



Revs David Millar, Todd Beiswenger, Julian Duckworth, Darren Brunne, David Moffat  
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## **The New Church Newsletter**

**Hurstville Society February 2016**

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## 2016 Vision Valley Review

by Rev Todd Beiswenger

As usual, we started off the year with a bang by heading off to Camp. This year the camp was only a short 75 minute drive from Hurstville, up near Dural. Upon arrival we were soaked. For the first three days it was rain, rain, and in case things weren't wet enough, more rain. But eventually it stopped and we finished the camp with the thought of rain being merely a distant memory.

Looking back at the experience, one of the best aspects of camp was the new faces! I think we had 15 people at camp who had never been before. Nine of them were able to stay the whole week, along with another 6 who came in for a couple days each. Well done!

These new people were treated to some amazing presentations! Surprises abounded, people were amazed, the crowds were delighted and of course, wretched souls were saved! The theme of the camp was "Divine Providence," and as such **Julian Duckworth** (Sydney) opened camp with a session that illustrated how providence "covers" us. His main prop was a bunch of margarita umbrellas, which was very appropriate on such a rainy day, but it illustrated how providence works to cover us from the worst of things, while still allowing us to get wet and make good choices ... while still offering us the freedom to put the umbrella away and get soaked.

**David Moffat** (Canberra) had the kids dressed up with fun animal hats that they had made earlier at camp, and then we got to figure out which children we could eat if we followed Jewish dietary laws. Unfortunately most of the children were not edible, and since there were not enough edible children to go around we decided to set them free.

**Darren Brunne** (Brisbane) likewise had a plan for the children which included them assembling a puzzle that was a picture of a parable. The adults were tasked with solving a puzzle of their own and we worked to decipher what the inner meaning of the parable was. Once complete the children flipped their puzzle over to show a new, more dazzling picture on the underside to illustrate how the beauty of the Word is also hidden beneath a veil.

My presentation was called, "Liar liar" and we got to repeatedly see people lied to by one of their five senses. We had some kind volunteers sample two different peanut butters, then tell us which one they liked better and why, only to find out that in actuality there was only one peanut butter and it was their taste buds and brains lying to them saying there was any difference. We saw our eyes, ears, and touch lie to us as well, hopefully leaving us not quite so certain that everything we see is actually to be believed.

These are just the family sessions, and after these we would break out into smaller groups to learn and experience even more. **David Millar** (Adelaide) offered a couple sessions, and camp new-comer **Joe Vandermeer** did as well, so there was a good variety of speakers to listen to.

For those who missed the camp or for those who did go to camp but want to view some of the sessions they didn't get to, the New Church in Australia website has videos, photos and much more:

<http://newchurch.net.au/documents/camp-2016-presentations>

Afternoons consisted of fun, which for some people took the form of water slides, adventure climbing and games, whereas for others they would take the opportunity to work on a jig saw puzzle or just chill out and relax. It was interesting to watch who the real adventure diehards were. With the rain pouring there was a group, mostly of children but a few crazed adults as well, who opted to take turns going down the water slide. The slide water was heated, but standing in line was a bone chilling experience.

The next day there was a similar opportunity to get soaked in the rain as you climbed a



vertical obstacle course. Not as many takers for this activity, but there were a few proud papas around as young **Dylan Johnson**, **Zach Beiswenger**, and **Evana Brunne** overcame their fears of heights and climbed about 10 metres all the way to the top! On another day **Holly Visser-Marchant** (pictured) among others braved the high ropes "Lily Pads".

The rain finally cleared for the outing day on the Thursday and various destinations beckoned. Some went to Sydney's northern beaches, some went to the city, others explored the Berowra Waters National Park and still others had a quiet day locally or at camp.

We had a few different evening activities, including a Price Is Right themed games night where teams would guess the prices of items in order to play another pricing game. The evening ended with a bonus round that provided a shocking ending to the evening as one team's greed for the points championship came to a thundering halt as they bet all their points on the next card being higher than a 3... and a 2 came up. Not learning the lesson, another team followed suit and lost their shot at the grand prize – which was a \$1 million Dick Smith's gift card – when they too bet heavy on higher than a three only to be dealt a two.

People were given further opportunity to embarrass themselves though as Julian had us doing a variety of small challenges, some mental, some physical, and then the next night there was an improvisational comedy night where we got to see how bad we all are at acting. However, at talent night there was in particular one big reveal as **Sam Johnson** displayed his singing talent by performing a updated cover of “Billy Jean” and “A boy, a girl and a graveyard.” Sam was accompanied on guitar by **Julian Ralls**, and for my money, they sounded better than the original artist. Good times.

Congratulations to **Jasper Visser-Marchant** for winning the table tennis competition. He is shown here with the trophy after the final with Jason Barritt. Change of an era with the winner not a Robinson this year!

Overall there were many good memories created, lessons learned, and friendships created and renewed. Personally I find camp to be a heavenly experience where all the normal cares of life just go away for a week. I know that I'm not alone in the sentiment as many people are already looking forward to next year's camp which will be held at Stanwell Tops NSW starting on January 1 2017. Get ready, because it'll be here before you know it!



<http://newchurch.net.au/camp-thetops-2017>

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## Our Eternal Debt

by Bill Hall

“We owe so much. Life, freedom, possessions, knowledge, happiness: nothing is from ourselves, all is a debt to God and to our neighbour.” Dr Hugo Lj Odhner

When I live from this truth that I do not have life in myself but that all blessings of life come to me from God and from my neighbour, I feel a deep sense of permanent joy and happiness every second of my life. Yes, I have to make an effort, as if of myself, to live as the Lord would have me live. But even this effort, though it may well appear to be from myself, in reality is from the Lord and His angels who are with me and with all people.

So we see that our lives are truly in the control of the Lord and that we are being blessed every second of our lives. It is as though we deeply perceive that “We are never alone. We are with Someone Who loves us and takes care of us.” (from the sermon, The Lord is with you wherever you go, by Bishop Brian Keith).



What can we do but to rejoice throughout our waking consciousness that we are being continually blessed by the Lord and His angels, every second of our lives. No more do we fret about the past or the future. Instead we live each moment with hope and joy that fills us with staunch determination to always follow the Lord's way.

One of the most helpful attributes of living by the truth is that we perceive clearly that all people are also recipients of the Lord's loving care. We perceive clearly that all people are our brothers and sisters. Even though some of our brothers and sisters are living more as the Lord would have them live, we are always linked to all people. Even though people who have broken the Commandments have to pay for their errors, we can always hope that they will come to see a new pathway and that they will follow that pathway with devotion and care. And we always have the freedom to extend compassion and zeal to help them along their perhaps demanding and difficult pathway.

At the end of each day, what can we do but rejoice that the Lord has provided us with the truth and the freedom to live every day as the Lord would have us live, forever rejoicing in the presence of the Lord's ceaseless love which forever leads us all the days of our lives.

“This is the day the Lord has made. We will rejoice and be glad in it.” Psalm 118:24

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## **Camp Wanawong**

So you had a great time at Vision Valley, or perhaps you didn't go and are now wishing you did?! Well, lucky for you we've just booked Camp Wanawong in Loftus for the weekend of 17-19 June! I have yet to put together anything resembling a program for the weekend, but there's likely to be a “New Church Day” theme running, which will include some intellectual stimulation as well as the requisite fun and games. The site is available to us at 6pm on Friday the 17<sup>th</sup>, and we've got to be out by 3pm on the 19<sup>th</sup>. This is a self catered site, so we've got to bring our own food, but as a result the costs are low: \$84 for adults, \$64 kids (6-17) and \$26 for little kids (3-5). They also offer a family rate of \$296 for 2 adults and any number of kids that stay in the same room with you.

If you are interested, please let me know ASAP! Email [todd@hurstvillenewchurch.com](mailto:todd@hurstvillenewchurch.com) or call 02 9580 1589. Bank details as such: BSB: 732-055 Account: 070253 Name: The General Church of the New Jerusalem.

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## **Deception Alert**

Recently I received an email from our home office regarding a school and orphanage that the New Church runs in Kenya. In essence, two Kenyan men – Robert Onterige and Nicks Marissa – have been contacting members and friends of the organization asking for money to support the children. However, these two men are no longer associated with the church, orphanage or school since it has been revealed that they were abusing their positions and more importantly abusing the children that they were supposed to be caring for.

Recently, they have been attempting to kidnap the orphans luring them away with various promises of wealth. It seems that they think that if they can take the children, then they will get funding from the members of the General Church in the US and possibly HCIC (Helping Children in Crisis, a New Church charitable organization).

The bottom line is that it is very important that you not be deceived into sending funds to Robert, Nicks or any of their clan. If you wish to financially support the orphanage, please do so through HCIC or the General Church head office.

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## **The Man Who Saved The World**

For a few crucial moments on September 26, 1983, Stanislav Petrov held the fate of the world in his hands.

When an alarm suddenly went off at Soviet nuclear early warning centre Serpukhov-15, Stanislav was responsible for reacting to a report that five American nuclear missiles were heading toward the Soviet Union. Rather than retaliate, Stanislav followed his gut feeling and went against protocol, convincing the armed forces that it was a false alarm. His decision saved the world from a potential devastating nuclear holocaust.

This story has now been made into a movie that came out in 2014, and we'll be showing it in the Richard Morse Room at 6pm on 12 February. There are a few good trailers of this movie available on YouTube, so check it and come along if you're interested.

**STOP PRESS:** We have just got confirmation that **Margaret Ward** will be visiting Sydney for about six weeks starting 15 February. She'll be staying with family and friends part of the time, but also part of the time at Baringa

## **Birthdays**

Happy Birthday to **John Hicks** (9<sup>th</sup>) and **Mike Lockhart** (11<sup>th</sup>)

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