

THE SCOTS' CHURCH

THE LEAFLET

Summer 2021



IN THIS ISSUE

Melbourne Best
Almond Croissants

River Of Life

Your Own Bible
Herb Garden





The SCOTS' CHURCH, MELBOURNE

LOCATIONS The Scots' Church, Melbourne,
77 Russell Street (corner Collins Street), Melbourne
Assembly Hall, Werner Brodbeck Hall, Ground Floor,
156 Collins Street, Melbourne
Assembly Hall, Robert White Hall, First Floor,
156 Collins Street, Melbourne
St. Stephen's, Flemington and Kensington,
26 Norwood Street, Flemington

WORSHIP **SUNDAY:**
10.00 am Service, St. Stephen's Church
10.30 am Indonesian Christian Church
(www.icc-melbourne.org), W. Brodbeck Hall
11.00 am Traditional Service, The Scots' Church
5.00 pm ScotsCity, Werner Brodbeck Hall.
Sunday School – held during Sunday morning services
for the Traditional and Indonesian congregations.

MINISTRY TEAM:

Senior Minister	Rev Phil Campbell
Minister Pastoral Care	Rev Litha Heshusius
Minister, Indonesian Christian Church	Rev Christian Tirtha
Minister, St. Stephen's, Flemington	Rev Andrew Wong

MUSIC MINISTRY:

Director of Music	Mr Douglas Lawrence AM
Assistant Organist	Ms Ria Angelica Polo

CO-EDITORS, THE LEAFLET: Phil Campbell and Rosalie Strother.

Welcome to The Scots' Church, Melbourne,
and this edition of our quarterly newsletter,

The Leaflet

ISSUE NO. 1089

The Scots' Church Melbourne is a diverse and eclectic body of God's people with a long history, who come together each week to worship God in a variety of styles and settings as we learn what it means to be followers of Jesus in our 21st century world.

Beyond our weekly gatherings, we seek to love and serve Him by being faithful in our devotion to the Word of God, caring in our fellowship with one another and visitors, and generous in our love to the communities in which God has placed us.

We would be delighted to meet you at any of our church services or at any of our other public meetings and functions.

If you want to know more about the Christian faith, or about becoming part of Scots' Church, please don't hesitate to contact us.

1st Floor, 156 Collins Street, Melbourne, Vic, 3000

Tel: (03) 9650 9903/9650 9904

Email: admin@scotschurch.com

Web: www.scotschurch.com

Cover image: by Margaret McKenzie Lowe

in this edition

- 2 Bread from heaven
- 5 Let there be music!
- 7 Reflection: Everything has its time
- 8 Lifechange: Five stories of finding faith
- 11 Where are you from?
- 12 River of life
- 16 Book Review: Big Questions
- 18 Interview with Judith Kilmartin: Guarding our heritage
- 20 What do you worship?
- 21 What's next for the Australian Chamber Choir?
- 23 The Bible in your Herb Garden!
- 25 Recipe: Coriander, mint and cucumber salad
- 26 Book Review: The urgent case for Christ
- 27 In Memoriam: Maxwell John Lewis Griffiths
- 29 His eye is on the sparrow
- 31 Your stand on the state sponsored jab
- 33 By the waters of Babylon
- 37 Light in a dark world
- 38 Word search
- 39 Biblical crossword



bread from heaven

The search for Melbourne's best Almond Croissant

Fashion Designer Jules Cole has just returned to Melbourne with her husband Graham after almost two decades in Chicago. Over coffee, we discovered a shared passion for Almond Croissants - a fixture of the Melbourne cafe scene. "Almond croissants need to be made from buttery light, flaky pastry, with a good filling of almond paste, and plenty of almond flakes on the top," says Jules. "For me the croissant doesn't need to be particularly thick, but it does need to have a generous amount of filling."

"Unexpectedly," says Jules. "in Chicago,

Starbucks had the best Almond Croissants! Another bakery that had great almond croissants and amazing sourdough bread was The Simple Bakery and Market in Lake Geneva, Wisconsin."

And back home in Melbourne? "Alpha Bakery makes one with custard which is rather delicious, though truthfully, I do prefer a slightly more dry almond paste filling," says Jules. "I'm still on the lookout for the best Almond Croissant in Melbourne."

That's where this issue of The Leaflet can help. Here are some of Melbourne's best.



THE BREAD CLUB

The queue outside The Bread Club Bakery just off Errol St in Queensbury St is a sure indication that something serious is going on inside. The shelves are full of rustic loaves and great looking cakes, but it's the rough-hewn Almond Croissants that demand immediate attention. I'm not sure what magic is involved, but the deep brown of the pastry and the robust styling are full of promise. The first bite does not disappoint. There's a good crunch, followed by a substantial ooze of moist, rough-ground almond-meal paste. Our first two visits promised consistency, though our third visit was not quite to the same standard. Even so, though not on the cheaper end of the spectrum, this one rises to near the top of the pile.

The Bread Club,
Queensbury St North Melbourne
Price \$6.00
Comment: Rustic exterior, but delicious in every way; superb.
Score: 8.5/10

STANDING ROOM COFFEE

This one's slightly out of left field, but if you're looking for a taste and texture somewhere between a Bounty Bar and an Almond Croissant, the Almond and Coconut Croissant from Standing Room Coffee fills the bill. Flaky but crunchy crust gives way to a moist centre dense with coconut and almond, with overtones of the baked custard my mum used to make. Absolutely delicious, though more coconut aftertaste than almond. You'll find them near the Shot Tower at Melbourne Central.

Standing Room Coffee,
Melbourne Central
Price: \$5.50
Comment: Quirky but delicious
Score 8.0/10



LUNE

Walk into Lune and all your senses are assaulted at once. But first, you'll need to wait a while in the queue on the footpath opposite the Grand Hyatt Hotel in Russell St. Eau-de-croissant assails your nose as you step down into the industrial-themed space, which is lined with constantly running ovens and racks of fresh goodies. A careful row of price-tagged samples lines the concrete display counter - but be warned, the prices are sobering. At \$10.50, these are the most expensive Almond Croissants on our list.

Even so, Lune has gained a huge following, featuring in this year's MasterChef, and reviewed in the New York Times. Branches have opened in Sydney and Brisbane, with the same rave reviews (and queues) everywhere.

Murray, Jonathan and Wendy at the Scots' Church Office joined me in testing a sample, and our conclusion was

unanimous. "You can tell it's next level," says Murray. "You'd buy one for a special occasion," commented Wendy; while Jonathan immediately decided to take one home for his wife Suzanne.

Here's why. Starting from the top, the slivered almonds are crusted in a light toffee, standing straight as Chinese ceramic soldiers. The resulting crunch is more than satisfying. The top layer of pastry is thicker than competitors, and crisp. The almond paste layer inside is generous, and offers a delicious and well balanced contrast to the crunchy surrounds. Just sensational, worth the wait, worth the price, and worth the weight in added kilos.

Lune, Russell St

Price \$10.50

Comment: Practically perfect in every way

Score: 9.5/10

Clearly there are many good options, but the winner is the luxury priced Lune. Treat yourself on your birthday - you'll be glad you did. And meanwhile, if you've got any time at all for the concept of an intentional Creator behind the world we see and hear and touch and smell and taste, ponder a while on how unnecessarily kind that Creator has been in creating beauty in every realm of the senses. Lune's Almond Croissants are sure proof of that. ■

Phil Campbell is Senior Pastor of The Scots' Church, and has been sampling one carefully selected pastry each week since arriving in Melbourne.



let there be music!

Loving the City to Life launches in the city centre

As Melbourne CBD emerged from the world's longest lockdown in November, Scots' Church and the Salvation Army Project 614 have been working together on an initiative we've called "Loving the City to Life." As a first step we launched The Festival of Buskers, a weekly busker event with free coffee outside the Salvos' Headquarters in Bourke St on Wednesdays, and on the Collins Street steps at the front of Scots' on Thursdays.

The event caught the attention of Melbourne's media, with a story in The Herald Sun followed by an interview with Sammy J on ABC Breakfast radio, and a brief spot on 10 News.

Having spent so long in lockdown, the city's buskers have been enthusiastic to join in. In the first week, we enjoyed great Australian folk music from Austral, a three-piece band featuring Angus on fiddle, Connor on Irish bagpipes and flute, and Rhys on guitar. Their musicianship is superb, and the band under the blue gazebo attracted the attention of many passing by.

As Lord Mayor Sally Capp declared the Festival of Buskers officially open, she spoke about the many challenges facing the city. “I thank you for all your efforts over this period, and I’m looking forward to all of you being part of this city’s revitalisation through this initiative and more,” she said. Even now, pedestrian traffic around the CBD is only half the pre-pandemic levels, and many businesses are struggling.

Part of the initiative that gained positive media attention was our “pay it both ways” policy - a promise to subsidise our closest local cafes for lost business by donating \$2 for each free coffee we gave away; our goal was to ‘love the city’ rather than compete with small businesses that have been doing it tough. “Not even the most cynical radio presenter could find a hole in the generosity you’re providing,” said Sammy J on ABC Radio Breakfast.

Our barista Guruh Sukowati served just on 80 free coffees, which meant we divided \$160 between four nearby cafes. “I’m going to cry,” said Ling, the proprietor of Cafenatics at the back of Georges Building. “That’s just lovely,” said Doonya at Quists. “Things have been so tough over the last few months that every little bit makes a difference.” We also donated to Otherside in Little Collins St, and Brioche By Philip on the corner of Russell St.

The Festival of Buskers continues each Thursday through December, with the option of adding extra days due to the number of musicians who are keen to participate. ‘Loving the city to life’ will continue as our theme with other projects launching in 2022.

Phil Campbell ■

BUSKERS ENLISTED TO HELP RECOVERY

JOHN MASANAUSKAS
CITY EDITOR

WHEN Scots’ Church’s Reverend Phil Campbell looked down from his office in Collins St during Melbourne’s lockdowns, he didn’t like what he saw.

“It was a pretty sad scene, quite miserable,” he said.

“It was one of the busiest corners of the city, but during lockdown it was a ghost town.”

Driven by that image, Mr Campbell has joined forces with the Salvation Army to launch a campaign to help bring the buzz back to the CBD.

Dubbed Loving the City to Life, it includes a Festival of Buskers that will see artists performing at lunchtime on Wednesdays and Thursdays starting this week.

“We are keen to show the city some love, so we and the Salvos will be running parallel programs on getting the city back on its feet,” Mr Campbell said.

Free coffee will be served during the performances, and nearby cafes will be compensated so they don’t lose income after the devastation of lockdowns.

Salvation Army welfare worker



The Salvos’ Major Brendan Nottle, magician Aiden McHarg and the Reverend Phil Campbell try busking in church. Picture: David Caird

Major Brendan Nottle said his organisation was keen to help revive the CBD.

“We want to recreate that vibe that Melbourne is known for, which is a really positive, engaging and welcoming place for everyone,” he said. “We want to provide some

interesting activity in the city that might help attract people back in, and while they’re watching a busker they can have a free cup of coffee as well.”

Mr Nottle said the Salvos had remained busy caring for people during pandemic shutdowns, with

the vulnerable including international students and those who had been employed as casual workers but had been unable to access JobKeeper and JobSeeker.

Buskers will perform on Wednesdays from noon to 2pm outside the Salvos’ Project 614 at

69 Bourke St, and on Thursdays outside Scots’ Church at 150 Collins St. As part of the campaign, Scots’ Church will create a community herb garden next to the Westpac walkway, and host a free sausage sizzle in December.

COMEBACK MELBOURNE, PAGES 18-19



REFLECTION

everything has its time

Time passes so quickly,
It is astonishing to think we are in year two of the Pandemic,
It is as though we are in the midst of battle,
Facing an invisible opponent named Covid,
Like the roar of bombs on the battlefield,
Reports of new cases devastate us.

As in war, shelter is found in underground bunkers,
Our shelters are our homes, face-masks, social-distancing, restrictions, curfews and lockdowns.
Like endless wars in so many countries,
Our beloved city of Melbourne has gone through many lockdowns;
We lead the world for being the most locked-down city.

Oh, sweet Jesus, have mercy, despite the challenges we face
Your Holy Word strengthens us!

Everything has its time...
a time to weep and a time to laugh
a time to mourn and a time to dance,
a time for war and a time for peace.

Though times are challenging, we believe that through God there will be better times ahead.
Like there have been, and will be,
A time for Covid, and a time for new beginnings.
A time to end lockdown, and a time to celebrate Christmas.
A time to farewell the Pandemic, and a time to greet a New Year of hope,
In Jesus' Precious Name.

Shalom
Litha ■

Litha Heshusius is the Care Pastor of The Scots' Church in Melbourne

five stories of finding faith

"In June this year, the Indonesian Christian Church started a weekly catechism class through Zoom, after it was postponed in 2020," says Rev Christian Tirtha. "We called the class 'The Foundation of Christian Faith' – it was adapted into the Indonesian language from Rev John Wilson's 'How Firm a Foundation: Nine Truths to Live By.'"

As a result, ICC is grateful to God that five people have decided to be baptised. These five ladies have agreed to share their stories of coming to faith. "We're humbly thankful for the gracious work of the Holy Spirit who continues to bring people into His fold," says Chris.



LISA

I felt that before knowing and believing in Jesus, my life was like a ship without a captain - only believing in myself, and following intuition. I believed that only I could help myself in this life, and never relied on anything or anyone else - until one day I found Jesus and realized that He had sacrificed everything in His life and death for our sins. Jesus is a wonderful Saviour. He always holds my hand and guides me to the right way, and never leaves me alone in the darkness. God has given me more peace and joy in life ever since I came to know him.

Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life, the one who believes in me will live, even though they die and whoever lives by believing in me will never die. Do you believe this?" (John 11:25-26). I think this is the most wonderful Bible verse I've ever heard. These words give me a peace of mind as I trust Jesus for eternal life.

In the past I was always worried about what was going to happen in the future and doubted as to how God could help me; ever since I came to know Jesus, my life was completely changed. I feel that God really takes good care of me. I really feel the love of God every day and his peace in my life. I am becoming more grateful every day with everything that I have in my life now.

I realize that no matter what plans we have in life and how we want our life to be in the future, God is the only Person who will decide what is the best for us and when is the right time for everything to happen.

"My relationship with God has become stronger than before, not just because I found God, but because God has found me."

"And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart. I will be found by you, says the Lord, and I will bring you back from your captivity; I will gather you from all the nations and from all the places where I have driven you, says the Lord, and I will bring you to the place from which I cause you to be carried away captive." (Jeremiah 29:13-14)



NOVELYN FAUSTINE

I grew up in a non-Christian family, where I was taught that being “good” was enough and that we shall be good to others to save ourselves from an unpleasant afterlife. I used to wonder what “being good” meant as the standards were unclear. It led me to question my actions, and I felt miserable trying to uphold standards that seemed too unattainable for humans to live by.

In high school, I began to question what my life purpose was and if the decisions I was making for my life were good enough. This continued over the next couple of years till I got to university. This place was what God used to really introduce me to the gospel. Christians I met encouraged me to reflect and understand the “why” behind my

calling and I grew curious to know who Jesus was. I initially tried to understand Christian doctrines cognitively, in an attempt to compare it to the belief I was raised in. Slowly, I realised that it is impossible to fully know Jesus without first fully committing my life to Him. After years of running, I eventually surrendered and there was no turning back from that point.

Jesus changed the way I see my life. I now understand why I am created. I learned to admit and accept my flaws, knowing He has loved me first. He showed me how to be forgiving just as I have been forgiven. He also taught me to be kind and loving to others not merely for my own sake, but because of His love and saving grace.



MICHELLE MILENIS

I used to think that simply believing in God and going to church on Sunday were enough. I now realize that believing in God means knowing and having a relationship with Him through all aspects of my life. It involves praying, reading God’s Word, and being part of the community of believers. I came to believe the gospel through the Bible and prayer. Jesus’ sacrifice on the cross is what made me believe in God. When I read the Bible and pray, I feel that the Lord is present in me, He listens and guides me along the way. The faith that I have makes me want to trust Him.

Before knowing Jesus, I always struggled to believe and found it hard to accept what happened in my life no matter how good or bad it was, but after

knowing Him I began to understand that He would take away my burden and worries and lead me to a better path. I am growing to have a clearer understanding of the gospel, as I slowly build my relationship with God.



LUCIA GOZALI

I was a believer of “you reap what you sow.” That was the simple principle I adopted to guide my life. Religion played no part. But then a dream about an angel and a cross shining on to me from the sky touched my inner soul. It seemed to me that it was a calling. I sought to learn and wanted to understand more about the gospel of Jesus, and the meaning of that cross.

Early last year, I contacted ICC while still overseas and started an online weekly Bible study. I started attending ICC upon returning to Melbourne. I am thankful to ICC and Rev Chris for guiding me in the journey to knowing Jesus.

The gospel has enlightened me in many aspects of my life. Understanding the gospel and Jesus gives me immeasurable strength and patience which I am still amazed by every day.



STEPHANIE SHEILA WIJAYA

Since becoming a Christian there hasn't been a big difference from how I used to live my life; it just seemed that I had a missing piece in my heart that nothing could fill. I had always known about Jesus and part of myself was drawn to Him, but I was afraid to acknowledge it and afraid of the thoughts of the people around me.

The gospel of Jesus made me want to start following Him. It gives me strength and helps explain the reasons many events happened in my life. Before coming to Australia, I told myself to be brave and start listening to His calling

Since believing in Jesus, I have a right and solid reason for how to behave and how to live. I have the ultimate Saviour, and I have a new hope. It's truly amazing, and I'm grateful for the relationships I have gained since I started this journey, which have been so warm, welcoming, and encouraging. ■



where are you from?

Where are you from? It is a question I get asked all the time. People would expect the answer to be China, but the answer might surprise you. I was born at the Women's Hospital in Auckland, New Zealand. I'm a Kiwi and I have great memories of living in New Zealand. I love visiting family and revisiting childhood memories. When I got married, I took Garam to the north island where we visited Rotorua and enjoyed the hot springs there. Where I'm from would explain why sometimes I say some words in a funny accent. I remember for years I pronounced the word "penguin" in a Kiwi way, and it was only when I was in high school that I found out how to say it properly like an Aussie. Often when I share that I'm from New Zealand, people might follow up with the question, "Where are your parents from?" My father grew up in the Xinhui district in Guangdong, China and my mother grew up in Shantou which is in the eastern coast of Guangdong. They met in New Zealand, and it was there that my two brothers and I were born.

Where we are from might help explain a lot about who we are today. I love asking people to share where they are from and learning all the interesting facts about their lives.

We are coming closer to Christmas, and one of the interesting passages that is often read is found in the gospel of Luke. In the third chapter there's a genealogy of Jesus, and it answers the question, "Where is Jesus from?" If you read Luke 3:23-38 you'll see lots of names which might not look familiar. When you get to the end of the passage it says in the English Standard Version (ESV), "the son of Enos, the son of Seth, the son of Adam, the son of God."

In other words, the author of the gospel of Luke traces Jesus back to Adam... back to God. That's an extraordinary claim! Where Jesus is from might help answer a lot of questions about why he came to earth and what he has to say. I want to invite you this Christmas, to have a think about where Jesus is from, and what it might mean for you and me.

I am proud to tell people I'm from New Zealand. I love the country and the beautiful scenery. I think it is an interesting fact, although I know many other people have much more interesting life facts than me. I think you will find, if you read more about Jesus, and find out a little bit more about where he is from and what he came to do, the facts might surprise you. ■

Andrew Wong is the minister of St Stephen's Presbyterian Church, Flemington, which is part of the overall ministry of The Scots' Church Melbourne.



river of life

The Old Testament theme of *living water* may be a key to better understanding John's gospel, suggests Douglas Green

BACK IN 1978 MARK KNOPFLER penned the song *Water of Love*, which soon became yet another hit for Dire Straits. *“Water of love deep in the ground, But there ain't no water here to be found; Some day baby when the river runs free, It's gonna carry that water of love to me.”*

It's a cry that struck a chord with thirsty hearts everywhere, and the thought resonates with the words of the Old Testament prophet Ezekiel, who promises the bone dry people of Israel not just the water of love, but the very water of *life*. As we'll see, these expectations of the Messianic age are picked up and amplified in John's gospel, in a way that transforms them and applies them to Jesus Christ.

In your own life, you might know the feeling of “Running on Empty,” to quote another famous lyric. Ezekiel's vision of an ever-deepening, life-giving river flowing from Israel's *temple* draws on imagery of the rivers that flowed from the Garden of Eden; to life-giving water that flowed from the rock at the foot of Mount Sinai; and the vision of a river flowing from temple mountain in Psalm 46, whose streams “make glad the city of God.” Later prophets like Joel and Zechariah envisaged the coming messianic age featuring respectively, a fountain that issues from the house of the Lord so that “all the streambeds of Judah” will “flow with water” (Joel 3:18); and a river of “living

water” that will “flow out from Jerusalem,” before dividing and flowing east to the Dead Sea and west to the Mediterranean.

Ezekiel 47:1-12 describes a mighty river that brings life to everything it touches; surging forth from the temple in an ever deepening flood that makes salt water fresh, enlivens fruit trees with leaves of healing on either bank, and nourishes teeming schools of fish and living creatures. Again, notice: in the coming age of the Messiah, the stream of life comes from the *Jerusalem Temple*.

*Water of love deep in the ground
But there ain't no water here to be found
Some day baby when the river runs free
It's gonna carry that water of love to me*

Mark Knopfler 1978

As we turn to John’s gospel, it seems that the Apostle himself has ‘drunk deep’ at the well of Ezekiel – but with a profound difference. John does not merely present Jesus as God incarnate, but also as God “*intemperate*” - in other words, as God dwelling on earth, as God tab-ernacled among us (John 1:14); the temple is none other than Jesus’ body (2:21).

Bringing Ezekiel 47 into the mix means that while Israel is looking forward to the construction of a postexilic temple – the place where God will dwell in the midst of his people – which will be the source of a river of life and healing, John changes that expectation, and locates its fulfilment in ‘God-in-flesh’, Jesus Christ. This is one explanation for John’s repeated emphasis on *water*.

With that picture in our minds let’s look at the way John transfers the imagery to Jesus.

John 2:6-10

This is the story of Jesus turning water into wine. Notice that Jesus orders the servants to fill the empty jars with water (v.7). So Jesus provides water that miraculously turns into the best wine. Interestingly, Joel 3:18 promises that in the last days “the ravines... will run with water... the mountains will drip new wine.” The fusion of the images of water and wine captures in a visual way the truth that Jesus is the source of “abundant life.”

John 2:19-22

When Jesus clears the temple, the Jews ask him by what authority he can do this. In other words, what makes him greater than the temple in Jerusalem? Jesus’ answer is surprising: “Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days.” (v19) Everyone misunderstands the point that Jesus is making. “This temple” is not the temple in Jerusalem, but as John tells us: “the temple he had spoken of was *his body*” (v.21). This is striking! What makes Jesus greater than the temple in Jerusalem? His body is the new temple! More specifically, he calls his resurrected body the true temple. This is important background for the rest of John’s gospel. For John, all the OT passages that speak of the rebuilding of the temple (for example, extended passages like Ezekiel 40-48) now have their focus in Jesus. The fulfillment of those passages and the life giving water is not going to be found in the rebuilding of some future temple in Jerusalem but in the rebuilding of the true temple, that is, in *the resurrection of Jesus*

Christ. This shouldn't surprise us. What was the temple anyway? It was that place on earth where God and man could live together. And we've already seen that John has told us that this is exactly what Jesus is: God and man dwelling together.

John 4:10-14

The discussion with the woman of Samaria is the point at which Jesus clearly identifies himself as the true well, the source of "living water" – an exact echo of the words of Zechariah 14. Jesus says, "Everyone who drinks this water [from the well at Samaria] will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a spring of water, welling up to eternal life" (vv.13-14). In Ezekiel 47, the river that flows from the temple brings life and healing. Here Jesus is saying that those OT metaphors were pointing forward to a much greater reality: Jesus as the source of eternal life.

John 5:1-8

This passage deals with the healing at the pool of Bethesda – another water story! The paralyzed man is unable to get into the pool of water. Instead Jesus heals him on the spot. The point is that Jesus is the true healing pool. This likely connects to Ezekiel 47:12 where the leaves of the tree watered by the river from the temple are used for healing.

John 7:37-39

The alternate translation of these verses found in the ESV and NIV footnotes fits better with the theme John is developing, and is grammatically faithful to the original Greek text.

*If anyone thirsts, let him come to me
Whoever believes in me, let him drink.
As the Scripture has said,
"Out of his [i.e., Jesus'] heart will flow rivers of living water."*

So, in agreement with the ESV marginal note, we should take the source of living water as *Christ*. The point is the same one Jesus made to the woman at the well: If you're thirsty, come to me and drink, because "living water" flows out of *me*. This fits the context of John's gospel better because the focus is on Jesus as the source of the "river of life."

John clarifies in v.39: "By this he meant the Spirit whom those who believed in him were later to receive." When Jesus is raised from the dead he pours out the Holy Spirit on his people. This is the reality, the true living water that wells up into eternal life.

What undergirds this application of the "river of life" motif to Jesus is the understanding that he is the New (and True) Garden of Eden, the New Zion, the New Tabernacle and Temple and the Spirit is the life-giving river that flows out from its centre. To be "in Christ" is to regain entry to the Garden of Eden!

John 9:6-7

Yet another miracle where Jesus provides water that brings healing and life occurs in the story of the man born blind. Remember how Jesus heals him? "Jesus spat on the ground, made some mud with saliva and put it on the man's eyes." (v6) This time, the idea of Jesus as the source of healing water is presented in a very graphic way: saliva from Jesus' own mouth, in other words, water from the temple, restores the man's sight.

John 13:10

Jesus washes the disciples' feet. This time the motif is used in a different way to show that Jesus is the source of the water that cleanses us. I think that is a very specific reference back to Ezekiel and his new covenantal expectation of cleansing: "I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean from all your uncleanness..." (Ezek 36:25).

John 19:28

Incredibly, the one who has been the source of the river of life cries from the cross, "I am thirsty!" - a powerful image of Christ suffering on our behalf. The source of the living water has become like us, parched and thirsty. For a moment, the well is dry. The river has ceased to flow. All is desert!

John 19:34

When Jesus dies on the cross John includes a curious piece of information. The soldier plunges a spear into Jesus' side and brings out "a sudden flow of blood and water." Why are we told this? Some commentators argue that this shows that Jesus died of a broken heart. Maybe so, but that misses the point altogether. In the broader context of the Bible, this is Genesis 2 through Ezekiel 47 fulfilled. This is where Eden is rediscovered. This is where the river of life flows. Here is the source of abundant life, of the Spirit - the broken body of Jesus Christ.

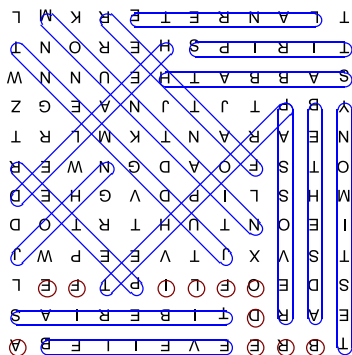
John 21:1-14

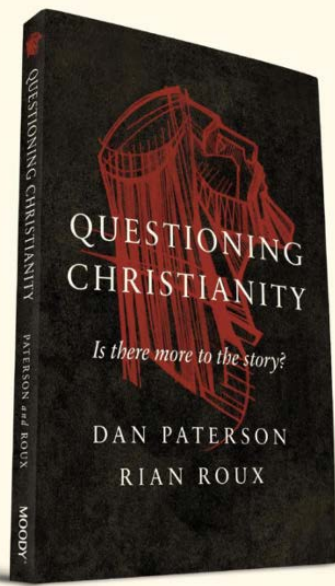
John closes with the strange story of a miraculous catch of fish. Resurrected Jesus surprises his disciples in the early morning as they are fish unsuccessfully from their boat just off-shore. He calls to them, advising them to throw their nets on the right side of the boat. "When they did, they were unable to haul in the net because of the large number of fish." (v6) Here, perhaps, are the 'abounding fish' from Ezekiel 47.

If you're dry then, thirsty for the 'river of life,' John would encourage you to look no further than this; to Jesus, the word-become-flesh, God in person, dwelling with his people. Life and love are to be found here, in a copious torrent. If you haven't already, why not take a look? ■

Dr Douglas Green is lecturer in Old Testament at Queensland Theological College

Hidden Message: BREAD OF LIFE





big questions

Book Review: *Questioning Christianity*, by Dan Paterson and Rian Roux. Reviewed by Nathan Campbell

This is the book you give to your friends who are seeking to make sense of the world we live in, and that you read yourself if you're a Christian struggling with questions of faith. Unusually, the book shapes itself around the 'big story of the Bible,' charting a path through the key ideas created for good, damaged by evil, chosen to bless, redeemed by love, sent together to heal, and set everything right.

Though the book works with a narrative framing, it manages to teach the importance of profound doctrines, with real and appealing clarity along the way — for example — zeroing in on the importance of the Trinity and God as loving-community in the chapter telling the Garden story.

Once the story has been told, Paterson and Roux shift to showing how we step into that story. They ground this in the key ideas of 'believing and following' which are fundamentally Gospel invitations reflecting what Jesus calls for in the Gospel. This is, for what it's worth, how I understand the language of repentance in the New Testament — not so much as a call to 'reject sin' but to 'follow Jesus' (and so reject sin). A slight change in language to the idea of "union with Christ" (which is arguably a key category for the apostle Paul) may have improved their argument, inviting us to see ourselves positioned in this grand story 'in Christ' by the divine author of the story — rather than us choosing this story as the one we'd particularly like to inhabit.

Each of the chapters in this section moves from abstract to concrete transformative practices and resources - these are terrifically helpful and memorable distillations, grounded in the Scriptures.

It's one thing to commend the goodness and beauty of the Christian story – and life in it – which this book does admirably in Parts 1 and 2; it's 'next level' to then engage deeply with the questions raised by Christianity. Section 3 tackles some potential belief-blocking questions:

- What if the snake was right?
- How can a good God allow suffering?
- Why isn't God more obvious?
- Has science disproved God?
- Can I trust the Bible?
- Did Jesus really rise from the dead?
- How can God be good when the church is so bad?

A questioning faith is a robust and growing faith, and the book gives a grammar for the sort of Christianity that can withstand the pressures of the world we live in, and produce resilience rather than fragility. This section is as much for Christians to grapple with questions we should be wrestling with as it is for non-Christians coming at them for the first time (or over a long period of time).

“God is not afraid of your questions. Why? Because if something is true, then any doubts, rather than subverting faith, should serve as a doorway to a deeper faith. For the healthy response to any doubt is to launch an open investigation. Doubts should spark you to study the reasons for faith, and upon embarking on that journey, if your curious questions are met with credible answers, then you can emerge with a more fully-orbed trust that there is a substantial ‘why’ behind the what of your beliefs. Serious space should always be made for questions and questioners to explore whether the Christian story can stand up to scrutiny. Such is the hallmark of any true story.”

This is a good book – one that left me inspired to view my faith as an adventure; not just dead letters or propositions, it's a story to engage in. And so I'd urge you, wherever you sit on the spectrum from unbelief to unquestioning Christian, to pick it up and give it a read. Maybe you, like the authors, will find truth and goodness in questioning Christianity again. They describe their experience living in this story this way:

“We've found rich meaning and help and hope in following Jesus. And perhaps the most exciting aspect of becoming a Christian, of joining Jesus on the road, is the unpredictability of God. For it is when you hand over the pen of your own life story that you find yourself swept up into an adventure as wild as the imagination of God.”

That's also my experience.

Buy a bunch of these for your friends. The book can be purchased from Koorong Bookshop or major on-line bookshops. ■

Rev Nathan Campbell is Pastor of City South Presbyterian Church in Brisbane. He also happens to be the son of Phil and Louise Campbell. This is an edited version of the book review he published on his website, St Eutyclus (<https://st-eutyclus.com>). Nathan offers the disclaimer that the book's author Dan Paterson is a friend, and that a review PDF was provided free of charge. Dan is the founder of Questioning Christianity.



guarding our heritage

Rosalie Strother interviews our archivist
Judith Kilmartin

As The Scots' Church 'in-house' archivist for over 24 years, Judith Kilmartin has helped hundreds, maybe thousands of people from Scots' and beyond fill in missing links of their family history, or details of Scots' past and its records. Judith probably knows more about Scots' and its stories from the past than almost anyone else around. She is always ready to share her knowledge; if she is unable to answer she will track it down!

Born in Melbourne during WWII, Judith's parents were country people who had moved to Melbourne to assist with the war effort. Her mother's family originated from Ross-shire, Scotland and members of her father's family were born within the sound of Bow Bells in London. After the war the family moved to a dairy farm at Kyabram, Victoria. At that time their means of transport was a horse and cart. Judith attended Gargarre and Kyabram Primary Schools and continued on to secondary education at Kyabram. She enjoyed playing hockey, basketball and softball. She was not encouraged to pursue farming life, but engaged in other activities including learning to play the piano, reading and sewing; she also enjoyed listening to music on the wireless.

From early childhood the church has always been part of Judith's life. She was baptised in the Presbyterian Church at Woodstock-on-Loddon, west of Bendigo, the church her father and grandfather helped to build. As there was no baptismal font, her grandmother provided a crystal bowl for the occasion. It wasn't easy to attend Sunday school, so on Sunday evenings her mother read Bible stories to Judith and her brother. Eventually they were able to attend and Judith went on to become a Sunday school teacher. Her father was ordained an elder, as was his father, and her mother was church organist. The Presbyterian Fellowship of Australia (PFA) was a big part of Judith's life and gave her the opportunity to attend camps and meet like-minded people.

On leaving school Judith joined the English Scottish and Australian Bank (E S & A) in Kyabram, and in time transferred to the Relieving Staff and moved to Melbourne. It was through PFA members that she first became involved with Scots' Church.

A chance to transfer to London for two years was a great opportunity to enjoy lots of travel, theatre, ballet and music. Judith dodged in and out of unrest in Europe during the northern spring of 1968 before setting sail for New York on the *Queen Elizabeth*. A Greyhound bus trip across Canada and the United States followed before connecting with the Orsova in San Francisco and coming home to Australia. Judith fully expected

to return to ledger work but was offered a position with the Bank's Travel Centre. She spent time at Qantas learning to calculate fares and hand-write tickets. There were more trips – India, Canada, Thailand, Hong Kong and Bali. Armed with her first-hand knowledge, Judith enjoyed helping travellers arrange their itineraries. Her interest in travel has not waned, and Judith and her husband Barry have had several overseas trips since he retired from the Bank, as well as enjoying several cruises in and around Australia.

Following her return to the bank after her time overseas, Judith was introduced to Barry Kilmartin, who was a manager in the Bank. She remembers the first time Barry came to Scots' with her. It was an evening service and Rev Dr Leonard Small from Scotland was in Melbourne as Turnbull Trust Preacher. Barry was impressed. They were married at St David's Presbyterian Church at Kyabram. Both their daughters, Fiona and Katie, were baptised at Scots' and attended Sunday school. Judith and Barry have three granddaughters and one grandson.

In 1993 Judith was elected to the Scots' Board of Management and shortly after joined the Pastoral Care Committee, positions Judith still holds. She was appointed one of three commissioners for the call to Rev Jack Pilgrim. Judith has been associated with the PWMU and the Sausage Sizzle for many years, and has served on other committees at various times.

In 1997 Judith was asked to take on the role of convener of the History and Archives Committee. At that time archival material was scattered throughout the church and in the old church hall at 99 Russell Street. With a willing band of helpers, materials were located, sorted and catalogued. Space was a problem and, after the refurbishment of the Assembly Hall, "The Archives" were able to share the walk-in safe at the rear of the Robert White Hall.

As the first Presbyterian Church established in Victoria, people look to Scots' for genealogical information. Unfortunately there are no marriage records prior to 1947. However there are a number of other records that can be searched such as communion rolls, baptismal rolls, pew registers and minute books, to name a few sources, although some early records are incomplete. There are bound copies of The Leaflet going back to the early 1900s that contain a wealth of information. Many of Melbourne's early settlers had connections to Scots' and historical records relating to them provide another useful source of information.

From its early days Scots' Church took on an important role in providing social services to many people. The Scots' Church Children's Aid Society, which later became Kildonan Children's Home, took children off the streets and fostered them out. Another group made clothes for the kids. Copies of anonymous letters written by the children can be found in early editions of The Leaflet. People still make enquiries about some of these children who were their forebears, though sadly many details have not survived. 'Kildonan' is now under the umbrella of the Uniting Church.

One of the most pleasing results for Judith came from an enquiry from a Scottish girl, whose parents were married at Scots' in 1949, later returning to their homeland. About to celebrate their 60th wedding anniversary, a request came for a photo of Scots' Church. We were able to supply a photo of Scots' of that era, together with a copy of the marriage certificate. The reply from Scotland: "It was the icing on the cake!"

A German architecture student studying in Melbourne, needed information on a

former Scots' Church Honorary Architect. Judith was able to provide this, and he was very pleased with the help he received.

A frequently asked question on viewing a Marriage Certificate of the 19th century is, "Why was the wedding held in The Manse (minister's house) and not the Church?" The answer: a marriage ceremony can take place anywhere.

The Scots' Church Melbourne: A Story of 175 Years 1838-2013 by Roland S. Ward is an excellent resource book. Ward had access to material from our archives and beyond; it's a useful place to begin if you're interested in the history of Scots' Church.

Judith has been a faithful follower of Jesus and member of the Scots' Church family for many years, supporting our church community in many ways. Our special thanks to her for the major contribution she has made in keeping our history alive. ■



*what
do you
worship?*

Do you worship anything? Worship is a religious word, yet in a famous speech the late American novelist David Foster Wallace claimed "Everybody worships. The only choice we get is what to worship." Though not really religious himself, Wallace gave powerful reasons to worship something spiritual like God because in his words, 'pretty much anything else you worship will eat you alive.' He said,

- If you worship money and things, then you will never have enough.
- If you worship your body and beauty you will always feel ugly.
- If you worship power, you will feel weak and afraid.

Tragically, David Foster Wallace took his own life on September 13, 2008. Having written a successful novel in his 20s, he was struggling, he said, 'to find his voice' and match his earlier success.

So - what do you worship? We need something bigger than us that won't eat us alive. For me, only the God of the Bible is big enough.

Robert Martin ■

Rob Martin oversees the work of City Bible Forum in Melbourne and shares his thoughts at thirdspace.org.au



what's next for the **AUSTRALIAN** *CHAMBER CHOIR?*

I like this image of Douglas Lawrence, because he looks like a magician casting spells with his hands. And in his work with the Scots' Church Choir and the Australian Chamber Choir, that's what he does!

For most of us who enjoy choral singing, it's not the act of singing that gives us pleasure so much as the effect of all of us singing together. Our voices are like base metals, transformed at the hands of our director through a heavenly alchemy into a choral sound of pure gold.

Alchemy is the title of a concert program to be presented by eight singers from the Australian Chamber Choir, known as the ACC8 in October 2022.

Another ACC8 program, Secret Chamber (in February 2022) focuses on music written for the Elizabethan Church – not only for Elizabeth I's Protestant services, but also for illegal Catholic services held in secret.

At Scots' Church, the Australian Chamber Choir will present the Vivaldi Gloria. Alongside Handel's Messiah (performed each Christmas by the Scots' Church Choir), Vivaldi's Gloria wins a prize as one of the most popular works for choir, soloists and orchestra.

Top Dozen Choral Classics gives you the opportunity to vote for your favourite unaccompanied choral pieces. We will create a concert program based on the most loved works from the results of your vote.

The ACC will conclude 2022 with Ceremony of Carols. Benjamin Britten's masterpiece will be complemented by Christmas music from the Italian Renaissance to present-day Australia.

As I write this, I'm looking forward to A Baroque Christmas, the ACC's final offering for 2021.

Get up to \$30 discount when you subscribe to three or more ACC concerts. Choose from six Melbourne concerts taking place between December 2021 and December 2022.

Enter the discount code SCOTS when you book online or mention that you are a Scots' parishioner when you book by phone.

www.AusChoir.org

Telephone 0452 531 750

Buy your tickets from Liz Anderson or Anna Price any Sunday after church ■





the BIBLE in your herb garden!

Fresh herbs are wonderful to have on hand to add flavour and zest to our food. If you don't have the pleasure of stepping outside your door to pick a handful of fresh herbs, spring and early summer is the time to get started. This could be in a plot, preferably a sunny spot, somewhere in your garden; many herbs are suitable for growing in pots that can be grouped together for an attractive display. Herbs can also be planted singly amongst other plants in the garden. Why not have a little section of hand-picked Bible herbs that go from garden to table? Here are some to appreciate or, if you don't yet grow herbs, to help you begin establishing your herb garden.

But have you ever thought about the story behind the herbs you enjoy growing in your garden? We're often so busy with growing plants that we don't stop to think about their history.

Herbs were mentioned as early as the first chapter of Genesis, the first book of the Bible! A broad range of herbs and spices figure prominently in stories and parables throughout the Bible, with many of these in widespread use today. Mint, dill and cumin are all mentioned by Jesus in Matthew 23:23, as he rebukes religious leaders who were quick to insist on strict religious observances such as tithing their herbs, but slow to love their people.



Herbs and spices add flavour and a garnish to food and drinks but are no substitutes for the nutritional substance of a meal. The Pharisees dealt diligently with minor aspects of the law, while neglecting such important matters as justice, mercy and faithfulness. It is interesting that this trio of herbs is still widely grown and used today.

Easily grown, mint makes a lovely garden plant. It is a vigorous perennial herb that sends out runners; these will quickly spread if not controlled, so some people prefer to grow mint in a container. As with all plants in containers, it needs to be kept well-watered. The leaves of the mint add refreshment to salads and sauces, and to iced drinks.

Dill, an annual plant, is easily grown from seed, or from seedlings found at your local garden centre. The fine leaves can be used fresh or dried, and lend delicious flavour to a range of savoury dishes. Following flowering the seeds can also be used in cooking, or saved and dried for another crop of dill next season.

The seed of coriander, another familiar annual herb, was mentioned as far back as Exodus, the second book of the Bible, where it was likened to manna, the heavenly bread of the Israelites as they travelled through the desert, see Exodus 16:31. It is also easily grown from seed or from seedlings. It has a tendency to flower and seed quickly, so may need replanting several times in one season. But the reward is well worth the trouble, as the leaves of this fragrant herb can be used to flavour a range of dishes including soups, curries and salads. The seeds of coriander are also used in cooking or sown for the next crop.

There are many references to hyssop through the Bible. This biblical herb belongs to the oregano family, and is closely related to the herb marjoram or oregano that we use in so many savoury dishes. In the Old Testament hyssop was associated with cleansing and spiritual purification, for example in Psalm 51:7. The hyssop of the Bible was most likely Syrian marjoram, with its fragrance and taste being enjoyed by the Greeks and Romans as well as the Israelites. Oregano, often called marjoram, is another easily grown perennial herb equally at home in the garden or a container. These perennial herbs die down in winter but put on vigorous growth in spring and summer.

Mint, dill and oregano are just three biblical herbs we grow and use constantly. There are many others – for another time! ■

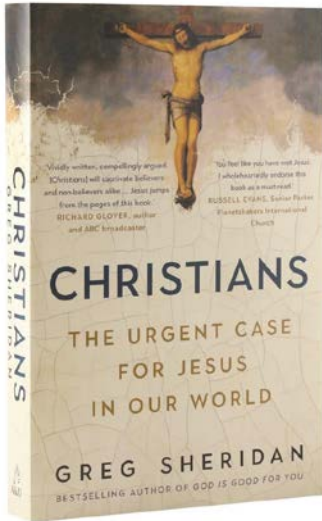


coriander, mint and cucumber salad

A quick salad recipe using fresh 'biblical' herbs from your garden!

The ingredients: ½ cup freshly picked mint leaves
½ cup fresh coriander leaves
2 small Lebanese cucumbers, thinly sliced into ribbons
2 red radishes very thinly sliced.
A dash of your favourite salad dressing.

Method: Toss all ingredients together and serve as a side salad. ■



the urgent case for CHRIST

Mike Raiter reviews 'Christians', the new book from Greg Sheridan...

In 2018 Greg Sheridan, Foreign Affairs editor for *The Australian*, and one of Australia's most respected journalists, wrote *God is Good for You*. As the title suggests, the book was both a case for the reasonableness of Christian faith, and the stories of many contemporary Christians whose faith has impacted society. The book was a commercial and critical success. But a friend told Sheridan that while that was all well and good, he "didn't get a strong sense of the living Jesus from the Gospels". Conceding the point, Sheridan spent the next two years inside the New Testament. He writes, "What fun it was". The product of those two years is *Christians: The Urgent Case for Jesus in our World*.

It's a book in two parts. In Part One, Sheridan takes us on his journey through the New Testament, and the people he's met there. He's come to appreciate John, Mary, Paul, and even the angels in fresh way. But, above all, he's met the crucified and risen Jesus. It's clear that Sheridan, a life-long Catholic, has encountered Christ in a way that's transformed his life. And, like any new 'convert' he's bold and unashamed about his faith, and wants to share it with others. But he's not preachy. The book is well researched, but not academic. At times, it's like having a conversation with a new-found friend,

Much of Part Two are the stories of Christians, from a range of denominations. They're all based on interviews with Sheridan. We hear the faith stories of people like Scott Morrison, John Anderson, Peter Cosgrove and Bill Hayden. There's also a very helpful analysis of the state of the Chinese Church in Ji Jinping.

My son bought me this for my birthday. It would be a great Christmas gift for your Christian or non-Christian friend. ■

Michael Raiter is director of the Centre for Biblical Preaching, and a regular preacher at The Scots' Church.



IN MEMORIAM

in the footsteps of FLYNN

Maxwell John Lewis Griffiths
2 November 1926 – 13 September 2021

Max Griffiths was born and grew up in Melbourne, one of four boys. After completing his secondary education at Melbourne Boys' High School Max went on to study at the University of Melbourne, where he obtained the degrees of Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Commerce, and Bachelor of Divinity. He was resident at Ormond College and president of the Students' Club there. Max saw service with the RAAF during World War 2. He married Sheila MacLean following his return, and they had four children: William, John, Michael, and Robert.

A minister of the Presbyterian and Uniting Churches from 1953 to 1989, Max began his ministry as an assistant minister at Abbotsford, while at the same time working for Vickers Ruwolt, in order to gain an understanding of the working conditions of men. He also became the 'union rep' for the Iron Workers Union! From there he went to Mount Beauty, in north east Victoria, as minister of the United Church. This was a very busy town due to the extensive hydro-electric works in progress there at the time. His next move was to Belmont, Geelong, with quite a different congregation of retired country people and young families. St. Andrew's, Oakleigh was followed by a period at St. Aidan's, North Balwyn. It was here that he first met the Murnane family, who were founding members and very active in the church. Max also served as the Director of Finance and Development of the Presbyterian Church from 1963 to 1969.

In 1973 Max was appointed as Superintendent of Australian Inland Mission (AIM), established many years earlier by the Rev. John Flynn. He held the position until 1985. During his tenure he initiated outback hospital, health and other services to pastoral, Aboriginal and mining communities, serving the needs of children, families and aged people living in isolation. He was honoured with the award of Member of the British Empire (MBE) in 1979 for services to the Australian outback.

With a wealth of experience and deep knowledge outback Australia, Max published many books on the subject, including definitive histories of Aboriginal Affairs, Flynn of the Inland, Outback Nursing, and the Mining Boom, to name just a few. He also wrote 'Angels in the Outback', to mark the centenary of the AIM, in September 2012, and 'Francis Ormond: a Ruling Passion' in 2015. Max had recently completed his autobiography, which is due to be published in late 2021. He was a member of the Athenaeum Club, Melbourne.

Sadly Sheila died not long after Max had retired. He went on to spend many years giving active service to the community, in a number of roles. These included positions as a council member of Ormond College; Scotch College; Morongo College; Geelong College; and Rossbourne House. He was a member of the board of Austin Hospital

from 1987 to 1994, and chairman of the Austin Hospital Human Ethics and Medical Research Committee from 1987 to 2001. The foundation chairman of the Patient Care Ethics Committee and honorary consultant in Medical Ethics at Austin, he had also served previously as a member on the ethics committees at the Royal Melbourne, Royal Children's and Freemasons Hospitals, as well as advisor to Royal Darwin Hospital. He was expert advisor in ethics to the Commonwealth office of the Gene Technology Regulator for its first three years. In addition to these positions, Max was for a time the chairman of the Norwood Association, providing housing and support services for people with psychiatric disabilities. He was a charter member of the Rotary Club of Carlton, a Paul Harris Fellow and chairman of the Rotary Club International Committee.

Max and Merrilyn Murnane, who had been widowed, met while serving on a committee and renewed their acquaintance, the Murnane family having known Max and his family many years earlier at St. Aidan's, North Balwyn. Their friendship blossomed into marriage.

More recently Max became involved in the supervision of several projects funded by his wife Merrilyn in Papua New Guinea. These included a mobile health and education unit working out of Wewak and visiting up to 20 villages in the region, and support for students undertaking education at primary, secondary and tertiary level. Several other children with health and education problems were also assisted, together with four Aboriginal children attending St. Philip's College, Alice Springs.

Max contributed an enormous amount to Australian life and beyond over many years, both as a minister and as a very active member of the community with expertise in a range of spheres. He gave generously of his time, experience and knowledge. He was a faithful and consistent member of Scots' Church, and attended worship services regularly until this became impossible due to failing health. Max died peacefully on 13 September 2021.

At the funeral service conducted by Rev Phil Campbell at Scots' Church on 22 September 2021, the sermon quoted from the 1986 Annual Lecture of the Uniting Church Historical Society, which Max entitled "Distance lends Enchantment." While Max reminds us that the remote areas of Australia often have a feeling of enchantment due to their inaccessibility, said Rev Campbell, the good news of the Christian gospel is that God in the person of his Son Jesus Christ 'broke through the even more enchanted distance' between heaven and earth, bringing the Kingdom of Heaven closer than we think.

Max's son Michael presented the eulogy very effectively through video-link, concluding with these words:

'Max's unyielding faith in God now joyously bears him into the landscape of an infinite and everlasting life; his restless heart at peace. In Max's last book *The Restless Heart*, he wrote:

I am, and always have been, a dreamer. Those who have witnessed or borne the brunt of my 'hard man' persona will find this difficult to believe. But the truth is, I am never happier than when my imagination has the opportunity to run free. ■



his eye is on the sparrow

BIRDS OF THE BIBLE – THEN AND NOW
An introduction

Doves, hawks, eagles, sparrows, ravens – do these sound familiar? This is a very short list of the many birds named through the Bible that we still see today, in our gardens, the local park or the countryside. There are even peregrine falcons in the Melbourne CBD! Nesting on the rooftop of 367 Collins Street, Melbourne since 1991, these rare and highly territorial are birds capable of flying at extremely high speeds. A camera

has been installed on the building and you can watch the progress of the growing chicks live on YouTube, as their parents bring them food. The ancient Israelites would have been familiar with these magnificent birds during their exile in Egypt.

The birds of biblical times lived in a land not easily defined by modern political maps. Most of the story of the Jewish people took place in modern-day Israel and Jordan, although they spent some considerable periods in exile in Egypt and Babylon. The south-east corner of the Mediterranean Sea defines the area inhabited by the birds of the Bible. This is a land of contrasts, with highlands and lowlands that have contrasting climatic and vegetation zones. The northern area is highly fertile, with the transition to a harsh and barren landscape further south. The climate over most of the region is described as Mediterranean, with variable winter rain, lengthy dry periods, and hot summers. Although today much of the land is under cultivation, especially in the fertile north, in biblical times the wide variety of natural habitats supported a rich diversity of wildlife, including birds of course. About 500 species of birds have been recorded in the modern state of Israel.

There are about 300 references to birds through the Bible, ranging from birds in general to specific species. The first mention of birds occurs in the first chapter of Genesis, and the last late in the book of Revelation. According to the account of creation recorded in Genesis Chapter 1, birds were created along with creatures of the sea on the fifth day. Later in Genesis man was given the task of naming each creature, including birds. Fossil records show that birds first appeared on the earth between 180 and 135 million years ago; they followed trees, plants and sea creatures, reflecting a similar sequence to that of the story of creation in Genesis.

The Old Testament writers were inspired by the birds of creation as they attempted to describe their world. In Psalm 104 the psalmist expresses wonder at God's creation; as well as including the heavens, seas, valleys and mountains, with their plants, animals and food, the stork is singled out along with birds in general. When we take time to pause and reflect on the world around in a quiet moment we can appreciate the psalmist's glowing account of God's creation.

Much later Jesus spoke of birds on a number of occasions in his teaching. For example in the Gospel of Matthew (Chapter 10) he spoke of the humble sparrow being very common, but important to God, with God's people being far more precious to him.

Although some of the birds referred to in the Old Testament can be readily identified today, others are not recognisable as the Hebrew names are no longer understood. However it is evident that the ancient Hebrews had a wide knowledge of the birds around them. Very early they declared which birds they saw as unclean and not fit to eat, with lists being found in the books of Leviticus and Deuteronomy.

The many references to birds throughout the Bible, in so many contexts, are a reflection of the significance of these creatures as an integral part of their environment and everyday life. Many of the species, or close relations, are with us today, providing yet another way in which the Bible relates to the 'here and now'. ■





your stand on the state sponsored jab

Remember November? As I write on a Tuesday evening late in the month, Melbourne is calm after weeks of unrest. Crowds chanted for freedom just a block down our street, helicopters hovered overhead, and the tension in the air was palpable. Today things are calm - though as I walked home from work a girl in a black hoodie scrawled "SACK DAN" in black marker on the pole as we waited for the lights to change.

Significantly - or so many Christians are saying - these are issues that call for a strong stand. Surely, no government should be allowed to mandate vaccines, create a 'two class society', create a 'vax-apartheid' system, and over-rule Christian conscience on the question of 'what we put in our bodies.'

Maybe you sympathise. There are certainly some issue to think through. Personally, though, I wonder if there's anything particularly 'christian' in the way the debate has been framed. Sure, the months of lockdown have been difficult, with Church services curtailed by 'the State' in a way most of us have never seen. More complex is the new question of 'segregation' of the unvaxxed - creating a new class of lepers, and an un-natural division in the 'body of Christ.'

It's no surprise then that militant Christianity is on the front foot. One local Christian website offered downloadable protest posters geared especially for Melbourne. "Resistance to Tyranny is Obedience to God," reads one; "Faith over Fear," and "Courage Culture not Covid Culture," blast others, all in heavy upper case letters on black.

In fact, courage is something of a by-word in this conservative Christian backlash. "There's a move afoot to enshrine courage as a lost virtue and the foundational virtue

of a healthy culture,” says blogger and pastor Nathan Campbell. “But courage is not, by itself, a virtue. Without being paired with other virtues it is barely a virtue at all.”

It’s an interesting observation, and one that rings true of the loud social media voices that equate accepting the jab with abandoning faith. “We need Christian leaders with courage,” they cry; “Courage to stand up to the evil conspiracies of government, big-pharma and the media.’

And yet, courage without love produces hateful violence. Courage without joy produces fear mongering and despair. Courage without peace produces war — at an individual level, at a cultural level, and at a geopolitical level. “Courage without peace produces rallies where people carry gallows and effigies of demonised others... and placards proclaiming the courage of the marchers,” writes Nathan Campbell. “Courage without patience produces silver bullets. Placards. Marches. The levers of power being impatiently pulled. But worst of all is courage without kindness and gentleness. It sees the outcome as dominance of the other. Courage with kindness and gentleness looks like loving your enemies, giving them your shirt when they ask for your coat, turning the other cheek, and praying for those who persecute you. It looks like submitting to a government even as it crucifies you.”

And courage without humility? “Well. That puts you and your narrative and ‘your research’ at the centre and expects everyone to conform to your perspective, and when they don’t, grab a placard, a website, or even a weapon — to make people comply.”

In other words, we don’t so much need a ‘courage culture’ as Christians. We need a Jesus culture. The same Roman government to whom Jesus says we owe taxes, and that Paul says we should honour (see Romans 12) tried and then crucified Jesus. And rather than protesting the state sponsored ‘invasion of his body’ by the jabs of nail and spear, he willingly complied. I’m not sure he’s backing the anti-vax stance with any great enthusiasm.

If you’ve read this far, maybe you’re angry. Statistically, around ten percent of you will be, given the 90% vaccination rate. But let me be clear. Personally, I think you’re entitled to take whatever view on vaccination you like. Protest and march with all your heart. But can I humbly suggest you don’t ‘sanctify’ it... because the sometimes chaotic public health efforts of our governments are (most likely) simply for the common good, and are not really tyranny or conspiracy at all. By all means be courageous - but courteous, humble, patient, wise and loving as well. ■

Phil Campbell is Senior Minister of The Scots’ Church, Melbourne, and is blogger and Pastor Nathan Campbell’s dad. Christian Protest posters available online





by the waters of BABYLON

Glamorous. Alluring. Dangerous. In Biblical imagery, Babylon has always been a symbol of the world that draws us in with promises of glamour and glory. It's "Babel" in the opening chapters of Genesis, and "the harlot city" in the final chapters of the book of Revelation. National Israel's destiny was entangled with Babylon; the banks of the River Euphrates were where exiled Israelites wept at the end of their national history, as they longed for their distant homeland. And it was in Babylon, argue many biblical scholars, that the documents that make up the Old Testament were finalised and assembled.

Babylon was a city in ancient Mesopotamia. Its ruins are located on the Euphrates River in present-day Iraq, about 95 kilometres southwest of Baghdad. Founded more than 4,000 years ago as a small settlement on the Euphrates, it grew into one of the largest cities in the ancient world. Older ruins date back to at least 2,300 BC, though inaccessible due to the rising water level in the region.

In the 19th century BC the first Babylonian dynasty came into being as small-time Amorite king Hammurabi (who ruled Babylon from 1792 to 1750 BC) built it up to a major military power. Conquering neighbouring city-states, he turned Babylon into a rich and powerful city, in the process creating one of the earliest and most complete written legal codes, the Code of Hammurabi. However the empire gradually declined after his death, as it was dominated by other rulers in the region.

A new line of kings saw the brief flourishing of the Neo-Babylonian Empire, which lasted less than 100 years, from 626 to 539 BC. Following the defeat of the Assyrians at Nineveh in 612 BC, it became the most powerful state in the world. It was a period of cultural renaissance, as King Nebuchadnezzar II constructed many beautiful buildings and preserved earlier artifacts. During his reign the Hanging Gardens of Babylon were said to have been constructed and the famous Ishtar Gate built.

This was the time of Babylon's conquest of Israel. After years of unfaithfulness to their God-given covenant, in 587BC Jerusalem fell, and thousands of Jews were taken from Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar and held captive in Babylon for more than 50 years. The Old Testament books of Daniel and Lamentations gives insight into Israel's experience during this time.

Although the Neo-Babylonian Empire continued after Nebuchadnezzar's death, it fell to the Persians under Cyrus in 539 BC. King Cyrus decreed that the Israelites could return to their homeland; while some returned to Jerusalem quickly, many second-generation Jews stayed on, having become comfortable with Babylonian life, and a Jewish community remained established there for many centuries.

Babylon flourished as a centre of art and education under Persian rule. The city survived the fall of the Persian Empire to Alexander the Great in 331 BC. Successive rulers fought over the city which steadily declined so that, by 141 BC it was deserted and forgotten. In 650 AD the remnants of Babylon were swept away in the Muslim conquest of the land, and the ruins were gradually buried beneath the sand. It was not until the 17th and 18th centuries that European travellers began to explore the region and uncover artifacts from the ancient city. The interest in the region increased and scientific excavation of the site began in the late 19th century, continuing ever since that time.

Babylon was listed by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site on 5th July 2019. It consists of a massive complex of ten square kilometres, of which only 18 percent has so far been excavated. It is hoped that World Heritage status will ensure the preservation of this ancient city.



THE HANGING GARDENS OF BABYLON

Although they are considered one of the seven wonders of the ancient world, the Hanging Gardens of Babylon have never been located. German archaeologist Robert Koldewey excavated the area of Babel and Babylon in the late 19th century, and thought he had found the cellar and other parts of the garden. More recently Stephanie Dalley from Oxford University has argued that the hanging gardens were built by King Sennacherib in the Assyrian capital, Nineveh, but the most common theory remains that the Hanging Gardens were indeed built in Babylon in the reign of King Nebuchadnezzar II, about 600 BC or a little later.

While there are no surviving texts from the period that make a direct reference to the Hanging Gardens, a description survives from a Babylonian priest, Berossus, who wrote in about 290 BC, though his writings are only known through quotations by later writers. Josephus, a famous historian who lived from about 37 AD to 100 AD, credited Nebuchadnezzar with the construction of the Hanging Gardens. Several other descriptions of the Gardens in classical literature support their existence, ranging

from the first century BC to the fifth century AD. None of the many Old Testament references to Babylon in the Old Testament (like Isaiah 13: 19–22; Isaiah 14: 22-23; Jeremiah 51: 58; and Daniel 4: 30) make direct reference to the Gardens.

According to legend, the gardens were built to raise the spirits of Nebuchadnezzar's wife Amytis, daughter of King Astyages of Medes, who was homesick for the green hills and valleys of her native Media, these days part of north-western Iran. The Hanging Gardens were essentially an artificial mountain with a series of rooftop gardens. Enormous terraces with arches were raised one above another, resting on pillars that were hollow and allowed large trees to be planted. Access to each level was by stairs.

The garden was probably built of huge slabs of stone covered with reeds, asphalt and tiles, then with sheets of lead to provide 'waterproofing'. Soil was then added and many types of trees planted.

The most extraordinary aspect of the Hanging Gardens would have been the reticulation of water from the adjacent Euphrates River for irrigation. This involved the raising of water to the uppermost level, allowing it to flow down through the terraces, with plants being watered at each level. Experts have proposed two ways in which this may have been achieved. The first, a 'chain pump', consisted of a series of slave-powered waterwheels with buckets that transported water to pools at increasing heights until the water reached the top. There it could be released into artificial streams. The alternative proposal was the use of 'screw pumps' to carry the water upwards as they revolved. However this is considered less likely, as it was supposedly invented by the Greek Archimedes some 300 years later!

Oxford's Stephanie Dalley believes that the reason there has been no conclusive archaeological evidence of the Hanging Gardens at Babylon is because they were not constructed there but at Nineveh, 300 miles north of Babylon and the capital of the Assyrian Empire. If her assertion that King Sennacherib built the Gardens is correct, they would have been constructed a century earlier than previously thought. Recent excavations around Nineveh, near modern-day Mosul in Iraq, have found indications of a large system of aqueducts that channelled water from the mountains, with inscriptions naming King Sennacherib. Reliefs from the royal palace show a lush garden supplied with water through aqueducts. The rugged terrain around Nineveh would have made supplying the water to the gardens much easier. Dalley goes on to argue that the reason for the confusion about the location of the Hanging Gardens may be due to the fact that the Assyrians conquered Babylon in 689 BC and referred to Nineveh as the 'New Babylon.' Nevertheless Dalley's assertions are not widely accepted.

The Hanging Gardens were purported to have been destroyed by an earthquake in the 2nd century BC.

Whether the Hanging Gardens were in Babylon or Nineveh, King Nebuchadnezzar and King Sennacherib, together with these great cities, form part of the story of the Old Testament. These gardens would have been a source of amazement to any who saw them. No wonder so many Israelites found it hard to head for the dry hills of their homeland, even when they were set free – though the final chapters of the Book of Revelation promise a much better garden in the New Jerusalem that lies up ahead.

Rosalie Strother and Phil Campbell ■

light in a dark world

After a tough year, it's easy to wonder if there's something wrong with the world. If you take a look at the Bible, you'll see that's exactly what you should expect, says Phil Campbell...

I can't remember a time when there's been such a string of disasters. Fires, plague (Covid-19 style), riots on the streets, floods and even an earthquake - they all combine to give an uneasy sense that 'all is not right with the world.' As someone said recently, "Seems like God hasn't been doing much of a job of things this year." Interestingly, though, the world we're experiencing right now is a perfect match with the world the Bible warns us to expect, from the moment our representative-humans chose autonomy from their Creator. From that point on, the Bible says we've been living 'East of Eden,' and far from the pleasures of God's garden. In fact, the Bible describes it as a world hostile to our very survival. Genesis 3 puts it this way:

"Cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat food from it all the days of your life," says the Creator. It will produce thorns and thistles for you... by the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return."

Though we've come to think we've mastered our environment and outwitted the creational curse, years like 2021 remind us that those 'thorns and thistles' are still around. Jesus himself makes a similar point in Matthew chapter 6, as he reminds us that everything we treasure tends towards disorder and relentless breakdown:

"Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. (Matthew 6:19-21)

Finally, let's hear from the Apostle Paul. Similarly, his view of the world is true to life. Creation groans, says Paul in Romans 8, and so do we.

For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now...

So...don't be surprised or discouraged when you find yourself groaning. The Bible describes a world of thorns and thistles, moths and rust, futility and corruption; a place of painful toil, perspiration and groaning, death and dust. Sound familiar? The great news is that into this dark and broken world has come the Light we celebrate each Christmas Season. The words "Light has shone in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it" were not originally written about our Premier, in spite of the recent comments of his wife. Instead, they're words that describe the coming of Jesus into our world as the Imperishable King who offers us an imperishable hope, no matter our circumstances. And the darker the night, the brighter He shines.

Phil Campbell ■

T B R E E V E I L E B A
 E A R D T I B E R I A S
 S D E O F L I P T F E L
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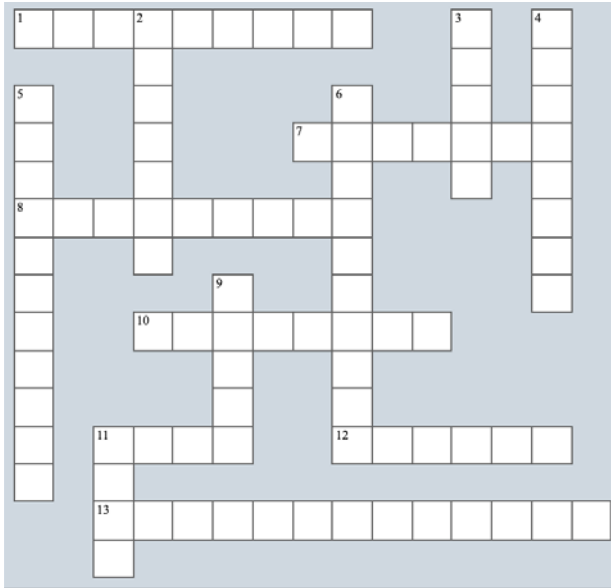
John Chapters 5 & 6 plus

Find the words in the grid. When you are done, the unused letters in the grid will spell out a hidden message. Pick them out from left to right, top line to bottom line. Words can go horizontally, vertically and diagonally in all eight directions..

(Solution on page 15)

The words to find

Believe	Passover
Bethesda	Peter
Eternal	Prophet
Father	Sabbath
Healed	Spirit
John	Testimony
Judgment	Tiberias
Mountain	



EclipseCrossword.com

biblical crossword

John Chapters 5 & 6 plus...

(Solution on page 5)

Across

1. What town were the disciples sailing to during a storm?
7. What did Jesus break that angered the Jews?
8. 'Questioning Christianity' inspired Nathan Campbell to view his faith as an _____.
10. Jesus retired alone to the _____ when they wanted to make him king.
11. Who bore witness to the truth about Jesus?
12. The words Jesus spoke were _____ and life.
13. Loving the City to Life is an initiative with (two words).

Down

2. The prophet _____ had a vision of a life-giving river.
3. Which disciple was later to betray Jesus?
4. Jesus healed an invalid at the Pool of _____.
5. Jesus said: 'I am the _____.' (three words)
6. Jesus _____ before he fed the five thousand. (two words)
9. Jesus refers to the herbs mint, dill and _____.
11. The judgement of Jesus is _____.



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a warm welcome.*

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CHRISTMAS
AT SCOTS'

HANDEL'S MESSIAH
Friday 17th December, 730pm

NINE LESSONS AND CAROLS
Sunday 19 December, 11am



CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE
Friday 24 December 1130pm

CHRISTMAS DAY
Family Service 10am

*Celebrate the Reason for the Season
with us at THE SCOTS' CHURCH,
156 Collins St Melbourne*

THE LIGHT SHINES IN THE DARKNESS, AND THE DARKNESS HAS NOT OVERCOME IT.