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## COVER

It takes a village to raise a child — an Anglican village, that is. SC considers what we're doing, how we are doing at it and where the pitfalls are.

PHOTO: Stephen Mason

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PO Box W185, Parramatta Westfield 2150  
**PHONE:** 02 8860 8860 **FAX:** 02 8860 8899  
**EMAIL:** newspaper@anglicanmedia.com.au

**MANAGING EDITOR:** Russell Powell

**EDITOR:** Judy Adamson

**ART DIRECTOR:** Stephen Mason

**ADVERTISING MANAGER:** Kylie Zahra  
**PHONE:** 02 8860 8888 **EMAIL:** ads@anglicanmedia.com.au  
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# Theological education: everyone's business

DR PETER JENSEN

**L**IKE most people of his generation, my father was not a demonstratively religious man. Nor did he attend personally to our religious education, leaving it mainly to church and school. But I remember vividly two basic lessons he taught me.

The first was to 'say my prayers'. He sat on the edge of my bed, and taught me to say the Lord's Prayer. I don't think he told me why we were doing this, or indeed much about it, but it made a profound impression on me. He believed and therefore I believed.

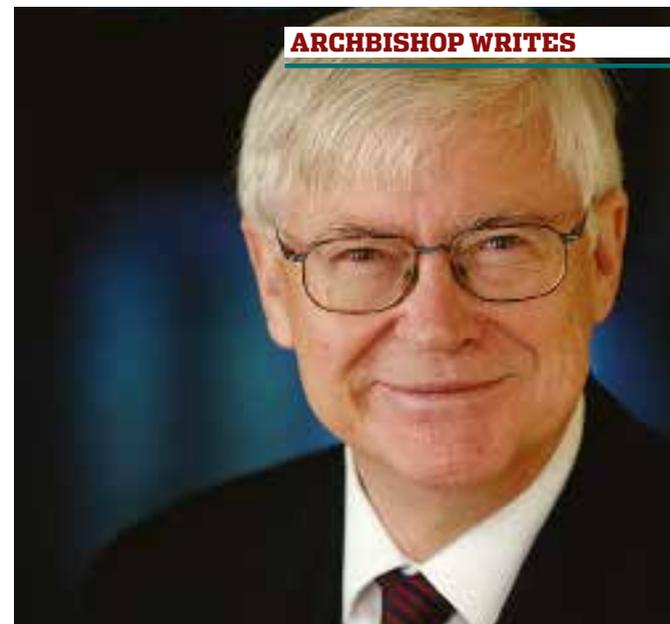
Secondly, when I asked him with some anxiety whether ghosts exist, he smiled and emphatically denied it. "Peter," he said, "there are no such things as ghosts." Now whatever you make of that answer, it was certainly biblical in the sense that we do not need to fear ghosts if we are in Christ.

These were my first lessons in theology and they occurred in exactly the right place, namely at home. The home is the first, basic and most vital theological college. Godly parents will seek for their children to know the Lord and will lead them to the Lord by way of his word accompanied by prayer that the Holy Spirit will illumine hearts.

You can hardly improve on that even if you were to study at the highest academic level possible. The proper subject of the study of theology is the Lord and our aim has to be to know the Lord. We come to know him in the way in which he has made himself known, namely through his word. Our sin is such that we cannot understand his word without the blessing of his Spirit. We come to know the Lord best in community where we can see modelled the outcome of knowing him in the lives of others. The best theological education can only build on these the basics, not replace them.

The same is true of church. The church is a family of God's people centred around God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Together, and relying on each other, we seek to know the Lord through his word blessed by his Spirit. It is a more important college of theology than a theological seminary. Both the family and the family of the church remind us that theological education is for everyone — all Christians are disciples and so scholars, enrolled in a lifetime of study and growth. Naturally, there is no true knowledge of God which does not show itself in obedience.

A well-founded theological college works on the same principles. Fundamentally it is a community of disciples who seek to know and serve the Lord. The academic program serves this end and because of



the subject matter — God as he reveals himself — it requires an intellectual rigour and seriousness the equal or more of any university course.

This is especially important in a world which is overtly antagonistic to the Christian faith and loves to suggest the faith is bankrupt of thought and intellectual life. The whole business of ministry, especially ordained ministry in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, requires our ministers to know the Lord at depth.

What are the implications of all this? There are three at least.

First, the fundamental importance of the family as the place in which we learn our theology, our knowledge of God. We should not leave it to church or Sunday school to teach our children. Others can supplement and reinforce what we do, but they cannot take our place. Parents must teach the Lord and live the Lord before their children.

For this to happen all families should have 'family prayers' in which parents (especially fathers) lead in reading the Scriptures and calling on God. This is a habit which every Christian family should develop (before children are born).

Second, churches are discipleship-making families in which we teach each other to 'know the Lord' and serve him. Hence the importance of the preaching of God's word and hence the importance of developing ways in which we can encourage each other to be obedient and faithful.

Third, it is vital that theological colleges do the same job. The key question about a college is, 'Who teaches in it?' for it is essential that our teachers should know the Lord and be capable of leading students in this same knowledge.

In our Diocese, Moore College has been fulfilling this role for more than 150 years. We must not take it for granted or fail to support it. I am glad to say that in my opinion it is doing exactly what is required of it and we may be thankful to God for its life, its teachers, its graduates and the influence it is having around the world.

SC

## Mission Prayer

Almighty God,

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

In the name of our Saviour Jesus Christ,  
Amen.





PASTORAL COURSE GAINS GROUND

# Listen and learn

Pastoral intensive: Allen Cook, Nathan Lowrey, Tanya Bosch and Archie Poulos.

JUDY ADAMSON

AN elective pastoral care course for fourth years at Moore College, which is also available in the one-year Diploma of Bible and Ministry, is gaining more students each year, with some regarding it as a life-changing experience.

“It’s been really huge for me,” says fourth-year student Nathan Lowrey. “It has broadened my insight into who I am but the emphasis that

you need to listen when people are hurting was really important. Our first instinct is to talk theology to them and reinforce the fact that God loves them, but they don’t want to hear anything when they’re hurting — they want to share their pain with someone and be understood in that pain.”

Fellow fourth-year Stephen Gardner agrees. “Intellectually I knew the difference between empathy and sympathy but I didn’t realise how often I failed to show

empathy to people when they needed it,” he says. “I think [the course] has definitely changed the way I relate to people in my church and people close to me... it’s really empowered me to take this into my life and ministry and to be a better listener.”

The head of the ministry department at Moore College, the Rev Archie Poulos, has been a strong supporter of the course from the outset — seeing the pastoral value in helping students learn to listen effectively,

then reflect on how to do it better.

“We at the college are very good at teaching theology, and we expect — and it usually happens — that people develop some of the pastoral skills after they finish college,” he says. “But here is a resource we can use to help people, in an intensive way, develop those pastoral skills before they leave. And the other advantage is that the course is being taught by people who are theologically orthodox and theologically reflective.”

The nine-week course is run by experienced chaplaincy supervisors the Rev Morris Key, the Rev Allen Cook, and Mrs Jan Corbett-Jones. It became a central element of the Moore diploma in 2007 and was introduced as an elective to fourth-year Bachelor of Divinity students last year. Word of mouth recommendation has

made it increasingly popular: this year the number of BD students doing the elective has jumped from eight to 19, or nearly 40 per cent of all fourth years.

The course has even pulled in a Moore graduate. The Rev Alex Zunica, an assistant minister at Caringbah, signed up for the subject as an external student.

“The guts of ministry is loving people — that’s the primary concern of a minister of the gospel,” he says. “And loving people is not just a theory — there are practical things to do and the course has helped me think through some of those ways to love and listen to people.”

One of the 11 diploma students, Tanya Bosch, says she had been keen to do the pastoral course because she had “heard how good it was”. As part of the course’s practical element she

made pastoral visits for her church and admits finding it daunting. However, in reflecting on



Morris Key and Stephen Gardner.

the visits Bosch began to understand more about the issues a particular parishioner was dealing with and says, “I’ll go back [and visit] with that in mind”.

In Zunica’s opinion, the course is something “all ministers of the gospel need to do... because every conversation is a pastoral conversation and an opportunity to love and care for the person you’re ministering to, so it’s applicable to anyone who’s in pastoral ministry”.

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GOSPEL CHOICE

## Northern Beaches partnership

IN a bid to rejuvenate a flagging family service the congregation of Holy Trinity, Beacon Hill has decided to go into partnership with the nearby parish of St Faith’s, Narrabeen.

Beacon Hill’s interim minister, David Ritchie, says that, “although financially keeping its head above water, the number of families [here] has dwindled.

“We formed a transition team... and came to a common mind that the church couldn’t thrive on its own — that it wasn’t really in a position to call a new rector and just hope things would get better. Instead [the group decided] it would be better for the gospel and Christian ministry if we put the whole nomination process on hold and developed a suitable

partnership with another Anglican church.”

Beacon Hill approached two churches and decided the model proposed by the Rev Kerry Nagel of St Faith’s — partnership rather than amalgamation — was the best fit.

Mr Nagel proposed a change he hopes will see the church flourish and be able to stand on its own feet in coming years. “The parish voluntarily said they needed help and are ready for a change,” he says. “They intentionally chose to partner with St Faith’s — a partnership which is about change.”

That partnership does not mean Beacon Hill just becomes another service of St Faith’s. While Mr Nagel was made acting rector of Beacon Hill in August

he is keen to help it retain its own identity.

“My suggestion was to appoint a younger minister who can lead them in a new direction but with a separate identity [from St Faith’s],” he says. “We want to help them reach their particular area... and it is my hope that in the future they will be established as an outreach centre.”

With the parish, Mr Nagel has appointed Rick Mason to lead Beacon Hill in 2012. Mr Mason is currently serving as assistant minister at St Stephen’s, Normanhurst.

Says Mr Nagel: “The church needs to go in a new direction but also need to keep their own identity... They need to be ready for radical change and have a certain level of missional thinking.”

NEW CONGREGATION

# Liverpool welcomes Nepalese fellowship



The St Luke's family joined together to celebrate the church's anniversary.

ST Luke's, Liverpool has offered its facilities to a local Nepalese fellowship in a bid to promote cross-cultural ministry.

About eight months ago the Nepalese group, which was meeting in a garage, approached the church asking whether it could meet in the church building.

The senior minister of St Luke's, the Rev

Stuart Pearson, sat down with the Nepalese leadership team to determine whether their fellowship's theology matched that of the church's.

It did, and the church then offered its building to the Nepalese group, which now meets every Sunday at 8am.

Mr Pearson holds regular talks with the

leaders to make them feel a part of St Luke's.

One of the ways the church hopes to help the Nepalese congregation integrate is by inviting members to stay and join in with the 10.30am family service.

At this stage there are 30 people attending the Nepalese service, with a small number staying for the St Luke's family

service. And while the Nepalese fellowship is not an official service of St Luke's, Mr Pearson is keen to ensure they feel part of the church.

"We recently celebrated our anniversary and the Nepalese fellowship joined us in those celebrations," he says.

"We hope that they will also be involved with our next AGM."

The Nepalese service also reaches the local community in a way that St Luke's on its own would struggle to do.

"Liverpool is very multicultural," Mr Pearson says. "There isn't one major people group so the way we aim to reach the community is by conducting our services in simple English... [The Nepalese

fellowship] is doing something that we couldn't do, which is really great."

By encouraging members to stay for the morning family service, Mr Pearson hopes to grow ministry to second-generation Nepalese.

"One of the struggles of ministering just to [the] first generation is that you lose the second generation who are trying to straddle both cultures," he says. "If we can get them involved in both services that would be great."

Under God Mr Pearson hopes that the Nepalese fellowship will continue to grow.

"This is a new ministry that is developing in Liverpool," he says. "It requires some care and looking after."

In time, who knows? We may see people raised up from there who want to go to Moore College and receive training."

COMMUNITY SURVEY

## Moore College looking well ahead

MOORE College has begun a major examination of its vision and priorities well into the 21st century.

The college, established more than 150 years ago, is the principal training college for ordained ministers of the Sydney Anglican Diocese but also trains students from other evangelical church traditions and for wider ministry.

Its high level of evangelical scholarship is recognised internationally and domestically and the college was this year granted Self-Accrediting Authority (the right to accredit its own degrees, much like a university).

The Moore College board, through its Vision Committee, has released a discussion

paper and questionnaire covering areas such as the profile of the college, the quality and categories of training and the preparedness of its graduates.

College friends and supporters, past students, churches and others with an interest in its future are being asked for their views.

The college's principal, Dr John Woodhouse, says Moore faces many challenges. "Although enrolments are now double what they were 25 years ago, the educational landscape and ministry challenges are vastly different," he says.

He adds that changes such as the revolution brought to learning by the internet, the growth in part-time study options and

greater flexibility and experimentation in church life and ministry made planning for the future demanding.

Background information and a simple survey form can be downloaded from the college website ([www.moore.edu.au](http://www.moore.edu.au)) and the results will be fed into the board's planning process.

Says Dr Woodhouse: "Moore College builds firm foundations for a lifetime of serving the Lord Jesus Christ. While the world is changing at a bewildering speed and our graduates serve in an astonishing variety of circumstances, the foundation needed is not new: deep knowledge of God's word, love for our Saviour, godliness of life and compassion for the lost."

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SYNOD VOTE

# Commission report goes to working party

RUSSELL POWELL

SYDNEY Synod has voted without dissent to send the recommendations of the Archbishop's Strategic Commission on Structure, Funding and Governance to a working party.

The commission's report, 12 months in the making, was the main item of discussion on day two of the Synod, held at the Wesley Centre in Pitt Street.

With such a wide brief, covering the assets of the Endowment of the See, diocesan investment policy and governance of the major boards, Synod members struggled to understand the full ramifications of the

commission's work. Pre-Synod briefings were well attended but it still took more than an hour of explanation and questions before a vote was taken on what to do with the recommendations.

## COMMISSION QUESTIONED

During the explanatory session, commission members took questions on areas of their special expertise.

Property consultant Robert Freeman and the chairman of the St Andrew's House Corporation, Dr Laurie Scandrett, fielded questions about the office tower and the retail complex below. Valuers say St Andrew's Arcade alone is worth more than \$30 million.

Mr Freeman said external managers had been appointed to the arcade and were fine-tuning the "retail mix". Dr Scandrett said although the last Synod had been told three floors of St Andrew's House would be vacant by this October, heads of agreement had now been signed to fill those vacancies.

Another commission member, businessman Simon Pillar, was called upon to explain the 'asset mix' of diocesan investments. He cited Yale and Harvard universities as world's best practice in managing endowments. Both of the universities had managed to generate large yearly payments, as well as growing the real value of their funds.

One of the secrets to the success, Mr Pillar said, was a mix of assets including securities, real estate and other investments. But while the universities had about 10 per cent of their funds in real estate, one Sydney diocesan fund had 37 per cent in bricks and mortar. He said Sydney's diocesan funds were therefore "heavily overweighted to illiquid real estate assets".

## WORKING PARTY

Commission chairman Peter Kell proposed a working party, overseen by Standing Committee, to consider which of the commission's recommendations should be implemented and how.

But after questioning

by several speakers, he assured Synod a parish levy was not being proposed and would have to be put to Synod if one were contemplated. Likewise, the sale of assets such as the Archbishop's residence, Bishops Court, would be a matter for Synod.

The Rev Craig Roberts of Neutral Bay (right), who is also a member of the Anglican Church Property Trust, held up a chart of the commission's proposed governance structure and central investment board, saying it would have the same weaknesses as the previous arrangement.

Mr Roberts' amendment requested Standing Committee to include the views of major diocesan bodies,



such as the Glebe Board and the Property Trust, in the final report, and this was accepted by Mr Kell and his co-mover, Bishop Glenn Davies.

Mr Kell thanked Synod for taking what he said was a "further step in a historic restructuring".

A motion to establish the working party will be on the agenda for the next Standing Committee meeting in November.



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“SOLEMN PROMISES” CHANGE

# Synod simplifies ordination vows

JUDY ADAMSON

THOSE making promises upon ordination in the Sydney Diocese will now do so in simpler, more modern language after Synod passed an amended form of the Solemn Promises Ordinance first considered last year.

Changes to the oaths ordinands take include precedence given to the Bible over the Anglican Church’s Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion, plus greater clarity about what is permissible in Anglican services.

The diocesan registrar, Dr Philip Selden, said the new forms of promise retained the benefits of the old while making it “much easier for our clergy to make wholehearted promises,

understanding what they are promising to do and being able to keep those commitments with a clear conscience”.

Some speakers expressed concern about a few of the Thirty-Nine Articles and whether all entirely conformed to Scripture, as this might create difficulty for ordinands. However, Dr Selden said a promise in relation to the Articles was also required in the original ordinance, and the legislation passed without amendment.

On the last night of Synod the house debated linked legislation about authorised services.

Bishop Glenn Davies said that while clergy had legislated freedoms in services they conducted, the new ordinance provided a road map: “They know exactly what they’re signing

off on because it’s been specifically approved”.

Some saw no need for legislation but others, such as Dean Phillip Jensen, were concerned it would regulate services too tightly. “I can see how it will be used in future to limit what people are doing... that’s happened in the past,” he said.

The Rev Matthew Johnson from Redfern was also concerned that “we are foregoing a freedom here” and wondered whether parishes would be judged in future on compliance with the ordinance “rather than preaching the gospel and reaching out to people”.

Bishop Davies said the legislation was “good guidance for who we are as Anglicans and how we can best edify one another and give glory to God”.

REGIONAL DECISION

# Cathedrals take off their ‘P’ plates

ANDREW BUERGER

ST John’s, Parramatta and St Michael’s, Wollongong were both upgraded from provisional to regional cathedrals at Synod last month.

The Bishop of Western Sydney, Ivan Lee, moved the ordinance to reclassify the cathedrals.

“Both of these cathedrals provide a leading Christian and Anglican voice in their respective areas,” he said.

In past years Synod has extended the cathedrals’ provisional status on a number of occasions. This ordinance marks a permanent move.

The other option would have been to remove the cathedral status altogether, but Canon Bruce Morrison



(above) from St John’s spoke against this.

“Parramatta is proud of its cathedral,” he said.

“There are currently plans to redevelop the centre of Parramatta, focusing on St John’s. The community would be confused if we lost the cathedral status and just became a church.”

Canon Sandy Grant, senior minister at St Michael’s, Wollongong, reiterated the importance of the cathedral for that city and the place it holds in community life.

“When the media

in Wollongong want a comment from the church, they ring the Bishop [Peter Hayward] or the cathedral,” he said.

Bishop Lee also spoke about the ministry and evangelism opportunities that the cathedrals can create.

“[The cathedrals] are seen as the centre of the church for the community. We can take the opportunities that come from that standing for Christian mission and outreach.”

Said Canon Grant: “It’s time to take off our ‘Ps.’”

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CHURCH GROWTH

# New life for provisional parishes

Paul Dale of Church by the Bridge conducts a baptism at a harbour beach.

JUDY ADAMSON AND  
ANDREW BUERGER

AMID the legislative detail and complicated argument, one of the most enjoyable aspects of Synod is hearing how churches around the Diocese are thriving. This year four provisional parishes shared how God was working in their area and Synod voted to reclassify them as full parishes.

Church by the Bridge at Kirribilli, which began more than 100 years ago as a church plant

of the Lavender Bay parish, has been a full parish, a branch church of Neutral Bay and, for the past decade or so, a provisional parish.

Under the Rev Ernest Chau a Chinese congregation grew from 1991 and, in 2005, the Rev Paul Dale arrived with a congregational plant from St Thomas', North Sydney that was christened Church by the Bridge.

By 2007 it had created a second congregation, Mr Chau had moved further north with his Cantonese congregation and Dr

Dale became Kirribilli's curate-in-charge.

More congregations have been created since and the church now boasts 500 adults and 50 children. It runs everything from art exhibitions and carols for thousands of locals to free monthly lunches for poorer residents — not to mention regular baptisms in Sydney Harbour with the bridge as a backdrop.

"I want Church by the Bridge to get that mission isn't just something you add into your calendar but that your whole calendar is missional...

that kind of culture where we're just living for Jesus," Dr Dale said.

In Sydney's south-west, Eagle Vale began as a church plant of St James', Minto in 1986, with church meetings held in parishioners' homes. As numbers grew the church moved to a local community centre and, in 1990, its own church building.

Eagle Vale's curate-in-charge, the Rev Craig Hooper, said the church was "thankful to God for the growth that we have seen but we continue to look to the future... there is still so much to do".

Further south-west of Eagle Vale is what locals affectionately call "the land that time forgot" — the parish of Wollondilly, off the Hume Highway near Picton, which takes in four churches in a parish with more than 100 years of history.

"Truth to tell," said curate-in-charge the Rev Kevin Flanagan, "we could have been a full parish some years ago but we've just been too busy!"

In his Synod presentation Mr

after its growth and child numbers made it difficult to continue on campus at the University of NSW.

As church member Greg Bergan noted, there were all sorts of risks in the two churches coming together because of the "not inconsiderable differences between the St Mark's congregation and AABC... but a common love of Christ stitched both sides together wonderfully".

Malabar's new curate-in-charge the Rev Simon



New additions to the buildings at Eagle Vale.



"A common love of Christ": members of St Mark's, Malabar.

time forgot" but church members are able to add: "but God did not".

The final church to be reclassified by the Synod was the provisional parish of St Mark's, Malabar.

The two-congregation Australian Asian Bible Church, under the headship of the Rev Andrew Moore, merged with Malabar in 2005

Roberts spoke of the church members' "warm-hearted concern for one another", and how "a significant number of people commit significant amounts of time to serve the gospel of the Lord Jesus".

The four provisional parishes will change their status to full parishes on January 1, 2012.

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FUNDING PRINCIPLES

## Payment of “essentials” considered

A draft statement of principles, to potentially govern the funding of the Diocese from 2013-15, was hotly debated at Synod last month.

The draft was presented to Synod members to encourage feedback and suggested, among other things, that parishes should be responsible for paying “Anglican essentials” such as the costs of the Archbishop and registrar and the membership of the national church.

Bishop Peter Hayward, who moved the motion about funding principles, assured members the draft was asking each parish to “openly contribute to the diocesan network” and was not “assessment by stealth”.

His seconder, Mr Peter Kell, explained the draft sought to look at

the Diocese’s complete expenditure in all areas before setting the budget, and this was “an important change in the way we do things”.

While some speakers described the document as “coherent and understandable” and “potentially a very good way forward”, others were not so keen. The rector of Ashfield, Five Dock and Haberfield, the Rev Andrew Katay, said that “if we are going to shift costs to the parishes we need a very good reason... the fact that they are essential [costs] is not a good reason — it’s a logical failure”.

Canon Sandy Grant from Wollongong argued that the suggested costs had “no flexibility”, while the Rev John Gray from Castle Hill said that although he

was glad revenue and expenditure were being considered holistically, he was concerned that “regardless of the size of the church an increase in the parochial cost recoveries (PCR) will place [parish] staff positions and work under threat”.

However Mr John Pascoe, from St Andrew’s Cathedral, supported the principle that “day-to-day running costs should be paid from our labours — if we’re using our inheritance then we’re not paying our way... the time has come to stop that way of thinking, pay our own way and be generous to those who follow us”.

Synod members have until March 1 to provide comments about the draft, which will be finalised in time for next year’s Synod.

TRIBUTES FOR STEVE MCKERIHAN

## A “good and gentle man”

A special motion about the former CEO of the Sydney Diocesan Secretariat, Steve McKerihan was passed at last month’s Synod, giving thanks for “the dedicated and expert contribution he made to the work of SDS, the GAB [Glebe Administration Board] and the Diocese as a whole”, and recalling “his deep commitment to Jesus Christ, demonstrated by a life of humble and dedicated service”. Mr McKerihan died of cancer at Sutherland Hospital on October 1.

He was a respected figure in the banking industry and had a long career with St George Bank, including 12 years as CFO. In 2007, he gave up a seven-figure salary to run the Sydney Diocesan Secretariat,

saying: “My decision to investigate this position was not so much a choice as a calling”.

In February 2010, Mr McKerihan had a car accident on his way home from work. Tests in hospital indicated he had a brain lesion that appeared to have caused the accident. Pathology tests then revealed a brain tumour. Despite quick surgery and initial good recovery, his condition worsened this year. He was admitted to Sutherland Hospital in late September.

In a speech at Synod, Canon Bruce Ballantine-Jones said it was Mr McKerihan’s faith in Jesus “and the way it affected every aspect of his life that was the greatest testimony to his character as a good and faithful servant”.

Archbishop Peter



Jensen has also paid tribute to Mr McKerihan, calling him “one of the finest colleagues I have ever known”.

“He loved the Lord and his word,” Archbishop Jensen said. “He wanted to see people come to know Christ. He put aside his own interests in joining us and he continued to sacrifice for the sake of the gospel. His leadership in time of crisis was exemplary. We thank God for every remembrance of him.”

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MISSIONARY HOUR

# Synod goes global

The Bishop of West Malaysia, Ng Moon Hing, addresses delegates during Missionary Hour

ANDREW BUERGER

SYNOD is not all about motions and ordinances. Each year, one hour is dedicated to hearing more about mission and ministry work across the globe.

In Missionary Hour this year Synod heard from the Bishop of West Malaysia, Ng Moon Hing, and CMS General Secretary, Malcolm Richards and his wife Elizabeth, who have recently returned from serving in the Diocese of Kindu in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Mr Richards and his wife served in DR Congo for a number of years at the Berea Bible School before returning to Australia in early 2011.

They shared with Synod the vision of Bishop Masimango in the Diocese of Kindu to grow

an evangelical diocese in a very unstable part of the world.

“The goal of our diocese is to train leaders,” Bishop Masimango said through a video message.

The bishop also spoke about how he hopes the Berea Bible School could spread its biblical teaching across the country.

“Most of our Christians are not mature... they are not reading their bibles,” he said. “What we are doing in Kindu could be done in other dioceses. My goal is to get other dioceses to send more students here so when they go back to their diocese they can share the vision of Kindu.”

Mr Richards shared the part Australia has played in the growth of evangelical Christianity across DR Congo.

“Despite the war, the

Anglican church in DR Congo has continued to grow,” he said. “God has used what CMS did all those years ago [in the early '80s before the civil war]. There are now nine dioceses in the country and, of those, four are led by evangelical bishops... three of those bishops are a product of ministry through CMS Australia.”

Synod then heard from the Bishop Moon Hing, who spoke about his affinity with Australia due to the fact that he became a Christian while studying at university in Melbourne.

Bishop Moon Hing spoke about the challenges that face the proclamation of the gospel in his diocese.

“In an urban setting there are many challenges,” he said. “Recently 12 churches have been fire-bombed. Also the church has been falsely accused

of plotting a Christian state and working with the [parliamentary] Opposition. We have also been accused of using porn and prostitution to convert Muslims to Christianity.”

Bishop Moon Hing then challenged Sydney churches in their giving to mission — as well as going on mission.

He ended with his vision for raising new disciples for Christ.

“We all say that the fruit of a mango tree is mango fruit,” he said. “But friends, that is not vision. You want vision? The fruit of the mango tree is another mango tree. Share the fruit and then ask that person to plant the seed... But I want to say, that is not enough. The fruit of the mango tree is a plantation of mango trees. If everyone plants [a seed] there will be thousands of trees.”

COMMUNION CRISIS

## “Flawed” Anglican covenant opposed

THE 49th Synod of the Diocese of Sydney has opposed the adoption of the Anglican Communion covenant after being told it was “theologically flawed” and the wrong approach to the crisis in world Anglicanism.

A motion, moved by the head of Moore College’s department of theology, philosophy and ethics, Dr Mark Thompson, opposed the adoption of the covenant by the Anglican Church of Australia. In September, the Sydney Standing Committee issued a report on the covenant and that report was presented in Synod papers and supported by Dr Thompson and seconder, Mr Robert Tong.

The report detailed five serious theological objections to the covenant, saying it was ‘fundamentally concerned with maintaining structural and institutional unity rather than biblical faithfulness’ — adding that ‘the real problem... is a departure from the teaching of Scripture’.

Dr Thompson told the Synod: “Undoubtedly the Anglican Communion covenant has been put together by those with heartfelt concern for

the predicament the Communion finds itself in”. But he added that it would not solve the crisis in world Anglicanism.

“Those who have created the problem won’t sign it; and if they did without repenting of the departures from the teaching of Scripture it would only demonstrate the uselessness of the covenant itself,” Dr Thompson said.

“What is more, a number of orthodox Anglican provinces throughout the world have already indicated they won’t sign it for various other reasons. There are serious questions about how it could be effectively adopted under the constitution of the Anglican Church of Australia.”

The decision of Sydney Synod is similar to the conclusion drawn by the GAFCON primates at their London conference a year ago. The primates’ communique said that ‘while we acknowledge that the efforts to heal our brokenness through the introduction of an Anglican covenant were well-intentioned we have come to the conclusion the current text is fatally flawed and so support for this initiative is no longer appropriate’.

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MINISTRY REPORT

## Sydney's future: cross-cultural ministry

ON day one of Synod the Rev Bruce Hall from St Paul's, Carlingford spoke to delegates about cross-cultural ministry.

Mr Hall, who also works for the Department of Evangelism and New Churches, emphasised the importance of this ministry for all churches in the Diocese.

"If they don't already, every local government area will have a migrant population," he said. "This is everyone's challenge, not just some people's."

Mr Hall challenged churches to consider how they are integrated into their area. "Many of our churches don't reflect the changing communities around them," he said. "[The current way of doing] ministry may not meet the demography of the new city... we need to change our minds

and look out into the community."

Over the previous decade 1.5 million people have migrated to Australia — one-third to Sydney and the Illawarra. The largest migrant numbers were from China, followed by India and the UK.

Sydney people involved in cross-cultural ministry shared with delegates how they are making the gospel relevant to different people groups.

Cam Phong Huynh works with second-generation Vietnamese in Fairfield and spoke about how the ministry has grown from five people when it started two years ago. "We just need to meet people in the local area," he said.

One of the ways he connects with local people is through

community sport.

Margaret Powell works with women from a Muslim background and emphasised the importance of making the gospel culturally relevant to different groups. "[These women] won't change unless they see the impact of Jesus Christ on your life," she said.

Seti Latu, who works with second-generation islanders in Canterbury, spoke about how important it is to model godly family relationships in a community where men often behave like boys.

Mr Hall ended by reiterating the vital importance of such ministries — and how they will need to be embraced by everyone: "By 2020, every Anglican church will need to be doing significant cross-cultural ministry".

In Brief

## Synod decisions on major social issues

### Gambling

Synod has officially supported efforts in Federal parliament to reduce the impact and incidence of problem gambling. A motion, moved by Canon Sandy Grant from St Michael's Cathedral in Wollongong, also calls on the NSW Government to reduce its reliance on taxation on gambling. Synod was told there are between 80,000 and 160,000 problem gamblers in Australia, with poker machine users disproportionately represented among them. The Synod motion 'endorses efforts being proposed in Australia's Federal parliament to reduce the impact and incidence of problem gambling - for example, by the introduction of a compulsory precommitment system for poker machine use'.

### Abortion

A vote at Synod gave support for the San Jose Articles, launched last month at the United Nations, which defend the humanity and rights of unborn children and clarify that access to abortion is not a right under international instruments. The motion, moved by Dr Claire Smith, 'affirms that all human life is a gift from God and, irrespective of race, gender, ability and socio-economic circumstances,

is created in his image, with inherent dignity and value, and accordingly, that ending the life of an unborn child is to be avoided unless the mother's own life is genuinely at risk'. Dr Smith also moved that the motion include a clause declaring that the "gospel of Jesus Christ offers complete forgiveness, healing and hope to all those who have knowingly ended the life of an unborn child". Federal and state members of parliament will be informed of the vote.

### Same-sex marriage

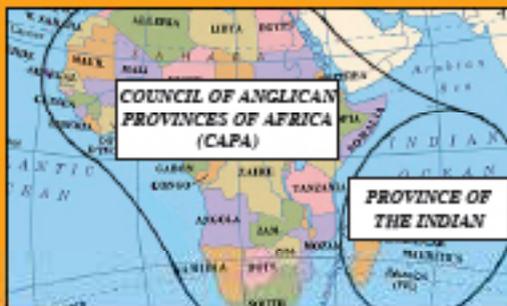
Synod has urged Federal parliament to retain the current definition of marriage at law, namely as 'the union of a man and a woman to the exclusion of all others, voluntarily entered into for life'. The motion said the definition 'not only reflects biblical teaching but widespread and longstanding practice which has served the good of human societies independent of religious affiliation'. Synod also resolved to encourage ministers, Synod representatives and other church members to write to their local MP affirming the current wording of the Marriage Act. At the same time, the Australian Christian Lobby is circulating a petition and information video for churches prior to the issue being considered at the ALP Conference in December.



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# Questions answered

## ANDREW ROBINSON

ANDREW Bottomley has always been someone with a lot of questions.

Born in England, his family came to Australia

when he was three — and after his parents split up six years later they independently started going to church in two different Christian traditions.

“I was exposed to both Pentecostal and

Anglican faiths at an early age,” Andrew (pictured, above centre) says. “This was confusing to say the least!”

The confusion didn’t abate when both parents stopped going to church again — and Andrew

with them. “My parents vaguely professed to hold some type of belief but it was never with clarity or with absolute conviction,” Andrew says. “I followed in fashion, vaguely claiming to be a Christian but never putting my trust completely in God.”

But he never stopped thinking about the biggest questions of life. And neither did his parents, particularly his father.

“He is definitely a prominent figure in my journey to faith,” Andrew says. “He doesn’t necessarily have a Christian faith but he has made it a personal goal of his to scrutinise and question everything. I have great respect for him because of this. So even though I did stop attending church, I never stopped questioning the ‘why’ because of my father’s influence on my life.”

When Andrew was in Year 10 his father took the family back to church at St Peter’s, Hornsby one Sunday morning for some “intellectual stimulus”.

“I just got initiated into the church from there,” Andrew says. “I think they actually invited me

to play the piano at the evening service that day.”

He kept on asking questions but now he began to find some answers. “From here, I would definitely say I was a Christian,” he says. “I knew Jesus died for me to save me from my sins and actually appreciated this properly; however this definitely didn’t stop me from asking questions.”

In fact, Andrew’s new-found faith sharpened his father’s interest in the interaction between philosophy, religion and science.

“He really challenged my Christian outlook from different viewpoints — not in an unfriendly way but as an intellectual discussion.”

High school came to an end and Andrew found himself faced with a decision. Younger than his year group, he wanted to take a gap year so he’d be the same age as his university peers. And though he knew his gifts and what he was good at, he felt unsure of which career direction to take.

“Plus, I guess I wanted to mature a bit,” he says. “Nobody really wants to admit that, though.”

Andrew decided to do the Year 13 program with Anglican Youthworks. It is a combination of theological study, a month serving in Fiji, involvement in camping ministries and a year-long ministry placement in a church or school. Andrew did his placement at St Peter’s, working with kids and youth.

“It is aimed at people like me who want to strengthen their Christian faith and this was what appealed to me,” he says. Year 13 was a place where he could bring his questions — and whatever else was going on in his life.

“The deeper and further I read into the Bible and gospels

increases the passion I have for it exponentially,” Andrew says. “I have grown to be more forward with my views and confident in my position as a Christian and I have been able to express my views to others. I’ve started having very large philosophical discussions with my father and where previously I would have just said ‘I don’t know’ to such critical analysis, now I can flesh out reasoning for why I believe what I believe.”

Andrew now has a folder on his computer called ‘Not black and white’, where he’s catalogued his struggles and thoughts from the year.

The month-long Fiji trip was a defining part of the year — and what challenged him most were the straightforward and passionate ways that others lived out their faith.

“I met one kid aged about 17 whose group at school meet together for lunch and put all their food in the middle of a circle,” he says. “Then they go around and share their favourite Bible verse for that day with a quick explanation of how it applies to their lives. I guess it just challenged me to be more open with my faith — never in a hundred years would I have had the courage to do that in my school!”

Next year Andrew plans to study science and engineering at Sydney University, and make the most of all uni has to offer in terms of sport, culture and ministry opportunities. He’s thankful for the way 2011 has sharpened and deepened his appreciation of the gospel.

“It is not something we should take for granted but we must be thankful for it every single day,” he says. “It is the reason we live.”

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## Sydney behind jailed pastor

Sydney churches have officially supported a Protestant pastor sentenced to death in Iran. Pastor Yousef Nadarkhani has been in prison since 2009, accused of apostasy, a charge levelled at Muslims who change religion. He is married with two young children.

Nadarkhani, who became a Christian as a teenager, is also accused of evangelising and baptising converts from Islam. Under sharia law court authorities in Rasht, north of Tehran, imposed a death penalty – even though the verdict seemed to conflict with the religious freedom provisions of Iran’s constitutional law.

In order for his life to be spared, Pastor Nadarkhani was given three chances to renounce Christianity but refused to abandon his faith.

In a motion moved by the Dean of Sydney, Phillip Jensen, the Synod asked the Department of Foreign Affairs to make representations to the government of Iran and for the media to highlight Pastor Nadarkhani’s case. The British and US governments have also called for his release.

The Synod motion also called for Sydney churches to pray for the pastor, his wife and children, as well as all Christians in Iran. A decision on Mr Nadarkhani’s fate is now to be made by Iran’s supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.



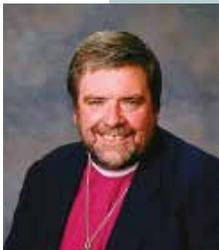
## Ballarat welcomes new bishop

The current Anglican bishop of Willochra in South Australia, the Right Rev Garry Weatherill, will begin his new role as Bishop of Ballarat on November 5 when he is enthroned at Christ Church Cathedral, Ballarat.

Bishop Weatherill has been the Bishop of Willochra for the past 10 years, serving before that in parish ministry and as Willochra diocese’s ministry development officer.

A statement from the Ballarat diocese described Bishop Weatherill as “an experienced and much loved country bishop with important roles in the national Anglican Church and the international Anglican Communion”.

Bishop Weatherill said of his appointment that he was “very excited about coming to join the clergy and people in the [Ballarat] diocese as we rejoice in the abundant life that is Jesus’ promise to us – and as we search for new ways to be ambassadors of hope, love, forgiveness and justice”.



HORN OF AFRICA APPEAL

# Government doubles Anglican Aid

The Minister for Foreign Affairs, Kevin Rudd, speaking to representatives from non-government organisations on October 5, holds up before-and-after photos of a malnourished boy now healthy thanks to food supplements funded by Australian humanitarian assistance.

THE Federal Government’s AusAID has included Anglican Aid in the list of organisations for which it will offer dollar-for-dollar help.

In early October Foreign Minister Kevin Rudd announced the Australian Government’s Dollar for Dollar initiative, which will match each dollar the public donates to appeals run by AusAID-accredited non-government organisations working to alleviate the food crisis in the Horn of

Africa. The aid matching runs from October 5 until November 30.

AusAID says the need for assistance remains acute, with more than 13 million people requiring urgent humanitarian aid. In Somalia alone 750,000 people are at risk of starvation and 1.3 million children are acutely malnourished.

The agency says unprecedented numbers of people are fleeing their homes for neighbouring countries and the situation is being made worse by life-threatening cholera

and measles outbreaks in the region.

The Archbishop of Sydney’s Anglican Aid (Overseas Relief and Aid fund) has now been named on the list of 18 organisations eligible for the Government’s dollar-for-dollar support.

In announcing the funding initiative Mr Rudd said: “We cannot wait for the situation to worsen before responding. Already the Australian Government is making a difference as the third-largest donor to the crisis, but now we will double every dollar

raised by agencies already working in the Horn of Africa, making the public’s contributions go even further.”

Already Sydney Anglican churches have raised \$300,000 for the Horn of Africa famine appeal, which has a target of \$500,000.

Anglican Aid has been working with the Anglican Church in Kenya, which is distributing aid in drought-hit areas where the situation has been made more urgent by large numbers of refugees.

## Horn of Africa Emergency Appeal:

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The famine in East Africa has deepened. Millions in Kenya, Somalia and Ethiopia are in desperate need and the Australian Government is now matching every dollar Anglican Aid raises. Your donation will assist us to provide help for twice as many people! Please donate at [www.anglicanaid.org.au](http://www.anglicanaid.org.au) or call 1800 653 903

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## At home with the Kumars

Experiencing the love and wholehearted service of God in an eastern Indian town was an eye-opener in more ways than one, writes DAVID MANSFIELD.

I HAVE just spent a week in India visiting some potential partners/projects on behalf of Anglican Aid.

Three days were spent in the home of a Dr Kumar and his wife Nimmie in a small coastal “village” called Payakaraopeta with a population of 50,000 people. Across a large, fast flowing, khaki-coloured river is a bigger 70,000-people “town” called Tuni.

These twin towns, in the state of Andhra Pradesh, overlooking the Bay of Bengal, are home to Telugu-speaking people — very hot curry eaters and fanatical watchers of a cricketer called Tendulkar as well as the local Tollywood (Telugu language) movies.

Dr Kumar is the founder-director of an indigenous ministry called Eye Openers and is himself a qualified eye surgeon. Eye Openers operates out of his amply proportioned three-storey home. The ground floor consists of a reception room, consulting rooms, operating theatre,

dispensary and a 20-bed hospital.

The middle floor is made up of staff accommodation and the Kumars’ home. Six bedrooms (often filled with visiting village pastors from surrounding plateaus and valleys), a large kitchen, laundry, living and dining areas make up their simply furnished, multi-purpose house. Often the Kumars will vacate their bedroom and sleep on a makeshift stretcher in the laundry to host an overflow of guests.

The top floor houses more staff, including the Eye Openers’ school principal, and a meeting area for the several church gatherings, Bible college classes and conferences that are held each week.

Eye Openers Ministry is multi-focal. As one of the few doctors for this large population — and the only operating eye surgeon for over a million people in the wider district — Dr Kumar’s skills are called upon for a large number of medical problems. At the heart of his medical

work he performs several hundred Fred Hollows-type surgeries a year. He also runs regular medical clinics in up-country villages where tens of thousands of peasant farmers and day labourers have absolutely no other access to a doctor of any description.



One of the classrooms in the Eye Openers Study Centre.

An English medium Christian school is run on a leased block next door to the main building. Then, using the same facility, an after-school study centre operates from 5pm to 7pm for children from the local government schools to help literacy levels so kids don’t fall through the cracks of an educational system in crisis. These children are also fed an evening

meal, for many the only nutrition they receive each day.

A Bible college trains pastors for the 50 churches that Eye Openers has planted. These are spread throughout a mountainous geographical area the size of the Sydney

Diocese, difficult to access during the monsoon season, and there is a pastor appointed to each church.

Bible Widows is yet another ministry of the Bible training facility. Christian widows are supported and trained to visit the homes of those of their Hindu neighbours who are also widowed to offer them comfort, friendship and

an opportunity to hear the gospel.

Many children at risk are supported in community-based care arrangements and Dr Kumar is hoping to establish a 30-bed orphanage for those not able to be supported in the community.

It was a whirlwind three days at the end of the Indian monsoon season. I accompanied two friends, Mitch and David, from an Anglican parish in Tamworth. I spoke at the pastors’ conference, preached at church meetings and attended a village medical clinic.

At the village clinic we sang, I preached and prayed, and then three queues quickly formed: one for Dr Kumar to diagnose general medical ailments, a second for David (who is a Tamworth ophthalmologist) to diagnose eye complaints and a third for Mitch and I to pray individually for the 100 men, women and children who had gathered in the small church building that night.

The young, who spoke English, requested prayer for their families, their education and for their future life in serving Jesus. The frail 50- to 70-year-olds, who spoke no English, just looked at us with such pain and longing deeply etched in their grey, almost blinded or sunken bloodshot eyes. These eyes spoke a language that needed no translation.

Dr Kumar was always on the move. No sooner had he finished interpreting my talk at the pastors’ conference than he disappeared downstairs to scrub up for the day’s first eye surgery, followed by seeing a long line of patients who had been queuing and patiently waiting since early morning for a

consultation. That night we sang for much longer than usual, waiting for the doctor to complete his final cataract surgery and come up to the rooftop to interpret my preaching at the evening meeting.



Dr Kumar removes a woman’s cataract.

I was dumbstruck by many things during my brief encounter with this cricket- and curry-loving culture. Not least was the observation that, apart from my travelling companions, I did not see one W/W/W (Wealthy White Western) person in the three days I walked the streets of the villages or travelled the district. Not one Western tourist, NGO worker or missionary could be spotted in this vast sea of humanity.

But most of all I was awestruck by the grace of Jesus flowing through these indigenous Indian Christians. Living on the smell of nothing, yet spreading the sweet aroma of Jesus.

Again and again, my vision was blurred as I kept blinking back the tears, not from the curries or the steaming humidity, but from the sight of so much suffering and the sheer joy of seeing God’s grace at work.

Jesus is opening eyes through the ministry of Eye Openers in India as many Dalits and other low-caste “less than a dollar-a-day” labourers are responding to his life-giving gospel and many more are receiving sight-giving surgery.

*The Rev David Mansfield is the director of the Archbishop of Sydney’s Anglican Aid.*

Letters

# God's mission — and ours

Letters should be less than 200 words

Email: [newspaper@anglicanmedia.com.au](mailto:newspaper@anglicanmedia.com.au)

IN response to the story “Parishes prepare for a bright future” (*SC*, October), I’m wondering whether really we need new church buildings.

The older traditional stone-style Anglican church at Westmead, where I worship, is not the most comfortable accommodation on a cool night with its high ceilings etc. So, the other week there we were, the regular faithful few. Our evening service progressed as usual, the theme of the message on thanksgiving. I was struck by one reference to Job in the midst of the passages. A man who was thankful despite everything that happened to him and his family. What resounded was that Job had wholeheartedly embraced God as his source of life.

This led me to reflect on what I had thought about as I walked to church that evening: that we are blessed here in Australia — in Sydney, in Westmead. That we have the world, more or less, right here.

My other thought was why would anyone come into this old-style cold building? It’s certainly not pleasing to the eye these days, or outwardly inviting. It’s not multifunctional or comfortable. And at that point I was brought back to the idea that I needed to be content, and thankful for the mission field we do have right here.

We had visitors that night — four men in suits plus a cleric dressed in traditional Middle Eastern clothing. They had joined us inside the church — a real surprise to us all. They had stopped for a visit, likely because our church looked like an old-fashioned church building in the Western style. God was generous to have them come to get a photo and, I guess, see — like tourists do — what the religious services are like when you’re in a foreign land.

When the service came to an end George, our preacher, and a few members of the congregation engaged these visitors. One of the younger women offered them a copy of the Injil — a portion of the New Testament — and the conversation went on for a while. And we were all thankful that they had come to visit us.

After they left George shared how the point of the conversation was just to share who we are. Despite our differences, not to engage in a debate or make them feel pressured. To treat them with integrity and respect just as we have seen Paul and others in the Bible share their thankfulness for the opportunity to share who we are in Christ. Genuine love was shown, in a brief cultural exchange, and we ended the night in praying that they would continue to encounter Jesus.

What this brief interchange revealed to me was that one does not have to go to Pakistan or have a new purpose-built church to be involved in God’s world of mission. God’s mission is likely to come to us — regardless of the externals!

Kim Riley  
Westmead



## Biblical clarity?

THE idea in Michael Jensen’s article that everyone can read and understand the Bible for themselves (*SC*, October) has to be false because I can rarely do it unless I have already been taught the meaning of the passage — or have done the necessary exegetical work to interpret it — something that most people are not trained to do. Calvin said that the idea was insane. Understanding the story is easy, but understanding its meaning can be very difficult.

Tyndale didn’t want the ploughboy to be able to read it so that he could interpret it and all the major reformers agreed, most notably the translators: Luther (German), Calvin (French) and the English ex-pats, survivors of Queen Mary’s purge, who produced the Geneva Bible (English) — not to mention Tyndale himself (English). Each of them wrote extensive commentaries with their translations so the ploughboy would not try to interpret it for himself.

Further, they did not say that the Holy Spirit aided them in interpretation but rather that once the reader understood the meaning he still needed the illumination of the Spirit to compel him to existential belief, to believe and be personally committed to that belief. This is a major aspect of sanctification, an ongoing renewal of the mind following regeneration.

The “clarity” which the reformers insisted on was in opposition to the prevailing view of the church, defended by Erasmus, that there were large parts of the Bible that were intrinsically incomprehensible. They did not support a notion of “obvious meaning” here nor in their idea of “the plain meaning of the text”, by which they said they meant the unallegorised meaning.

Jim Bates

## Take one hymn, add one organ: mix well

READING the frank sentiments on Christian music expressed in Dr Ian Shanahan’s letter (*SC*, October) I was reminded of a common experience for many of us who are of more

mature years (that is, old) and who have had the privilege of being brought up on robust church music. Earlier this year I attended a day of well-presented and very helpful talks on an important topic for Christians. The talks were given in an Anglican cathedral in Sydney and because Christians like to sing there was a band whose job was to accompany so-called “contemporary” songs.

The big disappointment for me, and probably for some others, was the general absence of undoctored traditional hymns and the serious snub given to the majestic but silent pipe organ. The beautiful poetry and sublime theology found in many traditional hymns were denied to us all. It was especially painful to see the large number of young people present being denied the uplifting experience that comes from singing great words to a strong organ accompaniment.

David Morrison  
Springwood

## Love, not tolerance

I WANT to commend George Athas on his article “Love, tolerance & repentance” (*SC*, October). In a world, and even among certain ‘Christians’, where tolerance is confused with love — biblical love — I found it very refreshing.

Dr Athas’ focus question (‘If, out of respect, we don’t seek change in others, are we showing love?’) is something for all who profess Christ as Saviour and Lord to think about.

As he states: ‘If I was going astray and my friends watched on in tolerance, you’d have to question their friendship, their commitment and their love’. Love reaches out to make a difference, *not* tolerate.

Kris Proskafalas  
Koolewong

## Totem poles not worshipped

I WANTED to bring to your attention the article written by the Rev Justin Moffatt on “iPod, iPad, iDol” (*SC*, October). While I found the article interesting, it was the word “idol” next to a picture of a totem pole that really caught my attention. Can I say, after visiting Vancouver in October 2010 and learning that this very attitude of, shall I say, the white man’s assumption of what this totem pole stood for nearly cost the north-western First Nations people (whom you may know as Indians) their language and their art.

The totem pole, as our guide told us, is a coat of arms. The Queen’s colours/coat of arms are flown over the building, plane or car she is in and I don’t think anyone would think she is worshipping idols. It is a shame when we, in first-world countries, think we can presume to know and understand everything about other cultures.

What I really think you need to do is set the record straight. Don’t perpetuate this stereotype of associating the culture of another nation’s traditions with idolatry.

Chris Simpson

### Correction

In the the article “iPod, iPad... iDol” in October *Southern Cross* a totem pole was included by way of illustration. This was incorrect and could have led readers to the mistaken conclusion that totem poles were objects of worship.

Essay of  
the month

## Tech benefits for smart church

BRUCE STANLEY

I RECENTLY planted a new church — accidentally.

We have five members but about 14 people turn up each week. It takes about 10 minutes to prepare each week. There is no offertory. No music. No tea or coffee. Yes, it's online and no, it's not really a church plant. It's not meant to replace church. It's just something extra we do to support our Sunday meetings. And it's got unbelievable potential — not just for us here at All Saints', Waitara but for every church with 10 minutes a week and a congregation that has computers, or smart phones, or tech stuff like that.

So, some weeks ago, I downloaded this app (it's short for application, in case you're still used to MicroBees) on my iPhone called "youversion" by lifechurch.tv. I had seen other churches using this app, such as the new SOMA gathering at Macquarie. I decided to give it a try and share it with people at my church.

Why? Simply because it's a good thing for people to have more access to the Bible, and this app is free — a requirement for those yet to have technology in their church budgets. You can use it from a normal computer, or a smart phone — iPhone, iPad, BlackBerry, Android, Windows, Palm, Java, Symbian... blah blah blah. It has all these (useful) versions of the Bible you can

download — NIV, HCSB, Chinese, Korean, Ancient Greek (for those who must), ASV, CEV, The Message, Bahasa, French, Russian, Singhalese... you get the idea.

Next thing I know, I'm using its daily Bible reading plans. Using bookmarks to highlight verses. Sending verses to my Twitter and Facebook accounts every day. Then we start live events for Sunday with online polls, Bible readings and sermon notes — all there in front of everyone who wants it, plus links to our website and a place to send your prayer points to the ministry team. And people start joining; first from Waitara, then from all over the world.

Technology is often an untapped resource. Church websites are regularly out of date and the technology out there is barely realised. But one little app can make your church global every week, plus you can place in the hands of church members (and their friends and the community) a Bible resource that goes wherever their smart phone or computer happens to be.

Youversion is only one of the bazillion apps out there. Bible+ is another great free app. And all this technology has finally snapped out of geekdom — great news for those of us who have been slow to embrace the potential slippery slope of time-wasting social media.

It's now two things it never used to be: it's

useful; it's simple. And it's the Bible. This is the sort of app to look for. Nothing that opens up questionable theology (we don't want people getting their touch screens in a flap). We just want something that takes the great resource of God's word and opens it up to a new generation of tiny-screen-ophiles who are connected to social network utilities most moments of their waking hours.

It's accessible, free, easy to use and it's worldwide and easy to share. I spent two months looking for a good Chinese-English Bible for a new member (\$75) and then spent two minutes after church installing an app on his phone for free.

Churches are often struggling to connect with certain generations and cultures. These days, I rarely meet a newcomer (of any age) at our church who hasn't already been to our website, and a dozen others, to check things out first. People of all generations are embracing useful technology today more than ever. And when a free app connects people with their Bibles every day, increases their involvement in church, assists their daily devotionals, opens our community outside of Sundays and beyond the walls of our church membership, then it seems the church has finally come of age. That could be worth the 10 minutes a week. **SC**

Bruce Stanley is the rector of All Saints', Waitara.

## READER'S ESSAYS

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

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

**DON'T LET YOUR CHURCH  
LOOK FOOLISH THIS CHRISTMAS**

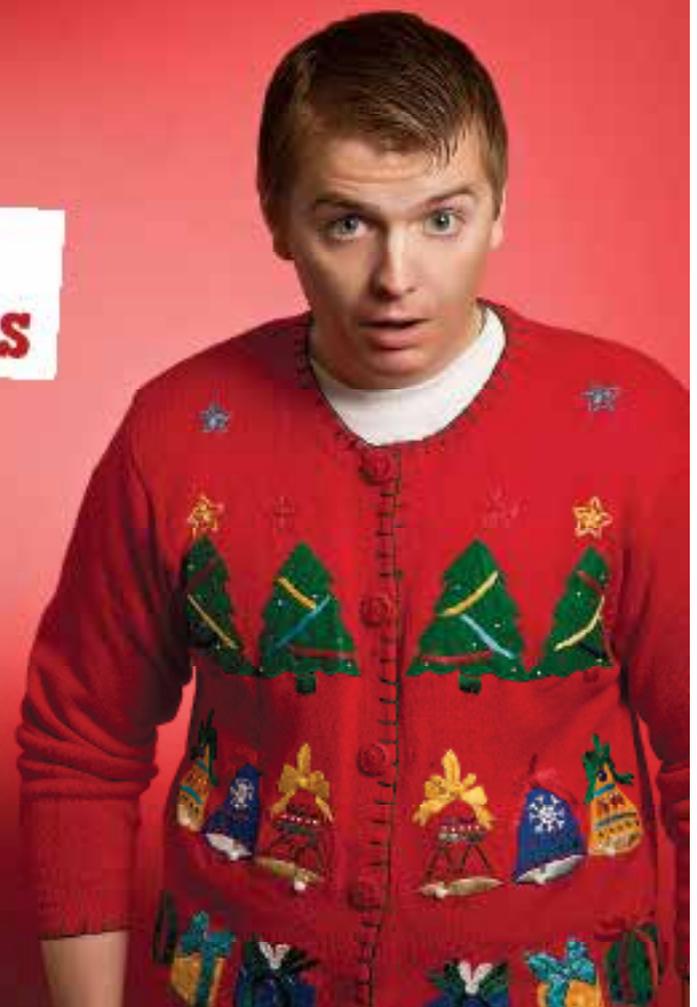
## TO DO LIST:

- Prepare outreach events
- Order extra FREE copies of *Connect For Life*

*Connect For Life* will be inserted in December *Southern Cross* but you might need extra copies to hand out to visitors or distribute to your local community. It has testimony, apologetics and general interest articles with a Christmas theme.

**Deadline: Monday 14<sup>th</sup> November**

Email church name, address and quantity to:  
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# Bringing up baby

While parents are always the most crucial role models in their children's lives, don't underestimate the part played in a Christian upbringing by the Anglican 'village', writes RUSSELL POWELL.

**I**N THE next 12 months hundreds, even thousands, of children will be born to parents in Sydney Anglican churches. In the next 20 years they will experience crèche, Sunday school, SRE, youth group — not to mention things such as ISCF or Crusaders, holiday camps, study camp and Year 13. It will take the Anglican 'village' to bring them up.

Churches can be thankful for a great heritage of youth work and the fact that, recently, it has been one of Sydney's strengths.

A study project by Sydney businessman Tim Sims concludes that not only does the Sydney diocesan age profile show a marked presence among 15- to 19-year-olds, but this profile is distinctly different from other

Anglican dioceses.

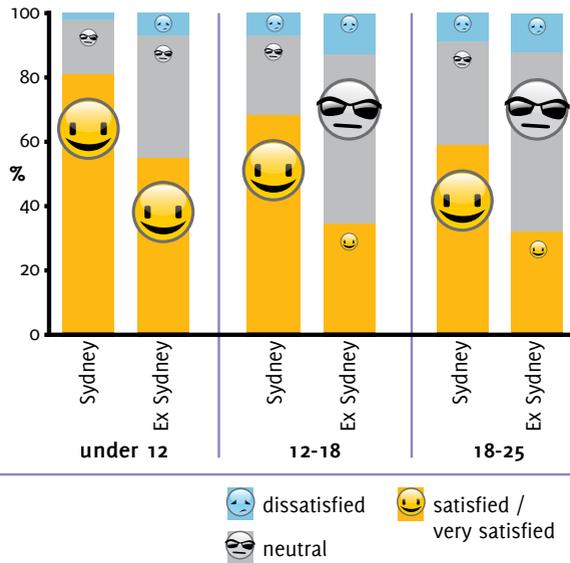
"While we are a small percentage of the population," Mr Sims says, "we are quite similar to the overall society in terms of the age profile of our constituency. If you wanted to be critical you could say we are under-represented in the 30- to 50-year age group — and that is something we should be worried about — but we have a very different age profile, a much more encouraging age profile, than the rest of Anglicanism in Australia."

The data used by the project includes the National Church Life Survey and census statistics. The NCLS also surveyed the level of satisfaction among youth with the programs they were involved in.

continued next page »

“You can see from the graph (below) that we [Sydney Anglicans] are running youth programs and groups which are very strongly satisfying to those taking part,” Mr Sims says. “All of us who go to Sydney Anglican churches will be able to relate what these numbers are telling us — that we do have a strong youth movement. Sadly, if that is the key difference physically between ourselves and other churches, it is yet another reason not to be complacent.”

Relative Quality 2006, Superior Programs



Source: NCLS06 Church Life profile p20, adjusted for no response.

There’s a general consensus among those in the field that in order to build the next generation of Christian parents, focused attention is needed on children’s and youth ministry now.

The principal of Youthworks College, Graham Stanton, said as much in a series of meetings with rectors before the recent Growing Faith conference in August.

“We need a clear discussion of where and why youth ministries have grown, where and why youth ministries have retained people as disciples of Jesus into young adulthood and beyond, and where and how we have recruited and trained the most effective labourers for this harvest,” he says.

The population statistics bear out that need. On the latest Australian Bureau of Statistics figures (2009), roughly 19 per cent

## Role models are key

### Stef Overhall

If you had asked the teenage me about role models, I probably would have said I didn’t have one. I liked to think of myself as a confident, independent individual who didn’t follow anyone.

But ask me the same question now and I’ll have a very different response. As I reflect on the person I’ve become, I can see that God has used many people to influence and guide me. My parents taught me how to pray, my ministers taught me the Bible and I had great Christian friends.

As Christian parents we want our teenagers to know right and wrong, make wise decisions and enjoy good relationships. Above all we want them to follow the ultimate role model — Jesus Christ. In God’s grace there are many ways in which this happens, but I’d like to take a moment to think about Christian role models.

When I look back on my formative high school years, one person stands out. She was someone who prayed for me and helped me with my maths homework. She would write me letters and talk me through boy problems. She led me in Bible study and took me to McDonalds. And while I didn’t know it then, Naomi was my role model.

Although she was only 19 or 20 at the time, Naomi taught me so much about Jesus and how to apply the Bible to my life. But it wasn’t so much her words that shaped me as her *life*. I watched as she negotiated relationships, studied at uni and stuck to the speed limit. I didn’t realise it at the time but it was all sinking in. Not only did Naomi show me how to live a godly life but she gave me a heart for youth ministry. When I became a youth leader I tried to impart the same example to my girls. Being involved with youth is so much fun but it’s also hard work. Many youth struggle with sexuality, loneliness or depression. But many come through this season of hardship and go on to lead others.



Well, my youth group girls are all grown up now. I’m proud to say they have become amazing role models at Sunday school, kids’ club and youth group. My prayer is that this pattern continues for generations to come so that all young people will have someone to lead them on in Christ. The role model relationship is organic and parents can’t force it. But here are some tips to encourage the process in our churches:

- Support your local kids’ club, youth group and camps. These are the places where young people will meet godly Christian leaders. This might include sending your kids regularly and being available to help out yourself or providing financial assistance.
- Pray for the youth leaders at your church. Ask God to help them grow in godliness and wisdom.
- Consider discipling a youth leader at your church. They need role models too!

*Stef Overhall grew up in the Sutherland Shire and became a Christian at a Year 7 summer camp. Her advice is published at the Growing Faith website, [www.growingfaith.com.au](http://www.growingfaith.com.au)*

of Sydney’s population is 14 and under. That’s more than 850,000 young people out of a total Sydney basin population of 4.5 million.

Our recent good track record may have led some to complacency, Mr Stanton says. “I’ve had conversations with people where they say, ‘What should we do to grow our churches and how does children’s and youth ministry work for that?’. I say, ‘If you have Sunday school which then has a good transition into a junior high school youth ministry that’s discipling, pushing young kids, teaching them the Bible, build that into a young adult ministry’. They say, ‘Yes, yes. We’ve heard that. But what could we really do to grow the church?’ I wonder whether there’s this assumption that because

it’s an old idea, they’ve tried it and it’s time to move on.”

For Mr Stanton, the basics will always be relevant. “With the steady work of discipling Christian young people you can grow a group from five kids up to 10, 15 kids over three or four years. All things being equal, we know that this works. Young people are open to questions about life and spirituality. They’re interested in the Bible when it’s presented in a way that is engaging and they are able to make decisions and commitments to Jesus and decisions that are life-shaping and changing.”

The Bishop of Wollongong, Peter Hayward, says most churches are committed,

# ALLEGIANCE

## THE KING AFTER GOD'S OWN HEART

1 SAM 13:14

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in principle, to children's and youth ministry. "The struggle is how to integrate it into the overall parish program," he says. "In many places it just hangs out there and is not connected to the normal web of parish life." In church planting, too, he says children's and youth ministry should be higher up the order of thinking and planning.

Some bemoan the lack of workers willing to take on this ministry area. Bishop Hayward, as chairman of the training committee for the diocesan mission, says it is not numbers but turnover. "I think we've got a good supply of people willing to go into children's and youth work and take it forward," he says. "What we haven't had historically is too many long-term youth ministers who have stayed the course over a 15- or 20-year period."

Graham Stanton agrees. "I often hear this idea that you can effectively minister to people that are 10 to 15 years either side of your age. So that you can be a youth minister until you're 30, but after 30 you're beyond that 15-year gap. I don't think that's always true."

Mr Stanton cites the example of primary school teachers, saying, "No-one says to somebody who has been a primary school teacher for 20 years, 'When are you going to move on to become a high school teacher?'



Photos are from the Growing Faith conference held recently in Sydney. Growing Faith is a Youthworks initiative to help equip Christian parents for the challenges of child-raising.

Or if you've been a high school teacher for 10 years, 'Are you going to now move on and become a university lecturer?'. Yet in the church we do."

## The Hidden Tragedy

Number crunching and statistical analysis of youth work has thrown up a disturbing trend.

Tim Sims believes the extent to which divorce increased in the mid-1970s (around the time of Lionel Murphy's Family Law Act) is very significant. "The data seems to show that perhaps the Anglican church model has been habit-driven and has been drastically affected, along with other incumbent churches, by the introduction of less stable marriages and the breaking down of the way in which youth learn to come to church as a lifetime habit," he says.

The problem seems particularly to emerge in the 12-14 age group. While church going seems more stable in the primary years, many high schoolers do not make the transition to youth group and Mr Sims believes family break-up is at least part of the reason. "It's a myth that Australia is moving away from the idea of God and in a spiritual sense becoming more resistant. This is a much more immediate and physical problem.

"Data from the US supports the notion that if you break family habit, you break church habit for life. From the Australian data we know that if you don't have two members of the same family, husband and wife, consistently attending church, it becomes very difficult for the remaining partner to attend in a circumstance where their spouse will not. So at that level, it becomes enormously challenging when you begin to break the

family unit down and change the way this model has worked in the past."

On the ground this is being seen every week at churches, says the Rev Michael Begbie, who leads the youth work at St Philip's, Caringbah. "Firstly, there's a real practical issue of kids spending one weekend with one parent and one weekend with another parent," he says. "That can make consistency of young people who want to attend youth ministry really difficult. On a deeper level, we're seeing a number of kids who are harder to get involved in youth ministry."

Mr Begbie believes some teenagers from single-parent families can find it difficult to engage in a structured youth ministry. "Spiritually, there will always be really deep, painful issues which go on for a young person when their parents split up and that can create issues of trust and issues about engaging with adults, particularly if you've experienced adults coming and going in your life. Sometimes, this is the fear of being hurt."

But there are also opportunities. "We can provide safe, stable youth-to-adult relationships, always trying not to replace parents because that's not our job, but certainly some of the things that we're seeing at Caringbah are young people really enjoying the adult contact. Not all of them are from broken families but some of them are... and they are enjoying a growing relationship of trust with adults again."

## PRESSURE POINTS

Any youth worker could tell you about the pressure points in their work. Says Bishop Hayward: "The two points at which we lose children and youth are the transition — boys especially, at the ages of eight to 10 through to youth, we lose a lot at that level. Another transition point is to young adult — that's a significant drop-off."

Youthworks College, Stanton says, is alert to the need to train workers who are up to the challenge. "There is an enjoyable vitality and vibrancy to working with young people but there's a seriousness to it," he says. "We're not just here to make nativity scenes out of pipe-cleaners and play gross food games. Actually quite the contrary."

So, back to those children just entering the world and being welcomed into Sydney Anglican churches. How prepared are we to raise them or to help the parents raise them with youth services — parish, diocesan and parachurch agencies?

Says Mr Stanton: "I think the individual

parts are in good shape. I've had a concern for a while that we don't have a good co-ordination and an understanding of how those different parts each contribute



and could connect with one another. We've tended to be splintered in youth ministry, which hasn't prevented very good things happening in all the different locations but I think we could be a whole lot more effective with some intentional co-ordination — or just understanding of what we're doing and a greater sense of fellowship together in what we're doing."

SC



One in Christ | One in Service

# SCHOOLS' MINISTRY CONFERENCE

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Wollongong—Dapto Feb 7  
City—St Andrew's Cathedral Feb 11



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# Home alone



Anglicare's annual State of Sydney report has highlighted the alarming vulnerability of many women, writes ANGUS BELLING.

ONE of the greatest social policy challenges facing this generation is secure, stable housing, so it is to this crucial issue Anglicare Sydney has turned in its annual State of Sydney report, *Home Truths: Impacts Of Housing Insecurity On Women Across The Life Course*.

Research undertaken for *Home Truths* found that housing insecurity particularly affects single young mothers, single women over the age of 50 and older women caring for a son or daughter with a disability.

"Our investigation of the experience of housing insecurity was sparked by concerns from some of our workers that young, single mothers leaving our support services were at risk of becoming homeless," says Sue King, the director of advocacy and partnerships at Anglicare Sydney.

With the Government spruiking new housing developments on an almost weekly basis under the National Rental Affordability Scheme and Nation Building Projects, we could be forgiven for thinking that affordable, safe housing is easily available for all who want it.

It is true that the amount of public and social housing is being increased, but ever so slowly.

The Rudd Government committed to building 50,000 new social and public housing dwellings by 2013-14. But at the beginning of 2011 the Gillard Government cut these targets to 35,000 with an open-ended commitment to eventually reach the

50,000 mark set by Mr Rudd. And it needs to be remembered that a portion of these 'new' developments are in fact rebuilds of derelict properties rather than additional new housing stock.

So, will these efforts meet community need? Not on your life. That's a fact. The National Housing Supply Council has found a national shortage of nearly 150,000 affordable rental properties for low-income families. Other peak bodies like the

## Key findings from *Home Truths*

- The need for urgent, further investment in the supply of public and social housing
- The need for provision of transitional housing services for people in crisis
- More choice in accommodation options for young people with a disability

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare estimate that 600,000 Australians are in rental stress, paying over 30 per cent of their income on private rent. Increasing the supply of social and public housing would significantly alleviate the cost of living pressures for these families, giving them greater flexibility to pursue further education and employment.

Nothing brings high-level policy speak into focus like personal experience. This is where *Home Truths* comes into play as it seeks to bring to life the experience of housing insecurity.

"As we looked at our data we found that single women were one of the highest

users of emergency relief services, needing emergency assistance with food and utility bills," Sue King says.

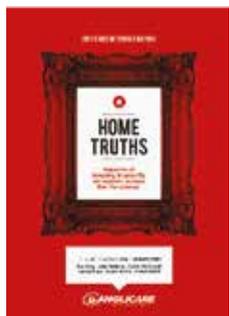
"More than half of the women assisted by Anglicare Sydney spend over 45 per cent of their income on rent — that is simply devastating on their ability to build independence and have choices for their future."

Another significant finding from *Home Truths* was the emerging housing insecurity of single women over the age of 50.

King says that as the population ages social welfare agencies such as Anglicare are seeing more women over 50 who need assistance because they are unable to maintain stable, affordable housing.

"Single women over 50 who are housing-insecure may have come out of a long-term relationship, have no assets or superannuation and may also have been full-time carers most of their lives," she says. "This means they don't have a record of paid employment and are often viewed as unskilled."

"These women typically move between short-term boarding houses that are often unsafe. They get caught in this gap where they can mostly only get casual work and end up relying on Government payments — like the Newstart Allowance of about \$240 per week for a single person or the Disability Support Pension of about \$340 per week — until they reach the Age Pension which is about the same as the Disability Support Pension."



“Once you add in sickness, a random accident and an electricity bill, there is literally nothing left.”

The third group of women Anglicare identified as being housing insecure are older parent carers — usually single women who have been long-term carers of a son or daughter with a disability.

Marianne Wilcox, who runs Anglicare’s support services in Sydney’s inner west says that while most older parent carers own their own homes they are burdened by enormous stress and anxiety over how their son or daughter will be accommodated when they can no longer care for them.

“Many older carers are hugely resilient and plan for the future relatively well,” Wilcox says. “But when it comes to finding accommodation options for their young adult son or daughter, there are very few appropriate options.

“I find it heartbreaking to hear these carers tell me they hope to outlive their son or daughter but I don’t blame them. Who would want to see their 35-year-old son or daughter living in a nursing home?”

Amid these findings is the simmering issue of gender. Men certainly experience homelessness and housing insecurity as well, so is it fair to characterise these issues as ‘women’s issues’?

In some ways that characterisation is very fair when you look at the evidence. National data from the Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP) shows women

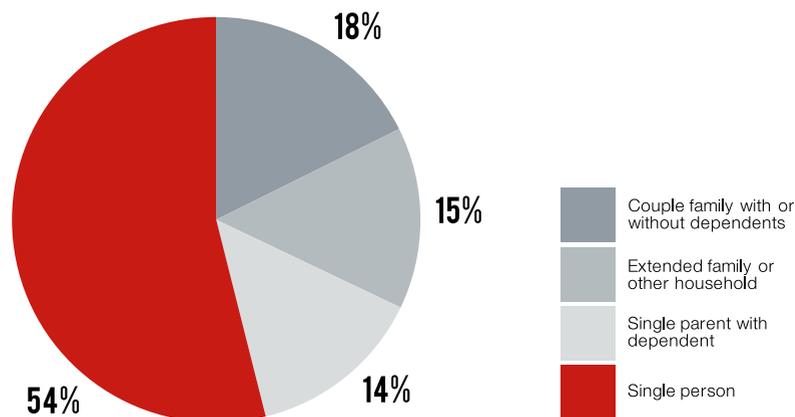
make up two-thirds of those seeking help from homelessness services. And the data shows this trend is on the increase.

An even more concerning fact revealed by the SAAP data is that children are profoundly affected by housing insecurity — the effects can ‘travel’ across the generations, entrenching disadvantage and insecurity.

The transient nature of housing insecurity, particularly for young mothers, classically involves moving between different forms of accommodation — it may be emergency accommodation in different motels, or bouncing between family and friends. Either way, there is no stability and constant uncertainty about the future.

Teresa Sanchez, who works with young mothers in Anglicare’s Carramar Support Program, reflects powerfully in *Home Truths* on the effect of housing insecurity and transience on young children. “The high levels of stress in a child will lead to a high level of cortisol in their brain, which is a stress hormone... that child has been psychologically primed to be more responsive to danger and to become anxious more quickly. And if you’ve got a really young child, their brain has been wired for life.”

This reflection on the intergenerational effects of housing insecurity captures the reason why Anglicare Sydney researches social need. “As we look carefully at the real-life experience of vulnerability we cannot help but represent those needs and help government understand how to better serve



Women over 50 years of age, by household type.

Anglicare ER Services

the vulnerable,” Sue King says.

“In calling Christ Lord and Saviour we are drawn to engage with those in need — Jesus clearly reveals this character of God’s mission. Trusting God’s word and following Christ gives us direction and energy in advocacy because we seek his glory.”

At the end of the day, there is a clear message here — a real home truth — for government: that giving someone a place to call home unlocks huge opportunities for their future, for choice and independence. It may be a simple message but it’s smart policy.

God’s people are speaking up for the vulnerable loud and clear.

SC

*Home Truths* can be downloaded at [www.stateofsydney.org.au](http://www.stateofsydney.org.au). For more information on local support services go to [www.anglicare.org.au](http://www.anglicare.org.au) and follow the links to services in your area.

## MICHELLE'S STORY



Michelle Keegan (above) was involved with Anglicare Sydney’s Carramar program for young mothers for four years — and was accommodated by the program for nearly a year. “I was referred to Carramar by Westmead Hospital after I had my first child,” she says. “The midwife felt that I needed some social contact and Carramar provided parenting groups and play time with other young mums and their children. “At that time I was living in a bad relationship. It was not safe for me to stay in the relationship but I didn’t know how to leave and I had a new baby. I felt trapped. I could only see myself having a future with this man who was awful to me and hurt me.” When Michelle eventually left her daughter’s father she lived alone for a time but found it increasingly difficult

to pay the bills while caring full-time for her baby. “On top of private rent I was also paying for basic essentials for my daughter, food and bills,” she says. “I found myself trapped again by the cost of living.” Michelle believes that being accommodated by Carramar during that particularly vulnerable time in her life had a significant impact on her parenting. “Getting stable accommodation through Carramar, even for just under a year, helped me relate to my daughter so much better,” she says. “I was more relaxed and we were both safe. “With the social support from staff and other young mothers, I could just enjoy being a mum and learning how to do that well.” Michelle is now married to the father of her second daughter and works full-time in community services with homelessness programs. She couldn’t be happier. “I have two beautiful girls, I am married to my best friend and I am able to work while I continue my education. Getting stable accommodation through Carramar really did help me get [back on] my feet at a very difficult time.”

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# The enigma of death



When death approaches — whether our own or someone near to us — we may look first to what medical science can provide. **ANDREW FORD** encourages us to consider the spiritual aspects.

**I**N hospital rooms around the country people are confronted with death, for themselves and of those they love and care for. Despite the stunning advances in modern medicine, death remains. We might live longer, with the aid of various medical interventions, but for good or ill, our dying is often prolonged. The old prayer, “Save me from dying suddenly and unprepared,” has, it seems, been ‘half’ answered. Now many are *unprepared* for our *gradual* death.

This is not just a lack of spiritual readiness. There is often blurriness about death, a kind of grey zone where it is hard to know what to do, or how to think about ourselves, and especially about our loved ones as they approach this terminus. For the Christian person this may be compounded, because we are so pro-life. “Shouldn’t we do everything to keep someone alive?” “If we don’t treat, are we giving up on that precious life that God

values?” We need to know whether it is good to always fight against disease, decay and death and to answer these grim questions as we walk through the valley of the shadow of our death (or someone else’s), we need to hear again God’s assessment of human death. Not just the inevitability of death because of sin; not just the gracious possibility of our rescue from death through the saving work of Christ; but also another strange note that, even though discordant, brings an uneasy resolution.

The Bible reveals to us that death was not originally intended for humanity. Disobedience (as God had warned) led directly to the entrance of death into the world: “for when you eat of it you will surely die” (Gen 2:17). In biblical thought the death of human beings, with all its horror and mystery, is not ‘natural’, it is not ‘just the way it is’ and it definitely is not the way it was meant to be. Death impinges on us as a

punishment due to disobedience (Rom 5:12).

The universal reality of death is matched by its felt reality in our experience — death is an outrageous and grievous thing. Most of us share a deep intuition that grasps death as something out of place, or alien to our nature. Death always comes as an intruder into our lives. Correspondingly, the inexpressible longing that many feel for eternity, and in particular for stability and true freedom from disease and dislocation, reveals our true identity as creatures designed to live with God forever. Death is the last enemy (1 Cor 15:26).

There is an explanation for this riddle. Genesis makes it clear that before sin and judgment, open access was given to eat from all of the trees in the garden bar one, and in particular the tree of life — a tree with fruit that when eaten would enable humanity to live forever. It was this access to the tree of life in this good creation which continuously

showed God's good intention for humanity — to enjoy him and this creation *forever*. But instead of life, humanity chose death, eating of that forbidden fruit.

Despite death coming upon humanity, God's eternal purposes for humanity will not be thwarted. For death is defeated by Jesus Christ in his resurrection. He is the one who came 'to destroy the one holding the power of death' and 'to free those who were held in slavery all their lives by the fear of death' (Heb 2:14-15). Death will be eradicated one day, for in the death of Christ we have the death of death. But as we wait for this salvation to be fully revealed, death still appears to win. For this truth remains: 'it is appointed for people to die once — and after this, judgment' (Heb. 9:27-28). These (death and judgment) are often motivating factors for people to seek forgiveness and peace with God through Jesus Christ. Whenever we are confronted by this alien death in our midst it is a great opportunity to consider whether it is simply the pain of death we fear or death itself and what comes after.

This fear from which we are to be saved is an extraordinary and slavish fear — a slavery that drives us to extraordinary and

#### FOCUS QUESTION:

How can we know when to accept death and when to fight on against it?

sometimes pitiful measures to extend life and squeeze out another day on this planet. The 'deathliness' that sin brings to our bodies sparks an insatiable but unachievable quest for longevity. In our day this quest has become a distinctly technological project. It is now biotechnology and genetics that are put to the task of correcting the biological malfunction or the physical decay. No longer is it the elixir of youth, but rather the hum (or ping) of some machine that holds back the rolling tide of death. But our death is appointed by God; we should not expect life to be held on to indefinitely or at all costs.

Nevertheless humans are made for life, so we urge and expect doctors, nurses and other health professionals to continue fighting for our lives for as long as they can. But as humans who will inevitably die, we also trust their wisdom and expertise to help us see when the battle is lost. Hence, we can accept withdrawal of burdensome treatment, and can allow someone to die, recognising death's current grip on humanity, and that one person in particular. And for that matter this perspective might also help us see when it is right to not place the burden of 'getting better' or 'fighting' on the dying person, but rather allow them to die.

NSW Health guidelines put this well when they comment that 'a primary goal of medical care is the preservation of life' and then, 'when life cannot be preserved... to provide

comfort and dignity to the dying person, and to support others in doing so'. This speaks also of another sometimes neglected reality concerning death that the Bible reveals to us.

There is an abnormal appropriateness to death. In the end it may be as C.S. Lewis poignantly said a 'severe mercy'. Having been designed to live forever, our sin saw us banished out of that garden away from the tree of life, because in our sin we no longer have the type of bodies that should go on forever. Having eaten the forbidden fruit, 'deathliness' and decay had become our nature. In his kindness and 'severe mercy' God excludes these deathly bodies from going on and on.

What's more, in his wisdom, knowing that humanity by its power and ingenuity would seek to go back and eat of that life-giving tree, God blocks the access with a sword-wielding angel (Gen 3:24). In God's providential care of creation it is merciful that we don't go on living in this fallen, corrupted state forever. Death is a mercy. These sinful, corrupted bodies are not good enough for this good creation forever — another reason creation itself groans awaiting the redemption of our bodies (Rom 8:22-23).

It is obviously hard to see death as a mercy, and there are at least two reasons for this. Firstly we are blinded to our sin and the totally corrupting, deathly impacts it has on our lives and bodies — the deathliness it inflicts us with. Secondly we forget, or ignore, or even reject the goodness that God is mercifully showering on us — good and precious things in this world, despite our sin, given to all, the righteous and unrighteous alike. It is ironic that God's goodness to us blinds us to this severe mercy, which releases us from this death-laden existence.

The Christian attitude to death, then, is not only outrage at this alien intrusion and the concurrent striving for life (now and eternally) that this outrage brings; but also an acceptance and a humble submission to God's merciful providence, even in death. Death, then, is an 'alien mercy', an enigmatic part of life.

With this understanding we can now re-engage in that grey zone of death around that hospital bed. Could it be that those who seek death before God's appointed time have not understood the alien nature of death for humanity? Could it be that those who want life to be maintained at all costs haven't understood the merciful aspect of death for humanity?

So then, as health care professionals we can decry death, rallying against this enemy, seeking life and healing;



The Rev Dr Andrew Ford lectures in ethics and church history. He has specific concern for first-year students and sometimes advises others (including governments) on ethical matters of concern to the church.



yet all the while recognising that this ultimate struggle will not be won by human power or ingenuity. Accepting that, there are points where further treatment becomes inappropriate. There is an awful futility to life — from dust to dust — that even human power or ingenuity, cannot conquer; there is 'a time to die' (Eccl 3:2) — that is, a time to embrace this alien mercy called death.

In addition, this view of the 'alien mercy' of death gives permission to let go as a loved one travels those final days and hours, as they stop living, eating, drinking.... and even to accept that continuing active treatment may not be for the best or even God-honouring. The deathliness that we carry in all our bodies may be so obviously manifest in this body that it is right to entrust it to the Lord who will judge justly. This painful embrace is not anti-life, but rather cognisant of a fuller truth. As Christian men and women, we should never buy into the idolatry that would see medicine as holding out the prospect of holding sway over death. **SC**



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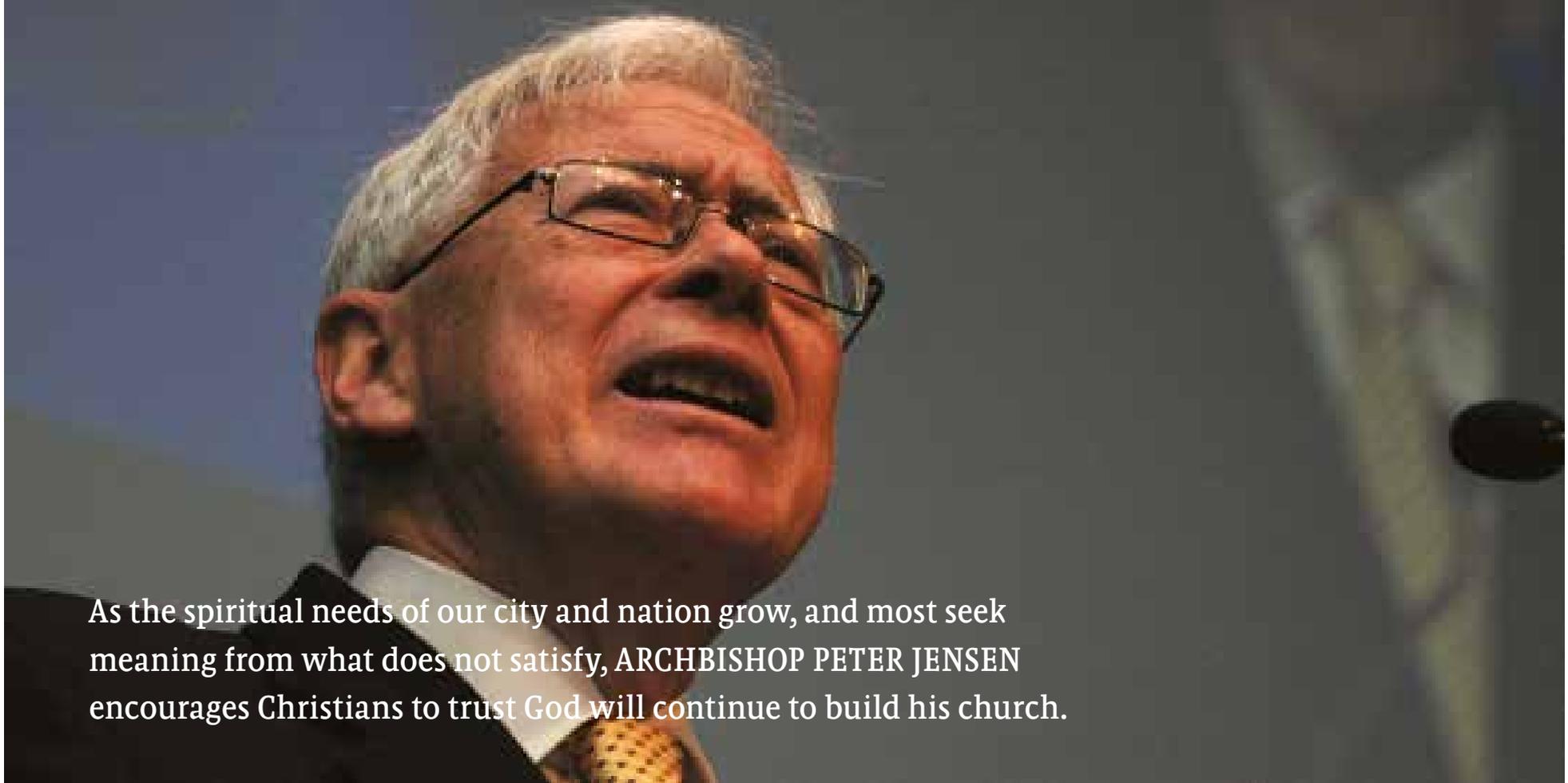
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# Take heart, Sydney



As the spiritual needs of our city and nation grow, and most seek meaning from what does not satisfy, ARCHBISHOP PETER JENSEN encourages Christians to trust God will continue to build his church.

**E**LIJAH could hear silence — the sound of sheer silence. He thought he would hear more. He had travelled back to the birthplace of the nation, back to beginnings, back to Sinai where his people had their unforgettable encounter with the living God in tumultuous wind, and earthquake, and fire. He had complained to the Lord: of that great nation which had been created there, “I, even I only, am left, and they seek my life, to take it away”. The nation was finished. The Lord must either declare death or resurrection.

And then, “What are you doing here, Elijah?”. The silence is broken by the word of the Lord. God remains in control. He is still promoting his kingdom. “I reserve seven thousand in Israel, all the knees that have not bowed to Baal, and every mouth that has not kissed him.” “Go, return on you way... anoint Hazeal... Jehu... Elisha...” My word stands: your job is to consult it, to believe it; to obey it.

Like Elijah, we sometimes feel alone. Like Elijah we have all sorts of plans and suggestions for God. Like Elijah we look for God in wind, earthquake and fire. Sometimes like Elijah we feel the silence of God.

But what we have is what Elijah was given — not God in earthquake, wind and fire but

God in his word. We live by faith, not by sight. Our business, whatever our situation, is to consult the word of God, to trust it and to keep it.

We sometimes lose the assurance of the gospel and try to grow churches by other means, forgetting that it is he who builds the church by his appointed means. And we sometimes lose confidence in the churches and wonder whether they are much more than religious clubs for those who cannot find a proper hobby.

But true churches are a product of the gospel. The word of God, blessed by the Spirit of God, produces the children of God and unites them in the church of God. I want to say to you, as Elijah was emboldened by God’s word so you, too, take heart. The gospel of Jesus Christ addresses the spiritual needs of our nation in a direct and potent way and Christ’s churches constitute a powerful vindication of God’s word and a key resource for the good health of the community. We have a word that in blessing individuals has the capacity to renew, revive and restore human community in an age damaged by selfish materialism and individualism. Australia needs the gospel and churches that are the product of the gospel.

Recently, Christine and I caught a city bus late at night. A young woman staggered onto

the bus clearly having been in party mode but now her face suffused with misery. She sat hunched over in great psychic pain. We could not speak to her but we spoke to our heavenly Father about her. She will never know. The misery of that young woman crystallised for me the serious spiritual malaise in our culture. The contrast to the church experience is plain. When fewer people have deep friendships, when more people are lonely, when vilification becomes a norm of communication, when volunteering is replaced by paid work, when the law is used to sustain social fabric, when the government is constantly looked to, to provide the works of love that create community — you have a society under stress.

The penetration of the gambling culture into sport and the media bodes ill for the future of sport in this country. That which has brought us together and given us some of our most memorable moments is now at the mercy of commercial interests appealing to our greed. The social capital created by sporting associations is being funded by the real capital of addicts. The Gillard government’s moral leadership about gambling addiction is to be commended.

In the end, however, it is communities and families themselves that must have the resources and resilience to deal with

this problem. Think of the great temple-like shopping centres where we attend to the worship of ourselves through the accumulation of possessions and possessions — endless possessions; the obesity epidemic, where we are sated with unhealthy food; the substance abuse which mars the lives of millions; the slaughter of unwanted infants in the womb — these travesties of human flourishing cannot be fixed by legislation; the harm cannot be repaired with mantras about individual rights.

When you look deeper you will see that these are spiritual problems. They go to our hearts. They testify to our alienation from the Creator. They require a new relationship with God and with others.

## SOCIAL CAPITAL

Two weeks ago I was speaking to a community leader who is not a Christian. He has a strong interest in the wellbeing of communities, in what is called 'social capital'. "What are you doing to fill up your empty pews?" he wanted to know. He assumed that, like most voluntary organisations, we are in decline.

First, I had to put him straight on our Mission. I pointed out that in a time of unparalleled social change and a population growing by multicultural and non-Christian migration, active participation in our churches is more than holding its own. We are experiencing growth slightly greater than the surrounding population. The growth is not vast but in a world where clubs, political parties and voluntary organisations are struggling to stay alive, it is significant.

Second, I said that we were committed to strong identity and strong activity. Our identity comes from an unshakeable, simple commitment to the biblical gospel of Jesus Christ. That is who we are. We have not yet halted between two opinions, we proclaim that the Lord he is God. We embrace countercultural beliefs that set us apart from others and also bind us together. We believe in miracles; we believe that the Bible is the word of God; we believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, true man and true God; we believe in husbands and wives and in marriage. We find these beliefs make sense of our human experience.

Furthermore, we are active. Our gospel promotes faith, hope and love as integral to the good life and makes us better citizens of our nation. Our beliefs turn us toward our neighbours, not away from them; that is why we talk about 10 per cent of the population — to remind us to look outward, to connect. Consequently we commit ourselves to the activity of sharing the faith energetically and imaginatively with those around us and drawing them into the fellowship of our churches. I could also have talked to him about the wonderful Kingsdene project being launched by Anglicare, to give practical help to the families of those with a disability.

My friend the community leader is not a believer. But he was keen that we grow

## THE TASK OF SYNOD

"The last three years have been deeply challenging. It is never easy to have much less money but it has made us think hard about priorities. We now know more clearly how much money there is to fund our operations and what those operations should be. The task of restructuring proceeded and our boards and committees are better for it. I am very grateful to the Glebe Administration Board, its chairman Canon Bruce Ballantine-Jones and the CEO Mr Mark Payne and his staff for the effort that has gone into renewing their part of the work in SDS (the Sydney Diocesan Secretariat) and GAB.

We still needed to see the big picture, to enter our future better focused, better structured. I therefore transcended our usual boards and appointed an Archbishop's Commission to advise us. The key boards were directly represented on the commission and could make their views known. I also asked certain people to pray for them specifically and this was faithfully done. The commission has now reported with far-reaching recommendations.

I believe that it is right to be more confident than we were a year ago. Then, it was hard to see how we would advance. We had more bad news than good. The provision of money through a one-off assessment was a very welcome decision of the Synod. It saved the day. I know it caused heartache but it acknowledged that we all belong to this network and need to support each other.

This year we have had more good news than bad. There are improved prospects for both our endowments. The work done by St Andrew's House Corporation and SDS to

rehabilitate our income flow is a significant reason for this. For this we thank the Lord. Both endowments are very dependent on St Andrew's House for their income streams. Although there remains a year or two of no distributions while essential expenses are incurred and debt is repaid, there is now the prospect of satisfactory returns. In the meantime, with the Synod's goodwill we can manage the cash deficit.

We also have before us a preliminary funding principles document to guide our thinking in the next triennium. It is preliminary because it has not been through the Mission Board and Standing Committee as yet. But it is placed before you like an exposure draft for your input. Peter Kell has chaired the group that has begun thinking about this, and he would welcome thoughtful responses. Once again we are called upon to have the same temper of clear thinking and mutual support as we have shown before."



more churches, fill more pews. His research showed the benefits of religious association to the community as a whole. He is interested in what constitutes 'the good life', and he agrees that the Christian message has shaped our understanding of the good life in this nation since the beginning and nothing has as yet come to take its place. It is here that we come to learn what is right and wrong, what makes life worth living, the value of relationships and the hope of glory.

## LOCAL MISSION

The Diocesan Mission continues to galvanise and embolden us. It is the application of the word of God to the needs of our community. Everywhere I come across evidences of it: new churches, cross-cultural ministries, Mission Area initiatives in partnership, the Year 13 program and more. Our Mission has no single front line. We must grow with our city. That means looking for Koreans and Sri Lankans and Tibetans and the rest of our neighbours. But it also means planting in new places. The Mission Property Committee has done sterling work in identifying places where we need to plant churches by purchasing land and erecting new buildings.

The test for our Diocese is always this: Will we remain completely committed to the scriptural gospel, the one word of God? Will we consult it, believe it, obey it? Will we be gospel people, or will our confidence and our passion ebb away?

It will only be by God's grace that we do stand. The lethargy of too much busyness may engulf us. Or it may be the hunger for new things, so that we can be different from our fathers. We may demand that God does mighty works or we won't believe in him. Scorn and opposition may erode our confidence. Elijah's challenge, "How long do you halt between two opinions?" may come on us with surprising force, not least as the culture moves further from its Christian roots and biblical teaching seems more and more discordant.

Stand with Elijah.

SC

*This is an edited version of the 2011 Presidential Address by Archbishop Peter Jensen at the Wesley Centre on Monday 10th October, 2011. The Scripture references are from 1 Kings chapters 18 and 19. The full version in text, audio and video can be seen at the Sydney Anglicans website: <http://bit.ly/synod2011>*



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## Senior Associate Minister St Jude's in Parkville



St Jude's Carlton (Victoria) is a large multi-site church seeking to reach inner-northern Melbourne with the gospel of Jesus. We are seeking a **Senior Associate Minister** to lead our "St Jude's in Parkville" Campus - a ministry focussed on young workers and urban dwellers in the inner northern suburbs of Melbourne.

The successful candidate will be an energetic and relational leader, an excellent Bible teacher, a strategic thinker, and able to equip and develop others for leadership and ministry. The candidate will have oversight of the two St Jude's in Parkville congregations and their related ministries and be part of the senior leadership team of a dynamic and growing church, committed to church planting and evangelism. This is a full-time position and will commence in 2012.

Please contact **Peter Williams** for position description.

☎ +61 3 9347 5152 ✉ vicarps@stjudes.org.au 🌐 <http://www.stjudes.org.au/what-on/job>

## FULL TIME CHAPLAIN AND HIGH SCHOOL SCRIPTURE TEACHER

We: The Anglican Church is seeking a suitable qualified person to minister chaplains and teach BIBE (scripture) in our local high school and primary schools.

Applicants must have a passion for sharing the good news of Jesus Christ and demonstrated experience in building relationships and working with young people. Teaching qualification is preferred but not essential.

Contact: 02 8945-4238 [vicarps@stjudes.org.au](mailto:vicarps@stjudes.org.au)

We: The Anglican Church  
12 Church St  
We: The NSWZSMB

Applications close: Friday 18th December 2011.

The successful applicant will be required to complete a Pre-employment Declaration, Federal Police Check, state of Queensland Children Check, and the NSW DET Child Protection Policy and sign-out of contact with NCRP.

## The Christian Medical Fellowship of Australia is seeking a part-time BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT MANAGER



This is an opportunity to apply your administrative skills, creative thinking and strategic vision to promoting and growing the membership in the Fellowship from amongst the Christian medical and dental community. Sydney based.

Contact: Paul Caspey, Resolute Consulting Group  
E: [paul@resoluteconsulting.net](mailto:paul@resoluteconsulting.net)  
P: 02 4234 4810

Applications close: 31 November 2011

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## St Barnabas Terraces SUPERVISOR

St Barnabas Terraces provides a significant Christian residential ministry among male and female tertiary students.

It consists of 6 terraced houses in Glebe, Sydney, managed by St Barnabas Anglican Church Broadway.

The Terraces Council is seeking a mature Christian person or married couple as the Supervisor(s) of these residential houses. This is a part time paid manager/ministry position with accommodation provided to commence in January 2012.

For a detailed job description and other information please contact:

Allan Pidgeon, St Barnabas Terraces Chairman  
PO BOX 606, GLEBE NSW 2037  
02 9562 9901 or [apidgeon@pce.net.au](mailto:apidgeon@pce.net.au)

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Would you love to share the gospel with thousands of young people each year? Would you love to serve by being active in the great outdoors? Would you love to be part of a close team of dynamic and passionate evangelists?

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## Ministry Positions at St Andrew's Roseville

St Andrew's is a growing, innovative church committed to our Evangelical Anglican tradition. In pursuit of our vision to be a community of Jesus Christ offering a centre of community for Roseville and beyond we are looking to fill three important positions.

### Youth Minister Full-time negotiable

Our youth minister will be responsible for our growing number of high schoolers, teaching them God's word in engaging and practical ways and helping them to grow into a deeper community of friends, followers of Christ and servants of the world.

Our preferred candidate will be an experienced youth worker with a deep knowledge of the Scriptures, a team player, prayerful and deeply relational. He or she will also have a passion for evangelism and be able to inspire young people to provide the gospel with all that they are.

The position is full-time (negotiable) and commensurate in a spirit of generosity.

### Minister for Seniors part-time: Sunday + 1-2 days

The Minister for Seniors will have a local ministry across our church but will be responsible, in particular, for building up our growing number of believers aged 65+ and helping them (and the whole church) reach out to and care for the many services in our area.

The preferred candidate will be a well-respected and experienced dogmatist of deep Evangelical piety and conviction. He will have knowledge of the Bible, leading formal and contemporary services, leading community, and he will be able to provide wise counsel to the Senior Minister and staff team.

The position is part-time (negotiable) and commensurate in a spirit of generosity.

### Women's Minister part-time negotiable

Our Women's Minister will work with the existing women's ministry to encourage our growing number of women, particularly the young mums and young single women, to continue serving Christ and each other.

The preferred candidate will have experience in church ministry, a pastoral heart and a deep knowledge of the Scriptures. If theologically trained and gifted, the candidate would be encouraged to exercise a preaching and training ministry. The position is part-time (three days or more) and commensurate in a spirit of generosity.

Expressions of interest together with a CV (with named references) should be sent to the Senior Minister, John Dickson, by Fax 2536 [john.dickson@standrews.net.au](mailto:john.dickson@standrews.net.au)  
Further information: 9412 2553; [www.standrews.net.au](http://www.standrews.net.au)

## Property positions available



- Combine faith with work
- Large organisation committed to development

With a vision to create "Communities of Christian Care", Anglican Retirement Villages is recognised for providing quality care to over 6,000 residents across a growing number of Sydney sites.

We currently have two positions available in our property department to enhance our facilities maintenance and the amenity of our grounds.

### Assistant Building Manager - South (Job ref. 32577)

Coordinate and supervise the overall asset strategy, including preventative and reactive maintenance, capital works and

infrastructure across numerous buildings and grounds within the southern region.

### Qualified Gardener - Parrith (Job ref. 32576)

Join us as we plan the move into our brand new Kingswood facility in early 2012. We are seeking an experienced gardener with appropriate qualifications and experience to make a significant impact on the grounds and, in turn, the lives of our residents.

For more information on these positions and to apply please visit [www.arv.org.au/jd](http://www.arv.org.au/jd) and click on the reference numbers listed above.



The Bush Church Aid Society of Australia invites mission-minded applicants for the position of

## Regional Officer in the State of Victoria.

Preferred commencement date — May 2012.

BCA is an evangelical mission agency, ministering within the Anglican Church throughout Australia, and is seeking a person who has a passion for mission plus proven gifts in strategic thinking, communication and public relations. Self-management and administrative abilities are essential. The nature of the task requires the person to have plenty of energy and a high level of self-motivation. Previous connections with BCA would be an advantage but not essential. The successful applicant would need to live in Melbourne, be authorized by the Archbishop of Melbourne and be subject to the Diocesan Professional Standards protocols.

For a Position Description, further information, or to make Application with CV, Contact the Victorian Regional Committee Chairman, The Reverend Ernest E Horth on [Ernest.Horth@bushchurchaid.com.au](mailto:Ernest.Horth@bushchurchaid.com.au), or write to him at PO Box 201, Heidelberg VIC 3084. Applications close on Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2012.



Full-time  
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### Mission Education Assistant

The Mission Education team builds support for world mission with churches across NSW and the ACT. You will play a key role in supporting this team by: providing organisational support for events and programs, maintaining the church database, coordinating large mailouts via email and post, responding to enquiries from churches and other groups, and overseeing our presence on social media.

You should have sound secretarial, organisational and inter-personal skills, be a self starter who can manage deadlines and competing demands and enjoy working on a team. Database and social media experience will be an advantage. This full-time position is based in the CMS NSW & ACT office.

Apply before 25 November and get more info at: [www.cms.org.au/jobs](http://www.cms.org.au/jobs)

#### Notice to all intended job applicants

It is an offence under the NSW Child Protection (prohibited Employment) Act 1998 for a person convicted of a serious sexual offence to apply for a position which involves contact with children or young adult people. Relevant checks of criminal history, apprehended violence orders and previous disciplinary proceedings will be conducted on recommended applicants to such positions.



## International Director

ReachAcross (formerly the Red Sea Mission Team) is an international, evangelical and inter-denominational organisation working with Muslims in several countries. We are seeking a new international Director (ID) with cross cultural experience who will manage the organisation, take pastoral care of our present team and encourage mobilisation of new workers. Though based (initially at least) in Birmingham, UK, a considerable amount of traveling may be expected.

The Start Date (some time in 2012) is flexible.

A modest salary can be negotiated. Accommodation will be provided. It is anticipated that some personal financial support will be sought, to assist with the mission's finances.

As a first step, please send by email to [steveng@hidella.org](mailto:steveng@hidella.org) a letter containing:

- A one-page summary CV
- A statement (less than 200 words) explaining why Muslims need to follow Jesus, and why you think you may be the person we are looking for to be our new ID.
- Any requests for further information.

Appropriate candidates will be sent a detailed job description; application forms, and reference requests.

Closing Date for receiving Full Applications is December 1, 2011.

Further information about ReachAcross may be found on our website: [www.reachacross.net](http://www.reachacross.net)

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[www.southerncrossalpinelodge.com.au](http://www.southerncrossalpinelodge.com.au)

**SYDNEY'S NORTHERN BEACHES:** B & B / Holiday Accommodation; Manly/Freshwater area. Fully s/c; 5 mins to beach; close to public transport; walk to shops; Contact: Jane 0418880368; Email: [beachesbandb@inet.net.au](mailto:beachesbandb@inet.net.au)

**WOY WOY - 3BDR WATERFRONT:** Fully equipped luxury house with jetty, avail for holidays & w/ends. Ph 0410 471 504 or 4739 1504 or 9609 1479 or [gannabel@pnc.com.au](mailto:gannabel@pnc.com.au)

### Miscellaneous

**COMPANION-CARER WANTED:** for invalid gent. Balgowlah. Low rent in return for light duties. Occasional heavy lifting. Furnished room. Call Kevin, Anne-Marie on 02 9400 2955 or Anne-Marie on 0405 849 924.

**SYDNEY ACCOMMODATION:** Budget accommodation in student housing in Glebe near city centre. Families welcome. Book a house (sleeps 8 or 9) or a room. Late November 2011 to early February 2012. Email [office@terraces.com.au](mailto:office@terraces.com.au) Phone 02 9562 9901. Website: [www.terraces.com.au](http://www.terraces.com.au)

**WEDDING DRESS:** Worn Once, Excellent Condition. Ph 0433600389

### EVENTS

## DIARY

SATURDAY, November 5 – Saturday, November 12

### SAFE MINISTRY WEEK

THIS week is for anyone involved in ministry to children and youth who needs to do Safe Ministry training for the first time or needs to update their training.

FOR details of dates, locations and times, visit [www.youthworks.net/events](http://www.youthworks.net/events) or call (02) 8268 3355

THURSDAY, November 10

### YEAR 13 INFORMATION NIGHT

FIND out all you need to know about the Year 13 program. RSVP for catering purposes to [year13@youthworks.net](mailto:year13@youthworks.net) LOCATION | Wanawong Campus, Fifth Ave, Loftus | 7-9pm

SUNDAY, November 13

### O FOR 100 YEARS TO SING!

NOVEMBER marks 100 years since the laying of the foundation stone of St John's, Auburn Park.

The name of the church may have changed, the location has changed and even the suburb has changed — but we are still 100 years old!

Chester Hill Anglican Church will mark this centenary with a Songs of Praise afternoon.

All past members are most welcome to make a nostalgic trip back home to take part in the event. The afternoon will conclude with a more-than-you-can-eat afternoon tea.

FOR more information — or if you have something to contribute to the celebration — please contact Stephen Miller on 0439 970 929.

LOCATION | Chester Hill Anglican Church, 125 Proctor Parade, Chester Hill | 2.30pm

continued next page >>

WEDNESDAY, November 16

### BCA COMMISSIONING SERVICE

THE council of the Bush Church Aid Society invites you to attend the commissioning of the Rev Dr Mark Short as national director by BCA president Bishop Peter Brain. THE Archbishop of Sydney, Dr Peter Jensen, will be the preacher. REFRESHMENTS will follow the service. RSVP by November 9 to [jenny@bushchurchaid.com.au](mailto:jenny@bushchurchaid.com.au) or phone (02) 9262 5017. LOCATION | St Philip's Anglican Church, 3 York Street, Sydney | 5.30pm

MONDAY, January 2 – Sunday, January 8, 2012

### YOUTHWORKS JAM CAMP

JAM camp is going to new X-tremes in 2012 as we look to start the year off with an X-plosion of X-ercise and X-citement that can't be X-ceeded! Plus we're focusing on Jesus' X-treme claims. OPEN to all in years 5-7 (in 2012) for just \$399 (subsidies available) FOR more information visit [www.youthworks.net/events](http://www.youthworks.net/events) LOCATION | Koloona Conference Centre, near Nowra

SUNDAY, January 15 – Saturday, January 21, 2012

### YOUTHWORKS PERFORMING ARTS CAMP

AS well as performing arts activities we'll be doing things like sailing, swimming, abseiling, canoeing and having heaps of fun making new friends and learning more about the role of Jesus in God's plan for our lives. OPEN to all students in years 7-12 (in 2012) for just \$419. FOR more information visit [www.youthworks.net/events](http://www.youthworks.net/events) LOCATION | Rathane Conference Centre, near Sutherland

SUNDAY, January 22 – Thursday, January 26, 2012

### LEADERS IN TRAINING CONFERENCE

LIT is about empowering and equipping young leaders with the biblical understanding and practical skills of leadership to serve Jesus now and for the future. OPEN to keen Christian youth in years 9-12 in 2011. COST Early bird \$279 (closes Dec 16) FOR more information visit [www.lit.youthworks.net](http://www.lit.youthworks.net) LOCATION | Port Hacking Conference Centres

# Lightning struck by Glenhaven

AS part of an ongoing partnership with Lightning Ridge Community Church, the Emmanuel Church in Glenhaven recently sent a team of 25 people on a week-long mission to the remote NSW town.

From September 24 to October 2 the team was involved in a number of activities including children's ministry, general maintenance and improvement of the church property.

John Hooton, the senior minister at Glenhaven, explained that the partnership with the church in Lightning Ridge came about because of Glenhaven's commitment to mission.

"We are committed to mission both overseas and domestically," he said.

"For a number of years we have been exploring the idea of, through BCA, partnering with Lightning Ridge Community Church through prayer, financial support and now this mission."

Emmanuel Church, with a number of other churches, currently supports the funding of the assistant minister at Lightning Ridge.

During the mission the team helped the church run its first ever holiday kids' club which saw 39 children attend over four days.

The more manual labour-minded members of the team repaired shadecloth, constructed outdoor seating as well as assisting with general maintenance around the church.

"Many of our congregation have a special interest in outback ministry," Mr Hooton said. "This was also an opportunity to broaden the horizons of many church members."

"The experience has also given us a passion to see the work in Lightning Ridge continue."

While nothing is set in stone, because of the positive response of Glenhaven people to the experience, Mr Hooton expects members of the church will go back to Lightning Ridge next year.

As a way of raising the funds for the assistant minister Emmanuel Church also held a 'De-clutter your life' garage sale on September 29.



Clockwise from left: kids' club group photo; replacing shadecloth; garden refurbishment; BBQ time; three kids' club members race cars.





## Pressing on in faith



YOUTH groups from the Canterbury-Bankstown mission area recently came together for a combined youth event entitled Press On — aimed at encouraging young people to do just that.

The event was held at Georges Hall Anglican church on Friday, September 2, with about 120 youth and leaders in attendance.

Gary Bennetts, senior minister at Georges Hall, was full of praise for the initiative, which also included training for youth leaders. "There are a number of smaller groups across the mission area," he said. "It's a really good way to encourage the kids."

"Combining the event with training provides input and adds value to youth ministry in a local setting. What we can do that conferences like Katoomba can't is offer training that is relevant to ministers and leaders working in this area."

The training involved a session after the combined event which gave youth leaders an opportunity to share ideas about what works and what doesn't in

their different ministries.

Youth from 16 different churches came together for the event which included games, singing, prayer and a Bible talk from Hebrews 12 on how easily we can get entangled in sin.

Due to the overwhelmingly positive response to Press On another event is planned for November 25 at St Paul's, Canterbury.



**A Service of Healing  
for Survivors of Abuse**

Saturday 19th November, 7pm

St John's Anglican Church, Darlinghurst

128 Darlinghurst Road, NSW 2010

For more details please contact

Miriam Sheehan (02) 9265 1872

or Jenni Minchance (02) 9265 1580

Anglican Professional Standards Unit, Sydney



## Celebration through helping others

St John's, Mona Vale visits the World Vision office in Alice Springs: (from left) World Vision staff Theresa Hutchins and Liz Mullen, Lisa and Christopher Poulson (Baptist minister for the Yuendumu Community) and, from St John's, Mark Corbett-Jones with Kath and Matt Elkan (and donated footies!).

MARKING its 140<sup>th</sup> birthday this year, St John's, Mona Vale has used the anniversary to look beyond its borders.

The church's Neighbourhood 22:39 initiative — in reference to Jesus' call in Matthew 22:39 to love neighbours as ourselves — has encouraged St John's to educate itself about others' needs and take action to help.

In February it launched the Project 1: Kids Hope program in partnership with World Vision. It is designed to provide one-to-one mentoring and support for disadvantaged primary school-aged Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in the Northern Territory.

In March Mona Vale's assistant minister, Matt Elkan, travelled to

the Northern Territory with a few members of the congregation, visiting a number of churches that will take part in the mentoring and creating contacts for future prayer updates and support.

St John's plans to provide funding and prayer support for Kids Hope and the Northern Territory churches in future, and also plans to partner next year with a Pittwater area school to provide mentor support to children in need.

In August the parish took an active local part in the World Vision 40 Hour Famine to raise money for East Timor. And on September 25, at the St John's 140-year anniversary lunch, a collection was taken for the drought-stricken Horn of Africa.

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# Create a heart for mission



LAST month 132 primary-aged children were given a bigger picture of God's mission in the world during

a week of their holidays at Camp Milimani in Katoomba. They heard God's word explained and listened

to CMS missionaries tell of their experience of cross-cultural mission.

Many of the children went home with broader knowledge and a bigger heart for mission.

"Simon had a fabulous time and has been trying to convince my Dad to become a Christian or at least read the Bible," one Mum says. "He has been very enthusiastically reading his Bible, too."

The youth and children's program director for CMS NSW, David Davies, says CMS camps are different from other Christian camps because of their focus, method and goal — their focus because they are run primarily to promote Christian mission (as a natural element of sharing the gospel); their method, because CMS missionary families are part of the whole camp

rather than just an add-on; and their goal because "The ultimate aim of any CMS camp is to have the kids come home and say: 'Mum and Dad, why aren't we missionaries?'"

"As adults we become quite adept at avoiding the big issues," Davies adds. "Children are wonderfully open to the challenge of engaging with God through his word and then responding... We want to encourage the kids to express their faith by praying, caring and giving to missionaries. And by considering mission for themselves."

*CMS NSW runs three camps for children through the year: Milimani for primary-aged kids is run in the spring school holidays; MMM for high school kids is held in the winter school holidays; and Summer School in January has programs from crèche to Year 12.*

## The WHAT & WHY of CHRISTMAS

**CHRISTMAS EVE**  
Children's Special  
4PM

Christmas Celebration  
6PM, 8PM, 11PM

**CHRISTMAS Day**  
Holy Communion  
8AM

Archbishop Preaching  
10AM

ST ANDREW'S CATHEDRAL  
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FOR MORE DETAILS SYDNEYCATHEDRAL.COM 9265 1661

### ST JAMES' INSTITUTE PROGRAMS

**WHY DO GOOD PEOPLE SUFFER? A STUDY OF THE BOOK OF JOB**  
Thursdays 3, 10, 17, 24 November from 1:00–2:00pm

**BELIEVING, BELONGING, BEHAVING, BECOMING: THE UNIQUENESS OF CHRISTIANITY**  
Saturday 12 November from 9:30am–4:30pm

**CHORAL EVENSONG (BCP)**  
Every Wednesday at 6:15pm, with the Choir of St James' and visiting Choirs.

Subscriptions available to full range of programs.  
Visit [www.sjic.org.au](http://www.sjic.org.au) for full details and bookings.  
Telephone 8227 1300

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

# MOVES

## MOORE FORD FOR ANGLICARE



AFTER five years lecturing at Moore College in ethics and church history, the **Rev Dr Andrew Ford** has been appointed to a new position at Anglicare Sydney as director of pastoral care and theology. This role is an expansion of the existing position of pastoral care manager currently filled by Archdeacon Ken Allen, who retires from full-time work at the end of this year.

Dr Ford has been a member of the Anglicare council for three years and, prior to his time at Moore College, served with the Bush Church Aid Society as assistant minister in Broome and as associate minister of St Barnabas', Broadway.

He says the Anglicare council had talked about the idea of a pastoral care manager for a while and, as it was discussed, he began to see it would be a good fit for him.

"It just brings together my experience in an interesting sort of way," he says. "Apart from knowing Anglicare, it makes use of my theological ability because the job is to help Anglicare do what it's doing already — which is being a great Christian service organisation... helping the organisation and individuals within it think through what it means to be a Christian in their particular area.

"I'm excited about it but it's also a bit daunting as well, as with every new thing. There's a lot about the job where I go, 'Okay, that'll be new', but there's also a lot I feel really comfortable with, too."

Upon making the announcement of Dr Ford's appointment the CEO of Anglicare, Grant Millard, said: "The building of our Christian identity and development of pastoral care

and theological understanding are essential parts of our mission... As a result, I believe that a new role of director of pastoral care and theology, incorporating these important mission areas, is required, which will also consolidate the responsibility for both pastoral care and chaplaincy.

"I am thrilled that Andrew has agreed to join Anglicare."

Dr Ford begins his new role in late January 2012.

## "TRANSITION" FOR ERRINGTON



AFTER six years as rector of St Andrew's, Oak Flats, the **Rev Graham Errington** will be retiring at the end of December.

"I'm going to miss the genuine love and support that a minister and his people have for each other," he says. "It's really been a two-way thing here. But I feel that I've done the job I needed to do and the parish is ready for a new start again with a younger bloke."

Mr Errington first studied at university for a science degree, working for six years as a high school teacher in Kiama before training at Moore College in the early 1980s. After three years as curate at Fairfield he became curate-in-charge then rector of Glenquarie parish (1987-1998) — "Our kids grew up there, so it's a pretty special place to us" — before spending seven years as assistant chaplain at Barker College.

It won't be a complete retirement just yet for Mr Errington. Although he jokes that he is "transitioning into retirement", he is looking for part-time ministry work in the Illawarra area as he will be based in his old stamping ground of Kiama.

# VALE

THE **Rev Bill Holland** was called home on July 29.

Born in 1939, he came to Christ at the 1959 Billy Graham crusade, studied at Moore College and then spent a year in England studying at St Augustine's, Canterbury and being mentored by John Stott, returning with a determination to defend the gospel against liberalism and with a strong theology of ministry.

Mr Holland began parish ministry in 1967, serving first as curate to Yagoona (where he met his wife, Ruby) and Castle Hill before becoming the curate-in-charge at Manly Vale with Allambie Heights in 1971. He spent the four years from 1974 as rector of the parish of Robertson and the following nine years as rector of St Marys, where he established the then branch church of St Clair.

For the last four years of the 1980s Mr Holland became "Mr Mum", as his son Andrew Holland puts it, working as support at home while Ruby's career developed. At the same time he worked part-time in the parish of Richmond and began studying for a masters degree in theology. In 1990 he became a lecturer at Tahlee Bible



College, north of Newcastle — while at the same time serving as part-time assistant minister to the nearby parish of Bulahdelah.

Returning to Sydney in 1993, Mr Holland became curate-in-charge of Liverpool South parish followed by Annandale, retiring from Annandale in 2002. But, as Andrew Holland said in his eulogy at Mr Holland's funeral: "Like all ministers, despite being officially retired, he never really retired. He took up locum work in 16 different parishes in the Nepean-Hawkesbury region and also the inner-west. He was always a much-loved peacemaker and pastor for many hurting people. His aim was always to build up Christ's church by proclaiming Christ directly from his word."

Said one former parishioner: "I have never heard one word of criticism of Bill and that's something."

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

Dr Peter Jensen  
Archbishop Of Sydney

## ZERO TOLERANCE

for Misconduct and Abuse

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

other support to victims of misconduct or abuse.

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

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

**Anglican Abuse Report Line**  
1800 77 49 45  
website: [www.anglican.org.au](http://www.anglican.org.au)  
email: [abuse@anglican.org.au](mailto:abuse@anglican.org.au)

**SAFE MINISTRY**  
Professional Standards Unit

## Vacant Parishes

LIST OF PARISHES AND PROVISIONAL PARISHES, VACANT OR BECOMING VACANT AS AT OCTOBER 26, 2011

- Auburn (St Philip's)
- Croydon
- Killara
- Lalor Park and Kings Langley
- Lithgow
- Lugarno
- Oak Flats
- St Marys
- Sutherland

\*Provisional parish or Archbishop's appointment

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# Pitt's pitch

MONEYBALL  
RATED M

JUDY ADAMSON

I'VE got a lot of time for true-story films about sport, and not just because I grew up in a sports-crazed family. However exciting invented tales are, they don't have a patch on something well told that is from real life. And frankly, when it comes to this story about baseball, underdogs and succeeding against the odds, it would need to be based on fact or else you would dismiss it as unrealistic in the extreme. But isn't that part of the fun?

Billy Beane (Brad Pitt) is a former professional baseballer and general manager of the Oakland A's — a baseball club punching way above its weight as it plays against clubs with payrolls three times larger.

When the season ends and three of his best performing players are poached by teams with deeper pockets, Beane begs Oakland's owner for more money (there isn't any) and explodes in frustration as his old-hand group of talent scouts keep talking about the same old things — how a player looks, how he hits the ball and whether or not his girlfriend passes the eye candy test.

"There are rich teams, poor teams, 50 teams of crap and then us," Billy growls. They don't have the money to buy the best players, he says. They have to think of something different or else they will continue to lose.

When Billy visits another team to try (unsuccessfully) to buy a player he notices

fresh-faced Peter Brand (Jonah Hill), a nerdy Yale economics graduate whose opinions seem to be carrying weight with the bosses. Peter analyses players based on stats, rather than what they seem to show by looks and playing style. Billy becomes convinced this might be the answer to getting a team with great potential that doesn't cost the earth.

"Everyone else in baseball undervalues [these players] — so you can afford them," Peter says.

And so we have the perfect set-up for significant conflict between the old school of baseball thought and young Peter's ideas, as well as crises of confidence for a team that doesn't yet believe in itself. Not to mention Oakland's on-field manager (played by Philip Seymour Hoffman) who'll put the players exactly where he wants, thanks very much, ignoring the reasons they were brought to the team in the first place.

Some of the baseball lingo and back room machinations will probably go over your head — unless you're big watchers of American sports on cable TV — which does create a potential barrier for Australians watching this film. There are also jocks and sports moments aplenty, which will leave some viewers cold, and the film could certainly stand to be a little shorter.

Yet the performances are great — particularly Pitt as the indefatigable but

angst-ridden Billy Beane — and the story is undeniably dramatic and engaging enough to pull you in, as the viewing I saw attested. People sat noticeably further forward in their seats as Billy and Peter's plan begins to bear fruit, dumbfounding commentators and detractors alike. The story is also fleshed out by elements such as Billy's relationship with his daughter, his anxious quirk of never being able to watch a game, the baggage carried from his own failed baseball career and a determination never again to let a big payday be the reason he does anything.

Change is always a tricky thing to navigate if it means leaving behind all you have known. As with anything, there is proved to be value in not simply accepting the way things have always been done but assessing whether they are good in themselves or can be done better. These days it's commonplace to use assessment tools of the kind Billy Beane adopted a decade ago, and so presumably forward-thinking people in sport are now working out where else they can find the edge over their opponents.

If you like sport, you'll have a great time watching *Moneyball*. If you're not totally sold on everything with a ball, the performances and snappy script (written by Steven Zaillian and Aaron Sorkin) still offer plenty to enjoy. There is a bit of language in places but given the context that's no surprise.

SC

## Josh's greatest struggle

David Pettett

As I walked across the prison yard I noticed a man in his early 30s sitting by himself. I hadn't met him before but before I had a chance to speak to him he called me over and asked if I was the chaplain.

Joshua\* told me he was in jail for the fourth time. He had a constant struggle with drugs over the past 10 years. He told me he was a Christian but that no matter how hard he tried he always ended up failing and turning to crime to support his habit.

When he was 18 a friend led him to the Lord. For two years life was great in a strong evangelical church with a bunch of young, lively Christian friends. He loved his quiet times of prayer and Bible reading. He led two or three university friends to the Lord.

Then at a party he did a stupid thing and tried some cocaine. Life for Joshua has been a downhill run since then. He dropped out of uni. His Christian friends gave up on him. His pastor gave him a final ultimatum that he wasn't able to keep. Each time he has been out of jail he has tried a new church. He loves meeting with God's people but for some reason the drugs have a great pull on his life.

When I meet men like Joshua I wonder how you minister to Christians with addictions. He has been to several rehab facilities but he keeps failing.



What do you say to Joshua? Is he converted? Does he need healing? Does he need victory? If you were his friend at what point would you give up?

*The Rev David Pettett is the assistant director, chaplaincy for Anglicare Sydney. This was first published on [sydneyanglicans.net](http://sydneyanglicans.net)*  
\*Name changed.

# Challenge to change

THE RELATIONAL  
MANAGER

BY MICHAEL  
SCHLUTER AND  
DAVID JOHN LEE

KARA MARTIN

WHEN I heard Michael Schluter talking about his groundbreaking book *The R Factor* on a speaking tour of Australia I was very impressed. The 'R' stands for relationship; and he was talking about the significance, politically and economically, of relationships.

From that early work developed the Relationships Foundation, an organisation that advocates the importance of relationships at every level of government, business, society and family life; and also offers a consulting service to business: a relationship audit.

The foundation has now gone global and this book represents an increasing move toward developing the application of the relational concept to work and personal life.

Schluter and Lee are investigating and writing from a biblical foundation. Schluter started the Jubilee Centre, a Christian think-tank relating biblical imperatives to issues of global social justice. Lee studied theology at Regent College in Vancouver.

The wisdom they express is biblically based, although *The Relational Manager* is written for a wider audience. The concept is that God's wisdom is wisdom for all people and all time — even for business!

This book is wonderful for crystallising some of the issues that rob us of happiness and effectiveness and provides some helpful guidelines about how to improve our relationships. It is applicable to every area of life and would benefit many churches.

Schluter and Lee examine five components of healthy relationship:

1. Encounter, with an assumption that more direct (face-to-face) contact is better for relationship building because it encourages connectedness and produces improved communication;

2. Stories, with the idea that every relationship has its own story, which strengthens with continuity over time; the relationship story encourages belonging and produces momentum;
3. Knowledge, with the assumption that greater knowledge leads to more depth. Knowledge is enhanced by widening the areas of awareness of the other person (what is their background, what are they interested in, where do they work?), encouraging mutual understanding and producing transparency;
4. Fairness, which has an assumption of parity, treating the other on equal terms and seeing things from the other's perspective. It encourages mutual respect and produces greater participation;
5. Alignment, with its focus on what the two parties have in common in the relationship. It encourages shared identity and produces synergy.

In a family situation, this means we should look for face-to-face opportunities, promoting conversation. We should take time to celebrate the story of our family, remembering highlights and lowlights. We should continue to ask questions, to increase our knowledge of our partner, kids, siblings and parents. We should make sure we don't play the power game within our family to bully or ignore some members. It is helpful to evaluate whether or not we are aligned as a family, working together.

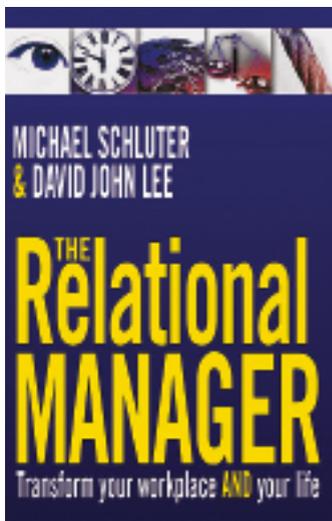
From the five components above flow 10 suggestions for developing a relational rule of life:

1. Process situations relationally: think about the impact of decisions on relationships. For example, how much would our decisions change if we, for example, thought about a promotion in terms of

how it affects relationships; or thought about a place we were going to buy or rent in terms of how it might enhance relationships.

2. Practise presence in your conversations: be present to the person you are talking to — avoiding distractions such as mobile phones, computers and TV. Give feedback to show you are listening.
  3. Develop a story with everyone you meet: evaluate a relationship in terms of where it has come from and where it is going.
  4. Cultivate relational intelligence: be aware of what others are thinking and feeling and how they are reacting.
  5. Find ways of closing the parity (power) gap: make sure that physical, financial, age or reputational differences do not impact on how you treat others. See them as God sees them, with eyes of love.
  6. Gather information about others and retain it: broaden your knowledge so it is more holistic.
  7. Think from the other side: ensure your conversations are mutually beneficial.
  8. Take time to plan your day relationally: think about whom you are meeting and how you can cultivate relationship.
  9. Do a mini relational evaluation: at the end of the day review what has happened in your relationships at work, school, uni, in the neighbourhood and/or in the home.
  10. Value relationships above everything else: don't wait until someone is sick or dying before you realise how important that relationship is! The reality is that relationships matter more than all our belongings and personal achievements.
- This is a challenging and exciting book that has the potential to change the way we look at so many things — and probably impact on the way we read the Bible as well.

SC



# Black and white evangelism

We want people to hear and respond to the gospel, but in our desire to be heard we should guard against hypocrisy or watering down our message, writes PHILLIP JENSEN.

**H**E was wearing a black T-shirt with white writing on it proclaiming himself a member of the atheist club. His shirt and the message it bore were stark and confronting.

I was speaking at a lunchtime public meeting on a university campus when I saw him — or rather his shirt. There was no doubting the sincerity and earnestness with which he held his viewpoint. However, his shirt made it clear that he came not to listen but to argue.

Whether by accident or purpose, the Christians were advertising their meetings with similar black T-shirts and white writing. Our message was as confronting and stark as the atheists'. But when it is your own message, the volume with which you shout seems a lot quieter than the volume of those who shout at you.

Advertising your position on your clothing (the modern equivalent of the sandwich board) gives little sense of engaging in conversation, dialogue or discussion. It says you believe you have the answer and want to tell people. You are not in questioning mode, wanting to join with others in discovering the truth or learning from them what they may know. You are in the teacher role, knowing what others need to know.

Self-effacing humour is widely used to build rapport with an Australian audience. Being self-effacing does more than just connect speaker and listener in sharing the humorous absurdity of the human condition. It shows that we do not take ourselves too seriously. It establishes our egalitarian credentials.

In a similar vein expressing doubts, questions, admission of failure and inadequacy is a way to win the confidence of the audience. It can build a bridge to the hearer when confrontation establishes a

vast chasm between speaker and hearer. It demonstrates humility, openness to fact and evidence, willingness to change our mind and engage in inquiry; it is the same way that we want the audience to respond.

This then can be a culturally sensitive way to reach our audience — an example of becoming like the people that we want to reach with the gospel (1 Corinthians 9:22). So we become open, humble, honest inquirers to reach the open, honest inquirers of the world. And many speakers can testify to the greater warmth of reception they have received by adopting such a practice. But prophets and evangelists should not expect or desire to be well received (Matthew 5:11-12, John 15:18f). While wherever possible we are to live at peace with all people (Romans 12:18), there can be a desire for human acceptance and approval that is quite unbecoming to a minister of the gospel (Luke 6:26).

Furthermore, being well received in public debate is not the same as communicating your message. While all manner of people have argued with great subtlety of mind and diplomacy of language for causes like atheism and feminism, it is the Richard Dawkins and Germaine Greers of this world, with their 'take-no-captives' approach, who have forced their issues onto the public agenda and brought about a shift in culture. Their opponents may not like them and they may embarrass their friends but their crude advocacy has had an enormous impact. This does not mean that Christian preachers should model themselves on these advocates but the pragmatic argument of effectiveness in communication must take their success into account.

The real problem with self-effacing humility is hypocrisy. It's one thing to crack jokes against yourself because you do not take yourself seriously; it's another thing to 'put it



# Going public with faith

PUBLIC  
CHRISTIANITY:  
TALKING ABOUT  
FAITH IN A POST-  
CHRISTIAN WORLD  
EDITED BY  
SIMON SMART

As anyone who lives publicly as a Christian knows, at some point friends, family or acquaintances will ask (either honestly or with an agenda) about your faith. Why do you have it? Isn't God a myth? Why do people suffer? What about the Crusades and other wars fought in the name of God? And what do/should Christians think about environmental issues, slavery, euthanasia and social justice — and why?

The questions that could be asked are endless, and realistic Christians will admit that some are questions we ourselves have asked. And we also need to admit that we don't always know the answers.

Enter the Sydney-based Centre for Public Christianity, whose members ask these questions and more of Christian luminaries from around the globe — and also seek to answer them in articles published in such forums as *The Sydney Morning Herald* and ABC Unleashed.

The results have been collected to form this book. It is broken up into four parts to deal with a practical, reliable and engaged faith as well as speaking in its defence, and

it is filled with thoughtful comment and explanation, questions and answers.

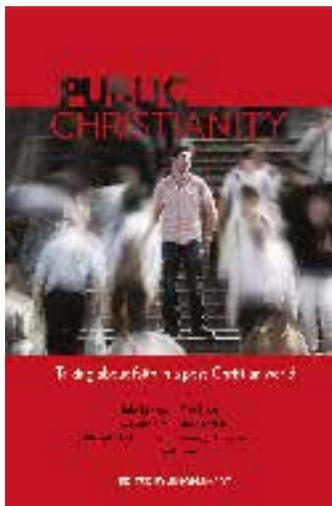
If you've ever wished for a cogent argument to help explain the shortcomings of New Atheism to friends, you will find plenty of help among interviews with the likes of Oxford professor John Lennox and theologian David Bentley Hart. If you want to read up on ideas related to social issues being debated in the public arena, or the historicity of the Bible, or hear about people's faith in action or trust in God in the midst of suffering, you will find those issues within these pages as well.

My personal preference would have been to place the "defence of faith" section at the end of the book rather than up front. It seems to me a more positive attitude to focus at the outset on an involved, practical faith and why it is reliable rather than on defending it from the latest attacks. Also, some of the ideas dealt with by eminent Christian thinkers in the "defence" section will take a lot of thought for an average reader to work through — and if, like me, you also have a tendency to read even segmented books from start to finish, this might slow you down.

However, there are also ideas in *Public Christianity* that may challenge our social comfort or "safer" beliefs, and that's a good thing. There is also constant encouragement to trust the God of the Bible and admit where Christians have failed in the past and present — not because we want to ingratiate ourselves with non-Christian friends and family but because we are all flawed, presenting an imperfect image of our perfect Lord.

As Greg Clarke and John Dickson write in the included essay "When Christians Aren't Christian": 'What society needs from the church is not some fancy new argument but the beautiful old narrative of Christians being like Christ. We can all agree that when a Christian is bigoted or violent, he is not following Christ but defying him. The problem with rotten Christians is not their Christianity but their lack of it'.

*Public Christianity* will be a useful book to have to hand for questions, reference and a good read. It's not something you could give away to every seeker, but it can be a great source of information and challenge for those willing to engage with its ideas. **SC**



on' purely to win an audience. Similarly, it's one thing to invite the listener to instruct the speaker with their bits of the jigsaw puzzle of life; it's another thing to feign ignorance to gain a hearing. In the end, truth will out — people see through the phoney.

But there is a deeper hypocrisy that undermines this style of evangelism. It's the lack of belief that uses 'effective evangelistic bridge-building' to mask itself by conceding to our opponents, avoiding the hard and unpopular truths, critiquing our allies instead of our adversaries, and so soft-peddalling our message as to distort it. By the time we have qualified what we believe, recounted how we learn from other religions and are embarrassed by Christian history — it is a little hard to hear the unique claims of Christ and the need to repent, or

gain any impression that we are real in our commitment to him.

Why, if we believe in the truth of the Bible, do we spend most of our time trying to soften its message to accommodate it to modern sensitivities? Why do we reject the Bible's teaching on the sinful blindness of the debaters of this age, who use their cleverness not to discover truth but to hide from it (Romans 1:18-32, 8:5-8; 1 Corinthians 1:18-20; Ephesians 4:17-19)? Are they not veiled by the god of this world from seeing the truth (2 Corinthians 4:3)?

We may reason and try to persuade people of the truth of the gospel (Acts 17:2, 17 & 18:4) and be ready to give an answer for the hope that is ours in Christ Jesus (1 Peter 3:15) — but in the end the gospel is a proclaimed truth, not an optional opinion for humans to

sit in judgement upon.

Dr Lloyd Jones wrote against debating the gospel — for the gospel is not open to debate. It is not for people to sit in judgement of God, for we are under the judgement of God. Professor Lennox recently said in Sydney that he does not aim to win debates but to use them to give a credible explanation of the gospel. Our task is not to be quarrelsome or argumentative (2 Timothy 2:24) but it is to declare God's announcement of the truth as servants of those to whom we speak (2 Corinthians 4:5).

Black and white T-shirts are loud advertisements — too loud for private conversation. But hiding them under our jumper risks the hypocrisy of people not willing to nail their colours to the mast. **SC**

*This article first appeared on [sydneyanglicans.net](http://sydneyanglicans.net)*



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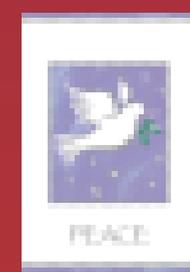
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