



# DIRECTIONS

Bringing news, views and inspiration to the Presbyterian Church of Queensland



## IN THIS ISSUE ...

QTC welcomes new lecturers	P. 3
The Indispensable Father	P. 4
A man from afar	P. 8
PresCare celebrates 85 years	P. 14
Mission team returns to Kenya	P. 16

One hundred and fifty years is a fairly long period in the history of a nation, a church, or even a family. During that period of time there have been seven generations in my family. The changes that have taken place within society over that time are incredible, for they are so diversified, and beneficial in how they make life more efficient and comfortable.

There have been good advances in education, very huge advances in technology and communication, big advances in machinery, great advances in medicine and surgery, big advances in transport, and vast changes in the social life of a community.

Changes can also take place that are not for the improvement or good of society, but rather the downgrade of it.

Just think about the wars, the immorality, the huge disrespect for the laws of the land, the vast disrespect for the need of belief in God and salvation and the need to do it 'my way' so that many sins have become respectable and no longer considered as sins. All that has taken place in the last fifty years.



# Being thankful for the struggles of our forefathers

by Very Rev. Dr K. J. Gardner

YOU WOULD have to conclude that the world is in a big mess because it is worshipping gods of their own creation rather than worshipping and following the will of the One True and Living God.

When society shows little or no respect for the first two commandments – “*You shall have no other gods before Me. You shall not make for yourself a carved image*” (Exodus 20:3,4) – it follows that they will have little or no respect for the remaining commandments.

It is very easy to take things for granted, for they are there all the time for us. For example, the thumb is a very important part of the hand and our civilization rests largely upon man's ability to reach across with his thumb, making it possible for him to grasp the tools to build, to farm, to cook, and a host of other things too numerous to mention. But have you ever thanked God for it? Likewise, have you ever thanked God for sanity?

We not only forget to thank God for His many blessings, but also our neighbours and friends for their many wonderful gifts of kindness and help rendered.

Just think, for a minute, of the struggle our forefathers had in establishing churches in the 1800s when they had so few benefits to assist them and so many disadvantages against them.

First of all, there is the area of **communication**.

There were no telephones in 1863 for they were not invented until 1876 by the Scots-born American inventor, Alexander Graham Bell (1847-1922).

It is difficult to imagine just how great an inconvenience it would be to have no telephone, no easy communication with people, no access to a doctor, an ambulance, police and your family in an emergency.

Instead of the minister knowing there would be someone home, he would have to travel miles to a farm homestead in the hope that he would find someone at home.

There was also no radio to get up-to-date weather reports for radio was not invented until the early 1900s.

TVs came in the mid 1900s so their usefulness as a means of communication could not even have been dreamed of.

The wonder and usefulness of email is quite a recent discovery, but a marvellous and very fast tool for communicating with others. The advantages and benefits that a minister has today in these forms of communication are so often just taken for granted.

Despite having little or no forms of communication, apart from personal contact, the minister in the 1860s obeyed the Great Commission to “go and make disciples” (Matthew 28:20)

for he wanted to share the Good News of the Gospel with others; he wanted them to know personally the One who was “the Way and the Truth and the Life” (John 14:6) and who came to give “life to the full” (John 10:10) in the here and now and “for all eternity” (John 10:28). He also wanted them to know that “man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God” (Matthew 4:4); he also wanted them to know that man is to “seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to him” (Matthew 6:33); also he wanted them to know “Your will not mine be done” (Matthew 26:39).

Secondly, there is the area of **transportation**.

The minister in 1863 was not blessed with the fast and efficient transport that we have today. There were no cars for quick and easy transport for the first petrol car was not invented until the 1890s. The minister in 1863 had the choice of walking, a very slow way to get somewhere; alternatively he could ride a horse, a much quicker and easier form of transport, but still a reasonably slow one compared with the motor car; or he could ride in comfort in a sulky drawn by a horse, also a slow method of transport when compared with a car.

These forms of transport compared with today's are difficult to comprehend: how did they ever get anything done?

Can you imagine how long it would have taken a minister in 1863 to travel from Longreach to Jericho and Alpha and back to Longreach? I am sure that you have not the slightest idea!

When I was the minister in Longreach (1959-1963) I used to travel quarterly to Jericho and Alpha to conduct Communion services and be back in Longreach the same evening. It was a round trip of approximately 500 kilometres but it could all be done in a day; something you could not do riding a horse or driving a horse and sulky or walking.

**The first services in Toowoomba**  
The first services in Toowoomba were conducted in 1859 by Dr Nelson who came up occasionally from Ipswich, a distance of about 90 kilometres. As a result of his efforts the first settled ministry was established in November 1863 when Dr Nelson became the minister of St Stephen's.

Dr Nelson also sought to set up congregations throughout the district extending from Laidley to Pilton – a distance of about 160 kilometres (100 miles). I am sure there are very few ministers today who would be willing to swap places with Dr Nelson. Would you agree?

## Organizing the Anniversary Celebrations

In order to make plans for the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary celebrations a committee comprising Joan Apelt, Fay McMahon, John Clements (a local historian), all from St David's, Toowoomba, Rev. Rob Farr (Minister, St John's, Toowoomba), Lyle Bogg (Session Clerk, Oakey) and Very Rev. Dr Ken Gardner (Minister, Oakey) met. Others were free to come to the meetings, if they so desired, for there were no restrictions placed on the number of members. We met regularly on a Friday morning for several weeks. We decided on a program, which was approved by the Presbytery of Darling Downs, and this was reported in the last edition of *New Directions*.

All agreed it was a wonderful time of worship, praise, thanksgiving, celebration, and fellowship.

## The Impact of Church Union

Prior to Church Union, there were two Presbyteries on the Darling Downs: Warwick and Toowoomba.

Church Union left the Presbytery of Warwick very desolate for the Charges of Allora/Clifton, Killarney, Stanthorpe, and Warwick, all voted to go into the Union. However, all these Charges, with the exception of Killarney, have since established a Presbyterian cause in their area.

The Charges of Goondiwindi, St George/Dirrnanbandi and Texas/Inglewood voted to continue Presbyterian.

In the Toowoomba Presbytery, the Charges of Lockyer Valley, Jandowae/Warra, the two outside centres within the Millmerran Charge, the three outside centres of the Oakey Charge, the Charge of Pittsworth/Greenmount, two outside centres of the Surat/Glenmorgan Charge, the Charges of St Stephen's and Scot's in Toowoomba, and Taroom of the Wondai/Taroom Charge, all voted to become members of the Uniting Church.

The departure of these Charges and people meant that it would be very difficult for the two Presbyteries to continue operating so one Presbytery, the Presbytery of the Darling Downs, was formed.

Currently, all the country Charges – Allora, Bell, Charleville, Clifton, Miles, Millmerran, Oakey, Roma, Surat, Wandoan, with the exception of Dalby – are finding it difficult to stay viable and many cannot afford a full-time minister or home missionary.

Prayer for these places must become a top priority for our people. Fortunately, the three Charges in Toowoomba – Christ-life, St David's and St John's, are all in reasonably good health.



Allora Charge - Pilton Sunday School 1958



Laying the foundation stone at Charleville 1963

## Conclusion

We were very fortunate in the rich inheritance that was passed on to us.

If the people of tomorrow are to be blessed with a similar good inheritance, it will be essential that each one of us plays our part well. To help you do that, I want to share with you what some faithful servants of the past have said we must do in order for our next generations to have a worthwhile inheritance.

John Buchan, Baron Tweedsmuir (1875-1940), who died in office as the Governor-General of Canada, made this very wise statement: “We can only pay our debt to the past by making the future indebted to us”.

How well are you doing this? Would your contribution, not just your money, but your service and witness for Christ be making an impact for good upon society? Are you, like the early Christians, “turning the world upside down”? (Acts 17:6) Are you?

Karl Barth (1886-1968), Swiss theologian, perhaps the foremost theologian of the twentieth century, made this very pertinent comment: “Today there is rather too much, rather than too little, said about the church. There is something better: ‘Let us be the church’.” Barth is emphasizing that we are not called to go to church, however important that might be. We are called to be the church. There is a vast difference between the two.

Barth's exhortation is one that needs our top priority, one that we need to personalize: “Let me (put your name here) be the church”. Are you? If you are not sure what is required of you then read very slowly and thoughtfully this statement by John Calvin (1509-1564), French Reformer and great theologian: “What I (put your name here) am offering to God

continued on page 4



Members of the Session and Committee of Management, St Stephen's Toowoomba 1923



# QTC welcomes new lecturers to staff



Tony and Rose Pyles with children Ezra, Josiah, Amos and Charity

## Old Testament lecturer new to QTC

IN 2014 Tony Pyles will join the staff at QTC as an Old Testament lecturer for a period of 18 months.

Tony and his family will be moving here from Canada where he has been completing his PhD at McMaster Divinity College in Hamilton, Ontario.

Originally from the United States, Tony will bring with him his wife, Rose, and their four children, Josiah (6), Charity (5), Amos (3), and Ezra (9 months).

Tony is a candidate for gospel ministry in the Eastern Canada Presbytery of the Presbyterian Church in America and has previously served the youth and young adults of

Wynndale Presbyterian Church in Terry, Mississippi.

We chatted to Tony about his move to Australia.

**QN:** Will this be your first time to Australia? How are you and the family feeling about the move?

**TP:** First time. We are very excited about the move, though also intimidated. We moved over 1,000 miles when we came to Canada for my doctoral program—now that is starting to sound small!

**QN:** What are you looking forward to about working at QTC?

**TP:** I think I am most looking forward to passing on my love for the Old Testament to the students.

**QN:** What do you love most about the Old Testament?

**TP:** The OT is huge, so that is a very big question! I think I love most watching/reading the way the history of redemption unfolds across countless generations.

**QN:** What do you like to do in your spare time? Is there anything in Australia you're looking forward to seeing or doing?

**TP:** What spare time?! I like to read science fiction and build things together with my wife (we're very sad to leave behind our power tools). We look forward to exploring the area around Brisbane, seeing the wildlife, experiencing Christmas in summertime, etc.

**QN:** What's the best Christian book you read in 2013? What's the best fiction book you read?

**TP:** (I assume books for my studies are off limits.) The best Christian book I read in 2013 was probably Joseph Alleine's *An Alarm to the Unconverted* (also published as *A Sure Guide to Heaven*). The best fiction book I (re)read was Frank Herbert's *Dune*.

QTC's aim is to provide top class theological training that faithfully applies the Word of God to the real world. We seek to do this as a real living Christian community, and as part of a wider Christian fellowship here in Brisbane. Word-controlled, community-focussed and totally practical: that's the QTC ideal.

## O'Donnells to migrate south next winter

AFTER VISITING QTC in 2013, Doug and Emily O'Donnell will be making the move to Australia permanently in mid-2014 so Doug can join the staff at QTC as the sixth lecturer.

**QN:** You visited Australia for Preaching Week last year, was it a case of love at first sight?

**DO:** Close. My wife, Emily, and I did thoroughly enjoy the Australian hospitality. We loved the city of Brisbane and the staff and students at QTC.

**QN:** What made you decide to make the move here?

**DO:** When I was invited to do the Preaching Week, I thought it would be a once-in-a-lifetime trip. When Emily and I boarded the plane to head home and read Gary Millar's letter of invitation to join the faculty, we were surprised but excited. As we thought and prayed through the invitation, we strongly sensed God's call to come. After two months, that call never subsided. The short answer is: Providence has pulled us down under.

**QN:** What are you looking forward to about working at QTC?

**DO:** I love the gospel, the church, and the life of the mind. QTC brings these three loves together. I look forward to the daily mental and spiritual stimulation. I also look forward to training the next generation of gospel workers!

**QN:** You're joining the team as an all-rounder, what areas/subjects do you most enjoy teaching, and what are you dreading teaching?

**DO:** I don't think I dread teaching anything (unless the faculty is planning some secret initiation rite

and sticking me with "Medieval Scholasticism" or "The Exegesis of Algebra"). I will enjoy the diversity—teaching on OT wisdom literature, the Gospels and practical ministry (worship, preaching, etc.). I'll even do British Church History if Andrew Bain gets a brain cramp.

**QN:** At the QTC staff and candidates vs students soccer match, when the staff were down 2-1, Gary Millar was letting everyone know that next year they would have Doug O'Donnell on the team. Do you think you can bring them home to victory next year?

**DO:** My father is from Ireland and my mother Scotland. That means I have European soccer blood (eg I did bicycle kicks in the crib). I also was raised in a neighbourhood of kids with Italian, Polish and Yugoslavian last names. That means I have European soccer experience. So, yes, I can bring home the staff victory, so long as I can play like the great German (adopted Chicagoan) Karl-Heinz Granitza—that is, stand near the goal all game and wait for the ball to be passed to me. I'll take it from there. I give a one yellow card/two goal guarantee!

**QN:** What was your favourite book in 2013 and why?

**DO:** First of all, I checked my Merriam-Webster Dictionary (American edition) and the word "favorite" is spelled without a "u". In service to our Savior, I look forward to bringing some color to QTC spelling. That said, my favorite book (fitting to my new calling) was Charles Spurgeon's *Lectures to My Students*. This classic book has the rare blend of pastoral honesty, wit and timeless advice.



Doug and Emily O'Donnell with their children

## NEW DIRECTIONS

Editor and Advertising: Lynda Rackley  
Proofreaders: Keith Booker, Gay Fletcher, Lesleigh Hall  
Printer: Beaudesert Times

### Deadline for advertisements and copy:

1st of the months of  
January, March, May, July, September and November.

Send copy to:

New Directions, PO Box 1508, FORTITUDE VALLEY 4006

Fax: (07) 3852 1564 Phone: (07) 3251 4100

Email: newdirections@pcq.org.au

Please note: If quoting other people's work, that work should be acknowledged in your article.



Advertising: Casual classifieds 20c per word; casual display \$5.00 per col. cm. For full details, contact The Editor. Articles and advertising in *New Directions* are the opinions of the authors, not necessarily the editor or publishers. Every effort is made to ensure the correctness of facts and information; however, we cannot accept responsibility for errors. The publishers reserve the right to accept or decline any advertising or submitted articles. Please limit letters to editor to 500 words.



Used with permission



# Letters to the Editor

We would encourage all who contribute to Letters to the Editor to do so in the spirit of Christian love and grace and to deal with issues involved, not personalities. The Editorial Committee reserves the right to decide which letters to publish. Please limit letters to 500 words and send to [newdirections@pcq.org.au](mailto:newdirections@pcq.org.au).

Did you know that there are at least 2 000 verses in the Bible that refer to God's desire for justice and care for the poor and disadvantaged people of the world. Micah 6:8 says, *He has shown you O mortal what is good, and what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.* Isaiah 58 says, *Is this not the kind of fasting I have chosen; to loose the chains of injustice, and untie the cords of the yoke? To set the oppressed free and to break every yoke? Is it not to share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with*

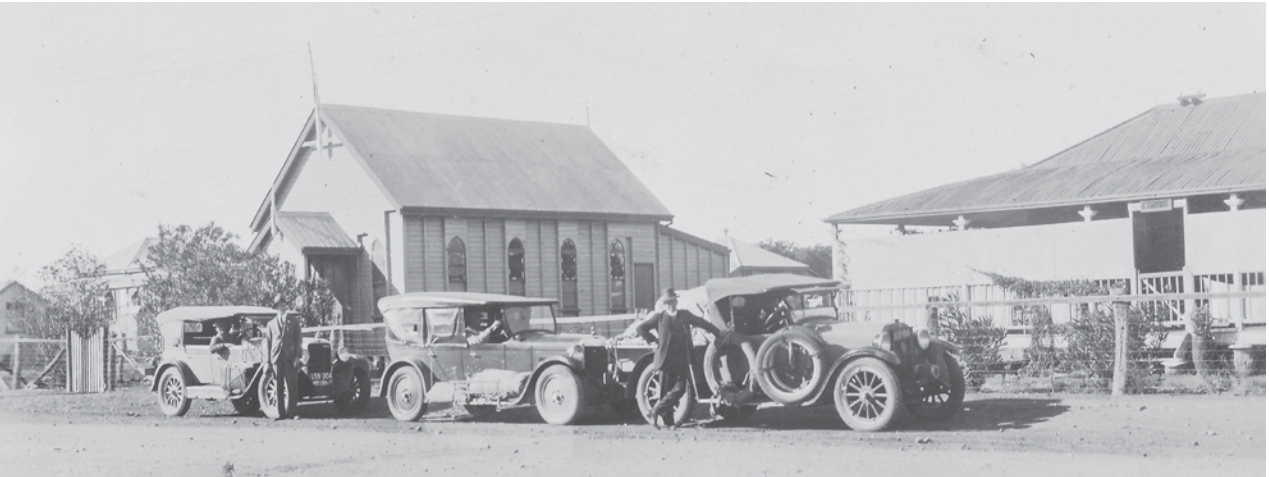
*shelter. Then your righteousness will go before you, and the glory of the Lord will be your rear guard.* I have recently watched a series of programs regarding sex slave trafficking. Did you know that statistics suggest that there are 27 million mainly young people and many quite small children who have been trapped in this terrible industry. These young girls are abducted, beaten into submission and then forced to service as many as 40 men a day. Two children are being sold every minute. How can we sit idly by while this terrible crime is going on?

The following suggestions are made as ways to help. Most importantly prayer; secondly bringing the plight of these suffering ones to people's attention; also by giving money to help free those who are trapped. It has been suggested that it costs \$128 to rescue one girl. If you are interested, there is plenty of information on the internet. All it needs for evil to prevail is for good men to do nothing. What we tolerate will never change. We need to challenge apathy with action. May God's people rise up to meet this great need.

Joan Neuendorf

## Being thankful for the struggles of our forefathers

continued from page 2



Early motor cars, Cloncurry Charge

is the genuine article; there are no compromises, no half-measures, no divided loyalties, not just lip service or luke-warm service, which blows hot and cold". Would others know by your behaviour that you are different from the worldling? Would they want what you have because they see how you face life courageously, cheerfully, considerate and forgiving of others, kindly and loving, and a victor, not a victim? Would they be able to say of you what the wounded soldier during the Crimean War said to Florence Nightingale: "You're Christ to me". Would they? Teresa of Avila (1515-1582), a Spanish mystic, gives a good explanation as to your role as a Christian. Read it slowly and thoughtfully to see what a privileged person you are and the great responsibility you also have to share

your wonderful inheritance with others. "Christ has no body on earth but mine, no hands but mine, no feet but mine. Mine are the eyes through which to look out Christ's compassion to the world. Mine are the feet with which He is to go about doing good and mine are the hands with which He is to bless us now." The Church of today will never reach her full potential if the minister and the elders are to do all the work. One of the important functions of the Reformation was to restore "the priesthood of all believers" to the Church. Once again every believer has a responsibility before God to

be the Church, if we are to leave a worthwhile inheritance for our children. Peter describes this privilege and responsibility very clearly, "*But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvellous light*" (1 Peter 2:9). You are a very privileged person and a very responsible one. Remember the future of the Church is in your hands, for you are the Church. You must make the future indebted to you. Are you?



St Stephen's PC Toowoomba

# GRASS-ROOTS REFLECTIONS

## The Indispensable Father

THE ICONIC lines from Joni Mitchell's 1970 hit *Big Yellow Taxi*, 'Don't it always seem to go, that you don't know what you've got till it's gone', echo through my conscience as a constant reminder not to take for granted the indispensable.

Recently, I had been invited to participate in a men's group called *Common Ground*, a group designed to assist men in recovering the essential nature of 'manhood'. During the 9 week course, a truth too obvious to ignore kept coming to my attention—the indispensability of fatherhood.

I clearly recall on one occasion, as men walked along a time-line (marked out on the floor) commenting on the significant milestones that shaped their lives, I observed an unmistakable pattern. Every man, who as a child had no father, an absent father, an abusive father, or no substantive father figure, suffered one or more of the following: substance abuse, marital problems, difficulty in maintaining relationships, and depression.

It seems the dissipation of distinct gender roles, as the patriarchal society of the early 20th century gave way to a socially liberal 21st century, has not been without consequence. The 'liberating' society that neutered fatherhood in the name of gender equality has begotten a generation of men whose life compass lacks a 'true' north.

Bill Muehlenberg in an article titled '*The Facts on Fatherlessness*' identified as the basis of a study that the following social and psychological problems are more prevalent among fatherless children: poverty, poor educational performance, increased sexual problems, mental health problems, and increased exposure to physical and sexual abuse.

A similar study in the United States revealed that boys from fatherless homes are more likely to commit suicide, rape, do violent crime, abuse chemical substances, drop out of school and end up in prison.

Indeed, I was surprised to learn that the influence of the father is far greater than the power of one. Dr Bruce Gibson believes that fathers are highly influential in the lives of children because children are especially sensitive to what their fathers think of them. Gibson notes that kids, '... have a radar out for what dad has to say, and how he treats them'. Further to this, he argues if both parents were to say the same thing to the same child it has four times the impact if spoken by the father. It is as if something has been 'hardwired' into fathers, giving their presence and words greater authority.

If indeed there is something innate about the value of fatherly affirmation and presence, then it is most clearly seen in Jesus' relationship with His Father (God).

Following the healing of an invalid in John 5:1-16 and subsequent persecution, Jesus' validation of His actions is based on an appeal to His connection with His heavenly Father. In Jesus' own opinion, His ongoing work (in the face of opposition) was dependant on the Father's ongoing work, the Father's authority, the Father's revelation and the Father's validation.

Jesus never looks for the affirmation of His disciples, the approval of the crowd or recognition from the religious establishment. Even in His darkest hour in Gethsemane as He uttered, 'Not my will, but yours be done...' it was the depth of His relationship with His heavenly Father that sustained and empowered Him to overlook His desires in favour of the Father's approval. The compass of Jesus' life and ministry was orientated around the 'true north' of His love relationship with His heavenly Father, and consequently conformity to His will. The fatherhood of God undergirded the successful execution of His ministry.

For a human father to grasp the innate authority of fatherhood, and then frame that within a Christ-like relationship with the Heavenly Father, is to truly appreciate its God-ordained value.

If there is one regret in my younger life, it is I did not understand or take seriously enough the ministry of simply being a father. Too often I allowed the urgencies of ministry and church programs to crowd out the importance of 'being' the Christian man God called me to be.

Pastors and leaders need to be mindful of the father's responsibility before God and the gravity of its ongoing impact; making sure not to expect and demand too much of men (and themselves) in congregational life, at the expense of a more substantive role in God's kingdom, fathering.

If there is ever a time when the role of father is indispensable it is our present time. The church does not need more busy men simply doing religious activities in the name of God. The church, firstly, needs Christian men to fulfil their God-ordained gender roles. Such an approach would lay a solid foundation for children to grow up with godly role models, providing a new generation with a true appreciation of Christ—whose close relationship with His heavenly Father proved indispensable!

Rowland Lowther



### SNIPPET FROM ARCHIVES

#### USE OF RAIL TO SPREAD THE GOSPEL

CLERMONT: Clermont is still the centre of a howling wilderness. Horse flesh as a means of locomotion is a thing of the past. Capella and Chermide are visited once a month by rail; the bicycle is used for all other visitations. But though cast down, we are not destroyed. Church and Sabbath school attendance maintained, and the Band of Hope is flourishing. Our Church Aid Society is working quietly and persistently; the latest effort, a social and concert, on the 15th October, drew a larger throng than the old church has held for years, the small admission charge of sixpence yielding a nett price of 4 pounds 11 s. Mr Andrew Small occupied the chair. A number of ladies and gentlemen, representing the membership of all the religious bodies, contributed to the harmony of the evening and the choir, conducted by Mr Rodgeron, sang an anthem and two part songs with evident appreciation. We have received a welcome donation of hymn books from John Knox Church in Rockhampton. If those who are in a position to do so would kindly supply us with the nucleus of a library for the Sabbath School, the gift would be very warmly appreciated. Reckoning every experience, we can still say, "The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad."



# St Andrew's Millmerran PWA celebrates 100 years

by Alison Rickert



Five members of PWA Millmerran - Joce Peardon, Evelyn Lindenmayer, Joan Armstrong, Jackie Dean, Denise McCullough

ST ANDREW'S Presbyterian women of Millmerran celebrated 100 years from 1913-2013 with a thanksgiving service, luncheon and welcome from President Joce Peardon. This was followed by the unveiling of the plaque by Mrs Ruth Carter, eldest living member, dedication by Rev. Don Ashman and cutting of the Centenary cake by eldest committee member, Joan Armstrong.

A display of memorabilia, kindly loaned by past members and their families, included a mission support display, photo gallery, Highland Ball display dating from 1918 to 1981, a beautiful collection of hand embroidery, hand crochet, smocking, woollen crochet, soft toys, floral display made from natural fibres, folk art, paintings, overlocking, quilting, plus cross stitch and long-short stitch.

The paper cutting photos of guilders' work and the early years of the women's devotion can be obtained from President Joce Peardon in booklet form, price \$25.

During the dedication service, Poh Wen (on violin) and Daph Curtis (on organ) played a voluntary piece which most found tear-jerking.

Rev. Don Ashman's rendition of *Faith* was inspiring to the overflowing congregation.

The Treasurer invited all to attend the following Sunday when a luncheon, followed by a thanksgiving service, was held.

The PWA of Millmerran would like to thank most sincerely all who contributed memorabilia to their display through the ages, which brought together the effort of Women's Guilds over 100 years.

To God be the glory, great things He has done.

*My apologies to the Millmerran PWA for not including this article in the February/March edition of New Directions.*

Editor



Folk art by Alison Rickert for PWA Women's Show displays over the years



President Joce Peardon with Rev. Don Ashman presenting book on history of PWA Millmerran, 1913-2013

## Pray, Live, Serve .... but where do I belong?

by Naomi Reed



Naomi Reed

A YEAR ago there was an article in the *Sydney Morning Herald* on 'expatriate stress'.

It quoted official studies, saying that foreigners (in any country) were more vulnerable to stress and more prone to mental ailments than the rest of the population.

Various descriptions followed and most of them were linked to a loss of social networks, loved ones or a sense of belonging.

A Sydney-based psychologist said that expatriate stress should be elevated to an official psychological syndrome because it is so common and its negative impact can be so severe.

I'd have to agree with her. Having lived long-term in Nepal - a country which was not our passport country - I know that it is physically exhausting and chronically stressful.

Every day we would get out of bed and struggle with the need to decipher a foreign language, to gauge real meaning behind words and to work out whether offence was being taken through our behaviour.

Then there was the aching awareness that we never fully belonged as well as a constant, energy-sapping need to assess the situation for cues and hidden assumptions.

Even harder than that was the ever-present longing for the smells, memories and people that made up our other 'home', the place where we were born and raised and known and understood.

Over time, of course, it grew easier

and we loved the richness of being the foreigner; but the underlying stresses were always there, even when our language improved and our cultural cues became more instinctive and our relationships deepened to a tearful honesty. The relationships we had were deep and wonderful, but we were still not fully at home. We still felt temporary and we still needed to work hard.

But then, years later and surprisingly, the problem turned into something else. In 2006 we returned to Australia and still felt like that! We were back in Australia but we missed dear friends and memories and very significant places in Nepal ... in exactly the same ways that we had missed our life in Australia. The only difference was that the smells were different - it was dal bhat instead of eucalypts, and paddy fields instead of autumn, and crazy tut-tuk drivers instead of a smooth ride, and Lalu instead of Linda.

So I'm sitting here today, thinking about the article and wondering whether the state of being an expatriate merely exacerbates our normal human condition.

Wherever we are, we don't fully belong. We aren't wholly complete and we need to work very hard at understanding the world around us. Perhaps being an expatriate merely causes us to face those feelings rather than run from them. It causes us to look them in the eyes and agree that in any country or city or relationship, we are still waiting and searching

and groaning. We are still aliens and strangers on earth, people longing for a better country, a heavenly one (Hebrews 11:13-16).

So instead of running from those feelings, perhaps we need to face them and say, "Yes Lord, this is my official psychological condition ... I'm not at home, I'm not complete and I don't truly belong ... but I thank you for the cost you bore to make me complete and for the place you're preparing for me where I will truly and utterly belong."

*[Naomi Reed is a returned missionary, author and speaker. Her five popular books and an audio book (The Promise) are available at good bookshops. For more information, go to [www.NaomiReed.info](http://www.NaomiReed.info) or join 'My Seventh Monsoon' on Facebook.]*



Daphne Curtis catching up with Rev. Joan Johanson, first lady minister of Presbyterian Church of Queensland

## Update on Roger Crane, PIM North Queensland



I AM pleased to be able to share with you the good news! A scan on 19 February, just before chemo five, showed that there is no sign of any lymphoma cells remaining in my system. I still had chemo five and I will have number six, but seven and eight will not be required.

Indeed we are thankful to our great God. In today's parlance, "It's all good!!" I thought you might appreciate the photo.

The doctor spoke of total remission

and I questioned what was the difference between this and a cure. He replied "Five years!"

With treatment behind us we hope to travel south and catch up with family and several churches. Obviously we were unable to do this over the Christmas period.

Hopefully we will be back on patrol sometime in August and regular checkups will be the order of the day as we get on with the job of visiting properties in north-west Queensland.



# Taking local ministry to Muslims seriously



Rev. Richard Shumack, guest speaker on engaging Muslims, presenting at CMS Summer School 2014

Some of the gospel-centred answers outlined by Mr Shumack included that absolute certainty is unreasonable, human religious success is impossible, and legal religion is impoverished.

"Islam makes some sense given the Muslim understanding of God and how we relate to God: Allah is Lord, and believers are his slaves. Christianity makes more profound and wonderful sense if you accept the personal and relational nature of God: YHWH is Lord and Father, and believers are his obedient children", Mr Shumack said.

"Laws don't generate right living, they only describe it. Rules aren't at the heart of your family, love and relationships are. True worship is personal and relational as well as obedient."

The primary way we engage and share our faith with Muslim neighbours and colleagues, he explained, should reflect the personal, relational way God engages with us, grounded on a solid understanding of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Mr Shumack currently works for the Centre for Public Christianity and teaches and researches with Ravi Zacharias International Ministries. He spent twelve years leading a church planting team on a housing estate in Melbourne among people from diverse cultural backgrounds. He has visited and lived in the Middle East, and has a PhD from the University of Melbourne's National Centre for Islamic Studies.

For more resources and information about engaging with Muslims in Australia or to purchase Richard Shumack's book "Witnessing to Western Muslims: A Worldview Approach to Sharing Faith" or "The Wisdom of Islam and the Foolishness of Christianity", contact CMS at [qld@cms.org.au](mailto:qld@cms.org.au) or (07) 3112 6530.

MORE MUSLIM migrants and refugees coming to Australia gives Christian churches opportunities to engage with them locally. "Taking their beliefs seriously and building strong relationships is crucial", said guest mission speaker at the recent CMS Summer School Conference at Tamborine.

"Islam is the sensible and reasonable faith, and we are the stupid ones – that's the perspective of many devout Muslims. We can be really quick to walk in and tell them they're wrong", said Rev. Richard Shumack, a mission expert on engaging Muslims and founding mentor for a CMS Queensland with Northern NSW program that equips Australian Christians for local cross-cultural ministry.

Mr Shumack was also the primary lecturer for the *Ministry in a Muslim Context* intensive at Queensland Theological College last year.

"We need to feel the intellectual, cultural and theological weight of their objections to Christianity", he said. "We need to treat them as worthy of answers that genuinely address the issues, and develop pertinent, gospel-centred answers for what we believe

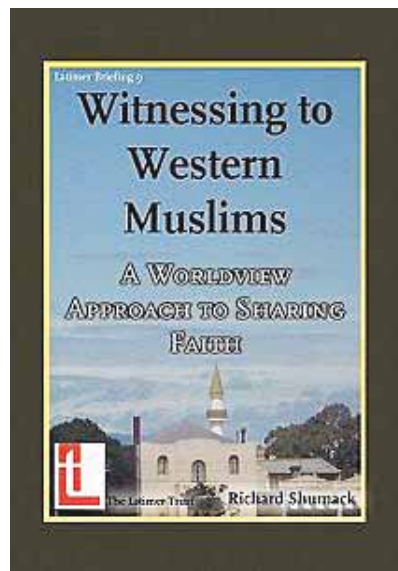
(1 Peter 3:15). The gospel needs the Holy Spirit to open their eyes."

Speaking on the topics, *The Wisdom of Islam and the Foolishness of Christianity* and *Understanding and Answering Muslim Objections*, Mr Shumack stressed the need to treat Muslims as people, following the example of Jesus Christ as he addressed the woman at the well in John 4.

Mr Shumack highlighted that Jesus drank with the woman, listened carefully to her objections, and then answered her with insight applicable to her life and centred on the truth of the gospel.

"From the Muslim perspective, Christianity is unworthy because it embraces doubt, unfair in its assessment of humanity as inherently evil and incapable of following God's laws, incoherent in its doctrine of a triune God, unjust in punishing an innocent third party for our sin, unholy in its doctrine of Scripture being authored by God through humans, irreligious in its focus on grace, and impotent in its engagement with society", Mr Shumack said.

"But there are answers to all these objections."



Available at CMS Bookstore – visit [cms.org.au/bookstore](http://cms.org.au/bookstore)



Annual Dedication of PWA

## Presbyterian Women's Association Annual Dedication and Communion Service

by Heather Burton

GOD BLESSED us with beautiful weather as we gathered at Ann Street Presbyterian Church on 4 February 2014 for the Annual Dedication and Communion Service. The service was conducted by Hon. Greg Rodgers with assistance from his chaplains, Rev. Matt Viney and Rev. Garnet Swann.

Beautiful hymns such as "Immortal Invisible", "And can it be", "When I survey the wondrous Cross", "There is a green hill" and "Praise my soul" were sung, bringing praise to our God. The Moderator led the ladies in dedicating us to our God's service in 2014.

Our Moderator spoke on the Cross being a history changer. When Christ went to the Cross, several groups had

something to gain. The soldiers kept their powerbase, the church leaders of the day kept their power over the people, the politicians didn't want the people to become upset with them and the people wanted, but rejected, a king for the second time.

God deals with people. What we see as important becomes unimportant as we seek God's will and His plan for us in this world.

The elements were served by our lady Elders and grace was sung before we retired to the Hall for a BYO lunch and refreshments provided by the Ann Street ladies.

Wonderful fellowship was enjoyed over lunch as we pondered what God has in store for 2014.



Enjoying a BYO lunch after the service



## EDUCATION AND VALUE FOR LIFE

### Clayfield College

**Girls:** PrePrep to Year 12 **Boarding:** Girls from Year 5  
**Boys:** PrePrep to Year 5  
(07) 3262 0262 [www.clayfield.qld.edu.au](http://www.clayfield.qld.edu.au)

### Brisbane Boys' College

**Boys:** Prep to Year 12  
**Boarding:** Years 5 to 12  
(07) 3309 3500 [www.bbc.qld.edu.au](http://www.bbc.qld.edu.au)

### Somerville House

Day and boarding school for girls Prep to Year 12  
**Boarding:** Years 7 to 12  
(07) 3248 9200 [www.somerville.qld.edu.au](http://www.somerville.qld.edu.au)

### Sunshine Coast Grammar School

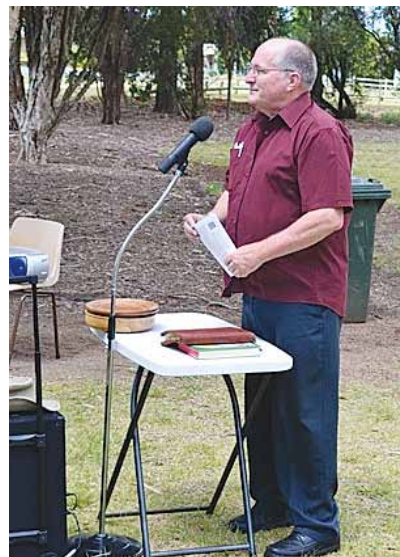
Co-educational day school Prep to Year 12  
(07) 5445 4444 [www.scgs.qld.edu.au](http://www.scgs.qld.edu.au)



## Outside The Four Walls



On Australia Day 2014, South Burnett Presbyterians stepped outside their four walls to lead their community in thanksgiving to the Lord for our nation. Rev. Bill Lutton reminded us of our Christian heritage and encouraged us to stand firm on the Word of God rejoicing in all of God's wonderful blessings.



## Grace College Principal confirmed

IN DECEMBER 2013, Grace College Council confirmed the appointment of Rev. Dr Anita Monro as Principal after the initial 12 months of her contract.

"Being Principal is all about constantly being conscious of the dynamics of community formation—something to which the Christian church is very committed. It's everything from making sure that we've provided for the physical needs of our residents to offering them opportunities to explore life's deep meaning and discover their own place in God's world. Every day brings something different. I'm having great fun!" Dr Monro said.

"We're delighted to affirm the work of Rev. Dr Anita Monro in her first 12 months in the role of Principal", indicated Rev. Lyn Burden, Chairperson of the College Council.

Grace College is a residential college associated with The University of Queensland. It is jointly auspiced by the Assembly of The Presbyterian Church of Queensland and The Uniting Church in Australia (Qld

Synod). The College houses 181 young women during semester time. Most residents come from rural and regional Queensland.

Many residents choose Grace College because of the community atmosphere fostered by students and staff, and the safe environment provided by the College.

Dr Monro is an ordained Minister of the Word of The Uniting Church in Australia. She has served in the congregations of West Toowoomba, Home Hill, Maryborough, Warwick, Geebung and Armidale (NSW). She has taught liturgy, theology and biblical studies through Brisbane College of Divinity, Sydney College of Divinity and Charles Sturt University. She has recently been appointed an Honorary Research Senior Fellow within the School of History, Philosophy, Religion and Classics at The University of Queensland.

For further information, contact Rev. Dr Anita Monro, Principal on (07) 3842 4000 or principal@grace.uq.edu.au



Rev. Dr Anita Monro



## St Paul's celebrates a new milestone

AFTER THE last twelve months of events celebrating 150 years since the establishment of the congregation, St Paul's has a new milestone to celebrate – 125 years of stone and mortar built on a sure foundation that is centuries old, Jesus the cornerstone of our salvation.

This House of Worship was dedicated to the glory of God on 5 May 1889. In days gone by, its imposing spire could be seen from all over the city, like a beacon on a hill.

As a sandstone building, St Paul's is facing the challenge of the years. In 2005, the bell tower was stabilised and the stone steeple was preserved under a steel framework and copper cladding.

Now St Paul's Restoration Trust is facing a \$1.5 million challenge to restore the stonework of the bell tower and main entrance façade to their former glory.

To expedite this project, celebrations and fundraising events are planned to bring awareness to greater Brisbane of the financial implications of preserving this heritage-listed, FDG Stanley-designed church, not just for the current congregation but for all Queenslanders now and for generations to come.

To download a donation form or for more information about the Trust and its current project, go to the website [restorestpauls.org.au](http://restorestpauls.org.au). For those who would like to assist financially, donations over \$2 are tax deductible and can be made to National Trust of Queensland St Paul's Presbyterian Church Restoration Trust Appeal in the amount of \$\_\_\_\_\_ and posted to:

National Trust, St Paul's Appeal  
PO Box 156  
SPRING HILL Q 4004  
See WHAT'S ON (page 15) for upcoming events.

## NIGERIA: ONE WEEK'S JIHAD IN THE NORTH

by Elizabeth Kendal

BOKO HARAM is waging a jihad to Islamise Nigeria, supported by al-Qaeda, which is seeking to gain strategic depth in sub-Saharan Africa. Their base is in Borno State, in the far north-east of Nigeria. Meanwhile, Fulani Muslims are waging a jihad to colonise and extend control deeper into the Christian-dominated south. Their jihad is supported by Boko Haram and rogue Muslim elements within the security forces who see the advance of the Fulani as furthering their own goals. Their front-line is the Middle Belt, in particular the states of Kaduna and Plateau. This is classic Islamic jihad: strife/war/terror to expand the territory over which Islam rules.

**\* ADAMAWA STATE (north-east Nigeria, bordering northern Cameroon)**

Sunday 26 January 2014: unknown gunmen attacked St Paul's Roman Catholic Church in Chakawa village in Madagali Local Government Area (LGA). They stormed the church, locked the doors behind them, threw improvised explosives (IEDs) and opened fire on the worshippers. At least 45 Christians were killed in the attack. Rahilla Ibrahim, who is pregnant, lost her husband and child and her home was burnt. According to a local Muslim, the militants set up a road block in a nearby area where they killed many Christians, before attacking Chakawa. Nigerian media report that a new tactic of Boko Haram appears to be attacking highways, including the use of 'snap road blocks'.

Friday 31 January: unknown gunmen attacked a church at Sabon Gari Gemadai in Madagali LGA around 8:30 pm when a prayer vigil was being held. The attackers opened fire on the worshippers, killing the pastor and ten members of the congregation. Two church members are reported to be missing.

**\* BORNO STATE (far north-east)**

Sunday 26 January: Boko Haram militants in 26 vehicles, including two armoured personnel carriers and six vans painted in army colours, attacked the weekly farmers' market

in Kawuri Village in Konduga LGA. They torched over 300 homes and opened fire on the local population. Dozens have been hospitalised and 85 are dead. Some were shot or burnt. Others were killed later by IEDs planted throughout the area. In total more than 4000 people were affected, with over 2000 becoming internally displaced.

Friday 31 January: seven people were killed and three others seriously injured when their bus ran over an IED on the Gwoza-Madagali road near Kuthra village.

**\* KADUNA STATE (Middle Belt)**

Friday 31 January: a mob of around 20 Fulani herdsmen (Muslims) invaded Manchok town in Kaura LGA, southern (Christian-dominated) Kaduna about 1 am. They set fire to at least one home and massacred a Christian family of seven, six of them slaughtered 'silently' as they slept in their beds. Traumatized and distraught relatives then launched a reprisal attack on a nearby Fulani settlement. Tensions are soaring. Though stationed in the area, security forces arrived at the scene only hours later, once the killers had long gone.

Despite jihad, Christian mission is strong and Muslims are turning to the Lord in unprecedented numbers. This is ultimately a spiritual battle.

**PLEASE PRAY SPECIFICALLY THAT GOD WILL -**

*\* Give the Nigerian government the clarity, conviction and courage to deny the Islamists their goals and preserve Nigeria as a united, secular state into the future.*

*\* Intervene to protect His people, confound the enemy and empower all Christian witness.*

*\* Stir up deep compassion and righteous indignation in the free and prosperous southern Nigerian Christians to take up the cause of the profoundly suffering church in the north in a new, fresh and revitalised way, such that prayer and mission flow out on an unprecedented scale.*

Please pray for Nigeria and its Church.

Source: Religious Liberty Prayer Bulletin 05 Feb 2014



IF GOD was to knock on our front door, we would surely open it with a mixture of emotions.

That's how it was for Elaine, the wife of the Rev. Andrew Gardiner, when she answered a knock at the front door of their home in Edinburgh in the mid 1980s. Only this was God knocking in the guise of an Elder from St Paul's Presbyterian Church, Brisbane, from the other side of the world.

What would she and Andrew make of this unexpected visit? What did this mean for the family?

The Elder's overseas travel plans included Scotland and he went armed with a contact name.

Through this connection, Andrew's name came up as a possible candidate to fill St Paul's vacancy. The Elder learned that Andrew was well-regarded for the work he had done in a poorer area of Edinburgh.

The Assembly of the Church of Scotland was meeting at this time and Elaine was not sure when Andrew would be at home. However, an evening meeting was arranged for the Elder to visit and he put forward the suggestion of Andrew being called by St Paul's, even for just a few years if not permanently.

The Elder relayed his progress back home to St Paul's Kirk Session.

Andrew was already planning a visit to Australia to see his mother in Sydney and it was suggested that he might extend the trip to come and see Brisbane and preach at St Paul's.

Following this visit, Andrew and Elaine prayerfully considered what the Lord had in store for them.

Andrew felt the call of the Lord and in mid 1986, he and Elaine duly farewelled their beloved congregation in an Edinburgh parish and uprooted their then-family of three children, Susan, Jamie and Elinor, and settled into Australian life in Brisbane.

So began, in August of that year, Andrew's 27 years of ministry at St Paul's.

There were many new challenges and adjustments to be made and within their first years here, they were delighted to welcome David as the Australian addition to their growing family.

In the course of Andrew's ministry at St Paul's, he did much more than just prepare and preach a weekly sermon and he has never waived from being a faithful servant of His



Children at Andrew's last service

# A man from afar ...

by Christine Campbell

to his birth place and it was here that his journey into ministry began in the mid 1960s.

He graduated from the Glasgow University in 1974 with a Bachelor of Divinity.

Soon after this, he married Elaine, whom he had met at University (love at first sight?) and they travelled to Australia to see Andrew's family. On their return to Scotland, Andrew was called to the Parish of Liberton Northfield, Edinburgh. He enjoyed his ministry there and served for ten years before being called to St Paul's.

Of his 27 years at St Paul's, Andrew says that although it seems a long time, in reality the years passed very quickly. He said that every year brought a new challenge and the Lord guided them through those times. He was always thankful to the strong body of faithful people within St Paul's who addressed those challenges.

Andrew said that although this phase of his ministry was finished, he will still be looking to serve the Lord in some way.

In his letter of thanks to the congregation, Andrew concludes with these verses from St Paul's letter to the Philippians: *"Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say again: Rejoice. Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus."*

To Andrew and Elaine, the congregation of St Paul's says a heartfelt thanks for all that you have been and done, and wishes you a long, happy and healthy retirement.

May God continue to bless you both as you have been such a blessing to others.

Lord, always exhorting his flock to love and serve their Master, and also to love one another.

One of the first things for which he was responsible was the Drop In Centre. Andrew connected in a relaxed way with those who came, providing food for their bodies as well as nourishment for their souls.

To prospective wedding couples he gave marriage preparation classes, imparting the biblical view of Christian marriage.

To parents of little children being brought for baptism, he guided them in the ways of raising their young ones in the knowledge and love of the Lord.

Andrew said it always gave him a thrill when parents brought their children forward to be baptized for, like wedding preparation classes, it gave him an opportunity to talk about the Lord Jesus and the great love God has for them and each of us.

A rough count reveals that during his time at St Paul's, Andrew conducted 982 weddings, 349 baptisms and the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper in public worship 135 times.

He took a very active part in St Paul's Care Group, visiting the elderly and frail regularly, taking the Word of the Lord and serving Home Communion every quarter.

Hospital visitation was an important aspect of Andrew's pastoral care and he was often called upon to conduct funeral services.

His care and compassion were some of the trademarks of his ministry and we will never know how often he was called to the hospital bedside of people who were not directly connected with St Paul's church family.

His affability was another quality which made working alongside him so easy. He was always very supportive and encouraging to congregational members for the contribution they were making in whatever capacity and area of church life. He was a hands-on man too when it came to the physical efforts needed to set up and clear away after events, never minding the sweat dripping from his brow.

His dedication to St Paul's Restoration Trust and its projects added new challenges, especially when he was called upon to ascend in a cherry picker to see first-hand the state of the stonework.

Andrew's retirement on Sunday 29 December was a day of mixed emotions for everyone - sadness that the time had come for the end of his parish ministry, but much thankfulness for the 27 years of faithful ministry at St Paul's.

In amongst the farewells, there was joy as Andrew was able to baptize his newest and fifth grandson, all the way from America, and in the presence of the extended Gardiner family, including his sisters, his four adult children and their families and also his mother from Sydney, who had been there for his induction in August 1986.

Over a special morning tea in honour of Andrew and Elaine, the Session Clerk, Viv Kitt, spoke of his appreciation of Andrew as counsellor and mentor and said how much he will miss his counsel.

On behalf of the congregation, he thanked Andrew for his tireless devotion and dedication, and Elaine for her unfailing support.

Viv presented Andrew with a most exquisite gift of a weather station in a beautiful presentation case, all lovingly handcrafted by one of the Elders, Doug Milne. An old and disused red cedar pew yielded the timber for the gift, which was in the shape of an arch, just like St Paul's front doorway.

Those gathered then expressed their prayer for Andrew and Elaine by singing the hymn, *"God be with you till we meet again"*.

Andrew's ministry went beyond St Paul's as he served as Moderator of the Presbyterian Church of Queensland in 1997. At the morning tea, the Rev. Lesleigh Hall paid tribute to Andrew's contribution to the wider church.

Andrew was born in Paisley, Scotland but, at the age of ten, emigrated to Australia with his family. As an adult, his travels took him back



Elaine and Andrew Gardiner with piper, Lachlan McPhee



Andrew baptizes his grandchild



Members of St Paul's congregations at morning tea after service



Special gift handcrafted by Elder Doug Milne





## WENDY HENRY TALKS WITH MELISSA SMITH ABOUT MINISTRY TO WOMEN IN A LOCAL CHURCH

**Wendy:** Hello Melissa and welcome to Girl Talk! I believe you are currently involved in ministering to the women at Bald Hills PC and I'm interested to find out all about that. But first, let's get to know you a little, by starting at the beginning of your story. So .... where is your hometown and what was it like growing up there?

Melissa: I grew up on the north side of Brisbane, the majority of the time in Strathpine while attending high school in Redcliffe. I moved to Redcliffe in my 20s and have recently moved back to Strathpine with my husband and daughter.

**W:** And then, after school, what study or work did you do?

M: After high school I went on to complete a Bachelor of Business (Accountancy) at QUT. After

commencing full-time work as an Accountant, I went on to post graduate study to become a Certified Practising Accountant (CPA).

**W:** Now, what keeps you busy on a daily basis?

M: I still work part-time as an accountant; however my main focus, and what keeps me busy on a daily basis, is being a mum to our one-and-a-half year old daughter Amelia.

**W:** Tell us a bit about your family and how you came to be at Bald Hills.

M: I am married to my wonderful husband Josh and we have a little girl Amelia. You could almost say I was born into the Bald Hills church community. This is the church where I grew up. I attended with my family - (Mum, Dad, sister and brother) - growing up and continued to worship there after getting married.

**W:** So how and when did you become a Christian?

M: Growing up in a Christian home, going to church, God's word and the love of Christ had always been a big part of my life. However, it wasn't until I was 21 that I really understood and wanted to accept the personal love and relationship that Christ wanted with me.

**W:** Who or what do you think helped or encouraged you most, as you were growing and learning more about Jesus?

M: Without a doubt my parents and grandparents were the greatest influence on my life. They were always there to help and encourage us no matter what we were doing.

**W:** What a blessing for you! And now you are sharing some of this with the women at Bald Hills! What sparked your interest in this particular area of ministry?

M: Having a ministry that is specific to women is really important to me. I have had on my heart for many years a need for a ministry where women are loved, supported and encouraged by each other; a ministry where we can grow together as sisters in Christ while spreading the word of God and the love of Christ to our family, friends and the community.

**W:** How did you get started and who has helped you along the way?

M: We began last year with a number of events. Integral in getting this going has been Kamina Wust who is the wife of BHPC ministry worker Mick Wust. Kamina shared the same passion I had for women's ministry and asked if I would work with her on the events. She has been a huge encouragement and a great support. Kamina has also written studies for, and led our BHPC Breakfast and Bible Study events.

**W:** How has it been working out and where are you at now?

M: We had a few events throughout 2013. There was a mix of events including a Breakfast and Bible Study for the women of the church and a number of other events open to the community, family and friends. We were encouraged by the success of these events and plan to run more throughout 2014. We are aiming to hold a BHPC Breakfast and Bible study at the beginning of each school term. We also aim to increase the number of outreach events for 2014.

**W:** What were some of the challenges and how did you overcome them?

M: One of the biggest challenges is encouraging women to come to the events. Everyone is busy and our calendars quickly fill up. Our plan is to hold events at different times and days (rather than the same day and time for each event). We also aim to have the date of the events planned out for the entire year so that we can give plenty of notice as to when the events will be on.



Melissa and Amelia Smith

**W:** You're so right. We are all busy – sometimes too busy! In those times when you are not busy with your family or other women, what do you like to do to relax or unwind?

M: I love to read blogs, in particular design blogs. I also love to sit in a coffee shop and read a good book or "study" the latest design magazine.

**W:** Sounds very relaxing! In closing, do you have a favourite scripture, song or book, that has encouraged you and that you could share with us?

M: My two "go to" scriptures are:

- Jeremiah 29:11, "For I know the plans I have for you", declares the Lord, 'plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future'."
- Proverbs 3:5-6 "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him and He will make your paths straight."

**W:** You can't beat those old favourites! Thanks Melissa, for sharing your story. We trust that God will bless your work with the women at Bald Hills.

## WOMEN @ PRAYER ...

Where there is no vision, the people are unrestrained. But happy is he who keeps the law. Proverbs 29:18 (NASB)

- Praise God for the recent symposium where leaders in women's ministry met to share their vision for ministry to women in the Presbyterian Church of Queensland. Give thanks for the overall unity of people from diverse groups and backgrounds and for Lesley Ramsay, who led the group with studies from Ephesians, about unity being at the centre of our vision.
- Give thanks for representatives from local churches, who shared how God is working through their women. Praise God for reports of churches where many women of all ages (from 4 to 84+) are using their abilities and gifts in diverse ways to share the gospel with those around them. And for others where cross-generational relationships are being formed and women are reading the Bible together in large groups and one-to-one, and are meeting together to pray.
- Pray also for other churches where this is not happening yet, and women believe they are not being equipped or encouraged, or that there are no opportunities for them to share the gospel or encourage believers in their faith. Pray that church leaders will find ways to encourage women to step out confidently and make a start - perhaps by simply inviting someone to read the Bible with them, or pray together, or even share their lives over a coffee.
- Pray for the Presbyterian Women's Association (and the PWMU) – women who have ministered faithfully over many years in local churches, and supported missionaries and students for the ministry. Pray that now, as these women reach their senior years and their numbers decrease, that they will know that their efforts have been appreciated by so many.
- Pray for the Queensland Theological College, as the staff continue their provision of theological training for men and women, including the new course begun in 2013 – M2W (Ministry to Women) - designed for women wanting to be trained in ministering to other women. Pray that the second intake of women this year will be excited about what they learn and will be confident to turn that training into effective ministry in their local churches. Also pray that plans to extend this opportunity in the future, to women in regional areas, will be blessed by God.
- Praise God for the initiative taken by Caboolture church leaders, in reaching out to teenage girls outside the church, by providing weekend camps where the gospel is woven into activities designed to help these girls overcome their lack of opportunity and to learn how to live godly lives. Pray for the organisers from different local churches, for the school chaplains who help identify the girls in most need, and for the girls themselves as they begin to turn their lives around in the direction of Jesus.
- Pray for the WMPCQ Committee as we review our role in light of the input from all of the participants at the symposium, and as we strive together to encourage, equip and extend women all over Queensland, especially those in small, rural and regional churches. Also pray for Women's Ministries of the Presbyterian Church of Australia, that their plans for another national "Flourish" conference in 2015 will be clearly led by the Holy Spirit and that their work of encouraging all Australian Presbyterian women will unite us all in our vision of women ministering to women.

## PREPARE - CUSTOMIZED VERSION

PREPARE and ENRICH have been used for many years by those working with couples planning to marry, couples wanting to strengthen their relationship and facing new challenges, and couples experiencing difficulties in their relationship. The inventories have a reputation for accuracy, reliability, sensitivity and relevance. PREPARE-ENRICH CUSTOMIZED VERSION has been used to great effect for 4 years now. It is accessed via the internet and is customised to suit each couple.

Training in the use of this new resource will be available at Brisbane Boys' College, Toowong on Thursday 12 and 13 June. For Registration details, please email [info@prepare-enrich.com.au](mailto:info@prepare-enrich.com.au), the Prepare office on 02 95204049 or Graham Cole on [gcole@bbc.qld.edu.au](mailto:gcole@bbc.qld.edu.au).

## Ladies Bible Study Retreat 2014

### The Unexpected Jesus

Guest speaker Beate Teale



5pm 23rd May to  
2pm 25 May, 2014.

QCCC Brookfield 179 Gold Creek Rd, Brookfield



Be Connected with WMPCQ through the website + newsletter  
[www.wmpcq.com](http://www.wmpcq.com) or email [pcqwomen@gmail.com](mailto:pcqwomen@gmail.com)



# KINGSFORD TERRACE



*Wouldn't it be wonderful to live  
with people who enjoy life as much as you*

Kingsford Terrace offers stunning new apartments in a vibrant and supportive community with exceptional facilities and services to meet your every need. From beautiful gardens, a superb café and lounge, to the sensational indoor pool, with the added security and peace of mind knowing Kingsford Terrace is operated by PresCare – a Ministry of the Presbyterian Church of Queensland.

**Premium retirement apartments from \$440,000.**  
Call 1300 287 672 to view our display suite or visit  
[kingsfordterrace.com.au](http://kingsfordterrace.com.au)



Kingsford Terrace & Display Suite  
260 Cliveden Avenue  
Corinda Queensland 4075



## Governor unveils \$100M retirement living development in Corinda



Councillor Adrian Schinner (Deputy Mayor), Mike Munro, Hon. Greg Rodgers (Moderator PCQ), Her Excellency Ms Penelope Wensley AC (Governor of Queensland), Greg Skelton (CEO PresCare), Dr Chris Davis MP

HER EXCELLENCY Ms Penelope Wensley AC, Governor of Queensland, and Hon. Greg Rodgers, Presbyterian Church of Queensland Moderator, officially unveiled the Foundation Stone plaque for the first premium retirement living village in Brisbane's inner west – Kingsford Terrace – on Saturday 8 February.

As PresCare's newest development, the \$100M Kingsford Terrace is designed to accommodate the way senior Australians want to live, with spacious and comfortable apartments, community areas and a focus on health, wellbeing and lifestyle.

Journalist and Kingsford Terrace Ambassador Mike Munro emceed the event, which was attended by over 100 local dignitaries and community businesses, representatives of the Presbyterian Church of Queensland, PresCare people and future residents of Kingsford Terrace.

Guests learned more about the history of the site and the origins of both PresCare and their legacy of care.

PresCare Chief Executive Officer Greg Skelton said PresCare was building a vital piece of community infrastructure. He also said that it helped maintain PresCare's connection to the site - an integral part of their history.

Guests at the opening toured the bright, spacious display suite with its full-sized kitchen, bathroom and bedroom, each equipped with all of the quality fixtures and finishes typical of a Kingsford Terrace apartment. The lead architect, landscape architect and project manager were on hand to discuss the features and benefits of the apartments and the \$5M Southern Cross Community Centre.

Kingsford Terrace is named after the Brisbane pioneering aviator Sir Charles Kingsford Smith and will be home to over 200 people once the 10-year, six-stage project is complete. The 68 Stage One apartments are due for completion in 2015.

**\*\* Mark these dates \*\***

### Assembly Public Events

28 June 2014	Celebration Rally
29 June 2014	Induction Service
30 June 2014	Public Seminar
30 June - 3 July 2014	Assembly Business meetings
1 July 2014	Mission Barbecue and Mission Rally
30 June/1 & 2 July 2014	PWA Activities
1 July 2014	WMPCQ @ Assembly

(These dates are based on last year's Assembly program and may change.)



Moderator-General’s Drought Appeal

LAST OCTOBER bushfires ravaged the Springwood area of NSW; 200 homes were lost. Our son-in-law, Steve Young, is the Anglican minister of Springwood and tells me the church and district were overwhelmed by generous help. One hopes that there is a similar response to the devastation caused by the recent bushfires in Victoria and South Australia.

However, there is an equally devastating disaster at the moment which, because it is gradual, seems to go unnoticed.

There is a severe drought in western Queensland, north-west and western New South Wales. These areas take in the Presbyteries of Moree, New England and Central West in NSW and Darling Downs and North Queensland in Queensland.

Here is one example:

Our son-in-law, David Burge is the Presbyterian Minister in Walcha. The population of the district is 5000. David is currently the only Protestant minister in town.

Walcha is a Northern Tablelands town. Grazing is the key industry and it is a fine wool centre. They have just had the driest summer for 132 years and in six weeks’ time will be carting water to the town at a daily cost of \$30 000.

There is no pasture and flocks have been reduced; stock is hand-fed and moved to the roadsides for agistment. Most farmers are already well-overdrawn at the banks.

David is organizing community prayer meetings and has advertised in the local newspaper his availability to farmers who would like to talk through their worries. David’s experience would be multiplied throughout our parishes.

Please pray for rain. Also pray that those in these areas will be humbled before God and realize their dependence on Him and cry out to Him in a way that they may not in good times.

In Scripture, we are rarely urged just to pray; we must pray but can also provide assistance. Money for our ministers to distribute as part of their pastoral duties would be very helpful.

I am therefore calling on the Church to pray earnestly and to give generously for this need.

Here’s how you may give:

In each State, to the Public Emergency Fund of the Presbyterian Church:

NSW contact Elizabeth McClean (emcclean@pcnsw.org.au)  
Queensland contact Keith Booker (keith.booker@pcq.org.au)  
Victoria contact John Wilson (Wilsonjp51@gmail.com)

Ministers should apply for grants to the above State representatives.

There is an advertisement being run by Emergency Services in NSW that says, “talking about a bushfire survival plan is not the same as having a bushfire survival plan”.

The Lord Jesus said in John 13:17, in the context of washing one another’s feet, “now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them”.

I call on you to a prayerful and generous response.



Rt Rev. David Cook

THE CENTRAL characteristic of God, and its absence in us, may be the root cause of the terrible alcohol-fuelled violence in our streets. That’s the central thesis of this column.

Covenant relationships only work if all parties to the covenant are committed to abide by its conditions. This was the failure of the old covenant. God was faithful, but Israel was not.

The superiority of the new covenant is evident that God faithfully keeps His part and graciously keeps ours as well.

The covenant and the Bible itself are not worth the paper they are written on, apart from God’s commitment to faithfully adhere to every promise and commitment He makes. Read Moses’ parting song of praise to the faithful God in Deuteronomy 32.

God’s Word, rightly understood, is His bond.

An acquaintance this year took as a resolution for 2014, “Be impeccable with your word”. I remember my father saying that the main difference between doing business in Sydney in

from the Moderator General

God’s faithfulness and alcohol-fuelled violence

the 90s compared to the 50s was that in the 50s a person’s word and a hand shake sealed the deal. “These days”, he said, “you don’t trust it till you have it signed in triplicate!”

This lack of human faithfulness is seen at its most devastating and destructive in the divorce courts. These days, solemn vows of marriage are subject to the whims of feelings of love or desires and God’s words to Malachi 2:16 “I hate divorce”, rings true to every person who has ever been touched by the tragedy of divorce.

In 2012 I met a teacher attending church in London. He taught at a high school for disadvantaged teens. The nature of the disadvantage was that these teens came from single parent families, usually their mother being the single parent. That Sunday we met was Fathers Day. The Friday before at school he had received five cards from students as he was the most important male figure in their life.

I heard one very conservative sociologist say that British society is crumbling and divorce is the major factor causing the crumbling. Marriage is the central relationship contributing to the stability of society. It is a covenantal relationship and as such it is based on human faithfulness.

When I see the violence on our streets, I wonder, where are the parents of these people? They may be beyond the age of parental influence,

Revitalised Preaching

THE IMPACT of our denomination on our nation will be determined by both the degree of faithfulness to the Bible and engagement with people from our pulpits.

God has spoken. His Word is perfectly suited to our nation; it is exactly what we need to hear. No other word is God-breathed but the Bible.

Faithful explanation, together with engagement with the lives of real people, is what our preaching is to be about.

Peter Barnes, David Jones and I look forward to visiting each of our Colleges and Tasmania for 3 day seminars for Ministers, Home Missionaries, Candidates, Metro Students, PIM, APWM, Missionaries and Preaching Elders in the next two years, in order to encourage such preaching.

There are very few occasions which bring together such a diverse group within our denomination for mutual encouragement.

Here is the program:

<b>Day1</b>	
9.30	Introduction and Sermon DC
11.00	Helping each other with our preaching DC/DJ
2.00	Barnes on Richard Baxter
2.00	Preaching when you lack style PB
2.45	Sermon DJ
<b>Day 2</b>	
9.30	Sermon DJ
10.15	Discipling/Catechising DJ/PB
11.45	Barnes on Charles Simeon
2.00	Preaching to the heart DC
2.45	Sermon DC
<b>Day 3</b>	
9.30	Sermon DJ
10.15	Book launch Systematic Theology
11.00	Barnes on Spurgeon
12.00	Value of preaching clubs PB/DC/DJ
2.00	Panel
2.45	Sermon DC

Each day we will break for morning tea and lunch with time for mutual encouragement. The day will finish at 3.30 pm.

<b>The dates are:</b>	
<b>Christ College (PTC Sydney)</b>	<b>17-19 June 2014</b>
<b>Tasmanian Seminar</b>	<b>10-12 November 2014</b>
<b>PTC Melbourne</b>	<b>17-19 March 2015</b>
<b>QTC Brisbane</b>	<b>18-20 November 2015</b>

**Registration**

We are grateful to the GAA Trustees for providing a subsidy which means we can keep costs to a minimum.

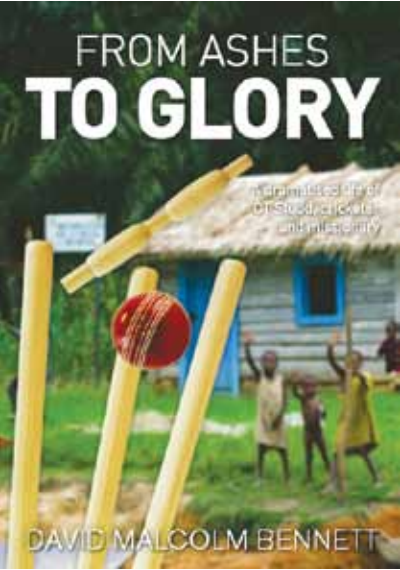
Each College will advise costs when you enrol, but they will not exceed \$60 for the three days.

In the case of Tasmania, please contact: Alistair Bain, [bain.ar@gmail.com](mailto:bain.ar@gmail.com) or Jason Summers, [minister@launceston.pctas.org.au](mailto:minister@launceston.pctas.org.au)

Registration is now open for the Christ College Seminar, the Sydney Conference!!

This is a fairly unique occasion; we ask that you make it a priority in your busy ministry.

*Our prayer is that these seminars will be a part of fulfilling the prayer of our Lord Jesus for us. My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one. They are not of the world, even as I am not of it. Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth. As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world. For them I sanctify myself, that they too may be truly sanctified. (John 17:15-19)*



It’s Not Cricket!

Well, it is, but it’s much more than that

Why would anyone give up fame and riches to live in poverty in an unknown country? *From Ashes to Glory* by David Malcolm Bennett tells the remarkable story of C. T. Studd, Test cricketer and missionary pioneer, who did just that.

Amidst this most extraordinary story is an authentic account of the Test Match between England and Australia in 1882, which began the Ashes legend.

Dr Evan Davies, of WEC International, has noted that Bennett has used ‘a different style’ in this biography, which ‘brings the story of Charles Thomas Studd to life’. It is, in fact, in a dramatic, fiction-like style that will keep the reader engaged.

C. T. Studd gave up fame and great wealth to serve Jesus Christ in China, India and Central Africa. *From Ashes to Glory* tells his story from his privileged family life and fame on the cricket field to a servant’s life on the mission field. He went to China with the China Inland Mission as one of ‘the Cambridge Seven’. They were all from wealthy backgrounds and well educated, but adopted poverty and hardship to serve Christ. C. T. Studd went on to found the missionary organisation WEC International.

David Malcolm Bennett says, ‘Researching the selfless, dedicated life of CT Studd has left a distinct mark upon my own life. He was an amazing man.’



Empowering Mother Tongue Translators

by English tutoring

**Introduction:** In South Asia something truly amazing is unfolding. A national student Christian organisation has become burdened that many pastors in their own country don’t understand the Bible in their national language. Each year when they sponsor seminars for pastors and evangelists, they are frustrated in teaching because of the lack of understanding of the Bible. Now they are recruiting mother tongue translators from three languages to begin translating Luke into their own language.

**I never dreamed:** One pastor said, “I never dreamed that it would be possible to have the Bible in our own language. Once our people (who are 99% Buddhist) hear God’s Word in our own language, they will believe.” (Now he has resigned from his job as a Social Worker to become a Bible translator.)

**Training:** These mother tongue translators have enrolled in the Serampore College Diploma of Bible Translation. (Serampore College was set up by William Carey 200 years ago outside Calcutta.)

**Challenge:** However, for these mother tongue speakers to succeed in becoming competent Bible translators, they need to learn English. Most of the available Bible translation resources are only in English. Would you be willing to invest 3-4 weeks to help these mother tongue translators with learning English?

**Translation Workshops in 2014:**  
March 22 – April 10: 3 weeks  
June 13 – July 11: 4 weeks  
September 17 – October 8: 4 weeks

**Translation Workshop Activities:** Mother tongue translators  
#1: take their Diploma of Bible translation studies  
#2: practice their computer skills  
#3: do translation assignments  
#4: take English classes

**Assignments for English tutors:**  
#1: help MTTs with English pronunciation  
#2: help MTTs understand Bible commentaries in English  
#3: converse with MTTs in English

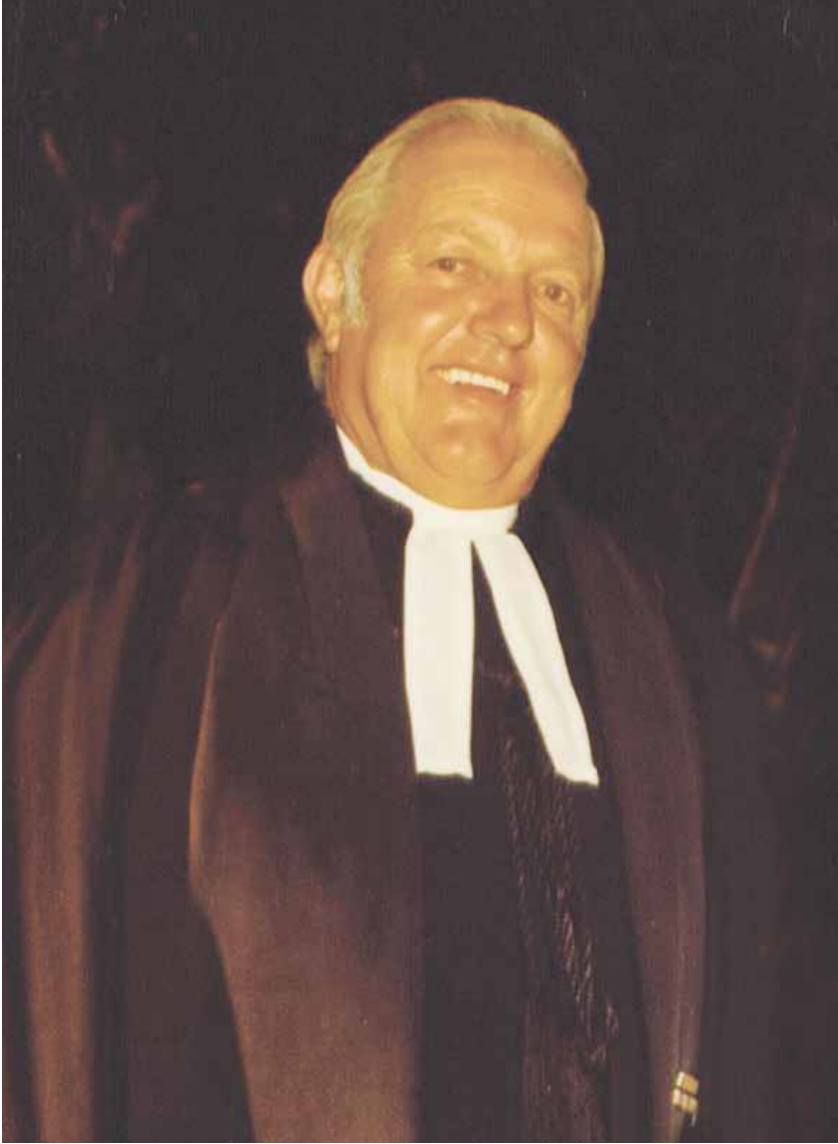
**Total Costs:**  
**Airfares, visas, insurance:** \$1,400 (approximate)  
**Accommodation/food costs:** \$1,300  
**Total costs:** \$2,700

**For more information:** email [Proshikkhon@wycliffe.org](mailto:Proshikkhon@wycliffe.org)



# Celebrating the life and work of Rev. Alan Switzer

Contributed by Viv Kitt, Session Clerk, St Paul's Brisbane



Rev Alan Lloyd Switzer, 26/8/1926 - 16/2/2014

ON 4 March 2014, St Paul's commemorated the life of the Rev. Alan Switzer, retired Minister of Ithaca Charge and Associate Minister of St Paul's Charge since 1994.

Alan was born in 1926 to Henry and Ethel Switzer and grew up in Hurstville NSW, a suburb of Sydney.

He joined the Presbyterian Church at an early age, enthusiastically taking part in all aspects of church life.

Both the Rev. Davies and the Very Rev. Dr Ken Gardner were a great influence in his life. He became a junior Sunday School teacher and was a member of the Presbyterian Fellowship.

Prior to 1944, he served as a member of the Volunteer Coastal Patrol and was caught up in the Japanese attempted torpedoing of American ships in Sydney Harbour.

In 1944 he joined the Royal Australian Navy as a stoker, and went to sea on the heavy battle cruiser "Australia" which was attached to the American Seventh Pacific Fleet. The ship was very badly damaged by both torpedoes and aerial bombardment by five Kamikaze aircraft. Alan's eyes were damaged during the Battle of Leyte Gulf in the Philippines, but he was able to remain on duty after a three day convalescence.

On returning to home port in Sydney for repairs to the badly damaged ship, Alan was again part of the crew when the ship was ordered to England for further repairs. On completion of the ship's sea worthiness, Alan returned to Sydney where he was crewed on to the HMAS Burnie, a mine sweeper, and sailed for India. These ships were affectionately called 'rubber duckies' because the sailors claimed they would roll and dip on wet grass.

In India he was again transferred to the LST 3035, a troop and heavy

equipment transport vessel, and sailed for Sydney.

Just before Alan entered the Navy he met a girl who would become his wife. Valerie was the daughter of John and Eva Anderson and many letters were exchanged during the war years and a love bloomed and flourished. In 1949 Alan and Valerie were married – two became four with the birth of Wendy and Pauline.

When he demobbed from the Navy in 1946 he joined the NSW Fire Brigade. Alan left the Brigade and went share farming and it was while he was on the tractor at their farm at Kennaile Creek in NSW that he heard God's voice calling him to His service.

Alan applied to the Presbyterian Church in NSW for admission as a Minister of the Gospel. He was accepted in 1959 and studied at the college in Sydney whilst serving as a home missionary at Wollomombi and Harbord. He was ordained at Hay in 1968.

In 1970 Alan was asked by the Chaplain General of the Presbyterian Church to take up a position in the Army as Chaplain and was sent to Vietnam with the 4th Battalion.

Alan returned to Australia and entered hospital to repair a damaged shoulder inflicted in Vietnam during an insurgents battle in Phoc Toi province. During his time in Vietnam, Alan deployed with the battalion in many skirmishes in the field, as he thought he was more use as a Chaplain in carrying God's message to the troops in their hour of need, rather than staying back in camp and waiting for their return.

While in Vietnam, Alan had contact with the Baria Orphanage in Nui Dat run by nuns who invited Alan to take a scripture class whenever time

permitted. He held an English class for the senior girls, who tried but failed to teach him Vietnamese. He also spent time on the orphanage's farm assisting and training them in better farm and animal husbandry practices to enable them to increase their food production.

For this and other tasks undertaken he was awarded the very rare honour of the Vietnamese Civil Actions Medal for service to the Vietnamese people.

In 1977 Alan took discharge from the army and served part-time in various churches throughout NSW, including Redfern, Kyogle, Guyra and Woodenbong.

Following a move to Queensland he conducted services at Nambour, including Woombye and Eumundi. Eventually the Lord's hand directed him into further service in the church and in 1990 he was inducted into the charge of Ithaca. Whilst there, he had his first heart attack.

In 1994 he demitted from the Ithaca Charge. Alan and Val became part of the St Paul's congregation where Alan held the position of Associate Minister until his declining health forced him to resign from this position. They drew great support from the love, prayers and friendship of the congregation.

Alan was admitted to Greenslopes Hospital in November 2013 with an infection in his right foot. This infection was partly lodged in the nerve and caused constant and severe pain. Although the infection was controlled, the wound would not heal and Alan eventually lost the leg. The amputation healed, but due to complications from the operation, Alan's health declined. His heart failed and he passed into God's charge on 17 February 2014.

# Abortion and the Gospel of Jesus

This paper was used for a St Andrew's Toowoomba Hospital information session in late 2013 and is contributed by GiST

VULNERABILITY CAN be frightening. Pregnancy certainly involves vulnerable people. The mother, the father, perhaps the siblings, family and friends, all find themselves in some way stretched to make room for this new, wondrous but utterly dependent and demanding person. The vulnerability of pregnancy is magnified though, when the pregnancy is unplanned, unwanted or the baby shows signs of major disability.

For many women, it can be terribly difficult to see such a pregnancy positively. It means reorientating to a very different future to the one expected, and it is often a future devoid of the things valued and hoped for. She may face losing relationships, freedom, security, career, opportunities or youth. She certainly loses some control over her life. She may fear that she will be pushed to the sidelines of life and even lose a sense of her own worth. Or she may simply feel that a baby at this time will just be too much for her or for others. A father may feel similarly, as might grandparents and others close to the pregnancy. It may even feel as though the survival of one demands the life of another.

For some women, having an abortion is the last thing they want to do but they feel enormous pressure from others or from their life circumstances to have an abortion. Others choose to have an abortion readily without realising the burden of grief and guilt they will carry afterwards.

In the gospels, Jesus sought out those who were vulnerable, isolated, struggling and who carried heavy burdens of guilt. Indeed, he had little time for self-righteous people who smugly displayed their seemingly 'successful' lives and looked down on others.

As the Son of God He could instantly see the truth about people's hearts – truth which they often failed to see or admit. His words to everyone he met were authoritative, deeply confronting, compassionate and liberating.

Jesus also knows the truth about our hearts. His words to every one of us are also both radically challenging and deeply freeing, and they speak directly to everyone who is rendered vulnerable by an unplanned or complicated pregnancy, or by a past abortion.

Here are three particularly important points Jesus made:

Firstly, many people know Jesus' story about the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37) who had no qualms about stopping to care for a complete stranger lying hurt (and vulnerable!) by the road after others had hurried past. Jesus told this story to a lawyer who, upon being told by Jesus to love his neighbour, asked 'And who is my neighbour?' You certainly get the feeling that the lawyer wanted to draw some limits about who he was obliged to love!

In his ensuing story about the Good Samaritan, Jesus shows that love does not stop to ask whether someone is worthy of my love. Love assumes that God gives value and worth to all people because He made every person to belong to Him.

Personal value is not found in success, youth, freedom, ability or acceptance by others. Security cannot ultimately be found in savings, jobs, education, birth control or even in particular relationships. We can be considered ordinary, unproductive and unimportant but nothing will shift the value God gives to us just because He made us.

Secondly, Jesus' story of the Good Samaritan was designed to make the lawyer feel very uncomfortable. And

it is designed to make us feel very uncomfortable too. For we must admit that we have failed to love others on countless occasions. Much worse, we fail to love and listen to the God who made us and owns us - and who owns the people we have failed.

Jesus pulled no punches about the dreadful seriousness of our continuing ignorance of and rebellion against God. According to Jesus, we deserve only His judgement (John 3:18-20, John 16:7-11).

But thirdly, Jesus came precisely in order to show compassion and to bring hope to failures and rebels like us.

After telling this story, Jesus continued on a long but determined journey towards a humiliating death on the cross. In His death, He voluntarily paid the price for our rebellion and lifted away our entire burden of guilt, including the guilt of abortion. He did this because of our deep worth to God and His unflinching love for us.

Jesus famously said, 'For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life' (John 3:16).

Jesus calls on us to start life over again, finding our value, security and hope in His unconditional love for us shown by His death on the cross. Then, with His help, He calls us to start changing into people who love God and unconditionally love others.

For a mother, father, family and community under the strain of an unplanned or complicated pregnancy, this means, first of all, deciding to embrace the dependant and vulnerable 'stranger' in the womb.

A foetus, just like each of us, is valuable and worthy of love simply because he or she has been made by God, no matter how much that love will demand of us. Indeed, we were all

foetuses once, known and treasured by God before we knew anyone else (Psalm 139:13-16).

The love of God in Jesus also frees us from the need to create our own value and security. Instead, as those who love and are loved by Jesus, we should strive to create Christian communities that leave no one in isolation; that thoughtfully and generously support vulnerable people who find themselves in radically changed circumstances; that value children; that honour parenthood highly; and that embrace those with disabilities, no matter how short and difficult their earthly lives. God, in His power, is able to work for good in

the lives of all those who love Him, no matter how dire the circumstances.

If you would like to know more about Jesus, try reading the gospel of Mark or Paul's letter to the Colossians in the New Testament.

If you would like to talk to someone about any of these ideas, feel free to contact the Gospel In Society Team at the Presbyterian Church of Queensland.

References:  
Andrew Cameron, *Joined Up Life*, IVP England 2011  
Oliver O'Donovan, *Begotten Not Made*, Oxford University Press, Oxford 1984  
Allen Verhey, *Reading the Bible in the Strange World of Medicine*, Eerdmans USA 2003



15% discount to all New Directions readers

### NEED TO UNWIND FOR A FEW DAYS?

Leave stress behind and pamper yourself in this beautiful old Bed & Breakfast, circa 1880. Accommodation has own entrance, own bathroom and is very private from the rest of the house. Being right in the heart of the Warwick CBD you will be close to all amenities.

**31 Guy Street, Warwick**  
www.guyhousebnb.com.au

**07 4661 7669 or 0416144070**  
email: nohlmans@dodo.com.au



# Sharing Jesus at youth camp

by Rebekah Hemelaar



Jemima Krivan (camp leader) and Grace Larimer (camp director)

ON THE weekend of 21-23 February the Redlands Presbyterian Church held their first Ricochet Youth Group camp!

A group of 15 kids between grades 6-11, led by some brave Young Adult leaders, settled in at a house in Tewanin, borrowed from a family that attends the church.

The first night began with a campfire discussion which led to prayer, where several kids decided to pray aloud, praise God!

During the weekend there were many things that did not go to plan; however everything worked out in the end and everyone had a fun and enjoyable time.

We were privileged to have Dave Hopper come to speak to the kids and lead them through who Jesus is in the book of Mark. Many found the passages confronting and were

challenged about their faith; or for those who don't have faith, whether they should put their trust in Jesus.

Saturday was filled with going to the beach, small group discussions and fun thought-provoking team building games. The kids were put into a position where they had to interact, providing opportunities to build strong relationships with each other.

A trivia and drama night was thoroughly enjoyed by the whole group with lots of competitiveness, laughter and memories that will last a lifetime. Although it was raining most of the time, and buzzing with mosquitoes, the immeasurable amount of fun times made the weekend a total blast!

Praise God for the opportunity of having a youth camp. Pray for the kids that heard about Jesus who now need to decide whether He is someone they should trust and follow.



Thank God that no one was seriously injured. Thank God for everyone who was involved in making the weekend a great time, but more importantly, spiritually beneficial to the kids. This included leaders who guided the kids

through the small group discussions about Jesus, the cooks who gave us yummy sustenance, Dave Hopper for speaking about Jesus and many more!

# Questions You Don't Need To Ask

by Greg Newnham, Member of Wynnum Presbyterian Church



Greg Newnham

WHO SAYS 65 should be the cut-off age for overseas cross-cultural mission service? When considering retirement from the secular workforce, perhaps the question we should ask is, 'Lord, where can I serve You best, now that I have more time?'

My question was answered by an invitation to join the Proshikkhon 2014 team. Whereas I had been contemplating the grey-nomad adventure, I now had to ask myself, 'But aren't I too old? What if my health packs up? What if this? What if that?'

Then I had to ask myself the question, 'If I had asked the original question, "Lord, where can I best serve you", why am I asking all these others?'

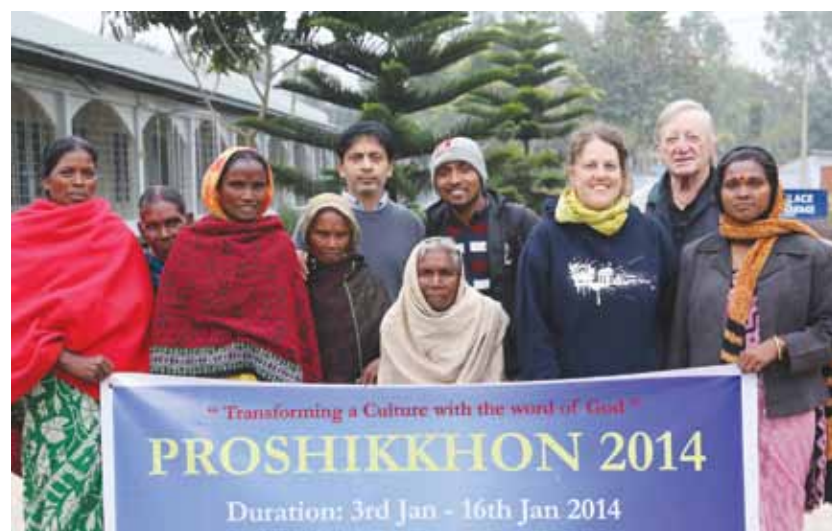
For me, the most important confirmation needed to come from my family. 'Could they do without me for a month or so?' But then I thought, 'Haven't I told you before that no one is indispensable? You haven't been anywhere much lately, anyhow.'

And so, after the formalities, I found myself a part of the team training at Maleny for Proshikkhon 2014 - a mission trip in Bangladesh.

But that didn't end the questions! 'Did you bring your laptop?'

'But I don't do lap-top! I'm hopeless at computer. What use will I be? I only type "hunt & peck". How about the language? At school my French was terrible, my Latin even worse. How will I cope where they even write differently?' I had to think again: 'Not to worry, Lord. You have begun a work in me, haven't you promised you will continue it?'

And then some obscure quote from the past came to me: 'Ours is not to wonder why, ours is just to do or die'. That was very comforting. Maybe I would be missed after all. I'm sure that must be a paraphrase of the verse about casting all our cares upon God,



and not being concerned about the outcome.

What a relief when I found myself in a team with three other retirees. I wouldn't be the odd one out. We could all make the same mistakes together. We could possibly pool our tech savvy, and end up with an acceptable level of IT competence!

But I had made the commitment, so now, surely, all I needed to do was to accept that the eventual outcome was indeed in God's hands. 'Take everything as it comes'; 'Take change on the chin'; 'Immerse yourself deep in the culture and enjoy it'; and something from the bard, about 'gripping the nettle', all came to mind at various times. And indeed, I haven't been disappointed.

Despite political turmoil resulting in travel difficulties, continual changes of plans due to safety concerns, and some feelings of being at sea in a different culture, the aims and objectives of Proshikkhon 2014 were still met, and more. And I have the joy of knowing that I've played a part in its success.

But the benefits of Proshikkhon have reflected back on me. I've been more blessed in this one month than in any similar period of time in my 70 years. Being chucked in at the deep end resulted in a steep learning curve: developing skills in Bible storytelling,

understanding contextualisation, learning the importance of partnership when growing the Kingdom of God, recognizing the importance of Bible translation, gaining some proficiency in the Bangla language, and developing a taste for many of the culinary delights of the Bengali culture - all these things made a mammoth impact on me.

Besides that, I experienced the concern and care of the many friends I've made both on and off the team. All these topics will infiltrate discussion at my church, in my household, and with the people I meet for a long time to come.

Should the opportunity present itself in your retirement or semi-retirement to join a Proshikkhon mission trip, skip the questions and take a tip from another old guy: recognise that God is calling you to serve him in a project which will bring Gospel light into the lives of many in Bangladesh. Commit yourself to Him. Let Him take care of the details. Embrace the truth of Romans 8:35: 'Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?'

\* Applications are open for Proshikkhon 2015. Email Proshikkhon@wycliffe.org.





Philanthropist William R. Black

## PresCare celebrates 85 years young

IT ALL started with a generous donation from Ipswich businessman, philanthropist and devout Presbyterian William Robert Black in 1929 – 85 years ago this May.

The Presbyterian Church in Queensland was driven to help the many aged men and women struggling in the aftermath of the Great War and the looming global economic disaster of the Great Depression.

It was in this climate that the foundations of PresCare – the Church's aged care mission – was established. Hopetoun Home for Aged Men, as it was originally known, was gifted to the Church by one of the state's earliest and most generous philanthropists, Mr Black.

William Black was said to have been a "reserved" man, but clearly he had a bold spirit when it came to business. Mr Black would perhaps not be so reserved were he here today to see that his legacy - of giving and contributing to the community - had survived for 85 years.

PresCare Chief Executive Officer Greg Skelton notes our rapidly growing ageing population means we must find new ways of providing care and services to the seniors in our community.

"This means new ways of ensuring that the elderly retain their independence for as long as possible and new ways of keeping their connections to family, friends

and communities", Mr Skelton says. "Projects like Kingsford Terrace represent a bold leap forward for PresCare and are a most fitting way of marking our 85th year."

PresCare expects this year to be one of celebration, enabling them to strengthen relationships with their people, clients and community stakeholders, especially the Presbyterian Church of Queensland.

General Manager External Relations James Woods says PresCare is driven by its Christ-centred values of Care, Respect, Discover and Deliver and its creation as a Mission of the Presbyterian Church of Queensland. He thanked PCQ Archivist Dianne Parker and PCQ PA to Clerk of Assembly Lynda Rackley for their invaluable assistance in tracing the history of PresCare and noting key milestones.

"PresCare as an organisation was originally created in 1929 as the Committee on Homes for Aged People," James says. "PresCare operations then began with the opening of Stonehaven Home for Aged Women at Chelmer on 24 February 1930 and in May that year the opening of Hopetoun Home for Aged Men."

It was not until 1 July 2000 that the organisation formally became known as PresCare, transitioning from the former Department for Social Mission.

The intervening years were busy ones with PresCare expanding from those initial two homes to facilities in Rockhampton, Mackay, Maryborough, Mt Tamborine and Brisbane as well as community and disability services in towns from Cairns to the Gold Coast. Our most recent addition was the former Queensland Government-owned Yaralla Place in Maryborough.

This year will see PresCare celebrate its 85th year through existing events such as the PresCare Woollam Constructions Charity Golf Classic and anticipated new events including a gala ball in Brisbane and a number of regional activities.

"We look forward to celebrating this milestone with our clients, supporters, suppliers and PresCare people throughout the coming year," James says.



Original Hopetoun Home for Aged Men, 1929

## PresCare is "more connected"

IN 2014 PresCare celebrates a remarkable milestone and will undergo a major transformation.

Chief Executive Officer Greg Skelton says this year is shaping up to be one of PresCare's most exciting periods particularly with the culmination of the Our Story project.

Last August, about 30 people representing a diverse range of roles within PresCare came together to talk about the organisation's vision and values and what they felt PresCare was all about – their story. The workshop was a melting pot of thoughts and ideas on shaping PresCare's future.

Out of this came the evolution of PresCare's brand, which builds on their 85 years of delivering care and compassion to seniors and those in need across Queensland.

PresCare's tag line has changed from 'compassionate care' to one reflecting the competitive and client-driven reforms to the national aged-care sector. "PresCare always has and always will offer compassionate care", Mr Skelton says, "but what will differentiate PresCare into the future is being 'more connected'".



"We are more connected because we offer one of the most diverse ranges of services of any aged care provider in Queensland, especially for an organisation of our size", Mr Skelton says. "We strive to offer care that is more connected to the communities we operate in and the people we work with. We strive to ensure our clients are more connected - to their families, their communities and to the services we offer."

Mr Skelton says PresCare believes that for every individual, having a sense of purpose, self-worth and connection to the rest of the world is vital to their wellbeing.

The refreshed logo maintains PresCare's connection to the Presbyterian Church, which is a core part of both their history and their future. However, they believe the more modern font and a simpler colour palette will help them stay fresh and relevant for another 85 years.

PresCare will be communicating the rebrand to customers, suppliers and community partners over the next few months.

If you would like to contact PresCare, email them at [information@prescare.org.au](mailto:information@prescare.org.au) or call 1800 773 722.

## Innovation aims to keep residents out of hospital

OVER THE past few months, a dedicated project team at PresCare has been working with Alexandra Gardens Facility Manager Sandra Thomson and a number of local partners including Central Queensland University, Medicare Local and Queensland Health, to deliver the Residential Sub Acute Care Project.

This project will deliver a "skilled service" model, whereby staff at PresCare residential facilities will recognise and intervene early when a resident's condition changes.

It is based on a simple traffic light system aimed at providing care in the facility for eight common conditions – chest pain, confusion, dyspnoea, UTI, dehydration, constipation, falls and palliative care.

The model was launched to local Rockhampton General Practitioners and PresCare's community partners at a dinner on 18 February 2014. Special guest speaker Dr David Lie, Clinical Director of the Older Persons Mental Health Service at Princess Alexandra Hospital Brisbane, spoke

to guests about the diagnosis and treatment of dementia in aged care, using examples from his 20-plus year career.

General Manager Residential and Community Glenn Bradley says that the new system PresCare is introducing will be supported by a suite of clinical tools and management guidelines.

"A key component of the model we are delivering through this project is not only the tools but staff training", Glenn says. "PresCare believes strongly in the importance of training and empowering our people to be leaders in the provision of high quality aged care."

Through this program, PresCare will be offering services not offered by other providers and it will help us ensure it delivers the right treatment at the right time, in the right place to the right person.

The Sub Acute Care Project will be piloted at Alexandra Gardens in March 2014 and then rolled out across PresCare's other residential facilities.



Staff at Alexandra Gardens qualify for delivery of Sub Acute Care Program

help overcome the disadvantage of loneliness, boredom, withdrawal and often depression which can result from being socially isolated, day after day, month after month.

In each region in which PresCare operates, the specific activities implemented to address social isolation will vary depending on the needs and numbers of their clients.

In Mackay, for example, there are around 400 people benefiting from the activities presented through its Social Isolation Program.

There are three streams of development for the community activities – Friendship Clubs, Special Events and a Christmas Function. All of these activities have identical objectives: to enhance the quality of life for elderly people at PresCare by reducing social isolation, increasing mobility and independence, educating clients, all under the umbrella of increased social interaction.

Throughout 2014, PresCare will continue to invite donations to reach the goal of \$50,000 to formally launch the Social Isolation Program.

One well-known and loved fundraising activity which will contribute funds towards the Social Isolation Program this year is the annual PresCare Woollam Constructions Charity Golf Classic – held in Mackay on 18 May, Rockhampton on 3 August and Brisbane on 1 September.

This year is the eighth year for these golf events, giving PresCare and Woollam Constructions' suppliers and business partners, as well as community organisations, the opportunity to play a round of golf



PresCare Philanthropy Manager Lorraine Nothling and Chief Financial Officer Peter Lynch accept a donation from Woollam Constructions Managing Director George Bogiatzis

## Social interaction builds wellness

HELPING THEIR clients manage the issues around social isolation is a key priority for PresCare in 2014, with a number of partnerships and programs being rolled out across its business.

In the communities in which PresCare operates, many caring employees, volunteers, members of the Presbyterian Church, family and friends have contributed their time to bring happiness into the lives of elderly people who are alone.

The recent PresCare 2013 Christmas Appeal raised almost \$25,000 towards the overall goal of \$50,000 for the Social Isolation Program. Thanks go to community and residential clients, Presbyterian Church congregations across Queensland, donors and suppliers, including a generous \$10,000 donation from Woollam Constructions.

Broadly scoped the program is developing a range of social activities for all PresCare clients to

*A very special way you can help*

Your donations and bequest gifts can help PresCare improve the quality of life for elderly people in care.

To make a donation or bequest gift in your Will, visit: [www.prescare.org.au](http://www.prescare.org.au) or phone: (07) 323 4444





# What's on ...

## MEGA SPORTZ SOCCER CAMP

[www.megasportz.com.au](http://www.megasportz.com.au)

**REGISTER ONLINE**  
[www.megasportz.info](http://www.megasportz.info)  
 like us on facebook.com/megasportznetballcamp



**GRADE 5 - 7 ONLY!**

- > SIZZLING SEVENS
- > SKILLS & DRILLS
- > GREAT NIGHT ACTIVITIES
- > BIBLE TALKS
- > ELECTIVES
- > 2 DAY CARNIVAL
- > WIN GREAT PRIZES
- > ALL MEALS INCLUDED

**INCLUDES A TEAM SHIRT!**


CAMP DIRECTOR: Narelle Jackson  
 ph: 3288 5572 / m: 0431 841 991  
 email: thejacks@optusnet.com.au

7-11 JULY 2014 **SKILLS FOR NETBALL**  
**SKILLS FOR LIFE**



# FEAR NOT

YNET LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE  
 26 - 27 APRIL 2014  
[WWW.YNET.ORG.AU](http://WWW.YNET.ORG.AU)



20 - 24 January	Propel (Darling Downs)
1 February	Kids Kickstart Training Mitchelton PC
15 February	Kids Kickstart Training Acacia Ridge PC
21 - 23 February	Kids Weekender North Brisbane
14 - 16 March	Kids Weekender Darling Downs
15 March	Gathering
21 - 23 March	Kids Weekender South Brisbane
7 - 11 April	NQ Launch
24 - 27 April	<b>YNET CONFERENCE</b>
24 May	Wide Bay/Sunshine Coast Training Day
30 June - 4 July	SQ Launch
1 - 3 August	Kids Weekender Wide Bay/Sunshine Coast
9 August	Gathering
19 - 22 September	Spring Camp
28 Sept - 4 Oct	Fun & Adventure
29 Sept - 4 Oct	NQxtreme
24 - 26 October	Kids Weekender
24 - 28 November	Jumpstart Schoolies

**FOR MORE INFO** [WWW.YNET.ORG.AU](http://WWW.YNET.ORG.AU)



## What's on in 2014

**August:** August will be packed full of great teaching as QTC partners with other Christian organisations to bring to you these world-class speakers.



**Kathleen Nielson : Date TBC**

Kathleen Nielson serves as director of women's initiatives for The Gospel Coalition. Author of the Living Word Bible studies, she speaks often at women's conferences and loves working with women in studying the Bible.



**Dr Michael Horton : August 23 : Talking Theology**

Dr. Horton has taught apologetics and theology at Westminster Seminary California since 1998. He has written many books, including *The Christian Faith: A Systematic Theology for Pilgrims on the Way*.



**Matt Chandler : August 25**

Matt Chandler is the lead pastor for teaching at The Village Church in Dallas, Texas. Chandler is involved in church planting around Dallas and across the world through The Village Church and other partnerships such as Acts 29.

### October 18: Children's Ministry Conference



It's anticipated that Colin Buchanan will join us at the Children's Ministry Conference next year. Colin has years of experience making God's word understandable and memorable for kids. He is, without a doubt, Australia's best-loved Christian children's artist. Colin began his working career as a teacher and has a proven track record for helping kids engage with ideas in the Bible, so this is sure to be a valuable conference to attend.

### 2015 Don Carson returns



Don Carson will be returning to QTC in July 2015 to conduct a series of lectures and speak at a citywide event.

**Web:** [qtc.edu.au](http://qtc.edu.au)  
**Email:** [events@qtc.edu.au](mailto:events@qtc.edu.au)

## briefly

### CHANGED ASSEMBLY DATES

The Assembly dates this year will be Celebration Rally, 28 June; Induction Service, 29 June; Assembly seminar and business meetings, 30 June-3 July. Mark them in your diary and plan to come.

### UNIT TO LET

CALOUNDRRA, beachside units, from \$300/week. For details contact Ray on 0427 990 161 or [rayandjean@hotmail.com](mailto:rayandjean@hotmail.com).

### TELEPHONE DIRECTORIES

Any charges wishing to make changes to their entry in the White Pages should contact Church Office on 3251 4100 or email [churchoffice@pcq.org.au](mailto:churchoffice@pcq.org.au)

### CHAPLAINS

The Moderator Elect, Rev. Phil Case, has made a change of chaplains. His chaplains will be Robert Thompson (Elder, Coorparoo) and Rev. Ross Wilson (Minister, Southside). To make bookings for the Moderator, please email [pcqmoderator2014@gmail.com](mailto:pcqmoderator2014@gmail.com).

## UPCOMING EVENTS - ST PAUL'S

Over the years St Paul's has been the setting for many weddings and special services and an open invitation is extended to all who were married at St Paul's or for whom it has a special connection. The Trust and the congregation would be delighted to have you support the High Tea fundraiser on the Saturday and also to share in worship the next day, celebrating 125 years of worship to God in this sanctuary.

### High Tea On The Hill

**Saturday 3 May: 2:30 pm to 4:30 pm**  
**St Paul's Presbyterian Church, 43 St Pauls Terrace, Spring Hill**  
**Hosted by: St Paul's Presbyterian Church Restoration Trust**

Enjoy a delicious high tea in St Paul's heritage-listed Church Hall to celebrate the 125th anniversary of the church building. With the accompaniment of beautiful music, this will be an unforgettable afternoon. Proceeds will go towards the restoration of the Church gothic style stone bell tower. The doors of the heritage-listed Church will be open to view its many fascinating features, including its ten pairs of stained glass windows depicting scenes from the life of St Paul. An online guide allows technologically savvy people the opportunity to explore in depth the features of this icon of Brisbane.

**Bookings for the High Tea are essential by 23 April. Adult \$35, Child \$20, Concession \$ 30**  
 T: 3831 7458, 0409 342 205 E: [restorestpauls@gmail.com](mailto:restorestpauls@gmail.com) [www.restorestpauls.org.au](http://www.restorestpauls.org.au)

### A Spire to Inspire Sunday 4 May - 9:30 am

**Church Service celebrating the 125th anniversary of the dedication of St Paul's church building to worship.**

St Paul's Presbyterian Church, Spring Hill, was dedicated to worship on 5 May 1889. The 'Kirk on the Hill' is of special significance to the architectural heritage of Brisbane as it is one of the buildings of the Colonial Architect, F.D.G. Stanley. Stanley was also responsible for other notable buildings such as the GPO, Port Office, Queensland Club and National Bank Building in Queen Street. Join together as a congregation, with friends and supporters of St Paul's, for a special service, filled with music and inspiring messages, to celebrate this heritage-listed building, which, with its imposing spire, has been a witness to the activities of the city for 125 years. The service will be followed by refreshments in the historic church hall.



presbyterian church of queensland presents

# Jumpstart Schoolies

24th - 28th nov  
 twenty fourteen  
 jumpstart your future.  
 life changing bible talks.

actual view from accommodation.

register online today at  
[www.ynet.org.au/schoolies](http://www.ynet.org.au/schoolies)

cost \$360

includes food, accommodation & these activities...

eat, sleep, chat, time to chill, surfing, swimming, beach footy, table tennis, lazing around in the sun, snorkelling, pool.

stay at stradbroke island for your schoolies

like us on facebook!

for further enquiries, contact jake manfield  
 p: 0630 530 400 e: [jake@pcq.org.au](mailto:jake@pcq.org.au)

actual view from accommodation.

pay-as-you-go for kayaking, snorkelling, diving & crazy killer team builds.



# Mission team returns to Kenya

by Rev. Ian McIver

THIS YEAR'S team, led by members of the Caloundra Presbyterian Church, consisted of nine members. Margaret Kennedy, Erin Higgins, Norma and Ian McIver were all part of last year's team. The other five - Irene Higgins, Joshua and Kirra Shanahan, James and Rachel Cran - had never previously visited Africa.

Undoubtedly a wide range of emotions are experienced in any visit of this nature, but once again our team experienced the sovereignty of God and the promise of Jesus that He will never leave us nor forsake us. It would be hard to think of a single hiccup during the nearly four weeks that the team spent in Kenya. And it is so easy to think of the many new and positive experiences that team members will treasure in the years to come. As James, one of our youngest team members, wrote: *"Thank you for introducing Rachel and me into the trip; it has been one of the most amazing months of my life!"*

Our first two weeks were spent in Nairobi where the main focus was on the Agape Hope Children's Centre in Kawangware on the western side and New Hope Education Centre in Soweto on the eastern side. Kawangware is just a few miles from Kikuyu where the Church of Scotland established its first mission in inland East Africa during the first decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Today there are over three million Presbyterian Christians in Kenya as a direct result of a century's mission and ministry by the Church of Scotland and other Presbyterian Churches.

Our major target was to build some 80 desks and about a dozen book and storage shelves for use in the school that is attached to the orphanage. By working right up to late afternoon of the last day, the team, which consisted of Josh, Kirra, James and Rachel, was able to complete the task to the delight of school staff and children alike. So great was the joy when the brand new desks were carried through to the school that the children didn't want to go home and many, perhaps most, were still enjoying their new desks until well after 5pm.

Several members of the Caloundra congregation, along with others, were very generous with their gifts. As a result, we were able to use some \$15,000 among the various ministries that we visited. In addition to the desks, we were able to fund 12 new dining tables and 27 new dining benches for the orphanage dining room to a total cost of approximately \$1,800.

While Josh and his team completed the carpentry, other team members were able to paint some of the dormitories, teach the older girls the art of sewing, and bring some sort of order to the computer records and the filing system in the office.

Irene and Erin come from the South Toowoomba Church and they undertook as their major project the promotion of hand washing and hygiene among the children. Three 350-litre water tanks were purchased and placed on specially-made stands outside the orphanage and school

toilets and beside the meal serving counter, along with stands for the washbasins. Irene and Erin also visited all the classes and taught the children the importance of hygiene and hand washing.

During our time in Nairobi we were also able to visit two schools in Soweto. The New Hope Education Centre was only a vacant plot of land when we visited a year ago. Now, however, the first two storeys of a four-storey building have been completed and are in use for the Bible Institute and the primary school. In Australia, there would be more than a few health and safety issues, but in Nairobi the pressure on facilities means that a building that is still a construction site is already in use as a school.

Pastor Edward Owino is the driving force behind the New Hope School and just down the road Pastor Samuel runs a similar school and has a similar vision for the education of the children in their area. The faith and commitment of these two men were striking. They face very adverse circumstances in the vast slum areas on the eastern side of Nairobi, and yet their vision and faith for Christian schooling, for the care of orphaned and vulnerable children and for the training of pastors, was inspiring.

It also came as something of a rebuke to those of us who come from countries where life is much easier, and where the challenge to commitment to Christ and the service of His Church and kingdom, seems to be eroded, or even drowned out, by a host of other priorities and interests.

During our third week, we visited two church planting ministries on the western side of the Rift Valley about 180 kilometres west of Nairobi. The local tribe, the Dorobo, have long been known for gathering honey from hives deep in the forests that once covered most of the western Rift. We were driven to a clearing deep in the forest and then taken on foot to see how the honey is gathered. On the way the footprint of a leopard was identified and pointed out, but we caught no glimpse of that most elusive member of the cat family. All in all we were enjoying experiences of local culture that most tourists would never have the opportunity to enjoy as they are ferried from airport to hotel to Game Park with little if any contact with local people.

Over the weekend we were privileged to join the two congregations and to share prayer, worship and fellowship with both. We were also able to leave financial gifts, along with books and clothing for their encouragement.

Once back at Shel and Kym Arensen's, our hosts for the visit, the young people on our team were permitted to climb on the roof rack of Shel's four wheel drive for a night-time "game spotting" drive. We were able to pick out in the headlights various antelopes, along with zebra and spring hares which jump in identical fashion to our own kangaroos. Hyena and buffalos were also there but they eluded us. The evening's adventure was something

else that would be hard to imagine in Australia. However, such events will no doubt become special memories for our young team members.

Our last two days involved a change of pace as we played the tourist role. We drove down from Naivasha, via Narok, to the Maasai Mara Game Reserve in the south-west corner of Kenya. The roads were amazingly awful but Africa weaves its own magic. In a game park, we saw most of the game animals, both from the ground and also from the hot air balloon ride that most of the team enjoyed. Then it was back to Nairobi in a small single engine aircraft before flying out from Nairobi International airport for Dubai and home that same evening.

Amid a rich tapestry of experiences in our nearly four weeks in Kenya, three things stand out.

One was the faith and commitment of our Kenyan Christian friends. In the midst of extremely adverse circumstances, their ministries stood out like beacons. Indeed, it became evident that the very adversities that they faced provide the soil in which their maturity in Christ was able to grow. The Lord is able to do amazing things with and for His beloved servants when their ministries are forged on the anvil of hardship and adversity.

Second, we were struck by the way in which the work of the Agape Hope Children's Centre and the New Hope Education Centre has grown in the last year. While there is still much to do, the two ministries have moved forward and developed in ways that were very encouraging to observe. We look forward to visiting again in a year's time to see still further improvements and developments.

And finally, we were grateful for the financial gifts that we were able to bring, some \$15,000 all told. And also that the time and talents we were able to share led to tangible improvements to the lives of the children, the schools and the orphanage. It was wonderful to be usefully involved in giving shape and nurture to young lives. And it is good to play a part, however small, in that part of the Lord's vineyard called Kenya.

And over all there was that same strong presence of the Lord that we sensed last year. It comes as a calm assurance that when He says to us, as to countless others of His people over the years, that He will never leave us or forsake us and that He will be with us always even to the end of the age, He means it. We had the great comfort of knowing that He was with us and that He would bring fruit from our visit that no one else could, least of all ourselves. What greater privilege than to be instruments in the Lord's hands for His work in the world.

For me there was also a small personal highlight. During our time at Agape Hope, Irene and Erin purchased a Kenyan flag for the flagpole that already stood in the playground of the school. A flag parade was held on our last full day at the orphanage. Exactly fifty years earlier Kenya had obtained her independence on 12 December 1963. When the new school year began in January 1964, I was in the equivalent of Year 12, and from the beginning of the new school year, "flag parade", complete with school band and assembled school, was held every Friday in the main quadrangle. And for the first time the new flag of independent Kenya was raised. Now, 50 years later, I was able to enjoy the same experience in an orphanage just a few miles away in the same city. The event was moving in itself; but even more than that, there was for me the sense of the faithful hand of God in the life of one who didn't deserve the least of the Lord's blessings, but who by His grace had experienced so many.

Finally our thanks go to the members of our own congregations in Caloundra, on the Sunshine Coast and in Toowoomba, and to the readers of *New Directions*, for your prayers. We are very grateful.

And Lord willing, we look forward to our next visit in 2015.



Dorobo honey gatherers



Josh and the children enjoying the results of his work



Seven girls with newly-made skirts they sewed themselves



Kenya Mission Team with Oliver and Margaret Chirabo



Flag Parade for the Kenyan flag