

April 2009
Issue 32

The Next Step



Canberra Christian Fellowship
(in the Methodist Tradition)

SCRIPTURE UNION DINNER – 24 MARCH 2009

Recently, eleven members of the Canberra Christian Fellowship attended the Scripture Union Dinner held at the Hellenic Club, Phillip.

During the night, various speakers highlighted the work that Scripture Union undertakes in government schools within the ACT. Not only does SU support chaplaincy with schools and colleges but also runs voluntary lunchtime groups: SUPA (primary age) and SUIS (secondary age). The ACT Branch of SU has been working in schools for more than 30 years



A Scripture Union Snapshot within schools is as follows

- Encounters more than 6000 students every year through chaplaincy
- Impacts over 1000 young lives through camps and school groups
- Supported by 200 trained and approved volunteers
- Currently partnered by 40 churches committed to caring for their community

A magnificent meal was served to 320 attendees and I received positive feedback from our table about the high standard of food. An appeal to help Scripture Union continue their work in schools was carried out amongst those who attended. Such appeals in previous years ensured that school chaplains gained extra days for their very important work to continue.



As we were leaving, we had a positive conversation with Steve Lindner who is the chaplain at Campbell High School. We told Steve that our thoughts and prayers were with him as he carried out his important outreach to the students.

Warren Clendenning
School Chaplaincy Support Contact

The Canberra Christian Fellowship table enjoying the Scripture Union Dinner

L to R: Coral, June, Ken, Maurine, Warren, Marie, Ann, Howard, Valda
Missing from photo but inset: Denis and Ruth

Harvest Festival - 29-3-2009



Harvest Festival services are something that many of us remember from our younger days. The wonderful displays of produce and the thanksgiving to God for all his goodness and provision to us seem to stick in the memory.

Joyce Hall preached for our Harvest Thanksgiving service and also was right in the thick of things arranging the display. I'm sure everyone else played their part in some way whether it was by providing goods, setting up, helping with the special meal, cleaning up afterwards or attending to other chores that needed doing. Thank you to all.

The produce that made up the display was taken to the Salvation Army depot in Dickson the following day where it was gratefully received.

It was a particular pleasure to have Matti and Ritva (the Finnish Lutheran minister and his wife) join us for the service and meal.



Joyce spoke on 'God's Good Gifts' and began with the tale of a minister who was known for his prayers of thanks and gratitude to God. One foul evening when rain was bucketing down and his congregation were all half frozen, they wondered what he could possibly be thankful for that night. The answer soon came as he began his prayer. "Thank you God that every day is not like this day".

Unlike that minister, some people seem unable to do anything but complain.

What about us? We know God has been good to us but are we thankful for what God does, or do we simply take it for granted, or perhaps even expect all God does for us as a right?

We must be different by displaying our thanks and gratitude to God and using those gifts God has given us to the best of our ability.

Joyce looked at the list of gifts from God as recorded in Romans.

Romans 12

⁶ *We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith.*

⁷ *If it is servicing, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach;*

⁸ *if it is encouraging, let him encourage; if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously; if it is leadership, let him govern diligently; if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully.*

A lady was given a bunch of primroses by her sister. They gave her great pleasure and she felt she could share that pleasure by passing the flowers on to a friend. The friend too enjoyed the gift but was thinking of an elderly lady she knew. The flowers were passed on. This older lady was very appreciative but she knew of someone else who had been recently widowed. She could use the cheerfulness the flowers seemed to bring. The widow was grateful for the thoughtfulness and the beauty of the flowers. The lady she worked for part time had also been particularly kind and so she decided to give the flowers to her as a sign of her appreciation. The primroses ended up back with the lady who had first been given them. The blessing of the primroses had been shared and increased several times over through that sharing.



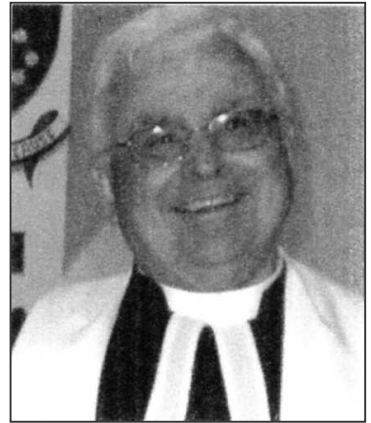
Joyce suggested that in using God's gifts to bless others, we will find that we are blessed.

ID

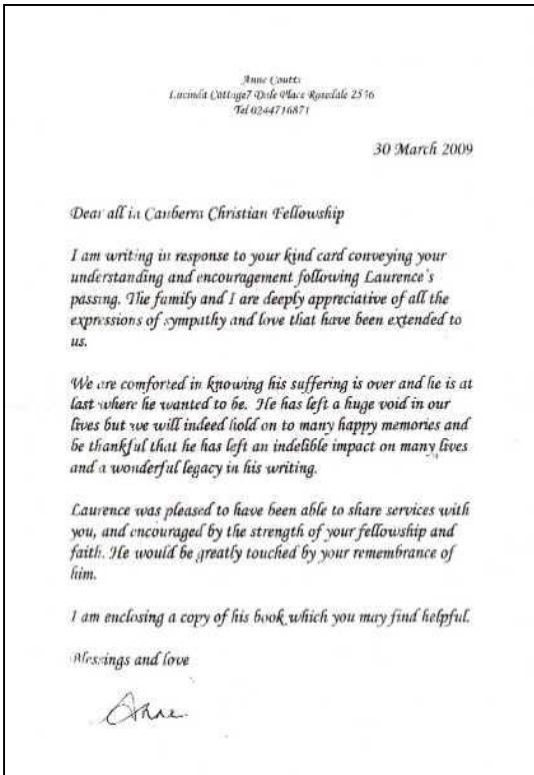


Rev. Laurence Coutts

Rev Laurence Coutts had a very varied career as a teacher, public servant and consular official. He then trained for the ministry of the United Reformed Church in the UK and served as a minister in Wilmslow, Cheshire. He returned to Australia and ministered at Scots Church in Melbourne and the Uniting Church on the South Coast. He preached to our Canberra Christian Fellowship on November 27, 2005 on the subject "Wherein lies the unity of the church." In 2006 he contracted bowel cancer. We were saddened to hear of his death at Rosedale on the South Coast and sent our sympathies to his wife Anne and their family. She replied and sent us a copy of his insightful book entitled "Jesus' encounters with women" which was published in 2008. I hope that many may wish to read this very interesting book.



JHB



An atheist decided he was being discriminated against because there were a number of Christian holiday celebrations included in the calendar each year, for example Christmas and Easter. He argued there were no Atheist holidays included in the calendar.

He took his complaint to court and after arguments were completed, the Judge gave his decision.

The Atheist's case was thrown out. The Judge ruled that in the Bible, Psalm 14: 1 states 'The fool says in his heart, "There is no God."', so an atheist is a fool and each year a day for fools is celebrated – April 1, April Fools day.

Just an example of things we learn from Ted at Bible Study!

Canberra Korean Uniting Church and Reid

A Korean congregation has been worshipping at Reid Church for very close to 25 years now.

On Saturday, 4 April 2009, a service was held at Reid to celebrate the transfer of the property from the Uniting Church Presbytery of Canberra Region to the Korean Commission / Canberra Korean Congregation.

Several of our fellowship attended the service and the meal that followed, to join our Korean friends in celebrating the beginning of this new phase of their worship and service at Reid.

Some of us have known and worked with the Koreans to varying extents for all of their time at Reid, however in the last few years, I think it is fair to say, we have got to know each other a lot better as we have regularly met and worshipped together. Certainly we are very glad to welcome Rev. Kevin Kim when he preaches for us and the Korean choir when they come and sing. Equally it is a joy to join with them when we are invited to their activities.



The former Reid Congregation achieved great things for God in the nearly 80 years it existed and numerous wonderful Christian people attended Reid, contributed to Reid's worship and service to God and either moved on to service elsewhere or ended their life's journey while still at Reid. While Reid has many past glories to remember, I'm sure it has many future glories to look forward to.

In Rev. Kevin Kim and the present Korean congregation, God has placed Reid in good hands.

ID

John Howard, former chairman of the Reid Congregation, recounting a little of the history of Reid Church

Rev. Abraham Tang - Palm Sunday, 5-4-2009

Once again we were very glad to welcome Rev. Abraham Tang to our pulpit.

As he stepped up to begin the sermon, I was pondering on the words of the hymns we had sung so far during the service, marvelling at the thoughts they expressed and of the insights they contained. I was not alone. Abraham began by commenting on the hymns and what they said, then revealed that the hymn we had just sung (No. 199) was one of the very first he had ever learned. His mother used to sing it to him when he was young as he does now to his children. He sang the chorus for us in Mandarin.

*In the Cross, in the Cross,
Be my glory ever;
Till my raptured soul shall find
Rest beyond the river.*

The sermon "The Brutal Cross" was quite thought provoking and Abraham closed it with the story of an art collector.



A man became interested in art and began to acquire a collection of some of the most famous and valuable works in the world. His collection was worth a fortune.

The man had a son, who shared his interest and proved to have an expert eye for art.

Unfortunately war broke out and the son went to play his part. After some time the son went missing and eventually the man's fears were proved well founded when the son was confirmed dead.

The father was understandable upset but he heard that his son had died bringing a fellow soldier back to safety. As time passed he heard more stories of how his son had helped many other soldiers who had also needed assistance.

One day a man visited him, saying he had something for him. The visitor turned out to be the soldier the son had just rescued when he was killed. The soldier knew of the art collection and being an artist himself, although not of any renown, had painted a picture of his rescuer. This he gave to the father.

The painting became the father's most treasured possession, not because of any artistic merit, but because it reminded him of his much loved son. Other priceless works were moved to make way for it.

In due course, the father died, and all his fabulous art works were to go into an art auction which attracted people from all around the world.

The first painting was the son's portrait. It failed to attract a bid and the crowd clamoured for the auctioneer to get on with 'the good stuff'. He insisted that the portrait must be sold. In the absence of any bid he finally accepted an offer well under the starting price from someone who had known the man and his son but had little money with which to buy any art. A sigh of expectation spread through the room, but it was stifled when the auctioneer announced that the auction was over.

Answering the demands for an explanation, he said his instructions were quite clear – whoever bought the picture of the much-loved son got EVERYTHING.

Abraham explained that in a similar way, God's much-loved Son died and if we accept God's son, God gives us EVERYTHING. We get the benefit of Jesus sacrificial death for us. We get forgiveness for our sins. We get a righteousness that allows us access to God. We get God's Spirit to stand by us, guide us, help us and strengthen us and we get to spend eternity in God's presence.

Finnish Lutherans' Musical Evening



Concert of Sacred Music

FinnSonido from Finland
choir leader Irene Ahonen

08.04.2009 7pm
Finnish Lutheran Church of Canberra

Wow, what a great evening of music!

The FinnSonido choir, their musicians and soloists provided great entertainment with wonderful singing. I was very glad there were so many of our fellowship people there to enjoy it.

My Finnish language skills are non-existent so I couldn't follow the subtleties of the lyrics but the music itself conveyed much feeling and the specially prepared English version of the programme provided some information on what was being sung.

A very enjoyable evening!

ID



Mr Perttu Mathlin sang three solos during the evening, the last one being "The Holy City" which completed the programme for the night. Several people have commented how much they enjoyed his singing, with "The Holy City" as a particular favourite.



**Clockwise from top left : Programme cover,
FinnSonido (the violinists, piano accordionist, guitarist and pianist were to the right of the choir and missing from this photo)
Mr. & Mrs. Ahonen and Mrs. Ritva Nuorala & Rev. Matti Nuorala
Mr. Perttu Mathlin (he can really sing!)**

Thanks to Ritva for the photos

Coming Up

Bible Study

Tuesdays at 2-30 pm at Holy Trinity Finnish Lutheran Church, Turner.

Currently studying 1 Kings

All welcome - contact Joyce Hall (6241 2085) for more information

Discussion Group

Fridays at 2-00 pm at Holy Trinity Finnish Lutheran Church, Turner.

Currently studying "The Sermon on the Mount"

All welcome - contact Ted Dennis (62593487) for more information

Services

We meet at **Holy Trinity Finnish Lutheran Church, Cnr. Gould and Watson Streets, Turner**

Sunday **19th April** at 5pm – **Rev. Bob Prior**

Sunday **26th April** at 5pm – **Mr. Laurie Hockridge**

Sunday **3rd May** at 5pm – **Mr. Zane Edwards**

Sunday **10th May** at 5pm – **Rev. Ron Peters**

Sunday **17th May** at 5pm – **Rev. David McDonald**

Sunday **24th May** at 5pm – **Rev. Ray Hughes**

Sunday **31st May** at 5pm – **Rev. Peter Nelson (Anniversary Service)**



**Rev. Bob
Prior**



**Mr. Laurie
Hockridge**



**Mr. Zane
Edwards**



**Rev. Ron
Peters**



**Rev. David
McDonald**



**Rev. Ray
Hughes**



**Rev. Peter
Nelson**

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