



ASSEMBLIES  
*Outreach*

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**October 2021**



*Laurie Cowell*  
9/2/1938 – 24/9/2021

**In this issue: Praying for CCCAust(NSW) affiliates  
Laurie Cowell and 'Outreach'  
News from Commended Workers  
Inspiring Hope - 10 years  
Jesus the Soul-Winner  
A Hint on Sharing the Gospel  
What on earth am I here for?  
Internet Corner**

**( ... and more)**

## Assemblies

# Outreach

Magazine Vol. 50, No. 5

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Evangelistic Mission (NSWAEM)

The NSWAEM publishes this bi-monthly magazine to offer opportunities for NSW Commended Workers, Assemblies, Para-Assembly activities and other kindred bodies, to share information about their ministries, to encourage others, and to encourage prayer.

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Written contributions to *Assemblies Outreach* magazine are welcome and actively sought from NSW Assemblies and any associated ministries and individuals.

Please submit your assembly news, people profiles, letters, etc, for the **December 2021 issue on or before 13<sup>th</sup> Nov 2021.**

Contributors enjoy reasonable liberty in their expression of opinion and exposition of Scripture within the boundaries of a biblical evangelical Christian faith. Neither the Editorial Team, the Board of NSW Assemblies' Evangelistic Mission, nor Commended Workers are to be held responsible for every view that may be expressed in these pages.

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# Awake to Israel

History • Current Events • Prophecy • Evangelism

*...To declare unto you all the counsel of God. Acts 20:27*

Meetings are held monthly,

February to November

2nd Saturday, 2.30pm

Gospel Chapel

Cnr Carlingford Rd and  
Epping, NSW

For further information

[www.awaketoisrael.org](http://www.awaketoisrael.org)

[mail@awaketoisrael.org](mailto:mail@awaketoisrael.org)

Awake to Israel is a ministry of Epping Gospel  
Chapel and combined Brethren Assemblies of  
Australia

**Our purpose:**

**Normal Programmes will return  
as soon as possible!  
Check ATI Website for  
ZOOM session dates!**

...to study what the  
Scriptures say concerning Israel  
and our relationship with Her, as gentile  
believers now and in the future.  
We encourage the believers in Israel  
to do as much as they can.

...to facilitate and be involved in  
evangelism and discipleship of  
the Jewish people.

To pray for Israel.

**Everyone is welcome and  
encouraged to come together and  
search the Scriptures**



Dear Readers,  
Welcome to this October 2021 edition of the Assemblies Outreach magazine, but I must immediately apologise, and take responsibility for, it arriving in your hands in early November! (I hope it does arrive!!)

What with lockdowns, Covid-19 restrictions, “to Zoom or not to Zoom”, travel restrictions, breathing through a mask difficulties, and general old-age issues — I just don’t know who or what to blame. So ... moving right along ...

Our team’s sincere condolences go to Margaret Cowell and all her family on their loss of her husband Laurie who was called to glory on 24<sup>th</sup> September. He had been very unwell for some months and was being cared for in Bethshean Nursing Home.

Please see pages 7 to 9 in this magazine for information about Laurie’s years of faithful service with the NSW Assemblies Evangelistic Mission from 1975 to 1985, for which the current Board is very thankful.

No doubt a full account of his life’s work will appear soon in the Spearhead

magazine published by GLO Ministries.

Now that the Covid-19 virus is coming under better control because many people have been vaccinated, probably many of our readers are beginning to re-gather for worship, and other meetings, in their usual premises. I trust your ministries will all recover well after the upheaval, and they may in fact have benefitted in some ways.

I would love to hear stories of how it all went for you, your family and your church, and would love to publish anything, for which you give permission, in an upcoming edition.

Have you used more technology for church ministry in the last 18 months or so? What worked well for you and what didn’t? Other churches could benefit from your experiences and advice—so please share with the rest of us (especially we ‘oldies’) so we can serve God better. □

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**If you attend a NSW assembly, or you work with any associated Christian Brethren ministry, please feel free to submit your local news or event dates to this 'Out and About' section so we can inform and encourage people in all our assemblies and churches.**

Short items (even if only one sentence) are welcome and can be mailed to this magazine at PO Box 20, Pennant Hills, NSW 1715, or better still, e-mailed to:

[outreach-mag@optusnet.com.au](mailto:outreach-mag@optusnet.com.au)

\* \* \*

Please note that COVID lockdowns have put on hold the usual meetings of the NSW Women's Missionary Prayer & Support Fellowship each month. Other options are being considered by those who normally take part. Of course the women can each still pray at home for the missionaries overseas and in Australia who welcome the prayer support.

\* \* \*

From Ken Harding (25<sup>th</sup> Sept 2021):

"Known to most as Laurie Cowell and loved far and wide, this dear man of God was called to His reward, early afternoon, Friday 24<sup>th</sup> September 2021, at 83 years of age.

"After coming to the Lord as a young man, Laurie attended Emmaus Bible School in the early 60's before going to France to study French in preparation for missionary service in Chad, Africa. After 11 fruitful years there he and Margaret returned to Australia with their family and continued to serve the Lord in the Sydney and Campbelltown

areas and since 1987 has been a co-director of GLO Ministries. Laurie was a faithful servant of the Lord, a man of vision, and one of the most dedicated Church planters ever seen by many. Our hearts go out to his dear wife Margaret, their four sons, many grandchildren and one great-grandchild. We thank God for his memory and the legacy he has left us of dedicated service, especially his passion for the Gospel."

(Please see pages 7 to 9 for info about Laurie's service with the NSW Assemblies Evangelistic Mission. A more complete Eulogy may be available in the future. Probably it will appear in GLO's Spearhead magazine.)

\* \* \*

A moving Celebration Service for Lawrence Edward Cowell was held at the Riverstone Community Church, on 29<sup>th</sup> September starting at 10am.

Alan Driver led the service and Andrew Cowell (a co-director of GLO Ministries Australia) gave the eulogy about his father. The whole service was live streamed and is still available on the Rivo church page on YouTube. Visit:

<https://www.youtube.com/c/rivochurch>  
and click on "Videos" Tab.

\* \* \*

**A message** from the Pathfinders Committee at West Penno CC:

"We hope and pray that you have been keeping well during the lockdown period over the last few months. Even though it is planned to lift lockdown by 1<sup>st</sup> December some ➤

restrictions in NSW will continue to apply that will not permit us to proceed with the Pathfinders event planned for Saturday, the 27<sup>th</sup> of November, so we have no alternative but to cancel it.

“Please be in prayer with us for the entire Pathfinders community that we will all be kept safe and will be able to celebrate Christmas with family and friends. Next year we will send out advice on future Pathfinder events.

“If you have any questions kindly contact one of the Pathfinders committee:

- Peter and Beth 9484 3235
- Ken and Christine 9674 5016
- Phil and Jennifer 0405 270 688
- Martin and Renata 0411 422 236

Blessings in our Lord Jesus Christ.”

\* \* \*

**Notes** about the next NSW Coordinating Conference planned for 4<sup>th</sup> November on Zoom:-

“We are pleased to welcome George Fattal from Bankstown Community Church, who will provide us with an overview of this church and its recent activities. Please join in, both to be encouraged by the Lord’s work at a vibrant church, and also to be an encouragement to George and the team at Bankstown.

“We also have the exciting opportunity to hear from and welcome two new churches to our network – Trinity Church (Tamworth) and City Reach (South Tuggeranong).

“There will also be updates from various other ministries in NSW.”

## Meetings & Events

Please note that because of the ongoing uncertainties caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, any dates published in this section may be subject to change, even at short notice.

If in doubt, contact the organisers of any event(s) you are interested in.

(Note: for **the latest details** of the Events listed below, please be also sure to check on the organisations’ websites:-

### 2021: (reserve the dates)

November:

- 4<sup>th</sup> **Coordinating Conference;**  
via Zoom; 7.30pm.
- 6<sup>th</sup> **Inspire Conference** - Rhodes.
- 12<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> **M2MAD** mid-term weekend camp at Camp Fletcher.

December:

### 2022: (reserve the dates)

February:

March:

- 25<sup>th</sup>-26<sup>th</sup> **Build Conference:** at CCC Camps Central Coast; speakers are Malcolm Gill and Roy Gomez.



Please submit any news items, letters, adverts or short articles for the December 2021 magazine on, or before, 13<sup>th</sup> November.

Please take some time-out daily to pray for our Assemblies and para-Church ministries and all the work of God in our nation.

## General Prayer Points:

- > Pray that our churches can be salt and light in our changing world; that we can show the love of Christ through the way we interact with our neighbours, friends and family. May people see Christ in us.
- > Pray that we as churches will not forget that even as society changes, we have a sovereign Lord who is in control and we, as His people, are still on the offensive, taking the Good News of Jesus to a world of people who need this wonderful news.
- > Pray that our church elders will have wisdom as they lead our local churches, especially in the uncharted waters of COVID -19.
- > Pray for the continuing work of Hands & Feet in NSW, and for God's protection over that ministry as it expands in Sydney, Brisbane and Perth.
- > Pray for our urban and rural communities to be revitalised as they emerge from the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and associated safety measures implemented by our State and Federal governments.
- > Pray that the Lord will have mercy on the people of our nation, and that many more people will hear the Gospel and be saved.

*If you have any matters on your heart (praise or prayer) relating to your congregation, your ministry, or the organisation you work with, and you would like to share them with our readers – please contact “The Editor, AO magazine, PO Box 20, Pennant Hills 1715” or simply email “outreach-mag@optusnet.com.au”.*

*We will do our best to include such matters in the next issue of this magazine – which will be printed in mid-December 2021 (DV).*

*Failing that, it would have to be printed in the February 2022 issue – so please always include your contact details in case I need to check if a matter is still current.*



# Laurie Cowell and 'Outreach'

by Colin Winrow  
Hon. Sec NSW AEM

Watching the Celebration Service at Riverstone Community Church for the life of our brother in Christ, Laurie Cowell, on 29<sup>th</sup> September, was for many people both a sad and a happy time. We were sad for his wife Margaret and his sons and their families. We know they will miss him very much and so will his many friends and colleagues in ministry over many years.

But it was also a time for thanksgiving and rejoicing for his life, largely spent serving the Lord in many ways. This was all covered well by Andrew Cowell who gave the Eulogy at the Celebration Service.

Because I only met Laurie midway through his Christian life, I have always thought of him and GLO as "one". Hence I was surprised to hear Andrew mention that Laurie served with the NSW Assemblies Evangelistic Mission after he and Margaret returned from the Chad, specifically in relation to the Christian Outreach Book Service and the Outreach Shops.

After the on-line Service, I began to search past copies of this magazine to find out more about Laurie's time with

the AEM. I found he and Margaret were commended as Home Workers by the Assemblies at Brookvale, Ballarat, and the new assembly at Baulkham Hills-Winston Hills to help at the Outreach Centre, Newtown. Laurie was sure he was called to work primarily in NSW in Evangelism and Bible Teaching.

He started at Newtown on 1<sup>st</sup> October 1975 and their photo appeared for the first time in the Sept/Oct 1975 edition of this Assemblies Outreach (AO) Magazine - all in Black and White of course! Underneath the photo was a statement of "the precise work in which Laurie would be engaged." Summarised, it listed (a) Visitation of Assemblies in NSW for evangelism and a teaching ministry; (b) overall responsibility in the Outreach Book Service for the assessment, provision, and supply of Bibles, Books, and Booklets; and (c) consider starting a state-wide plan to visit as many Agricultural Shows as possible, to display Bibles and other Christian literature, and follow-up contacts.

From that point in time newsletters from Laurie and Margaret appeared >8



in many issues of the AO Magazine, giving details of their work for the Lord as well as news of their family (4 boys at this stage, because Stephen was born in 1975) and news of their growing involvement with their local assembly at Winston Hills.

Evangelism was flourishing in those days. In the Nov/Dec 1975 magazine the Cowells wrote their first "Letter from the Field" and I was amazed to find all the following people wrote letters in the same magazine issue:

Walter Sims, Fred & Betty McMinn,  
Mr & Mrs G. Saxby, Miss V. Golf,  
George & Rita Galieh,  
Ray & Betty Gunter, and  
George & Beatrice Turner.  
(Wow!)

Laurie's letter mentioned that the New Testament translation into one of the Chadic languages (Gabri) came to an end on 30<sup>th</sup> September when the final manuscript was shipped to the Bible Society in London for printing. But a 'new door' had certainly opened for him in NSW. In his first month with AEM he had visited four Assemblies in the Newcastle area, including the fairly new one at Tingara Heights.

He was also settling into the routine work at Mission Centre, Newtown, and was impressed with the amount being done to distribute books and tapes all over Australia. There were at least ten volunteers doing one or more days per week there, plus other people 'behind the scenes'.

Since starting, he had been to Sunday night meetings at Asquith, Valley

Heights, Abbotsford, and Pennant Hills, and he was about to be at Orange for 3 days.

In the Jan/Feb 1976 magazine Laurie had an article about the Outreach Book Service (OBS) and eight short book reviews. This work went on regularly every month, plus he helped other groups to ship supplies to Chad.

I noted articles about GLO began appearing in AO magazines and Laurie was invited to help teach on some of the courses, including at the new GLO Training Centre at Smithton, Tasmania. Their ministry was expanding and Laurie's gifts were being put to good use and "the rest (so the saying goes) is history!"

Back in OBS, Laurie helped Devonport Assembly open a bookshop in Nov 1976. By the end of 1977 Laurie was appointed a Joint Company Secretary, along with Graham Hayden, of the whole Mission based at Newtown.

By the end of 1978, there were bookshops opened, in Guildford, Newtown, Gosford, West Wyalong and Mortdale.

I noted that in mid-1979 a NSW Home Workers List was published and it stated Laurie was involved in "Ministry of the Word" and "Outreach Mission Centre activities" - this must be shorthand for "a very busy brother".

His letter in the Jan/Feb 1980 magazine said Laurie had been invited to help establish an Assembly at Campbelltown. His next letter showed the family had moved to Ruse in that area on 1 Feb 1980, and Margaret had ➤



started teaching scripture classes in local schools.

Laurie was also still busy at Newtown but he did appeal for extra help, as the Christian Literature work was growing.

In mid-1980 the Cowell's letter said Margaret was teaching scripture in four schools; the Campbelltown assembly now had 10 families and its Sunday School was meeting in the Cowell's double garage. By year's end they are both very busy and praying for someone to take over Laurie's responsibilities at Outreach.

The Lord answered in His time, and by the 1983 AGM at Mission Centre, Laurie finished as Joint Secretary. Philip Kinmond (from Campsie) came

to assist Graham Hayden in various ways.

The work at Campbelltown Christian Fellowship was growing and growing in many respects throughout 1984 and 1985. A building program started and Stage 1 was complete by mid-December 1985. Over the years Laurie had thanked the AO readers for their prayers many times, and his last letter published in the magazine, dated 15<sup>th</sup> December 1985, was full of "God Answers Prayer" items.

What a faithful, hard-working, godly man he was. AEM was blessed by his services and energy, but was too small to contain him. Other ministries needed him! □



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**Brendon & Sarah Walker**  
**1 Shannon Street**  
**Lalor Park NSW 2147**  
**(extracts from emails)**

**19 September 2021**

### **Chaplaincy in Lockdown:**

*It's been hard to connect with students individually online this term as there always needs to be 2 adults present in an online situation. Having another teacher in the conversation has made it a lot trickier for the students to open up about life. We did get a chance to chat with one student who is a Christian and pray with them which was good, but it's just not the same online.*

*We have tried a number of different strategies over the term to see what worked best in order to connect with the students and care for their mental health. Some of them totally didn't work and some of them have worked well. I ended up asking the teachers if they wanted me and Leonard (the Student support officer) to join their class for a period and run some games to help the students connect with each other and break things up a bit. This worked really well and we had lots of positive feedback from teachers and students. Despite the challenges of the term there have still been opportunities to continue to build relationships with teachers and students. We are thankful that God is not bound by lockdown.*

### **Family:**

*As we are now into week 12 of being in one of the strictest lockdown LGA's we*

*are all feeling pretty tired and very glad it is the school holidays next week. We are looking forward to the change of pace even if it is not a change in location. We have got into a good routine with school/preschool work and are including lots of fun activities where we can. Our trampoline is getting a good daily workout and is helping us in our quest to increase our step count each day. We celebrated Annie's 5<sup>th</sup> birthday by declaring it a day off work/school and did lots of fun activities together.*

### **Prayer & Praise:**

- *Praise God for all the ways that He is continuing to work despite the fact that we are all stuck at home in lockdown.*
- *Pray for more opportunities to be the love of Jesus at Glenwood in the midst of the current restrictions.*
- *Please continue to pray that God would clearly lead us to the people He has prepared in advance to partner with us financially in order for us to continue to work at Glenwood High.*
- *Pray for us as a family as we continue to negotiate life in lockdown; that we would look to God as our strength and joy each day.* ➤

**Please submit any news items, letters, adverts or short articles for the December 2021 magazine on, or before, 13<sup>th</sup> November.**



**John & Irene Hills**  
16 Stewart Street  
Campbelltown NSW 2560  
26 September 2021

*Many Thanks for the gift sent to us. It has been an interesting few months, Irene has had open heart surgery and is doing well, I had to gut our bathroom – take out the old cast-iron bathtub and put a shower in, as well as all the other things going on.*

*It's been a very unusual year so far! Despite Covid, we have been able to still record programs for TV, and also help other folk involved in Christian work with Video production.*

*We trust you and your families are well.*

*Lord Bless. John and Irene.*



**Doug & Jenny McNaught**  
46 Barnetts Road  
Winston Hills NSW 2153  
20 October 2021

*Dear friends,*

*Thank you for gifts and prayers for us in recent months.*

*We have had quite a long, hard winter during the lockdown.*

*Just before we went into lockdown I (Doug) had a trip to emergency and found out that I needed to have a gangrenous gall bladder removed.*

*Not long after I came home we had to bury Jenny's mother, Daphne Akehurst. Only ten people were allowed to attend the funeral.*

*Next, I had a fall at home, and went down to Emergency again. The doctors wouldn't let me come home until they installed a pacemaker for my heart. I had a bad reaction to the dressings and am still struggling to get over that.*

*While I was in hospital our twelfth grandchild was born, so I was glad to come home to see the new baby.*

*Yours in Him*

*Doug & Jenny*



**Greg & Sarah Clark**  
Camp Kedron  
7 Emmaus Road  
Ingleside NSW 2101  
27 September 2021

*Thank you to the Board at AEM. We have appreciated your prayers and care over the many years you have supported us. Whilst it has been very challenging not having anyone here for such a long time, last week we were able to run a 5 Day camp where children came at 8am*

*>12*

and left at 5pm each day. They were faithfully taught the Gospel and given an opportunity to respond. One boy asked how he can know Christ and then gave his life to Jesus. On the last day they were able to make the gospel beads and that brought many questions, one camper asking can you go over each colour so I don't forget what each mean. It was a wonderful week and we are doing the same this week for Monday and Tuesday. Please pray that the seed will produce much fruit and that the children from these Day Camps will book in for our January residential Camps. Another prayer point is that a boy last week fell over in the Sports Centre and chipped his front two teeth and we are now dealing with the parents who are not too happy and think we have been negligent and may start court proceedings. We are seeking God's wisdom as the best way to deal with the whole situation. Thank you again for your prayers and support. We will put the gift towards the running of these 2-day camps over the holidays.

God bless.

Greg

**Geoff & Liz Folland**  
**9 Amberley Court**  
**Wantirna Vic 3152**  
**15 October 2021**

Dear Friends,

We are still learning the culture of this city, and thinking about how it affects our mission to make disciples of all nations. As Victoria approaches the 70% vaccination rate which will allow the easing of some restrictions, we are looking forward to engaging in more rela-

tionships with neighbours and friends.

**Mentoring & Colleagues:**

Last Monday, our friends and colleagues Grant & Kathryn Bickerton organised a picnic dinner for our families. You may remember that in our last prayer letter, Philip and Katrise were lamenting the lack of opportunity to make friends. Grant & Kathryn's practical ministry to us was such an encouragement, esp. since our kids had such a great time with theirs.

One of the other things we can do during lockdown is going out for exercise with a friend. I've been using the time to meet with our key leaders. Today, I went for a walk with Tim Freyer.

Tim and his wife Liz have been serving with our Families ministry in Australia for seven years. Prior to that, they served in a difficult ministry context in North Africa. Tim served on campus at Penn State in the US before he met Liz. Liz is originally from South Africa. Prior to COVID, a significant proportion of their ministry was speaking at marriage conferences, and reaching out to their local community. However, over the past two years, they have embraced the opportunity to train others in the MyFriends evangelism training our Church Movements team uses, while also investing in other leaders. With three demanding young kids at home, it's not been easy. But I have been encouraged by Tim's positivity, good humour and "can-do" attitude.

Thanks again for your prayer and partnership. We could not do this ministry without you!

In His grace, Geoff & Liz.



# “Inspiring Hope - 10<sup>th</sup> Birthday Celebrations”

by Narelle Harris

It has been 10 years since a group of people sat in a lounge room with a desire to do something for God. In those 10 years we have run:

- 59 Camps
- 17 Conferences
- 11 Terms of Mentoring and
- 1 Intervention Program.

Prior to the Covid lockdown we were able to have a small birthday celebration at Camp Fletcher. We shared stories of God’s faithfulness and dreams for the future.

We are so thankful for each person and organisation who has partnered with us, every volunteer who has served and each person who has



prayed. We will be forever grateful for each child we have had the privilege of sharing the gospel with, each life we have been able to instil hope in, >14



(Left to Right) Alberto, Nat, Jen (IH founder), Gemma, Jess and Narelle

and each individual we have had the privilege of leading into a personal relationship with Jesus.

Through these programs we have had the privilege of sharing the Gospel with 4,873 lives and seen thousands of lives make first time decisions for salvation.

This year, in March, we held our first Intervention Program. We took on four girls who were not going to school and they stayed with us for a whole month. We taught them life skills, coping techniques and helped them see that despite the challenges and disadvantages they had encountered in life they could still make positive life choices and had the potential to do something with their lives.

After the program all of the participants made positive decisions around their living circumstances and re-engaged with school.

The program went really well and we are hoping to be able to run it again before the end of this year.

We are so thankful for all that God has done through this ministry over the past 10 years and are looking forward to all that He has in store for the future.

### **Inspire Conference**

Inspire Conference will be going ahead online again this year and will be held on Saturday, 6<sup>th</sup> November. Our theme is Moment by Moment looking at the question: “What will you do with your moments, your years, days, hours and seconds?” For more information visit our website:-

[www.inspiringhope.org.au](http://www.inspiringhope.org.au)

### **January Camps**

We are eagerly planning and praying that we will be able to go ahead with our January 2022 Holiday Outreach Camps. Kids and teens have done it hard with the lockdowns and it has been particularly difficult for many of the kids that we work with, many of whom have learning difficulties and behavioural challenges due to the trauma they have faced in their lives. They are very much needing some fun, connection, love and hope to be injected back into their lives.

### **Partner with Us**

The best way that you can partner with us is to pray. Pray that we will be able to go ahead with our January camps and that the children will have open hearts and will accept Jesus as their Lord and Saviour.

The best ways to contact us are via phone: 0456 159 670 or email:

[admin@inspiringhope.org.au](mailto:admin@inspiringhope.org.au)

The Camp Fletcher postal address:-  
69 Alexander Ave,  
Hazelbrook NSW 2779



*As sure as God puts His  
children in the furnace,  
He will be in the furnace  
with them.*

*Charles H Spurgeon*

# Conquering “giants” in your life

The Word for Today

*‘I have given you authority over all the power of the enemy’  
Luke 10:19*

When he went out to fight Goliath, David said, ‘You come to me with sword, spear, and javelin, but I come to you in the name of the Lord... and He will give you to us!’ (1 Samuel 17:45, 47<sup>NLT</sup>)

Nobody in King Saul’s army seemed to have factored God into the equation, but David talked about nothing else.

He saw what they didn’t, and refused to be intimidated by what they did. He believed that the God he served was bigger than the giant he faced.

Do you believe that too? Do you see God as bigger than your problem?

If you are in a situation where there appears to be no way out, instead of wasting time and energy dwelling on your own weaknesses and shortcomings, stand on God’s Word and start talking about His power. You won’t win if you fight in your own strength, so don’t try it!

David said, ‘This is the Lord’s battle.’ (1 Samuel 17:47<sup>NLT</sup>) And God has never lost a battle! So confront your ‘giant’ in the name

of the Lord and declare: ‘Giant of divorce, you aren’t entering my home; depression, you won’t conquer me; alcohol, bigotry, insecurity, lust, you’re coming down!’

The Bible says, ‘When the enemy comes in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord will lift up a standard [a flag of victory] against him.’ (Isaiah 59:19<sup>NKJV</sup>)

There are three things Satan can’t withstand:

God’s Word,  
Christ’s blood, and  
The name of Jesus.

When you use those things you’ll bring Satan down every time—just like David toppled Goliath!



*Peace I leave with you;  
My peace I give you.  
I do not give to you as the  
world gives. Do not let your  
hearts be troubled and do not  
be afraid. John 14:27<sup>NIV</sup>*

# “Jesus the Soul-winner” – notes for a sermon

by Ken Harding

## Read: John’s Gospel 4:1-42

### Surely not me, Lord!

Some people almost faint at the thought of witnessing to others and in our modern day we are positively discouraged from daring to speak to people about or for the Lord. After all *“religion is such a personal thing and we should all keep it to ourselves.”* Right? Well, not according to Jesus!

### Why are we here?

I had never heard a sermon on this topic until I was asked to speak on John chapter four using this heading. But I quickly saw that there were some real issues in the soul-winning ministry of our Lord which may help us in our own efforts to be effective witnesses for Him.

Jesus started His public ministry by calling people to *“follow Me and I will make you to be fishers of men.”* Matt. 4:17-20. Then He said *“I have not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance.”* Matt. 9:13. His well known call was *“Come to me all you who are weary and heavy laden and I will give you rest,”* Matt. 11:28 and *“If anyone thirst let him come to me and drink.”* John 7:37-39.

In addition, He had compassion on the crowd, He touched the leper, He gave sight to the blind, He raised the dead and He cured all kinds of diseases. He calmed the storm and He fed the

multitude; but above all He came to give eternal life to all who would believe. (From all four Gospels and John 3:14-36.)

### An inconvenient pathway.

Now in John chapter four we have the meeting between Jesus and a Samaritan woman and we should note that religious Jews would normally avoid going through Samaria because they found the Samaritan people and their way of life utterly objectionable. So, even though it was longer to cross the Jordan river, go through Perea and Decapolis up to Galilee, that was preferable to having contact or confrontation with those Samaritans. However, Jesus needed to go through Samaria! Was it because His Father sent Him that way to meet the need of that one needy person?

How willing am I to go out of my way to be where there are needy people, whether they be a different ethnic group, culture, language or colour from “my normalcy” or comfortable environment?

Maybe my sense of being sent is lacking and I feel sent to my comfortable armchair rather than to let my life be disturbed.

**The Soul-winner in Action. (Availability, not ability.) 4:4-6** (many references given below ‘overlap’)

So, Jesus arrives at His point of destiny – Sychar’s well. Now, a good image of a well-prepared sales person is that they are well dressed, refreshed, and looking just like those adverts for ➤

Please submit any items for the  
December 2021 magazine on,  
or before, 13<sup>th</sup> November



expensive products. Certainly not tired, exhausted, hungry and thirsty and sitting down on the job. But that is just what Jesus was and yet He was an instrument in Almighty God's hand to reach that one needy woman with living water. God wants our willingness and availability, not some sleek polished performance.

### **The Soul-winner's technique. 4:7-14**

- a) Be where there are needy people.
- b) Be humble enough to ask help or a question.
- c) Treat the person with respect.
- d) Add some intrigue or a question.
- e) Draw their attention to Jesus.

All these things are seen in this story, though some may not work out for us the way they did in this account.

### **The Soul-winner's teaching. 4:10-14**

Jesus introduces Himself into the equation, verse 10, and **we** should always turn the conversation toward the Lord Jesus. Here Jesus introduces,

- a) the gift of God,
- b) He Himself,
- c) what He offers.

He then listens to her until she asks a question to which He can respond with greater revelation of Himself.

- d) He shows her the futility of her own resources v. 11,
- e) He then shows her the abundant adequacy of His resources, resulting in everlasting life.

### **The Soul-winner's conviction. 4:16-18**

Jesus was unwilling to let her continue in her life of sin, for had not the prophecy said "*He will save His*

*people FROM their sins*" not **IN** their sins, Matt 1:21. So He put His finger of conviction on her immorality (sin) by the command "*go call your husband!*" and when she said that she had no husband Jesus was able to do what we can't do, that is point to sin of which we may not be aware. "*You have had five husbands, and now you have one who is not your husband...*" Now this woman changes the subject to one where she is more comfortable, the issue of where to worship God. But Jesus brings it back to the true worship... "*the Father in spirit and in truth.*" v. 24

### **The Soul-winner's fulfilment.**

Jesus now reveals Himself to her, "*I who speak to you am He.*" v. 26

Now the time had come for this woman to be drawn to the Saviour in believing faith. And she then went away to proclaim Jesus as her Messiah/ Saviour and:

- a) Many of the Samaritans believed in Jesus because of her testimony, v 39.
- b) Many more believed in Jesus when He stayed two days longer and they heard His own words. All confirming John 5:24 "*He who hears my word and believes in Him who sent me has everlasting life and shall not come into judgement but has passed from death into life.*"

### **The Soul-winner's vision. 4:32-38**

Jesus gives the true basis of every soul-winner's vision, v. 34. "*My food is to do the will of Him who sent me and to finish His work...*" Jesus saw what His disciples could not see, "*Fields, white unto harvest.*" When we are tuned to the Father's will, we too, will see >18

the fields white for harvest. No doubt with the cornfields before Him and the crowd of Samaritans coming toward Him, Jesus saw the human crowd as fields “white unto harvest.” Do we see the people all around us as ready for harvest? It is true that we don’t have our Saviour’s vision, but we do have our Saviour’s saving message: water for the thirsty soul, bread for the hungry heart, and we too can say “come see a man who satisfies...”

### **The Soul-winner’s appeal.**

In Matthew 9:36-38 Jesus saw the

people as sheep without a shepherd and He was moved with compassion, saying “*the harvest truly is plentiful, but the labourers are few. Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers into His harvest.*” And before He went back to His Father in heaven He said “*You shall be My witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria and to the end of the earth.*” Acts 1:8.

I wonder if there’s a “**Samaria**” which I’d prefer to avoid but which Jesus wants me to reach for Him?



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## Mental health support

This is a very difficult time for many. Should you, or someone you know, need mental health support, we would encourage you to make use of the crisis supports available to you. You can call any of these:

Kids Helpline	1800 55 1800	<a href="http://www.kidshelpline.com.au">www.kidshelpline.com.au</a>
Beyond Blue	1300 224 636	<a href="http://www.beyondblue.org.au">www.beyondblue.org.au</a>
Headspace	1800 650 890	<a href="http://www.headspace.org.au">www.headspace.org.au</a>
Mission Australia	02 9219 2000	<a href="http://www.missionaustralia.com.au">www.missionaustralia.com.au</a>
Lifeline, 24hr counselling	13 11 14	<a href="http://www.lifeline.org.au">www.lifeline.org.au</a>
Suicide Call Back Service	1300 659 467	<a href="http://www.suicidecallbackservice.org.au">www.suicidecallbackservice.org.au</a>
1800 RESPECT (Domestic Violence support)	1800 737 732	<a href="http://www.1800respect.org.au">www.1800respect.org.au</a>
Streetwork	02 9419 7559	<a href="http://www.streetwork.org.au">www.streetwork.org.au</a>

There are also many online resources available at

[www.headtohealth.gov.au](http://www.headtohealth.gov.au)

# Another Hint on how to share the Gospel

— keep it simple

by Aaron Daniell  
(AFCI)

I was sitting in a high profile meeting with mature, highly capable men when one of them leaned forward and asked, “What is the gospel, can you explain it simply to me?”.

If you were asked this question, how would you respond? What would you say? Where would you begin?

Many sincere God-loving Christians struggle to know how to simply articulate the core truths of the gospel in a sentence or two. I know I once did. You may be asking, is it even possible to explain the essence of the gospel in a sentence?

Today I want to share with you a key passage that will help you know how to simply explain the gospel. You no longer need to wonder what you will say when you are given an opportunity to share the gospel.

As all those men waited for a reply to that question, I was grateful the Lord reminded me of the words of the Apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 15:3-5 that say:

*“For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures. And that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve.”*

In these few short verses, we see the gospel in its simplest form wrapped in two core truths. If you can remember these two core truths, you will be able to share the Gospel with anyone. Can you see the two core truths? Take another look at the passage.

The two core truths are these:-

1. Christ died for our sins, and
2. He was raised on the third day.

These two truths are so profound and yet the gospel is still that simple.

One sentence that captures the gospel – Jesus died for our sin, and He was raised to life so we can know Him personally.

This is the one sentence I used to respond to the men waiting for my answer. This is a sentence you can keep in mind to begin simply explaining the gospel to someone. Your conversation no doubt will begin where the person is at, but with these two truths locked in your mind, you can naturally explain the beauty of the gospel in conversation in a way that is simple and relevant to the person you are talking to.

*Christ died for our sin* – Jesus took the punishment we deserve upon himself, giving us peace with God.

*He was raised on the third day* – Jesus is alive, and we can have a personal relationship with our living saviour.

This is the simple message our world needs to hear. This is the simple message God has sent you to share!

Today, God wants you to relax in your conversation when it comes to sharing the gospel and with these two gospel truths in mind, **keep it simple**.

Who has God sent you into relationship with that needs to hear these two gospel truths?

➤20

Take a moment now to read the passage again and ask God to give you an opportunity to share these truths with that person.

What encouragement can we get from 1 Corinthians 15:3-5 when it comes to keeping it simple?

**Keep the Gospel your priority.**

For Paul the simple unchanging message of the gospel was of primary importance. He says, I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received. If there is one thing Paul wanted people to know and understand, one thing he wanted them to remember and prioritise in life, it was the simple message of the gospel. So, keep the gospel your priority.

**Keep the gospel, the gospel.**

The gospel, Christ died for our sins and He was raised so we can know Him personally, is the one unchanging message that has been preached around the world, throughout generations, in different languages, to men, women and children. This is the one unchanging


message that has transformed countless lives and brings hope to all humanity. This is one message we never change. This is the message we share in its entirety. It is the power of this message alone that brings life and peace. So, keep the gospel, the gospel.

**Keep confident in the truth of the gospel.**

Can you see the evidence in the passage that supports the truth of the gospel?

The proof that Christ died is he was buried. Jesus Christ actually died and was actually buried in a tomb.

The proof that Christ was raised is he appeared to Cephas, the twelve... and in the very next verse Paul says He appeared to over five hundred others at one time, most of who were still alive when Paul wrote this account.

The proof that this was all part of God's plan is that these two events took place in accordance with the Scriptures. Nothing is a surprise to God; he can be trusted. 

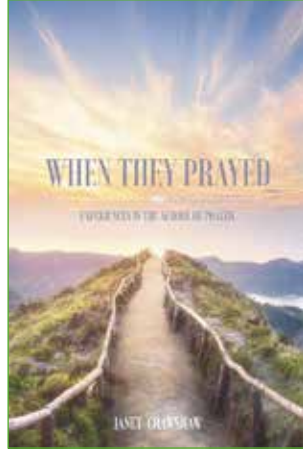
***Philippians 4:4-7***

*Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice. Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.*

# “When they prayed” – book review

by Ken Harding

In late May this year there was a meeting of the seniors group “Pathfinders” on a Saturday evening at West Pennant Hills Community Church. After the main program there were refreshments served as usual, and there were a couple of book stalls. One was selling surplus books to raise some funds for CLO (see page 22) and the other was for a local author, Janet Crawshaw, who was signing and selling copies of her book



We didn't know at the time that Ken Harding had read and recommended the book before it was published.

Here is what he wrote and has submitted here for our readers, again with his recommendation, and he wants to tell us why:-

“Firstly, I found it not only readable but **gripping** – right from the start.

“Then I found myself identifying with many of the people and situations written about, not only because they were so human but because I often found that their frustrations were similar to mine.

“In addition, I found myself challenged about my prayer life and how I related to God when things did not go the way I had hoped. Did prayer really matter or why didn't I get the answers that I had expected?

But through it all I saw that God's purposes were being fulfilled in my life even when I needed to just trust... and wait... and believe that God was there for me, just as He was for the Bible saints and for the people like me who did not see the answers when

they expected. Ultimately, it means drawing nearer to God in prayer and leaving the outcome to Him. Janet has touched so many places where we all need to change.”

Janet subsequently told me (this magazine editor) that “I wrote this book as a result of my own journey with God and because I felt there was some confusion about how prayer operates in people's lives.”

She informed me the book is available from bookstores Koorong, Amazon, and Barnes & Noble.

I understand Koorong currently has this paperback book in its retail book stores around Australia.

Janet Crawshaw loves to study the Bible. She leads a Ladies' Bible study group and writes summaries for these studies. She has been a Scripture teacher and currently teaches music privately. Her love for God and her concern for women of all ages is the motivation to encourage them to deepen their Christian faith and to live close to the Lord Jesus Christ.

## *The Barn, where we pack.*

Have you ever asked yourself that question?

Not something we probably would ask if we love the Lord, but for someone whose life is 'falling apart', that could be a very real and often asked question.

It was the question that a frequent prison inmate asked himself and the chaplain who spoke with him. A little more of his story later...

Let's first talk about people serving time in prison, and how we can be of service to them. This magazine included an article some years ago on CLO – Christian Literature Outreach – a ministry begun well over 20 years ago by David Gillies, who saw the need for those behind bars to have some good quality reading material, including daily devotions and the Bible. His passion is to share God's word with those in need in our prisons.

This ministry has continued and grown, and today is supplying Christian



materials to almost every prison in Australia and New Zealand (a couple of prisons will NOT accept any material, unfortunately). Each month a group of dedicated volunteers go out to 'The Barn' in Dural and pack boxes (for the prison chaplains) which are full of good material e.g. Christian newspapers, Bible Society comics, good Christian books, CDs and DVDs, four different devotionals, RBC booklets on multiple topics, and a variety of tracts. Each prison chaplain is sent a list of what we ➤

*Empty boxes are prepared and labelled for the next shipment to prisons; at least one box per prison.*



## What on Earth am I here for? (cont'd from p 22)

can supply and they then choose how many of each item they would like. David puts no limit on what they ask for – some get multiple boxes – some get very little, it all depends on the zeal of the chaplain and the size of the prison. These boxes are packed with all the items requested and then sealed and either posted, hand delivered or sent by courier, or shipped, in the case of the NZ boxes. It takes 1 to 2 days to pack and seal all the boxes each month and there are usually around 6 or 7 people involved. When not packing or sealing boxes, the team are unpacking ‘book pallets’ and stacking the shelves with any books that are appropriate to send. They are all Christian books, but the State Corrective Services Departments have certain authors they will not permit to be accepted. This means we always have to be careful to make sure we check each book, and any new title that arrives has to be approved before

they can go into the prisons. Each book that is sent has to be stamped to show it comes from CLO, and that can be up to 1200 books a month. There are also special ‘Books of the Month’ [specific Books authored by ex-Inmates and others, written specifically for those ‘doing time’] which also have to be stamped and labelled. All the CDs and DVDs we send also have to be labelled as coming from CLO. Comics, RBC booklets and tracts have to be packed into certain bundles depending on requirements, and this has to be done every month ready for packing.

This CLO operation is a vital service for those behind bars and we have received numerous testimonies from prisoners whose lives have been touched and changed by reading the material that they receive. The items are prayed over, as they go into the prison boxes, that God will use this material to speak to some prisoner's

➤24

*Preparing items to fill the boxes.*



heart – and He always answers those prayers.

Here is the story of one person who asked that initial question I mentioned above, and who found help.

A chaplain wrote to us: “Prisoner ‘A’ has been in and out of this prison for at least as long as I’ve ministered here (since 2008). I had a report from a staff member, knowing my long-term relationship with him, that he was being really positive about life since coming in this time. He described to me that when “A” came back into prison, he was feeling very low, and asking himself the question ‘what on earth am I here for?’ The next day, as he looked at the bookshelf in the maximum security section he came across a book supplied by CLO. It was ‘The Purpose Driven Life: What on earth am I here for?’ “A” went and got the book and

showed me several passages that had helped him understand how fear had been holding him back all these years. I prayed for him and left, feeling blessed that he just so happened to come across that book.”

“That day when I went home, my next box from CLO was on the porch. When I opened the box up the next day, the booklet on the very top of the box was Rick Warren’s ‘What on Earth am I here for?’, and I knew that God wanted me to give this book to prisoner ‘A’.

“Here’s what I am praising God for; that over there in Sydney, as you pack the books in somewhat of a random fashion, the Spirit of God directed whoever was packing my box to place this booklet on top, so I was able to get it straight to this individual. It has since been an encouragement and a tremendous help to him.” ➤

*Happily, all the filling is nearly done for this month!  
Only the sealing, weighing and labelling is now needed.*





Another prisoner wrote:- “I write to thank you for the support you have provided through the free books and information you have supplied to ‘xxxx’ Correctional Centre chapel. I found the true stories shared were inspirational and in a big way helped me to identify where God has been evident in my life.”

“I had the normal introduction to a normal Christian life starting with my christening, through Sunday school and church in later years. In my late twenties, I chose to be baptised and followed a Christian life.”

“However, after my marriage and the birth of my children, I found it easy to blame work and my family for not having attended church – saying I don’t need to go to church to talk to God.”

“I came to be a prisoner two years ago and tended to blame God, but

after going to chapel a few months ago I realised I need to get back in touch with God and I’ve started to realise all that God has done for me in the past. Your books have played a big part in this turn-around.”

It is stories like these that make the work we do so enjoyable. If you ever feel like doing volunteer work and have some time free, why not think about helping Christian Literature Outreach?

So, ‘what on earth am I here for? I would like to think that it is to do just what the Lord wants me to do and as we work at CLO we all feel we are doing just that.

If you would like further information about CLO, or to make a donation, please visit the website at-

[www.ChristianLiteratureOutreach.org](http://www.ChristianLiteratureOutreach.org)



*Finally, most boxes go on wrapped pallets to the courier’s depot.*

*The rest are hand delivered to local prisons or sent via Australia Post.*



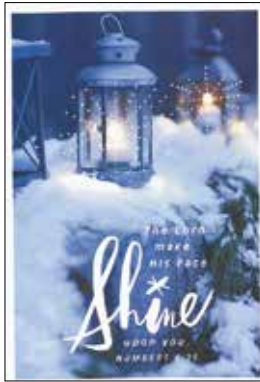


# Christian Outreach Book Service (COBS)

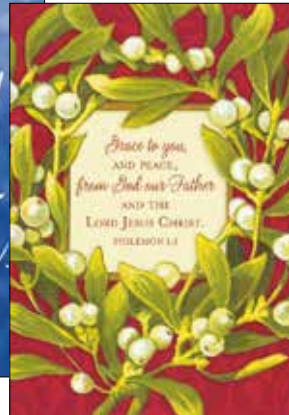
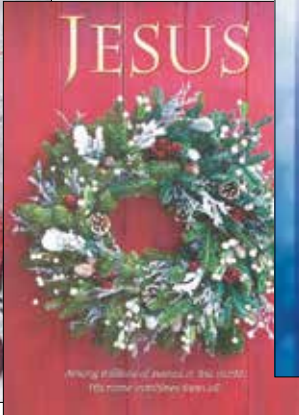
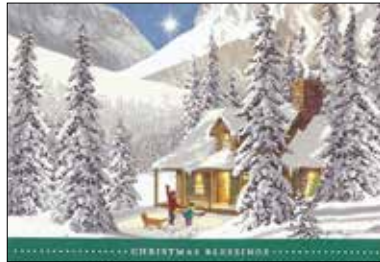
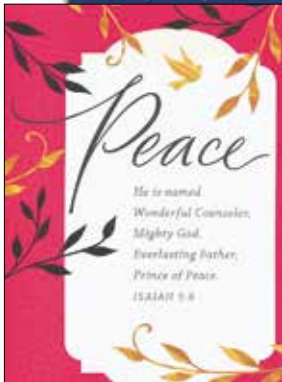
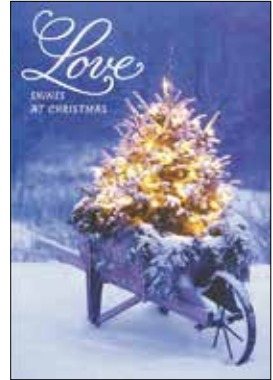
phone: 0402 107 724 email: aemcobs@gmail.com  
 Postal address: PO Box 20, PENNANT HILLS NSW 1715

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 below is a sample of the designs available.

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40¢  
each



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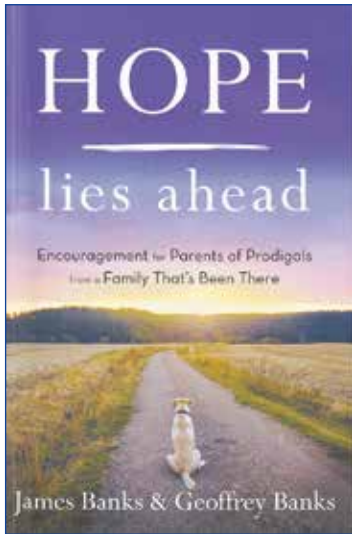
**To place orders:** phone: 0402 107 724

or email: aemcobs@gmail.com

50¢  
each

## “Hope Lies Ahead” - a book review

by C.H. Winrow



This is an incredible book. I read it two months ago. One chapter each evening over a two week period, which is reasonably quick for me (given there's a lot of 'distraction' going on at the moment because of the Covid-19 pandemic) and I think the title spoke to me every time I read a chapter, "HOPE – lies ahead." As the narrative of James the father, and his son Geoff, unfolded things were rapidly going downhill for this 'prodigal son'. At the end of each chapter 'Hope' was the main thing that drew me back to tackle another!

The book is written in an unusual format. There are twelve chapters covering Geoff's life from birth, to near-death, to complete rescue and salvation. But each chapter is written in two halves! James writes the first half and Geoff the second; each describing what was going on from their own perspective as they recalled events after the Prodigal Son "returned to his father".

Of course the book's sub-title on its cover immediately points our minds to the account of the Prodigal Son recorded in the Bible in Luke 15:11–32. That account is profound in its message, but it's relatively short, and perhaps focuses on the son's experiences and thoughts.

We are not told what his father was going through at home when the son was in the 'far country'. How did the father get through each day when someone he loved so dearly was possibly in a bad way? What thoughts troubled him each passing day when no news came to the father – good or bad?

Well, let me assure readers that this book pulls no punches when describing such matters from the parents' perspective, nor from the son's, who was going through a 'hell' of his own making – one which heroin addiction caused. It was both an "eye-opener" for me (regarding the horror of drug-addiction) and a wonderful blessing to be reminded of how great our God is.

In the book's Introduction James says "ours is a story about much more than addiction. It is about sins and mistakes we both made and the love that met us nonetheless. It is about the power of prayer (a lot of prayer!) and forgiveness and learning how to cling to God in the dark. It's also about the new beginnings He alone can give."

This book can be purchased as either a Paperback or eBook and should be available in many Christian bookshops. Koorong has both types displayed on its website for \$23.99 and \$15.25 respectively. □



As usual in this column, we mention Christian items on the Internet and World Wide Web which readers may find interesting or helpful, and worth a visit via their own computer, smart-phone, tablet or other device.

Moreover, again we have an extra page in the section because some readers may still have more time to spare to explore the Internet! Certainly there seems to be a growing amount of Christian material available to help us study the Bible; and to worship; to teach the children; and explore a range of issues impacting on Christians, the Church, and humanity in general.

**Please Note:** to make it easier to visit these websites they have been included as 'hot-links' if you use the PDF version of this magazine. The PDF version is available to subscribers as usual **but**, as another 'Covid Special', this October issue will also be available to those subscribers who normally only purchase a paper version. Just send me your request via email and you will receive a free PDF copy within a day.

If you try out any of the following websites **please send me feedback** on your experience whilst using the specific website or product itself. With your permission, I may have room to pass on your thoughts to help our readers in future issues of *Assemblies Outreach* magazine, or via our website page:-

[nswaem.org.au/Mag/overview.html](http://nswaem.org.au/Mag/overview.html)

Do you like listening to sermons from various churches around the world? This website has over 2 million recordings, both audio and video, and all catalogued and searchable. Visit and explore:-

[www.sermonaudio.com](http://www.sermonaudio.com)

No one misses out on a worship service—whether it's your shut-ins, travelling church members, or someone at home due to sickness. its overview page claims:

"A trusted source of Biblical preaching. We only broadcast churches and ministries that are conservative in doctrine and Bible-believing."

\*\*\*

Another useful website, this time based in Australia, is Family Voice. It has a range of resources for Christians including recordings of webinars on important topics affecting our daily lives.

<https://familyvoice.org.au/resources/webinars>

\*\*\*

**Lane Sebring** is a teaching pastor, speaker and author. He leads 'The Current', a worship gathering of young adults, in Northern Virginia. He created:-

[PreachingDonkey.com](http://PreachingDonkey.com)

a website to help preachers communicate better. He has a B.A. in Communication from the University of Central Oklahoma and a Master of Arts in Pastoral Ministry from Liberty >

Theological Seminary. He lives in the Northern Virginia / DC area with his wife Rachel and their daughter, Olive. You can connect with him at:

[twitter.com/PreachingDonkey](https://twitter.com/PreachingDonkey)

and

[facebook.com/PreachingDonkey](https://facebook.com/PreachingDonkey)

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Many of us may have used '**Our Daily Bread**' daily devotions at some point in our Christian life. The organisation which provides these booklets also operates an on-line University:-

<https://odbu.org>

This provides a wide range of on-line courses on Christian theology and practical ministries. The full list you can examine on the site. Some basic courses are free and the rest seem to be very reasonably priced via a subscription plan of various durations priced from \$7.95 per month for a year, to \$9.95 for a single month. There is even a very basic course called "Public Speaking".

Most of the courses are taught by professors. The faculty listing indicates the professors who have recorded the lecture material for the extensive course library. It states "The courses at Our Daily Bread University were taught over a period of time in various locations, and the recordings of those professors are now made available for your use."

\*\*\*

**Nicholas Carr** writes in the USA about technology and culture. He is the author of the acclaimed new

book 'The Glass Cage: Automation and Us' which examines the personal and social consequences of our ever growing dependency on computers. His previous book, *The Shallows: What the Internet Is Doing to Our Brains*, was a 2011 Pulitzer Prize finalist and a New York Times best-seller.

Here is a link to a secular video which summarises what that book is about:

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=cKaWJ72x1rI&list=RDCMUCoPlipOfn\\_kc1y1q7sXN5yQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cKaWJ72x1rI&list=RDCMUCoPlipOfn_kc1y1q7sXN5yQ)

Recently there was a short article in the newsletter from:-

[SermonCentral.com](https://www.SermonCentral.com)

which reflected on the "Internet effect" on people's brains and its impact on those who preach or teach. It said:

"In every generation there are challenges for those who preach the word. This completely secular video is instructional, and it could be a great intro for your next sermon. As preachers, it reminds us of the world our people live in, and the unspoken assumptions they bring to everything they read, see or hear. You might also use the video as an introduction to a message about using discernment in our modern context."

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**Bringing Hope Behind Bars** is a project by Bible League Australia to provide Bibles to prisoners in Aussie jails, 41,000 people approximately.

Here is a link to a YouTube video about the project.

[https://youtu.be/3\\_jXkLEv1g](https://youtu.be/3_jXkLEv1g)

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The following information came in an Email From 'Andrew at ChurchLeaders.com' in early August this year.

DJ Soto began preaching in the world of virtual reality (VR) in 2016. He is the founder and bishop of Virtual Reality Church, a church that is intended to be radically inclusive and consistent with Christianity's long history of adapting to new forms of media. DJ has helped plant multiple expressions of church online in digital communities, including Final Fantasy 14, Black Desert Online, and Rust. Before VR Church, DJ received a BA in Theology in 2000, gained experience as a high school computer and music teacher, worked as a photojournalist in broadcast television, and launched a multi-site campus for a mega-church in Pennsylvania. In 2016, DJ and his wife, Kari, created a new apostolic ministry to pioneer new churches across America in unusual places. Originally thinking they would plant physical churches, they soon realized a new vision to plant churches in virtual reality.

On 28 July 2021 there was a Podcast episode from the Church Leaders website, showing an interview with DJ Soto, see it here:-

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DicJdktiOe0>

Key Questions for DJ Soto were:

- How is what you're doing similar

to physical church and how is it different?

- Where has God brought you as far as expressing the essentials of church, such as baptism and communion, in virtual reality?
- How has the church adapted through its history and how does that set a precedent for VR Church?
- Can you speak to the concern that many pastors have that people might not return to in-person church after the pandemic?

Some Quotes from DJ Soto in the interview:-

"We're not a pandemic pivot. We launched Virtual Reality Church in 2016."

"If you're watching technological trends, why would a software company [Facebook] spend billions of dollars to get hardware?...They view virtual reality as the next iteration of social interaction."

"It was just an experiment at first. My first church service I think five people showed up...I was so excited because there was a lot of potential there. And none of the people that came would probably identify with any type of faith system. Many atheists came, and for the longest time, my church services were full of atheists and agnostics."

"It was like an accidental church plant."



Please submit any items for the December 2021 magazine on,  
or before, **13<sup>th</sup> November.**

## NSW ASSEMBLIES' EVANGELISTIC MISSION (NSWAEM)

ABN 81 001 037 690

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### AIMS

- To support the expansion of evangelism and church growth, primarily among Christian Brethren Assemblies.
- To offer opportunities in this *Assemblies Outreach* Magazine for Commended Workers, Assemblies, Para-Assembly Activities and other kindred bodies, to publicise and explain their ministries.
- To generate funds, through the Christian Outreach Book Service and other means, toward the support of NSW Commended Workers.
- To provide appropriate teaching for Christians.

Further information about the Mission  
can be obtained via the website:-  
[www.nswaem.org.au](http://www.nswaem.org.au)



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family and it shows in everything  
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# Christian Brethren Community Services

Providing communities of continual Christian care  
Residential and specialist care provided to the aged, frail aged and those  
living with dementia.



Elouera Gardens



Cherrybrook Christian Care Centre



Glenhaven Gardens



Carinya House



Lynden Grove



Groves House

## **Elouera Gardens Christian Retirement Village, Cherrybrook NSW**

Elouera Gardens comprises 75 independent living units with 1, 2 and 3 bedroom units, surrounded by pleasant gardens. It offers a wide variety of styles and sizes of units and a supportive Christian community.

## **Cherrybrook Christian Care Centre, Cherrybrook NSW**

Set in well established gardens, and with an enviable reputation for delivering a high standard of care, the 120 bed Cherrybrook Christian Care Centre provides high and low level care and special support for people living with dementia.

## **Glenhaven Gardens Retirement Village, Glenhaven, NSW**

Glenhaven Gardens offers modern and spacious 2 and 3 bedroom villas. The village comprises 24 air-conditioned and private units, with either a garage or carport. All units are wheelchair accessible for those who need a little extra room to help with their mobility.

## **Carinya House, Glenhaven NSW**

Carinya House is a 60 bed care centre providing high and low-level care support in a setting where residents enjoy the tranquil bushland setting and partake in a very full and stimulating recreational program. It includes a secure dementia support area and also offers ageing-in-place.

## **Lynden Grove Retirement Village, Cardiff Heights, NSW**

Lynden Grove has 44 modern 2 and 3 bedroom villas. It has a semi-rural outlook with picturesque Mount Sugarloaf as a back drop. It is in a pleasant and quiet bushland setting, yet close to local shopping centres.

## **Groves House, Cardiff Heights NSW**

Set on a ridge with panoramic views to the mountains, Groves House is a 60 bed care centre providing high and low-level care, dementia care and ageing-in-place to the people of Newcastle, Lake Macquarie and the surrounding districts.

For more information about any of our services please don't hesitate to call our Client Services Team on 02 9842 4111.