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# Darwin Presbyterian News

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Dear Friends,

Many of you might be wondering if we still exist – it has been such a long time since I last wrote a DPC Newsletter.

When I last wrote, Jeanette had not long come home after her cancer surgery. It is now a year since she had her first diagnosis given, and we are thankful to report that all is well. She remains in good health and has not had to undergo the rigours of further treatment.

The end of last year was very busy with church work which included extras beyond the local congregation as well. It takes a bit more effort to get there when the Assembly is 3500km away, but we had a good time at the Victorian Assembly in October which was combined with a week of holidays to see the family.

November brought two trips to Timor Leste. The first was for the annual teaching week for their church leaders. It was great to be there with Robert Benn, and also with Brian Wong and Crystal and Mike Durell who are all from Western Australia. We had known Mike from the time we lived in Narrogin while working in the PIM patrol there, so it was especially good to have him on the team and to find that that incredibly fast little kid on the hockey field had grown into a man with a heart for the gospel of the Lord Jesus. I returned to Timor Leste at the end of that month for their inaugural Synod meeting. Previously they had provisionally adopted their constitution and Standards of belief, but now it was all translated into Tetun and formally adopted. That was a wonderful foundational occasion. You can read more about Timor Leste on the blog <http://bondiatl.wordpress.com>.

I went straight from Timor Leste, with a few hours break in between, to Canberra for the AFES (Australian Fellowship of Evangelical Students) AGM. The National Training Event is an incredible inspiration. 1500 young people gathered in one spot to learn and praise and serve the Lord. It grows in strength every year.

By the time all this was over, I was feeling pretty tired, but just put it down to a busy end of year. I kept pressing on until January when I went to the Doc, and found that I had contracted Barmah Forest Virus. It is pretty much exactly the same as Ross River virus. It is a mosquito borne virus which gives you constant headaches, multiple arthritic pains and incredible lethargy. I managed to do the things I had to do most days, but not much more. On reflection I realise that I had it from the end of October, and I am very thankful that it only lasted for about 5 months, as some people are debilitated by it for a year or even more.

The end of 2012 also saw the last of our original congregation depart from the Berrimah congregation (apart from members of my own family). Alex Block left to go to Canberra with the Army. We also had the Careys leave – another key ministry minded family who had been with us since the end of our first year. I wonder if any other Pressie congregations have had a 100% turnover in the last five years? This transience does bring freshness and vitality to the congregation. It gives new meaning to the slogan “Reformed and always reforming” – the congregation many of you helped to form 5 years ago is continually re-forming in its membership. It also highlights our great difficulty in establishing a local eldership.

We (PIM and the local church) are thinking further about the great needs for gospel witness in the Territory. There is a desperate need for more gospel witness in Alice Springs, but closer to home there is also a great need for there to be a work in both Darwin and Palmerston.

The Bees Creek congregation remains quite small, but we have started a stand at the nearby Coolalinga Markets on one Saturday each month to try to make some contact with the community there.

We have also started a youth group once per month. Over the three months so far this year attendance has ranged from 2 up to 34. Some of the young people are from non-church families and we pray that the gospel will be heard, believed and trusted by all these young people.

We have also got back to having a monthly church family activity. It has always been difficult to fit in an effective prayer meeting, so we have cancelled the Bible Study on the first week of each month to devote the time to prayer.

Our church camp this year will be from 25<sup>th</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup> May. If you are going to be in the area, book in! Our studies will be on the book of Zechariah, led by Ross Brightwell.

The final piece of news for this epistle is that our youngest, Dooze (those who don't know him, call him Stuart) has become engaged to a lovely Christian lady – Michelle Ezzy. It is a great delight to see our son finding a committed Christian woman to marry. They plan to marry in November.

Thank you to all who continue to encourage us and to pray for the work of the Lord Jesus here in the Territory.

Your fellow pilgrim,  
Rob Duncanson.

*Please Pray*

- *That souls will be won for the Lord Jesus.*
- *for the DPC stand at the Coolalinga Markets on the first Saturday of each month.*
- *For the youth group and family activities that they will be for the advance of the gospel and bring growth in Jesus.*
- *That our enthusiasm will not wane over time.*
- *That Christians coming to the Territory would not simply look for a church where they can be ministered to, but for a place where they can serve the Lord Jesus, making good use of the gifts that He has entrusted them with.*
- *that we may be able to form a leadership team to drive the work here.*
- *that we may have wisdom as we plan for the best way to reach Darwin and surrounds with the Gospel. If it is to be through new congregations, pray that the Lord Himself would raise up the right people to lead these new works.*