

# NORTHWEST network

December 2014 No. 97

**PRAY  
THAT WE  
MAY  
ENCOURAGE/  
STRENGTHEN  
THE  
HEARTS  
OF ALL WITH  
WHOM WE HAVE  
CONTACT**

## The Grice Odyssey

The Grice family will be leaving the (sometimes) verdant rolling hills of NSW North West for Peter to take up the position of Dean of the Cathedral in early 2015.

Peter (the old one in the photo) was born in Newcastle NSW, and grew up in Wollongong on the NSW South Coast, which has a number of striking similarities with Geraldton. Peter trained as a Lawyer at UNSW, graduating in Commerce (Marketing) and Law in 1993. He practised in Government and Private practice for a number of years prior to theological training.

Peter & Virginia attended SMBC from 1999 - 2001 (the "Golden Age™"), with Matt (then 9 mths) and Tom (b 2000, think Sydney Olympics). Always drawn to Rural Ministry, they were ordination candidates for the Anglican Diocese of Armidale. In 2002, Peter was appointed as Assistant Minister of St Augustine's in idyllic Inverell. This was a very blessed liaison, so much so that Peter was appointed Vicar (senior minister) in 2003. During the years that followed, the Church grew significantly in numbers and ministries, as did the family, with the arrival of Freya (2002), Mim (2005) and Eddy (2007).

Four Assistants and their families have come and gone in that time, all making important contributions, as has the women's pastoral worker, Tineke Dekkers, who has been working with Peter for nine years. Peter was on Diocesan Council from 2006 and became Archdeacon of the Macintyre in 2012. In his spare time, Peter enjoys spending time on their property, counting the (12) sheep, woodwork, drawing, music, aviation and all things maritime. Travel is an interest, but largely a theoretical one at the moment.

Virginia was born in Sydney NSW, and grew up in Parramatta. Having spent much of her childhood imagining that the horses at the end of her street belonged to her, she completed her training in Veterinary Science at Sydney University in 1995. She married Peter in 1996, having met each other 5 years earlier rather unimaginatively at Beach Mission. Motherhood and part-time veterinary work have been major parts of her life ever since.

During her years at Inverell, she has been involved in crèche, Sunday School and Scripture teaching, music ministry and young mums' Bible study. Most recently, her time was taken up helping organise the Diocesan Women's Conference in Inverell. Virginia enjoys bike riding, swimming, Physical Culture (Physie), managing the afore-mentioned 12 sheep and playing the piano and guitar.

As a family, most weekends will find the Grices at a sporting field of some description, be it for cricket or soccer depending on the season. The Grice girls also enjoy Physie. As a family they like to cook, read and watch good TV together. Their family is completed by Dug (black Labrador) and Stanley (picture-book Beagle), Stanley being the brains of the operation. Multiple fish, axolotls and chickens will be re-settled before their odyssey.

This is a move of exhilaration, excitement and apprehension - please pray for this big adventure.

Peter Grice



L-R Tom, Freya, Peter (the tired looking one), Eddy, Virginia, Mim and Matt,  
taken Oct 2014 by Rachel Meszaros



# Thankful to be back

"Thankful" is the word that comes to mind as Jenny and I reflect back on the last 10 months.

We are thankful for the amazing support and prayers that occurred when last November Rob was diagnosed with prostate cancer and started on a very difficult journey.

We realised that surgery in Perth would take us away from Dongara for three months and there was no easy place to stay. So in December we returned to Sydney to family and friends for tests and medical appointments. Surgery followed in early January. We are thankful the surgery and healing went well.

We were ready to return to Dongara in March but the pathology from the surgery revealed an aggressive hormone single cell cancer. It was in its early stages and could be treated immediately through chemotherapy and radiation. We were thankful this cancer was found so early. So, following four months of chemotherapy that included 26 concurrent sessions of radiation and then two months of recuperation we are back in Dongara!

The prayers, accommodation for the ten months, and support of so many people reminded us to "Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer" (Romans 12:12). We are thankful for the support of our family and friends, North West Diocese, BCA, Springwood Winmalee, Gerringong and Glenmore Park Anglican Churches, Christ Church @ the College and Penrith Anglican College. We received messages and cards from Dongara and Mingenew (the community not just church folk) and from around the world! We were thankful for locums, Rod & Hazel Williams and Neil and Lynette Matheson, along with members of Dongara-Mingenew Church who continued to organise the church physically, socially and spiritually so that the parish vision for growth remained active. All of these things sustained us in spirit and confidence that our Lord is always in control.

It has been a time to reflect on our great God who enabled us to learn and grow through the challenges of the sickness. We hold on to the promises of God. Our God is bigger than any sickness and we are assured that He has a handle on whatever the outcome. We were able to keep in touch with people as they prayed for us by writing a blog to share what was happening and the Bible verses that we were holding on to.

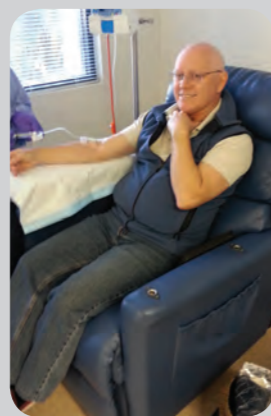
So many are asking us, where to from here? We are looking to the future and enjoying being back in Dongara and being able to share this experience knowing that "...with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God that transcends all understanding will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 4:6-7).

by Rob & Jenny Stubbs



BE  
**JOYFUL  
IN  
HOPE,  
PATIENT  
IN  
AFFLICTION,  
FAITHFUL  
IN  
PRAYER**

(ROMANS 12:12)



Top: First Day of Chemotherapy  
Bottom: Last Day of Chemotherapy

## From the Bishop

It has been a challenging few months. After our 7,500 km safari around the diocese Christine and I returned home for the School of Theology, followed by Synod. Then there's the pressing issues which have required attention, including the finding of locums or new ministers. But in the midst of it all God's faithfulness keeps returning, especially in those times when the pressure is intense, or the difficulties seem insurmountable. One of God's blessings has been Peter Grice and his family - Peter will begin as the new dean of the cathedral in late January, 2015 ... an answer to many prayers across Australia. Yet God's faithfulness is constantly seen in the people who serve our churches; the congregational members with their variety of personalities, experiences and gifts; along with those who faithfully pray and support the ministry of the North West financially.

At our recent fellow workers' lunch we focused on the end of Paul's letter to the Colossians. Sometimes we're tempted to skip these concluding greetings, but they're worth pausing over. Two challenges that struck me from Colossians 4 were:

- the gospel ministry aim of encouraging (strengthening) hearts - the mission of Tychicus and Paul, who writes in 2:2,

*'My purpose is that they may be encouraged in heart and united in love, so that they may have the full riches of complete understanding, in order that they may know the mystery of God, namely Christ ...'*

- the struggle of prayer - Epaphras brought the gospel to the Colossians and continues to wrestle in prayer for his fellow Christians. The goal of his prayers was in essence the same as that of Paul's gospel labours, to bring people to maturity in Christ.

Friends, these two challenges require a focus beyond ourselves, an attention that isn't centred in ourselves, but on others. Please continue to pray that we may encourage/strengthen the hearts of all with whom we have contact; and that we will commit ourselves to praying for maturity in Christ.

Thank you again for your prayers, support and care.

Bishop Gary

## A Biannual Event

Every second year the diocese holds a School of Theology, which is followed by Synod. While in the other year, the families of church workers meet for a conference in Perth.

This year our School of Theology considered theological preaching, that is, the importance of preaching/teaching doctrine. We had the privilege of hearing from Peter Jensen and gaining from the deep well of his experience and knowledge. But we also had some sessions where we heard from both Peter and his wife, Christine, on their reflections on ministry - especially the lessons they have learned over the years.

The doctrine of the Holy Spirit was on view in our discussions and in the sermons Peter preached (by way of example - but what a blessing). Each of the sessions provided thoughtful opportunities for both input and interaction. A highlight during this time was the public talk he gave on the topic of, is Christianity relevant in the 21st Century? The local newspaper estimated the crowd to be around 200, and they followed up with a story that faithfully reported Peter's talk. There was also an invitation for a spot on the local ABC radio, which we were very thankful for as well. All those who attended were encouraged in what we believe and the need to teach this in a more systematic way in our churches.

The school was followed by our synod. Though there were some very significant matters on the agenda, the manner in which people discussed and made resolutions was a testimony to the gospel of grace. It was a pleasure to be part of this body of men and women committed to serving our Lord throughout the North West. For our new chancellor, Joshua Thomson, it was his first synod. We were delighted to have his presence with us and for his valuable insight. The diocese has a number of ongoing issues to work through from synod but we are confident under God for outcomes that will honour him and serve the people of our remote region.

Bishop Gary



Bishop Gary Nelson



Bishop Peter Jensen



Chancellor Joshua Thomson

*Everything that happens to you is an opportunity to learn...*

... that just about sums up my philosophy of parenting, even when your child comes home crying, or they have done something wrong. My first reaction is often not that, however. I feel embarrassed or angry. So this line about an opportunity for learning helps me to respond as I need to under God, rather than act as a slave to my emotions.

This approach to parenting is an attempt to follow Jesus in our family life. Christians know that the God of the Bible is the ruler of everything. I may not understand how or why, but the death of Jesus shows me how the God and Father of Jesus Christ is the master

of bringing good, even from the very worst thing humans could do.

But that parenting line also sums up the last nine years of ministry in the Kimberley for our family.

It's been a wild ride - high highs and low lows. I've learnt more about myself than I was really ready for at times. The Psalms have become precious to me in a way they weren't before. They've helped me learn how to tell God what's going on - both highs and lows!

Having been in the Kimberley since 2006 I am convinced more than ever that Australian Christians have a

responsibility to bring the gospel to the ends of the earth, which includes remote Australia, along with our indigenous citizens. But it's also fair to say that the situations that many in isolated places face are pretty difficult. I've been privileged to see that first hand.

One of the reasons I value being an Anglican Christian is that we have a global vision. A global vision that includes reaching out to the remote areas of Australia. The Anglican world is undergoing a period of realignment at present. But I am hopeful that the Anglican grouping of churches around the world will continue to maintain this

global evangelistic outlook. Our world needs the gospel now more than ever.

*cont. page 4*



Mildenhall family 2005. L-R Jon, Kathy, Anna, Tim, Chris.

## PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

The Diocese of North West Australia seeks to be a safe place for all. If you have a complaint or a question about sexual abuse or inappropriate behaviour please contact the  
**Director of Professional Standards: Tracie Chambers-Clark (JP) Phone: (08) 9325 7455 Email: tchambers-clark@perth.anglican.org**



A key element of the ministry here in Broome has been recognising that there are things we can do and things we can't do; and things for which we're responsible and things we're not.

God brings people to himself. But I am responsible, as someone who knows God's kindness and mercy in Jesus, to help others understand what God's done. I can relate to Paul who said 'Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel'. Or Jeremiah, who said God's word burned inside him.

But there are some things and people for whom we have greater responsibility than others. The Pastoral Epistles provide qualifications for church leaders. In some cases they are a directive or concession to allow them to fulfil the creation mandate – a mandate that hasn't gone away just because Jesus has brought in the kingdom of God. 'What's he going on about?' I hear you say. For example, 1 Timothy 5:8 teaches that we deny the gospel if we don't care for our own family. So don't take on

church leadership if it means you cannot care for your family.

It's not possible for a husband to truly honour God in the service of the gospel if he fails to care for his family. This teaching challenges us to make sure we do the things God wants, not simply the things we like doing or want to do. Consequently, it may lead to criticism or misunderstanding as a church leader.

Another key thing I have tried to be responsible for is this: 'to make the main thing the main thing'. There is a basket of truths that every genuine Christian has; and without those things then we can't be genuinely Christian. But there are other things that I might like or believe as well. I need to be ready to die for the basket, but sit loose to my personal preferences or particular beliefs. This is challenging when you minister in a location where there are people from many different Christian and cultural backgrounds.

We are very grateful for the people who've prayed, visited, given money or somewhere to sleep while away from



Mildenhall family 2014.  
L-R Anna, Tim, Chris, Jon, Kathy & Isobel.

Broome; for meals, for cards and letters; for a listening ear on the phone during times of stress. We could not have done what we've done without the support of a great number of people. May God continue to strengthen his people in Broome and the Kimberley.

If we are to return to the Diocese, hopefully we will be wiser, having learned under God's good hand.

Tim and Kathy, Anna, Chris, Jon and Isobel.

**SUPPORTING GOSPEL MINISTRY IN THE NORTH WEST**

**PERSONAL DETAILS:** (please print)

Name: .....

Address: .....

.....

Phone: .....

Email: .....

☐ **I want to be a PRAYER PARTNER**  
Please send me the Northwest Network

☐ **I'm interested in training for MINISTRY in NWA**

☐ **I'd like to discuss SERVING in NWA as a ...**

☐ tentmaker

☐ retired Minister

☐ Parish Minister

☐ **I want to be a FINANCIAL PARTNER**  
Please use my gift for:

Parish ministry in ..... ☐

Diocesan Administration Support ☐

Youth Ministry ☐

Rural Chaplaincy ☐

Bishop's Discretionary Fund ☐

Bishop's Support (*capital of the See Fund*) ☐

My Support will be via, ☐

• **Electronic Transfer to :** ☐

    Diocese of North West Australia ACF

    BSB 706-001 A/C No. 30003508

    for the amount of \$..... ☐

    Or \$ ..... every ..... ☐

• **Cheque/postal note** ☐

    (payable to Diocese of North West Australia)

☐ **Please send me details concerning a bequest to the Diocese of NWA.**

**Mahesh's story**

On June 28th we were to become involved in the lives of a 27 year old Indian Seafarer, Mahesh, and later, his wife Sruthy. They were married just six weeks before Mahesh was contracted on board the JULIA N.

That June afternoon Mahesh was seriously injured in a mooring accident which resulted in his right leg being torn off below the knee. He was transferred to South Hedland Health Campus, where he underwent surgery. He was in hospital for almost two weeks and Garry, our Associate Chaplain, visited with Mahesh most days. Mahesh was transferred back to hospital in Mumbai for further treatment, and the fitting of a prosthesis. Sruthy went to Mumbai to be with him.

A fund was set up through our Mission to help raise money for Mahesh and his family, as their lives were now changed dramatically. We are thankful to local companies, individuals, the local Indian community, visitors and International Seafarers who responded to the plight of this family and gave generously to our fund.

In late September, the Seafarer's Centre paid for Alan, Senior Chaplain, and Garry, to travel to India where they presented Mahesh and Sruthy with

a cheque for \$43,000. This provided sufficient money for Mahesh to pay off their house, with some left to plan for their future.

While in India, Alan and Garry were able to lead Mahesh, Sruthy, his parents and brother to the Lord. They are now discipling and encouraging them from afar.

Mahesh has returned to his home town, and is grateful to all for their help and encouragement.

Sruthy emailed Garry thanking him for being like Jesus to Mahesh, hoping they could do the same for someone else. Praise God!

Kathy South  
Port Hedland Seafarers

