ON POINT

THE NATIONAL NEWSLETTER OF Family Voice AUSTRALIA

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# It's time to stand up for your faith



## Christians have helped our nation flourish from before the First Fleet set sail.

For many years, Australians have enjoyed the great freedoms of conscience, thought, belief, speech and association.

Consequently, as a nation we have found reasonable (and at times robust) ways to debate and manage differences and conflict in our parliaments and in civil society generally.

This is changing. Political correctness and identity politics are seriously limiting the public conversation. They seek to prefer some and make others less worthy of rights and freedoms.

Last year, we saw Penny Wong's private members' bill introduced to parliament, to amend the *Sex Discrimination Act 1984* by removing the exemptions in the Act that provide protection for religious bodies to operate in accordance with their religious beliefs. In effect this would remove the right to believe and practise fundamental tenets of faith in respect of human personhood, marriage and family.

The bill is evidence that some ...

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# *Yes, your beliefs matter...*
# It's time to stand up for your faith

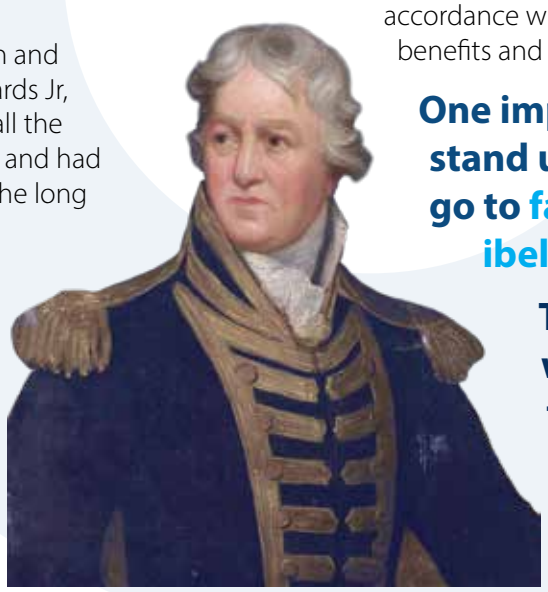
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... in Australia do not value the Christian foundation of our great national institutions upon which the freedoms of all depend.

In contrast, consider one example of positive Christian faith at work even before the First Fleet set sail. The person responsible for finding and provisioning the eleven ships of the First Fleet was Comptroller of the Navy Board, Charles Middleton (pictured right, and later known as Lord Barham).

Middleton was a committed Christian and together with his friend William Richards Jr, another Christian, worked to ensure all the convicts were well cared for, well fed, and had access to medical assistance during the long journey. The voyage was remarkably successful and is acclaimed as one of the great achievements of the time. Admiral Middleton later played a crucial role in the abolition of the slave trade.

In contrast, the Second and Third Fleets, managed by slave traders ended in disaster, with the death rate of the Second Fleet, five times that of the First Fleet journey.



***Charles Middleton (1726-1813) provisioned the First Fleet's 11 ships*** **(Painting by Isaac Pocock; public domain)**

Sadly, historians who do not value the Christian legacy fail to appreciate the significant role true Christians have played in building a country that is free and fair.

That's why we are touring with historian Professor Stuart Piggin in March/April – to bring to light our nation's Christian heritage and to affirm the place of Christian faith and values in our national life today.

When Christians are free to live and work in accordance with their faith, the whole country benefits and flourishes.

**One important way *you* can stand up for your faith is to go to familyvoice.org.au/ibelieveandivote.**

**There you will find ways to say religious freedom is important, and and that you will be voting with your faith in mind at the upcoming federal election.**

# Cleanfeed letter presented to the Prime Minister – thank you!

Thank you so much for your support of the Cleanfeed Campaign calling on the Australian Government to provide a default, pornography-free internet service to Australian families.

In November 2018, we wrote to Prime Minister Scott Morrison, indicating that many thousands of concerned Australians like you want our government to protect children from the dangers of online pornography.

Please pray that politicians will listen to the voices of concern, and act swiftly on this critical issue for the sake of our children.




We have asked for an update from the Prime Minister's office about our request, and remain committed to changing the cultural acceptance of pornography.



**Five ways Christian young people can influence culture in 2019...!**

Read more at **familyvoice.org.au**.

# Vulnerable Australians need your voice on these issues

Here are some of the attacks on life and liberty being considered in some of Australia's states and territories – where vulnerable Australians need your voice to help them:

**Laws have been implemented in NSW to create "safe access zones" outside abortion clinics**, making it illegal to communicate with a woman when she's entering or leaving a clinic. This means that "footpath counsellors" can no longer approach women to talk with them about their decision without the risk of prosecution.

In the lead-up to the Queensland abortion law changes in 2018, women campaigning against the changes gave powerful statements to the effect that many women are coerced into having an abortion.

One would think that a woman (and her child) should be protected from coercion and from the subsequent physical and mental health impacts of abortion.

**The Greens want to legalise abortion in NSW.** Plans are also underway to scrap South Australia's abortion law, with a coalition lobbying state parliamentarians to repeal the very limited legal protections that currently exist for the unborn. Politicians will be granted a conscience vote as they decide whether to 'apply the same punitive approach that operates in several other states and legislate a "150-metre safe access zone" around abortion facilities, which will stifle the ability of pro-lifers to help vulnerable women.

**Western Australia's Labor government has indicated it will seek to legalise euthanasia in the second half of 2019** – a worrying move that will put the lives of the elderly and vulnerable at risk and send an appalling message to our young about the value of human life.

WA State Director Darryl Budge is on the front-line of the campaign to resist euthanasia.

"We are working together in a unified way with other organisations against this terrible legislation. We must stop euthanasia being accepted as some kind of cultural norm," he said.

"As we anticipate Victoria's law in July, we know that – in fourteen euthanasia experiments across the world – most have minimal data collection or oversight, little to no protections against mental illness, and, tragically, the most common reason given by dying patients is to not be a burden to friends or family.

"We must not normalise the killing of the frail and vulnerable when our pain treatment and palliative care can ensure no patient dies in pain", he added.

**Although the Senate rejected a move to give the territories power to legalise euthanasia in 2018**, this campaign is likely to resume if the federal election results in reduced power for conservative MPs.

The push to introduce euthanasia across the nation is more evidence that the spiritual foundation is being bombarded. What does it say about our society that it strips marriage of its sanctity, permits late-term abortions, legalises euthanasia, and permits children to be exposed to the most dehumanising pornography – all in the space of a few years? By what measure is this progress?

**Your ongoing support helps raise a voice for what's good and right. Thank you!**

# Come join us and be inspired!

Be amazed at the work and witness of Christians in our nation's story. This aspect of our history is rarely mentioned in standard historical writing. You'll be surprised at who helped to shape the nation and lay the foundation of Christian faith and values in our culture.




Renowned author and historian Professor Stuart Piggin will tour with FamilyVoice Australia to share some of the many stories of great Christians who have shaped Australia. His book *The Fountain of Public Prosperity: Evangelical Christians in Australian History 1740–1914* is a scholarly work that adds the faith dimension neglected by other historians. The book is a vital tool and a great inspiration to us to continue to live out our faith in God by being socially and morally active and courageous.



***Prof. Stuart Piggin***

Each event will also feature Christians currently engaged in ventures of faith – evidence that Christians are still salt and light in our nation.

These events are designed to work for a younger audience as well as mature-age people. So we encourage you to bring young people in their teens, twenties and thirties along.

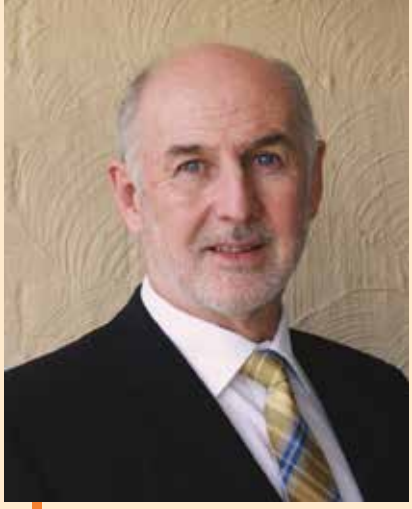
These events are about our Living Hope who inspires and enables Christians of all ages to live selflessly and powerfully for the glory of God and the redemption of our nation. It's a vital message for us today!

**Save the date for an event near you:**

**Melbourne: March 25**
**Sydney: April 1**
**Perth: April 6**
**Brisbane: March 27**
**Adelaide: April 3**

**Details and tickets at familyvoice.org.au/360Vision**

# FROM THE National Director



Dear Friend,

This past year was a bleak one for civic and political leadership. Everywhere commissioners looked they assessed the nation's civic and political leaders as putting personal interest and ambition above the common good.

Personal integrity and a commitment to the common good may be nurtured upstream of the political process if the primary social influences encourage them. Jesus taught the moral substance upon which (our) society depends – mercy, sacrifice and humility. These are more than ideas. They are tenets of faith. It's also a moral position: people give of themselves and forgive others (and eschew pride, selfishness and unforgiveness) because that is what is right, not because it is personally advantageous.

The anti-Christianism of our time then, is not just a rejection of the institutional power of the Church. It is a rejection of the moral influence of Jesus upon society. This contributes to the loss of integrity and social responsibility in society.

So, as we draw closer to the next federal election, reflect on how Australians need iron-clad guarantees that freedom of religion and conscience are given the weight they deserve – as detailed in Section 116 of the *Constitution of Australia* and Article 18 of the *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.*

With shifts in our laws happening in states, territories, and indeed across the whole nation, we must be sure of what we believe, and be ready to vote with our minds as well as our hearts.

**So, I encourage you to visit familyvoice.org.au/ibelieveandivote and join me and thousands of other Australians in standing up for your faith and for what is true and right and good – for the sake of your family, and for the sake of our nation!**

Thank you for your support and prayers. FamilyVoice Australia certainly needs your prayers that we may stand strongly and wisely with you as your Christian voice for family, faith and freedom.

Your brother in Christ,

Charles Newington

Charles Newington
National Director

> ***"We must be sure of what we believe, and be ready to vote with our minds as well as our hearts."***

# Thank you!

**A huge thanks to friends like you who gave so generously to meet the year-end Faith Goal. Your support is helping to launch important campaigns to strengthen the family and the church to change our nation for good in 2019.**

It's a challenge to be a Christian voice for family, faith and freedom in Australia at the moment. So, your partnership is such an encouragement as together we are a voice for good on the critical issues of our day.



**EXTRACTS**

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Our work is to make known the goodness and truthfulness of Christian faith that is faithful to Scripture and the nature of God. On this foundation we encourage society to regard all human life as sacred, to honour marriage and family and to defend the great freedoms necessary for a healthy society.

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