
January 2005
Issue 10

The Next Step

REFORMING
ALLIANCE

Within the Uniting Church in Australia



Canberra Christian Fellowship in the Methodist Tradition

Carols Service on 19th December

It was a real joy to participate in our 2004 carols service. Close to 100 people gathered in the Gospel Chapel where together we sang about Jesus' birth. Musical contributions from members of Chinese, Fijian, Korean and Vietnamese congregations and the Bible reading by Dinah from Papua New Guinea gave our time together an international flavour and was a reminder that God's gift to us of Jesus was a gift to all people everywhere.

We were glad so many stayed on for supper outside afterwards as it allowed everyone to mingle, chat, exchange Christmas greetings and get to know each other.

A retiring offering collected \$250-00 which was given to the Christmas Bowl Appeal.

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Things to consider

As we enter our second calendar year, there are some matters we need to consider.

In 2004 we met once each month for a service and also began meeting a second time each month for a time of fellowship which took the form of teas and / or times of hymn singing.

What should we do in 2005? Is one service a month enough? For those who are associated with other congregations, it may be. Others regard our fellowship as their spiritual home and may welcome an increased number of services.

We have a Tuesday Bible Study people can attend. What other between service activities should we undertake and how often? On non-service Sundays is hymn singing all we want to do?

Another matter is our name. We have called ourselves the "Canberra Christian Fellowship in the Methodist Tradition". This name has served us well as it has given us an identity and provided an indication of our spiritual heritage and outlook. Despite that it must be admitted that the name is quite a mouthful. What should we call ourselves? Do you have a suggestion for a better name? Should we wait to see if a new nationwide group of congregations forms, as a result of the current dissatisfaction in the UCA, before we change names in case we become a part of that?

We have so far managed to avoid the rosters and church meetings that we had become used to, but we don't want to exclude the opinions of anyone within the fellowship. If you have thoughts on any matter to do with our fellowship, including the above issues, please discuss them with others so we can all benefit from your thinking. The list of contacts at the end of this sheet may help you to find a first person to talk with.

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Contribution to post-tsunami relief

It was with sorrow that we learned of the widespread devastation and loss of life that resulted from the Boxing Day tsunamis.

After consulting a cross section of our fellowship's people, a donation towards the relief work of \$500-00 was sent to Red Cross from our fellowship.

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Boxing Day service

Rev. Don Purdey, minister at Glenunga Uniting Church in South Australia, was good enough to start his holiday stay in Canberra by preaching at our December service on Boxing Day. We are grateful to Don and thank him for the message he brought to us.

He began his sermon by reminding us that darkness hides things. If someone wants to do something undetected, often they will choose a time of darkness as their actions will be less visible. Many crimes are committed at night, in the dark.

Even though we can be surrounded by darkness, light is able to penetrate that darkness. A candle may not light up a whole dark cave but it remains visible and lights up those things near it.

One of the names given to Jesus is Emmanuel, which means 'God with us'. We are also told that Jesus is 'the light of the world'. With God with us lighting our way in the world we can face life confidently not fearing the darkness.

God keeps us safe. We are His people. Jesus' prayer just before His betrayal (John 17) talks of our relationship with God, the glory that is God's and the eternal life Jesus gives us.

John 3:17 says *"For God did not send his Son into the world to be its judge, but to be its saviour."* ^{TEV}

Jesus provides the means for Christians to come out of the darkness into the light and be part of God's family. ID

Coming Up

Bible Study every Tuesday at 10 am at the Campbell Gospel Chapel, Chauvel Street. (For further details, contact Joyce Hall – 6241 2085). **In recess for Christmas / New year until the 1st Tuesday in February.**

Sunday 23 January 2005 at 5 pm – Dr. E. Dennis

Sunday 13 February 2005 at 5 pm – Fellowship tea

Sunday 27 February 2005 at 5 pm – Rev. Malcolm Richards

Sunday 13 March 2005 at 5 pm – Between service activity

Sunday 27 March 2005 (Easter Day) at 5 pm – Rev. Abraham Tang

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Need help with transport? If so, ask. Someone may be able to help.

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When you get to your wit's end, you'll find God lives there.
