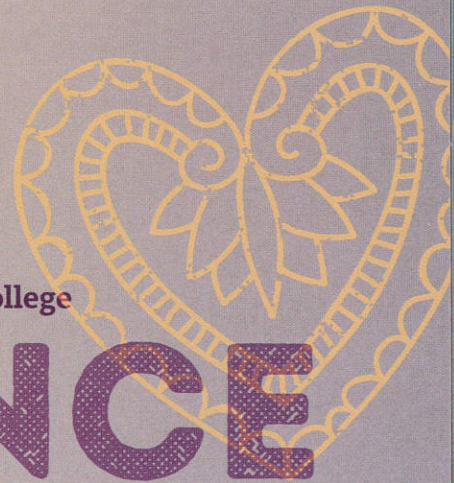


GODLY GOVERNANCE

Reflection by Miriam Lili,
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Thirty-three board chairs, vice chairs, and board members gathered for the Godly Governance Conference in October 2015.

Thanks to all who organised this event. It was a great time of community, networking, and encouragement to achieve excellence in a distinctively Christian form of board practice.

Over three days, we dined on a variety of insights and shared experiences. The President of Heritage Christian College Board, Darren Iselin gave us two hearty main courses from his research into Christian school sustainability, with an emphasis on the “transition period”. This is when a first generation of pioneers places a school in the hands of the second generation of guardians. He encouraged us to keep our *cantus firmus* song line strong, to stand on the shoulders of those before us, and to face the challenge of laying a new foundation for those who will follow.

Our CEN boards serve their schools in dual roles as guardians of the vision, and strategists. Regular ‘service’ is needed to ensure we are not sliding away from our core convictions, or fossilizing in our practices.

John Sikkema from *Halftime Ministries* cleansed our palates with a call to be strong, trust God, stand together, and boldly move out of our comfort zones, beyond our fears of tension and tough decisions. Speaking of tough decisions, the dessert buffet offered mini lemon meringue pies and mini pavlovas, with accompanying bowls of raspberry sauce, whipped cream, and multi-coloured mini marshmallows. The inclusion of the marshmallows was a bit of a puzzle, but finally my table group tried eating them as after dinner snacks, mixing them with cream and raspberry sauce, and floating them in milky chai tea. With a little innovation, the misfit on the table became

a valued addition to the meal. Similarly, some willing parents on our CEN school boards might seem or feel a bit out of place. There might be, or could be, some possibilities that they offer that have not yet been revealed or discovered.

Our own Michelle Dempsey (CEO, Christian Education National), Geoff Bateman (Northern Territory Christian Schools), Gerry Beimers (CEN National Board), Yvonne Bradley, and Martin Hanscamp (Australian Association of Christian Schools) all helped us to better define our roles and responsibilities as board chairs and board members with their informative presentations, scenarios, and stimuli for round-table discussions. Their candid insights in answer to our own questions during the panel session rounded off the meal nicely. 🍷

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your comfort zone”

