

fellow workers

NEWS FROM AROUND THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA

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 by Right Rev. Peter N. Orchard,
 Moderator PC Vic.
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fear not!

Somebody once said, “Worry is the most respectable sin among Christians”. He wasn’t suggesting that it’s respectable to worry, but that so many Christians do it without recognising it as sin. Worry is normally based in fear, fear of what will, or might happen.

When Jesus says to his people, “Don’t worry about tomorrow” (Matthew 6:34), he is referring to fear. Fear that we’ll lack life’s necessities such as food, drink and clothing.

He commands us to seek first his will and his way in our lives (“his kingdom and righteousness”) then assures us that God knows all our needs and will supply them. I read recently that there are 366 ‘fear nots’ in the Bible, one for each day of the year and one extra for the leap year.

Some personality types seem to drift into worry more easily than others. What can ‘worriers’ do about it? Our loving Father is aware of our problem and has given us the answer in his word in various places (we’ve already looked at Matthew 6: 25ff.). I was once taught a rhyme, “When you’re in a fix, Philippians 4:6”. It is all about worry and what to do with it. “Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.” But it is important to read on and claim the promise in the next verse, “And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.”

May the God of peace be with you all.

Peter Orchard.

THE SOUTH YARRA CENTRE FOR CONTEMPORARY CHRISTIAN DISCIPLESHIP

SATURDAY 22 MAY (MISSIONS FOCUS)

(Part of the SYPC Missionary Weekend)
 Allan Harman ‘Covenant and Mission’

SATURDAY 3 JULY (CHURCH HISTORY FOCUS)

(Part of SYPC 150 Anniversary Celebrations)
 Peter Barnes ‘Robert McGowen’

SATURDAY 11 SEPTEMBER (MINISTRY EQUIPPING FOCUS)

Murray Capill ‘Using the Bible
 in Ministry’

For further information please
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PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA

The position of

Assistant Accountant

Is now vacant, and applications are invited.

The position is based in the Church’s Office,
 Assembly Hall Building, 156 Collins Street, Melbourne.
 Applicants should have appropriate qualifications and experience,
 and have empathy with the Church’s ethos and vision.

For a full position description and details of application, contact:

The Office Manager
 156 Collins Street Melbourne VIC 3000
 Telephone: (03) 9650 9311
 E-mail: manager@pcvic.org.au

moderator's mission trip to cambodia

Peter and Toni Orchard report.

We departed Melbourne in the early hours of Friday, February 20 and arrived in the Cambodian capital, Phnom Penh, later that day. David Clarke met us at the airport and drove us home to meet his wife Lalit and daughter Rachel. The Clarkes are APWM missionaries, serving with CMS. Their home church is Mt. Evelyn Presbyterian.

first impressions

Whilst approximately one million people live in the capital, they are concentrated in a relatively small area. David tells us that wherever you are you're never more than 5 kms. from the edge of town. There are thousands of motor bikes. We're told there are road rules, but it seemed to us that every one "does what is right in their own eyes". David urged us not to use the local "taxis" (back seat of a motor bike). "You're not likely to be killed, the traffic moves so slowly, but I don't want your visit punctuated by broken limbs!" You couldn't call Phnom Penh a "popular tourist destination". It is hot, humid, dusty and smelly, with a constant smoke haze (exhaust fumes plus cooking & rubbish fires). Poverty and wealth stand side by side. An opulent mansion stands next door to a shanty; the king's palace with its Buddhist temple filled with gold, and beggars waiting at the gate. The people seemed gracious and friendly.



Toni and Peter Orchard in Phnom Penh

geography & history

It isn't a large country geographically. With a population of 12 million, 94% are Khmers. A large majority of the Khmer people are Buddhist (approx. 95%). It was a French colony until independence in 1953. Drawn into the Vietnam War in 1969, part of the country was bombed by the U.S. The notorious Pol Pot, ('Khmer Rouge' regime) came to power in 1975. It attempted, by force, to eliminate the middle class (including intellectuals and many Christians), turning most people into peasant farmers. Approximately 2 million Cambodians died (many murdered) during the 4 years of the regime. Mercifully, it finished when Pol Pot decided to take some Vietnamese territory by force, leading to a Vietnamese invasion and occupation, which lasted 13 years. There are deep scars in the hearts and minds of so many people over 25 years of age.

The current government is a constitutional monarchy. The King, who is over 80, is in poor health. He lives in China and visits from time to time. There is an elected Prime Minister, but the political situation is uneasy with much factionalism. Most importantly there is freedom of religion throughout the country.

our missionaries & what they're doing

David, Lalit and Rachel Clarke (members of the Mt. Evelyn church) rent a large house which they call the Grace Christian Centre. They live upstairs. Downstairs is ideal for teaching English and Bible with large and small rooms for lectures and tutorials. Free English classes are offered, morning and evening, Monday, Tuesday, Thursday & Friday.

Students are invited to come on Wednesday and Sunday, but told that it will be English Bible teaching on those days. On average 300 people per week come and go from the centre, many of them young students. There's a lot of unemployment in Cambodia and your chances of getting a job increase greatly if you can speak English. Speaking English, like the American dollar, is highly regarded! A number of those who study at the centre have been converted to faith in Jesus Christ. Some have been fed into appropriate local churches; some are keen to worship with the Clarkes. A time of worship is held on Sunday mornings. Peter was invited to preach and lead a Bible study on the Sunday; Toni led an English class during the week.

After 5 days with the Clarkes, we went

to stay with Ros Gill who lives on the other side of town. She is a member of the Somerville church. Ros has taught English classes but found that many young people came to her wanting to know about the Christian faith. She now takes basic Bible classes in her home, daily. She is also studying the Khmer language. Ros attends a local Khmer church (just around the corner). We enjoyed worshipping at her church as well as spending a day with her pastor and his wife. They took us to visit the orphanage run by their church, 2 hours drive north of Phnom Penh. It was encouraging seeing children being lovingly cared for, well fed, going to school, and enjoying life. This in contrast to the street children we saw in the capital.

We were glad to have the opportunity to meet with Rev. Graham Chipps, a Presbyterian minister from W.A. He is the team leader of a large church, the International Christian Fellowship. People from 32 different nations are represented in the church, many from non-government organisations (NGOs) which work in Cambodia. Graham's wife Sandra teaches locally. After about 8 years they have a good overview of what the Lord is doing in the country. They are also aware of the need for a sabbatical and are planning for it.

Dan and Rose Ellen Blosser, American missionaries with Trans World Radio, also helped us get an overview of Christian work throughout the country. They oversee the production of Christian programs in the Khmer language for broadcast on short wave, coming via their transmitters from the island of Guam. TWR also pays for programs to be broadcast on local FM stations dotted all over the country.

We were blessed to be able to stay with the Clarkes and Ros during our 12 day visit. We saw and experienced so much in a short time. It was valuable to spend some time each day with them, relaxing, talking and praying.

some prayer points

- Give thanks to God for the faithful service of His people in Cambodia.
- Pray for safety and good health for our missionaries. They have to drink bottled water and be very careful about hygiene!
- Pray for discipling of new Christians and effective training for Khmer pastors.
- Pray for cooperation between the many Christian organisations operating in Cambodia.
- Pray for stability in government and for the country to remain open to the Christian Gospel.

pcv commission

The Commission (half-yearly meeting) of the General Assembly met within the Assembly Hall in Collins Street on Tuesday 30 March. Under the able leadership of the Moderator, the Rev. Peter Orchard, ministers and elders gave consideration to a wide range of matters brought before them for deliberation and action.

- Among the business the Commission adopted a new booklet produced by the Church and Nation Committee entitled *Love Rules: The 10 Commandments for the 21st Century* and commended it to all parishes of the PCV, encouraging the use of this new resource as widely as possible. (*Love Rules* is available at \$8.00 a copy plus postage from the CNC's Distribution Officer, Rev. Ian Brown, 239 Jones Road, Somerville 3912 03-5977 5469, grandies@optusnet.com.au).
- The Commission heard a report from the Rev. John Wilson on the eve of his departure to visit the Presbyterian

Church of Central Africa in Malawi for the second time, of the potential for further strengthening of the relationship between the PCV and CCAP. Mr. Wilson advised that a large number of theological books and school texts had been collected for use in the Theological Centre in Blantyre and in the Mulanje Mission School.

- The Commission approved the expenditure of the whole balance of funds in the Irving Hetherington trust (\$223 146) to allow for the purchase of a place of worship for use by the Bairnsdale congregation.
- The Commission declared that as from 1 July 2004 the minimum remuneration be increased from \$38 388 to \$39 228, a rise of \$840.
- The Commission accepted the offer of the National Journal Committee, on behalf of the Victorian State News Committee to produce a quarterly PCV newsletter.
- The Commission elected Dr. Allan

Harman as the Moderator-Designate of the 2004 General Assembly. This the second time Dr. Harman has been elected as Moderator of the General Assembly.

- The Ad Hoc Committee for St Andrews Christian College reported to the Commission and it was instructed to pursue discussion with the Social Services and Theological Education Committees with regards to possible scenarios of working together to secure the long-term future of St. Andrew's by the purchasing of a suitable site.
- Members of the Commission were advised of the vexed question of sexual abuse within the Church and were strongly encouraged to fully implement in their home congregations of the provisions of *BREAKING THE SILENCE* document, which deals with policies and procedures for protecting against and dealing with sexual abuse within the Church by 31 May 2004.

from the presbyteries

ballarat

Mrs. Michelle Brennan of Horsham congregation has been awarded a Master of Theology degree for a thesis entitled "Is the concept of resurrection evident in the Pentateuch, Former Prophet or Psalter?" Mrs. Brennan argues that these portions of Scripture suggest that there is a relation with the LORD, which transcends death. She completed the degree through Ridley College under the supervision of Dr. Lindsay Wilson.

bendigo

Eaglehawk congregation (Mr. Bob Romeo - Home missionary) has recently completed a complete restoration of their historic Victoria Street building, including the damp proofing of stonework and extensive re-plastering. The renovations have provided renewed facilities, which are being enjoyed by the current members of the congregation and have presented an attractive face to the local community.

flinders

At the Lord's Supper held on 7 March Somerville congregation received 3 new members by profession of faith - Ed and Dianne Hill, and John Smeaton - and 1 new member by baptism and profession of faith - Andrew Clarke. Mr. Clarke is a grandson the Rev. Edwin Hale a previous minister of the charge. At the Presbytery meeting in March the Rev John Rickard (Dandenong) was elected as its Moderator.

gippsland

Rev. Jared Hood (Moe) and family have returned from six months in the USA where Mr. Hood completed a Masters Degree in Theology at Westminster Theological Seminary in Philadelphia. They spoke of their experiences in the USA at a meeting of the Gippsland PA held at Yarram congregation. Mr. Hood led the devotions from Philippians 4:13 "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."

kilnoorat

For the second year running the Noorat and Camperdown/Terang congregations joined together for a camp. The speaker this year was Mr. Fraser Diack, who currently serves as a teacher at Kings College, Warrnambool. Mr. Diack has pastored congregations in his native New Zealand. He spoke from the first chapters of 1 Samuel around the theme of "Hope in Dark Times". The camp was held at the Nelson campsite. The Noorat congregation is just finishing its first *Introducing God* evangelistic outreach. The Rev. Barry Oakes the minister highly recommends this course to other congregations.

maroondah

A highly successful one-day seminar entitled *Who Says Elephants Can't Dance* was held at Ringwood-Heathmont congregation on 20 March. The speaker was Rev. Richard Quadrio of Macquarie Chapel, which meets at Robert Menzies College at Macquarie University in

from the presbyteries continued...

Sydney. Drawing on Acts 2:42-47 Mr. Quadrio spoke on 'A Church with a better teaching ministry than the Sydney Anglicans, better evangelism than Billy Graham, better worship than the Pentecostals and better care than the Salvo's'. Copies of the addresses can be obtained from ajvenn@netspace.net.au

melbourne east

The Presbytery inducted Rev. Dr Botros Botrosdief into the Arabic congregation, which meets within the South Yarra building on 26 March. It was a very joyful night, with the sermon being brought by Dr. Douglas Milne, who was responsible for originally bringing the congregation in to the Presbyterian Church of Victoria. Rev Hamdy Awad of the Sydney Arabic congregation brought the charge to Dr. Botrosdief and his congregation. Following the worship service the congregation enjoy a happy time of fellowship over supper in the Church Hall. The new Moderator elect for the Presbytery is Rev Graham M Bradbear, Chaplain of Scotch College.

melbourne north

The Session of the Whittlesea/Mernda parish has invited Rev. Scott Kroeger to act as a voluntary evangelist/church planter/missionary in the southern part of the parish. This is a significant growth corridor on the northern outskirts of Melbourne with exciting prospects for the future. While the Presbyterians have had property and a small bluestone church building at Mernda for over 150 years, the facilities there are inadequate for an aggressively missional work amidst the new suburban culture growing around this historic country congregation. Therefore, as the opportunity arose to involve someone with a background in church planting, it was deemed wise to start something new in the area and base it in some other appropriate modern facility as required. It is the long-term goal and prayer that, as the existing congregation and the Oasis Project grow, we will be able to redevelop the current property into a modern multi-function complex to serve the wider Mernda-South Morang area. The current congregations of Whittlesea and Mernda will continue in their present format relatively independent of the Oasis Project. The Rev Rod Scott has been appointed to be the pastor/teacher in the pre-existing congregations for 2004. There is great encouragement at the

growth being experienced at Whittlesea in particular and hope to see the current congregations develop to the point of being able to fully support their own ministry needs as well as contribute to the new Oasis Project (www.oasisproject.com.au)

melbourne west

The official opening service of the new Brimbank Presbyterian Church was held on March 28. Led by the Moderator of the Presbytery of Melbourne West, Rev. Peter Phillips, the preacher was Dr. Allan Harman. The congregation meets at Mackellar Primary School Gymnasium, 29-35 Goldsmith Avenue, Delahay 3037. More details can be had from Mr. Andres Miranda on 8361 5766.

geelong

The latest Geelong Presbytery rally was held at the Inverleigh church on Sunday evening 28 March. Nearly 100 people from every congregation in the presbytery attended. The speaker was Rev. John Stasse from Ballarat West. His theme was "What's next?", drawing on the thief on the cross and question of eternity. The worship time was preceded by a basket tea.

benalla

The Tatura congregation has continued to develop with the opening of a new vestry, which includes a ministers study, a meeting room and toilets for the disabled. The memorial windows from the Girgarre East building which has been closed have been placed in the meeting room. The furniture in the new vestry has been supplied by the Ladies Fellowship.

franklin graham festival victoria launch event

The chain of events leading up to the anticipated visit of Franklin Graham (the son of Billy Graham) to Melbourne in

March 2005 began with a well attended launch event held in the Victory Room at Telstra Dome on 1 April. The Rev. Bob Thomas of St. Kilda, the Chairman of the Victorian Executive welcomed those attending and spoke of the highlights of the year to come. A beautiful rendering of the great hymn *Holy, Holy, Holy* was given by Marina Prior.

Among other speakers were Archbishop Peter Watson who led in prayer and dedicated Festival Victoria 2005 into the hands of God. Further details of Festival Victoria can be obtained from 9844 2528/0417592 646 or crthomas@pcvic.org.au

from the churches

St Andrew's Reservoir welcomed their new minister the Reverend Ross William Tucker along with his wife Sue and their three children, Alicia, Renee and Peter. The Induction Service was held on February 20, 2004 followed with a welcoming supper.

Mrs K McDonald wrote *Fellow Workers* to say that; "We are very thankful for the way the Lord looked after us during the twelve month long vacancy and are feeling blessed with the arrival of Rev Tucker and his family". She continues: "The Tuckers, who have come from Revesby, NSW, are settling in really well adjusting to a new Parish in a new city and a new school for the children".

This column is for you, to let all of us know what the Lord is doing in your congregation. And you can send your news by email: austpres@bigpond.net.au Facsimile: (03) 9723 9685 or Post to : "Fellow Workers" PO Box 375 Kilsyth VIC 3137.

Please Note: Photographs will not be returned unless accompanied with a self addressed stamped envelope. Neither can we guarantee their publication due to limited space.

MALAWI!

Can you help APWM (Vic.) help the Church grow?

3 appeals have been launched for books and funds for the

- Theological Resource Centre
- Mulanje Mission School
- Rev. Colin M'Bawa

Details available from The Convener, APWM Vic.
pjburns@dodo.net.au (03) 5561 7899