

THE AUSTRALIAN

Christian

NATIONAL JOURNAL OF CHURCHES OF CHRIST IN AUSTRALIA

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families



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Editorial

Two Extremes

DON SMITH

I was recently confronted with two extremes of family life. One was a 23-year-old young man who requested permission to use our office telephone for an urgent call. Previously we had allowed his friend who accompanied him to make some calls. The call soon degenerated into moments of extreme conflict and tension with the young man's mother. The conversation moved from outright rage to desperate pleading for money and threats of suicide and ended in the phone being slammed down and the young man leaving the office without comment and savagely kicking loose stones in the car park as he left. One



felt quite helpless. * By contrast, three days later Ralph Petty our photographer and I visited a home to take our cover photograph. My role was to hold the squeaking toy above the photographer's head to attract the attention of the four children. The parents, their four-year-old son and the identical boy triplets make a great family photo. It was a delightful experience to be able to share in the family dynamics, the very antithesis of the previous Friday. * This issue is about a range of family life issues. It is important that it reach some of the families in your congregation. (We can provide extra copies if you require.) Dr Gordon Moyes speaking at an Easter breakfast at Wesley Mission, Sydney, described aspects of Sydney life as "a city of despair" as he outlined the stark social problems now common to many situations. In one trenchant statement he said, "But many churches do not want to be involved, they want to build a membership of people who are happy, married, affluent and family based. They want to minister only in a 'city of hope' and advertise themselves as the Happy Family Church." * Gordon's statement is a challenge to every congregation about social and community responsibility. * The darker side of our society cannot be ignored. A recent Anglicare statement speaks of one in four girls and one in seven boys being sexually abused by the age of 18. Parents are also held responsible for 66% of physical abuse, 77% of emotional abuse, 87% of neglect and 24% of sexual abuse. Stark statistics indeed! How does your church respond to the challenge? *

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Letters to the Editor

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.

Logo Competition

To the Editor,

A couple of recent letters to the Editor have expressed concern about the proposal by National Council to change our logo. A particular item of concern is the cost of changing stationery, etc.

I want to thank your correspondents for expressing their concerns. National Council will certainly bear them in mind in making its decision.

The intention is to have the winning entry published in *The Australian Christian* so that people can see it and express their reactions accordingly. National Council will then make its decision whether to adopt the winning entry as the new logo.

If the decision is to go ahead with a new logo, it is envisaged that this would be phased in over a period of two years or so, giving time for churches and Conference departments to incorporate the new logo as they run out of stocks of stationery and have new stocks printed. In this way the costs of incorporating the new logo would be absorbed into ongoing expenses.

—Robert Smith
National Coordinator

church today interesting as we have felt comfortable in all worship styles from traditional to the most contemporary. We have seen change take place a number of times and have observed that those asserted by Rob as having difficulty are rather the very people who have been the motivators driving the cutting edge.

Further, our parents were involved in youth groups as children and teenagers. Whilst the years of the baby boomers made numbers balloon, youth work as a specific and focused ministry was not a new phenomenon in the fifties and sixties.

We would hope that our generation can be valued for the contributions made rather than denigrated for being church "misfits". It seems that Rob Culhane, although clearly part of that generation, has some difficulty fitting in himself and wishes to rationalise this as a group phenomenon. Let us be clear. Most of the rest of us in that generation have no such difficulty.

—Helen and Paul Davies
(Bellara, Qld)

Perfection

To the Editor,


I would like to respond to the article ("AC" 24.3.98) "It's a Shame" by Nigel Pegram. Whilst I concur with the wonderful truth that through the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus the shame of our sin is removed, the quotation, "We are not made perfect, but have had our relationship with God restored," however, needs some clarification. Hebrews 10:14 plainly states that one of the great blessings that the New Testament believer shares is that we "have been made perfect". The perfection is more than just spiritual maturity. The death of Jesus Christ has removed sin forever for those who belong to him. We are

Baby Boomers

To the Editor,

It was quite a shock, as children of the fifties, to read Rob Culhane's article. He is quite in error at a number of points. We find his conclusion that it is difficult for us to find our place in the

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Letters to the Editor

totally secure in our Saviour. We need cleansing when we fall into sin, but we need never fear God's judgment on us because of our sin. The one offering of Christ has perfected forever. The sacrifice never needs repeating and never can be repeated, likewise the state into which the believer is placed by God, perfected legally and officially. I have more than just a relationship with God restored. The relationship I have goes way beyond what Adam lost through sin. Adam did not share what I share now. Let's not sell the death of Christ short nor the believer's position in Christ.

—Graeme Ellingsen
(Gympie, Qld)

Communion Captives

To the Editor,
The recent articles on Communion ("AC" 10.2.99) bring to mind a chapter in the late Albert Jones book, *Captive Audience* (Vital Publications). It is entitled "Communion Without Compulsion" and tells the story of how prisoners at Yatala prison in Adelaide would hear the order: "Fall out for communion".

Albert writes, "For me to see twenty men step out of parade each Wednesday for communion was to see twenty men declaring their faith in Jesus Christ. They were willing for the whole prison to know it. They were willing to stand up and be counted!"

Albert continues, "As I looked over this unlikely congregation, I would be reminded of Paul's description of the Corinthian church in 1 Cor 6:10. 'Immoral, adulterers, perverts, thieves, drunkards ...' They were all here ..." but cleansed from sin and put right with God through the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of God".

This book is one of the most moving I have read. We thought it was

out of print, but Vital Publications have just discovered two more boxes and are willing to sell them at half price—\$5.00 a copy. Order yours by contacting the "AC" office now.

—Ron Holmes
(Magill, SA)

Baby Boomers and Outreach

To the Editor,

It seems to me that the very well worded, analytical letter by Ray Hawkins ("AC" 10.3.99) would indeed be a worthy reply to Gordon Stirling's excellent article "Baby Boomers" in the same issue. Our congregation is made up of approximately 80 people, comprising 32 baby boomers, 15 aged 60–83 and say 25 under 25 years.

So we are a mixed lot. These are my observations. We have a very active wonderfully dedicated "Baby Boomer" group who run very successful Kids Clubs aged in varying groups from 3–16 and youth groups encouraged by our youth minister, which are increasing each week as the young people bring their friends. These various groups are helped and encouraged by a small, loyal number of we oldies, who love our young people and enjoy their dedication. Our Sunday services are God focused, traditional morning services and a worshipful evening "youth service", with all age groups mixing together over supper. The one thing that I found

missing in each of the two articles mentioned was God's love. Surely if we show God's love to all who

enter our church doors, they will come again. —Nancy Souness
(Hurstville, NSW)

Update

Dear Readers,

Our cover photo was taken by Ralph Petty. We acknowledge the cooperation of Mark and Carolyn Angelin and (L–R) James, Luke, Matthew and Nathan. Carolyn and her sons participate in the Blackburn, Vic, MOPS program.

There is a dark shadow over this family issue when we think of the distress of so many families fleeing from Kosovo. Readers will be interested to know of the work of our Albanian churches. Their response to the crisis is impressive. Churches are invited to remember the refugee victims and our ministry in Albania in prayer and of course with gifts. The church in Nottingham, UK, gave the whole of their Sunday offering to the Albanian churches.

In the coming weeks churches in Vic-Tas, SA and NSW will be involved in their annual conferences. Churches in all states are encouraged to contribute items to the "Church News" section. Report forms are available upon request.

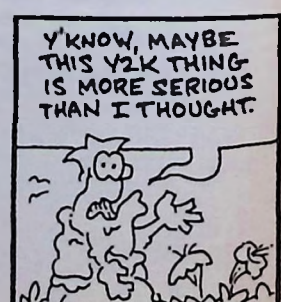
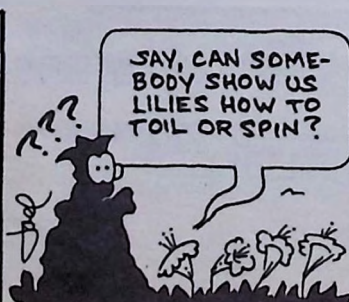
We have invited readers to nominate men and women within Churches of Christ in Australia who have made a significant contribution to our state and national life. Comments should be limited to 100 words. Closing date for receipt is 21 May, 1999. A reader is urgently in need of a copy of *Effective Eldership* by Jeff Deuble published by Vital Publications and now out of print. Please contact this office if you can help. Jack Ludbrook has received some very adequate information following his request in our last issue.

We continue to appreciate the support of all our advertisers. Your support of them is encouraged.

This issue marks the final contribution by Rob Culhane in his series of articles on significant issues for the church from the 1950s on. A range of other writers will contribute to various "Matters" during 1999.

Sam Smith

Pontius' Puddle



Covenant Celebration

Celebration as historic agreement signed in suburban Melbourne



Church and Conference representatives sign a covenant forming a new work in northern suburban Melbourne

A service of real celebration marked the culmination of a three-year process when four northern suburban Melbourne churches signed a covenant agreeing to form a new regional church. Representatives from

Ivanhoe, Northcote, Preston and West Preston churches signed the covenant, as did representatives from Vic-Tas Conference and the Properties Corporation of Churches of Christ. There was overwhelming congregational

support for the move.

The new regional church is not just an amalgamation of people and property, but involves a conscious focus on ministry and mission. This is shown to some extent by the fact that the issue of location for the combined congregation has not yet been decided, however there is a vision and values group that will guide all that

the church will do, both in its formative stage and in the future. John Gilmore, representing Vic-Tas Conference at the event, said that leadership of the new church would be critical. Someone who could build the church and lead it into a future where mission and ministry were maintained as the church's dual focus would be essential. —Nigel Pegram

Celebrate Easter

Ten years of Easter Awakening Marches

Christians around the world celebrated Easter in formal and informal services. In Australia family festivals attracted many people while prayer vigils through Good Friday evening and marches on Easter Sunday took the message of Easter to the streets and the airwaves. These events marked the tenth year of the Easter Awakening Marches coordinated by the Awakening 2000 Movement. In Sydney, ten festivals were held

throughout the metropolitan area and attracted many thousands of people. Western Australia had nine Awakening festivals. Brighton, SA held its first festival with 2000 attending. Other SA country centres involved included Victor Harbor, Goolwa, Keith, Ceduna, Gawler and in Port Adelaide the MV *Doulos* was an attraction.

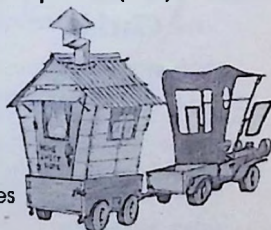
A prayer vigil in Canberra on Mt Ainslie had 600 in attendance, while in Melbourne a vigil was held in the Swanston Street church where 100 people stayed most of the night. Reported in Melbourne by *The Australian*, Stan McCredden, President Elect of the Vic-Tas Conference told the Awakening rally, "Resurrection demands that we care for the poor in spirit, the poor in money, the dispossessed and the outcast and we should remember them today as we march." Hobart and Brisbane events were also marked by good attendances. In Brisbane opportunity was taken for people to sign the Jubilee Debt Campaign petition.

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Conference 114 at Mopping Up the Tops

NSW Annual Conference details



Richard Menteith, standing for a second term as NSW Conference President

Steve Addison of Church Resource Ministries Australia will be

the guest speaker at the Annual Conference of Churches of Christ in NSW.

The Conference will be held on Saturday 15 May at Stanwell Tops.

Steve is also a member of the new Eastgate, Vic, church.

Each Ministry Team will bring a special report on the day.

Three churches have applied for affiliation.

Richard Menteith will stand again for a second term as Conference President.

Lyndsay Jacobs, General Secretary of the World Convention, will be the speaker at the President's Dinner.

The Ministers' Association refresher will be held for the three days before Conference 114.

A number of our churches enthusiastically and successfully embrace MOPS

When a small group of Australian Church of Christ ministers visited MOPS (Mothers of preschoolers) headquarters in Denver, Colorado, in 1996, they immediately saw the potential of adapting this program to the Australian scene. Their enthusiasm, as well as the success of the existing MOPS group at Dawson Street, Ballarat, inspired the formation of many groups in Australian Churches of Christ.

These include groups at Blackburn, Doncaster, (Victoria), Campbelltown, Wollongong, (NSW), Toowoomba (Qld) and Warwick (WA).

MOPS is effective because it meets two powerful needs.



Ted Keating reports on the popularity and success of MOPS

Any program that gives a young mother a break for a couple of hours while she meets with her peers, enjoys stimulating input, discussion and craft activities is meeting a community need. MOPS also helps meet the missionary need of the church to reach young families. At Wollongong, NSW, we are already seeing instances of whole families discovering faith because of an initial contact with MOPS.

—Ted Keating

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Farmer in UK

Big changes at ACOM

Dr Keith Farmer, Principal of the Australian College of Ministries (ACOM), has accepted an invitation to work in England with Springdale College for three months.

Keith is to preach in British Churches of Christ congregations every other week, but primarily he will serve and advise Springdale College.

In his absence, Dr Les Gainer, presently the General Manager of the new and much larger blended college, will act as Principal.

ACOM has 168 students enrolled in their Bachelor of Theology program, 54 new this year.

ACOM has an additional 60 in their international program at Kenmore, Qld, and 22 students in Vanuatu, making a total student body of 287.



Keith Farmer, ACOM Principal, goes to the UK

There are also many casual and audit students.

—Bruce Armstrong

Frank Leivesley

Woolwich graduate 1954. Pastored churches in NSW. Served as Children's Evangelist with CSSM. Evangelist with Ambassadors for Christ Australia and New Zealand. Last ministry with Church of Christ, Gympie, Qld.

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News from Nambour

Moving from building to building

We might be the "Sunshine Central Church of Christ" but "sunshine" is something we have not seen much of since we sold our church building and the builders started doing the excavations for our new church complex, but miracles and blessings have abounded for our "big picture" of the future. God has raised up professional men from within the fellowship who have taken over the tasks of overseeing the construction.

The new building is just below the old one, in a beautiful valley surrounded by a national park, with Tuckers Creek meandering through the property.

We have been meeting in the building we sold to Gregson and Weight, Funeral Directors, for which we have been very grateful, however, due to massive renovations being carried out to their building, we were given 24 hours' notice to find another place for a short time. Blessings were granted to us again as E.C. Thomas (Funeral Directors) just across the road from our property graciously granted us the use of their building until we can move back "across the road" again. Co-



incidentally, the E.C. Thomas building was the home of the Nambour Church of Christ in the 1980s.

The new complex will be named "Sanctuary Park" and the church revert to its original name "Nambour Church of Christ".

The new complex will have a worship centre, children's centre, care centre and environmental centre. We look forward to the rest of the century with faith and excitement for what the Lord has done in the past and is doing for us now in our lives as we meet as a church family at National Park Road, Nambour.

—Orrell Battersby



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—Lindsay Mott, Treasurer

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Federal Aborigines Board Inc

is calling for applicants for the position of

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The FAB is a national body responsible for work among Aboriginal and Islander people. Its ministry takes many forms.

Duties

Administration of the ministry in conjunction with the present Director. This will include:

- Field visitation and pastoral care
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- Preparation of promotional materials
- Some responsibilities for financial management.

The applicant should be computer literate.

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Package includes rates of pay as per the recommendation of the WA Conference. Other benefits apply.

Location

The successful applicant will be required to live in Perth, WA.

Written applications, marked "Confidential" and including CV and the names and addresses of three referees, should be addressed to:

The Executive Director
Federal Aborigines Board Inc
PO Box 1199
WANGARA WA 6947

Applications close 5.00 pm, Wednesday 30 June 1999.



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The Northern Community Church of Christ is seeking confidential expressions of interest from ministers interested in the position of Ministry Team Leader. Such a person, together with the church community, will help to create and implement a dynamic new vision for Churches of Christ in the Northern suburbs of Melbourne. This person will lead a team of ministers and the congregation into the new century, and will have demonstrable leadership and church development skills.

This newly-formed church is made up of a group of four churches in the northern and north-eastern suburbs—Ivanhoe, Northcote, Preston and West Preston—and is uniting to form one congregation with many aspects.

We will send all respondents a copy of the Northern Community Church's detailed vision statement. If you are interested in exploring whether God is calling you to this new, exciting and challenging venture, please contact either:

John Gilmore
Director of Ministry
77 Capel St
West Melbourne Vic 3003
Phone: (03) 9326 8900 or 0413 754 874
E-mail: jgilmore@cctc.com.au

or
Dr Lyn McCredden
19 Hawthorn Rd
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Minister for Family Ministries

The Monash City Church of Christ is seeking a dynamic Christian to fill a new ministry position. We are seeking a minister for family ministries who will lead a team consisting of two paid workers and at least three key volunteer leaders. This team coordinates the following:

- Youth ministries
- Playgroup ministries
- Mothers of Preschoolers (MOPS) ministry
- Parents of Teenagers (POTS) ministry
- Sunday school

The minister for family ministries will need to be a visionary (establish new ministries), equipper of leaders and a pastor to families.

This new position for Monash City Church of Christ will interest those who have a heart for God, a passion for evangelism, enjoy working in a team and are leaders.

Applications and/or inquiries to:

David Moyes
Senior Minister
Monash City Church of Christ
46-48 Montclair Ave
Glen Waverley Vic 3150.



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Kosovo Report

An Albanian Church of Christ minister reports on the current situation

This is an edited version of a letter sent to Bob Eckman, minister of the Nottingham, UK a cappella Church of Christ. Bob, who passed a copy of this letter on to a Doncaster, Vic, contact, says that Artan graduated four years ago from theological training with our British a cappella churches and has since done an outstanding work among our Albanian churches, with encouraging growth recorded. The possibility of some financial support has been referred to Bob Smith, National Coordinator. This report was received two days prior to publication.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,
The number of the refugees reaching the border increases every day. In the last fifteen days some 200,000 refugees have come to Albania. You can imagine how difficult it is for a country like Albania, which is the poorest country in Europe, and with a population of three million, to be able to deal with so many refugees. The Albanian people have shown great hospitality by sharing everything they have. Now some of the Albanian families are short of food and living space in the small apartments common in Albania. Everybody is trying to do something. Our church is helping to the maximum. Last Thursday a

group of twelve members with two vans loaded with food and clothes that the members of the church brought from their homes, went to a refugee camp near the city of Tirana, where there are around 500 refugees. I had never seen people so hungry. Children or mothers in tears were stretching their hands to receive a piece of bread or whatever it may be.

Most of the refugees are women, children and old people. An old man told me how the Serbs had surrounded a village and taken all the people from their homes. In the middle of the village, they separated men from women. While they were forcing people to get out of their houses, many people have been killed. The game the Serbs played was that whoever get out last from the house would be killed and they played this game in reality. As a result some people were killed.

Then the women and children were put in a big auditorium and soldiers were coming time after time and choosing the most beautiful women and girls and raped them.

"Some of them did not come back," said an old lady.

They do not know what happened to their fathers, husbands or brothers.

Then the refugees tell about Serbs who cut a finger off the hand of a baby two years old who called his father "Daddy" in the Albanian language. Then the most monstrous thing ever heard was the fact that the Serbs killed a small child who had lost his parents and was crying. One of the soldiers got a knife from his pocket and cut the child's throat. Then, using foul words, the soldier cleaned himself from the blood of the innocent child. God, please forgive them!

These victims are traumatised and living with a terror in their hearts.

There are many churches and individuals sending money and supplies to help the refugees. Considering that there is a lack of coordination and because such a situation was unexpected, we as a church decided to take over more responsibility in managing ourselves and any money and supplies that may come from our brothers all over the world. These are our plans:

A. In agreement with the local government, to take a piece of land or auditorium where there is electricity and water and build a camp for 250-300 refugees and manage it ourselves. We think this is the best, for many reasons. First, we are sure that the help is going where needed and not left in unsecured and misused hands. Second, the members of the church have direct involvement in helping the people in need and working next to each other. That will increase our relationship and love for each other. And last, but not least important, is the fact that we will have the chance of creating classes for teaching the Bible, and feeding those desperate peo-



Artan and Becky Samara, attempting to deal with the refugee crisis in Albania

ple not just physically but spiritually. Today we are holding a meeting with the head of the city hall regarding our proposals.

B. The second plan has to do with concentrating our efforts in not just a single camp, but in many, by covering differing kinds of needs that other camps may have. We could show more attention to the camps built near the towns where existing Churches of Christ are run by missionaries, such as in Korca, Durrës, Elbasan, Vlora and Fier.

Today the church decided to go for the first plan and, if this is not possible, follow the second. Even though we consider the first plan the best option, we are concerned about the continuity of the camp that we are going to run. This is because our finances are limited. One idea is to contact agencies such as UNHCR, World Food Program, Red Cross or Caritas agencies, but as I mentioned above the coordination is quite difficult.

We know that in our efforts to serve these people we are going to have your help, if not financially or physically through your precious prayer.

Your brother in Christ,
Artan Samara (Tirana, Albania)

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46 Montclair Ave, Glen Waverley

Thursday 29 April 1999

"Whatever Your Hands Find To Do,
Do It With All Your Might As Unto The Lord."

CWF President, Judith Turner and Women's Ministry Unit Coordinator Jenni Georgiadis invite you to attend this great day of praise, worship, enrichment and celebration.

Morning 10.20 am "Celebrating the Past"

CWF President Judith Turner Praise and Worship, Reports, Business, Focus, Offering, Soloist—Christine Sharpe, Dedication CWF Executive.

Basket Lunch or BYO \$5.00 pre order.

Afternoon 1.45 pm "Visions for the Future"

Women's Ministry Unit Coordinator Jenni Georgiadis. Praise and Worship, Focus, Speaker Christine Caine (Youth Alive NSW)

Evening 7.30 pm "Women of the New Millennium"

Coffee and Cake. Worship Leader Juliette Keating, dramatic presentation. Speaker Christine Caine (Youth Alive NSW). This is an evening for all women, especially youth.

Creche Free

RSVP Friday 23.4.99.

Day program, lunch and creche, RSVP Mrs Lorraine Hughes (03) 9802 8950.

Evening program, RSVP Liz Tilson (03) 9326 8900.

Registration: Day \$5.00, Evening \$12.50

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Family

Nurturing Faith in Children

DIANNE CHANDLER

You may wonder, "How do I foster my children's spiritual life?"

You cannot separate your children's spiritual life from the rest of life. The Christian life is meant to be integrated into all of living. A parent's role in nurturing children's faith is a great deal more than providing religious training. It involves helping children know and experience God in daily experiences, interactions and environment.

Your task is to do some of the background work in preparation for your children to meet and love God. You can

A parent's role in nurturing children's faith ... involves helping children know and experience God

nurture the beginning of Christian life—the beginning of a relationship between God and your children—by providing optimal conditions for this **all-important** encounter with God. You can create a **place for this relationship to grow!**

In providing the context for your children to seek and find God I will **SHARE** (a mnemonic, or memory aid) the following suggestions:

See God in life's everyday events.

This may include drawing attention to how God has answered their prayers, talking about how God can help them do what is right in their struggle with an annoying school friend, or how they can apply what they heard at church to what is happening with the neighbourhood kids. Share with them how successful daily living requires the bibli-

cal principles of love, honesty and faithfulness.

Honour God by showing that life works better when lived God's way.

In the same way that road rules and crash helmets make our life better and safer, life works well when God's principles of love, fairness, faithfulness and honesty are practised. Be prepared to answer your children's questions, such as, "Why do we go to church?", "Why do you believe the Bible?", or "What's wrong with premarital sex?" Talk with your children about why you believe what you believe and get them to think about the reasons for their own beliefs.

Acknowledge God as the source of all good things.

Talk about God's provision of love, protection, information and hope. Show that being in a relationship with God is the best way of getting true needs met. Your children can experience you as a better parent because of your relationship with God.

Regularly teach the spiritual disciplines and their purpose.

- Expose your children to the Bible: hearing, reading, studying, memorising and meditating.
- Encourage your children to develop personal communication with God through prayer—both individually and in groups.
- Foster the development of relationships with other Christians—through church activities, small-group gatherings and family times.

Teaching spiritual disciplines can begin at an early age. Toddlers enjoy being involved in family worship, singing songs, looking at pictures and hearing simple Bible stories. They begin to copy as you pray and enjoy reading the Bible with them. During the following childhood years growing children are



highly curious and accepting and are therefore able to receive lots of Bible teaching. They can be involved in worship, prayer and church family ministry activities and begin to learn beliefs and doctrines of God. Their sense of belonging in a spiritual family is developing. With adolescence come questions, challenges and the need to investigate, to search and often to struggle. A parent may be less able to teach but can be available to discuss issues and concerns. It is often during adolescence that faith is **personally owned**.

Example—Your faith matters to your child's faith.

No-one can give faith to another. It is a gift from God. However, we can be faithful in sharing our life and our faith. Parents can affirm, encourage, guide and model their Christian faith. Pray regularly that your children may find faith **for themselves**: not as the recipient of some practices handed down, not as just one of a crowd, but as an individual making a personal discovery that changes their own life.

Dianne Chandler is a member of the Westside Church of Christ in Brisbane. She is a trained early-childhood teacher.

Families in Conflict

KEVIN HARVEY



As with stress, conflict is often associated with negative connotations. But why? The Scriptures are full of incidents of human conflict. The biblical steward had to make decisions and use the resources entrusted to him. Surely this was not without considerable difficulty sometimes. Conflict within families is necessary, natural and, if handled well is the most useful training ground for our children to launch into the wider world.

Inner Conflict

Rather than blame everyone else for our personal problems, a better place to start would be to do the "inner work" whereby we can take a more effective role as manager of the conflicting emotions, thoughts and behaviours that are common to all people. To project the cause of our problems onto others is a sure way of ensuring that we will always have unresolved conflicts. The age-long philosophy that what we do with what happens is more important than what happens will continue into the twenty-first century!

Couple Conflict

How many couple relationships are there in a family of two parents and three children? (A good exercise for

families to address.) Add a third party who intervenes to solve the problem and families enter the "victim—persecutor—rescuer" cycle, whereby roles keep changing and little resolution takes place. Parents are constantly modelling their own patterns of resolving conflicts and too often we are still using "caveman" tools of fight or flight. Great for survival, but disastrous for the type of resolution whereby conflicts are seen as healthy. A friend of mine with four children said recently that "we have conflict every day in our home, so what's new? We are learning all the time!" Now that is healthy!

So what are some of the keys for handling family conflict?

Be Consistent When this happens it creates a sense of control—even though you may feel out of control! Children want predicability in terms of rules and expectations.

Be Aware of Differences Be aware of the differences in personalities and attributes of children and work out what works best to respect these differences. Make sure each child understands why they are treated differently in the family. Celebrate diversity!

Be a Learner There is no objective "right" way to raise children. Parents from different cultures, societies and denominations have different values, customs and expectations. Go to courses, but trust yourself. Learn from your mistakes because everybody makes them even though at the time they seemed right.

Be a Listener Few people object to being listened to! Open the heart as well as the ears to the hidden feelings and thoughts of each member of the family. Use the listening tools that are now taught widely and apply them at home rather than just at work!

Be a Consumer of Time Regularly dialogue with each other to establish rules, to negotiate win-win solutions and to affirm each other. Both quality and quantity are important! Practise having fun together—it is actually good for us, and it takes time!

Be Authoritative as a Parent You are "boss"! Bosses can be authoritative, authoritarian, permissive, or erratic. The first is best, but remember that you are human too! Remember Jesus, who spoke with authority!

Too often we are still using "caveman" tools of fight or flight.

Be Conscious of God Be conscious that the "unseen guest" is always present—not to judge, but as a helper and a reminder that there is always another perspective.

You may remember the cartoon depicting two goats tied together wanting to go in opposite directions, to where the grass was greener. They finally worked out that by negotiating which grass was eaten first they could both benefit from the grass on both sides! Sounds simple, but maybe goats have more time or are prepared to spend more time to resolve their differences.

Maybe churches could develop more programs which create safe learning environments where "win-win" in families can be learnt in a sports-loving society where "win-lose" is paramount. I often tell my clients that I have not lost a tennis match in 20 years.

At my age, I win by simply being on the court.

Kevin Harvey is a registered psychologist in private practice in Adelaide and Williamstown, SA.

Family

Ministers' Families

BRIAN WHITE

Ministers' families experience similar pressures to the community in general. We and our partners struggle for deeper levels of understanding and intimacy like other couples. Breakdowns occur at very similar rates to those in the community. We too labour to provide adequate nurture for our children. After all, despite what others may wish we were, we are unfortunately quite human ourselves.

Some of the Struggles

There are time pressures. The work of the kingdom is never done. It requires

One of our major tasks is to keep the balance

our commitment. Lazy ministers don't build churches. We face constant deadlines like weekly sermons, the weekly church paper, counselling appointments, planning and organisational meetings. There is always the pressure to get enough visitation done.

Because ministry is so people intensive, it is easy to get peopled out—tired of human interaction. This can leave us depleted of the resources needed to adequately interrelate with our family. Churches can pressure us to perform and succeed, and strongly criticise us when our families fail to be what they think they should be. Our own strong, personal-ego need, or that pressure from within to succeed and perform, can also drive us to over-invest in our ministries to the detriment of our spouses and children.

Suggestions

Plan plenty of good, fun, family times together. If our children are young we could try a weekly "family" night. Get

a block of chocolate, and involve the children in deciding what to do—watch a well-chosen video, go to a movie, play board games or computer games, or their musical instruments. Only break it for genuine emergencies.

As they get older go with them to the football, cricket, basketball or netball. Go camping or fishing. Plan fun holidays together. Take a child on a mystery flight. Try the ballet. Go bushwalking, gliding, surfing, sailing, or waterskiing together. Create positive memories by doing things that you can laugh about or feel good about later. You might say that it sounds costly, but it is really just a matter of priority. See it as a worthwhile investment in your family relationships.

Strong Priorities

We also need to treat our partners and children as a priority. Communicate by word and action that no human relationship is more important than them. Receive their phone calls no matter what you're involved in. Let them know you're glad to hear their voice, even if you have to suggest calling them back. Let's never leave our children wondering if we really love them.

Give your children freedom to be themselves and to express their faith in ways that seem relevant to them at the time. Some ministers' children have felt pressure from mum and dad to unnatural standards of behaviour in order to keep the church happy. Some churches want the whole family to be perfect. If there is any pressure from the church for them to conform, resist it with them. Share an authentic spirituality with them. Pray with them. Rejoice together in God's answers to prayer. Help them discover how relevant the Bible is to their life. Take them slowly through Proverbs in a modern translation. Help



them enter into a genuine experience of the living Christ and his Holy Spirit. But don't be so superspiritual that you aren't involved with them in some non-church activities. Help them feel we celebrate life itself, not just church life. One of our major tasks is to keep the balance between the demands of church and ministry on the one hand and the needs of home and family on the other.

Done Well

However, let us not be too hard on ourselves. Churches of Christ ministers have mostly done well with their families. A 1987 survey I did that covered 274 of our ministers' children showed that almost three quarters of them had adopted their parents' faith and were a part of a church. Eighty per cent of that group were actively involved in the life of the church. Most were deeply grateful for the experience of being raised as a "ministry kid", and almost 6 per cent of them had chosen to become ministers themselves. We must have done something right.

Brian White is minister at Dandenong, Vic. He did a master's research project on ministers' children. He and Joan have three sons—two in ministry and one halfway through college.

Family

The Empty Nest

PAUL AND HEATHER POTTER

Our "empty nest" came about because we left home. As one of our children frequently reminds us, "I didn't leave, you did!" As with any change, the bad bits are usually what hit us, and around these most of our emotions arise. And there are lots of changes that take place when the children leave home. As the parents, you are usually up-to-date on what's happening in their lives. Now, when shopping at the mall you're just as likely to see their friends and hear from them what they've been doing because you haven't seen your children for a few days. It takes a bit of adjustment to realise that this is now normal parenting.

And then they want to come back home!

Their lives no longer revolve around the family home and what goes on there. But still it hurts and reinforces the feelings of loss, wrongness and emptiness.

So maybe it's a good idea to remind ourselves of some of the advantages of the "empty nest".

You can clean up the kitchen and come back at the end of the day and it's still clean. There are no half-eaten apples in the family room or bedroom, no mugs with two weeks of dried up Milo under the beds, no chip and lolly papers pushed down the side of the lounge chairs. If you're coming home late you can grab something to eat on the way home if you want to.

If the parents and children have a healthy and loving relationship, the natural process of growing up and leaving home runs fairly smoothly. Indeed, the art of parenting, once the child

reaches early adolescence—around eight these days—is a process of staged letting go.

In today's society children seem to leave home either too young or too late. Whatever age the child is, parents can help them be successful in life by being constructive in the change.

Encouraging, building self-esteem, offering (but not imposing) help all contribute to the success of this new phase of life. Yet many parents tell children they will fail, and put obstacles in the way because they cannot cope emotionally with the choices and decisions their child is making.

One important point to remember is that while the children may not be at home now, parenting continues, only now it's different.

Don't expect the children to call unless there's a disaster or they need money. They still love you, they just have a new and exciting phase of life.

So very often you will need to take initiative in contact without complaining about not receiving a call or a letter.

And then they want to come back home! She may be 30 and divorced, or he may be 25 and out of work and the family home becomes a place of refuge. This is becoming the norm in our society. In many if not most children's minds, the family home always has been a place of refuge and security, which explains partly why children who've left home can be so upset when parents move house or divorce. Creating a place for them to stay—on their terms—all helps. Remember too that when a child returns home even if it's been a student away on exchange, they will have changed and will expect the family rules to adjust accordingly.

Perhaps the greatest impact of the "empty nest" is on the relationship of



the parents left behind. Most of us know of couples who have parted once their children have left home.

Rediscovering the reason why you married, falling in love all over again with someone who has now changed considerably, will enrich and bring fresh joy impossible before the children left home.

Finally, this is a moment to again ask the question, "What does God want of my life?" The end of another phase of life has come. The answer to this question may now be quite different from what it was when the task of raising children was a daily reality. So life continues to have purpose and meaning beyond the career goal and without having to put your life on hold until that precious phone call telling you that you're about to become grandparents!

Paul and Heather Potter recently left their four children in Canberra to move to Sydney. Paul is now Ministry Leader at Epping Church of Christ, while Heather is a Support Worker with Epping Community Support, a ministry of the Epping church.

Family

Family Dedications

JASON HEMSLEY

The couple stand before the congregation, dressed in their Sunday best, smiling proudly. Their infant, dressed in frilly white, gurgles as the minister holds her up and pronounces a blessing ... "Hang on a minute!" you say, "This looks suspiciously like a christening, and we don't do that in Churches of Christ!" However we do practise parent-child dedications ...

A child christening focuses upon the act of baptism, believing the Holy Spirit

who dedicated her son Samuel (1 Samuel 1-2) and Mary and Joseph dedicating their son, Jesus (Luke 2:22-40). In this article I will set out my philosophy for parent-child dedications and explain why we do things the way we do them, acknowledging that other Churches of Christ may conduct this service in a different style.

I believe a parent-child dedication serves three main purposes: thanksgiving, commitment and blessing.

Thanksgiving

First, we give thanks to God, creator of all things and giver of life, for the birth of the child.

We commence our service with a prayer of thanks for the child and the family, acknowledging, as Paul did in 1 Corinthians 12 that all members of the body are valuable.

Many churches today will not conduct dedications or christenings unless the parents are members of that congregation.

We do not insist that people must be "members" in the formal sense, but they must be actively involved in the life of the congregation. It would be meaningless to conduct an act of dedication for people who are unwilling to be part of the family of God, since it is supposed to be they who are dedicating themselves and their child, together with their church family.

Commitment

Secondly, we seek from both the parents and the congregation a commitment to ensure that the child is brought up in the instruction of the Lord.

This does not mean that the parents are giving permission for every other adult to discipline their child—we are seeking a commitment from the congrega-

tion to support the parents in their efforts to raise their child in a Godly manner, as well as their prayerful support. We conduct our parent-child dedications as part of a regular worship service, and the children's church does not go out for their service until after the dedication.

After the service we join in a fellowship lunch together. We seek to create a real "family" atmosphere that benefits the whole congregation as well as the family concerned.

Blessing

Thirdly, we ask God's blessing upon the child, remembering how the Lord Jesus blessed the children who came to him (Mark 10:13-16).

We conclude our dedication with a time of open prayer, allowing other family members or friends to come forward with words of encouragement or blessing, or Scripture readings. Such words can be added to the dedication certificate we give out as a memento, together with the order of service and a photograph.

I usually conclude the service with the words of blessing from Numbers 6:24-26.

Perhaps you've never thought of doing something like this before and your children are a bit older now.

Why not consider a service of family dedication? Parent-child dedications enable parents to renew their commitment to the Lord and dedicate themselves to leading their child towards making that same commitment. They are also great opportunities to enhance the sense of "family" within the whole congregation.

Jason Hemsley is minister of the Northam, WA, church and is married to Margaret. They have five children, aged 5-12.

The service is less a dedication of the child, as it is a dedication of the parents

sanctifies the water, so that those who are baptised are brought into oneness with Christ and are welcomed as members of the Body of Christ.

The primary focus of a dedication service is the commitment of the parents to raise their child in the ways of God. In a sense, the service is less a dedication of the child, as it is a dedication of the parents. Our understanding of Scripture is such that we do not see a salvation benefit in the act of dedication.

So the child cannot be welcomed as a "member" of the church, but they are accepted as part of our church "family", trusting that some day the child will accept the Lord Jesus as Lord and Saviour, and be born into the Family of God.

When we perform a family dedication, we are in good company, like Hannah

Classifieds

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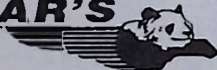
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Coffee Break Boundary Riders

CAROL PRESTON



I thought I'd be typing one handed this month, but the operation can't be done till later, so I'm still independent. However this hasn't stopped me anticipating how I will feel when the time comes for me to allow others to do some of my work and help me manage my life. What will I say yes and no to? How will I lovingly turn away those who might want to use

You are not responsible for the response of others.

this opportunity to invade my life? How will I gracefully accept the help I need? There are lots of feelings that are aroused when I consider these boundary issues. I'm sure if you are moving towards new ways of setting boundaries in your life there will be emotions that seem to ride up to those boundaries and challenge them.

Often the feelings around saying no are the strongest. Some feel guilty about saying no because the response from others is often to be hurt, offended, rejected. But that offence is meant to make you feel guilty so that you'll take the boundary away. Some people who say no for the first few times feel disobedient, ungrateful or selfish. Some of you might even feel fear about the response of those who are used to controlling you in some way. But if the boundaries are good for your growth to maturity they will be good or necessary for the other too, even if they resist them. You are not responsible for the response of others. You are responsible for thinking through what is

good and right for you, and putting that in place with courage and love.

Some think that people who say no are expressing anger. You might presume that in order to put boundaries in place you have to use anger or aggression. Not so! In fact people who have appropriate boundaries are likely to experience and express less anger. Anger usually arises when you have been injured or controlled, and this is less likely to happen when you have adequate boundaries in place. But you may need to show strength and confidence in new boundaries that you don't yet feel—so seek the support of God and others. I recommend the book *Bold Love* by Dan Allender if you need extra encouragement to set boundaries around angry, resistant people.

Think about how God sets boundaries. He often says no to us. He does not always rescue us from our mistakes or lack of understanding. He wants us to learn from these and grow. God tells us what he desires and allows us to choose. He does not use anger to force us. He even allows us to walk away from his love. It is a wonderful gift and we must take it for ourselves and give it to others. Then we will live and love in freedom and responsibility, not guilt and anger.

History Matters

The Cultural Convulsion Known as 'The Seventies'

ROB CULHANE

Historians will probably mark the commencement of modern Australia with the election of the Whitlam Labor party in 1972.

The long rule of the Liberal Menzies era and his successors had ended. The social and political conservatism which was a hallmark of the Menzies era gave way to the liberalisation of the Whitlam era that has never been reversed.

The seventies mark the emergence of a culture which is now commonly held by many Australians.

However, Whitlam did not begin the social changes which are commonly ascribed to him or blamed on him. These changes had already begun in the late sixties (such as the more permissive attitude to alcohol consumption that led to later closing times for hotels).

Social change was already in the air in the United States, Britain and France, and Whitlam acted as a catalyst for the fermenting energies that many felt were being suffocated in the leaden Cold War atmosphere.

The emergence of energetic rock music, the drug culture with its attendant lifestyle and dress, and alternative religious movements such as the Hare Krishna (although they were marginal to mainstream Australia), were portents of what

would in the eighties and nineties become more mainstream and commonplace.

The arts began to flourish and the refugee writers and artists in London returned home. Sexual conventions were radically redefined by the availability of the contraceptive pill. Women found a voice in the "first wave" feminist Germaine Greer. The 1975 Family Law Act simplified divorce laws and reflected the needs and reality of the wider community.

Whitlam rode the wave of social liberalisation which has become the watershed between the conservative post-War era and the era in which we now live, an era that celebrates its pluralism, relativism and multiculturalism. He has become unquestioningly associated with the social and cultural radical change that can only be described as a cultural convulsion that engulfed the entire West.

Passion characterised the era, be it concerns about the financial irresponsibility of the Whitlam government, his visionary policies, conspiracy theories surrounding his dismissal or the need for the church to do something.

This passion was frequently translated into protests so that the seventies became a decade of demonstrations, even after Malcolm Fraser's election which brought a more temperate approach.

Environmental issues aroused passionate debate and began to be a part of the political agenda. Issues such as the flooding of Lake Pedder, sand mining on Fraser Island, Aboriginal land rights and uranium mining drew the masses out onto the streets.

The church leaders of all denominations usually attempted a rear guard action in response to this social and cultural convulsion and focused almost exclusively on moral issues.

Some churches and their ministers were bitterly divided over the re-election of Whitlam. State assemblies and conferences of the churches frequently called for the maintenance of the hotel trading hours, for the prevention of a casino in Victoria or a second one in Tasmania. The churches in Queensland saw the Bjelke-Petersen government as a bulwark against the leftist-radical and permissive Federal government down south.

The percentage of people attending church each month continued to decline from 36% of the population to 25%, but in the Churches of Christ, this rate was slower. The rate of people stating no religion grew from 13% in 1970 to 22% in 1980.

The theological issues of neo-orthodoxy, liberalism and the radical New Testament scholarship of Bultmann and his ilk did nothing to save either ministers or their congregations.

It was a bleak period, with a lack of confidence by the church and its leaders of their place in society, or even in the church.

Some sought safety in the World Council of Churches, others turned to social action or politics to save them from their social irrelevance.

The Charismatic movement flooded Australia during the latter part of the seventies. Its exuberance and life was God's answer for the church's lack of vitality, whether the cause was liberalism or a stale and formalistic evangelicalism. Its warmth



and subjective emphasis provided a dimension to our faith lacking due to an over emphasis on rationalism.

The seventies mark the emergence of a culture which is now commonly held by many Australians.

It is characteristically hedonistic and religious authority or truth is validated by subjective experience. Both elements began to shape the church's culture in the early eighties and have continued to influence it. For example, "rock" music blends both these qualities and has been adopted by many in our churches. An emphasis on experience has bolstered our distrust of the intellect and subtly undercuts the authority of Scripture. The polarised political climate of the seventies confirmed to the Churches of Christ that politics are best left alone. The legacy of this has been the continued separation of faith from public life. The period highlighted our lack of theological skill and maturity in such matters and our inability to analyse and discern the new religious paradigm that began with this momentous social and cultural convulsion.

Rob Culhane ministers at Balwyn Church of Christ, Vic. He has an interest in Australian church history.

BAPTISMS

•Helen Castle, Amanda Beams, Kellie Beams, Danielle Raos, **Warrnambool, Vic** •Yvonne Jenkins, Ross Lettau, Dick Levers, **Lower Blue Mountains, NSW** •Ingrid Kramer, Alison Redmond, Beryl White, Marion Limmer, **Dianella, WA** •Kirsty Dunn, Scott Higlett, Thomas Anderson, Johanna Anderson, Nicholas Wuersching, Wayne Wallace, **Hume St, Toowoomba, Qld** •Simon Curtin, Christopher Powell, Ben Usher, Ron Mizzi, Sophie Mizzi, **Frankston, Vic** •Yvonne Bodger, **Latrobe Tce, Geelong, Vic** •Jean Tilley, Melanie Rutley, Elise Warwick, Nicole Street, Gary Wilson, Nicole Maxted, Kurt Maxted, Aaron Dove, Larissa Dove, **Tweed Heads-Coolangatta, NSW** •Aaron Best, **Swan Hill, Vic** •Andrew Hopton, Marion Hopton, **Twyford St, Bundaberg, Qld**

MARRIAGES

•Catherine Scott and Tristan Cole, **Frankston, Vic** •Julie-Ann Johnston and Ben Sanders, **Mt Clear, Vic**

DEATHS

•Janet Donaldson, **Dianella, WA** •Margret Dessent, **Dandenong, Vic** •Muriel Stafford, Millie Whitfield, **Frankston, Vic** •Harriet Jean Wileman, **Latrobe Terrace, Geelong, Vic** •Bernice (Bernie) Hampson, **Swan Hill, Vic** •Daisy Howden, Phillip Wiltshire, **Twyford St, Bundaberg, Qld**

WA

DIANELLA (Jennifer Turner) Half-yearly business meeting in February ... Breakfast for church pastoral carers ... Pastoral training sessions under Roger Ryall ... Alpha program starting 28 April ... Passover meal Maundy Thursday ... Due to family circumstances, Robin Haley resigned position of family & children's coordinator ... Sympathy to several members grieving loss of family members ... Four baptised.

FREMANTLE (Bob Fairman) Garry & Cynthia Cowley settling into manse 26 April, in preparation for beginning of ministry 16 May with Bob Fairman as assistant ... Peter & Louise Snowsills explained workings of Interserve to CWF ladies. Peter and his family await confirmation of Peter's engineering position with United Missions to Nepal. Both expect to be involved in a local church. Louise continuing as full-time mum.

NORTHAM (Jason Hemsley) Renovations begun on house next door. Congregation looking forward to being able to use it soon ... Local churches shared in "Walk of Witness" & service in park on Good Friday ... 8 youth attended Easter camp. Remaining shared "Passover meal" & sleep over. Preparing for State Youth Games ... Michael & Nicole Smyth moved to Marble Bar ... Family service led by the children.

QLD

WYNNUM (Charles Cole) Auxiliaries well into 1999 programs ... Study group reviewing "Christianity Explained" ... \$1,500 received for COCOA ... Easter services well attended ... Church, family & friends celebrated golden wedding of Charles & Beryl Cole. Charles has ministered at Wynnum for 12 years of his 64 years of ministry in Vic, NSW & Qld ... Charles & Beryl receiving hospital treatment for serious falls sustained at home.

HUME STREET, TOOWOOMBA (Dale White, Ross Savill, Geoff Eyles, Darren Robinson) Neale Proellocks to join ministry team in 2000, with responsibility for small groups & pastoral care ... Geoff Eyles appointed to interim pastoral care ministry ... Newcomer's dinner 22 March ... ACOM Principal Keith Farmer guest speaker at services and leadership seminars. 200 attended Passover Meal on Thursday prior to Easter ... Sancha Prowse and "Iron & Clay" guest artists over Easter weekend.

CAMP HILL (John Adermann) Church encouraged by recent baptisms and new members ... Youth Group started with about 12 young people. 6 from non-church families ... Held joint Easter Services with Samoan Wesleyan Methodist Church who use our building each week. Easter Sunday culminated with baptism of two Samoans ... Weekly prayer meeting commenced, specifically for growth and church contacts.

TWYFORD ST, BUNDABERG Bruce and Connie Roberts accepted short-term interim ministry, commenced March ... Welcome lunch at Sizzlers by women ... 23 ladies attended coffee & dessert evening ... 11 women attended Camp Cal retreat ... Ladies working on patchwork square for World Convention ... 2 baptisms ... Deaths of Phillip Wiltshire & Daisy Howden ... John and Betty McCreddin sold up to travel Australia.

NSW

LOWER BLUE MOUNTAINS (Stephen Templeton, Debbie Cox) Debbie Cox commenced ministry ... Administration team replaces old board structure. 2 new elders appointed—Roy Millar & Pat Cox. New treasurer Mark Hudson ... Successful senior service organised by Jean Flint as outreach ... Church paying off property purchased last year ... Youth group commences under strong committed team & growing ... New young leaders attending conference as delegates for first time. **METRO NORTH CENTRE** (Franklyn Elliott, Gordon Barr) Franklyn Elliott led well-attended Good Friday service & was the speaker at the morning service on Easter Sunday. No evening service, instead a large number of young people with Gordon Barr attended the Easterfest 99 at Stanwell Tops under auspices of NSW Churches of Christ Youth Vision Ministry.

TWEED HEADS-COOLANGATTA (Bruce Warwick) Several children taken to "Training Day for Kids" Brisbane by Bron Parsons ... Seniors

Getaway at Stanwell Tops ... Alan Hermann presented "Personal Spirituality" studies in March ... Church supporting Justin & Rebecca Whitecross in plans for ministry at Byron Bay ... Great Easter services ... Maurie Pieper baptised four grandchildren ... Church saddened at passing of 16-year-old David Prothero.

VIC

HORSHAM (Julie Trinnick) Third brochure telling of services church offers community has been posted to each household in city ... Alpha course in progress ... Youth band participating in art festival ... Toddlers to teens fashion parade held by playgroup ... Planning under way for two-week outreach program with OAC in May ... Visiting speakers assisting with preaching until senior minister is appointed.

WARRNAMBOOL (Larry Holt) 4 young people baptised, a number of families welcomed into fellowship ... 50 people attended Alpha dinner ... Successful elders' retreat held ... Another home group fellowship begins ... Youth club growing ... Guest speakers welcomed to pulpit.

KEYSBOROUGH (Larry Edwards) Church recently involved in outreach at Springvale Cultural Festival, invited to bring music for the night, no restrictions placed on presentation, presented Jesus in contemporary music & singing. Also involved in other community festivals over summer ... Held great services in large marquee recently on our 6-acre property. Barbecue lunch raised money for new building.

CHADSTONE (Malcolm & Yvonne Lowe) Peter Breen special speaker ... Club 147 & CWF held crazy whist & Scrabble day ... Church held seniors' lunch with Burwood-Mt Waverley church ... Family bike ride & picnic at Geelong ... Baby son, Ross, to Alison & Steve Peisley.

STRATHMORE (Marilyn Hinton) Impressive induction service for Marilyn Hinton held 28 March, led by John

Church News

Gilmore of Vic-Tas Ministry Division. Jim Tilson, Keilor East, & Mavis Uldrich, Ivanhoe, shared in the laying on of hands ... Farewell to Les Medley who has served as interim minister ... Good spirit prevailing in congregation.

FRANKSTON (Tom Ede, Glen Mason) 25th anniversary of chapel opening 6-7 Feb enjoyed by many ... Minister to families & youth, Glen Mason, welcomed with wife Angie & children ... Ann Smith moved to Oak Towers ... Markets held 3rd Saturday each month to raise funds to bring indigenous person to World Convention ... Money from sale of McClelland Drive land sent to Fiji church, WA Aboriginal work, "Outback Focus", Qld, & Vanuatu.

DANDENONG (Brian White, Jack Edwards, Martin Rees) 450 outreach calendars distributed in local district ... January services well attended. Morning services increasing ... Board retreat held ... Alpha Course launched 21 March. Much excitement & anticipation at the prospect of this course ... 75 people attended church family camp at Forest Edge ... Mark Butler led studies on reawakening prayer.

MT CLEAR (Rod Ratcliffe) Vision night, new mission statement and goals: slogan—Cut to the Chase! ... University & tertiary students dinner well attended ... 6 people involved in religious education in schools ... Young adults visit *Doulos* mission ship in Melbourne ... Letter of apology after recent burglary ... Youth service popular. Many involved ... Church fellowship lunch enjoyed with Dale White, Wendy & children.

MONTROSE (Harvey Clark) Special Palm Sunday service held, complete with procession, while congregation waved large palm branches. Maundy Thursday, Good Friday services very meaningful ... Second Alpha course starting ... Church complex open Monday, Wednesday & Friday mornings for community to have cuppa, chat, time out or borrow books ... Surrounding Churches of Christ cooperating with pulpit exchanges, combined

evening service & pleasant Sunday afternoon.

LATROBE TERRACE, GEELONG (David Jones) Lady baptised & welcomed into fellowship ... Over 40 attended men's breakfast with Robert Costa guest speaker ... Homemade biscuits given to prisoners ... "Echoes form the Cross" theme for pre-Easter services & on Good Friday, finishing Easter Sunday ... *Jesus* videos purchased for use by members ...

Laura Perkins attended World Vision youth leadership conference ... CWF held special meetings at Rosalie House & Cottage by the Sea.

BALLARAT CENTRAL (Jack White) Jack White has moved from part-time to full-time ministry ... Church mourns loss of two loved and respected members, Beth Jenkins & Dorothy Butler ... Dramatic re-enactment of the Easter story involved many of our young people.

SWAN HILL (Roger Risson) Aaron Best baptised, Vicki Palmer welcomed into fellowship, Hope Shadbolt dedicated ... Activities have included prayer vigil, guest service & tea, letterbox drop of Acts leaflets entitled "The Glory of Easter", table games nights ... 5 churches combined for Good Friday service ... Halls Gap camp 11-14 June with Gil Cann as guest speaker ... Senior member Mrs Bernie Hampson died 6 March.

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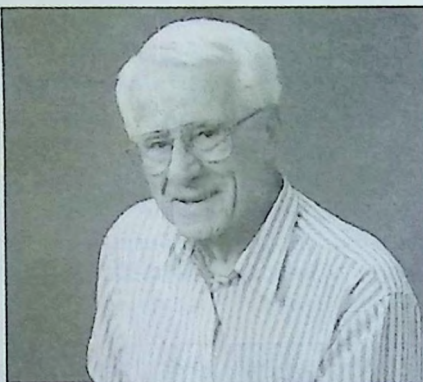
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The Campbell-Purcell Debate

GORDON STIRLING

Alexander Campbell was in Cincinnati to advocate the use of Bibles in schools. Opposing it was the Roman Catholic Bishop of Cincinnati, John Purcell. The two agreed to a debate, held for 17 days in January 1837. The debate covered such matters as Rome claiming to be the one holy catholic apostolic church, the validity of the apostolic succession, church government, prayers for the dead, the confessional and celibacy of the clergy. There were "no holds barred" on either side, with Campbell supporters loudly claiming victory.

Commenting on the debate many years later Bishop Purcell is reported in *The Christian Evangelist* (1.12.1898) to have said of Campbell, "He was a most lovable character and treated me in every way like a brother. Was he not my brother in the Lord? Was he not like me a follower of the meek and lowly Jesus? Did he not believe in the resurrection of the dead and the life beyond the grave where we shall meet to part no more? Did he not kneel before the same cross, in spirit, and regard there with reverence the mother of Jesus and that poor woman who bathed his feet with her tears and wiped them with the hair of her head, and those sweet and pious women who followed the great Master. It is true that we differed on some matters, but these were all minor. In the essentials of Christianity we entirely agreed."



Purcell's tribute continued, "As for Mr Campbell's standing in the future ages, I think it is quite within the bounds of truth to say that not ecclesiastical history alone, but profane history, will place him on the same pedestal with Luther, Calvin and Wesley, the peer of them all. Had he lived in the early ages of Christendom and accomplished the same amount of good with which he is justly credited, he would after death have been sanctified along with Saints Chrysostom and Jerome as a father in the church, his name for ever embalmed in its annals as a worthy successor of St Peter and St Paul."

Two brothers attended the debate, Glenn and Peter Burnett. Both were deeply influenced by it. Glenn became a Disciples preacher and Peter joined the Catholic church, later becoming the first Governor of California.

The Last Word

O Lord, I do not pray for tasks equal to my strength. I ask for strength equal to my tasks.

—Phillips Brooks

Small boy's definition of Father's Day: "It's just like Mother's Day only don't spend so much."

*How do you get an elephant down from a tree?
Sit it on a leaf and wait for autumn.*

A lawyer listened very attentively while the prospective client gave details of the case.

"You can't lose," said the lawyer finally. "If that case is presented properly, any jury in the land will deliver a verdict inside of ten minutes. Hand over a \$100 retainer and I will handle the case for you."

"No thanks," said the client, "I don't think I'll pursue the matter further. I was giving you the opposition's side."

Late News

Kosovo Crisis

Negotiations commenced regarding possible direct support by Churches of Christ Overseas Aid (COCOA) for Albanian Churches of Christ in their efforts in the refugee crisis. Donation (tax deductible) welcomed. See story on page 9.

Ross Norling Seriously Ill

Ross Norling of our Federal Aborigines work in Port Hedland, WA, has been flown to Royal Perth Hospital seriously ill with an unknown infection.

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