



The New Church Newsletter

Hurstville Society July 2018

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Think Like An Angel Day Celebrations!

By Rev Todd Beiswenger

On Sunday, June 17th we had our annual celebration for the birth of the New Church. Normally it is known as “June 19th” or “New Church Day” but this year in my sermon I decided to call it “Think like an angel day.” The idea was simple enough: in the angelic heaven, the future and the present are one and the same, for what is future is already present, or what is to take place has taken place. (AC/SH 730) If we believe, as the Lord teaches, that the prophecies of Revelation have taken place and that the dragon has been defeated and the New Jerusalem is descending, then we should put that belief into action. Sure, we can point out that the process is not complete, but that doesn't detract from the angels' joy! So let's be joyous as well!

Well, we were joyous on this Sunday. After church we had a few activities planned out. Two generations of Lockhart women put together a pair of treasure hunts. There was one for the littlest children, who practised their “finding” skills to locate some koalas in the garden and earn a loot bag at the end. For the older kids though we had something a bit more challenging planned. They were given a series of clues that tied back to their knowledge of the church and more specifically the book of Revelation that led them on through a series of clues that brought them to a treasure at the end. The boys who participated seemed to really enjoy it!



Lucy Evans admires her New Church Day gift

Next up was a pot-luck lunch where there was way more food than there were empty bellies, which is a good problem to have. Each of the children there received a New Church Day gift, and then took turns at slaying our dragon piñata. We went with a simple piñata design, with the heads and faces of the dragon drawn on the piñata by the children, but the simplicity of it didn't seem to diminish their fun in slaying it.

Overall it was a good day, and a good celebration where for at least half a day we were all thinking like angels.

Riding with Private Malone

Several years ago I came across a song titled, "Riding with Private Malone" by David Ball. The song is a story about a young man who is looking for a used car, and responds to a classified ad for a "1966 Chevy." It turns out that the "Chevy" is in fact a 1966 Corvette, and after he buys it he finds a note in the glove box that becomes the chorus of the song:

He said my name is Private Andrew Malone
If you're reading this then I didn't make it home
But for every dream that's shattered another one comes true
This car was once a dream of mine now it belongs to you
And though you may take her and make her your own
You'll always be riding with Private Malone

I've used this song a few times over the years here as a postlude song as it fits when we talk about angels with us, or any topic regarding military veterans. If you're not familiar with the song, it goes on to tell the story of how the new owner felt that there was a soldier riding shotgun with him, and that one night he took a curve too fast and crashed the car. Witnesses say they saw a soldier pull him out of the fiery crash, and he knew that it had to have been one Private Andrew Malone who saved him.

I've known for quite a while that Private Andrew Malone was a fictitious name, and the song wasn't based on any one man's life, but yet it has always rung true for me. I've heard stories over the years of an angel saving a person from all sorts of things, including death, so it seemed believable to me. Well, recently I just came across a story about a 1967 Corvette, that says the song perhaps is not so far removed from the truth.

As the story goes, the year was 1967 and a young soldier was just weeks away from his next tour in Vietnam. By the time that tour was scheduled to be done, the current body style of Corvette would be no more so he had to put an order in at his local dealer before it was too late. He spec'd out a Rally Red 1967 Corvette convertible powered by a 400-horse 427ci big-block paired with a Muncie M21 four-speed transmission. (Yes, I just car nerded out on you with that, but if those specs mean nothing to you, suffice it to say that this Corvette was ordered to suit a real rev-head) It was the Corvette of his dreams, but it was scheduled to be delivered while he was serving overseas so he would have to wait until he returned to enjoy it.

Unfortunately, he was one of many who proudly went off to serve his country and never returned. In his memory, his family held on to the Corvette for a short while before deciding to trade it back in to the dealer to be sold again. Unlike the song, this Corvette has survived and is currently undergoing a high level restoration to make it brand-new again. Part of me wants to think that this makes the song actually true, even if the song writer didn't realize it at the time... then I realize that I don't want its owner to crash the car

like in the song! But the bottom line for me is that I suspect though that whoever is driving it actually will have a soldier riding shotgun with them too.

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Liam Versus the Wall



I think everybody loves a David and Goliath story, where the underdog pulls off an upset victory. I was witness to an event like this on May 27. The church was having a post-church casual tennis afternoon, but after a while the kids wanted to move on to other activities. I happened to have one in mind for them. At the request of the neighbour, we're putting in a fence between the manse and 28 Dudley St, and in order to clear the space there is – was – a short brick wall that needed to come down.

My thought was that young boys would love a shot at some sanctioned destruction, and I was not wrong. Matthew Cooper took first crack at it, did a fair bit of damage to it, and said, “This is harder than it looks!” No doubt. He and I knocked down about half the wall. But then Liam Johnson wanted a go at it. Liam is a fair bit younger (7 years old vs 12) and therefore smaller than Matthew, but this kid showed that he's got heart! It wasn't David vs Goliath because David won the battle with one shot. Liam, he didn't have a knock out punch, but what he did have was perseverance. It took everything he had to swing that hammer, but by golly, he did it. It reminds me of a favourite quote I came across years ago: In the confrontation between the rock and the stream, the stream wins not through strength but by perseverance.

It's a quality that I greatly admire, especially because it was difficult for him to persevere. But persevere he did. He did not want to leave before the job was done. In fact, his parents were ready to go, but at his instruction they were patiently waiting for him to finish the job. There's a great lesson here about perseverance, which is something we need in our spiritual development. The hells and forces of darkness are relentless, and when we fight against them it can feel like we've just got the strength of a 7-year-old boy attacking a brick wall. It's easy to be discouraged when we hit that wall and it seems that nothing actually happened, but if we can be like Liam and keep swinging, eventually that wall and those forces aligned against us will fall!

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2019 Family Retreat formerly known as Family Camp Reminder – January Retreat

Yes, the name has been changed to a “retreat” instead of “camp” because when most people think of camping they think of tents, sleeping bags and waking up in the middle of the night with the fear of a dingo stealing their baby. In order to help combat that misconception of what we do for our yearly church gathering in January, the name has

been changed to “retreat.” Because that's what we're doing, we're retreating from the world and our daily lives to have some relaxing fun with friends old and new.

This year will be a new venue, down in Jindabyne in the Snowy Mountains, from **Monday 21st January to Sunday 27th January**. I encourage you to go to www.newchurch.net.au to get a feel for costs and logistical details, or the venue itself at www.alpinevillage.com.au to look up what kind of activities there are. Most importantly though we are getting to the time of year where bookings need to happen in order for us to meet our minimum number requirements. **Minimum numbers have to be met by September 1st** and you don't have to pay when you book, just a \$100 per person deposit or \$300 for a family. It'll be good fun, and you won't regret coming!

Carolyn Heldon says guaranteed twin rooms for couples are limited so book early. She also suggests you “Like” the New Church Retreat page on Facebook. Any further queries contact Carolyn on either 0434581994 or carolynheldon@gmail.com

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Family Comes First

Rev. Garry Walsh is one of our own who has been serving in the ministry for nearly 20 years. He's served here, followed by pastorates in Mitchellville Maryland and Phoenix Arizona. However, it looks like Phoenix will be his last pastorate. Garry and Laurel have decided that due to family responsibilities they need to move to Pittsburgh this summer. As you might imagine, this has been a difficult decision for him and his family and they have been wrestling with it for some time. It means he will have to obtain secular employment since no full-time church work is available in the area. If possible, he will continue to do some travel work for the church. We wish him well in this next phase of his life, knowing that the Lord always leads to a good end.

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Working Bee

On the **29th July** after church we'll be having a working bee. As usual, the goal is to clean up the property of the weeds. Last time we put a pretty good dent in the back gardens that Norm had worked so hard at, as well as some maintenance gardening at the front. I think it is getting easier to keep the front looking good these days in large part to the quarterly working bees. Once again we will provide pizza for lunch in exchange for your labour!

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Whale Watching Walk

It's whale migration season, so we're going to have an outing on the **8th July after church**. The plan is to head down to Cape Solander at Kurnell. The National Parks website says “June/July is the best time to see humpback whales as they migrate to warmer waters. If you're lucky you won't even need to look far – whales have been known to swim as close as 200m from the coast.”

We'll drive down, the park charges \$8 per car, and do a short walk. We'll walk along the Cape Bailey Track towards the lighthouse... and then decide how far we want to go before turning back. The lighthouse is 3.5km from the starting point, but after about 1.5km the track veers inland and away from the coast. It's hard to tell from Google Maps if that means you no longer get a good view, or if just means that the cliff face starts to work its way inland. At any rate, I don't expect us to do the full 7km round trip. But bring a picnic lunch, some outdoor footwear, and let's see if we can spot some whales. It'll be fun!

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Newest Journey Program

Every year we run the latest spiritual growth program produced by the General Church. Here's their press release for the next one:

“Love Over Ego” draws upon the Biblical story of Daniel. In each chapter, we witness the clash between the forces of ego and the power of true, humble confidence. Through watching Daniel’s responses to the vain Babylonian rulers, we see a powerful example of strength without pompousness, and love without fear. Organized for group discussion, this workbook contains links to a video for each chapter, as well as icebreakers, meditations, quotes, sample prayers, and suggestions for life application. Daily readings and an appendix full of sermons will guide you through a deeper exploration of this universal topic.

While our normal schedule would be to run this starting February 2019, I'm putting this out now as a way of getting some feedback. There has been discussion here about whether or not we are interested in doing the next new program, or if we would prefer to instead repeat an older one. By the time this rolls around, it will have been almost three years since we explored the Daniel story with the adults, but we did just finish going through the Daniel story with the kids.

If you have any thoughts on this program one way or the other, your input would be appreciated.

Birthdays

Happy Birthday to **James Kermond** (10th), **Babbette Horner** (14th) and **Danita Horner** (15th) Also omitted last month **Anna** and **Erik Heldon** (23rd June)

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