



*For Christ also suffered for sins once for all,
the righteous for the unrighteous,
in order to bring you to God.*

1 PETER 3:18 (NRSV)



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Vision: Our vision is of a world where God's love is shown through loving, respectful, and flourishing relationships.

Mission: Sharing Christ's love by encouraging, strengthening and supporting marriage and family life.

The PURPOSE of Mothers' Union is to be especially concerned with all that strengthens and preserves marriage and Christian family life.

Its AIM is the advancement of the Christian religion in the sphere of marriage and family life.

Its FIVE OBJECTS are:

1. To uphold Christ's teaching on the nature of marriage and to promote its wider understanding.
2. To encourage parents to bring up their children in the faith and life of the church.
3. To maintain a worldwide fellowship of Christians united in prayer, worship and service.
4. To promote conditions in society favourable to stable family life and the protection of children.
5. To help those whose family life has met with adversity.

MIAmia

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Mia Mia is an Aboriginal word for 'home'.

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Have your say in Mia Mia

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to the editor.

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Faithfulness

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Meet our contributors



John Cronshaw – aka ‘Buspa, the Grandpa with the buses’ – has been contributing to *Mia Mia* for over 10 years. John is the founding director of a tourism company based in the Blue Mountains of NSW, and still

works in that company, leading tours around Australia and internationally. He was on the council and executive of the Bush Church Aid Society (BCA) for 30 years, and has written several books, including ‘What is Your Plan B’.”



Rev'd Suzannah Daniels is the new president of Bendigo Diocese Mother's Union and an Anglican priest. She grew up in a Roman Catholic family in Melbourne, where gospel values of hospitality

and social justice were front and centre. Whilst teaching at a high school, Suzannah sought guidance from the school chaplain, who prayed for her. This moment transformed her faith from an intellectual one to a tangible sense of the presence of God. After undertaking an epic pilgrimage in 2012, encompassing three continents and countless ‘God-moments’, she returned to Melbourne to study theology and discern ordination. Suzannah, who is known widely by her nickname, Zan, lives in Bendigo on the traditional lands of the Dja Dja Wurrung and Taungurung Peoples of the Kulin Nation. Home life is full, with her husband Paul banging away in the shed and their two delightful rascals building forts and dancing around the kitchen. She enjoys gardening, various creative pursuits and unpacking the wonders of God and the bible with her children.



Virginia Grice has been a contributor to *Mia Mia* through her column, ‘Over the fence’ for the past three years. Of their life as a family in ministry, Virginia says, ‘We have loved serving Anglican

faith communities across rural Australia for more than 20 years. Remaining connected to our adult children remains a high priority, especially as the family is now spread across Australia, from Perth to Rockhampton.’ She continues to enjoy her work as a vet and has maintained a love of long-distance running, badminton and sports in general, with cricket playing the biggest part in their family's community sporting life.

Contents

From the Editor's desk

Christine Brain 4

The President writes...

Dr. Robin Ray 4

The true meaning of sacrifice

Susan Skowronski, Social Issues
and Action Coordinator..... 6

Dwelling in the Cross

Christine Jensen, OAM,
Prayer and Spirituality Coordinator 7

Sacrifice

Kristi Day, Promotion and
Communication Coordinator..... 8

You want me to sacrifice what, Lord?

Wendy Mabey, Overseas and
Northern Outreach Coordinator 9

That Night in the Garden

John Cronshaw 10

Hymn Workout:

The Power of the Cross to Change Us 11

16 days of Activism Against

Gender-Based Violence 12

From the Sidelines –

an Observer at the AMUA Council Meeting
Jan Rose 14

Who's Who on the Australian Executive 16

Connecting With Kids

Rev'd Suzannah Daniels 20

The Suffering Servant: Lent reflection 22

NSW State Conference

Joan Eberlé 24

Over the Fence

Virginia Grice 26

From My Bookshelf 28

Around the Dioceses 30



From the Editor's desk

Welcome to the first issue of *Mia Mia* for 2023. I hope that your Christmas celebrations were joy-filled, whether you were in the company of many or few. By now the new year has well and truly begun – those who took a break have returned to work, children have returned to school and Mothers Union groups are meeting again. I wonder how you are planning to engage with our theme for the year, 'Transformation – Now!'? I was greatly inspired by stories from members who were seeking to do that in 2022, and I look forward to hearing many more in the days ahead. Sometimes even a seemingly-insignificant change, such as smiling more at strangers, or bending down to look a small child in the eye in order to have a conversation with them, can have surprising results. Why not keep a diary of the ways in which you or your group are transforming your attitudes and actions, and let me know so that I can share it with others?

The theme for this issue, coming as it does in the season of Easter, is 'sacrifice' and there are articles from well-known friends and our Executive members which pick up on various aspects of sacrifice. Ben Boland, Anne Kennedy and I share our thoughts on three books which we think are well worth reading and I have included an exercise from my pick, *Hymn Workouts*, and also a reflection from Mothers Union (UK) to get us thinking about Jesus' sacrifice. I hope you also enjoy reading about the NSW State Conference as well as some of the ways in which AMUA members participated in the *16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence* campaign. The Rev. Suzannah Daniels shares some ideas for engaging with children and young people in the Easter season, Jan Rose has given us an Observer's view of the Australia Council meeting and there's news from around the country, as well as some Easter-themed recipes. So, grab a cuppa, put your feet up and *happy reading!*

Christine



The President writes...

Liberating Sacrifice

I have just finished reading an Australian novel in which some of the characters, as young men, go off to the First World War. They leave Australia full of hope and adventure. As the story progresses, the adventure soon turns to a desperate hope for survival. Through the pages, stories of mateship and sacrifice evolve as these characters try to keep each other alive, at Gallipoli and in France, sometimes unsuccessfully.

During the Church's season of Lent, working up to Good Friday, we read and study Bible passages about Jesus' ministry; the hope and joy he brings to people on his journey to Jerusalem. His triumphal entry to Jerusalem is filled with joy, praise and adoration. Jesus' intent through the events of holy week documents a change in focus as he prepares his disciples for the sacrifice of Good Friday – Jesus' ultimate sacrifice – death by the barbarous act of crucifixion, for the sins of the world.

Unlike the tragedy of lives lost or changed forever as a result of war, Jesus' sacrifice is liberating, enabling Christians to be reconciled and forgiven. 'Jesus Saviour of the world...by your cross and your life laid down you set your people free'¹.

Moving forward into this new triennium, our Mothers Union theme of *Transformation – Now!* gives us an opportunity to show others the vital ministry that MU can provide. Becoming more actively involved with supporting the needs of women, girls and modern families in the community can set MU free from some of the old attitudes that have hindered our image and our membership potential. Transformation may be calling us to sacrifice some of our old ideas and ways and look at fresh ways to be MU in today's society. Many of you have already begun this process and I congratulate you on what has

been achieved to date. However, transformation is an ongoing process that we all need to work at regularly. Change requires us to examine and evaluate, to give thanks for the positive ways in which we have lived into God's call and to identify those aspects of our lives and the work of MU that can be improved.

Mary Sumner worked to transform the social conditions of her time, giving us a pattern for our work as MU members. Now, more than ever, Australian families need the love of God in action in their lives. We are blessed with an Australian Executive who have a range of skills and talents, and a passion for service, to assist us. As your new Australian President, I'm stepping out with 'L plates' on, hoping to work with you all to focus

on the imperatives of mission and service. I look forward to visiting your diocese for a time of sharing and learning from each other. May we live into God's salvation flowing from Jesus' sacrifice as we discern ways forward, transforming and renewing Mothers Union in Australia.

Make yourself known as our saviour and mighty deliverer, save and help us that we may praise you. Come now and dwell with us, Lord Christ Jesus: hear our prayer and be with us always.¹

Please be assured of my ongoing prayers for you all.

Robin Ray

¹ A Prayer Book for Australia (1995), Broughton Books, Netley, South Australia, p.414





The true meaning of sacrifice

Through Jesus, therefore, let us continually offer to God a sacrifice of praise—the fruit of lips that openly profess his name. Hebrews 13: 15

When I admired my son's gooseberries, he suggested I grow some for myself. 'I guess I can sacrifice these,' he said as he handed me a couple of rather dry fruit, neglected at the back of the bush. Was it a sacrifice if he wasn't going to use them anyway?



I took the seeds home and dried them. I set up a seed tray and planted as many cells as I thought I could manage. Should I sacrifice the remainder of the seeds or put them aside for later? Would they be any use to someone else? I decided to discard them – not really a sacrifice as I was confident that I'd be able to save seeds from my crop.

The strike rate was phenomenal!

Many of the cells were overcrowded with seedlings. I counted up to 14 little plants in one cell. I didn't have a spare 20 acres to turn into a gooseberry field. Gardening gurus tell us in these circumstances, we should sacrifice the smaller plants to allow the bigger, stronger plants to flourish. If I have no use for these extra plants, is it really a sacrifice?

I started thinking about other instances in my life that have been referred to as sacrifices. I sacrificed my career to be a stay-at-home mother. I've never regretted my decision. I sacrificed time to help out at church, to give young mothers free sewing lessons, to serve on the committee of the writing group and so on. I do not believe these actions were sacrifices as I was amply rewarded with friendship, fellowship and fulfilment.

My son said he organised salary sacrifice to buy a car, and a friend refused to work longer hours if it meant she'd have to sacrifice her social life.

We use the word rather loosely, don't we? Let's pause and think of the true meaning of sacrifice – giving up some highly-valued, precious thing for the good of others. Remember Christ's perfect sacrifice – giving his life for us.

Susan Skowronski



Dwelling in the Cross

I wonder what church would be like without congregational singing? I think that some people would prefer that. A friend of mine has been conscious all his life that he cannot sing well, and that he must irritate people around him. Recently, for some reason, he has been given the gift of song and he finds that he is singing in tune. He is so pleased! And so are those who stand near him.

After all, God's word tells us to minister to each other in song: 'Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing each other in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs with thankfulness in your hearts to God.' (Colossians 3:16).

Some of the greatest of all Christian songs have been written about the death of Jesus. This is hardly surprising, given the central significance of the cross for the life and worship of God's people. It is no accident that the cross is the universal symbol of the Christian faith everywhere around the world.

What a gift some of these hymns are. I always think first and foremost of the words of Isaac Watts:

'When I survey the wondrous cross,
On which the Prince of glory died,
My richest gain I count but loss,
And pour contempt on all my pride.'

It is very personal, and rightly so. For although the Lord died for the sins of the whole world, we may also say that he died for me (Galatians 2:20). Watts also captures the great truth that we cannot save ourselves, that we cannot build up a collection of goodness sufficient to make up for our sins. Our only hope is forgiveness, and that comes to us through the cross. It is the same thought that we find in another great hymn, 'Rock of Ages':

Nothing in my hand I bring,
Simply to Thy Cross I cling;
Naked come to thee for dress;

1 Isaac Watts (1674-1748), published in *Hymns and Spiritual Songs*, 1707.

Helpless, look to thee for grace;
Foul, I to the Fountain fly –
Wash me, Saviour or I die.²

While we may sing it corporately, it is our own soul which is crying out to God for his mercy and fixing our eyes on the cross. Watts also enables us to think of the reality of the cross and what our Saviour did for us. He gives us the words we want to say, the thoughts we want to have:

‘See! from His head, His hands, His feet,
Sorrow and love flow mingled down!
Did e’er such love and sorrow meet,
Or thorns compose so rich a crown.’

Then he gives us the words for a true response to the cross:

‘Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were and offering far too small;
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all.’

What else can we say, feel and do, when we think of the cross?

Some years ago, I had the privilege of sitting at the bedside of a younger, dying friend. Her faith was real and strong. As we prayed and reflected together, it was natural that we should turn to hymns.

We sang the hymns which meant so much to her, which expressed her faith in Jesus. This is something we have which unbelievers lack, the ‘songs of Zion’ which bring peace and comfort and hope in the midst of pain and anxiety. What more important time is there for us to be thinking of the cross? Our hopes may be shaken by what is going on. Our failures and sins may be speaking very loudly to us as our conscience comes alive. How desperately we need assurance!

Rightly we read the scriptures; rightly we receive Communion; but rightly also we sing the songs which give us comfort and hope and enable us to focus our hearts and minds on what Jesus has done for us.

I thank God for hymn writers like Isaac Watts who preach eloquent sermons which we can all speak and through which we can address the Lord. And I thank God that they have given us hymns about the cross above all, for the death of Jesus for me is my supreme ground of hope in life and in death.

‘Hold thou Thy Cross before my closing eyes:

Speak through the gloom, and point me to the skies.

Heaven’s morning breaks, and earth’s vain shadows flee!

In life, in death, O Lord. Abide with me!’³

Christine Jensen



Photo credit: Jacob Lange on Pixabay

² Augustus Toplady (1740-1778), published in *Psalms and Hymns for Public and Private Worship*, 1776.

³ Henry Francis Lyte (1793-1847). The hymn was written not long before Lyte's death in 1847.



Sacrifice

When I started brainstorming ideas about the theme for this issue of the *Mia Mia*, it didn't take long for me to see how sacrifice fits into lives of families today. I soon realised that we make the greatest sacrifices for our families. Parents sacrifice a substantial part of their lives by working in order to provide the best possible lifestyle for their family. Most families no longer have the option of one parent staying at home to care for children due to the rising cost of living and financial pressures.

I live in Mackay, which is situated on the east coast of North Queensland. Mackay was a small sugar farming town; however, the population has grown significantly over recent years due to the expansion of the mining and resource sector in our region. Many families relocate to Mackay hoping to better their employment prospects, career or salary. When a family relocates for work, they often give up their social networks and support systems. Families who relocate to offer their gifts and skills to a town, in which they have no connection, is a blessing for the community. It is a sacrifice that is frequently overlooked and undervalued, when you consider the significance that our friends and extended family have in our lives.

The lack of social connections can also be described as loneliness or social isolation. This can have a detrimental effect on physical or mental health. In fact, according to a study conducted in the UK in 2017, long term loneliness is as damaging to your health as is smoking 15 cigarettes a day.¹ How much is the lack of social connections and the effect it has on one's mental health contributing to the rise of substance misuse, divorce or separation, homelessness and suicide in our communities today? For a young family, finding the right balance between work and family life can be challenging, especially for single parents, shift workers, and families with a limited or absent support system.

Relocating to a different town for work or a lifestyle change is not new. I frequently hear long-time Mothers' Union members say that, no matter where they lived, MU was a constant in their lives. As a result of their husbands' many relocations for work, they were quickly connected to their new community thanks to the local MU branch.

Helping families whose family life has met with adversity is one of our objectives. Families who are displaced, for any reason, are at risk of feeling isolated and lonely, which may have a detrimental effect on their mental health. How do we, as Mothers' Union members and branches, support new people who relocate to our community? How can you support the parents whose partners do shift work or work away?

One of the best things about being a Mothers' Union member is that we can reach out to families who are in need of support. We have the opportunity to deliberately engage with families who have relocated and made the effort to serve us.

How we view sacrifice raises many questions in a person's daily life. In your communication and interaction with people, where have you made a sacrifice? Can you and your branch use this as another way to enhance your Mothers' Union journey?

I look forward to hearing your stories in the coming months.

Kristi Day

Photo credit: Tim Marshall on Unsplash



¹ Loneliness as harmful as smoking 15 cigarettes a day <https://extension.unh.edu/blog/2022/05>. Accessed 20/01/23



You want me to sacrifice what, Lord?

*'It is one thing to read about God's people in other times and other places who have sacrificed in obedience to God. It is another thing altogether to imagine that God would expect the same of us. But why would God exempt us from the same sacrifice that He has required from His people throughout history?'*¹

When my husband Ian was first ordained as a priest he was posted to a country parish, because newly-ordained clergy were required to go where sent for their first placement as a parish priest. We had at the time two teenage children. Renae was about to enter her final year of high school and Rohan was going into year nine; they attended an Anglican school for both day and boarding students in Bunbury. Several years previously, when we had told them that Ian was going to offer for the priesthood and that we would be leaving our farm in the south-west of Western Australia, the one request that Renae made was that we not leave her behind.

I remember vividly the day Ian visited me at my work to tell me his appointment had been confirmed by the bishop. I found myself faced with a dilemma: Move with Ian to his new parish and place our children in boarding, or stay with our children and leave Ian to go to his new parish alone? For our family, answering this call to ministry required sacrifice. As we had moved around the diocese for four years as a part of Ian's

training, we had managed to hold our family unit together and now that was not possible. What constituted our family life needed to be redefined.

'As he walked by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew, his brother, casting a net into the lake – for they were fishermen. And he said to them, "Follow me, and I will make you fish for people." Matthew 4.18-19 NRSV

The Gospel stories tell us that Simon and Andrew left their nets, immediately, and followed Jesus. What the Gospels do not tell us is what sacrifices were made in their choosing to follow him and what impact those sacrifices had. Apart from being fishermen, what were their daily lives like? What were they walking away from? Who did they leave behind? What impact did their decision have on others? How was their family life redefined?

As in the case of our family, as was the case with the Simon and Andrew, so too being a member of Mothers' Union requires sacrifice. Becoming a member is to answer a call to ministry. We are called to both prayer and action in our daily lives as individuals and as members of our local branch, our parish and our wider community. There is a cost to this. To spend time in prayer, to engage in social action, to raise awareness of issues impacting the lives of families, of women and girls, to undertake God's work in providing practical care and support to those facing adversity in their lives, to attend branch meetings and other Mothers' Union events and activities comes at a cost.

We are called to give of our time and energy, to give money if we are able, to perhaps give up opportunities to be with family and loved ones or to take part in other activities. Even when given freely, joyfully, because we could do no other, it is still a sacrifice. What do we walk away from? Who do we leave behind? What impact do our decisions have on others? How has our family life been redefined by our living out our call as members of Mothers' Union?

Wendy Mabey



Photo credit: Josh Applegate on Unsplash

¹ <https://research.lifeway.com/2019/09/20/ministry-how-much-sacrifice-is-required/>

That Night in the Garden

It is difficult to understand the full import and angst of that night in the olive grove of the Garden of Gethsemane. Jesus, in deep emotional and spiritual turmoil, volunteered His life to God. His prayer time was such that he prayed 'more earnestly, and his sweat was like drops of blood falling to the ground.' (Luke 22:39-46)

The disciples, we read, were 'asleep, exhausted from sorrow.' This is before the events of what we now call Good Friday. Their sorrow and exhaustion came from the events of the previous few weeks, after the time on the Mount of Transfiguration when Jesus told them three times that he was to be 'delivered over to the Gentiles...who will mock him, insult him and spit on him; they will flog him and kill him' (Luke 18:32) as it had been written by the prophets.

When Jesus found them sleeping, he woke them and encouraged them to 'Get up and pray.' (Luke 22:45) For many years I focused my thinking on just this phrase and wrongly made the assumption that Jesus was asking the disciples to pray for him, knowing what was to follow. It is only recently that I have understood the full admonition – 'Get up and pray so that you will not fall into temptation.' On what was to be Jesus' last night on earth as fully man, his primary concern was that the disciples would not fall into temptation.

What temptation would they be likely to face in the next few hours and the next few days?

I could ask, 'What is the greatest temptation?' A temptation that is so important it transcends all other admonitions learned at the feet of the Son of Man. A temptation that is so important that Jesus, in His hour of need, focuses not on His own situation but warns the disciples (and us)? Peter fell into it. I suggest to you that then, and now, the greatest temptation we all face is to break the greatest commandment.

In the weeks preceding this night one of the Pharisees tested Jesus with this same question. (Matthew 22:34-40) 'Teacher, which is the greatest commandment of the law?' Jesus replied, "Love

the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind." This is the first and greatest commandment.'

The greatest temptation we all face, irrespective of our age and situation in life, is to give up our faith – to turn our backs on our Lord and Saviour. One of the saddest verses in the Gospels can be found in John 1:11, 'He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him.'

As we pause to remember the daily occurrences that surround Easter, on Maundy Thursday evening, hear the words of Jesus, 'Get up and pray so that you will not fall into temptation.'

John Cronshaw



Photo credit: Pray by Kjersti Brennsaeter from Pixabay

Prayer

Your children come to you, loving God,
confident of your goodness and mercy.

May the sacrifice of Christ, and his service
among us, teach us to live as servants to all.

As stewards of your generous gifts,
may we bear witness to your goodness in
our lives by the good we do as servants of
all your children.

Blessed are you, God of all goodness. May
our service give you glory as we pray now
and always through Christ our Lord.

Amen

Josephine Kulke,

Newcastle upon Tyne Diocese, UK

From The Platinum Prayer Book, © Mothers Union, 2022.
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Hymn Workout: The Power of the Cross to Change Us

Reading: John 19:17-42

When I survey the wond'rous Cross

On which the Prince of Glory dy'd,

My richest Gain I count but Loss,

And pour Contempt on all my Pride.

Heb. 2:10

Phil. 3:7-8

Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast,

Save in the Death of Christ my God:

All the vain Things that charm me most,

I sacrifice them to his Blood.

Gal. 6:14

See from his Head, his Hands, his Feet,

Sorrow and Love flow mingled down!

Did e'er such Love and Sorrow meet?

Or Thorns compose so rich a Crown?

Isa. 53:3

His dying Crimson, like a Robe,

Spreads o'er his Body on the Tree;

Then am I dead to all the Globe,

And all the Globe is dead to me.

Gal. 6:14

Were the whole Realm of Nature mine,

That were a Present far too small;

Love so amazing, so divine,

Demands my Soul, my life, my All.

Rom. 5:8, John 15:13

Luke 14:26

ISAAC WATTS

Reflection Questions:

1. What does it mean to survey the cross?
How is the act of 'surveying' different from taking a casual glance?
2. Pride is at the root of all sin. The first stanza suggests that the cross is a unique means of subduing pride. How does this happen? How does the cross humble the otherwise indomitable ego?
3. The final two stanzas talk about the way in which the cross can redirect our worship. How can gazing upon Jesus on the cross liberate us from deeply-embedded idols of the heart?

© Joe Barnard,
Hymn Workouts,
Christian Focus, 2022, p.70-71.
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Photo credit: Jon Tyson on Unsplash

16 days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence

DIOCESE OF BRISBANE

ST. JOHN'S CATHEDRAL

The president of the Cathedral AMUA branch, the Rev'd. Eleanor Mancini, and members joined with the Cathedral Domestic Abuse Action Group on 26 November for Mothers Union World Global Day. Lone Members and representatives from Caloundra and Coorparoo also joined in to draw attention to the shocking statistic that 1 in 3 women experience violence in their lifetime. Posters showed '#No More 1 in 3' and the banner read 'Let Justice for Women Flow Down Like a River'.

The event started with the Cathedral bell tolling 50 times, representing the number of women killed in Australia by a current or former intimate partner each year. A service of prayers was held while the members were holding the posters. They were followed by three minutes of silence and the morning closed with prayer.



BUNDABERG

Displaying banners and placards, Bundaberg AMUA and members of Zonta Club Bundaberg, along with members of the community, gathered in Buss Park on 25 November. At 9.30am. the sound of the bells rang out 74 times from Christ Church Anglican Church, in remembrance of the 43 women and 31 children who had lost their lives to domestic and family violence in 2022.

Following the ringing of the bells the large gathering moved into the church for a very moving prayer service led by Rev'd. Erica Williams and Father Keith Dean-Jones, which included the lighting of candles and prayers by various members

of the community Visitors from Edon Place (the local Domestic and Family Violence Centre) spoke about several of the programs they provide. Morning tea followed the service, with time for questions and discussion with the guest speakers.

The next day AMUA members were among the 120 people who attended the Zonta Club, Bundaberg, Fundraising Brunch where they heard three excellent speakers. Included in this event was the Mothers Union Worldwide Global Day, which focuses on the shocking statistic that 1 in 3 women suffer violence in their lifetime. The morning concluded at 12.30pm, after which those in attendance joined a 'Zonta Says No' walk on the adjacent oval until 1.03pm, when we ended with 3 minutes' silence and a closing prayer.

AMUA's next event was a dinner on Friday 9 December, with guest speaker Vanessa Fowler, who is the chair of the Allison Baden-Clay Foundation and the sister of the late Allison Baden-Clay. The evening was made more special by the presence of Allison's mother and youngest daughter, who had travelled from Ipswich with Vanessa. Vanessa and the Foundation aim to educate the community about family and domestic violence and empower them to aid in prevention. Vanessa is also on the Southern Queensland Diocesan Domestic and Family Violence Working Group, which works to educate the community in ways to prevent domestic and family violence in the community.

On Saturday 10 December, the final day of the '16 Days of Activism' campaign, we again gathered in Buss Park as the bells rang out 84 times – sadly, an increase of 10 in the 16 days. A closing prayer service with lighting of candles marked the conclusion of the campaign. Vanessa Fowler addressed us once again, with morning tea providing further time for questions and discussions.

During the 16 days a prayer tree was placed in the entrance of the church to provide opportunity to write a prayer to be hung on the tree. These prayers were offered during the final service. A pamphlet of Bible verses and prayers was available during the 16 days, with the hope that all those who entered the church during this time might be encouraged to pray.

This was the fourth year Bundaberg AMUA had held events in support of the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence. Each year we have seen this campaign grow, from small beginnings in 2019 to such an effective, wide-spread campaign in 2022. We have always advertised our events with the Bundaberg churches and some local organizations. This was the second year we partnered with Zonta Club Bundaberg, who advertised our program in their glossy magazine, which went out to the community, and we also prepared a media release for the local paper and local radio. Channel 7 News and Bundaberg Now were present at our launch in Buss Park on the 25 November and came into the church during the service, so we featured on the local 7pm television news.

Bundaberg AMUA are very grateful for the partnership that has developed with Zonta Club Bundaberg and for their support and commitment. We believe that by working together with them and other local organizations we create a greater impact, raise awareness and improve our understanding of the effects of gender-based violence on our society. With such horrific statistics it is important to continually raise awareness, to be vigilant in prayer, to inspire and equip others and unite together as one voice to challenge attitudes, beliefs, and behaviours. Together we can take meaningful and effective action in saying 'NO' to Gender Based Violence in our society.

Bev Perry



IPSWICH

For our 'Sixteen Days of Activism...' campaign we had a new banner made and hung to face the main street of our city, where passers-by in cars, or on foot, could see. We also set up a display at the entrance to our church based on the UK model, 'Souls of Our Shoes', in which shoes worn by survivors of gender-based violence were put on display. Alongside the shoes were real-life stories told by the survivors: stories from women, men and children. Feedback showed that the display was much appreciated by those who stopped to read and reflect.

Diane Thomson



LOGAN

For our Social Responsibility Project 2022, AMUA Logan Branch decided to participate in the United Nations global 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence campaign, which commenced over the weekend 26/27 November. The campaign ran until 10 December (International Human Rights Day). During Communion services at both Good Shepherd (Park Ridge) and St Mark's (Daisy Hill), with full clergy support, there was a special focus on the problem of domestic violence and abuse:

- through special intercessions;
- a special hymn
- a related sermon on the Christian response;
- specific prayers in the Parish Newsletter each week;
- and the showing of *Deadly Romance*, an

excellent 7-minute video from the Red Rose Foundation, which shows through ballet the escalating pattern of coercive control and abuse that can occur in intimate relationships.

To help us know how to respond better to suspected or disclosed abuse, we also distributed helpful literature at services throughout the campaign:

- the impressive MU UK summary *Responding to Domestic Abuse Survivors – Do's and Don'ts*;
- the outstanding Queensland Churches Together brochure entitled *Domestic and Family Violence*;
- and the excellent *Quick Help Guide* distributed by Logan Youth and Family Services as part of the *Not Now Not Ever* initiative.

As part of the campaign, MU Logan also sponsored the installation of a Red Rose Foundation *Red Bench* at both St Mark's and Good Shepherd with appropriate plaques, which are permanent reminders that domestic violence and abuse occurs in all our communities. The wording on both plaques is *Change the Ending: Let's Stop Domestic Violence*.

Our Rector, Ven. Geoff Hoyte, blessed both benches on installation. We also created replica red benches, which were displayed in the sanctuary at each centre during the campaign.

We enjoyed our campaign participation and were pleased to receive very positive feedback from parishioners and others.

Helen Culbert,

Logan Social Responsibility



From the Sidelines – an Observer at the AMUA Council Meeting

A 40-minute bus trip took delegates from Tullamarine Airport to Holy Cross, a conference and retreat centre in Templestowe, Victoria. On arrival we gathered together to register, have dinner and catch up with old friends or make new ones.

The weekend commenced with Bishop of Bendigo, the Rt. Revd. Matt Brain, leading members in the Eucharist, as he also did at the end of the weekend. Each day we were led in prayers, taken from the MU Worship and Prayer Book. The theme (Transformation – Now!) was included into Bible readings and Bishop Matt spoke about change in his addresses, which were based on his book, *God is Enough*. Different graces before meals were presented by various groups of members.

Council Meeting

The Council meeting was opened by Provincial President, Anne Kennedy, who welcomed those present. In her report to the meeting Anne noted that Covid19 had made a difference to our communities. However, she believes that God has given us a wonderful opportunity to transform from our old ways of MU to new, innovative and perhaps more meaningful gatherings by focusing on the core elements of the Worldwide Mothers Union – praying globally and serving locally, supporting family life and advocating for social justice by engaging in 'Transformation – Now!'

President Anne concluded by thanking her team for their help and wished the new President and new Executive God's blessing.

The minutes of the AGM of 20 November, 2021, which were held on Zoom, were passed and reports were received from all members of the Australian Executive and Diocesan Presidents. It was encouraging to hear of the many ways in which AMUA is rising to the challenges presented by the Covid 19 pandemic and changes in our society in general.

Prior to this meeting several MU members had been nominated for positions on the Australian executive. As there was only one nomination for each position, all were declared elected to serve for the next three years.

Other Discussions

Diocesan Presidents, grouped according to their membership numbers, discussed matters they considered were important for MU to address. These included participation in Global Day and the making of violence against women a 365-day concern, climate change and the homeless situation.

Joan Neild, Provincial President of MU Aotearoa and New Zealand and Polynesia, reported that the year had been much better with no Covid lockdowns. She paid homage to her predecessor, Rev. Iritana Hankins, who had passed away, and spoke about the many encouragements in their work.

Guest Speakers

We also heard from several guest speakers, including Darren Stirling, from Anglican Overseas Aid, with whom AMUA is partnering to develop disaster resilience in communities in Tonga and Fiji.

The Rev. Zan Daniels spoke about the need to understand the issues surrounding domestic and family violence. She suggested that members should consider attending a workshop such as 'DV Alert', and familiarise themselves with the General Synod 'Ten Commitments for Prevention and

Response to Domestic and Family Violence in the Anglican Church of Australia'.

Glenda McSorley reported that she and Anne Cunningham had participated via Zoom in the review of parenting programs currently taking place in MU worldwide which was conducted by Mary Sumner House staff.

Perth Diocesan President, Kaye Healy, asked that consideration be given to the production of a fabric showing the Australian MU logo. A recommendation is to be made to the next council meeting.

The meeting concluded with the commissioning by Bishop Brain of Robin Ray as the Provincial President and Elaine Longford, Elizabeth Parker, Marilyn Robey, Sue Milwright (in absentia), Christine Brain, Kristi Day, Christine Jensen, Wendy Mabey and Susan Skowronski as the Executive Committee for the next three years.

It was pleasing to see members taking a positive approach to the work that still remains to be achieved. As we move forward in 2023 let us remember Mary Sumner's Prayer:

All this day O Lord, let me touch as many lives as possible for thee: and every life I touch do thou by thy spirit quicken, whether through the word I speak, the prayer I breathe, or the life I live. Amen.

Jan Rose
Perth



Who's Who on the Australian Executive



**Dr. Robin Ray,
Australian (Provincial)
President**

A lifetime Anglican, Robin has served in many capacities at parish and diocesan level. She joined Caritas in 1989,

and AMUA in 2007. Her involvement in Mothers Union has included co-facilitating 'yarning days' – a community participation approach to the reviewing and renewing of MU structures – across the diocese of North Queensland. She has also been the NQ and Australian Overseas and Northern Outreach Coordinator. Using her expertise as an adult educator Robin has facilitated cooperation between AMUA and Anglican Overseas Aid in the establishment of a project to develop disaster resilience in Pacific Island nations and has assisted Indigenous women on the Torres Strait in the development of the Parenting Program in a culturally sustainable manner. Robin is passionate about helping others, particularly women, to achieve their potential and, in addition to AMUA, serves on the Board of Anglican Overseas Aid. Robin relaxes by reading, travelling to interesting places and walking.



**Rev. Anne Kennedy,
Immediate Past President**

Anne joined MU in 1982, and became President of her branch the same day, with daughters aged one and two clinging to her legs. Her mother and

grandmother were members, so she grew up with the Aims and Objectives of MU firmly entrenched in family life. She became a Deanery President, MU Office Manager and Diocesan President in Melbourne, and then Vice President, Acting President and then Provincial President of AMUA. Each of these roles has been challenging and yet exciting as she grew to know more and more about the life-giving work of the Worldwide MU, through engagement with members around the globe.

Amidst her MU work, and involvement in school councils, Anne studied theology 'to stretch the grey matter' when her daughters went to university, eventually giving in to God's persistent call to ordination as a priest in 2014. She was Assistant Priest at St Dunstan's, Camberwell for 5½ years, and then Vicar at St Thomas, Upper Ferntree Gully for two years until retirement, both appointments on the understanding that MU was accepted as part of her ministry. There's not much time for other interests but being around her family is an important part of her life. A collection of family history is something she will get around to sorting out 'one day', but currently her role as Acting Vicar in her home parish keeps her quite busy! She is looking forward to supporting the new AMUA Executive as immediate Past President.



**Elaine Longford,
Vice President**

Elaine's long involvement with Mothers Union – she joined in 1982 – has seen her wear many hats, including Deanery, (Melbourne) Diocesan and

(Victorian) State Presidencies, as well as the Overseas and Northern Outreach Coordinator in Melbourne diocese and Publications Coordinator on Australian Executive. Trained in secretarial and office work, Elaine serves her parish as the Office Secretary, as a Communion Assistant, and as a member of Parish Council and the Pastoral Care team. Family history, reading, gardening – Elaine and her husband grow most of their own vegetables and fruit – knitting and sewing fill any spare minutes.



**Elizabeth Parker,
Vice President**

Elizabeth enjoyed a secure, Christian family upbringing and wants to help and support others seeking to build strong families in a world where commitment to the Christian

faith is to run against the flow of society. Since joining AMUA in 2010 Elizabeth has been both Vice President and President of AMUA in the Diocese of Armidale. Her work as a solicitor

enabled her to represent parents whose children had been removed by Family and Community Services orders. In the parish she has been involved in ministries to children, women and the wider church family by teaching Sunday School and SRI in schools, by leading Bible studies and assisting in Sunday services. She has assisted in the planning and conduct of numerous diocesan women's conferences and outreach events, including marriage enrichment and parenting courses. In addition to her family, (husband Darrell and four adult children) Elizabeth's interests include overseas mission, rural ministry, reading, cooking and sewing.



Sue Milwright, Secretary

Sue has been a member of Buderim AMUA since 2013 and became Treasurer the following year, the position which she still holds. She has been the

Sunshine Coast Deanery President for three years. Currently Peoples' Church Warden at St Marks, Buderim, Sue has been on Parish Council for most of the years since she started going there in 1997.

Sue is married to Mike and they have three children, four grandchildren and one great-grandchild. Sue and Mike have a 'gorgeous little Shih Tzu', Toffee, who keeps them amused with her antics, two honey-bee hives and a native bee hive in their garden. Sue used to be a fitness instructor but now enjoys having other people instruct her, especially Zumba in the pool. She also enjoys knitting in the winter and hopes to finally finish a tapestry cushion for church this coming winter.



Marilyn Robey, Treasurer

Want to know anything about AMUA's finances? Marilyn has the answer! As a trained and experienced bookkeeper and a member of AMUA for 37

years and counting, there's not much that Marilyn doesn't know about our history and financial matters. Another Executive member who has worn many MU hats, Marilyn has served at branch,

diocesan and national levels. Marilyn is also on the parish council of All Saints Cathedral, Bathurst, where she serves as the Treasurer. She enjoys knitting, gardening, travelling and doing family history research in her spare time.



Wendy Mabey, Overseas and Northern Outreach Coordinator

A fresh face on the Australian Executive, Wendy hails from Mandurah, WA. Wendy has been a member of AMUA

since 1995 and has served in various capacities in six MU branches in three states. During her time in Coffs Harbour (NSW) Wendy coordinated a Saturday afternoon sewing class for African (mostly South Sudanese) women. She is employed as the part-time Parish Secretary and takes a very active part in the activities of the parish, including as a Licensed Lay Minister, reader and PowerPoint operator. Wendy has also been active in Cursillo, Godly Play and as a mentor to Education for Ministry trainees. Wendy is married to Ian and they have two children and five grand-children. Wendy describes herself as having 'a passion for sewing clothes and enjoying crochet and reading'.



Christine Jensen, OAM, Prayer and Spirituality Coordinator

Christine has been a member of AMUA since 2001, and during this time she has been Patron of MU Sydney and Diocesan

President in Sydney, as well as Members' Coordinator. Elected to the Australian Executive in 2017 as a Vice President, Christine accepted responsibility for the Social Issues and Action portfolio, and in 2020 donned the Social Media hat. In 2021, and again in 2022, Christine and Susan Skowronski produced a brochure of prayers and Bible verses to help members pray every day of the '16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence' campaign. After training as a primary school teacher Christine entered Moore Theological College, planning to be a missionary. Instead, she met and married Peter and has spent a lifetime leading Bible study groups, mentoring

and encouraging ministry wives, acting as chaplain to women studying at theological college and speaking at conferences in Australia and overseas. Christine loves catching up with friends over coffee, reading, (having five children and 26 grand-children has kept her interest in children's literature alive), cooking, watching TV dramas and, occasionally, knitting.



**Kristi Day,
Promotion and
Communication Coordinator**

Kristi, another fresh face on the Australian Executive, has been a member of AMUA since 2018. Since 2020 she has been a

member of the North Queensland Executive (Next Generation). Trained in hospitality management and educational support, Kristi's skills also include office administration and management as well as use of social media. She is currently employed as the Administration Officer for the Mackay Anglican Cluster. One of Kristi's desires is to help families develop healthy relationships with themselves, each other and with God – particularly families who experience adversity caused by substance abuse or addiction. Her hobbies include swimming, walking, cooking and music.



**Rob Kennedy,
Publication Manager**

Rob is married to Anne and is father to two daughters and grand-father to one. He has been a member of AMUA

for 10 years and has been Publication Manager since 2020. His parish involvement has included serving on Parish Council, attending to parish facility management and assisting Anne in her ministry responsibilities. Home maintenance, including the design and building of pergolas, decks and carports and the installation of kitchens, bathrooms and laundries, as well as landscaping and general gardening, keep Rob out of mischief.



**Susan Skowronski,
Social Issues and Action
Coordinator**

As a member of Mothers Union since 1985 Susan has filled many roles in her local branch and at Diocesan and Australian level, including being the Editor of *Mia Mia* for six years. In her church she has been involved with toddler and youth ministries, as well as SRI in schools and Bible studies. Her creative talents find expression in the writing of short stories and poetry, photography, gardening and sewing as well as the editing of the parish newsletter and *Poinsettia Post*, the Brisbane Mothers Union newsletter.



**Kaylene Vlasveld,
Web Administrator**

Kaylene's introduction to MU began whilst expecting her 5th child, when she was invited to join the branch meeting. Her response? "*But I am not a grandmother!*" Such was her understanding of MU!

Kaylene says, 'That was the beginning of a fantastic, faith-filled, fruitful, God-inspired growth journey over the next 31 years. Within 5 years my vicar invited me to become Branch President. Me? A shy person who ducked for cover if asked to speak or pray in public? It was his encouragement and God's strength and guidance that have seen me grow in confidence, becoming Deanery President, then on Melbourne Executive (Newsletter Editor, Website Administrator) and, for the last 12 years, Assistant Web Administrator for AMUA.

I enjoy creating layouts for brochures and newsletters and have learnt so much about worldwide MU as I have helped develop, and now update, AMUA and MU Melbourne websites. I am passionate in seeking ways that will bring MU worldwide into the homes of the grassroots members, not just via social media and websites but by providing resources and finding ways to connect with those who are isolated from the digital world who miss out on MU news and resources.

I have valued the opportunity to meet up either by Zoom, email, phone or face-to-face with members

from all over Australia and across the world during the past 31 years.'



**Christine Brain,
Mia Mia editor**

I joined MU in 1989, and after a rather slow start, have found myself in various positions at diocesan and Australian level over the years. I am married

to Peter and we are parents to three sons, one daughter, three daughters-in-law and one son-in-law. We are also grandparents to 12 boys and 4 girls. Over the past 48 years Peter I have lived and ministered in four dioceses across Australia.

We currently live in Perth and worship at Christ the King Anglican church in Willetton. I serve on the Executive committee of MU Perth – this year as the Promotion and Communication officer. I love my role as *Mia Mia* editor because it's such a joy to be the first to read about the great things that AMUA members are doing in their patch and to be able to share that with others through *Mia Mia*. It also gives me opportunity to indulge my penchant for pickiness over points of grammar and punctuation! As readers may have noticed, I love reading and usually have several books on the go at any one time. I also enjoy coffee with friends, walking in the WA bush (a winter activity!) and knitting small projects, especially socks.

Recipe

Easter Egg Muffins

INGREDIENTS

1¾ cups self-raising flour
¼ cup cocoa powder
½ cup castor sugar
1 teaspoon vanilla essence
2 eggs, at room temperature
¾ cup milk
100 grams butter, melted
Solid chocolate mini Easter eggs



METHOD

1. Preheat oven to 200°C. Grease a 12-hole muffin tray or use paper cases.
2. Can also make mini muffins – use two x 12-hole mini muffin trays.
3. Sift the self-raising flour and cocoa together into a large mixing bowl.
4. Add the castor sugar and stir to combine.
5. Whisk together the vanilla, eggs and milk until well combined.
6. Make a well in the centre of the dry ingredients and add the egg mixture and
7. melted butter.
8. Stir gently with a large metal spoon until just combined.
9. Spoon the mixture evenly into the prepared muffin pans.
10. Carefully press a mini chocolate egg into the centre of each muffin.
11. Bake in preheated oven for 12-15 minutes or until firm to touch.
12. Stand muffins in the pans for 5 minutes before turning out onto a wire rack.
13. Leave until just warm or completely cold to serve.

A dollop of whipped cream adds a decadent touch.

Lorraine Andrews, Tasmania

Connecting With Kids



Short on time? Looking after some littlies? Take a nibble.

Needing inspiration for family or church? Bites are for you.

Got time to dig deeper? Wondering how to engage the tweens? Take a chomp.

Children and young people thirst for connection. They want to be known and loved and it is all of our job to ensure that they are. If uncertainty or fear is stopping you from engaging about questions of faith with the young people in your life, the solution is simple. Pray 'come Holy Spirit' and start the conversation despite your fear. God will meet you there.



Photo credit: Happy Easter by Sweet Amaryllis on Unsplash

Symbols of Easter

Easter is a highlight of our Christian calendar. The story of Jesus' death and resurrection is not only an epic tale from the past but has real impact on our lives today. Christian symbols are a great entry point to understanding this life-changing story about death and new life. So, here are some ways to explore what Jesus' death and resurrection means with the young people you come into contact with:

NIBBLES

Eggs and crosses are both well-known symbols of Easter for Christians and non-Christians alike. They pop up everywhere at this time of year which makes for an easy conversation starter.

'Hi <granddaughter>. Tell me, why do you think the Easter bunny delivers eggs? Why not flowers? Or toothbrushes?'

'Hmmm, that could be one reason. I believe it is because eggs represent new life, like when a baby chick hatches and sees the world with new eyes.'

'But why do you think everyone is getting so excited about rabbits handing out eggs ... in Autumn! Aren't rabbits and eggs usually out and about in Springtime?'

'Hmmm, I suppose that could be a possibility. The actual reason is because eggs are a symbol from Christianity. And Christian symbols follow the seasons of the northern hemisphere where it is now Spring!'

'Why do we follow the northern hemisphere seasons if we're in Oz? Good questions! Because that's where Jesus was born, lived and died. And this time of year is when we remember Jesus coming back to life. When Jesus rose again, he showed everyone that there is a new way of seeing the world. Just like baby chicks see the world in a new way when they peck their way out of their eggs.'

'Gosh. That's a good question! Why is it rabbits that deliver the eggs? You know what. I have no idea. Let's Google it together ... No, Jesus didn't ride a rabbit to school.'

Why not make it a habit of having hot cross buns with the grandkids every time you see them over Lent? Each time, do a little spontaneous quiz game with them about what the cross is a symbol

of. The cross reminds us of Jesus' death as well as his resurrection. It reminds us of the darkness in the world and of how God took away the darkness by raising His son, the light of the world.

Rather than being limited to hot cross buns and chocolate eggs, you could serve carrot sticks as crosses. In a church setting, the children could make carrot crosses and watermelon 'eggs' to share with everyone for morning tea.

BITES

Holy Week starts at Palm Sunday and goes through until Easter Sunday. Pray about who God would have you draw near to in that week. Plan ahead and let them know that you're going to be in touch in Holy Week, or if it's your own family then make a plan together.

- Decorate your home with palm branches
- Deliver a 12 pack of eggs, each one with a word or symbol drawn on it for Holy Week
- Find a good quality YouTube video for kids about the symbols of Easter and email it through
- Gift them an Easter candle to light each day whilst they take turns praying, or re-telling parts of the Easter story
- Drop off a card with an extra personal note in it about Jesus, light of the world. Jesus, bringer of new life.
- Offer to take the grandkids for an afternoon and set up an Easter corner in your home. At Christmas we have Christmas trees and decorations – why not decorate your home for Easter? Talk together about what could go in your Easter corner.

CHOMPS

The Easter story depicts moments of great darkness which are in the end overcome by 'the light of the world'.

At an age-appropriate level, make space for a conversation about dark and light in the world, in your community and in your own hearts. Children and young-people typically respond well when adults are age-appropriately honest and authentic with them about feelings, events and experiences.

Read the story of Jesus' death and resurrection together and notice how it moves through darkness into light. (Luke 19:28-40, 22:1 – 24:12)

Notice how God is present in the different people who come alongside Jesus.

How might your family or church be beacons of light in your communities this Easter?

If you are doing this as an activity with children in a church setting, have them write or draw their suggestions and then turn each one into a prayer. These could be copied and given to everyone in church to use at home, or included in the church bulletin or service slides.



Rev. Suzannah Daniels,
MU Diocesan President and Ministry
Development Officer, Bendigo

**Content adapted from The Spirit (magazine of Bendigo Anglican Diocese)*

Prayer

Almighty God and merciful Father, we give you hearty thanks for all your goodness and loving-kindness to us and to all people. We bless you for our creation and preservation, and all the blessings of this life; but above all, for your immeasurable love in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ, for the means of grace, and for the hope of glory. And, we pray, give us such a sense of all your mercies, that our hearts may be truly thankful and that we may praise you not only with our lips, but in our lives, serving you in holiness and righteousness all our days, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, to whom with you and the Holy Spirit, be honour and glory, now and for ever. Amen

A Prayer Book for Australia, p 218



The Suffering Servant: Lent reflection

This resource may be used for personal reflection or as the basis for a Quiet Day, a shorter prayer activity or as separate reflections throughout Lent.

God's Chosen One

Here is my servant, whom I uphold,
my chosen one in whom I delight;
ISAIAH 42:1

We draw near in faith,
redeemed and forgiven
through the sacrifice of Christ.

Gaze upon Christ, the Father's delight,
the champion of our salvation;
won not with mighty displays of force
but with selfless sacrifice.

Worship Christ, the Suffering Servant,
who set aside the riches of heaven
and embraced the sin of humanity;
humbly obedient unto death.

Proclaim Christ, our exalted Saviour
whose wounds have brought us life.
Bow before him, you heavens and earth;
glorify his name.

Honour and glory,
blessing and praise
be to God's Chosen One
now and forever. Amen

Despised and rejected

He was despised and rejected by mankind,
a man of suffering, and familiar with pain.
ISAIAH 53:3

You were a man of suffering
acquainted with grief,
loved and despised in equal measure.

You understand humanity,
know our failings,
love us despite the people that we are
When we, like Peter, deny you
by word or action,
forgive us.

When we, like Judas, are tempted

to follow a different path,
forgive us.

When we, like those in the crowd
allow you to be crucified,
forgive us.

Bring us to the foot of the Cross
to stand next to the one who,
looking into your eyes declared
'Surely this is the Son of God' Amen

© John Birch

Suffering Servant

He was pierced for our transgressions,
he was crushed for our iniquities.
ISAIAH 53:5

We draw near in sorrow and shame
for the suffering of Christ,
borne for our sake.
Forgive us, Lord.

We gather at the foot of the cross;
we shy away from the sacrificial suffering.
We long to deny that our sins had a place
in nailing our Lord to the tree.

We lament in sorrow and shame
over the suffering of Christ,
borne for our sake.
Forgive us, Lord.

Giving God,
you suffered our sins in silence,
you carried our crimes on a cross.
Outstretched, outcast,
outlived but not outdone.
Your glory is still to come
on the day we sin no more. Amen

Fleur Dorrell

Healing and peace

The punishment that brought us peace was on him,
and by his wounds we are healed.
ISAIAH 53:5

Heal us, Lord.
Look upon the sufferings of your Servant
and grant us peace.

Deliver us, Lord.
Look upon the Crucified One.
See his scars of salvation
and give us life.

Heal us, Lord.
Look upon the wounds of our Saviour
and make us whole.

The Suffering Servant
becomes the healing source.
The stone rejected
becomes hope's cornerstone.
The Crucified One
is raised to new life.
The God of healing, hope and life is in our midst:
Let us celebrate and worship our good God!
Amen

Rev. Susan Blain
www.ucc.org/worship_worship-ways

Saviour of the world

It is too light a thing that you should be my servant
to raise up the tribes of Jacob...
I will make you as a light for the nations,
that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth.
ISAIAH 49:6

Jesus, Lamb of God,
when you walked this earth
you did not consider
heavenly equality,
though that was yours to choose,
but took the role of servant,
and in humility
and obedience
allowed the rough nails of our sin
to be hammered into your flesh
for the sake of our salvation.

And so it is
that we acknowledge you
as Lord of all,
to the glory of God the Father,
Son and Spirit, Three. Amen

© John Birch

It is finished!

After he has suffered,
he will see the light of life and be satisfied.
ISAIAH 53:11

"It is finished!"

The words of the Suffering Servant
resound throughout eternity
as he speaks out from the cross.

The darkness recedes,

the light of life dawns;
despair is banished by joy.

Lord Jesus Christ,
our sacrificial Saviour,
you utter the words of eternal life
as you speak from the cross.
Death cannot silence them,
ringing out to all generations.
Your words of triumph echo
through the universe,
proclaiming salvation to all.

The Suffering Servant takes his place
as the victorious Lord of Lords:
risen, ascended, glorified.
With wonder and gratitude
we worship our Heavenly King. Amen

Final Blessing

To him who loves us
and has freed us from our sins by his blood,
to him be glory and dominion forever and ever.
Amen

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Prayer

Lord, you gave us two hands to
reach out to others;

You gave us two feet to walk
beside someone in need.

You gave us two knees to kneel
in prayer for others;

You gave us two ears to
hear and to listen.

You gave us a tongue to speak
words of comfort and hope;

You gave us a heart full of love for
everyone we meet.

So, we come, in your name,
to give thanks. Amen

Emilie Aldwinkle,
Diocese of Auckland.

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NSW State Conference

In October 2022 Mothers Union Canberra & Goulburn Diocese was privileged to be able to conduct the NSW State Conference at the Australian Centre for Culture and Christianity (ACCC), exploring the issue of *Sharing our Faith from Generation to Generation*.

On Friday evening members from each diocese in NSW gathered at the National Press Club, where we were welcomed by our Bishop, the Rt. Rev'd. Dr. Mark Short, and Dr. Monica Short, our MU Patron. Following dinner the Rev'd. Dr. Tim Watson, NSW State President, spoke on Praise, Lament and Thanksgiving in the Psalms and Ms. Dorothy Mackenzie, of the Hackett (ACT) branch, was interviewed on living in an intergenerational family. Compline, conducted by our Diocesan Chaplain, the Rev'd. Canon Anne Wentzel, concluded the evening.

For our Open Forum Day on Saturday we welcomed other local friends interested in this vital issue in our Anglican Church today. Dr. Ruth Lukabyo, Dean of Women at the Youthworks College in Sydney, who is passionate about God's work with young people and Intergenerational Ministry, was our Keynote Speaker. Ruth pointed out that 71% of Christian kids drop out and become 'faith-repellent', while 29% of Christian young people continue to hang in there. Deuteronomy 4:9 identifies the challenge for us – *Only be careful, and watch yourselves closely so that you do not forget the things your eyes have seen or let them fade from your heart as long as you live. Teach them to your children and to their children after them* – that is, the passing down of our faith to the next generation. Ruth suggested that we need to...



1. Declare the promises of God (Galatians 3:29)
2. Testify of God's redemption (Psalm 78:4)
3. Pass down the wisdom of God (Proverbs 1:1-9)

In **families** we need to...

Pray!

Encourage parents, especially mothers, in their task of nurturing the next generation.

Read the Bible and pray with their children and grandchildren; take them to church.

Don't defer to the 'experts'.

Help children to be critical of their culture.

Lay down boundaries with social media.

Invite other Christian adults to be part of their lives; aim for five adults to every child.

Ask them questions, listen, and share your wisdom about life.

As the **church** we need to...

Pray!

Nurture intergenerational relationships; don't segregate all the time.

Try and get to know a young person, or two.

Allow the young people to lead and serve as genuine members of the body of Christ.

Create a warm community through hospitality.

Prioritise young people in our budget, programming, worship, and community life.

Dr Lukabyo also suggested a practical next step... What is one concrete change you would like to make in your church or family after thinking about intergenerational ministry?

Each participant attended three workshops during the day:

Dr Monica Short helped us to consider nurturing relationships between generations under the heading, 'Forgiveness: reconciliation through reconciling' to help us consider how forgiveness nurtures relationships between generations.

The Rev'd Judy Douglas, shared her passion for working with youth and Christian leaders, developing resources, and establishing



intergenerational environments within the church. Her book 'Finding Real Satisfaction' helps young people think through sex, relationships, and gender as followers of Jesus.

The Rev'd Anna Boxwell and Skye Coats explored Christian parenting the Gospel way by nurturing our children and grandchildren by sharing Christ's love and by sharing our own faith with them, under the heading, 'Discipling Parents, Discipling Kids'.

Saturday evening was a time of fellowship and sharing our diocesan stories. While the BBQ was being prepared Bishop Mark and Dr Monica led those who were available on a most enjoyable walk through the Biblical Gardens at the ACC&C. The final activity of the Saturday Open Forum Day was a time in which MU groups explored our theme for 2022, 'Transformation Now'. This was an interactive session with feedback and questions from members.

Sunday worship at the ACC&C was an uplifting and memorable time, led by the Rev'd. Canon Anne Wentzel and with the sermon being preached by Bishop Mark. The Grand Finale of the weekend was our cruise on Lake Burley Griffin on board the Southern Cross yacht. It included some fine dining and a commentary from the captain about the history of the ACT and our beautiful lake. During that time each Diocesan President spoke briefly about activities in their dioceses during 2022 and State Secretary for 2022, Joan Eberlé, formally thanked the Rev'd. Tim Watson for his leadership during the long build-up to the Conference.

Joan Eberlé

Poem

GIVING UP

The road to Christ-likeness will take you through the valley of suffering, for the road to the cross was narrow and painful, but if we truly want to follow Him, it is the very path we have to take.

Yes there are times when I feel like giving up, when Satan in all his power tempts me to give up

Yet, I will strive to continue, to press on, to push forward, ever upward...regardless.

For I know who is with me...I know who has my back, holds my hand, who lifts me up.

I know who guides my steps and lights my way ...and I know who breaks down the barriers and will remove the obstacles, the hurdles that block my path.

And it is in Him that I find my strength when I am at my weakest.

It is in Him that I will find my courage when it all seems too much.

And it is in Him I will find my peace, my joy, my hope and my rest!!!

By myself I am useless, but with him, I am more than a conqueror...for together we are an immovable and impenetrable force, a dynamic duo.

The Lord is my 'breakthrough', the Lord is my power within.

So I cannot, I choose not, I dare not, I will not give up.

Greater is He that is in me...than he that is in the world. 1 John 4:4 (adapted)

Gwen Wright





Over the Fence

For God so loved...

'Mrs. Grice, want to hear what Dad and I shot this week?' The small boy sat perched on the top rail of the school fence. His uniform hung on his wiry angular frame with an air of nonchalance, his well-worn farm boots dangled comfortably off stick-like ankles.

'Oh, yes please, Shaun,' I answered enthusiastically. I put my car keys away, and placed my bag of Scripture worksheets, various props and CD player in the dust under the shade of a flowering gum and gave him my full attention. The invitation to hear details of this weeks' explosive exploits was by no means unexpected. Each week he would wait for me to arrive at the school gate, and with great accuracy proceed to share the week's tales of skinning rabbits, trapping assorted feral animals and, of course, the ultimate feral eradication adventure – piggin'. My work at a local vet clinic was excellent preparation for this cheerfully-delivered weekly gore report. I frequently found myself in the operating theatre stitching up yet another pigging dog whose body armour had not proven itself up to the challenge of a furious bore's tusks.

I picked up my bag and followed the class inside. I had the most-dreaded of Scripture time slots – straight after lunch when post-prandial stupor was at its peak for adults and children alike. During the lesson I concentrated on engaging the children as we read the Easter crucifixion account – strong stuff for anyone, let alone someone who had only been on the planet for five years. The children listened well, and only two fell asleep. I followed the wise counsel of the teacher to never wake a sleeping kindergarten student. These little ones were true bush kids – their day started at daybreak with chores, before they would bicycle their way up winding, unsealed driveways to the bus stop. Kids' bikes could be seen all along the main road, deposited unceremoniously in the grass, just past the cattle grids next to the letterbox. A meandering bus journey then saw them arrive at the school gate, some 45-60 minutes later. After a

full school day, the whole cycle would be repeated in reverse – any wonder a small, post-lunch nap was to be treated with respect and allowed to proceed uninterrupted.

The children received their worksheets and commenced the usual activities of forming letters and drawing pictures. I always tried to encourage these little ones, tongues out firmly to one side, pencils gripped in grubby hands. They had a vulnerability that made me fiercely protective of their efforts. I walked around the class, quietly offering words of appreciation for their work, as they coloured-in a child-appropriate crucifixion scene on the worksheet.

Suddenly I stopped dead. Shaun was deeply and unusually engaged in his worksheet. I quietly stood next to him, interested in what might have captured his attention. I looked at his worksheet. With great anatomical accuracy, and using only a now very-blunted red pencil, Shaun had drawn Jesus, hanging on the cross. Blood and viscera spurted out from every point of the figure, dripping down the cross, covering the grass and the grieving observers close by. I was momentarily shocked. Had I been too graphic in my account? I had taken great pains to avoid this. Had Shaun heard the account before, in greater detail than I had provided? I collected myself, the small boy oblivious to my disquiet. I realised that he had drawn on his own experience and, despite my judicious sanitising of the horrors of the crucifixion, Shaun knew exactly what happened when a body was broken and pierced. He had merely applied his hands-on knowledge and allowed it to shape his understanding of the narrative. He stopped, satisfied with his work, and held it up for my appreciation. I accepted his work and commended his drawing to the class, saying, with what I hoped was a reassuring and steady voice, 'Shaun's drawing shows that he has understood perfectly how much Jesus loves us, that Jesus was willing to die in such a way in our place to bring us into friendship with God.'

I farewelled the class, and drove away, thoughtful. It is entirely possible that the sacrifice of Jesus becomes reduced over time, through repetition, intentional or unintentional sanitising or a revulsion towards the remarkable means that God chose to reconcile a rebellious world to Himself. I resolved to always be struck anew by the love of Jesus for us, that he would endure such a thing for us – for me.

The following week I arrived at the school again just as the lunch bell rang. Above the chatter of happy children, a small voice sang out, 'Mrs. Grice, want to hear what Dad and I shot *this* week?'

He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed. 1 Peter 2:24

Virginia Grice

Photo credit: Rod Long on Unsplash



Recipe

Hot Cross Pancakes

(yields approx. 15)

INGREDIENTS

- 2 Tbs butter, melted
- 3/4 cup buttermilk or substitute by adding 1 Tbs lemon juice or white vinegar to fresh milk
- 2 Tbs marmalade
- 1 egg
- 1 cup plain flour
- 1/2 cup rolled oats
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 1/2 tsp bicarbonate of soda
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1/2 tsp cinnamon
- 1/2 tsp mixed spice
- 1/2 cup mixed dried fruit

METHOD

1. Combine melted butter, buttermilk, marmalade and egg.
2. Fold in dry ingredients and dried fruit to create a batter that's mousse consistency, not too thick or too runny.
3. Heat a non-stick pan over medium-low heat, and cook pancakes for approximately 4 minutes per side.
4. Decorate with cream cheese, whipped cream, honey or maple syrup crosses. Serve with berries or sliced banana on the side.

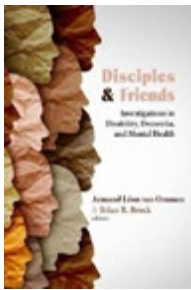
FOR CREAM CHEESE CROSS:

- 125 grams (1/2 cup) cream cheese, softened to room temperature
- 2/3 cup icing sugar or icing sugar mixture
- 2 tablespoons milk or heavy cream

Stir ingredients together in a small bowl. Place in a small freezer bag with the corner tip cut off or icing bag. Set aside until pancakes are cooked.



From My Bookshelf



Disciples & Friends: Investigations in Disability, Dementia and Mental Health, edited by Armand Leon van Ommen and Brian Brock, Baylor University Press, 2022

This book, a series of short essays in honor of Rev Professor John

Swinton, a world expert on the spiritual care of people living with disability, dementia and mental health challenges, is a survey of John's key methodological and theological stances and is, in my opinion, destined to become a classic.

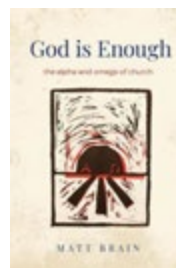
The book's short chapters (roughly 15 pages each) are both easy to digest and incredibly rich, making Swinton's work highly accessible and applicable. John's specialty is Practical Theology and Pastoral Care and he has had a long-standing interest in mental health, disability and dementia, initially as a nurse, then a chaplain and now as a theologian. In 2016 he was awarded the Michael Ramsey Prize for theological writing for his book *Dementia: Living in the Memories of God* and in 2022 he was appointed a chaplain to Queen Elizabeth. John has been a prolific and powerful writer in thinking about and advocating for Christians to love people whom society and, too often the church, dislike, discard and ignore.

Only two challenges make this masterpiece somewhat daunting. The first – it's long (314 pages), but the chapters are short, highly readable and can be read individually. The second – the cost (AU\$125.75). However, given its immense value, perhaps this is an opportunity to get together with others to purchase a copy?

I believe we, as individual Christians and churches, need to better love people living with disability, dementia and mental health challenges. Such care starts with awareness both of God's love and our neighbors and this book is a great way to start.'

Rev Ben Boland, aged care chaplain and advocate.

Ben made the bold assertion that this book would win his award as the Best Book of 2022. Would you be so bold as to make that claim for a book you read in 2022? Here's another contender.



God is Enough – the alpha and omega of church, Matt Brain, Broughton Books, 2022

The congregation of the mythical 'St Silas by the Overpass', is a very human bunch of people, whose lives are woven in and out of this very readable book penned by

Bendigo's Bishop Matt Brain. They all have their failings, but they also express their faith in their own special ways.

It's a practical book – each of the five chapters in Part A is easy to follow, and has three questions at the end, which makes it ideal for a short study for Parish Councils, church book clubs, or people interested in looking at how their church is travelling.

Part B reveals '10 Reasons to be Hopeful', and this is a great summing up of how God is working in and around our church communities in ways that are positive and life-giving.

I really enjoyed the book and invited Bishop Matt to be our Australian Council Chaplain and to base his talks around what he'd written. Many of the Council members purchased *God is Enough*, so check with your DP for their impressions.

Anne Kennedy



Hymn Workouts by Joe Barnard, Christian Focus, 2022

This book claims to 'set your heart ablaze' by taking 100 classic hymns as springboards for meditation on the great themes of scripture. Joe Barnard, in his introduction, warns that this is not a frothy 'devotional', although

the exercises within its pages inspire the reader to devotion. It is, he says, a 'HIIT¹ workout for the soul' designed to help readers engage the mind in meditation and the heart to praise. There are hymns covering the themes of the holiness of God, the mystery of the gospel, spiritual fellowship, spiritual transformation, spiritual disciplines and spiritual trials. Each of the hymns is printed in full, with the passages of scripture which are either quoted directly or alluded to in the hymn listed alongside. In addition, Barnard has provided the

1 High Intensity Interval Training – short bursts of sustained physical activity.

reader with 3 questions for reflection based on the main ideas expressed in each hymn.

Christine Brain

A conversation with Joe Barnard

I was interested to know more about Joe and his reasons for writing *Hymn Workouts*. He was kind enough to spend time chatting with me on Zoom from his home in Scotland (even though it was only 7.00 a.m. on a cold January morning).



Born in Texas, USA, Joe has spent many years studying, living and working in Scotland, UK. He is currently the Lead Pastor at Holyrood Evangelical Church in Edinburgh and also heads up Cross Training Ministries, a men's

discipleship training ministry. He and his wife have four school aged children.

CB: *Why did you write a book which encourages readers to spend time meditating on hymns, and old ones at that?*

JB: The idea of letting our thoughts rest anywhere is strange for a lot of Christians. It has been suggested that it's not the one who *reads* the most, or even *prays* the most who is the strongest Christian, but the one who *meditates* the most. I think that there's nothing better than poetry and classic hymns to focus people's attention on a variety of truths that cover the Christian life, and fill a spiritual need, but using limited content. A few minutes letting your thoughts rest on something profound that takes you to the centre of who Christ is, or what the gospel is, can be more beneficial than reading page after page, or just listening to something in the background. So, I was trying to fill a spiritual-discipline need.

CB: *Did you have an 'ideal reader' in mind?*

JB: That difficulty in concentrating thought is something people of any age can experience. We tend to be more slothful than we realise. Sometimes we want to receive a spiritual blessing without having to exert ourselves or expend any mental energy. The outcome of that is minimal understanding, minimal apprehension, minimal retention. We live in an age when people are encouraged to challenge themselves in all kinds of ways outside the spiritual domain, and so I wanted to bring some of that into people's devotional life;

to say, 'If you really want to grow as a Christian, it's going to take concentration and energy. If you do that, though, you can get more out of less.'

CB: *Could the 'Workouts' be used in a group setting?*

JB: I have personally loved using it in that way. I have really enjoyed printing off a copy of a hymn workout and giving group members 10 minutes with a Bible and a pencil to engage with the hymn. Because it's not a huge passage they can look up a few verses, or circle words they don't understand. Then, because they have really engaged their mind for those 10 minutes, we can have a really good conversation. Also, the 'Hymn Workout' format allows us to engage with different topics week by week – perhaps the work of the Spirit one week, fighting sin another week. It gives us the ability to have conversations on topics we wouldn't ordinarily discuss.

CB: *Have you tried using hymn workouts with your family, or other children, or is it really an adult exercise?*

JB: I haven't used a hymn workout in its entirety, but often there is a single stanza, or a single line, that is provocative, or has a really powerful image, that we can discuss.

CB: *What are the key messages you would like to convey to potential readers?*

JB: I think there are two. The first is the power of meditating on Christian truth. I would dare anybody to spend even just 15 minutes with a hymn such as 'When I survey...' and at the end of it not feel that the Holy Spirit has really used it. I have seen it with young men who have never done anything like this and at the end of 15 minutes their heart has been really warmed so that they want to worship God, pray to God.

Secondly, there are Christian truths we don't think enough about, for example, how to face death or how to face suffering. There are so many wonderful hymns that take us through those trenches. Hymns are something we can carry with us, as ammunition to help us and food to nourish us when we are facing temptation, or on a sickbed. There are hymns that can help us be ready as Christians to be challenged in areas of our faith where we need to be challenged.

That's what I hope people get out of it.

Around the Dioceses

BENDIGO

And the King will answer them, "Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me." Matthew 25:40 (NRSV)

Many of you will have seen disturbing footage of Karen villages in the jungle along the Thai-Burma border being bombed and set alight by Tatmadaw (Burmese) military. What you may not know is that this has been going on for generations – 70+ years! The escalation since the latest military coup has caused many villagers to flee their homes, land and livelihoods to find shelter and support along the border, in and around the refugee camps. They arrive traumatised, with nothing, and are entitled to no material support. There are now over 90,000 Myanmar refugees in Thailand. Mae La Camp is the largest refugee camp in Thailand, hosting around 34,000 refugees.

Our Anglican sisters and brothers in the region (Karen Anglican Ministry on the Border – KAMB) are doing what they can, supported by Anglicans in Melbourne and Bendigo Dioceses. St. Paul's Cathedral in Bendigo has a large Karen membership and a Karen MU group.

The Anglican Diocese of Hpa-An, KAMB and MU are working together with donor support to provide small grants to recent refugee families to develop their own small enterprise while they shelter in Mae La camp. This initiative is intended to give the ability to work for themselves, support their families and maintain their independence and dignity. So far 90 families have received such grants for start-ups which have included:



- back loom weaving
- domestic chicken raising
- vegetable plantations
- sewing and
- food services such as tempura, Karen noodles or local handmade food.

The Very Reverend Elizabeth Dyke

St. Paul's Cathedral Bendigo

In **Cohuna**, the Cranmer church AMUA members, prayer warriors as we are, planned our fundraising Coffee Morning for October, 2022. We knew our community was starving for entertainment and fellowship as the heavens had dealt us a very wet spring, river floods surrounded our town and we had been penned up for weeks. This was harsher than the isolation of 2021's Covid 19 lockdown, as roads were cut in every direction and bitumen was broken up, making them too dangerous to navigate. It was a very quiet time too...no planes, boats or semitrailers in sight.



Television coverage took note of the larger towns and the raging rivers. However, the smaller rural settlements and townsfolk could only find out about our welfare by pictures of the outer areas which were taken on mobile phones and then posted on Facebook. We were encouraged to focus and chat, to be hopeful and prayerful that our community coffee morning would actually happen.

Our day was nearing, food preparations were being completed, floral decorations sought (although they were hard to find), stock for the stalls was arriving and our Lord God thankfully sent the rain elsewhere! Joy! As the doors opened at 10am, guests just kept coming into our hall...it sounded like birds in an aviary! What a successful morning... the fellowship was immense. Thanks be to God. WOW!

Marlene Allen-Thomas

SYDNEY

St Thomas' Enfield MU branch celebrates 125 years of service

Take a moment to imagine a warm spring day – Thursday September 9, 1897 – as 24 women, in their long, heavy dresses and bonnets, each lifting the skirt of her dress to ease the walk up the slight incline, through muddy farmland, to a sandstone church that dominates the eyeline of all who live in Enfield. These women take the initiative to begin a Mothers' Union branch that faithfully serves Christ by serving one another and their community. Their legacy continues as women continue to meet regularly at St Thomas' Anglican Church, Enfield.

Over this time the branch has undergone many changes, with membership increasing as Enfield transitioned from farming to residential housing. We give great thanks that the children of some of these women continue to come to MU Enfield and share their memories and wisdom with the branch. In the words of our current president, Helen Cooney, *'I have wonderful memories of our meeting together. When life was busy with young children, these women taught me how to live out my faith. I learnt that life wasn't always easy, but these faithful women showed me not to walk away when things got hard – they showed me how to be a 'stayer' and to follow Jesus.'*



A flexible approach has been adopted to meet changing circumstances, to transform the branch so that its ministry is relevant for women of all ages. The regular Wednesday meetings now alternate with Saturday mornings to cater for working women.

On October 12, 2022, over 40 women gathered in the same place to celebrate and give thanks for 125 years of continuous MU ministry. Wendy Mayer spoke gracefully, and Rhonda Holman donated her knitted treasures to fundraise for the continued work of MU. We look forward to the next 125 years of joyful, Christ-centred service of the women of Enfield.

Sarah Gilles

WANGARATTA

The Mother's Union has been operating in the Diocese of Wangaratta for over 80 years. Members from the Diocesan MU branches and Lone members travelled through rain, hail and shine to attend their 2022 annual meeting at Purbrick hall on Monday 21 November.

The morning began with a Eucharist in the Lady Chapel, during which the bishop spoke about how we can be good stewards for our parishes, church and MU in sharing our gifts, money and talents. Following morning tea, the bishop spoke on his thoughts and ideas for 2023, not only for MU, but the whole Diocese. He spoke on changes from old habits that would inspire new folk to come along and join our ranks to support marriage and family life. Bishop Bester asked the MU for their support by joining with a Diocesan team to develop a workshop program, to be implemented in 2023, which will help raise awareness of Gender Based Violence.

After reports were presented those present enjoyed some lunch and fellowship before braving the elements to go home after a very satisfying and encouraging get together.

Diane Grant



here he was crucified, and in the garden there was a new tomb in which no one had ever been laid. 42 And so, because it was the Jewish day of Preparation, and the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus there.

The Resurrection of Jesus

(Mt 28.1-10; Mk 16.1-8; Lk 24.1-12)

20 Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Mag'da-lène came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been moved from the tomb. She went to Simon Peter, the disciple, the one whom Jesus had said to them, "They will take the Lord out of the tomb, but you do not know where they have laid him." 21 Then Peter and the other disciple, who had reached the tomb first, went in and looked in and saw the linen wrappings lying there, but they did not understand the scripture, that he must rise from the dead.

away. Jesus said to her, "Do not hold on to me, for I have not yet ascended to my Father. But go and tell my brothers and sisters, 'I am ascending to my Father and you are ascending with me.'"

Mag'da-lène went and told the disciples. They did not believe her, saying, "She is delirious." 24 But Thomas, the Twin, said to the others, "Let us go and see, and we will believe."