

April 2010
Issue 43

The Next Step



Canberra Christian Fellowship
(in the Methodist Tradition)

Easter Morning

Just before Easter, we heard that some of the Austral-Asian Church people were meeting for an early morning (6-30 am) Easter service at the top of Mount Ainslie. Those young and fit enough were planning to climb the mountain, starting at 5-30 am to get to the service. We were most welcome to join with them.

5-30 came around and a fair number of intrepid mountain climbers (including 4 from our fellowship) were gathered ready for the ascent. The climb was a challenge but not too strenuous and we made it up in time for the sunrise and the service.

The service was simple, consisting of some joyful Easter songs, a prayer from Pastor Peter Nelson of the Austral-Asian Church and a short talk from Pastor Chris Nelson of the Woden Valley Bible Church. (The Woden Valley Bible Church jointly organised the service with the Austral-Asian Church.)



Some of those gathered to celebrate Easter on Mount Ainslie

After the service (and the descent down the mountain) a number of us met at McDonalds for breakfast together.

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Sunday 28th March at 5pm – Rev. David McDonald – Teach us to number our days

Psalm 90 is a psalm about time – the time God gives us. It is often used when reflecting on a life that is over or nearing its end, however it is also useful for the young in thinking about life, its fleeting nature and God's preeminence.



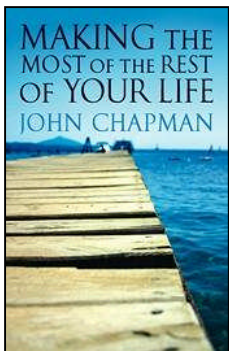
We see that God's perspective on time is different to ours. (v. 4). God is outside of time.

The psalm speaks of death and judgement. These are things we should take seriously.

- Moses, the psalmist, asks that God teach us to use the time we have wisely. We should remember God in all we do, making each day holy and productive.
- Moses asks that God satisfy us. That may come through a better attitude towards our own circumstances as we recognise that true satisfaction results from God's unfailing love towards us. Of course, Jesus is the perfect expression of God's unfailing love for us.
- 'Establish the work of our hands' (v. 17) asks that God make our lives worthwhile. If we allow God to use us and work through us we can achieve something that will last.

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John Chapman, "Making the most of the rest of your life"



Crossroads Church has recently started a new congregation in the south of Canberra. John Chapman spoke at the beginning of this new church as he did at the very first Crossroads service. David McDonald knows John very well and brought a copy of John's latest book with him for our congregation as he thought it might be of interest to us.

He quoted John in telling us about the book. *"I am 76 years old. You may think it strange that I am writing about making the most of the rest of our lives. Humanly speaking, I don't have all that much left. The average male lives for 79 years. That doesn't leave me much time. On the other hand, if there is life after death, if eternity is really eternity and I have the greater bulk of my life to look forward to, then that makes all the difference. If there is life after death, is it possible to make the most of it? Is it possible to prepare for that life, or is it totally a matter of chance? These are the questions I want to address in this short book."*

Sunday 4th April (Easter Day) at 5pm – Rev. Dr. Campbell Egan – The Emmaus Experience



Some years ago, Campbell visited Israel and while there made a point of going to Emmaus.

The Biblical story of the journey to Emmaus is part of the joyous Easter experience.

Two sad and dispirited men, overwhelmed by recent events were travelling back to their Emmaus home. They were also confused, as they had heard from some women that Jesus was not dead but had risen. A stranger joined them and as they journeyed He explained scripture to them, pointing out that the Messiah was to suffer. On reaching their home, they invited the stranger to join them. The stranger broke bread for a meal and it was then they recognised Him to be Jesus. Jesus disappeared

from their sight and they immediately set off back to Jerusalem to share their experience with the disciples there.

- Jesus explained the Scriptures to them as they walked along together. The Scriptures were important to the Jews and they should be for us. The Bible is where we can learn of God's dealings with His people and what Jesus did and taught.
- Jesus reminded them that the Messiah had to suffer, as the prophets had explained, before He entered His glory.
- They recognised Jesus as He broke bread. We can know Jesus through the Scriptures and the sacraments.
- They had a message to share! They couldn't keep it to themselves. They immediately set off back to Jerusalem to tell the others of their wonderful experience.



Katherine Warren with Sylvia Egan after the service

Our service was enriched as Katherine Warren sang "I know that my Redeemer liveth" from Handel's "Messiah" for us.

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Sunday 11th April at 5pm – Rev. Steve Estherby – The writing is on the wall

Daniel 5 tells us the story of King Belshazzar. He held a banquet during which a hand wrote on the wall. Noone was able to interpret what was written until Daniel was called for and he told Belshazzar *"This is what these words mean: Mene: God has numbered the days of your reign and brought it to an end. Tekel: You have been weighed on the scales and found wanting. Peres: Your kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and Persians."* (Daniel 5: 26-28). The king was killed that night.

King Belshazzar had given praises to gods made by men but failed to acknowledge the true God. God's judgement came down against him. Individuals, governments and organisations today need to repent and are subject to God's judgement just as Belshazzar was. Unfortunately there are many bad things being promoted and becoming commonplace in our society. People don't like to be told they are doing the wrong thing, so these days such people often claim vilification against them if anything is said against their way of life. The writing is on the wall for our society. God has set us free from the eternal consequences of our sin, but we must live with the earthly consequences.

The Church has a prophetic role to fulfil. Christians need to speak up for the standards God has set.

Steve listed a number of statistics dealing with drug use, gambling, divorce, etc. to illustrate the state of our society and they did not paint a pretty picture. They are facts that have become almost taboo subjects but they need to be addressed. All the different social problems affect people and God loves each one of those people.

We cannot afford to be indifferent. If nothing is done, we will keep heading towards disaster.

There are many forces working against family, faith and freedom in our society. **Family Voice Australia** is not asking us to just do as they suggest in combatting them, but to use the resources they can provide, to think about the issues, pray about them and then discern what God is asking of us.

Faith in God is not just a private matter. We have a faith that is world changing. We must listen to God and be obedient to Him.



Howard with Steve Estherby

Alec's Birthday

Ninety years ago a young fella came into this world and was given the name Alec. That same Alec is now part of our Fellowship and over the last week has been proving his stamina and endurance by moving from one birthday celebration to another. He told me there had been six celebrations up to the time we spoke, so I guess us singing Happy Birthday and providing another cake to be cut made seven.



Alec cutting the cake with Howard, Coral and Maurine looking on

In response to our best wishes, Alec told us how important relationships had been to him throughout his life. God always seemed to put the right person in the right place for him to meet and to help him through life's journey.

Although the parties were a little tiring, he had been enjoying them greatly.

A Dog, Moonlite and a Cut with an Axe behind the Knee

Not content with just plodding through each day without any excitement in their lives, a group of 16 people headed off to Gundagai for a day trip to see what that town had to offer. The number would have been even greater if some who wanted to come had not been prevented by mishaps, appointments and lectures.



Audrey, Marie, Ann, Dominica and Antoinette at morning tea with a woollen wall hanging behind them

On arriving in the town, we gathered at the local museum for morning tea and to explore their displays. Morning tea was almost a mini lunch (the scones, jam and cream deserve special mention) and the collection held something of interest for everyone. There were old tools, machinery, lace work, old household items, aboriginal items and all sorts of artifacts from Gundagai's past. An old two room bark hut was out the back and gave a real feel for what life would have been like for so many in the early days of settlement.

Several bushrangers operated in the vicinity of Gundagai, one of whom was Captain Moonlite. Named Andrew Scott, he had grown up in an Irish vicarage. He, with his parents moved to New Zealand and he eventually

ended up in Australia. Despite being a lay preacher in the church for a time, Scott turned his talents to bank robbery, bushranging and other forms of theft, going by the name Captain Moonlite. He was imprisoned, released, arrested again, escaped, captured again and finally hanged. Over a hundred years after his hanging, his remains were moved to the North Gundagai cemetery. (I hope none of our lay preachers are tempted to follow his example).

Early Gundagai was established on the Murrumbidgee River flood plains. At 11pm on 23rd June, 1852 a disastrous flood swept through the town, washing it away and claiming 83 lives. (Various sources claim different numbers of lives lost, however we were told that it was the greatest number of deaths due to natural disaster in Australia up until the recent Victorian bushfires). There were many deeds of heroism during the flood including those of aboriginal man Yarri who saved many people using his frail bark canoe.



**Ruth and Dinah outside an old bark hut.
The long drop loo is out of the picture to the right**

The name Gundagai (according to some sources) is derived from aboriginal words meaning 'a cut with a hand-axe behind the knee'. This might seem a little obscure but apparently refers to the local geography. The axe is Morley's Creek which joined the Murrumbidgee at the



At the Railway Station

**L to R: Howard, Ann, Wendy (kneeling - our guide), Audrey (sunglasses), Ian, Marie, Laurie (mostly hidden), Norma (looking between heads), Lea, Coral, Dominica (partly hidden), Ian (almost totally hidden), Joyce, Antoinette (partly hidden).
 Photographer: Ruth, Off exploring elsewhere: Denis and Dinah.
 We need some practise forming a group for a photograph so noone is obscured!!!**



Rusconi's Marble Masterpiece



back of a dog leg in the river. Due to movements in the river bed, that part of the Murrumbidgee is currently more of a snake than a dog leg.

Highlights of our tour included the restored railway station, the Prince Alfred Bridge and railway bridge, Rusconi's very impressive 'Marble Masterpiece' and of course on the way home the 'Dog on the Tuckerbox' five miles from Gundagai.

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Sunday 18th April at 5pm – Rev. Ray Hughes – Transforming our minds to Christ



The story of Philip and the Ethiopian eunuch from Acts 8: 26-40 was the Bible passage Ray used as a basis for his sermon.

Philip was instructed to go to the Jerusalem to Gaza road so that is what he did.

The Ethiopian was keen to have the Scriptures explained, wanted to learn from them and was transformed by them. He was seeking God and when this special opportunity to come closer to God came his way, he took it and was baptised.

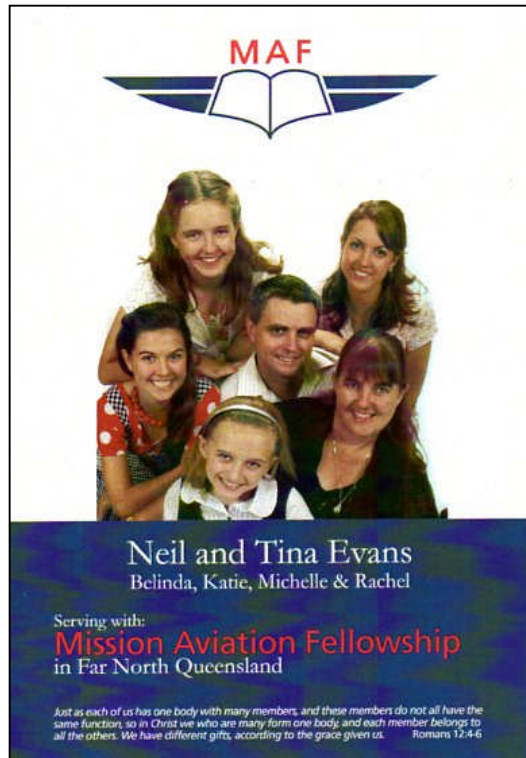
When God calls to us, are we listening?

Do we have the courage to respond to God’s call?

What are we doing to be conformed to the mind of Christ?

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Mission Aviation Fellowship



Two thirds of the Evans family have been visiting Canberra, staying with Vince, Dominica and Antoinette while they are here. It seemed a good opportunity for them to tell our Fellowship something of the work MAF does.

Daughters Michelle and Rachel began by explaining how a whole range of skills are required to allow MAF to operate. Pilots are necessary to fly the planes, however maintenance staff are required to keep the planes airworthy. Baggage handlers pack and unpack the planes, administration staff arrange flights and logistical matters and Information Technology personnel make sure communications and computer equipment is operating correctly. They took us through a day of MAF activity which gave us a bit of a physical workout.

Neil is not a pilot but belongs to the Information Technology staff and is based in Cairns. He was able to give us a brief but comprehensive overview of the ministry and service MAF provides in transporting people to and from distant or inaccessible locations. As the MAF website says “For almost 60 years, MAF has flown over jungles, mountains, swamps and deserts to bring thousands of men, women and children medical care, emergency relief, long-term development and Christian hope.”

ID

Campbell High Chaplaincy – Rev. Steve Lindner

Steve is grateful to God for opportunities that have arisen for him to have meaningful discussions with students and some staff. He asks that we pray he will have wisdom in talking with people and providing support when needed and that he will increase his knowledge and understanding so as to better fulfil his role.



Meeting

As has become a custom for our Fellowship, we met for a light meal before our meeting got underway.

We enjoyed quiche, bread, salad and tomatoes from Warren's garden. This was followed by apple crumble, icecream and watermelon – quite a satisfactory repast.

The meeting proper did what meetings do - confirmed minutes, received a treasurer's statement and discussed other business. Financially we are stable and discussion focussed on the best way to increase our support to a couple of causes.

On 27th June we are holding a Wesley Hymn Festival and are inviting several Methodist churches to join us. Our normal practise is to have a light meal after our services but there was concern about the ability of people to move about to get food if we have a large attendance as expected. John Wesley's birthday was 28th June, so it was agreed we would restrict the meal to birthday cake and a cuppa.



Ready for the meeting

L to R: Coral, Maurine, Wendy (totally hidden but you can see her shoes), Norma, Isobel, Denis, Joyce, Ian, Laurie, Warren, Vince, Alec, Marie, Arnold and Ailsa.

It was pointed out that we have several people who have difficulty hearing all that is said from the pulpit.



L to R: Marie, Arnold, Ailsa, Howard and Dominica.

One suggestion was that more use be made of the lectern when it is placed in the middle of the front of the church as people speaking from there tend to be better heard. The benefits of various types of microphone were also mentioned. We will continue to try and find a satisfactory solution for this problem.

Dinah has been part of our congregation for quite some time, however we were very pleased to welcome her as a member.

The prayer meeting earlier in the day was not held due to the busyness of the day, so, not wanting to go without a time of prayer, our meeting was extended a little to allow for a prayer time. ID

Racecourse Chaplaincy – Rev. Bob Prior



Bob asks for prayer that God will give him wisdom in properly using his time. He has been praying that he might find a way of using friendships he has built up to generate opportunities to present and explain his faith.

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 – 17th May 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 25th April at 5pm – Pastor Mark Warren

Sunday 2nd May at 5pm – Rev. Abraham Tang
(Indonesian choir)

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
(Korean choir)

Sunday 30th May at 5pm – Rev. Dr. Murray Earl

Sunday 6th June at 5pm – Mr. Zane Edwards

Sunday 13th June at 5pm – Mr. Craig Webber – Scripture Union *

Sunday 20th June at 5pm – Rev. Bob Prior

Sunday 27th June at 5pm – Rev. Peter Nelson – Wesley Hymn Festival



Pastor Mark
Warren



Rev. Abraham
Tang



Rev. David
McDonald



Rev. David
McDonald



Rev. Kevin
Kim



Rev. Dr.
Murray Earl



Mr. Zane
Edwards



Mr. Craig
Webber



Rev. Bob
Prior



Rev. Peter
Nelson

* to be confirmed

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