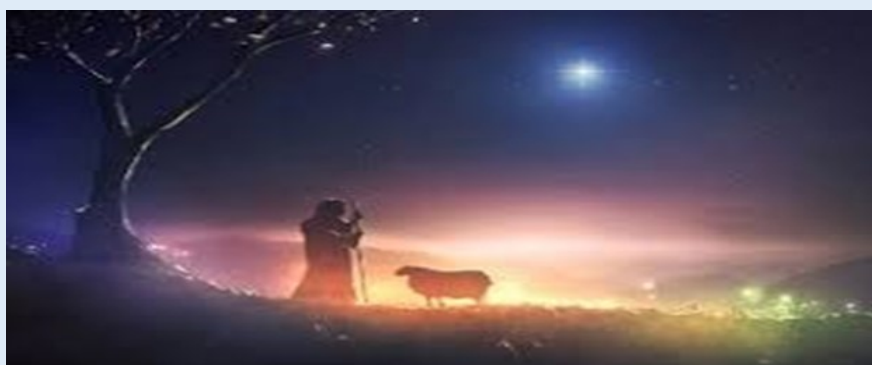




GFS AUSTRALIA  
NEWSLETTER  
ISSUE 8  
*NOVEMBER 2019*

*GREETINGS FROM OUR PRESIDENT ...*



As I write this, I am very aware that many of you like me have been keeping a very keen watch on the bushfires. Earlier this year we ran out of water at our place. We don't have town water and so rely on tanks. For the first time in 26 years the tanks were dry. I was having to buy bottled water to wash my white clergy shirts.

This is but a small touch of the reality of our dry continent. What was more amazing and touching to us was, when our neighbours became aware of our plight, they offered to fill our tank with water from their dam. We have at times assisted these neighbours when they were struggling with ill health and poor business and they were very ready to step up in our hour of need. A very real example of bearing one another's burdens and loving our neighbours.

I pray and trust that as each of you is facing various struggles in your life that God will provide good neighbours and a sense of community. Certainly, this is the time of year to do so. At work at the hospital we are all gearing up for the Christmas that is coming. For us that involves decorating our work areas to the Christmas theme, this year, "Go Green for Christmas." Our department has already created stars of all sizes from glossy magazines and paper and our message is 'Wise People still seek Him'. We will also present a Nativity Service followed by a Volunteers thank you luncheon. The following evening, we will join invited community groups to carol in the wards, such a touching time. We have made our own Christmas cards and treats which will be distributed to all wards and executive as we spread the Good News that Christ, the Light of The World is amongst us.

I sincerely hope that each of you will be able to both offer and experience the Love, Peace and Hope of this Awesome time of year with the world around you.

Love and prayers,

From My family to yours.

*Cheryl*

**DON'T FORGET THE AGM IN BRISBANE 10- 12TH JAN  
PLEASE RETURN RSVP FORMS BY 15TH DECEMBER  
ANNUAL REPORTS DUE BY 15TH DECEMBER**

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Micah 6:8

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GFS AUSTRALIA

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## Greetings from our Chaplain...

Dear sisters and brothers,

The last newsletter for the year! Another year has flown by, filled with incessant activity. And now, as December begins, I imagine that many of our diaries are filling up with pre-Christmas celebrations, our annual catch-ups, and of course shopping for Christmas celebrations. As you read this we will also be in the season of Advent – the church's season of waiting. I have always thought the contrast between these two aspects of December – rushing around and waiting – to be in stark contrast to each other.

I have been preparing my Sunday sermon on Romans 13:11-14 – a passage drawing on the hopes of Christ's future reign. Paul opens this passage with the words: *"You know what time it is..."*. My immediate response to these words is, "Time to send this reflection off to Julie" (who has been patiently waiting for it!)! Paul, however, is not writing here about this 'kronos' time – diaries and calendars. He is writing about our hope in Christ, Christ's reign, and the call to us TODAY to orient our lives towards living into Christ's future. This is 'kairos' time – which means *opportunity*.

Advent calls us to take the *opportunity* to be renewed in our faith and in our sense of Christ's truth and presence. Paul goes on, in the short Romans passage I am reading, to tell his audience, then and now, that it is now time to "wake up from sleep" for our "salvation is nearer than when we became believers". Cynthia Campbell, whose commentary I have been reading, writes of Paul's *kairos* call to his people: *Paul knows what time it is: it is time to wake up and look forward to what God will do in the future and what God is beginning to do now in your life and mine.*

My prayer is that in the midst of our busy advent season we may also find *kairos* time –

**time to wake up from slumber and to remember what God has done for us,  
look to what God has promised us, and  
recognise God in the here and now every day.**

With every blessing, *Sonia*



## Happy Birthday South Australia GFS – 140 years



GFS in South Australia recently celebrated the 140th anniversary of the first meeting of GFS Associates in South Australia, and Australia.

On 16th November, approximately 30 people attended an afternoon tea, at St. Andrew's, Walkerville, where memorabilia was displayed, and those present shared memories of their time in GFS,

and how GFS has blessed their faith and life journey.

We have been pleased to renew contact with a number of people, and next year plan to hold another Reunion. (photo –just before the cake cutting) *Karen Fagan*



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## National AGM—Brisbane 2020

**Friday 10<sup>th</sup> January** - afternoon – around 2 pm for those early birds with activities to be hosted by Brisbane members (*Dinner in the evening at own expense*)

**Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> January** - Morning - 9a.m. Workshops around Governance and other issues, lunch provided then AGM in the afternoon.

*Dinner Saturday evening at own expense at nearby restaurant (most likely at “Ribs and Rumps” restaurant)*

**Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> January** – Worship at St Francis College and morning tea to conclude our weekend

Venue: St Francis College, Milton in Brisbane



We are meeting again to enjoy our fellowship and to discuss those important matters upon us now.

Can you make it to Brisbane in January to join us? We hope you can!

On our discussion/workshop list are these topics and others as necessary—

*Governance issues—particularly around our next Vice President,*

*Term of office—for Vice President and others*

*timing of meetings (AGM, Midterm, National Council meetings)*

*Ordinary members on Executive*

*Timing of financial year*

Please let us know if you are attending any of our events over the weekend and there might still be a few billets available—please let us know soon!

**Forms available from Julie ([julie679233@gmail.com](mailto:julie679233@gmail.com)) or just email to let me know by December 15<sup>th</sup>.**

**Reports from Dioceses** are due by this date also—don't be late!! (Thank you Brisbane, Rockhampton and Ballarat who have already sent in their reports.)



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## News from Sydney ...

I recently had the enjoyment of attending the Sydney GFS annual camp at the Baden Powell Scout Camp at Pennant Hills from the 1<sup>st</sup> to the 3<sup>rd</sup> October. It was lovely to see how quickly the children re-acquainted with old friends and our first-time campers found their feet and actively joined into camp life. The study theme for the camp was "Light in A Dark World." The girls took part in four bible sessions exploring how we live in a dark world but can come into the light with Jesus as our friend. It was also lovely to be able to share an evening quiet time with a cabin of girls where they could reflect on the talks from the day and ask any questions that they had.

Camp had all the extra features of a GREAT camp; fun, games, activities, singing, dancing and of course food! Food was certainly a major feature of camp, no one went without, and it seemed that we were always eating! All our meals were prepared fresh by our kitchen staff. A big thanks to our "kitchen Sharon's" for looking after us all so well. Tuesday afternoon was an outdoor games time and then the evening was spent dancing to a Bush dance. The highlight of this was when together everyone planned an "Irish Hawaiian jig." It was certainly fun to see old and young enjoy this time together. Wednesday was a full day of activities, with all girls participating in a craft session, orienteering and bush cooking. The night was then filled with a Star Gazing extravaganza, we were fortunate that the clouds cleared, and the stars and moon were clearly visible. Thursday presented as a hot day and all participants headed off after breakfast on the bush walk to the lookout. The girls enjoyed being out and about and exploring trees and climbing over rocks. Arriving at our destination was the view into Sydney from the lookout, we then had to turn around and walk back! Our time at camp was concluded with an outdoor Church Service in the open-air Chapel. Many girls and leaders assisted with this service as we thanked God for his blessings on us and throughout the camp. As parents came to collect their children, we all said our goodbyes and eagerly await the opportunity to be able to attend the next camp. Our memory verse for camp was, "Do everything without complaining or arguing, so that you may become blameless and pure, children of God without fault in a crooked and depraved generation, in which you shine like stars in the universe as you hold out the word of life." Philippians 2:14-16a. I pray that the girls will think about what they heard and act on that, so that they can become a child of God"



*Kay Hudson, Camden GFS Leader*



## News from Rockhampton ...

### Celebrating the World Day of Prayer

20 members gathered at Val Gribble's home in October for the World Day of Prayer Service and Luncheon. A number of MU members also attended as we work closely together in Rockhampton and GFS has a place on the MU Executive. A number of us are members of each other's organisations. Sadly there are now no children's branches of GFS in Rockhampton diocese but still a very committed group of adult members.

We are also saddened at the death of the husband of one of our members (June) – Ralph Olive. Ralph and June have been so supportive of GFS. Ralph is also the brother-in-law of Glen and Jacqui Keily. Jacqui is well known to members of GFS Australia. So together we are upholding them all in our prayers. *Val Gribble*

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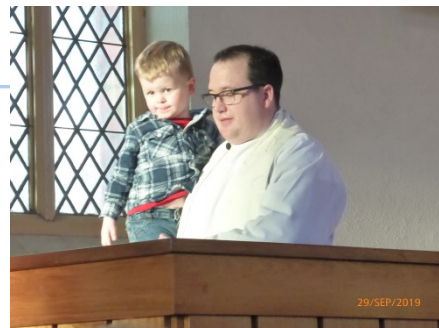
## News from Ballarat ...

We celebrated our World day of Prayer on St. Michael and All Angels day in conjunction with Deanery Evensong at Holy Trinity Church, Sebastopol. The service taken from the 1662 edition of The Book of Common Prayer.

Our GFS Chaplain Fr. Chris Keast was Preacher and he had printed booklets of the service for everyone present. This booklet had a brief outline of the history of GFS and the Rwanda story. GFS Members participated in readings and prayers. The sermon was on "God's Angels". We sang the beautiful St. Michael's Hymn. Much fellowship followed with a supper of soup, sandwiches, cakes and slices provided by GFS and Holy Trinity parishioners.

A very special evening. *Nathalie Stevens. Secretary.*

*Photos—Members helping with supper, GFS Members who helped with readings, and Fr Chris peaching with his son Alexander.*



## News from Tasmania...



In Tasmania, the Southern Townsend Group met in October to share in the World Day of Prayer service. It was also our day to highlight Orange Day. Members heard about the work of "Share the Dignity" and brought along items for the "Share the Dignity" handbags ready for donation in early December to share with homeless and needy women. It was a delight to fill the bags and know of our small contribution helping those most in need. We followed our time of worship with a hearty afternoon tea and trade table, funds going to the World Project. *(photo—Orange Day in Tas)*

We have also been wrestling with the National Redress Scheme and after much discussion had resolved to join under the Diocesan group with the ANRSL.

On Monday November 11th a small group gathered at St James church with Julie to give thanks to God for 20 years as Chairman of Tasmania and it was followed (of course) by afternoon tea to reminisce.

Our final outing for the year was a luncheon for Christmas on November 16th at the Riverfront Motel with a collection taken for donation to the Bushfires appeal. *(photo: 20 years of remembering)*





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## News from Perth ...

GFS Perth recently held a morning tea for "Orange Day" with a beautiful cake organised by Stephanie (our next Junior Delegate). Members met for some chat whilst wearing their bright orange clothes.

GFS Perth have been sharing many interesting snippets from their history treasure trove. "Like" their Facebook page to see a new one each week.

GFS Townsend Lodge has had many events over its years including ..

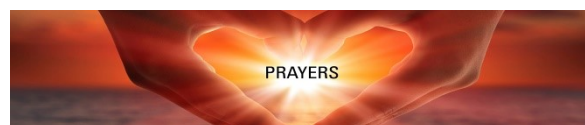
"A Sunday Tea Club" started in 1929 for lonely girls in Perth. The building opened from 3.30—7 each Sunday and members had tea and fellowship before Church.

In 1930 a "Good Comrades Club" was opened for those not yet members of GFS and catered for young women during the depression years.

In early December GFS will be some mustering some excited angels, shepherds and a few wise men for adorning the float for the Annual Christmas parade—such exciting times for them all !



*A sunny "orange day" group sharing morning tea together as they raise funds and help to 'end violence against women'.*



We pray for ...

- our land of drought and flooding rains—we pray for those whose lives have been so devastatingly changed by these weather events, we pray for helping hands in their time of need.
- Those who are unwell, sick, injured, sad and lonely as they face Christmas—may they feel the comfort of God and His blessings as we respond to their needs. We pray for Tania as her broken leg heals.
- We pray for Thembeke and her team as they continue the preparations for World Council. And we pray for our contingent travelling to be part of this.
- For the AGM in Brisbane—for wise counsel as we make plans for our future and bring glory to God through GFS.

## CONTACT US ..

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