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The End

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of the World

DAVID PALMER: OUR NEW MODERATOR



On the evening of Monday 8 October, the Rev David Palmer was inducted as Moderator of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria for the next 12 months.

Most recently David was Convener of the Church and Nation Committee with an extensive writing and lobbying ministry, particularly in relation to Government legislation in which the Church has an interest: religious freedom, abortion, surrogacy, marriage and so on.

David chose the story of the father with two sons found in Luke 15 as the Scripture to expound at his induction. At the following Moderator's Reception, David reflected on the Church's experience in the thirty-five years since most Victorian Presbyterian congregations moved into the Uniting Church, drawing a parallel between the prodigal son and the Presbyterian Church.

He went on to say: 'We have had our fair share

of bust ups and disappointments over the intervening years, but

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Above left: the PCV's new Moderator Rev David Palmer with his wife Chris.

DOUBLE CELEBRATION IN BENDIGO

Sunday October 28 was the cause for much rejoicing at Bendigo (St John's) on two fronts!

First, readers of fellow workers may remember that the June 2012 edition carried some news about how termites had stalled our much needed and long awaited renovations, and that the congregation was asking for prayer that the termites would go. Well, they did go (thank you for praying), the renovations commenced in July and were



completed and opened on Sunday October 28th, debt free and with much rejoicing and thanksgiving! During the service our thanks were expressed to the Ministry



Development Committee for their Capital Grant, the Presbytery of North Western Victoria for access to the funds from the sale of the

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The brightest camp ever



The weather at East Camp may not have required sunglasses, but the fluoro costumes sure did!

In 2012, Hawthorn, sadly, did not win the AFL grand final. It isn't all bad news though. In 2012 the first East Camp held

by Presbyterian Youth Victoria (PYV) took place. Which, let's be honest, had a far better result!

With a camp theme encouraging people to crack out neon pink, green and yellow–an idea lovingly embraced by camp convener Tia Wishart–East Camp 2012 was a complete success. Armed with a spray can of pink hair dye and boundless energy, Tia, together with hard working and encouraging assistant convener Nic Bilyj, served the campers and leaders with joy. This energy translated

into the vibe of the camp, and like a very relaxed, well-oiled machine, East Camp ran without a hitch, with tons of fun and fellowship and, of course, fluoro.

The greatest triumph of PYV's newest camp was most certainly the relevant and accessible series of talks given by Reverend Ben Johnson, from Warrnambool Presbyterian Church. Encompassing all



When will the world end? What do you know about the return of Jesus? What does the Bible say?

This September, Prof. Douglas Milne travelled to Moorabool Presbyterian to examine the topic of Jesus' return. This special series was part of Moorabool's mission to know Christ and make him known. Prof. Milne is former principal of Victoria's Presbyterian Theological College where he lectured in various subjects, including theology. During the worship service and afternoon lecture, Prof. Milne turned to the Scriptures for a practical examination of the return of Jesus. He concluded that the second coming of Jesus won't make any sense unless you understand his first coming.

Jesus came to atone for sin and impute his right standing before God to all those who trust in him. He returned to heaven to prepare a place for his people and to actively intercede for them before God. His second coming means he will appear again to judge everyone and gather his people. Prof. Milne's application was to know this Jesus in a personal way and to trust in his work on the cross as the central event in salvation history.

> Rev Jeremy Dover mooraboolchurch.org

four Chapters of Philippians, with a emphasis on Joy and Purpose in Christ, the combination of Ben's talks and studies worked to encourage those on camp to shine like stars for God, focusing on following Jesus' perfect example.

The smallest camp PYV has held for a long time, East Camp was an eye opening experience for the leadership team. With smaller numbers came greater opportunities to share with others, and new relationships flourished as everyone was forced inside by inclement weather! With a lot of new faces-both campers and leaders-East Camp brought people from the Eastern Presbyterian Churches of Victoria together, ranging from Clayton, to Elwood, to Bundoora, to Frankston, to Drouin, and more.

Human fooseball, a glow in the dark disco and funny antics caught on video were definite highlights of the three day camp, with the AFL Grand Final better forgotten by all those cheering on the Hawks.

Thanks to all the leaders and campers whose open hearts and enthusiasm made the camp so special. All I can say is that East Camp 2013 has a lot to live up to!

> Ashleigh Haughey East Camp Leader from Donvale Presbyterian Church

Summer prayer

• PYV Summer camp 27 December–1 January 2013 Pray for convener James Venning, the speaker Rev Brian Harvey and the leadership team. Pray that lives will be transformed by Jesus. • Engage'13

25th–28th January 2013 Ask God to use this new conference for his glory by spreading great Bible teaching via youth leaders to Victorian teenagers. Pray for the *Engage* committee and strand leaders.

Christmas Outreach and Beach missions

Pray for God's kingdom to grow and his fame to be spread through the holiday period!



How well do you know the team coach?



'Olympic costume' meant very different things to different people at North Camp!

The first PYV North Camp this year was held at Campaspe Downs over the first weekend of the school holidays.

The camp talks were titled 'Team Jesus' and given by Rev Heath Easton from the letter to the Philippians. The running theme of the camp was the Olympics.

There were 50 campers aged be-

tween twelve and twenty-one, with twenty-six leaders, and two awesome cooks–who fed us till we popped! It was a jam-packed weekend full of great talks as we were challenged by Heath to 'Get into the team Spirit' and 'Get to know the team coach (Jesus)' and finally taught 'What it takes to be in Team All star!' We enjoyed a relaxed atmosphere where we got to get to know each other and built on previous friendships, and loads of wannabe Olympic challenges!

> Shady Mehanni Camp Convenor

Fifty years in ministry

The Very Rev Dr Allan Harman was ordained 50 years ago (March 1962) in the Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia, Geelong.

His father, Rev Joseph Harman, took part in the service, as did Rev Edwin Lee. In October the Presbytery of Geelong presented Allan with a framed certificate marking this milestone.

It was presented by Rev Darren

Middleton, Moderator of Presbytery, at a supper following the combined Reformation Day Service held this year at the Christian Reformed Church.

Geelong West. Darren spoke of Dr Harman's outstanding contribution to biblical scholarship, his pastoral care of theological students, his faithful parish ministry and his



grace in dealing with people from all walks of life. He also spoke of the vital contribution Allan's wife Mairi has made, both in supporting Allan, and as a scholar in her own right. On behalf of the Reformed Theological College, Rev Dr Stephen Voorwinde expressed warm appreciation of Allan's time lecturing there before his appointment as Principal of the Presbyterian Theological College, Melbourne.

Rev Peter Orchard



Equipping youth leaders with Golds word.

25 - 28th January 2013 The Island, 41-53 Church Street, Cowes, Phillip Island, Victoria

The Engage conference features three main parts: strand groups, electives and Bible talks. The talks not only teach about God, but they model for us how to teach the Bible well. The specially tailored electives are facilitated by highly experienced youth ministry leaders and are designed to help with vital ministry skills.

The heart of *Engage* is the strand groups. In our strand groups, we will learn to teach the gospel to others.

Ceynote Speaker

Rev. Raj Gupta, a minister in Sydney, has been involved in NextGen in Sydney for 15 years and is passionate about training the next generation to serve the Lord Jesus. Raj will be teaching us from the Sermon on the Mount, where we will see how a genuine commitment to Jesus changes everything.



Register WW 4 engageyouthleaders.org.au. Registrations close 14th Jan 2013. Get in quickly so you don't miss out! Questions? Contact Nello Barbieri 0403 569 946.

Double celebration in Bendigo

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Wycheproof Manse, local builder Robert Phillips, draftsman/designer Kevin Slater, members of the Board of Management, congregation and our gracious God. The renovations now mean that we have a brand new bigger kitchen, indoor toilets and a lowered ceiling in the hall to enable heating and cooling.

If that was not enough, on the same day, Russ Grinter was also ordained and inducted to the eldership and commissioned for church planting work in South East Bendigo in 2013. Russ has been an AFES (Australian Fellowship of Evangelical Students) staff worker at La Trobe University in Bendigo for the last 5 years. Russ and his wife Aimee have by grace seen much fruit from intentional evangelism, discipleship and preaching at the Christian Union. As a result, the Bendigo congregation has enjoyed reaping the fruit of their labour! Session has set in place a plan to plant a new church in Bendigo closer to the University and this has been done with the approval of the Presbytery, funding from the Church Planting Commitee and the commendation of the recent General Assembly. Work is set to begin in earnest in January.

Given that the Bendigo congregation is still only a medium sized church (less than 80 communicant members), we feel that we are 'punching above our weight' with these new developments. But we are aware that with all that God has promised and blessed us with in recent days, and as we continue to seek Him in prayer, His Word will achieve the purposes for which He has sent it (Isaiah 55:11). Rejoice with us! Be encouraged! Rev. Philip Burns

Left cover image: The elders of St John's: (left to right) Philip Burns, Russ Grinter, Andrew Kerr and John Sutherland

Right cover image: Nonagenarians Cec Shilling and Joyce Adams (both in wheelchairs) cut the ribbon to open the renovations at Bendigo Presbyterian Church.

Eltham: Building and building

After steady growth over many years, Eltham Presbyterian Church (EPC) needed to expand our auditorium.

First we had to create more parking spaces to meet Council regulations. This started a journey of prayer and planning.

After some time, a block of land backing onto our hall was purchased. We then started the process of plans, permits, and building.

We now have twentythree new car spaces, a sixty-three seat exten-

sion to our auditorium and a new fover. The extension project was completed in 2009 and there is now seating for over 200 people.

We are very grateful for two gifts from the Ministry Development Committee.

Now the door has opened for the next phase of building-hiring



More space! Before (small picture) and after renovations.

> person could fill one of three ministry roles:

> a second paid worker! We pray a second worker will help us as we

seek to have a growing gospel

influence for Jesus.

1. Outward Community Focus,

2. Operational Inward Focus, or 3. Family, Youth & Women's Focus.

A longer job description and application form can be found on the web: eltham.pcvic.org.au/News.html.

Rev Don Elliott Eltham Presbyterian Church

full-time position.

ing for someone

who is energetic

is committed to

and outgoing, has

natural people skills,

team ministry, and

has a desire to train

others. Ordination is

not required. Such a

We are search-

PIM and Noorat–what a mix!



The new padres with Rev Miles Fagan in Noorat.

On Sunday 23rd September 2012, Noorat Presbyterian Church was graced with the presence of David and Gae McDonald.

David and Gae were recently appointed Presbyterian Inland Mission (PIM) padres to the John Flynn Patrol in South Australia. After attending the centenary service at Scots Church in Melbourne on Saturday, they drove the 'short' distance to Noorat. Just to put it into perspective, the John Flynn patrol is slightly smaller than Victoria in land size, so Melbourne

to Noorat (202 km) is not far at all! We were thrilled to hear of their work and how the Lord prepared them for this minis-

try. There was a flurry of activity as several men wanted to go with the McDonalds – a dream that may well be realized.

Two previous Noorat ministers also served as padres. One of those was Sir Francis Rolland (1908-1915) who served at Beltana (part of the John Flynn Patrol) before being called to Noorat. Rolland and Flynn were contemporaries-Rolland may have encouraged Flynn to go to the outback. It was tremendous to see the legacy that continues today, and that Noorat had a role to play in it.

> Rev. Miles Fagan Noorat Presbyterian Church



Introducing GOD

What a blessing to see God at work drawing people to himself though the *Introducing God* course.

Our church family rejoices that two men came to know God by trusting in Jesus during this course. Praise God that he desires that none should perish, but that all should come to him in repentance and be saved! Praise God that he is mighty to save and that he is active in doing so!

Drouin Presbyterian Church hosted the *Introducing God* course over nine weeks. It is a

areat course designed to help our churches reach out with the gospel. Participants shared a meal together, watched a 20-30 minute talk on DVD, and discussed the talks in small groups. The DVD talks by Dominic Steele are faithful in presenting the gospel message and give an excellent overall picture of God's plan of salvation through the bible. Following the '2 Ways to Live' gospel tract, the eight Bible talks make it clear that the only way we get to know God, and come to have a relationship with him. is through Jesus.

We had a group of about fifteen people come along each week. This was a mix of Christians with their non-Christian friends. Our guests all listened intently to the talks and enjoyed the additional multimedia clips that accompanied these. Group discussions were open and comfortable and our guests commented that they felt able to ask any questions they had and to express their own opinions freely.

We hope to use this gospel tool again in the future as long as God holds open this window of opportunity and continues to use it to draw people into a saving relationship with him. If you would like to talk about how this course might work in the context of your local church please contact Heath Easton on 0432 088 373 or at heatheaston@ hotmail.com, or check out http:// introducinggod.christiansinthemedia.org.

> Rev. Heath Easton Assistant Minister Drouin Presbyterian Church

David Palmer: our new Moderator

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just as the prodigal son left these things behind in the discovery of his Father's love and unconditional acceptance, so I think it is good to remind ourselves of some of the positive outcomes of remaining Presbyterian.

Well, what are these are these positive outcomes that we thank God for?

1. The rejection of a theologically liberal, biblically uncertain past, and in its place the development of theological education that is biblically and confessionally bound.

2. The reinvigoration of old established churches that had fallen on hard times, with still more to be done in this regard.

3. The planting of new churches - whilst not all have survived, many have blossomed.

4. The retention of young people in the church who marry and in their turn have children, contra the Church's experience in the 1960s and into the 1980s – a major positive factor.

5. The truly amazing number of missionaries that a denomination of just under seven thousand Sunday attendees supports – thirty missionary couples and singles, or fifty-eight persons including the children.

6. In contrast to declines of between 15% and 20% since 2000 being reported by a number of mainline denominations, we know that our own attendances over the same period have increased slightly. Not only so but the average age across all our congregations had actually fallen on my calculations by 3 years between 1995 and 2011.

When I referred to the return to our biblical and confessional heritage, this of course is extraordinarily counter cultural.

We live in a time when outright contempt is displayed toward our forebears who, for example, were in no doubt and for very good reasons knew that marriage involved a man and a woman who would provide a home for themselves and their children.

The English philosopher Edmund Burke lived at the time of the French Revolution. He noted the self-righteous contempt of the revolutionaries towards their ancestors, customs and institutions,



and wrote that society is a partnership not only between those who are living, but between those who are living, those who are dead and those who are to be born.

I believe this is a profoundly biblical understanding. To the extent that I have any contribution to make to the Church over the next year, it will be to reinforce and encourage the appreciation and application of our heritage today, even as we seek to bear witness to the Lord Jesus in our worship, in sharing the gospel with fellow Australians and speaking up for good and godly ways in the public domain where, make no mistake, we will refuse to be silenced.'

> Rev. David Palmer Moderator Presbyterian Church of Victoria

Beltana Abuzz



The Smith of Dunesk Mission Church building was overflowing as the community and visitors gathered for a special centenary service.

The tiny township of Beltana was abuzz over the first weekend of October when hundreds of visitors from all over Australia converged on the small country town.

To mark the centenary of the founding of the Australian Inland Mission (AIM), the local community and their Progress Association planned a weekend of activities. Nearly all aspects of the town were opened to the public including the bakery, railway station, Beltana Station and the Smith of Dunesk Mission church building (pictured above). Amid the hive of activity there were numerous static displays, books were launched and walking tours conducted.

The PIM set up a display and an information table behind the historic Smith of Dunesk Mission. Stephen Dyer was present for the weekend and sold copies of the

'Nearly all aspects of the town were opened to the public including the bakery, railway station, Beltana Station and the Smith of Dunesk Mission church building.' PIM's Commemorative Coffee Table book, *Views Beyond the Furthest Fence*.

On Sunday morning nearly two hundred people gathered at the historic church where a special service was conducted. Inside the church was standing room only and many had to remain outside in the shade of a tree or on whatever seating was available.

Those gathered were welcomed by David McDonald, the PIM Padre for the Flynn Patrol in South Australia. The service was led by Rev Stuart Bonnington and the sermon was preached by the Rt Rev David Jones, Moderator of the General Assembly of Australia. His message was based on the text emblazoned on the back of the church from Isaiah 55:6, 'Seek ye the Lord'. David called on all present to acknowledge the forgiveness of personal sin as their greatest need and to call on the Lord Jesus Christ who is able to forgive and restore.

There is no doubt that the local residents are proud of their close historic association with the Rev Dr John Flynn. Prior to the weekend's activities, Ron Johnson and a team of local volunteers built a cairn that was as prominent in the township as it was impressive in its construction.

Wording on the plaque commemorated the founding of the AIM by the Presbyterian Church of Australia with the Rev Dr John Flynn as its first superintendent. At the bottom of the plaque a favourite verse of Flynn's was recorded; 'Seek the LORD while he may be found; call on him while he is near.'

After extending thanks to the local residents of Beltana and acknowledging the fine craftsmanship in the construction of the cairn, Martin de Pyle recalled some of the personal qualities of John Flynn before he unveiled the plaque to the applause of those gathered.

Located 540km north of Adelaide and 240km north east of Port Augusta, Beltana was the remote town that the Rev. John Flynn went to in 1911 when he graduated from Theological College. More plans are in place to continue the restoration of the historic Smith of Dunesk Mission, and locals have expressed interest in regular services resuming there.

An abridged transcript of the sermon and order forms for *Views Beyond the Furthest Fence* can be found at pim.org.au.

Rev Martin de Pyle Chairman PIM Centenary Celebration Committee



The indomitable man of vision

One century ago, the Rev John Flynn was appointed Superintendent of the newly formed Australian Inland Mission. This is the third of five articles, by the Rev Robert Benn, continuing the story of the life and ministry of one of our own whose faith and service we must not forget. To read previous instalments of this story, download the June and September newsletters from our website.

Five months! Only five months for John Flynn to prepare and deliver a report on how the Church should be ministering to the folk of inland Australia. A massive undertaking.

Sure, he had had experience from the west to the east of Victoria. A year or so's experience from Adelaide to Oodnadatta. And he had overseen the building of a hospital, and settled into ministry based at Beltana. But this was only scratching the surface of knowledge of Australia's interior. 'Great God, I'm ready to start now. Please help! For Christ and the continent,' he prayed.

As the railway tracks stretched out far behind him into the deep distance of Beltana, he began to dream of reporting to the Assembly in September 1912.

Adelaide. Melbourne. Sydney. Brisbane. Thursday Island. Darwin. Bathurst Island. Katherine. Maranboy, where Mrs Anaeus Gunn of 'We of the Never Never' lost her husband. It was such a long and arduous trip, observing, making notes, formulating vision. Then back to Sydney.

Rev John Ferguson was responsible for mailing the White Book, and time was running out. 'I haven't finished the report, sir,' said John.

'Let me read it and I'll see what we can do,' was the reply. When Flynn arrived at Ferguson's office the next day, Ferguson was effusive in commendation of the slightly unfinished report. 'This is not a normal report. This is a living document.'

Before long, it went to the commissioners for the Assembly,

and then across the nation!

General Assembly, 1912. Flynn presented his case for ministry to the isolated folk of the inland. He told the stories of tragedy. loneliness, fear, dread, lack of communication and distance. He spoke of the need for literature. medical care, gospel ministries, and transport. He set out a pattern for cottage hospitals and patrol ministries. And he showed the Assembly pictorially how these ministries could be effected. Rev Prof Laurence Rentoul commended Flynn for his 'diligence, care and ability', and with standing ovation Rev John Flynn was appointed Superintendent of the Australian Inland Mission in September 1912,



Hugh Victor McKay contributed greatly to the establishment of the 'Aerial Medical Service'-now the Royal Flying Doctor Service.

a body within the church that would 'contribute to the general welfare of the bush settlers.'

We know from present day experience that you can't run a program such as was proposed by Flynn to the Assembly without many, many helpers. He talked about cottage hospitals and patrol ministries! With great vision and ardour, he appealed for ordained ministers to come forward to volunteer for the work of patrol padres. Not long before, there had been a standing ovation in response to his professionalism and vision. Now a strange silence seemed to descend.

Until Bruce Plowman came forward. 'No, I'm not an ordained minister, but I have had experience in SS teaching, youth work and in home missions. I'm a country man. I can ride a horse. I know there are six senses! And I can blaze the trail for others.'

Bemused, one of the Board members enquired, 'So, Plowman, what's the sixth sense?'

'Horse sense, sir!'

He was appointed the first patrol padre to the Southern Patrol. Flynn and Plowman headed to Beltana. This proved to be a major cultural adjustment for Bruce. All experiences were way beyond his 'six senses'. He seemed lacking in enthusiasm about the whole business of ministry in inland Australia. Little by little, Flynn turned Plowman's thinking, until in his mind's eye he could see tidy streets, families, and effective care for the inland folk. And then he was off to explore his field of ministry... the size of the United Kingdom!

Meanwhile Flynn was travelling too. Exploring, observing, listening and dreaming. And from his own experience of prayer, encouraging others in these terms: 'Do not pray for tasks equal to your powers. Pray for powers equal to your tasks.'

He rode camels, spoke of their

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The indomitable man of vision

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'cantankerous nature' and dreamed of 'motor buggies'. He saw the sand that could bury anything in its path, and dreamed of 'lessening the fear and the terror of loneliness'. He was stranded at the Diamantina river, and seeing the cockatoos fly over, and delighting in their freedom of movement, he dreamed of an 'aerial medical service'. All 'For Christ and the continent', his motto.

'How to improve the ministry?' was his constant exercise of mind. He had previously visited Jeannie Gunn in Melbourne who had entered thoughtfully into the development of vision. After much discussion, Jeannie concluded, 'You have to combine the medical, the social and the spiritual into one ministry.' It wasn't too long before cottage hospitals were springing up, mostly with a background of tragedy.

Patrol padres were settled into their rounds of itinerant gospel ministries in the Kimberleys, the Pilbara, the Northern Territory and the Southern and Central patrols. A Mail League had been established to promote a greater measure of communication between the city and the inland, and literature was being supplied in greater abundance. Prior to this, one fellow told Flynn, 'The only thing we had to read was the labels on jam tins!'

Assemblies came and went. For the AIM Board, Flynn's visionary



Left: Hudson Fysh. Right: Fysh, Flynn's friend and founder of QANTAS, stands in an Avro 504K, a war surplus aircraft used by QANTAS in its earliest days.

approach to inland ministry was difficult to cope with. He was running far ahead of them. And then came the 'War to end all wars' –1914-1918.

Tensions ran high between the Superintendent and the Board under which he served. His secretary, Miss Jean Baird, encouraged him to stay away from the Board until the mood changed. So, in his newly acquired 1924 Dodge Buckboard, he headed for Alice Springs to finish building the hospital. His dreaming for the betterment of life for the inlanders continued, and his vision expanded. He talked of the desperate need for an aerial medical service. When the hospital was completed and the dust settled on the celebrations, he

was informed that his very close colleague Hugh Victor McKay of Sunshine Harvester Company had died. What grief.

But it wasn't all bad news. HV McKay left a bequest of £2000 to continue the research into the possibility of establishing the Aerial Medical Service, and £2000 per annum if progress continued. Though the Board had not given any encouragement to press on down this track, with the bequest from McKay, the Board reluctantly wrote, 'If HV McKay believes it's worthwhile, the Board feels there must be something in it!'

Furthermore, Flynn's long-time friend Hudson Fysh was working towards moving people and goods around the country via the Queensland and Northern Territory Aerial Service (QANTAS). Keith and Ross Smith flew from England to Australia. And Charles Kingsford Smith has saved a child from the Carnarvon area ('Tragedy Corner') using an aeroplane. So Flynn publishes in the *The Inlander* magazine, 'Flying Doctor, why not now?'

So we sit on the edge of our seats, gazing into the future with Flynn, attempting to envisage what would become his mission, 'For Christ and the Continent.'

Rev Robert Benn

Planning your Bible studies?

For Home Groups, Women's Groups, Youth Bible studies and other groups! We have PTC Media-produced Bible study material on: Ruth, Isaiah 1-12, Daniel, Philippians, Proverbs 1-9, John 1-12, John13-21, Proverbs1-9, Philippians, Ephesians, Ezra, Amos, Romans1-8, Genesis 1-11. Ask for special bulk prices.

We also have study material for elders, youth leaders and deacons. Please look on the front page of the college website for the latest 12 page PTC Media catalogue www.ptc.vic.edu.au. Mignon Goswell PTC Media Manager Phone: 0400 880 515 Email: ptcmedia@hotmail.com

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