

November 2010

Southern CROSS

Sydney Anglicans Connecting

The answer is in the cloud

How ministry can benefit from the internet's third wave

PLUS: Movie reveals Facebook's friendless founder

- > Archbishop Jensen on Bishops court fallout
- > Why euthanasia is a toxic solution



Eye on the sky

As the 'cloud', the third stage in the internet revolution, takes off in Australia, MARK HADLEY explores how ministry communication can keep up to speed.

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Synod and beyond

DR PETER JENSEN

THE 2010 Synod received a progress report on the ongoing consequences of the financial crisis for our diocesan structures. We heard further bad news as the extent of the impact became clearer. We also heard an interim report on what is being done to fix our structures and to repair our finances.

The situation is not all gloom and doom. Giving through the parishes is healthy and work is growing there; and our two big Endowments, although significantly reduced, are still substantial. But for the next few years with reduced income from these Endowments we are going to struggle to support the work we need to do as a Diocese. While we reform our ethos and our structures, we are going to have to take some difficult decisions about how to sustain our work.

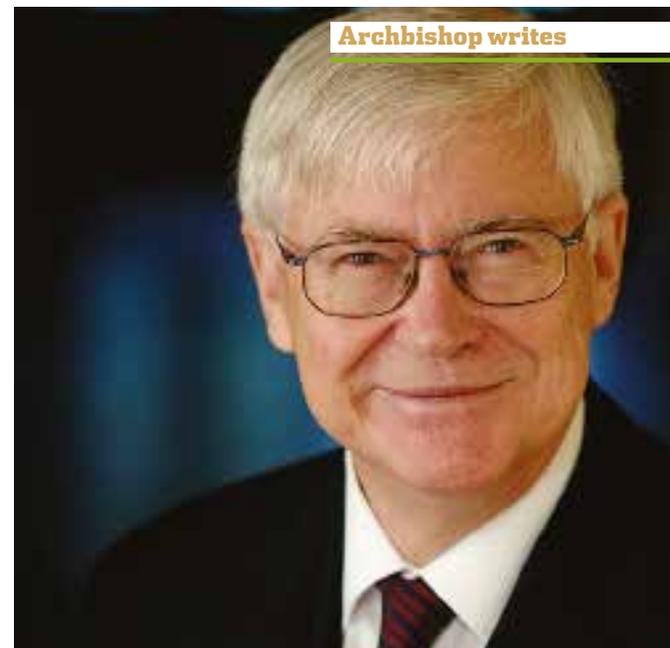
All this will be for the good if it results in better governance and healthier investment policies. Indeed the Glebe Administration Board, to give one case, has already spent considerable time and effort in reorganisation and renewal.

Overall, we are doing four things.

First, the Archbishop's Commission is hard at work. It has the strategic task of looking at the whole situation and giving us the advice we need to steer through the present difficulties while making the right decisions for the long term future. We have opportunities to ask the hard and basic questions and make the changes we need. The Commission's report is going to be a highly significant challenge to us to be enterprising, forward-looking and mission-minded. I have confidence that we have the right people working on our problems.

Second, we are reassessing the expenditure of centrally raised funds, especially in the office of the Archbishop. This involves a further examination of our budget to discover what can be saved or done in a different way. The problem is that much of this has already been done in the past 12 months. There is a limit to what we can do while retaining the ability to serve the parishes through the structure of regions and regional bishops as well as the other ministries provided through the Archbishop's office.

Third, we are seeking to find further money. As an interim measure came the suggestion that we sell Bishopscourt, invest the proceeds, and in that way release some funds to help with the expected



Archbishop writes

shortfall. After vigorous debate, Synod decided not to recommend this sale.

My sense is that the Synod needed to see the whole of what may be proposed by the Commission and other relevant bodies before being willing to take such a significant step. I think that at the Synod in 2011 we will have a far clearer picture both of what we can achieve and the reforms we need to undertake to improve our performance.

As an alternative, the Synod agreed to a one-year levy on parishes of 1.14 per cent of net income. This assessment offers considerable, though not complete, help.

There is some relief for parishes as, fortunately, two earlier levies — that for Connect 09 and that for asbestos treatment — have now ended. Although there is a sense that we will all be sharing the burden, it is an unhappy state of affairs that our present difficulties will have a financial impact on the parishes, especially those who are struggling as it is.

On the other hand the ministries they will help to pay for by this method do have a direct benefit to the parishes and are worth supporting. To that extent that can be regarded as on-costs in a network of churches such as ours.

Fourth, we are praying.

When I set up the Archbishop's Commission, I asked a group of people to pray constantly for its work. They will continue to do so. But this task should not be left to them alone. The difficulties we are confronting make ministry more daunting.

Humanly speaking, the loss of income has significantly lessened the amount of money available for Christian ministry in our region and far beyond. It is a challenge to us all, therefore, to cast ourselves on the Lord for his mercy, asking him to transform us and to provide for us, and asking him, too, for the grace of generosity so that his work will not suffer through our failures.

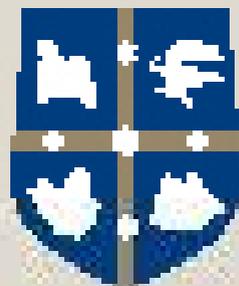
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Mission Prayer

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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CHANGES FOR CMS

Missio to Muslim heartland

WHEN CMS NSW general secretary John Bales brought his family home from Pakistan 12 years ago, he and his wife Jan always considered further missionary service a serious option once their children had finished university.

That yardstick passed 18 months ago and the couple started praying about their next move, seeking God's leading. The result is not quite what they originally anticipated: they are moving to a Muslim heartland but one in Sydney's Greenacre (which has a 30 per cent Muslim population).

"In thinking through whether to go back



to Pakistan or not, the obvious alternative is to be involved in cross-cultural

ministry — parish ministry — to Muslims here," Mr Bales says.

Once he arrives in Greenacre in February, Mr Bales plans to work with the congregation on ways to reach out to the community. He says prospective student ministers are already keen to come and support the work, which in the future he hopes will include an MTS program "tailored towards training people for Muslim ministry here and overseas".

New head of CMS NSW



The Rev Malcolm Richards has been announced as the new general secretary of CMS in NSW.

Since 2005 Mr Richards and wife Elizabeth have served in Kindu, DR Congo, where they have set up a Bible school.

From 1998 to 1994 they also served in Goma, in the east of the country.

Mr Richards says when the job of general secretary originally came up they ignored it. However, after a number of people suggested he should apply, he and Elizabeth committed it to prayer and then decided to "leave the decision to the body of Christ".

He says even their local bishop in Kindu, Bishop Masimango, had told them "it is God's will and that I must take this job".

Mr Richards will take up the post in mid-2011.

LAY ANGLICANS STAND FIRM

Ethics critics win SRE concessions

CONCERNED Christians will take some heart from South Australian academic Dr Sue Knight's review of the NSW Government's trial of ethics as an alternative to Scripture.

Her report, released last month, takes on board some points made by the critics of the trial.

For example church leaders, including Archbishop Peter Jensen, had complained that the course name created confusion.

Dr Knight has recommended that it be described as a course "in philosophical ethics, or equivalently, a moral philosophy-based course, or given some such name to make clear the boundaries of its content".



NSW Education and Training Minister Verity Firth watches as a student answers a question during an ethics class at Rozelle Public School in Sydney.

Another key criticism sees Dr Knight recommend that the course include "a consideration of the issues around moral relativism".

Nevertheless there remains a real risk SRE will be marginalised by the Labor Government and supporters are being encouraged to take up the Department of

Education's invitation for public comment on the Knight report.

Meanwhile, any doubt lay Anglicans strongly back Archbishop Jensen's passionate opposition to the ethics proposal was buried on the floor of Sydney's Synod.

An amendment led by Naremburn barrister Michael Meek significantly

strengthened the official motion, moved by Dr Bryan Cowling, head of the Anglican Education Commission, with the Synod calling on the NSW Government and Opposition not to extend the ethics lessons in any state primary school.

The final vote was overwhelming, taken on voices without any audible dissent.

CHRISTIAN VOICE

Newsradio's Kel Richards hosting 2CH Sunday nights

KEL Richards, formerly of ABC NewsRadio, author of *The Aussie Bible* and a lay canon of St Andrew's Cathedral, has taken over from Ross Clifford as host of the Sunday evening talk show on 1170 2CH.

With decades of commercial broadcasting experience, Mr Richards

believes it is vital to have a Christian voice in the radio marketplace. Yet his first goal "is to make a good show".

"I'm looking forward to getting to know the listeners and them getting to know me... radio is about building personal relationships with people," he says.

Richards explains this "personal relationship" allows for effective evangelism.

"Evangelism is part of the program," he says. "It's all about the personal conversations that you have with people, which radio... allows you to have." Sunday Night

with Kel Richards is broadcast from 9pm to midnight on Sunday evenings. While owned by Macquarie Radio Network, 2CH must set aside almost four hours of programming a week for Christian content due to a long-running connection to the NSW Council of Churches.

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‘NO SALE’ FOR BISHOPSCOURT — THE FALLOUT

Parish levy to ensure bishops’ cash flow

JEREMY HALCROW

FACED with the realisation its decision not to sell BishopsCourt could further cripple the capital base of the Archbishop’s Endowment of the See (EOS), Sydney’s Diocesan Synod reluctantly agreed to impose an emergency one-year levy of 1.14 per cent on all parishes.

The Rev Brian Tung seemed to capture the mood of Synod when he said that despite voting for the sale of BishopsCourt, he felt he had no choice but to pass the assessment.

“I think we have a moral obligation to take on responsibility for the decision not to sell

What is the EOS?

The Endowment of the See pays the stipends, accommodation and other expenses for the Archbishop of Sydney, his office and his assistant bishops.

BishopsCourt,” he said.

Earlier, Bishop Robert Forsyth and the Rev Craig Roberts, who had presented opposite sides of the BishopsCourt sale, teamed up to present this alternative bail-out solution.

Bishop Forsyth argued that the financial position was so dire that “we dare not” refuse to pass this option as well.

The Dean of Sydney, Phillip Jensen, successfully amended the original proposal so

it would only apply in 2011 and not be ongoing.

However a number of speakers rejected the whole idea.

The Rev Andrew Katay believed a levy was premature and said it would lead to parish staff being laid off.

“We are nowhere near saying that every dollar spent at the centre is more important than at the front line,” he said.

“The way forward is to reduce expenditure, not raise income by taxing the parishes.”

Dr Laurie Scandrett, Sydney Anglican Schools Corporation CEO and a member of the St Andrew’s House Corporation, argued against the assessment saying the EOS had “a significant hunger for



Synod decided against selling the Archbishop’s official residence at Darling Point.

cash” and had not been living within its means.

“It has been spending more than it has been earning for at least 17 years,” he said.

He also argued it was the “thin edge of the wedge” as “there was no such thing as temporary assessment”.

Although the levy

passed easily among the laity, these arguments clearly resonated with rectors, with the proposal squeaking through among clergy — despite the majority of parish incumbents not actually being in the chamber at the time of the vote.

A raft of amendments

More on this story

- BishopsCourt vote p6
- Letters, editorial p14
- Archbishop’s presidential address p30

seeking to water down the levy, either by making it voluntary or excluding poorer parishes, were lost.

Lisa was in her early fifties when she realised she was having trouble finding the right words.

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Lisa thought she had depression. But Lisa has younger onset dementia.



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(Names and details have been changed to protect the privacy of the people involved)

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NEW CHURCHES

Fellowships to power mission

IN a significant step forward for mission in the Sydney Diocese, Synod has passed an ordinance which will encourage the planting of new congregations.

The Bishop of South Sydney, Robert Forsyth introduced the ordinance which reconstituted the Department of Evangelism, adding "New Churches" to its title and objectives.

Bishop Forsyth said the most significant change was the creation of a new entity called a "fellowship", which would be a "powerhouse" for mission.

These "fellowships" will exist completely outside the classic parish structure. Rather, they will operate under the authority of the revamped department headed by Al Stewart, former Bishop of Wollongong.

"The great thing about new churches is that they reach new people," Bishop Stewart said.

CONNECT09 REVIEW

Evangelism campaign saw "many successes"

ARCHBISHOP Peter Jensen has revealed that church attendance in Sydney Diocese may have grown by 5 per cent during 2009, thanks to the Connect09 program.

This is above NSW's population growth rate of 1.7 per cent and Sydney's of 1.9 per cent.

The Rev Andrew Nixon, Connect09's

executive director, said the campaign "was God's campaign, in God's time, with God's people sharing God's grace".

"We have heard many success stories but for every story we know about, there are hundreds that we don't," he said. "So many ordinary people stepped up to do extraordinary things."

Mr Nixon briefed Synod on a survey conducted by Anglicare's research unit which found that 97 per cent of churches in the Diocese distributed gospel resources last year.

"During 2009 between 40 and 50 per cent of households... were contacted by their local church. That means that 1.75 million people were contacted," he said.

"That's not just a good start, it's a million good starts."

Growth figures

Parish returns for 2009 show a 5.5 per cent increase in average Sunday attendance on 2008. Caution has been advised on this result, however, due a dramatic jump in reported youth attenders. Nevertheless, adult attendance alone increased by 2150 or 4.1 per cent. It is estimated that over 76,000 people are regular members.



The Rev Matt Pickering from Nowra tells Synod of an extraordinary deathbed conversion, after a man read the *Essential Jesus* version of Luke's gospel distributed as part of Connect09.

Nixon connects at Youthworks

The Rev Zac Veron (left) has appointed the Rev Andrew Nixon as the director of Youthworks' Year 13 Gap Year program. Mr Nixon begins his new role in January 2011, at which time the current director, the Rev Andrew Hudson, will transition to the role of chaplain. Since late 2007, Mr Nixon has been the executive director of Connect09, as well as being responsible for organising KCC's Engage conferences for young Christians in the workplace.

With a passion for seeing young adults grow in maturity and love for Christ, he is excited about the possibilities presented to 18-19 year-olds by the growing gap year trend after school.



PHOTO: Russell Powell

BISHOPSCOURT REPRIEVE

No sale for Archbishop's "hospitality house"

JEREMY HALCROW

BISHOPSCOURT, the Archbishop of Sydney's official residence in Darling Point, will not be sold this year after the Diocesan Synod rejected the proposal in a close-run secret ballot, 249 votes to 218.

Synod witnessed the extraordinary situation of two of its highest decision-making bodies in stark disagreement. In those circumstances you would indeed expect caution to prevail.

Bishop Robert Forsyth (pictured) proposed the

sale of the 150-year-old property on behalf of Standing Committee.

He argued that each year it cost the Diocese "about \$1 million in foregone cash" and that "in our present and future circumstances, this price is unjustified and unjustifiable. There are more important calls on our resources".

Mustering the skill of a stump politician, the Rev Craig Roberts presented the case against, arguing there was "no guarantee" the expected sale price would be realised.

He said he was speaking on behalf of the Anglican Church



Property Trust which was "unanimous in its opposition" and claimed he would never have sold BishopsCourt in his previous career as a PricewaterhouseCoopers liquidator on the basis of the evidence presented.

In hindsight, one of the more decisive interventions came late in the two-hour debate

from Dr Stephen Judd, CEO of health provider HammondCare.

Dr Judd argued that BishopsCourt was a unique ministry asset that provided a point of connection with the top end of town.

"The proponents mistakenly regard it as the residence of one person. It is not: it is one of the few hospitality houses in the fellowship of the Diocese," he said, explaining that when successive Archbishops had invited heads of State and other VIPs to BishopsCourt they came.

Dr Judd also pointed out that "the problem is

not BishopsCourt" but the EOS "interest in St Andrew's House".

Lack of trust in the governance of the Endowment was a major thread running through the debate. In the end this proved fatal to those who wanted to sell.

Bishop Forsyth tried to tackle the issue head-on: "We need to be honest... especially in view of the lamentable financial situation we now face in the EOS. But we cannot react by becoming paralysed when action is needed." He said the recommendation to sell from the Archbishop's Commission should be

taken "very seriously."

Those against the sale argued that EOS governance structures were so flawed that they should be fixed before a sale is considered.

Of all the arguments against the sale, Mr Roberts described this as "most compelling of all".

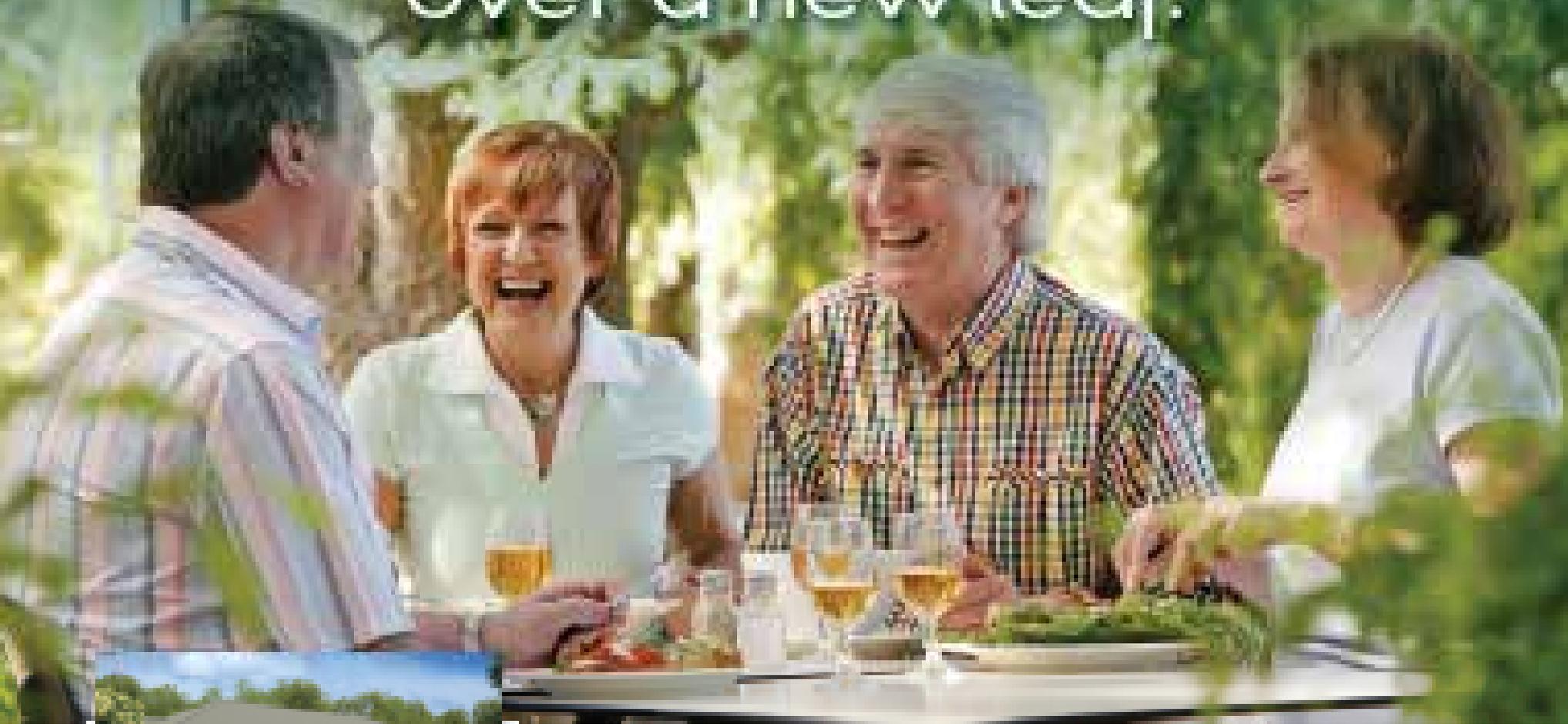
"How can we put another \$24 million into that slot?" he said.

Mr Roberts argued the "last time EOS rolled the property dice" with the Greenoaks apartments development the return "was nothing".

"Messing around with property is how the EOS got shot in the foot."

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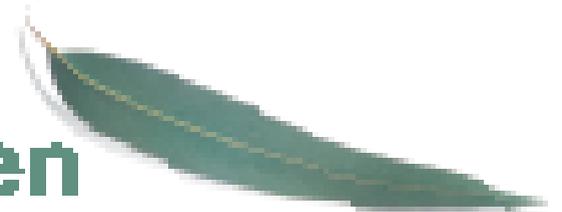
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glenhaven green



IN BRIEF

No fixed term for future archbishops

Future archbishops of Sydney will be elected with greater speed and remain in office until at least the age of 68, Synod has decided.

Synod also rejected a proposal from the Rev Dominic Steele to have a fixed 10-year term in order to increase the opportunity of electing a younger man as archbishop.

Synod tackles grievance policy

The Sydney Diocese now has an official grievance policy. The policy deals with allegations of unacceptable behaviour by clergy and church workers that involve bullying, harassment and emotional, physical or spiritual abuse.

Issues such as sexual abuse, child abuse, professional misconduct or criminal activities are not included, as these are addressed under other diocesan legislation such as the Discipline Ordinance.

Canon Sandy Grant, who moved the approval of the policy and procedure, said he believed it "should help provide a way of addressing complaints about unacceptable conduct in a way that upholds the highest standards for church leaders, and also attempts to be fair and impartial".

State Govt asked to fix property rules

Synod has endorsed a proposal from the Anglican Church Property Trust to approach the NSW State Government to add new provisions to the 1917 Act which establishes a property trust for each diocese in the state.

ACPT Chairman Robert Tong told Synod some of the present regulations hampered the work of the Sydney Property Trust and badly needed updating.

The trust looks after hundreds of church sites around the diocese but Mr Tong said under the original act, it was, for example, unable to delegate any of its powers and functions to a sub-committee to work on matters of detail.

Because the trust was created by an act of Parliament, the Synod cannot vary the regulations and legislative action is necessary to make the changes.

Despite media reports in the lead-up to Synod, it is expected that the final approach agreed to by the Sydney Diocese will not be controversial. The amendment will be circulated to the other NSW diocesan bishops for comment.

LORD'S SUPPER DEBATE

Deacons can keep celebrating

SYDNEY'S Diocesan Synod has reaffirmed its conviction that lay and diaconal administration of Holy Communion is consistent with the teaching of Scripture and "may" be allowable.

The resolution comes in the wake of an opinion from the Appellate Tribunal of the Anglican Church of Australia about the legal basis for allowing deacons and lay people to administer Holy Communion.

Lay presidency has never been authorised in the Diocese of Sydney.

However, since 2008 the Sydney Diocese has been implementing a permanent diaconate



Bishop Davies says diaconal administration "may" be allowable.

in an effort to fulfil a number of mission goals, not least making it easier to start new congregations. Churches led by deacons have also been planted in extra-parochial contexts such as Anglican schools.

There are currently 215 deacons actively ministering in the

Sydney Diocese and they make up 36 per cent of all clergy appointments.

In moving the motion, Bishop Glenn Davies (pictured) said there is nothing wrong with Sydney Synod stating an opinion different to the Appellate Tribunal's.

He placed special emphasis on the fact the

motion used the phrase "may be allowable" to describe Sydney's policy.

"There is a lot of power in the word 'may,'" he said.

In seconding the motion, Archdeacon Narelle Jarrett said the bar on deacons administering Holy Communion was nowhere legislated in Scripture.

"It is a tragedy that deacons cannot fulfil the full sacramental ministry," she said. "It is pastorally appropriate that deacons who are chaplains in schools, prisons and hospitals be allowed to administer the Lord's Supper."

DRAFT GOVERNANCE POLICY

Anglican school boards may face faith check

SYNOD has backed a proposal which will see everyone seeking election to a diocesan board, committee or council sign a statement of personal faith. This would cover members elected by Synod or the Archbishop and members elected by a school alumni association, as well as organisational CEOs.

Questions about this issue were a major focus of discussion over a draft diocesan corporate governance policy,

moved by the CEO of the Sydney Anglican Schools Corporation, Dr Laurie Scandrett.

The draft policy is partly in response to last year's external review of the Glebe Administration Board.

Dr Scandrett said he strongly believed all members of diocesan organisations should be required to sign a statement of personal faith, adding: "As soon as you introduce one non-Christian into the mix of a governing body of one

of our organisations we are creating problems we don't need to have".

Until now, alumni members of a school board have only needed to sign a statement supporting the school's Christian ethos, but the majority of Synod members voted that this was insufficient.

Discussing CEOs, the Rev Martin Robinson said "with the best will in the world" it was not always possible to find a sufficiently experienced person of evangelical

faith. He warned that if Synod expected everyone to sign such a statement "you may rule yourself out of electing a competent leader".

The Rev Greg Peisley countered it was already difficult to get existing policies applied in some Anglican schools, so "to have people just supporting [a Christian ethos] isn't enough".

The draft policy will be sent to all diocesan boards for comment and brought back to Synod in 2011.

PHOTO: Russell Powell

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More than a family affair



Helen Lochlin was angry, feeling that church was taking her daughter Bec away from her. So she decided to find out more, writes JUDY ADAMSON.

WHEN Bec Lochlin became a Christian in Year 10 her mother Helen thought it was “something she would grow out of”. But as years passed and Bec’s faith

deepened, Helen began to realise this wasn’t a flash in the pan — not that this made her any happier about it. “I never really felt comfortable at church

— whenever I’d gone I felt angry,” she says. Over the years friends had invited her to church and she had always turned them down, although she attended Christmas

services with Bec each year at Christ Church, Gladesville “just to be nice... I knew it meant something to her”.

Yet Helen also felt anger towards Christ Church because of Bec’s commitment. “There were lots of instances where she was away from us doing church stuff,” she recalls. “It was important to her but I felt church was taking her away from her family.”

Helen realised she couldn’t put a good ‘family first’ case without knowing more about the faith she was arguing against. Then in 2008 her mother and mother-in-law became sick; both died late in the year. As the family struggled with grief, Bec recalls saying to Helen that God had been teaching her she was not the one in control.

Mother and daughter had gone to church at Christmas, as always, but this year, Bec says, “I remember Mum on the

Sunday after Christmas walking into my room early and saying ‘Would you come to church with me this morning?’. I almost fell out of bed!”

Helen also started going to a Simply Christianity course each week run by the church’s senior minister, Phil Wheeler, and she plied him with questions.

“I began to see things I hadn’t seen before,” Helen says. “I had always thought, ‘I’m not sinful, I don’t do anything to anybody’... but now I could look at myself and see that, yeh... I can be very selfish, very self-centred and forget about everybody else.”

Bec, who began praying for her mother to come to Christ 15 years ago, now has tremendous joy in being able to talk with her about the things of faith and see her hungry to know more about the God who has saved her.

“For the first six months I tried not to get

Mission idea of the month

Christian evangelist John Dickson will be one of the writers in this year’s Connect magazine. It will have a strong Christmas theme and is designed for people who may not attend church regularly but want to know more about Christianity. Churches are encouraged to order extra copies to distribute at carol and Christmas services.

too excited,” Bec says. “I thought it could just be a grief process... It seemed a bit too good to be true.

“But then I could really clearly see God’s Spirit working in her. Things that had not made sense... now all these light bulbs were going off for her.”

Says Helen: “When I think of Jesus dying on the cross for somebody like me, it’s something I find so incredible I can get quite emotional.”

CHRISTMAS IS COMING

so get connected

connect is a magazine-style resource specifically designed to hand out to visitors who attend Christmas carols and church services.

Featuring testimonies, the gospel with a Christmas theme and top evangelistic writers including John Dickson.

connect will be inserted in every copy of December *Southern Cross*.

PLEASE ORDER YOUR FREE ADDITIONAL COPIES NOW

Parishes are encouraged to order additional copies to hand out at Christmas. Numbers are limited. Due to cost and logistics advance ordering is essential.

Order by emailing [Jeremy Halcrow](mailto:Jeremy.Halcrow@anglicanmedia.com.au) news@anglicanmedia.com.au or phoning 8860 8862 by 15 November.

Also on offer: Copies of this year’s women’s magazine, **passion**. Ideal stocking fillers for Christmas showbags.

SYDNEY'S NEWEST PARISH

Glenhaven gets its 'Ps'

EMMANUEL Anglican Church in Glenhaven has been granted provisional parish status after ministering as a branch church of St Paul's, Castle Hill for 130 years.

"With the recent growth in the church, it made sense for us to become a provisional parish and take additional responsibility for the spiritual welfare of the Glenhaven community," said the Rev John Hooton, minister of Emmanuel Church.

"We've been given our 'P plates' for at least three years... we will need to continue to demonstrate the effectiveness and viability of the parish."

Due to its growth, the church plans to employ a part-time assistant minister, a part-time

administration assistant as well as increase the hours of the current part-time children's worker next year.

Mr Hooton said that the church had "embraced change with enormous grace" so as to ensure the ongoing effectiveness of ministry to the community.

"The long-time members of the parish wanted to ensure that their legacy to the community was a vibrant, growing, gospel-focused church ... not a dying one," he said.

With three retirement villages in the new Glenhaven parish, Mr Hooton believes the church will embrace its ministry to retirees.

"We can be more intentional in our strategies to reach the Glenhaven community," he said.

DREW BUERGER

IN a bid to reach Newtown's local gothic community, St Luke's, Enmore ran its third annual goth outreach service for Halloween on October 30.

Marketed as a 'goth mass' it sounds controversial, but the rector Gwilym Henry-Edwards believes that it is an important ministry that has been much misunderstood.

Some Christians saw flyers for the outreach and equated it with Satanism. But the reason the church conducts these services is to encourage young goths back to the church.

"We need to accept people where they are," he said. "Many young people in the gothic community were brought up as Christians, however they are no longer practising or part of a



CONTROVERSIAL OUTREACH

Enmore goes to the Goths

church community. We wanted to give them the opportunity to worship in a familiar setting."

The service is merely a traditional Lord's Supper, celebrated according to the Anglican Prayer Book, with the addition of candles and atmospheric music which "upholds the spirit of what we're doing".

This year's service included the baptism of a child of a couple who

attended the first goth service two years ago.

Despite the past criticism levelled at the parish for conducting these services, Mr Henry-Edwards says the church is not doing anything unbiblical.

"We are doing nothing that is contrary to the gospel," he said.

"There aren't instructions in the Bible for some of the things we do but then there aren't instructions in the

Bible for computers. We don't do anything that is contrary to the Bible."

The Bishop of South Sydney, Robert Forsyth, has supported the event since its inception.

"I welcome every attempt to try and reach the local community, — that's what Connect99 was all about," he said.

"Some of the connections might look a bit strange... but we need to make every attempt to reach everyone."

THE AFRICA TRAINING FUND

COMING OF AGE

The growth of the Gospel in Africa requires strong leaders who are trained to teach the scriptures with depth and responsibility. In its 21st year George Whitefield College in Cape Town is well positioned to make a difference. Help us build the Africa Training Fund to provide quality education for disadvantaged students.

"Training black leadership is critical to the success of the new South Africa, and sound evangelical leadership will bring a multitude of blessings to the continent. GWC is already engaged. With your help we can be a strong contributor to a good Christian future."

PROF. DAVID SECOMBE, Principal



"Strategically we must work to unleash Africa's ministry potential. Theological education is the key."

BISHOP FRANK RETIEF
Chairman of the GWC Board of Directors.

RESPONSE SLIP

Email your contact details to David Secombe at dsecombe@gwc.ac.za and we will send you details of what GWC is doing, and the Africa Training Fund, and how best to contribute, or mail this slip (or a note with your contact details) to:

The Principal, George Whitefield College,
P.O. Box 64, Morningside 7960, South Africa.

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GEORGE WHITEFIELD COLLEGE
Theological Training at the Cape of Good Hope

GARAGE HYMNAL

Tour helps train church musos



Sydney-based band Garage Hymnal performing recently at St Jude's, Carlton, as part of a series of promotional concerts from Toowoomba to Melbourne. Garage Hymnal's music is congregational music, which is mirrored in their concerts. "We put on 'worship concerts,'" said keyboardist Andy Judd. "It's not just about entertainment, we want people to sing with us. We want people to engage God through music." The tours aren't just about performing and singing, either. The band also runs music workshops to train church music teams.

GREG CLARKE APPOINTED CEO

National Bible Society formed

THE Bible Society, after operating in Australia for more than 200 years as federated state-based units, has now merged all management and activities into a single legal entity.

The new Bible Society Australia will commence immediately.

The creation of this new national entity has led to the appointment of Dr Greg Clarke as inaugural CEO.

Dr Clarke has worked for 20 years in Christian publishing, education and media, including for Sydney-based organisations Matthias

Media and CASE at New College, UNSW.

He is also a founding director of the Centre for Public Christianity, where he has further developed a reputation as a guiding Christian voice across many interdenominational projects.

PALLIATIVE CARE EXPERTS SPEAK OUT

Euthanasia sees thousands killed without consent

AMANDA PERRY

IT would be dangerous for Australia to follow the example of the Netherlands in legalising euthanasia when thousands of people there are being killed without their consent, says Dr Megan Best, a palliative care doctor.

She said the "stringent guidelines in place in Holland" had not been able to prevent these killings.

Dr Best has been spreading this message around Sydney churches, speaking both to the annual Diocesan Synod and at a Social Issues Executive information night on October 26.

She said euthanasia was unnecessary because palliative care was effective in reducing people's suffering.

"A study in Sydney showed that the number of people requesting euthanasia in a palliative care service was 2.8 per

More resources

- Feature p38
- Euthanasia material from Dr Best, Dr Judd as well as Moore College lecturers Andrew Cameron and Michael Jensen are linked from Dr Karin Sowada's blog on sydneyanglicans.net

cent when they first showed up, falling to less than 1 per cent once care had started," she said.

Dr Karin Sowada put the motion to the Synod, opposing the Greens' euthanasia Bill and calling for greater government funding for palliative care services so the best care could be delivered to "those who are dying, are lonely and vulnerable."

Dr Stephen Judd, CEO of palliative care operator HammondCare, seconded the motion, saying proponents of euthanasia did not understand palliative care was a real alternative.

"What I find so ironic

is that both parliaments... are debating euthanasia at the very time palliative care services in some regions are being cut back or are severely under-resourced," he said. "One AHS [area health service] cut its subsidy to our 'at-home' palliative care services by more than \$1.5m."

He also told the stories of three patients whose lives were transformed by their positive experience of palliative care, including a businessman who came to hospital wanting to die, but six months later was back at home, "going well" and "living with cancer" thanks to proper palliative care.

"It is a nonsense to talk about euthanasia as a question of choice and then, in practice, not to provide those choices.

And when palliative care is effectively provided and well funded and supported, our experience is that people like Rachael, Janet and Peter choose to live."

PHOTO: David MacCullagh, davemaccphotos.com

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TRAPPED MINERS' WITNESS

Thank God, we're free at last!

SHARING the gospel with workmates is not always easy but for five evangelical Chilean miners, the 69 days spent trapped underground with 28 colleagues became a chance for them to share their faith.

The miners are reported saying God was their 34th companion during their time in a living hell, with some reports claiming at least two of the miners found Christ while trapped.

The Rev César Guzmán, a Chilean church leader who has also spent time in the Sydney Diocese, believes this is highly likely.

"There were five evangelical believers

among the miners and they led the rest in daily prayers and possibly Bible readings," he says. "It is quite probable that some responded to the gospel down there. This has been reported in the [Chilean] press and is perceived as positive and natural given the circumstances."

According to Mr Guzmán, the rescue of the trapped miners has put God back into the vocabulary of Chileans, after many years of politics being dominated by atheistic socialism.

"President [Sebastian] Piñera... is certainly a God-fearer and as such he has brought God and providence back into the



Mario Sepulveda, 39, celebrates his freedom from the San Jose mine wearing a Jesus T-shirt.

picture, into everyday conversation and his speeches. In short he has made God talk politically correct. The unplanned consequences may be that when ethical issues and the educational models for our public

schools [are discussed], the Christian worldview may be treated with a little more respect."

Mr Guzmán says of the crisis that at both "a political and social level it has unified the country".

"The miners themselves are seen as a model of camaraderie, perseverance and determination — a welcome change in our increasingly individualistic and selfish society," he says.

"In all, it has been a very moving time that has pushed nearly everyone to take another look at life and God.

"The miners' rescue... has [led to] many evangelistic opportunities."



The "Seeds of Grace" Appeal to help Tanzanian families in poverty



Let grace flow... and grow... for farmers and their families in Tanzania who are suffering the devastation of diseased cassava crops.

Your gift will bring food security after the devastation of the cassava crop disease – as well as stability for families and the means for people to feed their children and send them to school.

"But since you excel in everything – in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in your love for us – see that you also excel in this grace of giving." 2 Corinthians 8:7

So please give generously to the "Seeds of Grace" Anglican Aid Appeal.

Donate online at www.anglicanaid.org.au or call us on 1800 653 903

Letters

Playgroups good news

Thank you Heather Veitch for encouraging church members to value, support and participate in playgroup. ("Sometimes it's ok to talk about poo," *SC*, October).

I do not have children, I do not have an early childhood degree and I do not like asking people to do another ministry in their busy schedules. However, I do love Jesus.

This year my minister approached me to start up a playgroup at church and even though I felt weak, God has been strong. We have seen new connections made with mothers a few streets away, reconnections with families who once visited our church and support for new mothers at church.

Yes there are some interesting topics of discussion (just this morning I heard for the first time our mums discussing their child's poo) but then that is what is needed to support these families and build a relationship whereby Christ can be shared.

I am still learning how best to meet the needs of our small playgroup community and it can be hard work, but it is my prayer that God will give us a large harvest. I hope that our new playgroup will still be running strong in 20 years' time and, if I have children and they are grown by then, that I will continue to be a valuable contributor to playgroup ministries.

Lorelle Hood
Galston, NSW

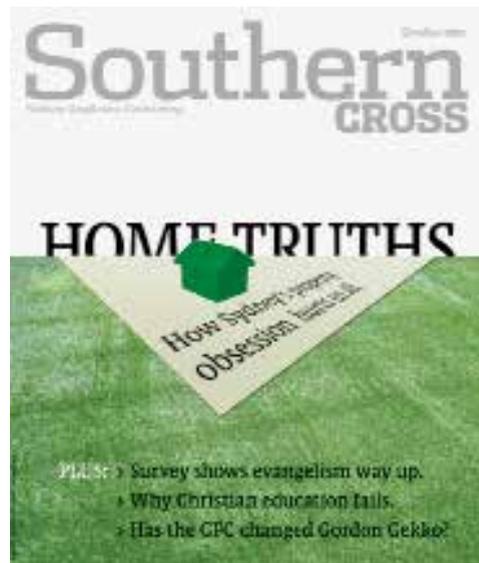
Fallout from Synod financial decisions

I left Synod very sorry for struggling parishes.

Further financial losses from property mismanagement mean that the Diocese was facing the prospect that its bishops could no longer be paid for. As a remedy, Synod decided to increase levies on all parishes (after a review of alternative funding sources).

Two attempts to protect our poorest "provisional" parishes from the impost failed. A motion to exempt these parishes was rejected with unjustifiable harshness. A proposal for a process by which wealthier parishes could assist provisional parishes, was quickly blocked. I sensed in the manner of its rejection no spirit of godly love or compassion. Is this what the Sydney Diocese has come to?

It is bad enough that the substance of the diocese has been wasted through mismanagement. It is worse that gospel ministry may now be curtailed on the parish front to recover the loss. It is worse still that the same powers that have brought this diocese to the brink of financial ruin



now believe that the road to recovery can conveniently bypass Christian charity. The Archbishop perceives the need for urgent reform in diocesan governance. Provisional parishes are now painfully aware of it.

Real reform requires the removal of roadblocks that equate hard questioning and disagreement with disloyalty. Real reform requires loving inclusiveness that listens.

Fellow Synod members, did the Anglican Church League show such leadership on that last evening of this year's Synod? Would not a compassionate word from them have won the day for our struggling brethren?

Lyn Bannerman
Lay Synod representative
Christ Church St Laurence

Despite the fact that I spoke against it during the Synod debate, part of me is glad that some financial relief was obtained for the Endowment of the See via a small, one-year levy on the parishes. After apparently living beyond its means for 17 years (!), the time had come for some radical action. Of course, much more will be needed.

Most interesting was the fact that by rejecting the proposal to increase the levy to 2.5 percent, and making sure that the levy was for one year only, it seemed pretty clear Synod has confirmed its intention not to make transferring resources from front-line ministry to the centre anything other than an emergency measure. We are not a centralist Diocese!

As such, the Archbishop's Commission has a year to fix things. The 2011 Synod will be the place where its full report will be considered and long-term solutions hammered out.

One thing's for sure — I bet the 130 or so rectors who weren't at the debate on the last day of Synod this year, and who will have to make some cutbacks on staff or ministry budgets because of the levy, will be there next year!

The Rev Andrew Katay
Rector, Christ Church Inner West
Ashfield, NSW

Editorial

What is all the fuss about?

Synod in 2010 will long be remembered for what the political pundits would call 'a robust debate' over financial issues. As Christians we need not be scared of this. We are a very public church. Our doings receive front-page attention in the newspapers. This year, much attention was on the decline in distributions available for the Archbishop and bishops from a fund called the Endowment of the See.

Compounded by the effect of the GFC on the Diocesan endowment, this crisis has been brought on by revenue problems with our 'headquarters' building, St Andrew's House.

As the Archbishop said, "The reason for this, in brief, was the need to refurbish several floors of St Andrew's House in order that they may be attractive to the existing tenants or attract new tenants; and the timing of the refurbishment, just prior to the downturn. In the event, the existing tenant has decided to leave. Given that something like \$20 million was still owing on the earlier refit of the lower floors of the building, this additional borrowing would mean that nothing would now be available for distribution."

This is the problem. Not Bishops court. That said, sale of the Archbishop's residence was a potential long-term solution to the cash flow problem for the EOS. In the end, we have a levy for 2011. But more significantly, we also have a test of our partnership, as a network of churches.

Let's be generous

In times such as these, the test is how we treat our poorest parishes. During the debate over the parish levy, Peter Lim, the rector of Fairfield with Bossley Park, spoke passionately about his church's financial situation. This blue-collar parish had seen many people laid off during the GFC. Only a minority of members are in full-time work and the parish already struggles to pay its electricity and other utility bills. It was heartening to see he immediately received a number of offers to help pay the assessment.

Since then, *SC* has been told of several parishes willing to help out struggling centres. In fact, we have heard that discussions are already going on in some parish councils about how and where this assistance can be given. If you wish to help but don't know how, *SC* is willing to link up donors with those in need. Please email newspaper@anglicanmedia.com.au.

We know, of course, that money does not equal ministry. But to see the arm of fellowship outstretched in difficult times is a mark of God at work in his people.

Web has more feedback on Bishops court

Our Synod website includes links to 16 blogs including those by Nigel Fortescue, Raj Gupta and Craig Schwarze presenting both sides of the Bishops court debate. There were over 150 comments on these three blogs responding to Synod's decision not to sell Bishops court and to impose a parish levy in 2011 instead.

VISIT: www.sydneyanglicans.net/news/stories/synod_2010_news/

Responding to Cooling's Christian education approach

READER'S ESSAY OF THE MONTH
by Allan Beavis

IN a major feature in the October edition of *Southern Cross*, Professor Trevor Cooling from Canterbury Christ Church University in the UK articulated two approaches to Christian schooling derived from his reflections upon recent research conducted at Emmanuel College in the north of England.

His views had been further explained in a lecture to heads and council members of Anglican schools in Sydney Diocese at Trinity Grammar School in September.

Emmanuel College is a "state school" that is sponsored by a wealthy evangelical Christian and has a distinctly Christian ethos. It was founded in 1990 as part of the then New Labour Government's experiment of founding schools with independent status but with open, no-fee access. It is driven by its sponsor's vision, the major characteristics of which are, inter alia, academic excellence (the college achieves outstanding results); an orderly environment; a Bible-based ethos; and opportunities for pupils to respond to the gospel. The college has a rigorous Christian Studies program, regular "assemblies" (which presumably include prayers, Bible reading and an address) and all high-profile staff are committed Christians. Emmanuel College has the appearance of an independent Christian school but is fully funded by the State.

The research to which Cooling referred found that the perceptions of the senior students were that their school is a good school; that making a decision about Christ was important; that Bible literacy is important; that staff status is linked to Christian belief; that the Bible does not impinge on everyday life; and that, by the time they reach their senior years, they are worn out by the message.

Cooling concluded that Emmanuel College is a very successful school in terms of academic achievement and that it provides an ordered and purposeful environment for learning. But in view of the reported failure of the ethos of the school to connect with the pupils he asked the question, "Is it in effect no more than a secular school?" and, perhaps of greater concern, "Is it a school that inoculates against Christian commitment?"

Reflecting upon his conclusions led Cooling to articulate what he described as two strategies designed to implement an ethos to deliver Christian education.

The first, "The Apologetic Strategy",

was observed at Emmanuel College and is probably the strategy in many Anglican schools, especially in the Sydney Diocese.

This strategy involves teachers explaining the truth of Christian precepts without challenge in a didactic, persuasive and controlled manner to ensure purity of message and with the intent of as many pupils as possible accepting what is taught. It is assumed that pupils will see the relevance of this transmitted knowledge and that making such a link is unproblematic. Key elements of the strategy are Christian Studies classes and assemblies (or chapel). Ensuring that senior staff are committed to the school's Bible-based ethos signals its importance. Cooling then concluded that, in view of the Emmanuel College research, this strategy is counterproductive.

The second strategy, "The Hermeneutical Strategy", honours the role of interpretation of knowledge and encourages pupils to approach their studies as interpreters rather than as mere recipients of a "correct" interpretation. This approach will no doubt lead to debate and the necessity to embrace diversity and disagreement but hopefully it will enable pupils to take the school's Bible-based message more seriously and prevent the emergence of a "dissident class" of people who never feel they really belong.

An important aspect of this strategy is contextualisation, by which pupils will come to see the relevance of the Bible to all subjects on the curriculum and how their meanings and significance are fundamentally transformed by a biblical worldview.

IFOUND Cooling's two strategies helpful for analysing Christian schooling. I have, however, two concerns. The first is that the two strategies are viewed as polar opposites and I believe this is unhelpful. While I would strongly support a hermeneutical strategy for senior students, I would claim there is value in the apologetic strategy. Pupils in the early years of their schooling are quite accepting of didactic pedagogy. For the most part their world is black and white and ambiguity is not something that they find comforting.

Furthermore, it is important to encourage young people to be committed to what they are being taught so that as they mature they can detach themselves from those imposed commitments and make their own commitments. I make this claim basing it upon a dictum articulated by Professor Alan Barcan of Newcastle University: "First comes commitment, then detachment".

Presenting young children with diversity is, in my view, counterproductive. It is only



when children have learnt commitment and have reached a stage when they can comprehend alternatives that they can detach themselves from imposed commitments and select their own. Schools must be places of both teaching and learning.

My second concern is the significance Cooling gives to the "the reported failure of the ethos [of Emmanuel College] to connect with the pupils".

One must be careful about the meaning one gives to this finding. As conversion is the work of the Holy Spirit, then it is not something that can be engineered by any educational process, no matter how good. Further, one would need to track pupils throughout their lives to know the effect of this aspect of their schooling in subsequent years. Some trees lie dormant for years before they bear fruit.

Has a Christian school failed if its graduating pupils do not see the relevance of the Christian gospel to their daily lives? Surely it is only converted people who see such relevance, so is it realistic to expect that all our senior students will be converted?

Cooling's work has much to commend it but it must be remembered that schools are primarily educational institutions with opportunities to nurture faith. Christian schools must be true to their callings and ensure pupils see that all knowledge is God's knowledge and that we live in his creation. Anglican schools must be places that live under the lordship of Jesus.

Whether in response to Cooling's questions these schools are observed as inoculating students against the gospel will no doubt be contested and ultimately be as much dependent upon the presuppositions of the observer as upon the existential reality.

Dr Allan Beavis PhD FCE is a former headmaster of St Andrew's Cathedral School and master of New College at the University of NSW. He is currently chairman of the Macarthur Anglican School Council.

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

Please email your (700-word maximum) submission to: newspaper@anglicanmedia.com.au

MOVES

DINGWALL TO MENAI

AFTER 22 years' involvement with St Clement's, Hoxton Park, the **Rev Bruce Dingwall** will become rector of St Paul's, Menai at the end of January.



Mr Dingwall began his ordained ministry as assistant in the parish of Sadlier in 1989 with responsibility for the then branch church at Hoxton Park — which at that stage had a tiny congregation of eight. In time he became curate-in-charge and then rector of the parish, which has since grown to 240 adults, and he has overseen completion of the parish's first purpose-built church building in 2008.

Mr Dingwall says he "had no real intention of moving" until nominators from Menai visited and got him thinking about whether it was time to make a change.

"I'd had a number of offers over the years but it wasn't the right time," he says. "But now the new building's up and the congregation's grown I felt it was a good thing for Hoxton Park and for us, too... I think the church probably needs a change from me — it needs fresh thinking and a new direction."

Mr Dingwall admits it will be "a big wrench" leaving his Hoxton Park family — "My boys have grown up here and never known anything else" — but is excited at the opportunity of heading the team at Menai and the possibilities for ministry there.

"I thought the church really fitted me well, with my experience and background," he says.

CANBERRA GIVES COUNTRY GARY JOY

THE **Rev Gary Mulquaney** is moving to the Diocese of Canberra and Goulburn this month after spending two decades as the rector of St Philip's, Auburn.



St Stephen's, Kambah in the Tuggeranong area will be Mr Mulquaney's new charge. He admits feeling sad about leaving Auburn, yet he also feels great joy "in the sense that I know the Lord has opened the door, so I'm really looking forward to this new phase of ministry and life".

"The second reason I'm joyous is that

I'm a country boy at heart," he adds. "I didn't grow up in the city... so I'm delighted this move has come about."

NEW ERA AT WAVERLEY

AT the end of this month the **Rev**



Peter Clark begins his new ministry as rector of St Mary's, Waverley.

Most recently senior assistant minister in the parish of Hunters

Hill, Mr Clark has also spent 10 years apiece at the helm of Newport and Wilberforce, and eight years ministering in the Armidale Diocese.

Mr Clark says when the possibility of going to Waverley arose he was "excited by the opportunity" and impressed by the "lovely, godly people".

"We want to respect the [high church] tradition of the place and help it develop and grow," he says. "We're interested in having a new challenge... We're very much looking forward to it."

JAMES LEAVES HOME

AFTER 20 years connected to Holy Trinity, Panania, the **Rev Paul James** has accepted the position of rector at Beverly Hills with Kingsgrove.



"We had a great chat with [the parish nominators] and Sue and I walked out of that interview feeling very positive about the fit between us and the church," Mr James says. "It was just terrific... we thought it would be a really good move."

Mr James was made a presbyter in August and will take up his new role at Beverly Hills on December 3.

HELPING NORTH COAST

THE **Rev Trent Minton** is heading north at the end of this month to take up the role of families minister at St Bartholomew's, Alstonville, west of Ballina on the north coast.



The assistant minister in the parish of Beverly Hills with Kingsgrove, Mr Minton says he and his wife Fiona "had always planned to go outside of Sydney just because of how well resourced a lot of the churches in Sydney are".

He says involvement in Scripture Union missions on the north coast had shown them the desire of the region's churches to reach out to the community but many did not have

the means. However, when the couple heard of an opportunity in Alstonville they quickly made contact.

"They are keen to grow their families and youth demographic so they've worked hard to be capable of putting someone on, and that is going to be me — our family," Mr Minton says. "It's a growth area because there are stacks of people moving [there] from Sydney and Queensland, so it's a great opportunity to reach into people lives with the message of Jesus."

PRINCIPAL FOR SHOALHAVEN SCHOOLS

MR Chris Pitt will leave his position as Director of Teaching and Learning at SCECGS Redlands to become the new principal of the Shoalhaven Region Anglican Schools, which encompasses Nowra Anglican College and Shoalhaven Anglican School.

Not keen on city life, Mr Pitt says he is looking forward to moving back to regional NSW.

"I'm really looking forward to getting back into a learning community that seeks to honour God and grow His kingdom," he says.

The governance of the two schools has recently been amalgamated, and ensuring that each school retains its own identity will be one of Pitt's biggest challenges.

"I'll need to work hard at developing relationships between the two schools. There are two separate cultures and we need to maintain the integrity of both schools while developing some common ground."

Mr Pitt thanked acting principals Andrew Leslie and John Barclay for their work at each school.

NEW PRESBYTERS

THIS month three new presbyters will take charge in churches where they have already been ministering. The **Rev Anthony Douglas**, assistant minister in the Gerringong parish since 2009, will become curate-in-charge of Gerringong's former branch church, Shoalhaven Heads. The **Rev Paul O'Brien** will become the curate-in-charge of St Andrew's, Abbotsford, while the **Rev David Esdale** will become rector at St Alban's, Corrimal.

IN BRIEF

ST Paul's, Burwood will welcome a new rector in February 2011 when the **Rev James Collins** arrives in Sydney from the Diocese of Tasmania. In January the **Rev Ed Vaughan** will return to the Sydney Diocese from Ireland to become the rector of St John's, Darlinghurst. There will be more details of both appointments in a future edition.

VALE



THE REV RALPH FRASER, 1926-2010

THE **Rev Ralph Fraser** was called home on September 3 after a long battle with cancer.

Born in 1926, Mr Fraser enlisted with the navy near the end of World War II and served with the occupational forces in Japan and the Pacific before returning to Australia to study at Moore Theological College.

After graduating, he spent two years as curate in the parish of Eastwood before serving with CMS in Tanzania. When he returned to Australia in 1955, Mr Fraser took up the post of CMS general secretary in Brisbane and home secretary for CMS NSW before spending four years as the Sydney Diocese's immigration chaplain.

His subsequent ministry over the next 30 years included serving as rector of Berrima cum Moss Vale, chaplain to St Vincent's and Lewisham hospitals, rector of Woollahra and chaplain at Cumberland Hospital.

Archbishop Harry Goodhew, who took Mr Fraser's funeral, described him as "a man of presence" who "brought a lot of character to the ministry that he exercised".

"He was a devoted and effective clergyman of the Anglican Church who was passionate for the cause of Christ," Archbishop Goodhew said.

Vacant Parishes

LIST OF PARISHES AND PROVISIONAL PARISHES, VACANT OR BECOMING VACANT AS AT 18 OCTOBER 2010:

- Auburn
- Berrima cum Moss Vale
- Blakehurst
- Cooks River
- Earlwood
- Hoxton Park (St Philip's)
- Keiraville
- Menangle
- Moorebank
- Sutherland
- Ulladulla

* DENOTES PROVISIONAL PARISHES OR ARCHBISHOP'S APPOINTMENTS.

The Cloud

and its silver lining

A seismic shift is occurring in the internet as more information migrates from physical hard drives to 'cloud' storage space. The heavenly minded should embrace this cloud, MARK HADLEY argues, as it provides blue-sky possibilities for gospel proclamation.

NOT too many years ago a minister pulled me aside and asked me what was probably one of the most perplexing questions I had ever been asked as a communicator: "Do you think we really need to get a fax machine?"

It stumped me for a couple of reasons. The first and most obvious one was that the minister clearly did not understand just how out of date the question was, given that most correspondence had migrated to email.

But at a more profound level I could understand his confusion and why there were no simple answers. Technology, particularly communication technology, changes rapidly. People are developing new ways of carrying on conversations of various depths almost every day. How do Christians determine which are worth investing meagre church resources in, in order to assist discipleship and evangelism? Or as someone asked me at a Christian communication conference this year, "Should we build a MySpace or a Facebook page?"

The answer to these sorts of questions depends on understanding two things: the changing nature of the internet and the audience that uses it.

Few but the most ardent technophobes believe the internet is something Christian ministers can avoid. Our nation's 16.9 million internet users represent more than 80 per cent of our population, meaning today's pew-sitter is more likely to have an online existence than the average American,

Japanese or South Korean. Neither is this simply a matter of scale. Ministers who underestimate the importance of that online existence are in danger of finding themselves in the company of film producer Darryl Zannuck who famously quipped that television wouldn't last because "people will soon get tired of staring at a plywood box every night".

In 2007, AC Neilsen found that Australians spent an average of 13.7 hours online every week, exceeding their 13.3-hour dosage of television for the first time. Three years on, Australians have only deepened their commitment to 'staring' at the internet.

But I'm afraid that anyone who asked me the question, "Mark, so you think we really need to get a website?" would actually be in much the same situation as the minister pondering the purchase of a fax machine. In the last two years internet usage has changed so fundamentally that asking "What about a website?" is becoming less and less the right question to ask.

Generation Y has led the way in the development of a new way of connecting with those they value, which I refer to as the 'thousand touch relationship'. A quick email in the morning... a Facebook status update to express some joy or frustration... an SMS invite for drinks after work... a late-night Tweet to friends about the film they just saw.

Internet-based communications are allowing Australians to build relationships *incrementally*, rather than by dedicated slabs of time. This observation in no way reflects

on the quality or depth of those relationships. However, the modern Australian has become quite used to electronically wandering in and out of the lives of friends and families as though they were simply occupying different rooms of the same communal house. In one sense they are: a virtual house with no physical or chronological boundaries to prevent Nathan in Lindfield from sharing with Matt in London the social minutiae that make up relationship.

Those who protest that this will not result in the formation of 'real' connections may end up displaying all of the foresight of the writer of this 1876 Western Union memo: "This telephone has too many shortcomings to be considered as a means of communication. The device is of inherently no value to us".

Yet now we live in a world where mobile telephones sales were one of the few growth

continued next page »

What is the cloud?

In the third age of the internet, our personal data is no longer stored in our desktop PC or laptop but in remote computer storage banks (often physically overseas) termed 'the cloud'. This 'cloud' can be accessed from anywhere by multiple methods and multiple users. This new era has arrived thanks to the development of wireless broadband and lightweight, low-memory portable devices such as digital mobile phones, netbooks and tablets such as the iPad.

Beyond bewilderment

A phone survey of Sydney Anglican rectors last year found widespread bewilderment about how to communicate in the new media environment. Many reported an awareness that the 'social media' generation were not being engaged by traditional means of communication such as the news sheet. In order to chart a way forward, we spoke to a diverse ministry panel who share one trait in common: they have experimented with the new online paradigm.

STEVE KRYGER

Media pastor, Church By The Bridge, Kirribilli



Best cloud computing ministry tool:

I use the Dropbox app to store the final versions of files I use for communications and marketing at church. If I'm not at the church office (or even not at my own computer), I can easily access all the files I need, anytime, from any place. I also use Dropbox to share files with others who need them who aren't on staff at church. For example, I have a folder of everything graphic designers need to create artwork and, with the click of a button, I can share a folder with all our logos, fonts, templates etc. It's much easier than emailing a long list of files. The cloud has a lot of potential. But when it's not working properly it's very frustrating, as you can do nothing to fix it yourself. I still have doubts about the value of storing anything significant in the cloud.

Tips for using social media:

We surveyed our church members about our church communication and found that many younger members actually don't like and avoid hard copy paper communication. Here are three conclusions I draw:

1. "If it's not online it doesn't exist". If the social media generation want to find something, they'll search for it online. If they search for it and can't find it, it might as well not exist.
2. "Paper is bad". Printing can generate a lot of waste and printed materials are often out of date very soon after print. A consciousness of environmental concerns and a high take-up of online media mean that the social media generation are not only happy to access information online, they prefer it.
3. "I expect a two-way relationship". Social media has opened up relationships with people and organisations in a way we haven't seen before. I can befriend my pastor or even favourite musician and receive updates from them. Social media has not only made these relationships possible, it's changed the type of relationship. One-way communication has given way to an expectation of two-way – I'll tell my pastor I'm praying for him, I'll post a comment on Coldplay's latest video. Not only does the social media generation seek this interaction, their interactions with these people have a massive viral impact observable by any of the contacts in their network.

DANI TREWEEK

Women's minister, St Matthias' Centennial Park



Best cloud computing ministry tool:

While Facebook is not intended to build and foster 'meaningful' relationships, it does assist me in hearing snapshots of how others are travelling – both incidentals and the deeper things of life. The flipside is that you learn things that may give you some reason for concern, helping you recognise the need to care for them pastorally and encourage them from God's word. I've also appreciated the ability to create 'communities' on Facebook... and the viral-type promotion of ministry events, though I wonder whether the informal, and often impersonal, nature of Facebook event invitations only exacerbates the non-committal attitude of the new media generation. In terms of ministry productivity, one of the most helpful new tools is Doodle (www.doodle.com). Doodle is an online scheduling tool which helps solve the constant challenge of finding a common available time for groups of people, whether it be to read the Bible or have a ministry planning meeting. Gone are the days when I have to cross-check emails from eight different people in the effort to find one half-hour slot which works for all – I love Doodle for taking the pain out of the process!

Tip for using social media:

The resistance to employing social media in ministry is understandable. However, the reality is that many – both believers in our churches and non-believers who we want to reach with the gospel – genuinely and sincerely interact and relate with others online. As such I think we need to be willing to lay our assumptions and perhaps even prejudices aside and instead ask what aspects of social media might assist and promote the gospel ministry we are involved in.

NEIL ATWOOD

Pastor, 7pm Factory Night Church, Springwood



Best cloud computing ministry tool:

As much as I hate to admit it, probably Facebook. Although I think it is woefully inadequate and is dying under the load of irrelevant nonsense, the Gen Y people I minister to use it where they won't use a regular website or

the weekly notice sheet. We are also experimenting with putting more mundane content (eg church 'want ads') on the web to get it out of the news sheet, making a special sub-site for that purpose.

For church staff, we are slowly getting more administrative processes and information into the cloud so we can access it anywhere. Small example: my personal work calendar and contacts on my laptop at work syncs via the cloud with a Google calendar, and thence with my mobile phone. The goal is to get that functionality happening for all staff and a subset of that data (eg: church calendar) available for members.

Tip for using social media:

SMS is the biggest winner here – far more effective than email. We do it through a web-based SMS service for speed and effectiveness. I wish more of my Gen Ys and the like would use Twitter, because that is really text on steroids but, so far, few do.

RAJ GUPTA

Rector, Toongabbie Anglican



Best cloud computing ministry tool:

The integrated online calendar is something I use every day. Everything else syncs to it. And it makes life and diary management much more efficient.

While part of me hates to admit it, my leap into the iPhone world earlier this year has changed the way I work, largely for the better. I do have to manage (and I don't always do it well) how I use it, yet other than being more efficient in responding to people, I am also able to make the most of social tools like Twitter and Facebook. Again, one has to have protocols as to what you say and what you don't. But if used well, you can keep up with more people and that's what part of my job is. For the record, I am resisting an iPad until at least a few of my congregation have one!

Tip for using social media:

At the level of connecting with people I have been pleasantly surprised at the value of Twitter and Facebook. They are not for fostering deep friendships but I have been able to keep up with more people than I ever thought possible and also renew old acquaintances. One guy I went to a youth group with and hadn't seen in years contacted me based on my name and a hunch.



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areas during the recent Global Financial Crisis. That limited communication device blossomed into the essential tool. And along with it the 'thousand touch relationship' is reworking the fabric of the internet itself.

The internet is undergoing its third wave of development and the buzzword is portability. The dominant web tools are those that can be slipped into a handbag. In 2005 the laptop computer outsold the desktop for the first time. In 2009 sales were dominated by the netbook, or ultra-portable computer. The arrival of the iPad this year seems set to shift the goalposts towards even slimmer, always-on devices, with market analysts predicting tablet computers will outsell

netbooks by 2012.

"So that's good news for the church website," you say. Not exactly.

Information has become as portable as the devices we use to access it. It now hovers above us, following us around rather like the cloud it is named for. Internet users are turning to third-party services to hold the growing amounts of information they wish to share online. Flickr for photos, Google for documents, Facebook for events, Twitter for conversations. iTunes is expected to introduce a hosted music service in the next year. Paradoxically, though, this increased use of the internet is beginning to spell bad news for your website.

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Alone with his 'friends'

THE SOCIAL NETWORK M

MARK HADLEY

THE irony at the heart of Facebook is that apparently the world's largest social network was created by a young man so socially awkward he was incapable of holding on to a single friendship. It's a contradiction *The Social Network* conveys well, while challenging us to consider whether we are more or less friendly than before.

This is a human drama about the doubtful dealings, broken promises and shattered relationships that went into building the world's largest site for online friendships. *The*

Social Network appropriately builds its story around Mark Zuckerberg, the 19 year old who took a fledgling website and transformed it into the most powerful social network of all time ... or did he?

Just pause and think for a moment about what that team of programmers *really* achieved. Was it:

- a \$25 billion web property?
- 500 million members in seven years?
- a site second only to China and India in population?

All true, but the answer is 'None of the

above'. It's too easy to be swamped by the statistics and miss what is truly significant. Mark Zuckerberg and others helped redefine friendship. Thanks in part to Facebook, a generation that grew up online has learned to build relationships on bytes of computer information. Yet it is a sad truth that a person can be part of a thriving internet community and still maintain sufficient distance to be barely known by anyone at all. Facebook has helped create 'friendship lite'.

The Social Network is ultimately a film about that tension: knowing but not really being known. The day that Facebook signs up its millionth member, Zuckerberg loses his best friend. "I was your only friend," his college roommate tells him. "Your only friend." Sitting on top of his silicon tower, Mark might have benefited from some of Jesus' advice: "What does it profit a man if he gains the whole world – yet loses his soul?". Instead he finishes the film refreshing his computer screen, hoping a single person he cares about will 'friend' him on Facebook.

The Social Network shows us what we have lost in the way of friendship. In many cases we have exchanged quality for quantity, when what we hunger for is real concern. Strangely this is what archaic Christianity can offer cutting-edge Facebook: a community that will strive and sacrifice for even its least-known members. Facebook may have topped 500 million but the church consists of many millions of its own who know the truth of that statement.

SC



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In August *Wired* magazine pronounced the 'death of the web'. Certainly it was an exaggeration but it highlighted an important trend for Christians who want to communicate.

This may sound mind-blowing to some but *Wired* helps us see the truth: websites are not the internet. Rather, websites are just one of many services that use internet protocols. Though internet traffic has increased by a factor of seven since 2005, the proportion of traffic that uses web browsers (for example Internet Explorer, Firefox, Chrome etc.) is in sharp decline.

How can internet usage be up *and* down? The answer is the 'push' internet.

When I use Skype to talk or chat I access the internet – but I don't use a browser. When I check my email or purchase music through iTunes the browser is similarly absent. Send a text message or update my Facebook status via my telephone and it's the same story.

In fact I can spend my entire day interacting with the internet via specially designed apps on smartphones and tablets and never see or enter a web address. The content is simply 'pushed' to my platform upon request without my ever having to leave the program I'm using. The very tools that have been developed to enable me to pursue my 'thousand touch relationships' have so simplified my access to the internet that they are steadily cutting the browser out of the equation.

**In August
Wired
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decline.**

Christians, along with all other content providers, have to rethink how they are going to speak to Australians who are always connected but increasingly likely to communicate in small bytes through closed, third-party systems.

The website has not ceased to be valuable. Web traffic may be proportionally down but it still accounts for a lot of traffic. That said, my advice is to start thinking of the humble church website as a 'warehouse' rather than a 'home' if we are going to engage with this push phenomenon. These websites are increasingly places where you store the Christian material you want to get out to people, rather than destinations you want to entice them to visit.

Adrian McComb, a gifted analyst and a committed Christian, says we have to learn to be platform agnostic. Let your audiences choose the way they want to consume your healthy content.

Today, the right question to ask is not, "What about our church website, Mark?" but rather, "What tools should we provide for delivering our content to the people we want to reach?"

The answer might be a blog that is also mirrored on a church Facebook fan page, or email bulletins that are simultaneously posted as status updates and sent as Tweets. Website sermons can be 'pushed' through iTunes podcast feeds; new articles can be spruiked through SMS updates. Like the most effective sermons, how you choose to

deliver your content will depend largely on the audience you are trying to reach.

The silver lining associated with communication in the cloud is that it tends to improve the quality of interaction you can enjoy with internet users.

Previously, your message was simply one more in a trillion of options offered to the faceless masses. Now, delivering content through social networks and applications provides the opportunity to be distinctly personal. You can offer virtual service as a corollary to that which you offer in the physical world. And because this new method relies on people requesting content, you know that all the contacts you are dealing with are actually interested in forming some sort of relationship with you.

The one thing you don't want to do is to fail to follow the Great Commission into this new field. The methods might be changing around us but the fundamental message remains the same. It has always been daunting to preach Christ saves sinners, though the present openness to communication may mean that the barriers are more digital than physical.

The answer is not to retreat to the pulpit and let the Spirit sort the rest of it out. God will still call in his children but there is no virtue in his transforming people *despite* you. Australians will continue to build their lives and relationships on a thousand little contacts.

Ensure that some of them are yours. **SC**

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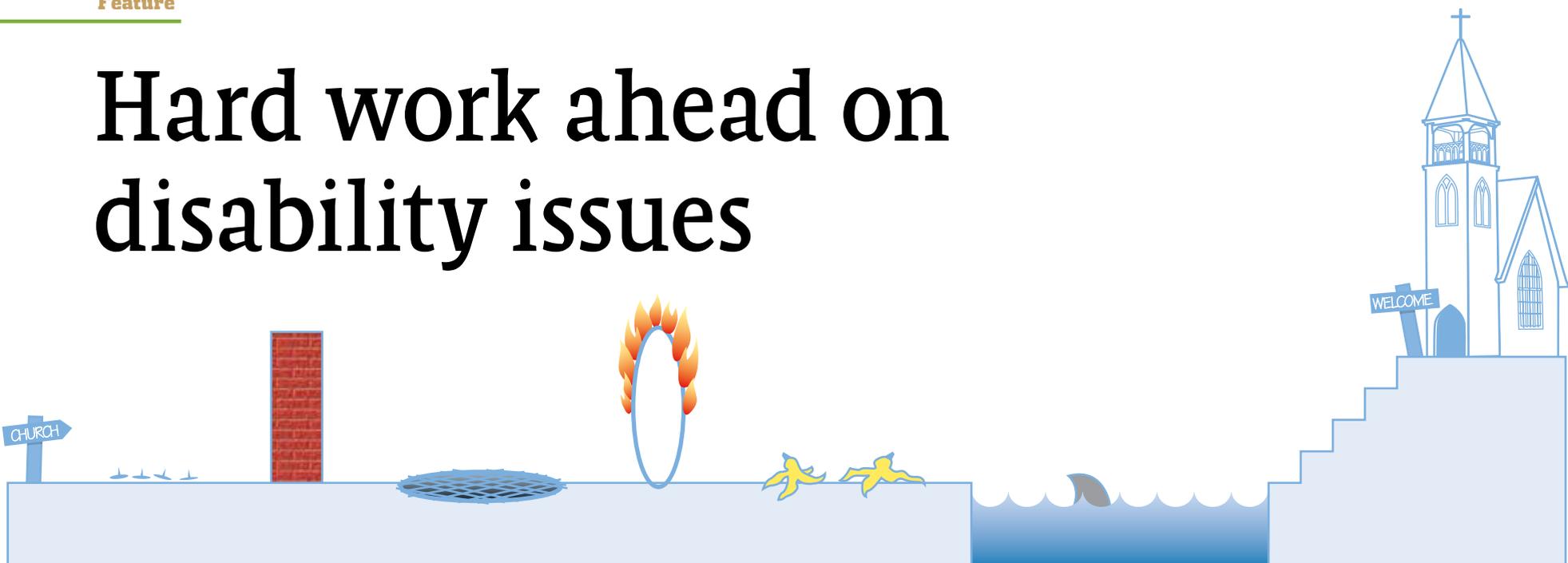
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Hard work ahead on disability issues



A survey of Sydney parishes conducted by ANDREW CAMERON shows the challenge facing those who want to welcome people with disabilities into church life.

What can churches do?

Q: What major social issue are local churches best placed to address?

A: Caring for carers, especially parents of children with severe disabilities

Understandably, Anglicare's chief public policy guru Sue King is "not comfortable with prioritising need".



Sue King
Head of the Social Policy Unit
Anglicare Sydney

"I have spoken with people who are homeless and have gone hungry for three days," she says. "How do you balance their need with the needs of parents caring for a child with multiple disabilities? How can you say that one issue is more significant than another?"

But if we are talking about an issue where local churches can make a significant difference, then Sue King says providing long-term care for carers is it. It doesn't have the underlying complexities of

an issue like homelessness, she explains.

Last month Anglicare released a research report 'Care to Live or Live to Care', based on Sue's surveys of parents who have children with severe disabilities coupled with behavioural syndromes.

"Carers have the lowest levels of wellbeing of any group in the community," she says. "Their sense of isolation is profound. They become cut off from their friends. They feel alone, exhausted and frustrated. Churches could be really proactive in this area: providing interventions, giving them respite, making them feel part of the community again."

LAST year, Sydney Diocese's Synod passed a resolution aimed at addressing the difficulties faced by people with disabilities, their families and their carers. It noted the many obstacles they face in participating in Christian fellowship. It requested all parishes and organisations in the Diocese 'develop and implement a plan to remove those obstacles that currently prevent people affected by disability from hearing the gospel and sharing in Christian fellowship'. It also requested further advocacy on behalf of these people.

The Diocese's Social Issues Executive (SIE) implemented a plan to assist parishes to improve their access. The plan has two parts. In the first part of the plan, the SIE developed a questionnaire for parishes in consultation with several experts. The Diocesan Secretariat hosted the questionnaire online, and invited each rector or his delegate to respond during June 2010. Representatives of 139 parishes (out of a total of 267 parishes) gave responses in respect of 150 ministry centres.

The survey reveals a mixed picture of accessibility to our churches. In the built environment for example, 22 per cent of centres do not have accessible car park spaces, 27 per cent do not have a sealed path to their front door and 15 per cent do not have a wheelchair-accessible church building. Once inside, 62 per cent have doors that cannot be opened easily by a wheelchair user or other person with a disability. In 42 per cent of these centres, one or more doorways is interrupted by a step. Only 9 per cent of centres met the four main requirements for ramp access that the questionnaire tested; 17 per cent met none of these requirements.

Without repeating all the results here, the overall picture was of a generally inhospitable built environment, with many good and clear exceptions. Of course this result concurs with a repeatedly expressed theme: that old buildings, and low cash flow, present significant challenges.

In terms of church culture, 59 per cent of the centres have welcoming teams that could be described as 'adept' at welcoming people with disability and their carers. No centres had Braille bibles or other Braille literature available and only 4 per cent had bookshop material on hand that related to disability. Centres that reported having even minimal disability-related material on their website totalled 4 per cent.

These results are not intended to reflect badly on those parishes that undertook to complete the survey. Indeed, no survey can entirely capture the real state of a church's awareness of people with disability (for

LOCAL CHURCH INITIATIVE

St Clement's, Mosman runs a monthly respite program called Saturday Care. It cares for children with several challenges, including autism, Down syndrome, Angelman syndrome, and total visual impairment.

When the respite program began, some 30 church members volunteered to assist. According to carer Kate Hurley, these people were nervous to start with but "are now very confident and capable".

Kate says Saturday Care has shown carers their families are welcome at church and can fit in. The program is "easily transferable to other churches" and Kate and program co-ordinator Gill Robinson are willing to help other churches begin such a program.

example, ministries that travel to such people are not reflected in the survey). Also, the fact that about half the parishes in the Diocese even made a response may signal a high level of goodwill across the Diocese toward people with disability. The results simply act as a snapshot of our current levels of awareness of the needs of these people. However, the results also indicate two broad generalisations that can be made about our current practices.

Most respondents thought obstacles to accessibility in the built environment would cost a lot of money to remedy and would involve massive changes to (generally) old buildings. These concerns are valid. However, it is often the case that many simple changes can make a centre more accessible: the removal of a door handle; attention to a trip hazard; use of a consistent, large-font PowerPoint template; the installation of inexpensive portable ramps — all are examples of the kind of ‘low-hanging fruit’ that can be easily missed. Our consultants (see box) have already helped churches by pointing out such simple, low-cost changes.

Many respondents unwittingly expressed a mistaken idea that is prevalent in every church culture. The thought appeared in two guises. For some, their church did not need to take active steps for people with disability because their congregation had no such people. Others spoke of handling problems as they arose for those people with disabilities who currently attend. But of course the challenges faced by people with disabilities

Many respondents unwittingly expressed a mistaken idea that is prevalent in every church culture.

mean that they simply cannot begin to participate if an environment is inhospitable to their form of disability. The blind are not helped by wheelchair accessibility; those with perambulatory disability are not helped by a hearing loop; and so on.

Just as no able-bodied person would come to church if the doors were locked, for people with disability the doors are effectively locked in the absence of a plan to cater for them. One respondent noticed this habit of thought: ‘We do things OK from a reactive point of view but are not proactive at this time’. This kind of thinking is understandable: it is hard enough to keep a church running for those who are there without thinking about hypothetical others who are not. But the survey revealed the very great need for a new culture that approaches disability access proactively and intentionally, not reactively. As things stand, only about 8 per cent of parishes responding had the beginnings of a disability action plan.

This response is at odds with the large number of people with disabilities found in the general community. In the 2003 Australian Bureau of Statistics *Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers* one in five people had a reported disability, defined as any limitation, restriction or impairment lasting for at least six months (84 per cent of these people experienced a physical disability and the mental or behavioural disorders experienced by the other 16 per cent were even more debilitating). The rate of profound

or severe core-activity limitation was 6.3 per cent of the population, or about one in 16. About one in 10 Australians provided carer assistance to those who needed help because of disability or age. About one in 50 were primary carers.

The survey did not directly test for the numbers of carers and people with disability present in churches. But when compared to the wider community, people with disability and their carers are probably underrepresented in most churches. **SC**

This is an edited extract of the report to the 2010 Sydney Synod from the Rev Dr Andrew Cameron, chairman of the Social Issues Executive.

CONSULTATIONS

Recognising it would be hard for parishes to grapple with these complex issues, the second part of the SIE plan has been to support parishes with the offer of free onsite consultations. The questionnaire offered each parish the opportunity for such a consultation. About 50 consultations were requested. Two volunteers, Louise Gosbell and Lara Oram, are expert at improving access and have kindly offered their time to assist parishes to change.

It will take several months to work through the initial requests for consultations. However, both will accept requests for further appointments and can travel to centres anywhere in the Diocese.

Louise can be contacted on 0413 994 131. Lara can be contacted on 0423 777 651.

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Don't be afraid of the BIG BAD WOLF



The Bible calls false teachers ‘ferocious wolves’ but how do you tell who they are? MICHAEL JENSEN explains.

IN these days of doctrinal confusion and bitter division, the term ‘false teacher’ is thrown around with some abandon. It is increasingly the case that this term is used to describe any Christian or putative Christian whose teaching differs from mine — or, I say with all seriousness, to describe someone whose work I don’t understand and haven’t read at any depth.

But what does the New Testament actually say about who ‘false teachers’ are and what should be done about them? Because the term sounds like it is biblical one, it is important that those who use it use it biblically. Is there a genuine category of false teaching and, if so, how should we use it? I happen to think the well-known US preacher John Piper is wrong about infant baptism. Does that make him (or me!) a false teacher?

So I have made a small investigation. And the truth is the term ‘false teacher’ hardly appears in the New Testament, though ‘false teaching/doctrine’ does and ‘false prophet’ certainly does.

In Matthew 7:15-16 Jesus warns the ‘new Israel’ against the infiltration of false prophets among them:

Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves. By their fruit you will recognise them.

He doesn’t tell them what the false prophets will teach, but he does say to them that they will be recognised by their fruit. What is their fruit? Is it what they teach? Or the immorality of their behaviour? Jesus does

not specify, other than to say that we will be able to recognise them as false by what they produce — and that they are doomed to destruction.

In Matthew 24:24, Jesus teaches that in the end times many ‘false Christs’ will arise along with false prophets. There will be false predictions about the appearance of Christ accompanied by great displays of miraculous power in order to deceive people.

In 1 Corinthians 15, Paul admits that if Christ is not raised he would indeed be a false witness about God. The resurrection is clearly an essential and decisive truth about God that is at stake for Paul and that would make him a false witness if it failed.

In 2 Corinthians 11, Paul introduces the false ‘super apostles’ who preach a faith of glory and not of suffering weakness. These guys are motivated by greed, power and

vanity — and it is quite clear to Paul that they are feigning their role as apostles of Christ. There is no suggestion that they might just be honestly mistaken in Paul's accusation against them.

In Galatians 2:4, Paul speaks of 'false brothers' who have spied on the freedom of the Galatians. Of course, in Galatians, Paul's gospel and Paul's commission to preach it to the Gentiles is at issue, and he is very strong in his repudiation of those who have compromised its integrity by their behaviour.

In 1 Timothy 1, Paul urges Timothy to be firm with certain men who are teaching falsely out of their ignorance:

As I urged you when I went into Macedonia, stay there in Ephesus so that you may command certain men not to teach false doctrines any longer nor to devote themselves

FOCUS QUESTION:

What does the New Testament say about false teachers?

to myths and endless genealogies. These promote controversies rather than God's work — which is by faith. The goal of this command is love, which comes from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith....They want to be teachers of the law, but they do not know what they are talking about or what they so confidently affirm.

Sincere but false teaching in good faith can be dealt with firmly but restoratively. After all, as Paul says of himself:

Even though I was once a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent man, I was shown mercy because I acted in ignorance and unbelief.

Later in the same letter Paul asks Timothy once again to be firm with those who teach false doctrines (not 'false teacher', note) *If anyone teaches false doctrines and does not agree to the sound instruction of our Lord Jesus Christ and to godly teaching, he is conceited and understands nothing. He has an unhealthy interest in controversies and quarrels about words that result in envy, strife, malicious talk, evil suspicions and constant friction between men of corrupt mind, who have been robbed of the truth and who think that godliness is a means to financial gain. But godliness with contentment is great gain.*

That is to say: if the one who teaches falsely won't listen to rebuke — well, watch how the consequences are destructive of community. Watch how constant friction circles about this person. And notice again — Paul has reason to think financial gain is on the horizon of those teachers in question. The content of the false teaching in 1 Timothy seems to be 'myths and genealogies': a devotion to the obscure and useless knowledge that is of benefit to no-one but of interest to many.

In 2 Peter we are actually introduced to

the term 'false teachers':

But there were also false prophets among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you. They will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the sovereign Lord who bought them — bringing swift destruction on themselves. Many will follow their shameful ways and will bring the way of truth into disrepute. In their greed these teachers will exploit you with stories they have made up. Their condemnation has long been hanging over them, and their destruction has not been sleeping...

These are people — ex-Christians no less — who really want to make money out of the religion business. Just as Israel was infected by smooth-talking false prophets, so the false teachers of the coming time will be in the church. What was their teaching? A denial of the sovereign Lord who bought them! There seems however to be an immoral content to the teaching of these false prophets — as Peter goes on, it seems that debauchery is the result of what they teach:

For they mouth empty, boastful words and, by appealing to the lustful desires of sinful human nature, they entice people who are just escaping from those who live in error.

It is quite specific: these false teachers are open in their immorality and in their lust for sex and money. In Jude, while 'false teaching' isn't mentioned per se, the church is likewise infected by divisive and argumentative types who are also openly immoral — *who change the grace of our God into a licence for immorality and deny Jesus Christ our only Sovereign and Lord.*

In 1 John 4:1ff we are told that many false prophets have gone out into the world, and that they are to be recognised by their denial of Jesus' coming in the flesh. John is quite specific in naming the diagnostic test for recognising them: they deny the true nature of Jesus Christ.

To sum up:

- 'false teacher' itself is rare terminology, only occurring in 2 Peter — though there it is given an extensive exposition.
- false prophets/teachers are not usually thought to be sincere, since the New Testament authors hold them to be motivated on the one hand by profit and on the other hand by lust. These two motives are indicators of false teaching.
- the content of false teaching/prophesy in the New Testament is often a Christological issue — for example, the incarnation of the lordship of Christ, or the resurrection, or the timing of his return.
- false teaching is also libertarian in character — advocating grace as an excuse



The Rev Dr Michael P Jensen wrote his doctorate on martyrdom and now teaches doctrine and church history. His current research interest is in the theology of being human. He is also working on a project on the doctrine of God.

for licence.

- false teachers are divisive and argumentative, especially over trivialities like genealogies and myths. The trivialities prove a distraction to the feeble. One of the worst results of their teaching is the division they cause in the church.
- those who teach falsely may at first be rebuked and corrected with forbearance. It is possible to teach falsehood without being (in the technical sense) a 'false teacher'.
- the New Testament authors reassure (and warn) Christians that unrepentant teachers are doomed to an extra-hot end.

SO: the New Testament alerts Christians to the ongoing presence of teaching that will a) compromise the divinity and/or humanity of Christ, for the purpose of b) promoting division amongst Christians and licentious behaviour. I am afraid to say that these two signs of false teaching are very much in evidence among Christians today. But we ought not to confuse differences over secondary matters — however deeply felt — for evidence of false teaching. **SC**



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Talking about resurrection

What are some helpful things to hold in mind when a friend or family member dies?

1. Grief is right

Even for those who believe that death is not the final word, grief is normal. Jesus wept at the death of his friend. He knew death was horrible and so prepared his disciples for the shock of losing him. We must feel free not only to grieve but also to express our grief in the way that is suitable for us.

2. We should weep with those who weep

We should allow others to grieve and stand with them when they do. This, after all, is what the Bible says we should do. This means not avoiding the topic of death and being prepared to talk to bereaved friends about the one they've lost — possibly at length, and over a long period of time. If we are not sure what to say or do, it is better to admit that to the person than to try to minimise the sadness, or offer misplaced comfort. Why not ask the bereaved if there is anything they would personally find helpful? This is better than guessing at their needs.

3. At the time of the funeral

It isn't necessary to say many words to other mourners at a funeral. Part of 'weeping with those who weep' means simply acknowledging the sadness, as well as joy, associated with the one who has gone. If you are asked to deliver a eulogy, it makes sense to write out a text in full, even if you prefer not to read it word for word. This allows time for thinking through the right words and is a practical help in working out how long you will be speaking for. If you are close to the one who died and become upset while speaking, it also allows others to read your notes out on your behalf. Those notes can also be made available to people after the funeral.

4. It is right to speak of the resurrection

It isn't necessary, nor is it always wise, to speculate on the spiritual state of the person who has died. The job of judgement is God's, after all, not ours. But the time of a person's dying is the right time to be reminded about the shortness of our own lives and to think about how we might prepare ourselves for death. 'It is better to go to the house of mourning than to go to the house of feasting, for this is the end of all mankind, and the living will lay it to heart,' says Ecclesiastes. For the Christian, the funeral reminds us about what is going to happen in future because of Jesus' death and resurrection.

5. It is right to wait patiently

A Christian experience of grief and suffering in this world is in many ways completely the same as everybody else's. But the reason our grief is different is because we know with absolute certainty that no matter how long it lasts, it is temporary. The Lord Jesus will return and wipe away every tear from our eyes. Therefore, 'let those who suffer according to God's will entrust their souls to a faithful Creator while doing good' (1 Peter 4:19).

Deliver us from tears:

grief and resurrections

The death of a loved one is always a confronting experience. GORDON CHENG considers what can help us shape a Christian response to grief.

I ONCE went to a funeral conducted by a man whose daughter had died suddenly and unexpectedly in her late teens. It was her funeral. He was a Christian, she was a Christian, and so at the funeral he preached courageously of his daughter's life, faith, and the confidence all of us could feel that those who trusted in Jesus would be raised to eternal life. As he spoke, he wept.

Another friend whose mother died while they were on the mission field came back to a funeral which, while full of sadness, was infused with rejoicing over the rich life of Christian service of the woman and a deep assurance that she was now at home with her heavenly Father.

How do we hold together the death of someone we love, together with our terrible feelings of loss, alongside the great truth of the resurrection of the body? I want to look at some of the ways in which we think about death as Christians, not just in the abstract, but when it comes to facing the death of someone very close to us. What does it mean for us to do what the apostle Paul says, and 'not to grieve as those who have no hope' (1 Thess 4:13)?

First, we must insist that 'not grieving as those who have no hope' is in no way the

same as 'not grieving'. Jesus wept when his friend Lazarus died; in the same way we will weep when our loved ones die and leave us behind. So we should! Death is awful.

Our grief may even be deeper and worse than that of the non-Christian sitting beside us at the funeral. A man I know went to the funeral of his great-uncle and was upset rather than comforted when he heard the preacher insisting that Arthur was no longer enduring any suffering. Not because he wanted further suffering for his uncle! Rather, because he feared very much that what the preacher said was not, in fact, true.

Yes, cancer no longer had hold of his dead great-uncle's body. But Arthur had shown no sign of trusting Jesus as Lord and so the preacher's statement that Arthur had, so to speak, 'gone into the next room' and remained somehow close to the living was empty of comfort. For Arthur's nephew knew that his death meant that he was now in a 'room' where he waited for the day when Jesus would stand revealed as Lord and judge of all creation. When that truth is applied to someone who never acknowledged him while they lived, it is a thought more full of dread than comfort.

So trusting that Jesus rose from the dead and has conquered death will not necessarily make our present experience of death any more straightforward or less painful. It may even (for a time) make grief harder to bear than for those people who have a misplaced confidence that dead people sleep never to wake again.

Nor does our hope in Jesus' resurrection take away completely the sadness of losing a friend in this life. Psychologists tell us that

grief takes many forms and will often take a lot of time to process. When a person close to us dies, we run through a massive range of emotions and often difficult stages: denial; anger and shock; a desire to bargain with God; deep depression and sorrow and sadness, and finally (perhaps) resignation and acceptance. Christians do not get a free pass that somehow exempts them from the more painful elements of being human. Quite the opposite: if we believe that in the Lord Jesus our true humanity is healed and restored, we may even discover our tears are harder to bear.

Some world views, for example, rationalise death and explain it away. Christians have no such luxury. We know that death is the terrible and unnatural result of human sin. It isn't how human life ought to end. In a very real sense, we don't have the luxury of imagining that death is not as bad as it really is. We are the ones who see most clearly how wicked death really is because of Jesus himself — firstly as he weeps and prays to avoid death in the garden of Gethsemane, and then as he hangs on the cross speaking the words of Psalm 22: "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"

So Christians, more than anyone, can empathise with my friend who wept at his daughter's funeral even as he spoke confidently about the resurrection from the dead. Nor should we want to hide the feelings of sorrow and despair that can overwhelm us when we face death in all its horror. "Weep with those who weep", says Paul in Romans 12.

Just like the psalmists, anyone who trusts in Jesus is crying out to a God who hears them.

We're not Stoics. When others suffer, we suffer. When they and we suffer, we cry.

At one and the same time, however, we know that we are not crying out into a vacuum. Just like the psalmists, anyone who trusts in Jesus is crying out to a God who hears them. Here, more than anywhere, is where Paul's comfort that we don't 'grieve as those who have no hope' comes into its own.

For when we are at a funeral, the great certainty that we have — and it comes because Jesus himself rose from the dead — is that the person who lies in the coffin will one day rise again to stand before God and give account. And when that person is a brother or sister who's put their trust in Jesus, everything changes. So my missionary friends could weep over the loss of their mother who had sickened and died while they were still overseas. Yet the entire funeral service could be filled with a sense of deep and incomprehensible joy, not only in thankfulness for a faithful life lived in Christ's service, but in powerful confidence that the family would be reunited beyond the grave in Christ's heavenly kingdom.

Nowhere is that confidence clearer in the New Testament than in 1 Corinthians 15, where as well as insisting that the Lord Jesus did indeed die and was physically raised from the dead, Paul sketches out the consequences of trusting or not trusting the many eyewitnesses who saw for themselves that Jesus was alive.

If Jesus didn't rise from the dead, writes

Paul, 'then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain'. There are ethical implications too, that go some way toward explaining why a society without Jesus as Lord is a society headed for despair and, often, debauchery. The stupidity of "Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die" is all that we're left with.

Christians, however, look forward with confidence and joy to the eternal kingdom of Christ: to being raised with new and perfected spiritual bodies that don't suffer any of the dreadful things — including and especially sin — that led to death in this age.

To see a friend or family member who has died is a most awful and confronting experience. As well as the shock of sorrow — knowing that the person has gone — there is the sheer dreadful physicality of a body that we once loved, completely still and often showing the effects of whatever it was that killed them, despite of the embalmer's care. We grieve for the loss, and we grieve over the horror of death itself.

But Christian grief is shaped by something greater and stronger, and that is the knowledge that when Jesus rose again from the dead, he defeated in himself not only death but also everything that leads to death, so that those who trust in him could likewise share in the life of serving him for eternity. We grieve, yes — but not as those who have no hope.

SC

The Rev Gordon Cheng currently works in student ministry. This article was originally commissioned by TJ Andrews Funeral Services.

“...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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The Hole

in higher education

BRYAN COWLING explains what he believes can effectively fill the gap in teacher training left by the mainstream public universities.

UP until recently, the idea of a Christian young person pursuing post-school academic or vocational education at anything other than a public university or tertiary college was unthinkable. If you wanted to become a teacher, for instance, you needed to attend a public university and some of us went on to complete our pre-service training (as it was called) at a state-owned teachers' college.

Since then not only has there been a proliferation of government-owned and funded tertiary institutions, but close on the heels of the aggregation of Catholic colleges into the Australian Catholic University, there has been a significant growth in the number of Christian faith-based colleges and institutes offering accredited tertiary courses and awarding degrees. This is not confined to the education sector, although my comments relate primarily to the education sector.

There is considerable disputation even among Christians as to whether this is a welcome development. In some instances, the apprehension about new institutions, commercial as well as faith-based, is simply a reflection of the conservatism that pervades

the educational community. The existing institutions have acquired respectable reputations over many decades and some over a century and a half. How could these newer institutions possibly compete with their sandstone counterparts?

I must admit that I have had reservations about the sustainability of some of these newer institutions and their ability to provide as rigorous and as comprehensive an education in today's society as their publicly funded competitors. Of course, many of them are offering courses and programs that are not offered in the major universities and probably never will be.

I believe we need both if we are to foster a culture of Christian scholarship in Australia. We need lots of intelligent, mature and articulate Christian philosophers of education who are as equally skilled and knowledgeable in their academic discipline as in applied biblical doctrine and theology. We need hundreds of these academics in our public universities and colleges to nurture the next generation of visionary educational leaders (you could say the same about each of the gatekeeping, public-policy shaping professions). There

need to be career paths in public universities and colleges in this country if we are to avoid losing our best Christian minds to leadership positions in other countries.

Why, in 2010, are there so few well-informed Christian educators in the university faculties of education, philosophy, psychology, social work, communications and law, just to name a few? Is it symptomatic of a disdain among Christians for scholarship and the cultivation of a Christian mind? Is it because Christians lack the courage or the knowledge and skills to mix it in an increasingly secularist and worldview diverse environment? Is it because there are not enough Christian academics or because those who are there just don't have a high enough profile in the institution to inspire a younger generation of potential academics to join their ranks? Is it a reluctance to endure the pain and criticism that comes with thinking, writing and speaking Christianly in the fiercely secularist environment of the public university?

THE HOLE

Let's face it: the lack of a robust Christian presence in academia especially in our public universities is contributing to the marginalising of respectable Christian thinking in Australian society. This is the hole in higher education and it is having a serious effect on schooling in all sectors.

The question we need to answer is: how do we fill the hole?

A CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY?

Some people have suggested that 'someone' should establish a Christian, or even an Anglican university. The Catholics have their university with a campus presence in most states, so why don't we?

Even if 'someone' had the billions of dollars needed, and even if it could be done under the Australian Government's rigorous conditions, I am not sure that we as Anglicans with a commitment to constructive engagement with our pluralist society would want to create an institution that is outside the mainstream of public thinking, research and scholarship.

If our goal is to see thousands of our brightest Christians exercising a godly

influence on the thinking and behaviour of our society, bringing to bear the mind of Christ on an increasingly secularist society, I don't see how cocooning the Christian thinkers in one institution, Christian or Anglican, is going to achieve this end. The track record in other countries of some of the most prestigious universities founded on a biblical basis does not engender confidence that we would do any better. A Christian university will not fill the hole.

But I believe that at this time in our history there is an opportunity through the re-formation of the Wesley Institute by its new management and academic team to promote a process designed to increase the pool of biblically informed educational philosophers and practitioners who, through multiplication, can go some way towards filling the hole in higher education. Through its serious attempt, not just in its rhetoric but in its practice across all faculties, to integrate a biblical theology and worldview with the academic disciplines, it is filling an important void in pedagogy and scholarship.

The Wesley Institute is committed to the implementation of an authentically Christian approach to higher education and in so doing is modelling an approach to its students — whether in dance, drama, music, the visual and graphic arts or education — that they can apply in their professional lives. The courses offered at Wesley are rigorously scrutinised by the accrediting authorities and lead to the awarding of certificates, diplomas and degrees. They are providing a solid foundation for scholarly thinking within a Christian worldview. In time these courses will be complemented with higher degrees and a more extensive research capacity.

The Wesley Institute and other Christian faith-based tertiary institutions are playing an important role in complementing the more established universities and, in due course, they should help to supply a significant proportion of the next generation of Christian academics for various faculties in the public universities. SC

Dr Bryan Cowling is the CEO of the Anglican Education Commission. He holds numerous degrees from public universities. He is an honorary Associate Professor of the University of Sydney and a member of the academic board of the Wesley Institute.

Equipped for every good work

Wesley Institute is set to become one of Australia's key tertiary institutions for training lay Christians for service in education, social services, communications, the arts and more. JEREMY HALCROW speaks to its new director Andrew Baartz specifically about Wesley's vision.

JH: Given your change in management, how has Wesley Institute changed?

AB: We have always attracted a stream of Sydney Anglicans to study at Wesley Institute with our unique course offerings and industry-recognised professional staff. Sydney Anglicans have always believed that Scripture equips believers 'for every good work' and Wesley Institute has always applied Scripture to equip people for good works in vocations of influence. That certainly hasn't changed with the new management.

What has changed is the ability of Wesley Institute to adapt to the emerging needs of the community, particularly the Christian community. To this end, we are fine-tuning our current offerings and preparing to launch new and innovative awards, and we have made significant investment in facilities and a virtual campus (online learning platform).

JH: What is the institute's vision for 2011 and beyond?

AB: We are pursuing new degrees that will equip people to live godly lives in influential vocations — be the "gatekeepers" of our society — in education, business and leadership, communications and media, and ethics and human dignity. In the midst of this excitement and new management, some things will not change. We will continue to be interdenominational, not-for-profit, and attract students who expect to be thoroughly prepared to engage their world with Bible-based Christian thinking and to provide Christian leadership within their field. SC

The Rev Andrew Baartz is director of the Wesley Institute. He was previously involved in city ministry in the Sydney Diocese.

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All that glitters is not gold

In his 2010 'State of the Nation' presidential address, ARCHBISHOP PETER JENSEN explores the fallibility of humans and how this relates to four key issues.

THIS glittering city began as an experiment on human nature. The history of Sydney raises the questions, 'What is a human being?' and 'Can we create better humans?'. In October 1786, a sailor stole a pair of silver-mounted spectacles from a shop in London. He was arrested. 'With every mark of joy in his countenance, and twirling his hat over his head, [he] hollered out, "Botany Bay ahoy!"'

The sailor had heard a wonderful rumour: NSW was intended to be run by the convicts. He was not entirely wrong. One of the architects of the whole scheme was the Home Secretary, Lord Sydney. He thought that after a relatively brief settling-in period under the rule of military authority, the new colony would be self-governing, run by morally improved convicts.

The dream of human perfectibility is a proper one, a Christian one. Furthermore, environment does shape human nature. As those who bear the image of God, when we work in the world in accordance with God's principles, fruitfulness follows. Could Jerusalem be built here at Sydney Cove? Can a better environment make better men?

SOCIETY

How does our advanced society treat the imprisoned?

Poorly. There are biblical principles of punishment. Punishment must be firmly

based on justice. There must be opportunity to rehabilitate and reform and spiritual counsel must be available. In fact we have too many gaols, we have far too many people in gaols, we keep them there too long; we have people on lengthy remand who are then proved innocent; we have a high percentage of prisoners with psychiatric illnesses; there is a disproportionate number of indigenous people in goal. We have still to be reconciled in practice; the dispossession is still paid for in the tears of successive generations.

Because the huge budget is so tight, we are now keeping prisoners in their cells for something like 16-18 hours per day. The prison staff ("unsung heroes", according to a friend of mine who works in a gaol) are overstretched, the opportunity for rehabilitation is very limited.

We have a State election coming up. It is very important that this does not become a law-and-order election; it is also very important that penal reform is not neglected. In some ways the original inspiration of the colony was more enlightened than we are. We should help our government to do better.

How do we treat the dying?

We do well. But this is becoming a society which values individual rights above all else and exalts human wisdom. As a result, once again euthanasia is being demanded. This is a debate about who we are as humans. My fundamental problem with it is that we are

sinners and we do not have the moral capacity to administer it. It is the myth of so-called voluntary euthanasia. At a moment in time of adversity and suffering we ask people to make up their minds about termination of a life.

We cannot — we can never — know what is going through the mind of the sufferer or of those whose lives will be changed by the death of the patient. No doubt there will be grief; but there can also be relief that I am no longer responsible; there can be pleasure in the knowledge that I stand to inherit; there can be the stress of needing the hospital bed. No system of prior decision-making can get around this; nor are we to think that euthanasia will be confined to the elderly or the cancer stricken. We will also have it demanded as a right for the young and the mentally ill. After abortion on demand, this is the next stage in the unjust harvesting of innocent human life, the next and dreadful stage in a culture of expedient death.

How do we treat the young?

The issue this year has been about the provision of Special Religious Education in our schools. One senior political leader said to me that he had begun by thinking that this was simply a discussion about the management of children. I do not doubt that a number of those pressing for this believe that sincerely. But as this person listened to the debate, he came to see that the bulk of support came from those who wanted to

ON BEING HUMAN

CAN we improve humanity? Our yearning for perfection is proper. Our commitment to education, to treating human beings properly, to the imprisoned, the dying and the young — to mention three vulnerable groups — has been fruitful. But it can be lost. When we deny original sin... when we commit to the perfectibility of human nature in this age we begin to believe in ourselves. We open ourselves to ideology of the secularist... In fact we create, not golden Jerusalem, but glittering Babel, the city of pretension and confusion and injustice. And under the impact of the false doctrine of human goodness, the imprisoned, the dying and the young have most to lose.

see SRE abolished all together, that is, from secularists.

We must not be naïve. This is indeed another round in the cultural struggle between the gospel and secularist thought and it involves very different views of human nature and of human freedom. As Anglicans in this Diocese we have always had a strong commitment to State education. This has been sustained to no small extent by the SRE provision in our state schools. I have to say, therefore, that I was surprised that the NSW Government allowed itself to be drawn into so controversial an area. It has united Jewish, Muslim, Roman Catholic, Buddhist and Protestant educators in opposition. Once more it will be an area where many people will be studying the policies of the political parties as the State election draws near, and I hope that Anglicans throughout NSW will let their views be known to their local members.

OUR DIFFICULTIES

We have been called by God to the daunting and yet exciting task of out-living, out-loving and out-thinking our contemporaries so that we can point them to the Lord Jesus Christ. You can see that much of this thinking needs to be done in the area of our doctrine of man, and that we see that human life in this world is far from perfect. I have mentioned that we need to approach pain and adversity as Christians. As you know we ourselves have not been exempt from such adversity in the area of our financial resources.

At Synod last year we were landed with the immediate task of confronting the Global Financial Crisis as it impacted the Diocese. We did not merely slash and burn; we actually began some new work and made sure that our vital work was funded. But that was only the beginning. We are now seeing all the more clearly and painfully where things have gone wrong and where we need to renew as well as repair. Our immediate problem is that much of these assets are now significantly underperforming and not producing the cash flow that we want. We have 'lazy assets'. We need them to get out of bed and start performing for us.

The second major problem relates to governance. Our losses have uncovered problems with the way in which we conduct our affairs and do our business. In part this is ethos. In part it is to do with structure.

In terms of ethos, we are profoundly conscious of our need to preserve the gospel and to do so in part at least through the wise governance of our boards, councils and institutions. Our volunteer status also means we are sometimes too trusting and not sufficiently acute in seeking accountability.

In terms of structure, we also have inherent strengths and weaknesses. We are certainly not like a great company; we are not a single organism. We do not have a chief executive officer. The Archbishop is certainly not such a person: we usually and rightly elect a person whose ministry is the preaching of the gospel and the care of the churches, not high finance and

administration of assets, and we therefore distribute the powers and responsibilities inherent in what you may call the temporal side of our work between groups of people, voluntary and paid. What the present problems have revealed is that at some key points we have allowed unconsidered and unhelpful relationships and habits to endure. Change is required.

But I counsel against recrimination. Last year we were given and we received an apology. Like you, looking back I can now see many of the things I should have done, things I should not have done and even clear moments when I should have spoken up or insisted on different behaviour. As I look now, I can see structures and committees where I have been in the chair and where reform would have made a lot of sense and may have saved some of our money.

At one level, I guess, you could say that the Synod itself is responsible. By all means blame me; but if you are going to spread the blame beyond me, ask yourself whether you would have done better; ask yourself whether you are prepared to yield up the good elements of what we do, such as our ethos or synodical government, in favour of more power in fewer hands and fewer of those frustrating checks and balances which long wisdom has shown to be important in a sinful world.

OUR FUTURE

Matthew Henry wrote about King David that, 'When he was at his wits' end, he was not at his faith's end'. The financial issues are grave but I am not despondent and I hope that you share my confidence in God and the word of God and the Spirit of God. We are here in the great arena of the Diocese of Sydney to make Christ known and to help make men and women human. The tragedy which is optimistic secularism continues to deprive men and women of their proper humanity. God has not left us without resources to make him known, although our resources now will come to us in different ways.

Through Connecto9 the Lord has blessed our renewed commitment to the community as a way of sharing the good news of Jesus Christ with all. Counting church-going Sydney Anglicans is very difficult. But on the figures we have, and using considerable caution, we grew numerically in 2009 perhaps by even as much as 5 per cent. To grow at all is significant; to grow by anything like that percentage is sensational. But grow we did in the very year when we, all together, prayed, shared the word of God and went out into the community.

But the important numerical growth may never show up in the counts we make on Sundays. Matthew Pickering, the rector of Nowra received a phone call to attend the bedside of a dying man. He found a man who had been handed a copy of *The Essential Jesus* by a visitor from the parish of Huskisson where he lived; he found a man who had read the Gospel of Luke in this version; he found a man who wanted to know how to become a

Christian. He left a man who had found the Saviour and whose whole hopes had been transformed as a result, to the astonishment of his wife. I believe there must be many such stories all over our Diocese.

How are we continuing the spirit which motivated Connect? Here are four ways out of many:

First we have decentralised our mission through the development of Mission Areas. I am pleased that so many rectors have taken the lead in this new initiative. The key aim is to carry on the principles of Connect into the future. You will remember that these principles are all intended to make us turn outward, looking into our community with a heart for our parish and our region.

Second, we have set Al Stewart loose on the growth of new churches. He has been recruiting church planters, assessing potential local missionaries, talking to students, encouraging new work, inspiring effort. We can see something of the shape

of his ministry in the new ordinance which comes before us at Synod this year.

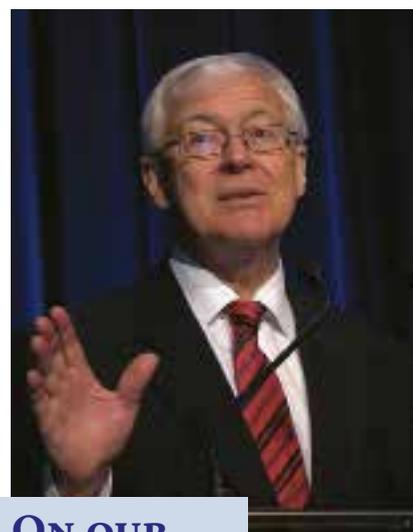
At the same time, and in fellowship with Al, Bruce Hall has given himself energetically to the inspiration and direction of cross-cultural ministry. There is much else to report but if I can summarise, it would be to say that Bruce senses a new mood in our midst of interest in cross-cultural ministry, less fear of people who are different, a greater willingness to take responsibility for the real

parish which surrounds our local churches.

Third, we have virtually completed one of the largest changes to our way of doing ministry in the history of the Diocese. We have created permanent deacons and by so doing allowed for far greater flexibility of training and deployment than ever before. At the same time, we have given special attention to the ministry of the presbyter/rector. The old days of an automatic move from deacon to priest and therefore to rector are over. A church in mission in contemporary Australia cannot afford such a mindless approach.

Fourth, with much foresight Synod last year provided for the Year 13 program to be expanded. Our younger people need the training and fellowship which will help equip them for a lifetime of living for Christ. This year there are 41 enrolled: surely our aim should be for all of our school-leavers to do it. From it will also come those whose life work for 50 years ahead will be in the ministry of God's word.

This is an edited extract of Archbishop Jensen's presidential address to the 2010 Synod. The full version can be seen online in video, audio or text at <http://www.sydneyanglicans.net/mediareleases/> SC



ON OUR CHURCHES

ONE of the glories of our Diocese is the number of mature and well-trained lay men and women who are true partners in the gospel. Their servant hearts, their fervent prayers... their witness for Christ in the workplace, their support of ministry with clarity and theological acumen, their generosity of time and money, their willingness to help in the work of the Diocese... all this and so much more make it so often a joy to minister in our churches and constitute one of God's richest blessings to us.

Synod vox pops

RUSSELL POWELL interviewed a cross-section of Synod representatives on the highlights — and lowlights — of this year's discussions.



Tim Booker — curate-in-charge, Guildford with Villawood: The issues on the table this year have been big ones. Discussion is always good, it's always godly, always wise, always well led and I thoroughly enjoy it, get a lot out of it. It's good contributing to the bigger picture of diocesan life and it's good to be here. Being out in the 'burbs you can read up on the stuff but you need to be chatting and hearing from the key players as to all the details — that's the beautiful thing about Synod.

Sylvia Tong — Standing Committee representative: I think there has been a lot of healthy debate on lots of different issues and I think that the Synod has been pretty strong on its opinions.

Garry Allen — St George North: Highlights were the new evangelism bill; lowlights, the time away from family probably.

David Clarke — rector, St Mary's: It's been fantastic to hear about Connect09 and what's been happening; lives changed, that's really what we want to see with the Connect09 process, that it continues now with mission areas and so it's been good to see that discussion explained a bit further as well.

SC: There are a few Synods that you've seen...

Warick Olson — Baulkham Hills North: 50 years.

SC: 50 years of Synod, that's amazing.

WO: Can't say I've been to them all but I've been on it for 50 years!

SC: And this is your last one; impressions this year?

WO: I think that the number of questions and the number of motions has been as many as I can remember in any Synod, which I don't mind because it shows people are pushing at the edges a bit.

Hayley Boag — UniChurch @ UNSW: This is my second year; I've really enjoyed it this year, now that I understand how things work.

Chris Braga — rector, Summer Hill: The highlight for me is my mate's church became a proper parish — he was provisional parish and now he's become a parish. It wasn't mentioned that he was a student minister there, then the assistant minister, then the curate-in-charge and then the rector, all in the same place. So it was great to hear about Harrington Park becoming a parish.

Robin Kinstead — rector, Manly Vale with Allambie Heights: The highlight for me has been that it's my first Synod, so I was quite surprised actually. I had low expectations [but] I came back of the first night feeling high as a kite — I think partly because Peter [Jensen] had spoken so well and so passionately about the stuff that is going on. We heard about Connect09 from Andrew Nixon. Heard about a lot of stuff that the Lord's doing throughout our city, and felt extremely excited about being a Christian and being a part of things.

SC: And the next day it was into pretty solid legislation and motions...

RK: The next day was the biggest learning curve I've had in a long time — and the third day, sadly to say, I fell asleep and I had to go home early!

DIARY

SATURDAY, November 6 — Saturday, November 13

SAFE MINISTRY TRAINING WEEK

ANGLICAN Youthworks offers Safe Ministry Training three times each year across the Sydney Diocese for anyone needing first-time training or refresher training. For more information on locations, times and requirements visit www.youthworks.net/safeministry or call (02) 8268 3355.

SUNDAY, November 14

LALOR PARK CELEBRATES 50 YEARS

PAST congregation members of St Clement's Anglican Church, Lalor Park are invited to celebrate the anniversary with Simon Manchester or Reg Piper at services at 8:30am, 10:30am and 6:30pm, with a luncheon following the 10:30am service. FOR more information visit users.tpg.com.au/ablackw/stclements50th RSVP to stclements50th@gmail.com or call (02) 9636 3850.

LOCATION | Cnr Freeman St and Burke Rd, Lalor Park

SATURDAY, November 13

SRE TRAINER COURSES

FOR those wishing to become SRE accreditation trainers. FOR more information and to register visit www.youthworks.net/sre or call (02) 8268 3355. Registration closes on November 10.

LOCATION | Bomaderry Anglican Church, Cnr Princes Hwy & West Birriley St, Bomaderry | 9:30am-1pm

SUNDAY, November 21

CMS COMMISSIONING SERVICE

PAUL and Sandra King
LOCATION | EV Church, 331 Terrigal Drive, Erina | 10.30am

SUNDAY, November 21

CMS COMMISSIONING SERVICE

CATHERINE Read
LOCATION | Orange Evangelical Church, Bowen Public School, Park St, Orange | 4pm

FRIDAY, November 26

CMS MEET THE MISSIONARIES

LOCATION | Level 5, 51 Druitt St, Sydney | 10am-12pm

SATURDAY, November 27

CMS COMMISSIONING SERVICE

KIRSTIN Hawkshaw
LOCATION | St John's Anglican Church, 26 Amy St, Campsie | 10.30am

MONDAY, December 6 — Wednesday, December 8

YOUTH MINISTRY CONFERENCE — SOME TO BE SHEPHERDS

FOUR key speakers will help examine how we lead and the culture in which we are leading. Nine practical electives will equip us to serve with wisdom and integrity. For youth ministers, chaplains, SRE teachers and other leaders who want to grow their leadership skills.

FOR more information and to register visit www.youthworks.net/ymc
LOCATION | Port Hacking Conference Centre

MONDAY, January 17 — Friday, January 21

LEADERS IN TRAINING CONFERENCE (LIT) 2011

LIT is a practical training ground, challenging young people (of years 10-12) to give their head, heart, hands, feet and voice for the sake of Jesus. Early bird discount applies until Dec 3.

FOR more information and to register visit www.youthworks.net/lit
LOCATION | Port Hacking Conference Centre

kcc | all one in Christ Jesus | men's katoomba convention



LIVING OUTSIDE THE GARDEN MEN FACING TEMPTATION

SPEAKERS: DAVID COOK, JUSTIN MOTE
18-19 FEBRUARY, 25-26 FEBRUARY & 4-5 MARCH



mkc 11

Next gen goes to Uganda

KCC'S next generation conference will return to Uganda in December to run a conference to train youth leaders.

A team of 15 will travel to Rukungiri in south-west Uganda to run the conference, aimed at supporting local churches by training youth leaders in ministry and increasing their competency in teaching the Bible.

"They are taught a method of understanding the Bible by reading and rereading the passage, understanding

the content, the context and the big idea of the passage," said Raj Gupta, chairman of the next gen conference.

"One of our strengths is our confidence in the word of God. We also have a lot to learn from them, particularly their zeal, enthusiasm and courage in seeing people won for Jesus."

The team will also run a separate conference aimed at increasing the Bible teaching skills of local clergy.



Next Gen Sydney

KCC's next gen conference seeks to equip and train youth, children's and future leaders to be effective ministers.

At the 2011 conference, delegates will be able to choose between taking part in a program for children's ministry leaders, for youth ministry leaders or for upcoming leaders (years 10 and 11 in 2011).

"The children's stream has given me much more confidence in handling and

teaching God's word," said John Khana, of Christ Church St George.

Speakers and presenters at next gen 2011 include Mark O'Donoghue (St Helen's Bishopsgate, UK), Kirk Patston, Raj Gupta, Leon Stead, Jodie McNeill, Stephanie Carmichael, Sam Chan, Bruce Linton, Sandy Galea and Al and Kathy Stewart.

Visit www.nextgen.kcc.org.au for more details and to register. The early bird discount closes on November 19.

LiT does 'whatever it takes'

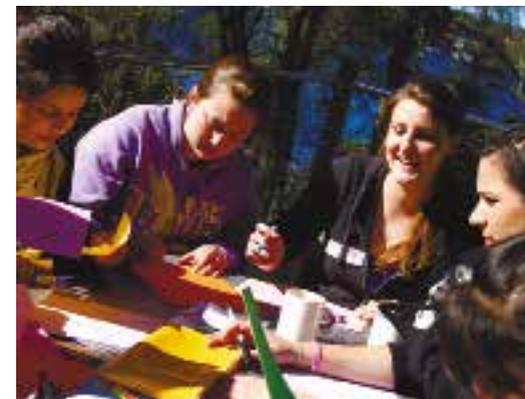
OVER five days from January 17-21, 2011, high school students entering years 10-12 (or equivalent) from schools across NSW will be taught from the book of 2 Timothy and encouraged to do "whatever it takes" to proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ, and endure in him, as part of Youthworks' annual Leaders in Training (LiT) conference.

Conference speakers include Richard Chin, national director of the Australian Fellowship of Evangelical Students (AFES), and Hayden Smith, associate minister at St Barnabas', Broadway.

In addition to the daily Bible talks and worship gatherings, the five-day program includes connect groups, time alone with God, prayer groups, recreational activities, more than 20 different workshop options and a ministry expo.

The 2011 conference will continue to build on the three-stage format successfully introduced in 2010, which caters for those students who have completed the first two stages and involves them in planning and leading parts of the conference program.

"LiT is such a strategic ministry", says 2011 LiT director Paul McPhail,



"because it equips young Christians to serve Jesus with their head, heart, hands, feet and voice now – whether it be at home, church, school or wherever they are.

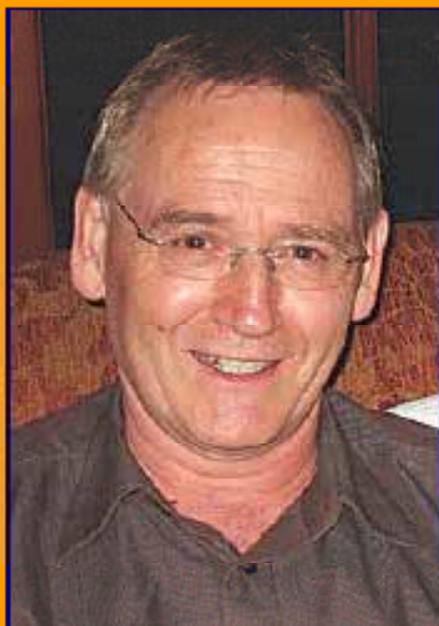
"This means that young people are enjoying the growth and maturity that comes from being part of God's huge plan of bringing the gospel of Jesus Christ to the world".

Leaders in Training Conference 2011 is a practical training ground in servant leadership for keen Christian high school students.

Visit www.youthworks.net/lit for more details. Those who register before December 3 will qualify for an early bird discount!



FORWARD IN FAITH INTERNATIONAL (AUSTRALASIA) INC.
*A ministry of evangelical and catholic Anglicans
 upholding the Faith once for all delivered*



MARTIN DREVIKOVSKY, ESQ.
 General Secretary of General Synod
 (Anglican Church in AUSTRALIA)

ANNUAL CONFERENCE

SAT. 4 DECEMBER 2010,
 9.00am - 4.00pm

ST. JAMES' CHURCH
 KING STREET, TURRAMURRA

(Seven minutes walk
 from Turramurra Railway Station)

CURRENT CHALLENGES IN ANGLICAN MINISTRY

9.30am - Eucharist / 3.15pm - Evensong
 Morning / Afternoon Tea and Lunch

Full Day Cost: \$25 per person,
 \$20 concession
 Call for information on single sessions



BISHOP TREVOR WALTERS
 W. Region, Anglican Network in Canada (ACNA)
 (Vancouver, BRITISH COLUMBIA)

Registration essential - contact the conference secretary on (02) 9876 2482 / fifinsw@aol.com



City icon restored

BISHOP Robert Forsyth (above) rededicated the recently renovated spire of St James', King Street at a 'Ceremony of the Bells' on October 20.

The Sydney church is the oldest in the city, consecrated in 1824.

The renovation of the spire was completed at a cost of \$1.3 million. It is part of a \$3 million conservation plan for essential works to the building.

Work to replace the 100-year-old copper plating on the spire and reinforce its water-damaged structure started two years ago.

The original orb and cross, which sit atop of the spire, were also taken down and conserved for the first time since the 1820s. These items still bear the convict arrow marks that show the copper to be government property.

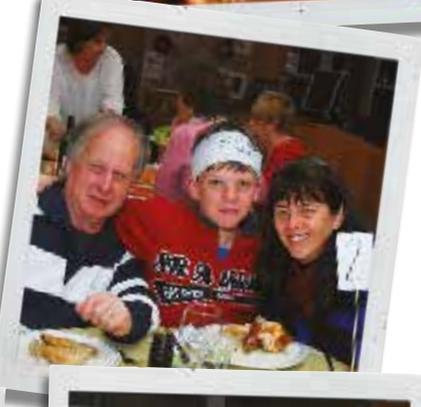
"The completion of the work will ensure that St James' retains its rightful place as an icon in the City of Sydney and in the history of our nation," said Rev Andrew Sempell, the rector of St James'.

Phase 2 of the conservation program will replace the church's slate roof and repair the convict-made brick walls at a cost of \$1.1 million.

"Conservation work of this scale and importance can only happen when the community works together," said Fiona Balfour, chair of the fundraising committee.

Ryde goes 'retro'

GREG Burke, rector of St Anne's, Ryde, formed the band Scissors Paper with a few of his mates to play at a Retro Rock night at his church. Complete with '60s and '70s music, the event was designed to raise awareness of SIM's Hope for AIDS work in Malawi.



Forty years as a deaconess



Wendy Colquhoun congratulates Dss Margaret Rodgers.

AT its 2010 annual general meeting, members, board and staff of the Anglican Deaconess Institution (Sydney) Limited gathered together for a special presentation to honour the life and ministry of Deaconess Margaret Rodgers.

After studying at Deaconess House, Margaret Rodgers was ordained as a deaconess by Archbishop Marcus Loane in October 1970.

Dss Rodgers' ministry has been wide-ranging. Commencing as a divinity teacher at Abbotsleigh School in 1967 she then became a tutor at Deaconess House from 1969-1973, warden of the Church of England Women's Hall 1974-75, principal of Deaconess House from 1976-1985, research officer for General Synod 1985-1993, CEO of the Anglican Media Council 1994-2003 and the Archbishop's media officer from 2004 until 2007, when she retired.

Dss Rodgers has been a director of ADISL since 2003, a member of General Synod since 1985, has a regular program on 2CH, serves on the World Council of Churches and numerous diocesan committees including Standing Committee, the Social Issues Executive and the Work Outside the Diocese Committee.

kcc | all one in Christ Jesus | katoomba easter convention

katoomba easter convention: especially for families with a children's and youth program for all ages

Friday 22 - Monday 25 April 2011
Don Carson, Dale Ralph Davis, Simon Flinders

www.kec.kcc.org.au

kec 11

Belrose to Bitung

A team of eight from St Stephen's, Belrose recently visited Bitung, Indonesia on a week-long mission.

The team worked with a local Christian organisation, Bridge of Hope, that seeks to equip local families by lending them money to start small businesses.



Students encouraged to train

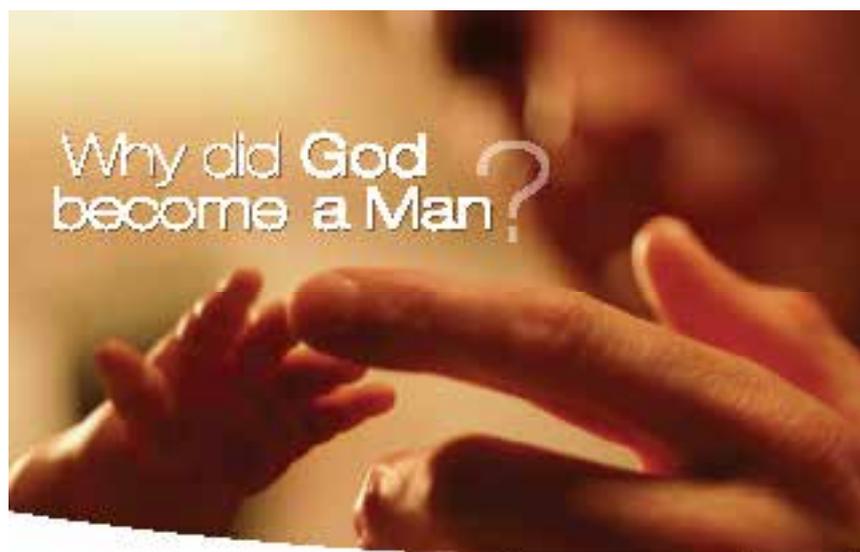
IN a celebration of the Commonwealth Games, Penrith Anglican College recently held a Sports Chapel service to recognise students' sporting achievements.

Students heard from Susannah Arthur, an Australian hockey representative and Penrith Panthers player David Simmons about the impact

their faith has on their sporting lives.

Students were challenged not to train for a short-term prize but to train for the eternal prize.

"As Christians we are given limitless grace and we give our lives in training for a prize which will last, instead of something short term," said college chaplain George Statheos.



'SING. CHOIRS OF ANGELS!'
The Cathedral Christmas Concert

St Andrew's Cathedral Choir
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Harp & soloists

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7.30pm

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www.sydneycathedral.com

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4pm
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6pm, 8pm, 11pm
Christmas Celebration

Christmas Day
8am
Holy Communion
10am
Archbishop Preaching

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Sydney (Above Town Hall Stop)
Phone 9265 1661
cathedral@sydney.anglican.com.au
www.SydneyCathedral.com



Personal Assistant

OMF International is looking to fill the position of Personal Assistant to the Director, of our National Office located in Epping. Experience in office computing and administration is essential. An interest and proven commitment to Christian cross-cultural mission would be an asset.

The main role is to assist the ministry of the National Director, including the administrative organisation of the annual National Conference. The role includes assisting the Candidate Coordinators with communications and with internet based meetings.

This position offers a variety of smaller tasks, including responsibility for book sales and purchases and occasionally releasing the recipient.

The appointee will make a significant contribution to the extension of God's kingdom in Asia.

For more information please contact:

Calin Johnston
OMF International
02 9856 4377
ca.johnst@omf.net



Call for Expressions of Interest in BCA's Intentional Missioner Programme

BCA is seeking to develop the Intentional Missioners programme as part of its mission to the Australian Church. In partnership with Diocesan Bishops, the programme seeks to employ clergy at or near retiring age in strategic mission and ministry to challenged Bush and Rural Parishes.

The programme aims to make available to financially challenged parishes experienced and energised clergy with a mission focus as part of the overall Diocesan Strategic Plan.

It also aims to enable clergy to be gainfully employed at a reduced work load and to allow their superannuation to continue to grow. Employment would be for two year periods and remuneration would include at least accommodation, utilities and part stipend.



For more details contact The Venerable Dr Royce Thompson at: royce@bushchurchaid.com.au or 0416 205 600

For enquiries contact The Rev'd Canon Brian Roberts at: brian@bushchurchaid.com.au



church army australia

National Director

Reach Beyond

For 78 years Church Army Australia has been reaching Australia's poor, marginalised and isolated with the good news of Jesus Christ. Successfully launching new mission work in some of Australia's toughest places, Church Army has pioneered innovative approaches to evangelism and church planting, providing training through its School of Local Mission and Global Gap Year programs. The national office in the Blue Mountains is also home to "Fahler" Restoration, a residential rehabilitation program.

As National Director, you will lead and manage the organisation at an exciting time of renewal. With 7 direct senior reports, you'll be responsible for sustaining ongoing growth by broadening the revenue base, continually improving organisational efficiency, and developing a high performance team. Critical to your success will be your ability to engage a broad spectrum of people to raise the profile of Church Army among its key constituents and beyond.

The successful applicant will be an active follower of Jesus Christ who is able to relate closely with the breadth of the Anglican Church. We anticipate significant executive experience and ability to empower a dispersed and diverse 'front line' team.

We welcome your enquiries to:
Judy Wong-See,
Principal of Credence International
02) 8884 8044
judy.w@credenceintl.com
www.credenceintl.com

A salary package that includes a car will be negotiated.

MAINTENANCE TRADEPERSON

- Taren Point location
- Full time position

With a vision to create "Communities of Christian Care", Anglican Retirement Villages is recognised for providing quality care for over 4000 residents across a growing number of Sydney sites.

We are seeking a Maintenance Tradesperson for our Taren Point site to ensure that all aspects of reactive and preventative maintenance work are undertaken as required.

Responsibilities include:

- Ensuring that work is carried out in a courteous & timely manner
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It is essential you have:

- Experience in property maintenance
- A current NSW drivers license
- A desire to combine your Christian faith and gifts with your career

Trade qualifications in building, maintenance or grounds work are desirable.

If you are passionate about working cooperatively with a committed team, caring deeply about our residents and their needs, all within a Christian environment, we would love to hear from you. An attractive salary package will be offered to the successful candidate.

For more information on working at ARV please visit www.arv.org.au/jobs. To apply for this role go to www.arv.org.au/jobs and view job number 20342.

Enquiries: David Young (02) 9421 6425

Please apply ASAP.



ANGLICAN RETIREMENT VILLAGES
Diocese of Sydney

"The embracing of Christian values is an expectation of all staff"



"ANGLICARE Sydney really is here for times like these. I give thanks to God for their faithful ministry in service of the weak, the elderly, and the excluded and their unwavering commitment to the Gospel of Jesus Christ"

Dr Peter F. Jensen Archbishop of Sydney

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

ANGLICARE's CEO is retiring in 2011 and a new CEO is being recruited to lead the organisation.

ANGLICARE www.anglicare.org.au based at Parramatta, is a large and effective provider of care in the Anglican Diocese of Sydney, continuing the vital role of being a facilitator of care in partnership with local churches. Every year, ANGLICARE services reach out to many thousands of people to provide support, assistance, advice and advocacy. This includes caring for children and young people, families, those with disabilities, their carers, the elderly through care and retirement living, those on the margins and, providing counseling, chaplaincy in hospitals and prisons, and disaster recovery services.

The CEO is responsible to the ANGLICARE Council and is required to demonstrate outstanding Christian leadership to achieve the vision, mission and values of ANGLICARE Sydney.

Contact Ken Patteson - CEO Chifley Global for a confidential discussion and a copy of the Essential Criteria, Position Description, EP's and information pack.

E-mail your application to:
ken@chifleyglobal.com.au
Chifley Global Pty Limited
Leading the Way in Business Capital Management
www.chifleyglobal.com.au; 02 9580 2358

For Rent

EPPING: Room available for male in Epping from 27 November. Please contact Greg on 9876 4109 or 0401 946 922

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BEAUTIFUL HOLIDAY HOUSE: Divided into 2 flats at Gerroa (near Kiama). Continuous ocean & beach views. 500m to beach. 02 4233 1331; if unanswered 0407 912 169

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SYDNEY: 3km beach directly across the road, TWO seaside houses, both sleep 8. Relaxing & comfortable, ideal for friends & family. Ph 0439 415 245, email knowlesj@bigpond.net.au, visit www.cathobaytorodes.com

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COWRA: Spring/summer Getaway. Self-cont hol units, 1-2&3br. Visit Japanese Gardens, Wineries, Wynangala Dam, nearby historic towns. Mention ad for discount. Ph 0427 423 194 or email gfmorton@bigpond.com

CURRARONG & CULBURRA BEACH HOLIDAY ACCOMM: Both houses fully self-cont with 3 br. Sleeps 8, less than 2 hours south of Sydney.

Short stroll to beaches. Ph 02 9548 0567, send email to info@putyourfeetup.com.au or visit www.putyourfeetup.com.au

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KIAMA HOLIDAYS: Beautiful new 2 bdrm unit, secure parking, faces main surf beach & park, 5-10min easy walk to harbour, blowhole & shops. 02 4233 1331 or 0407 912 169

NOOSA: Luxury 3 br unit facing river, 17m pool, dbl sea kayak, R/C A/C, gnd flr, walk to amen. Fr \$500 pw. Ph 02 6331 9804 after 8pm

NOOSA: Stylish 2 bdrm unit by river, R/C A/C, htd pool/spa, tennis crt, bbq, lcd tv, mod cons, linen. Ph for brochure 07 3289 7178

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furnished, suits families & groups. 02 9627 1850
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St James
Croydon

YOUTH WORKER

St James Croydon invites expressions of interest for the position of Youth Worker to commence in term 4, 2010/January 2011. The successful Applicant will need to succeed in all aspects of a youth ministry, with an emphasis on High School students, reaching out to young people in the Croydon area and providing discipleship for Christians.

The successful Applicant will need to provide leadership and encouragement to a mature team of Youth Leaders. Responsibilities include specifically the Youth Club on Friday night, ministry to Teenagers, Sunday morning and schooling to young people at the 7.00pm service. The successful applicant will be part of a team ministry at St James.

Interested applicants are asked to contact Rev. Barry Dooling at the church office on 5758 6742 or email stjamescroydon@bigpond.com

This is a full-time position. Part-time Applicants will be considered.

SMBC
St Marys Anglican Church

ADMINISTRATION ASSISTANT

Full-Time, Commencing January 2011.

This position (ideal for a well organized, flexible 'people person') provides the central point of contact for all enquiries. As an important member of the administration team, your duties will also include general administration, database management, word processing, email handling and web updating.

The successful applicant will be an active church member, have a strong customer service focus, an ability to manage multiple tasks simultaneously, computer literacy and prior experience in a team environment. For copies and information contact Greg Skelton, SMBC General Manager on (02) 8747 4788. Alternatively, email CV to greg@smbc.com.au. (Applicants close after position filled.)

Chaplaincy
Positions Vacant
at Castle Hill

Read what our chaplains say:

Rev. Andrew Haron, BD (Hons) Dip Min - Monro, MA (Theol). Previous ministry at Mt Druitt, Ryde, Farmacia & West Ryde. "In many ways this is no different to parish ministry except there is less administrative work and more opportunity to talk to people about God and pray with them."

Ben Boland, NDiv (SMBC)

"The opportunity to share Christ with people is amazing ... people, irrespective of their faith welcome me. ... people are open to discussing both Jesus and the Bible. ... My eye also means that when my wife (4, 2 & 13 weeks) came to a chapel service, I got extra credit!"

Louise O'Shea, BTh (SMBC) Previous ministry at Wahroonga and Dean of Women at SMBC.

"What could be more important than providing them with an opportunity to respond to Jesus in faith and trust? ... A lady in her 80s, had recently suffered a stroke ... I read through John's Gospel with her. ... We talked about the gospel and her eyes filled with tears. We prayed together and she is now a person of faith in Jesus."

To read these chaplains stories in more detail and to apply please visit www.rv.org.au and click on #20482.



ANGLICAN
RETIREMENT
VILLAGES
200 YEARS OF HISTORY



Safely to our journey's end

Euthanasia doesn't actually solve the problem it purports to, and ends up killing unwilling and vulnerable people. ANDREW ROBINSON investigates.

EUTHANASIA is back on the Australian political agenda. Greens leader Bob Brown reignited the debate last month when he reintroduced a private member's bill to Federal Parliament attempting repeal the 1997 law preventing Australian territories legislating on euthanasia.

Buoyed by a September Auspoll indicating 78 per cent support overall — though that dwindles to 18 per cent among the 65-74 age group — NSW Greens MP Cate Faehrmann has reintroduced a previously rejected 2002 bill legalising euthanasia to the NSW Parliament. Will Australia join the small group of jurisdictions — the Netherlands, Belgium and Oregon in the USA — that have legalised euthanasia?

Dr Megan Best, bioethicist and palliative care physician, suggests that one reason for the apparently high level of public support for euthanasia is deep confusion about what it actually is.

"Euthanasia is the situation where a doctor intentionally kills a person by the administration of drugs, at that person's voluntary and competent request," she says. "It isn't turning off a life-support machine; it isn't deciding whether or not to give more treatment. All mentally competent patients are able to refuse any treatment they want."

Mainstream euthanasia advocates argue that euthanasia is the only 'humane' response to the request of a terminally ill person suffering unbearable pain. This is reflected in

questions in polls about the issue: patients' situations are described as 'hopeless', 'unrelievable', with 'no chance of recovery'.

But Dr Best says this "perpetuates the myth" that unbearable suffering is inevitable at the end of life.

"It is very rare that intolerable suffering follows when palliative care is used," she says.

Physical pain, she says, is not the reason most people select euthanasia.

"It's fear of the dying process: the fear of being alone, fear of being a burden. It's anticipatory fears of things that haven't even happened yet."

One recent Sydney study, she says, found that the number of palliative care patients who initially asked for euthanasia dropped from 2.8 per cent when they started treatment to less than 1 per cent.

Euthanasia is cast by some supporters as an issue of the individual's right to choose. Nigel Gray, former head of the Cancer Council in Victoria, wrote in *The Australian* that he simply wanted "the right to choose the time and place of my death". He did not want to "transfer the responsibility to someone else".

Dr Melanie Lovell, a palliative care specialist at HammondCare's Greenwich Hospital, says that it cannot be that simple.

"Rights go with responsibilities," she says. "The responsibility lies with someone else and that's not a responsibility someone should have to bear. We know that doctors who end life feel deeply disturbed and

saddened — I haven't seen guilty written anywhere — but there's something wrong about ending someone else's life."

Dr Stephen Judd, HammondCare's chief executive, points out that arguments about choice are not as simple as they seem.

He was confronted some years ago by a man he knew professionally whose terminally ill mother had been a lifelong member of the Voluntary Euthanasia Society. She had stated her wishes but was no longer able to talk. And now there was a serious problem.

"He was highly disturbed because he could tell she'd changed her mind," he says. "What's the safeguard for that?"

Ultimately, Dr Lovell says, the strongest argument against introducing euthanasia is the threat to vulnerable people.

"By definition, someone with a terminal illness is vulnerable," she says. "You haven't got the normal set of resources you have when you're not sick."

"I'm happy for choice, but I want everyone to have choices," Dr Judd says. "If there is one involuntary termination of life, that's a cost too great."

Dr Best says another key objection to euthanasia is the very real risk of its abuse.

"In the places where it's legal, a lot of people who don't request or are unable to request euthanasia are killed against their will," she says. "In the Netherlands, government studies have shown that, even under the euthanasia guidelines, over 1000 are killed yearly without their consent."

"It is very rare that intolerable suffering follows when palliative care is used."

Euthanasia — Holland's tragic legacy

In the Netherlands, euthanasia has been practised for nearly 30 years giving us the best case study. It was fully legalised in 2002 after 20 years of widespread practice under certain guidelines. The following points can be made about the actual practice of euthanasia in Holland.

1. Doctors end up killing people who don't consent to termination of their lives
Although proponents of euthanasia say legal

guidelines prevent this result, repeated research over the past 20 years has shown this is not true. The Dutch Government's Rummelink Report in 1991 found that about one-third of euthanasia deaths occurred without patient knowledge or consent (approximately 1000 a year). Government reviews showed similar results in 1995 and again more recently — even though more stringent guidelines are now in place.

2. Once in place euthanasia is extended beyond terminally ill adults

By the time the 2002 Dutch law had passed, courts had already legitimised the death of patients who were not terminally ill. The Dutch are currently debating the need to allow the elderly to be killed when they are 'tired of life'. And early in 2005 a Dutch hospital* published its guidelines on how to kill disabled newborns.

3. It erodes political will to fund care

In Holland, members of the euthanasia society now go into schools to educate children on the benefits of euthanasia. Such social change erodes political will to value every human life, to seek cures for disease and to fund palliative and aged care.

*Verhagen P & Sauer, PJ. (2005). *The Groningen Protocol — Euthanasia in Severely Ill Newborns*. NEJM, 352(10), 959-962.

At the extreme end, in his book *Killing Me Softly*, controversial euthanasia campaigner Dr Philip Nitschke criticises the 'fiscal irresponsibility' of governments who refuse to countenance euthanasia. He cites the potential health care 'savings' if voluntary euthanasia took six months off the lives of seriously ill elderly people.

Some complain that this issue presents yet another case of Christians imposing their (unwanted) values on others. But while an anti-euthanasia stance is certainly consistent with Christian ethics, the biblical conviction that killing innocent people is also what lawyer and ethicist Margaret Somerville calls 'the most fundamental norm of our society'.

As Andrew Cameron, chairman of the Diocese's Social Issues Executive, says, "It's a no-brainer".

But there's one other significant argument against euthanasia: it doesn't work. It doesn't solve the problem that terminally ill — or depressed or lonely — people are facing.

Dr Lovell says she has had very few requests from patients for euthanasia — maybe two or three in the past couple of years — but, as care progresses, people are deeply thankful that she refuses.

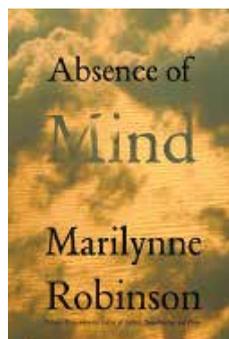
"The period at the end of life is a period of growth like no other," she says.

"There is huge personal, spiritual and psychological growth that happens at that time, and people are so grateful that you didn't agree to their request. They're saying they're depressed, afraid and struggling, and it's our job to help. Saying, 'Yes, I'll end your life' doesn't answer the real need that the person's expressing.

"I say, 'I can't do that for you, but I will walk this journey with you to the end'." **SC**

Thank God for the new atheists

ROB FORSYTH



I AM thanking God for the new atheists mainly because we increasingly see excellent responses to them that otherwise might not have been written.

I have been deeply impressed by Marilynne Robinson's *Absence of Mind* (Yale University Press 2010). Robinson is best known as the author of *Gilead*, the 2005 Pulitzer Prize-winning novel about a Christian minister. Here she turns to issues of science and religion.

Absence of Mind is a gentle, subtle and rapier-like riposte to all those philosophers, scientists and psychologists who present what is thought to be a new and radical understanding of the human mind based entirely upon science, but which in reality diminishes the human experience of the self once thought to be the very centre of who we are. For example, because every human quality has to be explained as in our genetic self-interest, we can never be said to be truly altruistic. We are only ever moved by hidden self-interest that masquerades as something else. Our true self is hidden from us.

Does this matter? Robinson thinks so: "Whoever controls the definition of mind controls the definition of humankind itself, and culture, and history." (p. 32)

Robinson works not in generalities but by picking particular elements of different writers, showing a narrowness and condescension about the past and a lack of genuine scientific rigour, a phenomenon which she characterises as 'parascience'. She writes:

"One of the characterising traits of this large and burgeoning literature is its confidence that science has given us knowledge sufficient to allow us to answer certain essential questions about the nature of reality, if only by dismissing them." (p. 33)

This brief review cannot do justice to this short but profound book. It requires patience and care from the reader, but is well worth the effort (I had to read it at least twice).

The fundamental issue at stake is caught in this summary statement from towards the end of the second chapter:

"Why is the human brain the most complex object known to exist in the universe? Because the elaborations of the mammalian brain overshot the mark? Or because it is intrinsic to our role in the universe as thinkers and perceivers, participants in a singular capacity for wonder as well as for comprehension. The anomalies that plague accident as an explanatory model — the human mind, most notably — are no problem at all if it is assumed that accident does not explain us, that we are meant to be human, that is, to be aware and capable in the ways the mind — and how else to describe the mind? — makes us aware and capable." (p. 72)

The book doesn't prove in any straightforward way that God exists. However, by refusing to allow the mystery of what it is to be human to be simply explained away, *Absence of Mind* shows the inadequacy and shallowness of 'parascientific' New Atheism. **SC**

[SOME SERMONS] ARE LIKE A

DROPPED LEMON

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HIT NOTHING VERY HARD"

- HADDON ROBINSON

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