

St Philip's Collingwood: a potted history S. Lawrence & E. Furniss (updated Feb 2025 B. Everett)

St Philip's Collingwood is located within the traditional boundaries of the *Wurundjeri willam* people of the *Woi-Wurrung* clan. The name *Wurundjeri willam* comes from *wurru*, meaning 'white gum tree' and *jerri*, meaning a particular type of grub found in that tree.¹ *Wurundjeri Woi-Wurrung* Peoples have cared for the land where St Philips is now placed for tens of thousands of years. A little plaque at the entrance of the church makes it plain: God of Holy Dreaming, Great Creator Spirit, St Philip's Anglican Church Collingwood acknowledges that this church is built on land for which the Wurundjeri people are the traditional custodians. Lead us on, Great Spirit.

Melbourne was established as a European settlement in June 1835, with John Batman and the Port Philip Association purchasing 600,000 acres of land and signing a treaty with Woi Wurrung elders at Merri Creek, now Northcote.² Collingwood was named by Robert Hoddle, Surveyor General, after the naval hero, Admiral Collingwood, and is found in red ink on one of Hoddle's maps of 1842.

Industry was a feature of Collingwood almost from the start and the suburb was to become known for tanning and wool-scouring, brewing, brick making, glass making, boot making, and textile industries. By 1870, 43 factories were recorded as operating in Collingwood, the most of any suburb outside of the town of Melbourne, with Collingwood known as the boot and hat manufacturing centre for Australia. Originally known as Newton, it was not Kew or North Fitzroy, nor even the place for 'the nobs' up the hill in Smith Street, and the people of this swampy corner, commonly known as 'The Flat', were beset with poor housing and polluting factories, often lived in dire conditions.

Only 20 years after Melbourne was settled, the Anglican community started meeting a few streets east of the Collingwood flats, on the corner of Nicholson St and Marine Pde near what is now called St Phillip's Street, at a small stone school called Christ Church Hall in 1855. This was an outpost of St Mark's Fitzroy, which extended from Carlton to Kew, and the school building was erected near the present site of Collingwood baths. The foundation stone was laid 3 November 1855 by Rev. J A Clowes³. The first morning service was held on 27 June 1858 and was conducted by Rev. Jas Linskea. Later services were mainly conducted by layman and a Fitzroy second hand furniture dealer, Nathaniel Kinsman, who gained a reputation as the marrying vicar as he performed more than 7,000 marriages. Church services were held in the schoolhouse from 1858 and it remained a school well into the 1880's. However, when the St Mark's Fitzroy folk wanted to install a priestly person, Rev. C J Martin, Kinsman and his flock broke away and formed their own Victorian Free Church on the corner of Park and Studley Streets where it lasted until 1907.

¹ *St Philip's Church & Vicarage, Collingwood Archaeological Watching Brief Matrix* Archaeological Services July 2005

² <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2024-11-02/batman-treaty-melbourne-aboriginal-victoria-history-colonisation/104199610>

³ Jubilee Souvenir, St Philip's Church Collingwood, 1865-1915

On 27 March 1863, a meeting was chaired by Sir William Stawell to consider a new parish on Hoddle Street, Abbotsford. With the consent of Rev. R B Barlow, and his wardens and trustees, the district bounded by Wellington St, Simpson's Road (i.e. Victoria Parade), the Yarra River and Gold and Roseneath streets, were separated from St Mark's and the new parish of St Philip's was formed in 1863. Rev Thomas Cornelius Cole was the first vicar. Thomas Payne, a wealthy local, sold the church trustees an allotment of land and then gave them back 75% of the proceeds. Sir Arthur Snowden, 44th Mayor of Melbourne and a keen advocate for reform of the poor living conditions in Collingwood, also helped to establish and support St. Philip's for 50 years as Vestryman or Churchwarden. The churchyard was securely fenced in and neatly laid out by the patients from the Yarra Bend Asylum.⁴ St Philip's church was designed by Lloyd Taylor and plans for the proposed church were approved on 25 September 1863. Two months later tenders were advertised to build the nave at the cost of £2,500 and it was built by the contractors, Messrs Morgan and Jones.⁵ The foundation stone was laid on 29 December 1863 by Sir C H Darling, the Governor of Victoria. "The ceremony on that memorable occasion must have been a picturesque one. Records say that there was a procession from St Mark's, after a service, headed by a brass band and including the trustees, the building committee, the church committee, the architects, the incumbent of St Mark's Clergy, Church Wardens, Collingwood Rifle Corps, the Governor and his suite, the Mayor, Councillors, the Town Clerk, school children and the police."⁶

At the suggestion of the Dean of the Diocese, the name 'Christ Church' was altered to that of 'St Philip the Apostle', in which the name of the foundation stone was laid. St Philip's was firmly back in the hands of the establishment and the booklet 'Sketch of the Parish of St Philip's Collingwood from 1849-1866' commented: "The good old parochial system brought into full working order, under able and zealous pastors...and instead of running to and fro after some of the popular preachers of the day...certain erratic laymen...of the church they profess to be members, would give their support and attendance at the services provided in their own parish, and thus encourage their lawfully appointed minister in his work."⁷

Rev. T C Cole handed over to Rev Barnabas Shaw Walker (1865-1872) on 15 January 1865. The licence for the building was issued by Bishop Perry and countersigned by Wm. E Morris as Deputy Register. The new church was opened on Thursday 20 April 1865, with the Venerable Archdeacon Crawford of Castlemaine preaching in the afternoon and Rev. BS Walker in the evening. The nave seated 302 people. Bishop Perry preached on 4 June 1865 and the first confirmation service of 40 candidates, took place on 26 August 1865. During the first year, 71 baptisms and 17 marriages were celebrated. The adjoining St Philip's bluestone vicarage was built in 1866, designed by architect John Flannagan and costing £1,000. The full description of the church appeared in 'The Church Gazette' of May 1, 1866. The church was consecrated

⁴ 1975 Writeup of St Philip's vicarage

⁵ https://www.picturevictoria.vic.gov.au/site/yarra_melbourne/Collingwood/9451.html

⁶ *The Collingwood and Fitzroy Courier* Jul 20, 1967 p1

⁷ *Twenty Years of the Church in Collingwood – an Assessment* Appendix O

by Bishop Perry on 3 August 1867. The building was later enlarged through the addition of transepts, which were begun in June 1871³ and the chancel was opened on 22 November 1876.⁴ In 1866, the St Philip's Trustees decided that the construction of a Vicarage "was imperative due to the smallness of the clergyman's income".⁸ The Vicarage was designed by architect John Flannagan and was erected in 1867 adjacent to the incomplete church building.

The Rev. John Heyliger Dewhurst was incumbent (1872-1874). In 1875, St Saviour's Mission Church was built in Oxford St Collingwood to provide a place of worship for members of the Church of England Church who couldn't afford to pay for pews at the larger St Philip's Church nearby. It became Holy Virgin's Protection Russian Orthodox Church and it is currently a residential property. Rev. Dewhurst was succeeded by Rev. John Caton (1874-1884) then Rev. Walter William Mantell, also known as Walter Woodruffe (1884-1895); Rev. Thomas Symonds (1893-1897); Rev. William McKie (1898-1905) who started *The Church Record*, the official newspaper of St Philip's, in 1897; Rev. William Leslie Langley (1905-1907) who oversaw the building of the transepts at a cost of #2,250; Rev. Dennis Murrell Deasey (1907-1912); Rev. Charles John Peterson (1912-1913); and Rev. Harold Balkwell Hewett (1913-1916).

"For many years, St Philip's attracted people from other suburbs because of its evangelical tradition, good preaching and fine choir of men and boys. Many clergy and overseas missionaries originated in the parish and the sons of at least one incumbent became one a bishop [John McKie] and another an organist at Westminster Abbey [William McKie]."⁹

The original St Philip's Sunday School was a prefabricated iron structure, called the Iron Pot, imported by Bishop Perry from Bristol, UK to be used for Holy Trinity Church, Williamstown in 1853. However, it arrived without directions for assembly and was shifted up to Collingwood for them to solve the puzzle. In 1915 plans were drawn up for a new Sunday School building on the site of the iron Sunday School north of the vicarage and the site of the present church and parish hall. According to the 1865-1915 Jubilee Souvenir booklet, "To have a healthy church you must have a healthy Sunday School."

During the First World War from 1915-1918, three thousand soldiers enlisted from Collingwood and 300 made the supreme sacrifice. Building works continued and in 1916 the new parish hall, to cater for the 500 Sunday School children, in 25 classes, was erected and freed of debt within 3 years. In 1918 it was decided that new Vestries would be built by Roussell and Co. to provide better robing facilities for the choir. Sir Arthur Snowden laid the foundation stone. Except for the pews, all the furniture and stained-glass windows were provided in the form of memorials to people who had served St Philip's. By that stage, St Philip's was capable of seating approximately 800 people.

⁸ 1866 Joint Report of Trustees and committees, together with balance sheets for the year 1865

⁹ *Twenty Years of the Church in Collingwood – an Assessment* Appendix O

Vicars of the time included Rev. Leonard Wenzel (1917-1924); Rev. William Edgar Wood (1925-1935) who, in October 1924, presided over the Confirmation of 70 Candidates, witnessed by 234 communicants;¹⁰ Rev. Frederick Parsons (1936-1939); and Rev. Noel Johnston Danne (1939-1961).

The 1939 Slum Abolition Report criticised many Collingwood houses (along with other inner city suburbs) and led to a process of demolition. Many inner city dwellers continued the exodus to middle ring or outer suburbs.¹¹ Danne writes that this growth of slums also “affected the national spirit of Collingwood, for the numbers of men who enlisted in the [Second World] 1939-45 War has dropped considerably despite the increase in population” from those who enlisted in World War I. By 1939, the church was also in great need of repair and \$1,800 was spent during the period of WWII. It was into this situation that the Rev. Noel Danne came in 1939 to spend 20 years of his ministry in the parish.

Despite these tough working-class conditions, the parish of St Philip’s was highly social and had number of clubs: a choir, a Girls’ Friendly Society, the Young Ladies’ Class, a cricket club and a football team. These clubs required regular attendance at worship as a condition of membership. “It is therefore difficult to determine how far reference to large church attendances in the past reflect an accurate picture of the number of committed church goers.”¹² In the early 1940s, St Philip’s was in the forefront of the youth movement, with a scout troop and a large branch of the CEBS. Following the Second World War Collingwood changed dramatically with the construction of the Eastern Freeway bringing increasing urban traffic, and the Housing Commission estate on the opposite side of Hoddle St. with the arrival of immigrants from many countries around the world. The Parish Roll was well kept up in a card system, having some 3,000 families on it, and was ready for house-to-house canvassing. Three evangelistic efforts were undertaken by Rev. Leslie Langley in 1942, the Church Army in 1948 and the United Churches (Billy Graham) effort in 1958.

In 1947 the weekday Kindergarten was taken over, after being run by St Philip’s for 9 years, to central Diocesan authority. In 1958, new toilets and a laundry were added at a cost of \$2,000. The Vicarage was thoroughly renovated in 1949, with two complete flats with an entrance by stairs on the North side, and the flagpole erected from the old tennis courts in 1953.

According to Geoffrey Danne writing in *The Church Record* in 1955, “Today Collingwood embraces Abbotsford and Victoria Park, and for many years had become more and more industrialised, until today this area contains some of the major portions of the slum buildings which disgrace Melbourne’s suburbs.” The residents often could not afford to live elsewhere and certainly, according to Mrs Edith Head of Bishop’s Court, “this parish which is peculiarly one of the poorest in the diocese...the labouring classes

¹⁰ *St Philip’s Church Record* Vol XXVII No, 10 Oct 1924 p1

¹¹ Collingwood Historical Society, Inc 36th Annual History Walk 8 November 2014 The Collingwood Slope

¹² *Twenty Years of the Church in Collingwood – an Assessment* Appendix O

do not give largely at a time, but they give frequently.”¹³ Inner city Melbourne was giving way to growing suburbs, along with ‘the motor car, talkies, radio and TV [which] have altered the whole atmosphere of the church to work in. Children no longer crowd out the Sunday Schools in our industrial city.’

Vicars of the time included Rev. Philip John Atkins (1961-1963); Rev. Earle F Williams (1964-1970); Rev. Allan Clive Clarke ((1971-1973); Rev. Kenneth William Parker (1973-1977). The coming of Rev. P J Atkins in 1961 marked the last occasion on which St Philip’s exercised its right as an autonomous parish to call a vicar of its own choosing. It was Mr Adkins who first encouraged the people of St Philip’s to think about co-operation with Methodists and Presbyterians.”¹⁴

By 1963, the parish was more than \$2,000 in debt and the bluestone church and vicarage gradually fell into disrepair due to lack of funds for maintenance. The newspapers over the years describe many requests for funds for the church and for goods for the people of Collingwood. At a meeting of Collingwood Council in July 1967¹⁵ Cr. H Dummett said that he viewed the demolition “with a great deal of sadness. It was true that the slates were off the roof and the church needed a great deal of money spent on it, but he felt that with the new housing development in Collingwood, the increased population would need a church such as this one.” However, in “when the congregation voted...the decision to demolish the church was unanimous.”¹⁶

The church was demolished in 1968. The windows of St Philip’s church were later installed in the Swan Hill Pioneer Settlement and the organ went to St George the Martyr in Queenscliff. The land where St Philip’s church was demolished is now St Phillip’s Reserve and is owned by the City of Yarra. According to a sign at the front to the park, it was ‘St Philip’s Church Land – space to breathe, to sit, to play.’

This demolition was to the consternation of the National Trust of the day who accused the Bishop, Rev. Geoffrey Sambell, of breaking a promise to consult with them before demolition. According to a press report at the time, Bishop Sambell replied that the church must give priority to the living “not to the maintenance of museums.” Other Anglican churches at Montague and Clifton Hill were also demolished over this period.¹⁷ A combined parish centre for use by Anglicans, Methodists, and Presbyterians, was planned to be built on the St Philip’s Hoddle-Street site.^{18 19}

¹³ *The Church Record* August 1955

¹⁴ *Twenty Years of the Church in Collingwood – an Assessment* Appendix O

¹⁵ *The Courier* Jul 20, 1967 p44

¹⁶ *Twenty Years of the Church in Collingwood – an Assessment* Appendix O

¹⁷ <https://ohta.org.au/organs/organs/CollingwoodAngStPhilips.html> and <https://www.churchesaustralia.org/list-of-churches/locations/victoria/c-e-towns/directory/2642-st-philipand%2339%3Bs-anglican-church>

¹⁸ See also McCutcheon and Vandermark ‘A Proposal for the Renewal of the Church in the Inner Areas: A Pilot Study in Group Ministries’ presented to the Methodist Conference in 1962

¹⁹ See also ‘Mutual Responsibility and Interdependence in the Body of Christ’ presented to the Anglican Congress in 1964-65

This reflected the coming together in January 1964 of Gipps Street Methodist, Collingwood, St George's Presbyterian, Collingwood, St David's Presbyterian, Abbotsford, and St Luke's Methodist, North Richmond, with the Anglican churches, St Philip's, Collingwood, and St Matthias', North Richmond in October 1965. The *Focus* brochure, explaining the combined parish, stated that "The churches, divided and in competing groups, have become a force of division instead of an integrating force in the community...This is why they took as their starting point, not the church in its sickness, but the whole community and its people." According to *Twenty Years of the Church in Collingwood – an Assessment 1949-1965*, "The body divided is not only inefficient, it is a scandal [and] evidence of the churches living a lie in the world!" The ecumenical team ministry initially comprised Reverends Andrew McCutcheon (Methodist), Bruce Anderson and Alan Hokin (Presbyterian), and David Pope and Earl Williams (Anglican). "We merged, Andrew McCutcheon said²⁰, not for the sake of survival, but because separate denominationalism is a divisive force in the community...we are concerned, not so much for the health of the church as for the health and welfare of the whole community...Our job is not to bring people back into the church and hammer this [need for freedom from conformism, from pressures, from self-interest, from idolatry, of wealth and apathy to others] into their heads, but to help them see that Christ is this for them in their own lives." "...service in terms generally outside the structural institution and related to inclusive community rather than exclusive church."²¹

Rev. Ken Parker was priest in charge of the combined parish of Collingwood and North Richmond for 5 years²² as the Anglican Inner City Ministry. The inner city was considered a lively and changing area where the church had to be alert to the needs of the people. There, local congregations, were thought to be generally more adventurous and more willing to experiment than in more settled parishes. Rev. Parker²³ says that the sharing of resources [in team ministry] is something that could be practiced to advantage in any parish, but it is almost obligatory in the small congregation parishes of the inner city.

"It was becoming clear that Collingwood and North Richmond were peopled by a new breed of citizen, the 'non-religious'. They were not even agnostic, just completely indifferent."²⁴ A survey "showed that in Collingwood, there were 11,000 nominal Anglicans [but] the estimated number of communicants in the area was 680...The nominal Presbyterians numbered 1,643 with 173 communicant members and Methodists 2,818 with 174. However, according to the Rev. Ken Parker²⁵, a lot of the work of the parish takes place in the streets. "People stop you, the clerical collar attracts rather than frightens away...The people have so many pressures, particularly those living in the flats – broken homes, illness, and these build up friction in the flat communities."

²⁰ Churchmen link to fight apathy *The Australian* Mar 19, 1966 p7

²¹ *Twenty Years of the Church in Collingwood – an Assessment* p4

²² *Gisborne and Macedon Telegraph* May, 9, 1978 p?

²³ *Gisborne and Macedon Telegraph* May, 9, 1978 p?

²⁴ *Twenty Years of the Church in Collingwood – an Assessment* p36,39

²⁵ *Church Scene* Jan 19, 1978 p25

The *Twenty Years of the Church in Collingwood – an Assessment* outlined the history of ‘the experiment’ of cross-denominational team ministry and by 1968 identified both a crisis and some lessons learned. It says: “We came from the early beginnings which were extremely paternalistic in their attitudes towards the community...through a stage of intense awareness of the pastoral responsibility of the ministry, to the stage of the team ministry...attempting [to work with the person]...you meet him at council level where he is being the manipulator, you meet him at the level of the deprived person where he is being manipulated, you meet him often in the industrial worker where he is being under-employed, frustrated, you meet him in the guise of the business man who has just begun business and who has completely forgotten all of his experience as a working man in the interests of getting himself and his family economically and socially secure, you meet him in the person of the old-age pensioner who, knowing that life is nearly over, feels neglected and forgotten and somehow useless and redundant, you meet him in the man in industry who makes up the Lions or the Rotary Clubs, and people like him who day to day make lonely decisions, who are faced with tremendous responsibilities, who often tremble and quake at the responsibilities they have, but who have no-one to turn to for advice or support.”²⁶

After the church was demolished, the congregation moved into the church kindergarten for the Sunday worship. In fact, many in the local community thought that St Philip’s had gone altogether. But a small faithful group evolved itself into a new set of parish facilities. The southern portion of the old parish hall was reclaimed and renovated to provide a chapel, lounge, study and vestry, and a front room opening onto busy Hoddle Street which became an opportunity shop cum drop-in centre. Archbishop Woods dedicated the renovated parish centre on May 12. The vicarage remained a home and a meeting place. Rev. Ken Parker, writing in the 1960’s said that it was “little changed on the exterior, except for the demolition of the single storey kitchen wing at the back and the unfortunate addition of a laundry block in the 1950s.”²⁷ The Vicarage was classified by the National Trust²⁸ in 1974, albeit as an unremarkable ecclesiastical building of substantial scale but little architectural importance. This Gothic Revival structure is of local historical importance being integrally associated with the social and religious development of the predominantly working class-suburb of Collingwood. It was noted that the townscape contribution of the Vicarage was considerably diminished by demolition of St Phillip’s Church in 1969. However, even the St Philip’s Vicarage came under threat, with the press announcing that “Collingwood Council may bury St Philip’s vicarage, Abbotsford, behind a pedestrian overpass.” Thankfully, the Melbourne Metropolitan Board of Works, favoured a crossing at Vere Street, a site further north of the vicarage.

²⁶ *Twenty Years of the Church in Collingwood – an Assessment* p68

²⁷ Rev. Ken Parker 1975 Writeup of St Philip’s vicarage

²⁸ <http://images.heritage.vic.gov.au/attachment/41454> Historic Legal Status: Registered (21/03/1978) Place ID: 4839 Place File No: 2/11/012/0005

Collingwood was very much in the public eye during the latter half of '77²⁹ as the battle of the Eastern Freeway came to a head - "The freeway that lifts cars out of the suburban streets of Kew and spills them into the inner suburbs. The freeway that cuts another swathe through the inner city, separating neighbour from neighbour, the building of which has caused walls to crack, foundations to move." According to the Rev. Ken Parker, at first the churches tried to keep out of it "But then, when the police moved in, it became so ugly and violent we just thought we might be a pacifying force." A service was held and about 50 people attended, but Ken thought that many were afraid because of the violence.

Meanwhile, at St Philip's kindergarten³⁰, for \$6 a week, the children received a good hot midday meal and an education. To cope with the needs of working mothers, the kindergarten operated for extended hours, 9 to 2.15 five days a week. There were 65 applications in 1978, 25 were eligible and 35 were too young, however, the kindergarten could only take 5 more. The parishioners continued to worship in the brick Sunday School hall, even after the front section was destroyed by fire in 1984. The fire started at the rear of the Hall and one wing was burnt out. Fortunately, the other wing, used a chapel, wasn't damaged. For a little while, church services were held in the vicarage. Vicars of the time included Rev. Raymond Arthur Harvey Wilson (1978-1994).

On August 9, 1987, the Hoddle Street massacre occurred down the road in Clifton Hill. Seven people were killed and 19 injured. On Sunday October 18, a memorial service was held and local clergy led about 200 people in prayer. Two semi-circles of lemon-scented gum trees were planted on either side of Hoddle Street as a memorial, with the prayer "to bless these trees as signs to us of new life and hope, and in God's name, we reclaim this place for our community and for His glory."³¹

Through the 1980 and 90's, attendance at the church declined. Much of the early church fabric may have come and gone but it was and is the people and their Lord who make St Philip's. Women such as Jean Hales, Rene Cogden, Olga Ware, Millie Gobbett, and Marjory Dower kept the place alive until the building of a new church.

It was decided that new church was to be built at the front of the parish hall and Sunday School. Before the new worship centre could be built, archaeologists from La Trobe University conducted a trial excavation to look for traces of the former Sunday School. Later in 2004, archaeologists also monitored the construction of the new worship centre and parking lot to watch for any remains uncovered. The dig uncovered the brick footings of the 1915 hall, evidence of the fire and demolition in 1984, and a few footings from the first building on site, the Iron Pot prefabricated iron structure from 1875.³²

²⁹ *Church Scene* Jan 19, 1978 p24

³⁰ *Church Scene* Jan 19, 1978 p25

³¹ *The Age* Oct 19, 1987 p

³² ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATIONS AT ST PHILIPS COLLINGWOOD: STAGE I, EXCAVATIONS HV Inventory No. H7822-0600 Consent C271 Susan Lawrence, Geoff Hewitt and Valerie Hill

In his speech at the Dedication of the new worship centre on Sunday June 19, 2005, Rev. Alex Scutt (1994-2006) acknowledged the connection to past and present priests and their families; the support from other churches (including St David's Uniting Church where St Philip's worshipped on alternate Sundays); the architects (Buchan Laird and Bawden); the builders (Long Contracting); Diocesan staff; and the Building Committee of the Parish, saying that it was a lay-led process.³³ The centrepiece of the new worship centre is an eight metre-high stained glass window facing Hoddle Street, designed by Christopher John of Phoenix Glass³⁴ and built at a cost of \$96,000. It incorporates early indigenous maps, Hoddle's map of Melbourne and the image of the Holy Trinity. Uniting it all is the Tree of Life and the Cross which traverse all three sections of the window. 94 year-old Irene Cogden was reported as saying "that she never thought she'd live to see a new St Philip's built, and says the congregation is thrilled. We'll have to wait and see whether people come along, but those who are involved with it now are quite thrilled about having the church there, after having church in the hall for so long."³⁵

St Philip's Collingwood celebrated its sesquicentenary of 150 years on 4-6 December 2015. Bishop Genieve Blackwell presided, with Locum Priest Fr. Dean Stuart Blackler (2015-2017) and Assisting Priests Fr. Roy Bradley and Fr. Fred Wandmaker.

Vicars of the time included Rev. Rev. M S Hopkin (2006); Jeff O'Hare (2006/7-2010); Rev. Jeremy Morgan (2012-2015); Rev. John Raike (2019-2023); and various Locum Priests including Rev. Stephen Ames (2006); Bishops Philip Huggins and Peter Hollingsworth; Roy Bradley (2003-2009); Rev. Roger Featherston (2010-2012); Rev. Jenny Ingles (2012-2013); Rev. Stewart Taplin (2017-2018); Bp. Paul White (2018-2022); Rev. Andrew Bunting (2022-2023); Mtr. Pirrial Clift (2023-2024); Fr. Walter McEntee (2024); Bp. Alison Taylor (2024), Rev. Philip Gill (2024-25).

In 2025, St Philip's Collingwood continues with the support of faithful parishioners and now a Deacon-in-Charge, Rev. Bruce Everett (2024). The ABS Census 2021 revealed that the Collingwood population was 9,179, with 71 Indigenous persons, and Abbotsford 9,088, with 56 Indigenous persons. Religious affiliation was noted for Collingwood as 5,324 (58%) No Religion, 918 (10.7%) Catholic, 703 (7.7%) Not Stated, 653 (7.1%) Islam, 371 (4%) Buddhist, and 237 (<3%) Anglican. For Abbotsford as 5,417 (59.6%) No Religion, 1,253 (13.8%) Catholic, 595 (6.5%) Not Stated, 432 (4.8%) Buddhist, and 269 (3%) Anglican. From a church built for 800 persons and having 500 children regularly in the Sunday School, St Philip's has declined in attendance. However, as our history shows, this is not a new experience and St Philip's continues to experiment in our mission and being welcoming of diversity. As the western arch of the first church of St Philip proclaimed all those years ago: "Surely the Lord is in this Place, this is none other but the House of God and this is the Gate of Heaven." *Gen 28:17*

³³ See Rev, Alex Scutt Speech at the Dedication of the new worship centre on Sunday June 19, 2005

³⁴ Holy Trinity window, St Philip's Collingwood Ref: Bak, H. The Tree of Life: An Engaging Vision: Saint Philip's Window by Christopher John. Stained Glass, v. 104, no. 2 (Summer 2009), pp. 116-121, ill. 1067-8867

³⁵ "Patience delivers heaven's gate" Apr 29, 2005