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THE AUSTRALIAN CHRISTIAN

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Comment

Creation Science

James Pearce

Stan Allison ("AC" 15 July) asked for an explanation of the Creation Science issue by someone who hasn't taken sides. I don't know if it is ever possible to be unbiased about anything, but I will try to be as positive as I can about both sides and see if that helps.

The Creation Science debate within the Christian community is basically a dispute between two conflicting philosophies; two philosophies underpinned by differing understandings of biblical interpretation. As a generalisation, it would be fair to say that the more literal an interpretation a person places on the Bible, the more likely that person is to be a creationist.

Since a literal interpretation of the Bible cannot be maintained if the Bible is shown to be in "error", any philosophy or theory that threatens this needs to be answered. Literalists are therefore strong on apologetic; putting forward counter arguments for those ideas that they see as undermining the integrity of the text.

Creationism is merely one area of apologetic.

The Creationism conflict arises in this way. If we were to add up the ages of the people written about in the Old Testament, we would arrive at a date for the creation. This method places creation around six or seven thousand years ago. Furthermore, a literal reading of the text clearly states that God created everything in six days. However, the majority of modern scientists do not believe that the world was created in six literal days and have developed and promoted a different theory. This secular theory states that the world is billions of years old and that life evolved slowly over that period, changing from one form to another to produce the variety that we see today. The threat to the literalist is that if the Bible is shown to be false for Genesis, who can say what else might prove to be false?

There are two courses of action open for us at this point. We can take the Bible as being literally accurate and look for flaws in the scientific argument and look for scientific evidence to support a young age for creation. Alternatively, we could assume that the Bible is not meant to be read as either history or science, in which case there is no clash between modern science and modern theology. Both these courses have indeed been undertaken and therein lie the seeds of the dispute.

My next statement is one that quite a few people may disagree with, but it is really

the key to the whole conflict. Neither side can prove their case.

If the case could be proved incontrovertibly, then there would be no dispute, but quite simply, this cannot be done.

Oh yes, convincing cases can be argued from ingenious interpretations of data. People are even convinced that they have seen proof. But for every argument, there exists a counter argument. Secular Scientist A looks at some scientific evidence and concludes that life is billions of years old, while Creation Scientist B looks at exactly the same evidence and concludes the earth is very young.

This means there will never be a settlement of this dispute. Despite all the rhetoric and polemic, there is really nothing in the way of hard evidence that conclusively proves the case for either a young earth or an old one. In the absence of a time machine and as long as the arguments continue to be based on interpretation, there will always be differing interpretations and, hence, conflict.

In my opinion and despite the opinions of some of the more partisan letter writers, there are reputable scientists and theologians on both sides of the argument. These people, experts in their own fields, are unable to reach an agreement on a definitive answer to the conflict, because until now every bit of evidence is open to challenge and reinterpretation.

What appears to be solid evidence on both sides, often disappears after closer scrutiny. Let me say again that because the evidence is not conclusive, merely the result of interpretation, different opinions about the same evidence are formed. This means that there is no argument, one way or the other, to which all people will agree.

Both the creationist and anti-creationist sides of the conflict, despite the scientific window dressing, are essentially argued on the basis of theories or systems of belief. Because they are belief systems, ie "I believe in evolution" or "I believe in creation", they are often held passionately and sometimes irrationally, leading to the heated exchanges that have aroused Stan Allison's curiosity.

If the experts cannot agree, how then can the lay person make a decision? An appeal to science doesn't help, as any person who has ever seen rival scientists arguing in a law court about interpretation of the same evidence will know. An appeal to theology doesn't help, any student of his-

Continued from page 2

tory will know just how divided theologians can be. Nor does an appeal to the Bible help because, whether we like it or not, we all approach the Scriptures with a bias.

If we believe Genesis is not meant to be read literally, we will not feel any need to challenge current scientific models of the origin of life. If we hold to a literal interpretation, then we are almost compelled to challenge modern scientific opinion.

In short, there is no easy answer.

A prayerful reading of the arguments for and against, with an attempt to filter out the polemic, is really all that the interested party can hope for.

This is only a brief outline of the Creation Science conflict, and I have tried not to take sides.

I hope that this provides a basis for understanding for those who wonder what all the excitement is about.

For those who wish to read more on this issue, I would recommend the following books:

- Derek Burke (ed) *Creation and Evolution*, (IVP). This book is part of the "When Christians Disagree" series and provides a series of arguments and responses from Christians on both sides of the issue.

- Michael Denton *Evolution, A Theory in Crisis* (Burnett Books) for a non-theological view of the problems with evolution. Denton argues that there are logical and scientific problems with evolutionary theory.

- As for a modern explanation of the origins of life and the earth, almost any current university level text book in the fields of Geology, Biology or Zoology would offer a clear and concise explanation without digressing into argument with creationists.

❖ **James Pearce** is in ministry at Strathmore, Vic, and as well as his theological qualifications, has a BSc Hons and worked for many years as a Forensic Scientist for the Victorian State Forensic Science Laboratory.

Vision Statement

For all to read

"We'll have a series of lunches and dinners to invite all those who have recently begun to worship with us," decided the pastoral care committee of The Avenue, Surrey Hills, Vic, church.

That was last year.

There followed some very welcoming, happy and, at times, quite noisy occasions.

This year they have continued providing all members of the congregation with opportunities to meet our new minister and his wife, Geoff and Diane Merrett.

At the May dinner this year, Sandi Purdie, attending with her husband Tim, was impressed by the Church Vision statement that was presented. "Brilliant!" said Sandi.

In the next few weeks she made a beautiful cross-stitched banner of the Vision

Statement and it now hangs in the front foyer for all to read as they come to worship.

The Vision Statement for the 90s reads:

"The Church of Christ in Surrey Hills has a long and strong heritage of service to the local community and the wider Church.

Our aim is to build on this heritage using the gifts and abilities of the whole congregation, so that we shall continue to be a Christ-centred community of faith where:

- People participate in worship that is relevant, creative and inspiring;
- People discover a vital faith in God and experience personal spiritual growth;
- People experience genuine nurture, friendship and hospitality;
- People are encouraged to re-



• Sandi Purdie with her version of the Vision Statement

spond with sensitivity and wisdom to the needs of the local community;

- People are encouraged to care for our world and to live responsibly in it."

The Toronto Blessing

A wonderful opportunity

The Toronto Blessing phenomenon should be used as an opportunity to teach our congregations about the Biblical ministry of the Holy Spirit. At Wollongong, NSW, it gave us a wonderful opportunity to give an overview of the different emphases found in the Bible about the Holy Spirit and the limited emphasis given to ecstatic worship in those passages. We asked the familiar questions about the phenomenon—Is it a problem or a blessing? Is it peculiar to Christianity? Can God do something new? How do you explain it? These questions can be applied to all new directions that churches may experience and gave some guidance to the congregation in developing the use of discretionary wisdom.

We used the evening also as an opportunity to invite our worshippers to seek God's power for leadership and teaching roles. We prayed for his Spirit for the healing of emo-

tional and physical pains and so also sought the Holy Spirit for the healing of relationships. Over 100 came out for prayer. We thank God for the opportunity the Toronto Blessing has given our church to teach more

about the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

An audio cassette of the service is available from the Wollongong church for \$8.00 by phoning (042) 26 5022.

—Ted Keating

Go With The Flow

A night to challenge our complacency

Go With The Flow is the theme for a youth Night of Missions to be held at Doncaster, Vic, church on 12 August.

Where are we flowing as far as missions is concerned? What are the goals we should be setting ourselves if we are to be obedient to the Great Commission? Why is it important to identify and reach every people group with the gospel?

This will be a night to challenge our complacency and willingness to let others do the work of mission.

The challenge is for this gen-

eration to reach into every people group by the end of the century.

The program will include youth interviews, testimonies, videos and a chance to meet the Berwick mission team who are preparing for their trip to the Philippines.

In line with proposed changes to our Conference structures, the Overseas and Aborigines Mission committees (Vic-Tas) are cooperating with Youth Vision for this program.

—Barry Jenkins

Pastoral Care Goes West

Alan Niven in WA

30 June saw nearly 100 gather at the Dianella, WA, church for the inaugural Doug Good Memorial Lecture. The speaker was Alan Niven of the Churches of Christ Theological College in Melbourne, which was the recipient of part of Doug's estate. The lecture entitled "Pastoral Care for Families", was delivered in a lively manner using a variety of media, including song, cartoons, stories and a bird's nest. The key theme that Alan developed was that "the process of ministry is welcoming strangers into a faith relationship". He pointed out that this involves us in a ministry of availability and in a ministry of in-

troductio. As this was one of the most significant aspects of Doug's ministry, it was fitting that this should have been the theme presented.

The response from those who attended this lecture and other similar lectures at Merredin, York, Bunbury and Wambro was most appreciative of Alan's gentle style and his willingness to share from a wealth of pastoral experience.

Twenty people, from seven metropolitan churches, continued with Alan over the next day and the following weekend to complete a workshop on the Pastoral Care of Families, which comprised the lecture input for a Ministry Training

Centre course. Alan pointed out that a large percentage of families in Australian society today are not what we would call "traditional" families—so he focussed on appropriate single parent/blended/step families which do not always feel comfortable and welcomed in our churches.

The sessions were informative and challenging.

During his time in the West, Alan also made visits to ministers and churches in the Eastern Wheatbelt and South-West, as well as preaching at Subiaco, Kalamunda, Warwick and Kelmscott. His input was much appreciated by all who heard him.

Alan's visit was jointly arranged by the Ministry Training Centre and the State Committee of CCTC.

Calendar

Senior Translator in Aust

Rev Dr Barclay M. Newman, American Bible Society Senior Translations Officer, will be visiting Australia, 17 August–1 September. He is the guest of the Bible Society in Australia and state offices will have details of special meetings being held in each capital city (Breakfast in Melbourne on 18 August, breakfast in Adelaide on 22 August). Dr Newman heads the translation team that, in 1991, introduced the Contemporary English Version (CEV) New Testament, a fresh rendering that appeals to both beginning and experienced Bible readers. The full CEV Bible is being published in Australia in September.

Single Ministry Consultant

Dr Bobbie Reed, a US consultant on single adult ministries is visiting Melbourne 13–20 August. She is the author of 31 books in the field of Christian Education, parenting, successfully living as a single or single again adult, and relationships. The Nunawading church is holding 3 seminars. "Single Parenting" is being held 15 August at 8pm. Cost \$10/person. "Blended Families" on 16 August at 8pm, cost \$10/person and "Looking for Love" on 18 August at 8pm and 19 August 9 am–4 pm, cost \$25/person. Dr Reed will also be preaching at morning services (9 and 10.15 am) on 20 August. For information and registration form contact Nunawading office on (03) 9877 6077.

Liturgical Music Convention

Writer, composer, minister of the Church of Scotland and member of the Iona Community, John Bell, will return to Australia for the national Liturgical Music Convention in September. This year, the convention, "Continuing the Song" will travel to Melbourne (1–3 September, Sydney (8–10 September), Brisbane (15–17 September) and Perth (22–24 September). In all cities, John Bell will give a keynote address and provide the workshops, Music of Iona and The Dangers and Delights of Christian Song. 40 Australian and overseas presenters will be involved in giving practical workshops. Details from Michael Wood on (03) 9662 2637.

ACT News

Resignation of Don Herbert

ACT Conference Executive has received with sadness the resignation of Don Herbert from ministry with the church at Tuggeranong, ACT.

Don has been ill for the past 15 months and has struggled with a chronic lung disorder. Don and his family plan to move to the South Coast of NSW to hopefully assist his recovery.

Don's ministry with the church has been very much appreciated as he worked to grow the church in this part of Canberra.

Visit of Dr Greg Elsdon

Dr Greg Elsdon, Principal of the Churches of Christ Theological College, spent the weekend of 22–23 July with the churches in Canberra.

Greg presented a seminar on the Saturday entitled "Matthew's Message for Today". Those who attended were most appreciative of Greg's teaching and his inspiring leading in understanding Scripture for today.

He was challenging in the message he presented and left us with much to think about—

how we as Christians should live together in community and how we ought to behave towards one another.

Greg helped us to appreciate the teachings of Christ to a much greater depth and gave us new insights into how we might read Scripture.

Greg shared with the churches at Ainslie, Belconnen and Lyons on the Sunday morning.

—Thelma Leach

PERTH BIBLE COLLEGE

requires a full-time FACULTY MEMBER for the beginning of 1996. The appointee will be a qualified Bible teacher with appropriate postgraduate qualifications, preferably with ministry or missionary experience.

Details are available from the Principal, Dr Alan Meers, PBC, 1 College Court, Karrinyup WA 6018. Phone (09) 448 0055; Fax (09) 448 0487. Closing date for applications is 30 September 1995.

"The Toronto Blessing"

Is this God at Work?

An address given by Ted Keating, Senior Minister, Wollongong Church of Christ.

Cassette (including reference notes) \$8.00 posted.

Mail orders to:

Wollongong Church of Christ,
O'Briens Road,
Figtree NSW 2525.



Australia

Clergy Conduct Guides

The Bathurst Anglican diocese will soon become the second Australian diocese to endorse a code of conduct to guide clergy in their ministry. The first was Melbourne, although many other dioceses are currently preparing drafts for review. Bathurst's Bishop Bruce Wilson believes the development of the new code is both a sign of the church wanting to improve the services it offers and a response to growing community demands for higher standards from professionals. The Draft Code of Conduct has been put together over the past 18 months and covers a range of professional duties of clergy, including requirements for confidentiality.

Sunday Night Live Extended

Gordon Moyes' Sunday Night Live program on 2GB (Sydney) is being extended to begin at 8 pm, to include a Christian service, complete with sermon, singing and interaction with the congregation. Between 9 and 10, many of the regular Sunday Night Live elements will remain, but from 10 to midnight, listeners will be able to interact with Gordon in a Christian open line, "Speak Out" session.

WCTU Convention

The 33rd triennial Convention of the World Women's Christian Temperance Union was held in Melbourne 3-10 May, attended by 300 delegates from 15 countries. This is only the second time a World Convention of the WCTU has been held in Australia, the first being in Sydney in 1977.

Church Walk-Out

A large group of young adults walked out of St Mark's Anglican Church in Emerald in the Dandenong ranges, Melbourne, with the blessing of those who remained. The new congregation of young adults decided to move off site to stem the tide of young people leaving the church and their faith. Meeting in a local community hall, the group is led by Rev Mike Flynn. 20% of Emerald's population are young adults yet only 2% go to church, according to the church leadership at St Mark's which planned the move.

Youth Longevity

Youth Ministry Emphasis at Spring Conference

This year Spring Conference will see the addition of new electives. These have been especially designed for youth leaders and ministers. Fuzz Kitto will lead two electives on the themes of Longevity in Youth Ministry and Outreach and Evangelism and the Changing Tides of Youth Ministry. The electives will be followed by a dinner for participants where Fuzz will answer questions and discuss issues.

Fuzz Kitto has worked in the youth ministry area for 20 years and is currently directing youth ministry outreach for the Uniting Church in Sydney's Western Suburbs. Youth workers are invited to attend on 4 November, or better still come for the whole Conference, (4-6 November). The various electives and speakers will be relevant to all outreach ministry ventures.

—Rob Lynch
(Youth Minister, Wollongong)



• Fuzz Kitto

Singles Pen Friends

Christian Singles Pen Friend Club

The Christian Singles Pen Friend Club is an attempt to fill a gap in the lives of Christian singles who, for a range of reasons, find themselves unable to access the resources of singles ministries organised by local churches or denominational groups. Bryan Hedges, who commenced the group, is a widower who lives in a small country town with an aging church population.

The club is open to anyone who considers themselves Christian and it "attempts to meet some of (not all) the com-

mon needs of single Christians". The club is for those who have lost a partner through death or who are no longer married, as well as for those who have never married, and is for all age ranges.

The aims of the club are:

To provide a secure way of meeting other Christian people via our pen friend monthly newsletter:

Christian camps in the Halls Gap area, at first, and then other areas as the group develops. (Some camps will be for parents and children, other camps

will be just for adults.);

To provide information on other single Christian groups and their activities and, wherever possible, work in with these groups for the benefit of all concerned;

To build a directory of information of services and resources available to Christian singles to help them cope with some of the many problems that can arise by being in the situation of being single; and

To act as a witness to the non-Christian community.

Bryan noted that some of the issues related to singleness he has encountered when talking with people have been: shortage of cash flow due to the bread-winner leaving the relationship, loneliness, feelings of failure and inadequacy, feelings of being discriminated against by married church members, feelings of despair and not knowing where to access help especially in country areas, feelings of isolation, fear of starting a new relationship for fear of being hurt again, and shortage of baby sitters to allow lone parents to have some time to socialise.

Readers interested in making contact with this group should contact the coordinator Bryan Hedges at 65 Ligar St, Stawell 3380 (PO Box 507) or by phoning him on (053) 58 4152.

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Golden Getaways

Camps with a Difference

The Bays' church in Batemans Bay, NSW, are planning to hold a number of "weekend camps with a difference" in 1996, involving people from Churches of Christ.

Our members will billet out those attending.

Friday evening will be spent with your hosts (billets).

Saturday after breakfast involves meeting and visiting some places of interest: eg the Moruya Markets; Australia's only Calligraphy Gallery; Forest Gallery and Trunketaballa Gardens and Nursery.

Lunch may be at one of the many lovely tea rooms, cafe, restaurants, etc, in the area, or at the Scripture Union Conference Centre, "Koorringa Park" at Casey's Beach.

In the afternoon there will be two sessions run by our church at Koorringa Park, followed by some light activity like a walk along the beach.

Tea would be at Koorringa Park and after tea there would be an evening program, which may be a concert (visitors would be invited to have an item), or it may be board games or other passive type games, or maybe a good video and discussion.

Sunday after breakfast would involve attending our 9.30 am service and then sharing in a BBQ lunch at a park or at one of our member's home as the concluding event of the camp.

The cost of the weekend will be around \$30/person, but you may have to buy your Saturday lunch. Accommodation is free and we could handle around 20 people. Our church membership is predominantly over the 50 year mark, so this will be the age range we would be looking to accommodate.

If your church would like to investigate the possibility of a camp contact John Inman on (044) 72 8480.

—John Inman

Decision Reversed

SA Council of Churches relocation

In the 1 July issue we reported that: "The SA Government ... excluded the SA Council of Churches from a project to

house a whole range of non-government organisations and groups in one building." The Government has since then reversed that decision. (Reversing a previous decision!) From late 1996, the SA Council of Churches expect to be housed, next door to the SA Council of Social Services and close to Amnesty International and The

Global Education Centre, on the first floor of Torrens Building, overlooking Victoria Square.

This will finally bring to an end a long saga and offers opportunities for the Council to work closer with other advocates of people in need.

—Malcolm McArthur
(Executive Officer, SA Council of Churches)

Churches of Christ Theological College

INFORMATION

DAY Saturday 19 August 1995

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Australia

Carer Crisis

The future of Australia's 1.5 million carers "hangs in the balance" according to the first national conference on community care, held in April in Canberra. Organisers of the conference, the Carers' Association of Australia, said poverty, isolation, failing health and thoughts of suicide were an everyday reality for community carers. Research by the Australian Bureau of Statistics confirmed that many carers were near to breaking point.

Quality Cable TV

The Jesuit-backed Lifevision Network is negotiating with the Murdoch-Telecom pay television group, Foxtel, to screen more than 1,000 hours a week of sex-free and violence-free programs. The network wants to broadcast on five of Foxtel's expected 200 channels when its cable service starts later this year. Lifevision's director, Father Michael Kelly, said the company would raise the estimated \$30 million needed by public float in the next few months. They hope to attract subscribers by offering rebates and discounts to Australia's 1,450 Catholic parishes and 1,750 private schools, a potential market of 2 million.

Catholic School of Evangelism

An experienced team from Brisbane, Melbourne and other centres will lead the first School of Evangelism in the Roman Catholic Church in Brisbane 3-23 July. The School of Evangelism was a response to Jesus' command and also a response to Pope John Paul's call to the whole church to embark on a decade of evangelism in preparation for the new millennium. The school has two basic courses, the first treats the theme of discipleship and lasts six days, the second on how to evangelise takes 12 days. Four Schools of Evangelism have been set up in Australia, three in Melbourne and one in Hobart. Brisbane will be one of three planned to set up in 1995.

New Editor Appointed

Don Smith appointed from 1996

The Board of *The Australian Christian* is happy to announce that as from 1 January 1996 Don Smith will become Editor.

Don has had an outstanding career with Churches of Christ. He was baptised at the Blackburn, Vic, church at the age of 18 and graduated from the College of the Bible in 1954. Whilst in college, Don was student president and secretary. Successful ministries were held at Morwell, Vic, and Cowandilla, SA. In 1962 he was appointed Director of Home Missions and Evangelism for the Victoria/Tasmania Conference.

On the amalgamation of Home Missions and Christian Education and Development in 1977, Don was appointed Executive Director. To add further to Don's already full workload, he assumed responsibility for the Federal Board of Christian Education in 1984 and subsequently the Australian Board of Church Development and Education. After serving the Victorian and Tasmanian Conference for 33 years, Don

retires from full-time service in September this year.

The Board of *The Australian Christian* is confident that Don will bring to our national paper the same skills and enthusiasm which has made his contribution to Churches of Christ so outstanding.

In her article "Editors 1898-1988" published in the 17 June issue, Mary Ambrose concluded her overview with the following words: "The people chosen to be editors of *The Australian Christian* have all been men of outstanding character and talent. They had many similar attributes: academic awareness, both secular and church; involvement with Federal and State conferences; close links with the College of the Bible; commitment to local churches and the ability to communicate with both the spoken and the written word. Their individual personalities and talents, together with their earnest desire to truly know God, to search for truth in Scripture and in the contemporary world, and to lead others into that knowledge, enabled each of them to meet the challenge of their day."

We believe that the appointment of Don Smith will also



• Don Smith

prove to be one which will rank with the editors of this overview.

The Board has restructured the staff who produce the paper. Don will work two and half days a week. We have appointed Nigel Pegram as our Production Manager/Sub Editor. This position is a full-time one and Nigel will be responsible for producing the paper. Nigel has for the last two and a half years worked on a part-time basis with Chris Ambrose and his work has shown him to be capable and efficient. Nigel has the support of the Board in this appointment. We believe that with this team, *The Australian Christian* has a very bright future.

—Keith Aird
(Board Chairman)

Castlemaine Church of Christ

After 125 years of Christian witness, Castlemaine Church of Christ is moving to a new location. The final service at the present Campbell St location will be taking place on Sunday 27 August, starting at 10.00 am.

We would like to invite all who have had a previous association with the church to this service. It is hoped there will be opportunity for people to say a few words about their association with the church. The service will be followed by a fellowship luncheon at the new Blakeley Rd site.

Notification of intention to attend would be appreciated to assist with catering.
Phone Mary-Anne Revell the Church Secretary on (054) 72 4364.

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Letters to the Editor

Letters are limited to 200 words

A Prayer Request

To the Editor,

We as members of the rural community of Callala Bay on the South Coast of NSW, would like to invite the wider community of Churches of Christ to join us in a prayer for survival. Under the leadership of Peter and Hennie DeWildt, a small but exciting community Church of Christ was established in 1991. We average 30 communicants at present. We would like to grow spiritually and numerically in order to continue our witness to the local community. We are the only church in our village at present. Our prayer is for a few more mature and dedicated Christians to join us and support us with leadership.

With the financial support from NSW Conference and our nearest Church of Christ, we have been able to keep our minister who has and is willing to minister amongst us at well below the recommended minimum salary. However, next year, due to circumstances beyond our control, that financial support will cease, leaving us in a dilemma—either we grow, or our minister will have to go. Please join us in prayer to our Heavenly Father, for it was Jesus who said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few, ask the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into his harvest field." Matt 9:37-38.

—35 concerned Christians
(Callala Bay, NSW)

Whether Churches of Christ?

To the Editor,

I am indebted to Ron Graham for his craftsman-like series of articles "Whither the Churches of Christ?" Perhaps the question that we should now be addressing is "Whether the Churches of Christ?"

In the 1995 Annual Report to the NSW Conference, Ron Kallmeyer, Ministry Coordinator, refers to the increasing fragility of Churches of Christ in this state as a cohesive movement.

His report indicates a lack of interest by local churches in conference work, of networking together and the collapse of the restoration ideals as a basis of integration for our communion. He writes, "We appear to be a loose association with some common heritage and events. Some of these links appear increasingly tenuous." The restoration ideal was always that our churches would eventually sink into the body of Christ at large. Perhaps that time has now come. If there is nothing worthwhile that we can say or do together, perhaps it is about time we dissolved Conference.

Personally, I do not think the time has come and I would be interested in networking with others in order to understand how the present situation has developed and to consider the future of Churches of Christ.

Is there anyone out there? Please write to me c/o 3 Kulgoa Rd, Pymble NSW 2073 or phone/fax (02) 44 91291. Expressions of interest from other states would be welcome.

—Harold E. Hayward

An Apology

To the Editor,

Writing a sermon this morning to be preached at Mitcham, Vic, next month. I turned to my "Whither the Churches of Christ?" manuscripts which I submitted to the editor last July and which I have not re-read for many months. I was embarrassed to discover that while I used single-word subtitles for the last three articles, I had used "The Restoration Movement" and "Christian Unity" respectively for the third and fourth articles. The editor printed what I gave him. *Mea culpa.* (See letter of 1 July.) —Ronald Graham
(Johnston, Iowa, USA)

Victorian Electricity Prices

To the Editor,

The Victorian Treasurer, Mr Stockdale, makes a number of statements in his letter ("AC" 17 June) that require comment.

Electricity prices for domestic consumers in the period from now until the year 2000 will be regulated. Any purported price reduction will occur because it is legislated and not as a result of the operation of "the market". This begs the question: If reductions can be achieved through legislation, why is it necessary to sell off these assets?

The four years until 2000 is a period in which the privatisations will be pushed through. In a sense, a kind of "sunset clause" is in place, regulating domestic tariffs until 2000 delivers a *fait accompli* that cleverly avoids the political backlash that has the greatest likelihood of derailing the so called "reforms". The Premier and the Regulator-General have both acknowledged that there is no guarantee that prices won't rise once the "market"

is deregulated after 2000; prices can move up or down. The Public First Campaign believes that many domestic customers will face increases.

Putting all this aside, the Government's promised but unlegislated schedule of tariff reductions until the year 2000 still leaves the vast majority of domestic customers (especially low income households) hundreds of dollars worse off than if electricity tariffs had been left at the 1992 rate and pegged to the CPI. Tariffs have risen by 21% since October 1992. Even a 10% reduction still leaves most households out of pocket.

Mr Stockdale has argued that privatisation is necessary because of what he describes as a "debt crisis". But contrary to the Government's promotion of budgetary blues, the current account surplus is running at \$1.3 billion and rising. Dr David Haywood of Swinburne University of Tech-

Letters To A Travelling Companion The Homeless Problem

Dear Daniel,

Thanks for your last letter. It is marvellous that your church is looking for ways to help the homeless people in your community. You're right when you say that it seems an almost insurmountable problem for a small local church. For most churches, resources don't permit vast food or accommodation projects or other major welfare efforts.

Let me make a suggestion to you, if I may. One area where the local church can be of some help is in the prevention of the circumstances that so often lead to the "homeless problem" in our society is often a symptom of the more widespread problem of relationship and family breakdown. All too often, disenfranchised young people will tell you that their situation stemmed from a breakdown within the functions of their family.

One practical way your church could help in the prevention of this enormous problem is by offering regular relationship and parenting programs, led by appropriately qualified people and opening them up to members of your local community. Another idea is to make available the names of appropriate counselling services for families or couples who are experiencing relationship difficulties and assisting people to pay for these services, if needs be.

Sure, one church doing these things would merely knock the tip off a very large iceberg, but if many local congregations were to engage in similar activities, imagine the impact that it would have. In any case, we have to start somewhere. It seems to me that throwing resources at the problem of homelessness, without addressing the cause, will mean that it will continue to grow into a more and more unmanageable situation.

Until next time,
Pastor Salt

Letters to the Editor

nology estimates that the budget surplus is now so large as a result of increased taxes, spending cuts and economic growth (but slower growth than other states because the cuts have reduced our ability to recover from the recession), that Victoria's debt could be paid off within a few short years without any asset sales.

However, the privatisation of utilities is essentially ideological in nature. If it were not, there would be no need for the level of secrecy surrounding the sell-offs. "Commercial confidentiality" is being used to protect the Government, not the commercial sensitivities of the bidding companies.

It is untrue that domestic customers will be protected from harsh disconnection practices. The Government is happily promoting "pre-payment meters". These meters effectively privatise the act of disconnection. Pre-payment meters are a card in the slot version of the old coin in the slot

meters. When the customer runs out of money, they cut themselves off.

The Treasurer raises many points on the supposed benefits of privatisation. It is important to point out that privatisation is not merely about changing the ownership of assets. It is a massive shift of wealth from the many to the few, ie from the poor to the rich, which, as a political process, also massively distorts the way in which decision-making happens. Privatisation, as an agenda, has serious ramifications which challenge the legitimacy of parliamentary democracy because of the way it undermines accountability mechanisms.

—Andrea Sharam

(Public First Campaign, PO Box 2288, Fitzroy 3065)

Creation Science

To the Editor,

Stan Allison ("AC" 15 July) asked for a simple answer to a simple question.

If you believe that "God created all things that are in heaven, and that are in the earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions, principalities or powers, and that all things were created by Him and for Him, ..." (See Col 1:15-17), then you believe in Creation Science.

However, if you do not believe the above, but choose to believe that all things came to be by a process of gradual growth through an unknown method over an unknown timespan of unknown millions or billions of years, then you do not believe in Creation Science.

Hope this helps!

—Lawrance Hughes
(Bayswater, Vic)

The Church in the Workplace

To the Editor,

Two job vacancies advertised on the same day, on different sides of the world, demonstrate the different ways churches are involved in industry.

Ministry in the Australian workplace, with its focus on chaplains, was imported from England in 1960.

In England, however, there has been a continuing open debate on the role of the church in the workplace. As a result, it is not uncommon to see British advertisements for industrial mission staff such as the one which required in Slough: "a missionary for work and economic life, ... to work with an ecumenical group among a broad range of business ... to help churches understand their pastoral and prophetic responsibility in the world of work." (*The Tablet* 3 June.)

Compare that with the Australian advertisement for industrial mission staff, which appeared in *The Australian Christian* (3 June). That job description required applicants with, "specialised counselling and educational skills" to be involved in "workplace care,

Continued on page 11

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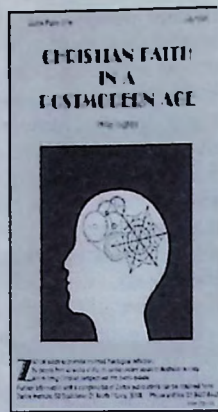
Papers

Christian Faith in a Postmodern Age

by Philip Hughes (Zadok Paper S74) \$5.00.

Philip Hughes contrasts the ways in which those over 50 years and those under 40 tend to view the world. The paper compares these world-views, traces how the differences have emerged and explores the implications for the beliefs and shape of the church in our post-modern world. Philip Hughes notes that, for the younger generation, individual feelings and experiences assume a greater significance at the expense of what he sees as the traditional regard for corporate beliefs and institutions. These changes are reflected in expressions of faith and worship. For churches comprised primarily of older members, there are some insights that could help them as they look at reaching a new generation. If they do not take note of some of the ideas expressed in this paper, then they will struggle to achieve any relationship with a younger generation. This paper is also a good general start to look at the issue of post-modernism as it outlines some of the philosophy of post-modernism and its implications for the church in easy-to-read language.

Available from the Zadok Institute, 59 Scotchmer St, North Fitzroy 3068 (Phone and fax (03) 9482 6442) for \$5.00 which includes postage.



Books

Prayers for Aussie Kids

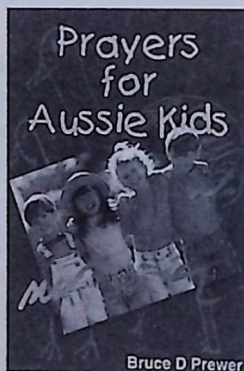
by Bruce Prewer (Openbook) \$16.95.

"For brumbies prancing
and brolgas dancing,
for seals looping,
and swallows swooping,
for kangas leading
and lizards creeping,

for children playing
and children praying;
thankyou, God, for living things,
for all that flies, swims and sings.

Amen

This is a book of delightfully simple prayers for children written by the author of *Never Alone*. The prayers are set out under headings such as "For Others", "Our Needs" and "Jesus' Love". The one above is entitled "For Wild Creatures and Children" and comes under the heading "Thankyou God". They seem to cover every conceivable situation; from troubles ("give me nurses that smile a lot") to the seasons ("thanks, God, for winter, but we're glad its not forever"). Some are simple, some poignant and others disarmingly humorous. Illustrated with children's drawings, this book would be a good resource for parents and children's workers. It would also be a nice encouragement for children who want to pray, but "can't think of the words". —Cathy Clun



Guardians of Creation

by Dr L. Osborn (Apolllos Press) \$21.50.

As one who has engaged in research and discussion on the issue of environmentalism, I deeply appreciated Dr. Osborn's

book. It is both scholarly and practical and addresses a number of significant issues facing the Christian Church in the area of our response to the environment.

It also counters a number of the criticisms levelled at the church from within the environmental movement, primarily that the Church is responsible for developing the understandings society has concerning exploitation versus conservation of our world.

Osborn clearly sets out that we, the inheritors of the Biblical story, are in fact the rightful guardians of creation, for it is to us that the responsibility to be good stewards is given.

Citing such people as St Frances of Assisi, C. Westermann, M. Fox, L. Gilkey and a host of other contemporary authors, he sets about establishing the roles and responsibilities of guardianship in ways that are both theologically sound and immensely practical.

I recommend the book to any serious reader in the area of Christian thinking and its role within the environmental debate.

—Ian Smith

Roget's Thesaurus of the Bible

by A. Colin Day (Harper) \$39.90.

If you feel you cannot handle the Theologian CD-ROM 66 MKZ 486, the Logos Bible Software V 1.6, Any text 3.0 ("a powerful engine for indexing and searching for English, Greek, Hebrew, Aramaic and Cyrillic texts"), or the Outline Bible (requiring "15-30 megabytes version 6.10 for DOS"), then this is the book for you.

Its more than a dictionary and more accessible than a concordance. A great weakness of the latter is that it usually works only for one particular translation. A thesaurus on the other hand is not tied to the language of any one translation. Its uniqueness is that it links together verses with similar meanings—similar and opposite—irrespective of the particular translation.

Preachers, teachers, writers and students will be familiar with the traditional *Roget's Thesaurus*. The Thesaurus of the Bible is based on the general framework of this original work, which categorised the whole field of meaning under some 1000 headings. So, for example, under "Religion" are a number of subheadings, including "Worship". Under "Worship" are listed the synonyms (7 pages of texts grouped under "How to worship", "Sacrificial Offerings", "Right Sacrifices," etc, and antonyms (4 pages of Biblical texts grouped under "Idolatry", etc).

Apart from more than 700 pages of the thesaurus itself, it also contains an index of every Biblical reference included (100 pages), as well as nearly a hundred page subject index. This makes for an indispensable tool which will replace the traditional concordance for any serious bible student.

—Alan Matheson



"This is Mr Gillespie. He's the gentleman who wrote that highly controversial book titled, 'The Hospital-Doctor Racket'."

Letters to the Editor

International

Whole Village Converted

An entire Russian village was converted to Christianity in a single meeting. All 80 members of the community near Yelets went forward in response to Gospel messages from Southern Baptist missionaries Larry Lindsey and Norman Lyle. Thinking the eager inquirers had misunderstood the appeal, Lindsey explained further. But all said they understood perfectly and wanted to become Christians.

Mormons Back Down

The Mormon Church has told a Holocaust survivors group that it will stop its practice of posthumously baptising Jewish victims of the Holocaust and listing them as Mormons in genealogical records. Baptism for the dead is a common practice in the Mormon Church and is based on the belief that spirits are thereby given a chance to accept or reject the "true Church of Jesus Christ".

Interesting Characters

King David and Prophetess Deborah are the most interesting figures in the Old Testament, according to a survey published in the Biblical Archaeology Review. The survey attracted 8,000 responses. David narrowly edged out Moses in the polling for the most interesting man, 31% to 29%, followed by Abraham (19%), Joseph (11%), Jacob (5%) and Saul (4%). In the poll for most interesting woman, Deborah received 27%, followed by Rachel (26%), Eve (15%), Miriam (13%) and Hagar (7%).

Warning Against Complacency

Leaders of a worldwide prayer focus on Muslims have cautioned against a "sit back" mentality after their most successful campaign ever. Reports of miraculous conversions and incidents among Muslims came in from many countries after this year's 30 Days Muslim Prayer Focus, which involved an estimated 2 million Christians. While in its three years the annual 30 Days project has seen increased prayer for Muslims, there had not yet been a significant rise in the number of Christians prepared to go as missionaries to Islamic countries.

counselling and educational programs aimed at providing employee and organisational support through contract arrangements with public and private sector organisations."

In Britain, the emphasis is on both "pastoral" and "prophetic" ministry. In Australia, the language and emphasis is pastoral, reflected in "management" language which rejects a prophetic role for industrial mission and is more comfortable with offering, "new ways and perspectives for an organisation to think about itself in terms of being human, contextual, social, educational and spiritual," and over 35 years has "practised impartiality!" (Church Scene 14 June).

—Alan Matheson
(Hawthorn, Vic)

Creation Science

To the Editor,

Like Stan Allison, ("AC" 15 June), I am tired of the "to and fro" discourse on the subject of Creation Science through the letters column. May I suggest that any further contributions only be accepted if the writers cross-reference their particular point of view to the scholarly study of the subject by Arthur Pigdon in his book, *Rethinking Evolution* and, in particular to chapter 15. In that concluding chapter, the author questions the acceptability of all three "popular" theories: the Darwinian theory of evolution; the theistic evolution view ("that regards God merely as the initiator of the universe and of life but denies his continuing involvement in the creation process"); and the "instant creation" theory. Arthur then sets out cogent reasons why a "progressive creation" proposition fits the scientific data, while also allowing for the creative power of a personal God to be necessary for the continuing development, diversification and maintenance of life. He states: "If we are prepared to accept God as the source and impartor of life, we have no more need of other highly speculative theories of the origin of life." If the suggested restriction does nothing more, it might, at least,

promote a wider study of this excellent critique of the current evolution theories and the limitations of the "creation science" alternative.

—Max Carter
(Footscray, Vic)

[A second edition of *Rethinking Evolution* has been printed and is available for \$17.50 plus postage from Vital Publications, PO Box 101, Essendon North 3041. Phone (03) 9379 1219, fax (03) 9379 0015.—Ed]

OT through Christ's Light

To the Editor,

Gladys Butler, responding to my letter ("AC" 7 June), asks "Does David believe in universal salvation?" adding, "If so, the cross of Jesus was and still is a nonsense way of salvation." I reply, "Yes" to the question, but "Not so" to her statement.

On salvation, I refer to Mark 9:2-8 which indicates that Jesus accepted Moses and Elijah. Yet from Numbers 31, Moses is guilty of genocide, murder and rape; and from 1 Kings 18:17-40, Elijah is guilty of the murder of 850 priests of other nations. The writers may imply obedience to God, but surely Christ (who is one with God), could not have so directed? Also note that Jesus did not condemn the adulteress (John 8:1-7), nor the Samaritan woman with six husbands (John 4:7-42), nor Peter who denied him, and Jesus made the murderer Saul an apostle. Note the unconditional forgiveness to the lost son (Luke 15:11-32). From these and others, I am convinced of universal salvation out of the love and grace of a perfect God. However, I do believe all will "render account for every careless word," (Matt 12:32) but loving judgment will follow. (See Matt 10:15.) Surely Christ would show more compassion than he asked of us. (See Matt 5:43-48.)

As to the cross, it was essential, as best explained by Martin Luther: "The death of Jesus was a sacrifice, but a sacrifice by God to man to show the extent of His forgiveness, not to remove barriers to it." Gladys, doesn't that fit so very rightly, with God "loving the

world" and with Jesus' rebuke to the disciples and the Pharisees in Matt 9:13?

For me the church's word to the world should be "God who created us loves each one; let his perfect love cast out fear, then come, follow him."

—David Allison
(Black Rock, Vic)

Baptism of the Spirit

To the Editor,

In stating Alan Norling's main conclusion, is Gordon Stirling taking us back to the OT where the Spirit came only upon people to equip them for some service for God and then to depart?

The Holy Spirit was given to the church, to the body on the day that it was given birth; the Day of Pentecost. The Holy Spirit dwells in people's lives; he endows the believer with a gift or gifts; he enables that person to use their gift solely for the building up of the body. He is subject to the availability of the believer, that is, it is up to the believer to give the Holy Spirit control of their lives. The command is for all to be filled with the Spirit. To imply that we are baptised over and over again, takes away the command and our responsibility to the Spirit. Paul has much to say about us and the Spirit in Romans, but there is no mention of being baptised in or with the Spirit continually.

He is wrong. It is lack of allowing him to control our lives that hinders the Spirit's work. Christ baptised us with his Spirit. He placed us into his body by his Spirit when we were born of the Spirit. Surely this placing is a once only act. I sincerely believe that the closer a person comes to Christ, the more the fruit of the Spirit is seen in their lives. I believe that is what the world needs to see today. All the resources for whatever ministry/service we have been given to do, is at our fingertips, because of the dwelling Holy Spirit in our lives. The more we open ourselves to his leading and filling will we be seen in our service for Him.

—Ron Goodwin
(Warwick, Qld)

Barber's Return to PNG

Continuing work with Wycliffe Bible Translators



• Keith and Carol Barber and daughter Christine leave Horsham to start their return to PNG

The next few years for Keith and Carol Barber and family will again resemble a mini-United Nations.

Keith and Carol, formerly Wimmera teachers, are missionaries with Wycliffe Bible Translators in Papua New Guinea's eastern highlands.

They work and live among mission people from more than 20 countries, which have a base for their linguistic work at Ukarumpa.

The couple with daughters, Christine (12) and Johanna (11), leave behind Horsham's cold weather today (12 July) to start their return to Papua New Guinea.

They first left Horsham in early 1992 for Ukarumpa, where Keith taught prep and grade six at nearby Aiyura International Primary School, which has children from 15 missions. He was later appointed vice-principal and will be principal from June next year.

Most of the pupils in the schools are missionaries' children. Some have parents in commercial enterprise, such as coffee plantations and a government research station.

Teachers also prepare correspondence lessons for pupils who travel with their parents on language or mission work. There is also a radio school.

Nine hostels provide accommodation for students forced to live away from parents.

Carol taught at Ukarumpa High School, but on her return will work part-time in the primary school and will also be a personnel worker with the mission.

Yams

Lifestyle for the Barbers at Ukarumpa will be a far cry from life in Australia. Annual rainfall is about five metres, 200 inches, with most falling in the "wet" season. Temperatures stay constant in the mid-20s.

There is no television or radio and few papers. Their fibro house has barred windows. And their microwave will stay in storage until they return to

Australia perhaps more than three years away. Or they might opt for a five-year term.

Shopping is more likely to be yams, taro, sweet potato and bananas from the market than supermarket lines.

In December when they left for Australia, cheese was \$18 a kilogram, bacon \$30 and rice bubbles \$12 a box and inflation was running at 50%. They make their own bread and yoghurt.

Commissioned

Wycliffe Bible Translators aims at giving as many people as possible the chance to read the Bible in their own language.

Almost 100 of Papua New Guinea's 870 languages are translated. Eleven more will be dedicated this year.

Keith is a former teacher at Wimmera schools including Nurabel, Noradjuha, Dooen, Jung, Pimpinio, Kewell and Kalkee, and Carol taught at Horsham Lutheran Primary School.

Horsham Church of Christ elder Graham Kitchen led a commissioning service for the family in the church on Sunday.

—Faye Smith

Photo: David Fletcher of *The Wimmera Mail-Times*. Photo and story used with permission.



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People

Billy Graham Visit

Dr Billy Graham will visit Australia and NZ in February and March 1996. He will undertake short outreach programs in each of the cities he will visit, in contrast to the large crusades held previously. It is planned he will speak at a major mission rally in three cities, tentatively 24 February in Melbourne, 9 March in Sydney and 16 March in Brisbane. Already there is a strong cross-denominational support and involvement in planning and organisation. Recently Dr Graham suffered a health scare while conducting a mission in Toronto, Canada.

State Director

Rev Ian Sexton has been appointed as State Director of the Bible Society in Queensland, succeeding Ray Jones, who held the position for five years. Ian worked for Qantas for 20 years as a maintenance engineer. In 1978 he accepted the Bible Society position of Flying Bibleman with the task of relocating the work from Camarvon, WA, to Darwin, NT. In 1982 he commenced ordination studies at the Baptist Theological College of Queensland. In 1992 he joined the Australian Baptist Missionary Society and served in Zambia, but repeated attacks of malaria forced an early return to Australia.

New ITIM NSW Director

Ms Margaret Cody has been appointed State Director of Inter-Church Trade and Industry Mission ITIM (NSW). She brings to the position 15 years experience in education—as a teacher, Pastoral Guidance Coordinator and Counsellor. For the last three years she has worked in Educational Administration at the Catholic Education Office in Sydney. Prior to that she worked as a freelance radio and TV interviewer and presenter with the ABC and for Dialogue, Sunday Magazine and Catholic Hour religious affairs programs in Melbourne. She is a member of the *National Outlook* Editorial Committee. She sees her work with ITIM as an opportunity to work with a team of dedicated and professionally skilled Christians, discovering Christ's presence in the workplace. She is impressed by the deep sense of vocation of ITIMs chaplains.

International

Children in Assembly

The NZ Presbyterian Church's General Assembly in May offered a children's program running parallel to the main business sessions. It involved 16 children aged 8-16. As well as contributing their own art and music to the atmosphere of Assembly, the children led worship one morning and offered their own observations on what was taking place. They learnt of the issues facing Assembly and met with some of the overseas visitors who told them of the church in their own country.

Algerian Annihilation

Approximately 500 Christians in Algeria are killed by Islamic extremists every week, according to diplomatic sources. Members of the Islamic Salvation Front are reportedly "purifying" Algeria of non-Muslims, including Christians, Jews and Communists. The Armed Islamic Group, the most extreme of the Islamic militant groups in Algeria, has declared a campaign of "annihilation and physical liquidation of Christian Crusaders", according to the *Middle East Digest*. Several expatriate Christians have been killed and the Algerian church is "feeling increasingly vulnerable". The only Christian bookshop in Algeria closed its doors in March 1994 after staff members were told they would "disappear" unless they did so. According to the International Christian Embassy (Jerusalem), virtually all Algerian Christians have converted from Islam. Under Islamic law, adult male apostates from Islam may be punished by death.

Worst Places for Christianity

Christians in Saudi Arabia, Iran, Sudan, the Comoros Islands (near Madagascar) and China face severe restrictions on their religious liberty, according to an international survey by a church-sponsored organisation, *Portes Ouvertes*, based in Austria. Saudi Arabia rated the worst, with North Korea, Qatar, Oman and Libya also ranked poorly. Of the 30 countries at the top of the list published by *Portes Ouvertes*, 24 are predominantly Muslim, and four are Communist.

Persecution Perpetuated

Religious persecution in China.



• Nuns in Drapchi Prison later beaten by guards for singing nationalist songs

Amnesty International is concerned at new regulations in China which are aimed at re-

pressing religious groups. The regulations which came into effect at the start of the year set down clear restrictions on freedom of religion; including the prohibiting evangelism and other religious activities carried out outside the control of official religious organisations.

The effects of these regulations is to perpetuate the repression suffered by religious groups such as Protestant house churches and others who meet in private homes already the target of police harassment. During the Easter period the levels of harassment increased. In Shanxi Province three Protestant house church leaders were arrested on 13 April at a house church meeting in Changzhi city. According to reports, everyone present at the meeting was arrested, most were subsequently released but six remain in custody.

In Jiangxi province between 30 and 40 Roman Catholic believers were arrested between 13-26 April by police officers. Many of those are still detained, with reports that they were beaten by police officers during their arrests. Two women detainees, Gao Shuyun and Huang Guanghua were so badly beaten that they know need help to eat.

Tibetan nuns have also been targeted because of their support for Tibet's independence from China. On 14 October 1989, Phuntsog Nyidron and five other nuns staged a peaceful demonstration in Lhasa, Tibet's capital city. They chanted slogans and marched in a procession for a few minutes before the police arrested them.

For that simple act, all six nuns were interrogated, tortured, tried and imprisoned. Phuntsog was sentenced to nine years in prison and this year her sentence has been extended by another eight years, because she has not given up her beliefs while in prison. Most Tibetan nuns are serving sentences of two or three years of "re-education through labour" for their peaceful opposition to Chinese rule.

Amnesty International is appealing to the Chinese authorities for the immediate and unconditional release of all people detained or restricted solely for the peaceful exercise of their right to freedom of religion and opinion.

If you would like more information on Amnesty International's Religious Network, contact Amnesty International on (03) 9427 7055.

—Richard Startari.

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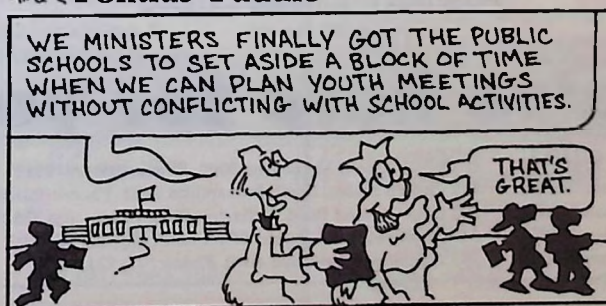
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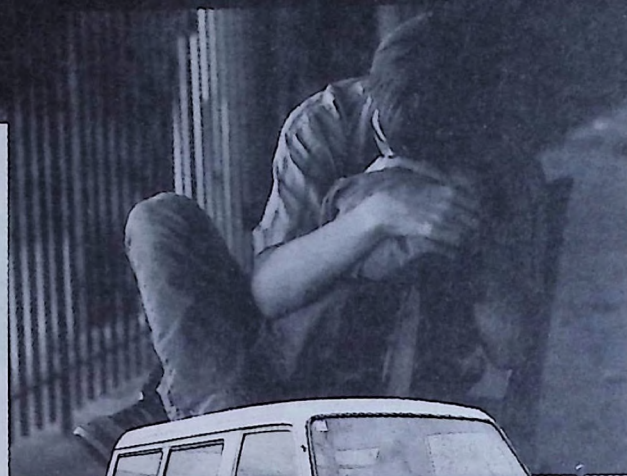
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into the community through education and support initiatives which address some of the key concerns in today's society.

Recently, ANSVAR purchased a Ford Econovan for Drug-Arm, a group which aims to promote a healthy lifestyle without the use of unnecessary drugs. Street Van, as it is known, takes assistance to the young people on the street, helping them to explore options to move out of this harmful environment.

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Fairness and Equity— Privatisation of Public Utilities

Trevor Giles

The current trend towards privatisation has become a controversial issue in Australian society. It is imperative that Christians and the church become informed about the issues and ensure that our society continues to pursue issues of equity for all people, particularly those individuals and groups who are greatly disadvantaged. There is insufficient information available from Government that people on low incomes, including aged pensioners, people on disability pension and the unemployed, will be protected under any schemes of privatisation.

The single-minded commitment of Government to sell the public utilities to the private sector is based on the assumption that competition in the supply of such utilities as electricity, water and gas will bring about financial savings for the consumer. This is a major shift of value for Government and the community. Does a Government have a responsibility to provide citizens with basic necessities such as electricity, water and gas? The Irvine Saulwick Poll conducted by the Uniting Church showed that 64% believed that the SEC should be Government owned,

as opposed to 28% who wanted private ownership. A concern of the churches is that there has been little consultation with the community before the decision to sell public utilities.

A second assumption of the Government, made in Treasurer, Stockdale's letter to *The Australian Christian* (17 June issue), is that the only way to run an efficient industry is through the private sector as Governments are unable to operate best practice in the provision of public utilities. While there are guarantees from the Treasurer that disconnection of supplier to a customer will not take place without appropriate process, welfare agencies throughout the state have reported a greater demand for financial aid for help with power bills and reconnections. Such agencies report significant amount of anecdotal evidence of disconnection without final warning. The State Government cites that the UK experience where there has been a 96% fall in disconnections from pre-privatisation levels. However, they fail to state that this has largely been due to the introduction of prepaid meters.

Faced with the choice between disconnection and prepaid meters, most consumers

have opted for the latter. Faced with the choice of eating or staying warm, what will those on a low income choose?

On 21 April, a joint group of churches and community based groups wrote to both the Government and Opposition requesting minimum standard. These minimum standards are:

Social Equity

- Universal access to electricity services;
- The maintenance of retail price regulation on tariffs, supply charges and charges for ancillary services up to and beyond 2000 (ie a maximum pricing regime should be established);
- No new charges to be introduced;
- The banning of security deposits, pre-payment meters and electricity load-limiters for residential consumers;
- No disconnection for consumers who are willing but unable to pay. Instead, they should have access to a comprehensive range of alternative payment arrangements and instalment plans to deal with past and future consumption patterns and access to Government funded emergency relief grants.
- Minimum 30-day cycle for account collection;
- Access to free energy auditing services, Government funded retro-fit programs for low income households as a customer service;

• Information provided in community languages according to need;

• An industry-funded advocate for low income and disadvantaged consumers.

Consumer Rights

- Legislated access to dispute resolution procedures that are independent of both Government and industry, equivalent to that which was formerly available to electricity consumers via the State Ombudsman;
- Legislated access to any information about the industry, equivalent to that which is guaranteed through the Freedom of Information Act in regard to Government bodies;
- Customer confidentiality must be safeguarded, so that information is not used for other purposes.

Environmental Protection

- The legislated regulatory framework should include comprehensive environmental regulation.

I respectfully call upon all Christians throughout our churches to become informed about the issues and, in particular, examine closely those aspects of privatisation where the most marginalised, dispossessed and disadvantaged in our community may be further disadvantaged through this significant shift of values in our community.

If you have concerns please forward those to the Victorian Government: The Treasurer/ The Premier of Victoria, 55 Collins St, Melbourne 3000; or The Department of Community Care, 77 Capel St, West Melbourne 3003. We will pass your concerns to the appropriate Minister.

❖ Trevor Giles is Executive Director of Vic-Tas Department of Community Care.



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ENGAGEMENTS

LEACH-SCHMIDT Rob and Thelma of Canberra are delighted to share the news of the engagement of their daughter De-Anne to Michael, son of Pat and Peter. Our love, support and best wishes for the future.

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DEATHS

CLARK Roy Daniel. Peacefully released 26 June 1995 at Chin-chilla. Aged 87. Ever loved by his wife Mavis; Owen and Marion, Rob and Eula, Barry and Pauline and their families. While there is sadness in our hearts, he goes with our love and blessing and thanks to God for many good years together.

EDMUNDS, Kathleen Armorelle. Passed away peacefully at a private hospital, Launceston, on Saturday 15 July 1995, in her 90th year. Dearly beloved wife of Roy (dec). Loved mother and mother-in-law of Lois (dec), Colleen and

Chris Peart, Maurice and Marlene. Loved Nanna of Darryl and Helen Peart, Leonie and Joe Agius, Jeanette and Karen Peart and Tony Edmunds. Great-grandmother of Matthew, Alex and Keegan. "Now one with Christ, I find my peace."

FLEET Hilda Olive at Wangaratta on 3.7.95. Loved and loving wife of Arthur (dec). Caring mother of Graeme and Lyn, Ruth and Frank (Belmont), Keith and Dawn. Grandmother and great-grandmother of their families. "The Lord is my shepherd".

HILL (STEVENS) Effie Maud, aged 97 years and 10 months, passed away on 22 June at "Betheden". Dearly loved wife of Robert Hugh (dec), loving mother of Dorothy, Thelma, Alan, Esma and Evelyn. Loved mother-in-law of Neil (dec), Allan, Joyce, Jack and Jack. Loved Nana of her 12 grandchildren and 30 great-grandchildren. Peace, perfect peace.

JENNER Alfred Thomas (24.3.1907-3.7.1995) Late of Golden Age Retirement Village, Ridgeway Ave, Southport, Qld, and formerly of Boonah, where he served as deacon, church secretary and Sunday School teacher; and Ipswich, contributing graciously to the church's ministry. This gentle man will always live in the hearts of those to whom he gave so much love and encouragement—his widow Jane, daughter

Merle, granddaughters and their husbands, Karyn and Andy, Marilyn and Tony, Heather and Sedat; and Andrew, the great-grandson of whom he was so proud. Forever with the Lord. Always ours to love.

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"Priest"

Viney Longthorp

One of the early screenings at the recent Melbourne Film Festival was also one of the best. The British film, *Priest* has been widely praised; it has been rightly described as a powerful film, dynamically directed, with first-class acting. Some leaders of the Catholic Church in the USA and Australia were very critical of it on the basis of its content. However, I agree with the opinion of most that it is neither anti-Christian, anti-Catholic, nor anti-clerical. It tells its story with integrity and objectivity. After all, the best minds in all churches keep telling us that the Christian engagement with the world should be as visible and open as possible, since the basis of the Gospel were historical events "not done in a corner". The church and Christians are not some protected, hot-house species to be handled with care. Thus the secular world, for whatever motive, has every right to use aspects of the church's life as subject matter for presentation on the media.

Priest tells the story of young Fr Greg Pilkington who is sent to his first parish in downtown Liverpool (England). Here he wrestles with his homosexual desires. Theologically, he is idealistic and has strong convictions about celibacy. He is horrified when he discovers that the senior priest, Fr Matthew Thomas, is sleeping with their housekeeper. His problem is compounded by Fr Matthew ridiculing the church's rules of celibacy. Fr Greg also has to

contend with the confession of a 14-year-old girl, who seeks absolution for her father's sexual assaults on her. He here experiences the tension between the vows of the confessional and the torment which his silence will bring to the girl.

Writing in *On Being*, Daniel Batt says that "if you don't like the tension of life don't see *Priest*. However if you do, you will get a brilliant glimpse into competing tensions which rip at the Christian's soul." The film has the same dramatic impact as do the mature plays of the great Henrik Ibsen.

A good film has all the substance of a good book, together with the power of well-directed visual images. On both counts, *Priest* gives us much to ponder on. Here are a few of them.

- There is the chilling reminder of the ways that sheer evil marshals argument and logic to justify itself. When the parent who is committing incest tells Fr Greg to "keep his nose out of my family affairs", then he trawls through many examples in history to show how "natural" are his deeds. The viewer will feel some sense of satisfaction as all his clever casuistry crumbles when his wife learns of the situation.

- Then there is the long discussion which Fr Greg has with a worker in the local physical culture centre about human free-will and predestination. Lay theology is alive and well in parts of Merseyside. Here by contrast, ideas are used with integrity; it is a heart-warming scene.

- Ministers of religion, like other leaders, can experience soul-destroying loneliness. But a sensitive approach to counselling and rehabilitation is not always practised. Thus when Fr Greg is convalescing after having attempted suicide when his homosexual activities became public, his bishop's response was, "The best way you can serve God is to @#\$% off

out of my diocese." Then a Catholic retreat priest says, "You are a boil on the body of Christ." How do we care for the carers in our society? Especially those who offend on account of moral lapses.

- Further, when news about Fr Greg becomes public, most of the congregation are outraged. They are divided according to their attitudes to morality—as we should expect. The scene where they argue will be familiar to most of us, regardless of the occasion. There are many references to the spectre of Sodom and Gomorrah. Others appeal to 1 Cor 6:9. Then there are those who quote, "That one of you who is faultless cast the first stone." Many others appeal to God's love and forgiveness. These are familiar voices in the effort to interpret Scripture.

- The outlook of Fr Greg and Fr Matthew on their respective roles will deeply involve many viewers. For Matthew, the way to get God's work and ministry done is to change the social and political systems and structures. Greg sees change in the individual as the important thing. He accuses his colleague of preaching socialism, whereas Matthew thinks his young associate is out of touch with realities on account of his reliance on doctrine and the quasi mystical. The makers of the film must have been very well briefed about the contemporary tensions within the church—both Catholic and Protestant.

- Guilt is another theme within the film which contributes to its dramatic impact. The burden of guilt is seen in many of the characters. In so many cases it wreaks terrible personal havoc. We are reminded here of the power of unresolved guilt and the way it can affect behaviour for the worse. For that ubiquitous character, "the man in the street", the film is an apology for the Christian teaching about guilt. For far from guilt

being an invention of the church in order to control the faithful, as some claim, guilt is seen in its true nature as being something basic to humanity, engendered by our moral nature. The church's ministry is to assist people to handle guilt in a positive manner, which only Christ's forgiveness and acceptance can accomplish.

- Another point made through the whole sweep of the story is a highlighting of the vulnerability of practising homosexuals. The film shows the negative side of this activity which is rarely acknowledged in the presentations of the "gay lobbies" in their seeking to be politically correct. The film shows its destructive consequences.

It is to the credit of the film that it gives no pat answers or moralising; nor (to repeat), does it give a cynical view of the church. To quote Batt again: "[*Priest*] rests gently on the most compelling images of hope and forgiveness you are likely to see in a film for a long time to come."

Finally, the best compliment I can pay *Priest* is the way in which it illustrates those words of a great Christian teacher and leader, Michael Ramsay: "History shows that attempts to be rid of the scandal of the Church, by puritanically turning out people who don't conform to certain moral standards, causes more evils than they cure ... Attempts to purge the Church like that break down because it is so easy to turn out those who by their actions have failed to uphold those standards, while leaving inside the Church the smug people, the proud people, the prigs and the hypocrites. The Christian Church was never meant to be a Society of the Moral, but rather a Society of the Forgiven, and of those who put themselves in the way of divine forgiveness."

Priest is now being screened in most centres. Rated MA. ♦



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A Church ABC

A new church, situated in a fast-growing area, Quakers Hill church is seeking to reach out into a community that includes both middle and working-class areas. There are a number of young families because, as Quakers Hill is on the suburban fringe (about 1 hour NW of Sydney CBD), housing is cheaper there.

The church was only planted in January 1993 by the Castle Hill church. Initially 16 people met in lounge rooms until on 2 May the first official service was held in the Quakers Hill High School, where the church continues to meet, now with 80+ members. The minister, Adrian Jackson, says that the growth is encouraging, but that much is simply due to the growth in the area itself, and is now beginning to level off.

Being a new church presents valuable opportunities and its own challenges.

One of the opportunities is that the church has intentionally been able to avoid church programs that so often tie up people. Instead, people are free to discover and use the gifts they have. They have found that they have initiated a lot of "good" things, but often they were not ready. The timing,

people or motivation was wrong, usually resulting in people being burnt out fairly quickly. This has led to a conscious effort to let God reveal the ministries they should do and then let him provide the people, instead of them trying

for in other ways, such as prayer. Some such people are now volunteers in the shop themselves.

House churches form the fellowship and care base. Sunday services are a celebration, house fellowships are "church" dur-

other plant, he would ensure that the church's goals and identity were clear beforehand, rather than forming these out of the mire of multiple opinions.

Another challenge, one common to many churches, is finance. Due to the nature of the area, people either have little income or are committed to a substantial mortgage. But the church can still say that so far they have survived by faith.

For the future, the church is concentrating on prayer and relationship evangelism. They are systematically praying for their area and, as opportunities present, offering prayer to friends and neighbours. When the people see God at work through prayer they are more open to hearing about God.

A dream is that the church themselves will be able to plant further churches in surrounding areas as the region around them is also growing, not just their immediate location. At present, they are praying, waiting for God to reveal the next step. ❖

Focus on Quakers Hill



to do it themselves. Adrian says it is a real danger trying to be a 10-year-old church when you are only two—it takes time to consolidate and learn.

Not having their own church buildings has also meant that they have been able to open an Op Shop in the main shopping area which includes offices and a prayer room in back. This provides a high-profile presence among the businesses and general population and allows for practical care and ministry. They have found that people who come in to use the Op Shop often end up being cared

ing the week, not just a Bible Study. There people get to know and care for each other.

A challenge to overcome in being a new church plant is that the church's identity and agenda have not yet been formed and set. Many folk come from differing churches and have their own concepts and agenda about what the church should be and do. Adrian admits that if he was to do an-

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Turning Tide—Conflicting Signs

Martin Robinson

A great deal has been written in recent times concerning the fundamental shifts that seem to be taking place in our culture at this time. Rabbi Sacks, to cite just one observer, claims that we are caught between two ages, one passing, the other not yet fully born. This single fact, if true, is of much greater significance for the church than the historical accident that we are coming to the close of a century and, coincidentally, a millennium.

Turmoil of Change

Some have described this change as the shift from modernity to post-modernity. That description has a different specialist meaning depending on whether one is talking about the fields of philosophy, art, architecture, literature or indeed religion. But taken together, these changes in our culture are indeed monumental.

How fares the church in the midst of all this turmoil? The evidence is disconcertingly confusing. There are some who claim to see the beginnings of an upturn in the fortunes of the church in terms of church membership and church attendance. Equally there are others who just as vigorously disagree.

Creative Initiatives

Other observers have noted the emergence of many creative

initiatives in such disparate activities as church planting, the pioneering of new forms of the church, a renewal of interest in spirituality and increasing signs of the idea of a missionary church here in the Western world.

I have personally been struck by the number of highly gifted individuals that I have met over the last few years who have only recently become Christians. In my experience, this flood of new and highly motivated, creative people to the ranks of church life is certainly a new phenomenon.

Disturbing Trends

However, the same observers have to acknowledge reluctantly that the actual situation of the church on the ground is often deeply disturbing and discouraging. I have sometimes found myself wondering what the future might hold for whole sections of the church which seem to be almost wholly unconnected with the communities that surround them.

How can we make sense of such conflicting signs?

Worldwide Change

Standing back for a moment from the particular situation of Christianity in Europe and the West, there is an obvious and fascinating contrast with the position of the worldwide church. The latter half of the 20th Century has witnessed the spectacular decline of Christi-

anity in what was once the secure sending base for mission in the West together with the dramatic and vibrant growth of the church in most other continents of the world. How do we make sense of these conflicting trends?

Futures of Christianity

Two completely contrasting scenarios present themselves. The first argues that the situation of Christianity in the West today represents the future of the rest of the world church tomorrow.

In other words, the decline of the church in the West will soon be felt in other parts of the world as they too are impacted by the influence of secular thought.

The second argues that the dynamic church found in the rest of the world today represents the future of Christianity in the West tomorrow.

Which of these tantalising futures is true? I suspect that elements of both are true. In short, there is such a significant interpenetration of East and West in almost every aspect of culture today that both cannot help being influenced by the other.

This may well suggest that we in the West have something to offer the rest of the world when it comes to dealing with modernity and that the rest of the world has something to offer us when dealing with post-modernity.

If this is true, it might after all be the case that we in the West are witnessing the moment when the tide is turning. A simple survey of the shoreline may well have difficulty in detecting which way the tide is flowing. In times such as these we can almost certainly expect the data to reveal contradictory evidence. But what matters is not so much the detail of the facts and figures but the broader direction in which they point. But this is where elaborate metaphors break down. Tides do flow in and out in a remorseless rhythm. Not so with the life of the church.

While the ultimate future is in God's hands, his covenant with his church is such that our actions do make a difference.

The turning of the tide is not inevitable, but it is possible. ♦



Martin Robinson is Director—Mission and Theology with the Bible Society in the UK. He has been a church planter and served as Secretary of Conference of our British churches. Martin Robinson will be the principal guest speaker at Spring Conference this year (Wollongong, 4-6 November) and also at a church planters' event (7-8 November). This article is reproduced with permission from the British Church Growth Digest.

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Fasting

John Edmiston

Fasting has a good biblical pedigree, it was practiced by Jesus, John the Baptist, the apostles, the Old Testament saints and the New Testament church. It has also been regularly practiced wherever revival has come and many of the Christian greats such as John Wesley, Martin Luther, John Calvin, John Knox, Finney and Moody practiced prayer and fasting to enhance ministry effectiveness.

The mere suggestion of self-denial sends cold shivers down the spine of most modern Christians. We seem to find every excuse to dodge fasting. "I might have the wrong motives ...", "my health isn't quite up to it ...", "isn't it a bit fanatical". Unfortunately for us Jesus did say that we were to deny ourselves, take up our cross daily and follow him (Mark 8:34). The spirit of the world is firmly against self-denial and preaches ungodly and profligate indulgence.

Perhaps this is why fasting is proving so powerful for church growth today—because it represents Christians making a serious break with the spirit of the world in order to consecrate themselves to God.

The motive behind fasting is all-important. Fasting in order to lose weight and look good is hardly a Christ-centred, cross-bearing act of denial. It may still be difficult and painful, but it is essentially self-centred.

Fast whenever you desper-

ately want God to do something. Fast when you want power in the spiritual realm for Kingdom purposes here on earth. Fasting is a potent spiritual weapon for the transformation of difficult situations faced by God's people. Esther declared a three-day fast (Esth 4:3) when her people were threatened with destruction from the wicked Haman. Deliverance came from God, her people were rescued, Haman hung and the Jews were victorious. Jesus fasted to conquer Satan in the wilderness (Matt 4:2). Saul and Barnabas were sent out on their first missionary journey after a session where the leadership of the church in Antioch were "ministering to the Lord and fasting" (Acts 13:3).

David even prayed for his enemies when they were ill—with sackcloth and fasting, for their deliverance (Psa 35:13). Countless saints have fasted to find the will of God for their lives or intercede for loved ones. True godly fasting is powerful fuel for personal, social and spiritual change.

But beware of imitations! Fasting can become a source of spiritual pride as it did for the Pharisee (Luke 18:11–12) or become a public show (Matt 6:16). Jesus says such fasting is "self-rewarded" and ineffective. True fasting is not just a ritual but involves a determination to obey God in all areas of life (Isa 58:1–14). This leads

us to the problem of how to go about it.

Start with one day fasts, where you allow yourself fruit juice. Skip breakfast and lunch, and after the sun sets eat well. After you have done this a number of times, gradually move to two and three day fasts. Most spiritual problems can be resolved in two to three days and I have never had to fast for longer. Wait on God. He will indicate to your spirit for how long you need to fast. It is generally wise not to go on 10-day or longer fasts without a medical checkup from a sympathetic Christian GP.

You don't have to pray all day when you fast. Just carry on with your daily work and use the normal meal and snack times for prayer. Jesus tells us to anoint our heads with oil, in other words look happy and act normal while you are fasting. Don't look like a bucket of gloom. Alert those who need to know and those who prepare meals, but otherwise keep fasting private.

The results of fasting make it enjoyable. When prayers are answered and lives changed, you will love fasting for the joy it brings into the world and the discipline will at last seem worthwhile.

Well as the shoe ad says—"Just do it".
✦
John Edmiston works as a freelance religious journalist and is a member of the Townsville, Qld, church.

Internet Resources

From time to time, we will provide details of significant or interesting sites on the internet. Wherever possible, we will supply the address and any information we may have about the site itself. If possible, we will check out the sites ourselves so we may make more informed comment.

ANDERE-L

The official listserv of the Department of Religious Studies at the University of California, Santa Barbara serves as a forum for discussion of theories, methods, and approaches to the study of religion. To subscribe, send the following command to LISTSERV@UCSBVM.UCSB.EDU
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Getting an Internet Connection—Why Bother?

Lea Nelson

One of the main benefits of the Internet is its ability to create new communities and to knit them together across national boundaries. I feel that we have so much to gain, both as individuals and as a Christian denomination, by tapping into the resources now available to us on the Net.

Lets start with the benefits of joining a Christian discussion group using a basic e-mail connection.

DOCDISC

A few weeks ago now I joined an Internet discussion group set up in the US for member churches related to the Restoration Movement—in other words, churches who are 'heirs of Stone and Campbell'. The official name of this discussion group is called "The Disciples of Christ Discussion List" which has been abbreviated to DOCDISC.

It was thrilling to read the various introductions from both ministers and laity as they joined and took part in some of the lively discussions that ensued. Each morning I would arrive at work, open my e-mail, and feel enriched by being able to 'eavesdrop' on the theological and practical Christian concerns of fellow believers on the

other side of the globe. More to the point, I was able to make myself known and take part in these discussions, and so become part of their group.

Forming a personal network

Needless to say, it soon became obvious that the opportunities for the cross-fertilisation of ideas were endless. Of particular note were the discussions on Suffering and Running the Church. I was able to print some of these off and distribute them to interested members of our congregation. Furthermore, I found that within the membership of DOCDISC were those who wanted to contact me personally about people and issues. As a result, I soon formed my own personal network of international Christian contacts.

How to get started

For those who are interested, I have listed a few questions together with their answers to help you gain Internet access and subscribe to DOCDISC, the Disciples of Christ Discussion List.

What hardware and software do I need?

Any type of PC, a modem ca-

pable of at least 2400 bps, and SLIP or PPP compatible software. SLIP stands for Serial Line Interface Protocol, and PPP stands for Point-to-Point Protocol. SLIP/PPP software is available for most PCs running Microsoft Windows and is also available for the Apple Mac.

How do I gain Internet access?

You can purchase Internet access from more than 25 local commercial organisations in Australia. For the complete list, contact Sandra Stavrinou from AARNet on (06) 249 4969 or Fax (06) 249 1369.

If you would like more guidance in this regard, one of the most popular commercial organisations offering dial-up Internet access is Oz-Email. In addition to e-mail, they also provide access to other services such as Telnet, FTP, Gopher and World Wide Web. To give you an idea of costs and charges, there is a one-time registration fee of \$25.00 and a global Internet access fee of \$8.00 (max) per hour (7.00 am–6.00 pm on week days). They also sell a commercial Internet software package called "Internet in a Box" for about \$199.00. For more information you can con-

tact them on (02) 9901 3445, Fax (02) 437 5888.

How does a discussion list work?

You join a discussion group (often called a Listserv list) by sending an e-mail message to a Listserv program on a computer. (In our case it is a majordomo program.) Once you have joined the list of your choice, you will automatically receive all messages posted to that list. Here is how it works for DOCDISC.

1. Send an e-mail message to: majordomo@ux1.cso.uiuc.edu
2. Leave the subject line blank.

3. In the message area type: subscribe docdisc

4. If you have a signature area which includes your name and address, please delete it, as any text, lines or drawings which appear after your subscription message may interfere with the majordomo program.

5. Send the message off. You should receive an acknowledgment that you have subscribed. Save this acknowledgment.

[It usually contains some important information. —Ed.]

To take part in a discussion "thread", always send your composed message to the List address. This address is usually the same as the majordomo address, except that you replace the term majordomo with that of the List name, in this case DOCDISC. This is what the address should look like when sending your composed message to all subscribers: docdisc@ux1.cso.uiuc.edu

Our North American brothers and sisters in Christ are waiting for your input. ❖

Lea Nelson lives in Canberra with her husband Peter and dogs Wesley and Ginger, and is Senior Librarian at the National Library.

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Personal

Baptisms

•Iain Campbell, Murray Nicholls, Jim Macarthur, Val Latham, **Berwick, Vic** •Joshua Johnson, Perserveranda Senoc, Timothy Matthews, **Bribie Island, Qld** •Coralie Sheen, Ellen Yamold, Bruce Fernance, Sandra Steiger, Lyn Bult, Wayne Bult, Stephen Woods, Kay Crossman, **Manning Valley, NSW** •Stephen & Linda Searle, Dianne Evans, **Pyramid Hill, Vic** •Jason Partridge, Tony Richardt, Scott Hannasky, **Twyford St, Bundaberg, Qld** •Joanne Elkner, **Knoxfield, Vic** •Derek Perry, Clinton Bodilly, Michael Fowler, **Bendigo, Vic**

Marriages

•Kelly Henderson and Greg Duns, Kerry Kitchen and Andrew Mclean, Rebecca Bachelor and Phillip Rayment, Dawn Mclean and Neil Juddery, **Berwick, Vic** •Vera Rodgers and Colin Albert, Elisa Trebbin and Adrian Toft, **Twyford St, Bundaberg, Qld**

Deaths

•Mrs Edna Jones, **Morwell, Vic** •Mrs Loma Bell, **Grote St, Adelaide, SA** •Peg Lloyd, Enid Funnell, Charles Wemys, **Bribie Island, Qld** •Bruce Fernance, Renee Goldsworthy, **Manning Valley, NSW** •Kitty (Catherine) Ham, **Twyford St, Bundaberg, Qld** •Stan Edwards, **Knoxfield, Vic** •George Grainger, **Bendigo, Vic** •John Hudson, **Boronia, Vic** •Colville Webster, **Bentleigh, Vic**

Obituaries

Obituaries limited to 100 words
Bell, Lorna Louise

(16.5.95) Born at Kadina, SA, 20.3.08, of Christian parents, met Bob Bell and married him in 1933 at Cowandilla church. They became very heavily involved in Aboriginal work with Churches of Christ. Lorna continued with this after Bill passed away in 1969. She became a member at Grote Street and was very active in the life of the church. A most gracious, yet private lady. Her faith was very strong and an inspiration to many. This faith in Jesus Christ remained strong during the latter years of her life even though she wasn't very well. We give thanks to God for the life of Lorna, a wonderful Christian witness. We extend our sympathy to Jennifer, Ron, Darren, Kerry, Alison, Alexandra and Colin. —PJA

Fernance, Bruce
(15.6.95) Bruce died at the age of 21 as a result of a car accident. He

was part of a group of developmentally delayed adults who worship at Manning Valley, NSW, church. Having come to faith in Jesus earlier in the year, he had been baptised with his foster mother. On the Sunday prior to his death, he came to church very excited that his wife had also come to Christ and wanted to be baptised. He and Narelle had been residing in our Family Care units. Bruce endeared himself to our congregation with his vibrant faith and will be sadly missed.

—Barry Rice

Goldsworthy (Buttsworth), Renee

(6.7.95) Renee died at the age of 23 after a battle with liver cancer. She had lived a vibrant Christian life for nine years. Her last weeks of life saw her radiant in Christ. Rev David Jones and the writer quoted extensively from her journals to share her journey of faith, hope and victory at services at Victory Baptist, Newcastle, NSW, and at Moorland Cemetery. 400 gathered at each location, an indication of the lives she touched. Renee had been school captain at Chatham High and this year graduated as a BEd from Newcastle University. She married Ian in 1993.

—Barry Rice

Olds, Colin

Colin was a devoted husband to Dorothy and a loving father to Val, Carol and Heather. He was a friend of his sons-in-law and delighted in his grandchildren and great-grand-

children. A man of integrity, Colin had a strong work ethic and unashamed Christian values. His contribution to Churches of Christ included a stint as Sunday School Superintendent at Hollywood, 49 years as treasurer at Subiaco, then Dalkeith Rd and Fremantle where we enjoyed his quiet humour and encouragement for nine years. He achieved many things and helped many people in different ways and, with his family, we give thanks to God for Colin Olds' long and rich life.

—John Caporn

Wright, James Phelp
(16.7.95). Phil was a man of faith, prayer, integrity and commitment. Brought up in the North Melbourne, Vic, church, he later became a highly respected member with his late wife, Eva, at Sunshine, Mitcham and North Balwyn churches. He served the church as elder, president, reader, organist, Sunday School superintendent and conductor of anniversary singing. A consistent participator in the church prayer meeting and a wise adviser. The last 14 months of his 93 years were spent in the excellent care of our Northcote Nursing Home. Loving sympathy is extended to Ruth and Jack, Margaret and Bob, Jennifer and Ben, and their families. Private cremation at Springvale was followed by a thanksgiving service at the North Balwyn church. To God be the glory for a good and faithful servant.

—Bruce Alcom.

Church News

WA

ALBANY (John Spencer) Evening service changed to Bible study format ... Started monthly prayer meeting & pre-service morning prayer meeting ... Ken & Beryl Robinson celebrated 40th wedding anniversary ... Marg Hall celebrated 80th birthday ... Church agreed to prayerfully support Fula people in northern Africa as part of 10-40 Window program ... Visiting speakers have been Avon Moyle (FAB), Steve O'Keefe (chaplain at North Albany Senior High School) & Gwen Strelton (WCTU).

KALAMUNDA (David Shalley) Ozreach groups outreach into local community held free carwash/sausage sizzle ... Intercessory prayer group meets Friday nights ... Church farewelled Baines family, leaving for YWAM Canberra ... Welcomed Longbottom family here on leave ... Friendship Centre luncheon held 18 July ... Winter family welcomed into membership ... 23 young people travelled to Boddington on mission trip ... Engagement congratulations to Travis Fancourt & Ainsley Rasmussen.

DIANELLA (Tony Armstrong) Social in form of mock wedding proved good fellowship evening & fund raiser ... Tony home after time at Mulgrave College ... Members involved in time & talent exercise ... Shauna Jeavons completing teaching degree at University of Missouri ... Dianella youth, with several other youth groups, spent weekend camping at Roelands in South West ... Doug Good Memorial Lecture & Alan Niven pastoral care program held July.

NSW

MANNING VALLEY (Barry Rice, Guy Cooper, Alex Wilson) Eighth anniversary services with Jeff May as speaker ... Mark & Bronwyn Oakey farewelled, moving to England ... Evening services growing ... Family Care units fulfilling valuable ministry to needy families ... Church benefiting from members involved in Ministry Centre, both part & full-time ... Op Shop & welfare program making good contacts ... John & Kathy Harris accepted for training at BCQ next year.

CHATSWOOD (Ian Alves, Rosalie Rofe) Minister, Ian Alves, at quarterly social night, reports on his visit to Global Consultation on World Evangelism recently held in Seoul, Korea. A great inspirational experience at one of the world's largest gatherings ... Church commences two morning worship/communion

CLINICAL PASTORAL EDUCATION

A training program for personal and professional development in ministry is offered each year at Peter MacCallum Cancer Institute.

The course is full-time and designed in units of eleven weeks duration. Applicants may apply for one or more units commencing Autumn 1996.

A limited number of study grants (up to \$5000) are available for those undertaking more than one unit. Training involves on-call weekend and evening duty for which allowances are payable.

Applicants should have previous experience in pastoral care.

Closing date for applications: 22 September, 1995.

For further information please contact:
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Director, Clinical Pastoral Education
Pastoral Care Department
Telephone (03) 9656 1301
Fax (03) 9656 1409

Peter Mac

Peter MacCallum Cancer Institute
Locked Bag 1, A'Beckett Street Victoria 3000.

arm04/950

Church News

services for trial period of three months. 8.45 am service is family & youth-oriented outreach meeting, while 10.00 am service follows more traditional lines.

NT

DARWIN (Jim Larkham) Church farewelled Chris Davidson & Narelle Jones (World Horizons Mission) & Barry & Greta Wrightson ... Scott Mylan (St Arnaud) guest speaker ... Church well-represented at Northern Territory Council of Churches Inauguration service ... Dry season brings welcome visitors from southern churches.

Old

BURLEIGH HEADS (Noel Newton, Bruce Harbottle) Membership has reached 137 ... Appointed full-time youth pastor, Bruce Harbottle ... Team of six students from Bible College of Queensland helped run Vacation Bible School during June holidays. 70 children attended during week. Many new families added to contact list ... Speakers from Capernwray Ministry (Billy Strachan & Bob & Amy George) encouraged church teaching on life & work of Jesus ... Men's breakfast 1 July saw 81 share scrumptious breakfast. Message by Bob George. Three indicated they had received Christ.

CAMP HILL (Alan Lochhead) Camp Hill recently celebrated Mother's Day by presenting awards to our mothers in several categories: Most Mature Mother presented to Anne Geale (87 years); Largest Family award to Evelyn Sherriff (eight children, 30 grandchildren & 30 great-grandchildren); Youngest Mother award to Lynn Little at 30 years. We had an enjoyable time of fellowship & so did our champion mothers.

PINE RIVERS (Neale Proellocks, Wayne Kirk, Alan Hermann) 70 men visited the almost-completed new international airport ... 150 shared a most enjoyable Christmas in July evening ... Parenting seminars led by special guests being conducted every Thursday during July & August ... Sunday Night Live programs proving very popular & are well-attended ... Special times of prayer each week for a number of folk who are seriously ill.

BRIE ISLAND (Colin Smith) Church concert was evening of old-fashioned fun. Well-attended & enjoyed by all ... 20th anniversary on 4 June saw many friends & visitors join us. Norm Flett guest speak at both services. Barbara

Flett blessed us in song. Cake was cut by long-time friend, Connie Robinson ... Very successful men's breakfasts each month with guest speakers ... 130 attended CWF rally in June. Guest speaker Bob Smith (DCDE) ... Three baptisms. Welcomed into fellowship with six transferees & nine baptised believers.

TWYFORD ST, BUNDABERG (Paul Scully) Evening services during July featured series of videos on Creation Science together with presentation entitled "Genesis, Genesis and the Flood" by Dr Don Batten ... Christmas in July evening, organised by CWM, very successful ... Congratulations to Trixie & Derek James on birth of Rebekah Kaylyn, Lyn & Bill Brown on birth of second grand-daughter, Mark & Leita Biden on birth of third son, Kallyn Ty, & Colin & Hazel Dionysius on birth of grand-daughter, Katelyn Jane.

Vic

RED HILL (Bruce Butler) Steve Downie visited, showed video & spoke Sunday morning on MWB ... \$262 raised for World Vision 40 Hour Famine ... 75 attended Home Fellowship luncheons ... Family service well attended & children's participation appreciated ... Young people's "Beyond 20s Group" enjoyed dinner at restaurant ... Evening prayer, praise & share on 25 June. Very fruitful service ... Sick members recovering ... Business meeting held afternoon 2 July.

BAYSWATER (R. Combridge) Ladies participated in Mother's Day service, Cath Maydom speaker ... Adam Davis welcomed to team of musicians at church ... "Christ in the Passover" presented by Lawrence Hirsch, from Celebrate Messiah Australia ... Paul Coyle speaker for Bible School anniversary ... CWF visited Christian Blind Mission International in June ... Young people joining older members working on new building for completion before 30 July.

MORWELL (Aif Thistlethwaite) 50 years of marriage celebrated by church members & friends of Joyce & Merv Little with function 25 June ... Minister conducted service for Mrs Edith Jones 26 June who had been in nursing home for last years of her life ... After stint in district pastoral care, worker Julia Seymour relinquished her ministry & tributes paid to her care for members & friends.

BERWICK (Tim Hanna, Ross Pelling, Andrew Ball) Friends of Religious Education contributed towards work in local schools ...

Children's Parable competition ... Golden Bargains Op Shop successfully launched in Pakenham ... Support for Gloria Hardy who left to mission with Kurdish people ... Hymn sing-a-long after morning service ... Loss & Grief Seminar ... Spectacle collection for YWAM ... Young people working towards mission trip to the Philippines in September.

KNOXFIELD (Rod Brown, Jack White, Jason Potter) Youth ministry at Knoxfield, supported by Jason Potter & our young people, has been expanding beyond our local church. We were active at the recent State Youth Games at Queenscliff & assisted the youth at the Dandenong church, at a weekend seminar, to plan expansion & outreach of their youth group ... We are attracting adult members through the youth focus of our evening services.

BENDIGO (John Sweetman) Mini fair raised over \$400 ... Youth services conducted last Sunday of month ... GMG held end of term parade ... Recent speakers Barrie Sutton (Prison Fellowship) & R. Broad while minister & family on holidays ... Church saddened by passing of George Grainger ... Many members recovering from bouts in hospital & winter illnesses ... Everything in readiness for third Missionary Convention launch weekend on 6 August.

BORONIA (Keith Milne, Darryn Hickling) Members of small groups combine to lead some evening services ... Seminars on Death & Dying by Geoff Rowcroft of Tobin Bros ... Social Justice group formed ... Kidsmin members compete in State Indoor Games ... Good Companions held doll show ... Worship workshop conducted by John & Chris Sharp ... All-age bush dance a success ... Prayers of church with Joan & Noel Cartmel following Noel's stroke.

GARDINER (Pieter Petrusma) Widespread prayer for Pieter undergoing by-pass operation ... Over 200 attended memorial service conducted by Les Dewberry for Emeritus Elder, Eric Buckmaster ... Hymn singing afternoons (every two months) well-supported by local churches ... Church opened for prayer last Wednesday each month ... Members glad Pieter accepted extension of ministry ... Peg Taylor in Box Hill Hospital ... Friendship Club, china painting, chair exercises weekly ... Korean Christian Church sharing worship facilities. **BENTLEIGH (Bill Sharrock)** Church enjoying fellowship with

student & wife Pauline ... Sadness at death of beloved member Col Webster, long-time deacon & door-keeper. Sympathy extended to family, & wife Irene, in local nursing home ... Wayside pulpit updated ... Letter drop of street near church, followed by door knock by minister ... Some members hospitalised ... Attendances regular despite age & infirmity ... Minister's pastoral care of membership & contacts much-appreciated. **TOOTGAROOK (Mal Giezendanner)** Attendances good though many on sick list & usual exodus north to warmer parts ... New constitution drafted by Ted Lewis & adopted by congregation ... Open Door still proving attractive to non-churchgoers. 103 attended thanksgiving dinner June ... Weekly prayer meeting & Bible study & KYB fortnightly ... CWF healthy, average 36 at each meeting. Three went to Halls Gap camp ... Tom Bryant recovering from illness ... Mutual Market functioning well.

SA

BLACKWOOD (Geoffrey Payne, Colin Dredge, Paul Hodgson) 2 July, 16 new members welcomed into congregation ... 34 boxes of clothing sent to Fregon. Aboriginal women used proceeds to fund craft supplies & pensioner meals. Aboriginal painting hangs in church foyer—thank you from Fregon community ... Geoffrey Payne welcomed & inducted 23 July with wife Liz & children ... "Vocation Vanuatu", 20 young people visiting Ranwadi Dec 95—refurbishing classrooms & attending Vanuatu National Youth Convention. **DULWICH/ROSE PARK UNITED PARISH (Garry Harris, Tricia Spargo)** Church has appointed part-time youth worker, Matt Eldridge, of Stirling Uniting Church, to cater for specialised religious & recreational needs of young people. He was formally installed by Garry Harris, who praised work already done by Heather & Vei Koto for junior children in Tuesday Club. Some activities are being separately framed for school levels 6-7 & levels 8-10.

GOOLWA (Neville Bradley) "Story of Music" presentation held as fund-raiser for rain water tanks in PNG ... David Brooker (State Minister) recent guest speaker at morning service & afternoon meeting to discuss future objectives ... \$200 raised at "Soup lunch" to support youth work ... Ladies held sewing day & worked on garments for PNG & local Community Care project.

Art and Craft Exhibition

Handiwork at the Gathering

The National Gathering for Women (and men) in September has many gearing themselves to share their talents and create an atmosphere of discovery and learning.

Lindy Gower is one of these people. Lindy is the coordinator of the Art and Craft Exhibition, which will run for the duration of the Gathering (21-24 September). Lindy is a young mother with three children under five years old. She and her husband live in the Adelaide Hills. Lindy is the daughter of Lois Marshall of "To Lois with Love" fame who was a TV craft presenter in Adelaide.

The exhibition will bring together a selection of art and craft work from numerous church groups involved in outreach. There is a wide variety of highly skilled craftswomen and men among the people of the churches. Some work diligently at home or in workshops or studios. All are using and celebrating the talents that God has given them. Some items in the exhibition will be for sale, others for display.

People who attend the Gathering will be challenged to see that Christians who choose to encourage, lead, teach or participate in crafts groups can be worthy messengers of salvation as people are invited to join embroidery, art (watercolours and oils), sewing, knitting, tapestry, gluing, painting, decoupage, cottage crafts, wood burning, spray painting and all manner of engrossing handiwork activities.

Lindy said, "Church-run craft and art groups for women and men of all ages, especially young mothers, are one of the strongest areas of outreach into the com-

"Godspell"

KIDSMIN Playhouse special event

Churches of Christ KIDSMIN in SA, after the success of last year's performances of "Joseph and the Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat", were very fortunate this year to be one of a few in Australia to be granted a licence to perform the major Christian musical production **Godspell**.

The popular Gospel musical **Godspell** will be performed in the KIDSMIN Playhouse on 11, 12, 18, 20, 25 and 26 August by arrangement with Dominie Pty Ltd. Stephen Schwartz wrote the new lyrics and music of this award-winning musical.

Godspell tells the Gospel story of Matthew, precisely portraying Jesus' life from John the Baptist preparing the way, through the highlights of his ministry, to his death and resurrection and appeals to all ages.

The exclusive Gospel musical is presented by Kylie O'Donohue (Director), Robert Coombe (Musical Director), the KIDSMIN Players and the KIDSMIN Band. Limited seats are available, for bookings, phone Jenny Thomson on (08) 352 4273 or Jean Feder on (08) 356 1565.

munity. It's a great way to mix with non-Christians in a non-threatening environment. Long live the craft and art groups!"

There will be child-care facilities available every day for parents attending the Gathering.

Lindy Gower will also be leading the elective "Boxes and Bows", which is one of the most recent crafts to attract interest around Australia. An offering of 21 other electives is available. Electives will be available as two afternoon activities.

The Last Word

He who has no government of himself has no enjoyment of himself.

—Benjamin Whichcote

Why does a chicken go to sleep on one leg? I don't know.

Because if the other were taken away, the chicken would fall over.

The trouble with that restaurant is, it's so crowded nobody goes there any more.

He talks 100 words a minute, with gusts up to 120.

Agent: "So how are you getting on with that mystery drama you're writing?"

Author: "Well, I've been working on it for twelve months solid and it's still not right."

Agent: "A case of all work and no play!"

A cyclist in hospital, injured in an accident with a bus, is said to be critical this evening—especially of the bus driver.

Have you forgotten that you owe me \$20? No, but give me time and I will.

Robin Hood was lying in bed in his cottage deep in the heart of Sherwood Forest. Knowing that he didn't have much longer to live, he called in Little John and said, "Bring me my bow and arrow and open the window. I will fire the arrow and I want you to bury me wherever it lands."

Little John fetched the bow and arrow and Robin Hood fired it.

Just two days later, Little John and the rest of the merry men buried Robyn Hood on top of the wardrobe.

Reader: "Can you tell me where the self-help section is?"

Librarian: "Doesn't that defeat the whole purpose?"



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