

PresLife



MAGAZINE OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF QUEENSLAND

Speaking Well of 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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We can turn your used stamps into mission support

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Speaking Well of Jesus

by Jennie Baddeley, GiST member

‘Giving an answer’ for our hope in Christ is one of our greatest privileges and hardest tasks. There is nothing anyone we know needs more than to know Jesus and the forgiveness he offers. But it remains one of the most difficult things we do in our everyday lives. Which words are the wisest? When to speak, when to be silent, when to ask questions? How to love well?

These questions, and many more, have increased for many of us as we find ourselves in a changing world. Certainly, God and His Gospel have not changed. But our world has, so the kind of opportunities we have to speak have changed.

For example, Tia’s mum is a school mum you chat with at the school gate. Your kids are friends. She says to you one morning, “Tia’s been telling me this morning how much she loves having two mums!”

How would you respond?

There are some difficulties to acknowledge:

1. Friendship relationships (especially between women) have changed. There is often no room for ‘live and let live’. The only option is total endorsement of a person’s self-identity and family configuration. The typical Christian response of “I love this person yet disagree with their life choices”, can be considered bigotry.
2. As Christians, we know we are to be driven by love, for others and for Jesus. These kinds of situations make us feel torn in two. How can I be loyal to Jesus by standing with him and his teaching on morality?

How can I be loving to Tia’s mum in obedience to Jesus? This feeling can paralyse us as we see two apparently opposing loves.

3. If I become friends with Tia’s mum, her life is already deeply embedded in a set of relationships. These relationships are not in line with Jesus’ call to live for him, so coming to know him might completely destroy her life.

The moment we have to construct an answer it feels congested and confusing for many of us. Where do we start? How do we unpick these problems? More to the point, what do we say to begin with?

Here are some things to consider:

1. It’s all about Jesus

If Tia’s mum never trusts Jesus, she can’t know God. She needs Jesus, desperately, the same as we all do. This one core belief helps to cut through the fog and focus our thoughts and words.

That is, if I show Tia’s mum that homosexual relationships are not God’s intention for us and she accepts that, she’s heard an important thing about God and how He wants us to live. Yet, if in the process she identifies that as the one thing God calls her to do, rather than to repent of all her sins and trust Jesus, she has missed the most important thing.

Our number one job, in giving an answer, is to speak well of Jesus. This is her deepest need. It doesn’t mean that she has no other needs, but that if she misses Jesus and his forgiveness, she has no hope.

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2. Love isn't about winning

'Love wins' was a great soundbite for the marriage plebiscite. It was clever. It also showed how little real love has to do with winning. Love loves and is inherently self-giving and sacrificial. This sets us free from needing to know the answers. We don't need to 'win' any of the conversations we might have with Tia's mum. We don't need to 'make a point'.

Love is about 'giving an answer' about Jesus, and that might be speaking about what Jesus means in our lives. We can reflect on our messy lives and what it has meant for us that we have been forgiven. We can speak well of Jesus, by talking about the reality of knowing him, how much that means to us and our struggle to follow him faithfully. We can love Tia's mum well by showing how Jesus has loved us.

3. Conversion can take a life-time

Sometimes we expect that God will save immediately after the Gospel is presented. The reality through most of church history (with some exceptions) is that people spent years hearing the Gospel before trusting in the Lord Jesus.

Understanding the Gospel is remarkably simple. Yet, it does require substantial categories that sometimes take a long time to establish. God the Father sent his pre-existent Son, truly God and man to earth via a virgin birth, in order that he might suffer death on a cross, a propitiation for sins, rising again to life, and through faith in him we have eternal life and receive his Spirit.

While the jargon can be removed, the conceptual framework is still often new. Therefore, Tia's mum may take a long time to understand the Gospel. It is helpful to remember this as we persevere with Tia's mum.

4. Being a Bigot for Jesus

In the past, it was possible to be both 'nice' and Christian. Increasingly, our society insists on things that we can't in good conscience affirm; in return we are considered haters. This is difficult and yet in line with what Jesus told us to expect: to be hated as he was and is hated.

We still want to be liked and have friendly conversations. The pressure will be huge as we talk to Tia's mum. We don't want to disagree. Yet, we may need to say things she doesn't want to hear. We might need to gently, respectfully say things like: "The Bible says that Jesus is the only way we can know God" or "Jesus has important things to say about how we should live and they are good for all people" or "God has authority over us and our relationships" and so forth.

We might not choose to say much, but to be faithful to Jesus we must speak into areas of difference between us. When we are asked to endorse what we cannot, we need to be clear eyed about the cost for us and our relationship. Our primary relationship is with Jesus. Therefore, we will sometimes lose other relationships. It doesn't mean we have failed, although it may feel that way. If we stand with Jesus, someone is going to call us a homophobe. We don't need to defend ourselves or our Saviour, but we do need to stand with him.

5. Prayer isn't an empty gesture

We need to love Tia's mum, truly and sacrificially. Therefore, we need to pray for her. If Tia's mum comes to faith, it will be an act of mercy by a powerful God, as was our own salvation. While we will ask for God's help in our conversations, our constant prayer for Tia's mum demonstrates our belief that only God can save.

Praying fervently and faithfully for Tia's mum is part of what it means to love her as our own self, as it will cost us in time and emotional energy. But Tia's mum needs us to pray for her.

6. God does save and sanctify

Knowing God in Christ is life transforming. The certainty of a relationship with God, a face-to-face future with the Lord Jesus, and the comfort of the Holy Spirit in this life are gifts we treasure. Yet, the reality of loving and serving Jesus is that it is costly. God is unapologetically committed to our sanctification and to this end we suffer, as Hebrews 12 explains, sanctification isn't just a necessary evil, but is itself good for us, and will be good for Tia's mum, despite its likely difficulties.

We all experience sanctification in different ways, and if Tia's mum comes to Christ, she will have her own struggle. The Church may or may not respond well, as the Church has, and has not throughout history. Our part is not to untangle things for Tia's mum, but to help her bear her burden, whatever that might mean for her and to care for her as we would aim to do with any person God brings into our lives.

Our times may be changing but our saving God is not. He has been saving people for a very long time and He is good at it; He doesn't need ideal times and places, or clever servants to speak for Him. He is a generous God who gives wisdom to those who ask, who comforts and gives courage. Let's love Tia's mum and tell her about this God and the forgiveness He offers in Christ.

Ministry Appointments



Brad Fletcher

Wife: Joanna

Children: Janiel and Charmaine

Position: Pastor at Bald Hills Presbyterian Church

What is your role at Bald Hills?

I've accepted a call to be the sole Pastor at Bald Hills, so my role is to Evangelise, Pastor and Teach, and to prepare God's people for the works of service.

What excites you most about working at Bald Hills?

Moving from being an Assistant Pastor to being sole Pastor is a great new challenge, and I'm excited about the task of training, equipping and encouraging the church members to engage our community, and their friends and family with the Good News of Jesus.

Why did you feel called to this work?

Sharing the Good News is the most important thing any Christian can do, and when given the opportunity, and encouraged by friends to do this full-time, I couldn't think of a good reason why I shouldn't. I felt this was obedience to the great commission, using the gifts God has given me.

In what way has God changed you the most significantly?

Most significantly, God has changed my heart from a heart of stone to a heart of flesh. Over time he has given me the gifts and the boldness to preach His Word, and build up His people.

What social issue concerns you the most? (in Australia)

The increasing unfamiliarity with the Gospel, and hostility towards Christianity (rather than just indifference) in Australia makes it imperative that the Church think much harder about how to engage our culture with the Gospel.

What is your favourite book in the Bible and why?

Probably Philippians because I'm preaching through it for the third time now in 15 years! Such a wonderful letter on what God has done for us in Christ, and of how we ought to live in response.

When are you happiest?

It's a three way tie between when I'm spending time with Jo and the kids, when I'm speaking to people and hearing about how they became Christians, and when I'm watching the latest super hero movie at the cinema. :-)

What song/s are you currently listening to on your playlist and why?

The CD I have playing in my car at the moment is Tobymac's *Tonight*. Upbeat and exuberant hip hop music that encourages me to live for Jesus.

What would you tell your 15 year old self?

Read your Bible more and get into some good Christian books. There's so much out there to help you mature in your faith, so make the most of it.



Robert Herrgott

Wife: Sandra

Children: Elijah & Josiah

Position: Minister at Peace Presbyterian Church

What is your role at Peace?

Minister of the Word and Sacraments, and doing the work of an evangelist.

What excites you most about working at Peace?

The aged congregation are devoted and united, and I join in with their enthusiasm to grow God's kingdom here.

Why did you feel called to this work?

I am old enough to relate to the aged members, and still young enough to put effort into a rejuvenation work.

In what way has God changed you the most significantly?

From Jeremiah 45:5, by God's grace, I am not seeking great things for myself, but living with joy that God has saved my life in Jesus Christ.

What social issue concerns you the most? (in Australia)

Individualism—I grieve about the decline of loyalty and duty to Family, Church and State.

What is your favourite book in the Bible and why?

At present, the Gospel of John because it speaks clearly about faith in Jesus Christ.

When are you happiest?

I love being a part of a Christian team—praying, praising, proclaiming.

What song/s are you currently listening to on your playlist and why?

I am always listening to new versions of Psalms because they comfort and strengthen me in the spiritual warfare.

What would you tell your 15 year old self?

Trust in the gracious forgiveness of God in Jesus Christ because you're going to make a lot of stupid decisions.



Bethany Fraser

Husband: Josh

Position: Children's & General Ministry Assistant at Manly/Lota Presbyterian Church

What excites you most about working at Manly/Lota?

Seeing people grasp and delight in the gospel of Jesus and how it changes everything!

Why did you feel called to this work?

Following Jesus and reading God's Word calls us to love others and share His Gospel.

In what way has God changed you the most significantly?

He's rescued me in Jesus and given me new life as his beloved child.

What social issue concerns you the most? (in Australia)

I'm particularly concerned and grieved by our views on and handling of the issue of abortion.

What is your favourite book in the Bible and why?

John—it's so dense and rich, and sets forth the majesty of Jesus so beautifully.

When are you happiest?

When I'm with people I love and who love me, having fun!

What song/s are you currently listening to on your playlist and why?

Anything by *Beautiful Eulogy* and *Is He Worthy* which captures our longings and God's promises.

What would you tell your 15 year old self?

Your identity is found in Christ, let that reality shape you deeply, live for him alone.



Stuart Hoadley

Wife: Belinda

Children: Emma, Jack & Will

Position: Associate Director of Ministry Resourcing & Christian Education

What excites you most about your role?

It's exciting to be involved in encouraging and resourcing Gospel ministry across our local churches. It's great to see new ministries flourishing, but it's just as good to see established churches continuing to faithfully reach out with the Good News of King Jesus.

Why did you feel called to this work?

Whilst I miss local pastoral ministry, because that's where you really get to see Christ growing his church through his Word and Spirit, this role is where I can best serve his church right now.

In what way has God changed you the most significantly?

I used to be a really anxious kid. Believing the Gospel gave me an inner sense of peace and joy knowing that God's in control, and that I'm forgiven and eternally accepted by Him because of what Jesus has done.

What social issue concerns you the most? (in Australia)

The mental health epidemic and the complex issues around Aboriginal health and communities. Our society doesn't seem to be able to find helpful ways forward.

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

King Josiah; because he responded heart and soul to God's Word.

When are you happiest?

When family and friends are all together, at ease and enjoying one another's company.

What book changed you?

No Guts, No Glory by Moser, Vaughan & Stewart. It's just a simple little booklet, but it made me realise that unless we're purposeful about Christian discipleship we're just wasting everyone's time in our 'ministries'.

What would you tell your 15 year old self?

Stop being angry and resentful. God loves you. Christ died for you. Get on with living for Him and not yourself.

God's Church in Queensland

Tablelands Presbyterian Church

Location

Our building is located in Atherton and our people come from all over the Tablelands.

The Ministry Team

Lindsay Foster (Pastor); Alan, Don, Jim and Phil (Elders); Our Church Family

Demographic

Our region is known for its wonderful climate and so we have a number of retirees who choose to call the Atherton Tablelands home. It's also a wonderful place to raise a family, so we have plenty of kids and parents. What we don't have is many options for those once they finished school, so many leave to pursue work and further education, then return to raise their kids or retire.

Prayer Points

We're praying that God would give Jesus 4400 people from our region and that he might use us as a part of that.



Morning Congregation



Evening Congregation

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

We're excited to see many people come to understand that by God's grace, it's through Jesus that we're right with God, and not our efforts or being nice people.

Meet the People



Alex Hamilton

How long have you been attending Tablelands?

48 years

What do you do during the week?

'Retired' to work on a farm.

What is the best thing about being at Tablelands?

This is my spiritual family and I love them all.



Mishae with Connor & Amy Flemming

How long have you been attending Tablelands?

Since August 2017

What do you do during the week?

I (Mishae) work as a Prep Teacher at a local school.

What is the best thing about being at Tablelands?

The best thing about our church is how warm and welcoming it is. From the first day I felt like part of the family.



Alan & Heather Johnson

How long have you been attending Tablelands?

24 years

What do you do during the week?

Alan – Truck driver/maintenance, Elder/ Music/Youth Group leader, Bible study, Church and home maintenance.

Heather – RI Teacher, Youth Group and KYB leader, Prayer Coordinator, rostered for cleaning/morning teas, does power-point and sound system, and enjoys gardening!

What is the best thing about being at Tablelands?

Being part of a caring church family; Bible-based and mission-focussed; Welcoming church with great fellowship.

Events



Wycliffe
Bible Translators

70 Graham Road Kangaroo Ground VIC 3097
Phone: 03 97122777
Email: info@wycliffe.org.au
Website: wycliffe.org.au

Acts 1.8 You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.

Jesus said, "Go to the ends of the earth..." and "Go make disciples..." But what do we Australian Christians know about what's needed 'at the ends of the earth' to 'make disciples of people from every ethnic group'?

Kumkumari to Capernaum (K2C)—a mission trip 'from the ends of the earth' (Kumkumari Bazar in South Asia) 'to where it all began'—has discipleship and Bible translation at the core, as we visit mother tongue translators in South Asia and seek to understand the vital role of Bible translation in their ministry of reaching out to people in their communities who have never before heard the Good News in their mother tongue. K2C is sponsored by Wycliffe Bible Translators Australia.

For the mother tongue translators, discipleship begins at home. So also for us: how can we apply in Australia what we learn from the mother tongue translators, what we learn from William Carey's ministry 200 years ago in India, what we learn



Kumkumari to Capernaum

A Journey from the 'Ends of the Earth' to where it all began

22 November - 13 December 2019



Wycliffe
Bible Translators

at the Home of Bible Translators in Jerusalem, what we learn from Palestinian Christians whose lands were confiscated by holocaust-fleeing European survivors, and from Messianic Jews who are unable to get employment in Israel because they have accepted Jesus (Yeshua) as their Messiah?

What shape must 'disciple-making' take in Australia, as we face our own unique challenges?

Journey with us on K2C as we follow the Master's footsteps, studying the Gospels and learning from Him what it means to 'go to the ends of the world' with the earth-shattering news that Jesus the Messiah saves.

For more information on Kumkumari to Capernaum, email the Wycliffe K2C Coordinator, Keith Benn: keith_benn@wycliffe.org.au.

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.

Events

Pastoral and Spiritual Care Training: For those Caring for and Ministering to Older People

Would you like to better care for, minister to and understand the older members of your congregation and others in the community? The Spiritual Care Series is a training course developed for volunteers, family and friends of older people to gain key practical knowledge to offer quality voluntary pastoral and spiritual care.

The course will help you:

1. Develop a broad understanding of the pastoral and spiritual needs of older people.
2. Understand spirituality and its connection to quality care of older people.
3. Provide the key practical knowledge required to undertake pastoral and spiritual care within the aged care sector including residential aged care and home care.

There are eight modules in the course. These include:

Module 1: Understanding the Ageing Process

Module 2: Spirituality in Ageing

Module 3: Good Communication

Module 4: The Power of Story Telling

Module 5: Dementia

Module 6: A New Home and a New Way of Life

Module 7: Grief, Loss, Death and Dying

Module 8: Roles, Boundaries and Self-care

Each Module takes around two to three hours to complete and has a number of video components. The course can be done by yourself online or in a larger group setting using a DVD or online. There is a Participants Course for those who would like to learn more about this area of ministry and a Facilitators Course available for those who would like to teach the course to others. The content of the course is broadly evangelical and is provided free of charge through PresCare.

If you would like to know more about the course, please contact John Evans (Executive Manager of Mission, PresCare): jevans@prescare.org.au



Staying Sharp: Loving and Caring for Older Adults

Ministry Tool

Staying Sharp is a ministry tool developed by PresCare to help local congregations reach out, love and care for the older adults in our congregations and communities. Two of the biggest concerns of older adults are declining health and social isolation. Our hope is that this program addresses both of these issues.

People over the age of 55, more than any other age group, require adequate fitness levels to help them maintain independence, recover from illness, and reduce the risk of disease. Studies show that it is never too late to get fit. The human body responds to exercise, no matter what its age, and there are many health benefits as a result.

The other major concern for older adults is social isolation. It is a growing issue in the older Australian adult population. Social isolation is a well-established risk factor for depression and anxiety. However, we believe that good social connections can help prevent and reduce the severity of these conditions.

The third major concern for older adults is death. Many older adults have experienced the loss of a friend and loved ones through death, and are faced with the realisation that their own death is drawing nearer. In a very real sense, older adults stand on the brink of eternity. Staying Sharp attempts to remind participants that the final heartbeat in this life is not an end, but a brand new beginning. *"But as it is written: What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man imagined, what God has prepared for those who love Him"* 1 Corinthians 2:9.

The aim of the Staying Sharp ministry initiative (designed for over 55s) is to increase the health and well being of older adults. Over the course of a morning, participants will exercise their physical, mental, social and spiritual muscles with a group of likeminded people in a fun and relaxed atmosphere. There are four components to a Staying Sharp morning:

1. **Brain-Fit Exercises:** Participants spend the first 45 minutes playing games together that are good for the brain. Each game is designed to provide a challenge in all the key mental areas. The aim of this component is to exercise the brain by providing a wide variety of activities so that participants can have a good 'brain workout' in a friendly, supportive and non-competitive environment.
2. **Morning Tea:** Nutrition Experts tell us that healthy eating is more important the older we get. A delicious morning tea is provided as part of the morning, and participants are served with tea, coffee or cold water.
3. **Reminiscing:** Participants are then led on a trip down memory lane. Each morning a topic is chosen, and the participants creatively reminisce about that topic. Reminiscing is an important activity for everyone, but especially in the life of an older adult. We all cherish our happy memories and enjoy sharing about the 'good old days' with others. There is a devotional aspect to this component as well. During the devotional time participants are reminded that they are more than a physical being and encouraged to reflect on what God has taught us in these times of reminiscence. (In a study published in the journal *Memory* in 2012, Routledge and his colleagues showed that reminiscing helps people relate their past experiences to their present lives in order to make greater meaning of it all. The result can boost people's moods and reduce stress. "Nostalgia increases feelings of social connectedness to others", he says. "Nostalgia makes people feel loved and valued and increases perceptions of social support when people are lonely.")
4. **Easy Does it Exercise:** Doctors say it's never too late to become more active and experience the benefits of gentle exercise! The morning finishes with 20 minutes of 'low to moderate intensity' exercise targeting strength, conditioning and balance, and falls prevention. These exercises have been developed by a physiotherapist and are set to music. The aim of this part of the morning is to address the problem that at least half of all age-related changes to muscles, bones and joints are caused by disuse. The exercise routine will improve fitness by developing an understanding of how exercise works, especially for seniors.

If you would like to know more about the Stay Sharp ministry tool Loving and Caring for Older Adults, please contact John Evans (Executive Manager of Mission, PresCare): jevans@prescare.org.au



News from around the State

Stay Sharp Cairns:

A Collaboration between Cairns Presbyterian Church and PresCare

by Kirk Farquharson, PresCare Chaplain

Stay Sharp Cairns has now been running for just over one year. It is a collaborative ministry initiative between Cairns Presbyterian Church and PresCare Cairns. The ministry started with a very enthusiastic crowd of 36 participants and 10 volunteers. We meet each week of the school term on a Tuesday morning at 10am. At a cost of just \$2 per morning, our objective is to give back to and be active participants in our community, while loving them with the Gospel.

When we meet, we run a number of activities that focus on community, mental alertness, health and fitness, along with a time of reminiscence combined with a Gospel devotional challenge and reflection. Our last get together in 2018 was the PresCare Christmas Morning Tea hosted by Cairns Presbyterian Church with over 100 people in attendance. Participants from the Stay Sharp program, PresCare Community/Respite clients and their families, staff of PresCare Cairns and a huge team of volunteers from the Cairns Presbyterian Church all joined together to make the morning happen.

We are now in our second year of running the program. This year started with great excitement after a five-week break over Christmas. The ministry continues to grow and we count it a privilege to love and serve the older adults in our community this way. We are excited to see how God will continue to grow and bless this ministry in the years ahead.



New Pastors at Ithaca Presbyterian Church

by Jayesh Naran, Assistant Pastor at Ithaca



L-R: Jayesh Naran & Ian Spence

Ian Spence and I (Jayesh Naran) started as the new pastors of Ithaca Presbyterian in February to revitalise the church.

Although we faced some setbacks at the beginning of the year, we have had so many encouragements. We started a musical playgroup for parents in our local community which is going gangbusters, even after just four weeks of operating.

We've been having community dinners and have shared meals with people from all sorts of different backgrounds.

After weeks of having no one come to our growth group, we had six people join the group recently. Our weekly prayer meeting has been slowly growing as well.

Recently, a good friend decided to start following Jesus and wants to be baptised.

The existing church members have been positive and receptive to us coming, and to the changes we've been making. Although this year hasn't been all rainbows and lollipops, the encouragements have definitely outweighed the discouragements. God has been very good to us and to His church.

Teaching English as a Second Language (ESL)

Churches around the State have been teaching ESL to internationals and using it as a way to share the Good News of Jesus. Those running the classes share below what they've been doing.

Michelle Martin, Editor of Pres Life

Southside Presbyterian Church

English for Life (EFL) is a ministry of Southside Presbyterian Church, providing free English classes every Wednesday morning. We aim to connect our students to each other, the community, to our church and ultimately to Christ.

Our classes teach conversational English for everyday life, and are filled with laughter, games and discussion. We have Beginner and Intermediate/Advanced classes, teaching students from all over the world. A typical term covers topics such as: work, family, shopping, eating out, form filling, government, holidays, health, recreation and cooking. Every year we use the Bible to discuss the Christian significance of Easter and Christmas.

Our students say they love EFL because they can make new friends, practice their English and learn new knowledge and skills that are invaluable to them in their everyday lives.

Each week we offer Easy English Bible studies that guide interested students from Genesis to Jesus. It is a privilege to introduce our students to the things of God. We have grown close to several students, which naturally leads to Gospel conversations.

Since we began EFL in 2016, over one hundred people from twenty countries have passed through Southside's doors. It is our prayer that with each person we meet, we will be another link in the chain that leads them to Christ.



Companion Presbyterian Church

We have been running a volunteer program called *Learn to Speak English like a Native* since February 2018.

The idea emerged when the ministry team realised that members from the congregation were struggling with basic English to communicate, and therefore solve problems on a daily basis.

The group meets once a week for about three hours, and the class is divided into the following sessions:

1. Know simple grammar (taught by Rev Jack Jeong); and
2. Learn to listen and speak English with native speakers (facilitated by our Christian friends).

The topics are chosen from a range of simulated situations, such as, 'what to do when visiting the doctors', 'meeting real estate agents', 'joining in parent/teacher interviews', etc.

Our English classes are open to the wider community, and have benefited especially those who are non-Christian Korean students, stay-at-home mothers and the elderly. Through this program, people have come to know about our church, and most importantly, it has created an opportunity for us to share the Gospel. We begin and end our classes with prayer, and at times, listen and read out loud Bible verses as an exercise to help with English pronunciation. God has given us the inspiration to use this idea as a way to evangelise, and since then, we have welcomed a few students who are now communicant members of Companion.

Our ESL classes have encouraged people to be confident about learning English, become more interested about the Australian culture and make lifelong friends from all backgrounds. We hope to continue this program for many years, and see how God can transform people's lives in different and unique ways!



Continued page 14

News from around the State

Continued from page 13

Ann St Presbyterian Church

Ann St has been teaching ESL to internationals within the Brisbane CBD and even from outside the CBD for a number of years. It is a wonderful way to reach out to those in our City who are far from home.

We offer free English classes every Sunday lunch (General English) and Wednesday afternoons (Beginner/General English).

The students walk in with huge smiles and say "Good afternoon, teacher".

Some have come from Christian homes and then find a church home here at Ann St, becoming involved in our church in any way that they can. Others hear the Gospel for the first time, and respond in ways that show us that God has made Himself known to them. For those who don't seem to respond positively to the Gospel, we know that God will be with them wherever they go and the seeds we have planted can become fruitful for Him through many circumstances of their lives.

For this reason, we conduct one on one or small group Bible study with those who want to learn more about Christianity.

Being far from home, living here in Brisbane can be a lonely experience for some, especially as they are not confident in speaking English. But then, by coming to class they make friends with other ESL students, and make the time to visit parts of Queensland such as Moreton Island, Far North Queensland and other States of Australia.

In 2018, one of our teachers, had a brunch for students at her home, which many enjoyed.

As we teach, we are always aware of being a window to God that His light can shine through to them. We pray that God will send the ones of His choosing. So, we thank Him and give Him the glory that belongs to Him.



Welcome to the Presbyterian Church Campsite at Bunya Mountains!

Enjoy spectacular views 1,100 metres up in the fresh mountain air amid 17,000 hectares of National Park rainforest, grassland and open forest featuring our very own majestic Bunya Pine.

The Campsite provides accommodation for church and youth groups, community and school groups. Recently the Campsite underwent extensive renovations with a large deck overlooking the property, a new kitchen, extended meeting areas, and an improved layout for dormitories.

Location: Lot 30 Tolmie Street, Bunya Mountains Qld 4405.

Facilities: There are 63 beds in total in the form of double deck bunks. Separate facilities are provided for each dormitory, plus one handicapped unit (which may be used as a leader's bathroom, if required). There is also a separate room for leaders or couples who can relax over the grass plains of the campsite.

The kitchen is well equipped with gas stove/oven, microwave, large commercial fridge, deep freezer, urn, dishwasher, teapots, boilers, baking trays, cooking utensils, crockery and cutlery. There is also an outdoor gas barbecue with several tables and seats outside the kitchen. The dining area can be left permanently in place for up to 50 people allowing a meeting area for a similar number. This area includes a video player and 65-inch TV (capable of supporting PowerPoint, videos and Google TV), a whiteboard, lectern, blackboard and notice board fixed to the walls.

A tentative booking can be held for six weeks. The dates of hire are secured by completing the Booking Form and returning with the deposit of \$350 to the Presbyterian Church of Queensland.

Camp Fees:

- \$18 per bed used per night.
- \$7.50 per person for day visitor.
- Children under 5 years of age are free of charge.
- Presbyterian Church members can book room(s) at negotiated prices.
- The minimum charge for hiring the whole campsite is \$350.

Payment: Final payment is preferably made upon departure, unless prior arrangement has been made. Available methods of payment: cheques (payable to Presbyterian Church of Queensland), direct deposit and credit card by phone.

For further information or to book please contact the Caretakers, Paul & Elaine at campbunya@pcq.org.au or call (07) 4668 3146.

Paid Religious Instructors

by John Nicol, Minister at Caboolture

The model

The Caboolture/Morayfield Ministers' Network has implemented a new model for religious instruction in local schools in order to improve the quantity and quality of Religious Instruction (RI). This model is now operating in five schools in our area.

The original situation was that volunteers would visit schools on days and at times negotiated with a particular school in order to provide religious instruction. The problems associated with this model are that these volunteers may not be available on occasions, and advice of their unavailability may not reach class-room teachers. This can cause difficulties for the teachers. Furthermore, volunteers may not be available at the times that suit the particular schools. Volunteers, though trained through in-service workshops and seminars are generally not trained to a level that the schools would prefer.

The Caboolture/Morayfield Ministers' Network became aware of the paid religious instructor model which has been working very well in schools in the Rockhampton district for the past 12 years. We are also aware that paid religious instructors are employed in the Bribie Island and Glass House Mountains areas. So, the Caboolture/Morayfield Ministers' Network has moved to mostly employ university students (usually trainee teachers) to instruct in local schools, in a situation much like a school chaplain.

The Network is responsible for providing the funds and for supervising the instructor, but the instructor would, of course, always work under the supervision of a line manager appointed by the school principal. The instructor would be responsible for most or all of the religious instruction in that school, much like a music or physical education specialist.

The advantages:

- Opportunity to place instructors where their skills are best suited.
- Paid instructors are at the same school for 2-3 days/week, working at multiple levels. This means that one or two instructors would provide RI for most classes in the school.
- Instructors are part of the infrastructure of the school. In some schools, religious instructors can start after the literacy block at 11am, or potentially for most afternoons.
- As part of the school team, the instructor understands and implements the school's discipline policy.
- The instructor has total involvement with the school community: students, teachers and ancillary staff.
- The instructor can become involved in extra-curricular activities of the school, eg. attend school camps.
- The instructor can get to know staff and children better, enabling a closer working relationship.
- The model provides a better link with support staff in the school (eg. instructors are often given a desk to work from in a staffroom)
- Instructors can work more closely with the school chaplain and the school counsellors (Support staff might alert the instructor to particular areas for focus in the religious instruction program, eg. a particular life-value)
- The Ministers' Network and the school are able to vet potential instructors as part of the employment process (as happens with school chaplains).

- The Network can more closely control the actual lesson and methodology employed by the instructor than with the voluntary model.
- The paid instructor model tends to attract younger, vibrant instructors who relate well to the students.
- While it was initially thought that part-time chaplains might be able to extend their hours by working as a religious instructor in, say, a different school, but it has become apparent that paid religious instructors have a different skill set to that of a chaplain. Chaplains are not allowed to be involved in religious instruction.
- Paid instructors are more reliable when it comes to turning up for classes.
- Our experience from feedback in the local situation equates to that in Rockhampton, namely the school principals and deputies involved are very pleased with this model and they promote it to their counterparts in other local schools.

The Ministers' Network

As an employing authority, the Ministers' Network has had to become an incorporated body. It is responsible for raising the funds to pay the religious instructor. He or she is paid as a sub-contractor. Each instructor presents a tax invoice to the Network's treasurer on a monthly basis. The Network also purchases the necessary student materials and instructor's manuals.

Through its Religious Instruction Coordinator, the Network oversees the program and monitors the instructors' performance. The Network approves the curriculum and resources to be used, and the instructor works to these.

In our area, there are two means that are used to raise the funds to pay our instructors. The first relates to screening movies. The Network has developed a relationship with the manager of the Event Cinema in Morayfield. The cinema obtains the relevant movie and we hold a movie evening there. Many Christian-oriented movies have been released in recent months. The manager of the cinema advises us of potential movies that are going to become available and we arrange to have them screened on a Monday night.

Attendances at cinemas on Monday evenings are generally low. But, by promoting the movies and selling tickets through the churches, we have been able on occasions to fill a 400 seat theatre. While a few movies have not attracted such large audiences, we have always managed to cover costs and make a modest profit. Event Cinema charges us a set amount for the use of their theatre (typically around \$900) and any profit above this amount is kept for fundraising purposes. On several occasions our 'profit' has been in the order of \$3,000.

The second way of raising funds for religious instruction is by seeking donations. We learned from the Rockhampton Group that at this stage it is possible to obtain tax deductibility for donations for the purposes of religious education. Our Religious Instruction Coordinator visits local churches from time to time to promote RI and the existence of the fund. Donations can be made securely via our website mna.org.au.

Storying the Bible in the Golden Land

Extract from report by Dianne Barber

The vision began in November 2018 when I was assisting with a Story the Bible conference and was presented with the list of languages that have no Bible translation. I came across Myanmar, and having close connection with Thang Bwee, I looked closer and saw a lot of the languages were from Chin state (Thang Bwee's home state), and the place where many of the Evangelical Reformed Church (ERC) churches are located. Seeing this saddened me. "How will these people come to know God without His word?" was the immediate question that sprang to mind. This gave me a desire to go to Myanmar and present some Storying to equip others to share the Bible with those who have no Bible in their mother tongue language.

My son, Tim and I travelled to Myanmar to Story the Bible. My initial plan was to present an overview of the entire Bible through presenting a set of 12 individual Bible 'stories' that go together with a 'storyboard' that each person would take away as a reusable visual aid, and then another storyboard to take and share with another person. We had a class of about 20 people.

My emotions were mixed arriving in Yangon, excitement to be returning after nine years, disappointment that my husband Peter was unable to come, joy that my son Tim was visiting Myanmar for the first time.

How do you share the message of the Bible with the people of Myanmar? This is the question I asked to a mixed group of Burmese people.

Pastors from the ERC, Reformed Bible Institute students and ladies had gathered together to receive some training in how to use storytelling as a means of sharing the Bible.

Some of the answers were, "It's very difficult to share God's Word in Myanmar. There are language barriers, Buddhist people may have never heard of Jesus. We try by asking them the question can you get to heaven by doing good works? Lots of people want to make money. Others say they are Christian but don't live it out in their life. We don't seem to have any success, it's too difficult".

The scene was set to train the participants in a technique to easily share Gods Word, but more importantly to challenge their thinking to see Storying as something everyone can do and know that God will use His Word to change people.

With only four days available for teaching, the challenge was to present the parts of the material that would be most relevant to the Burmese. Looking around the land I was reminded again of how rich we are in Australia. It's a land with a huge divide between rich and poor. They are in desperate need to hear the Good News of God's rescue plan in Jesus.

Tim and I worked together to challenge and train our students in a number of areas:

- Their attitudes towards evangelism;
- How to craft and retell a section from the Bible in a story format; and
- How to lead a discussion based on 'Storying'.

During the four days we built upon the concept of how people relate to others, and how the stories need to target the listeners' beliefs. Three main belief areas were identified. These were linked to a challenging story. For example, 'good works will get me to heaven'—the thief on the cross. 'Money will make me happy'—the parable of the rich fool. 'I'm a Christian but not living it out'—the rich young ruler. Each participant chose the story they wanted to share with another person and crafted it to retell in story format.

At the end of the teaching I offered another board to anyone who would like to share with someone else. These were all taken immediately. Everyone shared what they learnt during the week, and how they would use the Story the Bible technique in their personal life and ministry. A common response was "Storying is an excellent technique to share the Bible with all people". Several responses included a change of belief from thinking only a pastor was called to evangelise, to the realisation that all people are called to evangelise.

This work isn't for me alone, everyone can get involved. How can you get involved?

Pray: For the people in Myanmar who don't have Gods word in their language. Pray for the 20 storytellers that God will use them for His purpose to take His word to all people. Pray for courage for them to stand firm even in the face of persecution and to share the Word boldly.

Give: Financial assistance for the people in Myanmar through sponsoring a student or a child in the care of the church; Time in preparing storyboards as resources. Purchase some items to send to Myanmar that are difficult to find there.

Go: On a short-term mission trip to Myanmar, or sponsor someone else to go.



Tim demonstrating Zacchaeus climbing the tree



Story the Bible: story boards

QTC Study Week

for Ministers and Gospel Workers

Monday 22nd - Thursday 25th July, 2019 - visit 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



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

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.

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.

Ezekiel

MA Public Lecture Day - Monday 26th August with Dr. Daniel Block



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 1 Clarence Street, Burwood NSW 2134 (02) 8073 7490 national@apwm.org.au

FOUR OPPORTUNITIES TO TRANSFORM LIVES

From time to time some congregations contribute toward a strategic APWM project that requires significant funds. Perhaps your congregation could supply some of the funding for one of the projects on this page. Below are four projects that will change lives. Please contact APWM if you need more details.

TIMOR LESTE: BIBLE TRANSLATION

Most of us take being able to read the Bible in our mother tongue for granted.

In Timor Leste, 99% of the population speak the local Tetun language. However, the only scriptures that have been translated in Tetun are most of the New Testament plus parts of the Old Testament.

The whole Bible is available in other languages: Indonesian but only 43% understand it; Portuguese but only 14% understand that.

APWM would love to see the whole Bible in the Tetun language so that pastors can better understand the Bible for themselves and teach in the heart language of the people. This work is carried out in partnership with Wycliffe Bible Translators.

Cost: \$54,000 to take the Bible translation project to the next stage.



SCHOLARSHIPS: TRAINING NATIONALS

One of APWM's key characteristics is that we seek to train nationals to minister to the men and women from their homeland. Nationals know the language, history and culture of their country. For that reason, APWM is increasingly pouring resources into equipping nationals for ministry.

One of the ways that we do that is through scholarships. Pictured here is Vijai Tagore, a New Testament lecturer at the Presbyterian Theological Seminary in Dehradun, India.

By the time you read this, Vijai and his family will have settled into Christ College, Sydney, where Vijai is pursuing a Ph.D to better equip him as a theological lecturer. APWM needs funds to continue this strategic ministry.

Cost: \$65,000 per year



ETHIOPIA: TRAINING PASTORS

In November 2018, APWM ran a very successful "pop-up" training course for pastors in the refugee camps in Gambella, Ethiopia. Most of these pastors have three months of training and lead more than 80,000 South Sudanese Presbyterians living in the camps. The course was led by David Burke from Christ College, Sydney, along with Shaddy Hanna and Peter Burke.

It was an opportunity to equip the pastors with skills in understanding the Bible for themselves so that they can teach it to others. The pastors also received help in dealing with those suffering from the trauma caused by civil war.

APWM would like to run another course in 2019 but this will depend on donations.

Cost: \$9,000 per course.



AUSTRALIA: ABORIGINAL MINISTRY

APWM is involved in Aboriginal ministry through people such as Rick & Kayleen Manton, Bob & Lucy Quinn, Cliff & Carolyn Letcher, Surendra & May Wesley, Rob & Jenni Alley and Matt & Kate Vinicombe.

Rick Manton says 'Aboriginal ministry is totally different to white ministry' because it's far more community-oriented and has a different set of expectations compared to ministry to non-Aboriginal people.

The ministry can be hard and sometimes progress and joy are tempered by setbacks.

Cost: \$42,000 per year to meet the funding shortfall for the Manton's ministry.



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A spiritual curiosity and longing for God

In 2018, QTC graduate, Kim Jaeger moved back to Tasmania from Queensland in order to minister with PIM in the Midlands and north-west corner of Tasmania. Most of the people that Kim now works with live in places where they have very little access to the Gospel. In most cases, there is no Christian fellowship in their areas and no Bible-teaching church.

The ministry of PIM brings a voice of hope and truth into the lives of Australians living in the most remote areas. We often have the opportunity to bear witness to the outrageous love of our Father, as He seeks out those who are lost and brings them home.

One such encounter occurred when Kim first met Kevin through a God-orchestrated 'chance meeting'. Kim had stopped at a local service station just out of Hobart to fuel up for the trip ahead. Kevin noticed the PIM logo on Kim's vehicle. Curious, he asked Kim what PIM stood for. This led to a conversation about PIM's ministry and about the God we serve.

About a month later Kim was on the road visiting people and he happened upon the same man at a small property. Kevin was immediately enthusiastic, clearly pleased to see Kim again, and they spent some time together discussing God and Christianity.

In Kevin's mind, God was just a harsh judge and not a loving Father. Kim shared with Kevin the message about the love and grace of God. Kevin openly received Kim's message, showing an interest in learning more. He said he would take some time to contemplate it and compare it to his previous experience.

Clearly Kevin took a liking to Kim at their first meeting, and the friendship has grown. Kevin has asked Kim for assistance building the fence on his property, a venture which has given Kim time to prove his love and commitment to Kevin, and create more opportunities to talk about what God is really like and how Kevin could come to know Him personally. Thanks to that first 'random' God-arranged appointment, Kevin's spiritual longing is being stirred through the ongoing friendship, and as Kevin gets to know Kim as a faithful friend, he's also getting to know God as a loving Father.

What a joy it is to share the Good News of Jesus in the most remote areas of Australia.

It really is Worth Driving For.

**You can join with us in
reaching isolated people by
praying for our teams and
supporting them financially.**

**To learn more, follow us on Facebook,
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