



To the People



Dear Sisters and Brothers,

March 2026

March has begun with a war in all but name in the Middle East, the death of Ayatollah Ali Khamenie, and the resumption of the border conflict between India and Pakistan. On 2 and 3 March GAFCON and the Global South Bishops and Archbishops are meeting in Abuja, Nigeria. Our Australian national bishops' meeting takes place in Brisbane from 13-17 March. Please would you hold all of these situations and events in your prayers? I have attached a plea for prayer from Archbishop Hosam in Jerusalem whose episcopate covers nearly all the Middle East currently in conflict.

Also attached is the new Diocesan plan I promised. This is later than I had intended. It is a working document that addresses the feedback from Synod and the deanery hubs. You will find an AI summary of the hubs' feedback in the document. There will be more material to follow before Easter. A particular focus is sharing our faith with others and repeating what we did last year with **Hope25** in inviting parishes, Anglican communities and organisations to do one or more things to share our faith. Because the Lent book this year from the bishops is called *Joy*, I am suggesting we call this **Joy26**, or **Sharing the Joy26**.

The Ordination service on 7 February was a special occasion in the life of this diocese. There are photos below. Revd Nick Freeland led a deeply appreciated Ordination Retreat and was both Preacher and Precentor with a humdinger of a sermon. The service was livestreamed and watched in Living Water, St. Mary's. Busselton, Christ's Church, Mandurah, South Africa, England, and Wisconsin, among other places. The music and singing did not livestream quite as well and the Dean is working on how to fix this for future events, including another Ordination on 27 June.

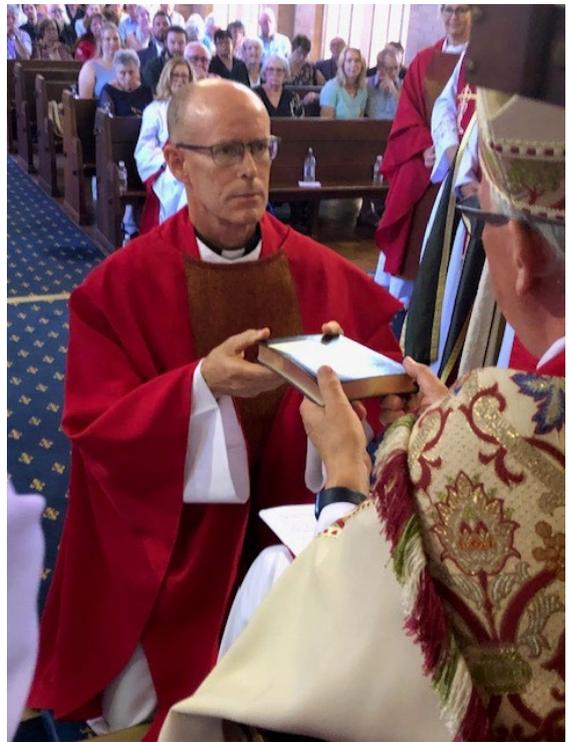
Chrism Eucharist on Thursday 26 March – Start Time and Order Change!

Due to the Founders' Day Service at Frederick Irwin Anglican School on the same day as Chrism Eucharist, I am hoping to make both by holding **lunch at 12 noon** in Lawrence House Hall at St. Mary's, Kojonup and the **Chrism service at 1pm**. If you are intending to come to support the clergy for the blessing of oils and the renewal of their clergy vows, please would you kindly let Revd Neale Sommersby know for lunch numbers by emailing: stmaryskojonup@gmail.com?

Sunday Service Supply rates, some have been changed back!

You may know that at Provincial Council last year it was decided to cut the rates for some Sunday Supply. This has caused some consternation among those who assist parishes and Anglican Communities by travelling to take services for them. We later discovered that although it had been proposed by Perth Diocese, they were not in fact adhering to it themselves. Accordingly, we have reverted to the previous rates and Revd Nick will be sending out the revised rates.

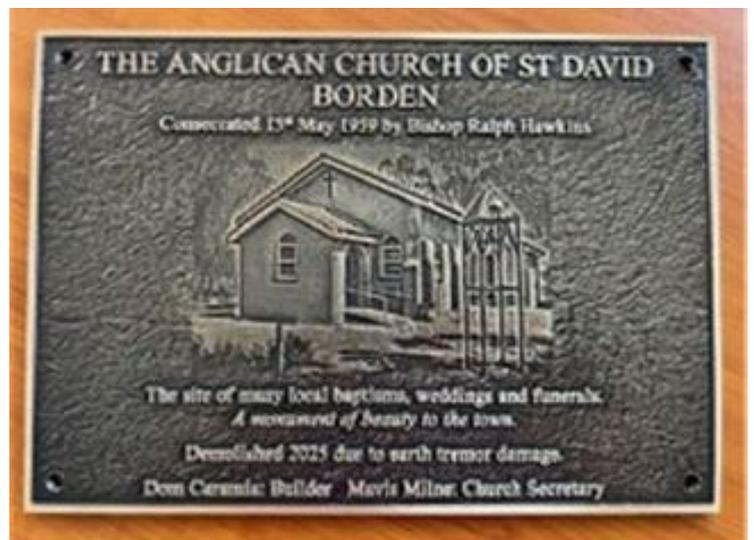
Ordination Service – 7 February





A plaque for St. David's, Borden

You may have noticed in the ABC News last week there have been a 'swarm' of earth tremors just north of Gnowangerup. This is earthquake prone part of our diocese and not far from where we had to demolish St. David's, Borden, last year due to irreparably expensive damage from two successive earthquakes. We promised we would have a memorial made to mark where St David's had been. We will affix this to the remaining niche wall in a small garden on the site. Below is a photo of the finished version which Archdeacon Geoff commissioned, and we will put in place as soon as we can.



Start of the School Year at BCGS and Frederick Irwin Anglican School



Archdeacon Geoff and Primary students gathered in the BCGS Chapel for a special service to bless and welcome the Semester 1 Student Leaders for 2026. Surrounded by peers, staff, and families, the school took time to acknowledge the responsibility and privilege of leadership, recognising the courage, compassion, and commitment these students bring to their roles.

Blessing of the Backpacks at Frederick Irwin Anglican School

Both campuses marked the beginning of Term 1 with their annual Blessing of the Backpacks, each holding a warm and welcoming service to remind students that *“Jesus is with me”* as they begin a new school year. Students received a prayer for their daily routines—preparing for the day ahead, enjoying a healthy breakfast, and travelling safely to school.

At Halls Head Campus, the service was led by Assistant Chaplain Mrs Alicia Tearle, with Head of Primary Mr Rob Gratton and Deputy Principal Shane Parnell encouraging students to start the year with kindness and positivity.

At Meadow Springs campus, Mr Noah Clark and Revd Tracey Gray also addressed the students, with Revd Tracey sharing a similar message about the importance of always being kind.



Winner - 2026 Pingelly Community Person of the Year Award - Meredith Freebairn

Meredith Freebairn is one of the Wardens in Narrogin, Pingelly and Wickopin parish. She has been celebrated by the Shire of Pingelly for her energy, generosity, and wide-ranging service across local health, community life, and heritage. A retired nurse, she still pours her skills and care into the community through her volunteer work with Somerset Alliance.

In 2025, Meredith stepped into the role of President of the Pingelly Community Garden Group, bringing fresh enthusiasm and helping locals connect through hands-on workshops and shared activities. She also volunteers at the **Forget Me Not Café**, offering support to people living with dementia and their carers. Meredith was presented with her award at the Australia Day Awards Brunch in Pingelly.



Note from the Revd Shane Marques at Living Water Anglican Church

I thought I'd let you know how our Invitation Sundays have gone this year.

This is the third year we've done these, in the first two weeks of February. The themes are 'Who is Jesus?' on Sunday 1 Feb, and 'Why did Jesus die?' on Sunday 8 Feb - these talks are based on the Alpha teaching scripts that are available for free to churches. We estimated that on the first Sunday across both services we had about 30 guests, and this past Sunday about 15 guests. The church had been praying about who they might invite from the beginning of January.

We used newspaper adverts, roadside signs, social media and cards for the church to use as invitations.

We gave out about 15 'You said Yes' booklets and Bibles to people who came forward after services. The 'You said Yes' booklet is a 21 day short

reading guide that can be done at one's own pace and covers key topics like 'How do I pray?', 'How can I read the Bible?', and 'How can I make friends?'. We adapted this booklet from a non-copyrighted resource online and it's been well received. We are also giving the Bible Society's 'New Beginnings Bibles' which have helpful introductions to the essential beliefs of Christianity.



Attendance over th

2024

Sunday #1 267

Sunday #2 246

and evenings services t

2025

Sunday #1 258

Sunday #2 271

2026

Sunday #1 325

Sunday #2 300

Christ's Church Joins the Mandurah Odd Object Trail

From 14 March to 27 April, the Mandurah Odd Object Trail will invite families and visitors to explore the Eastern Foreshore and the wider Mandurah CBD by locating "mystery objects" in participating venues. The trail aims to support local businesses and create a fun, family-friendly experience, with prizes and special retail offers along the way.

Christ's Church is pleased to be part of this year's trail. Organisers were keen to include the church because of its prominent location and important role in Mandurah's history. For the parish, it's a wonderful opportunity to welcome families and community members, share their story, and help visitors learn more about the life of the parish.

Booklets are \$10 to purchase online using the following link:

<https://joyoevents.com.au/mandurah-odd-objecting-trail/>

It may be giving the game away that the mystery object at Christ's Church is a pretend crab in a pot, here held by Wendy Mabey with Karen Reeves.



Naomi's suggestion

Naomi Backhouse from Northcliffe has suggested a creative new project for Advent 2026: a **Diocesan Advent Calendar of Carols**. The idea is simple, 24 carols, recorded by 24 different people or groups from across the Diocese, released one per day throughout Advent.

With musicians of every kind in our churches, schools, and communities, organists, contemporary groups, a cappella singers, and children's choirs, this could become a joyful way to worship together. By Christmas Eve, we would have a copyright-free collection of carols for use in services, especially supporting smaller parishes. The collection could include well-known favourites, hidden gems, modern pieces, and carols from a range of cultures, all pointing to Jesus as the centre of our celebrations.

Facilities also exist to make this achievable. For example, Northcliffe has a low-cost community recording studio, and there are likely many people across the Diocese with the skills and willingness to help.

If you or your parish, school, choir, or music group would like to express interest in taking part, please contact the Diocesan Office.

Let's see if together we can create something beautiful for next Advent. 🎵 🎶 🎷

Revd Gaerlan Baguil's trip to the Philippines.

Gaerlan recently travelled to the Philippines to help prepare for his daughter's wedding, which will take place on 20 June at Holy Innocents Episcopal Church in Baguio City. He plans to take leave from 8–22 June to support the family celebrations before returning for the upcoming ordination.

During the visit, Gaerlan was also invited by Deacon Aprila, an old schoolmate of Roseni, to preach in three local stations on the first Sunday of the year. With borrowed vestments, he joyfully accepted the invitation and felt honoured to share God's word in his childhood home.



An additional member of the congregation at Balingup!

This little face appeared recently at the end of a service – a 9-month-old Joey being gently cared for.

Baptism and Confirmation of Harry Coutts and the Reception of Pat Coutts

For the first time ever, I was able to baptise and receive a couple with the same surname as me. This was at Badgebup church near Katanning on 6 February. Nevertheless, I had to explain that the baptism certificate does not have my matching surname, as bishops sign with their Christian name and the name of their diocese! Revd Neale has been praying for all the seats in Katanning church to be filled and his prayers are being answered with Karen families and Solomon Islander workers all appearing at once. (*Thanks to Revd Neale for the photos, with permission*)



Thank you to Colleen Donovan, retiring as Chair of Albany Mission to Seafarers



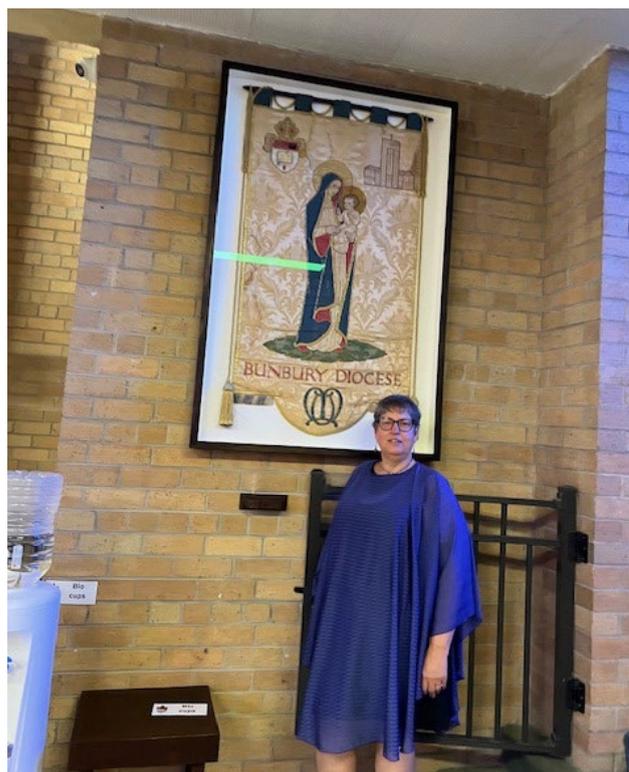
Colleen is second from the right in this picture. She has kindly and generously soldiered on for a further year as Chair of the Mission in Albany. We thanked her for all her work, care and effort at the AGM on 23 February. It is proving very difficult to find a replacement, so we are in the process of advertising a part-time paid role. If you live in Albany or nearby and might be interested, please contact Jenny Duncan, the Diocesan Secretary, by emailing secretary@buynbury.org.au

Colleen is not disappearing. Her passion is caring for the ships' crews, and we are very glad she is continuing in this valuable role.

The old Mothers Union Diocesan Banner in a new place

In order to preserve the old MU banner it has been specially placed in a glass fronted frame at the back of the Cathedral, after the usual Faculty process.

This is Wendy Mabey standing in front of the newly hung banner in its new position.



The 50th Anniversary of the Old Grammarians on 28 February

Whilst it was raining in Busselton on Saturday, the sun shone on Bunbury Cathedral Grammar School for the first of 3 events this year marking the 50th Anniversary of the Old Grammarians. It commenced with a service led by Archdeacon Geoff with Ven Emeritus Brian Newing giving an address. It was followed by a Garden Party and tours of the much-expanded school from the memories of many. Dr Eric Speed, the nonagenarian first Principal, was present. The MC was Pamela Medlen, a Grammarian who presents the 7pm ABC News and whose wedding, apparently, is recorded in the Cathedral register.



Clockwise: The Program, Pamela Medlen, Garden Party, past Old Grammarian Association Chairs, cutting the cake



Family and Cultures Commission

A reminder to please **save the following date for 2026** as part of our shared commitment to preventing and responding to domestic and family violence affecting those in our church communities.

Domestic Violence Sunday – Sunday, 3 May 2026

Parishes are encouraged to observe Domestic Violence Sunday to highlight God's concern for those experiencing harm. Prayer, preaching and other service resources will be made available in late February. The Standing Committee of the General Synod has also asked that members of our churches be invited to make a donation towards the church's work of prevention and response. There will be various ways to opt in to marking this day for your parish, including materials for a training workshop you could run in-person or online in your parish. For now, please mark the day in your church calendar. You can sign up to receive resources as soon as they are available at the website for our Anglican Families & Culture Commission: www.tencommitments.org.au



On behalf of the Families & Culture Commission

Rev'd Tracy Lauersen, National Program Manager, Families & Culture
General Synod of the Anglican Church of Australia

Bishop's Calendar

March	1	St Peter's Balingup, Service and AMP
	2	Labour Day WA Public Holiday – Diocesan Office Closed
	3	National Bishops' Planning Meeting, Diocesan Office
	5	Ordination Council Meeting, Diocesan Office
	7	Dunsborough Parish Fete, St George's Dunsborough
	8	Gelorup Parish, Service and Reception into Anglican Communion
	10	Pinjarra, meeting at the Shire of Murray
	12-17	National Bishops' Meeting, Brisbane
	20	Mother's Union Lady Day, Albany
	22	Hopetoun, Service
	23	Mother's Union Executive Meeting, Diocesan Office
	24	Mother's Union Lady Day, Bunbury School Board Meeting, Bunbury Cathedral Grammar School
	26	Founders Day Service, Frederick Irwin Anglican School Chrism Mass, St Mary's Kojonup
	29	Holy Trinity Williams, service
	31	Anglicare WA Board Meeting

Blessings,