Dear Friends,

Greetings to you in Jesus’ name. It seems only yesterday that I wrote to you our last newsletter. 2012 was ushered in with good soaking rains and a bushfire-free season, for which we are very grateful. Overall our occupancy rates were fair to good, for which we give thanks to Our Heavenly Father. However, winter continues to be very slow in terms of income as bookings are quiet and operating costs continue to increase.

The “Sunday Evenings around God’s Word” continue to be well attended as they provide a genuine opportunity for Christians to gather together for Bible teaching, prayer and singing and mutual encouragement in the faith. A ministry to small children is conducted during the sermon which is appreciated by children and parents alike. These sessions are also attended by a number of folk who are “enquirers” into the faith who come along with a desire to listen and learn and ask questions of the staff during their holiday stay. These folk are a testimony to the respect in which the staff are held by some of our visitors.

During the year, due to the generosity of some of our “Friends”, we were able to remove the old damaged and worn bridge. Steel was provided at a reduced cost, some materials also and all the labour was freely given to this huge task. The onsite staff and a team of volunteers took on this venture and worked tirelessly to complete the job with a minimum of inconvenience to patrons. Thank you to all who gave in so many ways. Thanks also to the ladies who kept the food and drinks up to the hard working lads. We were also blessed by “Friends” who provided for the office a much needed air conditioning unit.

2012 saw a change in staff of the position as Office Managers on the site. Nathan and Lauren Ross have taken up this ministry and have settled in well as much valued team members. Nathan and Lauren (and Rusty the Border Collie) came to us from Narwee Baptist Church where they took a keen interest in ministry and mission. Nathan worked as an electrician and Lauren was a nurse at a busy Sydney hospital. We are grateful to have such keen hardworking, capable young people to share with us. …another of God’s provisions, in His time.
Office Managers Nathan and Lauren Ross

Sadly, on October 31st my Father, Bill Stewart passed away. Dad was well known to those who came to the site as he waved to passers by whilst working away on his well kept garden and lawns at Reg and Ollie Lawlor’s old cottage. Dad and Mum worked voluntarily on the team during Peter and Evelyn’s years here and they contributed quietly to different needs that popped up from time to time, which we greatly appreciated. Dad and Mum are missed by us all, but we are grateful for their example.

Camp Site Managers Roy and Darlene Dallos with Hannah Rose & Caleb

The staff continue to be busy as they are involved in many ministries both locally and abroad. Darlene continues to teach on a part time basis at the local Christian school teaching Hospitality. During 2012 she also taught Christian Studies. Roy continues as an elder in the local Presbyterian church and leads a mid-week Bible study and preaches and leads services. Nathan, also leads services and attends two local Bible Studies. Both Nathan and Lauren are a great encouragement to the local younger adults and families. Nathan and Lauren are expecting their first child in May this year...! We all look forward to this new addition to the “Pines “ family. Kerry and I continue in our Bible Teaching ministries.

Kerry leads a Ladies study at Termeil on Mondays and she is a regular speaker at Ladies meetings and evangelistic events for women. Kerry’s course that she teaches on Marriage and Family is now an
important part of the curriculum that we teach in our ministry in the Former Soviet States and India. I continue to lead a Bible study in Ulladulla and also at Bawley Point. Most weekends I am preaching at different locations in country areas and during 2012 I began to preach on a monthly basis as an assistance to Peter Pallet, who is the Presbyterian Pastor responsible for the parish of Moruya, Tuross and Narooma. Each of these towns now has a weekly service of public worship. I continue to do evangelistic events, House party Bible Teaching, Church camps, Father-Son weekends and preaching at many different locations. Kerry and I continue our Bible teaching ministry in India and the Former Soviet Union. 2013 will see us, God willing, back in India during April, and September – October in the Soviet States. During the month of May I will be teaching the book of Hebrews to international students at Capenwray Bible College at Bowral, N.S.W.

Burrill Pines and Lagoon Point, as the Home Base of The Bush Missionary Society, continues to be not only a venue and site as an independent evangelical voice in the community, but also as a valuable resource for outreach and encouragement to believers in all walks of life and service. We do hope that you will continue to pray for the staff, our ministries and our needs as we seek to ….”Further the Scriptural knowledge of Jesus Christ without reference to sectarian differences”. Please remember that it continues to be a battle to “make ends meet” when it comes to yearly finances..., so we welcome all donations and gifts that enable this important ministry to continue. We value your prayers for our President, Gordon Dutton and his wife, Thelma, who are not enjoying the best of health at present.

God Bless,

Les Stewart,
Superintendent.

DEVOTIONAL.

“For I would have you know, brethren, that the Gospel that was preached by me, is not man's Gospel......but, it came through a revelation by Jesus Christ.” Galatians 1:11-12.

Who were the Galatians...? They were personal acquaintances among whom Paul had worked. (4:13-15) This region we now refer to as Central Turkey, part of Paul's first missionary journey....Acts 13:14--14:23. As we know, Paul was under personal attack by Judaizers, saying that he was not a true Apostle, and not on the same footing as the Original..."Twelve". The Judaizers insisted upon Gentile converts submitting to the rite of circumcision and religious feasts....based upon Jewish legalism. In short, it was an attack on the "Sufficiency of Christ!" Confronted , with this assault upon the Galatian Christians, Paul put pen to paper, and as a result we have what is sometimes referred to as ..."The Angry Epistle"

Well,... you and I live in interesting times and seasons. Our own nation, with its Christian heritage and law based upon Christian principles can really only be referred to as a Secular nation ...., with its contemporary cultural Ethos as ...Humanism which , at least for the present “tolerates “ a Christian voice and perspective. So,... we have our problems....!

As Christians we like the Apostle Paul, hold to a number of “immovable givens”. We believe that the Scriptures are Inspired, Inerrant and Infallible. (2 Timothy 3:16-17) We believe that the Scriptures are sufficient to enable us to live in God's world, under His authority, in a way that honours Him and for the well being of every human society. We also believe that the death and resurrection of The Lord Jesus Christ is sufficient to propitiate God’s wrath and to enable us to enjoy God’s favour, as we now live in a state of being “justified by Faith”....and sharing in all of the benefits of Christ’s finished work and the personal indwelling of God The Holy Spirit.

However, our own culture and society does not hold these truths as truth..! One young woman said to me in a High school scripture class some years ago....”How dare you call us to repent and believe the Gospel...you have no right..! This young woman expressed what the majority of the world’s population would think and practice..., that is, that , our preaching of Christ and Him crucified is just that..! It is
OUR preaching…it is OUR position and OUR point of view….and we live in a free and tolerant culture that in its Polytheistic and Humanistic thinking has no room and never will have any place for one truth and one truth alone…!

So, Christians stand, in one sense as opponents to the “common good “ of contemporary culture, for we hold that our preaching …., our teaching is not our own , but one that has come to us by Divine Revelation…! The Apostle Paul said in Galatians 1:7,8,9,… “Not that there is another Gospel.”… “as we have said before , If anyone is preaching to you a gospel contrary to that which you received , ....let him be accursed...!” Yes , we stand in a “difficult place”. We know that there is no renovation of individuals or of cultures unless the one and only Divine Revelation of the Apostolic Gospel is embraced and lived out. Every genuine renovation of culture is one that is impacted by the Gospel of the Saving Grace and Lordship of Jesus Christ. This truth alone has power to save, change, and revive the Global human experience. This truth, this Gospel, cannot and will not share its supreme authority and its sufficiency with any other philosophy or any other cultural ethos.

The apostle Paul knew that he did not stand alone. Galatians 1:1,2 reads.” Paul an Apostle—not from men nor through man, but through Jesus Christ and God The Father who raised Him from the dead-AND ALL the brethren who are with me..!” Paul knew that what he was preaching and what he was writing had the full authority of the Godhead and the support of those who also had been entrusted with the truth of God's word. So, he wrote with conviction and preached with a fearless assurance, knowing that His message was from God, and only God's word would do the work of ...drawing lost souls to .The foot of the Cross and to experience the Joy and Reality of sins forgiven...and being at peace with God and with our fellow mankind.

So then, dear Brethren, let us be encouraged that we are not alone. We may be viewed by our society as “cultural dinosaurs” as single minded and belonging to days gone by...., but we know the power of The Cross...Personally and Culturally. We know that our words come to every human society with divine authority and approval, ...for in the Gospel alone is God's glorious character made known and a world of lost sinners have Hope...!

God Bless,

Les Stewart.

FOR PRAYER AND CONSIDERATION:

- Let churches, organisations and individuals know that we have a venue that is clean, affordable and well maintained.
- We welcome donations, gifts and legacies for the improvement, maintenance and management of the facility and its ministry.
- That The Bush Missionary Society and the Centre at Burrill Lake have a unique ministry in contemporary Christian culture and that we value your continued prayer support for The Board of Management, The Directors and the working staff on site.

A copy of this newsletter and campsite information is available on our website


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If you let us know your email address we will send you a copy via email which you can easily send on to your interested friends.