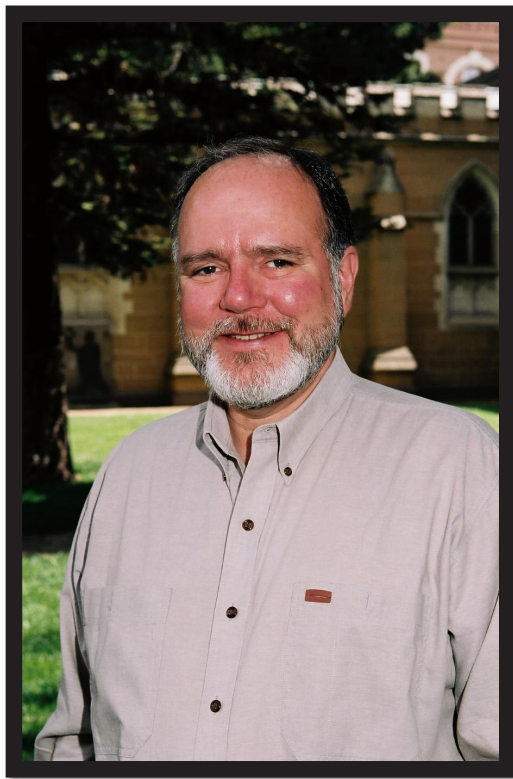


Thankyou



John



Are you convinced that the Holy Scriptures contain all doctrine necessary for eternal salvation through faith in Jesus Christ ? Will you instruct from them the people committed to your care, teaching nothing as essential to salvation which cannot be demonstrated from the Scriptures ?

I am convinced and will do so, with God's help.

The time has come for us as the Tasmanian Synod to say goodbye and thank you to our bishop, John Harrower.

The day of the Election Synod at Collegiate School, Saturday 19 February 2000 stands out in my mind. As one of the scrutineers, it seemed to my spirit, part way through successive ballots, that, although I had never met him, God was strongly guiding us towards one candidate, Archdeacon John Douglas Harrower.

When John was episcopally ordained and took up his Huon pine staff as the 11th Bishop of Tasmania on the feast of St James, 25 July 2000, the Primate of Australia asked him eight questions and after hearing John respond, he prayed "May God who has given you the will to do these things give you the grace and power to perform them." And the people replied: "Amen."

So I thought that 15 years later we could look back as a Synod and consider some of what you have done in God's grace and power in living out your answers.

The following are my reflections.

Will you then be faithful in prayer, and diligent in the study of the Holy Scriptures, so that you may be equipped to teach and encourage with sound doctrine ?

I will, seeking to discern the mind of Christ by the Spirit of God.



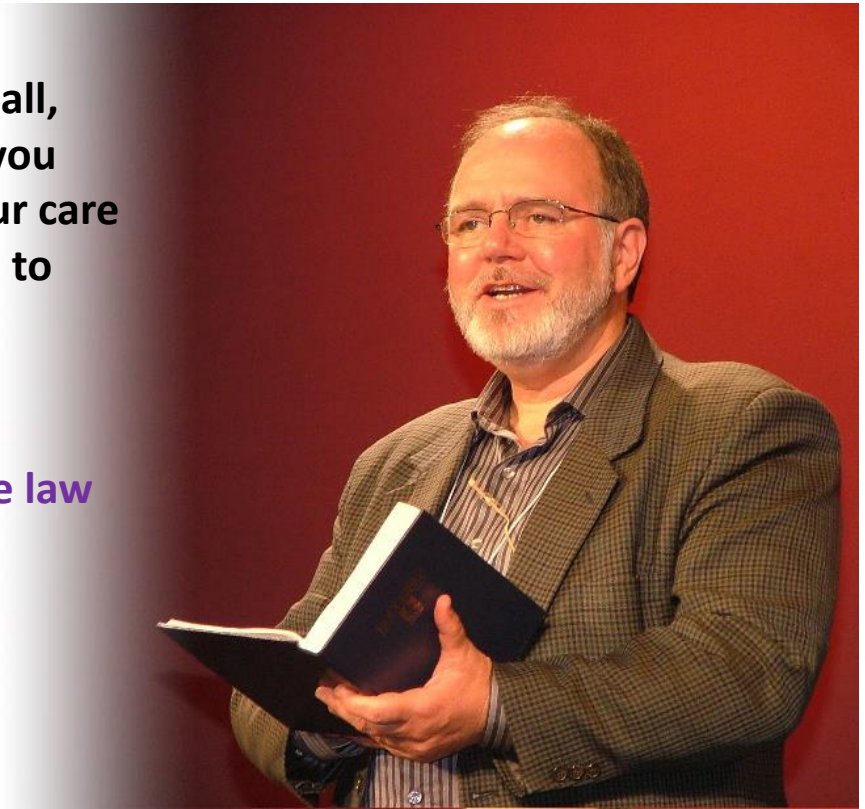
In addition to sending out prayers and help for sermons and other Bible studies, John has written two Lenten studies himself. But he has gone beyond that.

In response to another bishop going on pilgrimage along the Camino or the road to Santiago de Compostela in Spain, John went on his first prayer pilgrimage over several weeks around his own Diocese as an encouragement to his flock. He felt called to go on a second prayer pilgrimage a few years later and included the Anglican agencies.

He has also led days on prayer and teaching seminars not only for his clergy but also for his laity, the current teaching seminars being "Christian Voices in Public Places".

**Will you proclaim the gospel to all,
especially those among whom you
live ? Will you lead those in your care
to obey our Saviour's command to
make disciples of all nations ?**

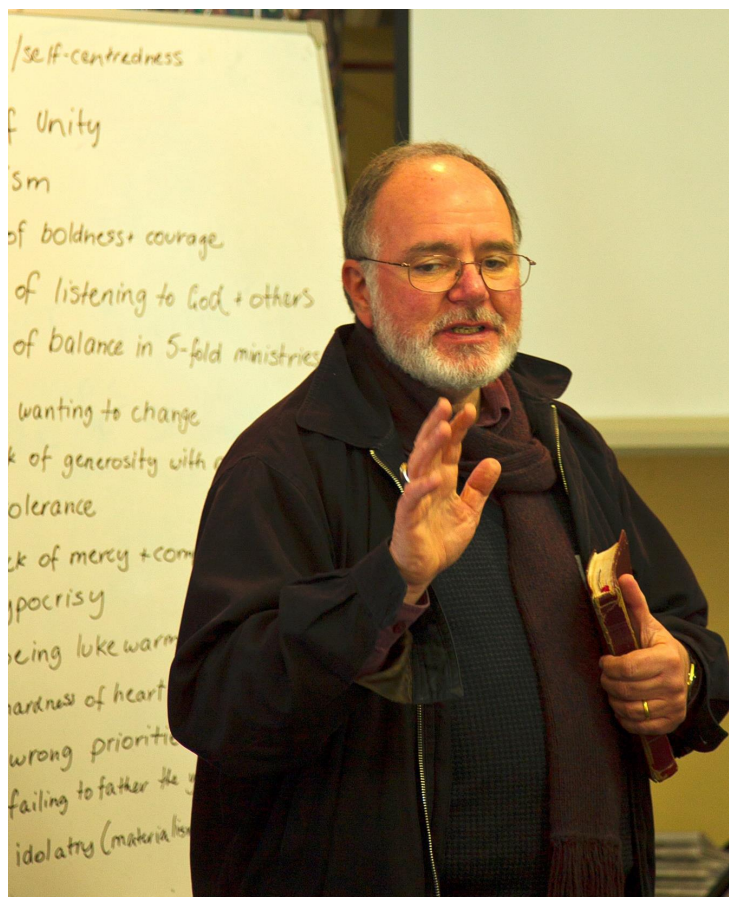
**I will, endeavouring to apply the law
of Christ with the grace of God.**



John has tried to distil what does the gospel mean in each situation.

He has worked hard at changing our Diocesan focus to be the Missionary Diocese of Tasmania.

*He has encouraged us as parishes and Anglican agencies at every turn to reach out to encourage all
ages, all nationalities, all cultures to be in church, to be out in the streets, to be in our schools, work-
places and in our neighbourhoods witnessing to the Good News of Jesus Christ.*



Will you administer with mercy the discipline of this Church ?

Will you correct and set aside teaching that is contrary to the mind of Christ, both privately and publicly urging all to live according to God's word?

I will, endeavouring to apply the law of Christ with the grace of God.

Without making one of the most costly decisions of his episcopacy, we could not in fact or in faith go forward with the Way, the Truth and the Life. Nor would we be able to strive to be Healthy Church, Transforming Life.

Deciding to apologise to those who had been abused by clergy or church workers and to try to work with them in their pain and through their loss and leading Diocesan Council to establish Safe Church Communities has been hard but also right. John has been a leader in this area in Australia, and other Dioceses have looked to our experiences in establishing their future conduct and response to this huge very sorry issue.

Thank you, Bishop John, for your leadership and persistent conviction to follow the way of Christ in this and other areas, no matter what the cost.

Will you put aside all ungodly and worldly behaviour and live modestly, in justice and godliness, so that by your life and example you may commend Christ's truth ?

I will, seeking in all I do to demonstrate the love of God.



The sale of Bishops court provided a fund to enable the pastoral response of the apology to victims of abuse to be met from this source until the fund was spent.

Then John set about establishing an episcopal fund to endeavour to meet the costs of the office of bishop of Tasmania with as little burden to parishes as possible.

The way that he has lived his life as bishop has given him the integrity to speak out publicly on matters in the news as well as on matters that governments would prefer not be commented on.

Will you maintain and promote quietness, peace and love among all people ? Will you correct and discipline, according to the authority you have by God's word ? Will you strive to build up the body of Christ in unity, truth and love ?

I will, commending to all the peace of God.



I found it fascinating that at the first Synod of John's episcopacy, you could tell which parishes he had visited as he generated goodwill wherever he went. As time went by, he discovered that there is a micro version in our diocese of the broad range of Anglicanism in the Anglican Church in Australia.

Although it is apparent that our bishop has his own preference of forms of worship, and don't we all, I think he has grown in his understanding and appreciation of the richness of Anglicanism and what it may mean for each of us. Ultimately, he rejoices in all who confess Jesus as Lord and Saviour regardless of the differences and diversity. This has helped him work well with other church leaders and to engage with the wider community.

He has been blessed too in this latter area, as in other ways by his bride, with the donkey ministry that Gayelene brought among us. John has also reached out to the Tasmanian Aboriginal community and to asylum seekers as other ways of promoting quietness, peace and love among all people.

Will you be faithful in ordaining and commissioning others for ministry ? Will you encourage those committed to your care to fulfil their ministry ?

I will, in all things striving to set forward the kingdom of Christ.



Bishop John has done what he could, freeing up the clergy to do their roles. We have seen church expressed in several forms including through Enabler Supported Ministry, the Imagine Project, Nostalgia Now and more. It has been a steep learning curve at times but each has been a practical form of trying to provide church to the church and the unchurched in the twenty first century. In addition, Bishop John has held fast to his strongly held beliefs.

Several years ago, when I was chairman of the Collegiate School Board, I approached John about the need for him to make a new appointment to the School Board. We had identified that the skill set we needed was an accountant who could think strategically. John said that was fine so long as the person was also sitting in a pew Sunday by Sunday. The story of how Chris Legg was appointed definitely has God's hand written through it. Not only could Chris explain significant financial matters so it gave all Board members confidence in their decision making but also he lived his faith so naturally that when he finished as Chairman of the Finance Committee, his successor, who was not a practising Christian, opened and closed each meeting in his own extemporaneous praying as he had heard Chris do.

I know of other appointments which have also been blessed because of Bishop John's faithfulness and encouragement.

Will you show compassion to the poor and the stranger, be gentle with the abused and needy, and defend those who have no helper ?



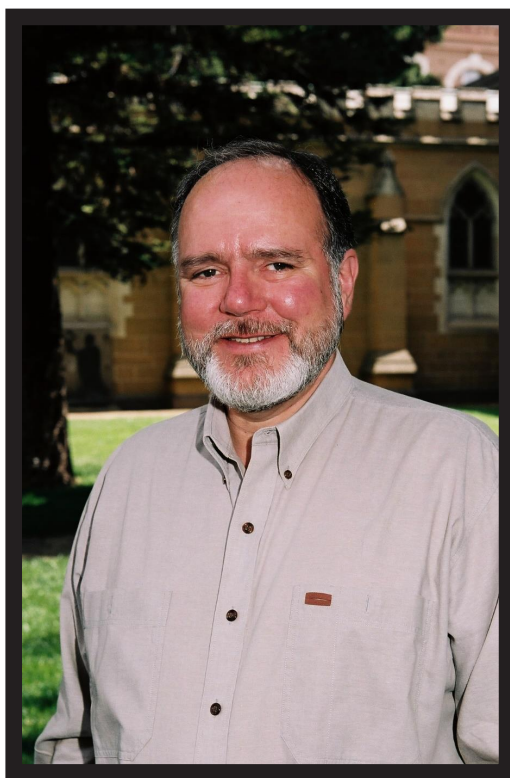
**I will,
striving to be
merciful in
the name of
Christ.**

Two areas where John's sense of compassion have been seen are first, John's personal interaction with people who have been abused by clergy or church workers which has been at great personal cost to him as it has for others and secondly, speaking out for asylum seekers.

But I have seen this on a parochial level as well. You may recall the inter parish conversations John encouraged many parishes to have. When it became my parish's turn to decide what we should do, we were without a rector in the parish and I asked Bishop John who was going to pastor our congregation. God provided. John did not have another pastoral commitment that Sunday morning so instead of attending church with Gayelene as they had looked forward to, Bishop John came to our parish and led us through the process. It is one of the many ways that he has exercised leadership.

We have also seen compassion in the way John has chaired our Synod meetings, trying to help all members negotiate their way through the unfamiliar Westminster system which are the rules of Synod but also enabling the light of Christ to shine through the Diocese coming together in Synod and for the wider Anglican family through the Diocesan Gatherings.

Thankyou



John

There is so much more that could be said - from the way John has contributed to the Anglican Church of Australia on a national level to the one on one conversations and interactions which have impacted on our faith journeys for which we thank you. We pray God's blessing on you and Gayelene and your family as you transition into the next part of your journey of faith.

I move that this Synod gives thanks to God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit for bringing Bishop John Harrower among us to lead His flock in the Anglican Church in the Diocese of Tasmania and for the fruit of his ministry and shepherding among us.

And I ask the Synod to join me in passing this motion with acclamation.

Text by Anne Brown
Presentation by John Langlois

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