



**Melbourne
Anglican
Foundation**

Helping transform communities

*newsletter
october 2026*

Transformed Foundation, Transformed Communities

Welcome to the refreshed brand of Melbourne Anglican Foundation – a new look that reflects a continuing commitment to *Helping Transform Communities* across Melbourne and Geelong.

While our appearance may be new, our mission remains firmly focused: raising and facilitating funds to support the mission and ministry of the Anglican Church in the Diocese of Melbourne. We partner with local churches to help them dream boldly, respond to community needs and strengthen their Christian presence.

Through targeted grants and facilitated fundraising, Melbourne Anglican Foundation helps make ambitious ideas possible. We provide churches with funding expertise, networks and practical support to develop programs that address important gaps in their communities.

We believe local churches are uniquely placed to bring hope and transformation. By walking alongside parishes – from developing ideas through to raising or applying for funds – we help expand their capacity to serve others.

We invite you to explore our refreshed [website](#) and [YouTube](#) channel, and discover the many ways Anglican communities are making a difference.

Stay connected through our email updates, Instagram and Facebook, and learn more about the strategic appeals and initiatives strengthening local mission.

Thank you for your interest and support. Together, we can help the good work of our churches continue, grow and transform communities.

Carolyn Clark OAM
Chair



Leaders in Training Conference.

**YOUNG
PEOPLE ARE
OUR
FUTURE...**

Raising Up Next Generation Leaders

For young people at Glen Waverley Anglican Church (GWAC), the annual Leaders in Training (LiT) Convention is more than just a weekend away. It is an opportunity to grow in faith, develop leadership skills and discover new ways to serve Jesus and others.

Hannah, a youth leader at GWAC, attended LiT for the second time this year and describes it as “a fantastic camp where youth get to come and learn how to be leaders.”

For Isaac, who has been part of GWAC’s youth community for many years, LiT provided an opportunity to step outside his comfort zone. He is interested in becoming a youth leader in the future.

“It wasn’t something I was used to doing,” Isaac says, “but I feel like it pushed me out of my comfort zone...”

The camp also gave young people opportunities to use their gifts. Shenqi Jin enjoyed serving as part of the band, while Isaac found joy in helping lead others in worship. Micah particularly valued learning how to better understand scripture.

“You’re really helping people like me to learn more about the Bible and be able to become more intelligent Christians,” Micah says.

Hannah believes young people have an important role to play in leading their peers. “The people who have the most insight to youth are youth... Letting them into leadership positions and opportunities where they can lead their peers is actually more powerful than just being young adults in their space.”

The Rev’d Amy Brown, Director of Leaders in Training Victoria, says the camp brings together Year 9 to Year 12 students from across the state to learn how to read, apply and communicate the Bible.

“It equips them to serve Jesus right now and also into the future,” Amy says. For some, LiT may also be the beginning of exploring future vocational ministry.

The Melbourne Anglican Foundation has helped make this possible by providing grants to subsidise the cost for young people to attend the annual LiT camp.

Through the generosity of supporters, young people are being equipped today to serve, lead and share the hope of Jesus for years to come.

VIDEO





For the Harvest

Growing Healthy, Fruitful Churches

Across Melbourne and Geelong, communities are changing rapidly. People are asking important questions about identity, belonging, hope and faith, yet many may never walk through the doors of a church.

The Anglican Diocese of Melbourne's 10-year vision is responding with prayer and confidence in Jesus Christ – seeking to grow healthy, fruitful churches, develop new leaders, reach younger generations and plant and renew churches in communities where the need is greatest.

The Melbourne Anglican Foundation regularly raises funds to support this vision. You can partner with us, and the Diocese, to help turn this vision into action.

A Foundation grant provides the seed funding that enables a parish to take a courageous first step – whether launching a family ministry, community café, youth initiative, shared ministry role, creative project or new community outreach.

As one local vicar shared:

"It gave us the ability to step out and start... From that start, it's grown into probably even more than we expected. But we wouldn't have stepped out unless we were able to have that small grant."

Melbourne Archbishop Ric Thorpe shares that as Melbourne and Geelong continue to grow and change, the Diocese wants to strengthen existing churches and establish new congregations that help people to encounter Jesus, find a place to belong and grow in faith.

He has been encouraged by his East London experience, where struggling churches were renewed, then become sources of new life for other churches.

Join the Foundation in prayer, giving and partnership. Your gift can help provide that first step. **Together, we can help churches grow, reach new people and create pathways for more people to encounter Jesus.**

Snapshots across Melbourne and Geelong...



Melbourne Anglican Foundation Stories

In September, the Melbourne Anglican Foundation launched its new YouTube channel, sharing stories of how God is helping transform communities across Melbourne and Geelong.

View the wide range of short stories of parishes and people stepping out to connect with their local communities.

Also read the longer form stories on the Foundation's website – of church renewal in Ocean Grove, youth growth in Spotswood, Testify Music Festivals, youth leadership through LiT, sporting teams in REACH West Hoppers Crossing, mentoring in the Carlton Estates, family services at St John's Camberwell, and the welcoming of refugees and migrants.

Read, pray and help.

YOUTUBE



WEB STORIES



Becoming a Welcoming Community

For the Rev'd Pedram Shirmast, Assistant Priest at St Paul's Cathedral, welcoming migrants and refugees means far more than helping newcomers settle in.

Through ministry at Deep Creek Anglican Church and St Paul's Cathedral, Melbourne, people are encouraged to build connections with both Farsi-speaking and English-speaking communities.

"We want to be a community that truly welcomes people," Pedram says. This reflects Christ's call to love our neighbours, regardless of culture, ethnicity or background.

While practical support and friendship are vital, the ministry has a deeper purpose: sharing the love of Jesus.

Pedram encourages every parish to offer a genuine welcome where all people can experience Christ's love.

VIDEO



Stepping Out of the Boat

CHURCH
REVITALISED



Crossroads Café, Living Waters Anglican Church.

On Victoria's Bellarine Peninsula, Living Waters Anglican Church brings together the Anglican congregations of St Peter's Ocean Grove and All Saints' Barwon Heads. With a long Anglican history in these coastal communities, the parish is now experiencing a season of remarkable renewal – with people coming to faith, baptisms taking place, new ministries emerging and a growing sense that God is doing something fresh.

The Venerable Liz Rankin is quick to give the credit away: "The church is growing, people are coming to faith, there are baptisms. I put growth down only to God."

Liz describes this season as an invitation to be courageous – to step out of the comfortable boat and onto the waves with Jesus. Inspired by the Archbishop Ric Thorpe's vision for renewal and revitalisation, the parish has learned to ask not simply, "What should the church do?" but, "What is God doing, and how can we join Him?"

That mindset has opened unexpected doors. A ten-year vision was developed, but "stuff is happening quicker than the plan!" In just two years, the parish has established Crossroads Café – a relaxed, relational and welcoming space where church and community meet. Operating several days each week, the café now attracts more than 30 regular community

clients, supported by volunteers and an employed café manager.

For Carmela, the café manager, this is much more than serving coffee. "I love this space because I'm actually connecting with the community that are a little bit wary of coming into a church atmosphere." Conversations become opportunities to listen, pray and build relationships. People experiencing loneliness or financial hardship are welcomed, sometimes receiving food or coffee for free. "I love Jesus and I just want to spread his love to everyone."

Long-term volunteer Alison has seen the transformation firsthand. "We're just growing and flourishing. It's wonderful to have this café here... people from the community can come through and just be at ease."

The parish is also exploring new ministry among families and different generations, strengthening its Wednesday morning service, monthly evening worship and leadership development. Its vision extends beyond Ocean Grove, with hopes to revitalise the Barwon Heads congregation and raise new leaders.

Courage does not mean doing everything alone. Living Waters has discovered the strength of a supportive team – people willing to pray, take risks, have a go, learn from what happens

and encourage one another. A local pastors' network provides another layer of prayer, Bible reading and mutual support.

There are still challenges: limited volunteers, financial pressures, building needs and the challenge of caring for people who feel uncomfortable with change. Yet the parish is choosing expectancy over fear.

For Liz, one post-it note, stuck permanently to her desk, captures the heart of it: *Seek what God is doing. Join Him – and with it comes ease.*

A small **Melbourne Anglican Foundation** grant helped make that first courageous step possible. "It gave us the ability to step out and start," Liz says. "From that start, it's grown into probably even more than we expected. But we wouldn't have stepped out unless we were able to have that small grant."

Living Waters is discovering that courage is contagious. When Christians stand side-by-side, listen for the Spirit, take faithful risks and keep their focus on Jesus rather than simply on the institution of church, something beautiful can happen.

The invitation is simple: get out of the boat. Step onto the waves with Jesus. And see what God will do.



WATCH VIDEO



26 year volunteer, Alison.



The Ven Liz Rankin.



Café manager, Carmela.



Reimagining **Church** on the **Surf Coast**



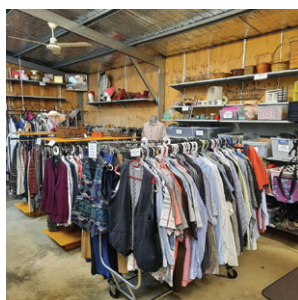
Easter Sunrise Service. Photo: Sharon Valentino



The Rev'd Sharon Valentino.

Across regional Victoria, Anglican parishes are asking an important question: how can Christianity remain relevant, accessible and alive in communities that are changing rapidly?

Surfcoast Anglican Parish, led by Rev'd Sharon Valentino, is embracing both the challenge and the opportunity. Serving Torquay, Anglesea and Aireys Inlet, the parish's vision is to "reclaim village, community, family and self through mission as an act of communion."



Meeting point: The Op Shop.

Connection is already happening in creative ways. The Torquay Op Shop is a meeting point for locals, it has quality stock and provides resources to theatre groups, schools and even Melbourne Zoo's orangutans! Mainly Music connects around 60 registered families across Torquay and Anglesea, while Music @ St Luke's welcomes accomplished Victorian musicians and classical music lovers.

Cycling, meditation, grief and loss groups, social gatherings and pop-up Op Shop BBQs create further opportunities for connection. The parish also partners with other local churches through initiatives including the Surf Coast Camino, Grow Free 3231 and shared Easter celebrations.

The challenge now is helping these points of connection become pathways towards Christian community and faith, particularly for younger generations.

"We need ways to connect, build bridges and serve the towns we live in and love," Sharon

says. Yet a small, committed leadership team carries much of the parish's ministry, administration and management, while ageing buildings and stretched volunteers add pressure.

There is also a deep sense of possibility. St Luke's is refreshing its church and community spaces to invite people to "come in". Locals already use the front garden throughout week and on Monday it is the home for low key Cosy Communion. Community events like Pancake Night, Easter gatherings, candlelight Christmas services and concerts create a joyful welcome. The parish is exploring café ideas, contemporary worship, expanded family ministry, music and prayer nights, shared ministry workers and new partnerships.

The **Melbourne Anglican Foundation** can help turn ideas like these into action through seed funding – a financial "nudge" that enables parishes to test new approaches, learn what works and build momentum.

A grant could help launch a family ministry, community café, music and prayer program, shared ministry worker or collaborative event. Through the generosity of the Foundation supporters, pioneering projects can create new opportunities for people to encounter Jesus.

At Surfcoast, the vision is not simply to preserve the Church as it has been, but to listen for where God is already at work – and have the courage and resources to follow him into the future.



Community garden space.

Schools News

Bringing Schools into wider ministry

Effective school chaplaincy does not happen in isolation. While chapel services, pastoral care and spiritual formation are central to school life, Anglican schools are strengthened when they connect with the wider mission of the Church.

At Melbourne Girls Grammar School (MGGS), a partnership with the Melbourne Anglican Foundation is helping students discover what faith looks like beyond the school community.

These partnerships give students opportunities to see faith in action. Through workshops, guest speakers, fundraising and service projects, young people engage with issues of compassion, justice and community while developing practical leadership skills.

At MGGS, student-run pop-up shops and sponsored walks have raised funds for Anglican ministries. One particularly memorable religious education lesson featured a young woman sharing how a Foundation-supported program had changed her life. Her story gave students a powerful, personal insight into the lasting impact of charitable ministry.

For chaplains, connections with Anglican agencies strengthen relationships between schools, parishes and the wider Church. They remind students that faith is not simply something explored in chapel or Religious Education – it is lived through compassion, expressed in service and shared with others.

The Rev'd Kirsty Ross

*Chaplain,
Melbourne Girls Grammar School*



The Rev'd Kirsty Ross.



Schools support Service and Sleep Out

Students, staff and chaplains from Anglican schools across Melbourne and Geelong gathered at St Paul's Cathedral on 23 July for the annual Anglican Schools Service.

Archbishop Ric Thorpe encouraged students to find awe and wonder in God's creation and to trust Jesus through life's storms, reminding them that their voices are heard, valued and loved.

Schools donated blankets (pictured below) for people facing hardship this winter. The blankets will be blessed at the **Big School Sleep Out event** on 4 September where the Melbourne Anglican Foundation will hand them over to Orange Sky and Many Rooms, Cathedral partners assisting those on the streets on a weekly basis, for distribution.

See article and pictures on page 6.



A Chaplain Reflects on the Anglican Schools Forum

On Monday 15 June, there was an unusual sight in the city, a steady stream of coloured and striped blazers making its way from Flinders Street Station, across the road, to St Paul's Cathedral.

Students gathered from the 23 Anglican Schools in the Melbourne and Geelong area at the invitation of Archbishop Ric Thorpe. It was called a 'Student Forum', and that is what we experienced, a cathedral full of students talking and listening to one another, and recording their responses so that their voices could then be heard.

One of our students commented that 'It was good to socialise, and it was good to have our voices heard'. Another one was thinking about how some of his friends don't want to go to a church that isn't talking about issues that are important to them. These reflections show how much our young people like to have a voice, and like to have their concerns addressed.

There was the challenge issued, for our religious leaders to be good listeners and to be wise and brave leaders. This challenges me in my role as a chaplain.

Jenny Sonneman

Chaplain, Ivanhoe Girl's Grammar School

Students Take Action for Those Experiencing Homelessness

What does it feel like to sleep on a cold, hard floor with no heating, no pillow and little comfort?

For more than 30 students from Peninsula Grammar, Melbourne Girls' Grammar and Ivanhoe Girls' Grammar, the **Big School Sleep Out** at St Paul's Cathedral in September offered a small glimpse into the reality faced by people experiencing homelessness.

"I'd like to have a small insight into what it's like to be underprivileged on the streets," one student said.

But the Sleep Out was about more than discomfort. It was an opportunity to listen, learn and discover the people behind the statistics.

Rev'd Steve Sonneman from St Jude's Estates Ministry spoke about families living in Melbourne's public housing estates, where poverty, addiction and isolation can be everyday realities. For one resident, that loving care prompted a powerful question: "Is that what you call God?"

Students also heard from Peter Sellars of City on a Hill's Many Rooms ministry, which provides meals for around 80 people twice a week at St Paul's Cathedral, and from Orange Sky, whose volunteers provide free laundry, showers and, perhaps most importantly, human connection.



The Rev'd Kirsty Brown blesses some of the donated blankets.

"Some just come for a chat," students were told. "Many people just want to feel part of a community – that they are not forgotten."

They were reminded that homelessness can happen to anyone.

The students responded with action. They raised funds for church-based youth programs supporting disadvantaged young people, while blankets donated by Anglican schools were distributed through Many Rooms and Orange Sky.

As the students settled onto the

cathedral floor, they were challenged to remember those who would spend the night outside: "Give them food, give them hope. Pray for the homeless."

The message was simple: faith is not just practised inside a chapel. It is expressed through compassion, service and action.

The Melbourne Anglican Foundation is proud to support the students as they turn awareness into action.



Testify: Creating Space for Creativity, Confidence and Community

In Melbourne's western suburbs, something special is happening as young people discover the courage to share their creativity and find a community cheering them on.

At Red Door Church, Caroline Springs, Associate Pastor Joshua Hennessy dreamed of creating an event where young creatives could come together. That dream became *Testify Music Festival*.

With support from a Melbourne Anglican Foundation grant, three Testify events were held during the April, July and October 2025. The response has been encouraging, with attendance growing to around 200 people at the October event. Across the year, more than 40 students from five local music schools

had the opportunity to perform, many for the first time outside their usual circles.

"It's an event that brings together a community of creatives," Joshua explains. "We've got students and teachers and artists alike that come together to put on this festival event."

But Testify is about more than music. Each event includes counsellors and mental health professionals. Partnerships with Headspace Youth Psychologists and Mend Family Care have brought valuable expertise and support.

The impact has been wider. Local businesses have joined in by providing stalls and snacks, creating opportunities for connection and participation. One local woman who began



attending with a jewellery stall told Joshua that Testify had helped rebuild her confidence to return to selling products after becoming a mum.

For Joshua, seeing students perform when they might otherwise never have had the opportunity has been one of the greatest joys.

"All of the teachers that I've spoken with... have all said to me that their students wouldn't normally get the

opportunity to perform in front of people. And that's been a really cool thing to be able to cultivate."

The Foundation's support has been practical and personal. Funding helped provide equipment and ensure local artists and guest speakers were paid.

Joshua says. "The thing that I've appreciated just as much has just been the ongoing encouragement – they believe in Testify, they believe in me."

He reflects, those who support the Foundation are doing more than funding projects. They are believing in people, backing good ideas and helping communities flourish.



Meet Our New Board Members



Dr David Knox AM

David has built an outstanding career in actuarial science, retirement policy and financial strategy, while faithfully serving the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne.

David holds a Bachelor of Arts and a PhD from Macquarie University and is a Fellow of the Institute of Actuaries of Australia. He retired from Mercer in April 2025 after serving as Senior Partner and National Leader for Research and Policy. He also led the internationally recognised Mercer CFA Institute Global Pension Index for 16 years.

Earlier in his career, David worked at PricewaterhouseCoopers and was the Foundation Professor of Actuarial Studies at The University of Melbourne, where he combined teaching with consulting in pensions and retirement incomes.

David has served as a Board member of the Australian Prudential Regulation Authority, President of the Institute of Actuaries of Australia, and was appointed a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) in 2023. He also serves on the Diocesan Finance Committee and attends St Columb's Hawthorn.



Rev'd Kathryn Watt

The Rev'd Kathryn Watt brings extensive experience in ministry, law and governance to her service within the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne.

An ordained Anglican minister, Kathryn recently concluded seven years as Vicar of Holy Trinity Balaclava and Elwood, having also served as Area Dean of Port Phillip, a member and director of Archbishop in Council, and continuing as a member of the Bishops'court Management Committee.

Before parish ministry, Kathryn spent over 25 years in the legal profession and has over two decades of board experience, primarily in the financial services sector. She currently chairs the boards of three wealth management entities within Insignia Financial and serves on several governance, compliance and audit committees.

Kathryn has also served on the boards of Anglicare Victoria, the Anglican Diocesan Schools Commission and Ruyton Girls' School. She holds degrees in law, theology and corporate law from the University of Melbourne and Trinity College, and is a Fellow of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.



Professor Ian Harper AO

Ian is one of Australia's leading economists, widely recognised for his contributions to public policy, economics and higher education.

Ian chairs the Australian Statistics Advisory Council and, until recently, served on the Monetary Policy Board of the Reserve Bank of Australia. He is a member of Kearney's Australia & New Zealand Advisory Group. In November 2023, Ian retired as Dean and Director of Melbourne Business School and Co-Dean of the Faculty of Business and Economics at The University of Melbourne.

A committed member of the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne, Ian chairs the Clergy Remuneration & Working Conditions Committee and served on the most recent Board of Nominators for the Archbishopric of Melbourne.

He and his wife worship at St Jude's Anglican Church, Carlton, where Ian serves as an occasional service leader and contributes to parish leadership.

In 2020, Ian was appointed an Officer of the Order of Australia (AO) for his distinguished service to economics, education, and public and monetary policy development and reform.



Board Member Recognised in Australian Honours

Andrew Porter OAM has been recognised in the 2026 King's Birthday Honours with a Medal of the Order of Australia for his service to business and corporate governance.

Andrew has more than two decades of experience in finance and accounting, serving as Chief Financial Officer of the Australian Foundation Investment Company and AMCIL Limited since 2005. He has also contributed nationally through roles with the Auditing and Assurance Standards

Board, Australian Securities and Investments Commission and the Group of 100.

Andrew has served the Melbourne Anglican Foundation as a Director since 2017, including as Treasurer and Trustee of the Melbourne Anglican Foundation Trust.

He is also a longstanding member of St John's Anglican Parish Camberwell, where he has served in parish leadership roles.

How You can Leave a **Legacy** of Faith

What will your faith make possible for generations to come?

For many people, supporting the Church is about more than giving today. It is about helping ensure that the mission, ministry and witness of the Anglican Church in Melbourne can continue to flourish well into the future.

The Melbourne Anglican Foundation plays an important role in making this possible. Through charitable giving, the Foundation supports parish ministry, clergy support, theological education and church buildings, as well as worship, the arts, pastoral care, emergency relief, chaplaincy, youth ministry and family violence prevention. Every gift can help strengthen communities and create

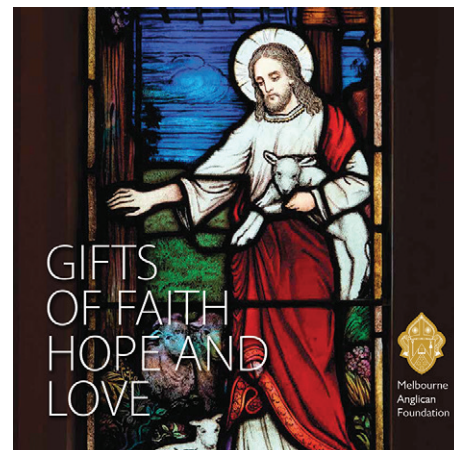
opportunities for people to encounter the love of God.

A gift that continues your story

One of the most meaningful ways to support the Church's future is by leaving a gift in your Will. A bequest to the Melbourne Anglican Foundation can provide lasting support for ministry and mission long after you are gone.

Making or updating a Will is an important part of planning for the future. There are several ways to leave a gift, including a residuary bequest, a specific sum of money or particular assets. Professional legal and financial advice can help you choose the option that is right for you and your circumstances.

Those who choose to include the Foundation in their Will are invited



to become members of the Charles and Frances Perry Society. The Society recognises and celebrates people who are making a lasting commitment to the future of the Church. Members have opportunities to attend special events, meet others who share their vision and remain connected with the wider Church community.

Generous giving: responding to God's Grace

The Anglican Church has been part of my life for as long as I can remember, and through it I have come to know the life changing love of Jesus Christ. Personally, this has been embodied in my parish as a constant presence of worship, learning, and shared life. Through it, I have received far more than I could ever give.

I want to see that good news continue to be passed on – joyfully and faithfully – through flourishing Anglican parishes, so that many more people can come to know and follow him.

As I have learned more about the Melbourne Anglican Foundation, I have become convinced of the importance of long term vision for the Church's mission. Guided by Jesus, I believe the Church has a bright future – but it is not something we can take for granted. After caring for family and supporting parish life, we are faced with a wider question: how might we help ensure the Church continues to grow, serve, and adapt in both long established and new communities?

For me, making a bequest to the Melbourne Anglican Foundation is a way of responding to that question with hope. It is an investment in the Church's long term mission, and in the people who will encounter Jesus through its ministry long after we are gone.



*Melbourne Anglican Foundation
Board Member, Bequestor
and Patron of the Charles and
Frances Perry Society,
Geoffrey Court.*

Geoffrey Court

A gift in your will is a powerful and valuable way to continue to support the Church's mission and ministry for generations to come.

Across generations, supporters have recognised that faithful giving is an investment in the future. As Foundation supporter Geoffrey Court has emphasised, it is about having a long-term vision and remaining faithful to the mission entrusted to us.

Your legacy can help the Church continue to serve, inspire and transform communities for generations to come.

To learn more about leaving a gift in your Will, explore the Foundation's bequest brochure and online legacy-giving options.