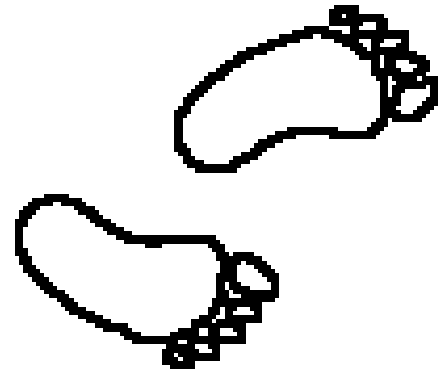


January, February 2010
Issue 41

The Next Step



Canberra Christian Fellowship
(in the Methodist Tradition)

Just a Spring Chicken

Late last year Jack notched up another birthday, and since it was one with a zero on the end (and included a nine as well), a bit of a fuss was made of him.



Shirley and Jack celebrating Jack's big day after our service

A Bit of Fun

Toward the end of Sunday service, the Minister asked, "How many of you have forgiven your enemies?" 80% held up their hands. The Minister then repeated his question. All responded this time, except one small elderly lady.

"Mrs. Neely, Are you not willing to forgive your enemies?"

"I don't have any", she replied, smiling sweetly.

"Mrs. Neely, that is very unusual. How old are you?"

"Ninety-eight", she replied. The congregation stood up and clapped their hands.

"Oh, Mrs. Neely, would you please come down in front & tell us all how a person can live ninety-eight years & not have an enemy in the world?"

The little sweetheart of a lady tottered down the aisle, faced the congregation, and said, "I outlived them all".

Dinah



Not so long ago I heard of a lady who had recently visited hospital. Her stay had been considerably brightened by a very friendly nurse who made the patients feel so much better just through her warm and happy manner. It turned out that the nurse was Dinah.

Dinah's story begins in a small village at Rabaul on the island province of New Britain, Papua New Guinea. Her father was a Methodist Pastor and Dinah was one of two daughters and two sons. Memories of her early years include helping her parents with various chores: cleaning in and around the house, washing and laundry. That may sound ordinary enough, but laundry Rabaul style was different - No simply filling the washing machine, letting it complete its cycle then hanging out the clean, wet clothes on the line, - Dinah used to lug her family's washing to the beach where there was a well to wash

it. There was no on-tap water supply at home.

At around age 10, Dinah began her education at the mission school which was later integrated into the New Britain province government schooling system. At the mission school Dinah felt protected. The girls were encouraged not to stray away from the mission vicinity. She also felt a personal responsibility. Anything of a dubious nature that she might attempt would reflect back on her father who, as a pastor, was well respected and held in high regard. There were still chores – maintaining a garden and collecting firewood and coconuts. After school there was opportunity for a swim at the beach.

Secondary schooling was done as a boarder, with only occasional visits home due to the difficulties of travel in New Britain province.

Dinah began her working life as a translator for the church. She translated some small children's books from English to her mother's language Kuanua. She also assisted people with an interest in learning Kuanua to get to know the language. After approximately a year, Dinah became a clerk at a development bank. This job too continued for around a year.

A Queenslander came into Dinah's life and a move to Sydney resulted. Two years there was followed by a bit over a year in Townsville and then a move to Canberra. At first lonely and homesick with no friends or family close by to call on, Dinah began to feel more comfortable in Australia when she started working in a Townsville home for handicapped people as a nurses' aide. She started making new friends and appreciated the responsibility her job gave her.

Canberra has been home now for around 33 years, although she did return to Rabaul for four years, working as a tour guide for the provincial government there during that time. She likes Canberra although she has reservations about Canberra winters. Canberra is relatively clean and still not too big plus she has a good group of friends here.

For a period Dinah worked at the Papua New Guinea High Commission as a receptionist, also showing visiting school groups around the High Commission and telling the students about PNG. These days she is an enrolled nurse at Canberra Hospital (Woden) having done her training at the old Royal Canberra Hospital in Acton.

A turning point in her life was the fishbowl to ocean experience of discovering the world beyond what she had previously known from her Rabaul life.

Dinah's parents gave her a solid church upbringing which instilled in her guidelines for her life. Her faith has continued to grow gradually. It has given her a desire to help people and helped her move on with life at times when she has been confronted by the sadder and more brutal side of life. Dinah has had two daughters. The elder daughter, Lina, was killed in a hit and run accident in Dickson, A.C.T. in 1996 when she was 22 years old. Dinah's younger daughter is now 30 and living and working on the Gold Coast. Dinah mentioned Ruth as one special friend who has been there for her during the ups and downs she has faced for the whole of her time in Canberra.

Dinah has a desire to always do better and strives to do so, within the limits of what is right.

When discussing interests, Dinah's willingness to help people became obvious. Around ten years ago, Dinah instigated a fundraising effort to provide things needed by the hospital in Rabaul. With assistance from a church, enough was raised to dispatch 20 boxes of materials. Dinah has done volunteer multicultural advocacy work and a contact from that activity invited her to assist in accompanying people to court ready for appearances in relation to domestic violence matters. Dinah is involved with AIDS Action doing reception and public awareness work and in preparing printed matter. Even in day to day contacts she is an active and willing helper. She mentioned in passing an elderly neighbour she had taken to the doctor and she was going to pick up some bread or milk for someone on the way home from our chat.

From her growing up years, Dinah remembers relay running games with friends and playing a knuckles type game. For a time she played netball. These days she reads educational books, perhaps focussing on life matters, health or finance. She enjoys walking around Lake Burley-Griffin or up Mount Majura or Mount Ainslie.

She considers herself quite fortunate. She has not just survived but carved out a satisfying life in our western society. Although a woman and black, she has encountered little negativity. She has been accepted for herself.

Her life is here in Canberra. She now feels little in common with old PNG friends and extended family, although funerals and other special occasions can reestablish old bonds. Papua New Guinea has changed and is still changing a lot. She believes she would now be regarded as an outsider in their community.

Although Dinah is unable to be with us every week due to the demands of her nursing job and the shifts she works, we are very glad to have her as part of our community.



ID

Mistaken Identity

A man was being tailgated by a stressed out woman on a busy boulevard, when suddenly, the light turned yellow, just in front of him. He did the right thing and stopped, even though he could have beaten the red light by accelerating through the intersection.

The tailgating woman hit the roof, and the horn, screaming in frustration as she missed her chance to get through the intersection.

As she was still in mid-rant, she heard a tap on her window and looked up into the face of a very serious police officer. The officer ordered her to exit her car with her hands up. He took her to the police station where she was searched, finger printed, photographed, and placed in a holding cell.

After several hours, a policeman approached the cell and opened the door. She was escorted back to the booking desk where the arresting officer was waiting with her personal effects.

He said, "I'm very sorry for this mistake. You see, I pulled up behind your car while you were blowing your horn, flipping off the guy in front of you, and cussing a blue streak at him. I noticed the 'Choose Life' licence plate, the 'What Would Jesus Do?' bumper sticker, the 'Follow Me to Sunday-School' bumper sticker, and the chrome-plated Christian fish emblem on the trunk.

Naturally, I assumed you had stolen the car."

Leaving the church early

"I hope you didn't take it personally, preacher," an embarrassed woman said after a church service, "when my husband walked out during your sermon."

"I did find it rather disconcerting," the Pastor replied.

"It wasn't out of any disrespect to you," insisted the church-goer.

"Fred has been walking in his sleep ever since he was a child."

Indonesian Carols

The Indonesians were one group we were very pleased to have join us for our carols last year. We were also glad to be invited to join them at their carols (held at St. Andrew's Presbyterian church) the following week and a good number of our people were able to attend. I am told it was a wonderful time together and the food afterwards was delicious and plentiful.



Sunday 20th December at 5pm – Holy Trinity Finnish Lutheran Christmas Carol Service

A good number of our congregation were pleased to be able to join with the Finnish congregation at their Christmas Carol Service on 20th December. Matti and Ritva had kindly printed the program for us in English so we could join with the Finnish congregation in singing the carols in English while they sang in Finnish. It was a very happy service which included singing by some of the children. Following the service we all joined with our Finnish friends for a traditional meal of rice porridge with stewed fruit followed by Finnish pastries and tea and coffee. We all enjoyed our evening and getting to know more about the Finnish traditions.

RB

Sunday 10th January at 5pm – Dr. Howard Bradbury – God of the Impossible

Howard chose Luke 1: 26-56 as the reading for this week.

The story told can be divided into three parts.

Scene 1 tells of the angel Gabriel coming to Mary and telling her she was to have a baby who was to be named Jesus. Gabriel's last words to her were "nothing is impossible with God" (v. 37). Mary accepted God's plan.

Scene 2 tells us of Mary's visit to her relative Elizabeth. Elizabeth recognises that Mary does not doubt what Gabriel told her and states Mary will be blessed for that belief.

Mary's song to God makes up scene 3. She proclaims God's greatness and is humbled that He has blessed her as He has. She states God is her saviour. God's saving work is in motion and so it is as good as done. Her song is not just about herself. God's goodness extends to all who fear Him.

When God acts, our appropriate response is worship, praise, belief, trust and obedience.

ID

Sunday 31st January at 5pm – Rev. Peter Nelson - In the Presence of Greatness

In Luke 5: 1-11 we read of Jesus talking to the crowd from a small fishing boat beside the sea of Galilee. Jesus loved people, he loved communicating with them and Simon was listening too.

After Jesus had finished speaking he said to Simon to pull out into deep water and let the nets down for a catch. Perhaps Simon thought "what does a carpenter know about fishing?" They had been fishing all night and had caught nothing. Yet, perhaps grudgingly, Simon agreed and his boat was soon filled with fish and also those of their partners, so much so that their boats began to sink.

Jesus is the master fisherman. He is the expert on everything and we must respect and obey Him. Simon obeyed Jesus' request and he got lots of fish. Simon was overwhelmed by the greatness of Jesus. Simon said "I am a sinful man" and Jesus answered "don't be afraid."

It is intimidating witnessing for Jesus, handing out tracts. He says "don't be afraid." Jesus wants this message of life to be shared by ordinary people like you and me. Simon and the others left their boats and followed Him. Every believer must be an ambassador for Jesus, being willing to serve and showing obedience, honesty, humility and sacrifice.

HB

Sunday 7th February at 5pm – Rev. Ray Hughes - Sometimes its OK to be absentminded

From Isaiah 43: 8-25, we read that God wanted the Jews to remember that He had brought them out of Egypt and to believe in Him. But they were stuck back in the past and when Jesus came the Pharisees would not believe.

We must look and see what Jesus is doing now. The church should live in the world of today and not focus on the past. God is doing a new thing!

Do you need to be set free from the past? Are you afraid of death? Jesus has provided for us forever and he gives us the victory. The greatest need for the world is to praise God and to keep praising Him for all his wonderful gifts to us. Remember that each one of us holds a special place with God.



HB

Sunday 14th February at 5pm – Pastor Mark Warren - Wouldn't it be great to have a rich benefactor



Pastor Mark Warren told us that we would be mad to ignore God, yet most people never consider Him. Psalm 111 tells us that wisdom lies in fearing God. In the Old Testament God was scary, but as we read in Hebrews 4: 14 we have a great high priest Jesus, so we can approach God's throne of grace without fear, because we have Christ. Furthermore, we read in 1 John that love is of God and that perfect love casts out all fear.

We must work out our own salvation with fear and trembling. The smart thing is to stick close to God. Why should we do this? Because God has a good track record. He pulled off a massive coup by taking the slaves out of Egypt and giving them a wonderful land in which to live. He had a covenant or agreement with the Jews (now called the old Covenant) which was replaced with the new covenant by the coming of God to earth in Jesus. Under the new covenant we put our trust in Jesus our saviour.

HB

Sunday, 21 February 2010 – Rev. Dr. Murray Earl – How to be a Christian in the Church

Many of us have managed a holiday break away from home over the Christmas / New Year period. Our preacher, Murray Earl has only just returned home from time away, much of it in Spain. His overseas sojourn, however, was work not play.



In a practical frame of mind, Murray spoke on "How to be a Christian in the Church".

Recognising the fact that many kitchens are redesigned in church goers minds during dry sermons, Murray provided some alternatives. One bishop suggested dry, boring sermon activities could include

- Practice sleeping with your eyes open.
- Attempt to remove the paper wrapping from lollies in your pocket silently.
- Compose a chant that you'd like to use in the service, eg 'What do we want? A shorter sermon! When do we want it? Now!'
- Set yourself a mathematical problem to solve, eg Take the average sermon lengths of several denominations and the proportion of Christians that attend their services then work out the average sermon time for the denominations combined.
- Think about what you'd like to say to the preacher right now, eg 'Be sincere; be brief; be seated.' (Franklin D. Roosevelt).
- Play sermon cricket. 1 run for every mention of church meetings, rosters, etc., 2 runs if God or Jesus is mentioned, 4 runs for mentions of evangelism, 6 for mentions of conversion. You are out if the meaning of the original Hebrew or Greek is explained.

While that bishop was probably still trying to remove his tongue from his cheek, Murray continued with 10 tips that he thought might help us as Christians in the Church.

- **Your presence makes a difference.** We believe in the priesthood all believers and should practice that. We minister to each other through our presence at church.
- **Take the message home.** Make the message yours - think it through.
- **Make the service the highpoint of your week.** It is a time when God's people share worship together – the communion of saints.
- **Listen to the readings and hymns for God's message.** There is a pearl of great price there from God for you.
- **Church is a team game – look for your role.** God has something for everyone to do.
- **Worship is a battle to be sustained.** There are always distractions but we should focus on God and the praise, honour and glory that are rightfully His and give it to Him through our worship.
- **Take God seriously and humanity seriously.** We need to care about each other and to pray.
- **Be a learning community of faith.** There is much to learn as a Christian and worship provides a great opportunity to discover more of what God is saying to us.
- **Enjoy life.** We are not forbidden from having fun, but we should be serious about things that matter.
- **When issues arise, ask yourself 'does it matter?'** Many issues occur within churches. Many are of little or only fleeting importance. Are they worthy of the potential upset they sometimes cause? If an issue arises that really is important, stick to your guns.

ID

ANU Market Day

At the beginning of each university year, the ANU holds Market Day which provides an opportunity for university societies and groups, and other groups interested in promoting themselves to university students, to set up a stall and let new students and whoever passes by know about their existence, activities and contact details.

As we meet so close to the university, it was felt worthwhile to be part of Market Day. Howard, Warren, Dominica, Antoinette and Derek were all part of our presence as their schedules permitted during the day. Leaflets were handed out and some conversations took place. Time will tell if we attract new people to our fellowship, however our presence and that of several other churches, at least lets the university community know that there are people serious about the Christian faith and keen to share that faith with others.

ID

Coming Up

Bible Study

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

Currently studying Daniel

All welcome - contact Joyce for more information

Discussion Group

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

Currently in recess

Wednesday Evening Group

Wednesdays at 6-30 pm at Vince and Dominica's, Campbell.

Currently studying John

All welcome - contact Vince / Dominica for more information

Prayer Meeting

3rd Monday of each month at Marie's.

Next meeting – 15th March at 2-00pm

All welcome - contact Alec for more information

Services

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

Sunday **28th February** at 5pm – **Mr. Laurie Hockridge** – Harvest Festival
Sunday **7th March** at 5pm – **Pastor Steve Prior**
Sunday **14th March** at 5pm – **Rev. Bob Prior**
Sunday **21st March** at 5pm – **Rev. Kevin Kim**
Sunday **28th March** at 5pm – **Rev. David McDonald**
Sunday **4th April** at 5pm – **Rev. Dr. Campbell Egan**
Sunday **11th April** at 5pm – **Rev. Steve Estherby** – Family Voice Australia
Sunday **18th April** at 5pm – **Rev. Ray Hughes**
Sunday **25th April** at 5pm – **Pastor Mark Warren**
Sunday **2nd May** at 5pm – **Rev. Abraham Tang**
Sunday **9th May** at 5pm – **Rev. David McDonald**
Sunday **16th May** at 5pm – **Rev. David McDonald**
Sunday **23rd May** at 5pm – **Rev. Kevin Kim** – Church Anniversary



**Mr. Laurie
Hockridge**



**Pastor Steve
Prior**



**Rev. Bob
Prior**



**Rev. Kevin
Kim**



**Rev. David
McDonald**



**Rev. Dr.
Campbell
Egan**



**Rev. Steve
Estherby**



**Rev. Ray
Hughes**



**Rev. Mark
Warren**



**Rev. Abraham
Tang**



**Rev. David
McDonald**



**Rev. David
McDonald**



**Rev. Kevin
Kim**

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