

December 2022 - May 2023  
Issue 154

# The Next Step

Canberra Christian Fellowship  
(in the Methodist Tradition)



Canberra Aboriginal Church

Also distributed to

It is quite some time since the last Next Step, so much so that it feels like I am compiling a historical newsletter.

The days, weeks and months may have slipped quickly past us however God's work and our contribution to that work has continued throughout that period as has our worship.

## OPI



Opi Nduati was briefly in Canberra recently. This time the reason for his trip was not primarily to visit supporters of iAfrika, but to give away the bride at a wedding in Brisbane. Some years ago he assisted a young orphan girl back in Kenya. She later was able to come to Australia and train as a nurse. Now, having met 'the love of her life', she wanted to get married and asked Opi if he would fill the role of her father and 'give her away'. Having taken part in that joyful occasion, Opi was very quickly visiting supporters in Brisbane, Canberra and Wollongong before returning to Kenya.

Opi was able to speak at the Yarralumla Uniting Church on 14 May and, as other Canberra supporters, we were invited to join them at their service (in the morning) to see him before he moved on to Wollongong.

Opi gave a particularly encouraging description of iAfrika's current activities.

Back in June 2008 when we first met Opi, it was not long after Opi and his wife Esther had taken a small number of boys into their own home to save them from life on the streets of Nairobi.

*"I Afrika has now grown! We have a rehabilitation centre in Lusigetti, a semi rural area 35 kilometres from Nairobi with facilities for housing sixty boys, a foster home for girls and boys as well as a newly established Transition House to support boys who have just left the streets. Our focus is on rescue, rehabilitation, reintegration, and education of vulnerable children, with the aim of creating happy, dignified adults capable of sustaining themselves and their families. The Aubrey Newman Academy (the primary school on-site) employs teachers and a headmaster who provide education for the rescued children and for children of both sexes from the surrounding community. Older children attend secondary boarding schools offsite.*



*In most cases, I Afrika works to restore and then sustain ties between the children, their families and communities. It also provides support and employment for destitute widows and grandmothers who need help to care for their dependents, either employing them at the centre or establishing them with small businesses whilst continuing to fund their children's education.*

*The centre supports a growing number of disabled and disadvantaged children in the community of Lusigetti, in many cases offering free schooling to children who would otherwise have no access to education, and medical care to those with long term physical needs, including amputees, epileptics and children with HIV and Hepatitis. I Afrika provides outreach including food, medical aid and emergency legal representation for an additional 600 young people living in the slums and on the streets in different locations around Nairobi. The property has 3 acres of farmland and currently grows basic crops and a couple of farm animals to help us feed the children."*

*We believe children belong in family homes. Unfortunately, some of the children who come to I Afrika do not have any living family members or they are unable to be found. In some cases, the families are unable to take adequate care of the children. We have dedicated spaces for these precious children to stay in a home environment, with a few of their friends and a house mother. The House Mother takes care of these small groups of children like they are her own. We currently have a foster house for younger boys and one for our girls with plans to build more home-like environments for children who will attend our school long-term in accordance with Government regulations.*

*'the streets are no place for any child'. We want to see every one of the tens of thousands of children currently living in the horrific circumstances on the streets of Nairobi taken home. We want to see their lives transformed through the loving power of Jesus.*

**<https://www.immanuelafrika.org/about>**

Opi gave us a number of examples of children taken from the streets who are now returning to the general community with skills they can use to move forward in life and benefit society as a whole - mechanics, medical workers, administrators, pastors, etc..

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### **Fijian Church**

We have had a long association with the Canberra Fijian Methodist Church congregation and Rev. Paul Tabulutu.



Paul has ministered to Fijian congregations in many different parts of our country including such far flung places as Sydney, Griffith and Darwin. Earlier this year he was able to pass a proportion of the work on to a new ministry colleague.

Identifying a danger of new Fijians to Brisbane falling away from the Church as a result of there being no church there that met their needs, Paul was keen to travel to Brisbane and start a new Fijian congregation. He needed financial help for travel, accommodation and establishment costs and approached us for assistance.

Two weeks later we were pleased to learn of the success of Paul's mission that we were able to in part facilitate.

We have a God given responsibility to build up the Church as a whole as we are given opportunity. It was a blessing to be able to do just that on this occasion.

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Every month or two I receive a phone call from Malcolm at Mission Aviation Fellowship (MAF).

He asks about our Fellowship and then prays for us, asking God's blessing on us and addressing our current needs or concerns.

I get many calls from organisations thanking me for previous donations and wanting more. I could gladly do without those calls, however I look forward to the calls I get from Malcolm !





Back in April we received a call informing us of a conference and service where Canon Andrew White would be speaking.

Andrew received publicity some years ago as Vicar of St George's Church, Baghdad, the only Anglican church in Iraq, until his departure was ordered in November 2014 by the Archbishop of Canterbury due to security concerns. He became known as the Vicar of Baghdad.

Andrew has undertaken negotiations and mediation in numerous dangerous / deadly disputes with some success. He has sat down to eat with terrorists, extremists, warlords and the sons of Saddam Hussein, with presidents and prime ministers. He invited ISIS to dinner as they threatened to take Baghdad.

*"Isis said, 'You can invite us to dinner, but we'll chop your head off.' So I didn't invite them again!"*

There used to be 1.5 million Christians in Iraq but now there are only 260,000, he says.

More than 1,200 men, women and children who worshipped with him have been killed in recent years.

*"If you want to make peace, you can't just do it with the nice people. Nice people don't cause the wars."*

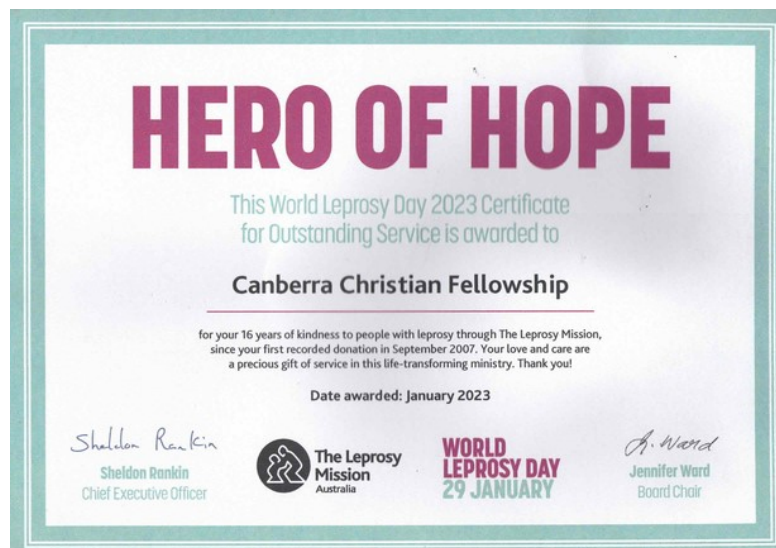
Suffering from Multiple Sclerosis, Andrew now says "I see myself as the pastor of the Iraqi refugee community in Jordan. I am providing them with food, housing, education for their children and a clinic to give them healthcare." He also remains one of the key global voices concerning the plight of the persecuted church and is dedicated to raising awareness of this issue in all of his work.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/people/canon-andrew-white-vicar-of-baghdad-on-leading-a-church-in-iraq-and-being-in-the-crosshairs-of-isis-a6716616.html>

Trish was able to attend the conference and we cancelled our service for 23 April which enabled our people to attend the service at St. Andrew's Presbyterian, Forrest which has their evening service at the same time as ours.

We have been glad to support numerous efforts to do God's work in different ways and in different places.

We receive thanks and feedback from those organisations we assist, again in different forms. The Leprosy Mission sent us a certificate to show their gratitude.



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### From the Hays in South Africa May newsletter

It is now nearly four months since our return to South Africa and our precious family at iKhethelo. It was a delight to be welcomed back so warmly by all the children and staff. During the ten months we were away on home assignment, eleven new children came to join the iKhethelo family. What surprised us was how we were welcomed and immediately accepted by these new children. Most of them met David only briefly in November, but none of them had met Janenne. But the way the other children had spoken about us in our absence, prayed for us, and anticipated our return, it was as if these new children already knew us.

...

While it has been a real joy to be back with our iKhethelo family, it has also been difficult being away from our family in Australia. So it is with very mixed feelings that we share the news with you that we have decided to finish our time at iKhethelo and will soon return to live back in Australia. This has been a very difficult decision to make. After much prayer, as well as seeking the counsel of others, we believe it is the right decision. We will be returning to Australia by the end of June. ... Please pray for us as we make this transition.



...

On a practical level, we will continue to serve with SIM until at least the end of the year:

David will continue to help iKhethelo with some administrative functions that can be done remotely ...

We will be serving with SIM from Australia on Home Assignment, prayerfully exploring future ministry options with SIM.

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Last year we heard that in 2023 Crossroads Church would be working with several Ministry Trainees to help ready them for Christian work. Part of that training would be to prepare sermons.

It seemed we could assist that training by giving the trainees an opportunity to not just prepare sermons but to gain the experience of preaching them in front of a small, welcoming congregation. Of course preachers (even inexperienced ones) who came to us with a Biblically based message would be a great benefit to us too.

We approached Crossroads and made that suggestion. It received a favourable reception.

We are now waiting for the training to progress to the stage where the students are wanting to visit us and preach the messages from God's Word that they have prepared and God has given them to pass on.

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At the same time our attendances have shrunk, those clergy and lay people we invite to preach for us on occasions have also reduced in number.

To avoid overusing those people willing to come to us and not take on an overwhelming amount ourselves, we have on four occasions so far used recorded sermons that we play back / project.

We are able to select speakers and messages that we consider stick to Biblical truth, proclaim the Christian Gospel and build us up in our faith.

Videod sermons may not be our preferred way to hear God's Word proclaimed or explained however we are glad to have that option when other preachers are unavailable.



If it was now July, I could pretend that the photos from our Carols Service are just part of the 'Christmas in July' fad that so many people these days choose to celebrate.

Since it is only May, I'll have to admit to my super slowness in making them available through 'The Next Step' pages.

### Carols 2022

Musicians



Welcome



Opening Prayer,  
Christine, Aboriginal Church



Carol

Chinese Methodists item

Musicians



Aboriginal Church item



Aboriginal Church item



Trish



Bible Reading

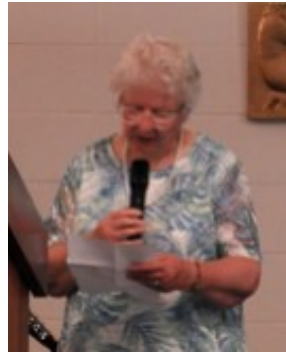
Ian



Talk, Rev. Peter Nelson



Prayer, Joyce



Carol



Close



Musicians at left

Musicians

Chatting afterwards





Scripture Union held their Discovering Life fundraising Dinner on Wednesday, 8 March at the Hellenic Club, Woden.



The guest speaker, Romulo, has long been an active presence in Scripture Union in Fiji.

At first it seemed there would be only a very limited CCF presence however Trish's enthusiasm and contacts resulted in a full table of 12 registered attendees.

As at past dinners, the meal, speakers and catching up with old friends all contributed to a good evening for those who went and I understand the donations given towards SU's work made it a successful event for Scripture Union.

On the 7th & 8th of January, the Finnish Lutheran Church in Canberra celebrated its 50th Anniversary. We were invited to help them celebrate.

On the Saturday there was a time of memories, singing and speeches with lunch providing an opportunity for people to stop and chat to each other over the meal.

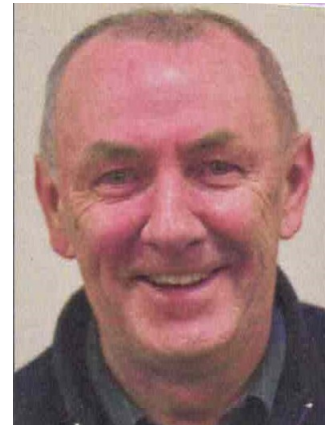
A number of clergy from other Lutheran churches joined in the festivities including Bishop Robert Bartholomaeus who preached at the Sunday service.

Bishop Robert's message was as relevant for us as it was for the Holy Trinity congregation.

Their congregation had been established, for years had flourished with baptisms and weddings occurring regularly but now numbers are declining and funerals have become the most common special services.

God met a need here and His work continues here now in a different form. Meanwhile He is still growing His Church in other places with significant numerical growth particularly in Africa and China.

Our task is to continue to serve Him as best we can and trust in Him. He will continue to bless us.



Bishop Robert was quite interested in our Fellowship when I was speaking with him.

After being married for 30 years, a wife asked her husband to describe her, He looked at her for a while, then said, "You're an alphabet wife ..... A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, J, K."  
She asks .... "What the hell does that mean?"  
He said, "Adorable, Beautiful, Cute, Delightful, Elegant, Fabulous, Gorgeous and Hot".  
She smiled happily and said ... "Oh, that's so lovely, but what about I, J, K?"  
He said, "I'm Just Kidding!"  
Memorial Service will be held Tuesday afternoon.



**Sunday, 14th May - Mr. Phil Ng - Living the good life**

Many people seem to go through life doing as they please and apparently fulfilling all their dreams. Their selfish outlook on life appears to pay off.

The Psalm 73 writer wonders at the value of his life following God’s commands.

Our Christian life is one of service. For the Psalm writer and us, being faithful to God is not always easy especially when those about us act as if God doesn’t exist.

The psalmist faces a dilemma. He sees the ungodly doing as they wish and profiting. Comparing his own life he feels envious and as if God is far away.

This feeling persists until the psalmist comes into God’s presence. At that point he recognises the true reality. Things might seem good for the ungodly but they are on slippery ground. Appearance is not reality and their final destiny is destruction unless they turn to God.



Should we leave them to their fate? It is an opportunity to share God’s love with them.

Life might be tough, but God is always with us, guiding us and watching over us. The letter to the Romans speaks of present suffering but also of the hope we have from God.

The secret of life for us is to fix our eyes upon Jesus.

The more we focus on Him and are captivated by Him, the less we will be concerned by worldly success or rewards the world offers.

ID

**Coming Services**

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



**Mr. Mark Warren**

Sunday **28th May** at 5pm – **Mr. Mark Warren** (19<sup>th</sup> Anniversary)



**Prayer**

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**Bible Reading**



**Chaplains**

**Rev. Bob Prior - Racecourse chaplaincy**  
**Rev. Paul Tabulutu - N.S.W. / A.C.T. Fijian churches**

Please remember Bob and Paul and their work in your prayers.



**Services over recent weeks have included the following:**



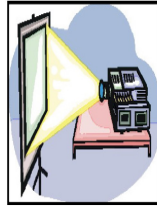
**Mr. Roy Dallos**



**Mr. Mark Warren**



**Rev. Peter Nelson**



**Rev. Paul Tabulutu**



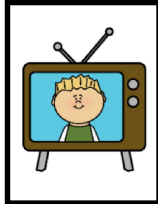
**Mr. Roy Dallos**



**Mr. Ian Denton**



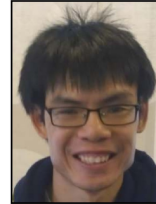
**Mrs. Joyce Hall**



**Mr. Roy Dallos**



**Mr. Jeff Mason**



**Mr. George Huang**



**Rev. Paul Tabulutu**



**Mr. Roy Dallos**



**Mr. Phillip Ng**



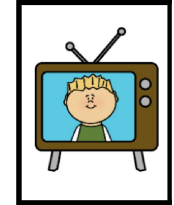
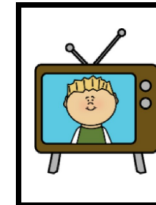
**Mrs. Joyce Hall**



**Mr. Ian Denton**



**Mr. Roy Dallos**



**Mr. Phillip Ng**

- Sunday **20th November** – **Mr. Roy Dallos** - A man reaps what he sows!  
 Sunday **27th November** – **Mr. Mark Warren**  
 Sunday **4th December** – **Rev. Peter Nelson** - Carols  
 Sunday **11th December** – **Video**  
 Sunday **18th December** – **Re. Paul Tabulutu**  
 Sunday **15th January** – **Mr. Roy Dallos** - My Name is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you  
 Sunday **22nd January** – **Mr. Ian Denton** - Worship  
 Sunday **29th January** – **Mrs. Joyce Hall**  
 Sunday **5th February** – **Video sermon** - Dr. Michael Youssef  
 Sunday **12th February** – **Mr. Roy Dallos**  
 Sunday **19th February** – **Mr. Jeff Mason**  
 Sunday **26th February** – **Mr. George Huang**  
 Sunday **5th March** – **Rev. Paul Tabulutu**  
 Sunday **12th March** – **Mr. Roy Dallos**  
 Sunday **19th March** – **Video sermon** - Dr. Michael Youssef  
 Sunday **26th March** – **Mr. Phil Ng**  
 Sunday **2nd April** – **Mrs. Joyce Hall**  
 Sunday **9th April** – **Mr. Ian Denton** - Easter  
 Sunday **16th April** – **Mr. Roy Dallos** - Men rail but God comes  
 Sunday **23rd April** – no service of our own  
 Sunday **30th April** – **Video sermon** - Dr. Michael Youssef  
 Sunday **7th May** – **Video sermon** - Dr. Michael Youssef  
 Sunday **14th May** – **Mr. Phil Ng** - Living the good life  
 Sunday **21st May** – **Mr. Roy Dallos** - Are you prepared to meet the King?



**Mr. Roy Dallos**