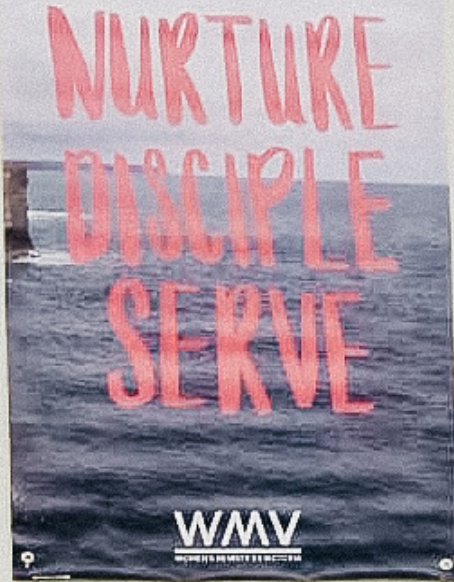


Winter 2021 / Presbyterian Church of Victoria



# FELLOW WORKERS



**FROM SPIRITUAL  
DISHWASHING TO  
CO-LABOURING IN  
THE GOSPEL**



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*Fellow Workers*

Quarterly Magazine of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria.

State News Committee: Stephen McDonald (Convenor), Phil Betts, Jo Craig, Luke Isham & Tony Zirngast.

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# FELLOW WORKERS

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## EDITORIAL: WHAT IS THE CHURCH GOOD FOR?

What is the church good for? Plenty of people who consider themselves to be Christians aren't sure.

Some are grateful for hearing the Gospel through the church, so they go along in the hope that others will be saved. Others have been hurt by people in the church, so they stay away. And others are disappointed that the church doesn't seem to do anything. So, why bother?

### THERE'S ONLY ONE MISSION STATEMENT

Perhaps, like me, you've been in your fair share of church meetings discussing what the church is about. We know that if we're not clear about that, there will be all sorts of problems. We'll drift from the mission. We'll direct our time and resources to the wrong priorities. And it'll be hard to encourage each other on in the task if we don't have a shared goal.

Will we find the solution in seemingly endless planning meetings and mission statements? If they prove anything, it's that we all know what the mission should be (even if we disagree about how to express it or are unsure about how to do it).

How much time should we spend finding a memorable way to summarise our mission of glorifying God by making disciples through proclaiming Jesus?

Perhaps we might prefer simply quote the Great Commission in Matthew 28:18–20, without any attempt to apply it to our local situations in our present time.

*'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.'*

—Matthew 28:18–20

However we express our mission, and however familiar the Great Commission may be to us, we need to be careful not to overlook some key points.

### THE AUDIENCE

We cannot fulfil the Great Commission on our own. Although we all have a part in fulfilling this command, we cannot do it as individuals in isolation. That's true, no matter how disappointed, frustrated, or hurt we may feel towards the church. Why?

Because Jesus gave the Great Commission to His people together. All of His commands in Matthew 28:18–20 are plural. That's a relief! I couldn't go and make disciples all on my own!

### THE BASIS

Jesus' mission for the church rests on Jesus' authority, not only in heaven, but in every part of the universe! He is the Lord of all, so He deserves for His call to repent and believe to be heard by everyone, everywhere! And He is the head of the church, so He sets the agenda for us, His people.

## THE PURPOSE

Jesus' Great Commission is not only about evangelism. The task of making disciples is not finished when people repent and believe (v19). It includes 'teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you,' (v20a). We all need to 'spur one another on towards love and good deeds, not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching' (Hebrews 10:24-25). This obedience to Jesus' commands isn't limited to the direct quotations from Jesus' lips in the New Testament. It includes all of the Scriptures because they were all breathed out by God, and are therefore 'useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work,' (2 Timothy 3:16-17).

## THE DYNAMICS

When all of our planning and strategizing is done, we find that the determining factor isn't anything to do with us. Our assurance, our encouragement, our boldness, and our power for all of this comes from the presence of Jesus with us by the Holy Spirit (v20b, see also John 14:15-18).

So, I need a group of other Christians to help: to encourage me, to engage the lost with me, to evangelise the lost together, to establish the found in the truth, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, and to go to gather and mature other followers of Jesus! We do that together because Jesus is the all-powerful Lord who lives in us and works through us by His Holy Spirit.

## DIFFERENT LANGUAGE, SAME MISSION

We might feel that these truths have been re-emphasised in our own day in a way that previous generations overlooked. But these Gospel-centred truths have always been the ministry plan for Jesus' church throughout time.

But none of that truth was lost on the authors of the Westminster Confession of Faith. They summarised the mission of the church like this:

*'To this universal, visible church Christ has given the ministry, oracles, and ordinances of God for the gathering and perfecting of the saints, in this life, to the end of the age. For this purpose he makes these means effectual by his own presence and Spirit, according to his promise.'* — Westminster Confession of Faith 25.3 [Modern version]

The language may be different to what we would use. The Westminster Assembly wrote that the church exists for a God-given purpose 'for the gathering and perfecting of the saints.' But is that so different from the church today saying its mission is 'growing followers of Jesus' or 'making disciple-making disciples of Jesus'? They both express the complete, whole of life obedience to Jesus that glorifies God through gathering and teaching followers of Jesus.

So, let's not fall for that tribalism that believes that only our group in this place and time really understands or is faithful to the Great Commission.

Fellow Workers, are we gathering and perfecting the saints?

*Stephen McDonald is Convenor of the State News Committee*

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## TRIBUTE TO BRIAN D BAYSTON OAM

**REV. PHILIP MERCER, MODERATOR OF THE  
GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF VICTORIA,  
AND REV. JOHN WILSON, CLERK OF THE  
GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF VICTORIA**

Former long-serving Law Agent of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria (1974 - 2014), Moderator of the General Assembly (1999 - 2000), loyal Presbyterian, friend of the church, faithful and tireless defender of the Christian faith, Presbyterian Ladies College Council member (36 years), Scotch College Council member (31 years), Brian D Bayston OAM, died early May 2021, aged 90. His funeral service was conducted at Scots' Church, Melbourne, witnessed by many. Peter Adam preached the funeral sermon.

On behalf of the whole church, we convey our condolences to his wife Helen and family, and assure them of our prayers for God's mercy and comfort at their loss. We concur and affirm how Brian's resolute faith in Christ has carried him through his long life, with many joys and trials along the way. He knew clearly of the Saviour's grace, mercy and peace as he passed away.

## MINISTRY MOVES

On 16 April 2021, Mr John Hudson was appointed as minister at Brimbank Presbyterian Church.

On 23 April 2021, Billy Kurniawan was licensed and exited to Burwood Community Presbyterian Church.

On 30 April 2021, the Presbytery of Melbourne West received Rev Seog-Hoon Son, formerly a Westminster Presbyterian Church of Australia

Minister, into our denomination and Presbytery. He was at the same time appointed the Minister of the West Melbourne Korean Church located in Point Cook.

Presbyterian Inland Mission have appointed Paul and Janae Denness to the manager's role at New Dunesk. They were commissioned at Ebenezer Presbyterian Church in Ballarat on Sunday 13 June 2021.

## PROFILE:

### INTERVIEW WITH PCV LAW AGENT, GEOFF COX

*How did you come to be the PCV Law Agent?*

The Law Agent is an officer of the General Assembly. Following Brian Bayston's retirement as the PCV's Law Agent of 41 years I was formally appointed to the role by the Assembly in 2015. Before then, my introduction to the work of the PCV had come personally in the life of the Reservoir and later the Bundoora congregations and then also professionally as I was privileged to work in legal practice with Brian at McCracken & McCracken.

*Why does a denomination need a lawyer, and what does the Law Agent do?*

Sooner or later, any organisational citizen seeking to carry out its purposes, whether they be commercial or charitable, will find itself grappling with all kinds of issues with legal ramifications. The PCV's Law Agent acts as its first port of call when it is looking to address a legal question and as someone who can identify a potential legal issue on the horizon. This, hopefully, brings some level of comfort and certainty to those engaged in the mission of the Church in its various parts.

In particular, the Law Agent has a responsibility to act for the PCV in specific transactions and matters where its legal interests are affected. The Law Agent is also responsible to advise the various agencies and personnel within the PCV where matters of civil law intersect with the PCV's affairs and interests. The Law Agent therefore interacts with a range of PCV officers across congregations, presbyteries, the Assembly, its committees and trustees of church property. The Law Agent also participates as a member of certain Assembly committees.

*How can a Christian even be a lawyer (considering what appears to be a prohibition on Christians suing in 1 Corinthians 6:1-8 and Matthew 5:40, or making oaths in Matthew 5:33-37)?*

The premise of the question is that there is an incompatibility between being a lawyer and being a faithful disciple of Jesus Christ. I respectfully disagree! Although it can be challenging even on a daily basis, it is a wonderful thing to be able to integrate one's faith with one's calling wherever that may be. A Christian lawyer will hopefully appreciate that they are the beneficiaries of God's grace and are called to do good works by being God's instruments. We can serve God by showing his love to our neighbour clients and colleagues.

The particular Biblical examples cited above, then, speak more about how I, as a Christian lawyer, can be faithful in my calling rather than whether or not I should even consider legal practice as a vocation. So, in the case of disputes among believers (1 Corinthians 6:1-8), I have a role to play in helping my Christian clients see what it looks like to live in obedience to Christ by encouraging them to first consider all other avenues to resolve their matter. In the case of Jesus' teaching on oaths in Matthew 5:33-37, this challenges me to pursue integrity and truthfulness in my practice and to encourage my clients to do the same.

*Do you have any advice to Christians considering a career in law?*

It is always sensible to try to discern what God is calling you to do. If that calling is to legal practice, then prayerfully consider how you might faithfully serve God and your neighbour in that sphere and how your faith might be integrated across all areas of your life. Practically, it can be of great value to connect with Christians already in legal practice to get an understanding of how they meet these challenges and to discover where, within the broad spectrum of legal practice, you might be best placed to serve with your particular gifts.





# FROM SPIRITUAL DISHWASHING TO CO-LABOURING IN THE GOSPEL

*What the new Women's Ministry Victoria committee structure means for you*

**AMY ISHAM**

In my doctoral thesis fieldwork, I found a strange phenomenon, when I was studying women in community leadership. I found that they juggled their community work along with other work and family commitments. Another rural researcher, Jo Little, researched women's voluntary work and how their "day-to-day" voluntary work tended to be dovetailed with domestic work" (Little, p, 2002). When women work voluntarily in their community, it can become a kind of community "dishwashing", something that gets done alongside the domestic chores, because otherwise, it won't happen.

In the context of women's ministry, the danger of already busy women making time for encouraging each other is that it can become a kind of spiritual "dishwashing". Given that at least 50% of the population of our churches are women, it is unfortunate that it can be something that people squeeze in on weekends, like vacuuming. What is missing is also a state wide and whole entity approach to women's ministry which can make it a priority across multiple committees, presbyteries and churches. Having a big picture vision for women's ministry would mean integrating the specific needs of women into every pastor's role and having a

designated committee to encourage this integration and collaboration for the benefit of all of God's people.

To follow-on from Mairi Girgis' article in the last edition of *Fellow Workers*, I would like to bring you up to speed on some changes to the WMV Committee. For the last five or more years, women's ministry through WMV was achieved under a portfolio of the CENC (Christian Education and Nurture) committee. This meant that it was a practical committee, running conferences, arranging catch-ups, training and encouragement, especially for women outside of the city. The *On the Road* conferences, particularly, acted as a major source of encouragement for outer regional churches, who often missed-out on training that is available in inner city churches.

However, in 2020, the WMV became established as a fully fledged Assembly committee, which has changed it to one that can think about the future, partner with other committees and work to make women's ministry more integrated across the whole PCV. This means that the work of running conferences has come under an *On the Road* sub-com-



mittee, which organises, delegates and liaises with churches to make sure all the details of these days come together. So we are still running the *On the Road* conference, but we will need your help. A Women's Ministry Facilitator's biggest role would be to recruit and organise the volunteers in the sub-committee and make sure they are supported, well resourced, encouraged and connected to the committee.

## PARTNER WITH US

If you would like to be involved with women's ministry across the PCV and in your own church, there are two ways you can help. Firstly, we are seeking to raise funds for the role of Women's Ministry Facilitator, who would run the sub-committee with the support of the WMV committee and support women in churches to flourish in their congregations. This complementarian woman would not become the "spiritual dishwasher", but oversee and coordinate the running of events so that volunteers can be involved to their own capacity. If you would like to partner with us financially towards the wage of a Women's Ministry Facilitator, please see our website [www.wmv.org.au/supportwmv](http://www.wmv.org.au/supportwmv) or direct your donations to PCV Trust Corp, BSB 083044, Account 015016531 and include "WMV" in the description. If you would like to arrange an ongoing monthly pledge for their wage, please email us at [wmvpcv@gmail.com](mailto:wmvpcv@gmail.com).

The second way that you can help is to attend the *On the Road* conferences and communicate your willingness to be involved in roles such as sound, social media, serving food, promoting the conference to churches, setting-up, running a bookstall, or just encouraging other women in churches that are farther from the city.

The *On the Road* conference dates for 2021 are:

**NORTH GEELONG** | Saturday 26/6

**RESERVOIR** | Saturday 28/8

**SHEPPARTON** | Saturday 16/10

We're overjoyed that God is working with women across the Presbyterian Church of Victoria and we're looking forward to working with you in your ministry.

*Amy Isham is on the Women's Ministry Victoria Committee and part of the St Kilda & Balaclava congregation.*

**24/4**  
Frankston

**26/6**  
North Geelong

**28/8**  
Reservoir

**16/10**  
Shepparton

**Sustained!**  
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you  
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# FIGHT FOR YOUR PASTOR

**PETER ORR**

I was struck by a tweet I read recently by a Christian author:

*I've had 28 Pastor friends resign this year. Almost all of them are transitioning to a new vocation. What is occurring?*<sup>1</sup>

That's just one tweet (from the US) but it resonates with my experience. In my position as a lecturer in a theological college, I know hundreds of men and women who have gone through college and are now in pastoral ministry and many of those are struggling in some way or another. Some are at the point of quitting ministry all together.

There are, I suppose, myriad reasons for why people are leaving pastoral ministry. The challenges of the COVID pandemic and increasing cultural intolerance have made the issues more acute. However, tragically, sometimes the most intense pressure on pastors is caused by “friendly fire”—i.e. from people within their churches. Some are on the verge of breakdown because of constant criticism from people within their congregation.

In this article I want to briefly think about how as Christians we might more intentionally love and support our senior pastors;<sup>2</sup> how we can encourage them, under God, to keep going.

## FIGHT!

I was going to write, “pray for your pastor” but that doesn't convey the seriousness and urgency of the

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<sup>1</sup> <https://twitter.com/danwhitejr/status/1389001708290859016>

<sup>2</sup> I am deliberately writing this article with respect to senior pastors, although I think the principles apply to others in full-time ministry. I wanted to concentrate on senior pastors, because in my observation they are the ones who are under most pressure – certainly in the contexts that I live and work in. For that reason, I have used the language of “he”. I am convinced that the Bible teaches that the role of the senior minister is reserved for men only. If you disagree, I hope that you can still benefit from what I read and apply it in your own context.

“I KNOW HUNDREDS OF MEN AND WOMEN WHO HAVE GONE THROUGH COLLEGE AND ARE NOW IN PASTORAL MINISTRY AND MANY OF THOSE ARE STRUGGLING.”

task. This is spiritual warfare (Eph 6:11-20). Your pastor is under more intense Satanic attack than anyone else you know. Satan wants to derail your pastor's faith; discourage him; wreck his marriage; ensnare his children.

It is striking how often Paul—who has such a clear grasp on God's sovereignty—asks churches to pray for him and his colleagues. Sometimes his request is general: “pray for us,” he writes in 1 Thessalonians 5:25. Elsewhere he asks for more specific prayers:

- for protection (Romans 15:31; 2 Thess 3:2);
- joy and refreshment (Romans 15:32);
- help and blessing (2 Cor 1:11);
- deliverance (Philippians 1:19);
- that he would proclaim the gospel boldly (Eph 6:18-20), clearly (Col 4:4) and effectively (2 Thess 3:2);
- for reunion with friends (Phm 22).

The author of Hebrews similarly asks his readers to pray “earnestly” that he would have a “clear conscience” and would be restored to them (Heb 13:19).

Do you pray for your pastor? Regularly? Daily? Prayer is hard work. Paul can describe Epaphras “working hard” and “struggling” in prayer for the Colossian church (Col 4:12-13). Do you “work hard” and “struggle” for your pastor? Do you pray specific



prayers for your pastor along the lines above or do you simply pray that God would “bless” him? Of course, we aren’t just limited to the requests that Paul asks his churches to pray for him. We can pray for his spiritual growth, for his marriage, for his leadership, for his children, for his encouragement.

Many of us, myself included, need to repent of the lip-service we give to the idea of praying for our pastors. Our pastors need our earnest, prayerful support.

## ENCOURAGE!

To say “be encouraging” seems banal but to write it off as banal means we can easily forget to do it. And all too often encouragement is reduced to a quick “Nice sermon, vicar/pastor” at the door on the way out of church. Paul reminds the Galatians that those who have been taught should “share all good things with the one who teaches.” (Gal 6:6) In its context, the command certainly includes material support, but I think it also establishes a broader principle of supplying the pastor what they need to keep going. If believers are supposed to encourage one another (1 Thess 4:18), we should especially encourage a pastor who is under pressure.

Why not send a text-message or email or even a letter thanking your pastor for his sermon and saying specifically what you found helpful? Tell him that you are praying for him and what you are praying for him.

So often the communication that a pastor receives is complaining. So, I know pastors who were still receiving complaints about the livestream technology months after their churches were meeting back in person. It was so draining and discouraging for them.

A pastor gives a considerable chunk of his time to preparing and teaching God’s Word. The New Testament puts him under the strictest warnings to teach only in accord with God’s Word, and to “preach in season and out of season,” (2 Timothy 4:2). So, in one sense, whether we encourage him or not, he still has to preach faithfully and regularly. But why not help him to keep doing it?

## GIVE!

Paul certainly assumes that a pastor will be paid (e.g. 1 Cor 9:14; Gal 6:6; 1 Tim 5:17-18). Some churches, though, make life unnecessarily hard for their pastor and his family by being deliberately miserly. Years ago I heard of a church where the elders met to discuss how much to pay the pastor. They brought him into the room and discussed with him how much to pay him. After the meeting one of the elders told him that if he had pushed harder they would have been willing to give him more.

That is precisely the wrong way round. A congregation should be as generous as they can with their pastor. Let him give back to the church if he thinks he is paid too much. If you can’t trust your pastor to be careful and generous with his money then you have the wrong man.

Yes, there can be problems if pastors are paid too much. Perhaps in some contexts, ministers need to be more sacrificial and more generous. But I think in our context—evangelical churches in Australia—the problem is more often reversed: ministers struggle to care for their families in contexts where it is very expensive to live, or end up resenting the fact that they are paid so pitifully when their congrega-



tions are so wealthy. As congregation members, our responsibility is to be as generous as we can be.

## **FORGIVE!**

In the Second World War, petrol was in short supply and so the British government put up posters asking people to consider: “Is your journey really necessary?” Do you need to take that trip and waste valuable, limited resources? Perhaps we need to ask, “is my criticism really necessary?” Do I really need to waste my pastor’s valuable and limited resources?

Every pastor will make mistakes. Every pastor will preach a dud sermon. Every pastor will let you down. Every pastor will hurt you. Obviously, if the matter is significant (a matter of serious sin etc.), something needs to be done. But, do I really need to inform my pastor that he did not handle verse 3 of the passage correctly? Do I really need to tell him that he seemed so distracted after church that I feel hurt? Do I really need to tell him that the church weekend away wasn’t organized as well this year?

Sometimes ... maybe it may be right to raise these things. But let’s be prayerfully slow about it. Let’s be “quick to hear [and] slow to speak” as James commands (James 1:19). Not every hurt has to be fully and formally dealt with. As Peter reminds us, we are to “keep loving one another earnestly, since love covers a multitude of sins,” (1 Peter 4:8). This isn’t a theology of atonement, but it is very practical advice: every relationship needs to be sustained by generous willingness to overlook failings and faults.

## **SUBMIT!**

Those who don’t know the Bible tend to react with extreme hostility to the idea of submission. This is not the place to go into the question in detail, except to say that submission—whether in marriage or any other relationship—does not mean unquestioning obedience or allowing oneself to be abused.

Even those of us who know the Bible, however, are affected by the world’s hostility to submission, and are rightly nervous because of its potential for misuse. We might easily find ourselves reacting to the word or the principle when we hear it mentioned. Yet the NT is clear—there is a right and proper submission to those who are in spiritual leadership over us. For example:

*Likewise, you who are younger, be subject to the elders. (1 Peter 5:5)*

*Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. (Hebrews 13:17)*

What does this look like in practice? Most commentators rightly concentrate on pointing out what this does not mean—and our own minds easily drift to how easy it would be to abuse this teaching (especially in the light of recent very high-profile failures). But submission and obedience to leaders is tied to their teaching of God’s Word. If Paul tells Timothy to: “preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching” (2 Tim 4:2), then submission means allowing yourself to be rebuked. It means allowing your pastor to point out where you are being inconsistent in your Christian faith.

And this kind of submission is in our own interest! The more responsive we are to our faithful leaders, the better it will be for both them and us. Or, as Hebrews 13:17 goes on to say: “do this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you (v17b).

## **CONCLUSION**

The Christian life is difficult. Christian ministers do not have a monopoly on suffering—not at all. But in my experience, and from the Scriptures, it often seems that pastors are under the most pressure. As Paul notes, “apart from other things, there is the daily pressure on me of my anxiety for all the churches” (2 Cor 11:28). Their role in teaching the gospel and guarding congregations means that they are generally going to be under more intense spiritual attack than the rest of us. I am deeply thankful for my pastor and my friends who are pastors, and, in preparing this article, I have been challenged to love them more intentionally and keep fighting for them in prayer. I hope you’ll join me...

*Peter Orr lectures in New Testament at Moore College, Sydney  
This article was first published at The Gospel Coalition Australia*



# WATCH AND LEARN

## JORDAN BORN

As a boy I'd go fishing with my dad. I'd watch how he tied his rigs, how he'd cast, and how he'd reel the fish in. 'Watch and learn' he'd say to me. It was by watching and learning that I learned and grew in my ability to fish.

These instructions remind me of Paul's instructions to his protégé in 2 Timothy 3:14, 'But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it.'

I freely admit that there is a lot I have to learn yet about pastoral ministry—and what a benefit it is to 'watch and learn' from men who have a great wealth of experience in ministry. This year's ministry conference (hosted by the Presbyterian Theological College) was a helpful forum to 'watch and learn' from those ministers who have many years of wisdom and experience.

So, having said that, what did I learn?

David Cook urged us to preach the word with conviction and clarity. Convinced that it is God's own word and testimony, give your hearers the Bible, as you preach make its message absolutely clear to them.

David Burge enjoined us to preach the word with humility and confidence. Take comfort in the fact

that you are not the power of God unto salvation—the word is. In his talk on the authorship of 2 Peter, he lamented how much of modern biblical scholarship has lost this vision.

Andrew Hastie and Stuart White encouraged us to engage our children with the word—our task is not to simply 'tell them what they must believe' but to apply and model your faith in the home. Our children cannot live on bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God. These men gave us insight into the life of pastor's children.

Peter Barnes encouraged us to fight for the Word, as the church fathers Ambrose and Athanasius fought to defend the divinity of our Saviour Jesus Christ.

What did I watch? I closely watched and heard from ministers who love the word, hear the word, reflect on the word, embrace the word, pray the word, teach the word and preach the word.

What did I learn? To do the same.

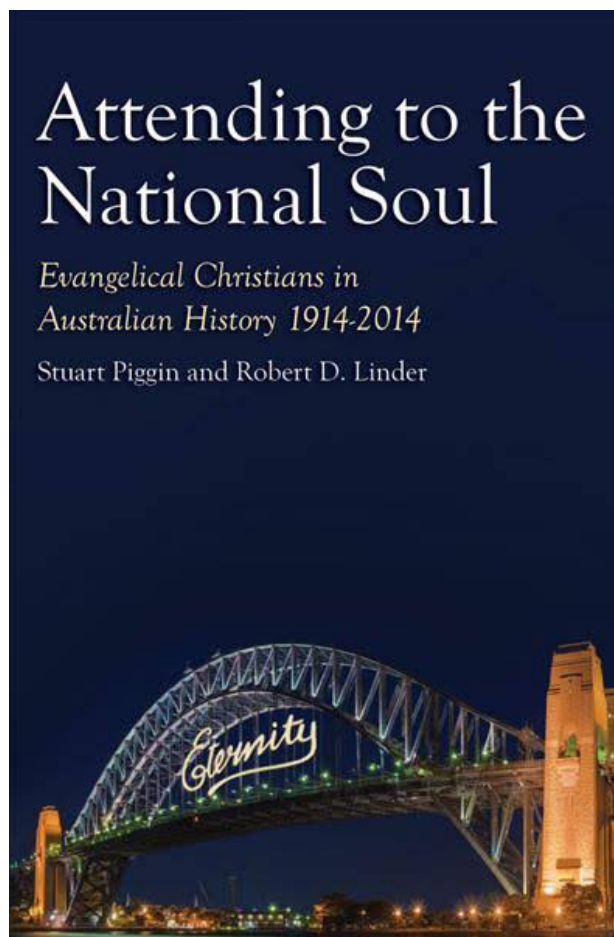
May God help us watch and learn from those who have gone before us.

*Jordan Born is a minister of the Presbyterian Church in America serving as Assistant Pastor at Donvale Presbyterian Church*

## REVIEW:

# ATTENDING TO THE NATIONAL SOUL

REVIEWED BY DAVID PALMER



*Puritan: All of Life to the Glory of God*  
Multimedia Pack

Reformation Heritage (2019)

ISBN: 040232379062

Stuart Piggin, the premier historian of Australian evangelicalism, with his American collaborator, Robert Linder, has produced a two volume history of the participation of evangelical Christians in Australian life. Volume I, *The Fountain of Public Prosperity*, covers the period up to the commencement of World War I while Volume II, *Attending to the National Soul* continues the story up to 2014. This review covers Volume II.

The question Piggin and Linder address is, “to what extent did evangelicals influence the development of Australian values and public opinion post-empire”; or, expressing this somewhat differently, “how effective were they in attending to the Australian soul, to the spirit of the nation, as well as to the cure of individual Australians?” In doing so, they explore the relationship of evangelical Christianity with the culture, with secularism and with the state.

While the authors cast a wide net over the manifestation of evangelical religion across the major Protestant denominations, making a threefold division between progressive evangelicals, conservative evangelicals and Pentecostals, they utilise a twofold focus; the first on the participation of evangelicals in war; and the second, the post 1930s history of Sydney Anglicanism.

Their book is a veritable tour de force, incredibly comprehensive and well written. This reviewer found no trouble in completing its 600+ pages. The book is divided into two parts: Faith under Fire, 1914-1945 and Faith and the Secular Challenge, 1946-2014.

With two grandfathers as participants in the First World War, and my father and father-in-law in the Second World War, I found the section covering these wars absolutely fascinating. Here we read about the churches’ differing attitudes to the first and second world wars; along with the actual war experiences of evangelicals—as enlisted men, as serving chaplains and in the various support services during and after



the respective wars. Much of this is given through the numerous recounted experiences of former combatants, chaplains and others, collected by Bob Linder. Taken together these lead to the conclusion that “evangelical Christians made a genuinely useful contribution to the war effort and they had done it through the means that they found most congenial, caring for the national soul and providing for the psychological and social needs of soldiers”.

There is a lot to like in the second part, presumably more Piggin’s contribution, dealing with the post-World War II period. For those of us with a good few years under the belt, we are reading the story of the times through which we have lived. Thus, matters raised and discussed that resonate with this reviewer, include the tremendous impact of the 1959 Billy Graham Crusade in Sydney and Melbourne and overflowing Sunday Schools, though alas, in all too many cases, parents remained at home on Sundays.

The authors describe in detail the rise of what they term ‘secularity’ in the 1960s, namely, what became the exclusion of religion from public concerns and cultural convictions. Labor, under Whitlam in the period 1967–77, mocked Christians with impunity, and during this period ended censorship of unsavoury publications, made divorce easy, decriminalised homosexuality, proliferated gambling opportunities, and legalised abortion on demand.

The authors described three responses to the 1960s. There were those who sought to remain faithful—and it would be the most faithful who would prove in time to be the most relevant, for in the end, only the faithful would remain. There were those who went for the ecumenical option as the best response to numerical decline and then thirdly, what the authors describe as “a surprisingly large number” who believed that the radicalism of the age meant they too had to become radicals, leading to the Jesus movement. This third response can also be seen in the dramatic growth of Pentecostals and Charismatics.

Each of these groups are dealt with well. There is a lot to be learnt from the extensive treatment given to the Pentecostals, their leaders and the strategy they adopted. Less attention is given to those who took the ecumenical option given the failure of the Uniting Church with its recent spectacular collapse in membership resulting from its support for homosexuality

and same sex marriage. The authors attribute this collapse to the UCA dumping the Bible in order to be relevant to the prevailing culture, while the culture failed to reward the UCA for its support.

The focus on Sydney Anglicans allows a lot of space to be given to fight over women’s ordination within Sydney Anglican Diocese, and the role of the Jensens—both Peter and Philip, in new ways of doing church. This material is almost certainly from Piggin who was an active member of the Sydney Anglican Synod from the 1980s on, and an ardent supporter of women’s ordination. However, despite some lapses, such as unhappily contrasting “the cold waters of conservative exclusive evangelicalism” (ouch!) with his favoured brand of “the warm currents of inclusive evangelicalism”, Piggin is a safe pair of hands in telling the story of the past three or four decades. I found him dealing with matters I was often well acquainted with and doing so accurately and generally fairly. He deals well with the resurgence of Reformed theology through Moore Theological College and our own revived Presbyterian Church, the greater evangelistic determination, including being more methodical in teaching the Bible, the arrival of low fee Christian Schools, and the extraordinary extent, found in no other Western nation, to which Federal and State Governments fund Christian charities in order to deliver their education, health and welfare programmes.

The final chapter deals with evangelical initiatives in ‘the public space in the 21st century’. Much of this material covers matters on which our Church and Nation Committee has kept us well informed. Piggin sees the three strands of progressive evangelicalism, conservative evangelicalism and Pentecostalism having moved closer in the past two decades. I would want to add in conservative Catholics with whom we have had good working relationships on a number of contentious ethical issues, as well as defending freedom of religion and conscience, something not really discussed in this volume.

There is lots of very worthwhile material to ponder in *Attending to the National Soul*. This book would be a profitable read for anyone from the upper years of high school onwards, and would be suitable for use by study groups.

*David Palmer attends Dandenong Presbyterian Church*

# MATTERS OF INTEREST FROM THE 2021 GAV COMMISSION OF ASSEMBLY

## PETER PHILLIPS

The March 2021 General Assembly, being informed that COVID-19 restrictions meant that the Assembly Hall would not be large enough to accommodate the 2021 Commission of Assembly, accepted the offer of Trinity Presbyterian Church Camberwell to host the Commission, where the current Moderator, Rev Philip Mercer, is the minister.

Each year the October General Assembly appoints a Commission of Assembly consisting of the same membership as the Assembly and empowers it meet in the first week of May of the following year ‘to consider and determine all matters that have emerged since the last meeting of the General Assembly that are considered urgent and in need of executive or judicial action’.

This year the Commission of Assembly met on 4 May and the agenda included a number of very difficult matters—but I’m pleased to be able to report that they were handled with grace, kindness, calmness of spirit, spiritual wisdom and maturity, for which we give thanks to our gracious God, whose hand is ‘on everyone who looks to him’. (Ezra 8:22).

## ELECTION OF MODERATOR-DESIGNATE FOR THE 2021 GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The Commission of Assembly elected yours truly as the Moderator-Designate for the 2021 General Assembly! Since I retired I have been asked several times to allow my name to come forward—and this time, after consulting with my Lord and my wife, I said ‘yes’. I am grateful for the honour conferred upon me, for the opportunity to serve and for the support of my wife. Please pray for us as we prepare for the Assembly and all that lies ahead.

## RETIREMENT OF MRS CHRIS PALMER, LONG SERVING PCV ARCHIVIST

The Commission of Assembly acknowledged the valued service of Mrs Chris Palmer as the first PCV archivist upon her retirement with a presentation

of flowers by the Moderator. Mrs Palmer, who was appointed church archivist in 1995, has served the church admirably for 25 years, turning the rather ramshackle collection of the 1980s into the well-ordered collection of today. We pray that the Lord will richly bless her in her ‘retirement’. Please pray that the Lord will guide the committee appointed to search for a new Archivist and provide the right person for the work.

## APPOINTMENT OF A WOMEN’S MINISTRIES FACILITATOR

The Commission of Assembly also approved the proposed Job Description for a Women’s Ministries Facilitator which was brought to it by the ‘Women’s Ministries Victoria Committee’ established by the October 2020 GAV to further women’s ministries in the PCV. This committee was also authorised by the October 2020 GAV to seek appropriate sources of funding from congregations and presbyteries to enable the employment of a suitable person—so no doubt in the near future we will hear more from the committee about its plans and needs; in the meantime, please pray that the Lord will provide the necessary funding and the right person for the work.

## CHURCH AND NATION COMMITTEE – COVID- 19 VACCINES

Given the diversity of opinion and the strongly held views expressed in the Commission of Assembly in this matter I simply state that the Commission resolved to:

‘Affirm that the issue of COVID-19 vaccines is a matter of liberty of conscience in accordance with some of the principles found in passages such as Romans 14, and Westminster Confession of Faith chapter 20, and:

- a. Encourage those in the Presbyterian Church of Victoria to have themselves vaccinated at the earliest opportunity.

- b. Assure believers that this matter is a question of wisdom, not righteousness, meaning believers can come to differing views.
- c. Urge believers to maintain love and affection for fellow believers who disagree with the stance they have taken (Ephesians 4:2-3, 'Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.')

## MAINTENANCE OF THE MINISTRY MATTERS

Responding to the MMC's report the Commission resolved (amongst other things):

1. that from 1 July 2021:

- the minimum remuneration increase to \$57,360, with a minimum stipend component of \$37,536 and a maximum non-cash benefit component of \$19,824;
- the Sustentation Qualifying Stipend be \$28,932 per annum;
- the additional amount for travel over 6,000kms of the agreed distance be 50 cents per kilometre;
- the rate of charge contribution to the PCV Superannuation Fund be maintained at 15% of actual remuneration for the year commencing 1 July 2021;
- supply preaching fees for the year commencing 1 July 2021 increase to:
- \$148 for one service; \$171 for two services; \$204 for three services, using the same sermon on the same day; \$268 for two services or more, with separate sermons;
- and the travel reimbursement for supply preachers be 50 cents per kilometre.

2. to set the Long Service Leave Levy for 2021–2022 at \$410 to be paid by every responsible body for every person for whom it is obliged to provide long service leave as at 1 July 2021.

Treasurers of vacant charges will be pleased to note that vacant charges no longer pay the LSL Levy.

## BOARD OF INVESTMENT AND FINANCE MATTERS

Responding to the BIF's report, the Commission resolved (amongst other things) to approve:

- the funding of the Safe Church Committee from the General Mission Program, discontinuing the Safe Church Levy and equalisation method'
- the GMP for the financial year 2021–22 of \$232,034 (2019–20 - \$216,542);
- the ongoing full-time employment of the Youth Ministry Director, with the PYV authorised to commence fundraising within the PYV for this ministry and required to report to the next General Assembly with a long-term plan for the ministry of the YMD;
- set the General Assembly Rate at \$100,000 to be allocated to each congregation in proportion to the number of communicants and adherents at 31 December ... necessary because the General Assembly (a) no longer has unallocated funds to meet the various needs of the church and (b) with a reduction in investment returns and interest rates, the Assembly budget is projected to be in deficit not just for 2021–2022 but beyond.

## SUPREME COURT ACTION—A CLAIM FOR DAMAGES AGAINST THE PCV

Undoubtedly the most difficult item on the agenda was advice of a Supreme Court writ on behalf of a man who was sexually abused as a child during the early 1980s by a minister of the PCV and a Statement of Claim asserting that the PCV is responsible and liable for acts and omissions of the Ballarat Presbytery, the Daylesford Presbyterian Church and Presbyterian Ministers at that time, including Minister Graeme Alfred Eldridge, who was convicted of historic child sexual abuse that occurred in or around 1981 and who subsequently died in gaol.



This presented the Commission with two major challenges; the first constitutional, for the PCV is not an incorporated body, and therefore not able to be a proper defendant, and the second financial, for this matter has serious implications for the funds of the church.

The Commission of Assembly, while noting that liability is not proven or declared in this case, considered the appropriateness of godly sorrow for past sins of the church if indeed there is found to be a liability. The Commission reflected on Ezra's prayer 'I am too ashamed and disgraced, my God, to lift up my face to you, because our sins are higher than our heads and our guilt has reached to the heavens' and that although we are not personally guilty, this criminal abuse by a minister of our church has brought shame and disgrace upon us and our church.

This is also a timely reminder of the importance of the observance of PCV Safe Church policies practices and procedures, not simply to protect the children of our church from abuse (which is the chief priority) and ourselves from such shame and disgrace, but also to protect the financial resources of the church that facilitate its gospel ministry. The financial burden associated with this case and any similar case in future will fall on the church. Even though the church is now insured, if negligence is proven, then such negligence would be highly likely to void the church's insurance against sexual abuse claims.

Finally – the Moderator dissolved the Commission with a solemn and challenging reflection from the words of Jesus to his disciples in Luke 17:1-2 "Temptations to sin are sure to come, but woe to the one through whom they come! It would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck and he were cast into the sea than that he should cause one of these little ones to sin.'

*Peter Philips is the Deputy Clerk of the General Assembly of Victoria*



MOPS.ORG.AU



## Want to reach young families?

MOPS (Mothers of Preschoolers) is a ministry for your church that serves mums and creates connections.

To find out more, email [info@mops.org.au](mailto:info@mops.org.au) to get an info pack

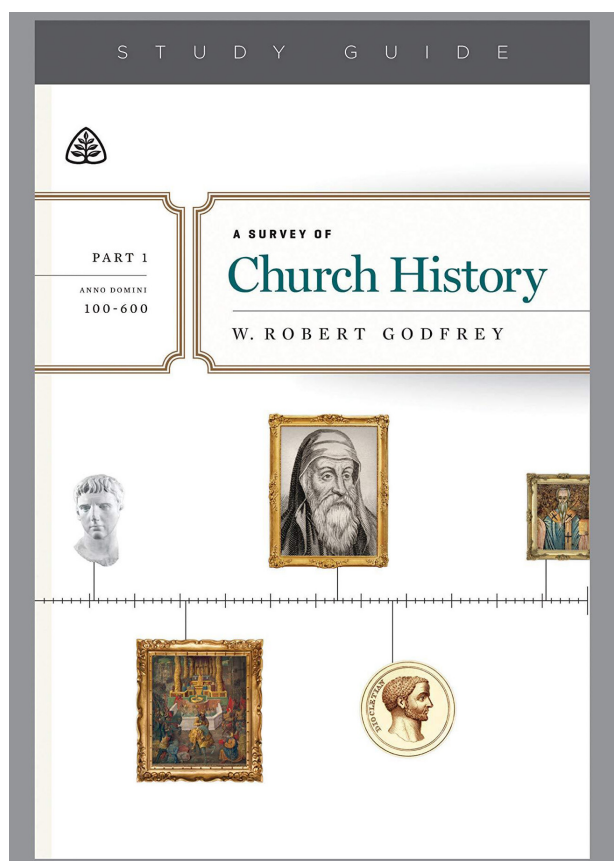
#thisismotherhood

## REVIEW:

## A SURVEY OF CHURCH HISTORY

REVIEWED BY DAVE WOOD

Lectures by Robert Godfrey  
Ligonier Ministries (2012)



I have just completed Robert Godfrey's 72 lecture series on Church History (Parts I-VI) on Ligonier Connect. It would seem that I was able to find 'fault' less times than the fingers on one hand so it rates a 99.5% for me.

The series is absolutely excellent; succinct yet with good detail; generally easy listening; and there is a Q & A with 6 questions from the MC at the end of each lecture. On completion of each of the 6 modules, you are given an Introductory Certificate of Completion to hang on the wall if you are that way inclined.

If Biblically-sound reformed doctrines (i.e. election and grace) are still a little shaky for you, and if they don't produce in you a profound joy in the Lord, with a deep and abiding assurance that God Himself is going to complete that which He began in you, along with a pressing urgency to tell others, then this series is for you. Robert Godfrey doesn't teach the doctrine, but he does put them in their historical context to bring us light and understanding.

If you want to know how there were three official representatives of the Roman church, each pretending to be a 'pope' who stands in the place of Christ in the earth, each teaching different doctrine to each other, and each with a desire to grab all the 'territory', all existing together in the same period of church history, then this series is for you.

If you just want to revise all the long-ago learning of college, or upgrade your own private studies and reading, then this is a very good supplement to that end.

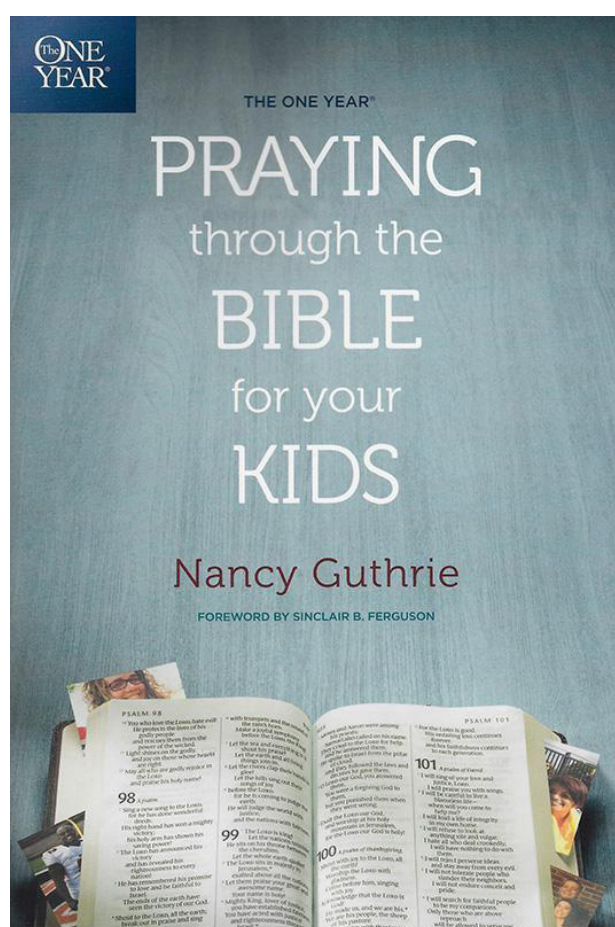
In Section VI there is more of an emphasis on American Christendom, but even that is highly interesting in light of today's political climate, and you should dive right in.

Cost? That depends on how you pay. I subscribed with US\$90 for a year, and then completed the whole course with only 2 top-up months (\$9.00 each), while also completing a dozen or so other courses under the same subscription fee at the same time. Or, if you prefer not to subscribe, the whole series can be purchased from Ligonier.org for US\$216.

## REVIEW:

# THE ONE YEAR PRAYING THROUGH THE BIBLE FOR YOUR KIDS

REVIEWED BY SARAH MCDONALD



*The One Year Praying Through the Bible for Your Kids*  
by Nancy Guthrie  
Tyndale Momentum (2016).  
373 pages.  
ISBN 9781496413369

Parents know we're meant to pray for our kids. But how should we pray for them? That's where Nancy Guthrie's *The One Year Praying Through the Bible for Your Kids* is so helpful.

*Praying Through the Bible* is a book of daily devotionals to encourage the prayer lives of parents, no matter what age their children are. It's based on the One Year Bible reading plan, and each devotion is based on one of the four readings. The plan uses the New Living Translation, but you can use it with whatever translation you prefer.

As Sinclair Ferguson wrote in the introduction, parenting is about being. It's not just about what we say and do; it's about who we are and our relationship to God. This devotional gets us well on the way to taking "a whole Bible to teach the whole Christ to make a whole Christian"

In every text, Guthrie takes us to the cross and then applies it to the hearts and lives of parents and our children. This is nothing like those post-it Bible devotions that pick and choose verses without considering their context. Guthrie's passion for Biblical Theology permeates each page as she traces the outline of the Bible's one storyline: Creation, Fall, Redemption, and Consummation.

Guthrie not only helps us as parents pray for our children's salvation and sanctification, she turns the spotlight on our hearts, words and actions calling us to account and helps us humble ourselves before God, level at the cross with our kids.



Guthrie has done an amazing job at writing this devotional generically enough for parents of toddlers, primary aged, teenagers, young adults and older children. Yet, it is full of specific detail that just blows my mind every page.

At the end of each devotion are beautiful prayers. She's left a blank so we can name our children individually or collectively, our family or the families of friends we love and pray for. It's a wonderful way to personalise the message highlighted in the devotion and a brilliant example of how to pray the Bible, and grow our prayers for our children.

The feedback from sisters in Christ who've begun reading this book is resoundingly positive: the impact on their prayer life, the encouragement to their marriages, the peace brought by the Spirit from letting go of the desire to protect, direct and ultimately control our children (sometimes with the best of intentions). The heartache that often accompanies stepping back and 'just praying' is being turned

around because we truly realise that all things are possible with God!

The book itself is beautiful! It's a hard cover with blue canvas and gold embossed geometric patterns (there is a paperback edition). The text is the same blue and it is an absolute delight to pick up and read every day.

So, buy it, and read it every day!

And buy one for your Christian brothers and sisters who have children. Connect with them about what you're learning and how God is growing your faith and dependence on him. See how your heavenly Father is the best parent you'll ever have.

That's what we're doing and it's awesome to see and hear God working in all our hearts.

*Sarah McDonald is member of the Benalla Presbyterian Church*

# WHY ARE WE NOT PLANTING A CHURCH IN ROKEWOOD?

**RICHARD WILSON**

You may have seen an article from ABC News, “*Push to return Rokewood Uniting church to Presbyterians hits a snag*”.<sup>1</sup> The ABC very rarely mentions the Presbyterian Church so I was curious. The Uniting Church wants to sell it but a couple of locals want it to become Presbyterian again. Rokewood is only 30 minutes drive from several healthy Presbyterian churches in Bannockburn and Ballarat.

But it raises the question—where do we plant churches and why?

The Lord Jesus came to earth to lay down his life for his human sheep—not for the woolly sheep which vastly outnumber the humans in the region around Rokewood. We will always seek to plant churches where the population is and will be. Jesus came to seek and save the lost and our church plants must have the same goals.

The latest projections are that Melbourne will reach a population of eight million by 2037.

Most of this growth will occur in the North, West and South East of Melbourne. For this reason, the church planting committee has put much of its focus on these areas. However many of Melbourne’s middle and inner ring suburbs are also regenerating rapidly and we will not overlook opportunities here as well. In God’s kindness most of our regional cities and towns are well serviced by Presbyterian churches with a few important exceptions.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2021-04-19/roke-wood-church-petition-hits-snag/100079122>

New churches in the Greenfields will be reaching the many young families that move into these areas. They are the future of our state, and Lord willing, of the Presbyterian Church as well.

## **ADVANCE: A CHURCH PLANTING CONFERENCE IN NOVEMBER**

We have an urgent need for church planters to be trained and equipped for the task. This takes time and investment. We are putting together a church planting conference on 19 and 20 November this year. Please be praying about who you can bring along to this conference. More details about registration will be available soon.

## **THE GROWTH CORRIDORS OF MELBOURNE**

### **MELBOURNE WEST**

The Presbytery of Melbourne West is expected to grow by one million residents by 2051. There are opportunities to plant in many places across the west including Sunbury, Bacchus Marsh, Tarneit, Hoppers Crossing, Rockbank and Plumpton. Each of these churches will need properties along with existing churches at Melton, Point Cook, Darebin and Brimbank.

### **MELBOURNE NORTH**

The Presbytery of Melbourne North is expected to grow by 890,000 people by 2051.

There are opportunities to plan churches in Wollert, Beveridge, Mickleham, Wallan and more. We have

the need for properties at each of these in the north along with Hume, Donnybrook and Templestowe.

## SOUTH EAST MELBOURNE

The Presbytery of Flinders is expected to grow by 700,000 by 2050. There are opportunities to plant churches at Clyde, Pakenham, Berwick and more.

## MEANWHILE AT ROKEWOOD ....

Meanwhile the sleepy village of Rokewood and the ten little towns nearby are expected to grow by a total of 77 over the next 20 years. It is not that these people do not matter to the Lord—they do—but so do the millions moving to the growth corridors of Melbourne in the decades ahead.

*Richard Wilson is a Church planter and evangelist*



*A converted children's play centre for church at Bendigo*



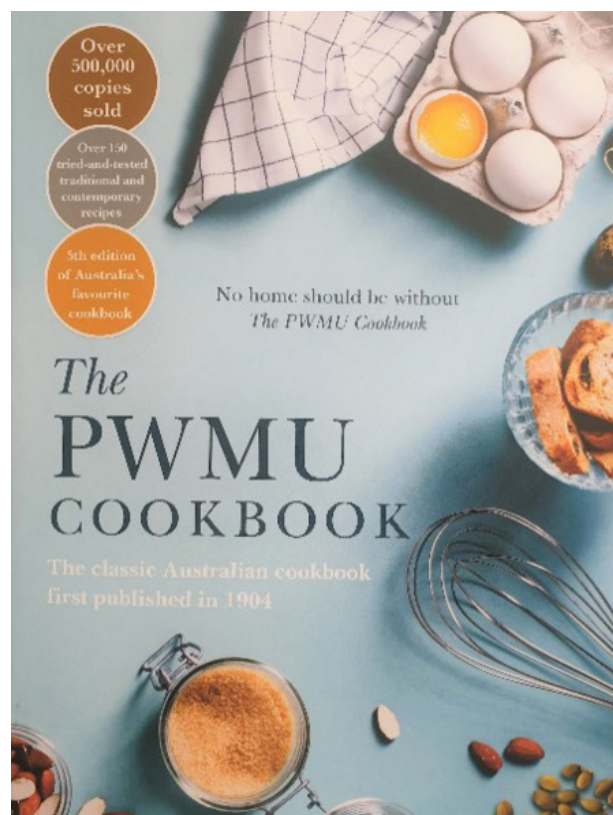
# LAUNCH OF THE REVISED FIFTH EDITION OF THE PWMU COOKBOOK

**ALISON STANLEY (SECRETARY)  
& ROS BROWN (PRESIDENT)**

On Wednesday 14 April, approximately 50 people gathered at the North Ringwood Uniting Church to attend the latest PWMU Cookbook launch. We were welcomed by the minister serving at this congregation, Rev. Andy Tiver. Pam Grant, secretary of the cookbook committee, then gave a brief summary of the history of the cookbook which had first been published in 1904. From the start, it has been a cookbook promoting healthy family eating. Various editions, including a copy of the 1904 edition (on loan from the State Library of Victoria) were on display. Two short videos were shown, displaying how each denomination used the funds obtained from the sales of the cookbook. The Uniting Church have used their funds to provide clean water to people in Africa. The PWMU have used their funds to sponsor bursary students to travel from overseas to study at the PTC.

The guest speaker was the celebrity chef Gabriel Gaté, who some may remember was the guest speaker at the launch of the Centenary Cookbook back in 2004, only this time he had not made a 'cake' (from playdough). He has been a chef for over 50 years and shared that cooking is not only an art form but also like a puzzle. He encouraged us to teach our children to contribute to a dish a little at a time. He is impressed with the variety of recipes in this revised edition. He suggested that everyone should practice new recipes and expand their repertoires, which would allow people to write their own cookbooks.

This revision has been printed in Maryborough, Victoria, using recycled paper. It is larger in size and sits open easily. Spiral bound books are not an option as printing would be done overseas, which would make it more expensive, and past experience has shown that people were tearing out pages from the books on sale. Copies of the new revised edition can be purchased from the PWMU office for \$25 each. Congregations and PWMU groups who would like to purchase the books for



fundraising can order through the cookbook committee at \$15 per copy. Target and Big W will also be selling the book.

Rev. Denise Liersch, Vic/Tas Synod Moderator for the UCA, extended thanks to the guest speaker and to others, especially the Cookbook Committee, for organising the day. Proceedings ended with Rev. Graham Nicholson (minister at Hawthorn PC), representing the moderator of the PCV, saying a few words and closing in prayer. He invited us to follow his example: buy three – one to use, one to give away and one to keep.

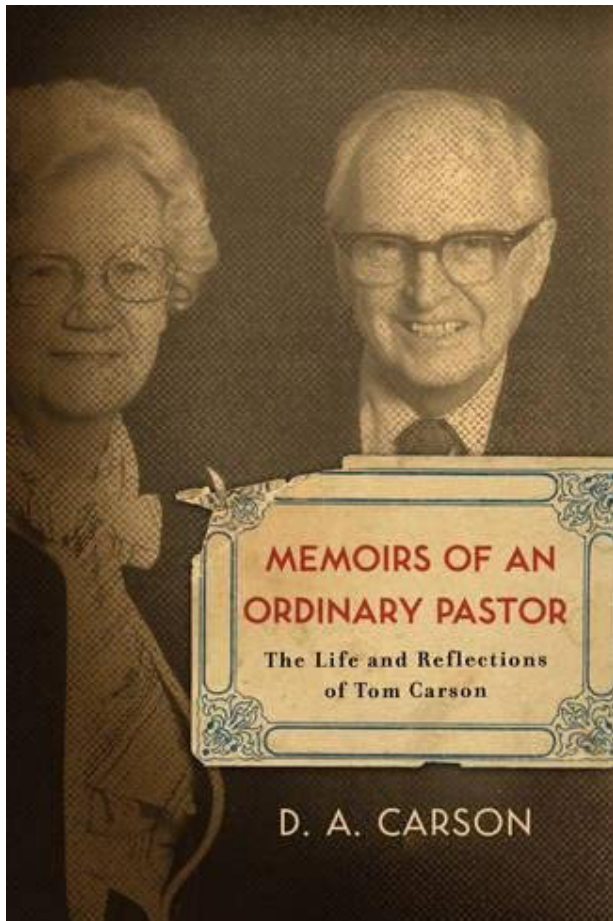
Afternoon tea, supplied by the cookbook committee, featured a selection of foods made from the recipes found in the cookbook.

*Order a copy directly from the PWMU: 0466 124 261 or [pwmu@ozemail.com.au](mailto:pwmu@ozemail.com.au)*

## REVIEW:

# MEMOIRS OF AN ORDINARY PASTOR: THE LIFE AND REFLECTIONS OF TOM CARSON

REVIEWED BY STEPHEN MCDONALD



*Memoirs of an Ordinary Pastor:  
The Life and Reflections of Tom Carson*  
by D. A. Carson  
Crossway (2008).  
ISBN 9781433501996

“Ordinary”. Of all the words that could describe you, would you like to be known as “ordinary”?

I don’t mean “ordinary” as a subtle put down, but just genuinely “ordinary”, meaning “of no exceptional ability, degree or quality; average.”

That’s the word Don Carson selected when writing the memoirs of his father Tom. And to be honest, it’s the word that put me off reading it for a while. But inside are honest reflections on an ordinary life of ministry (though in the same distinct settings that go with every ministry). It’s a record of faithfulness and perseverance despite despair, and sacrificial service not seeking recognition.

In fact, it makes clear that the difference between the full-time pastor is actually not that different to the ordinary Christian, except that they may be paid something to help keep feed and clothe their family (though not always, in Tom’s case).

This biography takes us to a place and time in church history we may not know much about, the French-speaking parts of Canada and the persecution that Protestant Christians faced in the 1960s.

There are lessons for ministry in the first-generation churches, and also where resources and effort are divided.

But this isn’t just a book for pastors. It will encourage Christians facing conflict in the church. It illustrates faithful living and speaking for Christ in the secular workplace. It honestly faces the double grief of losing a loved-one to dementia. And the tonic of thankfulness is applied to the regrets of later life.

For all of those reasons, I wish I’d read *Memoirs of An Ordinary Pastor* much sooner. I hope you will be blessed by it too.

*Stephen McDonald is the Pastor of the Benalla Regional Parish*



*Timor Leste Pastors*



## TIMOR LESTE & INDIA: THANK YOU!

One of the privileges of serving with APWM is seeing God's work in His people, around the world.

A few months ago the Moderator General, Rev Dr Peter Barnes, launched an Appeal following the devastating flooding caused in Timor Leste by Cyclone Seroja. It was stunning to see \$61,000 donated.

Our brothers and sisters in our Partner Church, the Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Timor Leste, have told us of their gratitude to God for such a response. They also feel very humble to receive such a practical outpouring of love.

Timor Leste's immediate needs for food, shelter and clothing, were met by emergency responses by international aid agencies and local government.

Your gifts are now being used to:

- Carry out repairs to church buildings and making the necessary upgrades in anticipation of future devastating weather events;
- Repair damaged homes and assisting those whose homes were destroyed;
- Assist students whose study materials were destroyed in the Cyclone, making study very difficult;
- Assist churches who have suffered loss of income because church members had to replace dam-

aged possessions or repair homes, which in turn meant they had less to contribute to an already small church budget.

To carry out this programme in a responsible manner will take some months.

Conscious that the Appeal for Timor Leste was still open, another Appeal was launched as the scale of the COVID devastation in India became apparent. We contacted our Partner Church, the Reformed Presbyterian Church of India, and asked for an assessment of their needs. The response told us that very few congregations were untouched.

Our Indian brothers and sisters are very grateful for the \$35,000 received in donations.

Your gifts are now being used to:

- Pay medical bills including COVID tests;
- Assist families who have lost income following the death of a breadwinner;
- Provide some assistance to day labourers who have lost their jobs;
- Assist Churches whose income has undergone a sharp decline in income because of COVID.

On behalf of our brothers and sisters, thank you for your generosity.



## INDIGENOUS MINISTRY SUNDAY 11 JULY 2021

The last 12 months have witnessed a growing awareness of the issues confronting Indigenous Australians in the 21st century. How can we respond as followers of the Lord Jesus?

Rick Manton says “We can’t afford to sit on the sidelines while Aboriginal people are dying without Christ.” Prayer is essential. The problems faced by our Indigenous neighbours can only find their ultimate solution in the work of the Lord Jesus Christ and His gospel.

APWM asks that all churches set aside Sunday 11 July as ‘Indigenous Ministry Sunday’. We ask that on that day you pray for our Indigenous people that:

1. God would continue to raise up and develop leaders for the Indigenous Church and that they would be well trained for the challenges they face.
2. That the Word of God would remain central in the life of the Indigenous Church.
3. That God would send His Holy Spirit and that many young Indigenous people would come to a genuine relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ.

4. That God would raise up workers for His harvest—Indigenous & Non-Indigenous.

5. That though the gospel there would be true reconciliation between Indigenous & Non-Indigenous Australians.

APWM asks that you consider holding a special collection on that Sunday to assist in the continued funding of its ministry to Indigenous people.

You can find a video to show in church on Indigenous Ministry Sunday at [vimeo.com/user16292236](https://vimeo.com/user16292236)

Thank you for your partnership.



*Mount Magnet Presbyterian Church, Western Australia*

## TALUA: ONE YEAR LATER

On Monday 5 April 2020, Cyclone Harold hit northern Vanuatu, causing extensive damage to the Talua Theological Training Institute. The damage was so great that Talua closed down for a year while repairs were carried out.

Cyclone Harold exposed a number of weaknesses in past building practices and so the aim of the reconstruction has been to ‘build back better’.

This has been made possible through the generous donations of you, the members of the Presbyterian Church of Australia. We sent \$127,633.37 to be used at Talua alone.

Talua has now reopened and thanks you for your generous partnership and gifts of love.



*Talua Theological Training Institute*

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