

OCTOBER
2018

Southern CROSS

THE NEWS MAGAZINE FOR SYDNEY ANGLICANS

Planet Earth

WHAT DOES BEING GREEN
AND CHRISTIAN LOOK LIKE?

PLUS

Hearing Aboriginal people

Truths behind justification

內附
關於華人的
故事



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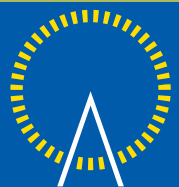


“文化是非常好的啓步。
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Peter Lin
Sydney News

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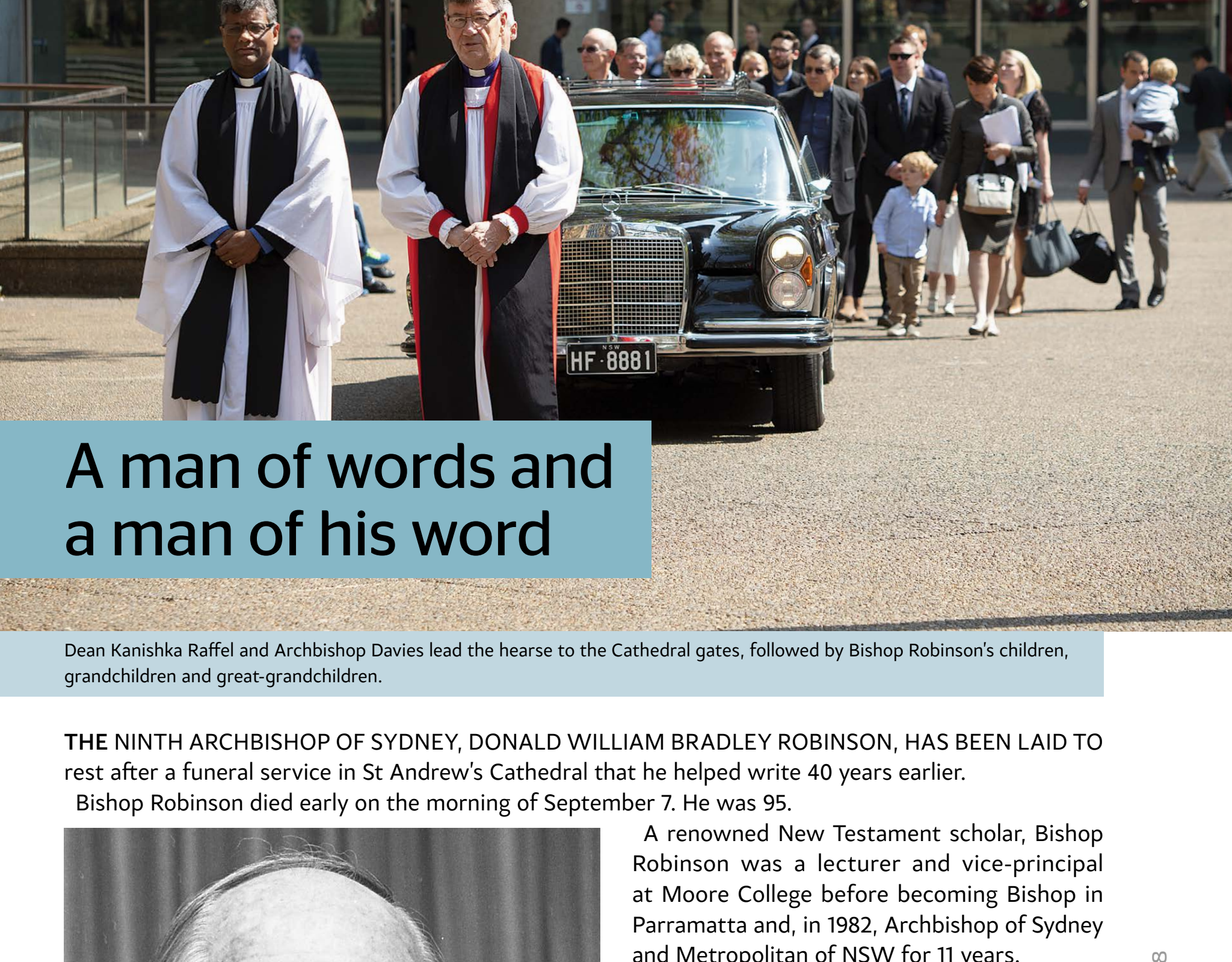
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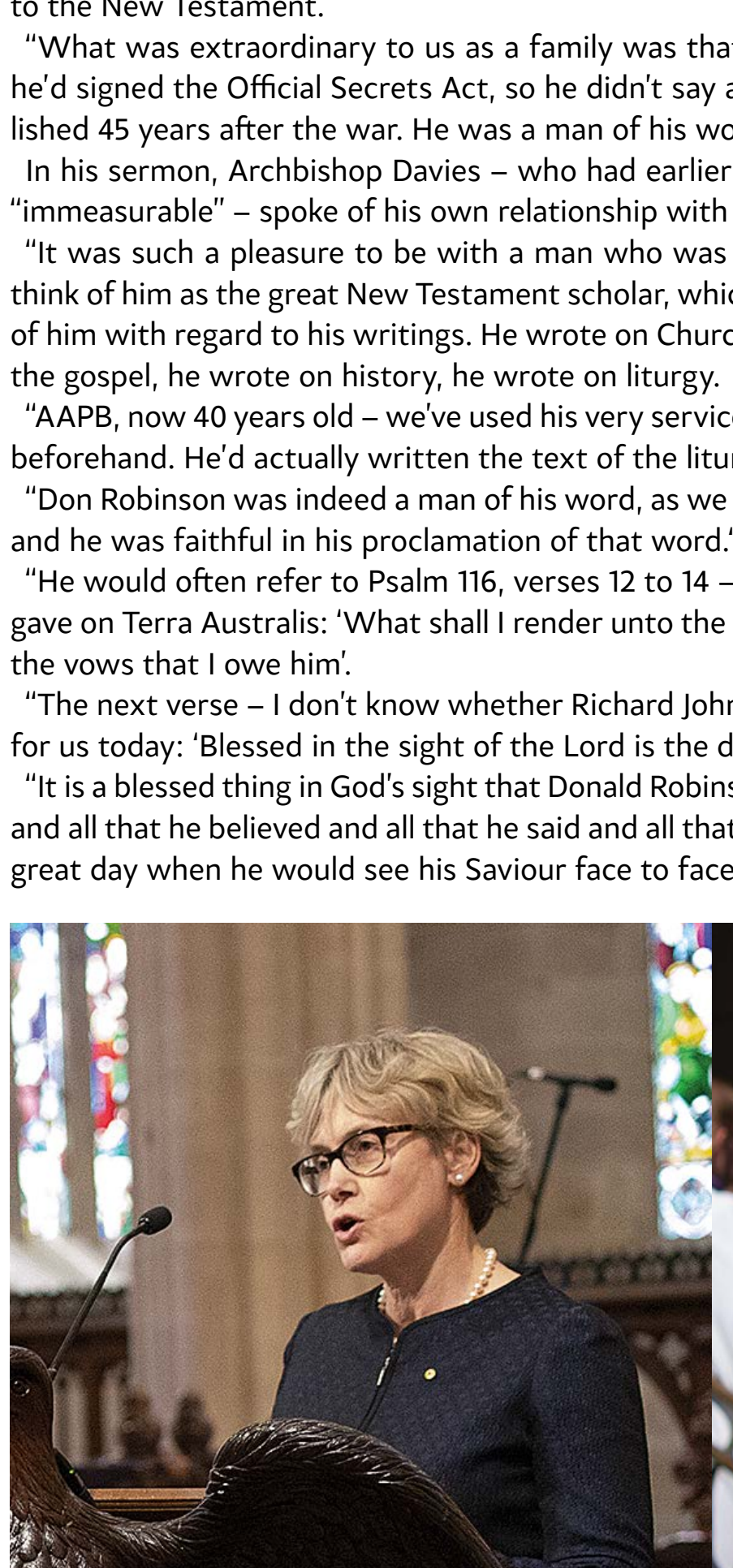


A man of words and a man of his word

Dean Kanishka Raffel and Archbishop Davies lead the hearse to the Cathedral gates, followed by Bishop Robinson's children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

THE NINTH ARCHBISHOP OF SYDNEY, DONALD WILLIAM BRADLEY ROBINSON, HAS BEEN LAID TO rest after a funeral service in St Andrew's Cathedral that he helped write 40 years earlier.

Bishop Robinson died early on the morning of September 7. He was 95.



Archbishop Robinson in 1982. PHOTO Ramon Williams

Bishop Robinson had been a codebreaker during World War II, a fact he only revealed in the 1990s. "He described his role as a codebreaker as studying everything about the message without being able to read it," Anne Robinson said. "This strong pattern recognition would become critical to his approach to the New Testament."

"What was extraordinary to us as a family was that Pa didn't talk about his war service. Why? Well, he'd signed the Official Secrets Act, so he didn't say a word until a book on the codebreakers was published 45 years after the war. He was a man of his word."

In his sermon, Archbishop Davies – who had earlier paid tribute to Bishop Robinson's contribution as "immeasurable" – spoke of his own relationship with his predecessor.

"It was such a pleasure to be with a man who was such a godly Christian man," Dr Davies said. "We think of him as the great New Testament scholar, which he was. He was a man who has so many aspects of him with regard to his writings. He wrote on Church, of course, he wrote on evangelism, he wrote on the gospel, he wrote on history, he wrote on liturgy."

"AAPB, now 40 years old – we've used his very service. Often people might prepare their funeral service beforehand. He'd actually written the text of the liturgy 40 years beforehand."

"Don Robinson was indeed a man of his word, as we heard, but he was a man who believed God's word and he was faithful in his proclamation of that word."

"He would often refer to Psalm 116, verses 12 to 14 – the text of the first sermon that Richard Johnson gave on Terra Australis: 'What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me? I shall pay him the vows that I owe him'."

"The next verse – I don't know whether Richard Johnson preached on it or not, but it is so appropriate for us today: 'Blessed in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints'."

"It is a blessed thing in God's sight that Donald Robinson is now entered into glory, and all that he taught and all that he believed and all that he said and all that he lived out in his life was looking forward to that great day when he would see his Saviour face to face."



Top left: Daughter, Anne Robinson (Judd) delivers the eulogy. Top right: Sons, Martin (left) and Peter, help carry the coffin from the Cathedral. Above: Bishop Robinson (centre) with proofs of An Australian Prayer Book in 1978.

Chinese churches growing, 200 years on



Bishop Lin (left) speaks with Hong Jiang on ABC RN.

林彼得主教 (左) 與 Hong Jiang 在 ABC 電臺交談

SYDNEY ANGLICAN CHURCHES HAVE A HIGHER proportion of members of Asian descent than the general population, according to the Bishop of Georges River, Peter Lin.

Bishop Lin has spoken about Chinese churches as part of the ABC's celebration of 200 years of Chinese immigration to Australia.

The first Chinese migrant, Mak Sai Ying, arrived in Sydney from Guangzhou in 1818 and purchased land at Parramatta as a free settler. There are now more than a million people living in Australia who have Chinese ancestry.

Bishop Lin appeared on Radio National's Religion and Ethics Report, hosted by Andrew West.

"I've been involved in Chinese churches for more than 30 years and have seen numbers significantly increase over those years," Bishop Lin said. "Certainly, for Anglican churches, we've seen the number of Chinese increase... to the point that it is probably the fastest-growing demographic in the Anglican Church at the moment, across Sydney."

"There's something like 15 per cent of the population across the Sydney basin who are of Chinese descent, and in Anglican churches... they make up about 18 per cent."

Asked by reporter Hong Jiang about what attracted Chinese people to church, Bishop Lin said it was not necessarily being Anglican but because of how the Christian faith marries with Chinese culture.

"That's not what changes people or what makes them believe in Jesus," he said. "But it's certainly something that opens a door... The Christian faith is very community-based and uses a lot of language of family, and for Chinese people, it's all about family. Chinese are in a 'we' culture, not an 'I' culture. That's very much what the Christian church is, too."

Bishop Lin said personal invitations to church services and events, especially involving food, is culturally appropriate for outreach.

"It's just people saying, 'Hey, can I talk to you about what I believe? They would you like to come to church with me?'" he said.

"Food is very important, so we would invite them to meals where they would meet other Christian people. I don't think they become Christians just because they're Chinese or just because a lot of the values of Chinese are similar. In the end, they become Christians because they're presented with this person called Jesus and... the Bible, and they still have to say, 'Is that true? Is that real?'"

"Culture is a great thing for opening the door. But in the end, people are confronted with Jesus and many, many, many thousands of them have said, 'Yes, I'm going to believe this and follow Jesus.'"

Chinese Anglican leaders from Australia and New Zealand will meet in Sydney in November for a ministry conference. The main speaker will be the Primate of South East Asia, Archbishop Datuk Ng Moon Hing.

据喬治河地區林彼得主教稱，悉尼聖公會擁有相當數目的亞洲面孔。

林主教曾在澳洲 ABC 電臺針對華人移民澳洲兩百年紀念節目中提及。

第一位華人移民是來自廣東省的麥世英。他於 1818 年到了悉尼，即在 Parramatta 一帶購地定居。

在 Andrew West 主持有關各民族與宗教報告中，林主教稱如今已有超過一百萬有華人社區的人居住在澳洲。

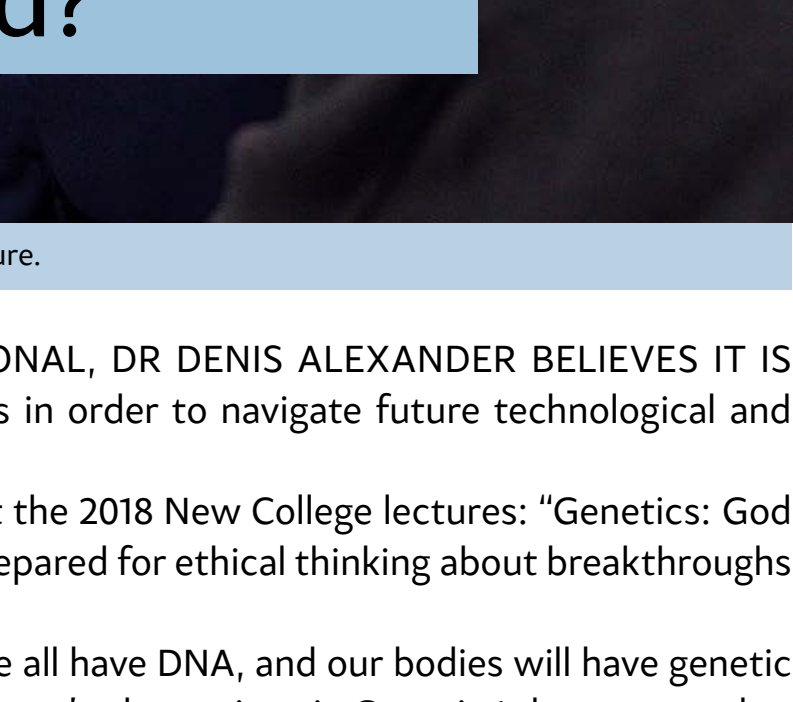
他說，「我參與華人教會的增長已超過 30 年，見證了教會顯著的增長。特別在過去兩次的人口普查數據顯示，悉尼聖公會華人會友數目顯著增加，是成長最快的族群。華人佔悉尼人口的百分之 15，而華人群佔悉尼聖公會會友的百分之 18。」

記者 Hong Jiang 問及什麼原因吸引華人到教會？林主教謂主要原因不在於聖公會，而是因為基督教信仰與華人文化的結合。

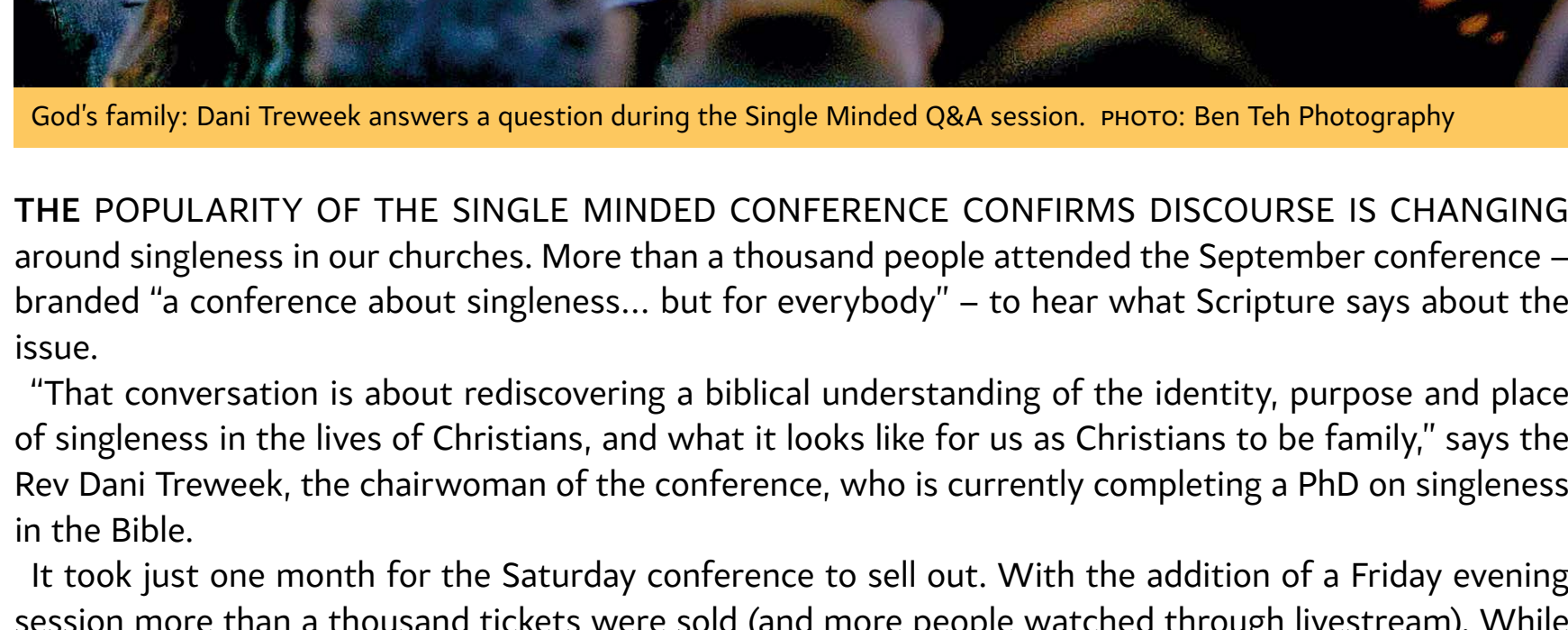
他說，「這不會直接改變個人，使之成為基督徒，而是一道門戶。基督教信仰使用了許多華人社區及家庭熟悉的用語，特別強調家庭觀念，而非個人主義。正如有人會說，『嘿，我能告訴你我的信仰嗎？你要和我到教會去嗎？』」

「我們常邀請朋友與基督徒一起吃飯。我認為這些都不會導致人成為基督徒。也不是因為基督教信仰有許多與中華文化的吻合。最終的是，當有關耶穌基督的福音被清楚講解後，對方仍然會問：『這是真的嗎？是事實嗎？』文化是非常好的啟步。然而，每個人都得自己面對抉擇，而成千上萬的人已表示：『是的，我願意接受耶穌基督，一生跟隨他。』」

悉尼聖公會教牧同工將於十一月舉辦宣教大會，與會者包括其他省份及新西蘭的教牧同工。主要講員是來自東南亞教省的黃滿興大主教。



Is your God only Lord of what you don't understand?



No "God of the gaps": Dr Alexander talks to attendees after his lecture.

WHEN SCIENCE FICTION NO LONGER SEEMS FICTIONAL, DR DENIS ALEXANDER BELIEVES IT IS vital for Christians to have a good grasp of who God is in order to navigate future technological and scientific advancements.

Dr Alexander visited Australia in September to present the 2018 New College lectures: "Genetics: God and the future of humanity", challenging people to be prepared for ethical thinking about breakthroughs in science and medicine.

"These are issues we deal with every day," he says. "We all have DNA, and our bodies will have genetic variation. I think for Christians it's really important, since we've been given in Genesis 1 the command to subdue the earth and look after it. That includes our own bodies, and the bodies of our neighbours who might be sick and need care."

Key to evaluating scientific advancements is considering the purpose they seek to achieve, and whether this is in line with God's purposes. Dr Alexander, who is emeritus director of the Faraday Institute for Science and Religion at Cambridge, hopes that by having a clear understanding of what it means to be human, people will have a solid framework for assessing the kind of technological advancements he focused on in his lectures: artificial intelligence, robotics and genetic engineering.

"I picked three types of scientific advancement going on at the present time, which threaten our very understanding of what it means to be human," he explains. "What the Bible does is give us a framework for understanding the value of human beings."

"The framework I focus on is that human beings is made in the image of God. We have a relationship value because we are made in the image of God, and his desire is that we should have a relationship with him. It also means that everybody has absolute value, irrespective of their genetic endowment, educational background, race or whatever it might be. I think that's a very powerful framework for considering some of these new technologies."

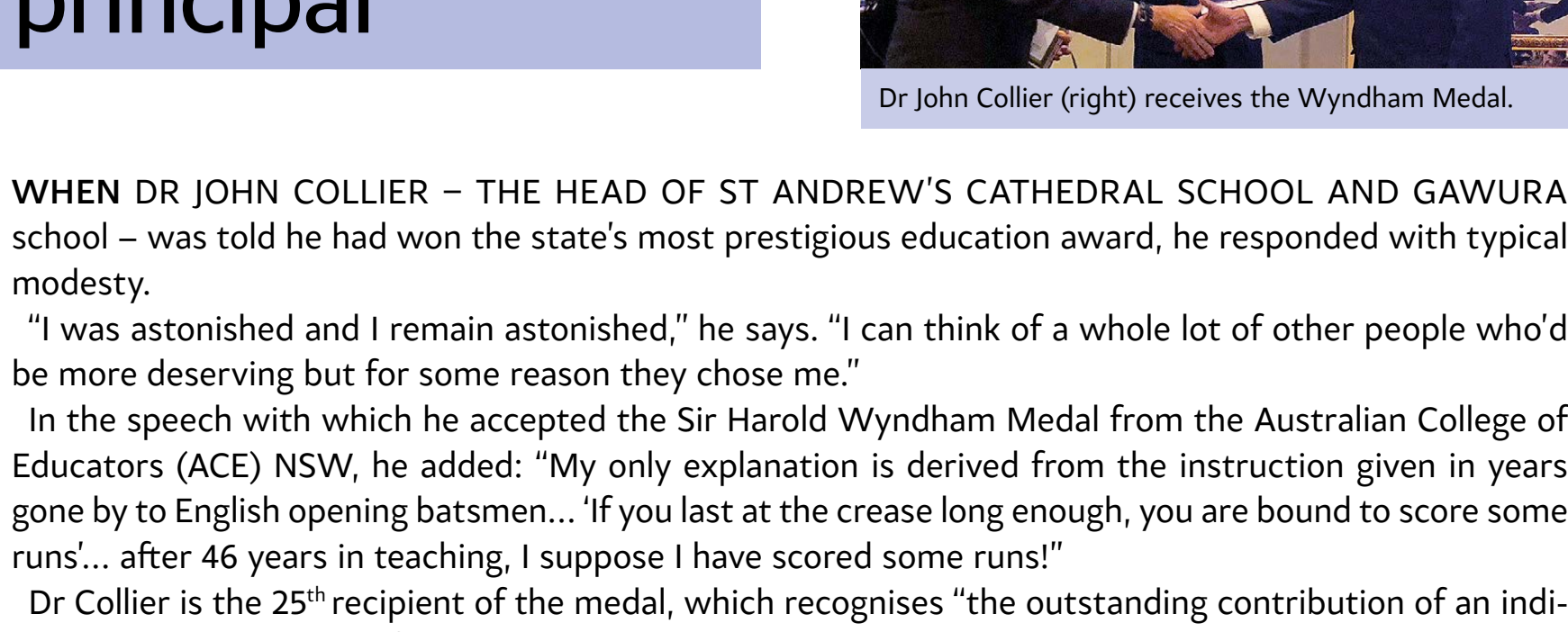
Another key element to thinking ethically and biblically is having a right understanding of God as the author of life, rather than the popular "God of the gaps" belief that many hold.

"There is a tendency for some believers, and some atheists, to place God as the origin for the gaps in our present knowledge," Dr Alexander says. "For example, we don't know the explanation of life completely or how DNA first came into being. Someone with a 'God of the gaps' belief might say, 'Well, that's obviously what God did'."

"Now if you think, that's perfectly true. If we're Christians we believe God is the creator of everything. But if we tend to focus on gaps, and gaps are where we place God, then God is obviously very fragile in that sense as those gaps in our knowledge will be filled in time. If that happens, what happens to your concept of God?"

"I personally do not believe in a God of the gaps. I believe in the God of the Bible, who is creator and author of all that exists. Whether we understand how things work at this moment in time in 2018 is not really relevant to my belief in God because God is the creator of all things, whether I understand them or not scientifically."

The purpose of singleness



God's family: Dani Treweek answers a question during the Single Minded Q&A session. PHOTO: Ben Teh Photography.

THE POPULARITY OF THE SINGLE MINDED CONFERENCE CONFIRMS DISCOURSE IS CHANGING around singleness in our churches. More than a thousand people attended the September conference – branded "a conference about singleness... but for everybody" – to hear what Scripture says about the issue.

"That conversation is about rediscovering a biblical understanding of the identity, purpose and place of singleness in the lives of Christians, and what it looks like for us as Christians to be family," says the Rev Dani Treweek, the chairwoman of the conference, who is currently completing a PhD on singleness in the Bible.

It took just one month for the Saturday conference to sell out. With the addition of a Friday evening session more than a thousand tickets were sold and more people watched through livestream. While the majority of conference attendees were single people, a quarter of those who came on the Saturday were married – a positive outcome for Miss Treweek and conference organisers.

Speaker Sam Allberry traced singleness through Scripture and busted myths about the marital status. "If marriage shows us the shape of the gospel, singleness shows us its sufficiency," he said.

Miss Treweek also added that Scripture helps us understand the purpose of singleness. "The Bible says there is something intrinsically good about singleness that goes beyond its functionality," she says. "The Saviour himself is a single man, and he redefines who family ought to be for Christians. We understand as the New Testament unfolds what it means for us to be adopted into a new primary family."

"We also get the picture in Matthew 22:30 where Jesus says there won't be marriage in heaven, because the purpose of marriage will be fulfilled."

"The corporate body of Christ will be married to the bridegroom. That picture of eternity ought to be foreshadowed in the lives of single people now."

However, our churches can often act otherwise. Conference delegate Elsie Lam reflected on how many Christians can unintentionally make single people feel like they have no place.

"I have been very blessed in my experience as a single person at my home church," says Miss Lam, who attends Church by the Bridge. "However, it is definitely intimidating walking into [another] congregation that is primarily made up of families."

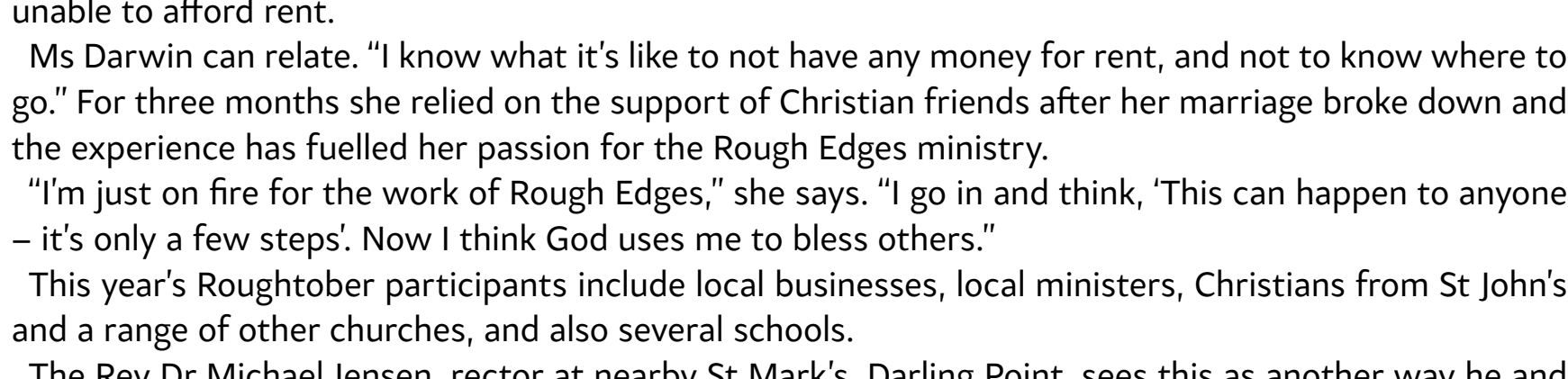
"In addition, naming services as 'family service', or having pictures on a church website predominantly made up of families, can make you feel like that church or service has no place for singles."

Single Minded reassured people that this is not a biblical reality. "A lot of singles struggle to feel like they authentically belong in our church families," Miss Treweek says. "This is theologically problematic. We've been adopted into a new family regardless of marital status, and the church is just as much the home of the single Christian as it is for the married Christian."

One delegate who flew in from interstate for the conference confessed he hadn't attended a church in more than 20 years for this reason. "He said to me that the conference had changed this for him, and he was going to go to his home town and find a church," Miss Treweek says. "He had captured the biblical vision of what it means to belong to a new family and he wanted that experience."

"I wanted David Milled to encourage single Christians to recognise they do have an authentic place to belong to the family of God. I wanted to put this conversation on the agenda and make a contribution, and I feel a great sense of delight that this has happened."

Resources and conference talks from Single Minded will be available on www.singlemindedconference.com



Thursday night fellowship (from left): Karam Awad, Samy Guirguis and George Bishai with one of their Christian brothers.

WHEN MANY ARABIC-SPEAKING FAMILIES STARTED SHOWING UP AT BANKSTOWN ANGLICAN'S Mobile Food Pantry, the ministry staff wanted to do more than just feed them. Eighteen months on, a Thursday evening Arabic service now teaches the Bible to more than 30 Arabic-speaking families, with Bible readings, worship songs and preaching conducted in their heart language.

More than 20 per cent of households in the Bankstown area speak Arabic. This has been bolstered in recent years by large numbers of people arriving from Syria and Iraq, escaping persecution and conflict in the Middle East. A team of faithful Arabic-speaking men and women at Bankstown hope their service will help these people to know the gospel.

George Bishai, a PhD student at Moore College and lecturer at the Alexandria School of Theology in Egypt, says that through his Bible teaching he aims to help those who have escaped conflict understand what has happened through a biblical framework.

"While speaking about Matthew's gospel, I try to highlight the similarities between the trauma they have been through and the trauma Jesus keeps highlighting in the gospel – both in his own suffering as the suffering servant, and the kind of persecution he told his disciples to expect."

Aware of the cultural differences newly arrived families have to navigate in Australia, Mr Bishai and the team also provide topical teaching from the Bible.

"There are struggles that Middle Eastern families have in Australia with Western culture, around manhood and womanhood, parenting and raising children in a foreign culture," he says. "I try to seek help from people who were here before me in Sydney." Another member of the team, Samy Guirguis, preaches these topical sermons.

The Mobile Food Pantry no longer runs at Bankstown, but rector the Rev John Bartik is overjoyed with the way it developed into something more. The service was begun by former staff member the Rev Grant De Villiers, and it was through connections made at the pantry that an Arabic ministry was able to grow.

"I'm delighted – this [ministry] is a great thing," Dr Bartik says. "They've come from a war-torn country, and now they're in a foreign land and we're discipling them in their heart language. They're not just getting food and practical help, we're teaching them as best as we possibly can the gospel of Jesus and its impact on their lives."

Top award for Cathedral school principal

WHEN DR JOHN COLLIER – THE HEAD OF ST ANDREW'S CATHEDRAL SCHOOL AND GAWURRA school – was told he had won the state's most prestigious education award, he responded with typical modesty.

"I was astonished and I remain astonished," he says. "I can think of a whole lot of other people who'd be more deserving but for some reason they chose me."

In the speech with which he accepted the Sir Harold Wyndham Medal from the Australian College of Educators (ACE) NSW, he added: "My only explanation is derived from the instruction given in years gone by to English opening batsmen... 'If you last at the crease long enough, you are bound to score some runs...' after 46 years in teaching, I suppose I have scored some runs!"

Dr Collier is the 25th recipient of the medal, which recognises "the outstanding contribution of an individual to the education of young people in NSW".

He is the first head of an independent school to be chosen for the honour (although he has also led and taught at government schools). Two principals of government schools have been awarded the medal, but most recipients have been directors-general of education, heads of the Board of Studies, executive directors of Catholic Education or academics.

Despite his surprise, Dr Collier describes the award as "a huge encouragement, and an affirmation that I've done things that are valuable for young people – which is what it's all about."

"Schools exist for children to flourish, they don't exist for the people who work in them. And it's encouraging because my Christian motivation has not been seen as a preventative but has been acknowledged as part of who I am, and that's encouraging."

ACE's CEO, Helen Jentz, describes Dr Collier as a "once-in-a-generation leader and teacher [who] has changed the education profession. His passion for learning is infectious, and it's not just his students who benefit, rather his colleagues and the entire school community. He has shaped and influenced the lives of thousands of students for the better."

"He's an inspiration and example to every educator in NSW."

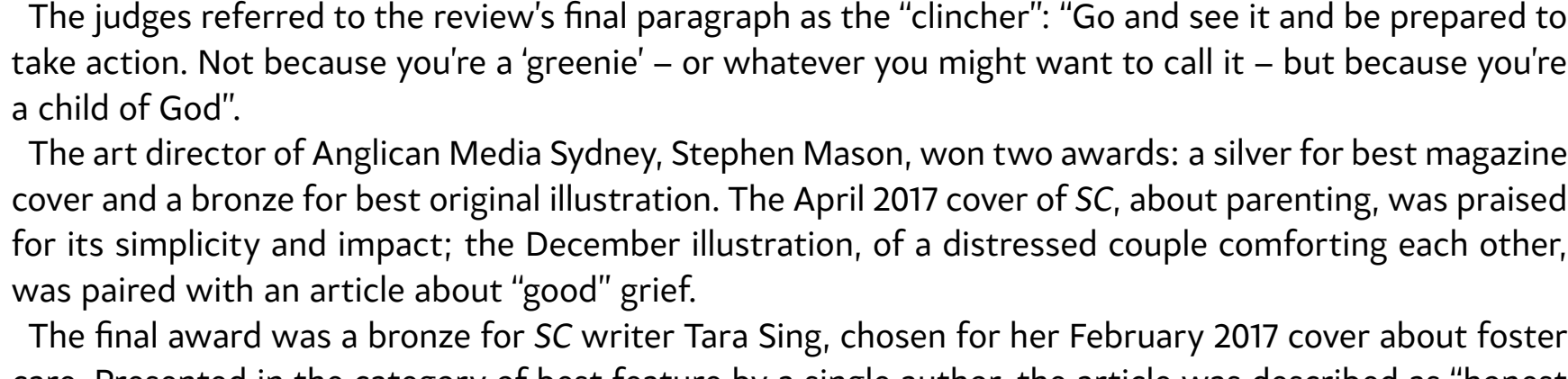
In his speech, Dr Collier drew attention to the many challenges facing teachers and schools in 2018, and the need to work together across all sectors towards a solution.

He said the nation's future depends heavily on its educational choices, as these prepare the next generation to be "controllers of levers of power in every aspect of society".

"If we are obsessed with [tests such as] NAPLAN... as the only relevant indicators, we will go forward into a stunted educational delivery: which prepares students to be smart with tests without understanding the broader, magnificent breadth available through proper education."

Dr John Collier (right) receives the Wyndham Medal.

Roughing it for Rough Edges



Trying to keep warm: participants at last year's Roughtober sleeper.

IN A FEW WEEKS ABOUT 50 PEOPLE WILL TRADE THEIR BEDS FOR A PIECE OF CARDBOARD IN the grounds of St John's, Darlinghurst in order to raise money for the parish to continue caring for those experiencing homelessness.

Roughtober, the annual fundraising month for the Rough Edges ministry, aims to raise \$45,000 to contribute to its costs. The sleepout also involves an exposure walk through the streets of Darlinghurst, guided by a member of the church who has experienced homelessness and been helped by Rough Edges.

"We invite people from all over our local community to participate in our sleepout," says Paula Darwin, the fundraising and community engagement manager at St John's. "They experience what it's like to sleep rough for one night and by doing so they raise funds for Rough Edges by seeking sponsorship."

Rough Edges has between 70 and 150 homeless patrons come through its doors each week for a meal and a sense of community. With a current wait time of up to 10 years for public housing, many find themselves couch surfing, in temporary accommodation such as hostels, or sleeping on the streets, unable to afford rent.

Ms Darwin can relate. "I know what it's like to not have any money for rent, and not to know where to go." For three months she relied on the support of Christian friends after her marriage broke down and the experience has fuelled her passion for the Rough Edges ministry.

"I'm just on fire for the work of Rough Edges," she says. "I go in and think, 'This can happen to anyone – it's only a few steps'. Now I think God uses me to bless others."

This year's Roughtober participants include local businesses, local ministers, Christians from St John's and a range of other churches, and also several schools.

The Rev Dr Michael Jensen, rector at nearby St Mark's, Darling Point, sees this as another way he and his parish can continue partnering with an incredible ministry.

"Our church has a special relationship with Rough Edges," he says. And although St Mark's has supported the ministry for many years in a variety of ways, this will be his first time roughing it himself.

"Leadership from the front needs to be there and be part of it," he says. "It says that we as a parish are committed. I really believe in Rough Edges, so this is the least I can do."

Dr Jensen believes it is important for everyone to remember God's blessings and grow in compassion for those struggling.

"If the grace of God means that everything we have comes from God's hand as a blessing, and it's nothing to do with what we've earned, it awakens us to see what others don't have in a new light," he says. "They're not lazy or stupid. It's much more complex. It provides greater sympathy for those doing it tough. It says we know people do it tough for different reasons."

"It's a helpful reminder to remember our own blessedness, and how can we not be generous when God is generous to us?"

SC recognised by peers at awards

SOUTHERN CROSS HAS BEEN RECOGNISED AMONG THE RELIGIOUS PRESS AT THE 2018 AUSTRALASIAN Religious Press Association awards.

The magazine won five prizes at last month's ceremony in Brisbane in a variety of categories, covering work published in 2017.

The "Sex, intimacy and aging" cover story from June 2017, written by Dr Patricia Veerakoon and Ben Boland, received a gold award for the best feature by multiple authors.

The judges noted the sensitivity and "down-to-earth practical authority" of the article, praising its candid and mythbusting discussion of an obviously delicate issue.

SC editor Judy Adamson also won gold for her October 2017 review of the documentary *Blue* – which shows the harm that plastics, overfishing and human carelessness are causing to the planet.

The judges referred to the review's final paragraph as the "clincher": "Go and see it and be prepared to take action. Not because you're a greenie – or whatever you might want to call it – but because you're a child of God."

The art director of Anglican Media Sydney, Stephen Mason, won two awards: a silver for best magazine cover and a bronze for best original illustration. The April 2017 cover of SC, about parenting, was praised for its simplicity and impact; the December illustration, of a distressed couple comforting each other, was paired with an article about "good" grief.

The final award was a bronze for SC writer Tara Seng, chosen for her February 2017 cover about foster care. Presented in the category of best feature by a single author, the article was described as "honest and edifying" as it showed the work and love of foster families for those in their care, and opportunities others might have to serve in a similar way.

Other awards for Anglican publications included a gold and two silvers for *The Melbourne Anglican* (best faith reflection, best editorial or opinion piece and best theological article); a gold for *The Gippsland Anglican* (best regional publication); a silver for *North Coast Anglican* (best newspaper design); and a bronze for the *Guardian* in Adelaide (best original photography).

Publication of the year was awarded to *Others*, a new Salvation Army magazine, while *NZ Baptist* won ARPA's highest honour, the Gutenberg Award.



"My theology convicts me that the Anglican Church needs Aboriginal people in it": Jum Naden, left, with his wife Pip.

Hearing our Aboriginal brothers and sisters

A conversation between Chase Kuhn and "Jum" Naden

MUCH LIKE MY MOVE FROM CALIFORNIA TO ALABAMA, MY MOVE TO SYDNEY WAS A CULTURALLY eye-opening experience. It has been 10 years since I first visited, and seven years since I relocated here with my family. From the first trip until now I am still learning about other people, their history, story and values.

Of the dear friends that we have made in Sydney, one is an Aboriginal man named Nathaniel "Jum" Naden. Jum walked into our church in North Sydney one Sunday evening several years ago. He was serving as a ministry apprentice at Living Water Community Fellowship in Redfern – a congregation our church was supporting in its infancy – and was visiting with his minister, Matt Paterson.

I was struck by Jum's kindness and courage. Here was a man going against the grain regularly. He was partnering with a white pastor to reach Aboriginal community members in Redfern. He was visiting St Thomas' in North Sydney, where seldom – if ever – an Aboriginal man visits. But he was there, and he was there because of his commitment to the gospel.

In the next few years I watched him begin study at Moore College (he is now in his final year), the third Aboriginal student ever to attend. I also watched him marry a very gospel-minded woman from our church: Pip – a white woman working as a teacher, now serving at Gawura, the Aboriginal school within St Andrew's Cathedral School. Jum and Pip are partners not just in marriage, but also in ministry to see the gospel reach Aboriginal communities.

I sat with Jum recently to ask him some questions about his experience as an Aboriginal Christian man and gain his wisdom about how non-Aboriginal and Aboriginal Christians might progress in gospel fellowship together. Below are my questions with his responses.

At Jum's request, people should note that this discussion is quite complex and, though Jum is a developing Aboriginal Christian leader, he does not speak for all Aboriginal people everywhere. His answers are reflective of his experience and thoughts on the issues as they relate to the gospel.

We tend to think from our own experience outward, which means we can assume others are just like us. How would you encourage someone to understand your culture and what it is like to see through your eyes?

Stereotypes are significant. People often assume much about Aboriginal people immediately, such as: uneducated, don't care for themselves, bludgers, druggies, alcoholics, etc. It is not that these descriptions aren't accurate of some Aboriginal people (just as they are of non-Aboriginal people!), but they are unfair assumptions.

In churches, if I walk into a non-Aboriginal congregation people generally assume these stereotypes. If they are generous, they might only assume that I am likely not a Christian, or if I am then I am likely a charismatic or a mystic.

It is also important to know that we have a great awareness of human mortality. Death is something that is common for us. But, because of many problems, it is rare to see death at a "natural" time or in a "natural" way among our people.

I am a foreigner and always confused about what Aboriginal people prefer to be called. Can you help?

There are many offences around terminology. Don't call someone "Abol!" Also, "indigenous" is a term that is quite scientific and can be understood pejoratively in our culture.

Aboriginal is fine, but it is important to realise that we actually are historically identified by our tribes and land.

How can we show respect to Aboriginal people, especially our Christian brothers and sisters?

Listen to them. Show them that you sincerely care, and do this by getting beyond the superficial. Don't approach them in a way that just "shows respect to the black man", but honour them as a fellow human being, and in Christian community as a brother/sister in Christ. After you have established a relationship, it is a very good thing to ask someone to tell you their story. But relationships are crucial. Some people, especially those of the stolen generation, have difficult stories to tell. So, their stories must be told within the confines of trusting relationships.

Are prayers honouring custodianship of the land helpful or hurtful?

In principle they aren't bad, but they can often seem tokenistic because they aren't backed by a broader conversation showing real care and respect.

Why do you think the conversation isn't happening? As a foreigner to Australia, I suspect the apathy is due to fear of inability to reach an agreement.

I am sure there is some fear about what would be the "right" outcome from the conversation, but what is important is to *have* the conversation. We don't talk about it. As an example, it is very important for non-indigenous Australians to recognise that land is crucial to Aboriginal identity. Being removed from our land has had significant consequences for our sense of who we are. As for fear, at the end of the day it is okay for us to be different and to disagree. We just want to be cared for by being heard. At the moment, we aren't having the conversation.

As we begin the conversation, black people will need to let go of some things. But white people (and other colours) will need to think about changing some things, too – perhaps even just their attitudes. As we converse as Christians, we will need to think through what it means to be one "new man" in Christ.

What would be a good forum for these conversations?

Church leaders can model this, and they can do so by seeking out elders in nearby communities.

How can we think about mission among Aboriginal people today, especially in view of a difficult history?

Building relationships is crucial and much more effective than drop-in, short-term initiatives. You need to get to know the people you want to reach and show them you genuinely care about them as human beings. It is also good to talk with Aboriginal leaders and ask them [about] ways you might effectively serve with them.

Historically, the problem has been paternalism; that is, people have not allowed ministry to suit the cultural context that they are serving in, but have demanded that Aboriginals join their culture. This has, of course, had roots in very poor and misguided understandings of the true humanity of Aboriginals. As people have repented of this, the pendulum has swung too far in the other direction, leaving white churches to simply send money (at best) but have no genuine partnership.

What we need is true gospel partnership; one that is grounded in a common love for Christ and an appreciation for our common identity in him. So, when we do mission, we must work together, in real and sincere partnerships.

You are moving into a ministry position next year, and are pursuing a role as an Anglican minister. Why are you doing this?

Theologically I affirm Anglican doctrine. With this, my theology convicts me that the Anglican Church needs Aboriginal people in it. This does not mean we become acultural, but the gospel is the uniting principle in our fellowship.

In terms of mission, the church needs black and white people to work together. So, I am working cross-culturally, in one sense, in order to see people reached for Christ. I want to do my part in giving expression to true gospel partnership.

The Aboriginal church needs the white church. We don't have the resources to be able to carry out gospel ministry like others do. We have a lot of work to do in seeing the gospel bridge the racial divide in our country. I want to help show forth healthy mission that is truly gospel driven. I think this starts in the local church.

Being a part of the Anglican Church gives me access, resources and accountability for gospel mission.

Saved to serve

TOMO FUJIMAKI

I AM FROM GUNMA [NORTH WEST OF TOKYO]. I'VE

lived in Australia for the past 2½ years.

When I was in Japan, I had no Christian friends and had never been to church. Shortly after arriving in Australia, I was invited to a church Christmas party by a friend. I also attended the SJEC [Sydney Japanese Evangelical Church] New Year's lunch and then started to attend Bible study and Sunday service. I became interested in Christianity because most of the people I met here were great people who faithfully believed in Jesus.

Three months later, I became a Christian and got baptised at Easter. I had little knowledge about God and had not read the whole Bible yet, but I decided to follow Jesus and believe what he had done for me.

In the past I had thought that, if there was a God, he had given me many blessings – such as scraping through difficult exams and having people who helped me when I was in need. But I was not sure which God that was. In Japan, the main religions are Buddhism and Shinto. Although Japanese people follow cultural traditions from these religions, they have neither interest nor knowledge about them and even celebrate the festivals of other religions such as Christmas. I wasn't in favour of these attitudes.

I didn't really consider myself a bad person as I had never committed any crime. I had lied but I thought it wasn't really bad as everyone was doing the same.

But I realised my view of sin was based on my own standard, not God's standard. I came to understand that sin is ignoring God and continuing to live life my own way despite knowing him. Since I came to know God, I have become aware of countless examples of his grace. God has blessed me through studying the Bible and through the encouragement I have received from other Christians.

SJEC is special in that there are always a mix of regulars and new people, providing a refreshing atmosphere. I think this makes SJEC different from other churches. I believe this can be the strength to spread the gospel in Japan.

Christians come to church to worship God and encourage each other. However, attending Sunday service is not all we should do – we should always be putting God as the highest priority every day.

This is a challenge for all Christians, particularly for Japanese who become Christian overseas. It is hard to read the Bible every day and serve at church on top of work and study. It is even harder to put God first and reprioritise things that were important before. Despite these challenges, we still want to follow God because of the salvation and grace he has given us.

During this past year, God continued to show me his wonderful grace. I was allowed to study for three months for free... and afterwards I found a job at a café. Even though it was tough working there I learnt a lot, especially how I could be patient and treat others as a Christian.

I was also given the opportunity to lead a Bible study. I used to just learn what I was taught and didn't really ponder over it. But, having to lead studies, I could take time to consider what the Bible wanted to tell us so I could share that with others.

At the end of last year, I had the chance to talk with students at the NTE conference, heard how they had grown up in this Christian country and wanted to serve God in the future. It was a great opportunity not only to raise awareness as a Christian but also consider how I should follow Jesus as a Japanese.

Over the past 2½ years God has prepared the way, leading me and giving me energy to keep going. When I was tired, he provided rest and support from friends and my Christian brothers and sisters. And while I would like to stay longer, I feel I have been able to do all I wanted and needed to do in Australia. Now I would like to go where God sends me and serve him there.



Tomo shares her testimony with the members of SJEC.

JAPANESE LIVES CHANGED IN SYDNEY



Ministry to Japanese people living in Sydney is hard work, but those at the Sydney Japanese Evangelical Church can see that kingdom work is being done.

Former minister started working at CMS, the Rev Grahame Smith, when he and his wife Cathy started working at SJEC a decade ago there were 10 people in the congregation. Now there are 40, which is wonderful, but "every year we lose people going back to Japan or moving on to English-speaking churches, or moving out of the area... that's just how things work".

On one hand this might seem deflating – working to help people understand the gospel and grow in faith, then waving them goodbye (see Tomo's testimony, above) – but Mr Smith is aware that those who go out from SJEC take Jesus with them, either to another local church or back to Japan.

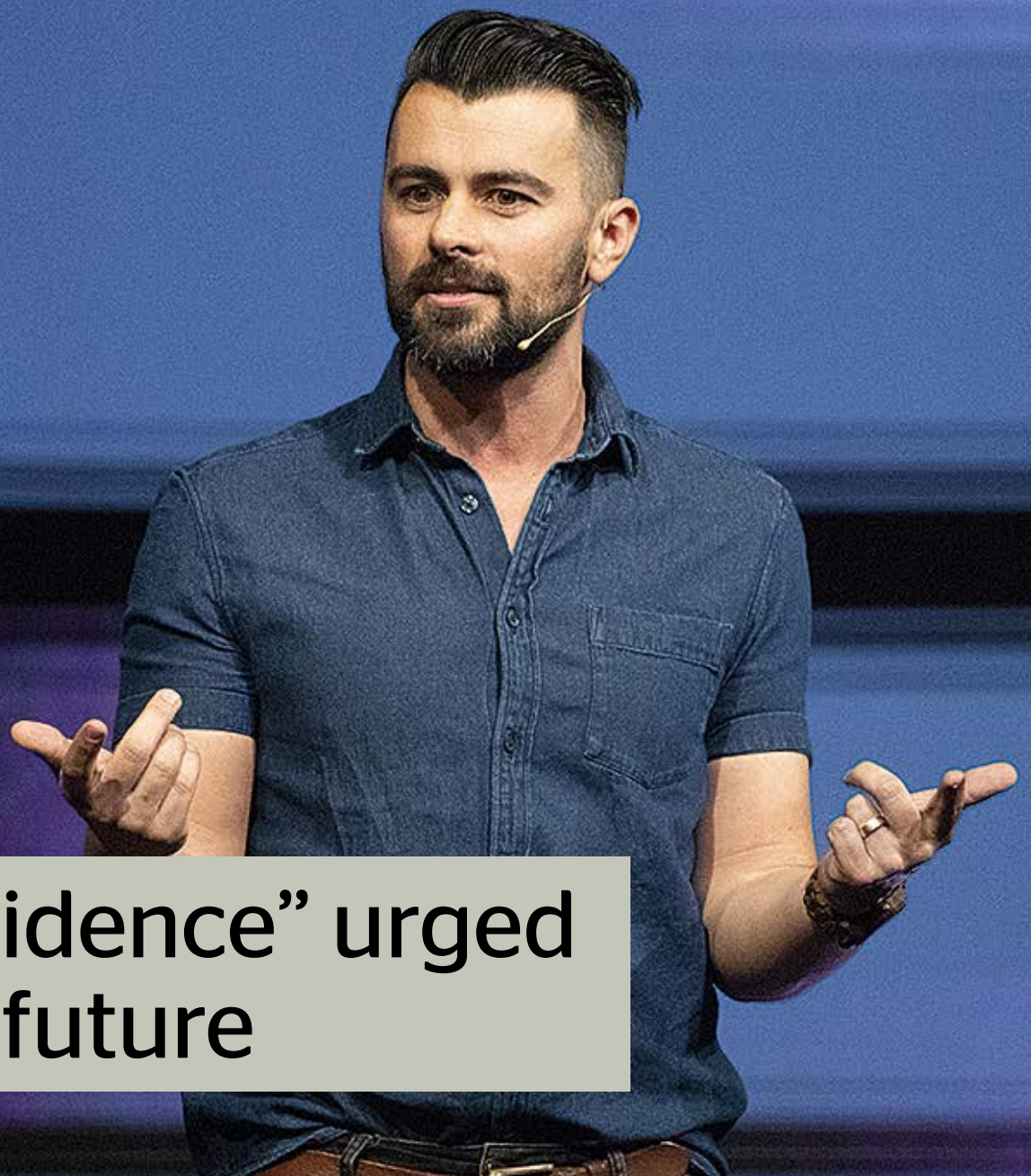
"It is sometimes hard for a small core group of Christians to constantly be welcoming and farewelling people, but to see lives changed through knowing Christ more than compensates for it," he says.

"We've been able to contribute to the growth of the gospel in Japan through returnees, as well as Christian leaders in Japanese university ministry [KGK] and people interested in mission work who've spent some time in our congregation before heading to Japan as missionaries."

The church – which is a congregation of Naremburn-Cammeray – is also involved in outreach to local Japanese families; Mr Smith runs an English Bible class for Japanese students at a language school in the city; and the church's student minister for 2018, Yuya Shimada, is a ministry apprentice for the Evangelical Union at the University of Sydney.

Just after *Southern Cross* goes to press SJEC will co-host a conference for members of Japanese language churches in Australia and New Zealand. At the time of writing, more than 165 people were registered from churches across Australia, as well as Auckland, Christchurch and Dunedin in NZ.

"It's an exciting initiative – everyone's looking forward to it very much," Mr Smith says. "Please pray for our ministry; that more and more Japanese will hear and respond to the gospel, and for the church to grow in Japan as a result."



“Gospel confidence” urged for Anglican future

THE ANGLICAN FUTURE CONFERENCE IN MELBOURNE HEARD A STIRRING CALL FOR CHRISTIAN leaders to defy secular stereotypes of the church as a dying force.

Guy Mason (above), the senior pastor of Melbourne’s largest Anglican church, City on a Hill, spoke from the book of 2 Chronicles on the opening night of the conference.

“I feel that in Australia we have a love-hate relationship with confidence,” Mr Mason said. “By that I mean we love to hate it. We cringe when sporting stars talk up their success, we expect comedians to be self-deprecating, we want politicians to be less assured, we want pastors... to play it safe.

“Perhaps there is good reason to justify that lack of confidence because when it comes to ministry we are living in a post-Christian, post-modern world, constantly bombarded by the secular media with the message that God is dead. The church is often depicted as a defeated fighter swinging from the ropes, about to go down. And sometimes I feel we accept that image as true.”

Mr Mason spoke to leaders from across Australia, with 19 of 23 Anglican dioceses represented.

“We accept the lie that the odds are stacked against us,” he said. “We accept the lie that our future is bleak and there is no hope on the horizon so we hold back – we retreat from challenge, we retreat from big prayers and bold visions to make much of God. And that’s devastating. It is devastating because our churches need us and our cities and this nation need us.”

Mr Mason drew on Jehoshaphat’s words in 2 Chronicles 20 in pointing to the future. “What will transform us into humble, courageous and sacrificial leaders who step out to impact our world for God’s glory?” he asked. “Two words. Gospel confidence. Gospel confidence is the living, active trust that God is sovereign, that God is powerful, that God can do immeasurably more than we ever think or imagine.

“Gospel confidence is sharply distinct from self-confidence. Self-confidence looks in the mirror and says, ‘Hey, I can do this.’ Gospel confidence recognises that God can do it. In the words of Jehoshaphat: ‘God will hear and God will save.’”

The opening address was followed by Anglican and former NSW Premier Mike Baird speaking on leadership in the public square. Mr Baird talked of his time in office and the lows and highs of his time as Premier. “The onus of a leader is unity not division,” he said, as he spoke of the difficult times after the Lindt café attack. “Whether it be a church or charity you are leading, bring people together.”

Delegates took part in seminars on topics ranging from cross-cultural ministry to multi-site churches, as well as a panel discussion on ministry involving same-sex attracted people and inclusion.

“All of us are hanging by the single thread of God’s sovereign grace to us in Christ Jesus,” said Dr Wesley Hill, associate professor of biblical studies at Trinity School for Ministry in Pennsylvania, who is same-sex attracted.

The conference was organised by the Evangelical Fellowship in the Anglican Church and the Fellowship of Confessing Anglicans, Australia.

New Zealand churches withdraw

SEVERAL CLERGY HAVE RESIGNED, CHURCHES HAVE WITHDRAWN AND MORE MAY FOLLOW after the Synod of the Anglican Church in Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia (ACANZP) decided to allow the blessing of same-gender marriages.

In May the three *tikanga*, or cultural streams, of the Province – Pakeha (New Zealanders of European descent), Maori, and Pasifika (Polynesian) – voted that there should be no change to “the Church’s teaching on the nature of marriage, [which] is to affirm marriage as between a man and a woman”.

However, the General Synod passed a motion that authorised diocesan bishops to allow clergy in their dioceses to bless same-gender marriages in “a non-formulary service”. The Diocese of Polynesia will not implement this measure as its members oppose the blessing of same-sex relationships, and Pacific Island countries such as Samoa, Tonga and Fiji do not recognise same-sex unions. However, Tikanga Pasifika did not block the resolution for Tikanga Maori and Tikanga Pakeha.

The vote, in May, sparked congregational votes to disaffiliate from the ACANZP (see next page) and a strong resolution from the Standing Committee of the Diocese of Sydney, which noted “with deep regret that this step is contrary to the teaching of Christ (Matt 19:1-12) and is contrary to Resolution I.10 of the 1998 Lambeth Conference”.



Participants, including (front, from second left) Archbishop Davies and Primates Don Tamihere and Philip Richardson.

Dr Davies in New Zealand

Archbishop Glenn Davies was then invited to New Zealand by the three Primates of ACANZP to hear from key representatives of the Church and to speak in response.

Dr Davies proposed what he called “distinctive co-existence” as a solution to the issues facing the Church. “I recognise that we are past the point where I could expect you to change your mind or that I could ask you to step back from the decision to which you have come,” he said.

“For this reason, I come to you with a proposal for a new way forward for Anglicans in New Zealand which, if accepted, could well become a model for other Anglican Provinces, avoiding... controversies that have beset our Anglican brothers and sisters in North America and, more recently, in Scotland.”

Dr Davies noted that the present difficulty was because those who opposed the legitimising of same-sex relationships saw the question not as a matter of order, but as a matter of gospel, and the adoption of such a departure from Christ’s teaching as they saw it, made it impossible for them to continue in communion with those who advocated the new teaching.

At the same time, he added, those who advocated for the legitimising of same-sex relationships as a matter of justice and non-discrimination saw the exclusion of same-sex couples as lacking the love that should characterise disciples of Christ.

“The heightened and emotionally charged debate has caused havoc in our Communion, which in my view has brought dishonour to Christ,” Dr Davies said. “However, peaceful co-existence seems illusory.”

The essence of the Archbishop’s proposal is a distinctive co-existence, modelled on the jurisdiction of Anglican churches in continental Europe.

“It is interesting that within Europe there are two overlapping Anglican Churches: the Diocese of Gibraltar in Europe under the jurisdiction of the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Convocation of Episcopal Churches in Europe under the jurisdiction of the Presiding Bishop of The Episcopal Church (TEC),” he said.

“Each has differing constitutions and canons, yet they share the same Anglican heritage. Could not the model of continental Europe provide a new way forward for Aotearoa and Polynesia?”

Dr Davies said the model would require changes and possibly a recasting of the Lambeth Conference of 2020. But he said it was needed to accommodate churches and disenfranchised Anglicans in New Zealand.

Plans to leave ACANZP

Already hundreds of Anglicans have indicated their intention to disaffiliate from the ACANZP. Leading Anglican vicars Jay Behan and Dave Clancey, with 10 other ministers, have already resigned and five parishes have made the decision to disaffiliate. Other parishes may join them.

Mr Behan, vicar of St Stephen’s, Shirley and Mr Clancey, vicar of South Christchurch, told of “painful decisions” at the Anglican Future Conference last month in Melbourne.

“One of the difficult things about this motion is that it doesn’t do anything for people who can’t live with it,” Mr Behan told the conference via video link. “So we have decided to form a new structure to cover those who can no longer in good conscience remain within ACANZP – somewhere they can find a home.

“We are working on the establishment of a new Anglican structure in New Zealand. It will be a parallel Anglican structure in the same geographical area, an extra-provincial diocese.

“Those who are disaffiliating and some who are very close to it are gathering together to formulate a robust Anglican constitutional structure and we hope to take it to the GAFCON Primates conference next April.

“Hopefully, they will give it their endorsement and blessing. We could then come back to New Zealand for an episcopal election of some sort and then have a constitution, bishop and a structure in place by mid-next year.”

Similar arrangements are already in place in North America and Brazil.

The Christchurch diocese last month announced that Dr Peter Carrell, who has served in parishes in Nelson and Christchurch, would be the new Bishop of Christchurch. He voted in favour of the same-sex blessing motion and described the disaffiliation of congregations as “sad”.



NZ vicars Dave Clancey (left) and Jay Behan speak to delegates at the Anglican Future Conference last month.

GAFCON standardises name

THE FELLOWSHIP OF CONFESSING ANGLICANS IN AUSTRALIA HAS VOTED TO CHANGE ITS NAME, bringing it into line with GAFCON branches in the UK, Ireland and elsewhere. The FCA name was introduced after the first Global Anglican Future Conference (GAFCON) in 2008 and was adopted locally in 2015. A meeting in Melbourne agreed to change the name to “GAFCON Australia”.

FAREWELLS FOR THE LORD

Thank you for the excellent, helpful articles regarding death and funerals (SC, September).

I am 70 years old and have begun a file outlining my desires for my funeral. My main desire is that all the glory goes to the One who loved me and gave his life for me.

Maureen Cummins
Lisarow

CAN WE DISAGREE WELL?

I recoiled with horror at Athol Cooke's iconoclastic image of Jesus "smashing bottles of this evil stuff [wine]" (Letters, SC, September).

Surely any evil associated with alcohol lies not in its existence or use but in its behavioural abuse, so often seen in the consequences of harmful social activity.

A forensic analysis of alcohol reveals it to be a chemical substance possessing beneficial antiseptic germ-killing bacteria. If such stuff is of benefit to mankind through medical science, how can it be evil?

Jesus was no prohibitionist since he willingly changed water into wine at the wedding feast in Cana instead of destroying the "evil stuff". Jesus knew the pitfalls of alcohol abuse yet did not judge the guests who wished to sample his miracle.

Whether or not there are circumstances in which wine may be an appropriate moderating agent in a social context during efforts to communicate the Christian message is surely the primary responsibility of those struggling with ways to break down barriers of opposition, hostility, doubt and indifference, without our need to be judgmental?

Jack R. Blair
Glenhaven

WHEN ESL IS THE ANSWER

It was with some dismay that I read in "Seasons of Service" (SC, August) about the cessation of ESL classes in Fairfield. This was obviously a very difficult decision for the Macgeorges to make. I am pleased to say we haven't had to consider that option in our parish.

My sister and I teach ESL classes at St Peter's, Campbelltown. Our lessons always include a Bible story, which has generated much interest from non-Christian students. Numbers have been steadily growing over four years, with a mix of people on temporary, study or tourist visas, as well as permanent residents and citizens.

Other students are older permanent residents or citizens who have been in Australia for a number of years but are only now free to go to an ESL class. This is often due to having to be available to look after preschool-aged grandchildren. Now the last grandchild has started school, there is freedom to start learning English. Too often they have missed the opportunity to have free AMEP English classes.

Three Chinese students who returned to China looked for churches near their homes. Another joined the congregation at St James, Minto, which has a Mandarin service.

We have had an Afghani student ask how to get an "angel book" in Farsi – his term for a Bible. Another student returned to India with the website for Bible Gateway so he could read the Bible in Marathi. One student from China thought Bible stories were fairy stories in Chinese – in English they gained credence.

We have had an ESL Bible study immediately after class, led by a minister or pastoral care worker. At the moment it is not operating because most students have returned to their own countries, but at its height there were eight or nine students attending.

We have had attendees at women's events over recent years and this year, for the first time, a fellow attended a men's breakfast.

We cross-refer students with the local Presbyterian church. Our flyers are available at the local library and Anglicare office. We also have Macarthur Anglican ESL network meetings with St Barnabas, Ingleburn and Eagle Vale Anglican.

Our outreach ministry through ESL has steadily grown as word spreads, often via our students – something for which we give thanks to God.

Cheryl Cumines
Leumeah

NO TO FRANKLIN GRAHAM

I read with horror Dr Davies' comment in Archbishop Writes (SC, September) about the upcoming tour to Australia by the Rev Franklin Graham – that we all should get behind it, even though he admits: "Some have even queried his credentials because of his support of President Trump. However [this is not] sufficient to deter us from supporting this initiative of the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association".

Yes, the speaking tour is the BGEA's way of marking the 60th anniversary of Billy Graham's first visit to Australia, but I believe support for Donald Trump is plenty of reason to not give Franklin Graham an audience.

To support President Trump is to support his disgraceful behaviour towards many individuals and groups in the community. How could we trust any gospel message Franklin Graham might bring? By their fruits you shall know them.

I am disgusted that Dr Davies would put such concerns aside in the name of the gospel of Jesus, and then ask Sydney Anglicans to get behind Franklin Graham – or the BGEA, of which he is CEO.

Franklin Graham is not Billy Graham. If Dr Davies, or Sydney as a Diocese, supports this tour initiative, how are we any different to the so-called evangelical Trump supporters in the US?

S Burgess
Albion Park

CONFIDENT IN SINGLENESS

Unlike the correspondents in your August edition I was disturbed by the SC article on singleness in July.

My own experience is at complete variance with the sentiments expressed, such as "singleness is a gift and curse", "a state of deficiency", "aberrant", "sin-prone", "lack of fulfilment", etc.

I belong to a church that, like most, is dominated numerically by married couples and families, but has a fair number who are single by various mechanisms. We absolutely do not "struggle with feelings of isolation, marginalisation, disappointment and even invisibility". Our senior minister and fellow members of all shades encourage us in our singleness. I heard, in a sermon to all, "Continue doing what you do – you are greatly valued".

Do we occasionally grieve that we have not found love and not had children? Of course – we are normal. But mostly we rejoice in our singleness, which is a gift to us as we are a gift to the whole church, but I acknowledge that some grieve more.

Many members have encouraged me with words such as this exact quote, "I am certain that you have been a blessing not only to us but countless others you have come across in work and church life. The Lord might have a few good works left up his sleeve for you".

Perhaps the real problem is that the singles interviewed, and in the surveys quoted, are not content or confident in their singleness. If we consider the major part of our church life – worship services and Bible study groups – the playing field is level. Last week in church I found myself next to a married lady who was breastfeeding her infant. I rejoiced! I am part of a family where I contribute on the same terms as all other church members. How can I feel isolated?

There are other minority groups to consider: for example, the aged, disabled or chronically ill and couples who are unable to have children.

If there was one way our leaders might improve, perhaps they could discriminate positively sometimes towards these minorities. Instead of interviewing a mother on Mothers' Day, how about choosing a single lady or a married lady who has not had children? That could be inspiring and encouraging!

Barry Wilkins
Baulkham Hills





DIRKS FAMILY HEADS SOUTH

The **Rev Shane Dirks** has left the parish of Turramurra South and next month will become senior assistant minister at Figtree Anglican Church, with the role of executive minister.

“My role is to collaborate with the senior minister in ensuring that the church-wide mission and vision is implemented effectively and intentionally,” he says. “This includes leading various ministries and ministry staff in the establishment of and direction of FAC’s ministry mission and vision.

“My ministry responsibility will incorporate preaching and teaching. A great joy will be leading a highly capable staff team and focusing on discipleship pathways for members of all demographics. I love to see different ministry areas such as kids, youth and young adults work in an integrated fashion. The thrill is participating with anyone’s journey in growing as a disciple-making disciple.”

Mr Dirks took time following his previous ministry role to seek the Lord’s guidance for what he should do next, giving consideration to roles beyond vocational ministry. However, he felt God was continuing to call him to parish ministry, which was confirmed by a number of conversation partners and ministry opportunities. “I was grateful for the Rev Ian Barnett [rector of Figtree], among others, helping me think things through.”

He and his wife Rachel look forward to returning to the Illawarra, a place of fond memories from their previous time living in the area. Both are excited about the opportunities to serve Jesus that will arise.

“For a long time, and from a distance, I have admired and been influenced by the ministry of Figtree,” Mr Dirks says. “Figtree wants to be a church that’s faithful, adventurous and compassionate, and my observation is that this has been part of their make-up for some time. My role is to continue in that stead... to continue to lead, encourage and pioneer ministry that is faithful, adventurous and compassionate.”

VALE

Church and college communities are mourning the loss of **Mark Fairfull**, the marketing and communications manager at Moore College, who died suddenly last month of a brain aneurysm. He was 41.

A popular and proficient communicator, Mr Fairfull was well known in Christian organisations after roles at New College at the University of NSW, Hope 103.2 radio, Scripture Union and Anglican Media, where he began his career as a production assistant in 1999.

Staff of those organisations joined family and church friends from the lower North Shore for a funeral at his home church, Church by the Bridge in Kirribilli.

His pastor and long-time friend, the Rev Paul Dale, said, “Jesus was the most important person in Mark’s life. His whole life was shaped by Jesus – his decisions and choices, his identity, his security and his purpose in life.”

In a statement to Moore College staff, principal the Rev Dr Mark Thompson spoke of Mr Fairfull’s “faithful ambassadorship” of the college.

“His faith in the Lord Jesus was what led him to join the team here at Moore College and he has commented regularly on the privilege of serving Christ and his gospel in this way,” Dr Thompson said. “So our grief at this unexpected and tragic news is not grief without hope.”



How a bishop leads



DR GLENN DAVIES

AM OFTEN ASKED WHAT AN ARCHBISHOP DOES. THE QUESTION IS USUALLY ASKED OUT of genuine curiosity, though occasionally the tone of the query exposes an assumption that the true answer is: Nothing much!

I am used to such questions, of course, as I have been answering the same queries for nigh on 17 years, since I first became a bishop.

Nonetheless, it is still a good question. For those who wish to explore this topic further, I recommend the Doctrine Commission's report for this year's Synod entitled: "An Evangelical Episcopate: The Purpose and Nature of Episcopal Leadership".

Episcopal leadership was an unquestioned feature of the Church Catholic at the time of the Reformation, and was not an issue for disagreement in the 12th century when the Eastern Churches separated from the West.

Yet the 16th century saw a re-evaluation of church polity, which occasioned the development of different styles of leadership – from congregational elders at a local level, to a presbytery of elders covering a cluster of churches. Many of the Reformed churches retained episcopacy, though they repudiated the idea that Rome had any jurisdiction.

Our *Book of Common Prayer* (BCP) sets out the duties of a bishop in the Ordinal, where the chief characteristic of a bishop is that he is a pastor of God's people who preaches God's word. As the opening prayer of the Form of Ordaining or Consecrating an Archbishop or Bishop states:

"Give grace, we beseech thee, to all Bishops, the Pastors of thy Church, that they may diligently preach the Word, and duly administer the godly discipline thereof..."

Preaching the word of God should be the first priority of a bishop. Whether in one-to-one situations or formal gatherings, the word of God is to fashion his life and teaching.

However, what sets the bishop apart from the presbyter (who is likewise charged to preach the word of God) is that the bishop is to administer the godly discipline grounded in God's word. I might add that Cranmer's prayer also asked that the people of God might "obediently follow" the bishop's exercise of godly discipline!

Yet the word "discipline" is a broad term that does not just reflect the opportunity to reprimand errant behaviour, but it encompasses the rightful order of the church, maintaining orderly conduct. The word itself comes from the Latin word for "instruction" and is closely aligned to our English word "disciple". For this reason, one of the unique responsibilities of bishops is their authority to ordain candidates to the diaconate and presbyterate and, consequentially, to license such persons for appointment within their jurisdiction, that is, the diocese.

This follows, in my view, from the apostolic instruction to Timothy and Titus, to whom were given the responsibilities of ordaining deacons and elders. It is not without interest that it is only in Paul's personal letters to these apostolic delegates that we find the criteria for overseers (elders) and deacons.

While deacons and overseers are an early development in the church (Acts 6:1-4; 14:23; Philippians 1:1), the development of bishops (although strictly speaking, the word "overseer" in the New Testament can be translated "bishop", and is equivalent to "elder" cf. Acts 20:17 & 28) flows from the example of Timothy and Titus as apostolic delegates, charged with the responsibility of laying hands on those who would disciple others in the faith.

Since the apostles were foundation-laying gifts of God (Ephesians 2:20), unrepeatable by nature, today's bishops stand in the succession of Timothy and Titus, not the apostles. The phrase "apostolic succession" rightly refers to the transmission of apostolic doctrine, and should not be identified merely with the practice of tactile transmission.

The bishop is therefore charged with discerning, evaluating and testing those who consider themselves called to full-time stipendiary ministry. In our Diocese, we require four years of theological education for those who would be presbyters, and we have designated Moore College as our preferred place for such training. While the Director of Ministry Training & Development and his team, along with the regional bishops, play their part, it is the Archbishop who has to make the final call. This is a solemn responsibility.

I have probably not fully answered the question posed in the opening paragraph, however, I think that the crucial elements of the answer are plain. Bishops are to be preachers of God's word, which is no less true of the Archbishop of Sydney. The word of God is to guide him in his life and doctrine. He is "to banish and drive away all erroneous and strange doctrine contrary to God's Word", and he is to preserve the transmission of that word to successive generations by ordaining godly men and women for ministry.

And this Archbishop, like his predecessors, covets the prayers of God's people that he might faithfully fulfil this responsibility for the honour and glory of God.

SC

A PRAYER FOR MISSION 2020

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

Amen

It's not easy being green

With all the competing voices in the environment debate, we need to combine our faith and stewardship of the planet with care, writes **SCOTT MONK**.

AUSTRALIA'S RECENT LOVE AFFAIR WITH BEING ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY lasted as long as a checkout beep. When two major supermarket giants announced a national ban on single-use plastic bags in favour of their green reusable cousins, the confected outrage began.

Within hours, news crews were filming agitated customers complaining they suddenly had to pay a gold coin for what many used as bin liners and, before long, pictures popped up of shopping trolleys dumped in back streets by people choosing to wheel their groceries home instead.

Ironically, only a few weeks earlier, footage of the bodies of marine life being cut open to reveal bellies full of plastic bags had led to widespread anger across all media.

In the postmodern West the real state of the environment, especially climate change, has become highly politicised. Truth is spun like fairy floss.

On one side environmentalists warn of worldwide drought, overpopulation, rising sea levels, depleted fish stocks, deforestation, the extinction of plants and animals and limited resources. Our screens show sea life wrapped in fishing nets, thousands of gridlocked cars pumping out carbon dioxide, and farmers watching their livelihoods literally turn to dust.

There's plenty of interest in maintaining a heightened level of fear, especially when some are motivated by political, academic or career aspirations, or governmental and philanthropic subsidies.

On the other side of the debate are the climate sceptics and countries protecting their own economies. The loudest are driven by global corporations, mineral-rich resources, and energy and mining companies – who call on favoured politicians, academics and public relations companies to muddy confidence in any real scientific data. And that's before you factor in shareholders keen on squeezing every dollar from their investments or superannuation funds.

At a public level, scepticism is real. Two months ago, as *The Daily Telegraph* splashed across its front page, we read that NSW's green tax – known as the Climate Change Fund – has raised almost \$3 billion during the past decade but only 1 per cent of these monies have actually been spent on green initiatives to reduce emissions. The media also struggles to be fair and balanced, with different organisations engaged in left versus right ideological battles.

Caught somewhere in the middle, miners, farmers and Aboriginal groups find their jobs under threat as interest groups use bullhorns rather than diplomacy.

The place of Christians in this supercharged debate can be confusing, as our overwhelming focus is always to promote the gospel, not environmental issues. The debate can be so divisive that it even splits denominations.

So, how should Christians react? To cut through the spin, there are three key questions:

- 1 Why should Christians care?
- 2 What can Christians do?
- 3 How can evangelical churches guard against green theology?

"Earth Overshoot Day"

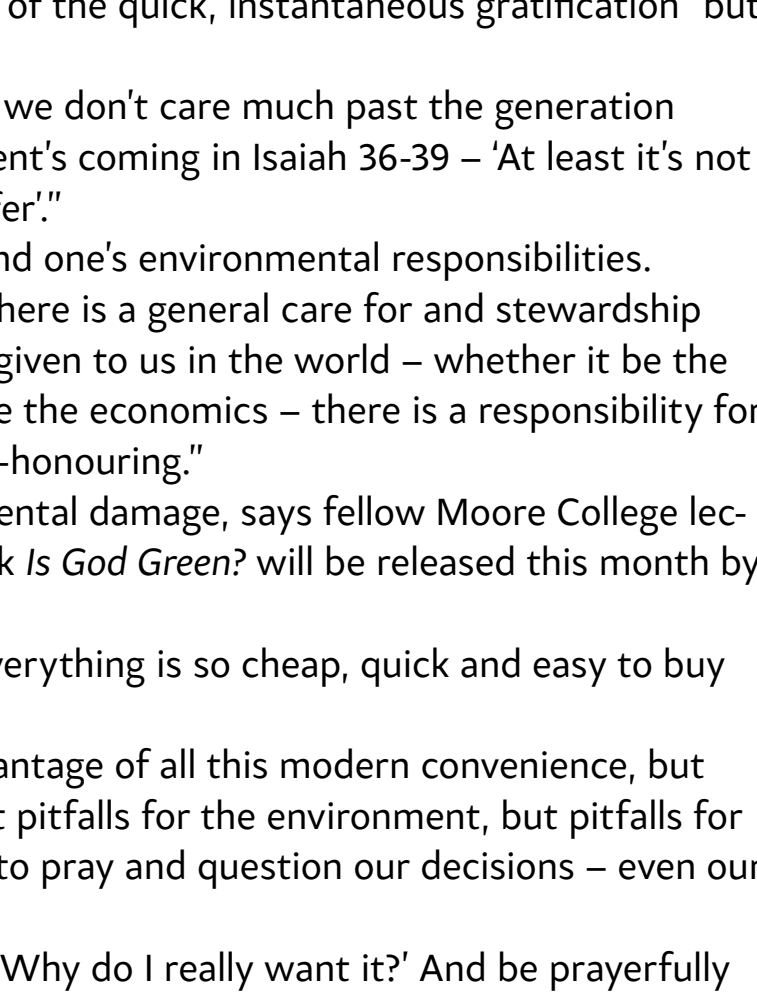
In 2018 was on August 1 – the date by which everyone on Earth had used more of the planet's resources than could be renewed in the entire year. Australia's overshoot day was even earlier: March 31.

How many Earths we would need if the world's population lived like...

USA	5.0
Australia	4.1
South Korea	3.5
Russia	3.3
Germany	3.0
Switzerland	2.9
UK	2.9
France	2.8
Japan	2.8
Italy	2.6
Spain	2.3
China	2.2
Brazil	1.8
India	0.7
World	1.7

Source: Global Footprint Network – www.footprintnetwork.org

Australians consumed 3,513,100 tonnes of plastics in 2016-17



but only recycled 11.8 per cent

Source: Australian Plastics Recycling Survey

WHY SHOULD CHRISTIANS CARE?

"Christians should care about the environment," says Dr Chase Kuhn, a member of the Sydney Diocese's Social Issues Committee and ethics lecturer at Moore College. "What's happened for us is that we've bought hook, line and sinker into a consumeristic mentality, and consumption cares very little for anything beyond the self."

He says everyone buys into "disposable goods because of the quick, instantaneous gratification" but there's "little consideration of the implications".

"We've thought we have boundless space for waste, or we don't care much past the generation beyond us. It's almost like Hezekiah's prayer after judgment's coming in Isaiah 36-39 – 'At least it's not in my generation. It'll be my grandkids who'll have to suffer!'"

However, Kuhn says there is no divide between faith and one's environmental responsibilities.

"When we really grasp what God's doing in his world, there is a general care for and stewardship over what he has given to us. The resources that he has given to us in the world – whether it be the planet generally, whether it be the animals, whether it be the economics – there is a responsibility for Christian participation in that space in a way that is God-honouring."

Greed is definitely one of the main causes of environmental damage, says fellow Moore College lecturer and blogger the Rev Dr Lionel Windsor, whose book *Is God Green?* will be released this month by Matthias Media.

"Modern technology means we live in a world where everything is so cheap, quick and easy to buy and consume and use and throw out," he says.

"As Christians, we can often be really quick to take advantage of all this modern convenience, but very slow to consider what the pitfalls might be. Not just pitfalls for the environment, but pitfalls for our own hearts. We need to be reflective and take time to pray and question our decisions – even our little decisions.

"If we're going to buy something new, we need to ask: 'Why do I really want it?' And be prayerfully honest with ourselves. Is it springing from the desire to get the most, the best, the latest? Or is it really something that is going to be right to buy for the service of God? This goes for our decisions about housing, jobs, devices... whatever.

"Another problem is the constant feeding of envy that comes through social media. Because we're one step removed from a face-to-face relationship on social media, the descriptions and images of things our friends share can so easily feed our envy, which is the flipside of greed."

Melbourne lecturer in meteorology and self-described "ecothelologist" Dr Mick Pope believes Christians need to act on climate change because it's inescapably linked to justice.

Pope ranks it alongside the needs to address poverty, slavery, war and the oppression of the powerless and defenceless, as he has written in his book *A Climate of Justice*.

"While there are many ways of framing climate change, it needs to be made very clear that, unless we deal with it, all of the other issues you care about deeply will be made much, much worse," he says.

Pope's argument is based around the idea of restorative justice: that all people need to be given "the opportunity to fully flourish as a human being made in the image of God (Genesis 1:26-31), to exercise dominion wisely, and to do so corporately". If anyone is in trouble, he says, then Christians are called to restore them to their original state of dignity.

Citing the parable of the Good Samaritan, he says all nations and peoples are our neighbours, as both the global economy and global ecological system are now interconnected. Decisions made by all Australians affect our neighbours.

And there are major levels of worldwide injustice because of climate change. For example, Pope points to a 2009 report by the Federal Government's Department of Climate Change and Energy Efficiency that predicts Aboriginal communities in Northern Australia – which already lack reliable transport, communication, health, education and employment infrastructure – will be further affected by climate change, and that mass relocation from their homelands into larger regional areas was highly undesirable.

"In terms of climate change scenarios, hot spells [days of temperatures above 35 degrees] are forecast to increase; the wet season is expected to become wetter while the dry season becomes drier," he says.

"Sea surface temperatures will increase, and some models suggest that tropical cyclone numbers could decrease, but individual cyclones become more intense. Sea levels [rising] will impact coastal communities. There will likely be a range of impacts on ecosystems that provide Aboriginal people with a food source."

For Pope, "justice is not something you do on a short-term mission trip; justice is a lifetime commitment to doing what is just."

About 60 per cent

of all seabird species have plastic in their stomachs.



Source: CSIRO

Australian shoppers used

5.7 billion single-use bags during 2016-2017 – up from 3.9 billion in 2007.



Source: Australian Plastics Recycling Survey

WHAT CAN CHRISTIANS DO?

Key verses in the debate are Genesis 1:26-28, wherein God says humanity's role is to rule or have dominion over the creation. Previously, this has been seen as a free rein to destroy as people please.

But there's greater awareness now that this is more akin to good stewardship – that Christians need to be caring for the environment. "Man is created to rule. But this rule is to be compassionate and not exploitative," North American theologian Victor P. Hamilton helpfully defines in his commentary.

So, turning a blind eye is not the answer. Says Kuhn: "We can't just be reckless as if the world's just going to burn. True as that may be – depending on what you believe about the end of the world – actions in the present demonstrate a reckless disregard for the Lord of creation. It's disrespectful to him as your Creator, and it's disrespectful towards his creation."

"You're not rightly ordering your relationship towards what he's given you. You're not rightly ordered to the fact that he is your God, the Lord who has called you to stewardship. Nor are you rightly ordered toward your fellow humanity or the inanimate creation."

However, boycotting goods and industries that are environmentally unfriendly has its own moral implications, he says.

"For example, many people today want to stamp out tobacco. They want to say, 'Down with tobacco', 'Tobacco is evil, cancer producing' – and sure, I'm not going to dispute that, obviously. But to just simply eradicate tobacco actually upsets an entire economy and even local communities of tobacco farmers who are dependent on this particular industry."

"Now, whether their participation in this industry is wrong in the first instance is to be discussed and debated, but their livelihood is dependent on that industry."

Industries that do affect the environment or lead to climate change need to be discussed or alternative energy sources used, but they may only be stop-gap measures themselves, Kuhn says.

"If we shut down petrol or coal we have to go to an alternative. Whether that alternative is a better solution, we're not sure – partly because technology is only advancing so fast. The solution we choose might actually create alternative problems that we'll need to find solutions for eventually, down the track. There's never this ideal that we can realise but it's really a balancing of how can we be the best stewards and how can we be responsible and prudent in today's society."

"Sometimes that will mean voting with our feet and boycotting or an abstinence, but other times we have to be considering, 'Is that farmer my neighbour? Is that person oil drilling, are they my neighbour?' There's a very complex web of relationships, if you will, in an economy."

Windsor says miners and farmers caught in the middle shouldn't give up their jobs – unless the company that they are working for is irredeemably corrupt.

"The problem here is that the environmental movement has so often been led by and gripped by a kind of pantheistic mindset that sees human activity, human ruling of the world, as inherently bad," he says.

"So if we've been influenced by the environmental movement we might see somebody involved in an industry that is actually inherently good – and at least in theory is for the good of people, and which can indeed be good for the world – but if we have imbibed the pantheistic mindset we will say, 'That is automatically bad' and tell them to give up their job."

In fact, Windsor continues, it is inherently good for people to be involved in industry, including mining and agriculture. Yet "there are also real systematic problems, with greed and sin at their heart, which mean that we are doing damage".

"This is a complex problem," he adds. "I would support movements that try to reform and help industries to do the right thing so that they are actually good for society – and these kinds of things can come from either a right-wing or a left-wing economic approach. It's not the prerogative of the Left and we need to stop giving air to people who say it is."

Bruce Cooke is an example of how rank-and-file Christians can balance their love for Jesus and care for the environment through small steps. In 2007, he and four other parishioners helped establish EcoChurch at St Mark's, South Hurstville (see left).

This initiative was inspired by the Anglican Communion's five marks of mission, which were established between 1984 and 1990. The marks include:

- 1 To proclaim the good news of the kingdom;
- 2 To teach, baptise and nurture new believers;
- 3 To respond to human need by loving service;
- 4 To transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and pursue peace and reconciliation; and
- 5 To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the Earth.

Highlighting this fifth mark, Cooke says safeguarding God's creation [as a balanced view of mission. "I've seen a lot of places where evangelicals are coming to realise that [being stewards of God's creation] is actually part of their mission, whereas before it probably wasn't high on the agenda," he says.

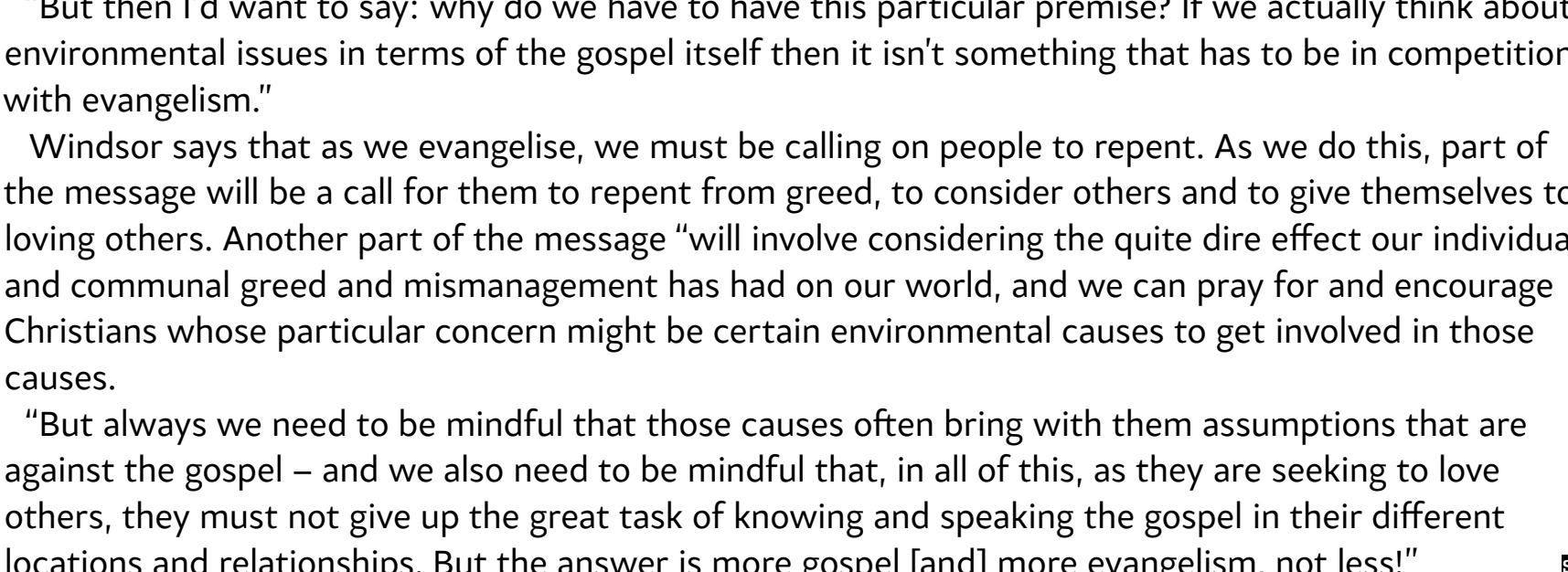
"But I think it's more and more so now. There's scope there to build a grassroots network rather a top-down approach from Synod."

For example, he adds, the Sydney Diocese could replicate the Melbourne Diocese's example of offering up to \$25,000 in repayable "green loans" to help its churches invest in technology or activities that reduce their environmental impact and/or improve energy efficiency.

Also, more churches could participate in the Season of Creation – an annual celebration of prayer and action held between September 1 and October 4 that was publicly endorsed in June by the Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby.

"For churches not used to focusing on stewardship of God's creation, a sermon on the first Sunday in September would be a good start," Cooke says.

GETTING INVOLVED



EcoChurch co-ordinator Bruce Cooke by the 10,000-litre water tank at St Mark's, South Hurstville.

When evangelical engineer Bruce Cooke walks past a tin full of plastics that can easily be recycled, he asks himself, "Do I take a stance on this or not?"

It's a question he first took seriously 11 years ago, when he could no longer turn a blind eye to rubbish needlessly going into landfill. Convinced that God's call for humanity's dominion over creation in Genesis 1:28 means "responsibility over the Earth rather than to plunder it", he knew he personally had the technological understanding to help change others' habits and, indeed, the environment.

He joined ARRC (the Australian Religious Response to Climate Change), a multi-faith network that brings together believers from Protestant, Catholic, Muslim, Buddhist and other religious traditions to lobby politicians on environmental issues. At the same time he was inspired to establish a venture called EcoChurch in his local parish.

Founded with a grassroots committee of five people at St Mark's, South Hurstville, its clarion call to this day is Psalm 24:1: "The earth is the Lord's and everything in it".

Initially, EcoChurch called on the laity to pledge to install solar panels in the church and their homes, fund a large water tank for the toilets of the onsite preschool and recycle printer toners, spectacles, stamps for the Anglican Board of Mission, magazines for a hostel and clothing for Anglicare, with St Mark's being the collection centre.

Twenty-three parishioners signed the pledge but almost everyone became involved in one way or another, Cooke says. "Even though lots of people were already doing the right thing, even the sceptics installed solar panels on their houses – not because they believed in climate change but because they believed in saving money or saving the Earth's resources."

Soon EcoChurch was also fostering dialogue and events with other religious faiths interested in action through the ARRC. It held award nights, installed dual-flush toilets, collected computers for recycling by Psychiatric Rehabilitation Australia, and became the first faith community to sign up to Earth Hour.

Starting an environmental group in a parish church was easier than Cooke expected, but he understands it is sometimes difficult to promote green issues in an evangelical environment. St Mark's leadership now places a greater focus on a more traditional evangelical approach, but still focuses on Creation Sunday each year on the first Sunday in September.

Cooke hopes to reinvent EcoChurch, as he sees renewed interest by the media and the public as another chance for the church to get involved.

"In the wider church, there is still opportunity for the Diocese to get more involved in that facet of our mission," he says. "A lot of the initiatives we introduced in 2006 have now become mainstream in the community, which is really terrific. And maybe that's why there's not so much of a push now, because many people have water tanks, many people have solar panels, many people are now scrupulous about recycling."

"In terms of our mission of safeguarding God's creation, I think it not only includes our own individual positive actions, but also lobbying the government on the broader issues."

HOW CAN CHURCHES GUARD AGAINST GREEN THEOLOGY?

About 15 years ago, a minister in a Sydney church (not Anglican) brought a small group of children together for a Bible talk. Rather than opening up the gospels, Genesis, Daniel or even Jonah, she opened up *The Lorax* by Dr Seuss.

For 10 minutes she read the 1971 book about damage done to the environment by corporate greed. Her Bible message? "God also loves trees."

There are plenty of churches in all denominations that are still faithful to Jesus. But some have been gutted by decades of over-emphasising social justice issues, including the environment.

The central message of the gospel to call on sinners to repent and worship Jesus as both Saviour and Lord has become less urgent in a bid to showcase a church that's more "compassionate" and "in touch" with current issues.

A native of Los Angeles, Kuhn has seen what happens when a church pushes "green theology" – mist-mashing Christianity with environmental activism to the point that saving the biosphere is more important than saving souls.

"When I first visited Sydney, I remember going into a liberal church and there was a shrine – an actual shrine – to Mother Nature," he says. "There was a tree and there was this idea that we are celebrating creation and life. It was an idolatrous way of looking at the world. Completely pagan!"

"I think Romans 1 and 2 are very clear that whenever we mistake the creature for the Creator we are in big trouble. We have to remember that the Creator cares about the creation. He cares about the creation so much that his Son entered into the creation to redeem the creation, namely human beings. It is through this redemption that the reach of the curse through creation is ultimately undone."

"And so he's bringing renewal and restoration. His agenda is one that is for creation in a sense that [it] ultimately brings about the best thing for creation. But to try and subvert the gospel in the interests of the environment is totally backwards. It's only through the gospel that the environment's best interests come to pass."

Windsor adds that the key problem is that people often talk and think about environmental issues in terms of a "cause": "That is, it's a bandwagon we must jump on, a battle we must fight with our energy, a mission that we must give our urgent attention to, a pressing problem that must be dealt with," he says.

"If we think about it that way, then environmental issues necessarily demand a lot of energy, focus, thought and attention. And, in particular, they need the energy and attention of church leaders who can campaign and preach and organise committees to get things happening amongst the church community."

If environmental issues become a cause in that way, he says, then yes, that is in conflict with evangelism. Why? Because evangelism is "a far more pressing need for the church... evangelism really matters for the salvation of the lost and the glory of God, and nobody else is going to do evangelism other than Christians."

"But then I'd want to say: why do we have to have this particular premise? If we actually think about environmental issues in terms of the gospel itself then it isn't something that has to be in competition with evangelism."

Windsor says that as we evangelise, we must be calling on people to repent. As we do this, part of the message will be a call for them to repent from greed, to consider others and to give themselves to loving others. Another part of the message "will involve considering the quite dire effect our individual and communal greed and mismanagement has had on our world, and we can pray for and encourage Christians whose particular concern might be certain environmental causes to get involved in those causes."

"But always we need to be mindful that those causes often bring with them assumptions that are against the gospel – and we also need to be mindful that, in all of this, as they are seeking to love others, they must not give up the great task of knowing and speaking the gospel in their different locations and relationships. But the answer is more gospel [and] more evangelism, not less!"

Scott Monk is a Sydney journalist and novelist.

Good news for the ungodly



The truths about justification in the book of Romans are a matter for great rejoicing, writes **PETER ORR**.

ONE OF THE MOST SURPRISING AND WONDERFUL VERSES IN THE WHOLE OF Scripture has to be Romans 4:5. Here Paul describes God as the one who “justifies the ungodly”. This description of God is wonderful. Here is good news! The person who has nothing to offer God, who “does not work” but simply “believes” in God, ungodly and wicked as they may be, is justified.

The image is from the courtroom. You can imagine yourself there. You know that you are guilty. You know that you deserve a long prison sentence. As the judge passes sentence you fear the worst. And so, when the verdict of “not guilty” comes, you cannot help but feel utterly relieved and amazed.

That, in a sense, is us before God. We deserve his condemnation, we deserve his wrath, we deserve to be cast into utter darkness forever but, wonderfully, God pronounces us righteous.

However, not only is this description of God wonderful, it is surprising. It is surprising because God is here described as doing something that he explicitly told Israel not to do: “Keep far from a false charge, and do not kill the innocent and righteous, *for I will not acquit the wicked*” (Exodus 23:7).

In a widely used and early Greek translation of the Hebrew Old Testament, the phrase in italics is very similar to what Paul says in Romans 4:5. God does the very thing he tells Israel not to! But it is not simply that God tells Israel not to do this. He later says through Solomon that “He who justifies the wicked and he who condemns the righteous are both alike an abomination to the LORD” (Proverbs 17:15).

So, Paul’s description of God as the one who “justifies the ungodly” is striking in the context of the whole Bible. Why and how can God do something that is so expressly forbidden in the Old Testament?

On one level, the question of how and why God can do this when he explicitly condemns others who do the same thing might be easy to answer. There are lots of things in Scripture that would be sinful for *me* to do, that are perfectly good, right and proper for God to do: for example, receiving worship (Matthew 4:10) or taking vengeance (Romans 12:10).

God as the sovereign creator of the universe is the only rightful recipient of worship (and knows that we will only be truly happy if we are worshipping him). Similarly, God is the only one who knows the end from the beginning, who knows *all* the facts pertaining to a particular matter, and so it is right that only he should act in vengeance to right a wrong.

However, the question of justifying the ungodly seems to fit in a different category. This seems to be God doing something that is objectively, morally wrong: he declares a person who demonstrably deserves to be condemned to be right in his sight.

Of course, we could argue that God can do whatever he wants to. He is not beholden to anyone and can do what he pleases. Nevertheless, God works in ways that are in line with his character and, throughout the Bible, God is described as righteous. If *anything* is unrighteous, acquitting the guilty surely is.

Is there an underlying logic that explains why and how God can rightly justify the ungodly? I think there is, and I think we can see it if we examine the letter to the Romans where Paul speaks of ungodliness or the ungodly in a chain of three references. Read together, these help us understand how God can justify the ungodly and remain true to his character.

GOD’S WRATH AGAINST UNGODLINESS

The first reference to ungodliness is in Romans 1:18, where Paul begins to lay out the problem of all humanity that the gospel addresses. Here is the unsurprising description of God’s anger in response to all the “ungodliness and unrighteousness” of humanity.

It is true that, as he continues, Paul traverses some controversial territory – the universal availability of enough knowledge of God to render every human being “without excuse” (1:20); human sins (including inappropriate sexual activity) as somehow the result of God’s wrathful “handing over” of people to their own lusts (1:24, 26-27) and depraved minds (1:28). However, his basic point that God’s response to ungodliness is one of wrath is unsurprising from the Bible as a whole.

GOD JUSTIFIES THE UNGODLY

The next reference to ungodliness is this surprising description of God as the one who justifies the ungodly in 4:5.

Before we consider how we get from God’s wrath against ungodliness to God justifying the ungodly, it is worth briefly pointing out what Paul does and doesn’t mean here. Some have suggested that his reference to the ungodly here is primarily about Gentiles – those considered ungodly by Israel. And so, God justifying the ungodly means, as N.T. Wright puts it, God “bring[ing] into his family Gentiles who at present seemed totally outside of it”.

However, not only is “bringing into God’s family” a misconstrual of the meaning of justification, ungodly people are certainly not confined to Gentiles. Paul immediately goes on to point to *David* as an example of this sort of ungodly person, who has righteousness counted to him even though he is guilty and has done nothing to earn God’s favour (4:6). Paul proves that this applies to David by quoting Psalm 32, in which David speaks of the blessing of “those whose lawless deeds are forgiven, and whose sins are covered” and “the man against whom the Lord will not count his sin” (4:7-8).

David, an Israelite, experiences the blessing of sins forgiven and righteousness counted to him. These two aspects (sins forgiven and righteousness counted) neatly capture what Paul means by justification.

As Calvin puts it in his *Institutes*, justification is “the acceptance with which God receives us into his favour as righteous”, and it “consists in the forgiveness of sins and the imputation of Christ’s righteousness”.

Justification might be related to God bringing us into his people but that does not mean the two things are identical. There are a whole host of blessings God bestows on us when we trust in Christ: justification, sanctification, adoption etc. It would be a mistake to overlook one of these and say it was unimportant, but it would equally be a mistake to confuse them and collapse them into one another. Justification is inextricably related to, for example, sanctification, but to confuse them is – as Calvin says – to try and warm yourself by the sun’s light or see by the sun’s warmth.

CHRIST DIED FOR THE UNGODLY

But our question remains. How does God go from being angry with ungodliness to justifying the ungodly? The answer, in a nutshell, is given in Romans 5:6. Very simply, the God who expresses his wrath towards ungodliness can justify the ungodly because “Christ died for the ungodly”. We who trust in Christ, ungodly as we are, are justified by his blood (5:9), having received the “free gift of righteousness” (5:18).

There is a lot of material in between 4:5 and 5:6, but at the heart of this section is Paul’s magisterial description of the atoning work of Christ. Paul tells his readers that God “put forward [Christ] as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith” (3:25). The language of “propitiation” is drawn from the Old Testament and refers to a sacrifice that turns aside God’s wrath.

Here, then, is the heart of why Paul can move from God’s wrath being revealed against ungodliness (1:18) to God justifying the ungodly (4:5) – Christ died as a propitiation. Whether or not Paul is specifically drawing on Isaiah 53, the theology of atonement is the same. As Isaiah puts it, the Servant was “pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed” (53:5). The LORD laid on him “the iniquity of us all” so that he was “stricken for the transgression of [the] people” (53:8).

This theology lies behind Paul’s description of Christ as a propitiation, and his propitiatory death is explicitly connected to the theme of ungodliness in Romans 5:6: “For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly”. Critically, far from God’s righteousness being called into question, Christ dying as a propitiation actually demonstrates God’s righteousness “so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus” (Romans 3:26).

GOOD NEWS

Could there be any better news than this? Even though God is angry with the ungodliness of humanity (Romans 1:18), God justifies the ungodly (Romans 4:5). And he does this fairly and rightly because Christ died for the ungodly (Romans 5:6). This is surprising and wonderful news we can rejoice in and shout from the rooftops!

Dr Peter Orr lectures in New Testament at Moore College.



Trust in God in drought

Strong and courageous: Colin Buchanan sings at the drought service.

"BE STRONG AND COURAGEOUS" SANG COLIN BUCHANAN, BUT THE WORDS OF ONE OF HIS MOST famous kids' songs were applied to all ages as St Andrew's Cathedral filled with people wanting to pray for an end to the worst drought for more than a century.

The singer's poignant songs about the Australian bush, farmers and faith hit the right note as the congregation was told of the struggles of those living and working in rural and remote areas of NSW.

"We've gathered to pray for rain," said the Dean, Kanishka Raffel. "We've gathered to show solidarity to our neighbours on the land in their distress and to pray – for God is the creator of all that is. The Lord is near to all who call on him."

The congregation, in the centre of Australia's largest city, heard an ABC Landline report which said urban areas were only just awakening to the devastation has wrought on parched areas of Australia.

Archbishop Glenn Davies, who activated the Anglican Aid drought appeal last month, preached and wrote the prayer for rain used at the start of the service.

"Our heavenly Father, we acknowledge our ingratitude when we have taken your goodness for granted, when the heaven has poured forth rain and the earth has produced its fruit. Yet now we cry to you for help, as the drought in NSW deepens," the prayer reads.

"Have mercy on our land; have mercy on the people of the land. May your bountiful hand send forth rain upon our parched earth. Fulfil your promises that while the earth remains, seedtime and harvest shall not cease, so that those in remote and rural areas may find relief from their distress and glorify your name for the provision of their needs."

The director of Anglican Aid, the Rev David Mansfield, told the congregation he had recently returned from the north west of the state, where the appeal funds had started to be distributed.

"People were telling me they have never seen or experienced a drought like it," Mr Mansfield said. "There is a pessimism which comes with that – but we must remember there is hope."

Echoed Dr Davies: "We trust in God that this drought will break."

The drought funds are already heading to needy farmers and rural families through churches of the Bathurst and Armidale dioceses in the central west and north west of NSW. Bush Church Aid is also distributing funds from its Kirkby Trust.

Some churches have reported that even the distribution of dog food is welcomed by weary farmers who are unable to feed – and face the prospect of losing – their working dogs.



PHOTO: Peter Karp Photography

KV revolution

TARA SING

A REVOLUTION IS COMING TO KANGAROO VALLEY NEXT MONTH, BUT IT PROMISES to be gentle. The Beyond Festival, to be held from November 23-25, aims to be a space for music, art, performance and faith to meet under the banner of social justice. The impressive line-up of acts taking part includes Paul Colman, Gungor and Katie Noonan.

The Christian festival, open to all, is expected to attract more than a thousand people of different faiths. A variety of workshops will be run by experts on key justice issues including gendered violence and Indigenous justice, with the hope of starting a gentle revolution in our communities and cities.

"Society and culture are becoming more violent in every element," says festival co-ordinator the Rev Andrew Palmer, who is director of global mission for the Baptist Church of NSW and ACT.

"The way we speak to each other is more aggressive, more oppositional, and violence begets violence. Revolution can sound like a violent thing, but Jesus is on about a gentle revolution in the cross. Jesus goes to the cross in an act of gentle revolutionary behaviour."

Mr Palmer hopes Beyond will provide a witness to the love and justice of Christ for those who don't believe but who also want to make a positive change in the world. He sees the festival as an opportunity to work alongside churches to reach people with the gospel in a unique way.

"Their heartbeat is for a better world," he says. "What we hope to achieve is that those who attend the festival [will] be inspired, educated and mobilised to live out justice within their communities."

With people of all faiths present, careful thought has been given to providing a safe space for people to not only consider social justice issues, but encounter Christ.

Festival chaplain the Rev Andrew Paterson, rector of Kangaroo Valley, will be available for those who want to engage with Christianity further.

"The chaplaincy role is a support work that is a gentle Christian presence and pastoral care model," he says.

"I hope to be able to bring the aroma of Christ to people I speak to as well as provide basic, practical help to people who need it. I hope to have lots of conversations with the locals who come and out-of-town visitors, too. Pray for God to do his work through me and all the Christians who are there."

Kangaroo Valley Anglican will also run a special Sunday service on the theme of social justice. Both Mr Paterson and Mr Palmer consider this a key part of the festival.

Says Mr Paterson: "All attendees will be invited to come on Sunday and celebrate the ultimate giver of justice and mercy – Jesus himself. This will be our focus for the service and preaching. The service will also bring some of the artists and musicians from the festival into the service itself. The music will be amazing!"

Mr Palmer hopes that everyone who attends the festival will be part of the gentle revolution, and encounter Christ in some way along the journey.

"Beyond Festival is not the destination, it's a gathering point," he says. "Jesus the Redeemer is at the core of our message and mission. This mission is largely carried out one-on-one in relational ways, listening and learning and laughing and living with all kinds of people from all kinds of backgrounds."

"Justice is love – it's love in the public space. It's profoundly kingdom-of-God oriented, but different people have different reasons for desiring it."

"If, at the end of the festival, it's a group of people coming together to work for the common good, that's a good outcome."

For more information on the festival see www.beyondfestival.com.au



Headliners (clockwise from top left): Gungor, Katie Noonan, Paul Colman and Karen Lee Andrews.

Do the Bible, Colin style

KAREN BEILHARZ

Fam! Bam! Bible Jam!

by Colin Buchanan



I KNOW WHAT YOU'RE THINKING. I HAVE TO ADMIT THAT, AT FIRST, I THOUGHT THE SAME

thing: "A concept album about the Bible? Constructed like a radio show? With puppets? For kids?

That's never going to fly!" And yet somehow Colin Buchanan has done it.

Fam! Bam! Bible Jam! is Colin's 24th album of Christian songs for children. Over the course of 71 minutes, Colin and his co-host/puppet pal Nudge explore the importance of God's word, sing their way

through various songs and engage in some lighthearted banter.

The radio format comes complete with traffic report, weather report, interviews with Bible teachers

and ads from the program's "sponsors" (the ads were among my favourite parts of the album). I found the concept surprisingly effective, and it made me wish Colin had a regular family devotional podcast that I could listen to with my kids.

Woven through the entire program are tremendously fun songs about God's word – new gems as well as old favourites. The titular track reminds us that "God's word will light your path/God's word will show the way". The hard rocking "Hold it Up to the Bible" encourages us to "let God's word be your guide".

"The Best Book (NOT) to Read" is a Nudge-inspired spin on a classic. And of course it wouldn't be a Colin album without memory verses, with passages like Joshua 1:8, Jeremiah 15:16, Proverbs 3:5-6, John 1:1 and 2 Timothy 3:16-17 complementing the theme.

As usual, the songs vary in musical style, from Colin's more familiar country leanings to theremin-led tango in "The B-I-B-L-E", a marching band in "Here Comes God's Word" and electronica/dubstep in "The Horsey Dance (Open Your Ears to God's Word)".

Depending on your sensibilities, you may prefer certain songs over others. But all are characterised by Colin's simple yet Christ-focused lyrics that joyfully urge you to look to the things of God.

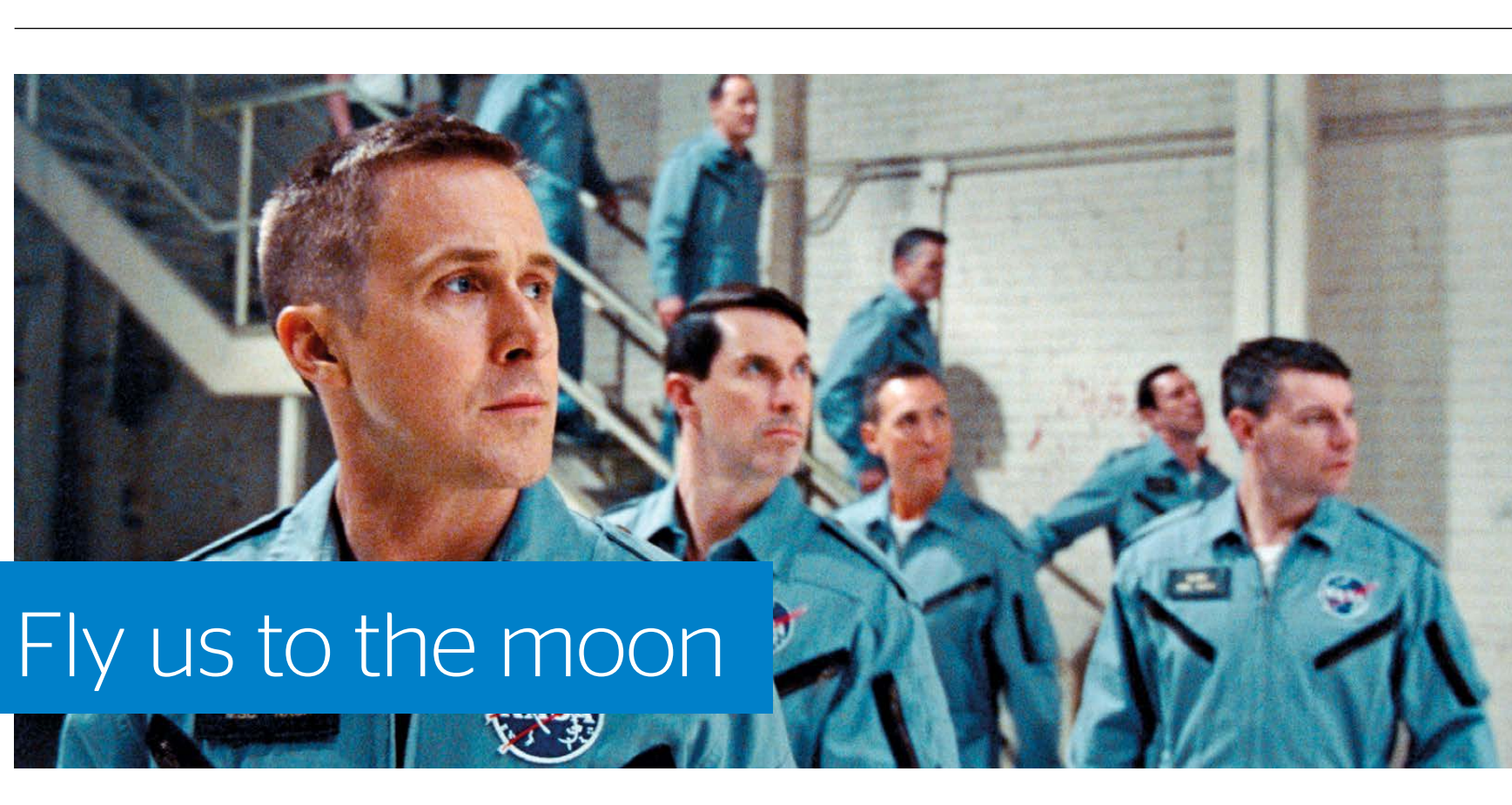
That said, the thing that makes the whole package shine is Colin's championing of Fam! Bam! Bible jams – that is, family devotions. This is outlined in Track 23, when Nudge asks, "What if mums or dads or kids want to have their own Fam! Bam! Bible jam together? How do they do that?"

Colin replies with some simple instructions – "Number 1: Read a little bit of the Bible together... Number 2: Maybe have a little talk about what you've read... [and] Number 3: Then you can pray (that's talking to God)" – then he and Nudge put these instructions into practice, demonstrating how families can have a "Bible jam" of their own.

The more we have listened to this album as a family, the more I have come to grasp Colin's deep passion for families like mine to know and love the word of God – and therefore know and love the Lord.

In the final song of the CD ("Press On Mums"), he encourages not just mums, but dads and kids as well, to persevere in the faith: "Look towards your Jesus and press on".

I think *Fam! Bam! Bible Jam!* is a tremendous gift to the Christian community, and one I am sure we will be listening to often in the years to come. I never knew I needed a Bible concept album! Maybe you do, too. Just don't be surprised if you find your kids walking around saying they'd like to "eat a Bible teacher"!



Fly us to the moon

JUDY ADAMSON

First Man

Rated M

HOLLYWOOD HAS CREATED NUMEROUS MAJOR FILMS ABOUT THE SPACE RACE – THINK

The Right Stuff, *Apollo 13* and, more recently, *Hidden Figures*. But if you're thinking that with these

films you've been there and seen that, *First Man* might make you think again.

Each film shows a different perspective of the hard slog, the smarts, the strength and the cost

involved in getting to the moon. *First Man* does it from the perspective of Neil Armstrong (Ryan Gosling), and there's precious little flag waving or hoopla. It's a reflective, almost introspective and

deeply personal account of the eight years in Armstrong's life that led to the successful Apollo 11 mission in July 1969.

What, after all, do we know about Neil Armstrong? If you're anything like me, you know he was the first man to walk on the moon (hence the title), and you know the famous line he spoke as he did so.

After that, it's a blank. A little digging and you discover he was an aeronautical engineer and the first civilian chosen for the space program (albeit with a Navy background). He was also an intensely private man who kept resolutely out of the spotlight – as much as he was allowed to – which probably explains why there's so little in the public memory about him.

But what did he do before that big moment in space? Who was Neil Armstrong, why was he an astronaut, and why was he chosen as the first man to step onto the moon's surface?

These gaps of knowledge are what the film seeks to fill in. After opening with a hair-raising experience in a test aircraft that will have you clutching the arms of your chair, we're brought back to earth with a thud as the Armstrongs face the impending death of their little girl from cancer. One public moment, and one that's very private.

Armstrong is hurting, but stoically goes on working. We see his daughter throughout the rest of the film in his mind and memory, and the filmmakers strongly suggest her death was the impetus for him to apply for the space program. Who knows. More likely, as his wife Janet (Claire Foy) says, "It's a fresh start".

Either way, they're off to Houston and there are gruelling years ahead of training, struggle, danger and death as NASA attempts to conquer space. There are lighthearted moments with family and friends, and we see the bonds that develop in the wider NASA community, but we're never allowed to forget what's at stake.

The clear message from director Damien Chazelle (*La La Land*) is that This Is Serious. And it is, but the action occasionally feels a little self-conscious because of it. However, the performances are absorbing and the script uncluttered, so viewers can engage fully with what's onscreen. It also helps that there's a focus on some lesser-known parts of the space "story" – including the potential statement that was readied for release in case the Apollo 11 mission went horribly wrong. Now there's a sobering thought.

The film omits the moment that Neil Armstrong planted the US flag on the moon, which caused a lot of fuss in some circles. Frankly, I'm grateful for some subtlety from the filmmakers at this point.

Rather than "U-S-A" rah-rah their attention is elsewhere, and we still do see the flag in the distance near the lunar module. We also don't get to see the astronauts' return trip to Earth, but it's not like it didn't happen!

First Man glories in human achievement, but it's also clear this comes at a price. Rational fears and sorrows must be put aside because nothing is more important than getting the job done. And despite the space program's eventual success, that's pretty tragic if you think about it.

The ensemble cast is excellent throughout, particularly Claire Foy as the no-nonsense Janet, but it's Ryan Gosling who carries the film. A calm, strong presence, he makes you believe that Neil Armstrong was every bit as valuable as NASA thought him. He says as much with a look or a moment of stillness as he does with his words, and while we get a few too many facial close-ups during dramatic moments, he is utterly believable and you're with him to the end.