

THE AUSTRALIAN



Christian

NATIONAL JOURNAL OF CHURCHES OF CHRIST IN AUSTRALIA

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QUEENSLAND SUNSTATE



THE AUSTRALIAN

Christian

NATIONAL JOURNAL OF CHURCHES OF CHRIST IN AUSTRALIA

Vol. 101 No. 16, 23 September 1998

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Editorial

Common Purpose

DON SMITH

"Floods her monotonous tribes from Cairns to Perth" is a satirical comment by the Australian poet A.D. Hope on the vastness of the Australian continent, with all the implications of distance and regional diversity. I first became aware of this when as a young Home Missions Secretary I heard my Queensland counterparts observe that it was as far from Melbourne to Brisbane as it is from Brisbane to Cairns. The logistics of development and servicing Queensland churches compared to my lot in Victoria and Tasmania left me in awe of the challenges faced



by them. * With distance comes the potential for separation and suspicion about what we do not know, experience or understand. In recent decades, at a political level, we have seen how some newspapers have sought to discredit other states, especially with the supposed north-south divide. East-west relationships have similar negative potential. Much of this tension can arise from the issues of geography, differing social conditions and of course the recurring theme of distance. * Given the nature of some of these issues through the century, we can be thankful for the overall sense of common purpose we experience within Churches of Christ as we face a new century and millennium. We have known past tensions and, at worst, potential alienation. Convergence is now much in evidence. * The overwhelming support by Queensland and New South Wales Conferences for cooperation at a theological college level indicates increasing common purpose. These attitudes must be affirmed. * The Queensland articles reflect a sense of common purpose. They convey something of the potential for the future of the Queensland Conference and the churches which together are confronted by a great mission task spread over a vast area. * It is good to be able to affirm the innovative Queensland Conference initiatives such as the outstanding services of Queensland Care and the national leadership offered in this area. The World Convention in 2000 will introduce many interstate members to Queensland and contribute to an increasing understanding of Queensland's potential for a major role in our national development. Our history was full of watchwords. For the future consider "Affirm and Build". *

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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.

Wollongong Floods

To the Editor,
The Wollongong Church of Christ wishes to express its appreciation for the excellent support it received for its ministry to people devastated by the recent floods. Financial support has come from the Community Care Department, the Christian Women's Fellowship and from Yooralla Ministries and associated churches, including Metro North Christian Centre, Castle Hill Community Church, Epping and Belconnen Churches of Christ. Young people from Canberra and Sydney Churches have helped our own "clean-up" teams. The overall witness to the local community has been very powerful. With this extra help we have been able to distribute food parcels and money as well as help many flood victims with the clean-up tasks.

It is during times like this that you are reminded of the value of belonging to a larger church family.

—E.C. Keating
(Figtree, NSW)

Gospel Light

To the Editor,
While I was with *The Australian Christian*, a number of readers were very kind in donating Austral Publishing Company pamphlets and books. I have been cataloguing these and undertaking research using this material. One of the donated books was *Gospel Light*. This is a collection of Austral pamphlets in a standard

format that were bound together as a book. All the pamphlets are four pages in length and are written by leading figures within Churches of Christ. I estimate that it was probably published before 1900. Unfortunately, the cover page and possibly the first few pages are missing. The first pamphlet that is intact is "Does God Mean What He Says?" by A.B. Maston.

Does any reader have any information regarding the date of publication and also where I could see a full copy?

At Goolwa, SA, we are having a monthly study on the distinctives of Churches of Christ. We look at some of the special emphases that we have claimed over the years and then look at the range of Scriptures and see what remains a distinctive and what is culturally influenced. The original pamphlets are the major source of Churches of Christ understanding of the church and its culture and thus are important in any study of our origins. Your help would be appreciated. I may be contacted at 11 Moore St, Goolwa SA 5214. Phone or fax (08) 8555 2054.

—Chris Ambrose
(Goolwa, SA)

Mobilise the Members,

To the Editor,
I wish to thank Colin Murdoch for his letter ("AC" 8.7.98).

I agree that the most important resource any church has is the ministry calling of each of its members. But the way many churches "do church" makes it clear that they do not really believe their greatest asset is the ministry calling of the average person. Rather, they think their greatest assets are their pastor, facilities, location or perhaps their "style".

Sure, some church slogans may say, "Every Member a Minister,"

Letters to the Editor

but in reality, translating the slogan into the life of the church remains a universal frustration.

Four key Scripture passages enable us to understand the significance of God's ministry call to every believer: Psalm 139, 1 Corinthians 2, Ephesians 2 and Philippians 2. Together they encourage us to understand that each one is created, called, and equipped to be part of the "Priesthood of Believers".

I conclude by challenging readers to consider three things: First, every time we refer to vocational clergy as "the minister" and what they do as "the ministry", we drive nails into the coffin of the priesthood of the believer. Second, for God's will to be done on earth as it is in heaven, we need armies of people serving with the same sense of calling possessed by many of our precious clergy. Third, we need every Christian to become a ministry specialist. This needs to be encouraged by the attitude of, "This one thing I do", not "These forty things I dabble in". Busy people must have time to become ministry specialists.

If the average person's calling is really that important, church leaders must talk less and listen more. They need to find out what the people can "bring to the ministry table". If faithful and disciplined leadership can treat every ministry calling as something precious, the harvest for our churches and the Kingdom of God will be immeasurable!

—I.C. Dribble
(Crows Nest, NSW)

[Edited for space]

Formula for Renewal

To the Editor,

There seems to be a widespread view in our churches that if the "right" form of worship is followed, revival will occur. For example, some have attempted to

reproduce the effects of the contemporary Argentinean revival by introducing the exuberant forms of worship associated with that revival. Such attempts amount to superstitious behaviour and ignore the social and economic contexts in which revivals occur in other countries.

Moreover, if the introduction of exuberant worship leads to speaking in tongues, barking like dogs or being "slain in the Spirit", it will almost certainly not be the work of the Holy Spirit, because the overwhelming evidence of the New Testament is that this is not how the Holy Spirit works. Those who claim scriptural precedent for such behaviours should note that worship in the New Testament church was never accompanied by wild electronic music or other trappings of the contemporary renewal movement. Speaking in tongues was more likely to be encountered in the quiet devotions of members of small house churches.

The instrumental view that somehow the Holy Spirit responds to a formula was the basis of Peter's condemnation of Simon the Sorcerer (Acts 8: 20). The late E.C. Hinrichsen was correct when he said in his last address to the NSW Conference that "the Holy Spirit cannot be worked up, he can only be prayed down".

—Harold Hayward
(Pymble, NSW)

Update

Dear Readers,

This issue brings you a special focus on Queensland and follows a previous issue on New South Wales earlier in the year. We thank Rod Foster the General Secretary of the Queensland Conference for his cooperation in the preparation of the material. In 1999 we shall continue with further issues on other states. We also welcome the article by John Rees as a contribution to the thinking of readers prior to the forthcoming Federal Election.

Ken Patterson of Western Australia has noted for our attention that in "Snippets from History" of 26 August, Thomas Jackson was described as an English migrant. Research indicates that Thomas Jackson was a native of Scotland and a member of the Glasgow Church of Christ prior to migrating to New Zealand.

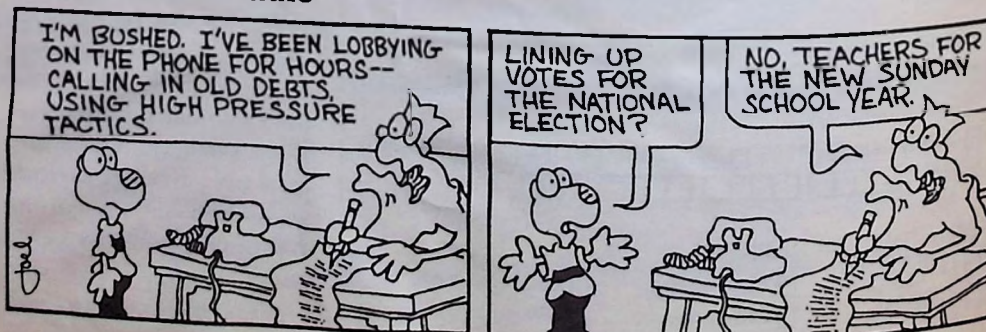
Staff members were recently able to research details of the opening of "The Christian Guest Home," Oakleigh, Vic, in 1938 and provide copies of reports of the purchase, renovation and opening of the building that year. This is a good argument for reporting your major events to this paper.

We continue to receive "Letters to the Editor" in considerable number, which means that there will be some delay in publication. Readers will note the letter from Wollongong Church expressing thanks for assistance in the recent floods. Bob Smith, National Coordinator of Churches of Christ has indicated that churches wishing to give to the National Disaster Fund should send gifts to him at PO Box 55, Helensburgh NSW 2508.

The staff of the web site "Shoot the Messenger" advise that the technical problems causing difficulty in accessing the site have now been overcome and a range of new items added. These include reviews of *Redneck Wonderland* from Midnight Oil, *Among the Barbarians* by Paul Sheehan and the soon to be released film, *The Truman Show*. Others include an examination of recovered memory and Christian fundamentalism. See <<http://www.shootthemessenger.com.au>>.

Sam Smith

Pontius' Puddle



International Students

Kenmore Christian College's expanding international student program

An exciting development in the ministry of Kenmore Christian College, Qld, has been the commencement in 1998 of our International Students Programme, supervised by our Dean of International Students, Moses Kim. Mr Kim has a Master of Arts Degree in Theology and is currently studying towards his Doctoral Degree. He is an ordained minister in the Australian branch of the Korean Presbyterian Reformed Church. Initially, our vision was to offer courses to Christian students from Korea, but the program has seen students come to Kenmore from Korea, Thailand, Japan and

Poland. An exciting and unexpected benefit has been the inclusion of a number of non-Christian students who are now keen Bible students and worshipping at churches in Brisbane. We have 39 full-time and nineteen part-time students enrolled in both the Certificate IV and Diploma of Christian Ministry Courses. In addition to Bible and theology subjects, the students are provided with graded English tuition and the opportunity to "study" our Australian culture. Staff have found this new program stimulating and challenging, and a great blessing to the College's overall ministry and witness.



Ho Choi, one of Kenmore's growing number of international students, with Dean, Moses Kim

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Haven Church Closure

Rural Victorian church closes



Haven Church of Christ opening, 1949

Haven church in Victoria's Wimmera District commenced in the local school 8 January 1916. The first building was moved to the area in 1924 and served until 1949, when the pictured building, formerly used as a saddlery at Jung, was relocated and redevel-

oped as a chapel on a site donated by Frank Oliver. The new chapel, dedicated by the late D.A. Cockcroft, Conference President, continued as the worship centre until the recent decision to close.

Always a small rural church, there has been a witness to the community and contact with numbers of children and young people through the Sunday School. Over the years the church has contributed many thousands of dollars to Conference work. Remaining members have transferred to Horsham church, following the final service 30 August.

Streetwise Graduates

Training to deal with people on the street



Graduates from the "Streetwise" counselling course conducted by St Kilda Gatehouse

The nine people pictured here with Moses Abbatangelo (right) were among the fourteen graduates who received certificates for completing a thirty-session "Streetwise" counselling course. This enables them to work with the ministry of St Kilda Gatehouse, which functions on the streets of St Kilda, one of Melbourne's inner-city suburbs. At the thanksgiving and graduation dinner held at the Blackburn, Vic, church, Moses Abbatangelo, the executive officer of the ministry, explained that the course with its emphasis on practical skills is intended to equip volunteers to

work with clients with special needs.

These needs may include people with drug addiction problems, the homeless, prostitutes, people with HIV and AIDS, and a range of other issues which can create crisis situations.

Workers are trained to identify problems, learn how to best help people and also deal with their own responses to the problems. St Kilda Gatehouse grew out of the South Melbourne Restoration Community and is directly linked to the Vic-Tas Conference.

Making News

Sunbury Opening

Sunbury, Vic, church, planted in 1991, opened a 650-seat auditorium and associated facilities 20 September.

High Percentages in Vanuatu

One in twenty-five people in Vanuatu are members of Churches of Christ. Seven of the fifty-two members of Parliament of the republic are members of Churches of Christ, two of whom hold ministerial office.

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Brisbane 2000

Sponsors help bring visitors from poorer locations

Our Australian churches have been asked to help to bring people from third world countries to the World Convention of Churches of Christ in Brisbane in August 2000. It is planned to bring at least ten from outside Australia and two ethnic Australians. Most churches that have responded are working in groups to raise the necessary minimum of \$30,000 to cover the project. South Australia leads the way with nineteen sponsoring churches, Victoria with eleven and Queensland with five. So far there has been no re-

sponse from other states ... yet! A South Australian church is planning to bring Michal Weremiejewicz, one of the leaders of Polish Churches of Christ to the Convention.



Six Slices of Reality

New drama video provides an effective way to communicate

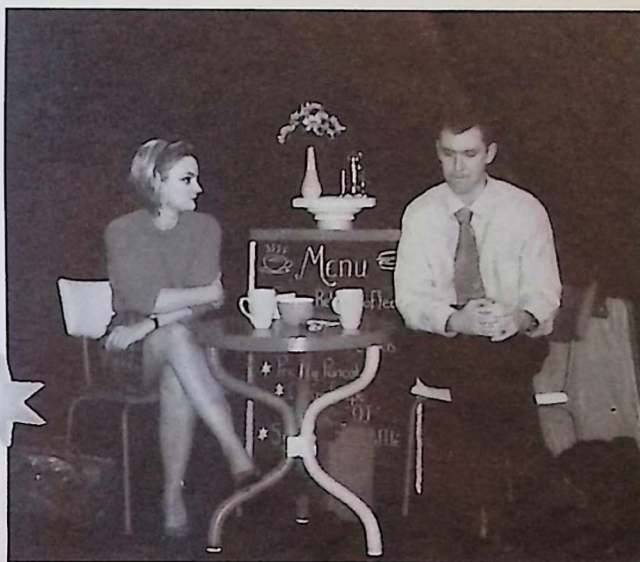


Photo John Berry

Merilyn Crofts and Tim Foot in one of the six slices of reality

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A video which contains six drama sketches and accompanying book of the scripts, discussion starters and sermon ideas has been released in Sydney, by the Sunflower Ministry of the Northside Community Church.

Called *Drama To Go*, the video was produced for groups to perform (using the video and scripts) or be watched and then discussed. These move from the performed sketch, to the viewer's own experience to relevant biblical connections and practical applications. *Drama To Go* was written by Grahame Crowhurst, associate minister and his wife, Merilyn Crofts and Tim Foot, creative ministries director at Northside. Tim and Merilyn are the actors in all six sketches.

The video's executive producer, Tom Glynn of Tom Glynn Advertising, said: "*Drama To Go* fills a

gap in churches, theological/Bible colleges and church schools. Drama is one of the most effective ways to communicate the Christian faith. We all know how powerfully drama communicates from film, television and the stage." Tom commented "Until now, Christians in Australia have lacked this essential resource—or have made do with overseas material that doesn't really apply to local attitudes and culture."

The video has been endorsed by a number of Christian leaders. Dr Keith Farmer, Principal, Churches of Christ in NSW Theological College says: "I've seen some of the dramas performed live at Northside Community Church. They're great in communicating Christian truth. And best of all, the dramas are easy to perform by a local group." Inquiries can be directed to (02) 9439 7822.

Centenary Volume

Bound copies of our centenary issues distributed



*Bound copies of the 1997 Centenary issues of *The Australian Christian* have recently been received from the book binder and forwarded to libraries, historical societies and others who requested a Centenary edition. Pictured here is Nigel Pegram preparing the copies for post with Jackie Kelly, one of our volunteer proof readers and a postal delivery officer.*

BALWYN CHURCH OF CHRIST

Cnr Whitehorse and Cherry Roads, Balwyn, Victoria

76th Anniversary

10.00 am, Sunday 11 October 1998

Guest Speaker

Chek Chia, President,
Conference of Churches of Christ in Victoria and Tasmania

Light refreshments to follow.

Inquiries (03) 9836 4074.

WESTSIDE CHURCH OF CHRIST

Position Vacant

MINISTRY ASSISTANT

In 1999, there will be a part-time paid ministry position (20 hours per week) available as assistant to the Senior Minister of the Westside Church of Christ.

The primary role will be that of administration, plus the ability to give assistance to one other area of the Church's ministry; eg: youth, worship, personal evangelism.

The Westside Church of Christ is presently undertaking a major building program to extend its worship and hall facilities.

For further details and an application form, please contact the Senior Minister, Geoff Risson, Westside Church of Christ, PO Box 211, Mt Ommanney Qld 4074. Telephone (07) 3279 1570. Applications close 31 October 1998.

Refugees from Sudan

People fleeing appalling conditions make a new start in NSW



One of the Sudanese families being helped to start a new life through the work of Community Care NSW

The Australian Government has recognised the plight of the people of Sudan, where 1.2 million people are starving. War and a policy of starvation has caused many southern Sudanese to flee the country and seek refuge wherever it can be found. Churches of Christ Community Care in NSW has launched a program of resettlement for the refugees.

Five families have been housed through temporary emergency accommodation and are now beginning a new life in their new home. In the a couple of days, the next group of families will be met at a Sydney airport.

Pendle Hill church has set aside two houses for emergency accommodation for Sudanese people. Campbelltown church will accommodate one family and Northside church are accommodating one family. Many other churches have learned of the work that we are doing and are supporting finan-

cially and in other practical ways. Every family arrives with nothing but a suitcase of clothing. Warm clothing has to be found. When the families move to their own accommodation, every item of furniture and household goods needs to be found.

It is easy to fall in love with these people and to catch the heartache that they carry for their families at home who are starving, or who have already died, or, in some cases, who have been sold into slavery.

We can all pray for peace in Sudan, and many will be able to support us in this important work of gospel love. Tax-deductable gifts should be sent to Churches of Christ Community Care/Welfare, Locked Bag 1, Pendle Hill NSW 2145. Donations of household items in good order from readers living in the Sydney area are welcome. Phone (02) 9636 7400.

—Graham Long

1999 Calendars

Best calendar yet dispatched to churches



The 1999 Churches of Christ Calendar is regarded as the best yet by members of the National Literature Department. Over 8,000 copies have been sent to churches Australia-wide after an intensive packing program by volunteers on Saturday 5 September.

The local Post Office had to request a special Post Office collection van to cope with the 450+ boxes, packages and large envelopes spread all over their floor after being delivered by staff of

The Australian Christian, who had the responsibility of dispatch. The Literature Department and "The Christian" share the same offices. Calendars should be available in each local church within the next week. Numerous copies are sent overseas, while most remain in the homes of members.

Photos have been selected for their effective portrayal of typical Australian scenes. In March each year the Department invites members to submit photographs for use in the issue of the following year.

The preparation of the calendar is under the control of Paul Andrews, a Melbourne graphic designer and a member of the Department. Calendars sell at \$6.50 each. Additional copies are available upon request.

The return remittance form makes provision for notation about unsold copies, which need not be returned. So successful has been the initiative that additional copies without specific Churches of Christ information are now printed for general sale in Christian bookshops.

International Ministry

Country church has international ministry through ministry to students



A church in East Java viewing a Jesus video, carried in by a student returning from Australia. He has a supervisory role with over fifty churches. His wife lectures in a University.

When Ted Bjorem was called to ministry in 1996, he expressed interest in working on the University campus, particularly with international students. That desire was warmly affirmed by the Board. A wonderful blend of people, ready to open their hearts to international students, created the ministry which this small country church is experiencing with students at University of Queensland, Gatton.

A retired couple, Alan and Mavis Wegner, were always ready to lend a helping hand, fixing or securing everything, from autos to small appliances. They helped one, and soon others followed. Steve Beasley, who teaches at the University, provides a friendly face both at church and on campus.

More contact is made during the morning tea, which follows the worship. In addition, a Bible study and fellowship are provided. The Bible studies provide opportunities for students to develop their leadership gifts. The fellowships provide a home group where students can bring non-Christian friends. Contacts have been made with students from Cambodia, China and other "closed" countries.

The church keeps a supply of Bibles and the *Jesus* video in the languages of potential contacts. Since we know the student population, we can anticipate which languages we may need. Queensland Churches' Centenary Development Fund provided much-needed funds to continue this project. Some of the videos have already gone overseas, to Cambodia and Indonesia.

Ted Bjorem visited several former students while in Java in August to teach.

**Ivanhoe
Church of Christ**

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PNG Aid Concert

One man makes a difference



Ivor Gilhooly on guitar and son, Craig, on saxophone

One man's vision to help the people of Papua New Guinea in the distress caused by the recent tidal wave culminated in a wonderful community concert held in the Hurstville Entertainment Centre, NSW. The man, Ivor Gilhooly, after having made over 1,000 telephone calls from his home, organised a fantastic line-up of artists and bands who presented a

magnificent evening's entertainment.

Gifts and services from some 23 different organisations were auctioned during the evening by a professional auctioneer, raising \$2,000. Ivor, who is a member of the Hurstville church, was ably assisted by another church member in catering and helping manage the mammoth task.

Some 800 people attended the concert. Everything from venue, printing, radio and press advertising, auctioneer and compere were donated. A grand total of \$6,000 was raised and has been passed to World Vision to be used directly in the PNG disaster area.

Making News

Fairhaven-Hervey Bay Village Opening

Churches of Christ Care, Qld, opened a major new Fairhaven Retirement Village at Hervey Bay on 12 September.

Lewis at Trinity, UK

Rick Lewis, currently ministering with Trinity Church of Christ, Birmingham, UK and formerly of Telopea, NSW, has accepted a further one-year term with Trinity church.

June Doster Dies

Death after extended illness

June Doster, Associate Regional Minister of the Disciples of Christ in Georgia, USA, for fourteen years died recently after an extended illness.

June will be remembered for her ministry in Victoria-Tasmania in 1990 where she conducted strategic-planning conferences for CWF leaders and was a the principal speaker at "Australia Grow" seminars in both states.

Her consultation with Christian Women's Fellowship leaders was instrumental in stimulating think-



June Doster

ing about the whole future of ministry with women.

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—Lindsay Mott, Treasurer

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Vanuatu Mission Trek

Staff and students go on a trek to start a new church

"Whatever you do, don't touch this water", Niksan, our guide, said quietly in Bislama, "It is very taboo." We were standing in dense rainforest, perspiring freely, after four hours of struggling up a daunting ridge line on the way to Vanuatu's tallest peak, Mt Tabwemesana. The stream in front of us bubbled and cascaded between ferns and seemed to mock our thirsty stares.

"If this water is disturbed", Niksan continued, "the clouds will come down and cover the summit for many days. We will not be able to see a thing."

Our group of students and staff of the Banmatmat Bible College, first began planning the trip as an extra-curricular adventure train-

ing exercise. The idea soon developed into a wider mission project as we learned of a village in the area (named Sauriki) that had requested contact with Churches of Christ. We saw this as a great opportunity to put into practice our studies in mission and evangelism, and to experience first-hand the planting of a new church. A three-month program of learning was organised, including practical skills of map reading and first aid, plus strategies for evangelism, culture and church planting. This would be the first mission trip to a new area organised by Banmatmat. The Principal, Samuel Vusi, was thrilled with the development. Fund raising was an important part, with many creative



Mike and Aaron Folland with staff and students of Banmatmat Bible College on top of Vanuatu's highest mountain, Mt Tabwemesana

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The trek itself was physically demanding, with four days of steep ridges, thick scrub and humidity all adding to the challenge. Highlights included meeting groups of sandalwood hunters searching the forests for this rare and aromatic timber, towering waterfalls, local bush food and the stunning view of the entire coastline of Santo island from the summit. For Aaron Folland (fifteen years old), it was his first extended hike and he became the youngest white person to climb this difficult peak. My biggest challenge was that I completed the entire hike in a pair of thongs, due to my old leather walking boots causing large, weeping blisters.

The new church plant was also successful, with solid contacts made in Sauriki and neighbouring villages. The first church service was held on Sunday 12 June, with

32 men, women and children in attendance.

The worship was simple and informal, with a tangible feeling of freshness, as Pastor Luke Tari spoke meaningfully about the love and presence of God all around us. Two of the college students, who would be staying behind in the village for the next twelve months, also shared in the service. In the months ahead they will conduct studies on basic Christianity as well as beginning a Sunday school for the numerous small children racing around the village.

Please pray for the ongoing work at Sauriki, especially for those who are responsible for the strengthening of this new church. Your prayers are also valued for the students and staff at Banmatmat as we endeavour to train for ministry in ways that are relevant and visionary within the culture of Vanuatu.

—Mike Folland

Women's Ministries

Features of the women's work in Queensland



Gwen Taverner, president of Queensland's Christian Women's Ministries

Lyn Parry, President Elect, and President Gwen Taverner (pictured) of Queensland's Christian Women's Ministries recently travelled several thousand kilometres to central and northern churches, including Maryborough, Bundaberg, Gladstone, Rockhampton, Cairns, Charters Towers and Townsville.

In no other state are there so

many churches so widely spread across such large distances. Queensland Women's Ministries is the umbrella which covers women's work within the state. This year the women of the churches gave \$10,000 for QCWM projects including Living Link Support, Overseas Mission Board Child Support, DCDE Church Planting and Queensland's Aboriginal and Islander Fellowship work for Sunday school resources.

A highlight of the year was the camp attended by over 100 women from around the state. A magazine renamed *ConXion* circulates among women in all churches.

Queensland women have accepted the task of organising National Gathering 2000, which will precede World Convention in Brisbane. This year's activities will culminate in a "Women's Gathering" to be held at Annerley church just prior to the Sunstate Conference in October.



Studies in Jeremiah

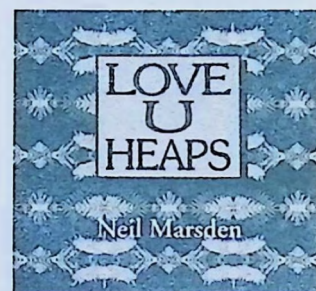
by Gordon Stirling (Vital Publications) \$5.00.

Gordon has presented us with an engaging and useful resource in studying the book of Jeremiah. He does an excellent job of putting the events of the book in their historical context and, importantly, helps make the study of the book all the richer for it. I was disappointed that Gordon only did six studies. With his engaging style and the scope of Jeremiah, there's lots more for people to explore. People and groups who use it will

find they have to grapple with some big questions on the way through, but that's what you wanted, wasn't it?

Available from Vital Publications, PO Box 101, Essendon North Vic 3041, for \$5.00 plus \$1.00 postage.

—Nigel Pegram



Love U Heaps

by Neil Marsden (Vital) \$15.00.

Available from PO Box 101, North Essendon, 3041 for \$15.00 plus \$1.00 postage.

This book is a skilfully-crafted series of articles relevant to a modern teenage audience, bringing them hope in a world that can seem hopeless. Using an unusual format which brings to mind newspaper articles, Neil tackles issues ranging from equality to homelessness, while also giving the reader and insight into Christianity. He effectively dispels some of the common stereotypes of Christianity and unravels some of its complexities.

The format and language makes this book suitable for a diverse range of adolescents, not just the hard-core reading population. It appeals to Christian and non-Christian youth alike. Neil assures his audience that they are not struggling alone. The book is ideal for teenagers growing up in today's society, offering comfort and food for thought, yet promoting no false illusions about Christian life in the 90s.

— Sherri Malmberg

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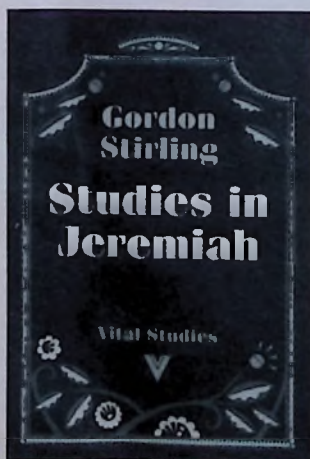
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The Election Approaching the Vote

JOHN REES

How should Christians approach the federal election? Where do we begin to connect our faith and the voting process? Regardless of who we vote for, here's three starting points that might be helpful for the task.

1. Voting is a Legitimate Christian Concern.

Some might believe that Christians should not be concerned with voting. After all, Hebrews

calls us to set our eyes toward a heavenly city (11:10), and 1 Peter 2:11 names Christians as "aliens and strangers" in the world.

However, we would be mistaken to read these texts as encouraging a Christian withdrawal from society. In Jeremiah 29:7 God instructs his people that, although they are in exile, they are to "seek the welfare of the city to which I have carried you". Peter has these words of Jeremiah in mind when he instructs Christians to do "good works" and "live good lives among the nations" (1 Peter 2:12).

Therefore, Christians are called to obey God's command to seek the common good of society and to do that in ways conventional to the society in which they live. While many Australians may approach the vote purely out of self-interest, Christians are to "seek the welfare" of society as a whole. No Christian should vote simply to get more money from the politician's "pork-barrel", or to gain certain benefits at the expense of others less fortunate in the community. It is only the pursuit of the "social good" that makes voting a legitimate Christian witness.

2. Voting Affirms "Government under God".

In Romans 13:1-5 Paul defines the role of government in relation to the authority of God. He explains that government is established by God (v. 1) to "do good" for its citizens (vv. 3-4) and to "bear the sword" of judgement against evil in society (vv. 2, 4). Therefore, Christians should submit to Government authority. However, Paul places a limit on the power of the state by calling it "God's servant" (v. 3). Therefore Government should submit to God's



authority by seeking the common good of society as a whole. There is a reason why Scripture offers this "contained" view of government power. Absolute power is dangerous because "sinful people will almost always use concentrated power for themselves, rather than everyone" (Sider). Voting is a good way for Christians to affirm the role of government, all the while making sure that government is serving the common good of all people.

3. Voting Prioritises the Community Values of Jesus.

Jesus was a social man living in a first century social world. Jesus' community values linked him to certain types of friends, including the poor (Luke 14:12-14), the outcast (John 4:1f.), those who were oppressed by society (Matt 25:31-46) and those who changed their selfish ways for the sake of the social good (Luke 19:1-9). Jesus included all of these people in his famous mission statement in Luke 4:16-21. This mission is as relevant today as in the first century. Therefore, the community values that Jesus considered important are to be our values also.

It is with Jesus' community values in mind that we can begin

to critique and prioritise the election issues of our day.

Take the tax package for example.

While the Opposition's targeting of the poor looks attractive for the short-term, some Christians have argued that (with some Senate negotiation) the Government's package can benefit everyone, including the poor, for the longer-term. Then again, maybe tax is not as close to the community concern of Jesus as issues like aged-care and Aboriginal reconciliation—issues that certainly do not fa-

It is with Jesus' community values in mind that we can begin to critique and prioritise the election issues of our day.

vour the Government's record. The policies of the minor parties must also be judged by the community values of Jesus.

As we approach the vote, let us seek the welfare of society, understand that government has a role to play in God's world and prioritise the needs of our community by the social values of Jesus. Beyond the ballot of 3 October, let us continue to pray for our government, whether we voted for them or not.

John Rees is a graduate of the Churches of Christ Theological College, Carlingford, NSW. He lectures at the School of Christian Studies in Sydney, and is a theological educator with TEAR Australia.

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A Window into Faith

JIM LONGBOTTOM

John Lennon wrote "And so it is Christmas, and what have you done. Another year over, a new one just begun." It's not over yet, in terms of celebrating Christmas 1998, but it is nearly over if one is wanting to plan something special to recapture the Christ birth event from commercial clutches and use it as a window from the world into the church. What I have enjoyed about writing this article is that it has

The people had some ideas and went to the plaza management, somewhat cap in hand, to explore if they could do something together.

given me opportunity to speak with a number of our churches in Western Australia about "What do you do at Christmas". I have received a whole range

of answers and a whole lot of new and great ideas. What came through each time is that those churches that are using Christmas as a window into faith and church (evangelism) have looked objectively at their local scene and utilised what was unique to their location in the local community.

One church is located over the road from the local area shopping plaza.

The people had some ideas and went to the plaza management, somewhat cap in hand, to explore if they could do something together.

In a partnership of several years now, church people are in the centre through the advent weeks singing carols, presenting skits and testimonies. On the major late night shopping night, they stage a major concert in the car park, all funded by the plaza.

In the night leading up to Christmas, the plaza funds a lit truck travelling the local streets with a band and carollers, throwing lollies for the kids and giving invitation to services and testimonies. Last year they saw one man come to Christ on his front lawn!

One church has a strong partnership with the local basketball stadium.

They have their Christmas eve service in the church, but go to a lot of trouble and effort to set up their Christmas morning service in the basketball courts with a large painted backdrop, staging, sound gear, chairs for 700, a carefully thought through program which preaches the Gospel.

And ... the place is full.

This year they are expanding their horizons and running, in partnership with the stadium, a "live Christmas" entailing the Christmas story complete with live animals.

This year they anticipate an exposure of some 50,000 people to the Christmas message!

One church is located in an old shopping precinct which has been rediscovered and reborn over the last ten years or so.

Because the church is a part of the precinct and has other good entry points through the year, they concentrate their efforts within church services. One evening service specifically connects with families through their children, who come to Sunday School through the year.

One church is in a younger



growth area, situated next to the local shopping centre.

They have taken over a flagging carol service and run it in the local leisure centre, with a new emphasis and message. In their advent services, they set up a nativity scene and the members bring a wrapped gift for a child, marked with gender and age. They are also encouraged to bring food, which is then assembled into food parcels and distributed in the community.

So ... look around you, then unite in faith who you are, as a church, with what resources are available, so that, in partnership, you'll be able to reach your community with the real message of Christmas.

Jim Longbottom is Team Leader at Warwick, WA, church.



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Ideas for Christmas

Jim Longbottom of Warwick, WA, has gathered ideas for the celebration of Christmas. The material is designed for middle and larger churches. In our next issue we shall include ideas for use in smaller churches with under 100 attenders.

Queensland

Church Camp— An Adventure

TREVOR MEARES

Nine hundred each way. Seven hundred and eighty each way. One thousand each way. Thirty-five each way. No, we are not taking bets at the Randwick racecourse, we are reciting the number of kilometres that our members had to travel to church camp.

The Church of the Outback provides church services, fellowship and pastoral care for Christians who are scattered on isolated properties and in remote towns throughout outback Queensland.

This is the equivalent of a Brisbane minister visiting a parishioner south of Tasmania.

Church services are delivered via special amplified telephones connected together in conference calls. These provide opportunities for fellowship, prayer, communion and teaching.

Fellowship is also provided through annual camps where those who only know each other by their voices have the opportunity to meet face to face. This fellowship is so precious to them that some participants travel over 1,000 kilometres each way to attend.

Pastoral care is provided by our pastor/pilot, Trevor Meares, in our Cherokee aircraft. Our nearest family is 250 km from the manse, our furthest 2000 km. This is the equivalent of a Brisbane minister visiting a parishioner south of Tasmania.

This year's camp was held at Longford station, 30 km south of Jundah, which

is 1,100 km north-east of Brisbane, as the crow flies. But by road, it's a different matter. However, it was a fairly central location for the members of the Church of the Outback, who travelled from Mt Isa,

Jenny Meares enjoying a break while "on the road" Julia Creek, Cunnamulla, St George, Augathella, and Windorah, as well as Bongeen on the Darling Downs, where the manse and administration centre are located.

Hosts, Tom and Margaret Greer, did a fine job of locating all twenty odd adults plus a similar number of children in the homestead. Not everyone had a bed, but who cares when you have your trusty old swag to throw down. This resulted in some close fellowship between friends who had been meeting weekly for years, but had just met face to face for the first time.

Everyone managed marvellously with just two toilets and three showers, perhaps with the exception of those who used the gas-powered shower set up on the back lawn. They were somewhat exposed to the night air, and to unwary campers who did not heed the "Cooee" from behind the bougainvillea hedge.

Studies by Bob Eaton (Mount Isa) and Kevin Ballin (Rolo Station), and a Sunday morning service conducted by the Phelps family exercised the Body of Christ and strengthened the fellowship. "Quaker" questions after a barbecue lunch at Tainty Gorge revealed some interesting life experiences and developed further bonds of Christian love. Social activities included a family con-



Jenny Meares enjoying a break while "on the road"

cert on Saturday night, with uninhibited bush kids (big and small) putting on a great show. Sunday afternoon found us swimming and fishing in a billabong on the Thompson River just west of the Barcoo, "where churches are few, and men of religion are scanty". As clouds built up in the west and rain threatened, the plane and Eaton's Falcon were moved into Jundah onto sealed road and airstrip. The Ballins decided that they needed to head for home before the bull dust turned to bog. They could then have been stranded for a week. However, they did hit a fair-sized roo down the road, which caved in the front of their Falcon and smashed their windscreen. Winter nights in the outback get very cold and the Ballins experienced some of the thrills and chills of bush travel on their way home.

Ten millimetres of rain overnight, and more threatening, sent a procession of four wheel drives slipping, sliding and fishtailing down the track, before the police closed the road. Some families spent more time in travel than they did at camp, but that's life in the bush, and we love it.

Trevor Meares is minister with the Outback Church of Christ.

Queensland Sunstate

ROBERT WARWICK

The idea of converting the annual Churches of Christ in Queensland conference into the seminar/convention model came about through a desire to have the annual gathering of the churches more focussed on the real reason we exist as Churches of Christ. While it is true that we are a corporate structure and we need to fulfil the requirements of any normal corporation, there seemed to be a need to focus on the more relevant issues of doing ministry today.

The Lord's business is not about having meetings but about routing the enemy.

It seems so often that the things we do within structures are more focussed on keeping the structure operating with a seemingly endless schedule of meetings that consist of talk about how we will do the job, rather than about doing it. There is a delightful story recorded in 1 Samuel 14 where the Philistines had moved their camp to the pass at Michmash. Each day the Philistines were sending out patrols to rob villages and destroy them. Saul was in Geba with his 600 men and was seeking to determine his strategy to destroy the Philistine enemy. The story tells how Jonathan and his weapon bearer left Saul's camp and went out, just the two of them, to do battle with the Philistines. The story describes how Jonathan and his weapon bearer, with the Lord's help, routed that Philistine enemy. The whole Philistine army panicked. Those who were in the camp, those on guard duty, those in the fields and those on patrol. All of them were

afraid and confused. Then God sent an earthquake. (See 1 Sam 14:15.) Where was Saul? Down in the camp having a meeting!

We as the Lord's church have been given very clear instructions by the Lord on how we need to be about routing the enemy. He has also promised that he will be with us. So often we have meeting after meeting that keep us from doing the work the Lord has called us to do. We need to be in tune with God, aware of where he is working and fall in step with him, rather than be locked into a meeting schedule which saps our time, energy and resources. The Lord's business is not about having meetings but about routing the enemy.

It was from this desire, to truly be focussed on the real reason for the church's existence and how we can best equip ourselves for that mission, that the concept of Sunstate was formed. The underlying desire has been to build a fellowship of churches that are able to have a true sense of belonging and able to encourage each other in the

So often we have meeting after meeting that keep us from doing the work the Lord has called us to do.

mission of the church. The best way to do this was to provide the opportunity for church leaders to learn and grow together as we confronted the issues that are part of doing church today. What has been achieved as well is a greater sense of being part of an organi-



sation that is going places and is alive and impacting the future of Churches of Christ in Queensland.

We live in exciting times for the church and we serve a God who is doing tremendous things around the world, and it is imperative that we are in step with what he is doing. To be in step we need to be informed, and one of the roles of Sunstate has been to inform. The program for Sunstate 98 is looking very exciting, with a variety of input from various specialist practitioners. It will build on the achievements of Sunstate 96 and Sunstate 97. Each year we have had three or four keynote speakers from both Australia and overseas. They have been very successful in challenging, teaching and encouraging our leaders.

Another aspect of Sunstate that has been very much appreciated has been the elective streams. There are usually four or five concurrent elective sessions. These have provided a great variety of teaching in a broad range of ministry areas. We are thankful to the Lord for his blessing upon Sunstate and we look forward to the future with great anticipation.

Robert Warwick is Conference President of Churches of Christ in Queensland.

Queensland Maryborough

DAVID WOODWARD

“Who'd want to be anywhere else?” That is the consensus of the

ministry team of the Maryborough church following a recent surprise in the Sunday night service.

Halfway through the service, the pastors and their spouses were unexpectedly escorted to the front and seated in special places. First, there was a drama sketch by “Sudden Impact” (the church’s drama ministry). It highlighted some of the more obvious aspects of each. This was followed by a dance to the song, “A Friend Like You”. Each pastor and spouse was presented with a box, full of encouragement let-

Most exciting has been the inclusion of some new ministries.

ters written by members of the church family. These were accompanied by chocolates and a bottle of Maison, to be consumed while reading the letters. The congregation was then invited to come to the front and lay on hands, while the elders prayed for each member of the team and their families. It was something none of the ministry team had experienced before and highlighted the sense of mutual ministry and encouragement felt at Maryborough.

Maryborough is situated approximately 250 km north of Brisbane, at the gateway to Hervey Bay and Fraser Island. It was once in the running to be selected as the capital of Queensland. Timber, sugar cane, shipbuilding and heavy engineering have, at various times, been the lifeblood of this city of 25,000. It is a “battlers’ town” with a

“Heritage City” theme, a place with a strong community spirit and low crime rate.

The Church of Christ began in 1892 in the Postmaster’s residence. The present worship centre has been centrally located in Kent Street since 1964. The ministry team is David Woodward (senior pastor), Eddy Heckathorn (worship and music), Frank Beale (pastoral care and counselling) and Neil Melville (chaplain at Fair Haven Retirement Village).

The church maintains many of the usual ministries. In addition, there has been cooperation with Churches of Christ Care in the areas of Fair Haven, Frank Gilson House, alternative placement support service and family day care. Arguably, most exciting has been the inclusion of some stimulating new ministries.

There is a strong emphasis on spiritual gifts and on each member discovering and fulfilling their place. In worship, people are encouraged to be as expressive as is appropriate to who God has made them to be.

Contemporary Worship: Eddy Heckathorn’s ministry concentrates on worship and music. Besides overseeing the move to a contemporary worship format, Eddy has transformed the evening service to a youth-focused service. An accomplished singer-songwriter with a heart for worship, Eddy has also lifted the proficiency of our musicians.

Small Group Ministry: This was started in 1995 and began with just one small group and a vision. There are now thirteen groups, with two of them at the point of needing to “give birth” to new groups. The aim is to see the church transformed from “a church with small groups” to “a church of small groups”.



Counselling Ministry: Frank was appointed to the ministry team with a focus on pastoral care and counselling. Frank has had a long association with the church, reaching back to his missionary service in Vanuatu and PNG. He recently settled in Maryborough and the church has been enthusiastic in appointing him to the team.

Sunday Night Live: Aiming to reach people in a culturally relevant way, the church began Sunday Night Live in 1997. It is a once-a-month seeker-directed service. The “Sunday Night Live Band”, along with “Sudden Impact”, put together a professional-quality music and drama package based on a relevant theme, which becomes the basis for the message. The result is a one-hour high-quality presentation which aims to reach the unchurched.

Maryborough, a church on the move; conservative, yet contemporary; culturally relevant, yet focused on the unchangeable truths of God’s Word.

Who’d want to be anywhere else? David Woodward is the senior pastor of the Maryborough church.

Queensland

A Practical Partner

ROD FOSTER

Through creative vision and effective stewardship, Queensland Conference is able to provide a valuable source of funds for a range of church-based ministries. There are a number of ways this effective pooling and distribution of funds is achieved.

The Centenary Development Foundation—Reaching Out The Centenary Development Foundation was es-

*That few dollars
(each little step)
forms part of a great
journey.*

tablished in 1983 to mark the Centenary of Churches of Christ in Queensland. A growing number of churches, conference agencies and members have invested. It operates like a credit union, offering term deposits and a variety of accounts. From the surplus generated; in 1993 grants totalling \$8,500 were paid to churches. In 1998, the total given away was over \$30,000!

Here's a snapshot of some outreach opportunities made possible through the Foundation in 1998.

- Ann Street church—youth worker for 10 weeks.
- Annerley church—assistance with "Journey Through Bethlehem" costs.
- Bribie Island—videos and books for high school library.
- Brisbane/Ipswich District Youth Rallies—hire of hall, speakers and publicity.
- G. Muller—equipment for church planting, Fernvale.
- Murgon Church—to assist with building extensions.

League of 500—Sharing the Journey Every six months members of the League of 500 are asked to give just a few dollars to support an approved church building project. A few dollars may often seem such a little step, but that few dollars (each little step) forms part of a great journey. Since 1957, \$100,000 has been shared by over half the churches in the Conference.

Churches of Christ Care—Living the Love This year, \$40,000 was set aside by Churches of Christ Care to assist local churches wishing to conduct community care ministries. Churches now conducting programs with grant funding include Hervey Bay, Pine Rivers, Toowoomba and Westside Churches of Christ. Two funding rounds are available each year in March and September.

Church Insurance—Saving Precious Dollars The Conference Office operates Church Insurance, an insurance agency. Covering assets valued at \$172 million, Church Insurance negotiates competitive premiums, which result in significant savings. Commissions earned from members' private household and vehicle policies enable grants to be made to church leaders. In 1998, Church Insurance awarded ten grants for enhancement of ministry and church work skills.

Jensen Memorial Fund—Spreading the Good News Interest earned from the Jensen Memorial Trust Fund is channelled into evangelistic programs in local churches. A wide variety of projects have been supported such as letter box drops, "Alpha" course material, evangelistic rallies and employment of youth workers.

Inter-Church Aid (ICA)—Building for God The Inter-Church Aid fund, administered by Churches of Christ in



Queensland, provides interest-free loans, to assist churches to achieve their building ideals as economically as possible. Numerous building programs have been completed and countless hundreds of thousands (probably millions) of dollars have been saved by churches in interest payments.

ICA Queensland was approached by the Whitford Church of Christ, WA, to provide an interest-free loan for their building program. This request received enthusiastic endorsement by both the Queensland and Western Australian Conferences. The decision to assist the Whitford church will enable Queensland to share its resources to advance the effectiveness of Churches of Christ in Australia. It is a decision for the Kingdom of God and in keeping with the ethos of ICA, which encourages mutual support among our churches. In this case, that support crosses state boundaries.

Churches of Christ Queensland Conference exists to serve the church, which is the Body of Christ. It is always ready to give financial assistance where possible to support effective programs and witness around Queensland. In effect, it's the Conference which cheerfully and regularly gives away money!

Rod Foster is the General Secretary of the Queensland Conference.

Queensland Churches of Christ Care

ROBYNNE MILNE

Over a decade ago Executive Director of Churches of Christ Care, Dr Don Stewart, wrote: "The primary model for care is found in Jesus Christ who came into the world to do the Father's will, to redeem mankind. Any ministry of care must therefore model itself on that selfless sacrifice and bring with it that divine hope which is the essence of Christ's resurrection ... the disciple of Jesus is

were no longer available. It's a mental exercise that helps us evaluate our effectiveness. Business consultants often use it as they

steer organisations through decisions about vision and mission statements. They may ask, "If you ceased to exist tomorrow, what difference would it make?"

For Churches of Christ Care in Queensland, that's an easy question to answer. It would make a big difference! We could quote statistics. Seventeen thousand people would not have received invaluable support last year. Around 1000 elderly people, many very frail, would be thrown back into a society already struggling to cope with the demands of our ageing population. We would not meet needs through our wide range of programs in early childhood care, or in alternative care, where we care for children who may be placed short-term with a care provider. People in crisis would not have access to our chaplains in universities and hospitals. Families would not be helped with emergency accommodation, food, clothing, furniture and a place to stay when loved ones are hospitalised.

But statistics are remote. Consider instead these real situations. Imagine what it's like to be four years old and living in outback Queensland. Imagine attending, just now and then, a child-care centre where the staff love to care and you can find new friends and share games. That's reality for little folk like



The Churches of Christ Care "family"—some board and staff members.

If you ceased to exist tomorrow, what difference would it make?

called to care by the actions and the teaching of Jesus himself as he moved among mankind, and that in fact, discipleship is a deep commitment, not only to hear the teaching of the Master, or to observe the lifestyle of the Master; but to seek to teach and live such a lifestyle. Thirdly ... the Church, through its knowledge of and its solidarity with the world, though not conformity to the world, must be committed to a ministry of care as the essence of its stewardship."

A call to individual servanthood? Indeed! And not just that, but a call to corporate good stewardship of all that God has entrusted to us.

At Churches of Christ Care, our mission is "serving the Lord, through service to people". By working out this mission in our everyday activities and our strategic planning for the future, we are also striving to fulfil our call before God to be good stewards of his world by having a positive impact on people's lives. And we do! Imagine for a moment what it would be like if Care's programs

"Jason" (a pseudonym), who only comes into the remote town of St George (population 2000) once a month, and so looks forward to his play time with other children. Or imagine being frail, elderly and without a family. Someone commented recently, "We have so many orphans in aged care!" That's reality for many of our aged care residents. But with our help, they soon feel part of a "family" again. Or, for a moment, be a young person in a difficult, if not desperate, family situation. Who cares? Who will help? We do. And our help makes a big difference in young lives every day.

It's true that many practical needs can be met by care given without the love of Christ. But what an opportunity for us as his body to be those "springs of living water" flowing out to a community of people who so desperately need to hear the Gospel. Yes, it's easy to answer the question, "If Churches of Christ Care ceased caring tomorrow, what difference would it make?". The results speak for themselves. And because the answer is so clear, we can move forward with confidence, knowing we are working out God's will for us as individuals and as his people.

Robynne Milne is Director of Development for Churches of Christ Care in Queensland.

Classifieds

Coffee Break Midlife Illusions

CAROL PRESTON

DIAMOND WEDDING

HAIGH, George and Ruby of Moonah Park Retirement Village, Mitchelton, Qld, give thanks to God for his love and goodness (Psalm 107:1) as they celebrate their Diamond Wedding anniversary on 1 October 1998.

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I'm more and more convinced that there is a need to reclaim the purpose, value and joys of middle age. Midlife does not have to be a crisis. But it does need to be a transition. If we do this well, we are well set up for later transitions to old age and death. While we continue to define life and ourselves in terms more suitable to the first half of life—



We have the opportunity to exemplify maturity and peace of mind in the face of loss and change.

Midlife can mark a move to more time for looking inward and completing our faith journey, time to reflect, learn from our own experience, draw close to God. There is more time for prayer, to come to a deep acceptance of ourselves and God's love for us. Midlife is time to face our deepest dependence on God, our readiness, even longing, to be with him. It is time to face that we are not in decline but in the natural movement toward what is essentially our calling, to be with our Father forever. It is a time for knowing that the sting of death is not the loss of life, but the loss of meaning, disappointment in life or a sense that it has been in vain.

This stage of life also brings us into a situation where we need to care for ourselves more and receive care from others. That can be a great learning and growth experience! It is a time when we have the opportunity to exemplify maturity and peace of mind in the face of loss and change. One of the gifts we give to those behind us is to assure them that moving on is OK. The beginning of healthy midlife transition is to work out what is truly, eternally important, and make it a priority every day. It will make a difference to every relationship in your life.

independence, power and productivity—we constrict our acceptable choices for the second half of life. And our relationships will stagnate instead of growing in new ways.

Midlife is a time for letting go, for relinquishing some roles, getting to know ourselves apart from producing, achieving, being in charge. It is time to focus on the quality of our love, for offering the coming generation what we know and have and are as spiritual guides, mentors, coaches, elders, grandparents and carers. It's time for embracing the learning and joys of later life. Illusions need to be discarded so we can move to a new stage of life with great anticipation and joy. There can be a greater appreciation and wonder at the beauty of the world, the small things we've overlooked in the rush.

Relationship Breakdown Separation and Divorce Recovery Workshop

6 Consecutive Tuesday Evenings
(7.45 – 10.00 pm)



Commences 13 October 1998.

Leader: Cheryl Johnson.

Cost: \$60.00.

Venue: Ivanhoe Church of Christ, Vic.

Inquiries: Mavis Uldrich (03) 9499 4155 or 0419 526 046.

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Two departures

10 October 1998 and 13 March 1999.

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Launceston, Cataract Gorge, Richmond, Hobart, Port Arthur, Gordon River cruise and more! Luxury motel accommodation.

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Depart 16 November 1998.

Christian Fellowship Tours

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Some Quality Documentaries

VINEY LONGTHORP

On the whole, television viewing has been made that much more worthwhile by the contributions of documentaries. Both the long series and the short have given us learning without tears. Who could forget the sheer excellence of Kenneth Clark's thirteen-part series, *Civilisation* or Jacob Bronowski's *Ascent of Man* (both in the

Watch and ponder. These creations are both symbol and metaphor of the society we live in.

1970s)? Then David Attenborough's infectious enthusiasm for nature documentaries had a deserved cult following in the 1980s. And did you see that excellent three-part series by Tim Flannery, *The Future Eaters*, in which he gave such a masterly understanding of the fragile nature of Australia's environment?

At present three first-class documentaries are being screened on ABC television. Even if you have missed the first few episodes of any of them, it is never too late to tune in, because each of the respective episodes is

complete in itself. Unlike some recent two-part murder-mysteries, there are no loose ends.

By popular demand, the four-part series *The Liners* is back on Saturdays at 6.00 pm. By the beginning of the twentieth century, these great vessels symbolised the growing technological and political rivalry between western nations. This ultimately resulted in the Great War. The rivalry at sea was displayed in the competition concerning who could cross the Atlantic in the shortest time. The ill-fated *Titanic* paid the price of speed at all costs by meeting an iceberg with a poor sense of timing.

Many of those liners were objects of great beauty, especially France's *Normandie*. Between the wars, in a volatile, changing world, these great transoceanic people movers became the conduit for further technological, social, and political change. In World War Two, Winston Churchill claimed that the huge carrying capacities of the *Queen Mary* and the *Queen Elizabeth* shortened the war by two years because of their role as troop carriers.

Some twenty years ago it seemed that air travel would render the liners obsolete, but now a new breed of huge proportions has emerged. Some of these behemoths are of 200,000 tons. (Or should it be tonnes?) Here are further means for the super-rich to declare their

wealth. If the *Titanic* was a floating luxury hotel, these newcomers are floating cities. They may need signs on board which read, "To the Sea."

Watch and ponder. These creations are both symbol and metaphor of the society we live in.

The Gamblers —Wednesday 9.30 pm. In case any of us are unaware of it, gambling in Australia is in the midst of a revolution. From a quaint cultural trait, it has become a national obsession driven by big business and revenue-hungry governments.

Today, there are more forms of legalised gambling here than anywhere else in the world, and Australians spend more of their personal incomes on betting than people in any other nation. Last year, \$80 billion dollars was turned over.

But it's not all glitz and glitter. For many, it is a devastating epidemic of addiction, family breakdown, crime, and suicide—social costs which no longer can be ignored.

This series provides a powerful insight into how these changes are touching people's lives, from high-rollers and industry insiders, to problem gamblers on the skids. The cast of characters includes a casino executive, a racetrack manager, professional punters and bookies, an anti-gambling crusader and some gambling addicts in big trouble.

Why watch this depressing story? Since most who read this are likely to oppose gambling on grounds of deeply held principles, it is best, at least, to know the enemy.

The Human Body—Thursday 9.30 pm. The presenter, Professor Robert Winston, is at once endlessly entertaining and deeply informed. This is a fasci-



nating series. So it should be, for it is all about us. Thanks to many modern medical technologies, such as the laser microscope, we are enabled to see the fine print of what we think we already know about our anatomies. Says our professor, "There is something unique about the human body that has made us the most powerful animal species on earth. All our triumphs stem from one thing—the human brain." As though we hadn't guessed! But in one episode, and for the first time on television, the cameras capture a single brain cell—or neuron—magnified 10,000 times, as it fires an electrical impulse. The facts presented are fascinating: the brain uses up one fifth of all the food we eat; as a brain cell fires, the electrical impulse travels at 400 km an hour; the brain is made up of 100 billion cells and together they can generate enough electricity to illuminate a light bulb. But beyond mere facts such as these we see many of these mechanisms at work. Other episodes examine in similar ways our hormones, skeletal structure, the processes of conception and gestation, and such like.

Whatever such a documentary teaches us factually, we come away with the awesome feeling of the psalmist that we are fearfully and wonderfully made.

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BAPTISMS

•Deanna Perry, Pine Rivers, Qld •Piya Jayakody, Springvale, Vic •Mara Maric, Scarborough, WA •Phillip Martin, Ann St, Brisbane, Qld

MARRIAGES

•Sara Randall and Isaac Moran, Scarborough, WA •Maree Rowlands and Mark Labinsky, Riverlands-Bli Bli, Qld •Kylie Armstrong and Justin Russell, Allison Pieper and Kevin Flett, Hume St, Toowoomba, Qld

DEATHS

•Fred Grace, Springvale, Vic •Arnold Cox, Riverlands-Bli Bli, Qld •Les McCredden, Oakleigh, Vic •Clive Fletcher, Hume St, Toowoomba, Qld

OBITUARIES

Obituaries are limited to 100 words
GRENFELL, Dorothy
(23.8.98) Dorothy was born 4.10.04 at Colac, Vic. She married Wilfred at Coburg in 1946. Wilfred died twelve years later. In 1920, Dorothy, a Moreland member, was active in helping to plant Coburg church. She attended Hinrichsen-Brooker tent missions, was active in girls' Cheerio Club, midweek prayer and Bible study groups, and pot-luck teas. She led Christian Endeavour, Ladies Guild and was a guiding influence setting up drop-in. In latter years, she was a member of church board, elder, wise counsellor on LMC, and provided hospitality for those meetings. A very loyal lady. Dorothy died peacefully at Fred Cambridge House. —DRM

WA

SCARBOROUGH (Nigel Merrick, Ken Doran) Wonderful sermons on Ephesians recently ... 50 attended church family camp. Great time for all ... "Operation Shoe Box" resulted in 150 boxes of gifts sent overseas to needy children ... Mara Maric baptised. Baptismal classes continuing ... Keith & Faith Croot, 60th Wedding Anniversary. Pat & May Howell, 40 Wedding Anniversary. Edie Prosser's 90th birthday. Vic Wiley 80th birthday. Peter Sharp engaged to Melissa Lueng.

VIC

SPRINGVALE (John Carmichael) John Carmichael's ministry extended for further 3 years ... Junior Church children raised \$140 for Bibles for Uganda ... Mission month focus held, realised \$6,219, \$1,419 over target ... Church celebrated 51st anniversary with luncheon ... 2 Doncaster young people shared their Fiji work party experiences

... School holiday club preparations well in hand ... Church luncheon to celebrate baptism of Piya Janakody.

TAS

LAUNCESTON (C. Spaulding, W. Kerrison, T. Gray, S. Fitzallen) Church voted to extend Wayne Kerrison's engagement until 2005 & make Steve Fitzallen's appointment full-time ... Proposed restructuring of the Board of deacons presented to 2 congregational meetings ... Healthy Living seminar led by Leicester & Pauline Jones 21-22 August.

NUBEENA (Keith Moulton) Ruth & Tom Edge shared with church 9 August ... Combined churches service 30 August, approximately 55 in attendance ... Team from WEC College, Launceston, worked with church & within community for two weeks. Special activities held were ladies coffee & craft mornings, school assembly, cross-cultural dinner, Bible studies on evangelism and puppets with Kid's Own.

CHURCHES OF CHRIST IN VIC/TAS

PRESIDENTS' RECEPTIONS



INTERNATIONAL CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

Friday 16th October 1998 8:00pm

COLAC

Friday 13th November 1998 8:00pm

SWAN HILL

Friday 20th November 1998 8:00pm

WARRAGUL

Gippland Gathering
Saturday 13th March 1999 1:00pm

DONCASTER

Friday 26th March 1999 8:00pm

COME AND MEET PEOPLE FROM OTHER CHURCHES &
CONFERENCE PRESIDENT: CHEK CHIA
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CONF. EXEC. OFFICER: LYNETTE LEACH

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Box Hill Church of Christ

14 Court St, Box Hill Vic 3128

invites expressions of interest from suitably experienced and skilled people for a two day per week position as

Children's Ministry Coordinator

commencing early 1999.

The Children's Ministry Coordinator will report to the Senior Minister and elders and will be responsible for the further development of an established children's ministry. The successful applicant, with the support of a team of volunteers, will minister to children (up to the age of twelve years) and their families.

The successful applicant will be, or become a member of the Box Hill Church of Christ and will have excellent organisational, interpersonal and communication skills, a proven love for and commitment to children, and the flexibility to work within a ministry team. Special skills in music and drama will be an added advantage.

Further details can be obtained from the Senior Minister, John Williamson. Phone (03) 9873 4731.

Church News

NSW

LOWER BLUE MOUNTAINS (Stephen Templeton) Completed extra parking ... Change of house usage for ministry at cost of \$30,000 ... Sound system upgraded ... Church presently considering purchase of adjoining property for future growth ... Greater emphasis on missions developing with \$2,105 given away during August ... 186 regular attenders.

QLD

PINE RIVERS (Neale Proellocks, Mick Cross) Church encouraged by visitors returning ... 4 new members welcomed ... Parenting Teens seminars held ... "Cafe One" program Sunday evenings a huge success ... Week of Prayer held September, also Family Fun day ... Ladies enjoy ten pin bowling night ... Sermon series on Ephesians jointly studied by home groups during week ... Members continue supporting distribution of *Jesus* video.

BURLEIGH HEADS (Jim Newton) Church started a new era 13 September when Jim Newton and wife Heather were welcomed by a packed church followed by BBQ lunch. Representatives from federal, & state governments, council & Qld Conference present. Induction conducted by W. Thorburn of Southport & service presided over by chairperson Fred Sharp. A memorable occasion for all.

ANN ST, BRISBANE (W.J. Flett) AGM held 23 August. T. Vincent & C. Colston re-elected deacons. Ray Smith relinquished eldership after 13 years ... Lyle & Hazel Morris guest speakers at special focus on Aboriginal-Islander church work ... Social raised \$144 for "Bibles for Uganda" ... 115 anniversary celebrated 13 September. Adrian Risson (Redcliffe) guest speaker. Many former members present ... Youth group participated in community fundraising.

RIVERLANDS-BLI BLI (David Allan, Alan Leane) In 27 months since formation of Riverlands, membership has

grown to 66, with attendances in the 90s ... David Allan appointed to full-time pastorate ... An inspired weekend under ministry of world-renowned Dr Steve Kumar ... 26 members training to distribute the *Jesus* video ... Strong support given to local high school chaplaincy & Living Link missionaries in Fiji ... Ladies missionary morning raised \$376.

HUME ST, TOOWOOMBA (Dale White, Ross Savill) Church participated in City

Celebration Service at Empire Theatre. 1,300 people attended from many denominations ... Morning services averaging over 400 ... Youth worship choir launched ... 20 small groups operating through the week ... "Christianity Explained" courses each school term seeing many people make commitments to Christ ... Playgroups held 3 mornings each week. Lunchtime playgroup being trialed for term 4 to cope with growing numbers.

WYNNUM (Charles Cole) Two ladies welcomed into active & associate membership ... AGM reports revealed all auxiliaries healthy & over one third of members attend prayer & Bible study ... Several members, including Kids' Club leader recovering from serious illness & open-heart surgery ... Minister & elders visit many with communion ... Gift of refrigerator (\$1,000 plus) for Normanton ... Guest speaker Alan Hermann.

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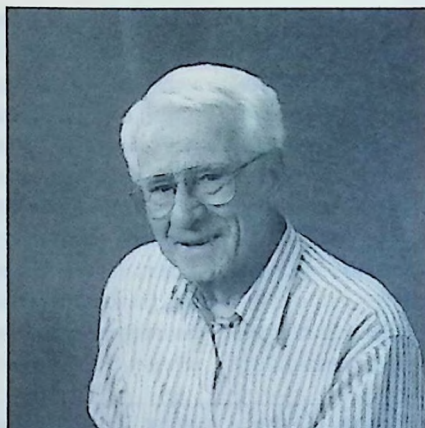
Post to: Churches of Christ Overseas Aid
180a Gray St, ADELAIDE SA 5000.

What's in a Name?

GORDON STIRLING

A lady who joined the Canberra Church of Christ was always confused by the name, calling it Christ Church. I wonder how she would have managed if we had been the Old Light Anti-Burgher Faction of the Seceder Branch of the National Presbyterian Church of Scotland. That was the church into whose ministry Thomas Campbell was ordained on his graduation from university. He was appointed to the parish of Ahorey in Ireland, where his famous son Alexander was born. In 1807, Thomas went to the United States with all the right credentials, but with misgivings about the narrowness of his church and doubts about its Calvinism that said that only the "elect" could be saved. He was given an itinerant pastorate to scattered congregations in South Pennsylvania. He was also given a young assistant, William Wilson, whose main function was to check the soundness of this foreigner and report to the Presbytery.

Wilson listened to Campbell week after week and detected signs that the generous-hearted Thomas leaned towards the idea of all believers being eligible for the Kingdom, rather than just the elect few. But the part of Wilson's report that staggered the Presbytery was that Thomas Campbell had offered communion to other Presbyterians than the Old Light Seceder Anti-Burghers. After a seven-day trial, Campbell was suspended from the ministry. He appealed the decision to the General Synod, which "rebuked and admonished" him but restored



him to the ministry. The local Presbytery had to accept the Synod's ruling, but responded by simply failing to give him a preaching appointment, which effectively closed all pulpits against him.

But the Presbytery didn't count on a large number of its thinking laymen who also had problems with Calvinism. They arranged meetings in their homes where Campbell was invited to share his understanding that Christ died for all, and not just the elect; that human creeds should not be binding; and that the communion table should be open to all believers.

In 1809, some thirty of these people formed what was called "The Christian Association of Washington" (Pennsylvania), open to all like-minded believers.

Later, they became a church, meeting at Brush Run, adopting the biblical name of "Disciples of Christ".

The Last Word

Painless change happens only in fairy tales.

—Laura Schlessinger

43.3% of statistics are meaningless!

It said, "Insert disk #3", but only two will fit.

Which is the non-smoking lifeboat?

Originality is the art of concealing your sources.

Paper clips are the larval stage of coat hangers.

Treat each day as your last. One day you will be right.

Five out of four people have trouble with fractions.

The buck doesn't even slow down here!

Don't assume malice for what stupidity can explain.

The only cure for insomnia is to get more sleep.

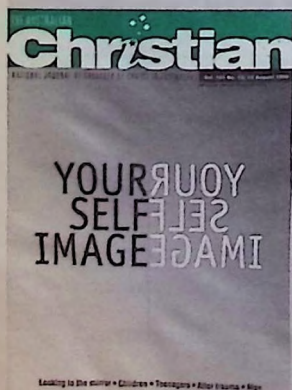
Advice is free. The right answer will cost plenty.

Pontius' Puddle



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