

**VIA MEDIA is the newsletter of Anglicans' Together Inc, Sydney Australia.**

The title is 'borrowed' from Anglican Church Reformers who sought to walk 'the middle way.'

**Who we are**

Anglicans Together includes a diverse membership of people from within the Anglican Diocese of Sydney who seek to work together in order to maintain, foster and develop our common life in the Diocese and wider Anglican Communion. We are a broad group with a diversity of beliefs and practices, reflective of our Anglican Church. We promote unity and co-operation with one another and encourage one another in mission.



**The Rev'd Dr Max Wood**  
**President, Anglicans Together**

Since the last edition of Via Media – we have a new Archbishop! At the special Election Synod conducted in early May, Kanishka Raffel, [pictured below] former Dean of St Andrew's Cathedral, was convincingly elected as the 10<sup>th</sup> Archbishop of Sydney.

He succeeds Archbishop Glenn Davies who retired earlier in March. Archbishop Raffel's Consecration and Inauguration then took place in St Andrew's Cathedral on Friday 28<sup>th</sup> May. The three unsuccessful candidates at the Election Synod were all Regional Bishops of the Diocese – Bishop Michael Stead (Southern Region), Bishop Chris Edwards (Northern Region) and Bishop Peter Hayward (Wollongong Region). The one potential candidature rumoured from outside the Diocese, namely that of Bishop Richard Condie of Tasmania, did not eventuate. For a full description of the events at the ordinary session and Election Synod, see Lyn Bannerman's article in this edition of Via Media.



One of the new Archbishop's first official acts was to summon a three day ordinary session of Synod for early September. However this was soon postponed due to the current COVID-19 lockdown in Greater Sydney. The Archbishop has now proposed a three day ordinary session of Synod from 28<sup>th</sup> February to 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2022. Having reviewed these proposed dates, the clerical members of the Anglicans Together Committee promptly advised Diocesan authorities that they clashed with Shrove Tuesday and Ash Wednesday – significant events for those of us who observe the annual liturgical calendar! The Archbishop responded to us directly that while he regretted the clash and apologized for any inconvenience, there will be no rescheduling.

The postponement of the proposed September session of Synod until February/March next year and the fact this session is only scheduled to be three days in duration has caused concern in some circles. This is primarily due to the fact that there has only been one ordinary sitting day of Synod in 2020 and 2021. In normal circumstances there would have been ten sitting days during this period and the concern is that this has severely limited Synod's important scrutiny and accountability function.



One of the new Archbishop's first important appointments has been to appoint his replacement as Dean of Sydney. In this regard, it was announced last month that Canon Sandy Grant will commence ministry as the 13<sup>th</sup> Dean of St. Andrew's in December<sup>1</sup>.

Canon Grant [pictured left] has been the Rector of St Michael's Cathedral, Wollongong since 2004. He will be well known to members of Synod as a regular contributor in debate and as the Chair of the Diocesan Task Force on

Domestic and Family Violence.

However the hot topic in National Church politics over recent months has been the reactions to the announcement by Gafcon Australia that it proposes to establish a new allegedly Anglican Church entity in Australia outside of the Anglican Church of Australia. Gafcon Australia was established in 2015 and is part of the Gafcon Movement which has its origins in the Global Anglican Future Conference (Gafcon) held in Jerusalem in 2008. Its basic objective is to oppose what it deems to be liberal theological revision in the Anglican Church, particularly in relation to sexuality.

In a Media Statement on 19 July<sup>2</sup>, Bishop Richard Condie, Chair of Gafcon Australia and Bishop of Tasmania, firstly outlined their motivations: "With great sadness and regret, we realise that many faithful Anglican clergy and lay people will no longer be able to remain as members of the ACA [Anglican Church of Australia] if changes allowed by the Appellate Tribunal majority opinion [concerning services of blessing for persons of the same gender who have been married according to the Marriage Act] take place in their dioceses ... We love these people and don't want them to be lost to the Anglican fold."

The Media Statement then went on to briefly outline the proposed process: "...the new church entity will be formed through a company structure, led by a small Board of Directors. In the beginning, former ACA churches would be able to join as affiliates of the new entity, through an affiliation agreement. At a later date these churches will become a Diocese, establishing a Synod to elect a Bishop and Standing Committee. Once established it is anticipated that the new diocese will be recognised and endorsed by the Gafcon Primates, as they have endorsed the formation of similar dioceses in the USA, Canada, Brazil and New Zealand, where the established Anglican Church in these countries has departed from the teaching of Scripture."

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<sup>1</sup> <https://sydneyanglicans.net/news/new-dean-swaps-wollongong-for-sydney/51493>

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.gafcon.org/sites/gafcon.org/files/news/pdfs/media\\_statement\\_final.pdf](https://www.gafcon.org/sites/gafcon.org/files/news/pdfs/media_statement_final.pdf)

This provocative proposed move by Gafcon Australia unsurprisingly attracted reaction from other leaders within the National Church. In a letter to the Bishops of the Australian Church<sup>3</sup>, the Primate and Archbishop of Adelaide, Geoff Smith [pictured right], firstly emphasized the biblical imperative of maintaining Christian unity amid diversity (see Ephesians 4:1-16 and John 17), something that he believed was being contradicted by Gafcon Australia's proposal. Indeed, the Primate argued that Gafcon's "...announcement [was] ramping up the tensions among us."



Maintaining that as no doctrine of the Anglican Church of Australia has or can be changed by a decision of the Appellate Tribunal and no bishops have validly been found to have departed from the doctrine of the church, "...faithful, orthodox Anglicans can continue with confidence as members of the Anglican Church of Australia. To suggest or insinuate otherwise is to not speak the truth."

Returning to the theme of unity (and disunity), the Primate also expressed concern that some of the leaders of Gafcon Australia also occupy positions of leadership in the Anglican Church of Australia. He wrote, "My expectation is that people who say they are committed to the Anglican Church, and who have made oaths and promises upholding its constitution and canons and therefore its governance processes, would be committed to keeping it strong, united and effective. I have to say this is difficult to see in Gafcon's statement and proposed actions. It feels like the life of our church is being undermined from within. Rather than making 'every effort' to stay together, a way is being prepared for a quick exit. We haven't even had the conversation yet [at a future General Synod], and the Gafcon boat out of the Anglican Church of Australia is being readied for departure."



In an August Ad Clerum<sup>4</sup>, the Archbishop of Melbourne and former Primate, Philip Freier [pictured left], then appeared to 'raise the stakes' in the responses to the proposed new church entity. Firstly agreeing with the Primate that there is no need for the Gafcon proposal, and acknowledging that church division is always painful and difficult, he noted that the Diocese of Melbourne had survived similar initiatives before, such as the establishment of the "Anglican Ordinariate" by the Roman Catholic Church in 2012.

However the Archbishop then went on to raise the more sensitive issue of the relinquishment of Anglican Holy Orders for those clergy who may leave to join a new church entity. He wrote, "As I understand it, clergy who leave the membership of the Anglican Church of Australia to be a minister in another church are wise to voluntarily relinquish their Anglican orders before accreditation or ordination in the new church."

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.anglicanstogether.org/current/PastoralLetterToAustralianBishopsJuly2021.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> <https://davidould.net/archbishop-of-melbourne-ad-clerum-gafcon-move-unnecessary-and-possibly-an-attempt-to-shed-redress-responsibilities/>

This call is likely to be strongly resisted by clergy who may leave the Anglican Church of Australia to join a new Gafcon Australia Diocese noting that this did not occur when a similar situation took place in New Zealand in recent years.

The Archbishop of Melbourne then concluded his response in a similarly controversial manner by suggesting that the Gafcon Australia proposal of establishing a separate church entity may be an attempt to avoid historical child sexual abuse redress payment responsibilities. He stated, "I want to express my concern that some, especially survivors of child sexual abuse, may see this initiative as an attempt to shed redress responsibilities or to leave them entirely in the Anglican Church of Australia without carrying any of that liability and responsibility to the new entity.

It would be valuable if the new entity resolved, early on, to fund redress in the diocese where any "former Anglican Church of Australia Churches" previously operated or where former Anglican Church of Australia clergy have served." As far as I am aware, this is the first time this type of concern has been raised in the context of this developing dispute, and as with relinquishment of Holy Orders, such concern will be strongly rejected by Gafcon supporters.

In a subsequent move that will hearten supporters of the blessing of people who have been civilly married of the same gender (and dishearten opponents), the Bishop of Newcastle, Peter Stuart last month approved the use of liturgies to facilitate such blessings.

In a Pastoral Letter to his clergy<sup>5</sup>, Bishop Stuart [pictured right] wrote, "...the legal and pastoral fact is that a member of the clergy of this Diocese, at this time, is not prohibited from using the 'Wangaratta service' or a similar service. No member of the clergy is required to use it."



The only two provisos being that clergy who wish to use such liturgy must have the approval of the Incumbent and Parish Council that they are willing for the relevant church building to be used for this ministry and that clergy also have a pastoral conversation with the Bishop prior to exercising this ministry.

And on the international Anglican Communion scene, the Governing Body of the Church in Wales this month also approved a Bill to allow same-sex couples to have their civil partnership or marriage blessed in a church liturgy<sup>6</sup>.

Developments regarding this matter will obviously continue and it waits to be seen whether Gafcon Australia goes through with its proposal to establish a new church entity in Australia outside of the Anglican Church of Australia and what actual form such entity might take. However, two final observations at this time. The first (and perhaps sadly) relates to money, or as our former President and current Rector of St. James' King Street, Andrew Sempell termed it, "funding"<sup>7</sup>.

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<sup>5</sup> <https://davidould.net/breaking-bishop-of-newcastle-lifts-ban-on-same-sex-blessings/>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.churchinwales.org.uk/en/news-and-events/church-approves-blessing-service-same-sex-partnerships/>

<sup>7</sup> <https://anyflip.com/iupi/kvad/>



With a few notable exceptions, it is my experience that the property of the vast majority of parishes in the Australian Church is held in central Diocesan Property Trusts. Should a particular parish or congregation resolve to “leave” their Diocese and join a new church entity (or even a parallel Diocese in Australia constituted outside of the Anglican Church of Australia), they would have to do so leaving the keys and their bankbooks at the door! This would be an enormously costly and expensive exercise and could no doubt, as experienced in other countries, result in long and equally costly litigation.

The second point is that if our organization is about promoting “Anglicans Together”, then this proposal by Gafcon Australia would appear to be an initiative in “Anglicans Apart”. Andrew Sempell has gone so far as to describe this proposal as “...a moment of schism within the church.” This is a serious accusation. Yet there is a sense that among some sections of the conservative evangelical faction, facilitating and perusing schism is a “badge of honour” and even “promotes your conservative evangelical cred”. It would be a tragedy if such pursuit was to fracture significant sections of the Australian Church. By contrast, a broad church embraces and cherishes diversity in unity. Yes, as others have observed, this can at times be difficult, disheartening, and sometimes downright infuriating! But as the Primate stressed upon us, striving for such Christian unity is a biblical imperative that cannot be ignored.

**The Reverend Dr Max Wood**  
**President**

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## **Report on the Archbishop Election Synod Proceedings, 4 – 6 May 2021**

### **Lyn Bannerman**

This Synod was held in the International Convention Centre at Darling Harbour where up to 500 people (the approx. size of Synod when all in attendance) could be accommodated, socially distanced for covid-19 purposes.

#### **Nominees for the Position.**

4 nominations were made and advised to Synod members a couple of weeks in advance, along with the list of nominators. Some nominators appeared against more than one name.

All four were currently in positions in Sydney Diocese. Very briefly:



**Bishop Chris Edwards**, born 1961, Moore College trained, priested in Sydney in 1994, worked in other Dioceses and internationally (Brussels), and currently Bishop, Northern Region in Sydney.

**Bishop Peter Hayward**, born 1959, degree in Economics, Moore College trained, priested in Sydney in 1993, worked in Sydney Diocese and internationally (Washington), and currently Bishop, Wollongong Region.

**Dean Kanishka Raffel**, born 1964, qualified in law, Moore College trained, priested in Canberra & Goulburn in 1996, worked in other Dioceses until appointed to the position of Dean of St Andrews Cathedral, Sydney.

**Bishop Michael Stead**, born 1969, qualified in Accountancy, Moore College trained, priested in 2002, PhD (Uni of Gloucester), worked in Sydney Diocese and currently Bishop of South Sydney.

### **Role of the Archbishop.**

What is it? 5 “contemporary” roles have been identified in “An Evangelical Episcopate”, a Report<sup>8</sup> written by our Doctrine Commission, chaired by the Principal of Moore College, and received in Synod in 2018. In summary:

- 1. The Guardian of the Faith** “that was once for all delivered to the saints” (Jude: 3)”. Emphasis is placed on ensuring the teaching of scripture to shape the life of the Diocese, with the courage to speak the truth, when it is not popular;
- 2. Order the Ministry of the Diocese** which is an extension of Role 1, and mainly relates to the selection and authorisation of appropriate men and women for the various ministries in the Diocese. It also involves dealing appropriately with those in such positions who may be negligent in some fashion, or acting contrary to the teaching of Scripture;
- 3. Pastoral Concern and Oversight** which is not intended to require the Archbishop to act as pastor to all in the Diocese. Rather, he must model pastoral care in all his interactions, “thereby encouraging thoughtful, caring relationships between all, with the spiritual welfare of others being of paramount concern”;
- 4. Represent the Diocese** nationally and internationally – “a role having arisen from history, rather than from the Biblical text or the Ordinal”. He needs to be a clear voice within Anglicanism and across denominations “for an unambiguously Biblical, evangelical Anglicanism”, and “to have a degree of mental agility and apologetic skill to handle opposition, even hostility, with grace, humility and courage”; and
- 5. Administration of the Diocese.** The diligent attention to this is “not to be a distraction from ministry but rather serving the interest of ministry”. The availability of 5 Assistant Bishops in Sydney Diocese means that the full weight of responsibility does not fall to the Archbishop. Nevertheless, faithful administration is recognised as an important aspect of guardianship.

### **Limbering up for the Election**

Two events, in the week before Synod helped our preparation:

- Synod members were invited to send questions to the Secretariat that we would like asked of the 4 nominees. These questions were collated under major themes and Synod members gathered in the Cathedral or via a live stream, to hear a facilitator put them to the 4 men. It is impossible to summarise all the material. Questions ranged across matters such as strategic directions for the Diocese, financial management and theological issues. It provided a very helpful insight into the way each nominee approached issues, not only their thoughts but their ability to articulate

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<sup>8</sup>

[https://www.sds.asn.au/sites/default/files/Contemporary%20Role%20of%20the%20Archbishop%20%28Appendix%20to%20the%20Archbishop%20of%20Syd.%20Election%20Ord%201982%29.pdf?doc\\_id=NDcyNTc=](https://www.sds.asn.au/sites/default/files/Contemporary%20Role%20of%20the%20Archbishop%20%28Appendix%20to%20the%20Archbishop%20of%20Syd.%20Election%20Ord%201982%29.pdf?doc_id=NDcyNTc=)

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**f:** [facebook.com/AnglicansTogether](https://facebook.com/AnglicansTogether)

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clearly. It confirmed that all four were deeply committed to the strict Evangelical nature of the Diocese.

- The next evening a group of 20-25 Anglicans Together Synod representatives (clergy and lay) met to workshop through the Diocesan 5 key roles of an Archbishop, assessing possible strengths and weaknesses of each nominee against these, and to exchange personal experiences in parishes. We pondered the degree to which each nominee would be supportive (or not) to our “stole” parishes. It was a very respectful discussion and while a strong name emerged, it was agreed, as with previous elections, that, as a group, we would run a low profile in the Synod. Better not to be a “kiss of death” to any preferred nominee.

It is appropriate to note, as it was already well known then, and was obvious in Synod, that the Anglican Church League (ACL), was actively promoting, indeed led the support team, for one of the candidates, Dean Kanishka Raffel.

### Election Synod

4 days were planned for; only 3 were required.

**Day One** began, after a Bible study, with a Presidential address by Bishop Peter Lin [*pictured right*], Bishop of Georges River Region. The Presidential address<sup>9</sup> was a challenge to Synod to consider each nominee against what he saw to be the major strategic issues facing the Diocese now. In very brief summary, we face:



1. “Our strategic moment”, referring to the growth of outer Sydney and decline in inner areas. The issue is the need to purchase new land in the growth areas, redistributing assets/wealth from inner Sydney;
2. “Our cultural moment” in which identity rules the “market place of ideas, and the moral and political landscape”. “You are what you feel you are”, with particular concern expressed about sexual identity. We must seek to share the Gospel and understand that our true identity is found in God;
3. “National Church moment” being the tricky waters to be navigated given the doctrinal divisions in the Church over homosexuality, a “sin” which makes unity difficult as “I do not believe any of us want the situation where we may share a denominational label but unable to share at the Lord's Table.”;
4. “Personal Moments” which refers to the Archbishop’s ability to deal with difficult and delicate conversations with victims and survivors, the heaviness of some most awful decisions and the need to confront misconduct and the unrepentant. “Media-savvy public performance can matter, but the personal, the private, the pastoral matters so much more.”
5. “Gospel Moment”. An acknowledgement that it is a time for “Gospel urgency”, noting the best we can say of Church growth is that it is “stagnation”. The Archbishop has a significant leadership role in this, but it is not his job alone as we are also called - “we are his foot soldiers”.

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<sup>9</sup> Full text of Presidential address

[https://www.sds.asn.au/sites/default/files/2021%20Synod%20Proceedings%20%28Special%20Session%20of%2052nd%20Synod%29.pdf?doc\\_id=NDc3ODY=](https://www.sds.asn.au/sites/default/files/2021%20Synod%20Proceedings%20%28Special%20Session%20of%2052nd%20Synod%29.pdf?doc_id=NDc3ODY=)

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And so the election began – a sense of enormous responsibility pervaded us. We were obliged to weigh up what we had learnt already of the 4 nominees and what more we were to hear in debate, against the Archbishop's roles as articulated, the views on the pressing needs outlined in the Presidential charge to Synod, and our deep concern for the future of our own parishes.

Anyone, including any media, were asked to leave the public gallery for the remainder of Synod. We agreed to a motion of secrecy (no social media comment etc) during the proceedings of the election.

After many speeches for and against each nominee, the Synod voted at the end of the first day (well into the evening) to determine which of the four nominees would be accepted onto the "select list", being the nominees selected for further consideration for the subsequent "final list". Every member of Synod received 4 pieces of paper (pink or blue depending on whether you are clergy or laity).

So we each got one paper for each nominee with the words "yes" above a box or "no" above a second box. You had to return all 4 of your pieces of paper with either yes or no marked on each – a vote was not valid if all sheets were not marked one way or the other. So, Synod members were not constrained – you could vote to have them all proceed to the "select list", or just some, or indeed none, if so inclined. To get on the "select list", a nominee had to have a majority vote in either the House of laity or the House of the clergy.

The count was done by the Secretariat and the results presented to Synod by email late morning on the next day.

## **Day Two**

Results of the ballot placed only 2 nominees on the "select list" as neither Bishops Edwards or Hayward received a majority in at least one of the Houses.

Dean Raffel and Bishop Stead progressed to the "final list" having a majority in at least one House– their votes were:

Dean Raffel – 417 for and 71 against (laity) and 248 for and 23 against (clergy).

Bishop Stead – 287 for and 198 against (laity) and 130 for and 134 against (clergy).

The debate, speeches for and against both nominees, proceeded. It should be noted that the nominees were not present during these debates. Just to give a flavour of this debate, I think it is fair to say the speeches for Dean Raffel emphasised his strong preaching skills, with his ability to bring people to Christ; those for Bishop Stead emphasised his strategic, financial and management skills.

We were dreading all along unpleasant behaviour in speeches as had occurred in previous Synods, to their shame. While some "twisting" of words to make a weakness look like a strength, or a strength look not so, occurred, in the main the proceedings were largely respectful and the President made it clear that he was not going to tolerate anything other than that.

So, again, late in the evening, we voted on which nominee(s) should proceed to the "final list", using the same voting paper approach – it was possible still to vote for both to continue.



### Day Three

A majority in both Houses was required this time – the ballot resulted in Dean Raffel only reaching the “final list”.

Dean Raffel – 366 for and 123 against (laity) and 231 for and 49 against (clergy)

Bishop Stead – 186 for and 306 against (laity) and 77 for and 202 against (clergy).



The likely outcome was pretty clear. The President told Synod that Bishop Stead had graciously advised that he would be available to support and assist Dean Raffel with the burdensome administrative tasks of the Archbishop.

All that remained was for the President to put to the vote the one name on the “final list”, Dean Kanishka Raffel. The motion was that the Dean be invited to be the Archbishop of Sydney. There was a show of hands, by Houses. The result was clearly positive in both Houses, so no formal ballot, to be officially counted, was deemed necessary.

Synod concluded with all nominees returning to the Centre, their participation in this gruesome process being warmly recognised and appreciated. The Dean and his wife, Cailey, were received with acclamation.

**Lyn Bannerman**  
**Committee Member**

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### Rwetyeome, The Pregnant Lady The Rev'd Michael Armstrong



Shortly after our arrival we were welcomed by Craig, an elder, to Arrente Country, which includes Alice Springs, and much of the Larapinta Trek which we were about to walk to raise funds for ABM.

Craig shared a dreamtime story of his people about Mount Sonder, which would be part of our trek, which is more accurately known as Rwetyepme, the Pregnant Lady.

In the dreaming a man and a woman, who were not permitted to marry due to their kinship relationships, had run away together. The woman was pregnant. They were hunted down for their breaking the law, and the man was killed. The woman was allowed to escape. However, she was so grieved by what occurred that she laid down on the ground and died.

If you look closely at a picture of the mountain you can see her laying with her head back, and her pregnant stomach in the air.

On the fourth day of trekking, we rose at 2am to gather at the feet of Rwetyepme. It would be several hours of walking, or more accurately climbing, to reach the summit where we would watch the sun rise.

Our guide was a great encourager – sharing enough information with us about the walk to prepare us, but not too much to scare us. He said, “The first 20-30 minutes will be hard going, and steep climbs. But after that, it’s not hard at all – you’ll be fine!”.

The first part was incredibly hard. It was steep. There were large steps up rocks, loose paths, sharp edges; parts of the trail sometimes disappeared in the dark. When we reached the top of that section, I had already stripped down to my T-shirt despite the temperature being below zero.

We stood at the end of this part, catching our breath, and through heavy puffing I said, “Well we must be a reasonable way along now”! Our guide politely laughed, placed his hand on my shoulder said, “We’re up to her ankle”.

While the next part of the journey was not as hard as the first, it was by no means easy. I was pleased we were walking in the dark, for if I’d seen what was ahead of me I may have chosen to stop and turn back. There were a couple of moments when we reached the top of a peak (her knee, her stomach, her breasts) where we could see lights ahead of us, way up high, of the walkers ahead of us, revealing how much further we really had to go.

The walking was hard, but what I was least prepared for was the cold. I began, as I said, in a T-shirt, and by about 2/3 of the way up the mountain I was wearing a thermal shirt, a T-shirt, a light jacket with a hood, a heavy jacket, a beanie, gloves and then my rain coat over the top. Those who know me would laugh as more often than not wandering about with a shirt and no jumper or jacket back in Sydney. I was cold.

There were a few moments when I came close to panic as I realised how far we had to go. I certainly wondered how much a helicopter would cost to fly me up and out! The cold certainly made it worse.

I found myself praying, often, for the strength to go on.

Suddenly from the steep hill above an orange glow began. Despite being exhausted, I found myself then annoyed and anxious that we might miss the sunrise – especially after such a huge effort. I pushed myself even harder to make it. My knees and feet are still paying for it.

However, we did make it, and we saw the sun rise from the top of the breasts of Rwetyepme.

Despite the cold, and the pain, it was an extraordinary moment; to bask in the sun and having achieved that. The whole group was abuzz.

Having risen so early we then had plenty of time to walk down the mountain, and so we were able to walk down at our own pace.

I was pleased about this because my knees and feet were very sore!

I found myself praying intensely most of the way down the mountain. Several times I had to prompt myself to watch my feet!

My prayer turned to the story of another mountain, and a treasured memory from a time in the Philippines with a group of young people on Pilgrimage as part of an ABM Adventure – seeing firsthand the work that is done in partner communities.

In a village in the Mountains in the Northern Philippines, ABM had provided assistance to the people to be able to pipe clean water to their village, which was in a mountainous area. The village was called “Megasusu”, which the men told us many times meant “Large Breasts”, because the mountains they lived upon looked like large women’s breasts.



Piping the clean water meant that the women, who had the responsibility each day to get collect and carry it upon their heads (several kilometres up and down the mountain), no longer needed to carry it so far. Now it came to a central tap in the village. This meant the women had greater time for other work, but most significantly it had an immense impact on their health, particularly in terms of their ability to conceive.

The Head of the Mothers Union told me, “Since the pipe has come we have not had one miscarriage, and for the first time in years we have the sound of babies crying in our village”.

The memory of standing in two sacred places, lifted up by the strength of women, and the prayer that accompanied it, brought me back to reality of why I was making this trek.

I am deeply thankful to my parish, family and friends who helped us raise \$12,000.00 for ABM and its incredible work. The amazing trekkers, despite complexities with COVID-19, have raised almost \$90,000.00 for ABM which will be well used to support those in need across our world, bringing a little more love, hope and justice.

I am deeply thankful for the privilege of having walked with such an inspiring group, on such sacred space, for such a worthy cause.

**The Rev’d Michael Armstrong**  
**Rector, Parish of Hunters Hill**  
**Committee Member, Anglicans Together**

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## The Anglican Eucharist in Australia's beginnings and succeeding years The Rev'd Dr Brian Douglas

### The Coming of First Fleet and the first Eucharist

The Church of England came to Australia with the First Fleet of 11 ships in 1788 in the person of the Rev'd Richard Johnson, Chaplain to the Penal Colony, along with copies of the King James Bible of 1611, the Book of Common Prayer of 1662 and other religious publications. The First Fleet brought with it somewhere between 1,000 to 1,500 convicts, soldiers, civil officers and sailors under the command of Captain Arthur Phillip RN, a British naval officer who was also the Governor of the colony. The colony was set up as a gaol for convicted criminals and as a means of getting prisoners out of Britain and into a far-away settlement where they could be punished and where they were no longer a problem for the government.



Johnson was responsible for the spiritual welfare of the convicts and brought with him, the resources of the Church of England, including the Bible and the Book of Common Prayer, along with his own Evangelical faith and vocation as an Anglican priest, to achieve this purpose. He also brought the services of the 1662 Book of Common Prayer, not only Morning Prayer and the Litany which were the most common services at the time, but also the service of the Lord's Supper or Holy Communion, known also in modern times by its more ancient title of the Eucharist.

When Richard Johnson celebrated the first service of Holy Communion or the Lord's Supper on the Australian mainland, on 17 February, 1788, he did so using the *1662 Book of Common Prayer (BCP)*<sup>10</sup>. Johnson celebrated Holy Communion in the 'markee' or tent of Lieutenant Ralph Clark, who resolved 'to keep this table as long as I live, for it is the first Table that ever the Lord's Supper was eat of in this country.' Clark's diary records that he was sensible of the honour in regard to his humble dwelling but he was also aware of the great honour of receiving the sacrament itself since he says, 'Oh my God my God I wish that I was fit to take the Lord's Supper.'<sup>11</sup> For Clark, the service of Holy Communion was of importance and gravity in his life at the very beginning of European settlement in Australia, reflecting not only his own personal piety but reticence to receive, reflecting the practice of the time of infrequent reception of the sacrament. The Holy Communion was rarely celebrated in the Church of England at that time, perhaps 3 or 4 times a year, and then only for the initiated who approached it with great restraint and sincere devotion so as not to eat and drink damnation to their own souls.

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<sup>10</sup> D. Robinson, 'The Church of England in Australia', in C. Buchanan (ed.) *Modern Anglican Liturgies 1958-1968* (London: Oxford University Press, 1968), 297.

<sup>11</sup> R. Clark, *The Journal and Letters of Lt Ralph Clark 1787-1792*, Entry for 17 February, 1788, accessed online 8 November, 2019 [<http://purl.library.usyd.edu.au/setis/id/clajour>]



### Johnson's understanding of the Eucharist

What Johnson thought he was doing when he celebrated that first Eucharist is unknown, however since Johnson was a product of his Evangelical upbringing some guesses can be made about his beliefs. He would have certainly used bread and wine and the communion vessels he brought with him. He would have probably also believed he was following the Lord's command 'to do this in remembrance of me' but he would probably also have believed a receptionist doctrine of Christ's presence in the Eucharist where Christ was present to the communicant at the time of reception or administration of the sacrament only and not apart from the act of reception and persisting in the elements of bread and wine. He may also have been a memorialist, that is, a person who believed that the signs of bread and wine merely reminded the communicant of past and completed transaction, that is, the sacrifice of Christ in the first century of the common era, and so aids to reflection in the enquiring mind.

He would probably not have espoused any real presence of Christ in the elements apart from the moment of reception although he would have subscribed to the statements of eucharistic theology in the Catechism in the 1662 BCP which saw the Lord's Supper as 'the continual remembrance of the sacrifice of the death of Christ, and of the benefits which we receive thereby' interpreting it in a receptionist or even memorialist fashion. He would also have believed that the outward elements of the Lord's Supper were the bread and wine while the inward part was 'the Body and Blood of Christ, which are verily and indeed taken and received by the faithful in the Lord's Supper.'<sup>12</sup> The way that Johnson perceived the connection between the signs and what they signified is unknown, but considering his Evangelical upbringing there was probably no concept of any real presence where an identity between sign and signified existed. Such a concept of identity had to wait several years until the arrival of Archdeacon and then Bishop Broughton in 1829.

Johnson would have also, at his ordination, have subscribed to the Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion finalised during the reign of Elizabeth I in 1571 and printed at the back of the 1662 BCP. The articles declared that the Lord's Supper was sign of the love Christians ought to have for one another, that it was 'a Sacrament of our Redemption by Christ's death' and that those who receive it with faith are 'partaking of the Body of Christ' and 'partaking of the Blood of Christ'. It is probable that Johnson interpreted this in a purely spiritual manner. He would have agreed with the denial of transubstantiation, as stated in Article XXVIII, but at the same time he would have believed that 'the Body of Christ is given, taken, and eaten, in the Supper, only after an heavenly and spiritual manner' and that 'the mean whereby the Body of Christ is received and eaten in the Supper is Faith'.<sup>13</sup> He would have also agreed with the Articles that 'the offering of Christ once made is that perfect redemption, propitiation, and satisfaction, for all the sins of the whole world, both original and actual'.<sup>14</sup> Any notions of a real presence of Christ in the elements and of eucharistic sacrifice would have been far from Johnson's mind.

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<sup>12</sup> Questions and Answers on the Lord's Supper in the Catechism of the 1662 *Book of Common Prayer*.

<sup>13</sup> Article XXVIII of the Thirty-Nine Articles (1563/1571) in the 1662 *Book of Common Prayer*.

<sup>14</sup> Article XXXI of the Thirty-Nine Articles (1563/1571) in the 1662 *Book of Common Prayer*.



Johnson was probably a thoroughly Evangelical thinker in relation to eucharistic theology and he would have projected that into his celebration of the Eucharist for all to see and hear, celebrating the sacrament plainly and without drawing too much attention to the elements, apart from what the rubrics of the prayer book in the Prayer of Consecration demanded.<sup>15</sup> It is likely that he projected into his celebration of the Eucharist exactly what he had experienced in his Evangelical upbringing and training in his early years and at Cambridge.

He probably would not have seen the signs of bread and wine as vehicles for conveying the grace of what they symbolised but rather aids to remembrance of Christ's death as an act of remembrance for the enquiring mind. Johnson would have worn a plain black gown, not a surplice and stole or scarf, and certainly not eucharistic vestments since this would have identified too closely with the Roman Catholic Church, and he would have used only the words as printed as the 1662 Book of Common Prayer and with the Bible readings as set in that book. Johnson would not have used the word 'Eucharist' but referred to the sacrament as 'The Lord's Supper' or 'Holy Communion'.

The Church of England as it was present in the beginning of the penal colony of New South Wales was an outpost 'of the Evangelical wing of the Church of England,'<sup>16</sup> with the presence of any High Churchmen some years away. High Church sacramental theology relating to the Eucharist, in the form of a doctrine of the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist centred in the elements and any ideas of a re-presenting of Christ's sacrifice by its effects (anamnesis), present in some of the seventeenth century divines like Bishop Lancelot Andrewes and developed later by the Tractarian after 1833, was not present in these early colonial days of New South Wales, at the official level at least and in the theology espoused and put into practice in the celebration of the Eucharist by Richard Johnson.

### Johnson's heritage

Johnson was born in 1753 in Norfolk and educated at the grammar school at Kingston-upon-Hull, under the Evangelical teacher Joseph Milner, before taking a place at Magdalene College, Cambridge, where he not only studied theology but came under the influence of the Evangelicals, a group within the Church of England who emphasised individual conversion and personal piety<sup>17</sup>, rather than any emphasis on sacramental means of grace.

Those who influenced Johnson at Cambridge, included Charles Simeon, William Wilberforce, John Newton and William Cowper, the poet.<sup>18</sup> He graduated BA in 1784 and was ordained by the Bishop of Oxford in the same year and came under further influence of William Wilberforce and the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (SPG)<sup>19</sup> as well as the Eclectic Society, a group of evangelical clergy and lay people interested in prison reform and missions<sup>20</sup>, and the Elland Society, 'a voluntary organization that provide funds for aspiring clergy.'<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> These rubrics included taking the paten into his hands, breaking the bread, laying his hand upon the bread, taking the cup into his hands and laying his hand upon any vessel containing wine to be consecrated.

<sup>16</sup> Joseph Hardwick, 'Australia and New Zealand', in Jeremy Gregory (ed.) *The Oxford History of Anglicanism. Volume II. Establishment and Empire, 1662-1829* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 237.

<sup>17</sup> T. Frame, *Anglicans in Australia* (Sydney: University of New South Wales Press, 2007), 50-51.

<sup>18</sup> R. Border, *Church and State in Australia 1788-1872* (London: SPCK, 1962), 16.

<sup>19</sup> C.M.D. Clark, *A History of Australia I. From the Earliest Times to the Age of Macquarie* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1978), 75.

<sup>20</sup> K. J. Cable, 'Johnson, Richard (1753-1827)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, [<http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/johnson-richard-2275/text2921>], first published in hardcopy 1967, accessed online 8 November, 2019.

<sup>21</sup> Hardwick, 'Australia and New Zealand', 238.

It was partly due to the Eclectic Society that Johnson was appointed Chaplain to the penal colony, and as well to Wilberforce being a close friend of the Prime Minister, William Pitt, and so in a place to influence Pitt to appoint a chaplain to the penal colony of New South Wales.<sup>22</sup>

The Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge (SPCK) provided books and tracts for Johnson to take to New South Wales, including 100 Bibles, 100 copies of the 1662 Book of Common Prayer, 200 catechisms, 400 New Testaments, 500 Psalters and various books with moral intent. Johnson was also given a chalice and paten and other communion vessels<sup>23</sup>, suggesting that the celebration of the Eucharist was an intended part of Johnson's ministry.

Johnson's intention as a priest of the Church of England of using these materials to preach the word of God, to celebrate the sacraments and to bring eternal salvation to those condemned to penal servitude was not always matched in enthusiasm by the governing authorities of the colony, including some governors, who saw religion as a means instead of enforcing morality and the chaplain as a moral policeman. Manning Clark comments that Johnson was trapped 'by the conflict between his own and the Governor's [Arthur Phillip] conception of the utility of religion. Where he saw religion as the divine medium for eternal salvation, the Governor treasured it as a medium of subordination, and esteemed a chaplain according to the efficacy of his work as a moral policeman.'<sup>24</sup> Johnson did not have an easy task before him in his dependence on the power of the word alone to effect personal salvation.

### **Sacramentality?**

Lt. Ralph Clark, in whose tent the first Anglican Eucharist on Australian soil was celebrated, may have grasped something concerning sacramentality<sup>25</sup> and of the eternal in his devout expression of unworthiness to receive the sacrament and his respect for the table on which the Holy Communion was celebrated, seemingly placing great worth on a material object. Convicts and free settlers brought their own understandings of the Christian faith and more specifically for some, Anglicanism, as some carried with them copies of the 1662 *Book of Common Prayer*, Bibles and other religious literature, both as officials of the government and as private citizens.<sup>26</sup> Many of the convicts were Roman Catholics or had no faith at all, so there was a mixture of resentment, anger and apathy among many who were not part of the Church of England and its way of doing things liturgically and sacramentally.

### **The 1662 Book of Common Prayer and eucharistic theology**

The presence of the 1662 *Book of Common Prayer* continued in subsequent years with shipments of prayer books and Bibles being sent by organisations such as the Prayer Book and Homily Society and the SPCK in an effort to keep people in New South Wales within the Anglican tradition and to make the Anglican liturgy in the form of the 1662 *BCP* the preferred liturgical resource.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> S. Judd and K. Cable, *Sydney Anglicans: A History of the Diocese* (Sydney: Anglican Information Office, 2000), p. 3.

<sup>23</sup> Border, *Church and State in Australia*, 16

<sup>24</sup> Clark, *A History of Australia* I, 5.

<sup>25</sup> Sacramentality means that God uses outward or material means to convey grace and in so doing invest these material means with spiritual significance such that they could be called holy or a means of receiving God's grace.

<sup>26</sup> Hardwick, 'Australia and New Zealand', 236.

<sup>27</sup> Hardwick, 'Australia and New Zealand', 239.

For many though, especially those convicts who came from English cities, untouched by the Church of England and from Ireland as Roman Catholics, the imposition of the 1662 BCP and the ministrations of the Church of England were both novel and unwelcome.

The first Governor of New South Wales, Captain Arthur Phillip, R.N., was however prepared to fulfil the legal requirements of his position as these related to religion and eucharistic theology and so on 10 February, 1788, duly swore allegiance to King George III on a Bible, stating: 'I, Arthur Phillip, do declare That I do believe that there is not any transubstantiation in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper or in the Elements of Bread and Wine at or after the Consecration thereof by any Person whatsoever.'<sup>28</sup>

From the very beginning of English settlement at Sydney Cove in New South Wales, not only was the Bible and the 1662 Book of Common Prayer part of the life of the colony, but the Protestant ascendancy was firmly asserted by a statement of eucharistic theology aimed at denying one eucharistic doctrine, that of transubstantiation. Bruce Kaye comments that Phillip 'probably did not believe the doctrine of transubstantiation' but that 'he certainly understood that that was not really the issue. The issue was that this religious denial was the category by which he must assert his loyalty to the English crown.' Such loyalty 'meant denial of the Roman Catholic doctrine of transubstantiation, because the crown and the reformed Church of England were bound together.'<sup>29</sup>

What was understood by Phillip and Johnson of the doctrine of transubstantiation is unclear, however it may be that this doctrine was wrongly understood to mean the changing of bread and wine into the literal flesh and blood in the Eucharist, although Article XXVIII in the 1662 *Book of Common Prayer*, does not make that claim, but rather speaks about transubstantiation as overthrowing the nature of a sacrament and giving occasion to many superstitions. It is perhaps these superstitions that led people to think that the doctrine of transubstantiation involved the change of bread and wine into literal flesh and blood, instead of being a particular version of sacramental realism, based on a change of substance rather than physical reality. Whatever these early participants in the Eucharist in Australia and oath takers thought, it is clear that at the foundation of white settlement in 1778, Australia was intimately linked with the English crown, with the reformed Church of England and surprisingly with the intricacies of eucharistic theology.

Eucharistic theology was to feature as a matter of some contention in the life of the Church of England in Australia over succeeding years of the later nineteenth and twentieth centuries and through to the present life of the Anglican Church of Australia, just as it had been right at the beginning. This was especially true as clergy influenced by the Tractarians or Oxford Movement came to Australia as priests and bishops. While the early Tractarians were inspired by a way of thinking the later Ritualists transformed that thinking into more outward forms of ritual in the Eucharist and to more developed forms of eucharistic theology where the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist and eucharistic sacrifice were seen as important.

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<sup>28</sup> Clark, *A History of Australia* 1, 89 and Robinson, 'The Church of England in Australia', 297.

Transubstantiation was a doctrine of the Roman Catholic Church was stated that there was a change in the substance of the bread and wine in the Eucharist such that the substance of the bread was changed into the substance of the body of Christ and the substance of the wine was changed into the substance of the blood of Christ. Transubstantiation was specifically denied by Article XXVIII of the Thirty-Nine Articles of the Church of England, first published in 1562. The Article stated that 'Transubstantiation (or the change of the substance of the Bread and Wine) in the Supper of the Lord, cannot be proved by holy Writ; but overthroweth the nature of a Sacrament, and hath given occasion to many superstitions.' Article XXVIII of the Thirty-Nine Articles.

<sup>29</sup> B. Kaye, *Reinventing Anglicanism: A Vision of Confidence, Community and Engagement in Anglican Christianity* (Adelaide, South Australia: Open Book, 2009), 62.

New dioceses (such as Tasmania, Adelaide, Newcastle, Brisbane, Perth and North Queensland) were significantly influenced by the Oxford Movement and this continues to influence the theology and practice of liturgy in those diocese to the present day, although some, such as Tasmania, are in the present day predominantly Evangelical.

The 1662 *Book of Common Prayer* remains despite these differences in church tradition and liturgy, along with the Thirty-Nine Articles, an important constitutional matter within the Anglican Church of Australia. The 1962 Constitution of that church affirms that the Church of England in Australia (as it was then known before it became the Anglican Church of Australia) 'retains and approves the doctrine and principles of the Church of England embodied in the Book of Common Prayer' and sets the 1662 *BCP*, together with the Thirty-Nine Articles, 'as the authorised standard of worship and doctrine in this Church' with the proviso that 'no alternation in or permitted variations from the services of the Articles therein contained shall contravene any principle of doctrine or worship laid down in such standard.'<sup>30</sup> The Anglican Church of Australia and its eucharistic liturgy is, by the standard of the Constitution, firmly committed to the worship and doctrine of the 1662 *BCP*.

The 1662 *Book of Common Prayer* sets the standard but in reality this standard has been interpreted very differently in the various dioceses of the Anglican Church in Australia, with some dioceses using the prayer book with Catholic ritual and eucharistic theology, while others use it in an Evangelical framework, with limited ritual and corresponding Evangelical eucharistic theology. Despite this, other liturgical forms, such the 1995 *A Prayer Book for Australia*<sup>31</sup>, have come into use in more modern times with both Evangelical and Catholic agendas present in the various eucharistic liturgies. Diversity of eucharistic theology and practice is a feature of the Anglican Church of Australia in the modern day, just as it was at the beginning of white settlement.

### **Public Worship in the early penal colony**

The role of the first Governor, Arthur Phillip, was important in any expression of religion in the new colony. Phillip was instructed to promote religion as part of his instructions from the government. He received an additional set of instructions on 25 April, 1788, just before the First Fleet sailed from England, giving him the following direction:

*And is further our Royal Will and Pleasure that you do by all proper methods enforce a due observance of religion and good order among the inhabitants of the new settlement, and that you do take steps for the due celebration of publick worship as circumstances will permit.*<sup>32</sup>

The 'publick worship' spoken of in the instructions meant the 1662 *Book of Common Prayer*, including of course the celebration of the service of Holy Communion, although at that time, for Evangelicals like Richard Johnson, the celebration of Holy Communion was not a frequent event and Morning Prayer, the Litany and Ante-Communion were the norm for a Sunday morning with a concentration on the preaching of the word as the means of salvation, instead of the use of sacraments.

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<sup>30</sup> Anglican Church of Australia, Constitution of the Anglican Church of Australia (Sydney: Anglican Church of Australia General Synod Office, 1962), accessed online <https://legislation.nsw.gov.au/inforce/67ab25c9-542f-ef2c-8da8-d990875c592f/1961-16.pdf>, 8 November, 2019, 6.

<sup>31</sup> Anglican Church of Australia, *A Prayer Book for Australia* (Sydney: Broughton Books, 1995).

<sup>32</sup> Historical Record of New South Wales, Vol I, Part 2, 90.

The carrying out of these instructions in support of Johnson, however, depended on the agreement of the Governor and not all the early Governors were fully supportive of Johnson and his attempts at 'due celebration of publick worship'. Johnson's services reflected the church in England. He was an Evangelical and a protégé of influential Evangelicals in England and so the ways the churches were built and furnished followed that style. Early churches were dominated by a three-decker pulpit, emphasising the preaching of the word with the normal Sunday service being a service of the word, comprising Morning Prayer, the Litany and Ante-Communion from the 1662 *BCP*.

The altar or holy table was an insignificant piece of ecclesiastical furniture, lacking in prominence in the church, to reflect the emphasis on the preaching of the word from a large and elevated pulpit towering above the congregation. The Eucharist was celebrated only occasionally, perhaps 4 times a year, and then only open to a small and dedicated group of communicants who withdrew quietly aside at the end of the service for a sacramental liturgy available only to the fully initiated.<sup>33</sup>

Samuel Marsden, the second chaplain who went on to become the Senior Chaplain did not always adhere to the 1662 *BCP*. Lachlan Macquarie (1762-1824 and Governor of New South Wales from 1810-1821) complained to Lord Bathurst, the Colonial Secretary, that Marsden had introduced an alternative translation of the Psalms by William Goode into churches in the New South Wales which were not in the 1662 *BCP*.<sup>34</sup>

Macquarie complained that Marsden had done this without reference to him and that these new Psalms had replaced those in the 1662 *BCP*. In Macquarie's view this was an unwarranted violation of the services of the established church and he feared it would lead Marsden and others to further innovation in regard to sacred ceremonies. Macquarie therefore prohibited any departure from the 1662 *BCP* in churches in New South Wales.

Macquarie further informed Lord Bathurst that Marsden and 'some of the assistant chaplains were of low rank' and 'not qualified in the usual way for the sacred functions entrusted to them, and are also much tainted by Methodistical and other sectarian principles, which dispose to a hasty adoption of new systems or at least of new forms to the exclusion of the old establishment of the Church of England.' It was Macquarie's belief that such innovations would 'give latitude to dissent' in this 'young and unschooled colony.'<sup>35</sup>

Bathurst agreed with Macquarie, even though he told Macquarie that Marsden had informed him of his decision to introduce the Goode translation, but at the same time gave him permission to instruct Marsden to use 'strict adherence to those forms and Services, which are prescribed by the competent Authority'<sup>36</sup>, that is, the 1662 *BCP* and the scriptural passages it contained as authorised by the Church of England. Such an opinion from a senior person such as Macquarie suggests that the Evangelical commitments of people like Marsden would have continued a practice of infrequent celebration of the Holy Communion.

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<sup>33</sup> Judd and Cable, *Sydney Anglicans*, 12.

<sup>34</sup> The translation was that of William Goode (1762-1816) entitled *An Entire New Version of the Book of Psalms*.

<sup>35</sup> Macquarie to Bathurst, 7 October, 1814, *Historical Records of Australia, Series I, Volume VIII*, 337.

<sup>36</sup> Bathurst to Macquarie, 2 December, 1815, *Historical Records of Australia, Series I, Volume VIII*, 637.





### Archdeacon Scott and the Ecclesiastical Board

In 1824 an Ecclesiastical Board was set up by the colonial authorities in London with the express task of regulating the supply of chaplains to the colonies,<sup>37</sup> presumably with the aim of overcoming some of the problems that Macquarie had encountered. One result of this Board was the appointment of an Archdeacon in 1824, Thomas Hobbes Scott (1783-1860), tasked with establishing and organising the church in New South Wales. Scott was given almost total control of ecclesiastical matters including the supply of suitable clergy.

In this Scott was a capable administrator but was not attracted to the Evangelical style and in fact said that Evangelical clergy depressed him.<sup>38</sup> Scott had a different background, from the earlier colonial chaplains, belonging to no church party,<sup>39</sup> but was quite unimpressed by the Evangelicals and their liturgical ability, although Scott himself had only become a priest in 1822 and lacked experience, not only as a priest but certainly as an archdeacon. Scott however, in writing to Archdeacon Hamilton in England, expressed concern about the standard of clergy in Australia. Scott said:

*On my arrival I found the Services administered much more after the manner of a Methodist Chapel than of the Church, nor can I by all the private hints I have given or example I have set, get the better of such practices ... their sermons are delivered extempore, or at least unwritten with a bible in their hand full of bookstrings, placed in the texts they intend to use by way of illustration – now and then they look at their watch as if they ought to continue a given time whether they have matter or not - & they usually continue an hour & sometimes more delivering the most unconnected sentences in a violent ranting manner to the little edification of their audience who in this hot climate are often asleep more than half the time.<sup>40</sup>*

Scott's opinion of the colonial chaplains and their liturgical efforts was dismissive. His attitude to life and the role of the church was also at variance with the early colonial chaplains.

Manning Clark characterises Scott as wanting to sow the seeds of Christian humanism and to link people to the service of the state and the church. Clark says that 'he wanted men to grow up as liberals in religion, tolerant and broadminded on questions of doctrine, but Tories in politics.'<sup>41</sup> This may be special pleading on the part of Clark. Hardwick on the other hand, brands Scott as a Whig, since his patron was the Northumberland Whig M.P., W.H. Ord, and Scott's letters to Ord speak more of plans for church development on the back of the Whig agenda of colonial commercial development.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> Hardwick, 'Australia and New Zealand', 247.

<sup>38</sup> S. Pigginn and R. Linder, *The Fountain of Public Prosperity. Evangelical Christians in Australian History 1740-1914* (Melbourne: Monash University Press, 2018), 144.

<sup>39</sup> B. Fletcher, 'Christianity and Free Society in New South Wales 1788-1840', *Journal of the Royal Australian Historical Society*, 86 (2000): 97.

<sup>40</sup> Archdeacon Thomas Hobbes Scott to Archdeacon A. Hamilton, 3 March, 1827, Society for the Propagation of the Gospel Archives, Australia Letters, no. 5, cited in A.T. Yarwood, *Samuel Marsden: The Great Survivor* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1977), 262-263.

<sup>41</sup> C.M.H. Clark, *A History of Australia II. New South Wales and Van Dieman's Land 1822-1838* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1975), 36.

<sup>42</sup> Hardwick, 'Australia and New Zealand', 248.

Whatever were Scott's true views they were acceptable to the colonial authorities in England and so he was appointed as Archdeacon. Scott was unpopular with most of the existing clergy, but he was also unpopular with the local newspapers and so after exerting himself with visitations across the whole colony and with successful administrative organisation, including work with schools and the appointment of a new breed of more educated clergy, he resigned in 1829 and returned to England. During his return his ship struck a reef off Fremantle and so he was marooned at the Swan River settlement where he industriously ministered to the residents and celebrated the first Christmas service and the first service of Holy Communion in what became Perth.<sup>43</sup> Again this celebration of Holy Communion was according to the 1662 *BCP*.

One of the significant achievements of Scott and his successor as Archdeacon and later Bishop of Australia, William Grant Broughton, was the appointment of more educated clergy from different backgrounds so that Evangelical clergy were now not the only type of clergy in New South Wales. Educational qualification and skill, such as teaching, were now seen as necessary.<sup>44</sup> This resulted in a greater diversity of clergy as men came from other parts of Britain and who reflected traditions other than the Evangelical tradition as well as differing social backgrounds.<sup>45</sup> This trend affected the way that clergy viewed the Anglican tradition and its belief system and in turn the sacraments, like the Eucharist.

A more diverse theological understanding of eucharistic theology became present in the life of the Anglican Church in Australia. This led to a higher estimate of the Eucharist in the life of the church, with weekly celebrations of the sacrament and more elaborate ritual. These clergy included not only of Broughton but the first Bishop of Tasmania, Francis Nixon. There were now alternatives to the Evangelical understanding of the Eucharist with Nixon in his writings expressing expressly realist eucharistic theology where Christ was seen to be present through the means of the bread and wine and the sacrifice of Christ re-presented in the Eucharist.<sup>46</sup>

Scott was replaced in 1829 as Archdeacon by Broughton. Broughton was a clear example of this diversity of opinion in relation to the Anglican Church itself and its eucharistic theology. Indeed 'this tension between an Anglicanism that emphasised liturgical and sacramental worship and one that focussed on personal conversion, preaching, and salvation by faith would become more marked after Scott.'<sup>47</sup>

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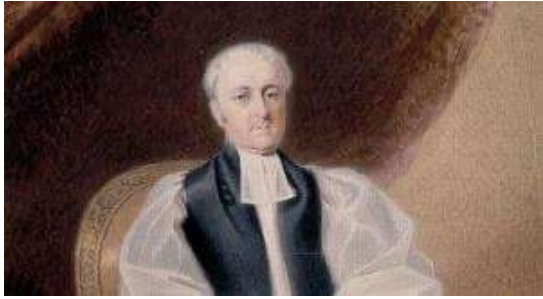
<sup>43</sup> R. Border, 'Scott, Thomas Hobbes (1783-1860)', in *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, [<http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/scott-thomas-hobbes-2645/text3685>], published first in hardcopy in 1967, accessed online 18 November, 2019.

<sup>44</sup> J. Hardwick, 'Anglican Church Expansion and Recruitment of Colonial Clergy for New South Wales and Cape Colony, 1790-1850', *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 37 (2009): 361-381

<sup>45</sup> Fletcher, 'Christianity and Free Society in New South Wales 1788-1840', 93-113.

<sup>46</sup> F. Nixon, *Lectures, Historical, Doctrinal, and Practical, of the Catechism of the Church of England* (London: Rivington, 1849).

<sup>47</sup> Hardwick, 'Australia and New Zealand', 249.



### Broughton and the influence of Tractarianism

William Grant Broughton arrived in New South Wales as an Archdeacon in 1829. It was during Broughton's time in Australia that Anglicanism developed quickly with growth from a chaplaincy to a penal colony to a separate denomination with the largest number of adherents. Broughton became the first and only Bishop of Australia in 1836 and then Bishop of Sydney in

1847. Broughton and the Colonial Secretary, Lord Bathurst, believed that Australia needed its own ecclesiastical hierarchy and church governance. Samuel Marsden was of the same view but had 'less sympathy for the imposition of a Tory High Churchman as bishop.'<sup>48</sup> Broughton was a follower of the High Church tradition of Anglicanism, holding a 'high' view of the Church of England's continuity with Catholic Christianity and the authority of the Church centred in the claims of the episcopate and in the nature of the sacraments as effective means of grace.

The origins of this tradition are in the Elizabethan age with theologians such as Richard Hooker whose great work *Of The Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity*<sup>49</sup> had a high place for both bishops and the sacraments, but continued into the seventeenth century in the work of theologians such as Lancelot Andrewes (1555-1626) and William Laud (1573-1645) and into the eighteenth in the work of bishops like Joseph Butler (1692-1752). Sacramentality was important for these theologians and this was continued in later thinkers.

In the nineteenth century the Tractarian or Oxford Movement was founded by people such as Edward Pusey (1800-1882), John Newman (1801-1890) and John Keble (1792-1866) and developed the High Church tradition into what became Anglo-Catholicism, through the publication of tracts on the Catholic tradition of the Church of England relating to the role of bishops and apostolic succession and the nature of the sacraments. The notion of sacramentality was prominent in the Oxford Movement as theologians argued that God worked effectively through outward signs, like water, bread and wine, in the sacraments in a realist framework of baptismal and eucharistic theology. In the second half of the nineteenth century many of the Tractarians or Anglo-Catholics became Ritualists with greater emphasis on ceremonial, often aping Roman Catholic worship.

Broughton was influenced by the Tractarians and their Tracts but was not a Ritualist, and in fact distanced himself from the last of the Tracts (Tract XC) which he saw as too close to the theology of the Roman Catholic Church. Austin Cooper comments that Broughton had 'an unswerving hostility to anything that smacked of Romanism.'<sup>50</sup>

<sup>48</sup> H. Carey, 'Anglicanism in Australia, c. 1829-1910', in Rowan Strong (ed.), *The Oxford History of Anglicanism Volume III. Partisan Anglicanism and its Global Expansion, 1829-c. 1914* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 339.

<sup>49</sup> R. Hooker, *Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity: A Critical Edition with Modern Spelling* (A.S. McGrade, ed.) (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

<sup>50</sup> A. Cooper, 'The Australian Bishops and the Oxford Movement', in Stewart Brown and Peter Nockles (eds.) *The Oxford Movement. Europe and the Wider World 183-1930* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012): 102.

Broughton was nonetheless 'sympathetic to the Tractarians who were attempting to revive or recover the Church's grasp of its Catholic identity, and raise the standing of Anglican clergy and the status of the episcopate'<sup>51</sup> while at the same time acknowledging that the Tractarians had recalled the Church of England to the teachings of the Reformers.<sup>52</sup>

Broughton approved of the clergy reading the Tracts since 'they were to interpret the Tracts by the light of the Reformation,'<sup>53</sup> and because the Tractarians, like Pusey, stood by the *Book of Common Prayer*. Shaw argues that Broughton preferred Pusey and held him in high estimation, although not excluding him from error.<sup>54</sup> This must have had significant implications for Broughton's understanding of eucharistic theology, since Pusey taught a real presence of Christ in the Eucharist and eucharistic sacrifice as a means of re-presenting the effects of Christ's sacrifice.

For Broughton the Tractarians helped him in his understanding of the place of the Church of England in Australian society after the passing of the Church Act in New South Wales in 1836 which formalised arrangements for other churches, thus weakening the privileges of the Anglican Church. Broughton agreed with the Tractarians who emphasised the historical continuity of the national Church of England and its apostolic succession of bishops, together with its sacraments, and used this to strengthen his own position as The Bishop of Australia, as well as resistance to the growth of the Roman Catholic Church and its hierarchy in Australia.<sup>55</sup>

In writing to his friend Edward Coleridge in England, Broughton commented on Coleridge's mention of Newman, one of the leaders of the Tractarians, saying that 'if I might make a choice of my fellow labourers, they should come from *his* school.'<sup>56</sup> The Tractarian position allowed Broughton to maintain the independence of the Church of England, apart from the state, and to see the sacraments of the church as a means of grace. In writing to Coleridge he spoke of how he depended on the 'internal strength of the Church herself.'<sup>57</sup> Part of this 'internal strength' was his commitment to the Scriptures but he also spoke of 'the nature and effect of the Holy Sacraments, the office of the ministry, the constitution and authority of the Church,'<sup>58</sup> as he distinguished these sources of internal strength from that offered by other churches. For Broughton there was a high place for the Church and its ministry and sacraments.

Broughton saw the Tractarian position as providing substance for the emerging church in Australia and so he appointed clergy to parishes who were aligned with his views.

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<sup>51</sup> Frame, *Anglicans in Australia*, 54-55.

<sup>52</sup> G.P. Shaw, *Patriarch and Patriot: William Grant Broughton 1788-1853. Colonial Statesman and Ecclesiastic* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1978), 180. This was the view of Edward Pusey who strongly endorsed the formularies of the Church of England (*Book of Common Prayer*, 39 Articles and Catechism). Pusey's views are set out in B. Douglas, *The Eucharistic Theology of Edward Bouverie Pusey: Sources, Context and Doctrine within the Oxford Movement and Beyond* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2015), especially chapter 4.

<sup>53</sup> Shaw, *Patriarch and Patriot*, 180.

<sup>54</sup> Shaw, *Patriarch and Patriot*, 180.

<sup>55</sup> K.J. Cable, 'Broughton, William Grant (1786-1853)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography, National Centre of Biography*, Australian National University, [<http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/broughton-william-grant-1832/text2107>], published first in hardcopy 1966. Accessed online 18 November, 2019 and Shaw, 180.

<sup>56</sup> Broughton to Coleridge, 19 October, 1837. Moore College Library, Sydney.

<sup>57</sup> Broughton to Coleridge, 14 October, 1839. Moore College Library, Sydney.

<sup>58</sup> W.G. Broughton, *The Speech of the Lord Bishop of Australia in the Legislative Council upon the Resolutions for Establishing a System of General Education*, Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> August, 1839 (Sydney: James Tegg, 1839), 15.

Of the four parishes in Sydney under Broughton's leadership, three had clergy influenced by Tractarianism, Robert Allwood at St James', William Walsh at Christ Church, St Laurence and Robert Sconce at St Andrew's. The fourth church, St Philip's, had the Evangelical William Cowper as its priest. Broughton took advantage of funds which became available from the Society for Propagating the Gospel from 1838 and used these funds to import clergy from England who had embraced Tractarian principles, thereby strengthening realist views of the Eucharist through the theology and liturgy employed by these clergy.

### **Broughton's innovations in worship**

Broughton's embrace of Tractarian thinking extended to the conduct of worship, including the Eucharist. The early chaplains in New South Wales, like Johnson and Marsden, were all Evangelical in outlook, worshipping plainly in churches dominated by a pulpit, to emphasise the preaching of the word. The normal Sunday service for these Evangelicals was Morning Prayer, the Litany and Ante-Communion. The altar or holy table was insignificant compared to the pulpit and Holy Communion was celebrated only occasionally and then to a small and dedicated group of committed communicants.<sup>59</sup> Broughton encouraged innovation in the services of the church, with the introduction of robed choirs, elaborate musical settings and a weekly service of Holy Communion.<sup>60</sup>

Broughton also encouraged the wearing of the surplice by clergy rather than the black preaching gown so that 'ministers preached as a priest rather than a scholar,'<sup>61</sup> suggesting a higher role for the priest in the leading of services. In one Parramatta parish, All Saints', James Cameron (Rector 1848-1849), ordained by Broughton in St James' Church in 1843, 'astounded the congregation by going into the pulpit and preaching the sermon wearing a surplice' instead of the accustomed 'black silk Geneva gown with white bands hanging from the collar, and black kid gloves.'<sup>62</sup> Cameron also caused upset by reading the offertory sentences in the 1662 *BCP*<sup>63</sup>, relating them to the offering of bread and wine and taking up a collection in the celebration of Holy Communion and by holding services on saints' days.

These were customs used by the Tractarians but they were also allowed by the 1662 *Book of Common Prayer*. Parishioners complained to Broughton describing them as heresy but Broughton replied that he could not agree with their complaints since the practices used by Cameron were in the rubrics in the service of Holy Communion and these practices were used in St Andrew's in Sydney<sup>64</sup>. The next Rector of All Saints', W.F. Gore (Rector 1849-1862), continued Cameron's practices, since he too was affected by Tractarianism. Parishioners sent more letters to Broughton but the bishop declined to intervene and so the parishioners decided to appeal to the Archbishop of Canterbury.<sup>65</sup> One parishioner, Mr Woolls, proposed withholding salary from Gore and said in a letter that: 'I will blame no one but the Clergy for obstinately persisting in measures which are calculated to Romanize the Parish.'<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> Judd and Cable, *Sydney Anglicans*, 12.

<sup>60</sup> Judd and Cable, *Sydney Anglicans*, 41.

<sup>61</sup> Judd and Cable, *Sydney Anglicans*, 41.

<sup>62</sup> P. Dorsch, *The History of All Saints' Church Parramatta* (Northmead, New South Wales: Daram Printing, 1979), 15.

<sup>63</sup> A set of scriptural sentences following the sermon in the service of Holy Communion which the rubrics or instructions set in the prayer book directed the priest to read to the congregation. In practice Evangelicals did not read these sentences or associate them with the preparation of bread and wine for the Eucharist.

<sup>64</sup> Dorsch, *The History of All Saints' Church Parramatta*, 16.

<sup>65</sup> Dorsch, *The History of All Saints' Church Parramatta*, 16-17.

<sup>66</sup> Dorsch, *The History of All Saints' Church Parramatta*, 17.



Broughton fully supported Gore despite the perception by some that Tractarianism was intended to introduce Roman Catholic practices into the services of the Church of England, especially in making the service of Holy Communion like the Roman Catholic Mass.

A later Rector at All Saints', Parramatta, John Blomfield (Rector 1868-1886), brought back from England two candlesticks and a jewelled cross for placement on the altar in the church, suggesting continuing Tractarian influence at All Saints' and the use of ornaments in the Holy Communion, although they were also the cause of opposition from some of the congregation. Blomfield's innovations were at a time of significant change in the Church of England in both England and Australia where the previous practice of Morning Prayer, followed by the Litany and Ante-Communion was no longer the norm.

Parishes began to celebrate an early weekly Eucharist and in some places the earlier Tractarian influence had given way to ritualist and Anglo-Catholic worship, such as developed at St James, King Street and Christ Church St Laurence in the city of Sydney by the end of the nineteenth century. This was accompanied by more emphasis on the sacraments and a reorganisation of church interior to suit the more catholic style of worship. Elevated three-decker pulpits disappeared and more prominence was given to the altar, with the addition of frontals, candles and crosses and through the use of a rich musical and liturgical tradition, including the use of eucharistic vestments.



#### **Broughton's successor – Bishop Barker**

Bishop Frederic Barker (1808-1882) and Bishop of Sydney from 1854 to 1882, a convinced Evangelical, succeeded Broughton. Although Barker tolerated the Tractarian influence he drew the line with the Ritualists. In 1879 for example, he refused to license a clergyman who was a member of the English Church Union, an organisation founded in England in 1859, to defend and spread high church principles in the Church of England, including giving greater priority to the celebration of the Eucharist and

enriching the ceremonial of the service. Barker's actions were an attempt to prevent the growth of more Catholic forms of eucharistic theology and worship in his diocese.

#### **Other Bishops**

Other bishops were also consecrated for service in Australia and among them were several Tractarians. In 1841 the Tractarian, George Selwyn, was appointed to New Zealand. In 1842, Francis Nixon, another Tractarian became the Bishop of Tasmania and in 1847 Augustus Short went to Adelaide and William Tyrrell went to Newcastle. Both Short and Tyrrell were Tractarians and firmly established the Tractarian style worship in those places. Charles Perry, however, was appointed to Melbourne in 1847 as a convinced Evangelical. Many later bishops appointed to metropolitan dioceses (places like Brisbane and Perth) and regional centres (places like Ballarat, Goulburn, Grafton, Armidale, Bathurst, Rockhampton, North Queensland and Riverina) in Australia were Tractarian or Anglo-Catholics and brought with them more developed ceremonial and theology of the Eucharist, including teaching a real presence of Christ in the Eucharist and the re-presentation of the effects of Christ's sacrifice in the Eucharist as *anamnesis*.

The Diocese of Sydney remained a bastion of Evangelical theology and worship, in distinction from many other parts of the Anglican Church in Australia, although some parishes such as St James' and Christ Church St Laurence in the city of Sydney took a decidedly different theological and eucharistic path. Deep Evangelical piety committed to the preaching of the word and personal conversion became the norm in the Diocese of Sydney and more advanced eucharistic worship was limited to a few Sydney parishes only.

Some other dioceses changed over time and became more Evangelical while others, Melbourne, developed a tolerance for different styles – both Catholic and Evangelical. What remained constant across the Anglican Church in Australia in these early years in the celebration of the Eucharist was the use of the *Book of Common Prayer* of 1662, although there was considerable variation in how the service was celebrated.

In later years of the nineteenth century Anglo-Catholic dioceses used elaborate ceremonial, introduced the wearing of eucharistic vestments and began teaching realist eucharistic theology while the Diocese of Sydney remained loyal to Evangelical and Reformation principles and to plainer worship and more Reformed eucharistic theology.

In the Diocese of Sydney the service of Holy Communion was regularly celebrated, not every Sunday in some places, but it was done plainly with the clergy wearing choir robes (cassock, surplice, scarf and perhaps academic hood) and limited ceremonial or ornaments (no candles or crosses), but always according to the 1662 BCP.

As the nineteenth century progressed the variety of styles in the celebration of the Eucharist increased according to the diocesan tradition, often firmly determined by the bishop of the day.

### **Australia's Beginnings**

The coming of the Anglican Eucharist to Australia is intimately tied up with Australia's beginnings and it is interesting, perhaps surprising, to note that one of the first public statements by the Governor of the new colony concerned the intricacies of eucharistic theology in his denial of transubstantiation. Phillip used the words he had to use and his statement concerning eucharistic theology was more about the assertion of English political power and submission to the English crown in comparison to any other political or religious power, rather than theology, but his words are nonetheless stark.

The beginnings were in the hands of Evangelical clergy with their emphasis on personal conversion and faith where the piety did not concern the use of sacramental means but rather propositional faith, where memorialist and receptionist ideas dominated. Little is known of what other inhabitants of the new colony thought of the Eucharist although Ralph Clark's ecstatic reaction to the Eucharist being celebrated in his tent and on his table suggests that he saw the mystery of what was occurring and perhaps this was an early expression of sacramentality in the Australian context by white people.

Governor Macquarie and the early English church hierarchy who came to Australia seem to have presented quite different views of religion and the Eucharist. By the time of Bishop Broughton's arrival a distinctly different theological understanding in the colony under the influence of the Tractarians or the Oxford Movement was apparent in the leadership by bishops of most of the dioceses in Australia.

Although Broughton was no ritualist, he was nonetheless different in his thinking from the early chaplains such as Johnson and Marsden.

Broughton advocated a more realist eucharistic theology where the sacrament was not only seen as important and a means of spiritual nourishment but also as a means of Christ's presence in the Eucharist itself. For Broughton the Eucharist was more prominent and his own reading of the early church Fathers and Anglican Divines helped to cement this in his mind.

Subsequent bishops and Archbishops of Sydney, through to the present day, did not follow Broughton's view, probably because the English government came more under the influence of Evangelical forces and so bishops were appointed from that party of the Church of England. The story of the Church of England in Australia in the Diocese of Sydney became firmly rooted in the Evangelical tradition with a few islands of more Catholic thinking established in parishes like All Saints', Parramatta, Christ Church St Laurence and St James' King Street.

The story in other parts of Australia was both similar and strikingly different to what happened in Sydney as both Evangelical and Catholic bishops came to various parts of Australia, reflecting a changing political scene in England and the rise of the Oxford Movement. Charles Perry who came to Melbourne in 1847 brought a decidedly Evangelical influence to the early years of the Diocese of Melbourne although more variation occurred in later years in that diocese.

Francis Nixon who came to Tasmania in 1842 and Augustus Short who came to Adelaide and William Tyrrell who came to Newcastle in 1847, brought a more Catholic flavour to the Church of England in Australia, having all been significantly influenced by the Tractarians and by the early church Fathers. For these bishops espousing the Catholic tradition of Anglicanism the Eucharist was central to their message.

The Anglican Eucharist was present at the beginning of white settlement in Australia and continued to have significance in the life of various Anglican dioceses in succeeding years. The theological views of various bishops were often determinative in establishing the theology of the Eucharist and how it was celebrated. What seems certain is that from the very first days of white settlement in Australia, eucharistic theology was a matter of importance and public statement.

**The Rev'd Dr Brian Douglas**  
**Former Rector, St Paul's Anglican Church, Manuka**

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## On being offended by the Bible: Reflections on Ephesians 5:11-31 The Rev'd Elaine Farmer, St Paul's Anglican Church, Manuka



One of the things it's popular to say is that Christians, like Jews and Moslems, are 'people of the book'. That what we believe in faith is written down for us and all we have to do, some say, is go to our particular book for enlightenment, for encouragement and to know 'the right thing to do'. As far as the Christian Bible is concerned, if it were that simple, then the millions of words that have been written and spoken would never have been. And preachers wouldn't be standing in pulpits.

The fact is that, no matter how some try to argue otherwise, the Bible is not a ready-made 'how to' book but a collection of bits and pieces written in all kinds of different circumstances for all kinds of different reasons over thousands of years. It's not an ossified code book. It's a living word about people's engagement with their god<sup>67</sup> and it chops and changes about.

It regularly contradicts itself. It's often beautiful and awe-inspiring, and sometimes ugly and offensive. All of which is evidence, of course, of life, and the mess and glory that is human life. Like all parts of the human house hold, the Bible's cupboards are rather untidy. The dross is stuffed in with the diamonds, and there are more than a few skeletons.

Well, for a recent Sunday the lectionary compilers pulled open a cupboard door and one of those skeletons crashed to the floor, rattling its bones at us and demanding attention. I'm sure you've guessed the bit I mean—the *wives, be subject to your husbands* bit in Ephesians.<sup>68</sup> Now this is part of the 'canon of scripture' so we can't simply dismiss it. But why lectionary compilers continue to include this negative passage about women for reading on Sunday when they omit other positive ones is a mystery.

Maybe. Mind you, they do include Paul's instructions for husbands. The bit that *goes husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her*.<sup>69</sup> And the selection from Ephesians chosen by the lectionary compilers does include the very important little verse that precedes these two injunctions: *Be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ*.<sup>70</sup>

For the sake of the intention of those words —and I'll return to them later—I think we need to deal seriously with this material. To start with, what were the circumstances in which these injunctions to wives and husbands were written?

Many scholars now are not even quite sure who wrote the letter to the Ephesians. They're beginning to think it was sent by Paul—or by one of his followers—as a kind of circular letter to various churches in Asia Minor. It had two targets: it was aimed directly at Christians trying to build their new way in the midst of pagan society, and indirectly at that pagan

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<sup>67</sup> Marie E. Isaacs, 'Exegesis and Homiletics', in *The Way Supplement: Spirituality and Scripture*, No.72, Autumn 1991, pp.32-47

<sup>68</sup> Ephesians 5:2

<sup>69</sup> Ephesians 5:25

<sup>70</sup> Ephesians 5:21

society itself. The section directed at husbands and wives is about exercising power but, as a whole, the letter is not about power at all.

Earlier on, the writer urges readers *to put away your former way of life, your old self ... clothe yourselves with the new self, created according to the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.*<sup>71</sup> That being said—Ephesians 5:11-31 is not so much about forging new ways as promoting a way that fitted comfortably with the household codes of the ancient world—and was, therefore, acceptable to that world.

Household codes were generally concerned with social stability. They were a convenient way to organise society, to undergird hierarchies of power and to oil the wheels of the state. And they conformed to the social ideas of those days: relationships in families and in the state were patriarchal—male-dominant—and this was thought to be part of ‘nature’, not of social convention. Into this patriarchal world came Christianity.

Conflict was inevitable. Christianity with its innate egalitarianism, teaching equality for all believers, was unacceptable to a social order dependent on dominant and submissive roles for its members. What’s more, conversion to Christianity was possible for individuals within households, regardless of the views of the *pater familias*, the head of the household. Such independent thought and action, especially for women, was unacceptable. And offensive.

They were very different times. Women were property. Their only real value was in providing legitimate heirs for men. Their behaviour therefore had to be strictly controlled. To suggest that women might act freely and become Christians was offensive to pagan husbands. Equally offensive was Paul’s injunction to those husbands that they should love and honour their wives.

These were times when a man could divorce his wife if his dinner wasn’t on time. And when punishment for perceived dishonour was death. To men accustomed to thinking they could treat women however they pleased, Paul’s saying they should value them as they valued their own lives was unbelievable, distasteful and offensive.

So, on one level, Paul’s letter set out to settle the fears of men, particularly non-Christian men, that they were losing control over their world and to reassure patriarchal society that this new Christian idea about the equality of all people was no threat. Of course, we shouldn’t rush to think that Christian egalitarianism ever got far off the ground. Christian faith is always influenced by the culture of its time.

It was then; it is now. Paul might have genuinely set out to push the Christian idea of the equality of men and women but he would have understood how threatening this would sound to a patriarchal world. He knew he’d have to hose down its fears.

After all, he himself was a product of patriarchy. Paul was formed by an orthodox Jewish world which, you’ll remember, he protected passionately, persecuting the new Christians until his unexpected conversion on that road to Damascus. He’d probably prayed alongside his Jewish brothers the prayer orthodox Jewish men still pray to this day, “Thank you, God, for not making me a woman”. Of course, his Christian fervour sometimes won out.

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<sup>71</sup> Ephesians 4:24



So, for example, we know he wrote with eloquent conviction to the Galatians: *in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith ... There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus.*<sup>72</sup> Even so, it's quite likely that, despite his Christian fervour, Paul's patriarchal Jewish side might have been offended by the kind of freedom offered women as followers of Christ.

Well, that was then and this is now and we all know our world is very different. Patriarchy lingers on but understanding of relationships, marriage, and social management has changed to something that would be unrecognisable to Paul and his patriarchal mates. And if they were offended by his words about relationships then, so are we now—but for different reasons. Some of that egalitarianism has come to pass, often through the work of the secular state, but often through the work and activism of Christians and Christian churches.

So Paul's words about the submission of wives, or women generally, are for all but the most conservative, unbelievable, distasteful and offensive. They are certainly dead in the water as far as Christian evangelism in twenty-first century Australia is concerned. At least in most of it. Therefore, what in Paul's day might have been meant to give women a degree of protection and freedom is seen for the most part in our society today as demanding the opposite.

Why the twist? What's happened? This touches on the problem of 'proof-texting', using bits of the Bible selectively for our own human purposes, or leaving them out as it suits us. Either way it's a dangerous practice. But we have a problem with what's been done with those key words—*wives, be subject to your husbands*—over the last nearly two thousand years.

Oh, as churchgoers you might have heard the balancing injunction *husbands, love your wives* but it's the injunction to women that's been given prominence. Patriarchy might have taken a beating in more recent times but it's lived a healthy life, is far from dead, and is protective of its power.

Over centuries those words, *wives, be subject to your husbands*, have been useful political and social tools of all who would confine women to back rooms, bedrooms and kitchens. Split off from husbands, love your wives—its companion—*wives, be subject to your husbands* has been used to justify witch burning.

To deny women education and the right to vote. To justify domestic violence and rape in marriage. To oppose abortion and the setting up of crisis centres for battered wives. In Paul's day, beating your wife was par for the course, the right of husbands; now it is a crime punishable by prison.

That alone demonstrates the difference between his day and ours and why these particular words of Paul's have reached their use-by date.

Our society, including Christians, actively struggles with issues of discrimination—whether against women or men, straight or gay, black or white—and has begun to legislate against it. There's a long way to go but we can no longer function or hope to transform our world with the words from an outmoded past.

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<sup>72</sup> Galatians 3:26 & 28

I said at the beginning that the Bible is not an ossified code book. We need to recognise when social change has rendered something in the Bible culturally irrelevant and unusable but, if we can no longer see injunctions like Paul's as social and moral guides, what do we do with them?

The first thing to remember is that Paul was only ever an interpreter of Christ's message. Great thinker, great writer, great theologian he might have been, even if his internal battles between upbringing and adopted faith did sometimes trip him up, but he was still only an interpreter of the faith. As are we all.

And one of the problems with this bit of Paul's interpretation is that he seems to be saying that men are the saviour of women, not Christ. But that's just not what the Christian faith is about. Christ is the saviour of women. Just as Christ is the saviour of men. They're not their own saviours. Or each other's.

In the end, the real test of what Paul wrote is whether or not the light of Christ's gospel shines through it as a transforming agent in the world. It's a question of the intention of the message being more important than the messenger. Or, indeed, the words of the message.

Let me repeat: what matters about Paul's 'household code' injunctions to the Ephesians is his intention, not his words. We need to see his letter as trying to find a way that both recognised that Christian faith must live within its social context and a way that would transform that society in accord with the Christian gospel.<sup>73</sup>

*Be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ*—they're the words that matter! The gospel of Christ was never about power over any one. It's not about maintaining social structures that are comfortable for some but that have allowed horrible abuse of one half of the human race—in the name of Christ. Christ was never about power that abuses. Christ is about the power of love and that can only be exercised by giving up power as the world uses it—over and against other people.

I've talked about the offence Paul's words caused all those years ago, and causes today. They were too demanding to be acceptable then and too alien to be useful now. In the end, this story brings us to sin. Human sin worms its way into all our doings and always, always it is there where power is involved. Power corrupts, as we all know, and we human beings are, I'm afraid, too addicted to it to give it up—even for Christ's sake.

Paul's words have been perverted by that human addiction, their transformative intention in the name of Christ rejected. We may well speak of being offended by Paul but I wonder how much God is offended by this and other human perversions of Christ's Gospel and the horrors that have been, and are being, perpetrated and justified—in the name of God.

May the God of Grace who has promised forgiveness to all who turn to him in faith, have mercy upon us all.

**The Rev'd Elaine Farmer**  
**St Paul's Anglican Church, Manuka**

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<sup>73</sup> Judith Gundry-Volf, 'Neither Biblical Nor Just: Southern Baptists and the Subordination of Women', in *Sojourners*, September/October 1998.



### **Notice for the Annual General Meeting of Anglicans Together**

The Annual General Meeting of Anglicans Together will be held at 7pm Thursday 4 November 2021 via Zoom. Financial Members who wish to attend the AGM should email the Secretary at [admin@anglicanstgether.org](mailto:admin@anglicanstgether.org) and a Zoom link for the meeting will be emailed to you in due course. Financial members may vote and stand for election to the Committee.

We are planning, after formalities are concluded, to break into smaller “chat groups”, to which you are invited to bring your drink and nibbles, for informal discussion – some trigger questions will be provided to aid discussion.

The pre-Synod briefing usually connected to our AGMs will not be held as Synod is now planned to start on 28 Feb (for just 3 days). We hope to be able to meet in person for that purpose just prior to Synod.

We also regret that we have been unable to schedule an Anglicans Together dinner again this year. We do hope that we will be able to host one in 2022!

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## WHY ANGLICANS TOGETHER?

Anglicans Together is an organisation that promotes an inclusive expression of Anglicanism in the Diocese of Sydney. Anglicans Together supports the idea that the Anglican Church is both catholic and reformed.

It allows for difference as described in the Lambeth Quadrilateral. We wish to show that our God, as seen in the Lord Jesus Christ, is not a God that can be defined by one point of view but the genius of the Anglican style is that we can draw upon the revelation of God to all God's people. Anglicans Together is an association incorporated under the Associations Incorporation Act 1984 to:

- maintain, foster and develop the life of the Anglican Church in Australia;
  - confirm our common allegiance to the Anglican Communion as an integral part of the larger body of Christ's church;
  - maintain the comprehensiveness and respect the diversity of belief and practice as it has developed within the Anglican Church;
  - promote unity and co-operation with the Anglican Church in the best interests of its mission and the credibility of the Gospel in Australian society; and
  - foster member involvement and participation in Synod with informed debate, coherent reasoning and constructive criticism.
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## CONTACT US

For general enquiries and contributions to *Via Media* or our online journal, please email [admin@anglicanstogether.org](mailto:admin@anglicanstogether.org)

To join Anglicans Together, please fill out an application form (found on our website) and post it to:

Secretary, Anglicans Together  
PO Box 162  
Spit Junction NSW 2088

The President of Anglicans Together is The Rev'd Dr Max Wood (Rector, St Luke's Mosman), who can be contacted via [president@anglicanstogether.org](mailto:president@anglicanstogether.org)