

# ENGAGE

July 2021 Issue 7



Community of St Anselm, photo supplied by Rachael Lopez

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AUSTRALIAN CENTRE FOR  
**CHRISTIANITY AND CULTURE**  
WISDOM FOR THE COMMON GOOD

*“God’s wisdom is like a diamond; complex with a depth of brightness and elegant precision. It is not just one thing and it refracts light from all quarters and is the medium for light.”*



The Great Cross in many refractions of light, photo by Andrew Cameron.

## A fragrant potpourri



As you survey the range of activities, articles, and reflections in this edition of *Engage* I hope you will be struck by the remarkable diversity of contributions on many important and fascinating topics. You may conclude, that it feels like a fragrant potpourri. There’s nothing quite like the smell of those complex fragrances that

are the hallmark of a good potpourri. This has been a hallmark of the newsletter over the past two years. Such a variety of topics, concerns and activities tracing the movement of the Spirit of God in myriad ways. In the current edition we move from cultural and religious engagements with leaders from Middle East; reflections on democracy and Christ; challenges for public intellectuals; a national conference on the future of religious life in Australia; consultations on ageing, dementia and spiritual life; the interface of leadership and neuroscience; tales of the earth and justice; book reviews on truth telling in public domain and the faith of lawyers; the importance of a gallery for religious art; yarny stories of justice and reconciliation; social justice and politics; interviews with those who have oversight of the Centre and its treasures. *Engage* has a large and growing readership in Australia and overseas. The sense conveyed is that there is something for most tastes to savour. The articles range across the Four Pillars of the Centre.

The underlying narrative that gives coherence and purpose to the kinds of activities and engagements in this edition of *Engage* is similar to previous editions. It is captured in the overarching desire to seek a fresh wisdom for the common good. If you like, this is the bowl in which the work of the Centre is nestled. Wisdom for the common good is our tag line, so to speak.

There is a remarkable passage in the New Testament letter to the Church at Ephesus (Chapter 3:9-10). The writer reflects on the ‘boundless riches of Christ’; and the ‘multifaceted wisdom of God’ becoming known. God’s wisdom is like a diamond; complex with a depth of brightness and elegant precision. It is not just one thing and it refracts light from all quarters and is the medium for light. Such a notion of wisdom cannot be reduced to mere information of which we are overloaded today. But the kind of wisdom referred to opens us to the wonder and the beauty and insight present in everyday activities. Moreover, such wisdom is always orientated towards that which lies beyond our grasp and manipulation. In the presence of such wisdom we are humbled and energised in the same moment. Finally, such wisdom points to what is good, true and beautiful. To be on the wisdom road leads us to new possibilities for good in the world; the common good. I trust that you find this edition of *Engage* a snapshot of the multifaceted wisdom of the Divine in the everyday work of the Centre. A fragrant potpourri that lifts and energises the spirit.

**Stephen**

**Rt Rev’d Professor Stephen Pickard**

**Executive Director**

**Australian Centre for Christianity and Culture**



Dr Lawrie Willett AO in front of the Mural Wall of the *Holy Spirit in our Land*, by Hecor Jandany, Gija Elder (East Kimberly), ACC&C, photo by Sarah Stitt

## Farewell and thank you to the ACC&C Board Chair

by Sarah Stitt

### Events and Corporate Services Officer

The Australian Centre for Christianity and Culture (ACC&C) Board Chair of six years, Dr Lawrie Willett AO, has stepped down from his role. We thought that we would have a conversation with Lawrie, a former Chancellor of Charles Sturt University (CSU), about his years as Board Chair, the highlights, what the ACC&C has contributed to the life of CSU, what more could come to fruition, what would he have liked to have changed, what is he looking forward to?

The conversation stepped back in time; a long time! To Henry VIII, the importance of the Royal Supremacy and the Reformation. We discussed the Church as the background to the pomp and ceremony of our parliaments, universities, the military and other defence forces; the role of Church procedures and processes as scaffolding to these institutions; and how they were conducted.

We fast forwarded to the history of Canberra and how all the Christian churches were allocated land on which to build their places of worship and cathedrals, and how, in the case of the Church of England at the time, this did not occur. Not many of the Anglican bishops of Canberra and Goulburn had been able to fully achieve their vision until Bishop George Browning gave

concrete embodiment to his vision to create the Australian Centre for Christianity and Culture. This vision was embraced by the then CSU Vice Chancellor, Professor Cliff Blake AO, and the partnership was confirmed.

With the evolution of society through the ages, the Church lost much of the power and status it was once awarded. No more noticeable than through the 20th century, due to the massive movement of people as a direct result of two world wars, the Great Depression, a pandemic, many smaller wars, and the onset and impact of climate change (resulting in the intermingling of cultures, religions, socio-economic strata) the redistribution of wealth, education and more freedoms exacted to women. Bishop Browning saw the need to reconnect the Church with society and recognised the role of all the churches by drawing them together to seek a genuine approach for the common good, regardless of religious background.

More than 20 years ago, with the support of the then Governor-General, Sir William Deane AC KBE QC and Aboriginal Elder, Dr Lowitja O'Donahue AC, CBE, DSG, along with many others from varying backgrounds, the ACC&C was established. Over the past



Dr Lawrie Willett AO with portrait of Bishop George Browning, photo by Sarah Stitt

two decades the Centre together with the School of Theology at St Marks National Theological Centre has become the Canberra jewel in the crown of Charles Sturt University, as well as its scholars being internationally renowned and respected.

Lawrie's hope for the Centre, whilst acknowledging different future players who will bring their own strengths and ideas into being, is that the Centre will continue to play a significant role in interfaith arrangements. He suggested that having a Professor of Islamic Studies and another scholar from the Jewish community would further enhance this role of interfaith dialogue. Whatever evolves he feels that the foundations have been set in a conclusive and converging way.

Lawrie made particular reference to Lt. Gen. The Hon John Sanderson (Rtd) AC for his role as Deputy Chair of the Board and the role of Emeritus Professor Ross Chambers AM in the establishment of the ACC&C from its inception to the present. Lawrie also thanked the members of the Board, each of whom have shared the vision, were a joy to work with, and have collectively cemented the Centre in the firmament of national institutions domiciled in Canberra.

From all at the Australian Centre for Christianity and Culture we would like to thank Dr Willett for his untiring contribution to this vision.

## Roundtable conversation

by Bishop Philip Huggins

Centre for Ecumenical Studies, ACC&C and President of the National Council of Churches

Paraphrasing one of the poets: each of our friends is like a separate world made up of the stories we have shared; gifts we have given and received; our interactions with other family members; the paintings on our walls; the style of our table hospitality; the ways we greet and farewell each other and much more that is distinctly the character of each friendship.

Each friend is a world and we are all made up of many such worlds, thanks be!

From a formal approach I made to the Ambassador to Australia of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Ambassador Fereidoun Haghbin, regarding possible meetings of religious leaders a more personal friendship has evolved in recent times. Flowing on from shared meals and conversations of depth and warmth came the idea of this Roundtable Conversation. Bishop Stephen embraced the idea and helped facilitate the invitations. Hazel worked with the Ambassador's key staff on details. The accompanying photo, after our Roundtable, conveys the extension of our friendship in a generous atmosphere of trust.

This rather unique Roundtable revealed again the gift that the ACC&C is - a place of dialogue towards deeper understanding. In the wisdom of the common good, where there is deeper mutual understanding there is more love and a better clarity about our future possibilities.

After a time of prayerful silence, I began by asking the Ambassador about the beneficial influence of his mother and father in his Teheran childhood. His face glowed as he described the blessings of those early years. When talking of significant others in his formative years, the Ambassador highlighted a poignant and focused conversation with a revered uncle at the time he was leaving Iran for further studies overseas. This uncle, a leader engaged in the political struggles that transformed Iran (and subsequently led to the 'martyring' that he knew then was the risk), fixed his eyes on his young nephew and gave him advice which he has never forgotten. He said, paraphrasing: "yes, the struggle is crucial, and we hope to be successful. However, even if we are, thereafter things will continue to change. Nothing stays the same;



Rt Rev'd Prof Stephen Pickard, Ambassador Fereidoun Haghbin, Bishop Philip Huggins, Dr Mohammad Pournajaf, Rev'd Dr Jane Foulcher and Genevieve Jacobs AO with the other roundtable attendees, photo by Hazel Francis.

all of this world is transient. What really matters and what must be your focus is that you are true to God." 'Pleasing to God' was the Ambassador's phrase for our life purpose. In a life there can be those moments from which we know we must live.

Those of us present at the Roundtable were deeply moved as this distinguished and experienced diplomatic leader, took us into this formative moment in his own biography. The symmetry with the life and teaching of Jesus needed little elaboration. "Thy kingdom come; thy will be done."

Thereafter our Roundtable moved into matters of interest to participants - the evolving role of women, including in diplomatic leadership; responses to the pandemic; Iranian research achievements in a context of sanctions; contrasts between the island of Australia and Iran's location amidst many neighbours of varied historic friendliness! We rounded out our conversation before fine Persian cuisine, with poetry. Ambassador Fereidoun shared a poetic prayer of the former Ayatollah, composed not long

before he died. In the near future we plan to convene a further shared time at the ACC&C full of poetry and music!

One doesn't want to overstate the significance of a Roundtable conversation such as this.

However, in summary, we are one human family on a tiny planet in a vast universe of divine creation. We are gifted with this life and encouraged to live this gift in ways the divine Creator has made abundantly clear! Much of what currently passes for reality is complete folly. What will help us find a way forward that heals our divisions and restores our hope?

Friendship, new friendships help us work this out together.

I am very grateful to Ambassador Fereidoun for his response to our invitation and his readiness to speak from his heart. One cannot but assume this will lead on to an even deeper friendship with a wider circle. One cannot but assume that all this good will is God's will!

# Democracy, Christ and Capital

by Dr Peter Hooton

Research Secretariat, ACC&C



Dr Peter Hooton,  
photo supplied.

Most people have a fairly good idea of who they are and what they stand for, but they take a lot for granted in the process. Life is built largely on 'common-sense' assumptions, and this is as it must be because, if people had no recourse to spontaneous practical convictions, they would be hard-pressed to function at all. It is important to remember though that common-sense is not for the most part either a natural or a universal phenomenon. It is engineered by

experts. It can change, and it can be manipulated.

With this in mind, the Research Secretariat is currently exploring some assumptions underlying the accumulation and distribution of wealth and property in democratic societies. We ask whether it should matter to Christians what form democracy takes. Is it simply the case, as Reinhold Niebuhr put it, that democracy is made possible by our capacity for justice and necessary by our inclination to injustice? Or does our confidence in regular elections and in the characteristically democratic division of powers too easily overlook the actual control of government by wealthy elites and the real experience of the poor both within and outside supposedly democratic societies? Should we not be more concerned that a taken-for-granted common-sense now renders largely unassailable elements of the prevailing order—the uncritical endorsement of free market principles, shadowy national interest and national security considerations, and populist myths of exceptionalism—that pose very real threats to the stability and credibility of this order?

Christianity and democracy are never simply claims to be asserted and defended. They will always embody, in true believers, tangible commitments to real values, and to the vision behind the forms. Christians may well prioritise their personal experience of Christ's redeeming grace and the sense of solidarity that comes with 'being the church,' but they have also to acknowledge that true discipleship entails a cost—that it is humble and selfless. Citizens in a democracy may for the most part subordinate notions of the common good to private interest, but they should not think that bland assertions of a generally available equality of standing carry either weight or conviction in face of spectacular inequalities of wealth and opportunity which render meaningless, in practice, modern democracy's principal claim: the claim that, notwithstanding its representative layering, real sovereignty is vested in the whole population.

We expect the finished paper to be, self-evidently, both a product of its twenty-first century Western context and a commentary on it. But we wouldn't have gone down this path if we believed Jesus to be substantially different now to the Jesus who gave the Sermon on the Mount—if we thought the one who spoke of non-resistance then was now a nuclear warrior; or that the one who once told people simply to leave everything behind and follow him now makes no such demand.

# The public intellectual as a dead wombat

by Professor Clive Hamilton



Prof Clive Hamilton,  
photo supplied.

Professor in Public Ethics,  
Charles Sturt University

I must be getting old; I'm writing a memoir. The memoir's theme is 'life as a public intellectual'. In Australia, anyone who calls themselves a public intellectual is regarded as a poseur, such is the anti-intellectualism in this sun-drenched Southern land.

Yet ideas are just as powerful in Australia as any other country. Think of the enormous transformation

of our society brought by the neoliberal revolution of the 1980s and 1990s. It upturned our education systems, attitudes to social security, the role of government and manufacturing industry, and it dethroned the citizen in favour of the consumer. It was a revolution begun and passionately prosecuted by a small group of intellectual activists (some would call them fanatics) who took advantage of changing social and economic conditions to bring about a broad swathe of policy changes that, in the main, did not enjoy majority support.

It was the damage being done by the neoliberal revolution—known at one stage as 'economic rationalism in Canberra'—that stimulated me to set out on the path of the public intellectual by founding in 1994 a progressive think tank, the Australia Institute. I ran the Institute for the next 14 years, building it into an influential alternative voice to the right-wing think tanks that dominated in the public domain, even if it arrived too late to turn back the tide of neoliberalism.

What I learned in those years, and the extraordinary things that sometimes happen when one engages robustly in public debate, will fill most pages of the memoir. How ideas change the world is a mysterious process. To become effective, ideas need to cut across and meld the worlds of politics, social development, public opinion, money power, media, publishing and universities.

I learned that, for the really big ideas, what matters most is the *zeitgeist*. The *zeitgeist* is a thing as slippery as 'the vibe', and not unrelated. Developing an antenna for an incipient shift in the *zeitgeist* is essential for a successful think tank. Like a dead wombat, you have to keep your ear to the ground.

# Religious Communities and the future of the Church in Australia

by Rev'd Dr Tim Watson

Rector of Holy Cross Anglican Church, Hackett, and Adjunct Research Fellow, ACC&C



Rev'd Dr Tim Watson,  
photo supplied.

In November 2021 the Australian Centre for Christianity and Culture is welcoming members of traditional, modern and emerging Religious Communities to a three-day ecumenical conference titled "Ancient Futures: The Renewal of Religious Life in the Australian Church". Archbishop Justin Welby has described religious communities as the 'canary in the coal mine' of the church, having an importance out of all proportion to

their size, and called for a "wild burst of Spirit-filled enthusiasm about religion in the 21st century" which will be "embedded in its traditions" while also being different, spontaneous, and organic. This second of two articles for Engage explores some historical features of Australian Christianity, the distinctive characteristics Religious Communities have developed on Australian soil, and the new forms of community life that God may now be calling into being to meet the challenge of our current missional context.

## The Australian context

Spiritually, Australia was regarded by its first Christians as 'terra nullius', a virgin mission field within the British Imperial project. The first clergy were British military and prison chaplains, while in 1825 the continent was declared to be an archdeaconry of the Anglican Diocese of Calcutta, and one Anglican parish was given the name of "Australia west of Liverpool"! We need only note the traumatic resonances of the word 'mission' for this land's

First Nation Peoples to be reminded of the complicity of the churches in a colonial evil which still cries out for justice, redress, and reconciliation. Other denominations came early to the new colonies, subverting the pretensions of the 'Church of England in Australia' and creating a distinctively Australian ecumenical culture: on the one hand, the chance to build a 'new Jerusalem' without the baggage of Anglican establishment; on the other, the importing of sectarian tensions which proved as virulent (if not more so) as in the British Isles. More recently denominational tensions have eased as the churches have slipped to the margin of society, but one Australian ecumenist has argued that Australian Christians still struggle to articulate a common vision of 'God's Church for Australia' because our denominations are so burdened by their histories as chaplaincies to ethnic groups.

## New forms of life, new challenges

The first Catholic bishops in Australia were English Benedictines with a vision for a church founded on monastic lines, and European religious orders established traditional centres such as New Norcia (Benedictine, 1847) and Sevenhill (Jesuit, 1851) – just as later migrant monastic groups such as Serbian and Coptic Orthodox have done in their turn. But soon the particular missional needs of the Australian context gave rise to distinctive new communities, such as the Josephites founded in 1866 by St Mary MacKillop who pioneered education for the children of the bush, or the Anglican Bush Brotherhoods founded in 1897 which adapted existing models of religious life to meet the challenge of providing pastoral ministry over huge distances. These pioneers were not always welcomed by the authorities: famously, Mary MacKillop was excommunicated for her pains! Communities also led the way in church-based social provision. Anglicare traces its origins to the Community of the Holy Name founded in Melbourne by Mother Esther in 1888, which developed a network of soup kitchens, residential homes, and hospitals. After 1900 an influx of Catholic apostolic religious orders from Ireland and Europe expanded these educational and health care ministries in unprecedented ways, but their arrival also reinforced denominational fault lines.

*"More encouragingly, churches are increasingly realising their obligation to work together for environmental justice in a world of climate change, and to articulate a vibrantly authentic Australian spirituality which addresses the 'original sin' at the heart of the Australian colonial project."*

The social changes of the 1960s led to the decline of traditional communities, a wave of new experiments in community living (often inspired by the charismatic renewal), and the arrival in Australia of international movements such as L'Arche, Focolare and Youth with a Mission (YWAM). Some new communities such as the Missionaries of God's Love / Disciples of Jesus have found long term

stability, while many faced a range of issues including mistrust from denominational authorities and internal governance failures and proved unable to sustain the vision of their founders over time. Others morphed first into 'house churches' and then independent Pentecostal denominations – and interestingly today many of these churches are showing increasing interest in 'new monastic' spiritual practises and birthing new communities such as 24-7 Prayer's Order of the Mustard Seed.



Spiritual praise, photo supplied

*Article con't from pg 7*

## **Rediscovery and renewal**

In 2021 Australian Christianity faces the twin challenges of rebuilding confidence in its public value and rediscovering its prophetic edge. At the same time social commentators such as Hugh Mackay and Andrew Leigh are noting how our secular contemporaries are increasingly crying out for sources of spirituality, connectedness, transcendent value, and hope. More encouragingly, churches are increasingly realising their obligation to work together for environmental justice in a world of climate change, and to articulate a vibrantly authentic Australian spirituality which addresses the “original sin” at the heart of the Australian colonial project. Ecumenical networks of indigenous and non-indigenous Christian leaders such as Common Grace, and new communities such as Campfire in the Heart, are well placed to make a prophetic contribution to this renewal.

It is within this contemporary mission context that the Holy Spirit is calling into being new forms of community life for the renewal of God’s Church and the service of God’s world. Like all renewals of religious life, such communities will be rooted in the prayerful tradition of the Church, but they will also be different, and history tells us that they will often be misunderstood by ecclesial powerbrokers and gatekeepers – particularly if they do not sit comfortably within existing denominational boundaries. The conversation between traditional, new and emerging communities must therefore be characterised by a spirit of mutual learning and generous exchange, as together we learn how to welcome the new charisms with which God is blessing God’s Church, and give these communities the support, encouragement and oversight which will give them the best chance to thrive and fulfil their missional potential.





Prof Ann Harrington, Prof Elizabeth MacKinlay, Ilse Hampton and Sally Mordike, photo by Hazel Francis

## Pastoral care, spiritual growth and holistic perspectives

by Rev'd Graham Lindsay

At 76 I find that my elderly friends and neighbours need a more nuanced form of support to cope with ageing, being frail, being in care or being disabled in some way.

During the seminar, what the various speakers cemented in my mind was that good pastoral care is closely connected to the spiritual growth of the whole Body of Christ. I have tried to encapsulate the spirit and principles addressed because they apply to a wider target group than the frail elderly. They can apply to any church community.

The principles of pastoral care arise from the two great commandments (love God, love your neighbour). Pastoral care is primarily about "connecting people's spirits to God's eternal spirit" (Rev'd Prof Stephen Pickard) requiring spiritual growth in each member of the Body of Christ. Christian hope is found in the grace of God. God's grace requires the church to be inclusive, welcoming and Christ-like in our relationships with everyone.

For each of us, taking the Gospel to the ends of the earth requires that the pastoring, teaching, and shepherding of God's flock is holistic and inclusive. It requires a holistic perspective encompassing all stages of life. Holistic approaches will cover spiritual growth, physical and mental well-being, social growth, and intellectual growth. We must address the needs of the whole person within their family, community, and cultural setting.

There is a practical limit to what we can do as individuals and as church to change society for the better. We need time to ensure we carefully develop our own local strategies in conversation with the intended recipients.

Challenging questions begin with everyone, at each stage in their lives, asking, "Where do I find meaning in life right now?" or "What is it that I can do for others now?"

I had asked myself the question, "As a 'retired' deacon in the Anglican Diocese of Canberra & Goulburn, what is God's purpose for my life now and into the near future"? The answer — a question: What could you usefully do in your parish to provide care for your elderly and vulnerable friends?

I am indebted to the Rev'd Professor Elizabeth MacKinlay whose assistance I sought and who directed me to the seminar where I met some wonderful people and ideas, and developed a future focus: a report on the Colloquium for Ageing Perspectives and Spirituality (CAPS) seminar - *Spiritual growth for frail elderly people: institutional and community challenges from 2020 and beyond*, held on 19 April 2021.

# Leadership, neuroscience and pastoral care

by Dr Carlos A Raimundo

ACC&C Adjunct Research Fellow



Dr Carlos A Raimundo,  
photo supplied.

I believe Chris Lowney took his statement from the first chapters of Genesis<sup>1</sup>. They are an ontological template for successful life leadership. After creating the world, God created a man and a woman in His image to manage, name, take control and care for the whole creation. His image included the ability to choose between life and death. In Ignatius<sup>2</sup> words, "God created human beings to praise, reverence, and serve God, and by

doing this, to save their souls. God created all other things on the face of the earth to help fulfil this purpose." How we use, not misuse, what God created will determine how we lead our lives. It also reminds us of our selfish nature;<sup>3</sup> we choose what we want, missing out on what we need to fulfil the purpose of life. The story highlights the natural human reaction to God's existential question, "Where are you?", we hide. The creation story affects us generationally, as seen in Cain's response after killing his brother to God's question, "where is your brother Abel?"; "am I my brother's keeper?" Behavioural neuroscience echoes the biblical story demonstrating that being human includes consciousness,<sup>4</sup> the capacity of choice and language, hence the ability to name and control the world around us. It's a reminder that we're all part of the human race<sup>5</sup>. We're all created in the image of God; we relate to Abba, and those around me 'are' my brothers and

*"We sometimes forget that we're leading, well or not so well, all the way in everything we do in life."*

**Chris Lowney, Heroic Leadership.**

sisters. Consciousness gives us insight<sup>6</sup>, so we can respond to the Where are you? And Where is your brother? Insight, or "coming to his senses," was the decisive point for the prodigal son to return<sup>7</sup>, to return home. Return in Hebrew is Teshuvah, a process of acknowledging our mistakes, sin, the decision to change, and the verbal expression or wrongdoing<sup>8</sup>. Neuroscience reminds us we can pause and reflect on 'our ways', how we are leading our lives well or not so well. Insight is available, and we can respond to the Where are you? A reflection that must include a pastoral care dimension of how we're caring for one another<sup>9</sup>. Yes, we're our brother's and sister's keepers. Professional accompaniment in spiritual direction, supervision, coaching and counselling are safe spaces to dwell on those questions allowing us to return home, Abba is waiting.

1 Genesis 1 -4. Lowney, 2009.

2 Loyola, 2007.

3 Domming & Hellwig, 2006.

4 Corballis, 2011.

5 Schaeffer & Coop, 1983.

6 Castonguay & Hill, 2007.

7 LUKE 15: 11-32, Nouwen, H.J, 1994.

8 CHABAD. Teshuvah. 2021 23/06/2021; The word Teshuvah is usually translated as repentance. In fact, there is a well-known prayer recited on the High Holy Days that Teshuvah, Tefillah, and Tzedakah, translated as "Repentance," "Prayer," and "Charity" can avert the evil decree. Available from: [https://www.chabad.org/library/article\\_cdo/aid/361890/jewish/Teshuvah.htm](https://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/361890/jewish/Teshuvah.htm).

9 John 13:34-35. Nouwen, 1994, Petuchowski, 1968.

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## Seeking hope in the Anthropocene

by Dr Jonathan Cole

PaCT Assistant Director



Jonathan Cole,  
photo supplied.

Last year, Rev Dr Peter Walker and I informed readers that we were seeking a publisher for a volume of essays on the theological implications of the Anthropocene, the culmination of a series of seminars hosted by the Centre for Public and Contextual in Canberra between 2017 and 2020. It is our very great pleasure to announce that we recently signed a contract with Lexington Books to publish the volume under the working title

of *Defiant Earth: Seeking Hope in the Anthropocene*. The volume is to be published in Lexington's Religious Ethics and Environmental Challenges series. The manuscript has now been sent to reviewers and we anticipate publication in 2022.

As the introduction to the volume notes, CSU Prof Clive Hamilton's book *Defiant Earth: The Fate of Humans in the Anthropocene* "is the sun around which the contributions to this volume orbit." Hamilton's internationally recognised writings on the philosophical and ethical implications of the Anthropocene has shaped the structure and content of the volume.

The volume begins Hamilton's own essay "The Anthropocene Epoch and Its Meaning," which is followed by ten contributing essays, with each exploring the theological implications of Hamilton's insights regarding the new ontology of the Anthropocene. Collectively, the essays investigate the impact of the Anthropocene on ecclesiology, eschatology, apocalypse, hamartiology, theological anthropology and the doctrine of creation. The volume concludes with Hamilton's response to the contributing essays and his reflections on the prospects for continued fruitful dialogue between theologians and secular thinkers regarding humanity's collective fate in the Anthropocene. In that regard, Hamilton is of the view that "theology, unlike modern philosophy, has the conceptual resources to...help us grasp the reconfiguration of the human condition on an Earth rendered dangerous and uncontrollable."

It has been an honour to co-edit the volume with Peter Walker, and on behalf of both of us, I would like to thank our contributors: Prof Clive Hamilton, Prof Lisa Sideris, Rt Rev'd Prof Stephen Pickard, Prof Mark Brett, Dr Dianne Rayson, Rev'd Canon Prof Scott Cowdell, A/Prof David Neville, Prof Christiaan Mostert and A/Prof Clive Pearson, and all the other scholars who participated in one or more of the seminars that led to the genesis of this project.

## Thinking beyond the individual and the imperative for human evolution: a Christian response to climate change

CES Forum 9 June 2021

CES welcomed a gathering at the Australian Centre for Christianity and Culture to listen to Bishop George Browning (former Anglican Bishop of Canberra and Goulburn) and Dr David Hunter (President, Othopterists' Society and adviser to the Asia Development Bank) speak on climate change and the Christian moral imperative to act for the common good.



Bishop George Browning and Dr David Hunter, photo by Clive Rodger



Danny Pratt, Courtney Allen and A Chorus of Women in the Invocation finale, *The Gravity Ball* (words and music Danny Pratt) beneath the screened image of Sally Blake's drawing, *The Sacred Thought*. Photo by Leighton Hutchinson

## Earthbound calls in the sacred on the climate crisis

by Dr Glenda Cloughley

### Earthbound and A Chorus of Women

Canberra's new intergenerational, multi-arts performance group Earthbound was out in public with creative responses to the existential threat of climate change.

Joined by A Chorus of Women, who have a residency at the Australian Centre for Christianity and Culture, the five Earthbound artists presented *Invocation* on 26 June. With a theme of regeneration, this sell-out showing of work in progress combined story, visual artworks, performance poetry, dance, heavy guitar grooves, heartfelt lyrics and soaring harmonies. Above the stage, Earthbound made dramatic use of the large Belconnen Arts Centre theatre screen for Sally Blake's images. The work was developed during a five-month Rhizome Performing Arts Residency at Belco Arts.

The Earthbound artists are dancer-actor-choreographer Courtney Allen, performance poet-art rock musician-dancer Danny Pratt, visual artist Sally Blake, and composer-storyteller-singer Glenda Cloughley and musical director-singer-songwriter Johanna McBride who also compose and direct A Chorus of Women's music. With assistance from artsACT, Elizabeth Cameron Dalman OAM worked as Earthbound's theatre consultant and choreography-dance mentor for the youngest Earthbounder, Courtney.

Wisdom from ancient, indigenous European culture became a steady guide through the development of *Invocation* -- particularly sources of story and image associated with the 'great goddess' named Gaia by both the ancient Greeks and today's complex earth system scientists. This Prayer was written and sung by Glenda Cloughley:

*O Gaia*

*Help us to spin the unbroken thread  
from the start of the world  
through our own time  
for the children yet to come*

Also woven throughout the performance was Ubuntu, the Zulu philosophy about the interconnectedness of people with all life on Earth. Ubuntu is also the title of Johanna's song, which was sung by the entire company and receptive audience:

*Ubuntu*

*I am who I am because of you  
We are who we are because of each other*

# Women Rising

by Dr Janet Salisbury – A Chorus of Women

Founder, Women's Climate Congress



The Women's Climate Congress was formed in early 2020 when 45 Canberra women came together in grief for the Black Summer bushfires at two meetings hosted by A Chorus of Women in the ACC&C Chapel. We were frustrated by the political roadblocks to action on climate change. We felt the need for cultural rebalancing to accommodate new, more collaborative ways forward and the potential for women to lead this change. So, we embarked on an ambitious plan to bring diverse women together to find a common voice to balance the polarised political discourse on climate change. We soon found that women around Australia had had enough of political discord and were eager to join our vision.

*“Climate policy in Australia has been divisive for too long. We share a common humanity and we must act together for the common good and for future generations. Women are stepping up.”*

By the end of 2020, we were an established organisation with hundreds of members across the country and a strong following on social media. We spoke to many MPs and decision makers and developed relationships with women from all walks of life who bring deep knowledge, lived experience and expertise across many areas. And we quickly found that women are rising everywhere in so many ways.

Early in 2021, our attention turned to 'Women Rising' as the theme for a national conference that we plan to host in Canberra over 3 days from 29 November-1 December. Meanwhile, by March, the voices of women were rising in a different way. Allegations of sexual harassment, misogyny and worse emerging from women working in the federal parliament led to a massive outcry from

women that 'Enough is Enough'. The March for Justice events that swept the country sparked conversations that went far beyond sexual misconduct to the difficulties women face in fitting in to the political system designed by men all those generations ago – of being listened to and of getting their political priorities onto the table. And every day as women become more outspoken, more pieces of the puzzle fall into place.

We aim for our national conference – the National Congress of Women – to take these new insights right into the heart of the challenging political area of climate change. Climate policy in Australia has been divisive for too long. We share a common humanity and we must act together for the common good and for future generations. Women are stepping up. They are rising and we warmly invite women from all walks of life, cultural, religious and political persuasions to join us. We also welcome support from men who share our aims.

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'Women Rising': Congress members, Jenny Robinson and Sarah Stitt join Founder, Janet Salisbury, at the Women's Agenda Women's Leadership Awards dinner, April 2021, photo supplied

### Launch of *Not Helpful: Tales from a Truth Teller*, Echo Books

by the Rt Rev'd George Browning. Speech by Acting Justice Richard Refshauge

I acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land on which we are meeting, and whose sovereignty has never been ceded, and pay my respects to their elders, past present and emerging. I commit myself to personal acts of reconciliation.

A week or so ago, my wife, Barbara, and I were delighted to attend the wonderful performance by John Bell of "One Man in His Time", a personal, funny and moving evening of Shakespeare with the greatest living exponent of the Bard of Avon.

He gave a fabulous rendition of many famous speeches created by the Elizabethan playwright, showing how modern so many were and actually spoke to our time. I was proud to remember quite a few, which I found I could recite - perhaps my education was better than I thought!

Some required a little exegesis, a process that we Christians understand especially in these days of controversy about women in ministry, rampant usury, same-sex marriage and the blessings of such unions.

While not wishing to consign our distinguished author and Guest of Honour to the grave just yet, but recognising that we are, at least in part, in launching these memoirs, looking at Bishop George Browning's legacy, I could not help but think of the words that Shakespeare put in the mouth of Marc Antony, "The evil that men do lives after them, the good is oft interred with their bones", but which Bell did not declaim, nor interpret. Thinking about it, I decided that Shakespeare was wrong in this generalisation; indeed, often we find that careful thought and distance enhances the legacy of so many and we appreciate what they actually have done and the contribution that they have made.

I rather prefer the epitaph for Sir Christopher Wren, "Si monumnetum requiris, circumspice" or, in what my Latin master, the late exquisite Professor Kay Masterman, would describe as Pig Latin, "If you want to find a monument, Sir, come spy, see".

In this chapel of the Australian Centre for Christianity and Culture, that is an entirely fitting comment on the contribution made by Bishop George to this city, this Diocese, the Australian Church, indeed, to Australia.

This memoir is a fascinating and instructive journey through Bishop George's life and work and an illuminating window into his personal history, how he came to the positions that he occupied and the views that he espoused.

As I said in my Foreword, which I was honoured to have been asked to write and proud to have contributed, it was inspiring to see how he so valued and respected his fellow human beings that he could learn from them and their experiences to form the

thoughtful positions that he took. It was a great education to see how he could come to many positions after wrestling with issues and respecting the need to realise that "now we see through a glass darkly", so as to form a provisional view but one clearly formed through careful consideration of reason and theology.

This, and his abiding faith, which shines through the book so strongly, with the commitment to his Lord Jesus Christ, led to his success and important leadership in many ways.

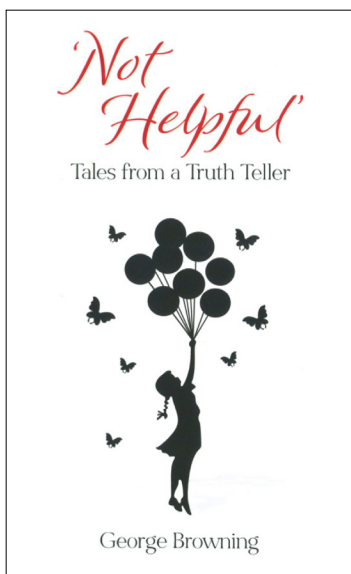
I think of what he did as Bishop of Canberra and Goulburn, too much to itemise, but especially of his early recognition of the need for action to address the sexual abuse of children through the scheme of Contact Officers throughout the Diocese, the growth and importance of Diocesan Schools, the creation of a vibrant, prayerful and creative Diocese with wonderful people trained and nurtured that came to enhance it and the wider Church - 7 Diocesan Bishops currently or in the recent past who spent significant periods here, as well as people from the Diocese in senior Church positions, such as assistant bishops and Archdeacons here and elsewhere, leaders of national church agencies and other positions - then, not least his speaking truth to power in national affairs, his leadership in environmental protection and enhancement and, of course, the cause of my reference to the Wren epitaph,

the Australian Centre for Christianity and Culture, an amazing, influential, unique and effective institution, that was essentially his vision and creation, with the impressive support that he garnered.

This is the man about whom you will gain insight when reading this book. You will understand and appreciate the work he did and the thoughts he had which underpinned that work and why he was as prominent and his work as significant as he and it was.

It is a good read. I recommend it without hesitation. It is honest and clear-sighted; no series of insider stories that can only be understood by the cognoscenti. It is an accessible trip through the interesting life of a devoted Christian and important Australian, who appreciated the gifts of God, and which actually centrally includes the creation of the world and the people chosen to inhabit it, and a person who was committed to enhancing, protecting and celebrating these gifts and not at all hesitant about saying what he thought to the great as well to the rest of us.

We are certainly lucky to have this impressive contribution to the biography of important Christians and grateful that it is no stuffy read but an inspiring and energising discernment of his personal history, life and thought.



# Australian Jurists and Christianity

edited by Geoff Lindsay and Wayne Hudson

Review by Dr Ken Crispin

*Australian Jurists and Christianity* is concerned with the influence of Christianity on legal policy and law enforcement in Australia. It approaches this interesting topic, not by broad analyses of relevant jurisprudential developments and the movements that led to them, but rather by a series of essays, each concerning the life of a person who might broadly be described as a 'jurist'. The editors explain that an unusually expansive view has been taken of that term. It has been taken to encompass "those who contributed to Australia's constitutional development, those who privileged 'black letter' law (now well-established legal rules), those who fought for social justice for indigenous people and those who were concerned with social justice more generally." The essays relate to an interesting and diverse cast of people, including Lachlan Macquarie, Robert Menzies, Gough Whitlam and Eddie Mabo, selected by reference to those criteria. Not all were Australian, not all were overtly Christian and not all were qualified lawyers. Yet all made substantial contributions to social attitudes and legal reform that reflected Christian values. The authors offer interesting insights into their lives and characters, the challenges they faced and their impact upon Australian law and society. The essays are generally well-written and they are introduced by a substantive discussion of aspects of Australian law, legal history and practice.

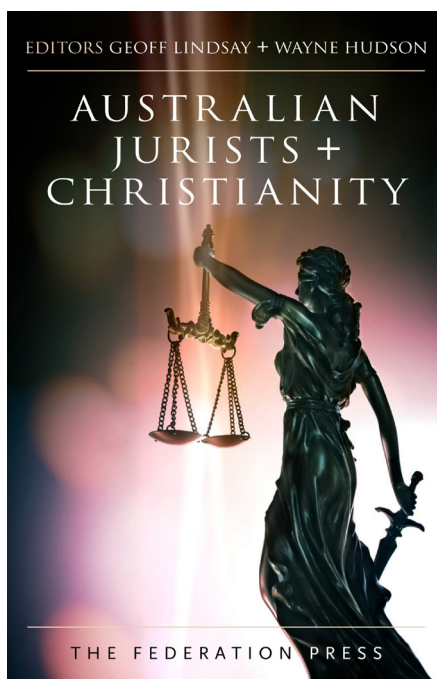
Of course, the essays must be read in their historical context. Religious influences generally waned as our nascent self-governing colonies merged into a new nation and a multicultural and pluralist society gradually emerged. During the 18th century it was generally assumed that the authorities had a duty to promote Christian belief and morality. In 1884 the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of NSW affirmed that Christianity was actually part of the common law of England and hence of the colonies. For many the bible has remained the fundamental basis for moral judgment. Yet, as the editors observe, Christianity was not as formative for the law in Australia as it was in Calvin's Geneva or in nineteenth century Ireland, Belgium and Spain. Australians may have been gratified by living in what they regarded as a Christian country, but they insisted that political, social, educational and legal arrangements should be free from ecclesiastical control. The law nonetheless reflected conservative Christian moral views concerning issues such as divorce, Sunday trading, censorship and blasphemy until social attitudes changed in the decades following the Second World War.

Issues such as the treatment of the early convicts, relationships with Aboriginal people, the rights of religious minorities and the need for workers to receive a "living wage" are all mentioned in the book, as are the more recent controversies concerning no-fault divorce, abortion, surrogacy and same sex marriage, but they emerge in the views and reasoning of the individual jurists. Those seeking a more general discussion of such issues in the context of the Australian legal system will need to look elsewhere, but the essays offer interesting insights into the thoughts of and actions

of people obliged to wrestle with religious conviction and public duty within what Sir Gerard Brennan once described as the lonely room of conscience.

The law may now reflect the mores of a more secular society, but the continuing influence of Christianity may nonetheless be seen in certain legal principles. Perhaps the most obvious example is the "neighbour principle" formulated by Lord Atkin, who later said, "I doubt whether the whole law of tort could not be comprised in the golden maxim to do unto your neighbour as you would that he should do unto you." It may also be seen in the introduction of concepts of conscientiousness into the law of contract and in the prevalence of laws to protect the poor, the sick and the vulnerable.

Christian influence may also be seen in broader legal and social aspirations, particularly in the insistence that the law should uphold the rights and dignity of each individual and in the expectation that government should have a higher purpose than the mere formation of rules and the exercise of power. As the editors suggest, this transcending element can be found in the lives of Australians active in legal contexts across any confessional divide. Whilst the book provides a wealth of interesting historical information and casts considerable light on Australian attitudes to law and morality, it is this aspect that some may find most heartening. The lives of these Australian men and women may be seen as exemplars, but they were not alone in seeking to ensure that our laws and legal practices were framed with a view to improving the lives of others. Controversies may continue and Christians may remain divided about particular issues, but the Christian imperatives of justice and love may still be seen in the lives of many contemporary jurists.



## A Collection of contemporary religious art at ACC&C

by Rev'd Dr Rod Pattenden

ACC&C Adjunct Research Fellow

The Christian faith has often found its most powerful expression through cultural forms, such as music and the visual arts of painting, sculpture and architecture. This provides a record of how human communities have remembered and

*'Seeing, listening, moving and silence, has been the means through which artists and musicians have enlivened the imagination of faithful generations to celebrate the God who is with us.'*

responded to the challenges of their day, finding hope, facing their fears, and celebrating a God present in even the most diverse of cultural contexts. Seeing, listening, moving and silence, has been the means through which artists and musicians have enlivened the imagination of faithful generations to celebrate the God who is with us. This continues today in the diverse multi-cultural and religiously diverse nation of Australia where creative people are drawn to the questions that surround the mystery of grace, the nature of justice, and the task of locating the face of God in creation, making God alive through vibrant colour and present sound.

The Australian Centre for Christianity and Culture is committed to study, research and action through a vision that contains the four pillars of Wisdom,

Peace, Resilience, and Creativity. It is therefore part of its founding vision to listen and to look at the work of creative people who explore faith and existence through the creative arts. It should then be no surprise that from its inception this vision commissioned works of art. These have been added to over the years through purchase and donation, and is now emerging as a nationally important collection of original works that explore the religious imagination within the context of Australian culture. While a cycle of conferences, events, book launches, and ongoing research mark the programming of the Centre, there is clear potential for the Centre to become a destination for those wanting to see how artists respond to the key questions that irritate and enliven scholars and the general public alike.

Artists like the internationally known Emmanuel Garibay from the Philippines, the high profile Archibald Prize winner Euan Macleod, and one of Australia's finest icon painters, Michael Galovic, all now grace the walls of the Centre with major works of artistic significance. What a gift to debates around Australian identity, reconciliation, justice, and climate change, to have this resource of artworks to frame and provoke such essential conversations. Fortuitously situated right next door to the National Gallery of Australia, the Centre could well become a permanent site for pilgrimage to engage the imagination and to consider the questions most crucial to us at this time, through the vibrant presence of the visual arts.



*My Dreamstory Icon: Iconic Uluru* by Michael Galovic  
2009, tempera, goldleaf on board, 120x90cm



*Young Christ* by Emmanuel Garibay, oil on canvas,  
photo by Hazel Francis



## Yarning circle with Arrernte's Elder Petherre Chris Tomlins

by Rev'd Hazel Davies

Making Peasce [www.makingpeasce.com](http://www.makingpeasce.com)

During three days in April central Arrernte elder Chris Tomlins hosted a small circle yarning around the fireplace at the Chambers Pavilion at the ACC&C. Uncle Chris was in Canberra for a series of truth telling yarnings about colonial era conflicts in Australian history. Chris and others have been walking a road to conciliation for many decades, well before the current Overton window of acknowledgement opened across Australia. The conversations at the yarning centered around our formative history and celebrated visions of hope born out of a growing sense that we have permission to acknowledge and grieve.

Chris maintains settlers and sovereign peoples alike are in recovery from an experience of theft. First nation peoples lost life, land and culture. Settler Australians, especially of the older age bracket, suffered a theft of the truth. He says, as Australia comes to terms with its past it is important that we create neither victim nor perpetrator so that we can heal and live together in peace. Chris is grieved by national statistics and policies which perpetuate a war that he says will not end until the marginalisation and brokenness of aboriginal people is transformed.

Chris and other elders like him are peacemakers who stand in the gap of national debate and speak a telos of shalom envisaging a golden generation that listens deeply to one another working reciprocally for all peoples in these lands we now call Australia.

Also under discussion was how Australia is moving towards commemoration as seen in local memorial actions like Myall Creek, and national narratives such as the controversial Australian War Memorial(AWM) extension, and the move by RSL Tasmania to recognise the Black Wars in Tasmania in Hobart on 25 April 2021 Reconciliation Tasmania video (3 mins 300mb).



Around the campfire, photo supplied

Some participants spoke of discovering what had taken place on their own lands in the Monaro district.

We also looked at the Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) proposal to include truth telling in schools review proposal. This would see "students taught explicitly about the colonial invasion of this continent". The draft for review of the History curriculum goes further than before referring to teaching about massacres during the colonial contact in Year 5 (10-11 years-old). While in Year 9 (15-16 years-old) there is an opportunity for age appropriate direct investigation "of the effects of colonisation, such as frontier conflict, and the massacres of First Nations Australians; the spread of European diseases, and the destruction of cultural lifestyles". It does not explicitly refer to the extent and severity of the colonial era conflict massacres.

And last but not least, participants learnt to make Desert Pea tribute wreaths. These were laid at the Stone of Remembrance alongside other wreaths by first peoples at the AWM on Anzac Day with sashes reading "Colonial Era Conflicts LEST WE FORGET".

On behalf of Uncle Chris, Making Peasce would like to thank the ACC&C for facilitating the space, and members of the Benedictus Contemplative Church community for providing food and hospitality during this time.



Uncle Chris Tomlins, photo supplied



The Delegation outside Parliament House, photo supplied

## 40 women leaders descend on Canberra to raise their voice for the world's poor

by Beck Wilesmith

Senior Advisor, Micah Australia

On 15/16 June, Micah Australia hosted 40 women Christian leaders, representing the Australian Church, for the Micah Women Leader's Delegation. This was the third delegation of its kind facilitated by Micah, with a goal to create a high impact moment in order to influence our nation's leaders on the significant role Australia has to play in addressing extreme poverty and injustice in our world.

The delegation included representatives from every major denomination in Australia including: Anglican, Baptist, Catholic, Seventh-Day Adventist, Uniting Church, Australian Christian Churches, Hillsong, C3 Church, Church of Christ, and more.

We hosted a day of lobbying and policy training for the group on the grounds of the Australian Centre for Christianity and Culture. We love the rich history and ecumenical vision of the Centre – the perfect place to host this diverse group of faith leaders which included Aboriginal Christian leaders and Pacific diaspora. The Women were then broken up into smaller lobby groups for a full day of lobbying in Parliament House.

Altogether, we met with 48 politicians in just one day – a huge effort. It was a true picture of 'justice in action' as the leaders met with politicians from all sides, to talk about global vaccine equity and the most urgent knock-on impacts of the pandemic for the world's poor: rising extreme poverty, famine, and, further marginalisation of vulnerable groups.

The leaders were able to address what is increasingly a 'two-track pandemic', with richer countries having access to vaccines and poorer ones being left behind.

While, over 1 billion people were lifted out of extreme poverty during the last 20-years, COVID-19 has thrown the brakes on this, and is now jamming it into reverse, with an additional 150 million people expected to be pushed into poverty by the end of 2021. An additional 10,000 children each month are dying as a result of COVID-19 related hunger.

The delegation impressed upon the parliamentarians they met that the moral, health, and economic case all point towards Australia and other wealthy nations continuing to increase their efforts to help end COVID for all.

It was an impactful and significant delegation. Highlights included meetings with the Treasurer Josh Frydenberg, Minister for International development Zed Seselja and Shadow Foreign Affairs Minister Penny Wong who all engaged deeply with the groups. The sense of unity among these women was tangible and sent a powerful message to our nations' leaders about coming together for the common good. Through our work, Micah will continue these important conversations to ensure strong outcomes for the poorest and most vulnerable in our world.

Micah is a coalition of churches and Christian organisations raising a powerful voice for justice and a world free from poverty.

[www.micahaustralia.org](http://www.micahaustralia.org)



A lobby group meets with Senator Penny Wong, Shadow Foreign Affairs Minister, photo supplied.



A lobby group meets with Treasurer Josh Frydenberg, photo supplied.

# Introducing Adjunct Research Scholar, Dr Monica Short

## The Wisdom of an Integrated Lens



Dr Monica Short,  
photo supplied

The Centre's new Adjunct Research Fellow, Dr Monica Short is a social work lecturer and social science researcher at Charles Sturt University and has recently been appointed as an Adjunct Research Fellow at the ACC&C. Monica has developed an integrated lens model of inquiry incorporating social work, sociology and theology. This points to the importance of her preferred research methodologies: co-operative inquiry, ethnography,

literature review, and case studies. People's narratives are key. This includes being warmly connected with God and their neighbours, and belonging and flourishing in their communities.

The integrated lens depicted below has proven highly instructive in understanding the dynamics of rural communities.

Her recently awarded doctoral thesis is titled, 'The Australian Anglican Church engaging with people living with disabilities and from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds in rural, regional and remote communities'. She has worked for over 30 years in large organisations, including professional, academic, project management, and senior managerial roles. Monica coordinates the International Network of Co-operative Inquirers and jointly coordinates social work and humanities teaching and

learning during and post-COVID-19 think tank. Monica is a member of several professional and research groups, including the Anglican Church of Australia Mission and Ministry Commission. In 2020, Monica received The Australia and New Zealand Social Work and Welfare Education and Research Field-University Collaboration Award; and she was one of a group of recipients who received a CSU Excellence Award.

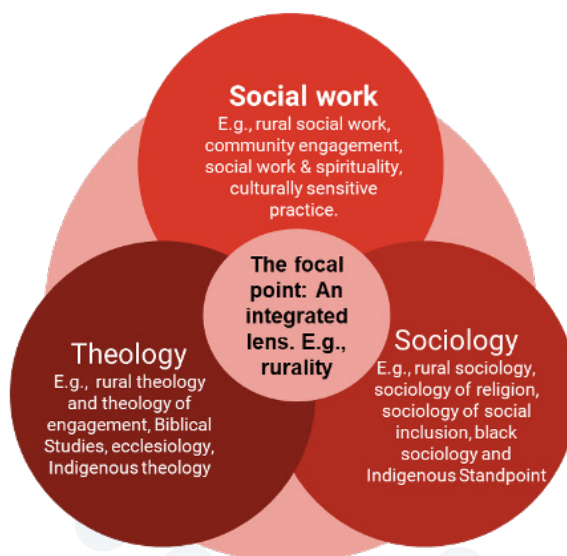


Figure 2. Applying an integrate lens with an epistemological base in social work, sociology and theology – For example applying the lens in understanding ruralism

# Introducing new Bible Garden gardener

by Hazel Francis

We are introducing our new Bible Garden gardener, Badri Rimal. In turn Badri introduced himself to us as grass loving and tree-hugging, outdoorsy, 'committed to the Bible Garden and creating a perfect reflection as scripted in the Bible'.

The Centre said a sad good-bye to our previous Gardener, Justin, as he departed with his family to warmer climes and new adventures. For the interim six months of having no gardener to maintain the garden through two crucial seasons, Summer and Autumn, we were extremely thankful to the volunteers who had found their way to us. They kept the Garden in order until Badri came onboard.

Since being with us Badri has created order with pruning, weeding, mulching, and planting new seedlings and seeds.

He has been ensuring the never-ending maintenance of the irrigation system, so that it is readied for the next hot spell. From our perspective we have been impressed with his enthusiasm, motivation and ideas.

Over the coming year there will be an audit completed of all plants in the garden, noting their place, times of flowering or fruiting or if they are still there and replacements planted. There are a couple of plants that are already on order for replacement including the Judas Tree (*Cercis siliquastrum*). Name plaques moved to make sure that the plants are correctly named and placed.

We look forward to witnessing the evolution and thriving of the Garden.

Thank you, Badri.



Badri Rimal, photo by Hazel Francis

## Upcoming Events

### ANSD Quiet Day – Compassion and Contemplation: Sisters

Saturday 28 August,  
from 9.30am – 3pm

This Quiet Day will bring our attention to a relationship between contemplation and self-compassion in the context of our, often, busy lives. To rest in contemplation, we need to bridge the gap between our many expectations of ourselves and the reality of who we are in any given moment. Compassion opens the contemplative space of the heart, where giving flows from receiving, doing is born of being, where effort is.

### Exhibition - Kim En Joong

8 – 10 October, daily 10.30 – 3.30

### Short Film screening and discussion

#### SIEV X Memorial

15 October from 7.30 – 9.30pm

Tuesday 19 October 2021 marks the 20th anniversary of the SIEV X tragedy when over 350 asylum seekers drowned while seeking safety in Australia. There is a memorial in Weston Park to those who died. The Faith-Based Working Group of the Refugee Action Campaign will commemorate this anniversary with a series of events on Friday 15 and Saturday 16 October. This film screening documents the background to and construction of the memorial.



SIEV X Memorial, Weston Park ACT,  
photo by Rosamund Daziell

### Conference – Ancient Futures: The renewal of Religious life in the Australian Church

4 – 6 November

The Ancient Futures conference will bring together ecumenical representatives from a wide range of traditional, new and emerging communities across Australia in order to:

- Reflect on the distinctive role played by Religious Communities during the first two centuries of Christianity in Australia
- Assess the history of new communities in Australia over the past 50 years: founding charisms, missions, relationships with church hierarchies, sustainability over time
- Consider how God may be calling 21st century Australians to various forms of religious life, and what ecclesial conditions (e.g. vision casting, theology, resourcing, oversight, ecumenical collaboration) are now required to enable what the Holy Spirit is doing.



Robes, photo supplied

### Exhibition – Sacred Geometry, Florentine mosaics by Anatoly Golobokava

26 November – 2 December,  
daily 10.30 – 3.30

The works are made using the Florentine mosaic technique from pieces of semi-precious stones such as agate, coloured jasper, tiger's eye, quartz, tiger iron, serpentine and others. The Florentine mosaic method was founded by Italian craftsmen in the late Renaissance, at the end of the 16th century and was called *pietre dure* (hard stones).



Trinity. Three-dimensional space, Anatoly Golobokava  
83x65cm, photo supplied.

The Centre is unique in Australia. It began in 1998 as an ecumenical venture for engagement with Australian culture and the issues of the day. It was established through a partnership between Charles Sturt University and the Anglican Diocese of Canberra and Goulburn. It is situated at the eastern edge of the Parliamentary Triangle in Canberra on a 99 year lease to the University which currently provides the major source of its funding.



Charles Sturt  
University

[www.acc-c.org.au](http://www.acc-c.org.au)

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