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5 MARKS OF MISSION

1. Witness to Christ’s saving, forgiving, reconciling love for all people (Tell)
2. Build welcoming, transforming communities of faith (Teach)
3. Stand in solidarity with the poor and needy (Tend)
4. Challenge injustice and oppression (Transform)
5. Protect, care for and renew life on our planet (Treasure)
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We all Stand on Sacred Ground: Learn, Respect and Celebrate is the theme for 2015 NAIDOC week which is marked from 5-12 July.

It is also the theme for this issue of the Messenger. The article written by Fr Frank Brennan SA AO explains the slow progress being made on constitutional recognition for indigenous Australians. Bishop Allan Ewing writes on listening to learn and The Reverend Dr Gregory Seach reflects on reconciliation as a gospel issue. The Reverend Mandy Herriman explores racial harmony, peace, justice and reconciliation from the perspective of a Deacon. There are several other articles in this issue that should provoke thought.

Lord God, bring us together as one, reconciled with you and reconciled with each other. You have made us in your likeness, you gave us your son, Jesus Christ. He has given us forgiveness from sin.

Lord God, bring us together as one, different in culture, but given new life in Jesus Christ, together as your body, your Church, your people.

Lord God, bring us together as one, reconciled, healed, forgiven, sharing with you others as you have called us to do.

In Jesus Christ, let us be together as one. Amen.

The Most Reverend Roger Herft, AM
Archbishop of Perth

SACRED ENCOUNTERS

The paradox of creation is that it is God’s handiwork inviting us to live in the power of the Divine Word. The Word became dust to make all humanity open to the ‘new creation’. Creation groans with us as we anticipate God’s completion of ‘all things’ in Christ.

The ground of being, beyond the limitations of all being, calls humans to have the courage to be what we have been created to be — a work of art, dust that dreams of eternity.

The eternal rock from which all humanity is hewn challenges us to see creation and all beings, be they friend or stranger, as a work of art — a divine carving, an etching in flesh — created to be encountered as sacred.

Archbishop Desmond Tutu challenges us who bow in reverence before sacred scripture and genuflect before the Blessed Sacrament to encounter each other and the world around us as sacred. We take the sandals from our feet to hear the earth tremble with the blood of injustice, cruelty and the suffering of the innocent.

Ancient people whose life story is moulded by this land greet us ‘newcomers’. We are all ‘reformed’ by a person who makes all land holy. Henri Nouwen described several meetings with a young person called John who wanted to know Jesus. The time came for him to return to college. ‘Will we meet again?’ asked John. ‘Yes,’ replies Henri Nouwen, ‘we will, today and to eternity, for, in our discovering together of Jesus, the ground between us, no matter how far we travel, will be Holy Ground.’

In Jesus we have been reconciled to you, to each other and to your whole creation. Lead us on, Great Spirit, as we gather from the four corners of the earth, enable us to walk together in trust from the hurt and shame of the past into the full day which has dawned in Jesus Christ. Amen.

A Prayer Book for Australia
Broughton Books 1999


What about those of us who are ‘newcomers’ in this land? The Judeo-Christian narrative describes God as the ‘creator of heaven and earth’.

Humans are created from the dust of the earth. To dust we must return. Our vocation is being active participants in creation’s cosmic liturgy. The Psalmist sings ‘the heavens declare the glory of God — the firmament proclaims God’s handiwork’. Every bush is set aight, every star a pointer to the mystery of God’s creative purposes.

Patrick Dodson observes:

For the Aboriginal people, land is a dynamic notion, something creative. It is something—yet it is not a thing—it is a living entity.

New stories are sung from contemplation of the land, stories are handed down from spirit men of the past who have deposited the riches at various places—the sacred places. The greatest respect is shown to them and they are used for the regeneration of history—the regeneration of Aboriginal people, the continuation of their life. Because that is where they begin and that is where they return.


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Broughton Books 1999
NAIDOC FEATURE

Awareness and Partnerships

Blackfella, Whitefella

Invited, Included, Blessed

Encounters On Holy Ground

Magnifying the Lord in Nyoongar language

Slow Progress In Constitutional Recognition For Indigenous Australians

Listen to Learn

Colonialists and Explorers

Reconciliation: A Gospel Issue

Street art by unidentified artist in Adelaide.
n recognising Indigenous education as an important part of this mission, Anglican schools across the State are involved in at least one of two key aspects. They provide educational opportunities through scholarships and they increase awareness of and knowledge about Indigenous peoples and their cultures among all students.

Guildford Grammar School, for instance, has provided enrolment opportunities for over 150 Indigenous students since 1905 and its current program, which involves 41 Indigenous students this year, began in the 1970s. Other Anglican boarding schools offer places for Indigenous students from all over the State, including St Mary’s Anglican Girl’s School with 10 girls, Bunbury Cathedral Grammar School and Christ Church Grammar School with 16 boys. The Indigenous enrolments in these schools also include some students from the Perth metropolitan region, as do enrolments in day schools such as John Septimus Roe Anglican Community School.

Partnerships are a very important part of the Indigenous education journey to enable and encourage people to walk alongside one another. At Esperance Anglican Community School such a partnership is found with the Wongutha CAPS School through activities such as drama and sport. At St Mary’s a key partnership is through the Association of Independent Schools’ [AISWA] Future Footprints program, where up to 200 students from across Perth gather for cultural, social and leadership activities. For Christ Church Grammar it is a partnership with the Garnduwa Amboorny Wirnan Inc Indigenous sporting body which has been crucial since 2005. For Georgiana Molloy Anglican School there are links with the Wadandi, Bibbulman and Wardandi peoples, while in the case of Bunbury Cathedral Grammar the local Goomburrup Aboriginal Corporation and the nearby Djidi Djidi School both provide important opportunities for engagement.

Knowledge about Indigenous peoples and their cultures among all students in Anglican schools similarly takes many forms. National Reconciliation Week, for instance, provides a particular focus for this at Esperance and also at Geraldton Grammar School where Tania Major, the 2007 Young Australian of the Year, enlightened the students about turning dreams into goals. Her own goal is to become the first female Indigenous Prime Minister. Additionally, Anglican schools integrate studies of Indigenous peoples and cultures into the curriculum, as for example at John Wollaston Anglican Community School in their Primary Years Program, and at Guildford Grammar where the Indigenous Program Coordinator has developed curriculum information which is used across the whole school.

Awareness-raising leaps to new heights when the Boodjar Bidi dance troupe from Guildford Grammar showcase their culture, whether in their own or other schools, on SBS television or for business groups, in Singapore, or at the Opening Ceremony last year of the Anglican Schools Australia [ASA] annual Conference in Perth. More information about Guildford’s and Christ Church’s Indigenous programs can be found in the latest ASA Newsletter at http://www.anglicanschoolsaustralia.edu.au

And finally, Anglican schools are blessed in being able to access recently published resources such as the Gospel of Luke in Nyoongar, Warda Kwabba Luke-Ang, as well as Jesus Christ, Boolanga Yira Nop-ang Koorlangwetta Bardip, the Christmas story also in Nyoongar.

Partnerships are a very important part of the Indigenous education journey to enable and encourage people to walk alongside one another.
The powerful and stirring chorus of the song asks the question:

‘Are you the one who’s gonna stand up and be counted?
Are you the one who’s gonna be there when we shout it?
Are you the one who’s always ready with a helping hand?
Are you the one who understands these family plans?’

The question follows this plea:

“We need more brothers, if we’re to make it
We need more sisters, if we’re to save it.’

The song speaks of the colour of our skin being a nonsensical determination of our true worth. Our true worth is evident in our actions. Our actions are what determines our true worth. Our true worth is evident in the lives of those with whom we engage.

Lilla Watson is talking about community. Warumpi Band is talking about community. God is talking about community.

The call of a deacon is into all kinds of communities, to be the bridge between them and to bring the needs of the world into the consciousness of the faithful. Deacons are to understand and know the needs by the way we listen to ‘story’, by the way we take into ourselves the journey of others. Deacons should walk beside those they serve.

In the Ordinal, those to be ordained deacon are asked whether they will ‘seek to set forward Christ’s kingdom in the world, proclaiming the gospel and working for reconciliation, peace and justice?’ Perhaps it could be asked another way. ‘Will you stand up and be counted, lend a helping hand, understand the family plan and work for reconciliation, peace and justice within the community of humanity?’ For your own liberation is bound up with theirs.

Everyone plays and sings by ear, harmonising expertly. Many of the songs are from my childhood, the choruses of faith and assurance and heartfelt love for Jesus. The words come back to me along with the melodies. People take it in turns to choose and lead a song, sometimes in English, sometimes in the Wungutha language. They invite me to join in. I settle into the friendly darkness and treasure the gift of the music and the undemanding hospitality of people who truly belong here, who clearly love one another, and who are including me.

Dr Christine Jeffries-Stokes is paediatrician at the local hospital and one of the organisers at Wongutha Birni. She’s married to Pastor Geoffrey Stokes, who leads an Aboriginal church at Ninga Mia, just out of Kalgoorlie. She’s the mother of talented Aboriginal teenagers. Christine gathers and feeds people like a mother hen, and her invitations extend to newcomers to town like me.

Around a campfire in the front yard, people sit and share food, tell stories and sing. Two or three have guitars.

Wongutha Birni are crowd-funding support for their community centre and programmes through https://chuffed.org
For me it is often a scary moment because what I do is not easy to explain, especially in situations that are outside church circles. After many years of trying to encompass my ministry in a short sentence, I offer ‘contextual theologian and incarnational missiologist.’ It causes quizzical looks but opens the way to explain what those four words together mean, in relation to me. They also afford a framework to regularly reconsider my core calling, and this was as important as ever when, as a newcomer to these shores, I engaged indigenous Australians, for whom the very earth we walk on is the bedrock of faith. One phrase I’ve heard is ‘Aboriginal spirituality is deeply linked to the land which ‘owns’ Aboriginal people.’

Reading the theme for NAIDOC this year, ‘We all stand on sacred ground’ - Learn, Respect and Celebrate, brought the last paragraph into sharp focus. My ‘four words’ took me to Moses when God spoke from the burning bush, ‘Remove the sandals from your feet, for the place on which you are standing is sacred ground.’ (Exodus 3:5) Then came my initial encounter with friends at theological college from Azerbaijan, for whom it’s customary to remove shoes when entering a home. It is considered extremely rude to enter with shoes on, so I was hustled back out of the door and scolded in a foreign tongue, as slippers were waggled at me.

Trying my best to understand the context, looking for parallels from God’s story and knowing myself as one living on mission for Jesus wherever I am, is the backdrop to every new engagement. Couched in ministry language it sounds a little daunting, something not many people can do. Perhaps the implication is that it’s a task only a well-versed clergy professional can achieve. But as someone on a course I ran recently said ‘Now I see evangelism starts by simply getting to know someone. You’ve demystified it so even I can have a go. We are all really contextual theologians and incarnational missiologists!’

The prospect of making cultural faux pas when engaging with first nation folk loomed large for me in the initial days of my time in WA, but trusting the ways God has taught me ensured that even when it appeared tribalism might be a barrier in engaging groups together in ministry and mission, all has been well, his grace has been sufficient. (2 Corinthians 12:9)

The 2015 NAIDOC theme resonated with God’s eternal voice, which shaped generations past, and will again, for indeed we all stand on sacred ground, where the need to ‘learn, respect and celebrate’ is still an imperative for us in our encounters, so that the abundant life of which Jesus spoke can be made available to all.
The expert panel was wise when insisting that any proposed amendments:
- contribute to a more unified and reconciled nation;
- be of benefit to and accord with the wishes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples;
- be capable of being supported by an overwhelming majority of Australians from across the political and social spectrums; and
- be technically and legally sound.

The co-chairs of the panel, Patrick Dodson and Mark Leibler said, ‘The logical next step is to achieve full inclusion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the Constitution by recognising their continuing cultures, languages and heritage as an important part of our nation and by removing the outdated notion of race.’

At the moment, ‘the outdated notion of race’ appears in two constitutional provisions. Section 25 is a provision which has never been used and never will be. It is modelled on one of the post-civil war amendments in the US Constitution penalising states which exclude people from voting in state elections on the basis of their race. Everyone is agreed that section 25 could be simply repealed. Section 51(26) provides that the Commonwealth Parliament can make laws with respect to ‘the people of any race for whom it is deemed necessary to make special laws’. That section could be replaced with a new power to provide that the Commonwealth Parliament can make laws with respect to ‘the cultures, languages and heritage of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and their continuing relationship with their traditional lands and waters’.

The art and statesmanship of constitutional change is in matching Indigenous aspirations, constitutional architecture, and public support. The key provisions of the Constitution cannot be thrown out of kilter. Our Constitution is still an appendix to an Act of the Imperial Parliament. It is a monarchical, not a republican, Constitution. It does not include a bill of rights. It prosaically lists the powers of the Commonwealth Parliament. The Imperial Act contains an old worldly preamble; the Constitution contains no preamble.

There has been a lot of talk about including a preamble in the Constitution. But any preamble would need to state our main national characteristics and express the key reasons for deciding to constitute and maintain the Australian federation. That would best be done, if and when, Australians decide to become a republic. The urgent need is not for a comprehensive preamble but for an acknowledgment of the assured place of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in our history and as part of our continuing national identity. All Australians could be sure of our distinctive national identity and place in the world if the Constitution were to acknowledge indisputable facts unique to Indigenous Australians. Adapting the language used by the expert panel and adopted unanimously by the Australian parliament, we could include an Acknowledgment at the commencement of the Constitution along these lines:

We, the people of Australia, recognise that the continent and the islands of Australia were first occupied by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples with their traditional lands and waters.

We acknowledge and respect the continuing cultures, languages and heritage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

The expert panel suggested a constitutional ban on racial discrimination. In the absence of a bill of rights, why would we contemplate a comprehensive constitutional ban on racial discrimination by the Commonwealth and the states but not a ban on sexual discrimination or discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation or religious belief?

Anyway, a constitutional ban on racial discrimination is not as simple as it seems. When legislating for native title in 1993 and 1998, the Keating and Howard governments were unable to agree to the demand by Indigenous leaders that all provisions of the Native Title Act be strictly subject to the Racial Discrimination Act. In the Senate, the Democrats and Greens had proposed such an amendment but the major parties, in government and in opposition, agreed to oppose it because of its ‘so-called clause busting capacity’.

Anyone serious about a constitutional ban on racial discrimination should first clear the decks by trying to convince the major political parties to amend the Native Title Act as previously suggested by the minor parties. They would first need to convince the Business Council of Australia, the National Farmers’ Federation, and the Minerals Council of Australia to agree to native title amendments which previously were thought to put in doubt future pastoral and mining activities. Without these precautions, a constitutional guarantee of non-discrimination would be a clause bust of nuclear proportions. It is just not on.

It’s time to learn the real lessons which followed the 1967 referendum. That referendum kick started the change from terra nullius to land rights, and from assimilation to land rights. Prime Minister Harold Holt appreciated that a modest referendum carried overwhelmingly provided the political mandate for policy changes. The catalyst for change was the Council for Aboriginal Affairs which he then set up to advise government and to engage daily with public servants and politicians when considering policy and administrative changes. Any modern equivalent would not restrict its membership to ‘three wise white men’ even of the eminence of Dr HC Coombs, Professor WEH Stanner and Barrie Dexter.
Noel Pearson is right to insist that Aboriginal leaders need a place at the table when new policies are being formulated. An Indigenous council is needed to advise government. Coombs, Stanner and Dexter constantly lamented that they lacked a statutory charter setting out their role and responsibilities. Any new council would need a clear legislative mandate. But there is no need to tamper with the constitutional architecture, seeking the inclusion of such a council in the Constitution. Indigenous representation is always a fraught exercise. At least in the first instance it would be impossible to design a constitutional provision for a Council which was technically and legally sound, ensuring the Council which was technically a constitutional provision for a council in the Constitution.

Indigenous representation is always a fraught exercise. At least in the first instance it would be impossible to design a constitutional provision for a Council which was technically and legally sound, ensuring the untrammeled sovereignty of parliament.

Four decades after the passage of the Northern Territory land rights legislation, and two decades after the first recognition of native titles, there are major policy issues which demand Indigenous participation at the table. Many Aboriginal communities now have title to large areas of land, but they often cry that they are land rich and dirt poor. It is time to review the balance between the security and utility of land. Aborigines want to secure their land base for future generations, but they also want to use the land now in an economical way which requires the capacity to lease, mortgage and sell some land. Remote communities need to be able to work with government determining their practical life choices, including decisions about which services are affordable in distant sparsely populated locations.

Our Constitution unamended makes no mention of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders. It is premised on the outdated notions of terra nullius and assimilation. It is time to modernise the Constitution, eliminating the outdated notion of ‘race’ and including an acknowledgment of the nation’s Indigenous heritage and ongoing identity. This is no small change. But it is a change which is necessary, correct and certain. Indigenous leaders may want to delay such incremental change, convinced that more substantive change might be achievable in future. That is surely their prerogative. But should they seek constitutional inclusion now, an Acknowledgment and a Commonwealth power to make laws with respect to the matters acknowledged would be a principled, safe way forward to complete our Constitution.

When it comes to the engagement between the churches of Australia and the indigenous peoples of Australia there is a great need to listen. A belief that it is possible to know how others must live has had tragic consequences for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples of Australia. This is not to suggest that the church has led those policies, but to make a simpler point when the voice of the church has been heard in public debate it has often been in terms of telling others how they should behave. This approach suggests that it is quite appropriate to direct matters in the ‘best interests’ of another group of people. There is nothing wrong with the concept that as God’s people we should have a prophetic role in society; as prophets we should be talking into the moments of national life, offering God’s perspective on what is going on.

Our Constitution unamended makes no mention of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders.

The challenge in offering a prophetic perspective is the discernment of what is the gospel, the good news of Jesus Christ, and what is no more than the cultural perspective of the dominant culture. This distinction is so important. The wonderful missionary work in Australia and the Pacific Islands in the nineteenth century brought good news to many people, but it was accompanied by demands regarding forms of behaviour and dress that had nothing to do with new life in Christ.

To engage with the stories of indigenous peoples is to often encounter people who have been dispossessed of identity as they have been dispossessed of place and family. It is also to encounter people with rich lives - individuals of great strength, great humour, and extraordinary resilience.

None of this is to say that there are not many great challenges for the nation and Indigenous peoples, but listening and recognising that the dominant culture may not contain the wisdom that is needed for our shared future is a good place to start.

Listening, truly listening, is a difficult and dangerous art. Difficult, because it is not easy to attend to what is being said, rather than planning what you are going to say the moment the other person stops talking; dangerous, because attending to what has been said may cause you to change your own perspective.
n June of the year 1770, the English explorer James Cook and the crew of his ship Endeavour arrived off the north-east coast of what was then known to Europeans as New Holland, or Terra Australis Incognita – the unknown southern land. Needing to forage for food and water, Cook and his men ignored the explicit instructions they had from the British authorities to seek permission of the inhabitants before landing, and went ashore not very far from what is now the tourist mecca of Cairns, on the Great Barrier Reef.

There is an apocryphal story (often the best kind, of course) regarding what happened when the crew of the Endeavour did encounter some of the Australian indigenous people who lived in that area. The sailors supposedly tried to ask them the name of the curious upright jumping beasts who provided some distraction, as well as some nutrition, for the Englishmen. Kangaroo, they were told, Kangaroo. Later, after the British returned and occupied the continent, further enquiries were made in the area, but linguists never found evidence that this familiar word was ever used by the aboriginal people of that place to refer to those marsupials. The closest things to ‘kangaroo’ in the local dialects were the phrases ‘I don’t understand you’ and ‘Go away.’

Subsequent history bears out rather clearly that these were not the most promising exchanges with which to begin a relationship between peoples, even if this etymology was not authentic. And yet these definitions from a people of, as the Book of Ezekiel puts it, obscure speech and difficult language can function as a sort of backhanded blessing to those of you who are leaving this place. Go away. And be prepared to say I don’t understand.

Since you do have to go away, there is perhaps a temptation for speakers at events like this to see if they can offer last minute advice that will compensate for the inevitable gaps even in a demanding curriculum such as you have undergone. The things you do not understand will sometimes plague or embarrass you as you go, but there is also a gift in them or in the recognition of them at least. We are not sending you out as repositories of theological knowledge whose effective banking of wisdom over two or three years can allow others to make withdrawals thanks to you, nor as theological colonialists whose knowledge acts as an excuse for your failure to listen to the obscure speech and difficult language of others. Rather we are sending you out as explorers - people whose limits, whose I don’t understand has been shaped in particular ways but which exists. It would actually be a very good test, both of the Yale curriculum and of your use of it, if there were areas where you realize that now you have to go away, that you actually understand less than you did (or thought you did) when you started, and hence that you need to consider new learnings and new journeys to undertake in order to learn afresh.

This choice between colonialism and exploration - overpowering the other and learning from it - flows through our daily office readings. The task given Ezekiel (Ezekiel 3:4-17) before he is sent away involves both a commission to proclaim the Word of God but also some awkward qualification about how hard understanding is likely to be, both for him and for those to whom he must proclaim God’s Word. He will preach to literal hard-heads, and so is divinely equipped to match them, thick skull for thick skull. Ezekiel takes his Master of Prophecy degree and the spirit drops him off among the exiles, where he sits stunned for seven days. God had already told him that compared to this, speaking to people of obscure speech and difficult language would have been easy. This is the hard work of solidarity; of not merely the prophet dropped in and then airlifted out, but the fellow hard-head who must sweat it out in exile with the rest.

The disciples of the Gospel reading (Luke 9: 37-50) are also would-be colonialists, who have to be taught about exploration and about difference. Just follow the plot thread: they are unable to cast out a demon; they cannot understand the prediction of the passion; and then on the strength of these triumphs, they argue about who is the greatest. Then when they find someone else who is actually managing to do the deed of exorcism even without having attended their colloquium, they are appalled. Jesus’ words are telling: Do not stop him; for whoever is not against you is for you.’

This is of course a different way of understanding difference itself; does difference demand the conformity of the other to our own theology, or does it invite mutual acceptance, partnership, and unanticipated wisdom?

This choice between colonialism and exploration is one that affects us as we face the seemingly intractable challenges of diversity in national and international power relations, and in daily living in community too. We can all use diversity as window-dressing; but the willingness to question our own forms of privilege and really, and to be changed by the difficult truths we hear in the obscure words of others that we could not otherwise understand, is the test of whether we will progress.

Like the disciples, we need to know what we don’t know, and to be ready to accept what they may learn from others who didn’t study as many obscure languages and texts. Like Ezekiel we need to go where the Spirit takes us, and speak difficult truths not out of our own privilege to make the other like us, but out of true solidarity.

You don’t know everything you need to. Yet there is such a thing as holy ignorance. Ignorance is not, of course, holy in itself, for wisdom is an attribute of God. The one who makes their own ignorance into false wisdom is the colonialist; what makes ignorance truly if provisionally holy is knowing, as the explorer does, that wisdom is God’s and not ours, and hence that we may find her in what initially seem unlikely places.
The reality we face raises (at least) two pressing questions: Why, as Christians, should this matter deeply concern us; and, given the seeming difficulties, what can we possibly do? In answer to the first question, an initial recognition needs to be that, as Christians, we are called to proclaim the good news of reconciliation to all. As so often, St Paul provides the clear mandate here. He writes to the Corinthians:

Ambassadors make representations on behalf of their governments to the governments and rulers of the lands in which they work. They make clear how their government and citizens feel about certain actions undertaken by the foreign lands in which they dwell. As ambassadors, therefore, we clearly have to ‘make representation’ on behalf of the Kingdom we represent, and of which, through grace, we are citizens. There are many ways in which that ‘representative work’ can be done, and we know that some (indeed many) Christian voices are and have been raised in the move towards reconciliation.

In their roles, however, all ‘ambassadors’ need to receive continual ‘briefings’ from their home government about the policies of the government, and its attitude to what is occurring in the other country. So, getting on with that work can be part of the answer to the second question, ‘what can we possibly do?’ Our ‘briefings’ come from continual reflection on Scripture, prayer, and discussion with other Christians about how we best present the good news of reconciliation. Each one of us can be engaged in that work – as ‘embassy staff’, if you like, rather than ambassadors who do the formal ‘representation’. If we are continually listening to what our faith proclaims about God’s reconciling love in Jesus, that should affect our thinking about reconciliation, not only of our governments to the governments, but with the whole world. It means reconciliation with those closest to us, whether our families, estranged friends or neighbours, or members of wider communities, become the small building blocks of our ‘ambassadorial’ work. Who knows where we move to from there?

One final, encouraging thought. We need to recognise God’s act of reconciliation has already happened. While moving from one ‘safe house’ to another as he awaited arrest by the Gestapo, Dietrich Bonhoeffer wrote a number of essays which were posthumously published as Ethics. One of those essays, ‘Christ, Reality, and Good’ contains the heartening observation that ‘the reality of God is the ultimate reality beyond and in all that exists’, and that ‘the reality of the world is always already borne, accepted, and reconciled in the reality of God.’

In other words, achieving reconciliation doesn’t depend on us! It has already been done, by God in and through Jesus, and it continues to be made manifest by the continuing work of the Spirit. Difficult though it is, we can give up being despondent about what hasn’t been done, and concentrate instead on protecting and nourishing the ‘seeds’ of reconciliation we see already emerging (c.f. Mark 4: 26–29) and working, in hope, for the fuller realisation of the reality that has already been established. Hope gives us courage to continue to act as ambassadors of reconciliation, in areas small and familiar, as well as large, national, international and, ultimately, cosmic.

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RECONCILIATION: A GOSPEL ISSUE

The Reverend Dr Gregory Seach | Warden | Wollaston Theological College

AIDOC week always brings with it reflections on the process of Reconciliation with our indigenous sisters and brothers. We can think, in great humility, of the progress that has been made, and the remarkable grace and generosity of Aboriginal people in accepting our efforts. But we also need to be acutely aware of how much still remains to be done. This is especially the case in Western Australia where, as I write this reflection, comes news that Aboriginal people are 56 times more likely to be imprisoned in this state than their white fellow-Australians, and that 1 out of every 77 young Aboriginal men here is serving, or has served, time in detention.

The reality beyond and in all that exists’, and that ‘the reality of God [is] the ultimate reality beyond and in all that exists’, and that ‘the reality of the world is always already borne, accepted, and reconciled in the reality of God.’
n NAIDOC Week 2014, the year which saw the centenary of the outbreak of the First World War, a new war memorial plaque (pictured) was installed at St George’s Cathedral. It honours all Aboriginal West Australians who served in the Great War. Such recognition of the Aboriginal men of WA who served in WWII was a significant public statement, their story having been marginalized by history until recently.

The service rendered to Australia in the Great War by Indigenous people did not see an end to discrimination. When Australia went to war again in 1939 neither the Army nor the Navy would accept men who were ‘not substantially of European origin or descent’ until forced to do so by the threat of Japanese invasion and the need for more personnel. Such a threat, however, caused one Perth man, Mr S McClintock, to express his concern to Prime Minister Curtin that Aboriginal people would not be loyal to Australia in the event of invasion.

As the Australian aborigines up North are wonderful bushmen- and unbeatable at finding water etc. – and as they will help anyone for a plug of tobacco and gaudy clothes, it seems to me that they should all be removed far inland from any likely enemy landing places – Darwin, Wyndham, Broome, Carnarvon etc. – as if taken by the Japanese they might prove very useful to them as guides, and in securing water etc.

Letter to the Prime Minister dated 1 April 1942

We cannot know for certain how many Indigenous women and men enlisted in WWII as the ADF enlistment forms of the time did not permit declaration of heritage. It is estimated, however, that around three thousand Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people enlisted. Perhaps as many as three thousand more were employed by the Armed Forces in ancilliary capacities: salvaging military hardware, locating unexploded bombs, building airfields, and in supply units.

2015 marks the 70th anniversary of the end of WWII. A seventieth anniversary is usually the last round-figured anniversary which veterans see, such veterans being in their nineties.

At 5pm on Sunday 5 July at St George’s Cathedral the annual NAIDOC Week Service will honour the Aboriginal men and women of Western Australia who served in the Second World War. Families of veterans participate in the Service and Madjitl Moorna, an Indigenous language choir, complements the Lay Clerks of the Cathedral Choir, bringing together Indigenous and non-Indigenous music into one very Australian service of thanksgiving.

Some of the translations, from a language that is more ancient than those from biblical times, encourage contemplation. From the Magnificat, the Song of Mary: ‘My heart praises God. My soul is happy because God saves my life, because he remembers me, his weak worker.’ Could there be a more humble response to the God who saves? ‘He has stretched out his strong hand, and scattered other people, all people thinking proudly. He has filled the hungry people, giving them good things, but the rich people, he sent them away, their hands empty. He keeps his word, everything he told our ancestors. He has remembered us!’ How poignant in the light of the last 200 years in this country, the very reason for NAIDOC week. And from the Nunc dimittis, the Song of Simeon, the elder who has been waiting a lifetime for the Saviour: ‘Lord, you kept your word, every servant depart in peace. My eyes have seen you, coming and saving us.’ You send the light, shining on all people, the very great light for your people. We praise the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. God has been from the beginning, God is now, and God will be forever. Amen.’

I believe that NAIDOC week calls us to reflect upon how far we’ve come along the ‘reconciliation road’ with the first Australians. It is time to ‘keep our word’, ‘send the light’ and ‘give good things’ in the name of the God who was here long before us and who will be here long after us.

A GIFT FROM AN ANCIENT LANGUAGE

The Very Reverend Richard Pengelly | Dean | St George’s Cathedral

At evensong on 7 June at St George’s Cathedral we enjoyed the first performance of Perry Joyce’s Nyoongar canticles. With translations from Tom Little and Daphne Davis’s ‘Jesus Christ, Son of God Birth Story’, the words of the Magnificat and Nunc dimittis rang out in the Nyoongar language to creative musical settings. Commissioned by Archbishop Roger, the canticles are now an excellent resource for the Diocese and beyond.

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When Rosendo Salvado, founder of New Norcia, died in Rome in 1900 it was said that the Aboriginal community in and around New Norcia was inconsolable and that this Indigenous outpouring of grief drove the decision to have Salvado’s body brought back to Australia, where it now rests in his Abbey Church.

That the Aboriginal people of the area had loved Rosendo Salvado was apparent not only after his death, but also during his life. Almost the whole community attended the mass following the great fire which almost destroyed the fledgling mission; the fire famously quelled by the image of Our Lady of Good Counsel. When Rosendo Salvado, preaches at St George’s Cathedral.

In a review for *Eureka Street*, Hamilton found it difficult to interpret Tacey’s approach resting on polarities that oversimplify. Hamilton refused the choice offered between a literal understanding, ’lumbered with all its associated crudities and historical barbarity, and a metaphorical understanding, endowed with a spiritual depth.’ Depth also brings the freedom to move between with a range of interpretations.

**METAPHOR AND REALITY: DAVID TACEY IN PERTH**

The Reverend Canon Frank Sheehan | Chaplain | Christ Church Grammar School

Australian academic, David Tacey, has written extensively on spirituality and religion. His books include *Edge of the Sacred* (2008) and *ReEnchantment: the New Australian Spirituality* (2009). His most recent work is *Beyond Literal Belief: Religion as Metaphor* (2015).

David Tacey’s family read scripture literally and their clergy encouraged this as the only serious interpretation.

Tacey wants this book to provoke discussion. He believes that some theologians in this country hint at metaphorical content but avoid plain language. They put institutional loyalty ahead of the search for truth.

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Depth also brings the freedom to move between with a range of interpretations. Bewildered by Father Hamilton’s review, Tacey asserted: ‘Of course faith is more than a metaphor,’ saying that he had always striven to encourage faith and to believe in a personal God. Hamilton responded that his faith rests on the belief that ‘a personal God has entered our world in Jesus, who is the Son of God in a unique sense, and whose resurrection is an event of God in this world that affected Jesus as well as the faith of believers.’ He understood Tacey as arguing for a faith in which these foundations were interpreted in a less ‘realistic’ way. This interpretation would not support Hamilton’s own lived faith.

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David Tacey will discuss *Beyond Literal Belief: Religion as Metaphor* in the Claremont parish hall at 7.30 pm on 13 August. No charge for entry.
Josephine Griffiths has been leading retreats for many years now and will again offer two retreats this year. The retreats are silent, nurturing and deeply dedicated to our growth in the spirit. I have been retreating with Josephine regularly for many, many years and I am never disappointed. Initially I was seeking a more authentic spiritual path, I needed to explore my own unique way. I wanted a place where I could be free to reflect in a supportive environment that was not dictating the way but allowing me to discover for myself where I was and where I was going with my life. At these retreats I was encouraged and sometimes challenged but always satisfied. Now the retreats are for me a place of refreshment where I can get back to basics and find that further growth is promoted. I can get back on track and move on, because for a little while I am away from the treadmill of life. These are times to remember what my life is really all about, I go deeper and find clarity and strength. I come away feeling more integrated, able to live more of me. I feel more truly myself.

Josephine’s next Retreat is 24 – 26 July at St John of God Retreat House in Shoalwater. There are still some places, but numbers are limited; we keep the groups small for maximum benefit. If you would like to explore further what retreating can do for you, ring Josephine on 9207 2696 or email jojo1@iinet.net.au.

THE PROPHETS ARE OUR UNFLAPPABLE SAT-NAV

HAVE acquired a wonderful tutor in the art of hope. It is called a satellite navigation system, and it lives in my car. All you have to do when setting out on a journey is to key in your destination. It then tells you how to get from here to there. It is a marvellous device, but I suspect that whoever designed it had never met a Jewish driver. What happens is this. Once the machine has worked out the route, a polite lady’s voice tells you something along the lines of: ‘Keep straight for 380 yards, then turn right.’ Normally, this would suffice. But as anyone who has shared a journey with a Jewish driver knows, the response is likely to be: ‘What does she know? I’ve been driving this car for 20 years. I know the neighbourhood like I know my own mother. Anyone knows that in 300 yards, you turn left.’

Watching the computer’s response is an education in itself. It has done what it was asked to do, and with impeccable politeness. Now, for no apparent reason, it finds its advice ignored and its instructions flouted. With commendable patience, it makes no immediate response. It does not say, as it has every right to: ‘If you’re such a maven, why did you ask in the first place?’

Instead, it goes silent for a few moments, perhaps meditating on the shortness of life and the lengths of human folly. It then sends up a signal: ‘Recalculating the route.’ Seconds later it provides you with a new set of instructions, based on wherever you have landed up as a result of going left when you should have gone right.

From this marvellous machine I have learnt one of the great lessons in life. However many wrong turns you may have taken, if you know where you want to be, there is a route from here to there. If that isn’t a source of hope, what is?

Reading James Surowiecki’s The Wisdom of Crowds, I came across the opposite phenomenon. He tells the story of how the American naturalist William Beebe came across a strange sight in the jungle of Guyana. A group of army ants was moving in a huge circle. The ants went round and round in the same circle for two days until most of them dropped dead. The reason is that when a group of army ants is separated from its colony, it obeys a simple rule: follow the ant in front of you. The trouble is that if the ant in front of you is lost, so will you be.

Surowiecki’s argument is that the alternative — follow the ant in front of you — doesn’t always work. Human societies have had a pretty bad record when it comes to protecting the environment, preserving species, conserving resources, promoting justice, respecting strangers and pursuing peace. Yet most of them were convinced at the time that they were doing the right thing. The fate of the army ants — going round and round in a circle until most drop dead — could serve as a metaphor for the march of human folly.

That is why, at troubled times like these, we need the satellite navigation system’s message of hope. However many wrong turns humanity has taken, if we know where we want to be, there is a route from here to there. (First published in The Times)
By ACNS staff

He was selected out of an initial field of applicants from Oceania, Asia, Africa, Europe and the Americas.

Responding to his appointment, Dr Idowu-Fearon said, ‘I am excited to take up the post of Secretary General of the Anglican Communion, and to continue the fine work undertaken by my predecessors in this office.

‘It is a privilege to be so honoured and recognised by the Communion for this leadership position. I look forward to serving the Anglican family with my future colleagues at the Anglican Communion Office and the Office of the Archbishop of Canterbury.’

Chair of the Anglican Consultative Council, Bishop James Tengatenga warmly welcomed the appointment saying, ‘I am delighted that Bishop Josiah has accepted the position. He will bring a vital new perspective on the Anglican Communion, its life and ministry. His experience and expertise in Christian-Muslim relations is particularly welcome at this time.’

Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby said, ‘I warmly welcome the appointment of Bishop Josiah and look forward to working closely with him in the renewal of the Anglican Communion amidst the global challenges facing us today.’

Bishop Josiah has a PhD (Sociology) and Postgraduate Diploma in Education from Nigeria’s Ahmadu Bello University, an MA in Islamic Theology from the UK’s Birmingham University, and a BA in Theology from Durham University in the UK.

He has lectured and been published widely on the subject of Christian-Muslim relations.

He serves on a variety of national inter-religious bodies and has previously worked with the Anglican Communion Office and Lambeth Palace on several projects.

Bishop Josiah has been awarded the Officer of the Order of the Niger, the Archbishop of Canterbury’s Cross of St. Augustine’s Award, and is a Canterbury Six Preacher.

Lay and clergy individuals from a member Church of the Anglican Communion were encouraged to apply.

Bishop Josiah is married to Comfort and has two children, Ibrahim and Ninna. He takes up the role in July.

Since then, however, we have identified that all who gather must be safe, so a holistic approach to safe ministry is required. The 2015 Refreshers program provides an opportunity to introduce this fresh awareness, using presenters who are local and at the coalface of child protection.

Protective Behaviours WA Inc (PBWA) will present ChurchSafe 2015 and beyond. They form part of the national Protective Behaviours Australia group which advocates nationally on behalf of children and young people to promote child safety as a basic human right. PBWA promotes positive change in attitudes, behaviour, policies, practices and education to prevent child sexual abuse and to increase the personal safety and well-being of Australian children, youth, parents, carers, and families.

The main focus of PBWA training program is for children to be safe from all forms of abuse, in particular, sexual abuse. The PBWA program works with children, youth, parents, carers, service providers, teachers, vulnerable individuals and communities, and aims to build more resilient and connected communities, and to promote better awareness of abuse and unsafe situations across the community. It also provides education and knowledge required to respond effectively to disclosures of child sexual abuse and domestic and family violence.

PBWA Executive Officer, Andrea Musulin, has been a member of the WA Police for nearly 30 years, and was named Police Officer of the Year 2012. She is also an inaugural member of the WA International Women’s Hall of Fame for her work in the child protection industry, and in particular for her work with children and families in crime prevention and within rural communities.

PBWA’s trainers are professionals in child protection, and provide the organisation with knowledge and skills of the very highest degree. The main focus of PBWA training program is for children to be safe from all forms of abuse, in particular, sexual abuse. The PBWA program works with children, youth, parents, carers, service providers, teachers, vulnerable individuals and communities, and aims to build more resilient and connected communities, and to promote better awareness of abuse and unsafe situations across the community. It also provides education and knowledge required to respond effectively to disclosures of child sexual abuse and domestic and family violence.

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Thirty students and eight staff boarded The Prospector early on the morning of Monday 4 May and started playing music. As the train moved through Midland, Toodyay and Northam, the groups continued to play. A wonderful lunch break, covered by the staff trio, awaited the students on the platform at Merredin station, with food beautifully prepared and cooked by boarder’s parent, Mrs Nola Allan. This gave the boys the energy boost they needed to tackle the final four-hour stretch to Kalgoorlie.

Each group would play continuously for approximately five to seven minutes, and then be dovetailed by the next group, meaning that the boys felt the energy for the whole trip. The event not only succeeded in raising money for a wonderful organisation, but also showed the students what they can do if they really work towards a goal. Seven hours of continuous music is a truly incredible feat, world record or not, that can never be taken away from the boys who took part.

Special thanks go to all of the accompanying staff, the media crew and the incomparable Mr Goodwin, who now knows the answer to the age old question ‘Which is faster, The Prospector or the bus?’

A big thank you also to the Reverend Dr Elizabeth Smith, the parishioners of St John’s Kalgoorlie and the members of the Wongutha Birni Cultural Centre Choir for their hospitality and friendship.

Anyone for a submarine ride? 🍀

One of the participants ‘taking the plunge’ is none other than the Dean of Perth, The Very Reverend Richard Pengelley. With a history as an Olympic water polo player, Dean Richard has never been one to shy away from a challenge, though he has assured us that this will be a first for him.

When Richard moved to Perth in 1972, he attended St George’s Cathedral, was married there, and served as Canon for 15 years before his appointment as Dean of Perth. Over this time he established a penchant for working alongside charity organisations including True Blue Dreaming, the Special Olympics and the Cambodian Children’s Fund.

His support of Anglicare WA has been equally staunch. Richard has supported our appeals for many years and recruited students from Anglican schools to help pack hampers of food for our Christmas Giving program. He has mentored our School Ambassadors, students who champion Anglicare WA and its cause in their schools; and he sits on the reference group that evaluates this initiative. Plunging off the edge of a skyscraper in support of our work may be taking things to a new level, both figuratively and literally.

‘Why am I doing it? Because I’m mad,’ he told us. Besides this, the Dean has also expressed an interest in further strengthening the St George’s Cathedral’s partnership with Anglicare WA. Having personally seen the disadvantaged and vulnerable people that occupy the CBD, he hopes to find a way to tangibly improve these people’s lives, perhaps partnering with Anglicare WA’s Street Connect program.

‘I sometimes hear people say they don’t know how to help those less fortunate than themselves, but there is always something you can do. Supporting causes like this is a perfect example,’ Dean Richard told us.

Dean Richard will be ‘taking the plunge’ at midday on Saturday 8 August.

You can support him, and Anglicare WA, at this link: https://centralparkplunge.anglicarewa2015.everydayhero.com.au/richard, or join the staff and students of the new St George’s Anglican Grammar School and come to cheer him on the day. 🎉
ishop Gary Nelson spent the greater part of the month of June firstly in Uganda where he visited and preached at the Uganda Christian University. He then provided a week of intensive teaching for the clergy in our link diocese, Karamoja, and delivered clothes for newborn babies to the Amudat Hospital.

Back in our own diocese, Rural Chaplain Eldred Royce has been appointed Minister in Charge of Northampton parish, and has leased his farm in the Chapman Valley. He and Geraldine will move into the rectory in August.

The Mothers’ Union WA State Conference held at Swanleigh in May provided a good time for the members of the three dioceses to reconnect and be refreshed. The MU Australia President, The Reverend Libby Crossman with her husband Bill, drove from Queensland to be present. Christine Brain and Lois McGrath directed us to contacts made among many indigenous people. Glory to God!

The conference followed a week-long visit to our diocese by the Crossmans, where Libby gave an overview of MU to men and women from the Geraldton parishes at an MU breakfast. The Crossmans plus four members of Geraldton MU Branch drove to Carnarvon where we shared an evening meal with the Carnarvon members, and worshipped at St George’s on Sunday, after which Libby spoke to the congregation over morning tea. BCA WA Regional Officer Rob Healy was in Paraburdoo/Tom Price parish with the BCA Victorian/Tasmanian Regional Secretary, Adrian Lane, as part of a two-week tour of the Pilbara and Midwest. The purpose of the trip was to give Adrian a taste of life and ministry in the North West, enabling him to speak to churches across Victoria of the work of BCA in WA with greater insight. They shared a valuable time with Minister in Charge, David Morgan, who introduced them to members of the two congregations and took them to Karijini National Park. Pray for the mission of sharing Christ with the people who live there. It is lovely news that David’s wife, Preya, is back home in Paraburdoo with their new daughter Evangelini after four months in Sydney.

Much preparation has gone into Sydney Youth Works College Mission to the Wickham and Paraburdoo/Tom Price parishes. Give thanks for the team of 20+ students, plus a support team from Sydney’s Norwest Parish, and pray for continuing fruit from contacts made among many indigenous people. Glory to God!

The first of the 39 articles reminds us ‘in unity of this Godhead there are three Persons, one of substance, power and eternity; the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost’.

Our creeds are Trinitarian, we regularly give glory to God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit and our blessings invoke each Person of Godhead to sustain us as we leave worship for witness. David Hewetson helpfully commented that ‘the doctrine of the Trinity was not a puzzle, but a solution’.

The first Christians and apostles, mostly Jews, prayed daily ‘hear O Israel, The Lord our God, the Lord is One’ (Deuteronomy 6:4). When Jesus came along claiming to be God (John 6:35;8:12;10:7 and 11 etc), doing things that demonstrated his divinity (like forgiving sins, calming the sea, raising the dead, feeding the multitudes) what were they to make of him? What were they to make of the promised Holy Spirit? It was their experience of Jesus and his express teaching to ‘make disciples, baptising them in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit’ that led them to the only possible conclusion, of One God who from eternity to eternity exists as three distinct Persons.

Here is a teaching that is easier to experience than to define. Yet once experienced in fellowship with our Holy Father, made possible through God the Son, with hearts and wills opened by and now indwelt by God the Holy Spirit, is not difficult to understand.

The truth, that we call the Trinity, was not as is sometimes asserted made up by the church but a response to the amazing grace of God. Only God could do that by identifying with our humanity and in bearing our sin. Only God could do that response to the amazing grace of God in salvation. No created being could reconcile us to God. Only God could do that by identifying with our humanity and in bearing our sin. Only God the Holy Spirit can bring into our lives the presence and power of God that brings both comfort and strength in our discipleship.

It is for this reason that the doctrine of the Trinity has become a mark of orthodoxy. If denied or devalued, we are rendered comfortless and powerless as Christians and churches.

A well known expression of the Trinity are the words of the grace (2 Corinthians 13:14). Paul Barnett demonstrates its relevance for church life:

‘By this prayer Paul is reminding the Corinthians that their ‘mending’ does not lie within themselves but with the grace of Christ, the love of God and the Spirit’s fellowship. The grace of Christ removes aggressiveness, the love of God dispels jealousy, while the fellowship created by the Spirit destroys bitterness. As God answers that prayer, the problems so manifest in Corinth and in every troubled church will be overcome’.
Sometimes we group together solely with those who hold to similar beliefs. If we find our unity in the Christlike God, and work from there outwards, our interactions will be healthier and more authentic.

- How are you living expressions of healthy and authentic relationships?
- Are you encouraging other people to have healthy and authentic relationships?
- Do you set appropriate boundaries and limitation in your relationships so that you honour God, self and others?
- How might you work with those in your household and faith community to embrace such living?

In unhealthy relationships the natural tendency is to avoid the person or to dominate the person by misusing power. It is easy to spend more time ridiculing someone than engaging in reconciling a broken relationship. Modelling right relationships with individuals and as part of communities takes practice and perseverance.

Over recent years, there has been positive change in how majority cultures treat minority cultures. While this has been good news for many, it has also come at a cost with many minority cultures being artificially lumped together. This month we join together in recognising the celebration of indigenous brothers and sisters during NAIDOC week.

If we lump all aboriginal and islander people together, we fail to recognise individuals, clans and nations. For original inhabitants, this land we now call Australia, was home to between 250 and 700 different clans or nations.

Being healthy and authentic in our relationships, means getting to know individuals. It means ‘Hanging Out’, spending time together. Listening and valuing who each other are - individually and collectively.

Let us learn to ‘hangout’ together.

- How about this year during NAIDOC week, join together and ‘Hangout’ at some of the NAIDOC week celebrations.

For details of NAIDOC week events go to http://www.naidoc.org.au/ click on the events link and select WA.
NAIDOC WEEK CELEBRATIONS

AIDOC week is a time to celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history, culture and achievements, and an opportunity to recognise the contributions that Indigenous Australians make to the community.

In Kindergarten at St James’ Anglican School we have been reading the story Ernie Dances to the Didgeridoo, learning a Torres Strait Islander dance and making our very own Aboriginal flag. We have talked about who the Aboriginal people are and why they are so special.

In Pre-Primary we have been looking at Aboriginal art. We compared many paintings and noticed how all the paintings had patterns and symbols, were created using colours found in nature and the backgrounds to the pictures were never blank, but filled with dotting, patterns or lines. All the children painted a kangaroo or platypus and filled in the background with dot painting of their own.

Year 1 students have the opportunity to making damper, make friendship bracelets, and dance using Aboriginal symbols for animals, before enjoying the story, The Magic Boomerang. Year 2 study the text, The Rainbow Serpent and create their own colourful cardboard rainbow serpents using wool. We are hoping to have a visitor who is Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander to come and share their culture and personal/family history.

Students in Year 3 and 4 will see a range of clips on Indigenous culture. These viewing activities will not only increase the students’ comprehension skills, but will develop an understanding and appreciation of the Noongar people and the importance of ‘country.’ Year 4 students are reading several texts. Bajirriga the Turtle is the story of a boy and his journey to becoming a turtle. Charlie Burr and The Great Shed Invasion are by popular indigenous author Sally Morgan. What a great read!

Earlier this year the Year 5 and 6 students at St James’ Anglican School visited Rottnest Island for their inaugural school camp. We looked at the history of the island, its settlement and how it has been used over the years. We took a guided tour where our guide told us stories about how the island was used as a prison for Aboriginals between 1838 and 1903. This connected with our history units on democracy and the road to reconciliation.

We learnt that whilst this was a sad story it is important to recognise and acknowledge the past, as it is an important part of Western Australia’s history and is a necessary step towards reconciliation and healing for the Aboriginal community.

When we were there we saw AFL Players’ Indigenous Camp who were visiting Rottnest Island. We learned about the Aboriginal burial ground and that the aim is to upgrade the existing burial ground by converting it into reflective parkland, to enable the Aboriginal Story and their connection with the Island, although very sad, to be shared through arts and culture, education and interpretation.

The visit was an excellent experience not only because it helped the students, who had only known each other for two weeks, get to know each other better, but it also helped them gain an understanding of the past and got them thinking about the need for reconciliation. Once back at school the theme of reconciliation has been developed and studied further, looking at it across the whole of Australia.

The school’s interior has been designed by one of Perth’s leading school architectural firms, DWA Architects, who has designed a number of other ASC schools including Geographe Molloy Anglican School, Swan Valley Anglican Community School, Esperance Anglican Community School and St James’ Anglican School. As there are no sports fields or other grassed areas on campus, much attention has been paid to the provision of recreation space for the students. Student lounge areas have been provided on every floor and the open plan cafeteria area creates a comfortable, cosmopolitan space for the students to enjoy. Additionally, the once drab rooftop has been transformed into a magnificent, timber-decked recreation area complete with basketball hoop, shade sails and outdoor seating, creating a wonderful open-air space with spectacular views across the city and over the Swan River to South Perth.

The school fit-out includes Science laboratories, Music, Drama and Art rooms, a Resource Centre, Cafeteria, general classrooms of various sizes and administration areas. Much thought has gone into the interior design and colour scheme, with the inclusion of contemporary finishes selected specifically to suit the needs of today’s adolescents.

While the city location provides many unique challenges such as a lack of parking and outdoor facilities, it also provides many unique opportunities. Students will have easy access to the resources on offer in the Perth CBD, such as the Perth City Library, Art Gallery of WA, the State Theatre and many other cultural and sporting facilities. Additionally, the wealth of human resources within a large city provides outstanding opportunities for workplace learning and other programmes.

Before being acquired by the ASC, the school was known as Murdoch College. One of the challenges has been to manage the change of ethos from a non-denominational school to one that is proudly Anglican in faith, culture and practice.

This change in ethos is well underway with the support of staff and students. Once the new campus opens, students will be privileged to enjoy the use of St George’s Cathedral for their weekly Chapel services.

The school’s motto is Wisdom, Grace, Service. One of the aims is to establish a strong service programme involving the students, working in conjunction with caring and welfare agencies. Again, the CBD location provides an ideal opportunity for the provision of service learning programmes that are authentic and accessible.

St George’s Anglican Grammar School enrols both local and international students, providing a wonderful opportunity for a truly multicultural school environment. It currently has 200 students and is looking forward to strong enrolment growth at the new CBD campus in the coming years.

The Minister for Education will officially open the School and the Archbishop will dedicate it to the glory of God on Tuesday 8 September.
JULY NIGHT DOCK

June solution

LURKING WITH PASTORAL INTENT

The Reverend Alan Forsyth
Chaplain | St Bartholomew’s House

I t the time of writing, I have been part-time temporary chaplain to St Bart’s for over a month. For much of that time I have been engaged in what I call ‘lurking with pastoral intent’, visiting various parts of this surprisingly large organisation and listening to people’s stories. It is a huge privilege when a person invites you into his or her life, and this has taken place for me already, time and again, in St Bartholomew’s House. One of the people who has extended that privilege to me is a man I shall call Sebastian, because that is not his name.

Sebastian has been at St Bart’s for two and a half years. He came because he was homeless, and had quite severe physical and psychological disabilities. In addition, he was battling addiction to drugs. At that time he had very little contact with his wife and three teenage children. Since coming to St Bartholomew’s House, Sebastian has worked hard to turn his life around. With the support of his case manager, he has taken control of his addiction and has made huge strides towards managing his life again. Two weeks ago, he was told that a house or apartment will soon be found for him. Because of his disabilities he may never be able to work full-time again, but he will be able to look after himself with the help of a visiting support worker.

I asked him would he miss the company of friends at St Bart’s. He said no, quite the contrary. He hastened to explain that nowadays he often needed to sleep during the day, and that friends currently drop in to see him at awkward times. When Sebastian had his own place he would invite them to call on him at times that were convenient to him. He could have his cake and eat it too. A few days ago, his wife contacted him. She said she and their three sons had decided that, if he stayed ‘on track’ for twelve months, there could be reconciliation.

Sebastian now has a future and a hope, due to his own efforts and because of his stay at St Bartholomew’s House. I understand that he is typical of quite a number of past and present St Bart’s residents who are part of a programme called Street to Home.
Michael Perham is well-known for his authorship and co-operation with several well-known titles, the beautifully bound Revised Common Lectionary, Daily Office SSF and Hospitality of God.

As Bishop of Gloucester, he gathered his people for Lenten retreats. This book grew out of these well-attended gatherings. It is a very readable and accessible book, with his main purpose in trying to find ways of proclaiming the faith afresh for each generation. In keeping with his purpose, it should not surprise the reader to find him declaring concepts and ideas which are inclusive and progressive, pushing for flexibility in liturgy, and compassionate understanding in asserting Christian values in a secular world.

A naturally tidy person, he admits that the future church might not be a tidy place. His vision of a very different church might be one which will be more difficult for a Bishop to hold together – an untidy place!

The Kingdom of Heaven, he says, is indeed on earth, and has been in every generation, ‘but it is to be found in pockets and in breaking-ins.’ In this generation, the clergy simply defend those pockets and ‘create new spaces where the Kingdom may break in’. What a superb image! This is a book to put in the hands of one seeking to enter into, or better understand the Anglican Communion.

TO TELL AFPRESH
Michael Perham SPCK $22.00

Shirley Clauftton

Anglican Church Professional Standards Committee
Providing a Healing Process for Survivors of Sexual Abuse and Misconduct

The Church acknowledges with regret that sexual abuse and misconduct has occurred in our Worshipping Communities. The Church also recognises the impact it has had on children and adults and accepts responsibility for the past occurrences.

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Your enquiry will be treated with confidentiality, sensitivity and respect.

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Anglican Church
Professional Standards Committee

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BEYOND LITERAL BELIEF,
Religion as Metaphor, David Tacey $34.95

David Tacey’s childhood was in Alice Springs, his university education in Adelaide where all his professors were atheists, and there he had a brief phase in atheism ‘partly to please my professors.’ He is currently Emeritus Professor of Literature at Melbourne’s LaTrobe University, and the author of fourteen books and numerous scholarly papers. An interdisciplinary scholar, Tacey’s best-selling books have focussed on Jung, mental health, and Aboriginal spirituality, always with a fundamental concern about myth and metaphor – what he calls ‘meaningful metaphor’ and ‘meaningful mythology.’

In Beyond Literal Belief, Religion as Metaphor, he is not presenting anything startlingly different, but has an accessible and personal way of opening up debate without throwing the ‘baby out with the bathwater.’ His aim is to teach ‘the multitude that something can be true and untrue at the same time,’ and that there is a middle way which avoids the emptiness of modern secularism. If Marcus Borg’s book Convictions was the book to discuss in 2014, this new book merits an in-depth reading in 2015.

One critic has described Tacey’s book as ‘a brilliant attempt to save religion from itself’, and he would be happy with that description as he is concerned to find a term between myth and history – affirming that the biblical stories were not intended as historical documents, but as poetic images of spiritual life. This can be liberating, as the scriptures are not just about the remote past, but the present – speaking to us.

The switch from thinking literally to metaphorical thinking will involve a gap – and his concern is that many will fall into this gap; accordingly this book is structured with careful, sensitive argument to not offend but to offer an intelligent alternative. The point of faith for Tacey is ‘that one is filled with a sense of the sacred that does not require evidence.’ From this, he works methodically through miracles, resurrection, virgin birth and Satan, introducing and acknowledging current and past scholars, authors and poets such as Karen Armstrong, John Crossan, William Blake, Carl Jung, Joseph Campbell, Tom Harpur, Matthew Arnold and Marcus Borg, and others such as Lloyd Geering, Rudolf Bultmann, Sandra Schneiders and Don Cupitt who he does not always agree with! The book is extensively footnoted with a comprehensive index.
Anthony Howes

The theatre is a magic place – it certainly is for me! Last month, I was invited to direct a group of young people in a dramatic presentation of what would normally be a sermon within the Eucharist to celebrate the 30th Anniversary of the Anglican Schools Commission. The script, written by The Reverend Gerry Nixon, called for five performers to create powerful characters, to make the congregation ‘sit up and take notice’. I quickly grasped that the power of effective communication was theirs – they vocalised, they danced; and, within a few short minutes, their dynamic performance, gave that ‘sermon’ life!

Applications are now invited for the following Scholarships for boys who wish to join the School in 2016. These Scholarships provide an outstanding opportunity for students to attend the School, who otherwise may not be able to do so.

Go Forward Scholarship
(for entry in Years 8-11 only)
Applications close at 2.00pm on 3 August

Indigenous Scholarships
Applications close at 2.00pm on 3 July

Refugee Scholarships
Applications close at 2.00pm on 3 August

Full information on each Scholarship, including the application process, is available from the School’s website at www.ggs.wa.edu.au/scholarships

There is magic, too, when Spare Parts Puppet Theatre presents Peta Murray’s adaptation of Tim Winton’s Blue-Back, a celebration of the WA coastline. Director is Philip Mitchell. The season runs from 4 to 18 July.

Last month, in recording a radio interview with Louise Helfgott, the novelist, poet and playwright, I discovered more magic. Louise has written a play as part of the Yaburgurt Memorial Project, a celebration of the life of this Noongar leader of the Bindjareb Boodja. He lived from 1824 to 1915 and in that life he gave to his immediate people and to us, a legacy of strong leadership, cultural knowledge, and sense of place. The Project was researched and created by indigenous and non-indigenous people in the Mandurah area, working together. Louise’s play will be seen later this year and is a positive focus for reconciliation, a celebration for all Australians of a great life of significance and positivity for us all.

Finally, from Melbourne, playing the Mandurah Performing Arts’ Centre on 22 July (matinee and evening), is a new Australian play by Carolyn Bock and Helen Hopkins, The Girls in Grey. It pays tribute to the over two thousand Australian women who bravely served their country during the horrors of World War One. A fitting tribute for this year, the 100th anniversary of Anzac.
FAR FROM THE MADDING CROWD

Review: Mark A Hadley

It is certainly an unmanly confession … but I like English period dramas. Why? Written in a culture that had not yet forgotten God, they have so much to say to a generation of men and women today who are generally attracted to love stories for all of the wrong reasons. Far From The Madding Crowd is no exception.

Carey Mulligan stars as Thomas Hardy’s memorable heroine, Bathsheba Everdene, a proud beauty with a strong admixture of good fortune, adventure, and, above all, Bathsheba seeks love with her own estate, a confident negotiator with men twice her age, the centre of universal admiration, and the one who makes all the decisions in regards to relationships. However that would be to miss Hardy’s inherent criticism of a woman who fails to consider her real needs or her effect on others:

Bathsheba: ‘I shouldn’t mind being a bride at a wedding, if I could be one without having a husband. But since a woman can’t show off in that way by herself, I shan’t marry – at least yet.’

Gabriel: ‘Upon my heart and soul, I don’t know what a maid can say stupider than that.’

Of course this sort of judgment wins Gabriel no points with Bathsheba, but it proves true nonetheless. The heroine comes to realise that a wedding is more than a social occasion and a husband more than a support to her vanity. In fact, the right sort of man will not hinder her but complete her. Yet, also like many women today, she only comes to understand what the right sort of man might be like by first directing her attentions to the wrong kind.

Bathsheba: Tell me what to do, Gabriel.

Gabriel: Do what is right.

But this is, of course, only the first fifteen minutes of what is in fact a very fast-moving film. A sad disaster and a surprise inheritance ensure, leading to a reversal of fortunes that sees Bathsheba rise to the level of an estate owner and Gabriel sink to the rank of a shepherd in her employ. What follows is a tale of blighted lives and broken halves in a culture that had not yet employed. What follows is a tale of blighted lives and broken halves.

Bathsheba is a character who might appeal strongly to the ‘power woman’ of the present century – the mistress of her own estate, a confident negotiator with men twice her age, the centre of universal admiration, and the one who makes all the decisions in regards to relationships. However that would be to miss Hardy’s inherent criticism of a woman who fails to consider

CLERGY NEWS

APPOMENTS

The Reverend Jane Hawkins
Deacon, Parish of Mosman Park
02.05.15

The Reverend Michael Jessup
Deacon, Parish of Beaconsfield
02.05.15

The Reverend John Maddocks
Deacon, Parish of Highgate
02.05.15

The Reverend Mark Yates
Deacon, Parish of Applecross
02.05.15

The Reverend Rose Guok
Assistant Chaplain (Deacon), St George’s College
01.07.15

The Reverend Bruce Hyde
Area Dean, Melville Deanery
02.05.15 – 30.06.15

Lay Resignation

The Honourable Graeme Murphy
Chancellor
01.05.15

Locum Tenens

The Venerable Michael Pennington
Murdoch-Winthrop
12.05.15 – 31.12.15

The Reverend Dr John Forsyth
St John of God Hospitals, Subiaco and Murdoch
05.07.15 – 01.08.15

The Reverend Chris Albany
North Perth
25.08.15 – 28.09.15

Vale

The Reverend Maggie Ward
07.06.15

Mrs Coralie Buckland
09.06.15

Tuesdays in July
5:15pm – 6:15pm
$10.00 per session

Heretics Anonymous
with Dr John Shepherd

14 July: Faith and Doubt – Are They Incompatible?
21 July: Jesus – What Can We Really Know About Him?
28 July: Why is God so Silent?

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SUNDAY SERVICES
8am: Holy Eucharist (BCP) with hymns
10am: Choral Eucharist and Sunday School
5pm: Choral Evensong

SPECIAL SERVICES IN JULY 2015
SUNDAY 5 JULY
5pm: Evensong for NAIDOC Week commemorating the Indigenous Soldiers of WWII.

WEDNESDAY 8 JULY
6pm: Evensong of St Kilian, bishop & martyr, with the Choir of Trinity College of St Benedict. Preacher: The Abbot of Westminster. www.perthcathedral.org

SATURDAY 11 JULY
11am: Airborne Forces Association (BA) Remembrance Service.

SUNDAY 12 JULY
2pm: Families Connect. 5pm: Evensong of St George’s Art Festal Evensong directed by Jonathan Bradley.

CATHEDRAL ST GEORGE’S PALMYRA
9.30am Thursday
9.00am Friday
10.30am Saturday
11am Sunday
12.30pm Monday
1.00pm Tuesday
2.00pm Wednesday
3.00pm Thursday
4.00pm Friday
5.00pm Saturday
10.30am Sun, 8.00am and 9.30am Sun, 10.30am Mon

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2.00pm Wednesday
3.00pm Thursday
4.00pm Friday
5.00pm Saturday
10.30am Sun, 8.00am and 9.30am Sun, 10.30am Mon
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