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THE AUSTRALIAN CHRISTIAN

Communicating the Gospel



—page 7

Nine Lessons and Carols

Proclaiming the Christmas message

A musical treat awaits all who attend the Nine Lessons and Carols at Berwick, Vic, Regional church on the evening of 18 December.

The evening has become a "must" on many people's Christmas calendar. The Nine Lessons and Carols

consists of Scripture readings interspersed with appropriate carols.

Jennifer Sheppard will lead a 60-voice choir.

The birth of Jesus is depicted, with the triumphant conclusion leaving no doubt in the minds of the audience

that he is "King of Kings and Lord of Lords".

The hour-long program begins at 8.30 pm and the church is hoping to fill the Centre Rd building to its capacity.

—Katherine Merbis

THE AUSTRALIAN CHRISTIAN

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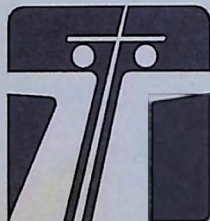
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christian Reflection

Get Me Out!

Elizabeth Payne

"**A**sk and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened. Which of you, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake? If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him!"

(Matt 7:7-11)

When I find there doesn't seem to be enough money to pay the endless stream of bills filing through my letter box, without even thinking, I find myself wanting to call out, "God! Get me out of this!"

When the stresses of family life press down on me and I'm disappointed with my performance as a parent or wife, without even thinking, I find myself wanting to call out, "God! Get me out of this mess!"

When I find myself in conflict with others or facing the consequences of the unwise decisions I have made, without even thinking, I find myself wanting to call out, "God! Get me out!"

Even my friends who don't know God, when faced with difficult situations will call out, "God, get me out of this!"

It's so easy to think that God is one who should simply remove the pain from our lives or remove us from situations that cause pain. So we often call on God to fix problems for us.

I know that I am not alone in praying these kinds of prayers. Often, as I pray with or for others, I suspect that what people want is for God to do all the hard work and solve their problems for them.

I understand that God is a perfect parent. He supplies us with all our needs and perceives the cries of our hearts before we even acknowledge them. Even so, I am often uncomfortable with the kinds of demands we place on God.

God does not promise to magically fix all our problems. When I consider the words of the New Testament, I find God promising:

- To forgive us and save us from our sin, to grant us eternal and abundant life
- To equip us with his Holy Spirit
- To grant us the gifts and fruit of the Holy Spirit
- To give us love, hope, comfort, wisdom, strength, joy and peace

• To renew us, grow us and mature us
But nowhere do I find God promising to fix all our problems. He has promised to supply all our needs, not all our wants.

The confession of all Christians is "Jesus is Lord". That means that we submit ourselves to his will. It seems rather odd that we call Jesus Lord and then demand that he obey our commands!

So how can we pray, moving beyond the initial, "Get me out!", and into areas of maturity and growth?

I have found a useful way of praying is to exchange "Get me out" for "Help me out". We must always understand that God is committed to our growth and maturity. His desire is for us to make choices which honour the life and love he is placing within us. Therefore, we are invited to pray in ways which seek God's participation in, and not the overriding of, our decision making.

It is a sign of maturity to admit our inability to cope alone and the need for God's help. God, who promises wisdom, courage, guidance, patience to those who ask him, will respond to those who accept responsibility for their lives, and that they need God's help.

There is another level to which we can take this way of relating to God. That is to change our prayer from "Get me out", through "Help me out" and on to "Grow me out." Ah! At last a prayer which honours God's sovereignty, his desire for our growth and the needs which press in around us in so many situations.

"Grow me out—I am sometimes foolish and immature and have walked into a situation that I cannot handle.

Grow me out, I have so much to learn, I need to grow in my wisdom and knowledge of your will.

Grow me out, I will submit myself to your will.

Grow me out, I am learning from the experiences of life and seek your help in maturing through this situation.

In the many situations we face, if God fixes the problems, we learn little, and remain at risk of making the same mistakes again. If we work with God, we learn and can avoid the traps in the future. When God grows us out, we mature, become wise and more able to handle our own lives, and help others as well.

Elizabeth Payne is a member of the Northside Community Church. She is married to Geoff, an associate minister.

God is up to Something

Disciple-making in Australia

Relationships across the Body of Christ seem to be strengthening. A growing number of Pastors are joining together in regular prayer meetings, praying for their churches, their region and our nation. In all of this, there has been a growing interest with church leaders in the area of disciple-making.

Generally, the church in Australia has reached a plateau in its growth and is struggling to effectively achieve the Great Commission. Church leaders across the Body of Christ are wanting to join together and do something about it.

Meetings in Sydney and Melbourne have helped to initiate this process, together with the production of a newsletter called *Disciplemaker*. *Disciplemaker* will be a catalyst to building these relationships and to the fostering of a clearer vision for the work yet to be done. It

will be published quarterly.

After a widespread distribution of the initial issue, *Disciplemaker* will be available by subscription, so if you have an interest and passion about this, make sure you subscribe at an annual rate of \$12.00. Simply send your name and address details, also indicating your church and leadership position. Most Pastors in Victoria and NSW will have received the first issue by now, with those in other states receiving them in the next month or so.

Another initiative that is being promoted through *Disciplemaker* are occasional regional meetings, the first of which will be held in Melbourne and Sydney on December 6 and 8 respectively. The purpose of the meetings is to gauge the level of interest in disciple-making and to provide information about what is happening. Feed-



• Some of the participants at a recent meeting in Melbourne to help initiate the disciple making network. Left to right Ann & John Farquharson (Salvation Army) Phillip Bradley (Churches of Christ) Graham Beattie (Uniting) Rob Bailey (Christian Revival Crusade) Justin Lau (Wesleyan Methodists)

back will be sought from participants about issues that we need to address in the Australian Church in this area. Meetings in each of the other states are planned for the new year. Participants need to register prior to these meetings at a cost

of \$6.00.

Inquiries can be made to Vivienne or Paulyne on (03) 783 3235 and subscriptions and registrations can be sent to Disciplemaker Ministries Australia, 130 Cranbourne Road, Frankston Vic 3199.

Waterman Plaque

Commemorating a generous family



• Neil, John, Joan, Ian and Jan Baulch with plaque

On 24 September, a stone plaque was laid at Camp Waterman, Monbulk, Vic, in memory of Grace Waterman. The plaque was donated and unveiled by Joan Baulch, the only surviving daughter of Grace and William Waterman. The plaque is a fitting reminder

of the generosity of the Waterman family who, back in 1944, released their property for a camp site at a minimal fee to Churches of Christ.

The plaque was on display at the 50th anniversary celebrations of Camp Waterman which were held on 26 November.

Church Planting Plans

National networking

Prior to the Wollongong Spring Conference in October, representatives of various states met to discuss possibilities for national cooperation in church planting. The conference was convened by the Australian Board of Church Development and Education following discussion of a paper presented by Milton Oliver at the annual meeting in July.

Issues included communicating the Gospel in Australia, appropriate training of church planters and networking. Decisions were reached to establish state and national networks among church planters. The first national move is planned for the 1995 Spring Conference. Training options are also under consideration.

—Don Smith



• (L-R) Des Croot, Ross Wakeley, Alan Hirsch, Bob Barreau (chair), Chek Chia, Ashley Barker, Milton Oliver and Don Sonsee

The Altogether Family

Southern Community family camp

At the Southern Community, Vic, church family camp held at Cowes on 22-24 October, the theme of the weekend was "Families". Emphasis was placed on the different combinations that make up a family in the 1990s. Consideration was also given to the relevance of the church to each type of family and how the church could meet the different needs of each.

Friday night activities included a time of getting together followed by a walk to the beach. David White from Scripture Union led a most interesting study on Saturday morning on family history: how it has been established that our background can have an im-

pact on how we respond to certain situations, personality traits, etc. He presented a broad outline of family patterns and the concept of Genograms (a method of establishing family personality traits) and stated that God can be the guide for our negative patterns to be healed. We were challenged to further explore this topic. Saturday afternoon was free time, followed by films and trivial pursuit in the evening.

Following a morning worship service on Sunday, a hypothetical led by Lindsay Dewberry and Doug Smith was held with the able assistance of puppets representing all ages. Questions were raised



• The "family" of campers

covering each type of family with individuals and responses coming from those who fitted into each respective category.

Southern Community church has found that camps create an atmosphere and coming together in a way that is not easily created in normal church activities. Camp offers an

unique opportunity for us to be challenged in our relationship with God and to experience the reality of his love in our lives.

Glorious weather, the superb setting of the Christian Youth Camp site together with challenging studies and the warmth of the enlarged family made for a most successful camp.

Beam Me Out

Billy Graham's Satellite Mission

More than 90 ministers' associations and groups of churches across Australia have officially registered to run Global Mission with Billy Graham in their local area.

The original target was 100 venues and, with registrations open until Christmas, the target should be exceeded.

With the registered venues having an average seating capacity in excess of 500, well over 50,000 Australians are expected to see Global Mission with Billy Graham on each of the three nights (16-18 March 1995).

There will be as many venues as people want to set up in each capital city, not a limit of four as a false rumour has circulated.

The program will be run in any place with satellite facilities. One of the main sources of such facilities will be pubs and clubs, and these are being used as they provide good places in which to evangelise Australians. Other places being used include church halls, school halls, civic centres, circus tents and even the grandstand of a local racecourse.

People concerned about the satellite arrangements should fax Global Mission Technical Coordinator, Ken Sandall, on (02) 627 5018, or else contact Sky Channel, the satellite contractors.

Registered groups will now have received the *Global Mission Leadership Manual* (a 70-page step-by-step guide through the mission project). They will also have received their Operation Andrew starter kits. Over the next 10 weeks, they will receive prayer materials, local publicity kits and counsellor training information.

When Global Mission with Billy Graham runs next year, Australia will have five different time zones (because of daylight saving in some states). The program will be transmitted twice each night. The satellite program will start each night at the following times (local time): NSW and Qld—7.30 pm, SA and WA—8.00 pm, Vic and Tas—8.30 pm. (The satellite program runs for about 80 minutes.) For information phone or fax Kel Richards on (02) 427 4197.

Overseas Positions with World Vision

World Vision is a Christian relief & development organisation seeking to serve the poor in over 80 countries around the world. We are wanting to develop a pool of suitably experienced professionals who are interested in working overseas for periods of 12 months to 2 years. Vacancies for specific position in Africa and Indo-China arise periodically in the following areas:

Logistics and Commodities

- Receipt, storage, distribution, monitoring, documentation and reporting associated with relief commodities
- Management of the logistic components of relief operations, including maintenance of vehicles, road repair projects and general construction projects

Health

- Implementation of health and nutrition programs based on local need
- Planning, design, documentation, evaluation, research and liaising with government entities

Agriculture

- Technical assistance to subsistence farmers, including management of material inputs and education regarding appropriate agricultural technologies
- Supervision and training

Financial Accountants

- Development and implementation of the range of financial activities including grant accounting

All positions require at least 5 years specific task experience, proven cross-cultural sensitivity, excellent communication skills and relevant qualifications. Living in the developing world requires strength of character and personal maturity. Interested applicants must be supportive of the Christian orientation of the organisation and be able to work as a part of an international team.

To register your interest, please send a detailed resume stating relevant experience, availability and motivation to:

The International Personnel Coordinator
World Vision Australia
GPO Box 388C Melbourne 3001
Fax (03) 287 2427



Spring Conference

A prime event for leaders



Great preaching and worship, effective workshops and enthusiastic participants were features of the 1994 Spring Conference held at Wollongong on 29-31 October. Spring Conference was jointly sponsored by the Wollongong, NSW, church and the Australian Board of Church Development and Education.

Dr Joe Harding of the United States (pictured centre), with Dr Carol Preston and Paul Cameron, was the guest preacher. Joe preached at all

the main public meetings and led an outstanding elective on Preaching for Growth. His warmth, vitality, humour and passion for the Gospel were well received by the audience.

A second overseas visitor was Dr Leroy Garrett of Texas, who had previously visited a number of Australian cities on a private visit and lecture tour. Dr Garrett (right) pictured here with Ted Keating (left), Graham Agnew and Mrs. Garrett, is a distinguished church historian within our American

churches and author of a history *The Stone-Campbell Movement*. He led an elective on the Boston Church of Christ and was interviewed by Ted Keating at a public meeting.

Participants came from all states and the ACT. The elective sessions ranged through topics such as worship, computing in the church, children's and youth ministry, church planting, singles ministry, revitalisation, spirituality, church finance, leadership for growth, ministry with women, recovery groups, team ministries, the welcoming church and much more. Allan Meyer of the Mt Evelyn, Vic, church, led a pub-

lic session of worship and outreach and an elective on recovery groups. Wollongong staff members led various sessions and were supported by elective leaders drawn from various local churches. The conference was well supported by Wollongong members and day visitors. Many positive comments about the worship and electives were received at the Conference and subsequently.

Among the many attending were representatives from four Tasmanian churches, with large groups of leaders from Launceston and Hobart City churches.

The partnership between







Let them Experience Religion in Life

Phone 1800 063 341

Wollongong and the Australian Board of Church Development and Education will be continued in 1995. Program details will be announced shortly. Spring Conference has established itself as a prime event in leadership development, training, worship, preaching and inspiration for leaders in our Australian churches.

—Don Smith

**Gardiner
Church of Christ**
(Cnr Malvern Rd & Scott Gve)
**Celebrating
Christmas**

25 December
9.30 am

All welcome to join in
our celebration of
Christ's birth

Plans for Rowville

Discussing future development



• (L to R) Allan Emmett, Dale Gorry, Tom Ede, Stuart Peterson, Gary Davis, Leanne Gorry.

Leaders in the Rowville, Vic, church recently met with Allan Emmett of the Properties Corporation and Don Smith of the

Department of Mission, Education and Development to discuss issues relating to a property development strategy.

The church is experiencing encouraging growth and is making good use of the factory facilities in which the congregation worships. Youth and children's work and play groups are expanding aspects of church life. The church buildings are situated in a modern factory and business park, with the church located on what will be an important link road in the area.

A regular barbecue lunch for workers in the area is proposed as part of outreach and community service. The church, which began in February 1990, is part of the CROP initiative.

Managing Better

Seminar for church leaders

For two Saturdays in November, nineteen people representing eight churches participated in a Managing Better seminar/workshop organised by the Vic-Tas Department of Ministry. The main objective of the seminar was to provide an opportunity for church leaders and ministers to develop understanding and skills in the areas of basic counselling and communication, interviewing for and evaluating ministry, and resolving conflict.

Participants were unanimous in their affirmation of the value of the seminar and comments such as: "Excellent—

should be attended by every church leadership person and those considering the same"; "Challenging and thought-provoking—learnt a lot" and "very helpful—'tis good to know the Department of Ministry is so actively involved in helping grow happy healthy church communities", certainly attest to the value of such a program.

The presenters were Mike Folland, minister at The Patch and chair of the Department of Ministry, Pat Greig, psychologist in private practice and Deputy Chair, Bruce McIntosh, Human Resource Manager and a member of the Department,

Peter McKinnon, Executive Development Office NAB and a member at Ringwood, and Ian Webber from the resource department at World Vision.

—Pat Greig

"School of Pastoral Ministry" 6-10 February 1995

Presenters (am)

Sr Veronica Brady
Rev Roy Bradley
Rev Dr Ian Williams
Rev Charles Bailey
Mary Scarfe
Rev Geoff Schirmer

Workshops (pm)

Mrs Imas Thompson
Ms Tricia McCann
Rev Dr Allen Edwards
Judith Ireland
Rev Lydia Saunders

* Evening Public Lecture *

Wednesday 7.30-9.30 pm
Sr Veronica Brady

"Certificate in Pastoral Ministry"

March-June 1995 p/time
Basic Pastoral Training

Christian Care Inc

Richmond Tce & Docker St,
Richmond, Victoria
Brochures (03) 428 6060

Ministry Appointment

Knoxfield Church of Christ is seeking a Minister for Pastoral Care

A two day per week appointment.
Commencing February 1995.

Knoxfield Church is a growing congregation with new buildings, a present membership of 170, a great Youth Ministry, a church family made up of all age groups and building a team ministry to keep pace with the mission before them.

We seek someone who is committed to Pastoral Care Ministry and to working in a team.

For further information please contact:

The Vic/Tas Department of Ministry
Secretary, Max Carter. Phone (054) 29 6098.
or Minister, Rod Brown.
Phone (03) 801 5798; Mobile 015 55 1099

Calendar

Baseball Outreach Clinics

Unlimited Potential Inc, an US baseball ministry, is returning to Victoria in January to run outreach clinics for young people at baseball parks, Scripture Union missions and youth camps. Players' wives will also be available for women's ministry. This year, the squad will include Don Gordon, UPI's discipleship director, with Cal Eldred, Jeff Kellogg and Bill Wegman from the Milwaukee Brewers, who will be here from 6-16 January. Last summer saw 130 young people respond to the gospel at coaching clinics, a team chapel service at a major league game at the Altona Stadium, and in churches. For further details contact Noel Mitaxa, 98 Barrabool Rd, Highton 3216. Phone (052) 44 2464 or fax (052) 44 3288.

Australian Christian Music Seminar

The 17th Australian Christian Music Seminar is being held at CYTA Lodge, Cooma, NSW, 8-14 January. This year the event is called "Stubble 'N' Stones". More than 50 electives are available during the week and there will also be concerts, group activities, children's programs and a wide range of music, performing arts and worship. A seminar brochure is available from Australian Christian Music Seminar on (02) 748 4000 (they were also included in the 15 October issue of *The Australian Christian*).

Children's Ministry Workshops

Throughout February 1995, the Victorian Council of Christian Education is holding a series of workshops for people in the church working with children. The training and development sessions will be conducted in four different locations (Kilsyth, Cheltenham, Ivanhoe, Moonee Ponds) over three weeks. In the first session (Making the story come alive) participants will learn how to tell a story well; the second (Making your group work) will explore group dynamics and the third (Using the Bible and prayer with children) will be aimed at helping children use the Bible and pray. The cost of all three sessions is \$25 and details can be obtained from Gail Wager at the VCCE on (03) 529 4377.

Brisbane North Telelink

A Caring Ministry

Telelink is a ministry where people who are ill, elderly, shut-in or lonely, can share with one another by means of a small group who meet fortnightly via the telephone. These groups enable people to know that someone cares for them. Groups are led by capable lead-

ers who encourage the "Linkers" to share with each other, with the half-hour session on the phone always concluding with a short devotion.

A wonderful time was had by all on 22 October, when about 70, including helpers, drivers, artists and Linkers



• Annual get together

shared in the 17th annual celebration. Recognition was made of Alex and Beryl Fraser who, after 14 years, had to resign as co-leaders this year, owing to Alex's ill health. Thanks was given for their committed and dedicated service.

Each year, Linkers from all over Brisbane are transported to Brisbane North church to be entertained, share afternoon tea

and meet their leaders and other members of their group who, up until then, have only been voices on the telephone.

This ministry has been extended over past years to enable folk who are not able to attend a worship service to listen in through the telephone each Sunday morning and feel part of a church family.

If you would like to know more about Telelink, or if you would like to be a Telelinker, phone (07) 254 0110 or write to Brisbane North Church of Christ, PO Box 129, Kedron 4031, and the Telelink Convener, Marj Stevens, will explain it all to you. There is no cost involved—all that is required is a telephone.

Southern Community Church of Christ

presents

Fabulous Christmas in Song

7.00 pm Sunday 11 December 1994

Featuring: Children's Musical
"The Animals' Story"

by Jenny Owen

and Drama

"On a Wing and a Prayer"

by Natasha Waters

Presented by a dynamic cast of young people
 at

The Auditorium, 4 Chesterville Road, Cheltenham

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 Accommodation for 60
 Large recreational hall
 Low tariff

Small groups welcome
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 (03) 568 1825

Biography of Gordon Stirling

Life of Tertius, the biography of Gordon Stirling, is still available and would make a great Christmas gift at only \$15 per copy (two for \$25, three for \$35). All prices include postage.

Order Form—Life of Tertius

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..... Postcode

Number of Copies: Amount Enclosed: \$

Payment can be made by Bankcard, Visa or MasterCard

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The Australian Christian

Life of Tertius

PO Box 101

North Essendon 3041

Life of Tertius



by **Tertius**
 Illustrated by Daniel Changer

Letters to the Editor

Letters are limited to 200 words

Well Done Marion

To The Editor,

Having just read the article "Flower Power" by Trish James of Marion, SA ("AC" 5 November), I can honestly commend Karen Billerwell and her team of helpers who are engaged in this wonderful ministry to hurting people and those in the community needing encouragement and God's love during difficult times.

Four months ago, I was "sacked" after nine and a half years as honorary editor of my local church newspaper. My husband, who was an elder/treasurer, resigned in disgust at the "un-Christian" handling of a communication problem. Graham and I, between us, have a total membership of 90 years and our commitment involved our whole lifestyle, so our grief is very real.

Two beautiful floral arrangements with cards bearing loving and encouraging messages have been personally delivered during the past months, showing us that God still loves us and so do the Marion people. Believe me, this "Flower Power" ministry has uplifted us on both occasions and helped to restore lost confidence and self-esteem. It is a ministry that all churches should consider in their outreach programs. Well done Marion, SA!

—Val Smith
(Adelaide, SA)

Women in Ministry

To The Editor,

In *The Australian Christian* (5 November) we were given an interesting article "Springboard for Women: Achieving your Potential". "Springboard" caters to the different needs of many women whether you are ... or simply looking for a new direction.

This article suggests the Mission and Education Department of the Victorian Churches of Christ are in favour of women training for the ministry. We are obedient Christians if we accept the word of God given to us by the Apostle Paul.

1 Cor 14:33-37. Verses 34 and 37 both say this is a commandment of the Lord. Obedience—it is better to obey than to sacrifice.

Your Christian potential is in obedience to the Word of God, which leaves no place for women to be ordained as a minister in Churches of Christ. We all are in the world, but Christians are not of that world which rebels against God.

We have today, in the secular scene, women with university educations and degrees accepting positions of executives and directors in the work force. They are also looking for new directions in Arts, music managers and now even as Members of Parliament. This is not permitted in the church. Women are to be silent in the church.

Mothers are indispensable as home-makers, teaching their children the love of God, also having many opportunities with relations, friends and neighbours to show and speak freely of the love of the Lord Jesus Christ. —H.L. Pietzsch
(Hurstbridge, Vic)

Creationism in Schools

To the Editor,

The appearance of Archbishop Hollingworth of Brisbane on a recent edition of the ABC "7.30 Report" has left me shocked. Here was the leader of the Anglican Church in Queensland saying that he would recommend to the Federal Government that funding be withheld from schools that taught creation. I take it he meant private or church schools.

To me this implies that Queensland Anglicans will be instructed that the early books of the Bible are officially regarded as irrelevant and uncanonical and not to be believed. Science is the path to follow. Hollingworth has said that creation goes against science, apparently he is at one with various others that have recently appeared with this view on the ABC.

When a leader from a mainstream denomination comes out in this way, it makes one

wonder how far off we are from a state-run religion, with beliefs dictated by the state. It certainly demonstrates the one-eyed view of the evolutionists and theistic evolutionists. Their view must be accepted and anything that they don't agree with will be quashed.

When one reads Paul's second letter to Timothy (3:1-5), one realises that his prophecy is true; "Having a form of godliness, but denying its power". Now is the time for Bible-believing Christians to close ranks and shake off their apathy and reject the current fad for ecumenism.

—J.H. Luxton
(Biggenden, Qld)

Creationism and Science

To the Editor,

I doubt whether the image of the church in the community

would be enhanced if it were to seek equal time on the ABC (Wal Caspersonn "AC" 5 November) for creationism versus evolution. They are not alternatives, but two distinct issues. One is a statement of faith about the nature and origin of life itself, and the other scientific dynamism about the origin of species by means of natural selection.

Creationism is not a science, but rather an article of religious belief which allows no questioning or variation of its basic proposition.

Evolution, on the other hand, describes the outcome of a truly scientific endeavour. The collection of facts and observations from nature, their systematic arrangement, and the reasoned development of a theory which fits the facts; subsequently followed by experiment and application of the

Letters to a Travelling Companion

"Misguided Ambition"

Dear Daniel,

Thanks for your latest letter. You are obviously a pretty game man fronting your boss and asking him straight out for a promotion. You're right when you say that climbing the corporate ladder is a stressful occupation.

Your comments remind me of the ambitious newspaper sub-editor who, in an attempt to earn the favour of his boss, accepted a mission to accompany a team of journalists deep into jungle territory known to contain a dangerous cannibal tribe. Unfortunately, he found himself being placed in a cooking pot in preparation for the tribal chief's evening meal. It was said of him that his last words were, "This is not what I meant when I said I wanted to be Editor-in-Chief".

Seriously though, whilst ambition itself is not necessarily a bad thing, it can become very destructive when we allow it to consume our whole sense of self. When we hang our entire self-worth on whether or not we are able to reach that next rung of the corporate ladder, or that next wage level, or get that bigger office or better company car, we fall victim to false criteria for worth, imposed upon us by our misguided, success orientated culture. This causes us to lose sight of what constitutes true human value.

The only true measure of human worth is that we are all, no matter what our occupation and social standing, people who are loved and valued by our Creator. This inherent value no one can take away. So, Daniel, keep trying for that promotion if you must, but remember God loves the office dogsbody just as much as he loves the Managing Director.

Write again soon,
Pastor Salt

Letters to the Editor

theory in the laboratory and in commercial application of new and changed species.

Creationism, then, is something to be argued about by Bible scholars as to whether or not it is valid biblical interpretation, whereas evolution is in the scientific domain, to be continuously reviewed and refined in the light of new facts and observations and more sophisticated methods of measurement.

—Colin R. Johnson
(Preston, Vic)

NCCA Representation

To the Editor,

I write to correct a misleading comment in a letter from J.H. Luxton ("AC" 5 November) in which he claims that the only members of Churches of Christ at the inauguration of the NCCA were from Vic-Tas and ACT.

In my report, "NCCA Inaugural Service—A personal perspective" ("AC" 6 August), I listed people who represented Churches of Christ as delegates in the sessions of the inaugural meeting, as well as some who were present in other capacities.

Listed were people from ACT, Victoria, Tasmania, South Australia and Western Australia. I am also aware of a couple from NSW who travelled a great distance to be present at the inaugural service.

Rather than it being "notable that ... only the Victorian-Tasmanian and ACT branches" were present, as far I could see, only Queensland was unrepresented.

—John Pye
(Richmond, Vic)

Care with Language

To the Editor,

Can we be a little more careful in the way we use the language? I note, with concern, that J.H. Luxton ("AC" 5 November) talks about "heathen" rites, under the general heading of concern about our involvement with the National Council of Churches.

I have no desire to waste emotional energy by debating the Issue of whether or not the National Council is of God or the Devil! My concern is that, when we use terms like "heathen" to describe our Aboriginal fellow Australians, we are continuing to see them as something less than human. My dictionaries variously describe heathen as "barbarous" and "irreligious" and "unenlightened". Another describes heathen as "one who does not acknowledge the one true God"—as if there were any other God!

There are implicit assumptions in the way we use this kind of language.

That we are superior to the "heathens".

That we have nothing to learn from them or their "rites".

That our way of expressing faith is the only correct way.

That faith in God is restricted to those who understand and respond to European cultural models.

I would be much happier if we retained words like heathen to describe those who assume that greatness is equated with money or power or position; or those who believe that the planet is there to be exploited for all it's worth; or those who believe that God given talents are a licence for self-aggran-

disement: or those who believe that God has somehow created two types of human beings—those like us and those who are not!

—Brian Phelps
(Rostrevor, SA)

Opportunity Shop Help Required

To the editor,

Running an Opportunity Shop is proving more difficult than we first thought when we took it over in late 1992. It seems that there is no shortage of clothing or knick-knacks to be sold in the shop. Nor is there a shortage of willingness on the part of local churches around Melbourne to go out of their way to organise to drop the clothes and knick-knacks off in St Kilda.

What there is, is a lack of help to keep the opportunity shop operating during normal business hours. In fact, the shop operates for only several hours per day Monday to Friday. Under consideration, is the option of closing the opportunity shop down because of the lack of help and the reflected lack of finance to keep going.

We have always had a commitment to the local people of St Kilda to provide low cost clothing, etc, and provide for them a point of contact with the ministry of St Kilda Gatehouse, but it seems that unless we get some help to do this, that this service will inevitably have to come to an end. If you can help, even if it only for a few hours per week, please call Moses on (03) 696 0224.

—Moses Abbatangelo
(St Kilda Gatehouse and Matthew's Party, Vic)

Communion for Shut-Ins

To the Editor,

It is my privilege as an Elder to visit church members in hospital or at home who are unable to attend services. Sharing in a simple Communion celebration of about 10 minutes is very meaningful to those involved.

May I encourage pastoral visitors to offer "shut-ins" the opportunity to partake of the Lord's Supper. I have noted that prayer and a passage of Scripture are often shared, while Communion is offered less frequently.

The daughter of a terminally ill member expressed much appreciation for the times we shared the Lord's Supper around the hospital bed.

In my experience, 99% of those given the opportunity to participate will readily accept and receive much blessing. Many people hesitate to make the request as they don't want to trouble others unduly.

—Dorothy Goodman
(Caulfield, Vic)

Churches and Unions

To the Editor,

Alan Matheson ("AC" 5 November) asks why no one wants to show their union ticket. It is because 75% of people don't like unions as they are today and so the ticket is not popular.

I personally don't think Christians and Unions should be mentioned together.

When I joined the staff of Australia's largest biscuit maker, I stated I did not want to join the union on my application form. They agreed to this. I was later forced to join the TWU.

I suffered a 12-week stand down because the union called a strike of the drivers for a wage rise. No help was given from the union and I lost 12 weeks wages, which took me 12 months to catch up on. I found out later, from another driver, that the drivers were not asked, just told they were out.

After several other strikes, the company was made a closed

Continued on page 11

Pontius' Puddle



Books

Is THIS the Day?

by Ron Holmes (Vital Publications) \$10.00.

Have you ever had one of those days? We all do—times when we wonder if God really intended any of the days that he made to be like this! *Is THIS the Day?* looks at some of the rough times and provides some suggestions for making the most of what each day has to offer.

This book might surprise you, as it explores what Jesus did when he had a bad day. The New Testament story springs to life with 20th Century relevance.

Ron Holmes' second book of daily readings for busy people follows the same format as *Enough for One Day*, ie a theme for each week and a page for each day. Readers of his first book will be eager to begin this new collection of devotional thoughts.

I found the book to be a delight. It is very readable and the images are effective—presented with humour and simple practicality. It overflows with ideas which will linger in your mind, encouraging you to continue thinking as the day progresses.

The author does not pull any punches... but I appreciate a book which makes me roar with laughter and say "Ouch!" at the same time. It is very refreshing.

This is a great book for the person with time constraints and it would make a thoughtful gift for all those friends who are almost as busy as you are! You won't want to give yours away when you have finished it, but you will want to share it with someone. Buy two!

—JMT

(Vital Publications is the imprint of the Churches of Christ Federal Literature Department and copies can be obtained from PO Box 101, Essendon North 3041 for \$10 plus \$2 postage. Phone (03) 379 1219)

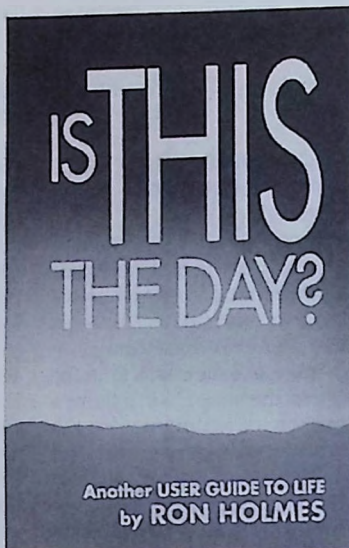
Mental Handicap: Is Anything Wrong?

by David C. Potter (Kingsway Publications) \$22.95.

The title of this book is misleading. The book does not deal with the medical reasons for mental handicap; instead, especially in the first two chapters, the author worried me by appearing to suggest that mental handicap does not exist at all, but that the term simply denotes a low position on the scale of what we arbitrarily term "normality". On page 23 he reassured me with the statement: "We are not saying that mental handicap does not exist... rather we are saying that people should be accepted on the basis that they are people".

David Potter is a Christian minister, the father of a daughter born with Downs Syndrome. He has first-hand knowledge of the negative attitudes the mentally handicapped and their carers have to face daily in a society which doesn't understand and is often hostile. One senses, in his writing, the frustration born of many years of championing the cause of the mentally handicapped.

With his wife he founded "A Cause for Concern", an organisation based in Reading, England, providing residential and day care for people with mental handicaps. One offshoot of this is



Causeway, which encourages and supports Bible study groups for people with mental handicaps.

He touches briefly on the medical background for some of the disorders leading to mental handicap and gives an overview of how this was addressed by society and the church in times past. In later chapters, he deals with the philosophical and religious thinking which has influenced society's handling of the problem.

David Potter writes from experience about a subject with which many are uncomfortable. He is an impassioned and persuasive writer with flashes of humour.

The author's aim is to "upset the accepted order of the way most people think about and react to a significant group of people in society".

At the end of the book, there is a helpful bibliography plus a list of resource material for mentally handicapped people and for those wishing to assist them.

—Zillah Williams

Children's Talks

compiled by Jean E. Feder (Henley Beach Church of Christ) \$5.50.

The people of the Henley Beach, SA, church and Jean Feder in particular, have done us all a service in offering for our use this collection of 20 children's talks. It is the sort of resource you can pull off the shelf to meet an immediate need, or reflect on to help fire your own creativity. The talks presented lend themselves to a range of settings, from worship to children's club to school class. They are brief and to-the-point, contemporary in expression and supported with an "equipment" list for each talk. At just \$5.50 a copy, it's great value! Let's hope Volume II is already on the drawing board!

—David Brooker

[Available from the Henley Beach Church of Christ either by ringing Jean Feder on (08) 356 1565 or by writing to her c/o Henley Beach Church of Christ, PO Box 164, Henley Beach SA 5022. \$5.50 includes postage and handling. Cheques should be made out to the Henley Beach Church of Christ.]

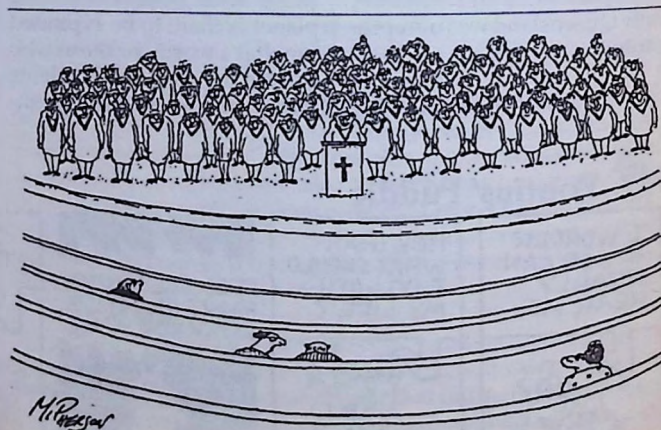
Children's Talks

A Selection of Children's Talks
Presented at
Henley Beach Church of Christ

Compiled by Jean E. Feder



Drawings by Mary Linn



"If you ask me, they got a little carried away with the choir membership drive."

Letters to the Editor

Australia

SA School Chaplaincy

The Schools Ministry Group in SA has claimed that its School Chaplain project is "one of the major and most effective ecumenical ventures happening in (that) state". Not only are local churches cooperating closely to provide chaplaincies, there is also great diversity in the chaplains themselves. The Uniting Church has the most, with 21 school chaplains, followed by the Baptist Church, with 11, followed by the Anglicans, Assemblies of God and Lutherans with seven each; the Catholics and Christian Revival Crusade have three, Churches of Christ and independent churches have two and the Brethren one. The average cost is \$7,600 per year for a 10-hour-per week chaplaincy.

Sports Focus Australia

Sports and Leisure Ministries (SLM) are publishing a quarterly magazine *Sports Focus Australia* as part of their promotions group. It is available from 98 Barrabool Rd, Highton 3216 for \$20 pa for an individual, or \$75 pa Bulk (30+ copies). The magazine includes stories of Christians involved in elite level sport and the way their faith is relevant to them. It also includes information about sports chaplaincy and the way this is carried out in various professional sports.

Lutheran "No"

The Lutheran Church of Australia has said "no" to Lutheran participation in inter-faith worship services. A statement adopted by its Commission on Theology says that only worship of the triune God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, is "authentic" and that Christians cannot participate in any act of worship that addresses any other "god", or that "deliberately and consistently" fails to define the "God" being addressed, leaving it to participants to "fill the word 'god' with the content and meaning that is peculiar to their own religion". However, the Lutheran Church recognises that there are non-worship situations, such as the International Year of the Family, in which Christians may work together with people of other religious faiths.

shop. I refused to join, knowing I could not be sacked.

I was called to Melbourne and told by two senior staff members what would happen if I continued to refuse: the company would be declared black, which would mean nothing into or out of the factory and hundreds, perhaps thousands, would be stood down as there would be no supplies to work with.

As a Christian, I could not do that to other workers who needed their jobs. So I joined!

Is that an action of a Christian nature? I don't think so.

These are the sorts of things that make people not want to show their tickets because most people consider unions a blot on the nation.

The unions have certainly done a good job of convincing you of what they have done for the workers. They have, in fact, done next to nothing.

—Jack Marshman
(Horsham, Vic)

National Council of Churches in Australia

To the Editor,

As one who had the privilege of attending the inaugural service and meetings of the National Council of Churches in Australia in Canberra in July, I would like to make comment on the letter from J.H. Luxton ("AC" 5 November). The statement that "only Vic-Tas and ACT branches of our denomination were present" is incorrect.

Our Churches of Christ delegation was led by the National President Robert Leane, of South Australia, and members from most other states were also present.

The inaugural service, held in St Christopher's Cathedral, was one of the most moving and special experiences I have had. The Spirit of God was very surely present, alive and active! There was a wonderful feeling of togetherness, as we shared in worshipping God across all denominational barriers and differences.

As for the criticism of the use of Aboriginal "pagan rites", I would like to draw attention to

these words from the order of service. "Aboriginal people never approach sacred, spiritual places for worship without preparing themselves properly. The mind is prepared by clearing it of wrongful thoughts, the body by cleansing and painting. The cleansing is done by purification with smoke."

I wonder if we take the time and prepare ourselves—our mind and body—before we come together before God in worship each Sunday. I suspect that often we come bringing all the hang-ups of our week, instead of in a spirit of preparedness and expectation of meeting our Lord and hearing him speak to us.

Perhaps we could learn from our Aboriginal brothers and sisters in Christ! We have much to share and learn, from other branches of the Christian church. What better way to understand and appreciate each other, than to meet in open dialogue together. Then we might see the prayer of Jesus, "that they all might be one", become a reality!

—Eunice Reidy
(Montrose, Vic)

False Memory Syndrome

To the Editor,

In reply to Bruce Coventry's response concerning the so-called False Memory Syndrome ("AC" 5 November).

I have kept fairly well abreast of world-wide developments. I have no doubt that there are cases of "misguided therapy" which can be the explanation for the claims of some adults. My point is that we must be careful that we do not fall into the trap of assuming all, or even most claims are due to this.

I am pleading that we remain open to possibilities lest we find ourselves aligning ourselves with the oppressors and further oppress the oppressed.

My research gives me cause to have grave concerns about some persons affiliated with the False Memory Syndrome Foundation.

Again, I am sure there are parents who have been

wrongly accused. Are they unknowingly joining a group with a covert agenda? I do not know. I ask again that we face up to the hard task of seeking the truth. My experience with both alleged victims and alleged perpetrators is that the victims' allegations are most often true.

—Reg Brand
(Clovelly Park, SA)

OT as Scripture

To the Editor,

I have followed the correspondence resulting from Alan Cant's article "The Greatest Error?" ("AC" 6 August) regarding the appropriateness of the OT as Christian Scripture. Previous writers have made useful contributions, so I only wish to address the errors in his latest letter ("AC" 5 November).

First, the argument that we are not required to follow Jesus' Jewishness is irrelevant. Jesus' adherence to the Word of God was not a product of his nationality, but his relationship with, and obedience to, the Father. Whilst we are no longer under bondage to the Mosaic law (fulfilled in Christ), we cannot set aside the eternal covenants and revelation God has given us through the OT.

Second, as a Christian, I am a true son of Abraham. Gal 3:29 says that if you belong to Christ you are "Abraham's seed"; and Paul further teaches that being a Jew is not outward, but inward by the Spirit. (Rom 2:28f) He also tells us that "not all who are descended from Israel are Israel ... but the children of the promise are regarded as Abraham's offspring". (Rom 9:6-9)

Consequently, far from being offensive to claim the Hebrew Scriptures as my own, is it not more offensive for a Jew, who is not in Christ, to claim our Scriptures for himself?

If the OT is not the Word of God for Christians, Alan, I can't see how your conscience allows you to preach from any of it. However, the OT is Scripture for the true "Israel of God"—the Church. (Gal 6:16)

—Jason Hemsley
(Nollamara, WA)

No Fantasy

Teacher's paradise in paradise

How'd you like a class of high schoolers where no student ever answers you back? Where the children always address you politely and respectfully? Where, when you tell them to go on with their work, they all do so? Where, if you are called upon to leave the room, they are all still working quietly when you return? And where every member of the class always tries his or her best?

A teacher's fantasy, you say. Some kind of dream? Where is such a class to be found? Well, I've not long returned from two months volunteer teaching at our Church of Christ school at Londua, Vanuatu, and I can tell you that classes just like that really do exist there—quite unlike any that I found here in Australia in a teaching career spanning almost 40 years. It really was a pleasure to work with such keen and responsive children—not to mention the adult Ni Vanuatu Christians and islanders who are outgoing and friendly and seem to be devoid of many of the hang-ups and complications that are a part of life here in white Australian society.

The school is situated on the island of Ambae, a rocky, jungle covered extinct volcano rising straight out of the ocean to an altitude of about a mile above sea level, (or 1500 metres

seeing that we are now metric). About 10,000 live on the island, which is 40 kilometres long and 25 kilometres wide. It is actually the fabled island of Bali Hai, the source of the musical "South Pacific" (although to take the romance from the tale, the author never set foot on the island itself—he only saw it from a distance and imagined what it would have been like). There are very few whites there. On the western end where the school is situated, we have our own missionary family, the Weatheralls, and another missionary couple from the Apostolic church ministering about 10 kilometres away.

The deep, sparkling waters of the Pacific Ocean roll into the rocky outcrops a mere 100 metres down a grassy slope from the school and mission campus, (the location would be worth hundreds of thousands of dollars back here) and a cool breeze usually tempers the humidity. About 100 students attend the classes—approximately 30 in each of forms 1 and 2, an older class of 10 girls for sewing and home-crafts, and 30 young men who have undertaken a three-year course in carpentry. The students come from all over Vanuatu, and are required to board at the school, most only getting home during the holidays. They look after

themselves in most areas of life—even to the extent of doing their own cooking by means of duty teams. There is a staff of 10 (seven teachers, three ancillary). The subjects taught are Maths, English, French, Social Studies, Agriculture and Religious Education (through the full-time pastor).

They are also very keen on all kinds of sports and games, especially some strange kind of football where they use a round ball and are not allowed to touch it with their hands. So they (foolishly it seems to me) try to mark it with their heads, but without much success from what I could see because it usually bounces off and flies anywhere. However, they have lots of fun and the school has a good team which did very well in local competition this year.

Of course, there is a down side in being required to run a school on a shoestring budget—there is little or no equipment such as we find in schools at home and much of what is there is run down and dilapidated. The children certainly deserve better.

Like most others who go there, I returned home captivated by these wonderful people and their magnificent singing and preaching (even if I didn't quite understand all the local language)—vowing to return one day.

—Len Martin

International

Beginner's Bible characters

Characters from *The Beginner's Bible* are showing up on backpacks and lunch boxes in the back-to-school section of Wal-Mart in the US. To date, over 30 major children's product manufacturers have licensed characters from *The Beginner's Bible* for use on their products.

Cuban Revolution

Churches in Cuba are full again and the demand for Bibles, once banned, is greater than ever. In 1993, the Marxist Cuban Government requested the Bible Society supply 100,000 Bibles for distribution through state-owned bookshops. These are in addition to the thousands already being distributed through the churches. This turnaround in the official position is documented in a new video available on free loan from the Bible Society in Australia. The video, "Cuba a different revolution", includes a brief history of Cuba and the testimony of Cuban Bible workers and church leaders. It is available from Bible Society State Offices located in all Australian capital cities.

Christian Music Awards

The winners of the first America's Christian Music Awards were Steven Curtis Chapman as Favourite Male Artist and Amy Grant as Favourite Female Artist. DC Talk were Favourite Pop Group or Duo while Petra were Favourite Rock Group or Duo with Point of Grace winning Favourite New Artist. Favourite Pop CD was "Free at Last" by DC Talk while Favourite Rock CD was "Wake Up Call" by Petra. Favourite Live Concert winner was DC Talk.

WCC Challenge Serbian Orthodox

The executive committee of the World Council of Churches has agreed to "challenge" the Serbian Orthodox Church, a WCC member, about its "responsibility to act as a peacemaker" in former Yugoslavia. There has been criticism of the apparent support of the Serbian Orthodox Church for the Bosnian Serbs and for Serbian territorial conquests.

Expressions of interest are invited for the following staff roles of the

Swanston Street Church of Christ

Youth Worker

For year 7-12 young people. This is a part-time position. The role includes discipling, training and equipping leaders, and coordinating youth ministries.

Worship Coordinator

This role involves developing the worship life of the church, training worship leaders and coordinating all aspects of worship. This is a part-time position.

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Fax: (03) 662 3487.



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People

Black Leader Dies

Tom Skinner, who moulded an entire generation of black evangelical leaders in the USA, died on 17 June. The author of four books and a much-sought after public speaker, he began his ministry career in the mid-1960s with evangelistic crusades in New York City's Harlem, where he had grown up. He did much to build bridges between black and white evangelicals.

"New Life" Editor

Rev Bob Thomas, editor of *New Life*, a weekly Christian newspaper has accepted a call from the St Kilda Presbyterian Church to be their minister and he is returning to his first calling—that of a parish minister. Bob has been editor of *New Life* since July 1988, following the death of the Rev John Coleman, the second editor of *New Life*.

Harold Bischoff Death

We are saddened to report the death of Harold Bischoff on 22 November. He was in a car accident the previous weekend, but had appeared to recover from that prior to his death. Following graduation from COB, he had ministries with churches in Victoria and New Zealand, and with the NZ Council for Christian Education in Schools and the Bible Society. A full obituary will appear in a subsequent issue.

Religious Liberty Award

Iranian Bishop Haik Hovsepian-Mehr, who was murdered in January after campaigning against the persecution of Christians in Iran, is to be posthumously honoured with the Religious Liberty Award of the World Evangelical Fellowship. Hovsepian-Mehr was an Assemblies of God minister and President of the Council of Protestant Ministers in Iran, who was well known in Iran as a critic of Teheran's treatment of evangelical Christians.

Fiji Relief Team

During December and January Graeme and Jeanette Wame (Kenmore Christian College) will be assisting the Overseas Mission Board by undertaking an interim ministry for the two months with the church in Fiji. Whilst the Wames are in Fiji the Clegg family will be returning to Australia for holidays.

Horace Christensen

A Life of Service

Horace Christensen was born on 31 January 1926 and died on 14 November 1994, when his heart failed to restart after bypass surgery.

His early life was spent at Kingaroy. Some time after his father's death the family moved to Toowoomba. Horace worked as a builder until his retirement. He married Shirley on 5 February 1949. They had three children, twins Fay and Jan, and a son Les. He enjoyed the extra additions to his family of a daughter-in-law, Joan, and grandchildren, Anna and Tyler. The influence of his world view is seen in the work of his children, who are all active participants in the work of overseas mission.

He enjoyed life and was interested in a wide variety of things. He collected many things—stamps, match packets, shells, model vintage cars, carpenters' pencils and more. He loved gardening and photography and appreciated the work of the Creator in nature.

Faithfulness and commitment are words which sum up Horace's life. His desire was to serve the Lord for many years to come, but before the operation he said, "Whichever way it goes, I'll be all right." He agreed with Paul's words, "For me to live is Christ and to die is gain."

Those who attended the thanksgiving service at the Harlaxton, Qld, church for Horace's life were reminded of how he lived out the words: "Serve the Lord with gladness". The more than 500 who

gathered to pay tribute were an indication of the far-reaching influence he had for Christ and the church.

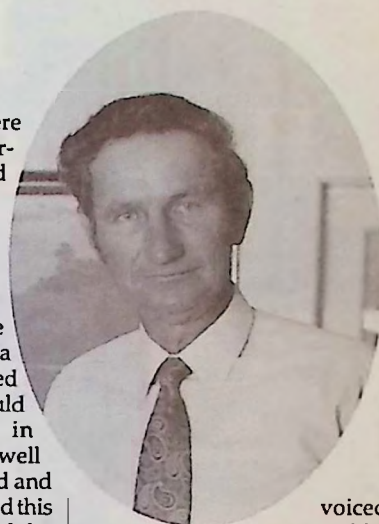
Serving locally

Daryl Thorpe, one of the Harlaxton church ministers, led the service. He said that Horace had a world view. He believed that the local church could serve the community in which it was planted, as well as the state of Queensland and overseas. Horace expressed this belief through tireless work for Christ at Harlaxton and in the wider church. He was secretary of the Harlaxton church from the time the congregation became independent in 1965 until his death. Earlier, he was the secretary of the Margaret St, Toowoomba, church. He served many years as deacon at both churches and as an elder at Harlaxton. He led the Harlaxton Sunday School for about 25 years.

No task was too small for Horace, whether it was putting on the urn, putting out the church rubbish bin, sorting stamps for overseas mission, or fertilising the church lawn. Past and present ministers have expressed their appreciation of his strong support. His influence was felt on young and old. One youngster told her mother, "He was my favourite man at church."

Serving in Queensland

David Eagling, on behalf of Queensland Conference,



voiced appreciation of the humble and wholehearted way in which Horace served the Queensland churches. He was Conference President in 1984, with the theme, "Serve the Lord with gladness". During that year, he visited every church in Queensland. Throughout his life, he helped in numerous building projects for local churches, Kenmore Christian College, Camp Cal and the Department of Social Services. Many remember Horace urging them to take up a hammer and join a working bee. He enthusiastically attended Men's Department Camps. He was a committee member for a number of Conference Departments: Youth Department, Kenmore Christian College, and Overseas Mission Board (of which he was Chairman for many years). This was his special love and few churches in Queensland have not had visits from Horace urging them to widen their vision and support Overseas Missions.

Serving Overseas

Julie Trinnick (OMB) brought greetings from Papua New Guinea and Vanuatu, where he had formed friendships during his participation in nine work parties. Manis Aver, a Papua New Guinean carpenter with whom he worked closely, has requested that, in the spirit of Elijah and Elisha, Horace's work hat and hammer be handed over to him.

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Australian secondary schools. "The Choice is Yours" challenges viewers to consider the way in which alcohol can impact on their own lives and on society. Similar products are available throughout Australia from all ANSVAR offices.

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People

Ralph Oke

40 Years in Ministry

Ralph Oke (Elizabeth, SA) will retire from full-time ministry on 1 January 1995, after a ministry spanning 40 years in Victoria and South Australia.

At the 10 am service at Elizabeth on 11 December, recognition will be made of Ralph's contribution to ministry. David Brooker, SA State Minister, will be representing Conference.

Ralph trained at the Melbourne Bible Institute (now Bible College of Victoria) in 1951-52. After a time working as a farm hand in the Mount Compass, SA, area, he began ministering in the Mount Compass/Goolwa Circuit. Other ministries included Merbein and Yarrawonga in Victoria, Strathalbyn/Milang/Point Sturt Circuit, Kensington Park, Gawler and Elizabeth in South Australia.

Before she married Ralph in January, 1954, Heather trained at the Adelaide Bible Institute (now Bible College of South Australia).

After retirement, Ralph and Heather plan to live in Gawler.

Mrs Clarice Digwood

A wonderful servant

On 10 October, at Carinya Village, Mrs Clarice Digwood went to be with her Lord whom she served so faithfully for many years. After her marriage, she and her late husband Ivor attend Maylands, WA, church from 1929. There she served as president of the local women's work, Bible School teacher and girls' club leader, and was well-known for her hospitality.

But she is best remembered for her service in: the Women's Auxiliary Conference of WA, where she was president four times, as Federal Women's President 1946-8, Federal Women's Vice-President 1958-60, and Vice-President of World Christian Women's Fellowship 1960-65. She served on the Women's Conference Executive from 1935, as Isolated Supt and Representative on the Youth Committee of Conference.

In 1939, she held in her home the first camp for country girls. This became an annual event for some years, several girls accepting Christ as their Saviour and forming the nucleus

of some country churches where they still continue to serve.

While a member of the Youth Committee, she became "Auntie Ruth" on the Radio Sunday School, which commenced in 1945 and grew in state-wide popularity.

She was in charge of the Bible School Correspondence lessons for three years.

She was Women's Aborigines Supt for seven years and was a member of the Federal Aborigines Board for nine years, commencing the clothing scheme for Aboriginal children being cared for on our missions at Carnarvon and Norseman.

As Women's President, she visited metropolitan and country women's groups and presided over the inaugural meetings of the South-West and Eastern Wheatbelt Women's Conferences.

In recognition of her service, Executive life membership was conferred on her in 1959.

For many years, she suffered ill-health, but that didn't deter



• Mrs Clarice Digwood

her in her service.

Her husband predeceased her in 1960 and a few years later she moved to West Perth, attending Perth church. Increasing ill-health necessitated her residence at Carinya Village in 1982.

Her wise counsel and encouragement, gracious personality, loving friendship and delightful sense of humour endeared her to the women of our churches, and we thank God for every remembrance of her.

—Elma Ewers

Think

From a long-term perspective, a reasonable projection is the numerically growing denominations of the 21st century will be those that (a) place the resourcing of congregations, mobilising resources for worldwide mission, the planting of new churches, encouraging the emergence of more large congregations and enlisting a new generation of highly competent and deeply committed pastors, as the top five priorities for that denomination and (b) display a high level of trust toward congregation leaders.

—Lyle Schaller, 21
Bridges to the 21st Century.

Classifieds

BIRTHS

WHITE (GERRAND) Wendy and Dale of Mount Clear (Vic) thank the Lord for the arrival of a daughter, Madeline Grace (6lb 9oz), born on the 18th November; a little sister for Christopher and Joshua.

90TH BIRTHDAY

STAFFORD The family of Muriel E. Stafford, resident at Greenways Retirement Village, wish to thank all those who shared in her 90th birthday celebrations on Saturday 19 November. Jeff, Ken, Laurie, Marjory and Colin, with 36 descendants, appreciate the gentle yet firm influence of Nanna and wish her many serene moments in the years to come. Congratulations!

DEATHS

THOMSON Hazel (1903-94) Passed away suddenly 14 November. Dearly loved wife of Roy, loved mother of Valerie and Olwyn, mother-in-law of Ross and Peter, loving Grandmother of Stephen, Denise and Joe, Judith and Andrew, Dianne, Greg, Great Grandmother of Holly. Lovingly remembered by all.

IN MEMORIAM

SMITH, Jack 14.12.86. In loving memory of my husband. I thank God for every remembrance of him. —Dorothy Smith.

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An Embarrassment of Riches

Viney Longthorp

During our long, hot summer holiday season, much of the offerings on the media tends to be a wasteland. Many media outlets take the view that since most Australians are in a comatose condition 'midst sea and surf and since few are engaged in serious viewing/listening, repeats and slops will do. Fortunately, our national broadcaster, not yet fully ratings driven, is free to take a more objective view of things. Some of its offerings are very good indeed and will actually enrich our holidays since many now have the time to "sit and stare" a little more.

Television

The ever popular "Songs Of Praise" have now started a new series. All of these programs will be screened on Sundays, 11.00 am-11.35 am on ABC TV.

On 4 December, the venue is Dover. In World War II this place was known as "Hellfire Corner", because most of the action in the Battle of Britain took place overhead. Many Dover people now feel that the latest threat is the newly completed "chunnel"! Pam Rhodes talks to locals about their plans for creating a new and exciting civic identity. The hymns? These include: "Thou Whose Almighty Word", "On Jordan's Bank", and "Long Ago".

The town of Wrexham is visited on 11 December. A special program called "Operation Christmas Child" is dedicated to helping suffering orphans in Romania, Russia, Albania and other parts of Eastern Europe.

On 18 December, we visit Tewkesbury Abbey, which possess one of the finest Norman towers in all Europe. This town is redolent with history. It was the scene of one of the decisive battles of the Wars of the Roses. We visit a typical English carol service and speak with many of the local workers in the town and the abbey. These interviews are an integral part of these presentations; they confirm the thought of one great Anglican scholar "that the true apostolic succession is in the lives of the saints".

On 25 December, the program brings us, via satellite, a special midnight mass (live) from St Peter's Basilica in Rome, where Pope John Paul II leads the service. We cannot guarantee you will be familiar with all the hymns, but the choice of music in this particular setting will make a great spiritual impact.

On 1 January, we are treated to a 45-minute special in celebration of the Twelve Days of Christmas. Such stars as Cliff Richard, Sir Harry Secombe and Dame Thora Hird will participate. The venue is the Wembley Conference Centre, with a 90 piece orchestra and a choir of 200.

8 January finds us in Chester Cathedral. This program marks the climax of the cathedral's 900th anniversary celebrations. Local people come together to sing some seasonal songs such as: "Good King Wenceslas", "God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen," and "Away in a Manger".

Then it's Windsor Castle on 15 January. We visit the fire-ravaged castle for a privileged first-ever camera view of the Albert Memorial Chapel in St Georges Cathedral. The music includes: "The Three Kings", "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing" and "God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen".

Then there is a "Compass" Special, "Inside the Vatican". This six-part series is screened each Sunday night at 10.30 pm on ABC TV. It runs from 11 December until 15 January. Each of the one-hour documentary programs is hosted by Sir Peter Ustinov. Each one is devoted to a rich and colourful tracing of the place of the Vatican in human experience—one of the most powerful and influential bodies in the Western world. Even though we Protestants disagree with many of the moral and doctrinal stances which emanate from the Vatican, it can still be an enriching

and rewarding ecumenical experience to see at first hand the workings of an ecclesiastical administration which is so important a part of the lives of our Roman Catholic friends.

Peter Ustinov will also show us many of the treasures of art and architecture in the Vatican. He will comment (as only Peter Ustinov can) on many of the great figures associated with the long history of the Vatican, such as Leonard da Vinci, Galileo, Charlemagne, and Pope Gregory, who brought Christianity to Britain.

"Beginning and End"—Sundays at 11.30 am on ABC TV. In this special Advent series, Bishop Paul Barnett of Sydney, presents a study of the relationship of revelation to the season of Advent. The programs include audience question time and music associated with this part of the Christian year.

Radio

"The Search For Meaning", presented by Caroline Jones, has earned a special place in the affections of many listeners who want more than "pat" answers to some of our spiritual pilgrimages and puzzles. The fact that this program is now under threat gives it special piquancy. It is broadcast on Radio National on Sundays, 6.05-7.00 pm, and is repeated on Fridays, 2.05-3.00 pm. The dates for the new year are: 1, 6; 8, 13; 15, 20 January.

We may share in the Choral Communion Service from Saint Andrew's Anglican Cathedral Sydney. The broadcast is per Radio National, 11.00 pm-1.00 am, Saturday 24 December.

Then, on ABC Classic FM between 8.00 pm and 9.30 pm, also Saturday 24 December, there will be broadcast the Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols by the Choir of Christ Church, St Laurence. ❖

[All times eastern summer time.]

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Inquiries to Don Russell (030 857 7318).

A Church ABC

North Essendon Church of Christ is situated some 10 km north-west of Melbourne in an established area. The community is predominantly Anglo-European Australians with a number being in their senior years. Economically, the area is basically middle class. A recent trend is for younger families to move back into the area (previously the community had undergone the common cycle of young families whose children moved to outersuburbs for cheaper housing, creating an ageing population).

The church itself seems to reflect the composition of the community quite well and is typical of many of our (inner) suburban churches, who face the issues of how to address the changes that have occurred in their community, how to reverse the decline in number over recent years. Built in the 1930s, the North Essendon chapel was constructed from bricks transferred from Prahran church. With the area being a fairly new settlement at the

time, the church grew and had a strong children's ministry, at one time having a Sunday School of about 190 with 25 leaders.

families, and a monthly craft group consisting mostly of non-church folk, opportunities for developing relationships abound.

limitation, but for their numbers and age, the commitment and work done by the members is great. The challenge is to channel their energies into out-

reach as a priority, particularly finding individual or personal applications.

Another focus the minister, Mike Esbensen, seeks to develop is their ministry to the needy, particularly the "hidden hurting

ones"—people in economic hardship, the unemployed, the lonely, the grieving; those who have needs but do not use or abuse the system. Part of this is a shift of focus away from the church building as the centre. Mike and the elders try to emphasise meeting people on their home grounds, rather than having to "come to us".

A further strength the church can capitalise on is their sociability and caring nature. Dinners, functions and inter-church activities are well supported and the church responds to needs well through the CWF or activities such as packing Community Care's Christmas hampers. ♦

Focus on North Essendon



Currently, the membership of the church is about 30, with average worship attendance being a little less. However, even though one might suggest the church's heyday was in the past, the leadership is taking time to intentionally consider the future. By considering "What Ifs" and by dreaming and imagining possibilities, they are seeking a way forward, ways in which they can build on the strengths and opportunities they have.

A very positive feature is the number of community contacts the church has throughout the week. With community run playgroups meeting four mornings a week, involving over 50

To capitalise on these opportunities, the church is seeking to be more involved with the playgroups, having regular contact, getting to know each other, rather than the church just being those who own the building in which the groups meet.

A regular event each year is show bag packing where, for a few weeks, all is on the go packing show bags for the Melbourne Royal Show. Show bag packing serves to raise funds for the church's ministry. The North Essendon church is also the location of the offices of *The Australian Christian*.

A smaller, relatively older congregation is sometimes a

White Papers

Ned

Once upon a time or ... perhaps more correctly, long ago, I was working on a farm in Queensland. Entertainment was minimal, but one evening, after the day's milking was done (after 8 pm), I set off to visit a neighbour for a game of "500".

There was no moon and none was needed. With the Queensland stars in control, there was light enough.

I was riding Ned, a brown farm hack. He was half-brother to a racehorse, but sometimes he acted as though he was the racing half! He was in his element mustering cattle. He would gallop and prod and turn, shoulder recalcitrant cows

and help bewildered calves stay in touch with their mothers. This night, however, he plodded along with his head down, resigned to some unpaid overtime.

My route took me through a large adjoining property, thick with scrub and brigalow bush. There were two gates.

The ride didn't take long. When I arrived at my friend's home, I tied Ned to a gate-post and went inside. Three hours later, I said goodbye to my hosts and set off for home. Queensland had changed. The stars had knocked off for the night and a storm was brewing. After passing the first gate, it had well and truly brewed! It began to rain, gently at first, then it came down in a torrent. All that matter about Queensland

being beautiful one day and perfect the next doesn't apply to that State's often stormy night-time!

Ned and I went on for a few minutes in the dark and wet. Then Ned shook his mane and stopped. I heeled him and patted him and wiggled the bridle bit to encourage him, but Ned stood still. It was time for a discussion. "Ned," I said, "You and I have a problem! I can't get home without you, and you are certainly not going home without me."

"Now, Ned," I continued, "You and I are different. Our Heavenly Father made me smarter than you. That is why I was inside playing cards and having supper for three hours, while you were outside with the gate-post. However, God

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White Papers

has compensated you and the rest of the animal kingdom with a few skills which I lack. Swallows can fly from Siberia to Tasmania without a map, huge sea-birds can fly halfway round the world on one tank of fuel and dogs and horses have a marvellous capacity for finding their way home. They never get lost."

"You are even cleverer than the animal which is called man's best friend! You have what is called 'horse-sense'. It is a gift so highly rated that it is even applied to humans who are a bit above the average. Now, Ned, tonight you are not only my best friend, you are my only friend! We have to find our way home. I can't see a thing. Without your help, I'm going to be stuck here all night, and so are you!"

"So, let's get moving and get out of the wet!"

I gave him a bit of friendly encouragement by jabbing my heels into his belly and, after a moment or two for reflection, Ned started walking.

I let the rein hang loose and hoped for the best. Visibility was nil and I was absolutely drenched, having dressed for that balmy tropical night which the northerners boast about.

As we went on, my hopes were high that all would be well ... until Ned stopped again. I recommenced my one-sided discussion and emphasised a few points with my heels, all to no avail. I was stuck! There was no way back and, apparently, Ned had decided he was not going forward!

I sat in the saddle pondering the future when, suddenly, there was a distant flash of lightning which gave me a fleeting glimpse of my location. We

were home! Ned was standing with his head against the home gate! He had done it! I don't know that he had been convinced by my arguments. Maybe he had decided to ignore what might have seemed like nonsense to him. Or perhaps he was just fed up with being rained on! What mattered was that we were home!

I dismounted and led Ned through the gate. I took off the saddle, removed the bridle, gave him a friendly pat on the rump, thanked him and said good night. As he sloshed away, I thought I heard him say, with a sarcastic whinny, "He thinks God made him smart! Smart! My rear left hoof!"

Well, that was years and years ago, and Ned has long since gone to that great stable in the sky, if there is a stable in the sky! However, what hap-

pened back there on that stormy night, happened again in a much more important area of my life. I don't want to get emotional and turn it into a sermon illustration. Oh what the heck! Why not? It was a life illustration for me and it was an emotional time.

I had, through my own fault, been estranged from my caring family, and I had been lost in storms of my own making. It certainly wasn't very smart of me!

Nevertheless, in that same area in Queensland I came into contact with a group of young Christians. I learned about their Lord and I learned about faith and trust and was helped to find my way home. I learned a great deal from those young people and I am very grateful.

I learned a bit from Ned, too.

"Smart! My rear left hoof!"

—A.E. White

Comment

Preacher in Storyland

Garry Harris.

The renaissance of story in the pulpit is not surprising, given its power as a communicative device and its historic place in recounting the

journey of homo sapiens from antiquity. Story has been told through cave painting, tribal dance and campfire recounting since humankind first wondered at the shadow it cast upon the earth. The purpose of this article is to affirm story as a valid homiletical method, by

tracing its biblical, historical and functional bases.

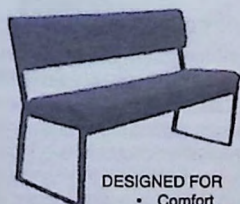
The Judaeo-Christian heritage has a long tradition of storytelling. The history of Israel is replete with parable, the most outstanding being the story of the poor man's ewe lamb, told by Nathan to remind David of

his crime. (2 Sam 12:1-4.)

Jesus' use of parable is particularly interesting and may serve as a model for our contemporary storytelling. It has been estimated that one third of Jesus' teachings are found in parabolic form.¹ Some scholars insist that in Jesus, the parable reached its zenith as art form and pedagogical tool.²

The carpenter's parables, like contemporary story, were more than intriguing art or an innovative means of holding an audience's attention. Jesus doubtless understood that a spiritual concept would be more readily retained if it could be seen to have an analogy in the material world. Consequently, he frequently employed the comparative parabolic formula: "It is like" (Matt 7:24-26; 11:16; 13:44; 13:47 [RSV]) or "as": (Matt 25:14 [RSV]).³

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Jesus' abundant use of parables attests to their capacity to convey essential message. As David Granskou observes: "Jesus calls us to examine the dynamics of his stories ... that we might come to know the secret of his proclamation."⁴

Story was critical to Jesus' public ministry, it was also integral to the kerygmatic preaching of the apostles. Recounting the story of the ministry, death and resurrection of Jesus was indispensable to the witness of the infant church.⁵

The early church's proclamation through story was not limited solely to the work of preachers. It was quick to utilise the human capacity to appreciate truth through drama. Martha Candler observes: "There are records of scholarly dramatisations from the Prophets during the first and second centuries. Appolinarius, priest of Laodicea, recast large sections of the Old Testament into dramatic form in the Fourth Century, ... his son, Bishop Appolinarius, similarly rewrote parts of the New Testament."⁶

Due to the depravity of its Roman precedent, Christian drama had a tentative birth and uncertain infancy. The excoriating comments of Tertullian in *De Spectaculis*, ca AD 198, did little to encourage the development of drama as a means of retelling the Christian story.⁷

Despite innumerable obstacles, the story struggled to be told in dramatic form. The 10th century saw the writing of *Quem Quaeritis*, the oldest extant Christian drama which details the scene at Jesus' tomb on Easter morning.⁸

The advent of miracle and mystery plays was a decided asset in the propagation of the faith, particularly to an illiterate populace. At the outset, these plays were purposefully employed as educational aids. The plot closely followed the scriptural accounts and focused upon the spectacular. Frank O'Hara and Marguerite Bro report: "These dramatic presentations were built about the great mysteries of the church, especially the birth and death

of Jesus, and hence the plays were called mysteries ... No miracle seems to have been too marvellous for reproduction except, perhaps, Jonah and the whale."⁹

For centuries, these spectacles constituted the educational ministry of the church. Visualised story was the means of Gospel proclamation by a Latin-speaking church in a non-Latinised world.

Having considered, in part, the biblical and historical warrant for the use of story in preaching, we shall focus upon the functional dimension of this consideration.

Storytelling can be an extremely effective illustrative technique. It is precisely the capacity of the illustration to transform the abstract into the concrete that gives it power. Similarly, it is the pictorial dimension of story that transforms objective, external truth into internal subjective reality. Herbert Lockyer testifies, "The illustration will be remembered with the point illustrated, for years, perhaps, whereas the 'thoughtful sermon' will scarcely survive the following week."¹⁰

Recently, story as sermon has re-emerged. The strength of storytelling is that it is open-ended, and non-prescriptive, which rightfully places the burden of responsibility for practical application upon the hearer. Fred B. Craddock sees story as an opportunity, "To communicate with men who after the sermon is over will have to continue thinking their own thoughts, dealing with their own situations and being responsible for their own faith."¹¹

Interestingly, this approach finds resonance with Jesus' concluding statement in his para-

bolic teaching, "He that has ears to hear, let him hear." (Matt 11:15)

Doubtless, story is a potent means of communication; a valuable tool in the preacher's arsenal of skills; a valid and viable means of proclaiming the Gospel to contemporary people. The longevity of this resurfacing style of preaching will be contingent upon the creativity and resourcefulness of those who employ its method. It may fall victim to the whims of faddishness. It may prove to be too demanding for all but the most gifted preachers. Nevertheless, only its durability is at stake, its validity remains intact.

Endnotes

- 1 M. Scharleman *Proclaiming the Parables* p. 13.
- 2 E Armstrong *The Gospel Parables* p. 12.
- 3 *The Interpreter's Dictionary of The Bible* edited G Buttrick, vol 3, p. 651.
- 4 D Granskou *Preaching On The Parables* p. 5.
- 5 D Holland *The Preaching Tradition* p. 20.
- 6 M Candler *Drama in Religious Service* p. 133-4.
- 7 S Cheney *The Theatre—Three Thousand Years of Drama, Acting and Stagecraft* p. 134-135.
- 8 Jay B Hubbell, and John O Beatty *An Introduction to Drama* p. 80.
- 9 F O'Hara and M Bro A *Handbook of Drama* p. 181.
- 10 H Lockyer *The Art and Craft of Preaching* p. 44.
- 11 F Craddock *As One Without Authority* p. 157.

International

Turn to God; Rejoice in Hope

The executive committee of the WCC has recommended that the Council's next (eighth) assembly, which is to take place in Harare, Zimbabwe, be held 24 August-7 September 1998, on the theme "Turn to God; Rejoice in Hope".

Chinese Protestants

A new survey commissioned by News Network International has determined that there may not be more than 30 million Protestant Christians in China. The statistic falls far short of estimates by ministries working in China which have at times reached as high as 100 million. The estimate is nearly four times greater than the official Three Self Patriotic Movement census of 9.2 million Protestants. The study indicates only 30% of China's Protestant population attends TSPM churches, while at least 70% worship in unregistered house churches or meeting points.

Seminary Closure Unjust

Turkey's dwindling Greek Orthodox minority has renewed a public campaign to reopen its church seminary, calling the ongoing closure after 23 years "unacceptable" and "unjust". Chalke Theological Seminary has facilities for to house and educate 100 seminarians, along with a 50,000 volume library and an international reputation for educating the spiritual elite of Orthodoxy. Along with the Armenian church's Holy Cross Seminary, Chalke was closed in 1971 by a government order prohibiting private religious institutions at the university level.

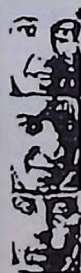
Mongolian Ins and Outs

The Mongolian government has allowed the legal registration of four additional Christian denominations, raising the total number of registered groups to five. However, authorities in the capital of Ulan Bator have also moved to prevent some as yet unregistered Christian assemblies from meeting in public buildings. The formally recognised denominations include the Baptist church, the Evangelical Free Church, the Assemblies of God, the Japan-based Executive Dispensationalist Group and a Korean Christian assembly.

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A Link in the Chain

A Sailor's Testimony

During the Second World War I was posted in Sydney. One day I was walking down George Street, one of the main streets in that city, when this little chap stopped me very politely. 'Excuse me sir,' he said; 'Could I ask you a question?' Before I could answer he continued; 'If you were to die tonight where would you spend eternity? The Bible says you'll go to Heaven or Hell, would you think about that please ... thank you.'

"With that he quietly walked off leaving me so dazed and shaken that it took me a few minutes to remember where I was heading."

"Later on when I had returned to London and settled back to civilian life, I often found myself thinking about those words spoken to me back in Sydney. Eventually I could stand it no longer, so I contacted a local Baptist minister a fellow named Francis Dickson. He explained the gospel to me and I accepted it there and then and was born again into the kingdom of God."

That was the testimony of a man named Peter who served in the Royal Navy during World War II.

Francis Dickson was holding an outreach mission in his

church and a few young men were asked to explain how they became Christians.

Another Pops Up

One fellow stood up in the congregation and told how he was in the Navy, posted in Sydney during World War II: "There I was walking down the main street near Town Hall Station. Next minute this little bloke walks straight up to me and asks very politely: 'If you were to die tonight where would you spend eternity? The Bible says you will go to Heaven or Hell, would you consider that please?'"

"Boy that shook me in my boots! Soon after that I began attending church services. One night it was explained that Jesus had died in my place on the cross and if I wanted to be saved I had to accept Him as Lord and Saviour—and that was exactly what I did."

Both Francis and Peter were amazed to find another person with the same experience, so a couple of years later, in 1955 when Francis had been called to speak at a conference in Adelaide, he decided to tell his story. He was barely half way through when an excited fellow got up in the meeting and told him that the same thing

happened to him. Murray had been an Australian soldier on leave in Sydney at the time.

All Over the World

Francis eventually became quite sought after at missionary and outreach conferences all over the world, because he was so enthralled by this story it became a standard part of nearly every message on evangelism. So time and time again he would meet others with the same testimony. He discovered missionaries, ministers and many other active, committed Christians who were able to trace their first encounter with God back to this humble little fellow in Sydney. In fact, over the years he had discovered hundreds of them.

Back to the Source

Towards the end of his career, Francis found himself in Sydney and having time on his hand, decided to try and track this "little fellow down". He looked up Alec Gilchrist, a man well known in evangelical circles at the time, and discovered that Alec knew him well—his name was Mr Jenner and he lived in a small cottage in Surry Hills. They called on him the next day and, true to all the descriptions he had heard, Mr Jenner was a humble little man who radiated the love of Christ.

He Never Knew

Francis began to tell him about all the converts he had met and the little fellow, hearing for the first time that any of his encounters had born fruit, broke down and wept.

It turned out that Mr Jenner had never actually led a person to Christ himself, but he used to talk to 10 people every day for 25 years. He would pray that God would lead him to the right ones then he would simply challenge them with the same straightforward message.

Over the years he had dropped his little bombshell on

thousands of people and in his faithfulness was the first link in the chain of events that led to many people and their families to salvation in Christ. Yet in all this, it was only very late in life that he ever knew the results of his work.

This man was no great evangelist in the normal way we think of evangelists, but what a wonderful faithful servant of God he was.

Even the Story Bore Fruit

I first heard the story from another wonderful Christian man named Jack Griffiths who used to run a discipleship group for men.

He often told the story as a means of encouraging people to speak up for Christ; he himself ran into people who had also been converted in the same way. Sometimes he would tell the story and someone in his audience would be challenged about their own eternal state, seek out the truth and be born again.

Whenever Jack would tell the story, he would always end it by saying, "Some of us will be the first link and others the second and again there will be others who are the final link in leading someone to Christ, but whatever you do, don't ever be the missing link!"

Over the years, I have reflected on this story and it never fails to encourage and humble me; but more than this, I am reminded that it is not cleverness, charm or wit that does the trick, but willingness, faithfulness and the joy of being a part of the salvation of people for eternity. It sure makes me want to be more than just a passenger in the kingdom, what about you?

—Warren Hicks

Reprinted with permission from APL Today
Warren is the pastor of Camden, NSW, Presbyterian Church

Interim Youth Ministry—1995

Applications are invited for a one-year part-time 2 day per week appointment for coordination of the Victorian-Tasmanian Youth Program of the Department of Mission, Education and Development. Prior youth ministry experience and theological training essential.

Applications to
D.H. Smith, 77 Capel Street,
West Melbourne Vic 3003,
by 16 December 1994.

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International

Sawbridgeworth Baptisms

Ross and Cheryl Wissman (Ross is a graduate of Kenmore Christian College) are ministering at the Sawbridgeworth Church of Christ in Herts, England. In their recent newsletter, they report that on 13 July they held the first baptisms in Sawbridgeworth. Six people were baptised with 46 attending the service held in the Congregational Church.

Solomon Islands NT

1,000 copies of a 1500 print-run of the first Cheko-Holo New Testament were sold within a couple of hours following its launch on 3 July in the Solomon Islands. Dedication celebrations were held at dawn on the island of Isabel. Anglican priest, Fr Andrew Piaso, worked with two SIL teams for many years to translate the New Testament into his own language. The Bible Society in the South Pacific published the New Testaments and subsidised the price to less than \$5 (Australian) each.

European Muslims

In 1991, more than 15 million Muslims lived in Europe, not counting another 11 million Muslims who live in the European part of the New Independent States or former Soviet Union. The seven countries with more than 1 million Muslims are Romania 2.75 million (1.2% of population), Yugoslavia 2.6 million (11%), France 2.4 million (4.3%), Albania 1.95 million (70%), Germany 1.9 million (2.4%), UK 1.5 million (2.7%) and Bulgaria 1 million (11%).

Top Missionary Nations

The US and France appear on two lists that seem mutually exclusive: The Top Ten Nations Sending Missionaries and the Top Ten States Receiving Missionaries. Americans send 69,000 missionaries abroad and receive 20,000 from abroad. The French send 15,000 missionaries abroad and receive 25,000 from abroad. The influx of missionaries into both France and the USA is caused by large-scale immigration of ethnic groups who are followed by religious workers seeking to establish centres of worship.

Changes

FEDERAL LITERATURE DEPARTMENT and VITAL PUBLICATIONS: Secretary, PO Box 101, Essendon North Vic 3041. Phone (03) 379 1219. Fax (03) 379 0015.

Baptisms

•Sally Scott, Warwick, WA •Avin Davis, Belconnen, ACT •Josephina Ianunzio, Grote St, Adelaide, SA •Christine Hugo, Peter Kechagias, Wakeley, NSW •Cathy Bransden, Robyn Robertson, Swan Hill, Vic •Natasha Albany, Luke Pasotti, Kalamunda, WA •Bradley Johnston, Simon Smith, Phillip Chappell, Joyce Swenson, Keith Walsh, Jon Guymmer, Michael Redden, Graham O'Neill, Marie Jones, Simon Gallagher, Barry Nunn, Bruce & Anne Graham, Dawson St, Ballarat, Vic

Marriages

•Kerrie Draney and Owen Vogler, Dalby, Qld •Elsie Crowe and Peter Connealy, Michelle Manniche and Peter Halsall, Tanya Griffiths and Jonathan Fletcher, Berwick, Vic •Rachelle Jones and Tim Hickin, Mount Clear, Vic •Joan Batten and Norm Bodinnar, Swan Hill, Vic

Deaths

•Margaret June Du Reitz, Dalby, Qld •Albert Dunstan, Lyons, ACT •Glady Loft, Maldstone, Vic •Marguerite Focroul, Grote St, Adelaide, SA •Ann Reader, Ada Hardy, Berwick, Vic •Mrs Ivy Myrtle Dumesny, Port Fairy, Vic

Obituaries

Obituaries are limited to 100 words

Harland, Evelyn Dalsy

(14.10.94) Eve came to the church at Parkdale, Vic, in 1933. She devoted herself to her young family, making it her priority to be involved in the life of the church. Because she played the organ to perfection, she was unstinting in her ministry of music. Eve's close proximity to the church enabled her to share her home and garden on many a church occasion. Her gracious devotion to the church's witness and outreach has meant that she was greatly loved by her church family. Eve will be sadly missed by her family—Geoff, Barry (Ward) and daughter Bev (Fox) and their families.

—K.H. Pitt

Mathieson, Alma Victoria

(7.10.94) Alma Victoria Mathieson (Wentworth) began her Christian pilgrimage at the Richmond and Prahran churches, but for her last 40 years, Alma's life enriched the congregation at Parkdale. Alma was a small lady, with a kind heart that expressed itself through her active involvement in the church. Her quiet nature didn't allow her to participate in leadership roles, but Alma's many skills enhanced the church's witness to the community. Alma could always be depended upon to be present at the Lord's Table. With her family Gwenda, Joy and Jim (Woolcock), and three grandchildren, we at Parkdale are missing Alma's happy presence.

—K.H. Pitt

SA

GROTE ST, ADELAIDE (Phillip Anderson) Church anniversary celebrated. Guest preachers Barry Benz, am, Bruce Coventry, pm. Pipe organ recital feature of PSA ... Josephina Ianunzio baptised on 16 October ... Dr Garrett, from USA, spoke on Churches of Christ morning 23 October ... City churches outreach concert. 60 attended. Excellent entertainment provided by the Turners ... Members helped with Glenrose fete ... Church rejoiced when Alicia was born to Heather & Alan Burns.

Qld

DALBY (A.C. Ochse, S.L. Colyer) Men's Fellowship commenced on a fortnightly basis ... Work party of eight men journeyed to Logan City church in Brisbane to do maintenance work ... Congregational meeting held to discuss youth work ... Julie-Anne Pedler going with Teen Missions Australia to India ... CWM looking at providing food hampers during the year to families in real need because of the drought & economic conditions.

TWYFORD ST, BUNDABERG (Paul Scully) AGM held 12 October. Ernie Linderberg accepted position of church secretary ... Natalie Tkaczynski ministered at Christian cabaret held in place of usual evening service ... Dinner & garage sale held in October to raise funds for construction of a well, by TEAR Fund, in India. Events so successful that enough money was raised to fund two wells ... Bridal Parade, some as old as 50 years, proved enjoyable evening with over \$400 raised for building fund.

Tas

NUBEENA (C.G. Henderson)

Three attended induction of Clinton Wardle, Hobart City church ... Two ladies attended CWF camp, Bicheno, with Maureen Daniels study leader ... Fellowship tea & social held 7 September with 15 ... Successful church fair held 8 October ... Meeting held with Target 2000, 12 October, 23 present ... Hendersons attended Ministers' Retreat, Bicheno ... Annual church meeting held on 30 October.

ULVERSTONE (Tom & Ruth Edge) CWF camp Bicheno 23-25 September, 14 attended ... Lynette Leach, DMED, conducted programs 30 October & 1 November ... 2 October, Special at 6 Devonport "Hupomeno" good attendance ... Annual meeting with Launceston at Caveside, 13 women

Inter-Church Trade and Industry Mission (NSW) Ltd State Director

ITIM is seeking a committed person, ordained or lay, to lead this ecumenical mission of the churches and its team of 40 chaplains and support staff in NSW. It is proposed to make the appointment in early 1995.

This senior position requires a person with superior interpersonal, team leadership and communication skills and the ability to relate Christian faith to the workplace. In addition the person will have business skills and the strategic vision to manage and grow a Statewide ecumenical agency, and its regional organisations. The State Director will be in good standing with a member church of the Mission.

A Position Description and Information Sheet should be obtained by contacting the undersigned on (02) 879 9106.

Interested persons should then forward a formal application, including detailed resume stating qualifications, relevant experience, motivation and the names and contact numbers of 3 referees to:

The Chairman,
ITIM (NSW) Ltd.,
c/o Lyn Carroll,
PO Box 459,
Gladesville NSW 2111



Church News

attended ... Evening meal out for Krinkleys, 22 October ... S. Sinfield led service plus slides on 6 November, while 20 adults & 13 youngsters attended working camp weekend, Camp Seaview, Bicheno ... Ladies took train ride Don Railway, 8 November.

NSW

WAKELEY (Grant Ramsey) Counselling & intercessory prayer groups working & much appreciated ... Bible study home groups popular ... Two baptisms recently ... Special studies on baptism commenced ... Yearly district camp held October. Studies on spiritual warfare appreciated, enlightened need of awareness. Great companionship enjoyed ... Quarterly evening service brought loving fellowship with groups from Fairfield, Carramar & Merrylands ... Corporate prayer gatherings begun ... New building progressing well.

Vic

ECHUCA (Arthur Symes) Sunday evening, a team of young adults gave talk about missions today ... Richard & Shirley Pearce gave an evening of Country & Western Gospel songs ... Garage sale held. Money raised will help carry out renovations at manse ... Sorry to see Lois Wust leave, but God's blessings go with you ... New people attending. We believe God is replacing those who move on.

MAIDSTONE (Andrew McMillan) Some have purchased Hosanna New Testament tapes ... Church still praying for many sick, but re-

joices that several are back after weeks of absence ... Andrew conducting several prayer for healing services ... Church saddened by death of Gladys Loft. Sympathy to family ... Congratulations to Ross Freiberg on attaining Bachelor of Business degree at RMIT ... Welcome to Stephen McMillan, transferred from Mulgrave.

BERWICK (Tim Hanna, Ross Pelling, Andrew Ball) Children's mini musical, "I'm a Soldier" ... Volleyball extravaganza ... Courses "See Through Scriptures" & "Marriage, Family & the Home" ... Country Fair proceeds to children's ministry ... Youth camp at Banksia ... George Mallaby in Villamaria Nursing Home Wantirna South ... Hospitality Sunday members share a meal in private homes ... Day camp Mill Valley Ranch grades 3-6 ... Weekly contribution for Benevolent Society plus special Christmas gifts.

MORNINGTON (Ian Cartmel) Joyfully commenced seventh year ... Outreach ministries to local hospital, primary school, retirement village ... Support to college chaplaincy & combined churches caring group ... Minister assisting CCTC student Jenni Georgiadis in pastoral visiting ... Property/building fund \$22,000 with people using their talents to raise finance & gifts from six Victorian churches & some individuals ... Minister assisted Hobart church with planned giving.

PORT FAIRY (Sandro Schletroma) Sad to lose Roy Hope's service, now with Missions to Seamen—Portland ... Thanks to all who maintained services especially Rev Malins, Phil & Carol Short (SIM),

Will & Wendy Parker ... Sunday School anniversary concluded with BBQ luncheon ... Thanks to Don Smith, assisting with induction of Sandro Schletroma 20 November. Welcome Sandro, Susan, Rebecca & Ruth ... CWF stall raised over \$1,000 for manse fund.

BORONIA (Keith Milne, Andrew Henley, Andrew Ratcliff) Church accepted Andrew Henley's resignation with regret ... Darryn Hickling accepted part-time ministry in 1995 ... Andrew Ratcliff & Darryn Hickling graduated from CCTC & were ordained ... Appreciation for 12-month student ministry expressed to Andrew Ratcliff as he & family move to Happy Valley for full-time ministry ... Annual meeting discussed finance, service time & focus on ministry 1995 ... Service times December-January, 10 am & 6 pm.

MOUNT CLEAR (Dale White, James Leviston, David Jones) AGM held in November. Two new deacons, Gary Greville & Jason Rankin, elected to board, other candidates re-elected ... New Task Force (subcommittee) set up to support James & Robyn Leviston in youth ministry ... Board met for Planning Day to begin organising program for 1995 ... International students organised recent evening service ... Average attendance for October best ever for this time of year—157 am & 91 pm.

SWAN HILL (Lindsay Mayes, Graeme Sonle) Two ladies baptised at evening service on 27 November ... Night of praise with hymn singing preceded by "finger food" meal in hall ... Small groups active in church, catering for all age groups ... Evening services now at 6 pm for trial period ... Youth group hired bus & visited Bendigo for ten pin bowling & ice skating ... Board member Lois Malone attended Spring conference at Wollongong.

WEST PRESTON (Chris Field) Family camp rewarding, challenging & enjoyable ... Stephen, Daniel & Matthew Field's time in America another challenging experience ... Margaret Turner spoke & men's ministry sang at 19th Blind fellowship service ... 7-10 Club's Christopher Rae, Simon Lea, Jason Kirwan, Melika Botans, Jonathon & Matthew Field took the morning service in November ... Samantha Hooper's preparation for YWAM service in India well in hand.

DAWSON ST, BALLARAT (Darren Kittel, Tracey Davidson) Three seminars held throughout 1994: Discovering Church Membership, Discovering Spiritual Ma-

turity, Discovering My Ministry ... Money raised for Rwanda with plant & lamington drives over \$500 ... Corazon Singers continues with successful ministry ... Church rejoiced in safe arrival of baby Georgina Pauline Kittel ... Fishes & Loaves Network appreciated throughout Ballarat community ... 5 November fete raised \$2,320 ... Leon Cottle & Ian Robertson newly elected elders.

WA

DIANELLA (Tony Armstrong) Philip Armstrong & family from Tasmania visiting parents ... Fifth Sunday combined service run by youth & well attended ... Members shared restaurant breakfast by the sea ... Church property used for Third World Market Day for various beneficiaries ... Rwanda aid target of \$2,000 attained ... All new church guttering fitted by volunteer members ... Thanksgiving dinner planned for 26 November.

WARWICK (G.B. Carslake, B.A. Eagles, R. Ratcliffe) Bruce Eagles moves to pastor Joondalup church, February '95 ... 19 attended prayer day led by Brian Stitt at Wollaston ... More than 200 attended two three-hour sessions on "God Options for Women" organised by Ainslie Robinson ... Rod Ratcliffe & Glen Goss attended International Youth Convention, Los Angeles ... Four teams won grand finals in basketball ... Gerry Doyle spoke on Sunday night.

EASTERN HILLS Guest speakers Michael & Kerry Fischer ... International night of food & costumes with film (*Peace Child*) ... Recently completed inaugural faith Promise Missions Challenge week. Speakers Glen Lock & Leroy Randall inspired & challenged us. Other guests included Ian & Sandra Peddler (Bible Society) & youth band "Imejo". Final total of promises reached \$11,722 ... Sunday School anniversary attracted large attendance. Guest speaker John Richardson (Bible Society).

KALAMUNDA (David Shalley, Paul Sanders) World Missions Week Faith Promise commitment \$65,813 made for '94-'95 ... Hills churches joined for combined evening service ... Graham Mabury spoke at "Link" service. Many visitors attended ... Axiom youth group held dinner & entertainment evening for parents ... Preparation in hand for special Christmas services including joining other churches for Carols by Candlelight ... Congratulations to David Akesson (CCTC) & Eleanor Burns (WABC), just graduated.

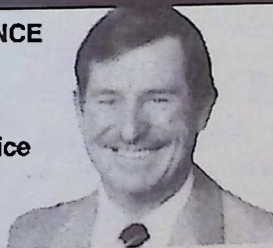
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Culmination of Years of Work

The Queen's Award/Badge Presentation

In October, fourteen SA Girls' Brigade members received The Queen's Award and 11 SA Boys' Brigade members The Queen's Badge from Her Excellency, The Hon Dame Roma Mitchell AC, DBE, Governor of South Australia.

The brief ceremony was held at Government House. After the official photographs were taken, Her Excellency mingled with the recipients, their invited guests and Brigade personnel.

The Queen's Award/Badge is the culmination of years of dedication by these young people who are already involved in their senior years at high school, university or out in the work force. Having completed their Brigade work, they are groomed for leadership within their Brigade Companies, their local churches and indeed the wider community.

Pictured from Churches of Christ Compa-

Standing, left to right: Rosemary Telfer (Hawthorn), Scott Brand (Noarlunga Centre), Robyn Meyer (Magill), Shane Giles (Modbury), Andrew Carpenter (Blackwood), Scott Palmer (Blackwood), Kenley Gerhardy (Aldgate Valley), and Simon Williams (Blackwood);

Seated, left to right: Coran Hackett (Modbury), Ross McIvor (Blackwood) and Scott Buchheister (Noarlunga Centre)

—Mrs B.J. Worrall
(photo courtesy of Hills Photo Studio)



The Last Word

We get the most out of life when God is at the controls. He takes us from the earth-bound plane of living and lifts it into meaning for today, into purpose for tomorrow and into the prospect for blessings even beyond the horizon that is tomorrow.

—Reuben K. Youngdahl

"Shouldn't you give that fish some more water?"

"Why? It hasn't drunk that lot yet."

What's the best way to catch a fish? Get someone to throw one at you.

Why do people go to bed? Because the bed won't come to them.

"Why did that person take a pencil to bed?" "To draw the curtains."

Why do people never go thirsty in the desert so long as they have a watch? Because every watch has a spring.

Why does lightning shock people? It doesn't know how to conduct itself.

A minister noticed that the congregation were nodding off during the sermon and decided to say, "All those who want to go to heaven, stand up!"

All the congregation stood, except one old person who was still asleep. The rector tried again, "All those who want to go to Hell, stand up!"

This time, the old person heard the words "stand up" and stood. Then, looking around, was heard to say, "I don't know what we're all voting about, but I see the minister and I am in the minority."



"I am in the bath."

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