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Southern CROSS

THE NEWS MAGAZINE FOR SYDNEY ANGLICANS

Meet, Pray, Love

ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW FROM SYNOD 2015

- + Old clergy don't retire - they do locums
- & The Law and the new covenant



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Sydney Synod in action on the first day of its meetings last month. P4

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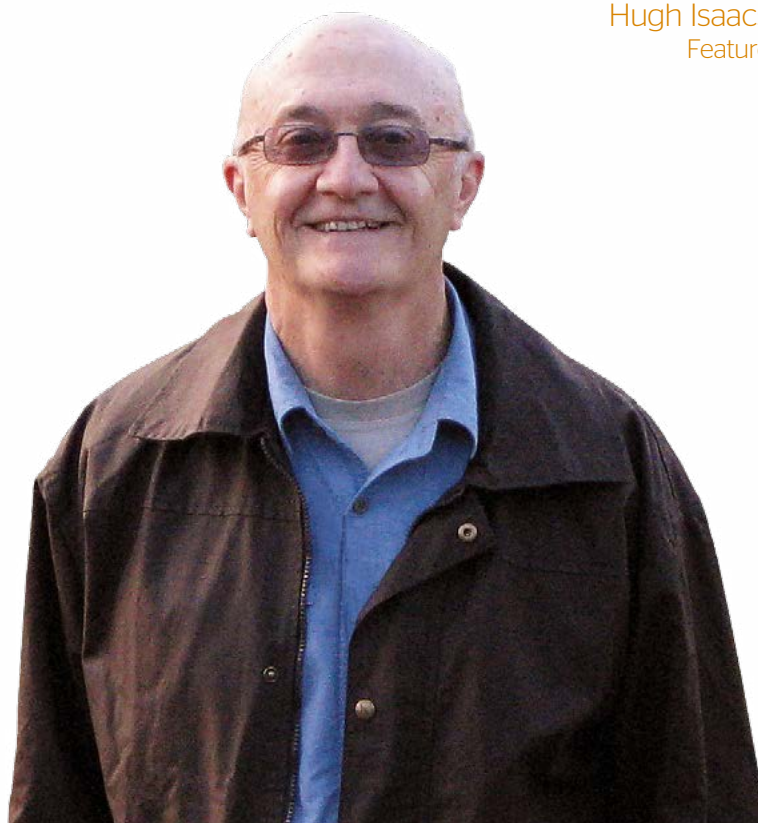
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On the one hand I have wisdom and experience, but on the other hand I don't have as much energy.

Hugh Isaacs
Feature



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PUBLISHER: Anglican Media Sydney
PO Box W185
Parramatta Westfield 2150

PHONE: 02 8860 8860

FAX: 02 8860 8899

EMAIL: info@anglicanmedia.com.au

MANAGING EDITOR: Russell Powell

EDITOR: Judy Adamson

ART DIRECTOR: Stephen Mason

ADVERTISING MANAGER: Kylie Zahra

PHONE: 02 8860 8850

EMAIL: ads@anglicanmedia.com.au

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SUBSCRIPTIONS: Garry Joy

PHONE: 02 8860 8861

EMAIL: subs@anglicanmedia.com.au

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'We can take more'



A Syrian family waits for transport at a camp in Macedonia on October 6. PHOTO: Caroline Haga / IFRC

THE SYNOD OF THE DIOCESE OF SYDNEY HAS CALLED ON THE GOVERNMENT TO INCREASE THE refugee intake to allow for more Syrian refugees, while calling on Sydney Anglicans to show "concrete acts of mercy and generosity".

The final night of Synod was given over to speeches and ideas from the floor on how to help the contingent of 12,000 refugees who will reach Australia's shores in the year ahead.

It was revealed that the Board of Anglican Retirement Villages is considering how older Syrian refugees might be helped by the ARV Housing Assistance programme, in particular at accommodation being built in Penrith.

"It really is hard to imagine 7.6 million displaced people – not quite twice the population of Sydney – without a home, dependent upon aid, seeking safety and the food and the peace and security that you and I take for granted," the principal of Moore College, the Rev Dr Mark Thompson, said in moving the motion. "This nation of ours is obscenely wealthy on the world scale. We have the capacity to be generous, far more generous, I would suggest, than just the 12,000 we have so far agreed to take."

Anglicare, which is the lead agency for the diocesan response, has already raised more than \$250,000 ..

"The motion before us provides us with an opportunity as a Synod to stand with our Archbishop on this issue, to give thanks to God for his leadership, to commit ourselves to support him in prayer, to pray for those who are directly affected by this horrific conflict, and to explore concrete acts of mercy and generosity," Dr Thompson said.

"We know that some have used this conflict as an opportunity to persecute Christians in particular. IS has targeted Christians for the most brutal treatment, not only in Syria but also throughout the Middle East. For that reason the motion explicitly mentions those who have suffered persecution for the name of Jesus. But we know that others have been persecuted too, and this is not a time to be sectarian or parochial."

Dr Thompson said the motion commends the Federal Government for its initial intake of 12,000 refugees and "calls on it to consider taking still more, so that those who have suffered so much might find a safe haven among us, a home not only free from terror and violence and persecution, but a place where they might be genuinely free."

The Synod then turned to a series of practical measures churches could take, as Dr Thompson put it, as "an opportunity for us to stand in the midst of our community and demonstrate the open-handed generosity of our heavenly Father and the compassion of the Lord Jesus."

Ideas included Christian businesses offering employment, tutoring, practical help such as ESL classes and even using soccer as a way of communicating to new arrivals.

The Bishop of Georges River, Peter Lin, said many refugees would settle in areas such as Liverpool, Bankstown and Blacktown.

"I have confidence in our churches in the area to provide what they need – but they are not the most well resourced," Bishop Lin said. "They [refugees] need personal connection and people to really love them. Helping them enrol their kids in school – taking them on a picnic or to the zoo. This is the hard part of loving these hurting people that God has sent right to our doorstep."

"It takes effort, inconvenience and commitment. And it takes more than just giving our money – we don't want to just leave the hamper at the door."

One church worker who is involved in ministry to Muslims made an impassioned plea for Sydney Anglicans to invest time in the refugees.

"To go and visit someone in their home is the most important thing you can do," she said. "To let them serve you – it will just make their lives worth living again. I visit a woman who is Syrian and she has told me that she was at a point where she didn't think she could keep going but when I and others starting visiting her, she felt hope."

A number of speakers emphasised the long-term commitment that would be needed to provide, in the Archbishop's words, "a warm and generous welcome".

Anglicare CEO Grant Millard said, "Once the media cycle moves on people may lose interest, but let's make our [Sydney Anglicans] response so overwhelmingly positive that the Federal Government will say 'we can do more.'"

Donate at bit.ly/anglicaresyria

Phone abortion 'commerce not care'

THE BISHOP OF NORTH SYDNEY, CHRIS EDWARDS, and the Archdeacon for Women, Kara Hartley, say a proposal to give women access to abortions by phone and mail is about commercial concerns rather than care.

Media reports say an Australian group will offer mothers an over-the-phone assessment before posting them an abortion kit, including the abortion drug RU486 and painkillers.

"Our willingness to treat an unborn person as an anonymous being is now being extended to an expectant mother," Bishop Edwards said. "No one, other than a voice on the phone, to provide care – and no one to assess the psychological damage that may be done by this dehumanised, commercial process."

"While we certainly oppose the termination of unborn lives, this bizarre proposal raises new concerns for the mothers and seems only to provide a low-cost telemarketing opportunity for drug companies."

Archdeacon Hartley agreed, saying, "Given the complexity of situations in which women will come to have an abortion, we must not suggest the 'convenience' of a phone call and medication in the mail is the best way to care for women in this very difficult, highly emotional situation they find themselves in."

"It doesn't in any way treat both the mother and the baby with the appropriate care that we ought."

In a media statement Bishop Edwards said, "the foetus in a woman's womb is neither a growth in a host's body nor merely a potential human being. It is human life. As Christians we are committed to defending the sanctity and promoting the quality of life given by God."

"I have no desire to stand in personal judgement on any who may have resorted to an abortion. I want to say to them instead, 'There is forgiveness with God' [Psalm 130:4]. Christ died for our sins and offers us a new beginning."



Bishop Edwards and Archdeacon Hartley.

Bible guys, in disguise



BP Man (Pete Bayliss, rear) and his faithful sidekick BP Boy (David Cochrane).

WHEN PETE BAYLISS AND DAVID COCHRANE KIT UP IN THEIR WIGS AND LYCRA ONCE A MONTH, morphing into BP Man and BP Boy at Naremburn Anglican, the last thing on their minds is whether or not leaping about the place will look embarrassing. They don't care.

They do get nervous but only because they are, as Cochrane puts it, "a couple of knockabout blokes".

Bayliss agrees. "We aren't gifted – certainly not!" he says with a laugh. "We just get up and work with what we've got."

And what both guys have is a deep faith, a real desire to share the Bible with kids and make church fun, plus a message for other dads and blokes across the Diocese: get involved.

Bayliss says BP (or Bible Passage) Man first appeared a couple of years ago. His family had returned to Naremburn from a four-year stint overseas, and he and his wife were looking for ways to serve the church.

"I saw a real gap in kids' talks," he says. "There were wonderful people involved but there didn't seem to be enough of them – and I noticed that they were all women."

Reasoning that input from a dad would be good he volunteered, chose the name BP Man, and emailed Cochrane (who makes promotional products) about creating a shirt with a BP logo.

"As a throwaway line at the end of the email I said, 'I wouldn't mind an offside'," Bayliss recalls. "Dave came back to me pretty much straight away and all his interest wasn't about the shirt. It was about being involved."

Cochrane's enthusiasm soon created two crazy superheroes with swimmers on the outside of their pants and full-on costumes, and BP Man and BP Boy were born.

"If we tried to be polished it just wouldn't work," Bayliss says. "The corrier it is, the better it is."

Then put have put memory verses on footbells and got pastors to kick them into the congregation, then put them in the right order. They've dressed up as pandas, or in flying gear, with actions aplenty – whatever helps the kids remember the verse they are teaching.

"Each month the kids hear the BP Man theme music and they get excited... they don't know what's coming but they know it will be fun," Bayliss says. Cochrane says they love to hear from other parents that "we were doing prayers and my son or daughter was recounting the verse with all the actions, or we were all doing it around the dinner table... that's great".

Even though Bayliss' wife Lisa died in April from a rare brain disease, the two men have continued to get up and "do" BP Man. Lisa Bayliss wanted Pete to keep going because she could see the kids' positive response. And they're telling the story now to encourage other men to have a go.

"We want guys to think about how they can serve," Cochrane says. "You don't have to be Billy Graham or a rock star to achieve something. We're hoping guys and dads will go, 'You know what? I could do that.'"

Adds Bayliss: "It's worth it and it's important for the kids... Just take that little first step. You never know what might come of it."

You can see BP Man's story online at <http://bit.ly/BPmanvideo>

Bishop Lee seriously ill

THE BISHOP OF WESTERN SYDNEY, IVAN LEE (right), has been diagnosed with a pancreatic tumour.

He had been experiencing some lethargy and symptoms of jaundice and scans last month revealed his bile duct was blocked by a tumour on the pancreas.

An initial operation to place a stent in the duct went ahead in early October, then major surgery on several internal organs, known as the Whipple's operation, was scheduled after *Southern Cross* went to press.

That operation carries the danger of complications and many challenges, including a recovery period of at least three months.

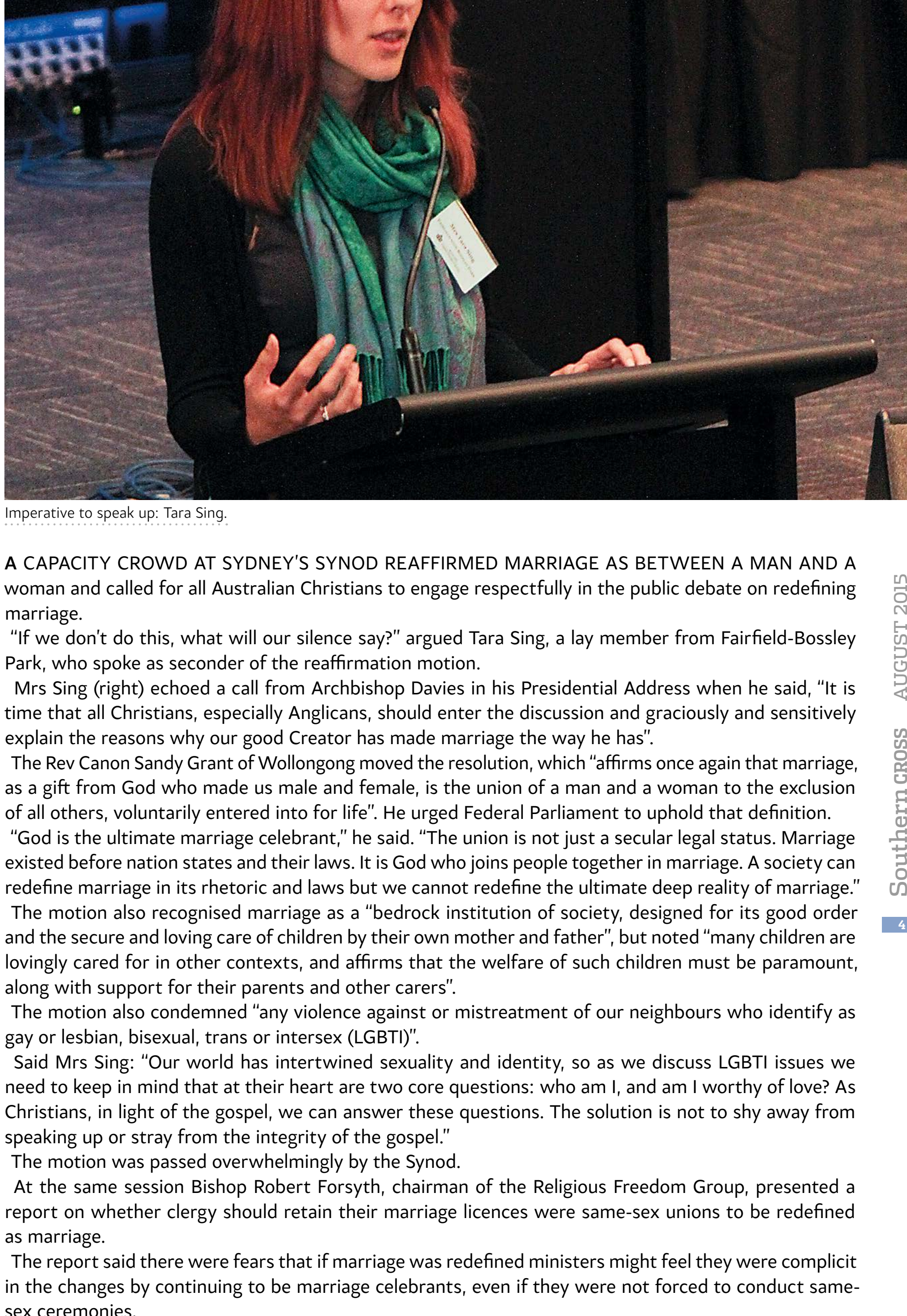
"When Virginia and I were told this alarming news... one of my first thoughts was: 'Here comes the biggest test of my faith in Christ'," Bishop Lee wrote to his clergy and church workers in Sydney's west. "These have been the hardest days of my life, shedding many tears of deep sadness with my wife and three daughters, and spending moments alone with my Lord."

"This may sound very odd, but under the load of heavy burdens and a hundred questions, I have been surprised by a calm in my spirit and inner being, and a deep thankfulness to God for the comfort of knowing him and for the joys of Christian ministry, and especially for the wife and daughters the Lord has kindly given me."

"I am certainly no apostle Paul, but his words 'to live is Christ, and to die is gain' became my words in a most personal way," Bishop Lee wrote. "My passion is to help local churches grow and reach their community with the love of Christ and I long to do more. But I also know that my times are in his hands. Of course, my family and I would value your prayers."



Synod reaffirms marriage



Imperative to speak up: Tara Sing.

A CAPACITY CROWD AT SYDNEY'S SYNOD REAFFIRMED MARRIAGE AS BETWEEN A MAN AND A woman and called for all Australian Christians to engage respectfully in the public debate on redefining marriage.

"If we don't do this, what will our silence say?" argued Tara Sing, a lay member from Fairfield-Bossley Park, who spoke as second of the reaffirmation motion.

Mrs Sing (right) echoed a call from Archbishop Davies in his Presidential Address when he said, "It is time that all Christians, especially Anglicans, should enter the discussion and graciously and sensitively explain the reasons why our good Creator has made marriage the way he has".

The Rev Canon Sandy Grant of Wollongong moved the resolution, which "affirms once again that marriage, as a gift from God who made us male and female, is the union of a man and a woman to the exclusion of all others, voluntarily entered into for life". He urged Federal Parliament to uphold that definition.

"God is the ultimate marriage celebrant," he said. "The union is not just a secular legal status. Marriage existed before nation states and their laws. It is God who joins people together in marriage. A society can redefine marriage in its rhetoric and laws but we cannot redefine the ultimate deep reality of marriage."

The motion also recognised marriage as a "bedrock institution of society, designed for its good order and the secure and loving care of children by their own mother and father", but noted "many children are lovingly cared for in other contexts, and affirms that the welfare of such children must be paramount, along with support for their parents and other carers".

The motion also condemned "any violence against or mistreatment of our neighbours who identify as gay or lesbian, bisexual, trans or intersex (LGBTI)".

Said Mrs Sing: "Our world has intertwined sexuality and identity, so as we discuss LGBTI issues we need to keep in mind that at their heart are two core questions: who am I, and am I worthy of love? As Christians, in light of the gospel, we can answer these questions. The solution is not to shy away from speaking up or stray from the integrity of the gospel."

The motion was passed overwhelmingly by the Synod.

At the same session Bishop Robert Forsyth, chairman of the Religious Freedom Group, presented a report on whether clergy should retain their marriage licences were same-sex unions to be redefined as marriage.

The report said there were fears that if marriage was redefined ministers might feel they were compelled in the changes by continuing to be marriage celebrants, even if they were not forced to conduct same-sex ceremonies.

Bishop Forsyth said the Anglican marriage service was "unambiguous" when it declared that "those who marry otherwise than God's word allows are not joined together by God, neither is their matrimony lawful in his sight".

The Rev Dr Michael Stead, who seconded the motion, said, "We must not abandon the public space, because marriage is a creation ordinance".

The Rev Ray Robinson of Katoomba wanted the motion amended so there was no recommendation to continue as marriage celebrants. "What kind of a statement are we making to society if we just roll on as usual if this change takes place?" he asked. "The minister is still acting as an agent of the state under a definition of marriage which is false."

After discussion, the motion was passed unamended.

Synod also passed a motion of regret and grief at the actions of bishops in the Victorian dioceses of Wangaratta and Gippsland. Gippsland's bishop has appointed a man in a homosexual relationship to a ministry position, while the Bishop of Wangaratta has publicly suggested same-sex marriage might be compatible with Scripture.

The motion said the bishops' actions were a departure from biblical teaching and a breach of fellowship and collegiality.

Grievance policy reworked

AFTER SOME DEBATE AND ALTERATION, THE 2010 GRIEVANCE POLICY AND PROCEDURE WAS formally replaced on the final day of Synod with the Diocesan Policy for Dealing with Allegations of Unacceptable Behaviour.

The Rev Canon Sandy Grant told members the revised policy had been created in response to feedback from churches that the Grievance Policy, while "sound in principle", was too complicated to read and implement. As a result, it had been very little used.

He said the replacement was much simpler to navigate, as well as being about 40 per cent shorter. The new policy took into account that unacceptable conduct was broader than such things as bullying, emotional abuse and harassment – put simply, it was any conduct that "falls short of the standard of behaviour that's expected of clergy and church workers".

"We have a policy like this because experience tells us bullying and other unacceptable behaviour can be a problem," he said. "Simply being aware of what's gone on in your region from time to time, or sadly even in a parish we've belonged to, will tell us that."

He added that civil obligations and a duty of care under *Faithfulness in Service* certainly made such legislation necessary, "but ultimately we have a policy like this not just reacting to our circumstances, or the advice and requirements of secular authority, but because of God's word."

"I believe our revised policy for addressing complaints about unacceptable behaviour should help us uphold these standards, to give a chance for reconciliation and repentance, if needed, while trying to be fair and impartial, realistic and useable."

Canon Grant's second, Ms Michelle England, said what had underpinned all the committee's work on the policy was the "firm belief that strong leadership both can and should be Christlike".

"It shouldn't be aggressive and domineering, but loving and compassionate," she said. "We hope that we can equip people in all our churches to deal with allegations of unacceptable behaviour in a godly way which leads to forgiveness and reconciliation."

An important addition, she said, was a flow diagram which clearly explained the procedures that needed to be undertaken from a local to diocesan level when there had been allegations made of unacceptable behaviour.

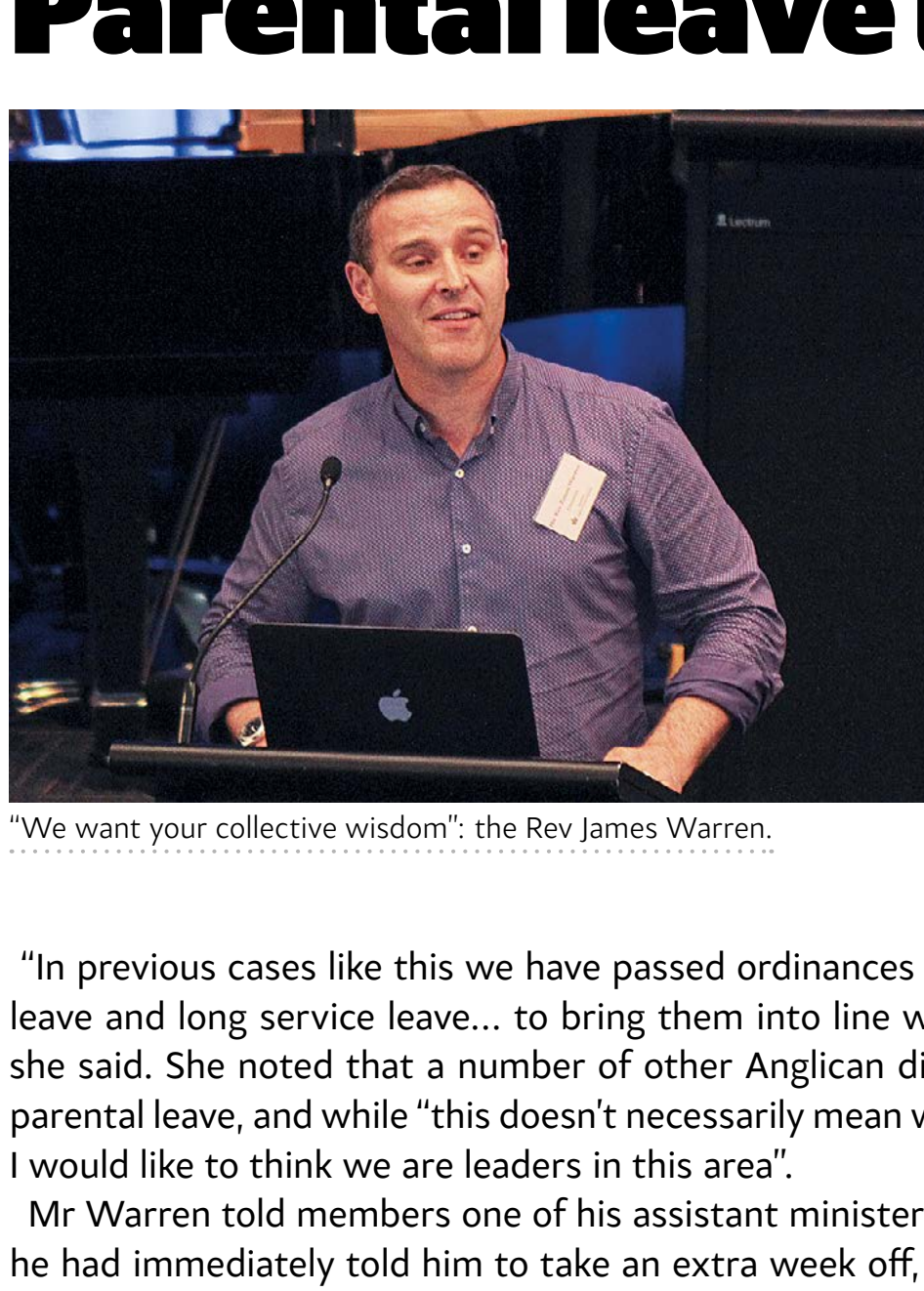
A query was made from the floor about whether anonymous allegations had been common under the Grievance Policy, and whether a record of such contacts had been kept. Canon Grant said that while anonymous allegations could not be dealt with under the policy, "a wise rector or bishop may be noting patterns of feedback received and may deal with it some other way".

Alterations were made during the Synod session to ensure that those at parish level understood when allegations were of a more serious nature and should be referred to the Professional Standards Unit (or the police).

The final motion passed by Synod also included a request for the Discipline Ordinance Committee to consider whether the Discipline Ordinance and Offences Ordinance should be amended to include – as an offence – a clergy or church worker's "repeated and unreasonable behaviour" towards another member of staff or parish volunteer, "which creates a risk to health and safety".

The new policy comes into force on January 1.

Govt a gambling 'addict'



Sorrow at State Government inaction: Canon Grant.

SYNOD HAS AGAIN REQUESTED THE NSW Government implement effective harm-minimisation measures with regard to gambling, with one senior minister noting the Government needed to "break its gambling addiction".

The Rev Canon Sandy Grant (right) of St Michael's Cathedral in Wollongong said people in this country currently lost more than \$18 billion each year on gambling – an average of about \$1300 per adult Australian – and that poker machines were by far the biggest contributor to the losses.

"Of course many Australians do not gamble at all and so the losses for some are far greater and they're concentrated in lower socio-economic areas, where poker machine

concentration is often higher and the rate of individual machine use is also higher," Canon Grant said. "So, the impact on the families of problem gamblers – who contribute something like 40 per cent of these losses – is appalling."

Synod passed Canon Grant's motion on the issue, saying it "laments deeply that, more than a year later, there has been no significant response from the NSW Government towards the recommendations in the report of the NSW Legislative Council's Select Committee on the Impact of Gambling published in August 2014".

Synod expressed its desire for the committee's recommendations to be implemented, including measures such as a \$1 maximum bet limit for poker machines, stopping the disproportionate concentration of poker machines in lower socio-economic areas and developing a scheme that required venues to intervene to assist problem gamblers.

Canon Grant pointedly told Southern Cross that "the biggest gambling addict in Australia is the NSW Government. Successive governments of both stripes have been addicted to the revenue raised from highly regressive gambling taxation."

"Mr Baird and Mr Foley are both professing Christians," he added.

"As a matter of justice and care for the vulnerable, it would be wonderful to see a bipartisan leadership effort from them to face down the mighty vested interests of the pubs and clubs gambling industry interests, and to make real effective changes for the welfare of those devastated by problem gambling."

Parental leave urged



"We want your collective wisdom": the Rev James Warren.

CONSIDERATION OF PARENTAL LEAVE for clergy in the Sydney Diocese is a matter that has taken 17 years to reach the floor of Synod, after it was first raised in a diocesan committee in 1998.

The Archdeacon for Women, Kara Hartley, said with good humour that "maybe we [the Synod] could move faster on this" when she and the rector of Engadine, the Rev James Warren, presented an exposure draft for an ordinance to Synod members last month.

Archdeacon Hartley said the Fair Work Act of 2009 created parental leave provisions for employees in Australia and this covered a parish's stipendiary lay workers but not its ordained staff as they were "technically not employees".

"In previous cases like this we have passed ordinances to give clergy access to [things such as] annual leave and long service leave... to bring them into line with best practice and community expectation," she said. She noted that a number of other Anglican dioceses in Australia had taken steps to provide parental leave, and while "this doesn't necessarily mean we should, in terms of care of clergy and families I would like to think we are leaders in this area".

Mr Warren told members one of his assistant ministers had become a father during Synod, and while he had immediately told him to take an extra week off, he soon discovered new fathers under the Fair Work Act were entitled to two weeks' paid parental leave, "no questions asked".

"To reduce any staff clashes of expectation, and for the sake of setting out a framework for some guidelines for parental leave, it seems to me [this bill] is worth supporting," he said.

Mr Warren added that he and Archdeacon Hartley had brought an exposure draft bill to Synod because there were a number of issues on which they wanted members' feedback and opinions. The draft allows for two weeks' unpaid leave for male clergy and up to 52 weeks' unpaid leave for female clergy and he said a number of issues needed consideration.

"What if clergy are in accommodation provided by the parish?" he asked. "What about parish cost recoveries? What about counting towards long service leave? The details need to be well worked over... We want your collective wisdom to make this bill as well thought out as possible."

Some speakers from the floor wondered if an ordinance would be too onerous and "binding" for churches, and whether a policy might be a better way forward.

The Rev Phil Colgan, of St George North, also raised the issue of returning to service, and expressed concern over whether it would be practical, or even possible, for most churches to hold open a female staff member's position for a year.

A lay member of Synod, Mrs Kristen Young from Lithgow, said even though lay workers had access to paid parental leave "there was still a great deal of variation in practice".

"If we don't have an ordinance, there's going to be a potential that our clergy who are already serving, who are already giving their lives for the sake of the gospel... may actually be not treated as well as they could be at this valuable time in their lives," she said.

Those interested in giving feedback on the draft should send comments to the Diocesan Secretary, Robert Wicks, by December 31.

To plant or to pot?



Reported: Sunday morning kids' talk at Village Church, Annandale.

A STUDY OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF CHURCH PLANTING IN THE SYDNEY DIOCESE HAS FOUND "pioneering" plants and "reported" churches have higher success rates than other types of church plants.

The research, conducted by Anglicare, looked at various models including a "mother-daughter" plant, in which a congregation is started elsewhere (daughter) with people and resources from another church (mother). Other models are a replant or report – where the plant is undertaken at a church that is struggling – and the pioneering approach, which establishes a church where there may be none in the immediate area, or among the target group.

The research was commissioned by the Strategic Research Group in light of Mission 2020 goals passed by Synod to plant 15 new churches in greenfield areas and at least two churches per mission area by 2020. The study looked at churches planted since 2002 and found all the pioneering and reported churches remained open, while about 60 per cent of mother-daughter church plants and 70 per cent of ministries among people of a non-english speaking (NESB) or indigenous background were still operating.

As well as survival rates, the study found varying levels of missional effectiveness. On average, pioneering and NESB congregations had the highest levels of newcomers and NESB congregations had more than double the diocesan average of first-time newcomers.

Bishop Peter Lin told Synod the most worrying aspect of the report was the fact that church planting had dropped off since 2011.

"This report really tells us that we need to put church planting on the agenda in a big way," he said. "Even though it has been shown that about a third of church plants have not survived past the first few years, it still means two-thirds have. That is still very effective."

Synod voted to ask Evangelism and New Churches (ENC) to consider the report and ways to improve and encourage church planting.

"Overall, church plants do reach a higher than average proportion of newcomers," Bishop Lin said. "The study also indicates churches that plant churches, on average, do better across a number of Mission 2020 indicators, suggesting that church planting churches have a good health about them."

"One thing is sure: we need to continue to plant new churches, new fellowships, new services and new ministries for this ever growing, ever-changing, ever-gospel-needy city."

Growing ministries



A living church: slides from the Liverpool South Anglican Church presentation.

SYNOD HAS HEARD THE RECLASSIFICATION OF GLENMORE PARK AND LIVERPOOL SOUTH AS FULL PARISHES, AND APPRECIATED THE DIVERSE AND GROWING MINISTRIES IN TWO DIFFERENT PARTS OF SYDNEY.

The motion for the reclassification of Liverpool South, given by church member and proposal convener Mr Thomas George, highlighted the multicultural nature of its ministry, the desire to continue reaching new residents moving into local housing developments, and particularly the ongoing ministry to asylum seekers.

"About 35 per cent of people in the area come from non-English speaking countries," Mr George said. "Residents include people from the Middle East, Italy, Greece, India and Fiji. Twenty per cent speak Arabic at home and there are several Hindi speakers as well, and generally the residents of these areas are from a lower socio-economic background."

"Please pray for the work being done in Liverpool South so that more people come to know Jesus as their Lord and master."

In addition to the asylum seeker ministry, which includes a fortnightly fellowship ministry supported by Anglican Aid, Anglicare and individual sponsors, Liverpool South also runs a School of Music ministry, where locals can learn an instrument and hone their musical gifts in fellowship with church members.

In moving the motion for Glenmore Park the leader of the original church plant, Bishop Peter Hayward, spoke of the blessings God had showered on the church and community through the church's ministry.

"Over the 23 years of the church's existence, God has continued to provide an extraordinary number of faithful, committed, servant-hearted folk who are adventurous in spirit, evangelistic in aim and generous in the gifts and riches God has blessed them with," Bishop Hayward told Synod members.

"There have been many testimonies that show people have found, as the church itself says, 'more to life' – either through conversion by God's grace, or by having a relationship with God renewed."



All in together: the people of Glenmore Park church.

Rector of Glenmore Park for the past 19 years, the Rev John Lavender, highlighted the church's long-term growth, the hard work of many people and the blessing of grants in facilitating a wide-ranging ministry.

"One of the things that has been outstanding... is that we were one of the recipients of the brownfields grants," Mr Lavender says.

"We have a much larger foyer and more meeting rooms, which has meant that even though we are ageing the original building, we were able to do four or five things at the same time, cater for more people being on site, and amazing things have been able to happen that way."

"We're very thankful and we feel so blessed by the generosity the whole Diocese has shown in supporting our ministry in that way."

The churches officially receive full parish status on January 1.

Lay licenses

A NEW ORDINANCE FOR AUTHORISING LAY WORKERS IN THE DIOCESE HAS BEEN PASSED BY Synod to reflect the modern church's different attitudes to lay ministry.

The mover of the ordinance, Bishop Rob Forsyth, said that since the previous legislation had come into force in 1981 there had been "a revolution in the way the ministry of the Diocese has been conducted" – including a massive growth in formal and informal lay ministry and significant changes in the work done by ordained and lay people. He noted that in many churches the distinction between the ordained and non-ordained members of a staff team was very small.

"Some lay ministries need to be authorised by the archbishop," he said. "Some may be authorised or licensed, and some don't need to be licensed at all – they're authorised at the local level by the rector."

The first level – lay workers who should be licensed – would apply to paid lay workers and volunteers who are part of a church's ministry staff.

"They may be full-time or part-time, paid or unpaid, but if they're regarded by the minister and the church as being on the staff team we believe they should be licensed," Bishop Forsyth said.

"As well as staff teams there are certain activities [such as] the delivery of sermons on a regular basis, the authority to administer baptisms and the conducting of funerals, where we believe the person should also be authorised. This would capture the old idea of parish reader."

He underscored that this did not affect contracts of employment, which are covered by different legislation, and was related solely to authorisation of a lay person for particular work.

With regard to the second level Bishop Forsyth said there were some lay ministries where it might be helpful if the person had an Archbishop's license, but it might not be necessary – such as a pastoral worker who visited in nursing homes. The third level covers all other forms of lay ministry – such as voluntary church musicians – which only need to be authorised by the senior minister.

In response to questions from the floor about new preachers Bishop Forsyth said the ordinance had flexibility – for example, licenses were recommended for regular lay preachers, but not for someone "having a go" for the first time.

"You don't want to license someone before they can say a word!" he said. "The ordinances are made for humans, not humans for ordinances... it's what is humanly workable. It's there to be our servant."

Safe Ministry revamp

A NEW POLICY MODEL FOR SAFE MINISTRY IN PARISHES was launched at Synod and includes a new website and video apology from Archbishop Davies.

The Professional Standards Unit (PSU) made a major presentation to Synod members during which the model, as well as a new logo and website, was unveiled.

"Last year we asked Sydney University's Professor Patrick Parkinson to undertake a review of the diocesan child protection policies," said PSU director Lachlan Bryant. "Out of his recommendations has come a new, easy-to-understand, policy model called the 'Safe Ministry Journey'."

A suite of documents supports the new model, aimed at groups of documents such as senior ministers, youth leaders and parents school teachers, parish councillors and the parents themselves.

"Senior ministers and parish councillors will have the Map – a comprehensive policy document for safe ministry with children and youth," Mr Bryant said. "Then there are seven Pathways documents, each written for youth group leaders, Sunday school teachers, Safe Ministry representatives and so on, containing just the information that's relevant to their role."

"The other documents are known as Signposts, aimed at parents and congregation members so they can be aware of the guidelines and also so they can spot when something is not quite right."

The documents can all be downloaded from the website. A key feature of the new site is a video apology by Archbishop Davies.

"As I meet with [these survivors] I am appalled as I listen to their stories," Dr Davies says in the video. "It is an abhorrent situation to find that they have been abused by those who should have looked after them, cared for them and in whom they put their trust – and yet they had abused their trust by behaving in such terrible fashion with these people."

Chaplain in the PSU, Catherine Wynn Jones, said, "There is enormous power in an apology and it can be so significant in promoting healing for a survivor. Our hope is that it will set a tone that will encourage people to come forward and to access the care and nurture that we can offer."



Synod swansong

THE BISHOP OF SOUTH SYDNEY, ROBERT FORSYTH, WAS GIVEN A ROUSING SEND-OFF BY MEMBERS in his final Synod before retiring next month.

The Rev Andrew Katay, rector of Ashfield, Five Dock and Haberfield, moved a motion of thanks to God for Bishop Forsyth's work in leading the South Sydney Region, as well as for previous strategic ministries he held such as rector of St Barnabas, Broadway and chaplain to the University of Sydney.

"So much could be said, particularly about the scores or hundreds who have entered vocational ministry... inspired by their time in the Evangelical Union of the University of Sydney in the '80s/90s and beyond," Mr Katay said. He went on to praise "the wonderful revitalisation of the South Sydney Region over the past 15 years, saying Bishop Forsyth had "exercised a remarkably effective episcopal ministry through his leadership".

Archbishop Davies also gave a personal thanks to Bishop Forsyth as part of his Presidential Address. He noted that, with 15 years at the helm in South Sydney, Bishop Forsyth was not only longest-serving bishop of any region, he was also the longest-serving clergy member of Standing Committee (1990) and "an engaging and respected member" of Synod since 1983.

"I particularly would like to pay tribute to his humility and grace following the Election Synod of 2001," Archbishop Davies said. "Our Diocese has some unfortunate history of relational difficulties around elections. Yet Robert distinguished himself under Archbishop Peter Jensen with loyalty and warmth, without rancour – an example to be followed by many who do not gain a position to which they might aspire, whatever their field of endeavour."

The motion passed unanimously through the applause of those present. Mr Katay prayed that God would continue to work through Bishop Forsyth and his wife Margie as they began a "new chapter", and that they would continue to be "instruments useful in the hands of their maker and Saviour".

More brownfields grants?

SYNOD HAS HEARD ABOUT THE OUTCOMES OF PREVIOUS GRANTS AWARDED TO SO-CALLED "brownfields" churches, and has asked Standing Committee to investigate whether further funds could be raised for established church facilities.

A motion, moved by the rector of Toongabbie the Rev Raj Gupta, was based on a report provided by Standing Committee and the Strategic Research Group (SRG), incorporating data from churches that had received grants.

The report concluded the grants had been an important factor in growth across a number of parishes, and had provided an actual return on investment in several churches.

"What this motion is saying is let's go further and see if it's possible for us to do something again, ideally on a continual basis," Mr Gupta said.

The report also cited State and local government data that 70 per cent of Sydney's future population growth will have to be accommodated in pre-existing suburbs, and that it was therefore prudent to consider whether future grants in such areas need to be considered alongside other greenfields developments.

The Rev Ray Galea of Rooty Hill MBM said that, as a beneficiary of a grant in 2007, his parish had been able to continue growing. Adult attendance at Rooty Hill increased by 10 per cent in the year after the completion of new facilities, rising to 31 per cent three years later.

"We see this growth as an expression of your generosity, for which we are grateful to God," Mr Galea said.

Money matters

SYNOD HAS MADE SEVERAL IMPORTANT FINANCIAL DECISIONS THIS YEAR, INCLUDING PASSAGE of the budget and a continuation of the greenfields levy on parishes, as well as a decision to pursue a "lease levy" as an alternative to the previously proposed large receipts policy.

The new Large Property Receipts Policy (LPRP) was agreed to in principle last year, pending further consultation. One of the consultation's findings was that a lease levy might be preferable when it came to receipts earned from leasing church property.

"It became apparent to us that there was an appetite for an alternative way in sharing in the mutual missional good, and that was to have a levy on each parish's non-offertory income," said the policy sub-committee's chairman, and rector of Neutral Bay, the Rev Craig Roberts.

"Let me be clear: offertory and bequest income would be quarantined away in such a levy, so we are not talking about the 15-20 per cent general assessments on general offertories that almost every other Diocese in the country puts on parishes. This is a very different proposition."

The principle underlying a Large Property Receipts Policy is that churches which benefit enormously from the sale or lease of church property beyond their reasonable property requirements should contribute a proportion of this surplus to wider diocesan objectives and to other parishes.

While Synod declined to finalise a new LPRP, effectively shelving it for the foreseeable future, it did call for Standing Committee and the Mission Property Committee investigate a lease levy and present a proposal to Synod by 2020.

The Diocese will continue to operate under the current LPRP until such a proposal is presented. Synod passed the main budget without amendment. The Parochial Cost Recoveries and Church Land Acquisitions Levy Ordinance was also passed, which included an increase in the parish cost recovery charge and a continuation of the 2 per cent greenfields levy.

Particularly highlighted were the deficits incurred by the Professional Standards Unit, which is funded from parish cost recoveries. The PSU has expended more resources than normal due to the participation of the Diocese in the Royal Commission into Institutional Child Sex Abuse, in addition to its work in responding to claims and inquiries.

Missionary hour highlights diverse global mission



THE MISSIONARY HOUR AT SYNOD HEARD FROM PEOPLE WORKING IN ENGLAND AND MADAGASCAR about the current priorities in taking the gospel to people in those countries.

The Rev Canon Andy Lines (above), general secretary for the evangelical Anglican Mission in England (AMiE), highlighted many of the current concerns within the Church of England, particularly flashpoints around gay marriage and the ordination of women to the priesthood and episcopate, as well as declining church attendance across England and the UK.

"Please, do not forget us in your prayers, not just for the sport teams, – although they need ample prayer support – but for the increasing proportion of our 62 million, or 51 million in England, who have no real encounter with Jesus Christ," he said. "Pray also for the churches who are seeking to meet that need, Anglican or non-Anglican, Church of England and also outside its structures."

AMiE and other evangelical groups have tended to buck the overall decline compared to the wider Church of England, with average attendances at AMiE churches at 99 people compared to C of E's 50, but Canon Lines says there is still much work to do, particularly outside the relatively spiritually resilient centre of London.

In the second presentation the Rev Alan Lukabyo, rector of St James', Croydon, spoke of the time he has spent working with Christians in the Province of the Indian Ocean.

"These nations are very different from each other," Mr Lukabyo said. "The Seychelles is relatively tiny, you could pile its population into the MCG. Mauritius is 1.3 million – a bilingual nation speaking English and French – while Madagascar has about the same population as Australia, and they speak French and Malagasy. This is all within this one province."

Mr Lukabyo has trained leaders throughout the province using Moore College's Preliminary Theological Certificate. He also shared video interviews with Eric Ma Fat, the current senior minister at St Paul's, Port Louis – who studied at Moore College in 2009 – and the church's youth minister, Albert Lamoureux, who plans to study at Youthworks College.

"For the youth at our church, I want them not to just share my God, the God of their youth leader, but *their* God," Mr Lamoureux said in the interview shown to Synod members. "I want them to be able to say, 'I believe in Jesus'."

The Sydney Diocese is currently piloting the PTC in Madagascar, using a French version developed in Mauritius. Madagascar has fewer ordained ministers than it does churches, and so often itinerant lay workers are called upon to lead services and evangelism efforts. These workers are being trained through PTC materials and given tools they can use with their own congregational study.

The work, in partnership with the Province of the Indian Ocean, is financially supported by the Work Outside the Diocese Committee and Anglican Aid.

Car helps cross-cultural outreach go the distance



From left: the Rev John Bartik of Revesby, donor Ms Judi Mann and the Rev Ijaz Gill.

A CAR HAS BEEN GIVEN A NEW LEASE OF LIFE AS A CROSS-CULTURAL MINISTRY VEHICLE.

Donated to the Rev Ijaz Gill, a refugee Anglican minister from Pakistan, the car was acquired through a chance social media exchange put together by the Archbishop of Sydney's Anglican Aid.

"Really, it's the story of social media in a lot of ways," says Eddie Ozols, Anglican Aid's operations manager. "I was contacted and asked for prayer about this, and so we shared it on Facebook. Within 24 hours we had two offers and it just went from there."

The Toyota Corolla is now in the hands of Mr Gill, who uses it to develop grassroots connections with other Urdu speakers in Sydney.

Mr Gill says having a car to use allows him to extend his visits and connect with more people, making further inroads with Urdu-speaking Christians and non-Christians alike.

"In Peshawar, the diocese provided me with a car and I would visit people and other churches regularly," Mr Gill explains through a translator.

"Here I could not do that and could not visit as often. This car helps me to visit more people than before, to talk to them and invite them to join our Urdu service.

"Many Pakistani Christian people here want to go to two services or two churches – English ones and Urdu-speaking ones – because of their children."

The car was accepted by Anglican Aid as a gift in kind before being donated for Mr Gill's use, making it tax-deductible.

Anglican Aid has also run appeals for the Diocese of Peshawar since the deadly suicide bombings there in 2013, which killed 122 people.

Ministry on the air



The Rev David Fell records his weekly segment for Radio Norfolk.

MINISTRY ON NORFOLK ISLAND IS FORGING AHEAD WITH ITS EYE ON THE LONG TERM, ACCORDING to the island's current Anglican chaplain.

The Rev David Fell, who is the full-time Church of England chaplain on the island, says the nature of the role is very different to that of a typical Anglican rector in a mainland parish. The island has a population of about 1400 residents, and another 500-700 tourists or other visitors on the island from week to week. It's estimated about 30,000 visitors make their way to Norfolk Island every year.

"You can't really think of the island as a parish in the regular sense," he says. "The chaplain connects with everyone on the island – there's a 24/7 element to it. It's close-knit, you are involved in so much of the everyday life of the island, people watch how you live, how you talk to people when you're out and about. In that sense it probably is not far from an old school English village type of ministry."

Mr Fell sees about 60 people at church regularly on a Sunday, between services at All Saints' in the island's south and St Barnabas' Chapel in the island's west. He also presents a regular prerecorded segment on the island's radio station, which plays on Sundays, and contributes to the island's newspaper – which he says often leads to conversations with people he meets during the week. Locals have become connected with the church and attend services as a direct result of things they have heard or read through these avenues.

"Often all I'm doing is sharing tidbits from sermons or blogs I've written, or offering a Christian perspective on major events, but I'm always trying to be evangelistic and I'm always trying to weave the gospel in," he says. "People do reference things they've heard on the program, and that starts conversations and allows for invitations. It's all about positioning myself to promote the gospel in the wider community."

Mr Fell also says his full-time position has allowed him to take a longer view of ministry on Norfolk Island, and to build lasting relationships with Christians and non-Christians alike to open up further opportunities.

"One of the things we want to do while we're here, what we're working towards, is launching a contemporary family service," he says. "It's hard to see a new work starting only with the established families, because of the number of people here moving in and out. We want to reach less connected families and incorporate them into the church.

"Similarly, we're looking to starting a regular youth group. A couple of churches here have worked together to put on a youth worker, and I'm mentoring him at the moment. We recently ran a camp with 43 kids going along to that, which was great. Things are ticking along there."

DEFENDER OF THE FAITH?

Archbishop Glenn Davies was right to pay a tribute to the Queen's achievement in becoming the longest-serving British monarch, but the article's heading was misleading ("Defender of the faith", SC, October).

Under the Australian Royal Style and Titles Act 1973, Queen Elizabeth became "Queen of Australia" and references to the UK and to "Defender of the Faith" were eliminated. The Act recognised the equality of Australia, the UK and each other sovereign nation under the Crown, and the separation of church and state.

The title "Defender of the Faith" was originally bestowed on Henry VIII in 1521 by Pope Leo X in recognition of the king's attack on the Protestant teachings of Martin Luther, and its use is inappropriate in a democratic, multicultural and multifaith society. Prince Charles once said that he would use the title "Defender of Faith" or "Defender of the Faiths" to reflect contemporary British society, and commented that there is "no way in which a sovereign can be defender of one faith".

The Queen has undoubtedly fulfilled her responsibilities with dedication, diligence and a strong sense of duty but she has no official role in the Anglican Church of Australia. We can share the Archbishop's admiration of her allegiance to Christ and her willingness to witness her Christian faith, but it is difficult to see what she could do, as Britain's head of state, to maintain "the Protestant Reformed Religion established by law" (as required by one of her Coronation oaths) without causing serious societal unrest.

In multifaith and multicultural Australia, the Anglican Church needs to avoid any suggestion that it is an Anglophile enclave. Australia's separation of church and state requires the head of state to act for the good of all people, of whatever faith or none, and Prince Charles' suggestion of "Defender of the Faiths" is a useful description of the role.

James Moore
Kingsgrove



Letters should be less than 200 words.
newspaper@anglicanmedia.com.au
PO Box W185, Parramatta Westfield 2150

Hospital care



From left: Peter Ellem, Kate Bradford and John Barrett.

THREE ANGLICARE CHAPLAINS HAVE MOVED TO DIFFERENT MINISTRIES WITHIN THE HOSPITAL system in Sydney: the **Rev Peter Ellem** became chaplain to Westmead Children's Hospital in July after seven years at the adult hospital in Westmead; **Mrs Kate Bradford** moved to Sydney Children's Hospital in Randwick from Westmead Children's; and the **Rev John Barrett** changed from a dual role at Royal North Shore and St Vincent's hospitals to a full-time position at Westmead.

All three speak of appreciating the challenges of now working at a different hospital.

Says Mr Barrett: "You're quite experienced and other people understand that, but I've described it as being like moving to a new high school. Each high school has its own ethos and culture and hospitals have that too, so while you're quite familiar with the procedures of chaplaincy and the visiting, there's quite a learning curve."

Mrs Bradford's colleague at Westmead Children's retired from that position, so after eight years part-time there herself she decided it was a good time to make a move. She was keen, however, to remain in pediatric chaplaincy so she could continue supporting children and their families – a job she says is very complex.

"We work with whole families and family systems, and the vulnerability of the family when a child is sick is quite acute," she says. "You're in a position to care for the whole family, and have the ability to make interventions that could really change the course of the whole family for the better.

"It's a time when many Christian families stop attending church and others become very disillusioned with God, so it's a very important time to intervene."

Mr Ellem, who moved from a position at the adult hospital to Westmead Children's, acknowledges that the work is quite different. First of all, he says, chaplains at the kids' hospital mainly deal with parents, who often feel very powerless and anxious in the face of their child's illness.

"It's a lot of waiting with them and holding them in that space of not knowing and waiting, and will it work out or won't it," he says. "There is a difference to suffering in children compared to suffering in people who might have lived a long and happy life. It strikes people as unfair... and it's not what they were hoping for when they started their family. They're pretty raw.

"I have very few conversations that are what I'd call 'light'. People are very ready to talk, and tell their story, and because you're not medical they feel like they can unload without really editing anything. You're a safe pair of ears, really."

Mr Barrett, who spent 10 years at RNS and three at St Vincent's, says someone commented to him recently that "the heartbeat of the Bible is love" – so therefore, by expressing concern and compassion and love as a chaplain, "you're a link in the chain of God's grace to that person. Who knows what will happen after they leave the hospital but you can extend that hand while you're there."

Adds Mr Ellem: "Prayer is an enormous part of that. Often people feel like they're going through very private pain and if that can be held before God, then some of the loneliness of that suffering can be overcome. All the families are God's families, not mine, so you just give them to him."

Preserve freedoms in marriage debate

ROBIN SPEED

IN THE SEPTEMBER EDITION OF *SOUTHERN CROSS* IT WAS REPORTED THAT THE ARCHBISHOP OF Sydney, Dr Glenn Davies, backed a plebiscite on the definition of marriage and supported an open debate on the subject.

The debate should recognise that each side has legitimate concerns. For example, those in favour of a change in the definition of marriage feel that the present system discriminates against homosexual couples who believe marriage will fundamentally improve their relationship, while those against the change feel the present system is in the best interests of society and that any change is not in accordance with their religious or other beliefs.

Whatever the result, the debate is only possible because Australia recognises freedom of speech, freedom of conscience and religion, and freedom of thought, belief and expression, including freedom of the press. Many other countries forbid any discussion on the subject. These freedoms should not be a casualty in the debate, in that they should remain as strong as ever whether the change is made or not. In other words, if the plebiscite decides to keep the definition as it is, those who want a change are free to campaign against the decision, and if the plebiscite decides in favour of a change in the definition, those against the change are free to campaign against the decision.

These issues have to be considered before and at the time any change to the definition of marriage is made. I wish to stress that this is separate and distinct from the question of whether the definition should be changed. Rather this article is concerned that in the debate, and any change, we preserve Australia's fundamental freedoms.

In considering the issue, the experience of Canada is relevant. In 2002 Canada recognised a homosexual marriage. At the time the effect on the fundamental freedoms were not addressed.

Professor Bradley Miller in a 2012 article entitled "Same-Sex Marriage Ten Years On: Lessons from Canada" (www.thepublicdiscourse.com/2012/11/6758/) discusses the experience of Canada since 2002. He notes that while results elsewhere may not be the same by reason of cultural and institutional differences, the Canadian experience is the best available evidence of the impact of homosexual marriage in a democratic society.

The formal effect in Canada of the recognition was that government recognised the relationship as marriage. But what transpired was that anyone who opposed the recognition must be acting on the basis of bigotry and animus to homosexuals. Freedom of speech was severely restricted. Those who voiced their dissent were subject to investigation by human rights commissions and proceedings before human rights tribunals.

Professor Miller writes that:

"Some have been ordered to pay fines, make apologies and undertake never to speak publicly on such matters again. Targets have included individuals writing letters to the editors of local newspapers and ministers of small congregations of Christians. A Catholic bishop faced two complaints – both eventually withdrawn – prompted by comments he made in a pastoral letter about marriage."

While the Canadian Parliament recently revoked the Canadian Human Rights statutory jurisdiction to pursue "hate speech" the other powers of the Human Rights Commission remain.

For those who are interested, another article on the Canadian experience is "A warning from Canada: Same-Sex Marriage Erodes Fundamental Rights" by Dawn Stefanowicz (www.thepublicdiscourse.com/2015/04/14899/).

In the light of this experience, we need to ask the following questions if a change to the definition in Australia is to be made:

- Will religious teachers be free to teach in accordance with their beliefs?
- Will ministers or priests be compelled to marry a homosexual couple even if it is contrary to their beliefs?
- Will parents or grandparents be free to teach their own children or grandchildren that they believe that the change to the definition is contrary to their beliefs?
- Will parents be free to oppose a school program that endorses a homosexual couple getting married?
- Will all teachers be compelled to endorse a homosexual couple getting married?
- Will you be free to say what you believe about homosexuals getting married, including that children brought up by homosexual couples are disadvantaged as opposed to those brought up by heterosexual couples?
- Will you be free to say that you hold a different view?

In Australia. even before any change is made, those who oppose a change are under attack with abusive criticism on Twitter, in the media and other outlets, and even being subject to a complaint to the Human Rights Commission or state tribunal.

As a Toowoomba doctor found out in a serious presentation of the case against a change to the definition, he was the subject of a complaint to the Queensland Tribunal for saying it was an abomination for a child to be artificially conceived by two gay men and brought up without a mother. Catholic Archbishop Porteous in Hobart was denounced for distributing a pamphlet entitled "Don't Mess with Marriage" to Catholic schools and parishes.

It is hoped that this does not continue and that the debate can be conducted in an open and inclusive manner. It is important that our fundamental freedoms are recognised throughout the debate and at the time of any change, because unless this is done at the same time as the change it is hard to get it done subsequently. There will be no delay as it could be done in the one Act of Parliament.

This should not be done as an exception or qualification to a change, as that can be read down or even taken away, but as an express recognition of the fundamental freedoms to which the change is made subject.

The plebiscite should only pose the question of the change being made if it expressly preserves our fundamental freedoms. As the Canadian experience has shown, a general guarantee of fundamental freedoms is not enough. A specific guarantee is required, to which the change is made subject.

Robin Speed is president of the Rule of Law Institute of Australia and a member of Warrawee Anglican Church.



"I've enjoyed it all": Bruce Ballantine-Jones with his wife Heather.

Serve, retire, then watch the flowers grow... or not. Older clergy speak to

TARA SING about how busy life after "retirement" really is.

THINK THAT RETIRED RECTOR YOU KNOW IS PUTTING HIS FEET UP? NOT LIKELY. Chances are he (and his ministry-minded wife, if he's married) are spending a good chunk of their "retirement" taking care of parishes whose senior minister has moved on or is on leave.

But that's not so hard, right? All care and no responsibility? Not exactly.

For some clergy, the thought of sitting around in a comfortable recliner during their golden years never crossed their minds. The Rev Barry George retired in 2003 after 40 years of ministering in Sydney and around the world (in Egypt and Malaysia), and he never for a moment imagined his serving would end.

"When you first retire and you think to yourself, 'I'm only 65', you have this idea that life is still in front of you," George says. "God has been very gracious to us. My wife Iris and I have had a very exciting life."

And the Lord continues to provide the Georges with an exciting life. Since their retirement, they have served in several churches around Sydney and elsewhere. "We did locums at Cherrybrook, Maroubra, Asquith, Norfolk Island and we went back to Sandakan [in Malaysia]," Barry George says.

Having previously served in Malaysia with the Church Missionary Society, George was delighted to return with his wife to care pastorally for St Michael's Church in Sandakan.

"Having been at our first church in Sandakan, Church of Good Shepherd, for four years, we made many good, lasting friendships," he says. "We understood the culture, what to do and what not to do. When the minister took long service leave, he contacted me because he knew I had been at the church next door and we were delighted to go back."

The locum days are behind him now, as he now serves part time at St Stephen's, Normanhurst. "I was kindly offered a position at St Stephen's as their senior assistant minister and I've been there for about six years," George says. "I preach about one sermon every month and I also take a men's Bible study. I think if I didn't have this preaching I would really miss it."

For other clergy, however, retirement wasn't something they thought about beforehand. Canon Dr Bruce Ballantine-Jones says that when he retired from his church at Jannali he "didn't have a very clear idea of what the future held... but I did find that as time went by my life filled up very much".

Life circumstances meant that Ballantine-Jones didn't have to plan much to find himself busy enough in his retirement days. "My first wife died just before I retired, and then I married a little while later," he says. "I was still involved in a number of major diocesan organisations, such as the Glebe Administration Board and SDS, and on top of that I did a PhD and locum positions as well. I found myself quite busy as it turned out, and I've enjoyed it all."

Ballantine-Jones has looked after a variety of Sydney churches such as Oatley, Beverley Hills and Lugarno, and has travelled as far as Norfolk Island and Lord Howe Island to care for parishes lacking a rector: "I went [to Norfolk] in November 2013 for three months... We loved the people there," he says.

Being one locum in a long line that cared for a small church facing economic difficulties came with its challenges – namely the inability to develop strategies to grow and care for the parish. "Of course, in the last year that has changed because now Norfolk has its own full-time minister, who is doing a wonderful job," he says.

CONTINUED SERVICE

While some clergy have found themselves in a range of different churches and situations, for other ministry workers they have found in their retirement a need to stay where they are and continue serving.

Since retirement, both Bishop Peter Tasker and Archdeacon Ian Cox served in the Georges River Region until July 2015, when Bishop Peter Lin officially took on the role.

"I retired in 2013 but stayed on until 2015," Cox says. "Bishop Peter Tasker retired in 2009 but came back when I retired in 2013, so we both continued our roles as honorary bishop and archdeacon."

Cox was motivated by his passion for the Georges River Region and couldn't imagine spending his retirement any other way. "We love the region and the people in the region," he says. "There are some great challenges and we were the best ones to help the region continue to function. The Georges River Region is a microcosm of what the Diocese will look like in the next 20 years, so it was important that we keep this region functioning because of the massive multicultural changes happening."

Despite being retired, the only thing to change about Cox's role was his title. As an honorary archdeacon for Georges River, his role involved continuing to support the local churches. And he wasn't the only one to roll up his sleeves and continue to do the work.

"My wife Bronwen also continues to meet with women in the region," he says. "We're both committed to the ministry of serving God's people. There's always a need."

Aside from caring for the Georges River Region, Cox also undertook several locums, including spending two months in Adelaide caring for a parish. Since being relieved of his honorary archdeacon position he has continued to keep himself busy, most recently by preaching in Botswana. Travelling to Africa to visit family, Cox found himself preaching at his daughter's church in Gaborone, the country's capital. "[Botswana] was a different form of multiculturalism," Cox says, "with two congregations of 100 people each, Africans from Nigeria, Zimbabwe, Zambia, South Africa and Botswana."

Most clergy find themselves involved in locum ministry as retired rectors, however there are a few who choose this way of life intentionally. The Rev Hugh Isaacs is one of these people, dedicated to caring for churches in need of a particular kind of locum. "They send me where there are problems," he explains, "because I have experience in helping churches with problems. They know I'm prepared to hang in there for a while and take on this ministry."

Isaacs made the decision to head down this path at 59, after years as a regular parish minister in a number of churches. "I decided that in my last few years I would give myself to doing this ministry because there aren't many ministers available to do it," he says. He sees himself in a unique role, stepping in to pastor churches that have been deeply hurt and who aren't quite ready for a new full-time minister to start.

"It's not the sort of thing that everyone would want to do," he says, acknowledging the challenges of this type of ministry. "But despite the fact that sometimes situations are extremely difficult, people are always trusting God will see them through. Their faith doesn't waver."

INTENTIONAL INTERIM MINISTRY

WITH the support of his wife the Rev Hugh Isaacs stepped down from being a full-time rector after the Five Dock and Haberfield parish merged with Ashfield. He began to work closely as an acting rector with churches that weren't yet ready to receive a new full-time minister, taking them from a broken state into, and through, a healing process.

"For healing to take place, you need time," he says. "It's no good forming a transitional team when nobody has dealt with something that has just happened. Often there's a period of healing and pastoral care."

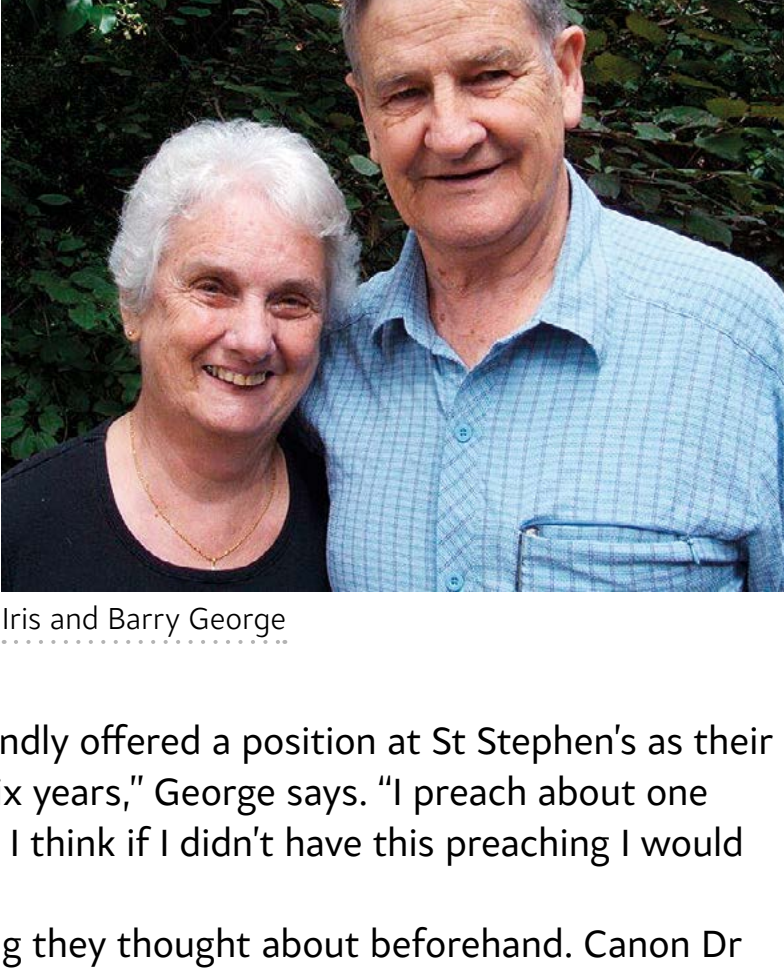
"When there has been a problem, there will always be people who are upset and these people don't just spring back to loving one another unconditionally, even though we want them to. It's especially hard to heal when there is division."

Isaacs helps people work through any issues that have occurred within their churches. He helps them to reserve judgement, to listen to one another, and to share and get things into the open to assist in the parish's recovery.

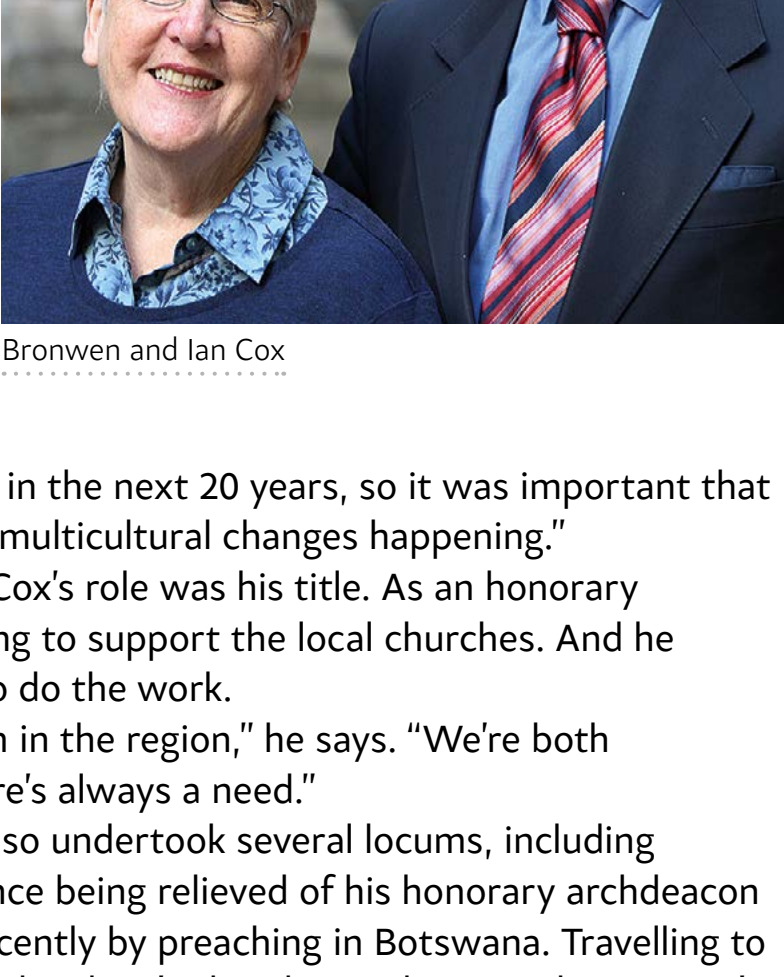
The ministry can be incredibly draining, but Isaacs believes he is the right person for the job. "God has helped me and has equipped me," he says. "On the one hand I have wisdom and experience, but on the other hand I don't have as much energy. I like taking my time, because God's time is love time, and love time is slow."

Despite the challenges of the role, Isaacs finds great encouragement in seeing God work through these congregations.

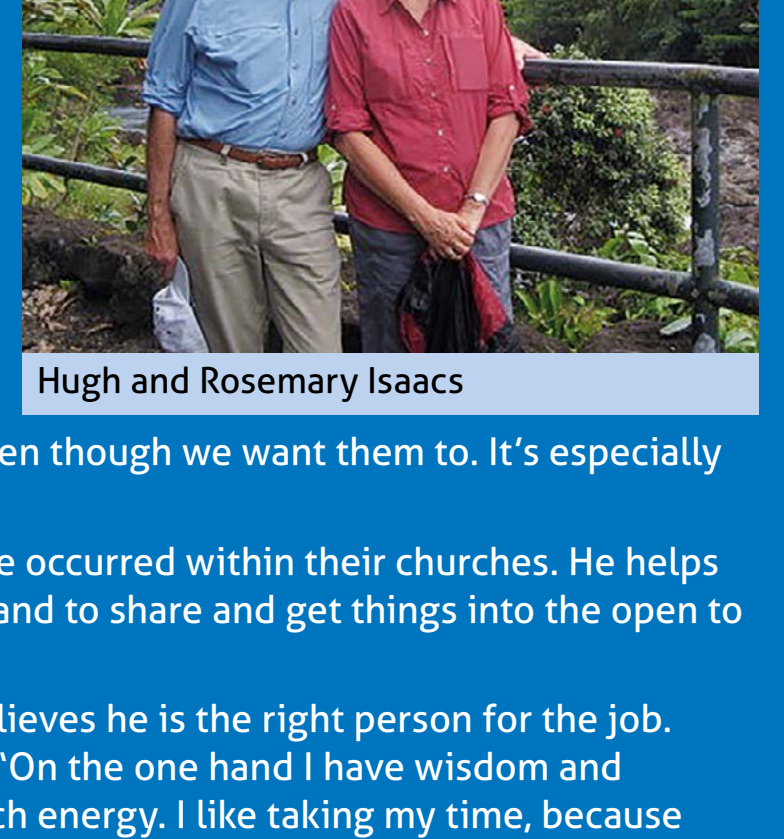
"People are always trusting God," he says. "You're never alone in this ministry. People will pray for you and with you, they will listen to what you have to say. It's a great time to gather the church for prayer."



Iris and Barry George



Bronwen and Ian Cox



Hugh and Rosemary Isaacs

ADDED VALUE

The Bishop of the South Sydney Region, Robert Forsyth, says that before he became a bishop he had "no idea how important acting rectors and locums are", and regards them as some of the unsung heroes among us.

"Once I was a bishop I realised what a valuable ministry these men do, not just filling in but helping parishes," he says.

Temporarily caring for another pastor's parish can be a tough gig. There are names to learn, systems to adapt to and by the time you feel like you are into the swing of it, it's time to move on. So what does it take to be able to minister in a context like this?

"I think flexibility and a willingness to listen," Forsyth says. "You've got to fit into a place that's already running and keep it running well. Although I did hear a story of one locum who closed down two of the four morning services of that church, so flexibility is the main thing."

Also ranked highly is the ability to love people. "There's a lot of quick getting on with people that's involved," he says.

With parishes across the Diocese needing locum ministers, a willingness to travel is also a bonus. Before George was appointed to a part-time position at Normanhurst, he and Iris travelled all over Sydney caring for parishes.

"We've always been willing to travel so I didn't think twice about it," he says. "When I worked with CMS, I would leave home in Carlingford to get to 8 o'clock services at different churches a fair way away – that was just the nature of the job. And [during our time at Maroubra] we went backways and forwards to Maroubra from Cherrybrook, to the early service and then to the evening service."

"Towards the end of my locum time I was looking for places where we didn't have to travel so far. I must have been getting old at that stage!"

Ballantine-Jones adds that having the right attitude is important, as by definition locum ministry is a support ministry. "You're there to mind the shop," he says. "You can't bring about major changes because that would be intruding on the prerogative of the new rector."

But the right attitude is only part of what's needed to be effective. "You've got to love the word, love preaching the word, love people and just do it," he says. "That's what we got into the ministry to do."

NORFOLK CALLING

FOR almost a decade Norfolk Island was cared for by a long list of loving and dedicated locum ministers.

"I found the people delightful and the setting very enjoyable," says Canon Dr Bruce Ballantine-Jones, who spent three months as locum on the island in 2013. "The main problem was that the church itself was struggling under economic pressures, being a tourist-based community and because they had not had a full-time rector for about 10 years, having been served by a string of locums like me."

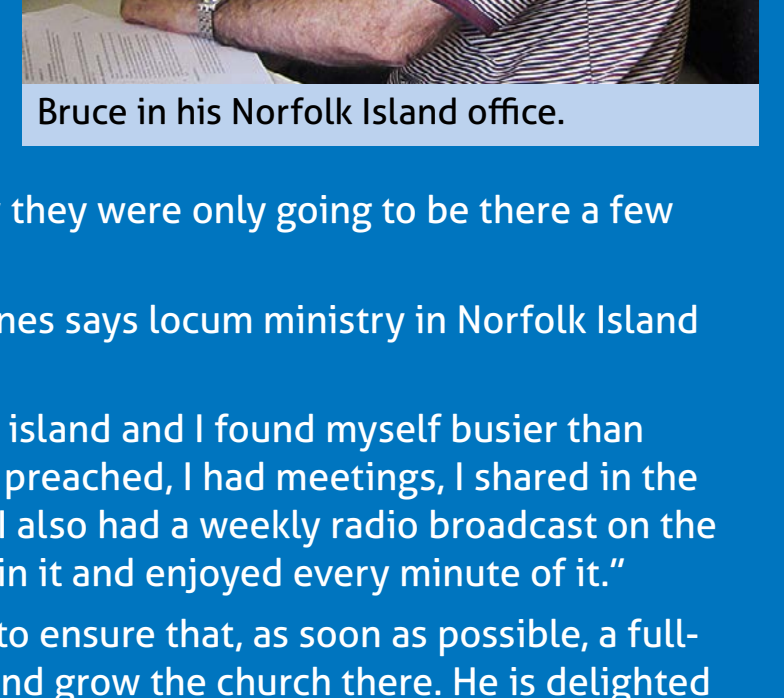
The main challenge for locum ministers travelling to the island was the short-term nature of each appointment. "No locum was there long enough to develop the proper relationships with the people, nor could they develop strategies because they knew they were only going to be there a few months," he says.

Despite the dramatic change in setting, Ballantine-Jones says locum ministry in Norfolk Island was not that different to serving in Sydney.

"I probably worked a little harder because it is a little island and I found myself busier than expected," he says. "But in essence it was the same: I preached, I had meetings, I shared in the leading of services, I did pastoral work as it came up. I also had a weekly radio broadcast on the local station and visited the hospital. I got caught up in it and enjoyed every minute of it."

Ballantine-Jones came back to the mainland fired up to ensure that, as soon as possible, a full-time rector could be found for the island to support and grow the church there. He is delighted that has now occurred.

"My wife and I felt it was one of the most wonderful experiences we ever had," he says. "The good outcome, from my point of view, of my time at Norfolk Island is that it precipitated the appointment of a young, able, full-time minister."



Bruce in his Norfolk Island office.

A MINISTRY STRUGGLE

As Bishop of South Sydney it is Forsyth's job to match churches and locum ministers in his area. "It is surprisingly hard," he says.

"It is difficult partly because of two issues. Many retired clergy are finding themselves getting long-term, part-time jobs in parish teams, which is a great thing to do. The second reason why it is hard is that where I am in my region, the city region, not many retired clergy live here. They all live in the Blue Mountains, the North Coast or Wollongong, so many have to travel quite a distance to get here."

According to Cox, one of the hardest things about his locum appointment in Adelaide was the temporary nature of the role. He says it can be tempting for many locum ministers to take a very casual attitude to the ministry.

"You still want to get to know people, remember their names and minister to them in an effective way so you can't be casual about it," he says. "Because there is a temptation to be casual about it, you have to work hard."

"One of the things I do, even though I have preached for many years, is I still try and go back to the Bible and look at what it's saying and approach the passage in a fresh way. It means that you actually approach the Bible, not just pull something off the shelf. You look at the Bible and work out what it means for today, not just for five or six years ago. The people in that parish are a special group of people, purchased by the blood of the Lord Jesus, so you need to look after them well."

INCREDIBLE JOYS

It is no surprise when talking to ministers who have dedicated their lives to the teaching of the word of God that their shared number one joy is preaching the gospel.

"I loved preaching again and having a role in the pastoral life of the church," Ballantine-Jones says. "It was like getting back in the saddle but without all the stresses of ongoing full-time parish ministry."

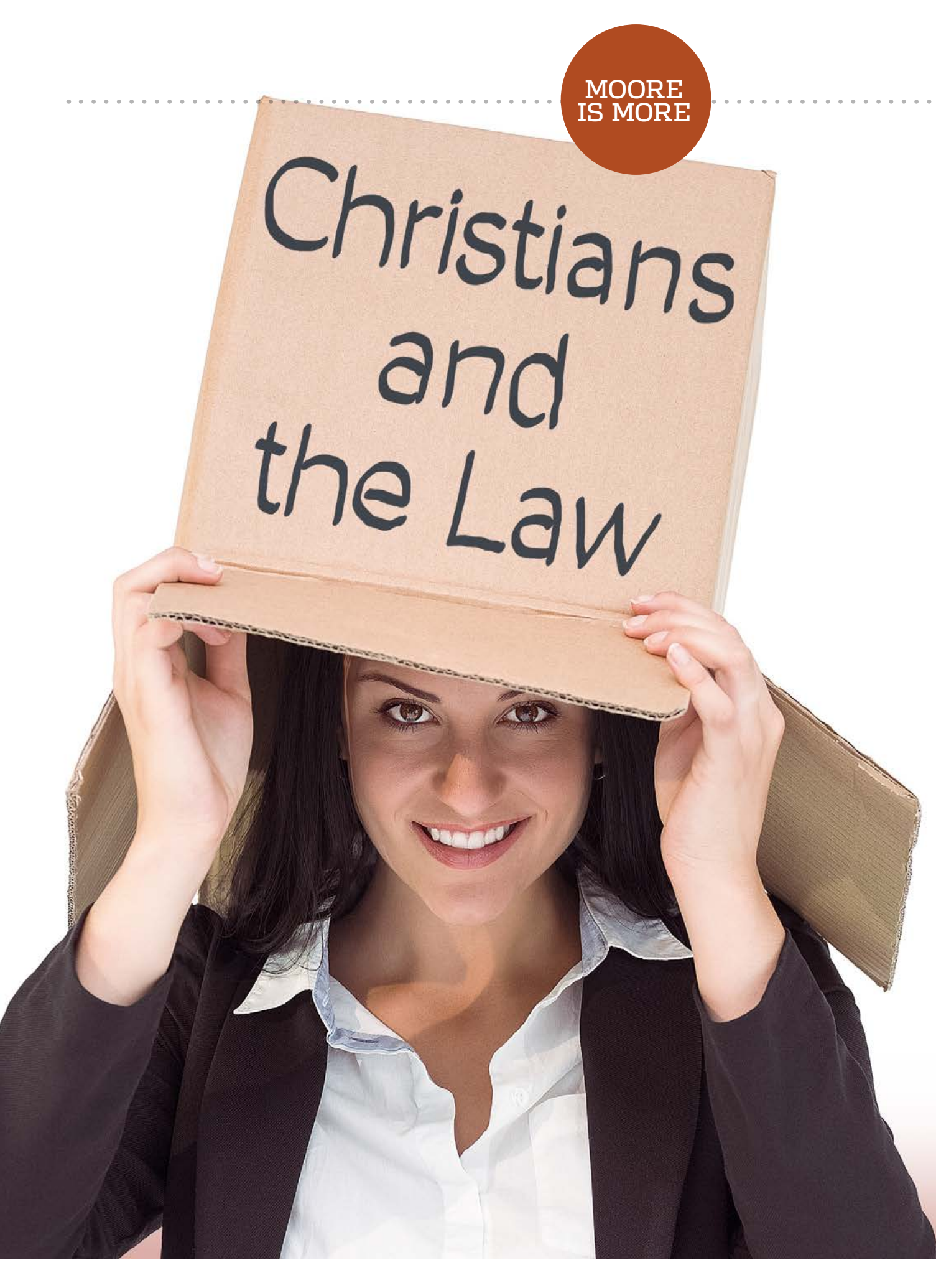
"I could take time to prepare my sermons because I wasn't under the pressures of being a full-time rector – every rector's dream!"

George agrees, calling it the most satisfying thing about the ministry, and saying he would really miss the opportunity to preach the word regularly. "Now I'm in my late seventies I need to stop and think, 'at what time will I lose my marbles and no longer be able to preach and teach?'" he chuckles.

"I'll keep going while I can and hopefully someone will tell me when I've fallen off the perch."

Driven by a conviction that the word of God saves people, and flowing from a love for Christ, these men continue to serve in whatever way the Lord needs them to. They truly demonstrate their devotion to a lifetime of serving Jesus.

"When you are ordained, you are ordained for life," says Forsyth, who retires himself next month. "I'm not going to stop being a minister just because there is a retirement age. Even the retired minister remembers that he has set his life apart for the gospel in a special way. That's why we have such a great heart for the ministry."



We need to work at understanding the place of the Law in the people of the new covenant, writes **GEORGE ATHAS**

AS CHRISTIANS WE HOLD THE BIBLE TO BE THE WORD OF GOD. WE acknowledge the Scriptures are ultimately God's idea and that he inspired the human authors to write them for the good of those who read them (2 Pet 1:20-21). We rightly acknowledge the Bible to be the ultimate authority for the Christian life. But this poses something of a challenge. How do we rightly interpret the Bible within a modern-day setting when it was not written by or to people in the modern day? How do we take these ancient words of authoritative revelation and apply them well to contemporary situations? As our society changes and seems increasingly keen to let go of Christian mores, this becomes an ever more pressing issue.

One of the particular challenges we face in this regard is the way we bring the laws of the Old Testament to bear on the church and society today. As we read the Pentateuch (the first five books of the Bible) we encounter laws about various aspects of life, and we often appeal to these in discussions about Christian behaviour and the ethics of society at large. We recount the Ten Commandments in our liturgy as a statement of God's righteous standards. We hold some laws as binding today (e.g. not murdering) but relinquish others (e.g. prohibitions against eating certain foods).

This can create a serious dilemma because, on the surface, it looks like an arbitrary approach – a purely selective retention of those laws that suit us and the rejection of those that don't. Indeed, this is how many caricature our handling of Scripture. Unfortunately, in many cases they are right. We have not thought carefully enough about interpreting Old Testament laws to ensure that we do not do so arbitrarily. We must do justice to these laws as integral parts of God's authoritative word to us, and that means having a rationale for how we interpret them.

One method popularly espoused is to divide the Law into three categories: (1) civil laws pertaining to the life of Israel as a national entity in ancient times; (2) ceremonial laws pertaining to how Israel worshipped God at the tabernacle or temple; and (3) moral laws that indicate the ethical standards God desires of people. Under this scheme, the civil and ceremonial laws are seen as no longer applicable to Christians, because they are fulfilled in Christ. The moral laws, though, do continue to have force, since God's standards have not changed. It therefore takes Jesus' fulfilment of the Old Testament and the high ethical standards of believers quite seriously.

There are a few problems with this approach, however. First, the Law itself does not make this kind of threefold distinction. The laws together constitute a singular whole. While we are still permitted to divide it up for the purposes of analysis, it becomes easy to take these divisions as absolute features of the Law, rather than useful tools. It's a bit like treating a three-room house like three distinct houses.

Second, the New Testament sees Jesus as the fulfilment of the Law in its entirety, not just two portions of it. And third, the Law is an all-or-nothing proposition. Paul's interaction with the Gentile believers in Galatia demonstrates this. When the Judaizers came to Galatia and urged the Gentile believers to undergo circumcision in order to be part of the people of God, Paul reacted strongly. He told the Galatians that if they wanted to be characterised by observing the Law, they had to keep all the laws, not just portions of them (Gal 5:3). But this would be to no avail anyway, since no one can ultimately be justified through the Law (Gal 3:11).

Nevertheless, Paul also affirms that when Christians walk in step with the Spirit who has been given to them (Gal 5:16, 25) and love their neighbours as themselves, they fulfil the entire Law – not just part of it (Gal 5:24). Carving the Law up into applicable and non-applicable slices simply does not do it justice.

So how should we approach the Law as Christians? The answer to that question would take many more pages than this article allows. Nevertheless, here are some principles and ideas that are vital "stakes in the ground" when considering the place of the Law today.

TYPES OF LAW

It's useful to understand the nature of the laws we read in the Bible. There are two broad types of laws. The first are "apodictic" laws, which plainly state what people must or must not do. The Ten Commandments (Deut 5:6-21) are the best examples of these.

The second type are "casuistic" laws. These don't hand down a "do" or a "do not". Rather, they describe hypothetical cases and dispense advice on how these cases could be handled. From these cases, readers can derive principles that can be applied in other scenarios. This is important to realise, because casuistic laws are not exhaustive. They do not explore all the possible alternative situations that people might encounter. They are simply worked examples.

It is easy to think that casuistic laws are simplistic, unjust or have numerous loopholes. But this is to treat them as apodictic laws, or misunderstand them as exhaustive. Their hypothetical nature also means that understanding the ancient culture that provided the context for these laws is invaluable. Without that context, it can be easy to misconstrue the intent of these laws.

The old covenant

God gave his laws to his ancient people Israel. These laws were part of his old covenant, by which he established a particular kind of relationship: God was Israel's "head of state" and they were his national society within the land he gave them.

The old covenant was about establishing and maintaining a nation, which is why laws were appropriate for ordering the covenant relationship. This is very different to our situation as Christians today. Jesus has established a new covenant in which we relate to God not as citizens towards a head of state, but as children towards a heavenly Father. We have become a family, which is why Christians relate to each other not merely as neighbours, but as brothers and sisters.

While our relationships to God and each other still require order to function well, laws are actually an inappropriate means for this. A family that needs laws imposed on its relationships is not functioning in a healthy way. A family functions well when its members share an inherent identity that inextricably binds them to each other in love. Affection, more than duty, is what makes a family function well. A nation, however, requires a dutiful level of order.

Understanding the different dynamics required in running a family and a nation gives us some leverage for understanding the rationale of some of the Old Testament laws and how they may relate to us today.

THE PURPOSE OF THE LAW

The Law was not about saving a person unto eternal life. Rather, it was about enabling a person to be a good citizen of old covenant Israel within the land. The Apostle Paul, for example, could boast about being blameless with regard to the righteousness that comes from the Law (Phil 3:6). But this type of righteousness only allowed him to be a good "Hebrew of Hebrews" – a citizen of Israel but not necessarily a citizen of heaven. This is why he counted such credentials loss for the sake of knowing Christ and having the righteousness that comes through faith in him (Phil 3:9). This is a new type of righteousness, which is apart from the Law, though the Law (and the prophets) testified to it (Rom 3:21).

Only Christ is able to save unto eternal life. Christians are not under the old covenant, so we are not required to live as a national entity within a particular land. We are, instead, under the new covenant, which allows us to relate to God as our Father, regardless of our ethnicity. This means we must not impose the Old Testament Law on Christians today. It is not necessary for salvation or Christian identity. Only Christ is necessary for salvation.

COUNTERCULTURAL LOVE

Other cultures of the ancient Near East had law codes. The Code of Hammurabi from Babylon (c. 1750 BC) is one of the best known of these. Some laws in these codes bear a striking resemblance to those found in the Old Testament. The "law of retaliation" is an example, whereby proportionate punishment is given for a crime: eye for eye, and tooth for tooth (cf. Exod 21:23-25).

However, there are also some glaring differences. For example, Hammurabi's code stipulates that no one must harbour an escaped slave but must immediately return the slave to his master. On this front, however, God's Law is profoundly countercultural. It stipulates that if an animal escapes from its owner, the person who finds it must do all in their power to return the animal (Deut 22:1-3). But if a slave escapes from his master, Israelites must not return the slave to his master but allow him to live among them (Deut 23:15-16). In other words, the Law does not see slaves as property but as human beings with an inherent right to personal freedom. This is why Israel was only ever to see slavery as a temporary measure for settling debts (Deut 15:12-15).

When we consider the ancient world's view of slaves as dispensable chattels, God's Law is countercultural. It sows the seeds of compassion and dignity that would eventually inspire the likes of William Wilberforce to bring the institution of slavery to an end. The Law outlines Israel's duties but at its heart is love of neighbour. This should be a guiding principle in how we analyse it.

This countercultural aspect of the Law is not just about Israel's being different to other nations for the sake of being different. As we've seen, Israel shared some laws in common with its neighbours. Rather, it is about establishing practices and policies that reflect the justice, righteousness and love of God.

The Law aims to treat people as persons in relationship with others. This is not the same as treating people individualistically – as singular units without reference to others. It is about promoting personhood and relational wellbeing. This is why it bids the powerful of society to use their power in loving service of the weak, usually characterised as the fatherless, the widow and the migrant (e.g. Deut 10:18). In an ancient society that lacked many of the social and political infrastructures that we enjoy in the West today, this was a crucial message.

SAME GOD, DIFFERENT CONTEXT

The God who gave Israel the Law is the same God who has spoken and acted in Jesus Christ. We worship the same deity whom old covenant Israel worshipped (or, rather, should have worshipped). But while God himself has not changed our understanding of God is, in fact, different to the understanding Israel had.

In Old Testament times, God was still in the process of revealing himself. This is why he kept sending prophets to Israel and why Israel had to keep adapting to this unfolding revelation. We, however, live after the completion of God's revelation in Christ. The Law was not God's final word – Christ was. Failing to take Christ into account is like interrupting God mid-sentence and not letting him speak. It can be presumptuous and lead to misunderstanding.

So as we interpret the Old Testament Law, we must appreciate the difference in historical and theological context between Israel and ourselves. We must feel the difference between BC and AD. Yet we must also recognise that God has not changed. This means we should be able to see a consistency between the Law given to Israel and what God requires of us today, but this consistency is situated in the character of God, not in the laws themselves.

Although we (technically) no longer have the institution of slavery, the laws on slavery should still speak to us of a God who values human-dignity and freedom, and places people above economics. And while we are in a different salvation-historical context to old covenant Israel, there are some things that have not changed. For example, human nature is still the same. Our capacity for sin, our biological composition and our personal limitations are unchanged. While our context may be different to old covenant Israel's, our need for God and his revelation is not.

The change in historical and theological context demonstrates that the Law is not a timeless revelation. It was, rather, a revelation in history. Paul describes the Law as Israel's tutor, put in place until Israel's time of maturity and fulfilment arrived – the time of Christ (Gal 4:1-7).

The Law is, therefore, not binding on Christians today as Law. But this does not mean the authority of God's Law has expired. The Law remains the word of God as it ever was, for it still speaks to us of the God we worship and of our forebears in the people of God. But it speaks to us today as prophecy and wisdom, rather than as Law. It testifies to the God whom we know today as our Father. It testifies to his righteousness, justice and love. It provides us with the framework for understanding God's dealings with his people in ages past and, in so doing, still provides us with wisdom on what is pleasing to God.

The Law is like a tall tree whose shadow has moved through the day. It now casts a different shadow on a different landscape but it is the same tree as it was in the morning. As such, we can affirm the truth of Paul's words to Timothy when it comes to the Law: "All Scripture is breathed by God and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the person of God may be complete, equipped for every good work" (2 Tim 3:16-17).

The Rev Dr George Athas is director of research and lectures in Old Testament, Hebrew and church history.

“We commit ourselves afresh...”

Work lies ahead: Archbishop Davies on the opening afternoon of Synod 2015.

Mission, persecution and love:

ARCHBISHOP DAVIES delivers his

Synod address.

MISSION 2020 — NEW CHURCHES FOR NEW COMMUNITIES

Last year the Synod enthusiastically endorsed Mission 2020 with a vision to see Christ honoured as Lord and Saviour in every community. It was the result of much work both before and during Synod. Of course, if we thought that we laboured long and hard in getting the wording right, that is nothing compared to the work that lies ahead as we commit ourselves afresh, in prayerful dependence on the Holy Spirit, to glorify God and love our neighbour by proclaiming the Lord Jesus Christ, calling people to repent and living lives worthy of him.

Next year greater Sydney's population will pass the 5 million mark. The Bureau of Statistics' latest population figures indicate the Cobby-Lepington area in south-western Sydney is the fastest growing area followed by Parklea-Kellyville Ridge. In 15 years it is expected an additional 1 million people will live within the greater metropolitan area of Sydney, with a total population of 5.9 million. Whether by birth or migration these new arrivals will be part of our mission field.

Of course, Sydney has been a growing city for many years. In 1836 Bishop Broughton established the Diocesan Committee for Church Growth, then 20 years later Bishop Barker formed the Church Society (to become Sydney's Home Mission Society under Archbishop Wright, which we now know as Anglicare). After the Second World War, Archbishop Mowll established the "More Churches for Greater Sydney Campaign". In 1964 Archbishop Gough oversaw the formation of the New Areas Committee. Twenty years later Archbishop Robinson created "Vision for Growth", which raised \$7 million over six years. Archbishop Goodhew followed this enterprise with "Vision 2001" and Archbishop Jensen was instrumental in the expenditure of \$20 million from the Diocesan Endowment for facilitating church growth.

Yet greater Sydney continues to grow. Therefore we must continue to grow. Before this Synod lies the challenge to continue funding the acquisition of land, which the Synod initially endorsed three years ago. This is a generous commitment of our parishes to look beyond themselves and to plan for the future.

Yet the greenfields levy will only secure the land. It was for this reason that last year I announced my intention to form a new body to raise the necessary funds to build New Churches for New Communities [NCNC]. A number of significant donations have already been received from generous donors for which I thank God. Our goal is to raise \$2.5 million by June 30, 2016 as part of an overall target of \$20 million over the next five years. This requires our full commitment. Some of the funding for these facilities attracts tax deductibility. The intention is to build new churches, gatherings of God's people who will reach out with the life-giving gospel to the new communities that are springing up in growth corridors of Sydney.

Some of the proposed church plants, like Stanhope Gardens, already exist, but experience shows they will need facilities of their own for significant church growth to be achieved. In close co-operation with the Mission Property Committee [MPC], plans are well advanced to commence construction of church facilities at Stanhope Gardens in October 2016. Land has also been secured at Leppington, Marsden Park, Riverstone and Austral, upon all of which it is hoped that in association with MPC, NCNC will be able to build so God's church might bring the gospel of Christ to the new communities arriving at their doorstep.

However, it needs to be recognised that Sydney is not only growing at the edges of its historic boundaries. Much of the growth is in the inner city and rejuvenated existing suburbs as high-rises dominate a landscape previously reserved for suburban bungalows. Last year the new developments in the Waterloo-Beaconsfield area of the inner south experienced the second largest population growth in Sydney.

The work of Evangelism and New Churches has a significant part to play. It has responsibility for two separate church plants in Green Square in addition to the parish of South Sydney's own church plant at St James', Beaconsfield. The Rev Philip Wheeler has been appointed as director of ENC from 2016 after the retirement of the Rev Bruce Hall, to whom we are in debt for his contribution to our Diocese in the work of cross-cultural evangelism as well as church planting. I look forward to the contribution Phil Wheeler will make to ENC as an integral part of Mission 2020.

SAME-SEX MARRIAGE

We live in a world of social change. This is not a new observation, yet it brings fresh challenges for gospel proclamation in our society, which appears to be moving further and further away from the guidelines for living which are enshrined in God's word. As Christians we are at odds with the world. For good reason John the Evangelist recorded Jesus' warning to his disciples:

If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you.

John 15:18-19

Two things are identified by Jesus. Notice the world hated him first. To be a disciple of Jesus is to follow in his footsteps. This is not to suggest that we are to look for opposition, let alone persecution, but if we are true to our Master, faithful to his commission, then opposition and persecution will inevitably follow, as Paul reminded Timothy (2 Tim 3:12).

The second fact Jesus mentions is that he chose us. It is his choice, not ours; it is for his glory, not ours. It therefore follows that we undergo opposition for his sake, not ours.

Moreover, he who chose us is truly with us. His Spirit indwells us so we may live for his glory and endure the persecution that may come our way. In the same chapter of John's Gospel, Jesus told his disciples he had spoken these words so that his joy might be in them – in us – and that our joy may be full (John 15:11). This is an incredible promise and one that perhaps we do not appreciate, let alone assimilate, in our daily lives.

How is your joy? Is it real or feigned in the face of opposition to the gospel from your friends or family, workmates or fellow travellers? For joy is a fruit of the Spirit, listed second after love. Yes, even joy, in the midst of suffering, according to the apostle James:

Count it all joy, my brothers and sisters, when you meet various trials, for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.

James 1:2-4

While suffering in the name of Christ can be hard it is also the fount of joy. It enabled Jesus to sing a hymn before he went to Gethsemane (Matt 26:30) and Paul to sing hymns to God while in prison (Acts 16:25). It enables us to sing with the psalmist:

May those who sow in tears reap with shouts of joy!
Those that go forth weeping, bearing the seed for sowing,
shall come home with shouts of joy, bringing their sheaves with them.

Psalms 126:5-6

The antagonism of the world to the word of God is perhaps seen nowhere more acutely than in the virulent challenge to the definition of marriage which pervades conversations in the media, the workplace and even in our places of leisure. The bombardment, both subtle and not so subtle, is relentless.

Those, like us, who hold dearly to the definition of marriage as enunciated in the *Book of Common Prayer* are under attack for defending holy matrimony as "an honourable estate, instituted of God in the time of man's innocence... and is commended of Saint Paul to be honourable among all men: and therefore is not by any to be enterprised, nor taken in hand, unadvisedly, lightly, or wantonly, to satisfy men's carnal lusts and appetites, like brute beasts that have no understanding; but reverently, discreetly, advisedly, soberly and in the fear of God; duly considering the causes for which matrimony was ordained".

The opening exhortation from the Form of Solemnisation of Matrimony outlines three reasons for which the holy estate of matrimony was ordained. First, for the procreation of children; second, as a remedy against sin; and third for the mutual society, help and comfort that the one ought to have for the other.

Marriage is fundamentally not a social construct of human invention, but is a divinely ordained institution for the good of humanity and the wellbeing of society. Yet our society for many years has not recognised the importance of this divine origin, nor the importance of confining sexual intercourse to the marriage of a man and woman, united by an exclusive and permanent bond, "forsaking all others... so long as they both shall live".

Sexual activity outside of marriage became more prevalent following the sexual revolution of the 1960s. Yet despite the statistically small number of "committed partnerships" within the gay community, let alone their representing merely 1 per cent of all couples in Australia in 2011, it was only a matter of time before the arguments in favour of "same-sex marriage" would enter the public debate. It is hard to believe that a mere 11 years ago, with bipartisan support, the Marriage Act was strengthened by the explicit clarification that "marriage means the union of a man and a woman to the exclusion of all others, voluntarily entered into for life".

Yet what was accepted and endorsed by the major parties a little more than a decade ago has now become anathema to the majority of the Labor Party and to several influential members of the Liberal Party. It would also appear that an Anglican bishop in our country believes it is inevitable, and has even opined that it could be compatible with the teaching of our Church!

Opinion polls, questionable though they may be, tell us that a majority of Australians believe that marriage needs to become inclusive of both genders – let alone those who claim no specific gender. "Marriage equality" is no mantra. Yet despite the success of this slogan it claims more than it can achieve. There simply is no "marriage equality" for everyone. Marriage necessarily has boundaries that even the adherents of the facile rhetoric of "marriage equality" cannot deny: children, for example, are excluded; couples within prohibited relationships, such as siblings, are excluded; those who are already married and wish to marry another spouse are also excluded. Yet we are the ones portrayed as being discriminatory in our defence of marriage, when in fact we are not alone, for everyone needs to discern the purpose of marriage if one is to understand, and so rightly "discriminate", regarding the eligibility of proper candidates for marriage.

It is for this reason that I applauded the decision of the Abbott Government, reaffirmed by Malcolm Turnbull since becoming Prime Minister, to hold a plebiscite upon the question of marriage. I, like many others, had encouraged the Prime Minister to choose this path, for the nature of marriage is of such fundamental significance to the way in which we as a society operate, that such a question should be put to the people of Australia by way of a national vote rather than be left in the hands of 200 parliamentarians in Canberra.

Like a referendum, the Government funds both the "Yes" argument and the "No" argument to any question put to the Australian electorate. It is not difficult to discern the bias that media outlets exhibit when promoting a change in our law, with scant attention to the argument for retaining what has been an understanding of marriage in Australia not only for the past two centuries of white settlement, but for thousands of years of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultures.

That two TV stations should recently refuse to air advertisements by Marriage Alliance for promoting what is simply the law of the land is a scandal!

It is also symptomatic of the wave of naïve enthusiasm for the novelty of "same-sex marriage" that a significant number of corporations have publicly endorsed for this change in our law. How, one might ask, does such a position have anything to do with the core business of these companies – it is inexplicable. Why don't we hear from these companies about their views on the treatment of asylum seekers on Manus Island, or the decline in Australia's foreign aid budget, or other controversial issues such as the slave trade, euthanasia or abortion? Have these companies any idea of how many shareholders, let alone employees, do not share these publicly endorsed sentiments regarding "same-sex marriage"?

Above all, the Australian public needs to be informed of the argument against "same-sex marriage" and not be beguiled by the empty rhetoric of "marriage equality", without considering the impact of severing the link between marriage and procreation, let alone severing the bond of the nurture of children by their biological parents on the premise of selfish adult preferences.

It is time that all Christians, especially Anglicans, should enter the discussion and graciously and sensitively explain the reasons why our good Creator has made marriage the way he has. We need to be courageous in our discussions in private and in public, yet we also need to be sensitive and loving in our defence of biblical truth. As Vaughan Roberts reminds us: "homosexuality is not simply an 'issue'; it concerns people, created and loved by God, many of whom are Christians".

Yes, it will kindle criticism, provoke ridicule, and invite hatred – but remember, you are not of the world, therefore, the world hates you. Yet such hatred should not silence us. Are we prepared to stand for what God has said, despite the opposition it will inevitably engender? There is no place, however, for a spirit of superiority, let alone a spirit of contempt for those with whom we disagree. We must persuade with gentleness (another fruit of the Spirit), sincerity and grace, as befits disciples of Christ.

Nonetheless, if the Australian electorate votes in favour of "same-sex marriage" in a plebiscite, we as citizens of the State will need to acknowledge this outcome and learn to manage its consequences. This will be a challenge for all Christians, as well as those of other faiths, whose theological commitment to marriage as being heterosexual by definition will not change despite such a change at law. We shall find ourselves in very much the same situation as Christians in the first century, where Roman law was not as broadly aligned to biblical values as it has been in Western civilisation for over a thousand years. This will require wisdom, boldness and compassion. Of course, we should not forget that many Christians today live under even more oppressive regimes than ancient Rome.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

If it were not enough that marriage was under threat by the advocates of "same-sex marriage", the recent heightened awareness of domestic violence within marriage is another wake-up call for our society. Two years ago our Synod raised this question as a matter of concern. Since then, considerable work has been done in addressing the issue, including Moore College and Ministry Training & Development in their education of prospective and recently ordained ministers, though there is still more to be accomplished. I am particularly grateful for Canon Sandy Grant's having raised this matter on a number of occasions both at Synod and Standing Committee and for his initiative in persuading Standing Committee to establish a Task Force to develop a diocesan response to domestic violence.

While I welcome this Task Force, it grieves me that we need it. It is a salutary reminder of the corrosive effects of sin even in the believer, that men who profess Christ should treat their wives with such contempt, inflicting either verbal or physical abuse upon those whom they have promised "to love and to cherish, till death us do part".

This is not the way of Christ. It should not characterise the bride of Christ. It does not reflect, despite the accusations of some, the inevitable consequences of the doctrine of headship in marriage. What it does demonstrate, regrettably, is that in the words of the Thirty-nine Articles: "in the visible Church the evil be ever mingled with the good" (Article xxvi).

If even Satan can use the words of Holy Scripture to his own evil purposes. That Christian women are caught in such a vulnerable situation at the hands of those who abuse their responsibilities as husbands is both horrendous and inexcusable. It is therefore important that we address this issue with honesty, compassion and resolve, so that we may protect those who suffer any form of domestic abuse and find ways to prevent its recurrence, especially in the household of God.

REFUGEES FROM SYRIA AND IRAQ

While our mission is rightly focused within the Diocese of Sydney, to some extent we are all global citizens. It was therefore with great joy that I witnessed the overwhelming response of our diocesan family to the Syrian and Iraqi refugee crisis that was catapulted onto our screens with the image of three-year old Aylan Kurdi, whose lifeless body was washed up on a Turkish beach in early September. When the Government announced that Australia would take an additional 12,000 refugees from this conflict it provided an opportunity for us to offer a generous welcome to these displaced persons, many of whom are Christians.

For ancient Israel it was not only the fellow Israelites to whom a duty of love belonged, but also the foreigners in their midst (Lev 19:33-34; Deut 10:18-19). The teaching of the New Testament is no less compelling, as Jesus' story of the Good Samaritan portrays.

In my opening address to Synod in 2013 I said:

Let our love for one another and our love for Christ, grounded in Christ's love for us, be the magnet that draws unbelievers to the Saviour so they too may be enfolded into the fellowship of the church. This past month has seen such love shown in abundance. I thank God for his love, and I thank God for his love shown through his people. And it is my prayer that we might be able to share God's love with these people, in word as well as deed.

This is an edited version of the Archbishop's Presidential Address. You can read the address in full online at bit.ly/address15

“Jesus... chose us.

It is his choice, not

ours; it is for his

glory, not ours. It

therefore follows

that we undergo

opposition for his

sake, not ours.”

“It is time that

all Christians,

especially Anglicans

...should graciously

and sensitively

explain the reasons

why our good Creator

has made marriage

the way he has.”

Conference for large staff teams kicks off



Archbishop Glenn Davies and the Rev Ray Galea (front) with the staff teams and ministers in a session at the conference.

A GRASSROOTS CONFERENCE FOR CHURCH STAFF TEAMS WAS RECENTLY HELD IN PORT HACKING.

The conference, organised co-operatively by a number of larger churches with diverse staff teams, grew out of previous meetings of those churches' senior ministers, who saw the need for their staff to also network and pool ideas with each other. The conference looked to provide an intensive way for peer networks to grow, as well as for staff to receive leadership training.

"This has been an eight- or nine-year journey to get to this point," says the rector of St Paul's, Castle Hill, the Rev John Gray. "A number of us have been gathering every year and trying to work out how to better lead and serve the kinds of churches we're in. This conference was a component of us doing that, by making something aimed at our staff teams to share in together."

The conference consisted of three keynote speakers, including Archbishop Glenn Davies, Joel A'Bell of Hillsong Australia and Keith Farmer of the Australian Christian Mentoring Network. There was also significant group discussion time, where people in particular fields of ministry split off into networking and discussion sessions with their counterparts in other churches.

"The gold was in the peer networks," Mr Gray says. "We knew it would be, but it was good to see it turned out that way. The speakers gave us some great leadership input, but the gold of the conference was when peer groups gathered to look at and study their common ministry challenges."

The Rev Ian Barnett, rector of Figtree Anglican in the Wollongong Region, says the conference was particularly valuable for his staff team as it reminded people there were others in similar contexts who understood the day-to-day successes and struggles of their ministry.

"I think often when you're in a specialised ministry area as a member of a staff team, such as if you're doing kids' ministry or music ministry, often you don't get a chance to meet with your peers who are also navigating a staff structure and connect one-on-one," he says. "I think it's valuable for people to have that opportunity and to trade experiences and ideas."

The plan at this stage is to repeat the conference every two to three years, with staff encouraged to continue to share ideas and keep in touch with their peers in the interim.

Mr Gray says that, while this conference was geared towards larger churches and the specific issues their staff teams typically deal with, he and the other senior ministers involved are more than willing to meet with others to share ideas.

"We're pretty cheap at the end of the day," he jokes. "For the price of a cup of coffee we're happy to sit with anyone and share any wisdom we may have. There are particular challenges for the larger church but leadership is an important element for every church. It's not so much an issue of the size of a church, but whether it is willing to give itself to the theological discipline of leadership and service."

ARV Castle Hill chapel turns 50

ST JAMES' CHAPEL AT ARV CASTLE HILL RECENTLY celebrated its 50th anniversary, ahead of the upcoming construction of new chapel facilities.

The chapel, formally consecrated by Archbishop Gough in 1965, celebrated its birthday with a special Sunday service and lunch, with an eye on another celebration shortly down the line.

"The actual 50th that we held was reasonably low-key, mostly because the plan is to pull this chapel down and build a new one," says ARV parish chaplain and associate minister at St Paul's, Castle Hill, the Rev Geoff Deutscher.

"In a few months we'll likely have another celebration service to conclude the chapel, and that may prove to be more significant as well, but we here always enjoy celebrating special occasions and it is a good milestone to mark. The service was great. [ARV's director of mission] Andrew Nixon came and spoke and we had a BBQ lunch together afterwards to celebrate."

"The location of the chapel is fairly significant in terms of its prominence and placement in the village, and it also has a very distinctive shape, so you have this sense of its presence throughout ARV. The spire with its cross on the top can be seen anywhere in the Castle Hill village, basically, so it's stood throughout virtually the whole lifetime of ARV – since the Mowll Village days – as this sign of Christian ministry here."

Mr Deutscher says he has been pleased to be involved with continuing ministry at ARV, which has included a renewed partnership between the village and St Paul's, which resulted in the employment of himself and the Rev Barry Dudding as parish partner chaplains within the village. Mr Deutscher calls it "essentially our parish".

"I think that helps create stability and continuity in the ministry of clergy, and also lay people, from St Paul's working with people at ARV, and in a sense it almost makes St James' into a parish church again."

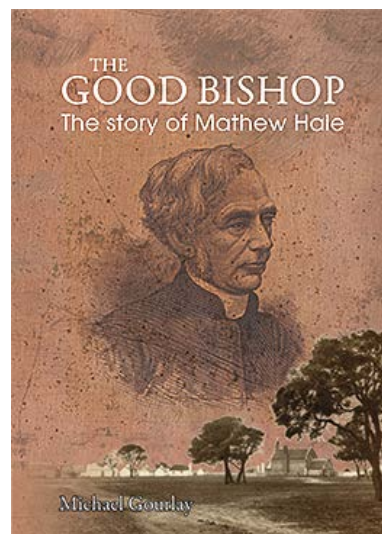


Early church champion

R.H. GOODHEW

The Good Bishop: the Story of Mathew Hale 1811-1895

by Michael Gourlay
Boolarong Press



EUROPEAN SETTLEMENT IN AUSTRALIA WAS NOT WITHOUT ITS NEGATIVE ELEMENTS. There are sad stories to tell. But there are great and good stories, too, and one of those is the story of Mathew Hale.

Hale has the honour of being the first Church of England archdeacon of Adelaide, the first bishop of Perth and the second bishop of Brisbane. He has an impressive record of work with Aboriginal Australians and was a significant player in the development of education in Western Australia.

A resolution concerning Mathew Hale was adopted in the synod of the Diocese of Brisbane in 2011, the 200th anniversary of his birth. As well as recording the above-mentioned achievements it noted his “firm commitment to the scriptural and reformed Anglican Church, his willingness to work with people of other viewpoints in the Anglican Church, as well as with other Christian churches... a man of prayer... a leader by example”.

Mathew Hale was born in Gloucestershire in 1811 and studied at Cambridge in the 1830s. While there two associations shaped his life: one was the untimely death of a young female friend, the other his contact with Simeon’s Church. He became a serious believer and a servant of the gospel.

After completing his degree Hale approached a missionary organisation with a view to ministry in the West Indies but that did not proceed. Instead he served in parish ministry – suffering the sad loss of his wife in 1845 after five years of marriage, plus one of their three daughters.

Two years later he accompanied the first bishop of Adelaide, Augustus Short, to Australia as the settlement’s first archdeacon. He proved a conscientious promoter of the life of South Australia’s churches and an advocate for the wellbeing and education of Aboriginal people. The institution he promoted at Poonindie drew favourable comments from the bishop, who also noted that the Poonindie Aboriginal people played cricket with better humour and grace than the settlers! In 1857 Hale was consecrated and appointed as the first bishop of Perth.

The book’s author, Dr Michael Gourlay, gives an informative account of this able man’s involvement in the development of education in the colony, in the planting and development of churches and in the Australian Church as it developed a national life.

Dr Gourlay provides interesting insights into the early workings of the Church in Australia and into the character of Hale with his appointment as Brisbane’s second bishop. There were moving expressions of gratitude for his work in Perth and an obvious confidence displayed by other bishops in their appointment of him to this new role.

The section of the book dealing with his Queensland ministry is a revealing treatment of the highs and lows of the episcopal task of developing an expanding ministry in that state. However, as previously, Hale served the community, the Diocese of Brisbane and the wider Australian Church with the same energy and commitment to Christ that had marked his earlier work. He also had valued contacts with two early bishops of Sydney, Frederic Barker and Alfred Barry.

Hale retired in 1885 and returned to England, where he died 10 years later. The tombstone marking his burial place shows the focus of his life, reading “Our door to enter into eternal life is gladly to die with Christ that we may rise again from death and dwell with Him in everlasting life”.

Dr Gourlay has given us a very approachable and informative account of a man of God worthy of honour among us as a devoted servant of Christ in the life of our Church in Australia. His book includes numerous helpful photographs and illustrations, including one of a statue of Hale outside the cloisters of St George’s in Perth. There is a series of appendices that also provide detailed information on Hale’s connections and influence.

R.H. (Harry) Goodhew was Archbishop of Sydney from 1993-2001.

To order *The Good Bishop* go to <http://mathewhalepubliclibrary.com/book-sales/>