

September 2011

# Southern CROSS

Connecting Sydney Anglicans for 50 years!

## Reaching out

Music as a vehicle for the gospel

- › Gospel ministry and same-sex attraction
- › The Archbishop's Commission report

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Music is a fundamental part of the Christian life but how do we, and how can we, use it for God's glory?

PHOTO: KYCK 2011 by Megan Bennett  
www.megan-bennett.com

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# Fellowship of Confessing Anglicans

DR PETER JENSEN

IT is now just over three years since the bishops of our Diocese, with a group of other people, attended the extraordinary Global Anglican Future Conference (GAFCON) in Jerusalem. For us it was an alternative to attending the once-in-a-decade Lambeth Conference called by the Archbishop of Canterbury. The fundamental reason for choosing GAFCON rather than Lambeth was the presence at Lambeth of bishops from the American Episcopal Church (now called TEC) who had taken part in the consecration of Bishop Gene Robinson, who is living in an active homosexual relationship. The nub of the problem, then as now, is the authority of Scripture. But the consequences of defying God's word are very grave worldwide.

The conference itself was a remarkable event, rich in spiritual blessing. It renewed confidence in Anglicanism as an authentic instrument of gospel ministry. It produced a statement called the Jerusalem Declaration which I am sure will take its place among the most important declarations of the past hundred years and more. From GAFCON emerged a movement called the Fellowship of Confessing Anglicans, headed by a council of primates. I have the honour to be the general secretary. The two aims of the FCA are the defence and proclamation of the gospel and the recognition of authentic Anglicans around the world, especially those who have been forced to leave dioceses or national churches which have embraced unbiblical practices.

The three years since GAFCON have witnessed significant achievements for the FCA. Notably, it enabled the birth of a new Anglican Church in North America (ACNA) with about 100,000 members. It has set up branches in the UK and in South Africa, with more to come. It has produced books, it has a website with materials aiming at the renewal of Anglicanism and has facilitated the ordination of some clergy to work in church planting and evangelism in England, at the request of a new missionary society called the Anglican Mission in England.

The opportunities and challenges are endless. Certainly the theological conflict which created the FCA has grown more intense and become even more global, involving other historic denominations as well as Anglicans.

Since the FCA has been hampered by not having a full-time staff, it is opening an office in London which will be staffed by Bishop Martyn Minns. There is now someone whose daily focus is on the FCA. As well, next year the FCA is holding a conference for Anglican leadership from around the world and,

in the year after, the plan is to hold GAFCON 2 — another major gathering.

How important is all this? An African leader recently said to me that in his part of the world his twin problems were Islam and American liberalism. Indeed he saw a connection between the two. His membership of the worldwide Anglican Communion creates intense problems for him while facing a militant Islam which is able to point to permissive sexual ethics as an indication of the weakness of Christianity. But as well, the liberalism of the churches accompanied by financial aid is dividing Christians when they need to be united for the proclamation and defence of the gospel, and is creating doubt about the authority of God's word.

This is all the more important when we realise that in a number of countries the Anglican Church is one of the sinews which holds the nation together and which helps look after people in crisis. We are not dealing here with negligible matters. One of the aims of the FCA is to help churches to reach self-sufficiency. Our own Anglican Aid organisation is playing a key role in our partnership with churches, not least those who now refuse to receive money from sources tainted by theological liberalism. I have been awed by the faith and courage of financially needy Christians who have cut themselves off from sources of funding.

In recent months I have been contacted by and had conversations with Christian leaders in places as far apart as Nigeria, Canada, South-East Asia, the US, South Africa and Scotland — all convinced that biblical Christianity is in urgent need of robust defence and proclamation among the churches and beyond. The FCA is a movement inspired by God's word for doing this. I am grateful for your understanding that this is part of what I do and I am grateful for the clear support given by our Synod. You can also become an active member through the FCA website, [www.fca.net](http://www.fca.net).

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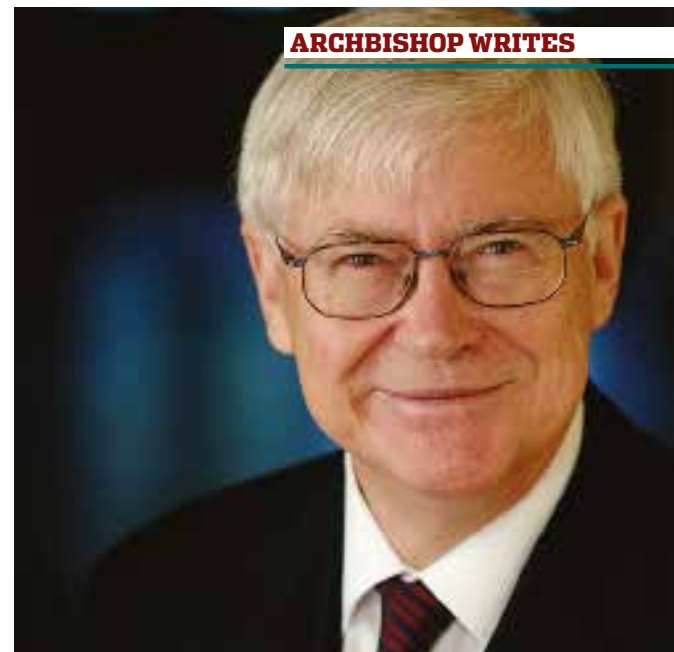
## Mission Prayer

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.

## ARCHBISHOP WRITES



**OPEN DAY AND  
SPRING CARNIVAL**

Saturday 24 September  
9.30am - 2.30pm  
Moore College  
15 King Street Newtown  
BBQ lunch at 12pm  
Info sessions at 10.30am  
and 1.30pm

**CONTACT**

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e: [alex.cowling@moore.edu.au](mailto:alex.cowling@moore.edu.au)  
w: [moore.edu.au](http://moore.edu.au)

**INFORMATION  
NIGHTS**

Monday 8 August  
7.45 - 9.00pm  
St Michael's Cathedral,  
Wollongong  
Monday 15 August  
7.45 - 9.00pm  
St James, King Street  
Taranulla and  
St Alban's, Rookby Hill  
Monday 22 August  
7.45 - 9.00pm  
at Moore College,  
15 King Street Newtown



**OPEN DAY+**  
**INFORMATION NIGHTS**  
**CONSIDER MOORE**





Church planter: Bruce Pass with his wife Kate and children Joseph, Eden and Isaac.

#### CHURCH PLANTING PARTNERSHIP

## Anglican church for Warrawee

ANDREW BUEGER

IN the past, residents from Warrawee on

Sydney's north shore have not had an Anglican church to call their own. However, due to a partnership between St James',

Turramurra and St Philip's, Turramurra South, that is all about to change.

Both parishes had separately recognised

the need for a church plant in Warrawee but, on their own, neither had the numbers or resources to do it properly. So the logical

decision was to work together.

"There is a pocket of land around Warrawee Public School that neither of us is really connected with," said the Rev Michael Stead from St James'. "We saw the untapped potential there and thought we could reach these families if we worked together."

The church plant will commence in January next year with a group of about 50 people from both churches. The new church, which will be called Warrawee Anglican, will meet in the public school hall.

For the first three years both St James' and St Philip's will fund the church plant with the view of its becoming a provisional parish some time after that.

Bruce Pass, who is currently in his final year at Moore Theological College, will lead the plant — which will initially be aimed at families with school-aged children.

"I'm delighted to be able

to work with a group of people who are so eager to share the gospel with their community," he said. "Our desire is that the Lord Jesus would be glorified and draw many to himself through our witness. We would appreciate everyone's prayers in this."

Mr Pass is aware of the challenges that he and the church community will face. However, under God he is already planning ways to grow the church from its initial plant group.

"We have a three-stage plan for the development of ministry groups dedicated to evangelism, deeds and pastoral care," he said. "While enthusiasm will be high in the early months it will be very important for us to avoid core-group burnout and to be mindful of each other's needs. I know all of these things will bring their own challenges, but I am excited about the possibilities for sharing the love of Christ in Warrawee."

#### ST ANDREW'S HOUSE

## "Substantial progress" in office block lease

THE three floors of St Andrew's House, about to become vacant, may be leased by the end of this year.

Mark Payne, CEO of the Sydney Diocesan Secretariat which manages the building

on behalf of the St Andrew's House Corporation, says there has been substantial progress towards filling the vacancy that will be left by the Australian Bureau of Statistics. The Bureau has been

a long-term tenant of floors 3, 4 and 5 of St Andrew's House but is relocating at the end of October.

Heads of agreement have already been signed for a tenant to occupy two of the floors and

negotiations are well advanced for leasing the remaining space to another tenant. Mr Payne says some capital works will be undertaken once the Bureau moves out and the office space should be ready for

occupation by February, 2012. "Having these initial agreements in place gives us clarity as to what refurbishment works are needed," Mr Payne said.

The Red Cross Blood Bank recently took

out a long-term lease on the ground floor of the eight-storey office building behind St Andrew's Cathedral. The building also houses diocesan offices as well as St Andrew's Cathedral School.



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**Anglican National Super**

# The face of ANGLICARE

*Will, 6 months, faced a poor future. His first memories are of his mother being abused by a violent partner. With the help of ANGLICARE's Carerunner Early Intervention Program he is now on the path to a brighter future.*



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\* The 'Face of ANGLICARE' programme is a not-for-profit organisation and is not a government agency.





## COMMUNITY OUTREACH

## Putney gears up for mission

Kat Holt, Natalie Snelson, Chris Lewis and Sue Bourne prepare for the spring market day among the donated books and toys.

JUDY ADAMSON

IF it's September it must be mission month — at least, in Putney.

The members of Putney Anglican Church have been planning, creating and doorknocking in the lead-up to a month of activities and outreach in the parish.

"One of the things we've been doing is to try and tap into the recent census with our doorknocking campaign," explains Putney's curate-in-charge, Matthew Snelson. "So we knock on someone's door and say, 'Hi, I'm Matt from the local Anglican church — did you tick Anglican in the census?' "If they say 'No', you

wish them a nice day and 'Here's a brochure about our church. Let us know if we can help you'. If they say 'Yes' — which would be true of about 20 per cent of the population here — then in doing that they're taking a significant relational step towards us. And in this way we can also take a step towards them."

The idea for the mission grew out of the awarding of a \$40,000 community grant to the church for upgrades to its facilities, including the creation of a crying room. Because the cost of the renovations was going to exceed the grant, church members began to consider how they could use their time and talents to close the financial gap.

This led to the idea for a fundraising spring market day.

However, Mr Snelson says, one of the parish councillors — while

supporting the idea of the market day — added that "bricks and mortar don't build churches, it's the gospel". And a mission month was born.

Now the market day — which Mr Snelson describes as "an old-fashioned fete on steroids" — will also be used to help raise awareness of activities such as a men's rugby night, a women's dinner and a seniors event. Each Sunday in the month will also be an "invitation" day, with the last week a back-to-church Sunday that aims to build more relationships with locals.

"It's a real personal joy to me that the congregation has caught that vision for mission — to recognise that we're not just building funds and numbers for the sake of building the church but focus on building God's kingdom through gospel mission," Mr Snelson says. "It's going to be exciting."

## New journals will reap rewards

A new series of daily devotional journals, published by Anglican Youthworks, have been designed to help families and individuals grow closer to God each day.

There are three separate REAP (read, explore, apply and pray) journals: one for kids, one for youth and one for adults.

"These journals take people through the whole Bible in one year," said author the Rev John Gray, senior minister at St Paul's, Castle Hill. "By following this pattern, over a lifetime people's lives and behaviours have a much greater chance of being shaped by the word of God."

Each journal follows the same Bible reading plan.

"It is possible for a whole family to be reading from the same passage," he said. "That means that they can talk about what they have read and they can journey together through the Bible."

Mr Gray believes it is vital for Christians to spend time daily in the Bible because "[it] gives wisdom for daily life" — however he warns against the journals' becoming our masters.

"If you miss a day you can feel really bad," he said. "But you shouldn't worry about that; it will take a while to get into a regular habit. If you do miss a few days, don't worry, just pick the journal back up."

The journals were launched on August 27 at the Growing Faith conference. They will be available for purchase from mid-September from Christian bookshops and online at [www.cepstore.com.au](http://www.cepstore.com.au) and [www.growingfaith.com.au](http://www.growingfaith.com.au)



## Christian Counselling Courses find out more

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- Advanced Diploma of Christian Counselling
- Vocational Graduate Diploma of Relationship Counselling
- Vocational Graduate Certificate in Supervision (Clinical or Pastoral)

• Meet trainers, current and past students. Past students will share what they have gained from doing these courses.

• Find out how these courses equip you for ministry in your church and work place, and how they can be a pathway towards a career in counselling.

For more information visit:  
[www.stmarksrto.org.au](http://www.stmarksrto.org.au)  
or phone 02 6272 6252

### Locations and times:

**Saturday 8 Oct**  
**CORRIMAL**

The Underwood Centre,  
off Russell Street,  
Corrimal; 2pm to 4 pm  
Enquiries: Beth Dougall  
Mob: 0409 840 037  
email: [MacScott@underwood.com.au](mailto:MacScott@underwood.com.au)

**Monday 10 Oct**  
**GORDON**

Gordon Baptist Church,  
20 Park Ave, Gordon;  
7pm - 8.30pm  
Enquiries: Nicky Lock  
Mob: 0415 312 557  
email: [nickylock@bigpond.com](mailto:nickylock@bigpond.com)

Refreshments provided

Proposed course  
venues for 2012:  
Gordon, City,  
Caringbah and  
Corrimal



"...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

**ZERO**  
**TOLERANCE**  
for Misconduct and Abuse

The Professional Standards Unit receives and deals with complaints of child abuse or sexual misconduct by members of the clergy and church workers.

A pastoral Care and Assistance Scheme is available to provide counselling and

other support to victims of misconduct or abuse.

The Safe Ministry Board formulates and monitors policy and practice and advises on child protection and safe ministry for the Anglican Church Diocese of Sydney.

**Anglican Abuse Report Line**

**1800 77 49 45**

website: [www.anglican.org.au](http://www.anglican.org.au)

email: [abuse@anglican.org.au](mailto:abuse@anglican.org.au)



Professional Standards Unit

## SYDNEY MEMORIAL SERVICE

# John Stott 'inspires our pulpits'

RUSSELL POWELL

### ARCHBISHOP

Peter Jensen led a thanksgiving service for John Stott in Sydney last month, hailing the humility of Stott's leadership and, under God, the remarkable effect of his ministry.

The service, at St Andrew's Cathedral, concluded with "I know that my redeemer liveth" from Handel's *Messiah*, which the great British evangelist was listening to when he died.

Hundreds of people — from those who had known Stott to young theological students who had felt his influence — packed the cathedral for a service of thanksgiving. Those attending were

urged to share their stories about Stott and share a prayer of thanksgiving for his life and work.

"From the middle of the 20th century, three outstanding overseas leaders helped shape the life of the Diocese of Sydney," Dr Jensen told the congregation. "The great evangelist, Billy Graham; the great theologian, Jim Packer; the great preacher, John Stott. To this very day, the converts of the Graham crusades can be found in all our churches; the books of Jim Packer can be found in all our libraries; the preaching of John Stott inspires all our pulpits."

Wendy Toulmin, the Australian executive officer of Stott's ministry organisation, the

Langham Partnership, told how his work had touched people around the world. Dean Phillip Jensen, who led the service, read a note of appreciation from Aboriginal ministry pioneer, Auntie Jean Phillips, who spoke of Stott's love and understanding of indigenous ministry. The head of the Australian Fellowship of Evangelical Students, the Rev Richard Chin, spoke of a mission to Sydney University when Stott lost his voice. "In his words, he 'croaked the gospel out' and many were saved that night," Mr Chin said.

John Stott died at his retirement home at St Barnabas' College on Wednesday, July 27, aged 90. His funeral was held at All Souls' Church



Archbishop Peter Jensen leads the memorial service at St Andrew's Cathedral on August 5.

in Langham Place on August 8.

At the Sydney service, Canon John Chapman gave personal remembrances of how Stott's model of biblical, expository preaching landed like a bombshell in the Diocese in the 1960s. "I came out of one of the expositions at Summer School and

I remember saying to Dudley Foord, 'Surely that is the way all preaching should be done on Sundays'. He said 'You've seen the model, all we've got to do is practise'... and I've tried to do that ever since," Mr Chapman said.

Dr Jensen said as a leader John Stott was never slothful, but served

with a 'fervent spirit'.

"In consequence he never let us down as so many leaders do by personal failures," Dr Jensen added. "His was a cross-shaped life. In the end, nothing will take the place of the school of the cross, of the living sacrifice in response to the one great sacrifice of the Saviour."

# The face of ANGLICARE

*"Vera, 60 years old, found herself homeless after the sudden death of her husband. Frightened and hungry she first came to ANGLICARE through the Penrith Community Care Centre. She was given a warm bed, food and friendly support."*



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## ARCHBISHOP'S COMMISSION REPORTS

# Commission recommends centralised investment board and governance review

IN a report described as a "balance between the radical and incremental", the year-long Archbishop's Strategic Commission on Structure, Funding and Governance has called for the creation of a central investment board.

After analysing the current structure and noting improvements since the GFC, the report identifies key areas for review and provides Synod and Standing Committee with a path for ongoing reform.

The report will be the subject of pre-Synod briefings and some of its proposals could be considered by Synod in October. The establishment of a Central Investment Management Board (CIMB) is a key recommendation, after fieldwork found that

although there are able individuals serving on diocesan boards the number of committed, willing Christians with a genuine depth of financial experience is spread too thinly. The commission believes that because the CIMB would be the sole body making investment decisions, there would not be the need to spread expertise across other boards.

Responding to the investment losses of 2009, the commission "noted that the GAB had borrowed significantly to invest in the stockmarket at the time the GFC so significantly reduced the value of the equities portfolio". For this reason, the commission is recommending that the CIMB be subject to a borrowing limit approved by Standing Committee.

## OBSERVATIONS ON THE DIOCESE

In setting out its vision, the commission's report said: "Unlike commercial organisations, the Diocese is not a centrally controlled entity. The parishes are

Board (GAB) had been restructured and refreshed after an independent review.

In addition, the Sydney Diocesan Secretariat (SDS) had introduced reforms such as Service Level Agreements and reduced its cost base

Still, the report said, "a more holistic structural approach is required to address the governance, culture and cost issues".

It said the historical problems of the GAB and the EOS Committee are regarded as symptomatic of poor governance. In addition to other measures, the commission recommends a process of review of governance and internal controls be adopted for the central diocesan organisations. The CIMB would oversee investments currently under the GAB, the EOS and the Property Trust but day-to-day management of funds would continue to be outsourced.

On the wider diocesan structure, the commission said it recognised that radical reform, involving the

creation of a diocesan executive with a board of directors consisting of a mix of businesspeople and clergy, would be "too much too soon" for the Synod.

In regard to the services provided by the Sydney Diocesan Secretariat to diocesan bodies and parishes, the commission called for more research into the needs of such groups and that a degree of contestability should be introduced in the provision of services.

The commission also recommends that a chairmen's committee be established. It would consist of the chair of each of the most financially influential diocesan bodies, as well as other financial experts who would be appointed by the Archbishop.

## Key recommendations

- Central investment body
- Strategic plan for St Andrew's House
- Review governance and controls
- Committee of chairs of major organisations
- Survey to clarify SDS role and services
- More fundamental review in the longer term

autonomous and to a certain degree resent too much intervention or interference from the centre".

According to the report, consultations and submissions had shown "historically there has been a low level of trust of the centre which is mitigated by a loyalty to the Archbishop and others in the leadership team".

The commission thanked those who provided submissions, saying they had highlighted that the number of entities at the centre and the overlap of board membership led to confusion of roles, duplication of tasks and conflicts for volunteers who sit on more than one board. As well, it said the Diocese is widely regarded as not having "lived within its means".

## THE BEGINNINGS OF REFORM

The final report recognised that there had been significant progress on a number of reforms introduced after the GFC. It noted the Glebe Administration

by 50 per cent. The Endowment of the See (EOS) had also reduced its staff cost by 50 per cent and, the commission said, "had sought to balance its budget in extremely difficult circumstances, which are mostly beyond its control".

## Future of St Andrew's House

The EOS holds a half share of St Andrew's House, the diocesan headquarters next to the Sydney Town Hall. The report calls for a strategic plan to be developed and options would include selling the building. The commission wants changes to the structure of the

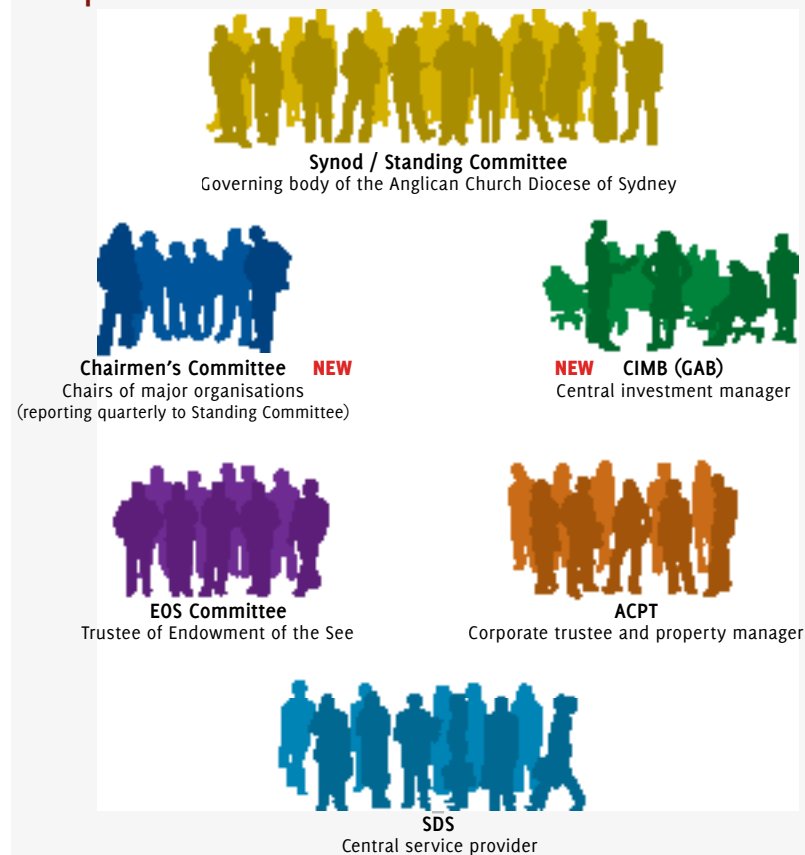
St Andrew's House corporation which it says "is unnecessarily complex and has proved inefficient".

Even with the recommendations, the report says the immediate cash requirements of the

EOS for the next two years will not be met. It says "in the absence of an ongoing parish levy, EOS will need to accept a further run down of its asset base to fund itself until SAH [St Andrew's House] rental yields recover". Despite the defeat of a vote in the 2010 Synod, the commission maintains that the EOS should sell Bishops Court. Some of the funds would be used on an alternative home for the Archbishop while the commission believes the balance would boost investable funds and increase yearly income for the EOS, which pays for the Archbishop and the bishops.



## Proposed structure







# FRENCHS FOREST RENOVATION

## Congregation in short-term move

FRENCHS Forest Anglican Church (above) is a welcoming church but its buildings will be much more welcoming by November. The church has begun meeting at Frenchs Forest Public School on Sundays while the building on Bantry Bay Road is renovated.

Parish rector the Rev Dave Lanham says, "There's a sense of enthusiasm and anticipation but also some anxiety at the change. We're doing our 8am and 10am gatherings at the school temporarily but we should be in the renovated building well before Christmas."

When completed, seating will be expanded by one-third and there'll be a crying room as well as a new toilet block. "We've had good support from the Diocese and the Finance and Loans Board," Mr Lanham says. "It was very encouraging to see this was exactly the kind of project they

were hoping to support, helping existing churches grow and develop."

But there may be an added bonus from the period of renovation. Says Mr Lanham: "We hope our time in the local school will help us connect with members of the community we have not yet reached."

## Croydon servant says farewell

After nearly 40 years of ordained ministry — 28 years of which have been spent as rector of St James', Croydon and the church with which it amalgamated in 1990, St Peter's, Burwood East — the Rev Barry Dudding (right) will retire at the end of 2011.



"It's a significant change because all our children grew up here, and there are still some people here who were coming to this church when I first came," he says. "We'll be living nearby... but I can't come to church here any more, so that will be very different."

Mr Dudding describes his years in the parish as "a very fulfilling time", saying he has enjoyed all aspects of the ministry from Scripture in schools to ministry to his congregation members to evangelism and community outreach.

"We've seen people become Christians over that time — that's pretty encouraging," he says. "And being here such a long time you see kids you taught in kindergarten Scripture come through and become keen Christians, marry Christians and get involved in leadership — and in some cases go into full-time Christian work and that's been very encouraging and enjoyable. And just the fellowship with people, I think, has been very rich."

Mr Dudding hopes to remain involved in ministry "in some capacity" but has no definite plans as yet apart from the appealing possibility of spending time studying the Bible in its original languages.

# The face of ANGLICARE

*"Millie has been looking after her severely disabled son for 15 years. The strain of 24-hour care for her teenage son reached crisis point. Through ANGLICARE's carer respite services Millie and her family have been given the opportunity to recharge and also the strength and hope to carry on."*



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Dave Vincent is a favourite with the kids at Minchinbury Anglican Church.

**Dave Vincent came to the Lord 50 years ago this month — and for him, there's nothing better to celebrate than his faith anniversary, writes JUDY ADAMSON.**

IT was September 1961 and, like most teenagers, Dave Vincent was looking for something to do with his friends on the weekend.

He'd grown up going to Sunday school and youth group but the words of the gospel had never really sunk in. Now, at 15, he was dabbling in shoplifting — but still went with his mates to a Christian youth rally on Saturday night.

"I had been before... but this night there was an American guy from a rock band, and he shared why Jesus had to die," Dave recalls. "He talked about sin and heaven, not accepting Christ and eternity separated from God, and the need to ask

Jesus to be my saviour.

"I'd heard that many times but I'd never really thought there was any need to [respond]. But I can still remember on that night I felt as if I was the only person there and that God was speaking directly to me."

Dave became a Christian that night. But as anyone who has walked along life's road with the Lord will know, staying strong in faith amid temptations and pitfalls is not easy.

By the time he was 20, Dave had grown "a bit tired of the Christian life". He joined the RAF in England and had plans to "experience what young guys do... wine and women and song".

To his surprise, as he pursued these things he became more unhappy. "I tried hard — I did go out and drink with the guys and chase the girls but I felt God's voice speaking to me, telling me I was going the wrong way and to come back because he loved me.

"God touched my heart in such a way that I knew he loved me very much and he didn't want me to make mistakes that would hurt me."

A year or so later, Dave migrated to Australia and, in the late 1970s, married his wife Bev. Not long after, he began to have RSI trouble with his wrists. He returned to work a few months later but the repetitive

physical labour of his job meant that by 1988 the RSI had returned with a vengeance, along with a range of other chronic illnesses.

Dave has not been able to work for a living since, which he describes simply as "very hard". His three children grew up with an invalid father and he admits to feelings of failure "as a father, husband and as a man — even as a Christian".

Eventually, however, he realised that where he lived in a western suburbs Department of Housing estate there were many men who felt the same.

"Sometimes people will say how rotten they feel and that nobody cares,

and I can tell them I've felt the same way but this is how God's helped me," he says. "Bev and I just pray and we're here and often people will just stop and chat... or they've got a problem with drink and 'Will you pray for me?'. And that's good."

The year after Dave gave up his job he began teaching Scripture, and he has been teaching at local schools ever since — as has Bev. The pair also started an after-school club for primary kids, supported by a number of local churches, which ran for 13 years and spawned a high school club. These clubs were, Dave says, a "place of refuge and getting help — and of course learning about Jesus Christ".

The family linked up with Minchinbury Anglican Church about nine years ago and, after running children's clubs there for a while, Dave was asked to become a youth leader, which he relishes. Now 65, he can look back and see the hand of God in his life. And although there has been a great deal of sickness and struggle, that's not what he wants to focus on.

"I just want to encourage others with the truth that God is faithful. No matter how you feel, tell him. Just trust him to get you through hard times... and my testimony is that he'll do that."

## MISSION IDEA OF THE MONTH

### Northern Beaches leaders team up for growth

Youth leaders on the northern beaches joined forces recently as part of a program to share ideas and training.

The second annual EquipT, held on June 23, was attended by 55 youth leaders from more than 10 local Anglican, Baptist and Uniting churches.

The aim of EquipT is to encourage and train youth leaders to better lead their groups.

"It's about getting people together," said David Fell, youth minister at St Matthew's, Manly. "It's a great encouragement, especially for smaller groups. It lets people know that they aren't alone."

The idea of the day is to offer youth leaders training in areas that are common to all youth groups, no matter what their size or denomination.

At this year's event, which was held at St Matthew's, leaders participated in a variety of workshops, including sharing ideas, personal care for leaders and parents' and youth ministry.

By making EquipT an annual event, organisers hope they will see local youth ministry flourish. "We want to encourage people to have a shared sense of vision," Mr Fell said. "Sometimes there can be a 'This is my patch' mentality but we want to help people lift their eyes outside the parish and work in partnership with others to grow God's kingdom."

On August 19, many of the youth groups represented at EquipT came together for their first joint event. 'Unashamed' aimed to encourage young Christians to be passionate about their faith and to not be ashamed of Jesus.

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# Welcome to church... please fill in the card

Ensuring visitors feel they belong in our church takes a lot more than saying “Hello”, writes IVAN LEE.

IS your church a welcoming church? Whenever I have asked this question, many respond with “Yes, I have lots of friends here!”. But of course, that is not quite answering the question. That “I” have many friends doesn’t necessarily mean my church is “friendly”.

A more revealing and admittedly threatening question is: How many people have come along to my church seeking answers to life or comfort or a new spiritual home but have slipped away after staring at the noticeboard or hanging around the bookstall for an inordinately long time? This is, of course,

a nearly impossible question to answer. How would we know?

Yes, many may come with absolutely no intention of staying nor interest in Christ. But even if, over the course of a year, it was only five or 10 or 20 serious seekers, we have missed some important opportunities. And yes, mission-mindedness requires actively ‘getting out there’ rather than passively waiting for them to come but substantial numbers *do* actually still visit us, with or without a personal invitation. *Carpe diem!*

Furthermore, we want to go beyond “Hello, my name is... what’s yours?” to truly welcome people

into our fellowship so they come to know Christ, or if they already do, to quickly find a genuine place in our spiritual family.

Such welcome and integration require two things working in tandem: a real heart of hospitality and care and an effective system of welcome. A system without heart is impersonal and procedural, while good intentions without a plan of action will remain just that — good intentions.

Some of our mission areas are engaging in a great reality check exercise where people from churches within that area agree to visit each other’s services

anonymously and give constructive feedback. The Upper North Shore mission area has created a “Secret Shoppers Program” complete with instructions and questionnaire that other mission areas can use and modify.

A plan for welcome and integration needs to be more than filling out a card. It must be comprehensive: greeting, ushering to a seat, follow-up, materials to give away, hospitality

and meals, helping people into a small group, finding a way to serve and more. The plan must also be simple, straightforward and doable. Only a team can make it happen — don’t land this whole thing on one person. If no plan is in place, talk to your minister about forming a team.

Some rectors are already meeting together to work on welcome systems. The Welcomers Training Course by

our Department of Evangelism is a great local resource. There are also stimulating ideas in Nelson Searcy’s book *Fusion: Turning First-Time Guests into Fully-Engaged Members of Your Church*.

But back to the heart of the matter, because the bottom line of genuine welcome is love — that other-person centredness which looks beyond me catching up with my friends and sees the person lingering at the bookstall, gets to know them and helps them take their next step towards Christ and into our fellowship.

*Ivan Lee is Bishop of Western Sydney and mission areas co-ordinator.*



## He shares mum's eyes... and a legacy of abuse

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## TSUNAMI CLEAN-UP

# Christians offer hope in Japan

SARAH BARNETT

SIX months after the March earthquake and tsunami that devastated parts of north-eastern Honshu in Japan, the clean-up is still continuing.

CMS missionary Karen Darda works at the Oyumino Christ Church a few hours' drive south of the worst affected areas. Oyumino joined other church and Christian groups in delivering aid and basic supplies to those in need after the quake – and people from Oyumino still visit the disaster areas weekly.

"In a country where

the church is very denominational and there is little cross-denominational fellowship, the past few months have seen an outpouring of Christ's love crossing these boundaries," Karen says.

From giving practical help such as clearing mud from farmlands so farmers can plant crops to offering support through care and counselling, Christians in Japan have been tireless in their efforts.

But although news about those in Japan has been off the front pages of our newspapers for months, the clean-up and reconstruction will not be completed anytime soon. Many

survivors of the disaster lost their homes and livelihoods and are only now being moved out of evacuation centres into temporary accommodation. About 87,000 Japanese were made homeless by the quake and tsunami and nearly 5000 people are still missing. And the country is exhausted.

For Christians in Japan, including foreign missionaries like Karen, the emotional rebuilding will take many years as they seek to support and care for those devastated by the events in March. Shin-Urayasu, where Karen was on the day the quake struck, was the most damaged part of the Tokyo region and

she says conversations there begin with two questions: "Where were you on the day?" and "How are you coping?"

"There is great fear as people contemplate the possibility of another big earthquake," she says. "Uncertainty and panic are just below the surface and, because of many months of ongoing earthquakes and aftershocks, people are living with a lot of stress."

"We want to witness to the fact that our God doesn't change, we can depend on him and he is our 'very present help'. We know that we can call on God; he is our comfort, our rock, our fortress. This alone is a great witness."



Before and after: volunteers dig through debris and rotten fish to reopen a canal in Ishinomaki, Japan.

Karen Darda has served in Japan for 20 years and says that the country's problems did not start with the March earthquake and tsunami. She says that while people "feel overwhelmed and saddened when we learn that over 15,000 people died in March 2011... there is another tragedy that haunts Japan – suicide claims the lives

of 30,000 people every year. Japan is a nation that needs hope and comfort."

She asks for prayer that there would be wise and sensitive evangelism by Christians in Japan and more workers to share the love of Jesus, as well as prayer for the nation's ongoing clean-up and reconstruction and spiritual and emotional healing for the people.

## EAST AFRICA DROUGHT

# Appeal opened to give 'hope in the villages'

THE Anglican Primate of Kenya has thanked Sydney Anglicans for opening an appeal to aid drought victims in his country. Archbishop Eliud Wabukala was in Sydney in mid-August, and spoke to Archbishop Jensen and diocesan

leaders about the effects of the worst drought and famine to hit the Horn of Africa for half a century.

More than one million lives are already at risk and up to 10 million could be endangered as the crisis is expected to drag on into next year.

Archbishop Wabukala says authorities were prepared for drought but this one was worse than expected, and refugees from Somalia and Ethiopia also had to be fed.

The Archbishop of Sydney's Anglican Aid launched the Horn of Africa Famine Crisis Appeal on August 1. Aid will be channelled through the Anglican Church in Kenya, which has 8 million members and a network reaching villages and settlements in outlying areas.

Archbishop Wabukala told *Southern Cross*, "The church in our society is the only thing that remains when everything else fails so the faith groups are in the villages, they are a constant. The people really depend on them for sustaining their lives, for giving them hope in situations that sometimes are



Archbishop Wabukala (right) discusses the famine and the African churches' aid strategies with Archbishop Jensen.

unmanageable."

Food distribution has been going on in drought-parched areas, financed by a large

fundraising effort in Kenya. Archbishop Wabukala told Archbishop Jensen at their meeting in Sydney

"We have done our best, and I think we also want to call upon friends, like you, to continue supporting our efforts."

Archbishop Jensen, in a video appeal, said: "Here is a cry from brothers and sisters in Kenya. Let's be generous. We are confident that, working with the Anglican Church in Kenya, we will do the best that can be done to help those in desperate need."



Women return home with flour distributed by a nearby church.

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## LONDON LOOTING

## Church leaders speak out about 'consumer riots'



Rioters confront riot police in Tottenham, August 6.

## RUSSELL POWELL

SENIOR evangelicals in the Church of England say the lawlessness that hit London and several northern cities last month could more correctly be described as 'looting' than 'rioting'.

The unrest began after a police operation in Tottenham but quickly spread to other areas such as Croydon and Battersea. The rector of Battersea Rise, the Rev Paul Perkin, watched his parish being looted from end to end. "My son and

I were in the middle of the streets being looted from 10pm to 3am – the police abdicated responsibility," he says.

Looters used the church garden to stash the stolen goods and then called up friends in cars to take it away. "They were older teenagers, most between 15 and 20 years old," Mr Perkin says. "Many we talked to, trying to encourage them to go home, were not local people. We engaged with some of them. They did not know where they were or how to get out of the area."

The unrest has led to criticism of politicians and police, who it is claimed did not respond quickly or with sufficient force. Mr Perkin says the attitude of the rioters was frightening. "This was not an angry mob – indeed for some there was almost a carnival-like atmosphere. What was truly terrifying was the complete absence of law and order – this was truly a society without law. There was no breaking into houses. It was petty criminality by looting thieves."

British newspapers have been filled with

opinion columns suggesting reasons for the crime wave. The principal of Oak Hill Theological College, Dr Mike Ovey, said secular responses were either "bleeding-heart liberal or a flog-'em diehard... both seem to see the looters as profoundly other, patronisingly in the one case, demonisingly in the other".

Dr Ovey said the responses are not just anger but also bewilderment and incredulity. "It is clear that Christians are not being looked to for answers."

Writing in the Oak Hill College magazine, he pointed to the comments of a sociologist who called them 'consumer society riots'. "It hints that this is the kind of riot you expect from members of a consumer society, not from those who refuse to be part of it. That does not allow me to say the looters are totally alien or other, or even 'enemies of society' in a straightforward way," he said.

Church youth worker Martin Saunders, writing in *The Guardian* newspaper, agreed: "In this society we look to

raise not young citizens but young consumers," he wrote. "They've grown up on dreams fed to them by the marketing men... yet as credit and funding have dried up, they now don't have the resources to fund the dreams they've been sold."

Dr Ovey said Christian leaders needed to speak up. "Christian truth has even more to offer here, by way of explanation as well as by way of picking up the pieces," he said. "The consumer society has bought the lie of justification by wealth: and it's about time it heard the truth."

**The Horn of Africa is in the grip of the worst drought and famine to hit the region for half a century.**

**1.5 million lives are at serious risk right now with an estimated 9 million at risk over the next 18 months.**

The Archbishop of Sydney, The Most Rev Dr Peter Jensen, through Anglican Aid, is seeking the goodwill of all Sydney Anglicans to show an extraordinary outpouring of compassion and generosity to raise \$500,000 for drought and famine relief for the people of Somalia, Ethiopia and Kenya. **5,000 gifts averaging \$100 will reach this target. Let Grace Flow.**



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## Letters

### Thanks, Sydney

IN mid-October Maureen and I will conclude our ministry in the West. It will be nearly eight years since we left Parramatta and drove across the Nullarbor to serve as bishop of the Diocese of North West Australia, which covers 25 per cent of Australia.

The support we have experienced from the Diocese of Sydney has been very significant. Many have prayed, some have given and a few have come, for short and longer terms. Sydney's Synod has been

generous and Archbishop Jensen has been very encouraging. Copies of *Southern Cross* have been a welcome gift to our isolated ministers, along with the annual Moore College lectures.

I wanted to write to thank you for your partnership in the gospel. The Diocese of the North West continues to need prayer and financial partners. It still needs ministers who will move from suburbia and serve in some pretty challenging places.

Pray for the bishop election Synod set down for February 10 and 11 next year. Pray too for the dean, Jeremy Rice, as he oversees the

diocese until a new bishop arrives.

Again: thanks, Sydney. We look forward to catching up with some of you as we settle in Gerringong.

**David Mulready**

Bishop of North West Australia

Letters should be less than 200 words

Email:  
newspaper@anglicanmedia.com.au

## Reader's essay

# The sum of our low appetites

As the fallout from the phone-hacking scandal continues in Britain, Christians would do well to consider how often our decisions encourage the ongoing pursuit of similar stories, writes DAVE CLARIDGE.

A FEW days after the announcement in July that British scandal sheet *News of the World* would close, Christopher Hitchens wrote an opinion piece, published here in *The Australian* newspaper, on the British tabloid-media dramas — in which journalists stand accused of tapping into the phone accounts and message banks of victims of crime and prominent citizens. In the aftermath, publisher Rupert Murdoch acted swiftly to shut down the iconic 168-year-old newspaper.

*News of the World* has never been accused of excellence in journalism. It was, if anything, a publication that became the editorial version of an ambulance-chasing lawyer. It could be counted upon to publish the gruesome murders, the lurid photographs, the salacious gossip, the ruinous infidelities of the royal, the elected or the famous. It published all manner of human miseries, provided that the misery could attract a dodgy adjective. This was the paper that proved the dictum of tabloid journalism: if it bleeds, it leads. *News of the World* never pretended to be anything else. But it sold. Lord, how it sold. And now it is dead, apparently unlamented, killed by the same intrusive devices that earned its publisher so much money. Irony indeed.

The reality, to Hitchens, was sobering: we should look elsewhere for the reason those wrongs have been committed — the satisfying of our own low hungers. Hitchens' moral accuracy was deadly: surveying the appalling breaches of privacy that tabloid reporters routinely perpetrate upon the grieving, the mourning and the distressed, he noted that "the opposite effect is produced on the many millions of people who are not thus violated and who hotly desire to read about those who are. When reporters speak so easily of the great influence exerted on politicians by Murdoch's

*papers, what they really mean is by Murdoch's readers. His only real knack lies in knowing what they want. And what they want are invasions of privacy — and plenty of them."*

We should be quite familiar with the moral logic: we've been employing it — correctly — for years when we urge others to abandon pornography. It's not merely *our* own hearts and minds that are damaged, we argue. By buying, viewing, downloading, or in any other way contributing to the consumption of pornography, we become complicit in the continuing sexual abuse and degradation of the "models" being viewed. In child pornography under-age girls (and boys) are tragically and disgustingly exploited; violated with violence to provide meat for the market. By satisfying a low hunger we imperil our souls and also become responsible for the continual wickedness inflicted upon the vulnerable young.

We should push the logic further. A scenario: yet another young actress disgraces herself, and a news item (with accompanying photograph) hits the web the next morning. Now, we may not consider it appropriate to view a photograph of an under-age, drunk Hollywood starlet suffering a wardrobe malfunction upon entering or exiting a car. But would we stop ourselves reading the same story? By clicking open the article, we tell the producers that we most certainly don't want to stop ourselves. And the message will go forth to the reporters and the paparazzi: *they want more — so go and get some more*. And the reporters go and get some more, placing immense pressure on someone manifestly incapable of dealing with any of it. By the satisfying of a low appetite — purposeless curiosity, in this case — we signal loudly to the publishers and all the minions below them. And the signal is that *we want this*.

There is one dictum that is rarely challenged: the public has a right to know. It's a truth claim that is rarely questioned. After all, who wants to be seen to challenge freedom of speech? Any public statement from a Christian leader challenging this freedom will draw fire. I wonder, though: is this simply cowardice? The public may well have the right to know about tragic deaths. But I am less certain that the public has a *right* to view the graveside grief of the family in shock and mourning.

You have the right to know if a politician has broken trust with his spouse — your decision to elect them (or not) may well be based on how trustworthy you believe them to be. Do you have the *right*, though, to witness the anguish of the wounded spouse? Do you have the *right* to witness the continued humiliation of that politician long after the wrongdoing has been exposed?

I don't ask those questions rhetorically. I won't answer them, either. I do want us to think this through, I do want us to throw these questions around, I do want us to consider — deeply.

Freedom of speech is, in Western culture, considered a right. Freedom of the press is a right to be guarded jealously and zealously. But rights, taken to such lengths, may not be really... right.

"*All things are lawful for me,*" said Paul in his first letter to the Corinthians, quoting the leading Epicurean philosophy of the day. However, he then added; "*but not all things are helpful. 'All things are lawful for me,' but I will not be enslaved by anything.*"

And neither should we. We should not be enslaved to our own low appetites and we most certainly should not assist a misery-generating industry committed to satisfying them.

### READER'S ESSAY

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





# Take notes

Whether it's a hymn, contemporary worship songs or simply music used in a Christian context, we shouldn't underestimate the power of music to spread the gospel, write **ANDREW BUERGER** and **JUDY ADAMSON**.

**A**NYONE who has responded to a song or a piece of music — and that's most of us — knows the power it can contain. There can be joy, elation, excitement — even tears — as we are moved by the melodies or the combination of words and music.

God's people over the ages have always sung and made music together. It's an everyday part of what makes us who we are. But Christian composers and musicians are also aware that it is a tremendous tool for outreach. Whether singing in church, making CDs, teaching others or performing in a rock band or classical choir the love of the Lord and the message of the gospel can be shared and lives can be changed.

Sydney singer-songwriter and Archbishop's ordination supervisor Rob Smith says, "I think [music] is unbelievably important and very effective, by God's design. The two passages of the New Testament that say the most about singing are Colossians 3:16 and Ephesians 5:19, which both see our singing of psalms, hymns and spiritual songs as a way of teaching, admonishing and addressing one another.

"So as far as the apostle Paul is concerned singing is a ministry of the word... we have the

reading of Scripture and the preaching of the word and the singing of the word. Obviously we can meet and *not* sing... but the sung word is powerful on a whole range of levels. It enables the body [of Christ] to express the truth in a unified way, in a way that engages us emotionally and enables what you might call an emotional processing of God's truth as well. When you sing you kind of 'buy in' — you take some ownership of what you're saying, as you do when you say a confession or a creed or some liturgical prayers."

The organist and director of music at St Andrew's Cathedral, Ross Cobb, believes that Christian and secular music share one very important trait.

"All music comes from God and points to God," he says. "All musicians, whether they like it or not, are pointing to God with their music."

He believes that because all people appreciate good music, this makes it perfect for outreach. Churches therefore need to also be serious about their music if they are serious about growing their churches and, ultimately, growing God's kingdom.

"Good music doesn't turn people away but bad music does," he says. "If your music is not done well visitors will be put off."

## SINGING AS OUTREACH

The songs that we sing in church, or that Christian bands and songwriters put onto their CDs, very clearly explore ideas and themes from the Bible. They give Christians the opportunity to respond to and praise the Lord but can also be a clear witness to non-Christians who hear them.

Rob Smith says that non-Christian people who hear Christians singing God's praises "can often be very affected by the experience... it is, in itself, a powerful witness. I've heard innumerable testimonies from people who have said it was an important element in their coming to faith".

Trevor Hodge — a songwriter, music pastor and one of the leaders at the annual TWIST (The Word In Song Together) Conference in October — agrees, saying "Singing together helps connect with non-Christians... some people will have their ears closed to 'being preached at' but will engage with songs and their messages".

As a way of encouraging himself in his work, Mr Hodge remembers two stories about how songs he has written have helped bring people to Christ.

"I got a letter from a girl who, while

continued next page »

« from previous page  
singing 'Christ My Saviour', was impacted by that very truth and accepted his salvation," he says. "Another man shared with me how, even though he'd been dutifully attending church for years, he was convicted of his sin and God's salvation while singing the words [from 'Truly Worthy'], 'You alone could rescue me, You alone could break these chains and set me free'.

"These stories keep me going. What a privilege that God might use our little acts of worship to bring about his kingdom."

Mr Cobb also gives an example of how he has seen music working as an outreach tool. While working at an ultra-contemporary



church in an upper class London suburb, members of the ministry team decided to start a choral evensong service and gauge the community response. The service proved extremely popular, with the church regularly full — and it didn't just translate to numbers in the pews but led to a large number of people becoming Christian.

Mr Cobb believes that this kind of

response is a challenge to churches to try to actively engage with the people around them.

Parishes across Sydney regularly hold music-related events to help build bridges to the community. All Souls', Leichhardt has used the past connection between church and sacred cantatas to invite people in to Sunday morning services. The gospel preached by rector Darren Hindle is underscored by a sacred Bach cantata that is performed by professional musicians and singers.

Locals who would normally never darken the door of the church were invited, or saw ads in local papers, and came. The cantata services (pictured, left) now run twice yearly and bring in up to six times more people than would normally attend a morning service.

Just down the road at St Stephen's, Newtown, Jazz in the Cemetery events are also focused on creating local connections.

Peter Rodgers, the rector of Newtown with Erskineville, says that people in his area don't even want to come into the church hall — "they like the anonymity of sitting on the grass on a mat with their picnic and bottle of wine" — so adding even a short gospel talk to the concert "would just have been counterproductive. But the musicians introduce themselves as members of the church and the event is sponsored by the church, so that people will go, 'Wow, church must be different from what I thought'. It's starting the process. And already people have said [of the jazz events], 'Can't you do this every month?'"

**"What a privilege that God might use our little acts of worship to bring about his kingdom."**

Trevor Hodge



PHOTO: Faith Oxley

## TEACHING AS OUTREACH

St Paul's, Castle Hill has a thriving music ministry and is passionate about sharing its knowledge with others through its congregational worship albums and annual SHINE music conference. A recent initiative aimed at reaching the surrounding community is a music-training organisation called the JAM Academy, or JAMA.

"We are blessed with talented musicians and we wanted to share those gifts with the community," says JAMA's director Rowan



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## Hitting the right notes in church

A crucial part of church music being a tool for evangelism is the way visitors perceive it.

"I remember one wedding I was asked to play at," says organist Ross Cobb. "It wasn't my regular church but the thing I remember most about the day was the band, which seemed to have been cobbled together with musicians who had probably reached Grade Two at best. During one of the songs they were playing in two different keys. That church would have been full of visitors and that isn't going to make them want to come back."

Musician and songwriter Trevor Hodge (pictured) believes there is a fine line on which church bands need to balance to ensure the music they are producing is helpful to Christians and non-Christians alike.



"Often the word 'excellence' is used in regard to music... but that is a very relative concept," he says. "It may be more helpful to ask if your musicians exhibit an attitude of humility and wholehearted service. Are they giving it their all to serve the church, regardless of their skill or experience, or are they just 'churning it out'? If the answer is the latter then there's probably something that needs addressing in your church culture.

"Another question to consider is whether the music draws attention to people or God. Often this argument is used against showy or slick music... but it is the same principle with underprepared or sloppy music. Both can distract people from God. A goal to aspire to in music ministry is to be 'so excellent that no-one will notice'! We want all the focus and attention to be on God, not us."

Tombs. "Since we started in Term 2 we have grown to 40 kids, which has been really encouraging. Currently we offer rock and concert band tuition but in the future we hope to offer dance and production as well."

While the training at JAMA is not overtly Christian, its link to the church leads to opportunities for outreach and evangelism. "What we do isn't necessarily Christian,"

Mr Tombs says, "but it does create relationships which I think is the key to people becoming Christian. It's very unlikely someone will become a Christian just from coming to big gatherings. The real work is done through one-on-one conversations and JAMA gives

opportunities for this. There are Christian and non-Christian parents mingling in the waiting rooms and the relationships formed between tutors and students has already given opportunity for gospel discussion."

At the Wesley Institute in Drummoyne, all music students study a subject called "Faith

and the Contemporary Artist" that, in the words of the institute's head of music, Dr Heva Chan, "talk about how to be a creative Christian. So it's all about art and theology".

In first year students are challenged by the realities of working and surviving in a secular world, while in second year they study the Old and New testaments.

"At their auditions they all tell me how God made them feel they should come to this school," Dr Chan says. "They pray about it because there are so many music schools... some of them have passed the audition for the Sydney Conservatorium but they come here because 'I want to serve God'."

Wesley's music students do go on to become professional musicians but many also stay on at the institute and take a Dip Ed so they can teach music in schools — and they take their faith and confidence in the gospel with them.

## OUT IN THE 'REAL' WORLD

Because of the opportunities Christians have to hone their music skills at church, it's quite common to find Christian singers in the music charts and on the radio.

Just think about the past winners of *Australian Idol* and *American Idol*. Guy Sebastian, who won the first series of *Australian Idol* in 2003, spoke openly about his faith as well as the experience he gained singing in church in Adelaide. More recently Stan Walker (pictured), winner of the 2009 series, was so overt about the importance of Jesus to his life that he sang 'Jesus Loves Me' and 'Amazing Grace' in front of the *Idol* judges — and the TV viewers.

In *American Idol* six of the 12 winners have been open about their Christianity — think Jordin Sparks and Carrie Underwood — and a number have discussed the influence church has had on their lives and musical ability.

But with that comes the responsibility of being a good witness. In a magazine interview after her post-*Idol* success, Jordin Sparks said: "My faith has been a humungous part of how I have looked at my career... With my purity stance, I'm very careful about what I wear and my lyrics. The music business is a very secular world and there are always people quick to point to you as a

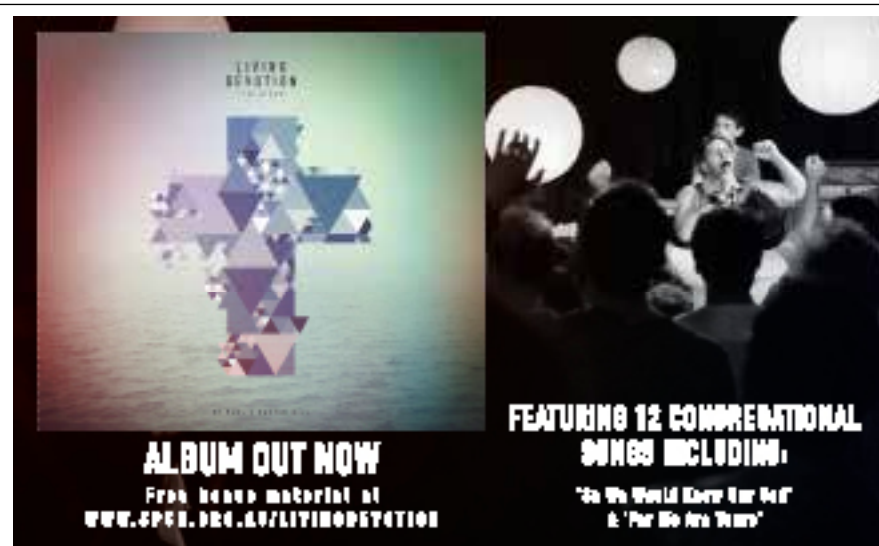
hypocrite when you mess up and fall."

For Rob Smith, when it's a specifically Christian song the gospel is being proclaimed: "When I sing to people, in my head I'm preaching to them. It's a different form of preaching to giving a sermon but sometimes it can accomplish things that a sermon doesn't.

"For example, it's a relatively common experience that you might go to church one Sunday and the sermon's interesting and you learn things from it, but the song you sing after the sermon suddenly hits you right at your point of present need and breaks through with some aspect of God's truth that you desperately need to hear.

"Likewise when I go to preach at places they want me to sing as well. And I used to be a little puzzled when people would talk to me afterwards and say nothing about the sermon but say how much they appreciated the song. I've learned to be a little more relaxed about that, because it doesn't mean the sermon missed them. It just means the song engaged them emotionally in a way that was helpful for them. There's just something about music and the way God's designed it, and about the activity of singing, that speaks to and engages our emotional self."

SC





# Living between THE CROSS and THE RESURRECTION



The reality for Jesus' friends after his crucifixion was painful in the extreme but the transformation of their lives — just like those of people who hear the gospel now — was still to come, writes PHILIP KERN.

SEEN from a satellite, Earth is a beautiful placid sphere that hangs in space. Zoom in close enough, however, and the illusion of peace gives way to activity. People are at play, at work, running to and fro — often with a sense of anticipation and even joy. For some, however, today will be filled with fear or grief. At some point, for all of us, days will include hurt, frustrated hopes and even death. Thankfully we are often free to define our horizons and can enjoy the calming effects of blue skies and gentle oceans. But at other times reality imposes itself on us in horrible ways and dictates our horizons to us. Let's zoom in on Jerusalem in the days

after Jesus' crucifixion to see what dominated people's horizons.

## JOSEPH AND NICODEMUS

In John's Gospel the first words after the crucifixion account tell us that Joseph of Arimathea asked for, and received, permission to bury Jesus' body. Joseph thought Jesus would establish God's kingdom. But the king is dead.

Joseph takes the corpse and, with Nicodemus, wraps it in valuable spices and linen. In fact, the spices are said to weigh 35 kilograms. If Jesus hadn't already died, laying him out on a cold stone slab and then heaping 35 kilos of dead weight on him would certainly kill him. They clearly have no preconceived notion that Jesus is about to rise from the dead. They almost appear intent on holding him down. Dashed hopes dominate their horizons.

## MARY MAGDALENE

John next speaks of Mary. It is now early Sunday morning. She ventures to the tomb, only to discover that the stone has been rolled away.

Now a small group of women run through quiet Jerusalem streets. Mary runs to the disciples to report, "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we don't know where they have put him". Her words here, and other accounts, reveal that Mary is not alone. She is with others, immersed in the death of the one they love and they are bewildered, with nothing but questions.

Does life ever zoom in closer than when we stand beside the casket of someone we love, shortening our horizon to answerless questions? Why? Why now? (I'm not ready yet.) What will I do now? Mary says that Jesus has been taken, and we don't know where.

What a profound disorientation. Unless we expect an aged Nicodemus to have hauled 35 kilograms of spices we need to allow for at least a handful of servants who, along with Joseph and Nicodemus, have been to the tomb. And Mary is accompanied by other women. In other words, it won't do to say that they can't find the tomb. Its location is shared knowledge. Her lack of direction is due to only this one thing: the body isn't there. And she thinks somebody took it.

Clearly she isn't expecting Jesus to rise from the dead. Clearly, at this point she doesn't think that Jesus has risen from the dead.

## PETER AND JOHN

Mary's words set Peter and John in motion. They take off at a sprint, the younger arriving first. Perhaps his scruples get the best of him: he doesn't enter the tomb. Peter arrives second and goes straight in. He sees linen strips and a burial cloth. One might add, he sees the very things that a thief would most value, namely the linen and spices. They are set aside, the clothes neatly folded. At this point John enters, sees and believes. He believes because the tomb is empty.

John knows that this is the right tomb. It is ludicrous to suggest otherwise. He knows that Jesus was really dead. He was there to see the spear pierce Jesus' side. He watched as Roman executioners — professionals — carried out their task. He knows soldiers were posted to guard the tomb lest people tamper with reality to their own ends. And maybe he remembers what Jesus had said. Other disciples won't believe until they see Jesus alive. For John, it is enough to see the tomb and the burial cloths.

At this point, a parenthesis appears in John's account. John 20:9 tells us, "They still did not understand from Scripture that Jesus had to rise from the dead". That is to

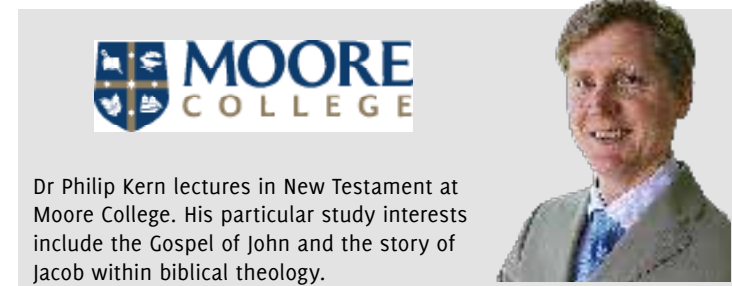
**Q FOCUS QUESTION:**  
Can our hope in the resurrection offer us comfort in dark times?

say, John is not compelled by a theological truth or a passage of Scripture to believe that Jesus rose from the dead. The tangible visible evidence of his own experience leads him to believe. In this we see a sort of irony as people try to explain away the resurrection: critics sometimes suggest that the Old Testament has no hope of resurrection, that Christians try to find it there to make sense of Jesus. Others say that Christians explain what happened to Jesus in terms of the resurrection because they find it in the Old Testament. So, is it there or isn't it?

In any case, John is saying the question is irrelevant. He 'still did not understand from Scripture that Jesus had to rise from the dead'. He understands from what is before his very eyes. He will soon understand from seeing the risen Lord. He will eventually understand from what the risen Jesus teaches him. And by the Holy Spirit he will go on to understand more fully from insights gained into the Old Testament. But for this moment, he sees — and that is enough. His horizon is defined by what is directly before him. And he believes.

## MARY AGAIN

John (and presumably Peter) now believe and return home. Mary remains. With tears flowing, she looks into the tomb. She sees angels and tells them, "They have taken my Lord away and I don't know where they have put him". Don't you want to whisper 'resurrection' to her? That one word would



Dr Philip Kern lectures in New Testament at Moore College. His particular study interests include the Gospel of John and the story of Jacob within biblical theology.

change everything. This is life lived between the cross and the resurrection. Tears flow. Longings go unsatisfied. Disorientation arises from the events around us.

Maybe you know something of life lived between the cross and the resurrection. Maybe you feel grief, pain, worry, stress — even in the midst of joy, peace and prosperity. There is one word that we need to whisper to one another: 'resurrection'. Jesus' resurrection, something un hoped for, unexpected, was the only thing sufficient to alter the disciples' world. But Jesus had risen. And so the disciples could go away rejoicing. But Mary was living in a world that had passed away, that no longer existed. Because Jesus had risen. Won't someone tell her?

And so it is with us.

We live between the cross and the resurrection. But a world that is passing away need not define our horizons. We're being told that Jesus has risen. John saw it and then wrote it down for us. He bore witness so that we can have confidence in the truth. Jesus is risen. Won't you tell someone? **SC**

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# FOLLOW the LEADER



Strategies for youth, apologetics and a clear proclamation of the gospel are just some of the elements Christian educators should include in their ministry to students, writes JOHN COLLIER.

**T**HE ongoing debate about Christian education in the pages of *Southern Cross* is welcome. The existence of an effective and winsome approach to Christian education in schools is critical for the kingdom of God as, these days, very few young people attend church but everybody goes to school.

Schools are therefore frontline opportunities for evangelism and Christian nurture and, for most people, probably the only extended contact with Christian proclamation they will have in their lives. This is why preservation of SRE (Scripture) in government schools is so important.

Some of the following comments are applicable to Christians working in government schools; all apply to the setting of Anglican and other Christian schools.

My experience and studies have led me to the following propositions:

**1** Clear proclamation of the gospel is essential. Whatever other Christian teaching a school undertakes, it must ensure there is periodic clear enunciation of the saving message of Jesus.

**2** Schools actually need to strategise their approach to presenting faith to their students. It is really important to have a clear strategy for ministry, rather than simply repeating what a school has always done, in the hope or expectation that it may remain adequate or effective. While salvation is the work of the Holy Spirit it is incumbent on us, as ambassadors of Christ, to undertake the work of the gospel as effectively as possible.

**3** Schools need to be clear on their model of Christian education. In this respect, schools ought to be introspective and evaluate their Christian education programs.

**4** Simple frequent repetition of the same message, in the same way, without development or variety of presentation, is unlikely to be effective. Rather, it may annoy students with its bland and repetitive nature and in this respect 'inoculate' students against reception of the Christian message. Schools can most usefully think through the implications of having students for (variously) 13, six or two years, and build an approach over time.

**5** The Christian consensus of Christendom has ended. Schools therefore need to think through the implications of a situation where many students lack the conceptual understanding or vocabulary to make sense of basic Christian concepts. For this reason, pre-evangelism is necessary to provide a broad canvas of understanding.

**6** Schools need to create a program of effective evangelical teaching in which to embed good evangelistic preaching. This program needs to provide clarity on the character of God and his dealings with humanity across the great themes of creation, the fall, redemption and final consummation. The structure will need to flow in cycles — reflecting the fact that, as students mature, greater sophistication is both possible and necessary. Strict programming will also avoid the alternative of annual repetition of favourite Bible stories, and build in a basic understanding of biblical theology appropriate to students' age and stage.

**7** Presentations need to take account of youth culture. This has implications:

- a) Young people are highly relational and therefore will be influenced by narratives of other people's lives and what faith means to them.

- b) Youth are impressionistic, media savvy and media-driven. Accordingly, for presentations to effectively penetrate their consciousness there may be a need to harness digital imagery and contemporary music while also remaining solidly evangelical.

**8** Simply telling students what they should believe is unlikely to be effective. There is such a cacophony of voices in young people's worlds that relying on merely announcing the gospel as our sole technique may seem like shouting into the void. Similarly, very emphatic or even belligerent presentations are unlikely to be winsome: it is not possible to bludgeon or badger people into the kingdom of God.

Many graduates of Anglican and other Christian schools commonly resent the apparent forcefulness of Christian presentation at their schools, complaining of having faith 'shoved down their throats'. My aim as head of school is to see the proclamation of the gospel done with both clarity and sensitivity, so that students who graduate not yet Christian remain open, not closed, to Christian ministry later in life.

**9** Presentation modes need to provide scope for students to think, dissent (sensibly and with respect) and make choices. In short, just as we want to develop students in other areas of life who are critical thinkers, so we wish to encourage thinking about matters of faith. Attempts to indoctrinate will be ineffective, offensive to families and to our charter as places of education, and unfaithful to a full biblical understanding of personhood. Rather, our approach to presenting the gospel needs to be engaging. Young people want interaction,



opportunities to unpack content and consider its implications and see its relevance in their lives.

**10** Apologetics is also important. The gospel is propositional revelation. In schools we have a responsibility not just to proclaim but also do what Paul called 'defend and confirm' the gospel. The apostle Peter tells us to do this with gentleness and respect (1 Peter 3:15). Providing a rationale for a Christian position is very important in the age of 'new atheism', when students may present with the mindset that science has disproved God. Such a rationale is needed to sweep away the objections that present as impediments to engaging with faith.

**11** Teenagers go through a period of confusion where the circumstances of life don't seem to make sense within a faith context — for instance, why does a good God allow evil and suffering? British Christian educationalist Dr Trevor Cooling argues that schools need to assist students to grapple with their questions in a supportive, faith-nourishing context, rather than dismiss the relevance of the questions with glib assertions of the need to have faith.

**12** Christian teachers need to model faith as they live winsome lives under the gaze of their students. The importance of modelling and mentoring must not be underestimated. Faith is sometimes 'caught' as much as it is 'taught'. Teachers therefore have the responsibility to deal lovingly with students in a pastoral sense that expresses

**Simply telling students what they should believe is unlikely to be effective.**

deep care and genuine interest in them as people. We also must be excellent teachers — that is, diligent in preparation, marking and all the core business of teaching. To be anything less than fully professional in our core business undermines the credibility of anything we might say about faith.

**13** Paul writes in Romans 12:1-2 of the need to have our minds transformed so we will not conform to the mould of our society. For this reason young Christians need to be mentored (through lunchtime Christian groups etc) into a full understanding of the doctrinal and lifestyle teachings of the Bible. Beyond that, if the Christian message is to be really pervasive, it needs to be unleashed across the total fabric of the school rather than caged into a small proportion of the contact time that is represented by chapel and Christian studies classes.

Moreover, as Paul implies in Romans 12:2, if we are to disciple young people into godly adults, we need to comprehensively transform their thinking. We want them to think through the prism of a Christian worldview, where the understanding of reality is based on their Christian faith. It is therefore important that subject teachers are Christians and can critique the secular humanist worldviews that underpin the syllabuses they teach and the textbooks they use. This is not an argument in favour of 'Christianising' the classroom by tacking on unrelated Bible verses or trite

examples from Christian experience. It is an argument for Christian teachers to think robustly and authentically about how their subject area relates to the Christian understanding of the world.

**14** Schools need to articulate young people into other sustaining Christian groups. School has a natural end point with graduation. There is a danger that if all Christian experience is related to school, there can be a cessation of faith activity on graduation. It is therefore important to link students to local churches, to parachurch organisations such as Scripture Union, Crusaders or Anglican Youthworks camps, and to evangelical unions and Christian unions in universities and TAFE colleges. Usually, schools will need to pursue these links by inviting representatives of these groups onto campus to address students and to establish networks.

**15** Ongoing connection. Some of the most effective Christian teachers in schools are those who are available after student graduation to provide ongoing longitudinal connection and student support as a mentor. This can be done partly electronically through email and various social media.

SC

*Dr John Collier is head of St Andrew's Cathedral School and chairman of the NSW-ACT branch of the Association of Heads of Independent Schools in Australia. He recently completed a doctorate on the role of leadership in schools, particularly in establishing viable Christian education programs that are authentic and engaging.*

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Applications for this position close on Friday 23 September 2011.

Applications addressing the Position Statement should be addressed to the Rector and emailed to [rector@sjiles.org.au](mailto:rector@sjiles.org.au) or mailed to Level 1, 169-171 Phillip Street, Sydney NSW 2000.



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LOCATIONS | Port Hacking 1, September 24-30; Port Hacking (Asian Australian) September 24-29; Shoalhaven, September 24-30; Port Hacking 2, October 3-9

## SATURDAY, September 10 CMS EASTERN SUBURBS REGIONAL PRAYER MEETING

LOCATION | St Matthias', Centennial Park | 10am-12pm

SATURDAY, September 10  
**YOUTHWORKS INFO DAY**  
COME and find out about Youthworks Year 13 Gap Year and Youthworks College (Adv.) Diploma of Theology study options.

ONE location — two programs. FIND out more and register at [www.youthworks.net/events](http://www.youthworks.net/events) or call (02) 8093 3400  
LOCATION | 'Wanawong', 11 Fifth Ave, Loftus | 10am-2pm (free lunch at 12.30pm)

## MONDAY, September 19 WORLD VISION GLOBAL POVERTY AND CHRISTIAN SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT FORUM

THIS will be the third in our series of theological forums where we unpack

the role of God's people in addressing global poverty in the 21st century. DR Jayakumar Christian, director of World Vision India and author of *God of the Empty-Handed* will be a special guest speaker, along with other leading Christian voices including the Rev Tim Costello, Dr John Dickson and the Rev Steve Chong.

This is a free event. To RSVP please email your name, number of attendees, and phone number to [church@worldvision.com.au](mailto:church@worldvision.com.au) or call 13 32 48 by Wednesday, September 14.  
LOCATION | Kirkplace Church, 12-16 Derby St, Kogarah | 7.15pm-9.30pm

FRIDAY, September 23

## CMS FRIDAY FELLOWSHIP

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

WEDNESDAY, September 28

## UV FESTIVAL FOR KIDS

BRING your kids into the city to experience two hours of creative mayhem in the September school holidays. Featuring gospel shows by Anton's Antics and The Shed, plus new music and fun activities. Bookstore specials and refreshments included. FOR more information visit [www.kidzlink.com.au](http://www.kidzlink.com.au) or call (02) 9265 1538

LOCATION | St Andrew's Cathedral, Chapter House, Sydney | 9.30am

TUESDAY, October 4 – Thursday, October 6

## YOUTHWORKS HOWZAT! CRICKET CAMP

DID you know England are No. 1 in Test rankings? Let's do something about it: score a ton, bowl a five-fer, trap him in the crease — and learn about our wonderful Saviour. OPEN to all 10-15 year olds for \$199 FOR more information visit [www.youthworks.net/events](http://www.youthworks.net/events)  
LOCATION | St Gregory's College, Campbelltown

SATURDAY, October 15

## BURNOUT WORKSHOP

THE pressure and speed of life in the 21st century mean more people are suffering from burnout. THIS workshop will focus on how you can pray with, encourage and support people who are suffering from burnout. SPEAKERS: Bishop Peter Brain and Christopher Allan  
COST: \$20 per person  
TO book call Barbara on 0407 910 238 or email [brichards@sydney.anglican.asn.au](mailto:brichards@sydney.anglican.asn.au)  
LOCATION | Golden Grove, 5 Forbes St, Newtown | 1.30-5pm





## Sydney church trains Indian pastors

ON August 1, a team of nine people from Naremburn-Cammeray Anglican Church (NCA Church) returned from a trip to India, where they had been working with the India

Gospel League (IGL).

The team, led by assistant minister Matt Lemsing, spent two weeks training local Indian pastors in conjunction with Moore College.

"The growth of the church in India is amazing," Mr Lemsing said. "There are more people becoming Christians than [the IGL] can train pastors for."

The team taught up to 200 Indian pastors with material from Moore College on Ephesians and Biblical Theology.

"They were really intense days but the trip was amazing," Mr Lemsing said. "One of the main things we learnt was how we need to rely on God for everything in our lives. The Indians don't have much and so are forced to be dependent on God. This challenged us to do the same."

He said the team was so moved and challenged by what they experienced that there have already been noticeable changes in them.

"Since we've been back there has been a renewed focus and enthusiasm for ministry — particularly for discipleship and evangelism."

NCA church is committed to the work of the IGL and is planning to send at least one team back to India every year for the next five years.

## 90 years in the making



The Rev Brian Heath, Mrs Faye Keith and Archbishop Jensen.

St John's, Asquith recently celebrated its 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary in a novel way.

On July 30 the church launched *Ninety Stories to God's Glory*, which recounted tales from parishioners about how they had seen God working in their lives.

The concept for the book came from Mrs Faye Keith, who spent many months compiling the 90 stories from children as young as five.

Archbishop Peter Jensen attended the celebration, saying that after he had read the book he "felt like he knew the congregation intimately".

Archbishop Jensen also contributed the foreword for the book which he recommended highly.

"This book is significant... [because] it shows us how God uses ordinary people to bring others to himself," he said. "Billy Graham and John Chapman both get a mention... but you will also find a story about a bus driver who spoke to his passenger and persevered as well as stories about the impact of Scripture teaching and Christian camps. You will be fascinated."

However the church also used the anniversary service to look to the future of its ministry, with senior minister the Rev Brian Heath presenting a revised mission statement, explaining how the church plans to grow.

## Celebrating innovative education

THE Anglican Education Commission is passionate about encouraging Christian schools around Sydney to implement innovative strategies in their provision of education.

On August 9, 80 principals and teachers from 29 Anglican and Christian schools around the Diocese came together at Tara Anglican School in North Parramatta for the third annual Integral Project Dinner.

The Integral Project is a way the AEC brings Christian educators together so they can share with each other new and interesting ideas about Christian education.

The main goal of the Integral Project is to help principals and teachers to effectively integrate Christian faith and values into the curriculum.



Representatives from Tara Anglican School, Macarthur Anglican School, Broughton Anglican College and Nowra Anglican College all shared some of the strategies that they have

implemented in their schools over the past year.

Justin Moffatt from St Philip's, York Street also spoke to dinner guests from Philipians 4.

### BACH & BEYOND CONCERT

The Choirs of St James' & Trinity College  
Melbourne with Jonwood Orchestra

Thurs 22 Sept, 7.00pm & Sat 24 Sept, 5.00pm

### ST JAMES' INSTITUTE

THE WORD TRANSLATED:  
READING THE ENGLISH BIBLE 400 YEARS  
AFTER THE KING JAMES VERSION  
Saturday 24 September, 9.30am-5.00pm

THE WORLD OF ANGELS  
Thursday 29 September, 6.15pm-7.30pm

Visit [www.sjks.org.au](http://www.sjks.org.au) for full details and bookings, or telephone 8227 1300.

### THE ST JAMES' CHURCH

### CHORAL EVENSONG (BCP)

Every Wednesday at 6.15pm, with the Choir of St James' and visiting Choirs.

Visit our website at [www.sjks.org.au](http://www.sjks.org.au) for all details of ministries at St James'.



### 2011 CONFERENCE SATURDAY OCTOBER 8

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Rooty Hill  
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# MOVES

## CLARKE MOVES TO HOXTON PARK



THE **Rev David Clarke** had no plans to leave his parish of St Marys — where he has served for nine years — but when nominators from Hoxton Park persisted in their

interest, he and his wife Janine knew they had to pray and reflect on whether now was the time to make a change. Mr Clarke will become rector of Hoxton Park next month.

“Being a mission area leader for Blacktown-Penrith as well, I was anticipating continuing in this role for a while,” he says. “But God’s done a lot of great things while we’ve been here — with God’s enabling, we’ve completed the things we believed God wanted us to do here — and it’s true that sometimes change is a good thing to have. After nine years it will be good for fresh eyes to consider the possibilities here and for us to have new challenges in a different location.

“We look back with very fond memories of all the people and things that have happened here. We’re thankful to God for significant growth, that many people have become Christian and that we’ve been able to see a church planted at Ropes Crossing.”

Mr Clarke is enthusiastic about tackling the needs and challenges in Hoxton Park — with increasing numbers of Islamic schools and booming housing growth.

“Having grown up in a missionary family I’ve always had an interest in cross-cultural ministry,” he says. “And having had some experience in church planting in new areas we’ve got some ideas on how to reach out to the new suburbs being built around the great church facilities at Hoxton Park. We’re looking forward to seeing what God has in store for the future.”

## MOORE COLLEGE WELCOMES NEW GM



THE principal of Moore College, Dr John Woodhouse, has announced that **Mr Campbell Capel** is the college’s new general manager, replacing Mr

Grant Millard (now CEO of Anglicare Sydney).

“Mr Capel has worked in the corporate, banking and finance, insurance, consulting, IT and not-for-profit sectors and brings a wide range of experience in small and large organisations,” Dr Woodhouse said. “I am delighted to welcome him into the fellowship and work of Moore College.”

Most recently Mr Capel led a management consultancy practice that analysed organisations’ business models — identifying and implementing initiatives to improve the stewardship of resources while seeking greater efficiencies and solving business issues.

Mr Capel is excited to join the leadership team at Moore College, as he sees his supportive role as critical to the growth of the college and beyond. In addition, Mr Capel is keen to support Moore’s growing overseas educational unit with its links to overseas mission efforts.

“I look forward to providing leadership to the administrative staff and support to the principal and the governing board,” he said.

Mr Capel attends St Thomas’, North Sydney.

## FROM THE MOUNTAINS TO THE WEST



AFTER more than three years as assistant minister to Holy Trinity, Wentworth Falls, the **Rev Rodney Kerr** has accepted the position of rector at Merrylands. He will be made a presbyter in his present parish later this month and then inducted at Merrylands in mid-October.

Mr Kerr says the nominators from Merrylands made contact a few months ago and sent him their parish profile. “We invited them up here for dinner and talked, it was very friendly and encouraging... and then they invited us down there for an interview — and not long after that they were keen to put my name forward,” he says.

After Merrylands made the offer, Mr Kerr and his wife Vanessa spent time talking to people about the parish and putting the move before the Lord in prayer, and “after a couple of weeks we were able to confirm that we would go”.

A former fitter and turner who grew up in Panania, Mr Kerr says he has been keen to serve in south-western

# VALE

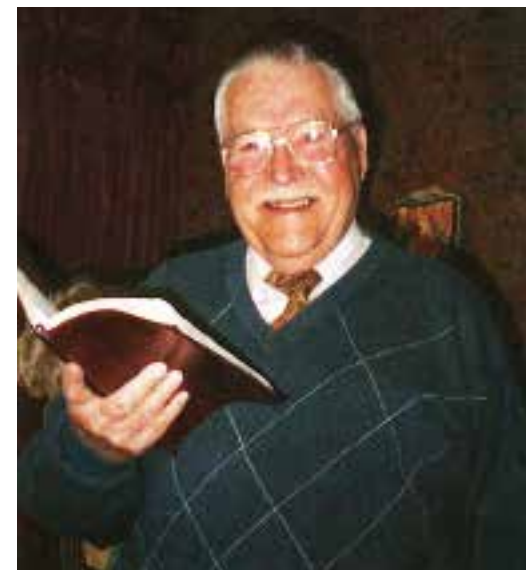
THE **Rev Ray Wheeler** died on June 24.

Born in 1922, Mr Wheeler studied at Moore College in the late 1950s — the first married student at Moore — and was catechist-in-charge at Wilberforce while still at college. After graduating he became curate-in-charge of Jannali-Como and then the former West Kembla parish before taking on the rectorship of Ashbury throughout the 1960s, and spending the following five years at Bexley North.

In 1975 Mr Wheeler became registrar and senior lecturer in New Testament at Sydney Missionary and Bible College. In 1978 he returned to parish for four years as rector of Burwood East.

After his “retirement” in 1982 Mr Wheeler was almost more active than he had been in his earlier ministry years. He was principal of SMBC in 1984-5 and helped bring about the selection of the next principal, David Cook.

Mr Wheeler’s son Geoff says that when a committee was put together to find a replacement principal, Mr Cook was part of that group. “After one of their meetings Dad said to David, ‘I think we’d better interview you for this position, brother’, so that’s how that came about,” Geoff says.



For more than a decade after he left SMBC, Mr Wheeler took on a number of locums and interim minister positions around Australia, including Perth, Hobart, Katoomba, Northmead, Leura, Normanhurst and Parkes.

Mr Cook preached at Mr Wheeler’s funeral, which Geoff Wheeler called “a terrific celebration... There were large numbers of people there who spoke of how he’d been such an influence on their lives and in their faith and walk with Jesus and I think that typified Dad right through his life. He just wanted to teach people the Bible, so he took every chance he could to do that.”

or western Sydney, “so Merrylands is a pretty good fit... it reminds me of some of the ministries I’ve been part of in the past. Wentworth Falls is very much a village and very different from suburban Sydney. But I’ve really learned a lot being up here and learnt a lot from Neil, my senior minister — and with the Lord’s help I will do what I can at Merrylands.”

## TURNER TAKES A TREE CHANGE



AFTER three and a half years as an assistant minister to St Andrew’s Cathedral’s City Night Church the **Rev Michael Turner** has been announced as the curate-in-charge

for the provisional parish of Port Kembla and Warrawong.

Mr Turner says he and his wife Vanessa had been looking to take on a parish, and “when this one came up we had some meetings and it was all positive. We knew this was the next ministry step for us”. The region is also familiar as he previously spent two years as assistant minister in the Wollongong suburb of Fairy Meadow.

Even better, the couple already owns a

house in a nearby suburb and the family has moved back in, as the parish rectory is already being rented. And after more than three years living a short walk from the cathedral in Sydney’s CBD, they can’t get over the quiet.

“We lived in Pitt Street and while that was great — you get used to the background noise after a while — we couldn’t help hearing the karaoke on Saturday nights,” he says with a laugh. “Now we hear the birds, and the wind... we have two boys who are almost five and three, and we’ve got a daughter who’s nearly seven, so it was time to move out of the city and find a backyard!”

Mr Turner will be made a presbyter at his induction service in late November but before then he has taken his family to Lord Howe Island to spend a few months as locum to its Anglican church.

## Vacant Parishes

LIST OF PARISHES AND PROVISIONAL PARISHES, VACANT OR BECOMING VACANT AS AT JULY 22, 2011

- Auburn (St Philip’s)
- Croydon
- Doonside\*
- Lalor Park and Kings Langley
- Lithgow
- Lugarno
- Moorebank
- Newtown with Erskineville
- St Marys
- Sutherland

\*Provisional parish or Archbishop’s appointment

# Same-sex attraction and gospel ministry

Some would say the two are mutually exclusive — but then where does the grace of God come in for those struggling with an unwanted same-sex attraction? DAVID PETERSON responds.



**I**N the prologue to John's Gospel, the apostle claims that the glory of God has been seen in the Lord Jesus Christ, who is 'full of grace and truth' (1:14, 17). John goes on to affirm that 'from his fullness we have all received grace upon grace' (1:16). The people of the old covenant knew about grace and truth but in Jesus Christ believers like John experienced grace beyond any grace previously received, and came to know Jesus as 'the way, the truth and the life' (14:6).

The new covenant is essentially about grace and truth through Jesus Christ. He is the ultimate revelation of the truth about God and his sacrifice fulfils the promise of Jeremiah 31:34, 'I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more'. Christianity is about living in the light of grace and truth and continuing to experience the benefits through the ministry the Spirit enables us to have to one another.

Unfortunately, however, we sometimes get the balance wrong. It is possible to emphasise truth at the expense of grace or grace at the expense of truth. Nowhere is this more obvious in the contemporary church than in dealing with issues related to homosexuality.

In their zeal to uphold what Scripture says about homosexual behaviour, some Christians show little grace towards those who struggle with unwanted same-sex attraction. In their desire to show love and mercy, others seek to modify or ignore what the Bible teaches on the subject.

If we are going to support one another in our struggle with sin and remain faithful to the gospel and the New Testament, we need to keep grace and truth together. If God condemns homosexual behaviour, we dishonour him and bring no real help to those who struggle by hiding what he has revealed. But if we show no love and grace, how can people be transformed and strengthened to please God?

The apostle Paul clearly combined grace and truth when he preached to the Corinthians on this topic. He first identified for them the sort of people who would not inherit the kingdom of God: 'neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practise homosexuality, nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers' (1 Cor. 6:9-10). Presumably,

he had called all such people to repent and receive the grace of God in Christ for he goes on to say, 'And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God' (6:11).

Two Greek terms are translated by one in the ESV ('men who practise homosexuality'). The first word via classical usage has the sense of passivity and the second via Leviticus 18:22; 20:13 has more active connotations. In Romans 1:26-27 Paul also writes about God's condemnation of women who 'exchanged natural relations for those that are contrary to nature'. Although some scholars have tried to argue that these texts point to particular expressions of homosexuality, the context in each case and the language used point to homosexual intercourse in broad terms.

But the apostle also proclaimed that anyone caught up in the behaviours listed in 1 Corinthians 6:9-10 could be washed, sanctified and justified by trusting in the Lord Jesus and his sacrifice for us. When the Spirit of God convinces individuals that such acceptance and renewal is possible, they begin to experience spiritual healing and transformation. There is hope for change in facing the truth of God's revelation about us and receiving the grace he offers us in the Lord Jesus Christ.

In the contemporary scene, we are faced with the pressure to endorse same-sex marriage. According to Genesis 1 and 2, marriage was instituted by God for the union of a man and woman in an exclusive, lifelong commitment, for their mutual benefit and for the procreation and nurture of children. The Lord Jesus repeated and endorsed this teaching when questioned about divorce and remarriage (Matthew 19:1-9). But many today want the Judeo-Christian view of marriage reflected in our legislation to be abandoned and for same-sex partners to be allowed to marry. The issue is presented as one of civil rights.

Some Christians are moved by love and a sense of justice to support this campaign, which is gaining ground around the Western world. But how can we allow the truth of God's revelation to be silenced in this way?

If God has ordained marriage as the Bible outlines it, will there not be serious social and personal consequences if God's will is ignored? How can it be loving to give people what they want, even though it flies in the face of God's word?

Liberty Christian Ministries has been operating in Sydney since 1993, offering grace and truth through Jesus Christ to those who struggle with unwanted same-sex attraction. The organisation's motto is 'support, hope, knowledge'. Pastoral care is offered to individuals who struggle with unwanted same-sex attraction and, when requested, referrals to professional counsellors can be provided. Liberty is not an evangelistic organisation and it does not offer simple solutions to those who seek God's help.

Haydn Sennitt has just been appointed as the part-time pastoral worker for Liberty. His testimony to God's grace in his life can be found on the Liberty website ([www.libertychristianministries.org.au](http://www.libertychristianministries.org.au)).

According to Haydn, "The problem with human brokenness is that people reject God first and then take matters into their own hands by making cups that hold no water. It is tantamount to someone not drinking water from a pure fountain but lapping it

## About Liberty Christian Ministries

Liberty has published some literature including a book edited by Chris Keane titled *What some of you were: Stories about Christians and homosexuality*.

Liberty provides support groups for those struggling with same-sex attraction, and for parents and families of those who have entered homosexual relationships. It can also provide speakers for churches and other Christian groups. Please consider helping Liberty financially. Such support is absolutely critical in helping relationally and sexually broken people. More information: [www.libertychristianministries.org.au](http://www.libertychristianministries.org.au) or 9818 8111.



out of a latrine (Jeremiah 2:13). They thirst even more and do the most degrading things with their bodies, minds, and souls to fill the hollowness in their hearts. I did this. It never filled me but actually made me thirst all the more."

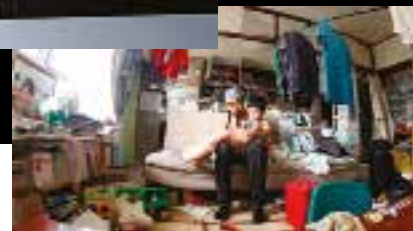
Please pray for Haydn and the ministry of Liberty. Regular newsletters, with encouragements for prayer, can be sent to those who make contact with us ([lcmi@inet.net.au](mailto:lcmi@inet.net.au)).

The Rev Dr David Peterson is chairman of the Liberty Committee.

SC







## Rewriting history

*Caleb's Crossing* by Geraldine Brooks

Kara Martin

Australian author Geraldine Brooks is known for her rigorous research. This book — which tells the story of the first Native American to graduate from Harvard College, Caleb Cheeshahteamauk — is no exception

and involved sharing information and drafts with members of the Wampanoag tribe from which Caleb emerged to “cross” cultures. Any detail other than bare facts is total fabrication, as Brooks herself admits. To overcome this she uses a fictional character, Bethia Mayfield, who interacts with Caleb — first when they are preteens and he is ensconced in his native culture, then later when Caleb as an orphan is tutored by her father. Bethia’s family is based on that of Thomas Mayhew, a minister who saw his life’s work as converting the Native Americans to Christianity. His son and grandson continued his work. Hence Bethia represents a conservative missionary family perspective in her interactions with Caleb, which is something very interesting in a popular book, and Brooks has done her research on theological perspectives of the time carefully. While there is an authenticity in the portrayal of this tension between two different spiritualities, what is lacking from Bethia’s faith

— and consequently some of her choices — is a sense of a personal faith. Most of her decisions seem to be based on ritual or fear of judgment, rather than on a desire to please God, or a sense of grace. What strikes home is the way Christian missionary work was inseparable from a desire to “civilise” at this time and how general attitudes to native populations were often characterised by racism and a sense of superiority, even toward converts.

It may appear from the description that this is a dry book but it is far from that. Brooks captures beautifully a rare relationship in literature: a powerful friendship. The characterisation is rich, the conversation feels real and the plot is enticing — it’s a book with the potential to capture the reader’s heart and mind.

Brooks seems fair in her descriptions of the religious views of the time but some of the squabbles over baptism and the requirements of new converts made me wince. Bethia’s embracing of some aspects of Native American spirituality may also be more post-modern yearning than historically accurate but it points to some of the challenges we face in a multi-faith society.

This would be a great gospel-centred conversation starter for book groups, or as a gift for family or friends.

» from page 28

disparate ideas, people, places and thoughts to create something that makes sense, that engages the audience’s interest and emotions and (apart from one dull fellow going up and down in a lift near the beginning of the film) never bores you.

By complete chance the day the filmmakers chose for their “day” — Saturday, July 24, 2010 — was also a full moon. So when allowing people to capture moments from midnight to midnight it naturally starts with a lunar close-up — then takes you somewhere you didn’t expect: to watch two elephants swimming by moonlight.

Where are they? We don’t know. But like the drunken fellow musing on a park bench, a new mother cuddling her sleeping baby (“Isn’t he pretty?” she asks) or the fellow howling for effect, they — and we — were all under that same moon on that night, and the same sun as the day progressed.

Because the film is by its very nature a series of vignettes, there really isn’t any story that we follow, apart from the gradual passing of the day for the many disparate people whose lives we enter for a few fleeting, intimate moments. We see their wedding day, their hospital room, their car, their pets, their personal doubts... laughter, tears and great poignancy as we experience with them the people and things that matter.

Often you will have no idea where they’re from. If they don’t speak English you’re listening for clues — words you recognise, things that might identify them or their location. Some are clearly marked by their looks, dress or religion as coming from certain areas of Asia or Africa... but where? You’re drawn in. You want to know.

The charming goat herders, sun-weathered, contented and chatty, prove to be from the Ukraine. The little boy who shines shoes on a Saturday to make more

money lives in Peru. The father and son in an apartment surrounded by mess — who, heart-wrenchingly, say hello and pray in front of the photo of their dead wife and mother to start the day — are in Japan.

It’s extraordinary how affecting such small pieces of people’s lives can be. What happens more often than not is you wonder what was going to happen next in their day. When a little boy runs through narrow lanes pushing a wheelbarrow you want to know where he’s going. He’s wearing an England football jersey but clearly he lives somewhere in the Middle East. Who is he? What’s he doing? We don’t know, but we were there with him for that busy little moment.

There are a handful of stories that the filmmakers return to, giving you a little more each visit. The goat farmers are one, as is the little family where mum Cathy is clearly recovering from major surgery, and the Korean cyclist who has been travelling the world for more than nine years — who can close his eyes and see people from every tribe, nation and tongue, and has dreams of unity. And we know it’s possible.

English musician Howard Jones once sang “Don’t try to live your life in one day” — because it’s important, of course, to savour each moment, not rush through as though where you are now doesn’t matter.

So, then, was making this film a risk worth taking? You bet. If we needed anything to underscore the fact that all people everywhere are alike, this is it. They are savouring this moment, or struggling through this moment — and we’re right there with them.

You may well leave the cinema wishing you could hold the hand of the man in hospital, laugh with the girl who’s just been proposed to or have a cuppa with the goat farmers. And there’s someone just like them where you live.

SC





# Global village

LIFE IN A DAY  
PG

JUDY ADAMSON

**T**HIS has got to be one of the biggest cinematic risks of all time as well as one of the best uses of a social communication medium. Put the word out on Youtube: ask for people from across the globe to film an element of their lives on the same day and submit it to be used (or not) in a documentary.

The director of *Life In A Day*, Kevin McDonald (who also directed *The Last King Of Scotland* and the Oscar-winning

documentary *One Day In September*), knew the results could be tremendous — or terrible. Life-affirming and remarkable or dull and dreary. He hoped for, but did not really expect, 15,000 film clips to be sent in. He got more than five times that number, from 192 countries, and the result — happily — is not only watchable but, for the most part, utterly fascinating.

After all, here we have a snapshot of the world. Pretty much everywhere in the world,

seen through the eyes of the ordinary people living here. And to help them think about what to send in or what to talk about, they were asked to answer three questions: what do you love, what do you fear, and what is in your pockets/handbag?

While selecting what should be included in the 90-minute documentary was obviously crucial, the real genius lies in the editing process — cutting together so many

« continued on page 27

## Global Poverty and Christian Social Engagement Forum

World Vision

Monday 19 September • 7.15pm - 9.30pm



Kirkplace Church, 12-16 Derby Street, Kogarah NSW 2217

Featuring special guest speakers: **This is a free event, open to all.**  
**Dr Jayakumar Christian** (Director of World Vision India and author of "God of the Empty Handed")  
**Rev Tim Costello** (CEO, World Vision Australia)  
**Rev Dr John Dickson** (Director, Centre for Public Christianity & well known author)  
**Rev Steve Chong** (Lead Pastor, Kirkplace Presbyterian Church)

For more information visit [worldvision.com.au/events](http://worldvision.com.au/events)  
 or email [church@worldvision.com.au](mailto:church@worldvision.com.au)

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