

Anglican Rainbow Network shines at St Richardâ??s Lockleys

Despite a cold, drizzly day, inside St Richardâ??s Lockleys was a scene of warmth and fellowship last Saturday, July 26, as it hosted a worship service and one of the regular social events organised by the Anglican Rainbow Network (ARN).

The gathering brought together members of the LGBTQIA+ community and their supporters in an atmosphere of inclusive faith and celebration.

The ARN, which began as a ministry of St Oswaldâ??s Parkside some four years ago, has steadily grown into a diverse community of around 30 individuals and 12 supportive parishes.



ARN members and their supporters from St Richardâ??s Lockleys

The ARN is founded on the belief that â??the Mission of God is one of universal and eternal love for all creation and all humankindâ?•, striving to move beyond mere tolerance to the full affirmation and celebration of all as Godâ??s beloved people, particularly those on the margins due to gender and/or sexual identity.

Monthly gatherings, like the one held at St Richardâ??s, are central to the ARNâ??s activities, offering hospitality, shared meals, prayer, and reflection.

Saturdayâ??s service featured powerful testimonies that resonated with attendees. Jack Condie, an Australian gay man living in the United States, shared by video his journey of finding belonging within the Episcopal Church, highlighting its clear stance on LGBTQIA+ inclusion compared to the varied experiences he encountered in Australia.



The Revâ??d Sally Sandford-Morgan celebrates the Eucharist

â??I identify as an Episcopal more so than I do an Anglican,â?• said Jack. â??One of the things that became very clear to me when I started attending church in the United States was that I could walk into any Episcopal church in the country and know where the congregation stood on people like me,â?• Jack explained.

â??In Australia, you really have to pick which kind of Anglican church you go to. There is never a guarantee that the church will be accepting.â?•

He emphasised the high value the Episcopal Church put on the equal standing of â??tradition, scripture, and reasonâ?•, which he had been taught in confirmation classes in the Anglican Church of

Australia were fundamental Anglican values.

That position allowed for critical thought and the inclusion of diverse voices, he said. For Jack, this approach provided a spiritual home that aligned with his identity.

In the conversation and sharing which followed a BBQ lunch after the service, Jill Huntley, priestâ??s warden at St Oswaldâ??s Parkside, spoke candidly about her personal journey of coming out at 40 and the profound love and acceptance she found with her partner, Elizabeth.

Jill recounted how their relationship, despite initial apprehensions from some, ultimately fostered understanding and acceptance within their community, including among healthcare professionals during Elizabethâ??s illness, and the Anglican parishes in both Willochra and Adelaide where she has belonged over the years.

Jill said a nurse who had cared for Elizabeth, told her later, â??it was the relationship that you had and you showed to us that stopped any discrimination that may have been thereâ?•.

â??That was a lovely thing to hear, but it was also about fear. Fear of the unknown is what puts people of difference, I think,â?• said Jill.

She also shared an anecdote from a parish council meeting in the Yorke Peninsula in the wake of the Gay Marriage vote in Canberra, where councillors did not say anything affirming. That led to her resignation from the council. â??I did go back on later,â?• she said. â??And theyâ??d learned quite a bit in that intervening period.



ARN co-convenor Peter Burke during the service at St Richardâ??s

â??One day I was doing a reading from Timothy, here I am Lord, and it just hit me one of those epiphanies and I could barely get through it. At morning tea following the service, one of the women, in her 80s, who I was very close to came to me and said, â??Jill, I could see you were really visibly affected today â?¦ but what came to me out of that reading was that you and Lib were meant to come to this church to show us that being gay is actually a lesson to us, and weâ??ve learned a lot from you two being hereâ??.

A couple of weeks later, one of the womanâ??s grandsons, came out as being gay.

That same day, another parishioner told her his brother, who was 60 at the time, had just come out as gay.

â??Funnily,â?• the man said. â??My father, whoâ??s taken the Bible very literally all his life has now allowed for a slightly bendier version because itâ??s his son whoâ??s gay.â?•

â??So we all live, and we all learn.â?• said Jill.

The event underscored the Networkâ??s commitment to building a safe and inclusive community within the Anglican Church.

The ARNâ??s next gathering will be held at St Judeâ??s Brighton on the evening of 12 August.

Date Created
July 31, 2025