

"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

The Presbyterian Banner



July 2023

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 great barrier in humanity is not between the races. The great divide is between believers and unbelievers. The great divide is between those who know Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, who seek to worship and serve Him, and those who don't.

Mind you, many would boldly proclaim: if you maintain that other religions are wrong, that the beliefs and practices of non-Christian people groups are in error, then you are by definition a racist.

How ultimately misguided. And deceptive. It is not racist to say that pagan religions are of the devil. The opposite is true. It is racist to say that certain people groups should be left alone to practice the pagan religions of their ethnic forefathers, as if their race must determine their religion.

The only thing that can truly break down ethnic barriers is the one Saviour Jesus Christ, the one faith in Him., worked in us by one Spirit. Any other faith, any other practices, any other philosophies, all such thinking and acting that is apart from Christ can only serve to build barriers, furthering the results of Babel. Only in the power of Pentecost, only in the one Spirit, only in the one truth, can there be meaningful unity among people from different backgrounds.

It was a joy to experience fellowship with people from different backgrounds at Synod 2023, with visitors from other churches and countries, and even within the PCEA itself.

Jim Klazinga

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Self-Consciousness in the Church

The Moderator's Second Address at Synod 2023, by Andres Miranda

If you go to the dictionary for a definition of self-consciousness you will find this explanation: (1) Conscious on one's acts or states that belonging to or originating in oneself; (2) uncomfortably conscious of oneself as an object of the observation of others.

The first definition tells us that this experience happens inside the body. The second definition shows us that the flow of mental reflections that we call "consciousness" and we associate with our personal self, also take place in the social domain.

In social situations, self-consciousness is fundamentally an act of thinking about ourselves, but the problem is that when we think about ourselves, we can't think of "self" or "you being you" without taking into account the relationship of "yourself" with other people.

In other words, you begin to think of what other people think of you, or what you would like them to think of you.

It's quite clear then your "self", your "personal identity" has no meaning without human interactions. From a clinical perspective, self-consciousness, has to do with what other people think of us, or say about us, or what we assume they think and or say about us. So anxiety in social situations is the result of excessive self-attention. In absolute solitude, the self-conscious person would be quite indifferent about his appearance and behaviour. But our life is intertwined with the lives of other people, and when excessive



attention is given to this interaction, we become self-conscious.

There are two ways in which self-consciousness can manifest itself in social situations.

(1) In some cases, self-conscious people get pleasure from the thought that what they say or do it's being noticed by other people. Sometimes there are legitimate bases for thinking that people are captivated by their speech and actions. In other cases, the basis for this feeling is found in the imagination only.

(2) For people who struggle with self-consciousness, the idea of being the object of attention, is painful and embarrassing. They experience high levels of anxiety.

Now, as religious workers, concern for the spiritual and mental well-being of people in the local congregation is important to realise that self-consciousness is a very unpleasant feeling. Self-consciousness creates significant distress in personal relationships.

However, the possibility of freedom from anxiety and avoidance behaviours, is God's greatest gift to the church. Human personality is not deterministic. It is possible to grow in freedom and

self-confidence with God's help.

I will mention some theological strategies for living more effectively towards the end of the lecture.

For now I want to continue the discussion of the nature of self-consciousness. What is the cause of self-consciousness? This question is not easy to answer. Self-consciousness is a complicated state of mind and body. And this complexity makes it difficult to isolate a single cause.

The factors that contribute to self-consciousness are many. And due to time constraints we can't focus on all of them. But for the sake of simplicity, I am going to say that one of the most noticeable causes of self-consciousness is fear.

Practically, everyone who has studied the subject of self-consciousness agrees that fear, in one way or another, is involved in self-consciousness. When we realise that fear plays such a big role in human life, it's not difficult to understand why clinicians regard fear as one of main causes of social anxiety.

Think about it. We spend most of our conscious life trying to avoid things that we don't like. We live in fear. Fear keeps us in a constant state of alert. Some fears are part of our repertoire of instinctual urges or inherited responses to a hostile environment. This type of fear is a biological reflex that relates exclusively to our survival.

If you see an angry kangaroo coming towards you, fear is an emotion that can save us from a

terrible beating. This is an instinct of self-preservation. Everybody is motivated by that. I don't need to go into details.

Some fears, however, are self-imposed. They often develop in childhood, and they are technically called phobias. Very quickly, a phobia is anxiety associated with an object or situation that is not normally considered dangerous.

People with phobias are unable to explain how they became afraid of the non-threatening objects. The fear of the self-conscious person is a special fear. They fear themselves, and also experience intense fear and anxiety in social interactions.

In case you're wondering what is the difference between fear and anxiety, the difference is that anxiety is the anticipation of situations perceived as threatening, and fear is usually associated with the urge to escape. When these two emotional feelings overlap in the personality of the self-conscious person, they experience a panic attack.

Now, a few minutes ago, I said that self-conscious people fear themselves. What do I mean by that? I simple mean that self-conscious people lack confidence in themselves. In many cases, this is due to the persistent habit of self-contempt, and the attitude of underestimating one's abilities.

Although self-conscious people are creative, and possess outstanding skills, they hesitate to take new challenges because they are afraid of themselves. They question themselves: Can I really do that? I don't know if I have what it takes? I fear what people will say about me? They will find me

boring, stupid, awkward, and unlikable?

But who are “they”? “They” are simply an imaginary group of people that you think will evaluate you negatively. Now do you see what I mean? A person who experiences social anxiety, finds it difficult to put themselves in the way of new opportunities.

The worst enemy of personal achievement and growth is the fear of oneself. This fear brings doubt, and self-limitation. As you can see, if we fear ourselves, the fear of other people is always present in our mind.

The fear of people has two aspects, (1) When you have done something to make people angry, and (2) when you have done nothing to offend people. If you have done something to make people upset, then your fear has some basis in reality. But if you haven't done anything to offend someone, there is no reason to feel anxious in social settings.

The fear of people is also related to the fear of an audience. This fear is usually caused by a visual rehearsal that happens long before the upcoming situation. You see the audience in your mind everyday. You see yourself in front of the audience, which somehow they always appear to you as cruel, intimidating, and always ready to find something to criticize. The anxiety starts weeks before the social event.

Even professional speakers or preachers can feel this fear. But someone might say: How can that be? They're professionals. They've been doing this for years! The answer is simple. If they have a

reputation to maintain, there's always the fear that they'll let down the expectations of their audience. This can produce intense fear.

The other extreme is when public speakers or preachers are so confident of their “rhetorical skills” that they fail to notice weaknesses in the way they communicate things.

I am not here to talk about how to improve skills of public speaking, so let us come back to the topic of self-consciousness. The self-conscious person also has a fear of criticism.

For this person, criticism is always unfair. They take it as a personal attack. So the self-conscious person tries to avoid anything that will cause them to be under the evaluation of others.

I know, most people don't take criticism very well. But people who are extremely sensitive to it overreact. The self-conscious person experiences the criticism as rejection. Probably, because of deep-seated insecurities. But that's a subject for another time. I hope you have found this outline of self-consciousness helpful.

The Fear of the Lord

Now, I would like to say something about how to control the feeling of self-consciousness. We all want to live a life that's not limited by fear and anxiety, so how do we do it?

When Proverbs 9:10 came to my mind, I said to myself, “This text is old, and well-known. I don't think I'll be able to find something fresh in it.”

I was wrong. The first thing I

noticed was that the control of fear begins with a specific mental attitude. According to the wisdom-teacher, that mental attitude is “the fear of the Lord”. Look what the text says again,

“The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.”

This is the first step to develop courage and joy in personal relationships.

This text is a call to action. What action? The preacher says: “the fear of the Lord” is the beginning of wisdom.

In other words, the “fear of the Lord” can displace the “fear” that prevents us from enjoying fullness of life, which is the wisdom of God.

The psychological implication here is interesting. Human beings don’t like emotional vacuums. We must have basic emotions to get things done. We need attachments. If we don’t have anything to hold on to, we feel empty.

But total freedom from attachment is impossible. That is why we become obsessed with thoughts, objects, people, and other stuff. Human development is really the constant replacement of one emotion with another. It’s clear that if we’re trying to displace social fear, we can’t leave the mind empty, otherwise another negative emotion will take that place.

So the Biblical solution for personal transformation is to introduce a new emotion.

When the wisdom—teacher speaks about the “fear of the Lord” he doesn’t mean use more logic, or replace social fear by avoiding people or become more moralistic.

It’s wrong to think that we can stop self-consciousness by any of these strategies. Even if we resist, or build a defence against it, we’re only creating more internal conflict.

The best way to get away from self-consciousness is by stimulating a spiritual emotion in the heart. So instead of worrying about what we assume people think of us, we should be more concerned about what God thinks of us. That’s the starting point of personal change.

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. The word beginning is interesting. It assumes that behind the beginning there is a past. The way of wisdom recognises that past.

But despite the past, and our symptoms of anxiety, and dysfunctional personalities, and moral limitations, the past is not an obstacle for a new beginning. With God we can start again.

How do we start again? We start by asking two simple questions: Who is the Lord? And What is the fear of the Lord?

The first answer is that the Lord is the God of creation. And therefore He knows everything that he’s created perfectly, including us. The Lord is also our Redeemer.

I’m not going to talk about the problem of sin. We all know that there is a problem. But God found a way to help us overcome the things that we don’t want. In fellowship with Christ, the Spirit changes our human nature. He renews the mind, especially the thoughts that paralyse us with human fear.

The Lord is the Redeemer.

What then is fear? Biblical fear is the recognition that God is a God of power and holiness. This recognition is not simply acceptance of theological statements about what God is, or a subscription to a particular creed.

Of course, I love the precision and beauty of Reformed theology, but we can’t experience the transformative power of God without the fear of the Lord.

Let me say it again, fear is a spiritual emotion. It comes from the volitional centre of the person renewed by the Spirit. That means a desire for the adjustment or conformity to the will of God.

The fear of the Lord is a response to what we believe. It’s building an emotion of complete submission to what you are convinced of. That’s the way of wisdom.

So, how do I change? And where do I start? The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.

But there is a past; a personal history that is ugly, and is constantly interfering with my present. How can I deal with that?

God will give you the power to deal with that past in fellowship with Him. Not only that. As Christians we know full well that if we live in the fear of the Lord, we’ll be on our way to the city of God with restored personalities.

The way of wisdom brings moral beauty, courage, and the freedom to become socially integrated because we are growing in “wholeness”. In the last analysis, the only person who can go through life without anxiety, is the person who fears the Lord.

Visitors from Other Churches at Synod 2023

A highlight of Synod 2023 were the visitors from other churches. The representatives from five of the denominations were focussed on last month. These are the other four. Quotes are from the minutes of synod.

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“Mr John Ferguson from the Associated Presbyterian Churches (APC) was introduced to and welcomed by the Moderator. Mr Ferguson brought greetings and encouragement from the APC. He spoke of the APC’s formation and congregations in Scotland. Mr



Ferguson encouraged the PCEA with the words of 1 Peter 5:7 – ‘... [cast] all your care upon Him for He cares for you.’ Mr Hall prayed for John and the work of the APC “

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

“Rev. Matthew Winzer from the Australian Free Church was introduced to and welcomed by the Moderator. Mr Winzer spoke of the history of the AFC and

brought greetings. He exhorted us to seek to maintain what we have attained in our common heritage. Mr Tso prayed for the work of the AFC.” “The [Inter-Church Relations Committee] Convener presented the proposed deliverances and it was resolved

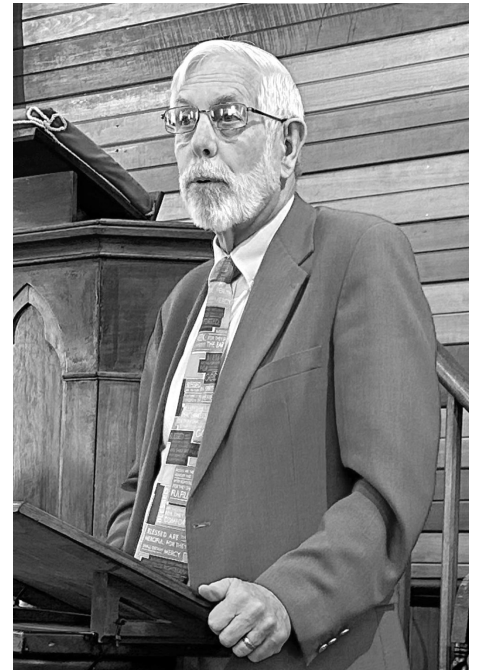


that... Synod approves the Committee’s ongoing discussions with the Australian Free Church in seeking a closer relationship between our denominations.”

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

“Rev. Bruce Backensto from the RPCNA was introduced to and welcomed by the Moderator. Mr Backensto was invited to speak and brought greetings from the RPCNA. He spoke of pain and struggle in church discipline, but rejoiced in growth. He spoke of the formation of the RPC Canada and asked for prayer in their own move toward closer relationships with the ARPC. He encouraged us with Paul’s words: “Only let your

conduct be worthy of the Lord



Jesus Christ...”

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

“The [Missions Evening] Session [on Thursday 4th May] opened with prayer led by Dr Muldoon, at 7:15pm... The [Missions Committee] Convener, Dr Muldoon, introduced Rev. Samit Mishra and Mr Pradeep Kumar to the Moderator, who welcomed them to the Synod and invited them to speak. Dr Muldoon presented a video on the work of Dr Dickson with VETNET in North India (translated by Rev. Mishra). Rev. Mishra and Mr Kumar then spoke on the work of the schools in Chhapara and Lakhnadon. Rev. Mishra spoke of school developments into English based Medium schools, which are in demand from people in the region. He also spoke of the work in the presbyteries, with new ones being established. Strategic approaches are bearing fruit, by God’s blessing, in church planting



work, in building infrastructure, in community involvement and in some income generating activities. The PFCCI hopes to conduct its first Synod in November, 2023. Rev. Peter Gadsby and Mr Greensill prayed for the brothers from India and the work of the PFCCI. The Session closed with prayer at 9:10pm.”

* * * * *

The following is the Missions Committee Report on the Presbyterian Free Church of Central India, contributed by Samit Mishra.

We are very much thankful to the Lord for His faithfulness in our lives and ministry. The things have been really getting tight for past many years as the hostility towards Christian work is all around. The graph of hostility is raising so high that even doing the good work and serving the community is taken otherwise. Yet, in amidst of all these, the Lord has helped us do things that are beyond our potential. Hence, though we struggle, we are not survivors but conquerors of the faith. Here are the things that we praise God for:

1. The work of the church is

being sustained well. In fact, we are at the edge of having our first synod in November 2023. Four churches in Maharashtra and other four in Madhya Pradesh will soon be recognized as a presbytery. The elders of these churches have been having regional counsels for past two years and are trained to follow the rules and procedures of a formal meeting. This was an intentional attempt from our end because, as we observed, despite being leaders in the community and having enough reasoning and capacity, they would often keep quiet in our presbytery meetings due to respect and other reasons. Having them meet separately allowed them to express their opinion openly and mainly to develop the sense of ownership over their regional work. 15 Alongside, the synod of PFC-CI will be joined by a Presbyterian Reformed church of India in Maharashtra. This is a new church plant network, working independently in terms of finance but under the supervision of the presbytery of PFC-CI for past many years.

2. The third batch of diploma in theology completed this year with 14 students. We are now prepared to start the fourth batch in Gondia, Maharashtra, with 30 students. Many of the students of last batch are connected with us and some of them are looking to join us as church planters. This may require some additional fund support from our partners.

3. Women Ministry: Using the principles of discipleship, a core group of women (Mrs. Aileen Kumar, Mrs. Varsha Mishar, Mrs. Ruma and Mrs. Sandhya) was authorized by the presbytery to provide leadership in women

discipleship and community service. To our amazement, in a very short span of time, these women were able to strengthen many women and become a missional community called “Women for Mission”. In past two years they together were able to conduct four friendship camps with disabled people, helped them get benefits of government schemes, provided medical treatments and equipment such as wheel chairs, walkers etc. They further plan to organize a course on bakery items and production of FMCG (Fast Moving Consumer Goods) to help the wives of rural pastors and leaders to get self-employed and earn extra income as in rural church plants financial suitability (in terms of supporting a pastor financially) is still a far destination.

4. Mission School, Chhapara: In the last academic year, one of the girls succeeded to be in the top ten of the State merit list. With all the infrastructure developments, this boosted up the reputation of the school in the district. The staff enthusiastically worked on the admission. Consequently, they were able to increase the strength of the students by 25%. Having many private schools around, this was quite an achievement. Specially in Hindi section, where we were expecting a rapid fall due to change in Education culture where every parent now wish to have their children in English Medium school, the numbers of the students increased. With the sponsorship scheme of PCEA, it is helpful for many poor students to continue their studies in post-Covid season where the rate of unemployment and inflation has increased a lot.

5. Lakhnadon Mission School:

As mentioned above, due to a cultural shift, Hindi schools are experiencing lack of students. The story is the same in Lakhnadon School as well. Due to lack of finance, many senior staff resigned, yet there are few left with much dedication to continue the missional service in the community. Lakhnadon Mission School has become a challenge for us. With new staff and leadership, now we are developing it to be an English Medium school. We are journeying through a valley,

knowing that the Lord will take us through, and soon we will have a greener pasture.

6. Lakhnadon Christian Hospital (LCH): this rural hospital was opened in 1936 after many years of medical mission work at nearby Chhapara. Dr Helen Ramsey, Sis Flora Neil and Heather Beaton, among others, served here. LCH was handed over to the Emmanuel Hospital Association in 1974; Dr McDonald and Sis Barbara Stone left in 1988. As this rural town grew, private hospitals opened

nearby, and EHA found it difficult to find doctors. LCH closed in 2018. In 2021 EHA placed two doctors, Sumit a surgeon and his wife a psychiatrist, at LCH to reopen the centre, for which we in PCEA give praise; Neeti Raj is administrator. Outpatient numbers are increasing; LCH currently has 16 beds. Community health work has also resumed. The old hospital buildings are prone to fire. With help from Barnabas Aid, the wiring is being made safe and two old generators are being replaced.

Greetings from the Associated Presbyterian Churches in Scotland

By Dr John Ferguson

Warm greetings to you in our Lord Jesus Christ on behalf the Associated Presbyterian Churches (APC) in Scotland. We are thankful for this opportunity to visit your Synod and return Rev Robin Tso's visit to our Assembly meeting in 2018. Thank you also for your kind welcome and generous hospitality while visiting Raymond Terrace. I would like to share a little with you about the APC as well as our aims in visiting.

The APC formed in 1989 from the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland, retaining the same forms of doctrine, governance and worship. In doctrine, Westminster Confession for confessional standards, in governance, the Presbyterian system and in worship, Psalms in public worship without accompaniment.

Today in Scotland there are APC congregations in Dundee, Inverness, Kinlochbervie, Oban and on the Western Isles, Stornoway is linked with a



preaching station on the Isle of Harris. There are ministers in charges in Dundee, Inverness and Stornoway. The remaining congregations receive ministry through regular supply. Since the APC formed, a number of congregations merged with neighbouring Free Church of Scotland congregations. Recently

the Vancouver congregation in Canada has affiliated with the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Canada. These arrangements developed locally and happily have borne fruit for God's kingdom.

Rev Philip Ross is minister of the church in Dundee. They meet at a local community centre and are keen to develop evangelistic work. In Inverness, where I minister, many were raised in the Free Presbyterian Church and are involved in long term Christian ministries. Kinlochbervie is a crofting community with a commercial harbour on the north west coast of Scotland. A dozen meet in the community centre and are supplied with ministry regularly from Inverness — if you ever have opportunity to visit, it is also one of the best places for fish and chips! In Oban, a coastal town, further down the west coast, one of the elders recently reported an encouraging story. A gentleman who visited the church, is taking interest in the gospel and

The Broader Body

“A great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne.” Revelation 7:9

enthusiastically sharing his experiences with a friend. From Stornoway, Rev Jonathan Baxter, also our current Moderator of Presbytery, writes, ‘We have 26 members and a number of adherents, with on average 20 to 30 in attendance at each service in Stornoway, with a further 5 to 10 in Harris. We have always enjoyed good relationships with other congregations in the town, and are currently looking at ways to work in closer partnership with congregations committed to the same standards of doctrine, worship, and government. We do our best to have representatives from a number of missionary organisations at local and national level, and try to commit to supporting a few of them financially each year. We are a small congregation made up of committed people, where there is a

love for God, His Word, and one another.’

Visiting your Synod offers the opportunity to meet, learn of the interests you have in Christian ministry and also for me to meet with your Inter-Church Relations Committee during the course of the week. I hope we can encourage one another in the fields where we serve our Lord.

Within the APC there is a diversity of Christian interests, to mention a few, Christian publishing, books and journals, local outreach works, care home ministries and support of other charitable works with a Christian ethos.

I hope that through this visit there may be opportunities to mutually support one another. I first intended to visit your Synod in 2020, but flights were cancelled after the Covid outbreak. Since

then, state approaches to addressing the practice of ‘conversion therapy’ has emerged as a matter of concern in both Scotland and Australia.

Our bonds as Christians may be strengthened when we face common adversities, yet our bonds are not formed by our difficulties. Instead they are formed by and in our saviour. An expression in Numbers 4:47 tells us of our Lord’s help for Christian ministry; the Levitical priesthood is described as ‘the service of ministry and the service of bearing burdens’. It is also descriptive of Christian ministry and perfected in Christ’s ministry. As his work is a ‘service of ministry and of bearing burdens’ we are encouraged to bring our burdens to him, ‘casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you’ (1 Peter 5:7).

July Search Work

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

Senior and Intermediate
(Intermediate omit questions 7 and 8)

- 1 Corinthians Chapter 15:12-58
1. What happens to our faith if Christ be not risen?
 2. When Christ rose what did he become to them that had fallen asleep?
 3. Complete the verse: “For as in Adam all die....”
 4. What will be the last enemy to be destroyed?
 5. The body is sown in corruption, but how is it raised?
 6. The first man was of the earth. What of the second man?
 7. What is the mystery which Paul revealed concerning the resurrection? (2 verses)
 8. What is the sting of death, and the strength of sin? Nevertheless, for what does Paul thank God? (2 verses)

Junior

Luke Chapter 20

1. What did Jesus say about the stone that the builders had rejected? (2 verses)
2. What should we render to Caesar, and what should we render to God?
3. Is God the God of the dead or of the living?
4. In the quotation from Psalm 110, what does David say about his Lord? (2 verses)

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.

July Prayer Points

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

Saturday, 1st: Pray for the Northern presbytery.

Sunday, 2nd: Pray for the Central presbytery.

Monday, 3rd: Pray for the Southern presbytery.

Tuesday, 4th: Ian Hamilton underwent an operation today, for the purpose of preventing his lung from collapsing again. Pray for him and his family. Pray for wisdom for the medical personnel working with him, that the operation may achieve its intended purpose.

Wednesday, 5th: From the PCEA Handbook 2.8 – “The elders visit the sick, instruct the young, warn the careless, and edify and comfort believers.” Pray that the elders in our congregations will grow in wisdom, strength and conviction as they continue to do this important work.

Thursday, 6th: At this 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 Orthodox Presbyterian Church, and of the United Reformed Churches in North America. Pray for our relationship and contact with them.

Friday, 7th: From Hawkesbury-Nepean: Pray for a Creation Ministry Event at our church. We

pray that it will encourage young people in their faith that the Bible can be trusted, and that others who don’t have faith may be interested in what the Bible teaches.

Saturday, 8th: From Carrum Downs: The work of the Lord continues by his grace. The congregation meets twice each Lord’s Day for public worship and periodically we are blessed with the presence of some visitors. However, we would like to see more consistent attendance at both services and prayer is requested to that end.

Sunday, 9th: R.B. Kuiper writes: “In order that it may progress in holiness the church must delve ever more deeply into the truth of God’s Holy Word. Did not Jesus pray: ‘Sanctify them through thy truth’ and declare: ‘Thy Word is truth’ (John 17:17).” Pray that the preaching from our pulpits today may powerfully proclaim the truth of God’s Word, and that those attending may be encouraged to delve deeply into that truth.

Monday, 10th: Pray for the ministry of the Manning congregation in Taree.

Tuesday, 11th: Pray for the Manning office-bearers: for Rev George Ball; for elders Clive Alley, Trevor Leggott, and Peter Smith; and for deacons Paul Dyson, Marshall Reid, Alistair Weber, and David Wilson.

Wednesday, 12th: At this 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 home and abroad, both in giving, in praying and being directly involved during this past year.” Pray for the work of Mukti in India. Give thanks that we can support a number of young ladies through this organization.

Thursday, 13th: Pray for Allan Stewart of the Hawkesbury-Nepean congregation, who has been diagnosed with leukaemia. Pray that the Lord will uphold Allan and Julie, and surround them with his love, as they go through the treatments and make decisions; pray that the doctors will have wisdom in the treatments that will be most suitable for Allan.

Friday, 14th: The right to freedom of religion and of the expression of Christian views in the public domain are increasingly threatened in our society. Continue to pray earnestly that the Lord would revive His Church and thereby be merciful to this nation.

Saturday, 15th: From the Hunter congregation, “Two infants are to be baptised this month: Esther Tamata, daughter of Elle and David Tamata, and Zara Oringo, daughter of Amy and Alfred Oringo. We pray before the Throne of grace that these and other covenant children are brought to saving faith during their formative years. As well, we pray that their parents would be diligent in instructing the children

July Prayer Points

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

and exemplifying Christ-likeness in word and deed.”

Sunday, 16th: WLC Q&A 72 states: “What is justifying faith? Justifying faith is a saving grace, wrought in the heart of a sinner by the Spirit and word of God, whereby he, being convinced of his sin and misery, and of the disability in himself and all other creatures to recover him out of his lost condition, not only assenteth to the truth of the promise of the gospel, but received and rested upon Christ and his righteousness, therein held forth, for pardon of sin, and for the accepting and accounting of his person righteous in the sight of God for salvation.” Pray that God may work through the preaching of the Word from our pulpits to produce and strengthen justifying faith in the hearts of those attending our worship services.

Monday, 17th: Pray for the ministry of the Hastings congregation in Wauchope.

Tuesday, 18th: Pray for the Hastings office-bearers: for Rev John Forbes; for elders Doug Hamilton and Glen Hamilton; and for deacon Neil McKinnon.

Wednesday, 19th: Pray for the work of the Annie Soper school in Peru.

Thursday, 20th: From the Ulverstone congregation: Give thanks that Peter and Esther Cumming were married on the 17th June.

Friday, 21st: From Ulverstone: Pray for Andrew and Matilda Hamilton as they settle in the Newcastle area. Pray also for Sylvia Loney as she prepares to relocate to WA.

Saturday, 22nd: From Carrum Downs: Rev Hall has begun preaching a series of evangelistic sermons from the Book of Acts. Please pray earnestly that as Christ is preached in all his fullness and the gospel promises are pressed upon all, sinners will look to the Lord for their salvation.

Sunday, 23rd: From a prayer entitled, ‘A Minister’s Preaching,’ from ‘The Valley of Vision: A Collection of Puritan Prayers and Devotions’ – “My Master God, I am desired to preach today, but go weak and needy to my task; yet I long that people might be edified with divine truth, that an honest testimony might be borne for thee; give me assistance in preaching and prayer, with heart uplifted for grace and unction....May thy people be refreshed, melted, convicted, comforted.” May this be the prayer of those preaching from our pulpits today.

Monday, 24th: Pray for the ministry of the Northern Rivers congregation in MacLean.

Tuesday, 25th: Pray for the Northern Rivers office-bearers: for Rev David Kerridge; for elders Ross Campbell, John Greensill, and John McPhee; and for deacons Gordon Law, Bruce Campbell, and Ernie Really.

Wednesday, 26th: Pray for the work of Mark and Rahel Landrum of the International Mission for Jewish People.

Thursday, 27th: Please pray for the ministry of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Ireland, and of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America. Pray for our relationship and contact with them.

Friday, 28th: From Ulverstone: Give thanks for the birth (17th June) and baptism of Caspar Dotson.

Saturday, 29th: From Carrum Downs: Continue to remember Rev David Kumnick in your prayers. In recent times Rev Kumnick has been in and out of hospital but is now steadily recovering at home.

Sunday, 30th: John Owen, in his collected works, writes, “God’s great and first design, in and by the gospel, is eternally to glorify himself, his wisdom, goodness, love, grace, righteousness, and holiness, by Jesus Christ. And in order to this his great and supreme end, he hath designed the gospel... To reveal that love and grace of his unto lost sinners.” Pray for the preaching of the gospel from our pulpits today.

Monday, 31st: Pray for the ministry of the Brisbane congregation.

