Gospel opportunities in our PCNSW schools:

The first of our two-part four-page series

MODERATOR’S FEDERAL ELECTION WARNING:
Think carefully about same-sex marriage

SURROGACY:
Why it is a bad idea

ALL IN THE (Barnes) FAMILY:
Peter preaches while his son is ordained

FROM THE BIBLE:
Gentleness and Peace

CELEBRATING A NEW CHURCH PLANT AT GREEN SQUARE
Editorial

A focus on education

During February and March, I spent a very pleasurable time driving to all our country schools. Muswellbrook, Nambucca Heads, Crafter, Casino, Armidale, and Bathurst, spending time with our Principals, and hearing about the work of the gospelpromise in our country schools. It was tremendously encouraging to see strongly committed Christian leaders speaking passionately about the work of Christ in their schools.

On 14 May, the Moderator, The Rt. Rev. Malcolm Murray, will be convening a consultation involving all our Principals, Chairmen, and Chaplains (or as many who can attend). This will be a first, and arises from the decision by the 2015 General Assembly to establish a Special Committee to Explore Educational Activities.

The General Office of The Presbyterian Church in NSW is keenly interested in understanding how our Presbyterian Church's involvement in education (1) to explore the current nature of the Presbyterian Church of Australia in the State of New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory.

The 2015 General Assembly has required churches to think very carefully about how they cast their vote in the upcoming Federal Election. The Prime Minister, Malcolm Turnbull, has called on church members to think very carefully about how they cast their vote in the upcoming Federal Election. The Prime Minister, Malcolm Turnbull, has called on church members to think very carefully about how they cast their vote in the upcoming Federal Election.

The Greens have put a Private Members Bill before parliament that would remove discrimination from the Marriage Act and give same-sex couples the right to marry and allow for overseas same-sex marriages to be recognised in Australia.

The Greens think that “it will be an issue both at the election and any joint participation of thousands of churches nationwide. Strong condemnations have been expressed by church leaders of many denominations, including our own. The surveys are available in English, Arabic, Chinese, Dinka, Italian, Korean, Tongan and Vietnamese. The Presbyterian Church in Australia is excited to be part of this important debate.”
The Desire of Our Heart: ESL ministry

By Judy Rowlands

First came the vision, then a request, and then a challenge. These stages lead to Woy Woy Presbyterian Church receiving the desire of its heart: the commencement of an English as a Second Language ministry.

In 2012 Session Clerk, John Baxter, attended a conference run by Ministry & Missions Cross Cultural Ministry Team at the Presbyterian Theological College. As a result, John saw the rich potential in our congregation, for which to connect with the community, and to grow.

During this time, we heard from a local Christian (Tan Luan), who had been hosting a Chinese speaking Bible-study group at her home. Tan wished to further assist his fellow Chinese-speakers who were new to Australia. A member of a different church at the time, Tan heard on the grapevine that Woy Woy Presbyterian might be calling a new minister of Chinese origin. She contacted the church, and hence began a Chinese speaking Bible-study group. By request, they have learned introduction, apology, invitation, agreement, disagreement and description, along with the use of tenses, are included games and singing. A picture dictionary proved invaluable.

Learning language through cooking – recipes, measurements, co-operation in the kitchen, and conversation – was a highlight of the foreigners’ group at one stage. All lessons have revolved around specific conversation communication needs of our individual students, and always included laughter and fun. Often a lesson plan changed as soon as a need was perceived and many lessons included games and singing. A picture dictionary proved invaluable.

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From the PWA

By Barbara Clark

The Bible is a reassuring positive reminder of God’s love for the world and His involvement in our lives. John 3:16 is the best known verse of the Bible: “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

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The Pulse

Hymnfest at Mosman

Scotts Kirk Presbyterian Church, Belmont Rd Mosman, will be the venue for a Hymnfest on Saturday June 4 from 2pm.

The event is being organised by the Mosman-Neutral Bay Inter-Church Council, comprised of local Anglican, Catholic, Presbyterian and Uniting churches.

Come along and join us for an uplifting afternoon of praise and thanksgiving, with favourite hymns both old and new.

The afternoon will be commenced by David Garrett, the hymn singing will be led by an ecumenical choir directed by Ga- reth Baard, and accompanied by organ, and an ecumenical choir will be led by an ecumenical choir directed by Ga- reth Baard, and accompanied by organ.

The event will be a great opportunity to sing together and enjoy some great music.

All ordinands are special, but when Graham Barron was or- dained and inducted to the charge of Walcha by the Pres- bytery of New England recently, there was an interesting quirk.

Graham had Peter - our own Pulse col- umnist Rev Dr Peter Barnes - the preacher for the occasion!

Without detracting from the poignancy of the occasion, Peter couldn’t resist a very grin and a smart quip.

“Could I say that I couldn’t pass up another opportunity to lecture him and lay hands on him,” he said.

“Obviously I was pleased and thank- ful to God, and trusting that the Lord does a work of grace amongst His peo- ple in Walcha.

“Also, the occasion was added to that my third son, Luke, and his fam- ily were also there. Luke played bass guitar or flute, and thank- fully Graham did not play anything (family joke: a constant stream of R flat lacks music).”

“Seminary was privilege for me, and a testimony to the loving kindness of the Lord of Psalm 103.”

Graham had been working as a high school teacher, his wife Karen in events management for the State Government, when he decided to study ministry.

“I was struck by Revelation 7:9-10; thee are a great assembly, which are clothed in white robes, and which are worthy to receive a crown. After this I looked, and beheld, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, and through the palms in their hands, and crying out with a loud voice, ‘Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!’”

“There is more to it than that, yet that is where it began many years ago. Beyond this, the call to full-time pastoral minis- try and ordination was another step along the way that involved both an internal desire and external recognition from those in the church.”

Asked how he felt about having his fa- ther preach at his ordination service, Graham offered a similar kind of very smile that delivered by his Dad.

“I have suffered a semester of his church history lectures at Christ Church College and so it was easy compared to that,” he said.

“A lot of grief for many people.

“Deliberately separating a child from his or her biological parents is at least very unwise, and to include into that mix a commercial arrangement, it is unavoidable that the surrogate mother is treated as an item for sale.

“Surrogacy, even done altruistically, objectives children and surrogate mothers and creates lifelong emotional issues for both, “ Ms Francis said.

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Words are used to describe PLC Sydney. Often refers to the school that has an evan- 

ers to a school that is associated with the young woman of integrity. 

Into a confident, caring and accomplished 

ating academic results as well as being a 

he Countess’ spirit lives on in the Col-

ity; to gain knowledge for the sake of being 

edge for the mere love of displaying it is van-

“to gain knowledge for the mere sake of 

things do not – and should not – change. In 

been transformed over and over again but 

12. Over its long history the College has 

out and make the world a better place, and 

rity and purpose….caring, confident and 

Kindergarten to Year 12. It aims to produce 

the value of girls’ education 

perspective, emphasising God’s sover-

“Jesus to redeem us. It is a World View be-

“marvellous human beings, deeply loved 

Mr Burgis says the students of a school are 

“Where do girls study theology? I hope the 

answer is at school,” he says. “Girls come to 

“in the world or, like Micah or Hosea, how 

to act justly in the world. Girls are keen to 

School Bathurst 

OUTREACH INTO THE COMMUNITY 

AT A GLANCE 

The school is a co-educational day and boarding school, rich in what it offers to students at school and the community 

The Scots School Bathurst has a strong relationship with the local Presbyterian Church congregation. 

“We reach out in a lot of different ways,” he says. “This is consistent with our ethos of a good Christian surround are 

grow up in a Christian surround are 

We have come from that ethos of a good Christian surround are 

Ireland describes The Scots School as a 

“We ARE community. We are part of the community. The community is part of us,” she says. 

“We need to be in touch and it is impor-

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It is beautiful to see the pre kinders speaking the truth of the Gospel to the girls in the junior school, providing a full context for students each week.

The commitment to partner with families in the education of their daughters provides a framework to nurture the growth of girls and foster personal growth along the way.

Perseverance, enthusiasm and curiosity are encouraged through the breadth of subjects studied as well as the extensive co-curricular program.

The Scots College is a distinctive all-boys school, providing a top education for high fee paying students. In fact, The Scots College is so much more than a school providing a top education for the children of rich fathers. Rather, it is a community of 1900 students from a range of different religious and socio-economic backgrounds.

The Scots College MISSION, CHAPLAINCY AND SRE

AT A GLANCE: The Scots College is a distinctive all-boys prep, primary and secondary boarding and day school that exists to inspire boys to learn, lead and serve as they strive for excellence together. Strong and positive values are important to the college, which aims to build a culture of respect for each community towards God, others, self and the environment by aligning its policies and practices with Christian principles. Particularly, it has a strong focus on mission and chaplaincy.

"It works because I stay present and keep in touch with students," she says.

"How it works is that I or the head of junior school welcomes students, then we have a song, then Bible teaching time follows. Sometimes this can be a game or a video. Bible reading, prayer, song to backup and message that we have taught. We do the presentation of certificates then finish with a song. Parents are welcome to attend and see what we do.

We have just finished a series in Mark’s Gospel called Meet The King, to see that Jesus really is the promised King, in the lead up to Easter.

Next term we are looking at friendship and what God has to say about how we conduct friendship, kindness, forgiveness and living a life in relationship to other people.

Two year six girls are rostered on to help with song actions and Bible reading and prayer. I speak to them during the week, have a practice.

The students are engaged and keen to be there. I enjoy seeing them sing and enjoy being in Chapel. I am the only Christian Studies teacher in the school, so I get to follow up in the classroom as well, clarify, link and remind.

Each class gets Christian Studies class each week.

Jen also spends equal time in the senior school.

In her ninth year as chaplain for the whole school, Jen sees her role as an opening opportunity to open the Bible with the students each week. Being a smaller student group, she gets to know them well enough to be able to speak to the situation and be there to support and encourage them.

We have boarders' chapel each Monday night as well, and get to know these girls very well.

The Chaplain has a pastoral role across the school - overseeing chapel services, organising camps, go on a service learning trip to Thailand for years 10 and 11.

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RELIGIOUS FREEDOM AT RISK IF MARRIAGE ACT CHANGES

The head of a Christian think tank has described the potential change to the Marriage Act as “the most urgent religious freedom issue in 2016”.

Freedom For Faith Executive Director Michael Kellahan says that experience overseas shows there are “drilling changes to other freedoms” when same sex marriage was introduced.

Mr Kellahan noted other challenges to freedoms that have emerged in recent times including:

- the controversies over the Safe Schools Coalition program in Victorian schools;
- the Tasmanian discrimination complaint against the Catholic Church over its ban on “Mrs Does Marriage” distributed through the churches schools;
- the move to deregister the Sydney University Evangelical Union (EU) from the clubs and societies program because EU requires declaration of faith in Jesus Christ in order to be a member, while the executive have to subscribe to a statement of faith;
- the University of Sydney Union (USU) and EU - one of the oldest student organisations at Sydney - had been in discussions for more than five years when it came to a head in March. The USU says that clubs and societies may not limit membership to students with an expression of faith.

Mr Kellahan said Freedom For Faith existed to ensure there is always space for faith in Australian public life.

Freedom For Faith has advisers from the Presbyterian Church, other denominations, as well as the legal profession.

In highlighting the importance of the potential change to the Marriage Act, Mr Kellahan said:

“The best protection of religious freedom will be if the Plebiscite or Bill is rejected.

“The experience of the US, UK, Canada, New Zealand and Europe is that a change to allow same sex marriage brings chilling changes to other freedoms.

“Once passed, the new understanding of marriage is enforced without much space for dissenters.

“Even before the Plebiscite has been drafted the Australian Catholic Bishops have been told they have a case to answer for sexual vilification hate speech in Tasmania. They have been summoned by the Tasmanian Anti-Discrimination commissioner because they taught against parishioners and students a Catholic understanding of marriage.

“Long before the laws censure speech, there is cultural pressure to be silent, and even a resultant tendency to self-censorship on sexuality and marriage.

“There is pressure to have Christian voices removed from the public square because they are prejudiced. This needs to be called as an anti-democratic move.

Freedom For Faith has appeared before Senate and parliamentary inquiries, made submissions on legislations, briefed politicians and drafted alternate legislation.

Mr Kellahan said the legal focus has been broadened so that Freedom For Faith now speaks with Christian leaders in churches, charities and schools, produces media content, networks with lawyers, and promotes high quality academic scholarship in University conferences.

“In this, much wisdom is found in old ways of thinking – to recognise that the foundational right of a liberal democracy is the freedom to believe,” Mr Kellahan says.

Christians of all denominations have always been at the forefront of navigating the competing demands of the individual conscience, the state and the church. Today a genuine commitment to religious freedom involves a commitment to true diversity and the encouragement of believers to live out their faith for the good of all Australians.”

Michael Kellahan has been invited to address this year’s PCNSW Assembly and will speak at a dinner on July 5 organised by the Gospel, Society and Culture Committee.

Mr Kellahan will also be speaking at Freedom For Faith conference at St Andrews Cathedral Sydney on August 12. More details will be available soon on the Freedom For Faith website.
IT'S JUST THE BEGINNING OF SOMETHING MUCH BIGGER

Same-Sex Marriage?

Church planting and church revitalization are at the heart of Ministry and Mission. We love to see established churches discovering new vitality in places like Tahmoor, Taree and Terrigal. We also love to see new churches starting at Albury, Cameron Park, Harrison, Homebush Bay, Petersham, Rozelle - and elsewhere. Planting new churches and revitalising existing churches is essential to the growth and health of the Presbyterian Church in New South Wales. I thank God that, in his wonderful kindness, he keeps on raising up men to head up these challenges. Recently, I spent time with Jeremy Tan, planning for a new church in Green Square. Here’s some background on this project.

Jeremy, tell us a bit about yourself.

I’m married to Kezia and we have a baby girl, Jemima. I will complete my studies at Christ College in 2018 and look forward to then leading a new Presbyterian church plant.

Why is church planting important?

Many people believe that church planting is the most effective way to advance Jesus’ disciples-making agenda (Matthew 28:19-20). To quote just one: Tim Keller said, “The vigorous, continual planting of new congregations is the single most crucial strategy for 1) the numerical growth of the Body of Christ in any city, and 2) the continual conversion and revival of the existing churches in a city.”

Can you give us a snapshot of the area where you will be working?

Green Square is the area of Sydney city and the airport. It includes five suburbs: Waterloo, Zetland, Alexandria, Bronte and Rozelle. Our focus area is Zetland on the eastern side of Green Square (adjacent to the Eastern Distributor).

Green Square is largely made up of 25 to 34 year olds high-growth, young professionals, living as singles or as couples without children in medium to high density dwellings. It is a melting point of cultural and ethnic groups where, apart from English, the languages most commonly spoken are Mandarin, Cantonese, and Indonesian.

Green Square is now the fastest growing area in the City of Sydney. By 2030 it will be home to 61,000 people, more than 40,000 of them under the age of 15 years. It will also be one of the most densely populated areas of the city with 22,000 people per square kilometre.

Why plant a church in Green Square when a number of churches have been planted there already?

Simply, “If 100 churches were planted tomorrow and each grew to 100 people, we would still have a long way to go to engage the 40,000 people moving into the area. We need more churches.”

Our prayer is that under God, Redemption Hill will be the first of many Presbyterian churches planted in area like St Leonards, St Peters, Tempe, Marrickville, Arncliffe, Wolli Creek and Trarsnville where, currently, there are none.

What’s with the name “Redemption Hill”?

The Bible tells us that when Jesus died on a hill at Calvary, he secured the redemption of all things. Jesus bought back the world that he made good but that had been ruined by sin. He is now renewing, restoring and re-creating it and he invites his redeemed people (the church) to join him in this great project. The name “Redemption Hill” reminds us that in and through the church, the begin to see glimpses of that great day when Jesus will finish what he started at Calvary.

What’s planned for Redemption Hill in 2016?

In November 2015, Sydney Presbytery confirmed its desire to see a new church planted in Green Square and established a Steering Committee to provide support, planning and oversight for Search to launch starting in 2017. The Steering Committee includes Eugene Hor (Minister at GracePoint, Lidcombe), David Burke (Pastor at Christ College, Burwood), David Baiker (Minister at Ashfield), Ian Stenhouse (Minister at GracePoint, Lidcombe), Tim McKeown (Minister at Randwick) and Mike Jackson (Pastor at Green Square).

In December 2015, we had our first vision day where we invited others to come and hear about the vision and consider partnering with us. We had a second vision day in February 2016.

Since March 2016, we have been meeting monthly as a launch team as we gather people to join us in this work. We have already pledged generous financial support, but we need more financial partners.

JOIN THE TEAM

We’re looking for at least 100 people to join us in what Jesus is doing at Green Square as we live out our vision of Jesus’ great command to love our neighbours as ourselves. We need leaders and we need people who are passionate about what we’re doing. We’re also looking for at least 35 people to join us in what Jesus will do at Redemption Hill. Please contact us if you are interested in being a financial partner.

PRAV

We are looking for 150 people to sign up to our mailing list, receive our newsletter and pray regularly for the new church plant in Green Square. This is the best way to keep updated with what’s happening. Please contact me if you’d like to be included in this.

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None Like Him
Jen Wilkin (Crossway)

Our limitations are by design. We were never meant to be God. But at the root of every sinner is our rebellious desire to possess attributes that belong to God alone. Calling us to embrace our limits as a means of glorifying God’s limitless power, Jen Wilkin invites us to celebrate the freedom that comes when we rest in letting God be God.

Living in the Light (Money, Sex & Power) [HC]
John Piper (Good Book Company)

Whether we’re rich or poor, married or single, in a position of great influence or not—all of us face temptation in the areas of money, sex and power. They are the dangerous opportunities of God’s glory. John Piper shows us that when we have the blazing glory of Christ at the centre of our spiritual solar system, the planets of money, sex and power find their true and beautiful orbits. This book is for every Christian and will help you to wake up to the all-satisfying glory of God, and discover what you were made for.

A Great Blessing to Me
Grant Gordon (Christian Focus)

The lives of George Whitefield and John Newton, interviewed as this study of a portion of those lives reveals, speak across the centuries to our day. These two marvellous characters have much to teach contemporary Christians. A great read for both the professional historian and the thoughtful believer.

Visual Theology
Tim Challies & Josh Byers (Zondervan)

In this book, we have made the deepest truths of the Bible accessible in a way that can be seen and understood by a visual generation. We have prepared what we see as a theology of the Christian life, a book that explains the ‘now what?’ of living as a Christian. It is ideal for the new or seasonal believer.

The Whole Christ [HC]
Sinclair Ferguson (Crossway)

Ferguson shows us that the Son of God, by the power of the Holy Spirit, has delivered us out of the kingdom of darkness and into the kingdom of his Son. He sets forth the loving kindness of God demonstrated in the cross of Christ, and the saving power of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

The Inerrant Word [HC]
John MacArthur (Ed) (Crossway)

Exploring key Bible passages, events from church history, common criticisms, and pastoral applications, the contributors in this volume instill Christians with both the certainty and the courage to defend the inerrancy of God’s Word—the means by which God has revealed himself and awakens sinners from death to life.
SRE is a positive influence that is greatly appreciated by students, parents and principals in many schools across NSW. The over 10,000 volunteers across the State are doing a mighty job by forming students in the teachings of their family’s faith, seeing well over 240,000 students a week in the process.

One of these volunteers is Madeline Christian, a mum of 4 who is also a volunteer at the City Central Presbyterian Church in Wollongong. Madeline has been teaching an SRE class for a number of years now in her local school and finds it an exciting and positive experience.

Madeline started teaching SRE when she found out there was a need for it in her children’s school (one of the classes was just sitting in front of a DVD each week as they were short of SRE teachers). With her teaching background and flexibility to teach SRE having young children still at home, she began teaching a SRE class. Madeline finds it really worthwhile and a great opportunity for children to hear about Jesus Christ, particularly for many children who may not have this opportunity normally. The children are very responsive to the lessons and she has seen many children grow in their understanding. Madeline has been fortunate to have had the same group of children as they have moved through from Year 1 to Year 4, and has found it so encouraging to see them at different times "click" in their understanding and get excited to hear more and more from the Bible.

Madeline has been able to spend a significant amount of time at the school for her own children, attending carnivals, school activities and serving on the P&C. Being involved in the school at these other times has given her the opportunity to build on relationships with the children outside the SRE class as well as other parents and staff. Madeline feels she has a good relationship with the school so the communication channels are open to talk about SRE options when things arise. As well as she has been able to build on relationships with other parents more easily as they know she is teaching their children SRE each week.

Each year at Madeline’s local school, as they approach Easter and Christmas, a SRE assembly is held with a guest speaker for all SRE classes combined together. Last year (and again this year), the parents of non-SRE students were given the opportunity to allow their children to join in through a permission note. This year, around half of the non-SRE students went to the Easter assembly.

There is an SRE class in every year in this school (from Kindergarten to Year 6) and each class has about 20 students. The numbers noticeably suffered this year in Kindergarten (about ¼ of last year’s student numbers) through the old enrolment form for new students, but the school subsequently sent out the SRE Preference letter to all new entrants in the school. This increased the numbers in kindergarten SRE, though it is still lower than previous years. Madeline’s positive relationship and good communication with the school very much helped in this situation, and she is hoping that next year’s enrolments won’t be affected to the same extent. Her desire is for as many young children to have the opportunity to be part of an SRE class and Question, Explore, Discover faith for themselves.

Madeline wants to encourage other parents to be involved in their local school as they are able, and to support SRE where they can in every day conversations. Building on relationships and taking opportunities is a significant part in supporting and growing SRE in your local school.

Please continue to pray for SRE and the work of many people behind the scenes in advocating for the strength of SRE for this generation and the next.

Suggestions for use:

• Provide a supply for school administration to give out to newly enrolling families.
• Ask for permission to display in the school foyer.
• Hand out primary brochures at your church playgroup to parents of children starting at school or high school brochures at your church kids’ club to parents of Year 5 & 6 children.

The heart of any ministry must be the Gospel. There is no denying or arguing the pulsing core of ministry must be the Gospel. Camp is no different. Whether it is your Local Church Camp or PYNSW’s Statewide Youth Camps, the heart of Camp has to be the Gospel.

The Gospel calls us out of darkness into the light to be in relationship with God, our father and creator.

PYNSW’s Statewide Youth Camps seek to be relational flowing out of the relationship God calls us into. It’s possible to hold a camp that isn’t relational, it’s pretty easy. However, people often describe PY’s Camps as ‘little glimpses of heaven’ – and it’s true! Sometimes Camps can feel that way, especially when there are 500 people singing ‘Amazing Grace’ a cappella in an auditorium. Sadly though, unless the entire Camp is built around relationships, often that ‘glimpse of heaven’ stops when you exit the auditorium. For Camp to truly be relational, this ethos has to extend beyond the doors of the auditorium flowing into every aspect of Camp.

Exceptional relationships just don’t happen, it’s not as simple as providing morning tea for 500 people after they exit the auditorium. Relationships have to be cultivated, especially for those who are younger. Sure, if you’ve been around a while, you might have the gumption to awkwardly start talking to a stranger over a brownie and coffee. Though if you’re a young person, it’s rare that you’d have the confidence to do this - it’s not very heavenly. For most people in that situation, you might be screaming to yourself ‘GET ME OUT OF HERE!’

In the case of a Gospel centred Camp, the relational foundation is already provided by the Gospel, in which we are brothers and sisters in Christ, family by nature. It’s just that we don’t know each other yet.

Every aspect of Camp contributes to the relational culture of Camp. It starts with the Gospel at the core, but practically what does that look like on the ground?

It begins by creating structured intentional opportunities to develop relationships. These are opportunities that force people to interact and become friends. One example of this would be a discussion group. When you flow out of the auditorium, you split into discussion groups. These groups are already set, leaving no requirement on individuals to make relational decisions at this level. Within the groups, there is an external input to stimulate discussion. It can’t be relied upon participants within the group to stimulate the discussion. If it is, we enter into the ‘awkward’ territory again. The answer is to provide discussion questions, though not just any discussion questions, but questions that warm the group up then lead them through simple to complex discussion. There are questions that engage with different types of people: the talker, the thinker, the drawer, the mover. It’s important when developing relationships to realise that people are different.

This is just one example of our relational culture. We also consider activities, meals, free time, cabins, sessions and more in this light of relational camping.

The end goal, though, is to facilitate the proclamation of the Gospel. With relational trust is gained, barriers are broken down, and questions can be wrestled with openly and honestly. The Gospel can be honestly and truthfully presented in all its rawness.

Sure Camp is fun, and that’s a significant benefit of relational Camping; you end up loving Camp with your friends. However what’s more important, what’s life and death, is the proclamation of the Gospel, and in the case of PYNSW, this is done through relational Camping.

SRE - a great opportunity to hear, to question, explore, discover faith for themselves.
Stacey Chapman has been studying with the Timothy Partnership for a part-time basis over the last number of years, and now is working with her church in women’s ministry. We recently spoke to Stacey about her Timothy Partnership experience.

Why did you start studying with the Timothy Partnership?

I started studying through the Timothy Partnership back when it was first launched. Studying at Bible College was one of those things that I’d always thought I’d like to do — but it wasn’t realistic for me with four children, and living outside Sydney. I felt I’d missed my chance. When I heard about the Timothy Partnership I thought it sounded like a fantastic opportunity — but not for me! Great for younger people, or Scripture students passing a degree in regular middle-aged people like me. But I had a friend who wanted to do it too, and we started together, and I discovered that in fact it was for people just like us!

It is for people involved in ministry in the local church who wanted to be better equipped to serve God and serve others in those ministries. When I started, finishing seemed like a very long way off — impossible even, but my goal wasn’t really to finish, but it was to help women grow in the Lord, and for many years I have been involved in a voluntary capacity. Doing the Timothy Partnership study has given me the opportunity to do that in a more formal way, and I know I’ve learnt an enormous amount through the essays and other assessments. I’ve also found it really helpful to have met regularly with a mentor over the last two years, reflecting with her on my ministry.

Where has it led you now?

Half way through last year I had finished the subjects for my Diploma of Theology, but there was still an elective I really wanted to do. So I made the obvious choice to enroll in an Advanced Diploma, which meant I could keep going just that little bit longer!

You are now working in a church — what is the connection of this with the Timothy Partnership?

This year, I’ve been offered a position on the staff of my church, which I am looking forward to taking up soon. I’m super excited (and also very daunted) by this opportunity, which was certainly not on my agenda when I began studying. I have been passionate for a long time about women’s ministry and seeing women grow in Christ, and for many years I have been involved in a voluntary capacity. Doing the Timothy Partnership study has given me the opportunity to do that in a more formal way, and I know I’ve learnt an enormous amount through the essays and other assessments. I’ve also found it really helpful to have met regularly with a mentor over the last two years, reflecting with her on my ministry.

Why choose theological Study online with the Timothy Partnership?

1. It’s flexible
You choose how to structure your week, without having set times for lectures or tutorials. You can also choose how many subjects you wish to undertake at any one time. This allows you to fit your study around work, family, church or other commitments.

2. It’s collaborative
You don’t learn on your own. You learn alongside others who form your online learning community. You also receive the collective expertise and experience of educators from both Anglican Youthworks College and Presbyterian Youth. As well, you are encouraged to undertake mentoring with your local church throughout your study, to enhance learning and provide practical ministry experience. We support you to equip your church mentor throughout.

3. It’s contextual
Rather than move away from your local church and church community, study online means you can continue serving locally, and see your learning brought to life in the context of your real-life experiences.

4. It’s cost-effective
There are no relocation, accommodation or transport costs when you study online. You also have access to government support, such as AUSTUDY and FEE-HELP.

5. It’s compelling
Its distance education done well, with balanced content, engaging audio resources, interactive online discussions and real-life application for your individual ministry context.

For more information on studying with the Timothy Partnership please visit timothypartnership.com.au

You can obtain an Australian College of Theology approved Diploma, Advanced Diploma or Certificate from home, while experiencing the support of a connected, online learning community.

I recently had the privilege of giving two Bible talks at the METRO conference. METRO is about serving God through being an apprentice in Christian ministry. It is a ministry apprenticeship where a trainee is trained by a mature Christian trainer, for Christian ministry. But of course, the idea of Christian discipleship applies to the whole church throughout the world not just to METRO trainees!

To understand what Christ calls us all to do as we serve him in this world, we can look to the great commission in Matthew Chapter 28.

Matthew 28:16-20: Then the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. 17 When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted. 18 Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

This is what Christ calls us to do. We are all called to fulfill his great commission. The great commission is that we should go and make disciples! But what is a disciple and how do we make one?

In January this year, while recovering from an operation, I decided to watch the Star Wars trilogy (Episodes 1, 2, and 3) on DVD. As I watched the trilogy one theme that struck me was that of what is called “the Padawan learner”. Let me explain…

In Star Wars, a Jedi Knight is like one of the knights of old. They are professional peace keepers and they are warriors who are the guardians of the universe. They are very experienced and very trained. But in the story of Star Wars, each senior-Jedi has what is called “a Padawan learner”, that is, a young person that they are mentoring to become a Jedi. Each senior-Jedi has a disciple. The Padawan learner followed the Jedi everywhere he went. The Jedi would train the Padawan learner. It was a mentoring relationship. There was a trainer and a trainee. The Jedi would share life with the Padawan learner and teach the Padawan learner how to be a mature person.

And so it struck me as I was watching these Star Wars movies, is this not what disciple-ships is all about? We can be encouraged that this idea did not originate first from George Lucas (the director of Star Wars) but actually it came first from our Lord Jesus himself. Jesus commands his church to go and make disciples. Find a Padawan. Make disciples and train them to be mature Christians. The big challenge for us from the great commission is that Christ calls us all to be disciple-making disciples. That means, invest your life into someone. From the great commission is that Christ calls us all to be disciple-making disciples. That means, invest your life into someone.

To do this we seek to be faithful, through the grace of God, to fulfill his great commission.

In his great commission Christ calls us all to be his disciple-making disciples.

JESSE HUCKEL
Minister of Griffith Presbyterian Church

“…
In March 2015, Cyclone Pam hit the nation of Vanuatu. Cyclones are a regular feature of life in Vanuatu but this was the most intense cyclone the South Pacific has known in living memory. Thank you to the members of the Presbyterian Church of Australia for your extremely generous donations for our brothers and sisters.

Some of the money was given immediately to the Presbyterian Church of Vanuatu to meet urgent needs. In consultation with the Church the rest of the money is being used for relief projects such as:
- repairs to Church-owned school buildings
- replacement of buildings that were severely damaged
- repairs to Church buildings
- vouchers to enable pastors to re-stock their library. At last year’s Assembly book vouchers were distributed to Presbyteries to enable them to select books sent from the Presbyterian Church of Australia and some ordered from the USA.
- the reprinting of the New Testament owing to the fact that many were damaged or destroyed by the cyclone
- fees for students at Bible Colleges who came from the islands but these were often severely affected by the cyclone.

Owing to the scale of the disaster and the shortage of building materials, these projects have taken some time to be completed and a few are only now receiving photos. Thank you very much for your generous partnership!

**PRESAID AND SANTO BUSH MISSION**

One of the projects supported by PresAID’s Christmas 2015 Appeal was the Santo Bush Missions need for a water pump for its farm and training centre. Located on Vanuatu’s largest island, the farm trains its workers in practical aid to remote villages in Vanuatu. In addition the training centre will be training people from these villages in practical skills such as carpentry.

The Santo Bush Mission is a ministry of the Presbyterian Church of Vanuatu and is led by missionary Tueni Wan from New Zealand. Tueni is a man full of vision and enthusiasm for the growth of the gospel in Vanuatu.

APWM greatly values the partnership of PresAID and the generosity of those who gave toward the water pump.

**MARTIN EAGLE**

In January-February Martin was in Australia to attend the Wycliffe six week Summer School and have a brief holiday. Martin will next be in Australia in February 2017 for home assignment. Martin’s support account needs extra pledges to enable him to return to Myanmar after home assignment.

**UPDATES**

**JAPAN: THE NEXT STEPS**

John and Rosemary Evans and family recently returned to Japan after 5 months home assignment in Australia. They now enter a particularly exciting phase of their ministry as the groundwork of the last few years begins to come together.

The task now is to assemble the Chiba City church planting team. It is hoped that within two years they will begin to meet as a church. The team includes Adam and Helane Ramsay (APWM/CMS) and Matt and Carly Chase (Mission to the World). Please pray for the Evans family that they will know God’s sustaining hand as they transition back into life in Japan.

Nathan and Tomoko Stewart continue to develop their partnership support and have recently been visiting churches to speak about ministry in Japan. Their plan is to help a Japanese congregation in Osaka reach out to people through English language ministry. Their current support level is at 50%.

APWM is planning to commission them on Sunday 23rd October if their support level is near 100%. If you would like to have them speak to your congregation then please contact Nathan on 0422 833 808 or nathan@stewartfamily.id.au or finance@apwm.org.au or use the form on the last page of this newsletter.

**THE BURDEN OF LOVE**

Lauren Crase

It was with great joy that Lauren Crase was recently commissioned for service in Timor Leste at the Browns Plains Presbyterian Church. Part of that joy sprang from the fact that Lauren grew up in the congregation and is the first person to be sent out by Browns Plains as a cross-cultural missionary.

During the commissioning, hands were laid on Lauren. She later commented “Those hands were heavy but I thought ‘This is a burden of love’”. Lauren will be serving in a remote area in Timor Leste through outreach, discipleship, teaching English and in healthcare. Lauren left Australia for the field in early May.

Lauren has served in remote Timor Leste on three previous occasions but this time will be located there for two years. Please pray for God’s wisdom as she settles into ministry.

**POSITIONS VACANT**

**Teacher of English for Academic Purposes - Talua, Vanuatu**

Oversee development of the Foundation Year and Bachelor of Ministry students’ academic skills, particularly in the area of English.

Qualifications • a love for Jesus • at least one year of Bible teaching (long term applicants) • where possible relevant English as a Foreign Language teaching qualifications and/or experience • flexibility and patience.

Primary and Secondary Teachers - Ethiopia

SIM in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia needs 24 teachers in its mission school. Such a school enables missionaries to stay on the field instead of having to return home for the education of their children.

Qualifications • a love for Jesus • academic qualifications appropriate to the area being taught • professional accreditation.

**Theological Lecturer - Talua, Vanuatu**

Full-time lecturer needed at the Talua Theological Institute, the Bible College of the Presbyterian Church of Vanuatu.

Qualifications • a love for Jesus • academic qualifications - either a Bachelor or a Master’s degree in theology

Please contact APWM for more information.

Please note that all positions require the raising of partnership support.
Supporting the Gospel in Myanmar

APWM supports the Evangelical Reformed Church of Myanmar through sponsorships provided to students at the Church’s theological college (Reformed Bible Institute) and also to pastors who work in rural regions of Chin State in north west Myanmar. Students train at RBI in Yangon, and many go on to serve the church in Chin State once they have graduated. This year the sponsorships will be $500 per student, to be given in this way please contact Sheryl Sarkoezy in the National Office for more information.

New APWM Directory 2016-2017

The 2016-2017 APWM Directory is now available. This provides information on all our current APWM missionaries and is a great resource for prayer. The Directory has been sent to congregations and more are available by contacting the APWM National Office. Please note that a digital version is not available because of security issues.

Meal for Mission

Each year we encourage congregations to hold an annual ‘Meal for Mission’ as a way of raising awareness about overseas cross-cultural mission and as a means of providing financial support for APWM’s overseas projects. We encourage you to choose a country from the list that can be found at www.apwm.org.au/partner-churches

There you can download information sheets about each of our Partner Churches. Please encourage those in the congregation to give the cost of one meal toward the work of overseas mission.

Email Update

Every two months the APWM National Office produces ‘Email Update’. This provides two months of prayer points for APWM missionaries all around the world. If you would like a copy sent by email then please send an email to Sheryl Sarkoezy national@apwm.org.au or phone (02) 8073 7490. Please provide the name of your minister so that we can check that you attend a Presbyterian Church.

For security reasons we do not make this available on the internet.

Including APWM in your Will

If you would like to include APWM in your will, then you may like to use these words as a guide:

“I give to the Presbyterian Church Property Trust for the National Committee of the Australian Presbyterian World Mission [here insert a description of the bequest together with the amount of money or description of property or other gift] free of testamentary charges and duties for [here insert] in general purpose or the specific purpose you desire] and I declare that the receipt of the Secretary of the Trust shall be sufficient to discharge to my Executors."

Please provide this wording to your Solicitor when seeking advice and assistance for your will.

Australian Presbyterian World Mission

This year the sponsors will be $500 per student, to be given before June. If you would like to support the Myanmar church in this way please contact Sheryl Sarkoezy in the National Office for more information.

How Does Someone Apply to Serve with APWM?

1. Talk to their local leadership

The first thing is to talk to their minister and church elders. They will be able to help determine if the applicant has the gifting and temperament for missionary service. They will interview the applicant and if they think they should proceed then they will refer the applicant to the APWM National Committee.

2. Talk to the mission agency

When someone wants to serve with a mission agency they should begin the application process with the agency, in parallel with their application to APWM. If they hope to serve with one of the PCA’s Partner Churches, they should contact the APWM National Director to discuss the opportunities available.

3. Submit the APWM application forms

Application documents are available on the APWM website: http://www.apwm.org.au/serving/have-do-i-apply There are various application forms to complete both for the mission agency and APWM.

4. Meet with the State APWM Committee

When all of the documents are received arrangements are made for an interview with the APWM State Committee. Applicants intending to serve with Partner Agencies are interviewed and accepted by the State Committee. A successful applicant is a member of APWM in dual membership with the Partner Agency. Applicants intending to serve with a Partner Church are interviewed by their APWM State Committee, and after that by the APWM National Committee.

Once someone is received as an APWM missionary, Presbyterian congregations are encouraged to get behind them in raising prayer and financial support to enable them to go to the field to which is God is leading them to serve.

I would like to support the following:

Missionary’s Name: □ Please send me the missionary’s prayer letter.

OR APWM ministry in a particular country: □ Please provide an amount of: □ $20 □ $50 □ $100 □ other $ □ Please indicate how regular your payment will be: □ one-off □ monthly □ half-yearly □ yearly

Four Ways to Give

1. Cheque

□ made out to: ‘Australian Presbyterian World Mission’

Name on card: __________________________

Date of first payment: __________________

Signature: ____________________________

Cheque

2. Credit card □ Visa □ Mastercard

□ Other payment method (please specify): __________________________

Name on card: __________________________

Date of first payment: __________________

Signature: ____________________________

Card Number: _________________________

BSB: __________________________

Account number: ______________________

Cheque

3. Direct debit

□ Please provide your bank details below:

Name of applicant: ______________________

Date of first payment: __________________

Signature: ____________________________

BSB: __________________________

Account number: ______________________

Cheque

4. Direct deposit

□ Please provide the name of the missionary you are supporting in the box below:

Name: __________________________

Date of first payment: __________________

Signature: ____________________________

BSB: __________________________

Account number: ______________________

Cheque

Cheque

Cheque

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GENTLENESS & PEACE

"Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near." Philippians 4:5-7

In 1947 WH Auden wrote a book-length poem which described modern society in terms of 'the age of anxiety'. Certainly, it is one of the obvious characteristics of our age.

People talk about the rat race and road rage, and lament that despite all the modern conveniences life does not seem to be any easier than it was without them. All the world desires gentleness and peace, but the more it seeks these goals, the further away they seem.

GENTLENESS BECAUSE THE LORD IS NEAR

Paul writes: 'Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand' (4:5).

The word translated as 'reasonableness' in the ESV is variously translated: 'moderation' (KJV), 'forbearance' (RSV, H. C. G. Moule), 'big-heartedness' (William Hendriksen), 'sweet reasonableness' (Matthew Arnold's famous expression), 'gentleness' (NASB, 'gentleness' (NIV, NKJV, NRSV), 'patient steadfastness' (Peter O'Brien) or 'reliability' (Luther).

Bishop Handley Moule says that the idea is 'yieldingness' – which is strange English but the right idea.

Aristotle contrasts this with strict justice, which no doubt is behind Luther's comment that 'the most extreme justice is the most extreme injustice': Lloyd-Jones says that this gentleness is more difficult to do than to rejoice. That may or may not be true for you, but it is certainly true that there is to be joy in our self-control and gentleness. There can be no resentment but only joy that we are following the Lord's will.

This gentleness is to be extended to all, not just to those we find it easy to be gentle with, and not only to Christians.

In all our relationships with people, whether they are Christians or not, whether they are reasonable people or cantankerous and ill-tempered, we are to be gentle (see Rom.12:17-18).

Being firm is commanded (Phil.4:1), but not being abrasive. We are not to be imagining slights and harbouring grudges, and busy devising reasons why we cannot have much to do with this person or that person. There is a great difference between being firm and being unreasonable. The Christian is to reflect the character of the Lord Jesus Himself (2 Cor.10:1).

The motive which drives the Christian is that 'the Lord is at hand', which is a distinctly Christian motive.

By definition, the Christian believes it, the unbeliever does not. Paul could mean, as Ben Witherington III says, that the Lord is close and watching us. Psalm 145:18 assures us that 'The Lord is near to all who call on Him, to all who call on Him in truth'. Because the Lord is near us, we can be strong enough to be gentle.

Don Carson, however, confesses to be 'not quite certain' what 'the Lord is near' means.

It is possible that Paul could mean as the Good News Bible has it: 'the Lord is coming soon'. James 5:8 could be cited in its favour. Hence J. B. Lightfoot writes: 'Bear with others now, that God may bear with you then.'

Both views make sense and it may be that both are intended. We are to be always ready for Christ (Luke 12:35-36).

The Christian is grateful for God's past mercies in Christ (Rom.12:1), but also looks ahead to what is coming (James 5:7-9). Why be joyful and gentle? Because the Lord is near - that is both a comfort (as it was, say, to Paul in prison) and an incentive (it would stop resentment, for example, against the jailers who beat him).

PEACE THROUGH PRAYER

Paul continues his train of thought: 'do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.'

And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus' (4:6-7).

If we are evangelical Christians, we have no trouble in saying that idolatry is a sin, and so is blasphemy, murder, adultery, homosexuality, and stealing.

We would also say that there are internal sins like pride, lust, and coveting, so sin is not just what we do but also what we think in our hearts. One suspects that we are not so used to thinking of anxiety as a sin. Yet Scripture says: 'Do not be anxious about anything.'

Clearly, this has to be interpreted properly. There is a concern which is right and good. Timothy possessed such a concern (Phil.2:20), as did Paul (2 Cor.11:28). There is a right concern for the welfare of others, a right kind of anxiety which Scripture does not forbid.

God does not commend a lackadaisical approach to life - 'no worries mate, no matter what'. That is the peace of the idiot, who has not faced up to life. The peace of God is greater than the pax Romana. This 'peace militant', to use Alexander Maclaren's expression, is beyond our comprehension (see Eph.3:19), but it is real.

Matthew Harmon puts it well: 'A prayerless life is a sign of a self-sufficient person; a prayerful life is a sign of a God-dependent person.'

The image that Paul uses is taken from the fact that Philippi was guarded by a Roman garrison (one might wonder: was the jailer in Acts 16 still in the Philippian congregation?).

As the Roman garrison protected the peace of Philippi - or was supposed to - so the peace of God guards the hearts and minds of His people. The peace of God is greater than the pax Romana. This 'peace militant', to use Alexander Maclaren's expression, is beyond our comprehension (see Eph.3:19), but it is real.

Paul is writing here to Christians, to believers in the Lord Jesus Christ. Here are common problems, or common sins, to be more accurate – unreasonable and anxiety.

Here are God's remedies – remember that the Lord is near and pray with thanksgiving. Attached is God's promise, that His peace will guard our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

This can choke the Word of God (see Luke 8:14). Martha was weighed down with good concerns but in the wrong way (Luke 10:39-42).

Christ is not saying that doing the washing up is wrong, but that being so concerned with it at the expense of hearing the Word of Christ is wrong. That kind of anxiety is detrimental to faith. Surely Paul is echoing the teaching of Jesus Himself (Matt.6:25-34).

To be anxious about nothing is to be prayerful about everything.

The answer to worry is not gorging on popping pills or calming techniques or Transcendental Meditation. It is prayer, which is communication with the God of the Bible.

If you find you are meeting yourself coming the other way, the answer is not less prayer, cutting down on meeting with God so that you can concentrate on more 'practical' activities, but more prayer. With some qualifications, one can cite JA Bengel's comment that 'Care and prayer are more opposed than fire and water.'

Notice that the prayer is not just asking for things, even asking for peace. It is prayer and making requests with thanksgiving. Gratitude is a feature of the Christian's prayer life (Col.3:15; 17; 4:2).

The Bible always treats ingratitude as a mark of the unbeliever (2 Tim.3:1-2). Whatever we are worrying about at the moment, we ought to start praying about, not in frantic anxiety but in calm thanking.

God's promised peace is given irrespective of whether the requests are granted or not; the peace is certain, the requests are not. There is a danger here. Everybody wants the peace of God (4:7), but only Christians want the God of peace (4:9). Matthew Harmon puts it well: 'A prayerless life is a sign of a self-sufficient person; a prayerful life is a sign of a God-dependent person.'

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