

Anglican Diocese of  
**BENDIGO**

# The **Spirit**

164 JULY 2024



## **Anointing of the Boneshakers**

Glenis Trull and Phil Zamagias

# The Bishop writes...

## Dear Friends,

Much of this edition is given over to news arising from our most recent session of Synod. I hope that you are encouraged by the great variety of work which is being done across the diocese as we seek to follow on after God. My charge to synod is one of the things you get to taste as you read on.

You will see that in the charge I recall Ruth and her determination to stick with her mother-in-law Naomi (which means 'pleasant') just as Naomi renames herself Mara (which means 'bitter'). What a time to make this decision! There were all sorts of reasons for the 'Pleasant one' to become 'Bitter', but Ruth showed amazing fortitude in determining to stick with her. This is particularly striking as Ruth did not even share the same ethnicity as Naomi and her decision would cause her to become a stranger in a foreign land.

Ruth's own words to Naomi (Ruth 1:16-17) were:

*"Don't urge me to leave you or to turn back from you.  
Where you go I will go,  
and where you stay I will stay.  
Your people will be my people  
and your God my God.  
Where you die I will die,  
and there I will be buried.  
May the Lord deal with me,  
be it ever so severely,  
if even death separates you and me."*

As someone who had been foreign to God's promises before being enfolded in Naomi's family Ruth can be thought of as being 'late to the party' when it came to God's work. Yet, the curious thing is that she inherited what God had done beforehand. Physically, my impression is that being part of Naomi's family gave a glimpse of what following *this* God looked like. I can only presume that the quality of care and affection she received gave her enough hope to stick with Naomi (and Naomi's wider people) even as Naomi became bitter.

It also seems to me that the physical quality Ruth knew came because of the sort of God Naomi's God was. This was the God who had made promises in

*Ruth shines through the story as being one who continually met God at work in her. Yet even more, we see God at work through Ruth.*

the past to care for the people and had come through for them. These memories and stories would have been the ones Ruth responded to as she shared life with Naomi.

Clearly this was not all about the past though! Ruth envisages a present and a future. Ruth shines through the story as being one who continually met God at work in her. Yet even more, we see God at work through Ruth. Could God work though someone who was not part of *our* group? I think not! Yet God did; and how beautifully.

The part we can miss though, and we miss it because we ourselves are reading this story backwards knowing the end before we even start the beginning, is that God was *also* at work in Ruth's future. God was there before she got there. I think that Ruth got this. We get a hint of Ruth's understanding in her willingness to make a long commitment to Naomi – to death did they part. Why commit to an embittered person unless you saw something which would sustain you?

I think that this is a cause for great security and relief for us. Let me illustrate it with a more contemporary experience from our own land.



## Bishop Matt Brain

Each year on 1 July the Festival of the Coming of the Light is commemorated in the Torres Strait Islands. On the one hand it celebrates the coming of the Gospel to Erub Island in the hands of the Rev'd Samuel McFarlane. The deep and energetic faith of many Torres Strait Islanders expresses this reception. Yet on the other we must remember that (in the words of Aunty Rose Eliu) 'God was on both sides of the beach.' As Samuel knelt on the shore with the Bible in his hands he was met by Dabad. Dabad could have exerted himself over McFarlane but showed wisdom, strength, and forbearance in staying his hand. Like Ruth God was already at work in and through him.

Friends, this should give us confidence that God is ahead of us preparing the way for God's own work. We can rest secure in this knowledge. It should also bring relief in that our insecurity will be met by God's own activity which far anticipates our own. And friends, this should make us humble. Samuel thought he was bringing the gift, Dabad was already ready.

Your servant in Christ,

*thatt*



*Phil Zamagias blessing one of the riders*

# Anointing of the Boneshakers

*Phil Zamagias*

Riders from across northern Victoria descended on Christ Church Anglican, Echuca on Sunday 21 April for the 'Anointing of the Boneshakers' event.

The event has been run for the past five years and is co-ordinated by the Northern Victoria Spyder Riders (NVSR) club but is open to all motorcycle enthusiasts. This is the first time it has been held in Echuca and the increased attendance was very encouraging.

When the Rev'd Simba Musvamhiri was accepted as the new CEO of African Enterprise he had to relocate to Sydney. That meant that someone else had to take over the event which the Parish of Tatura had revived after COVID.

Simba asked the Rev'd Phil Zamagias if he would be interested and, with twenty years' experience as a motor-racing chaplain, it was hard to say no.

The Parish of Echuca welcomed the opportunity to host this event as an outreach to the biker community which has consistently sought a connection with God, and His blessing, as riders tackle our roads.

On a perfect autumn day in Echuca, a band comprising musicians and vocalists representing four churches from Moama and Echuca played a selection of gospel classics and popular hits from the 60s and 70s. "The standout track for me was Bob Dylan's *Knocking on heaven's door*" said Rev'd Phil Zamagias.

A representative from God's Squad Christian Motorcycle Club, Glenn Childs, read the Bible passage from Mark chapter 4 before Rev'd Phil gave a message entitled, "Who's got the power?"

He drew on his experiences as a pilot and an aircraft engineer where he had thousands of horsepower at his fingertips to show how that paled into insignificance compared to the power of God.

"No amount of power is enough for our machines," said Rev'd Phil. "We always want more. But God's power is such that it can cause storms to cease, restore sight to the blind and even raise people from death to life. It's not for sale, but it is available to all who ask," said Rev'd Phil.

An important part of the Boneshakers event is to remember the fallen. In a touching gesture, helmets are placed in a row on the ground in front of the priest as he prays for those who are grieving the loss of loved ones. Following a period of silence, the riders gather their helmets and ride past the blessing station where two priests, Rev'd Phil and Rev'd Glenis Traill give an individual blessing or 'anointing' to each rider.

At the conclusion of the event, Dennis 'Macca' McKenzie from the NVSR said "I was deeply touched by the message and the turnout today".

Plans are already underway for the 2025 'Anointing of the Boneshakers'.



Bishop Matt Brain

# Bishop Matt delivers Synod Charge

*Sarah Crutch*

**B**ishop Matt has encouraged three timely actions in his annual Synod Charge arising from the opportunities and challenges currently facing the diocese and the Church more broadly.

The first is to join with our sisters and brothers across Australia to reach a world which has lost hope with the national Hope25 campaign.

“At the annual Bishop’s Meeting we decided to embrace an intentional season of sharing hope in Jesus from Easter to Pentecost 2025 across the nation.”

“We live in communities labouring under clouds of disappointment and hopelessness. To have the opportunity to be part of a national invitation seems to be a gift of God,” he said.

The second is to recognise that the land

we use is not ours to cling to but seek to share with those who first held it.

Bishop Matt spoke of the recent appearance of the Anglican Church at the Yoorook Commission, which has been examining the way in which land was taken without consideration from the first people of the country.

“We, the churches which are now the Diocese of Bendigo, have inherited much property and have profited from dispossession. It falls to us to make right this injustice and engage with Aboriginal people here to redress this wrong,” he said.

“We must recognise the harm that was done in practical, financial, and relational ways,” he added.

“As I have said before, I cannot imagine being part of a church which knows what is right, has the means to do something about it, and fails to act.”

The third is to empower safe, engaged, and fruitful people so that there is a congregation worshipping God in every community.

“My dream is that there is a congregation of people worshipping God in every community. It is empowered congregations who will be agents of God’s transforming mission in our part of God’s world as they are prepared to serve because they wholeheartedly place themselves within God’s transforming power,” he said.

“We must continue to prepare those who make up our congregations to never tire of the good works which God has prepared for us to do (Eph 2:10), investing in the teaching training and opportunities to serve which build each other up.”

*Bishop Matt’s Synod Charge is available to view or read on the diocesan website.*

# Ian Dallas concludes as Chancellor

*Sarah Crutch*

Ian Dallas will conclude as Chancellor at the end of 2024 after 21 years.

Ian was appointed to the role on 1 January 2004 by Bishop Andrew Curnow and has contributed significantly to the achievements and progress of the diocese since that time.

Bishop Andrew Curnow appeared by video to thank Ian, noting his efforts in a range of areas including governance, finance, professional standards, administration, Bencourt Care, New Horizons as well as church law.

“I appreciated your wisdom, advice, understanding and faith,” he said. “The way in which you gave time and your patience to work through often complex and challenging issues I will never forget.”

Dale Barclay spoke on behalf of the Synod, noting Ian’s considered and gentle demeanor at Synod, his ability to present complex legislation in a way that could be understood by Synod members and his willingness to talk through matters with clergy.

Bishop Matt praised Ian’s gifts, commending him as one of the best Chancellors he has worked with.

In responding, Ian shared, “It’s always been my view that the law should serve the people, and that’s what I tried to do for the diocese.”



*Sarah Crutch, Ian Dallas and Bishop Matt Brain*

## Professional standards act passed

*Sarah Crutch*

The Dioceses of Melbourne and Bendigo have passed updates to the uniform professional standards legislation that governs complaints and clearance processes for both dioceses.

The amendments largely ensured the legislation is consistent with expectations of the Victorian Commission for Children and Young People.

The Dioceses of Melbourne and Bendigo have consistent legislation with the scheme operated by Kooyoora, an independent professional standards body.

The amendments were worked on collaboratively between the two dioceses. The legislation was passed at Bendigo’s regular Synod in May, and a special synod held by Melbourne in June. The updated Act can be read on the diocesan website.

# Synod hears family violence update

Lauren Porter

Action against Domestic and Family Violence (DFV) has been a topic which the diocese has taken very seriously, and in collaboration Mother's Union (MU) was invited to present on the topic at Synod this year along with the DFV working group.

Domestic and Family Violence is a national issue, but more than that it is an issue which affects the Anglican Church with statistics indicating that Domestic and Family Violence is prevalent in the Church as well as in the wider Australian community. Our hope is to shine a light onto this important topic and to help to equip leaders in the church, both ordained and lay, to know how to respond to domestic violence or the disclosure of it in ways which are safe, compassionate and Christ-like.

As we shared in our presentation, "In the Christian scriptures, the desire of God is for human beings to have relationships which reflect the way in which God relates to us – this vision is characterised by the value and equality of every human being and behaviour towards each other which is characterised by

behaviour which imitates Christ, this is shown by relationships which display love, patience, mercy, justice, compassion and in particular to us as a church, a desire and a calling to heal the sick and mend the broken hearted.

In Matthew 25, Jesus says to his disciples, '... that whatever you have done for the least of these, you have done unto me.' In this, we see that by responding to family and domestic violence as a church we are presented with an opportunity to serve Christ."

The first poster highlights what good, loving and healthy relationships look like. We also felt it important to highlight that following Christ means that we do not engage in harmful and abusive relationships and that we take seriously God's call to stand against violence and injustice by clearly communicating that as God's people we do not support Domestic and Family Violence.

The second poster promoting gender equality which comes from the Domestic Violence Resource Centre Victoria. This poster addresses some of the harmful behaviours and underlying systemic issues of gender inequality which contribute to Domestic and Family Violence.

You will be seeing these posters up around the parishes and around the diocese more broadly. I encourage you to have a look at them and to ponder and reflect on what it means to be a community that says no to Domestic and Family Violence and supports those who have experienced it.

At Synod I was able to share the testimony of a woman who attended a healing service at the St Paul's Cathedral in Bendigo. I was honoured to be able to share this woman's vulnerable, brave and heartfelt testimony. Our hope is that other parishes might also look at DFV healing services in the future, as it can be incredibly impactful.

The DFV working group would also like to ask that individuals and parishes pray (including publicly in your time for intercessions) for a more just society, for peace and safety for all those who are or have experienced DFV, a blessing on those working in this challenging area, that perpetrators be brought to justice and find transformation and an end to Domestic and Family Violence.

*If this has raised issues or concerns for you, please contact 1800 RESPECT: 1800 737 732.*

## Testimony

*In November 2023 I attended a very special church event that changed my life during the 16 Days of Activism against general-based violence campaign.*

*I would sincerely like to thank the Anglican Church of Australia, the Anglican Diocese of Bendigo, Mothers Union, the Parish of St Pauls Cathedral in Bendigo and the Healing and Wholeness Ministry for your steadfast bravery and compassion of faith in bringing light into the dark and ongoing situations of domestic violence.*

*I have been a churchgoer in Bendigo all my life and I will be honest in saying that I have not heard of or been to any dedicated service that focussed on the hard topic of domestic violence. These faith filled people deliberately and determinedly created a safe place for healing, direct from the heart of God.*

*I am 57 years of age, am a survivor of domestic violence, my lived experience was like living in a vault, where you could not breathe and had no voice. At times you would share a little in vulnerability to others that crossed your path but quite often, whilst they were compassionate, they were afraid and unsure of what to do with this knowledge. So, I just kept quiet all the more.*

*When attending the service at St Paul's, I went afraid but wanting to honour the many that have suffered and lost their lives in this battle. A woman dies every four days on average, and it is only by the grace of God that I am still here.*

*The fact is, when I turned up on that day, I thought my dfv wounds had already been healed. But God opened this safe place for me to receive a depth of the love of God that I had not experienced ever before.*

*When you have such deep soul wounds, sometimes we can think it is fully healed, and then the band aid comes off. So, I sat in St. Paul's Cathedral with the wound raw, but thankfully, this had already been thought of so sensitively by the organisers. There were prayers for healing and a place to pour my tears into the jars that God has for me. Ones that He carries close to His heart and once full, gently replaces those tears with feathers that cover each of us. It is under these wings that I found refuge and shame was finally stripped away. New growth through hope arose and there was no more shame.*

*"I will change their shame into praise and renown in all the earth" (Zeph 3:19).*

*I walked away knowing I am so loved by God and that I am His beloved and precious daughter. He had knitted together by His hand a dedicated group of agents of change that were authentic, sensitive, compassionate, brave, and safe in talking and educating us all about this hard topic and providing a space for people to open up to God and give Him their trapped hurts and pains.*

*My prayer is - "I wish more churches were brave enough to tackle this hidden issue so that God's healing can be gifted to survivors and perpetrators alike, creating a safe place for God to exchange beauty for ashes (Isaiah 61:3).*

*Thank you, Anglican Church, for helping to change my life. I can breathe and I have found my voice.*

*Contact Suzannah Daniels for permission to use this testimony.*

# HOPE 25

HOPE IN AN UNCERTAIN WORLD

## Hope25 launched at Synod

*Tracey Wolsley*

**W**e live in challenging times! One of the major felt needs in Australian society is hopelessness due to the perceived uncertainty of the world. Climate change, wars and rumours of wars, the mental health crisis and the cost of living, all make for instability and uncertainty.

As the people of God however, we know that Jesus offers real and lasting hope in the midst of these challenges. The Church has something precious, something unique to share with a world longing for hope. Exploring the theme of hope in an uncertain world, is at the heart of a national Anglican season of proclamation to be held in 2025 from Easter Day (20 April) to Pentecost (8 June).

Hope25 will help us, the Church, connect with ordinary Australians and provide a good connection with the gospel. This applies not only to 2025 and within the context of Hope25, but beyond that by equipping and building up confidence within God's people.

Being part of a national Anglican Church of Australia season of prayerful preparation followed by a season of intentional proclamation in every parish and in every diocese is an exciting and awesome opportunity and privilege. There has not been anything like this on such a scale for a long, long time, if ever. Will you join us?

Check out the Hope 25 website where you can view an introductory video on Hope 25: [www.hope25.com.au](http://www.hope25.com.au). The video is provided in Chinese Mandarin, Dinka and Farsi.

On the website you can download a parish launch pack that has information for your newsletter, flyers about Hope25, a slide presentation to show your congregation and a mailing list to sign up to for monthly updates, ideas, practical steps and resources.

In addition, there are preaching resources for 2025, Christian outreach courses and 'how-to' sheets which give you practical steps or pointers in running particular events. Just as you were thinking: wow that's great...wait there's more!

There's also a Hope25 Facebook page you can join where you can see what other parishes and dioceses are doing in the Hope25 space.

In time there will be short, sharp testimonies to view and easily share.



*Shannon Smith, Fiona Preston and Tracey Wolsley*

## Will you join us?

At Synod, a motion was passed to embrace Hope25 as a diocese. Each parish is now encouraged to:

- Put it on your Parish Council agenda
- Identify who your Hope25 champions will be and encourage them to check out the resources and sign up for the Hope25 monthly updates
- Pray – let's be diligent in praying and preparing to share the hope we have in Jesus in an uncertain world that desperately needs hope.

What will Hope25 look like at your church?

Visit [hope25.com.au](http://hope25.com.au) for videos, resources and to join the mailing list.



*Bishop Matt dedicated the restored plaque*

# Lost plaque restored

*Sue Willox*

A plaque in affectionate memory of George Edward Downton has been re-mounted in the Ouyen Anglican Church.

The plaque was discovered as part of a regular church clean up and it was decided that this beautiful plaque should be re-mounted in the church as part of its history.

George Downton was the first priest-in-charge of the district, with the plaque originally unveiled in 1927 in his memory.

It is presumed that when the old All Saints church was demolished, the plaque was put into storage where it laid undiscovered until now.

Bishop Matt visited the parish in May to celebrate 30 years of the Central Mallee Cooperative Parish and was able to dedicate the newly restored plaque.

# Congratulations Shirley!

*Darcy Vaughan*

On Tuesday 26 March Shirley Heather was awarded the Anglican Board of Mission's 'Coaldrake Medal' for her many years of service.

This is an award usually given to clergy and missionaries, but Shirley's tireless efforts fundraising, baking and contributing to the auxiliary were deemed worthy of this prestigious award.

The Parish of Inglewood is very proud of Shirley and congratulates her. Thank you to Canon Ian Howarth who attended Inglewood Hostel to present the award on behalf of ABM.



*Shirley Heather with Ian Howarth*



# Bendigo North welcomes new ministry

*Contributed*

The Rev'd Hannah Gregory was inducted into her new ministry in the Parish of Bendigo North at a celebration in St Luke's White Hills in May. Bishop Matt Brain along with clergy from across the diocese and clergy representatives from other churches came together to celebrate the beginning of this new ministry for the parish.

It was a wonderful celebration of joy, as we welcomed Hannah and her family as our new Priest-in-Charge. We enjoyed seeing a video from Hannah's previous congregation in Shipston-upon-Stour in the UK as they wished her every joy here in Australia. We are looking forward to where this new ministry leads as we seek to reach our community for Jesus.



Hannah Gregory



50 Anglican Bishops from across Australia met in Bendigo in March

# Bishops visit Bendigo

*Sarah Crutch*

The National Anglican Bishop's Conference was held in Bendigo in March, seeing 50 Anglican Bishops from across Australia, including Archbishops, Diocesan Bishops and Assistant Bishops, descend on Bendigo for a week.

A highlight of the week was a tour of the former Bishopscourt, now known as Langley Hall in White Hills. Thomas Heywood gave the bishops a tour of the site's history along with enjoying drinks in the gardens and Evening Prayer in the on-site chapel.



Uncle Glenn Loughrey. Photo: Jenan Taylor, The Melbourne Anglican

# New Archdeacon for Reconciliation, First Nations Recognition and Treaty

The Anglican Province of Victoria will commence a new Indigenous ministry and reconciliation initiative to strengthen the participation and leadership of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people within the Anglican Church. The project will be led by Wiradjuri elder and Anglican priest, the Rev'd Canon Glenn Loughrey.

On 30 June 2024, Uncle Glenn Loughrey will be commissioned as Archdeacon for Reconciliation, First Nations Recognition and Treaty, at a Provincial Evensong in St Paul's Cathedral, Melbourne at 4pm.

The Anglican Diocese of Bendigo will administer the project, with seed funding from trusts held by the Melbourne and Bendigo dioceses.

The new ministry initiative was first conceived of during a meeting at Bishops Court in Melbourne on 14-15 August 2018, chaired by the National Aboriginal Bishop, the Right Reverend Chris McLeod. Two significant outcomes from that meeting were the establishment of the Aboriginal Council of the Anglican Province of Victoria (ACAPV) and the

drafting of a Statement to the Provincial Leadership, presented to the Provincial Bishops' meeting in November 2018.

One key recommendation from the Statement was: 'the Diocese engage a full-time Indigenous Bishop or Archdeacon, whose key responsibilities would be to support Indigenous leaders and call on Anglican Parishes, agencies, and schools into a concrete practice of reconciliation'.

Over the next five years, Archdeacon Loughrey will coordinate the project, focussing on the following core objectives:

1. The establishment of a Provincial Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Council comprised of both clergy and lay leaders.
2. The development of skills for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clergy and lay leaders.
3. The creation of a pathway for emerging Indigenous leaders within the church.
4. Providing reports and advice to the bishops of the Province to support

ongoing efforts in Recognition, Reception, Formation, and Self-determination for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Anglicans within the Anglican Church of Australia.

This project has received the endorsement of NATSIAC (National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Anglican Council).

Archdeacon-designate Loughrey said: "This is a timely appointment welcomed by First Peoples inside and outside the Anglican church.

"It signals serious intent to engage respectfully with us and to heed our voices on issues such as reconciliation, recognition and treaty".

Bishop Matt Brain said the province wanted the project to be a NATSIAC-endorsed, worked example of First Nations ownership and responsibility for ministry to the Anglican Church of Australia.

Bishop Matt said this was important because in time the national church would consider how First Peoples were recognised within its constitution.

# Youth and Families

## The book of Ephesians

*In July the lectionary takes a journey through the book of Ephesians, a great letter from Paul which looks at how the story of the gospel (God's work to save the world through Jesus) impacts our life story. Below are ideas for how your church or family can explore this letter together.*



### Ephesians 1:1-14 (14 July)

We are part of two families – the family we were born into and the family of God. Draw a picture of each family. What does it mean to be part of your birth family? What does it mean to be part of God's family? What does Paul say about it in this passage?



### Ephesians 2:11-11 (21 July)

It's no fun being excluded or shut out from something. Think of all the things that make us different or that keep us apart. The good news is that God has broken down the barriers and brought us together in Christ. We are no longer strangers and aliens but citizens and saints!

### Ephesians 3:14-21 (28 July)

What is the longest/deepest/widest/tallest thing in your house? In your school? At your church? In the world? Paul tells us that God's love is even longer, deeper, wider, and taller! Paul prays we might keep growing in our knowledge of that love – spend time praying that for others.

### Ephesians 4:1-16 (4 August)

This passage is about the one and the many. How many 'ones' are there? Why does Paul talk so much about there being 'one'? While there is one body there are many parts. How do the different parts of the body (yours and the church) work together? What gifts can you share with your church family?



### Ephesians 4:17-5:2 (11 August)

What is the oldest and dirtiest piece of clothing you own? After you've had a bath or shower do you put them on? When we are washed clean by Jesus Paul tells us to put on new clothes, to be dressed in holiness. What does he say this looks like in practice?

### Ephesians 5:11-31 (18 August)

Play a game of Simon says to get started. All of us want to be the boss, but God calls us to be respectful and loving in all our relationships. We are called to be obedient to those who take care of us (and those who take care of others are to love them whole-heartedly!). Who are those who take care of you? How can you show loving obedience to them this week?

### Ephesians 6:10-20 (25 August)

Create a suit of armour out of cardboard and label the different pieces according to the armour of God in the passage. How effective would this cardboard armour be in a real battle? How does the armour of God help us against sin and evil? Give thanks that Jesus has already defeated sin and death for us on the cross!



**Archdeacon  
George**



## Editor's Notes

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

# Womin-dji-ka: Welcome

Suzannah Daniels

**W**omin-dji-ka means 'welcome' in Dja Dja Wurrung language. The Djaara peoples are the Traditional Owners of a large portion of the land in and around Bendigo on which we worship.

The newly launched Safe Church box aims to raise First Nations cultural awareness by learning and using language. We are using Womin-dji-ka with permission from Djaara elders. They shared why language is important to them:

*"Language is one of the most significant aspects of the Culture and Heritage of any group. Aboriginal culture and knowledge systems are largely expressed verbally, through vocalising place names, stories and*

*songs. Aboriginal languages express not only culture, but also kinship, relationship to the land, water and environmental knowledge. They contain a complex conceptual framework for the living things on the land, the landscape and natural resources. Without language, the link between Aboriginal people, Country and the Dreaming would be compromised and the benefit of Aboriginal knowledge may be lost."*

In the Safe Church box is an activity where kids are encouraged to decorate the Womin-dji-ka page and place it in their church. You can find the word for welcome in your Traditional Owner language and seek permission to use it to welcome and recognise the Traditional Owners of the land where your church is.

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