



Reaching the Ridge

David and Joanne Piper and their boys

IN THIS ISSUE OF *THE LINK*, THE WORD “mission” comes up a lot. The Bishop gives us a helpful definition on page three. Nick Stone gets excited about his new role at the Church Missionary Society on page nine. We meet George Ferguson and hear about his exciting new job with the Front Yard Fellowship in Coledale and here, on the very front page, we spotlight ministry in Lightning Ridge. These latter two stories would not exist if it were not for the Bush Church Aid Society. BCA was formed in 1919 when a group of people met together in Sydney with the aim of sending people into the most remote parts of Australia with the gospel. These days, BCA is ministering in very remote areas, but it also has a ministry to larger, or rural areas.

Sometimes a Diocese needs a bit of extra help to place a minister in a small town, and that is where BCA comes in.

Lightning Ridge is one small town where BCA works in partnership with the Diocese of Armidale. Vicar of Lightning Ridge Community Church David Piper told us “We arrived here in early 2010 as a children’s ministry worker, combined with assistant minister duties for three years, until the vicar at the time (Mike Keith) left for another parish. At the time we had funding from a few sources for the children’s ministry. When Mike was leaving, Bishop Rick asked me to stay on as vicar. That also required us to apply to be Bush Church Aid field staff. That was granted, and we officially became BCA field

staff in May 2013. So I have been here for eight years.”

Lightning Ridge is one of those places that seems to have a part in Australian folklore. Its fame as ‘The Black Opal Capital of the World’, and as the site of the Louth races means that tourism is now a major part of the town’s identity and income. But how does one minister at a church in a town like that? “Average attendance at our church last year was 39 people each week, with about 63 percent locals, 27 percent kids or youth, and 10 percent visitors visitors. We have visitors with us in church most weeks of the year, except in summer...and even then, we get a few hardy drop-ins!” David said. “Some visitors make an annual visit, and are essentially part of

Building Bush Scripture

Cheryl Hallinan (right) is BCA's Bush Scripture Adviser. Bush Scripture is a new initiative which Cheryl devised. She is thrilled with the way Bush Scripture is working in Lightning Ridge.

"Bush Scripture is a vision to see all country secondary students in regional, rural and remote public schools have access to Christian education lessons, to build on the great work churches do in primary schools. Bush Scripture provides a video-based program option designed to enable volunteers from small country parishes to easily start to deliver secondary SRE (Scripture) to high school students in the secondary years of central schools and small rural high schools.

Building on the Primary SRE at Lightning Ridge, and starting SRE at Goodooga, the Pipers have ensured the delivery of quality SRE lessons to secondary students. Prayer has been answered with two volunteers to help deliver the video lessons. Jo Mihalic, a retired Walgett high school teacher has been a particular blessing.

The team has grown in confidence and is now adapting the Think Faith Curriculum, with video interviews as needed showing how Bush Scripture can act as a pathway to high school SRE delivery.

With solid biblical teaching country kids are able to make their own informed decisions about faith in God. SRE and lunchtime Christian groups are often the only time students can gather and discuss faith issues for those who live out of town, whose church does not have children or youth programs. They are just as important for Christian children as those who are yet to meet Christ."



Scripture teachers Jo Mihalic, left, and Rata Jackson met Colin Buchanan at a Scripture conference.

From page 1

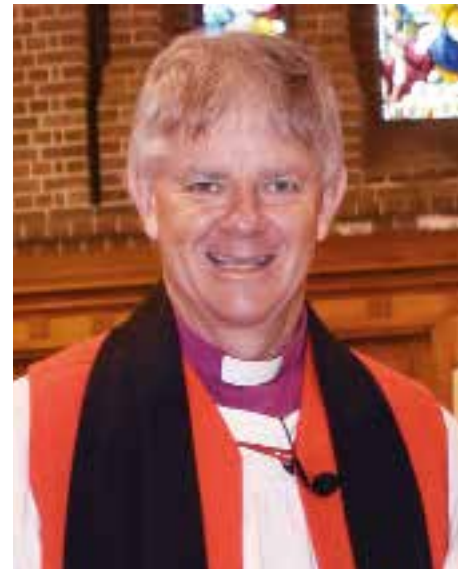
the congregation when they are here. Our regulars are used to tourists coming, and quite a lot of them are very welcoming. We have learnt over the years to not worry about how long someone will be around. We try to serve them and bring them God's word for as long as they are around."

Ministry to children and youth is something which is close to David's heart. "In my first three years here we ran an after-school kids' club", he said. "We had two full-time ministers at that time. In 2013 that dropped back to one, and the kids' club stopped. We tried employing a Christian chaplain/youth worker a few years ago, but didn't find a suitable person. That was disappointing, but I finally realised I would be crazy to keep a youth ministry going without appropriate people. So I just kept praying for it. Last year we finally had some people keen to see youth ministry happen – Rata and Jo in particular – and we started High School scripture classes and a youth group! BCA has helped in that process. Before we started, Peter Volkofsky – BCA's Distance Scripture Advisor – came up to speak to the Principal with me. He has provided a lot of resources for us and has visited to teach classes and to give us ideas on teaching in an engaging way. It has also been encouraging to see church members support the youth group – taking home youth who live out of town, and providing afternoon tea. Some of the ladies who provide the food stay around for a chat and the study time. I love seeing that inter-generational connection! It has been great to see kids who came to kids' club years ago now come along to youth. We pray that the seeds sown back then will bear fruit now."

For both David and BCA the size of a church is not the most important thing. "People are important, whether in a big place or small", he said. "People in the small places need the gospel too. Also, we sometimes think that the solution to ministry in small places is to get part-time people, or 'spoke-and-hub' models, or committed lay people. These are all important parts of the picture, and there are excellent lay people making ministry happen around our Diocese. But sometimes there are places where it is difficult to find people with the appropriate combination of character, convictions and competence to keep a Gospel-focussed church running. In short, some places are mission fields and need missionaries. Don't hear me wrong! There are plenty of good and godly people here in Lightning Ridge, and it is always a joy for us to see our congregation serving in different ways. But I think the church would find it extremely hard without a full-time minister. And BCA makes that possible."

FEBRUARY/MARCH 2018

What is mission?



Bishop Rick Lewers

MISSION: AN ASSIGNMENT, TASK, JOB, undertaking, charge, duty, operation, enterprise, quest. Well, that is what the thesaurus says. Interestingly, it leaves the whole idea of Christian mission undefined.

When I think of mission I don't immediately think words, I think God. The God who is insistent on blessing the world He has made. The God who promises a seed to crush Satan, and allows that seed – through Abraham – to produce miraculously a line of promise in a barren woman that ultimately gives birth to history's greatest missionary, Jesus Christ. The same Jesus who commissioned his disciples to be ambassadors for the God who is insistent on blessing our world.

After I think God, then I think words. I think of Jesus' words about the rich man in hell. I think about that rich man, who in life was frustrated by calls to mission and the demands upon his time and resources. Now, in hell he is frustrated by his inability to do anything to warn his loved ones to avoid the judgment to come. For the rich man, hell was a place where his wealth couldn't purchase a drink, it made no impression on God's side, offered no power in conversation and in hell he was unable to conduct a mission to prevent his loved ones joining him. I hear Jesus' words and in them I hear the eternal lament of the dead crying out for mission, and I realise that it is only the living who can conduct a mission to keep people from such a dreadful future.

When I think mission I think God, I think words and I think actions. I think about Jesus' actions and the cross of course. I think, "Greater love has no man than he lay down his life for his friends." I think, "He bore our sins in His body on the tree." I think, "God made Him who had no sin to be sin for us so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God." And I think, "This is

love, not that we loved God but that He loved us and gave His son as a propitiation for our sins." I think, "WHAT A MISSION! WHAT A MISSIONARY!"

When it comes to mission I think God, words and action but I also think "me". How blessed I am that the mission of our resurrected Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, reached a sinner such as me. He purchased me for a price and as such I no longer belong to myself but to Him and I think if this is what God has done for me then there is no price to great for me to pay for Him.

I think mission. Simply motivated by God, Jesus' words and actions, His love compels us to no longer live for ourselves but for Him who died for us and rose again. His love motivates me to proclaim a message of reconciliation that everyone this side of hell needs to hear so they never find themselves in the rich man's frustrating eternal anguish.

If you know the love of Christ you don't need a definition of mission because you are too busy doing it, proclaiming the Saviour of the world. If you are not involved in mission there can only be one reason – you just don't believe in the mission of Jesus and as such can't see the dangers of a hellish eternity. Of course you might object and say, "I do believe but I am afraid" or "I am too busy" or "I don't know enough" which would of course indicate that you just don't believe... or at least not enough.

There is more to say about mission that could educate us in the content of our message, and how we might proclaim it effectively but we need no education about who we should go to with the saving words and actions of Christ. God so loved the world, so we are to go into all the world to make disciples. Anywhere from your next door neighbour to the furthest corners of our world. And the time for mission? Well that is obvious...NOW!

Lay Preachers gather

Geoff Hearne

THE DIOCESAN COMMISSION FOR Education and Discipleship is holding a lay preachers' conference on Saturday June 16 at the Barraba church hall.

The conference is for all people who are currently preaching and teaching the Bible, as well as those interested in being trained to do so. It is not just for those preaching from a pulpit, but is to help anyone who may have the opportunity to share the word of God with people in other settings like nursing homes, men's or women's events, or any opportunity we may be given to talk about a passage of scripture. It is designed to equip lay people to help them in understanding and sharing the Bible as Paul's commanded Timothy...

The things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable people who are also qualified to teach others.

We want the conference firstly to help people understand the context and content

of a Bible passage, and then to help them think about how to present that message. The aim of the conference is to help provide people with the confidence to teach God's word faithfully.

Preaching and teaching the Bible is a vital aspect of our Christian life because we are people of the Word. Our Diocesan vision is to introduce people to Jesus and help them home to heaven, and we meet Jesus through His word as He reveals Himself to us. It is through the word of God that the Holy Spirit will touch people's hearts and cause them to repent and believe.

The sad reality is that if the word of God is not preached well, then those exposed to bad preaching over time will lose sight of the gospel truths. They will become confused and unclear as to the message of salvation, and they will be prone to wander into sin without good preaching calling them to repentance and true faith.

On the other side of the coin is that those exposed to good preaching will be confident in the gospel and the truth it reveals. This will enable them to share that truth clearly and allow the Holy Spirit to work through them. It will continue to give them assurance, the direction and strength they need to live for Christ and get home to heaven. As people committed to the Bible, we want to encourage and train people in handling and presenting the word of God well. As people learn and seek to minister in this way, it would be good for those who sit under their teaching to encourage them. Share with them how they have been encouraged from the passage and what you found particularly helpful. Never begrudge people sharing the word of God, for without the continual hearing of the gospel truth, we can easily be led astray.

Registrations for this conference will open soon. Check with your vicar for more details.

Book Review :

A Life Already Started

Dr Megan Best



Kaylene McClenaghan

Member of the Commission for Education and Discipleship

UNPLANNED PREGNANCY AFFECTS A NUMBER OF OUR church family members, and they are not all teenagers and unmarried. The strength of *A Life Already Started* is the establishment of a framework for grace-centred conversations around what can be a difficult topic. Dr Best begins with where the gospel and unplanned pregnancy intersect and continues to wind a biblical understanding of the value of life through what can be a very blunt discussion at times.

While it is a great resource for those who feel they need some help in thinking through how to love and encourage an 'unexpectant' expectant mother, it is not a book to be placed in the hand of a woman in the midst of dealing with the emotion of facing unplanned motherhood. Descriptions of all current legal abortive methods, alongside stages of foetal development, while not unnecessarily grotesque are certainly confronting.

Readers will be equipped to gently introduce thoughtful decision making criteria into what is often an emotional mine field. Be warned – the challenges to our personal responsibilities for the provision of

practical care are also compelling.

Dr. Best raises often forgotten alternatives to abortion for women who do not want to be active mothers or increase their current family size; difficulties for women carrying to term in these circumstances being brought to light. Importantly, forgiveness is also offered to women who have previously terminated pregnancies.

There is a subtle assumption that readers are members of larger churches, resourced at least in part with a women's ministry team. This does not mean that those of us who live in small parishes will not find it valuable. The meshing of over-arching biblical principles and factual treatment of what can be a delicate issue is well worth the read.

A Life Already Started is a concise, yet detailed, treatment of the emotional, physical and spiritual implications of living with an unplanned pregnancy while working through the decisions that need to be made as a consequence. It prepares both individuals and church families alike to compassionately care for women in 'wonder-filled' but fragile circumstances.

George answers the call



George and Carmel Ferguson

LATE LAST YEAR, GEORGE FERGUSON AND HIS WIFE CARMEL heard the call to ministry. They have just commenced a two-year Indigenous ministry traineeship with BCA. George is working at St Peter's Anglican Church, South Tamworth, the Coledale Front Yard Fellowship and is completing the online Diploma of Bible Theology.

George says: "I was raised in a Christian family. My parents both loved the Lord and served Him faithfully in a little country town called Collarenebri. I saw my need to be saved at the age of thirteen, and committed my life to God.

Unfortunately, in my later teens I had to leave home in pursuit of work and it was only a matter of time before I wandered away from God. However, God in His grace and mercy never wandered away from me, and at the age of 21 He spoke to me in a vivid dream. He challenged me about the life I was living and where I would spend eternity. Immediately I repented and asked God for forgiveness. With His help I've been following Him ever since.

For the past eight and a half years I worked at Tamworth Hospital as the Aboriginal Liaison Officer. About two and a half years ago, the senior minister at St Peter's Rod Chiswell, asked if I would be interested in assisting with Coledale Front Yard Fellowship. I felt that this was an opportunity to help out with ministry in Tamworth, so I agreed to give the team a hand. This was mainly playing guitar and helping out with the singing, but also led to role playing and sometimes narrating the children's story.

About a year ago Rod asked if I had ever considered going into full-time ministry as he thought God had given me a gift. Carmel and I both prayed about it and felt that we were in the place where God had

placed us. So we decided against entering into ministry.

In September last year my sister was unwell and during that month God spoke to me in one of my quiet times. He just said: 'George, you need to be doing more for me'. I never told this to Carmel. In October 2017 we attended my sister's funeral. That morning Carmel and I got up early and had a coffee on the back porch of the motel. Carmel said to me: 'George, God has spoken to me and has called us into ministry'. I replied to her and said: 'Yes, God has spoken to me too'.

I contacted Neville Naden (Bush Church Aid's Indigenous Ministry Officer) and spoke to him regarding what Rod had asked us concerning ministry. Neville suggested that I go back to Rod and tell him of God's call. Rod said: 'Praise the Lord! I never stopped praying and He has answered my prayer'. As Carmel and I set out into ministry we seek God's guidance, as it is a new journey for us. We pray that He will settle us into work and study."

This article was originally published in the Bush Church Aid's quarterly magazine, The Real Australian. It appears here by kind permission.

Vicar of St Peter's Rod Chiswell continues to thank God for George's willingness to serve with the Front Yard Fellowship. He revealed a secret to us at [The Link](#)

"When I got off the phone the day Gorge called to tell me he was willing to come on board with us, I actually did a little dance right there in my office. Then I cried...just a tiny bit. I love working with them and I truly believe that God has great things in store for George and Carmel."

Good news for indigenous ministry

AN INDIGENOUS MINISTRY TRAINING weekend will be held 11th-13th May at Copeton Dam. This weekend is for anyone who is interested in ministry to Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people within the Armidale Diocese. The Reverend Neville Naden from The Bush Church Aid Society will be speaking. Neville is the Indigenous Ministry Officer for BCA and is tasked with supporting BCA field staff who work with indigenous people, as well as indigenous staff. He is a wonderful speaker with many years of experience in this ministry. For more information, or to book your spot, call 0414 367 043, and speak to Paul.

Meanwhile in Uralla, Vicar Brian Kirk

and the congregation are rejoicing in the appointment of Dixie Skuthorpe as a part-time pastoral worker. Dixie (pictured) grew up in Goodooga but has lived in Uralla for the past six years. She put her trust in Jesus Christ about five years ago. Dixie has been actively involved in the Uralla Anglican Church through attending Bible Studies, prayer gatherings, and assisting with children's and youth ministries. Brian Kirk said, "Dixie is very good at building relationships with the young and old because she is a good listener, pray-er and encourager. She is always looking at ways to share her faith in Jesus and invite people to hear Jesus being proclaimed



in church services or outreach events. This year Dixie organised an informal gathering of local aboriginal people for morning tea and a sharing of the gospel. Dixie has been studying for a Graduate Diploma of Divinity at her own initiative."

Please keep Dixie and all other others involved in indigenous ministry in your prayers.

For better or worse in Inverell



The Mothers' Union Armidale Diocese 2018 Marriage Enrichment Seminar will be held in Inverell on Friday and Saturday, 25th and 26th May. 'Making Meaningful Marriages' seminars are a wonderful opportunity for couples to take some time together to reflect on their relationship and learn some new strategies to strengthen and encourage their marriages. They are suitable for couples of all ages and stages in marriage. This seminar is suitable for both Christian and non-Christian

couples, but will be presented from a Christian perspective of God's plan for relationships.

This year, the facilitators for the seminar are James and Suzanne Dean. They currently live in Newcastle and are part of the congregation at Hunter Bible Church. They will get the weekend off to a cheery start on Friday night with a helpful, non-threatening and fun couple's communication session. It would be great for all participants to

Making Meaningful Marriages
 A marriage enrichment opportunity for couples of all ages.
 Friday 25th May 7pm - 9pm and
 Saturday 26th May 9am - 4:30pm
 St Augustine's Anglican Church Hall
 33 Rivers Street, Inverell
 \$125 per couple (\$100 for MU members)
 Includes Fri and Sat sessions, all course materials
 and morning tea and lunch on Saturday.
 RSVP to muarmidale@gmail.com
 or to 0466 075 273 by Sunday 13th May.
 Payment details given upon RSVP.

be at this session as it will greatly enhance the experience for them. But for those who cannot get away until the Saturday morning, the program has been structured as a stand-alone seminar, not dependent on Friday night attendance.

The seminar will include discussion and input on topics such as communication skills, conflict management, intimacy and romance, families of origin, finance, and roles in marriage. Saturday lunch will be provided and couples will be encouraged to take their lunch out and enjoy a picnic 'date' together (weather permitting!). This will be a time to further explore some issues raised during the morning, then grab a coffee in town and enjoy some time together.

May is a great month to visit Inverell, so why not make a weekend of it at one of the motels in town? The cost for the weekend is \$125 per couple or \$100 for Mothers' Union members. If you know someone who would benefit from this time but costs would make it difficult, or you would like more details, contact the committee on 0466075273 or at muarmidale@gmail.com

All the world's a stage...even Namoi Reserve



It's not the Opera House, and there is no green room in sight...but the Namoi Reserve is still a stage for hope.

COVENANT PLAYERS IS AN INTERNATIONAL DRAMA GROUP that exists to communicate the Lord Jesus Christ through the medium of drama. Recently they had a sudden cancellation of part of their outback Australia tour so the Vicar of Walgett, Tory Cayzer, leapt at the opportunity to do something unusual. "They approached us because of a cancellation that meant they could come", Tory said. "We just thought we'd try drama as a way of connecting with people as it's something we can't do on our own."

The venue for the main performance was the Namoi Reserve. There were 15 local adults, 20 local kids, and five people from the church in attendance. "They also performed as part of our Walgett church service and Collarenebri church service, and then did a 40 minute secular program at Walgett High School on Monday morning on hope, anti-bullying, social media, and gossip", Tory said. "While our

presentation was aimed mainly at adults, most kids probably came when they smelt the barbeque! That said, the kids loved the plays.... I doubt they've seen anything like it."

For Tory, the take home message was quite simple. "There is hope! It is a message that never grows old, and can be communicated from any stage in any part of the world...even from the Namoi Reserve!"



Performers Joe Medley and Cozette Mashue are quite used to performing in venues that aren't quite what the city theatre-crowd would expect, but the reactions of the audience were as pleasing as any big city actor could get.

"It's fun when we have church out here [Namoi]."

"We should do more stuff like this!"

"They were good actors."

"It was lots of fun!"

"I liked it when he was dressed like a worker, but I know he was just faking."

Would you like to support ongoing gospel ministry throughout the Armidale Anglican Diocese while also being able to earn interest on your savings?

Consider opening a

COMMUNITY SAVER ACCOUNT

with the Diocesan Development Fund.
ABN: 81 462 509 988

Current interest rate

2.75% p.a.

calculated daily and paid monthly.

The DDF will pay an additional

0.50% p.a.

to the Parish, Diocesan Entity or Project of your choice at the end of the financial year, by using the interest paid to the account holder for the calculation.

This is a fee free account. Rates are variable.

For further information please contact:

Diocesan Development Fund

email: ddfaccounts@armidaleanglicandioocese.com

phone: 02 6772 4491

address: PO Box 198 Armidale NSW 2350

Visit armidaleanglicandioocese.com/ddf to view the DDF Identification Statement, Ordinance and Terms and Conditions documents.



Vale Betty Chiswell

Margie Newman

“For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.” Phil 1:21

THIS INSCRIPTION WILL BE ON BETTY AND PETER Chiswell's plaque at the cemetery in Armidale because this is how they lived their lives. Let me fill in the gaps with some stories to show you why we have chosen this verse.

Betty Chiswell died on the 3rd Feb 2018 at the age of 82. We had been taking turns to sleep in Mum's room with her over the last few days and on the 3rd February, it was my brother Rod's turn. He was awake holding her hand and singing hymns to her. She died while he was singing “Wide, Wide as the Ocean” and “Jesus loves me this I know”. These two songs were the most heard songs in the corridors of Nazareth house. You can't get better than that!

Indeed, Mum's influence in her late Alzheimer's years at Nazareth House was considerable. She was an evangelist to the end. Here is a story to illustrate:

One day my husband Andrew and I were sitting chatting to her. That particular day she did not recognize us. She said to us:

“Do you follow Jesus?”

“Yes” we replied. “That's good”.

“Do you read the bible?”

“Yes” we replied. “That's good.”

“Do you tell other people about Jesus?”

“Yes” we replied.

“That's really good. They need to hear about Jesus.”

Her thankfulness, humour and encouraging demeanour (not to mention her tunefulness) was ever a great witness for Jesus. God in His everlasting grace used her for His glory to the very end.

As her family we are grateful for all that Mum meant to us and the broader church family. As a Bishop's wife Mum had a huge influence in the diocese of Armidale over many years. I share with you Sharon's words:

“For many clergy wives, Betty modelled what it meant to be a godly Christian woman, supporting our husbands in pastoral ministry,

whilst not losing ourselves or our God-given giftedness in the process. Betty herself used her gifts to God's glory, teaching us through her wise and often Scripture-soaked words, whether given in private or through her many public teaching opportunities. Her words to me one day - ‘Balance is one of the hardest things in life to find’ - have proved so true and helpful over many years. Betty was a wonderful servant to the clergy wives, organising conferences and retreats through which we could be encouraged and nurtured. We have so much to give thanks for in the life and ministry of Betty, our Bishop's wife!”

Many others have written to us with stories of the ways in which Betty Chiswell touched their lives. They are stories of warmth, inspiration and gratitude for her accessibility, friendship, wisdom and godliness. To all those who have written to us and supported us in this time, thank you. How wonderful to belong to a body of believers who are aware of God's blessings in their lives and who care for God's family so well.

Mum was indeed someone who encouraged and nurtured many. All through our lives we had visitors to our house; often young single women who were in the country towns for their work. They became part of our lives. Many became lifelong friends.

This poem was written by a dear friend who experienced first-hand her kindness.

*Thank you, my friend, for the joy you gave
And for the thankfulness that fills my soul
Of having one that understood,
And gave advice as best you could.
The laughter, jokes, hilarity
The caring, loving sympathy
Are now a part of memory.
We shared so much –
Of faith in God, sure hope of heaven
Of love for Jesus and sins forgiven*

Mission and CMS

Nick Stone

CMS representative – Northern NSW

WHY PARTNER WITH THE CHURCH Missionary Society, more commonly known as CMS?

CMS has a vision for a world that knows Jesus. God, in his love, is calling people from every tribe and language and nation. And He is doing this by His Word, through His Spirit and through His people, the church.

Partnering with CMS is a way to be involved in this great and wonderful work. God is raising up men and women to serve him around the world. Today, CMS has workers in 43 countries. These workers are serving God in a variety of ways. They are training and strengthening churches, providing practical help for people in need, and sharing the hope of the gospel of Christ.

2,000 years ago, the apostle Paul wrote to the people of Rome, telling them about the gospel, “the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes” (Rom. 1:16). Yet, 2,000 years later, many in this city do not know that gospel. Today, CMS missionary Gillian Law is sharing the good news of Jesus in Rome with university students. Rome needs the gospel. And so does the Middle East. It was in this part of the world where our Lord Jesus walked, taught, healed, died and rose again, yet today many people in the Middle East do not know Jesus as their Lord and Saviour. And so we give thanks to God for Mirrilee (another



Nick and Caroline Stone and family.

CMS missionary), who is about to go to this region to tell people of God’s grace in Christ.

When the apostle Paul wrote to the church in Thessalonica, he praised God that they were a people who had “...turned to God from idols to serve the true and living God” (1 Thessalonians 1:9). Jesus is the only hope for a world which has turned its back on the true and living God. Matthew 9:36-38 says, “...when Jesus saw the crowds, He had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then He said to his disciples, ‘The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into the harvest field.’”

How can you partner with CMS? You can pray, care, give or go. You can pray for people who are on the mission field and that God will raise up more workers. You can care for missionaries by writing to them or visiting them. You can give financially, so that more workers can go out to more countries. Or you can consider going as a missionary yourself.

Being involved in God’s mission around the world strengthens our faith in God, as we see His kindness and mercy in bringing men and women and boys and girls into the kingdom of His Son. I trust that gives you much joy. And I hope you’ll see in CMS one way that you might be a part of that.

www.cms.org.au

On her last night, we were sitting in Mum’s room talking about how much she meant to us and came up with the idea to play the alphabet game. Here are some of the words we came up with.

*Accepting, Adventurous,
Authentic
Books, Bushwalking, Bible
reading, Bike riding
Communicative, Crosswords,
Chocolate
Degrees, Delighted, Diocesan,
Devotions
Evangelist, Empathetic
Friendship, Faithful, Forgetful
Flower Flogger
Gracious, Grateful, Godly
Hospitable, Humble
Independent, Inquisitive,
Industrious
Jesus-centred, Just, Joking
Kind, Knitter*

*Loving, Life-Long Learner, Letter
writer
Mother’s Union, Musical,
Mathematics
Nanny, Nature lover
Observant of people
Persevering, Patient, Philosophy
Quiet times
Rock of Ages, Reflective, Retreats
Servant heart, Spiflicate,
Scripture Union
Thankful, Teacher, Tea, Theology
Unassuming
Vivacious, Very beautiful Voice
Wise, Witness, Word lover
Xtra special, Xcellent*

To us, her children, Mum exemplified wise humility. She was deeply reflective, thoughtful and prayerful about her shortcomings. For her, honesty before the Lord was an everyday essential and she was not despairing but ever prayerful. She knew that God’s Spirit is at work in us all. That is His promise. She lived by it.

Mum exemplified faithfulness. Faithfulness to husband and family, faithfulness to her brothers and sisters in Christ and faithfulness to the Lord Jesus Christ. In God’s strength she held firm. Her servant heart and relational approach to us and to so many was a wonderful reflection and reminder of Jesus the servant and of God the Father as He relates to His children.

Mum exemplified thankfulness. This doesn’t mean she was always a happy person but she was always grateful for God’s good gifts – even in the small things.

There are so many more ways we could speak about Betty Chiswell but suffice to say we thank our God every time we remember her. We are thankful that He has brought to completion the good work He began in her.

She is at home in her new life with Jesus. We thank God for the privilege we have had to be a part of her journey in the Lord.

Discussing dementia

Margaret Payne

THERE IS A GOOD CHANCE THAT MOST of us will encounter dementia sometime in our lives, whether as a carer or a person living with it.

Dementia is a progressive and severe impairment of mental function which interferes with the normal activities of daily life. Dementia is not a specific disease. Rather, it is an umbrella term that includes Alzheimer's disease, vascular dementia, frontal lobe dementia, Lewy Body dementia, Parkinson's-related dementia, and many, many others. Many people think of dementia as memory loss, but that's only one aspect of it. Confusion, anxiety, disorientation, isolation and the inability to perform everyday tasks are common

With Australia's ever-ageing population, dementia is becoming more and more prevalent among spouses, relatives and friends. Dementia Australia reports that there are around 413,000 people living with dementia. It is therefore important that people understand the condition and discover how best to relate to people living with it.

In May last year St. Peter's Anglican Church South Tamworth hosted seminars entitled *Discussing Dementia*. The speaker was Rev. Frank Van Der Korput, former Minister of Quirindi Uniting Church, now an Aged Care Chaplain with Uniting (formerly UnitingCare). Frank serves full-time in low-care, high-care and dementia-specific aged care homes. He believes he has been called by God to "be a bearer of hope and joy" and through his chaplaincy work he aims to help



Frank Van Der Korput and a colleague.

people to "live well and to die well".

Last year's seminars addressed a variety of topics, and many who attended wanted to hear more. In May this year, Frank will be returning to St. Peter's to lead seminars on "*Discussing Dementia 2*". The focus will be on caring for people living with dementia, particularly while they are still living at home. Most importantly, this seminar will focus on caring for the carers, on whom a great weight

of responsibility so often falls.

Sessions will be held at St Peter's Anglican Church corner of Vera and Kathleen Streets on Friday, 4th May 2018, 7pm – 9.30pm or alternatively on Saturday, 5th May, 9.30 am – noon.

A donation of \$10 per person would be appreciated. Please book by Monday 30th April 2018 at the St. Peter's office by phone 67659304; or email stpeterstamworth.org.au; or call Margaret on 0419 408 863.

Sarah's gap year

FOR MOST 18 YEAR OLDS, THE FINAL RELEASE FROM SCHOOL presents a crossroads in life. Do I go on to further study, start work, or take a year off to consider my options?

Sarah Blomfield from Barraba decided to have a go at all three! She has relocated to Sydney to do a gap year called *The Bridge*. This programme is run by the Sydney Missionary and Bible College, and aims to equip 18 to 21 year olds with ministry skills that will enable them to serve God throughout their lives. Sarah told us, "I think it will be a great opportunity for me to grow in my relationship with Jesus as well as understanding His plan for me. By doing this before any further education, such as university, I'm hoping it will allow me to make decisions which will lead to me living a more God-centred

life. I hoping that by setting aside a year to learn more about God and focus more deeply on him, it will allow me live the rest of my life with him at the centre of my actions and decisions. Colossians 4:2-6 is what I read the night before I started and I think it sums up well what I what I hope to get out of this year and how I want *The Bridge* to influence the rest of my life."

When she has completed this year of study and skill-building, Sarah hopes to study nursing at university, but she remains open to God's leading. "Overall, I'm hoping it will teach and enable me to live a more God-focused life", she said. "Hopefully it will shape my relationships and the way I interact with other people so that reflects better the character of Jesus."



Eye Openers International

Graham records an interview with Dr Kumar.

Graham East

LIFE IS FULL OF SURPRISES. IN 2017, MY WIFE BARB AND I were fortunate enough to be able to travel to the village of Payakaraopeta in the state of Andhra Pradesh in South India to visit the work of Eye Openers. Our good friends, Tamworth based ophthalmologist Dr David Moore and his wife Gaye had long been telling us of the work they were involved in serving the Hindu rural poor and Untouchables.

For the duration of our eight day stay we were hosted in the home of Indian ophthalmologist, Dr Kumar and his wife Nimi. Their home which also functions as a church and hospital is the centre of the Eye Openers work. Dr Moore and Dr Kumar had teamed up some 12 years previously. Since that time the reach of Eye Openers has been gradually expanding.

Before we went we knew that much was being achieved with the delivery of eye surgery and work for the Gospel but we were astonished as day after day we understood more and more of the extraordinary

reach and effectiveness of the work.

Eye Openers now performs over 1,000 sight restoring cataract surgeries and sees over 50,000 other patients annually. Australian based sponsorship is in place for over 130 pastors (\$35 per month) and 35 widows (\$18 per month) with a network of churches with over 13,000 attending. Five after school study centres help poor children with their school work. The gospel of God's love for the Untouchables is cutting through and many are coming to Christ.

Barb and I were able to return to India again in January 2018 and this time we were able to capture some of this incredible work on video. In the near future this video footage will become available on the Eye Openers web site www.eyeopeners.org.au/church

Anglican Aid has long recognised the high quality of the work of Eye Openers, which has recently been added to the list of Target Ministries for the Diocese of Armidale.



Give your child the Diamond School Advantage...

One school, two campuses, three unique learning environments.

Secondary Girls Day and Boarding
Brisbane Street Campus
140 Brisbane Street, Tamworth

Secondary Boys Day and Boarding
William Cowper Campus
242 Moore Creek Road, Tamworth

Phone 02 5776 5100

www.calrossy.nsw.edu.au





Polly's surprises

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

John Bunyan



Polly Wong became a Christian in Hong Kong after attending an Anglican church with her cousin. She came to the University of New England in 2004 to study for a Master's degree, and attended St Peter's Cathedral in Armidale. In March 2006, she got a huge surprise!

I WAS INVITED BY THE FORMER DEAN of St Peter's Cathedral, Reverend Stephen Williams to return to Armidale to take up a position as an Overseas Student Worker. I commenced my work in December 2007 and was happy with so many opportunities for overseas students to be a part of our church family and see how Christ loves them through us.

Of course, there are difficulties in ministering to people from over 80 countries! It can be quite challenging to keep in mind the different cultures. Broken English with totally different accents, as well as being sensitive to different cultural backgrounds and situations, means that always being wise in each situation can be a bit harder.

But I want you to know is that even though cross-cultural ministry is challenging, it is very rewarding because of the students' friendship and getting to know something entirely different from Australian culture. In fact, many international students are more open to learning and talking about Jesus.

Please let me share about one of my Muslim students. We will call her “Beauty”.

I met Beauty in September 2011, when she came to Armidale to do PhD studies with another six students from the Middle East. Because they needed help with language for their studies, they contacted me at St. Peter's Cathedral. After that we became friends, especially when Beauty and her female friend got a two-bedroom unit close to where I live. We visited each other more often.

Two years later, Beauty stayed with me after her best friend completed her studies, and went back home. During her stay with me, we had so much fun! We did lot of shopping together, and we went to the Cathedral's Sunday services, as well as some other things. We prayed before meals each time and we read the Bible together sometimes. Furthermore, we had very genuine conversations and discussions about Christianity and the Koran. Friendship was growing! But I never thought God was at work on her heart.

One evening, when we were driving home after attending a church activity, not too far away from my home, a man suddenly jumped out and wanted to stop us! I was absolutely shocked by the unexpected thing that then happened. I was surprised, not because I was able to swerve my car on to the other lane so as not to hit that crazy man, but because Beauty shouted out “Thank you, Jesus”, at least three times! I looked at Beauty and I asked (just to clarify), “Did you say ‘Thank you Jesus?’” Beauty replied, “Yes, I did. I did say ‘Thank you Jesus’”. She smiled and said, “You taught me that Jesus Christ is not a prophet, He is the Son of God and He is our only Saviour. I believe what you told me!! Now, I see He is our God and saves us from sin”.

Beauty went back to her home town in February 2015, and we are still in touch. She asked us to present her with a Bible for her to take back home, so she can show it to her family. I love working with international students. They are always full of surprises!

About

The Link, Number 64
April, May 2018
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”.

Anglican Diocese of Armidale
PO Box 198 Armidale 2350
T: 02 6772 4491 F: 02 6772 9261
www.armidaleanglicandiocese.com

Editor: Robyn Powell
E: robyn@redropewriting.com

Art direction and assistance from
Stephen Mason and Anglican Media Sydney.

Our thanks to all photographers featured in this edition.