

Katoomba Baptist Church Bulletin

Oh, magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt His name together. Psalm 34:4

41 Waratah Street, Katoomba NSW 2780.

September 2020.

Pastor: Steve Cooper. Contact: mob. 0451 954 675; email cooper.steve.j@gmail.com .

Restricted church services are in compliance with the NSW Government rules.

10am Sunday service is also streamed on Katoomba Baptist Church's YouTube channel.

KBC website <https://katoombabaptist.org.au>

Bible Study: Second and Fourth Wednesday of the month, on Zoom

(to participate, please email Grahame McCraw: mowogmaca@gmail.com).

Church prayer meeting: Each Saturday, 9am. Prayer for Israel: Third Friday of the month, 1.30pm.

From the Pastor

This past month has been a wonderful experience for me as your Pastor. Thank you for opening up your hearts to me and making me feel so welcome! As I have chatted with people on Sundays, and visited several in your homes, it has been so enjoyable. The lunch at the RSL on 30 August was a real highlight – it helped me get to know people better in a relaxed and informal atmosphere.

My approach to pastoral ministry is shaped by this insight from C.S. Lewis: "The clergy are those particular people within the whole Church who have been specially trained and set aside to look after what concerns us as creatures who are going to live forever" (*Mere Christianity*, p.66). As people who are immortal, what should concern us most is our relationship with the eternal God. My primary task as your Pastor is to encourage you in your communion and fellowship with God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

That's why, during this past month, we have focussed on the Lord's Prayer. This prayer reminds us of the essentials in how to enjoy conversation in prayer with our heavenly Father. Many of you have prayed that prayer each day, sincerely and thoughtfully, expanding each line to connect with what is on your heart. Thank you to those who have shared with me what you have been learning about prayer – it has been such an encouragement to me!

During this next month, I will commence a preaching series on the Old Testament Book of Habakkuk. It is a logical choice after our consideration of the Lord's Prayer. Habakkuk is a unique book. It reveals the prayer life of the prophet. It begins with Habakkuk confused and complaining to God. The Lord replies to the prophet's complaints. By the end of the book, Habakkuk offers a prayer which shows he has moved from complaint to a stronger faith: 'I will rejoice in the LORD, I will be joyful in God my Saviour' (3:17). The prophet had to go through a spiritual journey before his fear gave way to faith. The same often needs to happen for us: a process of honest prayer, struggle, listening and reflection before God before we are able to rejoice with a strong faith in the Lord.

There are so many aspects to prayer. The Lord's Prayer supplies us with the basic pattern and framework for praying. The Book of Habakkuk shows us the prayer life of a prophet, who is confused and annoyed at the way the Lord is organising his world! Habakkuk is so relevant for us this year, where we find it hard to rejoice in God's kingly rule in a world full of catastrophes, viruses, evil, pain and injustice. Habakkuk's dialogue with God shows us the way to a stronger trust and confidence in the Lord.

Please keep telling me what you are learning about prayer. This is my task as your Pastor, to pray for you and support you in your relationship with God. This should concern us most as 'creatures who are going to live forever'.

Your companion on the journey,
Pastor Steve Cooper.

Please pray

- for our Pastor Steve, for the Lord to guide him and bless his ministry
- for the Lord to help us through these times in which we live, and grant us strength and wisdom.
- for our leaders and authorities, for medical staff and indeed all those who are dealing with this crisis.
- that the Lord will minister to all who are undergoing trials and suffering, here and everywhere.
- for Israel, for the "Peace of Jerusalem" (Ps 122:6) and for the Gospel there "To the Jew first." (Rom 1:16).
- for our persecuted brothers and sisters in nations rich and poor and for those who persecute them.
- for the people whose livelihoods have been impacted by the Coronavirus, the drought and fires.
- for revival in our community, state, nation, and throughout the world, and for our faith to increase.
- that the Lord will help us to use our gifts for His glory and to share the Gospel with others.
- that the Lord will draw to Him our unsaved loved ones and all for whom we have a burden.
- for missions to be fruitful, especially those we support as a church, and for the preservation of converts.
- that we continue to grow in Christian love as a church, serving the Lord and each other.
- Maranatha! ("Come, O Lord!")

"Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks:

for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you" (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18).

Church announcements

Advertising Material. If you wish to place advertising material in the church, on the Hall notice board, on a Hall table, or in the church foyer, please check with Daniel Thomas beforehand. You can ask him or send him an email at: katoombabaptist@gmail.com

“The growth of trees and plants takes place so slowly that it is not easily seen. Daily we notice little change. But, in course of time, we see that a great change has taken place. So it is with grace. Sanctification is a progressive, lifelong work (Prov. 4:18). It is an amazing work of God’s grace and it is a work to be prayed for (Rom. 8:27).” [John Owen]

From Scripture Union NSW website [https://s3-ap-southeast-2.amazonaws.com/prod-sunsw-web/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/SU-News-Winter-2020_ONLINE.pdf]

Due to the restrictions that have been put in place for COVID-19, our SUPA Clubs and ISCF School lunchtime groups have been unable to meet and explore God’s Word together. This has, however, provided a space for us to explore different ways of assisting children, young people and families to meet with God daily through Bible reading and prayer. Adam Smyth reports:

SUPA TV launches. *One of these new ventures has been SUPA TV which is a fun, interactive online series for primary-aged children and their families to connect with God through games, songs and Bible stories. Series one contains four episodes exploring ‘God’s big plans for little people’ in the Bible, and how He has big plans for little people today too! Check it out at: [sunsw.org.au/supa-tv](https://www.sunsw.org.au/supa-tv).*

YouVersion reaches 40K. *We’ve also been so excited to see God using our Bible resources in extraordinary ways! Partnering with YouVersion, many of our most loved Bible engagement resources can now be accessed on the YouVersion app and website!*

Looking ahead. *... our new devotional for adults, called Sharing God, on YouVersion as well as a primary-aged version of our very popular CHAT-A-BOX topic card series and, coming soon, a new video resource for teens, exploring the Book of Luke! ... At a time when meeting together has been difficult, this has been a huge blessing! It is remarkable how God has used these resources and this online platform to reach primary and high school ages, as well as adults, not just in NSW or throughout Australia but also in over 100 countries around the globe.*

Throughout all of this, I am reminded that God never leaves us, and He never forsakes us (Hebrews 13:5). He is close to us in this time, as He is in all others. His word is powerful, and we can trust Him to continue to touch hearts whatever the circumstances may be, as we joyfully proclaim the Good News of Jesus. What a great God we serve!

September birthdays: Michael W. 14th, Joshua T 15th, Jamie G 16th, Peter C. 17th, Loren H. 22nd, Joy C. 29th. May the Lord bless you abundantly on your special day and through the year ahead in your walk with Him.

Spurgeon on the joys of springtime, in creation and in the Spirit

In springtime, one cause of happiness is new life. Things have been dead, but they are now springing into life. ... It is so spiritually. We have come into a new life, the Holy Spirit has breathed upon us and we live and, blessed be God, that life never gets old! ... There is a constant novelty about the life of faith. The mercies of God are new every morning and fresh every evening. Well, then, since you have a life of which you knew nothing before, since you can see all around you the tokens of a life which you never perceived before, be glad!

... Another source of joy in springtime is to be found in our happy surroundings. It is beginning to be warm. We hope, soon, to be able to sit out of doors in the sunshine. ... So we feel happy in the advent of spring and is it not so with us spiritually? We are no longer in bondage and no longer in fear! "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God." Reconciled through the blood of Jesus Christ, our Lord, we joy in God. Let us be happy together and ... meet in joyful anticipation of the day when we shall sit down at the marriage supper of the Lamb in Glory! New life and happy surroundings should make us clap our hands and rejoice before the Lord!

Springtime, I think, is peculiarly pleasant because of its large promise. We are thinking of the hay harvest and of the fruit of the fields. We are reckoning upon luscious grapes and upon the various fruits which faith sees to be hidden within the blossoms. Yes, but may not our hopes be disappointed if we reckon upon earthly fruits? But you and I have come, by Grace, into a land of hope most sure and steadfast! We have hopes grounded on God’s Word and they shall never be disappointed! Let us be happy, then, since we shall certainly one day be in Heaven! Let us begin the music of Heaven down here. Since our Lord is on His way back to us and may arrive before this assembly breaks up, let us anticipate the joy of His glorious appearing. May God the Holy Spirit help us to think of all these choice mercies, that we may be glad in the Lord!

[Charles Spurgeon, from the sermon, “Springtime in Nature and Grace” Text: Isaiah 55:10-13.]

Friday September 18th — Prayer for Israel at Katoomba Baptist Church, 1.30pm

“Therefore say, “Thus says the Lord GOD: “I will gather you from the peoples, assemble you from the countries where you have been scattered, and I will give you the land of Israel.” [Ezekiel 11:17]

Contributions welcome: The KBC bulletin is available on the first Sunday service of the month. A multi-page PDF version of the Bulletin is uploaded to the church website which you can also receive by email upon registration: <https://katoombabaptist.org.au/library/bulletins/>. Contributions and enquiries can be made to the editor, Bill Fewer (email: hillbillyfewer@gmail.com).

Giving: Please remember that you can give online to Katoomba Baptist Church at BSB 704-922 and Account Number 100008926. Thank you for your faithful commitment to giving.

Jesus answered and said to her, “Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again, but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life.” [John 4:13-14]

Katoomba Baptist Church Bulletin Online Extra

** Please note that to access websites referred to in the Bulletin, please copy and paste the link into the address bar of your web browser.**

A reminder that KBC now has a website

<https://katoombabaptist.org.au>

Again we thank the Thomas brothers, Daniel and Joshua, who are responsible for creating the church's website.

A reminder too that if you want to continue to receive the church Bulletin by email then you need to register on the KBC website: <https://katoombabaptist.org.au/library/bulletins/>

Let's pray that with this new online presence that the Lord will draw people to Him through our church. In all our ministries, individually and as a fellowship, may the Lord be blessed and glory be to Him.

Baptist Churches of NSW & ACT website

In response to the Covid-19 crisis, the Baptist Union has put together a very helpful page on their website which is an excellent guide for local churches and their fellowships: <https://nswactbaptists.org.au/covid19/>

Plus, there is a national call to daily prayer at 7pm to seek the Lord about the crisis:
<https://www.baptist.org.au/covid-19-national-call-to-prayer/>

And there is also the previous disaster which is still affecting many people:
Bushfire Relief and Recovery Campaign, <https://nswactbaptists.org.au/bushfire-relief-and-recovery/>

And, finally, you can contact the Baptist Union website and request to be added to the prayer mailing list.

From the Editor

We are blessed in the Upper Mountains with all the beautiful flowers in spring. It's a joy to see God's handiwork in the infinite variety of blooms and fragrances. Just to look out your window, enjoy your garden, or admire all that you see on your favourite walk gives many reasons to praise our great God. The trees, the sky, the clouds, sunshine, rain, the birds and all His incredible creatures, the moon and the stars — how wonderful are His works in creation. What a blessing to worship the Creator, not the creation as so many do!

Our God is a God of regeneration. After the dark, cold months of winter, spring brings warmth and colour in a glorious display as all the flowers and green leaves emerge from bare branches. It's astonishing to realize that the beauty of the natural world is actually a marred masterpiece, one that has been vandalized by sin. Can you imagine how glorious creation will be when it is no longer under the curse?

We read in Romans, Chapter 8 how the creation groans waiting for the sons of God to be revealed. In the Psalms (65 and 96) even the hills and trees celebrate at the coming of the Lord. As we wait for the Lord Jesus so does the natural world. We wait for the Curse to be removed and the Creation "to be delivered from its bondage to corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God" (Romans 8:21). We wait for the times of refreshing, for the Kingdom to come, for a world of righteousness, for the Lord to rule the nations, for Israel to be the faithful wife of God and for the Church to reign with Christ as His Bride. What a hope we have!

We give praise to our Saviour that He has taken each of us from the winter of sin and regenerated us, changed us, that each day we are growing as we are sanctified by the Holy Spirit, being slowly conformed to His image. We can testify of His love in our transformed lives and spirits and how the Fall is being overcome with righteousness. This righteousness is from the Lord and is not from ourselves. It is the fruit of the Spirit.

Let us give praise to our great God and Creator for all He has done. We are in readiness for the Springtime of His coming Kingdom. Everything that was lost in the early chapters of Genesis is lovingly restored in the closing chapters of Revelation. The world will be like the Garden and mankind will once again have an open, unbroken fellowship with God. For our God truly is the God of resurrection, regeneration, restoration, renewal. He lavishes unimaginable blessings on His children.

What does He look for in those who are His? A humble and repentant heart. Those who have accepted their Saviour, Jesus Christ, as the Lord of their lives. Those whose hearts were once cold and dark with sin, now warm and filled with life, overflowing and bountiful with the beauty that is Christ.

To the Lord be the glory,
Your brother in Christ, Bill.

From Tim Chester, “Enjoying God”

Peter invites us to apply the taste test to the Bible. “like newborn babies,” he says, “crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation, now that you have tasted that the Lord is good” (1 Peter 2 v 2-3). By “spiritual milk” he means “the living and enduring word of God” through which we have been born again (1 v 23). We crave the Bible because we know from experience it tastes good. But Peter doesn’t say the Bible tastes good. He says “the Lord” tastes good. The point, of course, is that we taste the goodness of God in the word of God. The theologian and author Wayne Grudem comments: “In the hearing of the Lord’s words believers experience the joy of personal fellowship with the Lord Himself.”

PUTTING IT INTO PRACTICE

Since the Bible is how we hear God’s voice and enjoy his presence, we’ll want to be intentional about reading it. So it’s great to have a Bible-reading plan or use daily Bible notes. But don’t confuse the means and the end. The goal is to enjoy God, and planning to read the Bible each day is just the means. So don’t feel the need to catch up if you miss a day — just skip a day or be a day behind. The goal is not ticking off a task. The aim is to hear God’s voice. It’s not that if you read your Bible for ten minutes, then you’ll receive ten minutes worth of grace for the day. We go to the word to hear our Saviour speak to us.

Here’s a practical way of putting this into practice. Get into the habit of praying as you read the Bible. Turn God’s speech into a two-way conversation by worshipping over the word. Many prayers recorded in the Bible are actually Bible promises turned around and presented back to God as requests. One way of doing this is to read the passage as a whole and then reread it a verse or two at a time. After each section, turn what you’ve read into prayer. You might respond with praise or confession or thanksgiving or petition. In the case of a Bible story, you might focus on two or three verses that capture your attention or summarise God’s involvement.

Let’s take John 14 as an example. You might read verses 1-10 to get the big picture and then re-read verse 1.

Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in me. (John 14 v 1)

You might begin by confessing some of the ways your heart is troubled. Then rejoice in Christ’s invitation to trust him. This is an opportunity to leave your troubles with him. Then re-read verses 2-3:

My Father’s house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am. (John 14 v 23)

Thank Jesus for preparing a place with God for you through his death and resurrection. Thank him for the promise that he’ll return so we can be with him. Ask him to help you view your troubles in the light of eternity.

[Jesus said] “You know the way to the place where I am going.” Thomas said, “Lord, we don’t know where you are going, so how can we know the way?” Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me. (John 14 v 7-9)

Praise God that he has perfectly revealed himself in Jesus. Praise him for all the aspects of his character that we see in the actions and words of Jesus. Express your desire to know more of the Father by knowing more of Jesus.

How can you say, “Show us the Father”? Don’t you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me? The words I say to you I do not speak on my own authority. Rather, it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work. (John 14 v 9-10)

Through the words that Jesus speaks (written for us in the Bible), the Father does his work. We’re back where we started. God is present and active through his word. Pray that God will be at work through the words of Jesus in your life, in your church and in the mission of your church.

Reading the Bible is an educational process. We learn about God as we read. But it’s much, much more than this. It’s also a relational process. Every word we read or hear preached is an opportunity to enjoy communion with God. In every word we can meet God and hear his voice.

Why do I say to my wife, “I love you”? After all, I’ve told her before. It’s not new information. Yet she never complains when I tell her again. The words “I love you” reassure her and enable her to feel secure. It’s the same with God’s people, whom Jesus speaks of as his bride. Every day our sin gives us reasons to wonder whether Christ still loves us. But every day — if we will only listen — Christ reassures us of his love in his word. Your primary aim as you read the Bible is not to seek out new or novel ideas (although you may meet some new ideas as you read). Make it your aim to hear God’s voice and meet him in his word.

Tim Chester interviewed on “Enjoying God” (from The Pastor’s Heart on YouTube)

Today we get to know UK pastor author Tim Chester. Tim is pastor of Grace Church, Boroughbridge, and author of more than 30 Christian books. He’s with us to speak about his new book, *Enjoying God*, but also how you balance a busy pastoral ministry with being such a prolific author.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UM_u07atoNg

Let’s praise the God of all creation for His wonderful works!



Thank you Adrian for contributing this beautiful photo. It makes us look closely at God’s handiwork in all its detail. How often have we walked past flowers and butterflies without appreciating our Creator’s astonishing artistry? Thank you Adrian for stopping and looking!

Let’s keep this going, KBC folk. If you have a photo that glorifies God in creation, please send it in.

“Ruth” by Costa Karagounas

The dense heart-wrenching book of Ruth can rightly, in my humble opinion, be co-titled ‘Blessings’. On the surface it’s the story of a stranger to Israel, the Moabitess Ruth, who loyally stays by her Jewish mother-in-law Naomi to the end, even after a decade-long famine and the death of a husband. Ruth then marries Naomi’s kinsman Boaz and they produce the grandfather of King David, the royal ancestor of our Lord. Beneath that historical account there is a deeper meaning.

Ruth represents all gentiles. Paul tells us in Romans that gentiles, as the unnatural branch, have been grafted into the natural root which is Israel. Naomi represents Israel. When Boaz divides to Ruth six seahs of barley to give to Naomi, it’s telling us something rather profound. If we consider that barley represents the Word, we are being told that the Word is for God’s people. Remember that the Word was to the Jew first, then to the gentile. But ironically, it’s the gentiles (Ruth) who will deliver the Word to the nation of Israel (Naomi). The barley, the Word, is given out by Boaz. He is the kinsman redeemer; he represents Jesus Christ.

Beneath that analogy there is yet another deeper meaning in this short and amazing book. It ought not to surprise us that Scripture often has many layers of meaning. When Boaz is introduced to us, a blessing has been bestowed upon him by the reapers. That is a reference to the reaping angel who will bring in the harvest of believers at the end times. A second blessing is bestowed upon Boaz by Naomi. A third blessing by her quickly follows.

There are three blessings for Boaz and there are three blessings for Ruth.

Ruth’s first blessing occurs early, in chapter 1:8. It’s clearly a blessing without the word ‘blessing’ being used: ‘The Lord will deal in loving kindness with you...’ The second blessing occurs at midnight by the mouth of Boaz after he discovers Ruth nestled at his feet. The third blessing is by the mouth of ‘all the people who were in the gate and the elders’ that Ruth would be fruitful, also a blessing without using that word.

At the end of the book, the Lord is blessed by the womenfolk after they have learned Ruth bore a son. And there follows a blessing for Naomi, who, having lost much and endured long, is told of her restoration and nourishment. Since Naomi represents Israel, this tells us Israel will be restored and nourished in the Last Days. Prophetic words are devoted to that particular subject by Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel, and the minor prophets in turn.

What an amazing compressed little account of the place for Jews and gentiles united in Christ in the Kingdom of God. Blessings be upon our Lord and upon believers.

“To Peace Through Prayer” a poem by Jemima Woolley

Torn apart, breaking,
Brought to my knees,
Yearning and praying,
Presenting my pleas.

Lonely and frightened,
Comforts are few.
Before I was asking
My seeking He knew.

Turmoil and trouble,
Of great ranging storms,
And spiritual battles,
He saw well before.

Pause now, in chaos
And look to the Lord.
In Him we have refuge,
Of Him we are sure.

Cast away worry,
Cast away care,
This life is just fleeting,
Our true home's Up There.

Soli Deo Gloria.

My Prayer for You

*May the Father of Life pour out His grace on you;
may you feel His hand in everything you do
and be strengthened by the things He brings you through:
this is my prayer for you.*

*May the Son of God be Lord in all your ways;
may He shepherd you the length of all your days,
and in your heart may He receive the praise:
this is my prayer for you.*

*And despite how simple it may sound,
I pray that His grace will abound
and motivate everything you do;
and may the fullness of His love be shared through you.*

*May Jesus be Lord in all your ways,
may He shepherd you the length of all your days,
and in your heart may he receive the praise:
this is my prayer for you, my prayer for you.*

From the Ong Family in Malawi (missionaries supported by KBC)

CHALLENGES FACING YOUTH

Today, there are 1.2 billion young people aged 15 to 24 years, accounting for 16 per cent of the global population. By 2030, according to the UN, the number of youth is projected to grow to nearly 1.3 billion. Almost 85 per cent of the world's young people live in the developing world where they face challenges such as poverty (spiritual, relational and material), unemployment and the effects of Climate Change on the environment in which they live resulting in cyclic patterns of droughts and floods. How can the church speak into these situations and stand in the gap on behalf of young people to help them flourish? How can we help young people connect their faith to their everyday situation?

With a population of about 18 million people, Malawi has about 75 per cent of her population under the age of 30, making it one of the nations with the highest proportion of youth in the world. Compare this with Australia which has about 39 per cent of the population under 30 years old. That's why for SIM Malawi, ministering to youth is one of our priorities!

We would love to see the youth of Malawi glorify God as they come to know Jesus, grow in Him and become the next generation of leaders who will one day lead powerful disciple-making movements across Malawi and beyond. We exist to make disciples of Jesus among the youth of Malawi by reaching out to them with the Gospel, helping them to integrate their faith to their everyday life, and equipping them to be disciple-makers to transform their communities and the world. Two ways in which we are doing this is through the neXGen Youth Leadership Development ministry and the Mtengo ministry, and we would love for you to continue to partner with us in prayer for the youth who come through these programs.

The main focus of the neXGen Youth Leadership Development program is to mentor and equip youth leaders from the local churches by helping them to grow in their own relationship with Jesus out of which their service overflows, and to equip them to better understand and minister God's Word to others.

In the past, we had conducted this ministry by running conference-style training events with many youth leaders attending. While it may have looked successful, it was always difficult to gauge the impact we were having in the lives of the youth leaders. Through the influence of wiser and more experienced disciple-makers like Robert Coleman (who wrote "The Master Plan of Evangelism") and others; and having reflected on my own experience growing up being disciplined by my youth leaders, I became more convinced that our discipleship strategy needed to change. We are revamping this ministry to be more in line with the way that Jesus went about discipleship; where he intentionally invested in a few rather than spending all his energy in ministering to the masses. ... Pray and journey with us as we travel down this road working with God in His work of deep spiritual transformation in the lives of youth leaders He brings in our path.

"Mtengo" means "worth" or "tree" in Chichewa depending on the context. This ministry is about helping unemployed youth to know their worth in Christ that comes from what He has done for them in bearing their sin on the "tree" (1 Peter 2:24 ESV) giving them new life, new hope and a new future. The focus of Mtengo is helping our youth to grow as disciples of Jesus in their season of unemployment and teaching them to be good stewards of all that God has given them. Mtengo provides a platform whereby unemployed youth can learn skills to help them and their communities to flourish. Pray with us as we seek to do this. While COVID has temporarily stopped our meetings, pray that God will continue to grow them in this season of waiting.

YOUTH CAMP, BELONGING AND COMMUNITY

The youth in Malawi, in many ways, are not that different to youth anywhere in the world, in that they desire community, relationship and a sense of belonging to someone or something which gives them a sense of their own identity. That's why youth camps are the main highlight for the youth in the AEC every year! However, this year is the first time in a very long time when youth camps have been cancelled due to COVID. Youth camps were suppose to be running right now, this month. But due to government restrictions in their fight against COVID has restricted religious gatherings to only 10 people. This not only impacts camps, but the way they will do church and their weekly youth group meetings. Everyone in the world is in the same situation right now, but let us be praying for the youth in Malawi to creatively come up with ways to do community without the online privileges that we have here.

WORK, VOCATION AND STEWARDSHIP

One of the things I touched on above is the importance of helping our young people to connect their faith to their everyday life, which work is a big component of it. As I reflect back to my younger days working in the engineering industry, one of the things that I wished that I had more spiritual guidance on was this very issue. Many people today still feel the disconnect between what they do 9 to 5 each day with their faith. Ministry is relegated to Sundays only, and Missions is just for pastors and missionaries.

One of the resources that Jonathan and I are working on for use with our Mtengo youth is on work, vocation and stewardship. We are still far from finishing but some of the resources ... shaping our thinking are below and I wanted to share this with you (especially if you are a young worker) to be reflecting theologically about your work.

Reframe is a great course which I wish I had discovered as a young worker! It has been well thought out and put together by Regent College, Vancouver and their partners. They have uploaded all videos and study guides online free of charge. Check out their introductory video by clicking the picture, and check out their website for more details: <https://www.reframecourse.com/>

INVESTORS WANTED!

Ministry is about investing in lives. I have known Jonathan for about 4 years, and over the past 2 years he has been working closely with me as a Youth Ministry Intern while he completes his theological studies. As the youth work is expanding, I would love to bring Jonathan on board in a full-time paid capacity role. I am looking for four people who would be committed to investing AU\$100 per month over the next 2 years. This equates to each investor giving up 5 coffees per week to invest in Jonathan to do vital Gospel ministry among youth! Could you be one of the four investors I am looking for? Contact me to start the conversation.

FOR PRAYER:

** Give thanks for the young people in your lives on this International Youth Day. Pray that God will use you to encourage them during these challenging times.*

** Pray for the ongoing development of the neXGen and Mtengo ministries to youth leaders and youth in Malawi.*

** Pray for the AEC youth who grieve the loss of community of not having youth camp this year. Pray for Gilbert (AEC national youth coordinator) as he works with the youth leaders in coming up with creative ways of doing community and studying God's Word under the strict government COVID restrictions among youth in the local churches who do not have online access.*

** Pray for the ongoing resource development on Work, Vocation and Stewardship.*

** Pray for 4 Investors who would be willing to support Jonathan to continue to do Gospel work with me among youth. Pray for Jonathan and his wife Tadala as they are expecting their first baby soon, and that God would bless their marriage.*

Thank you for your partnership in prayer!

In Christ,

Pete, Jo and the Onglets

ongsinmalawi@gmail.com

[Please contact Peter Ong if you wish to receive the Ong family newsletter to keep informed of their missionary work in Malawi]

"Growing Older is part of God's Plan" by Helen Steiner Rice

*You can't HOLD BACK THE DAWN"
Or "STOP THE TIDES FROM FLOWING" -
Or 'KEEP A ROSE FROM WITHERING"
Or "STILL A WIND THAT IS BLOWING" -
And TIME CANNOT BE HALTED
in its SWIFT and ENDLESS FLIGHT*

*For AGE is sure to follow YOUTH
and DAY comes after NIGHT
For He who sets our span of years
and watches from above
Replaces youth and beauty
with PEACE and TRUTH and LOVE*

*And then our souls are privileged
to see a "HIDDEN TREASURE"
That in our youth escaped our eyes
in OUR PURSUIT OF PLEASURE
So BIRTHDAYS are but BLESSINGS
that open up the way
To the EVERLASTING BEAUTY
of GOD'S ETERNAL DAY.*

[Thank you Elaine for this contribution!]

Some music for you

Keith & Kristyn Getty — “Living Waters”

With lyrics on a background of a flowing stream (with chords for the musicians among us):
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LA9UfBEHciY>

And in performance:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PVEsJXKfhEo>

Trees and Rivers

Blessed is the man
Who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly,
Nor stands in the path of sinners,
Nor sits in the seat of the scornful;
But His delight is in the law of the LORD,
And in His law he meditates day and night.
He shall be like a tree
Planted by the rivers of water;
That brings forth its fruit in its season,
Whose leaf shall not wither;
And whatever he does shall prosper.
[Psalm 1:1-3]

And he (the angel) showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding from the throne of God and of the Lamb.

In the middle of its street, and on either side of the river, was the tree of life, which bore twelve fruits, each tree yielding its fruit every month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.

And there shall be no more curse, but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and His servants shall serve Him.

They shall see His face, and His name shall be on their foreheads.

There shall be no night: They need no lamp nor light of the sun, for the Lord God gives them light. And they shall reign forever and ever.

[Revelation 22:1-5]
