

## Australian Gospel Community



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**MOORE**  
COLLEGE



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# Australian Gospel Community

**Mark Thompson** / Principal

HAVE YOU CONSIDERED HOW THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST UNITES PEOPLE FROM A WIDE VARIETY OF BACKGROUNDS AND ACROSS VAST GEOGRAPHICAL DISTANCES? RIGHT ACROSS THIS NATION, MEN AND WOMEN WHO LOVE CHRIST AND HIS WORD HAVE LINKED THEMSELVES IN ONE WAY OR OTHER WITH MOORE COLLEGE.

**T**hey have been brought to the foot of Christ's cross and they want to know the gospel better, to preach and teach it to others, and to serve lovingly and effectively in a variety of contexts. That is a great encouragement to us. We at the College want to see ministry right across Australia (and indeed around the world) that speaks the truth about Christ crucified and risen, and the response this astonishing mercy demands (Luke 24:45-47). We want to play our part in faithfully preparing men and women to do just that. That is why we exist.

The College itself is located in the inner city of Sydney. It enjoys the tremendous support of the Diocese of Sydney, a network of churches committed to reaching the wider community with the gospel of Jesus Christ. Yet its students come from all over, from suburbs of Sydney very different from the one in which the College sits, from regional New South Wales, from interstate, and from many different countries around the world. They come from a variety of Christian denominations, with an increasing number of independent students. We have never wanted to be locked away in a small bubble in Sydney, but to reach out as far as we can. The message with which we have been entrusted is for everyone.

In this issue of *Moore Matters* we are concentrating on that wide reach to support and resource ministry right across Australia. Christian ministry has its challenges in any context, but there is a particularly difficult element to ministry in the more remote areas of the country which do not always have the resources that are so readily available in Sydney. Fewer people and greater distances, cycles of drought and flood resulting



in a fragile financial viability, and the changing patterns of life outside the major cities all bring challenges that are not experienced in city ministry.

Moore graduates are serving in every state in Australia. We are delighted that they have opportunities in churches, schools and universities, and other Christian organisations to speak of Jesus and live out



among his people and the wider community what it means to be one of his disciples. Nine theological and Bible colleges in five cities have Moore College graduates on their faculty, and five of those have Moore graduates as their principal! We have a longstanding interest in and commitment to supporting and resourcing ministry in as many places as we can across Australia.

We obviously have a special connection with the Anglican churches across the country. At last count, fifteen of the bishops in dioceses around the country are graduates of Moore. Eight of those lead their dioceses. The ministry of Moore graduates is welcomed across the country and increasingly so. We are very keen to resource every one of them in whatever way we can. We certainly don't think that our ministry to our students ends the moment they graduate!

This breadth of interest and opportunity is not always known or appreciated. We are and will always be the theological college of the Diocese of Sydney, but our vision is much larger. For many years now our correspondence course, the Preliminary Theological Certificate (PTC), has been used by many in remote areas and other parts of the world. More recently part-time study for the one-year program and online study of both the PTC and the new Diploma of Biblical Theology (DBT) have opened opportunities for those in far-flung places. We are hoping that these will really be of help to many.

Sydney is an extraordinary place with very great need, but it is the base rather than the limit of our interest and ministry as a College. Jesus' great commission to his disciples did not have a limit: "to all nations" and "to the end of the age" (Matthew 28:18–20). Every human life is precious to our God and so everyone needs the opportunity to hear about Jesus and be built up in him. The opportunities for ministry are both rich and plentiful right throughout Australia. The words of the apostle Paul are a great challenge to us as we consider gospel need in our vast country:

*How then will they call on him whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to*



*hear without someone preaching? And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach good news!" (Romans 10:14–15)*

Will you pray that the Lord will raise up labourers for his far-flung harvest? We need men and women who have grown up in rural Australia and in other cities, who know and understand what is going on in those places, to come to Moore. And we pray that such men and women will return after study at Moore to exercise a wonderfully effective ministry in bringing the word of God to bear in people's lives. We need men and women who are passionate about the gospel and passionate about people, who will take the time to walk alongside people and share Jesus with them. But we also need men and women who have grown up in Sydney and share a real burden for the advance of the gospel in other places—in the country towns and villages, and in the very different cities with very different backgrounds in other parts of Australia. And then, of course, there is the world.

The great saints of the past dreamed big and prayed big. Will you dare to do just that and pray that the whole of Australia might be won for Christ?

***Sydney is an extraordinary place with very great need, but it is the base rather than the limit of our interest and ministry as a College.***

Dr Mark D Thompson,  
Principal





# Small fish in a big pond

*The work of the Anglican Diocese of Armidale*

**Rod Chiswell** / Bishop of Armidale

RECENTLY A YOUNG MAN STUDYING AT MOORE CALLED ME OUT OF THE BLUE. HE WAS SEEKING TO DO A PAPER ON MY FATHER BISHOP PETER CHISWELL AND HIS IMPACT ON OUR DIOCESE, THE ANGLICAN DIOCESE OF ARMIDALE.

**T**he young man's name was Andrew Marrett, and early in our conversation I asked him if he were related to the Reverend Charles Marrett. He told me he was his grandson. I found it heart-warming, as Charles was one of my pin-up clergymen in the Armidale Diocese. He joined the team along with a handful of evangelicals late in Bishop Moyes' time. It was a time of change leading up to the election of Bishop Clive Kerle, the first in a line of thoroughly evangelical leaders who moved the diocese from being middle high church to lower church evangelical. Charles, to me, was the model of a hardworking country clergyman. A godly man and a fine Bible teacher who shepherded congregations in a number of mainly small towns in the Armidale Diocese over decades of ministry. Seeing his grandson Andrew now taking on the challenge of full-time ordained gospel ministry reminded me of my own journey, and that of many others who have gone into ministry from the Armidale Diocese. All of us share a passion for proclaiming the crucified and risen Lord Jesus and teaching God's word faithfully.

The Armidale Diocesan Mission statement proclaims that we are on about "Introducing *all* people to Jesus and helping them home to heaven". Such a statement of course is nothing new, indeed it could have been the mission statement of the apostle Paul. But this mission statement reinforces an ongoing solid commitment to proclaiming the gospel boldly and preaching God's word passionately. Foundational to this work of making and growing disciples of Christ is our belief that the Bible is the inspired word of God. Since I began my time as Bishop in late February 2021, I have been delivering a simple but important stump speech about what makes us who we are as God's people in our diocese. My text has been 2 Timothy 3:16-17

*All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.*



Photos: Moore College Mission in Armidale





From passages like this one, we believe that the Holy Scriptures are God-breathed, that is, every word is inspired by God. We believe that when we hear the Bible read, we hear God Himself speak. This seemingly unremarkable message is vital at this point in time, as many churches in Australia have lost sight of the importance of upholding the authority of the Scriptures. The result is that they have begun to drift with the tide of our culture and embrace the wisdom of our time, particularly with regard to matters concerning human sexuality. Thankfully, a high view of the authority of Scripture has been a hallmark of churches in the Armidale Diocese for many decades now. The history of Armidale moving from being middle high church to a lower evangelical church is now well documented. The effect of having strongly evangelical bishops for over 60 years is that they consistently recruit from colleges like Moore, who train leaders to proclaim the gospel boldly and teach the inspired word of God faithfully. The result over time is unity in gospel ministry right across the diocese.

Over the years the Armidale Diocese has become a beacon of hope for evangelicals in other Anglican dioceses around Australia. I was speaking to a clergyman recently in a diocese currently divided over the issue of blessing same sex marriage. He spoke of the hope he has for the transformation that happened over time in Armidale: from there being just a handful of evangelical clergy scattered over a largely middle high church diocese, to the current situation where there is an evangelical clergyman in every parish ministering to laity who are fully on board with a lower church evangelical style of ministry, where reading, studying and applying the scriptures prayerfully to daily life is



Photos: Moore College Mission in Armidale and Clergy of the Armidale Dioceses

central to church life. Of course, Armidale is not the only example of it nowadays, with Tasmania, North-Western Australia, Northern Territory, Canberra/Goulburn, Bendigo, Bathurst and most recently Rockhampton all with evangelical bishops now in place.

Going forward here in Armidale, we plan to continue to faithfully uphold the authority of Scripture and to speak the truth in love to a nation that is largely lost and turning its back on God's word and way. We want to support and encourage other evangelicals in more difficult circumstances than our own, in whatever way we can, to do the same.

Another way in which I am hoping that we will be able to encourage evangelical churches around Australia is in the area of reaching out to Aboriginal people with the life-transforming good news of Jesus. The front yard gathering model that I learnt some 25 years ago from our Indigenous brothers and sisters out west in Mungindi is one that we have sought to establish and develop over the past 10 years in Tamworth. The Coledale Frontyard Church, which began as a Bible Study group of five meeting in an Aboriginal man's home, has now grown to become a weekly Wednesday outdoor gathering of about 100 people, 80% of whom are Aboriginal.\* Our goal is to plant similar gatherings in at least three other centres in our diocese. We are also seeking to identify, support and train indigenous men and women for leadership in gospel ministries that centre on faithfully teaching God's word to make and grow disciples of Christ. For I am convinced that Jesus is the only answer to the many problems facing Aboriginal people in Australia today. My prayer is that, as we persevere in this work on our patch, we can encourage and train others in evangelical churches around Australia to have a go at similar long term, committed Indigenous ministry initiatives.

In the end only God knows what lies in the future for the church in Australia, and only He knows the contribution the Armidale Diocese will make to shaping that future. The reality is that we are a very small fish in a very big pond, but even a small fish, if it is determined to keep swimming in the right direction according to God's word, can play a part in encouraging the rest of God's church. May He strengthen us by His Spirit to do so.





# Learning on mission

## Reflections as a Moore College chaplain

**Ruth Sheath** / Moore College Chaplain

RETURNING TO MOORE COLLEGE HAS BEEN A REAL JOY AND MORE ENCOURAGING THAN I HAD IMAGINED. I ENJOYED AND GREW IN MY TIME AS A STUDENT AND STUDENT WIFE AT MOORE COLLEGE, BUT AS A COLLEGE CHAPLAIN I HAVE GAINED A BROADER INSIGHT INTO THE COLLEGE COMMUNITY.

**I**t has been a privilege to be serving alongside humble, godly and encouraging chaplains, lecturers and many other staff who have a real concern and love for the students. The number of daily informal discussions and gatherings of students and faculty to encourage and pray for kingdom growth amongst one another and for particular people groups is extraordinary.

One of the highlights of my experience as a chaplain is Moore College mission. As a Chaplaincy Group, we arrived in Maitland on, literally, a dark and stormy night—with flooding occurring up and down the coast. Many of the proposed activities were still in question due to the floods and forecast of rain. In the weeks before

Mission, we talked with Maitland Evangelical Church (MEC) and joined them in praying, as they shared heavy grief and concern due to multiple sudden deaths, bereavements, and significant illnesses.

So, on that first Sunday morning, it was a joy to meet the people of MEC in person and be among God's people gathered in that school hall. We arrived hoping to encourage and to serve in whatever ways we could, but we found the servant attitude and welcome of the church a great encouragement and example to us all. Nineteen years of meeting in a school, with the setting up and packing down and working to make spaces welcoming, has developed a “can do” servant-hearted culture.

The planning and welcome by Taire Wilson and the rest of the ministry team meant that the students had many and varied opportunities to serve and observe different ministries on both Sundays and throughout the week. This created a great opportunity to do ministry, to get feedback and coaching, and to try new things.

Some of our opportunities included preaching, serving in children's and youth groups, observing SRE classes and helping set up for and speak at evangelistic nights. We were encouraged and fed too, as we got to hear each other proclaim the good news of Jesus and enjoyed working together and bonding as a team. The willingness of the students on mission to humbly serve in whatever tasks needed doing, and to work hard at clearly and warmly proclaiming the gospel in ways appropriate to the different contexts, is a great testament to the love and godliness of these students.

We prayed together for the rains and flooding to ease enough for the men's event to happen, for door knocking to go ahead, that SRE classes would resume, friends would come to the men's and women's events to hear the good news, that some would want to hear more, and we praised God for His provision for each of these.

We were privileged to be a part of the launch of the “Go” purpose area, which seeks to equip, enable and encourage members of the church to share the good news of Jesus with others. People gathered in their connect groups for a “Kindle the flame” event, which included an opportunity to hear a story of Jesus' power and offer of forgiveness



Photos: Moore College Mission in Maitland





for us, and equipped us to practise sharing the good news and to pray for opportunities and the proclamation of the gospel.

Mission is a great opportunity for students to observe and experience ministry in a particular context and culture. It allows students to reflect on the way context shapes the application of ministry principles. We learnt that due to the history of the area many have been deeply hurt by church leaders. As we went door knocking, we were cautious and conscious of the need to listen and love. We were greatly encouraged by many warm conversations about church and the meaning of Easter. In Maitland there are particular opportunities to love and share

with local groups, including the residents of a local rehabilitation centre. We prayed with MEC as they prepared equipment and the multigenerational MEC team to go to Katherine to provide support at the Katherine Christian Convention for Indigenous Christians

We valued becoming part of the church for a week, and particularly being welcomed inside a team ministry and inside a ministry home. Roger and Carolyn Burgess, who met and married while studying at Moore, showed us great hospitality. They and their team were a great encouragement and inspiration as they humbly shared themselves, their faith and ministry philosophy, and how these things play out in their ministry. We observed and



reflected on a 'Purpose' team staffing model, that included paid and voluntary ministry team leaders. We were impressed by the way they valued the roles women play in this team and the healthy partnership between men and women in ministry.

Mission gave an opportunity to work through anxiety and change. The unknowns of being billeted by a stranger in a country town gave way to rich experiences of being welcomed into the homes of brothers and sisters in Christ. Billeting allowed us to experience something of life in another's household and culture, and the joy of making new friends. Ministry often involves long hours and extended time away from family. Being away for the ten days gave an opportunity to reflect on how to manage the competing demands of ministry, study and family.

Moore College is concerned for growth in godliness, ministry practice, self-awareness and cultural awareness, and mission is a fantastic learning opportunity. Being out of our normal life and comfort zone and trying new things gave us lots of opportunity to reflect on ourselves, our teamwork, and ministry possibilities. As a chaplaincy group, our time in Maitland was precious and uplifting as we bonded, learnt and worked together, and will continue to be a reference point as we meet to consider ministry. We are thankful for our opportunity to serve among our brothers and sisters in MEC and will continue to partner with them by receiving prayer points to inform our prayers for the spread of the gospel in Maitland and beyond.





# All Saints ANeW Church

*An Evangelical Church plant in Newcastle*

**Arthur Copeman** / Senior Minister All Saints ANeW New Lambton



ANeW Church



ANeW Church

IN FEBRUARY 2011 MY WIFE, ANABELLE, AND I MOVED TO THE CITY OF NEWCASTLE TO PLANT A CHURCH. THE BISHOP OF NEWCASTLE AT THE TIME, BRIAN FARRAN, APPOINTED ME TO UNDERTAKE THIS WORK, UNDERSTANDING THAT THE CHURCH WE SET OUT TO PLANT WOULD BE CLEARLY EVANGELICAL.

**W**e spent our first four months in Newcastle familiarising ourselves with the context of ministry in the city. At that stage, humanly speaking, there were just the two of us. We had no musicians, no children's ministry leaders and nowhere to meet. Worse, we were both over fifty and our kids had left home. If the church planting books were right,

that meant we were too old to plant a church and had no automatic connection to the community through our children.

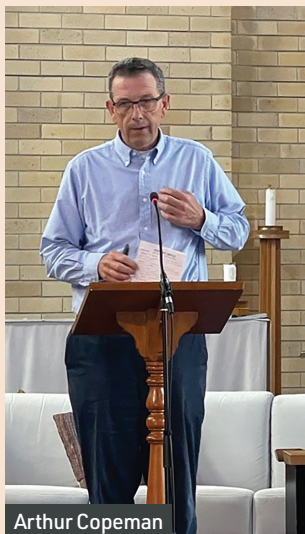
With all this in mind we commenced a weekly prayer meeting on Sunday 19th June 2011. We invited people to come and pray with us. Through the kindness of God some people came, and together we prayed for God's hand on the church plant and that he would bring people who would form the core group to plant the church. Some families with children joined the prayer meeting, so it soon became a prayer meeting with a children's ministry!

Three different categories of people joined our prayer meeting. Some people who were very content with their present churches and had no intention of leaving them prayed with us for a season, that God would establish an evangelical Anglican Church in the city. There were some people who were looking for a church, and attended the prayer meeting for a while, but it became clear that they did not wish to belong to a church with as evangelical a focus as we were proposing, and so they stopped attending. Then there were those who joined the prayer meeting because they were looking for a church with an evangelical focus and have stayed with us.

By Christmas 2011 we had a core group of around twenty-five people who were keen to work with us to plant a church. I also had a church planting colleague—Cathy Young, a Moore graduate who had taken time off from paid ministry work to care for her children but was keen to resume ministry. Cathy immediately began ministering to women in and around the church and organising a variety of evangelistic activities. Cathy also thought of a name for our church—ANeW—Anglican Newcastle Evangelical Worship. In February 2012, with this group, we commenced church meetings on a Sunday night.

After some time, an existing parish, All Saints, New Lambton, invited us to join with them. There were a few people from New Lambton who did not support this. These people chose not to stay with us. The majority of the original church have been a great blessing to ANeW. Our church committees and Growth Groups now contain people from both original churches. At times it is hard to work out who came from which group. Indeed, these days there are many people who have only known the merged entity, which is now referred to as All Saints ANeW.





Arthur Copeman



ANew Church



Adam Matthews

Fast forward to 2021 and we have come out of Covid with four weekly congregations with a total attendance of around two hundred and forty people. We have a paid Pastoral Team, which consists of three full time and two half time staff, one MTS trainee and an administration co-ordinator. The three full time Team members (Sam Broadfoot, Beck Bishop and myself) are all graduates of Moore College.

Now why did All Saints ANeW grow when several Anglican churches around us have recently closed? I would suggest three reasons.

1. The exposition of the Bible is the core activity of the Church. We have endeavoured each week to be opening the Bible and working through it in our sermons. We further endeavoured to establish mid-week Growth Groups, where the core activity would be the reading of the Bible. There are many people who have commented that the reason for joining our church was to hear the Bible spoken about in a clear and precise manner.
2. The exposition of the Bible is undertaken with children as well as adults. We are an all age ministry with age appropriate teaching. So, while for adults this teaching is a sermon, for children this is putting them in groups and teaching them the Bible through age appropriate activities. People have joined our church saying that they wanted their children to be taught from the Bible, not simply be removed from church for secular activities.
3. The church has a focus on reaching out with the gospel to bring people to faith in Christ and eternal life. We have supported others undertaking gospel ministry overseas through the Church Missionary Society (CMS), across Australia through Bush Church Aid (BCA) and locally through Newcastle Christian Students, the local university group. We have also done this ourselves through evangelistic events and courses.

We have had a number of Australian Fellowship of Evangelical Students (AFES) teams come and assist us. We have also had Youthworks teams and a Sydney Missionary & Bible College (SMBC) team on mission with us. We now have our own local evangelistic course (Knowing Jesus) which was designed for Zoom as well as regularly running Christianity Explored. There are a number of people in our church today as result of this local evangelistic ministry.

None of these are rocket science. In fact, it is hard to imagine why any church would not undertake ministry in this way. More than that, in all of these we are conscious of our weaknesses. We long to be able to reach out more to our local community with the gospel. We know we have at times been too internally focused.

The result of undertaking ministry in this way has been a gospel unity within the church. It is the gospel which has united those who came from the New Lambton Parish with those who came from ANeW. It is the gospel which has led those from the original New Lambton Parish to propose repeatedly that what happens in the church building needs to now be different from what it was in the past. We consider our ministry to be gospel focused, and others expect our ministry to be gospel focused. After all, we are evangelicals!

All Saints ANeW now has a church vision: *To see more people transformed by Jesus.* It is our hope and prayer that as we look to the Bible as God's Word, both for ourselves and as the basis of the gospel for the whole community, that we will see more and more people transformed by Jesus in Newcastle.

***We long to be able to reach out more to our local community with the gospel.***





# The legacy of learning and living in Christian community

**Paula Darwin** / Alumni and Fundraising Officer



Alumni 50 year reunion class of 1970

## THE LEGACY OF LEARNING AND LIVING IN CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY CONTINUES TO BEAR FRUIT FIFTY YEARS ON.

**R**eunions can often arouse a mixed bag of emotions. The anticipation of seeing people you may not have seen for years. Will they remember me? Will I remember them? Our College alumni reunions always bring great joy and excitement for the year group attendees but also for faculty, students, and the wider College community. It is noticeable, though, that rarely are there any concerns amongst the cohorts about people remembering each other. This is because the skills and benefits of Christian community learned at Moore are applied beyond the College campus. This was most apparent at our recent fifty year alumni reunion.

The Class of 1970 has maintained connection and invested in each other's lives through ups and downs over the past fifty years. This cohort has continued to encourage one another at annual retreats and regular catch ups at Church Missionary Society (CMS) Summer School since graduating from College just over fifty years ago. They have shared a lifetime of memories and a legacy of living in community which continues to bear fruit around Australia and beyond.

It was a great blessing and privilege to be assigned this cohort as my very first reunion event after starting

my new role at Moore College as the Alumni and Fundraising Officer earlier this year.

Twenty-two guests arrived for a day of fellowship, encouragement, and memory sharing. Starting with morning tea in the TC Hammond Room and a welcome from the Principal and faculty, the day continued with a guided tour of the College led by Vice Principal Simon Gillham, lunch in the Dining Hall with current students and an afternoon of storytelling, reflection, an abundance of laughter, and thanksgiving for their time at College. One of the main highlights of the day was story sharing after lunch, which included hearing about the extraordinary pastoral care of Broughton Knox, and the ways in which that has had a profound impact on the cohort. Alumnus and former Rector at Jannali Anglican Church, Bruce Ballantine-Jones, proclaimed: "Our generation were the most privileged group of any era that has ever been part of this process."

Reunion attendees gasped in amazement at the modern facilities in the new building on 1 King Street, which many had prayed for but had previously not seen. Jovial comparisons were made regarding the limited resources they had to endure "back in our day". All were greatly encouraged to see where students now live and learn at College. They were especially encouraged to see the Donald Robinson Library, where they enjoyed perusing memorabilia from their time at College in the late 1960s and early 1970s.



It was inspiring to hear stories throughout the day of the rich history of family connections to College. Former Vice Principal Michael Hill and his wife Wendy reflected on their memories. Michael shared stories about his time at College with his wife Christine, who sadly passed away in 1992. His children grew up at College, he met his wife Wendy and they continued at College until the end of 2006. Wendy's history at College goes back quite a long way with her father, John 'Jack' Dahl, studying at Moore and being ordained in the Sydney Diocese. Beryl (née Ferguson), Wendy's mother, worked as Secretary to TC Hammond in his time as Principal of the College. Her sister, Patsy, studied through Deaconess House and was ordained Deacon in the Sydney Diocese. Wendy also worked as the Principal's Secretary and Assistant Registrar at College in more recent years. Wendy kindly wrote to us after the reunion, "Michael and I want to thank you and all the team for the wonderful 50th Reunion on 21st of April. We really enjoyed catching up with friends, the tour around the College, morning tea, lunch and time to reminisce. Thank you all so much for your warm welcome and generosity." Similarly, Deryck and Glenda Howell commented, "thank you very much for organising for the College to so generously host our reunion, for the attention to detail and for making it as easy as possible for us!"

After listening to the myriad of encouraging stories unfold as the day progressed, I realised that I had been a benefactor of the College's learning and living in community from members of this cohort. Glenda and Deryck Howell and Helen and Philip Jensen were leaders at St Matthias Anglican Church in Paddington, just before I become a Christian there at age thirty-one. I was also taught by Christine Jensen in my women's Bible study group. She was one of only three women who graduated from College in 1970. I remember feeling incredibly cared for by the entire congregation as a brand-new Christian and first time mum. I was engulfed by a spirit-filled, other-person-centred community of Christians. I remember feeling totally perplexed as to why people would offer to mind my baby in crèche so I could listen to God's word without the stress of caring for a newborn. Why would women turn up on my doorstep with hot meals when I was sick, visit my home to read the Bible to me and pray for me? Their practical, Christ-centred outworking of loving others in community fundamentally helped me to grow as a Christian woman. This legacy of living and learning in community continues to bear fruit today. Twenty years after my conversion, my mother became a Christian at age seventy-one after observing Christian women (some of whom had also been taught under the leadership of this same 50-year reunion cohort) care practically and lovingly for others in the household of faith.

Please join us in giving thanks to God for these faithful men and women who have served the Lord

over many years. Pray that they will continue to be an example and encouragement to current and future students, showing the next generation the blessing of studying in Christian community to be equipped for a lifetime of gospel ministry.

Moore College is keen to host reunions at College in five year intervals, and we would like to hear about your annual retreats. If you are thinking of organising a significant year reunion or if you would like some resources to take to your next annual cohort retreat, we'd love to hear from you. Please contact me at [alumni@moore.edu.au](mailto:alumni@moore.edu.au).



Photos: 50 Year reunion





# Gospel proclamation and unity in South-Western Victoria

**Sarah Weber** / AFES Senior Staff-worker, Deakin University



IT IS INCREASINGLY APPARENT JUST HOW FEW PEOPLE READ THE BIBLE WELL FOR THEMSELVES, EVEN THOSE GROWING UP IN CHURCHES. STUDENTS CONTINUALLY TELL ME, "I'VE NEVER BEEN THIS CHALLENGED ABOUT READING THE BIBLE" AND "I JUST WANT TO READ AND UNDERSTAND THE BIBLE BETTER FOR MYSELF".

**S**o I'm thoroughly convinced of the need for training students in how to read the Bible through a Biblical Theology framework. Formative conferences, such as National Training Event (NTE), help students from all over Australia and internationally to understand how the Bible fits together as one big picture and equip them to teach others.

The desire of Australian Fellowship of Evangelical Students (AFES) is for our NTE to train students to proclaim Jesus as Lord and Saviour by carefully and humbly teaching the Bible. This is because our conviction is that we meet the risen Christ when engaging with the Bible. Therefore, the heart of NTE are the 150 small training groups, or strands, of eight to ten students with two leaders each, spending 12 hours studying a Bible text together. Students learn the skills of careful contextual reading of a passage and understand how the Biblical narrative is fulfilled in the Lord Jesus Christ. At the end of the week, each student gives a short talk with feedback, explaining a part of Jesus' person or ministry they have learnt from the Bible. The act of speaking trains the student by practising the skills needed to share the gospel. It's a real confidence builder for students to become teachers of the Bible. Students are grouped



Photos: AFES group from Deakin University

together from different states and countries, so it is truly community-in-action, with everyone part of the body of Christ, working in unity for Gospel proclamation.

## NTE is mission

A vital part of NTE is the mission-team partnerships with local churches across Australia. Each year, AFES goes on mission with around 100 local churches. Students serve with the convictions and skills they have learnt at NTE, and on campus. Our student teams serve and engage with local church activities—school Scripture presentations, BBQs, doorknocking, nursing-home visits, free carwashes, testimonies, Sunday School leading and preaching. It's exciting to see students grow to trust God, overcome their fears, and see God at work through them as they proclaim the gospel together in the context of mission.

## NTE exposes students to world mission

Jesus came to save the world, and all nations will submit to Him. Therefore, a key training strategy of NTE is to





National Training Event

raise students' eyes to have the same vision as Jesus—for the world. Missionaries come to NTE from all over the world to share their lives and ministries and recruit support and student workers for global mission.

### **NTE invests in the main game**

AFES staff are invested in the main game of training students to proclaim the gospel through carefully and humbly teaching the Bible in the context of mission. When we gather nationally, we are replicating what we do on campus—mission. There's no better national expression of our fellowship and partnership.

### **NTE is long term**

NTE has been a significant ministry of the AFES throughout the past twenty-five years. Our prayer is that God will equip many students with the gospel of Jesus, and the heart to share the love of Christ by calling others to follow and trust Jesus. Please uphold this ministry in your prayers.

### **Gospel Training Event (GTE) goes online in 2020 for South-West Victorian Christian University Students**

The priority of Gospel proclamation and Biblical Exegesis in the NTE model is so convicting that the Christian Unions of Geelong, Ballarat, Bendigo, Footscray and Warrnambool ran our own 'Gospel Training Event' (GTE)—a localised version of NTE, which couldn't take place in Canberra in December 2020 due to Covid restrictions. Alison McDonald (FOCUS GCU staff) and I hosted a FOCUS group of international

students, training them to understand the Biblical narrative, pivoting from Colossians 1. A highlight was hearing student testimonies of how Colossians 1:15-23 challenged their view of Jesus as 'The One' through whom and for whom everything exists. Jesus literally makes all the difference. We gathered around screens like other Christian Union (CU) groups nationally to hear the evening Bible talks on the '*Gravity and Glory of the Gospel*' from our wonderful AFES National Director, Richard Chin. One of the highlights of NTE is singing praises to God in a packed auditorium with 2000 others from across Australia and the world. We still managed to do this last year, just from our lounge-rooms!

When I was a student at LaTrobe Uni in Melbourne, NTE was a real highlight, as well as other CU conferences during the year. At NTE, we were trained in Biblical exegesis and taught how the Bible fits together as God's big picture of redemption from creation to new creation. Throughout my four years of involvement with the LaTrobe CU, I was constantly challenged by how Jesus demands all my priorities. This led me to eventually give up my career as a Speech Pathologist to take up an AFES ministry apprenticeship on campus in Geelong (my home-town), followed by a four-year Bachelor of Divinity at Moore College and now almost six years of student and church ministry. NTE continues to be a highlight for me. We even offer our students in Geelong CU a 'money-back guarantee' for NTE and have had no refunds to date! NTE truly is a glimpse of heaven on earth as many tribes, tongues and nations are gathered around the Word of God. It is such a thrill to be a part of God's visible national and global mission, expressed each December at NTE.





# Conscious of community

**Ben P. George** / External Engagement Manager



THIS EDITION OF *MOORE MATTERS* HAS BEEN A WONDERFUL REMINDER OF THE SIGNIFICANCE OF CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY AND GOSPEL UNITY IN AUSTRALIA.

**I** hope and pray you are both encouraged and challenged by the articles, which focus on gospel workers from across our country as they unpack the significance of community in their own ministry contexts, and how they are connected to the wider gospel fellowship. Personally, when I think of community, I can't help but turn to the words of the apostle Peter:

*Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins. Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling. Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms. If anyone speaks, they should do so as one who speaks the very words of God. If anyone serves, they should do so with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen. (1 Peter 4:8-11)*

These words from Peter beautifully capture the relationships that brothers and sisters in Christ ought to have, as they adorn the gospel in their relationships with each other. Notice the clear, other-person-centred selflessness with which all Christians ought to relate to each other. Notice how Christian relationships ought to flow out of the gospel imperatives we have been taught by the example *par excellence*—our Lord Jesus Christ. And see how all of this is done for the purpose of praising our God, which leads Peter to end this section in uncontrollable doxology. However, as we are all too aware, this sort of community takes commitment, humility and perseverance not only to build but to maintain. We are too easily entangled in the struggles of this world, plagued by sin. And we too easily resort to selfishness, with hearts seeking to be kings and queens of our domain.

As Peter would attest, the only antidote to such selfishness is of course to remember the gospel that has “given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead” (1 Peter 1:3b), and to look forward to “an inheritance that can



never perish, spoil or fade [...] kept in heaven for [us]" (1 Peter 1:4). In looking back and looking forward, we have all the impetus we need to persevere until the return of our Lord. In fact, the struggle to persevere as Christians in the messiness of this world and the gospel as the antidote are a big part of the reason why Moore College values learning and formation in the context of Christian community so much. College's *raison d'être* is to equip men and women to live for and proclaim our crucified Messiah. This is best done in community, because it emulates the realities of what a lifetime of ministry will look like. Students study face to face, living together, laughing together, mourning together, forgiving and being forgiven, and forging relationships that last a lifetime. Things aren't always perfect; however, all of this is to build not only an ability to handle the whole counsel of God, but also resilience of Christian character. This is because the varied ministries students find themselves in are inevitably face to face, living in the messiness of life, proclaiming Jesus to a world which actively hates him and encouraging people who are harassed and helpless. Like sheep without a shepherd.

This was my experience as a student at College. It was a great kindness of God that as I studied here, I learned how to understand my reactions to injustices, respond with humility to circumstances I did not appreciate, and work at selflessly loving brothers and sisters who were bought by the blood of Christ and precious to God. In my cohort, I also made friendships with those who continue to be some of my closest friends and confidants in ministry work and in navigating what it looks like to walk with Jesus in this life. It was only when I left College that I realised just how valuable it was to be able to message a friend in Singapore on Whatsapp, pray with people in New Zealand via Zoom, or catch up for dinner in Sydney with a fellow worker ministering in a different context.

A theological education in community is vitally important for being equipped for a lifetime serving Jesus—especially when given an office of responsibility. The Scriptures are too valuable to not study them in depth, the people are too precious to lead them astray, and the world is too complicated because of sin, to not have thought through how to live as a Christian deeply. However, doing this comes at some significant financial costs to the College. Asking students to uproot their lives and move to the expensive city of Sydney requires us to subsidise accommodation and provide maintenance and upgrades regularly. Providing meals for our on-campus students is essential for discussions after class but it does incur costs. Caring for students' spiritual and academic needs while at College takes a toll on faculty resources and energy. Modelling men and women ministering together in partnership means we also have male and female chaplains who work together with faculty to minister to students and



provide a model of godly servant-hearted ministry worth replicating. Add to this the administrative staff who work behind the scenes to ensure that the various needs of living and learning in community are met as smoothly as possible.

To this end, we ask if you would please pray for the faculty, staff, and students at College that we will all continue to foster Christ-like Christian community. Please pray for our current students, that they will continue to develop in Christian character together and be convicted to serve our Lord Jesus Christ where he might direct them to serve. Please also pray for another large in-take of students in 2022, that God would convict many to consider being equipped to go out into the ripe harvest field.

I continue to thank God for all of you who pray and financially support the work of the College. As you have in the past, would you consider giving to the John Chapman House Capital Development Fund or General Fund, to allow Moore College to continue to facilitate the ongoing legacy of living and building community at College, to the chief end of glorifying God.

Rev Ben P George  
External Engagement Manager  
*Communications, Future Students,  
Alumni & Foundation*

# My Moore gift

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### **About Moore College**

Moore College exists to train men and women to take the good news of Jesus Christ to the world. Since 1856, more than 5,000 students have graduated from the College and have been sent out by God. Moore College has equipped men and women to serve in over 50 countries across the World. Today over 3,500 students are enrolled in our courses globally.

Moore College Mission Event in Maitland



# Archbishop's statement



Moore College is the theological college of the Diocese of Sydney. Yet it is much more than that. It is a centre known and loved around the world for biblical, gospel-directed thinking and ministry practice. For 165 years it has been preparing people for gospel ministry, providing them with the best available theological education and shaping Christian character and conviction through the College community experience. In so doing it is the lifeblood of the diocese, but its ministry stretches across Australia and across the globe. I am thankful for my own theological education at Moore which prepared me well for ministry in each of the contexts to which the Lord has led me. I know the same is true for many other graduates of the College serving in varied ministries around the world. I am thankful too for the way the College is growing and continually improving what it does, all the while remaining steadfastly committed to the authority of Scripture, the centrality of the cross, the gospel message of repentance and faith, and an understanding of Christian ministry that is driven by these crucial truths. I warmly commend the College to your continued prayers and support.

**The Most Rev Kanishka Raffel**  
**Archbishop of Sydney**

***How sweet are your words to my taste,  
sweeter than honey to my mouth!***  
(Ps 119:103)

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