

# The Link

ANGLICAN DIOCESE OF ARMIDALE

2017 APRIL/MAY

## Ordained to serve

ON SATURDAY THE 18<sup>TH</sup> OF FEBRUARY, well over 200 people crowded into St Peter's Cathedral in Armidale to witness the ordination of Tim Stevens as a priest in the Anglican Church, and Tineke Dekkers, Daniel

Hayes and Aiden Sibrava as deacons. Bishop Rick Lewers preached from Paul's second letter to the church at Corinth, as he urged the ordinands to continue to put their trust in the God of all comfort, despite the afflictions

that come to all who follow Christ.

The four ordinands come from very different backgrounds, previous careers and families, yet all of them were struck by the seriousness of the promises they were making before God.

### Tineke Dekkers | Inverell



Tineke is a local girl from Manilla. She trained as a pre-school teacher, then worked in Sydney, London and Gunnedah before embarking on theological training at the Sydney Missionary and Bible College. When she graduated, she wrote to several churches, checking out the possibility of a job.

"I really wanted to be closer to my family, so when Peter Grice in Inverell got back to me, I jumped at the opportunity. I am now working three days a week for the church, and two days a week as a chaplain at the local public school. I love working with children, because far from being the future of the church, they are the church! We don't need to worry about the future, but in the here and now, their faith can be nurtured while they are preparing for the future.

"As well as doing chaplaincy work on two days, I teach Scripture at the school on one of my church days. A couple of our young leaders at Youth Group were in my primary Scripture classes some years ago, so seeing their growth has been wonderful.

"The ordination day was both God-honouring and weighty. As I heard the promises we were making and thought over the implications of this work, I was so thankful that this is the path God has chosen for me. One thing that really struck me was that, in the days leading up to the ordination retreat before the service, I was quite nervous. But at each point when I was most nervous, I was calmed by reading the scriptures. In focusing on God's Word I understood again that God's Word is central and this is what we are on about."

### Tim Stevens | Mungindi

Tim came to full-time ministry after stints as a nurse and a graphic designer, among many things! We are getting to know him well, as *The Link* will be following his first year as a new Vicar throughout 2017. He has also taken on the role of Youth Encourager for the Diocese. Despite his years of ministry work, Tim found the ordination service very moving.



"It was a very emotional time for me. Reflecting on God's provision and plan for Kirsty and me over the past few years is a very sobering thing to do. We are not in control, He is! But in addition to that, to be ordained by a dear friend and brother in our Bishop was very special. God gives us special gifts like that often. In the challenges of the new ministry I have just taken on, I am encouraged by King Solomon who asked for God to give him wisdom, which he then received (1 Kings 3:1-15). I pray that God will me wisdom for everything that lies before me. His care for us is so great that He knows what we need the most before we have even asked."

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## Daniel Hayes | Moree



Daniel Hayes is from Brisbane, but spent his early life as a missionary kid in Nepal. He completed his theological training at the Brisbane School of Theology.

"The church I attended in Brisbane was a small independent church. I understood the struggles the ministers had, so could see that the support of a Diocese would be a great thing for someone in long-term ministry. My parents were with CMS and had link churches in the Armidale Diocese, so I knew the area a bit. After my training, I was keen to go to the country and Armidale, being

an evangelical Diocese, was a good fit for me theologically.

"Being ordained as a deacon means that I have many more opportunities to tell people about Jesus. I can put full-time efforts into helping people know Him better. On the day of the ordination, I was struck by the seriousness of the promises and what a responsibility and privilege it is to serve as a minister. Everything about the service told me that it is not in our own strength but in our dependence on God that this work can be done."

## Aiden Sibrava | Gunnedah



Aiden chose to be ordained because "It's part of being a pastor in an Anglican Church, but it's also an entry into a support structure where we are taught and supported by our Vicar, Bishop and clergy peers. Being an ordained Anglican clergyman also means that there's a bit more of a door for the Gospel created where people give weight to 'being ordained' in chaplaincy and community roles."

Read an extract from Bishop Rick Lewers' sermon from 2 Corinthians 1:1-11 on page 4.

# Towards a healthier church

David Greeff

**HOWEVER WELL WE FEEL WE ARE** doing, there is always room for improvement.

According to founding Bishop of Melbourne, Charles Perry, in 1851, there is a way: "There is nothing better calculated to increase the health of the local church than a vital commitment to world mission". So how can we move towards this 'vital commitment'?

A great step forward would be to attend **CMS Autumn Encounter**, held at Calrossy Anglican School, Tamworth, 7<sup>th</sup>- 8<sup>th</sup> April, 2017. Autumn Encounter is an opportunity to encounter God through the solid teaching of His Word; to encounter like-minded Christians from all over the region, and to encounter the stunning growth of the kingdom of God all over the world through people like you!

This year, the committee has shortened the program to cut accommodation costs, and to enable you to be back at your own church on Sunday. You can come for Friday evening's program at 6 for 7pm, stay over at Calrossy



(or any Tamworth motel), and enjoy Saturday 8:30-4pm. There is also the option to just come for the day, on Saturday.

The teaching of God's Word will be by Mike Raiter (above): ex-missionary, Bible College principal, and now international speaker and teacher. His theme is 'Believe!', as explained by the apostle John in his Gospel. We will also

hear from Rick Lewers, Bishop of Armidale, a valued and gifted speaker. Overseas workers who will tell us first-hand how God is at work in their part of the world include Bruce and Libby, who are heading back to an Asian country, and Adrian and Jen, who have done short-term trips to another Asian country.

We will also hear from Ben and Sally, who have lived in a Middle-Eastern country for two years, learning the language so that they can better minister in Sydney to people from a similar background. There will be programs for crèche, lower and upper primary and high school as well as a mums with bubs room.

Bring your family and bring your friends. Bring your Bible study group. Bring your church for a house party weekend. It's not too late to register. Let's take a step towards a healthier local church together!

More information and registration forms are available at your church or [www.cms.org.au/autumnencounter](http://www.cms.org.au/autumnencounter) or contact Jen Lindsay at [JL@craigdon.com.au](mailto:JL@craigdon.com.au) or (02) 6793 3100.



# Do missionaries ever retire?



**STEVE AND NARELLE ETHERINGTON HAVE JUST RETIRED** after 32 years as CMS missionaries in the Northern Territory. They met as student teachers in Armidale, and are now living in Tamworth. The Link sat down with them to find out what the life of a career missionary is really like, and whether retirement is ever a true possibility for those who have spent a lifetime in ministry.

## **The Link: Tell us about your life in the Northern Territory.**

**Steve:** In 1977 we moved to the remote Northern Territory Aboriginal Community Oenpelli (now Gunbalanya) to set up a Commonwealth School-funded bilingual education program so that children there could begin schooling in their own language, Kunwinjku. We worked as government employees in various roles in the school at Oenpelli for six years, and in that time learnt the Kunwinjku language and made lifelong friends in the Aboriginal community. We lived very much in the same lifestyle as our friends and realized that, although some were Christian, there was a very great need for them to have more access to the Bible in their own language. That was how we knew that the Lord was calling us to help in translating the Bible into Kunwinjku, building on the foundational work already done by other CMS missionaries. CMS accepted us as candidates and after a year at St Andrew's Hall in Melbourne and a year of study at Moore College, we began our work as missionaries in Oenpelli in January 1985.

## **The Link: What did your day-to-day work involve?**

**Steve:** Translation work involves knowing the language and thoughts of the people you work with, and having strong relationships with the Christians in that language. It is complicated and demanding. Some days we worked with the Kunwinjku translators getting parts of the Bible drafted and checked, other days we were caught up in the various dramas of life in Oenpelli. We spent much time with the people in hunting, fishing, story-telling, praying with people and learning the culture and language. There really never was a dull moment.

**Narelle:** My particular tasks were firstly to support the Kunwinjku women pastorally, but also to spend countless hours keyboarding masses of material drafted onto cassettes orally, making booklets of Bible portions and helping people learn to read using a variety of

techniques. Two of the women did the initial basic translation verse by verse while the others responded and they all worked together to tidy the thing up. Other team members were the specialists at things like making the Kunwinjku sound natural, and checking vocabulary and cultural factors. We prayed together a lot!

## **The Link: Why is Bible translation work so vital?**

**Steve:** You can find out how vital it is by having a houseparty where no one is allowed to read the Bible for a couple of days. Then try to answer simple questions about the Church, human beings and what God tells us about Himself – all without using the Bible!

## **The Link: What sorts of things did God teach you as you worked with CMS?**

**Steve:** Don't be in a hurry in relationships with people.  
Interruptions are part of the work and under His sovereignty.  
Don't worry about money or other needs.  
Pray and exhort others to pray.  
See other people as He sees them.  
Expect His work in others to be like it is in yours.  
Insist on the Bible as the *only* authority in matters of faith and understanding other humans.  
And that is just for starters!

## **The Link: What is your continued prayer for those amongst whom you worked in the Northern Territory?**

**Steve:** We pray for people by name, asking that God would encourage and strengthen them in their difficult environment, as they speak about Jesus and try to live for him.

We thank God for the way Kunwinjku Christians have taken the Scriptures so seriously and preach and teach from God's word.

## **The Link: What does the future hold for you and Narelle?**

**Steve:** Between now and heaven, we don't know for sure. We ask people to pray about post-retirement options. Meanwhile we rejoice that the Bible Society is now preparing to publish the whole Kunwinjku New Testament (with some Old Testament). We send lectionary

readings and other booklets to the Kunwinjku Christians but it will be hugely helpful for them to have the entire volume available.

**The Link: Do missionaries ever retire?**

**Steve:** See above. We don't think Christians ever stop trying to follow God's leading.

**The Link: Finally, why should everyone be interested in missionary work?**

**Steve:** The moment a church or Diocese loses interest in mission work, they lose commitment to carrying out Jesus' command to

make disciples of all nations (Matthew 28:18-20) and to pursue His intentions to be known in the whole world (Acts 1:7-8). They also lose the encouragement and excitement of seeing God's great plan working out despite the issues we face in our own little back yard (Revelation 7:9-17).

After this I looked, and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands. And they cried out in a loud voice:

"Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb."

Revelation 7:9-10

# Affliction and comfort



Bishop Rick Lewers

**WHAT'S THE MOST COMFORTABLE** thing in your life? It's a pretty obvious thing to say, but if you get your comfort wrong you will be forever uncomfortable.

Paul's second letter to the Corinthians is more significant than one from the Queen when you turn 100. It's from, "*an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God*". An apostle is a sent messenger of Christ and comes with the full authority of God Himself. This is a letter you open quickly, and give your fullest attention. Unlike the Queen's letter it is an undeserved communication from God expressed by the Apostle to enlighten and save.

Paul dives straight in to what he wants the Corinthians to know.

*"Praise the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and the God of all comfort. <sup>4</sup> He comforts us in all our affliction or troubles, so that we may be able to comfort*

*those who are in any kind of affliction, through the comfort we ourselves receive from God."*

"Affliction or troubles" here, are the inwardly felt pressures caused by outward circumstance. We know it's not easy to praise God in such circumstances. Troubles often produce introversion, make people withdraw, blame is often attached to them – blame of others, and sometimes even blame of God. We become so caught up in our own afflictions it becomes hard to hear good advice let alone find praise for God, but that is where having brothers and sisters in Christ to pray for you becomes such a blessing - praying things that our lips struggle to utter.

It is clear that the source of Paul's afflictions come from being a follower of Jesus Christ and it is equally clear that Paul expects that all Christians will be persecuted. But we must not miss that the fellowship of these sufferings is with Christ Himself and like Christ's sufferings, God's sovereign purpose is to bring comfort to others through the sufferings of His people. Paul is no fool, he can see through the façade of those who imbibe the world's culture and adulterate the truth of the Gospel. He knows what a genuine counter-cultural faith in Jesus Christ will mean in the context of a world going to hell in sin. He knows that all genuine Christians will suffer persecution as Jesus warned we would. But Paul knows that God is sovereign and wastes nothing. He tells us in verse six; "*If we are distressed, it is for your comfort and salvation; if we are comforted, it is for your comfort, which produces in you patient endurance of the same sufferings we suffer.*"

In the space of just five verses, suffering is spoken of directly and indirectly no less than 17 times! It is an interesting way for Paul to open this letter but not surprising when we understand that the church is unsettled by the sufferings of their apostle. His life looks hardly victorious and hardly worth listening to. We ourselves know that in hedonistic Australia

suffering is hardly the sign of success. In such a culture it's not a very big step for the worldly to want an apostle or accept a clergyman who is articulate but ruffles no feathers; at home in all sorts of company but never prepared to condemn bad company; well accepted but accepting of everything; a settled fun lover who enjoys luxuries as much as the next person. Conversely, our culture is not quick to accept a messenger of God who is persecuted; recognisably buffeted and weakened; admits to being insufficient for the task; and who comes with scars of battling for Christ. Such a person is hardly the stuff of the successful, entertaining ministry so many Australians are looking for. But all this is indicative of the ministry of God in the person of Jesus Christ who suffered the depravation of life itself at the cross to bring life to all those who only have death to look forward to. God used Paul's suffering not just to bless others but to teach Paul the most valuable truth of all – to trust not in self but in God who raises the dead and offers eternal comfort. He is forced to reflect back on God's sovereign power to raise the dead, so that now and always he would remember God's care for him. We need to live in this way: "*He has delivered us from such a terrible death, and He will deliver us. We have put our hope in Him that He will deliver us again.*"

It is great to know that God has delivered us in the past through the cross and it is a great comfort to know that our deliverance in the future is assured through Christ's resurrection. But please don't miss the fact that in the interim, God is always delivering us even in the midst of suffering, and sometimes through our suffering he delivers others who, like us, are also spectacularly undeserving. There are no comfort zones *on* a cross but every comfort *from* the cross. Because Christ paid the price to purchase us and bring us back to God there should be no cost too great to pay to honour Him.





# From Armidale to North Kigezi, with love

*Scott Dunlop with radio translator, Enoch.*

**THERE** HAVE NOW BEEN SEVEN NEXT GEN UGANDA Conferences held in North Kigezi Diocese, most recently in January this year. As well as the usual conference programs, the Armidale Next Gen team were guests at the consecration of the new Bishop of the North Kigezi Diocese, and two team members got the chance to speak to a very wide audience on radio.

## From Simon Reeve:

The Diocese of North Kigezi has a good relationship with Radio Rukungiri, 96.9 FM, the Voice of Development. This is the only radio station in Rukungiri, and they are overtly Christian. The Reverend Enoch Karamuzi (Youth director and Next Gen organiser), and other clergy, have regular time slots through the week at the radio station. Each year when the Next Gen conference is running, Enoch invites the Australians, as guests, to preach on Sundays in a half-hour slot from 8:30-9am.

Scott Dunlop preached on one Sunday, and I preached on the other. Afterwards, both of us had comments from locals in the town that they had listened to our spot. The estimated audience is about five million, we were told! However, I am not sure quite that many people were listening at that time. Also, we had a translator (Enoch) working with us, so there may have been a language barrier for some of the locals who were listening. My sermon was about Evangelism and the process by which people have a chance to respond to Jesus. Although 85 percent of Ugandans claim to be Christians, Islam is growing rapidly and many Ugandans have a shallow knowledge of the Bible and therefore God. Life is tough in Uganda, and so having a radio station transmit solid teaching to five million potential listeners is a wonderful method of strengthening those who are shallow or weak in faith. As well as that, radio is a great way to remind people of the significance of Christ, and that He is not to be ignored.

I honestly can't remember what we prayed before we went to air, or after I preached. We had great time pressures and complications with translation but in the end it went pretty smoothly. I must have prayed for peace, wisdom and probably for us to think well on our feet. But whatever we prayed, God was faithful and blessed me immensely with the experience.

## From Lou Davies:

On 8<sup>th</sup> January 2017, around 7,000 Ugandans and 20 Muzungus (white people), all gathered under several white tents to celebrate the consecration of a new Bishop, Benon Magezi, for the North Kigezi Diocese. As the Next Gen Conference happened to coincide with the consecration service, we were invited to attend, and of course accepted the invitation with some hesitation, but mostly excitement! The service went for six hours



*Bishop Benon with just some of the 7,000 people at his consecration.*

and all 7,000 people shared in Communion together and were provided with lunch after the service. We Australians were invited to be guests at the Bishop's house where we got to meet and mingle with other VIP guests. There was much celebration and rejoicing by all who attended. It is this that stood out to me the most. From the youngest child to the most senior person present, all were thankful to God and showed their support of Bishop Benon. They hold their Bishop in very high regard.

Our Ugandan brothers and sisters who are a part of our Next Gen team were able to reflect with us after the service. All agreed that the partnership between the Armidale and North Kigezi Dioceses will continue to remain strong. Bishop Benon himself is a graduate of Next Gen and is very supportive of the conference. He has a vision for Next Gen Uganda which he shared with us over a meal together, and has reaffirmed his support and commitment to the partnership. The whole team was so excited to hear the impact Next Gen is having, and we look forward to furthering the partnership with the help and support of their new Bishop.





# The Youth Encourager's vision for 2017

The Rev. Tim Stevens

**MINISTRY TO YOUNG PEOPLE** IS something that has long been on the agenda in our Diocese, though there were some humble beginnings.

After the second world war, our Diocese had few centralised ministry initiatives that catered for young people. Regardless of this, there were some clergy in the Armidale

Australia experienced in that year. Australia celebrated the 50th anniversary of Federation; the Governor-General, William McKell, issued a double dissolution of parliament, and the ensuing election returned Robert Menzies to power. Also, the Australian parliament passed the National Service Act: legislation that called for the conscription of all males

successful, another one was run later that same year, with follow-ups in subsequent years. Secondly, in 1952, a youth encourager was appointed.

What does this history lesson have to do with our current work of Youth Ministry? Well, I think you would agree that, even though the changes of 1951 were large, our young people



Diocese who, inspired by the Youth Ministry that was happening under the leadership of Graham Delbridge in Sydney, had started to minister to young people in an intentional way. One of those voices was that of Archdeacon Ian Stockdale, who wrote in 1951 to encourage the clergy to keep youth ministry as a priority, saying, "The Clergy must be awake to the urgency of the task of gaining the interest and the confidence of Youth. Many precious years have been wasted, and many young people [have been] lost forever". His words were timely because of the turbulence that

turning 18 on or after the 1st November 1950. The young people of 1951 were living in a quickly changing world, and the church had lost connection with them.

Thankfully his words were heard, and from that point on, co-ordinated youth ministry began in our Diocese. Firstly, the Vicar of Bingara, John Wagstaff, asked Graham Delbridge to send some help to run the first Diocese-wide youth camp. Graham sent two young men, John Chapman and Allen Quee, and on the Easter weekend of 1951 the first ever "Youth Muster" was held. It was so

today are experiencing even bigger changes and, more importantly, increasing pressure as they seek to live as Jesus' followers. This is evident in some significant areas as they relate to young people:

- the lack of welcome shown to those who come to our shores seeking safety.
- the way our society prides itself on the absolute freedom of the individual to the detriment of self-giving service, and
- the pervasive changes that are currently being made to gender, sexual identity and marriage.



All of these are symptoms of the widespread rejection of Biblical truth in our day and age. My experience from the young people in our Diocese that I have spent time with over the last few years is that they are earnestly seeking guidance for how to live as Jesus' followers in this changing world that regards following Jesus as a stupid thing to do.

When framed like that, Ian Stockdale's words from 65 years ago are just as relevant for us today. In keeping with our Diocesan vision statement (with a minor correction): "we need to introduce all young people to Jesus and help them home to Heaven". So how is the Youth Encourager going to assist the realisation of that vision?

Following the long tradition of Youth Muster, we will be running it again on the weekend of 19-21 May. This year we will be learning from 1 Peter about living as exiles in this world from two outstanding speakers, Mike Dicker from All Saints Petersham in Sydney and Gary Eastment from UNE Chapel. We will also be prioritising the training of our youth leaders at FUEL, our Youth Leaders Weekend, 21-23 July. To cap off the year, on 3 November, we will be holding our YouthSurges, which are combined youth nights in Gunnedah and Armidale.

To keep informed on all of these events please visit the new Diocesan Youth Ministry website that will serve as a one-stop-shop for all our Diocesan youth events in 2017 - <http://armidaledioceseyouth.weebly.com>

On top of these events, I am looking into some other possibilities for equipping and



training our young people, so stay posted for them. If you have any suggestions or questions, please head to the website and fill out the contact form and the youth encourager committee will be in touch.

Our young people are growing up in changing times. We must be alert to the task of introducing them to Jesus, and we need to then help them home to Heaven. Please continue to pray for the youth of the Diocese and make these events, and others in your local parish, opportunities that you support in 2017.

# The cross-roads

Ian Page

**IT WAS THE WEEK AFTER THE** Childers backpacker hostel fire, and the police were scouring the country for a "person of interest."

It was dark. I was driving home from town, when my headlights lit up a dark figure walking hurriedly along the edge of the road. I pulled over, offering a lift. The ute's dome light was blown, so I couldn't get a look at him as he climbed in. We headed off into the darkness.

He was silent, so I asked him where he was headed.

"Ah, just wherever this road is going" the shadow in the corner murmured.

That was a bit odd! He seemed agitated, and as though he was running away from something. Could he be that "person of interest?" I changed the line of my question.

"Where have you come from?" I asked, trying to sound casual.

"Just from town."

"Where did you stay last night?"

"With Debbie!" he replied

"Does Debbie know where you are?"

He hesitated. "No!" he murmured.

More silence. Why had he hesitated?

"Why doesn't Debbie know where you are?"

More hesitation, "Because Debbie is no more!"

Guide posts flashed by into darkness, as I tried to get my head around this reply.

"What do you mean, 'Debbie is no more?'"

An even longer hesitation "Debbie's dead!"

More silence. What had I gotten myself into?

"How do you know she is dead?"

"I killed her!"

Kilometres of tense silence passed. A murderer! Sitting right next to me!

We came to a small village, so I pulled over at the cross-roads. Commuters hurrying home to the light and warmth of their loved ones sent flashes of light into our dark cab; as I started the most tense conversation I have ever had. I was completely in the dark as to what I should say.

"Satan told me to do it!" he whimpered in anguish.

Lord help me! Please don't let Satan tell him to kill me also.

I nervously explained that Jesus was much more powerful than Satan, and that He loved him very much, and would protect him from Satan, if he trusted Him. After about half an hour of intense heart to heart, he agreed to return home.

Most of the return was in charged dark silence, but as the lights of town were coming over the hill, he said in a very strange voice.

"I can hear Satan laughing at me!"

The hairs on the back of my neck stood on end! Once again I nervously assured him that Jesus was more powerful than Satan, and He would look after him.

He gave me directions through the back streets to a quiet suburb. I was expecting to see flashing blue lights everywhere, but all was quiet.

He pointed to a flat. There was a light in the window.

I knocked tentatively on the door.

It was opened by a friendly looking woman, to a room of light and warmth.

"Would you be Debbie?" I asked hopefully.

"Yes" she replied cautiously.

"You have no idea how glad I am to see you! I have somebody here for you!"



# Men @ Glen



John Woodhouse speaks.

**THE EIGHTH MEN @ GLEN MEN'S CONFERENCE WAS HELD** at the Glen Innes Showground on the weekend of 10-12 March this year.

This conference began as a conversation between men who regularly travelled to Men's Katoomba Convention, but who realized that not everyone could make such a commitment to the long trip.

Scott Wright, who was part of that original group said, "We thought that maybe we could start a similar convention, close to home, to make it easier for men to attend. I think its great to attend conferences with your whole family, but it's really special when men get together. We become more open and frank...we open up to each other, and that's what Christian men need. The preaching of God's Word must always be the centre of what we do, but the fellowship that goes on...little groups of twos and threes, just talking about stuff...that's really important." This year, Dr John Woodhouse former Principal of Moore Theological College in Sydney spoke from Colossians 3 to a crowd of nearly 300.

The conference is a highlight of the year for everyone who attends, but it has special significance to those who are in some of the smaller churches in the Diocese, some of which have no full-time clergy. Ran Mitchell from North Star could not pick a highlight! "There were so many", he said. "Meeting other men, catching up, hearing what others are doing is always important, and John Woodhouse was one of the best speakers ever. One of the greatest things is the way people get enthused. Men @ Glen is a lay initiative, and it really works. Lay people can do anything if they get in and are enthusiastic. I think the informality of it and the common purpose allows people to be very open with each other. To be honest, I felt sorry for the men who were not there – they missed a golden opportunity!"

"When groups of Christians get together, it is a powerful thing and we need to celebrate that more often. I know that it can be difficult, and that it is costly in time or money but we need to do it."



## REGISTRAR

The Diocese of Armidale, in pursuing its goal of introducing people to Jesus and helping them home to heaven, is facing a number of exciting challenges and opportunities and wishes to appoint a new Registrar to join its leadership team.

The successful applicant will work closely with the Bishop and oversee the administrative, financial, legal and property affairs of the Diocese. In addition, the person will participate fully in the work of Diocesan Council and be a member of the Diocesan Development Fund Board.

Applicants should be persons able to lead and manage staff, have a sound record of achievement, possessed of well-developed administrative, financial and coordination and liaison skills and have an aptitude for policy development work.

The position is located in Armidale and a generous remuneration package is offered, including assistance with relocation costs should the successful applicant need to move to Armidale.

The selection criteria and a job description can be obtained from the current Registrar on 02 6772 4491 or [registrar@armidaleanglicandiocese.com](mailto:registrar@armidaleanglicandiocese.com).

Applications, together with the contact details of at least two referees, should be sent to  
PO Box 198, Armidale, NSW 2350  
or [registrar@armidaleanglicandiocese.com](mailto:registrar@armidaleanglicandiocese.com)  
by no later than 30 April 2017.

introducing people to Jesus  
and helping them home to heaven



**WHILE THE MEN WERE MEETING AT THE SHOWGROUND,** some of their wives have found a warm welcome in Glen Innes as well. Over the past couple of years, women from Glen Innes Anglican Church have been providing afternoon tea for the wives of men who travel into town for the conference. This year, they invited Tam Ramsay from the University of New England Chapel to speak to these *Kindred Women* from Colossians 3, the same passage the men were studying. Organising committee member Kathryn Duddy said, "Why waste an opportunity for us to gather together for something more meaningful? It has been of great value to everyone. We have been joined by the women of other denominations in Glen Innes, and we are especially mindful of some older ladies who come a long way to Glen Innes, and who may not get many opportunities to gather and hear God's Word."

Jenny Mitchell, who travelled in from North Star with her husband Ran loved it! "We had a three-hour trip home, and we talked about what we had learned the whole way."

That, of course, is exactly what both committees hoped would happen and they are looking forward to seeing the fruits of these gatherings over the coming year as people throughout the Diocese get enthusiastic about ministry.



# Prayer in the Diocese

The Rev. John Cooper | Boggabri

I LOVE WILLIAM CAREY'S ANALOGY ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE of prayer. In 1792 when Carey was about to leave England to serve Christ in India he told his friends, *"I will go down if you hold the rope."* It would be madness to go down the mine shaft without the assurance that someone has got the rope. What happens when we get together to pray for one another, is that we are effectively saying, *"I will hold the rope for you."* It's an enormous encouragement to know that others are holding you up in prayer. Sometimes our labours for the gospel can feel like a solo effort, but when we pray together, we realise that our perception has been wrong, and that God has put us together to hold the rope for each other.

For the last couple of years at Synod we have broken into small

groups to pray for the spread of the gospel at a Deanery level. This was such an encouragement, some of us started talking about doing something like this at a local level. We started very simply at first by just sharing prayer points with other parishes in the Namoi Deanery. At the end of last year, Gunnedah and Narrabri invited their neighbouring parishes to join them for an evening of prayer.

It would be great if what has happened at Synod could be replicated at a local level. But there is not a one size fits all approach because the Diocese is so large. There will need to be some creative thinking. Parishes could adopt each other as prayer partners and share prayer points. Deaneries could split into two or three. It would be good if nearby parishes could team up and get together at some point in the year. Of course, not all of us feel comfortable praying out loud. But we should never let that stop us joining together with others to pray. Our presence at gatherings like this can be a way that we show our brothers and sisters that we care about the cause of the gospel and will be their greatest allies in serving Christ.

Whenever you meet someone who has given their life to the Lord you can be sure that there have been people praying for them... often over many years. But a what a joy it is discover that the one you have not given up on in prayer has not been forgotten by God either and now belongs to his family. It is in moments like that we see God graciously using our prayers to build his church. What a great privilege!

## Namoi Deanery leads in prayer



Yvonne Chang from Narrabri was at the first Namoi Deanery prayer meeting. She has now moved to Sydney to study at the Sydney Missionary and Bible College, but clearly, she would be more than willing to attend another Deanery prayer meeting!

"Where is Tambar Springs?"

This question came up at a prayer night for the churches in our Deanery. Not only did the questioner not know anything about the ministry of the Tambar Springs Parish, they didn't even know where it is, even though it's less than two hours' drive from Narrabri!

We might drive through various towns without much thought for the churches within them. Or, when we do think about them, we might not know how we can best support our brothers and sisters there. One of the most important things we can do for each other is to pray. However, we are often unsure of who or what to be praying for.

Enter the Deanery prayer night.

The prayer night was a really valuable time for us to hear about the churches in our region, and what our brothers and sisters in the region are celebrating, planning and struggling with. Things like toolbox dinners, women's events, playgroups and new ministry workers. Things like declining numbers and lack of people to preach God's Word.

Hearing about the desire for each of the churches to grow in Christ and make Him known to others was encouraging. Hearing about their opportunities and events was inspiring. Hearing about their struggles and needs was moving. By praying for one another we were also forced to consider the blessings we have in our own churches, what we are doing (or are yet to do), and what we could, by God's grace, do better.

Within our region there is much to rejoice and be thankful for, and much to lift up in petition. As we move together towards our common hope of Heaven, what a privilege it was (and is) to be able to come together, on behalf of one another, to bring these prayers for our region before our Father.

The only question possibly remaining is: "when is the next Deanery prayer night?"



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# David Smith comes home



*David Smith being welcomed to Calrossy.*

**NEW CALROSSY PRINCIPAL DAVID SMITH IS NO STRANGER** to the Armidale Diocese, having spent his formative years in the region. David commenced at Calrossy in January 2017, being inducted on 1 February in front of the whole school community by Bishop Rick Lewers. He describes the return to Tamworth as ‘coming home.’

A son of the then Reverend Ray and Shirley Smith, he was born in Moree, spending time in Ashford, Uralla, Armidale and Tamworth, where his father had various roles as a local Vicar and as Director of Christian Education in the Diocese. David trained as a teacher in Bathurst and met Julie there through the University AFES group. He later completed a Bachelor of Education and a Master of Arts degree and began teaching in Sydney at Barker College Junior School.

In 1983 he and Julie were married by Bishop Peter Chiswell. He spent 19 years at The King’s School Parramatta, as a Primary Teacher, an English Teacher, a Boarding Housemaster and Assistant Chaplain. He has been a Head of English, Head of Pastoral Care and an HSC English marker in various schools. For the last six years he has been Head of Middle School at St Andrew’s Cathedral School, based in a nine storey building in the centre of Sydney, quite a contrast to the open fields and five campuses of Calrossy.

For the past 30 years David and Julie have been part of the congregation at St Matthew’s Anglican Church, West Pennant Hills. They have been widely involved in ministry with children, youth and young adults. Julie has recently enjoyed a staff role in Pastoral Care with women. As a family, the Smiths have been closely involved with Scripture Union, especially in Beach Mission and David served on Scripture Union Council for 12 years.

David chose to train for teaching while he was in Year 11 following a visit of a CMS missionary to St Paul’s West Tamworth. The idea of making a difference in the lives of children and having a Gospel impact on them during their formative years defined his thinking about serving God in his career.

Youth group experience at St Paul’s West Tamworth shaped his early Christian growth and he remains grateful to his faithful youth group leaders. “It wasn’t what I was taught that made such an impact, as important as that was, but I greatly benefited from lives they shared and the patient discipleship that was modelled consistently. They helped me to understand that following Jesus wasn’t what you did in your head but was something that impacted upon the way that one lived.”

As Principal at Calrossy, shaping a Christian environment is an important focus. David is keen to promote a school community that reflects the generosity that God has shown to people in Jesus. “As our society retreats from Christian understanding, it is essential that we open space for students to understand and respond to God. The Gospel must be central and should be reflected in our learning, our community and modelled by the adults in the school.”

David would appreciate the prayers of the whole Diocese as he leads Calrossy into the next chapter of its history.

## Sandy Galea comes to Tamworth

In February this year, over 50 people turned out on a 42 degree day in Tamworth to be trained and encouraged by children’s ministry expert, Sandy Galea from Kidswise. The day was organised by the Oxley Vale Anglican Community Church. Among many things, the training sessions looked at the importance of ongoing training for children’s ministry leaders; the implications of using God-given gifts in children’s ministry; establishing a ministry where children are welcomed and supported, and encouraging others to use their talents in children’s ministry.

Leonie Collins, who works as a school chaplain found the day extremely encouraging.

“We were urged to open the Bible...and then



to trust it!” she said, “I was especially struck by the idea that we need to allow opportunities for children to minister to each other. For me the best quote of the day was ‘One of the best ways for people to develop their faith is by serving’. We really

need to teach children that we are all members of the one body and we are called to have an active faith - to love and serve one another. When children serve, they apply their faith. This training day reminded me once again of the importance of having a clear and collective purpose to our children’s ministry.

“We need to take the time to find out what children already know and then what they are interested in finding out, so that our teaching will be meaningful and relevant to them. We need to put Bibles into children’s hands and let them experience the wonder of God’s Word speaking to them, and we need to help children understand that God has a good plan and purpose for their lives, and He has equipped them to carry this out.”





# Bundarra's 100 year old vicarage gets a makeover

*Bundarra's Jordon Henningsen with the Engadine volunteers Trevor Loveday, James Warren, Paul Drayton, Gordon Hunter and Glen Hackfath.*

**EIGHT** MEN AND WOMEN VOLUNTEERS FROM THE Heathcote-Engadine Anglican Church have been in Bundarra painting the century old vicarage. They have been joined by Bundarra Anglican Church member Jordon Henningsen (far left in photo).

Ministry Leader of the Bundarra Anglican Church, Patrick Kennedy, said he was thrilled to have been approached by Engadine's Paul and Rhonda Drayton with the offer of sending the team to Bundarra. The team includes the Anglican Minister of the Heathcote-Engadine Parish - James Warren. "A few years back a similar team from Engadine painted the Ashford Church and did a fantastic job so we jumped at

the chance of having the vicarage painted under the guidance of Paul who is a professional painter from his own business P & R Brushworks in Sydney. Even the paint and most of the food was donated!" Mr Kennedy said.

"Local people from Bundarra have generously billeted the painters, while others have cooked cakes and slices, donated money and provided eggs. It has been a real local effort and the vicarage is beginning to look like its old self. The talented team are also refurbishing a shower and fixing screens and doors. We are very appreciative of the team's time and the local community's assistance."

## Lay Ministry Conference 2017

**THERE** ARE MANY WAYS TO SPEND THE June long weekend. You could go fishing, or curl up on the sofa for a television binge. Or you could head off to Copeton Dam to join people from all over the Diocese, to hear Simon Manchester speak from the Bible, and to be trained and encouraged in your ministry!

The Lay Ministry Conference is designed to equip lay leaders in the Diocese for a lifetime of ministry. Janene Lewers hopes that people will come ".....to be encouraged from God's Word, and to start to consider new ministry areas. It is always great to be able to network



with others in similar ministry situations. This year, we are particularly looking at the importance of one-to-one ministry.... reading the Bible and praying with just one person. When people start doing this, they see just how significant it can be, and it then becomes a model for others to follow. Over

the years, I think we have seen the huge impact that community and accountability have on peoples' ministries. Because so many of the churches in our Diocese are without a paid minister, we need every lay person to be trained to introduce others to Jesus, and help them home to Heaven."

The conference will be held on 10-12 June at Copeton Dam and will include an excellent children's program. You can bring your own tent or caravan, or stay in one of the holiday park's cabins or bunkhouses. To find out more information, call Xavier Lukins in Tamworth on 6765 9304.

“...there’s no  
discouragement  
shall make  
him once  
relent  
his first  
avowed intent  
to be  
a pilgrim...”

John Bunyan

## About

The Link, Number 58, April/May 2017  
ISSN 1834-0741

The Link is published six times a year by the Anglican Diocese of Armidale as part of the Diocesan vision to “Introduce people to Jesus and help them home to Heaven”.

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Stephen Mason and Anglican Media Sydney.

Our thanks to all photographers featured in  
this edition.



# IAN'S BLUEPRINT

**IAN PAGE IS A FARMER, INVENTOR AND WRITER. WE WERE THRILLED TO RUN his true story, *The Crossroads* on page 7, as an illustration of evangelism under pressure. Now, meet the man!**

One of the things I like doing most is inventing new machines that might make life a little easier, and safer, for farmers.

From the dream to the first nebulous imaginations – through scribbled drawings – to building a guesstimated machine that works beautifully in the shed. Then, finally, comes the big test with real animals. Such a wonderful machine; the animals will love it. What could possibly go wrong? Oh what a way for it to end! My beautiful, brilliant baby – kicked to death by crazy goats! All I have from months of work, is a long list of things that don't work. One thing though; once it has failed it is much easier to see what its faults and weaknesses are. Then, on to solving problems – building new parts that failed, and rebuilding a new machine. Once again it is the big test – and it fails a little better; and so to a new list of things that don't work, more problems to solve, a new machine is built, tested...

Sometimes, when I have displayed my machines at field days; the most common comment has been “You must have lost a lot of sleep working all that out.” I respond; no, I never lose sleep over problems. Then, if they are interested, I tell them my method of solving problems.

When I have a problem, at the end of the day, I completely immerse myself in it. After dinner I have a brainstorming session with myself, scribbling down every conceivable, crazy solution I can think of. Invariably I fail to find a solution. So, before going to bed, I pray about it. If I want to lie in bed worrying about it, I say no, it is no longer my problem, I have given it to my omniscient Lord and it is actually a sin to take it back, so I roll over and go to sleep. Sometimes when I have woken next morning, I have been given a solution. Other times when I look at all the scribbles of the previous evening, the solution just appears. Sometimes I only receive part of an answer, but that's what I need before I am given the whole solution.

Some may say that this is a Christianised version of Carl Jung's method of “sleeping on it” to solve problems, but some things I know for sure.

Worrying never solves any problems; in fact, it is entirely counter-productive. Secondly, we don't have a button we can press to delete all our worries, envy, hatred, vengefulness, lust, guilt, or any of the other “viruses” that can infect our mind, causing it to run slow, or even crash. Just as a computer needs a technician to cleanse it of its viruses, we need a transcendent power to lift us out of this mire. The more we try to fix it; the worse it will get. Thirdly, prayer renews the mind, and refreshes the spirit. It opens our mind to receiving new ideas.

My Christian life has been rather similar to the life of my machines. From a pretty wobbly start, I set out to follow Jesus to the distant Kingdom of Heaven. From this, to confidence that with God on my side, then I could do anything.

*“I could run through a troop;  
leap over a wall”*

Well I crashed at the wall, and was taken captive by the troop, and had to be redeemed, restored, and rebuilt once again by the ever faithful love of Jesus.

I stumbled from failure to disappointing failure; until it slowly dawned on me that it wasn't about God being on my side, but me being on God's side.

Overruling every failure though, was the profound truth that God sacrificed His own dear Son, and His beloved Son willingly went to that excruciating death of crucifixion, to be our sacrificial lamb; so that all of our failures could be on Him. This is so deep, that I can dump all of my failures and sins into it; and with the love of the scarred, but risen Jesus, I can set out again, in the hope that, despite all of my failures, and only because of the unfailing love of Jesus, one day, even I may also hear those words “Well done good and faithful servant.”