

MARCH
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Southern CROSS

THE NEWS MAGAZINE FOR SYDNEY ANGLICANS



Below the waterline

SYDNEY GOES IN-DEPTH ON SAME-SEX MARRIAGE

+ When disagreements turn ugly

& New chapter for Norfolk Island



COVER

Sydney's Doctrine Commission explores beyond the tip of the iceberg on same-sex marriage. P11

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“ It was a bit of what I call a God-incidence. ”

Paul Davey
Sydney News



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Green Tent turns 15



Goosey fun: some of the younger kids at Green Tent making fluoro-coloured slime. PHOTO: Nick Dick-Smith

NICK GILBERT

ST PHILIP'S, SOUTH TURRAMURRA HAS CELEBRATED 15 YEARS OF ITS ANNUAL GREEN TENT mission event, seeing hundreds of children and their families connecting with the church and hearing the good news of Jesus.

The Rev Tom Henderson-Brooks, the rector at St Philip's, says that the event is one of the central components of the church's life and is truly a parish, rather than individual or group, project.

"It's really something that the church and the parish owns, as opposed to myself, or any of the other leaders or volunteers," he says. "It was started 15 years ago, before I was here. A lot of the hard work in getting it going was done then, and it's just grown and grown from there."

Green Tent is a week-long event in the January school holidays aimed primarily at families, run in a very similar way to many beach missions. The program caters to children from kindergarten all the way up to Year 9 and is on at the church site, as well as at the local primary and high schools. Mr Henderson-Brooks says that about 12 different churches are represented among the program's 90-plus strong leadership team, making it an interdenominational endeavour.

"We have a lot of face-to-face leaders involved in the main-event type activities," Mr Henderson Brooks says. "Then there are other volunteers who give hours of their time every day for a week making sandwiches, or baking thousands of muffins to recipes that make sure we cater to kids who can't have nuts or other things like that.

"There are people who come in to barista for a couple of hours in the morning, people who do admin odd jobs, people who set up equipment – there are all sorts of jobs that need doing but thankfully there are people who are willing to come in and do them."

Mr Henderson-Brooks says the event has helped to encourage mission throughout the year, and to intensify engagement with overseas mission as well as local parish work.

"Green Tent is a key part of our mission DNA at St Phil's," he says. "January is always focused on mission – our sermon series are mission-focused. We've had link missionaries preach during January, either in person or over Skype. It's funny, 'cause it means that as a church, we don't get to things like Summer School, because we're too busy getting ready to do our own mission work. January just works out to be the best time to do it. And that has flow-on in terms of the rest of the year – it helps connect everything up in terms of evangelism and gospel work, and means that we want people in our area to be able to connect in anywhere into our church life."

This year has allowed Mr Henderson-Brooks, who has led the Green Tent event for the past two years, to train up someone in the team to be able to lead it next year. The attendance at Green Tent dropped from last year, from about 300 to 220. While this leaves room to review and grow, there is still an abundance of gospel fruit to be had.

"We end up having a lot of soft evangelism contact with families, including families from outside the area, or who are on the edges of what our regular activities reach, that we then capitalise on throughout the year," Mr Henderson-Brooks says. "There was one family who hadn't come to church before that were at Green Tent. The mother made a commitment to Christ last Sunday and became a Christian. There's a lot that flows on from Green Tent, beyond what actually happens there."

Oz Day honourees



Gordon's Australia Day awards: Margaret Stafford, June Millar, Keith Millar and Maree Grieve.

ANGLICANS FROM THE FIELDS OF BROADCASTING, EDUCATION AND MEDICINE, AS WELL AS members of parish councils and community organisations, were awarded honours on Australia Day. The Governor-General and Chancellor of the Order of Australia, General Sir Peter Cosgrove, approved the awards announced on January 26, marking the start of the 40th year of the home-grown honours system.

The list recognises a diverse range of contributions and service across all fields including professional endeavours, community service, Defence and Emergency Services, and acts of bravery.

As well as a range of people from other backgrounds, Anglicans from Sydney have again featured. 2CH Radio personality Gareth McCray, a member of St Paul's, was awarded a Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) for services to the community, to broadcasting and to education.

Professor Janice Reid, who has been extensively associated with Anglican schools, was made a Companion of the Order of Australia (AC) for eminent service to the tertiary education sector including as an advocate for equitable access, particularly for indigenous and refugee communities, and to health care and medical bodies.

Surgeon Dr Andrew Gatenby, a member of Campbelltown Anglican Church and a former member of the Macarthur Anglican School council (as well as a past parishioner and warden at Narellan and Minto), was given an AM for significant service to medicine, particularly as a colorectal surgeon, and to the community of south-western Sydney.

Further south west in the Southern Highlands, environmental scientist Rick Morse – a member of Bowral Anglican – received his AM for significant service to environmental management. Dr Graeme Watts, of Epping parish, received an AM for significant service to people with a disability and health education.

In other OAM awards, four current or former members of St John's, Gordon were honoured for their charitable work. Mrs Margaret Stafford was given an OAM for her volunteer and fundraising work, particularly through the ladies' group and lunches for parishioners. Also named on the list were Mrs Maree Ann Grieve, Mr Keith Millar and Mrs Alice June Millar, who are part of a team who staff the Gordon parish Op Shop, raising funds for mission.

Mrs Lorna Wright, who taught Sunday school at Holy Trinity in Concord West for 40 years and also served as a member of the parish council, was honoured for service to the community of Concord.

Mr Wallace Edwards, a pastoral partner of St Matthew's, Manly, was given an OAM for service to the community and Mrs June Beck, a member of the parish of Hunters Hill, was honoured for service to the tourism and hospitality sector, and to the community. Mrs Prudence Thomson, a member of Christ Church, Lavender Bay, was honoured for service to people with disabilities and Richard Begbie, honorary minister at the Anglican church in Bungendore, was given an OAM for service to the community through historical and social welfare organisations.

In other Anglican schools Mrs Evangeline Galettis, who has had a lengthy association with St Catherine's School, Waverley and, as archivist, established the school museum, was honoured for service to the community, particularly to educational institutions. Mr Brian Larking, treasurer of the King's School council since 2005, received an OAM for service to a range of cultural, social welfare and educational bodies.

In local awards, Laurel Horton, a member of St Peter's, Cooks River, was named Marrickville Council's senior citizen of the year for her work with the church and the community, while the rector of St Paul's, Burwood, the Rev James Collins, was named Burwood Council's local citizen of the year.

“Whole church” movement gathers momentum

THE AUSTRALIAN BRANCH OF THE GLOBAL Fellowship of Confessing Anglicans (GfCA), a worldwide movement promoting reform of the Anglican Church around the biblical gospel, will be launched this month.

The GfCA was created at the landmark Global Anglican Future Conference, or GAFCON, in Jerusalem in 2008. Now the Australian body is being launched at the Anglican Future Conference in Melbourne on March 26.

"Some parts of the Anglican Church are being weakened by a drift away from biblical authority and the Fellowship of Confessing Anglicans [FCA] stands against this movement and for a positive contemporary orthodoxy which we believe to be the essence of Anglicanism," says the Ven Dr Richard Condie (above), Archbishop of Melbourne and the chairman of FCA Australia's board.

The Archbishop of Kenya, the Most Rev Eliud Wabukala – who is also chairman of the GAFCON Primates Council – will fly into Melbourne for the launch event.

Says Dr Condie: "This is a whole church movement, and we are looking for dioceses, parishes and individuals (lay and clergy) who are concerned with defending and promoting the gospel and biblical authority in Australia to join us".

Like the international fellowship – which includes the 23 million-strong Nigerian Anglican Church – members must assent to the Jerusalem Declaration, which Dr Condie calls "a statement of contemporary orthodox Anglicanism".

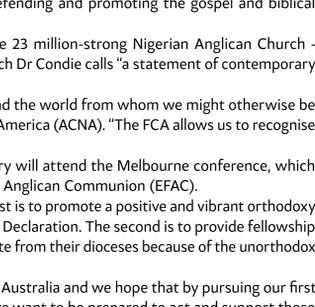
"FCA puts us in fellowship with faithful Anglicans around the world from whom we might otherwise be separated," he says, citing the Anglican Church of North America (ACNA). "The FCA allows us to recognise them as true Anglicans."

Australian church leaders from every state and territory will attend the Melbourne conference, which is jointly sponsored by the Evangelical Fellowship in the Anglican Communion (EFAC).

"We have two aims in Australia," Dr Condie says. "The first is to promote a positive and vibrant orthodoxy within our denomination along the lines of the Jerusalem Declaration. The second is to provide fellowship and assistance to those who have been forced to disaffiliate from their dioceses because of the unorthodox actions of their leaders.

"Fortunately, we have not encountered this situation in Australia and we hope that by pursuing our first aim we may never have to. But in case it does happen, we want to be prepared to act and support those affected."

There will be coverage of the conference and launch in April Southern Cross.



MAC numbers surge

MARY ANDREWS COLLEGE (MAC), the Bible and pastoral care training centre run by Anglican Deaconess Ministries (ADM), has recorded a 45 per cent jump in enrolments.

The record number of students started their studies last month at the college's city site in St Andrew's House, where MAC has been since 2009. More than 180 people are enrolled this year, including MAC's first indigenous students.

The college's director of studies, the Rev Jackie Stoneman, says there has been particular interest in specialty teaching on pastoral care, with 53 students enrolled.

"We are thrilled to see the number of students grow in such a dramatic way this year," Ms Stoneman says. "More and more people now understand that pastoral care combined with solid Bible teaching can help to build churches in many different ways. We take seriously the biblical principle that everyone needs to be involved in ministry and we want to equip women everywhere to do their part as God's people, ministering in their churches and communities."

One of 2015's new students, Mrs Tricia Spencer, says, "I already do a lot of pastoral work in my church but I am hoping the course will help me to be more confident. I've been reading about it for a long time in Southern Cross. I looked at the pictures in the ads and saw a number of people I know, really high-calibre people, and I knew of the college's reputation. As it happened, I lost my job on a Friday, and attended an Open Day on the Monday!"

Last year, ADM announced it would spend \$1.8 million over four years on 60 traineeships for women over the age of 40. The parish positions include funding for a MAC course as well as a trainee wage.



Rush hour: MAC registrar Sarah Barry prepares for an influx of new students.

Macarthur to support Malaysian training



An Equip student in Kuala Lumpur studies the PTC in English.

NICK GILBERT

THE MACARTHUR MISSION AREA IS EMBARKING ON A NEW VENTURE DESIGNED TO HELP FUND ministry training efforts in Malaysia.

The scheme, which will be a partnership between churches in the mission area, Moore College, and Equip Gospel Ministries – the agent for Moore's External Studies Department in West Malaysia – will raise money through parishes in order to help fund lay people and clergy being trained in the Preliminary Theological Certificate and the Licentiate in Theology.

"Basically, the idea is we provide the cash as a Mission Area, and that trains lay people in the PTC and also helps to identify and train clergy in the future," says the Rev Paul Davey, rector of The Oaks Anglican Church and the person who is heading up scheme.

"We really wanted to have a look at partnering with another diocese in the Communion and this is what we've all come up with."

The new scheme grew out of a quarterly mission area meeting that was also attended by the principal of Moore College, the Rev Canon Dr Mark Thompson. When asked about ways that the mission area could partner with the college and other dioceses, a potential partnership identified was one with the Diocese of West Malaysia.

"We found we had links with people in the Diocese of West Malaysia, in particular Andrew Cheah, who is the Dean of the Cathedral in Kuala Lumpur and who graduated from Moore College," Mr Davey says. "Paul Downward at the External Studies Unit had just got off the phone with him when we rang around investigating. It was a bit of what I call a 'God-incidence'."

Adds Dr Thompson: "The college is right behind this and absolutely excited by the opportunity. I think this is a way in which parishes and the college in particular can partner to help gospel work around the world."

The ministry director at Equip Gospel Ministries in Kuala Lumpur, the Rev Tim Nicholls, says the partnership will allow Equip to offer PTC through Moore and the THL through the Australian College of Theology to more students, and provide a more affordable, evangelically minded option to those wanting to do further theological study.

"If people want to go overseas to study at a particular college they often can't, simply because it's well and truly out of the reach of many Malaysians," Mr Nicholls says. "If someone wanted to study at Moore for four years, pay for accommodation, buy food, it would probably be equivalent to about 20 years' worth of wages for someone here. So what we're trying to do is to just raise biblical literacy generally, give access to resources and also help raise up the next generation of Christian leaders in this area."

The partnership is looking to raise \$12,000 for Equip's work over the course of 2015, with a view to expansion as more churches in the mission area are able to contribute. The hope is that within 10 years the number of Equip students will increase from 100 to 500, including an increase in students taking the THL. A Malay translation of course material is being finalised and it is hoped it will be ready to teach within the next two years.

Dr Thompson says there is the potential for similar schemes to work in other dioceses around the world. "We have regular requests from dioceses around the world for help, particularly to help resource their lay people and church leaders," he says. "We have more requests than we are able to cope with. These kinds of opportunities through mission areas and those structures help us to expand what is possible in terms of that service."

Fell swoops in to NI

THE ORDINATION OF A FULL-time chaplain on Norfolk Island has brought much-needed hope for the future of the church and the community.

The challenges to provide effective ministry for the Church of England on Norfolk Island (as the Anglican Church there is known) are immense. But in early February a new chapter began for the Diocese's most remote parish when the Bishop of South Sydney, Robert Forsyth, ordained David Fell as presbyter and inducted him as chaplain to the island.

"This is a new beginning," Bishop Forsyth says. "It's the first time in more than a decade there's been a young family in ministry here, and after years of struggle it represents a really positive 'Yes' to the island and 'Yes' to ministry on the island."

The circumstances of ministry and the economy on Norfolk have meant that for the past five years the Church of England chaplaincy has relied on short-term, part-time retired clergy. Their ministry was deeply appreciated but could not be the same as that of a full-time younger man.

By late 2013 it was clear that without change there was a long-term danger to the existence of the Church of England on Norfolk, let alone the task of reaching islanders for Christ.

The then acting chaplain, the Rev Canon Bruce Ballantine-Jones, galvanised the island's lay leadership, and Bishop Forsyth, to seek a young, full-time man who would set about rebuilding the ministry.

"One of the unique challenges in such a remote place is that there is no parish next door to go to if the one you are in is failing," Bishop Forsyth says. "Finding the right long-term chaplain was crucial."

A Southern Cross article on the needs of the ministry caught the attention of Mr Fell, then an assistant minister at Manly. Although he had never been to Norfolk, his wife Crystal's parents had worked as schoolteachers there in the 1980s and often talked about it. Increasingly David and Crystal came to the conclusion that God was calling them to ministry on the island.

Yet financial support was needed until the Church of England might become self-supporting again. After much thought the South Sydney Regional Council committed to a five-year program of significant support to the ministry.

Four of the previous short-term chaplains flew back to Norfolk for Mr Fell's induction and to take part in the service.

Mr Fell expressed gratitude to them all for their example of love and Christian service, adding that "Norfolk Island will be the place where our children will grow and learn about the world, the place where they'll enjoy those special childhood friendships – and a place where we pray that in God's kindness, they will come to call on the name of Jesus in repentance and faith... God willing, this will be our life's work for the next season of our family's life – and for that we are grateful to God."

At a lunch to welcome the Fells and their children, Bishop Forsyth emphasised the significant place of the Church of England in the island's life and history and its commitment never to give up on Norfolk Island "because God will never give up on Norfolk Island".

Church member Mary Christian-Bailey expressed her joy and thankfulness on behalf of the islanders that "we have not been forgotten".



David Fell receives the Bible from Bishop Forsyth as previous NI chaplains look on.



Forward in faith: Ugandan youth at January's convention in Bushenyi respond to Zac Veron's evangelistic sermon..

Ugandans choose Jesus

JUDY ADAMSON

LIVES WERE WON FOR, AND DEDICATED TO, CHRIST AT UGANDA'S LARGEST ANNUAL YOUTH AND students' convention in January, which included input by a team from Anglican Youthworks.

Held in the western Ugandan city of Bushenyi, the event attracted an estimated crowd of 10,000 to a five-day program of teaching focused around the theme of walking wisely (Ephesians 5:15), with local and international speakers including the Archbishop of Uganda the Most Rev Stanley Ntagali, the Bishop of Butare (Rwanda) the Rt Rev Nathan Gasatura, and the Rev Canon Ian Parkinson (UK).

In his address to open the convention, Archbishop Ntagali warned those present of the dangers of thoughtless involvement in worldly things.

"If we know our good ways, not walk as fools, we shall live longer and we shall have a future," he said. "We are called upon to live in this world with a wise mind, because we are living in a terribly wicked world."

The CEO of Youthworks, the Rev Zac Veron, who was sent by the Youthworks council to preach at the event, says it was "incredibly exciting" to be part of it and see more than 1000 young people make commitments to Jesus.

"It's a very different environment to anything in Australia," he says. "These young people, mainly teenagers but youth in Uganda are also 20-35, are hungry for teaching... and it's a great privilege to be in front of people like that. Seeing hundreds of people come to the front after a number of talks that were evangelistic, including mine, it's hard to put into words. It was exhilarating to see the effect of the word of God being preached... and see people give their lives to Christ.

"In Sydney it appears that the wider population are very closed to the gospel of Jesus, so we work hard, we preach well and often there seems to be very little response to that in terms of new converts. In Africa it's very different. There's eagerness to hear, churches are filling, there's enthusiasm. On the Sunday, these teenagers and 20-year-olds sat from 8am in the morning until 4pm with the odd break to get up and sing and they were well behaved for one-hour talk after one-hour talk... that would never happen at any of the youth conventions in our country!"

One of the speakers on the Sunday was Uganda's President Yoweri Museveni, a former freedom fighter against Idi Amin, who encouraged the youth to read the Bible – then added "and the Koran".

Mr Veron admits he found this frustrating but says his fellow clergy were unperturbed. "They were happy that he encouraged people to read the Bible," he says. "The President isn't a believer but he is married to a Christian, and the fact that he was there was very big news – it was reported everywhere. He's a politician, and in a county where 10 per cent of the population is Muslim he can't alienate a substantial minority... [Local clergy] were just really pleased that he took the time to come to the convention."

The next teaching step is a trip to Uganda in May by Youthworks' Jon Thorpe and Emma Collett to run training in the primary school *Connect* program. The plan is to conduct a *Connect* pilot in Anglican schools later in the year, with a view to rolling out the program across the country.

“Free the children”: report



PHOTO: courtesy Australian Human Rights Commission

THE ARCHBISHOP OF SYDNEY, DR GLENN DAVIES, SAYS THE SITUATION OF CHILDREN IN DETENTION “should concern every Australian” and he has supported calls for an overhaul of the existing system.

The Human Rights Commission published a report in February calling for a wide-ranging public inquiry into children in detention and a special reference to the Royal Commission on Child Sexual Abuse for incidents that have occurred in detention centres.

The inquiry concluded that “current detention law, policy and practice does not address the particular vulnerabilities of asylum-seeker children nor does it afford them special assistance and protection. Mandatory detention does not consider the individual circumstances of children nor does it address the best interests of the child as a primary consideration”.

In a media release, Dr Davies said governments of both parties have struggled with the issue of refugee and immigrant arrivals and unfair political criticism had marred what should be a bipartisan debate.

The Archbishop said it should be acknowledged that, according to the latest figures, there were 211 children still in detention, a dramatic fall from previous figures and a tenfold decrease from its peak. However, he added, “Every Australian should be concerned at the plight of children in such extreme circumstances”.

“Governments must clear the way for the necessary checks to be done and then for the children to be quickly removed from detention, with their parents,” he said. “It would only cause further heartache for families to be separated from each other at a time when they need each other the most.”

Anglicare has made a similar call to release the remaining detained children, along with their families. “The commission’s report confirms what many in this sector already know – that prolonged detention has a profound negative impact on the welfare of children; that the rates of self-harm in children are directly linked to their length of time in detention and feelings of uncertainty about their future,” said Anglicare’s CEO Grant Millard.

Armidale’s new Dean



NEW ENGLAND clergyman the Rev Chris Brennan (left) has been chosen as the new Dean of St Peter’s Cathedral in Armidale.

Mr Brennan grew up in a farming family in Enmore and Yarrowyck, two rural localities close to Armidale, and was educated at The Armidale School, where he became a Christian in his HSC year. After studying science at the University of Southern Queensland, he returned to New England to gain a Diploma of Education, and then worked for three years as

a chaplain in the university chapel before beginning study at Moore College in 2001.

He has subsequently ministered as an assistant in the parish of Gunnedah and, for the past eight years, has been vicar of Glen Innes.

The Bishop of Armidale, the Rt Rev Rick Lewers, described Mr Brennan as “a son of the diocese” and “an outstanding leader and Bible teacher like the previous Dean Emeritus Stephen Williams. Chris will bring a different style to the Cathedral and challenge the congregations in his care to consider how they will reach all people for Christ across the area,” Bishop Lewers said. “It is with great joy that this Bishop welcomes Chris to the ministry.”

Mr Brennan said his greatest debt was owed to his Lord, “who has guided my footsteps and paved the way of my salvation by his blood alone. I know that I am not much of a bloke, but I have an incredible Saviour and have been undeservedly gifted with a fantastic family”.

He will be installed as Dean at St Peter’s Cathedral, Armidale on March 2.

South Carolina court win



Proclaim Christ: Bishop Mark Lawrence.

THE ANGLICAN DIOCESE OF SOUTH CAROLINA HAS WON A COURT CHALLENGE TO ITS PROPERTY and identity rights in a ruling that has encouraged orthodox dioceses across the world.

In 2012, the Episcopal Church (TEC) tried to sack Bishop Mark Lawrence, claiming it owned the property and identity of the diocese. Bishop Lawrence had remained within the Episcopal Church but had been outspoken about the liberal drift of the denomination, including its actions in appointing a practising homosexual as bishop in contravention of Lambeth conference resolutions.

Bishop Lawrence and the diocese then withdrew from TEC taking with them all their property, including churches, symbols and other assets.

After a marathon hearing and the calling of 50 witnesses, South Carolina judge Diane Goodstein denied the TEC's claim to identity and \$500 million in properties. Lead counsel for the diocese, Alan Runyan, argued successfully that the diocese had existed long before TEC was established, that it was one of the dioceses that founded the denomination in 1789 and was therefore free to associate with a denomination of its choosing.

The Episcopal Church, which has declined by a quarter in the past decade, has reportedly spent \$40 million pursuing dioceses and churches that have withdrawn from the denomination through the courts, demanding property and assets. Many have affiliated with the Anglican Church of North America (ACNA), which is recognised as authentically Anglican by GAFCON primates but not by the Archbishop of Canterbury. ACNA has pledged to plant 1000 new churches in five years.

"This has never been about exclusion," Bishop Lawrence told a news conference after the decision. "Our churches, our diocese, are open to all. It's about the freedom to practice and proclaim faith in Jesus Christ as it has been handed down to us. We're ready to move forward and grateful for Judge Goodstein's handling of the case."

Two weeks before the ruling, the Archbishop of Canterbury was asked whether he saw a future for the Episcopal Church and said, "Well, you'd have to ask them. I am dodging the question, but it's not because I don't see a future for the Episcopal Church. I don't feel I'm qualified to answer that question."

When asked by *The New York Times* about the status of ACNA, he described it as "a church of Anglican tradition".

"It is not currently part of the formal structures of the Anglican Communion," Archbishop Welby said. "It's recognised as a fellow Anglican church by many primates in the Anglican Communion, primates whose membership is probably more than half the Anglican Communion. And they're doing a lot of good work."

Bush harvest

Thanks for your recent article "Gone bush" (SC, February). Our family lives in Wee Waa, one of the towns mentioned in your article.

I grew up in Sydney. I now live, by God's grace, in a terrific rural town. The drought is biting significantly – our butcher has just shut down. It is often a picture missed in the city. However, in both places, broken people need to hear about the Great Physician.

If you want to join us, give us a ring and we'll show you around!

Bernard Gabbott

Wee Waa

I wish to commend *Southern Cross* and Nick Gilbert for the fine and challenging article "Harsh harvest" in the February edition.

The experience of Andrew McClenaghan and others like him is heartbreaking. We city dwellers need to appreciate more keenly the struggles of men and women in many parts of rural Australia.

That country bishops find it hard to attract city clergy to serve, even for a period of time in these areas, is disappointing in the extreme.

I grieve for them as they seek to honour Christ in their calling as overshepherds. And how much do people like Andrew and his family need the encouragements and consolations of Christ in their "dark valley"? Are they not our "neighbours"?

Any clergyman willing to spend some time outside the Diocese serving rural communities will find his own life and ministry enriched and will fill a much-needed role in the life of county people and their communities. My wife and I can bear personal witness to the truth of that statement.

R. H. Goodhew

Keiraville

Eternal gospel

I was perplexed by the initiative described in the "BCP, old and new" article (SC, February). It seems there is a seeking after the 1662 form of *The Book of Common Prayer* 1662 without a seeking after the explicit intent of the BCP. The article inspired me to go back to the original source, pick up the BCP again, and start reading the opening explanatory preface concerning the guidelines of updating, where it states "for the more proper expressing of some words or phrases of ancient usage in terms more suitable to the language of the present times". In the BCP there is a desire to update the ancient, but today there is a desire to return to the ancient.

It made me wonder why there is such a desire and drive for the BCP to "be protected" and does it follow that it "therefore needed to be used"? Is there any danger in trying to lead people to historical Anglicanism, as seminal as it has been? Does it indicate a deeper sickness with the present shape of our church that necessitates such a renaissance?

But as I read on in the BCP I was, indeed, very clearly reminded of the eternal gospel, and it reminded me that my wonder over ancient form and language was missing the entire issue. What is eternally clear is not what tool we use as long as it's clear *why* we use it. As 1 Corinthians 10:31-33 so wonderfully reminds us: "So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God. Do not cause anyone to stumble, whether Jews, Greeks or the church of God – even as I try to please everyone in every way. For I am not seeking my own good but the good of many, so that they may be saved".

James Warren

Engadine

Faithful servant

I have just opened my *Southern Cross* and was saddened to hear of the death of John Lambert ("Educator farewelled", SC, February).

Long before I became a Christian, John Lambert was my English teacher for four years at high school in St Marys. He was also my CO in the school's Army cadets. He was an inspirational teacher and I cannot remember any student ever saying anything negative about him. He was a man with great integrity and someone we instinctively knew we could trust. There was definitely something positively "different" about him.

I worked in the St Marys area for a couple of years before joining the RAAF where I later became a Christian at the age of 27. I entered a non-evangelical Anglican theological college, but managed to keep my reformed evangelical theology and was one of two students in the whole college to pass all the ACT examinations.

After graduation I decided I should find John Lambert and thank him for the love of English he had laid in my life as the basis for all my studies. I remembered that "Mr Lambert" had lived at Warrimoo and, 17 years after leaving school, I knocked on his door. He greeted me with, "Johnny Nicholls, what are you doing here?" I sat with this dear man and thanked him for being my teacher and we both shed some tears. He said, "Very few students have ever come back to thank me".

When I told him I had just graduated from theological college he was overjoyed and told me he had been a Christian since before he started teaching. I then realised that the qualities I and other students had seen and experienced in this man came from his commitment to the Lord Jesus Christ and his determination to live out the Christian life.

Now aged 68 and "retired" (whatever that means), I still think of John and his impact on my life. I feel deep sorrow at his death, but also rejoice that he has gone to be with the Lord. I can think of no more fitting Bible verse than Matthew 5:16 (ESV): "let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven".

What a wonderful privilege to have been inspired by him. Thank you, heavenly Father, for your faithful servant John Lambert.

The Rev John Nicholls

Chairman, BCA Queensland and Nth NSW Regional Committee

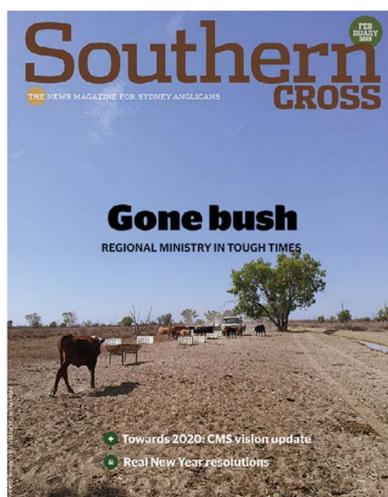
Immeasurable influence

Quite rightly *Southern Cross* has acknowledged the tremendous contribution of John Lambert to the establishment of scores of low-fee Anglican schools beginning in the 1990s. Yet John's impact as a committed Christian was equally great for more than 30 years before that on the lives of thousands of students, young and experienced teachers, principals, fellow inspectors, administrators and curriculum developers within the public school sector throughout Australia.

Few Christians have borne such a powerful testimony to their Lord within both government and private schools over the past 50 years. A significant number of the people he inspired attended his funeral service.

Dr Bryan Cowling

Executive Director, Anglican Education Commission



The devil and the deep blue blue

•David Mansfield

I HATE BLUES BETWEEN CHURCH MEMBERS. BUT WHAT I HATE MUCH MORE IS WHEN ONE OF the parties in the dispute ascribes evil intent to their opponent. They may even call the other party evil or a servant of Satan.

However it is said, the theme is the same. Because one party can't get their own way, win their side of the argument or make others see their point of view, it is because the other party is listening to the voice of the enemy and doing the devil's work.

I've seen and heard it happen in church leadership teams, lay leadership teams, and between clergy and laity. I've listened to painful stories of fallings out. I've experienced the tension, conflict and pain of deep disagreements in the 45 years I've been a member of a church and in the 35 years I've been an ordained member of a church staff team, leadership team or Christian organisation.

Recognised church leadership can often be the target, just as recognised leadership can also be the culprit. But it's not just the experience within the circle or hierarchy of a leadership team. It can happen at every level of church life and relationship. I've watched the carnage as church members have climbed into each other in cutting and cruel ways.

Disputes have been with us from the beginning (almost). They can be healthy. They can deepen relationships, not just destroy them. They can clarify truth and help people move on from confusion. But there is a world of difference between healthy discussion and irrational argument; respectful disagreement and bullying behaviour; or between creative conflict and verbal abuse.

I'm not saying Christians aren't capable of behaving very badly. Nor am I saying our churches don't contain people with disorders who can inflict frightening cycles of pain and abuse. Nor am I saying we aren't capable of acting in a way that could be described as evil through verbal, emotional, even physical abuse. Nor am I saying the devil is not active through false teaching, moral failure, rumour, gossip, lies, arrogance, pride, bullying and harassment.

What I am saying is that most conflict comes because strong personalities with passionate objectives clash with each other – nothing more, nothing less.

This seems to be the scenario between Paul and Barnabas in Acts 15. These men are as close to each other, in terms of being gospel co-workers, as you are ever likely to find. Barnabas recruits Saul (Paul) for the work of establishing new believers in the faith in the fledgling church, the first planted in Gentile soil.

Together they teach, disciple and nurture the baby church in Antioch for a whole year and over that time great numbers of people are taught the gospel (Acts 11:26).

Together they are entrusted with the task of delivering aid safely back to Judea at a time when there were no electronic banking facilities, no money transfer companies and no armoured trucks or coaches. Ministry would have made these two men closer than most twin brothers.

Together they are sent by the church at Antioch, at the call of the Holy Spirit, on the first of four missionary journeys in the book of Acts. They take a young associate, Mark, who doesn't see the journey through but returns to Jerusalem when they reach Perga (Acts 13:13).

As they prepare for their second journey the relationship runs into some rough weather. Barnabas wants to take Mark again but Paul thinks it unwise because Mark retired early from the previous campaign (Acts 15:36-41).

Make no mistake; this was a deep blue. The severity of it is described with the phrase, "sharp disagreement". They part company and go in different directions.

As striking as the language is in terms of the depth of the disagreement, it is compelling to see there is no blame laid, high moral ground taken or assigning to the other party some sinister or Satan-driven motivation! What can we learn from this? May I suggest that when some major (or minor) disagreement disturbs a relationship with a brother or sister in Christ we apply three simple reflective actions before we start drawing other conclusions.

1. Look inside myself Are there biblical principles undergirding my stance? Have I thought my position through thoroughly? Are my motives beyond reproach? Have I breached the boundaries of my responsibility?

2. Look for a settlement Have I explored and appreciated points of agreement with the other party? Could I moderate aspects of my position to accommodate a working solution? Are the issues critical enough to justify the potential relational damage?

3. Look for an alternative explanation before the "evil" one Is this any more than a matter of strongly driven people used to getting their own way? Am I any less capable of acting sinfully than the other party? Will I look back on this episode in the cool light of a future day and still think I was under some kind of evil assault?

Paul and Barnabas' disagreement led to major changes in ministry plans. But the commentary is brief, without a trace of bile. May our interpretation of tense encounters be equally temperate.



new POW CHAPLAIN

After 18 years as an assistant minister at St Andrew’s, South Brisbane, the **Rev Katherine Hilton** has become the new full-time Anglicare chaplain on the Prince of Wales Hospitals campus. Her busy role in Brisbane saw her working six days a week, which left very little time to spend with either her husband or her ailing, Sydney-based mother. Feeling as though it was also the right time to move on from St Andrew’s, Mrs Hilton gave notice a year ago with the hope of moving closer to her home town. “There were a number of jobs in different places but none seemed quite right, and towards the end of the year I was starting to wonder if the right job was going to come up,” she says. “We would have been willing to go anywhere – city or country – but this was a gift from God, really, in terms of being a position in pastoral care that suits my gifts and my background, and is also close to family.” It’s a bonus for Mrs Hilton to be back in the diocese where she grew up and studied, and to be surrounded again by its strong focus on Bible teaching. “God is very gracious,” she says. “Often he makes you wait until the 11th hour so you can learn to trust better.”



PHOTO: Anthony Khoury Photography

MODELLING CHRIST

Last month the **Rev Jenni Stoddart** was commissioned as the first ordained female chaplain at Abbotsleigh school on Sydney’s upper north shore. Ms Stoddart has a long history in youth and children’s ministry, and spent the past three years as families minister at St Swithun’s, Pymble. She admits it was “a tug to leave a congregation I cared for deeply”, but says she was drawn to the position at Abbotsleigh by the desire to support and care for the school community and emulate the kind of female Christian role model she had as a younger woman. “I know that part of why I am in ministry today is that I grew up with models of women around me who served Jesus in incredible ways,” she says. “They modelled to me that faith in Christ and serving his church and his world belong to all irrespective of gender. I hope in some small way to model this to our girls. These are the women who will be influencing and shaping Australia and the world.” “When I was considering this position I was acutely aware of the wonderful opportunity before me as a female ordained minister in the context of a girls’ school. I have watched over the years as many girls’ schools have pushed towards having female chaplains. While there are incredible male chaplains doing great work in many girls’ schools, I would love to see a new era where it would be unusual to *not* have a female chaplain in a girls’ school.”



GOING TO THE GONG

It’s a wrench to leave any parish after long service, but midway through this month the **Rev Canon Dr Michael Blake** and his wife Alison are farewelling Narellan Anglican after more than 21 years in ministry there. “It will take some adjusting [to a new location], but going part time is a step I need to take,” he says. “We’ll be moving to St Mark’s, West Wollongong and I’ll be doing four days a week there as an assistant minister.” Mr Blake will be 64 this year and, while he could have stayed

until retirement at Narellan, he wanted to clear the decks for someone new. “I haven’t got the same energy that I think might be needed there if I were to continue for the next few years, so it’s better to recognise that now,” he says. “My mum is also 93, and I need to put more time into visiting her. This will make it possible see her more often, and to stay for longer, at the same time as continuing to minister in another parish.” Mr Blake finishes at Narellan on March 15.

FROM PRAYER TO PARISH

The **Rev Steve Wakeford** became the rector of St Cuthbert’s, South Carlton on February 12. Working at Menai for eight years – first as an assistant then as senior assistant minister – Mr Wakeford and his wife Nonie had been thinking and praying last year about whether it was time to move. God answered their prayer faster than they could possibly have imagined.

“One of the nominators, Ben Pfahlert, is a really good mate of mine,” Mr Wakeford says. “I didn’t know he was a nominator... and when he rang and said, ‘I’m ringing you in an official capacity’ I thought it had something to do with MTS. Then he said, ‘I’m ringing on behalf of the nominators of South Carlton’, and I started laughing. When he asked what that was about I said, ‘Last night Nonie and I were praying that if we were to move churches God should get someone to ring us, and by my watch it’s 16 hours!’

“When it happened that quickly, I wasn’t about to argue with God about it. What mattered was God saying, ‘This is where you’re going – get with the program, mate’. Of course we do have a choice in these things. South Carlton said, ‘You’re the bloke we’ve been looking for, but we could’ve said ‘No’ and stayed at Menai. It’s been great place to work... but I just think it was a clear answer to prayer. I never thought I wouldn’t be here by the beginning of the year.”

Mr Wakeford feels very grateful to the Archbishop for the faith shown in inviting him to the parish, and says his intention “is to certainly repay that trust, work hard and preach well and see if we can’t help South Carlton to grow”.



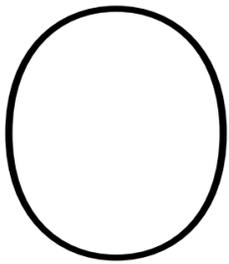
IN BRIEF

- The **Rev Aleks Pinter** moves in April from the parish of Windsor to become rector of Waverley. More in a future edition.
- The **Rev Martin Kemp**, now acting rector of Darling Street Anglican in Balmain, will become rector of the parish of Waitara on May 20. More in a future edition.
- The **Rev Darren Hindle** has left the parish of Leichhardt to take up a chaplaincy role with the Navy. More in a future edition.
- The **Rev Gary Bennetts** has become acting rector of Bankstown in addition to his role as rector of St Martin’s, Georges Hall.



Educate the whole person

DR GLENN DAVIES



ONE OF THE STRENGTHS OF THE DIOCESE OF SYDNEY IS OUR NETWORK OF Anglican schools. I say “network” because, while some of our schools are members of the Sydney Anglican Schools Corporation and others have independent governance structures, they all share in common the purpose of providing quality Christian education within the framework of Anglican theology and practice.

While many are governed by an ordinance of the Synod, they are all related to the Diocese and the Archbishop of Sydney in some form or other, and share in the commonality of being Anglican. This unity is expressed in various ways – not least of which is the annual meeting of all heads of schools with the Archbishop on Ascension Day for the sharing of ideas, mutual encouragement, prayer and fellowship over a meal.

While we have wonderful access to students in our state schools through Special Religious Education (SRE), which we value highly, the opportunities on a daily basis to shape the character, engage the mind and enrich the spirit of the 40,000 students who attend our Anglican schools is a wonderful opportunity and a great privilege.

We have a wealth of talent among the students in our schools and it is therefore a special honour for me at the start of each year in St Andrew’s Cathedral to commission the Year 12 prefects and leaders from the 30 Anglican secondary schools within our Diocese.

I well remember when I was in Year 12 coming to the Cathedral along with hundreds of students to hear the Archbishop of the day, Sir Marcus Loane, address us and commission us as prefects. What particularly impressed me on that day was the Archbishop’s invitation to make contact with him, if we had any questions about leadership or the Christian faith. I confess I was too scared to make any approach to an archbishop (I am less intimidated these days!), but the fact that he personally offered to engage with us was profoundly moving.

The format of the occasion has changed somewhat since the 1960s, as it now begins with a 45-minute session of Q&A, followed by morning tea and then a service of commissioning for the prefects. For many the opportunity to ask questions of the Archbishop is a highlight, ranging from predestination to same-sex marriage to tips for leadership in the school.

However, in the footsteps of Archbishop Loane, I also extend the same invitation as was given to me, inviting the prefects to contact me personally with any questions they might have and were afraid to ask publicly or unable to ask because of time constraints. To my surprise and delight, each year a small number of students take up the offer through emails and it is a privilege to respond to each one in a personal manner.

We have a long tradition of Anglican schools in our Diocese of which we can be justly proud. Whether it be The King’s School founded in 1831 or Oran Park Anglican College founded in 2012, we are blessed with a great variety of schools which seek to mould both Christian knowledge and Christian character in the lives of their students.

Preparing the next generation to take their part as citizens in the world is an enormous responsibility, which needs our prayers. Engaging Christian teachers who are able to present their own subject areas, within the framework of a Christian worldview, is an ongoing challenge but one that will reap eternal rewards.

I thank God for our Anglican schools as they continue to strive for the education of the whole person in body, mind and spirit.

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.

Beneath the surface

Southern CROSS MARCH 2015

Society now demands that Christians accept same-sex marriage as a matter of equal rights, but a new diocesan report argues the debate is much deeper and more far-reaching than this, writes **RUSSELL POWELL**.

AS A YOUNG JOURNALIST, I COVERED the 1979 gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras parade. There was a small crowd taking part and an even smaller one watching. There was little publicity and the only tourists there were the ones passing by. In 1979, homosexuality had not yet been decriminalised in NSW (that came in 1984).

In the space of a few decades, what was almost an underground movement has been transformed into one that attracts advertising dollars, political support and high-profile donors (Apple, Google and Nike are among the companies actively backing gay rights). Laws, regulations and community attitudes have all changed in the past 35 years, which has culminated in the push for a redefinition of marriage to include same-sex couples.

The societal changes and the ubiquitous public debate are the starting points for a major report by the Doctrine Commission of the Diocese of Sydney titled "Human Sexuality and the 'Same Sex Marriage' Debate".

The speed of the changes has left older Christians floundering. They are having conversations they never expected to have. For younger Christians their contemporaries are asking, "What's the fuss?"

"I think people just don't know what to do," says Archdeacon Kara Hartley, a member of the Doctrine Commission. "They know 'I'm not supposed to agree with this' but don't quite know how to disagree in a way that doesn't make them sound like a really hard-line, unfeeling, uncaring person – because it is about love and marriage and those things."

"We want to disagree but we are not sure how to do it and we are not really sure of the nuance of the arguments, because it is quite nuanced."

It was concerns like this that prompted the then Archbishop Peter Jensen to commission the report in 2012. Since then the eight members of the Doctrine Commission have grappled with a mountain of material.

According to the commission chairman, Moore College principal the Rev Canon Dr Mark Thompson, the group sought to read the most substantial and influential material from both sides.

"Nothing is to be gained in this debate by creating straw men or women – on either side – or simply by repeating tribal shibboleths," Dr Thompson says in the report's introduction. "It was particularly important to each of us to read with generosity and sympathy the contributions of those, both inside and outside the circle of Christian faith and fellowship, who most seriously and strongly disagreed with us."

WHERE ARE WE?

Perhaps the most hard-hitting section of the report, for those already familiar with the arguments, is the first chapter on the contemporary context of the debate.

Reviewing social developments and influential movements and the development of so-called "Queer Theory", the report charts the influence of books such as *After the Ball: How America Will Conquer Its Fear and Hatred of Gays in the 90s*, written by two Harvard graduates, Marshall Kirk and Hunter Madsen.

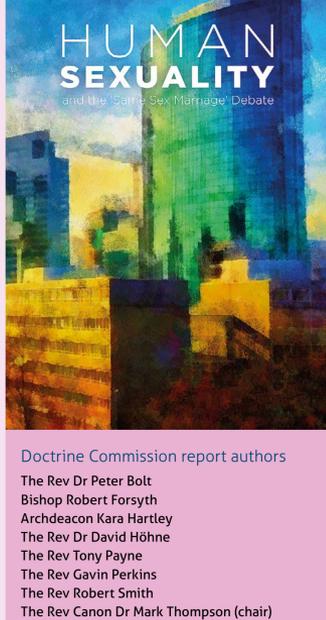
"Combining neuropsychiatric insights (Kirk) and public relations expertise (Madsen), the book issued a clarion call for homosexuals to lose their image as a promiscuous and deviant sexual minority seeking greater freedom, and provided detailed instructions as to how to repackage themselves as decent, mainstream citizens, deserving of equal treatment. In short, it was nothing less than a powerful and practical handbook for a homosexual revolution," the report says.

It then quotes *After the Ball*: "To suggest in homosexuality might be chosen is to open the can of worms labelled 'moral choices and sin' and give the religious intransigents a stick to beat us with. We argue that, for all practical purposes, gays should be considered to have been born gay – even though sexual orientation, for most humans, seems to be the product of a complex interaction between innate predispositions and environmental factors during childhood and early adolescence".

Dr Thompson says the context of the debate is one of three major issues the report tackles.

"The first issue is what does God have to say on marriage and human sexuality," he says. "Second, how we can care for those who are caught up in the confusion about gender and sexuality in our age, and a third issue is the way society got to this point. We want to open people's eyes to see that we didn't get here by accident."

"For the last three or four decades, there has been a massive exercise in social engineering. It is a calculated and determined social agenda that has been pursued and while the policy makers are not necessarily the people who have been pursuing it they have been caught up in an agenda that other people have created for them. That's why I think the first chapter is such an important part of the report."



Doctrine Commission report authors

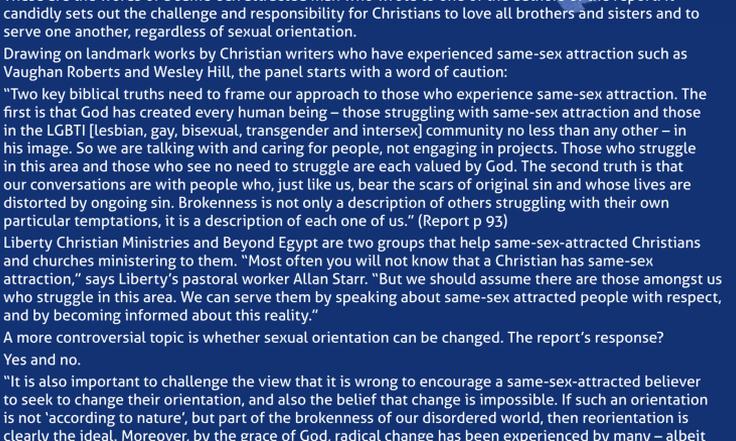
The Rev Dr Peter Bolt
Bishop Robert Forsyth
Archdeacon Kara Hartley
The Rev Dr David Höhne
The Rev Tony Payne
The Rev Gavin Perkins
The Rev Robert Smith
The Rev Canon Dr Mark Thompson (chair)



Influential: *After the Ball* – the PR "handbook" for the gay revolution.

SERVICE OF OTHERS

"As a homosexual struggler I crave to be accepted and loved like any other man – but sometimes with a bit more intensity as I fear the judgment and being unloved by Christians who might reject me and not just my behaviour."



These are the words of a same-sex attracted man who wrote to one of the authors of the report. It candidly sets out the challenge and responsibility for Christians to love all brothers and sisters and to serve one another, regardless of sexual orientation.

Drawing on landmark works by Christian writers who have experienced same-sex attraction such as Vaughan Roberts and Wesley Hill, the panel starts with a word of caution:

"Two key biblical truths need to frame our approach to those who experience same-sex attraction. The first is that God has created every human being – those struggling with same-sex attraction and those in the LGBTI [lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex] community no less than any other – in his image. So we are talking with and caring for people, not engaging in projects. Those who struggle in this area and those who see no need to struggle are each valued by God. The second truth is that our conversations are with people who, just like us, bear the scars of original sin and whose lives are distorted by ongoing sin. Brokenness is not only a description of others struggling with their own particular temptations, it is a description of each one of us." (Report p 93)

Liberty Christian Ministries and Beyond Egypt are two groups that help same-sex-attracted Christians and churches ministering to them. "Most often you will not know that a Christian has same-sex attraction," says Liberty's pastoral worker Allan Starr. "But we should assume there are those amongst us who struggle in this area. We can serve them by speaking about same-sex attracted people with respect, and by becoming informed about this reality."

A more controversial topic is whether sexual orientation can be changed. The report's response? Yes and no.

"It is also important to challenge the view that it is wrong to encourage a same-sex-attracted believer to seek to change their orientation, and also the belief that change is impossible. If such an orientation is not 'according to nature', but part of the brokenness of our disordered world, then reorientation is clearly the ideal. Moreover, by the grace of God, radical change has been experienced by many – albeit often slowly. At the same time, it must also be acknowledged that not all who seek deliverance from same-sex desires find it. Why this is so is rarely clear – any more than it is clear why some prayers for healing are answered and others not." (Report p 98)

As the Doctrine Commission report makes clear, ministry to the same-sex attracted needs sensitivity and understanding, bearing in mind what it calls "the complexity of both the causation and continuation of their feelings".

For example, sexual orientation can be unhelpfully fused with self-identity. "Much of this confusion is fostered by contemporary attitudes and by the entertainment media," the report says. "For example, it is now common for a 'gay' contestant in a reality television show to be identified by their same-sex orientation, as if this is what defines them as a person."

Vaughan Roberts in his book *Battles Christians Face* writes, "The gay movement appeals to those who experience same-sex attraction to 'come out' and publicly accept a homosexual identity. But the path to Christian maturity lies in recognising that our true identity is in Christ and that we are defined by our relationship to him, not by our sexuality".

Unfortunately, fellow Christians may not even get that far. "The big problem for same-sex-attracted Christians is the fear of sharing their struggle with others," Allan Starr says. "Secrecy and silence are maintained, which means they cannot get the support from others they need. By our reaction, we can show that it is safe to share."

"The most loving thing we can do for a same-sex-attracted Christian we know is encourage them to think and pray about one or two others they can tell and encourage them to keep expanding this list. We should remember that Christians who have a same-sex-attracted family member also need support and also need to be encouraged to share their struggle with others. The same principles apply for them, too."

RIGHTS AND "EQUAL LOVE"

The writers of the report struggled not only with the amount of material, but also with the starting point of the debate in the public sphere. For many people, the discussion skips past the acceptability (or otherwise) of homosexuality, and begins at the "rights" stage. They are all too easily drawn into the equal love arguments put forward by gay activists and the debate gets quite passionate. Christians, who want to step back and look at the entire picture – the framing of the argument, the nature of marriage, homosexual behaviour and orientation – are stopped before getting to first base.

So, not surprisingly, the heart of the report is the second and third chapters which focus on applying the Bible to same-sex relationships and to marriage and family life in general.

"We tried to make this not simply an argument about the meaning of a few texts," says Bishop Robert Forsyth, another panel member. "There has been a way for those who are revisionists, like the book *Five Uneasy Pieces*, to try to knock the whole case over by just saying, 'Look, you could read that text this way and another text that way'. In fact, it is a much deeper theological, anthropological, Christological question about the nature of God and humanity – it's not just about what five texts mean."

"Now, we do hold with the classic understanding of these texts but the goal was to make it a much deeper exploration of marriage within the whole purpose of God so that's why those chapters are so important, and quite distinctive."

There is much in the report that stresses both the authority of Scripture and God's good design for marriage.

Says Dr Thompson: "The argument is that in God's goodness towards us he gives us sexuality to enjoy and he creates it in a way in which it works. As a result of the fall we take that good gift and distort it. Part of the confusion at the moment is the tearing aside of those boundaries and that order that guards and ensures God's good gift is a good gift and used for nourishing and health and advancement rather than in ways which create all sorts of problems."

In the face of some contemporary arguments that the biblical prohibitions are time-bound or linked to ancient custom, the report is clear about the authority and timelessness of Scripture.

From p 52: "...the historical particularity of the Bible in no way lessens its abiding relevance. An important sense, it is in fact the guarantee of it. The Bible addresses real people and circumstances in our world with real words from God, and reveals God's character and purposes and promises within those circumstances. As we read the Bible, we constantly recognise that this is our world being addressed, the world that God has created, with all its order and complexity."

Marriage and celibate singleness

While much media coverage of the debate has portrayed a narrow, negative view of biblical theology on the subject, the panel wanted to set out the "grand themes" of the Bible on creation, marriage and sex.

Says Dr Thompson: "We want to talk about the strength of marriage and the goodness of marriage and of sex, and the way in which human selfishness has turned a good gift, which is designed to see one giving to another, in on itself so that my sexuality becomes about me expressing myself. Instead of my sexuality being one way I serve my marriage partner, caring about him or her, my sexuality is now about ensuring I must be able to express my own feelings and longings. The purpose of sex has actually been turned on its head by the Enlightenment and the centuries since."

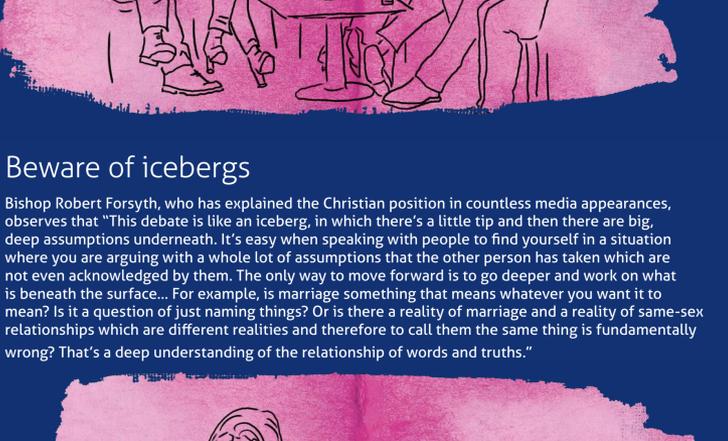
Although underscoring the positives of God's design for marriage, the commission was also aware that the issue of singleness could be overlooked in such a debate and warned against an overreaction in either direction.

They note in chapter 3 of the report that "We have already mentioned those who mistakenly forbid marriage or even consider it as ungodly given the priority of serving the Lord. Yet it would be just as wrong to idealise celibacy as the only way to live in service of the Lord Jesus. To do this would be to forget the warnings about family from Jesus himself (Mark 10:37). Paul also reminds us that it is possible to live unmarried for the Lord. Perhaps the more that this alternative way of living in the world for single men and women is affirmed and celebrated in our churches, the greater will be the contribution that married couples can make towards bearing the burdens of others."

JOIN THE PUBLIC DISCUSSION

In a debate that can draw such passion on each side, the report's writers acknowledge that the tone of the debate is often as important as the content.

In chapter 4, *Arguing in the Public Sphere*, they write that it is "important to keep in mind that reason by itself is not decisive in how people come to and hold moral convictions, for intuitions play a major role as well. Simply seeking to persuade someone by strict logic may prove singularly ineffective. Given some of the tone of recent debates, just to show that the Christian objection to 'gay marriage' is at least not driven by mindless prejudice, but has a coherent nature and a positive goal, is an achievement worth striving for, though we will, of course, be praying for much more."



Beware of icebergs

Bishop Robert Forsyth, who has explained the Christian position in countless media appearances, observes that "This debate is like an iceberg, in which there's a little tip and then there are a big, deep assumptions underneath. It's easy when speaking with people to find yourself in a situation where you are arguing with a whole lot of assumptions that the other person has taken which are not even acknowledged by them. The only way to move forward is to go deeper and work on what is beneath the surface... For example, is marriage something that means whatever you want it to mean? Is it a question of just naming things? Or is there a reality of marriage and a reality of same-sex relationships which are different realities and therefore to call them the same thing is fundamentally wrong? That's a deep understanding of the relationship of words and truths."



Go deep

Inform yourself. Read the report. Think about the issue and the deeper underpinnings of Scripture.

The Rev Michael Kellahan, senior minister of St Barnabas, Roseville East, says "For Christians entering the debate there are two issues: being confident and knowledgeable about what the Bible says and confident that they can, or should, speak to others. Some think it is 'imposing' our ethics on those outside the church. My own view is that Jesus tells us to love our neighbour and we can't harm them and be indifferent about something that will do harm. Harm to them, harm to children, harm to society."

OFFICIAL RELEASE

The report's authors stress this is a document designed for Christians and not a polemic for the debate in the general public. It was officially launched this month in a special printed edition available at cepbstore.com.au for a cover price of \$16.95. It will later be published as an e-book.

Archbishop Glenn Davies is urging Sydney Anglicans to read the report and consider it carefully. "I want people to understand the biblical arguments for maintaining marriage as God created it. That's the prime thing," the Archbishop says. "This is a matter of honouring the God who created marriage and therefore understanding why he created it and how we can best use it for the way in which it was designed and for the betterment of our community."

"Unless ordinary Christians become light and salt in their society, standards will slip and same-sex marriage will be adopted by society without thinking through the ramifications, the significance of marriage and the consequences."

Archdeacon Hartley agrees it should be read widely. "There are those who have grown up having known homosexual behaviour is wrong, then there are those who have grown up in this era of change – particularly in the public perception – where there is not only change but now full acceptance," she says. "They are trying to work [it] out. Yes, they know from their Bible and statements from church leaders that homosexual practice is wrong in God's sight, but they are told in the media 'It's just about people loving each other and what's the problem with that?' Trying to marry those two things is really hard when public opinion is now turned so dramatically and how to defend God – which is what people want to do – they are not sure how to do that."

Perhaps the most common reason Christians give for not speaking up on the issue is one of "inevitability". Why not keep our heads down until it blows over? What gospel good can we do when the public doesn't support Christian sexual ethics anyway?

"I think [the report] should help people be confident they can engage in the conversation and on this topic," Archdeacon Hartley says. "These days you don't have to go looking for that conversation. It comes up all the time."

Bishop Forsyth agrees that it is a "cutting-edge" issue. "The Christian faith is not like Captain Cook's *Endeavour*," he says. "When he ran into the Great Barrier Reef he threw all the cannon overboard to lighten the ship and he saved it. That was good if you are a ship's captain, not if you are a Christian. You simply can't jettison doctrines to 'lighten your faith' for popular culture."

"I'm not asking Christians to go on a crusade but at some point they'll need to explain wisely and winsomely what it is about marriage and human sexuality that makes us say no, this is not the way a disciple of Christ should live, in homosexual behaviour, and to call it marriage is a fundamental error." ❦

Relationships + truth



The world has a very self-focused, desire-fuelled view of relationships and marriage, but **KEITH CONDIE** prefers the Bible's robust alternative.

RECENTLY I ASKED A GROUP OF YOUNG PEOPLE TO JOT DOWN THE WORLD'S take on romantic relationships. There were no surprises in their responses: "Get into a relationship if it feels good and get out of it when it is no longer fun"; "It doesn't have to last, it just has to be fun for both parties"; "Do what feels right for you"; "It's about feeling".

These answers capture so much of our culture. We love experiences. Our feelings really matter. Freedom and fulfilment are found in expressing our desires – having as few boundaries and restraints as possible as long as we don't hurt anyone else. We are awash with a focus upon ourselves. As another of my respondents put it, sex and relationships are "about me".

As we would expect, the Bible provides a robust alternative to this picture. Not much is said about romantic relationships (more on that later), but the vision of marriage – an institution that our culture still, to some degree, associates with romantic love – is far removed from the self-focused consumerist mentality of our age.

The heart of the biblical view of marriage is a lifelong binding commitment or covenant between a man and a woman. The focus is not upon passion and feeling (which inevitably come and go). Nor is it about having your own needs met. No, the promises the couple make to each other give a particular shape to the relationship. As Timothy Keller puts it in *The Meaning of Marriage*: "In a covenant, the good of the relationship takes precedence over the immediate needs of the individual".

The central text that affirms the biblical perspective on marriage is Genesis 2:24: "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh". Here we see God's design for marriage and the primacy and permanence of the binding together of a man and a woman.

For the couple, their marriage becomes the primary relationship in their lives. With marriage priorities change. Commitments to parents were vital in the ancient Hebrew context, so to affirm that marriage involves the formation of an even more important bond highlights just how significant it is. If you are a parent of married children – respect this truth. Give them space and don't interfere! And for the couple to whom God grants the gift of children, never allow your investment in your children to be at the expense of your marriage. One of the greatest gifts you can give your children is a strong marriage.

God also desires that marriages last. The uniting spoken of in Gen 2:24 literally means to be stuck together – it's as if the two are superglued to one another! Permanence is on view here. Just as God's people are called upon to steadfastly commit themselves to him (Deut 10:20; 13:4 etc.), so the couple are to commit to each other.

Permanence is also captured by the phrase "they will become one flesh". We often think this phrase is referring to sex, but the key idea is the formation of a new family. We speak of family members as our "flesh and blood". The ancient Hebrews conveyed the same thought by saying "bone and flesh". To become one flesh is to become kin, to become family. The thing about family relationships is that we are stuck with them, whether they bring us joy or are painful and difficult. The old saying, "Blood is thicker than water", is true. Jesus makes a big deal of this one flesh concept (e.g. Matt 19:4-6). Why? Because breaking a marriage is like brothers ceasing to be brothers. This is a relationship not to be dismissed lightly.

It is true that some marriages don't work out. God in his grace acknowledges our human weaknesses and sin. There are situations of unfaithfulness and abuse when it is not appropriate to continue in a marriage. But we must never lighten the truth of Scripture that entering into a marriage is entering into a covenant, an intense promise of commitment. Breaking that covenant must be seen as an absolute last resort.

In his book Keller explains the benefits that flow from this perspective on marriage. The commitments made provide a cradle of security that sustains a couple through the ups and downs of life. It frees them up to be their true selves in a way that builds intimacy. And there is abundant evidence that, generally speaking, marriages based on this covenant principle are a much better alternative to cohabitation, in terms of the benefits to the couple, their children, and society more generally.

But isn't marriage about love? Where does love fit into this biblical perspective? In fact, marriage is all about love, but a love that has a much more full-bodied flavour than the saccharine version filling the songs and TV shows of popular culture.

Love within a covenant relationship is the strong virtue that characterises God himself – that willingness to reach out at cost for the good of another, irrespective of how one feels and what comes back. Keller notes that parents have this form of love forced upon them by their children. Whether or not the child gives back to them, decent parents keep on giving and they know they just have to do that. The new parent has to meet the challenge of a helpless, dependent baby. There is much sleep deprivation and cleaning up before they are rewarded with those first smiles! And many parents face the even greater challenge of continuing to love a rebellious teenager when it seems that all they receive in return is grief.

The selflessness of the biblical vision of marriage extends even beyond the couple themselves. We are told that God made marriage to solve the one thing in unspoiled creation that was "not good": the problem of Adam being alone (Gen 2:18). This is normally taken to mean that the man is lonely and marriage answers the human need for close relationship. But God's solution is not to provide a companion, but a "helper". Why does he need a helper? Because God had given the man a job to do in his world: "to work it and take care of it" (Gen 2:15). He cannot fulfil that task on his own. As Christopher Ash has so helpfully argued in his books, the joys of married life are never an end in themselves but should extend to fruitful service of God and others.

This is a very significant truth for those who are not married. They, too, share in God's kingdom work and often have opportunities for service that can be difficult for those who are married (see 1 Cor 7). But furthermore, this understanding of Genesis 2 fits with the rest of the Bible in affirming that the meeting of our relational needs is not dependent upon being married. Rather, in friendships and the fellowship of God's people we can find the warm companionship and support that we long for (for example, Prov 17:17; 18:24; 27:9-10; Mark 10:29-30).

What I have said so far has the potential to sound unromantic. But I want to return to one of the comments from the group of young people spoken of earlier: "It's about feeling". There is a truth here that we need to acknowledge. Because while feelings do come and go, God's design for marriage is not a picture of cold, hard duty but is deeply emotionally fulfilling.

Adam gleefully cries out when he meets the helper provided by the Lord (Gen 2:23), and two verses later we can see a glimpse of what God intended a marriage to be: "The man and the wife were both naked, and they felt no shame" (Gen 2:25).

This, as Dale S. Kuehne writes, is "one of the most evocative pictures of intimacy imaginable". A couple who can be totally open and transparent with each other because there is nothing of which they need to feel ashamed; who feel perfectly safe with each other; who can trust each other fully. There is a joy and delight in this picture that captures something of what we understand romantic love to be and extends beyond it. This couple are true friends.

We find glimpses of this reality throughout the Bible. Jacob worked for seven years (14, actually) so that he could marry Rachel "but they seemed like only a few days to him because of his love for her" (Gen 29:20). In Proverbs, the son under instruction is urged to "rejoice in the wife of your youth... may her breasts satisfy you always" (Prov 5:18-19). And Song of Songs is a beautiful testimony to married love.

But most significantly it is the great and final marriage – to which human marriage bears witness – that most clearly reveals this reality. In our fallen world, sin will always tarnish even the best of marriages. Our shame causes us to hide and withdraw and this undermines intimacy (see Gen 3:8-10). But Christ loved his bride so much that he gave himself up for her so that he might present her to himself perfectly clean and without anything that might cause shame (Eph 5:25-27). At the final wedding that we long for our sin will be totally wiped away and we will see the Lamb, our bridegroom, face to face in perfect intimacy (Rev 19:7-8; 21:2; 22:4). The picture is one of delight, closeness and safety.

It is often women that articulate a longing for this kind of intimate relationship in marriage but that doesn't mean it is not important for men. The driver of marital unfaithfulness, for both men and women, is normally not sexual need but emotional need. The clichéd words of the married man to his newly acquired lover, "You understand me so much better than my wife", capture this truth perfectly.

So if God's ideal does involve intimacy and emotional connection, what can we do to move marriages in this direction? For a wife to submit to her husband does not mean that she cannot gently express her longings to her husband. In fact, doing this might be the start of an honest conversation that begins to draw the couple closer together. But perhaps we husbands need to take greater initiative here – to see that part of loving our wives as Christ loved the church is to take the time to listen carefully to them and to be willing to open up about our thoughts and feelings.

The goal is to create a warm, open space in a marriage where the couple can share what is in their hearts; where conversation and pillow talk move beyond discussion of the details of the day to how we feel about life – the hopes, fears, longings etc. – that reveal who we really are so that each deeply knows the other.

We do not stop loving when we do not receive what we desire in a relationship. But when working properly, God's design is that the delightful mutuality of the relationship will bring blessing to both husband and wife, a blessing that will overflow in service to others.

And perhaps the best thing to say by way of conclusion is that the security that flows from the covenantal perspective on marriage that we find in the Bible actually feeds the loving feelings that we long for in our relationships. The German theologian and martyr, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, captured this truth beautifully: "It is not your love that sustains the marriage but... the marriage that sustains your love".

new faces on ministry journey



The newly ordained deacons and Archbishop Davies (centre), Bishops Lee, Forsyth and Archdeacon Hartley (left), Bishops Edwards, Hayward and Tasker (right)

The Governor of NSW, His Excellency General the Hon David Hurley, was just another proud parent in the over-capacity crowd that squeezed into St Andrew's Cathedral on February 7 to witness the ordination of 37 new deacons.

The Governor's daughter, Caitlin, joined men and women from across the Diocese being ordained and taking up a variety of ministries including prison chaplaincy, university chaplaincy, church plants with the Department of Evangelism and New Churches and parish work.

General Hurley and his family were among the parents and family members who were asked to stand as the congregation prayed for their future ministry.



Before the ordinands took their vows the acting Dean, the Rev Canon Chris Allan (left), spoke on the parable of the banquet from Luke 14.

"To my brothers and sisters who are about to make very serious promises, remember who it is that Jesus has invited... there's no A-list crowd with Jesus," Canon Allan said. "Jesus isn't interested in reputations or qualifications or the degrees on the wall. Your first-class honours will count against you, if you don't have a heart for the lost. God's invitation through Jesus has been thrown wide – as wide as it can be."

Archbishop Glenn Davies and assistant bishops laid hands on each candidate as they were ordained and the congregation of family, friends and parishioners from all corners of the Diocese broke into applause as the group was finally presented.

For brother and sister Matthew and Rebecca Baines, it was a family affair. "We're very glad and privileged to have the support of our father [Peter], who is also an ordained minister, and my brother Mike who has been ordained for four years and my cousin Mark who was ordained two years ago," said Matthew Baines. "We have come along different paths, it just so happened that they've met at the same time. I went to Moore College and Rebecca went to Youthworks College, but somehow we ended up serving God in the Sydney Diocese and it's a great thrill."

Caitlin Hurley will be ministering in the South Sydney region. "The time ahead is going to be very exciting," she said. "We are a tiny parish so I have been sent in as a missionary by lots of other people outside the parish to help with reaching 18- to 30-year-olds. It is exciting to have friends and family, aunts and uncles and friends from university at such a gospel-centred event."

Surrounded by friends and family, the (now) Rev Osea Taito came to Australia from Fiji 37 years ago and began the path to ordination with the Ministry Training Strategy (MTS) in 2007. "The initial plan was to go back to work but I was convicted that I should do extra study and I spent four years at Moore College," he said.

Mr Taito is a full-time Scripture teacher at two local high schools and honorary minister at Rooty Hill. "It's a great opportunity, the teachers are really supportive of Scripture. They are two of the hardest schools in the state – the children have probably seen more hardship than I have in my lifetime."

Like most of the ordinands making their way through the crush of family and friends in Sydney Square after the service, the newly ordained Mr Taito said he was "relieved... but at the same time I'm already thinking ahead about what ministry looks like now with the responsibilities and the oaths that I have taken".



Smiles all round: dozens of parishioners came by coach from Sutton Forest in the Southern Highlands, joining friends and family of Matt Taylor for the service. It was the first ordination for Sutton Forest parish in many years. PHOTO: Russell Powell



Andy Pearce with sons Jonny Rock, Dexter and Arthur. PHOTO: Nick Williamson/nickwphotos.com



Faces in the crowd

Clockwise from top left: Steve House (l) and Dan Anderson (r) at the head of the procession; Emily Carpenter takes her vows; Osea Taito with his parents; Matt Baines speaks with friends after the service; Angus Cameron and Han Lee; Catherine Wynn-Jones (l) and Darling Street parishioner Maria Wilson. PHOTOS: Russell Powell

ORDINANDS

Daniel John Anderson Macquarie University (Robert Menzies College)	Steven Gregory House Anglican Home Mission Society (Anglicare)
Christopher Luke Anstiss Kiama	Martin Stuart Hughes Gladesville
Matthew Jonathan Aroney Newtown with Erskineville	Caitlin Ruth Hurley South Sydney
Matthew Charles Baines Minchinbury	Matthew Ivor Jacobs Seaforth
Rebecca Joy Baines Shellharbour	Roger Benjamin Geoffrey Kyngdon Windsor
Jonathan Baring Baird Wollongong	(Alby) Albert Gar Kay Lam Department of Evangelism and New Churches
James Stewart Barnett Hurstville Grove	Han Oh Lee Enfield and Strathfield
Robert Angus Cameron Fairfield with Bossley Park	Trent McGrath Minchinbury
Nathan John Campbell Manly	Troy Dylan Munns St George North
Emily Ruth Carpenter Waitara	Benjamin Nathan Pakula South Creek
Timothy Edward Clemens Department of Evangelism and New Churches	Andrew Edward Pearce Kirribilli
Murray John Colville Toongabbie	Brian John Snell Hornsby
Christopher Robert Conyers Narellan	Belinda Leigh Stead Lalor Park and Kings Langley
Grant Andre de Villiers Bankstown	Osea Tuqovu Sapenafa Taito Rooty Hill
James Peter Delanty North Ryde	Matthew Roger Taylor Sutton Forest
Michael Wilson Dicker Petersham	Michael Geoffrey Turner Ashbury
Stephen David Gilmour Moorebank	Catherine Louise Wynn-Jones Darling Street
Cameron Glenn Harte Miranda	Michael Jen-Ern Mantle Under Letters Dimissory for the Bishop of London
Roger James Hokin Dural	

ST JOHN'S SCORES GOAL WITH ASIAN CUP



Drop-in Asian Cup activities at St John's Cathedral.

St John's Cathedral in Parramatta got in on the AFC Asian Cup party, partnering with a Christian football camp organiser to host Parramatta and skill in the AFC Asian Cup party, partnering with a Christian football camp organiser to host Parramatta and skill in the AFC Asian Cup party, partnering with a Christian football camp organiser to host Parramatta and skill in the AFC Asian Cup party.

The Cathedral's lawn, positioned next to a high traffic mall in the centre of Parramatta, played host to Ambassadors Football Australia and volunteers from St John's, who ran a suite of activities and clinics aimed at kids, but inevitably involved footballer parents as well.

"Ambassadors were involved in several things in the lead-up to the Asian Cup, so we asked St John's whether we could run some things in Parra," says Ambassadors' national camps director and St John's church member, David Johnston. "They said we could come and run things on the church lawn, so that's where it all came together.

"The idea was to have something pretty unstructured, that people could flow in and out of, without a need for any programming – with just people helping to guide people around."

The events included dribbling activities, a speed shooting net complete with speed radar, and precision passing over the two days. Mr Johnston estimates that about 80 people came through the drop-in, drop-out event over the two days.

The outdoor events were also followed by a semi-final trivia night, held in the church hall, to mark the Socceroos' penultimate match in the competition against the United Arab Emirates.

Mr Johnston says one of the great joys of sport is the way it brings people together, adding that football is a great way for churches to be involved in their wider communities.

"It's the highest participation it has, he says. "It's also a great way to form relationships with people, and relationships can form quickly and strongly around shared activities like sport... that can eventually lead to opportunities to also share your faith with people.

"I'm a passionate football player myself and love playing with others, and I'm even more passionate about sharing the gospel with others!"

Ambassadors has been working in Australia since 2009, and seeks to partner with local churches, helping to run football-themed holiday coaching and coaching clinics by providing infrastructure and coaching expertise. Mr Johnston, who oversees the camps program nationally, holds junior, youth and senior coaching licences accredited by Football Federation Australia.

Ambassadors also runs several camps through the Sydney region during the April school holidays, with a Parramatta camp running for the second time this year.



Kids enjoy the 2014 Parramatta Soccer Camp run by Ambassadors and St John's. PHOTOS: Ambassadors



French fancy

JUDY ADAMSON

A Little Chaos

WE ALL KNOW THE GAME WHERE YOU PICK PETALS FROM A FLOWER, wondering if you will have the final petal in your hand having said he loves me, or loves me not.

Watching this film was a bit like playing that game, with my view see-sawing as though I had picked another petal of the flower. As with the game, there was never a moment where genuine dislike was an option – it's more a case of how much enjoyment there is, and why the balance tips in either direction.

On paper, *A Little Chaos* has everything going for it. A cast of known and admired actors, a story set in the past with a slightly modern edge, sumptuous historical costumes and understated performances of almost literary dialogue. It sits there like a tantalisingly wrapped gift, with all the expectation that brings.

Set in France during the reign of Louis XIV, it follows the fictional tale of Sabine De Barra (Kate Winslet), a widow who supports herself by designing and creating gardens. She and others come with their ideas to the home of Andre Le Notre (Matthias Schoenaerts), the real-life creative force behind the formal gardens at Versailles. Le Notre wants to commission someone to take over a portion of the design in order to keep up with the incessant demands of the king (Alan Rickman). Louis wants perfection – heaven on earth – and like every absolute monarch expects to have all things his way, with scant regard for anyone else.

After a less than encouraging interview with Le Notre – who seems dubious about her preference for natural disorder over architectural beauty – Sabine is surprised when he chooses her to design the rockwork grove at Versailles, thus putting many men's noses out of joint. Her work is initially hampered by their jealousy, but before long she gathers a good group together and her plans begin to take shape.

Le Notre, who is almost monastic in his dress and style, is devoted to his work and has little time for the shallowness of most things at court. That said, he is expected to attend various events at the king's pleasure and does have an effusive friend in Louis's brother, the Duc D'Orleans (a gay, married soldier, entertainingly portrayed by Stanley Tucci).

While Le Notre initially seeks to keep Sabine away from the stifling effects of life close to the throne, it doesn't take long for her to attract the attention of a number of people – including Le Notre's own perennially unfaithful wife, the newly bereaved king and his long-time mistress. And while Sabine seeks to manage these new surroundings and people and still get her work done, she is haunted by memories of an unexplained past that regularly intrude on her waking hours.

Affairs in these circles are accepted as the norm – even encouraged – but in private conversations we can see the hurt and confusion such choices inflict. It's interesting to wonder how differently the royalty and aristocracy of this era would have grown up and how their views on relationships would have altered if they had seen their fathers and mothers living faithfully together.

The pace of *A Little Chaos* is sedate, taking us in a leisurely way through the plot and concentrating lovingly on words rather than action – and very often on the gorgeous settings, gowns and faces of the cast.

The performances themselves are subtle, which is an excellent thing in a cinematic world that usually has about as much subtlety as a brick. Rather than overblown histrionics we get a gently delivered speech, an inclination of the head, the flicker of an eyebrow, or a moment's pause for effect. Even the obligatory sex scene is presented more through suggestion than action.

This attitude is to be applauded but it does have its drawbacks. The burgeoning interest of Le Notre and Sabine for each other came as a complete surprise to me (and I was looking for it), so it would have been helpful if Rickman's direction had encouraged a slightly less pared back approach on occasion.

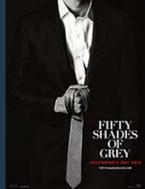
At times the dialogue is also too self-aware for its own good. There's no getting away from the fact that this is an actors' film by an actor. The words are lovely, and well fashioned, but in the end they should be there to serve the story. They should not draw you out of the action to admire the prettiness of what was said as this lessens their impact, which is a pity.

On balance, however, *A Little Chaos* is an enjoyable film. It's perhaps not as scintillating as it might first appear, but if you like fancy dialogue and costumes, you'll be hooked.

TO SEE OR NOT TO SEE

Let's be frank. The editorial staff of *Southern Cross* didn't see *Fifty Shades of Grey*. We were not, as the film's advertising wants you to be, "curious". We knew what we would see. There was no way we wanted to treat onscreen abuse as "art". We didn't want to waste a review. But we think Christians should engage with the fact that the best selling book is now a movie, ready to influence our society

– even our churches. So, we collected the thoughts of people who have seen it and present these as a guide to your thinking and your conversation. These are the review quotes you won't see on the movie posters.



Christian Grey, 28, in reality a sexual sociopath worthy of a restraining order, is depicted as handsome, alluring and exceedingly wealthy. (He) grooms Anastasia Steele, a virginal, klutzy, 21-year-old college student. In the advertising overdrive, the dangerous messages propagated by the *Fifty Shades* phenomenon should not be missed: stalking, aggression, sexual violence, threats, intimidation, manipulation and control are sexy. If he stalks you he must really love you. If you say "no", that's just a come-on. And if you love a sadistic abuser he'll change and you'll live happily ever after in a really big house. None of these behaviours are marketed as problematic but promoted as romantic. That's why domestic violence groups internationally launched a campaign called "50 dollars not 50 shades" asking for donations to women's shelters instead. They have seen too many real-life Anastasias.

Melinda Tankard-Reist

Upon closer inspection, *Fifty Shades of Grey* is not just harmless "mommy porn." It clearly depicts a deeply abusive relationship in which its protagonist suffers emotional and physical violence at the hands of her partner. And, worst of all, it doesn't seem to realise this. While there have been several well-rendered and moving depictions of abuse in media, all of these recognise domestic violence as a cardinal sin; none are as bafflingly oblivious as *Fifty Shades of Grey*. The marketing for the film is sickening: posited as "an incredible fairytale love story", encouraged as a date-night movie, and released just in time for Valentine's Day, *Fifty Shades* barrels ahead without an ounce of self-awareness – or, perhaps, of conscience. The abusive behaviours are treated as adorably flirtatious interaction; here, domestic violence is met with the enthusiastic approval of the story's protagonists.

Kristen O'Neal, *Relevant Magazine*

Fifty Shades may be a wake-up call for the individual and corporate drifting that has been at play in our lives. It may be a spotlight shining on the pain of the vulnerable in our society. It might be an alarm bell sounding a message of danger ahead if we do not change. But it is also an opportunity to show what true love really is. Our world desperately needs a good dose of real love. So, as *Fifty Shades of Grey* hits the screens, let's love God well by honouring him wholeheartedly with our eyes, ears, hearts and minds. Let's love our brothers and sisters well by encouraging them with truth rather than lies. Let's love our unbelieving neighbours by showing them how beautiful and alluring purity looks. And let's love ourselves by committing ourselves wholeheartedly to living in light of the immense love that has been lavished on us. (1 John 3:1)

Helen Thorne / *The Good Book Company / Challies.com*



Sour truths

©Madman Production Company 2014

JUDY ADAMSON

That Sugar Film

Rated PG

WHILE THE PREMISE OF HUMANIZE EATER AS GUINEA PIG HAS BEEN USED BEFORE IN documentaries such as *Supersize Me*, the idea to investigate the effects of sugar on the body this way seemed like a novel. Little did I know that watching *That Sugar Film* would leave me gobsmacked and reconsidering half of what I eat.

The driving force behind the doco is Australian actor Damon Gameau, who is best known for TV roles in the likes of *Secrets and Lies*, *Puberty Blues*, *Howzat! Kerry Packer's War* and film *The Tracker*.

A former smoker and choco-junkie who gave up refined sugar three years ago to "seal the deal" with his girlfriend Zoe, he began to consider what eating sugar again might do to him – and what it therefore already does to everyone else – as he prepared to become a father for the first time. This is what set him on the path to create this film.

The content is very serious but Gameau, who is also director and writer, has managed to make his journey hugely entertaining. There are colourful illustrations and animation, silly nicknames for all the experts (whose photos appear on everything from billboards to packets), and guest stars such as Stephen Fry, Hugh Jackman and Brenton Thwaites, who ham it up as they offer the history of sugar, how it breaks down and a "living" illustration of the liver's response to it.

As with *Supersize Me*, Gameau collects a group of experts around him to advise, inform, warn and check his health during the experiment, which he decides will run for two months.

When he hears that the average adult in Australia consumes the equivalent of 40 teaspoons of sugar a day, he decides to make that his goal, but wonders how on earth he'll achieve it. He's assured that it will be easily accessible in the supermarket – and in foods sold and touted as "healthy".

So, when Gameau begins his sugar journey, he decides he won't eat any sweets, chocolate or ice-cream. He will only consume foods that are low in fat and regarded (or marketed) as good for you, such as muesli bars, yoghurt and cereal. He will also keep up the same exercise regime and eat the same number of calories each day.

You don't need to be a genius to figure out what happens, but I won't spoil the journey by going into too many specifics. However, as Gameau himself says, the speed at which his body was affected "took us all by surprise".

But it's not just about him. We get the science as well as the experience, learn about the corporate fixation with the "bliss" point for consumers, where rats rate sugar in tests, and whether all calories are the same.

Gameau adds considerable weight to the film by taking us to an Aboriginal community in the Northern Territory that has sought to change its poor eating habits with *Mai Wiru*, or "good food". Their experiences are sobering, especially when compared to those of their town's inhabitants only 40 years earlier. He also travels to the home of obesity, the USA, where he finds it increasingly difficult to stick to his sugar limit and struggles with lethargy, sleep problems and a growing desire for his next sugar hit. The killer punch, however, is the compelling story of a dentist in the US state of Kentucky, and his battle to help residents with "Mountain Dew Mouth".

You want to turn away from all this, but you can't. The argument is compelling – all the more so as it is simple, clear and presented by an ordinary Aussie guy who has no agenda other than seeing what happens.

At this stage *That Sugar Film* isn't receiving a regular cinematic release, although if there's enough demand that may possibly change. For the moment, those interested in seeing the doco in Sydney have the opportunity to go to a handful of screenings from March 9-11 (cinema information at www.that-sugar-film.com). There are also special kits and screenings available for schools, although because of some more adult content the film is probably not appropriate for most primary-aged children.

Just be warned: if you see *That Sugar Film* you may never look at cakes and chocolate – or low-fat health food – in the same way again.