

Southern

THE NEWS MAGAZINE

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2015

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Himalayan hunter

HOW THE SEARCH FOR A NEW LIFE BROUGHT ETERNAL JOY

- + The plan to care for Syrian refugees
- & Pray with heart and mind

“ Air Force chaplains...
are immersed in a dynamic
community... Most clearly,
a chaplain is a visible
'God person'. ”

Kevin Russell
Events



COVER

From village to global village: Logan Kunwar's journey from a poor Nepali upbringing to Sydney and a new life in Christ. P11

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Archbishop calls for “warm and generous welcome”

THE ARCHBISHOP OF SYDNEY, DR GLENN DAVIES, HAS GALVANISED ANGLICAN AGENCIES AND parishes to welcome the resettlement of 12,000 refugees from Syria.

Just days before the Federal Government’s announcement in early September, Archbishop Davies had called on the Government to raise the humanitarian intake to help resettle some of those fleeing IS and political instability in the Middle East.

“At the moment the humanitarian intake is 13,500 and it is moving up to 18,000 by 2018 – I’d actually asked for 20,000,” Dr Davies said. “But the Government then announced a one-off intake of 12,000 from Syria because of the crisis.”

In a series of media interviews, Dr Davies referred to the parable of the Good Samaritan. “You wouldn’t say we are a near neighbour to Syria, but we are part of the international community so we have a part to play in this and so I commend the Federal Government,” he told Radio 2CH.

Sydney Anglican organisations immediately swung into action with a series of measures to welcome the refugees.

“Anglicare has disaster recovery volunteers already trained to assist with the reception of those needing immediate assistance upon arrival, and our hamper-packing and second-hand clothing warehouse is available to provide food and clothing,” said Anglicare Sydney’s CEO, Grant Millard. “We will also be looking to prepare and distribute hygiene and children’s packs as well as facilitate language training through our ESL network across the parishes.”

The Rev Zac Veron, CEO of Anglican Youthworks, offered immediate short- and medium-term accommodation for up to 400 refugees. “We are preparing to offer medium-term accommodation facilities for up to 150 refugees and short-term accommodation for up to another 250,” Mr Veron said. “We could potentially provide vocational training on one or more of our sites, and invite school-aged Syrian refugee children to special camps specifically designed for them.”

Dr Kate Harrison Brennan, CEO of Anglican Deaconess Ministries, has offered to champion a “one parish, one refugee family” approach across the Sydney Diocese.

“ADM will co-ordinate the response of these participating churches as they provide temporary housing to refugees, assistance in finding long-term accommodation, as well as friendly help in using public transport, setting up bank accounts and learning English (as needed),” she said. “Participating churches will be able to access a pool of grant funding provided by ADM for this purpose.”

Dr Mark Thompson, the principal of Moore College, remarked that “generous non-discriminatory hospitality and practical care for those in such dire need flows out of our understanding of what God has done for us in Christ. We who have been received freely and yet at great cost to God cannot harden our hearts to others at a moment like this. Our college community stands ready to do whatever we can to assist in this important work.”

The Sydney Anglican Schools Corporation and Anglican Retirement Villages have also indicated their willingness to mobilise their students, residents and other stakeholders to provide any assistance they can.

Dr Davies highlighted the importance of a non-discriminatory approach in deciding who should or should not come to Australia.

“Our ability to show love and mercy and provide a warm welcome to anyone regardless of their faith must serve as a counterpoint to the brutality of IS and as an expression of the love of God to all humanity,” he said. “Our response needs to be immediate, generous and unquestioning with regard to race, ethnicity or religion.”

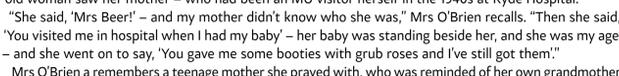
Dr Davies also appealed to parishes, with a letter sent soon after the Government announcement. “I’ve been overwhelmed with the response,” he said. “Within hours I had a couple of rectors saying this is just marvellous. One said, ‘I will open up my rooms in the rectory, another person rang and said, ‘I’m changing my sermon on Sunday. I’m going to preach on the Good Samaritan and use the information that you’ve given in your letter’. That has been marvellous, I’m very impressed.”

The Archbishop and Anglicare have also launched The Archbishop’s Syrian Refugee Crisis Appeal to provide particular emergency relief and support to Syrian refugees. For more information, or to donate, please visit bit.ly/anglicaresyria or call 13 26 22. An Anglican Aid appeal that seeks to support relief workers working with refugees in countries neighbouring Syria is also currently running.

The Archbishop told 2CH that “if people haven’t got an empty room to house a refugee they could give money so we can find as many opportunities for welcoming, open generous homes across Sydney to say ‘Christians love’.”

He urged the importance of the refugees being able to see “the love of Christ being reflected in the lives of ordinary Christians, so that a person you don’t even know comes to our shores and we can say, ‘You’ve come here for peace and safety... we want to show you how wonderful it is to be an Australian and will show you the love that God has shown towards us.’”

Simple visits change hearts



Mary O'Brien chooses gifts for hospital visiting at the MU Shop in Town Hall Arcade.

MOTHERS’ UNION MEMBERS MAKING HOSPITAL VISITS TO NEW MOTHERS MIGHT SOUND LIKE an everyday exercise but it has changed many lives over the 75 years it has been operating in the Diocese.

Mary O’Brien has been a regular visitor at Royal Prince Alfred Hospital in Camperdown since 1990 and has stories aplenty of her experiences. Yet one of her favourites is the day, about 10 years ago, when she was shopping with her late mother and an elderly woman came out of a lift with her daughter. Then the old woman saw her mother – who had been an MU visitor herself in the 1940s at Ryde Hospital.

“She said, ‘Mrs Beer!’ – and my mother didn’t know who she was,” Mrs O’Brien recalls. “Then she said, ‘You visited me in hospital when I had my baby’ – her baby was standing beside her, and she was my age – and she went on to say, ‘You gave me some booties with grub roses and I’ve still got them.’”

Mrs O’Brien remembers a teenage mother she prayed with, who was reminded of her own grandmother praying when she and her siblings were in the bath. She told Mrs O’Brien she was now determined to pray for her baby son the same way. And then there’s the couple from the south coast who came to study at Moore College and the family have ministered in Queensland for many years.

Such stories are a testimony to the impact MU members, young and old, have had through simple visits with baby gifts – and prayer cards or gospels when possible – since the ministry began 75 years ago.

“When I go visiting at RPA I go to Ward 5, where women have just had babies in the past couple of days,” Mrs O’Brien says. “I ask if there’s anybody I shouldn’t visit – they may have just had a caesarean or the baby has died – but apart from that I can visit any bed. They may be women who have no affiliation with any church, they might be Hindu, Buddhist, Christian – anything.

“What we are able to do isn’t the same in every hospital, and what we do might be small, but it’s very significant.”

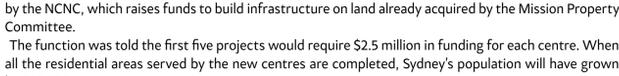
Mothers’ Union members began visiting hospitals in 1940 at the invitation of Archbishop Mowll. He had been approached by the rector of Surry Hills about help visiting new mothers at the Women’s Hospital in Crown Street, which was taking up a good deal of his time, and that of his parish deaconess.

MU Sydney estimates it now makes 12,000 visits a year at 18 hospitals across the Diocese. Visitors offer baby gifts and encouragement for the mum as well as listening ear, materials such as Luke’s Gospel (when permitted), and prayer. Members also come together to make “grieving gowns” for babies who die in hospital, special nighties for premature babies, and hand embroider other items such as bibs, singlets and booties.

“Many people we visit now have no connection with church and they’re very grateful you’ve come,” Mrs O’Brien says. “Many also have no connection to family because they’ve come from overseas – from every country you could imagine – so they have a really open opportunity to connect with someone who’s Christian. That’s very exciting.”

MU would love to hear from women who have been visited over the years, as well as those who have been visitors. They also invite anyone who wants to mark the anniversary to the Advent service at St Philip’s, Church Hill on November 27 at 10.30am. For information ring the MU Sydney office on 8030 8970.

NCNC launched



Planning for growth: (from left) NCNC chairman Philip Bell OAM, executive director Glenn Gardner and Archbishop Davies.

THE ARCHBISHOP OF SYDNEY’S NEW CHURCHES FOR NEW COMMUNITIES INITIATIVE WAS officially launched at a function in August. The churches was hastily moved to St Andrew’s Cathedral School after damage caused to the Chapter House by a storm in the city.

Compered by TV journalist Leigh Hatcher, the audience heard details of the first projects to be targeted by the NCNC, which raises funds to build infrastructure on land already acquired by the Mission Property Committee.

The function was told the first five projects would require \$2.5 million in funding for each centre. When all the residential areas served by the new centres are completed, Sydney’s population will have grown by 700,000.

For more information see www.ncnc.org.au.

High-rise hopes



Self-imposed isolation: it’s hard to minister to residents in a high-rise apartment complex.

ST DAVID’S CROSS-CULTURAL BIBLE CHURCH IN ARNCLIFFE IS DEVISING NEW WAYS OF CONNECTING with its local area, particularly as its surrounding suburbs culturally diversify and host a number of new high-density housing developments.

The rector of St David’s, the Rev Moussa Ghazal, says the past few years have seen large-scale demographic changes within his parish.

“Wolli Creek developments began a number of years ago... and it was estimated that about 10,000 new people would move into the suburb,” he says.

“When they had basically completed the first set of these developments we were left trying to work out how to make contact with people. Most of these new places are secure buildings. We couldn’t get letters in or basically make contact during the day. So we’ve been trying to work out how to connect with people in the high rises when the nature of the living arrangement seems to be that you disconnect from other people unless you have to [make contact].”

The assistant minister at St David’s, the Rev Kevin Chan, is heading up the effort to reach into the new communities, often comprised of young working professionals from Asian backgrounds. He says a lot of what he is doing is trying to navigate obstacles unique to areas with new, large housing developments.

“I’ve spent quite a fair amount of time trying to just build up a presence there, doing walk-up evangelism and meeting people,” he says. “A lot of the time, though, people don’t really want to stop and chat... there’s not always a lot of success with that. We’re in the process of preparing a proposal for the development group to host a carols event in some of the complexes and trying to connect that way.”

Mr Ghazal says in some respects the shift in demographic is not dissimilar to previous waves of migration that have seen people from other overseas backgrounds move into the area. However, he says it’s important to make a start now, particularly because he expects the changes at Wolli Creek reflect an eventual change in Arncliffe and further afield.

“I think 20 years ago the church struggled to come to terms with the changes that were happening then in terms of migration, particularly of Muslims, and Macedonians before that,” he says. “So we’re trying to play catch-up to a certain extent.

“Much of our current work is connecting with people from a Mediterranean background, but with a lot of these new high-rise developments the reality is there are now a large number of Asian people moving into the area as well. I want to make sure we try and get on the front foot with that people group and not have to play catch-up there.”

History goes digital



History preserved: Dr Louise Trott in the Diocesan Archives.

SOME OF THE OLDEST RECORDS IN AUSTRALIA – PARISH REGISTERS FROM SYDNEY’S EARLY colonial churches – are to be digitised under an agreement between the Diocese of Sydney and ancestry.com.

Ancestry will digitise baptism, confirmation, marriage and funeral registers from 1824 to 2005 and in return, minute books from diocesan boards and Synods will be scanned by the company for preservation in digital format.

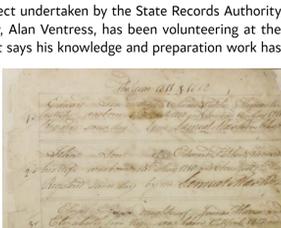
“This Ancestry mass digitisation project is a means by which we can transcend paper-based format and the limitations on access it provides, in order to provide access to the data to the widest number of interested persons possible,” said diocesan archivist Dr Louise Trott. “At the same time we obtain a digital preservation copy.”

The agreement parallels a similar but larger-scale project undertaken by the State Records Authority of NSW in 2012. The former director of the Authority, Alan Ventress, has been volunteering at the Diocesan Archives for the past three years and Dr Trott says his knowledge and preparation work has been invaluable for the new project.

Although now housed in secure units in the Diocesan Archives, many early registers have had to be repaired due to wear and tear. They provide a snapshot of Sydney from its earliest days until now, containing notable figures in church and colony including the Rev Samuel Marsden, pioneer missionary to New Zealand, and Archdeacon William Cowper, an early supporter of The King’s School in Parramatta and rector of St Philip’s, Church Hill. The Rev William Branwhite Clarke, former headmaster of King’s and rector of Castle Hill and Dural in the 1840s, also signed many of the entries for his parishes, which later included Campbelltown and North Sydney.

Some famous Sydneysiders also feature in the records. One of the most unusual is Eliza Emily Donnithorne, whose funeral and burial at St Stephen’s, Newtown was recorded in 1886.

Miss Donnithorne was a well-known eccentric who never left her house after being jilted on her wedding day in 1856. The wedding breakfast remained undisturbed on her dining table until it rotted away. If the story sounds familiar, it was said to have been the real-life inspiration for Charles Dickens’ novel *Great Expectations*, with Miss Havisham modelled on Eliza Donnithorne.



Emergency call answered by Ambo chaplains



New volunteer chaplain Rev Mal York at an emergency dispatch call centre.

THE CHAPLAINCY PROGRAM THAT SERVES THE AMBULANCE CREWS IN NSW IS CURRENTLY expanding its work to include more volunteers.

The Rev Paul McFarlane, Ambulance Service NSW’s senior chaplain and co-ordinator, says, “There is currently a team of about 38 volunteer chaplains from many different denominations and some from other faiths as well. Recently we’ve also recruited a new cohort of 12 and are running inductions for them, and we’re looking to try and recruit more in the new year.

“Chaplains are always very much in demand, I think, because the crews know that we’re there for them and their wellbeing, not as managers or auditors, but to give the crews support and be open to what they want to talk about.”

Volunteers include clergy and lay people from a variety of ministry and occupational backgrounds. “One of the things that seems common to a lot of people who are volunteers, or who want to become volunteers, is that they are the kinds of people who see an ambulance go past, they think about the crew heading off to attend an emergency and they pray for them,” Mr McFarlane says. “There’s a heart for helping the helpers, that’s the base of it.

“We also look for pastoral skills, so lay people who are trained in pastoral care or there’s a heart with that training. Some people also have a background in emergency service work themselves. It’s very much a mix of people.”

Ambulance Service NSW receives an average of one emergency call every 26 seconds, with chaplains providing a listening ear after potentially traumatic callouts as well as providing support in other life circumstances.

“We’re expanding our program rapidly, trying to service more locations and more crews, and the only way we can do that is with volunteer chaplains,” Mr McFarlane says. “The crews like having us around and we have strong support from management in this. They see chaplains as being an important component amongst other staff support services, so there is always valuable work to do.”

NCLS anniversary

NEXT YEAR THE NATIONAL CHURCH LIFE SURVEY WILL CELEBRATE ITS 25TH ANNIVERSARY BY holding its sixth survey of congregations, leaders and denominations across the country.

Held every five years, the NCLS for 2016 will be run in October and expects to cover the faith life and practice of church attenders and leaders with more than 20 Christian denominations, as well as helping them to identify strengths, weaknesses and ways to move forward.

The survey, which began as a small project to find out who attended church, now has an international reputation, with each new instalment eagerly awaited by overseas researchers.

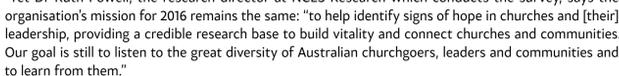
Yet Dr Ruth Powell, the research director at NCLS Research which conducts the survey, says the organisation’s mission for 2016 remains the same: “to help identify signs of hope in churches and [their] leadership, providing a credible research base to build vitality and connect churches and communities. Our goal is still to listen to the great diversity of Australian churchgoers, leaders and communities and to learn from them.”

The new Bishop of the Georges River Region, the Rt Rev Peter Lin, says he “eagerly encourages all churches to take part in the next NCLS.

“In a society that is changing so rapidly – and having served in a church that has grown and evolved so much in the 16 years I was there – the NCLS research has been a critical tool in serving this church family better and reaching our community more effectively with the message of Jesus.

“I see the work of NCLS not simply as helpful but as necessary to understand where we have been, where we are headed and what we must do to most helpfully proclaim the gospel and grow our people to maturity in Christ.”

Northbridge remembers in history book



St Mark’s, Northbridge as it was in 1928. Supplied

A BOOK ON THE HISTORY OF ST MARK’S, NORTHBRIDGE TELLS THE STORY OF GOD’S WORK IN the area since 1919, and draws on human sources and reproduced documentary material to bring that story to life.

Steven Moe, a lawyer and parishioner at St Mark’s, says he took on the 433-page task because of his own love of history, but also a desire to help others hear the stories of long-time parish members.

“I originally wanted to put together just a short booklet of maybe 10 or 20 pages, but I started to interview people and that was when it snowballed,” Mr Moe says.

“I met a lady named Lois who had been baptised at St Mark’s in 1928. I sat down with her and began to chat. So many of the names I’d read in old newsletters were real people she had met – she knew them. Their stories came alive to me and I just thought that the stories of these people were worth telling.”

The rector of St Mark’s, the Rev Simon Flinders, says while he had read a previous history of the church produced for its jubilee in the late 1960s, he was grateful to be able to see the older history of the church combined with its more modern stories and see God’s hand in it all.

“It’s a remarkable and humbling thing to think about people who first had an idea to buy a block of land to build the church, who built the building we meet in every week, who worked in the area over that time,” he says. “It’s an important thing, I think, to have a better idea of the kinds of people whose shoulders you now stand on and this book does that.

“It’s also interesting to see that while we’re different in some ways, in a lot of ways we’re the same. Many of the same things people found important 100 years ago are still important to us today.”

Mr Moe says that while he was able to discover many interesting, one-of-a-kind documentary sources in old books and church archives, it was often the human storytellers he was most glad to find and speak to. “I wrote to one of the rectors from the 1960s, Stuart Abraham, in early January,” he says.

“The thing is, he died on August 20. It did occur to me that I hadn’t written to him when I did the opportunity would probably have been gone, and what he remembered of that time would have passed with him. As it was, he was very jovial in his conversation with me and now his memories of that period survive in the book.

“I see it as a classic example of the importance of this kind of thing, to ‘suppose ‘catch’ those stories for future generations to remember as well.”

To order St Mark’s: A visual history celebrating the first 100 years contact Steven Moe on www3moe.com

Anglicans awarded at ARPA

SOUTHERN CROSS HAS WON TWO PRIZES AT THE ANNUAL AWARDS OF THE AUSTRALASIAN Religious Press Association, which were announced in Brisbane at the end of August in recognition of work published in print and online during 2014.

SC staff writer Nick Gilbert was awarded a bronze, in the category of Best Feature by a Single Author, for his July 2014 cover feature “Sex on the Brain” about pornography in Christian circles.

Describing the article as “gutsy” and “convincingly written”, the judges commented on the skill and sensitivity of the feature, as well as noting that it provided “a way through and out of the tunnel of darkness where pornography thrives and into the light”.

The second prize, also a bronze, was given to contributing writer Scott Monk for his opinion piece “The dangers of digital church”, about Mark Driscoll and the Mars Hill Church in Seattle. Calling it “an informing, entertaining and thought-provoking read”, the judges said the article offered “pertinent analysis and clear conclusions that reflect [the author’s] personal passion for churches that can be enduringly effective”.

The magazine of St James’, King Street, *St James Parish Connections*, also picked up two prizes: a silver in the Best Review category for a piece about early Christian art in Asia, and a Best Social Justice Article bronze about refugees and asylum seekers.

The top prize of the year, the Gutenberg Award, was presented jointly to *The Melbourne Anglican* and its editor, Roland Ashby, who has served in the role for 20 years. ARPA president Peter Bentley said Mr Ashby had “demonstrated an exemplary role in leadership and development” and the publication was a team effort, “helmed by a person committed to excellence”.

Anglican Communion: the future?



ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY JUSTIN WELBY HAS INVITED PRIMATES TO A GATHERING NEXT January to discuss the future of the Anglican Communion.

The meeting follows a breach of communion by the US Episcopal Church, which began with the consecration of openly gay bishop Gene Robinson in 2003 in defiance of the resolutions of the 1998 Lambeth meeting of Anglican leaders. Bishop Robinson had divorced his wife and entered a partnership and eventually a same-sex marriage with another man, whom he has now divorced.

Since then, several major provinces of the Anglican Communion have realigned with the Anglican Church of North America (ACNA), formed by those who had left the Episcopal Church because of its actions and its liberal theology.

"I have suggested to all primates that we need to consider recent developments but also look afresh at our ways of working as a Communion and, especially as primates, paying proper attention to developments in the past," Archbishop Welby said in announcing the conference. He said he would also invite Archbishop Foley Beach (above), the Primate of ACNA, even though Canterbury does not officially recognise it as a member of the Anglican Communion.

"The difference between our societies and cultures, as well as the speed of cultural change in much of the global north, tempts us to divide as Christians," Archbishop Welby said. "A 21st-century Anglican family must have space for deep disagreement, and even mutual criticism, so long as we are faithful to the revelation of Jesus Christ together."

Primates of the GAFCON movement, who represent the majority of the Anglican Communion, say they will "prayerfully consider" whether to attend the meeting.

"They [the Primates] recognise that the crisis in the Communion is not primarily a problem of relationships and cultural context, but of false teaching which continues without repentance or discipline," a GAFCON statement said.

The statement added that the GAFCON grouping, begun in 2008 at the Jerusalem Conference, was now "a global family standing together to restore the Bible to the heart of the Anglican Communion, with a strength and unity that comes from our common confession of the Lord Jesus Christ, not merely from historic institutional structures."

Archbishop Beach said he would go to the meeting if his fellow members of the GAFCON Primates Council also attend.

MOVES

WEST PYMBLE HOMECOMING



After nearly 14 years in charge of the parish of All Saints', Petersham, the **Rev Antony Barraclough** will become rector of West Pymble on November 20.

"It was a big decision for us and it's turned out to be a very happy-sad thing – that's how I've been describing it," he says. "We didn't want to leave in many ways. There are still a lot of good things to happen here that it would be nice to be part of, so it's sad to leave but a very happy thing to be asked to go to a church that's done well and has asked us to take it to the next step of its journey."

Mr Barraclough arrived at Petersham on the Australia Day long weekend in 2002. He says the church "needed revitalisation, which had begun before I got there and we just needed to keep going. When we used to describe the location of our church people would know the Oxford Tavern but not the church! So in other words, as a church we were unseen even though we had a very dominant

physical presence. The task was to be noticed by our community again and that was the task we set about."

With so much to do and be part of at Petersham, Mr Barraclough said "No" when West Pymble nominators first knocked on his door to ask whether he was interested in a move.

"They said, 'Are you sure?' and I said, 'No,'" he recalls with a laugh. "We have been very happy here and happy to keep going, yet also very happy to talk to an old church of ours that we know and love and want to support in many ways.

"I was a student minister at West Pymble 20 years ago, so there are still a number of connections there and that's the happy side of it. Our eldest was born and baptised when we were there. She turns 20 just after we arrive so it's a homecoming for her even though she's not aware of the place.

"We're excited about the opportunities ahead and can't wait to get there to renew old friendships, build new friendships and get cracking with St Matt's next steps in ministry and evangelism."

GOD'S HAND IN THE HILLS



The **Rev Graeme Toovey** will retire from Holy Trinity, Baulkham Hills on October 16 after nearly 20 years in the parish.

Asking Mr Toovey about the parish results in a flood of thoughts about the maturity of the congregation and how this has been demonstrated over the years.

"When I arrived here in 1996 the church had an emphasis on renewal and healing with a regular healing service modelled on that held in St Andrew's Cathedral," he says. "I embraced that ministry and we also initiated the Alpha course which proved very fruitful over several years."

The church has been encouraged to follow the leading of the Holy Spirit and be outward-looking in its approach.

"Every year we have a wall of 500 boxes for Samaritan's Purse built behind the communion table," Mr Toovey says.

"The distribution of these Christmas boxes in South-East Asia supports the ministries and evangelism of local churches. Since 2006 we have had

groups of parishioners doing short-term missions to East Timor, which has challenged us to embrace social justice as part of a holistic gospel.

"The church has enthusiastically supported a parish couple engaged in ministry in Uganda where there has been a remarkable work of the Lord in two Christian schools and a prison. In addition we have a dozen retirees working as volunteer chaplains in three local retirement villages and Westmead Hospital. The parish has also helped initiate chaplaincies in two local primary schools and provides ongoing prayer support to these chaplains.

"I'm telling all that I love about the church I am about to leave," he adds, "but I look back and think what a privilege it has been to be part of Holy Trinity."

At this stage Mr Toovey and his wife Lesley will remain living in the area near to family. They are unsure what the future holds apart from travel within Australia and some "downsizing". He says that many things are possible but he and Lesley will "wait on the Lord to give directions".

STEDMAN AS HE GOES



This month the **Rev Matt Stedman** moves from a long association with Roseville to become rector of St Bede's, Drummoyne.

Mr Stedman joined Roseville as a student minister in his final year at college in 2009, was made an assistant minister there the following year, and became senior assistant minister in 2012.

"St Andrew's, Roseville has shaped me in profound ways so I feel like I'm ready now to make this next step," he says. "God has given me this opportunity so I'm taking it with both hands, prayerfully and seeking the wisdom of others.

"It really comes down to what I've witnessed over the past seven years, being shaped by my previous rector Mark Calder and then John Dickson, and God giving me the desire and the passion to do this in another part of Sydney."

Mr Stedman enthusiastically engaged with the nominators from Drummoyne when they first made contact, and was delighted when he heard his was the name they were putting forward.

"I consider it a real privilege to care for the people at St Bede's," he says. "I'm going to learn its history and the stories of the people – I'm on a listening tour for the next six to 12 months. I want to know who they are, what they're passionate about and what the context I'm moving into is before we come up with a mission or a purpose or anything like that, because I have to learn about the people I'm ministering to and with."

Despite Mr Stedman's excitement at this new step he also acknowledges there is great sadness for the whole family in leaving Roseville.

"Our two children were born and baptised here, their friends and our friends are in Roseville, so we leave a huge part of our heart here because it's been so foundational to our lives as a family," he says.

"I've cut my teeth in ministry in this place and I thank St Andrew's people for putting up with me as I've been learning! We're going to miss them desperately and there have been many tears shed since making the announcement – and there will be more shed as we pack up and move on – but often that's the nature of ministry: you have to say goodbye so you can start something new."

Mr Stedman will be inducted on October 15.

VALE

The **Rev Stuart Abrahams** died on August 20, aged 88.

Born in 1927, Stuart Noel Abrahams initially pursued a career in real estate before studying at Moore College from 1958-1961. After graduating he spent two years as a curate at St Michael's Cathedral in Wollongong, and in 1964 became the NSW home secretary for CMS.

Two years later Mr Abrahams took charge of his first parish – St Mark's, Northbridge – and from there went on to serve as rector of St Andrew's, Wahroonga (1973-77) and Nowra (1977-84).

He left parish ministry in 1984 at the request of then Archbishop Donald Robinson to become director of the Archbishop's Vision for Growth, which blossomed under his leadership. He moved in 1992 to spend a further two years in charge of the Diocese's forerunner to Anglican Aid.

In the mid-1990s, after his retirement, Mr Abrahams was instrumental in the establishment of the Hamlin Fistula Relief and Aid Fund, which provides financial support for the work of Dr Catherine Hamlin in Ethiopia. He administered the fund until 2008 and continued to support it in an unofficial capacity until his death.

From 1994 to 2005 Mr Abrahams was an honorary assistant minister to his former parish of Wahroonga, and filled the same role in Windsor from 2010-12. He also spent two years (1997-98) as CEO of Anglican Youth and Education for the Diocese.

His work was recognised in 2009 with an Order of Australia for service to international humanitarian aid and the Anglican Church.

The Rev Dr Michael Stead led Mr Abrahams' funeral service at his long-term church home of St James', Turramurra, and said that "Stuart was a man with a compassionate heart and a practical head – not only would he see a need, he would also know what needed to be done to address that need. He was motivated by the gospel – he knew the love of Jesus and wanted to share that with others, and he was a great teller of stories, which were always told with a purpose."



The **Rev Norma Farley** died on August 12, aged 96.

Born Doris Norma Farley in Canowindra in 1919, Miss Farley grew up on the family farm and attended church in town with her family every Sunday. She felt the call to missionary work from her childhood, and looked for where this might lead her.

She eventually moved to Sydney and undertook a three-year course at the Sydney Kindergarten Teachers College, later completing the Preliminary Theological Certificate as well.

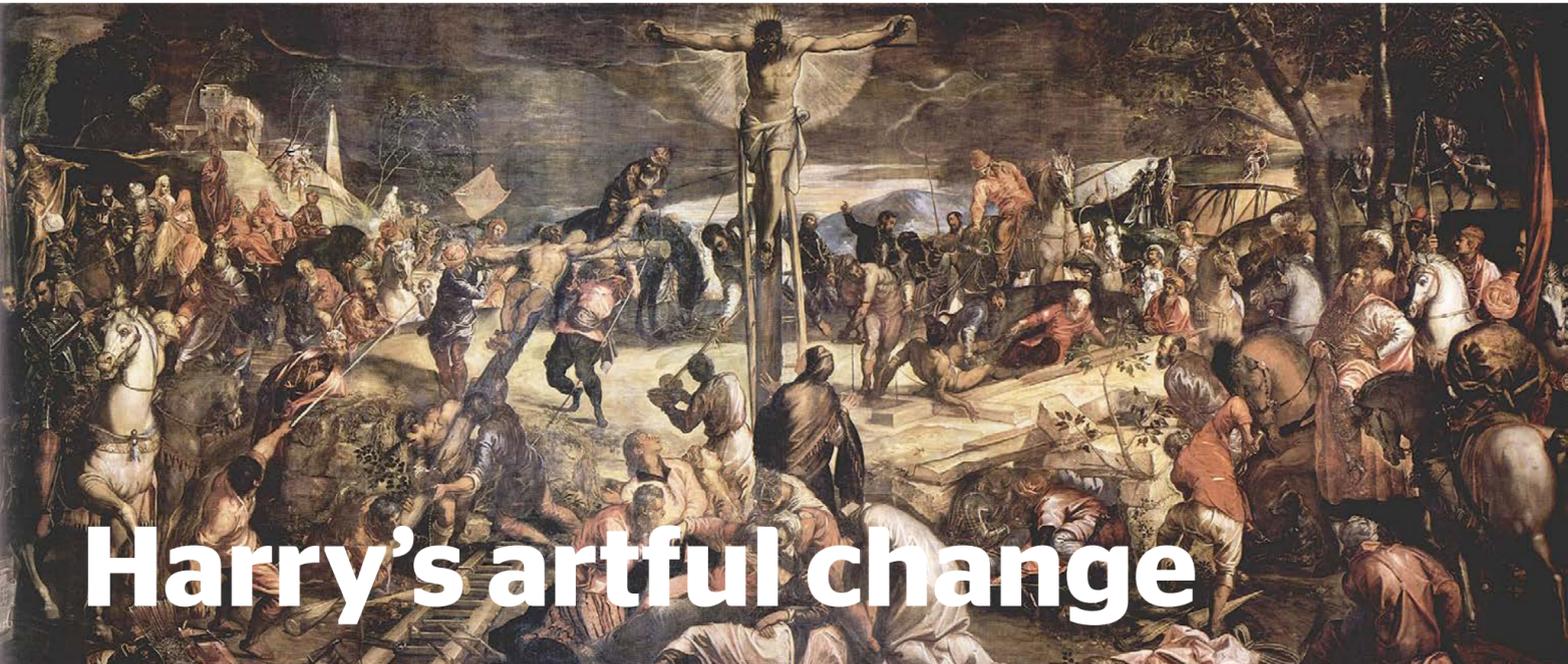
Keen to find the best way to use her gifts for the kingdom, Miss Farley then spent two years working at Deaconess House, before offering to serve with CMS among Aboriginal people. She was made a deaconess in early 1952 then travelled to Groote Eylandt to work in the Angurugu community – a ministry she continued for the next 33 years.

Miss Farley was made a Member of the Order of Australia in 1980 in recognition of her work with, and for the welfare of, the Aboriginal people of Groote Eylandt.

At her funeral her brother John Farley said that after the award was made public the then Bishop of Bathurst, Ken Leslie, wrote in a letter that it was "good to know the powers that be sometimes recognise sacrificial devotion to God and his people as worthy of public recognition".

Miss Farley returned to Canowindra after completing her service on Groote Eylandt. She was made a deacon in 1994 and served as an honorary deacon assistant in the parish of Canowindra-Woodstock until she retired in 2005, aged 86.





Harry's artful change

DAVID PETTETT

HARRY HAS BEEN IN PRISON FOR 30 YEARS. HE RECEIVED A LIFE SENTENCE WITH NO POSSIBILITY of release. Harry's crime was horrendous. Nobody thinks he has been harshly dealt with. Having been in prison since he was 21 years old Harry will die there.

As a teenager Harry was a mess and a rebel. He was out of control. Nobody could tell Harry what to do. He was against the world and the world was against him. Harry got out of bed every morning thinking about how he would take revenge on someone that day for the supposed wrong they had done him. He lived, breathed, planned and executed violence every day of his life.

Harry was always running afoul of the police but more often than not his victims were too afraid to press charges. Until his 21st birthday. On that day Harry committed the worst series of murders his arresting officers had ever seen.

The violence didn't stop in prison. Harry was still angry, perhaps more angry than ever. Again, victims were too afraid to report his violence. Men who came out of the shower block with bloodied and bruised bodies explained to the prison officers that they had slipped and hit their face on the basin.

That was 30 years ago. The change in Harry started in the prison library. Flipping through some art books he saw the agony of the cross in Nikolai Ge's *Crucifixion*, the madness and violence of Tintoretto's *Crucifixion* and the pain and love in Bartolome Esteban Murillo's *Crucifixion*. He thought about who could inflict such violence. He thought about the madness of such violence and the pain it caused others as well as the victim.

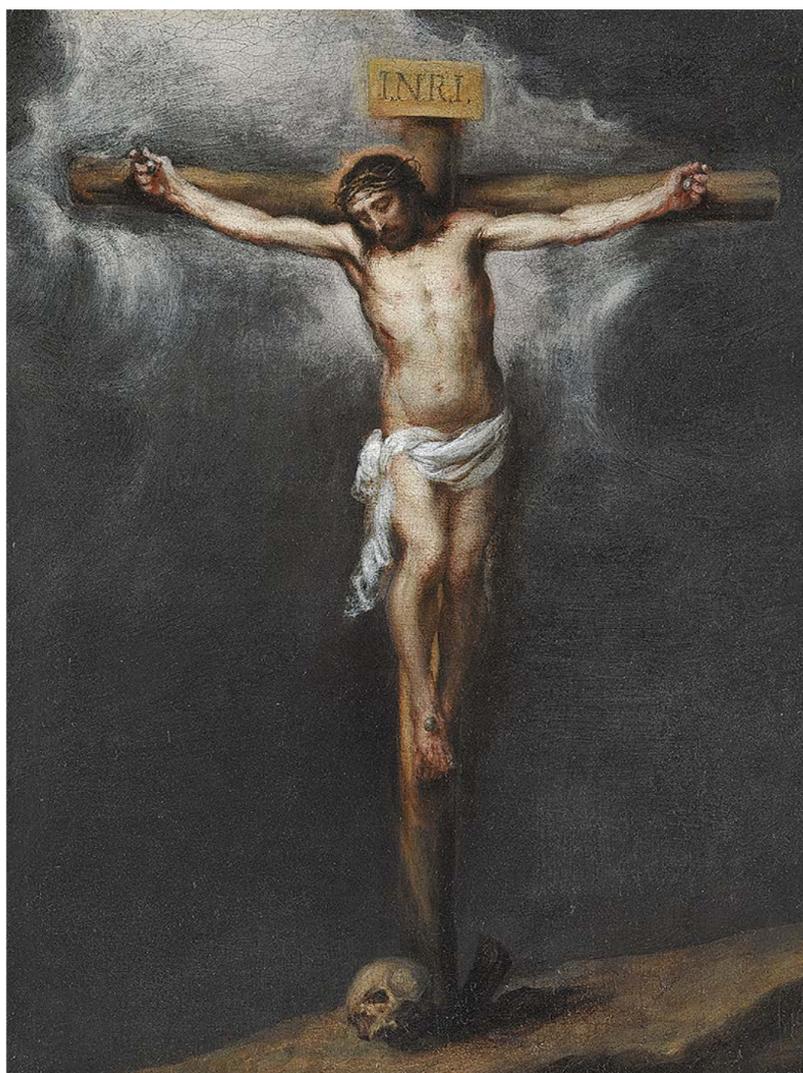
Harry realised it was himself. He was the one who could do such horrendous things. He was the one who could put Christ on the cross. The thought was overwhelming. Harry didn't know what to do with it. He spent weeks not engaging with people. He needed time alone in his cell to think what these profound images meant.

Harry couldn't work it out so he sought out the chaplain. Over many months the chaplain explained the gospel. Harry finally came to understand and put his trust in Jesus.

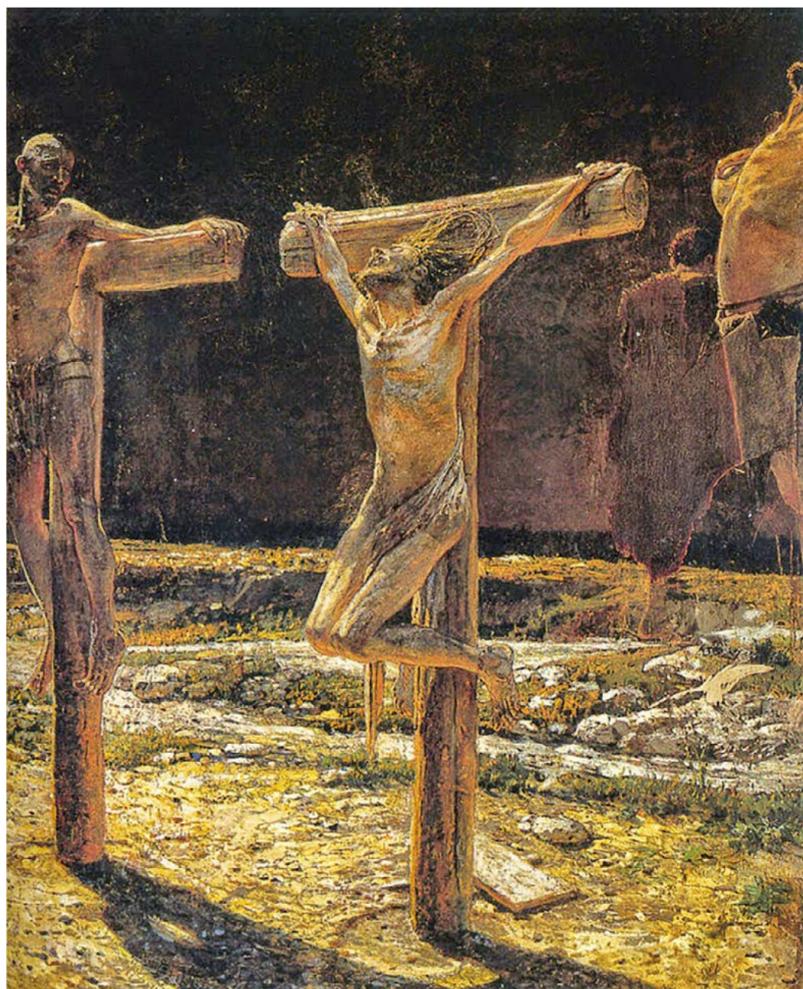
No one was close to Harry. It was never safe to be so. But those who knew him best wondered what scheme he was up to. Not understanding the change they saw in the man, most other inmates just kept their distance. But Harry had changed. He had experienced the love of God in his life and the hatred and anger he had carried for so many years was gone. People even commented that his appearance had changed. No longer did his face express hate and anger. He was calm and even smiled occasionally.

Recently Harry and a number of other lifers have had greater restrictions placed on them. Many of these men have become angry and have threatened more violence. Harry has ended up back in the maximum security he began his prison term in 30 years ago. Standing in the middle of the yard, he looked around and said, "Nothing has changed here in 30 years. But I have".

The Rev David Pettett manages the chaplains in prisons, hospitals and Chesalon for Anglicare Sydney.



Crucifixions: Tintoretto (top), Bartolomé Esteban Murillo (above) and Nikolai Ge (below).



Defender of the faith



DR GLENN DAVIES

IN THE CHAPEL OF BISHOPSCOURT STANDS THE EMBROIDERED CHAIR THAT ARCHBISHOP Howard Mowll was given in commemoration of his attendance at the Coronation of Her Majesty on June 2, 1953. I can only assume that honoured guests were given the same gift, unless it was a special item for archbishops alone. The royal emblem ER adorns the back of the chair and it is of such special significance that my granddaughters know they are not allowed to sit in it!

That singular event in history, when Queen Elizabeth II was crowned after the untimely death of her father King George VI, is one that most of us were not privileged to witness other than by the film clips of the event.

At her Coronation the Queen took a number of oaths. The first was with respect to her governance of the peoples of the Commonwealth in accordance with their laws, with each country mentioned by name, including of course Australia – though disappointingly not alphabetically listed, with Australia following Canada! The second promise related to her willingness to cause law and justice, in mercy, to be executed in all her judgements.

The third and fourth are worth quoting in full: “Will you to the utmost of your power maintain the Laws of God and the true profession of the Gospel? Will you to the utmost of your power maintain in the United Kingdom the Protestant Reformed Religion established by law?”

And with her hand laid upon the Holy Gospel in the Great Bible, the Queen responded: “The things which I have here before promised, I will perform and keep. So help me God”.

Well, in the 64th year of her reign it is abundantly clear that our gracious Queen has fulfilled her promises, not only with a remarkable sense of duty but with a display of wisdom, courage and grace. Since she has now exceeded her great-great-grandmother Queen Victoria’s legendary reign, we should celebrate this achievement, for it is right and proper so to do. For her 89 years of life have been a gift of God, surpassing even the psalmist’s expectation (*Psalm 90:10*). Indeed, God has answered our prayer expressed in the Royal Anthem: “Long may she reign!” And so we should rightly thank our God.

The Apostle Paul reminds us that our rulers are God’s ministers for our good (*Rom 13:1-5*). Human authority is derived from God, even if the ruler does not recognise it! Yet in our Sovereign’s case, she is very much a servant of God. She is not only aware of her dependence upon God but of her being anointed by God for this great task. A constitutional monarch though she be, we have been blessed by a lady of dedication, diligence and duty – filled with grace and benediction, which are gifts from our heavenly Father that we have been pleased to observe, and by which we have been blessed.

We can look back on more than six decades of her reign and marvel at the way the Queen has endeared herself to the world and to Sydneysiders in particular. She has visited our Cathedral Church of St Andrew on a number of occasions, first in 1954 (commemorated in a painting of her visit which now adorns the Chapter House) and most recently in 2006.

We could list her many achievements, of which her involvement in securing reconciliation between Ireland and Northern Ireland is most prominent, but we could add her commitment to the Commonwealth of Nations and her active involvement therein. Her longevity has often brought stability and calm to troubled relations between its members. She has had 12 Prime Ministers serve under her in Britain, and her Australian Prime Ministers now number 14.

The prayers of her people have been regularly offered to God and continue to this day, certainly in Anglican churches week by week across the Commonwealth of Nations. However, it is her fearless allegiance to Christ that is most significant of all, regularly expressed in her Christmas broadcasts where her Christian faith shines. In last year’s Christmas message she courageously stated to a multi-faith English society, and, of course, a multifaceted and multi-faith Commonwealth:

“For me, the life of Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace, whose birth we celebrate today, is an inspiration and an anchor in my life. A role model of reconciliation and forgiveness, he stretched out his hands in love, acceptance and healing. Christ’s example has taught me to seek to respect and value all people of whatever faith or none.”

Well may we sing “God Save the Queen”, for God has saved her and will save her at the last day by the person and work of our Lord Jesus Christ. As Christ has been her example to follow, so her confidence in him is an example which we would do well to follow – not just as loyal subjects of the Queen of Australia, but more importantly as loyal subjects of the King of Kings.

SC

a PRAYER FOR MISSION 2020

Our heavenly Father, fill our lives with the fruit of your Spirit, so that we may walk in joyful obedience, share your love by word and deed, and see Christ honoured in every community as Lord and Saviour.,

Amen.

Search for God from Nepal to Australia

One man's journey from the Subcontinent to Sydney and back again shows us God's powerful mission to all the earth, writes **NICK GILBERT**.

Southern CROSS
OCTOBER 2015

EVERYDAY PEOPLE OFTEN HAVE THE UNLIKELY OF STORIES. MEETING LOGAN Kunwar in his Sydney CBD workplace, and then again with his family at their local church on a Sunday, one could be forgiven for thinking of him as just another regular guy among the many that make up Australia. His story, however, is not everyday. It is one that started in a place and circumstance far away from here, away from his current day job as an accountant, and far away from faith in Jesus Christ. His story begins in such a way that most of those things, he says, never even crossed his mind.

HOW LONG?

Kunwar was born into a poor family in a village within the Burtibang district in Central Nepal. He says he remembers the close-knit nature of that community, where his family knew everyone and everyone knew them. But he also remembers the intensive nature of life in the village, even for a young boy such as himself.

"We had to walk two hours down the track to get a sack of rice or sugar," he says. "We'd be up at 4 o'clock in the morning collecting grass for our buffalo and come back at 8 o'clock for a meal. And then after that we'd get ready for school. The schools weren't that close, so we'd have to walk for more than an hour to get there, down the hill and along the river.

"We'd get home about 5 o'clock, then collect firewood to cook food until it got dark, and then we'd eat and do homework. We'd usually fall asleep while studying.

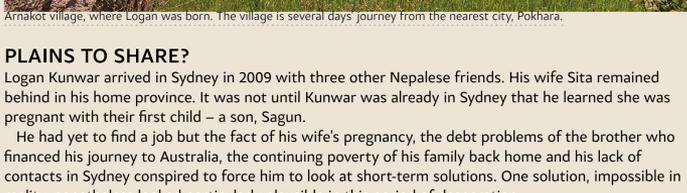
"Even then, when I was young, I knew it was a tough life. There were people who lived like we did but others like my uncle didn't have to work in that way because he was a schoolteacher. I did wonder then how long things would continue like this."

While the family business was farming, Kunwar says typically a harvest would not be able to sustain them for an entire year, so members of the family would have to find other work to earn the money they needed to survive. Kunwar's father would spend the better part of six months a year working in neighbouring India. At the age of only nine Kunwar followed in those footsteps, travelling on his own to work as a house servant for a middle-class Indian family.

"It was a stressful experience," he says. "I didn't have family there and I'd never worked under someone else. The caste system, if you were poor and you had to work for someone else, could be difficult for you, but I at least could get good food and I could earn money, so I stayed. I worked in a family of eight people, and they had a dog. I had to do everything for them – cooking meals, washing, cleaning outdoor areas. It was basically a mansion. I had food and things like that but often at the end of the day I would cry, I would miss my mother and my family. But it certainly taught me lessons."

That lesson of sacrifice is one that seems to recur frequently in Kunwar's story. After he turned 12 he returned to his village and was supported in further education by his brother, who had already finished a tertiary education. Kunwar and his brother are two of the roughly 17 per cent of Nepalese who study to tertiary level.

After studying hospitality in Nepal, Kunwar's brother mortgaged his home in the city in order to send Kunwar to Australia. The desire was for him to find opportunities and a way to further support the family away from the uncertainty that existed in the immediate aftermath of the Nepali civil war, and the change in political climate from a monarchy to a Maoist-led democratic government.



Arnakot village, where Logan was born. The village is several days' journey from the nearest city, Pokhara.

PLAINS TO SHARE?

Logan Kunwar arrived in Sydney in 2009 with three other Nepalese friends. His wife Sita remained behind in his home province. It was not until Kunwar was already in Sydney that he learned she was pregnant with their first child – a son, Sagun.

He had yet to find a job but the fact of his wife's pregnancy, the debt problems of the brother who financed his journey to Australia, the continuing poverty of his family back home and his lack of contacts in Sydney conspired to force him to look at short-term solutions. One solution, impossible in reality, nonetheless looked particularly plausible in this period of desperation.

"I decided to sell my organs," he says. "I had no idea about the legal issues of that in Australia at the time – and when I brought it up later I was told that was not possible – but my thinking then was simply if I could sell organs, my brother would be out of debt in Nepal and at the same time my wife could be cared for during her pregnancy. I had no money and that was really the only way I could think of to help fix these problems. I wasn't even really thinking about what would happen to me."

It was at this point, in a period of desperation in a foreign country with no friends and an entire family he felt relied solely on him, that Kunwar began to consider his life and what might lie behind it. "It was about this time that I thought of God," he says. "Before, I was influenced by Communist ideas. There wasn't a clear idea of God and I didn't have one in my personal life. But at that time, when I was everything about selling my organs, I thought, 'Is this life? Some people say there's a true God behind everything, but I didn't know. I thought, 'Is this life? A God, and God can show himself to me before I die, I would think that was satisfactory."

Even in the midst of all this, however, there were some Christian connections encouraging Kunwar. He says one woman he knew in Adelaide had served as a missionary doctor with the International Nepal Fellowship (INF). Kunwar's sister had met this doctor in Nepal and put her brother in touch. Even though the doctor was interstater, Kunwar had spoken with her on and off since his arrival.

He admits that at this point he was somewhat doubtful about Christians, and of foreigners more generally, but this former missionary was one of his few contacts in his new country.

"Many in Nepal are distrustful of Christians," he says. "To some people, the Christians coming in is like the British, who came in and changed the country. That was a big issue when I was in Nepal and it was when I first came to Australia. People are worried that Christian taking over will mean foreigners coming back again and taking our country away. Because of this, I had this idea of Christians, and of church, and really I hated all religions."

Kunwar later discovered that his doctor contact and others had been praying for him during this period, but at the time he had no idea. He also had no idea that she had been in touch with the Rev Campbell King, rector at Canterbury-Hurlstone Park Anglican Church, close to where he was living at the time in the Ashfield area. No idea, that is, until King rang him out of the blue.

BEHIND THE SCENES

"I got a call from him one day and he basically said, 'You and your friends are having dinner with me,'" Kunwar recalls with a laugh. "I was very surprised and really confused, because I didn't like foreigners that much, and we were also from different religions. I was worried about what would happen if I had dinner with him. But in my village there was a saying that basically was: It is better to be mad than die. So I thought, 'Well, I guess I ought to have dinner with him then.'"

Says King of that dinner party: "The one who was personally most responsive to me was Logan. He was something of a leader of the pack then I think, a thoughtful kind of guy, and it was also obvious to me the Lord had already been working in his life.

"He had this sense of lack of purpose, of looking for lack of purpose. I just said to him – after looking after them for a bit, feeding them and being in contact – something along the lines of 'It seems your gods and goddesses haven't done all that much for you. Why not give the God of the Bible a try?'"

This was the beginning of a long relationship between Kunwar and King, one that would result in a return together to Nepal. For the moment, however, Kunwar was still living in a hostel in Sydney, sharing a four-bedroom apartment with 15 other Nepalese. However, it was not long before the local council picked up on this and forced the owner, a Nepalese man himself, to evacuate the building and move its residents on.

With the possibility of homelessness very real, Kunwar reached out to his only local contact, Campbell King. He rang expecting the Christian man to perhaps find another hostel with a reputable owner, if he was lucky. When King called back, he gave an unexpected response.

"When he called me back he said, 'Pack up your things and we'll pick you up in an hour to take you to our house,'" Kunwar says, laughing as he tells the story.

"He also picked up the three other friends with me. I didn't want to leave them behind. So Campbell picked up myself and three other Nepalese in his car and we went from where we lived in Ashfield to Canterbury, to live in accommodation provided by the church."

From there, things cascaded. Not only did the Kings put up Kunwar and his friends, but the members of the church at St Paul's, Canterbury pitched in as well, organising beds and other amenities for the group. It was at this point that Kunwar's view of Christians began to shift and he found himself asking some familiar questions, but with a more pointed edge.

"Over this time, I was wondering 'Is this the true God working behind the scenes here now? Am I in the right place and am I being guided here?'" he recalls. "It was all still very confused. When I met with Campbell and Marcia, I found they were very kind. They weren't like what I had heard Christians to be. They were doing this for me, a Hindu, even though they were Christians. There was something big behind this, and I started thinking more."

Kunwar found himself attending the church from time to time to explore what Christians did when they gathered. When they sang, spoke to each other, taught from the Bible, he found something distinct and unusual, an authenticity and earnestness he didn't expect. "I had never seen people like this before," he says. He read parts of the Bible but struggled to put it together.

After several long nights of thinking through what he had seen and what he was feeling, Logan Kunwar spoke to Campbell King after church. He was feeling as though he had to make a choice about something – that there was some action he needed to take.

The response from King, according to Kunwar, was, "Look, I think God is calling you. If you are ready to accept him as your King and Lord, he will make your life go on track.' And I said 'Okay'. I was lost, lonely and I didn't want to die without knowing what would happen to everything, to my own life after I died. Again, I felt that I wanted to see God before I died. We prayed and I said, 'Lord Jesus, I have lived a sinful life, but you have died for me.'"

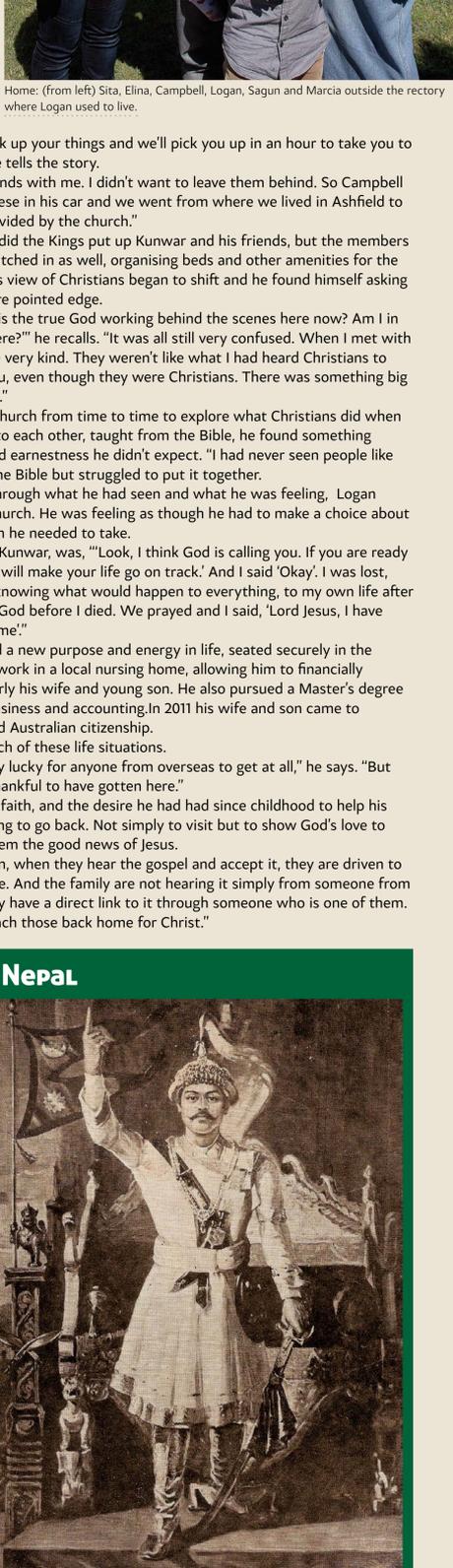
It was at this point that Kunwar found a new purpose and energy in life, seated securely in the gospel and his church family. He found work in a local nursing home, allowing him to financially support his family back home, particularly his wife and young son. He also pursued a Master's degree that opened up new opportunities in business and accounting. In 2011 his wife and son came to Australia, and they have all now received Australian citizenship.

Kunwar sees God working through each of these life situations.

"I got a job in accounting, which is very lucky for anyone from overseas to get at all," he says. "But God put me in this situation and I am thankful to have gotten here."

Even still, Kunwar says his new-found faith, and the desire he had since childhood to help his village, meant he always felt he was going to go back. Not simply to visit but to show God's love to family and friends, and to share with them the good news of Jesus.

Says Campbell King: "People like Logan, when they hear the gospel and accept it, they are driven to share it with their loved ones back home. And the family are not hearing it simply from someone from another culture they do not know – they have a direct link to it through one person who is one of them. One man who is truly converted can reach those back home for Christ."



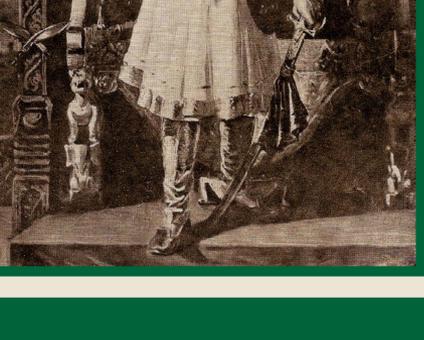
Home: (from left) Sita, Elna, Campbell, Logan, Sagun and Marcia outside the rectory where Logan used to live.

HISTORY OF MODERN NEPAL

The Kingdom of Nepal – the first time a united Nepal emerged – began under Prithvi Narayan Shah (right) in the 18th century. This monarchy was reformed in 1951, ending a period of hereditary monarchies and beginning a period of multi-party governance.

In 1996, a Maoist Communist insurgency arose, which led to 10 years of civil war before the king retook absolute power in 2002. This arrangement spawned mass protests in 2006, leading to a peace accord and a temporary constitution. In 2008, the monarchy was abolished and replaced by a federal democratic republic and an elected coalition government led by the Unified Communist Party (Maoist). This government was defeated a year later by another coalition government, led by the Marxist Leninist Communist Party.

The current government, led by the left-centre Nepali Congress, was elected in February 2014. A new constitution was formally passed by the Nepali parliament last month.



VITAL STATISTICS

Population: approx 31 million

Urban population: 18.6%

Religion:
80% Hindu
10% Buddhist
5% Muslim

1.4% Christian
3.6% other

Median age: 22.9 years

Literacy rate: 63.9%

Health expenditure as % of GDP: 1.9%

Gross National Income per capita: US\$700

Population below poverty line: 24.7 %

Sources: CIA World Factbook (2015), 2011 Nepal Census, The World Bank (2014), UNICEF (2011)

THERE AND BACK AGAIN

Kunwar went back to his village with his family, and the Kings, in 2014. As a mission field, Nepal is very different from Sydney. In places like Kunwar's village, beyond the main cities and town centres, the everyday lifestyle of folk is about as different from the everyday comfort of Sydney as it can be. Kunwar himself describes life in his village as having more in common with the time of Jesus, in many respects, than 21st-century Australia.

"In my village, for a long time there had not been many taps," he says. "People would gather at the water pump there, like in Jesus' day when people would gather at the water source – like in the story of the woman at the well. Just before the Kings, my family and I arrived there, my brother had been working on his own project in our village to install taps for every three or four houses there. So there it might have been God's work. However, just to be arrived all those taps stopped working. I think it was only two taps that would work.

"While we were there, in the morning everyone would gather to get water for everything, and again in the evening. We decided we would play our Saber [an MP3 player powered by a hand-winding mechanism instead of batteries], that would tell the story of Jesus in Nepalese for half an hour, and then after that I would get up preach, talk about God and talk about my story."



Good news: Logan (left) shares the gospel with friends and family in his home village in Nepal.

The Kunwars and the Kings also discovered a nearby church, located 2½ times down the valley from the village in the loft of a small mill. The group met with the church and were invited to preach at a service during their stay. They have also since helped to raise funds in Sydney to construct a new church building, a project which is currently underway.

In the short time spent there on mission, there were many stories of God's grace being further extended to the people of Nepal.

"There was one lady there who had TB [tuberculosis] named Gaumati," Kunwar says. "She actually followed us around at the village when we were there. She was thinking that we could perhaps give her medicine to help, which we didn't have. It is difficult because sometimes people will listen to you just because they want medicine, but you also want them to hear about Jesus.

Because she was ill we couldn't be too close, and she was also *dalit*, 'untouchable' [dalit are a marginalised] within the traditional Hindu caste structure that are often day and we were preaching at the church she was right there, listening to the sermon. We told the elders at the church to take her to hospital on their motorbike and she was cured there. Since then, she has been taking her family and other women to the church."

The church in Nepal generally, seen through this little church in the valley, faces its share of obstacles. Traditional social structures as well as poverty and disease are obvious factors, but the things that hindered Logan Kunwar hearing the gospel in Sydney are amplified in Nepal. Campbell King also tells of women who have become Christians who have been kicked out of home by their husbands because of their conversion.

"When we spoke people were scared to follow Jesus, to believe what we say, because of what other leaders would think," Kunwar says. "They would come up and say, 'We like what you say, but you are here only for a few days and you can't follow Jesus because of those reasons'. It is also difficult because many of the Christian leaders in Nepal do not have a way to learn theology. The two local elders in the valley church do not have any theological education. So what we are trying to do now is to help with that education, for example by providing resources like Saber players. It is important that the Nepalese church there is helped to grow."

One thing Kunwar is thankful for in Sydney is the opportunity to be a part of a church that is multiethnic, that tries to incorporate all cultures in together.

"I really like that church is not just for one community," he says. "Australia is the perfect place for that because people from everywhere are here. I like the union of church, and the idea of being united here, because that is what will happen in the end, in heaven. Having different churches or cultures can be good, doing things a Nepalese way can be helpful. But I want to also help Nepalese Christians realise this as well: that we can be united."

Being a Christian. Having a passion for evangelism. Living in Australia. Working as an accountant. These are all things that Logan Kunwar never dreamt he would be or have. Much of his time as a child was taken up by working to support his family, and the dreams he did have were quite different to the ones he has now.

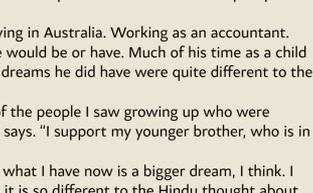
"I actually had a dream to become a doctor, because of the people I saw growing up who were always sick, people who died, and who had no help," he says. "I support my younger brother, who is in China studying medicine – I cover his expenses there.

"My own particular dream there didn't come true, but what I have now is a bigger dream, I think. I would never have thought of being a Christian, because it is so different to the Hindu thought about worshipping this god for this, and that god for that. It was so unexpected, but I am glad that God found me."

The thing one quickly discovers when speaking to people like Kunwar, however, is that while his story is quite unique, it is in some respects not unusual after all. There are many who have left their country for reasons of poverty or persecution. There are many who have gone to great lengths to support their loved ones. And there are many who found the God of the Bible in the last place they expected to look. This makes Kunwar's story no less amazing; it's even more amazing in light of the many, in our own churches, that God is calling in this way. It is often the most unassuming "jars" who carry this unlikely treasure.

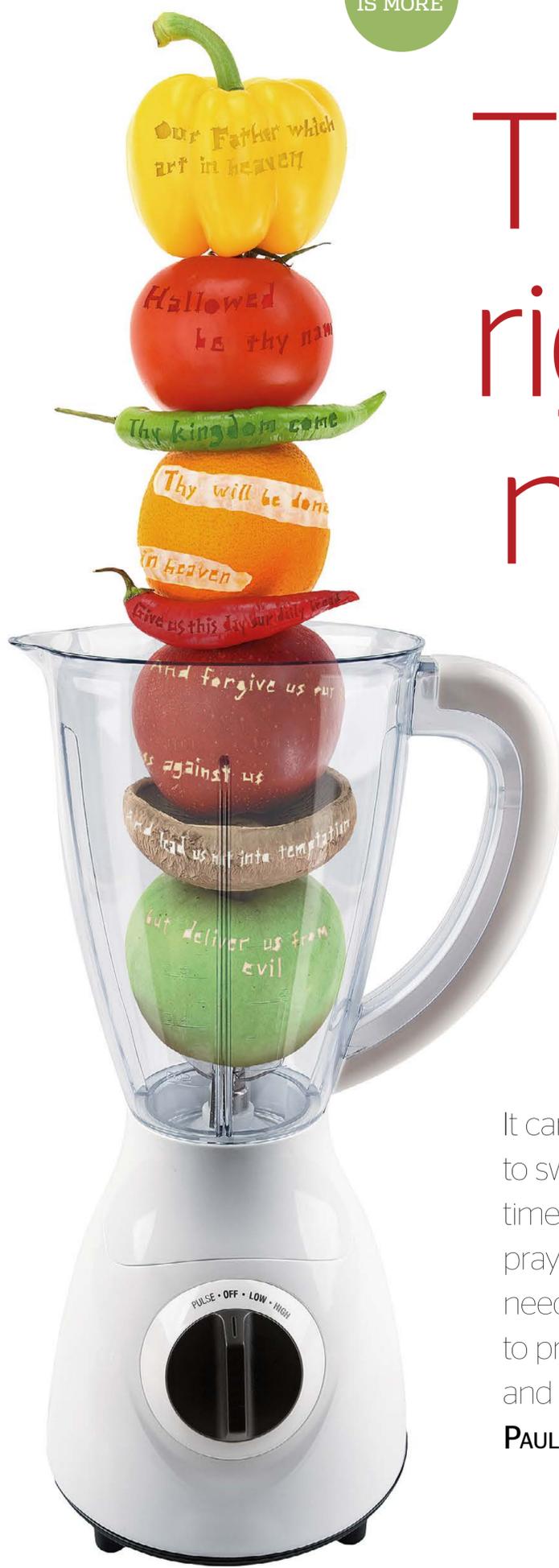
Kunwar agrees.

"It is not really my story," he says. "It's nothing of me. Truly, it's not me, it's all God. Everything I have now came from him. When I told him, 'Take my life', it is what he does. That does not mean I don't go through struggles. Every day I go through struggles. But now I know the truth, that he will be with me, whatever happens to me."



Campbell and Logan preach at the valley church.

The right mix



It can be so easy to switch off in times of corporate prayer, so we need to learn how to pray with heart and mind, writes

PAUL WILLIAMSON.

ACCORDING TO THE WELL-KNOWN PROVERB, FAMILIARITY BREEDS CONTEMPT. But it can also result in a casual or careless attitude to corporate worship. We can be so familiar with the words we use that it becomes little more than a vain repetition of pious phrases. If we are not actually engaging our hearts and minds, are we truly honouring God or ministering to one another? A lecture has been cynically described as 'a device whereby the notes of a lecturer are transferred to the notes of a student, without going through the mind of either'. Perhaps something similar is true when our liturgy does not receive the careful thought and reflection it deserves.

Take, for example, the congregational use of the Lord's Prayer. Like many readers of *Southern Cross* I was raised in a church tradition where the congregation joined together in saying the Lord's Prayer every week in church. Each Sunday morning the minister would conclude his long intercessory prayer with words such as the following: "... we ask all this in the name of the one who taught us to pray, saying..." – at which point the entire congregation would launch into, "Our Father, which art in heaven, hallowed be your name..." I can't recall much variety in the order or form of our unwritten Presbyterian liturgy. In any case, the Lord's Prayer was the most consistent feature of our "hymn-prayer sandwich". Most of us had been taught to recite it off by heart in Sunday School, and therefore it would roll off our tongues quite easily in church; not much mental effort was required, hence the problem – we were too familiar with the actual words. Both I and (I suspect) the vast majority of the congregation were able to recite this prayer without even thinking about what we were saying. For me, at least, it had become simply a thoughtless recitation of pious phrases. The Lord's Prayer had degenerated, as an old hymn puts it, into "a prayer of words alone".

After my teenage conversion, I began attending a Baptist church. There we took some pride in not using the Lord's Prayer at all! Unlike the established denominations – which there was a tendency to frown upon – we were certainly not going to fall into the religious trap of "vain repetition" by thoughtlessly reciting the words of the Lord's Prayer. Indeed, rather than any form of conventional liturgy, great value (read: spiritual maturity) was placed on extemporary prayer. Of course, I soon discovered that like Presbyterians, Baptists also had their own unwritten liturgies – and that certain pious phrases and petitions could sometimes be used rather glibly in that tradition also.

However, when finally I was introduced to Anglicanism, I was exposed to a degree of liturgy such as never before. As you would expect, chapel services at Moore College are consistently liturgical, using the various forms of service suggested in *An Australian Prayer Book* or the contemporary revision produced by the Archbishop of Sydney's Liturgical Panel. But whether we use the forms in the Prayer Book or (very occasionally) a more free-form order of service, certain aspects are seldom omitted, such as the Apostle's Creed or the Lord's Prayer. Not surprisingly, therefore, even those from other denominations quickly become familiar with these liturgical elements – so much so that even theological students and lecturers can find ourselves saying the words without really engaging our minds. But I suspect that this is not just a problem faced by those who participate in several liturgical services every week. I imagine this is something all of us can struggle with, whether we're conscious of it or not.

At a church I visited some time back, the minister tried to help the congregation reflect on what we were actually saying as we recited the Lord's Prayer. The congregation was encouraged to pause momentarily at the end of each petition and think about what we had just prayed. The idea was to avoid simply reading or reciting the prayer in a mechanical or insincere manner. The sermon had expounded the Lord's Prayer, so such reflection on each petition immediately after we prayed the words seemed entirely fitting and possible. Nevertheless, it quickly became clear that this was a difficult thing for us to do. We were all so familiar with the words (and regularly repeating them at a certain pace), that we struggled to implement these simple instructions. And so by the third or fourth line we found ourselves saying the prayer together at the normal pace and, in some cases perhaps, in the normal manner.

Of course, I need to be careful here. It would be wrong to assume that everyone shares my own difficulty in concentrating carefully on these familiar words every time we say them. Undoubtedly, not everybody reciting the Lord's Prayer falls into this trap of doing so in a mechanical or disengaged fashion. So I am certainly not suggesting that we simply abandon our practice of using this prayer, whether in private devotions, or in a family or congregational setting.

However, I do suggest that, especially for those like myself, we need to think about how we can sincerely use this prayer as Jesus intended, and work hard at preventing it from becoming a mindless exercise or vain repetition.

In corporate worship, one thing we can do is vary or reduce the regular pace at which the prayer is said in unison. Perhaps this could be achieved in some measure by formally introducing a sustained pause at appropriate intervals, giving opportunity to reflect (prayerfully) on the words just uttered. For example, before beginning the prayer, we could pause to consider the intimate relationship we have through Jesus with the Creator and Lord of the universe. Immediately after the first three petitions we could maybe stop to reflect on our personal and corporate concern for God's glory – his honour, his kingdom and his will – in our lives, our church, our denomination, our society, our world. After the next three petitions it might be helpful to reflect on our personal and collective need for God's grace – to provide us with the daily necessities of life; to forgive us our sins, and to steer us away from temptation and the wiles of the devil.

Finally, we could conclude with a short pause after its affirmation of our faith: "For the kingdom, the power and the glory, are yours, now and forever, Amen". Clearly the congregation would need to know beforehand where such pauses would be introduced, but hopefully it would not prove too difficult to adjust to them. Of course, this might admittedly be of limited value, in that ultimately we could simply be replacing one piece of mechanical ritual with another. Nevertheless, perhaps with some variety (e.g., not always pausing at the same point each time we say the prayer together) such a simple adjustment to the regular pattern may help us to concentrate more easily, and not simply rattle off the words in a careless or thoughtless manner.

Such a practice could also assist us in family and personal devotions. Indeed, here we have even more opportunity to take time to reflect on the prayer and what we are saying. Luther suggested saying the whole prayer and then focusing on one petition in particular as the basis for further prayer and reflection. By such a practice we could systematically and regularly pray our way more carefully through each part of the prayer. Another thing we could do is think about the ramifications of each petition for our personal lives – how can God's name be further hallowed in my life? How invested am I in God's Kingdom? How submissive am I to God's revealed will? What are we doing with the blessings God has graciously given to us? Is there unconfessed sin of which we need to repent, or is there someone we need to forgive, as God has forgiven us? Are we making it more difficult for God to answer our petition by exposing ourselves to temptation or besetting sins?

By such thoughtful reflection on these questions, prompted by these words we pray, we will almost certainly be convicted by God's Spirit and hopefully also preserved from the hypocrisy of not meaning what we say. Moreover, we will probably also be much less likely to "switch off" when we say the Lord's Prayer. Moreover, in church. The real problem may not be our over-familiarity with the words, but our under-familiarity with the theology and practical implications of this prayer. Ironically, therefore, the more familiar we truly are with this prayer, the more likely we will be to pray it with heart and mind.



MINISTRY IN THE HEAVENS

An RAAF A PC-9 Roulette aerobatic display aircraft performs a low-level fly-past during the 75th Anniversary Commemorative Service. PHOTO: Sgt William Guthrie

To mark the 75th anniversary of chaplaincy in the Royal Australian Air Force, RAAF chaplains from around the country descended on Canberra for several days of celebration last month.

"Air Force chaplains are ministers and pastors who are immersed in a dynamic community, living the same sort of lifestyle as other Air Force personnel and their families," said the RAAF's Director-General Chaplaincy – Chaplain (Air Commodore) Kevin Russell.

"They share in the ups and downs of people's lives and Air Force ministry means sharing our faith," Mr Russell said. "Most clearly, a chaplain is a visible 'God person'."

Activities included a church service at the Royal Military College Duntroon, a reading at the Last Post ceremony and dinner at the Australian War Memorial, and a reception with the Governor-General.



Bill Salier (left) is interviewed by Dean Reilly.

The tyranny of distance from major events such as KCC and EQUIP has prompted Southern Highlands churches to band together for local conventions. The inaugural Southern Highlands Women's convention was held at Moss Vale Anglican Church in July, followed by the first Men's Convention in August.

"While our men and women have enjoyed attending some of the Katoomba, Sydney and Wollongong conferences, the distance from the Highlands to these conferences seemed to be restricting some of our congregation from attending," said convention organiser, the Rev Dean Reilly. "I have also learned over the last five years that the Highlands is its own geographical and unique Mission Area, so it was worthwhile putting in the effort to have our own conferences."

Joining with fellow rectors, Mittagong's Richard Mills and Jeremy Tonks from Sutton Forest, Dean Reilly led the Men's Convention while his wife Catherine gathered a team to organise the women's event.

"Our speaker Kara Hartley (Archdeacon for Women) was encouraging and relevant on the topic of our faith being a faith we can live by, using the current debate surrounding SRE and marriage equality as helpful illustrations," Catherine Reilly said. "It was great to have the Southern Highlands Ministry Wives working together on this event in conjunction with the Women's Ministry Team from Moss Vale."

The principal of Youthworks College, Dr Bill Salier, and social researcher Mark McCrindle spoke at the men's day in August. "Bill Salier was encouraging and challenging and Mark McCrindle was wonderfully informative, energetic and thought-provoking," Mr Reilly said, referring to the demographer's slideshow of local, state and Australia-wide statistics.

"We have begun planning for next year's conferences, taking on board the feedback that we received with regard to topics and the possibility of extending the time of the men's conference to provide some optional seminars and longer question time." With a statistic worthy of Mr McCrindle's research, Mr Reilly said the age ranges at both conferences were from 12 to 90 years.

Foul is fair



Southern CROSS OCTOBER 2015

JUDY ADAMSON

Macbeth

Rated MA15+

THE SCOTTISH PLAY IS NOT ONLY ONE OF THE GREATEST WORKS IN ENGLISH literature – a tremendous challenge for any director and cast – it is also one of fiction's finest examples of temptation and the ripple-effect consequences of acting upon it.

Dour and dark, violent and bloody, prophetic and profound, this film is a tightly edited, fearless adaptation of Shakespeare's classic text for which Australian director Justin Kurzel should be rightly applauded. There is no unnecessary clutter here in action or setting – just the meat of a story that is almost word-for-word familiar, yet presented with such skill that it is first-time fresh.

With a confident hand we begin, not with the three witches, but with funeral rites for the small son of Macbeth (Michael Fassbender) and his wife (Marion Cotillard). Only vaguely referred to in the text, here their loss is centre stage, planting us solidly into Middle Age ritual and superstition before the "weird sisters" appear, hailing Macbeth as a king – and his friend Banquo (Paddy Considine) as the father of kings to come.

The pair, who have been loyal and valiant leaders for King Duncan's armies in the country's civil war, laugh at first about their future good fortune, but the wiser Banquo quickly muses at the safety of listening to such pronouncements. He says:

"And oftentimes, to win us to our harm,
The instruments of darkness tell us truths,
Win us with honest trifles, to betray's
In deepest consequence."

True enough. He feels the power of what the witches have said to turn his heart away from his sworn service towards pursuing an unexpected inheritance.

At almost the same moment Macbeth's thoughts start down the path that Banquo has rejected – with justification and ambition gradually squashing his loyalty, his honour and his conscience.

In a savage battle that follows, both fight for Duncan (David Thewlis) against a traitor's army and are successful. Yet all through the fighting Macbeth can see the witches standing by the battlefield. The challenge and temptation are ever present.

When a grateful Duncan honours Macbeth after the battle and purposes to break his journey homewards at Macbeth's estate, it is Lady Macbeth who greedily swears the king shall not see the next morning and convinces her husband Duncan must die. Kurzel even places her in the family chapel as she conjures up spirits to "unsex me here, and fill me from the crown to the toe top-full of direst cruelty". It's chilling, but it's just right – an illustration of how often the public face hides the heart beneath.

Even more chilling is the coronation of the couple. Dressed in finely coloured robes rather than the dark browns or dour black almost all others wear, they stand crowned before a throng that hails its new king. Macbeth has achieved what he sought – yet his eyes are dead. The line has been crossed. The horrors of Duncan's murder have left their mark.

Lady Macbeth keeps saying that "what is done cannot be undone", yet as more and more deaths follow to keep them "safe", both gradually lose their reason.

Kurzel and his production team have taken a tremendous text and given it even more power through uncluttered settings, arresting highland scenery and careful adaptation. Music is sparingly used and the moments of slow motion action make the visceral battle and murder scenes all the more ghastly (and not for the squeamish). Production plans have been laid with great care and then everyone gets out of the way, allowing the words and the performances to do their work.

Michael Fassbender is extraordinary – a seemingly effortless combination of raw strength, doubt, reflection and eventual madness – and his Macbeth is likely to be a benchmark for many years to come. He and Marion Cotillard are an inspired pairing, and the passion and conviction she brings to Lady Macbeth is all the more remarkable given she is performing such a difficult role in (for her) a foreign language. Her skill makes it look simple.

There really isn't a scope anywhere, although sometimes one feels almost overwhelmed by the complexity and a fable of Shakespeare's words. How did one human being invent all this? He sees so keenly and truly into the heart and all that lies there, so despite the centuries that have passed what his characters feel and express is timeless.

With the play being such a perfect illustration of the effects of giving in to temptation, it doesn't take a genius to understand the awful implications of unrepentant sin. The best way to highlight this comes from the Bard himself. It's a line from the play that doesn't appear in the film, but after Macbeth has killed Duncan while the king's drunk guards lie sleeping, one cries out "God bless us" in his sleep.

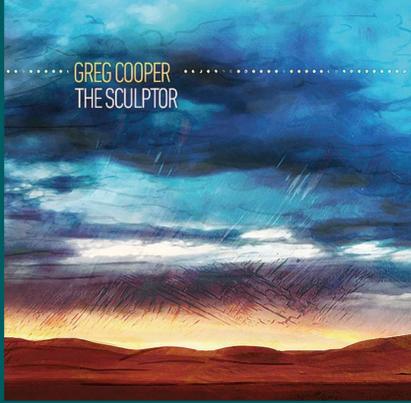
Macbeth, his hands still awash with Duncan's blood, finds he cannot say "Amen" to this prayer, and asks:

"Wherefore could not I pronounce 'Amen'?
I had most need of blessing, and 'Amen'
Stuck in my throat."

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COOPER GOES SOLO

The Sculptor EP



This latest release from Sydney musician Greg Cooper consists of six songs loosely centred around the theme of being sculpted and changed by God, through all kinds of experiences and challenging times.

While this is a clearly Christian release, it seems something more of a step towards a typical singer-songwriter album than 2013's *Again and Again*. All songs are written by Cooper, with the exception of two co-writes; one with fellow Emu contributor Mike Begbie and the other with American artist Marcella Detroit – formerly of Eric Clapton's band and Shakespeare's Sister, and a Top 10 ARIA charting solo

artist in Australia. The song Cooper wrote with Detroit, "Take One Step", is certainly the most distinctive song on the album, and possibly the best – it combines Cooper's acoustic sound, uplifting lyrics and strong hooks with a smattering of R&B stylings.

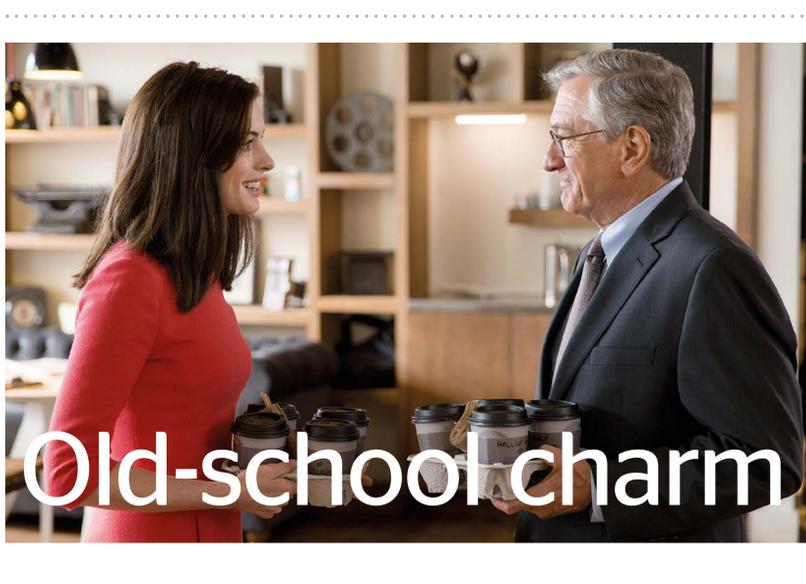
The other songs are more "typically" Cooper, but change things up appropriately among pop-rock and singer-songwriter type styles – which is impressive when you consider there are only two songs on the record, including Cooper himself. The straight up-and-down soft rock of the title track rolls along at pace complete with a guitar solo, while "Rainy Day" would not sound out of place in a Finn Brothers playlist.

While there is enough musically on the six tracks to sink your teeth into, I did feel on occasion the lyrics were hinting at more specific stories (such as "Take One Step", which reflects on a deathbed conversation with a friend or relative), but didn't always develop specifically from those stories to latch onto and ground the songs.

That may have been deliberate on Cooper's part, and this is a more subjective comment in any case, but it did feel at times the EP is caught a little between being a personal confessional songwriter collection and a more general devotional recording.

Despite that, this is a thoroughly listenable release with several strong tracks on board, one that stands up to repeat plays.

Nick Gilbert



Old-school charm

JUDY ADAMSON

The Intern

Rated M

HOLLYWOOD CHURNS OUT COMEDIES AT A RIDICULOUS RATE, YET IT'S RARE TO FIND more than a handful each year that are worth watching. Part of the reason is quantity, but most of the blame sits squarely with the subject matter and the way it is handled.

Millions are invested in lowest common denominator claptrap, often based around the most ridiculous premise. Add uninspiring, tacky scripts and half-hearted acting, and you have what to see at the cinema gets even narrower.

This made the prospect of a comedy starring Robert De Niro and Anne Hathaway very attractive. First, the two main actors are excellent. Second, it wouldn't be about them falling in love with each other. Third, there was hope the script would be above average.

The premise of *The Intern* is simple: Ben Whittaker (De Niro) is a 70-year-old widower who finds retirement dull. He's done the yoga, the holidays, the language learning and the family visits, but wants something to really engage his mind – something to get up for every day. So when he sees a notice offering internships to over-65s at an internet fashion start-up, he jumps at it.

The brains behind the company is Jules Ostin (Hathaway), whose kitchen table business has mushroomed into a national web phenomenon in 18 months, with more than 200 staff beavering away at laptops in a funky open office in Brooklyn.

The trouble is, while Jules has all the right ideas for quality presentation and customer service, there isn't time for her to keep on top of every creative decision, customer needs, staff needs and tech problems while having quality time with her stay-at-home-husband Matt and daughter Paige. She's now been told she should hire a CEO to take some pressure off, but the idea of handing over control distresses her.

Jules isn't unkind, just demanding and extremely time-poor, which makes her tricky to work for – especially when decisions are made and forgotten faster than she can ride her bicycle around the office.

She has no memory of agreeing to start the seniors internship program and wants out but, because it's an idea she has begun, she needs to set an example. When Ben is assigned to her, Jules apologetically tells him there will be little for him to do, but he isn't about to spend the whole day reading the paper and quickly makes himself indispensable elsewhere.

Before long Ben's approachability has won over his co-workers, who lap up his wise relationship advice, sartorial tips and problem-solving attitude, and it isn't long before Jules follows suit.

At a time when older workers are being sidelined, regarded as having little to offer the modern office world, it's a lovely change to see nothing but positives in Ben's presence. Sure, he's almost too perfect in his reliability, loyalty, kindness and discretion, but it's good to show the added value someone with life and work experience can offer.

The best part about *The Intern*, however, is that it's not completely predictable. Within five minutes I thought I knew exactly where the story was heading and was pleasantly surprised to discover I was wrong. While you know Jules and her youthful staff will learn to love Ben – with plenty of good-humoured business along the way – and it's clear there's a potential new girlfriend in staff masseuse Fiona (Rene Russo), there are a number of assumptions that simply don't fly. What a relief that is.

De Niro is avuncular and charming as Ben while Hathaway, in a lovely performance, manages to be both tough and vulnerable as Jules.

Yes, there are holes in *The Intern*. Nothing's perfect and life is rarely so neatly resolved. But, much like Ben, the comedy has an old-school style and charm, and that is very appealing.

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