



# REDEEMER BAPTIST SCHOOL ANNUAL SERVICE OF WORSHIP

9<sup>th</sup> December 2019

Main Auditorium, Hillsong Convention Centre

**Principal's Address:**

*Entrusted with Truth and Life*

# **REDEEMER BAPTIST SCHOOL**

incorporating

**The Hills Regional Skills Centre**



**Annual Service of Worship**

and

**The Principal's Address**

*Entrusted with Truth and Life*

Hillsong Convention Centre  
1-5 Solent Circuit, Baulkham Hills  
Monday, December 9<sup>th</sup>, 2019



The intergenerational transmission of wisdom is indispensable. Future leaders need to be cared for themselves the way they will be caring for others. They need to see priorities lived out right up close, next to them. Our task goes way beyond merely helping people to access information.

Mark Thompson, *Moore Matters*, Spring 2019

I pray that God, the source of hope, will fill you completely with joy and peace because you trust in him. Then you will overflow with confident hope through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Apostle Paul, *Letter to the Romans*, circa 55AD

Have you ever thought about how much better life would be if everyone kept the Ten Commandments? We may grumble about rules and regulations, but think of what an amazing place the world would be if these ten rules were obeyed.

Kevin DeYoung, *The 10 Commandments*, 2018

In the past decade, the emergence of digital learning has redefined and broadened access to education, making high quality resources available to a global audience, and enabling peer-to-peer feedback. However, despite its potential, the more insular experience that technology provides has clashed with the human instinct for inherently social experiences. As such, being part of a co-located student community still plays a key role in instilling a commitment to learn, establishing long-lasting relationships, developing soft social skills, building confidence and creating opportunities for innovation and economic growth.

ARUP Report, *Campus of the Future*, 2018

# *Entrusted with Truth and Life*

In 1980, an Indian philosopher and his young wife left their mud-hut home in an obscure village because he had been invited to speak in various locations around Europe. One afternoon in Holland, his Dutch host Dr Jan said to him, ‘Come, let’s go get some milk.’ The Indian philosopher and his Dutch host walked to a dairy farm nearby. There were no staff on site. The philosopher—who owned a small dairy in India—was amazed at how clean and orderly the dairy appeared. They walked into the milk room but no one was there to sell the milk. Nevertheless, Dr Jan put his jug under a tap and filled it with milk, took out his wallet, put 20 guilders (Dutch currency) in a bowl and took some change. The philosopher was stunned. He said to Dr Jan, ‘If you were in India, you would take the milk and the money.’

Then the philosopher realised: ‘If I walked away with the milk and the money, the dairy owner would have to hire a salesgirl. Who would pay for her? Me, the consumer. And if the customer couldn’t be trusted, then why should the supplier be honest? He would add water to the milk to increase the volume of his sales. An activist would then protest to the government that the milk had been adulterated. So the government would have to appoint milk inspectors. But who would pay for the milk inspectors? Me, the taxpayer. Then again, if the consumers and suppliers were both dishonest, why would the inspector be honest? The farmer may have to pay a bribe to the dishonest inspector to keep his licence to operate. This cost, too, would eventually be passed to the consumer.’

**The Indian philosopher concluded that a culture of distrust and dishonesty ends up costing individuals much more.**

Perhaps there are some folk here who can remember, like I do, never locking the front or back door of the family home unless everyone was going on holidays for a week—anyone could have walked in and taken anything but no one ever did, at least, not in our home. Similarly, as young children our parents were not worried about us spending an unsupervised day walking through bush behind a friend’s house without a mobile phone (which weren’t invented yet)—we were just defenceless children, but no one ever harmed us. And if we got hurt in an accident or were worried while out on our push bikes, we could have walked into any home for help—there was no reason to distrust our neighbours.

It sounds like a different country, doesn’t it? That was Australia 50 years ago. But it seems that now there is reason to distrust not only our neighbours but also institutions that we depend on, institutions that we should be able to trust. Hence three Commonwealth Royal Commissions this year which, according to Paul

Bongiorno of the online *New Daily*, is ‘in itself testimony to the complete lack of trust the country has in its politicians’.

Just over a week ago, Paul Kelly (editor-at-large at *The Australian* newspaper) wrote that the Westpac money laundering scandal ‘further shatters trust in financial elites, exposing their moral bankruptcy, self-interested complacency and flawed management.’ The Final Report of the *Royal Commission into the Banking, Superannuation and Financial Services Industry*—released on 4<sup>th</sup> February 2019—found that ‘very often conduct has broken the law and, if not breaking the law, it has nevertheless fallen short of the kind of behaviour the community not only expects but is entitled to expect of financial services.’

A second *Royal Commission* in 2019 into *Aged Care Quality and Safety* described Australia’s aged care sector—in an interim report released 31<sup>st</sup> October 2019—as ‘a shocking tale of neglect’, a ‘cruel and harmful system’ that is ‘woefully inadequate’. A third *Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability* has already begun to reveal abuse, neglect and exploitation of people with disabilities.

Former Liberal leader Dr John Hewson’s comment on the state of the nation in 2019 is poignant: ‘The loss of trust and belief in government and many of our major institutions has been significant and particularly damaging to the future wellbeing of our society’. In his 2019 text *Australia Reimagined*, social researcher Hugh Mackay states that ‘one of the grimmest reminders that all is not well with us is the steady erosion of respect and trust that we feel towards many of our major institutions’. One of the top six trends in McCrindle Research for 2019 references the ‘refocus and recalibration of Australians’ trust, with trust eroded in religious and political entities, the financial sector, aged care providers, social media and tech companies. And the international Edelman Trust Barometer describes Australia as ‘trust in tumult’.

**What about the trust barometer in 2019 for Christian schools or, indeed, any individual Christian or Christian ministry?** There is currently in the hands of the Australian Attorney General a suite of Religious Discrimination and Freedom of Religion Bills which he intends to gain passage through the Parliament. What happened in Australia that we now need legislation to protect Christians from discrimination, and to give Christians freedom to live and speak their faith in accordance with the Bible? Why are Christians now afraid of dismissal from employment if they quote a verse from the Bible on social media? Why was there a rally of thousands of people in Hyde Park angry about a surprise abortion bill—given passage by a recently elected Premier—legalising the killing of an unborn baby right up until it is due to be born? Why do respected health professionals in

the Christian Medical and Dental Fellowship of Australia feel compelled to pose these questions to the Australian government, in light of recent abortion and euthanasia legislation in several states:

*Does Federal parliament really want a medical profession with deconstructed ethics? Is it not safer for everyone to have a profession committed to the simple commandment 'thou shalt not kill'?*

And what about the anguish of a Queensland midwife who told Christian media that her job description was once all about the preservation of life but, suddenly, it also includes the taking of life? Now she asks:

*Find me a politician who will insert the medication to end a baby's life. Which politician will look into the woman's eyes while she consents to this procedure? Tell me who's going to dispose of life in the bin?*

What has happened to the simple trust that gave Australians freedom to leave our doors unlocked and let our children play unsupervised in the bush? What has happened to the respect for eternal, God-given commandments that we all valued as a society which gave us all much more freedom to trust than we have today?

And with a rising crescendo around the world in 2019 students and young people have been gathering in large numbers, frustrated and angry with those who have authority over them—worried about losing democratic freedoms; hostile towards police because they no longer trust them; irate at world leaders as they blame government inaction on climate change for accelerating an immanent destruction of our world; incensed by laws that limit their freedoms; aggrieved by increasing costs of living; and resentful over the increasing personal cost burden of their education.

How do we respond to this turbulent sea of distrust with a Christian worldview in education?

### **Trust in the Lord and do good (Psalm 37:3)**

Whatever may be untrustworthy in human institutions, our Christian worldview in education comes with a central affirmation that God has created a good world for us to live in and that He is eternally trustworthy and that His plans for us—for all of our children, for all of our students—His plans are good. So we can trust in Him and do good, whatever the circumstances.

In a world where distrust is prevalent, where do you look for guidance—in practice, what do you trust? A Deloitte Mobile Consumer Survey in 2019 begins with the statement:

*Mobile has come to define the last decade of our lives, a technology unrivalled in its dominance.*

91% of Australians have a smartphone device. An Australian Child Health Poll has found that almost all Australian teenagers, two-thirds of primary school-aged children and one-third of pre-schoolers now own their own tablet or smartphone. Our access to information and perspectives that shape our view of the world is filtered through our pocket devices. Our decisions to act are determined by the latest viral video or blog advice.

Indisputably, the mobile phone—like many recent technological inventions—has contributed a great deal to efficiencies and possibilities in our everyday lives. But what happens when use becomes trust, when our highest trust is placed in the information streaming from a device?

The London-based Millennium Cohort Study (2019) has linked depression in girls to higher use of social media. An Australian Gonski Institute survey (2019) has found that excessive screen time has had a profound impact on Australian school students over the past five years, making them more distracted and tired, and less ready to learn. A medical study of 6,595 US adolescents (2019) has found that those who spend more than 3 hours per day using social media may be at heightened risk for mental health problems, particularly internalizing problems.

A couple of weeks ago—in a speech responding to receiving ADL’s International Leadership Award—the actor Sacha Baron Cohen said that ‘hate and violence is being facilitated by a handful of internet companies that amount to the greatest propaganda machine in history.’ Quoting the 18<sup>th</sup> century French philosopher Voltaire, he gave a warning about the influence of trusting in social media: ‘those who can make you believe absurdities can make you commit atrocities.’

Just one year ago—outside of Redeemer where mobile phones have always been banned for students at school—it was presumed that schools could not hold back the tide of technology flowing with unwanted debris into every classroom in children’s pockets. The Department of Education *Review into the non-educational use of mobile devices in NSW schools*, published early this year, cautiously suggested restricting use of mobile devices in NSW primary schools and possible limited restriction policies for high schools to opt into. But then in June this year, Victoria became the first state to announce a mobile phone ban in all state schools followed by Western Australia in October and Tasmania in November. And many private schools, including our neighbours at Kings and Tara, have also this year banned mobile phone access during the school day. And the report from schools that have introduced bans is increased student social engagement and participation in a variety of different school activities.

**The choice of who or what we trust is important. But our Christian worldview goes further, encouraging us to ‘do good’.** The 2019 World Happiness Report states that ‘research has documented a robust link between volunteering and greater life satisfaction, positive affect, and reduced depression’. The advice of Murdoch Children’s Research Institute is that ‘a modern education system should develop a “whole child”, providing a balanced set of cognitive, social and emotional skills to face the challenges of an increasingly uncertain and volatile world’. So I am pleased to report this year that, in addition to very significant sporting and academic achievements, Redeemer students have excelled in ‘doing good’. From the sterling efforts of our Year 10 in their Gala Day mission to Boggabilla, to our wonderful City of Parramatta Young Citizen of the Year, to our compassionate Year 6 recipient of the Fred Hollows Humanity Award, plus over 5,200 voluntary hours contributed to serving the wider community by our Years 7–10 students acknowledged in the 2019 Premier’s Volunteer Recognition Program. Freed up by a context in education where we can trust God’s goodness personally and as a guide for life, our students have impetus and opportunity to do good. This is what they said about their Gala Day mission to Boggabilla.

*This experience has really impacted my life path to be full of showing love to others instead of just gaining things for myself.*

*It was such a fun time. It was such an amazing experience; it has honestly been one of the best weeks of my life.*

## **Blessed are those who trust the Lord (Jeremiah 17:7)**

There is an old song, from time to time a very popular song over the last couple of hundred years, that reminds us—if our view of our circumstances is somewhat dismal at present—to get a better perspective. These words keep on getting repeated throughout the song:

*Count your blessings, name them one by one;  
Count your blessings, see what God has done;  
Count your blessings, name them one by one,  
And it will surprise you what the Lord has done*

As Australians, we enjoy a self-critical joke. That’s one way to stop us getting too proud. But when cynicism becomes a way of life—when our distrust barometer is too high, perhaps because we’ve been stung by the people or institutions that we should be able to trust—when individually or as a community we no longer trust, then, as a consequence, we cannot receive or achieve all the blessings that God wants to shower on us. We think of Jesus being able to do any good thing. In the first five chapters of the gospel of Mark, He had already healed a leper and a paralytic, He had already calmed a storm and exorcised demons, He had already



raised a young girl from death to life. But then Mark's gospel says that there was a limit to the good things that Jesus could do. Jesus couldn't do any mighty work in His hometown, Nazareth, because they were too cynical to believe Him and they didn't trust Him.

In many different verses through the Bible, the Spirit of God reminds us that those who trust the Lord are blessed by the Lord. Now that doesn't mean that every student is going to get the top band in NAPLAN or get their name included in the HSC distinguished achievers' list. It doesn't mean that we will be immune from the difficulties of life, from sadness and grief, even from failure. But it does mean that there is a bigger perspective, a hopeful perspective. *Count your blessings*. See what God has already done and trust Him for what He is yet to do. Then, truly, what the Lord does will surprise you! That is our experience as staff with nearly 40 years in the adventure of operating a school with a Christian worldview in education. And when we join together in that adventure—staff, students and parents—we share in the happiness, the joy that accompanies the blessing.

**A few weeks ago in the NSW Parliament**, our local Member—The Hon Dr Geoff Lee, Minister for Skills and Tertiary Education—shared a summary of our blessings at Redeemer this year. This is what is recorded in Hansard.

*I bring to the attention of the House the broad range of excellent achievements this year of students and staff of Redeemer Baptist School. In a ceremony at Government House on 29 October 2019, Stuart Garth, a science teacher at the school, was honoured with the NSW Premier's Prize for Innovation in Science or Mathematics Teaching. Over the past 20 years, 15 of Stuart's students have represented Australia at the Intel International Science and Engineering Fair, the world's largest pre-university science, technology, engineering and mathematics [STEM] competition. As an active leader on the Young Scientist Committee of the Science Teachers' Association of New South Wales, Stuart has single-handedly brought together STEM teacher associations to promote investigation awards that are entirely syllabus based. I thank and congratulate Stuart. He has also helped to form the new science extension course for the New South Wales Education Standards Authority [NESAs]. His leadership in science teaching has influenced thousands involved in the annual Young Scientist competition.*

*On 1 November, this year's Young Scientist Awards were presented in a ceremony at the University of Wollongong. Following many years of high achievement in original scientific investigation, Redeemer Baptist School students achieved excellent results again, including first prizes in scientific investigations, working mathematically and chemistry. The STEP Environmental Award was also won by a year 11 student from*

*Redeemer Baptist School, Suzanne Jones, whose detailed survey on cicadas in Lake Parramatta Reserve, adjacent to the school's campus, found the as yet undescribed Sydney Ticking Ambertail Yoyetta species. I congratulate Suzanne Jones.*

*Redeemer students have also achieved recognition for excellence in literacy this year. At a ceremony in the State Library of New South Wales, Year 2 student Tiya Maharaj received a gold medal from the Minister for Education and Early Childhood Learning in NESA's 2019 WriteOn competition. Well done, Tiya. In Gunnedah, during National Literacy and Numeracy Week, Redeemer students won four out of 13 national prizes in the Dorothea Mackellar Poetry Awards. This year, for the third consecutive year, Redeemer Baptist School was congratulated by the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority for demonstrating substantially above average gain in NAPLAN. In a context of excellence, Redeemer students are achieving significant, ongoing and measurable academic improvement. A satisfying high point in the school's 2019 sporting achievements are the gold, silver and bronze medals that were won at the NSW Combined Independent Schools athletics carnival at the end of Term Three.*

*At the Parramatta Australia Day celebrations at the beginning of the year, Redeemer Baptist School HSC student, Pariselle Hughes, was proclaimed the Parramatta Young Citizen of the Year in recognition of her community service. In September, Pariselle also received a 2019 John Lincoln Youth Community Service Award from the Order of Australia Association at a ceremony at Government House. I applaud Pariselle on receiving those awards. Last month, Eugene Kim, a year 6 student at Redeemer, received a Fred Hollows Humanity Award from Gabi Hollows in a ceremony at the University of Technology Sydney. The Fred Hollows award was received for compassion, integrity and kindness, which are core values at Redeemer. Well done, Eugene.*

*During NAIDOC week in July this year Redeemer year 10 students returned to Boggabilla with the \$30,000 they raised in the student led gala day program. Supported by a team of volunteer licensed tradesmen, they completed the Oasis Ministries community facility to serve Indigenous communities in that remote northern New South Wales town. I commend all the Year 10 students and the volunteers for their hard work and effort. Redeemer students have achieved so much in one year. I congratulate all those students on their excellent achievements. They give us reason to hope that they will make a valuable contribution to our State's future.*

That's the summary. The detail of God's blessing in student achievements this year—listed below—is even more amazing!

## **Life and Truth at Redeemer in 2019**

Entrusted with truth and life in a Christian worldview in education, Redeemer excelled in:

### **City of Parramatta Australia Day Awards**

- *Pariselle Hughes*, Young Citizen of the Year

### **The Order of Australia Association NSW Branch**

- *Pariselle Hughes*, John Lincoln Youth Community Service Award

### **Fred Hollows Humanity Award**

- *Eugene Kim*

### **National Library of Australia publication**

- *Elvice Ikuo's* poem 'In My Language They Call Me Ume Ibiegi (Bird of Paradise)' published in an anthology for children selected by Jackie French

### **BHP Foundation Science and Engineering Awards**

- *Carla Zammit, Bilge Zohre, Anthony Guirguis, Simge Zohre* and *Gregory Burns* were 2019 national semi-finalists
- *Bethanie Jones & Lucius Figueira* won 2019 Primary Encouragement Awards
- *Edward Garth, Ivan Wallace, Gokulraj Kuppusamy & Ethan Tjhin* are selected as national finalists in the 2020 awards

### **STANSW Young Scientist Awards**

- *Suzanne Jones*, STEP Environmental Award, 2<sup>nd</sup> Biology Years 11–12
- *Lillian Azzi*, Equal 1<sup>st</sup> Scientific Investigations, Years 3–4
- *Karmichael Candra*, Equal 1<sup>st</sup> Scientific Investigations & Working Mathematically Years 3–4
- *Edward Garth*, 1<sup>st</sup> Working Mathematically Years 9–10 & NMI Measure Award Secondary, 1<sup>st</sup> Sebel Testing & Evaluation Award
- *Ruth Burns*, 1<sup>st</sup> RACI Chemistry Encouragement Award
- *Danielle Gibson*, 1<sup>st</sup> Chemistry, 3<sup>rd</sup> Working Mathematically Years 7–8
- *Bethanie Jones*, Most Promising K–6
- *Rachael Jones*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Chemistry Years 11–12

- *Antonio Rajaratnam*, Silver, Depth Study Award
- *Gokulraj Kuppusamy & Ethan Tjhin*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Innovations & Engineering Design Years 9–10
- *Darren Candra*, 3<sup>rd</sup> Physics Years 7–8, Broadcom MASTERS International Honorary Mention
- *Adithya Manoj*, 3<sup>rd</sup> Working Mathematically Years 11–12
- *Ivan Wallace*, 3<sup>rd</sup> Sebel Testing & Evaluation Award

### **Dorothea Mackellar Poetry Awards**

- *Felix Liu* 1<sup>st</sup> & *Jasmine Safrglani* 2<sup>nd</sup> in Australia AL primary
- *Han Zheng* 1<sup>st</sup> & *Tom Li* 2<sup>nd</sup> in Australia AL secondary
- *Zahra Dinkciler & Bora Secme*, Highly Commended lower primary
- *Abby Park*, Commended lower primary
- *Nathan Burns & Obani Ohunayo*, Shortlisted AL primary
- *Julian Nissan*, Highly Commended AL primary
- *Jorden Wu*, Commended AL primary
- *Joseph Lee & Pierre Hughes*, Shortlisted AL secondary
- *Bemnet Asrat & Andrew Zhao*, Highly Commended AL secondary
- *Isabella Burns & Kartik Verma*, Commended AL secondary
- *Redeemer Baptist School*, Commended Primary & Secondary Schools' Award

### **NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) WriteOn Competition**

- *Tiya Maharaj* (Stage 1), Gold Award

### **HTA History Mastermind**

- *Yoon Choi, Justin Joseph, Yemi Olaitan, Aran Yoganandha & Richard Zhu* won the silver medal
- *Anubhav Ammangi, Koray Bayramoglu, Dhruv Doddi, Danielle Gibson & Riana Maharaj* were semi-finalists

### **Macquarie University Leaders & Achievers Early Offer**

- *Vivienne Kew*, Year 12

### **Western Sydney University Global Leaders Scholarships**

- *Gilana Behan, Pariselle Hughes & Vivienne Kew*, Year 12



### **AusSIP Employability Award**

- *Mikalah Zammit & Panialeise Hughes* (HSC Business)
- *Ethan Tjhin & Gokul Kuppusamy* (Prelim Business)
- *Talar Alzened & Dawit Abebe* (Prelim Information, Digital Media & Technology)
- *Ruth Burns* (Prelim Hospitality)

### **Premier's Reading Challenge**

- *Kayley Garth, Jin Jeon & Sarah Lee* received PRC medals
- There were 26 platinum awards & 40 gold awards

### **VALID Science**

- *Dilara Dinkciler & Aparna Manoj*, equal 5<sup>th</sup> in NSW

### **Young Australian Art Awards**

- *Felix Liu*, national runner up gold award

### **Julie Owens MP Christmas card competition**

- *Tiya Maharaj & Amber Xu*, finalists

### **Premier's Volunteer Recognition Program**

- 52 students (Years 9–12) received Certificate Awards including students involved in the Gala Day construction work on the community shelter for Australian Indigenous Christian Ministries at Kempsey

### **Western Sydney University Dean's Merit Lists**

- Alumnus *Alexandra Garth* (Year 12, 2016), School of Nursing & Midwifery
- Alumnus *Michael Jones* (Year 12, 2014), School of Engineering

### **Western Sydney University Honours Scholarship**

- Alumnus *Michael Jones* (Year 12, 2014), School of Engineering

### **Excelsia College Postgraduate Achievement Prize**

- Alumnus *Judson Bailey* (Year 12, 2012), Education

### **Ian Henderson Award for Public Speaking**

- Alumnus *Michael Jones* (Year 12, 2014), Engineers Australia Newcastle

## **President of the NSW Branch of the Young Liberals**

- Alumnus *Chaneg Torres* (Year 12, 2011)

## **NSW Premier's Prize for Innovation in Science or Mathematics Teaching**

- *Stuart Garth*

## **Australian College of Educators**

- World Teachers' Day Awards, *Simeon Cannon & Tanya Poyitt*
- Fellowship, *Russell Bailey*

## **BHP Foundation 2020 Science & Engineering Teacher Award**

- *Diane Garth*, CSIRO Crest nominee

## **Sport team championships**

- SWISSA senior boys soccer with *Junior Savaiko* as captain
- SWISSA senior girls soccer with *Carla Zammit* as captain
- SWISSA under 15's girls soccer with *Victoria Garth* as captain
- SWISSA under 15's girls basketball with *Victoria Garth* as captain
- SWISSA under 15's girls netball with *Stephanie Anonuevo* as captain
- Parramatta/Eastwood Woolworths Blast Cricket Gala Day

## **Swimming, Athletics and Cross Country**

- In the SWISSA swimming carnival: *Joshua Frost, Alex Choi, Evelyn Poyitt, Jayden Kwak, Mikalah Zammit, Adam Gibson, Carla Zammit & Anthony Bolton* were age champions and Redeemer was the champion school.
- In the SWISSA cross country: *Victoria Sultana, Joshua Frost, Salote Fiefia, Jeffrey Dong, Cameron Frost, Victoria Garth, Solomon Aynalem, Emily Burns, Suzanne Jones, Adam Gibson, Carla Zammit & Anthony Bolton* were age champions and Redeemer was the champion school.
- In the SWISSA athletics carnival: *Victoria Sultana, Joshua Frost, Jeffrey Dong, Victoria Garth, Esther Park, Jordan Ebert, Mikalah Zammit, Adam Gibson, Carla Zammit & Anthony Bolton* were age champions and Redeemer was the champion school.

## **Association of Independent Co-Educational Schools (AICES) Sport**

- *Elvice Ikuo, Carla Zammit & Junior Savaiko* were awarded AICES Honours in recognition of sporting excellence (athletics)

- *Anthony Bolton, Elvice Ikuo, Junior Savaiko, Khelsie Thompson, Ivan Wallace & Carla Zammit* were awarded AICES Colours in recognition of Sporting Excellence (athletics)
- *Anthony Bolton* was the 18 years boys athletics age champion
- Redeemer won the AICES athletics carnival

### **CIS (Combined Independent Schools) Sport**

- *Joshua Frost* won gold (12 years javelin), secondary athletics
- *Elvice Ikuo* won silver (open javelin), secondary athletics
- *Carla Zammit* won bronze (long jump & triple jump), secondary athletics
- *Junior Savaiko* won bronze (open javelin), secondary athletics
- *Solomon Aynalem, Anthony Bolton, Gregory Burns, Edward Garth, Godnah Johnson, Evelyn Poyitt, Khelsie Thompson, & Ivan Wallace* also represented AICES at CIS athletics (secondary)
- *Benjamin Fahd, Eugene Kim, Diego Ndongo-Empesa, Dorian Ndongo-Empesa, Joseph Sesay & David Shin* represented ASISSA at CIS athletics (primary)
- *Niushka Shrestha* represented ASISSA at CIS swimming (primary)
- *Adrian Burns, David Shin & Unish Shrestha* represented ASISSA at CIS cross country (primary)

### **Tertiary success**

- In 2018, 100% of our HSC cohort were offered enrolment in university or diploma pathways

### **National Assessment Program—Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN)**

- Redeemer results were identified by ACARA as substantially above average gain

### **English, Mathematics, Science and Computers conducted by the University of NSW; Mathematics conducted by the Australian Mathematics Trust; Australian Geography conducted by the Royal Geographical Society of Queensland; Language Competence (French & German) conducted by ACER**

- 51 High Distinctions: *Anubhav Ammangi* (English, Mathematics, IT, Science & Geography); *Madhav Karthikeyan* (English, Mathematics, IT & Science); *Gokulraj Kuppusamy* (English, Mathematics, IT & Geography); *Kayley Garth* (English & Geography); *Aditya Verma, Yoon Choi, Aran Yoganandha*

(Mathematics & Science); *Abishek Clement, Yemi Olaitan* (English); *Christine Huynh, Jerry Shen, Rhema Suresh, Christopher Herbert, Jacob Mikhael, Andrew Zhao, Ellery Behan, Hess Lee, Leon Yangdong, Han Zheng, Antonio Kwok* (Mathematics); *Krish Bansal, Joshua Frost, Chantel Jose, Jacob Dinkciler, Aaron Jose, Akhil Akku, Robbie Waller, Edward Garth, Miriam Poyitt* (Geography); *Sanya Sehgal* (IT).

- 169 distinctions & 362 credits

Many students starred in excellent productions, including: Kindergarten's *David and the very very very scary giant*; the Preparatory School's *Find Us Faithful*; Junior Drama Club's *Bridge to Terabithia*; and Senior Drama Club's *The Amulet*. Music students entertained the Middle and Senior School in Sargood Hall with an end of year pop-up concert including: *Antonio Kwok*, piano; *Darren Li*, violin; *Andrew Zhao*, piano accordion; *Anaya Rajaratnam*, flute; *Oliver Jang*, Viola; *Jade Pathinather, Antonio Rajaratnam & Didem Aras*—voice.

Redeemer's staff and facilities continue to be a resource for: Sydney Symphony, to produce education kits for schools; and the Australian College of Educators, with their *Collecting Quality Assessment Data from our Students* forum in Sargood Hall.

The Redeemer school community continues to reach out to other communities in need as we teach our students the importance of perceiving the needs of others and, if possible, helping to meet those needs personally.

### **Redeemer's Outreach in 2019**

- Year 10 students raised \$37,672.52 in their Gala Day program to: assist remote Indigenous youth from Tennant Creek and Yuendumu, NT; and complete the *Oasis Ministries Centre* for the benefit of Indigenous communities in the Boggabilla region.
- Redeemer hosted a visit from one of the leaders of the Barai tribe in Papua New Guinea where the *Itokama* sister school is located.
- Redeemer students *Junior Savaiko* and *Elvice Ikuo* from the Barai tribe in the Oro Province met with The Hon Alex Hawke (Minister for International Development and the Pacific) and the Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea, Hon James Marape.
- Redeemer hosted a visit from Indigenous leaders of the Bible Translation Association, Papua New Guinea.
- Redeemer hosted a visit of 96 Chinese students from *Tianjin* in January and an Australian immersion experience for a group of 7 Chinese Primary School students with their parents from *Beijing* in August.



- Redeemer hosted visits of Indigenous leaders from Muli Muli (NSW), Canteen Creek (NT) and the Northern Territory Department of Education.
- Redeemer continued to partner with the *Australian Literacy & Numeracy Foundation* to qualify Indigenous workers with a Cert IV in Early Language & Literacy.
- *Mitchell Youth Leadership Forum* was supported by Redeemer with transport and pastoral leadership.
- Redeemer contributed speakers and leaders to the *Refresh Summer Camp*.
- Students completed professional placements or work experience at Redeemer from: University of Sydney; University of New England; Australian Catholic University; Excelsia College; Bedford College; Meadowbank TAFE; and Condell Park Christian School.

## **The blessing of new and refurbished infrastructure in 2019**

- The School purchased a new *Volvo B8R* bus which has already served the students on long distances in our Middle School Camps in November. Our fleet of aging B10M Volvo buses from Harris Park Bus Company continue to serve us well. We expect this new addition to serve the School for a long time.
- Extensive heritage restoration of the *Son of the Rock* building is underway ready for its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2020—including air conditioning for the classrooms.
- A new fence—in keeping with the existing heritage fence along Pennant Hills Road—replaced the outdated and ugly cyclone fence topped with barbed wire along our James Ruse Drive border.
- Underground, a new sewerage connection and decommissioning the overhead telegraph wires should serve the campus for many decades to come.

## **Guard what was committed to your trust (1 Timothy 6:20)**

The Bible has a lot to say about us being in a trusting relationship with a trustworthy heavenly Father whose love never fails toward us. This is what the Lord does for us when we trust Him.

*He leads you into good paths  
 He protects, preserves and defends you  
 He never forsakes you  
 He is merciful toward you  
 He saves you, helps you, prospers you  
 You will never be condemned  
 So you will never be put to shame!*

*He is your everlasting strength  
So you do not need to fear!*

No wonder the Bible says over and over again that those who live trusting God are happy. Isn't all of this what we crave from our governments, from our banks, from our laws, from our institutions that care for the elderly and disabled, from the internet? Isn't it the lack of all this that disrupts our trust barometer and provokes revolution?

So, parents, let's turn this around. Have you ever considered how amazing it is that God has entrusted you with your children? Perhaps that first night in the delivery room you were overwhelmed with the thought that you were given a responsibility to lead and protect and save and be the strength for this child given by God into your care. And your child naturally looked up to you because you were the one in their life that they were supposed to be able to trust. None of us has kept that trust perfectly like God does. Sometimes when children find it difficult to trust and obey they have good reason! But we all try.

The prophet Jeremiah lived in a difficult period in history where all the institutions that formed his nation were crumbling. And his heart cried out, weeping for the children who were being sacrificed even by their own mothers. He called for everyone to repent, to 'pour out your heart like water before the face of the Lord and then lift your hands toward Him for the life of your children'. In these days of rapid social change—where sometimes good is called evil and evil is called good—I encourage you as parents to constantly pray for the life of your children.

And what about the School? For just as God has entrusted you with your children, so you have entrusted us with your children. And—news flash—we won't be perfect either. We'll try, but perfection is not possible for us mortals. So we are in the boat with you, entrusted with the lives of your children, entrusted with the awesome responsibility of leading them into good paths, of being merciful toward them, never condemning them, being the strength in their life when they are being overcome by evil.

**What does it mean to guard what is committed to our trust?** Obviously, there is the safe and secure environment that we must provide for them. Their lives must be safe. But more than that, the Apostle Paul says that we are to protect them from false knowledge. False knowledge about the origins of our universe. False knowledge about the identity given to us by God in our conception. False knowledge about love. False knowledge about what it means to care for an unborn child or terminally ill adult. And then as we teach across the curriculum we have a sacred, exciting responsibility to lead your children—with a Christian worldview in education—into all the truth about this wonderful creation that God has given us

to care for and enjoy, all the truth about living a forgiven good life with purpose given by their heavenly Father who always loves them.

Our speaker tonight, Professor Stuart Piggin—reflecting on the Boyer Lectures that Archbishop Peter Jensen delivered on ABC radio in 2005—paraphrased Jensen in these words in his new book (for sale at our Bookstore tonight) *Attending to the National Soul*:

*Liberty of action and speech is only really possible in a moral society, 'where good is honoured, and where love is the rule', and it is the rule of Jesus, the Kingdom of God, which is the demonstration in history of that truth.*

My desire is that Redeemer continues to be a place where our common acknowledgement of truth and goodness gives us plenty of reason to trust each other so that we can revive the enjoyment of those unregulated simple freedoms that should characterise Australian life.

**As this community of trust is fostered among us, let us continue to discover ways of inspiring each other to do good**, not just in our much appreciated Gala Day program but also in simple actions of everyday life, like our HSC students this year who—instead of going to schoolies week—volunteered their well-earned break in the weeks after their examinations to help their teachers in the leadership of our Middle School camping program. We enjoyed their friendship at Camp Long Beach.

A couple of weeks ago we were blessed to receive this email from a past student, Chaneg Torres, who did his HSC as a Redeemer student in 2011.

*I was officially declared elected President of the NSW Young Liberals yesterday, with 90% of the vote. I certainly wouldn't have made it this far without your encouragement and mentorship over many years and the virtues disciplined into me at school by my many teachers.*

This is not necessarily an endorsement of Chaneg's party political persuasion but it is an acknowledgement of a significant public achievement from one of our past Redeemer students.

In January this year, we received an email from a former student who moved to America a few years ago at the end of Year 8. He wrote:

*I would love to share my Testimony with you because Christ has changed my life so much! Anyway, I would love if you could share this with the rest of the staff at Redeemer because you guys were close as family to me.*

In May this year, we received this email from the Dean of Education at Excelsia College, a Christian tertiary institution:

*The students from Redeemer are a credit to your school and community, and they add a dimension of commitment and devotion to Excelsia that is very much appreciated.*

And as we continue to trust the Lord in this adventure of a Christian worldview in education, please join with me in looking forward to more surprising blessings from God in the lives of our 2019 HSC students and, indeed, in all of our students—past, present and future—as we continue to respond to the apostolic injunction to guard what has been committed to our trust.

Have a wonderful Christmas celebrating our Saviour's birth, and I pray for God's continued blessing for you all in the New Year!

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Each of us is made in the image of Creator God, and we have been made to learn, to inquire and to be creative in order that we might flourish—not just at school, though that is very important, not just in the immediate post-school years (where the utilitarian drive is most evident) but throughout our lives.

— Bryan Cowling, *Better Learning*, 2019

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Life is no accident, and life for individuals can only be truly meaningful when connected to God, the source of life!

— Jean Ashton, *Better Learning*, 2019

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Only two things can truly change how we feel about ourselves. Real accomplishment and real love. It makes no sense for students to be full of self-esteem if they have learned nothing. Reality will soon puncture their illusions and they will face two disturbing facts: that they are ignorant; and that the adults responsible for teaching them have lied to them. Try to get self-esteem and you're likely to fail, but do good to others and accomplish something and you will have all you need.

— Paul Vitz, *The Problem with Self-Esteem*, 1995

A community in which men did not dare to talk to one another with impunity or to meet each other in ordinary situations with trust and belief would be something inhuman.

— Josef Pieper, *Faith Hope Love*, 1997

An informed understanding of Christianity provides both clarification of what we ought to be doing and a motivation to do it.

— Alister McGrath, *Richard Dawkins, C. S. Lewis and the Meaning of Life*, 2019

A real Christian community (especially in a society like our own in which there is little sense of common purpose and identity) would have the ability to provide an environment in which people could live strong Christian lives. If people can find Christian communities which are alive, they will have the strength as Christians to exert influence upon society (and not simply conform to society). And the more these Christian communities grow, the greater the effect they will have upon society.

— Steve Clark, *The De-Christianizing of Western Society*, 1972



## Valete – Year 12

Betselot Asrat  
 Shiven Bansal  
 Gilana Behan  
 Anthony Bolton  
 Huzayfah Choudhury  
 Alpay Filizkok  
 Pariselle Hughes  
 Elvice Ikuo

Rachael Jones  
 Adam Karvon  
 Vivienne Kew  
 Evette Khaziran  
 Shawn Lee  
 Adithya Manoj  
 Miriam Poyitt  
 Junior Savaiko

Aryan Sehgal  
 Jackson Turner  
 Ivan Wallace  
 Rowin Wanigaratne  
 Teila Willoughby  
 Carla Zammit  
 Bilge Zohre

