



WORLDWIDE
CHURCH OF GOD

Church Matters

May 2010

Living and Sharing
the Gospel

Keeping a link with the Sydney congregation

Please click on the following Web Links for:

Message for the Day

Rod's Updates

Sydney Home Page

Extras

Your Personal Gold-Disc Church Service

The ABC once promoted its symphony concert series with the slogan: "There's nothing like being there!"

Regular Sydney WCG congregation attendees agree with this sentiment. However not all our members are able to enjoy the in-person blessings of 'being there'. We're a scattered church family that extends across greater Sydney, through satellite churches, to individuals in rural districts of NSW.

Many of us can't get to regular church meetings — for various reasons. We can be frail, aged, chronically sick or just plain distant. Some of us have moved interstate and (even overseas) but still value that contact with Sydney's services. We want to 'be there' and share the worship life of the congregation and hear the vital messages being regularly preached.

Fortunately, there is a way: our CD distribution program.

For decades, Sydney tape-recorded its services and sent tape copies to those in need. Postage costs were high and the tape had to be posted back for re-use. **Paul Brewster** says that the arrangement didn't always work smoothly and tapes were often damaged.

CD production replaced tape in 2005 to accommodate a growing list of recipients. Sound quality immediately improved and the listener could hear both messages and songs on a single-sided disc.

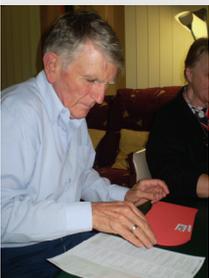
When you receive a CD, the disc remains yours. The decision was made to post the discs in Roza Red CD envelopes – a stand-out colour to assist archiving in your storage area.



Another load of 2,400 blank CDs

While superior in quality to tape, CDs are cheaper for us to purchase, as we buy in bulk – up to 2,400 at a time. This covers the program for around six months. Right now there are over 70 people on the regular mailing list. Most are within NSW, but interstate and overseas recipients figure as well.

In practice, the entire church service is recorded on computer. It is then edited by **Drew Garratt** over the following days, ready for duplication by **Wayne Garratt** using a CD duplicator capable of burning seven discs at a time in only four minutes. As a CD only runs to 70 minutes, Drew edits out local announcements to fit to size.



Presently, two regular services are duplicated and posted out in a single envelope, saving money and pack-and-post time. Previously this workload fell on just a few shoulders and was subject to slow delivery times; but now the labelling of discs and addressing of envelopes is a joint 'people' exercise held at the Garratt's home after the fortnightly Bible Study.

"The work gets done in one group sitting and we all can have a fun fellowship time in the process," says **Helen Callaghan**. "Our CD congregation is seeing more consistent delivery times as a result."



(More....)

Appreciating the Importance of Each Person's Story

Lessons from Ministry

At a funeral, have you ever sat and listened to the eulogy of a person you thought you knew reasonably well? As you looked around the room you realise that there are people there you have no connection with except somehow you share being part of the deceased's story. There is something unique about each person's story. We as humans only know each other in part. God knows us fully.

When Jesus came amongst us his life pointed to a focus on the grass roots. He responded to the individual's story – their anguish, struggle and questions. He didn't seem too concerned about the perpetuation of the elite leadership structure of the temple. Instead his followers would be brothers, fellow footwashers. Even the smallest is respected and concerned for. They would be quick to forgive their common frailty to make mistakes or hurt one another. Jesus didn't seem to want titles that lifted one above the other. They were followers of the same Master, hearing, watching him.

Thus Christian ministry, which really operates as an unglamorous service at the grass roots, has sensitivity to the privacy of each person's story. Christian ministry is not about being representatives of an organisation who have the authority to barge in or impose the dictates of such an organisation. Christian ministry is by invitation into someone else's story. And if invited to walk alongside sharing whatever part of that story the person wishes to reveal to us.



Each person's story is as different as fingerprints.

<http://tedsonline.co.uk/>

We see this exemplified in Jesus in Revelation 3:20 "Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with me."

At the heart of Christian ministry is a belief in the effective work of the Holy Spirit dwelling within each believer. The Holy Spirit takes each person's story and brings it into God's story. That in itself should be a warning not to meddle with His work and to impose on the conscience of another. It requires having a long term view and not reacting to present-day differences or demanding everyone think the same way on every topic.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Special Services Pentecost Weekend

At our normal service on Saturday May 22nd we will have a Praise/Worship entitled "God's Future Arriving in the Present."



After the service there will be a Lord's Supper in the staff room.

Then on Sunday May 23rd at 3.00 pm, we will be holding a Pentecost Service at our normal venue.

The National Day of Thanksgiving is a day for us to pause as a nation and say thank you to God and to each other for those many things we often take for granted, but which really make our lives worth living. Let us use this day to be a blessing to those who have been a blessing to us during the past year.



Those we are honouring and thanking as part of our National Day of Thanksgiving celebrations on May 29th 2010 are:

People engaged in *Small Business*, such as sole traders and shopkeepers. Those engaged in the *Trades* such as builders, electricians, plumbers, carpenters, etc. Also *Primary Producers*, which includes all types of farmers.

In addition, and at a more personal level, we encourage you to honour and thank *Grandparents* for the difference they make in their families and the contribution they have made over the years in our nation.

We will include this in the first part of our service on May 29th.

The money sent to buy rice for the Buduburam refugee church in Ghana has been received and the rice purchased. Ten bags of rice of 50Kg each were shared among the families attending our congregation there. Each member received two of the little containers you see in the picture. It came just in time.



Emmanuel Okai wrote:

Once again, please accept our appreciation for your kindness and love for these brethren of yours here in a refugee camp. We will continue to give you updates on developments here in Ghana's G.C. I. fellowship. You are our partners in development and we thank you for your kind support.



In three to four months' time, we will make another purchase of rice.

[\(More....\)](#)

Buduburam, Ghana

The Sydney web site is updated regularly by a number of volunteers and is continually being improved to provide a better service.

Sydney Church Web Site

Some of its features are as follows:

- Rod's Updates**
- Message for the Day**
- Over 60's**
- Intercessory Prayer**
- About Us**

Any relevant news is immediately available.

This takes daily portions from the sermons given in Sydney for further reflection.

Insights and thoughts on the final stage of life are provided from a biblical perspective.

This includes requests for prayer s such as the Haiti tragedy, the persecuted church.

This includes articles about how our congregation functions, what we believe, and our Strategic Plan — *Sydney Church of God - Our Future Together*. **Any comments on this plan will be appreciated.**



As you can see, it can be a way to become better aware of what is going on. If you have any thoughts on how to improve it, please let us know.

Pearly Gates

