

Prayer:

O God, you know us to be set in the midst of so many and so great dangers that by reason of the frailty of our nature we cannot always stand upright: grant to us such strength and protection as may support us in all dangers and carry us through all temptations; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

MARMINGATHA

Stories to Inspire

FOR THE MONTH OF SEPTEMBER 2021



Christ Church Hawthorn

MELBOURNE THAI CHURCH

Melbourne Thai Church is a ministry of Christ Church Hawthorn. It was planted by Andrew & Amy Dircks after they arrived at Christ Church Hawthorn ten years ago. They moved to Melbourne from Bangkok, where Andrew had served as a missionary and where Amy, who is Thai, had also served in church ministry.

Over the years, Melbourne Thai Church has had its ups and downs, and has settled into a long-term pattern of having a monthly Sunday afternoon gathering, a weekly small group Bible study, and other occasional social activities. It includes a number of young families, and some couples where one partner is Thai and the other of some other ethnicity. Some members were already Christians in Thailand before moving to Australia, while others have come to Christian faith here in Melbourne.

A number of Thais have made Christ Church Hawthorn their regular church home, while others continue Sunday morning fellowship in other English-language churches across Melbourne.

During Covid lockdowns Melbourne Thai Church has continued, and one particular benefit has been that during lockdowns, the weekly Bible study group, meeting by Zoom, has been led by a capable young Thai pastor, Ajarn Aon, leading from his home in Bangkok. This has strengthened the fellowship and has helped church members integrate their Thai lives with their Melbourne lives. – *Rev Andrew Dircks*



Children's song time in Melbourne Thai Church.



Thai Bible study group by Zoom, with Ajarn Aon top left, and Andrew & Amy Dircks top centre.

St Alfred's Blackburn North

DAILY PRAYER

During the 5th lockdown it seemed a good idea to start a daily 2pm Prayer Meeting on weekdays so that people at St Alfred's could have the opportunity to use this lockdown time in a positive way, if they were available to join in on Zoom. Once the 6th lockdown started we quickly 're-booted' the 2pm meeting. It lasts for just 30 minutes.

Each prayer session begins with some verses of scripture to feed our prayer-time. As ever, the Psalms are especially helpful in this. We then break the meeting into 3 sections: prayer for the wider world (we have concentrated recently on the continents of the world), prayer for Australia, then final prayer for St Alfred's & St Luke's, as well as Deanery & Diocese.

People also share their own knowledge and contact with friends and family in different parts of the world and across Australia. We have held up our mission partners and those of CMS in prayer. With the Afghanistan situation, the crisis in Myanmar and, due to Covid, so much unrest across the world and across the states and territories of Australia, there has been much to pray for. Wonderfully, we have a God who hears our prayers and who invites us to "approach the throne of grace with confidence" (Hebrews 4:16).

– *Rev Mike McNamara*

MESSAGE FROM BISHOP GENIEVE BLACKWELL

I was privileged to host an online farewell for Robyn Boosey who has now concluded as Program Manager for our Preventing Violence Against Women Program. We are now advertising for a new Program Manager and I encourage you to share the following link to the job ad in your parishes and networks as appropriate.

If you are like me, Lockdowns 4, 5 and 6 have now all blurred together and the last couple of weeks has been the realisation that we are in for the long haul. Thank you to everyone who took the opportunity to respond to the pulse survey put out by Bishop Kate. She is currently engaging with the data and will communicate further in light of that. I continue to be encouraged by stories of pastoral care and support – by clergy and your parishioners.

My leave planned for the next three weeks (5-26 September inclusive) is now another staycation. I do feel blessed that I was able to make it across the border twice earlier this year for the weddings of two of my nephews. (I can assure you that I never thought of the Murray River quite so much in those terms in the past.)

It is different for everyone. I am encouraged hearing from various people what sustains in the midst of challenges – whether at home or in ministry. For me this past year it has been the 30-week retreat in daily life. What always seemed too hard (seeing a spiritual director in person every week) became possible with COVID and zoom!

See the adjacent dates for the 2022 reTreat and Marmingatha Ministry Conference. Such a gift that this year we were able to gather in person just prior to these recent lockdowns. If 2022 continues in the same vein as 2021, please understand that if restrictions prevent us going ahead on the dates planned, we will attempt one postponement and then move it online.

I was sorry that Marmingatha missed out on the Archbishop's Roadshows (again at least a gift that we heard directly from the Archbishop at the Conference). I am already receiving feedback from vicars as they are Reimagining the Future with their Parish Councils. I hope to be able to share some stories of different processes and conversations from some of you. I would also like to be able to share some stories of how you are shifting the focus for your congregations and the people in your care to what can be gained in this period of extended lockdown.

*Please send your stories to inspire for October...
+Genieve*

PVAW Program Manager

Applications Welcome

Submissions due by **Sunday 26 September**

[Click here](#) for the job advertisement.

REMINDER

Ministry & Curacy

Grants 2022

Applications Welcome

Submissions due by **Wednesday 8 September**

[Click here](#) for the application form.

Description of the project should include;

- what the grant is for
- why it is strategic & why does it need funding surplus to your budget
- how it fits your mission action plan
- if this is a new project/ministry and how it will be funded beyond 2022 if applicable.

Please [contact me](#) if you wish to discuss your application prior to submission.

SAVE THE DATE

Christmas Gathering

5-7pm Tuesday 23 November 2021

Format to be confirmed pending restrictions

Plan A

In person at St Michael's North Carlton

Plan B

Online Zoom, BYO Christmas cheer

Marmingatha Episcopate

ReTreat & Conference

23 – 25 May 2022

Foothills Conference Centre Mooroolbark

Optional reTreat

Monday afternoon until Tuesday Morning

Episcopate Conference

Tuesday afternoon until Wednesday afternoon



[Click here for this weeks' video message from the Archbishop](#)