

December 2023

# MILLER NEWS

*"Knowing God and Making Him Known...in the South Pacific"*



Dear Brethren,

Well, here we are moving towards Christmas and the end of the year. I have seen over the years that many Christians start strong but sadly end dismally. I was reading what Dr J. Robert Clinton, a professor of Leadership who spent 15 years researching over 1000 leaders of the Bible stated, "Sadly, only 30 percent of the leaders in the Bible finished well. That means that 70 percent fell short of God's plan for their lives." We all know Christians who were perhaps our mentors, encouragers, leaders and who may have even baptized us into Christ and yet departed from the faith. The old English proverb says, "well begun is half done". We know as Christians, finishing well is more important and equally more difficult than beginning well. More than anything else how you finish matters. I'm always inspired by Paul's finish as he waits for his death in 2 Timothy, he writes his last letter to Timothy. **2 Timothy 4:7 "I have fought the good faith, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith."** Paul's exhortation to Timothy is to hold firm to the gospel despite shame and suffering **2 Tim 4:6-8** is to ensure that Timothy will finish well. Paul knows that many had defected from the faith 2 Tim 1:15; 2 Tim 4:10. Recently I have been trying to encourage some Christians who have slipped back into their past life and are not walking with the Lord. It is a reminder to me that **"a good start**

**doesn't guarantee a good end."**

How we all need to keep going until we reach home.

This last month I was asked to go and speak at the **APEDS** conference in Melbourne Australia. It is the Asia Pacific Elders Deacons and Spouses conference. The conference was on "Revitalization of the church". I was asked to speak on a panel and do the sermon on the Sunday morning at Belmore Road Church of Christ, in Melbourne. It was wonderful to meet people from





Australia, the Philippines, Singapore, USA and NZ. We don't have many events like this in our part of the world, so it is truly delightful and encouraging



to be together, to encourage and fellowship and to hear of the work being done in different regions of the world. It was great seeing Dale

Hartman who works with the church at North Macarther in Oklahoma City which is one of our supporting and overseeing congregation. Melinda also enjoyed catching up with ladies from other congregations.

As we close the year we have been in review and planning meetings to try and look at what the calendar looks like for next year. We have found in the past, that we have planned too much, which can wear our ministries and the church out, so we got together to be more intentional in what we feel we need to do in 2024.

In November Melinda and I had



some medical procedures done which seems to come with age. Melinda had uterus fibroids and polyps removed the same day I had cataract surgery. So, we were quietly recovering at the same time. We were very blessed to have our daughter in law, Angelique, who is a nurse come and stay the night to make sure we were ok. We are truly thankful to live in a country that provides good medical service and for family that lives close by. I know this is not the case for many around the world currently.

I continue to enjoy teaching and mentoring Pablo who lives in Santiago Chile. He preaches for the church there and mentors and leads the church in that part of the world. Paula lives in Blenheim and preaches in Nelson and teaches individuals the gospel in the Nelson district. I skype with these two men weekly.

Recently we sadly had to see a fellow elder Mike Austin, step down from his role as elder. Mike has had number of strokes and seizures. The role of elder has become too much for him to handle. The picture above is an earlier one, Mike is the shorter one in the picture.



Melinda continues to mentor and encourage many of our families that have no grandparents close by. Several of our families are from South Africa so Melinda enjoys being a “Nana” for them and taking part in the children’s activities.

Melinda and Bella recently put on a baby shower for



Angelique, our daughter in law, as she is due on the 1st of January. It was a lovely time for Angelique’s friends to come to our house and share in this



occasion with her. Her mother zoomed in from the UK and so did our family from the US as well as some of her friends in Australia, so it was a special afternoon for Angelique. Please keep Aaron and Angelique in your prayers for a safe birth and healthy baby boy!

We recently had our “Go Sunday” where we meet early on Sunday morning and have a service around the Lord’s Supper and prayer and then we all sign up to be a part of a project and go out into the community.

Our mission statement is **“Knowing God and making him known in our community”** Melinda is helping teach the children to make care baskets that were taken to the Pharmacies to show appreciation for the kind work they do to our community. This helps to show them that the church cares.



As we come to the close of the year may God bless all of us as **we endeavour to finish well.** Thank you for your prayers for the Lord’s work we are striding to do in this part of the world. We always need your prayers. May you have a wonderful Christmas with family and with those close to you. As always, may God be glorified in all that we do **1 Cor 10:31. “So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God”.**

**Again, thank you for your kind generosity and prayers for us.**

**Blessings**

**Chris and Melinda Miller**