

InterSections



Editorial

Welcome to a special bumper November 2014 issue of *InterSections*. Instead of the usual 8 pages of articles and news, this issue has 12 pages – containing something of interest for everyone.

One theme of this issue consumes much of our lives: the concept of work. How does the Christian successfully harmonise a life of faith with work? In our *Feature* article, Benny Tabalujan writes about Christians and careers and considers God's perspective on the value of work, the use of individual talents and the Christian's vocation. We're also very fortunate to hear from Christians around Australia who share their reflections on how God is involved in their work in our *Food for Thought* article.

Another article updates us on efforts by congregations and individuals to partner collaboratively, encouraging one another and strengthening Christian unity within Australia. On a broader level, we carry a snapshot summary of the 2013 Survey of non-denominational Churches of Christ in Australia – showing membership and attendance figures.

With an eye to the past, Ted Paull writes about his parents, Ivor and Eleanor Paull, a couple whose faithful work with the church in Victoria actually inspires us for the future. Meanwhile, our *News* section carries briefs about singing workshops held in Brisbane and Adelaide by John Wiegand and his team, the commencement of the 2014 Klesis Bible Program in Melbourne facilitated by Harding University, and the 2014 Camp Revive when Christians from the east met some from the west.

We hope you like this bumper issue and are encouraged by the many contributors who invigorate us to work 'heartily for the Lord'. As always, we welcome your feedback.

The InterSections editorial team



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Feature *Christians and Careers*



In recent decades, the sheer variety of careers available has expanded remarkably. When I started in the workforce thirty years ago, there were no app designers, social media strategists, drone pilots, e-commerce consultants, big-data analysts or genetic counsellors. Today, each of these jobs exists, some with rather exciting prospects.

In view of the rapid changes in jobs, careers and the whole notion of work, what can we learn from the timeless truths of Scripture that can help us calibrate our working lives more closely to the will of God? Whilst there may be many lessons on work which can be highlighted from Scripture, in this article I focus on three points and their implications for us today.¹

Work is good

The first point is fundamental. It is that work was created by God for humanity and is intrinsically good. In the creation account, God instructed Adam to cultivate and keep the garden (Genesis 2:15). From this, we can see that work was commissioned by God. Indeed, work preceded marriage (Genesis 2:24). Thus, it's clear that, from the beginning, daily work – together with being fruitful, multiplying and exercising dominion over the earth (Genesis 1:28) – formed part of God's scheme for humanity.

Contrary to popular opinion, work is not a curse which God imposed upon humanity because of sin and the Fall. Work preceded the Fall. Of course, one of the curses which

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www.klesis.com.au/InterSections.html

1. Parts of this article draw on my earlier book, *God on Monday: Reflections on Christians @ Work* (Klesis, 2005).



flowed from the rebellion was that work became laborious (Genesis 3:17-19). But this doesn't mean that work was inherently so. Perhaps it wouldn't be too far-fetched to affirm that, before the Fall, work was deeply fulfilling and – reflecting our God who worked to establish the cosmos – intrinsically creative.

The implication for us today is that God wants Christians to work. Being active in producing goods and services, exercising dominion over nature with sensitivity and care, designing buildings, undertaking research, engaging in commerce and industry, being teachers and health care workers – all this is good and part of our original design. Sure, since sin came into Eden, work has also become toilsome. Murphy's law ('if things can go wrong, they will') happens. There's strife, envy and office politics. Despite all that, as Christians, we should accept that work is part of our normal lot as humans. It's part of what God wants us to do.

Individual abilities differ

The second point is that God in his wisdom gives individuals various skills and abilities to perform different kinds of work. The parable of the talents hints at this when it says that each servant is given a different number of talents (which I take to mean opportunities), 'each according to his own ability' (Matthew 25:15). In the Old Testament, God specifically gifted Bezalel with special skills to help craft items for the tabernacle (Exodus 31:2-5). Paul's likening of individual Christians as different body parts performing different functions share a similar theme (Romans 12:4-8).

If God intended for individuals to have different abilities and gifts, then one practical implication for us is that our differences in earning capacity and productivity are part of the natural order of things. Some people are born with a level of potential productivity higher than others. They may be naturally more talented or gifted in certain spheres.

The key point to note from the parable of the talents is that Christians should use their gifts and opportunities in an active, entrepreneurial – even risk-taking – way, rather than adopt a passive approach. Furthermore, the absolute amount of what we produce based on the gifts and opportunities God provides to us is not as important as the fact that we are faithfully using them.

Thus, individual abilities and earning capacities in themselves do not measure faithfulness. Faithfulness is demonstrated by our willingness to apply what we have rather than the amount of return we generate. In this sense, using is more important than producing.

If this is correct, then we can accept that some of us will earn more and some will earn less. There is thus no room for faithful Christians to be jealous of one another in terms of our productivity or earning capacity. Richer or poorer, we can all please God as long as we faithfully apply our gifts with respect to the opportunities which are presented to us.

Our calling is to faithfulness, not to a career

The third point is perhaps more controversial. My reading of the Scriptures indicates that there's no perfect job or career for each Christian. This may be a huge disappointment for some. After all, in many churches we hear the phrase, 'God has a plan for you' and we often come to believe that this plan includes specific details like what career we

should pursue (or which person to marry, etc). In fact, it's not uncommon to hear Christians say 'I believe God is calling me to pursue a career in ...' (insert: foreign missions, law, medicine, football, etc).

I suggest that the confusion in all this lies (at least in part) in the notion of calling. Generally, the New Testament uses 'calling' primarily in terms of a call to follow Jesus (Philippians 3:14). Similarly, we're called to be partakers of heaven (Hebrews 3:1). Sure, there are exceptions. Some key individuals received a specific and direct call to a specific vocation. Think of Moses hearing God's call at the burning bush to lead the exodus. Or Paul confronted by Jesus on the Damascus road and called to be an apostle to the Gentiles.

But these exceptions are precisely that – exceptions. The fact is that, aside from these special cases, countless other people in the Old and New Testaments did not receive a direct call from God. They learnt their parents' craft, they traded, they were homemakers, some became community leaders. What they had were lives uncharacterised by any epiphany or direct and incontrovertible call from God to pursue a specific vocation. Perhaps this helps explain Paul's assertion in I Corinthians 7:20-24 that when a person becomes a Christian this, in itself, does not necessarily require a change in their employment or personal status.

If this is correct, two important implications follow. One is that all God's people share an 'equality of calling'. Our vocation is foremost to be a faithful follower of Jesus. Faithfulness is not determined by our jobs but our lives. It is not so much what job we do but how we do our job. Specifically, ministry and church-related careers aren't a 'higher calling' than jobs in the banking, hospitality or (dare I say) advertising sectors. What matters is that in all jobs we glorify God.

A second implication is that, whilst God may not call us to a specific job or career, he does offer wisdom from above (James 1:5) and guidance as we contemplate our career choices. The Anglican writer, J. I. Packer, equates guidance from God as akin to learning general principles rather than 'practising divination or consulting oracles, astrologers, and clairvoyants'; it's more about the 'everyday thinking through of alternative options in given situations to determine the best course open to us'.² I tend to agree. As we contemplate alternative career options, let's consider our gifts, the needs around us – and then trust God as we prayerfully make our career decisions.

Conclusion

Work in contemporary society can be all-consuming. Yet, the thrust of Scripture is against making work idolatrous. Instead, our work is intended by God from the very beginning to be a core part of human existence. In fact, individuals are gifted with different abilities and granted different opportunities to exercise these abilities. And, whilst we may not receive a direct call from God to pursue a specific career, he graciously gives us wisdom from above to help us discern where we can faithfully employ our gifts to serve our communities and in this way give glory to God – which is our ultimate calling. ■

2. J. I. Packer, *Hot Tub Religion* (Tyndale, 1987) 119-120.

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Churches helping one another

One of the key aims of *InterSections* is to help Christians and churches connect, help and learn from each other. Over the years, our editorial team has heard of various efforts by congregations and groups of Christians doing exactly that. Some of these efforts are more formal and organised at a congregational level; others emerge as ideas from one or more individuals and they simply run with them. Below are descriptions of some of these efforts across Australia. After reading them perhaps you may be spurred to do something to help encourage and build up the body of Christ beyond your immediate area – if so, then to God be the glory!

Visiting teacher program - QLD

Many congregations in Australia are small in number and as a consequence the task of preaching and teaching often falls to only one or two men. For these men the task can sometimes become a burden. This situation also leaves few opportunities for those men themselves to benefit from teaching by others.

Several years ago the leadership at The Point Church in Brisbane sought to find more opportunities for younger men in the congregation to gain experience in preaching and teaching. They also recognised the opportunity to help share some of the load with smaller churches in the area. As a result, The Point has partnered with several churches in south-east Queensland to send men to preach and teach on a regular basis. The program currently assists six churches from Maryborough to the Gold Coast and inland to Warwick.

The nature of the roster varies to suit the need of the receiving congregation. Some have a monthly roster, some bi-monthly. Some congregations receive a roster of different men to teach throughout the year, while others

are paired with one preacher - creating stronger bonds and the ability to develop longer-term teaching themes. It all depends on the needs and wishes of each congregation.

In our churches we can easily become insular and stay within the familiar circles of our own congregation. This can often leave us blind to the lives of other Christians in our own backyard. The visiting teacher program helps to build and strengthen links between churches and Christians in the wider area. It reminds us that we are all brothers and sisters in God's family, each with a part to play in his kingdom.

As one of the teachers myself, I have benefitted greatly from the opportunity to spend time with other congregations. Even though I have been there to teach, being with these churches has taught me valuable lessons too.

The church in Australia faces many challenges, but I am convinced that we are better equipped to face them when we combine our resources and work together, in one Spirit.

Nathan Holyoak is a member of The Point Church in Brisbane and an associate editor of InterSections. nathan@helmsdeep.org

Over Fifties Group – QLD

An Over Fifties group has been meeting in the Brisbane area for over a year. The group meets on a monthly basis to encourage interested Christians and friends to share in fellowship and also to seek opportunities to serve.

Ray Walker, from the Wynnum church in Brisbane, perceived there was a need for such a group and initiated a meeting to get interested Christians to discuss ideas and goals for such a group. Out of this meeting the Over Fifties fellowship group became a reality. Many in this age group are semi-retired or retired and so have greater opportunities to serve. Many members of smaller congregations also fall into this same age group, creating a perfect opportunity to work together to support one another.

As well as social activities, the group has enjoyed hearing from guest speakers and also travelled to Ballina in NSW for a weekend to serve and encourage the small congregation there. Other such activities are anticipated in the future as well as looking out for special needs projects as they arise.

This group is not the work of any one congregation. It is simply a group of interested Christians and friends from the Brisbane area seeking to encourage others in this age bracket to take advantage of opportunities to share in fellowship and serve others who have a need. The desire is that more will be interested and the group will grow, share and serve together.

For more information contact: Terry and Elly Gill at The Point Church, Brisbane. telagill@spin.net.au

Sharing our gifts – VIC

Inspired by the good work The Point church was doing with members regularly preaching in some of the smaller Queensland congregations, a couple of years ago Belmore Road Church of Christ decided to proactively assist some of our smaller regional churches in Victoria. Within Victoria, Belmore Road is the largest congregation in our fellowship with a regular Sunday attendance of 110 -120 people. In addition to David Payne, our fulltime evangelist, we're blessed to have a number of men who assist with teaching and preaching. On the other hand, Victoria

currently has two active, but small churches at Bairnsdale and Yackandandah where a couple of men have the responsibility of teaching and preaching every week of the year.

Initially, two to three visits a year were scheduled to Bairnsdale (280km and 3.5 hrs from Melbourne), Yackandandah (now The Border Church, 300km and 3.5 hrs from Melbourne) and Bendigo (150 km and 2 hours from Melbourne). With the church at Bendigo closing, visits continue to Bairnsdale and Yackandandah.

Visits to Bairnsdale and The Border Church require either a very early morning drive or an overnight stay enjoying the fellowship of our brothers and sisters in Christ. Both churches have expressed enormous appreciation for our assistance and all the Belmore Road families who have taken part in this have signed on for further visits.

Hopefully the frequency of visits will increase next year and we are encouraging groups of people to visit so we can assist with a variety of worship and teaching activities and continue to share our gifts with God's people.

Alan & Debby Rowley are longtime members of the Belmore Road church in Melbourne. burlington.ajr@bigpond.com

Project Barnabas – NT & NSW

Although separated by large distances, the Coffs Coast and Darwin congregations decided in mid-2012 to conduct a joint work entitled Project Barnabas. The primary purpose of our efforts was to create a bond between our two congregations, share ideas on personal evangelism techniques and bolster one another's spirituality.

Our first united effort took place over the Easter period in April 2013 when Marvin and Jenny Ancell & Heather Cox travelled to Darwin from the Coffs Coast congregation along with Roy & Nancye Courtney from the Hawkesbury congregation. John Gibbins also joined us and my parents, Jan & Len Bestmann, decided to travel up to further boost our numbers. Many weeks of preparation, research and planning were put into each day of the long weekend. Nona & Allen Petree, who have now moved to Perth, were extremely hospitable and accommodating, providing our congregation with a venue for worship services and offering a community room within their inner-city housing complex for the daily messages and activities. Many hours were spent in planning of lessons, design & printing of programs, preparation of meals and daily setting up of the community room. The communal spirit of co-operation, happiness and anticipation each morning was a small taste of what was to follow each day and ultimately what heaven will be like!

Of particular spiritual encouragement was the insight provided into a large-scale benevolent work in the Ukraine, of which John Gibbins is a part. Other messages of exhortation were presented by Marvin, Allen and my father Len. The like-mindedness, unity of purpose and sharing of ideas was of major benefit to each of us. Some visitors attended each meeting and this provided us with more encouragement each time we met together.

The second part of Project Barnabas came to fruition over the weekend of 6-8 June 2014 when the Darwin group travelled to Brisbane and then drove to Coffs Harbour for a weekend of sharing, encouragement and relationship-building. The activities planned whilst we attended Coffs Harbour were informative, relaxing and very enjoyable. Peter Tickner presented terrific lessons on evangelism. We anticipate an ever-increasing bond to develop between both congregations and will always look back with fondness and warmth on the time we spent with the Coffs Coast sisters and brothers. ■

Leighton Bestmann is part of the Darwin Church of Christ, Northern Territory. Cloudless1971@yahoo.com.au



Project Barnabas – NT & NSW



Hogan-Cate Asian Missions Sabbatical

2014 Sabbatical recipient: Ong Kok Bin, Seremban Church of Christ, Malaysia
2013 Sabbatical recipient: Tan Beng Chuan, Pasir Panjang Church of Christ, Singapore

Harding School of Theology invites applications for the annual Hogan-Cate Asian Missions Sabbatical. The sabbatical is made possible by the Hogan-Cate Endowed Asian Missions Fund established at Harding University in honour of longtime missionaries to Asia, Gordon & Jane Hogan and Steve & Jean Cate.

The sabbatical recipient will be an accomplished male or female missionary, church worker or ministry leader from among *acappella* Churches of Christ in Asia, Australia and the South Pacific. The sabbatical period is 3-5 months commencing from August.

Whilst based largely at HST in Memphis, Tennessee, the sabbatical recipient will also spend time at the main campus of Harding University in Searcy, Arkansas. Funds may be used to cover airfare, food and accommodation, HST tuition fees (audit or credit), visiting churches and ministries and participation in the Harding University Bible Lectureship for spiritual renewal and to promote missions in Asia.

An information sheet and application form are available from www.hst.edu and applications should be emailed to dean@hst.edu as early as possible, ideally before 1 December in the year preceding the sabbatical.

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Highlights of 2013 Survey

of non-denominational Churches of Christ in Australia

Background

The 2013 survey is the tenth in a series of surveys of non-denominational Churches of Christ in Australia. The first survey was undertaken in 1984. For details on the background of the survey over the years, as well as the survey participants and survey methodology for 2013, please refer to the November 2013 survey report prepared by Southern Pacific Christian Research and Klesis Institute. The report is available from the Klesis website (www.klesis.com.au). This article is an edited summary of the highlights contained in the report.

2013 summary

- Eighty congregations were included in the 2013 survey.
- The aggregate number of baptised members in these churches was 1,941.
- The aggregate Sunday attendance in these churches was 2,338.
- The average size of churches, in terms of the number of members, is 24.3 while 29.2 is the average attendance for Sunday assemblies.
- There were 99 baptisms reported over the 12 months from October 2012 – October 2013.

Churches of Christ in Australia 2006-2013: Churches, Members and Attendance

	2006	2010	2013
Members	1,825	1,956	1,941
Sunday Attendance	2,208	2,394	2,338
Churches	73	78	80
Ave Size (Members)	25.0	25.1	24.3
Ave Size (Attendance)	30.2	30.7	29.2

Source: Australian Church Surveys (2014)

2013 survey highlights

This latest survey was initiated in December 2013 with a mailout of requests of information. Survey responses were received in the first half of 2014. These responses provide information on members, attendance and baptisms of churches as at October 2013. The survey highlights suggest the following:

- The results for the 2013 survey are not as positive as those for the 2010 survey. The encouraging growth between 2006-10 was not repeated in 2010-13. This could be seen as 'two steps forward and one step back' situation. Specifically, there was a drop of -0.8% in members and -2.3% in average attendance since the 2010 survey.
- However, between the 2010 and 2013 surveys, the number of churches increased by 2.6%. Moreover, the number of baptisms grew by 10%. There is a contrast in the statistics between the increase in the number of baptisms and the decline in members. One possible conclusion is that some churches are losing more people (through deaths, falling away, moving overseas, etc) than they are adding through baptisms.
- In terms of average size of congregations, non-denominational Churches of Christ in Australia may be considered as a 'micro church' movement (ie. churches with 3-34 persons for Sunday attendance). The majority of our congregations are small in size, with over 90% having less than 75 in attendance and nearly 62.9% having less than 35 in attendance.
- There are 8 congregations under the 'medium church' category (ie. churches with 75-199 persons for Sunday attendance). Of these, 4 congregations have over 100 people for Sunday attendance. These 8 congregations have an aggregate Sunday attendance of 867 people (37.1% of total attendance nationally).
- The number of baptisms fell significantly in NSW and this state also saw the largest fall in the number of members in the 2013 survey. Churches in Queensland, Victoria and Western Australia have seen encouraging growth since 2006.

Considering the last three surveys

- There has been modest growth between the 2006 and 2013 surveys (see above table).
- Over the period of the three surveys (2006, 2010 and 2013), the number of members has grown from 1,825 in 2006 to 1,941 in 2013 (6.4%).
- Sunday average attendance has increased from 2,208 to 2,338 (5.9%).
- The number of members and the average Sunday attendance peaked in 2010. ■

This edited summary of the survey highlights has been prepared by Benny Tabalujan, editor of InterSections. For more details, please refer to the November 2013 survey report available from the Klesis website (www.klesis.com.au).

News Singing workshop – Brisbane



From 2-6 August 2014, The Point Church in Brisbane was blessed with the presence of John Wiegand and his team as they led a workshop on congregational singing. John is the editor for the hymnal *Praise for the Lord* and regularly travels to encourage and teach churches how they can better engage in singing as a part of their communal worship.

Singing can be a mistreated aspect of our gatherings, often becoming dry and dull on one extreme or showy and superficial on the other. Both miss the value and purpose that is to be had as we sing in glory to God and also teach, admonish and encourage one another through song. To this end, John worked with song leaders teaching techniques to improve the quality of congregational singing, including pitch, rhythm and harmony. He also highlighted the importance of song selection and the purposeful theming of a set of songs, usually in connection with the teaching topics for the day. With a little bit of effort, these things can make a big difference to how we experience our time singing together, even for those who aren't very musically gifted.

Complementing this, John and his team also worked with the whole congregation, teaching several new songs as well as new arrangements to some familiar ones - exciting and encouraging all with the joy of sharing together in song to the Lord. Aside from this, the team travelled to several nearby nursing homes to encourage residents with their singing.

God bless John and his most generous team members for their tireless work encouraging and building up churches all over the world at considerable expense of their own time and money. Thank you! ■

Craig Holyoak is a member of The Point Church in Brisbane. craig@helmsdeep.org

Melbourne – Intensive Bible study

Klesis Institute, assisted by Harding University, has designed the Klesis Bible Program to further equip Christians in Bible knowledge for service in God's kingdom. During 28 July-2 August 2014, we had the first of six intensive modules taught in Melbourne. 'Old Testament Story and Vision' was taught by Daniel Stockstill, an associate professor of Bible from the Harding College of Bible & Ministry in Searcy, USA. The class was attended by 14 Christians from several congregations around Australia including Belmore Road, South East, Heidelberg West, Canberra and Gosford.

The syllabus covered the books of the Old Testament and established a foundation for sound biblical exposition as we explored the context of the biblical writings through genre, culture, geography and history. There was an emphasis on God's incredible redemptive plan. We also discussed how to share these learnings with others. Over the course of six days, we embarked on a journey to study God's plan, connected over lively discussions and were treated to deliciously prepared lunches.

I have felt immensely blessed to have been a part of this program. It has deepened my understanding and connection with the living word and has revealed God, his purpose and my purpose better. It has affirmed the foundations of my Christian faith and on more than one occasion re-shaped long held pre-suppositions. I am very excited about the following modules to come! ■

Christine Hooi, Belmore Road Church of Christ, Melbourne. christine.kuachi@gmail.com

Singing workshop – Adelaide

Singing is an integral part of worship and uplifts all involved, both the Christian and visitor. Between 7-10 August 2014, the Metro and Adelaide Churches of Christ were excited to host a visit by a group of interstate and international brethren for a wonderful time of singing, fellowship and edification. We were privileged to learn from John Wiegand (editor of the *Praise for the Lord* songbook), James Tackett (editor of *The Paperless Hymnal*) and John Hall (former choral director of Freed-Hardeman University) in a series of classes covering topics such as: improving our song leading and worship, learning new songs, singing in harmony and also a lesson on music theory. Singing in parts was greatly assisted by the other brethren who came, including Marvin and Jenny Ancell (Coffs Harbour), Pierpont and Rachel Dutcher (USA), John Cooper (Melbourne), Nancy Wu Won (Melbourne) and Suella Helmholtz (USA).

The grand finale was a combined worship service on the Sunday, 10 August, where we had a total of 95 brethren and visitors gathered.





We enjoyed lessons from Psalm 66, with messages from Ray Chivers, Marvin Ancell, Sam Kirkpatrick and Earl Lam. We had an amazing time filling the room with singing and worship to God! The lunch and fellowship included a whole roasted pig (that was probably not the best idea as singing on a full stomach is challenging!).

Unfortunately all good things come to an end. After another hour of singing and fellowship, it was time to say goodbye as the visiting brethren rushed to the airport. Although they were here for only a short while, I believe we have all benefitted from the time together. Praise God who has delivered us into his kingdom and family! ■

Earl Lam, Metro Church of Christ, Adelaide lamfuyuan@hotmail.com

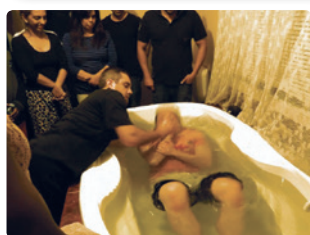
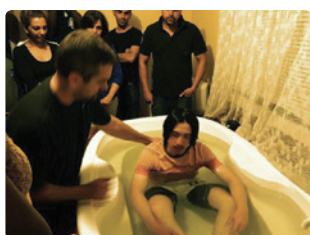
Camp Revive 2014 - Victoria

Because of the distance and cost required to travel across our wonderful country, it has been difficult in the past for the eastern and western Australian Churches of Christ to be involved in one another's lives. After some brave young Victorians came to our Easter Family Camp in Perth this year, we were also spurred to work against this trend. Since the youth camp Revive, held by the Belmore Road Church of Christ, was having one of our church workers, Tim Rosengarten, as its guest speaker, this seemed like the perfect opportunity. With help from Christians on both sides of Australia, 23 West Australians made the trek over to Melbourne.

Revive has been held annually for a few years now and it's shown by the level of organisation. All of the dormitories, meals, activities and Bible studies ran smoothly and on time, with space for Christians of all ages (not just teens!) to sit down, talk with each other, and play outrageous games (Ultimate Werewolf anyone?). And while God was greatly glorified by the camp leadership, the devotionals we shared were securely anchored in the Word. We were asked what our purpose might be in Christ and considered how we are to be ambassadors with a strong sense of identity as his image bearers. Also, when we glorify him we in turn are blessed and experience spiritual growth.

Even though Revive is only two days long, I would recommend it to anyone from the ages of 1 to 100 wishing to share with fellow Christians. ■

Johnathon Atchley is from the Malaga Church of Christ in Perth, Western Australia. john.atchley@gmail.com



Food for Thought

Christians @ work around Australia

One of the blessings God has given us is the opportunity to use our abilities and work in service of our communities and to provide for ourselves and our families. *InterSections* asked a sampling of Christians from around Australia to share with us what work they do and what role God plays in their work. Our scattered sample includes a paramedic, an economist, a teacher-librarian, a mother and an administration assistant, an architect-to-be and a marine trimmer. Read on and be inspired!

Arthur Johnson, Holland Park Church of Christ, Brisbane, QLD

Hi, I've been a paramedic with the Queensland Ambulance Service since the 1980s. I'm married with four kids aged 8-16. I was born and bred west of Rockhampton and moved to Brisbane as a teenager to work for the ambulance. I've been a Christian since 14 years of age and worship with the Holland Park church.

Now you know what I do, the three questions everyone asks are these. First, what's my biggest job? In 1990 a bus rolled over and there were 11 dead at the scene and more in hospital the following days. I was only new in the job. Second, have I delivered a baby? Yes, 16 of them and only one feet first. Lastly, does it get to you? Yes, to start with I was young, naïve and not street smart. I was shocked that people would hurt other people the way they did and take drugs. My work mates looked out for me and before I knew it 8-10 years had gone past and I was used to it and helping other students in the job. Having a good wife helps (which I have) - someone to talk to about how I feel about what has happened in the shift.

Being a Christian helps me in this job as I believe it gives me empathy with how people are feeling when they are having a bad day. I get to speak to many people who are at their lowest point in life - like when they have just tried unsuccessfully to kill themselves and I tell them the only way now is up, because things can't get any lower.

I have the opportunity to tell these people about Jesus, although often I don't have the courage to do it. People are looking for something in life different to what they are doing because drug-taking, etc is not working out for them

anymore. With God's help and me introducing the idea to them, they are open to a change in lifestyle - to come to church and surround themselves with other types of people. So I have the opening in their lives to help them.

This job has shown me that you never know when your number is up. You can be a young fit healthy person walking across the road and be hit by a car through no fault of your own. God lets this happen. He must have a reason as nothing happens without God letting it. But you do ask yourself, why?

It has been a great career with good and bad points. The good: it is a people job. We are out mixing with the public each day and not stuck in an office. Not knowing what the day will bring produces a 'spontaneous unknown.' Another plus is that 70-80% of the people are happy you are helping them and are genuinely thankful. But like other jobs there are difficulties. These include: doing shift work and being tired from having no sleep. Also there is the matter of missing church on some Sundays and seeing things no person should have to see in life including the unspeakably hurtful things people do to each other. Finally, too often, we are witnesses to the tragedies of life such as seeing kids hurt and being with cancer patients in their last days.

These are the times when I say a quick prayer to God and he helps me get through them. I am glad I have God in my life from my upbringing and do ask for his help in getting through certain situations at work and in my life. And he does noticeably help. ■

Arthur Johnson Hayley.johnson2@bigpond.com.au

Joanne Morgan, Lindisfarne Church, Hobart, TAS

I'm a marine trimmer and run a small business from my home workshop in Hobart. I design and manufacture all sorts of marine soft furnishings and accessories for yachts and motor boats. My projects range from outboard motor covers for 12-foot tinnies to complete fly bridge clears for 45-foot cruisers. The most popular projects are Bimini covers, spray dodgers, sail covers and upholstery.

A typical day may start at one of the marinas on the beautiful Derwent River here in Hobart for a meeting with the boat owner for a measure and quote. It may also be to make templates onboard in preparation for a day in the workshop cutting and sewing prior to the final fit of the completed project.

How is God involved in my work? Honesty, respect and fairness are the hallmarks of any Christian's work and lifestyle. My aim is to manage my business with Christ-like ethics and conduct. All my customers receive the same service and enthusiasm regardless whether they own a 12-foot runabout or a 50-foot yacht. ■

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Mark Jennings, Canberra Church of Christ, Canberra, ACT

I am currently acting director of a small team of economists at the Commonwealth Department of Social Services. My team does strategic analysis of social policy issues. Our overall objective is to make sure the Department speaks with a united voice when it gives advice to the government. We advise on issues of wide-ranging relevance to the department, such as disadvantage, inequality and the effects of population ageing on the government's budget.

A typical day for me begins with a quick browse through the policy-relevant media clips, which we get via email at 8.00am. Any hot issues require a written briefing to the Minister before 9.45am. Our bread-and-butter work is longer-term projects that involve gathering evidence, writing and then persuading people to adopt a certain perspective on an issue. On any given day we might be also briefing the Minister for meetings or meeting with other agencies.

I feel blessed that God has given me a job that helps me meet the needs of my own family and also in some small way serve the government's efforts to strengthen the hand of the needy.

At a personal level, I try to let the Bible guide my approach to life and work. Lately I have been challenged to persist in working heartily as if working for the Lord and not human masters (Colossians 3:23) and working only for God's glory (1 Corinthians 10:31). I have found it helpful to remember that when we have tried our best we shouldn't be too concerned about how much praise we receive. Our true value or worth is not found in men's praise, but rather God has shown us what we are worth in the price he paid at Calvary! ■

Mark Jennings marcusjjj@yahoo.com.au



Barbara Poynton, Bairnsdale Church of Christ, Bairnsdale, VIC

I'm extremely blessed to be a full-time mum of three children aged between 7-13 years. I also work part-time (two days a week) in an administrative role at the local hospital. It is very busy juggling both being a mum and working. Thankfully, Rod, my husband, is very supportive and we often tag-team as I start work early and his hours are more flexible. He also encourages me to strive to be a 'Mary' and not a 'Martha' – which I can struggle with at times.

My typical week starts on Sunday worshipping God at our local congregation in Bairnsdale. Sometimes I teach a Bible class for the children and Rod will be either doing the same with the adults or our older two boys. We make it a point of Sunday being a day of worship and even have a technology-free day on this day to enjoy the fellowship of our brothers and sisters in Christ and each other as a family.

Monday and Tuesday are my usual work days at the hospital. Before I leave, I ensure that the children are organised for school and band practice and any sports training after school. My typical day at work involves data entry, telephone enquiries and liaising with surgeons and doctors about their patients.

Wednesday is a shopping and catch-up-at-home day. I will also spend some time at the primary school helping in the classroom with reading and spelling, etc. Wednesday evening we have a Bible study in someone's home which we all attend. Thursday, Friday and Saturday are days where I can catch up on my own Bible study and get any Bible class preparation done. There is always something to do, someone to visit, someone to drop off at Scouts, sports training etc. Then it's the first day of the week again and another week starts.

God is involved in every aspect of what I do. I am mindful of the verse in Colossians 3:17 – 'And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord'. How I perform at work reflects on God. My work colleagues know that I am a Christian and therefore I must be honest, trustworthy and work to the best of my ability in everything I do – including being a mother.

When I am home with the children, I strive to always bring God into the conversation. I also believe strongly that children learn by what they see - not necessarily what they hear. Therefore it is extremely important that they see me living a Christian life - not just preaching it. ■

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Pam Paull, Macquarie Church of Christ, Sydney, NSW

My work as a school teacher has brought great rewards as well as some challenges. I have been a classroom teacher for some years and a couple of years ago I decided I would like to become the librarian at our school after the previous one retired. My job involves day-to-day running of the library which includes loaning books to children, returning them and re-shelving them. I also teach literature lessons to all our 435 students. I use a wide selection of texts to broaden a student's knowledge of books.

My job also involves choosing and caring for a collection of tens of thousands of books, DVDs and other resources. I have also spent the last six months re-organising the entire library.

I also team-teach with classroom teachers for either Science or Human Society and its Environment research topics. My role in this activity involves me selecting all the texts on a given theme and then helping guide the students in researching particular topics. I want children to develop a love of reading so I try to help them find texts that match their interest, but I also try to broaden their horizons and encourage them to read books which they may not have considered before. I encourage the use of technology in their learning. I want all the children to know that I care about them personally.

I have really enjoyed taking on this new role and taken the re-training very seriously. I consider my input in the lives of children very important. I always try to include 'life lessons' which have a Christian theme in my teaching. All the staff knows I am a Christian and I always try to do my best to fulfil their requests and be as helpful as possible while being a good example for teachers and children.

The job has taught me perseverance and gratitude while I have been learning my new role. I am very thankful to God that he has given me the strength and courage to learn new skills even later in life when I was perhaps considering retirement. ■

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Damien Forbes, Malaga Church of Christ, Perth, WA

Hi, I'm on the road to becoming a registered architect. I've been practising for about three years now since graduating but have been in the industry about 10 years since I picked up the drafting pen.

A typical day in the office for me would be responding to queries that builders, clients or consultants may have, researching products and materials, looking into regulations & standards and some drawing.

How is God involved in my work? This is something I've been trying to work out ever since I entered the workforce and especially since work became more of a career. In the past few months I've come to see that a lot of it is about being an ambassador for Christ (2 Corinthians 5:20). This is one of our important roles as a Christian and what almost defines us as being a Christian.

So I guess God is involved in my work just like he is in every other part of my life. My life and work are about being a representative for God and he would probably be involved the same way if I were in any other job.

I look at the office as a job which God has blessed me with and where I try and represent him the best I can. To be honest though, there isn't a whole lot I do. It is really him who does all the work. I'm always really impressed how much he seems to be able to do with the little I can do to represent him. I guess it really comes down to letting him work his way through us in the situations we are in. This is never an easy thing – but always worth it when someone notices there's something different in us. ■

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Looking Back *Ivor & Eleanor Paull – a century on*

On 8 June 1935, in Melbourne, Ivor Paull (aged 31) married Eleanor Chaffer (aged 28). In 1947, Eleanor's father Ambrose, then aged 82, made this summary of their union, 'Our girl...ended up marrying a young doctor. Now she has one of the best men in the world for a husband, four bonnie children, and very busy life, but happy and contented with it all. What more can life give? Especially when that life has the vision of opening out in a fuller sphere of work and influence in the ages to come.'

Ivor was born at Maldon, Victoria, in 1904. In 1909, he moved with his family to the Atherton Tableland, north Queensland, where his father worked at a tin mine at Stannary Hills. Ivor attended Townsville Grammar School then graduated from University of Queensland with a Master of Science in 1926 and the University of Melbourne with a Bachelor of Medicine and a Bachelor of Surgery in 1932.

Eleanor was born in Ballarat, Victoria, in 1906 where Ambrose was a newspaper compositor and her parents worshipped with the Church of Christ there.¹ In 1910 the family moved to Healesville West, Victoria, where Ambrose bought 100 acres and planted 1,400 apple and pear trees while his wife, Annie, ran the home as a guest house accommodating 26 boarders. Worship and study were conducted in their home each Sunday with several other families attending. Eleanor was baptised into Christ at age 11.

Eleanor left school with her merit certificate aged 14 and helped her parents, working in the orchard and guest house, then spent two years delivering mail on horseback from the Healesville West Post Office. When she was 20 years old she moved to Melbourne and began her three years of general nursing training at the Alfred Hospital. She qualified in midwifery training at the Royal Women's Hospital.

This medical training brought Ivor and Eleanor together. Ivor was taught and baptised by his prospective father-in-law. The couple spent their honeymoon in Tasmania where Ivor was employed as a resident medical officer at the Hobart General Hospital.

Early in 1936 Ivor signed on as medical officer on a freighter, with Eleanor as the only passenger. They sailed to England for Ivor to pursue further medical studies at Middlesex Hospital. Here their first son was born in 1937. With war impending, in the following year the parents were measured for gas masks and when they discovered that none were issued for small children they decided that returning home was a good prospect! They left England on 19 July 1938 on the *Port Fairy*.

They arrived back in Australia and settled in the Melbourne suburb of Fairfield where Ivor joined a medical partnership which had the surgery and waiting room in the family home. Eleanor served as the nurse and receptionist. In the 1940s Eleanor's parents joined them, living in a backyard caravan. Each Sunday, worship meetings were conducted in their home with Ambrose and later Ivor teaching. The home meetings were to continue for the next couple of decades.

Three more children were born here, girls in 1940 and 1942 and another boy in 1946. For Bible training, Eleanor read Bible stories to the children each Sunday evening, and as the children grew, most evenings ended with a family Bible story and prayer.

The war years were a busy time for Ivor as he filled-in for doctors who had enlisted, in addition to continuing his own practice. Early mornings and late nights were often spent

visiting patients at home or in hospital or delivering babies. Likewise Eleanor cared for her own family as well as the medical practice in a time of rationing and blackouts. Cooking and water heating were on wood or coke stoves. People telephoned at all hours seeking assistance. Consequently, family outings were few and were often delayed by the needs of those who were ill.

In 1947 the family and Eleanor's parents moved to nearby Heidelberg and Ivor moved his medical practice to the centre of the city. Each Sunday afternoon the family, along with 3 or 4 other families, met for worship in their home. For Bible study, the adults met in the lounge room while the children gathered around the kitchen table on their own (without a teacher) studying a chapter in the Bible to answer questions prepared by Eleanor in their exercise books.

At the beginning of 1960 meetings were moved to a rented hall in Heidelberg West. Eleanor and Ivor were committed workers in the congregation. They used their home for training classes, business meetings and social gatherings of members as well as inviting brethren and visitors for meals. Even though her health had begun to deteriorate, Eleanor continued to meet with the church and often travelled interstate to meet with other congregations. After retiring from general practice, Ivor worked as a medical officer at Mont Park Psychiatric Hospital from 1962-69.

In 1965 the church, which was then meeting in its own building, appointed Ivor and two other men as elders for the congregation. Ivor often taught the adult class and occasionally children's classes



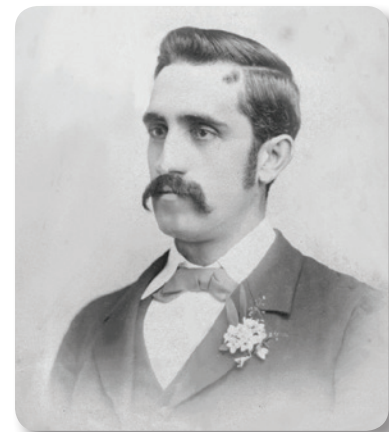
Ivor Paull: 1904-1970
Eleanor Paull: 1906-1978

as well. In 1967, Eleanor and her daughter, also named Eleanor, began to produce and distribute the church's monthly newsletter, *The Visitor*, which they did for the next ten years.

Ivor died suddenly in 1970, aged 66. Eleanor received many tributes from patients, friends and brethren. One described Ivor as, 'a gentle, patient and kindly man; a quiet helper of those in need.'

Eleanor and her elder daughter moved to Box Hill in 1977 and they became members of the Belmore Road congregation. By this time Eleanor had nine grandchildren. She died in 1978 aged 71. One Christian brother wrote, 'She was an extra special person, a real "mother in Israel". I believe she was one of the sweetest persons I have ever met.'

There is no doubt that both Ivor and Eleanor were great examples to many relatives and friends, encouraging them to pay attention to the importance of the Gospel. They also worked tirelessly in the church doing countless tasks, big and small, to support the brethren and provide help and instruction to all those who came in contact with the congregation – all the while with Ivor maintaining a busy medical practice. ■



Ambrose George Chaffer

1. Editorial note: Ambrose George Chaffer was a Christian who, by the early 1900s, was calling for a return to the old paths because of what he saw as increasing shifts away from biblical practices within many Churches of Christ of his time: see David Roper, *Voices Crying in the Wilderness: A History of The Lord's Church with Special Emphasis on Australia* (Salisbury, Adelaide: Restoration Publications, 1979) 301-303.

Ted Paull is the youngest of Ivor and Eleanor Paull's children. Ted and Pam and their family are longtime members of the Macquarie Church of Christ, Sydney. Ted thanks his siblings, John, Eleanor and Dorothy, and his cousin, Valerie Colley, for their generous help with information for this article. tedpaull@hotmail.com



10 Years Serving Australian Churches

The Australian Church of Christ Evangelistic Trust has now been in operation for a decade.

May 2014 saw the arrival of the 10th anniversary of the establishment of the Trust. Over those 10 years and through the generosity of Christians just like you, ACCET has helped to support:

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- 12 congregations.
- through the distribution of over \$120,000

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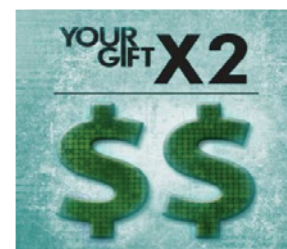
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