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ANGLICAN DEACONESS  
MINISTRIES

2021

1

Mary Andrews College held its largest ever graduation with graduates from 2020 and 2021

See page 40



2

Hired Rev. Jo Gibbs as our new CEO



3

Launched a new small grants scheme especially for women in ministry and funded 20 women

See page 10



4

Went online with our School of Theology, Culture & Public Engagement with 16 speakers and 164 attendees

See page 32



5

Developed the online version of the 'Building a Safe & Strong Marriage' course

See page 50

6

Developed and launched the Graduate Certificate of Pastoral Care for Mental Health

See page 46





7

Supported a total of 73 Christian women with grants of \$200 or more through our funding schemes

8

Mary Andrews College launched hybrid classes, teaching students both in-person and online in the same class

See page 42



# 10 THINGS

*we're thanking God for*



9

Ran 20 listening forums to hear from you as part of our strategic planning process


See page 8

10

Filmed and released a new online course for Christians: 'Press On: Building Resilience & Mental Wellbeing'

See page 48







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NOW TO HIM WHO IS ABLE TO DO  
IMMEASURABLY MORE THAN ALL  
WE ASK OR IMAGINE, ACCORDING  
TO HIS POWER THAT IS AT WORK  
WITHIN US, TO HIM BE GLORY IN  
THE CHURCH AND IN CHRIST JESUS  
THROUGHOUT ALL GENERATIONS,  
FOR EVER AND EVER! AMEN

– Ephesians 3:20-21



Anglican Deaconess Ministries acknowledges the Gadigal people of the Eora nation as the traditional custodians of the land on which ADM stands. In his wisdom and love our Heavenly Father gave this land to them as caretakers on his behalf. We pay our deep respect to their Elders past, present and emerging and extend that respect to the many indigenous peoples of these lands now called Australia.

# Dear friends

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It is with great thankfulness that we present this annual report for 2021 and reflect on God's faithfulness in so many ways over the last year.

Since starting as CEO with ADM in November 2020, it has been a joy to get to know the staff team and the directors, as well as the many members and amazing people who make up the ADM community. There are so many gifted individuals who contribute to this work – and you will see their energy, passion and expertise reflected in this report.

As is the case with many of you, my connection with ADM began many years ago and has developed over time. It started while as a social work student on placement at Neringah Hospital and continued with a Supporting Women of Excellence and Leadership scholarship during my Master of Divinity studies. Last year, my experience as an Annual Funding Event applicant gave me insight into the innovative and dynamic organisation ADM continues to be as our society changes.

In these pages, you will read of outstanding achievements from the ADM community as we seek to grow gospel-shaped women to serve Christ in a range of spheres – in church-based ministry, in mercy and compassionate work and in engaging our sceptical and hurting world with the good news of Jesus.

The Mary Andrews College graduation this year was our largest ever, and the ceremony was filled with stories of women growing deeper in the love and knowledge of God through his Word. This year also saw the launch of funding specifically to support

women in ministry, as well as a Graduate Certificate of Pastoral Care for Mental Health. Across our programs, there is story after story of women engaging our world with the gospel wherever God has placed them.

We've also begun the work of developing a new strategic plan for ADM – looking back to the significant legacy of the deaconesses, engaging the wider church in conversation, and prayerfully considering what God would have us do amongst new challenges ahead.

We also extend our deep thanks to Rev. Jenni Stoddart for her tireless work and commitment as she completes her time as chair of ADM. I am also delighted to welcome Rev. Caroline Andrews as she takes up the role. We are always thankful for our board and their faithful service and encouragement. We also give thanks to Dr Katy Davis for leading Mary Andrews College through the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, and wish her well for the future.

I pray that as you read about all these achievements in a year of great change and challenge, these stories would turn your heart to worship and give thanks to our God who is able to do *"immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine."*

*Jo Gibbs*

Reverend Jo Gibbs  
CEO, ADM

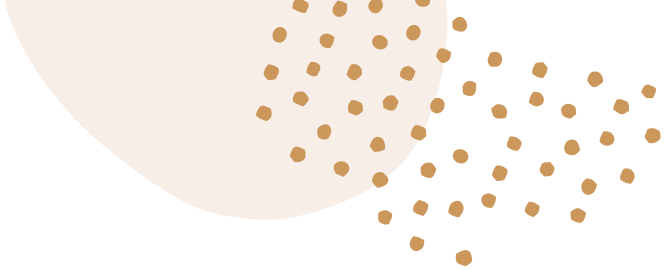


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# Our Story

Anglican Deaconess Ministries is a Christian women's organisation that encourages and equips women to serve Christ and his Church. Founded in 1891, ADM continues this legacy through our programs to support women serving the Lord in the Church, the community and the world.





ADM began 130 years ago when an Anglican Minister and his wife, Rev. Mervyn and Martha Archdall, set aside a quarter of his stipend for the equipping of Christian women. The Archdalls set up a lay order, the “deaconesses”, modelled on a similar order in Germany, and in 1891 ADM was born.

Through prayer and partnership, sacrificial serving and giving, our work grew from small beginnings over many years to include hospitals, nursing homes and schools. Always at the centre has been a foundation built on Jesus Christ and serving him.

As our society has changed over the years, so has the shape of ADM’s work. ADM continues our legacy through a diverse range of innovative programs and events for Christian women, to see them equipped and encouraged for gospel work. This includes Mary Andrews College (MAC), the Mental Health and Pastoral Care Institute, Mercy and Justice programs, an Annual Public Lecture, Fellowships and a range of programs and funding for Christian women.

ADM is proudly a member organisation, with members drawn from a diverse range of settings and interests. All of our members share a common desire to see women equipped and encouraged to serve Christ and his Church.

As a Christian organisation, our highest priority is to see people come to know Christ and grow in him. NCLS Research tells us that 60% of the Australian church is female. At ADM, we work to see every Christian woman using their gifts so that God’s kingdom would grow across Australia and the world. We are committed to seeing women flourish in Christ, being built up as they serve the Lord, and provided with the resources they need to reach the world for Jesus.

Left: Early deaconesses around 1917 and nursing a child at the Home of Peace in the 1940s.

# Our convictional foundations

*New CEO Rev. Jo Gibbs reflects on the biblical convictions that shape ADM as an organisation.*

As a Christian organisation, our biblical convictions shape every part of our programs and culture. We seek to carefully understand God's plans and purposes, revealed to us in his Word, and to be faithful in serving Christ at every level of our organisation.

At the heart of these convictions is the gospel, the story of God's determination to glorify himself by saving sinners through the atonement accomplished by his own Son. As Christ himself made clear, every word of the Scriptures serves to tell this story. In the good news of Jesus Christ we see the character of God clearly on display, a holy and powerful God who is loving, faithful and patient with each one of us. It is a story centred on the person and work of Christ – an historical event which continues to shake our world and transform lives in extraordinary ways. It is a message filled with both grace and truth.

Knowing Christ results in a transformed life of both holiness and good works, including love and care for others. Throughout ADM's history we have demonstrated the relationship between the good news and compassionate work, as we share Christ's message and his love with the world. In doing so, we reveal the fruit of the gospel in our own lives and respond to the love shown to us in Christ.

Knowing the urgency of the gospel, we work with the local church to see every woman equipped and fully activated in Christ's service, as God's image bearers and valued contributors to the growth of his kingdom. We strive to see every woman flourishing in union with Christ as they remain in him. We long to see women grow deeper in maturity in Christ through fellowship around God's Word and prayer. We create pathways for women to serve Christ in the Church, the community and the world, growing their relationship with the Lord as they serve and using their many gifts for the growth of God's kingdom. We celebrate women and men serving Christ together, labouring alongside one another in the world and the Church for the sake of the gospel.



ADM staff at the 2020 Annual Public Lecture



Behind the scenes of the online 2020 Annual Funding Event



CEO Jo Gibbs interviews Keith Condie and ADM Fellow Lily Strachan for a video on mental health



ADM staff gather with MAC staff and lecturers at the 2020/2021 MAC Graduation



CEO Jo Gibbs and Chair Jenni Stoddart sit socially distanced for a video interview



# Our Board



**Rev. Caroline Andrews**

Minister of Religion  
BA BEd BTh  
Director since 31 Oct 2019.  
Chair since 13 Aug 2021.



**Elizabeth Janssen**

Lay Women's Worker  
BAppSc (Physio) MPH  
Director since 17 Mar 2016.  
Deputy Chair since  
13 Aug 2021.



**Rev. Jenni Stoddart**

Minister of Religion  
BA BDiv DipMin  
Director from 30 Mar 2017  
to 23 Aug 2021.  
Chair from 3 Apr 2017 to 13 Aug  
2021. Chair of Constitutional  
Review Committee until  
23 Aug 2021.



**John Collins**

Solicitor  
BA LLB LLM  
Director from 11 Aug  
2005 to 24 July 2021.  
Constitutional Review  
Committee until  
24 July 2021.



**Rev. Janis Donohoo**

Minister of Religion  
BTh Grad Cert Supervision  
(Pastoral)  
Director from 18 June 2015  
to 13 Nov 2020.  
Constitutional Review  
Committee until 13 Nov 2020.



**Stuart Dyson**

Financial Controller  
BEc MAppFin FCA  
Director since 14 June 2018.  
Chair of Audit & Risk Committee.  
Investment Committee.



**Dr Christine Grice**

Education Academic  
PhD MA BA DipEd  
Director from 24 Feb 2018  
to 30 June 2021.



**Rev. Katrina Haggart**

Minister of Religion  
BDiv  
Director since  
31 Oct 2019.



**Julianne Jones**

Registered Midwife  
Grad DipMid DipSc  
Director since  
4 Apr 2013.



**Sarah Matthews**

Chartered Accountant  
BBus MCom ACA FINSIA GAICD  
Director since 10 Feb 2011.  
Chair of the Investment  
Committee.  
Audit & Risk Committee.



**Nerida Peart**

Ministry Worker and Solicitor  
BMedia LLB MDiv  
Director since  
11 Nov 2010.  
Constitutional  
Review Committee.



**Rev. Phil Wheeler**

Minister of Religion  
BE (Civil) BTh MA (Theol)  
Director since  
2 May 2006.



**Company Secretary**

Lyndelle Taylor was appointed  
to the position of Company  
Secretary on 12 Apr 2021.  
Ken Breakspear was Company  
Secretary from 19 July 2007  
to 10 Sep 2021.

# A message from our Chair

This year we have experienced another unusual year as we endured a long lockdown, rolled up our sleeves to be vaccinated and adapted to meetings on Zoom. For ADM, this has also meant a year of adaptation and change as we respond to the realities and needs around us.

November 2020 saw the arrival of the Rev. Jo Gibbs as the CEO of ADM and it has been so encouraging to watch her work closely with management and the board in developing a new strategic plan. I am very thankful for our acting CEOs Maryanne Davis and Stephanie Dunk who led ADM across the transition of CEO with energy and commitment.

I wish to extend my deep thanks to each of the ADM board members who give generously of their time and skills, and for their deep commitment to seeing ADM flourish in serving Jesus.

This year it is important to note the contribution of Rev. Jenni Stoddart, Mr John Collins, Rev. Jan Donohoo and Dr Christine Grice who have stepped down as directors this year. Jenni Stoddart has served as chair of the board for the last four and half years. Jenni's leadership has been an incredible provision to the board during that time and her leadership has been full of strength, grace and humility.

John Collins has faithfully served on the board for 16 years. His quick mind, legal brain and heart for mercy and justice have made him an active member of the board. Rev. Jan Donohoo joined the board in

June 2015. Jan has a long connection to ADM and encouraged the board to always remember the legacy of the deaconesses and the impact they had for Christ and his Church. Dr Christine Grice has been a director since 2018. Christine's experience and expertise in educational practice and management has been invaluable on the board. I am thankful for the service of these four outstanding directors and pray that they will have many opportunities to use their skills and gifts in God's kingdom in the future.

Ken Breakspear, our long serving company secretary, finished up after 14 years of serving ADM. Ken's faithful service was crucial to the good running of ADM and his wisdom, long history and commitment to ADM was an incredible blessing to the ministry.

I look forward to working closely with the board to support Jo and management as they seek to support women in serving Christ and his Church. Please join us in praying that we might have a significant impact on God's Church as we see women grow in their love and service of Jesus.

*Caroline Andrews*

Reverend Caroline Andrews  
Chair, ADM



# The next five years

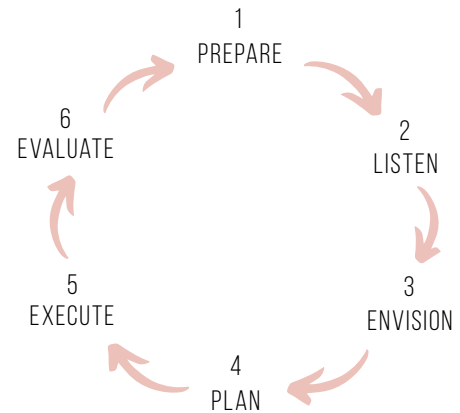
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## ADM Strategic Plan 2022 - 2027

In 2021 ADM began to develop a strategic plan for the next five years. In looking forward, we are building on the wonderful legacy of the deaconesses in equipping women and sending them out across Australia and the world to serve Christ. We are keeping Jesus at the centre of all that we do, and we're asking questions about the big issues facing our communities and how we might share the love of Jesus in practical ways.

### The strategic planning process has six key phases:

- 1. Prepare** – Designing the process, gathering the planning team and working on theological foundations.
- 2. Listen** – Connecting with key stakeholders and those that ADM seeks to serve, ensuring that ADM is providing something distinctive to meet genuine needs.
- 3. Envision** – Developing clear vision, mission and values statements.
- 4. Plan** – Forming a clear plan for implementing the vision in concrete actions.
- 5. Execute** – Sharing strategic priorities and implementing the plan.
- 6. Evaluate** – Ensuring that the strategic plan remains relevant and implementation is monitored.



Key to this process is pausing to hear feedback on our existing programs and opening up a conversation about the key challenges facing Christian women and churches. We did this through:

- **Stakeholder survey**  
a review of existing programs and hearing from stakeholders.
- **Listening forums**  
a series of consultation gatherings asking about the key challenges facing Christian women, envisioning the future as we consider God's plans and purposes, and brainstorming potential solutions.
- **Listening survey**  
a primarily quantitative, online survey hearing the needs of Christian women, churches and communities.

“FOR NO ONE CAN LAY ANY FOUNDATION OTHER THAN THE ONE ALREADY LAID, WHICH IS JESUS CHRIST.”

– 1 Corinthians 3:11

### What people are saying

Through the surveys and consultation forums, we’ve heard insightful ideas, issues and analysis. We’re also thanking God for some of the encouraging comments we’ve heard about the ways ADM’s work has been a blessing, as we consider how to build on our strengths as we enter the next five years of ADM’s ministry.

*“I’ve seen women empowered to work and serve the Lord with their gifts, I’ve seen many women encouraged to deepen their faith and I’ve seen women encouraged to innovate in their ministries. I’ve also seen women encouraged to persevere through hard times, all because of what they’ve seen happen through ADM. It’s been an encouragement to keep serving, knowing our work for the Lord is not in vain!”*

– survey participant



*“In my experience, ADM is an important space that stretches women theologically, academically and creatively. It doesn’t constantly critique or evaluate the place of women in Christian leadership but addresses women as if they are capable of great work for the Lord in a variety of ways!”*

– survey participant

We look forward to sharing the outcomes of the consultations and our strategic planning process in early 2022.

Please pray for us in setting a strategic direction for ADM for the next five years, that in all things we will seek to build only on the foundation with which the deaconesses began – the foundation of Jesus Christ.

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**“In my experience, ADM is an important space that stretches women theologically, academically and creatively.”**

Above: ADM members brainstorm at one of the listening forums for members.

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# Supporting women in ministry

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*ADM is delighted to offer the Women in Ministry Support Scheme (WIMSS) to support the incredible work women in gospel ministry do in churches across Australia. My prayer for each of the grantees is that the funds would not only provide much needed practical financial support for their ministry, but that they would also be encouraged as the value of their important ministries is recognised.* ”

– ADM CEO Rev. Jo Gibbs

Rev. Jo Gibbs meets  
with WIMSS grantees



Where Women in Ministry Support Scheme (WIMSS) grantees are ministering

MAITLAND  
EVANGELICAL  
CHURCH

ST PAUL'S  
CASTLE HILL

MULTICULTURAL BIBLE  
MINISTRY, ROOTY HILL

ST ANDREW'S ANGLICAN  
CHURCH ROSEVILLE

MT DRUITT INDIGENOUS  
CHURCH + MINCHINBURY  
ANGLICAN CHURCH

EASTWOOD  
ANGLICAN CHURCH

CHURCH BY  
THE BRIDGE

ST BARNABAS  
BROADWAY

GRACE CITY  
CHURCH

MACARTHUR  
INDIGENOUS CHURCH

ST GEORGE NORTH  
ANGLICAN CHURCH

SOUTH WAGGA  
ANGLICAN  
CHURCH

ST JUDE'S  
ANGLICAN,  
BOWRAL

CORRIMAL  
ANGLICAN  
CHURCH

# Supporting women in ministry



Twenty women serving in churches across Sydney and beyond received funding to support their ministries in 2021.

*We give thanks to God for the incredible variety of ways in which women, shaped by the gospel of Christ, are faithfully serving him in churches across Sydney and Australia.*

In September 2020, ADM launched a new funding scheme focused on supporting the particular needs of women in ministry across greater Sydney. Grantees in ADM's Women in Ministry Support Scheme (WIMSS) received grants of \$200 to \$2,000 to help pay for theological education, professional development, ministry resources and cover costs after having lost income due to maternity leave.

With the impacts of COVID-19 still being felt, the funding also helped those who had seen their household incomes reduced to purchase the resources they need – including laptops or digital commentaries – to continue to minister in online and offline contexts.

For other grantees, the funding allowed them to support themselves while working on a volunteer or part-time basis or as unpaid student ministers. It also provided a small stipend for those who had taken time off work to undergo full-time theological training.



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“I ALWAYS THANK MY GOD FOR YOU BECAUSE OF HIS GRACE GIVEN YOU IN CHRIST JESUS.”

– 1 Corinthians 1:4





20

women in ministry supported with grants

3

women awarded grants towards set-up expenses for a new ministry

1

woman awarded a grant as a contribution to lost income during maternity leave

8

women awarded grants towards the cost of theological education

3

women awarded grants for professional development expenses

5

women awarded grants to purchase commentaries and books to support development and ministry



## Elizabeth's Story

“Reading through books one-to-one with other women is one of the key ways I see the discipleship of women develop,” says WIMSS grant recipient Elizabeth Spencer (pictured above).

Elizabeth leads the Engage team at Minchinbury Anglican Church on a part-time volunteer basis and used her grant to purchase commentaries to help her grow in her understanding of biblical theology, disciple women and develop programs for her teams.

“*Reading through books one-to-one with other women is one of the key ways I see the discipleship of women develop.*”

“This grant means I have the resources to do the thinking I need to do and this will also help me as I produce a training program for the welcoming and pastoral care teams.”



## Amy's Story

Amy Townsend, Membership and Ministry Director at Grace City Church Waterloo and new mum to baby Penny, is the first to receive a small grant to cover lost income due to a period of maternity leave as part of the Women in Ministry Support Scheme (WIMSS).

As there are often no automatically available maternity leave entitlements for ministry staff, ADM saw an opportunity to support women in permanent paid ministry positions to take parental leave before returning to ministry work.

Amy and her husband were thrilled to hear the scheme had a grant category to cover lost income during maternity leave from a continuing paid ministry position. The funding was particularly welcome as the Townsend's had also lost household income due to the lockdowns in Sydney.

"This grant relieves the pressure of having to go back to work straight away and I'm really thankful for that because motherhood is incredibly valuable and a privilege."



“I have a heart to raise up gospel workers and I believe we need more women in ministry.”

– Amy Townsend

“I think the Women in Ministry Support Scheme is a wonderful initiative and as a woman in ministry, I feel incredibly supported by ADM.”

“I have a heart to raise up gospel workers and I believe we need more women in ministry. I feel privileged to have a full-time role in parish ministry and look forward to encouraging generations of women to use their gifts to serve Christ’s church.”



Above: Amy (seated in centre) celebrates with her women’s connect group. Below left: Amy with baby Penny.

To find out more about ADM’s Women in Ministry Support Scheme and to hear more about Amy’s experience visit: [deaconessministries.org.au/women-in-ministry-support-scheme](https://deaconessministries.org.au/women-in-ministry-support-scheme)



# Supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women in ministry

Twenty-one Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women received funding to support their ministries this year.

In 2021, ADM supported Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Christian women who serve and minister to their communities out of their Christian faith.

ADM sees that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Christian women continue to be uniquely placed to speak and act with the love of Christ throughout their communities.

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women in Ministry Support Scheme provided additional support and resourcing for these ministries with grants of \$250 to \$2,500, welcoming applications from across a wide range of areas of ministry, both paid and lay.

“These are women serving Christ faithfully at the grassroots level in a diverse range of ministries around Australia.” said CEO Rev. Jo Gibbs.

## ADM celebrates Miriam Numamurdirdi’s traineeship



We are delighted to share that Miriam Numamurdirdi has now completed her two-year paid traineeship in partnership with the Northern Territory diocese.

During this traineeship, Miriam has grown significantly in her giftings in chaplaincy and pastoral care, and has ministered to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people through hospital chaplaincy. We give thanks to God for Miriam’s faithful service of Christ, and pray God’s richest blessings on her future endeavours.

ADM is continuing to partner with the Northern Territory Diocese through a new fund to invest in emerging Aboriginal Christian women leaders, and to support their development in ministry. Having partnered with Miriam throughout her traineeship, Rev. Kate Beer (Ministry Development Officer for the NT Diocese) will also oversee this new initiative, which will equip and resource Aboriginal Christian women in sharing the love of Christ with their communities, and in their leadership development.

## Kayleen's Story

**Kayleen Manton, a pastor of the Kuku Yalanji people from Cape York, Queensland has led Mt Druitt Indigenous Church, part of Minchinbury Anglican, with her husband for the past twenty-one years.**

Across her ministry, she provides culturally appropriate pastoral care to her church, coordinates emergency relief, writes letters on behalf of community members attending court or needing referrals and counsels those grieving lost loved ones or needing care.

Kayleen's WIMSS grant was used to purchase equipment – a laptop and a printer – that will help her conduct both her ministry and her work on the board of Bimbadeen Aboriginal Training College more effectively.

“This funding has given me more space and time to do work on my own timeline. It means I no longer have to wait for my husband to finish his sermon to use his laptop. I will also have the freedom to be

flexible, which is really important for my ministry.”

### Understanding Grief and Loss

Kayleen has been involved with ADM for a number of years, having taken part in workshops and events on understanding Aboriginal peoples' experience of grief and loss.

In 2020, Kayleen attended Jill McGilvray's course on Grief and Loss at Mary Andrews College, following a diagnosis of breast cancer. This year, Kayleen was invited back to share her story.

“The course opened my eyes to grief and loss in a new way,” Kayleen said. “It wasn't just theoretical; I was living through it while I was learning about it. It also made me think, as an Aboriginal woman sitting in a class with non-Aboriginal women,



about our different experiences. I think people don't know about our history.”

“Kayleen always speaks with wisdom and godliness,” Jill says. “She has an extraordinary story that is a privilege to hear. While you'll hear her talk about terrible experiences of generational trauma with family members being part of the stolen generations, she will never give up an opportunity to bring in a godly perspective.”

Reflecting on the experience, Kayleen said; “I think it opened people's eyes. I shared my family's story as part of the stolen generations and my experience with breast cancer too.”

“Kayleen always speaks with wisdom and godliness. She has an extraordinary story that is a privilege to hear.”

– Jill McGilvray

# Responding to COVID-19

## COVID-19 Church Response Program

ADM's COVID-19 Church Response Program provided six women with funding for church-based mercy ministries that respond to unique areas of need within their communities through faith in action.


The program invited Christian women attending Anglican churches within the Sydney Diocese to develop compassionate and church-based responses to issues affecting vulnerable, isolated, and disadvantaged peoples in their local communities as a result of COVID-19. Women were able to apply for up to \$5,000 in one-time funding to support these ministries.

As part of the application process, applicants also attended a community transformation workshop in November 2020 which provided support in designing and developing compassionate, biblically-sound, and effective ministries.

## Kirsten's Story

In 2020, while Austinmer Anglican Church undertook research into the needs of those in the Northern Illawarra, four church members – Kirsten Hitchens, Liz McCoy, Wendy Potts and Karen Charleston – brainstormed how they could care for their community through the pandemic.





Together, they co-founded a food ministry program, For the Love Of (FLO). From the commercial kitchen at Austinmer Anglican Church, the women run regular cooking workshops at no cost, helping participants build connections and create budget-friendly meals. FLO also provides meals to those in the community who are struggling to make ends meet.

In 2021, ADM granted Kirsten Hitchins and the FLO team \$5,000 to continue to offer cooking workshops and meals to the vulnerable as part of the COVID-19 Church Response Program.

“We do the workshops with the idea of helping people connect with each other, which is good for mental health,” Kirsten told the Illawarra Mercury “but it’s also an educational opportunity

“

*This initiative is born out of our response to Christ’s love for us and the call to bless those in need.*

*We do this through the love of good, simple and nourishing food.”*

”

to learn to cook to a budget. Then participants are asked to nominate someone from their street or area who could benefit from a free meal.”

Austinmer Anglican Church pastor Nathan Sandon observed that loneliness, poor mental health and a struggle to meet basic needs (such as putting food on the table), are key issues for the local community. FLO made

it their aim to help alleviate some of these challenges.

“Our love for Jesus propels us to show his love and mercy to those in our community,” said Kirsten. “This initiative is born out of our response to Christ’s love for us and the call to bless those in need. We do this through the love of good, simple and nourishing food.”

*FLO work with Need A Feed to send meals to people in need. Oz Harvest also supply food for their in-person workshops.*

Left: Kirsten Hitchins, pictured with her husband Alex.

# Responding to COVID-19



## Katrina's Story

In 2020, Katrina received a \$5,000 grant through ADM's COVID-19 Church Response Program to provide support for vulnerable international students.

Dr Katrina Clifford is the Dean of Academics at Robert Menzies College (RMC), an Anglican residential college affiliated with Macquarie University.

"As a student residential college, we always have a high number of international students living with us," Katrina told ADM. "Over the past year, due to COVID-19, many of these students have struggled financially, with their mental wellbeing and with feelings of isolation as they are unable to return home."

Using her grant, Katrina partnered with Trinity Chapel to help provide practical support to students, with a particular focus on creating community connections and supporting their mental health.



"As we love and care for [our students], we have the opportunity to explain we are doing so because Christ's love compels us."

— Katrina Clifford

"At this time, it's clear that our international students are particularly in need of care and

support," Katrina said. "Most of our international students are not Christian and may never have the opportunity to hear the gospel. As we love and care for them, we have the opportunity to explain we are doing so because Christ's

love compels us; because he cared for the poor, the needy, the lonely and the outsider, and he calls us to do the same."







Grantees of the COVID-19 Church Response Program gather together at ADM with CEO Jo Gibbs and Melina Ey



WIMSS grantees Kylie Polkinghorne (left), and below Linda Stephens



MAC graduates celebrate



WIMSS grantee Naomi Deck in yellow



Chair Jenni Stoddart and CEO Jo Gibbs



Chair Jenni Stoddart with Stephanie Dunk and Katy Davis at the 2020/2021 MAC Graduation

# Igraine and Erica's Story



"I PRAISE YOU BECAUSE I AM FEARFULLY AND WONDERFULLY MADE; YOUR WORKS ARE WONDERFUL, I KNOW THAT FULL WELL."

– Psalm 139:14

When Igraine Lim went for a pregnancy scan, she learned her first child, a baby boy, had a lot of fluid in his lungs.

Doctors were unsure why this was the case, and it was too early to detect what underlying conditions might be responsible.

Igraine had multiple procedures to drain the fluid in utero, while she and her husband Josh wondered if he would survive.

"I would have loved to be able to talk to some people who've had that experience," Igraine later told Eternity news. "It felt quite daunting at that moment."

At four weeks, Josiah Lim was diagnosed with PACS1 syndrome, a rare syndrome that affects intellectual development, mobility and speech, and can also cause regular seizures and sleep issues.

At six weeks, after heart surgery, Josiah could go home. "I was just so overjoyed that he was home and alive," Igraine remembers.

But as time went on, Josh and Igraine felt alone on their journey. They looked for a Christian support

group for families living with disability and were surprised not to find anything.

Igraine was eventually encouraged to start a group herself and was put in touch with Matt and Erica Dodd, a young family also living with disability, through mutual friends.

Matt and Erica's son Noah was the same age as Josiah and had been diagnosed with Down Syndrome.

When Igraine reached out to Erica with the idea of starting a support network for Christian families living with disability, Erica said to her: "You wouldn't believe this, I've been praying for six months for this group to start!"

"There's something very special and unique about the support that can be offered by someone who

*"There's something very special and unique about the support that can be offered by someone who has gone through a similar experience."*

– Erica Dodd



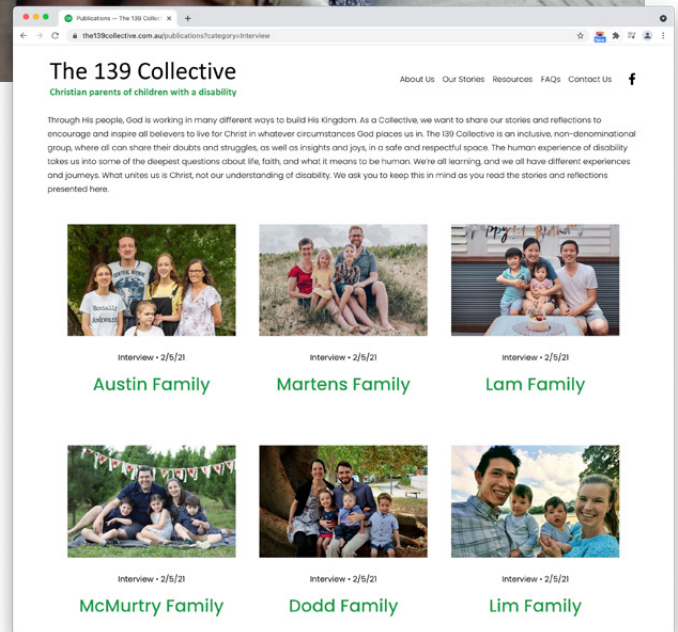
Above: Erica and Igraine holding their sons Noah and Josiah.

has gone through a similar experience,” Erica told Sydney Anglicans magazine.

“God in his kindness surrounded us with people who had a similar journey.”


In 2019, the 139 Collective was born and by September 2020, it already had more than 140 members encouraging and praying for one another and wrestling with tough questions.

In September 2020, Erica and Igraine were also granted \$5,000 as part of ADM’s Annual Funding Event to build a website to publish resources available to churches and others. The website went live in May 2021 and by mid July 2021, the 139 Collective group had more than 300 members.



To find out more about ADM’s Annual Funding Event and the 2020 grantees visit: [deaconessministries.org.au/annual-funding-event](https://deaconessministries.org.au/annual-funding-event)

# Engaging our world with the gospel



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## Annual Public Lecture

Dr Katy Davis delivered the fifth ADM Annual Public Lecture on ‘Desire, Fear, and Being Human’.

The ADM Annual Public Lecture continued in 2020 – thanks to livestream! – to provide a platform for a Christian woman to engage our world with the good news of Jesus and inspire Christians with imaginative ways to make the gospel intelligible in their own spheres.

### Lecture excerpt

What gets us up in the morning is not the decisions we make, our thoughts or our emotions. It’s the momentum of desire that moves us and shapes what we believe, choose and feel, whether we are conscious of the desire or not.

Listening to our internal monologue reveals the strength of our desires and fears that shape our experience of the world. Internally, we hold questions that are very rarely spoken aloud,

*“Will I ever be free of the drive of a particular desire? Will I ever be free of the bind that fear has on me?”*

*“How long can I keep hoping? Or would it be easier to shut down my desire so that I can just live, so that I can accept and move on?”*

*“Am I created to desire? Or is my desire part of what is broken about this world?”*

At the core of these questions are some questions that are more fundamental:

*Is this part of how life is to be?  
Is this part of who I am? Is desiring and fearing part of what it means to be human?*

My contention in this lecture is that the Christian worldview, shaped by the Bible, offers a viewpoint that could deeply transform our understanding of our desires, our fears and of being human.

Why do I contend that the Christian worldview, which we are invited to consider through the biblical story, offers a transformative understanding of desire, fear, and being human?

Here is the reason; because the Christian worldview offers a circuit-breaker to the futile circle of unmet desire and offers rest for our longings.

## Our 2020 Lecturer Dr Katy Davis

Katy is a leading Old Testament scholar currently writing a commentary on Exodus for Zondervan. In 2020, she was Principal of Mary Andrews College and prior to that lecturer in Old Testament and Director of Postgraduate Studies at Bible College of South Australia. Katy completed her PhD through Trinity College at the University of Bristol on 'The Persuasive Intent of the Book of Leviticus'.



The Christian worldview upholds that for those who look to the Son – and seek the peaceful completeness in relationship with him, the relationship we as humans were created for – there is rest for our unmet desires. There is rest from longing for an imagined life that remains beyond our grasp. There is rest from the inner tension between the drive of our desires and the fear that holds us back.

We find rest for our unmet desires because we no longer

expect anything we have created or anyone else other than Jesus to bring the satisfaction that only relationship with God can bring; peaceful completeness, in connection with him and one another.

We find rest because the certainty of life beyond the grave – for those of us who look to the Son – surpasses any future or any life we can imagine for ourselves.

“we no longer expect ... anyone else other than Jesus to bring the satisfaction that only relationship with God can bring.”

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Watch the full video of the lecture at: [deaconessministries.org.au/annual-public-lecture](https://deaconessministries.org.au/annual-public-lecture)



Above: Acting CEO Stephanie Dunk presents to a small number of in-person guests at St Andrew's Cathedral.

Right: 2019 and 2020 Annual Lecture speakers, Dr Natasha Moore and Dr Katy Davis. Natasha gave the vote of thanks in response to Katy's lecture.





Top left: Katy answers questions during Q&A time. Top right: Stephanie Dunk as MC. Bottom left: Preparing to live-stream the lecture. Bottom right: 2021 Fellows attend the lecture.



# Engaging our world with the gospel

ADM Fellowships support Christian women to complete a major project that will help them engage a sceptical and hurting world with the good news of Jesus. Here three of the 2021 Fellows share how they're going six months in.

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## Rev. Lily Strachan

**2021 ADM Fellow**

Project:  
*Neither Height nor Depth: Bipolar  
in the Hands of a Good God*

Deacon and chaplain Rev. Lily Strachan is using her ADM Fellowship to research and write a book for those who suffer with bipolar and its associated symptoms, seeking to provide comfort and hope from God's Word as well as share personal testimony and practical wisdom.

Lily has finished a substantial portion of the book she is writing through her ADM Fellowship.

"It's been wonderful to have the space at ADM to take time to read, research and put pen to paper to speak of God's goodness in the midst of mental illness," Lily said. "I've discovered that I love to write in this format and am excited to reach a wider audience of people living with bipolar and those caring for them."

Lily has been encouraged by the professional development organised for Fellows on writing and big picture thinking, planning and goal setting.

"I'm excited to work towards having this book published,



Celebrating the announcement of the 2021 ADM Fellows at the 2020 Annual Public Lecture.





2021 ADM Fellows, from left: Jodie McIver, Lily Strachan, Emma Kluge, Ruth Lukabyo, Emma Knowles and Stephanie Kate Judd.

so that it might reach those who wrestle with the question of whether God can really be good in the face of persistent mental illness.”

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## Jodie McIver

### 2021 ADM Fellow

Project:

*Bringing Forth Life: God's purposes in Pregnancy and Birth*

Registered midwife Jodie McIver holds a Bachelor of Midwifery and a Bachelor of Theology (Moore) and is using her Fellowship to develop a book to prepare and support women and their partners through pregnancy, birth and meeting their baby, from a Christian perspective.

Jodie has loved the time she has been able to work in the ADM offices and has felt enriched by conversations with the other ADM Fellows.

She has almost completed initial drafts for all her chapters and has enjoyed seeing themes emerge in her thinking and writing, which will help her to tie the book together.

“I’m still passionate about what I came to do here and have been surprised by how the hours fly by when I’m working on it,” she said.

“I’m hoping my work will be of great benefit to the next generation of women and couples as they enter the transition from pregnancy to birth.”

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## Dr Ruth Lukabyo

### 2021 ADM Senior Research Fellow

Project:

*The History of Youth Ministry in Australia*

Senior Lecturer and Dean of Women at Youthworks College, Dr Ruth Lukabyo is building on

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“My work will benefit youth ministers who need good research in youth ministry, its goals and methods.”

– Ruth Lukabyo

her teaching and research to write a series of journal articles and a popular-level book on the history of youth ministry in Australia.

Ruth has loved having time with other Fellows in the ADM office, sharing the ups and downs of academic life and giving and receiving advice on their respective projects.

Having submitted one article to the Journal of Youth and Theology, Ruth says she feels a renewed sense of vocation and has been encouraged by the professional development provided by ADM.

“My work will benefit youth ministers who need good research in youth ministry, its goals and methods. I’m excited to get into some more research in the second half of the year.”

To find out more about ADM Fellowships visit: [deaconessministries.org.au/fellowships](https://deaconessministries.org.au/fellowships)

## In the media

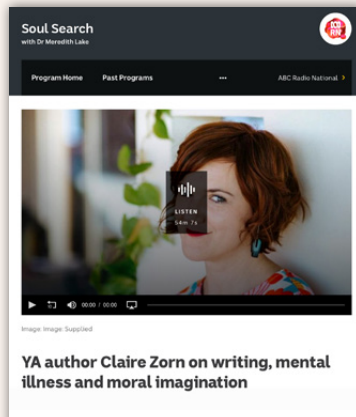
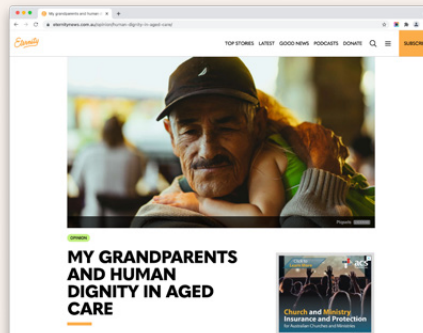
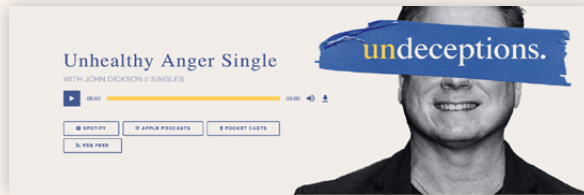
Our 2020 and 2021 ADM Fellows have been active writing in the media and speaking at public events. We're delighted to see them taking up opportunities to share their work with wider audiences and engaging our sceptical and hurting world with the good news of Jesus.



**Rev. Lily Strachan,** 2021 ADM Fellow, spoke at this year's Onward conference on the topic of 'God in the Shadows: Finding God when times are tough'.



**Stephanie Kate Judd,** 2021 ADM Senior Fellow, hosted an episode of John Dickson's Undeceptions podcast on the topic of 'Unhealthy anger' and wrote on the topic of human dignity for Eternity.

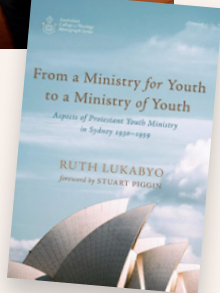


**Claire Zorn,** 2020 ADM Senior Fellow, was interviewed by Dr Meredith Lake, host of Soul Search on ABC Radio National and a 2017 ADM Senior Fellow. They discussed writing, faith and mental illness. Claire used her Fellowship to finish her latest book 'When We Are Invisible'.





**Dr Ruth Lukabyo,**  
2021 ADM Senior  
Research Fellow, joined the  
Pastor’s Heart to discuss her  
new book ‘From a Ministry for  
Youth to a Ministry of Youth.’

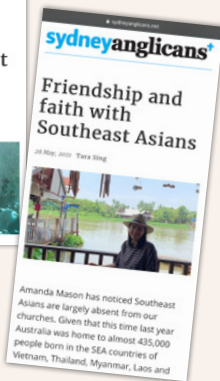


Since becoming CEO at ADM in  
November 2020, Rev. Jo Gibbs has  
received a number of invitations to  
speak and write in a variety of contexts.

Jo joined Dr Chase Kuhn on the Moore College Centre  
for Christian Living podcast to discuss living out our  
convictions. If we believe in the gospel, what does it  
mean for each of us to live like we believe it?

She also joined Geneva Push’s The One Thing  
podcast for episode 180: ‘Does Your Church Need  
a Women’s Minister?’

In August 2021 Jo had the privilege of being  
a special guest speaker at KCC’s OneLove,  
speaking on this year’s theme of holiness.



**Amanda Mason,**  
2020 ADM Senior Fellow,  
continues to write regular pieces  
for SydneyAnglicans on gospel  
ministry among Southeast Asians.



“The gospel should move me. It is  
incredibly good news that changes  
everything about the world. It  
should make us teary in gratitude.”

– Jo Gibbs speaks on ‘Living out our convictions’

# Engaging our world with the gospel

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## School of Theology, Culture & Public Engagement

In 2021, due to COVID-19 restrictions, the School of Theology, Culture & Public Engagement (STCPE) went online. Held over three days in the middle of summer, STCPE provides a unique, curated program of masterclasses delivered by leading scholars. Attendees made time to reflect on ideas and cultivate skills that will help them better engage our world with the gospel.

**164**  
attendees  
online

**16**  
speakers

**98%**  
of attendees  
rated STCPE  
as 'good',  
'very good' or  
'excellent'

### 2021 masterclasses

**Brian Brock**

Theology of disability

**Denise Daniels**

Faith in the workplace

**Karen Swallow Prior**

Cultural engagement

**Sam Chan**

Clash of cultures

**Amanda W. Benckhuysen**

Rereading Eve through the eyes  
of women in Christian history

**Leisa Aitken**

What is hope? Psychology  
& theology in conversation

**David A. Höhne**

Jesus Christ and the choosing self

**Luke & Mark Glanville**

Refuge reimagined

**Natasha Moore**

Dear reader: on life and books

**Claire Zorn** hosted by

**Meredith Lake**

Faith, fiction & fifteen-year-olds

**Katie Tunks Leach**

Chaplaincy in secular Australia

**Jacob Sarkodee**

Christians and modern slavery

**Amanda Mason**

First steps in relating to people  
from Buddhist backgrounds

**Rebecca Oakley**

Belonging in diverse teams



### Reflections on Brian Brock's masterclass: Theology of disability

“Brian brought deep theological thinking and his raw personal experience to the question of how those living with a disability are central in the body of Christ. The challenge: do we view all people as providers of grace and love to our churches? Or do we see those with disabilities as problems to be solved? The first attitude is light and life to those living with a disability, their families and a watching world.”

– Rev. Lily Strachan, 2021 ADM Fellow

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“I am so thankful that I had the opportunity to hear such wonderful speakers – who have each done so many years of research, thinking, writing and ‘lived’ these things out in their lives. Each of these talks have inspired my thinking in how to reach more people with the hope of Jesus.”

– STCPE attendee

“Brian Brock explored his son Adam's life experiences with our masterclass, sharing the different realities faced by Adam and by those who interact with him.

We were prompted to reflect on our own responses to differently abled people and examine our attitudes as to what true inclusion looks like, particularly in a church context. While we may assume the Church welcomes disabled people more universally than society, this perception can be out of step with the reality experienced by those who come to church with a disability and feel a relative barrier before them.

To truly welcome all people we must have a pervasive theology of Christ's body, that is, the Church, as a community that we are not only sanctified into but also sanctified through. People with disabilities play a key role in this reality. Almost all of us will experience disability at some time in our lives, so to have a full understanding of the gospel being good news for us as a community of weak vulnerable people will lead us towards the ministry of Christ.”

– Jodie McIver, 2021 ADM Fellow

Dr Brian Brock is Professor of Moral & Practical Theology at the University of Aberdeen in Scotland.





**Reflections on Karen Swallow Prior's STCPE masterclass: Cultural engagement**

"We explored the cultural moment we find ourselves in – a time when institutions and experts can be seen as suspect and in which our lives can be defined by fragmentation and great change. We spoke about the importance as Christians of modelling critical thinking with gentleness and compassion... Karen encouraged us to reflect on our gifts and responsibilities and ask how God might want to use them for this moment."

– Dr Emma Kluge, 2021 ADM Senior Fellow

Dr Karen Swallow Prior is Research Professor of English and Christianity and Culture at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary.



**Reflections on Natasha Moore's STCPE masterclass: Dear reader: on life and books**

"Natasha encouraged us to reflect on how our culture's 'tyranny of productivity' affects our reading lives, such that reading can simply be about getting through a certain number of books in a year. I was reminded that reading is a real and rich part of life, and like many other parts of life, should come under the jurisdiction of our prayer lives. I was also reminded of how everything in our lives should ultimately glorify and improve our understanding of God."

– Dr Emma Knowles, 2021 ADM Senior Fellow

Dr Natasha Moore is Senior Research Fellow at the Centre for Public Christianity (CPX).

Read more about 2021 STCPE speakers at: [deaconessministries.org.au/summer-school](http://deaconessministries.org.au/summer-school)

DEACONESS STORY

Olive's Story

**When Olive Cotter's family emigrated from an English village to Sydney's North Shore, the move set in motion a series of changes that would eventually bring Olive to a life of Christian service as a deaconess, parish worker, missionary and chaplain.**



Above: Olive with her class at Deaconess House, 1957/58 (top) and a Mothers Union group from Olive's years of service in Kenya  
Right: Olive teaching at a church in Nairobi (top) and leading a school chaplains retreat in Malaysia with her husband Harry.

Olive recalls that school scripture and church events reinforced her understanding that “Before I knew him, he loved me.”

In 1955, after becoming a Christian just four years earlier at a church house party in Rathane, Olive heard a missionary nurse share her experiences of serving the Lord in Malaysia. Reflecting on what she had heard, Olive began to wonder, ask, and pray about whether she too could serve in similar ways.

She began to notice Bible verses such as those in Isaiah “Who will go for us?” and “Whom shall we send?” After spending a year wrestling with questions, seeking godly advice and praying for direction, Olive applied to the Church Missionary Society (CMS) and was accepted as a candidate to begin studies at Deaconess House in 1957.

She served at churches in Erskineville, Padstow, Figtree and Coolah, learning “... how brilliant it was for me” before receiving news from CMS, stating “You’re going to Kenya”. In 1961 Olive went to Kenya where she met Harry, who was teaching with Scripture Union (SU).

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## “I just do what I can for Jesus.”

– Olive Cotter

Two years later they married and together worked with CMS & SU in Kenya. Living in Nairobi, they began their family of four children before returning to Sydney in 1974.

Ordained as a deaconess in 1982, Olive worked in parish and as a chaplain, including at the former ADM hospital, Neringah.

Olive and Harry continued their various ministries at Barker College and praying for and supporting TEAR, SU and CMS. They also went to serve the Lord Jesus in Singapore 1988-90 OMF/SU and again in Kenya from 1998 to 2002, before returning to Australia.

Harry’s death was a sad blow to Olive, but she is grateful for the time they had to share and prepare and is confident of

Learn more about our deaconesses at: [deaconessministries.org.au/deaconesses-stories](http://deaconessministries.org.au/deaconesses-stories)



God’s faithfulness and that no tears are wasted (Psalm 56:8). Olive reflects that Harry is “more alive than ever.”

Olive is truly a joyful woman, living out her creed “I just do what I can for Jesus.”

Olive says she wants to be remembered for sharing God’s everlasting love.

“I’m just one of his spoilt children and I want other people to know him too.”



Top: Dr Louise Gosbell interviews students Denise and Brielle at the 2020 graduation.  
Left: Students take a break on campus.  
Above: MAC's hybrid learning classroom.





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## Equipping women to serve Christ

Mary Andrews College (MAC) is a theological college that equips women to serve Christ faithfully. Our primary focus is on growing our students' knowledge and understanding of the Bible and combining that with the development of practical ministry skills.



## A message from the MAC Principal

When I first started teaching at MAC, I can remember reading the incredible story of MAC's origins and the legacy of Rev. Mervyn Archdall and his wife Martha in founding a training centre for deaconesses. I was deeply impacted by the story of the deaconesses being trained and equipped in God's Word and practical ministry skills so they could serve God and others in the Church, the community, and the world. Not only did they share the gospel in Word but also in deed as they cared for the vulnerable and those on the margins in their communities.

I love that 130 years on, MAC continues to equip women to serve Christ and prepares them to take the gospel message out into the community and the world! While many things have changed in those 130 years, the need for people to hear the gospel remains the same. And this means at MAC, we are just as committed to training women to be able to "correctly handle the word of truth" (2 Tim. 2:15) as we have ever been.

*Louise Gosbell*

Dr Louise Gosbell  
Principal, Mary Andrews College

ADM is pleased to announce that Dr Louise Gosbell, formerly Acting Principal and Dean of Students at Mary Andrews College, accepted the role of principal beginning in August 2021. Louise's postgraduate qualifications in biblical studies, her many years of experience in teaching theology, as well as her dedication to inclusive education make Louise the right person to be leading the college into its next season.



## About MAC

We are dedicated to growing our students in spiritual formation and discipleship in order to equip them for ministry in the Church, the community, and the world. Our particular areas of specialisation – pastoral care, mental health, and disability – are what make MAC unique amongst theological institutions in Australia.

Our courses offer many different pathways for students at both certificate and diploma level. This year, we have also begun to offer study pathways at graduate certificate level. The women who study at MAC range in ages from 19 to 80, with some who have multiple degrees in different fields, and others who did not complete high school. Each of our students share the desire to become more Christlike and to serve his Church and his people. They come to MAC in order to study and grow together in community.

Some women come to MAC in order to be trained for roles in pastoral care or community chaplaincy. You can read stories of some of our students who

“  
*We work at developing and fostering a sense of community and connection for all our students.*”

have done just that on pages 44-45 of this annual report. Others come to study at MAC to be better equipped to do the ministry roles they are already involved in, whether that's running Bible study groups, teaching SRE, or serving on the pastoral care team of their local church.

MAC is a community of like-minded women who understand the challenges of juggling study with family, ministry and other responsibilities. At MAC, we make study as flexible as possible for our students, which means many of our students study as little as one subject per semester. As students follow a range of study pathways that reflect their needs and goals, we work at developing and fostering a sense of community and connection for everyone who studies at MAC.

In order to keep making our study options as flexible and accessible as possible, MAC is looking to develop a range of short courses in our areas of expertise – discipleship, ministry skills, pastoral care, mental health, and disability – that can run through a hybrid model on campus as well as in churches throughout Sydney and beyond. We'd love to see women in churches across Australia better equipped to handle the word of God faithfully and to activate them for gospel ministry.

To find out more about studying at Mary Andrews College visit: [mac.edu.au](http://mac.edu.au)

# MAC graduation 2020 and 2021

49  
2020  
graduates

The Mary Andrews College student graduation is always a highlight of the year for MAC staff, faculty and students.

At graduation, we celebrate not just the academic achievements of our students but also the journeys they have each taken arrive at this point. This year's graduation held even more cause for celebration given that the original 2020 graduation had been cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Both graduations were held on the same day at St Andrew's Cathedral – a morning graduation for the graduating students of 2020 and an afternoon graduation for the 2021 students. Despite restrictions on the number of guests, there were still plenty of family and friends present to applaud the graduands.

Reflecting back on her time as MAC Principal, Rev. Jackie Stoneman encouraged graduands to always work at integrating the head, heart and hands and to wrestle daily with God's Word, allowing it to shape not only our minds but also but our hearts and all that we do. Jackie also encouraged graduands to be firmly rooted in the message of Jesus so that in a constantly changing world, we have something firm to anchor us. Finally, Jackie reminded students that God has a plan and purpose for all of us and gives us all opportunities to play our part and use our gifts and skills in service to him. "God is the great 'jigsaw puzzle God,'" Jackie said, designing all the individual pieces and giving each puzzle piece a particular role to play.



"I am now a community chaplain and I work in the local hospitals and in a parish pastoral care role."

– Lynette Johnson  
Diploma of Christian Studies

28

2021  
graduates

77

graduates  
in total

Graduation is not only an opportunity to celebrate the achievements of our students but it is also a commissioning: we send our new graduates out into the world to use their gifts and skills in service to God and his people. Our prayers go with each one of our graduates as they continue faithfully in their walk with him.



“Having a greater understanding of the Bible and of Jesus’ great love for us all has helped me to see the world through his eyes and people as his most important treasure.”

– Charisse Fawcett,  
Diploma of Christian Studies

“My study at MAC gave me the confidence to take on a Masters of Counselling and Psychotherapy, something I would not have had the confidence to do otherwise.”

– Jocelyn Woodford  
Diploma of Theology/  
Diploma of Ministry



“My life is enriched by the greater understanding of God’s Word and the way it has worked through history.”

– Susan Phillips  
Undergraduate Certificate  
of Theology



# MAC students on campus and online

## Hybrid learning

Amidst the challenges of COVID-19, MAC has had the opportunity to begin offering online classes for the first time. With the introduction of a hybrid teaching model, students in the classroom and students online join together for live lectures.

Through this teaching model, online students now have the same real-time access to their lecturers and class discussions as face-to-face students.

In combination with our expanding digital library collection, this hybrid approach to learning is opening up many new opportunities for women across the country. The hybrid model now gives MAC the capacity to make our teaching available to women across Australia, particularly to those in regional and remote areas for whom theological education is often less accessible. This is an exciting opportunity for MAC to be able to see more women grow in their knowledge and understanding of God's word and continue to be spiritually transformed to become more like Christ.



## Formation groups

At MAC, spiritual formation happens both formally in the classroom but also informally as students meet together with MAC staff and their peers. Our formation groups give students the opportunity to meet together each week, to pray and encourage one another while working through a selected text. In semester 1 2021, MAC lecturer Jill Williams facilitated our formation groups working through John Mark Comer's *The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry: How to Stay Emotionally Healthy and Spirituality Alive in the Chaos of the Modern World*.



*"The formation groups are a great forum to be challenged practically in how we are living and applying what we learn at college in our everyday life. We also get to learn from each other's experience. I have found it transformative in having the tools to reflect on how we are using our time, our gifts and resources for the glory of God."*

– Linda Wong,  
MAC Certificate student

# Introducing MAC's newest lecturer

## Dr Nicole Starling

It has been a delight to welcome Dr Nicole Starling to our lecturing team this year. Nicole's passion for educating women and her lecturing experience make her a valuable addition to the MAC lecturing team. It has been wonderful to have Nicole teaching Theology Overview with us.

Nicole recently completed her PhD thesis at Macquarie University exploring the way the Christian faith and ideas of the enlightenment movement influenced the temperance movement in Australia in the middle of the 19th century. "The topic was of interest to me as a case study in how religious faith and theological convictions shape the way Christians interact with their cultural context and seek to foster the good of the wider community" Nicole said.

The role women have played in Australian Christian history has also been an ongoing research interest of Nicole's. This year, she was thrilled to be asked to talk about a number of Australian Christian women for a documentary called 'Faith Runs Deep', which is expected to be released in 2022. "I was also pleased to have the opportunity to speak about the kindness of God in the life of another Australian Christian woman, Elizabeth Saunders, at Katoomba Easter Convention this year."

We look forward to expanding Nicole's teaching opportunities with us in 2022, adding a unit on ethics in semester 2 to her unit on theology.

Right: Nicole speaks at KCC Easter Convention.

“

*I've been excited to join the team at MAC and am looking forward to helping women think through the implications of Christian faith for all of life.*

”



# Annette's Story

## **Annette is currently studying for a Diploma of Theology**

While Annette is a qualified physiotherapist, it had been a long time since she had done any tertiary study. With some trepidation, Annette enrolled in the Diploma of Theology at MAC at the beginning of 2021.

Before commencing, Annette participated in MAC's two day Return to Learn program, which helps students prepare for study at MAC. The program focuses on study skills, time management and preparing students for theological study. Meeting other women like herself who were also feeling a little nervous about returning to study, as well as learning a range of study skills, helped Annette feel better prepared to begin her study at MAC.

Annette's first semester at MAC, however, didn't quite go to plan. While participating in a Bike for Bibles fundraising event, Annette fell off her bike and broke her arm. Annette said she was "incredibly worried that I wasn't going to be able to complete my study that semester because I could not type or write and I was getting tired much more easily." Annette

recalls her surprise at the pastoral and practical support she was offered by MAC staff, saying that "I was able to get extensions on my assignments, and submit some of them by recording my voice rather than having to type them out."

While her first semester didn't work out quite the way she had planned, it gave her first-hand experience of the level of support MAC provides to students in challenging circumstances.



Annette reflects that "MAC staff really model the pastoral care they teach, which makes it a wonderful place to be able to study God's Word with like-minded women."

# Victoria's Story

## **Victoria studied for a Diploma of Theology**

After 12 months offering pastoral care as a volunteer, and with her Diploma of Theology from Mary Andrews College almost completed, Victoria has accepted a role as a pastoral carer at Dudley Foord House Aged Care Facility at The Ponds in North-West Sydney.

Victoria's studies at Mary Andrews College helped her grow in her theological knowledge, which in turn built

her confidence in answering questions from the residents. The practical skills she developed in pastoral care units have also equipped her to care for residents with diminished cognitive abilities and those who are nearing end-of-life.

“  
*I've become more bold in declaring the reason I work in pastoral care in residential care.*  
”



# Nicole's Story

**Nicole graduated in 2021  
with a Diploma of Theology**

Five years ago, while working as the office administrator at her church, Nicole received an email about the Ministry with Seniors unit being run at MAC. As she was already involved in this area of ministry, the unit piqued her interest and she enrolled in a Diploma of Theology.

Around the same time, she asked the chaplain at her local retirement village if she could join him as a student minister, combining her study with hands-on ministry experience. The Chaplain and Chapel Committee readily agreed and Nicole started work.

Nicole was now serving in a ministry she loved and being stretched and challenged in her study, developing new skills and a deeper knowledge of God's Word. She says her husband has described this season of her life as 'her time to flourish'. And flourishing, she is.

Initially Nicole's interest was specifically in pastoral care, yet the Diploma of Theology gave her the opportunity to study a range of theology and ministry



topics. "I had no idea how wonderful it would be to also study Biblical Theology, Church History and Christian Thought. Each unit has become my 'favourite subject' as it has opened up my understanding and love for God and his Word."

Upon completion of her Diploma, Nicole was offered the role of assistant chaplain at the retirement village where she had been volunteering.

*"One special moment was when a congregation member thanked me for 'giving us oldies the opportunity to display our God-given gifts'."*

Nicole says it has been a great privilege to walk alongside the saints at the retirement village, as they have continued to trust God and proclaim his goodness even amid tremendous challenges with their health and families.

*"One special moment was when a congregation member thanked me for 'giving us oldies the opportunity to display our God-given gifts'. My MAC studies have helped me to do that."*

# Supporting wellbeing and mental health

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## Graduate Certificate of Pastoral Care for Mental Health

COVID-19 has put mental health on everyone's agenda. But mental health needs had been a significant concern in our communities and churches well before the pandemic made mental health a matter of everyday conversation.

In 2019, staff at ADM and Mary Andrews College began to consider how to deepen understanding around mental health in our churches from a robust theological perspective.

In late 2020, MAC gained approval to teach a new Australian College of Theology offering, the Graduate Certificate of Pastoral Care for Mental Health.

The need for church leaders and members to be better equipped to address mental ill-health was highlighted in a research study commissioned by the Mental Health & Pastoral Care Institute

and conducted by McCrindle Research. In this study, ministry workers reported feeling under-equipped to care effectively for those experiencing mental health challenges.

Christians working in health care, particularly those working in the area of mental health, are also seeking further training to gain a theological framework for their work. There are also Christians working in school settings who have pastoral care and wellbeing responsibilities who are looking for opportunities to reflect upon these matters from a theological perspective.



3

information sessions held, with prospective students attending from Tasmania and Western Australia

25

applications for the course

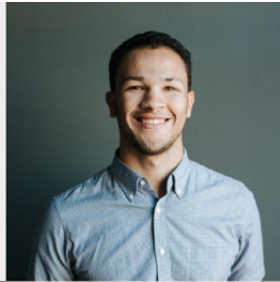
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students enrolled in the first unit in Semester 2, 2021 'Theological Approaches to Wellbeing'

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Graduate Certificate  
of Pastoral Care for  
Mental Health

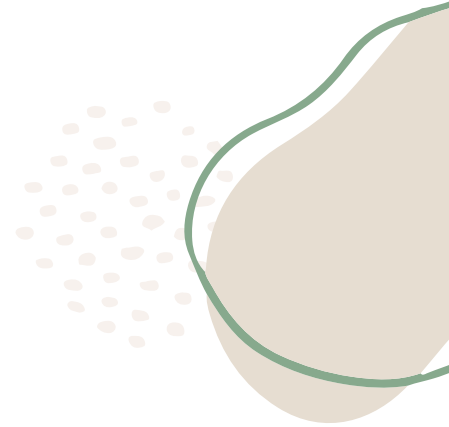
**STARTING  
2021**



“... ENCOURAGE THE  
DISHEARTENED, HELP  
THE WEAK, BE PATIENT  
WITH EVERYONE.”

– 1 Thessalonians 5:14

To find out more about the Graduate Certificate of Pastoral Care  
for Mental Health visit: [mac.edu.au/graduate-certificate](https://mac.edu.au/graduate-certificate)



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“Our hope and prayer  
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Lord’s service.”

– Keith & Sarah Condie

The new Graduate Certificate offers a biblical and theological foundation to inform wise pastoral responses to matters of mental health. The certificate highlights the importance of Christians seeking assistance from mental health professionals and the medical and psychological expertise they offer, as well as the unique benefits that flow from the gospel of grace and from connection with Christian communities.

The course focuses on the positive elements of mental health and wellbeing as well as mental ill-health. It is particularly designed for ministry staff, for Christian mental health

professionals wanting a deeper theological perspective on their work, for Christians working in schools with pastoral and wellbeing responsibilities, and for anyone seeking to grow in their understanding in this area. While Mary Andrews College focuses on training Christian women, this Graduate Certificate welcomes both women and men.

Our hope and prayer is that this course will play a part in reducing stigma around mental health in our churches, equip believers to provide appropriate care, and assist many to appreciate how looking after our mental wellbeing strengthens us in our Lord’s service.

# Supporting wellbeing and mental health



**COVID-19 and lockdowns have impacted us all. Many of us have been left feeling as if we are languishing rather than flourishing in life.**

Keith & Sarah Condie, Co-Directors of the Mental Health & Pastoral Care Institute, were given funding to respond to the demands of the pandemic upon the mental health of Christians. The funding has been used to develop an online resource called 'Press On: Building Resilience & Mental Wellbeing.'

This seven-session course combines a sound biblical framework with the best of scientific research to assist Christians in caring for their mental wellbeing.

JESUS SAID "I HAVE COME THAT THEY MAY HAVE LIFE, AND HAVE IT TO THE FULL."

– John 10:10



## WHY PRESS ON?

'PRESS' is the acronym used in the course to describe the key resources and activities that we can draw upon and cultivate in our lives:

**Physical** – caring for our bodies in a way that keeps us mentally strong

**Relational** – connecting with others to build our wellbeing

**Emotional** – nurturing our emotional life

**Skills** – using our abilities to bolster our wellbeing

**Spiritual** – drawing upon the truth of God's Word to strengthen us



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“We believe that doing this course will be good for those who participate and will help us as we seek to serve God and others.”

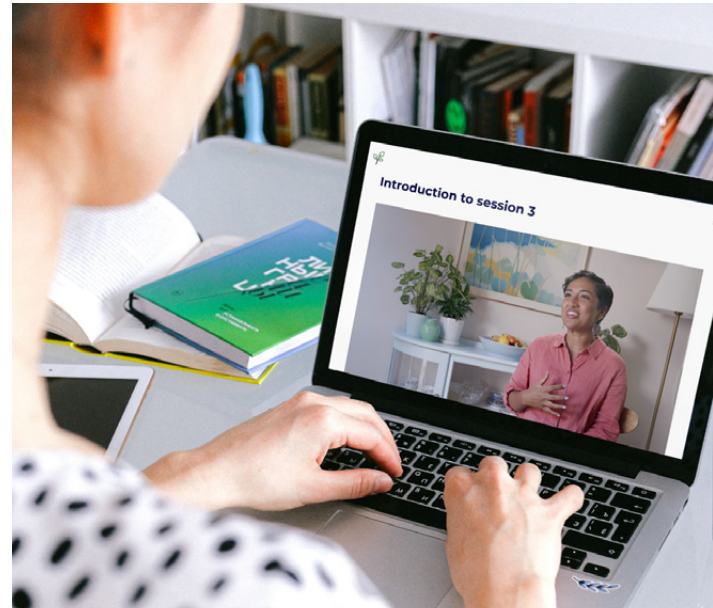
– Sarah Condie

### EACH SESSION INCLUDES:

- Videos from Keith and Sarah Condie
- Stories from people about what helps them press on
- Questions and activities that help participants engage with the course content
- A short biblical passage to read and reflect on
- A prayer
- Opportunity for self-reflection and developing your own plan
- Your own wellbeing plan

### TOPICS COVERED BY THE COURSE:

- Stress and how it affects us
- The impact of chronic stress upon our bodies and minds
- Understanding resilience
- The benefits of healthy habits and routines
- Resources and activities that strengthen our wellbeing



To find out more about Press On or to do the course yourself visit: [mentalhealthinstitute.org.au/press-on](https://mentalhealthinstitute.org.au/press-on)

# Building safe and strong marriages



*Churches have a practical resource to support marriages in Sydney, in Australia, and across the world.*

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## Marriage course goes online

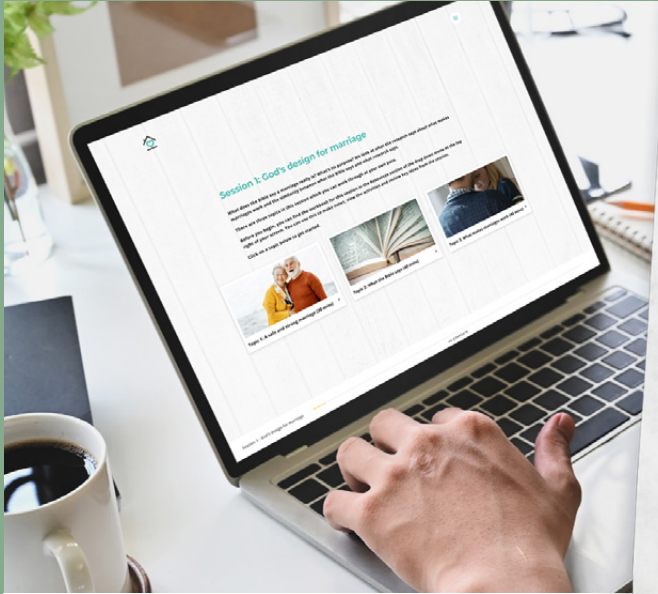
When the COVID-19 pandemic hit in March 2020, the Mental Health and Pastoral Care Institute moved their course 'Building a Safe & Strong Marriage' online.



This not only meant that couples could sign up and take the five session course from their home at their own pace, but it also meant that churches could offer the course to couples in their church while social distancing and restrictions made in person events impossible.

In moving the course online, individuals and churches outside of Sydney and outside of Australia could benefit from the course. Couples in Goulburn and Canberra have taken the course along with couples in the UK, Singapore and Hong Kong.

To find out more about the course visit: [buildingmarriage.com.au](https://buildingmarriage.com.au)



**Mark Rainbow, Grace Church,  
Durham, UK:**

“Building a Safe & Strong Marriage has enabled us as a church to provide faithful and practical assistance to married couples connected to our church in a format that is flexible enough and safe enough for them to make the most of it. It’s enabled me to come alongside those doing the course and given me practical ways of helping couples who are struggling. We chose the course because we felt confident in the quality of the teaching Keith and Sarah would provide and felt the format would suit modern life well – our hopes were exceeded on both counts.”

**Bishop Mark Short and his wife Monica –  
Anglican Diocese of Canberra & Goulburn**

**Monica:** Mark and I thank God for each other and hope to fall continually more and more in love with each other. The course was easy to access and participate in. It was refreshing to talk with Mark about what is going well in our marriage and what needs work.

**Mark:** The course was really helpful in opening up conversations about what we could celebrate in our marriage and where we needed to make some course corrections. The presentations were clear, and the exercises easy to follow.

“This course is a remarkable mission to marriages in Australia. The incredible work that Keith and Sarah Condie have done will establish a powerful legacy in congregations and beyond.”

– James Dean, Hunter Bible Church



**Rev. Jo Gibbs**

Chief Executive Officer



**Stephanie Dunk**

Chief of Operations



**Dr Louise Gosbell**

Principal,  
Mary Andrews College



**Dr Annette Pierdziwol**

Director of  
Public Engagement



**Libby Sanders**

Program Manager,  
Mercy & Justice



**Rev. Dr Keith Condie**

Co-Director,  
Mental Health &  
Pastoral Care Institute



**Sarah Condie**

Co-Director,  
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Program Officer  
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replacement)



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