

Church Matters

Keeping a link with the Sydney congregation



Living and Sharing the Gospel

February 2017

So Long, Farewell! And Go Singing

Saturday January 14th, 2017 was one of those *(by Barry Hatfield)* emotionally sad-but-warmly happy days at end of services. Sad that the **Wilson** family was moving to Brisbane; but happy in recounting their appreciated involvement in the Sydney congregation.

When anyone departs for whatever reason it leaves a painful gap in our small crowd. And we feel it, despite the pleasant memories it leaves to heal the temporary wound.

Both **Alan** and **Cath Wilson** have served the Sydney scene for many years, along with Cath's brothers **Lachlan** and **Gavin Best**.

'*The Three Bests*' (that has a good ring to it!) have long used their prodigious singing talents, both individually and collectively, in supporting congregational hymns and contemporary spiritual songs, together with occasional special music items.

As a scheduled worship leader in recent times, Cath often brought great humour to her task to ease the tension of pre-service song rehearsals and sound checks.

In my memory, Cath has been the only singer in our band that's plonked her Apple Mac laptop on the music stand to read song words and to manage the role of worship leader. We'll miss her ready supply of CDs when the band isn't available. Once, a CD showed a fault in rehearsals – so she promptly burned a fresh one on the spot for me to playback. Nothing, it seemed fazed our Cathy. She always appeared ready to step in with music and her voice when others were not available. We were never left wanting.

Robyn Pemberton remembers Cath's spiritual approach to her worship leading role that added depth to both the song service and the messages for the day. "She always prepared well and this showed whenever she led worship. Her lovely voice would add spiritual zest to the singing and our responses."

Helen Callaghan recalls that more than a decade ago, Cath was one of the then Children's Church teachers, working with **Fiona Griffiths**. "Cathy was also 'on-call' to help out when we had a gap in the team and was always a very willing helper," Helen says. "She was always well-prepared and very active with the children, getting down on the floor and bringing her wonderful laugh to help the children learn. Cath was always encouraging, always humble and an absolute delight to share our singing with during song service."

Both Robyn and Helen spoke at conclusion of service, thanking Cath and presenting a gift to assist their settling in to their new location. A special cake added to the special occasion.

Sydney congregation will miss the Wilson family and their children **Ethan, Lauren, Mya** and **Zara**, yet it's certain that whatever fellowship they may join in their new city, it will be the richer by their presence.

Zane and Eilish Farewell

Zane has grown up in this congregation and is a highly respected member of it and of SEP. He has contributed with worship leading and drumming and presenting well thought-out messages.

Zane is very blessed to have found a calling at *Crusader Camps* which exercises his gifts. He has a deep love for God. He desires to share his love for his Saviour Jesus Christ.

And he has now been doubly blessed to meet **Eilish** who shares his love for serving together on their Christian journey.

Rod Dean said:

"We know that they both will be active in whatever community they find themselves. Our loss will be another congregation's gain. Our doors are always open to you to visit and join us in the joy of worshipping our God - Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

So thank you for the times we have had. We also thank God for the way you both have conducted your relationship. It has upheld the way of faithfulness to God.

I would like to say one more thing. Jesus gave us a wonderful gift before he was crucified. He prayed for us:

(Continued on p 2 ...)



(... Cont'd from p 1) ²⁰My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, ²¹that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. ²²I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one – ²³I in them and you in me – so that they may be brought to complete unity. Then the world will know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.' (John 17:20-23)

What a wonderful blessing there is one who prays for us.

And he wants us to share in the oneness of the Father and Son.

What a comfort to live out of this given reality and not have to just rely on our human efforts.

Even when we are disappointed in ourselves or one another, we can still receive this oneness and still be faithful in how we give to each other. We can always go back to Jesus, the faithful servant of his people, and receive the love described by Paul in 1 Corinthians 13. It is not about getting my way or being right in my own eyes. It is a service.

Congratulations for your upcoming wedding day and your future life together."

Wedding

On Friday December 9th, 2016, at 4.00pm **Zane Garratt** and **Eilish Sullivan** were married at Q Station, North Heads. The service was officiated by **Rod Dean**.

Friends and family came all the way from the US. It was a beautiful afternoon, followed by an evening meal and celebrations.



Report on PNG Annual Meeting

On January 29th the annual PNG meeting was held. In attendance were **John McLean, Rod Matthews, David Jordison, Mark Latham** and **Rod Dean**.

Mt Wilhelm is the largest congregation under the supervision of the GCI Australia. The meeting included a review of the 2016 trip and the challenges to support the wonderful growth of children and young people. New families are beginning to attend as well.

Mark shared the growing connections between the Vanuatu and PNG brothers and sisters in the faith. It is hoped that this will grow and one day include all those of the Melanesian culture.

One area that will need further discussion is the ongoing pastoral and theological education of elders and the young adults as they continue to grow in their service to the church and the wider community, including the local high school. It was recognized that a lot of training and information had already been shared up there. The question is how to utilize ACCM up there. The remoteness and poor communication presents major difficulties in on-going teaching and assessment. This will require training the trainers up there. It will also need some form of record or register of training done. All of this takes time and effort. So we would appreciate your prayers on this.

The 2017 trip is in the midst of the uncertainty of the elections. We want to make the completion of the toilets at the church and orphanage a major priority. In the next couple of months Mark and Rod will be busy planning the trip with all the messages, training, books, equipment, budgets and the schedule with the knowledge that PNG is the land of the unexpected and no matter how ready one is you have to be flexible and respond to the needs that can surprise you.



The meeting was held in the meeting hall of *Uniting Caryna Epping Independent Living*. We thank **Jeff** and **Helen Callaghan** and **Ruth Matthews** for their help with our lunch and making the day so comfortable.

Theo Okai:

"Thank you so much for your support over the years on behalf of Buduburam. The Children's building is particularly appreciated.



We have fixed doors and metal burglar proof for the windows now. I took some pictures on my recent visit we would like to share with you."



Buduburam Children's Hall

Recently \$4,600 was sent from the Sydney congregation to complete the project.

[... More on Web](#)

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Thanks to Greg Ballos 02-27-2006
WHY ARE YOU SO SPECIAL THAT YOU AND ONLY YOU KNOW WHEN THE END IS NEAR, HUH?