

# Southern CROSS

AUG  
UST  
2013

THE NEWS MAGAZINE FOR SYDNEY

## It's Glenn

SYDNEY ELECTS DAVIES AS ARCHBISHOP

- + The future of Moore
- & Prime ministers and their beliefs



**COVER**

Stepping out in faith – Bishop Glenn Davies is elected as Archbishop of Sydney.  
PHOTO: Russell Powell

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“ I had  
120 Bibles  
and I  
left with  
none. ”

Peter Palmer

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**AUGUST 2013**



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**PUBLISHER:** Anglican Media Sydney  
PO Box W185  
Parramatta Westfield 2150  
**PHONE:** 02 8860 8860  
**FAX:** 02 8860 8899  
**EMAIL:** info@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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**SUBSCRIPTIONS:** Garry Joy

**PHONE:** 02 8860 8861  
**EMAIL:** subs@anglicanmedia.com.au  
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# WHAT IN THE MOORE COLLEGE LECTURES 2013

# WORLD?

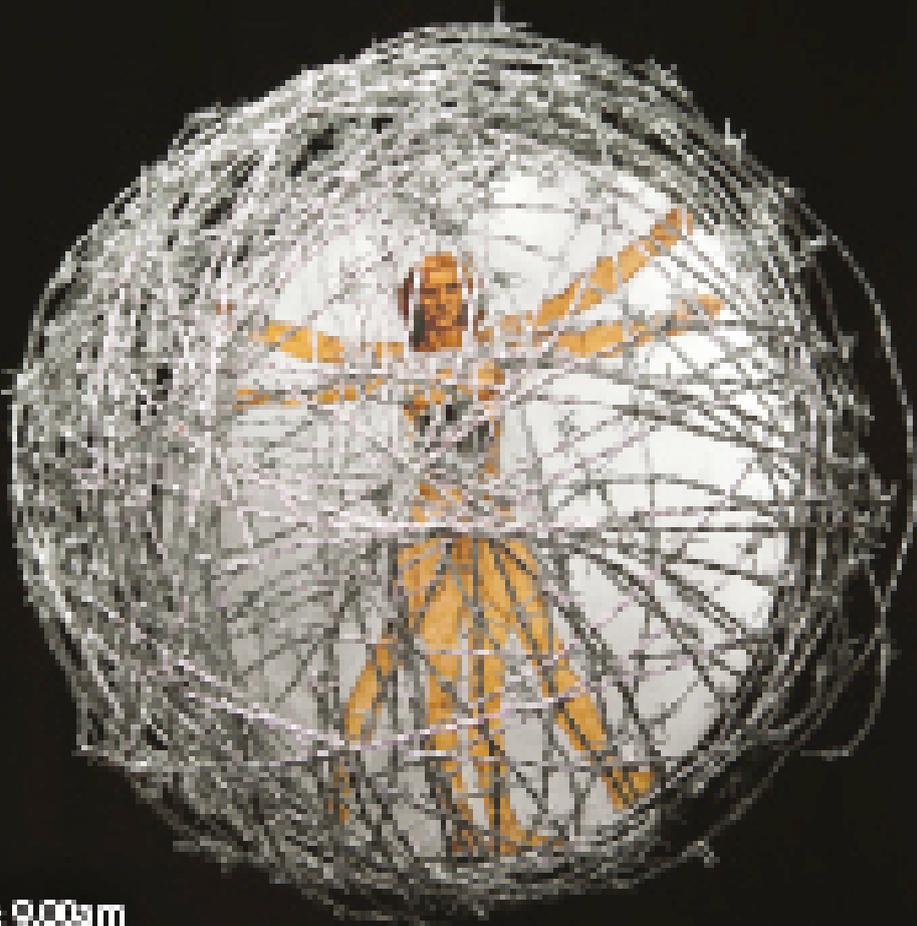


Speaker: Dr Bill Saller,  
Vice Principal of Moore  
Theological College

Understanding the whole Bible's  
teaching on the 'world' as the  
context for faithful Christian living

Thursday 15 August (N.S. AMHROD DATE)  
Evening lecture, 8.00pm

Monday 19 – Friday 23 August  
Morning lectures | Mon: 10.00am, Tues – Fri 9.00am  
Knox Lecture Theatre | 15 King Street Newtown



## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

### Open Night

Monday 26 August  
7.45 pm – 9.15 pm

Check out the College  
and have your questions  
answered.

### Open Week

Monday 26 August –  
Friday 30 August

Come and visit our  
Newtown campus, sample  
a lecture and meet faculty  
and students.

### Open Day

Saturday 28 September  
9.30 am – 2.30 pm

The day will include a  
sample lecture, a campus  
tour and a BBQ lunch.

# Campbelltown turns 190

**CAMPBELLTOWN** ANGLICAN Churches has recently celebrated the 190th anniversary of the building of St Peter's church.

The first service, led by then-rector the Rev Thomas Reddall, was held on June 29, 1823, making St Peter's the third oldest church building in Australia.

The anniversary was marked by two main public events, which were open to the people of Campbelltown and focused on the church's legacy over that time.

The senior minister of Campbelltown Anglican Churches, the Rev Nigel Fortescue, says it was a time to reflect on the history of the church and connect with their neighbours.

"We actually had one guy, a youngish guy in his forties, who rang up and said he had a pencil drawing hanging up in his bathroom of St Peter's church," Mr Fortescue says. "This guy said, 'It's dated sometime



The Rev Nigel Fortescue greets visitors after the commemoration service.

in the 1920s. Can I bring it down to display?' And we all said, 'Yeah, come on down, no worries'.

"He was exactly the sort of person we connected with, people who have a keen interest in history who don't have a keen interest in Jesus but to whom we want to say that

church is not just a historical place, but that we also actually stand on a historical faith."

Moore College lecturer the Rev Dr Peter Bolt spoke on Tuesday, July 16 at a public lunch, on the topic of 190 years of Christian faith in Australia, while a special

commemorative service was held the following Sunday with the Bishop of Wollongong, the Rt Rev Peter Hayward, speaking.

In regard to the service, Mr Fortescue says, "It was an opportunity for everyone in our church to come together and celebrate the long-term witness to Jesus our church has been providing to the Campbelltown area."

Looking to the future, Mr Fortescue says he sees the church continuing in the same vein as it originally did 190 years ago.

"We're just going to keep doing what Thomas Reddall was here to do in 1823," he says. "When Thomas Reddall came and the church opened, it was to preach the gospel to the local people. And we're just going to keep doing that, to preach Jesus to people in Campbelltown. Our big theme has been that much has changed, but much has stayed the same."



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# Anglican schools saved

Orange Anglican Grammar School infants students at this year's ANZAC Day celebration.

## RUSSELL POWELL

THE SYDNEY ANGLICAN SCHOOLS Corporation (SASC) has secured the future of Anglican schools in Orange and Dubbo.

Macquarie Anglican School in Dubbo and the Orange Anglican Grammar School had been on the market since earlier this year because of financial issues in the Bathurst Diocese.

Expressions of interest were called for in February for the purchase of the schools, which operate on a similar "affordable fee" model to Sydney schools operated by SASC.

The Dubbo school was established in 2002 and is a growing K-12 co-educational institution. Orange Anglican Grammar started in 2007 as a primary school but has now grown to Year 10.

Dr Laurie Scandrett, the CEO of the Sydney Anglican Schools Corporation, announced last month that the corporation had exchanged contracts for the purchase of both schools.

"We are very excited to be able to make this announcement," Dr Scandrett said. "By including the operation of these schools as part of Sydney Anglican Schools Corporation, we can guarantee to

students, parents, staff and each community that the future of these schools is secure. The schools will be able to continue their great work of Christian education with confidence."

SASC currently operates 17 schools across Sydney and on the South Coast, comprising more than 12,000 students and 1500 staff. Schools outside metropolitan Sydney include those in Milton, Nowra, Tahmoor and Shellharbour.

"Every corporation school operates under a local school council to ensure that they maintain their foundations in the communities for which they exist to serve," Dr Scandrett said. "At the same time, the corporation brings the strength of resources of all of our schools that can only enrich the educational experience of all students."

Of the schools in Dubbo and Orange, he said the corporation had been "impressed with the staff teams and their dedication to providing teaching and learning experiences and facilities that are truly outstanding in each area". Dr Scandrett emphasised that the decision of the Bathurst Diocese and the board of the Sydney Anglican Schools Corporation would "bring stability to underpin the future operation of these schools".

"We believe that parents choose

Anglican schools because they appreciate the quality of education offered and the commitment to Christian values that form the basis

of the culture of our schools," he added.

The purchase is expected to be completed at the end of September.

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ARV2013

# Asylum seekers find help and home in churches

NICK GILBERT

ASYLUM SEEKERS IN COMMUNITY detention have found a warm welcome in some of Sydney's Anglican churches.

For the Rev Andrew Bruce, senior minister at St Peter's, Cooks River, it all started on Good Friday, when about 25 young Tamil men recently placed into community detention sat down at the back of his church just in time to hear the sermon.

"That struck us as being fairly unusual, given we're only about 40 adults," Mr Bruce says. "We doubled in size because they turned up."

One of the men in this group, Ravi (not his real name), says that he and some of the other young men with him were Christians and thought they would be able to find help from the the local church – which is across the road from the main hotel used by the Department of Immigration and Citizenship to house asylum seekers for the first six weeks of their community detention. A Canadian Sri Lankan, who just happened to be staying in the hotel while on holiday, also assisted in directing the group to the church.

"We were given \$85 for two weeks [by the Red Cross as living expenses]," Ravi says via a translator. "We had a look at the places around in terms of food, shops. The only place we had was McDonalds, and if we spent our money there it would be gone in no time. There was no other contact we had [but] the church was there, and the church will always help."

Mr Bruce says his church has become a kind of first aid station for asylum seekers entering the community, and has come into contact with more people released from detention since the first group of Sri Lankan men.

"At our end, we're literally the first face they see outside of detention," Mr Bruce says. "They're out of



Asylum seekers and church members enjoying a lunch together.

Curtin, they have shorts and shirts and thongs. When this first group came in, it was raining and freezing. We gave them blankets, showed them where they could cook, got some rice and rice cookers. We're really just the very basic end of things."

Some of these early asylum seekers are now a part of the community at Liverpool South Anglican Church, pastored by the Rev Manoj Chacko, himself a migrant to Australia from India. He also speaks Tamil. Mr Bruce contacted Mr Chacko after learning that he spoke the language of this particular group of asylum seekers and so the networking began.

A group of the young men now live in a granny flat on church property and volunteer their efforts to keep the church clean, to conduct basic maintenance and help move supplies donated to the church for other asylum seekers who pass through. According to Mr Chacko, an average of about 10 new asylum seekers have been connecting with their church for basic aid every week. Around 40 asylum seekers attend the church each Sunday.

Brenda Gaal, a member of Liverpool South Anglican Church, has been heavily involved with the asylum seekers and the various ministries to that community, since their first outreach event to the released Sri Lankan detainees on Anzac Day.

"We'd been told that Manoj and Ramabai [Mr Chacko's wife] had gone to help the guys out at St Peter's," she says, "but then on the Sunday [before Anzac Day], Ramabai came rushing in and said, 'Brenda, Brenda, are you doing anything on Anzac Day?' and I said 'No'. She said, 'Maybe we can have a lunch and a cricket match, and invite the Sri Lankans along'. And I thought that would be great.

"I remember the day, because people were a bit doubtful about how many would come, and I can just remember turning up and there were Sri Lankan people everywhere. So I think that then we began to understand that just being friends with them and showing them God's love was a good thing to be doing. That's how it started."

The lunch itself was delayed, and so an impromptu teaching session began, with church members telling the asylum seekers about the significance of Anzac Day and the connection with Christian faith, while the asylum seekers spoke about their experiences back home, and how they came to Australia.

"We came to this church after the initial reaction, the relationship was very good. It grew and grew," Ravi says.

The recent leap in media coverage about asylum seekers, and not least the recent policy decision by the Labor Party to refuse Australian

settlement for refugees who arrive by boat, have made refugees a political issue. However, when asked, this group of asylum seekers said that given the amount spent on them, they would like to help contribute to Australian society.

"From our point of view, allowing us to work would be most beneficial for everyone," says another asylum seeker, Kumar (not his real name), "because then we can pay our own expenses. Instead of people having to give us free money, we can work, and take care of ourselves."

"Coming to Australia and being supported by Immigration is not something we wish," Ravi adds, "because it is burdening the community, and it is not helping us because it makes us feel handicapped, or like someone who cannot work and sits around and watches TV. If we could work we would have some self-respect. If we cannot work, then we could study. I have an O level in Sri Lanka, and could contribute in that way."

While the issue can be a divisive one, particularly in the media, Ms Gaal says in her experience that the way actual people relate to asylum seekers is quite different, even outside the church.

"The other exciting thing is that when we really need blankets, and warm clothing and household utensils – and when I've said that at work – people have immediately brought things to give to these people," she says. "It heartened me that lots of Australians wanted to welcome people. Quite away from the television and media reports that have set up a division, at the grassroots I don't think it's there."

Ms Gaal also says that it has been a privilege for her and others at Liverpool South to be involved with the asylum seekers who have come through their door, a feeling reciprocated by the asylum seekers.

"I can't express enough thanks about what the church is doing," Ravi says.

# A fair Dinka hymn book

NICK GILBERT

A NEW HYMN BOOK WRITTEN IN the Dinka language has been launched, providing a new resource for the Sudanese Christian community here and abroad.

The hymn book project, headed up by Belmore Anglican Church's Sudanese Pastor Abraham Dit and supported by the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge Australia (SPCK), brings together 977 hymns and choruses, passages of Scripture and liturgies written in the South Sudanese dialect, bound together in a physical book.

"We have many songs which are just oral," says Mr Dit., "but not written or in a book, so a long time ago I was ordained in Khartoum [the capital of what is now North Sudan] in 1997, and I tried to write these things down in books. I didn't have a computer when I was in Khartoum, so I just tried to write it out."

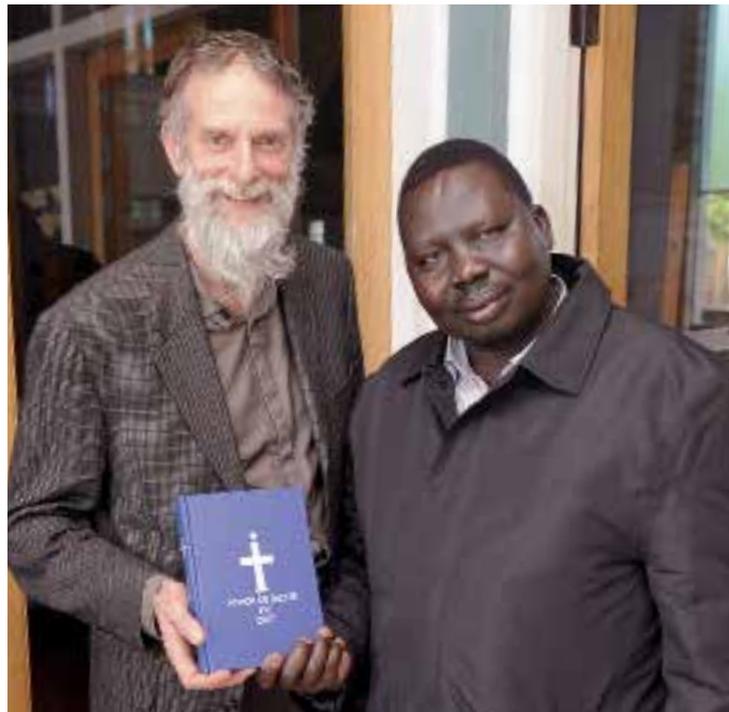
Dinka as a formal written language is relatively young, with many key

pieces of Dinka literature being Christian writings. The alphabet is Latin-based, and Christian missionaries played a large role in the standardisation of the written language.

Mr Dit eventually arrived in Australia after leaving Sudan, and began the hymnbook project again in earnest., helped by readily accessible computers and printers. Eventually, the Sudanese community raised \$8000 for a first print run of the book, with SPCK matching the money raised dollar for dollar.

"[Mr Dit] managed to raise \$8000 from the impoverished immigrant community so we said we would honour that enterprise," says SPCK national director Michael Collie.

Following its launch here in Sydney, the book will also be launched among the Melbourne Sudanese community, and further spread throughout Australia. There are also early plans to eventually raise more money through sales and donations, and print another run, with some books being sent to other diaspora communities and to Sudan itself.



Michael Collie (left) with Pastor Abraham Dit. PHOTO: Ramon Williams

"A lot of people are looking to receive this book," says Mr Dit. "I received a phone call from South Sudan, and they sent me even more songs, and I am adding them in. They have contacted me and asked me to send the book, so we are preparing to send something like 1000 books, but we have difficulties about how to send them by plane and to afford the cost. But we are on our way."

Mr Dit says the book is important because it gives his community a way to teach the Gospel in their language, and to help maintain links

between Dinka speaking people in South Sudan and other Sudanese communities around the world.

"It can help our community, especially young people, to read Dinka," says Mr Dit, "to learn it as their language, and to have less of a big difference in the language between South Sudan and in Australia. So there can still be contact between the two communities. It can help our language to develop, and it can help the youth to develop in their understanding and work for God, in their own language".

# New head for Youthworks college

RUSSELL POWELL

ANGLICAN YOUTHWORKS HAS announced that the Rev Andrew Nixon will be the new Principal of Youthworks College.

Mr Nixon (right) took over the Year 13 program at Youthworks in 2011, after being executive director of Connect09 for the Diocese.

"Youthworks College has had an extraordinary impact in the Diocese over the past 13 years, but the next few years represent a unique opportunity to provide new impetus," Youthworks CEO Zac Veron says. "I am delighted Andrew



has accepted my invitation to be principal."

With many years of experience in the VET sector and in youth and

young adult ministries, as well as a master's degree in adult education, Mr Nixon's focus will be on the strategic direction and reshaping of the college.

"I want to listen to ministers, parents and teachers," Mr Nixon says. "There are so many talented graduates out there at the very forefront of reaching the next generation – I want to hear from them and explore partnerships in this space. But the goal at this time must be to set the course for the next 10 years so that the youth of Sydney (and beyond) can know Jesus. I can't wait to begin exploring the possibilities."

Youthworks has given an assurance

that the college's high theological education standards and strong commitment to training vocational youth and children's ministers will not change.

Mr Jim French will continue as college vice-principal and will oversee the day-to-day running of the college, along with the existing faculty.

Says Mr Veron: "I am convinced that the best days for Youthworks College are ahead of us. We aim to be well placed to grasp the opportunity and meet the needs of training local, national and international students for the strategically important ministry of bringing God's word to the children and youth of his world."



# Hope one to one

Helping hands: some of the Kids' Hope mentors from St Philip's, Caringbah, including Jill Moss (front row, left).

## JUDY ADAMSON

IT'S A COMMON CONVERSATION in the media and in school playgrounds: what to do with troubled children in a school environment. How to help the kids who need extra support to guide them through the life and learning difficulties that threaten to overwhelm or send them off the rails even before the end of primary school.

Despite the tricky issue of ethics classes and the increasing cynicism in the community about Christianity, word of mouth is seeing more and more public schools turn to their local churches for help under the Kids' Hope program.

The idea for the program, which began in the US, has been running in Australia under the umbrella of World Vision for almost a decade. It sees a local church link up with a nearby school, matching trained volunteer mentors with children the

school nominates as needing extra support.

"The motto of the program is 'One child, one hour, one church, one school,'" says Tim Smith from Kids' Hope. "The link is quite deliberate: each volunteer exclusively mentors one child within the school, and that school and church are linked one to one, so it gives the parish the opportunity to reach out to the community through the link with that one school."

It's an interdenominational program, and of the 10 Anglican parishes in NSW and the ACT that take part in Kids' Hope, seven are in the Sydney Diocese: Caringbah, Croydon, Gynea, Jannali, Miranda, Mona Vale and Sutherland.

The fact that there are five Anglican parishes in the Sutherland Shire is indicative of the popularity of the program in the local area, with schools not infrequently phoning up churches to ask if they would be interested in sending mentors.

At Jannali Anglican, where a team of 12-15 mentors have been linked

to a local school for 2½ years, some of the changes in the children have been dramatic, says the parish's Kids' Hope co-ordinator, Cathie Smithers. She says parents who were initially doubtful about the program's value have now become enthusiastic advocates, and a survey of parents and teachers at the end of 2011 nominated Kids' Hope as the most valuable program run at the school.

"Any kid could benefit from a mentor," she says. "The children who have mentors are from a range of backgrounds – they may be from a single-parent family and need that extra adult in their lives, or they may just be having trouble with school work or something. And word gets around... now everybody wants their kid in the program!"

Mentors from St Philip's, Caringbah have only been part of the program for the past four months but Jill Moss, the parish's Kids' Hope co-ordinator, says the impact is already being felt at the school.

"I just got an email from one of the teachers last night saying she can see the positive effect – the difference that it's made to the girl that's in her class," she says. "The mentors are just loving it. They're aged from 19 to their early 80s and I love that it's not age-specific at all – it's just having the desire to befriend a child."

"When I first got the list of volunteers together I saw we had many more women than men. I thought that was a shame because so often in society now, children live without their father. But in the end, the school had prioritised children who were living without a mother! And it worked out really well because we had so many women who wanted to be mentors. Our church had prayed about it beforehand but even so, I've been struck by how wonderful the matching has turned out. It's been fantastic."

For more information see [www.worldvision.com.au/takeaction/Volunteer/KidsHopeAus.aspx](http://www.worldvision.com.au/takeaction/Volunteer/KidsHopeAus.aspx)

# Jensen says “Don’t retreat”

RUSSELL POWELL

IN ONE OF HIS FINAL ADDRESSES as Archbishop of Sydney, Peter Jensen has urged Christians to engage in public discussion and “not to be put off by those who say we should stop trying to impose our values on others”.

Dr Jensen addressed a forum titled “Christian Voices in the Public Square: How should Christians speak on public issues?” held at St Barnabas’, Broadway and sponsored by Moore College’s Centre for Christian Living, and said he believed there was a biblical imperative for speaking.

“The Bible delivers a particular way of thinking about human beings, an anthropology,” he said. We believe it is true, life-giving and universal. We belong to Christ and teach the biblical revelation to all. We have his mandate to speak whatever the society, the state or the human structures. This arises from love of God and love of neighbour. I would say that we have not done this enough. We became lazy and complacent and thought that it was impossible that the basic ideology of our culture would be threatened. We accepted the pietistic privatisation model and retreated.”

Dr Jensen says Anglicans, and Christians generally, should engage by using the resources of the biblical revelation, having a coherent view of what it is to be human and seeking to demonstrate that the biblical



Engage: Archbishop Jensen speaks at Christian Voices in the Public Square. PHOTO: Vicki King, Moore College

revelation actually makes sense of human life and experience.

“We must not be afraid to do so and we must not be silenced by any false ideology which removes our right to do so,” he said. “We have to trust that God’s way for human well-being and flourishing as revealed in law and gospel is best.”

The director of the Centre for Christian Living, Dr Andrew Cameron, says the night provided a helpful overview of a topic that many Christians find quite hard.

“The Archbishop outlined how to

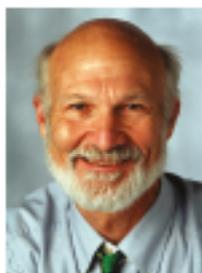
bring a ‘Christian social philosophy’ to an unbelieving world,” he said. “People were interested that he thought it was important, that he didn’t think it was contrary to gospel preaching, and that he didn’t think it necessary to hide his biblical foundations. He showed how Christians are committed to preaching for repentance, alleviating suffering and doing good. These tasks aren’t enemies, they weave together.”

Dr Cameron said Dr Jensen’s recognition that Christians

abandoned the intellectual task of bringing a Christian social philosophy to an unbelieving world some decades ago was “quite striking... that means it will take years to become good at it again. But we needn’t be pessimistic: with serious focus by Christians gifted for it, we can again become a voice that blesses the community. At a time when both Christians and others think that Christians have nothing to offer public debate, he put the matter back on the map and showed something of how to proceed.”



## NEW COLLEGE LECTURES 2013



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# One changed life at a time

SIX YEARS AGO MARK ARRIVED IN Sydney from Western Australia. His life was heading in the wrong direction through a combination of personal and family issues and a number of addictions he was battling.

But a chance meeting with chaplain the Rev Stuart Woods in early 2012 marked the beginning of a remarkable turnaround in his life. That meeting led to an invitation to Mr Woods' WayOut fellowship at St Luke's, Liverpool and now, more than a year on, Mark has not missed one monthly meeting.

In addition, a few months after meeting Mark, Mr Woods became the chaplain at Break the Cycle, Glenquarie (BTCG); a ministry seeking to empower sustainable life choices and community which had grown out of Glenquarie Anglican Church's desire to love and serve its local neighbourhood. Anglican Aid is a major partner in funding his work.

Mark became one of his first clients, joining the newly established Men's Shed and then taking advantage of some of the other services provided by BTCG such as counselling, financial guidance, access to a community pantry and, on the rare occasion, the provision of emergency relief.

Mark also became a pioneer in BTCG's management of Work Development Orders (WDOs) whereby clients can have individual State debts reduced under a government-approved program – managed by Mr Woods – as they



Turned around: Men's Shed guys with Stuart Woods (second from right) and Mark (far right). PHOTO: Scott Webster

volunteer their time and attend relevant courses or counselling and therapy sessions. Looking for further opportunities to serve his clients, Mr Woods has just begun a partnership with an Anglicare counsellor to provide "Sorted", an anger-management course that accrues WDO credits. Mark was, of course, one of the very first to sign up.

All this fruitful work has led to a strengthening of the relationship between Mr Woods and Community Corrections Division parole officers as they work together in order to reduce jail return rates and provide holistic care to many WDO clients.

Reflecting on these developments, Mr Woods said, "The wonderful thing about [Sorted] is that not only will the attendees like Mark gain practical personal skills, but they can also have their State debts reducing at the same time.

"As chaplain in this safe place, it is a real privilege to make contact with the men in our community who want to turn around their lives, often after many years of poor choices. It is in this setting opportunities are taken up to engage clients with Jesus so they can hear a message of real hope in their seemingly hopeless situations as biblical truths are shared through loving pastoral care."

Mark is the first of many lives changed by the partnership between Anglican Aid and Mr Woods' chaplaincy at BTCG. Now part of his local Anglican church, Mark enjoys being part of a positive community that reflects Christ's unconditional love where he is challenged, loved, cared for and prayed for within a community of mature Christians.

While there are still struggles and issues in his life, Mark is moving closer to be the man he knows God wants him to be. The alternative life choices are becoming less and less appealing in his life the more he seeks the Saviour and finds lasting hope in Christ alone.

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# Partnership and prayer

Working together: a combined Blacktown and Penrith Mission Area prayer meeting at Glenmore Park.

When Archbishop Jensen announced the creation of Mission Areas he called for a new spirit of partnership to emerge in the Diocese. Three years down the track *Southern Cross* speaks with BISHOP IVAN LEE, the Mission Area co-ordinator, about how they are working.

**SC:** Has a new spirit of partnership emerged as the Archbishop had hoped?

**IL:** It certainly has. The Archbishop was very committed to this initiative and gave it much personal time. We both knew gospel partnership was always going to be a huge challenge to our Western individualist mindset, but we agreed we must learn to work together for the sake of mission. It is just the beginning, but praise God good progress has been made.

**SC:** What sorts of things have been happening?

**IL:** Very significantly, clergy and lay people are praying together in good numbers that I don't think I have ever seen before in the Diocese. I went to one Mission Area prayer meeting and lay people from many parishes were there, all very excited to be in the same room together, praying and expecting great things from God. Partnership and trust are also developing as clergy share their struggles and pray together. I see ministers concerned about how the church down the road is going, not just their own. That's just terrific. It's kingdom thinking, not "my church" thinking. The competition is not

each other, but the idols of sport, materialism, pleasure, self, greed. Transfer growth is not the same as kingdom growth.

**SC:** For people still unfamiliar with Mission Areas, can you put it in a nutshell?

**IL:** Mission Areas are about developing gospel partnership between churches and ministers, so that we may be much more effective in making new disciples and establishing them in our churches. We are only growing by 1-2 per cent a year, and much of that is by breeding (having children and keeping them in the church) and welcoming other believers (transfer growth from other churches). We need to do these things, but we are not making very many new disciples as Jesus commanded. That's not good, not for God's glory or for the future of our church.

**SC:** So what can we do about that?

**IL:** The answer is not a top-down program of activities imposed on local churches – which wouldn't work anyway, as each part of the Diocese has its unique challenges. Mission Areas is about something deeper and more difficult: it's about

developing genuine partnerships which result in local strategies appropriate to the area and the churches. I am delighted to see different things happening. This means the ministers are deciding what the local priorities are and getting on with it. Partnership is also to be developed between churches and our diocesan organisations, all of which, by the way, are very keen to partner with Mission Areas.

**SC:** So what are the main ways forward in developing this partnership to reach more people?

**IL:** There are many ways, but three key things I have said we need to do are:

- Looking outward at our Diocese and treating it as a mission field, identifying its challenges and opportunities afresh. So Mission Areas are seeing what cross-cultural and ethnic work needs to occur, where new churches need to be planted, how the demographics are changing and more. We need to think like missionaries.
- Sharing resources – and I mean all kinds of resources, such as knowledge, experience, skills, finances and facilities. We can waste valuable energy and time reinventing the wheel when there is so much to share. We can combine resources to do things we cannot easily do by ourselves. One area has combined funds to employ a church worker. Some small youth groups are meeting together to make a greater impact.
- Training and development of rectors, church staff and lay people for ministry and mission effectiveness. Our ministers and lay people have a great grasp of

theology and the Bible and we must continue to grow deep roots, but we do struggle with how to reach outsiders. There is no easy fix nor does any one person have the answer, but through the Mission Area platform we are beginning to evaluate more honestly how we are going and focus on our priorities, strategies and implementation. Some of our best learning is done not as individuals but by learning and doing together.

These are the three broad objectives. But I have also pointed to specific areas that require immediate attention, such as youth and children's ministry and vastly improving our welcome and integration of new people.

**SC:** Any final comments?

**IL:** We need to remember that this is a long-term project. It will take many years. I am meeting ministers and lay people who are working hard with, sometimes, little result – and they often feel isolated. We cannot just keep doing what we have been doing and expect something different to happen. We need to help each other become more effective in reaching a community that is rapidly changing.

Actual practical partnership is quite a culture change for us. It's entirely voluntary and will take time, as we are all very busy. Some areas are doing better than others for various reasons. But more and more people are seeing the great encouragement and value of Mission Areas – not only in receiving but in giving. I would also like to thank the 22 Mission Area leaders for accepting the very challenging task of developing this partnership among their peers.



# Miners dig new Bible

Some of the recipients of the new Bible designed especially for miners.

## NICK GILBERT

A NEW BIBLE FOR MINERS AND others in the resources industry has proven a hit, with more than 100 Bibles personally taken by workers over the space of a weekend.

The new Bible, containing prayers for miners and testimonies from people who have been a part of the industry, has been produced by the Bible Society and Out of the Pit, a ministry to the mining industry. It includes the whole New Testament and the Psalms.

Bush Church Aid mining chaplain, the Rev Peter Palmer, who also contributed some of the material, has seen first hand the impact the new bibles have had on the people that he meets.

"A couple of weeks ago I was part of the SA Mine Rescue Challenge,

which is rescue teams from different mine companies coming together and pitting their skills against each other," he says. "I had 120 bibles and I left with none. I'd only just got them, and they were actually supplied and donated, bought for me by one of the contract companies."

Mr Palmer also says he deliberately decided not to give the Bibles out individually – instead, he let people grab one if they wanted to. The response was enormous.

"I gave them a spiel about it, what was in there, and people just grabbed it, brought it up, and said, 'Look what's inside this for me, Rev, this is great stuff,'" Mr Palmer says. "A lot of these people aren't Christians, most of them aren't Christians, but the whole idea was to give them a gospel in a bright orange colour. We've got them out there, and people were really excited to be a part of that."

That excitement even extends to local contract companies, who wanted to be involved and even grabbed some copies of the Bible for themselves.

"They [Giacci Brothers, a Perth-based contract company specialising in trucking and transport] thought it was a good idea. I approached them and said, 'I'd like to buy some bibles', They said, 'How many do you want?' I said 'Aw, maybe a couple of hundred?' So they gave me the money. That's the rapport I have with all these sorts of companies that's been built up in the six years I've been doing this.

"Anyway, I put a little sticker in the bibles saying 'Generously donated by Giacci Brothers', and the manager of the company sent one back to Perth – and they loved it so much they wanted some more, just for their office."

Mr Palmer says that he puts the

success mostly down to the fact that the new packaging for the Bible shows it has something to say to them personally.

"One of the teams asked me what my favourite passage in the Bible was. I said I didn't know about my favourite passage, but I think the passage that spoke to me for that group [of rescue team workers] was 'No greater love has man than this, that he should lay down his life for a friend'. I showed them where it was in the Bible, and they all looked at it up. I saw one guy dog-ear the page.

"They came up to me later and said, 'That was very, very profound, I thought about that'. I also said to them that when they hear that alarm, and they're out on a rescue, they're putting their life on the line for someone else. This person came back to me and said, 'I'm going to think about that a lot more, and about where I stand!'"

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# New bishop for Defence Force



Bishop Lambert at his commissioning service. PHOTO: Leading Seaman Helen Frank

**BISHOP IAN LAMBERT** HAS returned to the Royal Military College Duntroon, from where he graduated in 1976, to be officially commissioned as the new Anglican Bishop to the Australian Defence Force. During a ceremony on July 5 in St Paul's Chapel, Bishop Lambert was installed as the chief minister and pastor within the Defence community.

Before entering the ministry in the 1990s, Bishop Lambert was a Lieutenant in the Royal Australian Corps of Transport. He also knows the value of armed forces ministry, having been converted and discipled by his local padre, Chaplain Royce Thompson.

After theological college, a series of parish ministries led to his appointment as Archdeacon for the South Coast and Monaro in 2009, and then as an Assistant Bishop in Canberra-Goulburn in 2012.

Bishop Lambert's commissioning ceremony was attended by the Vice Chief of the Defence Force, Air Marshal Mark Binskin, the chiefs of the Navy, Army and Air Force and

members of the Religious Advisory Committee to the Services, as well as representatives of the Defence community from many religious denominations.

During his sermon, the bishop spoke of his conversion at a leadership course in 1988. "I discovered the answer to the questions 'Who am I? And whose am I?'" he said. He added that these were "the two most important questions for each us, whether we be bishops, admirals, politicians, lay folk, ambassadors, chaplains – whomever – the answer to these two questions will shape our character and our confidence in life, in work and in ministry, and will determine our destiny.

"Each of us here is so important to God that his sent his Son to die for us – to put us right again with the God who lovingly created us," Bishop Lambert said.

The bishop takes up his role immediately. "I look forward to my new ministry in support of those that serve their country so selflessly," he said.



Dr Karin Sowada (left) and the Rev Mrs Rhoda Wabukala.

## Aussies help with GAFCON

**SEVERAL SYDNEY DELEGATES** ARE among the international team helping Kenya's local committee organise the second Global Anglican Future Conference (GAFCON) in Nairobi later this year.

The massive undertaking will see more than 1000 delegates converge on the Kenyan capital between October 21 and 26. They will gather in the new function centre at All Saints' Cathedral – a venue that the GAFCON chairman, the Primate of Kenya, Archbishop Eliud Wabukala, calls "an act of providence".

The archbishop told SC "We are very delighted that by God's own providence Christians in the cathedral put up these wonderful facilities, including a modern conference hall that can take up to almost 3000 people. We did not know when we started putting up this that an international conference of this magnitude would be here. So it is, for us, a gift from God and an opportunity to use it properly for God."

Former Archbishop of Sydney Dr Peter Jensen is the general secretary of GAFCON and the Global Fellowship of Confessing Anglicans, which was established at the first conference in 2008. Cherrybrook rector the Rev Gav Poole, along with the CEO of Anglican Deaconess Ministries Dr Karin Sowada and Anglican Media's CEO Russell Powell, have already visited Nairobi to help

in planning and to meet with the local organising committee. Dr Sowada also spoke with the Rev Mrs Rhoda Wabukala about the conference workshops and ways to encourage women's ministry.

Up to 80 delegates from Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific will travel to the conference. Dr Jensen says he is looking forward with great expectation to seeing God at work in Nairobi.

"God is establishing new churches, creating new believers and transforming lives," he said. "Our hope for the future is in him. Our aim is to move forward confidently, to plan and experience in fellowship a future for Anglicans in which his word is honoured and our witness is clear."

Archbishop Wabukala says that as well as having good facilities in Nairobi, Kenya is a symbolic place to meet.

"We are happy that they [will] come here because, globally, the Christian faith is moving towards the Global South and Africa is the place to go. And for East Africa, the East African revival which started around 1935 in Rwanda covered the whole of East Africa and it has contributed significantly in growing leaders, strengthening Christian faith in all areas of life. So for people to come to Nairobi is very important and for us it is a statement of the growth of Christianity in this region."



# Year 13's Fiji legacy

Zaccy (centre) with Daniel Tomalaris, Brendan Fallon and two friends from the village. PHOTO: Brendan Fallon

SIX YEARS OF VISITS BY YEAR 13 mission teams are leaving their mark on Fiji. The trip is a centrepiece of the one-year Youthworks program and Year 13 director Andrew Nixon says this year, with a record number of students, they were able to conduct Leaders In Training days in the capital Suva as well as Lautoka

and Sigatoka, plus Dreketi on the island of Vanua Levu.

"The Vanua Levu visit was very significant," Mr Nixon says, "because few Westerners visit and churches there get little help." The rector of Richmond, the Rev Wayne Tildsley, had previously taken a mission team to the local church, and the Year 13

visit built on relationships there.

Training days were preceded by a youth night to bring local churches together for fellowship and an evangelistic message. "In Dreketi the youth night evolved into a combined churches praise night with about 150 locals from five denominations turning out to sing and hear the

Bible taught," Mr Nixon says.

"The training was demanding, involving seminars on how to read and understand the Bible... the heavy lifting was done by Year 13 students in small groups as the Fijians wrestled with Exodus 12. Some delegates were excited to learn the Old Testament is actually related to the New Testament and not a separate book!"

Local church missions were also conducted on a wide scale with volunteer leaders from Manly, Richmond, Carlingbah and Lismore as well as previous Year 13 graduates.

One significant local church mission is in the village of Naimalavau. "Our key contact, Brother Lai, is full of thanks and praise to God for the increasing impact over the past six years," Mr Nixon says. The impact is personified in Zaccy (pictured), who was 12 when the first team came. He joined in the games, learned about Jesus, and now takes part in Leaders in Training to help Brother Lai teach the next generation of youth.

"Every year's visit has been a highlight and has helped him grow in his understanding," Mr Nixon says.

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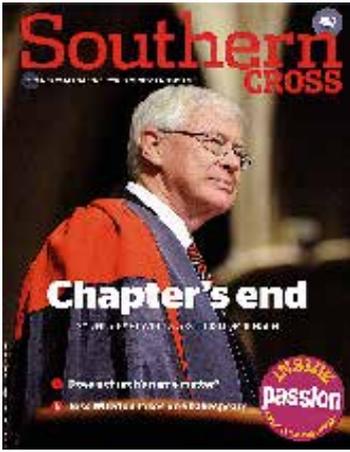
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**There is also an unprecedented wave of Asylum seekers in Egypt that are being cared for by Refuge Egypt (the Anglican Diocese of Cairo). The Arab Spring is turning into an uncertain winter. Thousands of refugees fleeing wars and conflict are flooding in from Syria and Sudan.**

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**Legacy**

Archbishop Dr Peter Jensen's most enduring legacy for the Diocese of Sydney is the gradual opening up and encouragement of the many churches in Sydney for cross-cultural ministry. It has forever transformed the churches in Sydney into a multinational, living and growing, evangelical and Reformed ministry for the third millennium and beyond for the Lord's glory.

I give praise to God and to you, Dr Jensen, for your dedication to cross-cultural ministry. Blessings

to you and your family in the Lord our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

**Paul Chang**  
Principal, PMC College  
Rockdale

**Refugee reminder**

Thank you to Dr Michael Jensen for organising a service of commemoration at St Barnabas', Broadway for the asylum seekers lost at sea, and for his thought-provoking, challenging and compassionate article "The Dead at Sea" (SC, July). It was a timely reminder of the respect we should have for all human beings who are made in the image of God. It particularly highlighted the fact that these people, although unknown to us, ungathered, rootless and homeless, are "known unto God".

For me it was a great motivation to pray for these unknown people who struggle so hard to come to our shores, for those who rescue them and those who make decisions about their lives when they arrive here. They are not just "more refugees" but men and

women in need of salvation by the one Saviour. May they call out to him in the midst of their distress.

**Janet Adeney**  
Macmasters Beach

**On suffering**

I have read a feature article in June SC by Dr Megan Best titled "On the elimination of suffering", where Dr Best decries the situation of a woman – whom she describes simply as "physically disabled" – wanting assistance to die.

The woman mentioned in the article, Loredana, has suffered from multiple sclerosis for 37 years. Until five years ago she was an English teacher, the last few years of which she taught from her wheelchair.

Loredana's body is now succumbing to the disease. She can no longer make the simplest of moves – needs assistance to eat, to bathe, to toilet or to move an inch. She still has sensation in her body but cannot relieve the pain caused by lack of movement. The MS is now eating away at the nerve endings of her eyes

and attacking her voice box. This understandably terrifies her. A healthy, sharp mind and soul trapped in a body that will never again make the simplest of moves and is slowly, excruciatingly, shutting down.

What right has Dr Best to impose her views on Loredana? If I were in Loredana's position I would be asking for help to die too, at a time of my choosing, and not be at the mercy of some well-meaning doctor prolonging my torture! I believe many Anglicans would feel the same (Anglicans comprise the greatest proportion of our group membership – that group being Christians Supporting Choice for Voluntary Euthanasia).

I ask Dr Best, how will "the warmth of human touch" help Loredana?

**Ian Wood**  
Mittagong

**Errata:** July SC p20. Archbishop Jensen is with members of the Brotherhood Christian Motorcycle Club, not the Ambassadors.

“...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  
(2001 - 2013)

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MOVES



**THE Rev Andrew Rees** is returning to Australia after more than six years in the north of England as associate vicar at Christ Church, Fulwood in the city of Sheffield. He will become rector of St Andrew's, Wahroonga at the end of October. "Being in Fulwood has given me the opportunity to work in a large

staff team and learn a great deal from them and the church over here, and we've loved it," he says. "It's a wonderful church family and there have been lots of gospel opportunities over the past six and a half years."

A two-month sabbatical in the first half of 2013 saw Mr Rees and his wife Liz back in Sydney, where they prayed and reflected on what God wanted from them next in ministry. At the end of that time, he says, they had concluded that while they could continue serving very happily in Fulwood, it was "clear that we had to be open to me taking on a senior minister role". So, after his return to the UK, Mr Rees contacted regional bishops

back in Sydney and before long he received an inquiry from one of the nominators at Wahroonga.

"The impression I got, both over the phone and on Skype initially, was here was a church that had been well taught," Mr Rees says. "They were very clear on the gospel, very committed to the church family and very servant-hearted. So right off the bat I thought here is a group of people who have been trained, are ready to serve – and are already serving – and are excited about their future as church."

"I grew up in St Ives so I know the area reasonably well. It seems to have huge potential – there are lots of schools here, lots of people

commuting into the city for work, lots of long-term residents but also apartments on the highway so lots of newcomers as well. So there are plenty of opportunities."

IN BRIEF

The senior assistant minister of Fairfield with Bossley Park, the **Rev Huynh**, has left for Vietnam to be an English teacher in a developing country. If you would like to be in regular contact with Mr Huynh you can email Nathan Dean [atnathanita@gmail.com](mailto:atnathanita@gmail.com) for more information.

VALE



**THE Rev Canon Allan Whitham** died on June 24.

Born on February 17, 1925 in Bankstown, Canon Whitham joined the Air Training Corps in the early 1940s with the intention of becoming a World War II fighter pilot. In 1943 he trained with the RAAF in Tocumwal, and then was sent to the Richmond RAAF base to do a crash course in radar. In early 1944, after travelling to PNG with the 152<sup>nd</sup> Radar Unit, Canon Whitham became one of the two operators in the world of the new specialised radar equipment.

After the war, and his marriage to Coral in 1946, Canon Whitham worked as a teletype operator in Newcastle for more than a decade before being appointed deputy chairman of Church of England Homes in Carlingford in 1957. He began theological training at Moore College in his own time in 1963 and was ordained two years later.

Canon Whitham was curate at Cronulla and then in 1967 established the Housing

Commission church at St James', Whalan. He was resident minister for five years and placed in charge of the then provisional parish of Whalan and Mt Druitt between 1972 and 1980, when he became rector of the new parish. During his time at the parish he was awarded the Queen's Silver Jubilee medal for services to the church and the community.

From 1982-1990 Canon Whitham was general secretary of the Anglican Home Mission Society (now Anglicare). He was a Canon of St Andrew's Cathedral from 1984-1990 and was also the senior Anglican police chaplain in NSW during the same period.

Canon Whitham was appointed a Member of the Order of Australia in 1986 for "services to religion and social welfare". He retired in 1991 and was made a Canon Emeritus of the Cathedral in 1998. His son Christopher says of his father that "he was only 5 foot 8 in height but in my opinion he was 100 feet tall. His love for the Lord was profound in all things he

did – in all he did he put the Lord Jesus first. He showed everybody the Lord's love and looked at their needs in the way Jesus would have."

**DEACONESS Freda Tattersall** died in November 2012 after a number of years with dementia.

She was set apart as a deaconess in May 1953 specifically "for the work of the Chesalon Nursing Homes". The Anglican Deaconess Ministries website records that before the opening of the first Chesalon home in Summer Hill in 1952, Deaconess Tattersall "had been involved in caring for the aged and infirm in their own homes. She was a part of the group who determined that residential accommodation was essential".

Parishes and provisional parishes, vacant or becoming vacant, as at July 29, 2013:

- Bondi
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- Nowra
- Paddington
- Penrith
- South Hurstville

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# Our 12th Archbishop

A new chapter: Synod well-wishers congratulate Archbishop-elect Glenn Davies and his wife Dianne.

It was unexpected, it was extraordinary and it was God-honouring. JUDY ADAMSON recounts the events that led to the election of Bishop Glenn Davies as Archbishop of Sydney.

IT WAS AN ELECTION WITHOUT PRECEDENT IN SO MANY ways. The smallest number of candidates ever. The highest number of nominations. A busy and exhaustive social media and direct mail campaign. And finally, a result reached in a way that no-one could have anticipated as the Bishop of North Sydney, the Rt Rev Glenn Davies, was resoundingly endorsed as the 12<sup>th</sup> Archbishop of Sydney. Bishop Davies was not in the chamber when the announcement was made, but came in soon after with his wife Dianne to a standing ovation. He thanked members for the support and said he was "very humbled" by their decision – describing himself as a "human, frail person, sinful and trusting in God's grace".

"It's a great challenge for me," he added. "I'm very aware of the responsibility, the honour and the privilege."

Events on the night of the election unfolded in a most unexpected way. After one evening of discussion and deliberation on August 5, it was announced that both Bishop Davies and the rector of Naremburn-Cammeray, the Rev Canon Rick Smith, had been voted through to the next round – which meant each had a majority of votes from either the clergy or the lay members of Synod. But when Synod members arrived for the second day of proceedings they were informed by the

## Bishops and archbishops of Sydney: a history



**William Grant Broughton**  
(1788-1853)  
appointed 1836



**Frederic Barker**  
(1808-1882)  
appointed 1854



**Alfred Barry\***  
(1826-1910)  
elected 1884



**William Saumarez Smith\*^**  
(1836-1909)  
elected 1890



**John Charles Wright**  
(1861-1933)  
elected 1909



**Howard West Kilvinton Mowll**  
(1890-1958)  
elected 1933



**Hugh Rowlands Gough**  
(1905-1997)  
elected 1958



**Marcus Lawrence Loane\*\***  
(1911-2009)  
elected 1966

\* Elected by the Sydney Synod but approval required from other Australian bishops

^The first to receive the title Archbishop, in 1897

\*\* First Australian-born Archbishop of Sydney

Administrator of the Diocese, the Rt Rev Robert Forsyth, that a counting error meant only Bishop Davies' name had actually gone forward the night before.

The hundreds of men and women assembled were stunned. This was potentially very awkward and everyone felt it keenly. How should we proceed?

But Bishop Forsyth had more to say, informing members that once the change in result had become known earlier in the day, Canon Smith and his foremost nominator – the principal of Moore College, the Rev Dr Mark Thompson – had come to him with a suggestion: that they be the ones to move Bishop Davies' name progress to the final list, from which he could be voted in as the new Archbishop of Sydney.

"I was moved almost to tears by the proposal," Bishop Forsyth said, and when Dr Thompson moved the motion a few minutes later, members stood as one to applaud it.

Canon Smith rose to second the move, offering his "very genuine and sincere congratulations" to Bishop Davies on his pending election. He reminded members that Bishop Davies and his wife would need "our prayer, our patience, our support, our love and our affirmation", adding that "we now need to pray that he will be able to serve and shepherd, to love and listen to this wonderful Diocese".

The vote required by ordinance saw Bishop Davies formally move to the final list, from which Bishop Forsyth then asked members by a show of hands if they wished to elect Bishop Davies as Archbishop. This they did, without dissent in either house, and more applause erupted as Bishop Forsyth declared Bishop Davies elected as Archbishop of Sydney.

Archbishop-elect Davies has been Bishop of the North Sydney region for more than a decade. Before that he spent six years as rector of the southern Sydney parish of Miranda, and another 12 years as a lecturer at Moore College. The Archbishop-elect, at 62, is also the oldest man to be chosen for the role, pipping a previous archbishop, Harry Goodhew, by a few months. He will lead the Diocese until 2018, unless his tenure is extended by the Synod to 2020, when he turns 70.

Throughout the lead-up to the election both candidates had been united in their desire for godly behaviour – praying for each other, each other's wife, and calling for "edifying discourse" in speeches, in handouts to Synod members and on social media as people began to discuss what gifts each might bring to the role of archbishop.

After his election, Archbishop-elect Davies paid tribute to Dr Thompson and Canon Smith, saying it was "no easy thing" to be nominated as archbishop with all the scrutiny that came along with it.

He added that he and Canon Smith had been friends for years and, through the election process, "by God's grace and mercy and your prayers, our friendship has been strengthened".

In his presidential address at the first Synod session Bishop Forsyth had reminded the group that they had gathered "for one of the most important tasks a diocesan synod can perform – the election of the bishop of that Diocese, in our case, of the Archbishop of Sydney and Metropolitan of NSW".

He reminded members of the many issues and responsibilities the incoming archbishop would face, and the type of man they should seek to elect. His list of qualities included Christian maturity and



Moving: Rick Smith encourages Synod members to vote for Glenn Davies.

character, strength in leadership, clarity of vision and a "depth of biblical, theological and historical knowledge of the Christian faith" – as well as being someone humble, hospitable, worthy of respect and a good listener who could "bear the responsibility of making lonely decisions that sometimes carry momentous weight and consequences".

"I know this is a quite a list," Bishop Forsyth added, "but the office does require a man like this."

On the night of the election the Bishop of Singapore, the Rt Rev Rennis Ponniah, gave the Bible study, saying it was a privilege to be present on what he described as "a significant and moving night" for the Diocese of Sydney.

"We trust in God," he added. "So, rest in God's faithfulness and go forward to contend for the gospel."

The new archbishop will be inaugurated on August 23.

SC

FEATURES

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Bradley **Robinson**  
(1922- )  
elected 1982



Richard Henry  
(Harry) **Goodhew**  
(1931- )  
elected 1993



Peter Frederick  
**Jensen**  
(1943- )  
elected 2001



Glenn Naunton  
**Davies**  
(1950- )  
elected 2013

# The Word

Every Christian feels the tension between the pressures of life in the world and the words of Scripture. **BILL SALIER** examines John's Gospel to consider how we should respond.

**O**NE CHRISTIAN SINGS, "This world is not my home"; another sings, "This is my Father's world". The relationship

between Christians and their world has been described as the enduring problem. You may feel that. How should we relate to the world? Should we hate it or love it? Should we seek to be pure from the stain of the world; should we be seeking to be relevant to our world; should we be defensive against it? Or should we be all three at once? Or perhaps we should react differently at different times and in different circumstances? Or perhaps there are other alternatives?

# and the World

And what is the world we are talking about anyway? Is it the physical world, is it people generally, or bad people only? What do the Scriptures say about this apparently complex subject?

I remember first seeing the movie *Star Wars* back in the day. The cinema was packed and the only seats left were in the very front row. As the movie began the back story unfurled across the screen beginning with those memorable words, 'A long time ago in a galaxy far, far away'. With those words a context was given, a stage was set and a legend born. The impact of that opening was accentuated by our position in the cinema, so close to the front that we had to swivel our heads like we were at a tennis match in order to read these words as they appeared on the giant screen before us. The prologue to *Star Wars* was an essential piece of narrative, setting a context for the story to follow.

“ **This Word is identical to and yet distinct from God... This Word is brimful of promise.** ”

'In the beginning was the Word.' We are no doubt familiar with the opening words to John's Gospel, the prologue as it is called. These words perform a similar function to the *Star Wars* text but are even more thrilling.

The prologue (John 1:1-18) is a wonderful piece of writing that introduces the fourth gospel as a kind of overture. It gives an overview of its plot and themes, provides snatches of tunes to come in the narrative of the gospel and generally hints at the various moods of what is to follow. By the end of the prologue the reader's appetite is whetted for what is to follow.

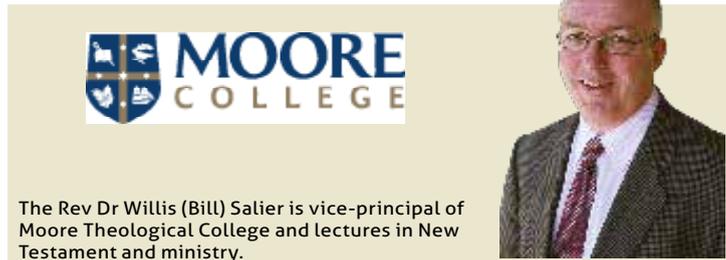
These opening 18 verses place John's biography of Jesus into the widest possible context.

The identity of Jesus is placed in the widest possible context. Jesus is introduced (eventually – we have to wait until verse 17 to actually read his name) in the context of his divine identity through the title "Word" (John 1:1-5). The Word is identical to and yet distinct from God, we are told. To this is added the further descriptors 'life' and 'light'. This Word is brimful of promise. We are also told that all things came into being through the Word, all things made without exception, including the world. Finally we are told that the light shines in the darkness.

The story of Jesus is placed in the widest possible context. We are told that the light shines in the darkness and the darkness has not overcome it. A conflict is hinted at – not necessarily an eternal conflict but a conflict nonetheless, from close to the beginning of creation.

As the prologue progresses the focus narrows to a more specific story. We are told of John, a witness to the light that is coming into the world. We are then told that the light, the Word, was in the world but not recognised; that he came to his own place but was not received by his own people (John 1:9-11).

The general conflict between light and darkness is localised to a story of the Word interacting with the world. In verse 10 of the prologue we are told that the world did not recognise him. The world is personified here but we have already been prepared for this by the mention of men in verse 4: it seems that the world being referred to here is the world of humankind. We are told that the world did not know him. Does this



The Rev Dr Willis (Bill) Salier is vice-principal of Moore Theological College and lectures in New Testament and ministry.

mean it couldn't know him or wouldn't know him, or both?

Verse 11 parallels verse 10 and localises things even further. The Word comes to his own place and his own people do not receive him. This could be a general reference to the created world as the proper homeland of the Word; the place where, as creator, the Word ought to be known and received but is instead unknown and not received. Or, in the light of the story that unfolds in the gospel that follows it could be referring to Jesus coming to his own homeland, to his own people and not being recognised or received. Perhaps the ambiguity allows us to read both stories at once.

This story looks like a tragedy unfolding: the Word, full of life and light, coming to the world, to his own place and not being recognised or received. But as the passage goes on we realise that this will have a happy, not tragic ending; that all will end well as some receive the Word and become children of God, by the miracle of God's power and grace (John 1:12-13).

John then reflects on this story in the second half of the prologue (John 1:14-18) and explains that this story has been talking about the incarnation of Jesus and that Jesus has come, full of grace and truth, to reveal the Father so that anyone can become a child of God, enlightened, knowing God and therefore and full of life.

In these opening verses we are given two stories to ponder. The first

FEATURES

is the story of the Word and the relationship of the Word to God. This frames one of the central teachings of John's Gospel: that in Jesus, God has come near – in the flesh, as it were, in the person of his Son. This is a great story.

The second story is the story of the Word and the world; a story that frames and informs the narrative to follow as Jesus comes to the people of Israel and is rejected. It is a story that reaches back into Israel's past as we recall the rejection of the Word of God in the story recorded for us in the pages of the Old Testament. And it is a story that we recognise around us today as the Word, Jesus, is still unknown and rejected. And yet we need to recall that this is not a tragedy; that in Jesus's time, Israel's time and in our time, by God's grace and power, people still are given the right and privilege of being a child of the living God. The world might be in darkness but the light still shines.

In order to relate to our world we need to understand it in the light of God's revelation to us. John has given us a great start. He has reminded us that our world does not have an independent existence. Rather, it has been created through the Word. This world is created and ultimately ruled and ultimately accountable to Jesus. God remains sovereign over this world. It is a world created good.

But it is also a world of people gone wrong. The world according to John is characterised by darkness, ignorance and rejection of the Word. It might be a world gone wrong but it is not a world abandoned by God. Despite its darkness, ignorance and rebellion, God loves the world and sends his Son, the Word, to save it.



**[John] has reminded us that our world does not have an independent existence. Rather, it has been created through the Word.**

In the rest of the gospel John shows us what the world is like, how and why it rebels and how God's children should respond to it.

John tells a grand story of the Word and the world and challenges us to find our own place in that story: are we with the world or with the Word?

This is only the tip of the iceberg of the Bible's teaching on the world; there is so much more to be said but there is plenty of food for thought here. The fourth gospel presents the world as the context for faithful living as the children of God. John shows us God's unique Son, Jesus, living faithfully amid the world he created. Jesus loves the world, comes to the world, lives in the midst of the world, acts to save the world, suffers the opposition of the world. John provides the raw material for us to think about we should live faithfully in the world today. 

*Bill Salier will be talking more about the Bible's teaching on the world and how it is the context for our faithful living as disciples of Jesus in a series of lectures to be held on August 15 at 8pm, and then daily from Monday, August 19 to Friday, August 23 at 9am. All lectures will be held in the Knox Lecture Theatre at 15 King Street, Newtown. See advertisement, page 3.*

# The future of

As society changes and views about Jesus become ever more dismissive or harsh, MARK D THOMPSON outlines how our training college is evolving to prepare students to meet these challenges.

**R**EACHING AUSTRALIA AND THE NATIONS WITH THE GOSPEL of Jesus Christ is the passion that brings men and women to study at Moore College. It also lies at the heart of the college's own vision. Moore College exists to prepare men and women for a lifetime of word ministry, taking the word of life to men and women in a myriad of different situations all around the world. We want to equip those who study here to speak the gospel faithfully, live the gospel genuinely and love people for the sake of the gospel sincerely.

This is certainly an exciting time to be involved in such ministry. The opportunities are still huge. The door for gospel work is by no means locked shut. Nevertheless, new challenges have emerged over the past decade or so that make thorough preparation for the task more important than ever. We can no longer expect a respectful hearing in public or in private. Liberal scepticism has given way to an unveiled hostility in some quarters. Christian "intolerance" is an easy target, something we would all want nothing to do with, but it is all too often manufactured out of thin air.

We shouldn't think for a moment that the challenges that face the fresh-faced graduate of a theological college are all "out there". A pragmatism that refuses to be disciplined by biblical principle is increasingly evident in the churches. Some speak of a "theology-free zone" when it comes to discussing aspects of the work of ministry. Deep convictions about the world's need of redemption, the exclusive claims of Jesus Christ, and the value and priority of expository preaching seem to have been unseated even in some evangelical circles. A rising spirit of accommodation to the world and its preoccupations is evident in contemporary theological writing and even some preaching. Persevering and keeping your head amid all of this is increasingly difficult. Those who give their lives to this work need the best preparation possible.

Moore College has been an instrument in God's hands to prepare men and women for gospel ministry for more than 150 years. We want to continue to serve Jesus Christ in this way for another 150, or more if the Lord has not returned by then. Yet if the college is going to keep doing that, and keep doing that effectively, it needs to keep growing and adapting to the needs of today's churches and today's students while retaining its core commitments.

We are in a time of change at college – a new principal, new faculty replacing those who have recently retired, serious attention to improving our external studies courses and making them more accessible, the establishment and development of our three centres (the Priscilla and Aquila Centre, the Centre for Christian Living and the Centre for Ministry Development), and a redevelopment of the campus beginning with the library building. It is an exciting time to be at Moore.

# Moore



Excited: some of the Moore students of 2013.

What is Moore College going to look like in the future? In many ways, I expect, very much as it does now. Our commitment to the teaching of the Bible, with its focus on the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, will be as strong as ever. We must be directed in our thinking and living by what God has had to say about himself and his purposes in the world. Our commitment to that distinctive blend of learning and community life that has characterised us from the beginning will continue. We are not just passing on information or developing skills but shaping convictions and providing opportunities to live out what we learn in a network of personal relationships. Our faculty will continue to be highly skilled in their fields and yet thoroughly committed to the life and welfare of the churches. Our students are invited to join a fellowship of Christian brothers and sisters who are both pastors and scholars.

Yet our college will and must change. We are becoming more attuned to the multi-ethnic character of the city in which God has placed us. God has brought the nations to Australia and far from cross-cultural ministry being a particular interest of a select group at college, it must now be the concern of us all. We still have some way to go in this area. However, we are being assisted by good friends at CMS, Evangelism and New Churches and elsewhere to think through how we may do this better.

We have given particular attention to promoting and developing the ministry of women in partnership with the ministry of men. This work needs to continue and expand. The crucial contribution of Jane Tooher and the Priscilla and Aquila Centre, and of Tara Stenhouse alongside the 12 women chaplains working at college, has been a wonderful start. Our partnership with the Archdeacon for Women's Ministry, Kara Gilbert, and with Anglican Deaconess Ministries, is vital and will grow closer in the coming years.

We are concerned to resource our graduates for many years after they finish their full-time studies at Moore. Our postgraduate programs (many of them part-time), the annual Moore College Lectures, our annual School of Theology and a range of other conferences have all arisen from that concern. The new Centre for Ministry Development takes this further, working closely with other groups such as Ministry Training and Development, the Ministry Training Scheme, Sydney Cornhill and Effective Ministry (formerly known as Effective Ministry under God). It will target the ongoing development of those engaged in Christian ministry, providing opportunities to acquire particular skills, assistance in analysing and responding to particular challenges, and encouragement to grow in our capacity to serve those God has given us to love.

We must become more effective in engaging our world. Given the pressures we identified at the start of this article, how do we bring the life-giving message of Jesus to bear on contemporary life and

society? How do we continue to speak of the necessity of repentance and faith, and even of the virtues of obedience and sacrificial service, when the atmosphere is not so much indifferent as hostile? A new kind of apologetics seems called for, not so much trying to prove the truth of the gospel by criteria our contemporaries would accept, but giving a faithful and winsome account of the work of God for the world through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Instead of looking for ways to affirm the world, we must be clear and generous in showing the better thing that God has done. Our Centre for Christian Living is a move in this direction, seeking to assist all Christian men and women in Sydney to live as faithful disciples in today's world.

Our college serves the churches of Sydney but it has always had a larger vision than just our own great city. The world is full of people who need to hear of Christ and full of churches who need faithful pastors and teachers to care for Christ's people and encourage them to maturity in him. Moore College is wonderfully placed to play a role on the world stage, sharing the resources God has given us for the benefit of Christian men and women around the globe. Our external studies courses will remain an important part of that, with about 5000 students currently enrolled worldwide. We are working on those courses and the processes of enrolment, assessment and advancement to make them more useful in the decades to come.

Our fellowship with theological colleges around the world is growing. Moore College graduates serve in theological colleges on five continents. The quality of our graduates serving globally, together with the writing ministry of our faculty, has opened doors for further mutual encouragement and the sharing of resources. Our college must build on its global reputation as a centre for faithful Bible teaching and effective ministry training committed to the cause of Christ around the world.

All of this requires the college to grow in other ways as well. Our infrastructure is creaking under the load and we need to attend to some serious redevelopment of our campus. The recently launched Being Moore campaign aims at raising the funds needed to build the facilities which will enable each of these ministries to flourish and grow. It is, of course, only the beginning. We want a much higher percentage of our students to have the opportunity to be resident in one of our campuses at Newtown, Croydon Park or North Parramatta. We need to bring early 20th-century accommodation into the 21<sup>st</sup> century so that community life at college flourishes too.

It is an exciting time to be part of the ministry of Moore College. As a diocese, it is *our* college. Please continue to pray that our heavenly Father, who has so richly blessed us throughout our history, might give us all we need to serve him faithfully for many years to come.

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**TRYING TO GET A COPY OF THIS BOOK:** *Hymns For Today's Church: Music Edition.* Author: Michael Baughen. Second Edition. If anyone out there has this book and is willing to sell it or knows of anywhere I can purchase it, please contact Elizabeth on 0401 819 464. Many thanks.

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**DIARY**

Tuesday, August 13  
Life, the Universe and Nothing: Why is there Something rather than Nothing?  
Creation? The Big Bang? Evolution? Intelligent design or dark energy? What are the origins of life and why? Cosmologist and foundation professor at Arizona State University Dr Lawrence Krauss, and philosopher and research professor at Talbot School of Theology Dr William Lane Craig, will go head to head on the issue and work out why we have something, not nothing. Tickets from \$27 for students. More info at [lifeuniversenothing.org](http://lifeuniversenothing.org).  
LOCATION | Sydney Town Hall | 7pm-9pm

Thursday, August 15 and Monday - Friday, August 19-23  
Annual Moore College Lectures 2013: What in the World?  
Christians have always been challenged to work out what it means to live out their faith in this world. Bill Salier, vice-principal of Moore College, will deliver the lectures on the world in Scripture. For more info: [www.moore.edu.au/amcl](http://www.moore.edu.au/amcl)  
LOCATION | 15 King Street Newtown | 8pm (Thurs); 10am (Mon); 9am (Tues-Fri)

Saturday, August 17  
Better than Dr Google Medical Panel  
A panel featuring a GP, cardiologist, psychologist, palliative care specialist and paediatrician will give their top tips for living well. The night will feature a Q&A session and a light supper will also be provided. RSVP by August 12 at [office@neutralbayanglican.org.au](mailto:office@neutralbayanglican.org.au)  
LOCATION | St Augustine's Anglican Church, cnr Wycombe and Shellcove roads, Neutral Bay | 7pm-9.30pm

Saturday, August 17  
An evening with Dr Grace Warren  
Toongabbie Anglican Church is hosting its Women's Winter Dinner with Dr Warren, a surgeon and missionary, talking about her experiences in researching neuropathies, and helping people in places around the world dealing with diabetes, leprosy and other nerve-affecting conditions. Tickets are \$20 for visitors. For more information contact Katie Hooton through [www.toongabbieanglican.org.au](http://www.toongabbieanglican.org.au)  
LOCATION | Toongabbie Anglican Church, 46 Binalong Rd, Pendle Hill | 6pm-9pm

Sunday, August 18  
Moore College Sunday  
Moore College Sunday is held every year in August to ask churches to get involved in the work of Moore College. It is a day when the college partners with churches to encourage people to be trained and equipped for Christian ministry, to pray for the college and also partner financially. For more information contact [info@moore.edu.au](mailto:info@moore.edu.au)  
LOCATION | Churches across Sydney

Saturday, August 24  
Growing Faith Family Conference  
This one-day event is for adults, kids and teenagers and will leave you encouraged and uplifted as you seek to raise your family for Christ. Registrations are now open, and close August 10. Visit [growingfaith.com.au/conference](http://growingfaith.com.au/conference)  
LOCATION | St Paul's Anglican Church, Castle Hill

Friday - Sunday, August 23-25, Friday - Sunday, August 30-September 1  
Engage conference  
Young Australian workers live in an



**Daniel Todd**  
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1:15 - 1:45pm  
Daniel Todd is the Winner of the St James Recital Prize, Australian Singing Competition.

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oversexualised culture where there is often confusion, false information and temptation. Engage 13 will look at God's intentions for sex, particularly from 1 Corinthians and Song of Songs. Speakers are Justin Moffatt and Matt Fuller. Seminars include singleness, marriage and same-sex attraction. \$145 + accommodation. Register at [kcc.org.au/engage13](http://kcc.org.au/engage13)

LOCATION | KCC Convention Centre, Katoomba

Monday – Friday, August 26-30

### Open Night & Open Week

Want to know God and serve him better? Come along and get a look at Moore College. For more details see [info.moore.edu.au/open-events/](http://info.moore.edu.au/open-events/)

LOCATION | 15 King Street Newtown



Saturday, August 31

### Reaching Subcontinental Sydney conference

The 2011 Census showed that for the first time ever, India was the largest source of permanent migration to Australia, accounting for 15.7 per cent of the immigration total. Come to this ENC conference and be encouraged to deepen and broaden your understanding of ministry to Subcontinentals living in Sydney. Cost is \$30, including dinner. Contact [kamal.weerakoon@gmail.com](mailto:kamal.weerakoon@gmail.com) for program details, and contact [sophie@newchurches.org.au](mailto:sophie@newchurches.org.au) for registration details.

LOCATION | St John's Anglican Cathedral, 195 Church St, Parramatta | 2pm-9pm

### Monday, September 16 Youthworks College Open Day

Come and experience a day in the life of Youthworks College. Take a tour of the campus, have your questions answered by faculty and meet the current students. Runs all day, lunch and dinner provided. For more information, please visit [youthworkscollege.edu.au](http://youthworkscollege.edu.au)

LOCATION | Wanawong Campus, Loftus

### Wednesday, September 11 St Andrew's Cathedral School Open Day

If you're wondering how and where your child should start school, come and find out more about the Cathedral School at this open day. Includes a tour of the Junior School. Contact Roby Pedley on 9286 9552 for more info and to reserve a place on the day.

LOCATION | St Andrew's Cathedral School, St Andrew's House, Sydney Square, near Town Hall | 9am

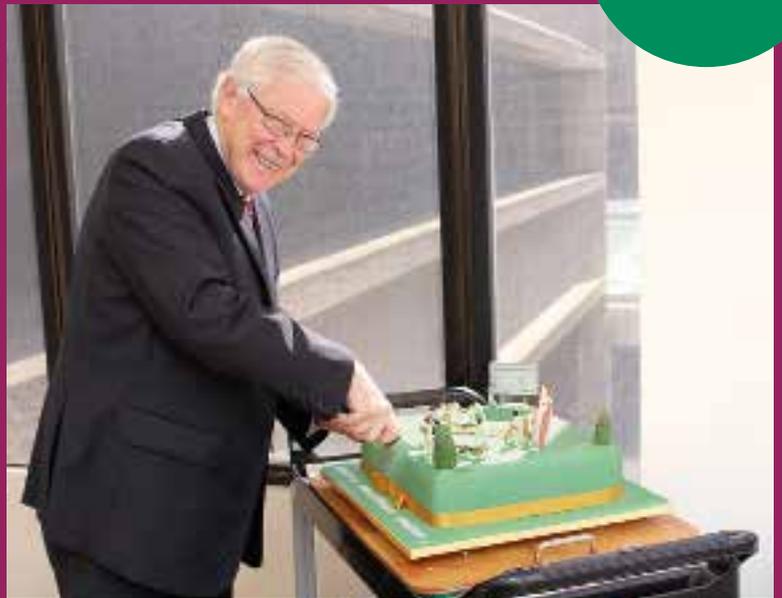
### Saturday, October 19 TWIST Conference

The annual TWIST Music Ministry Conference turns 10 and welcomes much of the EMU Music team from the past few years back together for 2013. Featuring Nicky Chiswell, Greg Cooper, Trevor Hodge, Phillip Percival, Mark Peterson and Rob Smith, the day will include workshops and seminars to help your church music ministry, as well as an evening worship concert. Prices range from \$25 (the concert) to \$70 for the full number of clinics. See [twistconference.com](http://twistconference.com)

LOCATION | Shore School, North Sydney | 10am-9.30pm

For diary events email  
[newspaper@anglicanmedia.com.au](mailto:newspaper@anglicanmedia.com.au)

## PFF'S LAST DAY



"I DON'T know what to say!" was the response from Archbishop Jensen, but no-one believed him. Staff of the Archbishop's office at the Sydney Diocesan Secretariat gathered for morning tea on July 11, the Archbishop's 70th birthday and his last day in office. It was decided that a birthday party was more fun than a

farewell, so a large birthday cake was wheeled out – a miniature cricket pitch with the score: Jensen, 70 not out.

There were speeches from diocesan registrar Dr Philip Selden and the head of SDS Mark Payne – responded to by the Archbishop, who cut the cake as one of his last acts in office.

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Scripture Union

## ENGAGING A COMMUNITY



Badge making and some of the art exhibited outside the church.

### David Pettett

**TWENTY** years ago Katoomba started its Winter Magic Festival, celebrating the winter solstice.

It was a decidedly new age, pagan event, a counter to Christianity. The churches closed their doors. Witches, warlocks, fairies and goblins paraded.

The event has changed somewhat over time and has more of a community focus and inclusion these days. People still dress up and the odd warlock can still be seen. But the pagan symbols have been removed from the promotional material.

Since the Rev Ray Robinson became the senior minister of St Hilda's, Katoomba eight years ago he has made consistent efforts to engage the community. He went to the organising committee of the Winter Magic Festival in his first year. People raised eyebrows. St Hilda's is in the main street. The parade passes directly in front of the church. Ray wanted to be involved. St Hilda's began running events in the building. Music, bush dancing, refreshments, face painting, balloon sculpting. People came in. Show bags were handed out. Each bag had a copy of one of the gospels and other Christian material. Every year now, for eight years, St Hilda's has been doing this. One year they even wrapped the church tower like a present with

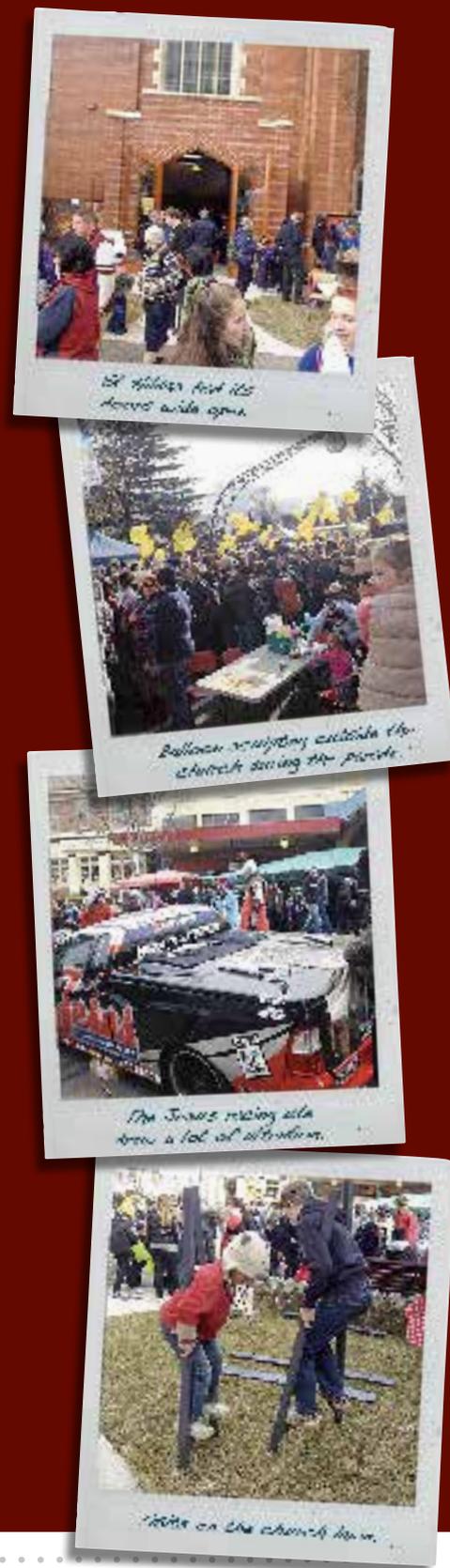
a big red bow and a card that read, "Our gift to the community".

This year a new front entrance, with large glass doors, has opened up the building to the street. Anyone walking by can see straight in to what is happening inside. This brought in more of this year's Winter Magic crowds and the show bags ran out early in the afternoon. Eleven hundred cups of tea and coffee were served. The bush dance in the building that night presented a warm welcome of fun and music to anyone walking past.

The church has engaged with its community. Winter Magic no longer divides Katoomba. St Hilda's has reached out as part of the community. The messages are different – one is pagan, the other Christian. But opening the doors has meant there is now dialogue.

At the end of the bush dance a young man came into the building as Ray was getting ready to go home. He said he really had to find out what this Christianity was all about. Ray sat with him and talked about Jesus.

Here is a church that exists in a hard place, side by side with an overtly pagan, new age community. It has become the Christian voice in the public sphere from which it would have once retreated.



St Hilda's front its doors wide open.

Balloon sculpting outside the church seeing the parade.

The Smurfs raising a lot of attention.

Smurfs on the church lawn.

from page 28

It's not subtle, not by a long way, but this is a children's film after all, so the theme bubbles along amid the run of spells, jokes, animated highjinks and talking animals. There are some moments that littlies might find scary but other than that it's cheery and occasionally silly, with plenty onscreen to keep viewers busy.

As my junior reviewer – aged 10 – noted afterwards, there are some jokes in the film that are clearly intended for parents (a nod to *Star Wars* and *Breakfast at Tiffanys*, the odd bit of suggestive humour, the allergy-plagued birthday party and so on), but she had a good time, happily going along with the Smurfiness of it all.

You can see *The Smurfs 2* in 3D if you want, but like most releases that have leapt on the 3D bandwagon it's completely unnecessary, so don't feel you'll be missing out if you go to a 2D screening. It's not the greatest children's film you'll ever see, but just come with kids (preschoolers to upper primary) keen to have fun, and you probably will.

SC

# Belief in the bearpit

ANDREW CAMERON

## In God They Trust? The Religious Beliefs Of Australia's Prime Ministers 1901-2013

by Roy Williams

**D**ID YOU KNOW THAT KEVIN RUDD reads the New Testament in Greek? Or that William McMahon wrote a paper on how Christian theology undergirds his political philosophy? Or that Julia Gillard isn't exactly an atheist?

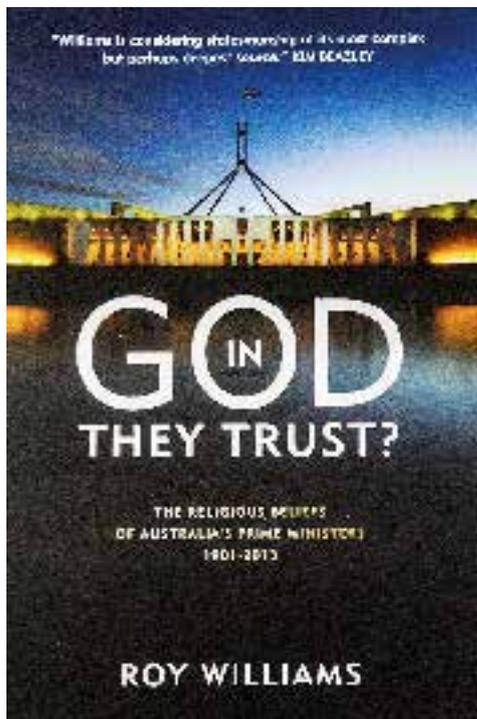
Roy Williams' investigation of the religious beliefs of our PMs is ambitious, audacious and fascinating. I've only covered the PMs of my lifetime, and a few from before. But I cannot put it down.

It surprises me that I enjoy this book so much. It's rich in Australian history, of which I know almost nothing. It unveils Australian politics, which bewilders me. It does have "untidy" moments: arguments that don't quite work; prime ministers who remain hard to fathom (because the evidence is patchy); and theological moves that sometimes make me wince. But Williams' book is so generous-hearted, expansive and well-researched that it succeeds nonetheless.

The author has two goals in every case. First, he revisits the life of each PM through the available evidence, telling their journey of faith (or not). These mini biographies are riveting. Figures most of us know only through caricature and invective come alive as real people. Williams draws upon dozens of sources, all ably referenced.

Second, he tests their time in office according to how "Christian" it was. The results are intriguing. Williams' success here is varied but on the whole I applaud it. To understand this aspect of the book, it helps to know Williams' own political theology, outlined in his *God Actually*:

[T]he "Christian" position on political issues is neither wholly left-wing nor wholly right-wing... [I]n respect of the "Big Four" political issues – war and peace, the just distribution of wealth, human rights, the environment – orthodox Christian teaching supports a



generally "left-wing" policy prescription. Conversely, in respect of a raft of vitally important social phenomena – sexual mores, marriage, drug use, gambling, pornography, sanctity of life questions, to mention just a few – the Christian position is decidedly conservative... [E]ven the apparently clear-cut issues have a Christian twist. For instance, the Bible unquestionably takes the side of the poor over the rich, and posits charity as one of the greatest human virtues. But it also encourages thrift, self-reliance and obedience to (secular) law. Most importantly, while Jesus' sympathies were fiercely egalitarian, he was not a social reformer. His primary emphasis was upon individual salvation.'

Williams applies this thinking to the term of each PM to see how he or she stacks up. I appreciate the Christian audacity of this project. Williams simply knows that leaders are accountable to the King of kings for their treatment of the community, whether or not they worship him. He also expects that their behaviour, both politically and personally, should be "moral", as espoused by Scripture. He doesn't share the gloomy pessimism that expects little of those who don't follow Christ. Rather, Williams shows how the Christian gospel creates ripples that bless society. Even when a PM has only been touched by it in

lightly their youth, the way they care for the community is shaped for the better.

Rudd and Howard gave Williams extensive interviews. Their chapters highlight Williams' care and respect. The book appeared just before Rudd's defeat of Gillard and return to the prime ministership but it remains an invaluable guide to his theological views (prior to his reversal on same-sex marriage). The chapter on Howard is excellent. Williams adroitly summarises what 'made Howard a comforting figure for Christians of like temperament (especially the affluent elderly), but a disappointing and even infuriating one for those with different priorities' (p215). Like me, Williams doesn't agree with Howard on refugees. Yet we gain great insight into Howard's moral, spiritual and practical thinking on the matter. We can no longer demonise him, and are confronted with the vast difficulties of serving the community as leader.

People who expect bright, clear lines about Christianity will find the book hard. At some points Williams seems too optimistic. So although almost nothing suggests that Malcolm Fraser believes, he is still classified as an 'enigmatic Presbyterian'. The use of some "evidence" borders on specious. Williams cites the claim that saying 'a man has been educated at Melbourne Grammar School is the same thing as to say that he is a Christian gentleman' (p173). It adds nothing to our knowledge of Fraser and seems patently absurd, but Williams includes it anyway. He also describes some moral claims as a 'Christian sentiment' (eg p179) in a way that seems tenuous. The use of the Bible creaks occasionally. He compares Bob Hawke's charisma to NT *charismata* (p183). His great respect for Paul Keating is marred by odd biblical allusions (that Keating's Asian internationalism 'make[s] disciples of all nations', p195; or that 'his legacy looms over 21<sup>st</sup> century Australia like a city on a hill', p266).

But I think you should read this book anyway! These quibbles only arise from the scope of Williams' project for, on the whole, his theological instincts are sound. Indeed his application of them to contemporary life is better than I hear from most Christians. The book will expand your horizons about your country, its political history and its relationship to its true Lord. It is beautifully produced – on high-grade paper that's a joy to handle compared to an ebook. Highly recommended. 



# Paris gets Smurfed

Love those hats: Smurfette (centre), celebrates her birthday with new semi-Smurf siblings Vexy (left) and Hackus.

JUDY ADAMSON

## The Smurfs 2 3D

Rated G

MOVIE  
REVIEW

**W**HEN A FILM IS successful these days, a sequel is as inevitable as the sun rising over spotted toadstools in the forest. I don't know what Belgian cartoonist Peyo would have made of the (inevitable) Americanisation of his cute little blue creatures, but chances are your kids will be Smurfed before you know it (if, of course, they haven't been already).

The action in *The Smurfs 2* begins a few years after the first film. All is well in the Smurf village because the scheming wizard Gargamel (Hank Azaria) is busy in the human world, wowing all and sundry from New York to Paris with his amazing powers of illusion. Of course, people are unaware that his magic is real, and it isn't just part of the act when Gargamel hurls insults at the Parisian crowds for their stupidity, demanding (and receiving) their adulation and ongoing hero worship.

Another important bit of information, for those who are new to Smurfdom, is that Gargamel doesn't have this power on his own – he is only able to do his magic by using Smurf "essence".

And because he loves his new life and wants,

as all megalomaniacs do, to rule the world, he craves an uninterrupted supply of the essence. So Gargamel creates two semi-Smurfs, Vexy and Hackus, whom he christens the Naughties, to help him with a cunning plan: getting his hands on the secret formula Papa Smurf used long ago to turn Smurfette into a real Smurf.

Confused? A quick bit of history might help. All Smurfs are male, and are brought to their village by a stork during a blue moon. The exception is Smurfette, who was created from clay and brought to life by Gargamel to stir up jealousy and discord among the Smurfs. However Papa Smurf, with his own brand of love-centred magic, transformed Smurfette into a true blue Smurf and she was welcomed into their family and village. She still has nightmares about her past on the night before her birthday, but as the film begins with party plans for Smurfette in full swing, Papa reassures her that it's not who she was that matters, but who she chooses to be.

However, because Smurfette knows the secret formula, Gargamel uses up the last of his essence, sending Vexy to the village to kidnap Smurfette. His hope is that he – as her "true" father – can get the secret out of her and ensure an eternal power supply for himself.

Papa and a few other Smurfs travel to the human world, seeking help from their friends Patrick and Grace (Neil Patrick Harris and Jayma Mays) in New York. Keen to help their little friends get Smurfette back, the Winslows take them to Paris – along with their young son (named Blue) and Patrick's stepdad Victor (played by the delightful Brendan Gleeson).

The central theme in *The Smurfs 2* is one of relationships, our inbuilt need for love and acceptance and the confidence that can be found in the care of a real or adopted family.

Papa Smurf considers himself to be Smurfette's father, but there's no denying the reality of her past – that her "real" father is Gargamel, and that Smurfette now has a sister and brother in Vexy and Hackus. Vexy, like any child, longs for recognition and praise from Gargamel but never receives it as, in his mind, she is something to be used rather than loved.

Among the human characters the relationships are also complicated. Patrick shuns closeness with his stepfather, blaming Victor for a range of unresolved hurts from his childhood and never accepting the love that is offered. Yet Victor is always there, and always willing to help.

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