



*"from
Warren"*

Wrestling With God
and Ourselves

Coming to faith – or keeping faith – is a wrestle. It is as we wrestle with the challenges of life and faith that faith emerges and faith deepens. Faith is a gift for sure, but there is always a wrestle to come, at least some of the time. Writing a sermon is like this for me. If the sermon is to be more than sprouting theological platitudes, I argue with myself. Questions that live in me, doubts, sorrow and joy, all of these come into play as I write and read and pray as I talk and write.

This is always happening with life itself. To come to faith, or deepen faith, or keep some faith in the face of suffering and sorrow, we have to wrestle with the questions and with God. (I'm reminded of that famous passage in Genesis where Jacob wrestles with an angel/God. See Genesis 32:22-32) I am also reminded of the Psalms of Lament where the speaker in the Psalm laments/complains to God. The lament is real and of real troubles, and the speaker is wrestling with God. Jesus quotes from a Psalm of Lament on the cross. ("My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" Ps 22:1)

In John 9:1-41 we can see a man wrestling his way to faith. He is compelled by others to defend Jesus, and in defending Jesus it almost like he is arguing himself into faith. The story climaxes when Jesus helps him to make the last small step to faith in him. (See John 9:37-38) We should always remember that this same dynamic of wrestling and arguing that takes place in us is also at work in others as they come into contact with God. And perhaps this contact with God might be through us. This demands patience on our part, for people have to wrestle with themselves, and life itself, to come to an authentic faith in Christ.

✠ WARREN

For more of Warren's work see his blog at <http://classic-theology-new.blogspot.com.au>

EASTER SERVICES

- MAUNDY THURSDAY
- 7.00 PM AT THE LAST SUPPER WITH HOLY COMMUNION
- GOOD FRIDAY
- 9.00 AM GOOD FRIDAY SERVICE
- 10.00 AM MORNING TEA
- 10.30 AM CHILDREN'S SERVICE
- EASTER DAY
- 6.30 LIGHTING PASCHAL CANDLE, RENEWAL OF BAPTISMAL VOWS, AND HOLY COMMUNION
- 9.00 RENEWAL OF BAPTISMAL VOWS AND HOLY COMMUNION



**Archbishop
Brad's
Installation.**

Brad after the service

Hundreds of people from across Australia gathered at St Peter's Cathedral on March 7th for the Installation of the 11th Archbishop of Adelaide, the Right Reverend Dr Bradley S. Billings.

Following an extensive process, Brad was elected at the Bishop Election Synod on Dec. 6th 2025. Key attributes sought included "a courageous, visionary communicator, able to provide direction and unity within the church to leverage its diversity. Someone who can influence the position of the church as a relevant, critical thought leader, and as a place where people can find meaning and purpose."

Archbishop Brad is married to Karen and they have five adult children. They are from Melbourne where Brad served in a number of parishes, and eventually Brad was consecrated Assistant Bishop in 2016. He served in a number of regions in the Diocese of Melbourne, and has also in numerous leadership roles and

ministries, including schools and service organisations. He has many furthered his studies in theology, ministry, law, classics and archaeology. He has completed a Master of (Anglican) Canon Law. Archbishop Brad is also the author of several books including the recently published "Truly Called: Vocation in Anglican Ministry".

As Archbishop Brad settles into his life here in Adelaide, we continue to pray the APBA Prayer for the Election of a Bishop: "Grant that Brad may walk in your ways, faithfully teach your truth and, with loving care, watch over your people. Give him vision, courage, and joy in the gospel, that, together with us, he may build up your Church and glorify your holy name through Jesus Christ our Lord." Amen.

**NEWS FROM
MODAWA**

See page 2

**OPENING THE
TREASURE TROVE**

See page 3

News from Modawa:

Bishop Jeffrey writes:

I head back to PNG on the weekend and I am looking forward to once more seeing my dear friends North of Kokoda. I can no longer do the long trips that were necessary when I was Principal for a few years, but still fill a role in mentoring, advising and generally trying to ensure that this baby institution grows into something strong.

It is growing. This year we have our second intake into the David Hand School of Teaching, with students not just from Oro Province but from other parts of PNG. We have been working to put the finishing touches on our new female dormitories, as we seek to accommodate a growing student body.

The Institute is the work of PNG Anglicans for PNG people, but partner churches and people have a vital role in support; walking alongside (wokabout wantaim). I am delighted that there are a group of people who share a commitment to support the Anglican Church of PNG by involving themselves with the Modawa. It makes sense of a delightful Anglican phrase; "the bonds of affection", which link us in fellowship and service around the Communion.

I will be working on a response to an audit by the department of Higher Education (DHERST), helping with the development of a five-year budget, doing some policy development with members of the Governing

Council and actually fitting in a little teaching.

The challenges remain and are substantial. Administration and accountability is always a frail thing in PNG. There is a prevailing culture of corruption and graft. Governance tends to degrade in the tropical sun! But what we are doing is worthwhile. If there is anything that offers hope to a developing and struggling country, it is the education of future leaders.

Bishop Jeffrey specially sends his good wishes to St Columba's, with thanks for our friendship and support, and a request for our prayers.

BAPTISMS AND THANKSGIVINGS

We had the pleasure recently of a baptism and a service of thanksgiving for a child. Lucille, daughter of Sophia and Henry, and grand-daughter of Wendy, and granddaughter of Wendy and great-granddaughter of Alison was baptized in December. And in February we gave thanks for Arthur's grandchild, Philippa, and prayed for her parents Tom and Taylor. Philippa was baptized in the UK at a church with a family connection. (See the photo)



Lucille's Baptism



Philippa at her U.K. Baptism



Community Volunteer Program.

Mareea is a community volunteer

The vision of St Columba's is to provide a living experience of Christianity.

During the Mission Action Planning discussions and in the context of community outreach, the idea of a Community Volunteer Program emerged. Such a program would enable people from the community to engage in parish life without necessarily being formal members of the church.

St Columba's has benefited from volunteer engagement for many years, in fund raising, special projects and events. Increasing compliance around

insurance and child protection means that parishes have to formalize their arrangements around volunteers who are not church members. Accordingly, we have engaged with Synod Office to create guidelines for the St Columba's Community Volunteer Program.

At its meeting in February, Parish Council endorsed three volunteers to assist with music and at Columba Playtime. If you have family or friends interested, please speak to Warren, Ann or Mark.

If the volunteer work involves contact with children, safe ministry checks may apply.

History Festival.

St Columba's will be participating in the annual History Month, with an event on Sunday 31st May, **Futures Unimagined: Tradition and Innovation**

Since 1898 the church of St Columba has focused on creating a living experience of Christianity. We build on our tradition to proclaim faith through futures unimagined, including wars, technological innovation, urban development, changes in religious instruction, the rise of secularism, social change and the global pandemic,

Come and find out how lives grounded in faith and inspired by St Columba, an adventurous Celtic monk, continue to tell a story that looks to the future, in and beyond the original church.



Lancelot Begg Window

Opening the Treasure Trove.

Curated collections in museums and churches give us insights into the history and beliefs of other cultures. We can be caught up in the beauty and wonder but the ways in which guides respond can impact on our willingness to engage more deeply or simply make us feel embarrassed at our lack of knowledge. And head for a café.

Guides in these places usually assume a degree of interest and knowledge in their visitors. Can we make the same assumption about visitors and newcomers to church? How can we engage without patronising or confusing people?

Listening and really tuning into a person's reactions can be helpful. In the early days of Columba Playtime, a 4 year old looking at a Nativity set explained to me that Jesus was on the changing table next to his Mum. This interpretation led to a lovely conversation and an opportunity to open the

'treasure trove' of Christmas. The conversation reminded me of how Christian liturgy, art, worship, ritual and symbol can be so puzzling to so many. Or, in the case of a child, so concrete!

Reactions to Art are more than just a matter of differing tastes. They are driven by cultural experience, knowledge, bias and many other factors. I think the same about reactions to the church setting and to worship. Reactions may include puzzlement or even distaste. We can be open about negative views, be aware of different mindsets and look for points of connection.

It is interesting to read about the historical role of Art in educating people at a time when many could not read. Stained glass windows continue to provide not only beauty but keys to the Christian story. They are also great discussion starters when engaging with visitors.

We have access to a wonderful treasure trove of

liturgy, ritual, symbols, music and architecture. How can we engage with and understand different mindsets to find common ground with those who are at the edge of our tradition or seeing it for the first time? How can we open that treasure trove? We hope that the St Columba's History Festival event will provide some opportunities for us to be friendly, helpful guides.



Behind the Scenes
 Organ Tuning.

Worship Services

Sundays:
8.00 a.m. BCP Eucharist
9.30am Contemporary Holy Communion

Weekdays:
Tuesdays: 10.30 a.m. BCP Eucharist

Wednesdays: 5.30 p.m.: Evening Prayer in the Church
9.30 a.m.

Fridays: 9.30 a.m. Morning Prayer
10.00 a.m. Morning Tea
10.15am Bible Study



SERVICES ON FACEBOOK AND YOUTUBE:

Tuesdays at 5.00 p.m.: Message of the Day by Warren.

Wednesdays at 5.00 p.m.: Evening Prayer on Facebook

Thursdays at 5.00 p.m.: Reflection
You can always watch these at a later time if you wish.

PLAYGROUP: 10.00am Columba Playtime in school term time.

PARISH PRIEST:

The Reverend Dr Warren Huffa
email: rector@columba.org.au

PASTORAL MINISTRY WORKER:
Ann Nadge

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY AND OUTREACH WORKER:
Julie Ascher-Ellis

PARISH OFFICE:
8272 7266
email: welcome@columba.org.au
Usual opening times:
Wednesday 12.00 - 2.00 pm
Friday 11.00 - 12.30 pm

PRIEST'S WARDEN:
ANN NADGE

PEOPLE'S WARDEN:
MARK ENGELHARDT

**ST COLUMBA'S
ANGLICAN
CHURCH
HAWTHORN**

website: www.columba.org.au

101 CROSS ROAD HAWTHORN

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**ST COLUMBA'S
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The Messenger

Report on 2025 Synod

FIRST SESSION OF THE FORTY-SIXTH TRIENNIAL SYNOD, (171st Annual Session)
Friday 17 – Sunday 19 October 2025. Trinity College, Gawler.

The structure of Synod 2025 reflected the theme from 2024: the people of God discerning the direction in which God is leading us. Synod discussed several matters in small groups using the *Contemplative Dialogue* model to give all members an opportunity to contribute. Legislation was dealt with in the usual Parliamentary way.

There was group discussion on funding Aboriginal ministry via land sales. This was later followed by a formal motion that Synod "Request Diocesan Council, via the Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) steering group, consider and recommend alternative schemes for funding aboriginal ministry to Synod in 2026 following wide diocesan consultation."

Concern about Anglicare funding changes was reflected in a motion strongly endorsed by members of Synod. In part, it read that this Synod:

Notes with concern the recent changes to Anglicare SA's Emergency Assistance Program in the Adelaide CBD, which have significantly reduced the availability of food, and encourages all parishes, particularly those within the Adelaide city council area, to continue their current efforts in providing food and emergency relief, and to explore creative and collaborative ways to assist those in need within their local communities.

Dioceses around Australia are updating Sections of *Faithfulness in Service* and although one change was made, a motion for other changes was lost, largely because of perceived lack of notice. Further work will be done before Synod 2026.

Ministry development discussions included a motion encouraging Diocesan Council to explore the feasibility of establishing a fund to support church planting and church regeneration initiatives, and in addition, how the ministry discernment and formation program can appropriately accommodate and equip men and women for such adaptive ministry approaches.

Two motions involved requests for the Archbishop to communicate with the Prime Minister. Both motions failed, one about fossil fuel and a second about the situation in Gaza.

Even though these motions each had more than 12 sections, they could not express the complexities involved and agreement without amendments became extremely difficult.

Synod ended on a positive note as it "rejoiced with the Anglican Board of Mission (ABM) as it celebrates its 175th Anniversary of serving God's mission, on the 29th of October 2025."

Speakers thanked Archbishop Geoff Smith for his 8 years of faithful leadership and proceedings concluded with a standing ovation.

ANN NADGE

DIARY DATES 2026

MARCH

Saturday 7th
Installation of new Archbishop
Monday 9th Mothers' Union Lunch
Saturday 28th Feast for Freedom
Sunday 29th 9.00 Eucharist
Annual Vestry Meeting
Neuro-inclusive Service

APRIL

Thursday 2nd Maundy Thursday
Friday 3rd Good Friday
Sunday 5th Easter Day
Friday 10th End of School Term 1
Monday 13th Mothers' Union
Wednesday 22nd Parish Council
Monday 27th
Start of School Term 2

MAY

St Columba's Celebrates Month
Monday 11th Mothers' Union
Sunday 31st History Month Event