Accepting Christ in our lives

“So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!”

(2 Corinthians 5:17, NRSV)

The apostle Paul is clear in his understanding of the relationship we have when we accept Christ into our lives. It brings about a new beginning, a new way of seeing the world, a new way of living. As I reflect back on the last three months since moving to All Saints’ College I see parallels between our life in Christ and our life as the school community.

We have welcomed many new students and a few new staff members to the College this year. It seems that all have settled in to college life well and are excited about the opportunities that this place offers. In my case, I have been overwhelmed by the welcome and support that I have received from staff, students and supporters. Your prayers and well wishes have been gratefully received.

At the Commencement Service earlier in the term we heard from our School Captains, Max Hope, Tara Chan, Bradley Gardiner and Jakiya Whitfeld, who shared with us their hopes and visions for the year ahead. It seems appropriate in this first VIM of 2013 that I share some of mine with you.

As many of you know, our Chapel has been undergoing maintenance work over this term. My grateful thanks go to the OBU and the P&F for their generous support of the College for this project. With the Chapel off limits we have made a temporary home in the Kemmis Building, with an excursion to the Music Centre and Bickerdike Centre during Year 12 exams. Whilst these places have offered new opportunities for our services, I am looking forward to being able to return to our long term spiritual home.

It is my hope that our chapel services are engaging and fun for all. Our worship is meant to engage us - we are not spectators but participants in our worship of God. This process is already underway, especially in the Junior School where we have been using a lot of active and noisy Colin Buchanan music that the children love. As we continue to grow I hope to see our students across the College even more involved in Chapel; praying, reading, speaking about the scriptures, planning the services, and playing music and leading the singing. I also plan to have our teachers involved more by speaking about what their faith means to them and how it has directed their lives.

Since becoming a Christian after 35 years of pushing God away I have been committed to finding ways to connect faith to life. Jesus was highly critical of the religious people of his day who kept their religion in a box, setting rules that were impossible to follow, and living hypocritical lives. Christianity means nothing if it is just a set of rules. Our faith in Christ is best shown by our actions in the way we live our lives. I will be constantly encouraging and equipping our students and staff to live lives that show overflowing love to those around us, just as Jesus did. Our chapel collections for the bushfire and flood appeals over this term are one way that we are doing this. Another way is in helping others through work and service, not just by fundraising. Dr Peter Miller has asked me to facilitate a working group to review our service learning in the school. Through this review we will come up with a framework for service with the aim being to meet the College philosophy of ‘Educating the whole person for the challenges of a changing world.’

My vision as College Chaplain is to build on the good work of the 25 Chaplains who have served before me to see the College continue to grow not just as a place of quality education but as a place where our lives lived in Christ will lead to better relationships and a better world for us to live in. I trust that I will have your prayerful support in this.

With all the blessings of Christ,

The Reverend Tony Card
(Chaplain)