Julian and Melinda Dykman (nee Nugteren)

Both of us were born and raised in Tasmania at opposite ends of the state, Julian in Launceston, Melinda in Kingston. As of June 2013, our ages are 26 and 25, respectively. We were married in Kingston in March, 2008. Following our marriage we lived in Launceston for almost four years, before moving to Geelong for Julian to complete his studies at the Reformed Theological College.

Both of us have completed tertiary study prior to moving to Geelong. Melinda completed a Bachelor of Education in Launceston, and worked as a primary school teacher, first in Launceston, then also in Geelong. Julian completed a Bachelor of Environmental Science but never worked in the field, and instead was employed by the Christian Reformed Church of Launceston (CRCL) following his studies.

Beginning in February 2008, Julian began full-time ministry in the CRCL as an MTS (Ministry Training Scheme) apprentice. This role included work with youth in a variety of circumstances, as well as serving on various committees and groups within the church. Following some training, there was also significant opportunities to lead Sunday worship services. Towards the end of the first year of full-time ministry, Julian began preaching regularly, both in Sunday services, as well as other engagements (e.g., Aged-care facilities). Pastors, John de Boer and Jonathan Deenick were responsible for training and supervision over the two years of employment.

Towards the end of the second year of this employment, we both felt a strong call to continue in full-time ministry, and towards ordained ministry in the Reformed Churches. Realising our need for further training, we took particular interest in the newly instituted Task3 program that the RTC had just begun. This program particularly appealed to us as it afforded the opportunity to continue to be engaged in intensive ministry within the local church, whilst also beginning formal training.

At this point in time the CRCL was unable to offer us a position in the Task3 program, and so we had thought to wait until an opportunity arose. In God’s provision, this opportunity arose far quicker than we had thought, and another church in Launceston (The Branch – an independent, evangelical Reformed church) offered us a position as a Task3 ministry worker, beginning in January 2010.

Here Julian continued in ministry, serving three days a week, with the remainder of time set aside for formal study. Ministry duties included service leading, preaching, working with youth, serving as an elder. Over the two years at The Branch distance study was commenced, in New and Old Testament surveys, Greek and Hebrew, and church based theological education. Training and supervision was given by the whole Session, but particularly the ministers, Fred van Hulst, and later Karl Deenick.

Following the two years of the church-based aspect of Task3, we moved to Geelong at the beginning of 2012 in order to complete the full-time study component (a further two years). During this time Julian has been completing the requisite subjects for his Master of Divinity. Initially Melinda found employment as a primary school teacher. However, in 2013 she has also commenced study at the RTC (doing a Graduate Diploma of Divinity), in order that she too may be better prepared and trained for future ministry. Over these two years we have attended South Barwon Reformed Church, and have had the opportunity to serve in a variety of roles there.

We both enjoy good coffee, and are keen on our winter sports (snowboarding/skiing). Each of us appreciate reading, both fiction and non-fiction, but also enjoy fishing (Julian in particular). Additionally, Julian is a keen home-brewer, whilst Melinda prefers her baking. Both of us enjoy the outdoors in general.

In terms of ministry, we both enjoy working with youth. We also feel a strong desire to be involved in church planting ministry, whether directly or in support of. To this end we were recently assessed as potential church planters by the Geneva Push (an Australian church planting support network). Melinda enjoys ministry to women, in particular one-to-one ministry.

We are both looking forwards to future ministry opportunities, wherever the Lord may lead us. We know that his guiding is good, and no matter where he sends us, there will be opportunity to minister his Word, and grow his kingdom. Our studies have truly sharpened our desire to serve the church and have given us great passion to be involved wherever we can be.

In Christ,

Julian and Melinda Dykman