



November 2012

# Southern CROSS

SYDNEY ARCHDIOCESE

## Counting blessings

Archbishop Jensen shares his “last words”

- › Women, Sydney and the next 50 years
- › The real reason we love Bond

THE  
**SYNOD**  
ISSUE

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In his last Synod as President, Archbishop Peter Jensen shares some "last words" for Sydney Anglicans to ponder.

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# The creed's eternal truths

DR PETER JENSEN

**I** BELIEVE IN GOD THE FATHER ALMIGHTY, maker of heaven and earth...' These are the magnificent first words of the Apostles' Creed as found in our prayer books. They sum up the teaching of the Bible in the face of error and give us a confession of faith that we can all share.

I am surprised when I attend modern services and find the creed so consistently omitted or replaced. It summarises the teaching of the Bible in a memorable form on some of the key issues and gives us the opportunity to confess the faith we hold in public. I think it is well worth preaching on and learning about.

*'I believe...'* There is a moment when we need to say together, "We believe...". But this creed asks as individuals to confess our faith, to take responsibility for what we ourselves believe in a world that so frequently contradicts the teaching of the Bible. I 'believe': that is to say, I commit myself to the statements that follow, they are what I live by and trust in. We are not contrasting faith and reason here. Rather, we are revealing our deepest commitments.

*'in God...'* Without a personal revelation from God human beings embrace many different beliefs, from the non-existence of God to a multiplicity of gods. Typically, humanity has believed in the divine and usually in multiple divinities and/or spirits. This tends to reflect an experience of the world in which it is easy to think there is more than mere matter, that the dead have continued existence and that spiritual forces intersect with our lives at various points. Through Christ and in the Bible, God reveals himself to be real and to be one.

This is a marvellous revelation as it immediately puts to flight the interference of spirits and the idea that the world may be divided up into zones reflecting the powers of multiple gods or spirits. Unfortunately some varieties of the Christian religion have succumbed to such thinking and have reintroduced what tends to be a practical multiplicity of divinities with whom we can or must interact. This is a new bondage, so different from the liberation of knowing that there is one God alone with whom we have to do. We have the privilege of speaking to him directly.

*'the Father Almighty...'* The word 'Almighty' refers to his sovereign power over all things and forces in the universe. One of the elementary lessons of the Christian faith is to trust our God in all the

circumstances of life because he is almighty – all-knowing, all-powerful, everywhere present. But we not only trust his sovereignty.

The word 'Father' is a potent reminder that he is eminently trustworthy, that he has his glory and so our interests at heart. But there is more to it than that. He is our Father, that is true, but he is firstly the Father of the Lord Jesus Christ, his Son. If we can call him Father it is because Christ Jesus is his true and proper and unique Son. It is not, of course, that the Son of God is somehow a lesser or created being, for he and the Father are one. But because of what Christ does for us we may be called the adopted sons and daughters of God. God the Son brings us to God the Father by the power of God the Spirit.

*'maker of heaven and earth...'* It is possible to think that God and the universe are somehow independent of each other, for example that the world is, like God, eternal. But the Bible is very clear. God is responsible for the existence of everything in heaven and earth. He is responsible for its creation; he is responsible for its nature as ordered; he is responsible for its continued existence; he is responsible for its end or purpose. He has declared it all, in its foundations, good, very good, fit for use. In exploring the world, as we are privileged to do, we are exploring his handiwork and his handiwork testifies to his glory and majesty. Our inability to see him in his work is an indication of our sin. So, too, is the way in which we exploit the world for our own purposes, either in idolatry or in greed and carelessness.

I knew a father once who would awaken his children in the morning by saying the creed's words with joy, like a spiritual alarm clock. What a great assurance to be awakened to and sent forth into the world. This is my faith. Now let the world do its worst: God the Father reigns over all!

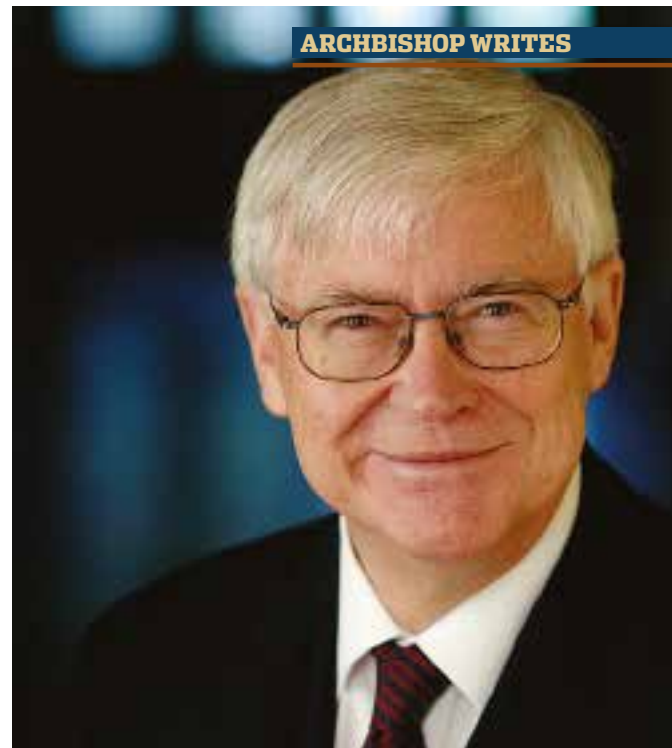
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## Mission Prayer

Almighty God,

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

In the name of our Saviour Jesus Christ,  
Amen.



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*2 Corinthians 8:9*



## MINISTRY FOCUS

# Serious about the subcontinent



Members of the Subcontinental Bible Ministry at Strathfield.

TARA SING

WITH THE LARGEST Sydney migrant group in the past 12 months being people from South Asia, this begs the question: How do we share the gospel with subcontinentals? Evangelism and New Churches is working alongside St John's Cathedral in Parramatta to find an answer and help others reach the Sri Lankans, Nepalis, Indians, Pakistanis and more that are flocking to our city.

"One of the reasons for focusing attention on this group is we have not done very much in the past," explains the director of Evangelism and New Churches, the Rev Bruce Hall. "There is a high proportion of folk from South Asia in Parramatta and St John's is developing a good ministry to them."

Held in early August, the first Subcontinental

Ministry Conference aimed to raise the profile of this ministry. "Churches in the Diocese will need to increasingly take this ministry into their consideration," Mr Hall says. "We want to show who and what is already being done, gain prayer support for existing ministries and encourage and train those who came to do this ministry."

The Rev Tom Harricks, assistant minister at St John's Cathedral, has served the subcontinental community for several years in a ministry that began as a result of the changing demographics of the Parramatta area. He says the ministry comes with several challenges.

"Talking about subcontinental ministry is like talking about 'European ministry'," he says. "When we say we are running an event for 'Indians', folk are more likely going to feel distanced

and disenfranchised than engaged and welcomed. To facilitate subcontinental ministry, one must identify where a particular person is on the spectrum of readiness for integration before running effective groups/events."

As a result, specific programs run for people from the subcontinent were developed by asking what they would attend – and working out how to develop Christian maturity.

"We ran a 'learn to swim' course for men who worked in IT at Woolworths, a Bible study course using *The God Who Saves* material, a 'How to write a resumé' evening, and 'How to cook a Parramatta meal' – an event where we interviewed two Christians (Chinese and Sri Lankan) as they cooked and also heard a gospel story," Mr Harricks says.

The Subcontinental Bible Ministry at St

Andrew's, Strathfield is also reaching out in its community. "Nine per cent of [people in] our area come from the subcontinent," says Clive Buultjens, who heads up the ministry. "They are tightly knit to their cultural group. That makes it hard for them to hear the gospel."

His congregation continues to use personal networks, along with cold evangelism, ESL and refugee work in order to evangelise.

Reflecting on the work, Mr Harricks adds that "fruit is seen in the change that occurs with the folks who come to church [who] then, down the track, have a deep conviction of what God has done for them in Jesus.

"We see this over and over again: people more engaged in studying God's word, in prayer, in reaching their Hindu friends in a way that they have never previously attempted."

## TITLE CHANGE

## CICs to become rectors

THE STANDING Committee has passed an ordinance to have the title of "rector" used across the Diocese for all incumbents, whether they lead a parish, a provisional parish (that is, one without sufficient income to support a minister) or a provisional recognised church.

The Bishop of North Sydney, Glenn Davies, said the main reason for the change from curate-in-charge to rector, "apart from removing the clumsiness of the old title, is that the labours of a minister in

a provisional parish are identical to those of a rector in a parish".

"While a parish may be provisional... the minister himself is not provisional," Bishop Davies added. "His ministry of being a pastor and shepherd to the people of God is identical to that of a rector."

"Standing Committee was therefore persuaded that a uniform title across all parochial units (including recognised churches and provisional recognised churches) was a sensible reform."

## HEAD OF YOUTHWORKS CAMPS

## A Bridge to the Outdoors



MR GREG BRIDGE HAS been announced as the new executive director for Youthworks Outdoors. The ministry, which runs multiple camping and conference centres across NSW, has been building strong momentum throughout 2012 and Mr Bridge (above) is excited to see that continue.

"The Outdoors team has been working really hard, and the results of that are plain to see, with bookings increasing considerably," he said.

Mr Bridge has previously worked in the hospitality industry, was CFO at the Sydney Anglican Schools Corporation and has served on various diocesan boards.

For the past four years Mr Bridge has worked as the CFO of Youthworks with a wide brief across a range of commercial functions.

"I describe myself as an accountant by training, but not personality," he said. "I have a strong affinity for the outdoors, so I'm really excited to join the team and thankful to God for this opportunity."

Youthworks CEO Zac Veron said, "I'm confident that Greg is the right man to lead and equip the Outdoors team for serving the 40,000 people who come to our sites each year."

Mr Bridge will begin his new role as executive director in January next year.



## ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS

# Decades of ministry remembered

ANDREW BUEGER

A NUMBER OF SYDNEY churches will celebrate significant anniversaries this month.

St Paul's, Bankstown will mark its centenary of ministry with a month

been serving as acting rector since 2003. "The community around us has changed but the worship and witness has remained the same."

The anniversary has given the church the chance to think about its future. "The church has got to grow

suburb," he adds. "In recent times different waves of migrants have started to come through the area. It's very exciting to see that the church is beginning to reflect in its membership the demographic changes of the area."

Archbishop Peter Jensen will speak at the anniversary service on November 11.

Another church celebrating its centenary in November is St Swithun's in Pymble, which will host a range of events culminating in outreach services on November 11 – the date 100 years ago when the first service was held.

"God has been extremely generous to us," said St Swithun's assistant minister, the Rev Craig Potter. "It's

a marvellous thing to celebrate the gathered community of the Lord... and give thanks for gospel ministry in the Pymble area."

The time of celebration, which will include an art and flower show and a 'Back to Church Sunday' with an address from former Archbishop Harry Goodhew, has allowed the church to think about how to continue to minister in Pymble.

"We look forward to how the church will move and grow over the next 100 years and how we will engage with the community and present the gospel in an effective way," Mr Potter said.

He said St Swithun's is seeking to work with surrounding churches to reach the local



St Swithun's, Pymble celebrates 100 years of ministry this month.

of events.

"There has been 100 years of worship and witness at St Paul's," says Archdeacon Geoff Huard, who has

by sharing the gospel with the inhabitants of Bankstown," Dr Huard says.

"Bankstown was always a working-class

community. "We seek to engage with the community by offering [a worship style] that other churches may not offer."

Other churches

celebrating significant anniversaries this month include St Paul's, Wahroonga (150 years) and St Matthew's, Windsor (195 years).

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City	Ministry With Seniors	4 Feb, fortnightly	Diploma & Certificate
Monday	Pastoral Care	11 Feb, fortnightly	Diploma, Certificate & Pastoral Care Course
City	Old Testament Overview	5 Feb, fortnightly	Diploma
Tuesday	New Testament	12 Feb, fortnightly	Certificate
City	Holy Spirit, Grace & Hope	6 Feb, fortnightly	Diploma
Wednesday	Practical Pastoral Care	12 Feb, fortnightly	Diploma, Certificate & Pastoral Care Course
City	Archaeology & the Bible	7 Feb, fortnightly	Diploma
Thursday	Early Church History (20-451AD)	14 Feb, fortnightly	Diploma
City	Old Testament	8 Feb, fortnightly	Certificate
Friday	John	15 Feb, fortnightly	Diploma
Diablo	Jesus - Lord & Saviour	12 Feb, monthly	Diploma
Tuesday	Theology for Everyday Life	4 Feb, fortnightly	Diploma
Anna Plains	Hebrews	11 Feb, fortnightly	Diploma
Monday	Understanding People	8 Feb, fortnightly	Diploma
Horton Park			
Friday			

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Diploma

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Jesus & Jewishity  
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Diploma

**Anna Plains Intensive**  
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## LEGISLATION LEFT UNTOUCHED

# Parish relationships splits house

JUDY ADAMSON

AFTER A ROBUST debate on the floor of Synod, members voted narrowly to reject further consideration of the Parish Relationships Amendment Ordinance – a piece of legislation which would, among other things, have reduced from four years to two the period required before a licensing review could be undertaken on a rector in a parish where relationships with members had broken down significantly.

The Synod split into the houses of clergy and laity before voting. The laity agreed to approve the changes in principle, but because the vote

in the house of clergy was not in favour of proceeding, the motion was rejected.

The same amendment ordinance was passed at Synod in 2011 but, because the Archbishop felt there had been insufficient time for debate, he declined to assent to the ordinance and brought it back to this year's Synod – adding that if it should pass this time, he would assent to it.

The mover of the motion, Canon Sandy Grant from Wollongong, said in his speech on the first Tuesday of Synod that the ordinance – first passed more than a decade ago – had never been used because the thresholds to activate it were “impossibly high”. These include the

four-year incumbency of a rector before a licensing review, and the requirement to have 65 per cent of church members at a general meeting vote in favour of such a review.

Canon Grant added that this would not just mean a review of the minister's license. One outcome of a review could be that “certain lay members stand aside from any office for up to three years”.

Bishop Glenn Davies, speaking in favour of the change, said the value of clergy tenure was “to protect the gospel, not the minister”. He related a story told to him by another bishop about a parish difficulty where the minister had said “You can't touch me until four years”.

“If we have ministers in our Diocese who could mouth such words then we need to guard the flock,” Bishop Davies said.

The Dean of Sydney, Phillip Jensen, spoke against the changes, saying it was good that such an ordinance had never been used and, because disputes could be ugly, it was important that every possible safeguard remained in the legislation.

“Legislation is not just about ‘What's happening in my parish’ it's about what's going to happen in years to come,” he said. “When relationships are working properly you won't need this legislation... when they aren't working properly this isn't going to solve them.”

## NEW SERVICES

## Common Prayer approved

SYDNEY SYNOD HAS approved the publication and use of the new liturgical book *Common Prayer: Resources for Gospel-Shaped Gatherings*, in a motion affirming that it also conforms to the doctrine of the Anglican Church of Australia.

The mover of the motion, Bishop Rob Forsyth, said that approving the motion was not just agreeing the work had “passed the test” but “giving Synod's encouragement for the use of this book”.

There was some debate over the second form of the marriage service, which has already created controversy in secular media over the use of word “submit” in vows made by the bride.

The only change agreed to by the Synod related to a request from the Dean,

Bishop Forsyth speaks on *Common Prayer*.

Phillip Jensen, asking the Archbishop's Liturgical Panel to reconsider some of the language in the vows. He noted that, in the book's earlier draft, these had made the duties of husband and wife more distinct, as in the old *Book of Common Prayer*.

Members also agreed to an amendment from Jodie McNeill, the rector of Oak Flats, asking the panel to further develop services of the Lord's Supper “to accommodate the contemporary practice of using more than one cup”.

## GILBERT COMMISSIONED

## New archdeacon for women

THE ANNUAL SYNOD Service has been used to commission the Rev Kara Gilbert as the new archdeacon for women in the Sydney Diocese.

Archbishop Jensen appointed Ms Gilbert to replace Archdeacon Narelle Jarrett, who retires this year. Ms Gilbert has studied at both Moore College and Sydney Missionary and Bible College.

Friends and family members came into the Synod chamber to witness the service and see Ms Gilbert commissioned for her new position.

Dr Jensen revealed it had been difficult to “disengage” Ms Gilbert from parish ministry, which she had conducted at St Thomas', North Sydney and Crossway Anglican in Carlingford.

“I love the people,” Ms Gilbert explained. “One of my great loves is meeting with the women at church and reading the Bible with them... and us doing ministry together. It's a great grief to have left and not have that daily interaction with them over God's word.”

However, she sees her new position as an opportunity to encourage ministry throughout the Diocese.

“I'm excited by the number of women I see serving,” she said. “I have a real passion to see the gospel go out to the women of our city and know that we need lots of women to help do that.”

The commissioning by Dr Jensen included by the laying on of hands by three of Ms Gilbert's supporters – Archdeacon Jarrett; the director of



Archdeacon Gilbert with Dr Jensen.

the Priscilla and Aquila Centre, Jane Tooher; and the dean of women at Moore College, Tara Stenhouse.

Archdeacon Gilbert said she hoped to build on the legacy of Archdeacon Jarrett and others “to think though how we can continue to equip women for the ministry of the gospel, how we can continue to resource ministry by women and among women and how we can equip our lay women to go and serve in the communities where they live.”



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## SYNOD AGREES TO SELL HISTORIC HOME

# Bishopscourt sale approved

RUSSELL POWELL

SYNOD MEMBERS HAVE voted to authorise the sale of the archbishop's Darling Point residence, Bishopscourt.



Debate on a motion to authorise a "sale window" of five years took most of the night

session on Day 2 of Synod and resulted in a ballot, by houses, which overwhelmingly passed the measure.

Introducing the motion, diocesan registrar Dr Philip Selden (left) said that for 30 years reports had consistently recommended selling the building.

Bishopscourt is listed on the register of the National Estate and is one of the most significant properties in Sydney. It was built in the 1850s by businessman Thomas Sutcliffe Mort and has been the official residence of the Archbishop of Sydney since 1911. In 1993, Archbishop Harry Goodhew called for the construction of a new residence and the matter was raised again in 2007 when Archbishop Peter

Jensen asked the diocesan CEO to look into the feasibility of a sale.

Dr Selden pointed to the report of the Archbishop's Strategic Commission which called the building a "lazy asset", saying it produced no income but cost at least \$100,000 a year – sometimes significantly more – to keep in good repair, in addition to other expenses. "Please do not choose sentiment for a property over people and ministry," he said – adding the continued expenses of Bishopscourt made running the office of the Archbishop extremely difficult, with a projected annual shortfall of \$875,000 if the house were not sold.

The movers of the motion wanted a five-year window to allow for a

sale at the best possible time for the market. They declined to put a figure on the value of the property, saying to do so would influence the sale price.

Seconding the motion Raj Gupta, the rector of Toongabbie, said when the issue had come before the Synod in 2010 he had voted against it because of financial governance issues in the Diocese. Now he was convinced there had been "massive progress" in this area, adding that the oversight of the Property Trust, and the fact that Standing Committee must approve any sale price and sign off on the deal, was "another mechanism for protection".

Several speakers rose to speak on the proposed sale. The rector of Naremburn-Cammeray,



Rick Smith, said he would vote "no" because "there are still too many things I am uncomfortable with". While not ruling out a sale some time in the future, Canon Smith said "I don't think a property like this was ever intended to be part of an investment portfolio and don't think the amount spent on upkeep is out of order".

Peter Young from Mosman opposed the sale, calling Bishopscourt "irreplaceable" for ministry, while Alicia Watson from Darling Point spoke for the sale

she had opposed in 2010, saying it was important to find a home that was not "an enormous millstone" around the neck of the next Archbishop and his wife.

Peter Kell, chairman of the Archbishop's Commission that recommended a sale, told Synod that Dr and Mrs Jensen lived in a small flat within the building, adding: "The accommodation we provide for our archbishop falls far short of rectory standard".

Under amendments to the bill, details of any sale will be reported to Synod.

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## CHURCH LEVY

# Money for greenfields sites



ANDREW BUEGER

SYNOD HAS VOTED TO support a landmark ordinance that will see churches pay a levy next year to facilitate

the purchase of land in Sydney 'greenfields' sites.

Debate on the ordinance, which includes the levy on all churches to be calculated at 2.24 per cent of net operating receipts in 2011, ranged from whether it

should be voluntary, how much it should be and the length of time it should be in place.

The ordinance was moved by Peter Kell who, in his opening speech, explained the need to raise funds for future church sites in areas with "enormous" expected population growth.

"The challenge is for us to meet the provision of sites, particularly in the greenfields areas," he said. "In general terms we have almost nothing in these areas where almost 1 million people are going to choose to live in the next 40 years."

The levy will raise about \$2 million, to be used by the Mission Property Committee to purchase land in new suburbs around Sydney. Before debate,

Synod members heard a presentation from the MPC's Geoff Kyngdon explaining the importance of "getting in early" to secure prime land in new areas at a reasonable cost.

Mr Kyngdon used the example of Oran Park Town in the south-west, where the MPC was able to buy land for a church in 2009 very close to the town centre. He said it would be financially impossible to buy the required land now.

In a speech seconding the ordinance, Bishop Peter Hayward said if a decision to buy available land were not taken now, "future generations will wonder why, when we had an opportunity, we did not act... The levy is a practical example of our generosity to them".

## BUDGET DECISIONS

## Commitment to training

AT THE END OF THE first week of Synod, members passed the Synod Appropriations and Allocations Ordinance 2012 which details the funding principles and priorities for the Sydney Diocese over the coming year.

Funding for the two diocesan training organisations, Moore Theological College and Youthworks College, has remained the same as 2012, at \$1,577,000 and \$80,000 respectively.

Synod also reaffirmed its commitment to Anglican Youthworks' other major programs for young people by keeping the funding for SRE and the Year 13 program at the same level as 2012.

Members also passed the Special Religious Education motion which, in light of information in the report "Special

Religious Education in Government Primary Schools – the Challenge over the next Ten Years", asked Standing Committee to 'address the need for sufficient funds for this ministry in its 2014-2015 budget'.

Funding available for the Department of Evangelism and New Churches and indigenous ministry also remained at \$290,000 and \$48,000 respectively.

In addition, Synod agreed to allocate \$20,000 for ministry on Lord Howe Island.

Some areas where diocesan funding was reduced included the secretariat, the parish risk management program, Ministry Training and Development, the Anglican Media Council and money for work outside the Sydney Diocese.



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## TOWARDS 2050

**The mission continues**

THE CHANGING FACE OF the Sydney Diocese, and the desire to adapt the Diocesan Mission to meet these changes, is the impetus behind a "Towards 2050" motion in Synod's second week.

Put forward by Bishop Peter Hayward, the motion sought to gain support from Synod for further work on how to meet the expected "growth in population and ethnic mix in Sydney and the Illawarra over the next 40 years".

Bishop Hayward noted that previous research had made clear that by 2050 there would be another 2.4 million people in the Sydney Diocese, and about 60 per cent of that growth was expected to come from overseas. "Changes will not be of the same order everywhere but there will not be any part

of our region unaffected by what is about to unfold," he said.

He added that there would inevitably be a mix of growing existing churches as well as church planting, but observed that evangelical church planting would need to be "front and centre" as there would need to be "something like 280 culturally specific congregations in our Diocese by 2050".

He added that "this whole world that's coming our way requires a strategic response" in terms of planning, training and leadership.

Synod approved the motion, which included a request that the Standing Committee and Mission Board work to bring to next year's Synod 'the suggested shape of the next phase of the mission of the Diocese'.

## TRIBUTES FLOW

**Archbishop leaves the chair**

THE 2012 SYNOD ENDED on an emotional note as Archbishop Peter Jensen left the chair for the last time as President.

The final hour of Synod was devoted to a motion expressing its admiration for the way in which Dr Jensen had presided over Synod during his term of office as well as thanking God for his faith, leadership and 'wise counsel' in reaching out to people through the Diocesan Mission, and 'his representation of the Christian gospel to the secular world'.

Dr Jensen vacated the President's chair and Synod delegates gave him the first of two standing ovations as he went to the public gallery and walked back to the front row with his wife Christine.

Canon Rick Smith



Fond farewells: the Archbishop and Mrs Jensen listen to speeches from Synod members.

began the speeches by paying tribute to Mrs Jensen, saying: "We would not have the archbishop that we have if he didn't have the wife that he has". Several speeches then spoke of Mrs Jensen's contribution to the life of the Diocese and the Mothers' Union.

Dr and Mrs Jensen enjoyed light-hearted moments – including the presentation of a pair of

pyjamas (a reference to rectors' overnight visits in 2009 known as "PJs at PJs") – and were touched by many tributes from lay and clergy members who praised the Archbishop's work as a pastor.

The rector of Fairfield and Bossley Park, the Rev Peter Lin, spoke of Dr Jensen consoling him in a time of tragedy: "He didn't even ask about the details, he was just

asking about me and how I was. It just amazes me in all that he has to think about... he still cares about people as individuals."

Dr Jensen expressed gratitude to the speakers and the Synod. "My life has been rich in friendship and it is out of that friendship that if anything has happened, then God be thanked – it has happened," he said.



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## MOORE, YOUTHWORKS AND YEAR 13

# Harvest from study and discipling

A PRESENTATION AT Synod from Moore College, Youthworks College and the Youthworks Year 13 program sought to bring members up to date with the work each is doing and provide news of those being trained to spread the gospel throughout Sydney, Australia and the world.

The director of Year 13, the Rev Andrew Nixon, noted that in addition to numbers exploding to 83 this year (more than double the prior best intake figure) those taking part in the discipleship and study program in 2012 were teaching more than 100 Scripture lessons a week: "We are training the next generation of SRE teachers," he said.

Mr Nixon also

interviewed two graduates of the 2009 Year 13 program, who spoke of their initial uncertainty about whether it would work for them but were now warm in their praise for its impact on their Christian life and Bible knowledge.

Graduate Emily Lane said the program of reading through the whole Bible had "set a practice in place that has become ingrained – tripled, quadrupled – because of this experience of being soaked in the word".

John Batten, who is working part-time in high school youth ministry while studying at university, said Year 13 "gave me a passion for serving – I understand what it means to be a servant of Christ".

Speaking about Moore College's work the Rev Dr Mark Thompson said the most exciting element was to "see or hear the impact of our graduates in this city and around the world... time and again we are told of how Moore College has helped prepare them for the opportunities and challenges of ministry in today's world".

Five thousand students from 50 countries are now enrolled in Moore external studies courses – which have been translated into 18 languages. Dr Thompson also spoke of how the past 10 years had been "a time of rapid change" – moving further into online learning and support, electronic assessment and the provision of e-resources

for students. Yet, he said, during this time the focus of the college had always been gospel ministry, and nearly 1100 men and women had graduated in that time trained to pursue the goal of "reaching Sydney and the world for Christ".

The principal of Youthworks College, the Rev Graham Stanton, spoke of the vocational training specific to youth and children's ministry that his college provides, while still teaching the Bible to students.

"We are unique among colleges... while students elect to do various specialised ministry units all the other core units in Bible, theology and history have a focus on ministry with children and young people," he said.

## IN BRIEF

## Archbishop's school responsibility

From 2013 all Anglican schools governed by an ordinance of the Sydney Synod will be required to include the Archbishop when selecting a new headmaster or headmistress.

Passed without opposition, the motion requires the Diocesan Policy Statement on Education to be amended by including, among others, the following words: 'Prior to the beginning of the selection [of a person as head] the chair of the council or board is to inform the Archbishop of the process and the Archbishop, or a regional bishop nominated by him, is to be invited to be a part of the interview process'.

## Future Diocesan Mission

Synod members have voted on a motion giving thanks to God for the past decade of Diocesan Mission.

"There has been significant change in the life of our Diocese since 2002," said Bishop Peter Hayward, who introduced the motion. "We have grown and changed for the better."

The Synod also passed a motion asking the Standing Committee, in consultation with churches and diocesan organisations, to bring to Synod in 2014 the suggested shape of the next phase of mission.

In conjunction with those motions Synod also voted to support a united mission campaign, similar to Connect09, to be held around Easter in 2014.

"We want to work as a network of churches to hold out the Lord Jesus to Sydney and Wollongong and make a big splash together," said the Rev Dominic Steele. "When we preach the word, lost people will be saved."

# All I want for Christmas...

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NEW PARISH

## Beach church on its feet

The church community at St Peter's, Shoalhaven Heads.

ANDREW BUEGER

SHOALHAVEN HEADS is a small beachside town about two hours south of Sydney on the road to Nowra.

According to the most recent census, the population is about 3000, with almost half of those being over 55 and

only 5 per cent born in a non-English speaking country.

The local Anglican church, St Peter's, opened just over 50 years ago in an old library building that was transported to the church site on the back of the truck. Throughout its life the church has been supported – first as a part of the parish Berry

and, more recently, Gerringong, before becoming a separate provisional parish. However, at Synod this year members voted unanimously to reclassify Shoalhaven Heads as a parish in its own right, effective January 1, 2013.

"I can think of no better occasion for my first speech in the house," said the delighted minister

of St Peter's, the Rev Anthony Douglas. "Today I hope to tell you of a few small things that [God's] been at work on, building his church in our little corner of the Diocese."

Mr Douglas used his address to share stories of how God has used the local Christians to spread the gospel in a place that is situated by the Seven Mile Beach – "which is actually eight miles long!"

A man called George Oyston ran a Sunday school before there was even a church in the town. He was also instrumental in preparing the former library for use as a church. Unfortunately Mr Oyston died a month after the church opened due to an injury sustained while building the communion rails – which are still in use today.

"[He was] the most significant member of our church to never attend a service there,"

Mr Douglas said.

The history of Shoalhaven Heads hasn't been easy. In 1998 the church building was severely damaged by a deliberately lit fire. "The damage was well contained but it still meant that the church went through its third refit," Mr Douglas joked. "We still have about three metres of the original walls left, so I'm hoping we'll be able to duck heritage issues."

The final story Synod members heard was the story of Brooke, the only teenager at the church.

"She's been prepared to be part of things, even when she's the only one," Mr Douglas said, holding back tears. "On our first night [of youth group], it rained. It wasn't sprinkling; it bucketed down. My planned outdoor games were a washout. My heart sank. And in through the door, having walked across town in the rain, came

Brooke and [her younger sister] Chelsea. Their dad had suggested they just wait for the next week, Brooke told me, but she said to him, 'Dad, we've been waiting four years for this – as if we're going to wait another week!'"

The youth group has grown from six kids to 20, and now has about a third of the local children in Year 5 and 6 attending regularly.

"Shoalhaven Heads is one of the smallest parishes in the Diocese," Mr Douglas said.

"Human wisdom would suggest that a church in this town should struggle to keep itself afloat. And yet God in his goodness has continued to bless us. It is a constant reminder to me that God does not see walking sticks or white hair but an army of saints, equipped with a gospel of unmeasurable power. It is my great privilege to serve the Lord in this town."

NEW PARISH

## Minchinbury throws off its 'Ps'

MINCHINBURY Anglican Church, formerly know as St John's, began its ministry in 1916 in conjunction with St James, Whalan, as the parish of Mount Druitt.

Almost 100 years later, Minchinbury was reclassified as a parish with the united support of the 2012 Synod.

"It's been a seriously long road that our church has travelled to get to this day," said the Rev David Mears (pictured).

The suburb of Minchinbury was established in 1978, and as it grew so did the congregation of the small church. The St John's building was sold in 1987, and a new larger, 'Vision for Growth' building was purchased nearby.

St John's continued to be associated with



St James' Whalan until 2002, when it became the provisional parish of Minchinbury.

"Our parish is an area where there are great opportunities to reach out to people with the good news of Jesus Christ: opportunities within the large and growing migrant community as well as opportunities to love and bring hope to the disadvantaged."

Despite the challenges that face the church and its members there has been significant growth in numbers and offerings.

"One of the most profound ways that God has blessed our church... and one of the things that I have personally found so encouraging, is the wonderful and joyful generosity that is continually on view in our church," Mr Mears said. "We are not from a wealthy area, and many of our members are not able to work or are on disability pensions, yet despite this... we have continually either met or exceeded budgeted offertory."

Mr Mears also said that since 2009 church members had donated \$93,000 over their regular offerings to finance improvements of the building, ministry positions as well as funds for a Christian school in Zambia, which members will visit next year on mission.



## SYNOD MISSIONARY HOUR

# Highs and lows of the global Christian church

ANDREW BUEGER

EACH YEAR SYNOD members hear about how God is working throughout the world during missionary hour. This year speakers with concerns for very different parts of the world spoke about the amazing work of Christians sharing the gospel, as well as the ongoing needs of the worldwide church.

Peter Rodgers, CMS Australia's Federal Secretary, spoke about

people groups but it also includes people who once had the gospel and were at the centre of the Reformation but now need re-evangelising."

CMS is seeking to meet a very particular need in France, that of assisting to provide a new generation of church leaders through a program called New Generations.

"The reason that this project was put in place was to raise a new generation of pastors for France," said CMS missionary, Danny Mullins. "There is a bit of a systemic problem because the current generation of pastors aren't doing a good job at recruiting, training, mentoring and raising up that new generation of pastors."

Mr Rodgers also addressed the need for missionaries in Spain.

"In 2013 we will have five families working in Spain," he said. "Spain is a country that desperately needs to be rescued by the gospel. There are now more evangelical Christians in Nepal than in Spain... In a country of 50 million people there are only 17 [Anglican] congregations and they are all very small."

The Rev Richard Wai



Bishop Dapo Asaju is interviewed by Bishop Peter Tasker.

Moo of Myanmar, who is in Sydney studying at Moore College, spoke about the challenges of sharing the gospel in an underdeveloped country that has been under military rule for the past 60 years.

"If I have to say frankly, our church in Myanmar is stagnant rather than growing, due to the political and economic situation of the country," he said. "We have the desire and passion to spread the gospel and share the love of God but we lack resources to put into action our desire and passion. The fact [that there are] only 64,000 Anglicans in Myanmar in 140 years of history highlights to us that we have a great deal of work to be done. This

is the reason why we need prayers and support from fellow believers in Christ."

The final speaker of missionary hour was Bishop Dapo Asaju who is the Bishop Theologian of the Anglican Church in Nigeria as well as the principal of Crowther Postgraduate Theological College.

He gave Synod members an overview of the current political situation in Nigeria as well as the state of the Anglican Church and theological training.

"We started running into trouble as a church when we began to produce bad pastors," he said. "Many of the theological colleges that have produced pastors [in Nigeria] today are

[Western institutions]. A secularism affects the Western world. We could no longer trust what was being taught in Western theological institutions so the African church fathers met and decided that we had to have our own centres of theological excellence.

"The Anglican church [in Nigeria] has become a training ground for the whole church in Nigeria. The vision of the church fathers was this – to recover the church we have to go back to the theological institutions and update their curriculums to help the church survive... The devil can destroy the foundations of the church [through theological seminaries and] those pastors can destroy the

church. It is our duty to get the churches back, to get people to fill the pews and to raise ministers who will preach the gospel."

Speaking further to *Southern Cross* after missionary hour Bishop Dapo talked of the dangers Nigerian Christians are facing.

"The church in Nigeria is facing a new wave of persecution," he said. "Persecution from militant islamists who have the global agenda that Islam must take over the world.

"We have huge Muslim populations who Christians have lived with for a long time but today they have suddenly changed. Now we find situations where it is becoming very unsafe to worship in churches. People go to churches, gunmen come, shoot at random, kill people, bombs are planted, people are killed. For the very first time churches are having to employ armed guards to screen people coming into church."

Finally, Bishop Dapo spoke about how Sydney Christians can support their Nigerian brothers and sisters.


"Prayer is the most essential way that you can support us," he said.



Bishop Ivan Lee (left) interviews the Rev Richard Wai Moo from Myanmar.


the importance of missionary work in Europe, particularly France and Spain.

"Gospel-poor people, are people groups with little or no opportunity to ever hear the gospel," he said. "That will include unreached



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## CMS IN FIJI

# Ministering in the sun

WHEN MOST OF US think of Fiji we imagine pristine beaches, abundant seafood and friendly people. It's a place Australians love to visit – about 200,000 of us holiday there each year.

It's also the location for new CMS missionaries Tony and Susie Wright and their three children.

Missionaries brought Christianity to Fiji in the mid-19th century when cannibalism and tribal warfare were still prevalent. Today, about half of Fiji's population would call themselves Christian. But despite the zeal of Fijian Christians there are many needs and opportunities for gospel ministry, particularly in student ministry and theological education.

"Those things we take

for granted because we're a wealthy nation, the bread and butter of Christian ministry here in Sydney, is hard to find in many other countries like Fiji," Tony Wright says. "Fiji is a developing nation on our doorstep. Given their financial situation they haven't had the resources to invest in theological training and Bible colleges. The heart for ministry is there but the financial backing isn't."

Tony, who has spent the past five years as an assistant minister at St Alban's, Lindfield, will be working with students at the University of the South Pacific in Suva. It's the premier educational institution in the region and draws students from Fiji, Vanuatu, Tonga and Papua New Guinea.

Through a partnership between CMS and Pacific Students for Christ (an IFES-affiliated ministry) Tony will be involved in evangelism, leading Bible studies and training students in gospel ministry. But the emphasis is very much on shared ministry: Tony is quick to point out that he will be

working alongside Fijian graduates and sharing in their ministry.

"I haven't done student ministry before," he says. "I'll work with Fijians and with what they're doing. There's enthusiasm about us going over to join them and it'll be great to share some of the resources we've benefited from and experienced."

While Tony's role is more defined Susie's ministry is more open-ended and she's excited about the possibilities.

"Our home is just near the university campus so I imagine we'll be having students over all the time," she says. "There are also lots of orphanages in Fiji so there will be opportunities there to

become involved. In many ways this will be like being a parish minister's wife. I think I'll just turn up and see what the needs are."

Tony appreciates CMS's commitment to long-term mission: "It's great to be able to take some time to see how the culture works [and] to learn language," he says.



Fijian university students at the Pacific Students for Christ annual conference in July.

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STUDENT SUPPORT

# Nungalinya opens new crèche

Play time: children have fun with the paints at the Nungalinya

A GRANT FROM Anglican Deaconess Ministries in Sydney has helped establish a much-needed crèche at one of Australia's leading Christian indigenous training colleges – Nungalinya College in Darwin.

The crèche will operate in terms two and three each year and can only cater for 10 children at a time but it has already been a blessing for indigenous students according to the college's principal, Dr Jude Long.

"With the establishment of the crèche it means younger church leaders can now come and study at Nungalinya," she says. "It also means that married couples can

study the Bible together and be equipped to teach others about Jesus in their communities."

Dr Long says one of the college's classes on the Jesus Story included a young couple from a remote Aboriginal community who could not have come together without the crèche. And, she adds, "in God's grace they also brought two young men they had led to Christ with them".

Parents taking advantage of the crèche include those learning literacy in English through the Bible, as well as those studying the Bible in greater depth.

And the feedback from parents is very positive. "Our indigenous students

say the staff at the crèche are very helpful and show great kindness to the children, just as the teachers show kindness to them as students," Dr Long says. "Another mother said that her little girl loved being at the crèche and the youngsters learnt things [they] would not have learned in their own community."

Dr Long is hopeful the crèche will also give opportunities for help with health and parenting issues.

"We hope next year to build on what happened this year by arranging health assessments of children when they arrive and providing support for parents in caring for their children," she says.

"Several of the parents expressed gratitude that health issues were addressed and our student services officer was able to arrange medical appointments for children and helped parents cope with common childhood health problems."

Anglican Deaconess Ministries funded the renovation of a unit at the college so it could act as a crèche. Funding has also been provided for crèche staff for a three-year period. A further donation from the Sydney Mothers' Union paid for equipment and toys.

For more information or prayer points about Nungalinya College see [www.nungalinya.edu.au](http://www.nungalinya.edu.au)

## WORLD BRIEFS

### London

The process to choose a new Archbishop of Canterbury has taken much longer than anticipated with reports last month the selection panel was deadlocked over names to be recommended to the British Prime Minister. The Crown Nominations Commission, made up of 16 lay and clerical members, must put forward two names – one as a recommendation and the other as a fallback. There were no official statements but media reports suggest the frontrunners are the Bishop of Norwich, Graham James and the Bishop of Durham, Justin Welby (pictured). The Church of England will need a new leader by January when Dr Rowan Williams becomes Master of Magdalene College at Cambridge University. An announcement is expected this month.



### Glasgow

The Church of Scotland has acted to evict the congregation of one of its most prominent churches and seize its buildings and finances after St George's, Tron left the Kirk over its approval of clergy in same-sex relationships. The Rev Dr William Philip (pictured), minister of the 500-strong congregation, said: "Our decision to separate from the Church of Scotland is the culmination of careful thought, sincere discussion and prayer for over 12 months." St George's has recently been refurbished at a cost of £3 million, raised mostly by the congregation. Dr Philip said to his congregation that, "We are discovering together what real Christian discipleship means because we are learning to tread where our Lord Jesus Christ trod." Dr Philip, the church treasurer and the session clerk are facing legal action from the Church of Scotland.



### South Carolina

The Diocese of South Carolina has become the latest to withdraw from The Episcopal Church in the USA (TEC). Amid negotiations with TEC leaders to resolve differences over the liberal theological direction of the denomination, Bishop Mark Lawrence (pictured) was informed by the presiding bishop that he had been found guilty of 'abandonment of the communion of the church'. A diocese statement said: "As a result of TEC's attack against our Bishop, the Diocese of South Carolina is disassociated from TEC." South Carolina had long sought to preserve orthodox ministry while remaining a part of the increasingly liberal Episcopal Church.





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# MOVES

## FROM DURAL TO MACQUARIE

After almost 15 years as rector of Dural District the Rev Fergus Semler will become rector of Macquarie parish in January.



"I think it's time for a change – for both me and the parish," he says. "The nominators can bring someone in with fresh eyes and fresh energy and a new focus and I think that'll be great. But there are lots of people here we hold in very warm regard... longstanding friends... and I expect as we get closer to the end of the year that will strike us a bit more sharply. It will be a bit strange not to be around them"

Mr Semler says the future is "entirely up to the grace of God and the goodwill of the congregation but we're very positive. The nominators were very warm – we enjoyed our time with them – and we thought that there were good opportunities for ministry: areas where we're sure we can contribute."

## NEW CHAPLAIN FOR PSU

Mrs Kerrie Newmarch has been appointed to the position of Case Manager, Pastoral Care and Support (also known as chaplain) at the Professional Standards Unit, replacing Jenni Woodhouse.



Mrs Newmarch is a safe ministry trainer for the Diocese who has worked

with Youthworks for the past 19 years in a number of roles, including Dean of Students and most recently in ministry support.

The head of the PSU, Lachlan Bryant, said of Mrs Newmarch that, "We are very excited to welcome her to the team" – adding that Jenni Woodhouse had made a "tremendous contribution" over more than nine years at the PSU and "will be greatly missed".

Mrs Newmarch begins in January.

## DRIES FOR CHRIST CHURCH ST LAURENCE



The Rev Dr Daniel Dries has been announced as the new rector of Christ Church St Laurence.

Dr Dries has been rector of All Saints', Belmont in the Diocese of Newcastle since 2009, and would be known to many in Sydney from his former career as a professional musician, which included appointments as head of music at Shore School, organist and master of choristers at St Alban's, Epping and assistant director of music at St James', King Street.

"I have always been inspired by the beauty of the music and liturgy at Christ Church St Laurence," Dr Dries says. "However, my sense of calling to the church is largely due to its extraordinary 172-year history. Christ Church St Laurence has lived out the Christian faith with unwavering conviction, despite changing and often challenging circumstances. I am deeply humbled to have been called to this unique inner-city ministry and I trust that God will give me the wisdom to lead the parish into the next stage of its development."

Dr Dries will be inducted in January.

# VALE

## The Rev Paul Watkins

died on August 22. Born in 1937, Mr Watkins trained at Moore College but was ordained in Newcastle in 1964 because the rector of Merewether in that Diocese wanted a curate from Moore.



Merewether supported CMS and Mr Watkins helped start a Newcastle CMS fellowship that ran for many years. In the 1960s he also held curacies in Hamilton and Cessnock before becoming rector of Williamstown-Nelson Bay in 1973 and nearby Mayfield in 1980.

Mr Watkins' masters degree from Durham, attained in the early 1970s, was undertaken to improve his skill in preaching and teaching the New Testament in parish but, to his surprise, led to him teaching New Testament part time to theological students at St John's College, Morpeth for 10 years – where his clear evangelical lectures and scholarship were much appreciated. When Mr Watkins became rector of Wanniasa in Canberra-Goulburn in 1985, he then continued lecturing part time at St Mark's, Canberra.

On returning to Sydney in 1990, he spent three years as chaplain to Danebank School before, in the words of friend David Crain, taking on "the highlight of his ministry", the rectorship of Lakemba.

Says Mr Crain: "[It was] a small traditional congregation in the midst of a sea of immigrants, a stone's throw from the main Sydney mosque. One by one a steady flow of people from many nations and faith backgrounds joined the church, especially enough Sudanese to form a Dinka congregation. The parishioners dug very deep to sponsor and support many of these folk."

Mr Watkins' final ministry before retirement in 2002 was four years as chaplain to Concord Hospital – and after his retirement he undertook significant locum ministries in parishes from Bathurst to Tasmania and Sydney.

The Rev Paul Mostyn died suddenly at home on September 25, aged 54.

Born in 1958, Mr Mostyn grew up at first in the



Wollongong area before moving to a Moore College house in Sydney while his father Frank studied at Moore College.

Once he finished school, Mr Mostyn began law studies at the University of Sydney. However, he also felt the call to ministry and left university in order to study at Moore College with his wife Deborah. Mr Mostyn then became the curate at Springwood in 1986, and the assistant minister at Shellharbour in 1988.

His first post as rector was in the parish of Kingsgrove, where he served for seven years from 1989. He then spent the best part of four years as vicar of the parish of Walcha in the diocese of Armidale.

Mr Mostyn returned to Sydney in 2000 as assistant minister of the former parish of Lidcombe-Berala, becoming senior assistant minister in 2002 before taking on the role as curate-in-charge at Berala in 2004. In 2007 he began working as a chaplain at Macquarie Psychiatric Hospital, moving to prison chaplaincy at Lithgow Correctional Centre last year.

Deborah Mostyn said of her husband's time at Lithgow that, "he often found that the men had great insights into their Christian faith that encouraged him in his faith. The Holy Spirit was definitely at work in prison and Paul saw the joy of the Lord on the faces of those who used to be hardened criminals".

Of his sudden departure, she quoted the following poem:

We stand watching until he fades and someone says "He is gone".  
Gone where? The loss of sight is in us not in him, for just at the moment when someone says: "He is gone", there are others who take up the glad shout: "Here he comes!"

## IN BRIEF

The Rev John Holle died on November 22, 2011. More in a future edition.  
The Rev Arthur Horrex died on July 11, 2012. More in a future edition.

## Vacant Parishes

LIST OF PARISHES AND PROVISIONAL PARISHES, VACANT OR BECOMING VACANT, AS AT OCTOBER 25, 2012

- Crossway
- Dural District
- Northmead & Winston Hills
- Darling Point
- Glenquarie
- South Hurstville



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## Letters

### Evangelism is on the agenda

I read with great delight Phillip Jensen's recent plea for unapologetic evangelism (SC, October). I also read with interest his shorter inset piece about principles gleaned from a recent interview with John Chapman. In that piece Phillip suggested that perhaps 'evangelistic camps' had drifted off the corporate Christian agenda.

However, just four pages earlier in the same edition, Drew Buerger drew our attention to the great work being done across the country by various inter-denominational organisations. One of those mentioned was Scripture Union NSW and one of the ministries mentioned was SU camps. So I thought I would write as the chairman of Scripture Union in

NSW to underline for your readers that many of the camps Scripture Union is running are most certainly evangelistic in aim.

They share in common with all SU ministries a great concern to make disciples for Jesus, beginning with the unembarrassed proclamation of the gospel of Christ. Our great hope for our camps is that Christian children and young people will bring their not-yet-Christian friends and that the

message of Christ crucified and risen will turn their lives upside down. Evangelistic camps are well and truly on our agenda.

Nevertheless, I warmly welcome Phillip's encouragement and challenge. There is no doubt that diverting from this aim for our camps is a temptation Scripture Union will continue to face. There is also no doubt that we could do with a lot more evangelistic camps across our state! We are excited about working towards that goal and, for that reason, I also commend Phillip's challenge to others.

**Simon Flinders**

Chairman, Scripture Union NSW

### Black dog complexity

GIVEN that the code of silence and the stigma of mental illness lie like a suffocating weighty cloak at times, I was very encouraged by the September edition of *Southern Cross* and the cover story on depression.

The cover was designed to be ugly and discouraging, Anna (Letters, October), just as mental illness is to those of us who have felt its debilitating squeeze. Not all of us are "Shiny happy people" and a few scratchy black scribbles get nowhere near the complexities, reality and horrors of feeling the heavy paw of the black dog.

It's not just hospital chaplains who see

mental illness and, as you indicate Anna, families like yours and mine have also had to somehow manage as spouses, carers, children, parents etc.

Those black scribbles barely touched the surface.

**Alison Watts**

I am sorry Anna Morrison found the cover of September SC confronting, uninviting and ugly.

Personally I thought it had honest, amusing insight, just as I found the article on depression honest and factual.

Some Christians think all Christians should be shiny, happy people when, in fact, as the cover suggests, some Christians suffer bouts of depression.

The article was not judgmental. It did not offer simplistic solutions. Some people need medication for diabetes. Some people need medication for depression.

Many godly Christians have suffered from depression – clergy, theological college lecturers, some Catholic saints and Martin Luther, to name a few.

While Martin Luther made no attempt to hide his depression, some Christians feel duty bound to do so because they feel guilty that they are letting God down.

**Rewa Bate**

Tea Gardens



Letters should be less than 200 words

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

## Editorial

### Synod – what's the point?

A NUMBER OF TIMES IN THE PAST month, when I told friends or family I was attending the Diocese's annual Synod, they either looked at me with incredulity or incomprehension. The incredulity came from those who couldn't understand why I would voluntarily take part in five afternoons and evenings of Diocese-related "church" meetings (I represent my parish in addition to *Southern Cross*). The incomprehension came from those who either didn't know such meetings took place,

or didn't know what a "Synod" even was.

It's a pretty archaic word, of course. A quick look in the online Oxford Dictionary to check its origins informs me the word "synod" comes from late Middle English, via late Latin from the Greek. So, then, *seriously* archaic. The original word is "sunodos", or "synodos", which translates as "meeting".

So now we know. But for those in the pews who don't understand what happens at Synod, here's a quick précis. Every senior minister of a parish and two lay members selected by that parish go to Synod to listen, debate and vote on how to spend diocesan money, what will become "law" in the Diocese (such as the need for those working with children in our churches to be screened and participate in Safe Ministry Training), what *might* become law in the Diocese and how to respond to matters in the Australian and global Anglican Communion.

Heads of Anglican organisations also take part in Synod, as do a number of others – both lay and clergy – who are asked to come by the Archbishop.

There's always a lot of talking. Sometimes too much talking, it seems, at the end of a long day. Debates can go on for hours as members seek to decide what is the right way forward for the Diocese on a particular issue, and wrestling with financial, legal, spiritual and other complexities is pretty tiring work.

So after five days of meetings for our Synod this year was it worth it? Have we gained anything? And is it a valuable thing in itself?

Despite the mental exhaustion that invariably follows each year's Synod, I have always found the answer to such questions to be "Yes". It isn't always easy understanding what is going on, and naturally not every debate and discussion goes the way you think it should. But apart from the fact that this is an open-door process in which every Anglican parish and organisation in the Diocese takes part, when we decide something we do it together, as a group of men and women under God, for the future of our church in this city and beyond.

Do we always get it right? No, probably not. But that's part of the pattern of life in a fallen world. We seek God's will in what we're doing and then trust that when we muck it up he will graciously show us how to do it his way.

Synod in October next year will be the start of a new era, following the election of a new Archbishop in August. But the God we serve is still the same and the work he wants us to do will continue.

Do pray for your church representatives – for stamina as well as wisdom! – as they seek to serve the Lord, and your best interests, every time Synod meets.

**SC**





Essay of  
the month



## The poverty challenge

Sydney Anglicans at Micah Challenge's Voices for Justice - the group held a prayer meeting before going into Parliament House to lobby MPs.

NADJA LEFFLER

THERE ARE PIVOTAL MOMENTS IN history when Christians unite with the world of politics to have a profound impact. Sometimes amid the whirl of family, work and church, I think how wonderful it would have been to work with Wilberforce to free slaves or march with Martin Luther King for racial freedom.

I recently discovered that raising our voices politically from early next year until 2015 may have more impact than ever before in freeing our fellow men, women and children from abject and dehumanising poverty. As a relatively new Anglican now worshipping at St Andrew's in Roseville, I was wondering if other Anglicans in Sydney were aware of this historic opportunity to rise and act.

The year 2015 is significant because in September 2000 all 189-member states of the United Nations signed on to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) – a set of eight targets that aim to halve world poverty by this deadline. Each target has a clear plan and indicators of success, and there has been significant progress. Although about 19,000 children around the globe still die each day from preventable diseases, that's almost 40 per cent less than in 1990 when the targets were set.

Ordinary Australian Christians have been taking action through the Micah Challenge since 2004: 114,568 have signed the Micah Call petition and hundreds have travelled to Canberra to directly lobby those in power, asking them to keep Australia's millennium promise. Responding to the biblical call to "do justice", Micah Challenge is a global coalition of Christian groups, churches, aid agencies and individuals, including Anglican Aid, the Anglican Board of Mission and Anglican Overseas Aid (AnglicORD).

This year about 40 Anglicans were part

of the 300 volunteers from all over Australia at Micah Challenge's Voices for Justice events in Canberra. It was exciting to hear speeches in support of the more and better-targeted aid from some of Australia's most powerful politicians, including former Prime Minister Kevin Rudd, Federal Education Minister Peter Garrett, independent MP Rob Oakeshott and Liberal Senator Gary Humphries. About 50 politicians showed their commitment to the MDGs by adding a puzzle piece containing their photograph to a giant "2015 – Halve World Poverty" sculpture on the lawn in front of Parliament House. It symbolised that if we work together, we can finish well in the race towards meeting these development goals by the 2015 deadline.

While praising us for our passion, the politicians warned that there were many professional, well-funded campaigns demanding political attention and taxpayers' funds. Senator Humphries said although aid was no longer the first area governments targeted when they needed to give the budget a haircut, even supportive MPs still needed the numbers to be able to take action. "Today there is a huge number of Australians that care and as a nation we are in a position where we can do so much better... but there are so many competing needs out there – we have to raise this issue as an issue of national importance," he said.

Micah volunteers in small groups visited about 200 MPs and senators in their Canberra offices. There was good news to share as well as specific "asks". Since 1990, maternal mortality has been reduced by almost 50 per cent. An extra 110 million children around the world are now in school. One of the MDGs is to halve the proportion of people without access to clean drinking water – this goal has been met early and, globally, 92 per cent of people now have such

access. However, about 2.6 billion people still do not have access to a hygienic toilet, so about half of the hospital beds in developing nations are filled with people suffering from diarrhoea.

Aid is saving and improving the quality of billions of lives, yet Australia still only gives 0.35 per cent of our national income – well short of the 0.7 per cent UN target that has been identified as Australia's fair share. In a new campaign area for Micah Challenge, we also pointed out to MPs what steps could be taken to help ensure international businesses paid some taxes in developing nations. In 2008 alone, \$US120 billion was given out globally in aid but \$US160 billion was lost in only one form of corporate tax evasion.

Yet obviously Christians are not the only ones who care for the disadvantaged – the Global Call to Action Against Poverty (GCAP) is an umbrella group for many people around the world who are lobbying for the MDGs. However, as we were reminded by another Christian political insider, Mr Rudd's former speechwriter Tim Dixon, we can create a better world and give a powerful witness when we speak out together. He didn't quote all 2000 Bible verses reminding us to fight for justice and against poverty, but stressed it was not an optional extra.

"God wants to see his character reflected in how we engage with our deeply interconnected world... doing it with grace and humility provides great opportunities," he said.

In a broken world, God needs us to take action for change to happen. So here's the challenge: are we as Anglicans willing to do our part when Micah's "Finish the Race" campaign contacts our churches early next year?

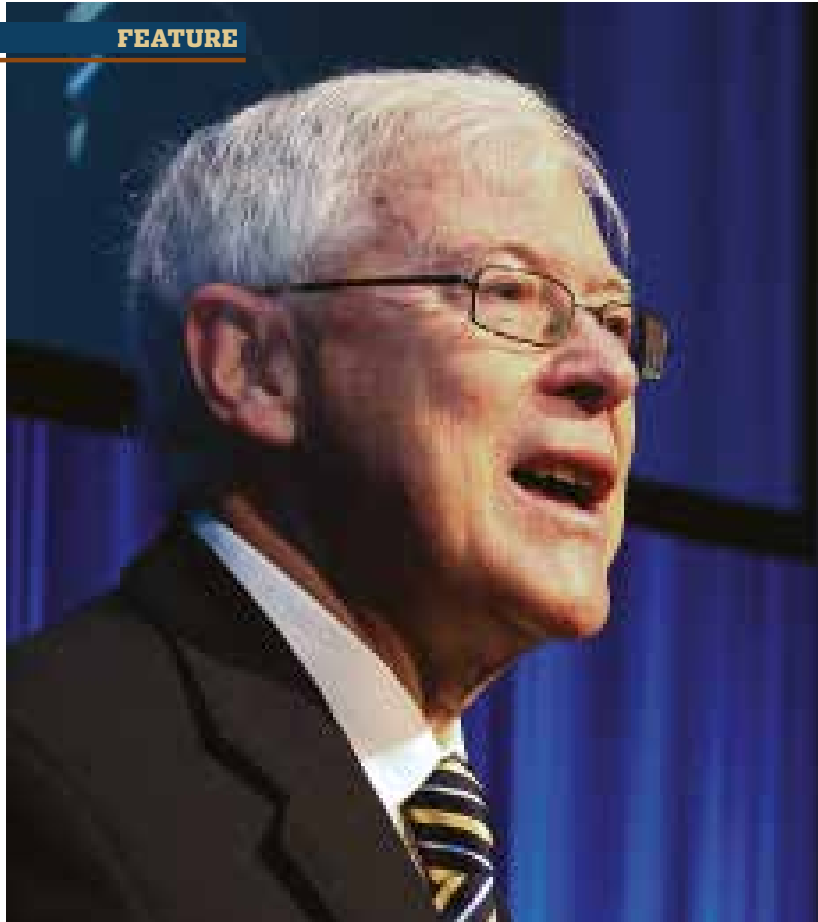
See [finish2015.com.au](http://finish2015.com.au) to get informed and stay in touch with the world poverty challenge.

SC

### READERS' ESSAYS

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

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



# Last words

His time as Archbishop might be coming to an end but God's mission to Sydney and beyond will continue, says Dr PETER JENSEN in his final address as President of the Synod.

This is an edited version of the speech. The full version is on the Internet at <http://bit.ly/synodlastwords>

**A**ND SO WE COME TO MY LAST address to this Synod as its President. The boundary of my time has been reached; my Last Words are to be delivered.

Of course, it would be better if I were dying. Death is such a decisive boundary. It creates the best opportunity for memorable Last Words.

I met death once, or so I thought. A council meeting, a pain, a dizziness, a sudden weakness. Lying on the floor. Serious faces. The room cleared. The ambulance summoned. Barry Newman beside me holding my hand.

I recommend Barry in a crisis. He was the right blend of concern without anxiety, and consolation without terror.

I feebly made a feeble jest. Then I thought, "What if this is the end?" What if Christine says, "What were his last words? Did he say anything to me or about me?" What if Barry answered, "No, all he said was, 'Have you heard the one about the parrot and Clancy of the Overflow?'"

I was composing my words, when the medics pronounced I was not sick enough for hospital. Much later, I gave Christine the epitaph for my grave: "At least I tried". She retorted at once that she will put, "He *said* he tried".

Why remember Last Words?

Some reveal the person's real passion:

Barnum, the money-making circus man said, "How were the receipts tonight...?"

A French expert on grammar said, "I am about to, or am going die. Either expression is used".

Dr Joseph Green's last word on checking his own pulse was, "Stopped".

General John Sedgwick, peering over a parapet, "They could not hit an elephant at this dis..."

From others we expect a testimony to the truth made powerful because of the moment:

Martin Luther, asked did he still hold to the faith that had shaken the world, replied simply "Yes". William Tyndale, burned for translating the Scriptures into English prayed, "Lord, open the King of England's eyes".

Nothing in me could match that, and I am not under sentence of death.

But this *is* a finale. What is so important that I would want to impress it on you?

The business of Synod in 2012 is not the spurious legacy or melancholy emotions of a retiring Archbishop.

The real issue is this: 10 years ago in obedience to the Lord we bound ourselves to our 10-year Diocesan Mission. Under God, what have we done? What have we learned? And most important, what now? What of our future? To this Mission and its future I dedicate these Last Words.

## WHO ARE WE?

To preach the gospel in this world, we must be confident of our identity.

Well, let me tell you what I confess about the Bible and the gospel.

The Bible is the unique word of God. It is inspired by God and has as a result the features of clarity, sufficiency and infallibility or, as I would prefer to say, inerrancy. It is the perfect revelation to us of God's person and purposes. The duty of the Christian pastor is not to preach his own religious thoughts or emotions but the word of God, for it is through the word that Christ rules his church and the conscience of Christians. Thank God that he heard Tyndale's last prayer and opened the eyes of the King of England and gave us the Bible in our own language.

In our day the struggle is over interpretation. Obviously, we must interpret. The difficulty is the suggestion that 'it all depends', that somehow on matters such as sexual ethics it is merely a matter of opinion. We do have to challenge accepted interpretations and explore and change our minds where warranted. But the idea that one interpretation is as good as another and that the Bible both endorses and does not endorse sex outside of marriage is lunatic. Better to say that the Bible is wrong than to pretend to overturn the obvious. In my view, however, what we are often dealing with here is that individualistic philosophy which repudiates authority and wishes to remake biblical religion in line with what the world is saying. This we must continue to resist.

The final content of the Bible is the gospel. The one God created and sustains all things by the power of his word and his Spirit. The



word of God gives the universe both its order and it *telos*, its End or purpose. Humanity, designed to inhabit the earth and rule over it as God's image bearers, overthrew the order and purpose of God in our lust for the knowledge of good and evil and entered a state of spiritual darkness, suffering and death, the symbol and experience of the judgement to come.

Into this darkness comes the promises of God and the work of God in creating a people of promise. And at the chosen moment, impelled by divine love, comes the man of promise, God's Son and his true image-bearer, God come from God, to save the world. His name is Jesus Christ. He shows how the world should be ordered, as he brings health and goodness. He announces the coming of the kingdom of God, the *telos*. He does the great work of saving God's people by suffering death in our place and on our behalf, thus bringing forgiveness and eternal life to those who by his Spirit repent and put their trust in him alone. You are constantly going to be tempted to mute or distort that gospel. It is so confronting, as well as so odd. It says that humanity embraces utterly disabling sin. It calls upon us for love and for relationships and for submission to God and to one another. It calls on us for the very community and family life which the individualist philosophy has discarded.

We must all daily determine to be Bible and gospel people. Being Anglican helps us here and I thank God that in his providence he has given us an Anglican heritage. In particular we are shaped by the legacy of Thomas Cranmer, a legacy which comes to us through his *Book of Common Prayer*, the Thirty-Nine Articles and a legacy sealed by his magnificent Last Word: his martyrdom. In a world which so little knows or cares for the biblical faith, Cranmer's teaching on the great matters of sin and death and judgement and salvation will keep us in the biblical tradition. My hope is that our new liturgical resources will help keep us in that godly tradition. Losing touch with it is not going to help us retain our identity.

We will not survive in any recognisably Christian form in the next decades if we do not understand who we are and who we need to be. We take the long view of things; we are not about to disappear and we see our task as involving the whole Diocese and not just a section of it. Precisely because we are Bible and gospel people, we are a preaching people. The culture around us is going to change in ways unimaginable and if we do not meet these changes without capitulating to the culture, we will become an irrelevant little sect. But in order to meet them we need to be scrupulously faithful to the gospel of salvation through Christ as expounded in Scripture as the word of God. Somehow you are truly going to have to preach amazing grace to the human heart which says "I am my own boss"; John Newton's "I am a great sinner but Christ is a great Saviour" to those who are saying: "I'll do it my way".

## Where are we?

We are in a place and time of growing evangelistic opportunity and obligation. Within the boundaries of the Diocese since 2006, population has risen 7 per cent to 4.5 million people. One in five Australians lives in our Diocese. Just over 725,000 claim to be Anglican, a decrease of 4 per cent. Of these Anglicans, about 10-12 per cent would be regularly in church. Just over 60 per cent claim to be Christian. There are now more people who say they are Christians but there is a smaller proportion, down 4 per cent.

Over a million people say they have no religion or do not answer this question at all. Within these two groups there has been an increase, but not a dramatic increase, in numbers. Overall, about 70 per cent of people claim a nominal religious adherence.

There are hundreds of other relevant facts about our time and place but what do we make of these? You could say: our business is to look after the religious needs of the descendants of the English.

The gospel itself utterly forbids us to think like that. The gospel addresses all men and women without exception in the same tone of voice, with the same demands and the same promises, the same Lord and the same Saviour. It is a matter of salvation, not of growing our numbers. If our denomination will not accept the challenge posed by the new and increasingly different world which has come to us, we are not being faithful to the gospel.



## HOW ARE WE?

How can we assess the Diocesan Mission? Has the blessing of God been upon us?

We gave ourselves a big goal, to reach at least 10 per cent of the population in 10 years.

In 2002, I gave three reasons for choosing this goal.

First, it is humanly speaking impossible. Only God could do this and it is pre-eminently a reminder to pray and trust God.

Second, our real goal is 100 per cent. The 10 per cent figure challenges complacency.

Third, the 10 per cent goal has the power to make us look outward. We need a mind change.

What has happened to us in the last decade? The 10 per cent has been a blessing: we are constantly reminded to pray, as only the Lord can move like that; he has kept before us the big goal of reaching the whole population; He has changed our mindset about evangelism and church ministry. He has yet to give us 10 per cent of the population but, remarkably, in contrast with voluntary organisations in general, we have experienced numerical growth.

How has the Lord blessed us? As I think of our four policies – to preach and pray, to plant and penetrate, to multiply and train, to reform – I see significant progress on all fronts.

**1** We kept preaching the gospel. The biblical gospel has been proclaimed in countless contexts during this period from pulpits, at camps, in halls, in prisons, on campus, to members of other faiths, at the bedside of the dying, in classrooms, in the workplace, in private conversations, in parks and trains, in shops, at funerals, through the media, via the internet and Facebook, through

gospel distribution, in season and out of season. Rejection has occurred; disciples have been made, believers have been assured.

**2** We prayed. We prayed for Sydney. The Mission prayer was in constant use. Prayer meetings took place. Private individuals and parishes became involved in praying for their neighbours and suburbs and institutions. We have begun to lift up our eyes.

**3** We progressed. In a period when there were fewer nominal Anglicans and where the general tendency in various mainstream denominations has been a marked numerical decline, we have continued to grow. As far as we can tell the growth during the decade has been approximately 7.1 per cent, from 75,000 to 80,000 regular attenders. The experts tell us that by comparison this is quite notable.

**4** We planted. The challenge was to plant new congregations, groups, churches. This being the Diocese of Sydney keeping records of new initiatives has been impossible. As far as we can tell, however, there have been 109 new church plants and congregations and at least 105 other groups initiated. I am glad to report also that a number other groups and plants have closed. It would be monumentally foolish to persevere with something which does not work. But what we have here is a record of an unleashed initiative on a large scale unprecedented in 60 years at least. In earlier decades, viewed overall, we were closing churches at an alarming rate. Now we are starting them. The turnaround is extraordinary.

Furthermore we have started to move forward in creating new parishes. For years we have been gently stagnating at around

continued next page »

**In earlier decades, viewed overall, we were closing churches at an alarming rate. Now we are starting them.**



» from previous page

260 parishes, quietly amalgamating the dying ones, leaving suburbs unpastored and letting buildings go. We have now begun to go forward, refusing to close parishes or amalgamate them without the hope of reopening them in the future, finding new congregations and uses for buildings and doing what we had forgotten to do – inaugurate new parishes. This changed mindset must be permanent.

Even better news. We have seen our responsibility for our neighbours from all nations. In 2002 we had an impressive 18 ethnic congregations. In 2012 we have 60!

**5** We have proliferated workers. Many denominations are declining in workers, with people becoming part-time and being older. For us the reverse is happening. The biggest expansion of workers has been amongst the ordained clergy where the numbers have advanced by an astonishing increase of 26 per cent from 480 to 604. Our workers are better trained and higher quality in gifts than ever before.

Most parishes are now using teams of workers, including a very significant number of women. I believe our complementarian position is biblical and has never held us back. But the advent of the Priscilla and Aquila Centre at Moore College has signalled at last a sustained theoretical and practical exploration of that position. It should always mark our approach to ministry. I urge you to recognise that it is the clear teaching of Scripture and remain loyal to it. God will bless such costly, counter-cultural obedience to his word and he has done so already.

**6** We have empowered change. There has been a mood change in the Diocese. I do not mean that the past was hopeless but the Mission has given us permission to experiment, to try new things, to adventure. It has also summoned new workers to our ranks. We are going forward. Integral to this has been the insistence, provoked by the figure 10 per cent that we look outward. Hence the fundamental changes to our ministry structure. Hence a dramatic jump in the first five years in the number of people involved in evangelistic activity; in the next five years there has been a similarly significant jump in the involvement of people in community service or welfare-related church activities. The statistics say that we are on the way to becoming more outwardly focused and hence more able to penetrate the community around us with the gospel. The Mission is working.

**7** We partnered. Parishes helped each other. Our organisations marshalled their resources as they never had, to make sure that they were witnessing to the gospel and that they were co-operating with each other and with the parishes. The whole Mission Area project is a challenge to make the outward look in partnership with others natural in our Diocese. Positive results have begun to emerge.

**8** We have prospered. In spiritual terms the most important test of vitality is not



our inherited money but money generously given through the plate. In 2002, the figure was \$47 million; last year, it was \$89 million, an increase of 88 per cent. Far from our churches dying off quietly, as the media would like us to believe and as is happening in many places, these figures tell us of vigorous commitment and serious discipleship. It is an indication of morale, spiritual maturity and generosity. At the same time missionary giving through CMS has also gone forward strongly, with an increase of 78 per cent over the past nine years.

The loss of endowment money has been a serious blow but I make two comments. First, much money was provided for the early stages of the Mission and it has had ongoing positive results, especially the distribution of \$20 million for land and buildings. Second, we have been forced to consider our priorities very carefully as you will see from this year's budget. This has been a painful but excellent undertaking and I congratulate Mr Kell and his team for doing it so well. Here, if we accept their work, is a permanent gain.

I have given you the big picture with scarcely a negative nuance. I have done so for a reason. It is typical of Australians to be cynical and disbelieving of success. However we are not dealing here with mere success; we are dealing with blessing, blessing which has come as a result of prayer and obedience. Furthermore you need to realise that we are dealing with the long-term here – we have used 10 years as a useful period. But we are 50-year people. We are not deterred by lengthy effort and hard work. We are building to last.

If you accept my challenge to continue with the priority on preaching the gospel into the long term, there will be an absolute need for clarity and hard-headed planning. It is time for the Mission to be dismantled, examined, adjusted, reformed, improved and embraced. But for now there is a moment for rejoicing, for acknowledging the kindness of God. Brothers and sisters, the Lord has been at work in and through us to bless our city and its region. Praise his name!

**The  
Diocesan  
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us all.**

## WHAT MUST WE DO?

Preach the gospel!

The Diocesan Mission does not belong to the Archbishop. I did not invent it. We should not think of this as something that an archbishop does – it belongs to us all. Already and rightly the Mission Board is working on the question of what we have learned and what comes next. Much of what we have done is right. We need to keep the momentum going, not start again from scratch or abandon it at this point. What we are doing is not for the short term – we must plan ahead to at least 2060, for a start.

Thus, in my view, the four policies are theologically responsible and fundamentally sound. The wording may need improvement but the concepts flow from an unchanging commitment to theology and mission. Likewise, the idea behind the 10 per cent goal is integral to what we are about, namely fulfilling our calling to reach out to all people, not just to grow churches. How do we keep going?

Let me dream about our future. In the light of what I know of our challenges, what do I see?

*I see cross-cultural work flourishing.* Why not 120 ethnic congregations in the next decade? Where are those people groups not even in mind yet? I see Moore College packed with students, especially from India and other parts of the subcontinent.

*I see children's and youth work flourishing.* This is the best entry point for new people, the best place for people to come to know the Lord, the best place to train people for a lifetime of ministry. The alternatives for young people in Sydney are very poor. What we can provide is great. Think of the Year 13 program for a start. We must grow.

*I see the lay people of our Diocese unleashed for service.* We already have an extraordinary number of lay people involved in evangelistic ministries. Indeed the laity of the Diocese must surely be the best trained and most dedicated you can imagine. But the evidence is in: you are frustrated at not being more involved! It is usual to think that if we just trained rectors better all would be well. I think that our major resource is lay Christians in the workplace and the community.

*I see new churches buildings in new suburbs.* We have always had a vision to be present throughout the whole region. We will vote for our absence if we don't buy land and build buildings. New churches cannot afford to buy into the property market. We need to deploy workers and back them with the resources they need.

*I see a spirit of partnership emerging.* The Bible loves fellowship or partnership in gospel work. We have huge opportunities to partner together in local areas and through our extraordinary organisations to reach the lost tribes and the deserts of our region.



This is also the goal of Mission Areas. I was delighted to hear, for example, that the Liverpool Area has now drawn together the young people of the region on two occasions. Giving a number of small groups the chance to meet with several hundred instead is brilliant. Why are we not doing a lot more of this?

*I see the gospel becoming visible in the media.* We will engage with the ideas of this generation and refuse to accept the censorship which is so easily imposed on Christianity. We must find ways of putting our case for Christ and making it natural to speak about God in the general community. The large mail I received after the recent Q&A program showed me that once the gospel is visible, Christians in the workplace can and will make use of opportunities.

*I see the glorious gospel guarded and promoted.* There is no point preaching a false gospel or a distorted one. We must be vigilant to guard the gospel which has been entrusted to us. We have been enormously blessed by the development of Moore College over the past 10 years and for its faithful testimony to the word of God. I always say that the college is the first work of the Diocese – not in any way to diminish the great work being done by bodies such as Youthworks and the Schools Corporation. But the vigour and faithfulness of the college is a vital component in our capacity to preach the gospel and we must ensure its wellbeing as much as we can.

**Do you think [Jesus] knows nothing of Facebook and the internet and Twitter and whatever will come next?**

## WHY MUST WE DO IT?

Now I have given you my Last Words. And yet, again I say, I hardly think that my own Last Words as such are of great importance.

Let me take you to some other Last Words, ones which really matter, for if you will not listen to these, you will hardly listen to mine:

‘And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”’

The thing about solemn Last Words like these ones is that they are carefully crafted. The Master chooses to say at the very end what it is that he wants his disciples chiefly to remember. Here are the standing orders for disciples; and the standing orders have us going into all the world, in the name and by the power of the one who has all authority. His gospel is about him and it is a declaration of his Lordship.

And then the promise: ‘And behold I am with you always, even to the close of the age’. For do you think he leaves his people to struggle with the problems of their age? Do you think he leaves it to us to plan and strategise and dream and labour and count? Do you think he knows nothing of Facebook

and the internet and Twitter and whatever will come next? Does he not know the hardness of men’s hearts and what it is like to see his disciples fish all night and catch nothing? Do you think he knows nothing of small churches and struggling congregations and a veritable sea of unbelief? Does he not say that there is only one age left and we are in it however long it lasts, and throughout it by the power of my Spirit, I am with you?

For you see I have been fooling you all along. Have you not noticed, this is not the Last Word of Jesus? I guess if you are looking for that you would think of his word from the cross: ‘Finished’ – done, complete, atoned, paid for, saved. Now that is a great Last Word.

But his word here is not the Last Word of a dying man. It is more like a First Word, the word that inaugurates a new era. We are face to face here with a resurrected Lord. The *telos*, the End, the goal has arrived in person. This sick, tired, sad, death-haunted old world in which we live is passing away. From now on when we look back into the darkness of human history, nasty, brutish and short, we see that a light has dawned. The age of promise is no mere promise, its beginning is there – there in history and its full coming, the rising of the sun, is not long delayed.

In the meantime, whatever this world says or does and however hard our way is or not, Jesus Christ is with us and all power has been given to him and he rules over all things!

That is why we are joyfully determined to preach his gospel as our priority. **SC**



## STUDY CHRISTIAN COUNSELLING

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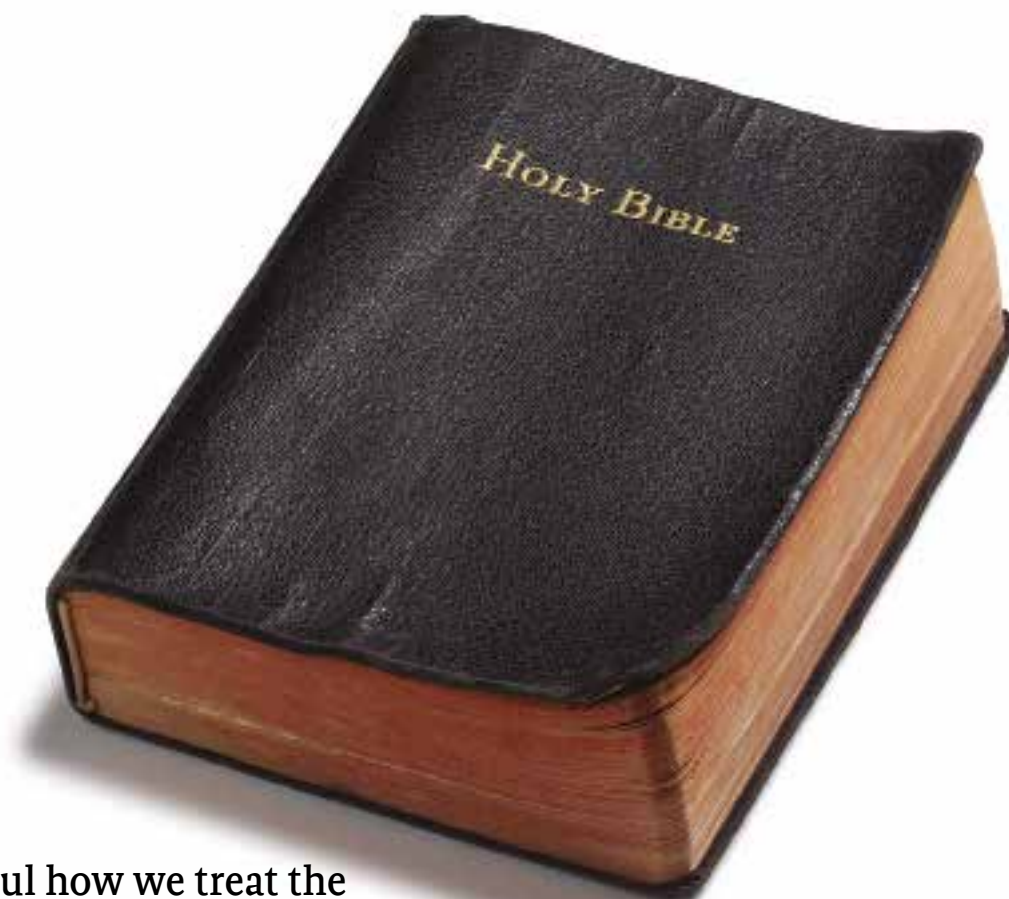
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*...see to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the elemental spiritual forces of this world rather than on Christ. (Colossians 2:8)*

# One Scripture, two testaments



We need to be careful how we treat the Bible – in understanding and in practice, writes GEORGE ATHAS.

**T**HE BIBLE IS MADE UP OF AN OLD and a New Testament. While that may seem like an obvious Sunday school kind of thing to say, it is actually a profound theological statement. The authoritative word of God in its canonical form has come to us in two distinct portions, with Jesus Christ standing at the critical divide. One of our tasks as Christians today is to figure out what each portion contributes to our knowledge of God so that our faith in him is nourished and our love for him grows. We also need to work out what it means for the practice of our faith so that our love for others is demonstrated in the world. In other words we need to ask, “How does the fact that we have an Old and a New Testament inform our beliefs and practices as Christians?”

It has been said that the Bible is essentially made up of stories, stipulations, songs and other people’s mail. It’s not a bad summary, really. One of the things this tells us is that the Bible was not written *to* us, but *for* us. That is, we as Christians living in the 21st century were not the intended audience of any of the literature in the Bible. However, we are its recipients, its preservers and those over whom the Bible has an authoritative claim.

The diverse material in the Bible was

originally written by and for people living in different ages and cultures to our own. This means that it is a mistake to read ourselves directly into the biblical literature. This is an easy mistake to make and we do it often.

For example, when the Old Testament Law stipulates what ‘you’ must or must not do, we might be tempted to treat this as a direction to us, rather than to the ancient nation of Israel in its covenant relationship to God. Similarly, when the apostle Peter writes that Jesus’ divine power has given ‘us’ everything for life and godliness through the knowledge of him who called ‘us’ (2 Peter 1:3), we tend to think he is addressing us and all Christians, rather than describing the situation of the apostles who knew Jesus during his earthly ministry.

To an extent this kind of mistake is understandable because, as Christians, we stand under the authority of God’s word and should let it impact us. However, the first thing we must do in letting it impact us is recognise that the words were written to and about others. Accordingly, one of our most important interpretive tasks is to understand to whom the stories, stipulations, songs and mail were originally given. Only then can we ask what relationship we today have to those original audiences and thereby work out how

any given passage of the Bible impacts us.

Another significant factor to bear in mind is that the Bible as a whole tells a unified story about God and his dealings with humanity. Thus, while we have two distinct testaments, they are still integrally related to each other.

Furthermore, stories unfold. They progress through stages, complications, twists and turns before arriving at a resolution and then finally coming to an end. As Christians we acknowledge that the resolution to God’s dealings with humanity is found in Jesus. He is the climax of the whole storyline of history as we find it in the Bible. However, we have not yet reached the end of history. In other words, we live between the resolution of the story and its ending.

This is also important for understanding how the Old Testament fits into the scheme of things. In the Old Testament, which comes before Jesus, the storyline is still unfolding. Those who lived in the Old Testament era of history did not have the benefit of knowing the resolution to the story in which they were taking part. For them God and his purposes were to some degree still unknowns, though he was revealing his unchangeable self and will to them bit by bit.

This is why the Old Testament goes



through so many stages of history and even has apparently dissonant voices in it. For example, Deuteronomy can affirm that God blesses the righteous and punishes the wicked, and yet the Teacher in Ecclesiastes can voice his utter befuddlement at why he sees so many righteous people suffering at the same time that so many wicked people prosper. Even today as we read these theological tensions, we may feel some of the discomfort of those who lived in the Old Testament era when revelation was still unfolding and the resolution to these issues had not yet come.

But come it did. In Jesus, we see one who is supremely righteous suffering death at the hands of wicked people, at the same time as we see God passing judgement on humanity's wickedness and raising Jesus to life for our justification. At the cross and empty tomb of Christ, we finally understand God and his purposes. Neither Deuteronomy nor Ecclesiastes were the end of the story. To pick up the sentiment of the writer to the Hebrews, God had spoken in the past at various times and in various ways but he finally spoke through his Son, who is the radiance of his glory and the exact expression of his being (Heb 1:1-3).

Furthermore, in the Old Testament God had not finished his dealings with humanity. Although he gave glimpses of where he was taking history, at no point in the Old Testament do we actually get to history's destination. So while the Old Testament gives us a true picture of God and his purposes, it is still an incomplete picture. That should sound a caution to us in how we use the Old Testament: if we use it without the New, we may distort our understanding of God, which will in turn detrimentally affect our beliefs and practices.

So when we read the Old Testament, we mustn't think that those who wrote it and who lived in that era knew God and his purposes as fully as we do. On the contrary, we have the blessed benefit of hindsight, having seen what they longed to see and heard what they longed to hear (cf. Matt 13:17). But with this blessed position comes much responsibility. We need to handle the Scriptures, both Old and New testaments, properly.

As Christians, we want to do justice to all of Scripture. We affirm that the entire Bible is God's authoritative word under which we sit, and rightly so, for it is all God-breathed and useful to us. However, this does not mean that we should treat all parts of Scripture in the same way. One danger we face is that of failing to see the Old Testament as the Old Testament – that part of the unfolding storyline that comes before the resolution in Christ. We affirm that the Old Testament gives us a true picture of God but we must at the same time affirm that it is an incomplete picture within the grander scheme of Scripture. If we do not, we risk absolutising the Old Testament in a legalistic kind of way.


For example, in light of Jesus we must


affirm with Paul that the Law served as a guardian or tutor for the people of Israel until the appointed time when Christ came and fulfilled it (see Gal 3:24-4:5). The Law has, therefore, served its purpose. If, however, we fail to realise the provisional nature of the Old Testament and treat it just like the New Testament, we may mistakenly think that Christians must observe the Sabbath from Friday night to Saturday night. We might say that Christians should avoid eating pork as something detestable to God. We may declare that homosexuals should be ruthlessly put to death. We might pledge a blind allegiance to modern Israel because we conclude that it is the continuation of God's chosen nation with a special claim over a particular slice of the Middle East, regardless of anyone else's claim within the region or whether their policies are just. We may even say that God is not a trinity of Father, Son, and Spirit.

Yet to do any of these is to fail to appreciate the progressive nature of revelation in Scripture, or the resolution that specifically comes with Jesus. The Old Testament begins to show us God and his will but, as Christians, we live on this side of the cross and empty tomb and should live by the light of God's fuller revelation. Just as the writer of the Hebrews urged in his letter, we must acknowledge that with Jesus things have changed irrevocably. There is now no turning back. Jesus is the game changer.

Alternatively, we may swing the other way and end up treating the New Testament just like the Old. That is, we may think that the New Testament is also an unfinished story for which the 'punch line' has yet to be delivered. If we do this, we will tend to look for more revelation that takes us further away from apostolic witness and New Testament theology. We may seek new experiences and depend on them for defining ourselves and our theology. We may seek new prophets who have new words to give us and put our faith in them for determining what we should believe and practice. We will probably feel an inexorable pull from our culture to conform our beliefs and practices to its norms. We may feel the inclination to give up seemingly 'old-fashioned' values in favour of more widely acceptable notions, especially on issues for which our society may ridicule the New Testament perspective, such as its views on men and women, sexuality and the exclusivity of Jesus.

All the while, because we are treating the New Testament in the same way as the Old, we will have convinced ourselves that






The Rev Dr George Athas is director of postgraduate studies and lectures in Old Testament, Hebrew and church history.

we are still being biblically faithful and yet we will have weighed anchor from Christ and drifted off on tides that take us away from the God who made himself known in Christ and inspired the Scriptures for our benefit.

Essentially, these pitfalls stem from the same error: not realising that Scripture is God's unfolding revelation that culminates in Jesus. We cannot graduate the Old Testament to the position of the New, nor can we relegate the New Testament to the position of the Old. Rather, we must understand that Scripture has come to us in an Old *and* a New Testament, with Christ standing at the critical juncture of resolution between them. In Christ, God's final word has been spoken and the faith has been once and for all delivered to the saints.

While we wait for the end we must let the word about the Christ dwell in us richly, for this is how we will be able to teach and admonish each other with all wisdom, to frame our words and practices faithfully, with heartfelt gratitude to God.

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# Sydney,



# women

## and the next 50 years

Where to now for our city and its women, asks KARA GILBERT.

I HAVE JUST BEGUN IN THE ROLE OF Archdeacon for Women's Ministry after serving in ministry among the people at Crossway Anglican Church at Carlingford.

While it's been very difficult to move away from local church ministry I am looking forward to serving across our city. I am a Sydney girl born and bred. I love this city.

Recently I was flying back into Sydney after a holiday and while it might have been the anticipation of uncurling myself out of my seat, I really felt the excitement of arriving back in *my* city.

I was sitting next to two girls from France who had never been to Sydney before and I was excitedly telling them all the great things about Sydney – possibly overwhelmed them. I have often thought that if I wasn't in vocational ministry I would love to be a tour guide of some kind through Sydney. I know I love trying to help tourists when I see them trying to make sense of their maps. I love this city. But as I reflect on Sydney, I ask myself: what kind of city are we?

There are so many answers to that question. I guess what comes to mind first is that we're a changing city. And what changes we've seen and continue to see! Even as I reflect on the Sydney of my childhood and

the Sydney of today, there are a multitude of changes.

There are the general changes that have occurred being part of the Western world, living in the light of the '60s revolutions, of technology revolutions, of feminism, postmodernism, individualism, relativism... and on it goes.

The effect of these have shaped and changed us in ways we probably aren't even aware of. They have permeated and got under the skin of our city. It's now the air we breathe. And depending on where you live in our city, you will have seen other kinds of changes.

In the suburb where I live I am witnessing the demolition of streets full of houses to make way for home units. We are seeing rapid change. I guess one of the most obvious changes is through multiculturalism – the arrival of so many different people from different cultural and faith backgrounds.

We've heard about it a lot at Synod this year and what a blessing it's been for us. Such an ethnically rich, diverse city we live in. And it will only continue. China and India now dominate the countries of origin of those arriving in our country – more than 300,000 people between 2006 and 2011.

In the middle of these kinds of changes

we feel and are experiencing the change of thought, beliefs and understanding to the point where – whether it's in the public sphere like Q&A or in the letters section of the paper, or fighting for Scripture lessons in our schools, or privately in our conversations with friends over coffee – we feel and are in the minority.

On my recent holiday I visited a friend in Italy. We travelled to Florence together and saw Michelangelo's great statue of David. It was quite breathtaking. I can't do it justice. But as I stood and admired the incredible craftsmanship of this Renaissance artist I overheard a young girl (American I think) say to the person she was with – "So who's David?"

I think I'm right in saying that my generation was really the last generation in Sydney to be sent to Sunday school. I have clear memories as a young child of coming out of Sunday school and seeing a line of cars parked down the street – parents who had been at home reading the paper and were now coming to pick their children up. Imagine that happening today: a parent coming, dropping off their child and driving off.

Sydney is anything but a stagnant city. Never has been, never will be. And this

This text is taken from a speech given at an ACL women's dinner during Synod last month.



sea of change has also had its effect on women in Sydney. The way we approach education, relationships, family, work has changed so dramatically, even in my lifetime.

We exist and participate in a relationship landscape that is confused and under debate, and where marriage either isn't sought or no longer provides the certainty it once offered. There's an intellectual environment which suggests that not using educational and vocational training throughout our lifetime is negligent, and an economic climate that necessitates both parents working while managing family life. For Christian women who have service to Christ, our families and our church as the dominating framework, there is simply a complexity to our existence, often resulting in great tension.

The common question "Is it possible to have it all?" rings loud and true. And for many this leads to guilt and pressure to 'manage it all'. As changes take place for women these eventually permeate and impact life and ministry in our church. They must. They do.

The tension women in my church seem to be facing is having enough time, not just for family (which is where the greatest strain seems to be located) but for ministry, for building and strengthening relationships in church, and for witnessing in their communities. I don't know if these are the tensions in your church... but I wonder what effect will the busyness and complexity of women's lives have on local church ministry and evangelism?

For if we look over the history of ministry in Sydney, women have played such an important role.

Ministry by women and for women, in a variety of capacities, is part of the DNA of Sydney Anglican church life. Women in ordained or appointed ministry have had a very long and distinguished history in Sydney, notably through the Deaconess



**Now is the time to keep holding out the unique and incredible claims of Jesus. For if we don't, who will?**

movement in the earlier 20th century. Deaconesses served in a variety of contexts throughout the Diocese, including the responsibility to visit women and families and run Sunday schools.

Currently we have many women training in our colleges. It's so exciting to see women putting up their hand to be training for vocational and lay ministry, full- or part-time, in a variety of roles and contexts.

Women involved in lay ministry also have a long and distinguished history in Sydney churches, particularly through the ministry of Mother's Union, caring for women in hospitals, families in prison or the courts, as well as what we commonly think of as 'women's ministry' – Bible studies, women's events, conferences, reading the Bible one-to-one, exercising ministry based on Titus 2, women sharing the gospel with friends, neighbours and colleagues. It is a great, exciting work and we must be very thankful to God for the thousands of women serving in our churches.

Yet if it's true our city will be changing in the size and make-up of its population over the next 20, 30 and 50 years then it is clear that not only are the women already involved in ministry needed to continue and build on existing work, but new workers are needed to play a role in turning outward toward the community.

Now is not the time to pull out of ministry, to be so busy to not have time for developing non-Christian friends, for meeting with one another to encourage and pray and remind one another of God. Now is not the time to shrink back in being a voice in the community. This is absolutely the time to be bold, be available and be willing. Now is the time to keep holding out the unique and incredible claims of Jesus. For if we don't, who will?

Acts 4:12 says: "And there is salvation in no-one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved".

There is no other name. And our job is to tell people about his name. A name that is becoming less familiar, less adored, a name that to many, I know, means very little. But they need to know his name. They need to hear of his love and forgiveness, to hear of

their sin and his salvation. They need to believe in him, to trust and adore him for their lives.

And so we need to be willing, in our changing city, to take the name of our Lord, king and saviour to our city.

How will we, as women in particular, do that? In some ways, just as we have been doing it. But hopefully also in new, imaginative ways.

There are times, for example, due to cultural sensitivities, when work among women of some ethnic groups must and can only be done by other women. How will we break into these cultural groups? Who can break into these cultural groups? Imaginative development of ministry by women and among women is needed so as to reach the growing unreached. Now is not the time to shrink back.

We can only look forward to see how God will use women in the future for the growth of his kingdom. This is what I am giving my mind to within our framework of the complementary position of Scripture, in consultation with those who similarly are keen to explore how to enable, train and recruit women for this work.

I am so keen to see women think creatively and sacrificially about how they can be more available – available to connect with other women at church, to connect with other women in our suburbs. Not because we are trying to build our numbers but because we care deeply and rightly for those who without Christ face God's eternal judgement.

I'm keen to see young and older women, married and unmarried, taking time for theological equipping, either at college or through external studies courses, to contribute to the teaching and discipling of women in their church.

I'm just so keen to see women persevere in their faith, certain and confident that their salvation is secure because of the death of Jesus. And I love to think that it might be possible for every woman in Sydney to have what I and other Christian women have: forgiveness of sins now and hope of eternal life in the presence of our great God to come.

I trust you too are keen for these things. I trust and pray you will partner with me in this work.

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# DIARY

Thursday, November 1 – Friday, December 14

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Churches and schools across Sydney and the Illawarra will be participating in Anglicare's Toys 'n' Tucker campaign during November. They will be collecting toys and food to be packed into hampers for people who would otherwise go without this Christmas. Please keep a lookout for the collection coming to a church or school near you! To get involved visit [www.toysntucker.org.au](http://www.toysntucker.org.au).

Sunday, November 4

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For more information or to contact the church ring (02) 9489 2863, email [stpaulswah@bigpond.com](mailto:stpaulswah@bigpond.com) or see [www.stpaulswahroonga.com](http://www.stpaulswahroonga.com)

LOCATION | Pears Corner, Pacific Highway, Wahroonga | 9am

Thursday, November 15

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Friday, November 23

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

Wednesday, November 28

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LOCATION | Wanawong Campus, 11 Fifth Ave, Loftus

Wednesday, December 19

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For more information and to purchase tickets visit [www.sydneycathedral.com/events/colin-buchanan-christmas-concerts](http://www.sydneycathedral.com/events/colin-buchanan-christmas-concerts)

LOCATION | St Andrew's Cathedral, Cnr George & Bathurst sts, Sydney | 10am-11am; 1pm-2pm

Sunday, January 6 – Saturday, Jan 12

## YOUTHWORKS JAM CAMP

JAM camp is going to be BIG in 2013! It's our 10<sup>th</sup> birthday. As well as all the usual activities – archery, caving, abseiling, low ropes, swimming and many more – we will also be looking at the big picture of the Bible and what God is saying to us. Open to all in Years 3-5 (in 2013).

For more information, visit [www.youthworks.net/events](http://www.youthworks.net/events)

LOCATION | Koloona Conference Centre, near Nowra

Sunday, January 6 – Saturday, Jan 12

## YOUTHWORKS PERFORMING ARTS CAMP

We run classes in three dance styles plus singing, drawing and video production, culminating in a performance on the final night. You can also use any instrument you wish to bring along. We'll also be learning more about Jesus – the greatest superhero. Open to all in Years 7-12 (in 2013).

For more information, visit [www.youthworks.net/events](http://www.youthworks.net/events)

LOCATION | Rathane Conference Centre, near Sutherland

Wednesday, January 23 – Sunday, January 27

## LEADERS IN TRAINING (LiT)

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For more info, visit <http://www.lit.youthworks.net/>

LOCATION | Rathane Conference Centre, near Sutherland

“...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

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Professional Standards Unit

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True Spirituality

10am - 5pm Monday 28 January 2013 A.D.  
St. Andrew's Cathedral

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## Engadine youth take a dip

WHILE THE WEATHER MAY BE warming up now in early September the water in the Karloo Pools of the Royal National Park was still pretty cold. But that didn't stop Engadine Anglican Church's youth group, Swiffer, from celebrating the end of the school term with a bracing swim.

"While the water was still a little chilly many of the kids took the plunge and many of them stayed in the water for hours," said leader Carly Kennedy. "We are blessed to have the Royal National Park so close to our church

and we thanked God for the day and our good fortune."

Up to 45 high school students made the 45-minute trek from the church through the national park to the pools.

"It was a great way for the kids to get out into the magnificent spring weather... [and] enjoy the explosion of colour with the native wildflowers," said Engadine's senior minister the Rev James Warren.

Taking up his first position as senior minister at Engadine, after serving as an assistant minister at Carlingford

and North Rocks for 12 years, Mr Warren has been greatly encouraged by youth events such as this.

"I have just recently joined the church and I am incredibly impressed with the level of commitment our young people have for learning more about Jesus Christ and how he came to save us," Mr Warren said.

"The early high school students are under the direction of some outstanding youth leaders who take such a strong interest in the future of their understudies."

## Richard Johnson



A GROUP OF 20 STUDENTS FROM Richard Johnson Anglican School gave up 10 days of their recent school holidays to go and minister in far northern NSW.

The group, comprising students from Year 8 to Year 11, visited five schools in Moree and Wee Waa.

"The students were split into two groups of 10," said deputy principal, Michael O'Hare. "One group ran a program for children from K-2 and the other group ran a program for 3-6."

Students ran Christian programs in both public and independent Christian schools, teaching the Bible as well as singing, praying and playing games.

"The older group looked at the gospel of John," Mr O'Hare said. "The theme was 'What's behind the door' and was all about the choices we have to make. They were challenged that they can make a choice to have eternal life through Jesus."

In Wee Waa students ran a holiday program for indigenous children in conjunction with Australian Indigenous Ministries.

"It was a challenge for the kids to see people living in conditions that they are not used to," Mr O'Hare said.

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# goes north for mission



us after the program and told us he wanted to become friends with Jesus," Mr O'Hare said. "Seeing the excitement on the faces of our students when that little boy made a commitment to Christ was amazing."

This year marked the fourth time students from Richard Johnson Anglican School have visited the region.

"We went there to change other people's lives and God used us richly," Mr O'Hare said. "He also changed our lives by giving us an experience we will never, ever forget."

The school is looking at ways it can continue to develop relationships in the area.

"There is definitely a strong connection now and it will be an ongoing thing," Mr O'Hare said. "There have also been talks about our students training some of the older Christian students in Moree so they can take the programs that we run out to smaller towns in the region."

Richard Johnson Anglican School is located in Oakhurst in Sydney's west.

Students also spent a day with an elderly couple who purchase fruit with their own money and distribute it to needy members of the indigenous community.

"That showed the kids about sacrifice," Mr O'Hare said. "They saw that this couple could have used their retirement money for themselves but instead they were using it to help others."

As the students ran the program again and again they became more confident and polished – a great encouragement to the five staff members who accompanied them.

"There was one very special moment when a Year 3 boy came and spoke to



## Jesus is... at the beach

UP TO 320 CHRISTIANS FROM AT least five churches and two university ministries across Wollongong have joined together to spell 'Jesus is \_\_\_\_' on North Wollongong Beach.

Held on Sunday, October 7, the gathering was just one aspect of a much larger campaign, of the same name, that ran across Wollongong throughout October.

"People really loved being part of the photo," said the senior minister of St Michael's Cathedral in Wollongong, Canon Sandy Grant. "The photo gave huge leverage [to the campaign] and grabbed people's attention. It sparked a lot of discussions on social media."

According to Canon Grant, many people have been able to take the opportunity to strike up conversations about who Jesus is. He also said that many non-Christians have attended talks and outreach services as part of the campaign.

"It has really been tremendously

encouraging," he said. "The personal conversations are what it is really all about."

The campaign, which also included people wearing T-shirts emblazoned with 'Jesus is \_\_\_\_' was a joint effort across denominations and stemmed from 'Gospel in the Gong' – a group whose aim is to see their city saved.

"We can sometimes do more together than the sum of our efforts apart," Canon Grant said. "Although there are good churches in Wollongong, there are far more people outside the church and outside Christ than in."

Another aspect of the campaign was a website that challenged perceptions of Jesus and encouraged people to engage with what the Bible says about Jesus rather than what society says.

Some of the issues that were addressed included: Jesus is anti-gay, Jesus is just one religion among many, Jesus is not God, Jesus is alive and Jesus is not for everyone.



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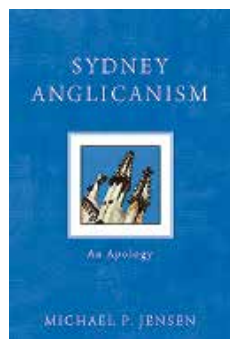


## BOOK REVIEW

# The reality of being a Sydney Anglican

SYDNEY  
 ANGLICANISM: AN  
 APOLOGY  
 BY MICHAEL  
 JENSEN

MARK EARNGEY



**G**OT A SUMMER READING LIST YET? ANY books for Boxing Day? This book needs to be there with you. Amid the turbulence in Anglican circles locally and abroad, Dr Michael Jensen's *Sydney Anglicanism: An Apology* injects much-needed calm and a constructive word into our ecclesiastical climate.

Holding a unique vantage point as lecturer in doctrine and church history at Moore College and as son of the outgoing Archbishop of Sydney, Jensen's purpose is to explode a particular narrative about Sydney Anglicans.

The narrative is told two different ways. One side speaks as if Sydney is some kind of extremist monstrosity unleashed within the Anglican Communion. The other side speaks as if Sydney alone is the idealised New Jerusalem, holding the torch against the onslaught of darkness. Jensen's major thesis is that both extremes are untrue and holding to either is potentially disastrous. He thus puts forward an apology setting forth a true telling of the narrative of Sydney Anglicans, albeit a true telling with constructive comments and 'elements of honest critique'.

The book is divided into two sections that tell our story through the lens of two significant theological contributions Sydney has made relating to the doctrine

of the Bible and the Church. In section one fundamentalism is discussed and the accusations made by Muriel Porter and her detractors are clinically dissected. The genesis of the robust way of reading the Scriptures by the likes of Donald Robinson, Bill Dumbrell and Graeme Goldsworthy, known as 'biblical theology', is outlined and Jensen asks 'Where to now?'. Propositional revelation, Broughton Knox and Peter Carnley's critique are examined by discussing Sydney's belief that divine revelation can truly be apprehended in words. The story of Sydney's 'romance with preaching' is told, illustrated by John Stott, expository preaching and phenomena such as the Katoomba Christian conventions.

What Jensen describes as the 'controversies of the present era' are picked up in section two on the Church. An accurate description and fair evaluation of Knox-Robinson ecclesiology is given with some constructive and biblical modifications. The chapter 'Are Sydney Anglicans Actually Anglicans?' does a concise and careful job of determining what it means to be Anglican and evangelical.

Whether Sydney Anglicans have failed in their response to the world is asked, as Jensen discusses SRE in schools, social justice, racism and Connect09. Sydney's position concerning

women and ministry is given judicious and firm coverage, as Sydney is defended from the charge of Arianism. The cause of lay administration of the Lord's Supper comes in for discussion, finishing with a constructive discussion about the Anglican Church League and church politics. The conclusion rightly anchors the whole discussion in Christ's death and resurrection and the providential power of the Lord in whom we can entrust all things.

Besides appreciating the non-anxious tone of this book, what struck me most was Jensen's ability to combine historical background with solid theology and present a precise and provocative case that gets to the nub of the issue and provides great food for thought.

*Sydney Anglicanism: An Apology* is a must-read for anyone who identifies with the tag of "Sydney Anglican" or is interested in any of the above issues. It is a highly accessible book for an educated layperson through to trained clergy. Its success is that it refreshingly refuses both a siege mentality defensiveness and a purely critical spirit. Some readers might disagree about some elements but all should benefit from Jensen's careful engagement with the important issues at stake.

SC

Mark Earngey is assistant minister in the parish of Toongabbie.

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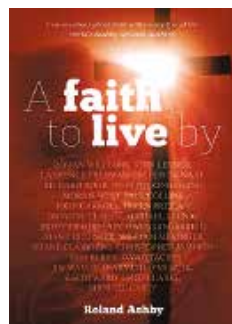


## BOOK REVIEW

# Faith in practice

A FAITH TO LIVE BY  
BY ROLAND ASHBY

KARA MARTIN



**B**OOKS THAT ARE COMPILATIONS OF interviews or stories are becoming increasingly popular. I suspect this is because they are relatively easy to pull together – and they help those interviews or stories achieve a wider audience.

Roland Ashby is editor of *The Melbourne Anglican* and has had the opportunity to interview many famous and infamous Christians. Now he has collected his favourite interviews in a book: *A Faith to Live By*. Those featured include Rowan Williams, John Lennox (right) and Richard Rohr, famous Australians Morris West and Michael Leunig, several mystics such as Esther de Waal and Brother Ghislain-Owen, as well as a few rebels such as Helen Prejean and Shane Claiborne.

There is a richness that emerges when Christians from different traditions talk about their own faith stories. The book could be simply too eclectic but there are some recurring themes: prayer and meditation, responding to the New Atheists, social justice/environmental concerns and the importance of creativity.

Highlights include the thoughts of the retiring Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams, on prayer: “There comes a level of prayer where it is no longer a question of ‘Are you seeing something?’ But, ‘Are you being seen?’ – if you like, sitting in the light and of just being and becoming aware of who you really are.”

John Lennox (Oxford Professor of Mathematics) on the New Atheists, comments: “We’re living in a world where people think that faith is something that just happens to you and you can do nothing about it. I think that’s nonsense. God, through his Spirit has already given us a massive body of evidence. But we are required to respond.”

Christopher Jamison (Benedictine monk) on why we need religion: “if we rubbish religion we deny people’s access to the world’s finest traditions of wisdom and interiority, and they as psychiatrists know that the lack of interior wellbeing in our culture is one of the most devastating aspects of contemporary culture.”

Shane Claiborne (The Simple Way Community) on social justice: “The great tragedy in the church is not that rich people don’t care about the poor, it’s that they don’t know the poor. The deepest disconnect is this one of relationship.”

Michael Leunig (cartoonist) on creativity: “I feel we are in danger of abandoning the language of delight and beauty, and are becoming embarrassed by it. In this we have tended to copy our technologies. I think we are presently aping and styling our lives upon



the functioning of the computer – fast, cold and informational.”

As you can see from these quotes there is lots of fascinating material in this book. However, there are some issues. Some of the interviews are more than 15 years old and some astute editing could have removed references that date the material unnecessarily (for example, predictions about reactions to the new millennium). There was also an abrupt change of style from Q&A to an article format with less direct quotes. Perhaps corraling each style would have been more helpful. Further, readers will probably not agree with everything said by the interviewees and a comment about the variety of faith perspectives represented would be a good warning for readers.

Finally, in a book of 25 “spiritual teachers” Michael Leunig and Morris West stood out. I liked what they had to say, because they live (or lived) in ways that interact more with the everyday world than most of the others. As such, their description of a “faith to live by” was more instructive. Perhaps a break-up between theological teachers, Christian thinkers and artists would have been more appropriate.

The inclusion of the final interview with Greg Clarke (Bible Society Australia, formerly from the Centre for Public Christianity) is a nice capstone to the book. Greg is very clear in his defence of the Christian faith but also gracious. He deals with most of the major objections to Christian faith. Having access to such a resource will become increasingly important for Christians as they seek to “always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behaviour in Christ may be ashamed of their slander.” (1 Peter 3:15-16). **SC**

Kara Martin is a lecturer with School of Christian Studies and the Wesley Institute, and is an avid reader and book group attendee. Kara also does book reviews for Hope 103.2’s Open House program.

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these movies that has kept people going back, even before the current era of flogging a sequel franchise for all it’s worth.

One factor in the Broccoli family’s genius could be that Bond movies always have a good sense for the *Zeitgeist*. The Cold War carried the franchise for most of its history but Bond still fought ethnically African drug lords and kissed African American women in the post-civil rights era (*Live and Let Die*), flew space shuttles when *Star Wars* was flipping everyone out (*Moonraker*) and averted environmental disasters before it was cool. He curbed his profligacy during the early AIDS scares, lost his licence at the end of the Reagan era, was a cultured action hero in the age of Schwarzenegger and Stallone yet still suffered the now-famous rebuke from the female M: “You’re a sexist, misogynist dinosaur”.

Perhaps what people have said about Bond is true: every woman wants to be *with* him and every man wants to *be* him. After all, Bond is the only 40-something man who has never had to wake up from his mid-life crisis fantasy. For Baby Boomers, the older they get the better he is. So, perhaps Bond’s best exploits are in the world of our covert desires and pleasures. In terms of late 20<sup>th</sup> century Western culture his lifestyle is the embodiment of luxury fever – brand placement, perpetual credit and a passport into the “for your eyes only” world of the *uber*-rich.

Although an agent of MI6, Bond is hardly secret (the tank chase in *GoldenEye* springs to mind). But as the director of *Skyfall*, Sam Mendes, told *Empire* magazine recently, “You can’t put him on the street with ordinary people. He’s not Bourne... You walk into Waterloo station this morning, [Bourne] is probably there, standing next to you. Bond can’t do that. He has to have his own space around him”.

The average Australian can eschew Bond’s excesses as the stuff of blockbusters. We’re not as uptight about violence as Europeans and not as pedantic about sex as Americans. Instead, the gratuitous nature of Bond serves to conceal the true darkness of *our* licence – a casual indifference to an “end-justifies-the-means” existence. Over-the-top sex and violence enables us to point to the “bad” things about Bond while still maintaining plausible deniability towards our everyday idolatries (nobody ever complained about a Bond film because he’s well dressed, drinks Bollinger and goes to exotic places – we like the luxury).

I admit that apart from the guns and the strings of girls I’m kind of happy with everything Bond does. It’s fun. That’s why he’s still popular: he’s “bad” about the right things.

As a Christian, see the film, don’t see the film. It is as Paul wrote, “Everything is permissible, but not everything is helpful” (1 Cor. 10:23). But if you do see *Skyfall* it might be worth asking each other, “Besides the guns and the womanising, what would Bond have to leave behind in order to join our church?”. And while you’re at it, ask yourself if there’s anything you should be leaving behind as well. **SC**



# Agent of secret desires

What has kept this most successful of movie franchises going for so many years? DAVID HÖHNE investigates.

**S**O, HERE I AM WRITING ABOUT JAMES Bond *before* the November 22 release of the new movie, *Skyfall*. How can I write anything meaningful about a movie that hasn't been released yet, even to the press? The more cynical of our readership will no doubt have the answer: "It's a Bond film – they're all the same!"

It is an accusation that in some respects is hard to deny. After 50 years and 23 films the "franchise", as it is commonly referred to, has developed a trademark formula:

**007** Opening gun barrel view of Bond walking slowly forward with orchestra stabs that feature the signature guitar twang – pistol-shot crescendo and blood curtain falling.

**007** Proprietary stunt sequence to kick-start the story with little contribution to overall narrative but lots of explosions. The main purpose here is to introduce Bond.

**007** Lengthy and surreal or psychedelic credit sequence complete with nude silhouettes and high-profile singer theme song (in this case by Adele).

**007** Mission brief at HQ. This scene should consist of M's headmaster bombast plus Q's goofy gadgets. Both of these are interspersed with Moneypenny's hapless flirting. With the arrival of Dame Judi

Dench as M, the above interactions include a cocktail of postmodern feminism with an Oedipal twist.

**007** Plot progresses with liberal amounts of womanising (especially from Sean "Alpha Bond" Connery<sup>1</sup>) that eventually includes "Bond Girl Major" and the entry of a megalomaniac antagonist with a nod towards a weapon of mass destruction or a world domination plot.

**007** We experience the indubitable Bond style (the only achievement of George "Aussie Bond" Lazenby<sup>2</sup>): exotic locations, vodka martinis, Savile Row suits, Rolex or Omega watches, Bollinger champagne, Beluga caviar, black jack or poker in casinos and, of course, the Aston Martin.

Bond racks up plenty of frequent flyer miles in the early days, although any chance to jump out of a plane, with or without a parachute, is to be welcomed. Latterly the tight British Government can only afford the Eurostar (see Daniel "Gangster Bond" Craig's<sup>6</sup> trip to Casino Royale).

**007** Depending on the Bond, scenes are punctuated with explosions, canon fodder goons and the "one-liner" – just one of the elements Roger "Camp Bond" Moore<sup>3</sup> took way over the top. Over the decades, as audiences become more familiar (and

their attention spans decrease in inverse proportion), narrative is replaced as much as possible with more chases and more explosions.

**007** The story is finally resolved when the domination scheme is subverted, the villain spectacularly destroyed and the WMD defused, all in time for a roll in the sack with Bond Girl Major.

It's easy to mock. But love or hate him, James Bond *will* return and the only things that have ever made that an unlikely way to finish the credits were a protracted legal battle (exit Timothy "Brooding Bond" Dalton<sup>4</sup>) and the recent financial woes of MGM. Even the end of the Cold War didn't stop Pierce "Big Hair Bond" Brosnan<sup>5</sup> from having a reason to save the world.

There has to be something about



« continued page 31