

THE AUSTRALIAN

Christian

NATIONAL JOURNAL OF CHURCHES OF CHRIST IN AUSTRALIA

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LIFE *after* DEATH

COTTESLOE, WA, CHURCH OF CHRIST MEMBERS HAVE VOTED TO CLOSE AFTER EIGHTY YEARS AND USE THEIR SUBSTANTIAL PROPERTY RESOURCES TO DEVELOP A NEW CHURCH AT LEDA. LEDA IS A FAST-DEVELOPING PERTH REGIONAL CENTRE WITH A PROJECTED POPULATION OF 70,000. MINISTERS DUNCAN BECSI AND BOB CHAPMAN HAVE ALREADY BEGUN WORK WITH A GROUP OF 25 WHO WILL FORM THE CORE FOR THE NEW CHURCH. MORNING SERVICES WILL BEGIN IN JANUARY 1997. JACK CHRISTIE, SECRETARY OF THE COTTESLOE CHURCH, SAYS THE CHURCH WILL LIVE AGAIN THROUGH THIS BOLD NEW MOVE. JACK SAYS HE HOPES THAT OTHER CHURCHES THROUGHOUT AUSTRALIA WILL BE CHALLENGED TO CONSIDER HOW THEY MAY ALSO BECOME INVOLVED IN CHURCH PLANTING.

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Editorial

Close To My Heart!

DON SMITH

Among the editor's tasks as we go to press is to review the material submitted and begin the process which in turn becomes the next issue of the paper. As I look back over the issues this year I can think of nothing closer to my heart than this feature on Church Planting. I found myself enjoying every report and feeling a sense of mounting enthusiasm as I read the various comments and talked with some new contributors and heard their stories. * And what a story it is. I came out of these conversations deeply impressed with the calibre of thinking, dedication and the evident initiative displayed. I hope you



have a similar experience. As someone who has been involved in these matters in other days, it is encouraging to see the calibre of thinking and the planning in each state. I drove home to write this editorial with a sense of well-being, confidence in our leadership and optimistic feelings about the future of our national work. * I believe our state leadership shows a deep commitment to church planting. The US church consultant Lyle Schaller says this should be the first priority in any denominational strategy. Those are strong and decisive words. Schaller goes on to say that he believes the organisation of new congregations is the most effective single method of reaching people without an active church affiliation. The National Church Life Survey observed that if churches are to relate to diverse Australia, a range of congregations varying in size, emphasis and focus will be needed in the different types of community. What a diversity there is in the projects described in this issue. What opportunities there are to reach new people. It is happening! I believe Schaller's statements are correct. If so, how can you, if you are a local church leader, respond to this challenge? The response of one Perth church, Cottesloe, is especially significant. Theirs is one response to a difficult situation. There may be other responses in different circumstances. What we need now is a total focus in each state on reaching new people through church planting. *

Church Planting

We report on church planting projects in various states and comment on its key role in our national development.

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The Australian Christian welcomes letters from its readers. Short letters up to 175 words stand the best chance of publication. All letters may be edited. We reserve the right to omit letters altogether.

Racism

To the Editor,
 Pauline Hansen's recent comments, both in Parliament and in the media have caused a strong reaction in the community. It has exposed an ugly side of our society. Racism is alive and well, not that I am surprised. Listening to talk-back radio I have been saddened by opinion that denigrates people from different racial backgrounds. That "think tank" of Australian society *The Midday Show* showed that there was overwhelming support for Hansen's views. Where is this leading us? Let me state, I believe that Pauline Hansen has the right to say what she has said in a free society, no matter how strongly I disagree with her. There is however, another perspective. A view that tol-

erates difference and treasures diversity.

The Church in our more noble times have stood firmly against racism. The extremes of racism have led to the apartheid of South Africa and the death camps of Nazi Germany. The Church must stand against racism! I am drawn to the words of Dr Martin Luther King Jr while standing at the Lincoln Memorial in Washington declaring, "I have a dream!" A dream of a nation where people would not be judged by the colour of their skin but the content of their character.

If I am to choose between the words of Pauline Hansen and Martin Luther King, I choose to follow the dream of Martin Luther King.

—Paul Creasey
 (Community Services
 Director, Vic-Tas)

Multiculturalism

To the Editor,
 The "strange silence" on multiculturalism that Barry Jenkins notes ("AC" 5.10.96) may be due to the fact that we do not quite understand what it means. The use of terms such as "ethnic congregations" and the idea that multiculturalism should be excluded from the broad survey of development and picked up as a special issue of the "AC" are but two indicators of this confusion. A so called "ethnic" congregation is not multiculturalism, nor is it an appropriate reflection of the New Testament church. Mission and ministry built on such an understanding at best produces marginal congregations, and at worst is an expression of discrimination and racism. One dimension of multiculturalism is equality of opportunity. This means, for example, that all departments and committees will reflect the diversity of our churches. It will mean trans-

A Christmas Gift that lasts all year

Letters to the Editor

lations of information on who we are as Churches of Christ; it will mean at the local level an end to "ethnic" congregations and the building of congregation which have opportunities to learn from each other. The popularity of the current immigration debate, triggered by the rabid bigotry of some politicians and the silence of our political and church leadership (Have any of our Conference officers made any statements?), should be reason enough in itself to take Barry Jenkins seriously.

—Alan Matheson
(Hawthorn, Vic)

Leadership Training

To the Editor,

The contributions on "Training" ("AC" 5/10/96) demonstrate that diversity is both present and needed in ministerial training in Australian Churches of Christ. It is worthy of note that each of the articles were written from somewhat different perspectives but focussed on the same end result, to prepare leaders who are equipped to lead churches in genuine engagement with and in the continued mission of Jesus Christ. Surely this indicates that a diversity of cooperating training programs would be a wonderful asset.

Our greatest hope for effective training of leaders lies in our training centres working in harmony (not competitively) to offer a variety of styles of training, learning from each other, so that all our potential leaders can be given the opportunity for Biblically-centred training and rigorous ministerial formation.

I fear that one of the greatest dangers to the future of our leadership training will come from those in our churches, who for the sake of their own agenda, "play off" one training centre against another

through misinformation and insinuation.

—Mark Butler.
(Mitcham, Vic)

Spirit and Form

To the Editor,

I doubt if anybody would disagree with Jeff Deuble ("AC" 5.10.96) that in the matter of church renewal Spirit should precede form. However, we need to be wary of the argument that structure is irrelevant. This argument is sometimes advanced by those who chafe at accountability and wish to legitimate their own structures and programs, while claiming Holy Spirit inspiration. Church structures and programs not only have to be relevant, but they must also have social and biblical legitimacy.

—Harold Hayward
(Pymble, NSW)

Caricatures of Jesus

To the Editor,

Like Mike Barker ("AC", 21.9.96), I was impressed with John Arthur's analysis of some prevalent "caricatures" of Jesus. However, I was puzzled by Mike's claim that John introduced a fourth caricature. Only three distortions of the "original" Jesus were suggested by John Arthur. His fourth depiction was of the Jesus we see in the Gospels. The "liberation" Jesus, succinctly described by John, is no caricature. Mike seems to suggest that the

"liberation" Jesus is yet another warped interpretation of Jesus. He seems to imply that the accounts of the Gospels can be set aside in favour of some esoteric pathway to understanding the real Jesus. It seems to me that the only ob-

jective criteria for finding out how to be more like Jesus are available to us in the Gospels. From those criteria, John Arthur summed him up with disturbing clarity.

—Phil Perry
(Wandin North, Vic)

Update

Dear Readers,

I believe you will enjoy this issue and the account of our national church planting program. Last week I had the opportunity to talk with Dr Martin Robinson who is the Director for Mission and Theology with the Bible Society in England. Some of you have met Martin in his lecture series in state capitals conducted under Bible Society auspices. Martin has also met with state leaders and attended Queensland Conference. Martin is a minister with British Churches of Christ and was enthusiastic about their church planting projects among our British churches. He also spoke with enthusiasm about some spectacular growth among Churches of Christ in Poland, with a church in Warsaw attracting attendances of over 400.

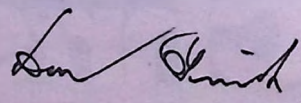
In this issue we welcome a contribution from Dr Bill Tabbernee who is now the President of Phillips Theological

Seminary in Enid, Oklahoma.

Bill has agreed to write a series on great personalities in church history. We are hoping this will make the history of the church more accessible to readers. We shall be carrying the series at regular intervals in 1997.

An encouragement this week was to learn of a further donations of \$1550 towards our computer replacement program. We are now nearly half way towards our goal of \$6000. Your help will be appreciated.

We continue to receive new subscriptions and requests for trial subscriptions. Please recommend the paper to your fellow members, especially the possibility of a trial subscription. As always, we have a backlog of material which we hope to deal with in the next two issues.



Pontius' Puddle

THE CHURCH MUST INCREASE ITS OUTREACH TO A PLACE PLAGUED BY POVERTY, VIOLENCE, AND A HIGH INFANT MORTALITY RATE—A PLACE WHERE LITERACY RATES ARE SO LOW THAT MANY CAN'T EVEN READ THE BIBLE.



NO, IN OUR OWN NEARBY CITIES!



First Baptism

Special event in life of new church



Trudi Rosendale's baptism by Alan Leane on 29 September is the first baptism for the recently established Riverlands church on Queensland's Sunshine Coast. At the inaugural service on 23 June there was an attendance of 120 and are averaging 90, with a Junior Church and creche as part of the program. Alan Leane is the minister. The church has applied for affiliation with the Queensland Conference.

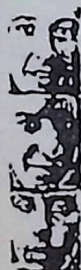
1995 Index Available

The indexing of the twenty two issues of *The Australian Christian* for 1995 has been completed. The distribution process will be varied this year. Copies will be posted to

readers only upon written request accompanied by a five dollar payment to assist in meeting expenses. The help of Anthony Rees in researching and preparing the material has been appreciated.

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ABCDE Annual Meeting

Examining the task of mission and education for our national churches

The Australian Board of Church Development and Education (ABCDE) met for its annual meeting 29-30 August at the Anglican Retreat Centre in Cheltenham, Vic. This retreat could well prove to be definitive for the shape of our future work in mission, church development, revitalisation work, education and training. We took a different approach to the meeting by making it a time of input and reflection for the State leaders in mission and education. We had challenging input by various speakers. Rev. Peter Corney, Senior Minister of St Hilary's Anglican Church in Melbourne and former Archdeacon for Evangelism led a very sobering session on "The Challenge of the Future", in which he explored the complex problems facing the church and suggested some possible mission and ministry responses. This was a remarkably clear and comprehensive review of the vital issues by one of Australia most outstanding and articulate ministry practitioners and strategists.

Dr Steve Addison, National Director for Church Resource Ministries (Australia), spoke to us on



the "Nature of Denominations and Movements", in which we delved into the shape of emerging post-denominationalism and then discussed what does it really mean for us to be a movement. The consensus was that the future belongs to the movement type structures.

Dr Steve Clarke, representing the NSW church planting group, gave us a profound theological reflection on the nature of mission and evangelism. Steve is one of the most passionate and articulate missiological voices in this country today and we were moved by his deep commitment to Australian mission while being intellectually stimulated and challenged with new ideas.

We also did some necessary reporting; reaffirmed our commitment to networking for grassroots mission and discipleship; explored new and exciting models for training people for radical mission; and went home challenged by the immensity of the task, but with a sense of apostolic joy in our hearts realising that the future belongs to the defined, the determined and the disciplined.

—Alan Hirsch

Morwell Church of Christ 56th Anniversary

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Paul Cameron

RSVP 9 November
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A Hardy Breed

The challenge of being a church planter

Church Planters are a hardy breed. Who else would struggle away in isolated contexts, often without the buildings, equipment and financial resources that others take for granted.

This sense of faithful struggle and ultimately succeeding against the odds was reinforced by those that spoke at the recent Church Planters' Conference held at South Melbourne Restoration Community, sponsored by the Vic-Tas Division of Mission and Revitalisation.

After a time of worship and thanksgiving, the conference began with an absorbing address entitled "The Search for Substance", given by Steve Clarke, former lecturer in Evangelism at the Bible College of Victoria and now church planting in Northern NSW. His two-hour address was a fascinating look at the future of the Institutional Church and the sociological and theological implications for its survival through evangelism and church planting. The subsequent speakers, Steve Addison from Christian Resource Ministries and Ashley Barker from UNOH, both spoke of their respective models and experience

of church planting and discipleship. The final session of the day was led by Milton Oliver. Milton has become something of a church planting legend in recent years, being one of the few people to successfully plant, grow (now up to approx 400 people with 50% conversion growth) and reproduce in the outer western suburbs of Melbourne.

He spoke on the importance of keeping and continually rekindling a passion for ministry. He shared his own conversion experience and of the importance for all in ministry to "Remember where God first met them". To "draw on the spiritual fires" of their conversion to keep their passion for the lost and the outcast, for evangelism and ultimately for planting new churches.

The conference closed in a moving time of intercessory prayer for those struggling with the hardships of planting new churches. Representatives and church planters from a number of states were present. Tapes of the sessions are available from the Vic-Tas Division of Mission and Revitalisation (03) 9326 8900.

—Tim Corney

What on Earth am I Doing Here?

Teaching in another culture



Dr Greg Elsdon (pictured above) lectured on the Gospel of Matthew for ten days at Banmatmat Bible College, Vanuatu, December 1995. He shared some of his experiences at the Overseas Mission Rally 6 October in Melbourne.

"As the plane was landing on Pentecost, I was overcome with anxiety," Greg said. "What on earth am I doing here?" he asked himself. "How could I possibly teach these people, when I know nothing of their culture?", he thought. His fears were allayed when he learned that in their culture experiences were passed on in story form. As he unfolded the story of the Gospel of Matthew, the ten men and two women, pastors and leaders in the churches, became excited about what God was calling them to be and to do.

"It was the most exciting experience in my teaching life" Greg said.

Their gentle hospitality which embodied the Gospel taught him the value of short-term involvement on the mission field. It changed his outlook on life he said. Greg challenged those present that if they had the opportunity of short-term service overseas to go for it!

There is one way in which you can help the students, pastors and leaders who return to Banmatmat Bible College for in-service training when theological lecturers go from Australia to Banmatmat Bible College twice a year. It is by giving to the Pastor Wilson Bebe Memorial Library Fund which is used to build up the College Library. See the advertisement on page 23.

Here and There

Dead Sea Scrolls

An English translation of the Dead Sea Scrolls for lay people is due to be published in November, providing greater access to the ancient documents that have fascinated scholars for decades. The first scrolls were found in 1947 in the Middle East cave near Qumran in the West Bank. The scrolls, rolled up in stone jars, numbered about 870. The collection contains the oldest known texts of the Old Testament, as well as messianic prophecies and moral teachings that shed light on the development of Judaism at the time of Jesus and the origins of Christianity. (AP)

Dickie Bird

When veteran English cricket umpire Dickie Bird officiated at his last test game at Lords, media reports noted his strong commitment to his Christian faith. He attends his local Methodist church in the village of Staincross. John Wesley is known to have stayed overnight in the same house. Mr Bird says he tries to worship in local churches wherever possible when on tour. Sometimes he says he even prays on the pitch when situations are difficult.

David Johnson

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Highest Award

Girls' Brigader receives highest national award

During a "Spotlight on Girls' Brigade" segment at the Noarlunga Centre Church of Christ, SA, Narelle McElroy received her Pioneer Pin. This is the highest National Award that can be attained in Girls' Brigade.

Narelle has been a member of Girls' Brigade for eleven years. She has come through the ranks and now helps lead the younger girls in her Company, 14th Adelaide.

She is currently studying in year 12 at Morphett Vale High. A career in dental nursing is her goal. Outside of Girls' Brigade, Narelle enjoys playing the piano, taking



classes in classical ballet and working on craft. Her talents are put to good use in her local Company.

Well done, Narelle! A delightful young lady who is worthy of the highest National Award in Girls' Brigade. She is pictured being congratulated by the State Commissioner of Girls' Brigade, Mrs Jenny Bing.

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—Lyle Schaller,
Strategies for Change

Wallaby or Pig?

Ministry and life in far north Queensland



Theresa and Remy Sese, strangers in a strange land

Remy Sese is a long way from his home in Vanuatu, now that he is serving with Queensland Churches of Christ Aboriginal and Islander Fellowship at Normanton. Remy was previously the Executive Director of Churches of Christ in Vanuatu. With his wife and two young children they are experiencing a whole new lifestyle after life in Vanuatu. A recent 72 km drive to see the Gulf delta of the Normanton River was an opportunity to see the sea again. It also meant fresh barramundi, chips and prawns for lunch. But for Remy and his wife Theresa, ministry is a big challenge.

The Normanton area has four main tribal groups. Remy and Theresa see themselves as "middle people", needing wisdom in their dealings with a diverse community. Many in the community are unemployed. In the Pacific Islands many support themselves by tending their gardens. Here, the people were not gardeners and the land is not suitable. You can see over miles and miles of grassland with a few small trees.

It is usually dry and dusty. In the wet season it floods and then salt is left. The people run cattle instead.

In a letter to Queensland churches, Theresa says that they have become accustomed to the new situation. The big challenge is to offer an effective ministry to the congregation and the community. She comments that people come knocking at odd times of the night—we cry for them she says. Others say they use us—but their problems are very real. Alcohol abuse is a continuing problem in the community.

Remy and Theresa are encouraged by support from the church. When they arrived the house was cleaned, rooms made ready and the evening meal prepared. The church gave \$600 towards the fares from Vanuatu. Quite often members will bring cooked meals, damper and fresh bush tucker (wallaby or pig meat). There is a closeness between the ministry family and the church members as they work together in service and evangelistic outreach.

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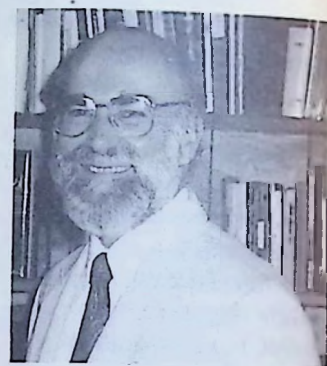
Famous Figures Church Planter Par Excellence

BILL TABBERNEE

Paul's strategy for church planting was simple, but effective.

He would enter a town, visit the synagogue or town square, proclaim that Jesus was the Christ, utilise the home of a new convert, instruct members in basic Christianity, encourage spiritual gifts, appoint local leadership, and, after having left, keep in touch via correspondence. *

The exact number of churches which Paul planted is not clear. Details about his earliest missionary activities are sketchy. Following his conversion c. AD 33, Paul spent three years in "Arabia" (the area west of Da-



ish culture. As a Pharisee (Phil 3:3-6) and former persecutor of Christianity (Acts 7:58-8:3; Gal 1:13-24), Paul had credibility when he reported the genuineness of his conversion. As a "tent-maker" who paid his own way, he distinguished himself from the religious charlatans of his day. Wherever he went, he either caused a revival or a riot. *

Paul may even have founded churches in Spain. He definitely wanted to do so (Rom 15:22-29), but he was probably prevented from undertaking a missionary journey to Western Europe by his arrest in Jerusalem (Acts 21:27ff). The final glimpse we have of Paul in the canonical Acts of the Apostles is of his house arrest in Rome awaiting his trial while continuing to proclaim the Gospel to all who visited him (Acts 28:23-30). Some speculate that Paul was eventually released and was able to recommence his church planting. Apocryphal second-century writings, such as The Acts of Paul and The Acts of Paul and Thecla, provide legendary accounts of his later life. Paul was beheaded in Rome under the emperor Nero c. AD 64, his reputation as a church planter contributing to the tradition that he and Peter were co-founders of the Roman church. *

Paul's personal background served him well

mascus inhabited by the Nabatean Arabs) and in Damascus (Gal 1: 16-17). The subsequent hostility toward Paul by Nabatean officials (2 Cor 11:32-33), suggests that Paul had been active in missionary activities. * Later, Paul and his colleagues travelled extensively throughout Asia Minor, Macedonia, and Greece, establishing numerous churches (Acts 13-18) in the decade before the Council of Jerusalem in AD 51 (Acts 15). Following this council, which ratified "Paul's mission to the Gentiles", Paul conducted an intensive three-year church-planting program in Asia Minor centring on Ephesus. * Paul's personal background served him well in his church planting. Born into a Hellenistic-Jewish family which had Roman citizenship, he was able to bridge Graeco-Roman and Jew-

New Churches

The Planting Imperative

MILTON OLIVER

It is often said that church planting is the single best means of reaching unchurched people groups. Statistically, this is unarguable. The proclamation of the gospel by the Apostle Paul saw converts who then formed the nucleus of new church plants. The momentum carried to the edges of the empire. When the message is preached and new church communities emerge by the creative power of God's Spirit, the church incarnates the transforming power of the Gospel. *

Virtually all our energies and resources are consumed by existing churches.

Gospel proclamation without church plants was unheard of in the New Testament. Yet we, in Churches of Christ, do not have a serious, properly thought through church planting strategy. I'm not sure that we really understand that these two dynamics are largely what mission is about. New church plants in new areas that effectively interface with our culture have tremendous impact on the surrounding culture. *

Some are involved in church planting, and one of our Colleges is beginning to take seriously the planting imperative in its curriculum. We have really only given token support to church planting. Certain leaders and practitioners have taken church planting seriously and have tried to encourage a church planting "stream" to develop. But we need a national strategy which has the serious, sacrificial and committed support of all state conferences. * Local churches need to take their responsibilities more seriously. Many

speaking positively about the need for a church planting strategy as an integral part of our mission, we say all the right things on conference boards, but the record points to our hypocrisy. *

We spend money on everything else but church planting. Our training centres are not wholeheartedly committed to raising up planters. We pay lip service to mission, but have invested the bulk of our resources in real estate and infrastructure to maintain what is. A church of less than fifteen active members can sit on real estate worth well over a million dollars, while a church planter receives no financial support from conference coffers and is forced to live below the poverty line. We invest huge resources training and then deploying almost all our trained ministry staff in established churches (most of which are not growing). We make no effort to encourage our best operators onto the cutting edge of mission, where people need to be reached. Gospel proclamation and church planting—is simply not a priority. *

Are we really serious about Matthew 28? It's time to rethink our priorities. Other ideas and agendas have driven us and we've lost the plot. Why? Despite our protestations to the contrary, at the highest levels of our movement, our heart is simply not in mission, although we assent to it in mission statements. Individuals with the call and the courage are setting most of the pace. * Church plants provide most of the growth of our churches; provide new and innovative ways of meeting and encountering people who most of our established churches will never meet. They are energy centres which provide stimulus, renewal and creativity. They offer new opportunities to go where the church has not been before. *



So, where does all this leave us? Am I recklessly attacking the church? No. I love the church. But I am challenging our poor record in mission and questioning our priorities. We need to rethink our theology of mission and evangelism so that it is faithful to the biblical mandate. At present, we are so focused on the task of pastoring, that we have no room for mission. Virtually all our energies and resources are consumed by existing churches. This is not the priority we see in the parables of the lost sheep, the lost coin and the lost son. All the energy was expended on what was lost. *

What resources will we now release in order to develop and implement an authentic proclamation and church planting strategy? How will we influence the grassroots churches to contribute to the mission task? *

We need to undertake a critical review of how we think about and do mission. We need to realise where we've arrived—and have the courage to repent and do the things we did at first. *

Milton Oliver is Senior Pastor of Sunbury Community Church, Vic.

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When: Thursday 7 November 7.30-9.30 pm

Intermediate Session

How to use email—sending and receiving electronic mail • Learn about File Transfer Protocol • Learn how to Chat, use POW, MIRC, Netscape chat, hold a MS Net meeting • Learn about news groups, news feeds, subscribing, reading, decoding, replying, links (spamming), protocol • Learn about sound, sound wav, au • Learn how to video conference

When: Thursday 14 November 7.30-9.30 pm

Advanced Session

How to Publish: including Photoshop, Paint, Gif construction, Java • Uploading—ftp, Htcopy • How to create you own homepage, including creating your homepage in this session • HTML, Headers, Body, Links, Banners

When: Thursday 21 November 7.30-9.30 pm

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The Church's Prophetic Call



to Social Justice

Williamstown Church of Christ
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 7.00 pm Sunday 10 November 1996

This forum will explore the biblical basis for recognising the Church's role in being a prophetic voice in society, reflecting God's concern for social justice.

Panel members are:

- Cheryl Johnson Minister Williamstown Church of Christ
 Charles Bayer Visiting Lecturer in Practical Theology at CCTC
 Kim Thoday Outreach Worker on ministry team at North Essendon Church of Christ
 Meryl Blair (Facilitator) Lecturer in OT Studies at CCTC

Each of these people has a strong interest in exploring the biblical witness to a God who insists on justice as well as righteousness. They are also committed to the reflection of this concern in the local church setting.

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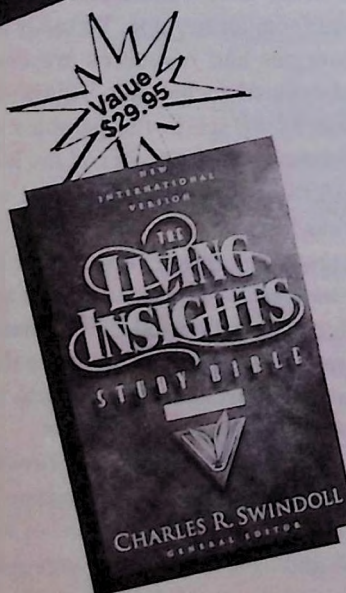
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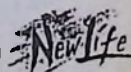
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New Churches

Urban Outreach

ROSE GOW

My husband Greg and I, and our baby Joseph are a part of the western suburbs team of the Urban Neighbourhoods of Hope Mission (UNOH, a part of the Division of Mission and Revitalisation, Vic-Tas). We started the mission in Footscray at the beginning of 1995, and Joseph joined us in July 1996, not having much say in the matter. We joined UNOH as we have a strong conviction to live our lives with and for the poor and the marginalised. Through the great commission of Jesus we believe we have been called to do this and felt a particular call to live in the western suburbs of Melbourne. Having this on our hearts for some time, we were introduced to UNOH and having similar dreams and visions we quickly became involved. *

Before this we lived in a strong Christian community in Blackburn, which gave us years of growth and support in our Christian lives. We were also able to "experiment" with different

Our aim in Footscray is to see indigenous churches develop, particularly among the Ethiopian communities.

ideas and live out some of our Christian values of sharing our lives and material possessions in a shared household with joint ownership and a common purse. During these years we were also able to live for a short time in both India and Indonesia, allowing us to truly experience living simply and with the poor, and confirming our desire to work cross-culturally. *

Our aim in Footscray is to see indigenous churches develop, particularly among the Ethiopian communities.

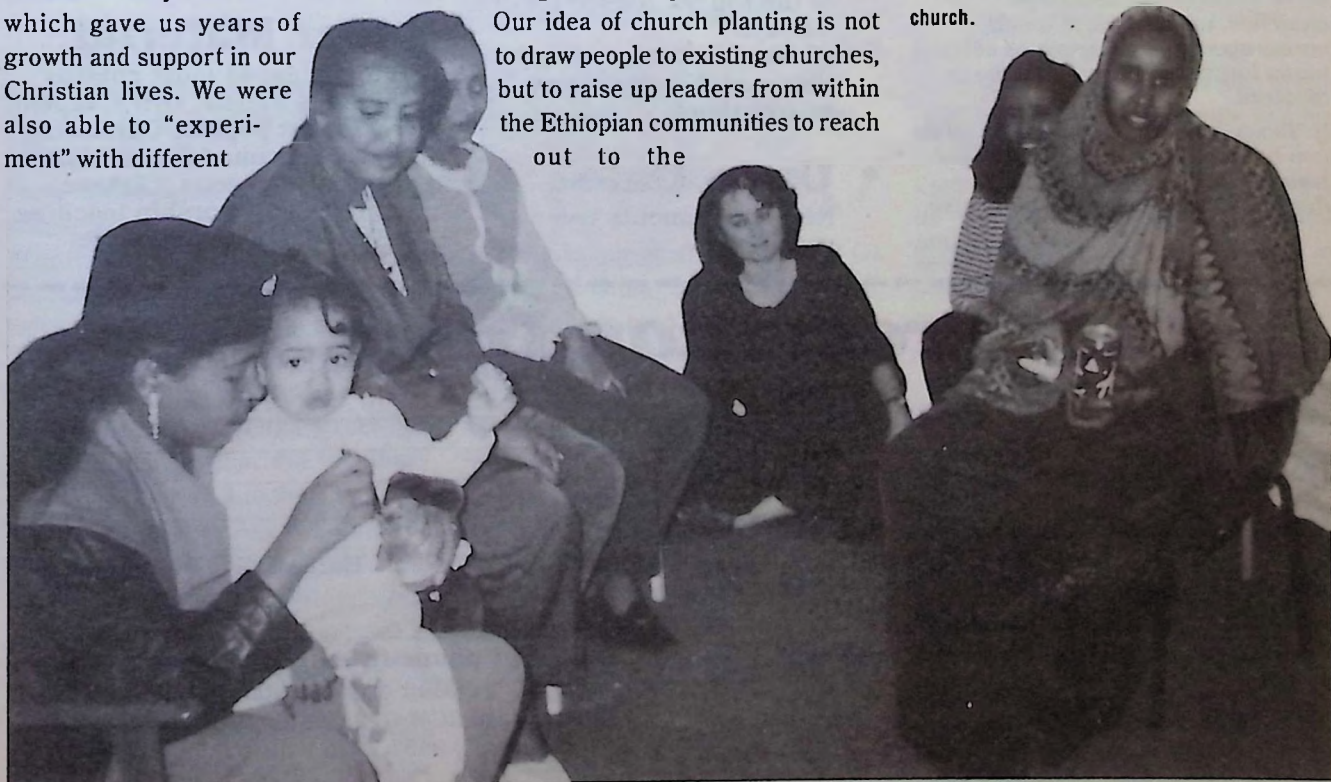
Our idea of church planting is not to draw people to existing churches, but to raise up leaders from within the Ethiopian communities to reach out to the

marginalised within their own communities and develop their own style of church to meet their needs, and from this make disciples and true followers of Jesus. This is what we mean by an "indigenous" church. *

To date, we have made many friends and can see real leaders in the community emerging. Relationships are our priority and, in partnership with an Ethiopian woman who has taken on a leadership role, we have begun a social group for Ethiopian women from refugee backgrounds, a home English class and an art class. These groups are not the focus, but provide support, particularly for women. *

Now coming into 1997, our team will be expanding to seven more people and we praise God for his movement in these suburbs and pray for continued growth and action. *

Rose & Greg attend our Footscray, Vic, church.

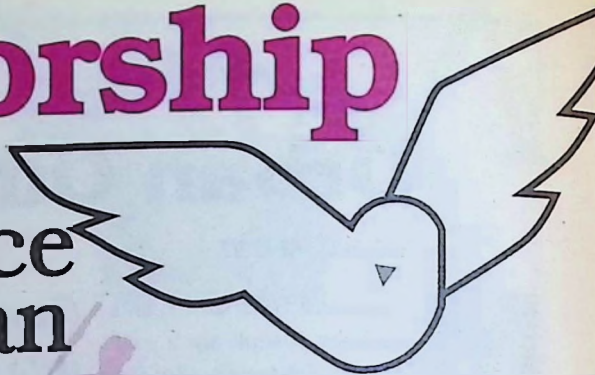


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New Churches

State Happenings

NSW—STEVE HALL

Peter Wagner in his book *Church Planting for a Greater Harvest* made the bold statement that "The single most effective evangelistic methodology under heaven is planting new churches". Wagner is right, but as Steve Clarke reminded us in the last issue, evangelism in this generation must be reviewed in the light of Biblical principles. So too church planting. Currently the NSW Conference is exploring some different models of church planting that

Prayer for us is not part of the battle, it is the battle

reflect a desire to revisit the Scriptures, in an effort to throw new light on the area of church planting. Steve Clarke, planting at McLean in the north, is investing part of his energy in the theology of church planting. What is this "church" that we are trying to plant? Steve is also exploring the underlying principles that affect evangelism. *

Alan Broom, at Nimbin, is networking with other Churches of Christ to establish a base at Lismore, to penetrate the new age culture of the local residents. Alan and his team are creating a presence in the area through street outreach and prayer that will eventually lead them to move into the area. They see the whole New Age culture as an opportunity to present the truth to people who are looking in the wrong place. They are currently praying through an option to establish and run a coffee shop in the centre of the town. *

At Eden we have been exploring Silvos's model of prayer evangelism, cou-

pled with the concept of catalytic or apostolic church planting. Most tend to limit the role of an apostle to those few great men recorded in the Scriptures. But Paul lists apostles among the gifts that God gives to the church. Throughout Acts it was the apostles who were out planting new congregations. Our own history records men who were gifted at starting new works, and did so number of times. If this holds true for us, Eden will be the first of many churches that the NSW Conference will plant in this way. *

The focus in Eden has been the use of prayer as a strategic part of our church planting vision. Last October over 100 joined us for 40 hours of continuous prayer, the aim of which was to establish the new congregation in Eden. The direct result of that weekend has been a church plant that is well established, and seeing new people brought into the Kingdom of God. Prayer for us is not part of the battle, it is the battle, as we seek to rescue people from the blindness in which they are trapped. *

Steve Hall is a church planter at Eden, NSW.

WA—DES K. CROOT

Church planting webs are fascinating. Over the years we have seen churches cooperate with the Home Mission Committee to establish new causes, which in turn have planted new causes, sometimes with the help of original church! *

For example Warwick (1973) planted Whitford (1976), who together assisted us to plant Kingsley (1985). Warwick has helped Alexander Heights (1987) become established and have committed themselves to plant a church on Ellen Brook (1997). Whitford planted Joondalup (1990) and Merriwa (1995) as well as an Arabic service and

Over the years we have seen churches ... establish new causes, which in turn have planted new causes

Sorrento in 1996. Rockingham (1979) was assisted by Applecross, and have in turn planted Warnbro (1991) who have a church planting vision. Rockingham recently commenced an outreach to Serpentine. *

The City Church has commenced an International service in a desire to expand their ministry base. The Indonesian Family Church joined us in 1995 and earlier this year started a second service in a city venue with the mother church continuing to meet in our Applecross chapel. The Roleystone Congregational Church are following in the steps of the Dowerin Christian Fellowship and joining our Association as a Church of Christ. The ministry of our members to these churches has resulted in this decision. *

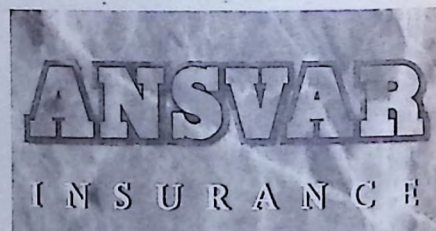
Cottesloe, discouraged by their inability to reach the affluent area around them for some years now, decided to close and have taken up the challenge to use their considerable financial resources to transplant a church to Leda some 30 km away (see cover). So the web spreads as church planting becomes part of our philosophy. *

The new Ministry Centre at South Perth is anticipated to provide further impetus for church planting. As we follow a strategy of planting 15 churches by the end of 2000, they will provide trained resources to assist in this expanding web. *

Des Croot is Director of the WA Church Development Board



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New Churches

State Happenings

QLD—BOB SMITH

New churches are the single most important factor in the growth of the Kingdom. To survive they have to grow. To grow they have to evangelise. To evangelise they have to invest significant energy in mission that is directed to the unchurched, rather than in maintenance of the existing group. If they fail to do this they die prematurely. If they succeed they continue to grow until they themselves become comfortable and inward looking. It is a fact of church life, and always has been. That is why church planting is the essential factor in any denominational strategy of growth. * The Department of Church Development and Education is strongly committed to such a program. As part of its strategic plan it aims, at any given time, to be involved with at least five new church developments—churches somewhere in their first five years of life (by which time we expect them to be standing on their own feet). *

At present there are seven churches that fall into this category. These vary from Logan West, in the southern suburbs of Brisbane, which is just about to go off DCDE subsidy and become self-supporting, to the recently formed Bayside Church, which is an experimental (for us) cell group church meeting in home groups each week and joining together for a monthly combined celebration service. *

One of our most energetic new works is the East Moreton church. It commenced eighteen months ago with three student couples from Kenmore Christian College. They started with nothing—no members, no contacts, no buildings. All they had was faith, enthusiasm and a lot of initiative. Twenty or more now meet regularly. Next year

Mark Kirk, the student team leader, will be ministering there full-time. *

At the top end of the Sunshine Coast, at beautiful Noosa Heads, thanks to the visionary support of the Nambour Church, a new church has been formed which now has 60 people regularly meeting. Eagleby, in the opposite direction and at the other end of the socioeconomic scale, while struggling to survive, has seen some very special changes happen in individual lives. * In addition, the past few weeks have seen the emergence of the Riverland church on the Sunshine Coast and one at Brown's Plains, in the southern Brisbane suburbs. Plans are also in hand for a new work, next year, in the developing area west of Ipswich and another just south of Townsville. *

Bob Smith is Executive Director, Department of Church Development and Education.

To survive they have to grow. To grow they have to evangelise.

SA—IAN CORLETT

The establishment of new congregations is a primary way for Churches of Christ in South Australia to reach people. Because of the diversity of our society we are using **several models** to reach out and embrace those who are needing a church home. *

Nesting occurs when an established congregation nests and supports a new congregation within its facilities. Cowandilla church is nesting two Chinese congregations, one Cantonese-speaking and the other Mandarin-speaking. Queenstown church is nesting an Aboriginal congregation and a

Vietnamese one. Grote St church is nesting a Greek church. *

This model is proving to be a very effective use of facilities and offers the potential for wonderful cross-cultural relationships and gospel interaction. * Although all new church ministries are partnership ministries, this model embraces more than the traditional partners. For example, neighbouring local congregations might join together to provide resources to begin a brand new expression of church. *

Aldgate Valley and Stirling churches have recently entered into a creative partnership and bought the old Aldgate TAFE site. They plan to sell their existing properties to fund the project. Albert Park closed last year and joined the Royal Park Uniting Church with a view to creating a partnership of outreach in their community. This outreach ministry is about to begin. *

The Pastor-Developer model was used to establish Aldinga Regional Church of Christ. A specific locality is targeted and a minister is called to draw together a group of individuals to be part of a new community of faith. *

Parenting involves a congregation that intentionally commissioning members to help start a new congregation. Members of the parent congregation either leave the parent congregation permanently or are loaned to the new congregation for a specific period of time. Noarlunga Centre is researching this model for outreach into the outer south of Adelaide. *

Gawler church has chosen to sell up and relocate in the new Hewitt Housing Development. They have entered into partnership with the local Council and Education Department to provide a focus for a regional outreach. *

Ian Corlett is Associate State Minister for Churches of Christ in SA.

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TORTURED FOR CHRIST

39

If I were to continue to tell all the horrors of communists and all the self-sacrifices of Christians, I would never finish. Not only the tortures were known. The heroic deeds were known, too. The heroic examples of those in prison greatly inspired the brethren who were still free.

One of our workers was a young girl of the Underground Church. The communist police discovered that she secretly spread Gospels and taught children about Christ. They decided to arrest her. But to make the arrest more agonizing and as painful as they could, they decided to delay her arrest a few weeks, until the day she was to be married. On her wedding day the girl was dressed as a bride. The most wonderful, joyous day in a girl's life! Suddenly, the door was pushed open and the secret police rushed in.

When the bride saw the secret police, she held out her arms toward them to be handcuffed. They roughly put the manacles on her wrists. She looked toward her beloved, then kissed the chains and said, "I thank my heavenly Bridegroom for this jewel He has presented to me on my marriage day. I thank Him that I am worthy to suffer for Him." She was dragged off with weeping Christians and a weeping bridegroom left behind.

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New Churches

Ethnic Church Planting

CHEK CHIA

Multiculturalism has long arrived. Is the local church able to quickly respond with specific contextualisation to its particular vicinity? For many churches survival and growth depends on the effectiveness and speed of such response. In the major cities, it is imperative to give multicultural and ethnic ministry serious consideration. *

Those concerned for the Gospel should see the proliferation of eastern religions in the increase of Buddhist and Indian Temples and Mosques in Aus-

Have churches considered revitalisation through a new church plant to suit a changing demography?

tralia. Are Churches of Christ aware of such development and its implications? Are they determined to spread the Gospel? Are they willing to channel resources and finance for multicultural and ethnic projects before Australia is pervaded fully by eastern mysticism and paganism? Each local church must increase its effort and effectiveness in mission and evangelism. *

Thank God that the ethnic churches planted (in Victoria) from the early 1980s are growing. Thank God that Conference had the vision to embark on these projects before the current spate of eastern mysticism. Some ethnic churches baptise 10-20 people each year. One Asian church in a 10-year period baptised 124 people. For some of these churches, the initial years of struggle and great financial sacrifice

(the minister often subsisting on \$100 or \$200 per week for several years with a family to support), are now bearing fruit. The Indonesian Church (in Malvern) in the last two years has grown to 200 worshippers. Further extension to the church is now necessary. *

The Korean Church (in Gardiner) experienced great growth in the last 18 months. For several years it struggled with 30-40 worshippers. Now 80-90 meet each week. Growth of newly planted churches often comes after hard work, sacrifice, agony and prayer. The Vietnamese Church (in Richmond) has filled their chapel to capacity, and is hindered only by lack of space. As the church has strategies for growth, the need for space now is critical. *

Many churches in the inner suburbs of the major cities are on the decline. Have such churches considered revitalisation through a new church plant to suit a changing demography? In many cases, it means planting a new ethnic church to replace a diminishing congregation. It is not good enough usage of the property to simply let it to a group outside Conference at token rental for stewardship reasons. There is a hope that by letting out the property at least a Christian witness is maintained. In the short term this is true, but not in the long term. What is needed is not a tenant church, but a resident church. A tenant church will want to own its property and so will one day move. The best property use for a diminishing congregation is to plant a new resident Church of Christ (whether Anglo or ethnic), and hand over the baton of maintaining a Gospel work in the area. The Malvern property is a case in point. The diminishing Malvern congregation had the vision and resolve to let the Indonesian Church



move in, and gradually take over its property, as they ceased to be a congregation. This is a form of revitalisation, through a new ethnic church plant. It is revitalisation, property usage and church planting at its best. *

With a changing population mix, a growing pluralistic society, and a possible increase of "refugees" from Hong Kong as July 1997 draws near, churches in the major cities must refocus their vision and consider multicultural and ethnic ministry. Each State Conference must consider apportioning of resources to such church planting. How much is set aside for church planting generally? The survival and growth of Conference, and the Church in Australia, requires that funds be set aside for immediate church planting within the context of localised social change. Frequently, church planting effort is restrained by the lack of funds. Is there a resolve and will to focus on the crux of the Christian faith, to extend the Kingdom of God through mission, evangelism and church planting? *

Chek Chia is minister of International Christian Community Church, Melbourne.

Personal Profile

Into his Glorious Light

EUGENE GONCHAROV

I was born into a Jewish family in Odessa, Ukraine. My father and grandfather were avid communists and I grew up in a typical Soviet, Communist environment, with no faith, no religion and no nationality. We rarely discussed Jewish life or our family's past before the Revolution. Occasionally, my grandmother would use some Yiddish (an old Germanic language mixed with some Hebrew) phrases. * Since then I have learned that some of my family were oppressed following the Bolshevik Revolution. Part of my family

Strangely enough, whenever I walked past the Bible sitting on my bookshelf, I always felt a warm feeling come over me.

from my father's side emigrated to the USA during the first Russian Revolution before the pogroms (persecutions of Jews) began. Prior to the Revolution, my paternal grandfather was a successful businessman, but the communists confiscated all his property and closed his business. Shortly after that he died in hunger and poverty. * The pogroms and revolution didn't affect my maternal grandparents as they were both intensely devoted to communist ideology and very active in the Communist Youth movement, and later in the Communist Party. Nevertheless, anti-Se-

mitic sentiments were reflected in government policy (for example legislation regarding university entrance quotas for Jews and some employment positions) and in the general Russian/Ukrainian population. Often, I was harassed for being Jewish—sometimes subtly and other times more openly. *

Before coming to faith in Y'shua I was, like everyone else, dead in sin and going my own way. I pursued my own interests without any reference to God or sin. The main interests in my life were biology, veterinary medicine and physics. I also enjoyed studying ancient history. *

Before my conversion, during the process known as Perestroika, I was an activist in the Movement for Democracy and in the newly-emerging Green Party. Even though I was involved in worthy causes and thought of myself as a good person, a sense of hollowness and futility continued to grow in my heart, and I knew I lacked something very important. *

In my search for meaning, I began attending the Russian Orthodox Church for some time. I felt that something was drawing me to church. Perhaps it was because at this stage of my life I was experiencing a personal and spiritual crisis. Every day I would look to see when a service was in progress. I was particularly impressed by the singing of the Russian Orthodox choirs. It was truly inspiring, but I still felt an emptiness in my heart, and after a short while, I ceased going to church. *

A couple of years later, I had a remarkable meeting with a very warm and friendly couple from the United States. I was always interested in meeting foreigners (although this wasn't allowed) and in practising my English. So

I invited them to my house and prepared a meal for them. We spent a few pleasant hours talking about various topics and after this, they left for their hotel. One year later, I received a small package from the USA. I was really surprised because I had no friends in the United States that I knew of. I excitedly opened up the box and found a Russian Bible. Since there was no return address on the box, I suspected that it was sent to me by this couple I had met a year earlier. *

When I got home from the post office, I opened the Bible with interest and tried to read a few verses. I couldn't understand a thing and so the Bible sat on my bookshelf and was not opened again for some years. Strangely enough, whenever I walked past the Bible sitting on my bookshelf, I always felt a warm feeling come over me. *

One year later, I was invited by my mother's friend to a meeting in someone's home. She said it would be "very interesting", and although I went along I was feeling somewhat cynical. That night, as I listened, something happened to me. I was drawn to these "strange" people who said that they were Jewish and that they believed in Jesus. The fellowship was a home group of the mission "Jews for Jesus". They invited me to their regular meetings and one year later I finally received Y'shua as Lord and as the promised Messiah. When I became a believer in Jesus, I discovered the heritage and promises that God had given to the Jewish people thousands of years ago. *

While I was preparing for my baptism I met Leanne, my wife to be. It was on the day of my baptism that we began our relationship which led to our mar-



riage at the end of 1994. I can say with all my heart that my wife is a true gift from God. * Since I've come to faith in Jesus, I have worked as a volunteer at the Odessa branch of Jews for Jesus and I've been involved with a Messianic congregation in Odessa. This was a special time as we witnessed many Jewish people return to the faith of our fathers and to the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. * Now that I live here in Melbourne, I am hoping to be able to work with "Celebrate Messiah" in sharing the Gospel with the thousands of Russian Jewish people that live in this city. Pray for us as we settle down and consider our calling as missionaries. Pray for my Russian-Jewish people, that many would come out of darkness into his glorious light. * Used with permission, L. Hirsch, *Celebrate Messiah*.

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BETTY BENJAMIN

New Zealand has just participated in an historic election—a change of great magnitude. Three years ago, by referendum, New Zealanders opted for a new parliamentary system. Unlike Australia, New Zealand has no Upper House, so we have been unused to voting under proportional representation. Our system has been one of “first past the post”. But no longer. We now have MMP or mixed member proportional

New Zealanders have felt betrayed for quite a few years now by the broken political promises of both major parties

representation. Now we vote for an electoral candidate and for a “party”. Many would say that the proposal gained ground in an endeavour to keep parliamentarians honest, for New Zealanders have felt betrayed for quite a few years now by the broken political promises of both major parties. *

Under this new system, no one actually wins. The people decide, through their votes, the make up of the parliament, and then those elected work out who will form the government, through coalitions or accommodations. Twenty eight parties actually contested the election, including the Christian Coalition Party. Though pre-election polls predicted that they would gain at least 5% of the vote, the threshold needed to gain a seat

in the parliament, this did not happen. They have gained no seats in this first MMP election. This is not to say that there are no Christians in parliament. Parties other than the Christian Coalition have members who are committed Christians. *

The Christian Coalition made its emphasis on strengthening the family, seeing that as New Zealand's greatest need. Commentators seem very surprised that they did not get at least one seat in parliament. Inexperience in the political game has been cited as a factor, and also the fact that they seemed to align themselves with the far right. For example, one party of the Coalition wanted to reintroduce the death penalty. The perception of extremism may have caused some fear among electors. Unfortunately, also, when television wanted one of their co-leaders to appear in a panel, they could not agree which one of them should appear! It did not go down well. The Christian Democrats and the Christian Heritage Party make up this Christian Coalition. They received a very good hearing. For a while it seemed that there would be a voice of moral conscience in the House. They are not defeated by their lack of showing, rather they feel that

they have caused the major parties to emphasise family issues in their policies. They will continue to be a Christian political voice in our land, readying themselves to contest the next election in 1999. *

Some amazing things have happened in this election. There are now 35 women MPs (20 only in the last parliament), 15 Maoris (previously 5), three Pacific Islanders and one Asian (the first). This new parliament certainly reflects the diversity of New Zealand culture. The five Maori seats, which in the past were always solidly Labour, deserted that party en masse. Not one of the seats returned a Labour candidate. This is, perhaps, more of an historic change than the change to proportional representation itself. *

Now the country waits—the media is saying—for the “King maker”. The third highest polling party, New Zealand First, whose leader is Winston Peters, a Maori, will decide with whom it will form a coalition to govern New Zealand. This leader was sacked from the National Party Cabinet before forming the New Zealand First Party. Their mix of policies places them in the centre of the political spectrum, so they could, with some negotiation, relate to both the Na-



tional and Labour Parties. The question is will they be a party of the centre-right or the centre-left? This is why we wait. We wait while the people we have elected to the House seek ways to cooperate. Each Party tells us that they want “what is best for the people”, with New Zealand First stating that they are not interested in the balance of power but in “the balance of responsibility”. *

If New Zealand First opts for coalition with the Labour Party, New Zealand will have elected its first woman Prime Minister—another historic first. She is a capable woman who has pulled her party together against tremendous odds and gained 38 seats in the House. *

The most telling part of the whole process for me has been one television advertisement placed by the Electoral Commission encouraging people to get out and vote. In stark black and white we see an African New Zealander sitting on the end of his bed, telling us that he is 38 years old and this will be his first vote. Then he says, “Isn't it wonderful to be free?” A poignant reminder and something we, who have always been able to vote, don't think about often enough. It gave me pause for reflection. *

Betty Benjamin is an elder of the Trentham church and Convenor of the Church Growth section of NZ Conference.



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Classifieds

BIRTHS

ARMSTRONG Lynette and Tony (Dianella, WA) give thanks for God's gift of a new grand-daughter, Chloe, born to Andrew and Carmen (Launceston) on Pa Tony's birthday, 19 October 1996.

GOLDEN WEDDING

BARNETT The family of Geoff and May Barnett invite their friends to join with them on the occasion of their 50th Wedding Anniversary at the Staff Meeting Room, Baxter Village, Robinsons Rd, Baxter Vic (Enter by Gate 2 and follow to end of road) on Saturday 23 November 1996 from 2pm-4.30pm. No presents please, just your presence would be appreciated. RSVP by 13 November to Donald and Margaret Barnett (054) 70 5162.

IN MEMORIAM

REES, GWEN (2.11.86), **FRED** (22.7.90), **PHILIP** (29.7.68). Mum, Dad and Phil, even though so much time has passed you are never far from my thoughts. I wish Michelle could have known you and loved you like I do. I miss you and you'll always be in my heart. —Kathryn

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

PATTERSON, ERIC & LOIS Unit 4/107 Andersons Creek Road, Doncaster East Vic 3109. Telephone (03) 9841 9748.

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AYR, NORTH QUEENSLAND Travelling up the Queensland coast? Stop over in the "Bountiful Burdekin" at Ayr Shamrock Motel. Friendly service, reasonable rates. Phone (077) 83 1498. Owned and managed by Dudleigh Oakes.

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Hospital Chaplaincy When Death Comes

GLEN WEGNER

Australian society doesn't cope well with death. We don't want to see it as a natural part of life. We are uncomfortable talking about it, and psychologically we tend to deny it. This makes it more difficult when the inevitable occurs. Because of the difficulties surrounding death and dying, a ministry such as pastoral care can provide valuable support through such circumstances. * Before we as carers can provide such support, we need first to be in touch with our own feelings of mortality. We can't effectively



When death comes we are all vulnerable and feel a deep sense of loss.

tively minister to others if we have not explored our own feelings about death and grief. This doesn't mean that we learn to become unaffected by such circumstances, but rather that we engage our thoughts and feelings in what it means for us as individuals to grieve or die. In other words, we have faced these issues, not avoided them. *

Because of our cultural tendency to deny death, grief sometimes remains unresolved. I have had people seek me out 20 years after a death for counselling to help deal with unresolved grief. It is better to deal with grief as it occurs, than delay it. Suppressed grief may be the cause of later problems such as depression. Hence the pasto-

ral carer has a healing role to play in helping people to deal with death and grief. * When death comes it is important for the pastoral carer to help people say, "goodbye". This involves allowing people time and space to be with the dying person before and after death. This should be quality time, and not rushed. * Some hold fears about being in a room with a deceased person. These fears arise because of our anxieties about death and the unfamiliar. While no one should be forced against their will, I usually encourage people to spend time with their deceased relative, and I am often present with them. This assists people in the process of grieving. It helps people get in touch with the reality of their loved one's death, and enables opportunities for farewell. It also provides the pastoral carer opportunity to minister and bring a sense of completion to the life just ended. This can be done with prayer and a liturgy of farewell, along with a commitment of the deceased into God's care. * When death comes we are all vulnerable and feel a deep sense of loss. At this point pastoral ministry has much to offer in guiding healthy grieving, and supporting recovery. *

Prison Fellowship NSW State Director

Prison Fellowship NSW is an interdenominational Christian ministry of volunteers, working under the aegis of Prison Fellowship International and Prison Fellowship Australia, which ministers to prisoners, ex-prisoners and their families. We operate as a faith ministry.

If you have management and strategic planning experience, the desire to encourage others and have knowledge of volunteer organisations, this may be the challenge you are seeking.

A full job description is available from Maggie Cahill at the Prison Fellowship office on (02) 9746 1788.

Written applications only will be accepted and these should be forwarded to:

CONFIDENTIAL
The Chairman
Prison Fellowship NSW
PO Box 64 FLEMINGTON MARKETS NSW 2129

Closing date: Monday 2 December 1996.

Media Matters Bits with Bite

VINEY LONGTHORP

The following paragraphs are "left overs" from media material used in these columns over a period. I feel they have something to say. They are offered without comment as possible sources of reflection, information, inspiration, and even "holy disturbance". *

True Religion

The spectacle we find in true religion has as its purpose enchantment, not entertainment; the distinction is critical. Enchantment is the means through which we gain access to sacredness. Entertainment is the means through which we distance ourselves from it. *

—Neil Postman

The Ingenuity of Musicians

When he loads up lorries with aid for countries of the former Soviet Union, Fr Jacob Forg of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart, Salzburg, does not only pile in food, medicine and cloth-

ing, but also volumes of sheet music: Bach, Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven. More than 50 years of communist rule have taken their toll of church music. Music cupboards are empty and there is not a single church music publisher in the Baltic countries, Belarus or Ukraine. Buying music from the West is prohibitively expensive for most. So in the little Ukrainian town of Mukachevo where there is an excellent boy's choir, when they wanted to rehearse Stravinsky's *Symphony of Psalms*, the young choirmaster and his wife wrote out all the parts by hand. And in order to practise Bach chorales, a sixty-member choir sight-read from one huge piece of paper on which the parts had been painted. *

—*The Tablet*

A New Translation

A new translation of the Gospels has appeared in Yorkshire. A Methodist lay preacher concluded that as Jesus was a work-

ing lad, who spoke in a "Northern" dialect (coming from the Galilee area), the word should be given a more authentic voice among the people of Yorkshire. So instead of Jesus saying "Rise up and follow me", he tells the disciples to "Come wi me lads". At the Nativity the shepherds ask if they "Can have a peep at t'baby", while the soldier at the foot of the cross says that Jesus "Wor a reight grand chap". The Archbishop of York's comment was; "This seems very interesting". *

—*Herald-Sun*, Melbourne

The Role of the Priesthood

The priest, as a priest, hardly exists any longer in our community. He is no longer even on an equal footing with the social worker, who is better trained, or the psychiatrist who is believed to be capable of opening mysteries of the human psyche, or the local doctor, whose status as a sort of alternative priest is widely accepted. The priest is one who prays, who is the exemplar of the holy and the repository of unbreakable secrets, still exists, but this is not the sort of priest the church now cares to publicise or honour. *

—Fr James Murray,

The Australian

Bureaucratic Bullying

A few months ago the chief executive of a Victorian welfare agency made a press statement about cuts to welfare services. The next day he got a phone call



from a senior bureaucrat in the Health Department saying, "The next criticism you make of the government, we will immediately move the funding from your foster care agency and give it to the agency down the road." This is not intimidation. I suggest to you that it is evil. *

—Alan Nichols, *Church Scene*

Some Benefits of Going to Church

Did you know that going to church could save your life? According to researchers in the USA, regular attendances can help people fight cancer and heart disease and cope with stress. The American Association for the Advancement of Science was told these things. The study suggested that when it came to fighting stress, prayer might be the answer. It also suggested that people with religious connections were more immune to problems related to diet, smoking and unsafe sex, as churches spoke out against these practices. *

—*Herald Sun*, Melbourne

GRADUATION

Invitation: You are invited to attend the Churches of Christ Theological College Graduation Service and the National Conference of Churches of Christ Ordination Service

When: Friday 29th November 1996
7.30 pm to 9.30 pm

Where: Blackman Hall,
Hawthorn Institute of Education,
442 Auburn Rd, Auburn Vic
(Melway's Map No. 59 E2)

Speaker: Charles Bayer, BA, BD
Visiting Lecturer in Ministry,
Mission and Practical Theology

1996 ORDINATION

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Rockhampton Church of Christ is presently seeking a Scripturally sound, non-Charismatic Pastor to commence ministry in early 1997.

For full details contact the Church Secretary, PO Box 155, Rockhampton Qld 4700.

CHANGES

NUMURKAH, Vic Sunday services now held at Seventh Day Adventist Chapel, 86 Tocumwal Road, Numurkah.

HAVEN, Vic Correspondence to the Secretary, Mr Bernie Price, RMB 7111, Horsham Vic 3400.

BAPTISMS

•Martin Long, Romana Byrne, Casie Creed, Nicole Memery, Wangaratta, Vic
•Ross Roberts, Prospect, SA
•Mike Sladden, Launceston, Tas

MARRIAGES

•Margo McIntee and Geoff Hays, Launceston, Tas

DEATHS

•Les Filgate, Launceston, Tas

OBITUARIES

Obituaries are limited to 100 words
BAGLEY, T.W.G. (Bill)

(9.3.96) Bill was born at Glebe, NSW, in 1912 and moved with his family to Victoria when his father, Thomas Bagley, was appointed Conference Secretary and

Home Missions Organiser in 1918. The family returned to Sydney on the death of his father. He married Merle McWilliams in 1937. After early years working in Melbourne, Bill and Merle established their home at Bexley North, NSW, in the 1940s and became actively involved in the new church there. For nearly fifty years Bill served variously as deacon, church secretary and song leader. In the 1950s Bill established Hayman Industries, now managed by his sons Graeme and John. The funeral service was conducted by Dr Dallas Clarnette, a close personal friend, together with Terry Carlson of Beverly Hills church.

FIELD, Miriam
(21.7.96) Miriam died after a long and courageous battle with breast cancer at 33 years of age. She was the youngest of three daughters of Dennis and Elsie Grant, then in membership at Ormond, Vic. Mim moved with the family to the Mornington Peninsula, being in membership at Red Hill and then Mornington. Widely loved for her positive, joyful and uncomplaining attitude, Miriam was a loving wife to Craig and devoted mother to Amanda, Nicole and Jacob. Her faith was an inspiration. The service at Red Hill was a celebration of joy and confidence in Christ as Mim had planned it would be.

—Ian Cartmel.

RIVETT, Thomas Edgar

(16.10.96) Born on 12.6.12, Tom lived all his life in the Western District, Vic, except for a period serving overseas in WW2. Later, Tom and his wife, Audrey, farmed at Morgiana, where his love of the Lord became a real asset to Hamilton church. They have 5 children, 11 grandchildren and 2 great-grandchildren. Tom presided on the Sunday prior to his death and gave another of his thought-provoking addresses. He went to work at his son's business on the day he died, but his real testimony was the way he lived for his Lord and his family.

—Tom J. Trimnell

WILSON, Carol

(24.9.96) Carol Wilson, Associate Minister of Northside Community Church, NSW, died after a 14-month battle with

a brain tumour. Carol had a distinguished ministry at the church since 1990. Her pioneering work with singles was legendary and her capacity to give people her undivided attention greatly contributed to NCC. She was an excellent communicator both through preaching and her 2CH radio spots. Almost 500 people crowded into the Northside Auditorium to hear tributes from her family, Ted Keating and Ross Clifford (NSW Council of Churches). Jay Bacik gave the eulogy. 400 yellow balloons were launched to thank God for her life. The Sunflower Ministry Fund has been set up through the tax deductible Northside Urban Mission to commemorate Carol's Ministry. She was the mother of Nathan, Tim and Adam, and the grandmother of Rileigh.

Churches of Christ Care Amaroo Retirement Village

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Applications to: Amaroo Retirement Village,
Logan St, Gatton Qld 4343. Telephone (07) 5462 3311.

CFA Dinner and Annual Meeting

Notice is given that the Annual Meeting of the Christian Fellowship Association will be held as follows.

Date: Tuesday 3 December 1996

Time: 12.00 noon

Venue: Chapel Hall, Swanston Street
Church of Christ, Melbourne

Speaker: Carmel Ryan
Volunteer Programs Manager,
Community Care

Lunch provided for CFA Agents.

Others attending, a charge of \$7.50 per head.

RSVP to Kerryl Rae on (03) 9567 1177 by
Tuesday 26 November 1996.

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Church News

TAS

MIDWAY POINT (Errol Gilbert) "Open Door" art/craft outreach recommenced second session. Ten new people coming via letter box drop ... Gwen Woolley far from well, but improving each day. Mavis Whelan also not enjoying good health ... Fund raising to be held November to replace piano ... Errol, Marg, Alisa Gilbert enjoyed week away September ... New emphasis "What Would Jesus Say About Our Church".

LAUNCESTON (C. Spaulding, W. Kerrison, J. Ratcliffe) 25 ladies from Launceston attended camp at Bicheno ... D. Allen spoke at CWF meeting on World Convention & Alaskan trip ... New session of Discipleship Explained beginning ... Basketball presentations made on 16 October when *Apollo 13* screened for funds ... Bill Dillon in hospital ... \$614 raised this year from sale of stamps for orphan support.

SA

SEMAPHORE (Roger Brown) Two community services held ... Senior citizens present to recognise God's gifts which have enriched lives of seniors. Kevin Foley MP & Mrs Mel Monfries, local citizen of the year present. Bob & Helen Angove contributed with music ... Navy Week service with Lt Com Paul Fryer-Hornsby representing Navy in attend-

ance, members of N Class Destroyers' Association took part in service ... Semaphore & West Lakes United Parish hosted a luncheon as part of recent John Bond Mission.

PROSPECT (Ruth May) Church celebrated 103 Anniversary. Victor Harbor church choir were special guests & contribution at service & luncheon appreciated ... Small play group has commenced, with strong support by members of congregation on rostered basis ... Plans are in hand for new ways for Sunday evening, in order to reach the community more effectively.

COLONEL LIGHT GARDENS (Bryan Sellars) Church saddened by sudden deaths of Ada Davey & George Venus, both missed by the church family ... A new "Kids Club" commenced 17 October & will run from 3.30-5.30 pm on alternate Thursdays during the last term of the school year.

WA

DIANELLA (Tony Armstrong) New grand-daughter to Tony & Lynette ... Short course on History & Witness of Churches of Christ by Keith Bowes ... Proceeds of Harvest Thanksgiving Service donated to Livingstone Foundation ... Election of deacons to be held November, also future planning weekend ... Church Open Day 3 November ... Sympathy extended to Stitt

family, Beryl White & Judy Garnett on recent family bereavements ... Thelma Parsonage making remarkable recovery following radical spinal surgery.

QLD

PINE RIVERS (Neale Proellocks, Alan Hermann, Mick Cross) Special night of prayer & praise with Bruce Dobbin ... Child Care Centre recognition service held, with sausage sizzle afterwards ... AGM well attended ... Family tea held with focus on missions ... New keyboard purchased ... Alan Hermann to take up position with Kenmore College next year, but will remain active membership with Pine Rivers.

VIC

ORMOND (Mark Dodd, Mavis Uldrich) Church excited at appointment of Alf Thistlethwaite who commences January ... CWF held morning coffee, Leo Rosner special guest at Drop In ... Afternoon held for special birthday of former minister Ray McKenzie ... Mark Dodd delighted at his OMB appointment to Vanuatu ... Fair yielded \$3,900 ... CWF held Progressive Dinner for Christmas hampers ... Community day held in chapel with Carl Clayden speaker

WANGARATTA (V. Burns) 70th Anniversary celebrated with visitors from all states ... Family camp held at Cheshunt, Charles Bayer guest speaker ... CWF held Spring afternoon, inviting local churches & Homes ... Four young people recently baptised ...

Church welcomed babies Grace Nicole Walker & Sophie Louise Jewel to church family ... Evonne Hyde completed Bike for Bibles ride with church sponsorship

NORTHCOTE (F.B. Alcorn) 93rd Anniversary successful with Lynette Leach speaker, Rosalie Tremain soloist, who was received into membership along with Mr & Mrs P. Chavarria, musical items also provided by church members ... Following lunch, members of Northern Suburban churches joined with church in a "Joyous Celebration" where Max & Stella Carter & Shirley Wallis spoke on World Convention experiences, Val Williams showed slides. **HAMILTON (Roy Hope, Brian Tunks)** Roy and Brian commenced team ministry 7 July, inducted by Stephen Blackett, Horsham, with the Mayor & Mayoress of South Grampians Shire Cws Mick & Mardi Bawden present ... Church hired mini bus & 12 members attended Seafarers' Service at Portland Anglican Church, where Roy Hope who is Warden to Missions to Seamen gave the address. Day concluded with lunch & tour of port & Alcoa.

MONTROSE (Harvey Clark) Great day 13 October when 119th anniversary celebrated, Neil Galbraith (former minister) speaker, visit from Korean Choir. Thank offering received with very pleasing result ... 12 Hour Prayer Vigil preceded on 12 October ... Tom Manallack had great time on Bike For Bibles ride, raised \$1100 too! ... CWF Dinner speaker, who had escaped from Rwanda, now working with Compassion, very moving.

Pastor Wilson Bebe Memorial Library Fund

Your generous response is invited.

Your gifts are tax-deductible and will be used to buy library books for Banmatmat Bible College, Pentecost, Vanuatu.

Address cheques to:

**Churches of Christ in NSW Theological College
Memorial Library Fund**

PO Box 140, Carlingford NSW 2118

The fund has now received \$7,676.70

Inquiries: Jack Edwards, 6 Bamboo Court,
Doveton Vic 3177. Phone (03) 9794 9419.

See article on page 6.

Cottesloe Moves On ...

Celebrate with Cottesloe, WA, church that as their doors close, the work grows at Leda.

Saturday 14 December, 7.00 pm

Dinner commemorating nearly 80 years of witness. (Cost \$15.00)

Bookings: (09) 384 6691/015 477 406

Sunday 29 December 10.00 am

Farewell Service

Address: 4 Irvine St, Peppermint Grove.

Exploring the Day If it feels good ...

JANET THOMPSON

King Alfric was the richest man in the world. There were nine tubs in his bathroom, and he began each day with three hot baths, three tepid baths, and three cold baths. Then he dried himself with twenty-five rough towels and ten fluffy ones. For breakfast he ate four fried eggs, three grilled kidneys, two lamb cutlets ... I think you get the picture! The fairy story has remained with me as a dream of what it might be like to be very, very wealthy. (If you have nine baths every morning people are unlikely to say that you are "filthy rich"!)

I stepped out of the shower and picked up my solitary towel. It had been baked in the sunshine on a still day, and it was rough and scratchy.

As I dried myself I thought wistfully of King Alfric's ten fluffy towels. Then I noticed that my skin was tingling from the brisk rubbing, and I felt good.

Alfric was a wise and good king, who cared for his people and paid attention to details—things like the benefits of a rub-down with twenty-five rough towels—and I reflected on the wisdom hidden in this extravagance.

The pampering of soft towels only came after the energising friction of the rough ones—when his mind had been activated, his nerve endings awakened and all his senses were alert.

In the lives of the wise, it seems, there are rules governing extravagance, as well as everything else.



We are a bit fragile about rules. The philosophy of, "If it feels good, do it," is the opposite extreme from the ascetics who put stones in their shoes and wore hair shirts to purify their souls!

There is a happy medium. Everything doesn't have to be soft and pleasant. And we don't have to practise rigorous self-denial to prove we are worthy people. But sometimes the less pleasant path has something more to offer.

Lemon juice is sour, but great for colds. Cold baths and rough towels feel like a punishment, but they reward me with a warm glow and a mind that is ready to tackle anything.

Jesus mentioned wide and narrow pathways and where they lead. Perhaps I can live without fabric softener!

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The Last Word

Nothing great was ever achieved without enthusiasm.

—Ralph Waldo Emerson

Two people worked together for many years. One wore a walkman with ear plugs. The co-worker wondered why this was so. One day he determined to find what was so interesting. He reached forward and flicked the headphones off the head of the co-worker. There was a ten second pause and the other fell to the floor dead. He was horrified and when he picked up the phones to hear what was being listened to he heard the words. "Breathe in ... Breathe out ... Breathe in ... Breathe out ..."

Advice to Tired Parents:

*Children are sponges
Who, at length
Slowly but surely
Absorb all your strength.
Leaving you listless,
Limp as a sack,
But just squeeze them tightly
To get it all back.*

Wife: "When my hair has turned to silver will you continue to love me?"

Husband: "Yes, just the same as I've done through all the other colours."



"According to our data, a small hole in the ozone layer has opened up directly above your house."

**From Close to Home by
John McPherson
(Zondervan, 1994).**