

THE AUSTRALIAN



Christian

NATIONAL JOURNAL OF CHURCHES OF CHRIST IN AUSTRALIA

Vol. 102 No. 20, 24 November 1999

PRINT POST APPROVED PP3/9181/03-113

" I wasted time, and now doth time waste me... Richard II William Shakespeare
But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son... Galatians 4:4 There is a time
for everything... a time to be born and a time to die... a time to embrace and a time
to refrain... Ecclesiastes 3 " I wasted time, and now doth time waste me... Richard II
William Shakespeare But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son... Galatians 4:4

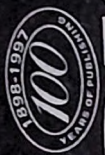
" I wasted time, and now doth time waste me... Richard II William Shakespeare
But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son... Galatians 4:4 There is a time
for everything... a time to be born and a time to die... a time to embrace and a time
to refrain... Ecclesiastes 3 " I wasted time, and now doth time waste me... Richard II
William Shakespeare But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son... Galatians 4:4

" I wasted time, and now doth time waste me... Richard II William Shakespeare
But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son... Galatians 4:4 There is a time
for everything... a time to be born and a time to die... a time to embrace and a time
to refrain... Ecclesiastes 3 " I wasted time, and now doth time waste me... Richard II
William Shakespeare But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son... Galatians 4:4

" I wasted time, and now doth time waste me... Richard II William Shakespeare
But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son... Galatians 4:4 There is a time
for everything... a time to be born and a time to die... a time to embrace and a time
to refrain... Ecclesiastes 3 " I wasted time, and now doth time waste me... Richard II
William Shakespeare But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son... Galatians 4:4

" I wasted time, and now doth time waste me... Richard II William Shakespeare
But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son... Galatians 4:4 There is a time
for everything... a time to be born and a time to die... a time to embrace and a time
to refrain... Ecclesiastes 3 " I wasted time, and now doth time waste me... Richard II
William Shakespeare But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son... Galatians 4:4

" I wasted time, and now doth time waste me... Richard II William Shakespeare
But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son... Galatians 4:4 There is a time
for everything... a time to be born and a time to die... a time to embrace and a time
to refrain... Ecclesiastes 3 " I wasted time, and now doth time waste me... Richard II
William Shakespeare But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son... Galatians 4:4



THE AUSTRALIAN

Christianian

NATIONAL JOURNAL OF CHURCHES OF CHRIST IN AUSTRALIA

Vol. 102 No. 20, 24 November 1999

Editor: Don Smith, Production Manager/Sub Editor: Nigel Pegram Issue 8 December Deadline 25 November; Issue 22 December Deadline 9 December; Issue 9 February Deadline 27 January. Address for all correspondence: PO Box 101, Essendon North Vic 3041. Telephone (03) 9379 1219, Fax (03) 9379 0015. E-mail <editor.ac@churchesofchrist.org.au>. World Wide Web <www.churchesofchrist.org.au>. Member publication of the Australasian Religious Press Association. Published by the Board of Management of The Australian Christian, a Department of Churches of Christ in Australia. Keith Aird, Chairman (SA); Lindsay Mott, Treasurer (Vic); John Batchler (Tas); Tom Glynn (NSW); Bev Grenfell (Qld); Allen Smyth (WA). Printed by New Litho Pty Ltd, Surrey Hills Vic. 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.



Editorial

Time Will Tell

DON SMITH

Take a moment now to recall significant events in your life and then move on to the various eras and times you have lived through in this century. * Whatever your age, you will be aware of momentous times, some of which have literally shaken the foundations of Western society. When we think like this, we are understanding time in a chronological sense. * There is also another way of understanding time, which has its roots in the Bible. Here the concept is of God's time, which sees God acting in history. The birth of Jesus is the principal expression of this



concept. * I suggest one example of such action in this century would be the rise of the charismatic movement. This could be quite a contentious statement, especially if we are personally uncomfortable with what we may regard as some of the excesses of this movement. If we take a broad sweep of mainline Western Christianity this century, we see worldwide decline. Against this decline is the phenomenal growth worldwide of charismatic expressions of the church. And it is phenomenal growth! * I believe another illustration of God's intervening is the rise of the Church Growth Movement, with its visible expression from the 1960s onwards. As the Western Church began to reel under the social impact of changing times, this movement under the leadership of Donald McGavran, a distinguished missiologist and from within our own US family of churches, began to challenge the church to reappraise its situation and task. The impact of this thinking has spread in ever-widening circles. Personally, I have been much closer to this initiative than the charismatic one, but I am convinced both express a real sense of God's intervention and timing. * Some may be uncomfortable with either or both of these movements. However, they confront us with significant challenges about the nature of faith and mission in times of turbulence and crises which society has itself created. May we not expect God's intervention in time? The rise of the Wesleyan Movement is surely an example from another century. I'm optimistic about our future, but our corporate life is still delicately balanced. Our last issue invited response to become a missional church. Time will tell! *

Contents

Letters to the Editor

Time

With the year 2000 approaching, time is constantly on our minds.

Ecclesiastes: A Sense of Timing

Why 2K?

The Significance of the Moment

My Times are in Your Hands

Our Lives and Times

10
11
12
13
14

News

Dauids Cohen

Historic House Destroyed

Aged Care Appointment

New Principal at CCTC

NSW Church Planting

Seniors Camp

cooma2000

Partners in Mission 2000

Y2K Paranoia

Terry Carter, a computing professional, comments on our response to the Y2K bug

Regulars

Coffee Break

Church Matters

Late News

Snippets from History

Update

5
5
6
6
7
7
9
9
15
16
17
20
20
4

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.

Mission Task Group Report

To the Editor,

With reference to Harold Hayward's letter concerning the ISMTG Report, even though the visits that the team made were to churches that are now quite big, the proposal is not that Churches of Christ should accept a big-church model (large, silo church was Harold's colourful description); but rather that Churches of Christ should make a commitment to becoming a missional church, rather than a static denomination.

This will express itself in many forms of local church—some large and multi-staffed, some working with the poor and marginalised, some reaching out to ethnic communities and so on.

The ISMTG Report, for example, placed much stress on the need for church planting and deeper concerns for ministering to the poor and those on the fringes of society.

I understand Harold's concerns that the proposed visionary leadership may turn out to be less than what was anticipated. I also read history and am aware that not all renewal movements succeed, or are even benign. I believe strongly that renewal movements ought, as far as it is possible, to work within existing structures and be subject to the discipline of the wider church.

I am very hopeful that this call to redefine ourselves as a movement for mission will receive the enthusiastic support of our existing leadership, as indeed it did at the recent National Consultation, and will help us to become the missional church we've always said we want to be. —Bob Smith

(National Coordinator)

Proposed Logo

To the Editor,

I am writing regarding the winning entry in the National Logo competition. I am quite concerned that this design so closely resembles the logo for "Youth Ministries Australia". Has the logo been copied, or is it an unfortunate coincidence? Either way, I feel it is certainly too similar for us to use.

Why do we need a new logo? It seems to me that the one we have is a unique design. It depicts Churches of Christ in Australia as we should be—a people with the cross of Christ at the centre of our being—Christ from whom we draw faith, strength, hope, courage and a desire to reach out from the cross to serve others (no matter where in the world they are). I wish very strongly to keep and use the logo which we already have—the logo which has become

THE AUSTRALIAN

Christian

SEND THE AUSTRALIAN CHRISTIAN TO:

NAME

ADDRESS

POSTCODE

CHURCH

AMOUNT ENCLOSED:\$

A GIFT FOR 2000 COSTS JUST \$33 (plus GST)

WE WILL SEND A GIFT CARD SAYING "THE AUSTRALIAN CHRISTIAN IS FROM"

☐ CHEQUE/MONEY ORDER ENCLOSED or

CHARGE MY — ☐ AMEX ☐ BANKCARD ☐ VISA ☐ MASTERCARD

NUMBER

□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

EXPIRY DATE

SIGNATURE

THE AUSTRALIAN CHRISTIAN PO BOX 101, ESSENDON NORTH 3041

A Christmas Gift that lasts all year

Letters to the Editor

recognised by other denominations as the sign of Churches of Christ in Australia. I know many who feel the same way.

—Wendy Ridge
(Magill, SA)

Sunstate 99

To the Editor,

I was privileged to be one of the guest speakers at "Sunstate 99", the annual "happening" of the Queensland Churches of Christ. What an outstanding function it turned out to be.

The emphasis was on inspiration and relevant information, rather than on decision-making processes. In addition to Keith Farmer, Chek Chia and me, the organisers flew in Rick Rusaw, a Christian Church minister from Colorado, to be one of the speakers. He made an outstanding contribution.

Being a veteran of conferences in various states, it was a relief to experience this refreshing approach to bringing our churches together. Obviously the organisers were working on the principle that "inspiration flows downhill from the top". —Ted Keating
(Figtree, NSW)

The Numbers Game

To the Editor,

What an excellent article "Playing the Numbers Game" was ("AC" 20.10.99). How many times has one heard ministers, board members and others stating, "we don't play the numbers game"? How wrong it is (as the article explained). The comment is usually heard when the number of church members is falling, and it is heard in both large and small churches. When one studies the WA statistics each year, one cannot but be alarmed at the continual drop in numbers, particularly when there is such a high WA population growth. One wonders how long it

will be before there is virtually no WA Church of Christ movement in existence—maybe in the not-too-distant future.

Most of us (including myself) are guilty of not being serious about helping to bring non-believers into the Kingdom, and while we continue in this mode nothing will change.

—Fen Hewitt
(Wembley Downs, WA)

The New Must Replace the Old

To the Editor,

I was appalled to read David Allison's letter ("AC" 6.10.99). To suggest for one moment that the OT writings are "contrived", and that Moses and David equate with Hitler and Stalin, is incomprehensible. God is nowhere seen as the killer of multitudes for the sake of one nation. Moses was God's leader and David a man after God's own heart says the New Testament. God did command the events of Numbers 31 for a specific purpose. The Midianites were the enemy of the children of God. Moses' actions were totally in line with God's command. In fact, to be exact, Phinehas the priest (he who had God's interests at heart) was the one who led the action with the holy vessels and the trumpets. As for the statement, the New must replace the Old, I leave that for another response.

—Graeme Ellingsen
(Gympie, Qld)

Update

Dear Readers,

Some readers have indicated their copy of the issue on "Mission" had four blank pages. We have replaced this issue if requested. Our printer is most apologetic about the problem. The company with whom we have an excellent relationship over many years is in the process of updating to the latest equipment. In the initial installation stages some defects have shown up. These are sometimes difficult to locate as such large quantities of paper are involved.

In our last issue we advertised the National Literature Department's request for photographs for the 2001 calendar. This will be printed earlier in 2000 than normal. Readers are invited to submit colour slides by 31 December 1999. Photographs are needed from all states and territories of Australia and from PNG and Vanuatu. Check the previous issue for details.

Readers will also be interested to know that the 2000 calendar has been an outstanding success, with cop-

ies virtually sold out. Dispatch of National Literature material is from this office. If additional calendars are required please phone your orders immediately. As a trial, a quantity of calendars was produced which was not Churches of Christ specific. Supplies have been exhausted such has been the response. The Department is greatly encouraged by the success and is planning for a larger marketing program next year.

In this issue, all Australian readers will receive an insert from the Christmas Bowl Appeal. We commend this appeal to readers. In our next issue we shall include comment on the range of overseas-aid work through the Christmas Bowl.

We currently have a large quantity of copy in hand. Items may take a little time to be included. However, we encourage your continuing supply of material.

Sam Smith

Pontius' Puddle



Dauids Cohen

Three David Cohens in Christian Ministry



Three David Cohens meet for lunch

In what must be a unique meeting among Christian workers, three David Cohens met up recently in Perth, WA.

Two of them are Churches of Christ pastors, and the other, an Anglican by ordination, is the National Director of CNEC/Partners International.

The first David Cohen (on the left of the photo), has been pastoring the church in Nollamara.

He is the son of the late Rev Leon Cohen who ministered in Anglican churches in both WA and Vic.

In 1967 David Cohen number two ministered in his church while on deputation on behalf of the Bible Society, where he had been serving in Mauritius.

David Cohen number two (in the centre of the photo) was in Perth as the speaker at two faith promise mission weeks at the Churches of Christ in Thornlie and Kalamunda, having earlier led similar weeks in the Scarborough, South Perth and Geraldton Churches of Christ.

David Cohen number three (on the right of the photo) has been

ministering in Mandurah, as well as lecturing trainee pastors.

All three agreed that it was a great time of fellowship to share common concerns and to establish a link of prayer.

Historic House Destroyed

Campbell Edwards House fire



Fire destroyed Campbell Edwards House, the original residence on the site of the College of the Bible, Glen Iris, Vic, on 31 October. The building will have many associations for past students and those for whom the site was well-known. The blaze was clearly visible from the freeway which runs alongside the property. The College moved to new premises at Mulgrave in 1989 at the time of the freeway construction.

cooma2000....down to earth

Sunday 9 to Saturday 15 January 2000.
Pacific Lodge Cooma NSW

A 7 day event to equip you to better use the creative arts in effective ministry:

- facilitating broad and practical artistic scope
- opportunity for "hands on" learning experiences
- providing networking opportunities with other Christian artists
- being a place for relevant biblical teaching
- enjoying community in a residential seminar setting
- joining in praise in creative, inspirational worship
- encouraging those who have an interest in the arts to explore involvement in Christian ministry.

Featuring John Smith - keynote speaker,
and Tim Uluirewa - worship leader
plus Michelle Kay and Paul Colman Trio

artists expressing the reality of faith

The 22nd Australian Christian Music Seminar - (incorporating all the arts)

For details phone 02 9890 4450 - fax 02 9890 4420 - email acms@ozemail.com.au - web www.acms.ans.nu

musicians
singers
songwriters
dancers
actors
pastors
visual artists
worship leaders
children's ministers
sound and light
technicians
multi media artists

Aged-Care Appointment

Graham Reed takes up new post in Qld

Graham Reed has been appointed to the newly-created position of Director—Aged Care with Churches of Christ Care, Qld.

Graham, who has enjoyed a long association with aged care in SA (14-plus years), primarily as executive manager with Aged Care and Housing Group Inc, took up his appointment in November. He has been actively involved with the Blackwood, SA, church.

He will be responsible for providing strategic management, direction and leadership for the Aged Care Division—a division comprising over 1000 residential care places, 603 self-contained units, 80 Community Care Packages and a number of HACC services.

The Aged Care Division is extensive, not only in size but in geographic spread, with services in



Graham Reed

Brisbane, Gold Coast, Wide Bay, Toowoomba, Bribie Island and south western Queensland as far out as St George. Graham appreciates that this new role will represent a significant challenge. However, he is particularly looking forward to working within an organisation with such an unashamedly strong focus on Christian values and service principles.

New Principal at CCTC

Merrill Kitchen Principal-elect

Mrs Merrill Kitchen (BAppSc, BTheol, TheolM) has been appointed Principal-elect of the Churches of Christ Theological College, Mulgrave, Vic. Merrill's appointment has been made by a unanimous decision of the College Board and ratified by the National Council of Churches of Christ in Australia.

Since 1991, Merrill has been the Dean of the Evangelical Theological Association (ETA is a co-operative venture between the Churches of Christ Theological College and Whitley College, the Baptist College of Victoria). She has earned wide respect as a gifted and challenging teacher of the New Testament and as an efficient administrator of theological education. She is known as a person of wisdom, vision and integrity. She already enjoys the friendship and respect of the CCTC faculty, who are delighted at her appointment, as well as many other key leaders in



Merrill Kitchen

Churches of Christ and the wider Christian community.

Merrill is deeply committed to and involved in the ministry and mission of the church. Between 1973 and 1976 Merrill and husband Paul were sponsored by the Swanston Street Church of Christ, Melbourne, to serve with the Edinburgh Medical Missionary Society in its mission to the Arabic-speaking people of the Galilee Region. Having trained and worked for many years as a medical scientist, Merrill turned to the formal study of theology in 1986, largely as a result of challenges and questions she encountered as a missionary in Israel. She has led several teams in short-term missionary service at the Edinburgh Medical Missionary Society Hospital in Nazareth, Israel. In 1994-1995 she also served in an interim ministry at the Kew Baptist Church in Melbourne. Merrill has been married to Paul since 1966 and they have four adult children. Merrill has a proven commitment to the ethos of Churches of Christ and the ministry of CCTC. The College Board celebrates this opportunity to appoint an appropriately-qualified and gifted woman as the next Principal of CCTC.

Executive Director Insight for Living

With the imminent retirement of the present Executive Director, we now seek a person committed to the truth of God's word and with a desire to help communicate that truth through the tools of the ministry, including radio broadcasts, audio tapes and books.

Insight for Living grew out of the Bible-teaching ministry of Dr Chuck Swindoll. Its main focus is the accurate, clear and practical teaching of Scriptures, broadcast in over 150 countries throughout the world. The ministry was established in Australia in 1987 and now broadcasts through more than 80 stations in Australia and New Zealand.

Ideally, you will have a strong business background in managing the resources, people and day-to-day functions of a reasonably-sized enterprise. You will most likely see this opportunity as a career change that will answer your desire to serve God in a meaningful, specific and energetic manner, to provide vision and growth into the future for a dynamic, bible-teaching outreach.

An attractive remuneration package is offered and is fully funded. A vehicle is included. The Blackburn office is modern and fully staffed. For further information, please contact either:

Mr Mac Hawkins
Chairman, Insight for Living
Hawkins Consulting
5/969 Burke Rd
Camberwell Vic 3124

Phone: Business (03) 9882 9045
Home (03) 9887 8525

Mr Graham Permezel
Executive Director, Insight for Living
20 Albert St
Blackburn Vic 3130

Phone: Business (03) 9877 4277
Home (03) 9808 1519



330-350 Frankston-
Dandenong Road
Seaford Vic 3198
Phone (03) 9786 8679

Managed by
Church of Christ
Frankston

1- and 2-bedroom villas
Motel-type lodge suites

Waiting list open

NSW Church Planting

Task force actively involved in developing church planting in NSW

The NSW Conference has been taking a hard look at its church-planting strategy. Bruce Armstrong, Ministry Coordinator, has been encouraging NSW churches to get really serious about church planting. That has resulted in Conference support for the Church Planting Task Force set up almost a year ago.

The task force was born out of an initiative of the Telopea church, who convened a meeting of the state's church planters and the relevant conference personnel to address the poor performance of NSW in church planting.

The first goal of the task force was to establish some protocols for the starting of new church plants in the state, which was done quickly. The second, ongoing role of the task force is to mentor and nurture new church plants. This is being achieved by putting a



Steve Hall

field worker "on the road" five days a month and by the coordinated use of existing Conference personnel. The third goal is to find and release resources to church planting—money, equipment and people—and, of course, covering it all in prayer.

The task force is actively involved in church plants at Nimbin, Kyogle, Byron Bay, Kellyville and Bellambi. It is also in discussions with teams looking at Old Barr, Newcastle, Goulburn, Buronga and Stanwell Park. It is also actively looking for churches to act as mother churches to the new plants. This is probably the most coordinated approach to church planting that NSW has seen in many years and is directly supported by the NSW Conference Executive who are giving it a high priority. It is already bearing some exciting fruit, with much more on the way.

—Steve Hall

Seniors Camp

First Victorian seniors' getaway



having a great time at the first Victorian seniors' camp

Eighty-two senior citizens from as far away as Swan Hill and Shepparton gathered at the beautiful CYC Camp on Phillip Island, Vic, 8–10 October, for a weekend of fellowship, study, worship and fun. Gordon Stirling was our leader and challenged us to think positively about ageing and to reach out to seniors in our communities. Charles and Wendy Bayer invited us to explore possibilities, to exercise the right brain so that our imagination will be creative, to discover new ways to serve Christ and the church. This came under the general heading, "It's a big wide wonderful world". We were reminded to be pro-active rather than passive in the life

of the church. We toured the island by bus on Saturday afternoon and learned much about its history.

At an evening concert Ray Thornley produced magic on his electronic organ. John Marshall sang excerpts from operas and musicals. We couldn't have heard better at the State Theatre! We met for worship and communion, led by Wendy Bayer, on Sunday morning and then in a final focus on "Where to from Here?" by Gordon Stirling. Our thanks to Community Care for allowing Peter Bradley to bring his vision to fruition. The general comment was, "When can we do this again?"

—Bob Clymer

It's Free (Alcohol Free)

For Melbourne's largest range of non-alcoholic and de-alcoholised wines and beer call

CORKSCREW

Ring now on (03) 9857 5660 for a free brochure.

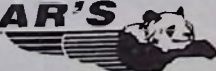
We deliver anywhere.

Opening special—10% discount* on all first orders.

*Conditions apply.

Sydney
Adelaide
Local
Country

BEAR'S



- Free quotes • Packing
- Insurance • Storage

7 Swift Way,
Dandenong Vic 3175

Moving and Storage Pty Ltd.

Member of the VRTA

Twice weekly to Qld

(03) 9706 5616

Bethel Funerals

The Caring Australian Alternative



*A unique Christian funeral company
supporting the work of missions*

24-hour, 7-day service

Pre-arranged and pre-paid funerals

(03) 9877 9900 (all hours) fax (03) 9877 0544

Servicing all areas

Why are Kid's Clubs & Sunday Schools growing?



and leaders
Kids love it!

a children's curriculum using videos, music, creativity, contemporary styles & themes, providing you with the latest media to help children grow in their faith using the clear message of the Bible.

Oasis Children's Resources

PO Box 609 Hornsby NSW 1630 Australia
02 9482 4412 Fax: 02 9477 5825

email: oasis@logosdor.com
web: www.logosdor.com



Logosdor

WOW!
BIBLICALLY
STRONG
creative
wild energy
TOTALLY AUSTRALIAN

Red Hill Church of Christ

Visit the beautiful
**Mornington Peninsula, Vic, over the
Christmas and New Year season
and join us for worship and celebration.**

5 December 10.00 am	Sunday School Anniversary Speaker: John Sutton
12 December 10.00 am	Speaker: Tom Frazer
19 December 10.00 am	Speaker: John Sutton
19 December 7.45 pm	Candlelight carol service and children's Christmas play. Speaker: Keith Milne
25 December 9.30 am	Christmas Day Speaker: John Sutton
26 December 10.00 am	Speaker: Keith Milne
23 January 10.00 am	Farewell to present ministers (inc. luncheon)
30 January 10.00 am	Induction of new minister Alby Fitt by Lynette Leach (inc. luncheon)
6 February 10.00 am	Alby Fitt begins ministry
27 February 10.00 am	Church anniversary and luncheon Speaker: Stan McCredden
All Welcome	

Inquiries to Secretary, Fred Dickson on (03) 5981 4096.

MOORESLEGAL

Decision Makers

of major businesses, churches
and Christian organisations

choose Moores Legal
for timely, practical and
complete business advice.

9 Prospect St
BOX HILL VIC
(03) 9898 0000

13 Pakington St
ST KILDA VIC
(03) 9525 3622

<www.mooreslegal.com.au>



Scripture Union is a dynamic christian non-
denominational organisation introducing young
Australians to Jesus, the Bible and the local church.

Scripture Union Australia wishes to appoint a

National Director

The person required for this senior position will have
a sound knowledge of Scripture Union and a
commitment to SU's aims, beliefs and ethos. An
ability to think strategically, lead and work in a team
is essential.

The role comprises three key elements:

- facilitating the development of strategic corporate vision and coordinating national activity
- leading a small national team and the network of State and Territory Directors
- managing the affairs of Scripture Union Australia Inc.

Currently determined to be a four-day-a-week position, however this is open to negotiation. Closing date for applications: Friday, 3 December 1999. Initial interviews commence mid-December. Appointment to commence early 2000, subject to the availability of the successful candidate.

For an application pack or to send letters of application, resumes, including details of three referees, please contact: Bev Johnston, Scripture Union Australia, 828 Sydney Rd, Coburg North Vic 3058. Phone (03) 9319 9195. Fax (03) 9319 9199. E-mail <sua@suvic.org.au>.

cooma2000

Australia's leading music and arts seminar

The theme for cooma2000 is "...down to earth". Keynote speaker John Smith, will bring his passion to see the arts used effectively by the church. Worship and praise will be led by Tim Uluirewa and a creative team bringing freshness and creativity in worship.

There is something for everyone. Major classes offer ten hours tuition and practical know-how in subjects such as bands, children's ministry, worship, vocals, drama, dance, visual art, technical management and multi-media. These are complemented by workshops giving opportunity for hands-on experience, working towards a performance at the end of the week. Concerts each evening featuring some of the best Christian musicians Australia has to offer will bring inspiration and refreshment.

Faculty for cooma2000 are chosen for their professional ability and commitment to Christ. The ratio of registrant to teacher is very low—a feature of this event.

A new element incorporated into the week is what is known as "The Limelight Sessions". These will be a series of entertaining magazine-style programs, which allow opportunity for registrants to perform on stage before an encouraging audience and be given a critique on their performance. The aim of this is to give not-so-experienced people a "go" with all the technical and production support possible, thus maximising their performance.

It is anticipated that the 22nd Australian Christian Music Seminar will again have the "house full" sign up. For further information telephone (02) 9890 4450 or see the advert on page 5.

Partners in Mission 2000

Contributing to the ongoing mission of the churches



Lynette Leach, Vic-Tas Conference Executive Officer

Victorian and Tasmanian readers are invited to become Partners in Mission 2000. In 2000, the Mission and Ministry Team of Churches of Christ (Vic-Tas) will be involved actively across Victoria and Tasmania, helping local churches to bring the love of God to people.

Much is being done already through inspiring events such as the Mission Summit, State Youth Games, State Children's Games, Youth Vision Arts Eisteddfod, and camps for young people, children and families. The recent seminar on Youth Suicide provided education for churches.

A great deal of involvement with local churches occurs through ministry support and advice, visits to churches for consultation and training, and assistance with ministry appointments.

Urban Neighbours of Hope are in the forefront of incarnational mission among the poor. Their lives speak the Gospel. Dedicated camp managers give warm hospitality to all at accredited camp sites. Church-planting pioneers

develop new models of church among diverse people groups. Mission practitioners and church planters are interns in the FORGE Mission Training Network.

Future plans for 2000 include a proposal to link all churches online with each other. A Gospel Ministry Course will be offered to train indigenous leaders. A ministry appointment in the area of Family and Children's Ministry will be considered. Guidance to church leaders in strategy, innovation, and managing change and conflict will be accessible. Michael Frost will be a presenter at a Summit for Ministers and Leaders on evangelism and culture. A series on Sexuality and Spirituality will be held.

The Mission and Ministry Team of the Conference of Churches of Christ in Victoria and Tasmania is responsible directly to the Conference Board for Mission, Revitalisation, Ministry and Education. The goal is to form partnerships in mission for 2000 with at least 2000 people contributing \$20. Will you pray and act to become a partner in mission?

— Lynette Leach
[Vic-Tas readers will find an envelope included with this issue.]

Youth Minister Wanted

2 Days Per Week

To commence 2000 at the Werribee Church of Christ, Vic.

Are you the youth minister we are looking for?

Werribee Church of Christ is an active church in Melbourne's fast-growing Western suburbs. With a committed youth membership of 20, our current youth activities are:

- Fortnightly youth group
- Senior Explorers club
- Weekly cell groups
- Bible discussion groups
- Youth Vision events/Youth Alive rallies

In addition, we have contact with many unchurched primary and secondary-aged-children.

Your role will include:

- Leadership, oversight and coordination of youth ministry.
- Participation in the life of the Werribee Church of Christ
- Ministry in accordance with spiritual gifts

If you feel that God is calling you to this ministry, please phone our minister, Graeme Batley, on (03) 9742 6788 or (03) 9741 6051 for any further information and a more detailed summary of the position requirements.

Applications close 1 December 1999.

"In my youth, I lived in the Vale of Keswick, under the roof of a shrewd and sensible woman, who more than once exclaimed in my hearing, 'Bless me! Folk are always talking about prospects. When I was young there was never such a thing named'."

—William Wordsworth
(on his staying in Keswick, England in 1794)

Time

Ecclesiastes: A Sense of Timing

NIGEL PEGRAM

Ecclesiastes can appear to be a contradictory, puzzling and frustrating book, especially as it seems to contain some ideas which some Christians might consider questionable (a time for war?). Yet it is a marvellous book. It has much to teach us about life and evangelism. For it takes the common, fundamental questions of life and holds them up for people to look and wonder at. It challenges the reader that life has to have more to it than what appears on the surface and points the reader in God's general di-

*For time brings
change—a fact we
cannot ignore*

rection without bludgeoning them over the head.

Ecclesiastes 3:1-8 (which even made it into a 1960s classic song) says there is an appropriateness to every activity **under heaven** (a phrase used to indicate when things are being viewed from God's point of view). Most are opposites, and many we would have difficulty with—an appropriate time for hatred and destruction?

Rather than endorsing both sides, the preacher of Ecclesiastes is saying how it is in life. A time to be born and a time to die, a time to tear down, a time to build; a time to scatter stones, a time to gather them; a time to search and a time to give up. This applies to our own lives as well as to that of the church.

All things have beginnings and ends, our lives, our communities, even this world. Yet, we sometimes find it so hard

to call a halt. Maybe its because we have put so much time and effort in to what we do that it seems that it will all be devalued if we just quit—that our contribution, our hard work will become meaningless. Maybe it's because we have a stubborn streak and we never like to "give up" or admit defeat. Or maybe we simply want things to remain as they were—holding onto the past when it has passed us by.

It may not be a defeat or giving up, however, but calling an appropriate end. That its time has come and gone, recognising that what we have done has served its purpose and we need to move on to other things. Sadly, we are more prepared to do this in our everyday lives, moving from one phase to another, than we are in our church life. We need to recognise that while all we do for God and the Kingdom is sacred, the methods and actions are only the means to the end of serving our Lord. What is appropriate in one time and place, will not be in another—even if the same people and place are involved. For time brings change—a fact we cannot ignore if we just look around us. We need to be prepared to begin new works as well as to end old ones—as it is fitting and as we are led by the Spirit to do so.

Timing is very important. Without the correct timing, even the best-planned, the most well-intentioned activities or events can be wrong or have disastrous results. Even though we may plan and try to do our best for our own lives, careers, family or even the church, unless we approach with a sense of God's timing, we run a very real risk of things turning out otherwise than we'd

planned. Not only do we need to seek God's guidance for what we are to be doing, but we also need his prompting as to when it is appropriate. What is right in one situation or at one time or another, can be wrong at other times and in other situations.

Thus, what may have worked in the past might well not work now. Conversely, what has not worked in the past is not now destined to fail! Again, it comes back to depending on God for guidance

Both beginnings and endings are part of the cycle of life—in our own lives and in that of our churches. We need to be prepared not only to accept change, but to be involved in it so that the kingdom might continue to grow, with each generation

Nigel Pegram is a staff member of "The Australian Christian".



Why 2K?

GRAHAME CROWHURST

In October 1582 a mob rioted in Frankfurt, protesting against Pope Gregory XIII. He, they alleged, had been stealing time from them. In an attempt to bring the antiquated calendar into line with the seasons, he lopped 5–14 October from that year's calendar.

If, in the thinking of the time, God had marked you down as dying of a plague on 8 December, then this calendar rearrangement seemed to bring that date ten days closer. Hence the riots.

Time can seem to be little more than a sequence of boxes on our wall calendars or slots in our diaries

Of course, we're still arguing about time. The matters are just as weighty (or not), although the arguments are a modicum less vehement. You might remember people protesting that daylight saving time should not be introduced because the extra hour of sunlight would fade their curtains. But wait, there's more ...

As the year 2000 draws near, does it matter that it is probably more than two thousand years since Jesus was actually born? Doesn't the millennium really begin in 2001? And what will Leadership 2000 be called when the year 2000 is history? This last is a great mystery: time and Ted wait for no man. Come December, we will celebrate the turn of the millennium. No matter whether it is or it isn't. Why 2K? Well, why not? Most of us will celebrate anyway. The fact is that many of us like convenient bookmarks between the

pages of our lives, however pristine or yellowed the paper on which they are printed.

And that's what time really is: a marker. When it ceases to be convenient, we modify it. The astronomers who worked out Pope Gregory's calendar would be mystified by the basis of our modern measurement of time. For it is no longer the motions of heavenly bodies, but the oscillations of atoms which allow us to build clocks precise to a billionth of a second per year. In order to measure time more precisely, it has been convenient to change our measurements once again.

It has even been demonstrated that the rate of time can change. Time, which had seemed to plod along so dependably, has turned out to be as elastic as the waists of our underpants. At high speeds, the rule is "the faster you go, the longer time lasts".

In everyday life, which mostly seems to happen very fast, the opposite is true. As humans are able to measure smaller and smaller units of time, time itself seems to be slipping out of our control. Time can seem to be little more than a sequence of boxes on our wall calendars or slots in our diaries, filled all too soon with things which, ultimately, matter all too little. Too few windows of opportunity blink up at us from the electronic organisers of our virtual lives.

For others, the windows are large yet the view is bleak. Loneliness, grief and sorrow can stretch out the hours of the day almost unbearably. Indeed, for much of the world's population, time has meaning only as a measure of the space until the next meal, far less the next business lunch or McBinge.

So what should time help us to measure? Certainly not our own empire



building. The high fliers of the 1980s demonstrated that the point of time's arrow eventually pricks just about every inflated ego.

The purpose of progress as time goes by is surely less an accumulation of achievements than a getting of wisdom.

For most of us, our lasting impact will not consist in what we do, but in who we are to the people whose lives we touch. And, in that light, time for us is important, not as a series of deadlines, but as a chart of the development of our characters. So what's important is not how much we can cram into the time we have, but rather how much we can harvest from that time, whatever markers of time we use: birthdays, anniversaries or millennia.

Why 2K? Who cares? The question that matters most to a society driven by ambition and greed, to churches bound by tradition and legislature, and to those of us facing an uncertain future is: "Who can we be in the future?" As we get older, all of us—even brash young associate ministers—can begin to turn ageing into sageing.

Grahame Crowhurst is Associate Minister at Northside Community Church, NSW. His ambition is to host a cooking show on television. Like everybody else.

Time

The Significance of the Moment

JENNIFER TURNER

When I was a child I laughed and wept, time crept.

When as a youth I dreamed and talked, time walked.

When I became a full-grown man, time ran.

And later as I older grew, time flew.

Soon, I shall find while travelling on, time gone!

Will Christ have saved my soul by then?

These words are engraved on an old clock in Chichester Cathedral, Eng-

land. Most of us identify with the feeling that time seems to go faster as we get older. But what do we make of that last line? Is it a matter of **how much time** passes (*chronos* time) before Christ has saved us? No! Rather, it is a matter of whether **in time** (*kairos* time) we have met him and responded to his offer of love and forgiveness.

There is also an undercurrent of fear

There is a lot of hype at the moment about a particular time we are about to enter. Whether we think the end of this year or the next marks the beginning of a new millennium, there is no denying that 31 December is receiving a lot of attention. Some just want to party, others are keen to mark a turning point that will not come again in their lifetime.

But there is also an undercurrent of fear about this point in history. Concern about whether our computers will stop working or whether we will have electricity and running water is part of it, but at the turn of every century people have lost confidence in the future, ex-

pecting something bad to turn up. They are afraid.

At least such fear focuses attention on the significance of this moment in time. The actual date of the start of a new millennium doesn't matter (the original estimate of the time of Jesus' birth was probably wrong to start with), but 2000 AD is celebrating two thousand years since the coming into history of Jesus at Bethlehem. That was a significant event in *kairos* time. In fact, we call it the First Advent and celebrate it not only through our dating system but by starting the Church Year from our preparation for it.

The Chinese written character for "crisis" is a combination of "danger" and "opportunity". The coming of Jesus into our time presents us with a choice which is fundamental to our Christian faith. In this "now" time we must take one fork or the other. Commit our lives to him or ignore him. The apostle Paul expressed it with "God says, 'In the time of my favour I heard you, and in the day of salvation I helped you.' I tell you, now is the time of God's favour, now is the day of salvation." (2 Cor 6:2) Millennium fear can help to focus this moment of danger and opportunity for everyone contemplating the future. There is a very real sense that God is outside time, above it, not constrained by it. But there is another sense in which he enters into it with us and transforms it. The pain of the past, the dilemmas of the present, the challenges of the future are in his hands.

The Second Advent, the coming again of Jesus in power and glory, is another of these significant "now" times. Yet even some Christians, for whom this



should be a joyful union with their Lord, are as apprehensive about this event as others are about the new millennium. Are they afraid of the judgment—they don't need to be if they have been accepted and forgiven. Are they fearful of uncertain end-times events? The Book of Revelation is written to reassure us that nothing takes God by surprise, that evil will be conquered, and that the saints will come through in the end. Anticipating the Second Advent with hope reminds us that our message to a fearful world is that the future belongs to God. Jesus is our beginning and our end. As Master of the universe he declares: "I'm A to Z. I'm the God who is, the God who was, and the God about to arrive."

In this significant moment in history we can say with the Psalmist: "I trust in you, O Lord; I say, 'You are my God.' My times are in your hands."

Jennifer Turner is the Minister of the Dianella church, WA. Her name will be known to readers of the Zadok Institute's "Perspectives" for which she wrote a column on Christianity and society for 15 years and as a writer of Scripture Union notes. She has a particular interest in the use of small groups in churches.

Time

My Times are in Your Hands

SUSAN WALKER

Have you ever noticed that some people stay longer in an hour than others stay in a week? Our perception of time varies according to our attitude. At various points in our life, time flies. At other points, time drags. While time has the amazing ability to heal, it also has the ability to distort reality. Whatever way we look at it "time is the stuff life is made of".

A 70-year-old in semi-retirement and a 21-year-old at the start of a career, what are their perceptions of time? Do they have the assurance of the psalmist that

into part-time employment again. He enjoys the hours spent nutting out a problem in a television set or video recorder, or researching family history on the computer. This still leaves him plenty of time to spend with grandchildren.

In recent years, times spent travelling with his wife Mary to Japan, Europe, Britain and Canada are regarded as the icing on the cake of life. For Bert, the past has been a wonderful opportunity to make memories that outlive the constraints of time.

For 21-year-old Alysson Catto, life is yet to provide her with the many experiences that Bert Matthews has had. What does she plan to do with the years ahead?

In her part-time roles as youth-worker and church youth leader, Alysson devotes a great deal of her time to young people, providing them with something that will outlast it. Two part-time jobs are usually enough to keep most people occupied full-time, but Alysson, a recent Bachelor of Arts graduate, is now topping up her studies with two postgraduate diplomas—one in psychology and the other in pastoral care.

She too is assured with the psalmist that "her times are in God's hands". Although she admits that there are times when she would like to see the future in order to be assured that she is making the right decision ahead of time, Alysson believes that the deci-



Alysson Catto

Bert Matthews

Two people at almost opposite ends of life!

"my times are in your hands"?

Bert Matthews, father of four and grandfather of ten, has experienced the many changes of time—sterling to decimal, imperial to metric, black and white to colour, and the introduction of supermarkets, fast food outlets, and countless technological improvements. During his lifetime, there have been the times of economic hardship during the war years and years when serious illness plagued family members—when "time dragged", which could easily be recounted as negatives in life's account book.

But for Bert, time has flown. He claims that, in spite of negative circumstances, he can look back and see God was in control of events. In hindsight, he senses a "communal feeling of binding together" during these difficult times. Hours that others might regard as "drudgery", time spent at school and at work, are viewed by Bert as good times. In spite of retiring five years ago, his love of work has drawn him back

sion-making process is vital to the growth process.

She says, "It continually places me in a position of trust and yet allows me to take responsibility. Knowing things ahead of time would cause me to miss the excitement of wondering about how things will turn out and the surprises that come with God's timing."

Alysson claims that the deaths of a number of older relatives have had an impact on her in a positive way. Comments such as "I remember when I was 21" have made her realise that life is short and that in order to make the most of it, she must prioritise her time so that she does important things first. It is these values that she wishes to pass on to the young people she works with.

Two people at almost opposite ends of life! One looks forward with excitement to a future where God is in control. The other reflects positively on a life of experience and change, recognising God's hand in the events of life. Both would acknowledge with the psalmist, "My times are in your hands".

Susan Walker is coordinator of the Australian College of Ministries Wollongong Campus and tutor at Wollongong University College.

Time

Our Lives and Times

GARRY HARRIS



The story of our lives and the journey of humankind is brushed upon the canvas of time. The valiant struggles, the triumphs and the wrenching catastrophes are all there, faithfully recorded. We may rightly be understood as natural creatures of time and accomplished time-travellers. Life-long residents of the present, we are journeying from the past and inexorably drawn toward the future.

Time is the instrument by which we number the days, months, and years of our lives, the measure by which we quantify history and position past

Even time is part of God's creative undertaking

events. The invention of the wheel, the Iron Age, the advent of the printing press, the evolution of the computer chip, are pivotal referents in the never-ending continuum.

This Century has witnessed momentous events that serve to define us in our time: two World Wars; the splitting of the atom; the lunar landing and the demise of the USSR. These moments identify us as existing at certain points in the unfolding story of human life on this planet.

Our personal stories cannot escape time either. As children we loved to hear those words: "Once upon a time ...", and when engrossed in the passion and the glory of a back-yard cricket match how we loathed the words: "Time to come in!" and "Bed-time!".

Having passed through the ages and stages that time inevitably dispenses, we have no doubt heard older family

members musing nostalgically about "the good old days" and "times gone by". From time to time we may have even done this ourselves.

Upon reflection, we may wonder if our existence is little more than a sequence of moments strung together to make "a life". Tiny bites of history arranged sequentially, flowing effortlessly into the now. This may indeed be partially true, but happily the Scripture assures us that even time is part of God's creative undertaking. The first biblical glimpse we have of time is as a measurement of duration: "And the evening and the morning were the first day". (Gen 1:5)

Early Judaism was organised around time. The week was divided into a succession of days from Sabbath to Sabbath. Seasonal feasts marked the passage of the year and served to recall momentous events in religious and national history. Passover rehearsed the deliverance from Egypt. The Feast of Tabernacles marked the beginning of the wilderness wandering. While Pentecost celebrated the giving of the Law to Moses. The highest and holiest day in the Jewish calendar, the Day of Atonement, addressed God's gracious remission of national and personal sin. The significance of these days representing judgement, penitence and forgiveness was embedded in the Jewish consciousness and celebrated in the yearly cycle.

The Church also quickly embraced the annual cycle to recall its holy days. Easter, being the centre and summit of Christian time, was the pivotal event around which all else revolved. The weekly cycle of the Lord's Day installed every Sunday as "a little Easter". Pentecost assumed even greater significance as God's Law was etched on our

hearts with the giving of the Spirit in Acts chapter 2.

Time became irrevocably enmeshed in Christian theology in the Incarnation. The Word assuming flesh and dwelling among us, was God forever spanning the gulf between eternity and time, to make both the domain of the holy.

Jesus' life was characterised by time. Critical events occurred at specific junctures, underscoring the unmistakable connection of his life to the "times" of the prevailing religious system. In Mark 14:1 we read that just two days before the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread the religious elite in Jerusalem were conspiring to effect Jesus' demise.

On numerous occasions throughout his life, Jesus avoided inflammatory situations because "his time had not yet come" (John 7:6). In Matt 28:16 he clearly had an unmistakable perception of the onset of his "appointed time" when he was to die on that time-dividing cross.

As time-dwellers, we celebrate that it was through the vehicle of time that God's grace was ultimately expressed in the Son's redemptive mission. Furthermore, a retrospective of God's active participation in the past assures us that future-time is also God's arena, and that we and time are in God's hands.

Garry Harris is Minister of the Church of Christ, Grote Street, Adelaide.

Comment Y2K Paranoia

TERRY CARTER

As we approach the year 2000, there is an increasing concern over the Y2K computer glitch also called the millennium bug. Some are predicting famine, pestilence, war, and the end of the world, as we know it. Why should anyone listen to me concerning Y2K? The answer is simple; I know whereof I speak. I hold degrees from two universities in computer science. In the mid-1980s, I programmed financial systems for a Fortune 500 company. In the early 1990s, I travelled in the US, China, Turkey, Yugoslavia, Thailand,

They ought to simply test it out and see

Mexico, and Canada programming real-time embedded systems. Since 1992, I have worked as an independent consultant on all types of computer systems and applications. I have dealt first-hand with the Y2K prob-

lem. I know what the issues are and what they aren't. Many of the computer experts that I work with share my sentiments on this issue.

Simply stated, the Y2K problem is an issue with computer systems that only use two digits for the year. Some software systems assume that the first two digits of the year are 19. In some specific instances, this is a problem. Sometimes it isn't.

I do not wish to discuss the technical details in this article. What I do want to discuss, briefly, are some of the problems with the Y2K prophets of doom.

First, they make mountains out of molehills. They assume that if a system doesn't work 100% correctly, that nothing works at all. This simply isn't true.

Because a microchip has a date does not mean that it has a Y2K problem. Most embedded chips don't care what year it is as far as their normal function is concerned. They simply perform a task over and over again.

Another example is the fear over networked systems.

They argue that since computers are connected, if one fails, the whole system goes down. This is simply not true. I can easily protect my system from crashing if another system crashes.

Second, much of the fear is based on ignorance. Somebody can do all the "research" that they want, but if they have never programmed a computer, they are not an expert. Too many people are parroting what they have read or heard from others. The old adage, "You can't believe everything you read," is a good one. Writing a book doesn't make you an expert. It only makes you a writer.

Third, too many of the doom and gloom Y2K prophets have ulterior motives. They are trying to sell books, tapes and survival kits. As long as they continue to sell, the authors will sing the same song all the way to the bank.

Fourth, if my income depends on providing you with a service, Y2K is not going to stop me. If I run a power company and my computer freezes, I will quickly find a way to override the system manually. I don't think that business owners will be content to close up shop if their computers fail in January. They aren't going to abandon their businesses and start looting the neighbourhood. They are going to lean hard on their data processing people to get the problem fixed. In the meantime, they will run things manually if necessary. It's simple economics.

Fifth, what if the prophets of doom are right? What if you prepare as they say you should? You buy a generator and put in a well. You stockpile food and fuel for your generator. If you are the only one around that has

food, water, and electricity, how long do you think you are going to keep it? Of course, that's why they tell you to buy guns and ammo. Are you prepared, as a Christian, to kill the hungry, thirsty, and cold when they come to you for help? Is that what Jesus would want? I think not. Besides, do you really think that nobody will come with bigger guns, more ammo, and more people?

Sixth, the proof is in the pudding. While the Y2K prophets of doom have been chanting their mantra of total system failure, people like me have been testing these systems. Here is what I have found so far. All of the computers in my house run fine with a date of 2000 or later. Incidentally, so do my VCRs. Every one of my clients who has tested their systems have found no problems whatsoever. Many of these systems are several years old. Some are still running older operating systems. I'm not talking about some problems that have been corrected. I'm talking about no problems to begin with.

Many people will worry for months that their computer will freeze next year. Instead, they ought to simply test it out and see if they have a problem. If you find a problem, now is the time to fix it. It's nothing to panic about, it's just something to plan for.

Lest I be misunderstood, I am not saying that there can't be any problems at all with Y2K. What I am saying is that this is not doomsday. It is not something to lose sleep over.

Terry Carter is the evangelist with the Northside Church of Christ, Fort Wayne, IN. (A fuller version appeared in "The Restoration Herald", August 1999. Used with permission.)

How to Prepare a Sermon

Used in colleges in Australia, the USA and Canada.

HOW TO PREPARE
A SERMON
AN EXPOSITORY
SERMON

Written by the late Dr Harold E. Knott, president and professor of homiletics, Bible history, philosophy and Greek exegesis at Eugene Bible University, and previous lecturer at College of the Bible, Melbourne. This classic volume has been used in many colleges in teaching the fundamentals of sermon preparation.

Cost: \$10.00 (including postage.)
Now available from Vital Publications,
PO Box 101, Essendon North Vic 3041.
Phone (03) 9379 1219. Fax (03) 9379 0015.
E-mail: <vitalpubs@churchesofchrist.org.au>

HAROLD E. KNOTT

Classifieds

CARS

PEDIGREE MOTORS Specialising in quality used cars, general repairs and servicing. Let us help you when buying your next car. 658 Canterbury Rd, Surrey Hills Vic 3127. Phone (03) 9898 9391. LMCT 4376.

HOLIDAYS

ADARE CARAVAN PARK Victor Harbor. Quiet, grassy sites, upgraded amenities, close to beach. On-site vans and en suite cabins. Good rates. Phone Adare Caravan Park and Holiday Units. (08) 8552 1657. RAA *** rating.

BELAIR Overlooking the Adelaide lights. UCA-owned holiday units sleeping 4-8. Close to all facilities. Phone Nunyara Conference Centre. (08) 8278 1673.

HOME STAY ACCOMMODATION IN BRISBANE We invite Christian families visiting Brisbane to utilise our three-bedroom "granny flat" accommodation. Fully-furnished, linen supplied, full cooking and laundry facilities. Located in the Eastern suburbs, 10 km to city centre, 10 km to beach, close to major shopping centres and public transport. One double and two single beds. Minimum stay 7 days. 1-2 adults \$175 pw. 3 adults \$189.

4 adults \$199. Children 14 years and under sharing with adults—no charge. Inquiries (07) 3398 7007, 0414 519 094, 0416 251 094.

HOUSEBOAT "White Heron" 8-berth. Moored at Blanchetown, SA. Phone (08) 8365 1153 or (08) 8540 5250 or write 7 Gameau Rd, Paradise 5075.

PT ELLIOTT Within sight and sound of the sea. UCA-owned, 2 and 3 bedroom self-contained units for rent. Good rates. Phone Adare Caravan Park and Holiday Units on (08) 8552 1657.

SUNSHINE COAST, CALOUNDRA, QUEENSLAND Two bedroom holiday unit for rent. Ground floor, lockup garage, pool, short walk to shops and beaches. Phone Trevor or Gayle on (08) 8298 7733.

THE AMBERS B&B Total comfort in elegant S/C B&B. Close to Halls Gap, golf, bowls, bushwalks, wineries. Reg and Lyn Seng Hpa, 40 Main St, Stawell Vic 3380. Phone (03) 5358 2283 or 0409 417 023.

VICTOR HARBOR Peaceful setting close to beach. UCA-owned, 2 and 3 bedroom self-contained units for rent. Good rates. Phone Adare Caravan Park and Holiday Units. (08) 8552 1657.

Coffee Break

Practical Gifts

CAROL PRESTON

There are some people who are gifts because of their practical, sensible, responsible approach to life. They are always there to do their job, on time, in the way it was planned. They are accountable and comfortable working within the given structure. They are people we can rely on, for whom service is a way of life. They are the caretakers of



They are people we can rely on, for whom service is a way of life

much of what otherwise might be discarded in our throw-away society; where today's structures, ideals, traditions and methods are often undervalued, while the latest version, newest approach, next phase of any commodity or experience is preferred, just because it's new.

I find some of these people are disappointed when faced with their own gifts. They imagine that others might find them boring or overly cautious. They do need to be careful they don't become too rigid and narrow, but it seems to me, that without these people much of what gives us security and stability in our homes, churches and communities, would fall apart. In a world where spontaneity, quick fixes and "anything goes" have become a lifestyle for many, we need those who uphold values of commitment, belonging, hard work and traditions. Those who want to guard what is good from the past, who want to maintain what is still useful, who can be trusted to be loyal to what they have committed themselves to.

These are not people who find change easy, especially if they are not in on the planning and cannot see the reason for change. But once they are convinced that any changes are for the good of the institution or the people involved, they will be the ones who will be responsible in carrying out most of the work necessary for that change to be implemented and work efficiently. They provide a balance for those who are always ready to move on and may in the process not think through the implications for people, or the cost involved in the project. The "sensible" ones, once they come aboard, are those who make the visionary's dreams become reality. We need to appreciate the great contribution they make and be prepared to take time to get them on board. Give them an understanding of the benefits of change. Include them in the planning. Give them time to adjust and own what is good for the future.

If you recognise yourself as a "practical" gift, be confident in your great capacity to serve the church and your community. The visionaries and idealists need you, just as you need them, so that together we can discern when to move and when to stay still, so that the best of the past and future can be embraced by us all.



**Portland
Church of Christ**
Portland, Victoria

60th Anniversary Celebration

16 January 2000

10.00 am — Worship Service

12.00 noon — Lunch

Guest speaker: Robert Hough
(Church's longest serving minister)

All past members, ministers and friends are invited to share with us as we celebrate our 60th anniversary. There will be a display of old photos and memorabilia. Contributions welcome. For information, phone the church on (03) 5523 1574 or contact Arthur Butler on (03) 5523 6117.

Church Matters

Closing

LYNETTE LEACH



When is the right time to close a church? Emotions run strong when churches decide to close. When the last service has been held, the last person walks out and the doors of the church property are locked for the last time, members who have had a long involvement in the church's life feel deep grief. The closure of churches encompasses pastoral, administrative, property, legal and financial dimensions. How many members are needed for a church to be viable? Most church closures occur when the congregation has declined to a small number. One state Conference has set the number at around twenty for responsible decision-making. Others have not stated a number, although when members meet together to decide on the future of a

church, the average number attending would be less than twenty. However, statistical decline is but one component in a decision to close a church. There are other factors to be considered. Once a church loses its sense of mission and no longer has the capacity to engage with the surrounding community in meaningful ways, it is heading towards eventual closure. Costs of supporting mission and ministry may become prohibitive. Maintenance of church property becomes a heavy burden on small, elderly congregations. Sometimes there is a lack of leadership with the gifts necessary to be able to give rise to new life and spirit. Vision may die.

Pastoral Concerns

Working with very small churches and with small groups of leaders who have served the church faithfully and with utmost commitment, requires pastoral wisdom as they explore what their options might be for the future. The decision to opt for closure is a brave one. Usually it is reached as a last resort, after opportunities for revitalisation have been tried. Members who have served the church in a particular location for a long time need care in coming to

terms with closure. There is grief about closing and about finding other worshipping communities in which to settle. Pastoral support for members as they move to new places of worship can be provided if the minister of the closing church can be employed for a period of time to ensure that each member has been assisted in making the transition.

Property Matters

Insular thinking about the stewardship of resources (people, property and finance) needs to be challenged. Careful decisions need to be made about the funds that have accumulated and about property assets. Wise advice from those responsible for the trusteeship of properties on behalf of Churches of Christ is essential, in conjunction with those engaged in the wider mission and ministry of the church, so that income from the assets can be applied to the mission of the church, now and in the future. Desires of the current members about how funds will be distributed are important. The church that is closing can express its relationship to the wider body by providing resources for churches elsewhere. One church that was closing offered its furniture to a newly-developing church in another area. When one church closes and another can be assisted, a commitment to the ongoing life of the church is realised.

Process of closing

How the church closes is important. Due recognition of the history of the church and of significant people and events can be expressed in a celebration service which includes a ritual of closure. Opportunity to tell the stories and to renew relationships is necessary. Assistance from

Conference leaders has been imperative in working with churches to help them close in ways that offer the opportunity to celebrate the church's history.

Future Options

If a church has reached the stage of considering closure, are there other options? If ministry is not available, a church could go into recess for a period of time, pending the availability of a minister in the future. It is difficult for some people to imagine church other than in a particular building. However, a small group of members could

The decision to opt for closure is a brave one.

meet as a house group, rather than in a church building.

Where numbers are declining in a region, the rationalisation of church properties is realistic. In the northern suburbs of Melbourne, four churches are closing to form one regional church. The properties of the four congregations will be sold and the proceeds will fund the development of the new Northern Community Church of Christ, which is commencing with a strong missional outlook.

The image of the life cycle is helpful. Churches are born, they develop, they mature, they age, they may have a long and vital life, but there comes a time where decline has set in to such a stage that renewal is very difficult. Faithfulness is not failure. Surrendering a local church's future for the sake of mission in other places is commendable and courageous.

Lynette Leach is Conference Executive Officer for Vic-Tas Conference.

Strack Removals

Removals—Storage—
Packing—Pianos
All Suburbs—Country—
Interstate

David Strack
(Proprietor)

Office and Store
45 McIntosh Street
Airport West Vic 3042

Telephone (03) 9330 2211
Fax (03) 9330 3039
AH (03) 5427 0472

"Service since 1907"

Would you like to advertise

in the
Churches of Christ Vic-Tas

Year 2000 Handbook?

The theme is:
Be the Vision of our
Past and Future Dreams.

Contact Simone McDonald
on (03) 9326 8900 for further
information and rates.

BAPTISMS

•Romana Sapier, Samantha Sapier, Sian Michalk, Craig Birtles, Brian Reid, Southport, Qld •Yvonne Dunn, Wollongong, NSW

DEATHS

•Doreen Allan, Wynnum, Qld •Lois Chislett, Red Cliffs, Vic

OBITUARIES

Obituaries are limited to 100 words
LONG, Harold Matthew

Born 20.3.23 and died 15.9.99, Harold was an army medical orderly for 3½ years before entering the College of the Bible in 1944. He married Joyce Fraser on 13 March 1948. They had five children: Bruce, Graham, Rob, Heather, and Andrew. He loved them and was greatly loved. He had ministries in Victoria (York St, Ballarat, Warmambool and

Horsham); NSW (Home Mission Secretary, Epping and Conference President); South Australia (Grote St, Adelaide, Hawthorn and Semaphore). He loved music and humour, but the core of his life was discipleship and service of Jesus, and making Jesus known to others. Now with his Lord. —CLS

STANFORD, Thelma Myfanwy Amy (28.9.99) Thelma was born 29.5.13 in Bunbury, WA, the eighth in a family of twelve children. She was baptised 1 January 1928 (following the death of her mother) and got involved in the Bunbury church. Thelma married Ken Stanford in 1938 and they then set up home in Harvey. Both entered wholeheartedly into the work of the church there. Hospitality was their specialty. Their home was always open to people. They went out of their way to especially bless pastors and their families. Thelma is now in the presence of Jesus whom she worshipped, loved and served so faithfully for over seventy two years.

NSW

WOLLONGONG (E.C. Keating, B. Bruce) Foyer renovations completed by volunteers, Barry Rose, Keith McKay & team ... Chocolate drive raised \$4000 ... Special day, "Invest in our Children", flooded out, but donations "flooding in" (\$52,000 so far) ... Glen & Flo Jones's 60th wedding anniversary ... 29 families at camp ... Guest speaker, George Barna (USA). "Saltwater", aboriginal dance group ... Divorce Recovery seminar ... Preaching series, "Overcoming" & "Building Healthy Relationships" ... Healing service ... Leadership electives successful ... "Super Seniors" first birthday celebration.

QLD

SOUTHPORT (William Thorburn) Edmund Spieker from TWR visited for morning service ... Church survey completed for strategic plan ... Youth pastor Andrew Boutros returned from USA conferences ... Computer network upgrade completed ... 250 ladies attended "Young Mums" dinner & craft evening ... Deliberations commenced for possible expansion to childcare, Christian Education, community care facilities ... Carwash raised \$600 for December mission trip to China.
WYNNUM (Charles Cole) Congratulations to Aileen Mortensen on completion of successful year as National President of ACW ... Appreciation to Grimsey family & George Mathieson for inspirational addresses ... Planning commenced for 75th anniversary 16-17 July 2000. Past members & friends welcome.

SA

NAILSWORTH (Andrew Evans) Deaconesses arranged "Seniors" & Sunday lunches in homes, ladies coffee & dessert evening ... Teen group "NEOS" conducted evening service, also entertaining seniors at afternoon tea ... Visiting speakers, Graeme & Linda Mudge, missionaries-elect PNG, Henry Rouse, local school chaplain ... Young men sharing evening service leadership ... 3 decisions at Doug MacFarlane Concert ... 90 at family camp. Mike Hey, Operation Mobilisation, study leader.

VIC

MT CLEAR (Howard Sanders) Annual football match on Grand Final Day ... Church camp a great success ... Trivia Night to support Murray 300 km canoe challenge ... Church gardens a picture of care and attention ... Monthly computer users' meetings going well... Young adults car rally around Ballarat... David & Heather Jones initiated church plant at Ross Creek (near Ballarat) ... Young adults arranged and enjoyed dinner dance.
HORSHAM (Rod Morse, Julie Trinnick) Rod Morse concludes a well-received 6-month interim ministry 14 Nov, elders hoping to announce a permanent appointment soon ... Rod Morse led 42 on Network course, where participants considered discovering & using their gifts ... Visit by Cecil & Laurel Grant of Albury Aboriginal fellowship appreciated ... Newsletter for Seniors commenced ... Youth & church bands presented church concert.

Templestowe Orchards Retirement Village
providing...

Care and Support

A resident-funded village with 44 independent units and 53 fully serviced apartments offering:

- 24 hour staffing and security
- personal care services and leisure programs
- a dining room serving freshly prepared meals
- a mini bus for shopping trips and outings
- the companionship of a caring environment

Tel: (03) 9842 8433 for further information or to arrange a visit

Templestowe Orchards Retirement Village
107 Andersons Creek Road
Doncaster East Vic 3109
(Melway Ref: Map 34 E7)

Fully serviced apartment available now



An accredited member of the Retirement Village Association of Australia
A Ministry of Templestowe Baptist Church

Toowoomba's quietest caravan park—(07) 4635 1747

GARDEN CITY CARAVAN PARK

Elser St, Toowoomba

- En suite cabins
- Overnight vans
- Powered & en suite powered sites
- Swimming pool & free BBQs



Church News

TOOTGAROOK (M. Giezdanner)

Church anniversary 17 Oct. well attended. Speaker Gordon Stirling much appreciated ... Friendship group enjoyed a happy day in the Bests' lovely garden ... Val Best recovering from surgery ... Open Door, a monthly outreach, still operating. Parkdale Singers entertained this month ... Church services well attended despite many members on sick list ... Annual mutual market 30 Oct. realised \$3000.

KANIVA (Paul Bauer) Great fellowship for 110th anniversary. Luncheon & reminiscences followed morning service. Many former members & other friends present. Pam Bowers speaker ... Weekly study group now sharing with UCA ladies ... Paul busy with shared ministry ... Keith Craig & Joe Gordon receiving ongoing medical treatment.

RED CLIFFS (Ian Hunt) Peter Breen (Christian Blind Mission), Gideons International & Jack Edwards (Vic-Tas OMB) recent speakers ... Sue Griffen, elder, attended Alpha conference, Melbourne ... Church family will miss Cynthia & Ian Hunt when ministry finishes 19 Dec ... Sympathy extended to Lindsay Chislett & family in passing of Lois Chislett ... AGM held. Ian Cook elected elder. Barry Orr elected to Board. Christine Cook, church secretary.

NORTH ESSENDON (Les Medley) Daughter born to Lisa & Russell O'Donnell ... 54,000 showbags packed ... Thelma Lucas, Jean Hosking, Edie Hayden, Hec Follett & Dennis Peebles hospitalised ... Members requested to give one hour weekly to church garden ... Social afternoon & evening for showbag packers from several churches 31 Oct ... Donations collected for Indian children ... Keilor Road Uniting Church joined us for worship 7 Nov.

BALLARAT CENTRAL (Jack White) OMB regional meeting 23 Sept ... Encouraging weekly mission offerings ... Leadership dinner & prayer night a blessing ... Jack & Ann White on leave 14-29 October ... Jack doing volun-

tary chaplaincy at hospitals ... Annual fair raised over \$800. Garage sale planned ... AGM and elections 7 Nov ... Constitutional changes implemented ... Church mourns the death of Len Murphy, aged 80 years.

ASCOT VALE (Chris Newland) Church involved in strong movement for unity across denominations in north west region ... Church excited about upcoming baptism of Philip Yew at Williamstown Beach ... Kids Club run

by Beth Rowse & Kim Newland proving effective & exciting outreach to refugees, with 26 kids attending ... Vikings youth group held sleep over & progressive dinner at The Patch church & attended (or invaded) morning service.

WA

CARNARVON (Gavin Law-Davis) Special morning tea held for

Ethel Law-Davis' 90th birthday ... Practices under way for Christmas carol program at Street party in Carnarvon & a community Christmas party at Gascoyne Junction ... Olive Laird staff house progressing, thanks to contribution of visiting tradesmen ... Ladies preparing gifts for children of Burringurrah Aboriginal community to be distributed by Kevin & Shirley Birch on their monthly visit.

COCOA brings HOPE



To the isolated people of Orissa State in INDIA, COCOA brings HOPE via medical treatment.

Dr Iris Paul and her assistants travel for many days to reach these people. She brings much-needed medical treatment and supplies. Without our support many of these people would die.

**Will you become a partner in this vital work?
Help spread HOPE through a gift to COCOA.**

Name:

Address:

..... Postcode

Amount: \$

Please charge my: ☐ Bankcard ☐ Visa ☐ MasterCard



Expiry Date:

Signature

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

The Widow of Lunanburgh

GORDON STIRLING

When our Movement commenced in the late 18th Century almost all denominations believed that baptism was the only means of entry into the church, as today.

When the Campbells and their followers set up their church at Brush Run, they of course believed the same. But they had not been immersed as believers.

Eventually they came to understand that biblical baptism was the immersion of penitent believers, and from then on preached and practised believers baptism. They not only believed with the rest of the church that baptism was the way into the church, but that the only valid baptism was believers baptism

This of course landed them in a lot of conflict with "the rest" whom they called "paedobaptists" (child baptisers). It was inevitable that people who had submitted to immersion would be worried about the eternal condition of friends who continued in the paedobaptist tradition. One of them, a widow from a place called Lunanburgh, wrote to Alexander Campbell as the Editor of the *Millennial Harbinger*. His reply in the March 1845 issue was as follows:

"Should I find a paedobaptist more intelligent in the Scriptures, more spiritually minded, and more devoted to the Lord than one immersed on a profession of the ancient faith, I could not hesitate for a moment in giving the preference of my heart to the one



who loveth most. Did I act otherwise I should be a pure sectarian, a Pharisee among Christians. Still I shall be asked, how do I know that any one loves the Master but by obedience to his commandments. I answer, in no other way. But mark, I do not substitute obedience to one commandment for universal or even general obedience; and should I see a sectarian baptist or a paedobaptist more spiritually minded, more generally conformed to the requisitions of the Messiah, than one who precisely acquiesces with me in the theory or practice of immersion as I teach, doubtless the former, rather than the latter, would have my cordial approbation and love as a Christian. So I judge, and so I feel."

The Last Word

Courage means doing the fearful anyway.

Consider This

*Why is abbreviation such a long word?
Why is there an expiry date on sour cream?
Is it true that cannibals don't eat clowns because they taste funny?
Why doesn't glue stick to the inside of the bottle?
Is it possible to be totally partial?
What's another word for thesaurus?
Why is it when you transport something by car, it is called shipment, but when you transport something by ship, it is called cargo?
If your vehicle is travelling at the speed of light, what happens when you turn on the headlights?
What is the speed of dark?
Why isn't phonetic spelled the way it sounds?
What is a free gift? Aren't all gifts free?
If a book about failures doesn't sell, is it a success?
Do cemetery workers prefer the graveyard shift?
Is there another word for synonym?
Why isn't there mouse flavoured cat food?*

Introduce Your Friends to an Australian Christian



We would be happy to send them three issues on a trial basis. Simply fill in their details below (with their permission) and send this form to, The Australian Christian, PO Box 101, North Essendon Vic 3041.

Name

Address

Postcode

Late News

Record Number of Courses

Australian College of Ministries announces that a record 98 courses will be offered in 2000 across centres in Qld, NSW, WA and via external studies.