Peace on earth, Goodwill to all people.

This sentiment will be spoken and sung again and again this Christmas time. I wonder what we really mean by those words. Many of us just want some peace and quiet! As we think about the year almost ended, though, we have to admit that for many people there is no peace. They struggle to survive in places of violence or have been forced from their homes because of war and strife.

Whitley College has a vision for peace on earth and indeed peace with the earth. This is an important part of the legacy of Ross Langmead, whose death is in many ways the defining moment of this year now ending. Ross taught courses such as ‘The church’s mission for peace’. He lived the peace he dreamed of and his constant greeting was ‘Shalom’.

Working for peace requires working for justice. There can be no peace in an unjust world. We are currently preparing for a Forum to be held in Rangoon in January 2014. Our Council chair, Alan Marr, and I will be giving papers at this gathering of some 150 leaders from the Asia Pacific region. This event will bring together peace workers from about 20 countries to dialogue with theological educators. The objective is that peace-making should become part of the theological curriculum in all our seminaries and colleges. The spirit of Ross Langmead will be watching over us, I am sure!

There are many other things we are doing to give practical expression to our hopes and prayers for peace on earth. Recently we held a public forum on issues relating to asylum seekers and in 2014 we will teach a new unit on Asylum Seekers and Refugees. Our curriculum theme for next year will be ‘Love and Justice’. Theologically, there is a growing movement concerned to promote the idea of ‘a non-violent God’. This means confronting interpretations of our faith which give credence to oppression and violence. We are therefore delighted to welcome the publication of David Neville’s book, A Peaceable Hope, which challenges the use of the New Testament to justify violent and vengeful images of God and God’s purposes in history.

This has been another year of excellence in the life of Whitley College. These pages give just a few hints of the achievements and activities of our students and staff. Together, we seek to live in peace and model a way of peace-making, equipping leaders for a world of peace and justice. May the peace of God be with you!

ASYLUM SEEKER AND CHURCH-STATE RELATIONS FORUM

Prof. Mark Brett writes: When Christian prime ministers promote harsh measures against asylum seekers, it is time for the churches to step up. It is time to speak out in public, and to provide hospitality to the vulnerable people who are knocking on our doors. This was the central message of the forum held in September, co-hosted by Whitley College and Catherine Booth College. The forum panel included refugee lawyer Jessie Taylor, Major Dr. Geoff Webb and Ben Clapton from the Salvation Army. Prof. Mark Brett from Whitley College, along with Tri Nguyen and Inotoli Zhimomi.

The Salvation Army participants in the forum have both spent some time on Manus Island providing welfare services under a contract with the federal government. Both spoke of the frustrations they have experienced, having witnessed injustices first hand yet being unable to speak about them due to confidentiality requirements under the funding agreement with government. The forum identified this constraint as one among many complex issues at stake in the relationship between church and state.

Forum speakers noted that the Bible’s consistent injunction to ‘welcome the stranger’ made hospitality towards asylum seekers an imperative that could not be ignored by the church. Tri Nguyen, pastor of Brunswick Baptist Church and student at Whitley College, gave a moving testimony to the welcome that he received in Australia when he arrived by boat from Vietnam in 1982. He became a Christian through the hospitality of Moonee Ponds Baptist Church, and through that church he learned about the hospitality of God.

The asylum seeker forum was made available online via live streaming, allowing people to gather at churches such as Canberra Baptist Church and send questions through to the panel. Whitley College is planning to provide more events in this format, as well as several units in 2014 that will be streamed online.

This event was just one of the ways Whitley College plans to provide training and resources on working with asylum seekers and refugees. In 2014 we will be offering the unit Asylum Seekers and Refugees as the coordinator of the diploma studies.

TRANSFORMING LEADERS

We are so proud of how the TransFormation Program has grown since it started in 2003. The Saturday program continues to provide training for church leaders from non-English speaking backgrounds, with over 80 students enrolled this year.

There has also been an increase in the number of students who are enrolled in the Diploma of Theology through the program. Eight students have completed their diplomas this year, and even more are beginning.

We would like to thank those who have supported the program, particularly the Warrnambool Baptist Church and the Collier Charitable Fund. Their generosity has enabled an education for many who could otherwise not have afforded one.

The program is growing again in 2014, with Rev Dr Richard Mallaby taking up the role of coordinator. Rev Jillian Stewart will continue as the coordinator of the diploma studies.

May the peace of God be with you!
In 2013 we welcomed 84 new residents into the Whitley College community. It is always interesting to see how the new students shape the College and from O-Week through to the Valedictory Dinner it has been a rewarding and memorable year.

Once again sports have been an important part of College life. We were particularly thrilled to cheer on the girls’ netball team as they took out their second consecutive premiership in a series of exciting matches.

The beginning of this semester was full of enthusiastic activity as the WARTS Theatre Society prepared their production of “Once Upon a Mattress”. The performance was a very enjoyable way for some of the students to show off their hidden singing and dancing talents and provided much laughter and entertainment.

We have a very talented cohort of music students this year and as well as the WARTS musical we have had the pleasure of hearing them in a number of performances in the College Chapel, organised by our music tutor Mario Dobernig and Deputy Warden Genevieve Leach.

A new event was added to the busy College calendar this semester, with the inaugural SPARTS (sports and arts) Dinner celebrating the achievements of the year. Clare Browne and Leroy Miller received the Sportswoman and Sportsman of the year awards and past-residents who provided coaching help throughout the year were honoured for their efforts.

Our new tutors Ogi Belic and Mayuri Wijayasundara have been a wonderful addition to the College community this year. Music tutor Mario Dobernig is in the final stages of his PhD and is now seeking funding for a performance of the opera “Norsica” next year. Sadly, Belal Khan is leaving us after 3 years to return to India and Goran Milosovski is leaving after 8 years to move into his new home with his family.

At Valedictory Dinner we farewelled nine Valedictorians: Cody Shannon, Nicole Chisholm, Briana Ellis, Joses Nathanael, Rhiannon Walder, Amy Chisholm, Lisa Shalders, Rhiannon Walder and Briana Ellis.

EASY PEA-SY
In August the Whitley Annual Residential Theatre Society (WARTS) staged a production of Once Upon a Mattress.

The show is based on the story of the Princess and the Pea and, as is traditional, was very silly. The cast and even the band were fitted out brilliantly in costumes made by first year resident Rachel Pitt-Lancaster.

The cast displayed impressive comedic skills, led by Claire Stubbs as Princess Winnifred, Jim Coulson as Prince Dauntless the Drab, Emma Zagami as the Aggravain and Alistair Jones as Sextimus the Silent.

The show was a testament to the hard work and effort put in by the students over many months. For some of them it is a rare opportunity to be involved in theatre and will be one of their favourite memories of College.

VALEDICTORIANS FOR 2013
At the Valedictory Dinner in October we farewelld nine Valedictorians who have completed their studies and have lived at Whitley College for at least three years. (Clockise from back left) Amy Clements, Joses Nathanael, Cody Shannon, Jason Zhang, Chris Lai, Nicole Chisholm, Lisa Shalders, Rhiannon Walder and Briana Ellis.

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from the Dean

Rev Bruce Tudball

Our theme for 2013, the second year of our three-year cycle, is **Hope and Mission** and is aligned with the year of the Gospel of Luke.

This theme gave direction to the artists who submitted entries for the Religious Art Prize. It was pleasing to have 9 finalists presenting a range of works of outstanding quality. Different approaches to the theme were reflected in sculpture, paintings and illustration.

Hope and Mission was also reflected in the subjects offered during the year. Many students found ways to explore this theme and make connections with their life and work situations. These include those whose mission is to impart hope through caring service in hospitals, the law courts, churches, schools and on the streets – to people who are homeless, in despair, sick or even terminally ill, depressed, unemployed, aged or alone.

At the annual Celebrate event in November we congratulated those who excelled academically and expressed their insights through integrating faith and life.

One such person is Stephen Said whose work with Urban Seed incarnates the gospel among youth and homeless people. He received the inaugural Ross Langmead Prize in Mission Studies.

Katrina Lambert was honoured for her selection earlier in the year as an MCD University of Divinity Vice Chancellor’s Scholar. This award recognised her excellence in theological study and ministry while competing her M Div.

The achievement and passion of all our students provides hope and validates the mission of Whitley College in equipping leaders for a different world.

The focus for 2014, the year of the Gospel of Matthew, is **Love and Justice**. We look forward to exploring that theme in creative and practical ways.

**RELIGIOUS ART PRIZE**

The 2013 Religious Art Prize focused on the theme of ‘Hope and Mission’. The nine finalists represented both Theological and Residential students and once again explored an impressive range of artistic mediums.

At the launch in October the Prize was awarded to Liz Braid, who is an undergraduate theological student. Her winning piece, entitled ‘Not in my name II’, is intended as a statement of defiance and hope regarding the situation of asylum seekers. It is an intriguing mixture of hand embroidery and watercolour painting and illustration.

The judges also awarded special mentions to Alex May and Hannah Essack.

During the exhibition, which ran in the College Library during November, a People’s Choice prize was voted on and awarded to resident student Samuel Lam.

The prizes were awarded at Celebrate 2013 in November. Liz’s prize includes a week’s exhibition at Chapel on Station Gallery in 2014.

Religious Art Prize 2013. 
Clockwise from top left: Winner Liz Braid discusses her work with Anne Mallaby; Alex May; Hannah Essack; Samuel Lam explains his piece to Frank Rees; the finalists (left to right) Samuel Lam, Xiaoli Yang, Hannah Essack, Joe Pinkard, Kelly Skilton, Alex May, Pauline Byrt and Liz Braid (Libby Byrne not pictured).
Alumni events

BACK TO COLLEGE DINNER FOR 1973 RESIDENTS

In August we had the pleasure of welcoming residents from 1973 back to the College. Derek, Jill, Shaun, Tony and Maritta (top right) joined us for drinks and dinner at Hall.

The trip down memory lane included a tour of the College with a chance to visit old bedrooms and compare the differences in the College layout and interiors.

The former residents chatted with current students and staff over drinks and dinner and shared their stories of College life.

This series of dinners will continue in 2014, with residents from 1974, 1984, 1994 and 2004 invited to come back to visit the College and join us for dinner.

For more information please visit www.whitley.org.au/alumni

WHIT’S END DRINKS

We celebrated the end of the academic year in the Residential College in November. Past residents from 2011 and 2012 returned to catch up with the students from this year over a barbecue and drinks in the courtyard.

William Tonkin, Sarah Ballard, Matt Culvenor, Louise Larcombe and Monique Eddy

Katelin McLennan, Nick Twaddle, Louise Larcombe and Sally Butler

Kate Cochrane and Meg Caffrey

Derek Mui, Nat Ballinger and Celeste Bussell

2014 Student Club President Shaun Pye with Chris Lee and Hiro Chan

2013 Valedictorians Briana Ellis and Rhiannon Walder with Brad Spinks