

PresLife

The logo of the Presbyterian Church of Australia, featuring a blue oval with a white cross and five yellow stars, with the text "Presbyterian Church of Australia" written in a curve below it.

BI-MONTHLY MAGAZINE OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF QUEENSLAND

Whose House this Christmas?



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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We are currently updating our mailing list.

Please let the Editor know via

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Father Time

by Ben Swift, writer of Escape the Box blog

Once a man is united to God how could he not live forever? Once a man is separated from God, what can he do but wither and die?
C.S. Lewis

With every beat of our heart, with every tick of the clock, the time we have in this life edges closer to the finish line. If nothing else, this realisation should have us thinking about what it all means—this life we have as a human being.

If there's one thing shared amongst western cultures, it is perhaps their relationship with time. As human beings so often do when it comes to making sense of life, things that are abstract or incomprehensible are reformed to reflect something more acceptable. They are moulded or created into something that better reflects finite human thinking. Perhaps this explains how the character, 'Father Time', came to be; an elderly bearded man with wings, seemingly depicting 'time' itself.

In this scientific age, it's reasonable to believe that most people would not take seriously the idea of time having any link to a god, let alone the God. But can God really be removed from this concept without losing real perspective on how we are to relate to time and to God himself? And if God is the creator of all things, unbound by time, then wouldn't that make time simply another aspect of creation with a beginning and an end?

It is often said that many aspects of God will always be hidden from humanity, at least on this side of Christ's return. What God reveals to us about himself through Christ, the Scriptures and the general revelation of creation is all we are able to comprehend about what He is like. Regular human beings can only perceive what exists in four dimensions—one being time. The dimension of time certainly leads to many questions causing us much philosophical angst as we journey through life.

I can still hear the voice of my high school headmaster trying to impart his knowledge based on life experience. "If only we could put an old head on your young shoulders, you could all be saved from learning things the hard way." Ironically the youth never heed this advice, but continue to hand it over years down the track to the next generation.

How often do we hear lyrics that yearn for the ability to control time? After all isn't this exactly what humans seek, to control everything for their own purposes? When the Rolling Stones once suggested that time was on our side they probably weren't reciting popular opinion. It's more probable for individuals to relate to Cher in wishing to turn back time. Perhaps one of the songs that speaks most deeply to our lives came from the Australian band *Powderfinger*. Consider their words from the song *These Days*:

"It's coming round again, the slowly creeping hand of time and its command... These days turned out nothing like I had planned."

And isn't this the case for so many of us? I suspect that when our older experienced head sits firmly attached to our older body we can only reflect on what might have been if we'd only done things differently; if only the shackles of time could be loosened, and we could have just one more roll of the dice.

"But the day comes when you're lying in the bath and you notice you are thirty-nine and that the way you're living bears scarcely any resemblance to what you thought you always wanted, and yet, you realize you got there by a long series of choices."

Francis Spufford

The writer of Ecclesiastes made it his mission in life to try out everything under the sun, but often concluded all to be meaningless and warns those who are young that time has us all in its grip; and life should not be wasted.

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"Remember your Creator in the days of your youth, before the days of trouble come and the years approach when you will say, 'I find no pleasure in them.'" Ecclesiastes 12:1

Without God and the hope that exists in His grace, life in the rear view mirror can sometimes appear meaningless or plunge us into a pool of regret. Our hope in Christ should remind us that the keys to the shackles of time are not in the hands of 'Father Time', but rather in the hands of the One who created time in the beginning. He will bring time to an end, and with it the consequences of our poor decisions that seem to hold us to ransom each day.

If our lives are really like sand through the hourglass, that hourglass has been given an expiry date. Christ has promised to set us free from the decay of this cursed life. Those who belong to him will no longer feel the need to dwell on the past, but will live in his presence eternally in the absence of time and its command.

To overcome the temptation to look constantly into the rear view mirror of life—as Lot's wife did before she was transformed to a pillar of salt—is a difficult thing. It goes against our natural way of thinking, and in fact, our tendency to focus on ourselves rather than Christ. As we remind ourselves who we belong to and the truth about time, perhaps we can join with the Psalmist as he prays:

"Show me, O Lord, my life's end and the number of my days; let me know how fleeting is my life. You have made my days a mere handbreadth; the span of my years is nothing before you. Each man's life is but a breath." Psalm 39:4-5

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



Whose House this Christmas?

by Mitch Smart, Minister at Dalby Presbyterian Church

It's Maddie's family this year. My wife and I are in that life stage where we swap whose extended family we go to each Christmas. Her's one year, mine the next. Weird year, good year. Or maybe the other way around!

Every Christmas most people face the question of whose house? Whether avoiding loneliness or juggling extended family and friends. Whose house?

Some houses and hosts make good years, others weird years.

Today we live in a culture that doesn't think much about the house we live in—the house called the known universe.

Most just take for granted that we're here, so whatever. Others think science has a lot of answers, but leave it to the really 'sciencey' people. Still others know there's probably something or someone behind it all, but don't look too hard in case it gets weird. No one wants a weird year, let alone a weird life.

The historical arrival of Jesus Christ rings a loud doorbell in the house we all live in.

This house we're living in, it didn't just make itself.

Jesus pops into our known world from the outside and says he's the one behind it all. This house we all live in has a maker and an owner.

That's got the potential to be cracking good news because Jesus is the kind of owner who sacrifices himself for others.

But the bad part: the owner's here and you've been squatting.

Truthfully all of us at some stage have taken for granted this house we live in. Squatters in a life that really belongs to Jesus. When he comes back, and you've stayed a squatter, it will be far worse than weird.

Christmas is the story of Jesus revealing himself as the good owner of the whole house willing to pay the price for our squatting. So, this Christmas, whose house?

The Gospel, Religious Freedom & the Ruddock Report: Highlights from the recent GiST Event

by Rohan Pieris - GiST Committee

We live in a society where our freedom as Christians to publicly live out our faith feels increasingly under pressure. Whether it's in the office, at our place of study, or amongst unbelieving friends and family, we're living in a cultural moment where it not only feels weird and out of place to speak of Jesus, but we worry that it may even provoke outright hostility.

Of course, it's nothing new for Christians to find themselves out of favour, or even hated, and we need to remember that whatever we might be going through is minimal compared with the intense suffering of brothers and sisters around the world in the persecuted church. Nevertheless, it's appropriate to acknowledge the rapidly changing landscape for religious freedom here in Australia, so that we might be well informed and prayerful about the challenges and opportunities it presents for us as Christians.

It was this background that prompted our Presbyterian Church of Queensland Gospel in Society Today (GiST) team to invite Michael Kellahan (Executive Director, Freedom for Faith) to speak in Brisbane on Thursday 15 November on the topic: *The Gospel, Religious Freedom and the Ruddock Report*. The event was held in partnership with City Bible Forum and Freedom for Faith, a Christian legal think tank that exists to see religious freedom promoted and protected in Australia. Approximately 50 people attended, coming from Presbyterian Churches and a range of other Christian denominations and organisations.

We opened the night with a reading from Acts 4:1-31, where right from the beginning of Christianity, Peter and John find themselves under pressure from authorities who sought to restrict their religious freedom. However, empowered by the Holy Spirit and trusting in their sovereign Lord, these early evangelists continue to speak boldly about Jesus, whatever the consequences. They understand that their allegiance to the risen Christ must always be higher than what they owe the State, and they refuse to allow fear to silence them.

While our situation is quite different from what Peter and John faced, Michael helpfully encouraged us to see them as a model for our response to any pressures we face in living as Christians in 21st Century secular Australia. Trusting in God, we need not be fearful, we must continue speaking about the hope we find in Jesus, and we should devote ourselves to prayer as our commitment to Christ is increasingly put to the test.

With those key foundations in place, we moved on to considering the current legal framework for religious freedom.

Exactly one year prior to our event, the results of the same-sex marriage plebiscite were announced and the Federal Parliament subsequently legislated to introduce same-sex unions. In response to concerns about the impact marriage law changes may have on Australians with faith, the government established a broad-reaching enquiry led by former Attorney-General, Philip Ruddock, 'to examine whether Australian law adequately protects the human right to freedom of religion'. Over 16,000 submissions were received, including one from the GiST team, outlining our gospel framework and endorsing the lengthy submission from Freedom for Faith.

The final report from the Ruddock enquiry was finalised some months ago, but unfortunately neither its contents nor the government response had been released by the time of our event.

Nevertheless, Michael spoke of how the inquiry and subsequent discussions with politicians regarding public policy have provided Christians with a unique opportunity to shape the future landscape of religious freedom in this country. As the report is released and religious freedom is part of the public conversation, we were urged to advocate for a society in which people are free to live out their religious convictions, side by side with others who may disagree, without interference from government.

In speaking with unbelievers, and even our local political representatives about these issues, it's important that we're aware of the two major perspectives on religious freedom that were represented in submissions to the Ruddock Enquiry:

Firstly, those who believe religious freedom is not under threat because they understand faith mainly in terms of privately held beliefs about God and the ability to gather with other like-minded people for worship services. Our current laws are adequate to protect these freedoms, and many suggested that religious groups actually enjoy too many concessions at the moment. Some were prepared to concede freedom to ministers of religion and churches not to conduct same-sex weddings. But otherwise there should be 'no exemptions to equality', since those who adopted this view of religious freedom saw any attempts to further expand legal protections as nothing more than a cover for bigotry. Michael noted that despite the impression we might get from media coverage, this group was smaller than expected.

Secondly, those who understand faith as having broad-reaching implications for a believer's life saw that religious freedom should extend beyond personal beliefs and the ability to gather for corporate worship. It must be lived out publicly, in community with others. On that measure, the current laws are inadequate in protecting the rights of religious Australians to meaningfully contribute towards society on the basis of their religious convictions, especially as they face increasing pressure to exclude their beliefs from the public sphere. On marriage and a range of other issues, there were specific concerns raised about free speech, parents' rights, charities, workplaces and the independence of religious schools from the state in determining their beliefs, policies and practices.

Christians who see that following Jesus requires an all-of-life commitment would understand their faith in this second way. We participate in the wider community and seek the common good in obedience to Jesus' command to love our neighbour. There is a rich history of our positive contribution to Western society on that basis, which must not be forgotten.

Consequently, Freedom for Faith has advocated for religious freedom to be protected as a positive legislative right, instead of the current exemptions-based approach, which gives the impression we want special treatment to practise discrimination and avoid playing by the same rules as everyone else.

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In contending for this kind of additional protection, Michael reminded us to listen well to those with whom we disagree, and particularly their genuine concern for equality and justice for all. We ourselves show a commitment to these values when we are just as willing to speak up for the religious freedom of people from other faiths with whom we disagree, as we are for our own. To do this demonstrates we are driven by a pursuit of the common good, rather than simply self-interest, because we genuinely believe a free society to live out one's faith is the best outcome for our nation.

So, we should make the most of the opportunity afforded by the Ruddock inquiry to be involved in shaping the religious freedom landscape which will exist here for years to come. However, that experience of the early Apostles teaches us that our faith in Jesus is in no way dependent on the level of protection granted by the government for religious freedom. For our ongoing witness to be effective, we must not allow ourselves to be crippled by fear, and instead continue to live and speak boldly for Jesus, no matter the consequences.

A real highlight of the evening was praying together for our nation, giving thanks for the relative freedoms we've enjoyed for so long here in Australia, and praying we would remain steadfast in our commitment to Christ, whatever the future holds.

Another great encouragement was an interview with Matt Duncan from Moorooka Presbyterian Church. Matt spoke about some of the challenges, and yet wonderful Gospel opportunities he's experienced in seeking to live and speak as a disciple of Jesus in today's corporate workplace.

Overall, this was an informative and uplifting event where above all else, we were reminded that trust in our Sovereign Lord Jesus, rather than fear, is the best Christian response to any current and future developments concerning religious freedom.

"But even if you should suffer for what is right, you are blessed. Do not fear their threats; do not be frightened. But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behaviour in Christ may be ashamed of their slander."
1 Peter 3:14-16

A recording of Michael's presentation is available from the GiST website www.gist.org.au.



Rohan Pieris (member of GiST Committee) and Matt Duncan (member of Moorooka Presbyterian Church)



Jennie Baddeley and Jeff Keighley (members of GiST Committee)



Michael Kellahan (Executive Director, Freedom for Faith)



Robyn Bain (Convener of GiST Committee)

God's Church in Queensland

Miles Presbyterian Church



Location

St Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Miles is located west from Brisbane on the junction of the Warrego and Leichardt highways.

The Ministry Team

Our church has enjoyed good, solid Biblical teaching for over 100 years. The Elders and Moderator continue in this strain. However it has been five years since our last minister left. During this vacancy we have been blessed with Home Missionaries Josh Acason and

Robin Watson. Dennis Mooney and Stuart Andrews are currently helping with the preaching roster. Douglas Walker (Session Clerk) and the Elders fill in as necessary.

We are unique because we have three generations of one family on our Session; Paul Gilmour, his son Gordon and grandson Caleb. What a blessing it is to have these three fine men.

Demographic

We are very blessed to have a growing number of younger married couples, several babies and young children. As with most congregations we have a fair sprinkling of age ranges.

Prayer Points

For an ordained minister for our charge who will continue the work of extending God's Kingdom.

That God will uphold Douglas and the Elders as they endeavour to continue to bring the Gospel message to our congregation.

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

The 'Resources Boom' has created many opportunities and challenges as we attempt to bring the message of Jesus Christ to itinerate workers. There are no ordained ministers of any denominations currently residing in Miles, consequently there is a huge vacuum to fill.

Meet the People



Bronson & Felicity Little

How long have you been attending Miles?

Since we were little.

What do you do during the week?

During the week Bronson works at the Council as a Diesel Fitter and Felicity is a stay at home mum of our three young girls.

What is the best thing about being at Miles?

The family feeling within our church. That we are a family, and our small children interact with the older generations.



Paul Gilmour

How long have you been attending Miles?

Since birth, 86 years.

What do you do during the week?

As I have retired from the cattle industry, I now just help my son by checking on stock, water and fences. To keep my mind alert, I am the Convener of the Senior's Bible Study group in our church, and also do some lay preaching.

What is the best thing about being at Miles?

The fact that all our ministers and lay preachers over the years that I can remember since about 1937, have been Bible based in their preaching, and have always preached without fear or favour. Consequently the whole attitude of the church family is evangelically Bible based, and close knit in fellowship.



Bruce Mellor

How long have you been attending Miles?

Not long, since 1981.

What do you do during the week?

Maintenance and care of commercial property, tenants and farms. After those things, office admin then music.

What is the best thing about being at Miles?

Safety and security through leaders who serve Jesus first then the church people, plus wider community. On Sundays notably, impactful preaching (then smoko with the best scones).

Peninsula Presbyterian Church



Location

We are located on the Redcliffe Peninsula. Two Congregations: Woody Point and Scarborough.

The Ministry Team

Rev Peter Whitney and his wife Katrina, Ed Nankervis (Elder), Geoff Packer (Elder), Bill Wasserman (Elder), Leaders of Youth, Children and Small Groups along with other ministry activity leaders make up the ministry team.

Demographic

The Scarborough congregation meets at 8.00am each Sunday and its

members are mostly of mature years. A monthly 'friendship' morning operates at this centre.

The Woody Point congregation meets at 9:30am each Sunday. There is a general spread of ages with ministries to children, youth and adults of varying ages happening at this centre.

A number of Small Groups operate during the week.

Prayer Points

Pray for us to continue and grow as a caring and supportive church, responding to the needs of the Body.

Pray for us to be outwardly focused on reflecting and declaring Jesus to the world.

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

Encouraging and equipping members to connect with people to grow them in the knowledge and understanding of Jesus, so as to serve him in the church and community.

Meet the People



Annelise Stephenson

How long have you been attending Peninsula?

2 years

What do you do during the week?

I am a freelance writer/journalist and I work full-time for a medical company in the city. At night I study the Bible.

What is the best thing about being at Peninsula?

Gospel-centred preaching and a strong sense of Christian family. When I went through a tragedy last year, the love and support I received from the Church was overwhelming. PPC is a church that cares.



Garth & Kirrily Wasserman (Amos, Amelia & Caleb)

How long have you been attending Peninsula?

9 years

What do you do during the week?

Garth is a public servant (except for one day off, taking care of the kids at home) and Kirrily is a stay at home mum (except for one day off—at work—also a public servant).

What is the best thing about being at Peninsula?

Being part of a fellowship where people care about each other as brothers and sisters in Christ, and where the gospel of Jesus and the Word of God is faithfully taught.



Geoff & Pam Packer

How long have you been attending Peninsula?

12 years

What do you do during the week?

Geoff is retired and a church elder; on the music team, Committee of Management and Session; a Bible Study Leader; and does home gardening and woodwork.

Pam goes to Bible Study group; services church morning tea; and does home gardening

What is the best thing about being at Peninsula?

Being part of a very caring church family, Bible based preaching, and great fellowship and hospitality.

News from around the State

Ann Street Presbyterian Church: Gary Tosh - Minister to Seniors

I was approached by the Session of Ann Street Presbyterian Church to ask if I would be interested in a part time ministry to communicant members and others, who were under the pastoral care of the Session.

My role would be to visit and encourage these members in their faith in Christ who were, due to their age and infirmities, unable to meet weekly for worship and Christian fellowship.

I agreed to this and my appointment commenced on 1 July 2014. I am often asked, "What programs I run for the Seniors?" However my role is not running activities, but to 'let brotherly love continue and show the hospitality of the Ann Street congregation' through my visitation. Those whom I visit are the 'Yesterday' church that enables the 'Today' church to be what it is.

My visitation reaches people in the areas of the Brisbane City Council, Moreton Shire and Logan Shire, covering thirteen Aged Care facilities, and many private homes as well as Hospital visits, and sadly officiating in funeral services when required. The joy of this ministry is carrying out the servanthood ministry of Christ who came 'not to be served, but to serve and give his life as a ransom for many'.

During my time of appointment, I have trained Ann Street members to provide a small pastoral support team which has proven invaluable, not only for the residents in the Aged Care facilities, but also for supporting families who have witnessed genuine Christ-centred care in crucial times of their lives.

In December 2017 a highly successful Christmas Connection Morning Tea was organised co-jointly by our Pastoral Care Team and Melinda Smith, Ann Street's Women's Ministry and Pastoral Care Co-ordinator. Many of Ann Street worshippers, and family members of the aged added to the success of this event by providing much needed assistance leading up to and on the morning as well as the provision of transport for our aged.

We had one lady in attendance who was at that time 105 years old and another lady 100 years old. Those who came met up with others that they had not seen for many years, and it was truly wonderful to witness the joy each had in connecting with one another.



Dorothy Gibson (105) meeting up Jack Young



Seniors and youth enjoying connecting with one another



Making final preparations for Christmas Connections Morning tea



Muriel (100) enjoying conversation with Elder Ian Young



Gordon and Rosemary Hitchcock appreciate visits from Ann Street's Minister to Seniors. "It makes us feel very much a part of the Ann Street congregation, even though we are not able to attend worship".



"I truly appreciate celebrating the Lord's Supper, and Gary (Minister to us seniors) makes my past worshipping experiences at Ann Street a present reality even though I am unable to attend", says Anne Gray

Caloundra Presbyterian Church: Month of Mission



Each August is Month of Mission at Caloundra PC, highlighting a year-round commitment to the Great Commission.

This year the theme was *Our Changing World*. Each Sunday guest mission speakers from Open Doors, Barnabas Fund and Africa Inland Mission opened our eyes to these changes in a way that is not available from the wider media.

On Saturday 25th our Annual Missions Expo was attended by 17 mission agencies with local, Australia wide and worldwide interests. It was a huge success with many enlightening conversations.

Both at the Missions Dinner held immediately following the Missions Expo and also at Sunday worship, guest speakers, Keith and Norma Briggs from Dalby Presbyterian Church spoke with personal knowledge and deep insights on ministry to refugees in Australia. Their time on Christmas Island and current work as 'retirees' (an interesting word in the Christian context) clearly shows the way God is bringing unreached people groups to us here, now, in our own streets.

We are encouraged to pray for this work, to get involved and to truly love our neighbour.



Biloela and Emerald Presbyterian Church: Family Camp

We may be more than 300km apart, but Biloela and Emerald have a special connection to each other. Two years ago in August, Emerald Presbyterian Church was planted with the support of the Callide Valley Presbyterian Church in Biloela. The history extends further than that, with the good people of Biloela supporting the church plant with vision, prayer, finances and training in the preceding years. Two years ago the congregation in Biloela travelled to Emerald to support the plant launch.

In October of this year more than 20 people from Emerald travelled to the Callide Dam in Biloela for a weekend of teaching, fellowship and reckless bonfires. At one point over the weekend we had more than 80 people in attendance.

Mike O'Connor provided the 'Food for Thought' with three expositions on the topic of Evangelism. The crew from Biloela provided an excellent kids' program, meals and entertainment. The camping environment and the dam provided plenty of opportunities for us to connect with one another.

It was great for those of us from the Emerald church to build relationships with our friends and supporters in Biloela. Our ongoing connection isn't always obvious in the weekly running of things, so it was excellent to concretely experience the hospitality of our generous benefactors.

The Biloela congregation was also enormously encouraged. Thanks to their support and ongoing prayers the work in Emerald has grown beyond expectation. In 1 Thessalonians Paul expresses his joy at receiving a positive report from

Timothy of the faith of those in Thessalonica. He says, "For now we live, if you are standing fast in the Lord". His desire was to see them face to face. His separation was not merely of distance, but also of great hardship. But his joy at witnessing the fruit of his labours was full. During, and since the camp our friends in Biloela communicated something of that same kind of joy.

We in Emerald are forever grateful for the kindness of our Lord and Saviour, in particular, as it is expressed in the support of our friends in Biloela. We look forward to seeing more of you!



News from around the State

Gospel Growth in Adelaide, South Australia

2018 has been a year of major change for the ministry of the South Australian churches, particularly the churches within the Adelaide area. The intentional interim ministries of John and Jan Langbridge and John and Dee Gilmour concluded. The new Lead Pastor Davo Gunning and his wife Megan started in Adelaide in February this year. Davo joined the team ministry that Damien Carson and his wife Kelly have been involved in since the six Adelaide congregations were amalgamated as the one Adelaide Charge in November 2016.

Damien and Kelly recently enjoyed a well-deserved long-service leave break away, and have returned refreshed for this new phase of ministry in Adelaide. The team also added a third pastor, Ben Harvey and his wife Bronwyn in February this year.

We are blessed with a unified and gospel-focused ministry team in Adelaide, who alongside the Elders are leading ministry across the six locations within the Adelaide Presbyterian Church (Elizabeth and Para Hills, North Adelaide and Norwood, Seacliff and Mt Barker).

Earlier this year people from across Adelaide Presbyterian Church came together for a 'Big Sunday' gathering at Norwood, with more of these planned for 2019. This was a great day of ministry, fellowship and encouragement.

A real sense of one church ministering in multiple locations is developing. Whilst there have been significant challenges in 2018, a number of our Adelaide meeting locations are experiencing growth with newcomers returning for a second, third and fourth visit, and then staying to become active members of the church community. This is encouraging, as a goal of the Adelaide Presbyterian Church is to be a gospel-focused church that is easily accessible to newcomers.

Adelaide Presbyterian Church is a member of the Church2Church network, and this has allowed the Adelaide Ministry Team to make significant contributions to the ministry that happens across the Church2Church network, as well

as receiving benefits for being a member of the network. It has also allowed mentoring and coaching from Dave and Kathy Thurston to be given to the team members and their spouses. All this happens in the context of the key support given by the Presbyterian Church of Queensland (PCQ) Standing Committees (i.e. Committee on Ministry Resourcing and Committee on Outreach and Nurture) and the PCQ Church Office. The experience of the ministry team in Adelaide is one of being members of the bigger PCQ team, supported and encouraged within that bigger PCQ team by their Church2Church partner churches.

Adelaide Presbyterian Church is blessed to have six active Elders and a number of Emeritus Elders, alongside a new Committee of Management for the whole Adelaide Charge. These men and women are a great support and backing to the vision to see Gospel ministry flourishing across many locations within Adelaide in 2019 and beyond.

Adelaide is a city of 1.4 million people, and the need for more gospel-hearted churches that are able to connect with people who don't yet believe the Gospel is huge. Under God, Adelaide Presbyterian Church aims to play its part in what God is doing through the gospel of Jesus in the City of Adelaide.

Please pray for Davo and Megan Gunning, Damien and Kelly Carson, Ben and Bronwyn Harvey, the Elders, Managers and people of Adelaide Presbyterian Church.

Please pray that they will be united in the gospel of Jesus and focused on reaching many in their city with the Gospel.

Please pray that in all their plans and ministries each will be considering and making room for the people who are yet to join Adelaide Presbyterian Church.





The extent of mental illness in Australia is quite staggering. One in five Australians aged 16-85 experience a mental illness in any year. However, 65% of people with mental illness do not access any treatment at all.

As a church, we became concerned about the marked increase in mental illness, social isolation and relationship breakdown experienced in our community. We also recognised that emotional and spiritual maturity go hand in hand. So, what do we do when people need help beyond the scope of pastoral counselling? How might we as a church help meet this need in our community?

We started by embedding this concern as part of our church vision, that by 2021, we want to be a church **whose practical actions are valuable to the community of Dalby**. We had people in our church who were in various stages of completing their counsellor training and available to offer counselling. So, we accessed some funds from the sale of a church property in our region, and started our own counselling practice called the Dalby Hope Centre (DHC).

DHC was established as a ministry of Dalby Presbyterian Church (DPC) in 2016, and was immediately valued in our community. From its commencement, it has received enthusiastic support from the local Ministers' Fraternal. Local pastors have been relieved to be able to refer a congregational member to a Centre with counsellors who are Christians and practice from a client-centred framework.

The Centre caters for the broader Christian community as well as local individuals referred by doctors, other clients or from Facebook advertising.

In addition, a large advertising billboard on the Warrego Highway outside Dalby was donated to promote the Centre. An information table was set up at two recent community events to promote the Centre. Also, one of our counsellors attends the monthly Dalby Network meetings where a huge range of government and private providers congregate to share the services they offer the community.

The Centre operates out of rooms generously provided by a local business, Horizons Commodities. This space provides a reception, toilet and two counselling rooms. Three part-time counsellors currently operate as private contractors under the DHC banner. Children, youth, individual adults and couples have been able to utilise this service.

Many hundreds of hours of counselling have been provided by Alison Clarke, Kylie Evans and Kristy Howarth as a result of this ministry.

In addition, during August and September this year, a weekly 'Reluctant Separation and Divorce Recovery' course was run by Kristy Howarth, as a further outreach to hurting people.

Vision

Our vision is for the Dalby Hope Centre to be a not-for-profit, self-funding, regional community care centre that is professional, accessible and Christ-centred, offering counselling, group therapy and educational life courses as a part of the ministry of DPC.

This course was very successful. More life courses are planned to meet the needs of our community. Counselling charges are very affordable, currently \$50/hr for singles and \$70/hr for couples. Members of our church and other local churches support this ministry by donating money to provide subsidies for those in financial hardship. The Centre continues to grow and has welcomed 41 new clients this year.

All of our current counsellors have extensive experience in church ministries themselves, and have a particular heart to serve the church. Some of our counsellors have been engaged in Presbytery Special Visitation Teams to help churches work through various relationship issues. Counsellors can also run workshops on mental or emotional health in your church or organisation. Dalby is three hours west of Brisbane, but phone or Skype counselling is an option for accessing the services of the Centre.

The prophet Jeremiah wrote to the exiles in Babylon to seek the welfare of the city (Jeremiah 29:7). He encouraged them to accomplish this through marriage, building homes, planting gardens and living their lives faithfully in a godless culture.

The early church (Acts 4:32-33) did the same. They were not just 'Word-only' churches, but they did good to those around them.

In our post-Christian community, DPC wants to be a church so connected in serving the community in areas of need that outsiders will say, "We cannot do without churches like this one".

DPC's vision is to be impacting communities across the Darling Downs. One way to achieve this is to meet an obvious need in the community through offering a professional, accessible and Christ-centred mental health ministry. Opening DHC is one step towards fulfilling this vision.

To speak to one of our counsellors call 0490 530 705, email us on info@dalbyhope.org or visit our website

www.dalbyhope.org



Camping Ministry

Youth Camps: Spring Camp, NQXTREME, Fun & Adventure

This September-October was a busy period as per usual, as youth ministries from across QLD gathered together for camps. *Spring Camp* and *NQXTREME Camp* ran in the first week of the holidays, followed by *Fun and Adventure Camp* in the second.

It was great to see God at work on *Spring Camp* this year. Danny Mitchell shared with us what real faith looks like from the book of James, and in small groups we dug deep into some big changes that Jesus wants to bring into our lives. It was a great joy to witness a number of teenagers put their trust in Jesus for the first time, and also to see other Christian teenagers celebrate and pray with them. Add in a bunch of fun on the river and at the beach, and it was a super week!



This year at *NQXTREME* we had a great time hanging out and opening up the word. James Ritchie opened up the Gospel of Luke and challenged us to pick up our cross as we follow Jesus. The challenge was well received by the youth and leaders. A number of youth are still working out where they're at with Jesus, but are regularly being encouraged to trust in him as they attend their local youth groups. We did the usual fun activities, but we added in a couple of new things; we had our first session at Atherton Presbyterian Church, and we went Go-Karting in Mareeba on our last night. It was a great week away and we're looking forward to next year.

Fun and Adventure Camp 2018 was a delight. From Christmas, to bush dances, to ski days, to epic volleyball, to chilling by the water: the adventure never stops. James Jensen joined us this year to explain the book of Revelation, showing us that JESUS WINS. The End. But that's really only the beginning. We rejoiced as we saw young people come to know Jesus as their Saviour for the first time, and young people continuing on and growing in their faith. It was a fantastic week joining together around God's Word, building relationships and making memories that will last a life time.

We're very thankful to our leaders who served so faithfully and sacrificially on camps this holiday season, and even more thankful for how most of them also serve week in week out in youth ministry in their local churches. We pray that God continues to bring young people to Himself, that they may grow in their love and their knowledge of Him, and that we may see the fruit of the Gospel in their lives.

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Camping Ministry

Kids Weekender

2018 has been a great year for Kids Weekender Camps. In October we finished out the year with Kids Weekender Brisbane South. Kids from churches across the Gold Coast and Brisbane South joined together to discover God's mission for His Church. Thanks to everyone involved, we're already looking forward to Kids Weekenders in 2019!



Leader of Leaders Conferences

For the past three years the Presbyterian Church of Queensland has been gathering together the Leaders of Leaders (youth pastors, volunteer coordinators) in youth ministry for a two day conference where they equip, support, and encourage one another to press on in their ministries. This has fondly become known as the 'LOL' (Leader of Leaders) Conference. We were so excited this year to see the rise of a similar conference for Children's Ministry Workers. LOL Conference Youth ran in October 2018, and the very first LOL Conference Kids ran at the beginning of November. We look forward to seeing what God is doing through these faithful ministry workers as they continue to share the Gospel with young people in their local churches and beyond.



Photos

Above: Children Leader of Leaders Conference

Left: Youth Leader of Leaders Conference

Be Creative Camp 2018: A Tale of two Songs, and three Lamb feasts

'Oh! What a Day, What a glorious Day!'¹ It was indeed. As we joined together at Dakabin again on the first weekend of November for Be Creative. On the 20th Anniversary of this amazing camp, started by Jan Langbridge and her team, we celebrated God's goodness to us in Jesus, and came to enjoy the fun, singing, learning and connection of new craft projects (and NOT SO NEW which are still being worked on!). There were 16 tutors who ran workshops from felting to portraiture, to knitting and quilting, to jewellery making and the campers whooped with delight!

The Gospel Girls shared with us stories of the Three 'Lamb' Feasts from the Scriptures...

- *The Passover*, when a Lamb was sacrificed, and its blood was sprinkled on the houses of the Hebrews as a sign of protection and deliverance
- *The Last Supper*, when Jesus showed that he was the One promised, and he was to be the Servant of all—the Lamb who was to be sacrificed to deliver us from our sin once and for all!
- *The Feast of the Lamb*, when Jesus will welcome his church at the resurrection and judgment.

As always, the thoughts and discussions at mealtimes were as rich as the fare, and many spoke of the significance of *Be Creative* for them over the years—connections, friendships, finding out about Christ for the first time, repairing relationships, learning that the whole Bible is rich for learning and refining, and of course, learning to serve others in creative ways. Some of the women who have been challenged at camp to go and serve others, shared of their experiences in Africa

and India where they taught women to sew, cook, and build businesses together.

'Oh What a night!'² NOT in 'Late December back in '63', but on 3 November here in '18... We said goodbye to *Be Creative*, as Jan and the Committee are retiring.

Saturday night at camp is usually a fun dinner with a theme. Since we were journeying with the Hebrews from Egypt to Jerusalem, and then to the New Heaven, we dined in a Middle Eastern feasting room, complete with a dazzling entrance (plus a photo booth!), and we enjoyed Jelly Belly dancing with Suzie—our 5 year old favourite mischief—who returned to camp for this last event. The feast was delicious with spices and pappadams (Baklava and Turkish delight for dessert), the fellowship was deep, and the thankfulness to our heavenly Father for His good gifts was overflowing.

A quilt made by women on camp was auctioned for PIM, and the Dorcas Silent Auction raised funds to send to the supported ministry in Dehra Dun India, which *Be Creative* campers have supported for a long time.

God is starting a new work of ministry to women... through those who have been inspired by the work of Jan and the team. What will it be? How will each person go home to 'tell of His salvation', to sing of that 'Glorious Day', and to gather women creatively to read the Scriptures, and learn to serve.

We look forward to hearing more stories of inspiration and seeing what these new ministries will be.

1. 'Oh What a Day' Mark Altrogge – find this song and sing along, it's wonderful
2. 'Oh what a Night' The Four Seasons (Lyrics Bob Gaudio)





We are currently taking enrolments for 2019. If you're interested in studying full-time to be equipped in the work of the gospel we'd love to hear from you. If you're not able to study full-time we have various options that could cater to your situation.

Part-time

All our lectures take place on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays throughout semester. All the lectures for our first year units are held on the same day (usually Tuesday or Wednesday) making it perfect for those who can carve out one day per week for study. Our Chapel services are also held at 9:30am on Tuesday morning, which all students are encouraged to attend.

Evening Classes

We also offer one evening unit each semester on Monday evenings from 6-9pm at our Spring Hill campus.

In Semester 1, 2019 this will be two half units; *Principles of Interpretation* (Feb-Mar) and *Foundations for Systematic Theology* (Apr-Jun).

Ministry to Women Online

Ministry to Women (M2W) is a 12-week course for women serving in local churches who would love to be equipped to serve Christ more effectively.

The next M2W course is set to run in Semester 1 of 2019. It will consist of 3 hours of classes per week (usually a Friday) and will cost \$350/ person.

We offer one or two online units each Semester which are designed in such a way that is possible to complete a one year degree (i.e. Diploma of Theology or Graduate Diploma of Divinity) through online study.

The online units in 2019 are OT501 *Old Testament Foundations* (Sem 1) and OT502 *Old Testament Prophets and Writings* as well as *Introduction to Christian Ethics* (Sem 2).

Audit

If you do not wish to do a unit or course for academic credit, you can experience our units as an 'audit' student. As an audit student you have access to all the materials and are able to sit in on lectures, but are not required to do assessments. There is a cost of \$350 per unit, which is payable upfront and cannot be added to FEE HELP.

If you are interested in any of these options, please contact the Registrar at registrar@qtc.edu.au or visit www.qtc.edu.au.

Join us on our Study Tour to

Jordan & Israel

Find out more at www.qtc.edu.au/study-tour



PRESCARE NEWS

The 2018 PresCare and Woollam Constructions Charity Golf Classic was a SWINGING success!

The 12th annual PresCare and Woollams Construction Charity Golf Classic was recently held at the Sanctuary Cove Golf Course on Hope Island.

This event was organised to support and raise funds to reduce social isolation for our senior Queenslanders.

The day was a 'swinging' success! Thank you to everyone who attended on the day and to all our sponsors and those who donated: Woollam Constructions, Catalyst Health REIT, Aon, Ansvar Insurance, Aspect Project Managers, Beaumont Commercial, Enware, Hanson, Markham, MET Services, PSA Consulting, u&u Recruitment Partners, Market2Market and Hesta.

Congratulations to the u&u Recruitment Partners team for winning first place with a score of 53.125!

Well done as well to the MET Services team for getting second place with a score of 54.




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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.

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MARK IS WORTH DRIVING FOR.

Helping Mark's new faith to flourish.

As a newborn Christian, 'Mark' felt the need to detox from his sinful life and began a journey into the outback. There he met PIM workers Greg and Janet Cripps. They encouraged Mark in his new faith by teaching him how to read the Bible. By the time Mark set off to continue his pilgrimage, his faith was confirmed.

At Presbyterian Inland Mission, we're relentless in our commitment to let Australians like Mark know they're not alone. And that's by reaching men, women and children in some of our most remote and isolated regions with the hope of the Gospel. So they can know Jesus.

It's why we've made it our mission. Because to us, it's that commitment that'll always be worth driving for.

Name changed for privacy reasons.



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to bring the hope of the Gospel
to Australians in the outback

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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

CULTURE SHOCK IN QUEENSLAND



Rob and Jenni Alley from NSW lead a ministry known as 'Across the Divide'. They take groups to Aboriginal communities across Australia so that participants will grow in their understanding of what God is doing and consider serving in their own backyard.

One participant says "One of the things that has stuck with me is the culture shock I felt when we visited Cherbourg on our trip. I've been to a few different places around the world, including South East Asia and the Middle East, but I've never felt culture shock as strongly as I did in Queensland. I was in my own country, yet it wasn't my country. The environment was the same, trees and animals and smells, but the culture was different. I was an outsider."

If you'd like to know more about this ministry then please go to acrossthedivide.com.au

TALUA: HAPPY 30th BIRTHDAY!



Whenever someone has their 30th birthday, it's not uncommon for someone to ask "Where did all those years go?" Talua, the primary Bible College of the Presbyterian Church of Vanuatu, recently celebrated its 30th birthday.

We praise God for our 30-year long partnership with Talua that has seen the following people serve on staff:

Peter & Lyn Barnes, Ian & Jenni Smith, Beryl Burke, Robert & Pam McKean, Chris & Leah Balzer, Philip & Sandra Burns, Darrell & Margaret Thatcher, Norah Taylor, Andy & Rosemary Williamson, Glen & Rachael Connor, Andrew & Marilyn Schache — and currently John & Kara Dekker and Tom and Margaret Richards.

We pray that God will keep Talua faithful to the teaching of the Bible and that God would use the College in a mighty way. As part of the birthday celebrations there was a re-enactment of the coming of the ship the *Dayspring*, bringing with it some of the early missionaries.

BIBLES FOR SOUTH SUDAN



Please join with us in praising God that, at the time of writing, \$134,000 had been donated toward our \$330,000 target to buy 33,000 Bibles for South Sudanese Presbyterians in the refugee camps in Ethiopia.

APWM plans to close this appeal in late January and will then place an order for the printing of the Bibles in the Nuer language.

If you would like to make a donation by direct deposit then the APWM deposit details are:

Bank: Westpac

Account Name:
Australian Presbyterian World Mission

BSB: 032 260

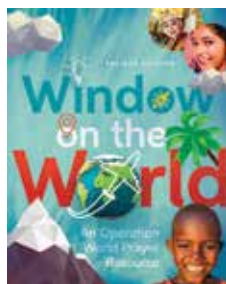
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"NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC MEETS THE GREAT COMMISSION..."

— Tim Keesee, Creator, "Dispatches from the Front"

Window on the World: An Operation World Prayer Resource Molly Wall \$29.99

This book is a child's version of Operation World. It has a beautiful layout and is packed with information about each country together with prayer points. It would make a great resource for family devotions and sparking a child's (and perhaps a parent's) interest in what God is doing in His world. For more information see www.ivpress.com/window-on-the-world



APWM

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Early learning centre: 3 months to Pre-Prep /
Co-educational day school: Prep to Year 12

Presbyterian and Methodist Schools Association (PMSA) www.pmsa-schools.edu.au.
Celebrating 100 years in 2018, the PMSA is a mission of the Presbyterian and Uniting Churches.

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