

Grace Alone

Celebrating 10 Years of God's Grace and Faithfulness



This edition of *Grace Alone* scrolls through the ten years of GTC's life, noting highlights and marking milestones. That seemed to us to be the best way of celebrating a decade of God's goodness to us as a College.

Those of you that have received *Grace Alone* over the years won't find anything new in this issue. That's because it is based upon the thirty-five issues that have gone before it. You will see photographs you have seen before and hear mention of events that you have read about before. However, putting them all together creates a special effect. It helps us see how much God has done in the College's life and how far it has come since its humble beginnings.

We invite you to sit back, put your feet up as it were, and come with us on this quick tour through the decade. We hope that you enjoy it and that you will join us in thanking God for his grace and faithfulness to us over the years.

1995

THE YEAR IT ALL BEGAN

GTC began its public life on January 30th 1995. That night GTC Principal Andrew Young was inducted into his role and the ministry of the College dedicated to the glory of God. Visitors from near and far came for what was described as "a grand, God-centred and uplifting evening."

Classes for our three full-time students began immediately. Mark Smith from Wyndham, and Andrew and Geoff Macpherson from Gisborne formed the brave trio that served as our "guinea pigs". All had come to the College with a deep sense of call to prepare themselves for Christian ministry, although the precise form of that wasn't clear to any of them at that early stage.

Our small daytime classes proved an ideal setting for grappling with ideas that were fresh and in some cases totally new to the student body –

Grace Alone

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1995– Induction of GTC's Principal, Andrew Young



*GTC students, Rev. Ho-Jang Ki, Mark Smith,
Andrew MacPherson, Geoff MacPherson*

which, incidentally, was soon augmented by a Korean pastor (Ho Jang Ki) eager for further study. Biblical Theology was a subject that Mark, Geoff and Andrew had never encountered before, and some of the approaches discussed in pastoral theology and preaching were equally novel for them. Those early days were challenging and exciting.

Seven courses were offered to full-time students in that first year – Hebrew, Church History, Homiletics (preaching), Biblical Theology, Pastoral Theology, Foundations for Christian Culture and Westminster Confession of Faith. In total there were six of us teaching in some capacity - Andrew Young, David McKie, Pieter van Huyssteen, Peter Reynolds, Arthur Palmer and Don Capill. Academically, it was a full and highly successful year.

Full-time students weren't the only ones who benefited from this instruction. The College had also been established to help elders, Sunday School teachers, and Christian workers of all kinds get a better grasp of the Bible. With that in mind, evening classes open to the general church public were launched in our first year as well.



Arthur Palmer

Twenty or more came to our first classes, among them veteran church members like Hugh and Jenny Thompson and Peter Dale. They were some of our most dedicated supporters in those early years, and indeed, remain so to this day.

Nor was the College's work confined to the classroom. It aimed to get out "into the field" as well by offering short courses in churches and providing a teaching ministry at camps and conferences. Within weeks of the year beginning, Andrew Young was off to the South Island (where the core of the College's support lay), to preach in churches and speak at a Christian Youth Camps study week at Waihola, South Otago. This was to be the first of many visits to the South, always a highlight for the southern-bred, "red-and-black" supporting Principal!

Another key feature of College life emerged in July when Dr. Hywel Jones, former Principal of London Theological Seminary, became our first visiting lecturer. We saw immediately the immense value of having outsiders come and speak to us. For one thing, it encouraged and refreshed us, and for another, it gave us new perspectives on issues. It helped us feel we weren't alone but had friends in many places ready to lend a helping hand whenever it was needed.

What with teaching commitments, Board meetings, speaking and preaching engagements and administrative tasks, the first year flew by. Before we knew it we were meeting for a September Board Retreat, and then preparing for our first end-of-year thanksgiving service. We were exhausted but elated.

1996

FITTING INTO THE GROOVE

That first year established the pattern the College's life has followed ever since. Teaching, outside ministries, visitors, administrative tasks – the same sorts of things happen year after year. But no two years are ever quite the same.

One thing that guarantees they are different is a changing student body. 1996 brought three new students to the College – Peter van den Brink, Graeden Chittock and Chris Scarlet. Peter was a graduate in analytical chemistry, Graeden a computer salesman, and Chris a farmer from Balfour in the South Island. They introduced "new blood" into the student group and changed class dynamics.

1996 was different for another reason too – the courses were totally different to the previous year. Given the small faculty and student numbers we

didn't try to teach all of the subjects in our two-year Basic Ministry Course at the same time. We taught them year about instead. Year 2 in the cycle included Greek, Systematic Theology, World Views, Homiletics, Apologetics, Biblical Theology and New Testament Introduction. The same team of teachers were available and the course programmes again went very smoothly.

There were more visitors again in 1996, three in fact. The first of these was well-know author Jerry Bridges. Jerry's books on practical Christian



Tom Cheely

living had made a great impact on the Christian world, and it was an honour to have such a distinguished and yet such a humble man come and speak to us. Rev. Graham Harrison of Newport, Wales followed shortly after, and then in August, we enjoyed the first of what

was to be several visits from Rev. Tom Cheely from Briarwood Presbyterian Church in Birmingham, Alabama. Through these visits we were beginning to forge a network of contacts with other institutions and groups worldwide.

Mid-way through this second year of College life an auxiliary ministry, "College Wives", came into being. Nola Young and Lorraine Thompson joined forces to provide the wives of students the benefit of their years of experience as pastor's wives. This ministry has continued intermittently through the years, serving student's wives whenever the need arises. It has always been appreciated and will continue to be a necessary part of College life in the years ahead.

December 1996 saw our first graduation service. Andrew and Geoff Macpherson and Mark Smith had all completed the two-year Basic Ministry Course and were eligible for this award. For Andrew and Geoff this marked the first step toward their ultimate goal, the three-year Pastoral Ministry Course Certificate. For Mark, however, it was "the end of the road" as far as his GTC experience was concerned. He was eager to get back to the South Island, to a ministry among youth and university students he was to pioneer in Dunedin.



Ministering in Singapore

1997 THE FIRST BIG "OE"

1997 began with a whirlwind visit to Singapore and the USA for College Principal Andrew Young. The Board wanted Andrew to meet with Seminary teachers and leaders in Escondido, California (Westminster Theological Seminary), and in Jackson, Mississippi (Reformed Theological Seminary). Friends in Singapore asked if he would travel to the USA via their country and deliver a series of lectures for them during a brief stopover.

Andrew returned home from this visit stimulated but also reinforced in his commitment to the founding emphases of GTC. While appreciating the scholarship and academic excellence of the American seminaries, he remained convinced of the fundamental importance of the spiritual, personal, and relational dimensions of Christian life and ministry. Reflecting on this after his visit he wrote, "My interaction with seminary teachers, preachers and church folk from different walks of life served in different ways to remind me that the most important thing of all is to know and walk with the living God. Theological training is valid and important, but it must in the end lead to knowing God himself or it can be a distraction, if not a positive hindrance, to true godliness.

Back in New Zealand new students Jim Stowers from Auckland and Phillip Millar from Christchurch were ready to join those returning from the previous two years. Graeden Chittock and Peter van den Brink were back for a second year, and the Macpherson brothers were pioneering our third year Pastoral Ministry Course. Along the way other people began to drop in for the occa-

sional class and then for whole courses as the College began to get better known.

1997 brought changes to the Board and to the teaching faculty of the College. Rev. David McKie whose leadership and teaching has been so vital to starting the College, moved to Australia to take up a pastoral call in Brisbane. Rev. Murray Capill was elected Chairman of the Board and Alex Robinson and Ian Grant added as new members. Ross Brightwell and Peter Boyd were seconded to take on specific teaching assignments.

College Principal Andrew Young had fewer outside speaking engagements in this year. This was in part due to the heavier workload associated with developing the Pastoral Ministry Course, but also due to sickness in his home. His wife Nola was diagnosed as suffering from lupus.

1998

GTC BY TELEPHONE

A casual meeting of old friends, the Youngs and the Bracefields, during the 1997-8 summer holidays sparked the idea of broadening the ministry of GTC throughout the nation using telephone technology.



Wired for the phone link

By term two, people in Christchurch, Dunedin, Otago, Wyndham, Invercargill and Winton were listening to lectures being delivered in the hall of St. Andrews Church in Manurewa! Although in recent years there have been fewer links in the chain, they still do exist. This year, for instance, we have connected with listeners in Palmerston North, Gordonton and the Great

Barrier Island. Tony Bracefield, a senior lecturer at the Christchurch College of education at that time, had used a system of teleconference links to teach students at a distance. Within a few weeks we were trialling this same system at our evening classes. It was an immediate success.

Barrier Island.

Student-wise, 1998 was what we might call a lean year. We had only one full-time student, Andrew Johnson, a farmer from Fairlie in South Canterbury. Joining him part time were Colin Redmond, a pastor from Auckland's North Shore, and Des Ng Shiu, a youth leader from Mangere. Joanne and Grant Bullin from CYC in Waiholo were also able to attend classes for part of the year as they took a well-earned break from managing a busy campsite.

In retrospect we can look back on this particular year and see that numbers *per se* are not really what matters most in kingdom work. It is *whom* the Lord brings to us to train that really counts, not *how many* people he brings. Andrew Johnson – who, incidentally, showed a fine aptitude for Greek – has gone on to become an elder and leader in a new Evangelical Presbyterian Church fellowship in his hometown. Furthermore, Colin Redmond was able to master new approaches to preaching that have radically transformed his ministry. Writing in *Grace Alone* in December 1998 Colin said, “I have learned in a deeper way what it means to apply my mind to the Scriptures in order to know what the author is talking about in the text, then to understand what the text meant to the original hearers, and then to carry those principles forward to our hearers today. It has been a demanding task – at times a mightily frustrating one calling for strenuous mental effort – but an exciting, dynamic, stimulating and rewarding task all the same.”

The smaller student body created other advantages as well. College Principal Andrew Young was able to speak at a youth conference in mid-Canterbury, at a study course in Singapore, and provide ten weeks of pulpit ministry for the Reformed Church of Pukekohe.

1999

A MARVELLOUS PROVISION

If there is one thing that stands out about 1999 it must be the unexpected provision of a generous bequest for the College. We learned in February from the lawyers of a Miss Rowena Levis, a member of St Andrews Presbyterian Church, that she had bequeathed her entire estate – amounting



The property bequeathed

to some \$500,000 – to the College. This was an amazing answer to our prayers and met a very real need. The College had been heavily dependent upon the financial gifts of individuals and churches. Many had covenanted support for a three-year period, however, and with the completion of that commitment there was a significant drop off in income. Dedicated individuals rose to meet the need with amazingly generous gifts, but we knew that something extra was needed to give the College longer-term financial stability. Miss Levis' bequest was God's answer to our need. To this day, we marvel at his goodness and faithfulness to us.

But this wasn't the only significant event in 1999. When it became evident in the latter part of 1998 that there were no new candidates for pastoral ministry waiting to be trained, we decided to offer a six-month discipleship course for those wanting biblical and practical foundations for their Christian life. This course attracted a small but eager group of participants. Des Ng Shiu was joined by James Ure from Wyndham, Pita Uo, Ian Worrell,



Some Discipleship school attendees

Huan On, Lisa-Marie Lale-Faumuina, and Uaita Levi from Auckland, and Ernie Dixon from Gordonton. It turned out to be an inspiring, enjoyable and helpful course.

Meanwhile, Peter Reynolds continued to teach a small group of students advanced courses in biblical theology and hermeneutics. Shem Foo, Paul Duncan and Andrew Macpherson were able to benefit from Peter's special gift of "seeing Christ in all the Scriptures". Andrew Young taught the Westminster Confession of Faith in evening classes, and continued an extensive preaching ministry. In the latter half of the year, new students David Lubach, Helen Macpherson, Steve Panapa, Konelio, and Peter Allen joined Ian Worrell, Pita Uo and Des Ng Shiu for courses in *E v a n g e l i s m / Discipleship, Old and New Testament Introduction and preaching*. All in all, what had threatened to be another lean year for students turned out to be a year of plenty.



Ross Thompson

Two other important events occurred in 1999.

The first was a three-month visit of GTC Board member Rev. Ross Thompson and his wife to America. Ross had long-service leave due to him and had initially toyed with the idea of taking this in the UK. However, growing contacts with Briarwood Presbyterian Church in Birmingham, Alabama, were a factor in eventually persuading him to spend February-April in the USA. These were months of stimulus and inspiration for Ross, and resulted in the College being encouraged to explore the areas of church planting and leadership development.

The other especially significant event in 1999 was a request from the Banner of Truth Trust for Andrew Young to contribute to their "Let's Study" New Testament commentary series. This required Andrew to write a 60,000 word pastoral commentary on 1&2 Thessalonians. With the wholehearted support of the Board he agreed to take up the task and set about doing it.

2000 EFFECTIVE SHEPHERDS

GTC had set out to be a College that intentionally (though not exclusively) trained people for church leadership. That emphasis had been reflected in a lead article in the May 1997 issue of *Grace Alone* entitled “Diligent Spiritual Shepherding – A Special Need in the Church Today.” While eager to help anyone who wanted to learn more about God and the Scriptures, the College nevertheless had a special focus on training men to shepherd God’s flock.

It was this passion that led to the College hosting what it called an “Effective Shepherds Seminar” in July 2000. Some 70 men from both North and South Islands registered for a two-day event that featured lectures and discussions in areas of spiritual life, biblical theology and pastoral practice. It was such a success that there was a unanimous request to repeat the seminar the following year. There were improvements that could be made, but the event overall was considered an enormous success.

College classes continued steadily throughout the year. Pita Uo and Steve Panapa had decided to continue full-time study to prepare for pastoral ministry, and five other students joined them for classes in biblical theology, systematic theology and preaching skills. Evening classes continued to attract around twenty students locally and were linked to others via telephone. All in all, 2000 was a quiet but solid year on the teaching front.

From that point of view it was a good year for Peter Reynolds and his wife Margaret to spend six months in the USA. Peter had studied at Westminster Theological Seminary in Philadelphia in the 1980’s and had long wanted to return there to renew friendships and be refreshed intellectually and spiritually. When the opportunity to do so



Peter and Margaret Reynolds

arose, Ian Grant picked up lectures in Systematic Theology, allowing Peter and Margaret

and their daughter Rebecca to travel to the USA.

Andrew Young also made a brief visit across the Tasman early in the year to speak at the Biennial Banner of Truth Conference in Sydney. He had done so two years earlier as well, and by this means kept in contact with Australian friends and church leaders. He also spoke at the Hamilton Reformed Easter Conference, building links and relationships with churches in New Zealand.

2001 A NEW BROOM!



Tony Bracefield

2001 saw the tempo of life at GTC pick up markedly. This was due in part to a larger student body. But more than anything else, it was due to the addition of Tony Bracefield to the College team. Tony had resigned from his teaching post at the

Christchurch College of Education to become full-time administrator for the Grace Bible Churches of New Zealand. These churches generously donated a significant part of Tony’s time to GTC, effectively giving us an on-the-job administrator.

The effects were instantaneous. The tone of chapel services and classes changed as Tony’s enthusiasm ignited everyone. Office furniture and library facilities were transformed, and the format of *Grace Alone* revolutionized. Tony’s wife, Sue, was responsible for the latter development. In the coming years her computer expertise and teaching skills were to be a great boon to the College. Together, the Bracefields welded the College faculty and Board into a smooth working team. Tony created a great deal of work, but he also enabled it to happen. GTC has not been the same since!

Twelve people had registered for daytime courses in 2001. The March issue of *Grace Alone* reported, “Twelve students have enrolled to attend one or more of our day courses this year. That’s a big jump on what we’ve had in the past. New students this year include Dawie Malan, a farmer from Zimbabwe, Trevor Keam, a former pastor, Azriel Gray, a joiner and cabinet-maker from



Alex Robinson

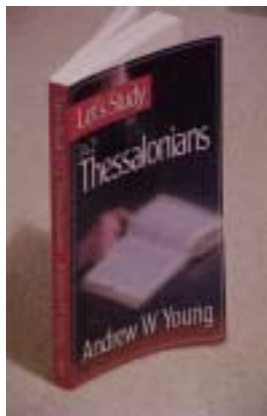
Dunedin, and Alex Robinson, a senior police officer from Auckland. They join returning students Geoff Priest, Pita Uo, Des Ng Shiu and Steve Panapa. Together they form a mature, committed student body.”

Fresh back from his visit to America, Peter Reynolds relished the opportunity to be in the classroom again. He had completed two courses in the New Testament and one in the Old Testament while away, and his wife Margaret had completed three courses in Biblical Counselling.

There were changes at the Board level, too. Board Chairman Murray Capill had received a call to teach at Reformed Theological College in Geelong, Australia, and had shifted there with his family. We were sorry to see Murray leave. His commitment, input and vision had been very influential in the life of the College. However, we were happy that the Lord had opened such fresh and challenging doors of opportunity for him. Ross Thompson took over his role on the Board and still acts as its Chairman today.

It would be wrong not to mention a number of willing helpers who had worked behind the scenes over the years to provide administrative assistance. Foremost among these was Mrs. Midge Thompson. How many hours did she spend, often alone, cataloguing books in the library? Always faithful, always gracious and gentle, what a wonderful help she was! Marie Macpherson, Denise Harris and Nola Young helped her from time to time, but Midge had always been the backbone of the support staff. This changed somewhat in 2001 with the arrival of the Malan family from Zimbabwe. Sarah Malan, a competent secretary, joined forces with Midge and together they went a long way toward cataloguing our library resources on computer.

Many other things happened in 2001 – too many to describe in detail. Andrew Young completed his commentary on 1&2 Thessalonians and at the same time published the first of the College’s Guides for Teachers and Preachers (Ephesians). His son Mark developed a



website for the College, Spiritual Encouragement lectures were inaugurated, Spiritual Encouragement Groups started for students, a second Effective Shepherds seminar conducted first in Auckland and then in the South Island, and a ministry of writing devotionals on the web commenced. In the midst of this we enjoyed the visit of American friends Howard Eyrich and Jim and Jane Baird. What an injection of wisdom and grace they provided!

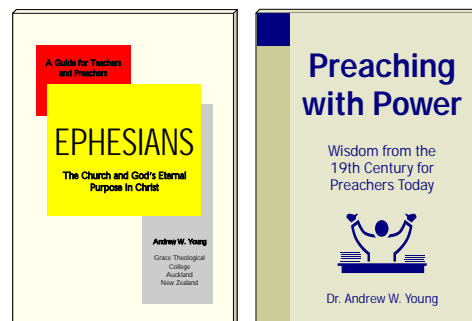
2002

THE YEAR OF THE MOVE

2002 will be remembered especially as the “year of the move” – the year GTC changed its location. Before that took place, however, Andrew Young and Tony and Sue Bracefield spent an exhilarating month in Singapore, Hong Kong, Britain and the USA.

Andrew had been asked to take a special series of lectures at Birmingham Theological Seminary in Alabama, and was planning en route to visit the Banner of Truth Trust in Edinburgh and the Evangelical Theological College in Wales. Upon learning of this, friends in Singapore and Hong Kong asked if he could deliver lectures in their respective countries. Tony and Sue needed to visit Briarwood Presbyterian Church in the USA, and were able to adjust their itinerary to accompany Andrew. They will always treasure those weeks of ministry and travel together.

They returned, as they wrote in the February 2002 *Grace Alone*, “refreshed and inspired”. A busy year lay ahead of them and the other teachers at the College. Sixteen students were waiting to be groomed for pastoral leadership and church ministries in day classes, and a group of 35 keen to study the book of Ephesians on Tuesday nights. The year began at a cracking pace.



Thessalonians Commentary, Ephesians Guide and Lectures on Preaching for Birmingham Theological Seminary

More changes were in the wind however. Up until this point, GTC had been based in the former manse of St. Andrews Presbyterian Church in Manurewa. As part of their commitment to the College, Ross and Lorraine Thompson had moved out of their church home in 1995 and made it available for GTC. The Session of the Church had shown its support too in providing three years of rent-free use of the facility.

However, developments in the St. Andrews congregation in 2001-2002 had signalled that the College would not be able to use this facility forever.



Our master builders and their finished work: new premises at 75 Rogers Rd



The growing student body was forcing us to look for new premises anyway. The new base that materialized was a recently vacated house on the border of the property of the newly constituted Covenant Presbyterian Church at 75 Rogers Road in Manurewa.

It took vision to see how this rather "tired" 60 year-old residential house could become the home of a theological college. But some could see the potential,

and set about a radical work of transformation. The "miracle" that took place before our eyes will again be a landmark in the College's history. "Spearheading this work," a report in *Grace Alone* for May 2002 said, "are four men with a combined age of 295 and accumulated building experience of 200 years! These veterans freely give their time to transforming the building into a custom-built home for the College."

By October the work was complete and the shift made. The impact of the new surroundings was immediate. Everyone loved the new building and it proved as functional as it was attractive. We celebrated the move with a memorable evening of fellowship, worship and thanksgiving.

Other things were happening in 2002 as well. Following his visit to Wales in January, Andrew Young had submitted a research project and been accepted as a PhD candidate with the University of Wales. He had also embarked on writing a second Guide for Teachers and Preachers (1&2 Thessalonians), was continuing to provide weekly devotionals on the web, and had opportunity to teach at the first Winter School of Theology in the South Island. The first of the Guides (Ephesians) had been translated into Urdu and Chin languages for use in Pakistan and Myanmar respectively, and other writing projects were underway.

Visitors continued to be a blessing to College life. In March, Iain and Jean Murray from Edinburgh made their third visit, and in August, we were able to host a special seminar conducted by USA counselling specialists Howard Eyrich and Judy Dabler called "People Helping: Curing the Heart."

This seminar was to prove a formative event in the life of GTC. The Board of the College was fully aware of the need for skilled, godly biblical counsellors within churches. But such counsellors needed specialist training. Was the answer to look to the USA (or somewhere else) to provide them "ready-made" for us? No, said Judy Dabler. The best solution was to train New Zealanders in the USA and have them return to train others here in our own country.

Her words struck a chord in the hearts of Peter and Margaret Reynolds. In the weeks that followed they sensed the Lord calling them to go to Covenant Seminary in the USA to train under



Judy Dabler and Howard Eyrich speaking on Counseling

Judy and others there for such a counselling ministry to New Zealand. They were eventually to leave their family and friends in December 2003 for this great faith-venture.

One other milestone in 2002 must be mentioned. We learned in October that the Board of Birmingham Theological Seminary had approved an agreement between the Seminary and GTC allowing our courses to be credited toward their degrees. This enables students at GTC who are university graduates to have their course work at the College credited toward M. Div, MRE, and M. Counselling degrees. We saw this as another evidence of the goodness of God and of the generous spirit of American brothers and sisters in the Lord.

2003 LAY COUNSELLING

The visit of Judy Dabler and Howard Eyrich in 2002 had widespread effects. Many who attended their seminar wanted to become “lay-counsellors” – people able to provide support and help for struggling Christians within their churches. To meet that need, Peter and Margaret Reynolds offered to teach a year-long course called “Lay Counselling.” Some 20 people registered for this and embarked on what was to become a life-changing experience. It was one of the most popular courses we have taught at College, and one that confirmed Peter and Margaret’s sense of call to study in the USA.

The first issue of *Grace Alone* for the year was entitled, “A Great Year in Store.” Andrew Young wrote in the editorial, “With courses in Counselling, Biblical Theology, Greek, Church History, Practical Christianity, Preaching, Hermeneutics, Christian Mind and New testament book studies being taught this year, the College is buzzing with activity as never before.” To cater for the extra teaching load and the growing student body, recently retired minister Arthur Palmer

and Board member Alex Robinson joined the teaching team. Arthur taught Greek and Alex, Church History. Both have since become well-established and valued members of the teaching faculty.

2003 brought a number of new and gifted students to the College. Among them were Caleb and Alison Gray and Andrew Ure from the South Island. Dawie Malan was completing his pastoral studies, Nick Allen was spending a “gap year” at the College, and Gus Sonneveld was making time in his family orchid business to attend two courses. David Robb, a lecturer at Auckland University wanted to attend preaching classes, as did Trevor Keam and Cook Islands student Rahai Nana. Classes of between 5-15 were common, a great advance on the early days. But again, more important than mere numbers was the spirit of camaraderie and love that pervaded the student body. It made GTC a great place to be at.

From early in the year Andrew Young had been involved in planning a conference for American Seminary Professor, Dr. Peter Jones. Dr. Jones, formerly Professor of New Testament at Westminster Theological Seminary in Escondido, California, was on a mission to awaken Christians in Australasia to the growing force of neopaganism in Western culture. His ministry, along with his personal encouragement, fellowship and counsel, was one of the highlights of the year.

Peter’s wife, Rebecca, who accompanied him on this visit, also made a considerable impact through a parallel conference aimed at encouraging Christian women. As a result of this the College Board began to consider the idea of offering a course designed to help women understand their



The 2003 Lay Counseling Class



Peter & Rebecca Jones

distinct role and ministries in the church. This was approved and Sue Bracefield was asked to teach it.

Principal Andrew Young was again busy both at home and abroad. In March he visited Melbourne to speak at a special study day at the South Yarra Church, and then at the Presbyterian Church of Victoria's annual Minister's Conference. He was home only a short time before embarking on another journey to the USA and Britain in connection with his research programme with the University of Wales. He preached in churches in both countries and spoke at a conference in Wales as well.

There was still more travel to come. Freshly back from Wales, Andrew answered an SOS from friends in Brisbane to cover for an American professor unable to take a special lecture series. Then in November he and Tony Bracefield travelled to the South Island to present a mini-church revitalization seminar called "Setting Churches Alight."

Meanwhile, the teaching ministry of the College continued smoothly and without interruption. Andrew's travels usually coincided with term breaks and brought minimal disruption to his teaching programme, and of course, had no effect on the other teachers Peter Reynolds, Arthur Palmer and Alex Robinson. At the same time, it was clear, especially with the impending departure of Peter Reynolds for the USA that GTC needed to enlarge its teaching faculty. Conscious of that, Andrew had been asked to interview Mark and Nancy Kreitzer while in the USA, and he had en-



GTC Trustees and Board in 2003

couraged them to visit New Zealand. They did so, fell in love with our country, but were subsequently unable to raise support to come for a long-term teaching ministry.

2004

A YEAR OF SPECIAL VISITORS

After the hectic pace of the previous years we weren't sorry that 2004 started on a quieter note. Several of our students had graduated and while there were newcomers, there was overall less pressure on the teaching staff.

We were excited, nevertheless, to welcome Hamish MacDonald as a fulltime student training for ministry within the Grace Presbyterian Church. It also great to see once again Guy McKenzie who had started pastoral studies halfway through the previous year. One of our new students was Adrian de Vries, a former sharemilker and a self-described "reluctant migrant" to the north. Others included Christy Peek, who had taken a year off teaching to deepen her knowledge of the Bible and discover the Lord's will for her life; Katherine Young, freshly out of school wanting a grounding in theology before studying to become a nurse; and Kynan Gray, taking a break from his work as an aircraft maintenance engineer. Sam Duthie, Michael Dixon and long-time students Uaita Levi and Rahai Nanua also enrolled for courses. Russell Cross, a missionary from Chad home on furlough, Falani Filipo and Kaye Christiansen were among other newcomers. Together with returning students, they guaranteed well-attended classes.

Sue Bracefield's 10 week course "Women in the Bible" was offered for the first time this year. The five women who attended deeply appreciated it. Alison Gray, one of the students, spoke of how the course had helped her appreciate God's design and pattern in creating two sexes. "I am more aware of the God-given roles and responsibilities of both men and women," she wrote, "and appreciate why women are not to be in positions of authoritative teaching/leadership in the church. I no longer feel 'squashed' by this truth. Instead, I know that women are a vital part of God's creation, and that we need to use our gifts to honour and serve him in the church, in our homes, and in society as we were created to do."

As noted above, overseas visitors provided one of



Andrew Young & Iain Murray

the special blessings of 2004. The first of these was Iain Murray, stopping briefly in March after a visit to Australia. Dr. Tom Holland from the Evangelical Theological College in Wales followed in April, and then a month later, we enjoyed a brief visit by

Dr. Stanford Murrell from the Sovereign Grace Baptist Church in Apollo, Pennsylvania, USA. All of these men delivered special lectures, as did Rev. Willem Glashouwer of *Christians for Israel* later in the year. Visits like this break the humdrum of regular College life and bring freshness and stimulus. We would be the poorer without them.

In June we welcomed another special visitor, Dr. Carl Stevens. Earlier in the year Andrew Young had received a call from a friend visiting Western Australia saying that he had met someone who was finishing a contract at a seminary in Perth. Would we be interested in having him come and teach at GTC? With Peter Reynolds in the USA we were short-staffed at GTC and in need of someone to help us, so it was worth exploring further. Within weeks we were welcoming Dr Stevens and his wife Irma-Maria and daughter Mona to Auckland. For three weeks we talked and shared and learned about each other, the outcome of which was a formal invitation to Dr. Stevens to serve on the faculty of the College. We were delighted when he responded positively, and look forward to his arrival mid-way through 2005.

Another feature of 2004 was the purchase of "Grace College House". This property, bordering



Grace College House

the College premises was purchased as a residential unit for students attending GTC from out of town. It also has land that could be used by the College for future expansion.

Ministries outside the College have continued this year, though not with the same intensity or range as in the previous year or two. In March Andrew Young was in Australia again, this time to visit Reformed Theological College in Geelong and to speak at the church camp of the Canberra Reformed Church. Shortly after arriving back he conducted a "Setting Churches Alight" revitalization conference in Auckland. Some 35 elders and pastors attended, one from as far away as Brisbane. An abridged form of this same conference was presented again in October at a regional meeting of men belonging to the Reformed Churches of New Zealand.

In July, Andrew and Carl Stevens travelled to Dunedin for the second Winter School of Theology before attending the General Assembly of the Grace Presbyterian Church in Gore. It was at this meeting that Andrew saw



Carl Stevens and family

the need for the College to focus specifically on training men for church planting. This will be one of the major new thrusts in the year ahead.

EPILOGUE

There have been many things omitted in this brief tour of our ten-year history. People have been left unnamed, some activities skipped over and disproportionate attention given to others. The omissions have not been intentional. We have not tried to be exhaustive but to give an overview that creates an impression of GTC's journey so far.

We want you to see two things in particular. The first is the emergence of a College devoted to bringing glory to God by "equipping, supporting and encouraging godly servant leaders for the church." That has always been our goal, and it has only burned brighter as the years have passed. We believe the Church of Jesus Christ is the most glorious reality on earth, and as one well-known church leader puts it, that it is "the hope of the

world.” We count it an incredible honour and blessing to do something, however small, to see the church a powerful redemptive agent in the world.

Second, we want you to see the goodness and faithfulness of God to GTC through the years. As we noted in our last issue of *Grace Alone*, the College began as a faith venture with the feeblest of human and material resources. From a purely human perspective, a “puff of wind” would have threatened its existence. But it has continued and grown. More than that, it has become a place where people young and old can experience the grace of God through his Word and through genuine fellowship and servant ministry. And for



“Setting Churches Alight” Conference in Auckland

that, we want you to join us in giving praise to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. To him alone be glory and honour forever.

---oOo---

Please join us in...

Thanking God for

- ◆ His goodness and faithfulness to GTC over the past 10 years
- ◆ The many opportunities GTC has had to equip, support and encourage godly servant leaders for the church



Praying for

- ◆ God’s continued blessings on GTC for the future
- ◆ New students to come and study with us

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