

Anglican Schools Australia 2023 Conference
Poetic responses – Sarah Agnew

Day One. Session 1

Welcome to Country – Selina Walker, Duncan Smith OAM, Jakida Smith

Welcome from Bishop Mark Short, Anglican Diocese of Golbourn and Canberra

Opening Liturgy – James Coats, Libby Gale

Welcomes – Fiona Godfrey, ASA 2023 Conference Chair; Debbie Dunwoody, ASA President

Keynote: Julia Baird, 'Re-emergence: the promise of a faith-based education in a fractured world.'

Craving hope, craving connection

Welcomed by voices of Kookaburra,
Dingo and Emu;
Kangaroo and Joey;
Wattle, Spring,
gathering together again.
Our work to nurture the growing,
building, raising, renewing,
living, re-emerging of the emerging
generations.

We gather in our pleas for connection,
for mutual care, presence, humanity,
for empathy in a disconnected
age craving communities of hope.

How are we re-emerging? How present
with students who know everything
and who are open to mystery and wonder
and the crystals that may or may not
help. God is everywhere.

We set the temperature, control
the climate with our faith
embodied in acts of moral beauty,
of poetry prescribed,
of holy listening;

schools of faith gifts for humans
held taut between being the hero
of our own self-curated story
and the yearning for connection,
for the empathy we find we cannot give;

to be the main character for ourselves
and play support roles for each other as
elaborate pathways run beneath


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and cross through each others' lives;
to look up, look out, to the vastness,
to remember the feeling of smallness,
to be still on a mountaintop, under a starlit
sky remembering awe

wonder
beauty

the mad creativity of the Creator,
the healing nature of green, of planting
roses, remembering what strengthens us,
to remember Canon Jesus, embrace unfair
grace – to want bread and roses for us all.

Day One. Session Two

Keynote: Brad Tucker, 'The New Space Race – more than just the science'

Presentation: Lesley Johnston & David MacGillivray, 'Faith and Life'

The Sky is Changing

The sky is changing
space is changing
everything is changing
and we need students to help us
wonder, listen, learn.

We need students who will listen
to the people who have watched
the skies for sixty thousand years,
can tell of when the fire dragons hit
the earth and took many lives away.

We have people to fill the metal
bakery in the sky, dropping crumbs
to help us find our way through fire,
follow planes in real time, catch
falling rockets to send them up
again –

the sky is changing, satellites are drowning
out the stars and who is remembering
our need for awe? we need to form the ones
who will imagine what happens when
what goes up must come down, who
will dream the lasers to de-orbit space
junk falling with catastrophic velocity;
who will pay attention to the listeners;
who will keep us safe on the dark side
of the moon as the moon gets cheaper,



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closer, busier; and who will speak
for the moon, or Mars, before we dig
our claws in through the treaty holes?

We need a re-emergence of the ones who
will wonder what it means

Day One. Session Three

Chief Executive Officer Address, Rev Peter Laurence OAM

Keynote: Dr Donna Cross, 'School leaders' and other school staff wellbeing: What's the master plan?'

Only the best die young

Only the best die young as late
in life as possible, and how?
we live!
we move, we pay attention
and always learn and most
of all, the wellest die young
as late in life as possible
by loving – yes, love
will lead you into life!
So love! Love well,
with strength and courage;
love children when they're children,
love your leaders; love the best
job in the world, and love each
other through the worst days possible.
Love. Love will lead you into life.



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Day Two. Session One

Acknowledgement of Country – Andy Gordon and Radford College Students

Morning Prayer – Rev Andy Fleming and Angus McKee

Keynote: Thomas Mayo, ‘The Uluru Statement from the Heart – Saying Yes to Recognition and a Voice’

presentation: Uncle Glenn Loughrey, Anglican Diocese of Melbourne/ NATSIAC, ‘Voice, Treaty, Truth, Absurd Generosity: The Statement from the Heart as Pedagogy’

On counting every blessing

Passion, compassion, presence;
purpose, truth-telling, speaking
in language, in sign, with heart,
in song – let all earth revere Holy One;
Rejoice in Holy One always
guarded by Peace and what is true,
guided by love

raw deciduousness exposed
still, waiting, vulnerable, until
the mountains laugh
with re-emergence, with unfurling,
growing the mountains with a deep
breath of joy

this Anglican schools community
raw together, waiting together breathing
with the fulness of life

our First Peoples: raw humanity
exposed, still, waiting, vulnerable
until: the people grow with a deep
breath of joy in each other,
re-emergence, a new day, together

power has disempowered,
choosing silence over reform,
choosing death without resurrection

power seeks now to empower,
choosing to listen, with effect,
choosing to recognise, fairly, with respect

and we are invited to embrace
a Spirit, a hope,
to back ourselves for who we can be,
to see, to show we see,
to meet absurd generosity
with generous reciprocity



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wrestling with our past selves
accepting the limp to our walk
for now, invited to receive
this invitation with gratitude,
with grace, inspired by Holy
generosity, Holy grace,
Holy yes!

Day Two. Session Two.

Keynote Address – Archbishop Geoffrey Smith

a new reign of light

Jesus often said,
the Kingdom of God is –

The Kingdom of God is
more than a sin
management system;
it is the good announcement
we carry into the world;
is an invitation into a new reign,

a new reign of life
as God dreams it to be,
a new embodiment of love,
connection, hope, and grace;
new sparks of light
appearing in the dark, a new
reign coming for a Divinely loved
kosmos – the love in which
we dig the roots of our being
and belonging, the love
into which we are called, all
the nourishment we need
for loving, the hope
with which we live now,
the care with which we walk
on Earth.



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Day Two. Session Three.

Keynote: Brennon Dowrick, 'Building success on strong foundations'

15 minutes

fifteen minutes more
fifteen minutes of falling
fifteen minutes of flair
fifteen minutes of failing
fifteen minutes, seventy hours:
one moment to fly

one mum, one dad,
one coach calling, 'just
like training!;
doctors, physios, a whole
team of mates, three
stand-in mums with late-
night meals and company,
one testing room volunteer

one gymnast, one gold medal,
one vast team.



Prayer of Intercession for the Conference Eucharist

A prayer for re-emergence

Response: Holy One, Holy Three, we pray for re-emergence

We pray for homecomings,
returns into family, to place,
into the arms of embrace
for lost ones, estranged
and exiled ones; for travellers,
adventurers, and escapees.
May all who seek, find home.

Holy One, Holy Three,
we pray for re-emergence.

We pray for new beginnings,
school terms, life's seasons,
relationships, employment
or retirement; putting learning
into practice, planting seeds
with hope for roots and shoots
and birth and growth.
May all who seek, find life.

Holy One, Holy Three,
we pray for re-emergence.

We pray for resurfacing,
for silenced voices to be heard,
for oppressed peoples to be freed,
for creation's release from heavy
burdens, heavy footprints, from
humans serving only humans;
and may we humans remember
to seek the overlooked and lift each other up.

Holy One, Holy Three,
we pray for re-emergence.

We pray for revitalisation
of the ones who choose to follow you:
for deeper connection to you Story
and each other; bolder singing
of your Song together; for faithful
and courageous enacting
of your justice, peace, and love.
May all who seek, find you.

Holy One, Holy Three,
we pray for re-emergence.
Amen.