Media Release

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mnd Australia

Praying for a miracle and campaigning for a cure for motor neurone disease

Counting their blessings – Phil Camden and his wife Lenore

When Pastor Phil Camden delivers his Sunday sermon to a large congregation in Newcastle, it's hard to believe that this charismatic 53 year old is gripped by a disease that will rob him of his ability to move, speak, swallow and breathe.

Ps Camden has motor neurone disease (MND), an indiscriminate killer that can strike men or women, young or old, from any country, race or demographic. MND is an unstoppable, progressive disease with no effective treatment or cure.

"I'd never heard of MND. When the doctor first suggested I had it, I googled and was numb to read that most people die within 2–5 years of diagnosis," says Ps Camden.

"Worst still, is being locked in a body that becomes totally paralysed while your mind and eyes see and understand all that is happening. MND has been likened to slowly being buried alive in your own body.

"I hate the thought of the process of death, but I do not fear death itself. To tell you the truth, my diagnosis with MND has only strengthened my faith in God. I am staring death in the face and my faith stands the test and is strong."

Following his diagnosis, Ps Camden resigned from senior positions within the Australian Christian Churches and stepped down from his role as Heads of Churches Newcastle.

"I have always been a visionary and leader, but MND certainly makes you look more closely at the now and encourages you to make the most of every day you have," says Ps Camden.

"Whilst hoping for my miracle, I am also trying to help as many other people as I can in dealing with this disease and its outcomes as well as trying to speed up the awareness and research for a cure."

Ps Camden and his wife have two adult daughters and lead a thriving church community, which they consider to be "like family". Three-hundred people from their church joined the recent Hunter region Walk to D'Feet MND and raised over $20,000 to help support the complex needs of people with MND and help researchers find a cure.

"We are not expected to live long with this disease so everyone needs to do their bit and be ready to grab the baton from those who ran the race before them and keep the pressure up," says Ps Camden.

During national MND Week (5–11 May) people touched by MND will remember those who have died, and from their stories draw the motivation to work towards a better future for the 1500 Australians currently living with MND.

Check the MND Australia website for events being held around the nation during MND Week (5–11 May): http://www.mndaust.asn.au/upcoming-events/

Ends

About:
MND Australia is the national peak advocate for people living with MND. MND Australia works with a network of state associations to advance, promote and influence MND care and research with a vision to achieving a world free from MND.

Media contact or to interview a person in your area who is touched by MND:
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