

St Andrew's Presbyterian Church Penrith

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www.penrithpresbyterian.com



ENCOURAGEMENT LETTER 22/4/2025

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

How are you today? I am thankful to have celebrated the Resurrection of Jesus with you over Easter. He is Risen!

The Prattis' and Mannyx' families are away from Tuesday to Friday this week at Refresh (Minister's Family Camp). Talk to one of the elders if you need anything.

Today we finish our series on the Congregational Snapshot with "What we need to work on – Session: Training" then followed by church matters.

ENCOURAGEMENT: What we need to work on – Session: Training

We are considering our Congregation Snapshot over the next number of weeks looking at what we value, what we are doing well and what we need to work on. Today we look at something you said we need to work on: Session – Training. This is our last look at a topic from our Congregational Survey.

What comes to mind when you think of training? We might consider a course of education to be trained in particular skills for a job – like we might receive at TAFE or University. We might think about sports, regular training to hone ability and strength and fitness to play well and win matches. We might think of learning basic life skills and live well like what happens in families. Training is an integral part of life and it includes serving at church and growing in Christ.

So how are we trained to serve and grow in Christ? Jesus shows us a model of training in how he teaches his disciples. It begins with the call: "Come, follow me and I will make fishers of men" (Matthew 4:19). Jesus promises to work intentionally in their lives to make them into fishers of men. How does Jesus do this?

Next, we see that he is present in their lives. His manner of teaching is for his disciples to follow him and be where he is, listening to him, being involved in his ministry. Jesus' training curriculum is himself, being with him and taking his lead.

Second, he acts intentionally to equip them to be fishers of men. We see this in preaching and evangelism. He tells them why he preaches (Luke 1:43), he explains what he is doing and the significance of his lessons (Luke 8:1-15). They are with him as he preaches and tells the good news to the crowds, demonstrating for them what preaching looks like. Jesus then sends them out to preach the good news themselves (Luke 9:1-6; 10:1-16) and reflects with them on their experience (Luke 10:17-24). Then after his ascension he sends them out as witnesses to the good news of his death and resurrection (Luke 24:46-47; Acts 1:8). Jesus does not throw them in the deep end but gets alongside them to EXPLAIN what it looks like and why to do it, DEMONSTRATE how to do it, SUPERVISE as they do it, APPLY it to them to go out and do it themselves (EDSA). This is how it should look like to learn anything at church.

There are opportunities for training in a number of ways at Penrith. First, one to one discipleship, where you meet up with another person who helps train you towards a certain task following the EDSA model. This is a very effective way of learning but very difficult to do for everyone. If you are interested in this kind of training, please speak to one of the elders.

A second way we have done training at Penrith is through our Bible studies. To take a term to consider an aspect of serving God (eg. prayer, sharing Jesus) and together as a church learn that together in our small groups.

A third way is through monthly seminars. Last year, Engaging With God seminars trained us in ways to engage with God and grow in our relationship with him. This year our Serving the Church seminars are training us in certain aspects of ministry in the life of the church.

The Bible also teaches us that “it is God who works in [us] to will and to act according to his purpose” (Philippians 2:13). The Holy Spirit lives in us and is equipping by the word of God (2 Timothy 3:16-17) to serve and grow as Christians. We can trust that God is working in us and take a step of faith to be trained to serve God and his church. How are you being trained to grow and serve?

FINAL COMMENTS

Here is a copy of the video we watched on Good Friday: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R2Fa52A-3kc&t=8s>
“Go Chatter Studios” also have other LEGO Bible Stories.

As always, love and prayers, Steve.