

UPCOMING

Mark Your Calendars

EVENTS

29th April
Supervisor Training
St Paul's Cathedral
 7.00 pm House Group
 Teesdale

3rd May
 9.00 am Devonshire Tea
 Parish Ministry Centre

5th May
 Jim Simpson Funeral
 St Pauls Inverleigh

6th May
 7.00 pm House Group
 Teesdale

7th May
 11.00 am Communion
 Estia Bannockburn

10th May
 8.30 am Men's Breakfast
 Parish Ministry Centre

11th May
 3.20 pm Geelong v Western Sydney
 GMHBA Stadium Geelong

12th-14th May
 Clergy Conference Mooroolbark

13th May
 7.00 pm House Group Teesdale

Parish Roster for May 4

Church Cleaning:
 Inverleigh: Carol Wilson
 Bannockburn: Gill & Phil Dickson

Reading:
 Bannockburn: Christina Szabo

Communion Assistant:
 Inverleigh: Geoff Morgan
 Bannockburn: David Bannister

Morning Tea:
 Bannockburn: Christina Szabo
 David Bannister

Parish Directory

Parish Office

5281 2553

Vicar

Revd Timothy Smith

0412 673 152

revdrtim@hotmail.com

Wardens

Darrell Blackman

0457 338 678

Carol Newlands

0409 654 527

David Bannister

0477 564 268

Parish Council Secretary

Carol Newlands

0409 654 527

Parish Treasurer

David Osborne

0419 398 455

Assistant Treasurer

Luanne Thornton

0437 667 011

St John's Op Shop

Naomi Peel

0418 346 484

Surprise Op Shop

Luanne Thornton

0437 667 011

I know he was really special
 but dead men dont come back.
 He's standing behind me, isnt he...

Golden Plains Anglican News

Living the Gospel in Our Community

Inverleigh†Bannockburn†Meredith Anglican Parish

27th April 2025—SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER

HIDDEN UNDERCURRENT OF AUSTRALIANS TURN TO CHRISTIANITY

Hundreds of thousands of Australians are quietly turning to Christianity despite a national trend of declining religious affiliation, new research has revealed.

Nearly 785,000 Australians who identified as having no religion in the 2016 Census listed Christianity in 2021, according to a study released by social research firm McCrindle. The findings challenge the prevailing narrative that Australia is becoming increasingly secular, instead uncovering what researchers call an undercurrent of faith. McCrindle Research founder Mark McCrindle said the data revealed a profound search for meaning beneath Australia's seemingly secular surface.

Surprisingly, the growth in Christian identification is not being driven by overseas migration but predominantly by Australians aged 55 and older.

Between 2016 and 2021, the number of Australians aged 55 and over who changed from no religion to Christianity increased by 48 per cent to nearly 195,000. The research also revealed that while younger generations are less likely to identify as Christian overall, those who do are far more committed to regular church attendance. More than 70 per cent of Generation Y Christians and 68 per cent of Generation Z Christians attend church at least monthly, compared to just 26 per cent of Baby Boomers who identify as Christian.

(Continued on page 6)

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(03) 5281 2553 revdrtim@hotmail.com

www.goldenplainsanglican.org

www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100094651898435

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Worship Today: SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER

Sentence: Jesus said to Thomas, 'Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe.

John 20:27

Collect: Living God, for whom no door is closed, no heart is locked: draw us beyond our doubts, till we see your Christ and touch his wounds where they bleed in others. This we ask through Jesus Christ our Saviour, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

Readings: Acts 5:27-32; Psalm 118:14-29; Revelation 1:4-8; John 20:19-31

Hymns:

Inverleigh: 520 – Lord, enthroned in heavenly splendour; 699 – A new commandment; 691 – Faith will not grow from words alone; 428 – Lord, for the years your love has kept and guided

Bannockburn: *Great is the Lord*; Here I am to worship; Majesty, here I am; A new commandment; The heart of worship; *Lord you have my heart*; Lord for the years; *All I once held dear*

Meredith: *Great is the Lord*; Here I am to worship; A new commandment; The heart of worship; Lord, for the years; *All I once held dear*

Intercessions: ...and, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

World: a world in conflict, war, or threat of war, especially: Sudan, Ukraine and Russia, Israel and Palestine, for all developing nations, especially South Sudan, struggling with poverty insecurity, displacement, and hunger; lack of education, employment, medical intervention, freedom, and clean water; those who are refugees or asylum seekers; for orphans, widows, and the oppressed; for all national leaders and those in authority for a world of justice and peace; for all who are seeking light and security in an uncertain and dark world.

Church: for all church leaders and the unity of the worldwide Church; our Diocese in this time of transition; the Board of Nominators and the election of a new archbishop; the establishment of the Youth and Family Community Cinema at Meredith, to be led by the Spirit as we seek a change in church culture that supports and enables spiritual growth and growth in numbers.

Community: the Wadawarrung and all our first nations peoples, their elders; those working toward reconciliation and treaty, recognition of the country on which we live, work and play; for all who come into our communities of any race, creed, colour, faith, or no faith that they will experience welcome; for all who are struggling with cost of living; that our neighbours will be find a new and better hope in the message of the resurrection of Jesus.

Those in need: Matt Bellchambers, Shirley Musgrove, Melinda Gregory, Karen Schulze, John Thornton, Jenny Bannister, Margaret McLaren, Mary Simpson and family, Sarah Rees, Jayden Rees, Fay McFarlane, Timothy Deng, Mawut and family.

Memorium: Jim Simpson

GROWING A HEALTHY CHURCH CULTURE ENERGIZED BY FAITH

Rather than just keeping things going or trying to survive

- **worship and sacramental life:**
move people to experience God's love
- **motivation:**
energy comes from a desire to serve God and one another
- **engages with Scripture:**
in creative ways that connect with life
- **nurtures faith in Christ:**
helping people to grow in, and share, their faith

Questions for reflection:

Read: Colossians 3:12-17

What is special about the church?

What kind of change might we need to make as a Parish/ congregation?

Read: Matthew 15:21-28

Why did Jesus seem to be playing 'hard to get'?

What kind of change might we need to make to be energized by faith?

Pray:

God of hope, you call us to be your witnesses in this uncertain world. By your Spirit awaken in us a true vision of your kingdom, a greater certainty of our salvation, and a deeper dedication to your service. Through our words and actions may the same Spirit bring many who are lost to be found, and for them to celebrate the hope that we can only have in Jesus Christ, in whose name we pray. **Amen.**



(Continued from page 1)

“These aren’t just shifts in census data—they represent real spiritual journeys,” Mr McCrindle said, “Particularly for younger Australians, identifying as Christian today is a meaningful decision that typically leads to active church involvement.”

Ocean Grove and Barwon Heads vicar the Reverend Liz Rankin said she had witnessed this spiritual searching firsthand in her parish. “Last year, we had a period where people were walking in off the street because they felt a sense they were needing to come to church,” Ms Rankin said. “The thing that struck me was they see the darkness in the world, and they believe that they need to choose the light,” she said. “The light that they had known as young children was actually Jesus, so they thought they needed to come back to church to find out more about Jesus and to choose his ways.”

McCrindle senior researcher Shannon Wherrett said Australians were increasingly seeking spiritual connection and meaning in their lives. She said people were drawn to Christianity primarily through personal spiritual experiences and the search for purpose.

Despite this movement away from Christianity, Australians appear increasingly open to spiritual exploration. The proportion of Australians open to changing their religious views has more than doubled since 2011, from 8 per cent to 19 per cent. According to McCrindle, the research suggests that as cultural Christianity declines, what remains may be a smaller but more committed core of believers alongside a growing population open to spiritual exploration. “Australians are looking for hope, for purpose, for something beyond themselves,” Mr McCrindle said. “And for many, Christianity is where they’re finding it.”

The research combines analysis of the Australian Census Longitudinal Dataset with a nationally representative survey of over 3000 Australians.

<https://tma.melbourneanglican.org.au/2025/04/hidden-undercurrent-of-australians-turn-to-christianity/>
(edited)

TABITHA ALANG MAYOM

A friend of mine, Gai Deng Biar, Lecturer in Economics at the University of the Upper Nile, South Sudan, is wondering if there is anyone who is willing and able to support Tabitha in the final two trimesters of a Diploma in Community Health at Kenya Methodist University. Fees are KES 32,500 per semester, approximately AU\$410.00 per semester plus transfer fees. Gai’s wife is in Kenya and Tabitha’s parents are her neighbours. Alang means prayer because Tabitha was an answer to prayer. Revd Tim for more information.



Bible Readings

Prayer for the week:
Almighty God, whose Son Jesus Christ is the resurrection and the life of all who put their trust in him: raise us, we pray, from the death of sin to the life of righteousness; that we may ever seek the things which are above, where he reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

Monday
MARK Evangelist and Martyr Proper
Morning: Ps 19
Isaiah 50:4-11
Acts 12:25-13:13
Evening: Ps 45
Ezekiel 1:4-15
2 Timothy 4:1-11

Tuesday
Catherine of Sienna (d.1380) Teacher
Spiritual Teacher
Morning: Ps 145
Exodus 15:19-27
Matthew 28:11-20
Evening: Ps 147
Joshua 2
1 Peter 3:8-16

Wednesday
Morning: Pss 148 & 149
Exodus 16:1-21
Luke 24:1-12
Evening: Pss 144 & 150
Joshua 3
1 Peter 3:17-4:2

Thursday
PHILIP & JAMES Apostles & Martyrs Proper
Morning: Ps 27
Job 13:1-12
Acts 2:37-47
Evening: Ps 33
Proverbs 4:10-18
John 6:1-14

Friday
Athanasius of Alexandria (d.373) Bishop
Morning: Pss 5 & 6
Exodus 17:8-18:9
Luke 24:28-35
Evening: Pss 7 & 8
Joshua 5
1 Peter 4:12-19

Saturday
Morning: Ps 9
Exodus 18:10-27
Luke 24:36-53
Evening: Ps 10
Joshua 6:1-21
1 Peter 5

Last night I ordered a glass of wine with my dinner and the waiter asked for my ID. I replied do I look that young and the waiter said "No. I just wanted to see if you qualified for the Senior Citizen discount."

Next Sunday 4th May
THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER
HEALTHY CHURCH:
Outward Looking
8.00 am Holy Communion
St Paul’s Inverleigh
10.00 am All-Age Communion
St John’s Bannockburn
5.00 pm Prayer & Praise
Epiphany Meredith
Readings
Acts 9:1-6 (7-20)
Psalm 30
Revelation 5:6-14
John 21:1-19



Personal Support Training Psychological First Aid & Emotional Spiritual Care

Saturday 24th May 2025 9.00am - 4.00pm
 Uniting Church 282 Wilson's Rd St Albans Park,
 Geelong 3219
 For more details or to register visit www.vccem.org.au

Why be involved?

VCC EM training is a comprehensive training package designed to equip members of faith communities to support affected residents through their participation in VCC EM deployments.

The training course is a 2 stage process involving:

- Self paced learning and completion of the workbook.
- Face to face training day.
- If Face to Face is not permitted at the time this will be done by zoom with a short face to face when permitted.

Successful registration will require the completion of safety checks and referee reports and will occur after the training has been completed.

Why complete the training?

This training is essential for all in the faith community intending to respond to emergencies and disasters in Victoria.

The Victorian State and Local Governments are continually tightening the requirements for people entering disaster areas.

The VCC EM is authorised by Government to coordinate an integrated faith communities' response when disaster occurs.

Compassion in times of crisis

www.vccem.org.au info@vccem.org.au 7037 6010