

Church Matters

Keeping a link with the Sydney congregation



Living and Sharing the Gospel

October 2015

Norman David Coventry 6th April 1946 - 28th August 2015

The relatively quick death of **David Coventry** from an aggressive brain tumour has been felt by a lot of people in the church and the wider community.



As a young man he had been active in sports, particularly loving rugby league. David retired after many years as a postman. Thankfully in retirement he did a memorable trip to the Middle East with **Stephen Brique's** group and was very involved with a local hiking club. He would share how wonderful the people were and the enjoyment he got from organizing hikes and being in the beautiful Australian bush.

Baptised in 1973 David attended a number of Bible Studies over many years. A lot of questions were raised by David in these studies. We acknowledged we didn't have all the answers. But there were two fall-back positions David and the rest of us could use:

God who is in charge loves us so much that he sent his Son to share with us his relationship with the Father. So we don't have to worry how God is towards us.

And whatever he has in store for us will be greater than anything we can imagine or even desire. So whatever we discuss and speculate upon is nothing compared to the glory God has prepared for his children.

While David did suffer from forgetfulness and confusion, there were many times in conversation that he expressed his knowing that he was in God's hands and that he was looking forward to something beautiful. He had an assurance, a peace in the midst of trouble.

David died peacefully without pain and in the presence of his faithful brother **John** who has been with him the whole journey. And of course **Madeleine** has been a wonderful support to both. She is like a member of the family.

A big thank you to all who visited or rang David. He probably was surprised how many genuinely felt great sadness at what was happening to him.

Noeleen Canard shared some thoughts at the funeral:

Tender hearted was the best word to describe David's approach to life. He had empathy for others and he loved his mother very much. He had a great love of nature, animals, especially dogs. He encountered many when he was a postman. He led a balanced, moderate life enjoying different types of music and live performances of musicians and singers.

He liked finding the meaning of new words and would often bring a new word to us to find out if we knew its meaning. He enjoyed telling jokes. David was a good steward of all God gave him and now he is waiting to be raised and meet God as he believed he would. May we all end as well.

Each of our lives can seem so fleeting. It is a reminder to enjoy the life you have.

If you love hiking and can hike, hike.

If you love dancing and can dance, dance.

If you love learning, and can learn, learn.'

If you have friends and can eat together, eat together.

Sam, John, Madeleine, **Ross**, **Jim**, Noeleen and others who would get together will miss David in their group.

We as friends share our condolences with David's family: John, sister **Shirley** and brother **Don**.

We are saddened by David's death. But in hope we wait for God's purposes to be revealed, when all the questions are answered and we are all reunited in God's family. In the meantime David's struggles are over. He is safely in God's hands

Congratulations to **Jeff Callaghan** for the 50th anniversary of his baptism on 11/10/1965.

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Earlier in the year **Margaret Gumley** also reached this milestone, having been baptised on 4/04/1965.

Faithfulness is very important to God.



Baptism Robert Piper

After a long journey of doing his own thing, **Robert Piper** was baptised on Wednesday morning September 30th during the Ulladulla Festival. Robert chose the beautiful Coliers beach for the occasion. Surrounded by family and friends Robert was asked:

Do you believe that God has forgiven all your sins for the sake of Jesus Christ, and that Jesus is your personal Saviour?

Do you believe what Jesus said: "Because I live, you will also live. On that day you will realise that I am in the Father, and you are in me, and I am in you."?

Do you believe "To all who receive him, to those who believe in his name, he gave the right to become children of God – born of God," and that through the baptism of the Holy Spirit, you are his beloved child in Jesus?

Then he was taken into the water to be buried with Christ and to be raised in newness of life — a life of on-going repentance in the joy of salvation. After the laying of hands for the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, Robert was welcomed by all present into God's family.



Ulladulla Festival 2015 Report

What incredibly warm and beautiful weather we had this year. With a theme of the 'Fullness of God' we could certainly give thanks to the many blessing we received each day.

A wide range of ages contributed to a real family atmosphere. In children's church **Mary Bouchier** introduced a new style of teaching children which many parents were inspired to learn about. The young adults continued their vital contribution to the festival: technology, organization of activities, worship and messages. Their friendships from all over Australia and their love for God added to the aliveness and well-being we all experienced.

To thank all those who contributed is like giving the credits in a movie. So many make their contribution for the smooth running of the 8 days. Many are invisible. We had a remarkable generosity at the festival. Whether the need was for cleaning products to Yurana House, the PNG orphanage, the offerings and the payment of festival costs, there was a wonderful response. Thank you!



Attendance this year was higher than last year with the largest being 138. We had guests from the US and UK. Dirty Bingo was very well attended with 98 participating. Also the Ulladulla Dash had 60 participants — a new record.

The last special music and the last hymn on the last day finished the festival with a crescendo.



We are very appreciative to the Highway Christian church in allowing us to use their very suitable facilities. We look forward to next year exploring "**The Mighty Waterfall of God's Grace.**"

Buduburam

We continue our support to the refugee church in Buduburam. In September we transferred \$4,100 to **Emanuel Okai** for education (\$3,300) and grain (\$800). Another transfer of \$6,500 for medical insurance (\$1,500) and children's church hall construction (\$5,000). All of this is in Australian dollars which has been devalued appreciably against the US dollar.

More on Web



Bangladesh

Due to the recent heavy rainfall, thousands of people lost their property and livestock and hundreds of people are missing. Our elementary school students, nurse's-assistant students and their families are also affected by this situation. The students' books, school supplies and belongings were washed away. The school's mud roads were damaged badly, which made it very difficult to the students attending the school and as well as community people to move around for their everyday needs.

We have 11 free Christian elementary schools operated by BEA Ministry with 341 poor students.

John Biswas to the Wollongong congregation:

We have received US\$994.18, Wednesday (9/23/15). Your support brings hope and eases the suffering of flood victims, students and community people. We are grateful for your continued support and prayers. *Your co-laborer in His vineyard.*