

newrestalrig

an evangelical church of scotland

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PARISH NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER 2006

FROM THE MINISTER

Dear Friends,

For much of the globe the New Millennium began in extravagant style. Celebrations took place all across the world in all the major cities. Nowhere was that extravagance more visible than in Sydney, Australia. On the tick of midnight 31 Dec. 1999 the promised fireworks display erupted over Sydney Harbour. The celebration burst into life to the delight of more than a million people, many watching from the foreshores and from the vast flotilla of watercraft in the harbour.

It was the display to end all displays. It was designed to outdo every other Millennium celebration on planet earth. And the verdict of the world's media and the millions who watched by TV was that it achieved its desired goal – nothing, they said, compared with the brilliance of Sydney Harbour on 1st January 2000.

And at the heart of that dazzling display was just one word. Suspended from the giant arch of Sydney Harbour Bridge and amidst the jetting rockets exploding above and the deluge of light pouring from the roadway beneath, one word stood out, “Eternity”. Like a message from heaven flashed across the world stage to billions of souls, it shone like a beacon, warning that time is swiftly passing and we are creatures of eternity.

But why this word *Eternity*? Why was this word chosen? Well, in downtown Sydney,

set in the pavement at Sydney Square, is the same inescapable word, “Eternity”, in faultless copperplate writing. It was put there to perpetuate the memory of one of Sydney's most unusual citizens, a man called Arthur Stace, otherwise known as Mr Eternity.

Arthur was a thin little man no more than 5 feet 3 inches in stature. He was uneducated and on his own testimony could barely write his name. His wife would read him his mail and he would tell her what to write in reply; yet for 33 years this incredible man rose at 5 o'clock each morning to walk the streets of Sydney and its far-flung suburbs to write with chalk in flawless copperplate style on the pavements just one word, “Eternity”. Day after day, with a commitment and passion rarely equalled, he preached his sermon to the busy crowds of shoppers and workers as they rushed along the side walks. It is estimated that this simple, yet profound message, was repeated over 500,000 times. In many ways the word was mysterious, because for years no one knew who was responsible for this elegant graffiti that adorned the pavement.

The story behind Arthur's one word sermon goes back to November 1932 when evangelist John G Kidney MC conducted an evangelistic mission at the Burton Street Baptist Tabernacle in Darlinghurst. Little did the preacher realise what impact his sermon would have on Arthur Stace when he preached on the text Isaiah 57:15. “Thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity. Stressing the word eternity, the preacher cried, “Eternity! Eternity! I wish

I could sound or shout that word to everyone in the streets of Sydney. Eternity! You have to meet it. Where will you spend eternity?"

Arthur Stace recalled that meeting. He said, *"Eternity was ringing through my brain, and suddenly I began to cry and felt a powerful call from the Lord to write "Eternity". I had a piece of chalk in my pocket, and outside the Church I bent down right there and wrote it. The funny thing is, that before I wrote it I could hardly write my own name. I had no schooling and I couldn't have spelled "eternity" for a hundred quid. But it came out smoothly, in a beautiful copperplate script. I couldn't understand it, and I still can't"*.

Over the next 33 years that one word, "eternity", was repeated more than 500,000 times, all over the city of Sydney, in country towns and in Melbourne; wherever he went. It is said that the word "Eternity" can still be discerned on the bell in the old Sydney GPO Tower. How he put it there no one will ever know, but on the 1st of January 2000 that one-word sermon tolled far beyond the revellers on Sydney Harbour, to possibly 2 billion viewers around the entire globe; not once, but again and again that message rang out. It was the message of a little man who had no theological qualifications, had never been ordained to the Christian ministry, and who, up to the age of

GREENFIELDS

It hardly seems like a year since the Greenfields Outreach Team walked through the door of Greenfields Nursing Home, but in August this year we celebrated our first anniversary with a special cake with the residents.

For people who do not know of this ministry the team Harry Witherspoon, Linda Witherspoon, Patricia Sharp, Tim and Janice Russell, Phil Preston, John Norrie and David Watters will go into the home once a month and conduct a service and a message to the residents and staff at the home for in the case of the residents who maybe never have been to church or been to church in a number of years. We hope and pray that God may speak through the message or the hymns sung to the residents.

We have a programme set out which allows us to sing our theme song "Let there be love shared among us" which we sing at the start and the end of the service and this song tells us that Gods Love is to be shared amongst us. We also let the residents choose their favourite hymns, many that maybe the residents know well or have not heard in years since their days at Sunday School which can bring memories flooding back to them.

Just before we have our reading and bible message Janice Russell performs a solo singing a well known Christian hymn. After this we read from Gods Word and a short message is presented to the residents sharing God's love for them.

It has been a year which has seen David Watters speak twice at the home on the subject of Sin and the subject of lost, which refers to the passage about the boy Jesus in the temple and we are blessed that David is taking this step of faith and speaking at the home.

We then finish the service by singing the groups theme song and close in prayer. We then spend fellowship with the residents over a tea and coffee, where we get to know them and ask what they thought of the service.

Please pray for this outreach team that we may bring God's message to the residents each month, also pray for the residents and the staff that they might know God's Love for them.

Greenfields Outreach Team

RESPOND

Mat 25:34 - 36,

34: Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:

35: For I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in:

36: Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me.

These words come are famous for their encouragement to reach out in mercy to people in need, but it might be interesting to see how Jesus fulfils them with our needs.

Hunger/Thirst: He gave his body to satisfy our spiritual hunger, it was consumed to death to fill our needs, so much so that we regularly eat a symbol of His body given for us in communion. Similarly His own blood was spilled so that those who “hunger and thirst for righteousness” might be satisfied in Him and again we drink a symbol of his blood in communion to recall the reality of His sacrifice.

Stranger: Before conversion we were strangers to God, in fact not just strangers but enemies (Rom 5:12). At this time, when we would all have been amongst the crowd crying “Crucify Him” He took us into his family and adopted us a sons and daughters of God Himself.

Naked: Naked would have been an improvement on how we were spiritually dressed before Christ’s redeeming love. We were clothed in the filth our own sin, before God nakedness would have been a vast improvement on our condition (Isa 64:6). But Christ has given us cloths of pure white without any blemish (Rev 7:9)

Sick: We were sick to death in our sins, leading a life of death and destruction. Christ did more than just visit us, He healed us and gave us new life.

In prison: We were trapped in sin and slaves to it, but “If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.” So again he does more, not just a visit, but a jail break!

If we have received these things from Jesus and if we appreciate how much they cost Him and how much we needed them, how can we help but respond in kind to other sinners who, like us, don’t deserve them.

46 years confessed himself “a petty criminal, a bum, and a metho drinker”.

When Arthur Stace turned to God and found mercy he realised that every other person needed to do the same. That is why, for 33 years, he walked the streets from the early hours of the morning preaching his one-word sermon, “Eternity”. He wanted to make people think about the big issues of life and

death and eternity. Arthur Stace committed his whole life to communicating the message of eternity. His one word sermon that blazed across the globe in 2000 is a reminder to all of us of the importance of living our lives today in the light of eternity.

In His Service,
David L Court

ANNOUNCING...

Rutherford House Evening Classes

‘Seeing the Big Picture’

Mondays 7.30-9.00pm, September 4th to October 9th

The aim of this series of 6 studies is to help people to see something of the overall shape of the Bible and how its different kinds of writing make their contribution to the whole.

Homely Hour

Homely hour resumes on the 12th of October at 2:30pm in the Upper Hall. New Members will be made especially welcome.

Women’s Guild

Start again Monday 2nd of October at 7:15. All are welcome

October Newsletter

Submissions for the October Newsletter should be sent to David Urminsky by September 29th. Submissions can be e-mailed to editor@newrestalrig.com or you can phone 0131-467-3319.

Recycling

For a long while the church has had a brown bin for recycling garden waste. To help further recycling in the church we now have a plastic box for recycling church paper. This can be found in the office, in the Church Centre.

Tear Craft Sale

Last October we held our first Tear Craft Sale at New Restalrig. After such a successful morning, we plan to host another on Saturday 7th October, 10am until 12 noon. As well as fair trade crafts and cards, tea and coffee will be served.

Soup Lunch

On Sunday the 8th October there will be a soup lunch in the upper hall, in aid of the work carried out by Tear Fund. Further details from Patricia Sharp, Church Representative for Tear Fund.

New Church Directory

All persons who assist in the running of the church, whether an elder, a cleaner or office bearer, should give details of name, address, telephone and email address to Alan Jeffreys as soon as possible for inclusion in a new church directory. Contact information on non-church organisations who use the premises would also be appreciated. Contact Alan Jeffreys at 661 1123 or goon90@hotmail.com