

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

FOR BUILDING THE BODY, FROM THE PRINCIPAL: **PAGE 2**
 WORKING WITH THE CHINESE CHURCHES: **PAGE 3**
 UPCOMING EVENTS: **PAGE 4**

SERVING WITH
THE CHURCH

Christine Gobius,
 (nee McClintock), BST alumna

Six years ago I was leading a research team in Military and Veterans' health at the University of Queensland; a role that exposed me to the personal side of military deployments and the challenges of bridging an academic and military culture. It was a stretching yet rewarding climax to a public health career that spanned 15 years in government and university. Now I am serving as the National Director of Interserve* and it is a privilege to pursue my passion for transformation of people's lives in this new context.

I grew up in a Christian home, in a remote Aboriginal community. As a teenager I resisted a personal relationship with God partly because I didn't want to be a missionary and I 'knew' that it would be just my luck that I would be called to give up the good life to serve God overseas. However, God's love and grace was irresistible and by the time I was at university my desire to serve developed, as did a vision for holistic mission. I loved the outdoors and wanted practical skills, so I chose to study vet science.

I gained a lot of experience while working as a rural vet practitioner. But I wanted to be better equipped for cross-cultural mission, so I took a year off in 1990 and studied at BST. At Bible college I was introduced to Interserve, and had an opportunity to go on short-term mission with them to India between 1992-93. After that I spent many years investigating a disease that impacts both cattle and human health, and subsequently worked in a research and advisory role for Queensland Health. My plans to live and serve overseas as a missionary didn't happen.

But I maintained my connection with Interserve and was appointed as a board member in 2006. I had adopted their vision of "lives and communities transformed through encounter with Jesus Christ" as my own vision. I realised that every part of our lives as Christians - who we are, our actions, deeds, relationships, and our words - bears witness to God.

In my role with Interserve as National Director, my biggest focus is developing ways to work with the church. The church exists in every country, even in the most difficult countries where believers may be operating "underground" or where some people groups remain unreached.

Our end goal is to do all that we can to enable the local church, though it might have a different format for different places. The kinds of questions we ask ourselves are, "What is God doing in that place?" and "What can we do to be part of what he is doing?" We want to empower the local church. We also want to partner with



the local church in Australia and enable them to better equip and support those they send.

My other focus is encouraging the church to grow disciples for holistic mission; recognising that people are social, emotional, physical and spiritual beings. Our Western Christianity is so impacted by a dualism that artificially separates the spiritual and material. But an encounter with Jesus touches on all these aspects of our lives.

If we claim to follow Jesus, then who we are and everything we do is a witness to him, whether we intend it or not. Holistic mission is taking that witness seriously. It considers questions like: "Is how we are engaging building the kingdom of God?", "Do our relationships really reflect the grace, mercy, justice and love of God?", "Is the Holy Spirit and the power of prayer active in all aspects of our lives?", "Is it apparent to others?" We will be less effective in proclaiming the gospel if those things are not taken seriously.

*Interserve Australia is a missional community with around 100 long term Partners seeking to make Jesus known through holistic ministry, in partnership with the global church, amongst the neediest peoples of Asia and the Arab World.

FOR BUILDING THE BODY

Rev Dr Richard Gibson, BST Principal



“But grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of Christ’s gift... And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ.” (Ephesians 4:7, 11-12)

Another year has begun at BST. With it comes the arrival of more eager, committed and gifted students. Some are very young; some are very experienced. Some listen to lectures in English; some listen in Mandarin. They come from diverse backgrounds, experiences and churches. All of them have received grace from Christ so they can serve his body. The apostle Paul makes two points very clearly. First, the various gifts we see in these students all come from the one source, the ascended Christ. These people and these gifts are precious. Second, they are given for the purpose of building Christ’s body. These gifts are not personal assets.

It is good to be reminded by Paul that the **gifts given to these students are for the building of the churches, whether here or overseas.** We must remember that BST exists to serve the churches by training and nurturing these people and their gifts. Partnership with Christ’s body is vital. This message has been

“Partnership with Christ’s body is vital.”

driven home in other ways. Even as we prepare people for the mission field, Christine Gobius’ article (page 1) reminds us that an organisation like Interserve understands its role as “serving with the churches.” She sums it up with phrases like “enable the local church”, “empower the local church” and “partner with the local church”.

We were given a similar reminder by **Rev Prof Lo Lung Kwong**, visiting on behalf of the Hong Kong Bible Society, who urged pastors and students to value and build the relationship between the colleges and the churches. The two need to work together in partnership for the sake of Christ’s body. It is vital for BST to remember its place, as a servant of the churches in preparing people for service. By singling out gifts relating to communicating God’s word (apostles, prophets, evangelists, shepherd-teachers), Paul also reminds us of the centrality of the Scriptures for the equipping process.

As another year unfolds we are very mindful of our continued dependence on the churches. We need them to encourage people to theological study. We need them for prayerful and financial support. We need them to employ our graduates. Please join us in praying for this partnership in 2015 between BST and the churches, that it would bear much fruit and bring much honour to our ascended, gift-giving King.

If you would like to invite Richard or other faculty to guest speak at your church or special event please contact us on **(07) 3870 8355** or email **info@bst.qld.edu.au**

SERVING WITH THE CHURCH

(Continued from page 1)

For those that have a desire to serve in mission, I encourage you to be intentional in being a disciple of Jesus, growing in intimacy with God and understanding of the Bible; share your thinking

about mission with your Christian friends and family and ask them to pray with you – be accountable to them and include them in your journey; engage cross-culturally, whether in your workplace or your neighbourhood (perhaps befriend a neighbour who is from a different culture to you); take an interest in the world at large and ask God to give you a heart for a place or an issue (e.g. refugees); find out about mission events and get involved.

DID YOU KNOW...



GIFTS OVER \$2 TO THE BST LIBRARY AND BUILDING FUNDS ARE TAX DEDUCTIBLE?

To ensure that our students are equipped with up-to-date resources, modern lecture facilities and suitable accommodation, we need the support of people like you to pray with us and to give to the ministry of the college. In 2015 our goal is to raise \$100,000 to go toward the following projects:

- New library system
- Installation of solar system to help the college save on its electricity costs
- Renovation of accommodation

You can make a donation online **bst.qld.edu.au/supportYourBST**, use the attached donation slip or contact us on **(07) 3870 8355**.

GROWING TO SERVE

Jonno Lee, 27, Master of Divinity student

My brain has never hurt so much before!



“I hope to be equipped with the knowledge of God’s word”

Bible college has been challenging, but in a good way. It’s my first semester at BST and I’m learning so much. My eyes have been opened to the depth and breadth of Scripture and ultimately who God is. A big plus is the community vibe. It lives up to what people have told me about BST – the

support you get, the wisdom of our lecturers and the food and fun with fellow students.

Before coming to BST I was studying a Masters of Social Work at Queensland University of Technology (with just a final placement to go before graduating). I was

also working for YoungLife Australia in their Redlands branch as the Area Coordinator. YoungLife is a non-profit organisation that provides outreach to high school-aged youth, seeking to build supportive relationships with them and ultimately to share the gospel.

The Lord has impressed on my heart the need to show love and compassion to underprivileged youth, which led me to go on a short-term mission exposure trip to Thailand with OMF in December 2014. From there the pathway to BST opened up. I first heard about BST through a friend

who was studying at the college. Then after meeting one of the BST lecturers at an OMF end of year gathering and also hearing more great things about the college from OMF missionaries who studied at BST, I was encouraged to apply.

My reason for coming to Bible college is to help me mature in my Christian walk; to be more like Christ in character, in knowledge, in reverence, and in faith. I hope to be equipped with the knowledge of God’s word so I can faithfully serve and show God’s love and compassion to youth in underprivileged nations and circumstances.

The BST mission week is on 21-29 March 2015. It’ll be my first one with the college. I’m unsure of what to expect, but I’m excited about the opportunities to participate in multicultural mission in Brisbane.

WORKING WITH THE CHINESE CHURCHES

Dr Wally Wang, Acting Director of Chinese Program

This new academic year is an exciting new beginning for the Chinese program including the introduction of Drs Jason and Rebecca Atkinson to the faculty.

While Jason was born to US/Australian parents, he is fluent in Mandarin and teaches Old Testament in our Chinese program. His wife Rebecca, who is originally from China, teaches New Testament.

We also had the privilege of hosting Rev Prof Lo Lung Kwong on Wednesday, 25 February. Prof Lo spoke on the relationship between Bible colleges and churches. He is the former director of the Divinity School of Chung Chi College, Chinese University of Hong Kong.



Rev Prof Lo Lung Kwong speaking at BST on 25 February, 2015.

We are continuing to build a good working relationship with Chinese churches in Brisbane. BST hosted the Chinese pastors and leaders prayer meeting on 12

January. It was well attended with over 20 leaders present. We will host another one in July.

While Rev Dr

Michael Tan is on sabbatical leave this semester, we pray for him as he engages with various ministries within the Chinese Methodist Church of Australia. Michael is also in the process of completing a book on

the Old Testament. We sincerely pray that God will provide him wisdom and time to finish the book so that it will be a blessing to the Chinese Christian community.

“We are continuing to build a good working relationship with Chinese churches in Brisbane.”

Many of the students in our Chinese program will be going on mission exposure week (21-29 March, 2015) to Papua New Guinea. Team

members will engage in church ministries in Port Moresby and surrounding islands. We look forward to sharing some testimonies when the students return.

THE PSALMS ARE NECESSARY



Viewing the Psalms as "tools for prayer" is a very helpful way to understand their role and to remember that we need to use them. How much can we do in our natural lives without tools? How do you grow or cook food without tools? How do you construct anything without tools?

Recently I read again Eugene Peterson's introduction to his book, *Answering God: The Psalms as Tools for Prayer*. Peterson argues that "the Psalms are necessary".

I was deeply affected by what I read. I was convinced further that the Psalms are needed for maturity in the life of God's people.

There are many ingredients that are necessary for the maturing of our Christian faith and character, but how many of us would include the systematic and regular use of the Psalms in our "essentials" list?

Visit bst.qld.edu.au/blog to read more of John Coulson blog.

EVENTS

DATE	EVENT	DETAILS	SPEAKER
MAY 6 Wednesday, 6.15pm	BST Open Night	Guests will be able to check out the campus and sit in one of the following lectures: "What does the Bible say about end times?" "Joshua to Kings: Is history going anywhere?"	Alan Stanley, NT lecturer John Coulson, OT lecturer
MAY 11 Monday, 6.30 pm	Chinese Program Open Night	Find out more about our Chinese program.	Faculty
July 13 - 17 Monday - Friday, 8.30am - 3pm	The Theology and Practice of Expository Preaching	Excellent preaching can be developed. Come along to this intensive and learn how to be an effective expository preacher.	Rev Michael Raiter
July 16 - 18 (Part 1) Sept 11 - 12 (Part 2) 8.30am - 5pm	Foundations in Youth Ministry	This intensive (delivered over two parts) will provide you with the biblical, theological, historical and strategic foundations for youth ministry.	Rev Graham Stanton
August 3 - 7 Monday - Friday, 8.30am - 3pm	Hermeneutics, Theology and the Book of Acts	Gain a deeper understanding of the book of Acts theologically, historically and pastorally.	Rev Dr David Peterson
September 21 - 26 Monday - Friday, 9am - 5pm	Foundations of Pastoral Care (Chinese program)	Explore the basic issues in pastoral theology, and develop an integrated biblical and theological understanding of pastoral ministry.	Dr Vivian Soesilo

Corrections: In *BST Connect*, Issue 1, Andrew Brown was referred to as AFES director. More accurately, he is the AFES campus director at University of Queensland.

Visit bst.qld.edu.au/events for more information on upcoming events or contact us on **(07) 3870 8355**.

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