

ST GEORGE'S ANGLICAN CHURCH, MALVERN

Fourth Sunday after Epiphany 26 January 2025

Liturgical Commemoration of Australia Day



Your Presence, O Lord, endures, as the Rock at the heart of our land.

9:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.

A Reflection

Australia Day has an ambiguous character for Christian people. And Christian observance on the day will reflect this ambiguous character. We give thanks to God for the beauty and blessings of this land, for all the land offers, God's providence in the story of this nation, and the privilege of living here.

But Christian people cannot avoid facing the sustained injustice experienced by indigenous Australians in their dispossession of Country, land and waterways that were not only their homes, but crucial parts of their spiritual lives. Nor can we forget the harsh treatment meted out to convicts — many of whom were victims of economic and political injustice; the struggle of pioneer settlers to survive; the harm wrought by the White Australia policy and the mistreatment of minorities. There is also the nation's misuse of God's creation and the consequences for the unique flora and fauna that are significant in our self-understanding and-representation as a nation, a people. And Christians must also acknowledge and recall with sadness the sectarian rivalry between Christian denominations that dominated and marred so much of our history since European settlement.

Today, in the context of a Christian eucharist, we may also reflect on the ambiguous nature of this liturgy, the one that is at the heart of Christian worship and identity, and has been for nearly 2,000 years. A eucharist is, literally, a "thanksgiving": we give thanks to God for the reconciliation of God and all creation, achieved by God in Christ and by the power the Spirit. But to help us arrive at this place of thanksgiving, our liturgy leads us to "confess our sins in penitence and faith": to acknowledge the times when we "have not loved [God] with our whole heart, [nor] our neighbours as ourselves". A further central part of that 'thanksgiving' is the memory of Jesus' betrayal ["On the night he was betrayed, he took bread..."], his death ["proclaiming his offering of himself... on the cross, his mighty resurrection and glorious ascension"]. That includes his identification (as we will hear this morning) with "wounded ones: the convicts, the hunted, the dispossessed, the refugees." These are the words that, bizarrely, make up our great thanksgiving to God: thanks for the work of reconciliation accomplished through Jesus' betrayal, pain, and resurrection.

In other words, to celebrate a Christian eucharist – that liturgy founded on the ambiguity of the worst that can be done to a human person being the manner by which God reconciles all things to God – on Australia Day is "meet and right". And it is, indeed, "meet, right and our bounden duty, always and everywhere" both to give thanks for all we share here in this land under the Southern Cross, while remembering that such "thanks" is only rightly offered when it is accompanied by repentance and a determination to live as those who are reconciled with God and with each other, and therefore attempt to live and proclaim the Christian gospel of reconciliation.

Today, we can understand how this gospel of reconciliation is traced in our land and history. Let us pray that we will continue to work to bring God's reconciliation to all we encounter in this land.

Adapted, in part, from Australian Anglicans Remember, by Charles Sherlock (Broughton Publishing, 2015)

GATHERING IN GOD'S NAME

We stand to sing the following hymn:

- Where wide sky rolls down and touches red sand, where sun turns to gold the grass of the land, let spinifex, mulga and waterhole tell their joy in the One who made everything well.
- 2. Where rain-forest calm meets reef, tide and storm, where green things grow lush and oceans are warm, let every sea-creature and tropical bird exult in the light of the life-giving Word.
- 3. Where red gum and creek cross hillside and plain, where cool tree-ferns rise to welcome the rain, let bushland, farm, mountain-top, all of their days delight in the Spirit who formed them for praise.
- 4. Now people of faith, come gather around with songs to be shared, for blessings abound! Australians, whatever your culture or race, come lift up your hearts to the Giver of grace.

Words: Elizabeth J. Smith (1956–) *Music*: 'Hanover' melody prob. by William Croft (1678–1727)

Celebrant: Blessed be God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

All: Blessed be God's kingdom, now and for ever.

The Lord be with you. And also with you.

The Celebrant welcomes the congregation, then this formal welcome is read:

Today we stand in footsteps millennia old.

We acknowledge the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung and Bunurong peoples of the East Kulin nations, traditional owners and custodians of the land on which we meet, whose culture and customs have nurtured and continue to nurture this land. We pay our respects to their elders, past and present, acknowledging their continuing connexion to Country and waters.

We honour the abiding legacy of these ancestors, who reside in the imagination of this land and whose spiritual connection flows through all creation. We pray that we may walk together on the path to reconciliation.

Sentence

One generation shall praise your works to another, O LORD, and declare your mighty acts.

The LORD upholds all those who stumble, and raises up those that are bowed down.

Psalm 145:4, 14

Let us pray.

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hidden: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy name, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

We say together:

Lord, have mercy. Christ, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

Christ the Son of God has been revealed as a light to the nations, and in the Cross that fills the night skies of this Great Southern Land.

Silence is kept.

Let us bring our darkness to his light, confessing our sins of ignorance, prejudice and complacency in penitence and faith, confident in God's forgiveness: Merciful God,
our maker and our judge,
we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed,
and in what we have failed to do:
we have not loved you with our whole heart;
we have not loved our neighbours as ourselves;
we repent, and are sorry for all our sins.
Father, forgive us.
Strengthen us to love and obey you in newness of life;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Celebrant pronounces Absolution, and the people respond **Amen.**

Glory to God in the highest, and peace to God's people on earth. Lord God, heavenly King, almighty God and Father, we worship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glory.

Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father Lord God, Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world: have mercy on us; you are seated at the right hand of the Father: receive our prayer.

For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

Let us pray.

The people pray silently, and then the President 'collects' the silent prayer:

Bountiful God, we give thanks for this ancient and beautiful land:

- a land of despair and hope,
- a land of wealth and abundant harvests,
- a land of fire, drought and flood;

we give thanks for those who nurtured this land for millenia beyond counting, and those who came to find a home of peace and hope.

We pray that your Spirit may continue to move in this land and bring forgiveness, reconciliation and an end to injustice; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

THE MINISTRY OF THE WORD

First Reading

Jeremiah 29:4–14

A reading from the book of the prophet Jeremiah:

Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, to all the exiles whom I have sent into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon:

Build houses and live in them; plant gardens and eat what they produce.

Take wives and have sons and daughters;

take wives for your sons, and give your daughters in marriage,

that they may bear sons and daughters; multiply there, and do not decrease.

But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile,

and pray to the LORD on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare.

For thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel:

Do not let the prophets and the diviners who are among you deceive you, and do not listen to the dreams that they dream,

for it is a lie that they are prophesying to you in my name;

I did not send them, says the LORD.

For thus says the LORD:

Only when Babylon's seventy years are completed will I visit you, and I will fulfil to you my promise and bring you back to this place. For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the LORD, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope.

Then when you call upon me and come and pray to me, I will hear you. When you search for me, you will find me; if you seek me with all your heart, I will let you find me, says the LORD, and I will restore your fortunes and gather you from all the nations and all the places where I have driven you, says the LORD, and I will bring you back to the place from which I sent you into exile.

Hear the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm 33:12-21

Response: Happy is the people the LORD has chosen as his own!

- Happy is the nation whose God is the LORD! happy the people he has chosen to be his own!
- 13 The LORD looks down from heaven, and beholds all the people in the world.
- 14 From where he sits enthroned he turns his gaze on all who dwell on earth.
- 15 He fashions all the hearts of them, and understands all their works.

R.

R.

R.

- 16 There is no king that can be saved by a mighty army; the strong are not delivered by great strength.
- 17 The horse is a vain hope for deliverance; for all its strength it cannot save.
- 18 Behold the eye of the LORD is upon those who fear him, on those who wait upon his love,
- 19 To pluck their lives from death, and to feed them in time of famine. R.
- Our soul waits for the LORD; he is our help and our shield.
- 21 Indeed, our heart rejoices in him, for in his holy name we put our trust.
- 22 Let your loving-kindness, O LORD, be upon us, as we have put our trust in you.

Second Reading

I Thessalonians 5:12-24

A reading from the first letter of Paul to the Church in Thessalonika:

But we appeal to you, brothers and sisters,

to respect those who labour among you, and have charge of you in the Lord and admonish you; esteem them very highly in love because of their work.

Be at peace among yourselves. And we urge you, beloved,

to admonish the idlers, encourage the faint-hearted, help the weak,

be patient with all of them. See that none of you repays evil for evil,

but always seek to do good to one another and to all.

Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

Do not quench the Spirit.

Do not despise the words of prophets, but test everything; hold fast to what is good; abstain from every form of evil.

May the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do this.

Hear the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Gospel John 8:31–36

Alleluia, alleluia!

Your laws are all made firm, O Lord, established for ever more.

Alleluia!

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, according to John.

Glory to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Then Jesus said to the Jews who had believed in him, 'If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples; and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.'

They answered him,

'We are descendants of Abraham and have never been slaves to anyone. What do you mean by saying, "You will be made free"?'

Jesus answered them,

'Very truly, I tell you, everyone who commits sin is a slave to sin.

The slave does not have a permanent place in the household; the son has a place there for ever.

So if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed.'

For the gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

All sit.

The Sermon. After the sermon, silence is kept.

All stand

Let us together affirm the faith of the Church:

We believe in one God, the Father, the almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made, of one being with the Father;
through him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary
and became truly human.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again

On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father [and the Son], who with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets.

We believe in one holy Catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

For the Anglican Church

The Episcopal/Anglican Province of Alexandria; The Anglican Church of Australia; St Mary's, Caulfield with St Clement's, Elsternwick; St Thomas', Burwood; and Religious Orders serving within the Anglican Church of Australia.

For all in need

May all who are in trouble, in need or sickness find peace and refreshment in you especially: Anath; Ann; Bethany and family; Catherine and family; Charlie; Collin and family; Helen; John; Kaye; Margaret; Mary; Nigel; Ravi; and Roma.

For the Faithful Departed

Those who have died recently: Jill Clayer; Judith Sharrock; Glenna Thomas; and those whose anniversary of death occurs this week: Eric Angliss; Esther Hazel Atkinson; Alan Baxter; Charlotte Bayley; James Cable; George Elliot; George Graham Findlay; Constance Francis; Maxwell Glover; Peter Jackson; Caroline Leonard; John McDonald; Ethel Manning; Lyndsay Nettlefold; Edward Newton; Isabel Ann Osborn; and Winifred Wilkinson.

All stand

THE GREETING OF PEACE

We are the body of Christ.

His Spirit is with us.

The peace of the Lord be always with you.

And also with you.

We greet one another with an appropriate sign of God's peace.

We sing the following hymn, as the table is prepared:

- Blest are the pure in heart,
 For they shall see our God,
 The secret of the Lord is theirs,
 Their soul is Christ's abode.
- The Lord, who left the heavens
 Our life and peace to bring,
 To dwell in lowliness on earth,
 Our pattern and our King;
- Still to the lowly soul
 He doth himself impart,
 And for his dwelling and his throne
 Chooseth the pure in heart.
- Lord, we thy presence seek;
 May ours this blessing be:
 Give us a pure and lowly heart,
 A temple meet for thee.

Words: John Keble (1792–1866), et al Music: 'Franconia, W. H. Havergal (1793–1870)

THE LITURGY OF THE SACRAMENT

The gifts are set on the altar and the President offers this prayer:

Generous God of Holy Dreaming, through your goodness we have these gifts to share. Accept and use our offerings for your glory and for the service of your kingdom.

Blessed be God for ever.

The President then begins the Great Thanksgiving Prayer

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

All glory and honour, thanks and praise, be yours now and always, Lord of every time and place, God beyond our dreaming.

We give you thanks that from the dawn of creation your Spirit has brooded over this ancient land: you spoke and the gum tree grew. In the vast desert and dense forest and in cities at the waters' edge, creation sings your praise. Your presence endures as the rock at the heart of our Land.

In the fullness of time you revealed your Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ, who by the power of your Spirit was born of Mary and lived as one of us.

When Jesus hung upon the tree you heard the cries of all your people and became one with your wounded ones: the convicts, the hunted, the dispossessed, the refugees.

We give you thanks that in him you have revealed to us your presence in the vastness of this land, your love in its fruitfulness, and your purpose in its cycles of death and renewed life. The sunrise of your Son colours the earth anew, and bathes it in glorious hope.

And so, with angels and archangels,
with people from every nation, country,
tribe and language,
and with the Church throughout the ages,
we proclaim your great and glorious name,
for ever praising you and saying:

Holy, holy Lord, God of power and might. Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

Merciful Father, we thank you for these gifts of your creation, this bread and wine, and we pray that we who eat and drink them in obedience to our Saviour Christ, by the power of the Holy Spirit, may be partakers of his body and blood, and be made one with him, with each other, and with all who set foot on this country, in peace and love.

On the night he was betrayed Jesus took bread; and when he had given you thanks he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, 'Take, eat. This is my body given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.'

Likewise, after supper, he took the cup, and again giving you thanks he gave it to his disciples, saying, 'Drink from this, all of you.

This is my blood of the new covenant shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins.

Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.'

proclaiming his offering of himself made once for all upon the cross, his mighty resurrection and glorious ascension, and looking for his coming again, we celebrate, with this bread and this cup, his one perfect and sufficient sacrifice

Therefore, we do as our Saviour has commanded:

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

for the sins of the whole world.

Christ has died.
Christ is risen.
Christ will come again.

As we eat and drink this holy sacrament, renew us by your Spirit that we may be united in the body of your Son and serve you as a royal priesthood in the joy of your eternal kingdom.

Receive our praises, Father,
through Jesus Christ our Lord,
with whom and in whom,
by the power of the Holy Spirit,
we worship you in songs of never-ending praise:

Blessing and honour and glory and power are yours for ever and ever. Amen.

Silence is kept.

As our Saviour Christ has taught us, we are confident to pray:

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done, on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and for ever. Amen.

THE BREAKING OF THE BREAD AND THE COMMUNION

As the President breaks the bread, the following is said:

As this broken bread was once many grains which have been gathered together and made one bread:

so may your Church be gathered from the ends of the earth into your kingdom.

Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world, have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world, have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world, grant us your peace.

The gifts of God for the people of God.

All are invited to receive the sacrament.

During Communion, the choir sings the following anthem:

May the Lord show his mercy upon you;
May the light of his presence be your guide:
May he guard you and uphold you;
May his spirit be ever by your side.
When you sleep, may his angels watch over you;
When you wake, may he fill you with his grace:
May you love him and serve him all your days,
Then in heaven may you see his face.

Words and Music: John Rutter (b. 1945)

After Communion, silence is kept.

THE SENDING OUT OF GOD'S PEOPLE

All stand and the President prays:

God of Holy Dreaming, we thank you for this sacred meal we share together on this day of mixed emotions; a meal that brings the reconciling spirit of Christ into our hearts and brings us closer to you and to each other. May our lives be lit by your love, and may your love enlighten others through us.

Father.

we offer ourselves to you as a living sacrifice, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Send us out in the power of your Spirit to live and work to your praise and glory.

- Almighty God, lift up our eyes; inspire us all with visions brave; from mountain heights' grey driven skies, to cities hemmed with sunlit wave, from bushlands green to desert plain, recall us to your truth again.
- 2. We do not seek the power, O Lord, to wing swift death with greater speed; but love, to be your love's reward, your love, to match our spirit's need grant this; but human wrath repeal, and all the troubled peoples heal.
- 3. Let not our land a tyrant know, nor shackled freedom give us shame; strongholds of selfishness o'erthrow: God, light in us your Spirit's flame now fire this nation's heart and will your mighty purpose to fulfil.

Words: William Courtenay Saunders Johnson (1907–87) alt. Music: 'Melita', John Bacchus Dykes (1823–76)

THE BLESSING

A blessing is pronounced to which the people respond:

Amen.

National Anthem for Australia

Australians all let us rejoice,
For we are one and free;
We've golden soil and wealth for toil;
Our home is girt by sea;
Our land abounds in nature's gifts
Of beauty rich and rare;
In history's page, let every stage
Advance Australia Fair.
In joyful strains then let us sing:
Advance Australia Fair.

Beneath our radiant Southern Cross
We'll toil with hearts and hands
To make this Commonwealth of ours
Renowned of all the lands.
For those who've come across the seas
We've boundless plains to share;
With courage let us all combine
To Advance Australia Fair.
In joyful strains then let us sing:
Advance Australia Fair.

Go, walk gently on country, learning to love and serve our God. In the name of Christ. Amen.

We look forward to sharing time together over lunch under the trees in the garden.

NOTICES

Thanks to all those, ably co-ordinated and led by Ewan and Sandra Morgan, who set up for this morning's liturgy and for the lunch to follow.

Next Sunday we will welcome to St George's our new Honorary Assistant Priest, The Reverend Fr Jeremy Cavanagh. Born and raised, and undertaking his initial studies in Australia, Jeremy was ordained in the Diocese of London, and has been serving in the parishes of St Stephen and St John, Westminster, and St Saviour's, Pimlico. He is returning to Australia, and is delighted to have the opportunity to be a part of the community here in Malvern and at St George's.

A reminder: on Tuesday, February 4 The Reverend Dr Aaron Ghiloni will be commissioned for a 'new ministry' at St John's, Camberwell (552 Burke Road). The liturgy begins at 7:00 p.m., and all from this parish are warmly invited to attend to wish Aaron, Jodie, Noah and the people of St John's our blessings as this new ministry begins. Please continue to pray for Aaron as he undertakes this new ministry. Please RSVP to office@stjohnscamberwell by 28 January 2025.

Scripture Readings next week

THE PRESENTATION OF CHRIST IN THE TEMPLE

Malachi 3:1–4 Hebrews 2:14–18 Psalm 24 Luke 2:22–40

Roster for today COMMEMORATION OF AUSTRALIA DAY 26 January 2025 9:30 a.m. Holy Eucharist Combined Service		Roster for today THE PRESENTATION OF CHRIST IN THE TEMPLE 2 February 2025 8:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist	
Acolytes	Judy Mallinson Malcolm Tadgell	Acolyte	Malcolm Tadgell
Eucharistic Assistants	Geraldine Powell Betty Renjen	Eucharistic Assistants	Jenny Weller-Newton Leonie Bird
Intercessor	John Stewart	Intercessor	Venetia Patchett
Readers	Suzie Hill Brian Tobin	Readers	Miriam Cherry David Sheppherd
Morning Tea	Sandra and Ewan Morgan		
Thursday 10:15 a.m. Holy Eucharist		I 0:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist	
Sides-persons	Miriam Cherry	Sides-persons	Melissa Carson Philip Jenkins
Reader	Miriam Cherry	Acolytes	Meg Winter Vincent Amos
		Eucharistic Assistants	Ray Lester Ewan Morgan
		Intercessor	Meg Winter
		Readers	Geraldine Powell Vincent Amos
		Morning Tea	Geraldine Powell Claire Sheppard
		Thursday 10:15 a.m. Holy Eucharist	
		Sides-person	Judy Wright
		Reader	Judy Wright

Morning Prayer

9:00 a.m., Monday – Saturday

Meeting ID: 709 867 2691; Passcode: 630283

https://us06web.zoom.us/j/7098672691?pwd=TFBBSGYxb2lhcUl3RWR1dm1XWDQ4Zz09

Evening Prayer

5:00 p.m., Monday - Saturday

Meeting ID: 709 867 2691; Passcode: 630283

https://us06web.zoom.us/j/7098672691?pwd=TFBBSGYxb2lhcUI3RWRIdmIXWDQ4Zz09

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VICAR

The Reverend Dr Gregory Seach

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HONORARY ASSOCIATE PRIEST

The Reverend Matthew Dowsey 0412 852 697

ORGANIST AND DIRECTOR OF MUSIC

Tom Baldwin music@stgeorgesmalvern.org

CHURCH OFFICE

Adrian Chong (Annual Leave returning Monday February 3)

Monday-Friday 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. Phone: 9822 3030 Option 2

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 Leonie Bird
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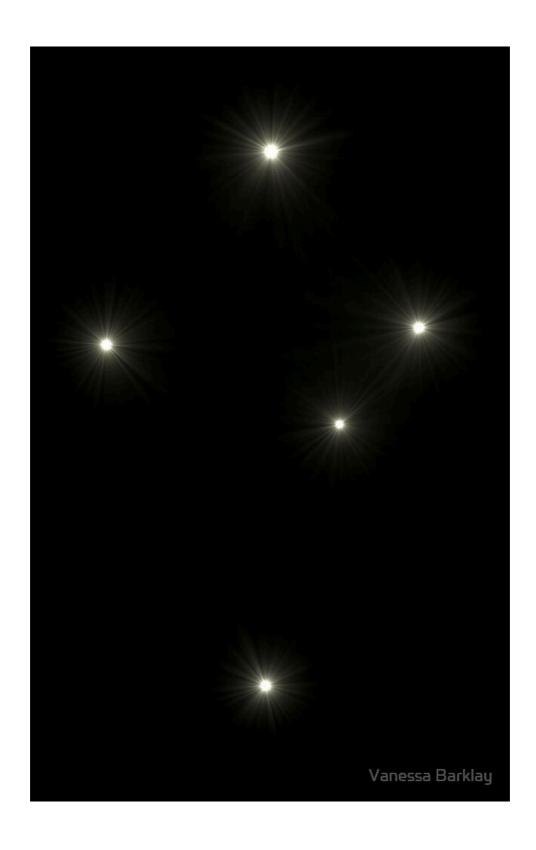
CHILD SAFE OFFICER

Leonie Bird 0409 860 026

We acknowledge the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung and Bunurong peoples of the East Kulin nations

as the Traditional Custodians of the land upon which we meet.

We pay our respects to their Elders past and present,
acknowledge their continuing spiritual and living connection to Country,
and affirm our commitment to walk together the path of reconciliation



May the "radiant Southern Cross" shine as a light and sign for all in this land.