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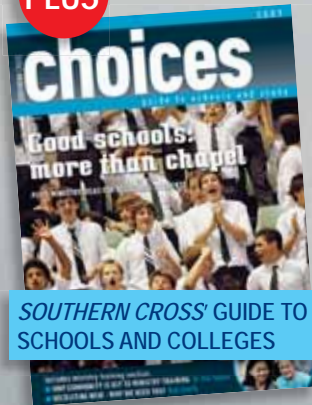
SOUTHERN CROSS

PHOTO: Elizabeth Johnson

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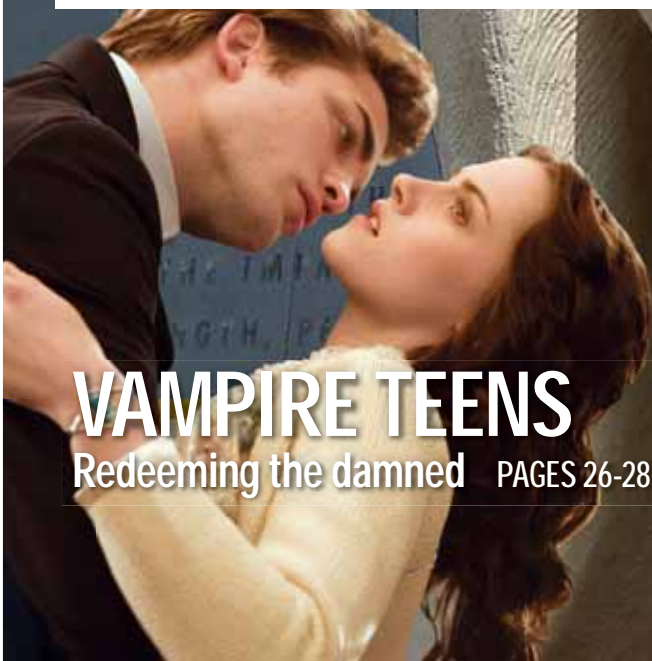
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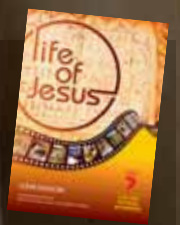


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Is Easter IMMORAL?

Dr John Dickson and Dr Greg Clarke defend the cross against critics who think Jesus' sacrifice was 'cosmic child abuse'.
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also:
Details of Dickson's upcoming Channel 7 TV Documentary *The Life of Jesus*



C09 HIGHLIGHTS

Maroubra cleans up local beach

MAROUBRA Surfers Church and St John's, Maroubra were part of a group of four churches who worked with the local council to run the suburb's first Clean Up Australia Day festival on March 1. They offered free surfing lessons, bands, a barbeque, kids games and a forum on environmental issues. "It gives us increased integrity in the wider community, because we're actually doing something that is not really seen as churchy," says Surfers Church minister, the Rev Steve Bligh.



Johnny Burns launch reaches locals

ST Matthew's, West Pymble invited locals to the launch of children's entertainer Johnny Burns' latest album, *Unreal Banana Peel* last month. The Supa Saturday included a café, jumping castle, facepainting, plaster funhouse, and concert. "A Christian children's entertainer seemed a non-threatening way to ask families to come to the church building for the first time and hear a gospel message," says children's worker Melissa Magee.



Neighbour Day takes the cake!

AS the Rev Gordon Boughton of St Mark's, Malabar walked out of the local cake shop, he made it clear it was his neighbours he was shopping for. Mr Boughton and his wife Lay Lee were among several Sydney Anglicans inviting neighbours around for an afternoon tea or barbeque for Neighbour Day on March 29, an Australia-wide initiative launched to combat a perceived breakdown in community values. "I'm holding this partly to thank some of my neighbours, who mowed my lawn when I was in hospital last year, but also as a way of making contact with others as part of Connect09," Mr Boughton says.



PHOTO: Scott Webster

Over 100 Indonesians confirmed

AMAZING scenes at St Paul's Kogarah as members of the Indonesian-speaking church which meets on St Paul's premises joined the Diocese. The vast majority are new converts.

FULL STORY PAGE 21

•MARK'S GOSPEL MAG A HIT WITH SYDNEY TEENS

Ed takes 1000 gospels to school



Gospels to go: Ed Sowden says the new Mark's gospel will be a hit with teens.

EDWARD (Ed) Sowden's schoolbag will be a bit heavier than usual this month as he takes 1000 copies of the glossy new Mark's gospel to school. Ed, 17, will make this gospel available to fellow students through the Christian group at his state high school.

Ed, who is a member of St Stephen's, Normanhurst, says the idea first came up when the group met to plan their mission for the year. In his search for a resource that could "move people from not knowing Christ to knowing Christ", Ed came across Connect09's new Mark's gospel. "I realised that it would meet the target audience much better - it's designed in a simple, easy-to-follow format, and just by looking at it you can see it's a bit more appealing for the younger generation." Already, Ed has showed the gospel to some of his non-Christian school friends, who agreed it "was a really good format".

The group will publicise the gospel through posters and announcements and have the gospel at the lunchtime meetings, so

that interested students can come along and pick up a copy. "We're not forcing it on anyone, but allowing them to take advantage of the information," he says.

Ed raised the money for the 1000 copies he hopes to give to students by promoting the idea at all of St Stephen's congregations. "People were so generous and supportive of what we were doing at the school that in the space of a week, we had all the money we needed," he smiles.

Ed's demeanour is gentle, but his enthusiasm for reaching his fellow students is obvious. "I think schools are one of the best missionfields - people are making big decisions in life and connecting with so many different people... I want them to have the same hope that I have knowing Jesus."

Ed also wants to encourage other students in other schools to be willing to try new things to share the gospel with other students. "Don't be afraid because there are so many people out there who are willing to support and encourage you and make it happen," he says.

•MENTAL HEALTH
Clergy learn 'first aid'

AMENTAL Health First Aid e-learning course has been taken up by an overwhelming majority of assistant ministers involved in Ministry Training & Development's post-College Ministry Development Program. "Ministers need to be able to understand what people with mental ill health are experiencing in order to connect with them more effectively. This is an excellent professional resource which will help them to do that," says the Rev Mark Charleston, manager of MT&D.

•MOORE MISSIONS
Teams stay in Sydney

FOR the first time in at least 8 years, Moore College based all 16 teams in Sydney for the annual mission week, which ran from March 29 to April 5. "We want to show that we're supporting Connect09, and the best way of showing that is by focusing our mission this year on Sydney Diocese," says head of mission, the Rev Greg Anderson. In the lead-up to the mission, a weekly Mission and Ministry Hour was held for students, with sessions on topics such as doorknocking and parish mission.

•GOOD NEWS FOR KIDS

Colin DVD in schools for Easter

THE *Good News Parcel Company* DVD, Colin Buchanan's Connect09 gospel presentation for kids, will be handed out in schools in the lead-up to Easter. 165,000 DVDs were distributed to churches late in March. Connect09's executive director Andrew Nixon hopes churches will connect with local schools as they encourage the handout at Easter assemblies and SRE classes. Connect09's children's coordinator and former Claremont College principal, Lesley May has

been helping churches work with schools. "We need to do this the right way because SRE is a great privilege and responsibility," Mr Nixon says. He believes Colin Buchanan's track record as an entertainer will help to make the DVD an effective way of enlightening children with the gospel. All 10 churches in the Penrith area deanery will put on a Colin Buchanan concert at St Paul's Grammar on April 9, followed by a women's event for mums.



What the doctor ordered: churches will hand out 165,000 Colin Buchanan DVDs.

As part of an invitation, Christ Church At the College, at Penrith Anglican College handed out DVDs to students and parents at the school. "We

know what Colin puts out will be quality, engaging and non-threatening - this gives people confidence to invite their friends," says minister Mark Bonnici.

•GLOBAL FINANCIAL CRISIS

Key parishes in unemployment hotspots

RESearch released this month by the University of Newcastle's Centre of Full Employment and Equity predicts some of Sydney Diocese's most strategic parishes will be impacted by high unemployment in the next 18 months.

The CBD, especially the Haymarket and Chinatown end of the city, is one key ministry area placed on 'red alert' by the researchers. This is because of the high number of casual workers living in city apartments. The data suggests that St Andrew's

Cathedral, Christ Church St Laurence and St Barnabas', Broadway should prepare for high unemployment in their local vicinity.

According to the research the three worst 'red alert' hotspots in Sydney Diocese are Campbelltown; Fairfield including the parishes of Cabramatta, Hoxton Park and Smithfield Road; and the southern Wollongong parishes of Albion Park, Port Kembla and Dapto.

"The research doesn't surprise me," said the Rev Stephen Semenchuk,

rector of Dapto. "We are already seeing contractors at Bluescope Steel having their hours reduced and wharfies have been told to stay home on full pay."

Mr Semenchuk says his parish is preparing for the downturn by becoming an official Work for the Dole host. Parishioners are now able to complete their Centrelink hours working for the church.

And the parish won't be cutting its ministry budget: "We are trying to encourage those people still in employment to think about how they

can do more to help their neighbours who are not."

Parishes in some relatively affluent areas should also prepare for high unemployment. Parishes affected will include parts of the Sutherland Shire such as Menai and Cronulla; and the north shore including Dee Why and St Ives.

New housing areas such as Shellharbour, Glenmore Park, Harrington Park, Rouse Hill and Kellyville are all on the list of parishes rated with an 'amber alert' for moderate-to-high risk.

STOP PRESS

Moore's plan to beat financial crisis

THE severity of the Global Financial Crisis (GFC) – and a likely reduction in its Diocesan grant – has added a further level of complexity to the challenges confronting Moore Theological College, the college's principal has said in an address to students. In February SC reported that MTC's 2009 enrolments were now 60 percent of their recent high, and that the College had announced a review. On March 20, MTC principal, Dr John Woodhouse outlined a seven-point plan to begin to tackle Moore's challenges. He listed six phenomena impacting Moore, including the GFC and generational changes which now see young people having different expectations about Christian ministry.

Impact of GFC on Diocesan grants >> p17

NEXT EDITION: Dr Woodhouse explains MTC's plan

•FIGTREE'S PHOTO SHOW SELLS OUT

800 see Ken Duncan's visual gospel testimony



ACCLAIMED photographer Ken Duncan explained his own testimony through a slideshow of his photographic works at Figtree Anglican Church last month.

"It was very winsome

presentation of the gospel because it was so personal, and stunning because the images were amazing," says evangelism minister, the Rev Stuart Starr. Of the 800 who packed out Figtree's church building, one-third were visitors.

Figtree first contacted Mr Duncan about the event several months in advance – but it was worth the wait.

"IT'S an easy invite for our people because Ken is a name that's known by their friends," he adds.

•SCHOOLS CORP TAKES ON TECHNICAL COLLEGE


SASC moves into trade training

THE Sydney Anglican Schools Corporation will take over the Australian Technical College at Western Sydney by December, after the Rudd Government cut funding for technical colleges last year.

College principal Sandra Langford says the move formalises the close relationship between the two and that the college, which currently has 18 percent of the state's school-based apprentices, will benefit from SASC's

"enormous expertise in establishing low-fee-paying schools".

SASC chief executive, Dr Laurie Scandrett says the move is "specifically targeting a segment of the education market that we're not currently in".



Australian Church History Festival

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Speakers:


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Dr Ruth Frappell
'Bush Church Aid: a pioneer of women's ministry in Australia.'

Mr Kim Robinson
'Treasures of the Moore College Library collection.'

Dr Colin Bale
'Christianity in World War I.'

Em Prof Brian Fletcher
'Hymnody, ecumenism and national identity: The Australian Hymn Book and Together in Song.'



Dr Peter Bolt

We hope you can come along to feast with us on aspects of Australia's religious history and to enjoy the company of other history buffs.

The History Festival is organized by Moore Theological College Library.

Cost is \$10 which includes morning tea and coffee/tea at lunchtime. BYO Lunch.

To register:
Telephone Julie on **9577 9897** or visit the link at www.library.moore.edu.au

For further information, email historyfestival@moore.edu.au

•CASH, CARS AND COUNSELING

Sydney gives to firestorm churches



THE irony was not lost on Heathcote Anglican's assistant minister, the Rev Tom Hargreaves as he prayed the rain would stop for their 'Monster' concert bushfire fundraiser. "It had bucketed down all day," he recalls.

The February 21 event brought in over \$8,000 towards the Archbishop's Emergency Bushfire Appeal, which to date has raised \$437,000, towards helping stricken churches.

The concert featured bands including Quirious, and children from local schools performed musical items. Colin Buchanan also sang 'Here One Moment', a song dedicated to bushfire victims.

The concert was a church-arranged event, but local community services also chipped in with PA equipment and a free barbeque put on by the local Rotary club.

"It was a terrific opportunity to just get together and talk about

what has been going on," Mr Hargreaves says.

Meanwhile in the Blue Mountains, it occurred to David Burns while sitting in church at Winmalee that he could offer Whittlesea parish a Jeep Cherokee 4-wheel-drive.

Mr Burns runs Mission Motors, a ministry which supplies temporary vehicles to missionaries and other visitors. A week after an offer by phone to rector, the Rev Stephen Holmes, Mr Burns drove the vehicle down.

"It's the joy of being led by the Lord, and the vehicle's gone where it will be more effective than it was here," he says.

In other news, St Paul's, Castle Hill sent associate minister, the Rev Eric Cheung to relieve Healesville/Yarra Glen's rector, the Rev Tim Anderson for a Sunday of preaching last month, and will continue its support where needed for at least the next 18 months.

•EXTRAORDINARY INTERNET CONVERSION

I searched for 'Sydney Anglican' and found Jesus

NATASHA PERCY

KRISTI Kulmar sat down at her laptop on January 3 last year knowing something in her life was not right.

Even though she had a strong career and hobbies, she "felt something was missing". And so she typed 'Church of England' into her Googlesearch, wondering if the faith she had been christened into as a child might have the answers.

"I'd only been to churches for Christenings or weddings – I'd never opened a Bible prior to this. I believed in God... but I suppose it was a blind faith because I believed in him but I didn't know him," she says.

After an article on the ABC website told her 'Anglican' was now the word used, a second search led her to Sydneyanglicans.net. The Find-a-Church function on the site led her to her local church: Helensburgh Anglican. "Obviously because I live near Sydney, I clicked on Sydney Anglican and that brought up a whole new world there for me."

On the other side of the screen, Helensburgh rector, the Rev Gary Eastment had only just put the website online, using a basic web program. "I'm not a computer guy at all... I was keen to get



something up and I was able to create something that was passable I guess."

However Kristi says it was all she needed. "A website is so interactive without judgment, and I could click onto anything I wanted and it didn't matter because it was just me and the computer," she says.

The links on Helensburgh's website, then sent Kristi to the 2 Ways to Live site, which was "the best thing that I could have seen because it made total sense and it was really simple".

From 2 Ways to Live, Kristi went to Matthias Media's website, and bought some books by John Dickson, reading them within a week. "After

KRISTI'S TIPS FOR YOUR CHURCH WEBSITE

- Make it simple – don't overload it with information or links
- Don't make it text heavy with jargon or long Bible passages
- Have photos of your staff – this helps people's comfort level
- Have photos of church activities – people need to see that church is fun and diverse.

reading *Sneaking Suspicion* that really cemented it for me – it all just fell into place from there I think, and that's what spurred me to go to church."

After going to Helensburgh Anglican church for the first time a week later, she cried tears of elation in the car on the way home. "I can't even really describe it in words – it was a wonderful experience. The word totally spoke to me."

Now, Kristi says she loves going to church, and has taken her family through 2 Ways to Live.

"I'm much more forgiving, I'm definitely less judgmental, and now I actually take the time to think about my thoughts, my words, my actions." Most of all though, she says, she knows Jesus.

"I've realised without Jesus, you're in a bit of trouble!"

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• AUSSIE CHURCH-PLANTING NETWORK CONCEIVED

Locals complete Driscoll boot camp

AN Australian church-planting network is in the wings after Bishop Al Stewart and four other Australian church-planting enthusiasts attended a boot camp and international church-planting conference in Seattle last month. The event was run by Acts 29, a network founded by Mark Driscoll and supported by Mars Hill Church, which provides friendship, coaching and resources to church planters. The network currently includes over 130 churches from nine countries.

Bishop Stewart, along with Andrew Heard from Central Coast Evangelical Church, Steve Chong from Kirkplace Presbyterian Kogarah and RICE, Guy Mason from Docklands Church, Melbourne and Mikey Lynch from Crossroads



Al Stewart (second from right) 'hangs out' with fellow church-planters in Mark Driscoll's studio: (clockwise from left) Joel Virgo(UK), Mark Driscoll(Mars Hill), PJ Smyth (South Africa), Scott Thomas (Acts 29) and Nathan Burke (Mars Hill).

Church, Hobart had been planning the trip for some time. To build momentum and gauge the interest in an Australian church-planting network, they held a conference in Sydney in February. "We would have been happy with 40 people; we had approximately 160 turn up," Bishop Stewart says.

This included people from different denominations, but also men from Brisbane, Melbourne, Hobart, and Adelaide."

The March 9-11 boot camp and conference drew 800 people from across the US and nine other countries. Key themes at the conference were taking risks to engage with non-

believers and tell them the gospel, and the need for endurance and hard work.

As all five planters look towards the formation of this network, Bishop Stewart says the Seattle experience has yielded wisdom in crucial areas:

Assessment of church-planters

One of these is the assessment of church planters. "I think particularly we need to understand how to assess potential church planters, because not everyone's suitable for this and if people aren't assessed properly there can be a very high burnout rate and people get damaged," he explains. "With proper assessment, the success rates improve dramatically."

Bishop Stewart went through the Acts 29 assessment himself – a two-hour interview and online preparation including questionnaires, references and a bible talk submitted) – and says he found it 'very useful'.

The culture needed for church planting

The 'vibe' of Mars Hill Church – overseen by Mark Driscoll – is a good indicator of what needs to be encouraged and improved in Sydney, according to Bishop Stewart. "I think this is the thing we can most learn from our American brothers and sisters: Mars

AUSSIE NETWORK

When: information released by mid-year, launch in November 2009.

Who: individuals, existing networks and Protestant denominations

Why: To pool resources to better recruit, assess, train church planters. The network will run independently of the Acts 29 network, but with their partnership and support.



The Aussie boot camp contingent: (from left) Al Stewart, Steve Chong, Guy Mason, Andrew Heard and Mikey Lynch.

Hill exudes a love for Jesus, a confidence about the future, and a great generosity to visitors," he says. "I feel like we often lack a sense of urgency in getting things done. We need a culture that is prepared to take a few more risks, in trying new things. We so often use our resources in maintenance mode. After the Global Financial Crisis, there will be a temptation to spend more and more time examining how to divide up a smaller and smaller cake."

Church planting: a fad or the future?

Bishop Stewart says church planting is not just a buzzword, but a much-needed tactic that Australian churches need to embrace. "I know the criticisms: this is new and fashionable, and these young guys think they'll be rock stars if they plant a church. Reality will sort

out the "would-be rock stars" from the real church planters.

"But reality also needs to give a wake-up call to the critics – we are slowly dying – Protestant Christianity around the country is 'bleeding out'."

Pointing to NCLS statistics which indicated that in the '90s. Protestant churches in Australia declined by six percent and Australian church attendance declined by three percent, Bishop Stewart has asserted the need not only to "revitalise and renew" existing churches, but also for new churches, and "churches that will plant other new churches". If we don't go in this direction, Bishop Stewart cautions that we may be 'left behind' by those with the "courage and vision" to plant new churches. "These guys will not fit neatly into our existing structures, we can welcome them or they will go elsewhere," he says.

Is her future secure?



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• REACHING THE BUSH

Country folk trained to 'stand and deliver'



Peter and Jenny Kelly are lay people who decided to become missionaries to a remote NSW community.

AMY BUTLER

PREACHING from the gospel was the theme at this year's third annual Stand and Deliver Conference at Parkes in the Central West of NSW.

Stand and Deliver is a conference designed to equip the great force of lay preachers who are increasingly the backbone of bush churches.

One of these is Peter Kelly, currently leading the Presbyterian parish of Trundle, Tullamore and Tottenham. Mr Kelly is a home missionary, which means he is not ordained but doing the job of a regular minister. He entered full-time ministry from working previously as an agricultural engineer, and identifies conferences like this as key

in encouraging ordinary people to be passionate about preaching the Bible faithfully.

"It is exciting to see preaching workshops coming into rural areas and I have used the workshops as a way of introducing others to methods I have found so useful," Mr Kelly says. "Realising that there are many others in the immediate area who are engaged in the work of biblical preaching is a great encouragement."

The 'immediate area' is in fact very large geographically from Tamworth to Griffith and drawing from many small towns in between.

Stand and Deliver is the brainchild of Bruce Bennett, minister of Orange Evangelical

Church and formerly an archdeacon in the Armidale Diocese.

"I spent eight years as a lay preacher with virtually no input from anyone," explains Mr Bennett. "When I entered Moore College I was determined to use my training to encourage lay preachers."

Likewise Mr Kelly attests to the importance of good lay preaching. "Increasingly, small country churches cannot afford to support full-time ministers, or at least spend significant periods without a minister.

"The health of the local church depends on consistent, faithful preaching of God's word, which I believe is most effectively done by members of the local body," Mr Kelly says.

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Darren Duncanson – now in his second year of training to be a full time gospel minister

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BISHOP WRITES
with Al Stewart

Ask yourself: does God want you to be 'nice'?

OVER the last few months thanks to John Gray (rector of Castle Hill Anglican) I've been using a 'read the Bible in a year' program. It's helped put some discipline into my reading and praying. There has been one theme that keeps jumping out at me from passage after passage. Here's a few passages, that have hit me morning by morning. You see if you can pick out the theme:

- John 5:44 How can you believe if you accept praise from one another, yet make no effort to obtain the praise that comes from the only God?
- Acts 5:29 Peter and the other apostles replied: "We must obey God rather than men!"
- Galatians 1:10 Am I now trying to win the approval of men, or of God? Or am I trying to please men? If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a servant of Christ.
- 1Corinthians 4:3-4 I care very little if I am judged by you or by any human court; indeed, I do not even judge myself. My conscience is clear, but that does not make me innocent. It is the Lord who judges me.

It's not hard to pick it is: we must not fear what others will think of us, but deliberately set out to please God, not men. It's so obvious and yet so hard to learn and remember.

We can spend our whole life looking sideways, worrying about our reputations and what others will think of us. It's obvious with teenagers, but for those of us who are older, it's not that this weakness has disappeared, it is simply that we get better at hiding our sideways glances to see if we are approved of.

The looking sideways, wanting the approval of men, can be even more of a problem for those involved in Christian leadership. Wanting to be liked by all, wanting to be popular, being afraid of the consequences of actions can cripple us.

Learn to live with an audience of one, and it will set you free. If you are a leader, it will set you free to be loving to people, rather than just 'nice'. Nice is acting in a way so people will like you; loving is doing what is best for other people. Often 'loving' and 'nice' are not the same thing.

Let's learn to look up, not sideways.

•TWO PARISHES TAKE ON WORLD VISION SCHOOL PROGRAM

Kids find Hope in church mentors



World Vision's Kids Hope program is connecting Wollongong churches with at risk families.

LEA CARSWELL

ST Luke's, Miranda is taking on a program already helping other churches in Wollongong region make connections with 'at-risk' families.

World Vision's Kids Hope Australia mentoring program brings together church volunteers and children from local schools deemed 'vulnerable' because they do not have a caring adult other than their parents in their lives.

St Luke's started training mentors last year after they were approached by one of the local public schools to run the program, which will begin

at the start of Term 2.

Members of St Luke's have enthusiastically embraced the program, and have double the volunteers needed.

"We see it as a good way of being involved in the community because of what we're doing with Connect09," says children's worker Jess Moran. "When the school approached us to run the program, we jumped on it straight away."

Meanwhile at St John's, Sutherland, the Rev Rod Harding says Kids Hope has taken connections with the local school community to a new level.

"Kids Hope has

provided the means to a new depth of relationship and commitment between the church and school communities and is beginning to open up other possibilities of contact," he said.

The program's coordinator at St John's, Chris Babbage tells the story of M, a Year 3 child from the local school.

At the end of 2008 M proudly received school awards showing her significant improvement; she is a very different child to the one who began the mentoring program when she was in Year 1.

"She is now a much more socially confident

little girl ready to 'have a go' and embrace her potential. Obviously there are many factors, but there is no doubt that Kids Hope has been significant in the way she has developed," she says.

The Sutherland program has nine trained mentors, several of whom are retirees. Ms Babbage's role at St John's is to encourage the mentors and keep the congregation informed.

"This is a great way for Christians to reach into a local community and express God's love in response to recognised needs."

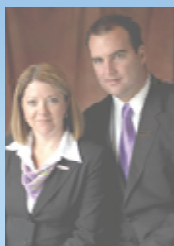
Mr Harding agrees. "For us, it's an absolute winner!"



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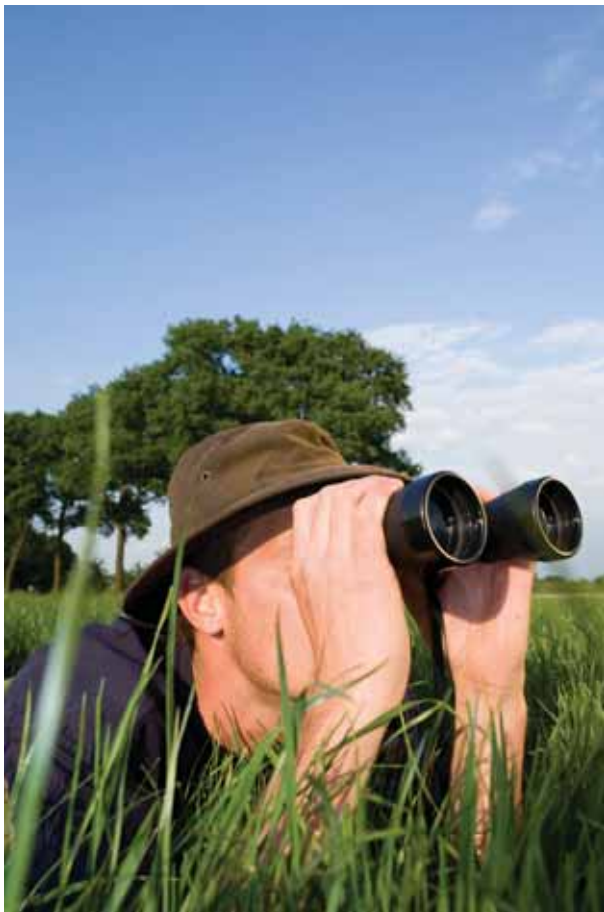
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In hard times, we can have a real hope

What will this Easter be like for you? ARCHBISHOP PETER JENSEN reflects that even in a world hit by hard times, Jesus has given us a real hope that can keep us going.

WE are a bit short of hope today. People are asking, what is there to look forward to? The good times are over and we fear the future. Poor President Obama was described in one headline as 'the hope of the world'. But we only ever had one Messiah that good. And it's a bit hard to live up to Jesus. Australia used to be such a hopeful nation. What's come over us? Well, it's hard to go past the fears we

all feel about the global recession. In the midst of the pain many of us are feeling, we need help and we need hope. Hope keeps you going. Try to live without hope and you may as well be in your grave already. Now the funny thing about real hope is this – it was born in a grave. They consigned Jesus Christ to his grave after they did away with him. They sealed the grave. They set soldiers to watch the grave. But it was no use. He broke the power of death and came



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out of the grave to show us that it can be done. After all, what is the end? What's the worst thing?

judgment, Jesus will stand by you, stand for you, stand with you. Do you want to connect with him? You only have to ask.

Now the funny thing about real hope is this - it was born in a grave.

The video of Archbishop Jensen's full 2009 Easter message is available to show in churches. To play the message use the April edition of our DVD magazine called SX Digital supplied free to all Sydney Anglican parishes. Alternatively, download the Archbishop's message from the video player on Sydneyanglicans.net.

To die. To die without having made peace with God. To die and to pass into eternity with no-one to be a friend. That's hell. But no-one has to do that. There is someone who died for you and who passed through death for you. When it comes to your present and your future, when it comes even to death and

MISSION PRAYER

Almighty God, We call upon you for such an outpouring of your Holy Spirit upon us, that we as your people may be assured of your love through your word, seek to please the Saviour in all things, manifest the godly life and be filled with prayerful and sacrificial compassion for the lost in all the world. In the name of our Saviour Jesus Christ, **Amen.**

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THE GOD WHO LOVES US TO DEATH



PHOTO: K S Trebor

JOHN DICKSON and GREG CLARKE defend the idea that God is love and argue that those who think of Jesus' crucifixion as sadomasochistic are wrong.

SOME people today are concerned that the Christian teaching that Jesus was killed on a cross 'in the place' of us sinners sounds unfair – even worse, it sounds like God tortured his own Son in order to forgive our sins.

World-famous atheist author Richard Dawkins with typical zest describes it as "vicious, sadomasochistic and repellent". He also calls it "barking mad" and asks, "If God wanted to forgive our sins, why not just forgive them?" (see *The God Delusion*).

Even some Christian theologians are struggling with this, because it is so hard to think of God as violent or vindictive or bloodthirsty. We know God is love. We can't think God is cruel.

And he's not.

It's really off-key to think of God as some kind of 'cosmic child abuser'.

To help explain why, it's important we look closely at what Jesus himself thought about his mission and impending death.

1. FORGIVENESS: A KEY TEACHING

Historically, there's no question: one of the central themes resounding on the shores of Galilee was that of forgiveness.

In Jesus' view people had replaced God's commands with their own cultural norms and traditions. They were pandering to the rich, trampling on the poor and pursuing a path of intolerance and violence. In short, they hadn't loved God or their neighbour – and, for Jesus, that's what life here on earth was all about.

He was once asked a favourite theological question of the time: "Which is the greatest of God's commandments?". The Pharisees had counted 613 commandments in Scripture, so there were quite a few to choose from.

Jesus quoted just two: "Love God with all your heart" and "love your neighbour as yourself" (Mark 12:28-31).

According to Jesus, the Golden Rule of God's Kingdom is a simple, twofold directive: love your Maker and love your neighbour. The logic is seamless. If God exists, what could be more basic to human life than devotion to the Creator and care for our fellow creatures? Jesus left no room here either for the religious hypocrite who loves God but doesn't care for others, or for the moral agnostic who

is ethical toward others but ignores God himself. According to Jesus, both fail God's demands.

There's no question: the Jesus of history declared judgment on all who refused to love God and neighbour.

However, Jesus' emphasis on divine punishment has to be balanced with another, seemingly contradictory, aspect of his life. He befriended those we might've thought were first in line for the 'fires' of judgment.

All scholars agree: one of Jesus' most striking habits was to associate with the immoral and irreligious – those classed

It's really off-key to think of God as some kind of 'cosmic child abuser'.

'sinners'. The word 'sinner' sounds strange now, but in the first century it was a potent insult.

The *Psalms of Solomon* is a Jewish text probably written by Pharisees in Jerusalem shortly before Jesus. It does a good job of conveying the contemporary attitudes toward sinners: "But [the righteous] shall pursue sinners and overtake them, for those who act lawlessly shall not escape the Lord's judgment. They shall be overtaken as by those experienced in war, for on their forehead is the mark of destruction. And the inheritance of sinners is destruction and darkness".

The document goes on to say how the

hoped-for Messiah would "smash the arrogance of sinners like a potter's jar" and "condemn sinners by the thoughts of their hearts".

We can say with some confidence that Jesus' habit of associating with sinners was not exactly Messiah-like.

More astonishing in a first-century setting was Jesus' practice of dining with sinners. In Jesus' day eating with someone was far more than a convenient way to fill your stomach: it was a real social statement. You normally only sat down at a table with those you wanted to honour as family and equals. As a result,

there were quite strict rules against eating with the immoral or irreligious. Their 'impurity' was believed to be contagious. Jesus had a very different view.

Luke 5:29-32. Levi held a great feast for Jesus at his house, with a large crowd of tax collectors; and others were there as well, reclining at the table with them. Now the Pharisees and Scribes complained to Jesus' disciples, "Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?". And Jesus replied, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to invite the righteous, but sinners to repentance".

Jesus wasn't approving of the behaviour

of sinners, as the religious leaders feared. He was trying to send a powerful message about the kingdom of God. Yes, the kingdom would overthrow all who rejected the path of love, but until then God offered amnesty to all who wanted it. Jesus' controversial meals were a symbol of the forgiveness he believed God held out to sinners before the day of judgment.

2. WIPING THE SLATE CLEAN

Jesus preached that God was inclined to wipe the slate clean for those who admit that they have not lived the way God wants them to – have not loved God and neighbour.

Many years ago, I (John) was in deep video trouble. I'd simply forgotten to return a film; in fact, it had fallen behind the television, out of sight and out of mind. No letter arrived from the video store, and months went past before we looked behind the TV and the video tumbled into view.

It turned out that the video was six months overdue and the extended viewing fees must have amounted to a couple of hundred dollars.

To return or not to return? To face the music and pay the fine, or to act as if nothing were wrong?

Just at this very tricky point, a letter arrived in the mailbox from the video store, addressed personally. It wasn't demanding payment or chastising the recipient for his misdemeanours (both of which would have been completely within reason). No, it said something entirely unexpected: 'WE'RE WIPING THE SLATE CLEAN'. I turned it over and read the words: "We would like to welcome you back to our store and 'wipe the slate clean'. Simply bring in this postcard to your local video store and we will remove all fees, no questions asked".

In disbelief, I grabbed the video, rushed to the store, postcard in hand. I eagerly, and somewhat sheepishly, showed the card to the store attendant. Although the smirk on her face was not entirely non-judgmental, she did do what the card promised. She called up 'Dickson, J' on the computer, went to the 'fees and fines' column, and inserted a beautiful zero.

It was only as I left the store that I realised that what had just happened was a perfect gift to anyone who is trying

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to explain what Christianity and Jesus' teaching are all about.

God is in the business of 'wiping the slate clean'. God knows that the debt we owe him – all of our wrongdoing, our failures to live a life of love, all of our sin is profound and unpayable. But God is willing to wipe the slate clean, to forgive and forget.

So we're left with a paradox. Jesus who regularly proclaimed God's judgment, also befriended those under judgment. Throughout history people have tried to resolve this tension by focusing on one or other part of Jesus' teaching. Some think only of his inclusiveness; others prefer his warnings. However, we must try to hold both threads together.

The first Christians, of course, had no problem holding these thoughts together. For them, the paradox was resolved not in Jesus' life but in his death. On the cross, they said, Jesus bore the judgment sinners deserve. What his meals with sinners symbolised, his death would secure.

3. JESUS, THE WILLING SACRIFICE

If you actually read the historical sources for Jesus' death, you discover that Jesus knew that he had to go through this terrible suffering. The clearest evidence that Jesus knew his destiny comes in a statement recorded in three independent historical sources.

During the Passover festival of AD30, as he sat down for his Last Supper, Jesus spoke words that would be repeated every week in churches throughout the world.

Luke 22:19-20: Jesus... took the cup of wine and said, "This cup is the

JESUS' JEWISH BACKGROUND AND WHAT HIS DEATH MEANT TO HIM

JESUS never pitted divine love against divine judgment. Both themes stand side by side in the gospel accounts of Jesus' teaching, just as they stand side by side in the Jewish concept of atonement.

At the centre of the Jewish legal code lay sacrificial atonement. The Old Testament book of Leviticus, for instance, describes the great *Yom Kippur*, Day of Atonement, in which Israel's sins were symbolically transferred to a sacrificial goat.

Much later in the Jewish Scriptures we find a strange prophecy about a man, known simply as the Lord's *Servant*, whose own life would be given in a kind of *Yom Kippur*:

Surely he took up our pain and bore our suffering, yet we considered him punished by God, stricken by him, and afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed. We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to our own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all. (Isaiah 53:4-6)

Many scholars see this passage as the key to understanding Jesus' own view of his suffering.

When Jesus at his Last Supper spoke of his blood as the "blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many", he was recalling a centuries-old tradition.

Mercy and judgment lay side by side in Jewish thought because both were intrinsic to the character of Israel's God. He was always willing to forgive but never at the expense of justice; he would always deal justly with evil but never without the offer of mercy. Atonement is the resolution of this tension in the heart of God. It is how he shows himself to be just toward sin yet forgiving toward the sinner.

In his ground-breaking study of the historical origins of the New Testament idea of atonement, Professor Martin Hengel of the University of Tübingen draws all of this together:

Jesus celebrated the Passover meal with his disciples and in it... in a symbolic action he related the broken bread to the breaking of his body and at the end of the meal the wine in the cup of blessing to the pouring out of his blood, through which the new eschatological covenant with God would be founded and atonement would be achieved for all.



Professor Martin Hengel from the University of Tübingen has shown in his ground-breaking study of the Jewish notion of atonement the key to understanding Jesus' understanding of his own death.

new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you".

By referring to his coming death as the "new covenant in his blood... poured out for others" Jesus was suggesting that his personal sacrifice would save people from divine judgement.

4. GOD THE JUDGE PAYS THE PRICE

Christianity teaches that Jesus' death on the cross was a kind of payment for sin – it was the price of justice, so to speak.

God can't simply ignore sin and still be

considered perfect and just.

So Jesus – who, according to Christians and the New Testament, is himself divine – willingly pays that price. It's a sign of how much God wants us, and how costly it is for a holy God to deal with the corruption of the world and humanity.

The image of a judge who, instead of condemning a lawbreaker, gets out of his seat and pays the fine himself – that image helps me.

It isn't God forcing Jesus to do it – it's Jesus the judge doing it himself. The New

Testament sources are clear that Jesus died willingly.

Of course, in historical terms, Jesus was killed by Romans who wanted to keep the peace with the religious authorities of the day.

But what for Pilate was a minor administrative matter, soon forgotten, was for the first Christians the 'crux' of God's mercy to the world.

Jesus' death was anything but macabre or cruel; it was the sign and substance of divine love.

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Bible Studies 5-8
Archbishop Peter Jensen

Dr Jensen's weekly Bible study series on *The Essential Jesus* (the gospel of Luke), designed for use with the friend or neighbour you have given the book to. Here are the April studies.

Follow-up questions can be addressed to the Archbishop at his Sydneyanglicans.net Bible study blog site.

WEEK 5 – Luke 2 (pages 11-14)

The circumstances of Jesus' birth were obscure, even shameful. His earthly father and mother were not yet married. The only accommodation was with animals, and his cradle was a trough. His 'courtiers' were shepherds. And yet, there was glory. Hosts of angels appeared, Mary was a virgin, Bethlehem was David's town and was the place from which an eternal ruler would come (Micah 5:2), and the angels called him 'Christ the Lord' and said that his birth was a matter of 'news of great joy'. The glory and the shame both revealed the truth about him: his humility was inherent in his greatness.

Two prophets, Simeon and Anna, identified him as the expected Saviour. Simeon made it clear that Jesus was for all people, but warned Mary of suffering to come. Anyone looking forward to God's next great deliverance should know that the deliverer had arrived, but that deliverance would be costly.

- 1 Why does Luke mention that Mary 'treasured all these things, and thought them over in her heart'?
- 2 What is the connection between Jesus being a Saviour and his being a King?
- 3 How was the salvation through Jesus going to impact on all peoples?
- 4 Why was Jesus born a Jew? Is this a mere accident, or was it a necessity?

WEEK 6 – Luke 3 (pages 14-17)

Luke wanted to nail history down, so he dated everything by well-known people. He also gives the Jesus family tree at the end of this chapter. He shows that Jesus was descended from David, Abraham and Adam. Each of those ancestors played a big part in the history which God created when he saved the world through Jesus. So did John the Baptist. John did three things. First, he readied people for the coming of God's wrath by calling for repentance. Their lives needed to be God-centred, and it should show. Second, he established that Jesus was the one whom they should look to. Third, he got himself arrested for rebuking King Herod. His suffering showed how dangerous the ministry of Jesus was going to be.

1 How did John compare and contrast the ministry of Jesus with his own? Was it a matter of wrath on the one hand and love on the other?

- 2 What do you think of John's advice to the soldiers about suitable repentance?
- 3 Why would people claim Abraham as their father, and why did John criticise this?
- 4 What indications are there in this chapter that the forgiveness of sins and salvation was not going to be for the Jews alone?

WEEK 7 – Luke 4: 1-13 (pages 17-18)

In chapter 3 we read that Jesus will baptise people with the Holy Spirit. Now the Spirit leads him into the wilderness where he will be thoroughly tested. Can he sustain this? Satan aims to bring him down to frustrate the plan of God. He seeks to divert Jesus from his calling as Son of God to bring salvation by God's method. Jesus uses the sword of the Spirit which is the word of God, and the shield of faith. He trusts God, at great cost to himself. He knows that to save the world he needs to obey God's revealed will. He repulses Satan for our sake.

- 1 What were the sins of other biblical champions? What does this show us about Jesus?
- 2 What tests did Israel experience in the desert and how did they differ from those of Jesus?
- 3 Why is merely quoting the Bible

insufficient to defeat temptation? Is this what Jesus did?

4 What do you make of the words 'he left Jesus until an opportune time'?

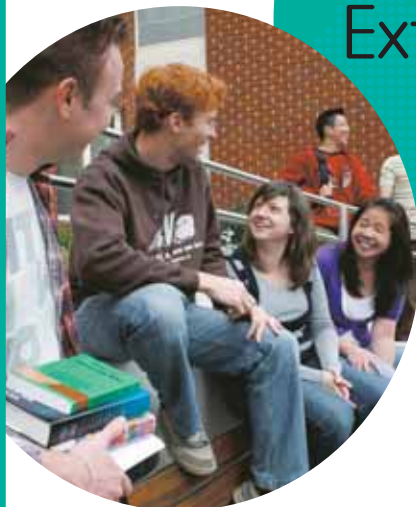
WEEK 8 – Luke 4:14-44 (pages 18-19)

Jesus is now the centre of Luke's story. He is magnificent – and very different from the pale imitation Jesus that people today so often carry around in their heads. Jesus announces the coming of God's kingdom, that great moment when God will bring the whole world to rights and make it what it should be. This is what salvation and judgment are about. But the secret is that Jesus himself is the King. He describes the wonders of his kingdom in the synagogue. He teaches with authority, breaks the grip of demonic forces on human beings, repels the power of death. He demonstrates what the new kingdom will be like. He attracts crowds, questions and rejection. But he does not stay. He moves on to announce its coming elsewhere, and to get people ready for it.

- 1 Apart from giving us a small indication of what the kingdom of God is like, why did Jesus quote Isaiah?
- 2 Should we understand the release of the prisoners, sight to the blind and good news for the poor spiritually or literally?
- 3 Why did Jesus not allow the demons to identify him?
- 4 What is the significance of the attempt to murder Jesus? Is it significant that it occurred in his home town?

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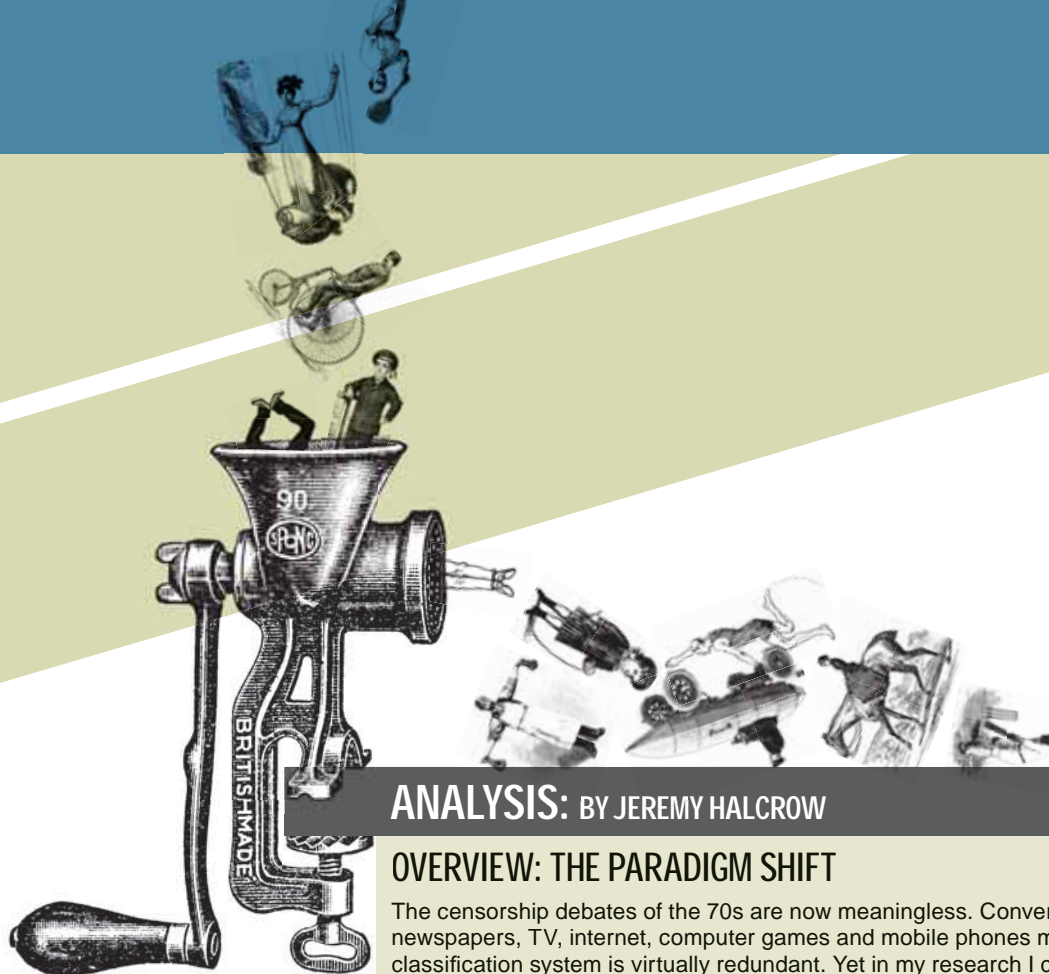
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"The wages you failed to pay the workmen are crying out..."

Rudd's PORN FILTER MACHINE

SAVIOUR or DESTROYER of the internet?



ANALYSIS: BY JEREMY HALCROW

OVERVIEW: THE PARADIGM SHIFT

The censorship debates of the 70s are now meaningless. Convergence between newspapers, TV, internet, computer games and mobile phones means our existing classification system is virtually redundant. Yet in my research I could find no church leader applying thought-out ethics to the real complexities involved. Sermons complaining about what's on free-to-air TV should be relegated to the horse and buggy era. Theoretically kids can watch illegal sexually violent footage - even torture - on their mobiles and there is no mechanism that can stop this. On the other hand, heavy-handed Government intervention may significantly degrade freedoms Christians take for granted. The internet is collapsing the gap between public and private 'broadcast' space. This makes attempts to directly apply the existing classification system for print, film and computer games to the net particularly problematic.

TIER 1- MANDATORY BLACKLIST FILTER

It is almost universally agreed that a small targeted blacklist filter focused on overseas-hosted *illegal* content is technically workable. Despite the fact that Senator Conroy told both Senate estimates and the recent Australian Telecommunications Users Group conference the proposed mandatory filter would only screen 'refused classification' (RC) material, there is much public confusion about the extent of the Government's plans. Some Christians worry about the secrecy around any mandatory blacklist.

TIER 2 – 'OPT-OUT' DYNAMIC FILTER

This filter is proposed to screen *legal* porn. Citizens would have to opt out of the filter to be excluded. There is a debate between the technical experts on whether this model is feasible. Many of the ISPs say it's a pipe dream, and that if the idea is implemented it will damage the Internet by degrading performance. Webshield's Anthony Pillion says it can work, and won't reduce speeds if engineered properly. The \$2 billion Australian porn industry should be worried about this aspect of the proposal if implemented. It would hit them hard. Most of their content is hosted offshore to avoid local regulation.

CHRISTIAN RESPONSES

ANTI-FILTER SAY: Some Sydney Anglicans argue that it's up to individuals to decide what material they want to view. Therefore parents are responsible for supervising their kids' internet usage. There are also fears that a filter based on a secret blacklist gives the Government too much power to silence political dissent. Anti-filter Sydney Anglicans draw on Reformation arguments about the need to regulate the power of the State in order to protect the conscience of the vulnerable individual.

PRO-FILTER SAY: New mobile web devices make it impossible for parents to monitor their teen's usage. Personal filters do not work on mobile phones. The Australian Christian Lobby argues that increasing access to sexually violent pornography will damage Australian society by increasing sexual crimes, especially against women. There is well-regarded psychological research that does show that 7 percent of the population are likely to develop sexually violent behaviours after viewing illegal porn.

HALCROW'S VIEW: 'Total' free speech arguments spring from an individualistic worldview that is not biblical. The Rev Dr Andrew Cameron from the Diocese's Social Issues Executive argues in his paper 'Freeing Speech' that a Christian account acknowledges limits on free speech: "human freedom... finds its fulfilment in community". Concern for the common good and especially vulnerable people – such as women and children who may be the victims of future sexual assaults – should be the primary starting point for Christians as they enter this debate.

That said, the secret nature of the proposed blacklist is a justified concern. To clarify this I have spoken off-the-record with some of the relevant public servants. Determinations of RC content (therefore the proposed mandatory filter) are not made by the Australian Government through the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA) but only by the independent Office of Film and Literature Classification (OFLC). Any decisions of the OFLC can be challenged and independently reviewed by a 'community' board. The OFLC media officer told me that (currently) they 'always' publish publicly a record of these review decisions. In regard to a future RC-based mandatory filter, I can see no reason why a descriptive account of the banned sites (which does not specifically list the url) cannot be published. Given the free speech concerns, churches should not back the final filter proposal unless it contains the independent checks and balances I have outlined.

The Government's proposed trial of internet filtering of porn caused an epic and feisty discussion on our website Sydneyanglicans.net. JEREMY HALCROW provides an introduction to the debate.

THE Canberra-based Australian Christian Lobby (ACL) is battling a rearguard action to keep the Rudd Government's promise of an anti-porn net filter trial on track.

Most Christians no doubt welcome the idea of bringing the internet into line with the classification system for magazines, video and TV.

As ACL spokesperson Glynis Quinlan told me: "In newsagents under 18s aren't given access to this material... why should the internet be exempt and completely unclassified?"

But that's merely where this public policy debate gets juicy. The ACL's position looks naive to many IT experts.

Christian dilemma

With the Greens and crossbench Senator Nick Xenophon opposed to the filtering plan it will only pass in the Senate if both major parties stay on board. So mainstream public opinion will decide the matter. And that is your dilemma.

1. Speak out and our churches may end up embarrassed as unthinking Luddites crusading for an unworkable and dangerous form of censorship.

2. Shut up and are we gutless dupes of powerful vested interests, including the porn industry?

That's certainly the ACL's take on the church's silence. "There is a campaign out there to bamboozle the public, and Christians are vulnerable to this," ACL's Glynis Quinlan said. "The issue is being put in very misconstrued terms."

The websites the Government wants to impose mandatory filtering on are much nastier than *Playboy*. The focus is material that if in print or video would be deemed illegal 'refuse classification': child porn, sexual violence, and bestiality.

Much of the IT industry concern about 'destroying the internet' relates to the 'dynamic' filtering approach needed for the opt-out second tier 'soft porn' filter.

This concern does not relate to the mandatory filter. Anthony Pillion, managing director of Webshield explains: "The loudest complaint is that it will slow down the internet for everyone. The truth is that, if implemented correctly, mandatory filtering will not slow down the internet in any way that would be noticeable to the end user."

But before readers throw the accusation of vested interest at Mr Pillion, the ISPs do agree with him on this point.

iPrimus CEO Ravi Bhati says the controversy around this is a "storm in a teacup" and that critics should not pre-judge the capabilities of the content filters until results are available from the trials.

Even iiNet's Michael Malone, the most aggressive industry opponent of the Government trials, admitted in his *Australian IT* blog that: "Filtering one, two or a hundred sites won't be a problem, but opening the scope of this trial to 'unwanted' material and 10,000 sites or more will have a negative impact."

And here is the rub. The concerns are based on the assumption that a mandatory filter will use the Government's current ACMA blacklist guidelines.

Senator Conroy is talking about blocking illegal material. And yet the guidelines for the ACMA blacklist – drawn up by the Howard Government – were not designed with this kind of mandatory filter in mind. It currently contains 1,300 urls including many legal sites deemed merely 'inappropriate' for children. According to Conroy's Senate estimate transcripts only 50 percent of the urls relate to sexually explicit material. "You are talking 700 or 800 urls. That changes the ballpark," Mr Pillion says. "It is absolutely possible that a small number of urls can be blocked across the Australian landscape."

Indeed this is exactly the same sort of filter system that is already operational in the UK, Canada and Sweden.

SYDNEY
ANGLICANS



Anatomy of the debate: following is a synopsis drawing on some of the 180 comments and other feedback on the issue at sydneyanglicans.net

Malcolm Purvis

(Member of the Diocese's Standing Committee)
We'll need to come up with our own strategies for the internet. Personally, I like the idea of Covenant Eyes, which sends someone else the list of URLs that you've visited (which is technically easy), rather than doing the much harder task of filtering.

Steve Kryger

(Founder of communicatejesus.com and Internet marketing expert)
As far as I'm aware, there are no personal filters available for mobile devices, such as phones, which are increasingly being used for internet downloads. I've contacted Covenant Eyes about extending their

the filter.

However, we can't prevent all the crime in the world, but that doesn't prevent us from having police. We don't call our police a success only if they prevent every crime from being committed, or catch every criminal.

In the same way, the filter doesn't need to be judged a success only if it prevents every piece of illegal content from being accessed.

Luke Stevens

(Award-winning Christian web developer)
You misunderstand the technical argument, Steve. No one is saying, "It won't be 100 percent perfect, therefore it's not worthwhile". We're saying it won't be even vaguely useful at all, and that's

do is block what they produce.

Yes, in extremely limited circumstances, this is possible (the small blacklist). However these circumstances are so limited as to be more or less effectively meaningless.

Jeremy Halcrow

Luke, you are pessimistic about mandatory filters. Other experts [like Anthony] are more optimistic. The responsible thing to do is have a trial to prove who is right.

I am arguing that the Classification Board process should review all urls on the blacklist, due to the freedom of speech concerns.

Fiona Patten

(CEO Eros and porn industry lobbyist)

filter/accountability software to mobile devices, and they don't expect to have this ready for at least 15 months.

The proposed filter is one way of restricting access to illegal content on mobile devices.

I think it's worth emphasising that what the government is proposing to block with this filter is illegal content: child porn, violent sexual content, bestiality. It's content that isn't legal to be accessed in any way in Australia, yet because it's online, it is available and readily accessible.

Duncan Maitland

(IT expert)
The filter will not and cannot achieve its stated aims of improving cyber-safety. Much illegal content is shared over P2P [peer to peer] networks, which are difficult to filter. In addition such material can be shared over encrypted channels, and no filter will be able to inspect encrypted content to determine if it should be blocked. Even if we are only talking about blocking a small number of URLs on a blacklist... it is also a trivial matter to bypass such a blacklist by setting up an encrypted channel to a proxy server overseas. There are many free proxy services available.

So have a filtering pilot, by all means. But it won't make the internet safer.

Steve Kryger

Duncan, you're right, a filter won't stop this content from being distributed via P2P networks, and hackers will find a way around

why it is not worthwhile.

To use your police analogy, this is like paying \$45 million for an internet police force that sits around all day, annoying everyone else trying to run a business and then retiring to their seat while whatever is happening continues to go on regardless.

The internet genie isn't going back in the bottle. We can't wind back the clock here. There are two issues: the blacklist and the dynamic filtering. The concern is mostly the burden created by the dynamic filtering imposed on all ISPs... it's hard to imagine network performance won't be degraded by the burden on the network. For those options that don't, they will still break secure ecommerce transactions, return false positives, and degrade performance.

Anthony Pillion

(Managing Director of Web-shield)
If engineered properly, even a dynamic filter wouldn't impact on the rest of the network. If it does, it's an engineering failure.

A blacklist filter will not go near ecommerce transactions... false positives are rare with blacklist filters... international implementations are proven not to degrade performance.

Luke Stevens

The internet is obviously a global phenomenon with no past media equivalent. The question of 'regulating free speech' has to take this into account, and given you can't prosecute people in other countries, the only thing you can

As CEO of the Eros Association I represent adult businesses in Australia. As the convener of the Australian Sex Party my concern is about Australian adults' right to choose. Sex is the canary of censorship. When it is censored other forms of expression are always next...

Jeremy Halcrow

Fiona, 'individual choice' is not a universal value without limits. It has to be balanced against other concerns such as protection of the vulnerable. But be honest - it's the optional part of the proposal that has you most worried?

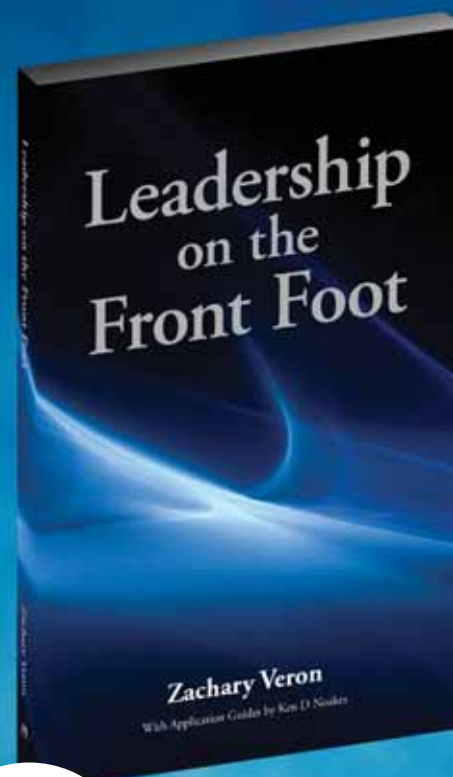
Fiona Patten

Almost all Australian adult sites are hosted offshore due to the 1999 internet legislation. Most of my comment on this issue is in regards to the mandatory filter rather than the optout filter. I think it is misleading to call it optional. If it was an opt-in filter then I would consider it optional. But the fact that you have to contact your ISP and ask to have it removed does not make it optional.

Michael Jensen

(Lecturer in Theology, Moore Theological College)
The internet has blurred the distinction between what we used to know as 'public' and 'private'. These categories were useful for determining how explicit material could be available to those adults who chose to view it, but not on public display. But the internet blows away that distinction... or makes it harder to control.

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This book has a wealth of practical and helpful material which reflects a ministry that has been greatly blessed by God. It is my hope that younger ministers in particular will be able to glean much that is helpful for them in their own work and witness.

Peter Jensen – Archbishop of Sydney

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Bishop v Bishop



THREE REASONS DR BISHOP IS MISTAKEN Dr John Woodhouse

JOHN Bishop has provided a careful explanation of the difficulties he sees with the motion passed by the Sydney Synod last October regarding the administration of the Lord's Supper by lay people and deacons. There are a few points to be made in response:

1. He does not identify any prohibition in Church Law that would make lay and diaconal administration of the Lord's Supper illegal. Indeed he does not tell us why it would require an ordinance signed by the Archbishop to make such a practice legal. This to my mind is of fundamental importance. To simply declare that something is illegal, but not point us to the law that would be broken, is problematic.

2. Legal barriers are sometimes perceived by lawyers because of questionable theological assumptions. For example, if one assumes that the essence of a "priest's" ministry is presiding at the Eucharist then allowing lay people to administer the Lord's Supper may be seen as compromising this office. However, both the Book of Common Prayer and the New Testament do not allow that assumption. Curiously, something like this appears in Dr Bishop's arguments where he sees that "the celebration of the Lord's Supper by lay persons and deacons is a *quintessential expression of the priesthood of all believers*". It is certainly no such thing. Dr Bishop's statement assumes that celebration of the Lord's Supper is a *priestly* activity. My point is that in this matter some legal opinions are based on *theological errors*.

3. It is at least interesting to note that Dr Bishop proposes that a Sydney Diocesan Ordinance signed by the Archbishop is what is needed. This is contrary to the 1997 opinion of the Appellate Tribunal that a canon of General Synod would be required. There is no difficulty with Dr Bishop differing from the Appellate Tribunal opinion. However, it is not clear that Dr Bishop is consistent here. Elsewhere in his argument he seems to give that opinion much more weight.

The Rev Dr John Woodhouse is principal of Moore Theological College.

BISHOP GLENN DAVIES answers the concerns of barrister John Bishop raised in the last edition, that the plan to allow deacons to administer the Lord's Supper may not be legal. Bishop Davies says Dr Bishop's understanding of the issues is flawed.

WAS intrigued to read John Bishop's article in last month's *Southern Cross* on the matter of diaconal and lay administration of the Lord's Supper. Dr Bishop makes a number of points, with which some of the majority of the Synod would agree – in particular "there is good reason for the endorsement of such a practice".

However, Dr Bishop doubts its legality, indicating that "[the] Synod decision raises questions of law and process."

The Synod did not make a "decision" but merely expressed an opinion. By expressing such an opinion nothing in law has changed. There is no process that is affected by the resolution of the Synod, merely the observation that the majority of those present and voting expressed their view (not dissimilar to Dr Bishop's view) that the Lord's Supper "may be

administered by persons other than presbyters".

For those who were not at the Synod for the debate, it was clearly stated that the Archbishop will not authorise lay persons to administer the Lord's Supper. Since lay administration requires a specific licence of the Archbishop for it to be lawful, there is little to be gained in pursuing the legality of lay administration.

However, diaconal administration is another matter. Unlike lay administration it does not require specific authorisation from the Archbishop, as its authorisation is embedded in the service of the Ordination of Deacons, a service which was approved by General Synod in 1985 and has been adopted by every diocese in Australia. Dr Bishop contends that there was no intention of the General Synod to allow deacons to assist the presbyter in

the administration of the Lord's Supper, *despite the fact that the words of the service say precisely that.*

The exact words of the ordaining bishop, when giving a copy of the New Testament to the deacon, are: "Receive this sign of your authority to proclaim God's Word and to assist in the administration of his holy sacraments."

No one doubts the fact that this service authorises deacons to baptise adults, despite the fact that this practice was previously unlawful in the Anglican Church in Australia. Under the 1662 Book of Common Prayer, deacons were only authorised to baptise *infants* in the absence of the priest. The 1985 canon expanded the role of the deacon's authority to assist the presbyter in baptising adults as well as infants. While there is no record of the "intention" of the General Synod to expand the role of deacons in administering baptism, the text of the canon clearly achieved such an outcome. Similarly, the text of the canon expanded the role of deacons in the administration of the Lord's Supper. In the administration of both sacraments the deacon assists the presbyter. As Justice Keith Mason says in his "Reference on Women Bishops" (2007 Appellate Tribunal): "The primary source of the presumed 'intention' of a legislative body is the language it uses."

Intriguingly, Dr Bishop cites Mr Justice Mason approvingly in his article, while at the same time boldly claims: "I cannot see any evidence of that intention in the language of the canon".

He goes on to say: "[the] quoted words are the classic descriptions of the role of the deacon in the administration of the Lord's Supper as it existed at the time".

Not so! The classic description of the role of the deacon is to assist the priest in the "distribution" of the elements of bread and wine¹ – *not* the "administration" of the same. While lay people often confuse

"distribution" with "administration", the two are not synonymous either in the *Book of Common Prayer*, the Canons of 1604 or the current canons of the Church of England. The Anglican Church of Australia has never used the term "administration of the Lord's Supper" when describing the role of the deacon until 1985, when the General Synod passed the Ordination of Deacons Canon.

CONTINUED PAGE 23 ►



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GFC: can we still afford our ethical priorities?



ANGUS DENNIS argues that churches should stick by their moral principles when investing in the currently tough market. And it makes financial sense as well...

WHEN times are tough, people tend to rethink their belief systems, ethics or priorities. What seemed important in the good times, and the costs we thought we could manage, suddenly look very different when things turn for the worse.

This is certainly true with investment decisions where people seek to minimise their personal risk exposure and stick to 'safer' options.

Lately a number of industry commentators have questioned whether ethical or sustainable investment equals good financial sense in these times of market volatility associated with the Global Financial Crisis (GFC). Let me say, categorically, the answer is yes.

Ethical or sustainable investment is not just about giving people a warm, fuzzy feeling and the knowledge that they are doing the 'right' thing.

One of the central reasons why ethical or sustainable investment models have themselves been sustainable is that these funds make good investment decisions.

It makes financial sense

Anglican National Super, as a signature fund of AMP Capital, invests in the Responsible Investment Leaders range. As a case study of how the funds have held up during the financial crisis, it is helpful to look at one of the funds within the range, Responsible Investment Leaders International Share Fund, and see how it has performed and what have been the drivers.

This fund is the top performing international multi-manager (unhedged) share fund over one year and three years, to December 2008, according to the Chant West Multi-Manager quarterly survey, which has included the fund in the survey since it was first managed as a multi-manager fund in September 2005.

In the year to 31 Dec 2008 markets have fallen significantly. In that environment the RIL International Share Fund has actually outperformed the

median (or middle ranked) international shares manager in this survey by some 8% according to this ChantWest survey.

So what has been driving these better returns, avoiding some of the individual company meltdowns?

Through assessing environmental, social and governance (ESG) factors in addition to financial factors, the Fund has favoured higher quality companies which have performed better in the downturn.

One strategy of the fund is to invest in "industries of the future", including sectors like environmental services, water management, healthcare, cleaner energy and knowledge. These are well aligned with a long-term trend towards sustainability. Within this framework a number of sectors have shown strong resilience. For example both healthcare and educational demand are still evident in the market downturn.

The market downturn has actually highlighted the good financial sense in supporting industries with a strong future in terms of global sustainability and social capital.

Looking ahead

Everyone would like to be able to predict market activity in the immediate, short and long term. We feel that, in any market conditions, having a focus on environmental, social and governance issues will stand an investor well in the long term.

Read widely and stay updated with industry comment on this subject.

Paul Willis, from Anglican National Super, can answer your questions and refer you to AMP Capital Sustainability Research papers and the SRI Newsletter. You can also subscribe to 'Oliver's Insights', regular economic updates provided by Dr Shane Oliver, AMP Capital's Chief Economist.

Angus Dennis is AMP Capital Investment Specialist, Equities & Responsible Investment Leaders.

*Past performance is not a reliable indicator of future performance.

Parishes: Tips for beating GFC #2



by Nathan Brown

DON'T become organisationally focussed.

The temptation is to focus on the needs of our church (as an institution) when this is the very thing that in the end is irrelevant. In fundraising terms, people don't care about the church buildings or its programs. What they truly care about, what they will pray for and support – even sacrificially – is impact, such as knowing people are coming to Christ.

Also, be wise and prayerful stewards. But remember that stewardship never originates from a position of fear.

Nathan Brown heads global fundraiser Dunham & co for the Asia-Pacific

World: Food crisis could worsen

by Jeremy Halcrow



THE global food price crisis – caused in part by increased energy costs and the use of biofuels – is not over, despite lowering commodity prices. Indeed protectionism may make the crisis worse, the World Bank said last month.

Many countries, including 17 of the G20 members, have implemented a total of 47 measures restricting trade since the GFC hit.

Rising food prices especially impacts those people who spend 60 percent or more of their income on food. The World Bank now estimates there are 923 million people around the world who are malnourished, while growing unemployment is predicted to push an additional 53 million people into poverty.

NGOs, such as Compassion and World Vision, have emergency relief programs in place in the worst-hit countries.

In Bangladesh and Ethiopia, Compassion is ensuring child development centres can operate normally, offering the same level of nutritional services as well as distributing seeds and agricultural tools so families can grow their own food as well as have an opportunity to earn extra income.

Diocese: Cutbacks looming



by Steve McKerihan

LIKE most organisations, our Diocese's finances have been impacted by the Global Financial Crisis (GFC).

The most serious impact has been on the Diocesan Endowment (DE) which is managed by the Glebe Administration Board (GAB). This fund has invested in a range of areas including shares, other listed securities, direct property, loans and cash. Like all equity investors the DE has sustained significant losses. The impact of these losses was magnified because we had increased the amount of investments through the use of borrowed money.

A decision was taken late in 2008 to sell a large component of the equity investments and repay virtually all bank debt. This was done to protect the capital of the DE from further losses.

The main implication is that grant distributions to a range of Diocesan organisations are expected to fall significantly from 2010 onwards. All recipients have been informed of this.

The appropriate reduction in total distributions and the impact on each recipient is being considered by Standing Committee and will ultimately be decided by Synod in October.

Administration costs at the Diocesan Secretariat have been reduced and a number of redundancies have occurred. This has flowed through to significant fee reductions for Diocesan clients.

The value of Glebe Income Account (GIA) depositors' funds is completely unaffected by the investment losses. Total balances have remained very stable. These deposits are backed by substantial cash holdings, a well-performing loan portfolio, a stable direct property investment and a substantial undrawn bank line.

GAB is providing detailed reporting to Standing Committee on the losses incurred, the reasons for them and the actions taken to protect the DE from further declines. This reporting will also be provided to Synod in October.

Steve McKerihan is CEO of the Sydney Diocesan Secretariat

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GFC: time for vision or to be realistic?

I want to applaud those ministers who are holding to their vision in these uncertain economic times (*SC*, March). Having endless debates about what aspects of ministry should be cut back must not be the main focus in these circumstances. Keeping our vision big is the wisest and most godly path for churches to follow.

For the local church, the primary driver for giving is evangelism: the number of people coming to church. Statistics indicate that average giving per head is very similar in churches in wealthy areas and those in less wealthy areas.

An increase in evangelism and the number of people at church, therefore, will lead to an increase in giving. While the rest of the economy at this time is suffering from reduced demand, it is precisely this situation God historically uses to get more people thinking about what is really important. That is, we should be in the unique situation where we have more 'demand' than normal.

We have every reason to push forward. If it is true that average giving is 'around 3.5 per cent of church attenders' incomes' (research quoted in *SC*), that is indicative of a deep spiritual problem. It is probably true that 20 per cent of the people fund 80 per cent of the local church.

At this time we must remember those who have become unemployed as well as those whose fixed incomes have fallen, such as retirees. But from a macro perspective, this is at least balanced by those who now have higher disposable incomes because of lower interest rates and falling petrol prices.

Connect09 has come at a wonderful time, under the sovereignty of God. And in the light of this time of incredible opportunity for the gospel, we must hold our nerve. It is not the time to become defensive and cut back, but to step out in prayerful dependence upon God.

**The Rev Raj Gupta
Toongabbie, NSW**

Thanks, Jeremy Halcrow, for an interesting feature on the US mega-church meltdown. It seems St Barnabas', Broadway have learned nothing from recent events and are in the process of trying to build their own Crystal Cathedral. The justification that \$12 million over 150 years is good value is nonsense. Who knows what will be appropriate for Christian worship in 150 years time. Time to be realistic at St Barnabas! Perhaps a more modest plan would be more appropriate.

**David Broadley,
Gerrigong, NSW**

In the GFC feature, the Rev Ian Powell justifies the \$12 million St Barnabas' rebuilding cost on the basis it will serve generations for the next 150 years.

A church is simply a meeting place. Advancement in technology and changing community needs restrict its life

to under 30 years before it needs to be totally renovated.

Take St Andrew's Cathedral as an example: it is a heritage structure and part of Sydney's history, but totally impractical as a modern place of worship. It is a sound technician's nightmare, electronic data projection is limited, heating virtually impossible, seating is uncomfortable and you need a pair of binoculars if you are at the back.

You wouldn't go to a cinema like this, so maybe St Barnabas' should build a church that meets the needs of the parish for the next 30 years and not 150 years.

**Malcolm Whitney
Lindfield, NSW**



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Worship debated

I find myself having to disagree with my old friend and teacher David Peterson (*SC*, Feb) on the language of worship – but only just! I heartily endorse David's challenge that our church gatherings must be about more than 'friendship' and 'edification'. We meet together not simply to build each other up, but to do so in the presence of, in response to, and to the glory of our Living Lord and Saviour. Corporate prayer, confession, thanksgiving, rejoicing, heartfelt praise – these all flow from this theological understanding of Christian assembly, a point which I think the Doctrine Commission report makes quite clearly.

I remain puzzled about the need to keep lumping these vital activities together under the rubric of 'worship', when the New Testament plainly doesn't (a point David's impeccable scholarship has helped establish over the years).

I am even more puzzled when I

consider the pressing pastoral reasons for not imposing the category of 'worship' upon our thinking about church. 'Worship' is so closely bound semantically with 'singing' and 'praise' and the emotionally responsive element of our gatherings that even if there were biblical reasons to do so, trying to rehabilitate 'worship' as a cover-all word for our church meetings is surely a lost cause.

**Tony Payne
Randwick, NSW**

Tony Payne's response to my article has been posted at Sydneyanglicans.net, and I'd like to continue the discussion.

Tony says he is puzzled about the perceived need to lump activities such as prayer, praise, confession and thanksgiving together under the rubric of worship, 'when the New Testament plainly doesn't'. But worship terminology is linked with these activities throughout Scripture (eg the Psalms, Matthew 14:33, John 9:38, Hebrews 13:15, Revelation

Upset by pet-free ARV

Your recent supplement presented an overwhelmingly positive image of Anglican Retirement Villages. (*SC Prime*, March). However as a clergyman with a pastoral concern for many older folk, and an animal lover, I was upset to discover that the ARV maintains a strict policy of "no pets" across all its villages. This flies in the face of worldwide evidence that pet ownership leads to greater contentment and longevity amongst seniors.

ARV's policy is lacking in Christian compassion and is just plain wrong. It cries out for change. The "55 plus" town houses in our area have no such policy. The difficulties involved are not insuperable. As so often happens, secular groups show more practical compassion in this area than Church organisations.

**The Rev John Emery
Glenbrook, NSW**

4-5). Biblical usage demands that we make such connections. A comprehensive theology of worship will show how these activities are related to the service of everyday faith and obedience. Are we meant to conclude that worship had a corporate expression in the Old Testament, that it will be corporate in the New Creation, but that it is a purely individual activity here and now?

Tony says there are pastoral reasons for not using the language of worship in connection with church. But my article was written because of the pressing pastoral implications I see in churches where they avoid the terminology. Pastoral problems are best solved by teaching how to use biblical terms appropriately, not by abandoning them. I am not trying to rehabilitate "worship" as a cover-all word for our church meetings, but to show how worship is an important aspect of what we do together.

**The Rev Dr David Peterson
Moore Theological College**

A revolution needs leaders

Dr BRYAN COWLING argues that the Rudd Government's 'Education Revolution' provides a ministry opportunity for young Christian leaders.

ALL over the country, a coterie of education mandarins is working feverishly around the clock to flesh out details of the National Partnerships between the Commonwealth and the States and Territories. This is the gateway through which the next stage of Kevin Rudd's 'Education Revolution' will be implemented by schools.

There's no doubt COAG (the Council of Australian Governments) is committed to making radical changes in school education over the next four years. The agenda is huge, expectations are very high and the speed with which COAG wants to see results is breathtaking.

As a Christian educator, I cringe when the phrase 'human capital' is used in the official documents to describe the young people and teachers in our schools and that 'enhancing economic productivity' is cited as the ultimate purpose of education.

Yet, a lot of the things they want to achieve are long overdue and quite laudable. These include reducing the education disadvantage of indigenous children, improving overall levels of literacy and numeracy, providing more support for students with special needs and setting high standards and expectations for all students.

I welcome the emphasis on enhancing the quality of teaching and the recognition that an important contributor to this is investing in the development of school principals. This aligns well with the Diocesan Education Policy endorsed by Synod in 2007.

The position of principal is pivotal to the tone and wellbeing of every school and it is recognised, at least in the rhetoric, as being critical to the success of Rudd's education revolution.

Principals are the gatekeepers of their school; they are the ones who shape and sustain the school's culture; they are the face of the school to parents and the wider community. Their beliefs, values, priorities and character carry more weight and influence in the life of a school than those of any other person. This applies to government, Catholic, Anglican and other independent schools.

Yet across this nation, the number of teachers and middle-level school executives who aspire to be principals appears to be diminishing. There are lots of reasons for this. We cannot ignore it.

The next generation of principals

As Christians, we want to see more schools led by men and women who are biblically informed, whole-life disciples



of the Lord Jesus Christ, thoroughly grounded in a wholesome view of education.

Men and women of such character and quality don't just 'turn up.' They need to be developed and they need to see the principalship as an opportunity to serve as much as to lead and to bring honour and glory to God.

That's why the Anglican Education Commission has begun a long-term project to identify, nurture and support the next generation of Christian educational leaders.

Whilst there are many good courses that can be attended and many good books that can be read, the Commission's goal is to facilitate access by the next generation of leaders to mentoring, coaching and networking that will help

to prepare them to become authentically Christian leaders.

Dr Bryan Cowling is executive director of the Anglican Education Commission. Readers who know of an aspiring Christian leader should encourage them to contact the Commission at info@aec.edu.au or phone 8268 3321.

More schools issues in CHOICES



Madness is infectious

At least JOHN SANDEMAN hopes so.

THIS column is in favour of madness and mad people. Like my mad friend who invited a homeless man to live with his family. And he stayed for three months. And my friend has daughters.

His latest feat of holy madness is to leave my church (and a special role at one of this town's most trendy and growing churches) to go to a church of 15.

His new church has been the victim of "white flight" with 80 of the congregation shifting out in fear of a certain group (and this column is not taking sides on whether that fear was justified or not because this column has to fit this space).

It is a tough area for Christianity and this church has cycled between great times and lean times like Joseph's seven years. The people who have stayed on must love Jesus because they are not going

to church to get affirmed or for a social buzz – they are too few.

A number of St Pewsitter's families have left with my friend. It has been a

time when "go in peace to love and serve the Lord" is no cliché. My minister is looking after that parish, which we will call St Pewsitters-further-West, as well.

When my mad friend first joined St Pewsitters-further-West he was worried that a church made up of a small tight group would resist change but nothing could have been further from the truth.

There's lots of "new" stuff going on.

Technically this is not a "church plant" (which is what you call it when you start something from scratch) and because the new people are not trying to take over the parish it is not a "re-potting" (inserting a new congregation) either.

Rather it is just a bunch of Christians helping other Christians by moving churches.

I wonder if us older pewsitters can get a bit selfish when we choose which church we go to.

Pewsitting in the place with the best preacher, or the one with the most 'buzz', or even the best music is sort of okay when you first become a Christian, but sooner or later we need to be where we are most useful.

From the back row I hear an objection that surely we should go to church where we live; to which the pewsitter responds that he has always been amazed that God has called so many of us to live in the wealthier suburbs.

The new emphasis on church planting will challenge many settled ideas (including where we settle).

It is a game like Rugby League or AFL, played usually by young men who are currently being sought as leaders for new churches.

But it is not a spectator sport. And us older pewsitters don't have to wait for a new church plant to happen either.

Madness can be catching you know.





PETER JENSEN

困難中的真盼望

在困難的時刻，我們擁有最可靠的盼望。

你今年的復活節將會如何？大主教彼得認為即使在普世面對困難得時候，耶穌給我們的保障足以幫助我們。

這世代的人好像缺少了盼望。人們會問：「有什麼值得我們盼望呢？」好時光早已過去，未來却使人恐懼。可憐的美國總統奧巴馬竟被某報章頭條形容為「世界的盼望」。如果真有救世主，那便沒有人能超越耶穌了。

現在都受全球經濟衰退而恐慌。當我們落在這痛苦的光景中，我們需要幫助，需要盼望

澳大利亞人一向都是充滿盼望的。現在又如何？現在都受全球經濟衰退而誠惶誠恐。當我們落在這痛苦的光景中，我們需要幫助，我們需要盼望。惟有盼望使我們能面對明天。活著沒有盼望就像死了的人一樣。

有趣的是，真實可靠的盼望是從死裏生出的。當耶穌被殺後，他們把他送進墳墓，還加上封條，再派士兵看守墳墓；但却無濟於事，他粉碎死亡的權力從墳墓裏出來給我們證據證實他可以勝過死亡。

人的盡頭是什麼？最可怕的結局是什麼？

死亡。沒有跟上帝和好而死。獨自進入那沒有朋友的永恒世界，那就是地獄。

但你有另類的選擇。有人已為你而死為你走過死亡。無論現在或將來，死亡或審判，耶穌都會陪伴你，維護你，甚至頂替你。

你想與耶穌連結嗎？只要你願意求便可得到他的接納。

專題：認識真神的聖靈

1. 引言：三位一體中的第三位。
(太28:19-20)

2. 他是誰？

- a) 訓慰師或是保惠師。(翰14: 26)
- b) 他有位格—是耶穌的聖靈上帝的靈 (創世記1:1-2)

3. 他的工作是什麼？

- a) 為聖子作見證。(翰16:13-15)
- b) 要叫世人為罪、為義、為審判，自己責備自己。(翰16: 8-11)
- c) 要引導信徒明白一切的真理。(約14:26;16:13-15)

4. 聖靈帶領人認識基督

- a) 向人們顯示饒恕的需要。(翰16: 8)
- b) 打開人們的思想和心靈。(翰16: 4)
- c) 賜給我們屬靈的生命。(翰3:5-7;6:63 8:2-11;以西結書37章。)
- d) 他是我們永恒的救恩之確據。(林後1:22;8:16)
- e) 他賜給我們自由。(林後3:17)

5. 聖靈賜給我們屬靈的恩賜來彰顯他的大能。

- a) 林前12章；弗4:11-13;12:6-8

6. 上帝的旨意是信徒應該被聖靈充滿。

(羅馬書6:12-13;12:1-3;8:9; 弗5:18)

7. 結論：

- 天父創造宇宙，與人類立約是為了要和他們有團契的關係。
- 天父差遣他的兒子，借著他在十字架上的死和復活，將人類從永遠的死亡中救贖出來，得著永生。
- 天父差派聖靈來帶領和引導他的子民見證基督，使所有的人相信主耶穌，榮耀上帝。



楊振華會督專欄



Kogarah confirms snowballing Church 卡格拉聖公會新氣象——歡迎印尼語新成員加入！

A whole Indonesian-speaking ministry of new Christians has been received into the parish of St George, St Paul's Kogarah on the 15th March 2009, and the 100 confirmees together with 30 teens and children officially become a part of this Parish.

"The majority of them came from a non-Christian background and have now become born-again Christians," explains St Paul's rector, the Rev Mee Ping Lau. The group, initially only 30 members, had started almost three years ago, meeting in the Peakhurst art centre until the location proved to be too out-of-the-way for newcomers.

"They have a heart for the Indonesian-speaking people in the St George area," he says. "They are always on the lookout for Indonesian, to share with them their testimony and the gospel of Christ," Rev Lau says. "I guess one of the very effective ways has been that they themselves have been personally touched by the gospel of Jesus – some of them were actually from quite complicated backgrounds and their life changed after they received Jesus and that impact has actually encouraged them to go further to reach out to others."

The natural next step

Originally been called the 'Christ Living Church'(CLC), it's pastor, Agus Setyawardja, says the inclusion of his church into St Paul's is a welcome next step for a ministry through which "lots of lives have been changed drastically". "I believe this membership is in the will of God for the sake of the unity of the body of Christ and achieving the main purpose of his church, reaching the lost souls and broadening the ministries to the multicultural communities."

"We built a very close communication with the leaders, as they hold the same conviction as St Paul's, Kogarah, which is to reach out through their mother tongue, we invited them to consider coming into full membership of St Paul's," Rev Lau says.

三月十五日，卡格拉聖公會正式接納了一群整百名的印尼語基督徒，成為該牧區教會的新成員！

“他們主要是來自非信徒背景而成為重生得救的基督徒。”此牧區主任劉孟萍牧師向介紹時說。

“這群原本只有卅來位的成員是在三年前開始在Peakhurst的藝術中心聚會，直到感受到該地址不方便之故而遷移。”

“他們特別是在對聖喬治地區內講印尼語的本族人清楚的傳福音負擔。嘗試接觸他們，並與他們分享個人得救的經歷并基督救恩的消息。”劉牧師說，“我深信正因為他們本身親身的經歷，十分有助於他人對他們所分享的產生共鳴。有些的背景複雜，但他們的生命在接觸到福音的不久之後有了大的改變。從而鼓勵他們更加殷勤的出去與人分享的心願。”

下一步

原本命名為“基督永活教會”的牧師 Agus談到有關加入成為聖保羅聖公會一分子時提及，“被接納對於十分賣力于向許多迷失者傳福音的基督徒弟兄姐妹們來說是件受到肯定的好現象。”

“我深信成為正式的成員是合乎是神的旨意，能增強合一并執行神教會福音使命的目標，進而擴展多元種族福音工作，為神得更多迷失者歸向神。”

劉牧師也提及，“我們彼此建立起一個十分良好的關係，因為大家都存有一致的使命感，通過母語傳達福音訊息。因此我便邀請他們考慮成為聖保羅聖公會正式的成員。”與此同時，劉牧師十分鼓勵他們保留原有的名稱，從“基督永活教會”加稱為“聖保羅基督永活教會”。

“如此，講印尼語者能以此為他們的認同點，成為在接觸新人過程中，減少莫須有的障礙。”



MOORE COLLEGE 摩亞神學院延伸課程 藉神的話語齊成長

我們提供以下兩類課程：

- 神學證書…函授課程
- 聖經科文憑…夜校課程

任何人均可報名參加，不需要有何教育程度的限制。歡迎踴躍報名參加。

有關詳細資料或有意收到宣傳單請電雪梨電話

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Even so, Rev Lau has encouraged the church to retain its name, becoming St Paul's Christ Living Church.

"They will remain as Indonesian-speaking, because this is a very effective way to reach out."

"Twice a year, we combine all our congregations, including Christ Living Church, having lunch together, each produces their own speciality food – together we enjoy the fellowship very much."

Now, the 300-member church faces a new challenge – fitting all the newcomers in!

"On Sunday nowadays, it is very lively in the church grounds and now we are facing the problem of all the facilities being used. Even the rectory has to be opened up for ministry on Sunday and the car park is overflowing. But this brings even more attraction to friends to come and join the church family," Rev Lau says.

Reaction from the new members...

We (St Paul's and CLC) are now ready to reach out to the lost souls and bring them to be members of the kingdom of God.

We now set a good example for other Indonesian churches - joining a big organisation (Anglican church of Sydney) is not an obstacle for us to work together to reach out to the souls for the Lord Jesus Christ.

-----Members of SPCLC.

The support from St Paul's to CLC has been incredible, both of these churches working together (with the other services hand-in-hand) to do God's work, to help those who are in need, to support one another and to make Sydney and Kogarah a better place to live in. I hope that CLC's membership into St Paul's Anglican Church Kogarah will be the starting point of a better future for Sydney and Kogarah in the eyes of God, with abundant blessings pouring onto each and everyone of us in both churches.

-----Members of SPCLC

“每年有兩次，四堂會的弟兄姐妹們同聚一堂舉行聯合崇拜。這包括了印尼語的基督永活教會的成員。之後，我們集合在一起享用午餐；大家各自制作具有民族特色的菜肴來，與在場的弟兄姐妹們共享歡樂。大家都十分盡興的享受如此時刻。

現在，這擁有三百人的教會開始要面對另一層面的挑戰——如何允許所有的成員有足夠的空間展開各項事工、活動呢？

“每逢星期天，教會呈現出活力和生氣，所能使用的空間都敞開使用。甚至連牧師屋也不能幸免的開放出來供事工場所來使用了！擁有大停車場，如今也出現了擁擠的現象。更多人因此歡喜這樣的而吸引來參加。”劉牧師說。

聽聽新成員的反應：

“我們(聖保羅教會及基督永活教會)現在預備好去接觸更多的迷失者，帶領他們進入成為神國度的一分子。

我們現在可以成為其他印尼語的教會的榜樣——加入一個大的體制(悉尼聖公會)不會成為我們一起同工、為主耶穌基督去接觸那許多未信者的攔阻。

聖保羅教會給予基督永活教會的支持真是叫人感到鼓舞，彼此同工去作神的工，幫助那些有需要的人，彼此扶持，好讓我們能盡力使悉尼和卡格拉成為一個更理想的居住環境。我期望這樣的聯合能成為促使悉尼、卡格拉在神的眼中，一個更美好的前途的新起點，擁有神豐盛的祝福，注入在我們彼此之間。

編輯：

我們盼望通過這一部分雙語的消息，可以提供新消息給閱讀中、英文的讀者。若你有能激勵人的消息，無論是關於教會或個人方面，歡迎通過電郵與編輯聯系。

It is our desire to provide news in both languages for you. If you come across any such interesting news, please contact us: spkogarah@gmail.com



堅持拒絕不道德和越軌行為

聖公會的防止侵犯行為舉報熱綫

Anglican Abuse Report Line
1800 77 49 45
www.psu.anglican.asn.au
abusereport@sydney.anglican.asn.au



**The South West Sydney Commonwealth Respite and Carelink Centre
FREECALL 1800 052 222**

悉尼西南区聯邦暫休和顧系中心

**您是否正在照顧体弱年老的家人或
家中患有殘障,智障或精神健康有问题的病患者??**

康福社西南区照顧者暫休服務中心

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讓大家來彼此交流, 分享照顧的經驗

並提供機會諮詢有關照顧者服務等問題



日期 : 2009年4月17日(星期五)
时间 : 早上十時至下午二時
**地点 : Bankstown Sports Club 賓士鎮體育俱樂部
8 Greenfield Pde, Bankstown NSW 2200**

查詢或報名請致電 02 97280290

Judy (溫), Hanny (鄭), Nhung (陳), Pinkie (梁姑娘)

截止日期 2009年4月10日(星期五)

Are you a Cantonese speaking Carer looking after someone who is frail aged or has a disability (physical, intellectual, mental health, chronic illness, dementia or in palliative care)?

Are you living in the South West Sydney region?

Have you ever wanted a break but don't know how to go about it?

**OUR SOUTH WEST SYDNEY COMMONWEALTH
RESPIRE & CARELINK CENTRE CAN HELP YOU!**

Come and find out more about the services, join our
FREE MORNING TEA & LUNCHEON Session

Date: Friday, 17th April 2009
Time: 10:00am to 2:00pm
Venue: The Bankstown Sports Club
8 Greenfield Pde
Bankstown, NSW 2200

Registration needed as seats are limited

RSVP (02) 97280290
Judy, Hanny, Nhung, Pinkie
by Friday, 10 APRIL 2009



DIRECTOR OF CONFERENCE CENTRE MINISTRIES



KIAH RIDGE CONFERENCE CENTRE AN ACTIVITY OF THE BAPTIST CHURCHES OF NSW & ACT

The Kiah Ridge Board of Management is seeking suitable applicants for the position of Director of Conference Centre Ministries located at Tahmoor, NSW. It is envisaged that the successful applicant will commence late September 2009.

The appointee will be an active and committed Christian and a person of vision with the ability to enable and enhance the reputation of the centre in line with the centres motto of 'SERVING GOD'S GUESTS WITH EXCELLENCE'. A demonstrated skill set including day to day management of staff and running a busy conference centre will be required as well as a high degree of hands on ability.

Applications will close on May 29, 2009, interviews and selection process will proceed during June/July. An information package containing a full job description and work conditions is available by contacting the current Director, Ian Clisdell at:

Phone 02 4683 1111 **Mobile** 0418 161 541
Email ianc_kiah@bigpond.com **Web** www.kiahridge.org.au



BOB O'SHA



MANAGER - PROPERTY TRUST

MATERNITY RELIEF - 12 MONTHS

You will be part of a professional team within a high profile Christian-based organisation that strives for excellence in administering to their large clientele, a range of financial and property related services.

This role will manage end -to- end, leases, licensing, estate portfolios, and applications of government grants for property purposes. It will also ensure compliance and timely reporting to senior management and assist with the administration of the trust fund and title registry.

This is an interesting and diverse role for a Christian professional who has experience within property management, possess excellent people skills with a good eye for detail.

Your enquiries welcome to Judy Wong-See on (02) 9994 8044 or email judy.ws@credenceintl.com



If you have vision to build our childrens & youth ministry we have the position/s for you. This role could be taken by 2 part timers or one full time person.

Part 1- Primary SRE coach. (3 days a week)

This position is for a pilot project in local public schools. You will be providing front-line, relational advice, coaching & training to current teachers & encourage more local Christians to get involved.

Part 2- Children's/Youth minister (2 days a week)

Our thriving Kid's Church program & a new midweek kids club, that requires a visionary leader to grow these & see youth ministry start up again in the area.

Please call Reverend Mark Layson on 0419 976 882 or email stmattsashbury@people.net.au

PASTORAL/SENIORS MINISTER W. PENNANT HILLS ANGLICAN

St Matthews Anglican Church, West Pennant Hills is looking for an Ordained or Lay Minister to join our collegiate ministry team with special responsibility for Pastoral Care and Ministry for Seniors.

You will oversee the pastoral care scheme operating across all congregations and groups and ensure that the volunteer lay pastors are appropriately trained and supervised. You will also oversee the ministry to seniors and their pastoral care.

This is currently a 4 days per week position but we could explore making it a full time position.

Enquiries and applications should be directed to:
Rev Steve Abbott, Senior Minister
St Matthew's Anglican Church
1 New Line Rd, West Pennant Hills 2125
Phone: 9479 3700
Email: sabbott@stmatts.org.au

NCLS research TREASURER

NCLS Research is an ecumenical project that provides mission research to help churches connect more effectively with their community. We seek a volunteer who wants to use their gifts in financial management by supporting the Director & reporting to the NCLS Steering Committee.

- You would:
- review book-keeping activities
 - keep a close watch on cash flow in the short term
 - add financial information to a 3-5 yr business plan
 - prepare reports for the Steering Committee
 - prepare financial info when negotiating with potential new sponsors, preparing major contracts, or seeking grants.

Proficiency in computers & financial software is desirable.

To express your interest, contact:
Dr Ruth Powell, Director, NCLS Research
info@ncls.org.au www.ncls.org.au

Notice to all intended job applicants

It is an offence under the NSW Child Protection (prohibited Employment) Act 1998 for a person convicted of a serious sexual offence to apply for a position which involves contact with children or young adult people. Relevant checks of criminal history, apprehended violence orders and previous disciplinary proceedings will be conducted on recommended applicants to such positions.

St Marks Child Care Centre

OOSH COORDINATOR

St Marks CCC, Oakhurst requires a coordinator for its 50 place OOSH service.

With a Christian philosophy and ethos the service currently operates 6.45-8.45am & 2.30-6.30pm school terms.

Essential:

- Diploma in Children's Services or equivalent,
- Administration & staff management skills,
- Experience in OOSH.

For **Information pack** – phone 02 9832 0378.

Prohibited Persons are not eligible to apply.

Applications in writing addressing all criteria, with resume & 2 current references by 5pm, 22 April 2009 to
St Marks Child Care Centre Inc
99 Hyatts Rd, Oakhurst 2761



Assistant Minister

We are seeking a full-time assistant minister to pastor two congregations, be involved in our ministry training programme, and assist in occasional services.

The applicant would ideally be ordained and previous parish experience is beneficial, but not essential.

Please contact the senior minister
Jim Crowweller
jim@stjohnsmaroubra.com
Ph: 9349 2160 / 0417 424 694

Office Manager

St John's Maroubra has a 15 hour per week position available for an office manager. The position is paid above the Grade 3 award (\$17.50 p.h.) and is suitable for a person with competency to oversee the running of church administration without regular supervision, and to manage a small, irregular voluntary staff.

Essential requirements include:

Demonstrable receptionist skills
Ability to interpret and apply and internal control office procedures
Distributing and, where appropriate, answering mail
Experience with MicroSoft Office suite of programmes
Experience with management of voluntary staff

Desirable attributes include:

Office network trouble—shooting
Data Base update and maintenance
Competence in published communications

Contact Jim Crowweller on
0417 424 694 or
jim@stjohnsmaroubra.com
to receive a position description and lodge an application.



POSITIONS IN CAMPING MINISTRY

Did you know that Youthworks Camping speaks the Word of God to more than 20,000 children and youth every year? Join our great team and work with us in this strategic and rewarding ministry in one of these positions.

OUTDOOR MINISTRY TEAM LEADER

Do you have qualifications in theology, a love for the outdoors and proven experience in leading a team?

Join us in this senior outdoor ministry position and shape the lives of other outdoor ministers and thousands of children and youth!

Previous outdoor recreation experience and qualifications ideal, but not essential. Positions at Port Hacking (South of Sydney) and Shoalhaven (near Nowra).

CASUAL HOSPITALITY & CLEANING STAFF

Casual hospitality assistant positions available weeknights at Port Hacking and weekends at Blue Gum Lodge (Springwood).

Duties include serving meals, and some cleaning duties.

Casual cleaners also needed at Port Hacking.

APPLY NOW!

Successful applicants must be committed Christians and actively involved in their local church. This is child-related employment.

For more information about any of these positions, contact:
Jodie McNeill, Executive Director, Camping & Conferencing, at
jodie.mcneill@youthworks.net or 02 8525 3101.



General Secretary, CMS Tasmania

CMS (the Church Missionary Society) exists to glorify God through the proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Our vision is to see God's Church growing in all the world as lives and communities are transformed by Christ.

CMS – TASMANIA Inc is currently seeking a full-time General Secretary

- to develop and sustain partnerships with members and churches
- to assess applications for missionary service

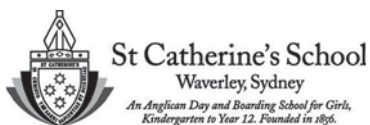
The successful applicant will need to have

- a mature Christian faith
- highly developed relational and leadership skills
- a deep commitment to cross-cultural mission
- one year of Bible training or the equivalent

Full job description and application requirements can be obtained by emailing
Rev'd John Tongue: jspk@iprimus.com.au

Applications close 21 May 2009

TO ADVERTISE CALL 02 8860 8888



Head of School

St Catherine's is a Kindergarten to Year 12 day and boarding school and the oldest Anglican girls' school in Australia.

The School has a proud history of educating critical, reflective thinkers who not only contribute to but shape society as leaders and as women determined to make a difference. The School operates on one campus in Sydney's eastern suburbs with 900 students and approximately 160 teachers and staff.

A school of the Anglican Diocese of Sydney from its inception in 1856, St Catherine's has stood firm on its Christian foundation and has taught and modelled Christian faith and practice whilst welcoming students of all faiths.

With the current Head leaving at the end of the year, the School Council wishes to appoint a new Head to commence on 1 January 2010.

The successful candidate will be an outstanding educator and possess a deep knowledge of the education sector, with an unquestioned commitment to and affinity for the unique aspects of girls' education. She or he will be a person of Christian faith and character who is committed to and capable of furthering the Christian purposes of the School.

To obtain a role specification, applicants should contact the consultants advising the Council, Egon Zehnder International, GPO Box 4858, Sydney NSW 1044,

Email: ezisdney@ezi.net,
Telephone +61 2 9240 4500.

Principal Danebank

An Anglican School for Girls

After 22 years of distinguished service, Miss Rosalyn Bird will retire as Principal of Danebank in December 2009. Sydney Anglican Schools Corporation now seeks to appoint a Principal to commence duties in 2010.

The Principal must be a committed Christian, active in their local Church. Applicants must have a well-developed philosophy of Christian education and be able to demonstrate initiative, leadership, effective teaching, a thorough understanding of contemporary educational issues and excellent administrative and public relations skills.

Danebank is an established Pre-K to Year 12 girls school of some 930 students, situated at Hurstville in Sydney's southern suburbs. It is one of 15 schools operated by Sydney Anglican Schools Corporation.

To obtain a prospectus contact:
Dr Laurie Scandrett, Chief Executive Officer, Sydney Anglican Schools Corporation
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FROM PAGE 16

While Dr Bishop contends that "the language of the canon was simply not considered to bear the meaning now contended for", this line of reasoning has been definitively overturned by the majority view of the Appellate Tribunal in its deliberation on women bishops.

When the Sydney Synod agreed in 1994 to redefine canonical fitness for the consecration of bishops, the Synod specifically stated in the adopting ordinance: "Nothing in this ordinance is to be interpreted as indicating an intention by Synod to legislate on the issue of the ordination of women as priests or the consecration of women as bishops".

Here was a perfectly clear expression of the *intention* of the legislators. However, the Appellate Tribunal declared that while this may have been their intention, the intention was not conveyed by the text of the amendment to the Constitution. In the words of Justice Mason: "the impact of an enacted law depends upon what it states, fairly construed, not upon what may or may not have been in the minds of those voting in the legislative body".

Whatever one may think of the majority view of the Appellate Tribunal, the reality of women bishops in the Anglican Church of Australia is the consequence. In like manner, the reality of the authority of deacons to assist the presbyter in administering both baptism and the Lord's Supper, in every diocese of the land which uses the canon for its ordination service, is the consequence.

The Synod of Sydney Diocese accepted the above argument and expressed the view that it was already legal for deacons to administer the Lord's Supper. It requires no separate authorisation either by way of ordinance or episcopal approval. The Archbishop can no more prevent a deacon from administering the Lord's Supper than he can prevent a deacon from baptising adults.

It is open to the General Synod to change the Canon that gave this authorisation, but the Canon continues to have force in this diocese, and the Synod considers this to be a good thing for the work of ministry, the health of the church and the extension of God's kingdom.

¹ "It appertaineth to the office of a Deacon...to assist the Priest in Divine Service, and specially when he ministereth the holy Communion, and to help him in the distribution thereof." The Form and Manner of Making of Deacons, BCP.

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STEVE SURGES FORWARD TO CHATSWOOD



YOUTHSURGE'S national director, the Rev Steve Jeffrey will become St Paul's Chatswood's new rector this month, leaving his current post as senior assistant minister of Norwest Anglican Church to take up the position on April 15. After nine years at Norwest, Mr Jeffrey is enthusiastic about continuing the vision already set at St Paul's. "A few years ago St Paul's set a target of an attendance of 1000 by 2009. Although it isn't there it certainly has taken significant steps forward so I hope to continue this vision and grow the

church's gospel impact in Chatswood." Mr Jeffrey will continue as national director of Youthsurge, which will involve vision-setting, giving talks and developing resource material. He believes the two roles will be a good combination. "I enjoy working as part of a larger team and utilising the collective ideas and resources that are generated. I think the Youthsurge and Chatswood teams coming together will be energising for me and the church," he says. "I have a breadth of experience in the wider Australian church training youth leaders but it is important that I also equip people for local church ministry by leading at the local church level."

Cliff faces new future at St Luke's Concord

THE Rev Cliff Stratton became the rector of St Luke's, Concord and Burwood on March 26. Mr Stratton had been rector at St Mary's, Waverley for four years previously and says he is especially reflecting on "the challenge of providing ministry to... so many [who] saw this church as theirs because they were married there, they were confirmed there". Moving to Concord has been a "homecoming", after reading a leaflet and walking into a Christmas service there in 1973. "I have been to the induction of three rectors at the church so it is an honour and something of a humble walk to come back and now serve those who I have been served with by other ministers over many years," he says.



Mission man moves on

AS announced previously in *Southern Cross*, Les Gray, mission executive for the Sydney Diocese, finishes up on April 3. Mr Gray has worked for the Diocese for three years, and says "it has been an immense privilege working with the Archbishop, parishes, Diocesan organisations, committees and staff as they work out how to best implement the challenges of the Diocesan Mission". Mr Gray is looking forward to continuing his work for the Mission through his local church, Springwood-Winmalee Anglican, and will take up an opportunity to operate his management consultancy business part-time, which he trusts will "provide an effective work, family and ministry balance".



Breaking News

- After 15 years at St Peter's, Campbelltown, **Canon Peter Stavert** will leave to become rector of St John's, Tamworth on May 9.
- Rosalyn Bird** will retire as principal of Danebank Anglican School for Girls at the end of the year.
- Archdeacon Neil Vearing**, rector of New Town and Lenah Valley parishes in Tasmania, and mission support officer of the Derwent Network, will leave the Apple Isle on May 31 to become the new rector at St Peter's, Cremorne on June 5.
- The Rev Denis Oliver** will leave the parish of Hornsby Heights on May 31 to become rector of Peakhurst-Mortdale.
- The Rev John Buchanan**, rector of St Alban's, Corrimal will have his last Sunday at the parish on April 26, but will officially finish up later in the year.
- The Rev David Reay** had resigned from his post of rector at St Paul's, Wahroonga, retiring officially on June 29.
- Rooty Hill Multicultural Bible Ministry's** senior assistant minister, **the Rev Ray Vassallo** will take up the position of Yagoona parish's new rector on July 1.
- Karen Staines** has joined the ministry team at St Paul's Castle Hill as part-time women's worker and director of the parish's care ministry as of last month.
- Gavin Crossley** is on his way to South East Asia as a missionary with CMS. Mr Crossley will be commissioned on April 25 at St Stephen's, Villawo.
- Michael Pailthorpe**, assistant minister at West Ryde Anglican Church, left on March 29 for the Bathurst Diocese, where he will work with Bathurst's Anglican Youth ministry team, as chaplain at Charles Sturt University and assistant chaplain at All Saints college. He begins on April 13.

OBITUARY



The Rev Theodore (Theo) Hayman

THE Rev Theodore Hayman died on Christmas Day and was buried following a memorial service conducted by his friend Bishop Reg Piper at St Stephen's, Willoughby.

Theo was born in 1920 in China to missionary parents. His father was imprisoned by the Chinese Communists for 413 days in the infamous "Long March". Moving to Australia in 1938, Theo served with the Australian Army Medical Corps in World War II. He entered Moore College in 1942 and was ordained in 1945.

Following several curacies in Sydney, Theo and his wife Joyce were missionaries for 10 years with BCA in South Australia at Ceduna, Streaky Bay and Cook.

He later served at St Paul's, West Tamworth and was a canon of Armidale Cathedral. He was federal secretary of BCA Australia from 1971 to 1980, before becoming rector of St Stephen's, Willoughby. He retired in 1986 to Macquarie Fields, assisting the parish of Glenquarie.

In recent years the Haymans have lived at ARV's Mowl Village at Castle Hill.

Theo's ministry touched hundreds of lives. Theo and Joyce had a very happy marriage resulting in four children, nine grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.

Ray Ctercteko

VACANT PARISHES

List of parishes & provisional parishes, vacant or becoming vacant as at 17 March 2009.

GEORGES RIVER

- Christ Church St George
- Oatley
- South Carlton

NORTH SYDNEY

- Forestville
- Hornsby Heights
- Lane Cove
- Manly Vale with Allambie Heights
- Turrumurra South
- St Paul's Wahroonga

WESTERN REGION

- Granville
- Mulgoa
- Lower Mountains

WOLLONGONG

- Cronulla
- Gymer
- Jamberoo*
- Keiraville
- Nowra
- Picton
- Port Kembla*

SOUTH SYDNEY

- Broadway
- Burwood
- Glebe
- Leichhardt
- Waverley

* provisional parishes or Archbishop's appointments

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Anzac Sunday prayers for diggers in danger

In the wake of both the tragic death of several Australian diggers in Afghanistan over the past year and the extra commitment of troops to that conflict, St Andrew's Cathedral is holding a prayer service for defence personnel on April 19 at 10.30am.



VIP guests will include the Governor General Quentin Bryce and Armed Forces Air Chief Marshal Angus Houston. NSW Police Chief Andrew Scipione will be interviewed about how his faith has sustained him.

Dean Phillip Jensen is calling on Sydney Anglicans to gather on the Sunday before Anzac Day – not only to remember those who have fallen but also to pray for those presently serving overseas in a variety of theatres of conflict.

“Just as it is important that these men and women represent us in these dangerous situations, so it is equally important that we uphold them and their families in prayer,” he said.

“We are inviting the whole community, and in particular anybody with family presently serving, to join with us.”

Wreaths will be laid for those who have been killed. But the focus will be on praying for those presently in danger.

Classical music lovers to hear gospel, help needy

A group of talented singers and musicians will perform an array of operatic classics at St Thomas', North Sydney on the evening of Saturday, April 4. Ticket sales will be donated to Anglicare's Winter Appeal.

Event organiser and church member Sophia Mitchell says the concert is going to have a real Easter feel about it.

“The concert is made up of ensembles and arias taken from well-known, larger pieces that will be taken out of their usual context to help tell some of the Easter story in a new way.

“Whilst classical music lovers may be

familiar with the pieces when they are performed entirely, they may never have given much thought to the Christian messages that the words are representing.”

The concert repertoire will be made up of works including Handel's Messiah, Bach's St Matthew Passion and Mozart's Requiem.

Singers Kerry Nicholson, Sophia Mitchell, Simon Gilkes and Randall Stewart are all graduates of the Sydney Conservatorium of Music. They will be accompanied on piano by Jonathan Chan.

Ms Mitchell says she is excited about using her talents to praise God: “The



concert is called 'Music for Easter', because all the music points to God and his son Jesus. I am hoping that some people will really hear the words of this music, perhaps for the first time.”

Tickets available at the door are \$30 for an adult and \$15 for a concession. The concert is at 7.30pm

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Bite Me

MARK HADLEY looks at why teens and tweens love the vampires their parents learned to hate.

THERE was a time when the vampire was the most feared denizen of darkness. Now it seems we have lived long enough to see it become the most desired. In centuries past, the folklore surrounding these undead beings served to underline the physical and spiritual terrors associated with death. However in the 21st century the fear is dropping away to be replaced by a sense of longing. The vampire is emerging as a symbol of another age-old human desire – to grasp hold of eternity.

However disturbing the idea, the vampire is undergoing something of a renaissance in modern entertainment. It is to the 21st century what the cowboy was to the 20th or the sailor to the 19th – a daring outsider living on the edge of the known world. Attempting to understand its particular attraction to young minds is, in a very real sense, an attempt to understand the spirit of the age.

Most adult Christians view the vampire in terms of classic European folklore. The term conjures up the demonic being or demonised human from 19th-century literature. John Polidori's 1819 novel *The Vampyre* first assembled our picture of these blood-drinkers from scraps of mythology about undead spirits; Bram Stoker's *Dracula* completed the portrait of an aristocratic lord of darkness. But Stoker's bloodsucker is as much removed from today's vampire as a Rolls Royce is from a Ferrari.

Socially, vampires were little more than animated corpses when their terrible deeds were first told around flickering firesides. Philosophers suggest they emerged simultaneously in many cultures to explain the strange transformations bodies underwent after death – the drawing back of flesh from the teeth, the paleness of skin without apparent decomposition etc. Probably their most important social identifier, though, was that they represented the damned. They were bodies that refused death – God's judgment – or even individuals, like Dracula, who had struck deals with the Devil. This view persisted well into the 20th century in series like *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* but had already begun to undergo a slow transition, from the 1950s.

In 1954 Richard Matheson penned the novel *I am Legend*, presenting vampires as the result of an unknown plague afflicting humanity. They were still killers, but more sociopaths than murderers. Vampires were no more morally at fault than the great white shark; they did only what their natures dictated. As the century progressed, though, writers added consciences to these creatures, giving birth to conflicted, morally sensitive characters like Anne Rice's Louis in *Interview with the Vampire* (1994) or Joss Whedon's Angel (1999). What emerged was not a vampire, but often a supremely aware human being, struggling with the desires of the flesh. Inside a century the perception of the vampire

has successfully moved from 'damned', through 'human aberration' and 'tortured soul', to 'super human'.

A similar transformation was taking place in the vampire's appearance. The vampire in the classic *Nosferatu* (1922) is an inhuman beast, befitting his damned status. Similar creatures populate *Salem's Lot* (1979). But the elevation of the vampire from demon to human resulted in a much more urbane presentation, befitting their moral struggle. Vampires were becoming more sympathetic, and their horrible features often dropped away so that the only difference became a pair of pointy teeth. In *The Hunger* (1983) David Bowie even dispensed with the fangs altogether.

However the vampire's assumption of 'rebel' status in films like *The Lost Boys* (1987) – swaggering along the dim line between our world and outer darkness – has recently resulted in a more attractive work-over. In the *Blade* (1998–), *Underworld* (2003–) and *Night Watch* (2004–) franchises, the vampires have come to look more like cast members from *The Matrix* with their uber-cool penchant for flowing black leather and expensive sunglasses.

Current vampire tales are all about redeeming the damned. Rising from the grave to stand with humans isn't enough; they have set their eyes on Heaven or at least heaven on earth.

But it is the spiritual transformation of the vampire that makes this character so hard to understand for adults, and yet so attractive to tweens and teens. Current vampire tales are all about redeeming the damned. Rising from the grave to stand with humans isn't enough; they have set their eyes on Heaven or at least heaven on earth. The vampire began as an antichrist, taking the blood of the living rather than laying it down in their service. Now, though, they are perceived as part of the created order. As such, their damnation depends not on their nature, but the deeds they do.

It's worth noting that the religious 'defences' against vampires have largely been dropped in popular culture, or ridiculed as myths. In some stories it is because vampire philosophers, who have seen both sides of death, have concluded that there is no God.

In other modern tales, vampires are on the same spiritual journey as you and I, and crosses hold no more fear for them than they do for us.

Carlisle Cullen, Stephenie Meyer's 'vegetarian' vampire, acknowledges the existence of God but wonders that there could not be a place in the Almighty's great plan for his good son Edward. Indeed, how can a person be blamed for being the very creature God made them to be? It's a familiar argument that has been marshalled to defend the gay community. In the television series *True Blood* vampires have achieved the status and rights of a social minority. Discriminating against them because of the behaviour of some violent individuals is wrong, and perpetuating religious stereotypes about vampires is as prejudiced as concluding that 'all blacks are lazy' or 'Jews have horns'. "I don't think that Jesus would mind if someone was a vampire," says the heroine Sookie. "I don't think so either, honey," her saintly grandmother agrees.

The attraction of the heroic vampire, though, is not that they are also struggling for eternity, but that they have grasped hold of it without giving up anything. Once God's damnation is removed, or at least distanced, the vampire enters into an everlasting life on earth that is wholly attractive to the modern teen. They are the undying princes and princesses. Certainly their eternity continues to contain the potential for pain, loneliness and destruction, but these are compensated for by power, attraction and wealth.

"You can be cool, you can be rich, you can be beautiful – you can be physically and morally superior for all of eternity," the vampire tells them. "And you never have to deal with God because you are never going to die." It's all fantasy, of course, but dangerous nonetheless. Without knowing, admiring youths dream of entering into the same bargain that Jesus rejected: they bow down and worship powers other than God's in exchange for dominion over the kingdoms of this world.



Parent counselling for would-be teen vampires

Thanks to the amazing success of the *Twilight* series, parents who were once just concerned about drug-proofing their children or educating them about sex now have to deal with a fascination with the undead. CATRIONA CORBETT from Anglicare's Family Relationships and Early Intervention service has some pointers for the parents of vampire fans.

Vampires in popular culture aimed at children – how concerned should parents be?

IT depends on the age of their children and their personalities. Parents with children under the age of 10 should be monitoring what they are reading, and when they are doubtful, they should have a look at it themselves and discuss it if their child really wants to keep reading them. There have always been scary stories around – think of *Little Red Riding Hood*. Tragic, terrible things happen in children's stories. So if children are showing signs of anxiety, parents need to be prepared to distract them into other activities.

At what age are children capable of starting to contextualise these sorts of stories?

THE general consensus seems to be that from age 6 onwards children are able to distinguish fantasy from real life. But really it's from age 10-12 onwards that adolescents are going to read what they want to read. You have to be guiding and directing them in those early infant and primary school years so that you shape their interests and steer them away from what's not healthy or helpful.

Is the child's age also going to affect the way parents choose to respond?

IT will, and I think where the children are young it's a very good idea for the parents to read the books or go to the film with the child and talk about it – particularly if the child is desperate to do it. Teachers often say, 'If you want your child to be a good reader, let them read anything!'. But parents do need to keep an eye on the content.

With an older child you can talk about the moral implications of some of these stories, the deeper issues that they raise. However, because of peer group pressure, if you ban them they become very enticing. There's almost a seduction about wanting to pursue something that is forbidden. You don't want to get into that sort of power-play.

Kids will talk about the books at school and it's better if your children have read them *and* have had an informed discussion with you about the issues that they are raising.

This interview can be shown as a video in churches via our DVD SX Digital sent free to all churches

THE TWILIGHT FILM SAGA

THE last thing any distributor wants to hear is a room full of critics laughing – when the film they are marketing is *not* a comedy. Such was the fate of the film *Twilight* at the screening I attended prior to its release last year. But the popularity of this franchise means reviewers are now choking on their chortles.

Bella Swan is played by meek 'every girl' Kristen Stewart, her repentant vampire Edward Cullen by teen heart-throb Robert Pattinson. Meyer's description of the vampires in her book is of a race of incredibly beautiful people with preternaturally pale skin, irresistible voices, dazzling eyes and alluring scents. It was always going to be interesting to see how this translated to the more visual medium of cinema. Sadly, the answer is 'Not well'.

Someone had clearly interpreted 'pale' as 'pancake'. The vampires that glided onto the screen looked like refugees from the silent features of the last century.

Worse, they wore so much lipstick and mascara they more resembled fans of The Cure than creatures of the night.

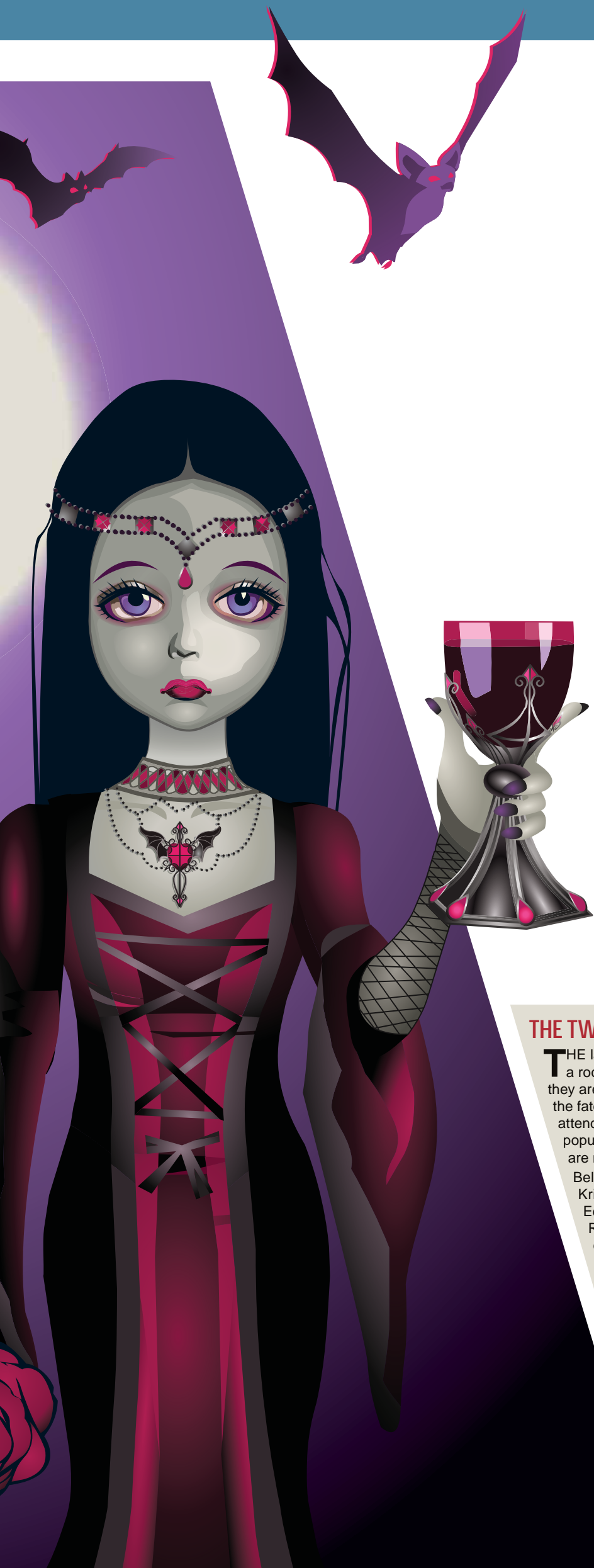
Furthermore, it appears that the only way the producers

could think of making good-looking actors look *extraordinarily* good-looking was to give them big hair. To be honest, Robert Smith would have appeared normal next to this collection of pretty-boy Goths.

However the look and the feature have found significant resonance with teen ticket buyers. Edward now has his own range of make-up – yes, that's right, *Edward* (ie for boys). It is no surprise given *Twilight* has returned \$530 million at the box office worldwide. Producers are already at work on the three follow-up films that mirror the rest of the *Twilight* series. *New Moon* is set for release in November this year; *Eclipse* in June 2010. *Breaking Dawn*, the final chapter, is currently set for 2013, but is likely to arrive ahead of schedule. Anyone hoping to avoid the *Twilight* saga over the next five years might just as easily have hoped to avoid Harry Potter during the previous decade.

For some Christians, deciding whether or not to see these films will be as simple as hearing that they involve vampires. For others, particularly teens, the vampire has become something of a modern-day dissident, like the James Dean of a previous generation.

Mark Hadley



Moral vampires shaping teen minds

A review of Stephenie Meyer's *Twilight* series by KARA MARTIN

VAMPIRES that resist the urge to drink human blood.

Vampires that are courteous and kind and try to live like humans.

A series of four books about teenage romance in which sex only occurs in the final book, after marriage!

The *Twilight* series takes the vampire myth and carries it to a different dimension.

Part of that is because the author, Stephenie Meyer, is a Mormon, who lets her characters live out her own conservative morals. There are also some religious messages in there. The vampires believe they are created beings, and although immortal, they yearn to be mortal. There are discussions about what happens in the afterlife, with the hope of redemption ultimately. These vampires have chosen the good life (for vampires), of drinking only animal blood, and they recognise evil.

The story involves Bella Swan, who considers herself very plain and awkward, who has moved to the country town of Forks to live with her Dad. Bella meets the very pale but fetching Edward, who at first seems appalled by her presence, but turns out to be as enamoured with her as she is with him. He is good-looking, courteous, intelligent, extremely coordinated, drives a great car... and is a vampire.

Many would have the same reaction I did when my daughter first mentioned these books to me: "Vampires! No way!". However, she persisted, and I decided to read the books first.

This is primarily a story of fighting addiction; of self-denial. Edward

resisting the temptation to drink Bella's blood is a constant struggle. Edward's choice – and the willingness to choose a different way in general – is a major theme in Meyer's books. "It doesn't matter where you're stuck in life or what you think you have to do," she said in an interview in *Time* magazine. "You can always choose something else. There's

always a different path." In fact she admits that being free of addictions is part of the Mormon lifestyle. So it is with Christians: we need to be free of addictions to focus on God.

There is a strong theme of self-sacrifice, particularly in the second novel, where Edward is prepared to kill himself to protect Bella and her family. In many

ways Edward is a Christ-like creature, the lover of Bella's soul.

These books do have some worrying influences. Although there is a lack of sex scenes, there is plenty of eroticism. Bella is very breathy, and descriptive of her desires. However, the biggest concern for me is the inversion of relationship hierarchies that plays into teenage megalomania. Bella is repeatedly making decisions for her father and mother without consulting them, aided and abetted by Edward and his vampire family. It is only in the fourth book that her family find out what is going on. She has removed from them the right to be parents. Okay, she is 17, but the lack of respect and consultation, the constant lying and sneaking around is disturbing because it is unquestioned. Although the all-consuming passion for Edward she feels is recognisable as a first love, there is no-one to counsel her about it being obsessive, or the need to show respect, set some boundaries and find some balance.

However, these are just books, fiction, and there are always faults in characters. I would suggest that those reading the books need to do so in conversation with other Christians. The message from the series that we can overcome those things that tempt us is positive, and these books do celebrate abstinence, something very rare in teenage literature. However, they need to be handled with care, like all literature, with the book in one hand, and the Bible in the other.

Kara Martin is a lecturer with School of Christian Studies (www.socs.org.au), and is an avid reader and book group attendee. Kara does reviews for Heart 103.2's Open House (www.theopenhouse.net.au).

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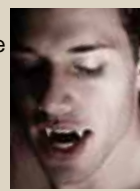
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