



## **The New Church Newsletter**

**Hurstville Society November 2022**

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# **The New Church Newsletter**

## **Hurstville Society November 2022**

### **Learning the Hard Way**

by Rev Todd Beiswenger

There's a repeating pattern in the Bible: God says, "Live your life this way." People say, "No thanks." I picture God shrugging His shoulders while thinking, "Good luck with that." If He was on social media He might type in "smh," which stands for "shaking my head." Things inevitably turn out bad for His people as we learn a difficult lesson the hard way.

Earthly parents are familiar with this dynamic as well. I remember well my Dad telling me not to go out one evening as the roads were slick and I didn't really *need* to go pick up that pizza. I didn't listen, and proceeded to crash the car, turning it into an insurance write off. If only I had listened I would have saved myself a lot of money. My Dad didn't tell me to stay home because he didn't want me to have a good time. He was actually caring for me and my finances. Yet I didn't want to hear it in advance. It was a lesson that I apparently had to learn the hard way.

Recently I was having a conversation with a person I went to High School with, and he was telling me about the ongoing debates in the US about how the church should handle the LGBT conversation. He asserted that if we didn't acquiesce to full acceptance of LGBT people then we were bigots. Full stop. That seemed to be a rather extreme position to me. The church doesn't hate LGBT people. I think the fundamental problem is that LGBT people do not feel cared for by the church, and the church has done a poor job expressing that it does care. Just because we don't think LGBT behaviours are good ideas, doesn't mean that we don't care about the people. We just think it will lead to bad outcomes, as evidenced by many a Bible story where the people don't listen to God's wisdom. People are starting to learn this though, as evidenced by the following account.

A couple of months ago an article was published in the *Sydney Morning Herald*, and the headline was: "'Absolutely devastating': woman sues psychiatrist over gender transition." In May of 2010 a 19 year old woman, who was identifying as a male, sought to get hormone therapy for "the development of male secondary sexual characteristics." She was referred to a psychiatrist for evaluation to see if she was a suitable candidate for the therapy. The psychiatrist signed off on it.

About 18 months later she went back to him to get approval to have her breasts removed, and then 7 months later to have her womb removed. Both times the psychiatrist signed off on the request saying that she was mentally competent to make these medical decisions. The problem is that now the person is now 31 and no longer identifying as male, and is suing the psychiatrist for professional negligence. The complaint is that the psychiatrist "knew or ought to have known" that she needed further counselling before proceeding.

The article states that in "an interview with The Age and the Herald, she explained the background to her gender confusion. Her complicated home life had given rise to a feeling

she was somehow defective. The feeling grew in her mid-teens when she realised she was attracted to other girls. At 17, she searched for answers on the internet and ‘discovered transgender’”.

“And because of the definition of dysphoria, I thought, ‘That’s what I have.’ I decided that I must be transgender because of my discomfort that I had in my body. As my unhappiness grew, I felt the cause of my unhappiness was because I was not male, so the answer was to change my body even more.”

She had hoped transitioning would bring her greater happiness and self-assurance. Instead, each surgery plunged her further into depression. These days she says, “Knowing that I can’t have children is absolutely devastating.” Unfortunately for her, this is a very difficult lesson to learn on listening to bad advice. If only somebody had warned her! But where could she have turned to get such advice? Most people these days are afraid to speak out against the whole gender ideology for fear of being called a bigot, transphobe, and/or receiving a public shaming. I say “these days,” but the reality is that the public has been shunning God’s word for thousands of years. I’m sure some people, probably the majority, think they are being kind by affirming the person’s beliefs about themselves, but in reality they are only enabling their friend or family member to continue down a path that will only limit and potentially destroy their happiness.

What this brings to light though is exactly what the church teaches regarding thinking and behaviours that are outside of the Lord’s order, which is that within all of it there is inherent unhappiness. The teachings from the Word are given to us in order to *increase* our happiness, not to limit it. Yet, because these teachings are often contrary to what we *want* to hear, we think that they are harsh, judgmental, and limiting. As a result we decide to build ourselves a golden calf, which in reality is nothing other than setting ourselves up as god.

I know that the culture tells us that people are happier doing what they want to do, but that’s just not what happens in actuality. There are plenty of examples out there that demonstrate that people are not good arbiters of our own happiness. If you don’t believe me, or want to just do some follow up research, take a look at Dan Gilbert’s talk on “The Surprising Science of Happiness” that tells us just how bad we are at choosing a path to happiness. That’s why we have the Word, because when we do what the Word tells us, we will be happier. Maybe not at first, but eventually it will come good. This is because the Word gives us the truth, and when we invent some rationale that is contrary to what the Word teaches what we’re really doing is lying to ourselves. We may not know exactly what we’re lying to ourselves about, but it’s safe to assume that some chunk of what we consider “truth” today is likely nothing more than a defence against some deeper meaning which is painful to accept. By lying to ourselves we mortgage our long-term needs in order to manage that which is tormenting us in the here and now.

Ultimately, this is just another example that demonstrates why we need to be guided by principles instead of our feelings. Our emotions and our five senses will deceive us. The Lord does all that He can to tell us that His ways are better than our ways, but He is also willing to let us try things our way if we insist. As culture continues to promote this radical gender ideology I think a lot of people are going to find out that it didn’t bring happiness for them either. Sometimes we have to learn things the hard way.

Link to original article: <https://www.smh.com.au/national/absolutely-devastating-woman-sues-psychiatrist-over-gender-transition-20220823-p5bbyr.html>

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## **Join in with the Centenary Celebrations!**



The church in 1921

On Saturday and Sunday, November 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup>, we're putting on a party!

But first a bit of history.

- July 1905 - Hurstville Society of the New Church was founded.
- 2005 - 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration of the Hurstville Society.
- 1921 - The church group purchased a block of land to construct a church building at 24 Dudley Street.
- July 1921, The cornerstone was laid on the 16<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Hurstville Society.





It is inscribed with the words, “Holiness to the Lord” in Hebrew, and the date “10-7-21”. The latter is not visible today but the Hebrew can still be seen at the base of the left hand pillar at the rear of the church building.

- November 27, 1921 the finished church building was dedicated. This is what we are celebrating! We would have liked to have been able to celebrate last year, but well, you know, COVID.

Here's a quick run down of the events for the weekend:

Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> November, 1-5pm:

- Open house, Gardens and Tennis Court.
- Afternoon tea served from 2:30pm.

Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> November, 10-11am:

- Worship service led by Bishop Lindrooth, followed by social time.

Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> November, 12-2pm:

- Lunch, please RSVP!

## Excerpt from February/March 1922 New Church Life

Our little church building is an accomplished fact. Thanks to our Pastor [Rev Richard Morse], who designed it and superintended its erection, we have a substantial and artistic structure of fibro-cement, with a base of mahogany, and a red tile roof. It stands on stone piers, and is capable of seating sixty people comfortably.

The chancel is of simple design, in Western Australian jarrah, which, when oiled has a rich red tone. There are three steps from the floor of the church to the Altar for the Word, which is in the middle of the chancel towards the east. Immediately above, there are two lead-light windows of flame-coloured glass, with purple and gold border. When the sun shines directly through these windows, it creates a most beautiful effect by illuminating the Word and the middle of the chancel with a glow like that of sunrise . . .

On Sunday morning, November 27<sup>th</sup> [1921], the building was dedicated to the worship of the Lord Jesus Christ in His Divine Human . . .

M.M.W.

(Martha Mornington White, who later married Frederick Fletcher)

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## Visit by Bishop David Lindrooth

As you may have noticed in the Centenary Celebrations entry, Bishop David Lindrooth and his wife Aven will be visiting us to take part in the celebrations. Beyond leading the worship service for that weekend, he'll also be giving us our doctrinal class for November titled, "Jacob as a Founding Father," that will get into why he was a good illustration of how we become a church. This class will be held on **November 10<sup>th</sup> at 11am**, and will be followed by a BYO lunch.

The Lindrooths will be arriving in Sydney on November 8<sup>th</sup>, and departing on the 15<sup>th</sup>, so there will be some opportunity for them to do some visiting with people outside the class and weekend events. If you would like some time with either of them, please let me know so you can be scheduled in.

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## Women's Weekend ~ Dec 9-11 ~ Last Call!

Making new friends and renewing old friendships with other New Churchwomen.... Exploring Feminine Swedenborgian Spirituality, Cultural Intelligence and the story of Manoah, his wife and the birth of Samson.... Assembling birth kits for women in remote regions of the developing world.... Meditating, playing, dining and relaxing with like-minded women.... Has this piqued your interest? Are you a woman interested in this kind of stuff? We'd love to have you join us for our December women's weekend! This is the last call, though – the **registration deadline is November 25<sup>th</sup>**, with a deposit of \$50 due upon registration and a balance of approximately \$200 (depending on the final number of participants) due at the weekend. Zoom participants are also welcome. *Please contact Jenn ([jenn@beiswenger.net](mailto:jenn@beiswenger.net)) or 0411 719 754 ASAP if interested!*

### **Fundraising for Birth Kits**

The ladies are looking forward to serving others by assembling 200 birth kits for Birthing Kit Foundation Australia at their December women's weekend! The catch is, they need to pay for the supplies. The total cost is \$1000, of which they've already raised \$655 – they just need another \$345 by **Nov 7<sup>th</sup>**! If you feel called to support the ladies and this cause, a donation would be very much appreciated. The online process is quite straightforward. Simply go to

<https://www.mycase.com.au/p/290744/womens-weekend-dec-911-2022> (or [www.mycase.com.au](http://www.mycase.com.au) and search for 'women's weekend') and click on the big 'donate' button. For more information about the cause and the birth kits, visit <https://www.bkfa.org.au/>. Thank you for your consideration!

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### **Welcome Back Angela and Jon and Evie**

After 7 years living in the Bryn Athyn area USA Angela,(daughter of Owen and Margaret Heldon) Jon and 4 year old Everlyn (Evie) arrived on October 22 to settle in Australia. Initially they will be living down the South Coast near Angela's twin sister Michelle while their future unfolds.

### **Birthdays**

Happy Birthday to **Cliff Adamou** (2<sup>nd</sup>), **Jesse Horner** (3<sup>rd</sup>), **Brian Heldon** (8<sup>th</sup>), **Cathy Kermond** (11<sup>th</sup>), **Skye Horner** (11<sup>th</sup>), **Lori Heldon** (30<sup>th</sup>)

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