



A THOUSAND CHURCHES WITHOUT BIBLES



A small group recently headed to Malawi to encourage and minister to fellow Christians, and to participate in evangelistic efforts.

God did some amazing things before their eyes. Just a few of them are included here.

To read more and watch videos about the adventures of this group, which included Rev. John Wilson, Carey Wilson, John Steendam and Sue Steendam, go to <http://missionafrica11.blogspot.com>.

Tuesday with the M'vano Women of Zomba Tuesday, 28 June 2011

Two hundred and fifty women of faith – what a powerful force for the kingdom! CCAP (Presbyterian Church of Central Africa) Zomba Women's Guild ushered me toward the heavens this afternoon with Spirit-led singing, urgent prayer and deep attentiveness

to the Word of God. But I rush ahead. The M'vano women of Colin Mbawa's church showed us through their sewing and knitting workshop where they use six sewing machines donated from a church in Melbourne to engage in acts of mercy for the Gospel's sake. Boxes of cloth sent from Victorian churches are turned into dresses for sale and gifts for the poor. Boxes of wool, likewise donated from PCV, are turned into jumpers.

After inspecting the workshop and enjoying lunch together, the 250 women met for worship. Two hours later we emerged singing Amazing Grace. Again, I was taken unawares by the day – I thought Colin had said I was to 'greet the women' – but it dawned on me during lunch that I was to preach. So, for the next half hour I turned over in my mind that 'glimpse of heaven' that we find

in Revelation 4. And so the Lord empowered me to preach for 40 minutes on those grand pictures of heaven that come through John's vision.

Beer and spirits vs Bible and The Spirit!

Saturday, 16 July 2011

An amazing night... have I ever said that before? Yes, but this was truly amazing. But, as usual, I run ahead of the story.

These are truly beautiful people. About a hundred of us crammed into the CCAP building – a flimsy and airy structure that looks as though it could blow over in a windstorm. This is evangelism training. I extended my series on 'What is the Gospel?' while John and Sue repeated their sessions each for a different audience. Such attentiveness and joy. Their singing is an inspiration to us.

In the photos above LEFT: John Wilson delivers gifts from Reservoir Presbyterian MIDDLE: Carey Wilson with children RIGHT: Ladies listening to a message from God's word

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Each of the Presbytery ministers participate and their response is to say that we must repeat these presentations before the whole Synod when they meet in General Assembly. In a way I am surprised by their reaction – all I do is present a theological explanation of the Gospel according to the Scriptures.

The theme of my presentation is 'You don't need me'. My purpose is to encourage these dear people that they can understand the Gospel by understanding the Scriptures themselves and that they can evangelise Zambia better than we can. It's been a humbling experience.

Fireworks at night ...

Have you ever preached against the music and noise of a sports club drinking bar? Picture this - on one side of the soccer arena, Christians from CCAP, on the other side, an open air sports club with amped-up music, drinking and lots of noise!

The choirs sang, the sun sank under the horizon, and the preachers preached. I sensed the distractions. The children were noisy and the crowd less attentive than the previous night. But I enjoyed preaching. I always enjoy preaching God's gospel in a way that would honour him. The opposition from across the paddock was making it hard. But little did I know that God was going to have the last laugh!

About three quarters of the way through my address, fire broke out. At the corner of the sports complex, a power pole caught fire and spectacular fireworks were coming from it! Sparks were flying everywhere - the night sky was alight. I preached on, pleading with people to remain. I said something like: 'This fire will only last a moment, but the love of God lasts an eternity'. Yes, it sounds corny, but it was the first thing that came to

mind! I needed to keep the crowd.

Then, the fuse blew, the lights went out, the music stopped, the whole place went dark... except our side of the stadium! Yes, by the work of God, our lights and power remained. All around us was dark. The community was blacked out. THIS IS A TRUE STORY... I have five hundred eye witnesses! I was floundering a bit by this stage, but I babbled on. My job was to save the occasion and call the people to stay.

The people came back. The stadium settled. I handed to John S who preached with the Holy Spirit's power and with great conviction... in the quiet. No drinkers, no music. We had the night to ourselves. About one hundred people came forward for counselling. We have no idea why each person came forward, but the pastors are following them up. Some came to know the Lord tonight. We are hoping that one of them might be a future 'Stephen Lungu'. Will you pray?

A thousand churches Friday 1st July 2011

This week, we visited a village church way off the beaten track. I can't remember the name just now but it is a CCAP congregation that commenced in 1922 and has been faithful to the Gospel ever since. Access to it is via a series of rough tracks barely used by cars. But they spotted us coming – 60 women on the move toward us swaying and singing 'you are welcome, you are welcome'. Dear faithful men and women of God: humble, devoted to God and... poor. So poor they do not know where their next meal is coming from.

We sat with them, hugged them and encouraged them. Then we conducted a short but very dignified service with sixty women from

the village, twenty men, thirty children, the session clerk and the Village Chief! I preached an impromptu message from John 6 and they gave wrapt attentiveness to the Word of God (through an interpreter). They were so delighted to hear the message. Then, out of their poverty, they provided a gift to take home: some fresh muffins and the ever-present Coke for refreshments. I spoke to the Village Chief after the service and he said that his village totals 156 persons. I think I counted 110 of

them at church! Then I spoke to the women and asked them their greatest need. I was thinking the reply was to be 'to

repair the roof' or 'food' or 'money'. Can you guess? Without racing ahead to the next paragraph? One by one these faithful women told me of their greatest need. Can you guess?

BIBLES! None of these men and women have a Bible. They are too poor to own a book! They can read, or, at least enough of them can read to share the knowledge around. They would give their right arm to own a Bible. We left with hearts aflame and decided there and then to give our immediate spare money and send them forty Bibles.

But what of the rest of Malawi? There would be at least one thousand villages in rural communities like this one. One thousand churches without Bibles – with at least a hundred people in each. And for ten dollars we can buy a Chichewa Bible.

That's 10 X 100 X 1000 = \$1 million dollars – that's all it would take to give the most precious book in the world into the hands of every known church goer in rural Malawi.

There's a challenge!
To view videos and read more about this trip, go to <http://missionsafrica11.blogspot.com>.

‘About three quarters of the way through my address, fire broke out. I preached on.’



Nine new members received at Bendigo



Left to right: Roger King, Matthew Burns, Ken Price, Melody Price, Nick Oliver, Simonn Mansley, Rhys Thorburn, Emily Chandler and Nadine Tipping

Sunday June 5th was a greatly encouraging day for the members at St John's Bendigo with nine new members added by baptism and profession of faith, with seven of these new members aged 19 or younger. The congregation were especially encouraged by the fact that four of the nine are university students at La Trobe University and that three of these (Emily, Nick and Rhys) received the sacrament of baptism and then spoke in turn of how God had led them to faith

in Jesus Christ after being born into non-Christian families and having no prior Church background.

The link between the Church and the Christian Union at Bendigo's La Trobe University has continued to be strengthened through the ministry of AFES staff workers Russ Grinter and Kim Megli who both regularly attend St John's. In many ways we as a church have just reaped the harvest of the hard work of sowing gospel seeds. Sadly, (for us anyway), Kim will be ending her ministry among the female university students and returning to Wagga Wagga (NSW) in early July.

The regular prayers of the wider church for the continued growth of the ministry among Bendigo's university students would be warmly welcomed!

*Rev. Phillip Burns
Bendigo Presbyterian*

A Window into the work of the HMWA

The work of the Home Mission Worker's Association is interesting in many ways.

- We are privileged to support theological students with book grants and Christmas cheques as they study at the Presbyterian Theological College, and then to follow them as they pass exams and exit the college to their first parish.
- Home Missionaries are encouraged with mid-year grants and Christmas cheques.
- Offers of support are available towards repairs and maintenance of buildings.
- Another interest is to foster children's work in the Sunday School.

This year we were also pleased to provide Afternoon Tea to the PYV 'Girl's Day Out' event

where girls and mothers came together for a seminar on 'friendships'.

We were also pleased to have Mr. Heath Easton, fourth year theological student at our AGM in March. Heath spoke about how he originally was going to study medicine and how the Lord moved him into ministry.

HMWA can also be rewarding as we fulfill our motto of 'caring and sharing'.

Our Annual Thanksgiving and Dedication Service will be held in Scot's Church Melbourne on Thursday 10th November at 11.00am.

There will be a guest preacher, and afterwards enjoy the fellowship at a BYO lunch in Robert White Hall, Assembly Hall. All welcome.

Rev Grant Vayne appointed to the Pastoral Charge of Ararat Parish

Friday August 5th was a happy and joyous day for the people of Ararat Presbyterian Church. 'We have got our man, praise the Lord,' one of the members said. Indeed, it summed up the ambience of the evening as everyone was smiling and grateful to God for the Rev. Grant Vayne's appointment as their Minister. Grant and Esther were no strangers to the Ararat Church because Grant had been doing supply preaching since the Ararat Church was vacant in October last year.

What a joy singing together with approximately one hundred people in a fully packed church! We were encouraged that the Rt. Rev. Andrew Bray, Moderator of the PCV, and his wife Joy were able to grace us with their presence. The Occasional Preacher was the Rev. John Brennan, Minister of Sorrento-Rye Parish. John preached clearly and passionately on the Supremacy of Christ. Scripture readings were read by Elder Jeff Hardy and Mr Gordon Ogden. Prayers for the Church and the World were led by Pastor Ian Smith. Clerk of Presbytery, the Rev. Dr. John Woodward, witnessed the Signing of the Formula and led most gladly in the Prayer of Appointment for Grant. The Solemn Charge to Minister and Congregation was most wisely delivered by the Rev. Keith Allen from Philippians 2:12-18. The most hard working Session Clerk, Elder Norm Sharp, gave a candid Narration of Steps, also acknowledging God's goodness in sustaining gospel ministry in this parish. I was most humbled and privileged to lead in the service as Moderator of Presbytery. May God continue to bless Grant and Esther, and the Ararat Church, for his glory and honour.

*Rev. K. Hui Lim
Promotions Officer
Ballarat Presbytery*

St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church

Clayton Family Camp

On the weekend of 6th – 8th May 2011, Forest Edge Camp at Neerim East proved to be a delightful place for around 180 adults, youth and children to spend time being refreshed in the beauty of God's creation and built up in faith

through the ministry of God's word. At the same venue eighteen months earlier, the congregation had been richly blessed by the ministry of Ken Harris, Senior Pastor of Clayton Church of Christ, and Rev. Mark Smith from Drouin Presbyterian, while Tony



Rev Philip and Sandra Burns from Bendigo

and Shona Archer had ministered to the young people prior to their departure as missionaries to the Middle East.

This year Derek Snibson, Senior Minister at All Saints Anglican Church in Clayton, gave a fresh perspective on Jesus' ministry to the Samaritan woman in John 4 and Philip Burns from St. John's in Bendigo challenged us all to look carefully at two vital attributes of God's character: His love and His justice.

These carefully prepared studies provided much food for thoughtful reflection and stimulated discussion to the glory of God and the blessing of his people. Complementing this program for around 80 adults, Rob Turnbull [from Backyard Bard] led a workshop to inspire our young people to use the scriptures in creative ways. Backyard Bard has become such a blessing to many Christian churches



who love God's word, restoring a passion for memorising scripture and presenting the narrative of the Bible in a living and powerful way. Around 30 young people participated in this workshop, with six

'Philip Burns from St. John's in Bendigo challenged us all to look carefully at two vital attributes of God's character: His love and His justice.'

preparing scripture passages for the worship service on Sunday morning.

During the adult and youth programs around 60 children also shared in their own fun filled, biblical program led by Philip and Lavena Mercer and an enthusiastic team of helpers from Trinity, Camberwell. Many of these children's camp fees were generously provided by a grant from the

Farewell and Fundraising Dinner for Rev. Dr. Douglas Milne

The Theological Education Committee and The Presbyterian Theological College invite you to join us in celebrating the significant ministry under God of Principal Douglas Milne on the occasion of his retirement.

Scots Church Werner Brodbeck Hall (156 Collins St)

7pm Friday 14 October 2011

\$55 (\$400 for a table of 8)

Part of the cost of the ticket will go towards the on-going education of overseas students.

Tickets available from Rev. Kevin Maxwell (kmaxwell@internode.on.net or 5824 1042)

or download a registration form from www.presbyteriancollege.org



FELLOW WORKERS

Rejoice with the Presbytery of Geelong

The Presbytery of Geelong records a number of changes to congregational personnel over the past year.

We rejoice with:

- North Geelong on the induction of Rev Darren Middleton, formerly from Caringbah NSW, on 16th July 2010 and whose ministry has been well received.
- Moorabool on the ordination and induction of Licentiate Jeremy Dover on 3rd of September 2010 and whose ministry has also been well received.
- Moorabool on the ordination and induction of new Elder Mr Peter Winstanley.

- Geelong West on the induction of Rev David Martin and the ordination and induction of Mr Drew Chitenden and Mr Luke McSeveny, all as new elders. Rev Peter Orchard was also appointed as Interim Moderator of the parish.

- Colac on the reappointment of Rev Marvin Hagans as Minister for a further term of two years from 1st January 2011.

- St Georges Geelong on the appointment of Rt Rev Andrew Bray, currently serving as Moderator of the General Assembly of Victoria, as Interim Moderator from 1st July 2011 to succeed the joint appointments of the Very Rev Dr Allan Harman and Rev Peter Wilding whose two year terms come to an end.

- Rev John M Cromarty who was received as a minister of the Presbyterian Church of Australia, through the Reception of Ministers Committee, on 10th May 2011. Rev Mr Cromarty is now assisting at The Leigh parish.

We were saddened by the death of Rev David Griffin on the 2nd of October 2010, minister of The Leigh parish, but we rejoice that he has gone to be with the Lord. Rev Jeremy Dover has now been appointed as the Interim Moderator of The Leigh parish.

*Bert Stasse
Clerk of the Presbytery of Geelong*

PCV Social Services Committee bringing much joy to families who would not have been able to share in a weekend otherwise.

After a delicious lunch, in a packed dining room, afternoon activities included familiar challenges such as the High and Low Ropes Courses, the Flying Fox, Bushwalks, Trampolines and Archery as well as two new events, a Football Clinic, and a Café on the Verandah. The fine weather provided the perfect



Younger campers proved their strength on family games night!

setting for the outdoor activities to be enjoyed by young and old.

With tired bodies we ate a wholesome evening meal and then shared in an evening program of family games. Children and adults challenged each other in contests including trivia, physical strength and teamwork.

There were lots of laughs and some surprises when it came to handing out the prizes, with many younger campers proving they were up to the challenge. Cups of tea, coffee and hot chocolate ended a full day and our warm beds were welcome resting places to restore exhausted bodies and busy minds.

Sunday morning began with a

prayer meeting at 7am followed by breakfast and then clean up

before our worship service. The worship was enriched by heartfelt praise to God, the sharing of scripture from our young people and Rob Turnbull's inspiring recitation of

John 17-20. Prayers of thanksgiving were offered to our heavenly Father who had watched over us so wonderfully (the rain came as we were leaving) and petition for a deeper work of the Spirit in all our lives, our church and our nation. Following the preaching of God's word we ended our worship with hearts overflowing. Lunch and more thanks to the team at Forest Edge brought to a close a truly memorable weekend.

*Rev. Michael Jensen
St Andrew's Presbyterian Church*

We'll be back soon



New and improved: the Heidelberg Presbyterian Church rebuilt after the fire

The old saying is: 'no news is good news'. With that thought in mind, you can usually sleep well at night. That is, until a phone call comes in the early hours of the morning, just when you don't expect it, for you are fast asleep.

'Are you the minister of the Heidelberg Presbyterian Church?' In a fog of confusion, wondering why anyone would bother to phone at such a time with that particular question, my answer was yes. 'Then you'd better get to Heidelberg as soon as possible. Your church is on fire.'

You know what it's like when you hear bad news. Your first

thoughts are that someone has either made a mistake, or that a person with a strange sense of humour has made a crank call. However, as I came closer to Heidelberg my worst fears were realised. Our church was indeed on fire. Even from several kilometres away I could see the blue and red flashing lights of the local fire engines. By my reckoning, they were in the right place for them to be attending a fire on the corner of Darebin and Hawdon Streets, right at our church.

There was little the fire officers could do except to watch the fire

burn down the church hall and make sure that it did not spread into what was the worship area.

It has been more than three years since we have been able to use our own building. Over that time the Uniting Church has made room for us to conduct worship and English Language classes in their buildings. We are most grateful to them for their generosity.

Within a few weeks we hope to be back in a new building that, we must admit, will suit us much better than the old one did.

We plan to continue to serve the community of Heidelberg by providing a place of worship that honours the God who made us in His image and likeness. Please accept this as an open invitation to all who wish to join with us. You will be most welcome.

Finally, on behalf of the Heidelberg Presbyterian Church I personally want to thank all those people in the community who have generously supported our rebuilding program with their gifts and donations.

Rev Alan Every

Rev Dr John Flynn, First Superintendent of the AIM/PIM

Rev Robert Benn was recently asked to address a gathering of over 300 supporters of the Royal Flying Doctor Service in the auditorium of the University of the Sunshine Coast, Qld.

Because 2011 is the centenary of Dr John Flynn's ordination, and 2012 is the centenary of the formation of the Australian Inland Mission, his address was on 'The life and ministry of the Rev Dr John Flynn'.

The PIM would be delighted to make this address available for other groups around our church, which Robert would deliver in person.

The address includes:

- Flynn's birth, childhood and education
- his spiritual growth and the crafting of his walk with God
- his ministry as Home Missionary of the PCA in Victoria, and experiences at Ormond College
- the origin and development of The Bushman's Companion and Shearers' Missions
- the incredible amount of investigative travel he did to serve our Inlanders with the gospel
- his commissioning to the Smith of Dunesk Mission in SA
- the formation of the AIM and its service to 2/3 of Australia
- the ongoing realisation of his visions for the outback - Nursing Homes; wireless communication; literature; and the Aerial Medical Service
- his supporters

- his ongoing legacy and recognition by church and state
- and more

The talk is supported with about 200 contemporary and archival pictures and is approximately one hour in length.

Donations for this ministry will be directed to the Presbyterian Inland Mission.

Call Rev Stuart Bonnington (Convener of the PIM Committee, 08 93981304 or melbonn@bigpond.com) or Rev Rob Duncanson (PIM Superintendent, 08 89457878 or rob@darwinpresbyterian.org.au) or Rev Robert Benn directly on 0431 062 853 or 02 47574144 or rbenn@exemail.com.au) if you wish to make use of this service of the Presbyterian Inland Mission.



CROSSFYRD

REACHING OUT TO THE YOUTH OF FRANKSTON



The Frankston Presbyterian Church are extending their youth program to include a live band performing once a fortnight. The band, 'CrossFyrd', featured at PYV winter camp, performed their first gig on Friday July 29th at the Frankston Presbyterian Church at 36 Radiata St. Frankston Nth.

The band members are Joel Otten on guitar, Pip Pluke on vocals, Ben Drew on drums, Shady

Mehanni on bass and Luke Medley on lead guitar. The band have already turned down offers to play at the Tennis Centre (people from Frankston North don't play tennis), instead they prefer to play music in Frankston North!

The band concept is first and foremost for gospel outreach, hoping to reach more of the youth in the area. 'CrossFyrd' play contemporary Christian songs with even

an original song or two thrown in. At each gig there will be a short gospel message by the band leader, Joel. It's a great opportunity to invite non-Christian friends. All youth are welcome to come along and support 'CrossFyrd'. There is no charge, no drugs, no alcohol, no smoking and no earplugs!

Signed: Frank'n'sten

Scots' Grand Final Service

The annual AFL Grand Final service at Scots' Church Melbourne will be held on Wednesday 28th September at 1pm.

The guest preacher will be Captain Brendan Nottle, chaplain to AFL Collingwood Football Club. Captain Brendan Nottle is a mem-

ber of the Salvation Army working with the homeless and disadvantaged in the City of Melbourne.

There is a sausage sizzle in Collins Street as a fundraiser for Sports Chaplaincy Australia and it is a great opportunity for people to meet socially before attending the service.

The replica Premiership Cup will

be on display and we encourage all who attend the service to wear their team scarf.

In this week of sporting celebration in the City of Melbourne we welcome everyone to come and hear Captain Brendan Nottle preach the Word of God.

DEAF FELLOW WORKERS



Bill Medley and Tony Salisbury: working in tandem in Frankston

About four years ago Frankston Presbyterian Church attempted to begin a ministry to the deaf. However there were difficult obstacles to overcome. Much prayer was needed.

We had one deaf family living right around the corner, but to find a sign language interpreter was a real problem that brought with it a need to step out in faith to cover the

added expense. After much advertising and personal contact, along with trial and error, we managed to secure Kim Spencer, who does an excellent job for us, interpreting Sunday morning services as well as a fortnightly Bible study.

However, pastoral ministry goes way beyond Sunday morning services and this is where Rev. Tony Salisbury came in. Tony and

his wife Anne have filled what would have otherwise been a serious gap in our deaf ministry by providing pastoral care and being available for the wider ministry. Tony has joined us when we have run outreach programs such as 'Introducing God', providing much needed extra explanation for the deaf people attending. Tony has also been indispensable in the area of pastoral

visitation. He visits members by himself as well as in tandem with Rev. Bill Medley. In general, Tony plays a crucial role in the deaf ministry at Frankston, so for the Frankston Presbyterian Church, Rev. Tony Salisbury is truly a fellow-worker!

*Rev Bill Medley
Frankston Presbyterian Church*

News from the Presbytery of Maroondah

- Heathmont House will be officially opened by the Moderator Rt Rev Andrew Bray on Sunday 4th September. We give glory to our Lord for this endeavour where offices will be available for various church committees, especially the PYV. Heathmont church gives thanks for the generous contributions from many church bodies towards this project.
- The Session at Woori Yallock has been strengthened by the ordination and induction of Wayne O'Donnell as an elder.

- The Session at Donvale has been strengthened by the ordination and induction of Tony Arnold and Jerome Vethecan to the eldership.

We give thanks for these men who have accepted this office and pray that they will assist in the work to further God's glory in their parishes.

*J.D. Fraser
Clerk, Presbytery of Maroondah*

I bet you didn't know you're a journalist.

A freelance, volunteer one, that is. *fellow workers* relies on people like you to write & send in stories.

So encourage & inspire your fellow believers by sending your articles & pics to FW!

You can also have the newsletter sent to your email inbox for free!

Just contact ed.fellowworkers@gmail.com