

NEWSLETTER

April 2024

Mardon Road Church

We exist to encourage each other on this journey of Christian faith, to share this message with others and to encourage one another to grow in maturity in Christ.

APRIL BIRTHDAYS

2nd Georgia Bennett
4th Aliyah Taiwo
4th Ben Watkinson
9th Josh Kimberley
15th Ben Chen
15th Helen Taiwo
23rd Carl Brandt
23rd Jonathan Miers
27th Levi Kerr
28th Elmarie Botes

Ben & Katie
Warmly invite you to
their Wedding Ceremony

4th May | 12:00pm | @ the church

COOKIE EXCHANGE

On Wednesday the 13th of March about 20 ladies turned up at church for the first annual Cookie Exchange. Lindsay and Maddi explained how the evening was going to work, each lady had to bring a batch of their favourite cookies. The Evening started off with a devotional about how the ANZAC biscuit was formed. All the ladies had a great time of fun and fellowship. Thanks to Maddi and Lindsay. >> RM



COMING UP ...

BAPTISM SERVICE

It's really exciting to announce a baptism service on the 5th of May for Emily Walton and Emma Cooney. If anyone else is interested in being baptised, please talk to someone on the leadership team.

EASTER THOUGHTS

As I watch the news and read commentary on Facebook and other places, I see we are continually being drawn into taking sides like a bloody battle in some macabre amphitheatre, or a scene from the Hunger Games. We are not permitted to just lean one way or the other, but we are demanded to enter the camp, so to speak, and put on the colours and fly the flag of the side we have chosen (or the one chosen for us). In our "camp" we are drawn, inevitably, to support, endorse or remain silent on what is inexcusable of the side we have taken, while continuing to fly the flag.

I find it disturbing when I hear people that I care about being dragged down into the mire by the polemic, side taking, approach. They end up fighting the cause by beating up on the person in front of them in what is often a single-issue approach to life. Who was it who said, "If all you have is a hammer then the whole world is a nail"?

Easter is, for me, a time to remember the battle of absolute good against objective evil. In that story evil, for a short season, appeared to win the day but then came the victory as all that is good and right won the day in the resurrection.

We went to the Easter service of our church here in Chiang Mai on Friday night. It was an intimate time where 12 people spoke about the meaning of the cross to them. It was so powerful hearing their stories and their humble acceptance of their own painful journeys and wrong-doing by them, by family members and others, and what the sacrifice and forgiveness of Jesus meant to them and their stories of lives being restored (we're all a work in progress, eh?). It was a refreshing break from the "You're wrong!" or "They're wrong" posturing to a vulnerable, open sharing of where "I was wrong" and "He forgave me" and, importantly, "I forgive you" or "I'm sorry".

It was a privilege to be with such a beautiful, sincere gathering. and to reflect on the side Jesus chose - He is our advocate/supporter/friend. He chose to love the enemy and to bless and forgive those who cursed and brutalised Him. So, forgiveness is where its at!

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This Easter I try to imagine a world where everyone who prayed, "forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us" was able to live that out. Actually I am just trying to imagine the 1970's and 1980's Belfast I grew up in trying to live that out. Catholics and Protestants alike can recite this from memory and yet sides were still taken, hatred was spewed amidst the prayers, and lives were lost and taken.

There is hope in the gospel but only if we allow its truth to come and dig deep on where we have been wronged and where we have wronged others. The gospel demands we learn the words, "I'm sorry" and "I forgive you". Jesus never implied they were optional.

I pray for a time where the whole Christian church, everyone who enters a church or chapel, cathedral or house-group, and even those who meet in secret, were to take these words of Christ and apply them to forgiving the family member they believe wronged them or apologising if that is needed; to forgiving the person at work who offended them or apologising; to forgiving political authorities that persecute them and treat its own citizens harshly; and, and, and, and all the other stuff that we carry around. I believe this would help us be the salt and light Jesus wanted us to be.

Happy Easter, one and all wherever you are, God bless!

>> Martin Campbell



NEWS FROM YVONNE

Dear whanau,

Time continues to fly by, with weeks quickly turning into months; I unbelievably have been in Australia for nearly six months! I hope I find you all well. I am well, mostly busy with work. The work I do is very busy and is tiring (I am not sure if it is the work or just age catching up!)

I am currently on a contract living and working in Warrnambool, Victoria. Warrnambool is a beautiful coastal town southwest of Victoria. It has extensive beaches, where I often take walks after work, the stand out is the rocky ocean scenery at Thunder Point. I go to thunder point when I feel homesick. I have made a few friends that I spend time with during weekends, touring Victoria, enjoying the sights and trying new food and experiences. One of most outstanding experience was attending an Aussie rules game with over 100000 others! It was such an electric atmosphere... I regrettably have been swept by the mania around the footy and turned my back on Super Rugby (for now!). The other one was visiting Mt Gambier and its majestic underground waterworld, seeing the deep blue crater lakes, lush sunken gardens and limestone and volcanic landscapes of Mt Gambier. Just to name a few. Everywhere I look I am reminded of God's glory in his creation. Psalm 19 comes to mind. "How clearly the sky reveals God's glory! How plainly it shows what he has done!..." I currently have Graeme visiting, which is such a treat. How lovely it is to have company. We plan to go on a road trip on the Great Ocean Road, visit the Redwoods in the Great Otway National park and end up at the famous Timboon Ice creamery.

My work contract runs until the end of June. I plan to take up a new contract for a further 3 months, hopefully this next contract will be in Western Australia (Broome), giving me a chance to live and work in what I heard is the most beautiful part of Australia before returning home to NZ around October.

Until we see each other again, may the grace and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, the Messiah be yours.

Warm regards, Yvonne

APRIL 2024

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1	2	3	4 7:15p choir	5	6
7 10:30a church speaker: Geoff Follas wl: Carl Brandt shared lunch	8	9	10 7:30p leadership meeting @ Neville's	11	12	13
14 10:30a church speaker: TBA wl: Peter Moss	15	16	17	18 7:15p choir	19	20
21 10:30a church speaker: Dave Firth wl: Ben Watkinson	22	23	24 10:00a coffee group @ Glenyss'	25	26	27 8:00a car boot sale @ church
28 10:30a church speaker: Geoff Follas wl: Paul Goble	29	30				