

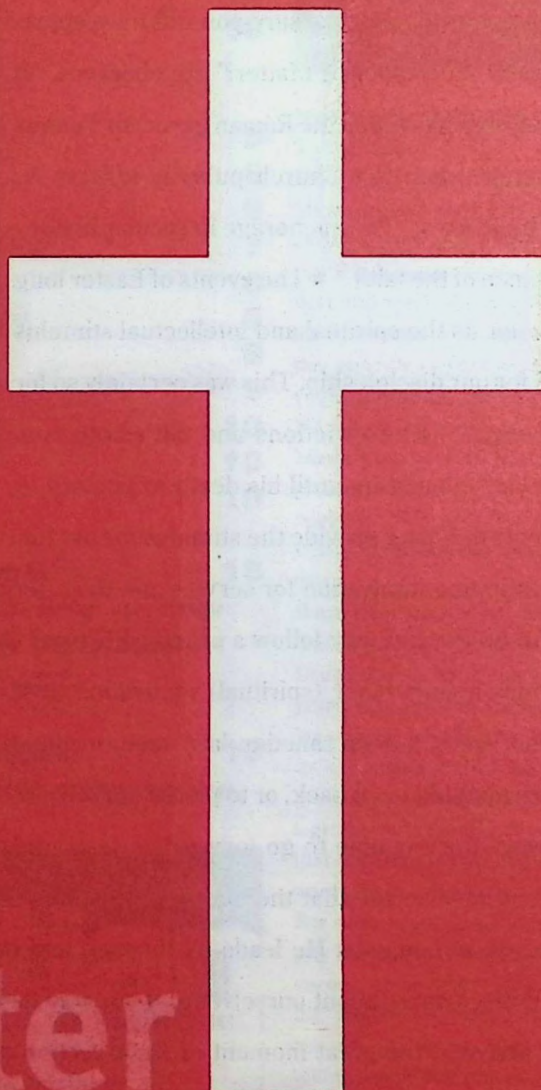
THE AUSTRALIAN

Christian

NATIONAL JOURNAL OF CHURCHES OF CHRIST IN AUSTRALIA

Vol. 101 No. 5, 8 April 1998

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Easter

Too often Christians have insisted upon the historicity of Jesus' resurrection without ever asking the question, "What does a risen Jesus mean for the way we live together as Christians in the world?" Greg Elsdon

Editor: Don Smith, Production Manager/Sub Editor: Nigel Pegram Issue 29 April Deadline 16 April; Issue 13 May Deadline 29 April; Issue 27 May Deadline 14 May. Address for all correspondence: PO Box 101, Essendon North Vic 3041. Telephone (03) 9379 1219, Fax (03) 9379 0015. E-mail: aceeditor@ozemail.com.au. Member of the Australian Religious Press Association. The Australian Christian is published by the Board of Management of The Australian Christian, a Department of the National Conference of Churches of Christ in Australia. Keith Aird, Chairman (SA); Lindsay Mott, Treasurer (Vic); John Batchler (Tas); Tom Glynn (NSW); Bev Grenfell (Qld); Lea Nelson (ACT); Allen Smyth (WA). Printed by New Litho Pty Ltd, 63 Sunbury Crescent, Surrey Hills Vic 3127. Responsibility for electoral material is accepted by Don Smith, 2 Larkspur Ave, Doncaster 3108. This publication is indexed in the Australasian Religion Index. ISSN 0004-8852. Advertising Rates: Displayed: \$6.00 per column centimetre, Classifieds: \$15.00 for the first 25 words and 25c for each additional word.



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Editorial

Easter Faith

DON SMITH

If you have been reading Lesslie Newbigin's articles in our last three issues, I'm sure you will have appreciated "Does What Happened Matter?" He observes, "It is enormously important that the Roman governor Pontius Pilate is named when the Church publicly affirms its faith." Newbigin says, "The anchorage in secular history is the substance of the faith." * The events of Easter long ago become for us the spiritual and intellectual stimulus and ground for our discipleship. This was certainly so for Lesslie Newbigin. His convictions and faith both constrained and sustained him until his death in January. *



The two events of Easter provide the stimulus for our journey. For me the death of Jesus has been the continuing motivation for service and the offering of oneself in whatever field we feel called to follow. But why follow a crucified Christ? One important response is that his death provides a deep inner (spiritual) motivation to service and the offering of oneself. There is, as it were, a deep sanction laid upon our life through the example of his death. When we are tempted to go back, or to please ourselves or to be careless about discipleship, there is always the example to go forward as Jesus did, even to his crucifixion. * In the death of Jesus we also see that the one who is at the very centre of the universe has also experienced dark moments. He leads us through and out of these experiences into new insights and discoveries about ourselves and our way forward. * When we come to Easter Sunday we arrive at the great moment of Resurrection discovery and truth. Here we can identify with pilgrims through all the centuries and receive the news of the day and go forward in hope. The pilgrimage will always present its doubts and difficulties and diversions. Similar experiences were also the lot of Jesus. But to face them we have the Resurrection. The personal implications of the Resurrection are fundamental for us. But I believe the message of hope and transformation and change is much bigger again and speaks to the church and to us about potential for the future, hope for our society, our world and the universe. That is the Easter faith! *



Easter

A significant event in the Christian year. Our writers provide many perspectives.

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Ralph Petty provides some help on how to take worthwhile photos for inclusion with articles sent to the "AC".

Shoot the Messenger 19

An update on a mission into cyberspace.

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.

Harm Minimisation

To the Editor,
First, let me congratulate you on bringing the drug debate into the church. A research paper from the UK has just landed on my desk this week showing that use of illicit drugs by young people in the church is very similar to young people outside the church. We are not immune and we must increase our understanding of this problem. However, I feel I must reply to Bob Aldred's article ("AC" 25.3.98) on harm minimisation.

Harm minimisation has been the foundation-stone of the National Drug Strategy for the past twelve years. By now, we should be seeing some positive results. Instead, we are seeing the drug problem grow. Harm minimisation is an illogical, poorly thought out theory, that in reality is the first step towards liberalising drug laws.

For some years now, the community has supported a program to encourage people to stop smoking. We are not using harm minimisation in this campaign, we are telling people that smoking is dangerous. We know that the majority of young people do not use drugs, why then are we telling them that there is a safe way to use, when this will only assist them to believe that these drugs cannot be all that dangerous? We should be reinforcing the message that drugs are dangerous.

We will never eliminate drug use, any more than we will eliminate

drivers speeding or people stealing things. That does not mean, however, that we tell them that they can safely speed, or safely steal. Nobody wants to see people die from drug use, but we certainly don't want to see more young people using drugs because of wrong information. Harm minimisation needs to be seen for what it really is.

—Warwick Murphy
DRUG-ARM Vic Inc

Support the 40 Hour Famine

To the Editor,
I have had the privilege of meeting and working with World Vision staff and I am deeply impressed with their commitment to Christ and to seeing his kingdom of love and justice extended here on earth.

World Vision is a tremendous Christian organisation which seeks to put into practice the words of Jesus about loving our neighbours as ourselves in a broken and suffering world. Its ministry in such desperately needy places as Lebanon, Cambodia, Rwanda and Sudan has my wholehearted support.

My daughters and I have participated in the 40 Hour Famine in the past and will be doing so again this year on 12-14 June. We believe this is one creative way to express our solidarity with those for whom famine is almost a permanent state of being.

May I urge your readers to support the 40 Hour Famine by either going without food for the 40 hours, or sponsoring others to do so. This is a practical way of experiencing some deprivation for a short while and, more important, providing much-needed funding for World Vision's strategic work among the world's poor.

—Michael Frost
(Eastwood, NSW)

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Letters to the Editor

Parochialism

To the Editor.

The NSW Conference Handbook for 1997 shows slow, but steady growth in the statistics for attendance, membership, faith and baptism, and communicants from 1974 to 1992.

In September 1992, the NSW Conference administrative structure was changed by resolution of a special Conference. While the strategic intention of this change was never made clear, the short-term aim seemed to be to produce a leaner, more managerial structure by the elimination of direct local church representation on Conference committees. There was much talk about putting resources back into local churches. Since 1992, there has been a steady decline in the aforementioned statistics and it appears that giving to the work of Conference has also diminished. While these developments may have been coincidental, it is difficult not to draw the conclusion that there is a connection between how we see ourselves collectively and how we fare locally.

—Harold E. Hayward
(Pymble, NSW)

Unleavened Bread

To the Editor,

Two words are used for bread in the New Testament. One is *artos*, the other is *azumos*. The latter is the word used when unleavened bread is referred to. The former is the word used for normal everyday bread (see Mark 8:4, 14, 17; Acts 2:46, where the reference is to a meal together; Luke 4:3, 11:11; John 6:5, 21:9; Acts 27:35; 2 Cor 9:10; 2 Thess 3:8; etc).

It is true that the Israelites in the Passover had strict instructions concerning many things, especially the unleavened bread. 1 Cor 5 picks up this issue and brings it to a practical aspect of living. We are called to live unleavened lives—lives free from sin. Jesus often used this terminology, beware of the leaven of ... In these days of justifying every association and activity we become involved with in the world as Christians, we ought to remember we are called upon to live separate lives. In 1 Cor 11 the stress is upon the "wholeness of the loaf" and our individual participation, rather than the unleavened character of the bread.

Rather than the symbol of sin not being in the bread, the more important issue is that sin ought not to be in our lives. Let's not miss the real point. The bread is also only a symbol.

—Graeme Ellingsen
(Gympie, Qld)

Update

Dear readers,

Our guest and regular feature writers have presented us with some significant reflections for Easter. I'm sure you will find their contributions stimulating as you come to this great point in the Christian calendar. Our cover features a quotation from the text of a new book being written by Greg Elsdon, the Principal of CCTC, Mulgrave. Greg has been writing this book while on study leave. We gather he is making good progress with the writing. You will be hearing more about this book in due course.

We recently sent our congratulations to Patricia Case, the newly appointed editor of *The Disciple*. This paper is the monthly magazine of the Disciples of Christ—one of our family of churches in the US. It was good to receive her warm response and some interesting reflections on the background to the three streams of our Movement in the US.

On 4 April we shall be holding our annual meeting of the Board of *The Australian Christian*. This event brings together representatives from all states and the ACT. We look forward to the

presence of our two new representatives from Queensland and the ACT, both of whom we have introduced to readers this year. Bob Smith will also be present as the recently appointed National Coordinator. Keith Aird of SA is the chairman.

Nigel Pegram, our sub-editor and production manager, is taking the first steps towards creating a web site on the Internet. We will keep you informed of progress. Readers may also be interested to know that we have an increasing contact with our office by e-mail. Transmission of articles and photographs is now quite common.

Our next issue will be in three weeks' time.

The next issue will carry a focus on New South Wales. From the comments thus far, I'm sure readers will appreciate the contribution that is being prepared. The Literature Department received a cheque and order for books from "BP & VM Butler". No address was supplied. Any information from readers would be appreciated.

Sam Smith



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A Lifesaver

Young Western Australian leads the way in saving people's lives

WA's Shani Dodd enjoys life-saving, having earned her bronze medallion, but it is through her involvement with World Vision that her life-saving efforts have made the most impact.

Shani, 16, of Doubleview, attends the Scarborough Church of Christ. Although she is only in Year 11, Shani is already a leader of World Vision's attempts to tackle poverty through the world's young people.

In mid-March, Shani attended the World Vision Youth Convention, and will help to coordinate the World Vision 40 Hour Famine at her school—Kingsway Christian College.

Shani said the Youth Convention helped her to understand that Australia really is a lucky country. "I was surprised at some of the poverty we witnessed on the videos—we were shown evidence of child labour and it's pretty shocking."

Already a two-time 40 Hour Famine veteran, Shani appealed to schools and youth groups to throw their support behind this year's Famine. "It's easy to do, yet it's very beneficial. We have so much more materially than people in the developing world."

Shani said that although poverty was an astronomical problem worldwide, it was still possible to

make a difference:

"If we work together we have the capacity to change things, for sure," she said.

This year's 40 Hour Famine aims to raise \$6.2 million across Australia. The money raised will be used to help save lives in countries devastated by wars, disaster and poverty. It will allow World Vision to respond immediately to emergencies, and support relief and development projects around the world.

The 1998 40 Hour Famine begins at 8.00 pm on Friday, 12 June and ends at noon on Sunday, 14 June. For information phone the Famine Hotline on 13 32 40.



Shani Dodd, Lifesaver

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College Open House

CCTC, Mulgrave, begins its 92nd year

In the old days at the College of the Bible it used to be called the Garden Party. Now it's Open House. In my day (1976), all the new students were full-timers and we formed a line of introduction across the verandah of Campbell Edwards House. Some irreverently called it a "cattle parade"! Times are changing. Even as I write this, the bobcats are clearing up the rubble of the old Chapel at Glen Iris.

This year, seventeen students commenced the new Youth Ministry course, which is offered as a specialist ministry formation program, alongside other Diploma of Ministry opportunities for training in leadership and pastoral care.

Fifteen other students have commenced study in the B.Theol. degree, with a further six students commencing Honours programs this semester. This represents a



Alan Niven, lecturer, reflects on his years at the college

further year of full-time study. Other students are undertaking post-graduate study for the first time.

Several students are in the process of transferring from previous part- and full-time study, into the ordained ministry stream, for endorsed ministry in Churches of Christ. The College community enters its 92nd year of service with a total enrolment of 101 students.

—Alan Niven

Here and There

Haggai Institute

New leaders involved in advanced leadership training and the graduates of Australia's first Haggai Institute National Aboriginal Seminar were introduced at the Haggai Institute Annual meeting in Sydney. The event came as the climax of Australia's first national training seminar, the Haggai Institute National Aboriginal Seminar, held 1-6 June 1997 in NSW. The participants, 43 Aboriginal church leaders, heard lectures from Aboriginal graduates of the H.I. Training Institute and members of the H.I. staff, as well as morning devotions by Mr Monti Ohia from New Zealand.

"From Me to You"

Third-world Christians to World Convention



Beth Butler

The Year 2000 will bring people from all over the world to the World Convention of Churches of Christ in Brisbane. The Australian Committee is encouraging Australian Churches of Christ to raise funds to assist people from Third-World countries who cannot afford to attend.

One of the Australian Committee's fund-raising projects is the publishing and sale of a book of poems, *From Me to You*, by Marion, SA, member, Beth Butler. They hope to raise up to \$3000 from it. Beth is a daughter of the late Lesley Stirling, many of whose poems were published and are in the homes of hundreds of our members. Around about the time that Lesley's dementia robbed her

of her poetic gift, Beth discovered that she had a verse writing talent and has pursued it.

She is a "folk poet" with the same wide gamut of human feelings that we all have, so we quickly recognise them as she "sings" about them to her readers. She feels with us the same pains and frustrations, but she does not leave us wallowing in them, because faith and hope and love, and her incorrigible sense of humour, come through to us.

Prior to the Calgary Convention, Beth was on the Alaskan Highway Tour and was so moved by the experience that she expressed her feelings in verse. Her poem was printed and readily sold to her fellow travellers, raising the first \$200 for the Third-World Fund. On her return home, still more poems were added to her collection until *From Me to You* was completed.

From Me to You will be sold at World Convention promotional meetings and at state Conferences for \$10.00. It is available now at \$12 (posted) from the World Convention President, Ron Brooker, "Maldon Farm", St Heliers Road, The Gurdies Vic 3984.



Help Make the News!

"By including 'The Australian Christian' in your will, you can help make the news for years to come. A bequest will help ensure that your newspaper continues to provide news and information to our future readers."

—Lindsay Mott, Treasurer

A bequest to The Australian Christian can be made through your solicitor or contact us for the appropriate wording.

The Luckiest Boy at the Olympics!

Ian Muir receives two mementos from medallists at "the Games"

Ian Muir, 13, who has Down's Syndrome, was probably the luckiest boy who was at the Olympic Winter Games in Nagano. He is a pupil at the Norwegian school in Kobe, Japan, and went

on a school trip to the Olympics together with 20 others. After the Victory Ceremony on 18 February, some Japanese ladies asked him if he wanted the silver medallist in the Biathlon, Frode Andresen's hat. He had thrown it to the public. "I said, yes", Ian tells, with smiles all over his face. The other pupils at the school also wanted the hat, but Ian was the lucky one! He also got a bouquet that one of the medallists had thrown to the fans.

"Norway won at least twice in cross country. Afterwards we went cheering with our Norwegian flags, almost the same as we do on 17 May, Norway's national day. It was great fun to look at them skiing. I didn't go skiing in Nagano, but at our ski camp at Hiruzen I did ski," said Ian. And we can say that Ian has become very good at skiing, although he hasn't lived much in Norway. (In Norway we like to think that we were born with skis on our legs!) Together with his family he has lived mostly in Korea and Japan.

If you think that Ian only cheered for Norway, you have to think twice: "Japan won the ski jump team competition. Then they cried, but I was happy!" As the world citizen he truly is, with a Norwegian mother, an Australian father, born in Korea and living in Japan, Ian has to cheer for many countries!

Ian doesn't only like winter sports. He is also a devoted sumo fan and watches eagerly every time there is a tournament. Ian is looking forward to the next one in March. He also likes to do sumo wrestling himself, but he does not beat his teacher! What does he think about the sumo wrestlers who went in front of each country at the Opening Ceremony? "Lucky guys!" he replies.

Who he thinks the lucky guys are, the sumo wrestlers or the winter athletes, is unknown.

"We stayed in a church and that was great. When we drove in the car I played with my Gameboy. I like that! We also went to an *Ofuro*



Ian Muir, with the hat and flowers from Games medallists

(Japanese bath) and it was really big. I haven't been many times to such baths, so I really enjoyed it. Once, when I was a little boy, I swallowed water in an *Ofuro* and then I had to throw up afterwards. Poor me!"

We don't doubt the incident. After the show Ian demonstrated what happened. He is a real comedian and freshens up the days at the Norwegian school.

I thank Ian for the interview and I am glad to have such a nice pupil. "Come on Ian! Come on Norway! Come on Japan!" Come on Australia!

—Elin Ann Øvensen

[Elin is a teacher at the Norwegian school. Ian is the son of Neville and Lill Muir, missionaries to the deaf in Japan and associate missionaries of Australian Churches of Christ.]

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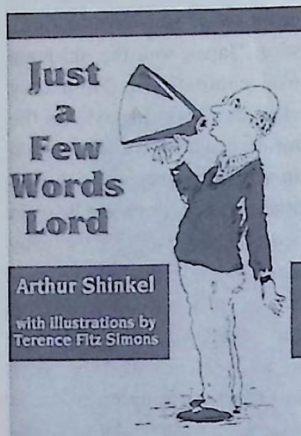
Two Melbourne stores to stock complete Vital range

Vital Publications, the imprint of the National Literature Department of Churches of Christ in Australia, has announced that two Melbourne Christian bookshops, Celebration Books and New Horizon Books, now carry a full range of Vital Publications. This is a first move by the National Literature Department to embark on new developmental initiatives.

Stan McCredden, the newly-appointed representative for Vital Publications, is directing these new moves. Stan is looking to develop Vital Publications nationwide. He commenced with the Department on a part-time basis in February. He also serves as a consultant to Youth Vision, Vic, the youth ministry arm of the Victorian-Tasmanian Conference. To add to his interests, Stan has been appointed the President Elect of the Conference. He commences this role in May.

Celebration Books is a recent initiative by the Swanston St, Melbourne, church. The shop is adjacent to the Melbourne Central shopping complex and a short walk from the Museum rail station. It is attracting an increasing number of buyers and others inquiring about Christianity. The manager, Ian Pugsley, is enthusiastic about Vital's publications.

Stella Crabb manages New Horizon Books, located at the Monash City church, adjacent to the Glen Waverley shopping area. Like Ian Pugsley, she has warmly responded to the increasing number of Vital books, which add to the growing range of books, cards and music offered by both shops. Celebration Books is open from noon to 8.00 pm weekdays, New Horizons from 10.00 am to 4.00



Just a Few Words, Lord, one of the titles now stocked by Celebration Books and New Horizon Books

pm each weekday and 10.00 am to 1.00 pm Saturdays.

Here and There

Catholics Commit to Work with Others

The Catholic bishops of Australia have released a letter to all Australians to mark the coming of the Great Jubilee in the Year 2000, marking the 2000th anniversary of the birth of Jesus Christ. Included in the statement is the expressed hope that in the years ahead the great failures of division among Christians in the Second Millennium may be overcome. The bishops have expressed a commitment to working with other churches through state ecumenical bodies, local ecumenical committees and the National Council of Churches in Australia. Recent statistics from the 1996 census, now place the Roman Catholic Church as Australia's largest religious denomination.

Growth in Church and Ministry

New team for Dandenong



Dandenong's ministry team, Martin Rees, Jack Edwards and Brian White

To help cope with growth and respond to new opportunities, Dandenong Church of Christ, Vic, has taken a step of faith and

added two part-time ministers to work in a team with Brian White.

Jack Edwards, a semi-retired minister, will work one day a week as the pastor to the senior members of the church and support a newly-formed seniors group.

Martin Rees, who has just returned from 14 years' ministry in New Zealand, will work two days a week with youth, and young married and single adults.

Church attendance has increased by 40%, with most of the growth occurring with young families. The church is in good heart and making plans for a bright future.

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Sunstate 98

Details of annual Queensland conference announced

Robert Warwick, Queensland Conference President, has announced details of the Sunstate 98 Conference to be held in Boonah, 8-10 October. Speakers are Alan Meyer of Mt Evelyn, Vic, church, Peter Corney, minister of St. Hilary's Anglican Church, Kew, Vic, and Peter Woodcock from the UK. The Sunstate 98 conference will follow recent conferences in 1996 and 1997 which have received outstanding support and have been highly acclaimed by participants. Rod Foster, the General Secretary of the Conference, in commenting on the speakers says they will bring outstanding gifts to the Conference.

Alan Meyer is the minister of the largest Australian Churches of Christ congregation with attendances over 1000 each Sunday. The church has developed a significant recovery ministry with many groups and people involved. Contemporary worship is also a major congregational emphasis.



Robert Warwick, Queensland Conference President

Peter Corney will lead thinking on the shape of the church in the 21st century. He is widely acknowledged as a presenter on this theme. In earlier years he held leadership roles in evangelism in the Diocese of Melbourne. Peter is currently the Executive Director of the Arrow Leadership Program, a national initiative to identify and train younger leaders. Peter Woodcock is from London. He has worked in earlier years in a palliative care hospital, on the streets of London as a counsellor for alcoholics and other addicts, and has subsequently been acknowledged as a Bible expositor and powerful Gospel preacher.

Think

Concentrate on one-at-a-time.

Whenever possible, choose the route of incremental change.

If the goal is to expand the women's organisation, it may be wise to add one circle every year rather than attempting to completely restructure the entire organisation.

—Lyle Schaller,
Strategies for Change

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Changes at Mildura

New ministry and upgrades to facilities

Another chapter in the 108 year history of the church was commenced on 8 February 1998, when Simon Risson was inducted into ministry.

The service was led by CCTC, Mulgrave, Vic, Principal, Dr Greg Elsdon. The sermon was preached by Simon's father, Roger Risson, currently minister of the Noarlunga Centre, SA, church. The laying on of hands was carried out by representatives of the various ministries of the church. Other representatives of the congregation presented the symbols of ministry.



Simon Risson, Mildura's new minister

A large number remained for the fellowship lunch in the church hall as an opportunity to meet Simon and Andrea.

This also provided the opportunity to officially open the new kitchen. Since last October a team of volunteers has been working three days a week with retired builder and member, Doug Clark, to remodel the no longer needed platform of the church hall into a new kitchen facility. The old kitchen had served the church for 35 years, when it was built to service a church of less than 100. The new kitchen will service a church community of 300+. Some 700 volunteer hours were contributed by a group of workers.

The Risson ministry follows a successful interim ministry by Tom and Ruth Edge, from Penguin, Tasmania. The Edges commenced their ministry in April 1996, expecting to serve the church to the end of the year when a new minister would be engaged. Tom and Ruth were gracious in extending their availability until December 1997.

Here and There

World Council of Churches Australian Delegates

Ian Allsop, Vic, and Jenni Ashton, WA, have been appointed as the two delegates to represent Australian Churches of Christ at the Eighth Assembly of the World Council of Churches to be held in Harare, the capital of Zimbabwe, 3-14 December 1998. The National Council of Churches paper *In Unity* announced the delegates appointed by Anglican and Uniting Churches and Churches of Christ. Australians may also appear in the delegations of the Orthodox Churches, to be named by their overseas authorities. Among the NCCA members churches, The Salvation Army, the Society of Friends and the Roman Catholic Church do not belong to the WCC. The Harare Assembly will mark 50 years since the first Assembly held in Amsterdam in 1948.

Christian Tortured in Egypt

Amnesty reports on allegations of religious intolerance

On 4 January 1998 Mohammad Hussein Mohammad Ibrahim Sallam was arrested at Cairo airport. His crime was to have converted from Islam to Christianity. He was released from detention on the night of 9 January and left Egypt the following day. He alleges he was tortured during the first two days of his detention in the Gaber Ibn Hayyan branch of the State Security Investigations Department (SSI) in Giza. He claimed he was beaten with fists and kicked by SSI officers for several hours while blindfolded and threatened with rape. SSI officers also threatened to have him divorced from his wife and that they would prevent him from leaving the country.

Mohammad and his British wife live in Lebanon and were in Egypt for a two-week holiday. Mohammad had been previously arrested, together with two other Christian converts, in September 1990 and detained for nine months during which time they were allegedly tortured.

In recent years there have been a number of cases of Christians in Egypt who have converted from Islam have been detained and tortured apparently for the non-violent expression of their beliefs. Lawyers and local human rights groups have lodged hundreds of complaints of torture with the Public Prosecutor's Office, but it is believed that no impartial investigations have been conducted. In May 1996 the United Nations Committee Against Torture issued a report summarizing the results of a confidential inquiry carried out since 1991 over a period

of five years. It concluded "torture is systematically practiced by the Security Forces in Egypt, in particular by State Security Intelligence". The Committee urged the Egyptian Government to "make particular efforts to prevent its security forces from acting as a State within a State, for they seem to escape control by superior authorities". The UN Committee Against Torture recommended that the Egyptian Government set up an independent body to investigate allegations of torture. The Egyptian Government has yet to implement any of the recommendations made by the Committee. Amnesty International has issued a letter writing action on behalf of Mohammad Hussein Mohammad Ibrahim Sallam, calling for the Egyptian authorities to investigate the allegations of torture made by him and bring those responsible to justice. Anyone interested in writing letters on behalf of Mohammad should contact the Amnesty International Victorian Branch on (03) 9427 7055 and ask for the Urgent Action with the AI Index MDE 12/03/98. Those interested in taking an on-going role in the defense of the human rights of religious believers should also ask about Amnesty International's Religious Network (AIRN).

—Kristina and Mark Zirnsak, AIRN Representatives

Mitchie Church

Stone placed marking part of our history

The Mitchie Church of Christ flourished from 1890–1909 in Victoria's West Wimmera region. The dedication of the members has recently been remembered by the Kaniva Historical Society in a small memorial to mark the location of the long gone Leeor East Primary School, in which the congregation met.

Kaniva Church of Christ historian and local Historical Society member, Doug Wallis, reports that the Society recently recognised the historic site along with a number of others in the district. *The Jubilee History of Churches of Christ*, published in 1903, reports that the Mitchie church met weekly at 2.30 pm, and reported a member-



Marking the meeting place of the Mitchie, Vic, church

ship of 20, eight additions by baptism and a Sunday school of 30, in this small rural community some 15 km south west of Kaniva.

Minister in Gaol

Disciples minister protests "misuse" of military base

Disciples of Christ minister Kenneth Kennon of Tuscon, Arizona, USA, has begun a six-month stay in a Texas prison. He was among 25 persons sentenced to federal prison terms following a peaceful demonstration in November 1997 concerning unlawful re-entry to a US military installation. The installation has received widespread criticism for its use as a training ground for Latin Ameri-

can military leaders. Critics allege the School of the Americas program is responsible for widespread human rights abuses in several Central and South American locales. The protest on 16 November last marked the anniversary of the assassination of six Jesuit priests and two women at the University of Central America in San Salvador. The soldiers charged with the deaths reportedly were trained at the School. Kenneth Kennon also received a \$3000 fine. He is married and has five children and fifteen grandchildren. His local church, the Regional Minister and his family are strongly supportive of his stance. (Disciples News Service)

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Easter

The Cross Provides

GRAHAM AGNEW

“O My God! That’s a bit too real!”

The audible expression by the gentleman sitting behind me was representative of how most of the five thousand strong audience members felt. It was July 1990 and I was at the Oberammergau Passion Play in Bavaria, Germany.

The crucifixion scene was without doubt the most graphic of its kind I had ever witnessed. In keeping with every aspect of Oberammergau, it was designed to stir one’s emotion to the very core. Over the years I have used the crucifixion to highlight a number of

For some inexplicable reason, it seemed to stand out as a powerful contrast to the doctrines espoused by the other signs.

important themes in contemporary society:

The Cross Provides Purpose

On a winter’s evening in 1992 I drove into the US city of Las Vegas right on dusk. What an awesome sight, with hundreds of neon signs bursting into life. These gaudy signs advertising everything from opulent casinos to tacky “drive in” wedding chapels seemed to scream out the philosophy of this city, which basically asserts that you can get all you want in life with no effort, no commitment and no endurance. It’s all about the quick fix and the painless way to success.

Suddenly, right out of nowhere there appeared a simple, white neon cross on top of a Lutheran Church. For some

inexplicable reason, it seemed to stand out as a powerful contrast to the doctrines espoused by the other signs.

The cross of Christ at Easter is a strong reminder that purpose and fulfilment in life are to be found in giving and not getting. (Matt 16:24–25)

The Cross Provides Perspective

The biggest cross I have ever seen is in Adelaide. It’s a giant cross featured on the side of a 40 story building which once housed the State Bank of South Australia. The effect of the cross is created when lights on certain floors are left on overnight, forming the shape of this huge cross.

The particular moment which I am recalling happened at the height of the State Bank collapse, an event which rocked the SA economy and political scene to its foundations. The collapse brought down a Government and intensified the level of cynicism and pessimism among the people of Adelaide.

From a vantage point as I looked toward the “State Bank Cross”, I could not help but think that the man who hung on the cross 2000 years ago talked a lot about money, taxes, debts, loans and financial management in general. He constantly warned his followers about the dangers of depending on the material world for security and satisfaction.

In these days when materialism is rampant and many people seem more dollar driven than ever, the cross of Christ provides us with a powerful reminder that while economic fortunes may rise and fall, the long term plans of God are unfolding and ultimately his will is going to prevail. (1 Cor 1:23–25)

The Cross Provides a Pathway

“What street your hotel in?” inquired the bus driver in broken English, with a rather embarrassed look on his face. It was dark and we were in the outer



metropolitan area of Los Angeles, having enjoyed an all-day sightseeing tour. Sure we knew the name of our hotel, but who remembers the address, especially when you’re away from home and have entrusted yourself into the hands of a “local”?

The driver confessed that he was new to the job and did not know the area well. We were prepared for some inconvenience while this man radioed to base, when all of a sudden, I saw it! There it was way off in the distance, positioned on top of a thirteen story building and rising ninety feet into the sky. It was the amazing neon cross on top of the Crystal Cathedral’s Tower of Hope. That’s where we want to go!” I called, knowing that our motel was just near the Cathedral. That night the cross had taken us home and that’s what it does for everyone who is lost on the freeways of life. (Col 1:21)

Easter is a wonderful season for evangelism because the cross of Christ speaks directly to the deepest needs of modern men and women.

Graham Agnew is Senior Minister at Marion, SA, church.

Easter

Those Easter Services

MARY HAWKINS

By those Easter Thursday afternoons, Mum often sounded quite frazzled. "Sleeping bag, Bible and note-pad, swimmers—though I think this time of year the ocean may be too cold. Now, are you sure you've got enough blankets, towels ... ?"

And yes, usually we managed to forget something to take to the Queensland Youth Department's Easter Camp at Caloundra, and many years later, despite my going through similar lists with my own teenagers, they also managed to forget something to take to other Easter Camps. Hmm ... now surely, being a Camp Director this year, my daughter will ...

*We have our special
Easter services ...
And what do they
achieve?*

And whether watching the sunrise over the Pacific Ocean and thinking of the morning Mary met the Resurrected Jesus in a garden, or in our usual place of worship, we have our special Easter services. And what do they achieve?

Every Sunday in our churches the Lord's Supper, or the Communion Table, is an essential part of our service—even the central focus of our worship. There, as I take the bread and the cup, I am reminded that Jesus Christ was crucified, buried and rose again. Do I really need the Easter celebrations to remind me even more that God sent his son to die for my sin, to be raised to life so that I too might live with him for all eternity?

As I write this, I pause and look back over many years and think of those Easter services that especially stick in

my memory. Of course there were those camp services, but then, when our children were but babies and long before they ever went to Easter camps, there was that small gathering of people at the new church being established many years ago in Orange in our manse lounge room.

Jesus Christ Superstar had been released. As controversial as it was, still is at times, my husband heard the record of the music score, borrowed it and at that Good Friday service played the crucifixion scene.

With horror, with tears, I heard the hammer pounding those nails into the hands of my so deeply loved Jesus. Those blows have rung in my ears and heart many times down over the many years since then, bringing home to me again and again just what it cost the Father to watch what man did to his beloved son, what it cost to save me, to redeem me from my sin.

Then just last year, in a modern church building, there was another very graphic portrayal. A solitary candle burning. A huge cross made of rough beams on the platform. The songs, the reading, the message, the story of Gethsemane and Calvary. Then the black material is flung over the cross, the candle blown out, the last post plays and every person in that service leaves without speaking.

Two mornings later, as the congregation assembles, the candle is still out, the cross still in black. We are still. Silent. Then the trumpets blew a message of victory. The candle flared brightly. The black of mourning disappeared. Roses were there instead and we triumphantly sang "Christ the Lord is Risen Today! Hallelujah!"

Jesus knew that we needed physical reminders of what he accomplished for



us that first horrible, yet gloriously triumphant Easter. Each week he gives us the emblems of bread and wine to remember his body hanging on a cruel cross, his blood poured out in sacrifice for our sins ... and yet ... Easter follows Christmas. Easter is a few days in the whole year, despite the horrible commercialisation of it, that reminds us that he was born to die. Easter reminds us that at a point in history the man Christ Jesus was killed and yet triumphed over death and the grave. Easter reminds us that God so loved, he gave all that he had that I might live eternally in joyful, wonderful fellowship with him.

Hmm ... I wonder what those dedicated camp leaders and those ministry teams in our churches throughout our land are planning to try to give impact to Easter on each one of us this year? Anything that hits home the deep message of Easter has value beyond measure!

Mary is the wife of Ray, the minister of the Maitland, NSW, church. She has had ten romance novels published, both secular and Christian. Her latest Harlequin Mills & Boon novel, *Sunshine Remedy* is a March/April release and now on the shelves.

Easter

Risen Indeed

GREG ELSDON

The resurrection of Jesus has always been central for Christian faith and identity. Belief in God's resurrection of Jesus is not an optional extra for Christians. Affirming the central significance of resurrection is one thing. Allowing the confession "Christ is Risen" to shape our faith and life is another thing altogether. Too often Christians have insisted upon the historicity of Jesus' resurrection without ever asking the question, "What does a risen Jesus mean for the way we live together as Christians in the world?"

Saying we believe in the resurrection of Jesus and allowing the risen life of Jesus to shape our lives are two very different things.

The resurrection of Jesus is God's shout of "Yes!" to the way Jesus lived his life and to what he taught about the in-breaking Reign of God. In other words, the resurrection is God's approval of the life of Jesus.

Earlier, at his baptism, a voice from the heavens spoke to Jesus saying "You are my son, the beloved; with you I am well pleased" (Luke 3:21-22). When God raised Jesus from death he declared for all to hear that truth and authentic life are to be found in the life and death of this man. The one despised and rejected by his contemporaries found God's ultimate approval in his life of faithfulness that ended in death by crucifixion.

When God raised Jesus from the dead he proclaimed unambiguously that he approved of the way Jesus lived.

Saying we believe in the resurrection of Jesus and allowing the risen life of Jesus to shape our lives are two very different things. From the beginning, Christian faith in the resurrection of Jesus has been born, nurtured and matured in the context of discipleship and mission.

Those who believe that God has revealed himself in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus are called to participate with the risen Jesus in continuing his mission of bringing God's salvation to all people.

All four Gospels testify in different ways to the inseparability of resurrection faith and participation in the mission of Jesus in the world. The empty tomb did not transform the lives of Jesus' frightened followers. It led to confusion, fear and disbelief (see Mark 16:1-8; Matt 28:1-8; Luke 24:1-12; John 20:1-13). It was when they encountered the risen one for themselves that true resurrection faith was born. Matthew, Luke and John all tell us that when Jesus appeared to his frightened and bewildered followers he commissioned and empowered them to continue his work in the world (Matt 28:16-20; Luke 24:44-49 and John 20:19-23). Even in Mark's Gospel (which offers no account of the appearance of the risen Jesus) we read how the disciples are instructed by the young man at the empty tomb to return to Galilee. If the disciples wanted to see the risen Jesus, they must return to the place where it all began. In other words, they would "see" the risen Jesus only as they joined him in his ongoing mission.

The Jesus who once called men and women to take up their cross and fol-



low him challenged them to live a life which embodied God's unrelenting mercy, compassion and justice—regardless of the consequences. Today, the same Jesus, now the risen Lord of the Church, calls us to the same costly, but fulfilling way of life. He calls us to live our lives, especially our life together, so that by the power of God's Spirit working within us, we become people in whom God's message of love and reconciliation is experienced by others. And we are called to live like this regardless of the consequences.

Easter is a time for celebrating what God has done for us in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. Because Jesus lived as he lived, died as he died and was raised by God as affirmation of all he stood for, we too have the opportunity to enjoy the relationship with God for which we were created. Easter is a time for reassessing our commitment to being people in whom God's message of love and hope, the message embodied in Jesus, lives on in a conscious and intentional fashion. And this will undoubtedly be a costly business. Christ is risen! He is risen indeed!

Dr Greg Elsdon is Principal of the Churches of Christ Theological College, Mulgrave, Vic.



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Easter

"I Saw Jesus Alive!"

EIRA CLAPTON

Ladies and gentlemen, tonight's news exclusive is the story of a witness who says she knows Jesus was raised from death. Mary Magdalene has been contacted by our new computer program "History Vision" and consented to come to the studio to face modern-day experts who will question her closely on her testimony.

"The panel consists of: Deidre, a scholar of ancient manuscripts who says her work has proved that Jesus did not die on the cross, but revived in the tomb, and went on to live a long life.

"And he said my name. And I knew—it was him."

"And Frank, a churchman and eminent scholar, who has written a best-seller in which he describes how the disciples came to believe in the resurrection on the basis of the testimony of Peter, alone on the Lake of Galilee where he had gone back to his old trade of fishing after the death of Jesus. According to Frank, Peter looked at the beach in the distance, saw a figure cooking fish over a fire, remembered the time Jesus had done the same, and in Peter's mind, Jesus rose from the dead.

"First we go to Mary. Thanks for your time tonight."

"That's all right. I love to talk about Jesus and what happened that day."

"What did happen?"

"I went to the tomb with the other women, but it was empty, and the others went off to tell the disciples, and I stood alone crying. Then I saw someone. I thought it was the gardener, and I asked what had happened to Jesus'

body. And he said my name. And I knew—it was him."

"You mean Jesus?"

"Yes."

"You couldn't have been mistaken?"

"No. No way."

"Deidre, don't you have a question for Mary?"

"I certainly do! Mary, come on, you can admit it now after all these years. You and the women went with the disciples to the tomb to anoint the body. When you removed the stone and started to remove the bandages, you found that Jesus was still breathing. You revived him and told the story that he had been made alive again to protect him from being chased by the authorities!"

"If you believe that, you're crazy. The disciples wouldn't come with us, they were all scared to be seen in public. No one wanted to come with us. We didn't roll the stone away, it was already rolled away. Jesus did die on the cross. How many people do you think survive something like that?"

"Well, Mary, wasn't it Peter's memories of Jesus that had you convinced that Jesus was alive again? He came back from Galilee again and ..."

"Your story doesn't fit the facts. The disciples were not expecting a resurrection and they were very hard to convince that it had happened. The empty tomb didn't do it. It only left them wondering and confused, like me. It was only under the most compelling evidence of our own senses (eating with Jesus, talking with him, embracing him) that we believed."

"We started to gather that evidence ourselves from early in the morning in Jerusalem on that third day."

"I know when someone dies it's comforting to realise that you have strong memories of them, but I have never met



anyone who would use those memories to justify the story that their loved one was still alive."

"Have you forgotten the martyrs? Would they have died for a lie? A memory?"

"What about your own experiences? Doesn't your faith tell you that Jesus is alive now, in your time, and that you can know for yourself that his resurrection power is with you?"

"Don't let your scientific world view colour all your thinking. If you start from the premise that everything that happens in the world has a cause and effect, that nothing happens which does not fit the laws of nature, you will never find the resurrection. You will never find God because God made those laws of nature, and has broken into our world in Jesus in a totally new way. Don't be doubters: believe!"

"Well thank you Mary, thank you Diedre and Frank. I'm afraid that's all the time we have for tonight."

Eira Clapton is a Refugee and Migrant Services Consultant and Domestic Violence Project Officer with the Conference of Churches of WA.

Easter

Salting the Bunny's Tail

BRUCE PEDERSON

We were too young to know at the time, but my grandfather was a real tease. We always took his advice seriously, despite the polite laughter of our parents in the background. "If you want to catch a rabbit," he used to tell us, "you need to put salt on its tail". I always knew there was a trick there somewhere, and 40 years on I think I'm getting nearer to working it out! Something about getting close, I think!

It's Easter again. There can hardly be a more important celebration on the Christian calendar. If you're not heading off to your favourite holiday spot, bracing yourself for another youth

The big story for them was reality. Today, the big story is in danger of becoming a micro fable.

camp or that waiting domestic project, you might catch yourself in this generous holiday time (Four days off, can you believe it?) soaking up the meaning of it all.

Easter is what faith is all about. The biggest story ever comes to a pinnacle right here. Denial, trial, Calvary, the cross, darkness, rejection, mourning, resurrection hope, loaded with meaning—for us!

How do you talk about the biggest story ever, especially in passionate Easter terms, when most of our culture considers privately and publicly that this narrative has been tampered with? More and more of the big stories of humanity are doubted. Worse still, for many they couldn't care less about what

we believe, "As long as you're happy with your faith and don't bother me, everything is ok".

Our evangelism courses still teach us simple techniques and responses—it seems that if we can just get our message right, we have won over our audience. In reality nothing could be further from the truth.

Can you see our dilemma? Christians celebrating the story that changes all history, both universally and personally, living in a culture content with Christian sentiment and its effect on its adherents, and doubting its integrity. The Easter Bunny is almost beyond our reach.

Christians throughout history have responded to the Easter story with amazing passion. They risked their very lives because of the cross. The big story for them was reality. Today, the big story is in danger of becoming a micro fable. What are we to do?

My grandfather's advice about catching rabbits says something to me about communicating Easter in this post-modern world. More than ever before, we have to realise that the church cannot afford to celebrate faith (including Easter) in a passionless, religious, ceremonial way. We can't afford to be satisfied with a Christian witness that belongs to dutiful church services, Easter marches and nice slogans at safe distances from reality. We've got to get really close to the Easter Bunny.

In Philippians, the apostle Paul, master of "salting tails", shares his passion in the context of the big story. "I want to know Christ," he says "and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of his sufferings, becoming like him in his death". Our only hope to help others and ourselves make sense of it all is to get that close. Living the power,



Lyn and Bruce Pederson

sharing in the pain. No room for triumphalism here, we've got to learn as a church to share our weaknesses, to weep, to embrace failure, to stop looking like we've got it together. We need to live in that same resurrection power that moves beyond the nice part of the Easter story—a good man dying for a worthy cause—to the reality of the incredible kingdom struggle, (and victory) over dark forces.

My year twelve human relationships class teaches me many things that I would never learn in church. Most of those kids have absolutely no interest in religion or what they perceive as the big story. Without fail though, whenever an issue comes up that deals with the soul, the normally noisy classroom has a hush come over it. Most of these kids are desperately in search of love and hope and mercy and forgiveness. They are entangled in the same struggles we see written all over Calvary. Easter's meaning to a world beyond the church doors will only truly be found in our willingness to get real close to its culture.

Are you ready to put salt on the tail of the Easter Bunny?

Bruce Pederson is minister of the Centenary Lakes (Cairns) church, Qld.

Mary Magdalene: A Saint with an Undeserved Reputation

BILL TABBERNEE

Each of the Gospels tells us that Mary Magdalene was among the women who, on Easter morning, went to the tomb to anoint Jesus' body (Mark 16:1-8; Matt 28:1-8; Luke 24:1-12; John 20:1-10). John's Gospel relates that Jesus appeared to Mary

We know nothing about Mary Magdalene's life other than that explicitly stated in the Gospels.

while she was weeping outside the tomb (20:11-18), and one of the longer endings of Mark states specifically that, after the resurrection, Jesus appeared first to Mary Magdalene (16:9).

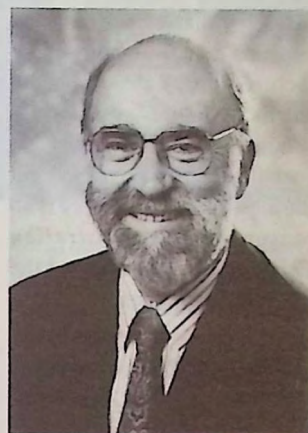
Throughout Christian history, Mary Magdalene has usually been identified as the "sinner" who scandalised Simon the Pharisee by anointing Jesus' feet (Luke 7:36-50). In Luke's account, the woman is not named—although Luke does refer to Mary Magdalene two verses later (8:2).

Mark recounts a similar but distinct story of a woman anointing Jesus' head (rather than feet) in the house of Simon "the Leper" (14:3-9). Unlike the event recorded by Luke, placed in Galilee at the beginning of Jesus' ministry, that recorded by Mark occurred in Bethany at the end of Jesus' ministry. John (12:1-8) has a slightly different version of the Markan story: the dinner takes place in Bethany in the house of Lazarus. The woman who anoints Jesus' feet(!) is Lazarus' sister Mary. It is clear that Christian tradition fused together different stories.

Because the woman who anointed Jesus soon before the resurrection was called Mary, that Mary was confused with Mary Magdalene. Because of the similarity of the two anointings, Mary Magdalene was erroneously identified as the prostitute of Luke 7.

The view that Mary Magdalene was a "loose woman," or at least had been, influenced how she was portrayed in the post-New Testament period. She is a colourful character in a number of Gnostic Gospels. Even the legends circulating about her in orthodox circles are tainted by her undeserved reputation.

According to the Greek church, Mary Magdalene died in Ephesus, and her remains were later taken to Constantinople. According to a legend promulgated in the west, she carried the holy grail to France and died there. Tradition venerates her as a saint, her feast day being 22 July.



We know nothing about Mary Magdalene's life other than that explicitly stated in the Gospels. She was a wealthy, upper class woman who had been exorcised by Jesus, became a devoted disciple, and provided significant resources for his ministry (Luke 8:2-3), remaining with Jesus to the very end. Perhaps it is not surprising that someone with her extraordinary faithfulness should have been the first to see the risen Christ.

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Taking Good Photos

RALPH PETTY

A picture is worth a thousand words, and that is no doubt true, depending on the quality of the picture and or the thousand words. Modern methods of communication—TV, films and suchlike—rely on images to get the message across. There is no reason why *The Australian Christian* should be behind the times in this regard.

Modern methods of communication rely on images to get the message across. There is no reason why "The Australian Christian" should be behind the times.

In pre-planning a photo to be sent to the paper, it is worth studying illustrations in the daily papers, noting the angles and distances from and between

the subjects that are used to clearly convey the intended message.

It is a good idea to include someone well-known in a group shot, if the person is involved in the activity. This tends to make the reader look more closely at the picture to see what the well-known person is up to this time. Try, if possible, to set up formal shots after the event, as there are many traps that cannot be foreseen. Microphones are a photographer's worst enemy at meetings. Many a good picture has been ruined by the sight of a microphone appearing to enter one of the facial apertures of the main speaker or guest. The same photo taken after the event with the extraneous matter removed generally tells the story better and is much more pleasing to the eye. I remember taking some portraits of a Mayor and Councillors in the Council Chamber. The setting was fixed, as was my viewpoint. Unfortunately, in the ensuing print that came from the event, the crossed flagpoles which held the two flags of the City appeared to be a continuation of the inner ears of the Mayor himself, which gave the photo a comical look and somewhat defeated the mood of a rather solemn occasion.

With regard to technique, don't have a group of people doing

their best to look relaxed and intelligent as they gaze fixedly into the blinding sun. Apart from ruining their eyesight, the flat, hard lighting takes away the detail in the faces and makes them less easy to recognise in a photo. Having the main light—generally the sun if it is outside—slightly to one side of the subject will give a better result. But be sure that the camera lens is not pointing directly at the sun, because that will result in no photo at all. Photos should have a fairly even tone with not too much contrast, as the whites and blacks block up in the printing process and a great deal of detail is lost.

Close-ups are generally more acceptable than distant shots as they have more impact.

When submitting photos to the paper, it is helpful to include two or three different angles of the same subject so that there is some choice. More often than not, pictures have to be cropped



to suit the space available. Also, don't forget to include some comments indicating what the photo is about and who is in it. I hope this helps budding photo-journalists. The main thing is to keep the photos coming, but not to be disappointed if your efforts are not printed because of space limitations.

Ralph Petty is a professional photographer. He makes his services freely available to the editor for special assignments.

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Churches of Christ Community Care, NSW, is seeking an experienced person for the exciting and challenging position of **DIRECTOR OF NURSING** at our Woodlands Nursing Home, a 60-bed facility at Cherrybrook, NSW.

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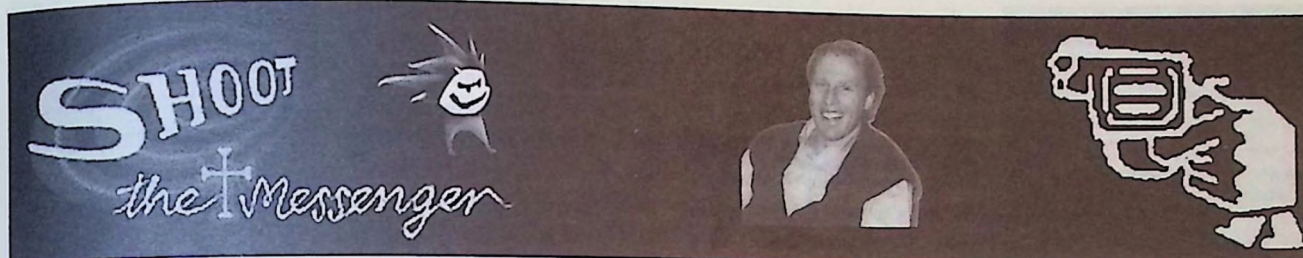
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Comment Shoot the Messenger

TIM CORNEY AND PAUL MITCHELL



Last September ("AC" 6.9.97) we told you of the commencement of our mission into cyberspace, "Shoot the Messenger" <<http://www.shootthemessenger.com.au>>. Basically, Shoot the Messenger is an on-line (Internet) magazine providing a unique Christian perspective on popular culture, including film, TV, music, literature and social trends and events.

The on-line magazine continues to break new ground. Between June 1997 and the middle of January 1998, Shoot the Messenger had received a total of 125,938 separate requests for pages of our 75 articles contained on the site. This represents tremendous development for this exciting endeavour. In 1997, Shoot the Messenger had an article by a respected Christian artist on the *Piss Christ* controversy the week after it occurred, and we aim to continue providing informed Christian commentary on con-

temporary issues. We also had an interview with Stephanie Dowrick, ABC radio commentator and author of *Forgiveness and Other Acts of Love*. We looked extensively at the spiritual upheaval caused by the death of Diana, Princess of Wales and we gave Christian perspectives on significant films and music (including *Slingblade* and *The Castle*; U2 and Nick Cave). But you haven't missed any of this material. It's all available in our archives.

Currently on-line is an interview with Douglas Coupland (the man who coined the term "Generation X") and an interview with Dylan Lewis, the host of ABC TV's youth program, "Recovery". We also talked to the producer of "Blue Heelers", Rick Pellizeri, to discover the moral framework behind this most popular of TV programs. There are also reviews of music (including Archie Roach and Amy Grant), film (including *Gattaca* and *Contact*) and literature (including Mark Davis' *Gangland* and Tim Winton's *Blueback*).

Shoot the Messenger has received encouraging feedback from all over the world. In 1997, Shoot the Messenger was nominated for a national web-site design award. We were also ranked 160th most popular web site in Australia by an on-line database. With thousands of sites nominated, this was a significant feather in the cap of Shoot the Messenger. The Na-

tional Library has also chosen Shoot the Messenger to be archived as part of a campaign to store on-line material of significant Australian cultural value. Tim Corney, Shoot the Messenger's publisher, and Siewke Siemsta, a Shoot the Messenger designer, have both received several invitations to speak at churches and conferences about on-line ministry in the past six months. Shoot the Messenger is obviously becoming known as a leader in Internet ministry and is becoming increasingly well-regarded for its model of Christian witness using new technology; its critique and analysis of popular culture; and its engagement of the secular world of cyberspace with the message of the Gospel.

In 1997, The Christian Television Association (CTA) became a sponsor of Shoot the Messenger. This has meant that CTA information appears at Shoot the Messenger and the Shoot the Messenger address (<<http://www.shootthemessenger.com.au>>) appears on CTA's telespots. The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel has also recently joined as a sponsor. Shoot the Messenger has already had e-mail messages from non-Christian people visiting the site through the telepot's address.

Shoot the Messenger will continue to consolidate its Internet presence and promote its activities this year. Plans are afoot to produce a hard-copy promo-

tional best of Shoot the Messenger for 1997, to encourage those who may be unfamiliar with the Internet to get their eyes on this valuable resource. We are also planning to redesign and refocus the publication this year because on-line culture moves with the speed of a computer mouse click—and we want to

Shoot the Messenger was nominated for a national web-site design award. We were also ranked 160th most popular web site in Australia

remain at the forefront of this new technology.

Shoot the Messenger realises that it could not continue its mission without the forethought and visionary financial assistance provided by the following bodies: The National Literature Department of the Churches of Christ of Australia; The Australian Board of Christian Development and Education; the Mission and Revitalisation Unit of the Churches of Christ in Victoria and Tasmania and individual donors.

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ENGAGEMENTS

ELSDON-RISSON Greg and Elaine Elsdon, together with Roger and Anne Risson, are pleased to announce the engagement of Bronwyn and Anthony.

DIAMOND WEDDINGS

DAFF (Woff), Theo and Wilma at Cheltenham, Vic, 30.4.38, J.E. Allan officiating. Present address: 322 Hursley Road, Toowoomba Qld 4350. Anniversary will be celebrated at Bongeen Church of Christ, Sunday, 3 May 1998. Children are Hazel and Reg O'Connor, Les and Lois Daff, Marian and Charles Jones, and Keith and Lynette Daff. Grandchildren are: Phillip, Stewart, Bradley, Rosie, Gary, Leonie, David, Dale, Sharon, Tania, Robyn, Debbie, Warren, Paul (in Heaven), Fiona and Cameron. Theo and Wilma also have several great-grandchildren. They give thanks to God for their long life and have enjoyed fellowshiping at Cheltenham, Warragul, Kingaroy and now Bongeen.

DEATHS

CAMERON, Ivan Griffiths A service for the celebration of the life of Ivan Griffiths Cameron was held at the Red Cliffs Church of Christ, Vic, 25 March 1998. Passed peacefully to be with his Lord and Shepherd on 22 March 1998. Joyce Cameron current address, 1/7 The Boulevard, Mildura Vic 3500.

SOMMERVILLE, Amy (23.6.07-14.3.98) A tribute to our mother who brought us up in the love of the Lord, surrounded us with prayer and taught us to laugh in adversity. —Joan Pye and Margaret Hone.

WOOLFORD, Thelma Joy (nee Roberts) Died at home in Pinnaroo, SA, peacefully, after a short battle with cancer, on 15 March 1998. Aged 66 years. Dearly loved wife of Phil, loved sister of Ivan and Bruce Roberts and Aileen Harper. Loving mother and mother-in-law of Philip and Kathy, Judy and Ray Schroeder, Cheryl and Rob Simon, John and Jodi. Grandmother to twelve grandchildren. Thelma's funeral service was held on Thursday, 19 March in the Pinnaroo Uniting Church, followed by her burial in the Pinnaroo Lawn Cemetery. Thelma will be sadly missed and

always remembered with love and affection. Now at rest with her Lord and Saviour. "Abiding love surrounds those who trust in the Lord." (Psalm 32:10)

IN MEMORIAM

GEEVES, Wade Phillip "Now the heavens can be home for my spirit has been freed." Remembered always, Mum, Dad, Luke and Leah.

HOLIDAYS

AYR, NORTH QUEENSLAND Travelling up the Queensland coast? Stop over in the "Bountiful Burdekin" at Ayr Shamrock Motel. Friendly service, reasonable rates. Phone (07) 4783 1044. Owned and managed by Dudleigh Oakes.

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WANTED

VITAL PUBLICATIONS BY JANET THOMPSON One copy of each of *Out of the Shadows* (1986) and *Catching the Sunlight* (1983). Contact Jeannette Evans (08) 8344 3795.

When I was a kid, I remember having a "Viewmaster"—a device that you looked through to see 3-D images. It fascinated me. The sense of depth in the pictures was achieved by combining two images of the subject from different positions. When we read the four gospels, we're experiencing the same effect from a literary perspective.

Why four gospels? Why not just one definitive account of the life of Jesus? I think the reason is that four accounts, each with their particular outlook, gives

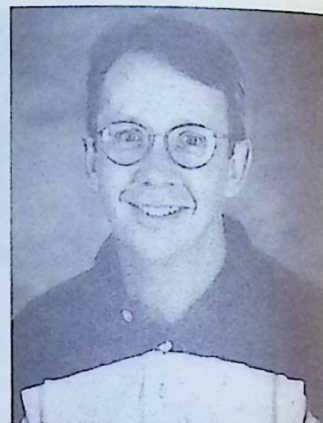
After Gethsemane, Jesus speaks just three times—at his trial, to Pilate, and on the cross.

us a greater sense of depth to the person of Jesus than one account, however authoritative, ever could.

To illustrate, let's look at the stories of Jesus' trial and death—the Passion narratives.

Mark's story of Jesus' Passion, for instance, seems quite stark. After Gethsemane, Jesus speaks just three times—at his trial, to Pilate, and on the cross. It seems that not only Jesus' followers, but even God the Father has abandoned him. Yet, at that point of complete vulnerability, the Gentile centurion recognises who Jesus is.

Matthew's account stresses the authority of Jesus. Jesus, the teacher, teaches even when he



is arrested in the garden. His innocence is proclaimed several times, which makes his condemnation even more horrible. His death is marked by signs of the end of time—resurrections, earthquakes, etc.

And, ironically, the religious leaders take Jesus' prediction of his resurrection more seriously than do his disciples! Luke's story is gentler.

He omits Jesus' scourging and his cry of abandonment on the cross. Jesus is concerned more for the welfare of others than himself. He dies peacefully, with a traditional Jewish evening prayer on his lips.

John's account reflects years of meditation upon the significance of Jesus.

He is in complete control of the situation—who is really on trial here? Even on the cross, Jesus is fully aware that it is his hour of glorification.

Can these four quite different accounts be harmonised? Possibly.

Should they be harmonised—definitely not!

It's their differences that give us an entrance into the mystery that is taking place as Jesus dies.

I'm happy to stand in awe before that mystery and confess with the centurion: "Surely this man was the Son of God!"

The Media at Easter

VINEY LONGTHORP

For a couple of years I helped provide transport for a member of our church so he could attend morning worship. One Easter Day morning while driving down Glenferrie Road, Hawthorn, Vic, Orville and I were somewhat bemused by crowds of people going hither and thither. With more than a touch of irony, we set about guessing whether these people were coming or going to church. We nearly gave in to that feeling which I call "Doing an Elijah"; that is, being tempted to complain, "I alone am left!"

To say the least, the observance of Easter in the press, television and radio is alive and well.

But if today masses of people choose to ignore the significance of Easter, the media does not. To say the least, the observance of Easter in the press, television and radio is alive and well.

Consider: The Easter edition of *Songs of Praise* always gives an

Easter presentation in its choice of resounding hymns and spiritual songs. Then on ABC FM radio you can always depend on the mellifluous voice of Kay McLennan, in her program, *For the God who Sings*, to give generous offerings of some of the very greatest Easter music. And at this time of the year we will have several occasions of both live and broadcast performances of *Bach's St Matthew Passion* and Handel's *Messiah*. It is no coincidence that these are offered at Easter. As Archbishop Söderblom of Sweden said, "Bach was the fifth evangelist". *Messiah* is nearly always performed at Christmas, but we need to remember that it is really Easter music, for the greater part is a musical exposition of the events of the first Easter.

On Friday, 3 April 1997, ABC TV, by popular request, gave a repeat broadcast of that lovely Irish program, *Faith of our Fathers*. I hope many readers watched it. It celebrated Ireland's cultural and religious heritage. It was a wonderful resource for Lenten reflections. The tenor Frank Patterson and the Monks of Glenstal Abbey helped viewers warm to the faith of others and to praise the Lord themselves.

Nor was it by accident that the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra and the Melbourne Chorale presented Mahler's mighty *Symphony Number 2—the Resurrection* just before Easter this year. This sublime work by a "tortured" genius is all about salvation, spirit, redemption and resurrection. Here is the existentialist theology of Søren Kierkegaard in sound. Then on the night of Maundy Thursday, ABC TV, as part of their regular series *The Big Picture*, gave us the "Jesus Conspiracy". In this program legal reporter for the BBC, David Jessel, reopened the case of "The State versus Jesus of Nazareth". Jessel examined what some people claim as "history's greatest miscarriage of justice". He sought to unravel the puzzle as to what went on in the 24 hours before Jesus' "savage execution". The judicial details are fascinating, but only faith will see the deeper significance and the prophetic patterning of the purposes of God at work for the world's redemption. Even so, the program was sensitively handled and followed closely on the Gospels' witness.

The editorial in *The Weekend Australian* issued Easter 1996 was an amazing piece of writing. It could have been lifted from any of the better sermons offered at Easter.

It reads, in part: "Easter Day ... commemorates the Resurrection of Jesus, on the third day after his death. For Christians ... the death on the cross and the Resurrection are part of a continuous event. The Resurrection of Jesus would simply be a charade, if he had not really died. And the death on Good Friday would have proved the simple extinction of a possibly good man if he had not risen



from the dead. Of course Easter Day is a challenge to human credulity, and those who continue to embrace the veracity of the Resurrection are sometimes dismissed as gullible. Yet much of what is Western culture is based on the fact of this Resurrection. Death and Resurrection have become constant themes in history. The struggles that have convulsed this world seem to result in a renewed conviction that good will triumph in the end. So not only is the reality of suffering accepted, but also the hope of a triumph over it. The Resurrection is also a vindication. The witnesses of the event were convinced they were not merely thinking wishfully. They understood the frequent post-crucifix appearances of Jesus as proof of his own predictions about himself being reliable. They came to believe, as the church has proclaimed ever since, in 'the life of the world to come'." (© *The Weekend Australian*.)

Our settings of conspicuous consumption, mountains of Easter eggs, Easter bunnies and frenetic holidays tend to trivialise this time of celebration. So thanks to those sections of the media who help us address the ineffable mystery of Easter and help keep alive the rumour that God exists and is at work in his world.



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OBITUARIES

Obituaries are limited to 100 words
FIMMELL Douglas Maxwell

(24.2.98) Doug was born in Armadale, WA, 1.2.24. He joined the RAAF in 1942, trained as a pilot, and was posted to the UK, where he was operational until the end of the war. Doug was baptised and married Beth Pocock in Mount Gambier, SA, in 1946. They lived in WA until 1957, then returned to Mount Gambier and commenced the Church of Christ fellowship in their home. Doug began his family real estate business in 1960. Doug cherished his children, Leray, Max, Rose, Marj, Libby and Jenny and their families. He served the church in many roles. In recent years, Doug battled with cancer and the loss of his beloved Beth.

—Roger Brown

WICKHAM, Emily Bertha

(11.3.98) Emily Hall was born 29 December 1902 at North Williams-town, Vic. Her family had an early association with Churches of Christ, from the 1850s in Melbourne and the 1860s in Sydney. At age ten she made a commitment to Christ at a Schofield Mission. In her teens she was involved in the commencement of PBP and KSP youth clubs at Footscray, Vic, church. She married Norm Wickham in 1927. They had two children, Nell and Dorothy. Emily was active in CWF over many years and held the offices of treasurer and president. After Norm's death, she worked with the Social Service Dept for some eleven years. In later years she was associated with Burwood and Monash churches, Vic.

CHANGES

WEST LAKES UNITED PARISH, SA—Minister Robyn Walsh, telephone (08) 8356 4295.

BALLARAT CENTRAL, Vic—Minister Jack White, 209 Main Road, Ballarat Vic 3350. Telephone (03) 5331 7580 (res), (03) 5333 4396 (office, Fri–Sun).

BAPTISMS

•Allan Elliott, Steve Riedel, Lex Brookes, Tanya Brookes, Glen Hurse, Margaret Hurse, Dalby, Qld •Alex Edward, Merredin, WA •Hayley Sutherland, Werribee, Vic •Joelle Iles, Frankston, Vic •Matthew Tatnell, Launceston, Tas •Graeme & Trish Harvey, Ballarat Family Church •Aaron Kamp, Warwick, WA

MARRIAGES

•Leeanne Borradaile and Rohan Lidsey, Red Cliffs, Vic •Rachel Whiteside and Scott Shillito, Monash City, Vic •Leah Parsons and Anthony Lord, Montrose, Vic •Rebecca Gilbertson and Grant Mackay, Bathurst, NSW •Melissa Van Sambeek and Andrew Ryall, Warwick, WA

DEATHS

•Geoff Luke, Monash City, Vic •Laurie Rowland, Victor Harbor, SA •Joyce Tyler, Harry Rackermann, Reg Freestone, Twyford St, Bundaberg, Qld •Ken Thompson, Frankston, Vic •Kevin Smith, Warwick, WA

WA

ALBANY (John Spencer) Jack & Joyce Dayman celebrated their 50th anniversary 5 February ... Social evening held at the Robinson's home where topic was "Travel Tales" ... Several ladies from church attended CWC camp at Camp Quararup for weekend and day attendance.

MERREDIN (Ray Hockley) Interdenominational Carols by Candlelight service ... Children presented book each at Christmas barbecue ... Janine Bosworth farewelled to Perth Bible College ... January, farewelled Chris, Laura, Rachel Oh to Perth, gift given ... Sunday School, Bible study groups recommenced February ... Alpha course continued ... Youth For Christ outreach in surrounding schools culminated in "Youthquake" event with 260 attenders & 60 seeking follow up ... Hakka people in China supported in prayer.

WARWICK (Jim Longbottom, Keith Bowes, Graham Hill, Paul Sanders, Jodie Mullaley) Youth minister Rod Ratcliffe & family farewelled 15 February as they left for Mt Clear, Vic, ministry ... Congregation supported Franklin Graham Festival ... Ladies' breakfast at Reike & Rose Cafe (North Beach) great success ... Kids' Club Workshop held 6–7 March ... First Alpha Course commenced ... Church affirmed new ministry team, Graham Hill (youth), Paul Sanders (children & families), Jodie Mullaley (sport & leisure). Team inducted 22 March.

TAS

LAUNCESTON (C. Spaulding, W. Kerrison, T. Gray, S. Fitzallen) Dedication of baby Caleb Whittington 15 March ... 19 brigaders & leaders in camp at Camp Clayton ... Girls' Brigade parade 22 March when Julie Wise commissioned as an officer ... Matthew Tatnell baptised at evening service ... Jess Parry (92) has moved to Hostel Care at Scottsdale. She will be greatly missed at the services.

Churches of Christ in Victoria and Tasmania 133rd Annual Conference

Thursday 30 April

Women's Celebration at Monash City Church of Christ Sessions led by Liz Tilson, CWF President, at 10.20 am and 1.20 pm; lunch at 12.20 pm. Noelene Prince, Resource Christian Music, will be guest presenter at the afternoon session. Creche provided.

Friday 1 May

Ministers' Summit 10.00 am – 4.00 pm at Southern Community Church of Christ.
Sepakers: Mark Connor (Waveley Christian Fellowship) and Graeme Cann (Berwick Church of Christ).

Business Session 7.30 pm at Blackburn Community Church of Christ.

Speaker: Gordon Stirling "Vic-Tas Churches of Christ: Where to Now?" Worship led by Lindsay Dewberry, Conference President.

Saturday 2 May

Business Session 9.00 am – 5.00 pm at Blackburn Community Church of Christ
 Includes affiliation of two churches and focus on Indigenous Ministry.

Youth Celebration 8.00 pm at Crossway Baptist Church

Sunday 3 May

Celebration Rally at 7.00 pm at Camberwell Civic Centre

Speaker: Rev Tim Costello
Induction of Chek Chia,
 Conference President 1998–1999.

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Church News

NSW

BATHURST (Glenn Cumbers, John Fragar) John Fragar inducted as associate minister ... Church voted for name change from Hillside Christian Fellowship to Bathurst C of C ... Michelle Barrie, Paul & Debbie Walther welcomed into membership ... 6 people appointed to new ministry team ... Attendance continues to increase ... MOPS ministry attracting many mothers, featured on regional TV ... Spiritual Warfare seminar with Brian Pickering 28-29 March.

QLD

DALBY (Tony Ochse) Tony had joy of baptising Allan Elliot in Brisbane Prison ... Church joining with many others in prayer for Owen Vogler, who has leukemia ... Rick Whittle Bible trivia quiz champion of Dalby & district ... Quiz & auction fund raiser for Bill Newman Crusade. Good attendances at Crusade ... Developing strategies for youth ministries from primary school through to young adults. **TWYFORD ST, BUNDABERG** (Paul Scully) Ron & Zeta Goodwin have gone to Victoria ... Erected 3-bay shed for storage & future use for sale of second-hand goods ... 10 ladies went to women's camp ... Church gained grant of \$1,000 for parenting program ... Church held Doug MacFarlane concert 21 March.

SA

HAPPY VALLEY (Andrew Ratcliff) Alan Shadforth appointed administrator ... Farewell for Tim & Jenny Sherwell & family ... Jackie Grantham, Mark Riessen returned from Vanuatu full of rich experiences & growth in their faith. Many attended formal welcome home at Brooklyn Park ... Group of primary school children went to Kids Camp Out at West Beach Caravan Park. **VICTOR HARBOR** (Graeme Rogerson) 19 children, 6 adults attended Kids

Camp Out, West Beach Caravan Park. Theme: "Born to Give" ... 190 praised God at "Celebration of Creation" service. Lunch & working displays of talents followed in hall ... Men's Stuff project to raise \$1,500 to allow an overseas Christian to attend World Convention Year 2000 ... Choir involved in Hymnfest at St Augustines ... Covenant Players guests evening service.

BORDERTOWN (Darryn Hickling) Rachel Beth born to Darryn & Anita Hickling 4.12.97 ... Guest speakers R. Christinat, Rosemary Hunt, I. Simons, P. Bauer ... Lewis family welcomed into membership ... Dedication service for Rachel Hickling 15 March ... Monthly Sunday evening prayer services being well attended.

VIC

RED CLIFFS (Ian Hunt) Welcome extended to Ian & Cynthea Hunt & family. Ian inducted to part-time ministry by elder Sue Griffen. Rex Sharrad speaker ... Harvest Thanksgiving held. Produce sent to Community Care, Melbourne, & local hostel for the elderly ... Manse restumped & kitchen renovated ... Ladies morning retreat held each Wednesday. Other auxiliaries started year's activities.

MONASH CITY (David Moyes, Craig Brown) David Moyes inducted as senior minister 1 February by Lindsay Dewberry, Conference President. Rev Dr Gordon Moyes speaker. Special welcome to Leisl, Brianna & Chelsea ... Senior Friends active. Bus outing to Werribee Zoo for Seniors' Week ... Support being given to Brett Huggan & "Young Life" ministry ... 33 people attended training night on how to visit new attenders ... Worship attendances increasing again.

SURREY HILLS (Jonathan Moore, Julie Adam) Church 1998 Theme "Seven Miles from Jerusalem" (the Emmaus experience) ... Core values forum held to assist future options task group ... Visiting speakers: Conference President Lindsay Dewberry &

Tom Jenson of Amnesty ... Worship leaders' workshop held ... Lent studies under way ... Christmas Bowl giving \$4085 ... Part-time administrator Cathy Bradley appointed ... Informative gathering of inter-church council with David Gill of NCCA organised by Jonathan Moore.

MORNINGTON (Allan Avery, Bronte Stanford) Church welcomed Bronte & Katherine Stanford to ministry with Allan Avery in January. Bronte studying at CCTC, Mulgrave ... Successful church op shop commences second year of operation ... Jean Preston, Byron Groves, Myrle Beerling, Melissa Fisher & Phylis Young have been ill ... New programs started & more to commence in near future ... Church congratulates Colin Avery on his appointment with the Drug & Alcohol Foundation on release from Education Department.

BALLARAT CENTRAL (Jack White) Induction service of Jack White 1 February by Alan Niven. Alan morning speaker with number of visitors present. Jack & Ann nearly completed pastoral visitation ... Loretto Allen welcomed into church ... All auxiliaries recommenced ... Senior citizens group "Chat & Chew" held light lunch at Ballarat Gardens during Begonia Festival ... Church picnic at Kirks Reservoir enjoyable time ... Live & Learn craft group Kay's Fashions very successful.

ARARAT (Michael Thurlow) 6 March church hosted World Day of Prayer ... Bible study groups, and Discovery Time for children resumed ... Attendances up at morning contemporary worship ... God blessed with great day for annual garage sale ... New lighting installed over platform ... Church Board retreat in April.

MONTRORSE (Harvey Clark) Two prayer breakfasts held as result of congregation deciding to have more prayer emphasis ... Craft evenings began the year with 55 ladies in attendance ... Extra contemporary Sunday services to be held to reach out to unchurched ... Great to have David &

Tina Cannon & children visit while on furlough from Thailand ... Norm Thomas elected to eldership at AGM.

CAMBERWELL (Amar Raj) Under the leadership of Amar Raj recent meetings well-attended ... 90 attended parents' dedication service for Zarin & Kalpna Nathaniel & baby daughter Zoya ... Outreach project to assist Roxburgh Park church ... Looking forward to multi-cultural seminars with Barry Jenkins ... More improvement to property with concrete paths at the hall rear ... Special Easter services planned for Good Friday & Easter Day. **FRANKSTON** (Tom Ede, Jason Potter) Tom Ede appointed permanent senior minister until end 2002 ... Junior Church now called "Hey! Hey! It's Sunday!", coordinated by Glenys Jamieson ... Margaret Woodhart returns to Good Companions after leading Junior Church for some years ... Joelle Iles baptised by her father, Peter, in a vibrant evening service ... Kellie Jo Woodhart & Hannah Bertram joined outreach in Fiji ... Helen Sayer recovering at home.

SWAN HILL (Alan Fletcher) Alan Fletcher began part-time interim ministry in March ... John van Groningen, chaplain to South East Melbourne Magic Basketball Team, speaker at men's breakfast with 38 present ... Small groups involving many of church family ... Recent 12-hour prayer vigil well supported ... Haydn & Jacqui Price's infant son Cael dedicated at evening service 8 March.

BALLARAT FAMILY CHURCH (Darren Kittel, Isaac Khan, Pam Harrison) 80 attended Seniors' Day activities, followed by 180 attending special seniors' tribute service 22 March ... Music/worship team retreat with Simon Moore from Wollongong as guest speaker ... 8 new members welcomed 22 March ... Mothers of Preschoolers ministry continuing to consult with other churches as vision expands ... Strong response to introduction of "Masterlife" discipleship training course.

Exploring the Day Covered in Chocolate

JANET THOMPSON

Three weeks before Easter, a record-breaking Easter Egg Hunt was held in Melbourne. Thousands of foil-covered, egg-shaped chocolates were spread out on a football ground, and people swarmed onto the grass, grabbing "eggs," and cramming them into plastic bags—as quickly as possible. It was an interesting anomaly—it wasn't Easter, there were no eggs, and no-one had to hunt. (Yes, I know I'm being pedantic!)

Hunting for Easter Eggs is an old custom. Early on Easter Day, children looked for the decorated eggs their parents had hidden in the garden. It comes from a much older practice, but it is a delightful way to introduce children to the feeling of the first Easter Day, when Mary found Jesus in the garden, following the Resurrection.

Commercial imperatives and secular disinterest have combined to smother the symbolism and mystery with weeks of indulgence: another anomaly, since it happens in Lent—a period of fasting and restraint in preparation for Easter.

As with Christmas, the time of this celebration has been placed alongside an old pagan festival, to promote harmony in the broader community—so there's no point in kicking up a fuss about the contradictions. We must do as we have always done—hold our truth faithfully, never losing sight of the depth and symbolism in our time of remembrance.

The cross on a hot cross bun was perpetuated by superstition, but it is still a cross.



Chocolate "eggs" abound, but an egg is still an excellent symbol for new life. When Easter Day dawns, we still feel the joy of hope and promise ... Jesus **did** defeat death. It's harder than it was when whole communities combined in a season of strict observance, but we shouldn't assume that it will be easy. We can't expect everyone we meet to share the orthodox greeting, "The Lord is risen!" ... "He is risen indeed!" But most newspapers will carry a story about the "Real Easter", exploring rituals and symbolism—even touching on the mystery. Not all of it falls on deaf ears.

If we have to battle for our perspective, surely that underlines the significance ...? May your Easter be rich and meaningful—overflowing with joy ... and light on saturated fats!

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The Last Word

While the rational approach to spirituality must never become obsolete, neither should it become the shrine before which we worship.
—Philip Black. *Wineskins*

Boss: You had your hair cut in work time.

Worker: it grew in work time.

Boss: It didn't all grow in work time.

Worker: I didn't get it all cut off.

*How do you catch a squirrel?
Climb a tree and act like a nut.*

What's the best exercise for losing weight?

Pushing yourself away from the table.

"What are you reading?" asked the prison librarian.

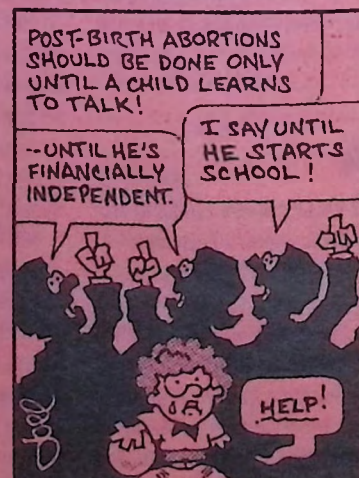
"Nothing much," replied the prisoner, "Just the usual escape literature."

Husband: I've just discovered oil.

Wife: That's wonderful. Now we'd better get a new car.

Husband: We'd better get the old car fixed first, that's where the oil is coming from.

Pontius' Puddle



Ethics debate of the future.