



## FROM BISHOP MARK



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# On Fire Fronts for Jesus



*The site of St Saviour's Church in Quaama, with the bell tower still standing*

It has been a summer like no other for the Diocese of Canberra & Goulburn. Beginning in November, fires have been burning across the Diocese for almost three months, from Batemans Bay to the Victorian border, to the east and west of Braidwood, south of Canberra, around Cooma and Adaminaby, and in the west at Batlow and Tumbarumba. Around one third of Parishes, and more than half of those in NSW, have been impacted by fires.

It is estimated around 1000 homes have been destroyed across the Diocese and several hundreds more damaged, with final figures yet to be released. There has also been extensive damage to commercial and agricultural infrastructure, including major losses to pine plantations and orchards in the foothills of the Snowy Mountains. The pines typically take 35 years and the orchards between five-seven years to reach maturity. Tragically, several lives have been lost in the

Diocese, including three in the Cobargo district.

Many of our churches have been providing emergency relief and pastoral care to those affected in a multitude of ways by the fires.

*'In the first chapter of his second letter to the Corinthians the Apostle Paul praises "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort who comforts us in all our troubles so that we can comfort those in any trouble". Recent troubles in our Diocese have put many of us under great pressure.*

*At the same time we have seen God's promise fulfilled as servants of Christ have displayed Christ-like compassion in caring for their neighbours and communities.'*

*~ Bishop Mark*

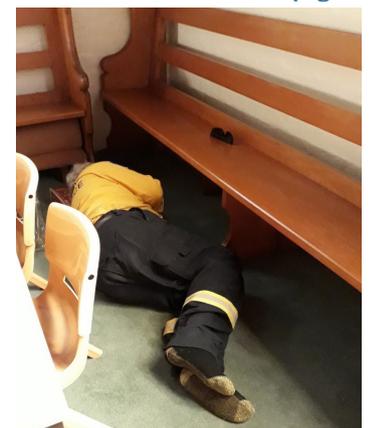
One of the first fires in the Diocese started in the Tallaganda National Park to the west of Braidwood on 26th November 2019 and threatened Braidwood on the evening of the

29th, before conditions changed and spared the town. The Currowan Fire to the east also began to spread rapidly on the 26th November. A bushfire-generated firestorm formed and reached the town of Nerriga on 21 December where 27 homes were lost and four homes were also lost in Araluen. Braidwood Life Centre, a joint venture with the Anglican Church, has been tirelessly providing food, clothing and other support since these fires broke out to its east and west. Volunteers worked on many projects such as putting together back packs of supplies for children needing to return to school.

When Moruya received the evacuation orders on New Year's Eve, The Reverend Linda Chapman went into town and opened the church and parish hall for others who began to arrive that morning shaken and anxious. A young family, partners of those out fighting the fires, some parishioners and others including various animals found their way in

during the morning. They parted the pews to make sleeping cubicles, one family camped in the vestry, others in the hall and office. Then they waited, glued to the Fires Near Me app that showed the frightening extent of the growth and size of fires as they began to join up. Later they lost power and communications.

Over a period of 10 days the **continued page 3**



*An exhausted firefighter sleeping in St John's Moruya*

# Bishop Mark Writes ...

Sometimes everyday words fail to capture the essence of what we have experienced.

Visiting Cobargo in the aftermath of the devastating bushfires Monica and I noticed a sign in the bookshop window – ‘Post-apocalyptic fiction moved to current affairs section’. It’s a reminder of how events have pushed our post-Christian society back to the half-remembered resources of theological and Christian language. We’ve contrasted disasters of ‘biblical proportions’ and wept over those who’ve ‘laid down their lives for others’.

What of ‘apocalyptic’? I believe it’s used to convey the unprecedented scale of the fires and their capacity to produce feelings of horror and dread. There is, however, the literal meaning of apocalyptic – that is, to unveil or uncover. Drawing on this background, I want to consider three ways in which the fires have indeed been apocalyptic.

*Apocalyptic events reveal what has been hidden or forgotten.* I believe the fires have brought into view truths and realities easily overlooked. Some of what has been revealed

has been re-assuring – the capacity of human beings for service and sacrifice, the beauty and necessity of genuine community. Some of what has been revealed has been sobering – the illusion of our invincibility as affluent Westerners, the dreadful impact our lifestyle is having on our natural environment.

*Apocalyptic events foreshadow the coming of a new world.* What world might the fires foreshadow? Perhaps a world where we learn to trust and acknowledge God in all things. Perhaps a world where we commit ourselves to renewing our local community organisations so we have capacity to respond to similar disasters in the future. Perhaps a world where we move beyond polarization to develop a holistic and shared response to climate change.

*Apocalyptic events call us to repentance.* By repentance I mean something more than standard New Year’s resolutions. Repentance is nothing less than a change of mind that re-aligns our lives in light of the new world that is coming. Repentance is always lived out in the first person. It’s about what I and we



will do, not what I or we think others should do. It touches on our prayers, our purchases and our priorities.

Many of us will be reading through Matthew’s gospel in our churches this year. In that gospel Jesus begins his public ministry with an apocalyptic announcement – ‘Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near’ (Matthew 4:17). What has been long hidden is coming into plain view. A new world is coming, with God as King. It’s time to get ready for it and repent. As Jesus calls His first

followers and disciples them into a life of poverty, meekness, mercy and persecution we get a glimpse of what repentance looks like.

The fires have brought terrible tragedy to our Diocese and its people. So many have led the way in caring for the wounded and weeping with those who weep. Wouldn’t it be great if we could also lead the way in heeding the summons to repent and so receive the new life that Jesus is always willing to give us?



*The Reverend Gaynor Elder* has been licensed as Hon Acting Chaplain (Deacon) p/t The Canberra Hospital (30.01.2020).

*The Right Reverend Allan Ewing* has been licensed as Locum Rector Woden from 29.11.2020 (30.01.2020).

*The Reverend Tim Hall* has been licensed as Assoc Priest Gungahlin (4.02.2020).

*The Reverend Trent McGrath* will be licensed as Chaplain & Missioner (Deacon) Snowy Mountains Ministry (08.02.2020).

*The Reverend Guy Matthew’s* three year term as Area Dean South Canberra expired and we thank him for his excellent service.

*The Reverend Dave McLennan* was elected Area Dean, for the South Canberra Deanery by his peers on 6.02.2020 & licensed from that date.

In light of the impending consecration of Archdeacon Carol Wagner as Assistant Bishop *The Reverend Rebecca Newland* has agreed to serve as Archdeacon, The South Coast, Monaro and Alpine (ie the South Coast & Parishes of Southern Monaro, Berridale & Cooma). The Parish of Queanbeyan will return to the Archdeaconry of South Canberra.

*The Venerable Dr Brian Douglas* has had his South Canberra Archdeacon’s license amended to include the parish of Queanbeyan from February 2020.

*The Reverend Dr Guerin Tueno* has been licensed as Acting Rector Locum Weston from 01.01.2020 (30.01.2020).

## Clergy Moves

Following the completion of his ministry extension on 11.01.2020 **Bishop Trevor Edwards** resigned as Assistant Bishop of C&G from that date. A number of wonderful farewells have been held for +Trevor and he has been granted an ATO (12.01.2020).

*The Venerable David Ruthven* has resigned as Rector of Wagga Wagga Parish and Archdeacon of Wagga Wagga and various committees effective from 01.03.2020. David will take up a new appointment as Rector of North Pine Anglican Church in the Diocese of South Queensland. David has served Jesus and this Diocese faithfully and skillfully over many years including in recent times as the Chair of The Episcopal Election Nominations Committee, Chair of The Riverina Anglican College and Deputy Chair of the Diocesan Schools Commission. Thank you David.

*The Reverend Jonathan Cole* has resigned as Assistant Priest Canberra (from 23.01.2020) to take up a teaching position at The Googong Anglican School.

*The Reverend Sallyanne Hart* retired in December 2019.

*The Reverend Wendy Bloomfield* has been licensed as Hon Assoc Priest (p/t) at Kaleen-Giralang-Lawson from 01.02.2020 (30.01.2020).

*The Reverend James Coats* has been licensed as Assoc Chaplain, Canberra Grammar School from 01.01.2020 (06.02.2020).

**The Venerable Carol Wagner will be consecrated on the 22nd of February 2020 at 11am in St Saviour's Cathedral.**

### AnglicanNews

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district had three evacuation orders. Linda wrote: 'During one of the worst days, when we were refugees in our own church, I wrote up a list of activities for the day in order to keep us occupied. The kids loved the pom-pom making. And I invited people to meditate at various times during the day. I cleared a space in the parish office and a few of us gathered there. Amid fear and anxiety, swirling orange smoke, and the constant sound of planes filling up with water from the river, we joined in wordless prayer. As we finished one session, and remained sitting in silence, I knew God in the stillness at the heart of it all. Our little evacuation centre became a place of grounded care.'

Elsewhere on the South Coast, St Saviour's Anglican Church at Quaama, in the Parish of Cobargo/Bermagui was destroyed, along with the homes of two parishioners. You can read the story from Locum Priest, Reverend Mandy Wheatley, at <https://www.etsnews.com.au/australia/cobargo-quaama-brog-lessons-from-the-fires-of-hell/>

Over 30 Anglican parishioners and more than 20 families with children at the South Coast Anglican Schools have lost houses. Principal of Sapphire Coast Anglican College, Mrs Tracey Gray, took up the gruelling task of calling staff and families in fire affected areas,



Janet Brandon, Merimbula/Eden volunteer



Bishop Designate Carol Wagner, Sue and Reverend Mandy Wheatley at the Narooma Evacuation Centre

hearing their stories of escape; of panic, disbelief and confusion at the intensity of the fire; of losing farms, sheds, animals, feed for their stocks and also losing their homes. At St Peter's Anglican School Broulee the administration building was destroyed, as well as teaching and maintenance staff spaces, communications, outdoor equipment and grounds.

Fires then started in the west of the Diocese, and on the 4th of January the Dunn's Road fire destroyed twenty properties as well as fruit orchards in Batlow. The fires miraculously went around either side of the small wooden church in Wondalga. Batlow has pulled together and the parish has been providing assistance to parishioners and those in the community who lost their homes. Donations have come from afar with a member of Lavender Bay church in Sydney sending \$500 to Batlow, raised from selling succulent plants.

In Tarcutta and Adelong, many families were evacuated and one

family lost their home and much farm property. Acting Rector Ken Day says, '2 Corinthians chapter five verse 14 says "Christ's love compels us" in reaching out to those affected by fires.' On Thursday the 9th of January 2020 they had an 'open day' to enable people to come and share in fellowship, to have a quiet time in the church, to enjoy food, and to request a time of prayer. This was also repeated on Sunday the 12th of January. They had available clothing, drinks and food on many large tables, which helped many.

Tarcutta and Adelong also assisted Blazeaid, an organisation that rebuilds farm fences, which set up a large camp of over 100 volunteers at the Adelong showground. They donated money to the Camp to assist with breakfast, dinner, and other meals and snacks for the volunteers, plus other expenses, and food that the parish ladies cooked. In addition they supplied a dinner for the 100 people on one evening.

From the outset of the crisis Anglicare Disaster Recovery

volunteers were mobilised to serve in local evacuation centres. At the height of the emergency the centres in Batemans Bay, Narooma and Bega each registered over 4000 evacuees. Several church buildings were also opened to provide respite and temporary accommodation for tourists and locals. Diocesan clergy served as Disaster Recovery and RFS Chaplains alongside their regular pastoral duties.

In the first week of January the Diocese launched a Bishop's Bushfire Appeal (see advertisement for details) in conjunction with Anglicare. The Appeal will close at the end of February. To date nearly \$200,000 has also been raised which will be used to provide direct assistance and support longer-term pastoral responses. The Diocese has also received over \$100,000 in funds from external groups, which is being distributed to affected families and individuals through parishes and schools. The Diocese will also be supporting bushfire affected parishes

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**PRAY FOR:**

- dealing with people's shock and ongoing trauma and counselling services to aid this
- people with pre-existing illnesses exacerbated by the fires: mental and physical
- people hosting evacuees
- rest and recovery for the volunteers and fire fighters who have worked long hours and days
- wisdom and strength for clergy and church leaders and for rest and resilience
- additional chaplains to provide support and gospel opportunities
- peace for those returning to burned areas and wisdom dealing with general anxiety

**GIVE THANKS FOR:**

- the way Anglicare and other associations have come together to support those in need
- all the volunteers from churches and other community organisations who have been working long hours with high expectations

- the housing needed and land to locate emergency housing
- reconnection of basic services such as power and water
- good communication and cooperation between all those involved in assistance
- addressing loss of income to businesses, farms and parishes from loss of tourists
- rain and good weather to contain fires
- continued safety in areas burnt out
- enrolments at both South Coast Anglican Schools in view of loss of income in those areas

- the vast and ongoing efforts of the volunteers of RFS and Emergency Services
- the opportunities to share the love of Jesus
- for the rain that has since fallen across much of the Diocese, extinguishing or aiding control of many fires

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by giving them a six month respite from their Diocesan contributions.

Prayer has been a major part of the Diocesan response. In the first half of January the Bishop convened a video conference meeting with affected parishes to collect prayer points which were then used throughout the Diocese. At least one online prayer meeting has been held and another is planned for March 17 (more details to come).

In good news, the congregation in Quaama met for the first time after the fire on Sunday January 26 in the community hall – and ran out of

seats! Classes at St Peter’s Anglican Church in Broulee were able to commence only a couple of days later than scheduled.

*‘Please pray that God will be merciful in helping us learn important lessons from these times. I’m praying that as a Diocese our trust in God’s word, our care for God’s world and our commitment to God’s mission will be stronger because of what we have gone through together.’*  
~ Bishop Mark



Anglicare Team at ‘Pop Up’ Relief Centre at Moruya



Anglicare Volunteers at Batemans Bay Evacuation Centre



Dr Fiona Kotvojs, a parishioner who with her husband Alan has been volunteering with RFS, gave the address at the Narooma Australia Day Dinner. She shared of her experiences on New Year’s Eve and as a member of the RFS and concluded ‘This last month has shown us, that regardless of our differences; what unites us is greater than what divides us’, encouraging listeners to not forget this and work together to heal the broken, restore our community and resolve our challenges.

# BUSHFIRE APPEAL

*Thank you*

**Thank you to everyone who has donated to Anglicare’s Bushfire and Emergency Relief Appeal.**

Your donations have already been used to bolster supplies at our existing emergency relief hubs on the South Coast. We have also just employed a case manager to assist in providing direct emergency assistance in Bega, Quaama, Cobargo, Tilba and Bermagui.

Anglicare is working with the Anglican Diocese of Canberra and Goulburn to develop a long-term support plan as we are aware that rebuilding and recovery will take many months. This includes trauma support and pastoral care.



**“Our property was impacted by the fires in December but we know that many families have lost even more than us. While rebuilding will take time and we are still coming to terms with the shock of what we experienced, we are encouraged by the support and resilience of the local community.”**  
– Matt and Helen Austin

**Anglicare NSW South, NSW West & ACT** offer emergency relief and housing assistance through our offices at: 1/51 Vulcan Street, Moruya. Open: Mon – Fri 9am-5pm Phone: 02 4474 7900

**Donate here or on [www.anglicare.com.au](http://www.anglicare.com.au)**

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*A receipt will be sent to you shortly. Donations over \$2 are tax deductible.*

**Enclose this completed form in an envelope and post to us at GPO Box 360, Canberra ACT 2600**

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# A new church for Jindabyne



Trent and Alice McGrath, and their three children, have moved from Sydney's Northern Beaches to the village of Jindabyne to make Jesus known in the Snowy Mountains. Pastor Trent was commissioned as Chaplain to the Snowy Mountains Ministry (SMM) on February 8 at a service held at the Anglican Church in Jindabyne.

The SMM is a gospel-centred initiative supported by Bush Church

Aid Australia in partnership with the Canberra Goulburn Anglican Diocese Exploratory Ministries Chaplaincy Unit (EMCU) to foster a year-round, long-term, self-sustaining church in Jindabyne that grows and serves the Snowy Mountains communities; a mission that Trent and Alice are eager to pursue under Jesus' leadership and with local Christian partnership.

Prior to this role, Trent served

as the Young Adults Pastor at St Faith's Narrabeen for two years, and before that as an Associate Pastor in Sydney's West for three years after completing his BD at Moore Theological College. Passionate about Jesus, the Bible, cultural engagement, and what God is doing in and through the church both locally and globally, Trent and his family are committed to establishing a healthy gospel-saturated, Bible-based church in Jindabyne. As those who already love the mountains, particularly snow sports, it was a quick decision for Trent and Alice to consider this new ministry position.

'We already co-owned a residence in Jindabyne because of our love of the area as a summer and winter getaway for the family. When we became aware of the state of the church and the huge opportunity to revitalise it and reach the area for the renown of Jesus, we both felt convinced and called by the Holy Spirit to see how far God might take us on the application process. It seems as though he wanted to take

us all the way here.'

'The support we have received from BCA, the Diocese, the Parish, the broader Christian community, and those already on the ground in Jindabyne has been so generous. We are incredibly thankful to know that God has not only put it on our hearts to further the cause of Christ here in the Snowy's but also on the hearts of many grace-filled saints.'

Trent's background in hospitality and Alice's background in outdoor recreation should serve them well as they seek to make connections with the residents who work and play in the mountains seasonally and year-round.

'We're praying that God will use all of who we are to shine the light of Christ and proclaim the gospel of grace in the Snowy's. We hope in God that we will see people come to faith in Jesus through this ministry and those who profess faith in him to be strengthened and live as sent ones both locally and across the globe.' Please join together in this prayer for the McGrath's and Jindabyne.

# Mothers' Union 40th Birthday Celebration



Dorothy Mackenzie, President of Hackett Branch

Holy Cross Anglican Church, Hackett, celebrates 40 years since it was first formed as a branch of Anglican Mothers' Union Australia.

Mrs Jean Bromwich, a MU member of the Sydney Diocese, approached the Rector, Reverend Geoff Sibley, regarding the forming of a Branch of MU and on 17th April 1979 17 women attended a meeting where it was decided to form a Branch. The Rector appointed Mrs Bromwich, President; Mrs Anne Downing became Secretary and Mrs Jenny Blunt the Treasurer.

The first admission service of 12 members was held on 22nd November, 1979. At first the Branch meeting was called 'Canberra Northside' as

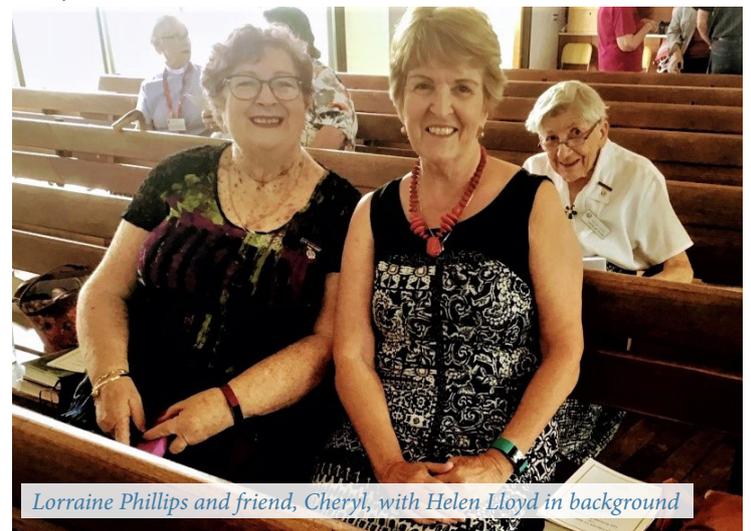
women from Ainslie Parish wished to also be members. Six years later in 1985, the name was changed. Today the branch has 15 active members.

It is with great joy and anticipation that we celebrated forty years of this Branch's faithful service to Mothers' Union and to our Diocese on Tuesday, 26th November 2019, with a Service of Holy Communion at Holy Cross Hackett, and a special lunch with Bishop Mark and his wife Monica, in their new home. We officially admitted Bishop Mark and Monica to our Correspondence Group on this special occasion. The Reverend Doctor Tim Watson (a member of Hackett Branch) led a reflection at the Communion Service,

interviewing Anne Downing as the only remaining original member. Patricia Stoddard spoke about the history of the branch 'Looking Back' and the Diocesan President, Joan Eberlé, spoke about Mothers' Union 'Looking Forward'. We welcomed visitors from Newcastle, Junee and Goulburn to celebrate this occasion of forty years of faithful service to our organisation: Cynthia and Keith Groundwater (now live in Melba) and Phyllis and John McLaren from Junee, Reverend Anne Wentzel and Kerrie Knowlman for Goulburn and Lorraine Phillips and her friend Cheryl from Newcastle.

There was an interesting display of photographs and notes - 'Looking Back' - and then after the service members enjoyed a delicious lunch with Bishop Mark and Monica (our Patron). Following the birthday cake, Reverend Joan Smith officially admitted them both to Mothers' Union.

We give thanks for Reverend Dr Tim Watson and to Bishop Mark and Monica Short for their support and commitment to our MU in the diocese and to the worldwide organisation in 85 countries with over four and half million members.



Lorraine Phillips and friend, Cheryl, with Helen Lloyd in background

# An invitation to join Exploring Faith Matters



Exploring Faith Matters (EfM) challenges us to begin a journey of exploration of the Christian faith—to make sense of our own faith journey with that of the Christian

tradition; to build a coherent theology or understanding of God; to reflect theologically; to discern what it means to follow Christ.

We do EfM in small reading and

discussion groups led by trained mentors. Through individual study, sharing our discoveries, and exploring our faith together, we learn to think theologically. We connect what we come to know of the Christian tradition with our ordinary daily activities.

EfM offers a four-year program where participants enrol for one year at a time. Participants commit to: reading and reflection in preparation for the weekly meeting; attendance and participation in the meetings; preparedness to share experiences, ideas and questions in a small group where norms of

confidentiality, respect, diversity and trust are observed. Most groups develop through discussion and shared fellowship.

There are several active EfM groups in Canberra. We are taking applications from new students now, and weekly meetings will commence 10 February with a 'taster' meeting for people to see whether EfM might be for them. For further information, please contact Kay Pendlebury (0409 313 153 or [kay.pendlebury@ozemail.com.au](mailto:kay.pendlebury@ozemail.com.au)). Details of the EfM curriculum are at <http://efmaustralia.org>

## What's Happening

### Music Relief for Braidwood & Villages

It's been a tough time for Braidwood and the villages of Monarlowe, Charleys Forest, Majors Creek, Reidsdale, Araluen and out to Nerriga and Sassafras with severe bushfire destruction and water restrictions. The support from within the communities themselves and also from outside with fresh RFS, SES and international firefighting crews has been tremendous and tiring. In planning the Summer/Autumn Concert Series at St Andrew's Anglican Church, we have been overwhelmed with a wonderful selection and also tremendous generosity.

Firstly, one of Australia's most outstanding contemporary jazz collaborations, a super group comprising Mike Nock, Jonathan Swartz, Julien Wilson and Hamish Stuart offered to perform in Braidwood for FREE as a gesture of goodwill to our fire-ravaged, water-deprived region and those who have supported the monumental bushfire effort here. They are touring their new album THIS WORLD which has such prescient new works entitled 'We shall rise again' and 'And in the night comes rain'. A collection was taken up at the end of the concert and all the proceeds donated to a nominated Braidwood bushfire fund. They performed on Monday 10 February.

Australian born and Italy-based organist, David Chynoweth, who will be performing at St Andrew's

on Sunday 15 March from 2pm, has also offered 50% of the concert takings to a nominated Braidwood bushfire relief fund. May we encourage all your readers to come and support these wonderful musicians and their extraordinary generosity. For details of the 2020 Summer/Autumn Concert Series at St Andrew's Anglican Church, Braidwood visit <https://anglicancg.org.au/music-relief-for-braidwood-and-villages/>

Readers interested in St Andrew's musical programs are encourage to join our mailing list for regular updates: [artwork123@icloud.com](mailto:artwork123@icloud.com). Make a lovely day or evening trip to Braidwood! You'll be made very welcome. Tickets can be purchased on the day at the door, cash only.

*by Anne Sanders*



*Organist David Chynoweth*

# unmasked

the strength of vulnerability in the workplace

Our society is based on the masks that we wear"  
(Australian author, John Marsden)

The workplace can be a dog eat dog world. Any hint of weakness or vulnerability is quickly sniffed out. So while we all carry burdens and troubles, workplace culture demands that we wear a mask and cover it up. Yet at the same time our culture prizes authenticity. We live in a time of "you do you".

Join us at the 2020 Life@Work conference as we discover how only the Christian faith helps us take off the mask and be real with our colleagues, both for our good and theirs, and ultimately for God's glory.

**LIFE@WORK**

Speakers Michael Spence and Andrew Laird

March 13 2020 6:00pm - 8:15pm

March 14 2020 10:00am-12:30pm

**CITY BIBLE FORUM**

St Mark's National Theological Centre 15 Blackall Street Barton

For further details and to register: [lifeatwork.org.au/conference](http://lifeatwork.org.au/conference)

### Professional Supervision (Pastoral) Sessions

**Celia Irving**

**Face-to-face sessions:**

- Canberra – available from 10 Feb. 2020  
Sessions available Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday
- Batemans Bay – available from 4 Feb 2020  
Sessions available Tuesday, Wednesday

**Group sessions:**

- Available in Canberra starting from Wednesday 12 February 2020 from 9:30am to 12noon
- If there is demand, a second group will be available from 2pm to 4:30pm also starting on 12 February

**Facetime / Skype sessions:**

- Will be available starting from 10 February 2020  
Sessions available Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday

For more information, please contact Celia at [cmivoctraining.com.au](http://cmivoctraining.com.au) or on 0427533159.