

Hayward goes Gong-ward




ON TUESDAY 13TH APRIL, PETER Hayward was consecrated as the new Bishop of Wollongong. In the current church-planting environment, Peter brings a great deal of experience to his new role. While Assistant Minister at Penrith Anglican Church (1992–96), Peter had primary responsibility for establishing a church in what was then the very new suburb of Glenmore Park. Through Archbishop Robinson's Vision for Growth scheme, he was able to give his full-time efforts to this work, which has now become a thriving congregation.

In 1996 Peter left Australia to become the founding pastor of Christ the Redeemer in Spokane, Washington (300 miles inland from Seattle). This was an independent Anglican church that was initially comprised of people

who, for very good reasons, had separated from the Episcopal Church in Spokane. The ministry opportunity came through a connection to Sydney Diocese through Bishop Donald Robinson who had visited the church in 1994. While in Spokane, Peter gave regular reports to the *Record*. Most of the early days were given to establishing the right foundations, and Peter rejoices at God's blessing of the Church during his five years and since that time.

After returning to Sydney in 2001, Peter has served as Rector of Beverly Hills Anglican Church. This Church had been established for some time, but the time had come to shape the ministry not by what the church and area once was but by what this area of Sydney was now becoming. The last 8 years have involved reconfiguring existing ministries, amalgamating a few congregations, and planting six churches with varying degrees of success. The Parish has now become a network of congregations partnering together in mission to the area.

With several clear growth areas steadily expanding its population, Wollongong can thank God that her new bishop is no mere theorist. As he moves south, Bishop Hayward brings eighteen years of proven and varied church planting experience. 

New Vice Chancellor for UCU

ON 12 MAY, MOST REV. HENRY Orombi, Archbishop of Uganda and Chancellor of Uganda Christian University announced that The Rev. Canon Dr. John Senyonyi would be the next Vice Chancellor at UCU, to replace Prof. Stephen Noll.

Dr Senyonyi is no stranger to the University Administration, having served as Deputy Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance, and then Deputy Vice Chancellor for Development and External Relations.

John Senyonyi's appointment comes as many in Sydney are beginning to support theological students at the Bishop Tucker



Dr. John Senyonyi

Theological School, within UCU, through the Archbishop's Overseas Ministry Appeal.

It will please supporters to learn that

[CONTINUED PAGE 4]

'Where the rights of God are upheld, the rights of man will not be forgotten'

WILLIAM MACQUARIE COWPER (1810–1902),
FIRST DEAN OF SYDNEY,
'THE LORD'S DAY' (1880), 12.

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Marsden Revisited Tom Harricks



Tom Harricks watering what another has planted in Parramatta.

REV. SAMUEL MARSDEN WAS REGARDED by Governor King as the ‘best practical farmer in the colony’. By 1805 Samuel Marsden ran over 1000 sheep, 44 cattle and 100 pigs. Marsden is much maligned in modern treatments of Australian History. So these kind of facts came as a real surprise to the history-lovers who were invited to the Samuel Marsden Service, run during the 2010 Moore College Mission at Parramatta.

The ‘Samuel Marsden Service’ was unashamedly evangelistic. The event was an attempt to run a mission service to which some of our more ‘mature’ members could invite their history-loving friends. By putting Samuel Marsden’s less-portrayed side forward and then preaching one of his sermons, the hope was that we might shift contemporary impressions of Marsden and, more importantly, impressions of the Lord he served so

persistently and sacrificially. The intent was to surprise people with aspects of Marsden’s life so that they might re-consider other things that they thought they knew.

Marsden was passionate about telling people about Jesus. The congregation heard in monetary terms just how passionate Marsden was about proclaiming the message of salvation. It is well known that he was the first to bring the Gospel to New Zealand. What is less well known is the level of his personal investment. The congregation at the Evangelistic Service heard that he purchased his own ship the ‘Brig Active’ at a personal cost of £1400—an enormous sum in those times (based on earnings this is about \$1–\$2m today). To pay for this he sold £900 worth of sheep and borrowed the rest. Talk about ‘putting your money where your mouth is’!

The service contained these and other surprises about Marsden. Fittingly the much maligned Samuel Marsden was given the last word. His abridged sermon on Ephesians 6 was preached and concludes in the following fashion:

‘What shall I say to you who know not God, nor desire the knowledge of his ways? I can only warn you of your danger, but I cannot prevail with you to turn

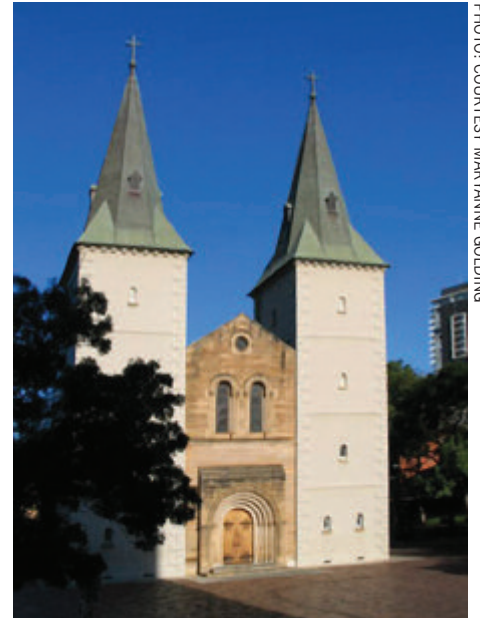


PHOTO: COURTESY MARYANNE GOLDING

Samuel Marsden was the second chaplain to NSW and the first Rector of St John's Parramatta.

from your sins. The wings of time that are carrying the righteous thro’ all their Seas of Trouble to Realms of eternal Bliss, are bearing you with equal speed down to the dark chambers of everlasting Death. Every moment you are hastening to meet your God and your awful Doom ... Oh, my fellow mortals, harden not your Hearts, but repent and believe the Gospel that ye perish not.’

Gotta Love an Enthusiast!

Alison Blake



Alison Blake enthuses about God and new buildings in Sydney’s south west.

UNTIL RECENTLY I’VE HAD A VERY nerdy passion—architecture and what the professionals call “the built landscape”. Until “Grand Designs” and Kevin McCloud came along. At last I could “come out”, publicly share my passion and join the 17,902 other fans on Facebook! You’ve gotta love a passionate enthusiast!

Many of our great grandmothers were outstanding home cooks. Some have passed on to us their enthusiasm. But few of them would have cooked with the passion of Jamie Oliver or the Master Chef judges. Passion and enthusiasm are hard to muster when you cook with a wood stove and no blast chiller! I have

absolutely no interest in the specs of late model European convertibles, but the passion of the Top Gear team draws me in and makes me curious about what excites them.

Yesterday I was reading the Song of Moses (EX15) and it struck me that, in the aftermath of God’s stunning delivery of Israel from slavery, through the Red Sea, Moses and Miriam were unashamed and vocal enthusiasts for the LORD and his achievements. They sang, and Miriam

celebrate our release from captivity and the gifts God has lavished upon us (Eph 1).

Are you an authentic, transparent enthusiast for the glorious cause of Christ? Not that God needs our enthusiasm, but are you asking our Heavenly Father to give you and your church a growing, infectious passion for him? Let’s pray that he would grow in us an enthusiasm for sharing his glorious salvation with others. Let’s ask our Father for lips and

... unashamed and vocal enthusiasts for the LORD and his achievements.

danced, proclaiming the LORD’s triumph in salvation and his glorious deeds. To Bible readers across time they unashamedly declare “Who is like you, O LORD, among the gods?”

Moses’ song looked forward to the greatest rescue—our release from slavery to sin and guilt. We look back to the cross of Christ and

lives that overflow with enthusiasm for him. Will you work with his Spirit as he transforms us to be authentic and passionate enthusiasts for The Grand Designer and his eternal treasures, which do not rust, cannot be stolen and truly satisfy?

ONE OF THE GREAT PRIVILEGES OF BEING PART OF the Lord's people is rubbing shoulders with so many gifted people. Paul's image of 'the body' (1 Corinthians 12) displays such a beautiful picture of the organic unity that exists amongst God's people. Here we find the Spirit of God has baptized all of us into the body-life of the congregation, and God has richly gifted his people. This is so that the body-life can function well, with security and stability, thus promoting the movement towards 'growing up into the head (Christ)', our ultimate maturity (Ephesians 4).

At least two factors in the last half-century have placed 'giftedness' firmly on the agenda, especially when it comes to discussions of 'leadership'. The first is within 'Christian culture', namely, the influence of neo-pentecostalism. This has made it almost axiomatic for Christians to wonder about the gifts the Spirit may have distributed to them. The second (and related) factor comes from general culture, namely, the so-called 'sixties revolution', a phenomenon which simmered across the decade, came to a head in 1968, and then continued to bring massive cultural transformation across the seventies and beyond.

With a cry for freedom from all authority, individualism—arguably already lying under some constraint in western society—was catapulted to the forefront. And along with this—with some kind of strange amnesia for the tyrannical examples from just a decade or two previously—came the rise of 'charismatic leadership'. Whether dispensed by revolutionary figures, rock stars, or the gurus of the increasing number of new religious movements, 'leadership' was no longer connected to social position, or to any perceived 'authority' structure or social convention, but it was connected to a counter-cultural individual who managed to sway others by his/her personal charisma.

With sad predictability, Christian culture soon followed suit. Whether expressed publicly in the charismatic movement or in 'famous-preacher' cults; or behind the closed doors of scholarship, where Jesus began to be restyled as a charismatic leader, the ripple effects of this view of leadership

continue to the present time.

But gifted individualism is *not* leadership. The ability to rule others by the persuasive force of personality is *not* leadership. The ability of a 'charismatic' personality to sway the crowds is not a sign of *good* leadership. The attractive power of decisive action and even impressive ability are not signs of *beneficial* leadership. Ability in rhetorical pulpitering, whether inside or outside the Church, says nothing about whether the teaching is *true* leadership.

And what has any of this got to do with *Christian* leadership? Jesus came amongst us to serve. God gifts his people for their works of service, exercised in a spirit of love and desire for edification. Shepherding involves serving up the word of God to feed the flock. True and proper use of God's *charismata* will be corporately expressed for the common good of the body, building itself towards maturity. Spotting those gifted for *Christian* leadership is therefore a tricky task, for it involves spotting qualities of self-effacing service; other-person-centred motivations and actions; integrated relational connectedness already displayed; quiet godliness already in operation amongst God's people; faithfulness in teaching by which the people of God are already being nurtured towards maturity; and the like.

Unfortunately, those influenced by the sixties' destabilization (and at the moment, that must be most) may completely overlook such quiet achievers in the quest for 'charismatic leaders'. They may even express a disappointment at the absence of leadership in the next generation—but according to what criteria is this judgment being made?

Western society is on the brink of its next turning-point. The sixties generation are being forced to let go (not of their own will, but through thoroughly 'natural processes'). Presumably there will be sixties' disciples who continue to push forward the quest for the 'charismatic leader'. But, perhaps too the moment is ripe for a different form of 'leadership' to emerge from the next generation. Hopefully within Christian circles, this leadership might reflect more of the Master. ●

The Australian Church Record

The Australian Church Record is an evangelical newspaper in the Reformed Anglican tradition of the historic creeds and the 39 Articles of Faith, and the standard of teaching and practice in the Book of Common Prayer. We accept the Scriptures as God's word written, and as containing all things necessary for salvation and the final authority in all matters of faith and behaviour.

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On the Lookout for a New Archbishop?

Seven Imperatives to start the Shopping List

Peter Bolt



WORD ON THE STREET IS THAT THE options for the next Archbishop of Sydney are beginning to be whispered about and discussed. Since the criteria by which the man is evaluated is most important, it is time to start generating lists of principles—even before lists of names. Here are seven (not the perfect number!) to throw into the discussion.

1. He must satisfy the basics

He must be male, soundly converted, displaying the characteristics required by New Testament and Prayer Book of a minister of the gospel, and a gifted teacher. Not just a gifted individualist (see editorial), but a genuine Christian servant-shepherd, committed to gospel growth through God's word, prayer and love.

2. He must be under 57

It is time to get a younger man into the office—especially at this crucial leadership changeover period from early baby-boomer to generation next. The trouble is, the early baby boomers just don't want to let go, and the next generation keep looking 'up' instead of 'around'. Let's change all that.

If the fear is having too long to muck things up, then we need to introduce a definite period of service, or a time for review, or,

better still—choose well! On the upside of longer terms, with Barker, Mowll and Loane amongst those with the longest terms previously, surely the advantages of a lengthy term for a strong, conservative evangelicalism speak for themselves.

Only one of Sydney's Archbishops has been appointed when over the age of sixty. Six have been in their fifties and four in their forties. In the nineteenth century, the energetic pioneering Broughton was 48; the strongly evangelical Barker, 47. In the twentieth, good evangelical leadership came from Marcus Loane, appointed at 55, and before him

The next Archbishop must be firmly on the trajectory the Diocese is already on, because he is already within it.

Howard Mowll, 'wet behind the ears' at 44.

Let's face it, a man in his forties is not a youth. But even if it is *relative*, youth and energy combined with evangelical zeal and theological leadership will be a step in the right direction. It will also continue the trajectory begun by the Synod at the last election. As the age crept upwards, it began to come down with Peter Jensen—57 when he took office. In 2013 that age should therefore set the upper limit: this time, the age should come down even further 'Loane-ward', 'Barker-ward', or even 'Mowll-ward'.

3. He must be a local, already here with us in the Diocese

Since Marcus Loane, our Archbishops have been born and bred Australians, and elected from within the Diocese of Sydney. The next

man must already be playing a role in the Diocese, not someone from outside the Diocese—even excluding those with some former connection. The next Archbishop must be firmly on the trajectory the Diocese is already on, because he is already within it. It would be a vote of no confidence in our present direction to turn to someone outside. This principle must be firmly stated, given that a high level of the old 'prophet without honour' syndrome is discernible in the Diocese at the moment. If those in leadership now cannot see anyone to fill their shoes, then this is an indictment on themselves:

whatever they have been doing so far, it is *not* leadership. If the next generation can't see someone in their own ranks, they need to look around more carefully. Everyone must lift up their eyes and see. The next Archbishop of Sydney is *not* somewhere else; he is already here in our very midst.

4. He must be capable of theological leadership

Sydney has a strong tradition of having theological leadership from theologically competent Archbishops. The next Archbishop must be appreciative of our conservative theological heritage, and competent to continue it into the future. This is especially important, as his ministry will be exercised in an increasingly anti-Christian society, and in an increasingly pragmatic Church.

New Vice Chancellor for UCU [CONT. FROM PAGE 1]

Dr Senyonyi is a passionate preacher of the gospel and one of the brethren of the East African Revival, a movement with past Australian connections. He himself knows Australia, having completed a PhD (Mathematics) in Melbourne. He first served UCU as Chaplain. During these three years, he

developed a strategic ministry of missions within the University, that have become a major force in recruiting young Ugandans of other academic disciplines to join full time ministry. The positive impact of this strategy on gospel ministry in Uganda is already being noticed. As chaplain he worked very closely

with the faculty at Bishop Tucker and has continued a close relationship with the School. As he comes to his new post, he is well aware of the needs of the theological students within the University. ☺

Diocesans of the See of Sydney

Archbishop	Date of Birth ¹	Installed	Retirement/ death date	Age at retirement	Length of incumbency (completed years)	Age at Installation
William Grant Broughton	22/5/1788	5/6/1836	20/2/1853	64	16	48
Frederic Barker	17/3/1808	31/5/1855	6/4/1882	74	26	47
Alfred Barry	15/1/1826	24/4/1884	13/5/1889	63	5	58
William Saumarez Smith	14/1/1836	9/10/1890	18/4/1909	73	18	54
John Charles Wright	19/8/1861	17/11/1909	24/2/1933	71	23	48
Howard West Kilvinton Mowll	2/2/1890	13/3/1934	24/10/1958	68	24	44
Hugh Rowlands Gough	19/9/1905	30/5/1959	31/5/1966	60	7	54
Marcus Lawrence Loane	14/10/1911	13/8/1966	31/1/1982	70	15	54
Donald William Bradley Robinson	9/11/1922	24/4/1982	31/1/1993	70	10	59
Richard Henry Goodhew	19/3/1931	29/4/1993	19/3/2001	70	8	62
Peter Frederick Jensen	July 1943	29/6/2001		Will be 70 in July 2013	In 2013, 12	57

¹ Judd and Cable, Sydney Anglicans

Three out of four of our last Archbishops have served on the faculty of Moore College prior to taking office, which also provides added advantages, such as already knowing the next generation of clergy very well, and having a good bird's eye view of Sydney's congregations. Any list of potential candidates should have representatives from the Moore College faculty on it. Whatever their own thoughts about this matter, men such as Mark Thompson, Bill Salier, Andrew Shead and Archie Poulos deserve serious consideration.

Any proposed candidate must be willing to have his theological position known on key issues (e.g. gospel, atonement, justification by faith, church, sacraments, charismatic issues, women's ministry, homosexuality ...). Further, he must be willing and capable of being robustly engaged in the public arena (including the ACR!) on where he stands on key issues, and why.

5. He must be psychologically robust, comfortable in his own skin

There is a lot of talk at the moment about how someone is 'wired', psychologically and personally. If you listen carefully, there is also some discontent that our clergy selection processes might favour a certain kind of personality—and, whether it is described as the old-fashioned A-type, the new-fangled narcissistic or just that of a rugged individualist, it is not all good.

Sydney doesn't want a new Messiah, whether self-proclaimed or other-person pro-

claimed. What is needed is someone who properly knows the true Messiah, properly knows their own true self; knows their strengths and how to use them, and knows their weaknesses and how to work together with others to supplement these weaknesses. This guards against being self-contained, and it is the stuff of good, relational team-building. A personally robust man, with a good circle of support, will be capable of meeting (or changing) the demands of a heavy schedule. More importantly, robust and relational people can also see the good in others and encourage it, so that it is fanned into flame for the common good.

Relational people can also see the good in others and encourage it.

6. Must be committed to mission

Sydney is already on a trajectory that is looking for the gospel of Christ to go to the ends of the earth. The new Archbishop ought to be someone committed to mission both at home and abroad, with the strength of will to continue to exercise good gospel leadership in both arenas. He should have the biblical insight to know that any mission begins at the grass-roots level, so that any talk of church-planting ought to be a third-order activity after talk of personal evangelism and discipling. In other words, he should be someone with an international vision that is firmly anchored to local congregations.

7. He must be the people's choice

Archbishops of Sydney do not appoint their successors. The next Archbishop must be freely chosen by those who will sit under his Episcopal oversight. This election also needs to be a grass-roots movement, as the members of Synod each exercise their own reflection upon the theological requirements for the office, and then vote for the man who holds most promise of bringing that theological leadership to the office. In the next couple of years it will be important for synodspeople to turn a blind eye to those placed on public platforms for all to see, so that other potential

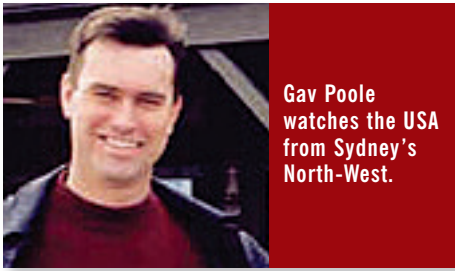
candidates might be discovered who are left in the wings. It will also be important for curates (the next generation of clergy) and laity (the true custodians of the future) to make their voices known.

But the most important task at this present time is to start to generate a 'shopping list'. What does Sydney want in the next Archbishop? ●

PS to add items to the shopping list: letters@australianchurchrecord.net

Bishops investigated but who pays?

Gav Poole



TWO AUSTRALIAN BISHOPS HAVE BEEN investigated by the newly formed Episcopal Standards Commission and are being tried before the Special Tribunal. The costs are mounting and we are waiting to see who will foot the bill.

The Charges

- A Special Tribunal will be convened to hear charges made against the Bishop of The Murray, Ross Davies.
- The charges have been laid by the Archbishop of Adelaide, Jeffrey Driver and the Bishop of Willochra, Garry Weatherill.
- The charges are unclear but a group called

the Voice of the Laity are seeking the removal of the Bishop and state that complaints come under the following section of the Episcopal Standards Commission's complaint form—"conduct, whenever occurring, which would be disgraceful if committed by a member of the clergy, and which at the present time is productive, or if known publicly would be productive, of scandal or evil report;"

- In addition to this there has been an 18 month investigation into the Bishop of Ballarat, Michael Hough, by the Episcopal Standards Commission which includes the appointment of an independent investigator.
- The charges are along the lines of bullying and harassment.
- It is estimated that the investigations will cost \$400,000 with the Special Tribunal costing a further \$350,000.

The legislation


- The Sydney Diocese refused to adopt the Episcopal Standards Canon of 2007. Therefore it does not have force in our diocese.

It is a commonly held belief that matters of this nature should be dealt with at a diocesan level. The way the Anglican Church of Australia is constituted, one diocese shouldn't interfere with another.

The money

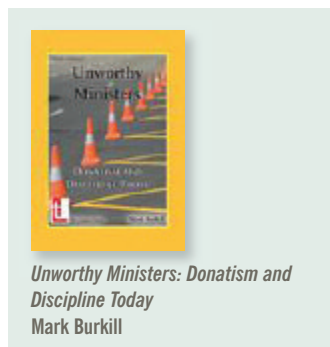
- In 2009 the Sydney Diocese was charged \$257,000 being its share of the statutory assessment (approx. 25% of the total General Synod assessment).
- The statutory assessment has increased by 33% over 5 years.
- It is possible that the costs incurred by the Episcopal Standards Commission investigation and the Special Tribunal will be recovered by the statutory assessment ... of which Sydney pays more than one quarter.

The question

- It remains to be seen whether these charges will stick and what can be done if they do. One thing is certain however ... it will cost and the question is, who should pay? 

Four New Studies from Latimer Trust

<http://www.latimertrust.org>




THE REVAMPED LATIMER STUDIES SEEM TO BE COMING THICK and fast off the press, with four new and helpful essays published in 2010. The short, readable format of the Latimer Studies continues to provide thought-provoking material that is easily digestible.

Those of us in the Southern Hemisphere will enjoy reading Malcolm Falloon's positive examination of Samuel Marsden and his missionary strategy as it worked out in the New Zealand context, in *To Plough or to Preach?*

Mark Burkill, *Unworthy Ministers*, explores the ancient Donatist heresy and the 39 Articles' statements about the validity of the ministry of unworthy ministers in the setting of the current controversies in the Anglican Communion.

In *Empty and Evil*, Rohintan Mody, an Indian Zoroastrian convert to Christianity, examines how Paul deals with the worship of other faiths in 1 Corinthians 8-10, and draws conclusions for our practice today.

Peter Sanlon, *Plastic People. How Queer Theory is Changing Us* is an excellent discussion of the impact of the intellectual underpinnings of the Gay movement ('Queer Theory') upon Western Society. When our biology is disregarded or negated, our sense of identity is distorted so that we become 'plastic people', able to be moulded into any shape. The consequences in terms of gender identity and human sexuality are disastrous. This is an important essay for us all. 

Leadership: Casting the Right Vision

Mark Thompson



Mark teaches theology at Moore College and is currently President of the Anglican Church League.

IN SOME CHRISTIAN CIRCLES AT THE moment there is quite a deal of talk about leadership and vision. It is the language of international politics with aspiring Prime Ministers and Presidents seeking to position themselves as genuine leaders with expansive (and yet still economically responsible) vision. As so often happens, churches then echo the concerns and the rhetoric of the community at large.

A Christian fascination with leadership theory has characterised evangelicalism for at least the past 30 years. The journal *Leadership* first hit Christian bookshops in 1980. However, it certainly does seem that there is a fresh enthusiasm for the rhetoric of leadership, vision-casting and entrepreneurial skill. Perhaps it's just the present moment, with its sense of a new generation poised to take greater responsibility within our denominational structures.

It would be wrong to suggest this is an unprincipled enthusiasm. The necessity of a specifically Christian adaption of what works so effectively in the world at large is not denied for a moment. In conversations I have had in the past few months friends have justified the embrace of corporate leadership

and management theory as 'plundering the Egyptians' or 'redeeming the wisdom of the world'.

What is so often forgotten, though, is the simple fact that Christian leadership is, and is meant to be, revolutionary and counter-cultural. It subverts the so-called wisdom of the world. After all, Jesus did not say that leadership amongst his disciples would take the best the world has to teach us in this area and filter it through the gospel of grace. His words were stark: 'it shall not be so amongst you' (Mk 10:43).

Churches echo the concerns and the rhetoric of the community at large.

Christian leadership, first and foremost, is characterised by service. Freed from our need to prove ourselves to each other and to ourselves, such service can be genuinely focussed on the welfare of others. We don't love people in order to get the best out of them. We don't show an interest in them in order to generate loyalty or commitment. We don't serve them as part of any other agenda at all. In the best sense of the word, we serve, we love *disinterestedly*.

This can only be possible because Christian leaders do not see themselves as leaders in the ultimate sense. It is Christ who leads his people by his word and in his Spirit. That must become more than just a pious cliché. If I really believe in Christ's headship, then I cannot claim a proprietary interest, no matter what level of responsibility I might

shoulder for the time being. Christian people gather as Christ's church, not mine. Peter spoke of the responsibility of shepherding 'God's flock' (1 Pet. 5:2). Those with such responsibility have a particular opportunity to serve, to be sure. But it is always an opportunity *to serve*. And that service takes place with an awareness that the day is coming when the Chief Shepherd will appear. We are here for such a little time and what has been placed in our hands is not ours.

Leadership is not 'all about me'. In fact, a humble preoccupation with God's agenda

doesn't mind not being noticed at all. Christ is building his church (Matt. 16:18) and he is its cornerstone (Eph. 2:20). His agenda directs the present and future of the local congregations towards the great eschatological and multi-ethnic gathering around the throne of God and of the Lamb (Rev. 7:9-12). Faithful pastors and teachers will put Christ's vision before God's people. They sublimate their dreams and plans to his great purpose — a purpose on the largest scale imaginable and yet of vital relevance to the smallest congregation.

I don't think for a moment the talk about leadership is about to stop. In fact, I'm not sure it should. But let's remember the deeply radical nature of the Bible's view of leadership and use that as our measure. ●

The Rhetoric of the Undefined Peter Bolt



Peter Bolt wonders, wasn't Status Quo a rock band?

APPARENTLY THE BIG FINDING OF Sydney's 'Connect 09' was that 'the Status Quo isn't working'. There is a lot of rhetorical power in this claim. It is bound to get people scurrying around, feeling panicky,

and basically ready to jump on whatever bandwagon that might come along to bring about change — of whatever kind, doesn't matter.

But, before we get too derailed, let's stop for a minute. What is actually being said here? What is the 'status quo'? This is simply a way of saying 'whatever is out there'. And, what is the criteria being used for the notion 'working'? There seems to be two huge holes at the beginning and end of this 'finding' that surely need to be plugged before anyone hops on any wagon.

This rhetoric of the undefined lures people into filling the holes with anything

Lures people into filling the holes with anything and everything.

and everything, and so into being panicked into 'the need for change' (whatever change, who cares?). But the rhetoric of the undefined needs to be seen for what it is. With two empty terms at either end of the equation, we are only left with the middle, which then speaks very loudly. This rhetoric 'isn't'. ●

Women and the Word



Alison Blake makes it to the back page!

Feed the (Wo)man Meat! Alison Blake

Look around the women in your Bible study or church congregation. I'm guessing you will find an impressive array of educational and professional qualifications, experience and skills. Reflect on the number and diversity of work-related training courses you've attended—or perhaps even presented. It is a common expectation that we'll need to update, fine tune and expand our work skills.

What about in our Christian journey? Are we just a little too content with where we're at in our understanding of God? A bit "minimalist" about our maturity in Christ? Are we tertiary educated women in our professional lives, but educated only to primary school level in our understanding of the truths of God?

Here's some very practical and achievable ideas for your personal "DIY Christian Inservice Training Program"; or, even better, train with a Christian friend, with your daughter, a new sister-in-Christ.

- Make a habit of reading, thinking over and praying about next week's sermon passage, before Sunday.
- Make it your practice to prepare for your weekly Bible study group. Rather than reading the passage for the first time when the group starts the study!
- Write a list of "big, scary words" associated with the gospel and find out what they mean—propitiation, expiation, sanctification, atonement. Or words that the world uses, but Christian believers understand very differently—words like hope, resurrection, wisdom, redemption, atonement, wicked. Think through how you could explain these words to a young believer, an unbeliever.
- Join the Equip Book Club (<http://equipbooks.blogspot.com/>) and commit yourself to reading a book that will stretch you in your understanding of what it means to know and live for Christ. Take it slowly, stopping to pray at the end of each chapter to pray—about the challenges, reminders and encouragements you've encountered. Read these books with your Bible open, so your understanding of God grows, not just your vocabulary!
- Read a secular book, with an older, wiser Christian woman and together reflect on the writer's "take" on life, and God's mind on the matter. Try "Eat, Pray, Love" by Elizabeth Gilbert. As always, search the Scriptures as you read and talk, so you're filling your mind with what is true and lovely (Phil. 4:8). Not a great reader? Do the same with a DVD, or the newspaper!
- Choose a topic or issue related to your area of work and find out what God's Word has to say on the matter. Ask your minister to point you in the direction of some helpful Scriptures or wise Christian writing.
 - And let's make it our prayer that we will "train ourselves for godliness", filling our minds with "the knowledge of God's will, in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, that we might "walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him, bearing fruit in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God."

Marketing, Spin and Reputation ... they're not synonyms

Scott Blackwell



Scott Blackwell is the Anglican Chaplain to Macquarie University.

I'M SLIGHTLY FASCINATED BY CHURCH slogans. Once "Knowing Christ and making him known" was all the rage—I knew five churches then, and one now, that carried this one. These days churches are a little more subtle, a little more sophisticated, a little more 'you-centered' and a little less in-your-face (or perhaps a little less ambitious?).

Today you'll come across church websites with pithy taglines like: "A place for everyone", or "Compelling, Compassionate, Community" or "Gripped by the love of Christ"¹. The idea is to not only communicate a core value, but a character, a personality—a *personal* value.

I accidentally read an article² about marketing and reputation within Universities, which made this wonderful comment, "Universities typically place over reliance on visual branding and imagery (logo, taglines and the like) as the main manifestation of reputation rather than on deeper attributes..." He goes on to say, "...reputation is defined not by what you say about yourself (spin and promotion), but by opinions of third parties." What a brilliantly insightful observation!—and yet so obvious. It is not what we say about ourselves, but what is said about us that decides our reputation. But for the church, who is the 'third party' that counts?

I have also (intentionally) been reading the Book of Revelation. The church in Sardis (Rev. 3:1-6) had great 'spin' and brilliant marketing, but the their reputation was thoroughly bankrupt. What they said about themselves was impressive, but it had little or no correlation to the reality of their Church life or, more importantly, to their actual reputation in the sight of the risen and glorified Christ.

What is the sense in hiring a graphic designer to make your web page look fabulous, or your logo sexy if you are in reality

doing nothing more than white-washing a tomb? It is one thing to say that your membership is 'gripped by the love of Christ', but it is another thing entirely to have earned this kind of reputation. It is folly to proclaim yourself a 'compelling compassionate community', if your church is in reality complacent, comfortable and comatose. Is there any point in declaring that there is 'a place for everyone' in your church, if you are populated only by the well-to-do upper middle class?

One thing is for sure, spin and marketing will have no impact on the judgment of Christ. Could it be that in the rush to make ourselves look lovely, we have ignored our own festering internal constipation? It seems

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to me that the first priority of every Christian church and community is to make certain that we are working hard to actually be what Christ has made us—to take hold of that God-given gospel gift and rigorously apply it to our preaching, teaching and fellowship in order to make sure that Christ himself is truly living and moving among us.

I'm actually thinking of retagging my church: "Flawed and broken but we're hanging in there" is openly honest and therefore perfectly adequate. ●

FOOTNOTES

- 1 The comments made in reference to the taglines used in this article are not intended in any way to be a commentary on the churches from which they have been taken.
- 2 Stephen Jones, "Reputation Management And Universities", The Australian Student Residences Management Journal, Vol.5, No.1, Adbourne Publishing: Belgrave, April 2010.