



## The ANGLICAN DIOCESE OF MELBOURNE The Social Responsibilities Committee May Newsletter 2013

The SRC Website: [www.melbourne.anglican.com.au/src](http://www.melbourne.anglican.com.au/src)

### RETRIEVING THE PAST – ANTICIPATING THE FUTURE

What kind of world will we be handing onto our children and grandchildren? We all stand in a tradition, a culture - our heritage. But what is really worth handing on? What will we take as our guide to the kind of future we want to create? Is this a spiritually and theologically significant question? What do the churches have to contribute now to addressing this question? Clearly there is presently a powerful contribution being made about the treatment of asylum seekers. *Making the Word of God Fully Known* could be used to help inform our high level judgements about what is worth handing on, while allowing great diversity as to means. The Collect for Pentecost is appropriate:

*God, you taught the hearts of your faithful people by sending to them the light of your Holy Spirit. Grant to us by the same Spirit to have a right judgement in all things and ever more to rejoice in his holy comfort, through the merits of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen*

### A MEN'S SHED IN SELBY

The Men's Shed movement is rarely associated with the Anglican Church but not so at All Saints Anglican Church in Selby. The Men's Shed opened in October 2012 to address the



growing proportion of retired men facing serious health issues that come from the dislocation from their working environment and work mates. With the permission of the Vicar Keith Purdie and Vestry, Lachlan Thompson (theological student at Trinity) turns the Church Hall into a weekly workshop.

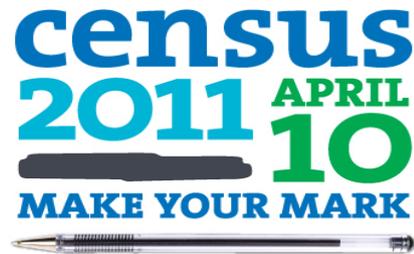
The inaugural meeting hosted seventeen blokes with interests

from motorcycle restoration to quilting. Unlike most shed the program has a monthly evening Chat night for those who are still working but soon to retire. "It has been fantastic to see the men rally out their despair as they walk through the door. They instantly find a mate who will share a cuppa, plane some wood or weld some steel with them." said club president Lachlan Thompson. The Selby Shed has placed itself firmly into the local community by hosting "Build a Billy Cart" days at the Selby Festival, the community house, local libraries and Scout groups. "Parents these days don't have time to build their kids a billy cart, but the Mens' Shed can and also help a mum or dad share a new experience with their child", said Lachlan. The role of the Anglican Church in the shed will be even more visible with a blessing by Archbishop Philip on the 2<sup>nd</sup> June. The Selby Men's Shed is a

pathway between non-church community and church. The Selby shed is on facebook at [www.facebook.com/pages/Mens-Shed-All...Selby/477084022311260](http://www.facebook.com/pages/Mens-Shed-All...Selby/477084022311260) or email [lachlan.thompson@gmail.com](mailto:lachlan.thompson@gmail.com)

### INTERESTING INSIGHTS INTO AUSTRALIANS

**Archbishop Philip**, in his talk at Regional Conferences spoke about research on people who ticked the 'Anglican' box on the 2011 census forms. It seems that 80% of them believe they can lead a good Christian life without ever coming to church. In the area covered by the diocese there are still hundreds of thousands of people who tick the 'Anglican' box. This is worth considering when we think about what people have taken hold of from what the Church has handed on. Equally important is the 29% increase in those ticking 'no-religion'. What are people making of all this or is it in the 'too hard' basket?



**The Brotherhood of St. Laurence** has reported on some interim results of research on Australian attitudes to their society. Those involved ideally want to live in a society marked by the 'fair go for all' and while there is much to be proud of about Australia, there are concerns that the actual society is vulnerable to becoming very different.

The research is based on three assumptions. (1) The power of stories: the importance of story in framing life and decision making; (2) Ideology as narrative: 'History records that there is nothing as powerful as a fantasy whose time has come'; (3) Model of change: that the future is open to influence and not predetermined.

The interim report concerns the results of extensive interviews with a 135 Australians from across the spectrum of our society. From a vast amount of data six themes were identified, which will inform the BSL scenario planning for possible futures. Themes are listed by the frequency of being mentioned.

Fairness and Opportunity:

Importance of a 'fair go' / worries about its erosion, misuse.

Multiculturalism:

Pride in successful embrace of diversity and social tolerance

Politics and Leadership:

Unease re negativity of political culture / need for visionary leadership.

Climate Change:

Concerns re. climate change and other environmental issues.

Inequality:

Concerns about increasing inequalities in wealth and income/ social cohesion/sustainability of life styles; negativity of asylum seeker/refugee policy.

Technology:

Connected world and declining affiliations/institutions."

The assumptions and themes provide food for theological reflection and possible action – to be pursued in response to the full report. Many thanks to BSL for access to this interim report and we eagerly await its completion. Ask for AFTER NOW report BSL May 2013. The

report is to be circulated only to those on the diocesan mailing list. It is available from Theo Mackaay, Bishop Philip's PA at, [nwregionbishop@melbourne.anglican.com.au](mailto:nwregionbishop@melbourne.anglican.com.au).

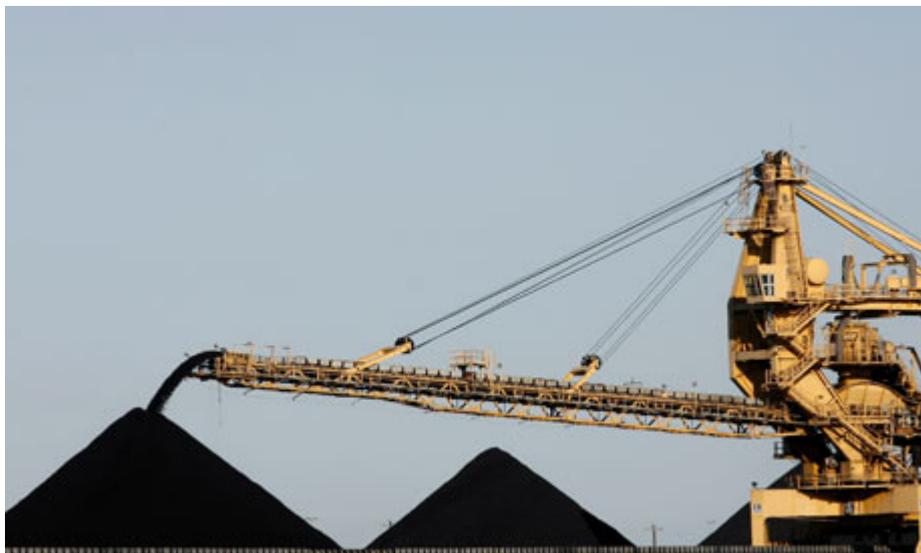
#### CHURCH AGENCIES RESPONDING TO THE STATE BUDGET 2013-2014



Each year church welfare agencies respond to the state budget. Go to [website](#) for a link to the summaries provided by the different agencies. At the meeting several main issues were identified Six issues were identified with a couple of points about each issue. This is supplemented by more detail on each issue. Go to [website](#) for these issues. No less important is the choice to develop 'roads' not 'trains', which requires suitable levels of usage if developers are to be involved. This is not a good sign for reducing cars on roads, which is one of the outcomes of developing various rail projects and a significant environmental impact.

#### CLIMATE CHANGE - JUST THREE NUMBES - DO THE MATHS!

- (1) It's simple maths: we need to stay below **2°C of warming** — anything more than that risks catastrophe for life on earth.
- (2) We can emit **565 more gigatons of carbon dioxide** and stay within 2°C of warming.
- (3) The only problem? Burning the fossil fuel that corporations now have in their reserves would result in emitting **2,795 gigatons of carbon dioxide** – five times the safe amount. And they're planning to burn it all — unless we rise up to stop them.



The massive coal expansion planned by Australian companies and governments is one of a handful of projects in the world that would take the planet beyond the point of no return if they were to go ahead.

In November 2012, following

publication of his Rolling Stone article, 'Global Warming's Terrifying New Math', Bill McKibben and 350.org hit the road to build a movement strong enough to change the terrifying math of the climate crisis by getting people, colleges and governments to take their cash out of coal investments. See SRC diocesan website for the November 2012 article in *Rolling Stone* by Bill McKibbin that started the *DO THE MATHS* movement. **See Bill McKibben – Q/A 3 June and Melbourne 6.00 – 7.30pm June 7, Athenaeum Theatre – go to Tickertek <http://premier.ticketek.com.au/shows/show.aspx?sh=BILLMCKI13> .**

### **IS THIS DEMONSTRATION OVER THE TOP OR NOT ?**

The report *Financing the Reef's Destruction*, commissioned and released earlier this year by Market Forces and 350.org shows how Australia's 'big four' banks, supported by international investors are literally financing the reef's destruction. The report makes it clear that the 'big four' Australian banks – ANZ, Commonwealth, NAB and Westpac – play a critical role in enabling major fossil fuel projects. Combined, these banks lent \$3.8 billion to coal ports and LNG terminals in the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area since January 2008. Still timely to give feedback to the banks.



### **REDUCING OUR ENVIRONMENTAL FOOTPRINT - STILL RELEVANT**

The SRC and the Cathedral are working together on this agenda for the Cathedral and hopefully for parishes in the diocese that have not explored this matter. We salute those parishes in the diocese that are a long way ahead of us. We are exploring a key point - a cost neutral approach. Companies are prepared to pay all costs associated with the audit of current electricity, water and gas use, and cost of implementing measures to reduce demand, and also install, for example, solar panels for further reduction of carbon footprint. This is paid off by (as per tailored contract) over a defined period by the difference between the current payment levels and the reduced costs due to improvements. This is at an early stage of exploration with companies and with our Registrar and General Manager Mr. Ken Spackman. Has anyone made use of this way of financing the reduction of their parish's environmental foot print? We would be very interested in your experience - [sames@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:sames@unimelb.edu.au) . Of course this is a multi-layered matter that is framed and driven by the clauses in the Diocesan Vision of Making the Word of God Fully Known.

### **WHAT KIND OF ECONOMY DO WE WANT INFORMING OUR LIVES?**

This issue is very relevant to the question of what we want to hand on to our children, of what kind of future do we want to create. Political discussions and consumer 'common sense' take for granted the answer: an ever increasing material standard of living, supported by a continuously growing economy. Within this dominant paradigm there is no question of an alternative. Here are two discussions that help us think about an alternative economy and the kind of society that it would serve.

Both materials could support an engaging study group or may be illuminating for individuals in our parishes reflecting on their lives in the light of the Gospel.

One is by Andrew J B Cameron who lectures in ethics and social ethics at Moore Theological College in Sydney and also chairs the Social Issues Executive of the Anglican Diocese of Sydney. 'Is Growth Good? Toward a Christian ethical interrogation of a dominant paradigm', *St. Mark's Review*, No. 214, November 2010 – go to SRC webpage. (Reproduced with Permission from *St. Mark's Review*). This whole edition features the work of the Public Affairs Commission of General Synod addressing a number of 'Wicked' Problems.

Andrew concludes, *"Is growth good? I am not an economist, and cannot finally pronounce in favour of the proposed alternatives. But I am a Christian, and can seek to live an identity in Christ that is not necessarily formed by the macro-economic orthodoxies of my time. I have reason to suspect that growth is not so good. I have reason to hope there may be different objects of love, and different ways of sharing our common life together. I can seek, with others, to find them"*.

The other discussion is 'Better than Growth' from the Australian Conservation Foundation: [http://www.acfonline.org.au/sites/default/files/resources/ACF\\_BetterThanGrowth.pdf](http://www.acfonline.org.au/sites/default/files/resources/ACF_BetterThanGrowth.pdf) Here is an accessible account of an alternative economy, covering eight themes with sufficient detail to take them seriously.

- (1) Better Progress emphasising measurement of individual and social wellbeing.
- (2) Better work balancing paid and non-paid work, family and leisure time.
- (3) Better production – reorienting design and manufacturing towards completely reusable products.
- (4) Better consumption – stepping of the consumer treadmill.
- (5) Better markets by ensuring that the full environmental and social costs are included in the price tag of goods and services will stimulate a cleaner economy.
- (6) Better business by matching private incentives with long-term public goals.
- (7) Better taxation e.g. shifting taxation away from income generation and towards pollution and resource use.
- (8) Better regulation, e.g. fixing cost-benefit analysis.

These two discussions give us insights into what an alternative economy might look like. That is essential. The next question for both discussions is what transition scenarios are needed to effect change.

## **RECONCILIATION**

The need for reconciliation was brought to the fore with the words of a young football fan to Swan's star Adam Goodes and even more with Eddie McGuire's on-air comments. The good news is that racist commentary has now become more widely unacceptable not just to the AFL but to many, many people. People are speaking out against it and other forms of discrimination – for example when tourists are vilified on public transport. There is a cultural change taking place – slowly and on the surface of our culture. What is bringing about this change? The stance of indigenous players for twenty years after Nicky Winmar defiant stance against racism. Also, the increased backing of institutions such as the AFL is having impact. This is bringing about a growing acknowledgement that racism is unacceptable. This kind of speaking out is also needed about violence against women and children and about the huge disorders due to our patterns of alcohol consumption.

The need for deeper cultural change is shown in Eddy McGuire's humour, which is not a surface matter, since it fell out of his mouth. For more on this see, <http://www.eurekastreet.com.au/article.aspx?aeid=36497>.

That there is a need for deeper reconciliation between Indigenous and other Australians was also brought to mind at the Reconciliation Evensong at the Cathedral on Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> May, with a welcome to Country by Aunty Di Kerr and another important step in forming the Reconciliation Action Plan for the Diocese. .

This need was reinforced by Bishop John MacIntyre in his sermon. John began by reminding us that reconciliation was at the heart of Christian ministry, recalling Paul's words that God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself. However, our reconciliation with God calls for reconciliation with others.

This is needed in the Australian society to heal the deep wounds in the lives of Indigenous Australian and the disorders of the rest of us 'enjoying' the inadequately acknowledged consequent benefits of the land . The story of invasion, theft of land, degradation and massacres is still to be recognised and owned by Australians and along with this recognition, repentance and restitution. There are simple steps (which can still be contentious) we can take to keep moving in this direction: flying both the Australian and Aboriginal flags; getting a sign publically acknowledging the Wurundjeri People of the Kulin nation as the original custodians of the lands on which the church building stands; remember the elders at the start of Sunday services. For Bishop John's sermon go to Melbourne diocesan website. See also Dr. Peter Adam:

<http://www.melbourne.anglican.com.au/NewsAndViews/Pages/Stealing%20'part%20of%20the%20fabric%20of%20Australian%20society'%20since%201788.aspx>

### **ASSULUM SEEKERS**

The excellent breakfast conversation at the packed BMW Edge, with Archbishop Philip , Jo Hood from Anglican Overseas Aid, and Julien Burnside QC, was filmed and may be viewed at, <http://www.melbourne.anglican.com.au/NewsAndViews/Video-Audio/Pages/videoaudio.aspx> .

Among other things the SRC motion passed by the 2012 Synod on treatment of asylum seekers included the call for "asylum seekers who are granted refugee status, without any issues to do with security risk, be place in the wider community." The full intent of that call will be summed up by the banners that will appear on St. Paul's Cathedral in July: FULLY WELCOME REFUGEES. This also supports the National Council of Churches programme calling for refugees released in the community to be able to work.

Bishop Philip Huggins has recently made clear this is a call to Federal politicians to rethink the 'No Advantage' policy, which is not working to reduce the number of asylum seekers. See his media release.

<http://www.melbourne.anglican.com.au/NewsAndViews/Pages/Anglican-Church-calls-for-review-of-'no-advantage'-policy---000425.aspx>

### **Bishop Philip Huggins on Family Reunion for Refugee families and Communities**

“In recent months, through my role at the Brotherhood of St Laurence, I have been involved with the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) on a proposal for a Pilot Program to allow the proposal of people for permanent humanitarian visas (subclass 200 series).

The BSL would be a Proposing organisation through whom such requests could be proposed for a visa.

A Pilot Program for 500 places will be announced by the Minister in coming days. The point of this note is to ask you to convey this possibility to individuals and communities who may hope to sponsor members of their family or community to Australia. For example, family members impacted by the war in Syria /Iraq; family who have left Sudan or Karen in the Thai/Burma camps.

Members of our Anglican Christian community may find this a way to reunite families, given how difficult this has become.

There will be a Community Briefing organised by DIAC in Melbourne on Friday 21 June in the afternoon (TBC). Please invite interested individuals/communities to convey their interest to BSL through Ms Hutch Hussein - [hutchhussein@bsl.org.au](mailto:hutchhussein@bsl.org.au), with a copy to me ([nwregionbishop@melbournanglican.org.au](mailto:nwregionbishop@melbournanglican.org.au) and Tony Nicholson, Executive Officer, BSL [tnicholson@bsl.org.au](mailto:tnicholson@bsl.org.au)).

The Community Placement Pilot has bilateral support. It is likely, subject to evaluation, to grow in coming years as a lower-cost method through which Federal Governments manage refugee intake numbers.

In Canada, an equivalent model now handles 40% of the Refugee intake. Accordingly, it is very important that our communities engage this Pilot because of the immediate scope and the future possibilities it may contain.

The downside is the cost which it shifts onto our refugee communities and the fact that they have varying capacities to meet these costs.

BSL is mindful of this in agreeing to be a sponsoring organisation.

As with all matters relating to refugees and asylum-seekers, there are no simple solutions. My prayer is that, through this Pilot, some families here may be reunited with loved ones. Especially those who's daily life is now full of terror and feel hopeless. Our prayers continue in the divine yearning for justice and peace for all God's children. Even so, Marantha  
Come Lord Jesus.”

Rev. Canon Dr. Stephen Ames  
EO Melbourne Diocesan Social Responsibilities Committee