



Hope25 @ Synod

I had the privilege of facilitating a Hope25 panel at Synod last weekend with the aim of giving Synod representatives a taste of some of the Hope25 activity that has been occurring across the Diocese and to present the following motion which was received unanimously by Synod with applause:

That this Synod commit to maintaining the focus on outreach generated by the Hope25 project as a Diocesan priority, and asks the Bishop and Diocesan Staff to identify opportunities each year for parishes and ministry centres to share what they have been doing with regard to outreach and how that has impacted the life of their communities.

Panel members shared the following:

Our very own *Robert Mesley* shared about our Gospel Music Open Mic and how much it has impacted him personally and how he is being stopped in the street by people who attended for a chat about singing.

Daniel Gebert from Warragul parish shared how as a parish they engaged Julie-Anne Baird for their parish camp who provided excellent training in how to share the gospel. Throughout Easter to Pentecost they have been offering services addressing common questions people ask about faith and encouraging parishioners to invite people who don't usually go to church along.

Dave Perryman from Avon parish shared about their desire as a parish to run Alpha but that they realised that they were under resourced to do it. This however lead them to teaming up with the Cathedral parish and a course has successfully been rolled out between the two parishes. He emphasised the benefits of churches working together to achieve a common purpose.

Bec Hayman from Churchill reported that her parish had worked through the evangelism course *The Ripple Effect* which they found very helpful, teaching them how to share in and use ordinary spaces. This has led to some creative ideas. One such idea was to have a campfire on the front lawn of the church, a piece of land that had been viewed by everyone as a burden has now become seen as a resource. Instead of a direct invite to the neighbourhood they decided to take a gentler approach producing a flyer to alert them what the church was doing and a gentle you are welcome to join us statement at the bottom. This resulted in one family from the neighbourhood attending the evening.

Sharron Lane told us about the Gippsland Camino which was a three-day pilgrimage along the Gippsland Plain Rail Trail from Traralgon to Stratford. This event was ecumenical with various churches along the trail opening and providing refreshments and sanctuary for participants. 25 pilgrims participated including the bishop who filmed his Synod Service Sermon along the way so Synod reps got a feel for what it would have been like to make the trek. For people along the track who were not participating the pilgrimage became a talking point creating opportunity for sharing and giving away Hope25 Luke Gospels.

Our Hope banner was showcased at Synod and was positively received.

The parish Hope25 team in step with Synod plans to continue on post the official end of Hope25 at Pentecost with a focus on facilitating more outreach activities for the parish into the future. Anyone is still welcome to join the team. **We are still looking for faith journey stories to share in our newsletter** so if you have one or plan to write one please give it to Leah or Susan. I'm sure everyone would agree that it has been a delight reading each other's stories. Please keep praying for the leading of the Holy Spirit in our efforts to share Jesus with others.

Reverend Susan Liersch