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INTERNATIONAL MISSION TEAMS 2019

CAMBODIA - SERVE CAMBODIA

For one and a half weeks in July, the PBC team served at the three Learning Centres of Serve Cambodia, teaching English, telling stories from the Bible and sharing their love with the children and the staff. They also participated in the annual Sports Festival and visited Fellowship of Hope Church and the Youth Group.

The 10th Annual Pastors Conference co-hosted by PBC and Fellowship of Hope Church in Siem Reap focused around the title, Loved to Love. For the team, and pastors, this was a time to pause to reflect on God's gracious love that He has bestowed on us, and how we, as His beloved, are called to love those around us. It was a joyful occasion to study God's word, worship, pray, and fellowship. The team took part in the main teaching sessions as well as leading two of the three workshops during the conference as well.

IMT AFRICA AND GREECE

In December 2019, a team of two staff and two students are planning the fourth IMT visit to Africa, with an additional six days in Greece. They are to visit the Kakuma and Kalobeyei refugee camps in Kenya to meet the church leaders and to do a two-day training seminar with them. After Kenya, the team plans to visit Kampala in Uganda, to do a training seminar with Ugandan church leaders. The last two days the team will spend with church leaders from seven different African countries to look at the challenges of ministry training in Africa.

Greece is an exciting new possibility for the IMT, especially focusing on the growing church among Muslim Background Believers that came to this country as refugees. The team has been invited to be part of the ministry training of Farsi-speaking (Iranian and Afghani) ministry leaders at the Discipleship Training Centre in Athens.

For more information on the IMT, please go to the PBC website.

A SURPRISING OPPORTUNITY

It's with great sadness we announce that our principal, Dr. David Smith, has made the difficult decision to take hold of a new 'God' opportunity and move on from his role as principal at Perth Bible College. David has served the college faithfully for the past 16 years and has never felt the desire to move on. The decision has, of course, not been made lightly, but you just know when it's God.

The opportunity arose off the back of a conference Dr Smith attended earlier this year in Rome. The conference was comprised of over 900 church leaders spanning across 122 countries and at the time David had no idea that his attendance would lead him in a new direction. We sat down with David to discuss what's next and the impact Perth Bible College has had on him.



YOU ARE MOVING ON FROM PBC, WHAT'S NEXT FOR YOU?

Following the recent international conference in Rome the organising board asked me to take on the role as International Director of Christian Brethren Churches worldwide. At the heart of this new role is unity and synergy. In other words, what does it mean for us to unify our international church networks to ensure more collaboration? How do we provide the right resources for leaders who are in need of international training, how do we equip others cross-culturally as a unified body?

The Gospel clearly speaks of the fact that unity is mission. So, I see this new role from that perspective. Every country has their own strategy but how does it all work together? It's exciting to think through what it means to bring greater unity internationally and then to see the collaboration unfold in order to bring mission and unity. The goal is to see the gaps in international mission filled through strengthening networks, coordinating leadership training and developing global strategies for mission.

HOW HAS YOUR TIME AT THE COLLEGE SHAPED YOU FOR THIS NEW OPPORTUNITY?

My time at Perth Bible College has equipped me with the ability to understand the complexities of theological tertiary education, and when paired with my experience with the International Mission Teams, I see how vital cross-cultural leadership training is. As the principal of the college I have been blessed with the opportunities to network internationally, and with these three things in mind the foundation for my new role has been established.

WHAT HAVE YOUR MOST MEMORABLE MOMENTS BEEN DURING YOUR TIME AT PBC?

The greatest highlight of PBC is our graduates. It is a privilege to witness how God takes people who don't believe they are capable or perhaps scared and then transforms them into agents of the gospel in such a short time. Every year I witness this miracle. I have also enjoyed re-invigorating the college's focus on mission through the development of IMT across Asia, Africa, and now Greece.

WHAT ABOUT THE CHALLENGES WITH REGARDS TO LEADING AN INSTITUTION?

The greatest challenges with leading an educational institution are maintaining unity and vision with the board and staff, and balancing faith, finance and educational requirements with the vision that God has given to PBC. Also ensuring we continue to balance the academic requirements with the need to provide contemporary skills to address the needs of various ministry vocations.

WHAT ARE YOUR HOPES FOR THE FUTURE OF PBC?

I hope that PBC maintains the vibrant ministry and mission that it has been renowned for, and that it will continue to address the educational training needs of the everyday Christian, to the Pastor, all the way to the vocations which require doctorate studies whilst also confronting the ever increasing demand to deal with the complexities of ministry in a continually changing world.

WILL WE STILL SEE YOU AROUND AT PBC?

I won't be too far away. This change doesn't require a change in geography so I will still be involved in sessional lecturing, on the leadership team for IMT and serving on the academic council.

Written by Tia Burton

TEQSA UPDATE

On 14 November 2020, PBC's current higher education provider license and course accreditation with the Tertiary Education Quality & Standards Agency (TEQSA) will expire. We have already, for many months, been working hard on preparations for the new license application. Nevertheless, since PBC's previous submission in 2013, there has been a significant shift in the Australian higher education regulatory environment, which has considerable implications for PBC as a small independent, faith-based provider.

Firstly, the cost of the upcoming application currently stands at \$51 800, excluding the cost of any additional courses we may want to add, which could contribute to a further \$21 600. Given that only approximately 25% of TEQSA's operational costs are covered by their current regulatory fee structure, they are proposing a full cost recovery model to be rolled out over a 3-year period. This may result in an actual re-registration and re-accreditation fee in 2020 of \$62 160 (incl additional courses \$88 080).

Secondly, TEQSA has, in the recent past, evidenced that it is in the process of pivoting the whole higher education sector in the direction of having to meet much more rigorous compliance requirements. Consequently, most recently, some providers did not receive their full 7-year license. Because of TEQSA's proposed full cost recovery model, a shorter registration period will have further financial implications for providers, when they have to re-apply sooner than expected. This may result in a not-so-far-in-the-future re-registration cost for PBC of \$155 400 (incl additional courses \$233 160).

Understandably we are quite concerned about the situation and regularly appeal to God for wisdom and the best possible outcome for PBC under the circumstances. God has already done amazing things, including an upcoming campus visit from our local member of parliament as a result of them becoming aware of our plight.

As reported in the previous Stepping Up, our students provided us only with the highest praise in the most recent national Student Experience Survey. Knowing that we offer a highly valued service to the community, Perth Bible College's deepest desire is to continue to serve the Kingdom in this capacity as we have faithfully done since 1928.

Therefore, we would value your support very much during this challenging time, either in the form of prayers and/or donations. Additionally, please feel free to talk to any of our staff members about this issue if you have questions and would like to make others at your church aware of the situation.

Written by Hanlie van Rooyen



GO DEEPER WITH THE GRADUATE DIPLOMA

PBC has a vibrant group of post-graduate students. Studying theology is different from studying other subjects as it relates to, and often challenges, the deepest dimension of our thinking and being. It is, at the same time, an exhilarating and awe-inspiring journey which leads us to the heart of the triune God and equips us to transform the world in His name.

Many students are enrolled in the Graduate Diploma of Ministry which offers students who have previously completed a non-theological degree the opportunity to study theology at an advanced post-graduate level which leads directly to a Master's degree in theology. The Graduate Diploma of Christian Ministry is designed as an introductory theological course. It can be completed within one year for students studying full-time. It can, alternatively, also be taken as part of PBC's Flexible Learning Programme, which enables students to mix and match on-line learning with in-class participation or face to face intensives.

The aim of the Graduate Diploma is to provide students with essential theological knowledge and foundational ministry skills from a chosen area of specialisation. The Graduate Diploma forms the first year of a three-year Master of Divinity degree. The Master of Divinity is a highly valued theological degree which opens the door to a wide range of professional ministry opportunities across the world. It is valuable to study theology on a post-graduate level. Students come from many different fields of study and professional backgrounds and add their unique experiences and insights to the class discussions [quote from post-graduate student]. Students encounter a wide range of differing theological views and are equipped to evaluate them critically in light of the Bible. Students are also encouraged and guided to find their own theological voice to add to the discussion.

PBC also offers a Master of Theology degree for students who have previously completed a theological degree. The degree can be structured to combine course work with a 12,000-word or a 24,000-word research component. This degree opens the pathway for high level professional ministry as well as doctoral studies in theology.

Written by Andre van Oudtshoorn

ACADEMIC PROFILE: GILLIAN DIXON

The Perth Bible College motto "to serve with integrity" prompted Gillian to contact the college regarding study in 2005. After working in women's ministry in local churches for many years, it was the need to deepen her theology and enhance her practical skills to serve others with genuine integrity which inspired her to apply.

After completing a Diploma of Ministry and working for a few years as a high school chaplain, Gillian became a member of staff at Perth Bible College nearly ten years ago. Gillian took up the role of College Dean of Students and Chaplain, continued to raise her five children, and completed her Bachelor of Ministry, majoring in Pastoral Counselling, gaining the Alan F. Meers Academic Award in 2014.



Over this period there grew a deepening awareness of the need to assist others with issues within their lives that have caused significant pain and distress. Gaining the knowledge and therapeutic skills required for this ministry was sought and Gillian enrolled in the Masters of Counselling and Psychotherapy at Edith Cowan University. Gillian graduated in 2018 receiving the 2018 Psychotherapy and Counselling Federation of Australia (PACFA) Award for Outstanding Graduate. This prize is awarded to the outstanding graduate who displays excellence in both academic and practical performance with the highest Weighted Average Course Mark (WAM).

On completion of her Master's degree, Gillian was employed by ECU as a Sessional Lecturer in the Master's programme, lecturing the Psychotherapy Practice unit. Gillian completed her professional placement at the University of Notre Dame Australia (Fremantle) in the Student Counselling Service, where she has now been employed to counsel students two days per week. She has also commenced a private practice called Hope Psychotherapy where she offers counselling and psychotherapy, and supervision to school chaplains. She has continued part time at Perth Bible College as the Dean of Students and lecturer.

Gillian considers that both lecturing and practicing as a clinician has been complimentary; the students gain the benefit of the lecturer's learned experience in the field, and clients gain the benefit of the therapist's therapeutic knowledge based on the latest research for effective practice.

This year has been one away from study, as Gillian continues to engage in practice and lecturing. Her children have grown up and a few are now married; she is also experiencing the wonderful joy of being a grandmother. However, Gillian has discovered that she still cannot pass a library door without wanting to go in and spend the rest of the day exploring some topic further! So maybe more study is on the horizon...

SECOND HAND BOOKSHOP

"Are you sourcing quality books but wish to score them at a fraction of the price? The PBC second hand bookshop is open to the public throughout the year. With an array of quality titles there is something for everyone. Many books are in 'as new' condition and are sold at a fraction of the retail price. For opening hours, please contact Perth Bible College.



INTRODUCING BECCA

Coming from a farm inland of Western Australia in a small country town called Dowerin, Becca first arrived at PBC in 2017 desiring to only complete a Diploma of Ministry. At that time, she didn't expect to grow a fascination within the counselling field, leading her to remain and undertake the Bachelor of Social Science course. At that time, it was also unbeknown to her that she would end up marrying Matt, one of her Diploma of Ministry classmates, in April of 2019.

At that time, she was also unaware that her jokingly excited expression of interest to work as the college receptionist would actually put her on the staff two years later. Now, alongside the role as receptionist, Rebecca's current project is assisting with the process of accrediting subjects offered at the college.



The beginning of this year was dedicated to preparing to become Mrs. Schubert, settling in to their home together and basically just learning how to be married. It has been six months and they believe they know everything now. In the midst of being a newlywed, Becca's work in ministry this year has mainly been at Rockingham Mandurah Lutheran Church, volunteering with the youth group, and assisting her husband Matt by leading small groups with the young adults. However, her main passion is serving God by playing the violin as part of the church music team.

Matt is in the process of transitioning from youth ministry to local mission and church planting, and Becca plans to fully support him and to make use of the gifts and skills that God has given her. Their hope for future ministry is to primarily revolve around the family dinner table, inviting friends and neighbour's alike.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITMENT

FREE AUDITS

Students who have completed a degree at PBC are invited to audit one Bachelor of Ministry subject of their choice per year free of charge as part of PBC's commitment to their on-going professional development. The chosen subject can be taken by attending class or by engaging on-line as part of PBC's Flexible Learning Programme. Students may also complete an assessment item in the subject to gain a PBC Certificate, for the nominal fee of \$100. Students with theological degrees from any other recognised theological institutions may audit one Bachelor of Ministry subject for \$100 or receive a PBC Certificate for \$200.

WEEKLY PODCASTS

PBC will be podcasting the faculty's PD sessions once a month from next year. In these sessions the lecturers and, at times, Masters students, will share their on-going academic research. The lecturers will also introduce key articles or books pertaining to their field of study. The sessions are marked by vigorous discussions and a general sense of fun. We are excited to move in this new direction and share these moments with you.



STUDENT PROFILE: NATASHA HILL

I grew up in a loving Christian home, and when I was in year one, unfortunately, my parents divorced. I was very upset with God because I couldn't understand why my mummy left my family and why I could no longer see her. It was during this time of seeking for answers when I was young that I really drew in to understand God's love for me as His child and became a Christian. I learned that I am a part of a bigger family, and He is my Heavenly Father who will always be with me.

I choose to go to PBC because of the community atmosphere, and to complete the Diploma of Ministry course, because it seemed like a great foundational course. I wanted to be able to have good firm foundations before going to university and to do some of the chaplaincy courses available. I honestly believe this was the best decision I could have made. I got new friends, great lecturers, quality learning, and new insights! I love PBC's commitment to their students and the caring environment that makes you feel safe to ask all the hard questions!

I'm currently an assistant leader for our kid's church ministry and I absolutely love it! I've always believed that we need to be able to help guide and shape our kids to be the awesome future leaders of the world. For my next step, I'm looking forward to going to university next year to study the behavioral sciences, to be able to engage with my local community.



REMEMBERING ERIC



It was 1965 and a young lad, fresh faced about the faith walked through the doors of Perth Bible Institute. What was to follow, would be years of passionate service for the gospel, a dedication to the church and a diligent pursuit in taking care of the less fortunate. This young man was Eric Withnell.

Eric encountered Jesus two years prior to commencing his studies. He explained his life before Christ as a life "devoted to making money," and although Eric eventually lost all he had worked for, God was gracious and provided him with the finances to cover the cost of his studies at PBI and all expenses. The end goal for Eric was to serve as a foreign missionary, and those who disciplined him felt this call for Eric too. He was bold in sharing his faith, often finding himself in situations where he was sharing with his colleagues or people he met in the street.

After his time as a student at PBI, Eric was invited to undertake a career in real estate and this opportunity opened the door for Eric to impact many lives over the course of the next 50 years. For ten years Eric served in Broome at the Germanus Kent aged care facility and Bran Nue Dae respite center. Eric faithfully served the residents, accompanying them to the shops and other outings. There was no one Eric couldn't speak too, he was gifted with the ability to make people feel special.

In his latter years Eric partnered with Mercy International, establishing a newly built orphanage in Khon Kaen, Thailand. Eric's humble and equally risky step of faith protected the futures of hundreds of orphans, who without his help would have continued to live in poverty and some may have not survived. Eric was faithful in his call to Thailand, he travelled there a handful of times to continue to serve those less fortunate.

It is with equally grieving and celebratory hearts that we remember the life of Eric and his dedication to furthering the gospel in Broome, Thailand and in fact wherever the Lord led him. Eric went to be in the presence of his Lord and saviour on the 16th of September this year and is dearly missed.

STEPPING UP

NOVEMBER

2019

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