

# Church Matters

Keeping a link with the Sydney congregation



*Living and Sharing the Gospel*

**September 2015**

## Christine Pavlovskis 1922 – 2015



The funeral service for **Christine Mavis Pavlovskis**, held on July 23rd, was a celebration of a faithful and humble life. Christine, along with her husband **Robert**, and her brother **Dick Quinsey**, were long-time church members remembered for their dedication and service to the church.

A modest, unassuming lady, she became a proficient dressmaker, working for **Madame Pellier**, a French couturier who had opened up a fashion business in Sydney. Christine's speciality was wedding gowns. She not only designed and made the gowns, she would help the bride on the wedding day, ensuring that every detail of deportment and etiquette was perfectly attended to.

Christine and Robert had a great love of ballroom dancing which they shared with Dick and his wife **Mary**, and other church couples.

Christine's death ends the most difficult period of her life – 10 years in Belmore Nursing Home following 5 years of sacrificial service to Robert after his was struck down with meningitis. She faced this difficult period without complaining, always accepting of the fact that her body was being ravaged by age.

Those that visited her during these times would receive a wonderfully warm and humble joy at seeing you. It is hard to describe because you don't often experience such innocence and simplicity in a person: a spontaneous child-like response, uncluttered with any agendas or hidden issues.

**Dawn Milne** described her experience with Christine: "I was going through some difficult times and I would go and share this with Christine. She was such a gentle person who would just listen and then say something very appropriate that would encourage me."

A quiet person you would know was there for you – it wasn't about herself. She wasn't above you or beneath you. She was just there as a friend.

Christine wasn't bothered by the outward appearance of wrinkles or grey hair; her deep faith carried her through her physical decline, grief and loss. She remained patient, composed and gracious.

She didn't despair when her mind began to deteriorate; she had found her identity in her relationship with a loving God whom she knew held her in his compassionate embrace. She died in the knowledge that what is yet to come for her, is far greater than what has been.

Although her passing marks the end of her family line, she leaves us with a legacy of a life built firmly on the hope of a glorious future in the New Heaven and New Earth.

With Christine we sense something deeper than the way this world measures people. We see the unfading glory of a gentle and quiet spirit who puts her hope in God.

## Special Services

*Feast of Trumpets* will be held at the Ermington meeting room at 10.30am on Monday September 14th. The address is 8 River Road, Ermington. The sermon will be "Who is the centre of the book of Revelation?"

*Day of Atonement* will be held at the Strathfield South High School in the staff room beginning at 10.30 am on Wednesday September 23rd. The sermon will be "Being set free by Christ's Atonement."

No services in Wollongong and Sydney on September 26 and October 3.

First service after *Ulladulla Festival* will be October 10th in Wollongong and Sydney.



## PNG Trip 2015

Thank you for all the prayers for the latest trip up to Mt Wilhelm PNG. The roads have been improving which makes the travelling easier than in the past. It is still quite tiring but at least it is, for much of the trip, a smoother ride.

We found the Mt Wilhelm congregation to be a settled and peaceful congregation, with a positive approach to their future together. They are very grateful for the on-going support they receive from Australia and wish to grow more and more in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. Their upcoming festival has the theme "Amazing Grace."

We had many objectives for this trip and discovered some new opportunities. **Mark** was kept busy with making sure the building projects were properly planned for the future. This required Mark walking many kilometres to get to the church site from the guest house. He also developed a prototype cone for directing smoke up and away from fire potentially freeing people from breathing in the smoke from fires in their homes. The locals will work on the prototype further.



We were given an appreciation ceremony with feasting by the Mercy of Life Centre for the blankets they received from the church for the orphan children. We are now examining how to complete their toilet and showers. It is a good and trusting friendship. In many ways it symbolizes the high regard the church has with all churches and groups. The Catholic priest told Mark: "We co-operate well together."

I spent a lot of time with pastors **Ben** and **Richard** discussing pastoring, doctrine and introducing a lot of teaching material for their development. We had several other meetings:

1. With the men about violence toward women, the use of alcohol and the biblical teaching on sex with the emphasis that the men in the church need to show to their neighbours a new way of being men.
2. With over 20 young people present - a number are coming from a non GCI background. We discussed what is worship, attitudes to sex and marriage, the development of camps based on Fun, Friendship and Faith.



Already they came up with the idea of a walk to the beautiful lakes up Mt Wilhelm where cottage accommodation already exists and the potential to fish for rainbow trout. It would be open to children and youths from other parts of PNG and even local ones from outside the church. They are even exploring the idea of opening a school for young children on the site once it is safe for that purpose.

3. With the women about how the Gospel of John honours women, how a Christian women lives in the difficult circumstances of an abusive situation, what is the peace of God and what are the essentials in a marriage for it to remain a covenant. **Josephine** had a very direct talk about the health dangers women face in PNG due to unhygienic practices, especially from men.



This was followed with a very emotional sharing with a large number of mothers with many children who had been abused and abandoned without support. Support and prayer were given for each one. The women's ministry is making it their major commitment in fundraising to support these women. Our church is becoming a safe place for women.

We visited the local high school. We already have Religious Instruction classes there and share on a rotational basis the worship at the school. Josephine will voluntarily give talks to young men and women there about health, sexual dangers, and other hot topics. They have a desperate need for text books and sporting equipment. The study pressure on our church young people is great. So we have two goals. Firstly we want to develop a study centre at our church with a laptop and text books with study guides for each course for the youths to share and encourage one another. Secondly to work with companies to bring surplus textbooks and laptops from Australia to the high school.

We were introduced by a new Australian friend **Craig** to high quality but very cheap second clothing stores in Goroka. This trip we were able to purchase over 20 warm and good quality jackets with two sleeping bags for just over A\$90. We will do this now on every trip.

The road project is on hold due to the uncertainties over a proposed Chinese-built huge dam and hydro project in the area which could dramatically affect everything up there. It is of great concern to us.

There is much more to discuss which will be done in future articles. A lot of follow up needs to be done and we will update everyone as we proceed.

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