

Southern Cross

August 2010

Sydney Anglicans Connecting

Culture Clash

The struggle to be Christian when your work is anti-faith

- › Advice for adults who can't leave home (and their parents)
- › Poll: we reveal your favourite church song
- › Gillard: anti-God or a good thing?

Cover

Faith not Work?

Focus groups among our young workers show many are struggling with how to be Christian in workplaces that are unfriendly to their faith.

COVER DESIGN: Stephen Mason

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Approaching
God trivially

DR PETER JENSEN

WHEN the great Archbishop Thomas Cranmer provided Anglicans with a pattern for approaching God as we meet together, it is no accident that he gave prominence to the confession of sin and the promise of forgiveness. He understood the gospel. What he bequeathed to us in the liturgies of the Book of Common Prayer were gospel-shaped services.

Cranmer clearly believed that it was part of being a Christian to examine our lives regularly by the word of God and in particular by God's law. He did not think that sin should merely be defined in some vague way, dependent on our uncertain memory

Our less formal services need far more careful planning...
The absence of any acknowledgement of sin as we approach
God always supprises me.

or our ignorance of God's requirements on human life. Indeed in his Communion service he asks us to read the whole of the Ten Commandments, not a truncated version or a summary.

(I realise that the summary is that of the Lord Jesus himself and that in one way it is even more searching and demanding than the Commandments. But nonetheless the love of God and of neighbour needs the definition of the Commandments. I sometimes think that we so regularly give the summary rather than the Commandments simply to save time.)

How can you understand the wonder of salvation without appreciating the depth of sin? How can you understand sin if you do not hear the law of God? I have to say that I am somewhat alarmed by the weakness of our doctrine of sin and our unwillingness to use the law to expose sin and to call for repentance. Cranmer gives us prayers in which we can express repentance, not mere sorrow or remorse. Of course they can be read merely mechanically and formally. But the antidote to formal religion cannot be no real expression of repentance at all.

And then there is the issue of forgiveness. Our less formal services need far more careful planning than do the structured ones. The absence of any acknowledgement of sin as we approach God always supprises me. But equally astonishing is the somewhat casually given assurance that we are

now forgiven if we have said a certain prayer, the wording of which is barely consistent with Christian understanding of sin and repentance at all.

The forgiveness of sins is no trifling matter. It should be completely clear to all that forgiveness is linked to repentance and that forgiveness is offered in and through the Lord Jesus Christ. There is a real danger that we are merely soothing consciences without dealing with the real problems of the heart and of the Christian walk. It is tremendously reassuring to hear from a fellow Christian — and especially from one who is an appointed preacher of the word of God — that my life is cleansed of sin.

But the reassurance can be very harmful if in fact it is false.

I would recommend to all of us that in addition to corporate confession we personally examine our lives by comparing what we do and say and think against the commandments and law of God. In fact this is a good preparation for corporate confession. It is rather too easy for us to forgive ourselves because we do not allow the full range of God's commandments to impact on our lives. One excellent way to remind ourselves of this is to read Psalm 119 with great care. We are allowed into a conversation between the psalmist and God which gives us hopes and words and instruction as well. It is a great stimulus to a fuller, deeper and truer Christian life than we are often accustomed to.

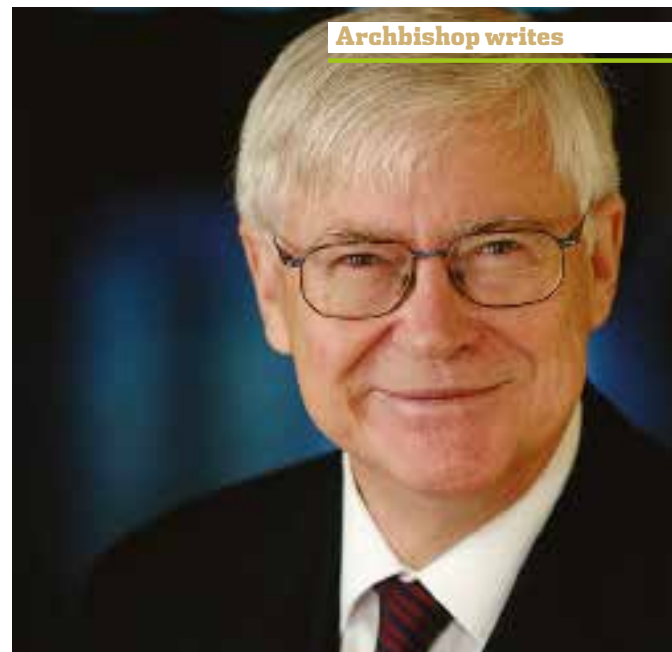
SC

Mission Prayer

Almighty God,

We call upon you for such an outpouring of your Holy Spirit upon us that we as your people may be assured of your love through your word, seek to please the Saviour in all things, manifest the godly life and be filled with prayerful and sacrificial compassion for the lost in all the world.

In the name of our Saviour Jesus Christ,
Amen.





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Big Decisions

College of Preachers wound up

Standing Committee has taken the decision to wind up the College of Preachers, which has been operating since the 1970s.

Diocesan Secretary Robert Wicks said the responsibilities of the College of Preachers, and its small amount of assets, would be transferred to Ministry Training and Development, "which would have a broader brief to ensure that preacher training continues within the Diocese".

CONSCIENCE VOTE

Anglicare urges caution on same-sex adoptions



to all state MPs, giving 11 reasons why the change should be rejected, including what it says is a lack of well-founded, unambiguous research evidence.

The agency's CEO, Peter Kell, (left) says the current Adoption Act considers the best interests of the child to be paramount.

Consequently, he says, Anglicare is urging MPs to use their conscience votes to reject the amendments put forward by Clover Moore.

"Men and women complement each other in their parenting roles as a result of their inherent physical, psychological and emotional attributes," Mr Kell says. "Optimal care for children consists of being in a family with both a mother and father. Adoptive children should not be denied this opportunity."

NSW'S only Protestant Christian adoption agency has urged State MPs to vote against a private members bill which would allow the adoption of children by same-sex couples.

Anglicare Sydney is one of only three accredited non-Government adoption agencies in NSW handling domestic adoptions. The agency has 45 years of frontline experience in the provision of adoption services in NSW.

Anglicare has written



HELP FOR HOLIDAY KIDS' CLUBS

Thy art in heaven!

Kids learn in front of the magnificent mural at the St George North holiday club.

JUDY ADAMSON

IT'S exciting, exhilarating, exhausting — sometimes all three at once — but a holiday kids' club is one of the best ways a church can connect with children and parents in its local community.

At St George North parish there has been a holiday kids' club with about 100 kids for the past six years. In the July holidays there was a time-travel theme, with gorgeous artist-planned murals lining the hall, painted over many weeks by church members.

Jana Koulouris, the church's children's worker, says the kids'

club has always provided excellent outreach opportunities. Church members take part in a parents' café and, each year, there has been a ratio of one parish child to every child from elsewhere.

"These aren't just kids from other churches in the area — they're not connected to church at all," she says.

Of course, for every parish that happily throws itself into organising and running a holiday kids' club, there are those who feel they lack the capacity.

For this reason, Youthworks has begun publishing holiday programs where much of the legwork is done.

Marketing manager

Julie Firmstone says Youthworks kept receiving requests from churches for material that could be utilised in kids' holiday programs. Some, she says, were even taking "bits and pieces from all our books to put something together".

As a result, Youthworks has taken two holiday kids' clubs created by Ian Morrison, a ministry worker at St Martin's, Blakehurst, "and developed them into a you-beaut program that small, medium or even large churches can take and run with".

The two programs are the medieval-inspired Knights of the King plus Follow the Clues, which has a 1920s detective

theme. More programs are in the pipeline.

"All the prep work is done," Ms Firmstone explains. "All the Bible talks are done, the scripts and the themed craft for small groups are done. We even give them ways to decorate their church, theme music and an animation to play when the kids come in each morning."

At St George North, Jana Koulouris says the kids' club itself is only the start of the evangelistic opportunities as the parish connects with parents.

"We have a lot of repeat families and friends coming again and some kids joining our mid-week kids' groups. So it is very positive."

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CHURCH A PUZZLE WITHOUT JESUS

Trina finds the missing piece

JUDY ADAMSON

TRINA Rambaldini's joy bubbles over with almost every word she speaks. She loves talking about Jesus, and how faith has changed her life — especially grateful given that she went to church for months but just "didn't get it".

She also attended a Bible study and was shocked to hear other women in the group talk about Jesus as though he was God.

"I always used to cringe when they said Jesus is God," she recalls. "I was brought up to understand that God is God and Jesus is the son of God."

After Trina and her

siblings had a short period of attending Sunday School when she was young — "I think it was really just to give Mum and Dad a break" — the family only ever darkened the door of a church for weddings, funerals and christenings.

Trina married her husband Darren at the Denham Court Anglican Church in 2006, taking part in the premarital course "because you had to do it" and attending church occasionally — "but not for the right reasons", she admits.

When the couple's first son Jake was born in 2008, they decided he should be baptised. The minister at Denham Court, Nigel Webb, came over for a chat and

Trina assured him her relationship with God was "brilliant": she knew God, could talk to him any time, and she didn't believe people needed to go to church to have a relationship with God.

On the day of the baptism, Trina recalls Nigel Webb explaining how the water meant nothing if people did not believe. "I thought, 'He's got a point'," Trina says. "I knew there was something else I was missing."

Months of slightly awkward church and Bible study attendance, and puzzlement, followed. Then in May last year, as Nigel was giving a sermon from John's gospel about Jesus being the Word, it all fell into place for Trina.



Trina with her children Jake (right) and baby Luke.

PHOTO: Judy Adamson

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"I know why they call it a revelation," she says. "I felt like getting up in the middle of the sermon and shouting 'I get it! I get it! Jesus is God!'... I had thought Jesus was just a man who walked about, but now everything's different."

Trina says she tries to apply Jesus' teaching to her life from day to day — relating to Darren and their kids (baby Luke came along five months ago), talking to friends or family, growing in patience and bringing all things to God in prayer.

"I turn to God a lot more now, because I know who he is," she

Mission idea of the month: greet a Muslim this Ramadan

The Muslim holy month of Ramadan (August 11-September 9) is a great opportunity to strike up conversations with our Muslim neighbours, says CMS Federal Secretary John Thew.

"Wish [them] God's blessing during Ramadan," he says. "God has brought these people to Australia to hear the gospel... we need to give them the opportunity to meet a true Christian."

Thew believes the media plays up the radical side of Islam but says the majority of Muslims are not like this and we should not be afraid of having a spiritual conversation with them. "It's not hard," he says, "to be friends with a Muslim."

says. "With people who are not Christian, I can see where they're at. I pray and hope they get to where I've started to go.

It's a journey and I'm still learning. But in 'Amazing Grace' it says 'I was blind but now I see' — and now I know what that means."

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FEDS GRANT \$165K

Community hub created at Ashbury

ST Matthew's, Ashbury will finish renovations on its church hall this month, after the church received \$165,000 as part of the Federal Government's Jobs Fund.

The renovated building will provide the church with new ministry opportunities including hospitality events, a café-style church and children's facilities.

Rector Mark Layson hopes St Matthew's will be a community hub.

"Many people don't even know about the church," he says. "We're hoping that this new building and the events that we will be able to run will increase our profile in the community."

The first will be a fair to be held on October 30.

CHURCH LAUNCHED

Torres Strait is coming to Glebe

THE Coming of the Light festival hosted by Glebe parish on July 11 included the launch of a new church plant for Torres Strait Islanders. The festival celebrates the London Missionary Society arriving in the Torres Strait in July 1871.

The all-day celebration saw almost 70 people come to support the new church, which is an initiative of the Sydney Anglican Indigenous Ministry Committee.

It is expected the church will meet once a month at St John's, Glebe. It will include all the recognised elements of a church service but will be conducted in a way that allows Torres Strait Islanders to celebrate their culture.

MAN V URBAN JUNGLE

Bear Grylls the face of Christian ad campaign

BEAR Grylls is known for giving himself tough challenges but convincing Sydney commuters to consider Christ may be toughest of all. The well-known British adventurer and TV star is featuring in an advertising campaign for a 15-year-old course designed to introduce people to Christianity.

The Sydney bus adverts encourage his fans to "discover life's ultimate adventure: the Alpha Course".

Some churches are displaying posters of Grylls and reporting an unprecedented response.

"Everyone is talking about [Grylls] now — he is young, exciting and wholesome," says Jon Seeley from Alpha



Australia. "He has a very direct appeal, not only to a young demographic but also to those who have no particular religious conviction."

It is suggested Sydney Anglican churches be aware of the campaign, with Bishop Glenn Davies saying the publicity is likely to raise the profile of Christian enquiry courses.

"There are a range of courses available, each

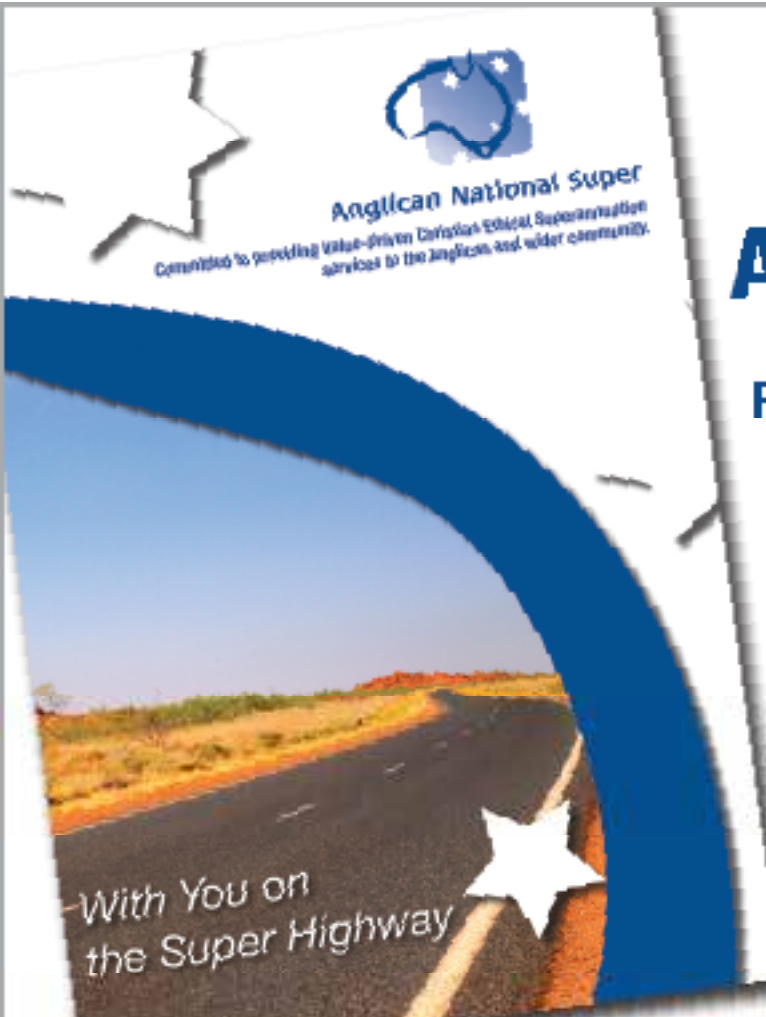
with their own strengths and weaknesses," he says. "Alpha, with its emphasis on the Holy Spirit, is one but there are other options for enquirers, such as Simply Christianity, Christianity Explained, Christianity Explored and Introducing God. We commend every opportunity for people to read and study the Bible and explore the claims of Jesus for themselves."

The campaign will also

be run in Melbourne, Brisbane and Perth.

Bear Grylls is the star of *Man vs Wild*, the Discovery Channel's most popular program, which also screens Monday nights on SBS with an average audience of 530,000 people.


In a recent interview with *Relevant* magazine, Grylls was blunt about his Christian faith, describing it as the 'backbone' of his life.



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NEW MOUNTAIN BIKE NETWORK

World champ stickers up for Christ

ANDREW BUEGER

AS in most Australian sports, it is hard to stand out as a Christian in the mountain bike community.

So as the 24-hour World Solo Championships begin in Canberra in October, it is encouraging that some of the world's elite riders will use this biggest of stages to declare their Christianity through a new network for Christian riders.

Gary Eastment, rector of Helensburgh-Stanwell Park Anglican Church, is a keen mountain biker and recently started a program to help Christian riders clearly show their faith.

JesusMTB is a network that allows Christian

riders to pray for each other, encourage other Christian mountain bikers and to show other riders what they believe.

Eastment began the program because he saw a need in the mountain bike community for Christians to stand up and say they are Christian. He also saw it as a great opportunity to share the gospel at big events, which can attract up to 5000 people.

"It's about being salt and light on bikes," he said. "It's a network for the encouragement of Christians and to encourage a Christian presence in the mountain bike



World title holder Jason English

community for the glory of Jesus."

JesusMTB does not hold meetings or have any regular events; the only formal part of the program is the stickers members are given to adorn their bikes with, as a way of showing they are not ashamed of their faith in Jesus.

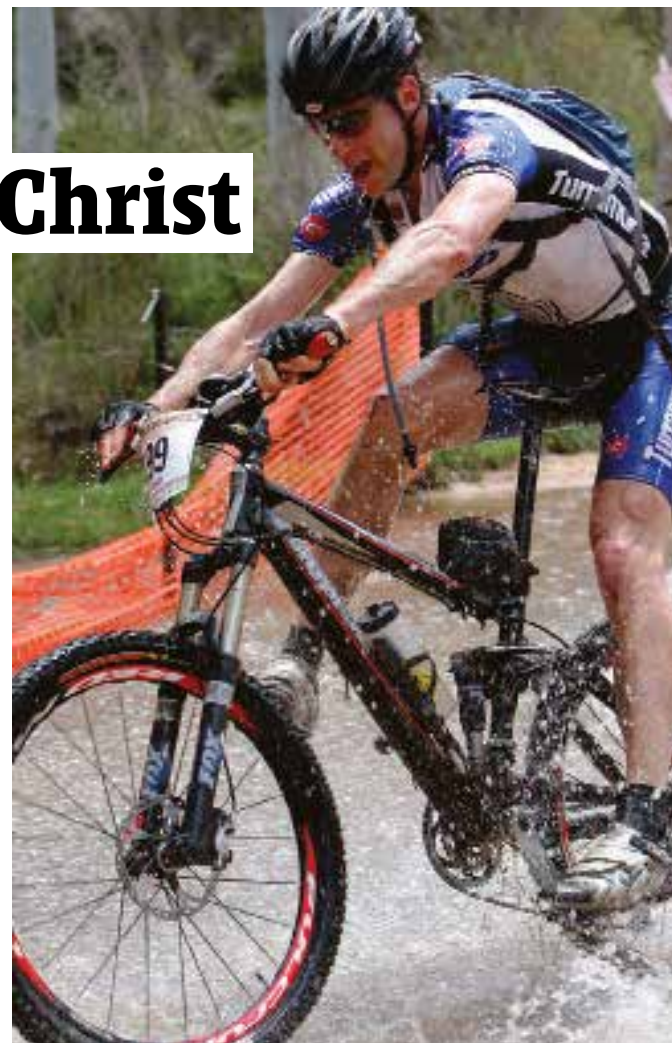
Jason English, a PE teacher from Port Macquarie, currently holds the 24-hour World Solo Championships title after winning the 2009

event in Canada. English will line up to defend his title with a few new stickers on his bike.

"It's about believers being together on their bikes and praying for the community," he said. "It's not an overtly evangelistic tool but just the fact that the stickers are on there, people ask you questions and they can check out the website which is a great opportunity for people to do their own research on Christianity."

As a world champion and three-time national champion English, 29, is well known within the masculine mountain biking fraternity and publicly identifying himself as a Christian was something he thought hard about.

"Initially I thought I can't sticker my bike up, my sponsors provide me with all these products, so my bike is already all stickered up," he said. "I guess I've always thought that I don't want to be too overt with Christianity and that's something I haven't been proud of. But three or four months ago I thought that God has given me this ability to ride and I want to use that as a platform to show off my faith."



Mike Israel in action: "not all Christians are Jesus freaks".

English, who grew up in a Christian home, believes the JesusMTB program is a great way to non-confrontationally challenge people about Jesus, without overtly evangelising.

"Having a 'JesusMTB' sticker on my bike; it's not me getting out there and giving people an ear bashing every time I get on the podium but it's more... if they have questions they can come and have a chat to me," he said.

Fellow Aussie Mike Israel will also

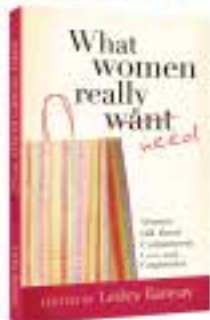
be participating in 24-hour World Solo Championships after qualifying earlier this year — and will also be sporting 'JesusMTB' stickers on his bike.

"Having the Jesus sticker on your bike allows you to declare your belief and it shows other guys around you that not all Christians are Jesus freaks, they're just normal guys with normal interests who are actually pretty good mountain bikers," he said.

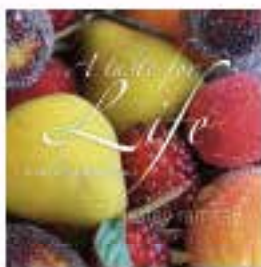
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Gay bishop in England! Was this report a scoop or a beat-up?

Analysis by Jeremy Halcrow

News that the Dean of St Albans, Jeffrey John — who is in a civil partnership with another clergyman — was about to become England's first openly gay bishop made headlines around the world, including in Sydney. But just five days later it was crystal clear this was not going to happen.

Britain's *Daily Telegraph* appeared to have a scoop when on April 3 it claimed "a confidential meeting, chaired by Dr Rowan Williams, the Archbishop of Canterbury, has approved Dr Jeffrey John, the Dean of St Albans, to be on the shortlist to be the next Bishop of Southwark" — and that he "is understood to be the favoured candidate".

It was soon public that the Crown Nominations Commission (CNC), which includes Archbishop Rowan Williams, would not approve Dr John to be Bishop of Southwark. Any other decision would split the Church of England, as well as cause major problems internationally.

So was it a beat-up or was the press being used?

First, it's important to take into account the archaic and highly political approval process for bishops in the Church of England, which even includes input from the British Prime Minister. It is possible that somebody leaked the list to provoke protests from conservatives and force a backdown. Or, as the Rev Stephen Kuhrt claimed in a report on website Anglican Mainstream, a leak may have been a smokescreen while the role is secured for another liberal with less iconic status but equally progressive views.

C OF E VOTES FOR WOMEN BISHOPS

Peace plan fails

THE Archbishop of Canterbury's plan to guarantee alternative oversight for English parishes that cannot accept women bishops may have failed by a whisker. But the final chapter is yet to be written.

At the end of the debate Archbishop Rowan Williams told Synod it was "not the end of the road".

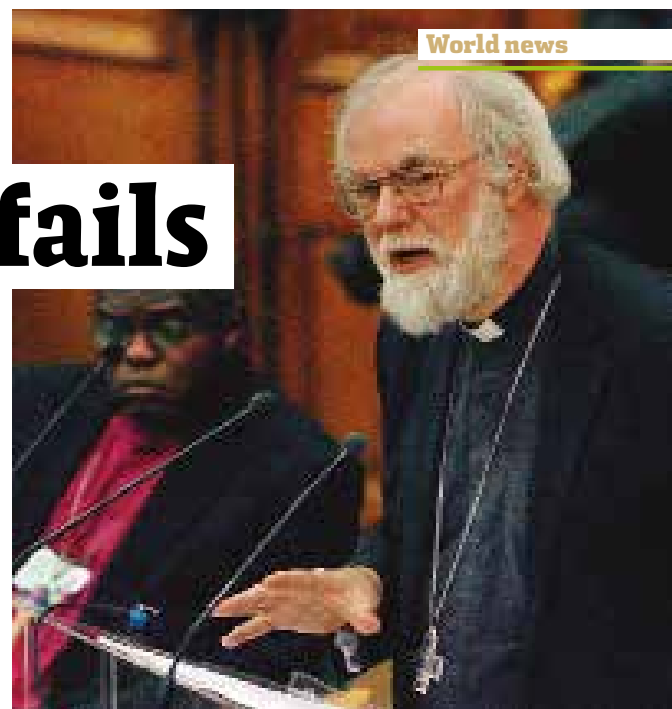
"We are profoundly committed by a majority in the Synod to the maximum generosity that can be consistently and coherently exercised towards the consciences of minorities," he said. "We have not yet cracked how to do that."

Legislation to approve women bishops now has to be passed by

a majority of English dioceses. It will then come back to General Synod in 2012 where it has to pass by a two-thirds majority in all three houses: laity, clergy and bishops. Given the voting patterns this year, that is far from certain. Archbishop Williams' amendment was carried by laity and bishops but lost by just five votes among the clergy.

Conservative evangelicals and traditionalist Anglo-Catholics are now left with a yet-to-be-drafted code of practice.

In *The Guardian*, the Rev Rod Thomas, chair of the evangelical group Reform, reflected the feeling among conservatives that the proposed code of practice



Archbishop Williams: "Not the end of the road".

was no good. "As it stands it doesn't provide for a secure future for us in the Church of England [C of E], a future that was promised in 1993 but now appears to have been rescinded," he wrote.

He believes that conservative evangelical ministries in the C of E will be threatened by the proposed legislation.

"[Experience] in Canada and the US shows that over time, people become less and less tolerant of traditionalist positions," he wrote. "That is why a clear statutory provision needs to be made, not the half-baked, half-hearted approach that the draft measure currently contains."

"...issues of child abuse and sexual misconduct generally within the Anglican Church have, in the recent past, been widely reported in the public media. I want to reaffirm our abhorrence of such behaviour. There is no doubt that we must continue to maintain a culture of rejection of sexual misconduct and abuse of children within this Diocese as we remain true to biblical standards of morality."

Dr Peter Jensen
Archbishop Of Sydney

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Letters

Children before career

IN 'The great child care debate' (July, SC) Jeremy Halcrow asks a rhetorical question about whether Titus 2:3-5 was a command against all working mothers. The answer, of course, is no. There are situations where mothers have no choice but to return to the workforce and they do so out of love for their family.

However, that such a possibility exists does not allow us to so quickly dismiss Titus 2:3-5 as something only for the 'women at that time'. Paul's instructions for younger women to love their husbands and children, to be working at home and to be submissive to their own husbands are undoubtedly counter-cultural but they are, nevertheless, commands that need to be taken seriously.

Among the mothers I know, I find it ironic that it is the Christian women — who have the greatest ability to take on the valuable role of mothering — who are the most reluctant to do so. These are the highly successful, highly paid women who are not dependent on a second income. They are intelligent and hardworking multi-taskers who can cope well with the difficulties of raising children. They are articulate and outgoing leaders who can competently run playgroup, teach Scripture, organise Bible studies and reach out to the local community. And yet it is these very women who often return to their careers once their year of maternity leave is over.

In a materialistic society there is a lot of pressure to outsource child rearing in order to remain in the workforce. Yet Titus 2:3-5 shows that a great way for younger women to exercise their 'Christian freedom' is to sacrificially love their children, perhaps even at the cost of having a career.

Loretta Liew
Castle Hill, NSW

Blokes, give SRE a go

I applaud Ken Eastwood's decision to recommence scripture teaching after a 20-year break (July, SC). Well done! We need more blokes taking time off work to assist with this ministry.

In Ken's letter he mentions his local primary school, and some readers may have inferred that his critique of Scripture was about his experience at Ryde East Public School. To clarify, Ken does not teach Scripture there. I have full confidence in all the Protestant Scripture teachers at the



school, four of whom are trained staff or authorised volunteers from our church.

Our staff are supplied with and use CEP material in their lessons. Through both financial and volunteering generosity of members of the parish, our program has grown 300 per cent in three years to reach 220 students weekly across three local schools. No child in the parish who has requested Scripture is missing out.

Five classes are 'team-taught' which I believe is an ideal Scripture arrangement. I join with Ken in the appeal to 'pour more resources' into the program, particularly through team teaching, to ensure that lessons can be as 'enthalling' as possible. Blokes, if you want to volunteer... give me a call!

The Rev John Chappell
St John's, North Ryde, NSW

Bible goes missing

I am thankful to God for the emphasis on and allegiance to the Bible which we have in our Sydney Diocese and the leadership the Archbishop provides in this area (May and June, SC).

However it is both puzzling and sad to me to see the Bible less featured in our Sunday worship. In many parishes in our Diocese the mid-morning and evening services have lessened the use of the Scripture. Let's contrast these modern services with Morning Prayer in the Prayer Book.

1. Introductory Bible verses exalting God. Now it is simply 'Good morning' or 'Good evening'.
2. Bible verses challenging us to repent and be forgiven. Not used.
3. The call to repentance which is the chief thing we do when we meet. Unused.
4. Prayer of repentance. Yes, usually used. (praise God)
5. Declaration of God forgiving us. Not used.
6. The Lord's Prayer. Not at every service.
7. Prayer to God to help us praise him. Gone.
8. Psalm 95. No.

9. A psalm or psalms. Rarely.
- 10 and 12. The Bible readings — often only one and that could be 50 verses from the Old Testament.
11. Te Deum, song of praise and prayer for mercy. No.
13. Song of Zechariah, praising God for sending Jesus. Gone.
14. The Creed (summing up scriptural truth). Often not used.
- 15-18. Prayers for the world, the church and the needy. Usually one general prayer without God-focusing introductory phrases.

I've tried to be fair and my criticism is a generalisation. But isn't it true for such services that the Bible content has been greatly reduced?

I believe that in seeking to accommodate the young and newcomers we are feeding them baby food instead of accompanying our biblical sermons with solid biblical worship.

Noel Pilcher
Richmond, NSW

In defence of hymns

BEFORE we finally decide to dump hymns (June, SC), can someone give us a list of contemporary songs which we can use to replace all the traditional carols in our Christmas services?

Megan Ainsworth
Armidale, NSW

IN my home culture, the American Midwest, nearly all churchgoers have some background in classical music. There we sing hymns in four-part harmony, people reading music from hymnals, to the accompaniment of an orchestra. It is a glorious musical experience that I find far more uplifting than the pop music I hear in Sydney Anglican churches which leaves me feeling flat.

The claim that hymns should be abandoned because they're difficult to accompany on a guitar makes me wonder: where are the musically literate people? Are they being driven away to seek beauty elsewhere?

I have found the most beautiful church music in Sydney to be in the Catholic churches. Although I believe passionately in Reformed theology, I sing in a Catholic choir, because they sing beautiful music. Last week, we sang Handel's *Messiah* in glorious harmony, accompanied by a live orchestra. The melding of Biblical words with beautiful music was exquisite.

Surely the beauty of solidly Reformed theology should be adorned with beauty in music. Let's not let our churches be dumbed down to the level of the tat we hear on the radio, in a well-meaning but misguided attempt to make the music accessible to all.

Annie Ross
Hornsby, NSW

We would like to encourage readers to submit well-considered essays in response to issues raised by **Southern Cross**.

Please email your (600-word maximum) submission to: newspaper@anglicanmedia.com.au

Editorial

Is Gillard anti-God?

JULIA Gillard is being (probably incorrectly) called our 'first atheist PM', with Pentecostal leader Danny Nalliah saying she is 'anti-God' will "destroy our Judeo-Christian heritage" and turn Australia into "Communist China".

SC does not agree. We will not be endorsing Tony Abbott (or Julia Gillard). Instead we encourage readers to pray and think hard about this election.

Australia is at a cross-roads with its environment, infrastructure, health system, and moral compass all facing serious pressures. Yet Nalliah's fears misrepresent our political system. We do not elect a president. The shape of policy is determined by the cabinet team. And so Labor's policies have changed little since Mr Rudd's removal. Ms Gillard's restatement of Labor's position on gay marriage is a case in point.

Labor is not campaigning on a secularist platform. Indeed with polls showing the Greens hold the key to the Senate, less focus should be on the PM beauty contest. More investigation is needed into how Green power will rework policy and test good government whoever wins the Lodge.

The privilege of SRE teaching

ROBYN POWELL

I'VE been spending a lot of time recently getting trained to be a better Scripture teacher. It is comforting to know I seem to have some of the gifts and skills that vital job needs.

A Scripture teacher needs to:

1. be prepared. How many fish did the disciples catch? One hundred and fifty-three. I know because I prepared.

2. be adaptable. When a child asks if he can stand on his head for the Scripture lesson, let him have a go.

3. cater for different learning styles. Who knew that some little boys learn better while standing on their heads?

3. be enthusiastic. Assure the children that you definitely can make Noah's ark from two pipe-cleaners, a paddle pop stick and a large sheet of aluminium foil. (There will still be a couple of unbelievers at this point, so ramp that enthusiasm up to the max!)

4. trust the word of God.

And don't be surprised at a conversation like this:

Me: King Saul was a great disappointment. He was not the right king for God's people. But the good news is that

God has already got another king waiting in the wings and this king would be the one God wants for his people.

Jamie (a quiet, utterly unchurched boy who sits in the back row): But I thought that Jesus is the king God wants for all his people?

It never fails to amaze me, though I suppose it shouldn't. I know that 'from the lips of children and infants you have ordained praise' but it still catches me unawares, week after week. And I still often skip — in a sedate, middle-aged way — up the street when Scripture is over. For after 15 years of teaching Scripture, I still marvel at the privilege it is to teach the Bible to 40 people for 40 weeks a year, year after year.

But what to do now? Jamie has stolen my thunder. How will I ever build up to Jesus over the next four lessons about David? What can be my big finish for the term?

No need to worry... I'm onto it. Because I will be prepared, adaptable, enthusiastic and trusting God. And as well as all that, you can make really good sheep out of cotton balls and googly eyes.

Robyn Powell is children's minister at St Matthias', Centennial Park.

Praying for new PM

READER'S ESSAY OF THE MONTH
by Philip Cooney

AS Tony Abbott recently observed, Jesus was not a party-political person. Nor should he be claimed to support one side of politics over another.

However, Christians are entitled to seek representation in the parliament by men and women who they judge will enable the peaceful proclamation of the gospel and who will uphold the biblical principles of justice, compassion, respect and protection for each human being created in the image of God.

Some Christians will seek more. They will want their elected representatives to protect the Christian church and associated organisations from secular interference. Some will vote for particular positions on third-world debt or asylum seekers.

Others will want assurances that their local member will, if given a conscience vote, vote in accordance with the Bible's teaching on issues such as abortion, euthanasia, embryonic stem-cell research and marriage.

Amid the political turmoil of the past month, various political leaders have made some interesting statements about their faith and its influence upon their role as politicians. Only days before he was forced to resign the then PM Kevin Rudd attended a forum run by the Australian Christian

Lobby (July, SC). At face value, Kevin Rudd's words there on climate change take a biblical mandate and apply it to a government policy, albeit a postponed one. "If we take carefully the requirement on this generation to be proper stewards of God's creation, it means that we should act responsibly in the care of this planet and this creation as well," he said.

Not that Opposition Leader Tony Abbott is afraid to make theological statements, despite his statement to the ACL forum that "Faith has influenced my life but it does not, and I believe should not, shape my politics".

Mr Abbott, like fellow Catholic and trained theologian NSW Premier Kristina Keneally, is fond of using the parables, the words of Christ and other religious words and terms to colour his political statements. These permeate his thinking but apparently not, he claims, his policies.

Mrs Keneally has no such qualms. Last month she launched into a defence of the right of same-sex couples to adopt children. This arose as she sought to deflect anger from the homosexual lobby after she earlier made a reference to Jesus sitting with "the sinners" to explain her stance on homosexuality. This was her explanation: "Jesus loved all. He loved all and he accepted all and, for me, that is the strongest message that comes out of the gospel. Where in the gospel do they talk about same-sex relations?"

When questioned about the parts of

the Bible that prohibit homosexuality, the Premier replied, "There are also parts of the Bible that prohibit usury — earning interest on money. There are also parts of the Bible that make claims that we as a community wouldn't accept today: about women, about slaves, and what... the Catholic Church teaches is, in fact, that there is Scripture and there is tradition. And the tradition of the church is to constantly reinterpret Scripture, in light of human understanding and human experience."

It may be easy for those from a Protestant tradition to distance themselves from such an approach to Scripture and its resulting thinking. But what about the views of the Rev Fred Nile on Muslims and the wearing of the burqa? Especially given the public spectacle of the two ordained members of parliament — Mr Nile and the Rev Dr Gordon Moyes — being at odds over this and other issues.

It almost seems a relief the present PM makes it clear that she does not believe in God. At least we know where she stands.

So where does this leave the Christian voter in Australia? Those living in New Testament times had little influence over their political leaders, whose failure to recognise the Lord was often manifest in the belief that they themselves were god. Yet the first Christians are commanded to pray for "kings and all those in authority that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness", recognising that "there is no authority except that which God has established".

And so should we.

It almost seems a relief the present PM makes it clear that she does not believe in God.

PAGET TAKES UP REINS AT BROADWAY

An 18-month search by St Barnabas', Broadway for a new rector has ended with the church's executive pastor, the Rev Mike Paget, accepting the position.

While aware of the challenges and pitfalls that lie ahead as his role (and relationships in the church) change, Mr Paget expressed his great affection for the parish and the people he has served for the past four years, and was confident in the greatness of God — and God's ability to build his kingdom.

"Barneys has been led, in both its senior ministers and godly elders, by some extraordinarily wise, capable and faithful servants of the Lord," he said. "I shall have to trust to Jesus to fill these very great shoes... they are certainly too large for me!"

Mr Paget's connection with the church goes back to 2003, when he began working at Barneys as a student minister. He joined the staff in 2007 as an assistant minister.

One of the churchwardens, David Britton, said that in the time Barneys had been without a rector Mr Paget had "given the place its energy... he's worked phenomenally hard doing his job while still chaplain at UTS, leading the evening student service, leading the staff team and then being the person who everyone else looked to."

Mr Britton said it was "a pretty bold move" to appoint a 33-year-old to a church that was "so strategically important" in Sydney but said parishioners had been convinced by seeing the way Mr Paget had conducted himself over the past 18 months: "his courage and faithfulness, good humour and perseverance and endurance — he's a very, very impressive guy."

"He knows how hard it's going to be... but he's taken it on



and we'll do our very best to look after him. We'd like to think that we're entrusting at least the next decade of ministry at Barneys in Mike's hands."

Bishop Rob Forsyth, who has been acting rector of the parish during its vacancy, said he was "delighted" by the decision to appoint Mr Paget.

"I have been particularly impressed at the leadership he has provided at Barneys over this last year in difficult times which shows deep potential for his growth and development in the decades ahead," he wrote in a letter to church members. "I know each of you will join me in doing all that we can to make sure that this appointment will lead to a long, growing future for this great church."

Mr Paget will be ordained as a presbyter by Bishop Forsyth at his induction service on August 12.

In addition, nominators were impressed by Mr Stedman's strong vision for the future and his collaborative leadership style — "working with people and engaging them in the decision-making process."

"He also seems to have a real love for ministry in Africa," Mr Titterton says. "One of the things he spoke to us about was wanting to look at ways we could have our church come along that missionary ride with him. It's a view much bigger than Baulkham Hills."

STEELE MOVES TO ARV

AFTER serving for 12 years as an Anglicare chaplain, first at Westmead Hospital and then at St George Hospital in Kogarah, the **Rev Janine Steele** is moving this month into a chaplaincy role with Anglican Retirement Villages in Castle Hill.



"I'll be one of four chaplains there, with particular responsibility for the 200-bed Brian King Gardens hostel — as well as general responsibility for pastoral care volunteers across the whole campus at Castle Hill," she says.

"I'm looking forward to the challenge of preparing a weekly sermon [for the Sunday chapel service], which I've never done before and I am excited about joining the happy team there."

Vacant Parishes

LIST OF PARISHES & PROVISIONAL PARISHES, VACANT OR BECOMING VACANT AS AT July 15, 2010:

- | | |
|---------------------------------|----------------|
| • Berrima cum Moss Vale | • Granville* |
| • Beverly Hills with Kingsgrove | • Keiraville |
| • Blakehurst | • Menai |
| • Burwood* | • Menangle |
| • East Sydney | • Shellharbour |
| | • Ulladulla |
| | • Waverley |

* DENOTES PROVISIONAL PARISHES OR ARCHBISHOP'S APPOINTMENTS.



MOUNTAIN PARISH CALLS YOUNG

THE rector of Moorebank since 2004, the **Rev Steve Young**, will move to the Blue Mountains in January 2011 to lead the parish of Springwood.

Mr Young says that while he and

his wife Jo had been happy at Moorebank and not looking to move, "the people at Springwood felt they needed someone like me and we feel that we might be able to make a contribution up there... the Lord has opened this door to a place where we felt we could be productive".

The couple is aware that moving to a new parish in a different region means stepping into the unknown but, Mr Young says, "Now that we have decided to take up this new challenge we are looking forward to serving God and his people in the mountains".

FROM NORTH TO NORWEST

AT the end of this month the **Rev Peter Stedman** will be inducted as rector of St Andrew's, Norwest. Assistant minister at St Andrew's, Roseville since 2007, he was made presbyter by Bishop Glenn Davies in November last year.

One of the wardens at Norwest, Craig Titterton, says the congregation is excited about Mr Stedman's appointment because "change always invigorates people".

Mr Titterton says parish nominators had been looking for a man with a young family (the Stedmans have two preschoolers), who could engage easily with that growing demographic in the Baulkham Hills area.

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FAITH v WORK

Why our worlds should collide



Focus groups with our young workers show they are hungry for workplace support, writes JEREMY HALCROW.

IT'S fairly unusual for a researcher to be inundated with thanks from members of the public for including them in a focus group. Usually they have to bribe people with free food just to get them to turn up.

But this was the surprising response when Leila Gunning, who is helping organise the Engage conference for Katoomba Christian Convention (KCC), ran four focus groups with young Christian workers earlier this year to find out what support they need.

"It was very encouraging to speak with... other Christian workers my age and to know they are out there and struggle with the same things I do," Ali Wark wrote to Leila soon afterwards. "I would love to know when the next focus groups are so I can go. I'm still on a high from them and have even admitted to a work colleague I'm Christian because of it."

Another said: "Please keep running them. They are like therapy groups."

It appears that 'work' and 'church' operate in completely different spheres for most young Christians and they are desperate for these worlds to collide.

"What surprised me most was that every one of them was positive about their church at first," Ms Gunning says. "But as they thought about it they realised that their churches aren't doing much to support them to be active Christians in their workplace."

The focus groups were made up entirely of committed Christians under 30 who have full-time jobs in a secular workplace. They came from a diverse range of white-collar industries: law, health, engineering, media, hospitality and tourism, as well as secondary and tertiary education. All attended an Anglican, Presbyterian or Baptist church in metropolitan Sydney.

"It was amazing how encouraged they were just from having the opportunity to share with others how hard they find it being a Christian in the secular workforce," Leila Gunning says.

Lawyer Megan Coall says she came away from the focus group with a greater sense that she was "not alone as a worker in the city" because "there are other Christians walking a similar journey, trusting that God has put them in this time and place to serve him".

"I am looking forward to Engage this year, knowing that the organisers are keen to address the issues faced by young Christian workers," she adds.

In his blog for The Joshua Tree initiative, Stuart Heath writes that he believes the disconnect between church networks and people's work contacts is a major problem. Analysing his Facebook networks, he observes that "much of our Christian community is ghetto-ised."

"Jesus said, 'By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another'. This kind of implies that people who don't know Jesus will see us loving one another. That can only happen if we let our relational networks collide," he writes.

Mr Heath believes that churches need to consciously plan to help their members worlds collide.

"Sydney is not a country town where everyone's lives already intersect," he says. "You have to plan for worlds to collide. And when a [church] group first decides to do this, the transition will take time: everyone's lives are already full. You probably need time to reorganise life so that you can be involved in the same mothers' group, frequent the same restaurants and cafés... and spend time

getting to know and serve the same people."

But there is also a flipside that comes from pushing our working world away from our church fellowships. Talking honestly about the real issues that have an impact on our working lives is culturally off-limits in most of our churches and Bible studies.

Leila Gunning says the feedback from the focus groups suggests that "when work issues are raised in our church fellowships they are skimmed over very quickly".

It appears we are not allowing the word of God to speak into to the world where we spend so much of our waking lives. This is troubling, given the complex ethical problems many workers face.

However, Ms Gunning explains that, according to her research, the severity of the ethical dilemmas workers face does depend on their particular industry.

"The most extreme compromising issues were about people being put in situations where they had to lie for their boss," she says.

The most common problems faced by Christian workers were around navigating office politics and gossip, while many of the professionals interviewed also struggled with the expectation in their workplace that they would commit to extensive overtime. **SC**

Q: WHAT DO YOUNG WORKERS WANT?

A: To be encouraged as Christians in their workplace.

"It would be great to highlight a worker every week at church. We highlight missionaries and pray over them. Why not see our workers as missionaries and pray over them, too? Little things like that can be so encouraging."

ON VIDEO

This year's keynote speaker at KCC's Engage conference is Steve Timmis from Crowded House in the UK. Mr Timmis will be interviewed on video by Anglican Media discussing how church can better support Christians in the workplace through 'continuous fellowship'. This video will be posted on Sydneyanglicans.net

Don't spin out!

Surviving the rise of the helicopter kids

Simply saying that “Mummy’s boys should grow up!” is not the wisest Christian response to the phenomenon of emerging adulthood, writes JIM FRENCH. In fact, the Bible has something to say to us all about this new demographic.

IN Italy they are called ‘mammoni’ — or Mummy’s boys. Today seven out of 10 Italian men are staying at home well into their thirties. The Italian government, faced with a crisis of an aging population, has sought to legislate to pay these men to leave home, become independent, marry and begin to produce children.

This cultural phenomenon is being lived out by many, and not just men, around the Western world. However, before we speak derogatorily or simply tell our children to grow up, get out and marry, it may be wise to try to understand more about this phenomenon — and particularly from a biblical perspective.

WHAT THE EXPERTS SAY

This life stage in between adolescence and adulthood has been called ‘emerging adulthood’ by one of its main commentators, Jeffrey Arnett. The age range in question is between 18 and 35.

Like adolescence, emerging adulthood is a cultural construct. That is, it is not a God-given, natural stage of life. What this cultural construct means is an extension of adolescence. More and more young people are not reaching traditional cultural markers of adulthood — such as finishing schooling, leaving home, being gainfully employed and financially independent, marrying, having children and taking responsibility to provide for their themselves or their family — until well into their late twenties and early thirties. This has changed from the 1950s when the average age for a woman to marry was 20 and she would leave home and be supported by a working husband who was, on average, aged 22.

Parallels can be drawn between the emergence of adolescence in the late 19th–early 20th century and this new life stage, which has emerged in the late 20th–early 21st century. Both came out of major social and economic changes. ‘Adolescence’ was

associated with the industrial revolution and ‘emerging adulthood’ with the changes that occurred post-war, especially in the 1960s.

The first sign of the change occurred in the late 1960s, when the average age of marriage rose to 21 for women and 23 for men. By 2002 this figure had increased to 27 for women and 29 for men. In Australia in 2001, 48 per cent of first births within a stable relationship were to women aged 30 or older. With this change is the tendency to have fewer children and therefore there is less pressure on those children to move out of home and become financially independent.

Bernard Salt, an Australian social commentator, believes a contributing factor in the rise of this trend is parents who support it. He makes the observation that much of it has to do with the baby boomer parents (those born after World War II into a prosperous Western post-war world). He writes that parents’ willingness to support and finance this life stage is a selfish



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The author shows how passages for evangelistic preaching may be selected and prepared. He also challenges modern church growth techniques, showing the superiority of direct proclamation. These and other key topics make up a complete guide to evangelizing.

Dr Peter Masters has been Minister of the world-famous Tabernacle Church in central London since 1988. He is the international speaker of the Gospel of the Kingdom in 1999 and holds the status of being a positive in the Tabernacle of the Kingdom.

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unwillingness for baby boomer parents in their 50s to let their children achieve independence. Speaking of the parents of emerging adults, Salt writes, 'confronted with the prospect that nature has dispensed with their services' they turn their suburban homes into five-star hotels in order that they may 'still be wanted and needed'.

Salt unkindly labels the young adult recipients of this welfare 'helicopter kids' because they 'perennially hover about the family home, refusing to fully move out and establish their own households'. The statistics in Australia show that, in 1976, 21 per cent of this age group lived with their parents and by 2001 the proportion had scaled up to 30 per cent. For whatever reason, for nearly half of all emerging adults their change in residency includes a return to the family home at least once, if not more.

An example of these phenomena can be seen in Channel 7's sitcom *Packed to the Rafters*. The premise of the show is that Dave and Julie Rafter have reached the stage in their life when the children are now in the young adult stage of life. Their three children Rachel, Ben and Nathan continue to use the family home as a place of refuge when a range of problems are incurred by them, from relational to financial. These children are the 'helicopter kids' that Salt is describing in his social commentary on Australian life.

Jeffrey Arnett has identified five characteristics of emerging adulthood that are exemplified in *Packed to the Rafters* and supported in Salt's research:

- instability
- feeling in between
- self-focus
- identity explorations
- possibilities

A feeling of being 'in between' is experienced by many young people, knowing they are not kids, yet also not quite feeling like adults. This seems logical as the gap between adolescence and adulthood has been extended from four or five years to up to 20 years for some people. A telling example of this instability is their living arrangements. Young people may typically

continued next page »

YEAR 13 The answer for emerging adults?

With the years between 18 and 35 characterised by instability, feeling 'in between', self-focus and the exploration of one's identity and possibilities, it is quite clear that today's young adults need careful and committed discipleship that can help equip them with a Christian faith robust enough to deal with the real challenges of life.

"In many ways those early years out of high school are all about freedom — being free from the restrictions of school life, often with the added freedom that comes from having a part-time job and a driver's license", says the Rev Graham Stanton, the principal of Youthworks College.



"This is an important time for young people to express and establish their identity... and many young adults have found themselves cut loose from the church during this period of life."

Statistics show that leaving school is the biggest exit point from the church for teenagers (or 'emerging adults') who call themselves Christians. The fluid and indecisive nature of this life stage is demonstrated by the increasing popularity of gap years as many young people are using their post-high-school years to expand their horizons, explore their possibilities and weigh up their options for the future.

One diocesan strategy initiated in 2006 to target this age group is the Year 13 Gap Year program. Responding to the popularity of gap years and their proven intellectual, social and emotional benefits, Anglican Youthworks wished to take these benefits one step further by developing a structured program for growing school leavers in their faith and love for Christ.

The three key elements of the program are: a formative, discipling community; biblical and theological reflection; and significant experiences of church and non-church based ministries, learning life skills and cross-cultural mission.

Year 13 director the Rev Andrew Hudson says he has found "that providing a dynamic Christian community for them [school leavers] to belong to at this transition time makes a huge difference as they genuinely choose to own and live out their faith in Jesus".

"Not only are Year 13 graduates equipped for a lifetime of serving God in their chosen career paths but many are choosing to go into some form of full-time ministry as well. This is great news for the gospel and for the Diocese of Sydney."

Angela Owen

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move out of home to attend university at 18 or 19 years of age, then move back into home to save money for an extended overseas trip. They may return to Australia, landing back in their parental home before 'hooking up' with a romantic partner and either moving out to cohabit with the partner or bringing the partner back to live at the parental house. After the relationship has ended they may move back in with their parents or out with friends.

HOW THE BIBLE SPEAKS TO THIS GENERATION

Of the five characteristics listed above, it is the last three that begin to move our focus towards the Bible: identity exploration, self-focus and a life stage of possibilities. The possibilities open to young adults today are unprecedented in human history, except, perhaps, in the lives of the rich. So if we were to ask the question 'Where in the Bible does the contemporary phenomenon of emerging adulthood best fit?', an answer may be from the nobleman's children.

A characterisation can be drawn from the Bible that parallels the experience of many contemporary young adults with that of the rich nobleman's child. Both the nobleman's son in the Bible and many 18-35 year-olds in contemporary society have the privilege of an extended period of life regarded as a time of possibilities, opportunity, exploration, 'higher'

**This time
can either
be used for
good, or
it can be
wasted.**



education, travel, enjoyment and finding one's place within society.

This time can either be used for good, or it can be wasted. In the Bible, examples like Moses (Exodus 2:6-10; cf. Acts 7:22), King David's son Solomon (1 Chronicles 29:1-25) and Daniel (Daniel 1:1-7) all were given this unique privilege, which they used for good to gain wisdom, learn the rules of conduct and protocols of the royal court and get ready for taking the responsibility of leading God's people. However Solomon's son Rehoboam appeared not to make the most of his privileged opportunity and, instead of gaining wisdom and learning from the elders of Israel, he listened to the folly of his youthful peers (1 Kings 12:6-14).

It is the same for many young adults today. This privilege of an extended period of life that is afforded to many young adults can be used for good to gain wisdom, work out where they fit in God's household and be trained to take up positions of responsibility in the family, workplace and church, or it can be squandered on self-focus and absorption, avoiding growing up, sponging off parents and just hanging out with your mates playing computer games and jetsetting around the world.

The characterisation of the privileged nobleman's children demonstrates the great privilege that is being offered to many young adults today. And with great privilege comes great responsibility (Luke 12:48).

Therefore wisdom is called for — gospel, Spirit-filled wisdom — in order that this privilege that has been given to our young people is not squandered but used to form mature, Christian adults.

Parents are primarily responsible for the raising and disciplining of their children into maturity in Christ. This life stage is crucial for identity formation and it is essential that our children find their identity in Christ in order to take responsibility as adults in their household and the household of God.

Parents also need to find and know their identity in Christ in order to overcome the tendency to hold onto their children, in order to 'need to be needed'. The goal of parenting should be to see our children grounded in Christ and beginning to take on responsibilities as adults.

For parents, youth leaders and ministers, and for young adults there is a great need to teach and be taught how to 'read' culture. What is needed is a deep look at culture in order to reject what is bad, accept what is good and change what is needed in order to live in a Christ-honouring way. Too often Christians treat culture like a grape and a pebble. We either swallow both or spit both out. There is a great need to learn how to discern between the two.

SC

Jim French is Vice-Principal of Youthworks College. This is an extract from his paper "Emerging Adulthood and the Need for Cultural Engagement" to be presented at the 2010 Theology of Youth Ministry Conference, St Anne's, Ryde in September. More details: www.youthworks.net/events.

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The all-of-life benefits of youth mentoring

PHILIP JENKINSON investigates the key ingredients needed to successfully mentor young people.



MOST of us can remember those individuals who provided us with encouragement, guidance, support and friendship at important moments in our lifetime. Perhaps it was an inspiring teacher who took an interest in us, or a sports coach who took the time to talk and not just train.

For the widely respected NSW Police Commissioner, Andrew Scipione, it was a bunch of Year 12 kids who needed more people at their church youth group, and so dragged him along.

Speaking at the 2010 Young Life Australia annual banquet the Commissioner recalled the impact their mentoring had on him, which eventually guided him to make a decision to accept Jesus Christ as his saviour.

"I was 14 and I had absolutely no desire to go but they decided that I should be coming along to a church and that was that," he told the audience. "They wouldn't take 'no' for an answer.

"After a very short time of being involved with this church youth group, I had a chance to really see the wonderful young leaders that they were. And this is where the mentoring, and the role modelling, began for me. This is where I watched these people... do this thing called life. As a result, my life went on a very different path than where it was heading before."

Youth mentoring continues to rise in popularity and, when it is done well — in a structured, safe and consistent manner — the benefits to young people can stay with them for the rest of their lives.

Mentoring is now a key element within national and local strategies for working with young people, especially those who are regarded as 'at risk' or socially excluded. What started out decades ago as a scattering of well-meaning individuals who wanted

to give something back has grown into a movement involving state and federal governments, charities, the education sector, and businesses seeking to fulfil a charter of good corporate citizenship and set a good example in the community.

However, just how mentoring stacks up against other forms of youth intervention depends largely on the quality of the mentor, the willingness of the young person to accept being mentored and the principles and ethical backbone of the organisation that trains, equips and provides the mentors — who are usually volunteers.

Coaching, tutoring and counselling are not mainstays of mentoring. Mentoring focuses on the relationship while counselling seeks to clinically address specific temporary or permanent conditions and coaching and tutoring focus on skills, performance and targets.

Mind you, an effective youth mentor can often do a little bit of coaching and tutoring from time to time as part of the relationship dynamic they may have with their mentee.

At its best, youth mentoring promotes positive behaviours and attitudes and is an excellent way of bridging the gap between generations. It takes its cues in this regard from the days of large extended families and friendly neighbourhoods within which young people could mix with adults and elders to establish common ground and learn from each other.

Glyn Henman, the CEO of Young Life Australia, is a passionate advocate of youth mentoring, calling it "a powerful form of intervention" that "makes a difference in the lives of young people.

"Ask any teacher who's been in the system for a while and they will tell you that the high schoolers who are unmotivated, unchallenged and constantly in trouble are the ones who unfortunately don't get active

parenting, don't have any decent adult role models outside of the family, often have a difficult family life anyway, and basically don't have anyone who cares about them.

"Not that it's just about lives that are a little broken, or way off the rails," Henman adds. "Mentoring works brilliantly in well-adjusted young people as well, as it opens up another layer of understanding, confidence and a sense of direction that can encourage them to achieve more out of life."

Recent research indicates that young people involved in youth mentoring are less likely to engage in harmful activities such as crime, theft, assault, drug or alcohol abuse and are more likely to improve their relationships with family, their peers, teachers and other authority figures.

Young people are also likely to improve their academic performance and develop the resilience to cope with challenges and major changes in their lives, as youth mentoring provides a structured and trusting relationship that brings young people together with caring individuals who offer advice, empathy and encouragement.

"When a teenager is trying to deal with adolescence and hormones and all of the peer pressure to act cool and be seen to be cool, the last thing they think they need is mentoring," Henman says.

"On the surface, it's easier just to get drunk, break things, steal things or humiliate people. But scratch a little deeper and actually a young person craves to be listened to, guided, valued, accepted and truly inspired to make the most out of their life. I know from experience, because I was that kid."

SC

Philip Jenkinson is a writer, marketer and blogger with a keen interest in youth affairs. He is the key contributor and editor of PublishNews the fortnightly trade newsletter of Publishers Australia. He also works part time for Young Life Australia.

Recent research indicates that young people involved in youth mentoring are less likely to engage in harmful activities.

1 Corinthians

The end of the world as we know it!

How can local churches cope with a crisis? BRIAN ROSNER says Paul's first letter to the Corinthians is an excellent guide.



PHOTO: Mizrak

IRONICALLY, 1 Corinthians was not in fact Paul's first letter to the Corinthian Christians, nor was it his last. Paul's relationship with the Corinthian church spanned several years in the 50s AD and produced some of the apostle's most profound teaching on the Christian life.

The capital of the province of Achaia, Corinth was the seat of its governor and lay on a major trading route between the east and west of the Empire. It was a cosmopolitan and religiously pluralistic city, accustomed to visits by impressive, travelling public speakers.

Cornith was also obsessed with status, self-promotion and personal rights. Do you see any similarities to Sydney?

Paul laid the foundation for the church of God in Corinth on his second missionary journey and spent 18 months there building it up (Acts 18:1-18). Most of its members were former Gentiles (cf. 12:2: 'when you were pagans...') and had turned to God from idols.

Sent from Ephesus on his third missionary journey a few years later, 1 Corinthians mentions a previous letter from Paul to the church (1 Cor 5:9-11). In it he had warned them not to associate with those who were guilty of serious sins, such as sexual immorality, greed and idolatry.

Since these were the typical faults of the Gentiles, Paul was effectively exhorting them not to be conformed to the world. Unfortunately, some in the church mistook Paul to be saying they should shun not just fellow believers who behaved in such ways,

but their non-Christian friends also. The book we call 1 Corinthians is, in part, Paul's attempt to correct this misunderstanding. He wrote it in response to disturbing news from the church. This included both oral reports, from Chloe's people (1:11) and from Stephanas, Fortunatus and Achaicus (16:17), and a letter from the church (7:1) consisting of a series of questions posed by the congregation.

As far as we can reconstruct the situation, after Paul had left, Apollos, and possibly Peter, visited Corinth. As well as bringing various benefits, this caused unintended problems. The congregation was now divided based on loyalty to their favourite Christian leader (1:12). Paul learned that they were in considerable disarray with civil litigation between members (6:1-11), sexual immorality (5:1-13; 6:12-20), marriage problems (7:1-40) and questions concerning food offered to idols (chapters 8-10) and spiritual gifts (chapters 12-14).

The common element in all the problems in the church is that the Corinthians were 'worldly' — 'acting like mere human beings' (3:3). The social values of secular Corinth had infiltrated the church. Paul's attempt to sort out the serious problems within the largely Gentile church in Corinth consists primarily of a confrontation over two particular vices: sexual immorality and idolatry.

Paul wrote 1 Corinthians to tell the church of God in Corinth that it was part of the fulfilment of the OT expectation of worldwide worship of the God of Israel. Therefore,

as God's end-time temple, the people must act in a manner appropriate to their pure and holy status by becoming unified, shunning pagan vices and glorifying God as they live under the lordship of Jesus Christ.

Paul wrote the letter as a man focused on an impossible mission, to proclaim the message of the lordship of Christ to the glory of God throughout the entire world. He acts out of a secure and noble identity, intent on fulfilling his priestly duty to ensure the purity of God's temple, which is the new humanity that is being transformed and renewed by God.

In the words of Romans 15:16, this letter is a case study in Paul carrying out his commission to 'be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles with the priestly duty of proclaiming the gospel of God, so that the Gentiles might become an offering acceptable to God, sanctified by the Holy Spirit'.

In 1 Corinthians 1:2 Paul refers to the Corinthians as those 'who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints along with all those who call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ in every place'. The phrase 'in every place' echoes Malachi 1:11, which predicts a future time when God would be worshipped by Gentiles all over the world: 'From the rising of the sun until its setting my name will be glorified among the Gentiles and in every place incense is offered to my name and a pure offering, for my name is great among the Gentiles, says the Lord Almighty'.

FOCUS QUESTION:

What difference does the cross make to our everyday lives?

For Paul, the Corinthians are part of the fulfilment of God's plan to be worshipped among all the Gentiles and he wants them to help fulfill this worldwide eschatological vision by glorifying God.

In chapters 1-4 Paul urges the Corinthians to be united in the proclamation and service-oriented lifestyle of the cross, for they have entered the new eschatological age of salvation. There is a negative treatment of the wisdom of the world, which asserts that God has outsmarted and overpowered human powers and authorities (1:10-2:5), followed by a positive section that proclaims the Christ-centred wisdom of the cross (2:6-4:17).

In chapters 5-7 Paul deals primarily with issues related to sexual immorality, first in a negative treatment of its manifestations in the church in Corinth (5:1-6:20) and then in a positive treatment of marriage (7:1-40).

Chapters 8-14 deal with the issue of idolatry, beginning, again, with a negative treatment of its manifestations in Corinth (8:1-11:1) and then moving to a more positive treatment of the proper worship of the one true God (11:2-14:40).

1 Corinthians comes to a climax in chapter 15 with a discussion of the resurrection as it relates to the ultimate triumph of Christ over all adversaries and the final transformation of our corruptible humanity into humanity that fully reflects God's glory.

Chapter 16 closes the letter with instructions for the collection, some personal requests and Paul's final greetings.

Paul's use of the key words 'flee' and 'glory' reveal his main concerns in the letter. In concluding the negative section on sexual immorality, Paul exhorts the Corinthians to 'flee sexual immorality' (6:18) and to 'glorify God' with their bodies (6:20). In concluding the negative section on idolatry, Paul exhorts them to 'flee idolatry' (10:14) and to do everything 'to the glory of God' (10:31).

Paul calls on the Corinthians to be the 'church of God', a phrase he uses to describe them in 1:2. It's a message he drives home again and again in the letter. They are the temple of God, the field of God, the building of God, and so on. They had been behaving like a church that belonged to its city. The calling of all believers is not to be conformed to this world but to be transformed in our behaviour by the renewing of our minds (as in Romans 12:2).

1 Corinthians has much to say to the modern world. No book in the New Testament, even Paul's letter to the Romans, does more to explain the grace of God, the lordship of Christ and the work of the Holy Spirit. The contribution of the letter to the practical knowledge of God is immense. Not only is its ethics searching and rigorous, its theology, especially of the cross, announces the end of the world as we know it.

As well as supplying concrete answers to many problems which have comparable manifestations today on subjects as diverse as leadership, preaching, pluralism,

MOORE COLLEGE


Dr Brian Rosner lectures in New Testament and Ethics at Moore Theological College. His co-authored commentary on the book of 1 Corinthians, in the Pillar series, is due to be published in November.



sexuality and worship, 1 Corinthians models how to approach the complexity of Christian living with the resources of the Old Testament and the example and teaching of Jesus. Above all, it shows the importance of asking, how does the gospel of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, which bookends the letter in chapters 1 and 15, teach us to live?

In September, Moore College's School of Theology will be exploring 1 Corinthians. Along with six members of faculty there will be four guest speakers, each with proven expertise in the letter, including Dr Bruce Winter and Bishop Michael Nazir-Ali. Topics to be covered include sexual ethics, the body, spiritual gifts, Paul's pastoral practice and preaching 1 Corinthians. The lectures will be supplemented by a conference dinner and two lively panel discussions. John Calvin was right to describe 1 Corinthians as "no less difficult than valuable". Come and join us for what promises to be a challenging and rewarding couple of days.

SC



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Department of External Studies

Unlocking the key to good music

A deeper truth lies beneath most church music debates, writes LUKE WOODHOUSE: loving our church is at the heart of great congregational singing.

I WANT to understand how good singing in church happens.

Let's make two assumptions as a starting point. First, we are singing in most of our local churches on Sunday. Second, we are not ready to give the practice up any time soon (these assumptions are certainly worthy discussions for another time).

How then do we approach our appropriate *desire* to have good singing (rather than bad singing) in church?

I may be operating in fairly closed circles but, from my experience, this desire is only addressed in one of two ways:

1. A discussion around the particular *theological considerations* regarding music and song. This often involves the attempt to help Christians see the specific, spiritual value of Christians singing to God and to each other.

2. A discussion around the *pragmatic considerations* of good church singing. This involves questions like "What kind of songs should we sing?"; "Should we sing hymns?"; "How do we better train our musicians?"; and "How do you work with an under-resourced music team?" (whatever that means).

Given the fact that a relatively large chunk of time in a typical Sunday service in Sydney is spent singing, I think both of these discussions are necessary.

Yet I think there is a more important one we need to have first. We need to establish the relationship between the health of a church and the health of its singing.

Let's consider this: if you feel there is a problem with the music and singing in your church, have you considered that the problem may have nothing at all to do with the singing and everything to do with your church?

There can be a tendency to assume that a church will be healthy when the singing becomes good. However, I wish to suggest

that it is the other way around. A healthy church will have good singing. Or to put it another way, a church that *loves itself* will love its singing.

LOVING OUR CHURCH

So what do I mean by a church 'loving itself'?

I realise there is debate over terminology and I am bypassing important discussions of ecclesiology. In this article, I'll use 'church' to simply refer to the local gathering of Christians around God's word.

Paul's first letter to the Christians in Corinth — clearly an unhealthy church — offers us great instruction as to what makes a healthy church. The apostle addresses the Christians who gather in Corinth and says that they are to think of themselves as the body of Christ (eg. 1 Cor 12). This is a fundamental reality that the Corinthians must grasp. If we think of church this way (as expressing the body of *Christ*), churches should indeed love *themselves*.

The problem with the church in Corinth was its members were puffed up and arrogant. Colloquially we would say that they were a gathering of people who "loved themselves and yet ironically, as an expression of the body of Christ, they did not love themselves at all. They loved who they once were more than who they had become.

A church that loves itself is a celebratory community, broken and re-formed by the forgiveness found in Christ and one that rejoices in the hope of future resurrection. So when the people of God get together, they have this forgiveness and this hope in common (among many other secondary things). It is then perfectly appropriate and indeed necessary for the people of this local church to love themselves — to love who they are, to love what it is that actually makes their identity in the wider community unique and to love why it is they come together.



A healthy church will have good singing.

WHAT ABOUT MISSION?

But can a church that loves itself still be open to the outsider in its church practices? Am I saying that 'missional' churches are incompatible with churches that love themselves? Certainly not.

Yet there are indeed many churches that might *say* they love themselves but in reality may love shared experiences and cultural commonalities far more than the redemption won for them in Christ. A church that is defined primarily by loving, shared experience and cultural commonality is not a church that in fact loves *itself*. This kind of love certainly excludes the guest at church. A church that celebrates being the local expression of the body of Christ must exclude the guest no more and no less than Christ himself excludes the guest.

THE PLACE OF SINGING

So where does singing fit with a church that loves itself?

Let's think about this kind of question away from a church setting for a moment. After all, corporate singing is something that is not only given to God's church, it is everywhere in God's creation. And although it seems rarer these days in an increasingly individualistic modern Western society, corporate song does still exist outside organised community choirs.

There are a number of examples, but let's take the AFL premiership victory of the Sydney Swans in 2005. Being more of a music fan than an AFL fan, I remember my fascination watching the Swans' victory song after the team's grand final victory. It was a bunch of grown men, arm in arm, singing their team song at the top of their lungs. There were tears and everyone participated with great enthusiasm.

But why? Was it alcohol-induced? Undoubtedly not (at this stage). Was it because of the musicianship of the song writing? I doubt it. Was it the depth of the lyrics? Unlikely. Was it because the Swans was well resourced with many gifted singers? No, I heard their voices.

But as a music fan, I watched and could not deny that what I saw and heard was excellent corporate singing. It was powerful.

But of course it is ridiculous to suggest that the Swans exist and gather to sing. Singing is not what unifies them. And so if there was a problem with team unity, or the love of being part of the Sydney Swans, I am not sure how much would be achieved by fixing their victory song, lyrics or musicianship. The Swans' singing powerfully supports and expresses that unity. Yet the singing happens when the team is 'happening'. When the Swans sing, it is because they have an occasion to sing. There is a reason for their song.

Now of course there is a world of difference between the Sydney Swans and the local church, yet something can be said for the sociological reality of the corporate song which powerfully reinforces a greater unity.

So what can we learn from the Swans' example? Because of a great victory, there is the occasion for great singing. Perhaps if there is a problem of singing in your church it stems from a failure to grasp this occasion, the *reason* for Christian song. Perhaps the singing is functioning as a God-given diagnostic tool as to whether your church actually loves itself.

Let's flesh this out a bit. Why is it that when a church has a weekend away, the singing is almost always better than the singing on a typical Sunday? (Throughout this article I am deliberately leaving the 'better-ness' of corporate singing undefined.) Again it is not because of the song selection or the musicianship: it is because the members of the church have made an additional investment into the life of the church. They are investing more time in just being together. There is also a clearer

sense of occasion. As with the Swans' example, the church members have tangibly expressed a love for who they are. At the beginning of a weekend there is often a sense of anticipation, a joy in being together for longer than a typical Sunday. As long as the songs are basically singable (in terms of pitch, tempo and familiarity) and they are played in a way that doesn't completely throw people off, *that kind of singing* is so often incredible. Yet it ticks none of the traditional boxes for what we assume makes good church singing (quality of rehearsals, musicians, song choice, PA etc).

The point of this article is not to downplay the importance of pragmatic considerations such as song selection, music training and lyrical considerations. These discussions should happen and it is the responsibility of a music team that loves its church to work hard on pragmatics.

It is also true, for example, that if a church regularly sings songs with lyrics that misrepresent the theology that defines them, they will eventually become redefined by the theology of their songs.

There is still a place for constructive criticism. There is value in a congregation bringing certain difficulties associated with the singing to the attention of the music team. We need people offering feedback, yet *out of concern for the whole* of the church. This is indeed far, far easier said than done.

It is so often the case that the importance of these considerations is put into perspective in a church that loves itself.

A REAL-LIFE EXAMPLE

Let me finish with the story that prompted me to write this article. Recently I had the privilege of singing with an indigenous congregation. To be honest, in terms of musical 'gifting' in the way I usually think about it, this congregation were well and truly under-resourced. They sang songs I was familiar with but it has been a long time since I considered them worthy for my own church. I would have typically used a word like 'cheesy' to describe the songs.

But the church members, perhaps because they are less enslaved by the individualism of much of our modern Western world, really loved being together. They loved what it was that united them. So when I sang with them, the singing was intensely beautiful.

Now of course, if I joined this church week in, week out, I may find some of my old frustrations with church singing creeping back in. But the magnificent singing of this indigenous church should always be a lesson to me: when a church loves itself, the singing will be great. **SC**

Luke Woodhouse helps oversee the music and creative arts ministry at Christ Church, St Ives.

MODERN HYMN WINS

Our favourite found in church song poll

TOP Pick!

A modern hymn, "In Christ Alone" — written by Irish composer Keith Getty and English songwriter Stuart Townend — proved a worthy overall winner in our quest to find Sydney Anglicans' favourite church song.

The result is apt given that the song, written in 2001, is both contemporary and a hymn, specifically composed to help revive the art of hymnody for a new generation.

Although it may seem unfair to compare the results for our three separate polls, "In Christ Alone" clearly received more votes than all other nominations.

Among other contemporary songs, Stuart Townend's "How Deep the Father's Love" topped the newspaper poll while local EMU favourite "Never Alone" proved popular online. Chris Tomlin's "How Great Is Our God" came fourth overall when we tallied votes from both print and website readers.

The significant differences between the newspaper and online polls reflects their respective demographics.

The newspaper poll was overwhelmingly completed by lay people. The online audience is dominated by men, especially churchworkers and those under 40.

Selecting Sydney Anglicans' favourite traditional hymn proved more difficult. On top of the seven hymns originally nominated, readers suggested a further 18 well-known hymns they felt should have been on the list. These nominations helped shape the online poll, and one of these — Augustus Toplady's "Rock of Ages" (1775) — went on to take third place in this poll, even up against modern rivals.

Looking across the combined results for print and online, it was difficult to split five other traditional hymns, although strictly speaking they finished in the following order:

"When I Survey the Wondrous Cross", "And Can it Be", "Be Thou My Vision", "Amazing Grace", "How Great Thou Art".



Online poll (1st week)



Print readers: Contemporary



Print readers: Traditional

Caretaker Couple:

Binacrombi operates simultaneously as a dirt bike park with on-site accommodation and as a retreat centre, focusing on young people. It is situated on the Abercrombie River, one hour north-west of Goulburn.

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Email: angamez@binacrombi.net.au
Camp Website: www.binacrombi.com.au



Deputy National Director

The Australian Fellowship of Evangelical Students is seeking a Deputy National Director.

We are prayerfully looking for someone with:

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For more information contact Richard Chin (rchin@afes.org.au) or refer to the full advertisement at www.afes.org.au/deputy-national-director

Applications close 20 August 2010.



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Principal

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We are looking for a Principal who will work collaboratively across the College and with the three church partners to implement training programs and develop student outcomes and the College community.

Position description and application details are available at www.nungallinya.edu.au

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King's College is situated in the major regional city of Warrnambool, located on the coast approximately 3 hours from Melbourne. The school's current Principal of 15 years will retire at the end of 2010 and the School Council now seeks expressions of interest for the role commencing at the start of 2011.

The school Council seeks to appoint a talented and experienced professional to effectively lead the organisation and build further on the school's success, providing educational, organisational and spiritual leadership and implementing the Council's vision for sustained growth.

The preferred candidate will be a committed Christian with a well developed Christian world view and a passion for Christian education. The Principal will be a proven leader, with skill for organisational growth & development and demonstrated educational leadership, along with strong people and communication skills. Graduate qualifications would be highly regarded in a relevant field. Candidates should demonstrate successful classroom teaching experience.

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To obtain an Application Package,
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Applications close: Monday, 19th July 2010
and should be addressed to:
The Council Secretary, King's College,
23 Riverside Ter, Warrnambool, VIC, 3208

Creative Arts & Worship Director



Figtree Anglican Church (FAC) is seeking applications for a full-time Creative Arts & Worship Director. If you are passionate about using creative arts in worship and the development of a vibrant program that will be effective in helping FAC fulfil its mission and vision, we would love to hear from you!

The Creative Arts & Worship Director is responsible for developing and leading a growing, creative ministry that uses the arts to stimulate and lead the congregation to worship God in a way that is consistent with the values, culture, theology and mission of FAC.

The desired candidate must have strong spiritual maturity, relevant experience, and the affirmed gift of leadership in forming, leading and nurturing ministry teams within the areas of music, performing arts and multi-media.

FAC is an evangelical church in suburban Wollongong. In April 2004, we moved into a new 900 seat auditorium to support continual growth. We believe a Creative Arts & Worship Director is crucial in helping us to not only engage with our culture but to bring the gospel to bear on all of life.

To be considered for this position and to receive an information pack, email Jane Whitelaw: jane.whitelaw@figtreeanglican.org.au

Applications close: 15 September, 2010
Position available: October, 2010

Connecting for Life

Callum Whitley

Year 13 student
Jannali Anglican Church

What does a typical week look like for you at the moment?

My week consists of a very packed schedule. On Mondays I have staff meetings and Bible studies for the majority of the day. I also do some admin work for church and lead a children's group in the afternoon. On Tuesdays I teach a Year 6 Scripture class, then straight to another Bible study. From there, two other year 13'ers — Coralie and Shannon — and myself help out at our high school's lunchtime ISCF Christian group. Wednesday, along with Saturday, is my day off, though I am usually at church on Wednesdays organising music and on Saturdays I play soccer. We are all at Loftus for Year 13 on Thursday and Friday and on Friday night I lead at one of our youth groups. On Sunday mornings I lead another kids' group at church and in the afternoon/night I co-ordinate and play in the band at our youth service and play guitar at our evening service. On top of all this, I have a parttime job at the Port Hacking Youthworks' sites and also teach guitar on Tuesday and Wednesday nights.

Why did you decide to do the Year 13 program this year?

My decision to do Year 13 was a very spontaneous one. I had considered

doing it about halfway through Year 12 after a few Year 13 graduates plugged it at my youth group, although I changed my decision on being accepted into a music course at the Australian Institute of Music. It wasn't until the day before the Year 13 program started that I decided that I wanted to have a gap year but one in which I would actually do something with the year and not just take a year off. So I decided to take a "year on" and enrol in the Year 13 program and started the next day. I also wanted to grow in my knowledge and relationship with God and Year 13 seemed and has proved to be the best option for fulfilling this.

What's been the best thing about doing Year 13 with other members of your own church?

Well being the most represented church at Year 13, with three others from my church, it feels as though we are at Year 13 the whole week, not just the two days we are at college. This is great because back at church



I have people who I can easily relate to because they are experiencing the exact same things as I am. It just gives you that support and encouragement that really motivates and spurs you on throughout the year.

In what ways do you feel the Year 13 program is equipping you for the future?

I feel that doing the Year 13 program this year has really started to mature me and prepare me for adult life ahead. Due to the ministries that I am undertaking as part of the Year 13 program I am also being equipped with many skills such as leadership, evangelism, public speaking, pastoral care etc, also gained at college, which will greatly assist me in my future

ministries and if I ever decide to take on full-time ministry.

What do you hope to be doing after you finish Year 13?

At this point in time, I hope to study a Bachelor of Music at the Australian Institute of Music and then get my Diploma of Education. This will enable me to become a qualified music teacher for high schools. I would also love to continue in some of the ministries I am undertaking at my church such as music, children's and youth ministries, as I've really enjoyed serving God and a variety of different people of different ages in this way throughout the year. Travelling is something I also have a passion for and at some stage I would love to experience Europe.

Classifieds

Holiday Letting

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DIARY

VARIOUS dates in August

MOORE COLLEGE LECTURES

THE story of Jacob in biblical theology will be presented in a series by Moore College lecturer Dr Philip Kern. FOR dates and times visit www.moore.edu.au/about/news-and-events/ or call (02) 9577 9933.

LOCATION | 15 King St, Newtown | Various times

THURSDAY, August 5

CMS ILLAWARRA MISSION CONNECTION

SPEAKER: Joe Radkovic (Kenya)
LOCATION | St Mark's Anglican Church, West Wollongong | 12.30-2pm

SUNDAY, August 8

CAFÉ ANGLICARE

AS part of the 2010 City2Surf celebrations, Anglicare Bondi will hold a street party to thank runners who raised much-needed funds for Anglicare. A BBQ, soft drinks, coffee and cakes will be provided as well as various child-friendly activities

and live music.

LOCATION | 60 Wairoa Avenue, North Bondi | 10am-2pm

SUNDAY, August 15

MOORE COLLEGE SUNDAY

STUDENTS are available to give a short presentation so parishes can reconnect, or familiarise themselves with, our diocesan theological college. The Archbishop has asked all congregations to take part. Parishes that would like to have a student visit can ring Sue Bennett on (02) 9577 9797.

LOCATION | Your church

SATURDAY, August 21

CMS COMMISSIONING SERVICE

XAVIER and Libby Lukins (France)
LOCATION | St Thomas', North Sydney | 10am

SATURDAY, August 21

CMS HIGHLANDS MISSION DAY

SPEAKER: Greg Anderson (Moore College lecturer and former CMS missionary). \$10 per adult. Children's program available. RSVP by Friday,

MU members recognised

JAN Livingstone, former president of Mothers' Union (MU) Australia, presented 20 MU members with certificates recognising more than 50 years of service at St Faith's Narrabeen, on July 11.



Shakespeare's Bible in heritage display

A 1607 Geneva Bible, with inscriptions reportedly from William Shakespeare, was part of the Heritage Bible Display at St John's, Parramatta. The Governor of NSW, Professor Marie Bashir, opened the display at a ceremony on July 19 and presented curator Dr John Harris with the Elizabeth Macquarie Award for his work restoring the collection.

August 13 (include details of child care required) to missioned@cms.org.au

LOCATION | St Stephen's Anglican Church, Mittagong | 10am-3pm

WEDNESDAY, August 25

LOFTUS FILM AND THEOLOGY NIGHT

ATTEND an outdoor screening of *The Hurt Locker* and reflect on it with the Youthworks faculty.

\$20 (includes food and drink). Buy five tickets, get one free. (02) 8093 3400.

LOCATION | Youthworks College, Camp Wanawong, Loftus | 6:30pm

FRIDAY, August 27

CMS FRIDAY FELLOWSHIP

SPEAKER: Liz (going to South Asia)

LOCATION: CMS office, Level 5, 51 Druitt St, Sydney | 10.30am-12pm

SATURDAY, August 28

BLUE GUM LODGE 50TH CELEBRATION

DETAILS Contact Kate Betts on (02) 8268 3322.

LOCATION | Blue Mountains Conference Centre, Springwood.

TUESDAY, August 31

BREAKFAST WITH THE ARCHBISHOP: THE FUTURE OF OUR DIOCESE'S AID UNIT

ENJOY a special breakfast with the Archbishop of Sydney, Dr Peter Jensen, as he discusses the future direction of the Archbishop of Sydney's Appeals Unit.

A donation is encouraged for breakfast.

LOCATION | The Talbot Room, Level 2 St Andrew's House, Sydney Square | 7:45am-8:30am


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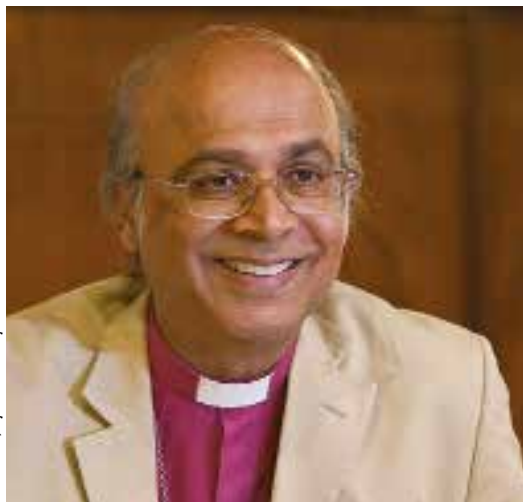
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Nazir-Ali will visit Sydney to address radical Islam



BISHOP Michael Nazir-Ali, who will speak in Sydney in September on the rise of radical Islam, was once dubbed by one British newspaper as the first 'black' diocesan bishop in the Church of England.

The appointment of Pakistani-born Bishop Nazir-Ali to the Diocese of Rochester in 1994 did create shock among many Britons, with one woman

saying, "I hope the new bishop's a Christian."

Bishop Nazir-Ali has a deep understanding of Islam. His father was born a Muslim and later converted to Christianity, an act which these days could result in death. The bishop believes modern Islam is as diverse as modern Christianity but that radical extremist Islam is on the rise.

When he was Bishop of Raiwind in Pakistan, Nazir-Ali saw Christians and Muslims suffering under sharia law imposed by General Zia in 1986. He spoke out but suffered for it and eventually found refuge in the UK. Two decades later, Nazir-Ali believes Britain is moving in the same direction.

"Now I am seeing the same things happening here," he said. "Christians in Britain are not allowed to express their faith in ways that people of other faiths are allowed to do."

Bishop Nazir-Ali will visit Sydney on September 15 and 16 to discuss how Christians should respond to Islam and Muslim refugees, as well as the rise of aggressive secularism.



TASTE buds were tingling last month at Naremburn-Cammeray Anglican Church's Taste of Fair Trade market. The church hosted the market to raise awareness that being a good neighbour can extend to our supermarket purchases.

Market stalls buzzed with activity as locals tasted Fair Trade-certified coffee, tea and chocolate from Alter Eco, Cadbury, Cocolo and Republica, feasted on free-range bacon and egg rolls from Neutral Bay's Naturally Organic Butcher and browsed fair trade products from Tribes and Nations.

Church member Amanda Lea, who initiated the market, described it as "a great success... we were able to talk to many people about the benefits of

swapping to fair trade products".

One of the parish' assistant ministers, Grahame Smith, said the church's motivation to host the market was grounded in the Christian idea of justice.

"When we recognise injustice, we react," he said. "The fair trade movement seeks to inform people of some of the injustices caused by unfair trade practices. And we react because God reacts."

Mr Smith said God's commitment to justice was more than a slogan.

"It involved his giving up himself to be unjustly executed on a cross. The trade of Jesus' life for ours is what motivates Christians to be concerned for others."

HEAR BISHOP NAZIR-ALI IN SYDNEY

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ONE FAITH, ONE MISSION, ONE LOVE FOR NEPAL

Could an atheist PM be a good thing?

Julia Gillard's rise may prove an antidote to Christian complacency, writes ANDREW ROBINSON.

How to vote

In their 'how to vote' guide (on sydneyanglicans.net) **John Dickson** and **Michael Jensen** say Christians should not vote:

- 1 without thinking
- 2 for a Christian just because they are a Christian
- 3 for the bottom line

THE first woman, the first Welsh-born and the first redhead: Julia Gillard's dramatic ascendancy to the top job was a day of firsts.

But not everything about Gillard is novel: she joins a host of Australian prime ministers, including Billy Hughes, John Curtin, Gough Whitlam and long-serving Labor PM Bob Hawke, who were and are notable unbelievers.

When ABC Melbourne presenter Jon Faine asked her if she believed in God, her answer was straightforward.

"No, I don't Jon, I'm not a religious person," she replied, explaining that despite a Baptist upbringing — even winning Sunday school prizes for memory verses — as an adult she had "taken a different path".

Her choice to take an affirmation rather than the traditional oath of office on the

Bible — probably an Australian first — and her frank comments about her lack of religious belief have caused some to gleefully celebrate the dawn of a new religion-free era for Australian politics.

Should Christians be concerned? The Australian Christian Lobby made headlines commenting that Gillard's lack of religious convictions would "alienate some in the Christian community". Even so, the ACL's chief of staff Lyle Shelton is positive about Gillard's pragmatism, expecting her to continue many of Labor's policies that had been attractive to Christians.

"We're hoping to see her continue to focus on Australia's contribution to the Millennium Development Goals, addressing homelessness here as well as compassion for asylum seekers," he says. "We've already seen the new PM make a strong statement

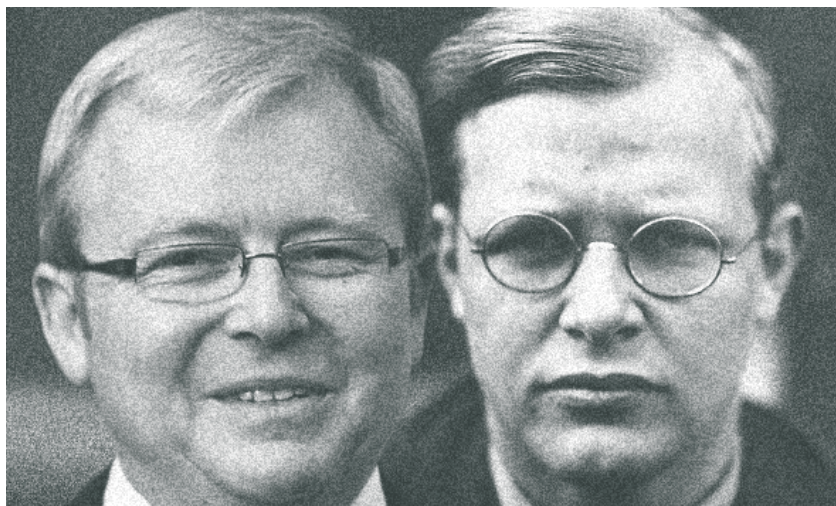
supporting marriage being between a man and a woman."

Dr Andrew Ford, ethics lecturer at Moore College and advocate to state and federal governments, says that some concerns about an atheist prime minister have been heightened by misunderstandings about Australia's political system.

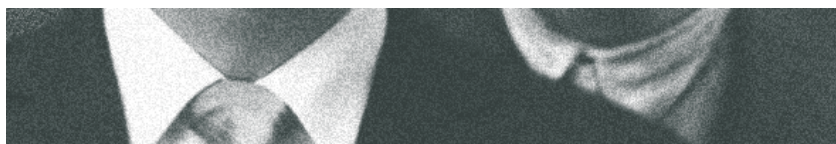
"Part of the reality of our system is that decisions are made in the party machine and caucus, not just at the higher levels," he says. "Certainly Julia will have her own policy agendas but she will not determine the entire shape of government policy."

What should Christians expect from government, anyway?

Sydney Anglican writer Andrew Errington, in the 'Jesus and Government' series on his blog *Will God Keep Gumbies*, argues that since Jesus is already Lord,



Kev's message from death row



Kevin Rudd's hero Dietrich Bonhoeffer is one of the greatest Christian thinkers about coping with failure. This is what he would advise our executed PM, writes BRIAN ROSNER.

RIDING high on a swell of popularity only to be unceremoniously dumped. From shooting star to first-term fizzer. It must be a crushing personal disappointment to the former prime minister. It's hard not to feel sorry for him.

Where can Rudd turn for consolation? His hero Dietrich Bonhoeffer, of course.

Rudd has described Bonhoeffer as the man he most admires from the 20th century. His many qualities included humble faith, a formidable intellect, resolute conviction and a sense of justice and public duty.

As it turns out, his own high hopes ended in dismal failure. As a German church leader, Bonhoeffer took a courageous stand against the Third Reich and his involvement in the famous Valkyrie plot to assassinate Hitler led to his execution one month before the end of the war.

Along with Bonhoeffer as pastor, prophet and political operative, Kevin would do

well to ponder Dietrich the failure. How did Bonhoeffer deal with disappointment? He had plenty of time to think it over. His famous *Letters and Papers from Prison* and *Love Letters from Cell 92*, written during a two-year incarceration to his family, friends and fiancée, record his musings. They throw up lessons for Rudd — and anyone else dealing with disappointment. Here are three of the most pertinent:

1. FOCUS ON THE INVALUABLE

According to Bonhoeffer not all disappointments are equal. He urged an ordering of priorities. Bonhoeffer would remind Rudd that popularity comes and goes. People who count are key.

2. DON'T GIVE UP

Bonhoeffer's Christian faith gave him a way of coping with difficulty. His remarkable



AAP Image/Mark Guthrie

resilience was not cultural or constitutional but theological. As he wrote to his parents, “My time is in your hands is the Bible’s answer to life’s frustrations”.

The day after the failure of the main plot to kill Hitler he wrote to console his friend, Eberhard Bethge: “By this-worldliness I mean living unreservedly in life’s duties, problems, successes and failures, experiences and perplexities. In so doing we throw ourselves completely into the arms of God.”

Bonhoeffer would counsel Rudd to continue trusting in and serving something bigger than himself.

3. STAY CHEERFUL

Bonhoeffer wrote to his fiancée Maria Von Wedemeyer: “Go on being cheerful, patient and brave”. And he told Eberhard to “spread hilaritas”. No one would decry Rudd’s tears at his resignation speech or his forlorn appearance on the back bench. But, according to Bonhoeffer, even in the midst of hardship, a joyful optimism can prevail. Cheerfulness was, in fact, one of his abiding qualities even in the horrors of prison and eventually on death row. His visitors and the

guards were inevitably impressed by it. In his famous prison poem, “Who am I?”, the opening stanza reads:

They often tell me I would step from my cell’s confinement calmly, cheerfully, firmly, like a squire from his country house.

In Bonhoeffer’s case cheerfulness was no accident of temperament; it was born of his unshakeable confidence in God. “I’m travelling with gratitude and cheerfulness along the road where I’m being led. My past life is brim-full of God’s goodness and my sins are covered by the forgiving love of Christ crucified.”

“What would Bonhoeffer say?” rang the Opposition taunts early in Rudd’s term in office.

What would Bonhoeffer say now? At this point of crushing disappointment, out of his own bitter experience, he might say to Rudd, hang out with Therese and the kids, hang on to something bigger than the high office and don’t hang up your sense of humour. SC

Brian Rosner is a lecturer at Moore College, a fellow of the Centre for Public Christianity and the editor of The Consolations of Theology. This article was first published in The Australian.

Obama’s manipulative memoirs

KARA MARTIN wonders if we can ever really trust what politicians say about themselves when they are so calculated not to offend.

Dreams from my Father

Barack Obama

I was surprised how well Barack Obama writes. I shouldn’t have been, really: his oratory is outstanding and although I think he has well-defined acting ability, there feels like the authentic voice of the writer in what he says.

This book is very interesting. I am sure Obama’s background is unique for a US president in recent times — and not just because of his African heritage. He had a very disrupted upbringing and education due to his mother’s failed marriages, his father’s absence and an initial lack of ambition. He grew up in impoverished circumstances in Hawaii, Indonesia and then the US mainland.

Essentially the book is about Obama’s search for an identity. He lacked a “typical” black upbringing yet was always conscious of his coloured skin. His father was like a ghost, the stuff of legends, intangible.

His childhood was full of stories of the subtle (and more obvious) discrimination he faced. He became politicised while at university but more along race lines than philosophy. However, his simple interpretations were challenged by a woman who pointed out that he still relied on a Hispanic maid to clean up his mess.

He then began to see poverty as the evil. He spent some tough years trying to organise for change in the poorest areas of Chicago, before applying to study law at Harvard.

Significantly, this book was written before Obama entered state politics, let alone the White House. It was cannily rereleased during his run for presidency however, as people began asking “Who is this guy?”. It has figured on the bestseller lists ever since.

I found it a compelling read. However, I also find it a little manipulative. There is something there to please just about everyone: women, Christians, Muslims, the poor and the well-educated.

In that way, it is a very political memoir, calculated to intrigue and not offend. For example, he praises the efforts of Christians

and churches and seems envious of their faith: “I remained a reluctant sceptic, doubtful of my own motives, wary of expedient conversion, having too many quarrels with God to accept a salvation too easily won.”

He referred to turning to the god within but later admits that “faith in oneself is never enough”.

His father was a Muslim and he admires the political Islamic faith of Malcolm X and other black leaders.

Interwoven through his story is the mystery of his father. As he finds out more about the ‘Old Man’, some of the idealism is broken down. His father drank a lot, was too outspoken, had several wives and was sometimes violent toward women and his own children.

His father also was very intelligent, won a scholarship to study in America and returned to serve in the government in Kenya.

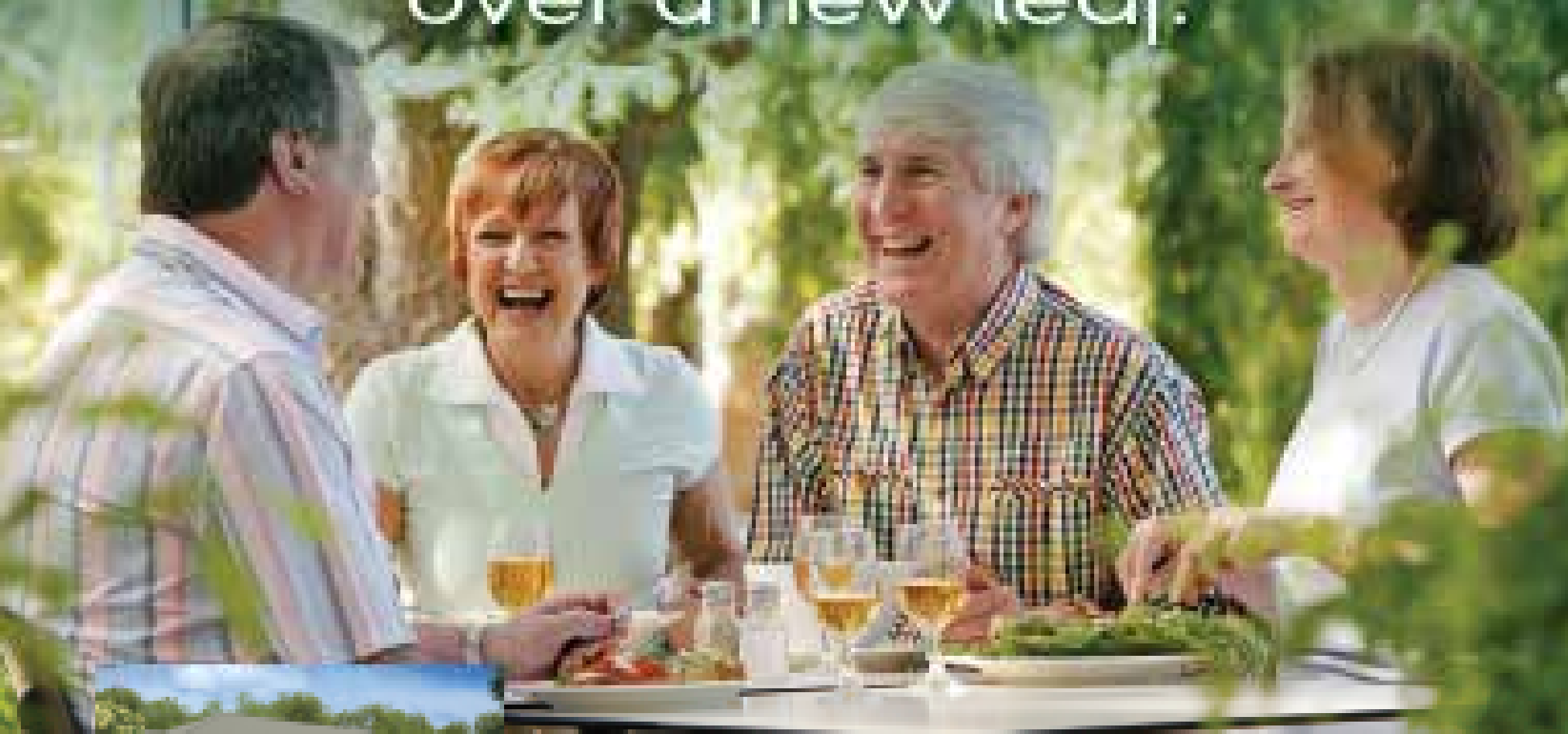
It is during Obama’s journey to Kenya as an adult to meet his brothers, sisters and grandmother, and to visit the grave of his father, that he begins to have a greater sense of clarity about his identity and responsibilities, his privilege and vision.

He has some simple questions that drive him and he is looking for political, historical and sociological answers: “How far do our obligations reach? How do we transform mere power into justice, mere sentiment into love?”.

There are hints of the themes that became part of his presidential run. He was moved by a sermon he heard entitled “The Audacity of Hope” and he yearns for the change that he can see is possible. Although these images begin in the church, he recognises wider potential:

Our trials and triumphs became at once unique and universal, black and more than black; in chronicling our journey, the stories and songs gave us a means to reclaim memories more accessible than those of ancient Egypt, memories that all people might study and cherish — and with which we could start to rebuild...

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