

THE AUSTRALIAN CHRISTIAN

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Southport Moves Ahead

Exciting things are happening at Southport, Qld.

• The ministry team has been increased and includes the following: Noel Newton, senior minister, David Capuano and David Eagling, pastoral ministers, David Murray and Shirley Condon, youth ministry, and Patricia Schmidt, office secretary.

• The new church complex, opened in June 1988, cost \$1m and the outstanding debt is only \$150,000. The chapel seats 700 and is comfortably full most Sunday mornings.

• During March there were 22 decisions and 13 rededications.

• Junior youth ministry has taken up the challenge of ministering to children who otherwise

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22 April 1989

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Guest Editorial

Shaping the Church for the Twenty-first Century

by Donald Stewart

As we draw to the close of the 20th century of the Christian era we are drawn to speculate as to what the new 21st century will hold for the church. Humanly speaking, the church totters on the edge of existence as it is always one generation from extinction. From the divine perspective, Jesus said, "I will build my church." He also indicated that he will come again to take the church to himself so that where he is the church is also.

Looking forward then, on the proviso that God does not wind up the cosmos, I think it is valuable to look at the forces already in place that will shape the new century about to break upon us. It is important to take a global view because experience has shown the swiftness by which ideas are transmitted around the globe.

Militant Fundamentalism

I suspect there is no force so aggressively poised for action as that of the militant fundamentalists of a range of religious beliefs. Militant fundamentalist Islam, Judaism, Hinduism, Shinto, Buddhism and Christianity are all demonstrating the power of religion in the world. It is a dangerous force, with which the world may have to deal, and religious war must not be left out of contention.

In considering this issue we ought not to ignore the forces of militant agnosticism and atheism. The world is already beginning to feel the shock of such militant fundamentalist movements as those in Iran, Israel, Libya and parts of the United States.

Denominationless Christianity

We are presently watching the emergence of new churches of Latin America, China, Russia and black Africa. These churches have turned their backs on the European basis for the denominational divisions within the church. The new divisions that are emerging tend to be of a different kind and for different reasons than those which European culture imposed on the church.

Within Western Christianity, with its move towards multicultural societies, the meaningless of denominational divisions is apparent already. People choose a church to worship in for pragmatic reasons rather than for a denominationally correct doctrinal position.

What is also exciting is the growing contact with and impact of the Eastern Ortho-

dox churches. The old division of the Eastern Orthodox and Rome is at last being confronted afresh and there is a growing need to look again at the question of what constitutes spirituality within the church.

Survival Theology

The depletion of the world's non-renewable resources, together with the increasing demand for more and more resources in a world with a greatly increased population and changing climatic conditions, is going to impose a need to think through our situation. This in turn will raise the need to speak the Word of the Lord to that new situation. This will cause the development of survival theology. Survival theology will be about the survival of civilisation and the role of the church in that survival. I do not believe it will be about the survival of the church, although one could expect that the issue will be raised, with results similar to those achieved by the now largely forgotten "death of God" controversy of the 1960s.

Church Unity

The facing of the common problems will tend to drive the various parts of the church together much more at the grass roots level, with the church hierarchies becoming less and less important. This movement will tend to leave the "ecumenical movement" high and dry. Increasingly it will be seen historically to have played an important part in breaking down the barriers in the early stages. The church may well experience a new outbreak of pentecostalism around the middle of the century if the pattern of the past is repeated. As in each previous appearance of this phenomenon, the form it takes has been different each time, so it is not possible to predict the next form other than that it will tend to break up the established formalism.

The church has always been an exciting place to be working out the issues of society as a response to the Lord of the church, Jesus Christ, and in the new century it appears to be shaping up to be both exciting and traumatic. I seem to see ahead occasions for great joy but also for more suffering. Faith and faithfulness, hope and self-sacrificing love, in an increasingly pragmatic world, will be essential.

• Don Stewart is President of Federal Conference and Executive Director of the Social Service Department in Queensland

Southport Moves Ahead

• continued from page 1

would go home to an empty house. Schools have given permission for buses to pick up the children after school and parents collect the children about 5.30. 120 children are ministered to two afternoons a week.

• A new challenge is the new college of advanced education

directly opposite. The senior minister, Noel Newton is the college chaplain and spends three lunch hours a week on campus.

• A new venture, **High Road**, has been a great success. Wheaton College operates a wilderness-based educational program in Wisconsin, USA. Its objectives include the develop-



Noel Newton with Reg and Edna Johnson

Easter Camp at Camp Irwin

Friday morning was time to board the catamaran for Magnetic Island off the coast from Townsville, Qld. Campers were excited to be underway at last. Campers this year came from Mackay, Charters Towers, Brisbane and a large Townsville contingent.

Guest speaker this year, Graham Sercombe from Brisbane, led campers through a series of studies "Living in the Third Dimension". Many were refreshed and touched by the Holy Spirit. Campers were also inspired by the music and songs presented by Andrew Kerr from Brisbane.

While the studies were in progress the children were involved in their own program. This included making their own puppets and presenting a

puppet show on Monday afternoon. The children's program was organised and run by Doug and Claire White of Townsville.

One of the camp highlights was the Saturday night mini Olympics. From the time the Olympic flame was kindled to the presenting of medals a fantastic time of laughter and bad sportsmanship was had by all.

On the Sunday morning a 6 am sunrise communion service was held on the beach. The service was a special time of focussing on the risen Lord. Breakfast of fish and rolls were enjoyed after the service.

Sunday evening the camp held a combined rally with the Baptist camp.

—Sue Matthews



High Road participants (front, l to r) Julie McCullough, Allison Colyer, Ken Kallsch*, Julie Mildren, Noel Newton (minister), Brett Ridley, John Mahony*, (rear) John Rutherford, Neil Moxey, Steve Scott, Brad Otto (* Instructors)

ment of Christian maturity and leadership skills. Seven men from Southport have experienced this exciting educational process, including past chairman, Ross Franks, and youth minister, David Murray. The vision of these men has led the church to commit itself to four High Road expeditions in Australia during 1989. The first expedition in February was successfully completed by 11 participants.

Each 14-day program venturing into the Australian wilderness requires average fitness and no prior experience is necessary.

• 21 people from the church are now at Bible colleges in Australia and New Zealand and a church scholarship fund has distributed \$6,500 to help with college fees.

• Seven people are planning to be part of "Love Europe" in July 1989 and Noel and Tricia Newton are organising a tour to Israel and Oberammergau in June 1990.

• New caretakers of the church complex are Darryl and Sharon Tobler, who live in "Johnson Lodge", named for Reg and Edna Johnson, who owned the building, now relocated to the new church site.

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High Road is about the wilderness and about building your relationship with God. If you want to be challenged and are of average fitness, send for information. No experience necessary. Cost is \$590.

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SOUTHPORT 4215



O'Deas Return Home



Doug and Cathy O'Dea and their children Amanda, Cameron and Sarah, completed their mission service with the Churches of Christ in Papua New Guinea at the end of March 1988. The O'Dea family were based at Momonup on the Keram River and served in the role of agricultural adviser for the Momonup Training Centre. However, because of a shortage of funds World Vi-

sion found it necessary to discontinue funding for the training centre, even though they were very satisfied with the way it was run.

For a further year after the closure of the centre the O'Deas followed up previous graduates to see how they were putting their skills to use. The family will now go back to WA and will be involved in some deputiation work.



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New Minister for The Patch

Mike Folland, an exit student from the Churches of Christ Theological College at Mulgrave, has accepted an invitation to become The Patch church's full-time minister in 1990.

The appointment will be supported by the Vic-Tas Department of Mission, Education and Development.

The Patch church continues to experience growth, with accommodation being taxed to the limits on many Sundays. Plans for extensions are being considered.



Much Joy at Mornington



Michael and Ian Cartmel

Bruce and Joy Bunn, Kevin and Florence Turner and Marj Watson.

Then after a time of sharing over lunch the members adjourned to the Red Hill church where Ian Cartmel conducted the baptism of his eldest son, Michael.

The moving service was shared with 60 others who also joined in the glorious singing with music supplied by Glenys, Michael's mother.

This is the first baptism from the Mornington congregation. Mornington says, "Thank you Lord."

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103rd Conference
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Missionary Focus—Miss Dorothy Geyer
Business
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RSVP 28 April to Helen Hall (03) 583 4341
- 1.30 pm Yukana Singers
Speaker: Dr Muriel Porter
Religious Columnist, Historian
Conference Commitment Offering
Induction of Mrs Dorothy Quantrelle & Executive
- 7.30 pm Yukana Singers
Speaker: Sister Nicole Rotaru, Mercy Hospice Care

Cooking It Up at Keilor East



Noel Petherbridge serving croissants, bacon and coffee at a women's Saturday breakfast at East Keilor

Approximately 30 women met at Keilor East, Vic, to hear Rosemary König, Nunawading, share her family's experiences when they travelled to far north Queensland combining long service leave and voluntary work with Scrip-

ture Union.

The following day, Palm Sunday, there was a surprise in store at the morning worship. During the scripture reading of Jesus entering Jerusalem, a young boy rode a very tame donkey into the chapel. The

congregation received palm crosses made by the young children during their activity session. At the close of the service the congregation joined in a procession outside, waving palm branches behind the donkey. Although it had its humorous moments, the service was moving, as people were challenged to think of the significance of the day. It was the first time the Victorian Donkey Association had been asked to supply a donkey for such an occasion.

Later in the week on the Thursday evening families met to share in the traditional Passover meal. This has become a yearly event in the life of the church, organised by Ian Smith, the minister, and his wife. In a time of reflection and celebration, the symbolic meaning of the Passover for Jesus and his disciples came alive for those who attended. During the Easter services appropriate music for singing and instruments added to the worship.

Coleman has taken on the responsibility to establish a strong motor racing ministry Australia wide and to liaise with the various state motor racing chaplains and ministries.

Ron Ross, former sports editor of Channel 4, Wollongong, now with YWAM (Vic) has accepted the position of Sports Media and celebrity chaplain. Ron has kept contact with sports media people and has experience in this field.

Australian Sports Ministry is part of the Specialised Life-Oriented Ministries Inc. SLM's two major areas of ministry are providing chaplains to professional sports and a discipleship encouragement ministry to sports people who are active Christians.

Recent additions to the chaplaincy list are the Brisbane Bears VFL team (Dean Davis) and Eastern Suburbs Rugby League team (Ian Docker), while a number of National League Basketball teams are in the final stages of appointment. Western Australia's Christian athlete ministry is being headed up by waterpolo Seoul Olympian Richard Pengelley.

The 1989 SLM national conference is being held in Adelaide 6-8 July at St Marks College will concentrate on sports ministry training and studying successful local church sports ministry models.

For further information on aspects of SLM ministries contact Dr Mark Tronson, SLM, "The Study", 3 Shelley Rd, Wallacia 2750. Phone (047) 73 8594.

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Developing an "Invitational Church"
Without a Vision the People Perish
How To Implement Change for Effective Evangelism
Wanted—A Verdict!
A Church on the Grow for People on the Grow
To register contact
Graeme Wigney on (03) 790 1000

Sports News

Two areas of Australian Sports Ministry were given nation wide television coverage in February. David Lloyd of Thorpdale, Vic, and King of the Mountain running champion was interviewed wearing his T shirt "Jesus—The Real Motivation" on Jack Thompson's Sports program. Paul Cameron, minister of our Carlingbah, NSW, church, the Sydney Swans chaplain, was featured on Channel 9's news, World of Sports and Graham Kennedy's late night news.

Sports and Leisure Ministry has made three new specific appointments.

Rev George Capsis, the chaplain to the Cronulla Sharks Rugby League team, Australian and Commonwealth Masters Weightlifting champion and evangelist, has become SLM's first full-time sports evangelist. He is available to any church wishing to see how sport might be utilised as an effective tool for evangelism.

Motor racing chaplain Garry

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Power Healing Conference

In February 4,500 Christians (213 from Churches of Christ) gathered at the Melbourne, Vic, Sports and Entertainment Centre for a four-day conference on "Power Healing" led by John Wimber and a team of 200 American Christians from the Vineyard churches. The purpose of the conference was to teach and encourage ordinary Christians to be involved in the sort of ministry that Jesus demonstrated and which he said would be continued by those who followed him. This ministry involves the healing of the sick (emotionally and spiritually as well as physically) through prayer and the laying on of hands.

In our Western culture we have a natural inclination to doubt and disbelieve the supernatural, so teaching is necessary to break down our resistance and lack of faith in God's ability to intervene in response to prayer. The delegates went home with increased faith and expectancy in God's power and their ability to be channels of God's power.

It is hard to put into words what the conference meant to me. God was dealing with us at a personal level—renewing our commitment to him, revealing our sin and wrong attitudes, changing our preconceptions and placing new callings on our lives. The highlights for me were the address by John Wimber on social justice and

the response of many people to dedicate their lives to ministry to the poor and the final night, when pastors and leaders dedicated themselves afresh to God to reach our nation for Jesus by being available to God in any way and to see and feel the power of the Holy Spirit moving as John Wimber prayed. The closing worship was an explosion of joy.

To be with 5,000 other Christians for four days was a blessing in itself. The conference excited us into believing we could change our nation (or rather God could, using us). The reality is that a vast task lies before us.

The conference was subtitled "Signs and Wonders and Church Growth". I have often wondered, with all the emphasis on church growth these days, why we have not asked why the fastest growing churches in the world are those who minister to signs and wonders. Are we as a movement going to address this issue or do we only want church growth through methodologies that basically allow people to remain in control of things? Allowing the Holy Spirit to reign in our churches can be scary. I appreciate what the church growth movement has done, but in addition let us simply allow God to be God for our churches.

—Russell Kilgour

More Land for Bribie

The Queensland Government through the Land Administration Commission have agreed to transfer a piece of land of about 5 ha to Queensland Social Service Department for the Bribie Island Retirement Village. This crown land will be added to the Reserve for Aged Persons of which the Churches of Christ in Queensland are the trustees. This brings the total area of land for the Bribie Island Retirement Village to about 12 ha of prime land on the island.

"The Social Service Department is most grateful to the Queensland government for their further provision for the ongoing development of care facilities for the aged, which has been demonstrated by this free-of-cost transfer of land," Don Stewart, Executive Director of the Social Service Department, said. The Social Service Department currently has a 30 bed nursing home, 52 bed aged care hostel, 10 studio units and 68 self-care units in the retirement village.

Kingswood Lodge Opening

The Hon. Craig Sherrin, Minister for Family Services in Queensland, has agreed to open the new Kingswood Lodge Group Home at East Berrinba on Saturday 15 April at 2.30 pm. The new group home is specially built by the Queensland Social Service Department to meet the needs of the Logan City area and features a special independent living training unit. Interviews have been held to select staff for the home, which is expected to become operational about the end of April. In commenting on this new program in the Division of Child Care, the Senior Child Care Director, Malcolm Chandler, said, "This project has been on the books of the department for a long time and delays by the Department of Family Services have held us up so it is good that it is built at last. It will be a valuable extension to our work among young people



Hon. Craig Sherrin, Minister for Family Services and deacon at Camp Hill church

with behavioural problems." The new group home is located adjacent to the Kingswood Park church and the Logan City Aboriginal church. Support for the staff will be given by the Kingswood Park church.

Branch-out Program Launch

The Hon. Mike Ahern, Premier of Queensland, has agreed to launch the Branch-out Program, which is the alcohol and drug rehabilitation program run by Churches of Christ in Queensland Social Service Department. The program, to be launched on Friday, 5 May 1989 at 3 pm, is the opening of both the office for the program in Nambour and the Activities Training Centre on 19 ha at Tewantin near Noosa on the Sunshine Coast. The program seeks to be a centre of excellence in the recovery of persons suffering from alcohol and

drug related problems. To this point the Social Service Department has borne all the costs in the development of the facilities for the program, which has been functioning through the Assessment Centre in Nambour since early February. The Department is currently seeking funding assistance through the Queensland government for the only recognised rehabilitation program between Brisbane and Townsville, a distance of over 1,000 km. The Program Director is Bob Walton and the program is administered by his wife, Joy.

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People

Melbourne Family's Outback Adventure



Rosemary, Sarah, Julia, Paul and Ted König

(Photo courtesy of the Leader Newspaper Group)

Have you ever considered taking time off to do voluntary work? Maybe you are planning a trip around Australia? Then, how about combining sightseeing with serving God?

Rosemary and Ted König and children of the Nuna-wading, Vic, church recently returned to suburbia after six months in northern Australia with Scripture Union.

They developed a Christian puppet and music show, presenting it around the Far North at numerous State and Catholic schools, Sunday schools and Christian school clubs. They

took a piano accordion and guitar.

Their home was a camper trailer and the children, Paul (11), Julia (9) and Sarah (5) did correspondence lessons.

Highlights included work with the Churches of Christ Aboriginal churches at Mareeba on the Atherton Tablelands with George and Leanne Radford and at Normanton in the Gulf with Neil and Ann Ewart; School of the Air Quest Club, a Sunday School for outback children as far away as Cape York and Thursday Island; leading mu-

sic at a beach mission at Port Douglas and a SU camp on a potato farm; camping beside a river with Aborigines attending a Christian Aboriginal Convention (sleeping under the stars and swimming in the creek with Aboriginal children were great experiences); and fellowship and support from the Cairns church and minister Bruce and Cheryl Warwick.

Rosemary and Ted thoroughly recommend this combination of tourism and Christian service

If you would like the König family to speak or perform puppetry for your church or Sunday School they can be contacted on (03) 878 5506.

Brian White Vic-Tas Conference President for 1990



Brian White is to become the new President-Elect of Vic-Tas Conference for 1989-90. His presidential year will begin following the 1990 conference.

Brian was born Collie, WA. He was married to Joan in the Ararat, Vic, church, following graduation from the College of the Bible in 1962. Brian and Joan have three sons, two of whom are married, and all of whom are keenly involved in the life of the church.

Brian has had ministries at Norlane, Vic, Telopea, NSW, Hawthorn, SA, and Caringbah, NSW.

Brian and Joan studied marriage enrichment and family life education in the USA as the Australian Christian Foundation Scholar for 1982 and have developed a ministry conducting marriage and parenting seminars all over Australia. Brian is currently a field director with both the Vic-Tas Department of Mission, Education and Development and the Federal Board of Christian Education.

In 1984-85 Brian was the president of NSW Conference and has served on the Federal Conference Executive. He was a board member of the NSW College and served as a part-time lecturer for many years.

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Letters

Letters are limited to 200 words

DORCAS COMMITTEE

To the Editor,

For the past five years I have been the Superintendent of the Churches of Christ Dorcas Committee and I have become increasingly impressed with the comparatively small group of self-motivated women in this committee, who work unselfishly for the poorer or less privileged people in our so-called affluent society.

Three of the committee members represent more than 120 years service—Mrs Ivy Funston, 45 years; Mrs Lorna Bagot, 37 years; and Mrs Amy Frith, 40 years. All the other members have given many years also to the work of Dorcas as well as many women in the country and in the local CWF groups. Thousand of garments have been delivered to the Kensington Christian Network, the Caroline Lodge Women's Refuge in Mentone and the Royal Women's Hospital, to name a few.

As well as many other articles, the Royal Women's Hospital has taken delivery over the past year of 140 rugs, 419 baby nighties, 440 knitted jackets, numerous jumpers and 214 pairs of booties.

All Dorcas work is done for others, to the glory of God

—Dorothy Quantrelle
(Nunawading, Vic)

LEAVING THE MINISTRY

To the Editor,

It would be unfortunate if the excellent research by Charles Wilson "Leaving the Ministry" ("AC" 4 March) draws no

comment from minister or congregation. While it is good for the results of such research to be statistically presented, they are no surprise to me. In over 38 years of ministry I have experienced such frustrations many times.

Ministering now in co-operation with the Uniting Church I look forward to the pastoral visit by the Presbytery Officer. To share my ministry with him, and to have him pray for us, is a real blessing.

The emphasis on numerical achievement through Church Growth presents problems to those whose spiritual gifts do not include administration. The work of apostles, prophets, evangelists and teachers, in Ephesians 4:11 are assessable. However, the work of the pastor is not, because it is confidential in nature. And this causes some conflict at board level.

As I recall the names and faces of those to whom I have ministered pastorally, and who, in some cases years later, have offered their appreciation, I realise that my ministry has been worthwhile. Such comments should be filed under "Affirmation" to be read whenever there is conflict or stress!

—M.D. Keatch
(Dareton, NSW)

CHRISTIANS ON CAMPUS

To the Editor,

On 1 February I took up my appointment as Ecumenical Chaplain with the University of Melbourne, a churning market-place of ideas about life and living. In this bazaar of beliefs and styles, the Christian church

is one of many "stall-holders", telling its story in word and act.

In fact, the Christian "stall-holders" are themselves numerous and quite variegated. This is no bad thing. In addition to giving seekers and shoppers a degree of choice, it also helps to keep spirited debate alive. If all the Christians were homogeneous, they would be less interesting, and the debate could die.

The predominant style is toward the more conservative end of the scale, with some groups taking a strongly fundamentalist position. There is something of a gap toward that end of the scale once vigorously served by the Student Christian Movement.

To broaden the range of choices, it is desirable to have groups like SCM up and running with more vigour and

vitality. But for this to happen, enthusiasts are needed.

If there are students at University of Melbourne from your congregation who would fit that description, and who are not already with one of the existing groups, I would appreciate knowing who they are, especially if they are the kind of young people who might reinvestigate SCM.

My own policy is to be "non-partisan", to try to be available as a resource and helper to all Christian groups. It is out of this policy that I write. Please contact me if you know of students yet to be contacted by one of the Christian groups.

—Rev Dr John Bodycomb
Chaplaincy Department
University of Melbourne
Parkville 3052.

Phone (03) 344 7566 (university) or 435 6544 (home)

Letters from Tertius

"Let Us Pray"

To the Editor,

I am interested in the way worship leaders get their prayers started.

Some say, "Let us pray." They mean we are going to pray anyway, except that it sounds like, "If it's all right with you lot, I am going to pray."

Some pray-ers thoughtfully add "together" and say, "Let us pray together." That introduction means at least, "I am going to prayer on behalf of us all, and I hope that you will pray along with me."

The most intriguing introduction is "Shall we pray?" I often wonder what would happen if someone said, "No!"

Some worship leaders in our church say nothing. They just raise one hand into the air. I've often wondered if the gesture goes back to Moses. But as I remember the story from Sunday School days Moses did no good until he got both hands up. It seems to work with one hand in our church.

All of these devices let us know that the time has arrived for prayer, because mostly we do not have a printed order of service. But on the rare occasions that we do, and it is plain to see that we do, the leader still says, "Let us pray."

There must be more imaginative ways of letting us know that the program says that prayer is the next item. I wonder what would be wrong with the leader launching straight off into prayer. It wouldn't be long before worshippers stopped fiddling with their purses or gazing into space or looking for the next hymn, and started to pray along.

I would suggest a brief word on what we are going to pray about as an introduction, except that some long-winded worship leader might like the idea, when it would be better for him to stick to "Let us pray."

—Tertius



El Kanah

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Media Review

Papers

SEX AND CHRISTIAN LANGUAGE

A Linguist Looks at How Christians Speak about God and Each Other

From the legal requirement that "the male should include the female" to the presumption that "children" and "people" are male, to the age-old use of female words as terms of abuse, our language still successfully puts women down. Christian language is one of the worst offenders. The language of hymns and liturgies is among the last linguistic relics of the era when women had to put up with being "men of God" or "sons" or "brothers". Much change has occurred in the last 20 years, but it is still neither sufficient nor widespread enough.

In a new paper published by the Zadok Institute for Christianity and Society, Dr John Harris discusses sexism in language in general and in church language in particular. He argues that much change is still necessary. He warns us, however, that in our eagerness to be fair to women, there are real dangers in tampering with scripture, which is the revealed word of God, and particularly in tampering with the descriptions of God by which God has chosen to reveal himself to us.

The paper, T32 Series 2, is available from the Zadok Institute, Blackall St, Barton 2600, for \$2 plus 80c postage.

Books

TWELVE KEYS TO AN EFFECTIVE CHURCH
by Kennon Callahan (Harper and Row) \$23.95
(Leaders guide \$18.50, Workbook \$7.95)

After attending seminars and reading many books on church growth that all sounded great, but never seemed quite applicable to my church, or the other churches with which I work, I came across this book. The title is terrible but the material is excellent. The author makes no attempt to put forward a sure fire plan for church growth that will suit every church. What he does is to show a church how it can identify its own strengths and weaknesses and then, by building on those strengths, become more effective.

A number of aspects of Callahan's approach are particularly refreshing. Firstly he is not predominantly interested in numerical growth as such. Growth is seen as a by-product which will usually follow when a church is being effective in its local community. To quote, "the church should be more interested in 'mission than membership' and in 'service rather than survival'." Secondly, the approach allows each church to design a program uniquely suited to its resources, its membership and its local community. Thirdly, it is an essentially practical approach that can be implemented by any church, small or large. There are no promises of immediate results or magic short-cuts. Churches are advised to work through a three to five year program.

Kennon Callahan has served as a successful pastor in a number of churches in the United States before becoming a full-time consultant. he has worked with over 1,000 churches and the book represents a summary of his experience.

The Leaders' Guide and Workbook supplement the main book and provide helpful direction for the implementation of the local church program. The short chapter on motivation in the leaders' Guide is brilliant. These are not books for those with a passing interest in church growth or those looking for an easy way to increase their numbers. The church that really wants to be effective and is prepared to put in a sustained effort over

a number of years would find them valuable.
Available from Collins-Dove.

—Alan Hermann

SHADOWLANDS

The Story of C.S. Lewis and Joy Davidman
by Brian Sibley (Hodder and Stoughton)



In recent years there has been a plethora of books published about C.S. Lewis and his theological understanding. This is particularly true in America. Shadowlands is basically the script of a BBC television film on the tragic story of his love for Joy Davidman. This film screened on Australian television in 1988 and was a very moving film. In this book Brian Sibley looks at C.S. Lewis and Joy Davidman's childhoods and early life. He also examines, in brief detail, their literary legacies. The majority of the book concentrates on the relationship that grows between these two Christians, their marriage, and the struggle they have to cope with Joy Davidman's cancer. It is a story of faith that copes with grief and despair, and is a moving story that is well told.

—CRA

JOHN NEWTON: THE ANGRY SAILOR

by Kay Marshall Strom (Moody Press)

John Newton is famous as the writer of "Amazing Grace". As a young man he certainly was "a wretch", an angry sailor who was angry with his fellow crew members and even angrier with God. How could God have let all the terrible things that happened to him occur? He fought and stole and became the captain of a slave ship with a fearsome reputation. In this "preteen" (haven't Americans heard of children?) biography, which will interest "teens" and "postteens" as well, we read the incredible and true story of God's plans for John Newton and how he became a great preacher. John Newton meant every word he wrote in his famous hymn.

—GTA



You know you're getting older when actions speak louder than words—but not so often.

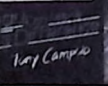
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Water a Pressing Issue in Zimbabwe

An Australian project review team which visited Zimbabwe in 1988 reported that "the most pressing issue raised by rural people we met was the urgent need for water."

Zimbabwe, a country of 9 million, is vulnerable to frequent droughts. Even in good years only one third of the country gets enough rainfall for semi-intensive farming. Malnutrition, especially among children, is one result.

In the Diocese of Bulawayo, CADEC, a development agency of the Roman Catholic Bishops, gives high priority to providing water. In the past three years CADEC has helped rural communities to dig more than 1,500 wells.

Now it has shifted its emphasis to building dams and developing irrigation systems, including canals and pipelines. It is also helping to rehabilitate old irrigation systems which have fallen into disrepair.

In order for a local community to get CADEC support for a water project, the people must make a contribution towards



Villagers in Garlya, Bulawayo Diocese, working together to build an irrigation canal

the project in the form of labour, money or building materials. CADEC helps with technical advice, materials and, if

necessary, bulldozers and other equipment.

CADEC is supported by Force Ten, a joint program of

the Australian Council of Churches and Australian Catholic Relief.

Radio Listener Starts Nine Churches

A listener's letter first alerted the Far Eastern Broadcasting Association to the blessings of God on their Gospel transmissions from Seychelles to Mozambique. Juma Matola wrote to the producers of the Portuguese series 'Words of Life', "I have given the Gospel of the Lord Jesus to our community and we have more than 200 believers."

Norman Brierley, a FEBA missionary went to Northern Mozambique to investigate the story.

Juma began preaching in his home town of Montepuez in Cabo Delgado Province, Mozambique, in 1985. His witness made a great impact among the local people because they had known him as a Moslem.

Juma comes from a Tao family (a Muslim tribe found in northern Mozambique, Tan-

zania and Malawi) who settled in Montepuez in the 1950s. As a teenager he first heard the Gospel from FEBA Seychelles using his father's radio. An illness took him to hospital in Tanzania. He sought the help of a witchdoctor but rejected the advice given. He then spent time with Islamic teachers. However he couldn't shake off the feeling of wanting to know more about the teachings of Christ, such as those he'd heard from the radio.

He stayed in Tanzania for five years. During this time Juma met a Christian pastor from Mozambique who also knew the Koran. This man was able to help him understand the Christian message.

Juma returned to Mozambique in 1983 to study at industrial school. For two years he helped at the assemblies of God Church there. After his studies

were completed he went to his home town and started the 'Church of Christ' which crowds into his mud walled home. Recently he knocked down one wall to make more room for the worshippers.

The young church now has groups of Christians in different parts of the Province. The largest is the Montepuez church where 170 Christians meet. The smallest is a group of 20 believers at Masasa. Each fellowship has an Anciao (elder) with other leaders helping. Juma visits each congregation once a month and the number of believers has grown to over 500 since his first letter to FEBA.

Guerilla warfare continues in Mozambique and the young churches in Cabo Delgado are right in the northern war zone. Life is hard for these people but they testify to having found riches in Christ. Juma has had

very little training for his work as a pastor/evangelist, and here again radio can help in teaching and Bible instruction programs. "My spiritual development has been through FEBA Radio" he says.

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in your will:

I give and bequeath \$ (or a percentage of the total estate) to "The Australian Christian", the national journal of Churches of Christ in Australia, absolutely for the use and benefit of the organisation free from all debts, funeral and testamentary expenses.

Happenings

Five monasteries are to be returned to the Russian Orthodox Church this year. Keston College reports that this will bring the total of monasteries released to 7.

The US ranks first among 8 industrialised nations in the number of children living in poverty. According to a recent study 17.1% of US children live in families whose income falls below the official government poverty line, which was \$5,784 for a family of 3 in 1979. Australia's child poverty rate ranked 2nd in the study with 16.9%, followed by the UK with 10.7%, Canada with 9.6%, West Germany with 8.2%, Norway with 7.6% and Sweden and Switzerland with 5.1%.

Poor people give more of their money to charity than rich people do is the conclusion of a survey commissioned by the Independent Sector, a non-profit US coalition of 650 corporate, foundation and volunteer organisations. The survey found that people donating the highest proportion of their incomes to charities are members of low to moderate income families, church goers and rural residents.

The 2 Operation Mobilisation missionaries imprisoned in Nepal ("AC" 18 Feb) have been set free after the judge decided that they had no case to answer because they were not guilty of proselytising and causing disturbance.

Studies in the US have shown that suicide by women who have had an abortion is four times higher than the general rate for women.

The Christian Broadcasting System in Seoul, South Korea, has begun airing a program of daily Bible readings for listeners in North Korea and China. It is believed to be the first time the Bible has been read over North Korean airwaves.

More than 200 raised their hands in response to an invitation to become Christians when American astronaut Col James Irwin spoke to a mainly non-Christian audience in the Central Baptist Church in Moscow. The previous day's TV news had announced the meeting and thousands of non-believers came.

About 7 million women will die in childbirth between now and the turn of the century unless urgent measures are taken to check maternal deaths in the Third World, a recent World Health Organisation booklet has warned.

Sudan's efforts to create a transitional government and peace after years of civil war have been stalled by influential Muslim officials who say they will not join in a new government if Sharia or Islamic law is not implemented.

Bibles are no longer tax exempt in the US. A recent decision by the Supreme Court ruled that laws in 15 states which exempt the Bible from sales tax violate the law of separation of church and state.

The latest figures on world distribution of literature reveal that in 1983 (the latest year available) Mickey Mouse was read in more languages than any other work. The cartoon series rates 284 translations, followed by 276 translations of Lenin, and 262 for Agatha Christie. The Bible is the world's 4th most translated work with 219 versions. Pope John Paul II comes close with 198 translations.

In 10 months last year more than 70 had been arrested in 8 Turkish cities for suspected participation in Christian activities. These included 15 arrested at a Christian wedding celebration in Ankara in early October and included the bride and groom. 4 of those arrested were released

when it was discovered that they were not of the Christian faith.

Bible Translations on Tape has produced the first "true production model" of the Crankassette, a spring powered tape player that needs no disposable batteries. The unit is powered by a no-maintenance battery that is recharged each time the device is played. 30 seconds of winding tensions a spring for more than 8 minutes of untended playback time.

An estimated 3 million Muslims now live in the US making Islam the third largest religious force in North America.

Pro-Life Japan reports that for every live birth in Japan there are 3 abortions, totaling more than 5 million per year.

The World Health Organisation estimates that at least 10,000 per year are killed in the Third World by pesticides, many of whose ingredients are banned in the West.

Prison Fellowship Ministries in the US has named Benigno Aquino to receive posthumously its first annual William Wilberforce award. The award will be given each year to honour an individual who models practical Christianity in tackling societal problems and injustices.

The Qld Overseas Mission & Aborigines & Islanders Boards are holding an "Operation World 2000" missionary camp 19-21 May at the Salvation Army camp site in Caloundra. Registrations from D. Eagling at 187 Vendale Ave, Moorooka 4105, or K. Tedford at 3 Basswood St, Algeester 4115.

76 Israeli rabbis have organised to protest human rights violations, notably against Palestinians, in the Occupied Territories. The creation of the Rabbinic Human Rights Watch is a response to the anguish

brought on by months of violent clashes between Palestinians and Israeli armed forces.

The SA Council of Churches is presenting "Building One World: Churches, Refugees and Migrants 1948-1988" an exhibition that examines the continuing response of Australian churches to the needs of immigrants and refugees 10 April to 28 May. The exhibition is being held at the Forum Gallery in the Migration Museum, 82 Kintore Ave, Adelaide. The Museum is open 10-5 Monday to Friday and 1-5 at weekends and public holidays.

Two kidnapped American missionaries in Columbia were released on 12 March after 2 months of captivity. They were released unharmed, apparently after convincing their captors that they were not narcotics agents.

An analysis of the hotel bills of the participants in the National Religious Broadcasters Conference in Washington, USA, last year showed that 80% of delegates had watched an X-rated movie in their room.

American evangelist Pat Robertson has dreamed up a novel way to take religious broadcasts deep into inaccessible jungles and remote Third World villages. He plans to parachute hundreds of little solar powered television receivers down to people and then broadcast his program, The 700 Club, by satellite to them.

The Inter-church Council of Men's Societies of SA held its 30th anniversary service on 4 April at the Grote St Church of Christ when the speaker was the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Adelaide Leonard Faulkner.

Nikoll Troshani, believed to be the only surviving Roman Catholic bishop in Albania, has been freed from captivity after 14

years, according to a report from Keston College. It has also received word of the death in a labour camp of Peter Meshkalla, an 87 year old Jesuit who had spent more than 25 years in Albanian prisons.

Franca Sciuto, President of the International Executive of Amnesty International, is speaking at a special interdenominational service being held at St Silas, Albert Park, Melbourne at 7.30 pm on 30 April.

Two families from opposite ends of New Zealand have joined to plant a new Associated Church of Christ in Cromwell. Darrel and Cindy Boyd shifted to Cromwell from Matura in Southland and were joined by Quinn and Becky Schipper from Auckland.

Soviet Pentecostals are receiving permission to emigrate from the USSR after a 10 year campaign. Keston College reports that over 2,000 Pentecostals have left the USSR to seek refugee status in the USA, Canada and Australia.

World Vision's office in East Beirut in Lebanon has been hit by shelling, the first time in the 14 years of conflict. An incendiary bomb also landed a direct hit on the home of a World Vision Lebanon staff member. Both husband and wife were seriously injured and are in hospital. The Christian community in Lebanon is under a virtual siege with the heavy artillery bombardment almost non stop.

The next Qld CWF rally is being held at the Rosewood church (36 Albert St) on 30 May, commencing with morning tea at 10 am. The speaker will be Mrs Betty Foster from the USA.

Missionary Aviation Fellowship's training plane, a Cessna Turbo 206, was stolen from the Redlands Airport, California. There is a high probability that the theft is drug related.

Easter Camp



Ken Salmon leading a small group at camp

"Who is God's Spirit?" and "How do we live by the Spirit?" were some of the questions raised at a recent Easter camp organised by the Vic-Tas Department of Mission, Education and Development. The camp was held at Shoreham on Victoria's Westernport Bay and was directed by Gordon Buxton (Glen Waverley). Andrew Ball led the studies on the theme "Spiritual Megabytes." Campers were encouraged to share in small groups and reflect on how God's Spirit had worked in their own lives. The camp culminated in a worship experience which left them highly motivated and committed to living their lives for God's glory.

Carnegie Singles Use *Getting Along*



Alice Campbell and Norma Hall studying *Getting Along*

The Whole-in-One singles group from the Carnegie, Vic, church had been meeting for coffee and chat nights and social events, but the group's coordinator, Anne Spoelder, had felt for some time that a number of people within the group were also looking for something deeper than the times of fellowship and friendship. Inviting these people to church at this stage was not the answer. Some had had "bad experiences" in other churches. To others the idea of attending church was strange and unfamiliar.

Anne and Norma Hall, the minister at Carnegie, discussed using a series of studies in an

informal small group setting, to provide challenge, interest and enjoyment, as well as looking at the scriptures for some answers.

It was decided to use the booklet *Getting Along*, a series of five studies on relationships, written by Brian White and produced by the Federal Board of Christian Education.

Eight singles participated meeting once a week for eight weeks. Several leaders were used for their knowledge and experience, depending on the chapter being studied. Those involved in leadership were from within the congregation at Carnegie and the student body at the Churches of Christ

Theological College.

Each study affected members in different ways. At times they brought back memories (sometimes painful), they presented a challenge, occasionally they were threatening, but always participation was excellent as people began to open up and share life's experiences with one another. As a result a close bond formed as group members were encouraged to grow.

Anne believes that *Getting Along* was an ideal study to use in a group setting. She says: "I thoroughly recommend *Getting Along* for anyone who is involved in developing and main-

taining the wonderful, though at times frustrating, area of human relationships! Each chapter is relevant and easy to "digest." I was impressed with the way Brian links all that he has written with God's word. This makes the scriptures all the more relevant to today's times and my own life. I intend to go through the studies again during this year, hopefully attracting some new faces from our singles group."

Getting Along is available from the Federal Board of Christian Education, 52 La Trobe St, Melbourne 3000. Phone (03) 662 2377.

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Eye Cross Over a First in Africa



Dr William Wilson, a Christian Blind Mission doctor working in Sierra Leone, recently completed one of the most unusual eye operations ever performed in West Africa. He operated on a man from the

neighbouring country of Guinea who was blind in the left eye from uveitis (which causes retinal damage) and blind in the right eye from a damaged cornea.

Performing a bilateral cor-

neal transplant, Dr Wilson took the good cornea from the left eye and grafted it on to the right eye. He grafted the bad cornea from the right eye on to the left eye.

The operation was a success and a very happy patient left with sight restored and praising God.

Dr Wilson is based at the Lunsar Eye Hospital and is currently completing a research project on corneal ulcers. He is also training nurses to travel throughout Sierra Leone and neighbouring countries treating eye disorders.

Chinese Bibles for the Under Forties

History was made on Easter Sunday in China when the first Chinese simplified script Bible was dedicated at various centres throughout China.

Earlier Bibles printed in China were in the traditional form of writing and, while familiar to older Christians, often cannot be understood by young people.

The Amity Printing Co Ltd, in partnership with the United Bible Societies, has printed and distributed 35,000 copies of a first print run of 100,000 of this new Bible, ordered by the China Christian Council.

The new Bibles have been distributed in Shanghai, Hangzhou and other major cities in Jiangsu Province.

A further 300,000 copies of the same edition, 100,000 copies of a pocket sized edition and 100,000 copies of a pocket sized New Testament and Psalms will be printed by the end of this year.

To date the Union Version Bible, in traditional script, was the only Bible available to the Christian people but, although it is a Bible older Christians know and love, there has been considerable demand from the youth of China for a simplified script version.

A production target of half a million simplified script Bibles will add to the 634,994 Union Version Bibles printed since the establishment of the printing press in late 1987.

Sudan Miracle Needed

A miracle is needed in southern Sudan to prevent 250,000 from starving to death in the next three months. World Vision Australia executive director, Philip Hunt, believes the miracle can happen as desperate efforts are made to get 100,000 tonnes of food into the war ravaged region.

The relief effort will include medical supplies, tents and blankets transported by truck and air.

The need is as desperate as any famine situation in recent times and it requires an immediate response. A top level agreement has paved the way for the massive relief effort to help an estimated 500,000 starving people in southern Sudan.

Appeals have been made to both sides of the conflict to silence their guns for a month of tranquillity during which food supplies could be transported into the famine affected regions.

World Vision has dispatched 33 trucks into Sudan carrying about 330 tonnes of maize.

World Vision Australia has started a Sudan Famine Appeal. Donations can be made by calling (008) 033 112 or by sending them to the Sudan Famine Appeal, GPO Box 9944, Melbourne 3000.

Recommend "The Australian Christian"

VISITING CANBERRA?

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A number of Canberra church families offer accommodation in their homes at basic bed and breakfast rates to help raise funds for "Home Mission" extensions in the ACT.

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Barbara Kennedy
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MELBA 2615
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Advance bookings appreciated

A Church ABC

Swan Hill is a lovely town on the Victorian side of the Murray River with a population of about 10,000. It is primarily a tourist town, the major attraction being the Swan Hill Pioneer Settlement.

The Swan Hill church has modern appealing facilities, including a good sized hall added in 1980 to a brick chapel from the 60s. Bright and well designed it is an attractive and useful building.

The membership of 115 plus 20-30 Christians in fellowship means an active membership of around 150 and an average of 100 communicants each Sunday. The members are drawn mostly from the town and include a substantial number of people in most age groups. There is a sizeable Sunday school and CWF and about 25 each in primary, secondary and young adult groups.

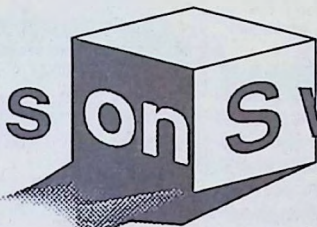
The minister is Lindsay Mayes, who came from Warrnambool. Lindsay gained a Bachelor of Social Science degree there before going to the College of the Bible. Swan Hill was his first church and he is now in his seventh year there. He is assisted by his wife, Erma, and they have two daughters. Lindsay has written a weekly "Christian Comment" in the local newspaper for the past six years on evangelical and social issues with much positive feedback.

Morning services are held at 10 am (with a prayer time before at 9.15) and there is also an evening service. The evening services are a real feature at Swan Hill, with about half the participants young people. Every two months there is a special guest evening service, when members invite their guests to

revamped Sunday school is co-ordinated with the theme of the preaching in the morning service. Young adults meet on Saturday nights for social activities, but most of them are also involved in the weekly home cell groups. One person is now at Wollongong receiving training in youth ministry and will return to Swan Hill next year. Others are contemplating full-time ministry.

A healthy singles ministry operates across the churches of the town, with its

Focus on Swan Hill



a tea service. Many new contacts have been made through this activity. Every month the young adults alternating with the young people are responsible for the evening service. Among the young people there are many musicians who use their talents in the service.

Cell groups are proving very popular, and much growth has resulted through these also. There are now five groups meeting weekly for praise, Bible study and support for each other. They are a major factor in the church's vibrancy and life.

Youth work is important. There is an after-school ministry to encourage young people serious about learning about Jesus Christ on Wednesdays and on Friday nights there are more social activities. A

core in the Church of Christ. This has also proved a means of involving people into the fellowship of the church. There are five "Know Your Bible" groups with approximately eight women in each. There is a midweek prayer meeting at 6 am. Recently a marriage enrichment seminar was held with Brian White involving about 20 couples.

A key factor in Swan Hill's success is its strong elders. The four elders meet every Tuesday at 6.30 am. Their leadership and ability of a high quality supports and gives accountability to the minister and they are involved in visitation and pastoral care. The church is advancing in the areas of holiness, healing, nurturing gifts and the moving of people into the ministry of the church. Swan Hill literally believes in the priesthood of believers.

Growing Spiritually

Knowing the Words

by Kaye L. Wray

I laughed all the way through the story my daughter was relating. It was about a young friend who was describing his first day at work. Although he was not intimately acquainted with vegetables in their raw state he had managed to get a position in a greengrocer's shop. And, he reasoned, surely his enthusiasm would make up for his lack of experience!

All day he observed closely. He watched as apples were displayed in their family groups, outer leaves being neatly trimmed off lettuces, soup vegetables packed and the polite way to attend to customers.

Towards the end of the day he was given his first real task. "Get me a bunch of silver beet from the back, please. Oh, and trim the ends." I'm not sure what the lad's boss,

or the customer, thought when he promptly arrived with a bunch of stalks—the leaves all neatly cut off and consigned to the waste box!

The story conjured up such a funny image in my mind's eye that I chuckled every time I thought of it. And I thought how similar the incident was to the experience of new Christians. Some people who become Christians are totally unfamiliar with the world of the church. When they make their commitment to follow Jesus they are thrust into what is almost an alien environment.

The church has its own patterns and traditions and the newcomer probably hasn't a clue about either! Christian jargon means little or nothing. Trinity, reconciliation, grace, fruit of the Spirit—are these words some sort of code Christians use

among themselves? It must seem like it to the people who are "Unchurched".

And there's no surer way to feel isolated than when you don't understand the words or actions. "Don't worry about finding the words, we all know this chorus"—how many times have you heard someone say that? And for the person who is a new Christian, or new to your group and its top ten choruses, the feeling of isolation, of not knowing enough to belong, is complete.

Let's remember to be sensitive to new Christians—whether in their new commitment to Jesus or new to the group and its peculiarities. Help them feel they really belong and they'll soon know the words and the actions—and be as "peculiar" as the rest of us.

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

Classifieds

BIRTHS

KRUGER (nee DAY) Marilyn and Jonathan welcome the arrival of their son Tyson Jon on 20 March 1989 at the Ashford Hospital, SA. "Praise God for his many blessings."

TOWN (CLARK) Cheryl and Steven are proud to announce the birth of their first born son Joshua Steven, on 24th March (Good Friday) 1989. 8lb 2ozs. Proud grandparents Allan and Louise Clark and Ray and Marie Town. To God be the glory.

ENGAGEMENTS

GREEN-BARNS George and Elwyn with Don and Fay, all of Launceston, Tas, are delighted to announce the engagement of Lyndal and Peter.

PEEMOELLER-GALLEN Don and Maranne Peemoeller are happy to announce the engagement of their daughter Bettina to George Gallen. May His blessings be with them always.

DIAMOND WEDDINGS

SEAL-DALE George and Elsie were married on 27th April, 1929, at the North Melbourne Church of Christ, Cretwynd St, by the late A.G. Bennett. They acknowledge with gratitude to God for 60 years of happiness they have shared.

DEATHS

MORRIS Keith Henry. On March 25, in Melbourne. Dearly beloved husband of Freda; loved and loving father of Wendy (Way), John, Susan (Robinson), and Bill; father-in-law of John, Robyn, Barry, Fiona, Wendy and Dale; grandfather of Jenny, Fiona, Robyn, and Belinda

Way, Peter, Alison, David and Andrew Morris, Andrew and Sarah Robinson, William and Libby Morris; brother of Eric and Walter (both deceased).

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Sunday, 7 May, 11 am

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Returning to the Ministry

by Ian Morton

In a recent editorial ("AC", 4 March) Charles Wilson spoke on leaving the ministry.

In June 1987 I left the parish ministry of Churches of Christ vowing never to return. Disillusioned, embittered and unwell, I went to the extent of writing a formal resignation to the local church and to the state and federal executives. However, miraculously, since that time God has turned my life inside out and has forgiven, healed and restored me. With confidence and boldness in Jesus Christ I am returning to the parish ministry, commencing with the Lake Illawarra, NSW, church this month.

For your encouragement I desire to share with you something of this journey of restoration.

On leaving the ministry I ran into hiding from God and his people. Knowing that I and my family needed God's help, and aching for a loving touch from his people, I chose to remain with my anger and pursue a life of wantonness. These were hurtful days and I thank God they are gone and forgiven. But God did not forget us! His help came in time and so did the loving touch of a few of his servants. Thank you.

God began to gently remind me of his call on my life to be a preacher of his word. However, I was not prepared to return as I still harboured many hurts and some enmity against God's people. Perhaps, I thought, a para-church ministry would be an acceptable place to fulfil that calling without having to deal with the problems in my life. So I accepted a position with the Boys' Brigade...interesting but not God's calling. On 28 March last year I sat at my

desk at BBNSW headquarters, still a despondent and torn man. I wrote a letter telling all of my woes, my bitterness, my anger, my tears—but didn't know who to send it to. In frustration and despair I penned across the letter "To Whom It May Concern" and put it in a sealed envelope and placed it in the top drawer where it would not be seen or read. But someone was concerned about my letter and life—God. He read and graciously answered my letter. Within days a Christian brother had contacted me "out of the blue" and had agreed to meet with me. At first I did not trust him, expecting that rejection would come when we began to talk. I believe now that God's Holy Spirit motivated him as he helped me own my hurts and choose to forgive rather than retaliate. What joy! I began to discover afresh that as we forgive, we are forgiven. Thank you Lord Jesus.

The way was now open to enquire about returning to the ministry. Again I expected rejection, but was received and welcomed openly. These were better days but there still remained the grip of unresolved sin in my life and a broken spirit in Heather, my precious wife.

Gradually, trust in God returned and then the opportunity to attend a Power Healing Conference in Melbourne. God provided—I attended, knowing my need of healing—expecting a miracle. At last I was seeking God again but at the conference God seemed hard to find—until the final morning. The Holy Spirit brought conviction of sin. I saw again the sovereignty of God in Jesus my saviour and said in prayer, "Yes Lord, it's me you are speaking to. I've chosen to sin—I'm sorry." A stranger heard my confession before the

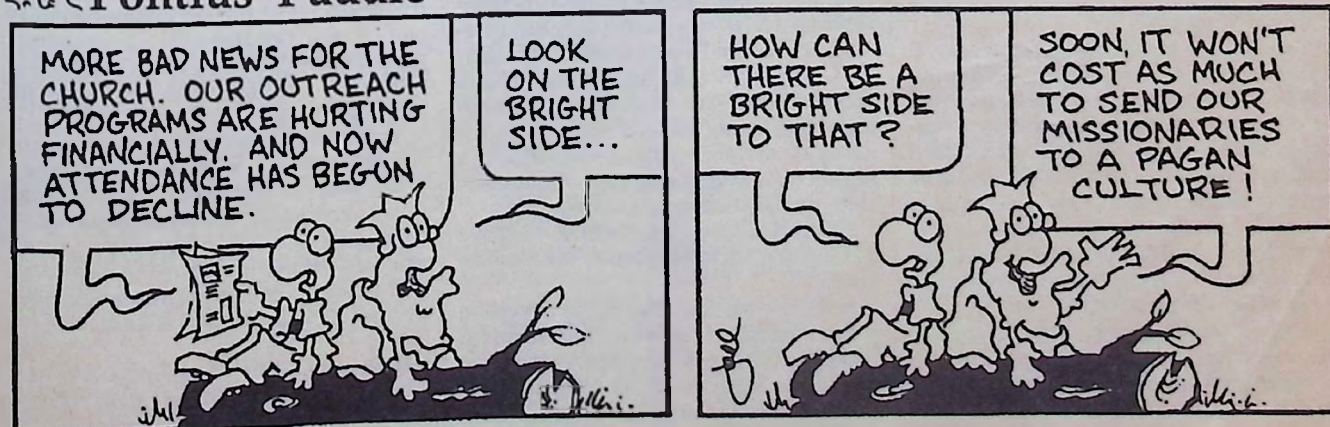
Lord, prayed for forgiveness and release from the guilt, the pain and the bondage and I sobbed as all the anger and hurt flowed out of me. He prayed asking God for maturity in Christ where growth had been stunted by sin. I began to laugh, sensing the welling up within me of the spring of water in my life.

That anointing of Jesus Christ was as precious to me as my first love of Christ when I was a child. Since then, God has also been healing and restoring Heather's spirit and her readiness to minister. I am now returning to the ministry with hope and joy and direction in the authority of Jesus Christ—to be a lover and a leader of his people. I've spent some time in the wilderness, experiencing, seeing and touching human need and emptiness, but I thank God for all of those days, knowing now that there are so many people still in that wilderness who with some love and understanding can be helped to find the living God.

Miraculous? I believe so, but like Jesus at the wedding at Cana, the best wine is saved to last. Just before leaving the ministry a lady handed me a slip of paper with the reference "Jeremiah 29:11-13" written on it, saying that she believed God also meant it to apply to my life. I can now say that it does. Verse 14, which follows, says, "...and I will bring you back to the place from where I sent you into exile." My friends, Lake Illawarra is where I was living when I left my first love for Jesus Christ—22 years ago. Isn't God good! Praise him.

• Ian Morton is the minister at the Lake Illawarra, NSW, church.

Pontius' Puddle



Where Something "Happens"!

by R. Robert Cueni

Vital congregations have five distinctive qualities.

Every pastor dreams of serving a congregation filled with positive, upbeat people like Marian. As she left on a recent Sunday morning she evaluated the status of the congregation's health and effectiveness. "Oh," she said, "we are having such good church lately!"

What a delightful way to express her belief that she is participating in a faithful, vital congregation. Yet what distinguishes a healthy congregation from one in which mere frenetic activity dominates? More precisely, what constitutes a vital congregation?

As a way to address that issue, I suggest that lively congregations share at least five qualities.

First, vital congregations have a vision of who they are and a plan to get to where they want to go.

One midwestern Disciples pastor asked the congregation he had just been called to serve to begin thinking of the local church as a spiritual caravan. After all, he suggested, people in congregations and in frontier wagon trains share a common purpose. Both are communities that covenant for a trip together—the journey west, or the one through life.

The pastor went on to analyse the congregation's present understanding of being a local church. Members thought of themselves, he told them, as an "ecclesiastical general store where a few clerks, namely the lay leadership and the minister, dispense goods and services to the members and the public".

Everyone in town knew that First Christian Church was a good place for weddings, funerals, worship services and other religious commodities. While nothing was inherently wrong in being the Church of the General Store, there were many more possibilities in becoming the Church of the Spiritual Caravan.

That imagery imprinted. Years later, it still serves as the benchmark for testing ideas, setting goals and evaluating the effectiveness of the congregation's program. This particular church can list itself among those all-too-rare entities called vital congregations. It has a vision. Its members share a positive way to talk about and think about their life together. The image also serves to motivate them to accomplish a set of agreed-upon goals.

Second, vital congregations are committed to intentional and multifaceted growth.

When growth ceases, sickness and death ensue. However, unlike the situation in

the plant and animal kingdoms, church growth does not occur naturally. It happens only where it is desired, planned for and pursued. Healthy congregations understand this principle and act accordingly.

Vital congregations grow programmatically and spiritually as well as numerically. Small study and social groups are constantly being formed, strengthened and then phased out as they become less effective. Leaders continually evaluate the congregation's small group life and its ability to assimilate new members as well as give long-term members a place to belong.

The concern for spiritual growth motivates the spawning of these small groups. As one pastor contended, "Our goal is for more and more people to be involved in a Bible study, a prayer group or other spiritual renewal program, such as Cursillo or Emmaus Walk. We believe church vitality requires more and more persons to be comfortable about talking about the importance of Jesus Christ in their lives."

Of course, growing spiritually and programmatically is not a substitute for numerical growth. The evangelistic task remains a challenge because it defies all laws of momentum. The leadership must push constantly to make the membership sensitive to reaching out to friends and neighbours with the gospel's message and an invitation to attend church. Vital congregations set numerical growth goals and pursue them as vigorously as program and spiritual growth goals.

Third, vital congregations demonstrate a high level of commitment to the church's significant worship services.

Local congregations differ from community agencies, service clubs and other manifestations of the church in that they are first and foremost worshipping communities. Vital congregations take this role seriously. Consequently, their pastors lead services which are well planned, thoroughly practiced and intended for maximum impact by bringing a word of hope and the possibility of an encounter with the living, loving God. As might be anticipated, these congregations respond with a higher than average percent of membership regularly attending worship.

Fourth, vital congregations are energised by reaching out to minister to the needs of others.

Someone has said that while television is a million dollar show on a four hundred dollar box, church is frequently little more than a four hundred dollar show in a million dollar box! The dullness results from

concepts of ministry that limit themselves to meeting the personal needs of those present. Vital congregations avoid this dullness pitfall by getting people involved in the greater issues. The stronger the concept and commitment to mission, the more lively the congregation. This involvement in local, regional and global issues energises the people rather than draining them.

Fifth, vital congregations value people over things and motivate positive affirmation rather than scolding.

In lively congregations the membership likes the minister, and the minister likes the people. Rather than being the reason for the church's health, this positive pastor-parish relationship reflects the church's vitality. Lively congregations are places where people are valued more than deeds or things. This includes the pastor, the lay readers, the pew-sitting members and the visitors.

This people-valuing stance offers other fringe benefits. For instance, vital congregations need not fear conflict. They understand that tensions are normal and, rather than harbouring ill will or escalating every deference of opinion to a full-scale fight, they know they must bring conflicts to a resolution without damaging those involved. People in healthy congregations emerge from conflicts feeling as though the issue was faced and they were affirmed. Now that is using tension creatively!

In this kind of creation people feel safe enough to risk. They can state their differing opinions or even stand emotionally naked before one another and need not fear they will be hurt. Vital congregations probably do not have greater diversity than non-healthy congregations, but because people feel safe to express themselves, they seem to.

This makes vital congregations places of great joy. Smiles come easily and laughter frequently interrupts committee meetings and worship services alike. Quite simply, people come to church with the anticipation that something joyous and important just might happen.

This positive atmosphere grows out of confidence in a fundamental assumption of the gospel—that we are all acceptable, loved and lovable, simply because we are children of God. And because of whose we are, we are called to love one another. With that pillar of the faith firmly established, everything else seems to fall into place.

• R. Robert Cueni is senior minister of First Christian Church, Bloomington, Illinois, USA. Reprinted from *The Disciple*.

Our Club

Our "Club" is a source of continual surprise. Its activities are such that I never know whether to laugh or weep. It is called a church, it has a church building and its members meet on Sundays. In reality it is nothing but a club for elderly persons, most of whom are women, the majority well into their seventies.

The essence of a church at work is to proselytise, to serve and to renew. It is a type of continuing rebirth, sharing the good news and spreading it abroad. A club, on the other hand, is for its members, unashamedly so, often difficult to join and tightly administered. It is usually a specialist group with one common interest and is inward looking. By all such measures our church has surely become a club, with an obvious warning: "We don't want you in our church." Sorry, club.

Age and circumstance have enabled an elderly group (mostly ladies) to take over the direction of a tired church. It is easier to be friendly and to support or be part of the controlling body than to advance the wit-

ness and growth of the church, hence the transition to a club. It has created a power base with unlimited opportunities for discussion and control. Is it tragedy or farce?

Some of the club's practices are beyond belief. The spokesperson for the board of officers once suggested that one auxiliary (incidentally the only successful and vital part of the church) had too much religious content in its meetings. On another occasion a member was invited, in writing, to meet the board. He did so, at the appointed time and place, but when he asked for a report of the meeting he was told he hadn't met the board. It is unbelievable!

The ordinary members of the club are never consulted. Attempts, to date, to have regular meetings have failed dismally. One officer, when asked when a meeting would be called said, "We are working on it." The secretary said, "We only have one meeting a year." A member was told that there would be a meeting and that he would be invited. It is not clear, therefore, if ordinary members are automatically able to attend a meeting if such a meeting were called or if it is by invitation. Can you imagine it?

The club has no rules to consult, no constitution to guide and little recorded

precedent. I wonder how many languishing churches are, in fact, clubs like ours.

The general opinion of outside observers is that the church cannot continue. This is not the view of most members and it does not appear to have been the subject of any decision at board level. The rank and file are only given sketchy reports of meetings of the board and who cares anyway? There is no plan for future growth and no real desire to change. "We have tried it all", they say.

It is hard enough to understand why plans for progress are unwelcome. It is more difficult to comprehend how a board can hold itself unanswerable to its members. This is surely the antithesis of Christian trusteeship.

Apparently all that is desired is that the present arrangement continues and the power group remains "Don't upset the boat," is the specific advice reformists receive. I wonder how Jesus Christ would fare if he came to this club and proposed a growth plan to spread his message abroad. I'm sure he would be warned off. It has all happened before!

• The author wishes to remain anonymous

A Nursing Mother's Reply

Kaye Caporn writes in response to Dave Vincent's article on the child's first two years ("AC", 18 March, p. 23) as spokesperson for the Nursing Mothers Association of Australia Public Relations (Vic. Branch). The NMAA's role in the community is to support and educate women who wish to breastfeed their babies. It recognises the value of breastfeeding in the mother-baby relationship and has seen firsthand the bonding that occurs between mother and baby when they are fortunate enough to achieve an ongoing nursing relationship.

As a qualified breastfeeding counsellor I often come across breast refusal. While I do not wish to negate the importance of the first two years of life or undermine the value of Dave Vincent's article, I feel the illustration used to show the vulnerability of a baby in utero is misleading.

A newborn baby can refuse the breast for many reasons, some mother related, some baby related. Tension, pain and similar sensitivities can prevent correct hormonal response in the mother, delaying the release of milk to the baby. In this situation a baby can refuse because it isn't being satisfied. A new mother can lack

confidence and skill, preventing correct positioning and the baby will refuse.

Perhaps drugs administered during labour could have affected the baby mentioned in the article, causing sleepiness. The extra handling could have awakened the baby, stimulating it to seek the other woman's breast. There are many reasons this baby could have refused its own mother's breast.

Many women have negative thoughts during pregnancy, for it is a time of fluctuating emotions. This doesn't mean a mother's baby isn't welcomed and loved. We are given nine months to adjust to the idea. It would be sad if Dave Vincent inadvertently laid guilt on mothers or planted seeds of doubt on their ability to breastfeed when his article was written specifically to encourage parents to recognise the importance of their role, especially in the first two years of life.

• Kaye Caporn is a registered nurse, a qualified breastfeeding counsellor who for the past three years has helped train other breastfeeding counsellors, a member of the Nursing Mothers Association of Australia Public Relations Support Group (Vic Branch), a mother of three children aged 9, 7 and 4...and a minister's wife. She is a member of the Ivanhoe, Vic, church.

Continually Aware...

Continually aware, Lord,
is how we need to be.
On each you are depending
to look around and see
Just where it is you've placed us:
our work—our church—our home—
Our friends—and all creation—
all made by you alone.

Continually aware, Lord,
of people: young and old,
Their moods, their needs, their feelings,
the joy, the grief, the cold.
Help us to empathise, Lord,
and gently show we care.
You love each one so dearly
and share each weight they bear.

Help us to be aware, Lord,
in worship times, and praise,
That there are those beside us
with heavy, darkened days:
Non-Christians who are searching
for all that you can give.
Please touch them through your Spirit,
help them respond and live.

Continually aware, Lord,
that Jesus is alive,
His presence always with us
our daily lives to guide.
We dedicate ourselves now,
and reach to you in praise.
With love and adoration
our hearts to you we raise.

—Margaret Croxford

Mission Focus Weekend

The Launceston, Tas, church held its annual Mission Focus weekend 31 March - 2 April. Guest speaker for the weekend was Jeff May, Executive Director of the Overseas Mission Board. Wayne and Janet Kerrison, on furlough from Papua New Guinea, also took part. Wayne is the business manager for the Churches of Christ mission in PNG and both he and Janet are members of the Launceston church.

The weekend commenced with a young people's night at the home of Craig and Joy Spaulding, co-leaders of the New Gene youth group. This was an informal evening with Jeff and Wayne giving real life examples of the problems confronting missionaries.

On Saturday evening there was an all nations dinner in the hall with 120 attending. This was followed by a rally when two audio-visuals were shown. One featured Brian and Julia Coats who are undertaking language training in Switzerland before going to Zaire with the Africa Inland Mission later this year. They are being supported by the church and spent four years at Launceston. The other audio-visual featured the Kerrison family (It is titled

"Two Days in the Life of the Kerrisons.") Wayne and Janet and Jeff were interviewed about mission and in particular the fears and joys of being a missionary in PNG. Jeff spoke on "Issues Facing a Church in Mission."

On Sunday Jeff spoke at both morning services on "Being Motivated for Mission." A men's singing group under the direction of Barry Birtwistle sang at both services.

Once again the church was packed for the evening service which commenced with an audio-visual based on Psalm 104. Wayne was interviewed by Jeff. This was a moving moment as Wayne gave his testimony on how God was calling him for total surrender. The service concluded with a devotional audio-visual after Jeff May had challenged the church with his address "Risk - The Normal Christian Life."

A number of missionary organisations had displays in the foyer.

The weekend was an outstanding success and many were confronted with the mission of the church to go and make disciples.

—George Green

Church News

Qld

KEDRON (Noel Baxter) Minister and two group leaders attended National Small Groups Conf in Sydney early April. 5 effective care groups now meeting ... Weekly "Cards & Craft" mornings commenced at Community Cottage ("No. 12") ... Transferred members from Stafford church (closed late 1988) contributing to church's life ... Plans proceeding for 60th anniversary 2-4 June with Graham Agnew. Theme "Being the Church in Touch".

WYNNUM (Charles Cole) March Open Door meeting Ambulance officers instructed on resuscitation of elderly. Senior gentleman vol-

unteer had very healthy heart for age according to cardiac read-out ... Golden wedding anniversary thanksgiving service & luncheon for Charles & Beryl Cole ... CWF alive & well, planning great things for 1989 include ladies night, games night, craftwork, progressive dinner ... 1 April bus trip to Whitestone Mountain. Ladies of Ma Ma Creek church catered lunch. Tremendous fellowship, sing-a-long, great views of God's world.

WA

CARNARVON (Donald Bone) Geoff Maxwell, missionary to PNG, visited Carnarvon & spoke to church ... Donald Bone conducting preaching classes ... CWF held Easter program at Olive Laird Hostel & attended World Day of Prayer ... Frank & Marian Law Davis farewelled at morning tea. Moving to Northam ... Donald Bone pre-

Obituaries are limited to 100 words

BENNETT, Philip John

A young man whose life and passing has made a deep impression on many. Born and nurtured in a faith environment, Philip's life manifested qualities and character of enduring nature. A gentle and sensitive nature was complimented by an active, determined and creative will. Within his heart Philip knew the love of Jesus that embraced precious relationships with his wife Kaylene, his earthly family and his family in Christ. The love of Jesus came to be seen as the treasure and strength of Philip's life as a battle with cancer drained the strength of the earthen vessel. A service of thanksgiving for Philip's life bore witness to the deep impression Jesus has made through Philip's life.

—Peter Broadbent

sent Easter message on local radio.

WEMBLEY (J.T. Timms) Highlights — Church of Christ Easter Camp at Roelands, musical evening by Cross Reference from Warwick, Film "Twice Pardoned" a real blessing, camps planned for junior & senior youth groups, church encouraged by growth from transfers & conversions.

SUBIACO (Nigel Merrick) Church farewelled Kraus family who returned to Canada on 12 April ... Young people blessed as they learnt more about God's word at recent Easter camps ... Oro young people's group took part in barbecue & bush dance in Kings Park. 60 present ... Basketball team formed with members from Oro playing in Churches of Christ competition ... Bible School continuing to grow ... Members excited with news of Graham Johnston from US accepting call as minister after Nigel Merrick leaves to minister at Scarborough

LEAVING THE MINISTRY

To the Editor,

E.A. Barton ("AC" 8 April) cannot know the agony that some of us have been through before we resigned from the ministry. To say that we have not really been called by God or that we thought it would be easy is extremely unfair.

But although we believed that God had called us, some of us wondered if we were meant to be miserable as we endured the meanness and cruelty of a powerful minority who rule God's church. We would have endured it if it had been only directed at us, but could not continue when to do so meant that our families also had to suffer.

So reluctantly, some of us have resigned. We have gone through great turmoil in making such a decision, as we have felt that in leaving an unhappy church situation we are turning our backs on the God who called us.

It has taken some of us months and years before we have felt that we are acceptable to God as we returned to our former occupations.

We are like the wives who take God's word seriously and who believe that marriage is a lifelong commitment, but who regretfully have had to leave husbands who beat them and abuse them.

Please don't judge us harshly and superficially. We hated leaving our calling as much as some of you apparently hated us.

—David McKay, RSL
(Returned Schoolteachers League)

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(Note: The Scholarship Committee reserve the right not to award a scholarship.)

Discipleship

•April Broad, Pyramid Hill, Vic
•Roger Bone, Ann Gill, West
Preston, Vic •Vani Meyer, Mark
Stodden, Glen Waverley, Vic
•John & Krishna Methven, Anthony
& Sue Tregenza, Ringwood, Vic
•Neil Spurr, Eva Briscoe, Grote St,
Adelaide, SA •Victoria Bradford,
Angie Ho, Michael Ossebaar,
Wembley, WA •Gloria Kinghorn,
Cameron Black, Nunawading, Vic
•Glen Johnson, Bradley
Cheeseman, Padstow, NSW

Marriages

•Fiona Broad to Bruce Moon, Pyra-
mid Hill, Vic •Jeni Stewart to Tony
Dare, Springvale, Vic •Carolyn
Banks to Bernard Brummell, Vani
Seru to Robert Meyer, Julie Squires
to Paul Purcell, Glen Waverley,
Vic •Victoria Nator to John
Bradford, Wembley, WA

Deaths

•Philip Bennett, Warrnambool, Vic

Changes

BERWICK: 32 Enterprise Rd,
Berwick (PO Box 75, Berwick, Vic
3806). Phone (03) 707 1868.

MOUNT CLEAR: Minister—Paul
Creasey, Flat 1, Cobden St, Balla-
rat, Vic 3350. Phone (053) 33 4729.

HAMPSTEAD GARDENS: Minis-
ter—Keith Ridge, 4 Falcon Ave,
Hampstead Gardens, SA 5086.
Phone (08) 261 1664 (office), (08)
266 1094 (home).

COLONEL LIGHT GARDENS:
Secretary—Allan James, 22
Cherub St, Hallett Cove, SA 5158.
Phone (08) 381 3676.

HUNTSMAN, Ben—25 Illawong
Apartments, 70 Gladesville Bvde,
Patterson Lakes, Vic 3197. Phone
(03) 776 0668.

HOLLOWAY, Jan and Miriam—
14B Celina Cres, Kingsley, WA
6026.

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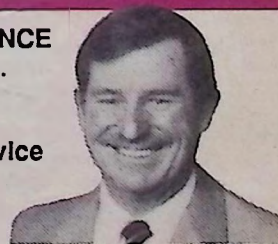
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Church News

SA

COLONEL LIGHT GARDENS (Danny Wilson) AGM held in March, one new elder & three new deacons elected ... Minister, elders & deacons held meetings to discuss & plan for future of our church ... Danny Wilson spoke at the Easter services where we combined with the Baptists for Maundy Thursday & Good Friday ... An Interchurch Council picnic for the district which was held on 2 April was well attended.

HAPPY VALLEY (Russell Allison) Gateway Bible study to commence next term ... Worship training sessions held ... At AGM Jill Richardson elected secretary, Harold Baggs & Phil Megson elders, Leigh Griffin & Alan Wilson general members ... Church library commenced ... Minister's invitation golf challenge was an enjoyable family day ... Sunday School teachers still required ... Rowan & Coralyne Wellstead had dedication for baby Nathan.

GOOLWA (Graeme Ritchie) On Maundy Thursday night a Passover feast was enacted ... Goolwa Uniting Church joined us on Good Friday for morning service with their minister, David Hunnerup, as speaker ... At 6 am on Easter Sunday we gathered on bank of River Murray for dawn service with other churches of our town ... Our 11 am communion & worship was well attended & evening service held also ... Ladies fellowship held pre-Easter devotions at home of Denise & Roly Bartlett on Hindmarsh Island.

GROTE ST (Ian Adams) Ian Adams commenced ministry early in 1989. Ian, Julie, Ruth & Mark received into fellowship by elder E. Finck ... Visit by Conf Pres Colin Dredge & Marg was appreciated ... Two baptisms during March ... Good Friday Easter services 9 am communion service, 3 & 6.30 pm Mr Wood, Bible House, guest speaker. Subject "The Second Coming of our Lord." 400 attended ... CWF birthday luncheon 30 March. Guest artist Lorraine, Pearl, Shirley presented excellent program. 40 ladies attended ... Weekly prayer meeting well attended.

Vic

PYRAMID HILL (Paul Hammats) Northern & Central District Conf held at Pyramid Hill. Speakers Roger Risson & Dorothy Geyer. Attendance 54 from 8 churches ... Young and the Restless youth

group began year with 30 attending a pool party. Other youth groups are Explorers, 6-10 years, Adventurers, 10-13 years ... All local churches participated in Palm Sunday walk, which concluded in hospital grounds with short service.

MOUNT CLEAR (Paul Creasey) Interim minister for 1989 Paul Creasey. Induction service held 5 Mar ... Students from Ballarat CAE are welcomed and hospitality given for Sunday lunch. Minister encouraging group on campus ... World Day of Prayer held. Howard Trezise speaker ... Playgroups meet 3 mornings each week ... Good Friday service well attended ... 6 people from church teach religious education at Mt Clear Primary School ... 3 commitments.

KANIVA (M. Goldup) Weekend for Kaniva centenary with return of former members, ministers. Celebrations included picnic, barbecue, social Sat. evening, displayed memorabilia. Features of Sunday service readings by former ministers Arthur Withers and Will Wigney, special message by E.L. Williams, centenary hymn composed by local member Bess Crouch, unveiling by Albert Williams of plaque commemorating pioneer faith. Sunday night service led by Pam Bowers.

SPRINGVALE (T. Ede, P. Lyne) 75 attended church camp at Cowes ... 1989 Prayer Partner program launched with 70 participating ... Three decisions recently ... Film "The Pretender" screened at youth service ... Bilingual Easter celebration service held with Vietnamese Church ... Audio cassette "The Bible in Living Sound" launched as outreach to associated families ... Number of folk incapacitated by accidents/illnesses ... Living Links, Wayne & Janet Kerrison from Madang, shared in recent evening service.

CASTLEMAINE (P. Haylock) Dorothy Geyer spoke at recent Monday evening meeting ... Small group life expanding with new groups forming from existing groups ... Church has appointed part-time administrator/co-ordinator. Church directory updated as an initial duty ... Youth groups growing numerically & spiritually. **WEST PRESTON (Chris Field)** What a weekend! Our 60th celebrations. Old Time Social Saturday night included slides over the years. All past ministers occupying platform Sunday morning. Joan Siler & Beryl Condict on organ & piano. Closed circuit TV for overflow. Luncheon happy time of munching & talking. Pleasant

Sunday Afternoon compered by John Bailey. A time of reminiscing followed by afternoon tea. Video available, contact Bill Nash on (03) 478 1106.

GLEN WAVERLEY (Ron Elbourne, Lindsay Croxford, Doug Fitzpatrick) Brian White led Small Group Workshop ... Singles group commenced ... CWF sponsored evening "Family Relationships & How to Cope with Teenagers". Speaker Pat Greig ... Good Friday service well attended ... College for Christians series "Tackling Life's Tough Questions" was led by senior minister ... Waves (YP) enjoyed canoe camp ... Recent artists: Adrienne Fitzpatrick, "Frontier", Mica Smart, Brett & Kerry Graham, Ken Harris.

WARRNAMBOOL (Peter Broadbent) Laurie Steele, Port Fairy, speaker for regional pulpit swap ... Combined Churches Praise march held Palm Sunday ... Praise God for moving "Passion" musical presented twice at Performing Arts Centre, with town choirs & combined churches choir & local musicians. Musical led by elder Chris Walters, who wrote most of the words & music ... Wayne Kerrison, PNG, guest speaker Easter Sunday.

RINGWOOD (Barry Jenkins) On Palm Sunday four baptised: John & Krishna Methven, managers of Jumbunna Lodge; Anthony & Sue Tregenza, a newly married couple from own church family. Hall was full to witness the baptisms ... Ken Geyer arranged footwashing communion service over Easter ... Bryan Mee will conclude his part-time ministry at Ringwood to go to Narang, Qld, in June ... Elders meeting with elders at Fountain gate to give guidance to the younger church.

NUMURKAH Northern & Riverina Conf 18 & 19 March guest speaker Dr Bill Tabbernee, Principal of Theological College. Topic was parables of Jesus then & now. 51 attended. A good learning & fellowship weekend was enjoyed by all ... Fellowship meetings are held each month, rotating in member's homes ... Youth group numbers increasing ... Pleased to see a few new faces over the last few months. **MONTROSE (Neil Galbraith)** Church heavily involved in combined churches Christmas program at Montrose Town Centre. Despite rainy conditions 1,500 attended ... Seven from church participating in Leadership Training course at new Theological College ... Choir reformed for special occasions ... Church School gave two performances of Christmas cantata/pag-

eant "Happy Birthday, Merry Christmas" ... Greater emphasis on small group program ... Six families attended Banksia Christmas camps. **ESSENDON (Ken Stothard)** Journey to Footscray on 14 March to hear Wayne & Janet Kerrison from PNG ... Jim & Doreen Strack celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on 19 March ... Phy Lynch from Western Trust visited on 26 March ... 2 April church business meeting Doreen Strack & Neil Hutton elected as elders ... Interest shown in our meetings by a number of Lebanese folk.

NUNAWADING (E. Keating, D. Hamilton, J. Wright, L. Smith) Force Ten allocations \$1,536 ... Opening of after church coffee shop ... Church choir presented "The Cross of Christ" on Palm Sunday ... Bethel & Care groups commenced ... During April Welcome Dinner for new worshippers, outreach dinner to Playgroup parents, young couples guest dinner ... 130 attended Easter family camp at Banksia ... Dave Watt able to attend worship ... Visit from Salvation Army Staff Songsters.

OCEAN GROVE (Andrew Henley) Welcomed in four new members ... Guest speakers: Dr Tabbernee, Brian White, Alf White, Ross Bourdon ... Successful fund raising activities for block of land: Trivial Pursuit night, garage sales, bush dance, street stalls & time & talent scheme ... Participation in community festival via float ... Singles group active ... After school childrens group commenced ... Board goal setting day & congregational Commitment Day held.

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Church News

NSW

TAREE (Neville Aubrey) Pass-over supper held 23 March. Neville Aubrey led the proceedings. Youngest child at each table asked, "What makes this night different from all other nights?" and it was explained to them. Lord's supper followed ... Congratulations to Marcia and Leo McCarthy on the arrival of another grandson, Joel Christopher. Parents are Vicky and Chris Robbie of Newport ... Attendances increasing ... Monday night Bible studies continue.

PADSTOW (Ed Holt) Tony Campolo film series "Who Switched the Price Tags?" being screened as lead up to Come Alive outreach in May ... Creative Living Centre attracting 30 ladies from community with craft & exercises as activities ... Two young people baptised recently & a further two have made commitments ... 10 young people who attended DCD Easter camp came back with great enthusiasm to minister to others ... Current Home Care fellowship studies focus on "Follow-up" & were written by one of our elders, Greg Clarke.

GILGANDRA (G. Arundel) Pastor commenced ministry in March ... 18 from Gilgandra church & AIM attended New England Easter camp "Rangari" Gunnedah. There were five decisions at the camp & a good time of fellowship & study.

Tas

COLLINS ST, HOBART (Jeff Weston) Long weekend family camp at Waddamana provided relaxing time for attenders ... New elder, Errol Gilbert, elected ... Elders undertaking study "Let it Begin with Me" on Fridays at 6.15 am ... Board structure now provides for each deacon to have specific area of responsibility ... Maundy Thursday service at 10 pm well supported & good youth representation at state-wide Easter Camp ... Sunday morning attendances filling church ... Greg Foot appointed State Director of World Vision.

LAUNCESTON (Rod Foster) Easter services well attended in spite of 27 being at youth camp ... Missionary Focus weekend an Inspirational time ... Working bees at Bicheno camp have reclassified two units & relined ceilings in shower block ... Vic-Tas CWF President Elect spoke to CWF on 3 April ... Henry Dubbeld appointed new chairman of the elders.

CAVESIDE (John & Colleen Harrison) Good attendance when churches in Caveside-Mole Creek area combined for Good Friday service in our chapel ... Sunday School & church picnic held Easter

Monday ... Wayne & Janet Kerrison shared experiences of New Guinea at Sunday service & home fellowship meeting ... Clem Burt, Ulverstone, preached 9 April to allow John & Colleen to attend Tas

Convention at Howrah ... Malcolm & Bev Ashdown away in New Zealand & Queensland speaking to Christian Business Men's groups.

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World News

Russia Opens Church Doors

In the expectant aftermath of the Soviet Union's first democratic elections and amid the threats from breakaway nationalism and a sluggish economy, one aspect of Gorbachev's glasnost goes forward with unabated pace—the changes for the Christian church and religion generally. Over a thousand places of worship, churches and mosques, have been opened across the Soviet Union over the past year. Plans are underway to reopen for worship many of the Russian Orthodox churches that have been closed for years or open only as museums. The All-Union Baptist's building program continues apace. Old Orthodox monastic sites are being restored to the church. A major monastery is to be established in Murmansk, and in Ukraine the monastery of Our Lady of Goscha is to be re-established. Recently 30,000 worshippers gathered for a special liturgy on the site.

In the run-up to the new law on church-state relations, which, among other things, will fully legalise church work among children, Sunday schools and children's services are being developed fast by the Baptists. The Orthodox have no tradition of Sunday schools but are anxious to train their priests to run Christian education programs for the young.

Over two million Bibles have been imported since perestroika began, and that number may double this year. Christian videos are being imported from western Europe and the USA. Bibles and prayer books are being published in a number of the USSR's languages and in the Baltic republics after-school instruction classes and religious television programs, by Lutherans, point to even more radical developments.

Archbishop Makary of Ivan-Franko in Ukraine said in London recently, "Perestroika is like another Pentecost for us in the Russian Orthodox Church. The millennium celebrations last year, in the

context of glasnost, created a totally new climate for the church in Soviet society... The Russian Orthodox Church is now a missionary church, reaching outside itself, responding to the great interest in spirituality in the Soviet Union today, especially among young people... Gorbachev is looking to the church to raise moral standards in the country." Economic perestroika, with its drive to make the economy more efficient and competitive, is posing moral and ethical problems in Soviet society. "There is a danger that people will become more selfish," the archbishop said.

—from *Christian Week*



The Last Word

Courage consists not in blindly overlooking danger, but in seeing it and conquering it.

—Jean Paul Richter

What is the worst thing you can do to a hungry actor?

Make him eat his own words.

★★★★★

Bishops, other clergy and church members gathered at the Sydney RSL Club in George Street recently for a dinner to welcome the Anglican Archbishop of Melanesia, Amos Waiaru, a Solomon Islander. It was announced that he would say grace in Solomon pidgin. Just as he began, the club's loudspeakers, which had been playing loud music all evening, blared forth with "That Ol' Black Magic Has Me in Its Spell". There was much unseemly clerical mirth.

★★★★★

Producer: No, I cannot give you the part.

Actor: Why not?

Producer: You don't put enough life into the death scene.

★★★★★

We have enough people who tell it like it is—now we could use a few who tell it like it could be.

★★★★★

A weather forecast that says, "Partly cloudy followed by partly sunny," is bound to be partly correct.

★★★★★

A solar powered computer wristwatch, programmed to tell the time and date for 125 years, has a guarantee—for two years.

★★★★★

Have you ever had your ears pierced?

No but I have often had them bored.

★★★★★



Rocking chairs are wonderful for getting babies??? to sleep!

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