

Southern CROSS

MARCH
2014

THE NEWS MAGAZINE FOR

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The conference call

SPEAKERS BEAT A PATH TO SYDNEY

- + Waves of support for 100 Beaches
- & An evangelistic *Jesus Christ Superstar*



COVER

Engaging culture faithfully: Tim Keller's first visit to Australia, and the busy evangelical conference scene in Sydney.

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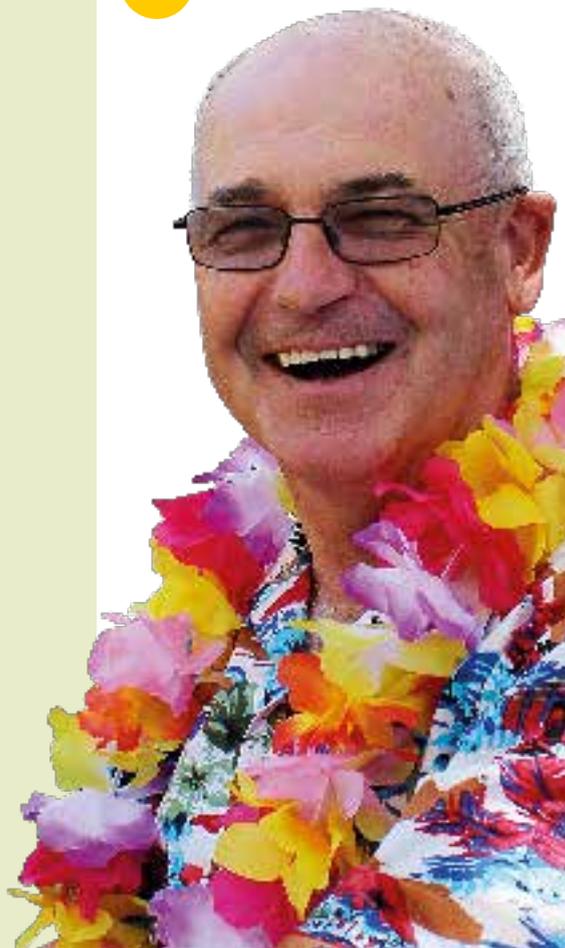
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“ the 100
Beaches Challenge
is a race against
time as we try
to break the waves
of poverty ”

David Mansfield

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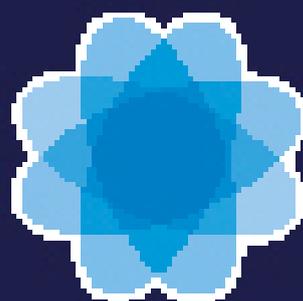
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Chatswood plans Chinese school

The Rev Brian Tung (left) and the Rev Steve Jeffrey interact with parents and children at St Paul's Mandarin playgroup. PHOTO: David Lawrence

JUDY ADAMSON

AS CHURCH RENOVATION PLANS go, it's a biggie. St Paul's, Chatswood is hoping that by this time next year it will have a school up and

running for kids in years K-2 – and not just any school, mind you, but a Mandarin-English school.

“Our church has three languages and four congregations – English, Mandarin and Cantonese – and we're right smack in the middle of a massive population of Mandarin

and Cantonese speakers,” explains St Paul's general manager, David Lawrence. “We're in a vibrant Chinese community that needs to hear the gospel... The link between the church and the school would be a wonderful, privileged connection.”

While the school is an enormous

project to take on, last year 95 per cent of members were in favour of pursuing a development application. Once Willoughby Council gave the go-ahead for a school with 49 students, 98 per cent voted in favour of the \$2 million budget.

Says rector the Rev Steve Jeffrey:



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“To have that kind of vote in favour was massive. The first time this was brought to the table for us as a church was probably in 2009, and most people were angry with the idea. I think now we’re really starting to stretch our faith muscles and trust God in a way we haven’t before.

“About \$700,000 over three years was pledged by members [towards the cost]. We haven’t even built anything and the first round of pledges are in the bank and ready to go. That’s really the test for us. It’s one thing to vote in favour and say ‘Let’s do it’ – it’s quite another to put your money on the line. And it’s coming from a broad range of people across all congregations.”

In December, Standing Committee gave the parish permission to sell a property it owns to help fund the building program. Money from the sale will be held in trust, so Standing Committee also needs to approve the release of trust funds for the school. A group from St Paul’s, with the help of local Archdeacon Terry Dein, is preparing information it hopes will be considered by the Committee this month.

If all is approved, and the school registered for 2015, there will be a six-month build to prepare the International Chinese School for next year. This will include rejuvenating an old timber hall on the church site, creating a large playground for the school and the existing Anglo and Mandarin playgroups, building an undercover breakout area that will benefit the school and the church, and developing a renewed car park designed to incorporate school drop-offs and pick-ups.

Mr Lawrence says the plan is to start with 15-20 students and build to 49 by year three. “We’ve got loose waiting lists and potential staff members... so we’ll be ready to roll as soon as there’s approval,” he says, adding that if the school is a success the church will look at offsite options for a K-6 campus.

Mr Jeffrey describes the school as “a great opportunity for us as a local church”. He asks for prayer – not just that the school would open, but that St Paul’s would continue in its desire to “connect into the next generation here in Chatswood and be a ministry into people’s lives”.

Cameron moves to St Mark’s



AFTER MORE THAN A DECADE AT Moore Theological College, ethics lecturer the Rev Dr Andrew Cameron (above) is leaving to become the director of St Mark’s National Theological Centre in Canberra. Dr Cameron is also the founding director of Moore’s Centre for Christian Living.

“Andrew is an extraordinarily able ethicist,” said the principal of Moore College, the Rev Dr Mark Thompson. “His contribution to Moore during more than a decade on the faculty has been of the highest quality and the most enduring character. While we are very sorry that he is leaving us – it is a very significant loss – we are not at all surprised

that others have seen the value of Andrew’s ministry and invited him to lead them.”

Dr Cameron and his wife Mary-Anne will move to Canberra at the start of second semester this year.

“I am honoured to be trusted with this role,” he said. “St Mark’s has a great tradition of both regional and national ministries which I respect and hope I can build upon. I am very thankful for Bishop Tom Frame’s leadership over the previous seven years; he has left a strong team and vibrant legacy for me to participate in.”

The Archbishop of Sydney, Dr Glenn Davies, also wished Dr Cameron well, describing him as “both an accomplished scholar and a faithful servant of Christ. He possesses an incisive mind, a firm integrity and a pervasive godliness, which he brings to every task he approaches. St Mark’s Theological Centre has chosen well and I have no doubt that Dr Cameron will continue to bless the Australian Church in his new role.”



Moore Community Space

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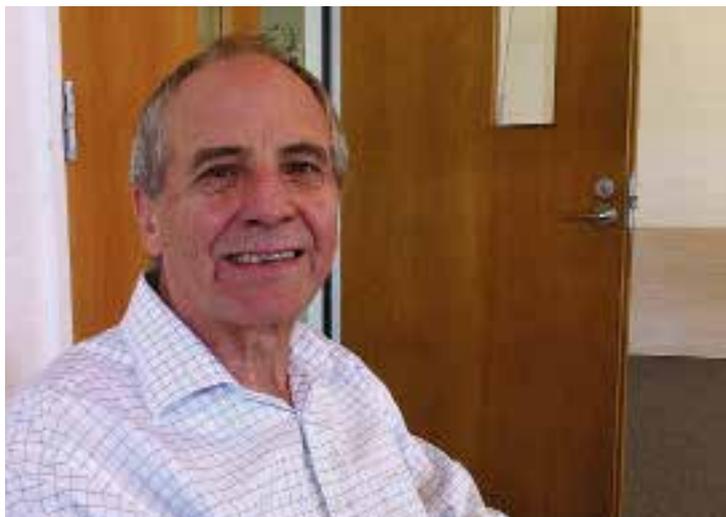
Community chaplaincy gains momentum

RUSSELL POWELL

STANDING COMMITTEE HAS endorsed a decision by the board of Evangelism and New Churches to create "community chaplains" as a way of reaching the 90 per cent of people beyond the current reach of diocesan Mission programs.

The new strategy has emerged from a review of existing chaplaincy arrangements. "We are mostly out of touch with the bulk of our city," said Bruce Hall, director of Evangelism and New Churches. "If we are to evangelise and grow our churches four times better than we are at the present, we would still have 90 per cent not reached with the gospel. We need to begin by raising up a new generation of men and women who are evangelists who don't run [churches] but are connected with churches. We need a generation of 'missionaries' to our city."

The review looked at the work done by bodies such as Anglicare,



New initiatives needed: ENC director the Rev Bruce Hall. PHOTO: NewLife Anglican

Anglican Retirement Villages and schools, as well as other chaplaincy models outside the Diocese.

'Great work is already being done in the public space by small platoons of God's people,' the review's report said, 'and our recommendation is to strengthen that work and increase it by providing formal training programs [see story below], funding

and a structure that will allow greater participation by all of the Anglican Diocese, its parishes and its laity'.

In fact, lay involvement is expected to be key to the strategy, as well as a unified diocesan education program. Along with the report, Standing Committee members were given copies of the article in the

May 2013 edition of *Southern Cross*, which looked at the opportunities for chaplains in emergency services and disaster recovery. The report said an expansion of the chaplaincy program is 'an opportunity for partnership between the parishes, mission areas and the community.

'It provides the basis for future rapid community support for disaster-related events'.

Statistics cited by the report said that in the next 40 years Australia's population would reach 35 million with 87 per cent of that growth through migration. The numbers in Sydney alone will climb to 7 million. New migrants and children will make up more than one-third of the population.

Said Mr Hall: "We need new initiatives to increase our gospel 'reach' into the community and we need to examine how to use the resources we currently devote to the 10 per cent to improve our work among the 90 per cent. The fields are white, but the labourers are often looking elsewhere".

TRAINED TO REACH OUT

CHANGING needs in society and the desire to reach out more effectively have resulted in a partnership between Moore College, Anglicare and Evangelism and New Churches to prepare and present a range of study options for those seeking to work in chaplaincy.

"We've been working with the chaplains at Anglicare for two years on this, and with Bruce [Hall, the director of ENC] for a year or so, about where the areas are that we need to develop," says the head of Moore's ministry department, the Rev Archie Poulos. "And we've come up with the same answers.

"We're recognising that our world is changing and our traditional churches with their attractional model are great things, but that for more and more of our society church is invisible. There are lots

of people who think churches are closed because we only seem to be open on Sundays while they're doing other things. So what we need to think about is community chaplaincy and community evangelism, and our offerings are being shaped across those lines."

Moore is now offering an award of attainment for volunteers in either hospital, prison or community chaplaincy. This involves studying four core subjects in the Preliminary Theological Certificate – Introduction to the Bible, Promise to Fulfilment, New Testament 1 and The Knowledge of God (previously Doctrine 1) – plus a chaplaincy practicum administered by Moore but written by Anglicare chaplains and delivered by Anglicare and ENC (see story above).

In addition, college students who undertake the advanced pastoral

ministry subject in fourth year, and plan to pursue chaplaincy once they finish at Moore, will now have the opportunity to be mentored for the following six months in a chaplaincy setting.

The Rev David Pettett, the assistant director, chaplaincy, for Anglicare, says, "Joining with Moore has given us the focus of encouraging our volunteers and paid chaplains to develop their pastoral practice while they reflect theologically. We don't want people in ministry just tacking on some pastoral practice to a theological degree. Our new training encourages the development of pastoral practice and theology together so that they inform each other."

Also now in place at Moore for students undertaking the one-year Diploma of Bible and Ministry is a subject in evangelistic

ministry focusing on community evangelism and chaplaincy in different institutional settings. And last month Moore also began offering a Masters course in pastoral supervision.

Mr Poulos says two-thirds of the Masters will be run by Nicky Lock and the Rev Dr Geoff Broughton, who have taught a similar course at St Mark's Theological Centre in Canberra. "The other third is specific to our pastoral situation [in Sydney] – working through the best way to pastorally supervise staff, congregational members and assistant ministers. If they're working through an institution [such as a hospital or school] David Pettett will work with that. "We are praying that this will be a means that God might use to see more and more people engaged with the gospel of Jesus."

Judy Adamson

Anglicans awarded

RUSSELL POWELL

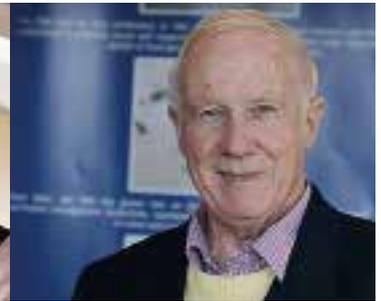
A DOZEN ANGLICANS IN NSW have been named in the Australia Day honours list including the headmaster of The King's School, Dr Tim Hawkes and the former principal of Deaconess House, Deaconess Margaret Rodgers.

Dss Rodgers was made a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) for "significant service to the Anglican Church of Australia through governance and representational roles, and to ecumenical affairs". Dss Rodgers was the principal of Deaconess House in Newtown from 1976-1985 and later served as the CEO of Anglican Media and the Archbishop's media officer. She has also been a regular commentator for the NSW Council of Churches on Radio 2CH.

Dr Hawkes has been headmaster of King's since 1998 and was awarded the Medal of the Order Of Australia (OAM) for "service to education, and to professional organisations".

Several other Anglicans were also recognised for business, community and church service.

Associate Professor John Overton, a member of St Philip's, York Street, was appointed an AM for "significant service to medicine, particularly in the area of anaesthesia, through clinical, administration and advisory roles, and to professional organisations". Dr Overton was previously awarded a Medal of



From left: Deaconess Margaret Rodgers; Dr Tim Hawkes; Allan Ezzy.

the Order of Australia in the 1999 Queen's Birthday Honours List for his service to medicine and to the welfare of children as a paediatric anaesthetist. He also holds Defence Force Reserve decorations.

The treasurer of Warrawee Anglican Church, Peter Achterstraat, was given an AM for "significant service to public administration through financial management and governance roles, and to the community". Allan Ezzy of Greystanes was honoured for "significant service to local government in NSW, and to the community through law enforcement, church and service organisations". Mr Ezzy has been a lay canon of St John's Cathedral, Parramatta and also a warden of the Cathedral.

Other Anglicans to receive the Medal of the Order Of Australia include Vera Abell of Mowll Village, Castle Hill for "service to the community, co-ordinating charitable donations". She founded a group of volunteers who donate handmade and purchased goods

to Anglicare Family Services, with donations currently totalling in excess of 40,000 items.

Philip Cooper, a member of St John's, Beecroft was recognised with an OAM for "service to the insurance industry, and to the Scouting movement".

Apart from Dr Hawkes, other OAM honourees in the field of education include Dr Janis Milburn, a former deputy chair of the Sydney Anglican Schools' Corporation and headmistress of the New

England Girls Grammar School from 1973-1989. Michael Smee of Camperdown was chairman of the South Australian Anglican Schools' Commission in the 1980s and later served as headmaster of Pulteney Grammar School in Adelaide.

Margaret Spinks was awarded an OAM for service to the community of Hunters Hill as a church warden, parish councillor, parish archivist, pastoral care team member and organiser of Hunters Hill parish's 150th anniversary celebrations.



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100 beaches boosts battle against poverty



Jumping in: David Mansfield at an Illawarra beach, halfway through the 100 Beaches Challenge.

RUSSELL POWELL

IT MAY HAVE NOT TURNED THE tide on world poverty, but the battle has become a little easier in areas being assisted by the Archbishop of Sydney's Anglican Aid, after a whirlwind tour of NSW beaches.

Anglican Aid CEO the Rev David Mansfield and a group of board- and bodysurfers set out on the South Coast, and at the edge of the Sydney Diocese, on February 10.

Their challenge was to surf and swim 100 beaches from Bawley Point, near Ulladulla, to Barrenjoey on the northern beaches of Sydney.

As Mr Mansfield swam and preached his way through the beaches and churches of the area, groups of Christians met for prayer

on the beaches before each outing and the money flowed, ranging from pledges of 10 cents a beach (\$10) to \$100 a beach (\$10,000).

The youngest surfer was 17-year-old Port Macquarie student Ben Collins, who joined the team of older surfers, as David Mansfield said, "making us feel good about ourselves as we hit the water each morning".

The allusions to water and surfing came as fast as the tide on each beach. "Just as Jesus encourages us we want to break the waves of poverty around the world and help those who are much needier than we are," Mr Mansfield said.

"With over 20,000 children under the age of five dying every day from preventable causes such as hunger, the 100 Beaches Challenge is a race against time as we try to break the waves of poverty engulfing

communities throughout the world," he told *Southern Cross*.

Sponsors could choose from a range of projects: helping to educate orphans in Bali, rescuing girls from prostitution in South Africa, providing dental health care in the Congo, training semi-literate pastors in South Sudan, supporting children with disabilities in Tanzania and giving sight to people in India.

But the key project was the African Gambella WASH scheme in Ethiopia, where 30,000 mothers are being trained in better practices of water and sanitation hygiene. This protects their children from deadly water-borne infections and diseases. (see SC, November 2013).

"The children of Gambella are dying in large numbers but our 100 Beaches Challenge will go a long way in saving lives," Mr Mansfield said.

Now the challenge is over, Mr Mansfield is reflective about what such "extreme events" can achieve.

"The number of people who came out to meet us at each beach was heartening – a highlight being the evening meeting at Dapto Anglican where 85 men joined us," he said. "I can speak to and pray with more people in two weeks [doing this] than I ever would in months at the office."

The next target for Anglican Aid is its fundraising drive for half a million dollars to meet its current commitments in training the next generation of leaders in Africa.

The next extreme challenge? "Lawn bowls," Mr Mansfield said mischievously. "But seriously, there's been a great suggestion for a Two Rivers Canoe challenge down the Parramatta and Georges rivers."

Bushfire aid continues

JUDY ADAMSON

IN THE SECOND HALF OF OCTOBER last year, you couldn't turn a corner in the Springwood-Winmalee area without tripping over a TV crew. Earnest pieces to camera amid the haze of bushfire smoke, the sound of choppers overhead – everyone was busily capturing the moment for posterity as locals lost homes and livelihoods.

Months later, the media bandwagon is long gone, but the needs are ongoing for the 200 families whose homes were destroyed, and the 100 or so more whose properties suffered damage.

Major charities are still on the ground, providing help and funds – and among them is the parish of Springwood, which had several members lose homes and has been caring in practical ways from day

one. Funds and vouchers were given out to those in need, but on top of that groups from the church helped those with property damage deal with the massive job of cleaning up areas affected by smoke or fire.

"Their whole backyard might have been completely black, with burnt-out trees that posed a danger, or there was a whole range of things to deal with inside the house," explains Springwood's rector, Steve Young, who also leads the church's bushfire response committee.

"For example, if a window was open during the fire then that whole room would have filled with soot, and that had to be cleaned up. Some people's insurance company did that for them, but others' didn't, so we helped them. It was all fairly messy."

Five months down the track the church has more plans afoot. It received money from a range of sources after the fire but on the advice of Anglican Aid, which



PHOTO: Leonora Enking

gave about \$50,000 to help with emergency needs, the parish held back some of those funds to give out to locals as the weather cools and they need to buy winter clothes.

In addition, a member of the church who works as a counsellor ran a seminar late last month on the impact of disaster and trauma – a follow-up to one he ran the month

after the fires, which was attended by more than 100 people.

Mr Young says that, after the seminar, the church is offering to pay for some counselling for those who feel they need it. Another practical idea is to hire storage space.

"There are a lot of people in short- to medium-term rentals – some of them do plan to rebuild, and storage is becoming more of an issue," he says. "They might be offered something [a piece of furniture] and want to take it, but they've got nowhere to store it, and that's where we might be able to help.

"We can't offer thousands of dollars to individuals – it's more in the hundreds. But there are needs that won't be covered by a big agency that we can help with. We just need to position ourselves so that we can continue to develop relationships with people as well as being practically helpful."

Thanks: Steve Young letter, page 17.

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Conference works up a SWEAT

THE SOUTH-WEST EVANGELISM and Training Conference, known as SWEATCon, wrapped up its fourth successful event recently.

The interdenominational conference, which is hosted by Hoxton Park Anglican Church, was designed to provide training to lay leaders and clergy with an awareness of the diversity in Sydney's south-west, and can be accessed by all Christians who live in the area.

"Our tagline is a conference for the south-west by the south-west," says SweatCon co-organiser and rector of St Barnabas', Fairfield, the Rev Peter Lin. "We started this conference because there are people here who aren't university-educated – not everyone has finished school.

"We wanted to do a similar thing to the National Training Event and Next Gen in terms of training people in biblical theology and evangelism through various strands, but we



Youth worker Mike Kinsey (left) with James Lane, a Fairfield SRE teacher.

also realised we needed to do so in a different way. We try to use a lot of non-bookish techniques, kinesthetic techniques, in order to appeal to different learning styles, and encourage people in our churches who learn in those kinds of ways."

In addition to the core training material, the theme of the conference this year was Passion for Christ, with talks by Ross Ciano and Mike Raiter, and a series of workshops led by people such as sexologist Dr Patricia Weerakoon

and Haydn Sennitt, formerly of Liberty Christian Ministries.

"This year we've also run a pastors' workshop in the afternoon with Mike Raiter – who's taken people through preaching workshops – because we're now trying to encourage pastors as well," Mr Lin says. "And with the workshops, our aim is to equip people with regard to issues of today. Sex, science and faith, multicultural ministry and same-sex relationship are all things we've been covering."

Mr Lin considers the main benefit of the conference to be the opportunity it provides for local churches to meet, encourage and equip each other, as they negotiate the particular needs, issues and obstacles to faith in their parishes.

"We're really just putting this on to help people serve in their churches," he says. "There are people who struggle, particularly if you're in a small church. You can think you're the only one struggling. Sometimes the most encouraging thing is to meet with people from other churches [which are] also struggling. "Not all churches are struggling in the same way, of course – some are doing pretty well – but even for people like youth pastors who are starting out with tiny youth groups, it can be good to get together and encourage each other, and train each other in how to keep reaching the south-west. That's what we're trying to do."

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Preschool children in the poor Yangon suburb of Dhala singing a "Thank you" song after a visit by the mission team.

Fruits of Myanmar mission

NICK GILBERT

A TEAM OF VOLUNTEERS recently travelled from Blakehurst Anglican Church to Myanmar on a short-term mission trip.

The rector of Blakehurst Anglican, the Rev Paul Lucas, says the trip, which has become a regular event, was all about assisting the neediest people in the country's largest city Yangon, as well as helping out the local church.

"There were seven of us who went," Mr Lucas says. "While we were there we visited orphanages, hanging out with and teaching the kids and supplying what we call 'love packs', which are really hygiene items for the kids. We shopped for and packed over 300 of those while we were there, and also gave enough rice and things for a month to each orphanage.

"We also participated in a ministry school. What they do there is teach community development and leadership, and we were able to teach God's big picture, essentially a biblical theology, to this group, most of whom are pastors in churches."

Mr Lucas says he began visiting Myanmar in 2007 after going on a short-term mission trip run by global evangelical organisation Operation Mobilisation.

"I chose Myanmar because it was an opportunity to work as relief for some of the people who work there," he says. "We then got connected with people there, and I just kept going back, with others as well."

Mr Lucas says some of the key issues for the Burmese church include the still-developing rights to freedom of religion and expression and Buddhist influences on Christian theology, as well as a sometimes superficial knowledge of the Bible – which has historically led to the

influence of the prosperity gospel regionally and internationally.

"Biblical knowledge can be shallow," he says. "You go and teach biblical theology to these people and you can really see the lights turn on. Being able to help them understand the Bible, which was translated into Burmese by English missionaries years ago, is great. The problem, of course, is that you have about eight different ethnic groups in Myanmar. The current translation is in Burmese, which is a second language to a lot of people, so even from that point of view it's a little difficult, but it's a wonderful opportunity for us."

He says he's also been privileged, along with this team, to see both pastors and lay people in Myanmar develop a real thirst to uncover God's word in the Bible, and to explore it in more and more depth.

"[At one of the training days at a Yangon ministry college,] they opened up the Bible teaching part

to whoever wanted to come – it became an open invite event," Mr Lucas says. "There was one guy whose name was Abraham, and his wife's name, believe it or not, was Sarah, and she would ride on the back of a pushbike for an hour and a half each way to hear the Bible. It was incredible to see that, and for them to come."

The effects of the trip have been felt at home as well. Mr Lucas says such short-term mission trips have been an opportunity not just to serve overseas, but also to encourage mission in the local church context.

"We had a terrific team, and they all worked incredibly hard, and it's been such a blessing," he says. "God has blessed us in such a way that when we've come home there's this new invigoration for mission now we're home, and people getting involved in others needing to hear the gospel."

Anglicare and Anglican Aid help link up asylum seeker ministries

NICK GILBERT

CHURCHES SERVING ASYLUM seekers are now being networked together through an initiative headed up by Anglicare.

Dave Baker, who is currently leading this effort at Anglicare on a volunteer basis, says his work provides information to churches about how they can support each other in asylum ministry, and helps connect resources to needs.

"Really, a good portion of it is simply communicating those needs to other churches around the place that might be able to help," he says.

The initiative began last year, with Anglican Aid, along with Anglicare, organising a meeting for some churches involved in ministries to asylum seekers in order to share ideas and stories.

"What happened last year was we tried to help the churches that were doing work with asylum seekers, and we ran a meeting jointly in Parramatta that was attended by seven or eight churches," says Anglican Aid's office and Africa project manager, Eddie Ozols.

"We handed that over to Anglicare in the end because it wasn't really part of our remit, but we did provide some funds to two churches for the emergency work that they were doing.



St John's Cathedral, Parramatta is one of the churches involved in the initiative.

"That initial meeting highlighted, I think, that everyone was in the same boat, and that there was suddenly this need."

The Rev Clive Buultjens, the pastor at St John's, West Strathfield, was one of those at the first meeting last year.

"I've been in contact with asylum seekers for about two years," he says. "I've been trying to help them with clothing, furniture, internet connections, that sort of thing, but also visiting and reading the Bible with them. Often they are non-Christians as well, so it's been a great opportunity to extend the kingdom. Two people have come to Christ already, which is fantastic."

Mr Buultjens says the initiative has helped the ministry he has been conducting, particularly in terms of sharing resources and filling needs.

"That networking has been really useful," he says. "Meeting people

who are doing this ministry in other churches, being able to find people who can transport furniture and do those practical things. Sometimes I have furniture that I want to give to people, but I haven't got transport. Manoj [Chacko, rector of Liverpool South] has been able to provide us with Tamil bibles. It would actually be great to work together more closely, in terms of evangelistic endeavours and services as well."

Mr Baker says while political changes barring new arrivals of asylum seekers into Australia have changed some aspects of this ministry, many churches are still doing the same work they were doing eight months ago.

"There's been a bit of a shift, but not as much as you might think," he says. "Early on, there were some churches who were dealing with dozens to hundreds of new asylum seekers regularly because

they were next door to a hotel [in which asylum seekers in community detention were being temporarily housed] ... But a lot of the churches, especially out west, continue to deal with asylum seekers in much the same way that they have been. The waves of asylum seekers we're currently helping are those who came throughout 2013 – who came before the change in policy [under the Rudd Labor government] and were released into community detention, and can't work, and are in temporary and uncertain conditions."

Mr Baker says having these people in our country represents a significant opportunity for Christian witness that would otherwise be impossible.

"It's such an awesome opportunity to have people from otherwise closed countries actually coming to us, living among us, and being able to hear the gospel.

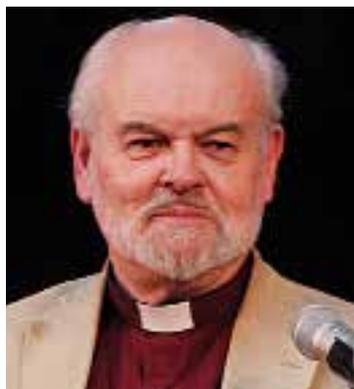
"From my experience of working with the churches, you can offer all sorts of ministries and run programs, but the very best thing that can be done, the most effective ministry, is to just provide friendship, to provide Christian friends who aim to share the gospel with people. Through that, they can practise English and find out basic things about how Australia works anyway, but it's most important to have friends who love them and share the gospel."

The Gospel according to Harry and Katniss

A BRITISH SURVEY HAS REVEALED an appalling level of biblical literacy in the UK. The research found 29 per cent of children did not know the story of the nativity came from the Bible.

The picture for other classic Bible stories is worse. Thirty-eight per cent of children indicated that they had never seen, read or heard about Adam and Eve, while for the crucifixion the figure is 43 per cent. For adults, the picture is little better. Presented with the plotlines of Bible stories and Hollywood blockbusters, many adults couldn't distinguish between the two.

Just over half of parents aged 25 to 34 correctly identified the story of Noah's ark as appearing in the Bible. However, almost a quarter of those aged 25 to 34 thought the storyline of *Harry Potter* was, or might be, in the Bible. Fifty-four per cent of parents thought the plot of *The*



Hunger Games might be biblical. Commenting on the results, the Bishop of London, Dr Richard Chartres (above), said: "Too few children have the opportunity to hear and reflect on what this life-changing book contains. Even those that do when they are young often take its awesome stories for granted when they become adults. There is work to be done."

WORLD BRIEFS

Auckland: Complaints from just three parents has seen a New Zealand primary school remove religious education classes from its curriculum. The board of the St Heliers School decided it will now hold Christian-based lessons after the end of the school day, even though a survey showed 68 per cent of respondents in favour of the classes, 19 per cent against, and the remaining 13 per cent neutral. A pressure group, the Secular Education Network, praised the decision while the principal Craig McCarthy said even though a majority supported the lessons continuing, there were other factors such as the pressure on classroom time and an increasing diversity of the New Zealand population.

Malaysia: The controversy over the use of the word "Allah" for God has intensified, with the Christian community and Islamic authorities at an impasse. Christians make up about 9 per cent of the Malaysian population, and those in Sabah and Sarawak claim they have used the term in their language for hundreds of years. But the country's Court of Appeal ruled last October that "Allah" should only be used by Malay Muslims. The Primate of the Anglican Church in South East Asia, Archbishop Bolly Lapok (right), has declared: "We won't stop using the word 'Allah'" and has commended the Muslim Chief Minister of Sarawak, Taib Mahmud, for his "bold stand" in not bowing to Islamist calls for a crackdown.



Washington: The abortion rate in the US has fallen to a 40-year low. A private research group, the Guttmacher Institute, says there are 16.9 abortions per 1000 women aged 15-44, the lowest rate since 1973. The group says the drop, from a peak in 1981, is not the result of legislative restrictions. Rachel Jones, the lead author of the study, said, "The decline in abortions coincided with a steep national drop in overall pregnancy and birth rates. Contraceptive use improved during this period... moreover, the recent recession led many women and couples to want to avoid or delay pregnancy and childbearing".

Overseas Ministry Fund 2014 – Target \$500,000



Imagine going to a church where the one and only pastor doesn't have a high school education, let alone a degree in theology. This is the case in many places across Africa.

In 2012/13, Anglican Aid's Overseas Ministry Fund supported 252 theological and Bible students in seven African countries at a total cost of \$175,123.

We cannot respond to all requests from Bishops and Bible College Principals who share our love for Jesus and our commitment to Biblical authority. \$500,000 is needed to continue to fund current students and the many other worthwhile requests for support we have received.

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An extract from Anglican Aid's 2013 Annual Report on the OMF can be viewed at http://anglicanaid.org.au/files/OMFAR_file.pdf



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African leaders push back on same-sex report

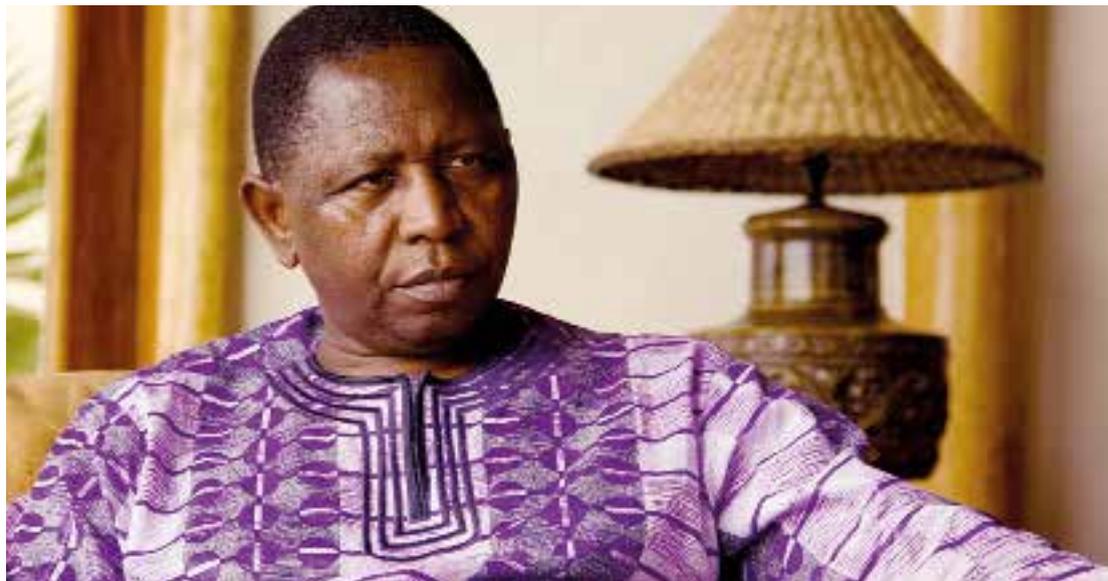
RUSSELL POWELL

TWO PROMINENT ARCHBISHOPS are among the African church leaders who have responded sharply to a new report from the Church of England that all but endorses the blessing of same-sex relationships.

The Pilling Report, named after its chairman, retired English civil servant Sir Joseph Pilling, was commissioned by the English House of Bishops in 2012 as the "working group on human sexuality".

While acknowledging that the Scriptures are strongly negative on homosexual practice and that the doctrine of the Anglican Church against homosexuality and same-sex marriage had not changed, the report laid stress on the Lambeth Conference resolution to 'listen to the experience of homosexual persons': 'Whilst abiding by the Church's traditional teaching on human sexuality, we encourage the Church to continue to engage openly and honestly and to reflect theologically on the circumstances in which we find ourselves to discern the mind of Christ and what the Spirit is saying to the Church now', the report concluded.

The group remained unclear about the scriptural references to



Archbishop Stanley Ntagali of the Church of Uganda. PHOTO: Anglican Diocese of Bristol

homosexual behaviour: 'We have listened to scholars who have studied these texts in depth', the report said. 'We are impressed by their diligence but have found, like many others, that whilst scholarship has deepened our knowledge it has not changed our individual beliefs about what God may require of lesbian and gay people or of his church.' Although not using the term "blessings", one of the report's 18 recommendations was that 'there can be circumstances where a priest, with the agreement of the relevant PCC (parish council), should be free to mark the formation of a permanent same-sex relationship in a public service but should be under no obligation to do so'.

The principal of Oakhill Theological College, Dr Mike Ovey, believes the Pilling conclusions have serious implications. "We must stress just how momentous the judgment is that Scripture is unclear," he said. "It means that the authority of Scripture is not actualised. There is a suspension of judgment. Or more accurately, a judgment is made to suspend judgment."

Not all the Pilling panel agreed with the report's conclusions. In a dissenting statement the Bishop of

Birkenhead, Keith Sinclair, said he could not sign it because "I believe Scripture and Christian tradition offer a clearer and better vision from God for the world in his gift of our sexuality as men and women, and that this is sufficient for directing the Church at this critical time of major cultural change".

His view was echoed by the chairman of GAFCON, Kenyan Archbishop Eliud Wabukala, who said: "The underlying problem is whether or not there is a willingness to accept the Bible for what it really is, the word of God". Archbishop Wabukala said he could not accept the so-called "listening process" urged by the report. "The conversations it proposes are not to commend biblical teaching on marriage and family, but are based on the assumption that we cannot be sure about what the Bible says," he said.

The Pilling Report was followed by an open letter from the two senior English archbishops, Canterbury and York, on the eve of visits to Africa. Their letter was addressed to Anglican leaders around the world, as well as the government of Nigeria – which has laws against certain same-sex behaviour – and

to Uganda, which is considering even stronger measures. Both archbishops called on churches to uphold a 2005 resolution of primates to "be committed to the pastoral support and care of homosexual people".

Archbishop Stanley Ntagali of Uganda, whose church has made representations to soften the Ugandan laws, said the church was "grateful for the reminder" of the promises churches, including his own, made. But in a rebuke to the English archbishops, Archbishop Ntagali said, "We would further like to remind them, as they lead their own church through the 'facilitated conversations' recommended by the Pilling Report, that the teaching of the Anglican Communion from the 1998 Lambeth Conference, from Resolution 1.10, still stands".

This resolution states that 'homosexual practice is incompatible with Scripture' and the conference 'cannot advise the legitimising or blessing of same-sex unions nor ordaining those involved in same-gender unions'.

After a year of discussion, the Pilling Report will be fully considered by the Church of England House of Bishops in January next year.



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The best kept ministry secret

DAVID PETTETT

RECENTLY ONE OF OUR HOSPITAL chaplains took some long service leave. We organised for the assistant minister from a local parish to do a locum for two and half days a week.

This was a win for us, and a win for the parish. The hospital still needed a chaplaincy presence. The parish needed help with its funds and this small injection of a few weeks' pay for the assistant would be just the thing.

This young minister hadn't thought much about hospital chaplaincy. It wasn't real ministry, after all. It's not what they prepared you for in college. The daily round of parish ministry was where the rubber hit the road. Here you got the chance to teach the Bible and interact with people in their everyday lives, encouraging them to be solidly Christian with their family, at work and in their interactions with neighbours. Hospital chaplaincy was for those who, well, don't quite make it in real ministry. But he was willing to give it a go.

He was surprised with his very first visit. He had a list of "Anglican" patients in the hospital and approached the first one. He introduced himself as the Anglican chaplain to a man in his early seventies.

"Ah, I don't go to church these days, mate," the man said. "I used to teach Sunday school when I was a teenager but my mother died of cancer when I was 20. There didn't seem much point any more."

"You must have loved your mother very much," the young minister replied.

The old man began to cry. Through the tears and emotion the conversation went on. The emotion rose as the man came to realise that the God he had taught about, and believed in, was still the same. This God had his mother's, and his own, best interests at heart. He became overwhelmed with the thought that

God hadn't abandoned him. And he became deeply saddened at the thought of the many years he had spent distancing himself from God. The young minister encouraged him to turn again to God, seek forgiveness and accept the salvation bought for him by the blood of Jesus.

Coming away from that conversation the young minister was completely drained. In four and a half years of ministry he had never had such an intense conversation. He had never been so deeply engaged in a gospel conversation such as this in his entire Christian life. But he had seen the Spirit of God touch a man's life and bring him back into fellowship with the Father and the Son.

Sitting under a tree in the hospital grounds just to gather himself he began to get very excited. He realised God had led him to this man and had used him to bring the good news of Jesus to someone who had been lost. He wanted to race home and tell his wife.

Over the next few weeks the young minister found that each day he was keen to get to the hospital. He was even disappointed when he woke in the mornings and remembered that today was a parish day. In the hospital he had many similar conversations with people who had drifted away from former Christian commitment. These conversations might not have been as dramatic as the first one, but all were positive and left

people challenged to reconsider their commitment to Jesus.

It was not only patients the budding chaplain encountered. He developed a friendship with the son of a patient. This young man came to church and the relationship is still growing.

This young minister can't believe what a well-kept secret hospital ministry is. He wants more ministers to have the opportunity to be involved. He can see what a fruitful ground it is. He can see what comfort and encouragement a minister of the gospel can bring to people who are thinking about the values of life, to people who are facing the end of life.

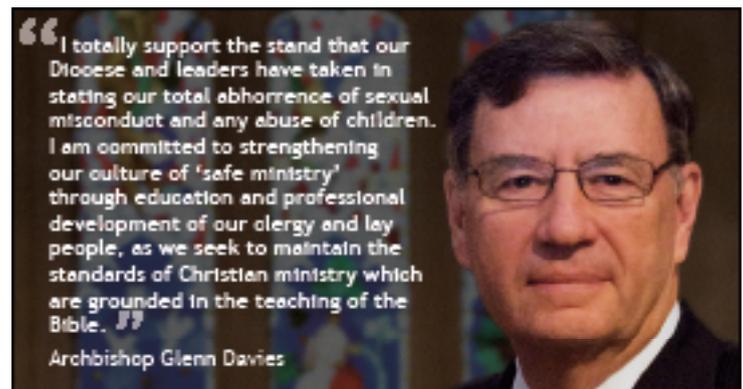
Surprisingly, or perhaps not, this assistant minister is not the only one I have seen within the last six

months get very excited about hospital ministry. Two of our new chaplains have expressed to me the joy of seeing people come to Christ as they have ministered to them in hospital. The conversations flow naturally. They are not forced but arise out of patients' genuine concerns that they feel free to express to their chaplain.

These chaplains are not proselytising. They are simply approaching people of their own denomination and allowing them to say what they feel. Surprising, really, that more ministers aren't falling over themselves to be part of this ministry.

The Rev David Pettett manages chaplains in prisons, hospitals and Chesalon in the Sydney Diocese for Anglicare.

Well-considered essays in response to issues raised by SC (700-word maximum) can be emailed to newspaper@anglicanmedia.com.au



Archbishop Glenn Davies

ZERO TOLERANCE

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

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MOVES



GREENWOOD TO SOUTH HURSTVILLE

The Rev Peter Greenwood became rector of the parish of South Hurstville last month.

An assistant minister at Crossway Anglican Churches (formerly St Paul's, Carlingford) since 2007, Mr Greenwood led a church plant to the West Pennant Hills valley in 2010.

"It was aimed at reaching the local suburb and, in particular, reaching the local community," he says.

"So I think the crossover with South Hurstville is that St Mark's has a wonderful, rich liturgical tradition that draws people from many surrounding suburbs, and as the parish enters a new phase of ministry life there is tremendous opportunity for reaching the local community as well... from children at the local public school and the St Mark's preschool to the shopping village to the large

ethnic community that resides in the area."

Mr Greenwood says the parish is a "really caring community", and what he will be seeking to do is help members show that care even more to the suburb around them.

"They need traction in getting families to come, and then down the track it would be building youth and young adults ministry," he says. "They've got a fantastic seniors ministry and pastoral care – there are people who've been here for 80 years who are faithful, committed saints and are wonderful godly people – but they need someone to reach families and teenagers in particular."

He says he and his wife Rachel are "really eager and excited" about the journey ahead of them, but "also daunted because it's a big responsibility being rector of a

parish. However, the sovereignty of God means that daunting aspect drives me to prayer and to trusting God further in this situation."

PADDINGTON PLAN

The Rev Dr Geoff Broughton has accepted the parish of St George's, Paddington.

Currently acting director (previously deputy director) of St Mark's Theological Centre in Canberra, where he lectures in theology and practical theology, Dr Broughton was often asked whether he would apply for the position of director after Bishop Tom Frame announced he would leave at the end of 2013.

"Ego said it would be something I should go for, but vocationally – with my skills, gifts and passions – I'd much rather run an inner-city parish," Dr Broughton says. "So that's what I told anyone who asked."

An apparently chance meeting with the Bishop of South Sydney, the Rt Rev Rob Forsyth, at a series of lectures led Dr Broughton towards Paddington.

"I just happened to bump into Rob... and he said, 'You don't want another inner-city parish, do you?'" Dr Broughton recalls. "And I thought that's the exact phrase I've been using. Lord, what's going on here?"

Keen to continue teaching – particularly in the areas of Christology, professional



supervision and Anglican formation – Dr Broughton found this was something the Paddington nominators were also keen to support. The result will be a ministry mix not often undertaken in Sydney, which will see Dr Broughton as rector, but part-time in the parish and part-time in the lecture room, while a ministry couple – Byron and Jess Smith, will do three days in the parish between them.

"I'm excited about it," he says. "This kind of model isn't done so often in big dioceses like Sydney and Melbourne, but it's the reality out there in the rest of the Anglican Church.

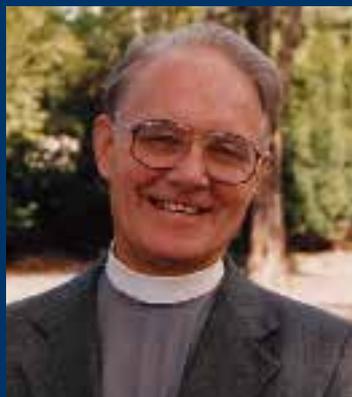
"Of course, in essence I'm trying to do two full-time jobs part-time, but that's a risk I, Paddington and [Archbishop] Glenn Davies are prepared to take. We're all on the same page in thinking this is a good thing to do. So managing the

VALE

The Ven Denis Francis Wann died on November 23, 2013.

Archdeacon Wann was born in June 1927 in suburban Dublin. Initially not keen on study, the young Denis was found a job in the Royal Bank by his father after finishing school. He rose through the ranks at work, whiled away evening and weekend hours drinking with mates and touring on his motorbike – often to dances or events where pretty girls might be found.

On one such expedition the young Denis got more than he bargained for, when he heard the gospel message on a camp and became a Christian soon afterwards. He met his future wife Elizabeth at a prayer group, and studied theology at Trinity College in Dublin while she undertook nursing training in England. The two married in 1956. After Archdeacon Wann's



ordination he spent two years as curate at St Donard's in East Belfast before the couple joined the Bible Churchmen's Missionary Society (now Crosslinks) in 1958 to serve – as minister and nurse respectively – in Tanzania (then Tanganyika). All four of their boys were born in Africa, and the Wanns became close to a number of

Australian CMS missionaries.

In 1972 Denis was made an honorary Canon of Morogoro before returning briefly to Northern Ireland to serve as curate of Shankill in Lurgan. It was hard at the time for evangelicals to find a parish in Northern Ireland, so Archdeacon Wann contacted Archbishop Marcus Loane who, on the recommendation of Bishop Alf Stanway, offered him the parish of Port Kembla.

The family came to Australia in 1973. After five years as rector of Port Kembla, he moved to Albion Park – and during the following years became rural dean of the Shoalhaven, and then Archdeacon of Wollongong and Camden.

In 1984 Archdeacon Wann moved to Sydney as rector of the parish of Turramurra, travelling back to Ireland in 1991 to spend four years as incumbent of Bailieborough

in County Cavan. His final official posting, after his retirement in 1995, was as part-time assistant minister of St Mark's, West Wollongong from 1998-2001, although he and Elizabeth also undertook locums in Oman and Lord Howe Island.

Speaking at Archdeacon Wann's funeral, his son Denis jnr said, "There were few expectations placed on us as his sons, except to put our Lord Jesus Christ first... When asked recently by one of his 13 grandchildren how he wished to be remembered, his reply was typically simple: 'As a true Christian'."

The Rev Ron Beard died on December 3, 2013.

Born in 1934, Mr Beard obtained a diploma from Sydney Missionary and Bible College before studying at Moore College. In the early

COMMUNITY

realities of that will be a new thing for Paddington and for me.

"I've always incorporated some teaching into my parish work, but this is the first time to formalise that. Yet the people of Paddington have a lot of goodwill about the idea... two of their former rectors went on to become principal of St Mark's, and they say they will benefit from my being involved in teaching and training in other parts of the Anglican Church."

There is no date fixed as yet for Dr Broughton's induction, although it will happen by mid-year.

FORSYTH'S TERM EXTENDED

Standing Committee has approved a recommendation from the Archbishop, Dr Glenn Davies, that the term of the Bishop of South Sydney, the Rt Rev Rob Forsyth, be extended to the end of December 2015.

Bishop Forsyth was due to retire in June this year, but Dr Davies told Standing Committee that he thought it was "undesirable for him to retire from his position as Bishop of South Sydney in four months' time", and while he recognised that refreshing the episcopate was important, he did not want to "rush in... with undue haste".

Dr Davies added that "Bishop Forsyth exercises a significant role at a number of levels in the Diocese, not the least of which is



his chairing of Anglican Media and being a senior media spokesman. Robert's experience as an assistant bishop, apart from his skill in responding to the media, is a valuable asset within the senior staff, which I believe we can ill afford to lose too quickly".

VACANT PARISHES

Parishes and provisional parishes, vacant or becoming vacant, as at February 19, 2014:

- Bankstown*
- Blackheath
- Centennial Park
- Eastwood
- Hurstville
- Mosman, St Luke's
- Nowra
- Penrith
- South Carlton
- Watsons Bay
- Wentworth Falls

*Denotes provisional parishes or Archbishop's appointments

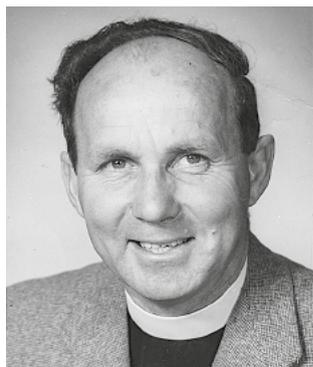
1960s he undertook a number of curacies, first at Coogee and South Coogee followed by Albion Park. He spent seven years as curate-in-charge and then rector of Albion Park, before joining the Bush Church Aid Society in 1970 to serve in North-West Australia in the parish of Exmouth. He then became the NSW Secretary of BCA, leaving in late 1974 to return to the Illawarra as rector of the parish of Bulli.

Mr Beard then served from 1982-86 as rector of West Ryde, before spending eight years as a chaplain with ARV in Castle Hill.

A quiet man, Mr Beard's faith and pastoral skills were noted in one of the many stories of the Rt Rev Howell Witt, who was "bush" Bishop of North-West Australia during Mr Beard's time in Exmouth. Beginning one of his tales with the observation that Mr Beard was

physically small like himself, Bishop Witt then added: "but his ability as a pastor was in inverse proportion to his size".

CORRECTION



In February SC a photo of the late Ken Patfield was mistakenly run with the obituary of his brother, the Rev Ron Patfield (above). We apologise for the error.

BEING BOAT PEOPLE

After reading the thoughtful letter from Ben Atwood (SC, February) I thought, yet again, of the irony of the current "turn back the boats" campaign. I wondered how often Aboriginal people wished that their forebears had been able to turn back the boats and prevent European settlement of their land.

Clearly there is no easy answer to our present dilemma, but we may, perhaps, deal with the situation more kindly (and with greater spiritual awareness) if all non-Aborigines remembered that their ancestors – and for many of us, we ourselves – were also "boat people".

Dr Ruth Bright
Turramurra

PRACTICAL THEOLOGY

I wonder if Mark Thompson's article in your last edition ("How does the theology of the Bible translate into practice?" SC, February) could have simply said "See page 9". On that page readers could find "The end of darkness" – the story of Shifang, saved through contact with a local ESL class.

Pete McDonald
Riverstone

LEARNING THROUGH DIVERSITY

Your reviewer in the February edition of *Southern Cross* suggested, amid a generally positive analysis of *Teaching Well: Insights for Educators in Christian Schools*, that a deficiency in the book was a lack of agreed definitions of Christian education. This was deliberate. We do not believe there is a single legitimate approach to or model of Christian education. Our intent, once assured that all contributors were evangelical Christians, was to let the authors speak for themselves and learn from their diversity.

Dr John Collier
St Andrew's Cathedral School;
Co-editor, *Teaching Well*

THANKS, FROM SPRINGWOOD

I would like to express the thanks of my church to all those individuals and churches throughout Sydney (and Australia



and the world) who sent money to us to support those who suffered loss in the bushfires in October last year.

Almost 200 houses were lost in our parish and many more were damaged. We are very thankful to God that no-one was killed (miraculous!) but many have suffered significant loss and trauma.

A number of churches as well as Anglican Aid contacted us as early as the day after the outbreak of the fires to tell us they were sending money immediately. This enabled us to begin planning our response with some confidence that we had resources to use. Since that time the generosity has been quite overwhelming, especially given that our church never officially held an appeal.

Having tracked down as many people as we can, we have used the money to provide everything from short-term financial relief to gardening help and money for counselling. Our hope is to maintain regular contact in order to develop meaningful ongoing relationships.

It has been a privilege to pass on the generosity of fellow Christians from all over. Those on the receiving end have been moved by your expressions of real care.

Steve Young
Minister, Anglican Churches
Springwood

Letters should be less than 200 words.
newspaper@anglicanmedia.com.au

The privilege of care

DR GLENN DAVIES



IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT FOR THE average Australian to be unaware that a Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse has been fully operational over the past year, following the announcement of its terms of reference by the former Prime Minister, Julia Gillard, towards the end of 2012. As I indicated in my Presidential Address last Synod,

We welcome the Royal Commission as a church that is mindful of its obligations to care for children, some of whom are the most vulnerable members of our society... The next 10 years, I suspect, will see a number of revelations that will be uncomfortable for the Anglican Church as well as other denominations and Christian organisations. However, we need to face any failures of the past with integrity, honour, repentance and compassion.

Public hearings have been held in various capital cities and recently in Sydney where the Commission has held hearings into the North Coast Children's Home in the Diocese of Grafton. The testimony of a number of victims of abuse is now on the public record, which should cause deep concern to any Christian, let alone any members of the Anglican Church.

The protection of children is of special concern for Christians. While the family is the natural place where children are nurtured and cared for by their parents, the Bible recognises the dislocation of a fallen world, so that the fatherless and orphans are given special mention. They are special to God's people because they are special to God, who 'is a father to the fatherless, a defender of widows' (Psalm 68:5; cf Psalms 10:17; 146:9). The Old Testament prescribed special protection for widows and orphans (Exodus

22:22; Deuteronomy 14:28-29; Psalm 82:3) and similar exhortations are repeated in the New Testament, where true religion embraces our care for 'widows and orphans in their distress' (James 1:27).

From June last year all clergy holding a

more than 1000 licensed clergy resident in the Diocese, this proved to be a monumental task of following up clergy, some of whom were not aware of their obligations under the law.

I am very grateful for the work of the Registrar and his staff in completing this task within the timeframe specified by the State Government. By the end of March 2015, all volunteers in our local churches who are working with children will require the same Working With Children Check and each parish will need to verify and record the numbers for all their volunteers.

This requirement by the State is a welcome move, as it highlights the importance of caring for the vulnerable in our society, and if the church is not in the forefront of championing the cause of the vulnerable, especially those within the orbit of our care, then we have lost our biblical roots. Our churches ought to be safe places for both children and adults, where the love of Christ is demonstrated in both word and deed.

The privilege of ministering to young children is a great one, and with it come many responsibilities. While compliance with State legislation may at times seem onerous, we should rejoice that the Government holds the protection of children in such high esteem. However, we have an even greater reason to care for children, especially those of the household of faith, as Jesus said 'Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven' (Matthew 19:14).

We continue to pray for those who have been damaged in Anglican churches through our negligence, as we strive to do all that we can to provide a safe place for children and vulnerable adults.

“
The privilege of ministering to children is a great one, and with it come many responsibilities.”

licence in the Diocese have been required by State legislation to apply for a Working With Children Check and verify their identity at their local motor registry. Our own diocesan Registry then needed to verify each number online and document every registration. With

A speaking ministry



Pastor of Redeemer Presbyterian Church in New York, and author of *Center Church* and *The Reason for God*, Tim Keller

This year Sydney will host some of the biggest figures in worldwide evangelicalism. Nick GILBERT looks at some of the ideas behind the speakers, and what conferences in general attempt to bring to the table – Bible teaching and ministry thinking.

IT SEEMS THAT, AS TIME GOES ON, THERE IS AN EVER-growing list of conferences to attend. Not only that, but the ever-growing number of conferences features an ever-growing list of internationally renowned names. For many, 365 days in a year is not nearly enough, but even so, the past few years have seen a larger than ever number of well-known international evangelical authors and preachers in Sydney, speaking at conferences, public events and churches during their time here.

Of course, visiting speakers isn't a new thing in itself. The likes of John Stott and Billy Graham were here more than half a century ago, with Mr Graham's crusades yet to be surpassed in terms of raw impact. However the sheer number of visits appears to have increased – the total of evangelical conferences in Sydney this year has passed double figures, while the actual number of speakers is on a completely separate level. The likes of Don Carson, Paul Tripp and John Lennox, who will be here in 2014, have made multiple trips to Sydney over the years, while one or two will be visiting for the first time.

FROM CITY TO CITY

Take, for example, Tim Keller. March 2014 will be Dr Tim Keller's first visit to Australia, although his church planting network, Redeemer City to City, has been involved in Sydney for some years already. He says that part of what has moved him to come to Sydney himself is the distinctives of Redeemer's ministry, and the role Australia's key cities continue to play not just in evangelical circles, but also culturally and economically in the local region.

"Our ministry has a burden for reaching the great global cities of the world," Dr Keller says. "Australia is a highly urbanised society and Sydney in particular is a very important city in the Asia-Pacific world."

A global city, in Keller's view, is one that has a cosmopolitan outlook ▶

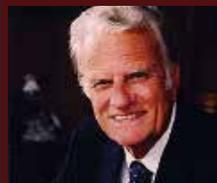
DECADES OF CONFERENCES PAST

Here are some of the many international speakers and movement leaders who have participated in evangelical events and conferences in Sydney over the years.



John Stott

John Stott, before his death in 2011 at the age of 90, had strong links with the Anglican Church in Sydney, and was in many ways a major influence on the character of Sydney Anglicans today. Perhaps most notably, his preaching at a Sydney University mission in 1958 famously caused the late John Chapman to tear up his own sermon notes, such as his speaking ability and capacity to apply Scripture.



Billy Graham

One of the defining movements in 20th-century evangelicalism in Sydney, and in Australia, was during the Billy Graham crusades held in 1959. Graham was invited by a coalition of Christian leaders led by Archbishop Howard Mowll, and the American evangelist's rallies were attended by crowds numbering in the hundreds of thousands, with some 57,000 people answering the call to go forward at the Sydney meetings alone.



Don Carson

Carson seems to pick Australia as his favoured holiday destination, making what appear to be nearly annual visits here, speaking at conferences run by KCC, the Australian Fellowship of Evangelical Students, Ministry Training and Development, and many others, over a period of many years.



Mark Driscoll

Driscoll visited Sydney in 2008, with part of that trip being a multi-day intensive at St Andrew's Cathedral sponsored by Ministry Training and Development. Driscoll presented as part of his second sermon 18 points of correction for the Sydney evangelical church, with more than a few points focusing on missional weaknesses in the Sydney Anglican church. While not all agreed with every criticism, most agreed that Driscoll was a breath of fresh air, with many genuine insights and challenges.



Craig Gross

The founder of XXXChurch, Craig Gross, made headlines in Sydney in 2009 after he and his team attended the sex industry expo (Sexpo) that year, to interact with sex workers and expo attendees – as well as to speak more widely among churches and on national TV about the problems of pornography and the sex trade in general.

and so in some respects connects more readily with other global cities than with other localities in the same nation. In this regard, he sees that while his home of New York City is a different beast to the centre of Sydney, it also has some similarities, too.

"Sydney and NYC residents – in their materialism, individualism, and cosmopolitanism – are in many ways more like each other than like many in other parts of their own societies," he says. "Yet every city still inhabits its own country and therefore is different as well."

Of course, what Dr Keller's conference is seeking to achieve goes ultimately beyond just the realm of the big cities (although that is certainly the area he focuses on). His approach to mission – that is, the taking of the gospel out into the world – centres on thinking about how to express the gospel in ways that are understood by the people around you, and what tools can be brought to bear.

"The first part of *Center Church* lays out the gospel with all its 'sharp edges' – penal substitution, the wrath of God on sin, the

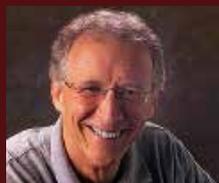
necessity of repentance," Dr Keller says.

"It is with that gospel we should seek to engage culture, and no other. Don Carson has written: '[While] no truth which human beings may articulate can ever be articulated in a culture-transcending way... that does not mean that the truth thus articulated does not transcend culture.' That means that you must engage culture even to simply preach the gospel to any particular audience. So I don't think the question is whether or not we should engage culture, but whether we will do it well and faithfully."

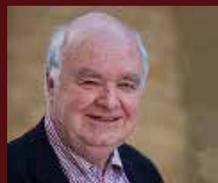
The Keller conferences themselves, then, will be places where these tools can be played with, the method explored. Each conference will have a different focus – the first three specifically aimed at equipping pastors and planters, young adults and women, with the fourth a public night designed for unbelievers.

The Rev Andrew Katay, rector of Christ Church Inner West Anglican Community and CEO of City to City Australia, says the planned set of conferences was designed to appeal to a wide set of contexts and ministry backgrounds,

“ I don't think the question is whether or not we should engage culture, but whether we will do it well and faithfully. ”

**John Piper**

Baptist pastor and author John Piper, most known for his book *Desiring God* that spawned the ministry of the same name, was one of the two speakers at KCC's One event in 2011, also taking part in other KCC conferences, events and conventions in Sydney.

**John Lennox**

The Oxford University mathematician and philosopher first made a prominent appearance in Sydney in 2008, debating sceptic and university professor Michael Sherman. He was in Sydney again in 2011, making an appearance on ABC's *Q&A* in discussion with Peter Singer. He also appeared at KCC's One conference with John Piper, attended by 10,000 people at the Sydney Entertainment Centre.

**Matt Chandler**

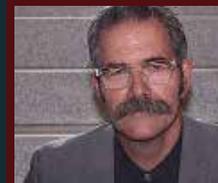
Matt Chandler, the pastor of a Dallas Baptist church and current president of the Acts 29 church-planting network, first visited Australia in 2009, speaking at youth rallies, church plants and conferences during this time. He returns to Australia this year to speak at public events in Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne.

**Mark Dever**

The Washington DC Baptist and president of the 9Marks ministry renewal organisation has participated in multiple Ministry Training & Development intensives held at St Andrew's Cathedral since 2009.

**Ed Stetzer**

The New York church planter and mission thinker has mostly been involved with church-planting conferences with multiple organisations here in Australia, including the Geneva Push. Stetzer was commissioned by the Geneva Push in 2013 to create a unique Australian assessment tool used by local church planters to evaluate their plans and prepare for starting a new church.

**Paul Tripp**

Paul Tripp, who speaks frequently on parenting and family issues from a Christian perspective, was brought to Australia in 2012 by a collection of Anglican and Presbyterian churches, as well as Biblical Counselling Australia, with a focus on marriage and local church ministry. This was followed by a parenting conference in 2013, and an appearance at Oxygen in 2014.

as well as to provide a foundation for ongoing thinking and ministry in this vein.

"Tim Keller had said no to coming to Australia on dozens of occasions," Mr Katay says. "The key thing for him, I think, is not simply running an event that people come to, where everyone is encouraged, he flies home, everyone else goes home, and then things go back to normal. The key principle here is that it's *not* simply an event, but hopefully a part of, God willing, a continuing movement."

Indeed, according to Mr Katay, that's precisely the point of City to City Australia – to not simply be a vehicle for getting Dr Keller out here in the first place, but to create a platform for meaningful activity as a result of his visit.

"The purpose of City to City here is – when Dr Keller comes out and looks to draw together people who have been impacted by his kind of thinking – that there's an ongoing capacity to push forward with that when he goes," Mr Katay says.

"There are three main ways we are looking to do that, three areas of focus: church planting, church renewal and what we're

“**The key principle here is that it's not simply an event, but hopefully a part of, God willing, a continuing movement.**”

planning to launch during the week, which is the Australian Centre for Faith and Work.

"What Redeemer has been doing in the last 20 years is developing a whole suite of resources, training materials, frameworks, discipleship programs, that embody this kind of theological vision – to help facilitate planting, church renewal, integration of faith and work, those things. So what we're looking to do is provide those kinds of materials here in Australia in a way that can help us all work out together on how to apply this kind of thinking in an Australian context more specifically."

Much of Dr Keller's recent work, particularly as expressed in his book *Center Church*, has been focused on the apparent tension among churches, and even within the pages of Scripture, about how Christians are to engage with culture, and to what extent.

Dr Keller says the primary idea behind this particular body of work is to simply listen to Scripture and look to it for guidance on how to deal with concepts that the word of God often holds in tension.

"On any given question, we could give a



The Gospel Coalition's director of women's initiatives and author of *Living Word Bible Studies*, Kathleen Nielson.

positive answer, a negative answer, or an in-the-middle 'yes and no' answer," Dr Keller says. "Anyone who is always negative, always positive, or always centrist runs the risk of responding out of our temperament and habit of mind rather than by following the Scripture wherever it leads. So yes, it is possible to be too accommodating and sanguine, too reactionary and over-cautious, or too 'centrist'.

"The Bible, of course, is often remarkably 'balanced' – Jesus is divine and human, God is three and one, we have both divine sovereignty and human responsibility – and that list of balances goes on and on. Yet in many other areas of biblical teaching there is no tension or nuance. So we have to listen to the Bible carefully and try not to impose our temperament on it.

"I would add that we shouldn't pit being culturally engaged against being gospel-centred as if they are in tension with one another. Being engaged with people and being engaged with culture is ultimately the same thing."

So in some respects, it's interesting that the events aimed at Christians are supplemented by one geared explicitly at the non-Christians. The "Reason for God" night, named after Dr Keller's 2008 book of the same name, will seemingly be something of a model for exactly what Dr Keller means by engaging people and culture with the biblical gospel.

The event's website specifically notes: "if you already follow Jesus, grab a couple of extra tickets and invite your friends". The event itself will take place in Luna Park's Big Top, which will have hosted metal band Korn and a mixed martial arts (MMA championship) in the weeks before.

“**We want people who are familiar enough with our situation here to provide outside voices into life and ministry so we can be encouraged and moved by it.**”

THERE'S PUBLIC, AND THEN THERE'S PUBLIC

Of course, this kind of engagement beyond the halls of the conference room isn't unique to Dr Keller. Many of the speakers who have come from overseas to speak in Australia supplement conference appearances with youth events, public appearances or engagements on national TV. Dr John Lennox's visit to Sydney in 2011 featured most prominently an appearance at KCC's One event, but he also appeared on ABC's Q&A, as well as featuring in a debate with Australian ethicist and philosopher Dr Peter Singer. Mark Driscoll's 2008 visit saw him take the stage at the Sydney Entertainment Centre as well as the pulpit at St Andrew's Cathedral. Francis Chan will speak at the annual RICE (Renewal & Inter-Church Evangelism) rally this year, as well as talking to ministers and church leaders at Oxygen.

In some ways, this reflects a trend in the past decade or so, where speakers invited from overseas aren't simply Bible teachers, but also come as ministry practitioners providing objective insights.

The acting director of Ministry Training & Development and Bishop of Wollongong, the Rt Rev Peter Hayward, says having a pair of eyes from outside your church can often be a good thing.

"We want people who are familiar enough with our situation here to provide outside voices into life and ministry so we can be encouraged and moved by it," he says. "I think it's helpful to have people from other contexts speak into ours, so that we can be stimulated by that and not develop a narrow vision. At the same time, it's healthy for us to have locals who speak about the same sorts of things, so we try to have both."

The annual conference run by MT&D in August has a set number of days that are open to the public, with the remainder an intensive course for Moore College students that examines in more depth the themes raised in the public component.

Bishop Hayward says the practice of MT&D is to have an international speaker every second year. Last year saw Washington DC Baptist minister and president of the 9Marks association Dr Mark Dever attend, with Dr Don Carson slated to speak in 2015.

"The advantage of someone like Don is that he's familiar with Anglicanism from his time in England doing his PhD," Bishop Hayward says. "And he's a great Bible teacher, so he can speak and bring all that to the table."

This year speakers will be Queensland Theological College principal the Rev Dr Gary Millar, and the Dean of Sydney the Very Rev Phillip Jensen. Dr Millar, while a native of Northern Ireland, has lived and worked in Australia for some time and is ideally placed, along with Dean Jensen, to continue

to promote local teaching and a particular awareness of the local Australian church context, while also having an awareness of an outside perspective.

Bishop Hayward says that in recent times, this outside perspective has been leveraged generally when inviting overseas speakers, with an increasing focus on ministry ideas and frameworks.

"One of the things that has changed, I feel, over the last little while is that historically we generally just had overseas speakers teach the Bible," he says. "Now we have speakers who come and unpack how ministry is conducted. That's a significant shift that's happened over the last, maybe, 10 years. So when Don came over, he was just a Bible teacher, and he still is that, of course, but increasingly we also have people who unpack ministry practice as well."

Of course, the likes of great English preachers John Stott and Dick Lucas, who have been in Sydney on multiple occasions stretching back to before the '60s, made their marks as Bible teachers in their own rights. However, they were also instrumental in modelling how to preach, with many of the distinctives of expository preaching still influencing Sydney decades on. But certainly, a new focus has emerged on practice in ministry in recent times.

Mr Katay says he feels that a part of what makes someone like Dr Keller interesting is that he attempts to more closely examine the relationship of theology and Bible to practice, rather than treating them as unrelated items.

"I think it's a powerful point that what Keller calls 'theological vision' is a reality that we often don't fully acknowledge," Mr Katay says. "It's what we think is the appropriate way to do ministry based on, or stemming from, our theology. It's not theology proper, and it's not practice proper, it's more a theologically informed methodology that drives practice, but is distinct from practice. This helps underpin why, throughout history, you have people who have the same theology but different practice in terms of doing ministry... in reverse, I think it's why we can consider people who have different practice and not have to conclude that therefore they have different theology."

LOCAL AND ABROAD

Katoomba has featured overseas speakers for several decades, particularly from the UK and the US. According to Jonathan Dykes, the current executive director of KCC, the changing conference line-up at Katoomba has also allowed for variety in the use of overseas speakers.

"KCC has been doing this kind of thing regularly since the 1980s, increasingly so as we've developed our convention platform," he says. "However, not all of our conferences do this, and instead favour local speakers almost



Former teaching pastor of Cornerstone Community Church in California and author, Francis Chan.

“One of the things that has changed... is that historically we generally just had overseas speakers teach the Bible. Now we have speakers who come and unpack how ministry is conducted.”

exclusively. In particular, nextgen [formerly KYLC, for young leaders] and Kyck [Katoomba's youth conference] are notable for this."

The suite of conferences that currently run at Katoomba is such that it can allow this differentiation. KYCK this year will feature Chatswood Anglican youth minister Sam Low and Barker College chaplain Damien Whittington, while the August Oxygen conference will feature no fewer than eight men and women from overseas as speakers – from Bryan Chapell to Francis Chan to Nancy Guthrie.

Of course, what really lies at the heart of any conference – and indeed is the intent of every Christian speaker, local or international – is to see the work of God done, to see the church faithfully and effectively preach the gospel and to see people saved. As Bishop Hayward says:

"This year we're going to focus on public proclamation, preaching and teaching the word of God, and how we communicate that. Obviously that's what Christians need to be doing anyway, but this year in our conference we really want to focus on that, and understand it."

As for Dr Keller, when asked what he most hoped to see happen in Sydney after the City to City conferences, he replied:

"[I hope to see] far greater evangelistic growth in existing churches and far greater growth in numbers of new churches – especially in urban areas – than you are currently seeing in Australia now, as well as a growing percentage of Australians in gospel-believing churches."

That's something to pray for.

MOORE IS MORE

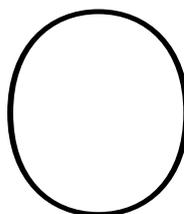
blah-blah-blah simile argob
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Smile & nod,
just smile & nod

Mind your language

ILLUSTRATION: Stephen Mason

We think our speech and gospel proclamation are clear, but in a multicultural group we need to consider whether everyone really understands us, writes GREG ANDERSON.



OVER THE SUMMER HOLIDAYS, ONE OF THE BOOKS THAT many Christians have caught up with is Tim Keller's *Center Church*. Keller argues that we need to engage with culture more intentionally and intelligently as we seek to proclaim the gospel.

There has been some discussion on Facebook and various websites and blogs about this book, and some division of opinion about whether it gets the "balance" right between simply proclaiming the unchanging gospel, and seeking to address the particular culture we are in so that we can communicate the gospel more effectively.

Then there has been further discussion about whether "balance" is the right thing to be aiming at anyhow, as though proclamation and cultural engagement are at opposite ends of a spectrum and that the best way forward is somehow to water both ends down a bit so that some middle ground is reached. It seems more accurate to say that both "ends" of the spectrum must be emphasised – that we must share faithfully the good news of Jesus, including the implications of that news for the way we understand ourselves and the world, and that we must engage with

the people we are speaking to because their backgrounds influence the way they hear our message.

I want to cut across the discussion to focus on just one aspect – maybe the most fundamental aspect – of engaging with other people and proclaiming the gospel. This aspect is words – the language we use. It is obvious that if I am proclaiming the gospel in English, I can be utterly faithful to the Bible but completely fail to communicate with someone who doesn't speak English. But what is perhaps less obvious and needs more thought is that there are not two neat and clear categories – "speaks English" and "does not speak English". There are many kinds of English, many levels of English, many different accents among English speakers. And among people from non-English-speaking backgrounds (NESB), there are various degrees of ability to speak and understand English.

The Australian Bureau of Statistics tells us that about one-third of the population of greater Sydney speaks a language other than English at home, but only about 6 per cent say that they are not good at English. The statistics are variable – many places in the west and south-west of Sydney have half of the population or more speaking a language other than English at home (for example: 70 per cent at Fairfield, 50 per cent in Liverpool and Parramatta), but the proportion who report that they have difficulty with English is much lower (20 per cent at Fairfield, 11 per cent at Liverpool and 9 per cent in Parramatta). One of my concerns, however, is that English speakers like me are not very aware of the kind of English we are using, and may be communicating much less than we think we are, even with people who don't feel they have any difficulty with English.

At Moore College last year, I made an awkward conversational remark at lunch one day to a NESB student. When I realised a couple of minutes later what I had done, I apologised and said that I had "put my foot in it". Then I wondered if I had put my foot in it *again* by using that expression! Indeed I had – I asked the student if he knew that expression and he didn't, and neither did another NESB student at the same table. Part of my explanation included that the "it" meant my mouth – and the idea of putting a foot in one's mouth needed even further explanation. Both students are sufficiently proficient in English to do a Moore College degree, but I had failed to communicate with them by using this particular English idiom.

If you have ever taken a NESB friend to church or to an event, I wonder if you have found yourself listening in a different way, a bit through their ears (or how you imagine their ears to be) – or at least with more sensitivity than you might usually have to the kind of language that is used, including slang, idioms, abbreviations and other "strange" expressions.

Does this really have implications for our gospel communication? I think it does. In a diocese like Sydney, every church will have a variety of different "languages" – even if they are all English-speaking. Making our message clearer to one particular group may alienate another group. At CMS Summer School this January, Rob Smith gave a little apology for the word "wanna" in one of the songs and gave us permission to sing "want to" if we "wanted to". It is a trivial example, but shows that even within one language, words do not just have meaning, but can produce emotional reactions in people.

As we seek to explain what the coming of Jesus into the world means, and how he is the climax of God's world rescue plan, there is language that we have learnt to use as we tell this story. A lot of this language is not used very much in other contexts – words like sin, redemption, grace, faith. When we have learnt our message using these words, we can be so used to them, we understand them so well, that we forget that their meaning may not be clear to others. It is like my saying I had put my foot in it.

In one of my Moore College classes we play a game called "Banned Word of the Week". The banned words are these Christian terms that we often use that may not communicate well with outsiders. Students (and the lecturer) who use the banned word have to pay a financial penalty.



The Rev Dr Greg Anderson is head of the Mission Department at Moore College.

The point of the game is simply to make us more aware of the language we are using, and to try to find different ways of explaining what we are talking about.

Does this mean that we should never use Christian jargon? No. It is important that people know and understand the words our English translations of the Bible use if we want them to be able to use an English Bible. But we still need to be aware of the steps along the way as we explain and teach, and it is helpful to be aware of the possible pitfalls. One Bible translator in Papua New Guinea discovered, as he attempted to translate the word "sin", that the understanding the local people had of that word was "things that white people get upset about". It is also helpful to bear in mind, especially when speaking English to NESB people, that they may have to do their own translation work all the time we are speaking and that this takes a lot of mental energy and effort.

I think it would be helpful if Christians who are regularly communicating the gospel in multicultural and multilingual situations (and ideally that will be most of us) recorded themselves from time to time and listened back to what they were saying – and even to the speed at which they are speaking. It would be a disaster for gospel witness in our neighbourhoods if we thought we were communicating effectively, but we actually were not. Listening back with somebody who has a

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different level of English compared with what we usually use would make the process even better.

In my own experience listening to others (and myself) speak – even those who have considerable experience in multicultural settings – it is much harder than we think to modify our language. If we are going to reach our communities with the gospel, particularly those who have come recently from non-English-speaking countries, we are going to have to listen to ourselves through others' ears much more. We are also going to have to listen to feedback from people different from us to find out what they are hearing (and we won't get accurate feedback just by asking, "Did you understand that?").

There are many ways to engage with the many cultures that are represented in our neighbourhoods, but language is fundamental to most of them. There are religions in the world where followers are expected

to use the language of the religion's founder, regardless of whether they understand it. Christian faith is different. God wants us to understand his revelation, as the miracle of languages on the day of Pentecost demonstrates.

If you have got this far reading this article, you may have noticed an irony all through it. I have been writing in the kind of English that I am used to writing – perhaps the kind of language that many middle-aged tertiary-educated English speakers use for this kind of article. But you could go through it again and ask what kind of assumptions about concepts, about the world, about communication and about language I have been making as I write. I do this more or less unconsciously because I am so used to doing it. That is what we all do unless we stop to think, listen and try to do it better. I invite you to retell these ideas in a way that people in your neighbourhood will understand. SC

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DIARY

Wednesday, March 5 – Thursday, March 6

City Bible Forum: On Trial

Why would anyone trust the Bible? Is Jesus the only way? Why are people leaving religion behind? Come find and, and bring a friend as the City Bible Forum works through each of these topics over three weeks, starting on March 5. A fourth event, Resurrection on Trial, will be in a mock trial format.

For more information contact Russ Matthews on 0433 069 071, or info@citybibleforum.org. LOCATION | Angel Place Office Tower, 123 Pitt Street, Sydney | 1.10pm-1.50pm

Thursday March 6

Jordan & Israel Trip Info Night

Rob and Margie Forsyth are heading off to Jordan and Israel, and they invite you to join them! This night is a time to hear more information about the tour, being held over two weeks in September. The trip will take in many important biblical sights, including Mt Nebo, Jericho, Bethlehem and Jerusalem. You can RSVP for the information night to Margie on 0411 128 906 or email margieforsyth@gmail.com

LOCATION | St Mark's, Darling Point, Cnr Darling Point Road and Greenoaks Ave | 7.30pm

Tuesday, March 11

ReachOut Pastors' & Christian Leaders Breakfast

ReachOut Missions Network extends

For diary events email newspaper@anglicanmedia.com.au

a warm invitation to pastors and Christian leaders to this year's breakfast with speaker the Rev Michael Raiter on the topic "The Dark Frontier: Evangelising the Post-Christian Western World".

RSVP to Tim Silberman on 0411 371 581 or mail@reachoutmissions.com.au by March 6.

LOCATION | Sydney Missionary and Bible College, 43 Badminton Rd, Croydon | 7.45-9.30am

Saturday, March 15

Prayer Book Society

The annual meeting of the Prayer Book Society (NSW Branch) will be held at St Paul's College, Sydney University.

The day will start with Holy Communion in the college chapel commencing at 10.30am when the Archbishop of Sydney, the Most Rev Dr Glenn Davies, will preach. The annual meeting will begin at 1pm, following lunch. RSVP to 9371 6953 by March 8.

LOCATION | St Paul's College, Sydney University, City Rd and Carillon Ave, Sydney | Rego from 10am

Friday, April 4 – Sunday, April 6

Youthworks WROK ON Camp

If you're over the age of 18 and have a disability, join us for our 25th year of WROK ON 18+! This weekend camp is full of fun and fellowship in the scenic surrounds of the Blue Mountains. Camp directors are Avril Parry and Ian Cochrane.

Please note that applications are assessed individually to ensure camp staff are equipped to provide correct care for each camper. Visit

youthworks.net/events. Cost is \$150. LOCATION | Blue Gum Lodge, 6 Fels Ave, Springwood

Thursday, April 24

Deaconess House Reunion Brunch

An invitation to meet up with former

students and share what God has done in our lives. For more info, or to RSVP, contact Barbara Ferguson on 9583 1727. RSVP by April 10. Cost is \$20.

LOCATION | Mary Andrews College, 464 Kent St Sydney | 10.30am-12.30pm

EVENTS

LIFE

Anglican Diocese of Sydney
TRIENNIAL FAITHFULNESS IN SERVICE CONFERENCES 2014
 The Conference in 2014 will be seeking to assist all clergy and stipendiary lay workers in addressing current issues with a focus on 'Using electronic communications wisely in ministry', 'Caring for the vulnerable' and 'Sexual purity in a pornified world'.
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REGISTRATIONS NOW OPEN
 www.psu.anglican.asn.au/index.php/p2/fairfaithfulness_in_service_2014
WALK IN THE LIGHT
 Dates and Venues
 Monday 2 June 2014 Dapto Anglican
 Tuesday 3 June 2014 Ryde Anglican
 Thursday 5 June 2014 Rooty Hill Anglican
 Friday 6 June 2014 Village Church, Annandale
 9am-5pm Registration opens 8.30am
SAFE MINISTRY
 Professional Standards Unit

"COMPANIONS" CHIP IN AT SURRY HILLS



Aninui helps out by pulling nails from the joists.

ST Michael's, Surry Hills has a new floor, due in part to the hard work of a group of parish "companions" – most of whom are homeless or live alone, and have made community and fellowship links at the church through its Bread of Life ministry.

After enjoying a sumptuous Christmas breakfast the day before, cooked by volunteers and with gift bags prepared by students at nearby Crown Street Public School (and filled with needs such as toiletries and a printed gospel), a group of companions fronted up on Boxing Day to help rip up the derelict floor of the church hall.

The rector of St Michael's, the Rev Francis Chalwell, said that to lay, sand, polish and dry the new floor in time for the start of church activities last month meant removal of the old timber had to start on December 26 and 27 – while most people were on holiday.

While he worked, St Michael's companion Ngatai said, "I just want to give back something to the church because they help me every Sunday". Another, Aninui, had been off work for more than three years and said that after that day of work he enjoyed his best sleep since 2010.

Mia, one of the wardens at St Michael's, was delighted with the turnout and the way everyone worked so hard and happily. She said, "What I love about St Michael's is the way everyone from all different walks of life gets together to do really great things for God".

After the first day's work, Mr Chalwell looked over the stripped hall and said, "It is funny how such a basic thing as a new floor [can help] promote the gospel.

"The floorer was happy, too – two days' work done in one day!"

new Deacons URGED TO BE SERVANTS

A standing room only crowd at St Andrew's Cathedral has witnessed the ordination of 35 men and women as deacons but also heard strong words of advice for the new ministers.



Archbishop Dr Glenn Davies, presiding over his first ordination as Archbishop, described it as a "wonderful occasion".

"These men and women are going to schools as well as parishes, ARV [Anglican Retirement Villages] and diocesan organisations," Dr Davies said.

Referring to the crowd which filled the Cathedral and spilled out onto the steps, the Archbishop said, "The great number of people who were here today was a testimony to the love and affection with which the ordinands, now deacons, are held by their parishes, families and friends".

Canon Sandy Grant, senior minister at St Michael's Cathedral, Wollongong, encouraged the deacons to take 2 Corinthians 4:5 as their job description: 'For what we proclaim is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, with ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake' (ESV).

"The whole Facebook/Twitter thing keeps telling you: get lots of followers and lots of likes," Canon Grant said. "We do not proclaim ourselves. We're not the heroes of ministry: Christ is."

Canon Grant referred to the variety of positions to which the ordinands would be going, including church planting, indigenous ministry, school chaplaincy and parish work.

"Not all deacons will regularly occupy church pulpits," he said. "Some operate in classrooms, by the bedside, around the lounge room.

"Now I am convinced that consecutive explanation and application of the Scriptures ought to be our bread and butter method in the pulpit. But the heart of preaching is not a 30-minute monologue. Rather, it's captured by that

alternate word used in verse 5 for the same reality: proclamation. Preaching is a declaration of the truth."

In a final charge on servanthood, Canon Grant told the new deacons their jobs would be "messy".

"As Jesus is Lord, then our role is clear: to serve him," he said.

"Or rather, as Paul puts it here, to serve others for his sake. We look to their welfare. We put ourselves out for them. And that means ministry will be messy and inconvenient. We won't always be able to focus on our strategic leadership tasks in some zen-like undistracted way. We'll have to get down on our knees and serve."

New deacon Kate Snell, who read the Bible at the service, is serving as a chaplain at Barker College in Sydney's north. "It is an incredible privilege to share the Christian faith with young people as they make decisions about who they are and how they live," she said. "It is also a great joy to serve staff members through the highs and





Above: The Archbishop with this year's ordinands. **Left:** Canon Sandy Grant preaches; Thomas Habib and Kate Snell read from the Bible. **PHOTOS:** Ramon Williams / Worldwide Photos

lows they face in their lives.

"Sandy's sermon and the promises we made reminded me of the importance of character and conduct. I want my life to model the Christian faith I teach in the classroom and at chapel – no easy task and one I'll need God's help with!"

Another new deacon, Brett Hall, who will serve in the parish of Rosemeadow, said the service was "a fantastic celebration and recognition of the training and testing that we've been through to see that we might be fit for the service of God's people".

Mr Hall agreed the large crowd from across the Diocese was a great boost for the ordinands.

"I had the special joy of having representatives of a number of churches that I've served in attend, as well as the couple who first shared the gospel with me 10

years ago," he said. "It reminded me that the journey of training for ministry is the product of God's work in us through many individuals and church communities."



Above: Youthworks College's (from left) Glen Elsegood; Phil van't Spyker; principal, Andrew Nixon; Pat Jones; Michael Mak; vice principal, Jim French; Adam Hotson; pastoral care volunteers, Jan and John Marshall.

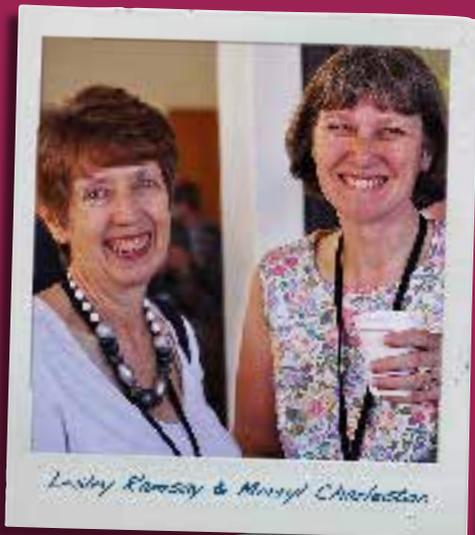
Below: (from left) Tom Halls and Brett Hall; Matthew Dodd (left) and Thomas Melbourne; Matthew Paterson (left) with Michael Duckett; Michael and Kelly Hastie with children Callum and Lewis. **PHOTOS:** Russell Powell

ORDINANDS

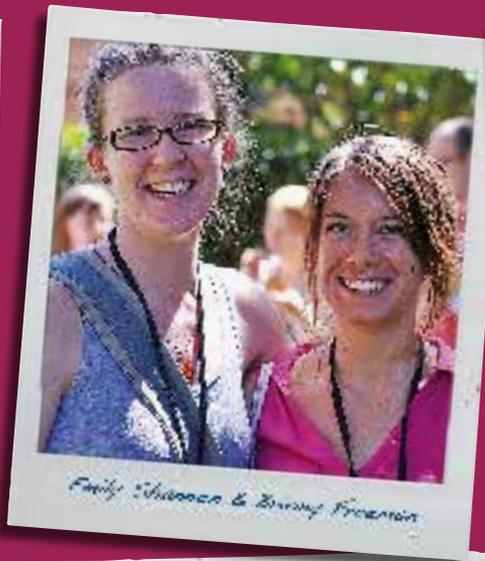
Toby Campbell	Cranebrook with Castlereagh
Eleanor Castle	Anglican Retirement Villages
Victor Chen	Hurstville
Matthew Dodd	Merrylands
Glen Elsegood	Pymble
David Forward	Lindfield
Jim French	Youthworks
Andrew Goddard	Peakhurst/Mortdale
Thomas Habib	Yagoona
Brett Hall	Rosemeadow
Michael Hastie	Roseville
Adam Hotson	Oak Flats
Cameron Howard	Kingswood
Anna Jackson	Panania
Joshua Johnston	Northmead and Winston Hills
Patrick Jones	Castle Hill
Faye Lo	Chatswood
Michael Mak	Oatley
Scott Maxwell	Asquith/Mt Colah/Mt Kuring-gai
Thomas Melbourne	Emu Plains
Nicholas Moll	St Anne's, Strathfield
Ian Morrison	Centennial Park
Stephen Morrison	Freshwater
Matthew Paterson	Department of Evangelism and New Churches
Ross Ryan	Blakehurst
Donovan Simmons	Glenhaven
Kristan Slack	Moorebank
James Smith	Roseville
Conor Smyth	Vaucluse and Rose Bay
Kate Snell	Barker College
Kevin Stepniewski	St George North
Donald Taylor	Mittagong
Mark Taylor	Clovelly
Philip van't Spyker	Berowra
Mark Wormell	Broadway



P and a CENTRE PONDER'S MARRIAGE AND SINGLENES



Lashy Ramsay & Mervyl Charleston



Emily Shannon & Zoriny Freeman



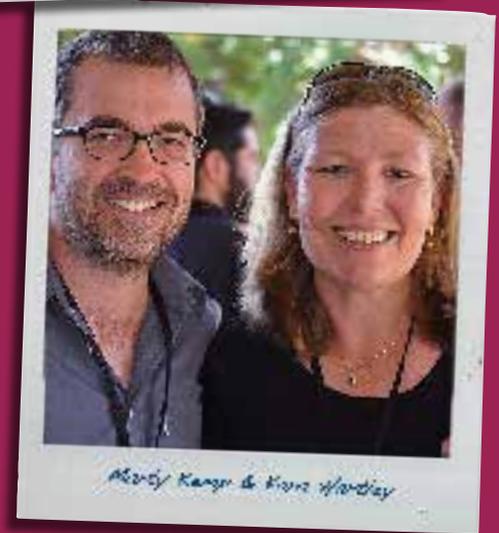
Jane Tooher & Phillip Jensen



Bob & Kerri Langford



Nikki Makin & Kitty Chan



Nancy Kanger & Kevin Hartley

FOR the first time since the mid-1980s, a public forum on the issue of singleness, marriage, divorce and remarriage was held as part of the 2014 Priscilla and Aquila Conference.

The conference, headed by Moore College faculty member Jane Tooher, focuses on encouraging

the ministries of women in partnership with men.

More than 300 people came from Sydney, other parts of the state and from interstate to consider biblical perspectives on singleness in ministry, marriage in ministry and divorce and remarriage in ministry. This was followed by

several electives. Moore College's principal Dr Mark Thompson said the conference was an opportunity "to think carefully and sensitively about issues of increasing importance in our churches and in our society". Keynote speaker was the Dean of Sydney, Phillip Jensen. Dr Thompson said, "I overheard

many comments of appreciation that the college, through this conference, was not shirking the hard questions and not afraid to allow differing opinions to be heard. The speakers were excellent and the crowds were abuzz with a desire to think through the issues further."

bc
The NSW/ACT Regional Committee invite you to the Commissioning Service for Revd Peter Adkins as the Regional Officer for NSW and ACT

Wednesday 19th March, 2014
5:30pm
St Philip's Anglican Church
3 York St Sydney

The Most Rev Dr Glenn Davies, will preach and commission the Revd Peter Adkins. There will be opportunity to meet Peter and other BCA staff. Light refreshments will be available

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Lloyd Webber evangelism



Director Justin Fitzgerald (right) discusses blocking with Garry Druery, who will play Jesus. PHOTO: Allan Dowthwaite

JUDY ADAMSON

WHEN THINKING ABOUT A GOOD evangelistic tool for your church, mounting a production of *Jesus Christ Superstar* isn't usually the first thing that comes to mind. But for Justin Fitzgerald, a long-time member of St Paul's, Castle Hill, it was a natural choice.

"I came from a non-Christian family, and every Easter my parents used to watch *Jesus Christ Superstar* the movie because it would be playing on TV, so I started asking questions... the questions that Judas asked: Was Jesus really the Son of God and if he was, what does that mean? Why are you wasting money on anointing Jesus' head? An outsider thinks all this is pointless but there's purpose behind it.

"[In *Superstar*] you're really looking at the gospel through the eyes of Judas, or every man. I had never read a Bible. But the show raised the questions I had as an outsider looking in, saying 'I have friends who go to church but they haven't explained to me why they go, and my parents have had a church upbringing and they

won't explain it to me either'. So my parents took me to youth group and I eventually started going to church – and I kept going. But I started going to church because of the 'gospels' of Webber and Rice," he says with a laugh.

This might seem unlikely, especially given that *Superstar* finishes with the death of Jesus rather than with his triumphant resurrection. But, Fitzgerald says, "I can't believe I'm the only person who's looked at the show and said, 'It's not just a show!'"

Spending a number of years as a theatre professional, Fitzgerald says he always wanted to do his own production as an evangelistic event – a desire he describes as a "gut-wrenching passion". He no longer works in the industry, but the desire to do the show had never gone away. So he approached the rector of St Paul's, John Gray, with his idea: a production held around Palm Sunday, with the opportunity for those with questions to return the following Easter weekend and hear Gray unpack the truths of the gospel.

Gray says that in a society where other faiths are hot topics of conversation he wants to answer Judas's questions about who Jesus is.

"I think *Superstar* gives us a springboard to re-engage a generation that has not been

engaged by a church all their lives," he says. "We have a huge ache for people who don't know Jesus, so we're going to make the message of Jesus extraordinarily clear over Easter, and invite people to get to know the Jesus of Scripture."

Says Fitzgerald: "I'm not expecting people to come in and say 'Wow' and have huge numbers of conversions. It's getting people to the point of being able to talk about it. Will they choose to find out more or just say, 'That was fun' and walk away? It's a dilemma we all face.

"Some presentations of *Jesus Christ Superstar* have shown Jesus as being weak. We don't do that. Some presentations show Judas as being the hero. He's not the hero here. There's no sexual relationship between Jesus and Mary, or anything like that. We're trying to make sure that as outsiders we relate to Judas through what we know happens [in the Bible], where they're friends and have been together a long time before he gets to that point where he chooses to betray Jesus.

"He's not a baddie, he's just the guy who says 'I don't get it!'"

Jesus Christ Superstar will be performed in the church at St Paul's, Castle Hill from April 11-16. For more information see www.spch.org.au/superstar

Under the spotlight

JUDY ADAMSON

The Voice Kids
Nine Network

TELE
VISION



IS ANYONE WITH ME IN THINKING THIS is a scary idea? Inviting children as young as eight to put themselves under a national spotlight to show off their talent to an (often) unforgiving public – and don't forget the pressure to get the judges to turn their chairs around!

Kids were able to apply for this as long as they were between eight and 14 on January 1 this year. The *X Factor's* lower age limit is 14 – and *Australia's Got Talent* used to have a cut-off of 18, but last year the blurb for the revamped show trumpeted that: "whether amateur or semi-professional, our doors are open to anyone of any age!"

Wonderful. If people want to get married, vote or get a part-time job, there are age restrictions in place. But apparently all bets are off if you want to be on the telly. For those like me who enjoy watching reality singing shows, it's difficult to imagine

that children, however mature for their age, will have all the skills they need to cope with both an audition and either rejection or adulation from the public. Especially when you see, over and over, how hard it is for grown men and women to deal with the same pressure.

I get that there are talented kids who want acting or performing careers. If there weren't, who would producers look to when casting musicals such as *Mary Poppins*, *Oliver!* or *The Sound of Music*?

Some will achieve their dreams. But doing most of that legwork out of the public eye is a much better option. How many adults could keep their feet on the ground when their talent is discussed on the TV, on radio and online – when songs they sing rocket to No. 1 on iTunes and people in the street suddenly want their

autograph? It'd turn most people's heads, and understandably so. And, for a child, how much harder will the public's disinterest in them be when there's a new singer to watch just six months down the track?

It's perfectly easy to be yesterday's news at 14. Just remember Nikki Webster. She was Australia's darling after the Sydney Olympics opening ceremony in 2000, yet six years later, still in her teens, she was featured on the TV show *Where Are They Now*. Her Wikipedia page even describes her (not entirely accurately) as "former Australian pop singer and actress". Ouch.

Here's a thought: entrants in *The Voice Kids* could go viral on social media such as Facebook when most are officially too young to join it. It'd be hilarious... if it weren't so weird.

We're meant to be reassured by *The Voice Kids'* choice of judges – "nice" Aussie songstress Delta Goodrem, mother-of-three Mel B, and soft-centred Good Charlotte front man Joel Madden with his twin brother Benji thrown in for good measure (are they going to share one chair or get a double made?). These four may genuinely care for all the young entrants, be willing mentors and want the best for them. But putting care aside for a moment, they're industry professionals and have to make tough calls to keep the best singers in – which will also, presumably, increase their chances of mentoring the competition winner. And those decisions might be more cut-throat than young singers would like.

The show is likely to be a ratings winner, given it's already a success in 15 other countries. The director of television at Nine, Michael Healy, has been quoted as saying, "*The Voice* has been an incredible success for Nine and we look forward to *The Voice Kids* shining a light on the enormous pool of undiscovered young talent this country has to offer".

On the face of it, that sounds great. But then you realise that shedding light on talent probably has as much to do with ensuring continued "incredible success" for the network as it does with supporting budding careers. It's a business. And if shows didn't rate, TV stations wouldn't be keen to shed light on anybody's talent.

As a fan of *The Voice* format, I may well be watching when these kids finally step up to the microphone. But I'll be fervently hoping that they – and their parents – are able to deal with what comes afterwards. SC

Blind auditions for The Voice Kids were held in Sydney in early February. No dates were set for the show to premiere by the time SC went to press, but it – along with Season 3 of The Voice – is expected to go live on Nine this month or in April.