

January 2019 News & Notes

January Calendar

The Australian New Church Retreat, formerly known as Family Camp, is happening later in January that has been the case the last few years, so it's worth bringing to your attention our January plans. We will be having **normal church** on **December 30th**, and it will be a **Holy Supper** service as well. Then **January 6th** and **13th** will be **outdoor** services in the gardens behind Baringa. Then there will be **no services on the 20th and 27th** as we head off to the retreat. Normal services will resume February 3rd.

Kogarah Storehouse Reminder

If this News Notes reaches you before the end of the year this is a reminder you are again invited to share the wealth by *bringing non-perishable food and toiletry items to benefit those in need, via Kogarah Storehouse*. **Deadline December 30th**. Let's show them how big our hearts are!

Spiritual Growth Program: Love Over Ego

Love Over Ego follows the biblical story of Daniel from his early days as a child captive in Babylon, to becoming one of the most respected leaders of the nation. Throughout each chapter, we witness the clash between the ego of the Babylonian rulers and the humble confidence of Daniel and his friends. The story offers a rich narrative for exploring questions such as: What is the difference between arrogance and genuine confidence? What is our true identity?

As Daniel and his friends boldly face the powerful Babylonian rulers, we glimpse ways that vanity, manipulation and desire to control never hold up to the grounding power of confidence, love and true self-worth.

These themes are as relevant today as they were thousands of years ago.

In times like these, we as members of the human race can learn to rise above petty issues, put aside differences and simply help one another, remembering our shared humanity.

For times when we find ourselves getting lost again in a self-focused mindset, *Love Over Ego* challenges us to remember what matters most. Like Daniel who stands amid lions, and his friends stand in the middle of fire, we also have the option to stand true to our values even in hard times. We invite you to join us in this program, as we practice letting genuine love take priority in our lives. If you would like more details on the program, check out our webpage where there's a link to the New Church Journey site.

We'll be starting this program on **February 10th**, and it will run for a total of six weeks with discussion groups happening on Monday evenings at 7:30pm. These programs have been popular over the years, and we encourage you to join in!

New Math! How Three Bishops Equals Two Bishops.

You are likely aware that currently the General Church employs two bishops: Brian Keith and Pete Buss Jr. What many don't realize though is that Pete's job is only half-time bishop, and the other half of his duties are with the Office of Education. Technically this means we have one and a half bishops in terms of capacity. When Pete was speaking to the clergy during the nomination process, he voiced a desire to get the GC back to having the capacity of two bishops, but spread out to three people. This would mean Pete would be the full time Executive Bishop, and then have two half-time bishops.

After Pete's successful nomination and affirmation from the board and laity, Pete has moved

forward with nominating **Brad Heinrichs** and **Dave Lindrooth** to be his Assistant Bishops. Brad would basically take Pete's current job of Bishop & Office of Education while Dave would be Bishop and Office of Outreach.

There is another level to this though, in that Pete has served in the capacity of "Assistant to the Bishop" but Pete is asking for Brad and Dave to serve as "Assistant Bishops." What's the difference? For most practical matters, there isn't really any difference, but what it amounts to is that the "Assistant to" is an appointed position whereas the "Assistant" has a three-step affirmation process that provides for greater buy-in and choice in that outcome. The three steps being affirmation by the clergy, board and GC membership. The GC does have a principle of gaining the "consent of the governed" at a congregational and central level which is why in this case a response is specifically being asked of the membership and participation would be appreciated. Currently we are two-thirds of the way through the affirmation process and the final phase is to place this dual-nomination before the GC membership for consideration. The plan is to initiate that process in the February-March timeframe. As a result, you should see something sent to you regarding a vote of affirmation in the months ahead. If you have any questions, concerns, or comments about any of this, feel free to drop me a line and I'll be happy to talk or write about it.

Final Thoughts

As I reflect on the year, there are many things to be grateful for, so many good people I've crossed paths with that I just want to take a moment here to say "Thank You." Thank you to everybody who has been part of my life and ministry this year. I've been blessed with a loving and supportive wife and child, but my support network extends well beyond the walls of our home. We have a dedicated group of people that show up for church and participate in the life of the church, including a team of volunteers that handle Sunday School, play music, provide flowers, cook meals, handle all the finances, maintain the property, as well as providing input, counsel and other forms of assistance that go above and beyond.

Yet, support goes beyond the Hurstville Society too. I've been supported by people all around Australia! Whether it be the hard working volunteers who run our summer camp, to those who attend it and make it wonderful with their presence, to the Logopraxis community, and the congregations around the country and especially to the good folks in Perth and Canberra who accommodate my visits and make me feel useful and appreciated.

Then there are all of you who are reading this newsletter, as well as the small but growing community of people who are supporting my YouTube videos... but most of all, thank each and every one of you just for being a friend. My life wouldn't be the same without you, and you know what, I like my life... so thank you for your contribution towards it.

It's been a wonderful 2018, and it wouldn't have been that way without you. Have a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year! May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with us all!

Birthdays – Margaret Heldon (9th), Thomas O'Brien (15th), Kerry Lockhart (24th), Bronwynn O'Brien (25th), Kaye Macfarlane (30th)

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Call or come at anytime.