

PO Box 663, Bendigo 3552 email rayandro@bigpond.com

#### from Chairperson, Craig

A podcast I was listening to recently was focussed on the 'anxious generation', the group commonly known as 'Gen Z'. The younger of this generation are currently moving through our secondary schools.

The big idea of the podcast was that the mental health of Gen Z has been devastated by their use of smart phones and social media. The statistics suggest that girls in the middle years of high school are the most profoundly affected. Heavy users of social media, for example, are six times more likely to experience mental health issues. About a quarter of teenage girls in the US have made a suicide plan. Anxiety, depression and self-harm in our young people may have been amplified by their experience of the COVID pandemic, but this was not the underlying cause.

Our teens are active on social media for an average of about five hours per day. Some report being on-line almost all of the time. While they understand the impacts of the endless social comparisons these platforms offer, most young people feel unable to extract themselves from the traps that are features rather than bugs of these platforms.

This is not to judge or criticise our young people, but to describe part of the context chaplains experience in our schools. They are dealing with a generation in crisis. While there is no single or simple solution to this, the presence of chaplains in our schools is needed more now than ever.

On behalf of our local chaplaincy committee, I would like to thank you for the support you provide through your interest, prayers and giving towards school chaplaincy in our community.

Your support helps them make a real difference in the lives of the young people and families with whom they interact.

*We hope you have a blessed Christmas with family and friends and look forward to being in contact with you in the new year.*

Hardcopy of this newsletter was photocopied at Bendigo Church of Christ at no cost to the Committee.  
We are most appreciative of this contribution.



Currently we have five chaplains, serving in seven schools.

Five primary schools, and two secondary colleges.

Chaplain	at these schools
<b>Rose Lynch</b>	Kangaroo Flat PS
<b>Cara Barnes</b>	Eaglehawk Secondary College
<b>Jean Carmichael</b>	Lockwood South PS
<b>Chris Powers</b>	Big Hill PS, Weeroona College Bendigo
<b>Alison Gillett</b>	Axedale PS, Eaglehawk PS

Our current committee	
<b>Craig Clifton</b>	<b>Chairman</b>
<b>Ray Harvey</b>	<b>Treasurer</b>
<b>Rosalie Harvey</b>	<b>Secretary/Newsletter</b>
<b>Mary Preston</b>	<b>Member</b>
<b>Laurie Preston</b>	<b>Member</b>

## Donations

We sincerely thank those supporters who have donated this year. We do rely heavily on the financial support of our supporters to be able to meet the financial commitment we make to schools who are not able to fully fund their chaplain.

Please use the payment slip below when making your donation by cheque. An addressed return envelope has been included with printed copies for your convenience. Alternatively, use the banking details provided to make a direct payment to our account.

When donating via Direct Payment, please ensure your name is given as the reference so that a receipt can be forwarded to you.

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For donating by cheque, fill in and cut out this donation slip and mail to:

**PO Box 663, Bendigo 3552**



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