

WHITEBOARD

December 2013

CHRISTMAS

ANOTHER YEAR is drawing to a close and Christmas is upon us. It's also time for the final 2013 installment of Whiteboard, the newsletter of C3 Church Monash Men's Ministry

Firstly, don't forget our church's major annual Christmas outreach event: **Love Christmas, Love Canberra**. It's on at church Sunday evening, the 15th of December. What a great opportunity it will be to celebrate this joyful season and bless our community. Remember to invite your friends, family and colleagues!

This month, Pastor Steve's Journey asks us to think about relationships and making little investments for the long run. Also, John Gallagher gives us a retrospective view of 2013 and, in keeping with the Christmas message, shares some insights on the Three Wise Men.

C3 Monash's emerging columnist, Geoff Herbig has another great read for us on a topic close to his heart. We also have some encouraging scripture and, with mixed emotions, some news to share from one of our church's families.

Whiteboard will be taking a break over summer but will be back in 2014 with more news and articles from you guys. So why not write down those Christmas holiday stories when they happen and share them here next year! But for now, enjoy this month's Whiteboard.

Have a merry and peaceful Christmas.

Matthew 1:20-21 (NKJV)

...behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, 'Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take to you Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins.'

WHAT'S ON IN DECEMBER

MEN'S NETWORK GROUP

8:00 am Saturday, 7 December

Where: McDonald's Tuggeranong

Come along and catch up with John G over breakfast and a coffee.

'Be devoted to one another in brotherly love; give preference to one another in honor.'

Romans 12:10

LOVE CHRISTMAS, LOVE CANBERRA

5:00 pm Sunday, 15 December

Where: C3 Church Monash

Amusement rides, photography, BBQ, food vendors, coffee van. Christmas carols by the church band & choir, a children's choir, dance, drama and much more!

2014 DIARY

EVENT: 2014 CANBERRA REALMEN CONFERENCE

WHERE: C3WATSON'S NEW CHURCH, 160 ASPINALL STREET, WATSON.

DATE: SATURDAY, 8 FEBRUARY 2014, START 8AM



THE JOURNEY

Pastor Steve encourages us to think about the little things we can invest into others' lives this Christmas, and not just the tinsel and presents.

During the week I received a text message from one of my three sons. It was an 'out of the blue' message. No occasion, no agenda, no ulterior motive! It read, "Love you dad! You are an inspiration. Miss you." Obviously reading something like that does your soul good. It is one man's expression to his father. He is showing himself to be better at that than I have been to my father. That text caused me to reflect on twenty eight years of parenting that lie beneath his statement. I consider it to be miraculous that any of my kids survived years of what felt like to me, inadequate, imperfect, even dysfunctional fathering!

Christmas time can be particularly challenging as a man. One seems to be constantly managing the tension between limited resources, unlimited consumer enticements and so called 'needs', and the feeling that if I was a good man I would be able to give my kids/wife/parents/significant others everything money can buy. However, the truth is what lasts in life is not material, but relationships that are shaped

over time. It is not about the latest and greatest material acquisition, but the cumulative build-up of respect, preferring others, apologies and forgiveness, boundaries, mistakes, humanity, honesty and imperfect yet authentic faith demonstrated over time.

"...precept upon precept, line upon line, here a little, there a little..." (Is 28:10)

“Whatever life stage you are at, invest the little things in the relationships that matter the most.”

Can I encourage you men, this Christmas? Whatever life stage you are at, invest the little things in the relationships that matter the most. Don't be intimidated or seduced by Christmas consumerism, and the culture of need, rather deliberately

sow kingdom values and enjoy the treasure of relationship. And if you happen to be able to, then splash out on a present or two as well!

Enjoy the season!

With you on the journey

Steve

2013

THE YEAR THAT WAS

John Gallagher recaps some of the highlights of 2013 in the C3 Monash Men's Ministry

- *Whiteboard* launched in February and we retired *Men's Media*. Meanwhile, Sunday the 11th of February saw a Maori Haka performed by all the men that attended the AM service, followed by Pastor Steve praying for them.
- Then came the Canberra Realmen Conference at C3Belconnen. Hosted by Pastor Nick Hine with Greg French, Keith Edwards and Steve White.
- Trent and Mel were married!
- We read about the Apostle Paul and a leader in the making, and reached out to our community by helping to clean up Lake Tuggeranong on 'Clean up Australia Day'.
- Ps Steve took us on an adventure with, 'You are never too young to be taught and never too old to teach'.
- We learnt about the vision – 'Connect; Change; Reach', were asked 'Are you ready for War' and found out about the whole armour of God.
- Wayne Allen shared his story and we continued Ps Steve's adventure along Dreamtime Beach, Kingscliff.
- We learnt more practical applications on how to connect.
- Presence Global in Sydney with Phil Pringle, Steve Furtick, Kong Hee and Joey Bonifacio.
- Ps Steve Furtick gave us a summary of 'engaging with your calling' and David Marriott let us in on his Christian walk.
- The *Drawing North* boys went to the USA to record a new album, Ps Steve shared the biblical principles of Psalm 84: 'The Korah Psalm', and Martin Cowling introduced us to Nehemiah.
- We were challenged by 'Generosity'...What about 'Death: a different Perspective'?
- July saw the launch of a new format for *Whiteboard*, then it was time for Realmen Global Conference at C3 Oxford Falls.
- Ps Steve transitioned from the adventure to the journey by challenging us to look at ourselves, show courage and ask 'what sort of difference will I make?'
- Andrew Kingston informed us that he is "Out There" in the pursuit of excellence, we read that beyond the mission of being a man is fatherhood, and Mark Westcott shared his story of 'Amazing Love'.
- We had our first of two men's breakfasts, sharing hot beef and gravy rolls with Ps Greg French. His message was, 'Personal prayer and worship', includ-



ing being in the word, being in a prayer group with other men, attending men's events and conferences.

- Ps Steve continued the journey and stopping for a short break 'with God's grace to always sustain and refresh us', and we were given an insight into the ministry of Christian Radio from Colin Webster.
- We heard some great reflections on the Realmen Global Conference at Oxford Falls and Matt D'Aquino's snapshot of his mission trip to Solo, Indonesia. Meanwhile, Geoff Herbig informed us of the 'ministry of hanging out'.
- We attended the second of our men's breakfasts (fully catered!), where Jim Wallace explained about the spiritual war, mateship and never leaving a mate behind. The war only ends for those who are dead'.
- Then we turned the corner on our journey as Ps Steve discussed, "how we respond to feelings of shame is foundational", and *Whiteboard's* editor Tom Hall weighed in with 'its love but not as we know it'.
- Who are you? Geoff Herbig wanted to know as he delivered the following revelation: 'your son will become you, your daughter will marry you, who are you?'
- We were also blessed this year with many personal inspirational scriptures provided by a wide range of

guys to Whiteboard. It has been greatly appreciated and encouraging for the year of rebirth of men's ministry in C3Monash.

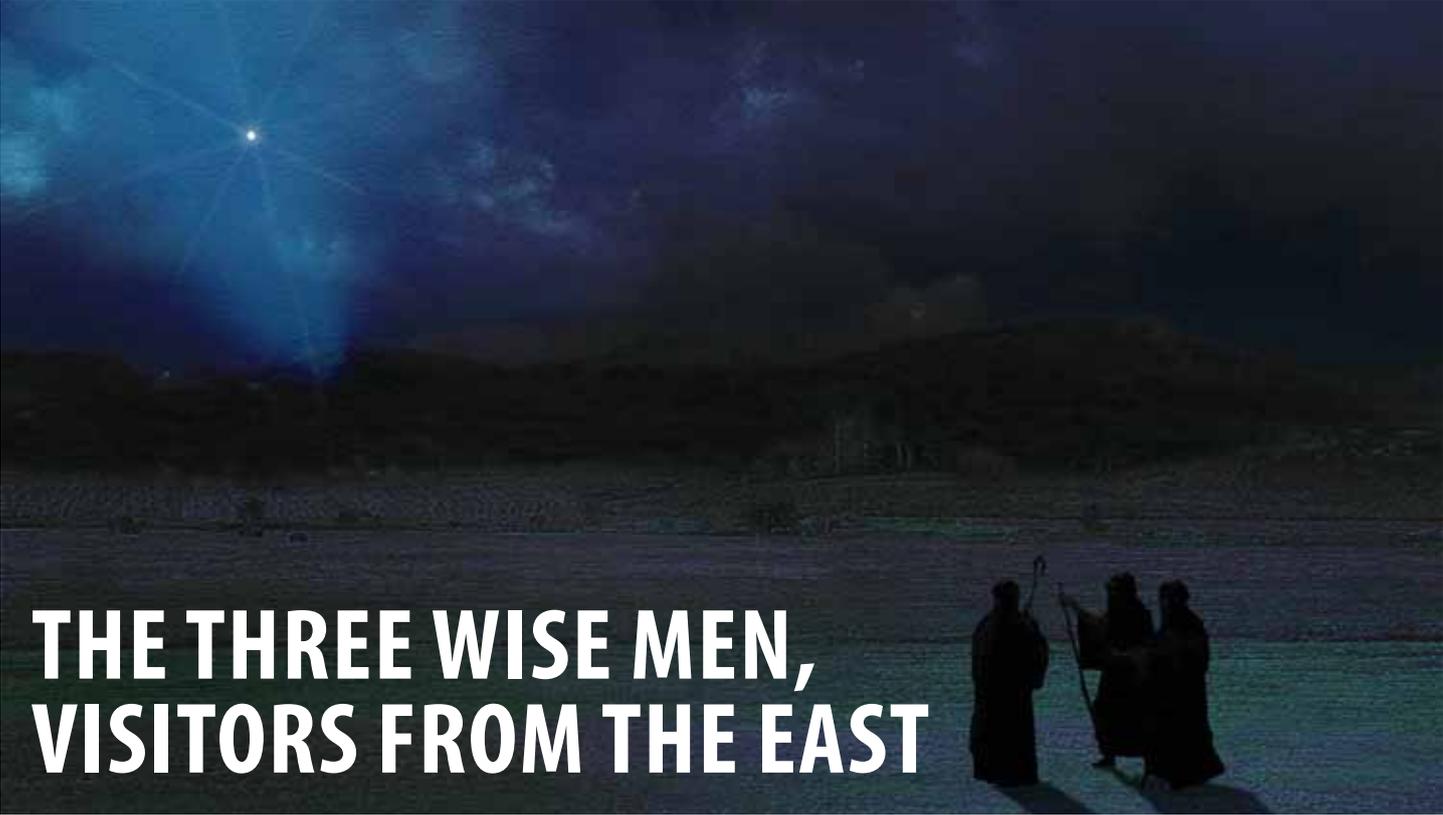
- Jared and Zoe were married!
- Ps Steve gave us an insight into 'The decisions we make in the natural have spiritual consequences', and we even read about Mark Donaldson the 2009 Victoria Cross winner.
- 'Christ the beginning and the end' – Colossians, James Ramsay style.
- David Marriot is... The Servant Hero.
- And Graham Cumming decided to have a rest from Connect Group Leader.

The foundation is set in order to grow the house of God – I am confident of that. May we focus on 2014 as one of greater engagement with God, each other and the men of our community. To grow in Christ is a personal journey, and to change is easier when you have mates to share the journey and to reach others is as simple as stepping out in your workplace. A friend brings a friend to church and a friend is saved through the God factor. I challenge you to go deeper in your commitment to God, our church and our community. 2014 is the year to step up, step out and step into the big 'C' Christian.

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THE THREE WISE MEN, VISITORS FROM THE EAST

Matthew 2:2 NLT

Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the rule of King Herod. About that time, some wise men from eastern lands arrived in Jerusalem, asking 'where is the newborn king of the Jews? We saw his star as it rose, and we have come to worship him.'

King Herod was deeply disturbed when he heard this, as was everyone in Jerusalem. He called a meeting of the leading priests and teachers of religious law and asked 'Where is the Messiah supposed to be born?'

'In Bethlehem in Judea' they said, 'for this is what the prophet wrote: And you, O Bethlehem in the land of Judah, are not least among the ruling cities of Judah, for a ruler will come from you who will be the shepherd for my people Israel.'

Then Herod called for a private meeting with the wise men, and he learned from them the time and

when the star first appeared. Then he told them, 'Go to Bethlehem and search carefully for the child. And when you find him, come back and tell me so that I can go and worship him too.'

After their interview with Herod, the wise men went their way. The star they had seen in the east guided them to Bethlehem – it went ahead of them and stopped over a place where the child was. When they saw the star, they were filled with joy! They entered the house and saw the child with his mother, Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasure chests and gave him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

When it was time to leave, they returned to their own country via another route, for God had warned them in a dream not to return to Herod.

I have compiled some interesting ideas about the story of the wise men.

- The Greek word for wise men is *Magi* – similar to 'magicians'. We do not know how many wise men there were because the bible doesn't tell us. However, the story told is about three wise men – Gaspar, Melchoir and Balthasar – but alas it is just a story developed from the three types of gifts presented to Jesus by the wise men: gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

- It is believed that the tradition of gift giving at Christmas is because of the gifts that the wise men had given Jesus to celebrate His birth, but Jesus was a child by the time they met. Gold is the gift for a king. Frankincense is incense used in prayer time. Myrrh is a type of fragrance used for embalming the dead. Did they know that Jesus was going to die at an early age?

- The journey could have taken a long time. If the star that the wise men had seen appeared at the moment of Jesus' birth, it would have taken them at least 2-3 months to

arrive in Bethlehem. They journeyed approximately 600-800 kilometres from the east, possibly from current-day Persia. They knew to make the journey, and in what direction to travel, because of the special star that rose.

- The wise men knew that it was not an ordinary star that rose in the east. The star appeared at the moment of Jesus' birth, and was visible to the wise men that were a long way away from the place of His birth. The scriptures appear to tell us that the wise men did not follow the star across the desert but instead it went ahead of them and when they saw it again they were filled with joy. They travelled a great distance because they wanted to worship the new King of the Jews.

- Herod was Jewish by choice only; he was not a Jew by birth, but an Edomite. We know Herod was brutal. He knew the Messiah was someone he needed to worship and was indeed the King of the Jews. He was prepared to do anything to keep the title and power, that were not rightfully his, including murdering Jesus. The wise men had never met Herod before travelling to Jerusalem but knew that he was up to no good. God had warned them in a dream not to return to Herod, which they were obedient to.

- The wise men were aware of the Messiah from former leader Daniel and prophet Balaam. The bible doesn't tell us that they met Jesus as a baby in the stable, but instead as a child in the house a few years

later. It appears the wise men did not know the Messiah was born in Bethlehem, as they arrived in Jerusalem asking where Jesus was.

The message for me from this story shown by the wise men is to seek out our Messiah, Jesus Christ, and worship him in prayer. Once put in context, Matthew 2 is more powerful than the Christmas scenes shown on cards and in shop front windows.

I have also read of another wise man that was rejected because he brought the gift of a fruit cake. Every Christmas story needs a Dad's joke attached, to put a smile on your dial!

- John Gallagher

A NEW SEASON FOR THE STANIFORTHS

The Staniforth family will begin a new season in their lives next year when they move to a local church in Yass. Dean and Jen have been part of C3 Monash for seven years.

Jen and I joined the C3 Church Monash family in early 2006 and it immediately felt like home for us. During this time we have grown our family with the birth and dedication of our 3 girls, made many friends and continued to grow in our knowledge and relationship with God.

We've been actively involved in church life at Monash, from serving in the set up and pack up crew back in the Wanniasa High School days, through to participation in the band, crèche and our current team/crew leadership responsibilities.

During our time at C3 Monash, the church has grown in so many ways - we literally watched the "new building" being built and helped paint the auditorium. And we were involved in the removal and setup of the play gym from Belconnen to our church.

Jen and I have always found serving in God's house rewarding and we feel that we have received far more than we have put in. Even though we will miss C3 Monash, we have had a conviction to get involved in the local community of Yass and start a new chapter in our lives. Of



course, we will continue to keep in contact with the friends we have made at Monash.

- Dean Staniforth

A FINAL THOUGHT

What's That On Your Body?

While most people may look at a tattoo and wonder why someone would want to do that to their body, the first thing I ask when I see new ink is what does it mean?

For me, my tattoo has two meanings, incorporated in not only its design, but also its placement.

My design is based around my favourite bible verse, John 10:10, "I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full." For me, this is the ultimate gift that God has given us. No matter what we have going on in our worlds, God wants to give us unrestrained life. In real man's words, for me it simply means: 'God's got this!' No matter what the world is throwing at me - a big bill, a bad day at work, a tough life choice - God's got my back.

The placement on my right shoulder is a sign of my source of strength. No matter how exhausted or run down I may be, my strength will always come from Him. This placement will play into my next piece I am already designing for my left arm which is inspired by my amazing family. With God on my right providing my strength, I will always have my family on my left supporting me in everything I do.

It is the strength from an all-powerful, ever graceful God, and the support of a loving, God driven family that allows me to live the life God has planned for me. A life that is full.

- Geoff Herbig



SCRIPTURE

This month Chris Brightwell shares with us a favourite bible verse of his, Psalm 62: 5-6 (NKJV).

*My soul, wait silently for God alone, For my expectation is from Him.
He only is my rock and my salvation; He is my defence; I shall not be moved.*

WE NEED YOU

Whiteboard exists for the men of C3 Monash. It's not just a newsletter - it's a platform for us to share what's been going on in our lives, encourage others in our experiences and generally get to know each other better. If you have a story, scripture or something else you'd like to see published, let us know. We'll also include 'for sale' and 'wanted' items if you have them. Contact John Gallagher for any contributions you may have. And, of course, we welcome your suggestions and feedback.

Send your questions or contributions to: johng@c3monash.org.au