

MAY  
2019

# Southern Cross

THE NEWS MAGAZINE FOR SYDNEY ANGLICANS



## Music and robots

CHOICES: SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

PLUS

**Psalms and the art of noticing things**

**Celebrating Down Syndrome - and life**

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The "St Cathodes" make the most of their combined skills at a robotics competition.

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**"God tells us to  
rest because  
rest is good."**

Rebecca Egan  
Choices

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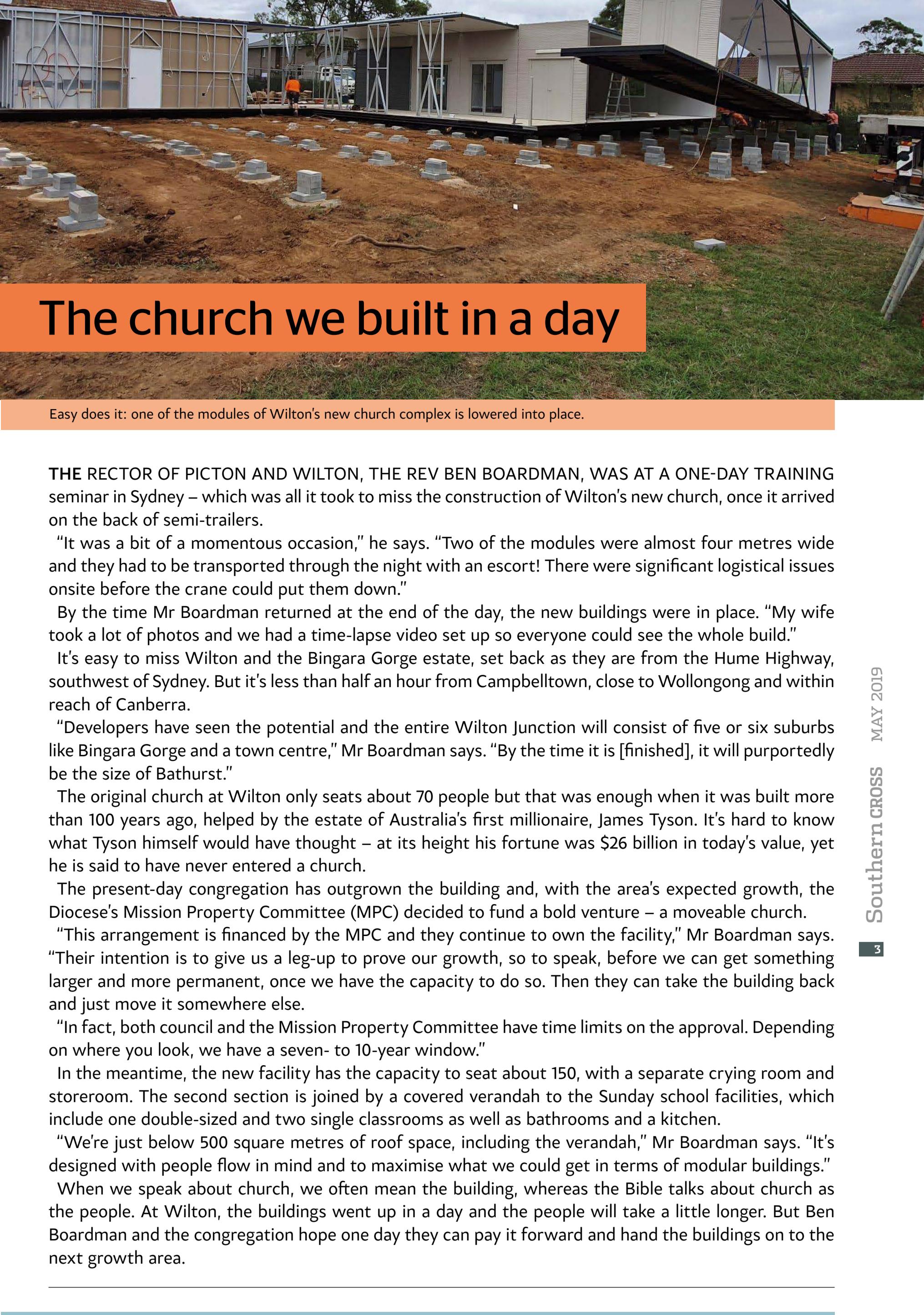
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## The church we built in a day

Easy does it: one of the modules of Wilton's new church complex is lowered into place.

**THE RECTOR OF PICTON AND WILTON, THE REV BEN BOARDMAN, WAS AT A ONE-DAY TRAINING seminar in Sydney – which was all it took to miss the construction of Wilton's new church, once it arrived on the back of semi-trailers.**

"It was a bit of a momentous occasion," he says. "Two of the modules were almost four metres wide and they had to be transported through the night with an escort! There were significant logistical issues onsite before the crane could put them down."

By the time Mr Boardman returned at the end of the day, the new buildings were in place. "My wife took a lot of photos and we had a time-lapse video set up so everyone could see the whole build."

It's easy to miss Wilton and the Bingara Gorge estate, set back as they are from the Hume Highway, southwest of Sydney. But it's less than half an hour from Campbelltown, close to Wollongong and within reach of Canberra.

"Developers have seen the potential and the entire Wilton Junction will consist of five or six suburbs like Bingara Gorge and a town centre," Mr Boardman says. "By the time it is [finished], it will purportedly be the size of Bathurst."

The original church at Wilton only seats about 70 people but that was enough when it was built more than 100 years ago, helped by the estate of Australia's first millionaire, James Tyson. It's hard to know what Tyson himself would have thought – at its height his fortune was \$26 million in today's value, yet he is said to have never entered a church.

The present-day congregation has outgrown the building and, with the area's expected growth, the Diocese's Mission Property Committee (MPC) decided to fund a bold venture – a moveable church.

"This arrangement is financed by the MPC and they continue to own the facility," Mr Boardman says. "Their intention is to give us a leg-up to prove our growth, so to speak, before we can get something larger and more permanent, once we have the capacity to do so. Then they can take the building back and just move it somewhere else."

"In fact, both council and the Mission Property Committee have time limits on the approval. Depending on where you look, we have a seven- to 10-year window."

In the meantime, the new facility has the capacity to seat about 150, with a separate crying room and storeroom. The second section is joined by a covered verandah to the Sunday school facilities, which include one double-sized and two single classrooms as well as bathrooms and a kitchen.

"We're just below 500 square metres of roof space, including the verandah," Mr Boardman says. "It's designed with people flow in mind and to maximise what we could get in terms of modular buildings."

When we speak about church, we often mean the building, whereas the Bible talks about church as the people. At Wilton, the buildings went up in a day and the people will take a little longer. But Ben Boardman and the congregation hope one day they can pay it forward and hand the buildings on to the next growth area.

## Missions boss to be new International Bishop

**THE ARCHBISHOP OF SYDNEY, DR GLENN Davies, has announced the appointment of the Rev Canon Malcolm Richards as the new Bishop for International Relations.**

Canon Richards (right) will take over from Bishop Peter Tasker, who has held the position since its inauguration 10 years ago. Bishop Tasker has represented the Archbishop at consecrations, conferences, and made pastoral visits across the globe since 2009.

"This is a vital role, through which we in Sydney can express support for gospel ministry and episcopal collegiality with leaders throughout Africa, Asia, South America and the rest of the world," Archbishop Davies said. "Canon Richards has a special passion for seeing the gospel grow and strengthening the mission of churches in the developing world."

Canon Richards has been general secretary of the Church Missionary Society – NSW & ACT for the past eight years and prior to that, Mrs Elizabeth served as missionaries in the Democratic Republic of Congo. He is fluent in Swahili and French.

"It is exciting for me to be invited by the Archbishop to work alongside him, building on the work that Bishop Tasker began as the Archbishop of Sydney's Bishop for International Relations," the bishop-elect said. "Although I leave my role at CMS, I am still committed to seeing a world that knows Jesus."

Last year, Synod had urged the Archbishop to finalise a long-term appointment for the role. In its vote of approval, Standing Committee also thanked Bishop Tasker for "his industrious ministry in this role as he has travelled extensively to develop and maintain close personal relationships with diocesan bishops and others in various provinces, especially in Asia and Africa". It also paid tribute to Bishop Tasker's wife, Joan, for the support she has given her husband as he has undertaken these tasks, often involving extensive travel in difficult circumstances and considerable absences from home.

As well as the role of Bishop for International Relations, Moore College has announced that Canon Richards will take up a parallel appointment as the Director of the Centre for Global Mission.

The announcement said the appointment would allow Moore College to improve and expand the resources and support that it can offer partner institutions in the developing world.

Canon Richards will be consecrated as a bishop at St Andrew's Cathedral on Saturday, July 6 at 10.30am.



**WHEN THE FIRST FLEET DROPPED ANCHOR IN 1788, A CATHEDRAL WAS NOT AMONG ANYONE'S plans. In fact, the first church service was held under a tree, the first church was put up largely by the efforts of Chaplain Richard Johnson himself, and it burned down five years later. So the fact that a cathedral was built at all is a cause for celebration!**

The congregation of St Andrew's Cathedral will mark the bicentenary of the laying of its foundation stone on September 1. To begin celebrations, Dean Kanishka Raffel has invited 12 bicentennial preachers to speak on "Meeting Jesus".

**KARLIE'S TESTIMONY**

Karlie Brake adores her rabbits, works hard at her job and loves the Lord. Although the 27-year-old administration assistant was born with Down Syndrome, this has not stopped her living a life full of joy and delight.

"It's pretty good, the people are friendly," Karlie says. "I like going to morning church better, because I don't miss my favourite shows" (her favourite at the time of our chat is *I'm a Celebrity, Get Me Out of Here*). "When I'm on the door with Mum, we say 'Hello' to people and hand out the sheets. I say 'Hi' to everyone who comes to church.

For morning tea, we take biscuits, fruit, dip and chips. Marshmallows are my favourite."

Karlie does zumba twice a week, works part time and also attends a weekly program for people with intellectual disabilities. Her family describe her as warm and thoughtful with a sassy sense of humour. She is known for always having a cup of tea ready at the right moment, diligently attending to her duties, being a great gift giver and affectionately caring for rabbits Hamish and Jack. "Hamish is mine, he is a mix of colours," she says. "He's good at cuddling and he watches TV [with me]."

Karlie first understood the gospel at primary school. Her teacher showed the Jesus film, which brought her to tears. "[My favourite thing about Jesus] is that he died for our sins," she says. She also likes the story of Moses, "because he brought the Israelites out of Egypt. God parted the Red Sea, the Israelites went through, and then God..." She mimics the sea crashing down with her hands.

"I like reading the Bible with Mum," she adds. "Last night we read Psalm 139 about God creating us. We pray for work, for the contestants on *I'm a Celebrity*, for my sister travelling to uni, and for Grandpa, that he'd be saved."

Given our colonial history, it is fitting the series includes National Sorry Day – Sunday, May 26 – when the Indigenous Ministry Officer for Bush Church Aid, the Rev Neville Naden (left), will be the preacher.

"Neville is an outstanding Christian leader," the Dean says. "I'm deeply thankful for the example of Indigenous Christians like Neville who have found hope and joy in the gospel, and offer the same grace to others that they have experienced in Jesus."

"I am delighted that Neville will be with us on that day because it marks the 21st anniversary of the tabling of the *Bringing them Home* report into the removal of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from their families."

"There are still many people alive who had this traumatic experience, or whose parents or grandparents were removed from their families with terrible consequences. So there is painful history in many directions. But I am so grateful for God's work among Aboriginal people and the grace and forgiveness, trust and hope of so many Aboriginal Christians."

The event also ties in with the history of BCA, because the day is the 100th anniversary of the founding of the organisation. BCA began in the Cathedral's Chapter House on May 26, 1919, when a group of evangelical Christians met to discuss how to minister to people in the bush.

"For 100 years BCA has served rural and Indigenous communities – planting churches, operating schools and hospitals, providing emergency care and equipping Indigenous Christian leadership," Dean Raffel says. St Andrew's is not the only Sydney Anglican church celebrating a bicentenary this year: St Luke's, Liverpool will celebrate its 200th anniversary in October. A history of St Luke's is being written and former parishioners are invited to contribute stories (contact drbryancowling@gmail.com).

There will be more on the celebrations in future editions of SC.



**A centenary kicks off a bicentenary**

**DAVID AND HEATHER BRAKE KNOW FIRST HAND THAT THERE'S A LOT WE CAN LEARN FROM people with Down Syndrome. When Mrs Brake found out at 20 weeks pregnant that her eldest daughter, Karlie, would be born with the chromosome complication, she prayed for two things in particular.**

"One, that she would be converted early, because God would give her the strength and resilience to deal with the rubbish life from some people," says Mrs Brake, who attends St Barnabas, Ingleburn. "Two, that God would give me what I could handle in terms of symptoms, because there are lots of variations."

Throughout Karlie's life, Mrs Brake has seen God answer both of these prayers. Karlie loves the Lord and works hard to learn about him.

"If you ask her what the main points of the sermon were, she can tell you," Mrs Brake says. "People assume that because you have an intellectual disability that you can't know God in the way others can. I think that denies the work of the Holy Spirit. He's the one who gives understanding. We limit people like Karlie when we assume they can't learn."

Mrs Brake recognises there is room for improvement in how churches include those with disabilities.

"People don't mean to be mean, but they don't understand and get scared," she says. "Everyone is different. Sometimes you just have to learn: sit down with the family, find out what things will make them feel comfortable and how to communicate with them. They can be integrated quite well."

She has experienced some great support from churches and Christians who have taken the time to consider how best to include Karlie. "If more people thought it through like they did, it can be a positive experience for other families with disabilities. What would be ideal is recognising that this is an area we need to train people in to help with integration."

Although there's been much joy, the journey hasn't been easy for the Brake family.

"What gets me through is that God is in control and he has a purpose," Mrs Brake says. "God was always there, even when it seemed like he wasn't. God allows Karlie to have Down Syndrome for a whole lot of reasons, not just for our family."

"I used to visit other mothers who had babies with Down Syndrome and share my story. Being able to say, 'This isn't really that bad' helps others to see that it is not a negative, it's a positive."

When Karlie was 3½ months old she needed major heart surgery. "A nurse at the time said, 'I don't know why we keep these kids alive, their quality of life is going to be so poor,'" Mrs Brake recalls. "But that's their perspective of their life." Karlie's life is quite the opposite – so full of joy that it overflows into the lives of those around her.

"It's really detrimental to society that we now just abort anything that looks like it might be a problem," Mrs Brake says. "These people teach us to love others, to be accepting and encouraging, and to stop focusing on ourselves. Our society likes to focus on everything being perfect, having the perfect child and the perfect education, but may feel uncomfortable going to church or visiting the chaplain while they're in prison."

The women come from a wide variety of backgrounds, and I want to take the opportunity to listen and learn from their stories and experiences and think about ways we can speak the gospel into their particular situations."

It's a first for Anglicare this year to employ two student ministers in health and justice chaplaincy. Miss Downes, and fellow student Zack Hankin, are keen to work as chaplains after they finish college.

Mr Hankin has joined the team at St George Hospital in Kogarah, where he works each Wednesday. "I wanted to learn how to do it [hospital chaplaincy] well, so I needed to be under someone else," he explains. "And I love it. It's really helping me to understand suffering more than I did before."

Mr Hankin has an extra reason to serve: he has a brain tumour and between six and 12 years to live, so "I understand it a lot more than most".

"Whilst knowing the urgency of the gospel and being able to speak into a space that it's most critical to be heard, it's also the hardest as well," he says. "People who may be trying to process [bad news] aren't in a headspace to hear the gospel... you help them process and then give them the hope of the gospel."

"Having cancer has helped me get more understanding of how little we listen to people, as a society. The nurses would love to sit and listen and talk, but they just don't have time... As chaplains, we don't have that time limit."

Anglicare's manager of health and justice chaplaincy, the Rev Stephen Gibson, says the fact that people go to Bible college thinking about chaplaincy is "sensational".

"Chaplaincy work is expanding in the Diocese... so I'm excited about the fact that their presence among the student body will help normalise chaplaincy as one of the career paths a Bible college student can take," he says.

There will be more on the celebrations in future editions of SC.



**Learning from Down Syndrome**

**FAMILY TIME:** Heather Brake is behind her elder daughter Karlie, and next to younger daughter Elise and husband David.

**TARA SING**

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**Vice-regal memories at Port Kembla**

**A MORNING SERVICE AT WARRAWONG ANGLICAN CHURCH brought**

# Canberra gets new bishop... one Bishop Short



Ready to serve: Bishop Mark Short is welcomed to the role by those attending his consecration service in Goulburn.

IT WAS A BITTERSWEET TASK FOR REPRESENTATIVES OF BUSH CHURCH AID AS THEY HANDED over their national secretary the Rev Dr Mark Short to be consecrated as the 11th Bishop of Canberra and Goulburn. The former BCA boss has now taken up his new duties in the national capital after a service in St Saviour's Cathedral in Goulburn on April 6.

BCA's indigenous ministry officer, the Rev Neville Naden, spoke from Ezekiel 34 about the promise that God himself will be the shepherd of his people: will care for his sheep, rescue them, provide for them, feed them good pasture and bind up their wounds. Archbishop Davies, as the Metropolitan of NSW, led the service before a packed cathedral.



## NEW START AT THE OAKS

On May 1 the **Rev Scott Lovell** became rector of his first parish – The Oaks, just west of Camden in southwestern Sydney.

He says they accepted the parish in October last year but, because a rectory is still in the process of being built, they put back their start date until the project was closer to completion.

"At the moment there isn't a place for us to move into, but when it's finished we will have a brand new house that will be great for ministry, which is a great provision," he says.

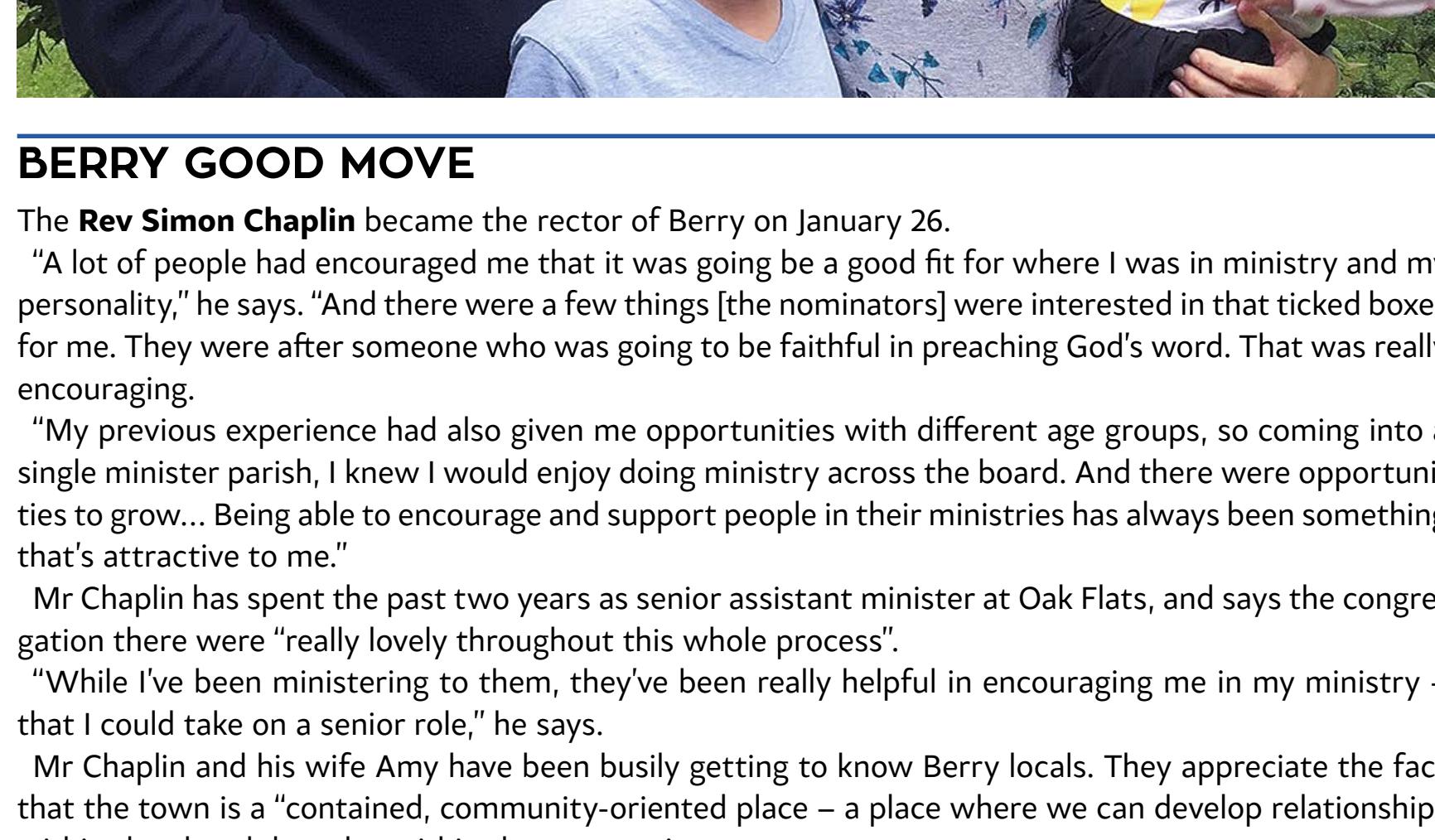
"I've been at Glenmore Park for the past three years, which is about 40 minutes away, so I'll be commuting to The Oaks to start with."

Mr Lovell says The Oaks has "a history of good Bible teaching", and he and his wife Kathryn are also looking forward to working with God's people in a more rural parish than they're used to.

"It's a changing area – as I think a lot of southwest Sydney is, with the airport going in," he says. "It's not in the growth corridor but there are a lot of subdivisions happening and new houses being built. It's more rural than we've ever experienced but we're looking forward to that aspect, and it is the direction where we feel God has been leading us."

"Kathryn enjoys being involved in the church and in parish ministry, leading Bible studies, following people up and networking in all sorts of ways. She facilitates a lot of hospitality... and that's one thing that we value and look forward to continuing at The Oaks: having an open home."

"The church has been without a rector for some time, but it hasn't stopped them working at community involvement and engagement. We're keen to get to know them and understand where things are up to before setting a new direction and making any plans."



## BERRY GOOD MOVE

The **Rev Simon Chaplin** became the rector of Berry on January 26.

"A lot of people had encouraged me that it was going to be a good fit for where I was in ministry and my personality," he says. "And there were a few things [the nominators] were interested in that ticked boxes for me. They were after someone who was going to be faithful in preaching God's word. That was really encouraging."

"My previous experience had also given me opportunities with different age groups, so coming into a single minister parish, I knew I would enjoy doing ministry across the board. And there were opportunities to grow... Being able to encourage and support people in their ministries has always been something that's attractive to me."

Mr Chaplin has spent the past two years as senior assistant minister at Oak Flats, and says the congregation there were "really lovely throughout this whole process".

"While I've been ministering to them, they've been really helpful in encouraging me in my ministry – that I could take on a senior role," he says.

Mr Chaplin and his wife Amy have been busily getting to know Berry locals. They appreciate the fact that the town is a "contained, community-oriented place – a place where we can develop relationships within the church but also within the community".

"There are lots of things that are new, but I'm praying God will help our family to grow into this role and use the opportunity he's given us."

## MOVING UP AT MIRANDA

After 10 years at St Luke's, Miranda – as youth minister and/or senior assistant minister – the **Rev Brett Middleton** is now the rector.

"The nominators approached me and said, 'How do you feel about being one of the people that we're considering?'" he says. "They wanted to talk to me, but they were interviewing a lot of people... they didn't want me to get my hopes up!"

Mr Middleton became acting rector of Miranda as the nominators searched for the parish's new rector – and discovered that he enjoyed the role very much.

"It wasn't something I thought that I would enjoy – and then I realised how difficult it would be to hand it over to someone else!" he says. "That was really helpful for me and my wife [Mardi] to resolve to seek a position of rector somewhere else if it didn't happen at Miranda."

Mardi Middleton is involved in welcoming and event ministries, and has also led multiple Bible study groups over the years the family has been at the church – including a lengthy stint co-leading a young adults group with Mr Middleton.

He is excited about what God has in store. "I really love local churches and local church ministry. It's exciting to plan with a really great staff team, that we can make this local church continue to honour God."

"We had a [parish] vision that was going to last until 2020, so we're about to start planning for the next season of mission and growth. It's an exciting time to take on the job... gathering the people that call St Luke's their home and moving forward together."



**Dr Tim Petterson** has been announced as the eighth headmaster of Shore school in North Sydney. He will replace Dr Timothy Wright, who is retiring at the end of 2019 after 16 years in the position.

The chairman of the Shore school council, the Rev Stuart Holman, said Dr Petterson stood out as the best candidate among a group of quality applicants, calling him "a proven leader and Christian educator with deep experience developing and nurturing teaching and learning environments of the highest order. He has an outstanding record for evaluating and improving teaching and learning, and for curriculum and program leadership."

"Importantly, Dr Petterson emerged through the search process as someone who embodies the virtues

we associate with Shore: humility, perseverance, courage and service. He is passionate about Shore's commitment to excellence in a rounded education spanning curriculum, co-curriculum and pastoral care."

Dr Petterson has been principal of St Philip's Christian College in Port Stephens for the past six years. He will begin his new role early in 2020.



# Add kindness to your roster

FAITH WATSON

**WHETHER THEY ARE IN A PAID POSITION OR A VOLUNTEER, PLEASE SPARE A THOUGHT FOR THE person who does your church roster.**

When I originally took over the job of doing the roster for our church, I thought, "How hard could it be?" It's just organising a timetable for a bunch of lovely Christian people who have volunteered their time to serve each other.

If you are smiling knowingly right now, perhaps it's because you have been responsible for the church roster yourself at some stage. You realise that, in fact, it's actually an impossible algorithm.

The Kelly family won't do morning tea with the Wilsons because they can't agree on the amount of teabags for the teapot. Beth won't lead the service if Hannah isn't on music because she needs a lift to get to church early. Mark can only do the third Sunday of the month. Heather will no longer be on Bible readings because Jim said that she reads too fast. Violet can't do morning tea on the odd Sundays at 10am because that's when she does it for the 8am service.

Fred won't be rostered on guitar on the same week as Louise as they don't agree on the timing of some of the songs. The James family won't come to church if Edna is on the organ because they prefer more modern music. The Smiths will not come to the 10am service if they see that Kevin is on the drums – he plays them too loud. Apparently. They're planning to submit another complaint to parish council because they don't think that drums should be in a church at all.

Andrew is unavailable during February because his boys made the rep cricket team and Kate has decided that she will no longer be on "welcoming" as I made a mistake with last month's roster and put her on when it was her wedding anniversary. And let's not mention the time when I labelled one Sunday a Family Service instead of Communion!

After receiving all of the complaints on my very first attempt many years ago, I cried. And then I tried harder to make everyone happy, and I tried to be less sensitive. In time, I felt like I got the hang of it. Then at some stage I started to find it mildly entertaining and then downright ridiculous. Now I find it completely disappointing.

Church rosters weren't high on the agenda for the Apostle Paul in his letters to churches in the first century. But the behaviour of Christians to each other and the outside world most definitely was, and in Colossians 3:12-19 he wrote:

*Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.*

*Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts.*

*And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.*

So, when Val or Liz or Frank from your church hands you the new roster, just say, "Thanks so much for that", and if something comes up and you are unable to serve, find someone to swap with. Please.

# Pray for God's grace in government

DR GLENN DAVIES



**T**HE NINTH CHAPTER OF DANIEL IS ONE OF MY FAVOURITE PARTS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT. It is a remarkable piece of prose, mostly comprising a prayer to God to forgive Israel her sins and to fulfil his promises to his people. Yet it concludes with a stunning response from God, sent by his angel Gabriel, announcing the fulfilment of his promises – on perhaps a grander scale than Daniel had ever expected – culminating in the coming of the Messiah and the end of this world as we know it. All this is wrapped up in the symbolic imagery of the 70 sevens, which usher in everlasting righteousness (Daniel 9:34).

That Gabriel only appears in Daniel and in Luke's birth narratives demands careful reflection upon the announcement and fulfilment of God's promises to his people, and the special part that Gabriel played in that time frame.

Chapter 9 begins with Daniel reading his Scriptures, in particular, that part of Jeremiah which prophesies the desolation of Jerusalem lasting 70 years. This can be found in Jeremiah 29:1-23, which records his letter to the Exiles in Babylon. When Daniel reads this letter, recognising that 70 years have passed, he does what Jeremiah predicted the Exiles would do: he prays (Jeremiah 29:12-14; Daniel 9:3). And the end of that chapter records God's answer to his prayers.

During Daniel's life in exile, he lived under four different foreign kings and two empires. He had grown up in Judah, under the protection of a king of David's line, yet in the providence of God he was captured and sent to Babylon for a university education that held no place for the Creator God or an understanding of his ways. Yet, by God's grace, Daniel's faith and witness enabled his wisdom to outshine all the other wise men of Babylon and he came to the attention of the kings, such that he was given great responsibility under their successive governments. Prayer was a constant feature of Daniel's life. Even when the threat of death might have persuaded him to desist, he would pray and offer thanks to God (Daniel 6:10).

As Christians, we should always pray for our nation and its leaders. Paul exhorts us to pray for rulers "that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. This is good and pleases God our saviour, who wants all people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth" (1 Timothy 2:1-2). It would not be surprising that Daniel prayed accordingly, as he was certainly not afraid to call kings to repentance (Daniel 4:27).

I am encouraged as I move around the Diocese to hear prayers for those who govern us at local, State and Federal levels. This is especially important in the lead-up to an election, which is now, again, upon us.

Not all Christians share the same political views, nor is it possible to find a political party that exactly espouses our political views. We need wisdom to decide what issues to prioritise when casting our vote. Yet we all need to pray, whatever the outcome of the Federal election, that Australia has a government that is committed to the common good for all Australians, protecting the freedoms that we enjoy in our land.

Each of us will have special interests in policies on health, education, the economy, the environment, immigration, or issues of justice for Indigenous Australians, the poor, the marginalised and the vulnerable. However, what may be critical in this election is the protection of our freedoms: freedom of conscience, freedom of speech and freedom of belief.

Our long-enjoyed freedoms are being questioned by society. Since 9/11, religion is seen as a source of violence; since the Royal Commission, religion is seen as a source of abuse; since the marriage postal survey, religion is seen as irrelevant and out of step with society.

Freedom of belief is not merely protecting the freedom of Christians. Genuine freedom must include the freedom of people whose beliefs we oppose. It provides the means by which people with diverse and deeply held beliefs are able to live together well. Freedom of belief might be thought of as the most basic of freedoms, which interacts with other fundamental freedoms: freedom of conscience, freedom of association, freedom of speech and freedom of assembly.

There are some critical issues facing us as a country: will faith-based institutions and schools be able to teach their beliefs and preferentially employ staff who share those beliefs? Will parents have rights to withdraw children from school programs that are contrary to their beliefs? Will there be protection from discrimination on the basis of religious belief? Will medical staff be able to refuse to assist in abortions or euthanasia? Will there be reasonable accommodation for people of faith in the workplace?

Daniel lived in challenging times. He experienced the deprivation of his freedom in many ways. Yet he was a man of faith, and by God's grace he was able to prosper. He held firm to his beliefs. He was a man of prayer. He looked for the coming of the Messiah.

May we, who have seen the salvation that has come in Christ, be no less prayerful that God would give us good government, for the benefit of all Australians and for the glory of his name.

## 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

## TUNED IN to music education

**H**OW can playing the tuba equip a student for the future? In many ways, according to Michael Newton, the deputy principal of Oran Park Anglican College.

A former director of music, Mr Newton is passionate for Christian schools to not only prepare students for a complex and rapidly changing future, but to see them delight in the creative ways that God has shaped the world.

Having taught for more than 15 years, Mr Newton is convinced that learning should fundamentally be a joy.

"Music gives students an opportunity to excel in something they love," he says. "There are added benefits in terms of firing different parts of a student's brain, and what it teaches students about discipline and persistence. We are teaching students to appreciate the beauty and aesthetic value of things. Things can't just be functional, they must also be beautiful."

### In tune with others

With ensembles and group performances at the core of music education, Mr Newton recognises it is of great value to see students coming together.

"One of our core values at Oran Park is collaboration and music certainly teaches that," he says. "There's a lot of joy in group music making. You're producing something greater than the sum of all parts. You take students, and some are not brilliant on their own but put them in an ensemble and together they can produce something quite beautiful."

These lessons equip students far beyond the band room. "Learning an instrument doesn't come easy and it takes a considerable amount of grit for a student to get better," Mr Newton says.

"Grit and perseverance are key things, and they're important for learning and success. If you develop the character trait of grit, you can apply that to other subject areas. When students are committed to ensemble groups, they're already thinking beyond themselves. These are not selfish pursuits but there is an element of collaboration and service involved."



**R**ehearsal time: band practice at Oran Park Anglican College.

### In tune with the community

A robust music program can transform an entire school community. Ray Avard is a retired state music consultant for the secondary school Department of Education syllabus, and former creative arts head teacher, who has since been directing several concert bands at Inaburra School.

He is convinced a solid music program dramatically impacts a student community – something he witnessed first-hand while teaching at a disadvantaged public high school in the mid-1990s.

"The music program was so important because so many of the students came from tragic backgrounds, and yet they started to belong," he reflects. "It was my belief that a performing community was the way to teach music."

"Music is one subject where we say, 'Forget about yourself, think of the team'. This brings responsibility to each young person. What you produce, you produce as a group, so you need to think about the group and be at practice regularly."

Mr Avard was amazed by how committed students were to the ensembles he ran. "We made rehearsals at 7pm on a Monday evening for an hour and a half," he says. "We thought, 'No one will turn up' and they all turned up. The band became the centrepiece of music education and we started to get great results out of these students."

With school support and the local community backing them as well, the ensemble had the privilege of playing in amazing locations such as the Sydney Opera House, and touring Japan to perform.

"As well as lifting these students' horizons, music was a social equaliser," he says. "They'd meet with young people from other bands in other areas of Sydney and become friends. It wasn't about where you lived but about the music and doing it well together. It brought them together as a team. They looked out for each other and they were like a family, regardless of their year group. I've seen this with every band program."

Not only did the band bring joy to people around the world, but even to those at the pub down the road.

"The students played outside the tavern, and one punter came out and, amongst expletives, told me how good the kids were and how much they enjoyed it," Mr Avard says. "It raises the joy in the community and that's really important."

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"The world could have been a unit of greys, black and whites, but it's a variety of colour," Mr Avard says. "Colour is useless in some ways, but God says it looks good and brings joy. You can see when working with young people that there is a profound moment of something bigger happening, and this is extremely important. God wants us to experience joy."

At Oran Park Anglican College, Mr Newton is committed to seeing students pursue excellence in all areas. Music is no exception. He believes that the selfless nature of performing is a reminder of the selfless nature of following Christ.

"We have always taught students to remember that they are performing for the enjoyment of others," he says. "So every performance is about the enjoyment of the listener; they're not performing in isolation."

"Our responsibility as Christians is to do whatever we do to the best of our ability, and we are teaching this with others in mind. Performing a craft can be an act of worship. You don't need to sing a church song to be worshipping God. If you're pursuing something to the best of your ability and using the gift God has given you, that is an act of worship. So it's really important, if you have a gift in music, that you turn it into a talent through hard work and persistence."

"That's the right response to what God has given you as a Christian. Work hard at it and become the best you can be for the benefit of others."

## BUILDING ROBOTS to prepare for the future

**T**ech time: students from St Catherine's School work on their robot.

**K**NOWN as the "St Cathodes", a group of students from St Catherine's School in Waverley are one of three all-female teams who competed in the 2019 FIRST Robotics Competition. For the third year in a row, they built a robot from scratch and then battled among 60 other teams from around the world for three days in March.

The team included student designers, engineers, mathematicians, programmers and business managers, who all used their skills to strategise, plan, design, build and program a robot in six short weeks. The FIRST Robotics Competition requires all robots to accomplish a range of tasks in a series of 2½-minute matches.

"We look at it as a fun experience for the girls," says Rene Mercer, Director of STEM and Innovation at St Catherine's School. "They've been involved in building something amazing that they might not have ever realised they could do. That confidence boost is really important for girls. When you talk to the girls, you realise that it's such a valuable component of what our school offers."

Mr Mercer believes that activities such as the robotics competition are vital to help prepare young women for the future.

"There's such a huge gender imbalance in engineering, software development, computer development and similar industries in Australia," he observes. "This is where all the economists are predicting future jobs will be, and if you want to prepare students to be successful citizens in the future, you need to prepare them for the future they are entering into."

St Catherine's is also the only girls' school in Sydney's eastern suburbs offering Engineering Studies for the HSC.

The girls develop many essential life skills through their involvement in the competition. "They have to produce budgets, market our robot and work in teams," Mr Mercer says. "This creativity and problem solving are the kind of skills employers are looking for."

Overall, the weekend competition was a success, with the St Cathodes ranking 20th.

"It was a tough competition," Mr Mercer says. "The teams that come first have been well established for years. When you consider our resources and age, we're happy with that."

**P**eople, not objects: How we want our students to engage with the world

Each person matters: Tim Bowden talks with students at Trinity Grammar School.

### Tim Bowden

Principal, Trinity Grammar School

**I**n the first half of the 20th century, Jewish philosopher Martin Buber wrote a book called *I and You*. During March at an assembly, partly prompted by International Women's Day, I attempted to explain and apply some of Buber's insights to the context of our students. The following text is a version of that address.

**M**ARTIN Buber argued that we engage with the world in one of two ways: these are "I-it", and "I-You". "I-it" is when we look at the world as an object to be used or experienced. Whether it is a view to look at, a pen to write with, or clothes to wear, these things around us are objects that we use and experience.

Implicitly, in the "I-it" category, "I-You" is more important than the "it". "I-You" and the "You" are equally important and valuable and significant.

Buber's key insight is that the person with whom we interact is not an object. That person does not exist for my sake, to be used and experienced for my benefit, or to be a means to my end. That person matters. Buber is reflecting a view of the world informed by the Jewish and Christian Scriptures, which show us that every person is made in the image of God and, therefore, matters. Other people are not objects.

As you make your way through the world, you will come across people who use other people. They might use them as an entry point to a social group. They might use them as a way of advancing a career. They might use them for the benefits that they can get. I want to warn you to be very cautious around people like that.

But I want to warn you even more clearly: don't become a person like that. Don't become a person who treats other people like objects – as though they exist for your benefit and as though there is not within them the same richness and fragility of life, the same stories and hopes and dreams.

I want to take that topic a little bit further. In our world, in which visual communication is so prominent and in which pornography is so prevalent, it is very easy for men to objectify women. When you talk to the girls, you realise that it's such a valuable component of what our school offers."

Mr Mercer was amazed by how committed students were to the ensembles he ran. "We made rehearsals at 7pm on a Monday evening for an hour and a half," he says. "We thought, 'No one will turn up' and they all turned up. The band became the centrepiece of music education and we started to get great results out of these students."

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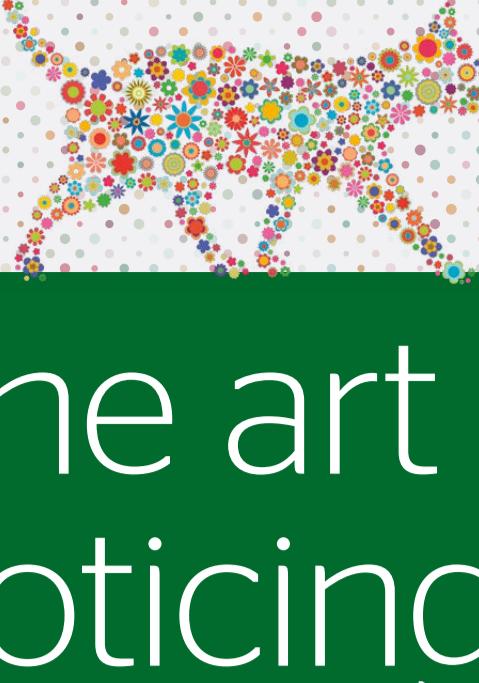
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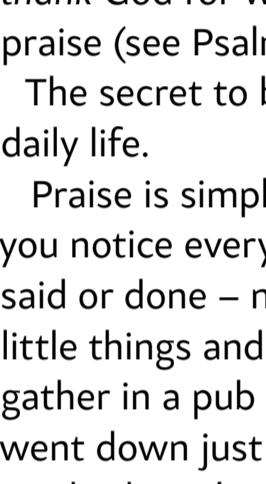
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# The art of noticing things

Praise is our gift to God – and psalms teach us how to praise him, writes **ANDREW SHEAD**.



**N**ONE OF HISTORY'S GREAT ECCENTRICS WAS THE 18TH-CENTURY POET Christopher Smart. While locked away by his embarrassed father-in-law for his habit of praying loudly in public places, Smart wrote a long poem in praise of his cat, Jeoffry.

Here are the opening lines:

*For I will consider my Cat Jeoffry.  
For he is the servant of the Living God duly and daily serving him.  
For at the first glance of the glory of God in the east he worships in his way.  
For this is done by wreathing his body seven times round with elegant quickness.  
For then he leaps up to catch the musk, which is the blessing of God upon his prayer.*

In page after page of detailed and joyous observations, the most trivial of things ("For he can creep") are placed alongside the most grandiose and mystical ("For the divine spirit comes about his body to sustain it in complete cat"). As one commentator observes, 'Everything is given equal weight, equal status, in Smart's world because everything is infused with divinity... It's understood that Jeoffry praises God simply by doing what cats do, by being himself'. Smart noticed everything about his cat, and his poem (forgive me) is a catalogue of praise. He 'understood the piling up of particulars as a joyous poetic activity'.

Southern CROSS  
MAY 2019

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## WHAT IS PRAISE?

I like Smart's wild and wacky poem because it captures the essence of praise. Christians use the word "praise" all the time, but we aren't always clear about its meaning. There is an adage, that we thank God for what he has *done*, and praise him for who he *is*. But the psalms don't reflect this view of praise (see Psalm 22:22-24, for example).

The secret to biblical praise is that there is nothing special about it. It is exactly the same as praise in daily life.

Praise is simply saying what you've noticed about a special person or thing. When you love someone, you notice everything about them. My wife and I will often tell each other things our children have said or done – not necessarily because they are praiseworthy, but simply because we love to notice little things and, by telling each other, we share our pleasure in our child. A group of football fans will gather in a pub after the game, and relive the highlights, blow by blow: "Did you see how their fullback went down just before half time?!"

Whether it's a gripping TV series, a fine meal, the perfect holiday spot, an ingenious solution, or the man or woman of your dreams, praise is all about noticing the details.

## A LESSON IN PRAISE

Like Smart's poem, the wise and cheerful 111th psalm is a catalogue of praise. Its 22 lines begin with successive letters of the Hebrew alphabet – a device to encourage memorisation, helping a student "learn God" feature by feature. There are no clear internal divisions, but I have split the psalm into bite-sized pieces so we can notice its habits of praise as we go along. The acrostic is hard to reproduce, so I have added an alphabetical series of word associations as a kind of substitute.

### PSALM 111

*Praise the Lord.*

**Applause**      *I will extol the Lord with all my heart*

**Believers**      *in the council of the upright and in the assembly.*

Praise is for sharing. It arises from within us when we gaze upon the thing we love, and we want everyone – especially our fellow fans – to see what we see.

**Colossal**      *Great are the works of the Lord;*

**Delight**      *they are pondered by all who delight in them.*

A six-year-old's heart swells with pride at Daddy's modest feats of strength. But our Father can speak oceans into existence, and stars, and forests, and cats. Do you ever grow tired of noticing what he can do? "Pondered" translates a rare Hebrew word, chosen for its opening letter. The verse paints a picture of God's fans seeking out wonder after wonder, never growing tired of the delight they bring.

**Excellent**      *Glorious and majestic are his deeds,*

**Forever**      *and his righteousness endures forever;*

**Graven**      *He has caused his wonders to be remembered.*

God's deeds inspire the awe of royal splendour, the magnificence that speaks of power. They overwhelm the senses and span the eons. His decisions are so perfect that they will last forever, and his miracles so mind-boggling that they are permanently graven in memory. Red Sea, anyone?

Resurrection?

**Heartfelt**      *The Lord is gracious and compassionate;*

**Invitation**      *he provides food for those who fear him;*

**Jealousy**      *he remembers his covenant forever.*

Could there be a more amazing feeling than meeting the hero you have looked up to your whole life? What about walking into a room where a crowd surrounds your hero, and having your hero spot you, smile, hurry over and greet you warmly as a friend? That's how it is between God and his people. He knows us by name. He grieves for us and with us. He sustains us. And though he knows what we are, he binds himself to us jealously, permanently.

**Kingly**      *He has shown his people the power of his works,*

**Lavish**      *giving them the lands of other nations.*

**Moral**      *The works of his hands are faithful and just.*

Such single-minded commitment to an oppressed people is a recipe for drama, and here is where a longer psalm would be filled with a blow-by-blow description. For those who sing through the Psalter the great trilogy of Psalms 105-107 is fresh in mind, a triumphant reliving of God's dealings with Israel from the call of Abraham to the return from exile.

**Never-failing**      *All his precepts are trustworthy;*

**Overwhelming**      *they are established for ever and ever,*

**Perpetual**      *enacted in faithfulness and uprightness.*

This catalogue of joyful noticing now arrives at its climax. Creation reveals God's power; his saving deeds reveal his love; but to disclose his deepest thoughts God must speak. So profound are his words that it took the greatest acrostic ever written to peg out their dimensions. Psalm 119 reveals a perfect mind – but only in part. God's final Word was so much greater that it burst into history in human form, and in the new creation his fans will literally never tire of noticing amazing things about the risen Christ.

**Quittance**      *He provided redemption for his people;*

**Relationship**      *he ordained his covenant forever –*

**Sanctity**      *holy and awesome is his name.*

Having mentioned God's perfect law, his decision to enter into relationship with us suddenly looks even more amazing. We have just gloried in the compassion which prompted him to rescue us from bondage, but his law exposes us as sinners, not just slaves. How could God, at one and the same time, be perfect in holiness and joined to us by covenant? The most amazing truth of all: "God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God" (2 Cor 5:21).

**Trembling**      *The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom;*

**Understanding**      *all who follow his precepts have good understanding.*

**Valuing**      *To him belongs eternal praise.*

"Pay attention!" concludes this little lesson in praise. To know God is to fear him, and to fear him is to live well. To hang on his every word is to master the world. Noticing God completes us. But even if it didn't... just look at him! He is utterly magnificent, and all the lesser magnificence we see around us exists because, as Gerard Manley Hopkins puts it, "the world is charged with the grandeur of God".

## PRAISE IS WHAT WE ARE FOR

The Hebrew title for the Book of Psalms is *tehillim*, which means "praises". It's an odd choice, because in the first 20 psalms the word "praise" occurs only once. Just a third of the opening 50 are praise psalms. Mostly they lament, complain, reflect, repent, grieve. But as we keep reading, the praises grow from a trickle to a stream to a flood, and the final five psalms all have the same title: "Hallelujah!"

Praise is not where the Psalms begin. And praise is not where the Christian life begins. It begins in sin, and it is marked by affliction and sorrow. But thanks be to God, praise is where it ends, and that glorious ending changes everything – even the sadness and suffering. And that is why the Psalms are called *praises*. Praise has the power to bring God near, even when sin and death press upon us.

Ultimately, praise draws us into the life of God himself. The psalms of David became the prayers of Jesus, by which he drew near to the Father in petition and praise.

*What is gained if I am silenced,*

*if I go down to the pit?*

*Will the dust praise you?*

*Will it proclaim your faithfulness? (Ps 30:9)*

But in God's kindness the Messiah was saved, and saved for a reason:

*You turned my wailing into dancing;*

*you removed my sackcloth and clothed me with joy;*

*so that my heart may sing your praises and not be silent.*

*Lord my God, I will praise you forever. (Ps 30:11-12)*

For us, as for Christ, to live is to praise. Everything we have and everything we are is the gift of God. Praise is the only thing we have to give back to him. So read the psalms and let them teach you to praise. Let them teach you to read the world. To see God in everything beautiful. To look up and around, to look into the past and the future, and to glory in God's work. And let the psalms teach you to read yourself. To see the good, the bad, and the ugly; the person God has made, the person he loves and cares for, and the person he redeemed with his own life.

Unlike Christopher Smart you may not be locked up with only a cat for company, but you can still use the psalms to make you slow down and practice the art of noticing things.

The Rev Dr Andrew Shead is head of department of Old Testament and Hebrew and lectures in Hebrew and Old Testament.



# Branagh's Bard

JUDY ADAMSON

**All Is True**

Rated M

HERE'S NO DOUBT WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE WAS A TREMENDOUS STORYTELLER. IN addition to creating worlds of words for his characters to inhabit, he wasn't above reinventing history to suit his purposes.

That being the case, we can hardly quibble with screenwriter Ben Elton's take on the final years of the Bard's life after the Globe Theatre burnt to the ground in 1613. Shakespeare himself might have enjoyed it – or perhaps not, depending on the truth of things.

After all, Elton depicts his Bard (played here with energy and insight by Kenneth Branagh) as a virtual stranger in his own home when he returns to Stratford after his theatre's destruction. He is devoted to his young son Hamnet, who died in childhood, while almost disinterested in Hamnet's bitter twin, Judith (about whom history knows almost nothing). Elton even provides us with the cause for the Bard's death, which no one actually knows for certain.

Shakespeare is also taken to task by his older wife, Anne (Judi Dench), for his sonnets that suggest a love for another – and then we're shown that other, in the person of the Earl of Southampton, played by Ian McKellen.

There has been much debate about who some of the famous sonnets were written for, whether the Earl was the "fair youth" to whom Shakespeare referred, and the precise nature of their relationship. It's not surprising Elton goes full steam ahead with the bisexual answer, and this will make some uncomfortable during the quiet chat the two share at the Bard's fireside.

Putting historical accuracy aside, what *All Is True* seeks to do, in the main, is explore the strangeness, challenges and unexpected pleasures for Shakespeare in returning to everyday life after decades in London.

Life for the women of his family, which includes his married daughter Susannah, is constrained by social boundaries and education. His return shakes that up – for him and them. Who is he now? What is he to do with his time, given that he no longer wants to write? What are they to do with him, if anything?

I've seen this film billed as a comedy, which is a ridiculous miscategorisation. Yes, Ben Elton might be the writer, and yes there are comedic moments, but it is most definitely a drama.

The Bard is head of a house that doesn't initially welcome his presence. He experiences ongoing sorrow about Hamnet's death, "seeing" and talking to him often, and both his daughters face life-altering problems.

Yet, having said that, *All Is True* doesn't take us on some crisis-driven rollercoaster ride. The bulk of the film is restrained and reflective, with an added poignancy for the viewer in knowing that these years will be Shakespeare's last. The storyline is also simple – not packed with self-important speeches pregnant with meaning – as we experience the uncomplicated pleasures and difficulties of a retired gentleman who just happens to also be the greatest playwright the world has ever known.

Age accuracy is thrown out the window with McKellen and Dench – who are decades older than the characters they play – but their skill and presence are such that you don't care. Branagh also directs the piece with a sure hand, and while you may disagree with some of the historical choices (and note there is also a decent amount of innuendo and bad language), the final product leaves you with much to ponder with regard to human frailty, the dynamic of family relationships and the long-lasting impact of choices we make.

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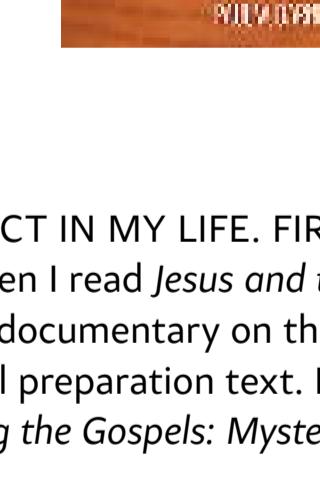
## Jesus and the Latin Church

EDWARD LOANE

**Passion and Resurrection Narratives: Post Nicene Latin Interpretations**

by Andrew M. Bain

Wipf & Stock



ONE OF THE GREAT BENEFITS OF STUDYING CHURCH HISTORY IS THAT WE ARE ABLE TO learn from, and be edified by, brothers and sisters who have long departed to be with Christ. Sometimes, however, the passage of time makes us feel like we live out our Christian faith in a very different world. Indeed, looking at the early church (33–500AD) the distance of centuries, culture, language, geography and technology may make us wonder if there really is a "communion of saints".

Yet, when we do look closely, despite the distance, we see our common faith in the death and resurrection of Jesus. A key topic among patristic scholars is the method of exegesis employed by the early Church fathers. Two general categories are commonly used to describe the way the Bible was read in those years, either literally or allegorically. Andrew Bain's new book explores the complexity of exegetical strategies in Latin Christianity and he demonstrates this is much richer than binary categorisation indicates.

Bain's book is essentially the publication of his PhD research, where he analysed the exegesis of the passion and resurrection narrative by four later Latin fathers: Hilary of Poitiers (315–367), Ambrose of Milan (339–397), Jerome (347–419) and Augustine of Hippo (354–430). The significance of each of these subjects for Western Christianity is profound and further research on their exegesis is certainly very welcome.

Even though the sources evaluated range in genre (commentaries, sermons, theology) and gospel account (Matthew, Luke, John), the narrowing of the topic to the passion and resurrection narratives helpfully provides focus and commonality to the analysis of the authors' interpretations. This brings out clearly the similarities and difference between the Latin fathers despite the diversity of source.

In light of contemporary scholarship, Bain studies each author in turn and draws out important features of each man's exegesis – such as whether they employ monosemy or polysemy (one or multiple meanings in a single text). The book is thoroughly researched and academically rigorous.

Ultimately, Bain demonstrates that the simplistic category of "allegorical" as a way of describing the exegesis of these later Latin fathers is inadequate. A close study of the diversity and complexity of their method shows that there were similarities between them and yet also important distinctions.

The contemporary reader of Bain's book will be encouraged by the consistent emphasis of these fathers on the gospel truths we continue to hold dear. Readers will also be encouraged by the fathers' desire to plumb the biblical text in order to expose God's purpose and character. There are many interesting exegetical points highlighted, such as Jerome's oblique application of the women watching the crucifixion from a distance (Matt 27:55), highlighting the importance of continuing female support for teachers of the gospel (pp.66–68).

While this book is technical and scholarly, it is certainly accessible to any who have a basic familiarity with the post-Nicene Latin fathers. As a work that enriches our understanding of the way four of the most significant Christian leaders of the early church read their bibles, Bain's book is very valuable indeed.

The Rev Dr Ed Loane lectures in theology and Church history at Moore College.

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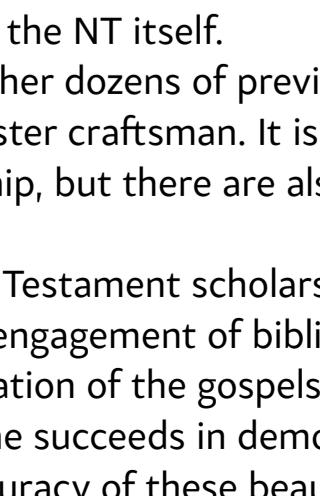
## "Master craftsman" re-examines gospel veracity

CON CAMPBELL

**Making the Gospels: Mystery or Conspiracy**

by Paul Barnett

Wipf & Stock



THE WRITINGS OF PAUL BARNETT HAVE HAD A MAJOR IMPACT IN MY LIFE. FIRST, AS A brand-new Christian, I read his *Is the New Testament History?* Then I read *Jesus and the Logic of History* while a student at Moore College and, while I was preparing a documentary on the Apostle Peter, *The Importance of Peter in Early Christianity* became our foundational preparation text. Now, as I prepare to film a documentary on Jesus, Dr Barnett's new book *Making the Gospels: Mystery or Conspiracy* is already influential.

The book is remarkable for several reasons. It is packed with information. It is simply written but brimming with fascinating insights. It is easy to read but thoroughly researched. It offers careful judgements about longstanding debates but also bold conclusions of its own. It will be useful to the educated layperson and the scholar.

The book demonstrates all the hallmarks of classic Barnett writing. He lays out the issues discussed by scholars and does not sugar-coat anything. The most critical biblical scholars are treated seriously, absorbing whatever insights can be gleaned. This can be observed from the full and informative preface, in which Barnett acknowledges the challenge to the veracity of the gospels set by William Wrede in 1908. Why should we trust the gospels? Are they what they seem to be? Or are they part of a conspiracy to reinvent the historical Jesus?

The book proper begins by looking at the famous manuscript "P45", written as early as AD 150, which contains the four gospels Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, as well as Acts. Barnett traces other historical leads that affirm an early acceptance of these four gospels, and only these four, as authoritative for the church. But rather than rely solely on early church traditions and the historical situations behind each gospel, he traces a huge amount of historical evidence detected within the New Testament itself, such as how the outline of Peter's five major speeches in Acts is followed by Mark in the structure of his gospel.

Barnett addresses several topics one might not expect, such as how the words of Jesus ended up in the letters of Paul, and whether Paul is guilty of reinventing Jesus, as many critical scholars have claimed. Such topics feed into the argument that the written sources used to compose the gospels can be detected in the earliest documents of Christianity, namely the New Testament letters. This shows these mysterious source texts are not figments of critical scholars' imaginations but can be detected within the New Testament itself.

The book also contains new insights. For example, Barnett surprised himself (and this reader) by concluding that the earliest sources about Jesus were recorded in Greek – not Aramaic – and were primarily written – not oral – in their transmission. While I was sceptical at first, the case is made so skilfully that one can't help but feel the pull of the argument.

The book does not rush to new conclusions just for the sake of it. In fact, contrary to the growing scholarly trend against the long-held belief in the (in)famous source document known as "Q", Barnett makes a case for accepting it. But instead of simply accepting default beliefs about Q, he treats it with fresh insight. He also carefully traces other sources detected in the gospels, such as Matthew's "M" and Luke's "L", outlining their contents and how they complement Q and Mark in forming those gospels. He demonstrates how these sources fit historical clues within the NT itself.

The final chapters trace the making of each gospel, drawing together dozens of previous insights. By its end, the book feels like a rich tapestry, woven together by a master craftsman. It is unsurprising that many conclusions resonate with mainstream gospels scholarship, but there are also some radical conclusions, such as the dating and provenance of John's Gospel.

In this book, Dr Barnett models everything one hopes for in New Testament scholarship: rigorous handling of the text; deep knowledge of historical factors; careful engagement of biblical scholarship; and its own fresh insights. It is an excellent introduction to the creation of the gospels and makes its own important contributions. While certain mysteries remain, he succeeds in demonstrating that such unresolved questions do not undermine the reliability and accuracy of these beautiful portraits of Jesus of Nazareth.

The Rev Dr Con Campbell is Professor of New Testament at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School.

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