



REDEEMER BAPTIST SCHOOL ANNUAL SERVICE OF WORSHIP

10th December, 2018

The Hub, Hillsong Hills Campus

The Principal's Address:

What's at stake in education?

Our children - the next generation!

REDEEMER BAPTIST SCHOOL

incorporating

The Hills Regional Skills Centre



Annual Service of Worship

and

The Principal's Address

What's at Stake in Education?

Our children—the next generation!

The Hub, Hillsong Hills Campus
1–5 Solent Circuit, Baulkham Hills
Monday, December 10th, 2018

Christians believe there are absolute moral truths that are the good gift of the God who made the world, and that upholding and living out these truths will be for the benefit of everyone in the community.

— Dr Megan Best, *Fearfully and Wonderfully Made*, 2012

It means everything to me to see this church on Dunghutti land in Kempsey completed. I am very overwhelmed by the generosity of Redeemer Baptist School and everyone who contributed to make this a reality. It means a lot to the Aboriginal community to get this finished.

— Uncle Claude Roberts, *Macleay Argus*, 20th July 2018

We cannot hope only to leave our children a bigger car, a bigger bank account. We must hope to give them a sense of what it means to be a loyal friend, a loving parent, a citizen who leaves his home, his neighbourhood and town better than he found it.

— President George H W Bush, *Inaugural Address*, 1989

I am passionate about Christian schooling. I am particularly concerned that we face the challenge of keeping Christian schools Christian. This will require a well-established Christian worldview that will inform our practice. There must be clearly Christian evangelical educators who will challenge one another to be fearless in their determination not to compromise to secular educational philosophies. I am also passionate about good scholarship. Excellence is important.

— Dr Max Shaw, *Australia's Christian Heritage National Forum*, 2006

In order for doctrine to be fruitful to us, it must overflow into our hearts, spread into our daily routines, and truly transform us within.

— John Calvin, *A Little Book on the Christian Life*, 1536

In Australia, many parents (and students) are focused on ATAR as the end-product of education, and are often wary of anything that distracts from that. There is, however, increasing awareness of the different and developing skills required for a more complex workforce and, indeed, for living happy, fulfilled lives.

— Mitchell Institute Report, *The Capable Country*, 2018

God's purpose in creating the cosmos was, in fact, to bless his creatures, to show them love and faithfulness, to rescue them from danger and distress, and to forgive and restore them when they falter.

— Iain Provan, *Seriously Dangerous Religion*, 2014

I don't think it's controversial in Australia that people expect religious schools to teach the practice of their faith and their religion.

— The Hon. Alex Hawke, *Australian Teacher Magazine*, November 2018

What's at Stake in Education?

Our children—the next generation!

In just over twelve months since it was launched, the online game *Fortnite* has become a cultural sensation with more than 200 million players. That's eight times the population of Australia, including 75 million players who have joined since June this year. And thousands of fans flocked to the first live stadium tournament in Los Angeles in June this year where players paired up with celebrities to compete for a top prize of \$1m US. The company that created *Fortnite* has pledged \$100m US in prize money for an e-sports league in 2019 culminating in a *Fortnite* World Cup. So if you think that adults and children are already wasting too much time on meaningless screen games that have the potential to suck in more than a reasonable amount of leisure and work time while drawing from the family budget without a worthwhile purpose, imagine the impact of this new e-sports culture in the years ahead.

What's at stake here? The survival of an onscreen avatar. A pump of adrenalin. The addictive pull to play it again. And perhaps a couple of dozen in 200 million players will get a prize.

For the last couple of months there has been a film in the cinemas taking a close look at the life of the NASA astronaut Neil Armstrong, the first man to walk on the moon nearly 50 years ago on 20th July, 1969 (the last time a man walked on the moon was in December, 1972). Armstrong's steps on the moon were seen live on television screens around the world, thanks in part to "the Dish" radio telescope at Parkes in NSW. Anyone who can remember this moon walk probably doesn't want to admit it because you would have to be at least as old as me! Most schools back then didn't have televisions, so some school headmasters let their students out of school into the care of a mum in a nearby home so that the students could watch the historic event as it happened. A Working With Children Check was not required back then. The *First Man* film portrays the extensive training of the astronauts in every detail of their mission. They weren't just trained physically. They were also trained mentally and emotionally. Their habits had to be ready for the precision required to get all the way to the moon and back on their pioneering mission where much was still unknown. They couldn't look up Google if they had a problem. Computers back then weren't anywhere near as powerful as any of your iPads or notebooks.

What's at stake here? Not only the pride of the United States of America but also the lives of the astronauts and their families. Prior to Armstrong's successful Apollo 11 mission, three astronauts in Apollo 1 perished in January, 1967 during a pre-flight test because the engineers got some things wrong. It's not just an

avatar at stake here, game over, start again. Any mistake will end in human tragedy.

For the last four years in the NSW Parliament, centenary commemorations have been voiced by presiding officers in both chambers lest we forget the Australians who sacrificed so much for us in the First World War. Like the daily Last Post ceremonies at the Australian War Memorial, it is very moving to read the Hansard accounts of Aussies who: promoted human concerns in the face of incredible suffering; helped to deliver allies from the oppression of their enemy; and secured our freedom as a young nation. This wasn't a game, nor was it an exploratory excursion into the unknown. This was the dread reality of war in which 416,809 men enlisted from a nation of fewer than five million. During the war, 60,000 Aussies were killed and 156,000 wounded, gassed or taken prisoner.

What's at stake here? Charles Bean, who established the Australian War Memorial and wrote the official history of Australia on the First World War, described the ANZAC spirit as standing for 'reckless valour in a good cause, for enterprise, resourcefulness, fidelity, comradeship, and endurance that will never own defeat.' In short, they gave themselves for us—for future Australians—so that we could live free from the oppression of a conqueror.

So what's at stake when children turn up at school every week day, 40 weeks each year, for thirteen years of their lives? In any school week, your children will spend much more time at school than most addicted gamers spend online. But at the end of thirteen years (or even thirteen weeks), we cannot simply discard the avatar student and start the game over again. What happens at school every day has to count for a lifetime. We are constantly being told by cyber experts that the vocational futures of your children are at least as difficult to predict and prepare for as the Apollo landings on the moon. So we must make wise choices about curriculum and pedagogy to equip our next generation for their uncertain future. Indeed, our children are inheriting a society where the assault on truth threatens to oppress anyone or any institution that will not bend its beliefs and actions to match the constantly fluid change that is driving community consensus.

In short, what's at stake in the mutual trust between teachers and parents in school education is the next generation—the holistic welfare of your children and their families. So what are the choices and what is the context presented for us as we look forward from 2018?

Curriculum & Pedagogy

At the 5th International STEM in Education conference hosted by the Queensland University of Technology in Brisbane last month, Dr Alan Finkel—Australia's Chief Scientist—in an address entitled 'The Winning 2030 CV', advocated for a

‘content-rich curriculum’ at school in which students worked towards mastering particular disciplines, especially science and mathematics. Finkel is also chair of the Australian Government STEM Partnerships Forum which stated in its Issues Paper released last December:

Our primary and secondary schools are not equipping our students in STEM subjects as well as in years past. Students are increasingly opting out of STEM subjects and their performance shows an alarming trend towards mediocrity.

Finkel is urgent because, he says, if Australia does not address this issue, ‘we will fall short of the incredible promise of our times’. The Issues Paper then proposed a solution: ‘make these subjects so compelling, so stimulating and so exciting that the student cannot help but be inspired to take up these subjects’.

The evidence in 2018 at Redeemer is that teachers of STEM subjects are stimulating interest and excellence, for example:

- The Preparatory STANSW Redeemer Budding Young Scientist winner (Year 2);
- The Middle School ICAS Redeemer national medallist in Mathematics (Year 6);
- The Senior School Redeemer 2nd in the BHP Billiton Science & Engineering Awards; and
- The University Dean’s Medal in Advanced Nursing for a Redeemer alumnus.

Excellence and interest in science at Redeemer is supported by our Christian worldview which sees the world as a wonderful place made by God for the flourishing of His creation. And in STEM we are given the amazing opportunity to observe with awe God’s handiwork (Psalm 111:2), and then respond in obedience to a God-given opportunity to use our observations for the benefit of humanity and all creation.

But it’s not only what we teach that is important, it’s also how we teach. In July this year, I attended a packed Wesley Mission auditorium with more than a thousand teachers present and thousands more online—not as big as the *Fortnite* phenomenon, but massive in the world of education—to listen to the current opinions driving practice in what has been aptly named ‘The Reading Wars’. Distinguished Professor Anne Castles from Macquarie University wrote this in a detailed paper on the subject published this year by the Association for Psychological Science.

There is intense public interest in questions surrounding how children learn to read and how they can best be taught. Research in psychological science has provided answers to many of these questions but, somewhat surprisingly, this research has been slow to make inroads into educational policy and practice. Instead, the field has been plagued by decades of ‘reading wars’.

But the teaching of reading is not a screen game where avatars are sacrificed if we get it wrong. Reading is vital for so much in learning, leisure, democracy and work. The World Literacy Foundation estimates that illiteracy costs the global economy \$1.5 trillion annually and points out that 85% of teenagers involved in criminal activities are functionally illiterate. The research, according to Castles, points to the necessity for systematic, explicit instruction in phonemic awareness as the basis for fluent reading and comprehension. Mere exposure to print—still the preferred method of many teachers in other schools, perhaps because they haven’t received instruction in phonemic awareness in their teacher education programs—leaves many students struggling without a framework to decode text in order to arrive at meaning.

The successful application of this evidence-based approach to teaching literacy in our WRAP method is demonstrated again this year in some excellent Redeemer student achievements, including:

- A state Gold Redeemer award in the NESAWriteOn competition (Year 2);
- A national 1st Redeemer prize in the Dorothea Mackellar Poetry Awards (Year 4); and
- Advice from ACARA that Redeemer has demonstrated substantially above average gain in reading and numeracy achievement, as measured by NAPLAN (Years 3–9).

The most recent UK’s Open University Innovating Pedagogy report lists ‘epistemic education’—knowing how we know—as a high impact trend that will become widespread in education over the next two to five years. It’s so important that our students learn to understand what they are reading from different sources and then, with attentive reasoning and critical thinking, discern what are true and important inputs for life decisions.

Our Christian worldview impels us to utilise best practice pedagogy when teaching students how to read and write because God has given us words in a book which—put together—tell us the truth about our world, our destiny, moral accountability, right living, human potential and God’s unfailing love for all the world revealed in Jesus Christ. More than that, we and the next generation have the inexplicable privilege of hearing God Himself speak to us as we read His

word. Then, as the reality of this personal relationship with our Creator and Redeemer hits home, we have a further privilege of sharing words carefully crafted to invite unbelievers to share our joy as we glorify our living Lord! The Word made flesh (John 1:14) is the *raison d'être* for any Christian school.

Cultivating Capabilities

There is increasing consensus in the teaching profession that education in the context of a rapidly changing world must be more than an accumulation of facts in subject disciplines. The OECD has identified three categories of transformative competencies (also known as 21st Century Learning) in its *Education 2030* project to help launch students into uncharted future social and digital spaces, namely: creating new value; reconciling tensions and dilemmas; and taking responsibility. According to their 2018 report, these competencies are learnable and assessable so the OECD has designed a framework for education departments around the world to redesign their curriculums. In this OECD model, 'disciplinary knowledge' is said to be important, but English and Mathematics are not mentioned. But epistemic knowledge about disciplines—knowing how to think like a mathematician, historian or scientist—assumes increased importance when mentioned specifically.

In October this year, the Victoria University's Mitchell Institute—whose purpose is to identify the needs of Australians who are missing out on educational opportunities—published an Issues Paper entitled *The Capable Country*. According to this paper, the capabilities necessary to successfully navigate life in an increasingly complex world 'are cultivated and grown through an accumulation of moments, interactions, activities and habits formed in the classroom, the home, the workplace, the community and the social sphere'. The paper then proposes a strategy for implementing a capability-led (as opposed to a knowledge-and-skills-led) curriculum. Following the Mitchell Institute guidelines, opportunities for developing and assessing creativity, motivation, problem-solving, conscientiousness and collaboration will be at least as important as assessment of knowledge or skills.

But in addition to these commonly referenced qualities, the general capabilities in the Australian curriculum include numerous ethical and intercultural domains. If these capabilities lead the curriculum in a school that disregards moral attributes, students could be taught and assessed on their ability to think the same values as the rest of the culture. The Mitchell Institute paper states succinctly:

When young people are given opportunities to routinely use capabilities, they become lifelong habits and dispositions.

So this proposed curriculum redesign has the potential to shape not only the learning and working capabilities of our students but also the values enacted in their relationships. If the cultural consensus in these ethical capabilities—which have no fixed reference points in divinely ordained decrees—leads the curriculum, together with associated grades affecting academic progression, then any school or teacher will trump the contributions of families and churches to their children’s moral consciences and ethical actions.

The cultural context of this proposal for schools and teachers to input the values into students’ lifelong habits and dispositions includes not only the discredited so-called ‘Safe Schools Program’, but also a recent postal-vote-driven change in Australian law concerning marriage that is offensive not only to Bible-believing Christians but also adherents of many other faiths. And poll-driven political agendas for the near future include changes to a doctor’s job description to facilitate the killing of old, infirm or apparently incurably hopeless patients. And free speech is already restricted for anyone who would like to pray for or encourage the mother of an unborn child not to terminate its life with an abortion. I believe that now, more than ever before, parents should be concerned about handing over their responsibility to shape their children’s moral and ethical framework to education policies that ignore, or specifically oppose, biblical truths which have for centuries shaped the vision of what is right and good in western societies.

Currently, there is a curriculum review underway in NSW ‘to equip students to contribute to Australian society in the 21st century’ and ‘prepare each student with strong foundations of knowledge, capabilities and values’. This is the first review of the whole curriculum in NSW since 1989, with a report due to the NSW Minister for Education by the end of next year. At this stage it is not possible to comment on the direction or outcomes of this review.

Of course, Redeemer values the partnership that we have with parents to cultivate our students’ right ethical understanding and right habits informed by unchanging truths recorded as the word of God in the Bible. We want our students to value every life as made in the image of God. We want our students to flourish in their relationships as they respect the commands of the One who truly knows what is best for His creation. Hence, our students are developing excellent employable attributes relevant to their futures as evidenced by the top VET in schools award issued by the NSW Department of Industry this year to a Redeemer Senior School student. Our Christian worldview gives us high motivation to give glory to God in everything that we do (1 Corinthians 10:31), serving others ‘with goodwill, as to the Lord, and not to men’ (Ephesians 6:7).

Fighting the good fight

In June this year, I attended a book launch at the Scots Church in the city. It was a new book on Australian history and there were about 300 present—which again isn't *Fortnite* proportions but is pretty big for a history book. John Anderson (the former Deputy Prime Minister) and Rob Stokes (the current NSW Minister for Education) were two of the celebrity speakers at the event. The author was a Macquarie University Associate Professor of History, Dr Stuart Piggin. It is an interesting read with many fascinating stories from our nation's past covering the years 1740–1914. One paragraph, fairly early in the book, says this:

Cowper [an Anglican minister at St Phillip's in Sydney from 1809 to 1858] and Macquarie [the Governor of NSW from 1810 to 1821] worked closely together in a team effort to bring order and social renovation to the infant colony. Governor and parson contrived to replace concubinage with marriage, drunkenness with sobriety, illiteracy and the neglect of children with education, shiftlessness with employment, practical atheism with Sabbath observance and churchgoing, and callousness about death with decent burials in consecrated ground.

There's the good fight! Government and the Church combining with an agreed view about what is right and good for families and society, planting the seeds of what will become a prosperous, just and free nation. At the launch, the Hon. Rob Stokes said: 'It's almost impossible to overstate the impact that evangelical Christians have had on the evolution of Australian culture and society.'

Having in mind this Australian history of significant contribution to public prosperity through the redemption of many individual lives, it is a surprise that 2018 has become a year where decent Australians would feel the need to fight to preserve their religious freedoms. No doubt you've seen the media headlines. Here are some from the last few days of November:

- Ignoring religious freedom debate helps no one
- Religious schools at risk of losing right to pursue their faith
- Time to protect religious beliefs
- Majority backs laws to protect religions
- Schools fear loss of rights on faith
- Labor plan a threat to biblical teaching, says Catholics

One Senator warned that current proposed legislation 'completely removes the ability of religious educational institutions to maintain their ethos through what they teach and through the rules of conduct they impose on students'. Another Senator warned that the proposed legislation says 'to a religious school that the

faith they have had for thousands of years can no longer be passed on to the children of that flock because, within the last decade, we've decided that it contravenes modern principles of antidiscrimination'. The issue of letting religious schools operate according to the moral dictates of their religion was, in 2013, given unquestioning bipartisan support. Just five years ago, it was unthinkable that a Christian school would be shackled with students or staff who belligerently opposed the school's religious doctrines, ethics or purpose. 'But', we are told by a leading politician, 'it's 2018, community attitudes have moved on.'

Well, in large part Redeemer Baptist was the result of community attitudes moving on in the 1960s with the sexual revolution causing major disruption in families and their children. We didn't move on. Our response was to open our homes in extended families in our Redeemer community to provide a bulwark for young people, especially—a safe place to restart their broken lives with the hope of goodness in the gospel of Jesus Christ. Then the education revolution in the 1970s promoted immoral lifestyles in personal development, and horribly polluted the imagination of students in its choice of literature, and specifically excluded God from recognition in science. We didn't move on. Our response was the founding of Redeemer Baptist School where the truth of creation and the Ten Commandments and forgiveness in Jesus Christ could be taught to children as a strong foundation for a good life in a culture that was losing its grip on truth. And now when the pressure to conform to the rapidly shifting sands of cultural morality are starting to blow a gale, we won't move on. With God's help we will stand firm because we want to provide an opportunity for children to flourish in the freedom of knowing and submitting to the truth about what is good in the world and in humanity. For all mankind is made in the image of God to live in the love of God, what the Bible calls the 'good and acceptable and perfect will of God' (Romans 12:2).

Greg Sheridan—foreign editor for *The Australian* newspaper—concluded his latest book (*God is Good for You: a defence of Christianity in troubled times*) with these words:

Christians should be happy warriors, even friendly warriors. They need to be as determined as their enemies, but much kinder. There is no formula for success. But Christians have the single great advantage that they are telling the truth. Keep trying.

I am grateful for the many parents who have joined us and continue to join us as happy warriors, determined to live the truth and tell the truth so that our children can know the truth. For the sake of our children, whatever the sacrifices, it is worth the fight!

A brief look at Redeemer in 2018

Standing firm in a Christian worldview in education, Redeemer students continue to excel.

City of Parramatta Australia Day Awards

- *Evette Khaziran*, Young Citizen of the Year High Achiever Award

Western Sydney VET in Schools Student of the Year

- *Pariselle Hughes* (Business)

BHP Billiton Science and Engineering Awards

- *Lachlan Bolton*, 2nd in Engineering 2018
- *Evette Khaziran & Lachlan Bolton*, national finalists 2018
- *Gilana Behan, Miriam Poyitt, Junior Savaiko & Bilge Zohre*, national semi-finalists 2018

STANSW Young Scientist Awards

- *Bethanie Jones*, Budding Young Scientist of the Year Award for her project *How packaging affects the ripening of bananas*; Equal 1st Scientific Investigations, K–2; Sebel Testing & Evaluations Award, K–12
- *Lucius Figueira*, equal 1st Scientific Investigations, K–2
- *Burhan Zohre*, equal 1st Scientific Investigations, K–2
- *Carla Zammit*, Rowe Scientific Depth Study Gold Award, Year 11
- *Bilge Zohre*, 1st AARNET Communications Award, Working Scientifically, Years 7–12
- *Madhavan Jayaraman*, MANSW 1st Working Mathematically, Years 9–10
- *Gregory Burns*, 2nd OshClub Inventions & Innovations, Years 7–8
- *Anthony Guirguis & Gleb Kozlov*, 3rd AIP Most Outstanding Physics Award, K–12
- *Leon Yangdong*, 3rd MANSW Working Mathematically, Years 7–8

Intel ISEF (International Science & Engineering Fair, Los Angeles)

- *Lachlan Bolton*, represented Australia with his project *Future Board*

University of NSW ICAS Medal in Mathematics

- *Anubhav Ammangi*, Year 6

Dorothea Mackellar Poetry Awards

- *Amy Kwak*, 1st in Australia AL primary
- *Ruth Burns & Han Zheng*, Shortlisted AL secondary

NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) WriteOn Competition

- *Kripa Clement*, (Stage 1) Gold award

History Mastermind

- *Kayley Garth, Victoria Garth, Sonaya Goldy, Robbie Waller & Peter Zhu* won the bronze medal at the HTA History Mastermind

University of Wollongong STEM Awards

- *Year 10* winning school & winning teachers (*Stuart Garth, Barbara Hodgson, Joel Poyitt & Ken Shaw*) STEM award
- *Evette Khaziran*, women in STEM winning student
- *Telisha Petrick*, Textiles Technology & Indigenous STEM awards (Year 10)
- *Khelsie Thompson*, Textiles Technology runner-up and Indigenous STEM awards (Year 9)
- *Bilge Zohre*, Science winner, overall runner-up (Year 10)
- *Junior Savaiko*, Mathematics winner, Industrial Technology runner-up (Year 10)
- *Antonio Kwok*, Technology Group winner (Year 9)
- *Gokulraj Kuppusamy*, Technology Group Winner (Year 8)
- *Gilana Behan*, Science & Industrial Technology runner-up (Year 10)
- *Thomas Portelli*, Technology group runner-up (Year 10)
- *Brooke Akele*, Textiles Technology runner-up (Year 10)

AusSIP Employability Award

- *Gilana Behan & Rachael Jones* (Hospitality)
- *Huzayfah Choudhury, Pariselle Hughes, Mikalah Zammit & Panialeise Hughes* (Business)

Premier's Reading Challenge

- *Daniel Bhe, Emily Burns, Elliot Fahd, Kayla Fahd, Alisha Maharaj, Lydia Mikhael, Evelyn Poyitt & Anaya Rajaratnam* received PRC medals.

- There were 19 platinum awards and 40 gold awards.

Julie Owens MP Christmas card competition

- *Gloria Han*, finalist

Western Sydney University Dean's Merit Lists

- Alumnus *Catherine Cannon*, School of Nursing & Midwifery
- Alumni *Thomas Bailey & Bethany Poyitt*, School of Humanities & Communication Arts
- Alumnus *Michael Jones*, School of Engineering
- Alumnus *Daniel Roman*, School of Business
- Alumnus *Jaisan Rajan*, School of Science & Health. Jaisan was also awarded the Western Sydney University Academic Achievement Scholarship (\$5,000pa) and the Jim Anderson Memorial Academic Excellence Scholarship sponsored by Blacktown City Council (also worth \$5,000pa).

Western Sydney University Dean's Medal

- Alumnus *Catherine Cannon*, School of Nursing & Midwifery

Australian College of Educators

- World Teachers' Day Awards, *Katriona Bailey & Richard Townsend*
- Service Award, *Russell Bailey*

Sport team championships

- SWISSA senior boys Oztag with *Ambaye Akele* as captain
- SWISSA senior girls volleyball with *Evette Khaziran* as captain
- SWISSA under 15's girls netball with *Sila Zohre* as captain
- SWISSA senior boys soccer and football cup with *Ambaye Akele* as captain
- SIWSSA under 15's boys football cup with *Atharva Dudhe* as captain
- SWISSA senior girls soccer with *Carla Zammit* as captain
- SWISSA under 15's girls soccer with *Esther Park* as captain
- SWISSA senior girls tennis with *Carla Zammit & Rachael Jones*
- SWISSA junior girls tennis with *Kayley Garth & Victoria Garth*
- SWISSA junior boys tennis with *Kush Dewan & Gokulraj Kupussamy*

Swimming, Athletics and Cross Country

- In the SWISSA swimming carnival: *Amelia Zammit, Alex Choi, Leon Yangdong, Evelyn Poyitt, Jayden Kwak, Carla Zammit & Jessica Kulasuriya* were age champions and Redeemer was the champion school.
- In the SWISSA cross country: *Victoria Gering, Victoria Garth, Gregory Burns, Emily Burns, Farzin Sheriff, Panialeise Hughes, Shiven Bansal, Carla Zammit, Marcus Portelli, Elvice Ikuo & Junior Savaiko* were age champions and Redeemer was the champion school.
- In the SWISSA athletics carnival: *Victoria Gering, Victoria Garth, Okiemute Albert-Ikolo, Esther Park, Edward Garth, Mikalah Zammit, Sirach Zohre, Carla Zammit, Anthony Bolton, Telisha Petrick, Elvice Ikuo & Junior Savaiko* were age champions and Redeemer was the champion school.

Association of Independent Co-Educational Schools (AICES) Sport

- *Ambaye Akele, Callum Bailey, Anthony Bolton, Lachlan Bolton, Jordan Ebert, Edward Garth, Adam Gibson & Junior Savaiko* were selected to represent SWISSA in touch football and were the AICES Champions.
- *Carla Zammit & Elvice Ikuo* were selected to represent SWISSA in girls basketball.
- *Anthony Bolton & Alpay Filizkok* were selected to represent SWISSA in boys basketball.
- *Joe Cho, Anthony Bolton & Ambaye Akele* were selected to represent SWISSA in open boys soccer.
- *Elvice Ikuo, Khelsie Thompson, Talar Alzened & Brooke Akele* were selected to represent SWISSA in girls soccer.
- *Edward Garth* was the 15 years boys athletics age champion.
- Redeemer won the AICES athletics carnival.

CIS (Combined Independent Schools) Sport

- *Elvice Ikuo* won bronze (100m), secondary athletics
- *Okiemute Albert-Ikolo, Anthony Bolton, Edward Garth, Junior Savaiko, Ethan Tjhin & Carla Zammit* also represented AICES at CIS athletics (secondary).
- *Edmond Filise, Joshua Frost, Pierre Hughes, Daniel Ouyang, Anshita Sarin, David Shin & Victoria Sultana* represented ASISSA at CIS athletics (primary).
- *Benjamin Fahd* represented ASISSA at CIS swimming (primary).

- *Adrian Burns, Jeffrey Dong, Emily Kim & Ansh Marken* represented ASISSA at CIS cross country (primary).

Tertiary success

- In 2017, 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.

Competitions: 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

- 14 High Distinctions: *Abishek Clement* (English), *Miriam Poyitt* (English & Geography); *Anubhav Ammangi* (Mathematics & Science); *Anaya Rajaratnum* (Mathematics & Geography); *Daniel Ouyang, Tom Li & Antonio Kwok* (Mathematics); *Gokulraj Kuppusamy* (Science & Geography); *Edward Garth & Gleb Kozlov* (Geography).
- 64 distinctions and 223 credits

Many students starred in excellent productions, including: Kindergarten's *You Are Special*; the Preparatory School's *The Amazing Book*; Junior Drama Club's *One Man Two Masters*; and Senior Drama Club's *Death in Egypt*. Music students entertained with high quality performances for parents and students in Sargood Hall including Mendelssohn's Violin Concerto performed by *Antonio Kwok* (piano) and *Darren Li* (violin).

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 *Educating the Cyber Generation: update for all teachers* 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 2018

- Year 10 students raised \$37,477.34 in their Gala Day program: to assist remote Indigenous youth from Tennant Creek, Yuendumu and Harts

Range, NT; and to construct a community shelter for the Australian Indigenous Christian Ministries on Aboriginal Land Council property in Kempsey.

- Redeemer hosted a visit from one of the leaders of the Barai tribe where *Itokama*, our sister school, is located.
- The Headmaster visited past and present students and their families and forged relationships with Christian schools in China and Hong Kong.
- Redeemer hosted an inaugural exchange visit of teachers and students from Wing Kwong College, a ministry of Wing Kwong Pentecostal Holiness Church in Hong Kong.
- Redeemer hosted visits from a Chinese student group and a Chinese Women's Society.
- The Chairman led a delegation of teachers to Europe on a tour taking in cultural, historical, geographical and technological items to enrich their teaching. They also met with friends of Redeemer who taught at the School many years ago.
- 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*.

The blessing of new and refurbished infrastructure in 2018

- Camp Long Beach, north of Batemans Bay, was purchased with the assistance of a number of donors including a substantial gift of \$1,860,427 from Elizabeth Cannon. All who worked with our Founding Principal, Noel Cannon, knew how much he valued the opportunity for character formation and community building in the context of outdoor education provided in Redeemer's camping program.
- The pedestrian bridge over Pennant Hills Road at Masons Drive has been provided by the NSW government to assist with the safe crossing of students from all schools in our education precinct at North Parramatta. We are thankful to our local Member, Dr Geoff Lee MP, who has championed this cause on behalf of Redeemer and all our neighbouring education institutions throughout his term in Parliament.
- With permission from our neighbours at the Uniting Theological College, Redeemer has updated our sewerage connection to bypass the very old,

unstable connection that relied on passage underneath Pennant Hills Road near James Ruse Drive.

- In order to accommodate Redeemer's growth, Year 2 has been housed in a new modern modular classroom located on the northwestern edge of the School oval.
- With an eye to long term cost saving and ecological responsibility, Redeemer has installed solar panels, with a potential harvest of 110,700kWh per year, on the N F Cannon Library and the Science & Technology building.
- The adaptive reuse heritage reconstruction of the Worker's Cottage on the northeastern edge of the Redeemer oval has been completed, with many admiring comments from those who pass by.
- Heritage maintenance projects have been completed in Sargood Hall and Ivanhoe.

Recognition of many years of academic excellence & community service

Earlier this year, the NSW Parliament Hansard recorded the cumulative impact of twenty years of extraordinary achievements of Redeemer students, including:

- *In the Science Teachers' Association of NSW Young Scientist competition, Redeemer students have won five Young Scientist awards, four Primary Young Scientist awards, and two Budding Young Scientist of the Year awards.*
- *In the national BHP Billiton Science and Engineering Awards, there have been six national Redeemer prizes, including a second prize this year, and four primary winners.*
- *At the Intel International Science and Engineering Fair in America, Redeemer students represented Australia honourably, bringing home five grand awards and four special awards including a \$50,000 scholarship to the University of Arizona.*
- *For eight consecutive years, Redeemer students have won gold, silver and bronze awards in the NESAWriteOn competition for preparatory school students.*
- *For nine consecutive years, Redeemer students have won national first or second prizes in the Dorothea Mackellar Poetry Awards.*
- *For four consecutive years, Redeemer students have won first or second place in the Carlingford Dundas Lions Club Voice of Youth public speaking competition.*
- *For five of the past seven years, Redeemer classes have been winners in the History Teachers' Association of NSW History Mastermind.*

- *Since 2005, Redeemer students have supported 15 remote or disadvantaged communities both in Australia and overseas, including significant construction projects for Aboriginal communities at Muli Muli, Bourke, Boggabilla and Kempsey.*

The Hansard record then stated that ‘this impressive array of student achievements has been supported by the dedication of a highly committed community of teachers, inspired by foundational leaders Mr Noel Cannon and Dr Max Shaw who were determined to instil a culture of excellence to the glory of God in accordance with Jesus’ command to love God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength.’

Giving thanks for the legacy of our founders

A few weeks ago, our Headmaster Emeritus Dr Max Shaw—affectionately known at Redeemer since its inception as Uncle Max—went to be with Jesus. For about two months prior to his passing, Uncle Max was unable to say much in his hospital bed. But during that time he received hundreds of visits from past Redeemer students and parents who stood by his bedside and talked or wept or laughed about who this Headmaster had been for them. When he was conscious, his face lit up with delighted recognition of his vast school family.

Following the celebration of God’s gift to so many through Uncle Max in Sargood Hall, which many of you attended, there were tributes given in his honour in each of the NSW state Houses of Parliament. In the Legislative Council, The Hon. Paul Green—our speaker at this Annual Service of Worship last year—moved a motion honouring Dr Shaw’s legacy. That motion was passed on the 21st November. In the Legislative Assembly, Dr Lee offered his tribute to Dr Shaw in a Private Member’s Statement recorded in Hansard on 15th November. Dr Lee’s speech is a reminder of what can be done through a man who gives himself unstintingly to the truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ, believing that there is hope for any fellow human, believing that God will provide the resources we need to do good for our neighbours in the name of Jesus. This is what Dr Lee said:

Tonight I bring to the attention of the House the extraordinary contribution of Dr Max Shaw to my community in Parramatta, in particular, through the community of the Redeemer Baptist School and the fellowship of the Redeemer Baptist Church.

In 1960 Dr Shaw began his working life as a research associate with the CSIRO in Brisbane. After completing a PhD in microbiology at the University of California, Max moved to Sydney in 1970 to take up an appointment as research director at one of the largest private research laboratories in the Southern Hemisphere. By that time he was already a world expert on cheese

starters and baker's yeast. Dr Shaw's expertise and integrity as a food and research consultant were highly regarded by governments and industry throughout Australia.

On weekdays Dr Shaw was a research scientist but on weekends he was a youth director in a local Baptist church where up to 100 counter-culture young people, kids with big problems—including bikies and drug addicts—started attending the evening service. Responding to their need for a new start so that these young people could have a good life, Max became a founding elder in a radical initiative to provide an intentional Christian community with families providing support 24/7, giving them hope for healing and redemption. In 1974 those families formed the Redeemer Baptist Church. Dr Shaw's home, Koinonia, remained open until the end of his life, with dozens of young people finding a new foundation for hope and lasting change for the better. Redeemer became a bulwark where souls with particular needs could find shelter.

In 1977 Dr Shaw resigned his prestigious research directorate to form his own consulting business so that he could be more flexible in providing pastoral care for youth in the extended household ministry when it was needed. As friends and fellow founding elders of Redeemer Baptist Church, Noel Cannon—founding Principal of Redeemer Baptist School—and Max Shaw led the Redeemer congregation into the vision for Redeemer Baptist School, which commenced in 1981. In that year, in addition to operating his consulting business and lecturing at university, Dr Shaw became Redeemer's first home science teacher and later became Redeemer's first hospitality teacher. He continued to teach that subject until a couple of years ago.

After a life-threatening illness and long convalescence from 1983 to 1986, Dr Shaw relinquished his leadership in the world of business and science and took up the role of Headmaster to serve alongside the Principal at Redeemer, in which role he served for the next 22 years. During those years Dr Shaw also became the founding centre director for The Hills Regional Skills Centre which, in 1991, was the first registered training organisation in Australia belonging to an independent school delivering vocational education to its school students. The Australian College of Educators awarded Dr Shaw with a Fellowship in 2011 in recognition of this achievement. Following his retirement as headmaster in 2008 Dr Shaw continued his involvement at Redeemer in an active role as Headmaster Emeritus until his final illness, offering wisdom and friendship to the school executive, parents and students alike.

In addition to his wife and family who continue his legacy of service to the community, Dr Shaw is survived by a school that delivers excellence with a

Christian worldview in education. This year Redeemer students have not only won state and national awards in science, literacy, mathematics and athletics but they have also contributed to genuine reconciliation in the building of a much appreciated meeting facility for the Indigenous community at Kempsey.

On Pennant Hills Road outside the Redeemer Baptist School in North Parramatta for a week after Dr Shaw's passing there was a memorial on a large screen summarising his contribution as Headmaster, teacher, elder and friend. He always made his home, his time, his money and his intelligence available to the service of Jesus Christ for anyone in need. Dr Shaw's contribution is worthy of our recognition.

After the funeral, one person went home to his wife and said: 'Our trouble is that our Christianity is just on Sunday when we go to church—we really should be living our Christianity every day.' An elder of a church said: 'I never knew Max, but on listening to the speeches, I am inspired to do more in my church in the role that God has given me.' A past parent, on his way to see Uncle Max in his hospital bed not long before he passed way, said: 'Uncle Max has left a legacy in so many lives, including my children.'

I pray that Redeemer will continue to live up to the legacy of its founders who were radical in their obedience to the call of God and radical in their desire to give any child or young person an opportunity to receive the very best education in the context of a community where they can know and receive the love of God in Jesus Christ. If you are challenged by this legacy of our founders, then I would encourage you to take the next step to do what God is calling you to do in your church, in your family, in your work, in your community. Fight the good fight for the next generation. The stakes are high as we prepare our children for a rapidly changing future.

God bless you.



Valete – Year 12

Eunice Aaron-Kumar
Ambaye Akele
Andrea Burns
Melisa Denizli

Precious Flores
Jessica Kulasuriya
Jonathan Ngai
Mary-Anne Poyitt

