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"GLORIFYING AND ENJOYING GOD AS CHRIST-LIKE COMMUNITIES
TRANSFORMING OUR NEIGHBOURHOODS, OUR NATION AND OUR WORLD."

OCTOBER-NOVEMBER '15
Editorial Page

The views and opinions expressed in The Presbyterian

From the General Manager

with Wayne Richards

On what sexual journey is your school taking your child?

The idea that children need to be introduced to a variety of sex and gender identity issues so as to reduce bullying in schools is a moral fiction. Such activity amounts to the sexualisation of school children. Yet this appears to be an emphasis of the NSW Department of Education official Bullying Policy.

This is despite the simple fact that bullying based on sexual identity is statistically far less significant than many other basis of bullying such as body shape, ethnicity, academic performance, language, and other important examples for bullying are overlooked such as religion or income.

So why the flawed emphasis on sexualising children from the Department? In the five examples given in the Department’s official bullying policy gender and sexual issues are given the dominance with instances for the basis of bullying, namely sex, seemingly re-emerged to mean gender, homosexuality and transgender. While race and disability are also thrown in, the balance tips to an obvious preoccupation with gender and sex.

Respecting and accepting individual differences and diversity has to do with much more than sex. It is revealing that respecting and being tolerant to those of faith is never mentioned in the policy.

Children are being taught a social fiction that anti-bullying must have a sexual priority. Worse, the Department under the guise of anti-bullying has opened the door to third party adult controlled bodies such as the ‘Safe Schools Coalition’ (the ‘Wear it Purple Day’ and Minus18) who refuse to be excluded from the film screening if they notified the school in writing. Mr Powell said: “Then, Education Minister Adrian Piccoli told the media he had reminded the secretary of his department that the government expected schools to remain apolitical and that schools must comply with all departmental policies.”

Mr Powell said many parents were upset about the cancellation of lessons to attend the movie, which was made by a former student.

“Those who are engaging in the cancellation of lessons to attend the movie are not genuine pedagogy and certainly far less significant than many other basis of bullying such as body shape, ethnicity, academic performance, language, and other important examples for bullying are overlooked such as religion or income.”

Another example of consciences of children with a faith.

There are superior alternative anti-bullying programs available which have a much broader respect of diversity and tolerance, than just sexual issues.

The Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists has warned sexualisation of children. Among other things it refers to the imposition of adult models of sexual behaviour and sexuality on to children and adolescents at developmentally inappropriate stages and in opposition to healthy development of sexuality.

The Department of Education and Principals have invited adult run bodies with a narrow sexual agenda for supporting children (in their own words) to “experiment with changing your appearance to better fit your identity”. They allow distribution of images and material encouraging children to cross dress showing a boy in a school dress and a girl dressed in male school uniform. This is viewed as some institutional grooming of children and adolescents.

Their methods of promotion philosophically fail all genuine pedagogy and certainly are not constrained to PDHPE curriculum.

The ‘Safe Schools Coalition’ works closely with ‘Minus18’, another group totally preoccupied with non-gender sexual issues and run predominately by adults targeting the sexual nature of children, who showed their promotions as decreasing unknown levels of potential childhood ‘self-harm’. Please write or contact your local member or the Premier and request that the Minister of Education immediately:

(1) Remove all forms of blatant sexualisation of vulnerable children from all NSW schools;
(2) Remove the Safe Schools Coalition and Wear it Purple Day programs from all NSW schools;
(3) Ensure that issues to do with sexual identity are not included within the formal curriculum and are contained within an unbiased and proper educational framework; work at all times;
(4) Review and revise the Department’s official Bullying Policy so that it properly reflects a balanced and broad basis of bullying and not a narrow sexual one;
(5) Institute the Department’s Bullying Policy a specific written mention of tolerance and respect to protect the diversity of consciences of children with a faith.

The views and opinions expressed in The Presbyterian Pulse are not necessarily those of the Presbyterian Church in Australia or the State of New South Wales. The Church is not responsible for the accuracy, currency or reliability of any advice, opinion, statement or other information contained therein.

Special Report

Gayby Baby film “promotes gay lifestyle in schools”

by Karen Forman

A public school which was banned from screening a movie promoting gay families in school time was trying to change children’s minds by promoting a gay lifestyle – effectively bringing the Mardi Gras inside our schools, former PCNSW Moderator Mark Powell said.

Mr Powell, Moderator in 2014, spoke out in the electronic and paper media after prominent government high school, Burwood Girls High, in Sydney, sent a flier saying all students would attend a special screening of the documentary Gayby Baby during second and third periods on Friday August 28.

Mr Powell, minister at Cornerstone, who runs a youth group in the area, was interviewed by SBS TV, radio 2GB and 2UL, Channel 7 News, the Daily Telegraph and Channel 10’s The Project news show. After the matter was brought to light in the media, Education minister Adrian Piccoli subsequently banned every school in the State from screening the documentary during school hours.

Mr Powell said as well as being told to attend the movie viewing during school hours, the students had been instructed to wear purple clothing and purple cakes were going to be served after the movie.

“My concern is that children are being taught a social fiction that anti-bullying must have a sexual priority. Rather, the Department under the guise of anti-bullying has opened the door to third party adult controlled bodies such as the ‘Safe Schools Coalition’ (the ‘Wear it Purple Day’ and Minus18) who refuse to be excluded from the film screening if they notified the school in writing,” Mr Powell said: “Then, Education Minister Adrian Piccoli told the media he had reminded the secretary of his department that the government expected schools to remain apolitical and that schools must comply with all departmental policies.”

Mr Powell said many parents were upset about the cancellation of lessons to attend the movie, which was made by a former student.

“This is trying to change children’s minds by promoting a gay lifestyle,” he said in a front page story in the Daily Telegraph.

“Students are being compelled to own that prejudice is by wearing certain clothes and marching under a rainbow flag. Schools are supposed to be neutral and cannot propagate a political view,” Mr Powell said.

“On its own and with facilitated discussion afterwards it could have been perceived as being ‘educational’. However, this was not so much about education as it was about enforcing compliance to a radically different worldview.”

Mr Powell said there was actually a larger political power play happening behind the scenes. “This was not about Burwood Girls High School even though the makers of the film were originally from there. There is a homosexual political lobby group that goes under the innocuous name of the ‘Safe Schools Coalition.’ The stated aim on their own website is ‘A public-private partnership in support of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender queer and questioning youth.’ They actively encourage students to engage in cross dressing (e.g. a boy to wear a girl’s school uniform) as well as numerous other strategies and suggestions to promote their particular ideological agenda. Currently they have 87 schools across the State of NSW signed up – as far away as Narrabri and as close to home as Homebush Boys.

“Initially I was only concerned about the girls who didn’t want to attend because of the conflicted situation the Principal of the school had placed them in. However, what I have since discovered is that by allowing this to happen we start to operate in our schools the Department of Education is in direct contradiction of its own guidelines!”
Safe Schools Coalition doesn’t make safe schools
by John McClean

The Pulse

When God’s plan goes wrong

The Bible has many references to God’s plan for humanity including how He wanted man and woman to come together, marry, and produce children.

Very early on, in Genesis, we read that “then the LORD God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and brought her to the man.” (Genesis 2:21). The woman was not made of bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she was taken out of the man and united to his wife, shall be called ‘woman,’ for she was taken out of the man. The primary purpose of marriage is to unite a man and a woman or between any two people, to continue a relationship with the child, and to bring forth children.

The couple was not married. Did not live together. Shared no financial ties. But they were committed to each other for many years after her son was born and her partner gave birth to her child. How was this possible? It is not possible to have a marriage relationship without a wife or a husband.

Despite the absence of any “marriage” legal commitment to each other and the lack of a legal relationship, the Family Court of Australia has allowed the former partner to file for orders asking for time, including overnight visits, with the boy.

Whether it will make those orders a matter of the Court… and it could take months or even years to sort out.

Meanwhile, Meg is stressed out and her stress and anxiety is taking its toll on her health and the wellbeing of her seven-year-old child, who does not want a relationship with her former partner.

“What a huge mess,” she says. “It shouldn’t be like this.”

Not only does she have her ex-partner to be concerned about, she also has her grown-up children, a family friend, who has decided he wants to be a dad for all and not just the donor of the genetic material required to give her pregnancy such that everyone must fully accept the new definition of marriage.

(Reference was made from the audience to Senator Dastyari’s reaction to Katy Perry’s recent remarks in support of traditional marriage on the ABC’s Q and A, two nights before. Dastyari asked in the debate of peddling “American Evangelical clap trap,” offensive views and hate language and further, he stated that there were no reasonable arguments to be heard in support of traditional language.)

In answer to questions from the audience, Dr Anderson stressed the need to engage with our culture where which had not done so in the US now regret their inaction. Our pulpits, he said, are a place to inform congregations about what God says about marriage and they must not be silent.

I am a member of the pastoral staff of the Chinese Presbyterian Church in Sydney. At our recent staff retreat, we planned the preaching program for 2016. Unusually for a Chinese church we have decided this year to move next year to preaching on what God says about marriage and sex.

The throughline, a threesome rather than a couple, a further extension of the rejection of marriage to consist of any three people.

Monogamy rather than monogamy, the marriage relation is no longer exclusive but sexually open Weddelse-rather than wedlock- and slaughtered, marriage has an agreed use by date.

The attitude of “I get what I want” trumps every other consideration. When people are free to do their own thing, the rights of the unborn, whether fetal or fertilised embryo, and of children may well be disregarded.

The legalisation of single gender marriage has led to religious freedom being curbed, those who are conscience bound not to participate in same sex marriage are seen to be bigoted, homophobic and discriminatory. Under US law such have been charged and fined, “bigots” are not tolerated.

The Marriage Equality groupings are not only wishing the right to marry but should be heard that everyone must fully accept the new definition of marriage.
**Greg figures beyond Blue could use his mosaic**

Greg Scott deals with figures all day at work in the General Office...then goes home and works on figures of a different kind.

The insurance manager, who works in PC- NSW’s head office in Sydney’s Surry Hills, is a keen artist, who works in mosaics.

He has recently decided to create and donate a mosaic to Beyond Blue, the organisation that works to support people with anxiety and depression and related disorders.

"My connection with Depression has not been directly personal. Instead mine has been having the huge impact on some of my friends," he says.

"Their journeys have been individual. One friend experienced an inability to hold her newborn baby and sadly to this day, some 15 years on, continues to experience difficulty in mothering a child with Down syndrome. One of my friends who is in the process of developing and so what goes in during puberty effectively gets hard wired. This is why pornography can be so damaging and potentially even breakages to your ribs – and remember, if things go wrong with your ribs, it has the potential to be lethal…" (emphasis mine)

Dr. Patricia Weerakoon, a sexologist with over 35 years experience talks about there being a "neural plasticity" to the brain especially during childhood and teenage years. This is because young people are constantly in the process of developing and so what goes in during puberty effectively gets hard wired. This is why pornography can be so damaging and potentially even breakages to your ribs – and remember, if things go wrong with your ribs, it has the potential to be lethal…" (emphasis mine)

The Australian Christian Lobby (ACL) has welcomed the Government’s response to the Syrian refugee crisis with the allocation of 12,000 additional places for asylum seekers.

The Australian Christian Lobby believes that assistance should be based on generation of children who are being stigmatised, but also to normalize a whole range of sexual practices that children below the age of 18 are in reality not actually ready for.

"Many of our supporters have been scheduled to travel to Syria to provide assistance to those in need," Mr Shelton said.

"They are our first love and compassion is never to be forgotten."

"We've not even begun to discuss the ethical dimensions surrounding commercial surrogacy and anonymous donor conception, both of which are needed to deliver marriage equality," Mr Shelton said.

"We hope as Prime Minister Mr Turnbull will also consider how people whose views on marriage are deemed by the state to be bigoted will be allowed to exercise freedom of speech, conscience and religion."

"Mr Turnbull will need to explain how his vision for redefining marriage will allow Christian and Islamic schools to continue to teach the truth about marriage without falling foul of anti-discrimination laws."

"Given that we now have a Prime Minister who supports changing the definition of marriage and therefore family, it is more important than ever for people who support Judeo-Christian values to engage with politics."

"This is not a time to be passive or silent about the things that matter for a flourishing society," Mr Shelton said.


Pray for Syria

September saw the Federal Government decide to accept a number of refugees from war torn Syria.

As the Pulse went to press, the PCNSW had not yet looked at any action it might take, however, Gospel, Society and Culture Committee convenor John McLean urges people to pray:

“We would urge the Federal Government to be generous in caring for people suffering in the Middle East, whether this involves supporting safe haven or bringing refugees to Australia,” he said.

“Over the last few years we have been praying regularly for the church in Syria and Iraq as it has faced horrific suffering.

“We are encouraged that the Government will extend generosity to other groups suffering, and we hope the Federal Government will extend generosity to all groups who are suffering.”

Mr McLean said as people who knew God’s love, “we would wish to extend a welcome to people who were currently displaced in the Middle East.

“Our congregations would be willing to care for and support refugee families fleeing persecution and suffering,” he said.

“The Presbyterian Church of NSW has two Arabic speaking congregations which are very concerned for families and friends and fellow-believers in the Middle East.”

Vale Thomas Pascoe

It is with sadness that we report the recent passing of a husband, father and strong advocate of the Presbyterian Church in Camden.

Tom was a long term member and Elder of St Andrews, Camden over the period 1962 – 2015. He assumed and performed the role of principle church “greeter” over a period of in excess of 40 years and through such a simple role encouraged many on their journey of faith.

He was a leader and strong advocate of Presbyteranism in the aftermath of the breakaway Church Union in the 1970s and together with his fellow elders and the support of Rev Fred Burke he helped to address some difficult times of securing the physical and spiritual wellbeing of the members.

Even from his constant recent bouts of illness and finally his palliative care bed he was still championing God’s charter of salvation as a Presbyterian.

He is survived by his wife and church organist (over 50 years) and sons Malcolm and Graham and daughter Sharon and their respective families. (Children, grandchildren and great grandchildren)

Recognition for Barbara

PWA stalwart Barbara Bullen has received an award from the National Council of Women for improving the status of women.

The award was presented to her at a lunch attended by the NSW Governor’s wife, Mr Linda Hurley.

Barbara has been the Presbyterian Women’s Association State President from 2012 to 2015.

During that time she has encouraged and enabled women in PCNSW to follow Christ in their endeavours in Women’s Ministry in NSW.

She has travelled to city Parishes and with the State to speak to women who have a heart for Christ and to encourage them in Bible Study and Prayer.

Over the past three years Barbara has addressed the NSW Assembly to speak to Ministers and Elders to tell them of the work that the women are doing in women’s ministry in the Presbyterian Church.

Barbara has been a PWA member for nearly 50 years and during that time has acted as branch President, Secretary and Treasurer. She has held positions on State Council as Selective Member and City Vice President. Barbara is a Deputy Convener of the PCNSW Extension Committee and assists with the Market Committee, Doreas Committtee and organizing rosters. Barbara is also a member of the Pastoral Care Board at Manly Hospital.

Also over many years she has been a member of Red Cross as volunteer and has received many awards and medals. Barbara was very involved in the Red Cross door to door knock in the Hunter Valley, Dungog and Wagga Wagga for over 20 years until she was involved in full time ministry with her husband. During that time Barbara taught First Aid Courses, Child Care and Baby sitting courses through Red Cross at Newcastle and Hunter Valley High Schools, TAFE’s and Newcastle University.

Barbara travelled extensively teaching and examining First Aid to the Hunter teaching at many businesses. Barbara was actively involved in running Junior Red Cross Clubs in many primary schools.

Barbara has many interests within the church and also in the community. Barbara is involved in working for Allowah Presbyterian Hospital for intellectually disabled children by organizing Jazz evenings to raise money. Barbara is also involved in the Presbyterian Island Mission that sends Padres to the outback to minister and care for those who at time have tough

Punches are drawn more tightly and the sounds of explosion give way to giggles.

The realisation that we are little people in the face of something so mighty grips everyone. And when the torrential spray becomes too great, people turn their faces and even their bodies to present their backs to the fury. I did. Eyes tightly shut. Camera carefully protected. And then I remembered where I was, that I’d paid for this experience, and that I’d never see it again in all likelihood. I opened my eyes and began to turn to face the Falls and, as I roared, I realised that everyone around me was turning back as I was – by some giant, unscripted choreography. Hundreds of people, captivated in wonder.

And there was silence.

Nothing more. No more chatter. No more exclamations. Just silence. The roar of the water and the howl of wind – and nothing else. It overwhelmed me, and in my mind there dawned the realisation that this was a foretaste of that indescribable moment when every knee will bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord. That powerful moment when, in all its overwhelming weight, is undeniable. When the bare facts of life and the truth of God’s sovereignty can no longer be contested, and all mankind will acknowledge Jesus Christ as Lord.

I thought, too, of that moment when the seventh seal is opened of which the Scripture says, “There was silence in heaven.” I thought of the unspeakable horrors that follow – the horrendous terror that assaults mankind and I was so grateful for a Saviour. Abound. The little boat, I would drown in an instant in the Niagara River. Abound my Saviour Jesus, the wrath of God would consume me without notice.

And I, too, was silent. Lost in wonder, love and praise.

And then another thought came to me. If every spectator is dumb before the Falls, and if every soul is silent before God – if every human is made to feel small and grandeur of the Falls and by the ineffable majesty of God on the Great Day – what would it take amongst Christians for the world to look on now and be spell-bound? If the size and power and noise of the Falls beggars the mind, what behaviour in Christians would cause others to be silent and, in wonder, to long to know the hope that lies within us? What know its like when people fail, and others say, in deep disappointment, “I can’t believe they’d do that!” But what behaviour in Christians – what lifestyle – would grab the world’s attention so that people looked with admiration instead and said, “I can’t believe they’d do that – for me!” My mind jumped to Jesus’ words, “All men will know that you are my disciples if you love one another!” It was his answer to the question, what would it take for the world to notice – for the world to see something so spectacularly overwhelming that it grabbed the attention of everyone and brought them to silence. In his day and ours this truth stands, the world is longing to see people who have committed to follow Jesus love and praise one another. It was his answer and we must not let it go untold.

Barbara Bullen pictured for her award from the National Council of Women for improving the status of women.
The Pulse

"Social networking can make it more difficult and useful.

Interacting with people can contribute to life, "she says.

"We need to evaluate technology and be intentional about how we use it and deliberate about the place that it has in our lives.

"As Christians we need to guard how we spend our time and be cautious of technologies that potentially draw us away from God and His kingdom while at the same time being wisely opportunistic about how we use it for the growth of the kingdom of God."

"Social networking, however, can be demanding and distracting - there are time costs in creating content, responding to questions (sometimes too quickly and without reflection) and following "friends". The paper also warns that there can be consequences for constant information feeds from social media sites - 29 per cent of which is via mobile phones.

"Christians could also find that their hunt for constant information feeds from this pervasive medium.

"At a day-to-day level it allows people to sustain meaningful conversations and generate for constant information feeds from this pervasive medium.

"Interacting with people can contribute to life, " she says.

"We need to evaluate technology and be intentional about how we use it and deliberate about the place that it has in our lives.

"As Christians we need to guard how we spend our time and be cautious of technologies that potentially draw us away from God and His kingdom while at the same time being wisely opportunistic about how we use it for the growth of the kingdom of God."

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**Moderator Testimonial**

**WITh RT R E v K E vIN  MURR a y**

We need to think like missionaries wherever God has placed us.

We've all watched in horror as some Christian denominations have been commissioned by the Lord Jesus Christ, to take the gospel to the ends of the earth and in our own backyard. That is what the Bible teaches.

It's very easy to domesticate mission in our own backyard. It's very easy to become comfortable with our setting and our culture that we begin to look more like a cruise ship than a lifeboat.

Recall the words of Jesus: “He that is faithful and wise shall receive glory and honour and peace. But he that shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, of him shall I make a ruler over many things.” (Matthew 25:34)

We need to keep on reminding ourselves that we are people who have been commissioned by the Lord Jesus Christ, to take the gospel to the ends of the earth and in our own backyard.

We need to think like missionaries wherever God has placed us.

So what are we? A cruise ship or a lifeboat?

**AN HISTOrIAN’S STOry**

A PhD candidate at Macquarie University and a lay preacher at Hawkesbury District Presbyterian Church, my life was not always as honourable as it is today.

But I have always been exposed to history and the Bible as far back as my memory stretches, and looking back now, I can see that these two sources of learning, when brought together in my life have strengthened my faith immeasurably.

Some might question bringing together history and belief, evidence and faith.

But I think it actually makes for a very happy marriage of sorts. That is because strengthening one's faith in facts has a strong Biblical basis.

As Hebrews 11:1 puts, a healthy faith ‘is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see.’

Obviously, human beings have not yet invented a time machine and we can't simply go back in time to see what life was like for the Christians of the first century. But we can investigate for ourselves those writings and artefacts the ancients left behind for us to find, and learn from them, including the Gospel accounts of Jesus’ life and the Letter to the Hebrews itself.

Indeed, even the writer of that epistle believed such, writing in the very next verse that "confident and assured faith, to what the ancients were commended for.” (Hebrews 11:2) Learning from the faith of the ancients, therefore, can inspire us, and can be beneficial to our own faith.

However, there was a time when I had my doubts that the study of ancient history could have any benefit at all to my Christian walk. When I was much younger as a first-year Arts student, being a Christian was hard. Surrounded by sex, drugs, and rock 'n roll, it didn't help matters much that many of the university's teachers were atheists. Young students are so impressionable and when peers and mature teachers say your faith is naïve, uninform, and unsubstantiated, sometimes you give in and begin to believe them. So, for a while there my faith in God was very weak, flimsy even, and lacking a solid foundation.

The voices telling me God does not exist were even, and lacking a solid foundation. That is because strong Biblical basis.

But that was then. Happily, that spiritual dryness could not last long. Soon I began to study the New Testament as part of my course and examine its historical reliability, and very quickly it became clear to me as an historian that as a source of information about Jesus, Judaism, and the early Church, the Bible really is infallible!

But not only did I rediscover a reliable historical source — I found a Spirit-inspired one too, and one that made me put my faith in Jesus Christ.

When I became convinced about the truth of Jesus, I really was set free too. I found his love, not just for me but for all of us, as expressed to the point of death on a cross and beyond, and I found his real, factual, and historically verifiable life power, as displayed in his life on earth and beyond as well.

I had discovered life's greatest treasure — I had certainty about God, His love for us, and His burning desire to have a relationship with every one of us. No university, or any learning institution, can manufacture that God Himself had provided that strong foundation and framework my faith had needed for so long.

Much time has passed since then. Now, my faith is stronger than ever, and I am proud to say that I am a member of a scripture-loving Presbyterian church in South Windsor in Sydney's northwest, and preach there as a lay preacher on occasions. I can truly say I'm living my life.

I am also studying ancient Roman history at the highest level at Macquarie University and am even a published author, having written on many ancient and Biblical topics for Archaeological Diggings Magazine over the past nine years, showing readers all over Australia how beautifully archaeology and ancient history vindicate the Bible's integrity.

I have also authored the recently released book Finding the Lost Years of Jesus: A Christian Approach, which draws on ancient evidence to show that the Bible's claims about Jesus are factual.

Of course, you don't need to be an historian to draw that same conclusion, or study history to have a strong faith. You can see God's invisible qualities simply by looking at the people and the things around you. But if we want to gain more understanding of God and His creation, as well as our own place in creation, we really do need to familiarise ourselves with Jesus and get to know him well.

That can be difficult in a fallen world in which we can be weak from time to time, but if you want the truth, and if you want true freedom, give what the Bible says about faith in Jesus Christ a try, and see for yourself how factual the Bible is, and how strong your faith can become.
WHY BECOME A CHAPLAIN?

Many Chaplains agree that being a School Chaplain is one of the most rewarding jobs available. Chaplains are able to run specific programs tailored to the needs of the school community, and offer support for 25 years and in Victoria for almost 50 years.

Due to its success the Program was extended in 2012 and continued in 2015. The Federal Government is currently looking to fund the program until the end of 2018 through the respective State Governments.

Each state and territory now needs its own grant application process so that all schools wanting a Chaplain can apply. There is no automatic rollover for previous grants, and not all schools will be successful.

The NSW Department of Education and Communities (DEC) is responsible for the application process for NSW state schools.

GENERATE MINISTRIES

Generate is the largest provider of School Chaplaincies in NSW with 130 School Chaplains, and 140 Chaplains in schools in the recruitment, training and ongoing professional development of School Chaplains. This ensures the placement of high quality Chaplains who are well equipped to support young people and strengthen local community.

THE ROLE OF A CHAPLAIN IN SHAPING WELLBEING

School Chaplaincy is a dynamic program that is tailored to the needs of the school. The specific tasks and timetable of the Chaplain are set by the Principal who best understands the specific needs of the school.

Chaplains assist in key areas of a student’s wellbeing from peer and adult connectedness to school and community engagement. Chaplains are qualified, trained, and accredited.

A Chaplain does not provide clinical or specialized care but rather pastoral care that shows a clear understanding and awareness of how to promote wellbeing. A vital aspect of which is to help students recognize when and how to refer to other services.

The National Curriculum recognises the importance of pastoral care. The Chaplaincy Program under the National Schools Chaplaincy Program (NSCP). The Federal Government is currently looking to fund the program until the end of 2018 through the Department of Education, and the majority of grants in 2015 were for amounts of $18,870 p.a. This provides for a 9.5 hour week Chaplaincy Service.

APPLICATION PROCESS FOR 2016-2018 GRANTS

The State Government has announced that applications for the 2016-2018 (3 years) grants for School Chaplains in NSW schools in Semester 2 of 2015. The application form will be provided directly to all schools by the Department of Education, and in Victoria for almost 50 years.

WANT TO FIND OUT MORE??

If you would like to know more about the Chaplaincy program, how to get a chaplain for your school, or how to apply for a chaplaincy grant, you can contact Peter Adamson at 04 6567 4700, or contact Generate Ministries directly to discover more about the myChaplain program! Call: 02 8268 3328

Visit: www.mychaplain.org
Email: info@generate.org.au

7 WAYS CHAPLAINS ASSIST WELLBEING

1. Mental Health and Wellbeing: Be there for students who are new here, getting bullied, or who have an immediate emotional need.

2. Small Group Program: Help students who may feel isolated or unique.

3. Educational Support (including In-Class help): Help students who are struggling with a subject or work.

4. Extra-curricular Activities – eg coaching. Help students who are interested in sport or other extra-curricular activities.

5. Connecting with the Community: Help students who need to understand and connect with other people.

6. Referrals: Understanding where the role of a Chaplain stops and where referring to other professional services begins is vital to ensuring wellbeing.

7. Informal Conversations - A Dolphin is missing in the community.

How can I get involved in Chaplaincy?

Chaplaincy offers a great opportunity to reach into the hearts and minds of students and their parents.

NSW has a growing number of state schools who recognise the value of the Chaplaincy program and are seeking to secure a trained support worker in their school to work with their students and wider school community.

They are looking for qualified individuals who are seeking to have an impact in the lives of young people helping them to thrive.

School Chaplains are required to have as a minimum a Certificate IV in Youth Work or Pastoral Care (or designated equivalent) – which is available through the Timothy Partnership (www.timothypartnership.com.au). Degree or diploma-qualified candidates in education, social work, psychology, theology, welfare, youth work or ministry will in most cases be required to have met minimum qualifications.

WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNED PERSONALLY AS A METRO TRAINER?

I’ve come to realize that Jesus build his church through the power of the Holy Spirit. I’ve come to realize that prayer and relying on his guidance has been the biggest key to my success.

In Jesus’ name I give thanks to God who has already led me to my current position as a Metro Trainer. I’ve been a Metro Trainer for over 5 years, I’ve grown a lot under the guidance of Simon and Steph. As they poured into my life with love and care I’ve learned to trust that Jesus will build his church through the power of the Holy Spirit.

SUSAN MASTERS FROM Costamunda Presbyterian Church is the local chaplain at Costamunda Public School. Susan serves the Costamunda Public community by working alongside the learning and support team to facilitate the wellbeing of our students and their families. If you would like to find out more about what Susan is doing in Costamunda or support towards increasing the chaplaincy boldly at this school please go to http://mychaplain.org.au/mychaplain/susan-masters

How is your experience of being a METRO trainer been?

What have you learned personally as a METRO trainer?

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Christian Petersen didn’t want to study. In fact he kept finding reasons not to.

Excuses like: “I’m too busy with work!” “I don’t want to move to the city” “I can’t afford to be a student again!” He was helping out with youth ministry at his local church, and held toyed with the idea of getting more involved and studying theology, but at his age and stage in life, he says he definitely wasn’t ready to study.

All his excuses however melted away when he broke his leg and ankle and had three months off work. This happened just a couple of months before he and his wife had their first child. Then a week after their daughter was born, Christian found himself unemployed.

His Minister at the time fortuitously turned up on his doorstep a few days afterwards, with information about the Timothy Partnership (TP) Diploma of Theology, and as Christian says, “All my excuses were dissolved. I was no longer busy with work, wasn’t earning anything more than a student would any longer, and, with TP being offered by correspondence, I didn’t need to move to the city!”

Christian though hadn’t been in a classroom for the best part of a decade.

Initially he was concerned about being a mature age student, and that his brain wouldn’t cope with going back to study, particularly studying theology. He says, “Theology in particular brought to mind images of old guys in robes sitting around stroking their beards and discussing the intricacies of the bible. No language, no body else understands. My biggest concern was that my rather simple view of the world, God and the Bible wouldn’t be adequate enough to hold up to the rigours of theological study.”

Fortunately he found it different to his pre-conceived notions.

“I’ve been in classes with people from all walks of life, backgrounds and situations. Whilst there are certain expectations academically, as would be expected, the TP team have been more than happy to help me out in my moments of feeling academically out of my depth.”

One of the questions often asked is, “How will I fit my studies around my everyday life?”

Christian responded this way, “I think the flexibility of TP was the key feature for my choice. I could study full-time or as little as one subject a semester, anywhere I had internet connection or for short periods without internet if I needed, and if I did get a little work I didn’t need to fit it around lectures or Uni classes.”

Christian has been studying quite intensely, doing 3 units a semester, in order to finish off his Diploma studies as quickly as he could. He said that when he first started studying, helped spend at least 3 days trying to study his units (if he wasn’t distracted by his cute children!).

Then a significant change in the direction of his family’s life saw them move to Cowra, NSW, where he now teaches SRE for 2 days early in his week, as well as helping out at his local church youth group. TP then uses the other 3 days a week for study.

He has obviously become more practiced, as he also says, “I still manage to find time to help out with 2 primary school Scripture classes on Wednesday and even the occasional mid week fishing trip with my minister.” Plus he also finds time to check on how his wife and children are going with their busy days, and he also helps out with his local church youth group.

One of the highlights for Christian as he has studied through with The Timothy Partnership were the moments when things just ‘clicked’ for him.

He calls these his ‘light bulb’ moments, as when things really went click in his mind and in his understanding. “In the midst of the online forums, someone will word something that makes all the pieces fall into place and I spend the rest of the day annoying my wife with my sudden clarity of understanding!”, he says.

Christian has just finished his study at the end of Semester 1, 2015, and he will graduate in early 2016 with a Diploma of Theology.

What were some of the benefits of studying with The Timothy Partnership?

“The academic side of the Timothy Partnership is only a part of the overall benefits. The relationships that develop from the course, even those that last only a subject, have been a great encouragement in both my study and personal life. I started the course as a step toward my goal of getting into a youth ministry position but the benefits in my personal life and walks with God have really made that a secondary outcome.”

If you would like any information on the Timothy Partnership please visit www.timothypartnership.com.au

Units on offer in Semester 1, 2016 will be:

OT102 Old Testament Prophets & writings
OT140 Old Testament Overview
TH210 The Doctrine of God & The Person & Work of Christ
CH202 The Church from 1550 to Modern Times
PC249 a, b, c, d - Guided Spiritual Formation
DN201 Foundations of Christian Education
PC201 Ministry Formation
EM110/EM310 Foundations of Youth Ministry
EM231/EM424 Foundations for Evangelism
EM256/EM454 Church Planting
PC211 Ethics & Contemporary Problems

Plus Youthworks College Summer Intensive (usually towards end of January/February):

DN232 Children’s Ministry Skills
DN230 Introduction to Church-based Child-Ministry
DN221 Youth in the Churches
DN210 Foundations of Youth Ministry
Hampers do not need to be members of the local church. People receiving this support come in all sorts and need to be supported in many different ways. Often it is the little practical things that can show God’s love in a time of need. One of the things we offer is a comfort pack for relatives who have had no time to pack a bag before rushing to the hospital - a toothbrush, toothpaste, deodorant, motel-sized shampoo, comb, soap, sanitary items and underwear. You can support our chaplains by making a donation of these items which are then packed into individual care packs. If you’d like to get involved in this work please get in touch with our Senior Chaplain, Ian Schooswater via email at ischooswa ter@jerichoroad.org.au Your partnership makes things like this possible.

If you are interested in helping and want to know more about how you can support Packed with Love… to refugees in your community we would love you to nominate interested people to support Packed with Love… and a way to distribute them to those in need. (among other things) and we are looking for volunteers to support the work of Packed with Love… and for those arriving from Syria through our local community or you can get in touch with Manda John ston at mjsjohnston@pcsnsw.org.au

REFUGEE RESOURCES
If you are in a church that provides support to refugees in your community we would love to hear from you. We have a way of collecting books and educational resources (among other things) and we are looking for a way to distribute them to those in need.

If you are interested send Jon Flood an email on jfloody@pcsnsw.org.au

CHRISTMAS HAMPERS THAT SHOW GOD’S LOVE
This year, as in previous years, Jericho Road will be distributing Christmas Hampers to those in need to those who knock on our door at Surry Hills and in Sydney-based and regional Presbyterian Churches. We want to let people in need know that we have not forgotten them on the occasion of the celebration of the birth of our glorious Saviour.

If you are able to assist by donating food items (please get in touch for a list of suitable items and general guidelines), please send your contributions into our head office at 166 Chalmers St Surry Hills. You can also make a financial donation to support the purchase of extra items for the hampers or for regional churches to purchase things for those in need in their local communities.

If you are able to assist by donating food items (please get in touch for a list of suitable items and general guidelines), please send your contributions into our head office at 166 Chalmers St Surry Hills. You can also make a financial donation to support the purchase of extra items for the hampers or for regional churches to purchase things for those in need in their local communities.

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If you are able to assist by donating food items (please get in touch for a list of suitable items and general guidelines), please send your contributions into our head office at 166 Chalmers St Surry Hills. You can also make a financial donation to support the purchase of extra items for the hampers or for regional churches to purchase things for those in need in their local communities.
Jericho Road is seeking to appoint a Chaplain at Allowah Presbyterian Children’s Hospital and The Children’s Hospital Westmead. This is a combined position of four days per week - three days at Allowah and one day at Westmead.

This special role of working with children and their families at a time of great need. The role of Chaplain is to provide pastoral care to patients, parents, staff at these hospitals. In this role you will be ministering to children across a wide range of faith traditions. There are on call responsibilities at both hospitals. The successful applicant will also be required to work one of their days on either Saturday or Sunday at Allowah.

The successful applicant for this role will have:

• A degree or diploma in theology
• Completion or a willingness to complete training in pastoral care that meets the requirements set out for the appointment of a chaplain by the Civil Chaplany Advisory Committee
• Membership of a Presbyterian Church
• Experience and a demonstrated competence in pastoral ministry
• A demonstrated ability to work harmoniously as part of a team, which will allow them to work with chaplains of other denominations and other faiths
• A willingness to undertake further training in Pastoral Care

A job description is available on request.

If you are interested in applying for this position please do so in writing, including your resume and covering letter to: Rev Ian Schoonwater, Senior Chaplain at ischoonwater@jerichoroad.org.au

If you have any questions about this position please email schoonwater@jerichoroad.org.au

The position will commence in January 2016.

The closing date for applications is 23rd October 2015.

If you are interested in applying for this position please do so in writing, including your resume and covering letter to: Rev Ian Schoonwater, Senior Chaplain at ischoonwater@jerichoroad.org.au

If you have any questions about this position please email schoonwater@jerichoroad.org.au

In no way shape or form do I consider myself a biologist. I know I possess a body, and that pretty much exhausts my knowledge of biology. So I must admit, picking up a 400+ page book discussing issues concerning reproduction written by a medical doctor a little intimidating. But I need not have worried! That’s because Megan Best wrote her book for people like me.

Best demonstrates extraordinary giftedness in presenting what can be a daunting, complex and confusing issue. She brings highly important issues down to earth, making them accessible to the average person in the street. Best’s aim in the book is to inform the reader about fertility practices and make decisions concerning them from a Christian worldview. This entails being able to understand the basic biology behind the issues, which Best enables her readers to do. She does this in part by clarifying much of the language which often causes confusion.

From the beginning Best argues that once the woman’s egg is fertilised by a male sperm, it becomes a human embryo, and therefore should be given human status and protection. This position informs Best says throughout the rest of her book, as she explores numerous issues. In this Best returns consistently to the Biblical view that all humans (including embryos) are made in the image of God (Genesis 1:26-27). This biblical viewpoint finds its expression in marriage, which in turn informs issues of reproduction.

The difficulty is much of the public debate ignores this viewpoint, resorting instead to consequentialist and utilitarian ethics. That is, deciding what is ethical by the final outcome and by what will be useful or practical. As Best observes later in her book, this is a different worldview to the Bible, and so the conversation around these issues resembles two ships passing in the night. So before addressing the issues involved in reproduction, Best informs her readers of the different ways of making an ethical decision. In doing so, Best enables her readers to think through the issues constructively.

While Best tells her readers her own position on various issues, she also provides a broader plurality of how different ways of thinking have developed, and the differences in the main theological traditions. Such is the case on issues including contraception where readers are also informed of the different types of contraception. While Best presents such issues in a way that the average person can understand, the issues are still presented simplistically. On issues such as abortion where the Christian position may be assumed to be clear, Best still takes the time to understand the position of those who advocate such practices. This allows the reader to perceive there is much more to these issues than is often presented.

Best’s book is an invaluable resource for couples that are looking at having children. Couples are now confronted by medical practices and the use of them without the raising of ethical questions. This poses an issue for Christian couples such as in pregnancy screening. While such medical technology has been developed to reduce disease or other complications during pregnancy, the technology has now developed to the point where ‘undesirable elements’ can be screened out. For instance, if an unborn child is found to have Down Syndrome, aborting the pregnancy is encouraged. Best takes the time to explain what is involved in each screening procedure, any risks, and what the alternatives are.

Infertility is another issue which couples may be confronted with. Best discusses this issue by looking at it from a biblical perspective, and explores the options for couples struggling with this. Miscarriages are also addressed, and the different causes of miscarriages are also explored.

One of the biggest issues addressed in this book is Assisted Reproductive Technologies (ART) including IVF treatments. Personally, I know such technologies exist. What I didn’t know was how complex and pervasive these technologies were. If you are thinking of using these technologies, or know someone that is, I implore you, read this book, or have them read it. If not the whole book, read chapter 12. There are decisions that need to be made that people should not make when they are emotionally vulnerable. Seeking such treatments do make people emotionally vulnerable, and such issues aren’t always openly discussed at the start of treatment. For instance, ART clinics often produce more embryos, which are then donated into the woman one at a time, than what is needed to ensure a successful pregnancy. So the question arises as to what to do with the left over embryos, remembering they have the status of a human and should be protected according to the biblical worldview. This is just one issue that couples seeking ART treatments need to consider.

One of the biggest issues to come out of the book is stem cell research. Going by our medical presentation of life, we are led to think there is only one type of stem cell research - embryonic stem cell. The problem with embryonic research is, once the woman’s egg is fertilised, it becomes an embryo. Embryonic stem cell research invariably ends the destruction of the embryo. And from a Christian point of view, embryos have human status and should be protected.

But “the notion that there is only one type of stem cell research is false! There is another type of stem cell research called adult stem cell, which is rather confusing because the procedure is done at birth. This involves taking cells from the placenta or umbilical cord blood. These stem cells can then be developed into any tissue that’s required. Because this procedure does not involve the destruction of embryos, it is ethical.

There has been more success in the development of adult stem cells rather than the embryonic stem cells. Many of the anticipated breakthroughs from embryonic research simply have not eventuated. There has been far more progress with adult stem cell research. We need much greater clarity on this. It is embryonic stem cell research that needs to be opposed. Not stem cell research in general.

The only criticism I have of the book is, even though it was published in 2012, some of the science is out of date. Occasionally, the phrase ‘disabled person’ or ‘disabled child’ will appear rather than ‘person/child with a disability’. Why does this matter? Language conveys thoughts and attitudes, and people with disabilities need to be considered according to their individuality, not by their defects - the individual comes first, then the disability. However, it can be clearly seen that Best is arguing for the dignity of all human life, with or without a disability. So this criticism does not detract from an otherwise brilliant piece of work.

One final comment: As a person with a disability, I particularly enjoyed this book to read. Not because of the authorship, or the medical terminology, but because of the implications this technology has for empowering secular worldview in relation to people with disabilities, and the way human life is now generally regarded. It made me re- aclue we are living in a postmodern era, where individualism has gone mad. This is truly disturbing, and needs a lot of breathing space and a lot of prayer to absorb. Now more than ever does the church need to witness to God’s grace in the way we speak and live.
NEW CEO FOR PIM

After a long journey of consideration, discussion, meetings and prayer the PIM Committee was pleased to reach the end of the search process and select a CEO for the Presbyterian Inland Mission. Andrew Letcher has been appointed to the full time position of CEO for the Presbyterian Inland Mission. Andrew, his wife Fleur and their three children, are members of Croydon Hills Presbyterian Church.

Andrew has a wide-ranging background in leadership and management of Christian ministries and business. His most recent role was as the CEO of a Christian Funeral business that was established to minister to grieving families and to generate profits to support mission work. Prior to that Andrew and Fleur served as APPM missionaries with Wycliffe Bible Translators in various management-related roles.

Both Fleur and Andrew are Presbyterian ministers’ kids, having grown up in manses in a variety of places. They met at a Presbyterian Youth of Victoria camp many years ago, and both remain active in a variety of ways within the denomination.

Andrew is looking forward to the challenge of building on the wonderful work of those who have gone before. PIM has a rich heritage of gospel ministry over more than a century, and together with the committee, Andrew is looking forward to helping PIM prepare for another century of ministry, Lord willing. The challenges are great, bit so are the opportunities.

Though life has changed and the world is a very different place than it was when John Flynn was patrolling the Inland on a camel, the spiritual needs of people are still the same. For as long as Australia has people living in remote areas, far from any gospel witness and beyond easy reach of most of the church, the work of PIM must be sustained, for the glory of God and the salvation of the lost.

SEASONS OF FAITHFUL SERVICE

After each giving over a decade of faithful, effective and diligent service to the ministry of PIM both Stuart Bonnington and Rob Duncanson have both stepped back from their respective roles of Superintendent and Convener of the PIM committee to allow them to focus on the other important ministries God has laid before them.

As Superintendent and Convener, Stuart and Rob made an enthusiastic and effective team as they together championed the cause of gospel ministry in remote areas of Australia.

Under their leadership, God has done many things. New patrol teams have been recruited and commissioned to serve and two new mission churches, in Darwin and Alice Springs, have been planted and nurtured. Countless other small and large tasks have also been accomplished.

Stuart is continuing in his role as minister of Scots Church in Fremantle and other responsibilities with the Presbyterian Church of Western Australia. Rob remains active and committed as the minister of the Darwin Presbyterian Church.

The PIM Committee praises the Lord for the wonderful contribution of these two servants of His.
NEWS AND UPDATES

After much planning and preparation, Mark Jellis and his team have commenced the challenging work of turning the deteriorating Meekathara Church building into a usable space for worship and community outreach. Of key importance in making the building usable is the installation of a toilet block, and the replacement of the tired old roof. Please be in prayer for this project and the gospel work in Meekathara.

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JOHN ILLUSTRATED

www.fionafernigwerth.info/Fiona@fionafernigwerth.info

Fiona Fernigwerth has produced a coffee-table sized book which contains the text of the Gospel of John (ESV), beautifully illustrated by her drawings of the Australian outback. Fiona’s artistic talent is clearly evident on just about every page, as is her love for the story of Jesus as recounted by His friend and disciple John. THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JOHN ILLUSTRATED is a book to be cherished and if given to others, will be received as a most attractive gift.

PIM RETREAT

Being scattered across the continent, PIM teams have few opportunities to meet up with their colleagues and spend time together. In September this year in Alice Springs, the team will gather together for fellowship, encouragement, spiritual refreshment and meetings. These retreats happened about every three years and are a vital part of keeping the people of PIM connected. Naturally, there are some significant travel costs in getting everyone together. If you would like to make a special donation to help cover the costs of this retreat, it would be a great source of encouragement to all at PIM. Please contact Mike Timmins at the PIM office for details of how you could make such a gift.

PRESBYTERIAN INLAND MISSION

www.pim.org.au

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Rob and Jeanette Duncanson
E: convener@pim.org.au; M: 0413 021 716 Darwin PIM Church

RESPONSE FORM

Name __________________________ Phone ( ) __________ email __________________________
Address __________________________ State __________________________ Postcode __________

Donation – PIM general funds

Donation – PIM Mid West/Surendra Wesley

Donation – PIM Alice Springs Retreat

Donation – PIM John Flynn/David and Gae McDonald

Donation – PIM Mungo/Colin and Alison Morrow

Total

Payment details:

Box: Cheque enclosed (Payable to Presbyteran Inland Mission)
Box: Charge my Credit Card
Box: Visa
Box: Mastercard

Card No ______________ Expiry date ___ / ___

Name on card __________________________ Signature __________________________

Return with payment to:

PIM
PO Box 4014
Croydon Hills Vic 3136
Ph: (03) 9005 8256
Fax: (03) 9876 1941
e-mail: admn@pim.org.au
APWM CHRISTMAS GIFT CATALOGUE 2015

This Christmas why not give gifts to your friends and family and at the same time help someone who doesn’t have the basics that we take for granted? The items below can provide for the needs of Christians and others in our overseas Partner Churches and APWM Aboriginal ministry.

TRAINING (TIMOR LESTE)
A gift of $10 will be used toward running a training conference for pastors in the Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Timor Leste.

LIBRARY BOOKS (INDIA) A gift of $15 will be used to help purchase much-needed library books for the Presbyterian Theological Seminary in Dehradun, India.

PH.D LIVING EXPENSES (INDIA) A gift of $25 will be used toward living expenses for a lecturer from the Presbyterian Theological Seminary in Dehradun, India, while studying for a PhD at Christ College Sydney in 2018.

APWM ABORIGINAL MINISTRY (WESTERN AUSTRALIA) A gift of $40 will help support APWM Aboriginal ministry in Mount Magnet, Western Australia in conjunction with PMM.

PH.D RENT (INDIA) A gift of $100 will be used toward rent for a lecturer from the Presbyterian Theological Seminary in Dehradun, India, while studying for a PhD at Christ College Sydney in 2018.

THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE FEES (VANUATU) A gift of $100 will help support the Theological College Fees in Vanuatu.

EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE (MYANMAR) A gift of $60 will help support the Presbyterian Theological Seminary in Dehradun, India, while studying for a PhD at Christ College Sydney in 2018.

ORDER FORM/PAYMENTS

1. Choose the item(s) on our list that you would like to purchase for your friends/family.
2. Send us your order, including payment. Please note that these gifts are not tax deductible.
3. We will send you the cards you have ordered. You are then free to give these cards to your friends/family for Christmas. The cards state which gifts you have purchased on their behalf for someone in one of our Partner Churches or for APWM Aboriginal ministry. There is no monetary value printed on the card.
4. APWM then sends the money to our overseas partners to purchase items locally, or uses it for APWM ministry as specified in Australia.

ORDER FORM/PAYMENTS

Complete this order form and send it with your payment (cheque or money order made out to APWM). Please DO NOT send cash.

Payment can also be made via Direct Deposit (details below) or PayPal (www.apwm.org.au/supporting-finance).

Bank: Westpac
Account Name: Australian Presbyterian World Mission
BSB: 032 260
Account #: 151267
For Direct Deposits and PayPal, please write your name in the description box and send an email informing us of your deposit (finance@apwm.org.au).

APWM Christmas Catalogue
81 Shaftesbury Road, Burwood NSW 2134

Item | Qty | Cost
---|---|---
TRAINING (TIMOR LESTE) | $10 | |
LIBRARY BOOKS (INDIA) | $15 | |
PH.D LIVING EXPENSES (INDIA) | $25 | |
ABORIGINAL MINISTRY (WESTERN AUSTRALIA) | $40 | |
ABORIGINAL MINISTRY (MOUNT DRUXT, AUSTRALIA) | $40 | |
EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE (MYANMAR) | $60 | |
PH.D RENT (INDIA) | $100 | |
THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE FEES (VANUATU) | $100 | |

Total |

I enclose a cheque / money order for $...or
I have made a Direct Deposit of $...
Please tick here if you do not wish to receive cards and simply want to make a donation for these items.

Please note that if any item is over-subscribed then the money will be allocated to a similar need.

Name ____________________________________________
Address ____________________________________________
Suburb ____________________________________________
Postcode ____________________________________________
Phone ____________________________ Email ____________________________

WANTED: BIBLE COLLEGE LECTURER FOR VANUATU

Australian Presbyterian World Mission is looking for someone to serve as a full-time lecturer at the Talua Theological Institute, the Bible College of the Presbyterian Church of Vanuatu. For further enquiries please contact the APWM Office 0407 731 796 national@apwm.org.au or Kevin Murray 0402 321 720 kevinmurray@apwm.org.au

NEW CLERK OF CENTRAL QUEENSLAND PRESENTRY:
Reverend Mike O’Connor PO Box 1862 ROCKHAMPTON QLD 4700 (07) 4922 8240 E: mike@rockcpc.org.au

NEW CENTRAL MAILING ADDRESS FOR:
South Coast Presbyterian Church C/O Elder Roy Dallas 32 Mercury Drive TABOURIE LAKE NSW 2539

YEHUD Worker

Danumasy Presbyterian Church (in Sydney’s Inner West), a growing church in the reformed evangelical tradition, is seeking a part time Youth worker to oversee the discipleship of the teenagers in their church family through the High School Youth Group “D3”. For more information, contact the Associate Pastor, Danny Soh: dar-dannysoh@hotmail.com.au. Applications close Friday 9th October 2015 | www.drummoyne.org.au

YOUTH WORKER

Drummoyne Presbyterian Church (in Sydney’s Inner West), a growing church in the reformed evangelical tradition, is seeking a part time Youth worker to oversee the discipleship of the teenagers in their church family through the High School Youth Group “D3”. For more information, contact the Associate Pastor, Danny Soh: dar-dannysoh@hotmail.com.au. Applications close Friday 9th October 2015 | www.drummoyne.org.au

26 The Pulse

Continued from p.11

All in all, he says his first church was a fantastic experience. There was only one speed hump, when three couples left the church at the same time. “I was going to resign, I was so upset. But God was so good over the next couple of months. The church started to change dramatically. I learned a lot. Having Phil on the end of the phone was fantastic. I could ring and say, ‘This happened, and what should I do?’” One huge change was that Luke found he loved living in the country.

“I was told once I had lived in the country I would never want to return…and that happened, too,” he says. “We had our first child. While we were when we moved north, then three more were born while we were there – Sarah in 1989, Jacob in 1992 and Ben in 1996.

“During our term there I got an assistant minister, Jon Nuttell, to run Byron Bay. It became obvious after three or four years that Byron Bay was not going as fast as Mullumbimby, where we lived, so it would be good to get an assistant. It was good, as we could then focus on Mullumbimby.”

With things going so well, Luke and Debra struggled to know when to leave. There had been a few offers...including one from Singapore, Orchard Road, which was very enticing...but it was Parramatta City Presbyterian Church (now Carlingford-Wentworthville) which turned out to be the right place for them.

“The church had been vacant three years and needed a minister and it felt right,” he says.

There they started a hospital Bible fellowship and planted a church at Wentworthville Presbyterian.

“The minister had left, half the building had burned down so we volunteered to run their service till they found a new minister. They wanted to amalgamate with us. It took five years. But by the time we left 13 years later, we had two assistant ministers in place and the church was in a great place.”

The next step for Luke and Debra was Balmain – also completely unexpected.

“My parents were at Balmain and we met for lunch to be told their minister was leaving. There were only 15 people at the church at the time, average age 80 and my parents were planning on leaving as well.

“We felt it was the right place for us to go. We had worked in Mullumbimby and Wentworthville with older congregations, so we felt we could do it. Both in our 50s, I felt I had one good run left in me, so I put my hand up.”

But Balmain had been a busy and productive time for Luke and his wife. They have worked hard at meeting people in the community and providing opportunities for the church and community to meet.

“We have started music and playtime group, I have been teaching scripture in the primary school, we have been trying to do community things like a seniors’ group, a toolbox men’s ministry and art and soul for women,” Luke says.

“We also did a Neighbour Day thing.”

Luke’s Dad died in April, but his Mum is still attending Balmain Presbyterian.

Apart from his ministry, Luke is also involved in the Cornhill Training College and was for five years the convener of Ka-tomba Men’s Convention.

For 15 years he has been chair of Sports Chaplaincy Australia. He is also heading to Zimbabwe for the fifth year to help train church Elders to teach. Outside of church, he plays in a band called Sad Old Rockers...which he concedes could also be another example of taking Church to the people...watch this space!

Just as it is now, his ministry is about taking the gospel to the people in a way that is relevant to them.
"Therefore, my brothers and sisters, you whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm in the Lord in this way, dear friends!" (Phil. 4:1)

Paul has been writing of two kinds of people - those whose minds were set on earthly things only (3:18-19) and those who are members of the kingdom of Christ (3:20-21). Now he comes to draw conclusions from that in a series of exhortations: be firm (4:1), be united (4:2-3), rejoice (4:4), be gentle (4:5), do not be anxious but pray (4:6), and meditate on what is good (4:8).

THE CONNECTION BETWEEN DOCTRINE AND LIFE

Paul begins with the word ὥστε which is translated 'therefore' (ESV, NIV, NASB, NKJV) or 'So then' (Holman). As a logical writer and thinker, the apostle often connects his doctrine to his ethics with this or a similar word (e.g. oὐκ ἐν Ῥωμ.12:1; Eph.4:1). So many people today think that Christianity is a series of inspiring thoughts or some guiding principles for life. Not so. First, it is a way of salvation - in fact, the way of salvation.

Then, following that, it tells us how to live. Parts of the church today are rather fond of telling people who are not Christians how they ought to live, and she does so often in areas where she has no particular expertise. For example, people are told that they ought to renounce the debts of poorer countries.

There is only limited good in telling an unbeliever how he or she ought to live. Paul's exhortations here are addressed to those who are already believers in Christ, to those who are citizens of heaven, whose lowly bodies will be transformed like Christ's glorious resurrection body.

If the 'therefore' looks primarily backwards, Paul is saying that because Christians are citizens of heaven, they ought to stand fast. Calvin, Handley Moule, and Don Carson all say that it means something like 'thus', and points both backwards and forwards. It does operate as something of a hinge.

Moule calls the whole verse 'a link of gold between the passage just ended and that which is to follow.'

PAUL'S LOVE FOR THE PHILIPPIAN CHRISTIANS

Paul multiplies expressions of affection for the Philippian Christians. In fact, there are six descriptions of them, although one is repeated.

He refers to them as 'my brothers', a term which he uses six times in Philippians (1:12, 14; 3:1, 13, 17; 4:1; see also 2:25; 4:21).

Through the rebirth brought about by the Holy Spirit they have come to bow the knee to the one Saviour of sinners, Christ Jesus, and so been adopted into God's family. Therefore, they are brothers.

Twice in the one verse he calls them 'my beloved' (the second one in the NIV obscures this by referring to 'dear friends'). There could be no greater expression of affection.

He also refers to them as his brothers whom he 'longs for'. In 'Tegel prison in December 1943, Dietrich Bonhoeffer commented that 'In my experience nothing tortures us more than longing.'

The apostle does not quite write out the same word of soul, but there is something of the same yearning and overflowing affection: 'For God is my witness, how I yearn for you all with the affection of Christ Jesus' (1:8).

Finally, says Paul, you are my joy and crown.

There is little to commend the contemporary English Version's 'You are my pride and joy'. Paul wrote of the Thessalonian Christians in the same way (1 Thess.2:19-20).

For all the many trials in ministry (cf. 2 Cor.11:22-28), Paul wrote of the joy that it brought him (e.g. 2 Cor.2:3).

John too wrote: 'I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in the truth' (3 John 4). Not only did Paul describe the Philippian believers as his joy, but also as his crown (stephanos).

This is not the royal diadem but is the same word used to describe the perishable crown or wreath given to the athlete in 1 Corinthians 9:25.

Dr Martyn Lloyd-Jones speaks of this burning, blazing love of Paul for his people. What matters is not essays written, meetings attended, committees sat on, or politicians browbeaten, but souls won.

It is people who will enter Christ's kingdom or who will endure the wrath of the Lamb. Paul delights in those who have bowed the knee to the Lamb. Other verses will speak of Christians receiving a crown (e.g. 2 Tim.4:8; James 1:12; 1 Pet.5:4), but Paul writes that the Philippians themselves are his crown both now and in the glory to come.

There is some reason for Alexander Maclaren to say that the church at Philippi could be regarded as Paul's 'favourite child'.

We can all be challenged here. Both Alexander Maclaren and Martyn Lloyd-Jones confessed that their greatest defect as pastors was an insufficiency in their love for their congregations. Albert Barnes commented that 'the chief happiness of a minister of the gospel is in the pure lives of those to whom he ministers.'

STAND FAST

That does not sound very exciting but not to move can be a good thing (1 Cor.15:58; Eph.6:13-14).

The liberal Scottish evangelist Henry Drummond wrote: 'There is no more unfortunate word in our Church's vocabulary than "standard." A standard is a thing that stands. Theology is a thing that moves.'

That is very clever, in a way, but not at all Christian. Paul is not telling the Philippians to stagnate. Alexander Maclaren uses the comparison of riding a bicycle. To stand fast is not the same as to stand still.

It can be difficult to stand fast when everything about you is moving, and when people are indoctrinated in the view that any movement must be progress.

These early Christians faced Jews who thought of them as blasphemous apostates and Gentiles who regarded them as ignorant, intolerant bigots who would not acknowledge the Roman gods.

Scripture is litten with accounts and warnings about the need to stand fast (e.g. Matthew 13:4-7, 19-22; Luke 11:24-26; 17:32; Gal.3:1-5).

It is not certain that Martin Luther uttered as the finale to his speech at the Diet of Worms in 1521: 'Here I stand, I can do no other. So help me, God.' Nevertheless, they reflect the tenor of what he said, and they remain most moving and inspiring for subsequent generations.

Someone who moves with the times may be regarded as progressive, but it usually only means that he or she has no backbone.

It is hard to stand firm when everything around you is moving, and when people are indoctrinated in the view that any movement must be progress.

But standing firm is what is needed, not panic and chasing after the world. That may be what you need in your dealings with the world - not to be stubborn and pig-headed, but to stand firm on an issue on which you know God has spoken.