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The Anglican Mens Society Australia

AMS Australia Newsletter

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From the National Chair:

With all of the bad news that tends to dominate our news at the moment, the Tokyo Olympics seem a distant memory. For a couple of weeks, however, they brought plenty of moments of joy to so many people in lockdown or experiencing restrictions because of COVID-19.

There were a number of moments that stay in my mind from the Games.

The first was Australian Nicholas Hough's semi-final in the 110 metre hurdles. Hough got away from the starting blocks quite well, only to clip the first hurdle and subsequently knock over all nine obstacles that followed. I agree with one person who commented:

"Can I say, as someone who knocked over every single damn hurdle in Year 7 PE and was relentlessly bullied the rest of my high school life, Nicholas Hough is my new sporting hero."

Hough is an unlikely hero whose determination to make it to the end of the race despite everything has become an inspiration to many.

There was another story that also caught my attention. On 2 August, 28-year-old former refugee Sifan Hassan of the Netherlands fell in the qualifying heat of her 1,500 metre race. However she scrambled back to her feet and ran on. One media outlet reported it like this:

"She was undeterred; she got back up and, now suddenly in last place, went on to pass 11 runners to finish first."

She would go on to win the bronze in the 1,500 and gold medals in two additional races – the 5,000 and 10,000 metres. A reporter asked her what her strategy was for the races following the fall, Hassan replied:

"After what happened this morning, all the drama, I don't care," she said. "Step by step, I'll do my best."

She fell. She got up. She won three medals.

The two stories give us two very different examples of determination and resilience. "Step by step, I'll do my best" speaks not just to the much hyped

'Olympic spirit' but to an inner strength that might benefit us all during these times.

Night after night as I watch the news. I feel a deep sense of dis-ease in the pit of my stomach. The unfolding sadness on my TV screen and my iPad and my computer feels overwhelming – COVID-19, the environment, Afghanistan... I am often left wondering what I can do to meaningfully respond.

"Step by step, I'll do my best."

Often my 'best' looks more like hurdle-clipping Nicholas Hough than medal-winning Sifan Hassan, but all I can do is take another step and then another. And, one beauty of being part of a community of faith is that there are always others alongside, ahead of and behind me cheering me on, encouraging me, offering me support and reminding me that 'my best' is enough.

With the AMS National Conference in Tasmania joining the long list of things that have had to be cancelled because of COVID we might feel "knocked down" once again. However I'm reminded of something I read somewhere about the Saints – it's not that they never fell down but that they always got up again.

"Step by step, I'll do my best" to follow in the footsteps of all those Saints who have gone before us for the sake of Gospel.





National (Zoom) Conference

3.00pm-5.00pm (AEST) Saturday 23 October 2021

With the uncertainty of current COVID travel restrictions and border closures, the difficult decision was made by the AMS National Exec to postpone the planned 2021 National Conference in Tasmania. Once vaccination rates are high enough, border restrictions more predictable and travel is much easier we will find a new date for the Tasmanian Conference.

In the meantime, Zoom technology will enable us to gather despite the restrictions.

To that end, a gathering by Zoom is planned for Saturday 23 October from 3.00pm-5.00pm (AEST) (Make time adjustment for your own location)

There will be a guest speaker, opportunities for discussion in small groups and a chance to hear news from branches around the country.

There is no cost to join the “conference and you can register at the link below to receive the Zoom link:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/ams-australia-national-zoom-gathering-tickets-175208361927>



**Richard Fay will be the guest speaker at the
Zoom Conference planned for 23 October**

Richard Fay writes this about himself, “I trained for pastoral ministry in the 1980s and ended up as senior pastor of a multi-staff church in suburban Brisbane in the first decade of this century. I burned out in that role which made me look at what’s going on inside me. This resulted in me completing a Masters in Counselling in 2012. I have experience working in several private practices and established my own in 2013.

As well as working in private practice, I am Ambassador of the Centre for Men and Families Australia (www.cfma.org.au).

I am a clinical member of The Psychotherapists and Counsellors Federation of Australia (PACFA) and a member of CCAA.

I have done specialised training in a very powerful trauma therapy (The Richards Trauma Process), neuropsychotherapy, in relationship counselling and working with men.”

<https://richardfay.com.au>

Toastmasters International and the Anglican Men's Society



Neil McMullen successfully launched the Eternity Toastmasters Club on Sunday 12th September and the second meeting was held on Sunday 24th September and following meetings will be held the second and fourth Sunday in each month at 4pm to 5.30pm EST but will be adjusted to allow for daylight saving time. After a short break a service of evening prayer and reflection has been conducted by Rev Lyle Hughes who was for many years Archdeacon of Western NSW (Diocese of Bathurst).....this has been well received

A detailed submission had been submitted to Bishop Jeremy who approved it with enthusiasm and his blessing. He had previously participated in a normal Toastmasters Meeting and observed that the teaching techniques that have been developed over a long period by Toastmasters International would be of great advantage to clergy and laity of the Church. These skills include self-confidence, public speaking, leadership, time management and communication skills that would enhance the spread of the Gospel.

There will be opportunity for Eternity Toastmasters to participate in speech competitions and conferences and have fellowship with Toastmasters who come

from all walks of life.

Toastmasters International has approved the new club Eternity Toastmasters and emphasised that they would provide any assistance that would enhance the success of the club and in fact Craig Bowen (Head of the Cathedral Chapter in Brisbane) has been appointed as club coach and he is well known to Bishop Jeremy. As well as being an established Toastmaster, he holds high office in Rotary International and in this regard he is working on a liaison between Rotary and Toastmasters.

The initial two meetings have been demonstration meetings of the teachings of Toastmasters including very high standard speeches. Table topics is the cornerstone of public speaking in terms of participants being subjected to random subjects and to submit a speech "off the cuff". This is something that we do every day and is a good introduction to the formal speech making in which Toastmasters excel.

At each meeting additional assignments are given in meeting procedure and time management. Additional skills are attained in leadership skills in the more detailed syllabus of speeches and other assignments that are contained in the new digital teaching aid





called Pathways.

At the two meetings that we have had so far there have been four clergy observers from NSW Queensland and Western Australia most of them had no idea of Toastmasters nor in fact the Anglican Men's Society. All of them can see the benefits of both organisations. And in particular noted that AMS had initiated the project between Toastmasters International and AMS.

Apparently the Rector of Lakes Anglican Rev Jody Zammit (who had been scripture master at our second meeting) had favourably reported her experience to Dr Peter Stuart Bishop of Newcastle. and an email was received from him giving his full support and blessing to the project.

We have three members from NSW who have joined Eternity Toastmasters and a further 6 members from elsewhere have joined. This in Toastmasters terms together with visitor observers is an outstandingly result. Membership is open to male and female members and already there is an excellent diversification of age. There are two members with Muslim and Buddhist background.

Bishop Jeremy has in mind that after Eternity Toastmasters has been established as a success as a model he will take the model to each of the Dioceses in Australia .

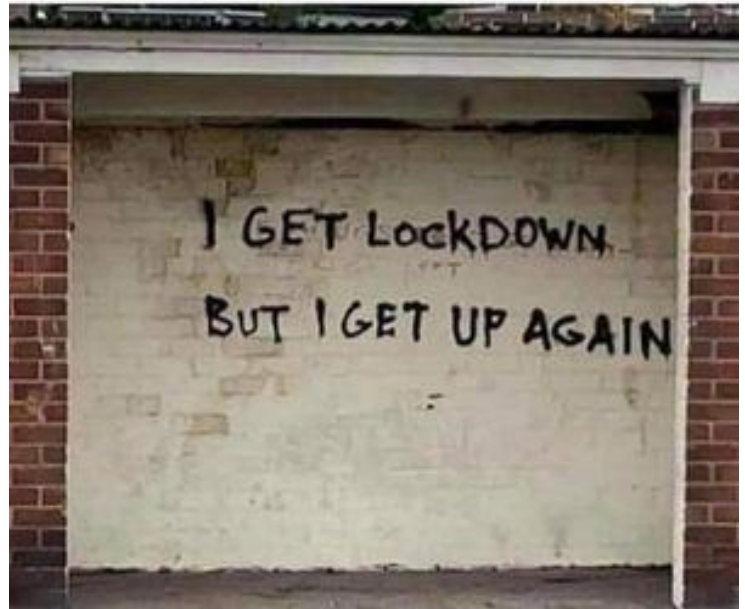
We have already been in touch with the diocese of Northwest Australia , Perth ,Bunbury ,Northern Territory, Willochra, Murray and of course Newcastle.

We have been promised action from these dioceses in that a representative will be allocated to visit a meeting of Eternity Toastmasters. Perth and Newcastle dioceses have attended the last meeting and from what we can gather were very interested in what they observed at the meeting.

One of the important factors is that the Anglican Men's Society has been seen as actively pursuing a project that will equip Christians in communication of the teaching of all the precepts that we all hold very precious. The cost of the project has been underwritten by AMS NSW.

At this stage there is a lot of work to be done to maintain the growth of Eternity Toastmasters and the prayers of all AMS members would be appreciated.and we will keep you informed of progress

Neil McMullen, President Eternity Toastmasters Club
AMS NSW



Just for a laugh...

“Most seniors never get enough exercise. In His wisdom God decreed that seniors become forgetful so they would have to search for their glasses, keys and other things thus doing more walking. *And God looked down and saw that it was good.*

Then God saw there was another need. In His wisdom He made seniors lose coordination so they would drop things requiring them to bend, reach, and stretch. *And God looked down and saw that it was good.*

Then God considered the function of bladders and decided seniors would have additional calls of nature requiring more trips to the bathroom, thus providing more exercise. *God looked down and saw that it was good.*

So, if you find as you age, you are getting up and down more, remember it's all in your best interest even though you mutter under your breath”



Getting Back to Normal

An opinion piece from Peter Reynolds



At first I was wryly amused, but now I am mainly irritated by people - especially some of our leaders - babbling on about "getting back to normal".

There is no "normal". It is a chimera (an illusion or fabrication of the mind).

In the early 1900s, what was "normal" were large families, a high infant mortality rate, home-made clothes and food, and rudimentary toilet arrangements. People walked, or rode horses; only the very wealthy owned cars. In 2021, people walk purely for exercise, most people own cars, and only the wealthy own horses.

In the 1950s, "normal" was the nuclear family; communication was by post, telephone (for those who had it) or telegram. Shopping was done in shopping strips along the main street, at specialised shops. Most foodstuffs were either fresh or canned, and meals were prepared at home. Bread, milk and ice (the older ones among us might remember ice-chests) were delivered to the home. Entertainment revolved around the wireless, the movies or "socials at the church hall or School of Arts.

Between 1960 and the present there have been enormous changes - technological, medical and social - and we have got used to, and adopted these changes. These quickly became "normal".

"Normal" simply means what we have adapted to, and can live with. At the moment, we have not adapted to, nor are comfortable with Covid-19 and lock-downs. So our days at present are not "normal".

But experience tells us that we cannot go back to what was. The current pandemic is going to bring about more social change, changes to patterns of work, schooling, shopping and international relations. Just as in the past, not all changes will be for the good. Sadly, the attitudes and behaviour of precious, selfish and pampered people - who "know their rights" but accept no responsibilities - does not bode well for our community.

As Moses lamented about his people (Deuteronomy 32: 28-29):

They are a nation without sense, there is no discernment in them. If only they were wise and would understand this, and discern what their end will be!"

Another effect of the Corona virus pandemic is that it has deflected our attention from other looming crises.

As a nation, Australia has sat on its hands for too long in the face of climate change. It has tried to close its eyes and shut the gate on the mass migratory movements that are seeing refugee camps springing up around the world, while a third major challenge is the growth of religious and ideological fanaticism, often leading to acts of terrorism.

In all this time of change, I feel that our congregation is managing fairly well, have learnt many valuable lessons and developed skills which will help us to adjust to coming changes. Most of us are improving our technical skills, and have adapted to a technology-centred communications environment.

More importantly, we have managed to stick together (even if, at the moment, it is only on-line), and have done our best to support each other..

Hopefully, we will be able to build on all this in future, improve our social media skills and maintain a "cyber presence" even after the congregation can physically gather together again.

However as the parable of the wise and foolish virgins teaches, believers are called upon to be aware of what is going on, and to be prepared for what is to come. In the Old Testament, the advisers of the king (Esther 1:13) and men of the tribe of Issachar (1Chronicles 12:32) are commended as "men who understood the times"; in the New Testament, our Lord Himself is critical of the religious leaders - both Pharisees and Sadducees (Matthew 16: 3b-4):

"You know how to interpret the appearance of the sky, but you cannot interpret the signs of the times..."

In a time of increasing social divisiveness, misinformation, false teachings, extreme ideologies - and resulting governmental interference with our (including the church's) activities, we need to be on guard.

As Paul told the Ephesians (Eph 5: 17):

"Be very careful, then, how you live - not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. Therefore, do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is."

We must, in these evil days, stand firm in our faith and continue to support each other in prayer and in fellowship.

(Contributed by Neil McMullen)

There has been some very good news from the AMANI Foundation (Hearts for Africa)

“The Hearts for Africa Foundation is a not-for-profit dedicated to long-term, intergenerational change in living standards for local communities in Tanzania, East Africa. We believe that quality education, access to fresh water, good nutrition and healthcare should not only be available, but are the fundamental and critical building blocks of any developing society. Our heart is to support, partner with, and empower the people of the Makang’wa Village and surrounding Dodoma region as they learn the necessary work and life skills to implement lasting solutions for future generations. “

There is too much information to go into an AMS Newsletter but the Website carries all the AMANI News www.amsnational.org.au



For your prayers...

Please pray for our church and for the Anglican Mens' Society Australia.

Please pray for local branches of the AMS, for existing members and for the raising up of new members

Please pray for the new “Eternity Toastmasters” initiative

Please pray for the National Executive: Bishop Jeremy, Andy Brodersen, Trevor Cowell, Grahame Foster and all who contribute to the life of AMS

Please pray for those suffering because of the COVID pandemic.

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