

PresLife



MAGAZINE OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF QUEENSLAND

God's Church in Qld

Bald Hills

Ann St (Brisbane)

Salt (Gold Coast)

Dalby

**6 workers for the
Gospel share
their story**

**GiST Launches
Website**

Bringing Domestic Violence into the Light

Bringing news, views and inspiration to the Presbyterian Church of Queensland as well as seeking to bring Glory to God and proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

VOLUME 21 QUARTERLY ISSUE 3 2017

Pres Life

Magazine of the Presbyterian Church of Queensland.

CONTRIBUTIONS of stories, ideas and images are welcome. Stories and advertising should be sent to the editor. Photographs should be saved in JPEG or TIFF format and must be high resolution (300DPI). Written permission also needs to be given to reprint the photographs. If quoting other people's work in your article that should be acknowledged in the article. Please limit articles to **250 words (subject to editing)**. For a copy of the publication deadlines please email preslife@pcq.org.au. For full details on advertising please contact the editor.

Closing date for editorial and advertising for issue four of *Pres Life* is 7 September 2017.

Dates subject to change.

Cover: Photo Stock Image

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Contents

GiST Launches Website	3
------------------------------	----------

Bringing Domestic Violence into the Light	4
--	----------

Ministry Appointments	6
------------------------------	----------

God's Church in Queensland	9
-----------------------------------	----------

News from Around the State	13
-----------------------------------	-----------

Queensland Theological College	19
---------------------------------------	-----------

APWM	20
-------------	-----------

PIM	21
------------	-----------

PresCare	22
-----------------	-----------

Briefly

Used Stamps

We can turn your used stamps into mission support

The Presbyterian Womens' Missionary Union (PWMU) is collecting stamps to support our missionaries. Stamps can be left at Church Offices, Level 4, 19 Lang Parade, Milton Qld 4064 or call Carole on 07 3324 9309 or Margaret on 07 3285 6146 for other options or more details.

Presbyterian Fellowship Association (PFA)

In the early 1980s, the Presbyterian Fellowship Association (youth thing) put on a number of 'Image' rallies, where gospel songs, skits and talks were presented to the public.

Having recently digitised about 1500 photographs from the 1980s, I'm interested to know if any survivors from those times and events would be interested in viewing them and talking over old times. These photographs also include images of sports and swimming carnivals, pirate-themed river cruises and leadership training camps.

If you are interested, please feel free to contact me by email 2xmaddoc@gmail.com and I'll try to organise some sort of mutually agreeable mass (or minor) meeting for that purpose.

Michael Madden



www.pcq.org.au



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Events Around the State



Do you have a connection with Charleville?

Did the Charleville Presbyterian Church feature in your family's life?

If so, please join us in the celebration of 125 years of the Presbyterian Church in Charleville!

Country church congregations experience boom and bust times, a reflection of the economy and population of the towns they serve. Over the decades many people have passed through Charleville, and this weekend will be a time to reflect on the blessings, Christian friendship and equipping for future mission that God bestowed during your time here.

Come along to catch up with friends and family, share stories and photos, re-live fun Kids Club times throughout the weekend and much more...

If you would like to share some of your memories or photos of God's goodness to you during your Charleville church life, you are welcome to join the Facebook Group created for the event. Contact us for an invitation.

Friday night is the Welcome BBQ, then Saturday kicks off with breakfast followed by Planting-a-plant in the new garden, and the unveiling of the new memorial Pavers.

Saturday afternoon will be a re-creation of the mini Spring Fairs.

The Sunday School picnic will include the famous activity of old, Sandcastle Building. Start practicing.

Rev Lindsey Timms, past minister of the church, will be preaching during the Sunday Service.

A farewell dinner will be held Sunday Night, 1 October 2017.

For more details, contact Jeff Parry, Charleville Presbyterian Church 125year Reunion Committee.



Stock image

Gospel in Society Today (GiST) Launches Website

by Robyn Bain (Convenor) for the GiST team

Euthanasia. Gender fluidity. Domestic Abuse. Inequality. Same Sex Marriage. Abortion. Climate Change. Aging. Media Power. Materialism.

Some of the headline issues that crowd conversations in our communities today. They spring from a vast landscape of values, morals, desires and fears. It is almost superfluous to point out that the values of our neighbours, teachers, policy makers, journalists and professionals are rapidly shedding any Christian content and developing in complex ways. But we continue to encounter stories and ideas that shock and worry us. We also have to admit that our cultural values profoundly influence all of us, young and old, and even without our noticing, as we tackle the details of everyday life.

Under the sovereign hand of God, however, our times also present us with new opportunities to grow in maturity of faith as well as show and speak the Gospel of Jesus Christ with compassion and clarity. This is a task we can confidently embrace knowing that in Jesus is the light our lost community desperately needs and His light cannot be overcome.

In response to the opportunities of our time and the needs of Presbyterian Church of Queensland (PCQ) churches and members, the Gospel in Society Today (GiST) has launched a website to help believers all over Queensland love, think, speak and live openly in the Gospel as we tackle the complexities of life in the company of our neighbours.

www.gist.org.au

The GiST website provides a two-way forum to help with this great task of showing and speak the Gospel to each other and our community.

1. Critical to the usefulness of our website is GiST's ability to hear from you! We are most concerned to help you with the real issues of your context. And we are also keen to receive your help and reflections. So we need to know about the challenges you face living faithfully for the Gospel together at church, showing and speaking the Gospel in your neighbourhood, questions and observations you have, the stories you have heard, the resources you need, the feedback you have and the prayers you would like us to share. The GiST website will work most effectively when it is built on two-way communication.

Contact us now at www.gist.org.au/contact (confidentiality will be respected if you so request)

2. The GiST team will post on the website an expanding number of '10 000 foot' Issues Papers: detailed, carefully worked through, theological explorations and cultural analysis of key topics. There are a number of these papers available on the website now covering the Gospel and humanity, sexuality, gender, the environment, domestic abuse and abortion. We are currently developing a paper on the Gospel and economics. The Issues Papers are the resources to go to if you are looking for deeper reading and reference.

The GiST team will also be working to provide shorter articles, stories, interviews, videos, book reviews, resources and answers to questions on a monthly basis. These will explore the ways these big issues touch us personally and in our Christian communities. If you look at the website now, you will see:

- a regional minister's reflections and questions on welcoming gay friends at church
- a conversation with a child about death
- and an interview with believer and missionary Michelle Taylor about facing death in Christ
- you will also find the videos of two GiST seminars given at the 2017 PCQ Assembly: Living Faithfully in a Sexular Age and Living Faithfully in a Suffering Averse Age. These contain teaching, reflection and panel discussion on ministering to each other in our sexual desires, suffering and dying.

We warmly encourage you to use any and all of these resources yourself, share them with your friends, and use them to serve those in your church.

We can send you monthly newsletters highlighting the most recent articles posted if you subscribe to our website.

Subscribe to our newsletters now at www.gist.org.au/contact

The GiST team prays that God will continue to help us live faithfully for Jesus Christ in our churches, holding out the hope of Gospel to the lost as He surely works out His plan of salvation in Queensland and beyond.



Bringing Domestic Violence into the Light

by Robyn Bain (Convenor) for the GiST team

Stock image

In July the ABC launched a public conversation on domestic violence in religious communities through the publication of a series of articles. One long article by journalists Julia Baird and Hayley Gleeson featured the first hand testimonies of women in conservative evangelical churches who have been abused by their husbands and found the response from church leadership to be unhelpful and harmful.

The ABC coverage drew a link between 'headship theology' and domestic violence. It suggested that abusers with connections to Christian communities would often twist the words of the Bible to justify abusing their wives, and to prevent their wives escaping. Christian teaching on divorce and submission, according to these stories, resulted in some women being sent back into danger.

The accounts of victims who have escaped abuse are the clearest and most accurate data we have when it comes to the existence of domestic violence in church communities; to date there is no substantial Australian research and no accurate statistics to paint a picture of how prevalent this issue is in our churches. But there is an emerging consensus in these stories and in investigations into domestic violence that the Bible can be twisted by abusers (who are typically experts in manipulation and control) and that churches can be ill-prepared to respond when a victim comes forward. Victims and advocates suggest it is important for churches to be clear on our theology and practice in this area for the sake of victims, abusers, and for anyone who a victim might trust to reveal their plight to.

The Queensland Government commissioned a special taskforce to report on Domestic Violence in Queensland. Its report Not Now, Not Ever, recommended that "Leaders of all faiths and religions to take a leadership role in fostering and encouraging respectful relationships in their community, and to teach their communities and congregations that coercive control and violence are never acceptable," the Presbyterian Church of Queensland created a special committee in 2015 to do just this; the committee reported to the 2016 Assembly, which adopted report and deliverances unanimously. The report can be found online on the Gospel In Society Today (GiST) website (gist.org.au) and on the Presbyterian Church of Queensland's site (pcq.org.au).

The Assembly voted to "Affirm the inherent dignity of all men, women, and children, whatever their age, or marital status, as people made in the image of God, to bear this image in his world, so thoroughly repudiates any use of Christian concepts of submission or authority in any relationship to justify the physical or emotional abuse of any person."

The committee, in taking up the challenge of the Not Now, Not Ever report, recommended that our churches conduct "active teaching around the issues of violence, and clear, reflective Bible Study on these issues" as essential for our churches to become safer communities for victims of domestic violence; particularly women who are being victimised by the abuse of Scripture.

In order to provide a particularly clear framework for ministers and elders responding to victims coming forward, the report also suggested our churches consider adopting the position that domestic violence can be a form of the 'desertion' envisaged by the Westminster Confession of Faith (24.VI), and so legitimate grounds for separation and divorce.

The report contained recommendations for our denomination, moving forward, which have been passed to the Committee for Ministry Resourcing for action, and GiST to take forward in the public square. These recommendations were around equipping our communities to Recognise, Report, and Prevent domestic and family violence within our communities.

This report was circulated to ministers and elders in our churches following the publication of the ABC story. In response to that story, many churches issued statements online condemning domestic violence and the twisting of the Bible to justify it. Creek Road issued a statement that included these words:

"Where abuse is happening, our church and its leaders will use our strength to stand between victim and abuser, like Jesus stood between the Pharisees and the woman they hoped to stone to death. It will not be the victim who is pressured to leave our community. We will not coerce a victim to remain in a situation of abuse for the sake of their abuser. We will report allegations of domestic violence to the police.

If you are reading this and are in a relationship where your husband is twisting God's word to justify violent or abusive behaviour speak out; tell somebody you trust. Keep doing this until you find someone who will believe you and provide you the help and support you need. Contact your pastor, or Growth Group leader, or a trusted friend."

Further Reading

Domestic Violence Committee gist.org.au/domestic-violence

Creek Road's full Statement:

creekroad.org.au/domestic-violence-in-the-church/

ABC article featuring stories of abuse:

abc.net.au/news/2017-07-18/domestic-violence-church-submits-to-husbands/8652028

Ministry Appointments



Jon Brown

Wife: Angharad

Children: Baby due in August

Position: Student Minister at Ann St

What excites you most about your appointment?

Seeing God at work in people's lives.

Why did you feel called to this position?

Because I really enjoy sharing God's word with all sorts of people.

In what way has God changed your life the most significantly?

God has revealed to me in Jesus how good he is, and along the way I'm learning how bad I am. Shifting my trust from me to Jesus has been liberating.

If you weren't in ministry what would you be doing?

Trying to make a living out of playing country music.

What social issue concerns you the most?

The growing hostility towards God and His Word.

Other than Jesus, who is your favourite person in the Bible and why?

The Apostle Peter because I can most relate to his blunders.

When are you happiest?

When my wife is happy.

What book changed you?

Pilgrims Progress – John Bunyan - a great reminder that the Christian life is an epic (in the true sense of the word) journey.

What would you tell your 15 year old self?

Get real and follow Jesus.

Zac Brasch

Wife: Hannah

Children: Expecting first child any day now

Position: Evangelistic/discipleship/musical capacity at Ann St

What excites you most about your appointment?

I think primarily, the sense that I am a part of the body of Christ, being formed into His image to do good works. And that I would bear fruit.

Why did you feel called to this position?

The laborers are few! But also, partly because I know that I can so easily fall into idleness. I have to be roped into ministry or I will wither.

In what way has God changed your life the most significantly?

By keeping me accountable. I often try to forge my own sinful path, until I realise who I'm up against.

If you weren't in ministry what would you be doing?

Graffiti art.

What social issue concerns you the most?

Probably the way our society sees abortion. And the attitudes some Australians still have towards the indigenous community.

Other than Jesus, who is your favourite person in the Bible and why?

Ehud the Judge because he was a left-handed man, from a right-handed clan.

When are you happiest?

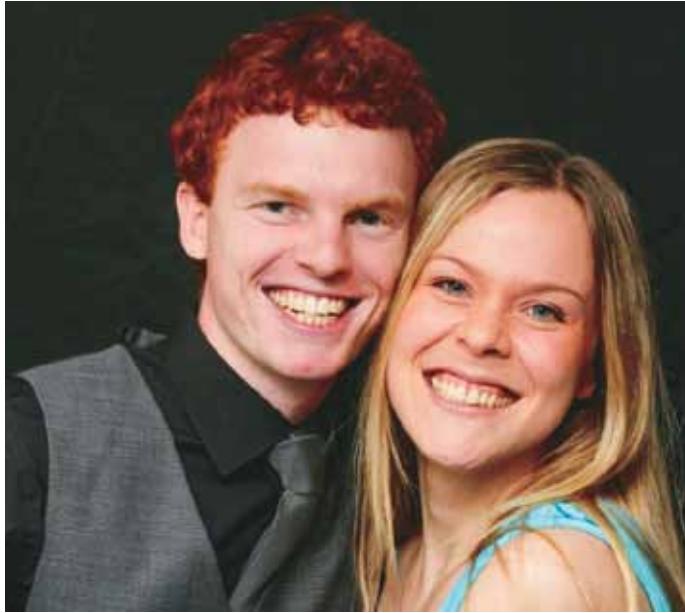
When my wife asks me to explain something to her from the Bible.

What book changed you?

Hmmm...*The Magic Pudding* - Norman Lindsay

What would you tell your 15 year old self?

That's a tough one...especially after seeing movies like *The Butterfly Effect*...maybe "What others think of you doesn't define you".



Josiah Wilson

Wife: Elizabeth

Position: Campus Pastor at Creek Road (Springfield)

What excites you most about your appointment?

I love spending my time creating opportunities for the Gospel to sink deeper in us, so it might go wider in our community. Doing this alongside brothers and sisters who love Jesus is very energising.

Why did you feel called to this position?

The pastors and elders at Creek Road saw an opportunity for my wife and I to move to Springfield, and help revitalize the church. We both saw an open door for the Gospel to flourish, and wanted to be part of it.

In what way has God changed your life the most significantly?

God is always surprising, and I think the most significant thing is what God is doing in me right now.

If you weren't in ministry what would you be doing?

Before heading into ministry I was thinking about studying education to become a school teacher.

What social issue concerns you the most?

I'm concerned about how my consumption of goods comes at a cost to others in our world. In recent years I have wanted to better understand what I'm buying and where it comes from, so I can make wise choices with my money.

Other than Jesus, who is your favourite person in the Bible and why?

Paul in 2 Corinthians 6:10 where he talks about being "sorrowful, yet always rejoicing". Only the Gospel gives us the resources to honestly face suffering, and still hold onto a hope that cannot be robbed by circumstances.

When are you happiest?

My wife and I do lots of hiking. I love getting out, exploring new places, and soaking up the good world God has made.

What book changed you?

One book I've really loved re-reading in recent years is Eugene Peterson's, *The Contemplative Pastor*. He pictures the role of a pastor like a poised harpooner—"To ensure the greatest efficiency in the dart, the harpooners of this world must start to their feet out of idleness, and not out of toil".

What would you tell your 15 year old self?

I became Christian around this time, and was still wrestling with some things the Bible taught. I think I'd want to tell 15-year-old me that God's love and justice go hand-in-hand, and they're most clearly displayed at the cross.

Lindsay Foster

Wife: Merryn

Children: Isabelle, Claire and 'Gubby' arriving late October

Position: Pastor at Tablelands (Atherton)

What excites you most about your appointment?

Getting alongside faithful Christian brothers and sisters to help equip them to minister to one another and reach their friends for Christ.

Why did you feel called to this position?

While at university I was convicted of the need for all people to know Jesus, and so with the encouragement of some wiser Christian brothers and sisters I headed off down the vocational ministry track. My wife and I were drawn to ministry in North Queensland as it's a region that people find hard to move to as it's really far away from the big cities, but it is also where I grew up.

In what way has God changed your life the most significantly?

He has brought me from death to life. This is most clearly seen in my sharp change in thinking. That came about at uni as I understood the depths of the Gospel, leaving behind a money-focused engineering career to a life of service to God wherever I was in whatever capacity I could.

If you weren't in ministry what would you be doing?

I'd probably still be serving God while working as an electrical engineer.

What social issue concerns you the most?

Divorce. There is a very large chunk of Australia affected by this sad and awful event, and yet we as a church struggle to care for those who are suffering in the midst of divorce or even years down the track.

Other than Jesus, who is your favourite person in the Bible and why?

The apostle Peter, he messed up so many times but kept plugging away, which gives me great hope!

When are you happiest?

On a day when I've got out for some exercise (usually a bike ride) and spending time with my family.

What book changed you?

Through my first ever real Bible study group at Uni, *Romans* probably shifted my thinking the most as I learnt to grapple with the Scriptures on a level I never had before. Other than that, *God's Big Picture* by Vaughan Roberts, as it helped me understand how the whole Bible fits together, and points us to Jesus.

What would you tell your 15 year old self?

Trust God.

Ministry Appointments



Dan Gorton

Wife: Adena

Children: Isaac, Josie, Laura and Philip

Position: Assistant Pastor at Salt (Elanora) and overseeing children and youth

What excites you most about your appointment?

Helping people see how great Jesus is for the first time or for the hundredth. Also seeing kids grow up and stick with Jesus.

Why did you feel called to this position?

God worked in my heart. I was a primary school teacher who was frustrated at not being able to teach about Jesus often, and God opened this new teaching role.

In what way has God changed your life the most significantly?

Being willing to serve others. Parenthood has helped this immensely, but still plenty of room to grow.

If you weren't in ministry what would you be doing?

I loved being a primary school teacher, so I would be happy going back to that. Although, I would seek out new ways to teach about Jesus.

What social issue concerns you the most?

Abortion. Life is a gift from God, and it saddens me that those who are completely helpless and vulnerable in our society are so abandoned.

Other than Jesus, who is your favourite person in the Bible and why?

Peter. He shows we don't need to have it all figured out to be a passionate disciple of Jesus. He also shows that we are to be teachable and learn from Jesus.

When are you happiest?

Either when I am with people excited by what they are learning about Jesus, or when I am at the beach swimming with my family.

What book changed you?

Show them Jesus, by Jack Klumpenhower. Not sure it changed me, but it's such a helpful book for all who parent or teach kids about Jesus. Highly recommend it.

What would you tell your 15 year old self?

You will continue to face opposition because you love Jesus, but it's completely worth it. Keep your eyes on him.

John Langbridge

Wife: Jan

Children: 3 adult children, 12 grandchildren, 1 great grandchild

Position: Intentional Transition Ministry of churches in Adelaide

What excites you most about your appointment?

Being able to help churches through a change phase

Why did you feel called to this position?

I have long experience in Ministry but God doesn't seem to want me to retire just yet.

In what way has God changed your life the most significantly?

From a non-christian background to believing in Christ

If you weren't in ministry what would you be doing?

Gardening and sitting in a rocking chair

What social issue concerns you the most?

The steadily glowing anti-Christian bias in our society

Other than Jesus, who is your favourite person in the Bible and why?

Thomas—he had the guts to honestly question and doubt, then whole-heartedly believe and follow the truth when he found it

When are you happiest?

Enjoying God's creation/nature and family and friends

What book changed you?

Who Moved the Stone by Frank Morrison

What would you tell your 15 year old self?

I had no Christian or even religious background at 15. So I would tell him about Christ.

God's Church in Queensland

Bald Hills Presbyterian Church

Location

58 Strathpine Rd, Bald Hills (next door to St. Pauls Anglican School)

The Ministry Team

John Trappett (Minister). Apart from John every member performs a ministry role according to their gifts and time available.

Demographic

We have babies through to 90ish year olds.

Prayer Points

Our current minister, John, has announced his intention to retire in the first half of 2018. We would value prayer as we work through the process to find a new full-time minister.

That we would not allow important things in our lives to push out the essential things.



What is the church excited about doing to make followers of Jesus?

Continuing to show the relevancy and absolute continuing need for the Bible to inform and reform every area of our lives, so that we may live lives honouring to God as we go about our everyday activities.

Meet the People



Annette Smith

How long have you been attending Bald Hills? 21 years

What do you do during the week?

On Tuesday mornings I attend a ladies growth group and every second Tuesday afternoon a mixed growth group. I also try to keep in touch with folk who may require some help from the church family

What is the best thing about being at Bald Hills?

Hearing God's Word expounded in its entirety which helps me immensely to live out my Christian life.

My church family is important too... we endeavour to show Christ's love as we get beside each other to encourage and be encouraged.



Peter Matthews

How long have you been attending Bald Hills?

1 year

What do you do during the week?

I am semi-retired, but studying bookkeeping online and learning the piano among my busy daily schedule.

What is the best thing about being at Bald Hills?

The best thing about being at church is to hear sound Biblical expository messages and participate in a Christ-centred worship service.



Sarah Bowden

How long have you been attending Bald Hills?

Since I was a baby.

What do you do during the week?

My paid profession is as an Actuarial Advisor but the last 2.5 years I've been on leave looking after my two boys—I know what's harder!

What is the best thing about being at Bald Hills?

Hearing God's Word expounded in its entirety which helps me immensely to live out my Christian life.

My church family is important too... we endeavour to show Christ's love as we get beside each other to encourage and be encouraged.

God's Church in Queensland

Ann St Presbyterian Church

Location

We are located right in the heart of the Brisbane CBD.

The Ministry Team

David Jones (Senior Minister), Garrett Edwards (City Church & Gospel Community Pastor), Gary Tosh (Minister to Seniors), Sam Argent (Music Director), Melinda Smith (Pastoral Care Co-ordinator), James Ritchie (Student Minister), Jon Brown (Student Minister), Diane Turner (Administrator)

Demographic

Ann St is a multi-generational, multi-ethnic church family. Some of us walk to church from inner-city apartments while many drive in from suburbs all across Brisbane.

Prayer Points

That our Gospel Communities would grow into networks of relationships where people come to *hear and grow*



in and live in light of the Good News of Jesus. That we would make the most of our location to effectively and strategically engage our city with the Gospel.

What is the church excited about doing to make followers of Jesus?

Our building is in the heart of the city but most of our church, that is, the people, are scattered all throughout the suburbs. We are excited about our developing networks of Gospel Communities as local, relational contexts for discipleship, mission and pastoral care.

Meet the People



Fransedo Ristanto

How long have you been attending Ann St?

13 years

What do you do during the week?

Project Accountant for a design and engineering company.

What is the best thing about being at Ann St?

Being part of the big family and gospel community.



Immanuel and Sharon Joseph

How long have you been attending Ann St?

Immanuel 2 ½ years and Sharon 2 years

What do you do during the week?

Immanuel works as a data analyst and Sharon volunteers as an artist assistant and has her own online art store.

What is the best thing about being at Ann St?

Worshipping and serving God together with our brothers and sisters in Christ.



Barbara Harvey

How long have you been attending Ann St?

Since 1983

What do you do during the week?

Retired - do volunteer work

What is the best thing about being at Ann St?

Worshipping God and fellowshipping with our church community.

Salt Presbyterian Church (Gold Coast)

Location

On the Gold Coast in Robina, Elanora and Mudgeeraba.

The Ministry Team

Alan Radloff (Senior Minister), Dan Gorton (Assistant Minister), Adam Gregory (Assistant Pastor), Greg Atkin (Assistant Pastor)

Demographic

God has given us a healthy range of ages and a variety of people including heaps of families and kids, and a growing bunch of students.

Prayer Points

That we'd be growing in our love and obedience as disciples of Jesus.

That we'd have the joy of seeing people become disciples of Jesus.



What is the church excited about doing to make followers of Jesus?

Lots of people came to hear Dave MacDonald speak about his *Hope Beyond Cure*. We're inviting people to regular *Christianity Explored* groups. We're about to celebrate 500 years since the Reformation by studying Romans.

Meet the People



Chris and Kelly Macindoe

How long have you been attending Salt Church?

Chris 4 years and Kelly 8 months

What do you do during the week?

Chris works as a doctor and Kelly as a part-time dentist.

What is the best thing about being at Salt Church?

We really find the preaching helpful and biblical. We also love the different types of people—there are lots of things that God teaches us through them.



Steve and Di Seumahu

How long have you been attending Salt Church?

13 years

What do you do during the week?

We're now retired. We go to a growth group, lead a ukulele ministry to aged-care villages and often visit local coffee shops with people. We appreciate having our son and family living nearby.

What is the best thing about being at Salt Church?

The unity of God's people and that God's Word is faithfully preached, thus encouraging us to bring unsaved friends.



Ben and Chelsea Donovan

How long have you been attending Salt Church?

2 and a bit years

What do you do during the week?

We raise our three children: Archer, Isla and Atticus. Chels does the important work of being a mum full-time. Ben co-manages a pool refurbishment company with his dad, while doing some theological study part-time.

What is the best thing about being at Salt Church?

That it is Word-driven, Christ-focussed and mission-minded. There's a real robust love and genuine concern for one another. We feel safe and secure because the leaders are transparent and build us up from God's Word.

God's Church in Queensland

Dalby Presbyterian Church

Location

We're in the Darling Downs about one hour west of Toowoomba. We're opposite Coles if you're ever in town.

The Ministry Team

Our staff team includes Ross Pethybridge, Peter Evans, Mitch Smart, Joshua Dodd, Kath-Lynn Smith/Chloe Skerman and Vicki Law.

Demographic

According to a recent National Church Life Survey our average age is 47 years. The majority of us were born in Australia, just over half of us completed tertiary education and about 25% of us joined this church in the last five years.

Prayer Points

That we will be a church that continues to prayerfully seek God.

That we will be a church which is actively engaged in evangelism, as well as supporting others in other parts of the world who are pointing people to Jesus.



What is the church excited about doing to make followers of Jesus?

Last year we launched a vision looking forward to 2021 and just part of it is starting another congregation. As we follow Jesus together towards 2021 and beyond this is going to provide plenty of opportunities for all of us to grow (not just those joining the new congregation).

Meet the People



Verna Harth

How long have you been attending Dalby?

Over 50 years

What do you do during the week?

Retired but spend my week by serving people through hospital visitation, attending the Older Adults ministry programs in our church like Staying Sharp and Craft 'n' Chat.

(She makes the best cakes in Dalby, but don't tell her we told you!)

What is the best thing about being at Dalby?

The people are wonderful and improving all the time.



Ryan Swift

How long have you been attending Dalby?

15 years

What do you do during the week?

Draftsman

What is the best thing about being at Dalby?

The people, fellowship and the Bible teaching.



Maggie Henning

How long have you been attending Dalby?

6 years

What do you do during the week?

I'm at school in Grade 1.

What is the best thing about being at Dalby?

Getting to know Jesus in kids' church.

News from around the State



Greg Watt

Wife: Helen

Children: Sidney and Robert

Position: State Moderator

In what way has God changed your life the most significantly?

Through long exposure to God's word, and through the ups and downs of life. The two are inseparable.

What were you doing prior to becoming a minister?

Working for the Butter Marketing Board in Brisbane, in a variety of capacities: groundsman, carpenter (on a fill-in basis); printer's offsider; butter grader (like a wine taster – only not so glamorous!)

When are you happiest?

Just doing what my hand finds to do. Reading. Time with family.

Why did you feel called to become the State Moderator?

It's a way of serving, in my turn, the denomination and help lighten the duty of care load on the other Trustees (attending Board meetings, etc); and there are opportunities for the Moderator to remind the Church of the most important things that can so easily get lost or diminished in the clutter of life and ministry.

What are your aims for the year and what do you hope to achieve?

To strengthen the hands of God's people and congregations, and particularly to encourage the habit of daily meditation in God's Word.

What are the main issues you see Christians facing in Queensland?

At a societal level: the whole growing perspective that faith/ God's Word has no place in the public square; at a personal level, the danger of life and busyness crowding out time to listen to God in His Word each day and being renewed in Him.

What do you see as the most important things the Presbyterian Church of Queensland needs to do to share the Gospel with non-believers and nurture/grow followers of Jesus?

As part of the Christian Church, we speak for God, and have the words of eternal life. And that's ALL we have (that, plus God's Spirit, of course). We should have compassion for people struggling with sin—any sin—but must resist the trend to make it part of normal.



Mike O'Connor

Wife: Corinne

Children: Joel and Emily

Position: Moderator-Elect

In what way has God changed your life the most significantly?

By Jesus' death for me on the Cross, God has brought me from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of the Son he loves.

What were you doing prior to becoming a minister?

All sorts of things, working in a book warehouse, a bakehouse factory, as a Solicitor's Clerk and as an apprentice Butcher.

When are you happiest?

On summer holidays at the beach with family and watching Australia play test cricket.

Why did you feel called to become the Moderator-Elect?

There's never going to be a good time to be Moderator (Elect), but the only way to help bring about lasting change in the church is to accept positions of responsibility when you're asked to do them.

What will you be doing as Moderator-Elect?

At every opportunity, I'll be encouraging Christians in our churches to know and tell the Good News about Jesus to other people.

What are the main issues you see Christians facing in Queensland?

We've lost our sense of urgency in telling others the Gospel. We've become complacent about evangelism by being distracted with secondary issues and hot button topics. Largely though, we've become unconvinced that we really do need to be rescued by God because on the whole life is pretty good in the Sunshine State.

What do you see as the most important things the Presbyterian Church of Queensland needs to do to share the Gospel with non-believers and nurture/grow followers of Jesus?

I think our church leaders need to be training and equipping Christians to share their faith in Jesus with others. Queensland is beautiful one day and perfect the next, so most Queenslanders don't think they need Jesus in their lives. Our God given task is to start helping our family and friends see they really do need Jesus to be their Saviour and Lord.

News from around the State

Induction of State Moderator 2017-18

by André Schwartz, Moderator's Chaplain

Many people from across the State gathered in a chilly Toowoomba on Sunday 18 June, amidst drizzling rain. But that did not dampen the spirit of warm hearts assembled in the ChristLife Presbyterian Church. After the challenging talk by Rev Esa Hukkinen on the importance of families and great fellowship around a BBQ dinner, the high point of the evening was the induction of Rev Greg Watt from John Knox Presbyterian Church in Townsville as State Moderator for 2017-18.

ChristLife welcomed all warmly, and their music team led us in singing from both seasoned hymns and contemporary songs. All present were blessed by the choir of Fairholme College—which is celebrating its centenary this year—with a couple of moving items. There were prayers of thanks to God for His Gospel, which is only truly understood by delving in God's Word daily, leading to growth in unity in Christ. The newly inducted Moderator expounded God's Word from Colossians 3, urging us to continue to spend time in the Bible, so that the *Word of God may Dwell in us Richly*.

The Moderator indicated the focus of his ministry will be to visit all Queensland Presbyteries, challenging congregations and church members to really get back to God's Word purposefully; hence the Moderator's theme: *Let the Word of God Dwell in us Richly*.



L-R: André Schwartz (Moderator's Chaplain), Greg Watt (State Moderator) and Peter Dimond (Moderator's Chaplain)

State Assembly 2017

by Peter Barber, Minister at St Andrew's (Townsville)

The 2017 Presbyterian Church of Queensland's (PCQ) Assembly has come and gone, and you might not have noticed too much about it, except perhaps that your Ministers and an Elder or two have been absent for a little while. Perhaps you might be wondering what the Assembly is? Why do we have it and what do Ministers and Elders do at Assembly?

Well Assembly is the gathering together of Ministers and Elders from churches right across the State including representatives from the Presbytery of South Australia—who are being cared for by PCQ—to be encouraged and strengthened in the work of the Gospel; to learn from one another; to hear God's Word and respond to it in worship, prayer and fellowship; to decide upon policy issues relating to Gospel ministry in the PCQ, and give denominational support to the Assembly committees, Presbytery and churches on the proclamation of Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour through speaking the word of life, and doing good in His name.

Decisions that are made at Assembly should be of interest to congregations around the State and in South Australia. Of particular note this year were the ongoing encouragements to 'pray, send and go' in Gospel witness through chaplaincy in hospitals, the Defence Force, Aged Care—especially through PresCare, and in prisons; to give active and prayerful support to Christ-centred mission locally and overseas through congregational ministry, PIM, church plants and revitalising works (in Darling Downs and Central QLD Presbyteries, and Adelaide), APWM; looking to the Lord to raise up and send out more labourers for His harvest.

First Impressions of Assembly

Getting together with other ministry workers from across Australia to talk about the Gospel is always a great privilege, and so this year's Assembly didn't disappoint. Many conversations were had about what God's been doing, and what we pray he'd continue to do across our church families, and it was encouraging to hear of the impact that the Gospel is having.

The logistical work of the Church is important to doing ministry well and with integrity, but it'd be great to see how we can better streamline these processes. This would provide more time for hearing about what's happening on the front lines of ministry, as well as planning towards what God might have us proactively do as a denomination in the year to come—so that we'd leave our Assembly each year refreshed and inspired to return to our cities with a renewed gospel heart to see Jesus known everywhere.

Rob Davey, Pastor at Eternity Church (Gold Coast)

The best thing about Assembly was catching up with others serving Christ in ministry across our State. In the main sessions there was lots of admin business to cover, but I was encouraged by reports of churches making real efforts towards revitalisation and church planting, so as to more effectively engage their local communities with the Gospel. It was fantastic to hear of this kind of progress down in South Australia, and also the way God has raised up many younger leaders in our denomination in recent years. Another real highlight was the GiST seminars on Tuesday morning to help us think through issues of suffering and sexuality from a gospel-driven perspective. Finally, Assembly reminded me what a wonderful blessing it is to be part of a denomination with leaders that share a strong commitment to the truth of God's Word and our mission to reach the lost.

Rohan Pieris, Assistant Pastor at Graceville

Presbyterian Women's Association (Qld Unit) Assembly Activities

by Beth Knowles, State Secretary

This year's State Assembly was held at Fairholme College in Toowoomba, so PWA of A (Qld Unit) held its conference in the beautiful 'Homestead'.

Fifty-one ladies were able to attend and enjoy the day fellowshipping together.

Our guest speakers were Rev Richard Wilson from IRFA and Mrs Jenny Noble from Fairholme.

We thank Rev Phil Campbell for taking the Communion Service and for his words of encouragement.

Our State President, Heather Burton addressed the Assembly, highlighting the bond in Christ we have with each other and the role PWA plays in our lives as we try and live and share the Gospel.

God blessed us with beautiful weather and joyful hearts as we toured around the many interesting places on the Downs during the Wednesday bus trip.

Jimbour House, the Biblical Gardens and a delicious lunch at Bell were highlights of some of the beautiful places we visited.

What an encouragement these few days were, spending time and sharing our faith together.



PWA outside Jimbour House

Australian Presbyterian World Mission (Qld) Buffet Dinner at Assembly

by Kim Dale, Convener of APWM (Qld)

Thank you to all who attended and helped organise the Assembly Missions' Buffet Dinner. It was well attended and provided mission updates from several different perspectives. Ian McIver inspired us with the story of the African Reformation Theological Seminary in Uganda where he and Norma minister about six months out of the year. Jason Atkinson spoke about the theological teaching ministry that their family is headed for next year in Asia. Jason holds a PhD in Old Testament and Rebecca a PhD in New Testament. They are well equipped to help build a solid theological foundation among unregistered churches. (Please contact APWMQ if you would like to support the Atkinsons or the McIvers who are currently self funded).

The videos from Lauren Crase in Timor Leste and Nathan and Tomoko Stewart in Osaka, Japan, gave us an up-close and personal look at their work. We also heard an excellent report from retiring Moderator Phil Campbell and his wife Louise regarding their trip to visit the church planting team in Chiba City, Japan.



News from around the State

Kids Weekender Camps

March was a busy month this year with three regional Kids Weekender Camps. The fun kicked off at the Bunya Mountains for Kids Weekender Darling Downs followed by two weekends at CYC Burleigh for the Brisbane South and Brisbane North camps. 2017 is the year of "Under The Sea" fun, with our activities and program focussing on the book of Jonah. More specifically, focussing on the great compassion, mercy, and grace of God that He has shown us through Jesus. There were 172 kids across these three camps, which is so exciting. We are looking forward to further Kids Weekender Camps later on this year, and would appreciate your prayers as our teams across QLD continue to share the Good News of Jesus with young people.



Presbyterian Women's Association (Qld)

Earlier this year the Caloundra branch of the PWA hosted the bi-annual rally of Brisbane North district which included a morning tea and lunch. There were around 55 people attending.

Rev Peter Dimond gave the devotions and led everyone in prayer. He also shared his experiences aboard the Doulos ship whose motto is METAL – M: Mission, E: Evangelism, T: Training, A: Aid, and L: Literature. The Doulos travelled from such far flung places as the Phillipines to the Faroe Islands pursuing its aims, and found that even in communist countries there was an interest in Christian literature. During his time aboard Peter served as bosun and 'decky', and on occasions used his nursing skills.

Members of various branches gave their reports. Hymns were sung and also the reading of poetry. An underlying theme was the shortage of members due to age and frailty, but one branch is planning a different format for meetings with an outreach to community.

The Caloundra ladies have decided, due to age and increasing frailty, to end this work. They will continue to meet, hold Mission Mornings and have speakers to come to address them.

It was a wonderful morning of fellowship for all in attendance.



PWA Lunch



Past Moderator's Visit to Chiba City, Japan

by John Evans, Team Leader at Kizuna Church

Thanks to the Presbyterian Church of Queensland (PCQ) from Kizuna Church

Church planting is hard work, and doing this in another culture and in a different language adds another level of complexities which makes it even more challenging. Add into the mix a bunch of Christians from different backgrounds and cultures, and the challenges of church planting go to a whole new level. To help face the challenges and complexities of church planting in Japan, each year the Chiba City church planting team (Kizuna Church) have a team retreat for four days to the Torchbearers Retreat Centre at the base of Mount Fuji. During this time we pray, sing, hear from God's Word, laugh, cry, share, build trust, and relax. It's also a time when we are able to focus exclusively on some key strategic ministry ideas and issues, and develop foundational documents for the church plant.

This year we were blessed to have Phil and Louise Campbell (Past Moderator) attend our retreat. During the retreat, Phil encouraged us with a series of talks on Jesus in the Psalms. Phil and Louise also provided valuable and timely input into a number of foundational documents that we were working on for the church plant. Their gracious and wise counsel, creativity and many years of pastoral experience

helped our team to achieve a clearer direction and vision for Kizuna Church, and key insights into how to tackle some of the ministry challenges before us. After the retreat, Phil also ran a workshop on how to be an effective communicator of God's Word for a number of pastors and church planters in the Chiba/Tokyo area. Phil touched on an area of preaching that is often overlooked, and his practical tips and ideas were found extremely helpful and appreciated by all who attended.

Thank you to the PCQ for your partnership in the Gospel and granting Phil and Louise the time to be with us. Their time with us in Japan was invaluable and will have a lasting impact for the Gospel in Japan. Special thanks also to Lauren Kamst from Village Church who came to run our children's program. Without her help we wouldn't have achieved as much as we did!

Photo above: John and Rose Evans (on right) and team

News from around the State



Regional Ministry Initiative Conference

by Nathan Shannon, Minister at Gladstone/Benaraby/Calliope

Earlier this year seven Presbyterian Church of Queensland (PCQ) ministers from Goondiwindi to Atherton gathered in Brisbane for the Regional Ministry Conference. All of them have started doing ministry in regional churches during the past two years. Some are experienced ministers and some are recent graduates from the Queensland Theological College. Generous funding from the Committee on Ministry Resourcing (a committee of the Presbyterian Church of Queensland) made the conference possible, recognising that regional ministry is one of the key avenues for gospel growth in Queensland.

The conference was organised by the PCQ's Past State Moderator, Phil Campbell and his Chaplain, Mike O'Connor, to provide encouragement and support to those working in regional ministry. The two-day conference focussed on the joys and challenges of regional ministry. Each day began with Bible input from the experienced ministers. There were opportunities for everyone to share what's happening and pray for the work in each place. Mark (aka. Coop) Cooper-White of Bangalow Presbyterian Church, a skilled regional minister, shared his experiences and wisdom gained over the past thirty years of regional ministry. The theme for the conference was 'From Little Things'.

Phil's goal was to strengthen regional ministry throughout Queensland. "In my year as Moderator I wanted to contribute in a small way to helping the next generation of regional ministers start well," says Phil. "I was hoping the conference would do three things: first, that it would help the guys develop a peer support network; second, that Mark Cooper-White, Mike O'Connor and myself could share some practical wisdom; and third, that we could show our new ministry recruits they are valued."

Coop has used his life and interests to find natural opportunities for evangelism and connection with the people of his community. His simple summary of what he's learned was, 'Don't be weird', 'Pray lots' and 'Don't muck it up'.

Lindsay Foster, Minister at Atherton comments, "I found it super helpful. Before this I only knew a handful of other ministers in Queensland, all of whom had been at it for a while and were in big city churches. I'm very thankful to meet other people in very similar situations and have been encouraged to hear how God works in little places too. The sharing times were great as they encouraged me in the things I'd been remembering to do, and put a few things back on the table that I'd forgotten about. I also felt appreciated and remembered by the way we were treated, through the great morning and afternoon teas, lunch and especially dinner."

It's a great joy to see what God is doing throughout our State. We can be very thankful for the hard work done by the gospel workers of the past and excited about the healthy and vibrant work that's going on in little and not-so-little places everywhere.

The finale of the conference was a tour of the new Queensland Theological College building and a celebration dinner.

Photo above from L to R: Nathan Shannon (Gladstone/Benaraby/Calliope), Phil Campbell (Past State Moderator), Lindsay Foster (Atherton), Rod McLennan (Emerald), Rob Davey (Eternity, Gold Coast), Daniel Saunders (Crown Road, Gympie), Brad Dewson (Goondiwindi), David Bailey (Rose City, Warwick), Mike O'Connor (Past Moderator's Chaplain) and Mark Cooper-White (guest speaker from Bangalow Presbyterian Church)

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SOME PRACTICAL WAYS TO CARE FOR MISSIONARIES ON HOME ASSIGNMENT

From time to time missionaries who serve overseas return to Australia for a period known as "home assignment". This is a time for them to rest, see their family, visit the doctor, the dentist, the accountant, reconnect with their home church and supporters, and to receive spiritual input. It can also be a very stressful time - especially when young children are involved. Here are some ideas for practical ways in which a church can care for their missionaries when they return for home assignment.

BEFORE THE MISSIONARY RETURNS HOME

1. Ask them what they need in the way of housing, a car, or furniture - and help publicise that need.
2. Check to see if there are any specific needs apart from the practical help above.
3. Offer to help find schooling options for the children.
4. Find out if someone has holiday accommodation that they could make available for the missionary.
5. Make sure the congregation knows the missionary is coming home, and for how long. Remind the congregation of the work the missionary has been doing, and where, so there are not too many questions like "So, please remind me where you have been..."
6. Send the missionary a church directory - especially if it has photos.
7. Plan for a specific time when the missionary will meet with the congregation's elders to report on their work and for the elders to share with the missionary about the life of the congregation.



Daniel & Rachael Djamaludin

WHEN THE MISSIONARY IS BACK IN AUSTRALIA

1. Arrange for someone to offer to take the missionary family shopping for clothing, especially if there are teenagers.
2. Help them move into their accommodation.
3. When you visit, keep an eye out for things like a lack of useful furniture - then be proactive in offering to help provide it.
4. Put together a "Welcome Home" basket with some of their favourite things and food they have not been able to get while away.
5. Invite the missionary into an existing growth group/Bible study group.
6. Encourage the different groups in the congregation (youth, PWA, etc.) to invite the missionary to visit the group to share their stories.
7. Catch up with them and let the missionary talk. Listen to them - lots! Be a friend and remember what is 'regular' for you is not 'regular' for the missionary.
8. Help clean and pack up the house when they are ready to return to the field.
9. Provide transport to and from the airport.
10. Pray with them.

SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITIES FOR PASTORS OF SENDING CHURCHES

1. Know when your missionaries are coming back and for how long. Be an advocate for the missionary by initiating some of the ideas above.
2. Proactively organise for the missionary to share their story in the congregation. Be creative - organise events or times the missionary can share at growth groups, hold a mission dinner etc.
3. Re-introduce the missionary to the congregation and affirm the church's support of them and their ministry.
4. Meet personally with the missionary and hear their stories.

NUER BIBLES

APWM recently sent 3,000 Bibles to Motor Yat for use in the South Sudanese Refugee camps in Ethiopia. Motor writes "The Scripture was a precious gift to those Christians who lost their Bibles because of the war in South Sudan, many houses were burnt to dust, and people lost all their belongings. The gift of a Bible was excellent, and many people appreciated this treasure in their hands again. People came and carried their gifts on their heads. The women were jubilant as they carried the Bibles to their churches."



APWM

To support APWM missionaries financially please go to www.apwm.org.au/supporting/finance

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LITTLE CHURCH, LITTLE TOWN, BIG GOD

Mt Magnet sits about six hundred kilometres North East of Perth and is listed amongst the five most disadvantaged towns in Western Australia. Right in the middle of Mt Magnet is a little Presbyterian Church. That little church is one of the very rare places where the gospel is proclaimed in the area.

About half the town's population are Aboriginal Australians, so the Presbyterian Church in 'Magnet', as the locals call it, is a ministry of PIM in partnership with APWM.

PIM Ministry workers Surendra and May Wesley have been based in the town for over two years now and are committed to long-term ministry there. Between them they carry out a range of ministry activities in the area, including patrol ministry to outlying properties and local ministry in the town. Here they tell a little of the story of the growing ministry amongst the children in the town.



Sunday School in Magnet

Last year we had an average of two or three children each Sunday and held our Sunday School for half an hour just before church. We spoke with a few people in the community about what we could do to include more children, and we also decided that half an hour was just not enough time.

So, this year we have held our Sunday School after church for about an hour and our attendance has grown and grown. We currently have 24 children on our roll.

We average about 11 children each week. About two thirds of these kids are aboriginal and we also have some Irish, Indian and Aussie kids too, so it is a very multicultural bunch. Two of the families from the local Catholic Church are sending their children to our Sunday School as the Catholic Church does not currently offer a children's program. We see it as a privilege that they feel comfortable in sending their children to our program.

Currently the only children in Sunday School who are from our church family are our own – so other than the catholic families the rest of the children are from non-church-going families who have little opportunity to hear the gospel anywhere else.

People have noted that the kids' behavior in Sunday School is much better than at their regular school. We attribute this to them being hungry for God's word and an appreciation of the boundaries and expectations we have set. We have not had to enforce any strict rules or deal with any really bad behaviour.

Occasionally some of the children, not knowing the time, will come along early and attend church as well as Sunday School.

Our program is kept very simple – we sing a few Sunday School songs, watch a video of a Bible story, discuss it briefly then do an activity related to the story. We have been working through the Old Testament this year.

Now that we have children in regular attendance we are trying memory verses and we have challenged the older children to learn the books of the Bible.

We like to celebrate each child's birthday as it comes and last term it worked well to have a shared lunch with all the parents at the end of the term.

In our small Sunday School room we have enough space for 18 children. We have not exceeded this number yet but if all the kids on our roll showed up on the same day we would quickly run out of room. We are thinking of ideas of how we might increase our available space.

God is at work in the lives of people in Mt Magnet. If you would like to help financially support this growing ministry, please send your gift to the PIM office or through APWM.

PresCare news

Information sessions

Our Community Care Team has started delivering information sessions for Presbyterian Church congregations. The aim is to increase people's knowledge of the kinds of support that are available to those who want to remain living at home for longer. At these information sessions – which have been held in our churches across the state – guests are invited to hear from home-care staff about how to access government funding and home care services. Staff from our commercial businesses such as The Contented Chef and Walk on Wheels also present on their products and services to demonstrate how people can get a little more help at home to live well and remain independent.

Over the past few months we have held 15 information sessions on the Gold Coast and in Brisbane, Bayside, Hervey Bay, North Brisbane, Townsville and Toowoomba. If you would like to talk to us about holding an information session in your local area, we would love to hear from you. Please phone us on **1800 773 722** to discuss holding an information session at your local church.



Information session at Hervey Bay

PresCare is a Ministry of the Presbyterian Church of Queensland and we've been helping older Australians live the way they choose for almost 90 years. We provide a range of residential and community services that are tailored to people's specific needs. At PresCare, we understand that people want to have freedom to make personal choices about the way they live. We're not aged care, we're PresCare.

Charity Golf Classic

It's Charity Golf Classic time again, and with your support, we can have an enormous impact on ensuring that our older Queenslanders do not live a life of isolation. Now in its eleventh year, the 2017 Charity Golf Classic is set to be our biggest yet. Hosted by PresCare and Woollam Constructions, this year's Charity Golf Classic is on Tuesday 19 September at Sanctuary Cove. The Palms at Sanctuary Cove is an 18-hole course and has recently undergone re-construction to achieve a ranking in the top 50 courses in Australia by Golf Digest.



Charity Golf Classic 2016

Over the past 11 years, the money raised has been used to combat social isolation amongst older Queenslanders. Social isolation is experienced by one in four Australians and it can lead to depression and early death in our aging population. Older Queenslanders who stay in their own homes, often alone, are most at risk. Together, we can chip away to reduce social isolation amongst Queensland's older population.

If you would like to be part of this year's Charity Golf Classic, please phone **1800 773 722** or visit www.prescare.org.au/charity-golf-classic-2017 for more information. We hope to see you on the green in September!

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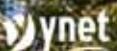
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