

THE AUSTRALIAN CHRISTIAN

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Photo by Lars Astrom, courtesy of UNICEF

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Suffer the Children

Millions of children and young people are exposed to war or violence or to physical, emotional or economic abuse.

This issue looks at the need of children for Jesus (page 19), a crisis centre for young people (page 15) and examples of the church's ministry to children (pages 3, 4, 5 and 6).

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Ministers' Workshop

The Minister and Conflict

by E.C. Keating

Conflict is not to be avoided at all costs. If a church is being the dynamic church that Christ intends it to be, conflict is never far away as all change involves some conflict.

However, intense conflict can also demoralise a church and a minister. It is unhealthy when it divides the church and impedes its development.

Understand the Reasons

The minister should be ready to understand that the presenting problems may not be the real issue. Underlying the conflict about the change of service times, or the length of the minister's sermon, or the organ roster, or a deep theological issue, there may be the insecurity of a sensitive person who has not been adequately recognised. Unwittingly you may be battling tribal loyalties. There may be a transition of power being resisted. Your conflict may be the residue of problems from the ministry of your predecessor. You may be fighting local cultural attitudes. You may have overstepped the unwritten board expectation of being a chaplain by acting as a catalyst for change. If you understand the conflict, you will handle it more objectively.

Is Change the Issue?

Never surprise your board with sudden suggestions of change. Make sure you have fully highlighted the problem that the change will solve (that may take months). Make sure that the late adopters have been given a chance to catch up with the idea. Do the unofficial leaders of the church approve of the change? Have you introduced the concept with a sensitivity and recruited some allies to help you share the resistance? Never be so far out in front of your congregation that you are alone. Allow time for some to catch up.

Is the Battle All That Important?

Is it like the current border conflict between India and Pakistan over an ice-covered mountain range that is of no strategic importance to anybody? Does this issue really matter? Is it a matter of principles and prestige that in the long run do not hinder or promote the witness of the church? Withdraw from unnecessary conflict. Do not waste valuable energy.

Separate the Issue from the Person

You have to live with your board. When you hear resistance to your proposals, tackle the issue but not the person. People

do not dislike you just because they disagree with your ideas.

Am I Promoting the Conflict?

Am I being unduly sensitive and defensive when criticised? Is my style of leadership aggressive rather than assertive? Am I presenting new concepts in such a way that the old ways are seen as being redundant? (Old ways that some worshippers have valued.) A minister can reduce the potential conflict by adding on a new group rather than attempting to dismantle an old one. A minister needs to take care of those chosen as supporters during conflict. Will they handle the issue carefully and calmly or will they make the problem worse? Sometimes the minister's spouse can feel criticism more keenly than the minister and can create more problems by speaking publicly in the minister's defence.

When Should You Yell For Help?

A minister's loneliest time is when locked in conflict with leaders of the church. If the above advice is taken seriously there are few in the church with whom the issue can be fully discussed. The minister should "yell for help" well before the conflict harms health, marriage and church. The minister could share with a minister friend, a denominational representative or consider calling in a mediator to assist. Do not wait until the battle lines are drawn and attitudes are set in concrete. Too often the mediator has been called in when the problem has become complex and individual's feelings are deeply hurt.

Is It Possible to Have a "Win Win" Solution?

Without watering down the issue or the proposal is it possible for both sides to feel that their point of view has been heard and taken into account? Compromise is not always a dirty word, and a mediator is of great value in this area.

Rarely is the conflict issue a theological one, although it may be given theological expression. It is not ideas and concepts and better ways of doing things that cause conflict. It is people.

• Ted Keating is senior minister at the Nunawading, Vic, church.

Edited by Brian White, Field Director of the Vic-Tas Department of Mission, Education and Development and the Federal Board of Christian Education.

Musical Raises Nearly \$1,000 for Vanuatu



Psalty, alias Rosemary König, ready for action. Surrounding Psalty are (back row) Lorraine Steele, Tamara White; (middle row) Emily and Rebecca de Jager; (front row) Peter Steele, Tim de Jager and Julia König

Photo courtesy Leader Newspaper Group

"Psalty's Camping Adventure", a musical staged by the children of the Nunawading, Vic, church, resulted in \$970 being given for Nunawading's workparty to Vanuatu.

Two packed audiences saw Psalty take 60 children through an imaginary hike over a mountain. Various difficulties en route showed them how much they need God in their lives.

Lorraine Steele, producer-director, was delighted with the children's singing and acting. The show taught the children many lessons about co-operation, humility and sharing.

Vic-Tas Ministers' Association

Andrew Ball and the Youth Ministry Committee presented a lively day's program to ministers and their spouses at CCTC during October. The program included videos of Mike Yaconelli and a demonstration of camping equipment.

A small group of ministers appreciated the annual Quiet Day and Retreat at the Carmelite Monastery, Donvale. These days are valued as times of meditation and reflection, guided by those who have vast experience in spirituality.

Dynamic Christian Education specialist, Dr Betty Javelera, spoke to a group of ministers and members of the Victorian Overseas Mission Committee during her recent visit from Manila in the Philippines.

Who Are We?

The Department of Christian Union received 202 responses from 90 congregations to a recent questionnaire, providing a sample of how our members understand Churches of Christ. The questionnaire covered the emphases of our churches' pattern of education, importance of co-operation and obstacles to unity. The returns covered all states (except Queensland) and the ACT.

The reaffirmation of the New Testament as the basis of faith and practice was very strong, as were traditional emphases on believers' baptism and weekly celebration of the Lord's Supper.

There was strong support for co-operation with other churches, combined studies and worship, and contribution to the Christmas Bowl.

Ongoing education of our distinctive witness was seen to be needed—at least every second year.

There was confusion by our membership on the question of membership in church councils.

Overall there was more support for membership than opposition, but the majority was not a large one.

A retreat from the commitment of past years to visible organic unity was recorded. The major obstacle to this unity was the fear of doctrinal compromise. There was also a fear of the World Council of Churches.

The survey reaffirmed that members of Churches of Christ remain committed to ordering their life according to their understanding of the New Testament. We have not lost our vision for unity, but there is confusion as to how this is to be expressed.

Thanks are expressed to all who participated and returned responses.

An expanded report with tables is available from D. Allison, 28 Potter Street, Black Rock 3193, at a cost of \$2 or five 41c stamps.

—T.A. Banks
(Chairman, DCU)

News

New Children's Strategies



(L to R) Brian White with Russell Croxford (Explorer Chief), Dot Brooker (Good Companions Chief) and Glenys Cartmel (Children's Ministry Committee)

A new umbrella committee established by the Vic-Tas Department of Mission Education and Development will give new impetus to work with children.

For 50 years Victorian and

Tasmanian Churches of Christ children's ministry has operated on two main lines: Sunday school work and Good Companions and Explorers weeknight clubs. The latter each had their own executives

and networks and a Children's Ministry Committee dealt with Sunday school and family worship issues.

Sociological and population trends have seen a decline in both Sunday school and girls and boys clubs. This has been met in churches, to some extent, by the growth of co-ed "Kid's Clubs" with no network association. There was an urgent need to develop new strategies to resource, support and encourage all forms of ministry with children.

In 1990 a Ministry with Children Committee will be created. The new committee will bring together experienced and specialist personnel to stimulate and resource all areas of children's ministry.

Brian White, Field Director responsible for Christian Education with MED says, "The Department is hopeful that the changes will stimulate a new enthusiasm, new ideas, better resourcing and significant development in ministry with children in Vic-Tas."

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News

Graduate Diploma

For those ministers who are looking to enlarge their vision and further develop their ministry skills and who would be stimulated by others who are similarly committed, the Graduate Diploma in Ministry is being offered by the Churches of Christ Theological College, Mulgrave.

This is a two-year course designed to help ministers grow small churches into larger churches, develop a style of leadership appropriate to larger churches, work in team ministries and sculpture a style of ministry appropriate to their ministry area.

Based on an action-reflection teaching model, the Graduate Diploma, in the first year, will involve students in a one-week intensive at CCTC from 26 February to 2 March, four day-

long collegium groups throughout the year and a one-week placement in a church appropriate to the student's needs.

In the second year a second intensive (in the week before graduation) where a research paper is presented, takes the place of the church placement.

The principal lecturer at the 1990 intensive is Dr Gordon Moyes, Superintendent of the Wesley Central Mission in Sydney, described as Australia's largest Christian complex.

Gordon will be talking about preaching, the media, church and society, word and deed theology and the Restoration Principle in practice. He will be complemented by other lecturers who are experts in their fields.



Gordon Moyes

Further information and application forms are available from the Director of the program, Graeme Chapman, CCTC, 40-60 Jacksons Rd, Mulgrave 3170. Phone (03) 790 1000.

"Party to the Max" at Modbury

200 young people, some from as far as Balaklava and from all denominations, gathered for a night of music and dancing at the Modbury, SA, church recently.

This was in support of Maxine Little, who works on behalf of local churches with street kids in the Tea Tree Gully area, which includes Modbury. The band "Soul Purpose" performed and Darryl Stephens played disco music.

Peter Duncan, Federal Minister for Youth Affairs, visited the party.

Local businesses donated prizes, food and drink.

The initiative came from the young people of the Modbury church and, with encouragement, exercised great enterprise as they made contacts and organised a faultless night's program.

They also exercised great energy and creativity in converting the church complex to a "disco format" for the party, staying overnight to ready the church for services the next morning. Prayer and consciousness of God's guidance and protection in their mission was paramount.

The young people of Modbury will now venture to monthly Sunday night youth services, commencing with "The Gospel According to U2" on 29 October.

State Minister

The SA Conference has appointed Ron Roberts to the position of State Minister following an overwhelming vote of support from churches and ministers.

Ron is at present a member of the ministry team at Noarlunga. He is a man with proven skills and a warm and positive approach to people. Most of all, Ron, and his wife,



Kate and Ron Roberts

Kate, come with a firm commitment to Jesus Christ and with a special love for the church. Ron is 43 years of age and he and Kate have four children.

In the role of State Minister Ron is firmly committed to assisting the church build effective programs in the local congregation; the planting of new churches in the growing areas

of the State; enlisting and releasing the skills of gifted ministers and church leaders in the local church to benefit and encourage the wider ministry of the churches of the South Australian Conference.

Ron has an impressive record of leadership and administrative ability, a capacity to plan and program and a pastoral heart. He is held in high regard by all who have worked with him.

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Maxine Little, youth worker in Tea Tree Gully

News

Thornleigh: A Growing Church on the Move—Again

July 1906 saw the humble beginnings of the Hornsby, NSW, church (now known as Thornleigh) with the setting up of the Lord's Supper in the home of Mr and Mrs Crosthwaite. As the church grew so grew the need of a building which was constructed and opened in Albert St in 1910. 63 years later there was again the need for larger premises. The church relocated to Thornleigh, having purchased the Nazarene Bible College property. The first meeting there as held on 21 October 1973.

But the church has continued to grow until the stage was reached when it became necessary for an even larger building to accommodate the morning service. So in August this year the church agreed to move the morning service to the Penant Hills Community Centre, Yarrara Rd (opposite the Penant Hills Station). This exciting move became a reality on 15 October, 16 years after the move from Hornsby to Thornleigh. A lot of prayer, planning and preparation went into the move.



Worship in new surroundings

The morning program commences at 9.30 am, when a worship service is held.

At the same time the children's ministry program operates with the senior Bible School meeting in the nearby

Girl Guide Hall and the Kindergarten and Creche in the lower hall.

At the first program there were 223 in attendance. This service was led by Stuart Wesley, youth minister, and the

preacher was Franklyn Elliott, senior minister.

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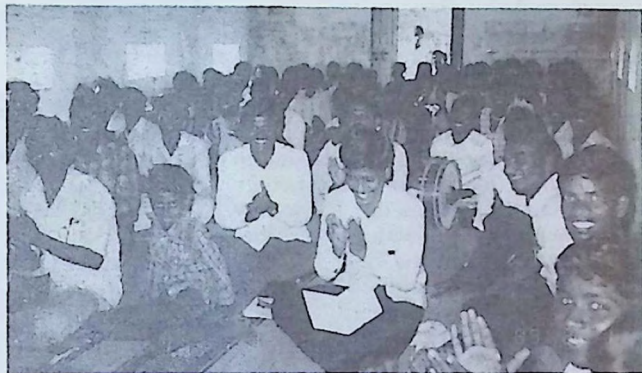
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World News

Thrilling Testimonies



Preachers at seminar in Ammambakam

Returning recently from six weeks of evangelistic meetings in North and South India, Doug Willis reports over 700 baptisms.

Over 80 preachers and workers attended a two-day seminar conducted by Doug at Ammambakam.

Doug shares some testimonies from this recent visit:

One young high-cast Hindu lady seemed very touched. She testified: "I have been to several Hindu gods and temples but they have not given me peace. An inexpressible feeling of fear was in my mind, but now I feel very pleasant. I decided to follow Jesus until my death. I am ready to accept Christ at once whatever the difficulties given by my relatives and neighbours."

At one meeting God's power was very evident. One older

man, a palm tree climber, said, "This is the first time I have heard the message of salvation. My soul, my body and my life is for God. While you were preaching about God's love and sacrifice, my feelings were bubbling with amazing inexpressible joy. I never had an experience like this in my life."

When a wife of a recent convert was asked why she came to be baptised she replied, "I have seen such a change in my husband—an inner peace and joy in his life which he never had before he was converted."

One night a meeting was overwhelmed when 75 responded to receive Christ. It is significant that 74 turned up the following morning to be baptised.

The other man asked to be excused because he was not well.

More Tucson Talk

Richard and Dawn Lawton, from Maylands, SA, are serving on an exchange basis at First Christian Church, in downtown Tucson, Arizona, USA. In this second article we hear about what Richard describes as the beautiful range of people who make up the family of God in that place.

Moderator Jerry McFarland runs an auto repair shop, and is local president of Habitat for Humanity, a worldwide body that provides low-cost housing by means of much volunteer labour; former President Jimmy Carter is an active volunteer in his own State.

Elder Andy Nichols is a doctor doing research at the University Medical Centre, and an unsuccessful Democratic candidate at the last Arizona State election.

His wife, also an elder, is Dr Ann Nichols, who teaches social work at the University of Arizona.

Their 19-year-old daughter Kathy spent the summer at the Bossey Ecumenical Institute in Switzerland and is on the General Board of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the USA.

Bill Percy served as a leader in the national Building Extension Department for many years. Another retired minister, Charles Whitmer, spent many years in Pueblo, Colorado,

where under his ministry the rundown church went from 80 members to 1,500.

C. Dale (no-one knows his Christian name: he is just called "C") is finance secretary. A retired postal employee, he spends days each week at the church, working on the church's accounts.

Mary Perrine hit 80 in July. As membership chairperson she meets every Monday morning with the ministers to decide which people need to be followed up after Sunday's services. Usually, she has already been in touch with them by phone before Sunday is over. She also organises periodic inquirers orientation sessions for new people, in which the faith and the church are explained and discussed.

Donn Taylor has just commenced as the new choir director. He was on the paid singing staff of St Philips Episcopal Church for 16 years, and teaches singing. He is keen to move to First Christian for faith reasons. Apart from directing the Chancel Choir, Hosanna Singers, childrens and youth choirs, he will resurrect the handbell choir.

Rudy Byrd is a medical practitioner. He sings in the choir, and does a tremendous job tending to the many refugees who come across the nearby border from Central America.

Hazel Dooley recently celebrated her 99th birthday. She comes each Sunday from a nursing home, sits in a wheelchair and feels that she has an important witness to her faith in what must be the short time remaining to her in this life. If this means interrupting the service to share what is on her heart, so be it!

Linda Valdez is an editorial writer with the *Arizona Daily Star*, the morning newspaper. Her editorials serve to influence or agitate the minds of thousands.

She recently came forward to confess her faith in Christ, and her husband, Sixto, a Mennonite from Mexico, transferred his membership.

Goal to Pele

Being handicapped doesn't stop these children from the School for the Handicapped in Kajiado, Kenya, from enjoying a game of soccer. The school cares for over 90 handicapped children and is regularly visited by orthopedic specialists.

Christian Blind Mission International (Australia) enables such children to receive an education and to learn skills that will eventually help them to earn a living.

The school was visited recently by CBMI representative



Jim Stallard, who asked one young boy his name. With a big

grin the boy responded straight away, "They call me 'Pele'."

Letters to the Editor

Letters are limited to 200 words

Communion Communication

To the Editor,

I have no desire to prolong the debate but I must comment on Brian Phelp's "Comment" ("AC" 7 October).

Some of Brian's expressions are so professorial, hence to me out of context. The "rhetoric of the dress" he says is important and then he talks about presentation, which to many minds is least impressive.

The celebration of the death and resurrection of Christ demands reverence and decorum and should be equated with clear enunciation. Brian's reference to the Gospel being packaged in "archaic, irrelevant anachronisms" is extravagant, not typical of the language of so many presidents.

In communicating the communion the leader should not direct attention to him/herself by dress, action or material. It distresses me when presidents relate long personal, irrelevant experiences.

Our task is to point expectant, penitent believers to the sacrifice of our crucified Lord.

We live in a new world but being true penitent participants in the Lord's Supper we will present ourselves with dignity, reverence and a feeling of being the best we can offer to our Lord.

I am not saying we should not wear casual dress but equate our dress to the occasion. The "hands in pocket"

attitude may be a prelude to other more distracting practices.

Incidentally its time we outgrew the "kids" syndrome.

—L.W. Marshman
(Victor Harbour, SA)

Tribute to W.T. Atkin

To the Editor,

We have recently received a letter from Bishop James Grant on behalf of the Executive of the Victorian Inter-Church Immigration Committee. The death of W.T. Atkin was reported to that Committee and reference was made to Mr Atkin's long association with the churches' ministry to migrants and refugees, as he was one of the original members of the federal Interchurch Committee from its foundation in 1947.

The Committee asked Bishop Grant to write "to the Churches of Christ expressing thankfulness to God for the life, witness and service to so many by W.T. Atkin".

—Clive Ward
(Vic-Tas Conf. Secretary)

Reply to Tertius

To the Editor,

In response to "The Man Upstairs" ("AC" 7 October) I wonder, Tertius, have you missed the joy of the resurrection of our Lord?

There is a man in the glory of Heaven. He arose from the grave. He ascended on high. He is seated at the right hand of the majesty on high, making intercession for us.

Yes he is coming again "as ye have seen him go into Heaven"

(Acts 1:11 KJV). "For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God." (1 Thess. 4:16 NIV).

He has promised, "I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am." (John 14:3 NIV)

Knowing the joy of all this, I still have his presence with me in a very real way. The Holy Spirit reveals him to me, day by day and moment by moment. I believe that we can know the Lord by the Holy Spirit in a closer way than even the Disciples could. The Lord Jesus Christ is both "up there" and down here, and this is not "sloppy theology" or "sloppy worship".

—Syd T. Burman
(Jamboree Heights, Qld)

Submission

To the Editor,

I respond to Alan Mathieson's article on "Shepherding" ("AC" 7 October).

The principles of "shepherding" and "discipleship" are thoroughly biblical. We are encouraged to obey our leaders and "submit to their authority". (Hebrews 13:17) Juan

Carlos Ortiz has been in Australia recently and his ministry has been valued by many. His books call us back to a biblical discipleship under the Lord's authority.

One principle of organisation of the Christian life is submission to our leaders. This may not fit with our laissez-faire society, but it is God's pattern.

The shepherds (elders, pastors, leaders of any type) are not authoritarian however. 1 Peter 5:1-4 describes the shepherds as examples, not lording it over the flock and accountable to God. Leaders in our churches need to have authority and they need to be able to lead. Too often we find God's work is held back by a democratic system of leadership which has no respect for the leader. Many think that the teaching on submission in Ephesians 5 is inappropriate for our day. I would draw attention to the fact that all of us are to "submit to one another out of reverence to Christ". (Ephesians 5:21) This submission to Christ and then to one another makes it possible for us to submit to our leaders.

—Barry Jenkins
(Ringwood, Vic)

Letters from Tertius

Horoscopes

To the Editor,

I think that they should be called "horror-scopes" because they deceive those who believe in them and waste the time of those who don't but still read them....wondering perhaps if there maybe something in it after all.

Even the name "astrology" is misleading. It is not the study of the stars, as the word implies, but a study of human gullibility and what appeals to it. How can anyone establish that stars thousands of light years away can reasonably determine whether it would be safer for me to stay in bed today or to get up and go to work.

The thing that staggers me is the number of well-educated people whose lives are run by the latest zodiacal nonsense. For instance, Jim, my school teacher cousin, believes it all. Yet he won't touch Christianity because he reckons it is unscientific and a lot of fairy tales.

I don't understand why people can swallow the stars and strain at Jesus Christ. Or perhaps I do understand. Belief in astrology costs you nothing, except the price of the latest magazine or newspaper. Belief in Jesus Christ costs you your life.

Yours "auspiciously",

—Tertius



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Namibian Repatriation



Children at the Dobra Reception Centre

The United Nations has asked the Council of Churches in Namibia (CCN) to assist in the repatriation of Namibians. CCN has therefore set up a special Committee for Repatriation, Resettlement and Reconstruction, known as the 3R Committee. The Committee works closely with the UN High Commission for Refugees to facilitate the refugees' return, which began in June this year. Force Ten, the joint program of the Australian Council of Churches and Australian Catholic Relief, will contribute towards the program.

The 3R program is helping to run several reception centres for returnees. Each returnee is

issued with eating utensils, towels, a mattress, two blankets, two sheets, tissues and soap.

When the returnees leave the reception centre, most will need help in building or buying homes. They will provide most of the labour themselves and the churches will assist with building and materials. In rural areas, 3R will purchase farms and provide a basic financial allowance so people can re-establish their livelihoods.

The 3R Committee also plans to set up 15 schools.

For more information, contact Force Ten, Box C199, Clarence St PO, Sydney 2000. Telephone (02) 29 2215.

Namibia: Background



South African occupation, but only in April 1989 was this resolution implemented, and since June thousands of Namibians have returned to their country from exile.

At a Glance

Area: 824,000 km². (NSW is 804,000 km²)

Population: 1.7 million (about one tenth of Australia)

Adult literacy: 30% (Zimbabwe by comparison is 70%)

Life expectancy: 43 years (blacks); 69 years (whites)

White traders and missionaries arrived in Namibia in the early 19th century. In 1878 Britain annexed the port of Walvis Bay and five years later Germany declared a "protectorate" over the rest of Namibia. In 1915, Germany surrendered to South African troops and Namibia passed to South African control.

In the 1920s South African legislation was introduced to control land ownership and labour; in 1966 this was formalised into apartheid.

In 1966 the United Nations revoked South Africa's mandate in Namibia and ordered South Africa to withdraw. In 1978 the UN passed Resolution 435, intended to end the

Churches in Namibia: The Christian church in Namibia owes its origins to 19th century missionaries. Initially, the only education available to the black population in the country was provided by the churches. Denominations include Lutheran (about half of the population), Roman Catholic, Anglican, Methodist and others. The Namibian Council of Churches (CCN) was formed in 1978. CCN has long been involved in work for an independent Namibia.

Vic-Tas Conference *Joint Presidents' Reception*

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Papers

Biomedical Ethics

Discerning right and wrong in a growing number of complex human biological and medical matters poses a deep challenge for Christians today. Few of us would claim to know all of the answers to all of the questions raised by abortion, euthanasia, genetic engineering, in-vitro fertilisation, surrogate motherhood, sperm banks and so on.

Professor D. Gareth Jones is one of the world's foremost thinkers in Christian biomedical ethics, and is the author of a new Zadok reading guide on the subject. This reading guide will enable us to approach intelligently the growing literature in this area. It is a timely contribution to thinking Christianly about a controversial area of human life.

Issues in Biomedical Ethics, Zadok Reading Guide R24, is available from the Zadok Institute for Christianity and Society, Blackall Street, Barton 2600, phone (062) 73 1634, for \$2 plus 80c postage.

Books

A Creative Christmas for Aussie Families Programs & Plays for Aussie Kids (9-11)

Both by J. Colin Jones \$8.95 and \$9.95

Jon Jones is the musical director of the Dawson St, Ballarat, church and has written and co-ordinated numerous musicals and dramas. He has now put some of his ideas into print in these two well-presented small books, which are designed for those involved in ministry with children.

A Creative Christmas has eight plays, numerous stories, meditations, poems and ideas for Christmas presentations, club break-ups, family worship services etc. Just in time for the coming season.

Programs & Plays for Aussie Kids contains more plays, a number of crosswords, various puzzles and stories and ideas for children's segments in worship services and club programs. These books will be well received by all those working with children.

The books are available from Jon Jones, 2 Bevre St, Sebastopol 3355, and the prices include postage.

—Brian White

The Cross of Jesus

by Leon Morris (Paternoster Press)

The Christian faith is based and centered on the Cross of the Master, and it almost seems unnecessary for us to read anything concerning the Cross and the crucifixion, apart from what is contained in scripture. Certainly there seems to be too little detail in the gospel record, but the teaching of the epistles concerning the relevance of the cross is a great source of advice, assurance

and comfort for us in our Christian life. However, in the face of the fact that ours is an age of frustration and futility, the writer suggests that we need to look to the cross of Jesus as the answer to our deepest needs and, indeed, he is correct.

If you read this book, you will find many answers to questions that perhaps have caused you concern in the past—such as "Law, Love and Victory" or "Answer to Futility, to Loneliness, to Sickness and Death, to Selfishness". There is a great wealth of teaching in this book by a learned man who was Principal of Ridley College in Melbourne, and who has written several books on the subject of the cross, including *The Apostolic Preaching of the Cross* and *The Cross in the New Testament*.

If you are seeking for some deep thinking on the subject of the Cross of our Lord then this book is for you.

—Paul Payne

Adoption Beginning to End



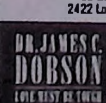
A Guide for Christian Parents

by Donald W. Felker and Evelyn H. Felker (Baker Book House)

Starting with a biblical justification, this book examines issues in regard to adoption. As the authors acknowledge, adoption is not for everybody. In today's society it is very difficult to adopt at all.

This book offers some practical guidelines and asks awkward questions to those who are contemplating adoption. Most of the modern thinking about the adoptees' right to information and the role of adoption agencies is covered but much of the practical information regarding the legal situation and agencies is useless as it is written for the American scene and is just not relevant to Australian conditions. The whole question of "open adoption", which is highly favoured in social welfare agencies at the moment, is not tackled. Overseas adoption and the resulting transracial adoption is just touched upon. Unfortunately there is not anything available from a Christian perspective written from within Australia.

—CRA

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How Will I Tell My Mother?

by Jerry Arterburn (Word Publishing) \$9.95

A true story of one man's battle with homosexuality and AIDS, this is a small paperback that is easily read. However, there is not much of a story to it, rather an itemising of incidents in Jerry's life that he felt to be critical in his developing homosexuality.

His points of view seem very predictable for his background and explain some glaring contradictions.

Near death, he quotes Agatha Christie. "There is too much tendency to attribute to God the evils that man does of his own free will." However in telling of his experiences Jerry does not take much responsibility for his conditioning.

There are some very good sections, especially where he relates the acceptance he felt coming into the gay community and the love and care of his family and church when eventually he tells them of his terminal illness and homosexuality, and also when he speaks of the isolation and desperation he felt as an AIDS sufferer. Unfortunately these glimpses of his feelings, which can arouse compassion and a sense of understanding on the part of the reader for people who are different from the "accepted mainstream", are all too few. He slips very easily into a preacher mode and tries to make explanations for everything. And that gives rise to pontifications.

That is the whole irony of the book. At the end, he still pronounces homosexuality as evil and of Satan. It was not a new realisation, but something from his childhood, along with all the other social evils such as drinking and dancing, with large slabs of low self-esteem that many Church of Christ young people of the postwar era will identify with. Through all his experience he did not realise that those dogmatic attitudes were the very reason he felt he had to keep hidden from his family the trauma he went through as he found he was different, queer and evil.

Jerry's pathetic plea expressed in the title *How Will I Tell My Mother?* will remain the dilemma for those who feel that the attitudes of their peers and elders are formed more by doctrine and dogma than compassion and understanding.

—Bruce Whyatt

Why Settle for More and Miss the Best?

by Tom Sine (Word Books) \$10.50

Why Settle For More And Miss The Best? is a follow-up to Tom Sine's previous best seller *The Mustard Seed Conspiracy*. It is an excellent and challenging book that takes a good hard look at the lifestyles and aspirations of modern-day Christians and concludes that they are, in essence, very similar to those of the rest of the world. Christians are also driven by the compulsion to accumulate possessions, assets, status and all the other paraphernalia that is part of the insanity of modern living. Like everyone else Christians are also profoundly dissatisfied with it all, but don't know what to do about it.

In this book Tom Sine does more than expose the problem. He offers solutions and examples of how Christians, throughout the world, are coming to grips with the fact that "the foolishness of the Gospel is more reasonable in the end than the wisdom of this World".

This is an easy book to read; its style is short, sharp and punchy, with an abundance of stories to illustrate the points being made. In the light of the crises facing society today there has never been a greater need for Christians who are prepared to seriously consider the call of Jesus to a radically different attitude towards life. Tom Sine's book is an excellent resource for those who would.

—Robert V. Smith

War and Pacifism

by Margaret Cooling (Scripture Union)

This topical book, designed as a resource and activity book, particularly with youth groups in mind does not come down on one side or other of the debate. Rather it aims to present some of the principles related to the subject. Although that subject is war generally, nuclear war is not ignored, since "No war can be fought now by any of the nuclear states, no intervention in someone else's war can be contemplated, without the ghost of the mushroom cloud haunting the decision-makers."

As the book indicates, while the extremes are war or pacifism, the possibly even greater danger is complacency. The discussion encouraged by this book uses contemporary resources, while also having a strong scriptural relevance. On the whole this is a very thought-provoking book, not only on war and peace, but on related topics, including values, power, love, punishment and just what is right? It is a book that needs to be used, rather than for the library shelf. The author, Margaret Cooling, has a strong association with young people, both in schools and church youth groups. She is currently one of the directors of a national conference centre in England for the Association of Christian Teachers.

—Bryan R. Mee

The Way of the Lamb

Christ in the Apocalypse

by Hans-Ruedi Weber (WCC Publications)

This series of five meditations, designed for use during the Lenten period, is based on the the passages of the Book of Revelation that deal with Christ the Lamb. Dr Hans-Ruedi Weber, executive secretary of the Portfolio on Biblical Studies at the World Council of Churches, attempts to bring out some of the contemporary significance of the message of this book of the Bible, which is often ignored today.

As the author notes: "The warnings and encouragements which the seer John conveyed, around 95 AD, to the Christians in Asia Minor can still speak to us today. They squarely face the realities of contemporary power struggles and confront them with the power of God as it manifested itself in the death and resurrection of Christ. They also open up a wide horizon of time and space. All things and all people must pass through the fire of judgement, but within and beyond the sufferings in church and world history there is the promise of a new heaven and a new earth."

A part of the Risk Book Series *The Way of the Lamb* should be available from the Australian Council of Churches, PO Box C 199, Clarence St PO, Sydney 2000.

Two Brand New Books

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A Creative Christmas for Aussie Families \$8.95

(Plays, meditations and stories to celebrate and portray the Christmas story to the family)

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Author: Mr Jon Jones (past owner of Ballarat Christian Book Centre and active member of Dawson St, Ballarat, Church of Christ)

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Happenings

Easy divorce is a major reason for the growing number of young runaways, according to a major UK Children's Society report. The report says that many of the 98,000 young people who run away from home each year in the UK come from broken homes.

The biography of a Christian missionary to China has been published and distributed in China, under orders of a General in the Red Army. Alfred Boshardt is the only Western survivor of the Long March, and the bulk of his book *The Guiding Hand* tells of his experiences on the gruelling journey.

The Board for World Ministries of the United Church of Christ and the Division of Overseas Ministries of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) have started a joint ministry for Latin America and the Caribbean. It joins common work by the two US denominations in southern Asia and the Middle East.

The Central Committee of the Hungarian Socialist Workers (Communist) Party has decided that from now on party members can participate in church life and send their children to religious instruction if they want to.

Soviet church leaders have challenged the United Bible Societies to provide them with 20 million Bibles.

Women can now become bishops of the Anglican Church in New Zealand.

The annual synod of the Uniting Church in SA has looked at the way the church can address the problems of the destruction of the environment. The synod committed itself to minimise the use of paper and other resources, use recycled paper and use washable crockery and cutlery instead of disposables.

Oral Roberts will close his City of Faith Hospital and Medical School and sell

his home to try to compensate for a \$US25 million deficit caused by declining donations.

Churches throughout Australia are being asked to set aside 12 November, the day after Remembrance Day, as a time of prayer and offering for the Soldiers' Chapel at Kapooka, NSW. The aim of the appeal is to build a new chapel at Kapooka's Blamey Barracks, near Wagga Wagga, to replace the present three pre-World War II chapels. The appeal hopes to raise \$800,000 on the special day. Donations can be sent to the Australian Soldiers' Chapel Appeal, Freepost 123, Kapooka 2661.

The Bible Society of Papua New Guinea dedicated the first *Buk Baibel*, the complete Bible in Tok Pisin, on 8 October. The Minister for Justice in PNG, the Hon Bernard Narakobi, said in a speech: "I believe the Word of God will save this nation from destruction as it comes to us in a language we can understand, one of the three main languages of our country." Tok Pisin is spoken by about one-third of the people of PNG and is a properly organised language in its own right.

The Soviet Union has given Swedish Pentecostals permission to ship 12 million New Testaments and Bible storybooks for children within the next 5 years. Available funding will limit the initial printing to 250,000.

There are now 6 full-time "Pro Sport Chaplains" ministering with the Sports & Leisure Ministry. South Australian motor racing chaplain David Vaughan and rodeo's Tim Kelly have joined NSW motor racing chaplain Garry Coleman, Cronulla Sharks Rugby League chaplain and sports evangelist George Capsis, NSW Christian athlete co-ordinator Rainer Ratlnac and na-

tional ministry co-ordinator Mark Tronson on the full-time staff. Link contacts are: WA—Richard Pengelly (09) 341 2864; SA—Greg Shaw (08) 352 3813; Tas—Bob Beeston (003) 27 2453; Vic—Noel Mitaxa (052) 44 2464; ACT—Greg Moores (062) 92 1961, Qld—Mark Willis (07) 344 2244; Newcastle, NSW—Ray Hawkins (049) 33 6983; Wollongong—Tudno Rees (042) 61 4145; North Sydney—Peta Condon (02) 938 2284; South Sydney—Eric Hunter (02) 521 4611; Outer Sydney—Tim Smith (02) 646 2392 and Blue Mountains through the national office (047) 73 8594.

Christians in Romania report a new wave of repression following the destruction of a church building and the arrest of 3 church leaders. The church elders from the Comanesti Baptist Church face possible prison sentences resulting from their role in helping to rebuild a church that Romanian authorities destroyed last May soon after its completion.

A leading religious sociologist believes the time is ripe in the US for mainstream Protestants such as the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) to start growing again. Amherst College sociologist Wade Clark Roof stated that the "baby boomers" and disillusioned fundamentalists are beginning to return to mainline churches.

Over 5,000 young people and 500–600 pastors and youth leaders from all over Brazil will gather in Brazilia, the national capital, on 29 January for a 5-day spiritual event featuring top national and international speakers. The event is sponsored by Youth For Christ in Brazil.

Bathurst 1000 week was ministered to by 2 Sport & Leisure Ministry motor racing chaplains, Garry Coleman and David Vaughan. Their "loaned"

courtesy bus was situated near the bottom end of the main straight.

Australia's Catholic bishops have criticised the federal Government for its "consistent support of those who deal for profit in hard-core pornographic and other objectionable video material".

The office building of the Tuggeranong Churches Centre, ACT, is to be sold because of delay in finding a tenant for the centre. The office block is a part of a \$13 million project incorporating office and community facilities, run by Canberra Churches Centres. The firm represents 8 churches, and operates the Woden and Belconnen Churches Centres, returning its profits to the community.

Four Catholic teacher training colleges are to merge from 1 January 1991 to become Australia's first Catholic university, and the first to have its campuses across 3 states. Signadou College (Canberra), the Catholic College of Education (Sydney), the Institute of Catholic Education (Melbourne) and McAuley College (Brisbane) will form a new institution that is expected to achieve full university status under the sponsorship of an established university.

On a recent trip to Melbourne David and Eileen Lewis sold \$840 of used stamps. The funds go towards the work of Bible correspondence courses on the Overseas Mission Board fields. They have also arranged exchanges with overseas collectors and thus have a range of countries and thematic books available for collectors to buy from. David and Eileen can be contacted at 9 Clisby St, Vale Park 5081.

A Sports Award Dinner was held recently in Adelaide. The evening opened with a brief devotion and comment by the Deputy Premier, Dr Don Hopwood. The major

speaker was Mark Davis, star of the Adelaide 36ers basketball team, who shared a powerful testimony. The Sports Focus Award was won by Darren Cahill (Australian Davis Cup tennis team member) and presented by 1988 SANFL premiership team coach John Cahill, Darren's father.

Representatives from the major Christian churches, including Churches of Christ, are planning a Conference on the Environment 13–15 July 1990. The conference is intended to give Christians and other interested people a chance to discuss the relationship between faith and creation. The conference will be held in Sydney. Anyone interested should contact Charles Wilson, Secretary, Federal Social Justice Committee, PO Box 140, Carlingford 2118. Phone (02) 630 7533.

Family Radio in Brisbane will be holding a test broadcast 18–24 December on FM 92.1 and their application for an FM special purpose licence will be heard by the Australian Broadcasting Tribunal on 7–8 December. They need 5,000 subscribers by December. The station can be contacted at PO Box 771, Toowong 4066. Phone (07) 371 5096.

A Gallop survey of Americans found that while music tastes may have changed, favourite hymns have not. The nation's 5 favourites are "Amazing Grace", "How Great Thou Art", "Rock of Ages", "Battle Hymn of the Republic" and "The Old Rugged Cross".

Visiting Hong Kong New Testament lecturer, Dr Benjamin Chu, will speak at CCTC Mulgrave on 28 November at 10 am. The meeting has been jointly arranged by the Ministers' Association and the Victorian Overseas Mission Committee. Dr Chu will present an update on Hong Kong and the church in China.

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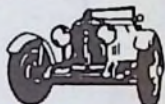
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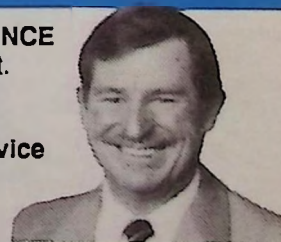
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Student Profile

There had to be more to life than looking down people's mouths and cleaning out spittoons...

Jenni Ashton

Jenni Ashton is a third-year student at CCTC, Mulgrave. This is her story:

Life as a dental nurse was fine, but I felt there had to be more to life than looking down people's mouths and cleaning out spittoons. I felt also, that while I was busily involved in ministry within my local church and several Christian organisations, this was somehow not enough.

God required more. So I prayed. A fairly simple prayer I thought. "Lord, help me to be obedient to your will." I took six months off full-time work and had various temporary jobs in many interesting environments, my aim being to listen to and discover what it meant to be obedient to God's will.

I didn't like what I heard...

My attitude was one of disbelief...

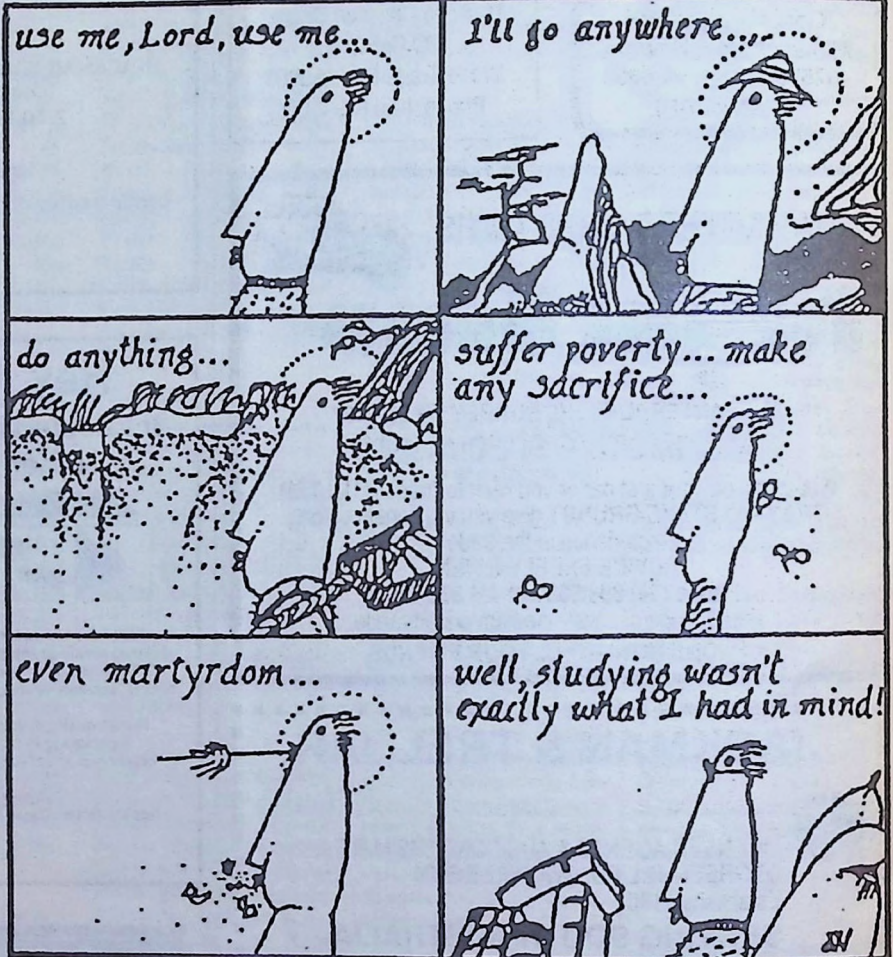
"You want me to study for a degree. Sorry God, wrong person!!"

Well, the rest is history...

I am now in my third year of my Bachelor of Theology and Diploma in Ministry at CCTC, Mulgrave.

I am Student Secretary and heavily involved in the overall life of the College community.

For the past three years I have been involved in both intercollege seminar programs and interstate College deputation teams.



Jenni Ashton

My life has been significantly enriched by the people I have met from these activities.

I am currently involved in a student placement at the Oakleigh church, where I am learning a great deal.

Last year I was involved in chaplaincy work at Peter MacCallum Cancer Institute and the State Bank head office. Both of these positions were challenging to say the least. I gained much from the people I encountered and experienced a great deal of joy amidst their trauma and pain.

My College experience has been one of constant challenge, growth and encouragement.

My studies have enabled me to discover a wealth of treasure I had not known existed. Through the support of my lecturers,

family and friends, I have explored deep and wide. I have experienced the trauma of struggling in the depths—and learnt to appreciate the rainbow after the storm.

I have collected many treasures—refined them and made them my own. I have held them and shared them...I have argued and struggled over them...I have laughed and affirmed them...

I have begun to discover the treasure and richness of God and the more I discover the more I realise there is to discover.

My College experience has been about discovery.

Discovering the richness of God, the potential of myself and life in all its fullness.

My prayer remains the same...

Student Profile

Jenni finds herself caught in the ugliness of a queue for a free pie and soup

You're a Christian Aren't You?

by Jenni Ashton

Where am I and what am I doing here? I came to visit my friend at the St Kilda Crisis Centre—to look around the place. But I can't find my friend. Instead I find lots of people—"strange" people. I realise that I am caught in the queue for a free pie and soup. The corridor is small. The air is thick and smoky. The people push and jostle closer to the counter. For some, this is their only meal for the day. Their need is urgent. The pushing continues...old people, young people, drunk people, smelly people, ugly people. The ugliest people I have ever seen. I stand in the midst and wonder again why am I here? The smell of urine, sweat and alcohol seems stronger and I look for an escape from the queue. I can't help thinking, in my comfy old boots and acid wash jeans, I am extravagantly overdressed. My bushy permed hair is too tidy and I'm sure there is something different about my face.

Nobody seems to notice me standing in the corridor, or maybe they're just too polite to stare.

A man knitting a blue scarf tries to sell me one of the many tattered and dirty scarves he has draped over his shoulder. He continues to tell me about life as a

travelling scarf knitter. My mind wanders to consider what I might ask him when he finishes telling me about his knitting. I don't have to worry—he never finishes. The story continues and he tells me he works better with an audience.

I'm glad I have been of some use.

A young girl comes up behind me, asking my name.

I tell her, and her eyes light up immediately. Her name is Jennifer—we have some common ground.

But she smells...

She smells bad...

Why does she have to stand so close?

I move away slightly and she in turn moves closer.

She gets bored and walks away.

The smell lingers...

My friend introduces me to Robby.

He is 17, with no money and nowhere to sleep tonight.

He is vague and simple, but he has nice eyes.

He walks across the room to shake my hand.

His hands are soft and warm.

His face is swollen and bruised from a bashing he received the previous night.

"Will you be my friend?" he asks. "I

don't have any friends."

I tell him yes, but inwardly I cringe.

Don't ask me to love you.

Don't ask me to care.

You are smelly,

Nobody wants to love you.

You are dirty,

Nobody wants to care.

You are ugly.

He looks at me again, "You are very pretty. I like you."

Again I cringe.

Robby moves to the chair next to me. "You know," he says, "I just want a home where someone will love me." He takes my hand and gently kisses it. Half of me wants to stand and give him a hug, half wants to go and wash my hand to remove all trace of this person. But it's too late. The impact has been made. He returns to his seat. The talk continues and Robby suddenly smiles.

"You're a Christian aren't you? I can tell by your eyes."

I hear the voice of Jesus.

"I have not come to call respectable people, but outcasts." (Matthew 9:13)

Again I cringe. I feel ashamed, guilty and ugly. Very ugly.

Forgive me Father, for I have sinned.

Growing Spiritually Caring for Babies

by Kaye Wray

"I've discovered that being a new Christian means being put under the microscope, but if you are 'someone' in the church you can get away with murder."

It was said tongue in cheek, with a bit of a grin. But there was pain behind the words.

He's a new Christian—adult, with a background worthy of any TV soap opera—immoral living, drink, drugs. But he has given his life to God and is a new creation—with a few of the "old self" habits still to be cleaned out properly.

And he and the Holy Spirit are working on them. His old friends can't believe, or understand, the change. And he admits that the whole thing still blows his mind.

But he's finding the church scene tough.

"I know I don't fit the image of the traditional churchgoer. I look like I always have, but I'm one of them now, yet most of them shy away," he said sadly.

We talked on. Yes, a few people were standing with him giving friendship and support, but the majority at his church offer only a "Hello" on the church steps or in the street. And when the odd swear word, tame by comparison to his former language, slips out the looks of horror and sometimes public criticism only serve to widen the gap for him.

"Yet it's a loose secret that one of the elders tells off-colour jokes and some of the members have workday words they never use on Sundays," he said with a bewildered shrug.

We parted (we'd been at an ecumenical gathering) but the conversation bothered me greatly. And the advice I've had from some Christians is along the lines of "As he grows spiritually and his life is cleaned up those things will disappear."

I agree. But what about his fellow Christians? Are we prepared to grow in compassion and understanding so that baby Christians, struggling with new issues, don't feel rejected, condemned or put on "hold" until they are as "good" as the rest of us?

It's just as well we look after baby humans better.

• Kaye Wray is a member of the Owen, SA, church.

Classifieds

BIRTHS

McLEAN (CARTER) Geoff and Lois are very proud to announce the birth of Amy Hope, sister to Damien, born 3 October 1989.

STREADER (CANN) Chris and Sue are delighted to announce the safe arrival of a daughter, Caitlin Jayne. Baby sister for Andrew and Mark. Born 22 October 1989 at 1.20 pm. 6 lbs 9 ozs. Both well.

Thanks to Dr A. Bell and staff at St Andrews.

WEINER (JENKINS) On 17 October. Glenda and Peter thank Pam and Michael for a granddaughter, Carlye Jade. Brother for Anthony.

90TH BIRTHDAY

CUDDY The family of Tom Cuddy have arranged a time of congratulations and thanksgiving in the form of an afternoon tea Party on Saturday 18 November 1989, from 2-5 pm. This will be held in the Church Hall, Pine Street, Cheltenham (Church of Christ). As this is an open invitation to all would you please bring a small plate of "party fare". Please, no presents, only your presence will be most welcome.

RUBY WEDDINGS

BROWN—EASTON Andrew and Hilda are happy to announce the 40th anniversary of their wedding by C.G. Taylor at the Hampton church on 19 November 1949. Congratulations from family. Present address: 35 Andrew St, Oakleigh 3166.

DIXON—CHAPPELL Roy and Joy of Unit 17, Green Hills Retirement Village, The Boulevard, East Maitland 2323 are congratulated by their family on 40 years of married life. Their wedding was celebrated at the College of the Bible Chapel, Glen Iris, on 10 December 1949. Brian, Bronwen, Catherine, Brendan and Myfanwy; Peter, Karen, Jonathan, Elizabeth, Timothy and Benjamin; Trevor; Barrie and Melissa; and Grace. We wish them God's blessing as they share a well-earned retirement together. Psalm 31:19.

GOLDEN WEDDINGS

CHISWELL—SCANTLEBURY With thanksgiving Arthur and Florie will celebrate 50 years of marriage. Wedding was conducted by Charles Cole on 8 November 1939 at Maryborough, Vic. Love from all the family. Present address: 12 McMahon St, St Arnaud 3478.

DEATHS

HALL (SCAIFE) Rose Frances on 13 October in her 93rd year. Loved wife of the late Carl. Loved eldest

sister of Arthur, Cyril, Daphne, Ivy, Daisy (all deceased), Violet (Mrs Notman) and Olive (Mrs Winstone). Dear sister-in-law of Vera, Elsie, Arthur, Alec, Sandy (all deceased), Roy and Douglas. Our thanks to the Matron and staff of the Churches of Christ Nursing Home for their care of our loved one.

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A Gallop survey of unchurched Americans found several trends that could lead to more people leaving the church. Among the warning signs: 58% of church people say churches are too concerned about organisational issues (compared to 47% in 1978); 39% say churches are not concerned about social justice (32% in 1978); 28% say the morality preached in churches is too restrictive (21% in 1978).

Of the 19 million black Christians in the US, 17.4 million belong primarily to black denominations.

The Perth Anglican diocesan synod has voted overwhelmingly to accept women for ordination and empowered Archbishop Peter Carnley to appoint women as priests. The diocese has 8 women deacons. The diocese also supported forthcoming moves for the decriminalisation of homosexuality in WA.

An alarming number of women are being beaten up by their teenage children, according to a SA Health Commission research unit report compiled from information from church and social workers.

The workload of priests was a major contributing factor to the rising rate of clergy marriage breakdowns, Tasmanian Angli-

can Bishop Philip Newell told his synod. Bishop Newell said most ministers tried to have one day off in seven, but that often this did not eventuate because of parish and pastoral demands. The day off could rarely be a Sunday, so time with spouse and family was limited.

Delegates to the Roman Catholic synod in New Zealand's largest diocese, Auckland, have voted for women and married men to be admitted to the priesthood. It is understood that the support for change was overwhelming.

Jim Bakker of the PTL (Praise The Lord or People That Love) television ministry was convicted on 24 counts of defrauding followers of his television ministry by selling guarantees of accommodation at his Christian retreat when he knew rooms were not available. He was sentenced to 45 years imprisonment and a fine of US\$500,000.

4 delegates of the (North) Korean Christians Federation visited Tokyo, Kyoto and Osaka in Japan in the first such visit since World War II. For part of the time they joined ecumenical representatives from South Korea and Japan. They agreed to work jointly on a 5-year plan to foster the reunion of the two Koreas by 1995.



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Dean Sander

Comment

Does failure fit into your theology?

Making Sense of Failure

by Russ Parker

Some years ago I read a book by Pat Boone called *A Miracle a Day*, and in it he writes that we should expect daily blessings and powerful demonstrations of God's love. While not wanting to deny anyone a blessing I felt that this was an unreal expectation.

A casual glance at the Bible reveals a more complex picture. After the wonder of creation came the rebellion in Paradise. Great heroes like Noah are found drunk and disorderly and a man after God's own heart like David commits murder in order to cover up his adultery. Prophets like Isaiah were forewarned of failure even before they spoke a word in public. And even Jesus while enjoying the heights of success is suddenly pinned down to a cross and dies almost alone.

Proof

Paul Tournier speaks of these two experiences of Jesus as the proof of God by success followed by the greater proof by failure. He is underlining that Christians do need sustaining in their lives by the witness of the Spirit but that power is only relative while the weakness of the cross is absolute to this witness. Why is this?

It is because the cross of Christ is like a

domino! As in the game, the winner is the one who plays his last piece first. When Jesus cried, "It is finished!" God was laying down his last piece in the plan of salva-

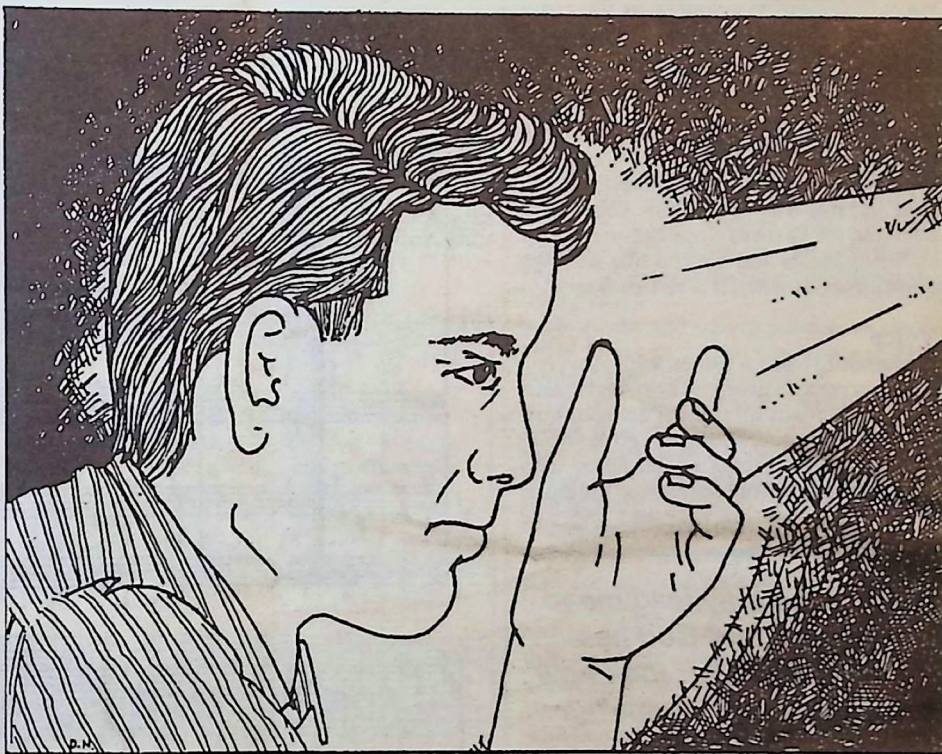
tion. Therefore the cross with all its sense of abandonment and pain marks the way forward for all those who would know forgiveness and spiritual renewal.

It is the place of power and powerlessness. Power because sin and death were defeated by divine love: powerlessness because here hung the Christ of God with no power to save himself.

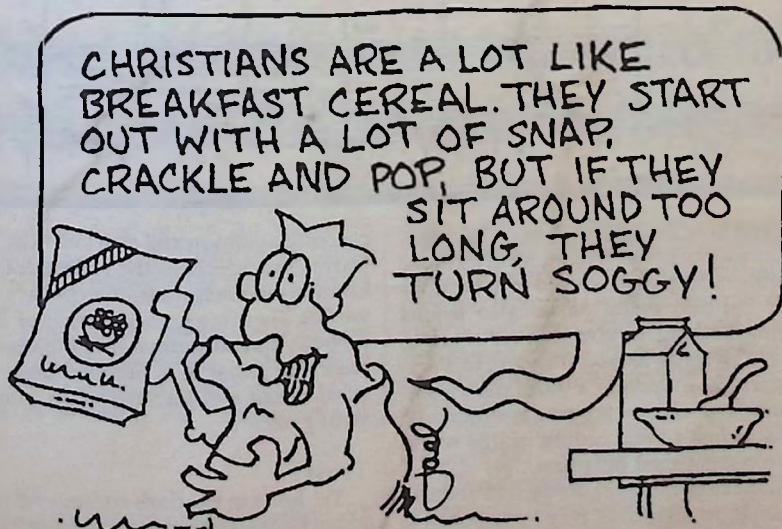
It is this powerlessness of Christ that speaks to our failures; when we are sickened by the crumbling of some enterprise into which we have invested heart and

"The Cross offers us a unique failure, for it is one where hope meets with despair"

soul or are crushed and hurt by others, then here we are caught up into the fellowship of Christ's sufferings and resurrection. As Maria Boulding put it, "God has dealt with our failure by himself becoming a failure in Jesus Christ and so healing it



Pontius' Puddle



Comment

from the inside."

The cross offers us a unique failure for it is one where hope meets with despair.

What then are some of Christ's experiences of the cross and how do they speak to our failures? Jesus cried out with a loud voice, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"

The most obvious point about Jesus crying is that he received no answer. There was only the cry of dereliction. Those who heard him thought he was hysterical and hallucinating. Yet Jesus was feeling the anxiety of a sinful humanity alienated from God and this was new to him. His scream once and for all reveals that the question of suffering exists and we can live with the question even when it is not answered.

Voice

Therefore Jesus is united with everyone whose scream is given no answer. He tells us that it is really all right to give our hurt a voice. When everything has gone wrong and the world seems to fall apart then learn this lesson from the man on the cross: do not bottle up the rage and anger or

"Success may lead me to believe that God has accepted me, for look how he's blessing me"

whatever feelings there are, give them a voice. We may not have an answer but it is enough to know we have been heard. This in itself is a release.

I well remember a woman who was sharing with me some of her story. As she shared what living with her father was like she began to cry and continued to do so for about 20 minutes. I didn't interrupt. She said later that she found this releasing as she was speaking out all the denied feelings she had accumulated. Her cry was in fact affirming and freed her to confront her own hurt and to go forward.

So Jesus, as he screams, commits his cry to a stronger hand; his powerlessness was put into a hand more powerful still. So as we focus on the cross our failures can be cried out and then left there surrendered. It is time to move on.

Rejection

At Calvary, Jesus hung naked as his executors gambled for his clothes. Like the emperor in the fable who paraded in public without his clothes so Jesus seemed to be the clown of God whose act was over. For many he had failed to live up to their expectations and so they rejected and

Conference Hymn

"God's People, God's World" was the hymn of the 42nd Federal Conference, held in Canberra this year. Written by Geoffrey Higgs and Carole-Anne Fooks of the Modbury, SA, church, it was the winner of a nation-wide competition.

God's People, God's World

Geoffrey Higgs &
Carole-Anne Fooks

See below for introduction

S

A

1. God's	greatness is	seen in all the	world.	His	praise reaches	up unto the	heavens.
2. God's	wisdom is	seen in all the	earth.	His	word reaches	out to all the	peoples.
3. God's	people are	seen in all the	world.	His	church reaches	out to all the	nations.

T f

B

Piano/Organ

C **Eh** **G** **C** **F** **Ah** **G**

1. Sun, moon and	stars	reflect his	light.	Mountains	hills	express his	power.
2. The word is	God:	the source of	life;	The word	life	to all man-	kind.
3. You are the	priests:	the chosen	race;	Body of	Christ:	you are the	Church.

C **F** **D** **G** **A7** **Bh** **D** **G**

mocked him. Being captured on the cross in this way he enters into the lot of all those who are robbed and reduced to nothing by their failures. Being naked also means having nothing to give and nowhere to hide. Yet Jesus looked forward to Paradise. He was open to a more permanent future. So the cross encourages us not to be too attached to succeeding in this world nor too enmeshed in failure.

At the final moment, Jesus died as darkness fell. In a curious way he is both the

centre of attention and also lost from view. Darkness underlines the feelings of isolation and loneliness that are so present when we fail. There is a growing sense of worthlessness and we retreat into the shadows; we abide alone. It is here we make decisions about the future and so often the wrong ones.

Trust

Yet Jesus in the dark committed his life to his father. It was an act of trust. He was

Comment

1. Earth's creatures serve the Lord their God; Earth's creatures bow before his presence.
 2. The Word is Christ, the first-born Son; The Word is Christ: head of the body.
 3. Chosen of God: from dark to light; Chosen of God: his holy nation.

Chords: G7, C, Am, Dm, Am, F, Dm, G.

1. God's people come be- fore him now. God's world a- waits its Holy
 2. God's people stand be- fore him now. God's world a- waits its Saviour
 3. God's people bow be- fore him now. God's world a- waits the Risen

Chords: G7, C, Em, F, Dm, C, G7.

Intro and first and second time endings and bridge Third (final) ending

1. Lord. (God's) 3. Lord.
 2. King.

Chords: C, Em, G7, C.

The Child and the Gospel

by Dave Vincent

The Gospel needs to be preached to every person worldwide. This is our Lord's strongly worded command and is meant for all. Children are included in this mission field. They are precious to our Lord and he desires that these "little ones" become children of the living God.

As adults and young people we sometimes forget that a large percentage of us became Christians as children.

I believe the need is even more urgent today than a few years ago. There are many bad influences on children's lives today. Suicide, drug addiction and disruption to family life are now common.

This prompts me to ask a question, "Who are the real sufferers?" Children! Often they are caught in a vicious trap, encircled by confusion, hatred, bewilderment and apathy. They do not know why they are in this situation. Many say "What have I done?" thinking they are at fault. Everybody, it seems, is too busy to listen and talk with them. Many think that nobody cares, but Jesus does!

Children need Jesus now!

1. Jesus Their Friend

Many children have no friends. They are lonely, depressed, scared and lost. Children desperately need a friend they can trust who will never let them down and who will stick with them no matter what happens to them. Well Jesus is that kind of friend.

2. Jesus Their Brother

Many children come from homes where there is little or no love. There is no family unity, no real family love. These children would love to have a real, loving, kind brother who would talk to them, help them and be a "big brother" to them. Jesus can be their heavenly brother.

3. Jesus Their Comforter

Many children need a shoulder to cry on. They need someone to unburden the heavy load they are carrying. Many have been helped by the knowledge of Jesus being the comforter (via the Holy Spirit).

4. Jesus Their Rejected One

Many children suffer from rejection.

not in control of events, he had been brushed aside but he held on to God's promises and commended his life into his hands

The cross, while being a real victory over the world, the flesh and the devil, is precisely so because it is also the place where all failure is fully embraced and redeemed.

Blessing

Success may lead us to believe that God

has accepted me now for just look how he is blessing me! Our failures tell us that God has accepted us anyway for he sent Jesus to taste our failure at Calvary. We are acceptable to God on no other basis than that he has demonstrated his acceptance of us already. Therefore we can live with failure and learn.

• Russ Parker is vicar of Christ Church, Coalville, England. This article originally appeared in Christian Week.

A Church ABC

Goolwa is a small country town on the South Australian coast at the mouth of the Murray River. The name means "elbow", describing the river, which doesn't always flow out to sea. A barrage is required to prevent the sea flowing into the river.

Goolwa is a farming and tourist area. People have retired to the area, and now the area is also attracting people who are seeking a cheaper alternative to Adelaide, which is only one hour's drive away.

Prominent in the town is the Church of Christ. Its building is in two segments. The older section, built of stone early in the century, was once the chapel and is now the hall. The newer section, built of brick and at right angles to the older section, is the main worship centre. It is a narrow building and can seat 120-140. The church is growing and this will soon be inadequate. However, Goolwa is a heritage area, so the church has purchased a property across the road for future development or expansion.

There are approximately 90 members and almost 40 church children. An average of 80 to 100 meet each Sunday. The membership is a fairly even mixture of elderly, middle-aged, young and children. They include a number of farmers from surrounding areas.

Sundays begin with Sunday Youth from

The Goolwa church is dominant in the community in youth work. On Fridays there is a boys and girls club for those up to Year 7 at 6.30 pm, followed at 8 by a teenage youth group. Ann Ritchie also conducts a drama club for the children of the church, who perform at services and other functions. In the last week of January a

Holiday Bible Adventure is held, with 80 to 90 children participating.

Other activities of the church include

CWF, Bible study (using "The Divine Drama" material) and sometimes a Sunday luncheon is held with a study time or family presentation afterwards.

Goolwa is a progressive church, open to change and friendly. It is recognised in the community as lively and for its work with youth. Many members are also involved in voluntary work in the community. Goolwa is growing and the church is growing with it, as new families come to the town. It has a high percentage of the population as members, a very healthy situation to be in.

Focus on Goolwa

9.45 to 10.45 am, with 50 kids from pre-school to teenagers, followed by church at 11 am. There is also an evening service at 7 pm. Worship is progressive and relaxed and family worship is being developed, involving every member of the family, including children.

The minister is Graeme Ritchie. Graham came from Geelong East, Vic, and graduated from the College of the Bible in 1987. Goolwa is his first church. He is more than ably assisted by his wife, Ann. They have three children, Paul, 13, Stephen, 11, and Kathryn, 10.

Rejection from parents who have not got time for their children or who reckon kids get in the way of their lifestyle. Rejection from a busy society that has no time for children. Rejection by schoolmates who do not want them as friends. Even children with Christian parents can feel deeply rejected by their parents because they are too busy in material gain or in church activities. These children need to know that even Jesus was rejected by people, rejected by friends and, to a lesser degree, rejected by his own family. So, because of this, Jesus knows how they feel.

5. Jesus Their Saviour and Lord

This is the most important. Every child must know that before Jesus can meet their individual needs he must become their Saviour and Lord. He must forgive their sin and come into their hearts. This brings to attention a very important point for all children's workers to always remember: salvation and forgiveness of sins must be taught effectively and truthfully. We must teach all children that it is their sin which separates them from God and his help. Once they become Christians then Jesus can help them in all their problems. There is no other way (John 14:6).

6. Jesus Their Example

One reason our Lord came to earth was to be an example for his people to follow. I believe children can receive real peace and strength from knowing this.

7. Jesus Their Assurance

They will also know that their Jesus is in Heaven waiting for them to receive their reward. They will know there is an eternal home waiting for them with an eternal father waiting to love them, where there is

no more rejection, sorrow, selfishness and sin. "Suffer the little children to come unto me." Children are tomorrow's church, tomorrow's adults, tomorrow's mothers and fathers. Children need the gospel and Jesus now.

At a Board Retreat

An adventure implies a threat,
And it is easier to withdraw into
Safety.

But when a snail does that
He stops moving
And just
Exists.
When he's out there
In the world,
Going somewhere,
Even if it is pretty slow,
He manages to make
Progress,
Feeling as he goes.
Tentative,
Short-sighted,

Pretty lethargic
And leaving a trail
behind him.
But at least he's getting somewhere.
Striving towards.

So long as he isn't inside his house
Worrying about how the getting
Somewhere
May make him change.

Lord
Help me to be a
Slightly
More adventurous
Snail.

—Brian Phelps

Discipleship

•Ruth Smith, Elmie Yan, Mark Penketh, Damien Mullally, Paula McKay, Melissa Favas, Kelly Spencer, Mark Gibb, Darryn Quayle, Kelly Spencer, Kalgoorlie, WA •May Smith, Tootgarook, Vic •Hayley Geale, Camp Hill, Qld •Peter Kneebone, Helen Lane, Dianne & Grant Koennecke, Brooklyn Park, SA •Ching Cleak, Hartwell, Vic •David Hossack, Shane Elsmore, Epping, NSW •Andrew Ferguson, Thornleigh, NSW

Marriages

•Tracey Strafford to Wesley Brough, Dandenong, Vic •Rikki Baxter to Mark Nicholson, Jenny Ralph to Neil Malcolm, Janine Jeffery to Vincent McCahon, Kalgoorlie, WA •Mary Watts to Ron Holthouse, Tootgarook, Vic •Christine Swan to Robert Kutcher, Hampstead Gardens, SA •Karolyn Hickman to Mark Ely, Swan Hill, Vic •Bon Bettless to Herb Banister, Caloundra, Qld •Terina Manley to Michael Playford, Balaklava, SA

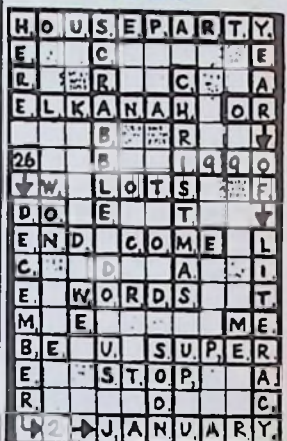
Deaths

•Essie Medcraft, BelAndreason, Et Donaldson, Bob Booth, Tootgarook, Vic •Elma Johnson, May Barker, Ruby Tregellas, Hartwell, Vic •Alf Lundberg, Hampstead Gardens, SA •Cecil Duck, Daisy Niblock, Balaklava, SA •Jean Perry, Win Costoloe, Box Hill, Vic

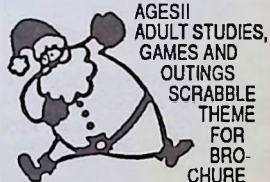
Changes

YORK ST, BALLARAT: Secretary—Rob Burns, RMB N41, Ballarat, Vic 3352. All correspondence to: Church Office, York St, Ballarat, Vic 3350.

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Obituaries

Obituaries are limited to 100 words

Burdeu, Olive Iris

(7.10.89) Olive was born into the family of Fred and Minnie Enchelmaier in 1905. While still young she confessed her faith in Christ and so began a long and fruitful association with the Albion, Qld, church. Olive married Clive Burdeu, a widower, in 1949, and came into a ready-made family: Ray and Marge, Barry and David, and Bill, Beryl and Ken Wiltshire. The service Olive and Clive gave to people through the Churches of Christ Social Services Dept and in the establishment of Kenmore Christian College was outstanding and sacrificial and will never be forgotten. Olive died after a brief illness.

—Barry Benz

Douglas, Leslie

(25.8.89) Born in 1922, Leslie Douglas at 10 accepted Christ and was baptised at Hornsby. He enlisted at 18 and served with the 2/6th Battalion in New Guinea. In 1944 he married Nora Roxburgh. Les and Nora began married life at the Loftus Park church. After moving to North Rocks with their five children Les became deeply involved at Pendle Hill. He was appreciated as a devoted elder, friend and teacher. He was called upon to preside every other week. After retirement they moved to Coffs Harbour, Narraweena and Ballina. He gave valuable service on the Social Service Committee. Loving sympathy is extended to Nora, Maureen, Colin, Aldyth, Denis and Warren.

—Doug Willis

Hall, Mrs Rose

(13.10.89) Born at Northcote 1896. Baptised at Gore St, Fitzroy. Married at North Richmond to Carl Hall. Sons Keith and Ralph were born there. Following her mother's early death Rose cared for her three younger sisters. Later active at

Balwyn. Prominent in local church and CWF executive. Outstanding soloist. Sang with Kew Philharmonic, Churches of Christ choirs. After her husband's death in 1969 moved to Port Macquarie with son Keith. Was foundation member of Port Macquarie in 1972. 14 years ago in failing health she came to Emmaus Rest Home and then Murrumbidgee Nursing Home. A thanksgiving service held in Balwyn church where Carl and Rose both served faithfully.

—Don A.V. Thomas

Pobjoy, Doris Ivy

(4.9.89) Born Doris Papst in Ballarat, Vic, in 1912. She gave birth to John, who died at two and a half, Allan who died at 34, and Brian. She had grandsons John and David. Dot lived in Frankston for over 40 years. She had a great love for cricket, winning many trophies and captaining the Ballarat Ladies team. She worked with Dows as a social worker looking after fellow workers. Dot was a straight shooter and had a strong sense of justice. A woman of faith she became a Christian in 1948. Longest current standing member, she served for a number of years in the Sunday School.

—Allan Avery

NSW

EPPING (Stephen Curkpatrick, David Moyes) New approach to AGM including worship, luncheon & church goal setting very successful. Aim was to include entire families. Plans for building renovation passed, which will commence as soon as possible. Valuable goal setting for 1990s. Keith Rodger, Col Wrigley, Ira Torode elected to eldership ... David Hossack & Shane Elsmore baptised ... Large influx of teenagers in evening service ... Children's special services very successful.

Church News

THORNLEIGH (Franklyn Elliott, Stuart Wesley) Sympathy of the church is extended to David & Jan Garrett & family at the passing of David's father but rejoicing with them that he is now with his Lord ... During the evening service on 22 October Andrew Ferguson was baptised by Stuart Wesley.

Qld

CAMP HILL (D.F. Smith) Church has called John Houston, final-year student, Kenmore Christian College, to full-time ministry 1990. Doug Smith will continue on part-time basis ... Minister conducting lay training classes in "Salvation History" ... Geale family from Perth welcomed into fellowship & Hayley Geale baptised ... Members from FISH (Fishermen Interested in Spiritual Happiness) spent weekend fishing on Fraser Island ... Creche commenced during morning service.

CALOUNDRA (Jeff Weldon) Recent AGM appointed Sandra Jenner, Ray Gallas & Kevin Kickbush deacons & Graeme Scott assistant minister for 1990 ... Average am attendance exceeding 80 with southern visitors now returning home ... Graeme Scott & Katrina Kickbush graduating Kenmore College 17 November ... Wednesday Friendship Group averaging 20 ... Auxiliaries planning end-of-year activities ... Bon Bettess & Herb Banister, both 78, married recently.

SA

BLACK FOREST (Allan Lockhead) Church welcomed Allan & Sanora Lockhead & daughter Bronwyn. Conference President Trevor Lawrie inducted Allan to the ministry of the church. Service followed by luncheon to meet members. Evening service followed by supper. Good fellowship enjoyed throughout the day ... Dorcas ladies held 61st birthday celebrations. 75 enjoyed a talk on early mistakes of pollution control, also excellent musical program. **BROOKLYN PARK** (G. Shaw) \$5,500 profit from melodrama supported Sports & Leisure Ministry national conference ... 100 children, 65 families in God's Gang ... New church logo ... Band playing am/pm services ... Fifth Serendipity group commenced. Now 50 in groups ... Four junior, three senior tennis teams ... 65th anniversary services held 15 October. Graham Agnew speaker ... Minister to at-

tend Sports Life Conference in USA. **HAMPSTEAD GARDENS** (Keith Ridge) Church was filled for our Sunday School anniversary. Currently 60 children enrolled in Sunday School ... Graham Agnew led board in a retreat to set goals for next three years ... New groups started recently include relaxation & meditation workshops, "Divine Drama" Bible study classes & a square dance group ... Successful family camp held at Stansbury. Theme "True Blue".

OWEN COMBINED (Phillip Gardner) State Minister, Keith Horne, spoke at the fourth anniversary of the congregation. Choir & younger Sunday School students took part ... Ian Freebairn elected chairman of congregation at the annual general meeting ... Church to purchase public address system ... Informal relationship commenced with combined congregation at Dulwich-Rose Park, with some from city church attending service & bush barbecue in September.

BALAKLAVA (Graham Lawrie) Five young people invited to perform in Mortlock Library Musicales in Adelaide. Many more won winter sporting trophies in Balaklava teams ... Graham & Shirley Webb moved to NSW, Terry & Carol Heinrich to Port Pirie ... Two most senior members, Cec Duck, elder & deacon, & Daisy Niblock, died ... Ray & Merry Bennett led studies at family camp at Two Wells capably organised by Alan Baker.

Vic

DANDENONG (Graeme Foon, Greg Elsdon) We are now meeting at the Cleeland High School, 23 Ann St, Dandenong ... Church celebrated 97 years of witness in Dandenong. Barbecue lunch was held after church ... Tim Edwards graduated from Police Academy ... Church expressed sympathy to Berthelson family ... Charlie Hansen recovered from surgery ... DCYF gave Wes & Tracey Brough kitchen tea ... Many members sick over winter with influenza.

CHELSEA (T. Frazer) Sheep dog shepherding exhibition by Keith Holt's trained dogs held at Pearce-dale. Another Feature for Friendship Building ... Dorothy Quantrelle, CWF Pres, guest speaker at luncheon meeting ... Ruth Smith presented with Schaeffer ballpoint in recognition of 27 years as CWF treasurer ... Keith Pitt (Parkdale) guest preacher in pulpit exchange ... Lydia Johnston, longtime house guest of Rita & Ern Tagg, died aged 94.

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Church News

TOOTGAROOK (M. Giezen-danner) Dorothy Langford speaker at anniversary. Oakover Singers concert followed by tea ... CWF street stall held & luncheon prior to missionary journey to many places. Large parcel of sheets/pillows sent to Normanton. 72 attended birthday meeting ... Minister's term extended by one year with option of further year ... Kath Forster recovering from major surgery ... Henry & Jess Lee Archer farewelled. Moving to Heathmont.

SUNSHINE (Ian Corlett) Annual meeting held 1 Oct. Unanimous appreciation to Ian & Carly for loving ministry ... Average attendance is 40 ... Sunday evening fellowship teas a great success ... CWF continue to supply casseroles for needy families in Sunshine ... Play Group for mums & kids averaging 12 children ... Youth group commenced SCYD (Sunshine Christian Youth Dimension). Visiting speakers Kim Thoday (Kensington Christian Network), Jeff May (OMB).

KANIVA (Martin Goldup) Visit by Noel Smith with New Life For All seminar ... Church family camp at Arura, Dimboola, on weekend 21 Oct ... CWF to make a special effort at November meeting for Bibles for Russia ... Reg Dyer home after operation ... Bible study groups & Boys & Girls clubs well attended.

HARTWELL (G.R. Rogerson) Visiting speakers: Bill Tabbernee, Trevor Giles, Rowland Croucher ... Worship roster training session leader Gordon Stirling ... Prayer

retreat led by Sisters from Heart of Life Spirituality Centre ... Tony Campolo videos screened at 5 pm services during June ... "In-as-much" Box established for Community Care ... Music group meeting regularly ... CWF visit & evening service conducted at Emmaus. **NORTHCOTE (F.B. Alcorn)** 86th church anniversary held 22 Oct, Conference President being the speaker. Former ministers read the lessons. Opportunity taken to dedicate a memorial to W.T. Atkin. Lunch provided after the service. PSA provided by the Leach family & Sandra Gibson ... CWF entertained residents of Fred Combridge House & provided afternoon tea ... Sunday meeting at 5 pm still attracting others.

SWAN HILL (L.J. Mayes) Ron Elbourne (Glen Waverley) met with board & elders during September to discuss Church Growth strategies ... Sunday School numbers on increase as new families come in contact with the church ... "Kaleidoscope" from Mildura visited in October & presented musical "First Love" ... Theo & Joyce Hayman, Overseas Mission Service, on furlough from China, pm guests on 22 October.

COBURG, PASCOE VALE (L. & C. Clun) Covenant Players at regional service presenting Gospel in plays ... New Bibles provided for church use ... Craig Beasy welcomed into fellowship from Mildura ... Prayer group & Saturday Kids Club progressing ... Michael Gre-

chko, youth minister at Ringwood, special speaker ... CWF held successful street stall ... Val Williams returned from visit to India ... Third 2 cent mile proceeds of \$500 forwarded to CCTC.

BOX HILL (J. Edwards) Friendship Club & CWF excellent programs & attendances ... Church involved in YWAM Box Hill outreach. Drama "Tale of Two Kingdoms" presented am service ... Church celebrated with Melb Chinese Disciples Church in their one year use of our buildings Sunday afternoons ... Sandra Gibson led seminar "Leading in Worship" ... Three members by transfer—Jim & Deborah Stevenson, Deslie Smith ... Two girls in discipleship class.

REDCLIFFS (G.R. Sharrad) Mr & Mrs Sharrad have returned after overseas trip ... FOCAS, Mildura, conducted service on 15 October. G.R. Sharrad speaker. Afterwards CWF annual fundraising luncheon held at home of Mr & Mrs Sprigg ... Dunkley family visited Walladges in Vanuatu ... Sympathy of church to Leonie Dunkley in loss of brother.

OCEAN GROVE On 22 October 9 were received by transfer into membership & two others made decisions for Christ. Speaker was Don Smith ... Albert & Barbara Fox from Warragul church contributed to worship & entertainment at a celebration event on 21 October ... \$6,454 was received to supplement the full-time ministry of Bradley Lewin in 1990.

Tas

HUON COMMUNITY (Steve Warwick, Jeff Gray) Two young people made commitments when combined churches youth group took service at Huonville ... 10 Huon ladies attended State CWF camp including oldest in camp, Mrs Owens, 88, of Dover, & youngest, Alison Orr, 15, of Geeveston ... 100 attended outreach at Geeveston. An "ABC Night" with old-fashioned community hymn singing followed by 7ZR's breakfast DJ, Bob Curé, speaking.

LAUNCESTON (Rod Foster) Four new members received in, two by transfer from Sydney & two by restoration ... Jess Dowd in hospital with broken hip ... CWF celebrated World CWF birthday on 23 Oct ... Evening services well attended.

WA

KALGOORLIE (Gene Howell, Larry Gibb) Home groups, Women's Bible study worthwhile ... Fundraising for Russian Bibles: Christine Rowcliffe, Japan; Dennis & Marion Favas, England ... Deacons Paul Robinson, Tom Rendall, Keith Kinney, Glen Brand ... Myrtle Forrest moved Northam ... Joyfull ladies weekend camp ... Elders Paul Robinson, Shaun McCartney ... Four babies born recently.

43rd FEDERAL CONFERENCE

CHURCHES OF CHRIST IN AUSTRALIA

8-14 October 1990

THEME: NOW IS THE TIME TO SERVE THE LORD

CONFERENCE PRESIDENT: Dr Don Stewart, PO Box 508, Kenmore 4069
CONFERENCE ARRANGEMENTS SECRETARY: Mrs C. Forster, PO Box 508, Kenmore 4069 Phone (07) 378 0400

CHAIRMAN OF FEDERAL CONFERENCE EXECUTIVE: C. Ward, 52 La Trobe St, Melbourne 3000 Phone (03) 662 2377

FEDERAL CONFERENCE SECRETARY: Joan Pye, 52 La Trobe St, Melbourne 3000 Phone (03) 662 2377

FEDERAL CONFERENCE TREASURER: N. Allison, 381 Bluff Rd, Hampton 3158 Phone (03) 598 9847

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Comment

Federal Social Justice Committee

What Social Issues Are You Concerned about?

The Federal Social Justice Committee is interested in hearing from churches and their members about issues that concern them.

One of the aims of the committee is to be a vehicle for promoting discussion, formulating recommendations and co-ordinating planning in areas of Christian concern for social action that arise on both national and international levels.

In order for it to adequately achieve its charter it is important that the committee be aware of the issues that are concerning our churches. Current issues that have been looked at include bank charges (see below), AIDS and the environment.

Churches or individuals can write concerning this matter to the Churches of Christ Federal Social Justice Committee, PO Box 140, Carlingford 2118.

Bank Charges

Recently the Churches of Christ Federal Social Justice Committee undertook a survey of seven banks and their methods of levying charges. This was in response to the concern raised by members towards the Commonwealth Bank's decision to levy a charge on Keycard and ordinary savings accounts that maintain a balance of less than \$250. The rationale given for the introduction of the charge was the need to reduce the number of small inactive accounts that are expensive to service.

The bank has exempted some accounts from the charge but there are many that do not fall into the exempted categories and many people would have difficulty in maintaining the \$250 balance. The levy of \$1.50 a month may not seem particularly high but the Social Justice Committee strongly opposes the idea that it should fall on those least able to pay. The person who is unable to maintain a balance of \$250 will in effect be subsidising the wealthy who can hold several inactive accounts of over \$250.

We received a range of responses from the banks surveyed. Some banks do not apply any charges to savings accounts while others have a variable scale of fees that depend on the balance held in the

account. The Committee believes that the issue of penalising those with less is a question of social justice that Christians should address. We suggest that those who wish to respond to this issue might consider the following actions:

1. Investigate your bank's charge system. Is it fair or does it penalise those on low incomes?

2. If it has an unfair system then write to or make an appointment to see your bank manager and explain to him or her your reasons for concern about the bank's charging policies. Also write to the bank's head office indicating your concern.

3. Investigate other banking options that have a fairer system of levying charges.

4. If you feel it is necessary, close your account, notifying your bank manager and head office of your reasons.

5. Union members should consider asking their superannuation funds to withdraw funds from banks with unfavourable charges.

If these actions were undertaken by all members, congregations and State and Federal Departments, a significant statement in favour of a more just and equitable society could be made.

—Beverley Maxwell

The Last Word

The man who fights with everything to defend his independence is not free at all, whereas the man who has surrendered his life to God and who, therefore, brings a spirit of self-sacrifice into his family and social relationships, possesses this independence that forever eludes the former.

—Paul Tournier

Have you ever noticed that the characters in the TV soap operas never watch TV soap operas?

★★★★★

Father: "Come here, Tommy. I'm going to dust the seat of your trousers with this cane." Tommy: "Don't be old-fashioned, Dad. Couldn't you use the vacuum cleaner?"

★★★★★

Garage sales are becoming commonplace and one gets used to seeing home-made signs advertising them.

On the lawn of one house was a sign that read, "White Elephant Sale". In front of the house across the road was a larger sign, with larger lettering, that read, "Sale of the Pale Pachyderm".

★★★★★

Have you ever noticed that when anyone says, "It's only money," it's usually your money they are talking about?

★★★★★

The absent-minded professor was strap hanging in a tram, the other arm clasping a lot of parcels.

"Can I help you, sir?" asked the conductor. "Yes," said the professor with relief. "Hold on to this strap while I get my fare out."

★★★★★

"There is a mouse in this room. I can hear it squeaking."

"Well, what do you want me to do? get up and oil it?"

★★★★★

Elsie had been to her first party and was telling her mother how lovely it all was.

Mother: "And did you tell Mrs Smith what a nice time you had?"

Elsie: "Yes, mummy, I did that as soon as I got there in case I should forget."

★★★★★



The drawback with TV is that you have to wake up to go to bed.



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