

Cycles

The rhythms of God are cyclic; His fingerprints are all over creation. So why do we constantly measure life in lineal terms?

The world spins around the sun, we call that a year.

The moon spins around the earth, we call that a month.

The world itself spins and as it does we call that a day.

All renewing in their own time, but we measure them lineally.

The tilted axis of our world creates 4 seasons in a year, Spring, Summer, Autumn and Winter, but which season comes first? Remember, the calendar is our creation not God's and the calendar is a lineal measurement within a year.

Adults give way to young in an ever cyclic renewing of life, animals and plants, fish and coral. Even the tectonic nature of our world is ever renewing our planet's surface. A woman's birthing cycle creates rhythms in our homes, and yet we always want to measure things lineally. We, as human beings, love measuring and celebrating the cycles of our world. This lineal measuring creates for us a sense of longevity and entitlement while at others, loss.

In the case of measuring trips around the Sun, several of our churches are holding, or have held, significant birthdays this year. Marion, 40 trips around the Sun, Hewett Community formerly Gawler, 100 and Strathalbyn, 150 rotations to name a few. Many other churches have celebrated similar milestones in their time. Some have never moved locations; some haven't stopped moving locations. In the case of Gawler and the Strathalbyn Churches, there are no founding members alive. The members of the church have cycled through, which is why we focus on celebrations, the longevity and the loss. When I look at the Churches of Christ Bicentennial Book there are many churches named there that no longer exist. In some cases, the town or suburb has been engulfed and renamed. There are some Surnames recorded there that, today, continue the legacies within a church or our movement. We celebrate those people who have recently joined our family and carry our name, Churches of Christ. Even the Bicentennial Book itself is a legacy of times gone by and yet despite the closures, amalgamations and new Church plants occur to secure and renew our Churches of Christ

in SA (and NT). While we may not be active in the NT at the moment, we can be again someday when the Lord deems it so or we have the motivation and personnel to do so.

Recently, David Whyatt, our historian and archivist, shared with me our archived reports from our 1948, 1959, 1980, 1983, 1984-5, 1987 and 1990 reviews. Each of these reports cover the same topics, "Review". And the wheel keeps turning even today. Strategy plan after strategy plan. From our 1990 review:

- Improve the image of the Board and promoting the work of Conference.
- Providing a definitive, positive direction for churches around the idea of 'Equipping Churches of Christ for effective Mission'.
- Sharing resources and skills among the churches.
- Direct interaction with ministers and church boards

Sound familiar?

When you're not a centrally governed Denomination run by the clergy, (and Churches of Christ fall into the 'not' category), it's hard to keep continuity throughout the years as we appoint and renew the leadership of our churches.

After reflecting on the cyclic nature of our reviews, I have chosen to celebrate this cycle of renewal rather than wrestling with the need for yet another one, or the energy they take. These cyclic rhythms of review and renewal enable re-assessment and enable re-engagement of the requirements of being an association of churches. Each Church, as members of the organisation, participating as Churches of Christ in SA and NT Inc. Together, exploring the effectiveness of our commitment to each other and our missional expressions and structural relationships. And, in answer to just such a question, State Board has received gracious donations over and above \$76,000 by our churches supporting the State Board budget.

As I reviewed these historic documents, the youngest of which is 30 years old, the one component that is missing is a review of each Member church and their participation in the movement.

Why do we as a movement come back again and again to these 4 things? I believe it's because:

We know they are the core items of our association.

We know they are the requirement of healthy community.

After two years in this role and in the understanding that we as a movement are inter-dependent churches who are self-governed, let me ask of each church leadership, each minister and each member of each church; How are our member Churches:

- Upholding Conference's image and work?
- Equipping with definitive, positive direction their participation in the Movement's Effective Mission? (see Conference hand book)
- Sharing resources and skills among each other and with State Board?
- Engaging with State Office Personnel as Ministers and Church Boards.

Yes, there is much to be done. Rather than fight against it, I choose to engage it and celebrate our intentional efforts of reflection, refreshment and renewal. These cyclic reviews have about them the fingerprint of God. They have about them the Holy Spirit's correction when we have strained our relationships. They have about them the death and resurrection cycle.

May we, as a movement, always return to collectively being about the Good News who is Christ Jesus and the coming of the Kingdom of God. To be aware of its

ways of breaking into our world afresh each day through Christ's body, the Church, and the breaking of bread with each other.

I have no doubt that even when we finish the current renewal process around the year 2030, we will be ready to come back to re-exploring the Conference or whatever we call it then, because we and the world will have changed, the leadership will have changed, the ministers will have changed. We need to attend to the foundational work of unity.

So in the shadow of things that have been, that are and that will be again, I share with you the age-old blessing of Numbers 6: 24-26 in the midst of God's cyclic revelation.

"The Lord bless you and keep you;
The Lord make His face shine upon you,
And be gracious to you;
The Lord lift up his countenance upon you,
And give you peace."

Scott Combridge



Croydon Memorial

The promised memorial to the Croydon Church of Christ, which was demolished in 2014 to make way for the Torrens to Torrens road development of South Road, is now completed and on display in the William Street Park, Croydon.

The red bricks in the picture are from the original building which was built in 1911 and the cream ones around the base of the plaque are from the A frame remodelling of 1970.

Special thanks to Barry Grear who, with the assistance of Bob Allen, has been the Churches of Christ contact person with the T2T Alliance.



Great Gifts Real Impact

The Great Gifts Real Impact catalogues are just arriving in churches. Your Great Gift can help someone realise theirs. It might be sewing, cooking or computer skills. There are many people around the world who need help to realise their gifts.

Like many in their community, Sakrin's family struggled with a small income. With the help of COCOA (Churches of Christ Overseas Aid) and his local church, Sakrin was able to learn how to raise chickens with his family. As they fed and cared for their chickens, Sakrin's daughter discovered her gift for raising them.



When you give a Great Gift, you help support people like Sakrin and his daughter realise their own gifts. Whether you purchase a Baby Chick to improve livelihoods in Thailand, New Tyres for a motorbike evangelist in Zimbabwe or a Cooking Class for Indigenous young people, you're helping people to develop their gifts and use them to make a real impact.

The purchase of a Great Gift helps to support local leaders and their communities. These gifts

help to fight poverty, build local Christian communities, or stand with Australia's first peoples. Each gift supports local people to empower their projects. That is real impact, achieving ongoing positive change!

With the purchase of a Great Gift you receive a specially designed gift card. You can write a Christmas message inside for a loved one or use these cards any time during the year.

You will find each of the Great Gifts and a whole variety of resources (including PPT slides and How to run a Great Gifts Stall) online – www.greatgifts.org.au; or for further information contact Val Zerna – val@gmp.org.au or 8352 3466.

Thank you for your partnership and involvement in promoting Great Gifts.

BJ and Chipu Mpofu's Visit

Thank you to everyone who was able to meet with BJ and Chipu Mpofu. They really enjoyed their time in South Australia. Your prayers and support for BJ and our partners in Zimbabwe are truly appreciated.



Convention 2019



**Wednesday 13th November
to
Saturday 16th November**

*Forward in faith through serving,
learning and discipling*

**Wednesday 13th—GR Stirling Lecture at
Tabor College**

**Thursday 14th—CareWorks Celebration &AGM at
Western Communities Church
(Danby Street Torrensville)**

**Friday 15th—Celebration Night at
Noarlunga Church of Christ**

**Saturday 16th—Presentations, Reflections,
Discussions, AGM & Communion at
Aldgate Church of Christ**

Call to Pray....You are invited to join with people across our churches in praying for one another. This month we pray together for:

Loxton, Magill, Marion, Market Place

The Morialta Charitable Trust Fund has been supporting disadvantaged Children, Young People and their families in South Australia through its annual program of Distributions for 40 years. To enable the Fund to continue this support through Community Organisations in South Australia Morialta Charitable Trust Fund seeks donations from the public.

Donations of \$2- and above are Tax Deductible and can be forwarded to the Morialta Charitable Trust Fund at PO Box 92, Crafers SA 5152.

Anniversaries

Please see attachments for information regarding the anniversaries of the Strathalbyn and Hewett churches.

SA Council of Churches AGM

As Churches Together ... Take Heart



Saturday, October 12th 2019 at 8.45am for registration and a refreshing cuppa. **Seaford Christian Churches**, Corner Main St and Grand Blvd, Seaford.

Agenda available [here](#).

Community Reports, Minutes and other Papers will be sent as soon as they are finalised.

[Information to consider](#) for conversation and commendation; this will be a significant part of this AGM.

RSVP to admin@churchestogethersa.org.au by Monday 7th October

SACC is relocating! The new office is located at Unit 1, 76-80 Sturt St Adelaide



Drakes Community Dollars - Supporting Local Church Programs

A really easy way to support community programs through Churches is to scan your Drakes Community Dollars tag at the Drakes Supermarket checkout.

When you do, a small percentage of your purchase amount is donated to CareWorks, and we distribute it on your behalf. We are always pleased when churches, groups and individuals phone in to ask for more Drakes tags. It is a **simple** and **costless** way to support caring programs in our churches. So if you need a new tag, or a few for your friends give us a call (8234 5802), and keep up the good work. It's amazing how it all adds up!



Anti-poverty Week that it might be a week of keen awareness for our Churches, and may we all find new ways to stand against poverty.

Balaklava Community Care as they support the people in their community through their food program, housing and op Shop.

Clear minds and good plans as CareWorks prepares for the annual celebration on November 14, and for wisdom for returning and new board members.

That supporters might be prayerful and generous during the Christmas Appeal, and that the resources gathered to support people escaping domestic violence might be a blessing and a sign of God's love to the recipients.

The teams who work so hard at all of the Op Shops, supplying low cost goods to the community, forging relationships with community members, and raising much needed funds.

The Beacon emergency relief program, run by the Mitcham Hills Interchurch council and hosted at the Blackwood Church of Christ.

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