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June - July 2005  
Issue 13

# The Next Step

REFORMING  
ALLIANCE

Within the Uniting Church in Australia



Canberra Christian Fellowship in the Methodist Tradition

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## **Rev. Phil Anderson (Senior Chaplain Army Headquarters)**

Back in May we were fortunate to have Rev. Phil Anderson come and preach for us.

We learned a little about his background through a short interview Ken McPhan conducted, discovering that he is a Canberra boy and finding out something of what is involved in becoming an Army Chaplain.

Phil's subject was 'Strength in Weakness' and he mentioned the importance of fellowship.

He drew our attention to the fact that over time various practices creep into worldly society and into the church. Such changes had in Biblical times sometimes brought Paul to combat them. Today we don't have Paul to come and pull us into line, but we can take heed of warnings he gives recorded in scripture.

Christians should live by the teachings of Christ, not by what the world says is popular.

In closing, Phil suggested we should think of the benediction not in terms of some theological understanding of the trinity but rather as a means of building up the community of faith.

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## **Fellowship Tea**

May was one of those months that just happened to contain five Sundays.

In keeping with our decision to have a fellowship tea on 5<sup>th</sup> Sundays, a fellowship tea was arranged. As always food was plentiful and conversation equally so. We were particularly glad to welcome a good number of Gospel Chapel people who joined us for the evening.

Following the meal we had a discussion on matters to do with our fellowship (which went on a bit longer than we intended) then Alec gave us some background information on one well known hymn which led into a time of hymn singing.

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We don't change the message, the message changes us.

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## **Dr. Howard Bradbury (Anniversary Service)**

We thanked God for one year of meeting together as a fellowship at our 1<sup>st</sup> Anniversary service on Sunday 12 June.

Dr. Howard Bradbury preached and drew attention to the fact that we are part of the ONE Church whose head is Jesus. This oneness in Christ has become particularly evident in the past year as we have got to know fellow Christians from a number of different groups much better – the Gospel Chapel folk, Fijians, Tongans, Chinese, Koreans and Vietnamese in particular. We are all part of one flock with one shepherd.

Once again we were blessed with some wonderful music this time provided by our Korean and Fijian friends.

It was also pleasing to welcome so many of our Gospel Chapel and Chinese Methodist friends to the service and supper afterwards. ID

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## **Sunday 26 June 2005 – Rev. Ron Peters**

What is vision?

Ron Peters produced two meanings for the word that were listed in the dictionary – the power of seeing with the eye and the act of perceiving what is not visible to the eye. He continued by speaking about “A vision for every church”.

He suggested vision in a christian sense is a reflection of what God wants to accomplish through us to build His kingdom. God can see both the visible and the invisible, what we can see and what is beyond our sight. He can see what can be achieved through us without becoming narrowly focused on us.

Ephesians 4 provides God’s vision for the Church. A two word summary of that chapter could be ‘maturing and ministering’. Christ is the head of His body, the Church. He prepares His people to work in Christian service to build up the body.

Having established that we are to work to build up the Church, Ron explained that we need to take account of our circumstances. We all have certain talents and opportunities. It would be unwise to try and use talents we don’t have to minister to people who may not be accessible to us just because a particular ministry works well elsewhere.

Paul wrote some of his epistles while a prisoner. Not great circumstances, but he made the most of the opportunities he had.

Ron provided another example for us to ponder. John and his wife were poor people and John was a little on the rough side. One day he was challenged – ‘Will you leave your sins and go to heaven or will you keep your sins and go to hell?’ John reformed his life. God continued to work in his life and eventually he became a very popular preacher who attracted huge crowds to his services. Unfortunately for John he was a non-conformist preacher at the time of the restoration of the monarchy (1660s). He ended up in prison for twelve and a bit years (over 3 different periods). Like Paul he did what he could in his circumstances and while in prison John Bunyan wrote ‘Pilgrim’s Progress’ which has inspired and helped countless Christians ever since and is considered a milestone in English literature. ID

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## Hughes Family

Many of our fellowship know Rev. Ray Hughes and his family from the days when he ministered at Reid Uniting Church. They have struggled with the same issues that led to the formation of our fellowship and have recently retired back to Canberra.

*Hi Folks,*

*Forrest Gump's mum once said "Life is like a box of chocolates. You never know what you are going to get."*

*The Hughes family has once again been blown out of the water and once again we are calling all our friends to mount a mighty prayer chain to our wonderful God.*

*Young Dave complained about an enlarged testis on Saturday 4 June. That same day we saw a Paediatric Surgeon ...*

*Thursday 16 - A Germ Cell Tumour was diagnosed ...*

*The final pathology shows it was a Germ Cell Tumour which contained areas of teratoma ... In layman's language it means it is an aggressive tumour.*

*The CT Scan showed cancer cells in two spots on the lung and a mass at the base of the spine.*

*... we will travel to Sydney for the start of Chemotherapy on Thursday 23 [June] if all goes well.*

*We are told this treatment will last four - six months and has a 70% success rate.*

*He is very grateful that his 16th birthday (22nd) looks like being free of hospitals. His spirit and faith are strong and is surrounded by the love of God. ...*

*May we call on you to surround him in prayer for total healing.*

*Our sincere thanks to our many friends and may God continue to bless each one of you.*

*Ray, Rosemary and David*

*Hi folks,*

*We thank God for our wonderful friends who have rallied once again to lift up our family in a time of need. Each one of you is special and we greatly appreciate your understanding, love, and prayer for our much loved son. ...*

*With the help of our Lord, David has not had any serious reaction to the treatment so far - the anti-nausea drug needed has been beneficial. We don't expect him to get off scot-free but rejoice in these good days and trust our great God to see him through.*

*The main reaction seems to be tiredness. ...*

*For those who may not have caught up, the treatment will last for approximately six months. Three weeks between each chemo course. Because of the particular drugs being administered all will be given at Randwick and Canberra Hospital will be used for weekly blood tests and emergency admissions in case of fevers etc.*

*... Rosemary and I are very appreciative of all that you are doing and thank God for the wonderful prayer support that now stretches right around the world.*

*Your cards - emails - visits are all special, so thank you so-oooooo much.*

*God bless each one of you.*

*I will update if there is any change and ask you to continue to pray for our David.*

*Love*

*Rosemary & Ray*

In an effort to provide practical and prayer support for David and the rest of the family, a potluck dinner was arranged on Tuesday evening 28 June at Bradburys', open to anyone who wished to help, whether they knew the Hughes' or not.

A dozen people met for a plentiful meal, gave donations and prayed. Others who were unable to be present also sent contributions.

The following day Ruth Bradbury was able to visit the family taking with her a financial gift to help with their expenses and some of the unused food from the previous evening. They were accepted with much gratitude.

We continue to pray for David as his treatment progresses and for the whole Hughes family, that God will stay close to them all as they face the challenges life brings.

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## Coming Up

### We meet at the Campbell Gospel Chapel, Chauvel st., Campbell

**Bible Study every Tuesday at 2-30 pm** at the Campbell Gospel Chapel, Chauvel Street.  
(For further details, contact Joyce Hall – 6241 2085).

**Sunday 10 July 2005 at 5 pm** – Rev. Malcolm Richards (Missionary Service)

**Sunday 24 July 2005 at 5 pm** – Dr. E. Dennis

**Sunday 31 July 2005 at 5 pm (5<sup>th</sup> Sunday)** – Fellowship Tea

**Sunday 14 August 2005 at 5 pm** – Rev. David McDonald (Minister of Crossroads Church)

**Sunday 28 August 2005 at 5 pm** – Rev. Abraham Tang

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Malcolm and Elizabeth Richards are returning to the Democratic Republic of Congo to work in the Diocese of Kindu.

In the Diocese of Kindu, Malcolm and Elizabeth will be involved in training pastors and lay leaders. This will mean working in a team to write a new syllabus for the rural Bible School and train the Bible school teachers. Once this is done they will teach in the Bible School and also travel throughout the diocese to provide ongoing training for pastors on location. Elizabeth will particularly be involved in teaching pastoral skills to clergy and lay people. "I am concerned for those affected by trauma associated with the war and hope to train suitable people in counselling," she said.

From the CMS website [www.cms.org.au](http://www.cms.org.au)

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