

the PRESBYTERIAN pulse



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Story and photographic contributions which relate to the Presbyterian Church are welcome and should be sent for consideration in Word and tif/jpg format to the Editor Karen Forman.

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COVER : Spring brings lambs and warmth and a reminder of God’s shepherdship over all of His people.
PHOTO: Karen Forman.



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Welcome to Spring!

By Karen Forman



Welcome to the Spring edition of The Presbyterian Pulse magazine. You may have noticed that we have featured sheep on our front cover – sheep that seem to have a Heavenly, angelic glow about them.

When I stopped on the roadside to take a picture of the sheep I knew I wanted for the photo, I wasn't aware of the spectacular backlighting created by the setting sun. In fact, I was a bit annoyed with it, as I thought it would spoil the photograph of the sheep I wanted to feature on the Spring cover.

I had had the initial idea to use sheep because Spring generally means the birth of lambs and new life after the darkness and cold temperatures of winter. But as I looked into sheep in the Bible more, I learned that they are a major feature of Christian life.

Sheep are mentioned in 44 of the 66 books of the Bible where they symbolize nurturing, guidance, care, and most importantly, the relationship between the shepherd (God) and the flock (all of us). Sheep cannot defend themselves and easily find themselves in danger if they do not have a shepherd to protect and care for them. Sound familiar?

Given that we have just come out of a winter that had some very cold and dark hours for many, especially the homeless, sick and frail, people paying for increasing mortgages and increasing heating bills, I felt that a picture of sheep would be just right for our Spring magazine.

Psalm 78 verse 52 says it all: "But He brought his people out like a flock; he led them like sheep through the wilderness."

Wilderness = Winter. We have been led out of Winter and are now in Spring – a time of warmth, new life, fresh starts and hope.

Like many, I struggled during the cold months. My mortgage payments increased three times. The overnight temperatures here in the Snowy Mountains were on average, minus five – and my 76 year old half renovated cottage is very difficult and expensive to heat. My daughter is away all week studying at college and I am suffering 'empty nest syndrome', which is a real type of grieving and loneliness.

Who has been there for me during these months in the wilderness? The Lord. The Lord, my shepherd. He has provided – a gift of an electric blanket for warmth. Invitations of hospitality to ease my loneliness. New friends made through music who "happened" to be Christians and love playing the same old time gospel blue grass music that I do with my banjo.

God has also provided great comfort at night when the loneliness and fear of being alone and uncertainty about the future, is greatest. I had forgotten to cry out to him, but when I did, He was there, speaking words of comfort and wisdom in the darkness.

God's shining light is always there for us. Even silhouetting sheep in the photo I thought was ruined.

We hope you enjoy our Spring edition, particularly our feature article on the importance of watching movies with children.

Rev Peter Pallet (pictured) was inducted as PCNSW/ACT Moderator for 2026-27 at the July General Assembly. This his first column for The Presbyterian Pulse.



How God was there for a "tough" Assembly

By Rev Peter Pallet

In January this year I was at a great stage in my life. I was retired from parish ministry, I had settled into my home in Albury, I was near my son and his family and had the means to visit my daughter's family in Townsville any time I liked.

I was also a part of a great local church and able to serve the wider church around the region preaching when required. Life was quite comfortable.

Then I was asked to take on the role of Moderator for the 2026 GANSW. I said yes, not because I wanted the job but because I couldn't think of a good reason to say no. As I have said many times since retiring, I have never believed God has granted me this long a life so I could indulge in my hobbies uninterrupted.

It was no secret that this General Assembly would be challenging. Proposals were being put forward that had been tossed around for years and that people are quite passionate about. There was a lot to be nervous about going into this Assembly. However, in the end, I knew that if the Lord had called me into this role, he would give me what was needed to do the job.

He did. When I say that the Lord gave me what I needed, it doesn't mean he gave me what I wanted. The last thing I wanted to be was the bloke who got emotional and needed to regularly wipe tears from his eyes, but I was, and the Lord used it.

What the Lord did provide, and I most certainly appreciated, were the people on the front table and behind the scenes at Assembly: my Chaplains, the Clerks, the Business Convener, the tech team and all those who worked behind the scenes.

There was advice, guidance, assistance, pastoral care and a great well of wisdom I could draw on at any time. They made the job of being Moderator manageable and it was a privilege to work with such a great team. I am also thankful for the many people who offered me encouragement during the Assembly and for the many more who prayed for me in the lead up to and during the Assembly. I believe your prayers were answered, thank you.

Of course, it shouldn't come as any surprise that the Lord provided what was needed for this occasion. We are constantly reminded in Scripture that God is faithful and can do immeasurably much more than we can think or imagine (Ephesians 3:20), and that he places people in certain situations to be used to fulfill his purposes (think of Joseph and Esther in the Old Testament).

*cont pg 6

General Assembly

Can I encourage you to be willing to be used by our great God for whatever purpose he has for you, be it great or small?

Finally, processes were put in place at this Assembly that some people will find disappointing, to say the very least. We, as individuals and as a church, need to acknowledge this hurt. We need to work hard at making these people know and feel that they are a loved, important and valued part of our church. We need to work even harder at this to ensure that our church is structured, as we understand it, according to Biblical principles. We need to imitate our God, for as Psalm 34:18 reminds us "The LORD is close to the broken-hearted, and saves those who are crushed in spirit".

I look forward to serving you as NSW Moderator over the coming year and would appreciate your prayers.

Images from PCNSW/ACT General Assembly 2026: Supplied.



Assembly returns Eldership to Biblically qualified men from 2027

By Karen Forman

ONLY Biblically qualified men will be appointed to serve as Elders within the Presbyterian Church of NSW/ACT in the future, following a decision by the General Assembly in July to amend its regulations to restore the Church's original practices pertaining to Eldership.

This change will will not affect the status of Elder for women who are currently ordained as Elders.

PCNSW/ACT Moderator, Peter Pallett said the decision brought the PCNSW/ACT into alignment with Presbyterian churches in all other Australian states.

"From the time of the Reformation, Presbyterian churches ordained only Biblically qualified men to the office of Elder," Mr Pallett said. "(then) In 1967, the Presbyterian Church of Australia introduced provisions allowing women to be ordained as Elders.

"While the Presbyterian Churches in Queensland, Victoria, South Australia, Western Australia and Tasmania subsequently determined, at various times from 1977 onwards, to return to the historic practice of male-only eldership, the Presbyterian Church in NSW and the ACT retained the 1967 position."

The amendment has been considered by successive NSW General Assemblies over many years.

The matter was again brought before this year's General Assembly in Sydney in July, following a consultation process across congregations throughout NSW and the ACT.

Mr Pallett said following a long debate, the General Assembly resolved to restore the Church's original practice of ordaining only Biblically qualified men to the office of Elder.

"In making this decision, the General Assembly affirmed that limiting the office of Elder to Biblically qualified men does not diminish the ministry or service of other members of the Church," he said.

"It reaffirmed its conviction that God gifts every member of the body of Christ - women as well as men - for the common good, and those healthy churches flourish when every member is equipped and encouraged to use those gifts in the life and mission of the Church."

The General Assembly also affirmed that, while Scripture assigned to Elders responsibility for the Government and official teaching ministry of the Church, it also recognised and encouraged a wide range of ministries undertaken by those who are were not Elders.

"Women and men will continue to serve together in numerous ministries and leadership roles throughout the Church, including as deacons, and on local committees of management responsible for the temporal affairs of their local Church," he said.

"These arrangements are unaffected by this decision."

The General Assembly acknowledged that the Eldership debate caused discomfort and great concern for some members and further resolved to give thanks to God for the faithful service of women Elders, acknowledge with gratitude their contribution to the life and ministry of the Church; and encouraged members to pray for women as they continued to serve the Lord faithfully as Elders.

“Couldn’t Help Noticing”

By Maxine Johnson

Glen Innes Presbyterian Church was blessed to have had the late Andrew Campbell as our minister. He instituted a segment called Couldn’t Help Noticing, as part of our Sunday service. Andrew would often talk about current events or This Day in History and interweave it with God’s view of things.

Recently, I had my own Couldn’t Help Noticing that I shared with our congregation. I have been asked to share it with readers of the Pulse magazine.

I was saddened to hear of the death of ABC radio broadcaster James Valentine. I felt like I knew him. He kept me company through many school holiday afternoons while I was doing schoolwork in preparation for the next term, or while I was doing housework or travelling.

James was a genuinely kind and funny human being, as attested by the hundreds of tributes. In an age of hate and anger on the airwaves, he stood out as a ‘voice in the wilderness’.

It wasn’t this that caught my attention. It was a tribute by his wife. She recounted that, just prior to his death, James called his family into the room to sit with him because he was ‘terrified’.

Wow! It shouldn’t be like that, I thought. I do believe that most humans who go through life saying there is no God, if they have the chance to reflect before they die, deep down, know that there is and are rightly fearful.

The other thing that caught my attention was that James’s wife talked about James choosing voluntary assisted dying (VAD), which up till now was called euthanasia.

It is understandable that most humans would choose not to suffer, but as Christians we know that that is not what we are called to.



My husband reminded me of one of my favourite Christian songs, when I was talking to him about all this, In Christ Alone, which moved me beyond words as I reflected on its truth as I shared this verse in church.

*“No guilt in life, no fear in death
This is the power of Christ in me
From life’s first cry to final breath
Jesus commands my destiny
No power of Hell, no scheme of man
Can ever pluck me from His hand
‘til He returns or calls me home
here, in the power of Christ, I’ll stand.”*

In Christ Alone (Getty & Townend, 2001)

In stark contrast, this same week, I opened the autumn publication of ‘The Pulse’, to find Vale Andrew Donald Campbell - Faithful, Honest, and full of Hope..., by Anne Campbell, which speaks of grief, but also hope. We lost Andrew very suddenly and unexpectedly. He didn’t die without knowing, loving and trusting our God.

Andrew had no scripted or controlled death, but a death that was controlled by a loving and Sovereign God.

I looked for what God might have to say on this subject:
2 Corinthians 5:8 “We are confident I say, and would prefer to be away from the body and at home with the Lord.”

And I am praying for myself that I will have the same confidence that the Apostle Paul had, who also said:

Philippians 1:21 “For me to live is Christ and to die is gain.”

Don’t ban them - watch the movies WITH your kids, expert urges

By Karen Forman

Hollywood-based founder and publisher of Movieguide and Chairman of the Christian Film & Television Commission Dr Ted Baehr spent time with The Scots College staff, students and parents on a recent visit to Australia and had some great advice on how to help young people negotiate Hollywood movies through a Christian lens.

Dr Baehr - who told The Pulse Editor Karen Forman that his life’s purpose was to be “used of God to redeem the values of the media while educating audiences on how to use discernment in selecting their entertainment” - says parents should watch movies with their kids, rather than try to ban them from watching.

“The content of many of today’s box office move can be of great concern to Christian parents,” he said.

“But my advice is, not to try to stop kids watching them to avoid the content they don’t believe is suitable for them, but to watch with them, so they can talk through all of the aspects, negative and positive, together.”

Dr Baehr, who said he “became a Christian against my will”, worked in Hollywood for many years and saw drugs, self destruction and devastation. But God helped him use his experiences for His purposes.

Movieguide was started in 1985 and now reaches nearly 34 million people every month through radio, TV and web.

“When we started Movieguide, the major studios in Hollywood released few movies with any positive Christian content or values at all - less than three per cent,” Dr Baehr said.

“Incredibly, in 2016, at least 184, or 63.88 per cent, of the major movies released theatrically by the movie industry contained at least some positive Christian, redemptive content. That’s a numerical increase of 581 per cent and a percentage increase of 515 per cent.

“Also, when we started in 1985, less than six per cent of the major movies were aimed at families. In the past 10 years, movies marketed to families have increased to nearly 40 per cent of the top movies released in your local movie theatres.

The Scots College’s Dr Jeffery Mann said Scots had been delighted to host Dr Baehr and had been keen to show students, parents and staff his work and ideas. The visit was funded via the Clark Fellowship. Movies had such an impact and kids picked up values from movies.

“I don’t think all movies are evil, but the advice was to just be wise, watch the movies with your kids and talk through values with them. “Don’t put a movie on as a babysitter, but have the discussions. Who is who, the characters, the emotions.”

For more information about watching films with your children, visit www.movieguide.org



Every congregation’s role in God’s global mission

By Rev Dr Wilson Fernandez Junior

Mention the word “mission” in church and most people immediately think of someone serving overseas.

We picture missionaries learning new languages, adapting to unfamiliar cultures, and proclaiming Christ where He is scarcely known.

We thank God for their faithfulness and pray that He will bless their ministry.

But have you ever stopped to ask a different question?

Who sent them?

Behind every faithful missionary stands a faithful congregation that prayed, encouraged, equipped, commissioned, and continues to care for them.

Missionaries are not simply produced overnight. God ordinarily raises them up from the life of ordinary congregations where His Word is faithfully preached and His people are nurtured in the faith.

Long before they board a plane, they have been shaped by years of Biblical preaching, Christian fellowship, prayer, pastoral care, and the quiet encouragement of God’s people.

In time, the church recognises God’s calling, commissions them for gospel ministry, and remains their faithful partner through prayer, practical support, and loving care.

Missionaries may travel across the world, but they are never sent alone. Christ sends them through the prayers, generosity, encouragement, and loving care of His Church.

This pattern of sending runs through the whole

story of Scripture. The Father sent His Son into the world, and the risen Christ entrusted His mission to His Church. As the Apostle Paul reminds us, the gospel cannot be proclaimed unless people are sent (Romans 10:15).

So, who does the sending?

The answer - is the local church.

Every congregation—whether large or small, urban or rural—has a God-given role in God’s global mission. While only some believers are called to serve cross-culturally, every church is called to participate in sending those whom God raises up.

A sending church does far more than provide financial support. It prays, encourages, prepares, sends, welcomes, and faithfully cares for those serving in Christ’s name. In doing so, God’s people share in Christ’s mission to the nations.

Mission is not the responsibility of a few adventurous Christians.

“
How can they preach unless they are sent?

Romans 10:15

It is the privilege of every local congregation. This conviction has long been one of the strengths of our Presbyterian heritage. Healthy missionary work grows out of healthy churches—churches deeply rooted in God’s Word, nourished by His grace, and captivated by His glory.

Such churches understand that mission is not one ministry among many, but the natural fruit of a people transformed by the gospel.

Wherever God’s Word is faithfully preached, mature disciples are formed. Among them, God calls some to serve across cultures and among the nations.

The same congregations that nurture these workers continue to uphold them through prayer, generosity, encouragement, and pastoral care.

No local church is meant to carry this responsibility alone.

That is why APWM exists.

APWM exists to serve local churches. Its role is not to replace the church’s responsibility, but to strengthen it by helping congregations identify, prepare, send, and care for missionaries serving across the world.

In this way, APWM helps local churches fulfil the responsibility Christ has entrusted to them.

Across the world, billions of people still have little or no opportunity to hear the good news of Jesus Christ. At the same time, Australia itself has become an increasingly significant mission field. The need for faithful gospel witness has never been greater.

God may not call every Christian to cross

cultures with the gospel.

But He calls every believer—and every congregation—to share in that mission.

Some go.

Others send.

All participate.

So the next time you hear the word mission, don’t think only of those who go.

Think of the congregation that prays.

Think of the family that gives.

Think of the Elder who encourages.

Think of the young believer discerning God’s call.

Think of your own church.

Because whenever a local congregation faithfully prays, gives, sends, and cares for gospel workers, it is participating in Christ’s great purpose of gathering a people for His glory from every tribe, language, people, and nation.

The next time you thank God for a missionary, remember to thank Him for the congregation that prayed, encouraged, sent, and continues to stand behind that gospel worker.

Every congregation truly has a God-given role in God’s global mission.

Would you like to learn more about the ministry of APWM NSW or explore how your church can become more involved in God’s global mission?

Please contact us at nswconvener@apwm.org.au. We would love to hear from you.

Mandeep's story shows importance of being part of "the link"

By Elizabeth Brown



What holds you back? Are you intimidated by culture or strong religious or political backgrounds? Is it the complexity of people's needs? Or simply the fear of being rejected.

Are you nervous about the language barrier? Is it that you have trouble sharing your resources or you think you don't have time?

Maybe your church has not considered this its duty to take up the challenge. Many churches have English classes and easy English services. Some have playgroups. Others have food banks, holiday programs or homework clubs. Take seriously the scriptures. Explore the opportunities.

Consider Mandeep's story.

'My name is Mandeep, and I am from an Indian Seik background. My father and grandfather read the Sikh holy book available in many Sanskrit languages. It is a challenging book to understand. When I inquired with questions I was shut down. I moved to Sydney in 2013 with my husband and daughter and members of my husband's family.

In 2017 I began my employment with a manufacturing firm, where a colleague asked me if I was aware of the truths about God. This piqued my interest but I was wary. I had heard that Christians brainwash you and coerce you into going to church. I had many spiritual conversations with two contacts he introduced me to but I drifted away from them as they focused on many manmade writings and not the Bible.

My colleague learnt that I had lost interest in spiritual matters so he introduced me to a Presbyterian pastor and his wife. We consistently studied the Bible together for an extended period of time including on Zoom during COVID. This study transformed my perspective of the Lord. We were directed to a Presbyterian church and a Bible study much closer to home.

My family were opposed to my interest in Christianity and thought I would lose interest.

Under their influence my husband also stood against me. I genuinely believe it was a miracle from God that my husband became interested in Jesus. Curious to know what was being studied at the Bible study, his one visit turned into many. He became eager to know more about Jesus.

We both started attending church with our daughter. We were welcomed with open hearts and open arms at Gracepoint Presbyterian Church in Granville. We discovered many families who embraced us and were prepared to support us whenever we were in need.

When we ultimately faced significant family pressure to relocate, we found a new home and continued our journey as a church-going family. I will not forget the assistance our church family provided for our new life.

After moving I learned that my father had passed away. My family believed it was entirely my fault. I did not heed their warnings, and due to my conversion to Christianity I brought death into my family. It was disheartening to witness their ignorance and despair. I have attempted to reach out on numerous occasions, but they consistently curse me and hold me responsible for everything that transpires in their lives.

In contrast, my church family has consistently shown us love and support during our challenging times. We now attend Hope at the Hill in Rooty Hill. I have an injury so I have only attended a few times but the church comes to me! My husband attends church regularly. The church people continuously pray for us and are present during our difficult moments. We feel as though we have not lost our family; rather, we have received an abundance of love and care from our church family.

Are you in this chain, this link? Are you following up people? Are you offering practical assistance? Be a missionary in your family, at work, in your neighbourhood. Make Christ known. Colossians 1:27



Anne helps ensure Scriptures are accessible to remote communities

For Anne Spragg, the humid air of Darwin is a long way from regional NSW where she grew up.

As the daughter of a Presbyterian minister, her childhood was spent in various churches, where her faith was nurtured and strengthened.

It was in these early years that a fascination with the global church began to take root, sparked by Sunday school books and stories from a family friend who served as a Bible translator in Papua New Guinea.

Today, Anne is no longer just a listener of those stories. As a Bible translation advisor in the Northern Territory, she is helping to ensure that the Scriptures are accessible to some of Australia's most remote communities.

A year of space

While Anne's interest in missions has been lifelong, the bridge between her childhood curiosity and her professional calling was built during her PYNSW Lead for Life (L4L) internship in 2015.

At the time, she was a first-year university student beginning a Bachelor of Linguistics, a degree she chose specifically with Bible translation in mind.

The L4L internship provided a necessary space to process this goal.

"I saw the internship as a chance to develop my knowledge of God and intentionally reflect on His purpose and direction for my life," she said.

The program's structure, which combined a week-long intensive at Summer Camp with regular mentorship, offered a unique balance of

community and introspection.

For Anne, the intensive was a highlight, providing an opportunity to build deep friendships with other young people who were also wrestling with big questions about their future.

However, it was the requirement for regular, one-on-one mentorship with an older woman from her church that proved the most formative.

These meetings pushed her beyond the "doing" of university and church life.

"It encouraged me to think more intentionally and with more introspection about the ministry I was already involved in," she said.

From ancient Israel to modern Darwin

The clarity Anne gained during her internship propelled her through her linguistics degree and eventually into three years of specialised study at Sydney Missionary & Bible College.

She found that the theological foundations laid during her internship, particularly in exegesis and Old Testament study, gave her a valuable head start in her formal training.

Now based in Darwin and working with Wycliffe Bible Translators, Anne's role is both technical and deeply relational.

She serves as an advisor to Indigenous translation teams, working with language groups such as the Mawng people of Goulburn Island.

Her work is a meticulous team effort. The Indigenous translators are the primary experts; as native speakers, they best understand how to

communicate the heart of the scripture to their own people.

Anne brings her knowledge of the original biblical languages to the table, reviewing their drafts against the Greek and Hebrew texts to ensure accuracy.

Together, they navigate the complexities of translation - balancing respectful, formal language with everyday colloquialisms- with the ultimate goal of producing scriptures that are "highly understandable".

Anne said that for smaller language groups, seeing the Bible in their own tongue was a validation of their identity and culture.

Having the Bible in their own language is not just a wonderful tool for understanding, but it also communicates to them that God sees them and that their language, and they themselves, are valuable to God, as much as people from larger language groups," Anne explains.

The L4L internship provided the reflective space Anne needed to commit to, and now sustain a demanding, cross-cultural vocation. By investing in a year of intentionality a decade ago, she has been able to transition from a student with an interest in missions to a specialist serving the global church.

Interested in the Lead for Life Internship? Visit www.pynsw.org.au/whats-on/lead-for-life/ to find out more. To support Anne's ministry, visit www.wycliffe.au/anne



Anne Spragg at work.



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Schools

South Pacific Pen Pals

The Scots College has enjoyed a longstanding relationship with Tata Presbyterian School in Vanuatu, creating opportunities for students to connect, learn and serve alongside one another.

Following a pause during the pandemic, the partnership has been renewed through a Year 7 pen-pal program. What began with two boys quickly grew to more than 30 participants after just one session, reflecting students' enthusiasm to build meaningful friendships beyond their own community.

Through regular letter exchanges, students learn about life and culture in Vanuatu while sharing their own experiences and perspectives. These conversations foster curiosity, mutual respect and empathy, while strengthening communication skills and emotional awareness.

The success of the program has created exciting possibilities for the future. It is hoped that further opportunities, including the return of service trips and fundraising initiatives, will continue to strengthen the connection between The Scots College and Tata Presbyterian School.



The Scots College and Tata Presbyterian School have partnered on building projects, classroom initiatives and resource support for more than a decade.



At The Scots College, a Year 11 student re-introduces the pen pal program with the Tata School in Vanuatu.

Springwood & Winmalee Presbyterian Refugee Settlement

By Paul Karlik

Careful planning and preparation, along with lots of prayer, still leaves plenty of room for the unexpected!

A little more than 12 months since welcoming a wonderful Syrian family of seven, so it has proved for the core CRISP group from Springwood and Winmalee Presbyterian Church.

Involvement in CRISP took the group on a steep learning curve. However, it has been a genuine privilege for those involved.

This is largely due to support from the church and community, plus, importantly, the warmth and initiative shown by those embarking on a new life in Australia.

The group, upon being matched with a family, initially felt significant nervousness. This is understandable, given the family spoke no English and no group members spoke any Arabic.

Plus, housing was a challenge. This occurred at the last minute, thanks to a supportive agent and, along with so much else, God going before everything to wonderfully provide.

A few of the many highlights of the last 12 months include the warmth of the relationships that have been built, evident in so many ways including meals and outings.

Also, the welcome extended and support offered by neighbours and local schools was very heartening.

Plus, the capacity of the family to rise above the trauma and uncertainty of the previous 13 years to embrace the opportunities of education, employment, health care and so much more that many of us take for granted is humbling and inspiring.

However, it must be noted that the group found involvement very time consuming and at times, emotionally demanding. Perhaps, no different to many richly, worthwhile endeavours?

Refugee Ministry at Orange Presbyertian Church
By Kate Baxter - Refugee Ministry Leader, Orange Presbyterian Church

Since 2022 Orange Presbyterian Church (OPC) has been actively involved in refugee ministry via the Australian Government's CRISP program.

OPC has welcomed three refugee households into the Orange community and assisted them in practical ways during their first year in Australia.

The CRISP website sums up community sponsorship, in a way that reflects the experience at OPC, it is "hands-on, impactful, and deeply rewarding".

Being a part of CRISP has allowed OPC to have a unique opportunity to reflect God's care and concern for those who are strangers in our land, by extending love to them on their arrival in Australia: As Deuteronomy reminds us; God "executes justice for the orphan and the widow and shows His love for the stranger by giving him food and clothing. So, show love for the stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt." (Deuteronomy 10: 18-19)

Three families who started as strangers to us have been welcomed and supported in their settlement by small groups of OPC members and now are our friends and part of our OPC family.

Each family has come from a different cultural background, experienced very different circumstances in what had brought them to being a

refugee and each has a different settlement journey.

What these families share is a deep desire to find freedom, safety and stability, especially for their children.

Orange Presbyterian has had the privilege of extending God's love to every one of the six adults and 14 children who make up these three CRISP families.

Jericho Road partners with Sydney Refugee Team [SRT], a Christian organisation which ministers to refugees in the Sydney Metropolitan area.
By Andrew Adam - Jericho Road Cross Cultural and Refugee Response Worker

Jericho Road helps SRT provide its annual Packed With Love food hampers and gifts for refugee children at the Annual SRT Christmas Party.

Members of the Presbyterian Church also helped at the Christmas Party itself. Last year, over 250 people attended. This year's Christmas Party will be held on Saturday December 5.

SRT also distribute food to about sixty refugee families.

Jericho Road encourages Presbyterian Churches to collect oil and rice that is then donated to SRT.

St Andrew's Presbyterian Church at Wentworth Falls - a very small congregation - generously collected a lot of basmati rice and olive oil for donation this year.

If your church would like to support SRT by conducting a Rice and Oil drive contact Andrew Adams.

Members of the Presbyterian Church are also involved in the ministry of SRT as volunteer Companions who regularly visit a designated refugee family.

They offer the gift of friendship which helps the refugees feel less isolated and more supported.

To prepare volunteers, SRT provides a short training course highlighting cross-cultural awareness.

Volunteers from the Presbyterian Church are also involved in helping SRT's annual weekend away for several refugee families - this year it will be held from 25 to 27 September, 2026 at Macarthur.

This gives the refugee families the chance to enjoy a short holiday. Bible talks are also conducted over the weekend.

**Andrew Adams is Jericho Road's Cross Cultural and Refugee Response Worker*

Christ College hosts METRO apprentices

Over a few days in May, Christ College hosted our METRO apprentices for the annual Christ College Day.

Our apprentices, both men and women, come from all over NSW and from various ministry contexts from churches to parachurch ministries. It really is a rare opportunity for them to meet each other and also to meet members of the METRO Committee.

For the committee, it is always a privilege to see God raise up men and women from our churches who are willing to spend two years being mentored by faithful trainers.

The annual Christ College Days are an opportunity for each of them to meet lecturers, sit in a class and visit a partner church.

It really helps them get a sense of what it might look like to study at Christ College post-METRO and serve long term in our denomination. It is also a rare opportunity for them to meet each other face to face as potential college students in the coming years.

This year we have been so pleased to see new churches undertaking METRO apprentices for the very first time, including one undergoing a church revitalisation.

Seven out of ten of our 2026 cohort this year are women which is also exciting. Along with the staff at Christ College, we're also thankful for Paul McKendrick from M&M and Sylvia Siu from the Women's Committee who together, really were able to sow a vision for long term involvement in our denomination.

On behalf of the METRO Committee, I would like to encourage you to be praying with great thanks for the trainers, trainees and their churches.

If you are a minister or Elder who is looking to work out how your church can be thinking about raising up a METRO apprentice from within your own church, the committee would love to hear from you. Please visit metro.edu.au

I thoroughly enjoyed my time spent with the METRO team and at Christ College. Something that really stuck with me was Christ College's ethos, as Principal, Rev Dr Ian Smith phrased it "training icebergs not ice floaters". It made me seriously consider not only Bible college, but specifically going to a Bible college where our convictions can be strengthened, challenged and deepened. I saw this philosophy being carried out accompanied by a real reverence for Christ in the teaching, behaviour and attitudes of both staff and students. It reminded me of 1 Peter 3:15: "But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer for the hope that you have". I greatly look forward to returning next year

- Lachlan MacKay, First Year Apprentice Kyogle Presbyterian Church





Proverbs - Anger and self-control

In the aftermath of World War II, WH Auden wrote his longest poem, The Age of Anxiety.

Less poetically, we might refer to our own times as The Age of Anger. 'Road rage' has entered the vocabulary, and there is a general fear of arousing anybody's anger. It is hardly healthy.

The book of Proverbs is blunt in its estimations of the person with 'a fire-cracker response' to inconvenient people and circumstances: 'A man of quick temper acts foolishly.' (Prov.14:17).

Indeed, 'A man of wrath stirs up strife, and one given to anger causes much transgression.' (29:22; also 30:33)

It is often the Bible's practice to teach by means of contrasts. So, 'Whoever is slow to anger has great understanding, but he who has a hasty temper exalts folly.' (14:29)

William Wilberforce used to cite Matthew Henry's comment that it is the second blow that starts the battle.

We can easily make matters worse: 'A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.' (15:1) 'A hot-tempered man stirs up strife, but he who is slow to anger quiets contention.' (15:18) 'The beginning of strife is like letting out water, so quit before the quarrel breaks out.' (17:14) 'Good sense makes one slow to anger, and it is his glory to overlook an offense.' (19:11)

Even pagans recognised something of this. In Aesop's Fables, Hercules stamps on the apple of discord which immediately doubles in size.

Every time he tries to cut it down, it doubles in size. Yet sometimes an apparent virtue can be taken to extreme whereby it becomes a vice.

Being bland is not the same as being Godly. We need discernment on this matter, as on other issues of wisdom. But a cranky demeanour is no advertisement for the gospel of grace.

In 1750 Jonathan Edwards was sacked by his congregation at Northampton, although he and his family remained in the town for another year, and Edwards even preached in his former pulpit during this time.

In his 'Farewell Sermon', Edwards said: 'A contentious people will be a miserable people and never think you behave yourselves as becomes Christians, except when you sincerely, sensibly, and fervently love all men, of whatever party or opinion, and whether friendly or unkind, just or injurious, to you or your friends, or to the cause and kingdom of Christ.'

In a time when many of us would have been tempted to fall into resentment and bitter anger, Edwards breathed a message of humble loving kindness.

In the eyes of the world, the descriptor 'the Great' is overused, often for military bullies like Alexander the Great and Napoleon.

Such an evaluation fails the Proverbs test: 'Whoever is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he who rules his spirit than he who takes a city.' (16:32)

In dealing with the outworking of the Spirit in the life of a Christian, the apostle Paul tells us how to handle anger by dealing with it quickly (see Eph.4:26-27).

There is a terrible futility about perpetual anger: 'A man of great wrath will pay the penalty, for if you deliver him, you will only have to do it again.' (19:19)

To clam up is to foster a slow-burning resentment; to blow up is to create more anger. To work out the implications of free forgiveness is to become a person who is slow to anger.



