

the Open Sanctuary@tilba



- ∞ a developing place of sanctuary for people, fauna and flora
- ∞ a sabbath space for prayer and contemplative activity
- ∞ a Christ-centered community caring for creation
- ∞ weddings, baptisms and funerals

“The Open Sanctuary@tilba is a new expression of the Christian commitment to care for creation. I fully support this vision as it seeks to offer a living model of simplicity, sustainability and the contemplative way of life. This sanctuary will be both a place of ecological education and prayer much needed in our world today.”

Bishop George Browning

Holy Trinity Anglican Church is a small weatherboard church situated in open pasture land at the foot of Gulaga (Mt Dromedary) at Tilba Tilba, a heritage listed village on the far south coast of N.S.W. The setting and general environment are strikingly beautiful and the church has served the community for over 100 years.

The proposal is to develop an Open Sanctuary, a place of gathering, retreat and refuge for both the human and non-human community. Our desire is to build a place of sanctuary that offers a contemplative rhythm of life coupled with the living out of practical sustainable life principles that both encourage and educate the wider community to care for the earth and others. The spiritual life of the community will be Christ-centered however the sanctuary will be ecumenical in its broadest sense. That is to say it will be inclusive of those of differing faith traditions and practices; a place of hospitality and invitation particularly to the disadvantaged, marginalized and vulnerable.

All structures and activities will be carried out according to sustainable principles and in consideration of the local and global ecosystems.



Simplicity

Hospitality

Sustainability

Humility

What we have

The church building and 11/2 acres of land on which it is sited are owned by the Anglican Diocese of Canberra/Goulburn. The church building and land will remain Diocesan property and the project will be considered a “Chaplaincy Unit” of the Diocese. It will however have autonomy to operate in the ways necessary for it to remain true to the vision. The project will be funded through grants and donations.

Where we want to go

At present there is sufficient land to build a simple building consisting of a multi-purpose activities/meeting room, kitchen, bathroom, office/counselling room and small accommodation space.

The bigger vision however is to buy more land for regeneration and open space. We would also like to be able to offer more accommodation for retreat stays.

What we will offer

We hope to offer a range of both practical and prayerful/worship activities that will include:

Educational workshops for sustainable practices
i.e permaculture, composting, organic gardening etc,

Retreats, Quiet Days, Meditation
Spiritual Direction

Opportunity to be involved in
tree planting and gardening

alternative worship such as Taize,
creation based Agape Meal

connecting with local indigenous community
listening to the land

Enneagram, Myers-Briggs, Ecopsychology
Workshops

Walks up Gulaga
and to village

Art, Poetry, Music, Conversation Events



The aim of the Open Sanctuary is to offer a pathway to contemplative intimacy with Creation, with one's self and others and with God. We desire to become a place of nurture to human and non-human kin fulfilling the call of Jesus to "love one's neighbour as oneself". The prayer of the sanctuary is contemplative in nature and we extend our invitation to join in prayer to people of differing faiths whilst we remain deeply grounded in the Christian faith of the church.

We believe that the experience of personal intimacy with God's creation may become the necessary metanoia to energize the individual and communities to act for justice and healing for others and the earth. We hope to offer a space for listening, for sharing, for becoming a whole and living model of a community caring for creation and disadvantaged people; a Sabbath space of rest, contemplation and recreation.

We also believe that some of the spiritual hunger of contemporary society may be fed through the contemplative tradition of the church. We hope to feed some of this hunger through the practice of the Sanctuary, through silence and simplicity, thereby forming relationships with those beyond the church and meeting others in the common ground of our humanity that longs for an unknown God.



“For us let it be enough to know ourselves to be in the place God wants for us and carry on our work, even though it be no more than the work of an ant, infinitesimally small, and with unforeseeable results. Now is the hour of the garden and the night, the hour of silent offering: therefore the hour of hope: God alone. Faceless, unknown, unfelt, yet undeniable.”

Abbe Monchanin

How to become a ‘Friend of the Open Sanctuary@tilba?’

You can help build the Sanctuary by offering a donation or becoming a Friend of Open Sanctuary@tilba and making a regular contribution.

Your support will help us to:

Restore the church building

Buy seedlings, mulch, fencing materials and equipment

Construct an ecologically sound building for multi-purpose use and accommodation

Purchase more land

Support the ministry

We need support to fulfill the vision.

If you would like to hear more:

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