

# Pres Life

BI-MONTHLY MAGAZINE OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF QUEENSLAND

## We Need A Bigger Jesus



Sharing the life of the Presbyterian Church of Queensland as we glorify God and proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ to our communities, nation and the world.

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# Pres Life

Magazine of the Presbyterian Church of Queensland

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### Used Stamps

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

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# GiST Stories: Abortion and Hope

by Robyn Bain (GiST)

As abortion becomes more accepted in Queensland and around the world, many of us lament the devastating impact. However, these stories from PCQ members\* remind us that God is still seated on His throne and able to work powerfully in the lives of those coping with unplanned pregnancy or the experience of abortion. We hope these stories will encourage you to move towards others with Christ-shaped love and hope.

If you or someone you know has an unplanned or complicated pregnancy, find assistance at Priceless House on 1800 090 777 or 0413 888 613, and contact your minister. If you have a question or a story to share, contact GiST via our website - <http://www.gist.org.au/contact/>.

*\*all names have been changed*

## Thijs and Fleur's Story

**F:** We were both born in Europe, but met at church in an Australian country town. We both came from 'Christian' families. I grew up going to church every Sunday and went to a Christian school, but I never heard the Gospel. I wasn't encouraged to read the Bible.

**T:** I grew up at Sunday School and loved the Lord Jesus when I was little. But when I went to church as a teenager it was different. It didn't connect with me. I didn't understand the Gospel and what it meant for me.

**F:** We got married when I was 18 and moved to Melbourne. I was still studying. My father was very strong on the importance of education as the ticket to happiness. Then we fell pregnant. I was shocked. I was worried about my education and scared of my father. I was anxious about my life. It didn't enter my head that I could have the baby. I thought early termination was all right because it's not really

life yet. Underneath I knew it actually was, but I pushed that thought down. I told my sister. She didn't say anything. The doctor just accepted that I wanted an abortion.

**T:** I thought that if an abortion was what Fleur wanted, I should just agree with her. A baby would be in the way. I also felt uncomfortable, but I didn't want to think about the truth of what we were doing.

**F:** He came with me to the hospital. We waited a long time. There was a long queue—it felt like a production line. Afterwards I woke up and went home. My life felt like a mess anyway and this was just part of it.

**T:** It felt then as though the abortion was over and done with. Fleur started studying. I went back to work and tried to carve out a living and a life. I did what was in front of me. What had happened was pushed under the surface. I found life in Australia rough and depressing—my colleagues talked about sex all the time.

**F:** After that I had lots of questions about life and how it works. I was anxious and depressed. Marriage was hard. I heard about a girl who had an abortion in order to keep her job. At that moment I knew abortion was wrong. It was so obvious. But we just kept going. That's what I'd been taught to do in life. I got into the occult—astrology, tarot cards. I knew there was something out there. I wanted to have some control over my life.

I got pregnant again. My father now helped us and gave Thijs a job. He worked thirteen-hour days. It was very lucrative. But then he was pushed out of the company. That was rock bottom for us. I had a breakdown.

**T:** Yes, that was the wake-up call. I thought 'stop being a wuss and take charge of things'. We were looking for God and we

wanted to be serious about the Bible. We had been going to a church where there were very few believers—now we started going to a new church. I realised there I could be born again.

It was a gradual regeneration for me. Under good preaching, the lights came on. I burned all the self-help books my father-in-law had given us. I was challenged to find my true self in Christ. He's the only one who knows me. Forgiveness starts with God. I realised I am forgiven. I have forgiven the family. I can live now.

I wished I'd done things differently and never let Fleur go through the abortion. I can still see her lying there in the hospital. I was a terrible, lousy husband then. I should have made sure she had another way. I realised that doing what is right really matters. I knew I was nothing like what I should be, so I asked God to make me what I needed to be.

**F:** I started to understand how the Gospel fitted together. It was really big to start reading the Bible and praying. I knew I was sinful, but now I discovered that Jesus mediated for me, so I could be brought back to a relationship with God. I had another mental breakdown at that time and was admitted to hospital. I needed to bring the abortion to the surface. I knew I had killed someone. I deserved the death penalty. I was completely undone. But I also realised I was forgiven. There is nothing He doesn't forgive. My worth is found in God, nowhere else.

I do carry a sadness. I have a soft spot for young women. Having children wasn't seen as good when I was young—career was the best option. I find myself encouraging young mothers to enjoy spending time with their kids and not be lured into the nonsense of the world. I have been helped by God, now I want to help others. I love that people feel they can talk to us and go below the surface. We are all only one step away from doing something terrible or being in a terrible situation. I am so looking forward to the next life.

**T:** It is so freeing to give control over to God. God provides and He can change a man's heart. People want so much to elevate themselves and have control. We have discovered that to be Christian is to give up wanting power and to depend on the Spirit of God. We keep pointing our two sons to Christ. We want to encourage people in our family and at church to surrender to God.

## Amber and Ellie's Story

I was 17 when I became pregnant. The main thing I was worried about was having to tell my parents. I didn't look ahead and think about having a baby. I just thought my parents would be super mad and kick me out. They're strong Christians and they didn't know that I was sexually active. The guy was shocked, but supportive. He was going to church too. He said it was up to you whether you keep the baby or not. Before this I would never have considered abortion. But in the situation, I couldn't imagine either having an abortion or having to tell my parents. It didn't seem real. My relationship with God wasn't good at all. I thought "How could God be with me in this situation? I've done this to myself, so this is beyond God's forgiveness".

We went to the doctor to confirm the pregnancy. He gave me a pamphlet for an abortion clinic and told me to call them. He ran me through the different abortion options. It was all very factual. I didn't connect emotionally. I wasn't thinking about this thing as a baby. It was just something I had to tell my

parents.

One day I got home from school and Mum said she had seen an email from the abortion clinic. My mum often checks my emails because I'm slack at it. She said, "You would never actually consider doing that would you?" I realised then that this was a baby. I thought to myself "I couldn't do that—I love babies". Mum cried for weeks and I felt my parents were disappointed, sad and angry. But she said right from the beginning that they'd be there for me and help me. It was now I thought "I'm having a baby".

I was in Year 12 at a strict private school. I was really sick with morning sickness and had to take a lot of time off. My parents talked to the school staff who were really supportive, and I switched to distance education. I thought my school friends would be supportive. I told my close school friend and she said, "You'll have an abortion, right?" Her mum offered to drive me there. When I said I was keeping the baby, she wanted nothing to do with me. My other school friends weren't interested and didn't talk to me about it. I think they just didn't know how to deal with it. I was really upset about that for the whole year. My closest friend later apologised, and the others loved Ellie once she was born. But we are on very different paths now. We're Facebook friends.

I was really scared to tell my friends at church. I thought they would judge me. But my church friends were really supportive. They said, "If there is anything we can do, let us know". They didn't treat me differently. They asked about the pregnancy and ultrasounds. They accepted it and I could talk about things when I needed to.

I was really happy when Ellie was born. I was in love with her. But I wasn't prepared for how hard a newborn would be. I found the sleep deprivation of the first few months really, really hard. Mum was so helpful. She would sit up with her so I could get some sleep.

I wouldn't call myself a Christian before I was pregnant. While I was pregnant, I thought "Wow, I have to raise another human". I was just so unhappy—fat, pregnant, no close friends, bad relationships. I felt I was all alone doing my life. I felt so guilty. I knew that if I put my faith in God, I would have to own up to all this stuff. But I also wanted to have a relationship with God. I started really listening at church. I began to feel free and know that God does forgive me.

I'm pretty happy now. I've become really close to my church friends. That's been awesome. It's been great to have a stronger relationship with God. Last year I was at home with Ellie full time, which was great. Now she loves her child care and I'm doing uni. I wasn't sure how that would go, but I prayed heaps and its working out really well. I'm really busy, but I love it. Ellie's very outgoing, extroverted, crazy and hilarious—I love her.

You can tell people make their own judgements about us, but it's not a big thing. I think I'm a lot less judgemental than I used to be. People often come to me for relationship help, knowing what I've been through.





# We Need A Bigger Jesus

by Mike O'Connor, State Moderator

National Gallery of Victoria

It was a mild May Monday morning in Melbourne and I was catching up with a mate of mine that I went to Bible College with in Sydney. He is currently doing ministry in an Anglican Church in Geelong, but I was in Melbourne for a church planting conference, so we decided to take the opportunity to catch up with one another. After an underwhelming, but overpriced breakfast in a fancy laneway cafe, my friend asked me if I wanted to go for a walk with him. I don't mind walking places, especially when I'm somewhere new, I don't know Melbourne that well, and I still had plenty of time before the conference started, so I agreed to go for a walk with him.

Thinking we'd take in the sights of the Victorian capital city, my friend instead led me in the direction of the Flinders Street Bridge. We crossed over the Yarra River and straight into the front door of the National Gallery of Victoria. It was at that moment I realised this was no casual walk in the big city—my friend knew exactly where he was taking me. So up-the-stairs of the National Gallery we went, to view their collection of international art, which, by the way, is on permanent display in the National Gallery of Victoria if you are ever so inclined to check it out and have some time to kill in Melbourne... I guess.

Now, I'm not one for visiting art galleries by choice, it is not exactly my idea of a good time, but this particular visit was more enlightening than it was a renaissance. It was not impressionist art, but it certainly left a lasting impression upon me. The artwork was from 15th and 16th Century Europe—periodic pieces taken from churches and private collections around the time of the reformation of the Church.

As we walked around the gallery looking at these 500 year old paintings and sculptures, increasingly I felt depressed, almost a despairing sense of hopelessness came over me, not because I was in an art gallery, not because I was in Melbourne, but because the gallery now felt more like being in a museum. It was as if Christianity had, had its day, a philosophy once relevant and important to western culture is now something we have moved on, progressed, grown up or even evolved from—the central theme of an exhibition, but no longer exhibited at the centre of our lives or communities.

Judging by the content of the exhibition depicted in every piece hanging from the walls or encased under a perspex box or locked away behind glass was a cold, foreign and distant Christianity to the one I know, believe in, and centre my life around. Every contribution to this 'exhibition' just seemed

like a slight variation on the previous piece I'd just seen. Jesus was portrayed as a weak and helpless infant, or pictured as a crucified sufferer, or sculpted as an aloof and passive victim. In fact, if I didn't know any better, it was almost as if Mary and the disciples were more the main subject than Jesus was.

If this is how people see Christianity, if this is the perception most people have of Jesus, then it's not surprising some think Christianity belongs in a museum and that Jesus has no relevance, no presence, no power and no place in a progressive and enlightened 21st Century context. The truth is, however, that this isn't just how people perceive Jesus, it is how most of us treat him too.

Recently, our family moved to the Gold Coast. It's hard not to feel like we've won the lottery now we are living here, but we might need to collect those prize winnings if we're going to keep up with some of our new neighbours. There is so much to do, so many places to see, so many more options for everything on the Gold Coast. We now live six minutes away from the beach, and any one of a dozen other beautiful beaches are within a few minutes of our very nice house, which is in a very nice neighbourhood. Actually, we are currently living on an island! Literally, we are now surrounded by water, bull sharks, real estate agents and affluence.

The Gold Coast is home, not only to some really beautiful places, but all the beautiful people live here too. Beautiful people with their beautiful bodies, in their beautiful homes, who drive around in their beautiful cars looking for a parking spot in any one of the countless number of beautiful shopping centres here, so they can spend more money they don't have (or even more troubling if they actually do have) on more things to make themselves look more beautiful.

Who needs Jesus when you can live on the Gold Coast? Who wants eternal paradise when you can eat imported ice-cream at Surfers Paradise? Apart from praying for the Titans or Suns, why would anyone here want to come to church?

But it's not just the Gold Coast, is it? It is everywhere you live too. We live in a holiday hotspot, an economy built around tourism with our home as the product. Even the new 'Busby Marou' version of Queensland is still beautiful one day, perfect the next—beautiful in Brisbane, the Sunshine Coast, Fraser Coast, Capricorn Coast, Whitsundays and Cairns.



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Most Queenslanders don't stop even for a minute to consider Jesus, much less his claim over their lives as Lord. They think they have no need for Christ or his promises when they live in such a beautiful, prosperous and promising place. Certainly there's no need of the kind of Jesus 16th Century European art has to offer them.

And so, in the face of misconceptions about Christianity, in cultural battles against complacency, affluence and general indifference, in the rise of secularism, and in the public maligning of 'the Church' by the media, we, the Church, have largely grown silent, passive and limp in sharing the Good News about Jesus. We offer, if we offer anything at all, what sounds to some, to be a weak, limp and powerless message not offering any hope, much like the Jesus on display in the National Gallery of Victoria.

But Jesus, you will remember, is neither passive, silent nor limp.

*Behold, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him, and all tribes of the earth will wail on account of him. Even so. Amen. "I am the Alpha and the Omega", says the Lord God, "who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty".* Revelation 1:7-8

The Almighty One, who was and who is to come is also the one who is. Jesus, who is coming soon is also now with us. Jesus is preeminent and ever present with his people. The one who is and who was with God in the beginning, who is all knowing, all loving and all powerful, is also deeply personal and personally intimate with us. God is with us. In fact, if you were looking for a short summary of the storyline of the whole Bible, it would be 'God with us'.

All this theology of course, is only helpful when it is practically applied to our lives and so, in the face of all these current cultural challenges towards Christianity, it might seem like God has abandoned, forgotten or forsaken us. Our neighbours seem opposed, adverse and indifferent to the Gospel that we deeply believe in. It can feel like we have nothing to offer them, nothing to say to them. The Church can look weak, defeated, in decline, marginalised, and in some cases, rightly ashamed of its behaviour. You might not know how to answer every question being asked of you, or even know what to say to someone else about Jesus, but we must never forget that he who was and who is to come, is also the one who is present with us now, until the very end of the age.

And so it is not the culture or the change in atmosphere we need to lament, and it is not the decline of morals, standards, ethics or even the Church we need to be afraid of; the world was always and still is going to hell in a hand-basket. The one we need to fear remains the one who tells us not to fear because he is with us and has conquered everything!

So take comfort in knowing that God is still in control and don't be afraid to keep telling people about Jesus and the hope that you have in him.

*When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. But he laid his right hand on me, saying, "Fear not, I am the first and the last, and the living one. I died, and behold I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of Death and Hades".* Revelation 1:17-18

Mike O'Connor is the Lead Pastor of Salt Presbyterian Church at Robina and Mudgeeraba, Gold Coast. He currently serves as the Moderator of the Presbyterian Church of Queensland and he still doesn't really like art galleries.



Gold Coast, Queensland, Australia  
Photo by Matt Barrett on Unsplash



# Chasing the Wind

by Ben Swift, writer of Escape the Box blog

Groundhog Day. Not only is this movie a classic, but it has gifted us with a term to describe the relentless, repetitive drudgery in which we often find ourselves. “How was your day dear?” “Oh, just another Groundhog Day.” Nothing more need be said, message received loud and clear.

The fact that so many of us identify with Groundhog Day speaks volumes about our propensity to reflect on life and our part in it. Surely there must be more to life than just another Groundhog Day?

It’s questions like these that take you down the path of existentialist thinking; a path that seeks truth and meaning; a path focused on the question of what it means to live as a human being.

If you’re anything like me, you will have at some point in time, found yourself bewildered by the pursuits of humanity. Maybe I’m just being cynical, but I find many of the activities that we hold up in worship to be, well, kind of ridiculous. Now, I’m not for a moment claiming any self-immunity to these bizarre behavioral patterns, but rather I’m finding myself identifying more and more with the words in Ecclesiastes, “This too is meaningless, a chasing after the wind”.

In the western world, sports stars are held up as modern-day warrior gods—heroes destined for an eternal legacy. How else could we justify paying these individuals higher wages than brain surgeons? Just step back and think about golf for a moment. Millions of dollars dedicated to hitting small white balls into small holes in the grass with metal sticks.

Why else would we open our minds to the wisdom of pop stars as they spray insults about the greed of politicians whilst flying in their own private jets to record lip-sync sessions on commercial TV?

There may be some truth to Lady Gaga’s suggestion that we were all born this way. But I believe the answers to our human condition can be better found in Genesis. Here we find the fall of humanity—the original seed of our desire to be our own gods.

*For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.* Genesis 3:5

It is here in the original paradise called Eden that the desire to be like God sent us into a world of self-serving, humanity-worshiping pursuits, all of which equate to chasing the wind. ‘One may best describe the fundamental project of the human reality in saying that man is the being who projects to be God... [and] God represents the permanent limits in terms of which man understands his being.’ (Olson)

To put it another way, human beings, while striving constantly to be their own gods, exist in a state of anxiousness. They are endlessly faced with the reality that they can never become the true God. They may suppress this knowledge, bury it deep in their self-constructed denial, but they can never escape the moral law written permanently on their hearts. It is God who defines divinity and truth. It is exclusively He who holds the keys to the shackles of death; salvation exists in Christ alone. Therefore, humans remain haunted by the limits of their own humanity.

It is for this reason that Kierkegaard—possibly the father of existentialist thinking—believed that humans can only desire the eternal fullness that God alone possesses. Humanity can only hold to the uncontrolled, unpredictable pleasures and pains of this finite life.

*No one can comprehend what goes on under the sun. Despite all his efforts to search it out, man cannot discover its meaning. Even if a wise man claims he knows, he cannot really comprehend it.* Ecclesiastes 8:17



Continued from page 8

Surely the only way out of the existentialist conundrum can be found exclusively in the one who is both fully human and fully divine—the Christ. He, having intimate knowledge of all that it means to be human, and to be all powerful and unlimited as only God is, provides us with the narrow path to salvation. For this reason we must die to self, only to gain true, eternal life in Christ.

*Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved.* Acts 4:12

Undoubtedly for most of us, life will continue to serve up Groundhog Days, but also days of overwhelming pleasure and pain. There will be times to laugh and cry, and seasons for everything under the sun. But like the existentialists, may we use these experiences to dig deeper into what it all means, seeking the truth about who we are as limited human beings.

It's time to stop chasing the wind and to start resting in Christ.

#### Notes:

Olson Robert, An Introduction to Existentialism, Dover Publications, NY, p. 59.

Ben Swift is a Freelance Writer of Christian Apologetics and Philosophy for the blog 'Escape the Box'. (<https://escapethebox.blog/>).



## The Boys' Brigade Qld

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## Decluttering: Konverts or Converts?

by Corrine O'Connor, wife of current State Moderator

The KonMari method of decluttering has become the face of most women's holiday Facebook posts this summer. Perfectly folded underwear. Decluttered rooms. Simplified wardrobes. Organised kitchens. Who doesn't want a house that looks like a page from an IKEA magazine?

As Marie Kondo's new show hits Netflix, and with four top-selling books on organising, women around the globe are being inspired to thank their house, their belongings, and then farewell those that don't spark joy.

And isn't this appealing? Life is chaotic. We have too much stuff. Surely, if we simplify life, we will feel better, perform better, and be better people. It will improve our marriages, our family life and our creativity.

Don't get me wrong. We just moved 800km, so I spent months decluttering. (Not long enough—I still have way too much stuff!!). It felt good to get rid of things. I still have way more than I need or use. And I'm sure the four wonderful ladies from our new church who helped me unpack my kitchen are convinced I need to KonMari it! And they're right.

Minimalism has superseded consumerism. Or has it?

Consumerism has driven us to fill our houses, and then get bigger houses and more storage so we can get more stuff. Consumerism has promised us that we will be happier and more fulfilled if we have. Just buy it and life will be simpler, more satisfying. Buy it and you will feel better, perform better and be better people. Buy it and it will improve your marriage, your family life and your creativity.

Let's call our decluttering for what it really is. The other side of the consumerism coin.

We bought it. It sparked joy in us for a while. But then it didn't. So we bought something else. It felt good too. But then it didn't anymore. And as our houses filled to bursting, those things that promised us fulfilment left us with a dissatisfied anxiety.

Then a petite and softly spoken Japanese woman, with Shinto-inspired methods, came along and told us that if we get rid of our stuff we will feel the joy and satisfaction we are longing for.

Life will be the way it should be.

Remember the garden of Eden? "Eat the fruit", the serpent said. You will be better people. Life will be better. So they did. But it wasn't. In fact, they were cast out of the garden and life was never as good again.

Jeremiah spoke God's word to Israel. They had the same issue. *My people have committed two sins: they have forsaken me, the spring of living water, and have dug their own cisterns, broken cisterns that cannot hold water.* Jeremiah 2:13

The root of our discontent and dissatisfaction is that we're trying to fill our broken vessels with the wrong substance. Neither stuff nor purging of stuff will spark the joy it promises. A short term buzz perhaps, but not pure joy. Decluttering, while not a bad thing in and of itself, is just another self improvement method with lots of false promises and self pietism.

When Jesus met a deeply dissatisfied Samaritan woman at the well, he knew how thirsty her soul was. And he knew that everything she had tried had not quenched that thirst.

Jesus said to her, *"Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life".* John 4:13-14

Certainly, go ahead and declutter. (Or go op-shopping—seriously, now is the best time!!!). But don't believe the lie that it will bring you pure joy. Only Jesus can do that. Ask him to help us put aside our love of things—our idolatry of things, either many or few—and come to Him for lasting fulfilment and satisfaction.

**P.S. Talking to your clothes is weird!!!**



# God's Church in Queensland

## Sandgate Presbyterian Church



### Location

Sandgate Presbyterian Church is located on the hills beside Moreton Bay at 50 Loudon Street.

### The Ministry Team

Pastor: Emmanuvel Jhonly  
Kids Church Leader: Christobel (Pastor's wife)  
Session Clerk: Robert McIntyre  
Music Leader: Dot Jones

### Demographic

We are a diverse congregation tending to be more mature, but with a mix of people from different ethnic backgrounds. Our age range is from preschoolers to over 100 years old

### Prayer Points

Pray that we continue to grow in our love and knowledge of Jesus Christ, and we apply it to our lives and share it with our community.

We are working towards starting a second work. Pray for us as we seek to reach different ethnic communities in the Sandgate area.

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

We are excited about opportunities that are opening up for us to reach our community in the Sandgate area as the congregation grows in love and unity in Christ.

## Meet the People



### Matt Holden

**How long have you been attending Sandgate?**

25+ years

**What do you do during the week?**

I work fulltime as a Forensic Accountant.

**What is the best thing about being at Sandgate?**

It has a great community, environment and Bible teaching.



### Robert & Sharon McIntyre

**How long have you been attending Sandgate?**

24 years

**What do you do during the week?**

Sharon is a retired Home Care Worker, who enjoys KYB, Share Group Bible Study, travel, reading, gardening, music and church choir. Robert is a retired Engineer and Church Elder, member of Gideons International, Bible study and prayer groups, does personal witnessing, travel, gardening and assisting new businesses with strategic advice.

**What is the best thing about being at Sandgate?**

Gospel centred preaching and a caring Christian family community that wants to impact the lost in Sandgate and the surrounding area.



### Ron & Jacinth Baines

**How long have you been attending Sandgate?**

Almost 40 years

**What do you do during the week?**

Ron is recently retired from Coca Cola Amatil after 49 years of service.

Jacinth is retired from the Queensland Public Service, and takes care of ill and elderly members of the family

**What is the best thing about being at Sandgate?**

It has been our 'family' church. We like how everyone supports and helps each other.



# God's Church in Queensland

## Kenmore Presbyterian Church



### Location

Brisbane's west: Kenmore/Pullenvale.

### The Ministry Team

Minister: Steve Blencowe

Children's Ministry Worker: Mel Waldeck

Elders: Andrew Brown, Rodney Brydon, Rob Miller

### Demographic

Our congregation encompasses people of all ages and cultural backgrounds. Families and couples tend to dominate our morning service whilst young adults seem to prefer our Nightchurch service. We are very happy that this is not a 'hard and fast divide'. Nightchurch people frequently help out in the

morning with children's ministry and we have some 'young at heart' to encourage our young adults.

### Prayer Points

Pray for more young women to join our Nightchurch congregation for balance and encouragement for the young ladies who already attend.

Pray for the financial resources to build a church on land recently purchased at 1 Pullenvale Road.

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

We are keen to reach the western suburbs with the Gospel—by growing, planting, and encouraging Bible teaching, Reformed, Evangelical churches. It continues to be exciting to see individuals come to know Jesus, and grow in their commitment and service of him. Since 2006 we have seen people move into ministry roles in Australia, and overseas. Others have taken up the challenge to try new things in church, including leading in prayer, facilitating Growth Groups and helping with children's and youth activities.

## Meet the People



### David & Chris Fairhurst

#### How long have you been attending Kenmore?

3½ years

#### What do you do during the week?

David is a retired airline pilot. He coordinates the weekly Missions program at QTC; provides Missions Support at KPC; and much more.

Chris is a retired primary teacher. She is an RI teacher at Kenmore South Primary School, attends a ladies' Bible Study; exercises a hospitality ministry; and much more.

#### What is the best thing about being at Kenmore?

Solid exegetical, reformed, biblical preaching. Gospel is central to all we do and teach, and to how we treat and serve each other. Being part of a friendly and caring fellowship.



### Brad & Jen Thompson (Dan & Matt)

#### How long have you been attending Kenmore?

Over 2 years

#### What do you do during the week?

We (Brad and Jen) are both Program Managers – Brad in IT, and Jen in Health Research. Dan and Matt are school students.

#### What is the best thing about being at Kenmore?

We enjoy being at KPC because of the rich diversity of people who attend who have drawn us into the church family, the style of worship, and the Bible centered approach to the sharing of God's Word, both at church on a Sunday and in the daily lives of KPC Christians.



### Riaan & Rene Saunders (Melanja & Kiki)

#### How long have you been attending Kenmore?

Since October 2017

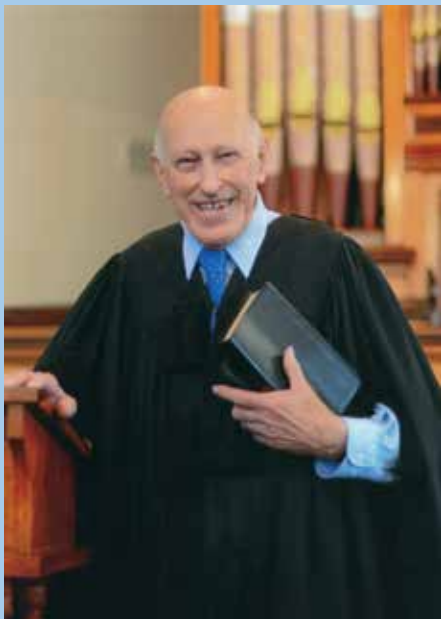
#### What do you do during the week?

Riaan is an engineer and Rene is studying to complete the Knowledge assessment exam to be able to practise as a pharmacist in Australia.

#### What is the best thing about being at Kenmore?

Pure and God focussed Bible teaching was the first thing that attracted us to KPC; the members of the congregation are also very welcoming and caring.

# News from around the State



## **Rev Ronald Clem Clark 18 Jan 1834-30 Dec 2018**

Extract from the eulogy  
written by Toni Cash,  
including contributions from  
Sharon Clark, Paul Cash,  
Coby, Rhi and Jeevan  
For the full version go to  
[www.pcq.org.au](http://www.pcq.org.au)



One of Ron's many puppets 'Roger Rabbit'

He was born on 18 January 1934. His father was a milkman, who died when he was two years old, so he was really raised by his mother, and as was common at that time, his aunts and an uncle had a fair hand in his raising.

He had one older brother—Uncle Cec—who was 15 years older than him, and who really played the strongest male role model figure in his life. Uncle Cec went to war when Ron was only a little boy. Ron knew that they were blessed that he came back to them.

He grew up in East Brisbane. He went to East Brisbane Primary School, and then to Brisbane High School when it was in the city next to the Botanical Gardens.

Ron's mother and family were nominally Anglican, but didn't go to church, so he never attended Sunday School, and this perhaps accounts, in part for some of his really strong interest in children's and youth ministry. His mother, his family and his upbringing instilled in him a strong moral compass that remained with him throughout his life. As a teenager he had significant health problems (Kyphosis), and the treatment for that at the time was to spend 12 months of his life lying on his back strapped to a board. It was during this time that he developed his life-long love of drawing.

Ron didn't finish high school, but his brother supported him to go to art college where he studied commercial art with an emphasis on figure drawing and cartooning. In the years preceding television, he gathered together a group of artists to create an animated cartoon studio which produced the first colour animated cartoon in Queensland, and the second animated cartoon in the State. While he was developing the studio he also had a job as a Clerk for the Brisbane City Council.

Ron talked about his search for meaning as a young man, and that he knew there was a purpose to his life. He found that purpose and the central tenet of his life—his faith in God—at a Brisbane Drive-In, where he went with a group of friends, including some Christians to see the movie "A Man Called Peter", and was converted to be a follower of Jesus.

After his conversion he looked around for the church that was 'right' for him and chose the Presbyterian Church. Those who knew him well, know he was a man of intellectual and moral rigour, and that was to be seen when he worked out how to live his life of faith and walk with God. He loved the structure of the Presbyterian Church, the law, and the strong Bible teaching from the beginning to the very end as well as his church family.

*Continued page 14*



# News from around the State

*Continued from page 13*

His first church was Holland Park Presbyterian Church, and there he met Bev. Ron loved Bev to bits. He was 26 and Bev 20 when they married on 30 December 1961. Ron was still a student minister and Bev a teacher.

Shortly after joining the Presbyterian Church he was accepted as a Candidate for the Ministry, training at the Queensland Theological Hall (now known as The Queensland Theological College), where he later taught—he hated Greek and Hebrew.

During his time at the Hall he served as a Home Missionary, and was a student minister at Kedron, Bald Hills and Townsville. On exiting the Hall he was ordained and inducted into the Charge of Bell where he served from 1965–1970.

In 1970 he was called to Coorparoo where he developed his real interest and skills in the area of family and youth. It is during this time that magic tricks became part of his ministry. Magic tricks became a regular part of the children's talk in church. He was also a ventriloquist and a puppet named Jo Jo lived with the family.

He served as Children/Family Worker with Scripture Union from 1975–1978, and that time really deepened the skill and use of these tools as ways to present the Gospel to people.

In 1978 he ministered in the Presbyterian Church as the co-joint Director of Home Missions and Christian Education following Union. This was a Statewide role. He travelled often and was heavily involved in pastoral support to Home Missions staff and the development of church planting strategies. He LOVED the publications work, camping ministry, congregational missions and Vacation

Bible Schools. He continued in that role right up until he retired in 1999. He wasn't really ready to retire, but Bev was unwell and he retired to spend time with, and care for her until her death in 2003.

Following Bev's passing, he returned again to work for his beloved Presbyterian Church and was appointed Assembly Clerk by the 2004 Assembly. He was on sick leave from this role—that he absolutely LOVED—when he died. He also accepted the appointment as Assistant Minister at Ann Street, which he held for 10 years from 2004–2014.

His other great love in his life was his family, and the two were not separate. His daughters, Toni and Sharon say, "Jesus 'lived' in our home growing up. He was there with us for our meals; for going to bed and sleeping peacefully; in stories, games and life lessons; and he went with us everywhere; he was spoken with and of, openly and all the time".

When Bev died in November 2003 Toni and Sharon really worried that he might just give up, but he was determined to get life going again and he went on to live another 15 years.

He was—

- A man of enduring faith in his God.
- A faithful man of service who served God and the church in his work, his leisure and his family.
- A man of rigorous intelligence.
- A gifted man who used his gifts of magic, music and story to serve God and love others.
- A loving man who loved his family.

## WANTED VOLUNTEERS FOR THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF QUEENSLAND (PCQ) ARCHIVES

Are you interested in the history of the church? Organising and ordering records from congregations? Cataloguing a book collection? Searching for baptism and marriage certificates? Helping individuals and groups discover the history of their church and family? Setting up a photographic collection?

If you have an aptitude for organisation and an eye for detail, your help in the PCQ Archives would be very much appreciated. Experience is desirable, but training can be provided.

The Archives are located at the PCQ Church Office, Level 4, 19 Lang Parade, Milton. For more details, please contact Rev Lesleigh Hall on 07 3716 2800 or email [lesleigh.hall@pcq.org.au](mailto:lesleigh.hall@pcq.org.au).





## Protecting Our Children

The recent *Royal Commission Into Institutional Responses To Child Sexual Abuse* has been a significant time for institutions in Australia to face the trauma and mishandling of child abuse in previous generations. It is vital that we learn from these mistakes to avoid the past repeating. The Presbyterian Church of Queensland (PCQ) has taken the findings and recommendations coming out of the Royal Commission seriously. To this end, *PresSafe* has been developed to provide policy and direction about child protection within our denomination.

*PresSafe* is the PCQ's system of policies, procedures and training relating to safe ministry with children (any person under the age of 18). In 2019 it will be implemented in all PCQ churches across the State. It replaces the previous 'Childsafe' program. The PCQ is committed to keeping children safe because it is impelled by the Bible's teaching on protecting the vulnerable and glorifying the Lord Jesus Christ. We also have clear legislative responsibilities to protect children within our care. *PresSafe* has been developed to ensure we fulfil both these obligations.

Wayne Knapp has been appointed as the *PresSafe* Risk Management Officer and Safety Administrator. He has been developing policies and procedures about how we keep children safe, with our specific kind of church government. This makes *PresSafe* unique for the Presbyterian Church of Queensland. If *PresSafe* is not implemented and followed within a PCQ church by **23 April**, that church will not be able to conduct ministry to children.

Within each local church, the Session is responsible for making sure *PresSafe* is implemented and adhered to within a local church. All children's ministry programs and anyone involved with children's ministry within PCQ must be approved by Session. Session's direct oversight helps to bring greater church-wide transparency with children's ministry.

As a denomination, we also want to be clear about who is involved in ministry to children, and appropriate checks are provided by the *PresSafe* Selection Process. Any person involved in ministry to children—a helper, leader, Ministry Coordinator, anyone—must complete the *PresSafe* Selection Process. If an individual has not completed this process, they will be unable to assist in children's ministry.

It is vital that all those within our churches—from elders and paid staff to volunteer leaders and helpers—understand their own responsibilities in keeping children safe in every PCQ children's ministry program or activity. In order to support churches in this transition, Stuart Hoadley is acting as the *PresSafe* Systems and Training Administrator. **Both he and Wayne Knapp can be contacted for further information about *PresSafe* via Church Offices on (07) 3716 2800.**

*PresSafe* does not exist to inhibit or prevent ministry to children, but as a denomination, we must prioritise the safety of children within our churches. We have seen too many organisations fail children, and it is right that we work hard to avoid this in the future. Children deserve our nurture and protection.

For more information about *PresSafe*, please go to: [pressafe.org.au](http://pressafe.org.au)



**L-R:** Stuart Hoadley, *PresSafe* Systems and Training Administrator  
Wayne Knapp, *PresSafe* Risk Management Officer and Safety Administrator



# Camping Ministry

## Youth Camps: Jumpstart Schoolies 2018

2018 was a fantastic year across the State, seeing many local Presbyterian churches come together in combined camps and events designed to tell young people about Jesus, and encourage them in their faith.

Jumpstart Schoolies camp brought the year to a close, with 38 school leavers enjoying an amazing Christ-centred experience on beautiful North Stradbroke Island.

Praise God for bringing these young people together and encouraging them to continue to put their trust in Him in the years ahead.

Pray for these guys as they start 2019, that God would guide their steps and their plans.

Register for 2019 Jumpstart at [ynet.org.au/schoolies](http://ynet.org.au/schoolies)





# QTC Study Week

## *for Ministers and Gospel Workers*

Monday 22nd - Thursday 25th July, 2019 - visit [www.qtc.edu.au/events](http://www.qtc.edu.au/events) for the latest information.

For some time, QTC has been committed to finding ways to serve the church across our state, and in particular, those who are not within easy reach of Brisbane. In 2019, for the first time, we have invited an international guest with the specific purpose of 'sending' him to events outside South East Queensland. This year, Thabiti Anyabwile will join us, and as well as events at QTC, will travel to Dalby and Northern Queensland.

Alongside these regional events, we are also proposing holding an event at QTC which is specifically tailored for pastors and other ministry workers. This four day conference will be designed to offer spiritual refreshment, provide opportunities to read and think, to reflect on ministry strategies, and to pray with other gospel workers. The study week will run from early Monday afternoon to Thursday afternoon, and be led by QTC staff and experienced

Pastors/Gospel Workers, alongside our main guest speaker. To facilitate those who live outside the South East, we will be including the option of accommodation within easy walking distance of College at reasonable rates.



Thabiti Anyabwile will be in Queensland from July 19th - August 5th, 2019.

### The Programme:

- Four expository talks from Thabiti Anyabwile specifically designed for those in the thick of gospel ministry.
- Two Toolbox sessions with experienced practitioners aimed to sharpen and refine our current practice and meet current challenges in ministry.
- Small group sessions: enabling extended time to talk with peers about the course of ministry, and then spend focused time praying together
- 'Books you really need to read'. Two guided reading sessions on one classic and one contemporary book of real relevance to the gospel worker.
- The option of booking time with an experienced coach/mentor to reflect on specific issues facing you right now.

**1** A gospel-shaped community

**2** Mission Mentoring Programme

**3** Training for Preaching

**4** Highly qualified and gospel-hearted lecturers

**5** CBD Location

**5** REASONS to study at **QTC**

**Taste of QTC Supper**  
Monday 13 May 7:30pm  
Register at [www.qtc.edu.au/events](http://www.qtc.edu.au/events)





The Australian Presbyterian World Mission exists to glorify God by facilitating the spread of the gospel to people overseas and Aborigines within Australia.

# Australian Presbyterian World Mission

[www.apwm.org.au](http://www.apwm.org.au) 1 Clarence Street, Burwood NSW 2134 (02) 8073 7490 [national@apwm.org.au](mailto:national@apwm.org.au)

## APWM MISSIONARIES IN JAPAN

APWM has five missionaries in Japan.

### Adam & Helene Ramsay: Tokyo



Adam & Helene are members of the Presbyterian Church in Japan Chiba city church planting team. They have completed their first term of service and have just returned to Japan.

### Nathan & Tomoko Stewart: Osaka



*Nathan & Tomoko Stewart with Moderator General, John Wilson, who was recently in Japan.*

Nathan & Tomoko serve with Osaka Christ Church (Presbyterian). Their primary role consists of helping the congregation reach out with the gospel.

### Andrew Adams: Fukuoka



Andrew serves in the southern city of Fukuoka and is currently learning Japanese.

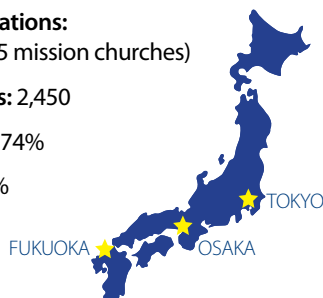
### The Presbyterian Church in Japan

**Congregations:**  
66 (incl. 25 mission churches)

**Members:** 2,450

**Women:** 74%

**Men:** 36%



- 0.5% of Japanese profess Christ as Lord.
- 80% of people who profess Christ while living overseas stop attending church when they return to Japan often due to family pressure.

## REFUGEE MINISTRY



Thank you to everyone who gave toward our project to provide Bibles for South

Sudanese Presbyterians in the refugee camps in Ethiopia. At the time of writing \$166,000 had been donated. We have now closed our collection and are in the process of ordering the Bibles which will be printed in Japan or Korea through the Bible Society.

In May 2018 Motor Yat visited Christ College, Sydney, and over lunch with David Burke discussed the need for further training for South Sudanese pastors in the refugee camps in Ethiopia.

This providential conversation led to a visit in November 2018 by David Burke, Shaddy Hanna and Peter Burke (David's brother and APWM treasurer) who was in Ethiopia at the time for ministry with SIM. Together they ran a five day training course and assessed the opportunities for ongoing training such as this.

APWM considers this to be a strategic ministry and, depending on funds donated, plans to send two teams each year to continue the training.

## CYCLONE PROOFING

Cyclones are a regular feature of life in Vanuatu. The Talua library and its books are a vital part of Talua since they enable the college to qualify for external accreditation which enables it to award a Diploma and a Bachelor's degree.

The November 2018 Workpartners' team spent most of its time reinforcing the roof and installing cyclone shutters over the louvred windows and maintaining the electrical system so that it can be as safe as possible.

APWM is grateful for the service of the team members and their partnership

as they paid for their airfares and other expenses. If you would like to join the June/July team please contact the office.



# APWM

[www.apwm.org.au](http://www.apwm.org.au)

### APWM Queensland

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# PRESCARE NEWS

This year we celebrate

90  
YEARS

SINCE 1929

**This year, PresCare celebrates 90 years of serving the Queensland community by helping older Australians to live the way they choose.**

Here are just some of our important milestones:

- **1929:** Mr William Robert Black donated two homes to the Presbyterian Church of Queensland for use in the care of the elderly. The homes were named in honour of two Governors-General and distinguished 'sons' of the Presbyterian Church: **Hopetoun** in Chelmer and **Stonehaven** in Oxley.
- **1985:** **Groundwater Lodge** in Maryborough and Morrison Park (now **Alexandra Gardens**) in Rockhampton open.
- **Inala Place** Day Centre and Overnight Respite Care is established.
- **1996:** **Sherwood Place** Day Centre and Overnight Respite Care is established.
- **1998:** The Presbyterian Church of Queensland establishes a new organisation known as '**PresCare**' to take over operations of the facilities run by the Church's Department of Social Mission.
- **2000:** Community Aged Care Packages are allocated to PresCare, leading to the establishment of our **In-Home Community Care Services**.
- **2008:** PresCare acquires **Lake Sherrin** in Thornlands.
- **2009:** **Vela** in Carina opens.
- **2012:** PresCare establishes **Contented Chef**, a catering services business.
- PresCare **Day Therapy Centre** opens in Coopers Plains.
- **2013:** PresCare acquires **Yaralla Place**, Maryborough.
- **2014:** PresCare purchases **Surecom**, an IT company specialising in aged care systems.
- **2016:** PresCare acquires national mobility providers **Walk on Wheels**, and **Freedom Health Care** (now **MWD-Mobility Wholesale Distributors**).



**The Presbyterian Outlook  
(December 1929)**

**Mr William Robert Black**

Alexandra Gardens innovative Sub-acute Care Program receives national recognition, winning the **Hesta Team Innovation Award**.

To support its in-home community care services, PresCare Group acquires **Adapt Health Care**, specialists in injury and illness rehabilitation as well as **Connect2Health**, assisting people to connect with allied health services.

**Fulton Place** Day & Overnight Centre opens in Cairns.

● **2019:** **Protea by PresCare** in Townsville opening in March.

*Want to learn more about PresCare's history?  
Head to [prescare.org.au/about/prescare-history](https://prescare.org.au/about/prescare-history)*

90  
YEARS  
SINCE 1929

**PresCare**  
It's more you  
A MINISTRY OF THE  
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
OF QUEENSLAND

1800 773 722

[www.prescare.org.au](https://www.prescare.org.au)

PresCare is a Ministry of the Presbyterian Church of Queensland and we've been helping older Australians live the way they choose for almost 90 years. We provide a range of residential and community services that are tailored to people's specific needs. At PresCare, we understand that people want to have freedom to make personal choices about the way they live.

**We're not aged care, we're PresCare.**



# God's Word

EQUIPPING YOUNG PEOPLE FOR THE JOURNEY HOME



**YNET CONFERENCE**  
3 - 6 MAY 2019  
[YNET.ORG.AU/YC](http://YNET.ORG.AU/YC)




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[www.fairholme.qld.edu.au](http://www.fairholme.qld.edu.au)

*Proudly a college of the Presbyterian Church of Queensland*



**100 YEARS**  
*in education*







## PMSA

Outstanding education. Values for life.

[pmsa-schools.edu.au](http://pmsa-schools.edu.au)

The PMSA is a mission of the Presbyterian and Uniting Churches.

**CHOOSE FROM FOUR GREAT PMSA SCHOOLS IN SOUTH-EAST QUEENSLAND.**

 <p><b>Brisbane Boys' College</b> <a href="http://bbc.qld.edu.au">bbc.qld.edu.au</a>   3309 3500 Boys: Prep to Year 12 Boarding: Boys from Year 5</p>	 <p><b>Clayfield College</b> <a href="http://clayfield.qld.edu.au">clayfield.qld.edu.au</a>   3262 0262 Girls: Pre-Prep to Year 12 Boys: Pre-Prep to Year 6 Boarding: Girls from Year 5</p>	 <p><b>Somerville House</b> <a href="http://somerville.qld.edu.au">somerville.qld.edu.au</a>   3248 9200 Girls: Pre-Prep to Year 12 Boys: Pre-Prep Boarding: Girls from Year 6</p>	 <p><b>Sunshine Coast Grammar School</b> <a href="http://scgs.qld.edu.au">scgs.qld.edu.au</a>   5445 4444 Early learning: 3 months to Pre-Prep Co-ed day school: Prep to Year 12</p>
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**Pres Life**

