

March 2015
Issue 78

The Next Step

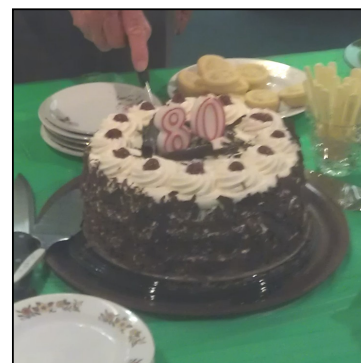


Canberra Christian Fellowship
(in the Methodist Tradition)

Just a mere youngster

I believe that on being told there was no bread for the people to eat, a famous French lady of the past answered "Feed them cake."

After our service on the 15th March, we were lucky enough to have both bread (in the form of sandwiches) and plenty of cake. John M. was good enough to supply us with a sufficiently diet defying excuse so we could tuck into the delicious, rich cake guilt free - a birthday. I thought he was a tiny bit older, at least into his teens, but when I looked at the cake, it had the numerals 0 and 8 on it and I wouldn't expect a birthday cake to lie.

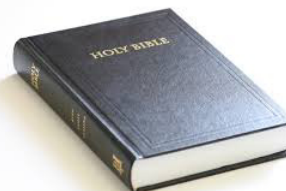


Wednesday Bible Study

It is exciting when an opportunity comes along to talk about the things we believe with others who are interested in learning about The Bible and faith.

Such an opportunity has presented itself.

Elsie is part of the Chinese Methodist Church but has been kind enough to play the piano for us in our services. Some of her friends have also come along. That interest pointed the way to our new Bible Study which we pray will enable interested young people to explore the Christian faith. We have spoken with Li Fang from the Chinese Methodist Church and she is very supportive of this Bible Study.



Dominica has been in touch with Natasha in Scotland via the internet and passes on a "Hello" to us all from her. Natasha and Paul have linked up with a Korean congregation and Natasha is also keen to find a local church there to be part of.

Socially, she has joined a tennis group.

The Scottish weather demands some acclimatising and Natasha is missing Canberra.

Harvest Thanksgiving



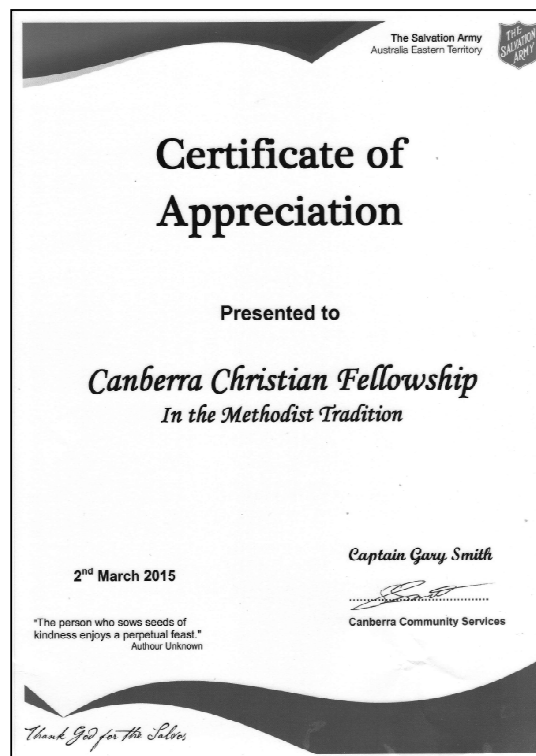
Our Harvest Thanksgiving service held on Sunday, 1st March was again a great time of thanksgiving for all God's gifts particularly remembering the vegetables, fruits and flowers.

Once again Joyce organised a beautiful display in the front of the church including two spectacular bowls of roses from her amazing garden.

Many of us remember many Harvest Thanksgivings, or Harvest Festivals as they used to be called, from our past. Much of the fruit and vegetables in those days were produced in our own gardens and the following Monday evenings there would be an auction sale of the goods with the proceeds going to the church. I well remember my grandmother raising her fingers at the auction to bid for some honey on the comb or sweet corn on the cob – both very special treats in the 1930 and 1940s. Most of those times have passed in Australia although some small country churches still have their Harvest Thanksgivings. Many churches in the English villages still follow that tradition which includes a Harvest Supper followed by the sale of goods.

Our Harvest Thanksgiving this year was followed by a harvest supper of quiches, salads and fresh fruit platters which we all greatly enjoyed. After our service all the produce was packed in three cars and the following morning taken to the Dickson Salvation Army for them to distribute to needy people in the area. The Salvation Army are always very appreciative of our donation and this year sent us a special certificate of appreciation for our support over past years.

RB



"The Rev" of A.C.T. cricket

You never quite know who is going to turn up in the pages of The Canberra Times.

Peter Nelson, who of course we know very well, was featured in that paper's sports pages on Sunday, 15th March.

He has mentioned his enjoyment of cricket a few times when he has preached for us, but the paper highlighted the milestone he reached in playing 300 games for the North Canberra Gungahlin Cricket Club.

With some teammates just starting their teenage years, Peter plays for the love of the game and is regarded as a legend at his club.

The newspaper also briefly mentioned his continuing church work (although retired) and his Australian Institute of Sport chaplaincy role.

Peter's words ended the report - "I'm part-time at everything. I'm like Polyfilla, I just fit in where there are gaps."



Sunday, 15th March – Mr. Zane Edwards – Can it be that simple?

Confucius once said "Life is really simple, but we insist on making it complicated". We are very good at complicated so can we get back to simple? Dejan Stojanovic suggested that "The most complicated skill is to be simple."

The church is not immune to making things complicated. Justification, sanctification, substitutionary atonement, propitiation, imputation and remission are just some of the words used when talking about the Christian experience. Do we really understand those terms? Do people outside the church understand?

Albert Einstein believed "Everything should be made as simple as possible, but not simpler."

The Christian faith is simple! It is fully summed up by the verse **"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."** [John 3: 16 NIV]

What is required? **Belief!**

- Many people find that such a simple requirement for God's gift of eternal life offends their sense of justice. Justice has in fact been served and God's gifts do not come with strings attached.
- Churches are not immune to the tendency to complicate things and have on occasions felt they controlled access to heaven. The Church does have a role, not as a controller but more as a courier delivering God's message and gift of eternal life to those who believe.
- 'If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.' This is a common word of warning given when we are dealing with offers we receive in the course of our lives. **God's offer can be trusted!** Galatians 3: 1-5 is a reminder from Paul to the Christians in Galatia that they received the Holy Spirit through belief, not by any other means. It is a good message for us too.

"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."

ID

Rev. Phil Anderson - Army & A.C.T. Emergency Services chaplaincies

Rev. Owen Chadwick - Universities chaplaincy

Rev. Steve Lindner - Campbell High School chaplaincy

Rev. Peter Nelson - Institute of Sport chaplaincy

Please remember Phil, Owen, Steve, Peter and their chaplaincy work in your prayers.



Services over recent weeks have included the following:



**Rev. Ron
Reeson**

**Mr. Zane
Edwards**

Sunday 8th March – **Rev. Ron Reeson** - If I only had a week to live
Sunday 15th March – **Mr. Zane Edwards** - Can it be that simple?

Scripture Union Regeneration Dinner 2015

Once again our Fellowship was well represented at Scripture Union's regeneration dinner. In fact our group (bolstered by a few friends) was the second largest group there.

The meal was worth waiting for and the speakers were encouraging, inspiring and certainly interesting.

Di Priest, the School Chaplaincy A.C.T. director, was as always enthusiastic. She spoke about "Skin in the game". By that she meant that it was VERY important to meet with people in person, to build relationships, have conversations and interact closely. God can and does use ordinary people to do extraordinary things. He can place people in the right place at the right time to achieve his purposes.

Anna Davey, the newly appointed Director of Ministry Development, mentioned her experience of a Scripture Union camp. She discovered she didn't enjoy sleeping in tents, she ended up with diarrhea and in fact everything seemed bad to her, however she said she had the best time. The loving example, testimony and friendship of the camp leaders 'spoke' to her. Anna is keen to find ways of converting faith into action. She sees Scripture Union as having a mission rather than a model which gives flexibility in determining future directions and ways of connecting with the community.



Keynote speaker Cliff Armitage has a long history of Scripture Union involvement. He has run ISCF (Inter School Christian Fellowship) groups for many years, organised and DJ-ed for many young people's discos, filled various roles in numerous SU camps, been part of the SU organisational structure as well as being active in his local church and doing charity work. Why? He found many non-christian youth came along to ISCF with their friends. The balls and discos were fun so again attracted substantial numbers of non christians. The camps involved plenty of outdoor activity which again had a very wide appeal. Cliff enthusiastically welcomed the opportunities these activities provided of taking his faith and that of the other christians involved out into the territory of the community at large. He found the 'fun and fair-dinkumness' meant participants were open to hearing and considering the testimonies of the leaders / organisers / workers and encountering Jesus themselves.

Cliff's message was that we should all be serious about getting out into the community with our faith as there are so many people with little or no knowledge of Jesus. SU provides opportunities to do this. ID

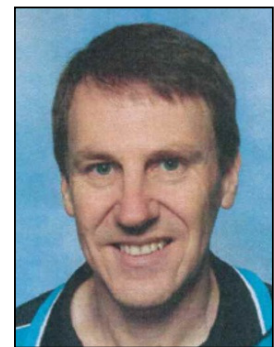
Steve Lindner (SU supported chaplain at Campbell High) writes:

What do I do as Chaplain?

I'm paid for 12 hours per week as a chaplain and typically work on a Thursday and Friday.

Every day is different but some things I do are:

- Run a free breakfast program 2 mornings a week for students (in 2014 we provided 8000 serves of toast and cereal)
- Run lunchtime groups with youth workers from local churches that include games and have discussions on spiritual topics and values
- Meet one on one with students, staff and families to provide social and emotional support
- I join in with a boys sports/leadership class and provide mentoring for year 9&10 boys
- I support students at risk of disengaging from school
- I also organise Mental Health and Student Wellbeing Programs for our whole school community.



I need help! ... funding has not increased since 2007. ... I need to raise \$5,000 to bridge the financial shortfall that exists for me to be able to continue as school chaplain.

from Chaplaincy News, Campbell High School, Term 1 - 2015

O for a thousand tongues to sing

Charles Wesley was suffering a bout of pleurisy in May, 1738, while he and his brother were studying under the Moravian scholar Peter Böhler in London. At the time, Wesley was plagued by extreme doubts about his faith. Taken to bed with the sickness on May 21 Wesley was attended by a group of Christians who offered him testimony and basic care, and he was deeply affected by this. He read from his Bible and found himself deeply affected by the words, and at peace with God. Shortly his strength began to return. He wrote of this experience in his journal and counted it as a renewal of his faith; when his brother John had a similar experience on the 24th, the two men met and sang a hymn Wesley had written in praise of his renewal.

One year from the experience, Wesley was taken with the urge to write another hymn, this one in commemoration of his renewal of faith. This hymn took the form of an 18-stanza poem, beginning with the opening lines 'Glory to God, and praise, and love,/Be ever, ever given' and was published in 1740 and entitled 'For the anniversary day of one's conversion'. The seventh verse, which begins, 'O for a thousand tongues to sing', and which now is invariably the first verse of a shorter hymn, recalls the words of Peter Böhler who said, 'Had I a thousand tongues I would praise Him with them all.' The hymn was placed first in John Wesley's A Collection of Hymns for the People Called Methodists published in 1780. It appeared first in every (Wesleyan) Methodist hymnal from that time until the publication of Hymns and Psalms in 1983. from Wikipedia

Joy to the World

The words and lyrics of the old Christmas carol 'Joy to the World' were written in 1719 by Isaac Watts (1674-1748). The father of John Watts was a Non-conformist and so extreme were his views that he was imprisoned twice. His father's influence over Isaac was demonstrated when he chose to attend Non-conformist Academy at Stoke Newington in preference to a University. Watts was ordained as a Pastor of an Independent congregation. He wrote many hymns and Carols and was awarded a Doctor of Divinity degree by the the University of Edinburgh in 1728. The music to the carol is by George Frederick Handel (1685-1759). <http://www.carols.org.uk/ba27-joy-to-the-world.htm>

Stille Nacht

The facts

1816 Joseph Mohr creates the text to "Silent Night!" in the form of a poem in Mariapfarr in the Lungau region where he was living at the time.

1818 In the schoolhouse of Arnsdorf, on Christmas Eve, Franz Xaver Gruber composes a melody to fit the text.

1818 "Silent Night! Holy Night!" has its world premiere on Christmas Eve in the St. Nicholas church of Oberndorf near Salzburg, performed by Franz Xaver Gruber and Joseph Mohr.

First performance - Oberndorf, 1818

"It was the 24th of December of the year 1818, when the then assistant priest Joseph Mohr at the newly established parish of St. Nicholas in Oberndorf handed over to the organist represented by Franz Gruber (who at the time was also school teacher in Arnsdorf) a poem, with the request to write a fitting melody for 2 solo voices together with choir and for accompaniment by guitar." These are the words of Franz Xaver Gruber which he wrote on December 30, 1854 in his "Authentic Account of the Origin of the Christmas Carol, 'Silent Night, Holy Night!'" Later the same day, on the 24th of December, Gruber came to the musically talented Mohr and handed over to him his composition. As Mohr liked what he saw, this song was included in the Christmas mass that evening. Mohr sang the tenor part and provided accompaniment with guitar, while Gruber sang bass. According to Gruber, the song was met with "general approval by all" in attendance (mostly shipping laborers, boat builders and their families).

In Gruber's "Authentic Account," there is no mention of the specific inspiration for creating the song. One supposition is that the church organ was no longer working, so that Mohr and Gruber therefore created a song for accompaniment by guitar. Surrounding this premiere performance of "Silent Night!" many romantic stories and legends have been written adding their own anecdotal details to the known facts. http://www.stillenacht.at/en/origin_song.asp

When I survey the wondrous cross

Words: Isaac Watts. Charles Wesley reportedly said he would give up all his other hymns to have written this one.

<http://www.hymntime.com/tch/htm/w/h/e/whenisur.htm>

We Give Thee But Thine Own

Scripture References: st. 1 = 1 Chron, 29:14, 1 Peter 4:10 st. 2 = Deut. 26:1-5 st. 3-4 = Matt. 25:35-40

When he wrote this hymn, Bishop William W. How appended a reference to Proverbs 19:17: "Whoever has pity on the poor lends to the Lord"—a Scripture that characterizes not only this hymn text but also much of How's ministry to the poor in the east side of London, England.

"We Give You But Your Own" is a hymn about stewardship, about bringing our gifts to be used for the church's ministry of word and deed to needy people—in other Words, *our* ministry for Christ. Like Psalm 50 and Isaiah 1, this text declares that everything in creation already belongs to God and that what we give and what we keep are all to be used gratefully in God's service (st. 5).

http://www.hymnary.org/text/we_give_thee_but_thine_own

The day thou gavest, Lord, is ended

John Ellerton (b. London, England, 1826; d. Torquay, Devonshire, England, 1893) wrote this evening hymn in 1870 for *A Liturgy for Missionary Meetings*. The text's dominant theme is the growing worldwide fellowship of the Christian church and its unbroken, unceasing offering of praise and prayer to God. Even though Victoria may have chosen the hymn to symbolize the British Empire, stanza 4 wisely reminds us that earthly kingdoms pass away—only the kingdom of God stands and grows forever.

Ellerton borrowed the hymn's first line from an anonymous text in *Church Poetry* (1843). He then revised his text for the hymn's publication in the Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge's *Church Hymns* (1871), of which he was coeditor. Possibly prompted by the suitability of the worldwide church image as a symbol for the British Empire "on which the sun never sets," Queen Victoria chose this hymn to celebrate her Diamond Jubilee in 1897. Victoria's use of the hymn assured its popularity in the English-speaking world.

Educated at King William's College on the Isle of Man and at Trinity College, Cambridge, England, Ellerton was ordained in the Church of England in 1851. He served six parishes, spending the longest time in Crewe Green (1860-1872), a church of steelworkers and farmers. Ellerton wrote and translated about eighty hymns, many of which are still sung today.

http://www.hymnary.org/text/the_day_thou_gavest_lord_is_ended

Coming Up

Tuesday Bible Study

Tuesdays at 2-30 pm.

All welcome - contact Joyce for more information
Studying Corinthians

Wednesday Bible Study Group

Wednesdays at 5-00 pm.

Catering for Uni. students - contact Howard for more information

Friday Study Group

Fridays at 2-00 pm.

All welcome - contact John M. for more information
Studying Acts

Prayer Meeting

3rd Monday of each month, usually at Marie's.

All welcome
Next meeting 20th April

Contacts

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Services

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



Mr. Mike Poulton



Rev. Peter Nelson



Rev. Dr. Campbell Egan



Mr. Robert Nicholls



Mr. George Huang



Mr. Peter Bentley



Mr. Mark Warren



Rev. Ray Hughes



Mr. Revin Blanchard



Rev. Peter Nelson

- Sunday 22nd March at 5pm – Mr. Mike Poulton (Service in Song)
Sunday 29th March at 5pm – Rev. Peter Nelson
Sunday, 5th April at 5pm - Rev. Dr. Campbell Egan (Easter)
Sunday, 12th April at 5pm - Mr Rob Nicholls (Christian Blind Mission)
Sunday, 19th April at 5pm - Mr George Huang
Sunday, 26th April at 5pm - Mr. Peter Bentley
Sunday, 3rd May at 5pm - Mr. Mark Warren
Sunday, 10th May at 5pm - Rev. Ray Hughes (Mothers' Day)
Sunday 17th May at 5pm – Mr. Revin Blanchard
Sunday 24th May at 5pm – to be advised
Sunday 31st May at 5pm – Rev. Peter Nelson

A Church from One Gospel

Several years ago an American missionary, Mr. L. L. Legters, was making a tour of exploration in Mexico, for the purpose of discovering how to bring the Gospel to Indian tribes that had never been reached by a missionary. Away in the interior he came to an Indian town and was amazed to find a church of nearly three hundred believers.

As he was the first missionary to visit the town he was curious to know how this group of believers came into existence. How could they hear without a preacher? He learned that nine years before an old Indian had heard the Gospel while away from home, and had been given a Spanish Gospel. When he returned home he found his nephew had learned a little Spanish and the uncle pressed him into service. As the Gospel was read the old man would hurry with the lad to a neighbor, to share it with him; then to another neighbor, and then to a group. As a result of reading that one Gospel there were nearly three hundred believers in this one Indian town - more than half of the village were real Christians.

from The Latter Rain Evangel, Chicago, July 1930 (found while looking for something very different on the internet)