

# God With Us

- Michelle Naude

Three little words. What does that make you think of? Probably the words, "I love you" – the words every young woman hopes to hear from the man of her dreams.

Sometimes really important things can be conveyed in very few words. "God with us" is another stunning statement in only three short words. And yet it conveys an absolute miracle—that God Himself took on flesh and was born to a human mother.

In Matthew 1:23 we read that Mary, "will give birth to a son and they will call him Immanuel— which means 'God with us'". God Himself became a human being, and lived on this earth among men. He was both God and man at the same time. Truly amazing.

In 2 Chronicles 6:18 David asks: "Will God really dwell on earth with men?" And the implied answer seems to be: "Surely not." He then goes on to say: "The heavens, even the highest heaven, cannot contain you." In other words, God is far too big to live on earth. But in the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ He did!

John 1:14 says something very similar: "The Word became flesh". (John has told us that "The Word was God" in the very first verse of his gospel.) The word "flesh" always refers to ordinary human beings who are made of flesh and blood. So when John says that the Word became flesh, he is saying that Jesus (Who was God Himself), became a human being. This wonderful mystery is known as the incarnation, the "becoming-flesh". (The Latin word *carne* means flesh). Then John goes on to say that after He became flesh, Jesus dwelt among us. But the Greek word for dwelt is full of meaning. It is not the normal word used for a place where someone lives. It is the word *eskee-noosen* which comes from the Greek word for a tent—*skee-nee* (pronounced skaynay). It is the word used for the Old Testament tabernacle which was also known as the Tent of Meeting. The tabernacle was the appointed place where God met with His people.

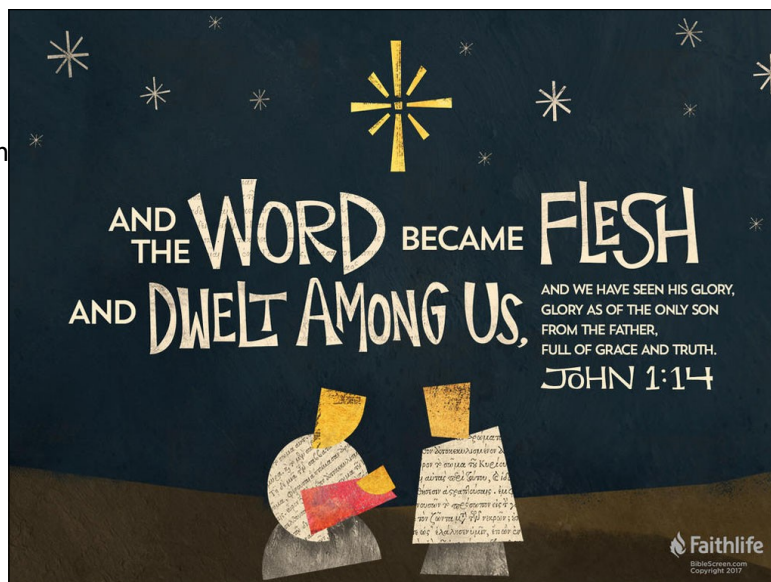
So a more literal translation would be that Jesus "tabernacled among us", or "He dwelt among us as in a tent." Or "He pitched His tent for a while among us." After John has said that Jesus tabernacled among us, he says: "we beheld His glory." The glory of God was always associated with the tabernacle. When the tabernacle was first set up, we read in Exodus 40:34 that the glory of God filled it. It was the place where God manifested His glory. But the word used for this special, revealed glory of God is the "Shekinah" glory—the Shekinah glory of God was manifested at the *skee-nee*—the place where God dwells. No wonder John connects Jesus tabernacled among us with seeing the glory of God.

2 Corinthians 4:6 says "God has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of

## The Eight O'Clock

# NEWS

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Jesus Christ". Hebrews 1:3 says "Jesus is the radiance (outshining) of God's glory". In the face of Jesus we see the Shekinah glory of God.

There is a lovely Christmas song called "Mary Did You Know" (the version sung by Pentatonix is truly beautiful). The song includes these words which sum up this truth really well:

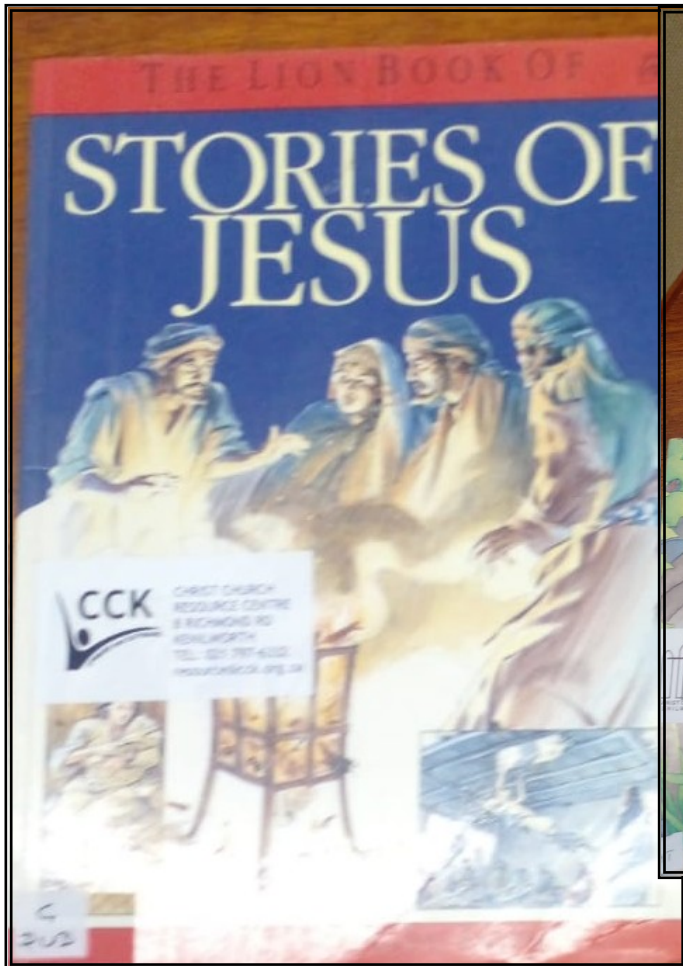
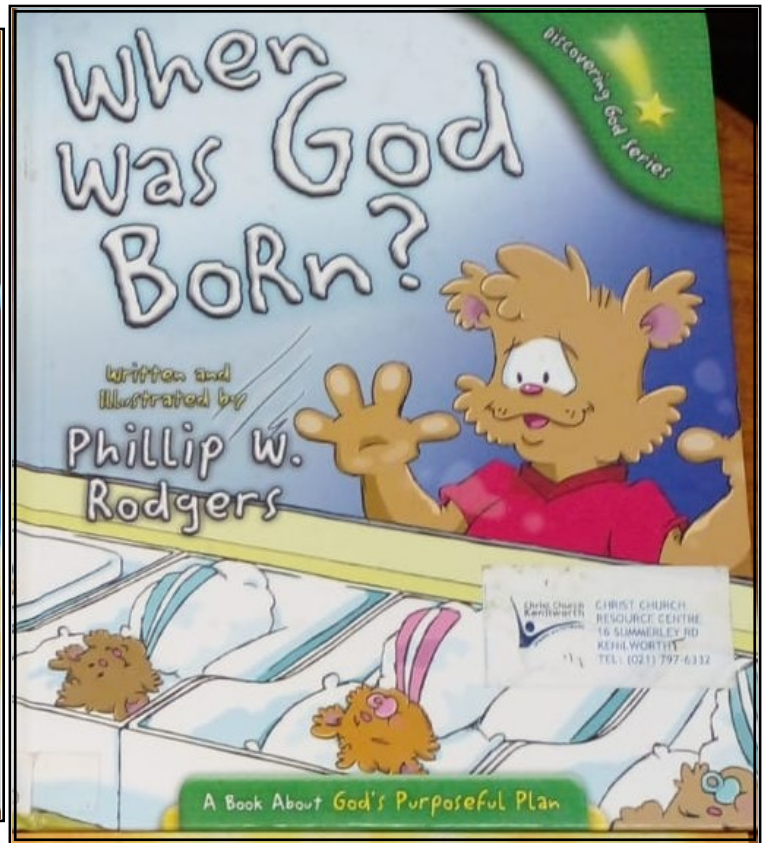
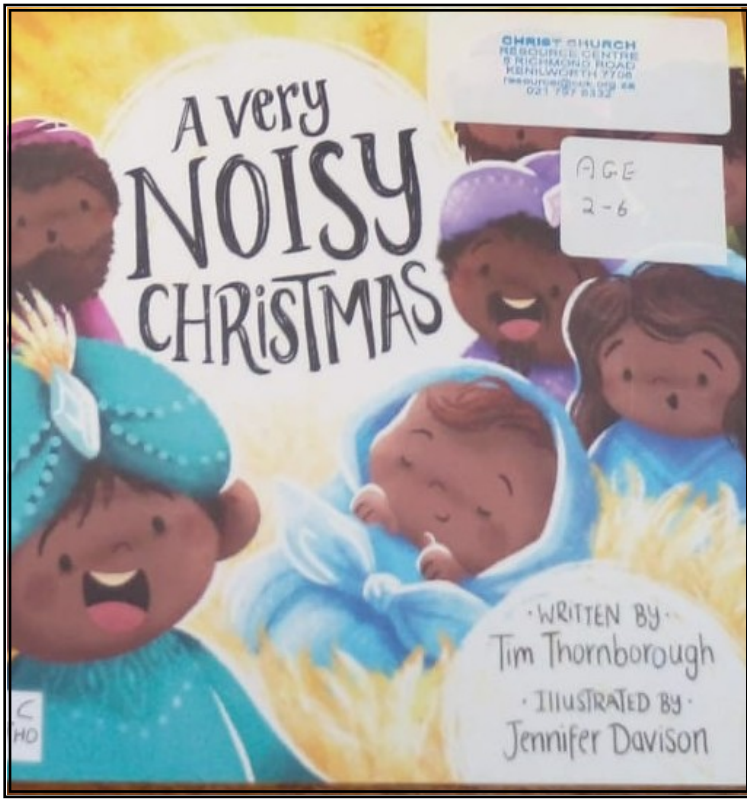
*"Did you know that your baby boy  
Has walked where angels trod?  
When you kiss your little baby  
You kiss the face of God."*

God's glory is revealed supremely in Jesus, who tabernacled among us. Where Jesus is, there God dwells. That is why Matthew could say that one of Jesus' names would be "God with us".

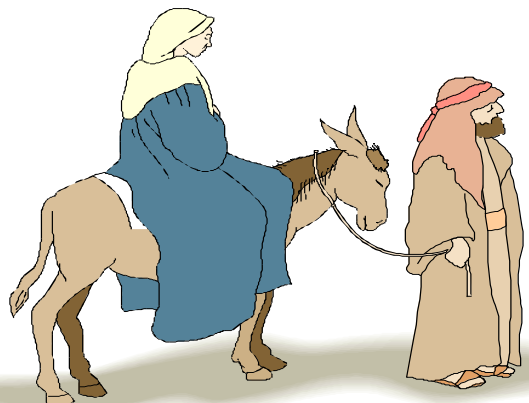
As we prepare to celebrate Christmas, may we stand amazed at the fact that the Word became flesh and tabernacled among us. And that is why it is possible for us to behold the glory of God in the face of God's Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.







Books to Borrow from  
the Resource Centre





# A Tale of a Gentile Woman who Found Dignity

– Bill Domeris

In today's story, Jesus encounters a very persistent Syrophenician woman looking for healing for her daughter (Matt 15:21-28). What makes the story interesting is the dialogue between Jesus and the woman, especially some of the finer nuances in the Greek, not found in the English. From time to time, Jesus ventured across Lake Galilee into gentile territory such as in today's story. Perhaps this was to escape the crowds and to allow him some quiet time. The verb "withdrew" (v21) certainly points in this direction. No sooner had Jesus arrived, than he meets with an unexpected challenge in the form of a local woman. This is signalled by Matthew's use of "behold" (v22). Verse 22 makes it clear who the woman is – she is a Canaanite woman, and she comes from the coastal region of Sidon and Tyre. All this is to emphasise the unusual nature of her greeting, "Have mercy on me, Lord, Son of David" (following the Greek order of words). Lord can mean simply "Sir" as used by the Samaritan woman and by the disciples of Jesus especially after the resurrection. But the title "Son of David" is more unusual since it reflects Jesus' messiahship and occurs very rarely (see Matt 20:30). Then the woman explains her need: her daughter is demon-possessed and requires healing.

Jesus remains silent (v23) leading to the disciples begging Jesus to drive the woman away, because she keeps following them and crying out. This was a problem especially in Jewish territory like Judaea and could have signalled a potential problem of Roman interference (see Acts 5:36-37) with terrible consequences for the followers. Here in country outside of direct Roman rule, there is less danger, but the disciples are still concerned that the words of the woman may bring danger.

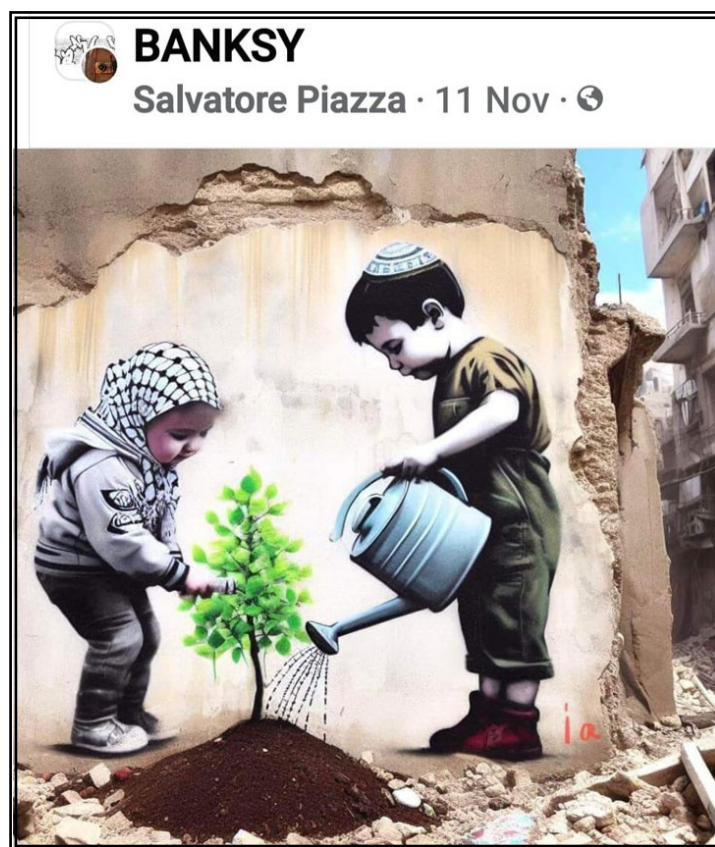
Jesus, now, for the first time addresses the woman, "I was not sent to any but the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (v24). Encouraged by even this negative comment, the woman draws near to Jesus and begins to worship, saying again "Lord. Have mercy on me" (v25). Jesus replies, "It is not proper to take the bread of the children and throw it to dogs" (v26). This could be construed as a somewhat rude dismissal, since "dogs" was a derogatory word used by Judeans of the gentiles. However, the Greek here has an unusual twist to it. The term for dogs is not the usual word for dogs, but a diminutive form of the Greek, meaning little dogs or in English "doggies". This suggests, not the large dogs confined to outdoors, or the scavenging wild dogs, but those little dogs commonly welcomed into the home. Jesus thus creates a sense of ambiguity which allows the woman to develop an intriguing and even witty response, making use of the "little dogs".

She points out to Jesus "Yes Lord, but really, the little dogs eat of the crumbs falling from the table of their masters" (v27). This Canaanite woman successfully uses Jesus' own words to challenge his conclusion.

Acknowledging that he has met his match, Jesus changes the tone of the conversation (v28) from negative to positive. Now he acknowledges both the faith and the dignity of the woman, "O woman" (and there is a marked sense of respect in the title), great is your faith. Let it happen to you as you wish" (v28).

What is remarkable about Jesus' comment is that here is a Canaanite woman who is being told that she has great faith. When Jesus speaks of great faith among those who come to him it is a huge compliment, so that this moment stands out as a significant moment. The story ends with the note, "and the woman's daughter was healed from that moment (lit. hour)" (v28). The woman leaves with her prayer answered, her daughter healed, her faith affirmed, and her dignity recognised.

Over the past few months, I have spoken about the dignity code of Jesus in relation to some very different women. These have included the nameless woman who washed the feet of Jesus, the healing of a woman and a girl, the comforting of Martha and Mary and now the most striking of them all, a gentile woman. In each instance, Jesus has responded to the needs of these women and left them with their needs met and a profound sense of Jesus granting them dignity. In so doing, Jesus signals to all Christians that part of our following of Jesus should include the recognition of the dignity of all those whom we encounter.



## Robin Trust

- Alison Bourne

Some 35 years ago, a little girl called Robyn was diagnosed with a serious and progressive disease called metachromatic leukodystrophy. Her mother, a single parent living in Thornton, who worked as a nurse tutor at Valkenberg Hospital, looked around for someone or somewhere to find care for little Robyn. But there was no-one to help. So she decided to train her domestic helper, Josephine, to care for her daughter. This was the beginning of the most amazing adventure of faith, of persuing a vision, with absolutely no resources or money—just a passion to help other people in a similar situation.

Leslie began her most amazing 'marathon' of faith in some run-down, neglected and delapidated buildings on the greater Valkenberg estate on the Pinelands side of the freeway. In faith, she resigned from her job, she had no money and two vulnerable children, yet she felt God was calling her to this task and she trusted him. The makeshift buildings had been a ward, but empty for years. No sewerage, no electricity or water. But undaunted, Leslie gathered the most extraordinary team of volunteers around her, mostly from churches and youth groups in Pinelands, and they began to clean and paint and fix up the buildings, and the Robin Trust was formed. A carer training school, a care at home agency to place carers in people's homes, a frail care and dementia unit, and now the second phase of a sub-acute facility have since been established.

On 23<sup>rd</sup> November a wonderful party was held to open the 2<sup>nd</sup> phase of the sub-acute unit. Cathy Miller who has been involved from the very beginning and has played a key role in the development of the Trust, cut the red ribbon to officially open the new wards. She was joined by the staff team, trustees on the Board amongst whom are Sam Moore and Desiree Daniels. Brian Burnett, Nigel Dunlop and many others from Christ Church have been or are involved. Sister Bonga, head of nursing services, gave a wonderful speech of thanks and welcome, prayers were said and Cathy shared about the journey to this magnificent achievement. The Robin Trust choir blessed the whole event.

The Robin Trust motto is 'Care brings Hope'. Many hospitals and care units and step-downs in Cape Town have luxurious facilities. Robin Trust is proud of the fact that they **excel** in care and compassion and the high standards of nursing care. How we long for this ethos to be evident in all hospitals and places of care.

The work has been developed with the assistance of many donors, both financial and in kind—accountants, builders, gardeners and many who have given hours and hours of their time as volunteers.

Recently, the fact that medical aids will pay for step-down or short stays in the sub-acute beds, has been hugely helpful in injecting funds into the Trust.

Those of us who were there at the event, were impressed by the fact that God can do absolutely anything – where there is nothing—if we do it in partnership with him. Trust, faith, bravery, courage, commitment, effort, team work and vision + God = the impossible being achieved!

Many Christ-Churchers have been cared for there after surgeries, many family members have been cared for there, and now several members of the WOTS community have been trained there as carers.

They are now working as carers in families and in retirement villages all over the Peninsula. Just visiting Robin Trust and seeing the wards and gardens and experiencing the warm welcome of all

the staff, is such a special experience. There is something unique and inspirational about Robin Trust. Could it be the aroma of Christ?

Lesley's daughter Robyn, died at 17, after a long and painful deterioration, unable to see or hear or do anything for herself. But she was loved and cared for in the most amazing way—and her situation was the motivation and spur to Lesley to train 1000's of carers to help others. She now lives in the UK and has taken up marathon running at the age of 65 to keep on raising funds for Robin Trust. We salute her courage, her faith and her example. The bible says we can plant a few seeds and produce a small harvest, but some people plant seeds that produce a 100-fold crop. Robin Trust is just such a harvest field.



Cathy Miller



Sam Moore



Pastor Shomang & guest



# Sustainable Grandparenting 17

## COP28

-Tony Westwood

Since I started writing these short pieces, two COPs have passed—26 and 27. Now, at the end of 2023, we have COP28, in other words the 28<sup>th</sup> meeting of the conference of parties around climate change. This one is being held in the United Arab Emirates [UAE] – a petrostate in the Gulf of Arabia, which does strike one as a little perverse when the leader of that country also leads his country’s petroleum company. Readers of this publication hardly need reminding that climate change is largely a product of the ‘greenhouse effect’ produced by humankind’s egregious burning of fossil fuels [coal and oil mainly] and the destruction of forests for agriculture, especially animal husbandry for meat-based foods because cattle and sheep in particular produce copious amounts of methane, a potent greenhouse gas. The COPs bring together governments, international agencies, commercial interest groups, non-government organisations and civil society [you and me] to discuss progress on the Paris Agreement that was signed in 2016 as a global approach to the mitigation of the climate change crisis. Note: we no longer talk about the prevention of climate change because it is here whether we like it or not, but we do or should talk about mitigation strategies aimed at preventing its exacerbation as well as adaptation to reduce its effects on living organisms including humans on planet Earth. What have we done between COP26 and COP28? Will our grandchildren, when they are our age, be pleased, disappointed or disgusted with what we did or didn't do in 2022 and 2023?



**Firstly**, what have we done individually and as CCK families? Use the following questions to guide your audit. Circle the correct answer. Then pause for reflection and prayer.

### Energy/Fuel:

In 2022/3:

- \*have we decreased our overall energy usage? Yes / No
- \*have we increased the proportion of our energy use that comes from renewable sources? Yes / No
- \*have we reduced our use of private cars, especially for short journeys? Yes / No .
- \*have we shared journeys with other people more often? Yes / No .
- \*have we intentionally travelled less by plane? Yes / No .
- \*have we helped others to reduce their dependence on and use of fossil fuels? Yes / No .
- \*have we reduced our consumption of products that come from far away, especially choosing to eat seasonally available foods? Yes / No .

### Food:

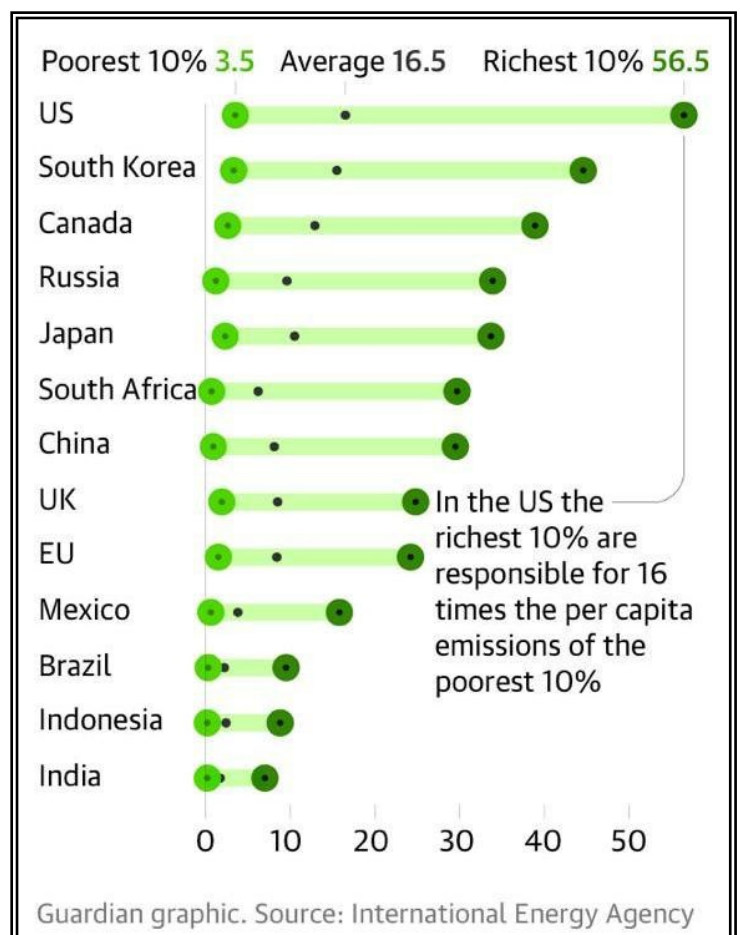
In 2022/3

- \*have we reduced our intake of all animal-based foods, especially red meat? Yes / No .
- \*have we increased our own production of plant-based foods? Yes / No .
- \*will we be having a greener Christmas in 2022 than in 2023? Yes / No .

**Secondly**, what have we done as the Body of Christ at CCK? Here I am guided by the headings from the Eco-church audit developed by the Arocha organisation.

- \*Has the leadership of CCK made a formal commitment to increasing our environmental credentials? Yes / No / Don't know but I intend to find out .
- \*was there more teaching and worship that related to Creation Care and environmental issues than in previous years? Yes / No / Don't know but I intend to find out .
- \*have we decreased the ‘carbon footprint’ of our church buildings? Yes / No / Don't know but I intend to find out .
- \*has CCK engaged with local leaders and organisations around environmental issues including climate change? Yes / No / Don't know but I intend to find out .
- \*there has a group at CCK who encourage the Body of Christ at CCK to follow sustainable practices and care for creation and those affected by climate change? Yes / No / Don't know but I intend to find out and might join them.

**Thirdly**, what have we done as a world? Here, because COP28, which will have begun as this edition of the Eight O’Clock News goes to press, has a focus on the health effects of climate change, I will point you to The Lancet medical journal’s 2023 Countdown which gives useful summaries as well as details of recent years [<https://www.lancetcountdown.org/>]. Here are the headlines:



\*Heat-related mortality, dengue fever [a mosquito-borne disease] and food security and malnutrition have all increased

\*City-level climate adaptation risk assessments are taking place but mainly in high human development index (HDI) countries. Cape Town is one of them.

\*Air-conditioning, while saving lives, consumed huge amounts of electricity [equivalent to total electricity use of Brazil and India combined].

\*External and internal air pollution due to burning of fossil fuels and biomass [where there is no alternative cheap safe energy source] have increased.

\*Deaths due to insufficient plant-based food intake and excessive red meat intake have increased.

\*Economic losses due to extreme weather events that are partly attributable to climate change have increased.

\*While financial institutions have lent far more money than they used to the development of renewable energy sources, their lending to fossil fuel companies continues to increase which is counter to the Paris Agreement which they signed.

\*Fossil fuel companies are still increasing production and exploration to levels that will exceed the Paris Agreement targets and significantly aggravate global warming.

\*Research into climate change and its mitigation and adaptation to its effects have significantly increased but largely in high HDI countries which is not where most of the affected populations live.

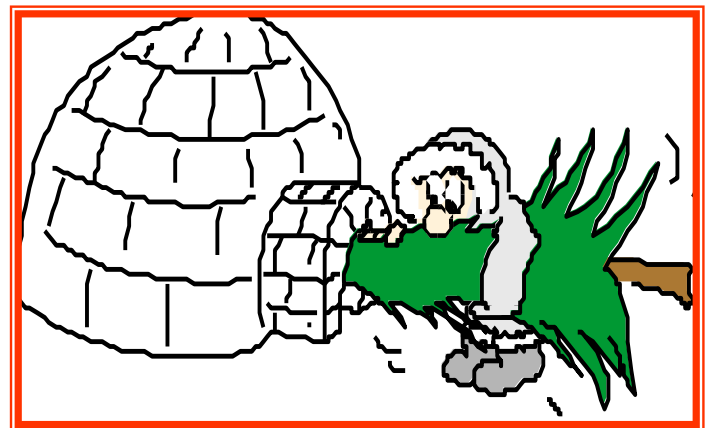
\*Many more people and organisations are engaged in the conversations around climate change than before. [Does that include CCK?]

My assessment of what I, we and 'they' have done as the COP numbers rise is that the jury has returned to the courtroom with sober faces [some members are crying] with the sombre judgement on each of us, our church and our human systems: "Could and should have done a lot better."]

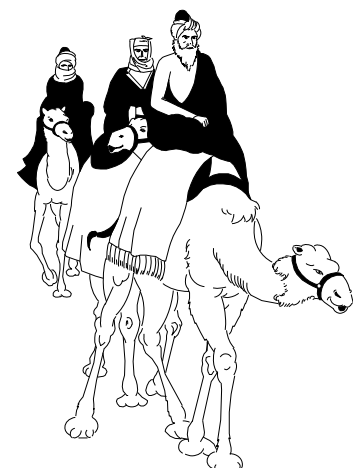
Who will step forward? (Isaiah 6:8,9)



Closer to God R130 per copy Good & Beautiful



Jeanette, Kim and Ev wish all our readers a blessed Christmas and a God-filled 2024. Thank you for sharing your journey with Jesus with us.



**The Last Bee**  
After the last bee  
Had buzzed its last buzz,  
The birds and the butterflies  
Did what they could.  
  
But soon the fields lay bare,  
Few flowers were left,  
Nature was broken,  
And the planet bereft.  
Brian Ilston

# The Church's One Foundation

— Peter Broster

Our recent series on the Letters to the Churches in Revelation has reminded us that the Christian Church is often an imperfect reflection of our beloved Jesus. One of the techniques of the devil is to sow dissension in the ranks of believers. If he can do this through arguing over theology or church doctrine, he is well pleased. Such a heated disagreement was sparked in South Africa in 1863 and affected the Anglican Church world wide. Bishop John Colenso of Natal published some writings in which he questioned the authorship of the Pentateuch and the book of Joshua, as well as rejecting the doctrine of eternal punishment for unrepented sin. Bishop Colenso was deposed and excommunicated by his metropolitan, Bishop Robert Gray of Cape Town. The theological dispute between Colenso and Gray became a widespread controversy throughout the entire Anglican Church. Hymns are usually written as praise or prayer—this hymn is a theological statement to remind worshippers of the truth. It was written by a young Rev Samuel Stone in 1866. It was Stone's conviction that the unity of the church must rest solely with a recognition of the Lordship of Christ as its head and not on the views and interpretation of men. Christ is the Church's one foundation.

*The Church's one foundation  
Is Jesus Christ her Lord;  
She is His new creation  
By water and the word:  
From Heaven He came and sought her  
To be His holy Bride;  
With His own blood He bought her,  
And for her life He died.  
  
Elect from every nation,  
Yet one o'er all the earth.  
Her charter of salvation—  
One Lord, one faith, one birth;  
One holy Name she blesses,  
Partakes one holy food;  
And to one hope she presses,  
With every grace endued.*

\*Doreen kindly sent us a photograph to accompany her birthday notice



*Though with a scornful wonder  
Men see her sore oppressed;  
By schisms rent asunder;  
By Heresies distressed:  
Yet saints their watch are keeping,  
their cry goes up, "How long?"  
And soon the night of weeping  
Shall be a morn of song.  
  
'Mid toil and tribulation,  
And tumults of her war,  
She waits the consummation  
Of peace for evermore;  
Till with the vision glorious  
Her longing eyes are blessed,  
And the great church victorious  
shall be the church at rest.  
  
Yet she on earth hath union  
With God the Three in One,  
And mystic sweet communion  
With those whose rest is won:  
Oh happy ones and holy!  
Lord give us grace that we,  
Like them the weak and lowly,  
On high may dwell with Thee!*

The hymn's portrayal of the Church of God is clear, positive, biblical. Jesus Christ Himself is its one foundation (1 Corinthians 3 v 11). Its members are His "new creation" (2 Corinthians 5 v 17) through the water of baptism and the word of the Gospel. They are also His "holy bride" for whom He gave His life (Ephesians 5 v 25). The second stanza asserts the Church's unity and the third recognises the Church's enemies. The Rev Stone was known as "the poor man's pastor" as he ministered to poor of the East End of London. Although a stern defender of the faith he was a kindly man. The music for this hymn was written by Samuel Sebastian Wesley, the great grandson of Charles Wesley, the great Methodist hymn writer.



HAPPY  
SPECIAL [DECADE]  
BIRTHDAYS  
DECEMBER 2023

10<sup>th</sup> Taryn Galloway  
\*11<sup>th</sup> Doreen Haskins  
30<sup>th</sup> Sue Court

"Who, then, are those who fear the Lord?  
He will instruct them in the ways they  
should choose."  
Psalm 25:12



# Celebrating 21 Years of the News





# I Fear No Man

## The Life and Legacy of Sailor Malan

- Dennis Henwood

Belinda and I together with a contingent of my Alma Mater, General Botha Old Boys' Association, travelled to Kimberley during September to attend the memorial lecture and wreath laying ceremony in honour of **Adolph Gysbert "Sailor" Malan GB Cadet 168; 1924/25; DSO & Bar, DFC & Bar, Croix de Guerre (Belgium), Croix de Guerre (France)** - and to commemorate the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Sailor's passing.

It began on Saturday morning when the McGregor Museum hosted the Memorial Lecture in the Humanities Faculty auditorium of the new (only 10 years old) Sol Plaatje University situated in the centre of Kimberley. Dr Yvonne Malan delivered a very interesting paper entitled "I Fear No Man" informing us of the life and enduring legacy of Sailor Malan. There were many dignitaries from SA and beyond in attendance.

Prof. Crouch (Vice Chancellor) welcomed us and spoke about Sailor. *"Sailor truly feared no man in the cause of justice. His legacy endures and still inspires us. We should thank God that such men lived. Our lives are their legacy, and their lives are our duty."*

Dr Malan, who is based at Oxford University, UK, is also Vice-President and Patron of the Spitfire Society, entitled her lecture "I Fear No Man". She highlighted Sailor's life from farm boyhood to Cadet on the SATS *General Botha*, to his short career at sea with Union Castle trading mainly to America, and then in 1935 changing career initially to the RN and then to flying for the RAF leading up to the beginning of the WW II in 1939. She spoke of his wartime experiences and acts of bravery as a pilot, and as Squadron leader of 74 Squadron during the Battle of Britain and on to RAF Group Captain during D-Day. In particular she focused on Sailor's moral and political convictions in his determination to defeat fascism and the onslaught in the air over Britain. She went on to describe his distress when, on returning to his beloved country South Africa with his wife and young son and daughter, there was a change in the political scene with the rise to power of the Nationalist regime and first steps to apartheid with removal of Cape Coloured voters from the voters' roll in 1950. He found himself once again having to defend the very principles and conviction in the face of another battle to defeat the fascist regime he had just successfully won in Britain and Europe. Through his leadership and determination he raised a following of 250,000 ex-servicemen recently returned from fighting the same battles to form the Torch Commando in direct defiance of his own kinsman, President D F Malan, and the apartheid laws. She went on to say that bravery, sacrifice and moral conviction are attributes demonstrated by only a few of us when circumstances compel us to do so. *"I fear no man is not a declaration, it is a call to courage to be brave and to do better."* His leadership certainly demonstrated that.

At the age of 52 Sailor succumbed to Parkinson's Disease 60 years ago, on 17 September 1963. However, his prominent role in opposing apartheid and the Nationalist Government at the time was the reason he was denied any recognition and the government sought to erase the legacy of the Torch Commando. Members of the SADF, including the Air Force, were banned from attending the funeral, and if they did so they were not permitted to wear uniform or medals. Newspaper obituaries were censored and Sailor was written out of the country's history. Instead, the US Air Force, the British Royal Air Force and the Rhodesian Air Force sent representatives in uniform to the funeral to honour his military achievements he so deserved, and in protest of the apartheid's regime.

Which made me think of our GB motto, *"Honour and Duty"*. I find it no surprise that Adolph Gysbert Malan's formative training was, not only a free-roaming sharp shooting farmer's son, but that he had learnt his hard lessons of life and seamanship and he had been prepared for leadership, with HONOUR & DUTY, on the Training Ship *"General Botha"* in 1924/25. He was one of the earliest (*the ship was donated to the country for training and began service in Simon's Bay in March 1922*), and a very fine example of many countless cadets over the years 1922-1987, who have learnt their lessons well and carried those high principles through their lives as Bothie Boys in varied careers not only at sea but in the air, in business, in farming, in politics, religion, medicine and so much more. We are proud of them. The following day, Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> September, a Service of Remembrance and a Wreath Laying Ceremony in honour of Adolph Gysbert "Sailor" Malan was held at his grave in the West End Cemetery, Kimberley, led by the Dean of St Cyprian's Cathedral, The Very Revd. Fr. Reginald Leeuw, who admitted his perception of the name "Malan" was synonymous with the past SA, but that he had since learnt a lot more about the positive history, and that he was very pleased to be leading this small ceremony and prayer. This was a very fine and fitting ceremony in honour of Sailor. An excellent job was done by the Scouts and other helpers in cleaning up the site which is a very dusty and dry area. Sailor's grave and headstone is in good condition relative to the sad condition of some neighbouring graves.

Coincidentally my mother, Priscilla Henwood, at the age of 20 in the Womens' Airforce (WAAF), was stationed at Biggin Hill, one of the British air bases during the war just north of London under the command of Sailor Malan. This was at a time in the middle of the war when she had just become engaged to my father, whose ship had recently been sunk in the Mediterranean Malta convoys (he survived), and she had also just lost her twin brother, Dennis, a fighter pilot in the RAF. It was, I imagine, a tough time for her. She writes in her Memoirs - *"... Another time when one of the WAAFS was in trouble and had to be brought to the C.O. I can't remember what she had been up to, but at that time the Commanding Officer at Biggin Hill was Sailor Malan, a*



*famous South African fighter pilot, an incredibly fearless man, who was respected and loved by everybody in all walks of life in the air force. I had to bring this young woman to him. There was the question of her to be on charge and whether she would be dismissed or allowed to stay on or punished in some way. Sailor Malan, with all his problems on a big RAF fighter station, took time to talk to me and this young woman. Her problem was sorted. She ... had made a mistake but she meant well and the case was dismissed. She was allowed to remain in the WAAF and return to her duties. ..., but I always remember the patient kindness of Sailor Malan as he talked to her and assisted me in my confidence to be able to help this young woman."*



Carolyn Clark and Thomas Pringle announced their engagement on 16 November.



Sam-Akim Ndyabisa was born on 18 November, a third child to Alida and Isidore Ndyabisa.

May the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all forevermore. Amen

## Isabel Hood MacGregor

- Roy MacGregor

My Mum, Isabel Hood MacGregor, née Smith, was born in Nakuru Kenya on 1st April 1933. She grew up on a Londiani farm and attended school in Nakuru and Loreto Convent Nairobi, excelling in hockey and running. She married Gordon MacGregor and moved to a farm at Timboroa, on the Equator at 9000 feet. In 1962 the family immigrated to South Africa and settled in Howick KZN, where she became a member of the Presbyterian Church. She slipped away on 2nd November 2023, at the Elizabeth Gardens home in Howick. She was well known in the district participating in tennis, Scottish Country Dancing and assisting with church meals. She was a reasonably active person, with only asthma slowing her down at the end. The family will miss her happy face and honest guidance, but we're glad she made 90 years here with us.



Hannah (6) and Emma (4) welcome the arrival of Joel Thomas Read Westwood into their family.



# Camping

- Kim Fowler

Most of the holidays I have been on have been camping holidays. I recently spent a wonderful long weekend with members of CCK camping in the Cederberg. It caused me to stop and observe some things about camping that turned out to be very encouraging:

## Camping is not convenient.

Everything has to be kept simple—my husband usually decrees that if an item doesn't serve two or more functions, it can't be brought along! Simple things while camping can be rather hard work. Making a cup of tea, for example, may take up to 20 minutes, as we scramble around to find all the various items we need, using a crate as a table, finding the teabags buried in an empty water bottle and making sure the milk doesn't overheat in the cooler bag, wrapped in our duvet. There are no washing machines; sometimes there isn't even hot water or flush toilets. Invariably we leave something at home. After years of "winging it", I finally compiled a travel checklist after too many eventful camping trips where rather essential items were forgotten at home, including glasses and corkscrew for a special anniversary bottle of wine, going on a hiking weekend without a backpack and – the ultimate winner – going on a 2-week camping trip without our tent.

## Camping is not glamorous.

There is something unique about camping with other people—you get to know them in a different way. From seeing people emerging from their tents in the morning in their pjs, bleary-eyed with hair sticking up on end, to brushing your teeth with people at a row of basins, to having to discipline children in public.

## Camping is not pretty.

Maybe that's a good thing. We can't spend time in the tiny bathroom cubicle applying makeup or blow drying our hair, we can't whip up a three-course gourmet meal (although some people really do achieve

amazing culinary feats while camping!) and we certainly can't lecture our children discreetly behind a solid oak door. (Ripstop nylon is a terrible sound insulator!) There is a grittiness and realness about camping that is surprisingly encouraging. It turns out that nobody gets it right all the time; we are human after all. And in the human-ness of it, we seem to meet each other, and have more patience, grace and sympathy for each other. We can spend an hour chatting peacefully while our children roast (or in some cases, obliterate) marshmallows. We can hike together and encourage each other's kids up the hill, celebrating together when we arrive at our lunch stop. The stronger ones can carry others' backpacks. The creative ones can tell stories to distract tired legs. The practical ones remember the sunscreen and the plasters. We can lend each other mugs and blankets, share sunscreen, muesli, Panado, chocolate and braai fires. In all of this messiness and imperfection, it struck me that *this* is a picture of the body of Christ. This is how we work together: not once we've perfected our own selves, not once we've tidied ourselves up and made ourselves presentable, not once we've collected everything we might need, not once we've made sure we're all doing the right thing. But just as we are. In all our brokenness, messiness, forgetfulness, disorganisation, neediness and human-ness. And maybe even without our tent. No wonder I like camping!

L>R Rose Dallas, MJ and Lucy Axelson, Ryan Fowler, Geoff du Toit, Claire Fowler, Sarah du Toit, Emily Dallas





## FORTY YEARS AGO

Judy Corder (originally from East London) and William Bates were married at Christ Church Kenilworth, Cape Town on the 17<sup>th</sup> December 1983. The officiating Minister was the Rev David Cook. The bridesmaids were young girls, Cheryl and Cindy Gilbert, and Bex Freeth. The flower girl was a very young Annwen Bates, the niece and goddaughter of the groom. William's support party included Brian Notcutt as Best Man and James Thomas, who had introduced us, was the Master of Ceremonies.

The bride wore a Laura Ashley dress and her hair had been beautifully done by Marion Counsell. Before this, Judy had been working in the St John's Parish office doing secretarial work and Christian drama in and around the Parish, mostly linked to David Cook and had boarded with the Freeth family in the Rectory for two years. John Freeth deputised for her late father Norman, and 'gave her away'.

A choir and orchestra under Chris Dare's direction, contributed greatly to the service, as did dancers led by Colleen Thomas. Cathy O'Reilly sang a solo. The reception was held in St Anne's, in the grounds of Christ Church.

There were doctors and ministers galore in attendance as these were our colleagues.

The speeches were excellent (according to Judy), by John Freeth, Brian Notcutt and William. William's speech included a few limericks that he implied were sent to him by others. One made reference to Judy's having dated three Williams:

'She seemed to get a thrill,  
Out of being with a Will or a Bill,  
And when you die,  
She will probably cry  
but her interest will still be the Will!

In time, Lauren and David made their appearance. We are grateful to God and thank Him for these 40 years together.



O Living God,  
When I am tired and cross and  
despairing,  
Distracted by many thoughts,  
Eaten by multiple demands  
And hungry for your peace;  
Help me to offer again the five loaves  
and two fishes  
That you have given me,  
And to discover again  
The miracle of the strength  
That comes in sharing everything  
When we have nothing.  
- Julie Hulme

The Incarnate Deity,  
Our God—contracted to a span,  
Incomprehensibly made Man.  
- Charles Wesley

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