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IN THIS EDITION

PAGE 3 Interview with Ben Rae

PAGE 4 **GO Week** PAGE 6 **Trusting God** PAGE 7 From Carpenter to Church Planter PAGE 8 The Journey from Perth to Macedonia

PAGE 9 Sabbatical Plans: Grant Taylor

PAGE 10 Annual Lecture with Matt Fuller



HOLDING ON TO THE MAIN THING

One of the refrains that I have found myself thinking and verbalising throughout this year is, "They didn't teach me this at theological college." It is hard to believe that nearly 12 months has gone by in my time as principal.

During that time I have encountered many areas with which I have never had to deal before: strategic planning, budgeting and finance, building questions, employment law, governance, and policy documents immediately spring to mind. But this sentiment isn't limited to me. Many ministry workers have spoken to me about the increasing administration requirements laid on them and all of the skills that are required to be faithful in our context. In a similar vein, some now argue that the primary task of the theological college is to train people in these skills for these tasks in various ministries.

Yet the Scriptures give us an important reminder. The Apostle Paul consistently held out the gospel as the core of all ministry content and practice. It was the first thing that he spoke to those who came to faith (1 Cor 15:1-8). It was the thing that defined his ministry practice, even with respect to other good things like baptism (1 Cor 1:14–17) or the choice whether to receive support from others (1 Cor 9:1-16). And as he approached the end of his life, it was the thing that he wanted the seasoned pastor Timothy to remember (2 Tim 2:8). This doesn't negate the need for skills training,

of course. But a firm grounding in the gospel shapes not only the manner and the purpose of ministry but also guides every skill used in service of the church.

It seems rather unlikely that the Apostle Paul knew what a policy document was. Yet his ministry still faced many pressures from those inside and outside the church to place the emphasis somewhere other than the gospel. Yet he never assumed the gospel and moved on to pragmatics. He always held onto the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ as the main thing.

I am so profoundly grateful to God for all those who have come before us and kept this same conviction as a defining mark of Trinity since its inception. Now, as much as ever, the church needs men and women in ministry who are grounded and equipped by the gospel. Please be in prayer that God would safeguard this in our College so that the faculty and staff deliberately keep the gospel at the centre of all that we do; we would also love your prayers that he would send more men and women to us for this grounding in the gospel.

Dan Cole Principal

44

Now, as much as ever, the church needs men and women in ministry who are grounded and equipped by the gospel.

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Front cover image: Students, staff and mission organisation representatives at the Missions Expo for GO Week

Page 2 PRINCIPAL'S WELCOME



INTERVIEW WITH

Ben Rae

Earlier this year, Trinity appointed Ben Rae as a new Old Testament Lecturer to teach alongside David Kummerow starting from January 2026. He is currently finishing his PhD thesis on Ecclesiastes at Cambridge University in the UK, and we took some time to ask him some questions about himself and his new role.

Please tell us about yourself.

I was born in WA to lovely Christian parents and lived in Perth until I was ten when my family moved to Donnybrook in the South West. I studied neuroscience at UWA and worked for the Lion's Eye Institute for two years. It was during my time at uni that I really understood that Jesus was Lord and that had implications for what I did with my life.

As part of thinking through life with Jesus I decided to do a ministry apprenticeship with AFES at UWA. That helped me to see that full-time pastoral ministry was a way I might be able to serve God. So, after doing an MDiv at Trinity, I started as a staffworker at UWA, where I worked for a little over 13 years. Along the way I married the wonderful Shelley and we have two sparky daughters, Emily (14) and Madeleine (6).

How did God call you to further study and training ministry workers as a lecturer?

Over the years a number of people, including some of the lecturers at Trinity, encouraged me to think about doing further biblical studies so I could serve as a lecturer. After 13 years in campus ministry, I was starting to run out of ideas and energy. God has given me a heart for training people for ministry and it seemed like a good idea to explore serving him as a lecturer. Shelley and I figured that God was quite capable of closing that door if he wanted to. So far he hasn't.

What are you looking forward to about your new role?

I'm really looking forward to getting to know the students at Trinity. I have been getting the Trinity stories and prayer emails each month and, while I know some of the students, there are lots I don't, which is exciting.

I'm also excited about helping people engage better with the Old Testament. I'm excited at the prospect of teaching Psalms—as much for my own sake as for the students! I'm also excited that I get to teach Hebrew. We are blessed with great English translations, but there is a richness to reading the Bible in the original languages that makes it worth the effort.

How can we pray for you and your family as you make preparations to move back to Perth?

First of all, please pray that I get the thesis finished. The last 10% is starting to feel like 90% of the work!

Then, please pray that we would finish well here. Emily and Maddie will be finishing up at school and saying goodbye to friends. Leaving church here will be a wrench too.

Most of all, we have been working towards sharing the gospel with friends at Clare Hall where we live; please pray that our impending departure would give us further opportunities with them.

INTERVIEW WITH BEN RAE Page 3



Every Christian must grapple with Jesus words' to "go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." GO Week was an opportunity for us to dwell on these words and consider how we might obey them.

In particular we asked students to self-assess which of these three options they were at:

Considering: I have the enormous blessing of being formally trained for ministry and haven't considered cross-cultural ministry, so GO Week is an opportunity for me to consider it!

Going: I have already decided to work towards serving in missions. GO Week is an opportunity to consider what my next steps would be.

Staying: I have decided to stay and serve locally. GO Week is an opportunity to think through how I might be partnering with those involved in missions, how my ministry could be one which trains and raises up people to go in the future, how my church could be praying for, supporting, encouraging and being encouraged by those who are already serving cross-culturally.

We were praying that GO Week would see people growing in their concern for those who are in gospel-poor places and acting on that concern in a plethora of ways.

We kicked off the week at chapel, where I got to share from the autobiography of John G. Paton, an early missionary to the New Hebrides (now Vanuatu). His book was highly formative for me; I read it having just returned from Vanuatu on my gap year. Speaking of the danger he was confronted with in sharing the gospel he writes:

"Life in such circumstances led me to cling very near to the Lord Jesus; I knew not, for one brief hour, when or how attack might be made; and yet, with my trembling hand clasped in the Hand once nailed on Calvary, and now swaying the sceptre of the Universe, calmness and peace and resignation abode in my soul."

We were blessed to be joined for the week by Pete and Mel. They served in missions for a number of years and now serve as field directors. They were very generous with their time, and their openness. They were interviewed at chapel, and Pete preached on the gospel as the power for salvation from Romans 1. Our Pastoral Care Groups combined for a workshop where Pete and Mel got us to discuss and consider our own readiness and capacity to serve cross-culturally, as well as how ready our churches were to be raising up, sending out and partnering with people in and for this work. At and after both events we got to ask them questions and glean some of their wisdom and experience.

Thursday was the capstone of our week: the 'Missions Expo.' We shared a catered lunch (thanks Frank and Marlene!), and heard from representatives from City Bible Forum, CMS, Interserve, OMF, Pioneers, Prepare the Way, WEC and Wycliffe. They each shared the distinctives of their mission organisations and some of the present ministry they were undertaking. Students were primed with a few questions based off which category (Considering, Going or Staying) they thought fit them and then let loose on the reps! At the start of the week the common area on Level 3 had been set up with stalls around the room from each organisation, and flags from different countries hung on the wall. It was a great culmination of the week to see the room full of students and representatives talking together, thinking about the future together, encouraging each other, and forming next steps for how we might partner together in the cause of the gospel.

Page 4 GO WEEK



I was encouraged by how communal the week felt. Some people already have concrete plans for ministry in Perth post-college, and yet many students expressed a real excitement about partnering together in cross-cultural missions work in different ways. It was great to be able to consider such a global undertaking, both as individuals and as a College.

Fellow student Beth said she was encouraged by the culture that developed among the students over the week—there was growing enthusiasm for cross-cultural missions and a real openness in discussing our individual and collective roles. It was great to see people eager to

engage with and learn from the visiting representatives at the Missions Expo. She had many rich conversations and was delighted by the interest it sparked.

We're so grateful to all those who made the week possible, who catered, who came and shared, who prayed with us and encouraged us. We continue to pray that God would use GO Week, things like it, and the people involved in it, to bring glory to our Lord Jesus Christ in many places across the earth!

Lindsay Rhodes *MDiv Student*



Library display for GO Week with resources on cross-cultural missions

GO WEEK



TRUSTING GOD IN STUDY, MINISTRY AND MARRIAGE

Rachel's Story

Rachel Lampard is weeks away from completing her Graduate Diploma of Divinity and getting married. After graduating as a speech pathologist in 2022, Rachel decided to take a break from full-time work this year to study, deepen her understanding of Christ, and wait on him to open the door for her next season of ministry and work.

Born and raised in Perth in a Christian family, Rachel's faith became more personal during her university years. She shares, "In my second year of uni, I was challenged by a Christian campus group to take following Jesus more seriously and consider what my life would look like to be in obedience to him. That was quite a dramatic giving-of-my-life-over-to-God moment."

After two years of working as a speech pathologist, Rachel began to notice a need for more women in churches to be theologically trained and felt called to begin her studies. "I always knew I would really enjoy going to Trinity. I just had to trust God to dive in and not put it off," she shares.

As she nears the end of her degree, Rachel reflects on how her time at Trinity has transformed her understanding of faith and learning. "The biggest takeaway has been that I thought I was going to Trinity to increase my knowledge of the Bible, which is true. But actually, and thanks to God, I have realised that the most important thing is to grow in your understanding of the gospel. I just see more clearly how rich and deep the good news of Jesus is. That's what everything is hooked on and flows out of."

Rachel has also appreciated the practical skills and resources she has gained through her studies. "I feel now I have this toolbox of learning for the future—the library at College is full of Bible dictionaries and commentaries, and they're really helpful resources, as well as the lecturers and people I've met. I've got a framework for thinking about how I would answer questions or think about things more," she explains.

A highlight of her year was travelling to Port Hedland for Mission Week with her Pastoral Care Group, which also helped to foster strong friendships and encouraged her throughout the year. "We got to work with an Anglican church and be a part of the Seafarers Centre, go on a ship and follow the chaplain around as he boldly prayed for international sailors he met. It's cross-cultural missions right here on our doorstep," she shares.

The support of her Pastoral Care Group, a small group of full-time students who meet weekly with a lecturer, has also been a significant encouragement. "It's been a space where I could say 'This is what I've been learning' or 'I found this hard this week. Can you pray for me?' They care about how you're going as a person, and I've found that helpful."

Following her wedding, Rachel hopes to combine parttime speech pathology with part-time ministry, applying the knowledge and growth she has gained at Trinity. She continues to pray with open hands about what God has planned for her next season, but feels drawn to church ministry, particularly discipling women to know Jesus and be transformed by his Word.



Please pray for Rachel as she completes her studies and reflects on all that she has learned this year. Pray that God will guide her next steps, and for his blessing over her new marriage.

Rachel (right) chatting with fellow students at College

FROM CARPENTER TO CHURCH PLANTER

Fordan's Story

When Jordan Musulin (BTh, 2024) first walked through the doors of Trinity Theological College, he was carrying more than just textbooks. The former carpenter from regional Western Australia brought with him a story of family breakdown, substance experimentation, and a burning hunger to understand God's Word that online preachers alone couldn't satisfy.

Today, more than a decade later, Jordan is on the cusp of church planting, having completed his Bachelor of Theology and currently pursuing ordination with the Christian Reformed Churches of Australia. But ask him about the journey, and he'll tell you it's not about academic achievement—it's about radical personal transformation.

Born in Carnarvon, ten hours north of Perth, Jordan's early life was marked by his parents' divorce when he was six. After dropping out of school at the end of Year 10 to pursue a carpentry apprenticeship, he found himself drawn into a world of drugs by age 18.

Everything changed when his mother decided to go to church during a difficult period in her life. I pretty much just decided to go along and support her, Jordan recalls.

But what started as family support became a lifechanging encounter with the gospel. "I heard about Jesus and thought if this is true, then it has sort of radical implications for my life. I gave my life to Jesus and he did. He changed my life, he changed my heart, and here I am."

After a few years as a new Christian serving in regional churches, Jordan realised he desperately needed theological grounding. His choice of Trinity wasn't accidental. Having sat under preaching from graduates of various theological colleges, he'd noticed a pattern.

"I sat under a number of guys that had studied at Trinity who were just really faithful exegetes—gospel-centered and Christ-centered," Jordan shares. "I remember thinking, 'Wow, if this is the sort of quality of the men and women coming out of Trinity, then that's the place that I want to study.'"

What Jordan discovered at Trinity went far beyond academic training. "I actually can't overstate how big an influence Trinity has been on my Christian life," Jordan explains. "Even on my personal holiness. Trinity was God's grace to me."



Coming from a blue-collar background into Trinity's academic environment wasn't easy. But rather than breaking him, Trinity showed him grace. This kindness became transformational.

"I received their love and that love was a wonderful example of the love of Christ," Jordan says. "I've seen a huge amount of gospel fruit in my own life and in my own family relationships. Trinity has been one of God's wonderful means of nurturing the growth of this fruit."

Now completing his ordination pathway while serving at Connect Christian Church—a thriving church plant that has grown from 35 to around 200 members—Jordan is now preparing to serve as a church planter.

When asked what he'd tell prospective students about Trinity, his response is immediate: "The quality of the teaching, the quality of the staff. Their emphasis on the gospel. Their ability to help you to grow in your knowledge of God and your love for Christ. It's a wonderful community to immerse yourself in, and grow and be encouraged in your faith."

For Jordan, Trinity wasn't just theological education—it was God's gracious provision for someone who needed both academic training and spiritual growth. As he prepares for ordination and potential church planting, that foundation continues to bear fruit in ways he never imagined.



Jordan baptising a church member

THE JOURNEY FROM PERTH TO MACEDONIA

Aidan's Story



Owen and Wesley

Halfway around the world in Macedonia, Aidan Herman (BTh, 2010) sits across from Roma translators, carefully checking their work as they render Scripture into their heart language. It's meticulous work—jumping between linguistics and theology, ensuring accuracy without imposing outside traditions. For this Trinity graduate, it's the culmination of a journey that began in a Perth youth group and was profoundly shaped by his time at theological college.

"I was really more or less a pagan in my outlook," Aidan reflects on his pre-Christian years, despite his Catholic education. That changed the summer after high school in 2002, when a youth group search for friendship led to a genuine encounter with Christ. By his mid-20s, he found himself drawn to deeper biblical study, eventually making the leap to full-time theological education.

Aidan's route to Trinity was rather unconventional. After completing TAFE and working as a telemarketer, he felt driven to pursue something more substantial.

"I started doing New Testament Greek at Trinity while I was doing an education degree at Edith Cowan," he recalls. But it was the encouragement of a church friend that nudged Aidan towards full-time theology study.

What began as part-time Greek studies became a full Bachelor's degree commitment, which he completed in 2009. The decision wasn't easy—Aidan juggled five units in one semester while working night shifts at Coles to support himself. But Trinity offered more than academic rigour.



Aidan (right) talking to a Roma man at church

"The camaraderie," Aidan emphasises when asked about his fondest memories. "The banter, the fellowship, table tennis, coffee, conversations. Those are fond memories."

The classroom experience also proved transformative in ways that continue to shape his current ministry.

"Getting proper training in hermeneutics and exegesis put me on a good path," Aidan explains. Trinity's emphasis on textual accuracy—"what does the text say rather than what you want it to say"—became foundational to his work as a translation advisor.

Today, as an 'exegete'—translation advisor and facilitator—Aidan checks the work of Roma translators, reading "their language without a back translation." His role demands exactly what Trinity instilled: careful attention to linguistic detail combined with theological accuracy.

After graduation, Aidan worked in rehabilitation centres and eventually connected with Wycliffe Bible Translators through a former Trinity lecturer. Two years of intensive training in Melbourne prepared him and his wife Alfinda for cross-cultural ministry. The Covid pandemic delayed their original departure date, but by June 2021, they were finally on the field.

Now, more than four years into their Macedonia ministry, Aidan works on two translation projects: one New Testament, one Old Testament. The Greek and Hebrew he studied at Trinity remain essential tools.

"I need to work on my Hebrew, to be honest," he chuckles, "but it certainly helps; at least to know what to look for in terms of checking."

For Aidan, Trinity's greatest gift wasn't only the academic preparation—it was the community. Those relationships have continued to bear fruit: his preaching ministry in Mandurah post-graduation emerged through friendships formed at Trinity, demonstrating how the College's community extends far beyond graduation.

As Aidan continues his vital work of ensuring God's Word reaches the Roma people in their heart language, Trinity's influence remains evident—in his exegetical precision, his commitment to letting Scripture speak for itself, and his understanding that meaningful ministry emerges from authentic community.



Sabbatical Plans

Grant Taylor, Academic Dean and Lecturer in New Testament, shares with us about his sabbatical plans for next year.

Please tell us about your plans for next year.

My family and I will spend six months in the US for my study leave, which the College has kindly approved for me to take during Semester 1 2026 (January–June). I will be working on an exegetical commentary on John's Gospel for Kregel Academic (a US publisher), while Becca and the kids do homeschooling for the first two terms. We will also enjoy spending time catching up with family in South Carolina and Tennessee, and with our former church in North Carolina. We will also take a holiday to Guatemala where Becca grew up as a missionary kid and later served as a missionary.

What are you looking forward to as part of your sabbatical?

I'm looking forward to digging into John for long, uninterrupted stretches of time. This is invaluable in seeing the treasures in that Gospel so that I can then write them up in a clear, helpful way for pastors and students. Our family is looking forward to refreshment after a good but very full, sometimes challenging six years of life and ministry in Perth, as well as reconnection with family and close friends.

How do you hope the time will help you in your ministry at the College?

I'm praying the study leave benefits the College in at least three ways: 1) to sharpen and deepen my teaching of the upper year John Greek exegesis unit through writing the commentary; 2) to deepen and broaden my understanding of the New Testament for teaching the first-year units; and 3) to develop a few fresh ideas about theological education and ministry training in our WA context (this is a side goal for when I'm not writing).

How can we pray for you and your family?

Those who have taken sabbaticals before tell me to be realistic about your goals, so you can pray for that! You can also pray that our family would be recharged for life and ministry in Perth, that I would make good progress in writing the John commentary, and that all the details related to living elsewhere for six months work out fine.



ANNUAL LECTURE WITH MATT FULLER:

Understanding the Soul

How do we change as Christians? How do we grow in love, in holiness, in godliness? How exactly does the Holy Spirit engage the different aspects of our make-up—our minds, wills, hearts, affections, emotions and bodies—as he transforms us into the likeness of Christ? In this year's Annual Lecture in Applied Theology, Matt Fuller made the case that to answer that question in a manner that is true and helpful, we need to draw from Scripture a proper grasp of what exactly those different aspects of our make-up are, how they relate to one another, and how they impact the choices we make.

Gaining such a grasp, however, is quite challenging. As Matt explained, we can often be a bit simplistic or formulaic in our understanding of these things. Sometimes we imagine that if we can just get the truth sufficiently embedded into our or other people's minds, knowledge of that truth will of itself affect the heart, and then empower the will for obedience; as a result, the job of the word minister is viewed (in the main) as targeting the intellect. Or flipping things around, some argue that our minds and wills follow the lead of our affections, and so a proper ordering of those affections holds the key for

transformation. As Matt demonstrated, however, this kind of "flow-chart" approach to change doesn't correspond to the complex nature of human beings as it is described in the Bible, and as we know it from our own experience if we reflect upon it. Scripture speaks of the different parts of which we're composed and the interplay between them in ways which, while coherent, are nevertheless remarkably varied and surprising, with a fair degree of give-and-take understood to pass between body and soul, intellect and will, imagination and desire.



Matt Fuller (centre) with Dan Cole (left) and Thom Bull (right) at the Annual Lecture



The lecture was well attended by people from churches across Perth

What's more, the fallenness of our natures, and of this world in which we live, adds further layers of complexity to the picture. A reductionistic approach which aims to smooth out the human picture by minimising the intricacies of our nature results in a simplistic and unrealistic account of change in the Christian life, which can lead to stagnation at best, and real damage at worst. Avoiding such oversimplifications is, therefore, pretty important.

Fortunately, we don't have to start from scratch in working a lot of these things out. As Matt showed us, Christians from earlier times thought quite a bit about these matters, and through their attentive reading of the Bible in its totality, and patient reflection on life in light of the Bible, they developed accounts of human nature which are in many ways more precise, detailed, and nuanced than much contemporary Christian thought in this area.

Matt introduced us to some of the ways in which 17th century puritan writers in particular provided sophisticated descriptions of humanity's make-up, and

applied it to the Christian life with great pastoral wisdom and insight. Notably, they saw the role of preachers as not only one of delivering information (though this is of course part of the role) but of engaging the whole person, in their intellects, imaginations, and desires, with the truth and loveliness of the Lord Jesus. Their articulation of the dynamics of change are, as a result, theologically rich and practically helpful, and remain a worthwhile resource for us to draw upon in our own lives and ministries.

If you didn't manage to catch Matt's lecture, or would like to revisit it, I'd encourage you to listen to it via the Trinity website. The material is in some ways challenging, however careful listening will certainly repay the effort.

Thom BullLecturer in Theology



Scan the QR code to listen to the Annual Lecture

PRAYER & PRAISE

Give thanks for:

- How the Lord has blessed the learning of our students, and sustained our students, faculty and staff over the past year.
- The more than 50 people who came to Info Night and Open Week to find out more about studying at Trinity.
- The 27 degree students, 13 Equip students and 3 Certificate in Christian Studies students who have completed their studies this year.

Pray for:

- God to raise up new leaders for gospel ministry for his harvest.
- Many new students to apply for theological study in 2026.
- Supporters to give generously to this year's Christmas appeal.

UPCOMING EVENTS

7 Feb 2026 Quarterly Prayer Breakfast24 Feb Commencement & Graduation





Take the next step and get equipped for effective Word ministry

Choose from Trinity's accredited courses and begin your training for gospel-centred Christian service.





Your giving invests in equipping men and women for effective Christian service







PRAYER & UPCOMING EVENTS Page 11



Living large is a term often associated with a lavish lifestyle of expensive properties, designer goods, private jets and self-indulgent behaviour. In stark contrast, wisdom from Scripture does not define these things as living large at all.

It has been said that a person wrapped up in oneself makes for a very small package. Proverbs 11:24 says, "One person gives freely, yet gains even more; another withholds unduly, but comes to poverty." I love the way Eugene Peterson paraphrases this verse. The Message puts it this way: "The world of the generous gets larger and larger; the world of the stingy gets smaller and smaller."

It appears that there is such a thing as "living large," according to the Bible, but it is not all about expensive vacations and luxury cars. Living large is participating in the work of God. Our vision of God is enlarged and our

joy in the gospel is renewed when we joyfully invest in the work of the Lord. As our College mission is to equip men and women for effective Christian ministry, giving to

Your generous giving to Trinity blesses the College, and is also a wonderful way for you to enlarge your prayer life for the pastors and gospel workers of Australia, and participate in the lives of our students, faculty, and staff.

Trinity directly invests in God's kingdom work.

My invitation to you is to enlarge your world. Strengthen your faith. Will you be generous with your investments in the work of the Lord and live large in the kingdom of God?

PARTNER WITH US

By giving financially to Trinity, you are partnering with us to equip men and women for Word ministry.

You can give via our website (ttc.wa.edu.au/partner-with-us) or by filling in this form and mailing it to us.



All donations of \$2 or more are tax deductible.



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