

The Presbyterian Banner



April 2023

**"From the end of the earth I call to you when my heart is faint.
Lead me to the rock that is higher than I." Psalm 61:2**

This Issue

"You are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God." Ephesians 2:19

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From the Editor



The Holy Spirit in 1 John 4 declares: God is love. Love lies at the essence of who God is.

But this is not a matter of saying, "My feelings that I have for the people I care about, the warm fuzzies I get when I think about them, that's where God is." Not at all.

Feelings of love are wonderful. But they weaken at times. God is almighty. Our feelings can become distorted, problematic, sinful, leading to unbiblical behaviours. God is supreme in holiness and purity. Our feelings fluctuate. God is unchanging. Our feelings are small, limited. God is boundless, infinite. God is so much bigger than our feelings.

So why does God identify himself in this way? Why link himself so completely to the kind of feelings that, say, lead young couples to get married?

Simply because that is who he is. God is love. And if we are to understand what love is really all about, looking beyond the ups and downs of what we might be feeling on any particular day, even on wedding days, we need to look to him, look to what he has done in Jesus Christ, reminding ourselves that just as God is so much bigger than we are, love itself is about something so much bigger than our feelings.

Looking to God, finding in him our definition of love, we can understand what it is, where it comes from, how it should be expressed, what it's goal and purpose is, and where it leads to.

Jim Klazinga

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The PCEA was founded in 1846 and adheres to the Westminster Confession of Faith (1647) as a correct summary of the teaching of the Holy Scriptures.

There are congregations in Kalinga in QLD; Maclean, Wauchope, Kindee, Taree, Cardiff, Raymond Terrace, Sydney CBD, and Mt Druitt in NSW; Wantirna, Mulgrave, Narre Warren, Carrum Downs, and Geelong in VIC; Ulverstone in TAS.

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The editor is grateful for the assistance of an informal network of Banner liaisons, one from each of the PCEA congregations.

Calvin, The Pastor, Part 2: Lessons from Calvin's Pastoral Character and Ministry

By Samit Mishra

Editor's Note: For Part 1, see last month's issue. Samit and Pradeep Kumar hope to represent the Presbyterian Free Church of Central India at this year's synod meeting. They also plan to visit PCEA congregations.

Here are some of the aspects of his great pastoral ministry with important lessons to learn:

A Courageous Pastor

On the basis of faithful biblical reasoning, the minister of the gospel is to pursue the elders to stand together in fencing the table for unrepentant members of the congregation. If the council (Kirk Session) are not willing to submit to the truths, a minister, by virtue of his calling and ordination to the ministry of the Word and Sacrament, has the liberty to deny the privilege of the Lord's Table to unrepentant sinners. In doing so, he is to be prepared to face the temporal consequences, remembering the fact that every truth of the scriptures is worthy to die for. Calvin was willing to pay the cost of his courage and faithfulness to God's truths.

The usual modern tendency is to keep the Lord's Table open for everyone who merely affirms the Apostles' Creed was not Calvin's position. He preached and taught earnestly and was courageous enough to fence the Lord's Table to the unrepentant people of Geneva who persisted in sin. If the sacrament of the Lord's Supper is administered without considering

people's lives and unrepentant hearts, the sacrament becomes just a superficial ritualistic exercise. Faithful preaching of the Word should always be supported by the proper biblical administration of the sacrament. Therefore, church discipline becomes important in the spiritual care of a congregation.

Calvin courageously proposed that "let the church have power of excommunication.....Church be allowed to decide who might partake in communion." Calvin's retractors accused of him becoming a French-pope in Geneva but his focus was to care for the struggling souls with true preaching, proper administration of the sacraments and biblical process of church discipline.

A Self-Critical, Vulnerable Pastor

Calvin was quick in correcting his approach by bringing in-depth Reformation in Strasbourg. He learned from the experience in Geneva. Calvin acted bold and loud for the right causes in Geneva whereas in Strasbourg he dealt with things patiently and quietly. He still stood for the biblical principles, but with grace, generosity and gentleness.

Sinclair Ferguson writes, "Calvin was constantly critical of himself and his shortcomings. He lived physically and spiritually on the edge." Self-assessment is an excellent practice that enables the pastors to assess their calling, character, behaviour and ministry, especially in India, where pastors are held so high that even elders

rarely offer spiritual corrections or guidance to their pastors.

A Submissive Pastor and Scholar

John Calvin was quite reflective in perceiving God's guidance, primarily through God's Word, but also through the advice of his godly friends. Calvin was blessed with many true and faithful friends. In Strasbourg, he had Pastor Martin Bucer, who ministered and mentored the discouraged Calvin with prayer and patience. William Farel remained a lifelong friend to Calvin. Calvin was around 20 years younger than Farel, yet they were audacious and blunt to each other when they got into arguments. It was Farel that Calvin continued to express his vulnerability in his letters. With Farel, Calvin was often open in confessing his inner struggles, and also, he was humble enough in submitting to his godly wisdom. To quote from a letter that he sent to Farel after re-joining Geneva, he wrote, "As you wished, I am settled here, may the Lord overrule it for good." In pastor Bucer and Farel, he had two great spiritual fathers and mentors. Though a high-profile reformer, a committed pastor, and a brilliant theologian, he was under constant spiritual mentoring. There can be no story of Calvin without the contribution of Farel and Bucer.

When Calvin encountered Farel's thunder to remain in Geneva, he felt God's hand upon him and did not persist in continuing his journey. Again, Calvin respected the voice of many

friends and the decisions of the Strasbourg Council to allow him to go to Geneva. Even though he was not happy and doubtful of his good reception in Geneva, Calvin did not continue to hold to his reasoning and feelings but bent and went as a slain sacrifice to Geneva. He wrote, "With what grief, tears, great anxiety and distress I did this, the Lord is my best witness." He wrote about the biblical polity and applied its principles of mutual accountability on himself – listening and submitting to the collective wisdom of godly leaders.

A Local and Beyond Pastor

In Geneva, "Work was constant: preaching and teaching, weddings and baptisms, meetings of the Consistory or consultations with the city council, visits to the sick and endless correspondence, and more preaching, visits, letters." "His ministry of counsel, correction, and encouragement reached beyond Geneva through his extensive correspondence (eleven volumes of his collected writings) with a wide range of people... men and women imprisoned for their faith, people troubled by personal and theological issues, and church leaders of many countries. "Geneva had enough problems to overload a pastor, but Calvin kept watch over the world too." Without neglecting the local church, he reached beyond and served the universal church of Christ. He was a minister in Geneva, but his ministry crossed the borders. He managed to serve the local and beyond with perfection.

A Practical Preacher

"More than any other activity,

preaching occupied Calvin's time and shaped his life and ministry. Twice on Sundays and daily every other week, Calvin stood before a congregation of townspeople, refugees, and visitors to preach, teach, warn, appeal, counsel, admonish, and encourage." His hands were full with preaching engagements, but his preaching never became an exhaustive exercise for others. "When I go up into the pulpit," he told his congregation, "it is not only to teach other men [but] the word that proceeds out of my mouth must serve me as well as you." He himself was the first audience to his sermon.

Calvin was an excellent exegete and linguistic expert, yet he was adaptive to the language of ordinary people. In his preaching, he stirred imaginations through figures of speech and involved local proverbs and straightforward illustrations. It was an intentional practice of Calvin. He firmly held that "a good preacher must not only know the word of God but must also be 'in touch with ordinary people and know-how 'to apply God's Word to the profit of His people.' If not, he should 'go and do something else" Calvin worked hard to apply his preaching to the everyday life of the people—a task he acknowledged as particularly challenging. He kept Christ as the central content of his preaching and required daily applications of God's Word preached.

A Caring Community Pastor

Though busy in writing and preaching, Calvin always had sufficient time to visit and minister

to the sick and dying. He instituted a practice that no one is to be totally confined to the bed for more than three days without informing the minister. When a plague hit Geneva, despite his wife Idelette expecting their first child, Calvin offered himself to serve in the plague hospital. But "on account of the great need which the church has of his service," the council refused his offer. Calvin insisted and wrote, "so long as we are in this ministry, I do not see that any excuse will avail us if, through fear of infection, we are found wanting in the discharge of our duty where we are most needed."

John Calvin was like a father to Geneva. Thinking and caring for the people in all aspects of their lives. "He was always busy in finding a wife, a house, a servant or a job to someone in need." He was a wise legal consultant for the Geneva City Council. He revised, compiled and later proposed changes in the laws of the cities. He was a wise counsellor in matters concerning construction and hygiene. He influenced the politics and economics of the city. "Given Calvin's self-confessed diffident and retiring personality, it must have been difficult for him to become involved in the lives of people. But Calvin did it nonetheless." Even though he himself was often sick, he was always available to serve and guide. John Calvin did not confide himself to within the walls of the church. He was a practical genius and a community pastor. He extended his care in every aspect of the community life.

A Pastor without Greed

Calvin, the great theologian of the Reformation, was a humble and poor pastor in Geneva. He delighted in poverty and often denied himself extra financial benefits. When salary was increased, he would require that portion to be sent as relief to his colleagues in ministry. He took loans from the council for the medical needs of himself and his family and repaid them without requesting, and even denying, any financial favour. At the end of his life, he refused the last quarter's salary with these words, "I have not earned it....so why should I receive it." Even the pope in Rome knew that Calvin was poor and that he wanted to be poor. At the death of Calvin, Pius IV commented, "The strength of that heretic came from the fact that money was nothing to him." Calvin's attitude towards money is a real threat to those who are in pastoral ministry for the sake of luxurious life and financial advantages.

A Model Leader

As a leading reformer, Calvin knew that the reformation movement was also a reaction against the clergy's corrupt and immoral life. The Reformation was an appeal to restore the pure doctrine, true piety and holy living, and the ministers have to be the examples in all of those. "Pastors must not only be orthodox in doctrine but also must strive to make themselves 'examples to the flock,' that is, Calvin explained, 'They are to excel for the purpose of being eminent in holiness.'" A pastor, who neglects holiness by his example, destroys the efficiency of his preaching, reduces the worth and magnitude of the Lord's Supper, and ultimately becomes a severe obstacle for the practice and process of church discipline.

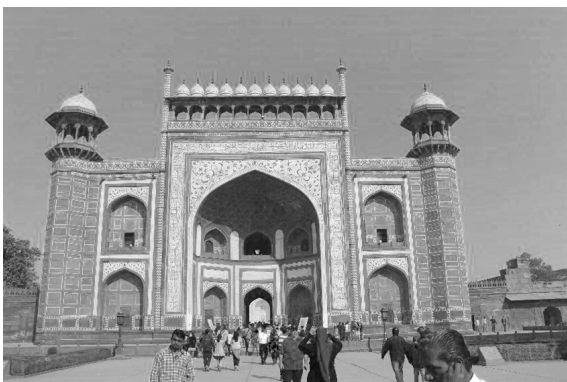
Conclusion

It is good to end the article with Calvin's own words about his pastoral ministry. In the Institutes, he writes: "God has filled my mind

with zeal to spread his Kingdom and to further the public good. I am duly clear in my own conscience and have God and the angels to witness that since I undertook the office of a teacher in the church, I have had no other purpose than to benefit the church."

Calvin, the Reformer, the theologian, the preacher and writer, was a pastor in heart and character. He did not have an easy beginning, he was not willing to face pastoral challenges, yet he submitted to the will of the chief Shepherd of God's flock. Even in his burial, he exalted the resurrected Christ – the only grave to be remembered is His master's empty tomb. Pastor Calvin was buried with the most important pastoral message that the church is to extol and glorify, not any dead minister of the church, but Christ alone! Calvin's lost tomb is a significant monument to his faithful and humble pastoral ministry.

The PCEA 2023 Mission Awareness Tour!



Destination: India

(Delhi, Chhapara, and more!)

Dates: 16th to 30th December

Approximate Cost: \$2700

(plus some meals and incidentals)

For a proposed itinerary and booking pamphlet,

Contact Dennis Muldoon at 0414 502 954 or dkmuldoon@hotmail.com

Places are limited. Book now!

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Brisbane

[Report by Jim Klazinga]

We rejoice with Hainian and Naomi Yu, who were married on 1 April (see their picture on the front cover).

We look forward to next wedding taking place soon. Weylin Morrison and Irene Klazinga are scheduled to be married next month, on 20 May.

On Sunday, 12 March, we had a congregational lunch to bid farewell to the family of Chris and Joanne Freebairn, who headed off to Canada the next day.

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Carrum Downs

[Report by Ian Hall]

The Lord's work in Carrum Downs continues as normal. Rev Hall is nearing the end of a lengthy series of sermons in Matthew's gospel and has recently begun a new sermon series in Isaiah 52-53 in the afternoon service. Pray that as Christ is preached God will be pleased to bless.

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Hunter

[Report by Ian Miller]

On March 18 our Annual Congregation Meeting was held. It provided an opportunity to reflect on the the grace and mercy of God during 2022. Of note was the increased attendance at Worship and other activities due to numerical increases in communicant members and adherents as well as the improved financial position. The ministry of the Word, pastoral support, contribution to missions, Sunday

School and ongoing property improvements were highlighted.

We are thankful for the recent birth of Zara Grace, daughter of Mrs Amy and Dr Alfred Oringo. Zara joins the family of three young sisters and one young brother.

Cardiff Sunday School has resumed. Mrs Vanessa Tso and Mrs Anna Fluit are the appointed teachers of the infants and primary classes respectively. Rev Tso and Mr Miller are expected to teach the adult class. Rev Tso has resumed a course regarding the Scottish Reformation. Please pray for the Lord's blessing upon the students and teachers.

With humble gratitude we ascribe all glory to our Sovereign God who has graciously blessed and kept us. We are assured that the "LORD is merciful and gracious. Slow to anger and abounding in mercy" (Ps 103:8).

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Manning

[Report by Joyce Bennett]

Here we are once again, another month nearly gone. On a personal note, I would like to thank Leanne Smith for stepping in and sending news from the Manning while I have been recovering from surgery.

A very dear member of our church, Freya De Haan celebrated her 85th birthday on Sunday 19th of March, and we had coffee and cake after the service (see the photo on the back cover).

Trevor Leggott also had a birthday last month (his photo is also on the back cover, showing him with his 2 great-

granddaughters sitting on his knee).

Congratulations also go to our Pastor George and Rhoda on the safe arrival of another granddaughter, Zara Grace.

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Northern Rivers

[Report by Beth Sonter]

I am sure that every congregation has its share of unsung heroes - those people who get on with big jobs with little or no recognition. In the Northern Rivers congregation, Elder Ross Campbell, is one of our heroes. Ross has been treasurer for Northern Rivers and formerly the Maclean congregation for just about fifty years. This is a remarkable achievement and for this and many other reasons we say thank you and well done Ross. As well as this, Ross is our church presenter and, as a resident of the Bethesda community, he is the usual first point of contact for issues relating to Bethesda units. Also, Ross actively supports the Re-Serve op-shop with any day to day problems. I am sure that there are many other things that this remarkable man does without fuss or expecting credit. Well done Ross.

It was remiss of this correspondent in not previously mentioning a very special milestone for Rev Ken MacLeod who reached his 90th birthday several weeks ago. Happy belated birthday Ken.

On Saturday 25 March our annual congregational meeting was held. Our very capable treasurer, Ross Campbell, tabled

Church News

"But grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of Christ's gift." Ephesians 4:7

financial statements for the Bethesda units and the general church account. Other reports were also presented and this is an essential and appropriate opportunity to discuss church business.

Church lunches have resumed. These are held on the first Sunday of each month after the morning service. Lunches are a great time of fellowship and we all enjoy the delicious food provided.

The mini camp for the children too young to attend the Easter youth camp will be held later in July, not following the youth camp as it was last year. Mini camp will be held at the Greensill's farm commencing on Monday 3rd July for 2 nights. Children and their parents attend this camp. .

* * * * *

St George

[Report by Alex Steel]

Since the retirement of our minister Rev John McCallum on 31st January, the Interim Moderator, Rev Robin Tso, Hunter minister, "Preached the Charge vacant" on 5th February and arranged pulpit supply for February and March. The congregation has appreciated the services of five different preachers with the remaining worship services being taken by the local Elders and a Deacon.

The Deacons' Court is currently preparing

documentation required by Council for the replacement of the church roof which is to be included in Stage 2 of the steeple conservation and restoration works. Specialist services engaged have included structural engineers, tilt monitoring, water hydraulics, surveyors and glaziers.

Visitors to our worship services during February and March came from Korea, Netherlands, Scotland and Hong Kong – Brisbane and Cardiff congregations and a visitor from Port Lincoln SA.

* * * * *

Ulverstone

[Report by Ian Hamilton]

On the 26th March Rev Andres Miranda and his wife Andrea visited. The service was a joy, with three new members being received and the Lord's Supper being observed. The new members - Philip and Suzanne Thompson and Dani Ezard are pictured below with Andres.



On the 9th March Peter Cumming and Esther Hamilton announced their engagement and are planning for a wedding on the 17th June. Peter comes from Wagin, WA (see their picture on the back cover).

The month of June will be a busy one, with our oldest member Mrs Jean Hearps due to turn 101 and Zach and Wilma Dotson expecting their third child.

Sylvia Loney and Denise Ryan are awaiting further surgery. Pat Ryan is tackling a challenging bicycle trek up the eastern divide.

* * * * *

Central Presbytery

[Report by George Ball]

We announce with regret that Duncan Hickey is no longer a licentiate of the Central Presbytery. At our recent meeting in March he indicated that he is no longer able to subscribe to the whole doctrine of the Westminster Confession of Faith. As a result therefore he was released from being a licentiate. We commend Duncan, his wife, and family to the God of grace and pray that he may be able to serve the Lord fruitfully in whatever sphere the Lord has planned for him.

Please continue to pray to the Lord of the harvest to call suitably gifted men to the work of the ministry of the Word.

Dumisani Graduation and Developments, March 2023

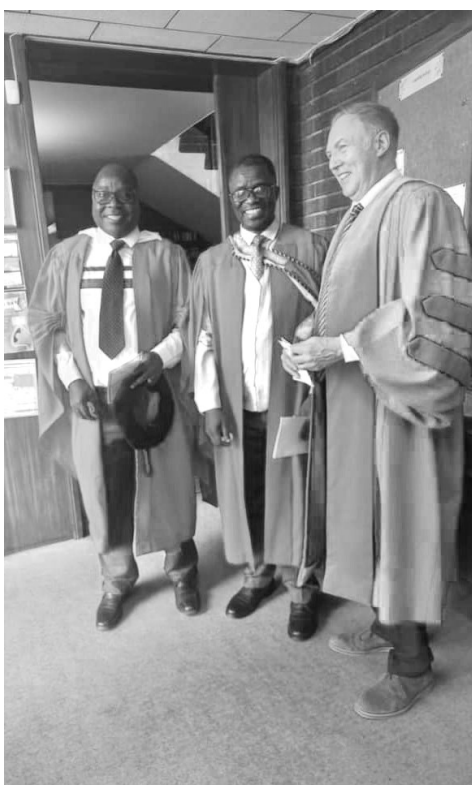
By J. C. Whytock



Dumisani Graduation

On March 4th at a very joyous and celebratory ceremony, 28 students received awards at the Dumisani Graduation Ceremonies with close to 200 in attendance in King William's Town/Qonce, Eastern Cape, South Africa. Thirteen received their Certificate of Christian Foundations (CCF), and fourteen received their Advanced Ministries Studies (AMS), plus one Dumisani student was recognised as completing their Honours BTh through SATS. Three students received the principal's awards for distinguished work. Also, at the Graduation Exercises it was announced that two students graduating from Dumisani with the Advanced Ministry Studies were awarded full scholarships to George Whitefield College in Muizenberg, Western Cape for advanced standing for the BTh degree.

Each graduating student was also presented with select bible commentaries and also a new study bible. We are most grateful to the partners who donated these graduation gifts. Three students



spoke in response: Nakase Khanyiso, Sikolile Ndyindila, and Bukiwe Baninzi. Those participating in the ceremony were: I. Magodla, K. Barrow, P. Diniso, W. Chipenyu, S. Kim, J. Whytock, and Mrs. S. Vera and Mrs. N. Whytock. It was a very hot day with no rain, so greetings were held outside with food and refreshments. Truly it was a time of rejoicing in the Lord's goodness. Many current students also attended the graduation exercises. Currently Dumisani has between 60 and 70 studying.

Accreditation

Dumisani Theological Institute has recently received official word that its two programmes of study have been accredited by the Quality Council of Trades & Occupations (QCTO) from 2023 for five years (2028). This is something for which Dumisani has been desirous for many years. We are very grateful to all who have prayed about this and worked so very hard in this application process. It was a long journey but by the Lord's mercies has been achieved. We ask that prayer continue to be made that this new accreditation for the two programmes will prove a real blessing for training Christian workers and leaders across the Eastern Cape and be a blessing to the churches.

This accreditation is at the right levels for the target grouping of students that Dumisani wants to reach. The first certificate allows

both matric and non-matric students to enter and if they complete that certificate, they can now earn an accredited certificate. The other programmes of study are more advanced academically as a residential in-class higher level certificate /diploma and also Dumisani works with accredited partners for the BTh and HonsBTh degrees.

Project Roof

Dumisani is now 44 years old. For the 40th anniversary (2019) a full upgrade and redevelopment of the campus was done to prepare Dumisani for the next ten years of ministry and also to help with the accreditation process. Many major changes were accomplished at that time including a new second lecture hall, new toilet facilities, an improved and extended

parking area, security updates, and new floors in several buildings with all rot removed, concrete poured and tile laid. At that time all roofs were repaired but with the plan that over the next ten years two buildings were identified needing new roofs. The first building to receive a new roof has been the Office Building late last year. The old steel was beyond repairing and was removed, and all new steel replaced it as well as several new rafters. The result is an office building with no leaks. Now the second designated building for a new roof and replacement of some

rafters is the next project. Dumisani welcomes donations to Project Roof to help replace the roof on the second lecture hall complex.

Global Study Bibles

Recently the post office in King William's Town/Qonce burnt. Shipping Bibles and other materials has become an issue. Dumisani uses the Global Study Bible in all its CCF certificate courses and needs these annually to be on hand. We took more in our luggage this month from a supplier in the UK.

Continue to pray for this vital ministry of training future leaders in the Eastern Cape of South Africa and give thanks to the Lord for Dumisani's residential training ministry—a truly unique ministry in the Eastern Cape Province.



Missions Report on Dumisani for Synod 2023

Submitted by Ian Hamilton

We received a summary report from Principal Wilbert Chipenyu on the 6th March. Synod 2022 may recall that Wilbert spoke to us via videoconference on the missions evening.

Wilbert writes:

Greetings in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Praying that the PCEA remain under the grace of God.

May I take this opportunity to highlight you on Dumisani. We are grateful to God that Dumisani got its first accreditation since 1979.

We are really excited. The accreditation is administered by Christian Council working with the South African Qualification Assessment. It seeks to produce ministers who would not fall prey to the current wave of prosperity gospel.

Dumisani is currently the only college in the Eastern Cape province that is accredited to offer the Christian Religious Professional qualification. Many students wish to enrol but most of them could not afford to pay the required fees.

We are working flat out to seek for bursary assistance to enable the prospective students to have access to Theological education.

Dumisani had its 44th Graduation and Award Ceremony. A total of 32 students graduated on 4 March 2023. (This compares with 25 graduates in 2022).

Dumisani has only two full-time lecturers including the principal. It also has 3 ministers who teach part-time and some visiting lecturers who come from abroad and locally.

April Search Work

"Oh that my ways may be steadfast in keeping your statutes!" Psalm 119:5

Senior and Intermediate
(Intermediate omit questions 1 and 6)

Junior

1 Corinthians Chapter 9

1. Which verse in Deut. 25 commands that the ox's mouth not be muzzled when treading out the grain? For whose sake was this written?
2. Why did Paul have nothing to glory [boast] of?
3. Why did Paul become all things to all men?
4. What sort of crown do Christians strive [compete] to obtain?

Chapter 10

5. What was the nature of the Rock that followed the Israelites in the wilderness?
6. Paul gives examples of the Israelites being punished in the wilderness. What relevance does that have to us?
7. How does God help us to overcome temptation?
8. What is to be our motive whether we eat, drink, or whatever we do?

Luke Chapter 17

1. What might we do if we had faith as a (grain of) mustard seed?
2. Of the ten lepers who were healed, how many returned to give glory to God? (2 verses)
3. What was Jesus' answer when he was asked when the kingdom of God would come? (2 verses)
4. What will happen to him who seeks to save his life, and to him who loses his life?

Find the verse(s) in the Bible that answer the questions, write/type them out, and send to:

Mrs Irene Steel

18/1-55 West Parade, West Ryde NSW 2114

or Email: iesteel@gmail.com

A book voucher is awarded at the end of each year to children who send in the answers.

April Prayer Points

"Keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints." Ephesians 6:18

Saturday, 1st: Give thanks with home and abroad, both in giving, in servants in the past, such as John Alfred & Amy of the Hunter praying and being directly involved Calvin (see pages 3-5). congregation for the birth of their during this past year." Pray for fifth child, Zara Grace Oringo, born Shekinah, and for her work with 21 March (see page 6). Interserve India, serving in Thailand.

Sunday, 2nd: Pray that our worship services today may be used by God to encourage those participating.

Monday, 3rd: Pray for the ongoing ministry of the Geelong congregation.

Tuesday, 4th: Pray for elder Donald Ramsay of the Geelong congregation.

Wednesday, 5th: At last year's meeting, it was resolved: "The Synod gives thanks to the Lord for the opportunity and privilege to be involved in the work of missions at

Thursday, 6th: Give thanks that Hainian and Naomi Yu of the Brisbane congregation could get married on 1 April (see page 6 and the cover photo).

Friday, 7th: Pray for the young people attending this weekend's PCEA Youth Camp, and for those assisting them. Pray for Rev George Ball, who is scheduled to give the talks.

Saturday, 8th: Give thanks for the examples provided by faithful

Sunday, 9th: Pray for the Youth Camp attendees and for the members of the Northern Rivers congregation, that their worship together today may be a blessing and may give glory to God.

Monday, 10th: Pray for the ministry of the Carrum Downs congregation.

Tuesday, 11th: Pray for Rev Ian Hall's work in Carrum Downs, and for Rev David Kumnick.

Wednesday, 12th: Pray for the ministry of the Presbyterian Free Church of Central India. Give thanks for our relationship with them, and pray for Samit and

April Prayer Points

“Keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints.” Ephesians 6:18

Pradeep as they prepare to attend our synod and visit our churches.

Thursday, 13th: At last year’s meeting, it was affirmed that synod “gives thanks to God for the churches with whom we have formal fraternal relations and for those churches with whom we have contact and resolve to pray for the Lord’s blessing upon their work and witness.” Please pray for the ministry of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Australia, and of the Southern Presbyterian Church of Australia. Pray for our relationship and contact with them.

Friday, 14th: Pray for Duncan Hickey and his family. Pray that he may be able to serve the Lord fruitfully in whatever the Lord has planned for him (see page 7).

Saturday, 15th: Pray for the Freebairn family, formerly of the Hastings and Brisbane congregations, as they settle into their new home in Canada (see page 6).

Sunday, 16th: Chrysostom said, as quoted by John Owen, “The spiritual man is he who liveth by the Spirit, having his mind enlightened by him; having not only an inbred human understanding, but rather a spiritual understanding, bestowed on him graciously, which the Holy Ghost endues the minds of believers withal.” Pray that the Holy Spirit may use the preaching in our services today to help those attending grow in their spiritual understanding.

Monday, 17th: Pray for the ministry of the Narre Warren congregation.

Tuesday, 18th: Pray for the Narre Warren office-bearers: for Rev Andres Miranda, and for elders Terry Buck and John Disney.

Wednesday, 19th: Pray for the work of the Dumisani Theological Institute in South Africa (see pages 8-9).

Thursday, 20th: Give thanks for the new members in the Ulverstone congregation: Philip and Suzanne Thompson and Dani Ezard (see page 7).

Friday, 21st: Pray for Zach and Wilma Dotson of the Ulverstone congregation, as they anticipate the birth of their third child in June (see page 7).

Saturday, 22nd: Give thanks for the birthdays last month of Manning members Freya DeHaan and Trevor Leggott (see page 6 and their photos on the back cover).

Sunday, 23rd: From a prayer entitled, ‘The Minister’s Covenant’ from ‘The Valley of Vision’ – “Give me a heart full of love to thyself and to others. Let me discover in this life what I am before thee, that I may not find myself another character hereafter. Prepare me for death, that I may not die after long affliction or suddenly, but after short illness, with no confusion or disorder, and a quiet discharge in peace, with adieu to brethren. Let not my days end like lumber in a house, but give me a silent removing from one world to another. Inscribe these petitions in thy book, present them to thy Father, Set thine Amen to them, as I do on my part of the covenant.” Pray that God may use our

worship today to enable those attending to have a heart full of love for God.

Monday, 24th: Pray for the ministry of the All Nations congregation in Melbourne.

Tuesday, 25th: Pray for the All Nations office-bearers: for Rev Tut Wan Yoa, and for elders Isaac John and Jonah Gatluak.

Wednesday, 26th: Pray for the work of San Andres school in Peru.

Thursday, 27th: Give thanks that Ken MacLeod of the Northern Rivers congregation could recently celebrate his 90th birthday (see page 6).

Friday, 28th: Pray for Weylin Morrison and Irene Klazinga of the Brisbane congregation, as they prepare for their wedding on 20 May (see page 6).

Saturday, 29th: Pray for Esther Hamilton of the Ulverstone congregation and for Peter Cumming, as they prepare for their wedding on 17 June (see page 7 and their picture on the back cover).

Sunday, 30th: John Owen, in his collected works, writes, “There is in unregenerate men a natural impotency, through the immediate depravation of the faculties of the mind or understanding, whereby a natural man is absolutely unable, without an especial renovation by the Holy Ghost, to discern spiritual things in a saving manner.” Pray that the Holy Spirit may work through the preaching today to help those attending grow in their ability to discern spiritual things in a saving manner.

