

Special Event: Thursday 2 March

Marrickville Peace Group

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Were YOU one of the millions who opposed the invasion of Iraq in 2003?

Members of MARRICKVILLE PEACE GROUP invite you to recall the events of Feb 15, 2003 and re-awaken interest in Australia's military relationship with the USA in 2017.

Thursday March 2, 2017 at 6.30pm
Herb Greedy Hall

(79 Petersham Road, near the junction with Marrickville Road)

Come to a screening of the acclaimed anti-war movie:-



Film review- "We Are Many"



Over one million people demonstrated in London's Hyde Park Anti-War protest in February 2003

We Are Many, a documentary produced and directed by Amir Amirani, and executive produced by Wael Kabbani, is a chronicle of the single largest global anti-war protest in world history. February 15, 2003, saw the first coordinated world-wide protests against the U.S. invasion of Iraq. On that day, as the sun rolled across the planet, protests unfolded in 789 cities, 72 countries and included as many as 30 million people.

A few record breaking statistics:

- **Rome** - Nearly three million protested – listed in the 2004 Guinness Book of World Records as the largest anti-war rally in history;
- **London and Madrid** - 1.5 million or more participated;
- **Sydney** - 1 million joined the protest in Sydney, the list goes on ...

(From Phillip David Morton, "Review: *We Are Many*", *The Huffington Post*, updated Nov 14, 2016).

More information: Nick Deane on 0420 526 929

Entry by donation



FOR YOUR CALENDAR Events

CHURCH ACTIVITIES are settling into a more regular pattern now that the Houseparty is past.

We specially welcome Rev Megan du Toit to our service on 5 March. Megan has a number of years of ministry experience, and has been to Marrickville before.

First Sunday lunch 5 March. All welcome, and we suggest a donation of \$8.00 if you can afford it.

Regular services on 5, 12, 19 and 26 March at 10:30 am,

The Lord's Supper celebrated 5 and 19 March.

Midweek Prayer and Bible Study is at 7:30 pm each Wednesday at the church.

Don't forget the working bee on 18 March!

The Drop In Centre runs in the hall each Thursday from 10 am until 1 pm.

On Tuesday 28 February and Tuesdays 7 and 14 March, seminars under the auspices of NEAMI in mental health first aid training will be held in the Coffee Room at the church.

Neami has a mission of Improving mental health and wellbeing in local communities.

Special dates '17

- 2 Mar** — Peace Meeting/movie
- 3–12 Mar** — Seniors Week
- S 5 Mar** — Megan du Toit
- T 21 Mar** — Harmony Day
- 14–16 Apr** — Easter (Western & Greek)
- S 23 April** — Prayer for district
- T 25 Apr** — ANZAC Day (also Rogation Day)
- S 14 May** — Mothers Day
- S 4 June** — Pentecost
- M 12 Jun** — Queen's Birthday
- S 30 Jul** — Church 130th Anniversary
- S 3 Sep** — Fathers Day
- 08–14 Oct** — Mental Health Week
- S 29 Oct** — Reformation Sunday
- T 31 Oct** — 500th Anniversary of Reformation
- S 03 Dec** — Beginning of Advent
- M 25 Dec** — Christmas Day

PEOPLE & ISSUES TO PRAY FOR:

THANKSGIVING

- Positive views of Church and Drop In centre
- Many people putting time and effort into helping us survive and grow
- Some good prayer meetings lately
- Seeing Bob Hardy a few times lately

PRAYER

- Guest speaker, Megan Powell du Toit this month
- Revival in all the churches
- Paul Cull in Brazil, struggling with noisy environment and struggling with finances.
- Better Drop In Attendances
- The Other City and Reboundrehab as they move or have moved
- Right decisions about SRE
- Wisdom for our church in future plans
- Effective plans for Pastor's leave coming up soon.
- Easter plans

The year gets away quickly

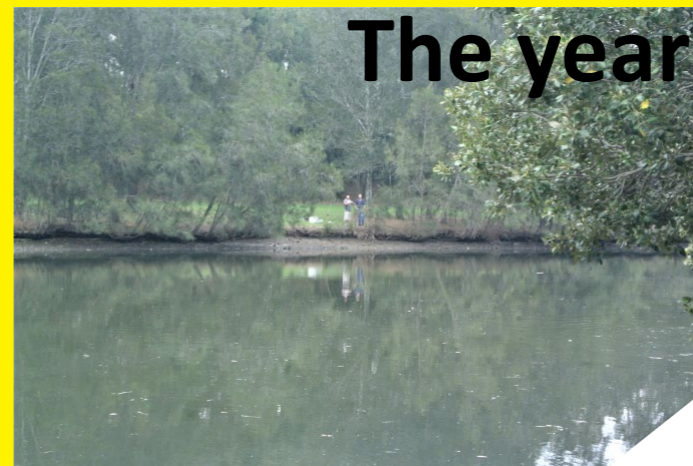


Photo: Cooks River, March 2015

MISSION NEWS March 2016



FROM THE PASTOR

I HAVE been encouraged in recent weeks to hear people discussing positively what they can do — and what we all could do — to enhance the work and witness of our church.

When we feel a sense of "ownership" it is a powerful step toward renewal.

Ideas include —

- A Street Stall or a Table Sale in the church
- Getting signs up (A Salvationist in Sydney said a while back that he had passed the church and thought it was closed down!)
- Negotiating with Council will to get a sign in the plaza indicating where we are.
- Consistency in our social programs
- Turning Sunday Mornings into a combined Drop In time and Service time (we'd have to roster attendants for each week)
- Working with community groups to develop Drop In and other community projects further.
- Relaunching our street leafletting program.

AT THE same time, there have been tensions and difficulties during the month. We don't minimise those, but we see that there are positives here too.

We sometimes refer to Luke 22: 31, where Jesus said,

"Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift each of you like wheat."

Churches, just like Jesus' little community, do go through times of testing, where the husks are removed so the good wheat remains. As Jesus also makes clear, each one of us can go through such a sifting process so that we become rich grain, ready to be ground against the other rich grains to make a good loaf.

God is doing something. It isn't fully clear what it is, but let's never draw back from our calling.

Love

Peter

WHILE A lot has been happening during February, not so much has been visible on the surface. However, some things stick out. We can be thankful for a large impact from a small church.



Probably the two most noticeable things have been the decision of The Other City to move to Bankstown Church. Pastor Marbuen Diaz has been appointed to a part time role within the main congregation while continuing with the original church plant.

Our relationship with them was good, and it is sad to see them go. We wish them the very best and should ensure that we keep praying for them.

Also leaving us is Rebound Rehab which has occupied the end rear room for about 15 months. Some will have noticed that Courtney had left a while back, and, with her departure and other changes in staffing and types of rehabilitation services offered, it wasn't practical any longer to keep Marrickville as a central meeting place. For the time being, Peter Green will do some general Admin work in that room on a Monday morning, but Rebound is already in the process of moving out. Again it will be sad to see them go. They will continue the internet service they had installed as well as the garbage services for the duration of their current contracts.

One really good aspect of our involvement with Rebound has been the decluttering of several rooms, as shown in the before and after photos above.

We had a really good Drop In meeting on Thursday 17 February,

as several people were there, and discussion turned to the future of Silver Street Mission. Several people had good ideas, and a lot of brainstorming went on as to how to build our work in the area.

What was even more valuable



was the people who said how important this ministry was to them personally.

Peter Green also received comment, not all favourable, when he wrote to The Sydney Morning Herald on 17 February defending Special Religious Education in NSW Schools. It was the lead posting in the Letters section.

The letter received criticism from other writers over succeeding days, but also quite a lot of approval from Christians, including some who had read it and decided to make contact. One had been a teenager at Fairfield Baptist Church in the 1960s and had moved away around 1968. Apart from once in the mid 1970s, there had been no other contact. Lyn is now in one of the Beth Shan cottages.

Kevin Llewellyn, who is a regular attendee at the Drop In and Prayer Meeting, continues his prisons work with Kairos, and, in this way, is an extension of our ministry.

More ministry goes on than we are sometimes aware of.

Pray for our church in all its forms of outreach!

Silver Street (Baptist) Mission

PO Box 414, MARRICKVILLE 1475
mob 0413 146065 :: pastor@atsilverstreet.com
www.atsilverstreet.com
<https://www.facebook.com/silverstreetbaptist/>
SUNDAY SERVICE: 10:30 am

How gullible are you?

WHEN GLORIA, with an Indian accent, phoned me recently and told me she was from the “Telephone Account Reduction Department” and wanted to speak to the person who was responsible for decisions about the manse phone, I thought of all the scams going around, trying to get money from us all.



She mentioned Telstra together with the gobbledegook about account reduction in the one sentence.

But when she asked if I were the person responsible, I said, “If you are from Telstra, surely you have that information in front of you.”

She hung up.

Not all scams are about money, though.

Many Americans have fallen for a scam claiming that Hillary Clinton was responsible for the deaths of dozens of people who were a danger to her campaign.

And some scams aim to get Christians taking action over something untrue, just to make us look stupid.

In Matthew 10:16, Jesus tell us,

“I am sending you out like sheep among wolves. Therefore be as shrewd as snakes and as innocent as doves...”

Considering that the Bible repeatedly urges us to be wise and to be committed to truth,

then, for your own sake and the sake of others,

be alert to misinformation, and careful not to pass it on.

Here are a few clues.
1. If it is too good to be true, or too bad to believe, it probably isn't true or to be believed.

If someone offers you \$250,000,000, or tells you that you can catch AIDs from sitting on a train seat It's almost certainly a lie.

2. If it confirms your bias, it is mostly a lie.

You know that Bill Shorten doesn't eat babies, but you always vote Liberal, and maybe that story about Shorten's being a secret Trotskyist is true...

Well, perhaps it's not. Just because you

would like to believe it, that doesn't make it true (same for Turnbull.)

3. If you get a message urging you to pass it on to three people in an hour to get a blessing (or avoid bad luck) it's a lie.

The Internet is full of “click bait”, messages saying, “Type Amen if you agree!” But even using snail mail, these things often capture names for a business or even get you to agree to something wrong, but tricky worded.

Ask a friend, search on Google if you have a computer, or ask your library: avoid being caught in scams, or passing them on!

A trustworthy Bible

IT IS 200 years since the Bible Society was established in Australia, and celebrations are kicking off on 5 March. Here are a few reflections on the Bible.

Did you know that we probably know more about the Bible now than any earlier generation did?

Probably the most important thing I can say is that modern research suggests that most of the New Testament writings are almost certainly much older, much closer to the events they record, than scholars thought 150 years ago. In fact, about 40 years ago, a famous Bishop and leading Biblical scholar, John A.T. Robinson, turned the scholarly world upside down.

He didn't think the New Testament was very reliable. He thought it was written well after the event, and was mainly popu-

lar stories about a half-forgotten Jesus, made up in the churches. But the more he studied, the more convinced he became that none of the New Testament writings was likely to have been written more than about 35 years after the crucifixion.

If this is so — and many scholars lean in that direction — it means that the gospels were written by people who were, or had met, eye-witnesses. Their credibility took a great leap forward!

Even scholars who totally reject what we Evangelicals believe are more likely now to accept the New Testament as a reliable source of information about Jesus and the early church.

But how reliable are

our texts?

Since the King James Version of the Bible was produced, hundreds of Greek texts have been found. Some are entire books of the New Testament, some are a few lines from a Gospel or an Epistle. Many were found in the 19th Century.

Not only do we get vastly more copies, but we also have a lot more other writings of the same period.

Today we have more evidence for the New Testament text than ever before. And we understand better how language was used.

The Bible has been much more influential, too, even in modern times, than we often realise.

Do you know the song, *Mack the Knife*?

It was originally written in German by one of East Germany's most famous modern playwrights, the Communist, Bertolt Brecht.

When someone asked Brecht what was the greatest influence on him as a writer, he said, “You'll laugh: it's the Bible!”

And, of course, it is where many, to this day, find the inspiration and conviction to leave home and career for the sake of others, bringing healing, faith and hope to needy people.

We used to sing, *The best book to read is the Bible... If you read it every day it will help you on your way...*

It's still true today!

The Baptist Church



Members of Baptist churches voting on behalf of their churches in a denominational Assembly meeting.

LAST MONTH we saw some basic history of Baptists as people wanting the church in England to be more Biblical and to continue the reforms of the 16th Century. In the Netherlands to escape persecution, they began taking their distinctive form.

Believing that the members

of a church should have free and equal access to God within a free and equal fellowship, Baptists further developed the idea that every member is a minister, competent to make decisions about the local congregation.

So believers are baptised on profession of faith and become church members, confessing Jesus as Lord. In the church, these believers come together to manage the congregation's life and witness.

This doesn't mean that churches have no need for a trained min-

istry, and most Baptist Churches have seen the importance of two ministries: deacons and pastors.

Jesus described himself as a servant and instructed us to serve each other. The Greek word for a servant is *diakonos*, so you could say the basic form of ministry is that of the deacon. We should all

be deacons in a sense!

The New Testament also talks of Bishops (*episkopoi* = “overseers”) or Elders (*presbyteroi*) who have a supervisory and pastoral role.

To get away from the idea of the power and control of bishops, Baptists use the Biblical term, “pastor” for people with this role.

How should Christians vote?

CHRISTIAN AUTHOR, Philip Yancey (pictured), is baffled by Evangelical support for Donald Trump in the US election. He says Trump “stands against everything Christianity believes.”

In an interview with the website, *Evangelical Focus*, he said, “I am staggered that so many conservative or evangelical Christians would see a man who is a bully, who made his money by casinos, who has had several wives and several affairs, that they would somehow paint him as a hero, as someone that we could stand behind.”

According to a Huffington Post article on Yancey's views, rank and file white evangelical Christians

don't seem to mind, or are willing to forgive, Trump's deeds.

A fifth of all registered voters in the U.S. and about a third of all Republican-leaning voters have rallied strongly to Trump.

According to a June 16 Pew Research Center survey, 78% of white evangelical voters said they would vote for Trump.

Yancey believes that tying the church to politics like this isn't good for American Christianity in the long

run. He points to the setbacks experienced by the church in parts of Europe where the church is considered stained by having sold its soul for power.

While the problem isn't as great in Australia as in the US, we still lean in that direction. In most Protestant churches, the majority of members vote for the Coalition, suggesting that there is a feeling abroad that Liberal or National is the “natural friend” of

Churches. Otherwise, the split inside Churches would be closer to 50%-50%.

There are things which should be preserved — like school scripture.

But we must beware of blindly following anyone who promises to protect the church. We are better than that!

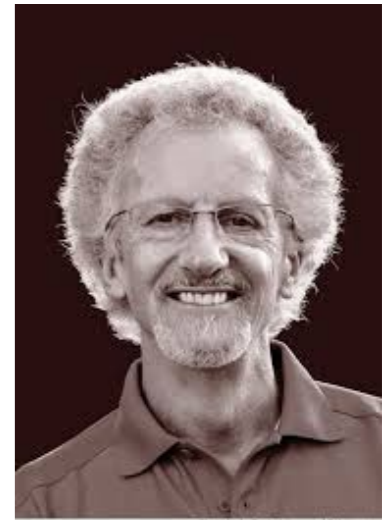


Photo by L. Scott Johnson of Fotogram

That Letter to the Editor

THE FOLLOWING is the letter Peter Green wrote to the Sydney Morning Herald, published on 17 February. It was in response to a 16 February article against School scripture.

“I am a Baptist. When only one

religion, the Church of England, was officially permitted in England, we Baptists extended the dissenting campaign for recognition when, in 1612, Pastor Thomas Helwys published a pamphlet arguing for religious pluralism, with room for Christians, Muslims, Jews and those of no religion. He died in

prison for his efforts.

How can groups like FIRIS (“Parent group that ousted scripture from schools”, February 16) ignorant of history, urge us back toward the kind of religious uniformity situation of 400 years ago? It was to prevent such a single, state-authorised, religious outlook that religious dissenters, Baptists among them, developed the idea of separation of church

and state.

In a world where religious sentiment is often manipulated for political ends, even leading to wars, public religious pluralism is a vital protection to society, most particularly where children are concerned. Children are concrete thinkers. To them it is meaningless to say, “Muslims and Christians can be friends”. On the other hand, for Zayneb and

John to be able to say, “She's Sunni, and he's Presbyterian and we are friends”, means a great deal, but only if they can actually see that difference in action.

Truly secular fairness in religion in schools requires more than mere knee-jerk capitulation to secularism.”

(The cartoon, drawn by Matt Davidson, was in the Letters section.)

THE BIBLE SOCIETY IS AUSTRALIA'S LONGEST LIVING ORGANISATION FORMED IN 1817