

Monthly Newsletter March 2025 Issue No. 3



Dear Brethren,

We are truly blessed to be working here with the congregation at Gipps Street. As we find our place here, we enjoy the kind hospitality and patience of the church. One great blessing of the church here is that they are always eager to try new ideas, so I have been given quite a lot of freedom to try out new things in the work.

Church

On the Sunday morning after my last report, we had tropical cyclone Alfred pass over Toowoomba. This is the first time in over 50 years that a cyclone has come as far south as Toowoomba, and, myself being from Tasmania, it is the first time in my life that I've ever had to deal with one. For the most part we were unaffected by the storm. We had no electricity on the Sunday, and a tree had fallen about a block up the road, which meant I had to take the longer road to church. A few of our members couldn't make it to worship due to road closures, but we praise God that no one was harmed.



At the start of the month, we held the first lectureship meeting for the year, where we discussed potential speakers, topics and timetable for the upcoming lectureship in October this year. I am excited to be a part of this lectureship and to help organize



it. I have previously been involved in the planning of only a couple of lectureships. One in 2018, when I served as director of the Eastern Shore Bible Lectureship. And one in 2023, when I assisted with the planning of the Southeast Student Lectureship, hosted by the church of Christ at East End in McMinnville, Tennessee. To be fair, the student lectureship required no planning on the part of the students, but the class of 2023 decided we would be fancy and organize a theme and a flier, and we

advertised the lectureship to neighbouring congregations. While none of that was necessary, the class I was a part of believed in taking pride in whatever work we were asked to do, and I am very glad to have been a part of that class. It has also helped me with the valuable experience that I get to use now as I help plan the Annual Gipps Street Bible Lectureship. The topic for this year will be on marriage and family. I will be working on a flier for this shortly and will have more details to come in future newsletters.

Outreach

At the start of the year, the men of the congregation had a discussion on the areas of responsibility for all the men of the congregation. While I have various responsibilities in different areas of the work of the church, my primary focus is on outreach and evangelism. One of my first projects in this area is to review the study material and gospel tracts that we have

available. A lot of evangelistic material, while good in its own context, is not particularly useful in Australia. As such, I am going through all of the materials that we have available and trying to put together some of my own material that could be useful in the Australian context. This project could take a while, and may take some trial with studies, but this will hopefully be helpful for the future work in Australia.

One of my focuses in outreach has been trying to get involved in various social groups to develop



contacts. Recently, the school that Vivien attends hosted an introductory Bible series called Christianity Explained. The concept was to introduce Christianity to any parents of students who were unfamiliar with it. I decided I would go along to meet other parents and to check out the material. The material itself did a good job explaining some of the basic foundations of the gospel message, but I was left disappointed when the leaders concluded the study offering the opportunity for the participants to pray and ask Jesus into their heart. Even so, I was able to get some good contacts for future discussion, and was able to make several comments throughout the study prompting others to think more deeply about what they've been taught.

As mentioned in previous newsletters, we recently hosted a mission trip from America. After some discussion with the men of Gipps Street, we are planning on hosting another trip for some American missionaries to come to Australia in 2027. The man asked that I organize this trip, with a great deal of consultation from the previous trips organizer. I am extremely excited for this opportunity, especially since we have so many brethren who we met in the State who expressed excitement about the prospect of coming to Australia on a short term mission trip. I am currently in the very early stages of planning the trip, and as yet we are unsure of who will be leading the trip from the American side. But I am currently in discussion with some congregations who have demonstrated interest in the past.

Family



An exciting development for our middle child Olive is that she has returned to kindergarten. Her first attempt had a lot of struggles with being left alone at kindy, however, she has really grown over the last few months and has made some huge steps in her independence. We believe that a major part of her struggles were all the changes that had been going on around her. A new house, a new church, a new city, and to top it all off, she would be left alone at a new school. Not the best time for it. However, after much settling in other areas, she has made huge strides in confidently returning to school. She is currently on school holidays, but is looking forward to returning next term for more excitement.

One of the promises that me and my fellow Southeast students made to each other was that we would regularly catch up with each other, despite the distance and time differences between us. This hasn't happened much since our graduation in 2023, but this last month, we were finally able to organize a time to get together and speak. I was so encouraged to hear about the work my fellow soldiers of Christ are involved in. Sadly, 3 out of 7



of us are no longer in our first work since leaving school. However, we were all encouraged to know that we are not alone in our struggles. We were able to talk over some of the challenges we faced and how we overcame them, we asked each other questions and uplifted one another. I am truly blessed to have been a part of this class.



Vivien's vision has sadly deteriorated over the last year. Her left eye has almost completely shut itself down and is officially blind. She still maintains some vision in that eye, but when we cover her right eye, she can barely see 3 feet in front of her without a lot of concentration. We have taken her to an ophthalmologist who suggested that we put a patch on her right eye once a day for 2 hours to get her used to using her left eye again. She also suggested a new pair of glasses with a slightly altered prescription. We decided that this would be a good opportunity to take Vivien out to get some new frames as well, maybe some glasses that are a bit more grown up. While Vivien hates the time she has to wear a patch, she absolutely adores her new glasses.

Please pray for her vision, the next step for her may be surgery if needs be.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!