

THE AUSTRALIAN CHRISTIAN

NATIONAL JOURNAL OF CHURCHES OF CHRIST IN AUSTRALIA

Registered for Australia Post Publication No. VAR 0761
Volume 93, No. 19 3 November 1990

The Colours of Faith

Sorting through the hundreds of patches that have come flooding into Canberra for the patchwork wall-hanging for the 7th Assembly of the World Council of Churches next February

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THE AUSTRALIAN CHRISTIAN

Vol. 93

No. 19

3 November 1990

Managing Editor: Chris Ambrose
Assistant: Geoff Alves

Issue	Deadline
17 November	7 November
1 December	21 November
15 December	5 December

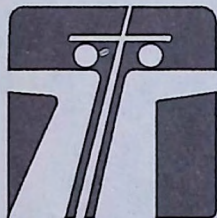
Address for All Correspondence
(including all subscription payments)
PO Box 101

North Essendon 3041
Telephone (03) 379 1219
After Hours (03) 337 8349



Member
publication of the
Australian
Religious Press
Association

National logo of
Churches of Christ
in Australia



"The Australian Christian" is published
by the Board of Management of the
Australian Christian, a Department of

the Federal Conference of
Churches of Christ in Australia.

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Printing by New Litho Pty Ltd,
63 Sunbury Cres,
Surrey Hills 3127

Responsibility for electoral material is
accepted by Chris Ambrose,
3 Hamlyn St, Essendon 3040

This publication is indexed in the
Australasian Religion Index

ISSN 0004-8852

Advertising Rates

Displayed: \$4.40 per column
centimetre

Classifieds: \$9 for the first 25 words
and 10c for each additional word

World News

German Reunification: A Mixed Blessing for the Church

Amidst the public euphoria at German reunification, many German Christians are struggling to come to terms with the changes it will bring, reports a recent visitor to Berlin.

Jean Skuse, National Co-ordinator for the World Council of Churches Assembly to be held in Canberra next year, visited Berlin on the eve of reunification.

Ms Skuse met with numerous church leaders and members, who shared their hopes and fears about the future of a united Germany.

The post-war division of Germany was followed by the division of the German Protestant Church in 1969.

In the Federal Republic (FRG or West Germany) the Evangelical Church had over 25 million members and received a percentage of each citizen's taxes.

This linked church and state and contributed to the wealth and influence of the former.

In East Germany (the former GDR) the Evangelical Church was strongly based in the local parishes and remained much smaller (with some 7 million members) than its Western counterpart.

It struggled to find a role in a socialist society and to carry on its work with meagre resources.

Some church leaders from the East told Ms Skuse they fear that their church will effectively be "taken over" by the larger and wealthier FRG Church.

They think this could compromise their church's independence from the state and its strength at parish level.

Another concern is the rise in unemployment in the former GDR at a time when East Germans are exposed to unprecedented wealth and materialism from the West. The gap between reality and aspirations is thus likely to widen, and poverty will be even starker.

Despite these underlying concerns, Jean Skuse said it was "tremendously exciting" to be in Berlin at this crucial time. "It was hard to believe that you could go across the Brandenburg Gate without obstruction," she added.

The World Council of Churches Assembly, to be held in Australia in February 1991, will be the last Assembly attended by two separate German delegations. Some 30 delegates from the FRG and 15 from the GDR will join an estimated 4,000 participants from all over the world.

Soviet Revival under Way

Soviet Baptist churches report a growing response to the Gospel and rising numbers of baptisms in many local churches amid the rapidly deteriorating conditions in the country.

According to Alexander Firisiuk, recently elected secretary of the Union of Evangelical Christians-Baptists, the average number of baptisms among the Baptist churches of the USSR is likely to be twice the number of previous years.

He said, "In my former home church of Minsk, where for many years we only had about 30 baptised, already this year the church has baptised 90 converts with another 50 awaiting baptism."

Moscow, Leningrad and many smaller churches have reported more converts and baptisms in response to local evangelistic meetings, crusades by such international preachers as Billy Graham and Luis Palau, and the stepping-up of Christian literature work, Bible distribution and the use of video.

However, church growth and church planting by the Soviet Baptists is being adversely affected by the failure, despite promises, of the government to assign property for a seminary and churches, while in some areas churches have been weakened by loss of members after ethnic upheavals and the migration of German-speaking Baptists, especially in central Asia, to West Germany. In Byelorussia up to 70% of the population is still suffering from the after-effects from Chernobyl.

Rev. Dr Alexei Bychkov, former general secretary of the Soviet Baptists says the new freedom to evangelise and undertake "deeds of love and mercy in hospitals, orphanages and homes for senior citizens", and the new basis for church-state relations, now meant unprecedented possibilities.

A recent meeting between Baptist leaders and student historians of the Moscow Institute was typical in revealing great interest in the Christian faith, much misunderstanding to be overcome and the desire of young people "to co-operate in healing the wounds of Soviet society".

The most significant development for Soviet Christians today is that now the Holy Bible can reach the hands of each person. Rev. Vasily Logvinenko, Baptist Superintendent for the Russian Republic, recently wrote, "We have received hundreds of thousands of Bibles and Christian books from abroad".

—Brian Cooper
Reprinted from *Christian Week*,
12 October 1990

The Colours of Faith



Ranjini Rebera and Lillas Wheat sort through just a few of the 700-odd patches that have arrived to date

Two years ago a group of 50 came together to consider decorating the 7th Assembly of the World Council of Churches.

Melburnians Margaret Gambold, Susan Daily and Coralie Ling came up with one possible option: a giant patchwork wall-hanging, to form a backdrop in the plenary hall.

With three months left to the beginning of the Assembly, that option has become a reality. Groups and individuals from across Australia have created a kaleidoscope of colour and texture. Over 800 "patches" of the targeted 1,000 are now complete. Over 700 had poured into the Canberra Assembly office by the end of September.

The theme for each patch is that of the Assembly: "Come Holy Spirit, Renew the Whole Creation". One theme; over 800 different expressions. No two patches are identical; no two similar in texture or imagery.

The colours and textures of the Australian desert, our rainforests, our waters, the vibrant colours of our birds, our flora and our fauna, are all represented in the patches. When the 1,000-piece multipatch wall-hanging is finally erected in the National Convention Centre in February, it will be a fitting tribute to the creative genius of the women, men and children who sit in the pews of Australian

churches. Each piece of work is unique.

Many would love to see this wealth of creativity captured and preserved as a part of our national heritage. At the close of the Assembly the patches will not be piled into a musty room and locked away for posterity. Instead they will be untied. Each delegate will be given a patch to take back to their home church. When it is received in its new home, the little pocket at the back of the patch will be opened. The written message from the patch's creators will be read. Hopefully, it will create the first link between two distant groups of people. Through the link, some of the impact of the 7th Assembly may continue into the future.

—Ranjini Rebera

Reprinted from *Journey*, the magazine of the Uniting Church in NSW, Qld and Northern Synods.

A Party in the Mountains



Turning the sod for the new manse

16 September was a day of excitement for the Upper Blue Mountains, NSW, church.

Children arrived at church with party whistles, party hats and pig's noses. Their big moment was to come during the special thanksgiving and farewell service for Judy Gordon as they enacted the parable of the prodigal son. The party didn't only occur during the play, the real one was still to come when 50 shared in the luncheon that followed the service.

The service was in two sections, the first was a time of communion and thanksgiving for what God has done and is doing in the mountains. Judy preached on the parable that the children had portrayed,

centring thoughts on the father's love. The second part of the service was a very special time to thank and farewell Judy for the 18 months of hard work she had put in on behalf of DCD to get the Upper Blue Mountains church functioning and moving confidently into the 90s. It also included a special prayer of commissioning as the church sent Judy forth to continue the work of God's kingdom at Castle Hill.

After the service everybody moved to the rear of the church property where Judy Gordon (representing DCD), George Arundell (who was given the vision for a church at Katoomba) and Frank Clarke (representing the Wentworth Falls congregation who sponsored the vision, with both churches now joined to form the Upper Blue Mountains church) turned the first sod for the new manse to be built in preparation for Doug Fitzpatrick and family who commence their full-time ministry in February 1991.

The day was rich with laughter as all shared together to celebrate God's growing kingdom on the mountain.

—Clinton Wardle

Corrections

In the 20 October issue we had a feature story on the ICA scheme in Queensland. Towards the end of the article under the heading "Progressive Achievements" the wording of the paragraph could be read to imply that Cyril Coward had died. Cyril is still very much alive and we wish to

apologise for the implication that he is deceased.

In the report of the death of Bob Peaker in the 6 October issue we mentioned that Mark Emerson is the chief pilot in Papua New Guinea for MAF. The story said that Mark's home church was the Swanston St, Melbourne, church. This is incorrect. Mark's home church is Ringwood, Vic.

Spring in the Hills

The first signs of spring surrounded 83 ladies for their weekend CWF camp at Camp Waterman, Monbulk, Vic. Their theme was "This Is the Day..."

Phyl Davis shared in three studies: "This is the day to share God", "This is the day to grow" and "This is the day to show".

Lois Smith led a discussion on changes in society affecting women and various forms of relaxation, dance exercise and meditation.

Entertainment came from the "Tiny Trio" (Rebecca, Katherine and Laura—Helen Hall's grandchildren) performing dance routines and the "Tiriki Trio" (Julie Stokie, Cheryl Connor and Verity Cormack) with flute, guitar and singing.

Quiet time was led by Glenys Reaby and the communion by Helen Hall. Lynette Leach led a challenge segment: "This is the day to act—activate, celebrate, transform".

Thanks to all who who contributed, and a special thanks to Linda and Paul Fry and Marilyn and John Beard at the camp. The Beards will be missed at next year's camp as they move to WA.

—Jan Hutton, Camp Convener

Memorable Camp

The Women's Camp at Bicheno, Tas, this year was memorable for at least two reasons. With an attendance of 33 it was the smallest camp for years, due in part to some regulars being in Brisbane for Federal Conference and others involved in a special church function. The other was the presence of our first baby. Six months old Kyran was a delightful addition to our numbers.

Conditions for camp were lovely, with two beautiful sunny days, enhanced by a full moon rising over the Tasman

Sea in the evening. Ida and Basil Marden, our caretakers, spoiled us with flowers in every room and gourmet meals. Ruth Edge, who shares in the ministry with her husband at Ulverstone, was our camp study leader again this year and took as her theme "Jesus His Life, Death and Resurrection". The studies helped to confirm our faith, as we re-examined the foundation and core of our beliefs, and made a fresh assessment of the place the Lord Jesus had in our lives.

The praise time that accompanied each study session enabled us to open up our hearts to the Lord in worship and thankfulness. The small numbers and the caring atmosphere encouraged us to open up to each other, knowing we were accepted and understood by each other.

The devotions each evening carried through the theme of the studies and were a fitting climax to the day.

The weekend, under the leadership of our State President, Va Warwick, was a relaxed and happy occasion, and we all, regulars and first timers alike, came home refreshed and renewed.

—Naomi Neville

Volunteers Sought

Melbourne City Mission is a nondenominational Christian organisation that has the welfare of the older members of our society as one of its fundamental concerns.

Harold McCracken House is City Mission's 50-bed nursing home in North Fitzroy, established in 1979, to care for dependent aged persons. City Mission also operates the Hospice/Palliative Care Service, which aims to provide comfort and care to those persons who have a terminal illness.

The staff of these two programs are highly committed to quality care and service, and greatly appreciate the work of volunteers. Volunteers give much practical assistance in the

mending of residents' clothing, taking residents for walks, attending to indoor plants and performing clerical duties.

Volunteers in the Hospice Service undergo an extensive training course. On completion of training they can be involved with clients, offering physical, spiritual, emotional and social support.

All volunteers are required to participate in on-going training and supervision as part of their contract.

If you are interested in being a volunteer telephone Denise Amey, Co-ordinator of Volunteers for the Hospice/Palliative Care Service, on (03) 486.2666, or Rosalie Hudson, Director of Nursing at Harold McCracken House, on (03) 481 1666.

Course in Ecumenism

International ecumenists, including Dr Michael Kinnamon, Dean of Lexington Theological Seminary of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) will lead a special summer course in ecumenism in Melbourne in January and February.

The leaders will be participants in the World Council of Churches' Seventh Assembly in Canberra, 7-20 February.

"This is an excellent opportunity for clergy, lay people and students to expand their ecumenical vision through lectures and workshops with some of the best people the world's

churches can offer," said Dr Bill Tabbernee, Principal of Churches of Christ Theological College, Mulgrave, who chairs the interdenominational committee sponsoring the course.

The Summer Course in Ecumenism has two sections. The first is the Faith and Order Consultation of the ACC over 25-28 January. Keynote speakers will be Dr Michael Kinnamon and the Rev Janet Crawford (Anglican).

The second part of the course is the annual Ecumenical Summer School at St Mary's College, University of Melbourne, 1-3 February.

The main speakers will be Dr Kinnamon, Rev Ofelia Ortega (Presbyterian Church of Cuba), Rev Hans Ucko (Church of Sweden (Lutheran)) and Rev Dr Geoffrey Wainwright (United Methodist, USA).

A number of Victorians will lead workshops including Bill Tabbernee, Ian Breward, Robin Boyd, Robert Gribben, Coralie Ling, and Rodger Bassham (Uniting Church) and Peter Cross and Mary Leonora Moorhead (Roman Catholic).

Participants may attend either or both weekends. The course is accredited by the Melbourne College of Divinity.

Those wishing to enrol or to receive further information should contact Graeme Wigney, CCTC, PO Box 629, Mulgrave North 3170, phone (03) 790 1000, or Mrs Anne Paul, Ecumenical Affairs Commission, 406 Albert Street, East Melbourne 3002, phone (03) 662 1962.

Churches of Christ Community Care Dept Coffs Harbour Unit

\$60,000 Loan & Licence We currently have available at Dalpura Retirement Village, Coffs Harbour, on the NSW north coast, a single-bedroom unit. This well-appointed unit is one of a group of four single-storey units, having a community hall and located close to transport and amenities. If you are of retirement age and would like further information either write or call:

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Maryborough on Air



Janelle Davy (at the controls) and Bess Lunn (announcer) relaxing while music goes to air

The Maryborough, Vic, church has ventured in faith into radio broadcasting. Recently a team of 12 spent six hours from midnight to dawn on-air from the top of Mt Alexander. They were supported by many more in the church who helped with preparation and follow-up work.

As a conclusion to a series of sermons on faith the minister, Bruce Anderson, challenged the church to take up a specific outreach venture that would stretch their faith. Something that was beyond them but not beyond them and their God.

The potential of radio broadcasts was presented. Emphasised was the possibility of reaching well beyond the Maryborough area and to many who might never enter the church doors. Sixteen indicated their willingness to back the project and join in the planning meeting that night. Others of-

ferred support in other ways.

The opportunity was available to the church because the Central Victorian Gospel Radio station was about to conduct its 11th test transmission from Mt Alexander, just out of Castlemaine and only 60 km from Maryborough. Only weeks before the transmission the station still had several midnight-to-dawn program slots available.

The possibilities of reaching out to restless and hurting people through the night hours excited the group. A program combining Gospel music and needs-oriented good news spots was prepared. A team of 12 prepared themselves to take full responsibility for the operation of the radio station—announcing, operating, telephone answering, record searching, catering and praying. Several trips were made in advance to learn the operation

"AC" Postal Survey

To help us in discussions with Australia Post we intend to conduct a survey of arrival dates of *The Australian Christian* during 1991.

Subscribers who would be willing to help us with this survey over the first six months of 1991 should contact the office on (03) 379 1219.

Already some 30 subscribers at Federal Conference have agreed to help with the survey. We are looking for others to join this group so that we can be sure of a wide coverage of Australia.

Those participating will be sent a letter explaining the scheme and a form to complete.

The form will include the issue number and date and the day of posting from Melbourne.

All the subscribers have to do is to fill in the appropriate space with the day the issue arrives.

The information gained will assist us in our negotiations with Australia Post regarding the quality of delivery services.

of the studio and equipment.

On Wednesday night, 10 October, the team travelled over to Mt Alexander and worked together on this exciting venture. Many requests were made for listeners to call the station and ACTS International literature was offered.

During the night 16 called the station: eight requested literature, two shared deep needs and one requested prayer. As a result 20 pieces of Christian literature were sent out.

However, what is also exciting is the way this venture drew a diverse group of people together. The team that went to the studio included students and grandparents, a cactus cultivator and a chiropractor. Others in the church gave generously to meet the cost of literature, travel and station membership fee and the surplus funds were donated to the station.

At the review night, the following Sunday, we watched a video of the night's activities and decided we would do it all again during the next test transmission early next year.

—Bruce Anderson



Ken Weir cueing up a record

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Seven Hills Centenary



Left to right—Kevin Crawford, Gordon Moyes, Tom Beaman and John Foote during the centenary service

100 years ago, in 1890, in their home in Prospect, Sydney, Mr and Mrs Hawkins with three of their family met with Mr and Mrs William Piper for the breaking of bread. This was the beginning of the Seven Hills, NSW, church.

The church through the years has had its ups and downs, but on 2 September it celebrated its centenary, an event only made possible by faithful members who served the Lord during all those years.

For over a year the present members planned for the day. The Lord showed his approval by bestowing many blessings—the forecast was for a wet day but it was beautiful—a clear blue sky with not a cloud in sight. About 190 past and present members, contacts of the church and visitors packed the chapel. Everybody was given two booklets, one a concise history of the church, the other the anniversary program, both attractively printed by Max Kingham. The service was led by the present minister,

Tom Beaman, and the song leader was John Foote. Past minister Roy Dixon opened in prayer. Kevin Crawford, NSW Conference Secretary, brought a greeting. Les Pilkington was pianist and his daughter, Beth Chant, soloist. The group "Dove" also contributed to the success of the program. Past members Owen Wainwright, John Horne, Brian Speechly and Colin Wakley helped with the emblems. Joyce Piper, the longest-serving member of Seven Hills, read the lesson. Dr Gordon Moyes brought a challenging message on the theme "Moving Forward". He said the church at Seven Hills must move forward into this second century with Christ; with Christ and the Gospel and with the fullness and blessings of Christ. To do this successfully means taking off one's coat, rolling up one's sleeves and working. The anniversary dinner was enjoyed by all. The Catering Committee of Vianne Willis, Sylvia Foote and Beverly Beaman with the able assistance of Marjorie and Wally Naylor did a marvellous job. While the anniversary was in progress, John Willis and Dorothy Pilkington were busy videotaping and Barbara Spencer took some great photos.

The management committee would like to thank all who helped make the 100th anniversary a success, particularly the Pendle Hill church for the loan of chairs and tables and Conference Executive for communion glasses.

—T.J. Beaman

"Beyond the Black Stump"

"Beyond the Black Stump" has been firmly established as one of the top events in the youth calender in NSW. And its clientele in other states is also steadily growing.

Black Stump is a festival of music, teaching and the arts, run annually on the October long weekend in NSW. This year more than 6,000 young (and a few not so young) people came to camp at the Cataract Scout Park to take in the exhaustive and exhausting program on offer.

Keynote speaker on main stage was John Smith, back at the Festival after a break of a couple of years. Taking his texts from the parables, "Smithy" shook his audience with the challenge to look hard at the teachings of Christ and make the tough decisions needed for a life to match.

At least 270 came forward for counselling in response to the three main stage teaching sessions, either to commit their lives to Christ or to seek counsel for some further step along their Christian walk. The committee is now following up these contacts with references to home churches where appropriate. There have also been several reports of young people coming to the point of commitment since the event.

Evaluation sheets show that Black Stumpers go away placing a high value on a variety of experiences, but there is no doubting that most are drawn

to the festival by the music. This year's event featured rock, jazz, blues and classical music. With the exception of "Hoi Polloi", "Real Time" and Paul Aldrich, the artists were Australian. Black Stump is seen by groups as a key venue from which to launch a tour program.

The arts program continues to grow with a strengthened following. Performances this year were of a high standard in theatre, dance and poetry. As ever, mime was a very popular medium, featuring the talents of Dennis Claire and Gerrard Mikelsons particularly.

On the Saturday and Sunday afternoons more than 50 seminars and workshops were held, spread over two sessions. Despite the hectic pace of the music and arts entertainment, attendances at these teaching times were still very good, for topics ranging from teaching on "Acts" by Ian Powell, through "Prayer on the Road", "Parents as Partners in Youth Ministry" to "Wearable Art" and "The Arts and Building Community".

At this stage it seems that the 1990 festival has made its financial goals, opening the way for a 1991 event. The Monday offering of over \$12,500 will be passed on speedily to the nominated projects in Aboriginal education, Bibles for Eastern Europe and developments in the Christian arts as an outreach to young people.

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Double Baptism



Bronwyn Streeter (left) and Lynette Richards proudly holding their plants

The Keilor East, Vic, church celebrated a double baptism recently. Lynette Richards and Bronwyn Streeter were baptised by minister Ron Schepis. During the service the girls were each presented with a plant by their mothers.

The plant was chosen as a symbol of life and growth,

which the girls have experienced through their baptism.

These baptisms bring to four the number of baptisms at Keilor East in 1990.

During the same time seven people have transferred their membership to the church in what has been a very exciting year.

Wheeling in the Spirit

Worship took on wheels at a recent service at the Colonel Light Gardens, SA, church.

An assembly line was marked out on the floor and

children's bikes decorated the church. Children carrying bicycle wheels and elders carrying trays for the communion were led in by a person carrying the theme poster "Come Holy Spirit". Communion was held and the wheels put on the bikes.

An international flavour was given as Petra Yarebrant, a Rotary exchange student from Skane, Sweden, led the children to their seats.

At the end of the service the bikes were wheeled out and trikes were ridden along. Worshipers were invited to leave their seats and join the assembly line; a response indicating that they would say yes to a year of ecumenical sharing, a year of world-ranging weekly praying with all God's people in the new "cycle" of prayer, a Bible study program for the weeks 3 June to 15 July and the sharing of two united Sundays in September and December.

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Combined Circuit Meeting

The annual combined communion service of Keith, Mundulla and Bordertown, SA, was held on 21 October at Mundulla. Wampoony was missing this year—it closed during the early part of last year. Those left took up fellowship at Mundulla.

The visiting speaker was

Graham Lawrie, a past minister of the Keith church. A song service conducted by J and H Wiese commenced the meeting. A duet was presented by Joan Wray and Jenny Jeisman.

A retiring offering for World Vision's Romanian Forgotten Children appeal raised \$530.

—Bill Carson

Craig Wilmott Joins Team



Delwyn and Craig Wilmott

The minister of the Lismore, NSW, church, Ian Phillips, has been joined by honorary associate minister, Craig Wilmott. Craig and Delwyn have moved up to Lismore from Newcastle and are helping Ian with a new youth group, CCs. This new

group, which meets at the Goonellabah Hall on Friday nights, is constantly attracting new members. Craig is also in charge of the musical side of the evening services, as well as leading a Tuesday night study group.

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Dean Sander

Letters to the Editor

Letters are limited to 200 words

Elitism and Sexism in Christian Religious Education

To the Editor,

100 years of Christian education in Victorian state schools! What an occasion to celebrate. As a voluntary CRE teacher, I eagerly looked forward to the St Paul's Cathedral centenary service. I was disappointed.

First, the sexism was sad. As most CRE teachers are lay women, I wish we had been involved. The choir was male and the readers and all participants were male, except one.

Secondly, it was elitist. The clergy dominated. Where were the rank-and-file teachers? Without us there would be no program in schools.

Thirdly, the choice of dates was puzzling. Why the middle Sunday of school holidays when many people were away?

Also, the service was cold and traditional. The formality was a vast contrast to the joy and colour of CRE classrooms.

Praise God for ordinary women, working for him in schools. —R.R. König (Nunawading, Vic)

"Cough Up Your Coppers"

To the Editor,

With the slogan "Cough Up Your Coppers", a leading Ad-

elaide charity has offered to accept people's one- and two-cent coins, following the Federal Government's decision to discontinue the issue of these coins. The charity announced coins could be left in a barrel on the ground floor of its head office, or else at its goodwill shops. An arrangement was also made for one of the big medical/hospital benefit schemes to accept such donations. They will be used to buy blankets and food for the homeless and provide "innovative employment programs".

Some householders have jars full of copper coins and can't be bothered to count them. This is a good way to get rid of them.

Perhaps our welfare groups could adopt this idea to raise money for special projects.

—Jack Ludbrook (Dulwich-Rose Park, SA)

[This scheme was picked up in most Australian states. I am not aware that any of our welfare agencies have such a scheme, however I am sure they would be willing to receive any such donations—Editor]

Faith and Sudden Death

To the Editor,

The shocking news report ("AC" 6 October) of the aircraft accident in PNG that claimed the lives of all five people on board brings to my memory

the saintly lady who was killed in similar manner about two years ago.

The former accident is most horrifying in that the unfortunate victims were consecrated devout Christians whose lives on no account should have come to such an unwarranted ending. Surely this is nothing but an untimely undeserved punishment inflicted and allowed by an Almighty God who we are taught and told will faithfully protect them who love and trust him! John 6:37 I say: What a let down!

Psalms 1:6 "For the Lord watches over the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish." I say: An outright sham and a broken promise to those dear souls whose lives were unjustly stolen from them, which surely indicates no promised reward whatever for their profound faith and good works as they witnessed.

If faith can remove mountains (1 Corinthians 13:2) I say: It should also safely land aircraft!

"The Lord knows those who are his." (2 Timothy 2:19) I say: But shamefully and pitifully he forsakes them also!

Joshua 1:9 "Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go." I say: Well, if they were the terms with Joshua it should have been equally so with Bob Peaker and his four associates. Such promise or power certainly was not manifest in their tragic situation. There are so many people of the devil who have better treatment and assurance of safety and respect.

Revelation 21:5 "I am making everything new." I say: That because of the New Testament the Old Testament ought to be discarded entirely as the New Testament is sufficiently testa-

Letters from Tertius

Bang!

To the Editor,

Genesis tells us that the world was already there when creation began, albeit "without form and void". So I've often wondered what happened before that.

The other night on TV they were talking about a big bang that got the universe going. One scientist said that the bang was just right. If it had been smaller all the bits and pieces and planets and stars and suns would have fallen back into whatever was there before the bang. If it had been bigger there would have been nothing but cosmic dust.

The chances of that happening by chance must be rather slender. So God must have had a hand in it, if that's the way it happened.

But one thing I do know for sure and that is that we could easily end the world with a big bang. That's why I'm glad that the world situation is so much easier. Maybe God has had a hand in that too. And should I be surprised?

Our minister always prays for world leaders. He makes a point of reminding us that the Bible tells us to. I didn't think all this praying for world leaders was working out very well, but now I'm beginning to believe that the prayers of millions of Christians are being answered. I'm sorry that until recently I never joined them.

If the world started with a big bang it was a creative one. We don't need the destructive kind. So we'd better keep praying.

And just a thought. If God did start it all with a big bang, what a show it must have been! We humans were a bit late getting there so we missed it.

—Tertius

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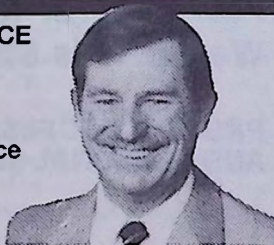
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Nubeena Holds Its First Ever Fair

mentary but of course must be accepted with caution!

May I mention something personal. I had a devoted Christian brother, the youngest of seven children. Our parents were most sincere and devout in their Christian living and they brought us kids up accordingly. Now the youngest brother when he became of age was called up for war service. He joined the RAAF. In 1945 he with five good mates lost their lives in a crash. He would often quote "God willing".

Kellems Richards Davey was his name. He was buried the day before he would have been 21 years of age.

My Christian father too was snatched from us at the age of 44 leaving seven children fatherless when I was nine.

This extract of my notice in the announcement of my brother Kellems' death would appropriately apply to Bob Peaker and friends: "We wonder why the good are taken/ Why in life they are forsaken./ Kell loved this life./ God only knows./ The very best is what he chose./ While our hearts and lives are shaken./ By the grief brought when Kell was taken./ We remember a wonderful brother and a perfect friend./ Such a good life so young to end.

—A.C. Davey
(Colonel Light Gardens, SA)

[This edited letter is far longer than we normally allow in the Letters to the Editor column. The questioning of God allowing the "good" to suffer while the "evil" seem to prosper is an age-old question. In the next issue I will cover some of the questions raised in my examination of Malachi—Editor]

L. C. F. Higgins

**Chartered
Accountant**

**7 The Parade
Norwood SA 5067
Phones (08) 362 1665
& (08) 362 8619**

The Nubeena church, nestled on the Tasman Peninsula, Tasmania, decided some months ago to work towards their first fair ever in its active life of 111 years. Apart from the members there were interested folk within the district and beyond Hobart who wanted to help in the ongoing work. The only goal set was to do the best that could be done. None of us knew how much was likely to be made nor how many would attend.

The fair was due to commence at 11 am and the day opened damp and cold. However by 11 am the weather had cleared fairly well and we burst into action—cake stalls, our small youth group singing, icy poles to suit the weather,

clothes, knitting, vegetables and even a small merry-go-round supplied and manned free by the Lions Club so that little children could enjoy free rides. The kitchen was well manned—or womaned—for cuppas and eats as well as a barbecue for those desiring something a little more meaty.

The population of the whole Peninsula is only about 1,100 with about 600 living at Nubeena and others scattered around Port Arthur, Tarana and Eaglehawk Neck and other such places.

The day climaxed with an auction.

Every avenue of the venture was successful, fellowship-wise and financially. Even guessing the doll's name

brought in \$35 and the cake stall exceeded \$500. As this article goes to *The Australian Christian* the financial achievement looks to be fairly close to \$3,000.

We praise God for the great day in all its blessings including the fellowship and financial reward. The support given by so many shows the ministry of the church is appreciated.

—Gordon Henderson

Tear Down the Walls at Christian Music Seminar

For all those involved in music and the creative and performing arts, the 13th Australian Christian Music Seminar will begin to "Tear Down the Walls" between Christians and the world. From 6–12 January 1991, the CYTA Lodge in Cooma and the Monaro High School will be the sites for this week of inspiration.

ACMS has an international reputation as a week of creativity, energy and expression for those who are or would like to be involved in all the arts ministry.

Guests this year include Martyn Joseph from the UK, whose distinctive voice and challenging lyrics will be enjoyed throughout the week. He will be joined by keynote speaker Brian Willersdorf. A specialist team of over 30 will be participating as teachers and advisers.

The week comprises workshops, performance critique sessions, inspiring concerts, Bible teaching and times of praise and worship.

Families are encouraged to participate as well as young people of all ages. Children are welcome and encouraged to join their own special program.

Contact the Christian Youth Travel Association for further information on (02) 764 1700.



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Media Review

Radio

Triple Seven

The people of Melbourne are hurting. Unemployment, high interest rates and the State's financial situation are accentuated by the materialistic viewpoint of the media in society.

Triple Seven Communications is launching its first test broadcast on FM radio for three days (16-18 November). The aim is to communicate a quality-of-life radio program for Melbourne that will lift the tone and emphasis for society. It will be a new sound. The format will present carefully selected Christian and secular music, together with news and information.

The adult contemporary style will appeal not just to churchgoers but also to the wider community. Triple Seven Communications plans to develop a backup network of churches of all denominations and an off-air counselling service. To the hurting people of Melbourne, it wants to communicate the Christian message of hope.

Professional broadcasters, technical personnel, journalists and backup supporters will all be volunteers for this major event.

The broadcasts will be on 96.3 FM for the three-day test broadcast. This is a provisional frequency and will be only in use for these three days. The strength of the signal is such that it should be heard in most of metropolitan Melbourne.

Papers

The Rights of the Child

After considerable delay and much controversy, Prime Minister Bob Hawke agreed that Australia would sign the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child in August 1990. The Prime Minister has, however, not yet agreed to join a growing number of nations which have fully ratified the convention so that it becomes binding.

The purpose of the Convention is to protect children from abuse and to foster their proper development. Opposition to the Convention comes from conservative sectors of the Australian community, including some Christian groups. They see the Convention as a threat to the rights of parents. In a timely Zadok Institute paper just released, Rosamund Dalziell discusses the questions facing people who are trying to gain a thoughtful Christian perspective on the issues involved.

Protecting Children: Do we need a Convention on the Rights of the Child?, Zadok Series 1 Paper \$47, is available from the Zadok Institute for Christianity and Society, Blackall Street, Barton, ACT 2600 (phone (06) 273 1634), for \$2 plus 80c postage.

Books

A Kangaroo Loose in the Top Pocket

by Lachlan Ness (Wilbur Books) \$12.95

Written in the genre of Herriot's *All Creatures Great and Small*, this book is a delight to read, entertaining and amusing. The setting is the high country of NSW in the 1960s. Lachlan Ness, newly ordained Presbyterian minister, newly married and slightly accident-prone, takes the reader through his first year of ministry, with all his hopes and apprehensions. The events are sometimes surprising, sometimes hilarious, but always draw us sympathetically to the central character. This would be an excellent gift for a friend—but read it yourself first!

—Joan Pye

Leading a Kids Club in Your Church

by Vernon Cracknell (Joint Board of Christian Education) \$14.95

For anyone who is considering setting up a children's program or for those already involved in such a program, this book will be

of great value. It is very comprehensive, easy to read and leaves no stone unturned in its effort to offer to leaders and churches adequate information on what is involved in kids clubs.

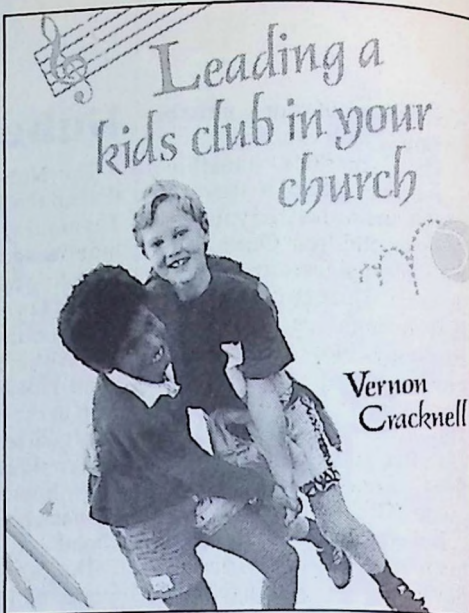
The book is divided into three main parts. The first deals with the principles, both biblical and theoretical, of what is involved in working with children. The

way Jesus cared for and encouraged children is outlined, and then there is a good summary of child development and what a leader can expect from 8-12 year olds. The philosophy of the kids club is also outlined, helping churches understand how and why such a program should be conducted at their church.

Not only is this an excellent theoretical book, but it is also highly practical, with parts two and three devoted to giving everything that is needed to conduct such a program: administrative details, staffing requirements and many ideas for programs. There are varying approaches to the various elements of a program for children in mid-week programs, and these are discussed very well. Follow-up is emphasised and also helpful advice given on how to bring the children and their families into the church community.

There are suggested games, crafts and other exciting ideas that all help to make this book essential reading. I would commend this book to Sunday school teachers and leaders of any sort of children's program.

—Judy Gordon



Federal Conference

Fiji, Aborigines and the Constitution

The three major areas of discussion and decision making at the 43rd Federal Conference business sessions held in Brisbane 8-14 October were: giving the Overseas Mission Board the go ahead to be involved in mission in Fiji, a resolution from the Aboriginal Issues Task Force and changes to the constitution to streamline the executive.

Federal Conference, which was presided over by Dr Don Stewart, was held in conjunction with the Queensland State Conference. This is the first time for many years, if ever, that a state conference has been held in conjunction with a Federal Conference. Twice in the past (Melbourne 1952 and Adelaide 1970) Federal Conference was preceded by a World Convention.

National Ministers' Seminar

The first event of Federal Conference this year was the National Ministers' Seminar which was held 4-6 October at Camp Cal, Caloundra. 161 ministers and spouses were present at the seminar making it one of the largest National Ministers' Seminars. This was helped by it also being the Queensland Ministers' Seminar and most ministers from Queensland were present. Studies at the seminar were led by Professor Ron Graham and Dr Gordon Moyes. There was also an interesting evening session looking at the future of Churches of Christ.

Differences

One of the differences of this Federal Conference was a deliberate attempt to separate the seminar/rally time of Conference from the business sessions. Rather than operating with deliberative groups and then having plenary sessions throughout the week of Conference it was decided to hold the business sessions in the first two days. All sessions were held at the Baptist Tabernacle and reports and motions were dealt with in plenary sessions.

There were 18 notices of motion facing the delegates as well as discussion on the reports of all Federal Conference Departments.

It should be noted that this year 707 (at last count) registered for Federal Conference. As it co-incided with Queensland that state had the largest number of registrants with 453. 85 registered from Victoria, 61 from New South Wales, 56 from South Australia, 22 from Western Australia, 12 from Tasmania, nine from the Australian Capital Territory, two from the Northern Territory and seven from overseas.

Motions Carried

Amongst the business transacted was a change of name for the Australian Board of Church Development & Education (previously the Federal Board of Christian Education). This move also included some changes to the constitution to bring it into line with the work of the department.

Three motions from the Department of Christian Union and one motion regarding the environment were also passed. The text of these motions will appear in a subsequent issue.

There were some changes to the Churches of Christ Provident Fund constitution, a motion regarding the Task Force on Theological Education and a motion that called for greater recognition of the Federal Social Justice Committee: "That greater recognition be given to the role of the Federal Social Justice Committee in the future ministry of Churches of Christ in Australia; that such recognition include allocation of adequate resources to enable the Committee to fulfil its task; that the Committee be resourced to enable an annual meeting; that the Committee be called upon to establish a 12-month action strategy and program and that the Committee be called upon to establish a five year plan of developmental activity".

After appointing Jeff May for another five-year term as

the Executive Director of the Overseas Mission Board, Conference then looked at one of the major issues before it.

Fiji

The motion that was carried after much discussion and input that helped to clarify some questions was: "That the Federal Conference of Churches of Christ in Australia, through the Overseas Mission Board, be involved in mission in Fiji, giving particular attention to the unevangelised Indian population."

Jeff May, Barry Gear and others, in background material and presentations outlined the reasons why the OMB was interested in moving in mission in Fiji. A careful summary of negotiations with a wide variety of churches and ecumenical councils was detailed and a possible course of action was outlined. Co-operation with existing churches and or councils have been carefully negotiated and at this stage the OMB is looking at all possibilities of mission in Fiji. The wording of the motion was very carefully written so that all options of areas of operations are still open. The OMB will be very careful in moving into mission in Fiji and will only move if the right people become available, there are no major objections from other Christian bodies in Fiji and we are able to operate in an area where no other groups are currently operating. This could mean that our area of operation may be either rural or urban or a mixture of both areas.

The motion was passed with overwhelming support.

Constitution

Another major area of discussion was the constitution. Following the Federal Conference held in Hobart a Task Force was established to examine the structures of Federal Conference. This group had come up with major changes to the constitution relating to Federal Conference itself and the executive. The changes mean that

in the future we could well have separate National Conferences for business and a National Convention, which would be a time of fellowship and learning. The major changes were made to the executive. This will now be called the National Council and instead of being made up of members from Melbourne with a proxy from each state it will now comprise a small executive (President, Secretary and Treasurer) with the other members—two from Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia and Western Australia and one each from Tasmania and the Australian Capital Territory. This group will meet twice a year and will be more representative of the states. It is hoped that this will make the Council more representative of each state and streamline its operations.

National

One aspect of the changes is that Federal Conference will now be the National Conference and Convention. The next National Conference and Convention will be held in Melbourne in 1993 with Clive Ward as National Conference President and Eunice Reidy ACWF President. Conference also changed the normal rotation of National Conference so that the 45th Conference and Convention will be held in South Australia in 1995 to coincide with the 150th anniversary of Australia's oldest Church of Christ, Grote St, Adelaide.

Aborigines

The other major area of discussion at the business sessions was a motion that was brought from an Aboriginal Issues Task Force set up by the previous Conference in Canberra. The discussion took over two whole sessions and the motion presented was passed with the addition of an addendum. A full report on this motion and its wording will appear in the next issue.

—Chris Ambrose

Happenings

Recently the Essendon Football Club signed Port Adelaide rover Gavin Wanganeen to play for them for the next 3 years. In an interview Gavin, 17, who is a devoted Christian, family person and proud of his Aboriginal heritage, said the Lord had given him the gift of playing football and he wanted to make the most of his opportunities in life. Gavin's father is the pastor of the Adelaide Berean Church. One of the conditions in signing was that Essendon would provide Gavin with accommodation with a good Christian family.

Adam Hartley, son of Alan Hartley, former secretary of the Dulwich, SA, church, was recently awarded the Inaugural Messenger School Sports Star of the Year Award. Adam is a cyclist who won the 500 m national junior time trial earlier this year. He won gold medals in the 500 m time trial, the 5 km scratch race and sprints at this year's SA state titles.

Telecom is supporting direct-dial pornography in Australia, according to the Australian Family Association. In a catalogue for the Discovery service, a public network for personal computer users, services available over Telecom's phone lines can access 4 major pornography suppliers.

By 1993 some half a million Christians are expected to have emigrated elsewhere. That's 20% of Hong Kong's Christians. Some 25% of church workers and clergy are also expected to be gone by then, according to the Hong Kong Christian Institute.

The previous head of the Romanian Orthodox Church, Patriarch Teocist, has been reinstated. It appears no one else could be found to fill the job. Teocist had resigned over allegations that he was too closely associated with the Ceausescu regime. Teocist said he had been a virtual

prisoner before the revolution.

A 200-year-old congregation exists in Tibet's Mangkang Country, according to the Hong Kong Xinwenbao news agency. In Upper Yanjing village, the parish currently has over 600 believers—all peasants. A Gothic-style church has been restored recently and returned to believers after being destroyed during the Cultural Revolution.

Japan replaced the USA as the world's largest donor of official foreign aid last year. US aid totalled \$US7.66 billion while Japan gave \$US8.95 billion. A Japanese Foreign Ministry official noted that a decrease in US aid was a larger factor than an increase from Japan.

Christian Journalist, Dan Wooding, has claimed that Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait has unwittingly encouraged the largest ever influx of Christians and Bibles into Saudi Arabia.

A major famine ravaging through war-torn Angola left more than 11,000 dead in the province of Benguela between September 1989 and July 1990, and a further 8,000 in the province are suffering from illnesses caused by malnutrition.

A 3-day leadership conference to address the societal ills facing Kenya as a nation and to which the country's leaders have been invited was due to start on 22 October. The conference will address itself to "the present trends of corruption, violence and general decay".

Chinese government officials have confirmed that US Southern Baptist teacher Mary Anna Gilbert was among 127 killed in the 2 October crash of a hijacked Chinese jet in Guangzhou, China. Co-worker Erin Thomas, who was seated next to Mary Anna Gilbert, survived the crash and is in a stable condition in hospital.

A fire started by arsonists on 2 October seriously damaged a Baptist printing and publications operation in southern Italy. Initial damage estimates total more than \$US200,000 to equipment and books stored in the offices. According to initial police investigations the act appears to be the work of the local Mafia.

An estimated 1,000 Cambodians a month suffer amputation of a limb due to landmine and other war-related incidents, but the production of artificial limbs is not keeping pace.

The Department of Studies in Religion at the University of Queensland is now offering a Master of Arts (Studies in Theology) alongside the Master of Arts (Studies in Religion) they already offer. They are also offering a Postgraduate Diploma (Studies in Theology) along with the Postgraduate Diploma (Studies in Religion). All are coursework courses. The MA degrees are two years full time or four years part time and the Graduate Diplomas are one year full time or two years part time. Further information from Dr Edgar W. Conrad, Studies in Religion, University of Queensland 4072. Phone (07) 377 2162 or 377 2154.

If 32 denominations reach their goals, North America will have 33% more churches by the end of the century. Representatives of the church groups met 7-8 September for an interdenominational dialogue on church planting. Their collective goal is to have 223,460 congregations by the year 2000, an increase of 55,836 churches.

Reports from Liberia indicate that SIM's hospital and radio station, ELWA, has been destroyed in the bloody and escalating civil war in the West African nation. SIM is to consider ways of ministering to the 500,000 refugees who have managed to escape Liberia's borders.

The Vic-Tas Conference Presidents' Reception will this year take the form of an afternoon tea fellowship at CCTC, 40-60 Jacksons Rd, Mulgrave, on 3 November, 2-4 pm. It will be an informal afternoon with a cost of \$3 for the afternoon tea.

A free seminar on computers in churches has been scheduled for 13 November in Melbourne and 14 November in Sydney. Tower Systems, who are hosting the seminar, aim to introduce churches to the use of computer technology in managing member records, resources and staff. Those interested need to call Rachel on (03) 537 2811 to book a place at the seminar.

The Venezuelan Senate is reviewing proposed legislation that would ban Protestant missions from carrying out evangelistic outreach among indigenous tribal groups throughout the country.

The Christian church is a pervasive part of American society but, according to findings of the Barna Research Group, the effectiveness of its ministry is diminishing. While 80% of American adults describe themselves as "Christian", more feel the church is losing its influence on American society (49%) than say it is increasing its impact (36%). Only 38% of all Americans believe the church is relevant for today. Only 40% of Americans say they turn to God during tough times. Several years ago this figure was at 60%.

The Anglican communion now has more than 2,000 women priests throughout the world. The first was ordained in Hong Kong nearly 50 years ago, and has been followed by others over the past 15 years in the US, Canada, New Zealand, Kenya, Melanesia, Ireland and other dioceses in Africa and South America.

The Churchill Trust is now calling for applications for

Fellowships to be taken up during 1992. Merit in any field, which must be of value to the community, is the major criterion in the granting of fellowships. The opportunity is given to any Australian regardless of academic or other qualifications to study overseas with fares paid and a living allowance provided. An average fellowship is worth about \$12,000. Those interested should send a self-addressed 24 cm x 12 cm stamped envelope to Application Forms, Winston Churchill Memorial Trust, 218 Northbourne Ave, Canberra 2601. Applications close on 28 February 1991.

Leaders of ANDEB, the evangelical association of Bolivia, are spearheading a campaign for a constitutional amendment to end official recognition of the Roman Catholic Church and guarantee the free exercise of religion.

F.F. Bruce, a leading English evangelical Bible scholar, died on 11 September at the age of 79. He was the author of nearly 50 books and several thousand articles and essays.

Last year the Australian Soldiers' Chapel appeal raised \$80,000 for the project. 350 churches from around Australia contributed. It is hoped to raise in excess of \$600,000 by the end of the year through various fundraising efforts. The Appeal has been established to build a new chapel at the Kapooka training base to replace old World War II temporary buildings. The new memorial chapel will have three denominational wings. It will cost \$1.1 million after the Army has provided labour. Churches are asked to remember the project on Remembrance Day (11 November) by praying for the missionary work of the church in the army and by encouraging your church to contribute to the chapel. Details of tax deductibility and addresses can be found on page 21.



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• Ephesians 6:17

The Helmet of Salvation

"You'd think he'd been baptised in vinegar!" That was the delightful turn of phrase used by one of my friends in the ministry to describe the sour behaviour of a particular fellow Christian. Such character is the exact opposite of what Peter said would attract the favourable attention of those outside of the church. In 1 Peter 3:15 we are encouraged to be prepared to explain the hope that we exhibit.

Paul also emphasises the great value of hope in the Christian life. That was what kept him going through all the hard times as a Christian (2 Corinthians 4:15, Romans 8:18). Even when "everyone in the province of Asia" deserted Paul he soldiered on because he "knew whom he had believed" and had great confidence that God would see him through (2 Timothy 1:12,15).

So it is that in listing the armour of the Christian, Paul is careful to include the helmet of salvation. The verb used to tell Christians to "take up" the helmet is used of receiving knowledge. "Christian, know where you're going!" is Paul's battle cry.

But how does this knowledge and the hope that goes with it become evident to those outside of the church? What did Peter envision in the Christian that would inspire others to ask about hope? Was it the enthusiastic distribution of evange-



listic tracts? Was it conversation sprinkled with references to the anticipated eternal bliss of life beyond this world? No! It was the ability to curb revengeful thoughts and suffer unjustly (1 Peter 3:9,14).

How does this relate to the hope of the knowledge of salvation? Perhaps the parable of the unforgiving servant told by Jesus holds a key. The parable recorded in Matthew 18:21-25 tells of Jesus' criticism of a servant who, after being mercifully forgiven a tremendous debt by his master, proceeds to unmercifully extract a small debt from a fellow servant. Jesus warned his disciples that those forgiven by God had better not follow the same pattern of refusing to forgive their earthly debtors.

David Seamands in his book *Healing for Damaged Emotions* suggests that the servant acted as if the debt had not been forgiven and it was still necessary to scrape up every last cent. He had only asked for an extension and acted as if that was all

that was given him. Seamands suggests that, consciously or unconsciously, all of us keep records of the ways people have let us down and the ways we have let others and God down.

This suggests that those who have difficulty in forgiving others may really be expressing a lack of felt forgiveness in their own lives. Those overly critical of others may really be oversensitive to their own shortcomings. "Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors" shows Jesus' insight into human personality.

There is then a link between salvation, hope and suffering unjustly. Those who are quietly confident of having been forgiven and who are looking forward to spending an eternity with God will have less need to always be seen to be right and to get their own way in this life.

If the church is to be successful in evangelism we need to re-emphasise the preparedness to suffer injustice and forego our rights in this world. But that will only happen as Christians more deeply appreciate the reality of present forgiveness and future blessing. Satan can try to undermine the work of the church by keeping Christians feeling guilty and preoccupied with securing their rights and demanding justice this side of eternity. But for the Christian it is indeed true that "life wasn't meant to be easy" ...yet!

—Greg Murphy

Temper Temper!

The last time I really lost my temper was in Papua New Guinea. A fellow missionary had left their cat with us to look after, but it was a very ill-mannered cat. The first day it got up into the woven bamboo ceiling of our house and while Virginia was making bread in the kitchen she was showered with a warm shower of tomcat rain. To deter the cat from getting into the ceiling again I made some booby traps with tins of water triggered with hessian bags up the wall and put some rat traps in the ceiling.

The second day the cat got into the ceiling and did the same thing again. By then I was getting angry, and put it into a hastily built cage. It escaped, got up into the ceiling and repeated its urinary vengeance on us yet again. This time I lost my temper and, pulling the scratching, clawing cat out of the ceiling, I flung it onto the veranda from which it could not escape. I would have killed it with my bare hands, but Virginia stopped me.

Who of us hasn't felt a moment of blind anger before? An old proverb says, "Anger has no eyes"—and its true! In anger we can lose our perspective on a situation. "Anger is a brief madness" in which we no longer think rationally or calmly, and say or do things we later regret. I guess that is why Paul warns, "In your anger, do not sin." It seems there is a precarious fine line between anger that is legitimate ventilation ("righteous indignation" we have always called it) and anger as sin, which can hurt and denigrate others. But who of us in the heat of anger can judge where that fine line is? As Aristotle once said, "Anybody can be angry, that is easy. But to be angry with the right person, to the right degree, at the right time, for the right purpose and in the right way, that is not within everyone's power, and is not easy."

—Stephen Curkpatrick

Pontius' Puddle



Comment

Richard Lawton has been reading the autobiography of Catholic writer Ronald Conway and finds Conway's views raise important questions for Churches of Christ

Conway's *Way* is the autobiography of Ronald Conway, Melburnian, Catholic, clinical psychologist, media personality, dramatist and writer (*The Great Australian Stupor, Land of the Long Weekend*).

Conway's way is different from that of the post-Vatican II Catholic church.

He talks of "more than 15 years of meaningless experimentation". He claims that "the mass and the confessional no longer invoke the mystique of the past".

"Good!" exclaim many Protestants, as well as many Catholics. But read on to see where Conway's critique bites into modern Churches of Christ worship and raises important questions for us.

"A constant catering in parishes to a kind of hand-shaking, sugar-and-water populism and a dreadful standard of preaching has literally bored more thoughtful Catholics right out of the pews.

"...the new liturgies have often been excruciating in their pop-mentality and soap-commercial banality."

Conway goes on to talk of the psychological potency of the old religious symbols. He says that "a deep act of public worship should always be pointing to meanings beyond itself" and that "worship with any depth should not become restless, busy and noisy, as the work is".

"Exactly," say some of my friends, "these modern choruses have no depth, they are noisy, pop and repetitive and give no sense of mystique and no atmosphere of real worship."

Some don't! Neither do some of our traditional hymns. The Holy Spirit is not confined to hymns with five verses that sit in a black-bound hymn book. Nor is the Spirit absent from the hymn book. There are good and bad, worshipful and non-worshipful, in both. That is not the issue.

Worship: Sugar-and-Water or Bread-and-Wine?

I tire of being asked whether we have "choruses or hymns", even after the question has been asked once, as if the answer tells whether we are with-it or old-fashioned on the one hand, or sound or shallow on the other. Again, that is not the issue.

Is worship a matter of quiet, peaceful surroundings, muted architecture, "good" music, where without a smile given or received we hear the Word read and preached, pray (or are led in prayer), receive communion and go away feeling "uplifted", "moved" or at worst bored still?

Or does it happen in a setting where we "relate" to each other (and perhaps to God), sing cheery, fun and "relevant" songs, hear the Bible read as dinkum Aussies would understand it, and go away feeling good inside?

Is it reverence versus relevance?

So far, questions only, but they are pertinent to us as well as to Catholics.

Here are some possible guidelines through the maze, for Churches of Christ are at various points in the maze, some perhaps down dead alleys, many of us wishing that we could see through the bushes so that we could know where we are going.

• There is not a "New Testament pattern" for worship: perhaps some indications of some of the elements of early church worship, but no prescriptions for all time. Sure, there are some helpful stipulations—all things done decently and in order—but they don't help us much with content.

• The old and traditional (although Churches of Christ tradition is not old by world

church standards) is not necessarily outdated.

• The new is not necessarily to be rejected out-of-hand, nor is it necessarily shallow.

• We need to experiment, albeit carefully: the Spirit may be wanting to teach us something. "We've never done it that way before" are dirty words in the Christian vocabulary. It is not worthy of us to think badly of someone because that person does something different, even if it is a flop. We pray for each other, even (or especially) when we don't like what the other is doing.

• Public worship involves God and other members of the congregation. Neither can be neglected. Dawn and I attended an Anglican service in Tangier, Morocco, where the one other member of the congregation must have belonged—he took up the offering—but left without so much as saying "hello". We need to explore creative ways of being a fellowship, without neglecting one person.

On the other hand, worship is not worship without the godward dimension: talking about God and simply expressing what we think does not constitute worship. By the way, when people praying refer to God in the third person they may be talking about God rather than to God.

• The language of worship has to be modern. The English of 1611 or of 1950 is no more holy than was the Aramaic or Greek of the early church. If words have to be in graceful, measured English, we may be linking worship with feelings that are stimulated by word and language associations.

• On the other hand, worship has to be done "decently and in

order". Unprepared slapdash familiarity is not likely to lift us to God and leave us there (recognising, of course, that God can take our poorest efforts and use them and us!) Dignity and relaxedness are not incompatible.

• Nothing that I have read in the Bible suggests that we can't smile and worship at the same time. "Decently and in order" does not mean that we cannot enjoy our worship, God and each other. Too many of us check in our smiles at the church door. Why do so many worship leaders act as though they are at a funeral? (Funerals need not be like that, either!) When we sing "I am happy in the service of the King" there is no law against looking happy. When we pass or receive the communion elements there is no reason why we should not exchange a caring smile.

• There is no virtue in drabness or discomfort. Bright, well-done banners can stimulate us through the eye. Carpeted floors can add to the physical and emotional warmth. Padded seats can add to physical and spiritual comfort. (Our traditional pews must surely have been an invention of the devil!)

Coming back to Conway: experimentation, yes; meaningless, no. Mystique, yes; obscurantism, no. Hand-shaking and hand-clapping, yes; sugar-and-water, no. Pop-mentality and soap-commercial banality, no; responsible use of technological media, yes. Restless and busy, no; noisy, maybe.

In deep acts of public worship we will discover more of each other and more of God. In thousands of congregations around the country we will continue to gather once, twice or three times a Sunday, for years to come. What will happen?

• *Richard Lawton is the minister at the Maylands, SA, church. (Conway's Way is a 1988 Collins-Dove publication.)*

Classifieds

BIRTHS

HEIER (DANIEL) Terry and Lynne welcome Amy Rose. Sister for Kate and Aaron. Born Launceston 12.10.90.

ENGAGEMENTS

MADDERN—WEBER Leola and Russ (Bordertown) announce, with love, the engagement of their daughter Suzanne to Dieter.

DEATHS

DUNN, Eileen Winsome. Dearly loved wife of Laurie (dec.) Loving

mother of Laurie and June, fond mother-in-law of Nancy and Mervyn. Loved Nana and Granny of their families. Aged 78 years. A patient sufferer resting in God's care.

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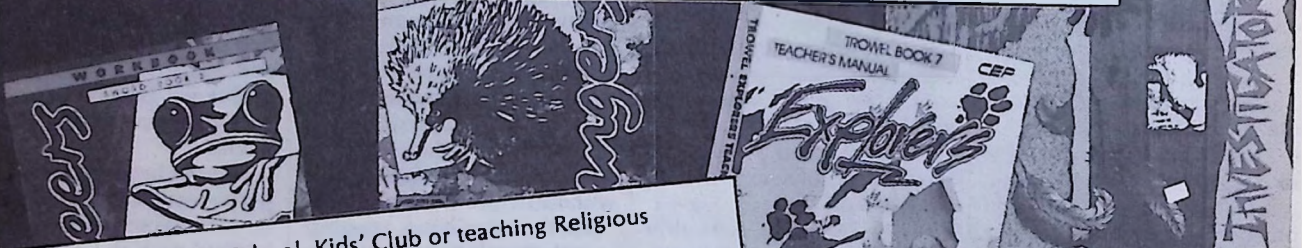
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• *Setting mission priorities for the coming decade*

Are We Asking the Strategic Question?

by K.P. Yohannan

Global surveys and research have so far uncovered some 2,000 plans for world evangelism in the next decade. Even if these plans are only partially implemented, it is now quite likely that the 1990s will become the greatest period of missionary activity this century.

Hundreds of these emerging plans were shared and compared by mission leaders in July 1989 at the Lausanne II World Congress on Evangelization in Manila, Philippines. Is it possible that these are not merely the schemes of human beings? Could God be sovereignly prompting a global movement that will lead to the fulfilment of the Great Commission in our lifetime? There is a strong probability that the answer to both questions is "yes".

Certainly the attitudes of church and mission leaders worldwide are undergoing a radical change. The church is becoming militant again, and indigenous leaders in the Third World are aggressively setting new evangelism targets for their nations in an unprecedented way. The self-doubts that characterised mission leaders in the 1960s and 1970s are gone. The call for a moratorium on Western missions that rocked so many denominations and missions is rarely heard today.

AD 2000 Movements Grow

Not only is the call for a moratorium a dead issue, but it is being increasingly replaced by numerous calls for the "completion" of world evangelism by the year 2000. This new call is reigniting many long-dormant flames of missionary zeal. In fact, the AD 2000 movement promises to strengthen international missions in general—and particularly increase the presence of Western missions in the

worldwide work of the Great Commission.

Two recent international conferences of mission leaders have focused on 400 of the larger plans. In both conferences, it was quickly obvious that every plan relied to some extent on an increase of funding from the churches in the West. Most also include plans for a fresh infusion of cross-cultural missionary staff from the West and will be fuelled by new networks of prayer and information that are to be based in North America and Europe.

These AD 2000 movements are already putting new financial pressures on Western-based missions and church organisations, denominations and parachurch agencies. In the next 10 years, they will be raising billions of dollars to support the costly initiatives. Local churches and individual believers in the Western nations will soon find themselves faced with a tidal wave of appeals for involvement in and support of AD 2000 evangelism.

I view this development as a mixed blessing.

First of all, we must fall on our knees and thank God for what appears to be a marvellous answer to prayer. It is exciting to see this huge new wave of prayer and interest in the needs of a lost and dying world. AD 2000 endeavours will help to increase partnership in world evangelism.

But once that initial rush of gratitude passes, we need to examine each plan for strategic errors. However good the intentions of these plans, there is a danger that they will become an exercise in futility if they transfer aid primarily through the traditional channels: Western missionaries.

This second feeling, one of serious concern, grows out of a real fear that many of us in the Third World have developed concerning the present contri-

bution of Western missionaries on the field.

Although it may no longer be fashionable or necessary to call for a complete moratorium on Western missionaries, it is certainly too soon to drop the call for at least a partial moratorium on sending new replacements.

Learning To Ask Strategic Questions

Why do we come to illogical and incorrect conclusions in missions strategy? I think it starts with asking the wrong questions.

We must teach ourselves to begin asking all missions questions from a field perspective. This is especially important as we plan for the coming decade of evangelism.

The question we should always be asking is this: "How, Lord, can this unreached people group best receive the Good News?" Instead, we have generally asked, "How can we take the good news to them?"

The first question emphasises the needs of the unreached people—the needs on the field. The second question comes from our own fleshly, ethnocentric worldview. The emphasis is on how we can be the ones to tell them the good news.

When you ask the question from the wrong perspective, you come up with answers that involve Westerners going personally rather than sending the nearest native missionaries. No wonder so many mission agencies, churches and denominations in the West have failed to move with the latest wave of the Holy Spirit in missions.

The Missions Revolution Continues

Sadly, most of the missions planning and funding formulas today still ignore the phenomenal growth and importance of indigenous missions.

The phrase "emerging Third World missions" is obsolete—we have already emerged. During the coming decade, we will see the mission enterprise shift out of Western hands into the evangelical mission movements of Africa, Asia, Latin America, and Oceania. Larry Pate, author of *From Every People*, says the number of Third World missions is growing at a rate of 13.29% annually—an increase of 248% every 10 years. In 1988—according to the latest data from the Missions Advanced Research Center (MARC) in Pasadena, California—over 30% of all Protestant missionaries were being sent out by missions in the Two-Worlds. By MARC's criteria (which I think actually underestimates the number of native missionaries), in 1988 there were 35,924 native missionaries serving in 118 countries. If the present rate of growth continues, MARC estimates that there will be a total of 86,490 non-Western missionaries on the field in 1995—and 162,360 by 2000.

Indigenous missions are growing five times faster than missions in the West. Most important to our planning is the fact that indigenous missionaries will become the majority within the evangelical mission force sometime in 1998 if this trend continues.

There is another reason that it is dangerous to continue making plans for evangelism based on the assumption that there will be an ongoing presence of missionaries from the West. We must take into consideration the ever-growing number of nations banning Western missionaries.

By the year 2000, more than eight of every ten persons in the world will live in so-called restricted-access countries—lands closed for political reasons to missionaries from the West. The best estimates pre-

dict that 4.8 billion people will be out of reach to Western missionaries by the end of the century.

Even though some part-time, "tentmaking" missionaries may be able to enter these countries, any strategy to reach them must be based on the support of native missionary structures. The primary responsibility for evangelism, disciple making and church planting has shifted to indigenous missions, but support structures in the West have failed to respond to this reality. Too many missions programs are still centred on Western staff.

Required: A Missions Reformation

It is positively suicidal for us to go into the next decade blindly making plans that hinge on the continued presence of Western missionary staff and technologies. While we should support AD 2000 evangelism plans, we need to be alert to the danger that some aspects of these programs could contribute to a revival of neocolonial missions. Any AD 2000 plans that increase numbers of Western missionary staff on Third World harvest fields are counterproductive at this time.

Will we learn to make this kind of prayerful, thoughtful, sober decision in the 1990s? I hope so, because it will be key to making effective choices in the support of AD 2000 evangelism plans.

How would the next decade be different and better if Christians in the West began supporting programs that are "right" from a field perspective? Let me suggest three areas in which we would begin to see the reformation needed in Western missions:

1. Staffing policies would be reversed, permitting a rapid shift to an all-native staff in front-line mission situations.

2. Short-term critical needs would be funded before long-term programs.

3. A balanced Acts 1:8 mission strategy would be developed—one that would concentrate on what Christians in

the West can do to help reach the world without actually sending themselves to the foreign mission field.

Why are these changes necessary?

Supporting Native Missionary Staff

From a field perspective, it no longer makes sense to import and train missionaries from the West. In Asia, it is costing us an average of 47 times more funds to support an Occidental missionary than it does to support a local worker.

Millions in the Third World reject Christ simply because he is presented to them by a white-skinned foreigner. The presence of Western missionaries reinforces the false idea that Jesus is the white man's God.

By the end of the century, 4.8 billion people will be out of reach to Western missionaries

In addition, the language and cultural barriers the Western missionaries face are immense. It takes most Western missionaries one or two terms to learn the language effectively and adjust emotionally to a strange new culture. Yet we find that non-Western missionaries from the same country, or a culturally near one, can usually be planting their first church in six months to a year. What's more, native missionaries rarely require special schools for their children, foreign-style housing and diet, or a higher standard of living that alienates and divides them from those they hope to reach.

Does this mean that I believe there is absolutely no need for Western missionaries on the field? Of course not. There are some Western missionaries who are still winning souls, making disciples, and planting churches—but these are the

exception rather than the rule. As we plan for the coming decade, we must not base our general policies on these exceptions to the rule.

Nor should policies be based on cherished myths and fantasies about the effectiveness of Western missionaries, given the wonderful contribution they made to world evangelism during the colonial era. The political reality of most Third World mission fields now prevents Westerners from having a fruitful ministry.

Funding the Critical Needs

The real needs of front-line non-Western missionaries are usually a surprise to Americans and Europeans. Western missionaries generally go to the field with a shipping manifest that differs radically from what a native missionary would want or need. Western missionary strategists, in their air-conditioned office towers, also come up with some rather bizarre theories about what we need on the mission field.

Any study of the 12,000 unreached people groups identified by the Lausanne II Statistics Task Force will show that most of these people are still located in remote rural areas. They are frequently living without electricity. More than one billion of them are illiterate.

The critical needs for reaching them—the tools most in demand on the mission field—are primitive and simple. Most often, our missionaries need gospel flip charts rather than video studios; bicycles, not automobiles; bullhorns rather than elaborate public-address systems. On a day-to-day basis, it is still Bibles, cassette tapes, films, and tracts that are most requested—not community development, seminaries or even evangelistic training programs from the West. And the greatest need of all is usually for \$45 to \$90 a month—the support most native missionaries need to care for their families while they carry the gospel into unreached villages.

If planning for missions is based on a field perspective,

we will go back to basics before launching highly sophisticated plans that require outside technology, equipment, education and supplies.

Renewing a Church-Based Mission Program

If Third World missions don't need Western missionary staff, technology, and education, what can Westerners do to help them in the coming decade? I would suggest that believers in the West need to review their whole approach to missions and go back to building a church-based mission program around the teaching of Acts 1:8: "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

Four implications of Jesus' words come immediately to mind:

1. Renew an emphasis on missions.

The Acts 1:8 model presents a church that is involved in the Great Commission at home and abroad simultaneously. It is a healthy, witnessing church.

Most Western communities now include large groups of non-Westerners, many of whom—students, refugees, visitors—will eventually return to their home country. If Christians in the West really have a vision for winning the world, you will reach out in intentional witness to these aliens, hoping to send them back to their own lands as born-again, disciple-making believers.

2. Become informed intercessors.

Although many mission fields are now closed to Western missionaries, you can still become expert prayer partners with native missions, lifting them up as they move out to win their own people to Christ. Hang world maps in your home, display photographs of the native missionaries you support, and pray daily for them.

3. Pass along a missions vision to the next generation.

Ministers' Workshop

Maximising Your Church Office Secretary

by Rod Brown

Why have a Church Office Secretary?

A Clear Goal

Christ had a clear goal for his ministry. It was said of him that "he had his face set steadfastly towards Jerusalem". We need the same resolution about our ministry, and as we set our face to a goal, voluntary staff and paid staff assist us in reaching it. For example, my ministry goal is—

- to share the Christian Good News with individuals, extending Christ's invitation to join the Kingdom; and

- to equip others to do the same.

My primary goal is not to have the greatest newsletter, or be the best letter writer. Church office secretaries use their ministry gifts to enable ministers to keep their faces steadfastly set towards their primary goal.

A Clear Purpose

- To free ministers to meet primary goals, e.g. for preaching, visitation and equipping. There are many administrative tasks in a growing church, and while each is important in itself many cannot justify taking up

the ministers' time. There are others who have the gift of administration but they may not have the gift of evangelism, teaching or pastoring.

- Administering a church office that provides a centre point for the ministry of the church. Our church worship services are the front windows for the local church but ministry happens all through the week. There are many ministries that make up the body of the church. A church office that is staffed by a secretary can be the nerve centre from which needs are made known, information given, contacts made and communication networks fostered and enabled.

- To encourage and co-ordinate volunteers. The secretaries' ministry also needs to have an equipping role. Their primary purpose is to maximise the ministers' ministry, but on the other hand not to take away from other ministries in the church. Church secretaries can help ministers by assisting, informing and equipping others in their ministries. All the possible tasks below can be the responsibility of office secre-

Growing Spiritually

Warnings!

by Kaye Wray

Do you have a squeaky gate, a barking dog or ultra-sensitive hearing to warn you that someone is approaching your home?

Christian musician David Meece talks about his mother's car muffler, which warned him that Mum was almost home and he had a certain number of seconds to put away the "forbidden" country and western music he would play when she was out of the house. On her return he would be dutifully practising his classical music or doing something equally commendable!

Some years ago the Rev. Dan Armstrong told how he believed God challenged him on whether he was more concerned about his reputation among men or with God.

Immediately he responded with, "You, Lord!" but continued prompting made him think the question through. Of course he wanted to believe that God was first in his life and since it was to him he was ultimately

answerable he tried to live a life pleasing to God. On the other hand, his reputation with others was very important and something he guarded jealously. Then God "hit below the belt": what about his thoughts?

And Dan said he had to admit that there were thoughts that had passed through his mind that he would be mortified if another human being knew. Yet God already knew them and he hadn't been worried about that at all.

David Meece's message, coupled with Dan's story, remind us that we don't get warning bells to let us know that God is watching or listening. He knows us more intimately than any human being. Perhaps it's a bit like, "You can fool the people about who you are, but you can't fool God."

It's just as well he not only knows us better than anyone, but loves us better, too.

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

taries but also some can be delegated, thus helping others to play their part in God's service.

What Can Office Secretaries Do?

Their ministry can include:

- Typing letters on Monday to all visitors attending Sunday's services.

- Typing and distributing absentee follow-up sheets for elders.

- Posting and distributing the weekly newsletter to absentees.

- Phoning and making appointments for ministers.

- Answering phone calls and vetting them.

- Editing and printing the newsletter.

- Roster reminders.

- Minute printing and circulating.

- Ministers' correspondence.

- Protecting ministers from small detail.

- Keeping records and filing.

- Printing pamphlets, directories and programs to aid communication and evangelism.

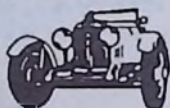
In Conclusion

Whatever is done in the church office no matter how menial or important, is done in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ to enhance and extend his ministry.

• Rod Brown is a member of the ministry team at the Knoxfield, Vic, church.

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

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Discipleship

•Peter Downes, Andrew Stanford, Rose Zeiler, Scarborough, WA
 •Herb Cann, Stephen Martin, Ormond, Vic •Mary Street, Hampstead Gardens, SA •Kerry Hillyard, Bundaberg, Qld •Helen Lane, Brooklyn Park, SA •Adam Hill, Fiona McKenzie, Naomi Hough, Darren & Vicki Collihole, Janet Barry, Portland, Vic •Natalie Roberts, Eddie Paulsen, Nunawading, Vic •Ralph & Ruth Hall, Carnegie, Vic •Sarah Baines, John Duncan, Kalamunda, WA
 •Vicki Lanyon, Henley Beach, SA

Marriages

•Wendy Turner to Kevin McKenzie, Portland, Vic •Ruby Fordham to Gordon Clark, Oakleigh, Vic •Vicki Duff to Richard Halleday, Jenny Patterson to Chris Dungey, Bordertown, SA

Deaths

•Jack Pemberton, North Essendon, Vic •Judith Yarde, Scarborough, WA •Bert Miles, Mrs Hilda McMillan, Ormond, Vic •Horrie Brown, Bundaberg, Qld •Mrs May Jory, Carnegie, Vic •Ashley Morrall, Alice Hodges, Oakleigh, Vic •Lyndsay Riggall, David Rhodes, Port Macquarie, NSW

Changes

Tuggeranong: Change of location. The church now meets at St Thomas', Boddington Crescent, Kambah, at 9.30 am.

Koorringal 1991

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2 December
 10 am service
 Speaker:
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Christian Fellowship Association Victoria

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Notice to subscribers and agents
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 Surrey Hills Church of Christ
 1 The Avenue, Surrey Hills
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 at 6.30 pm
 Guest speaker: Des Purnell
 RSVP to Val Bush
 on (03) 662 1411

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wishes to invite you to a
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 6 pm, 25 November
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The Australian Soldiers' Chapel Appeal is an exempt fund under section 78 (1) (a) (viii) of the Income Tax Assessment Act

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Special Guest Speakers: John Smith & David Wraight

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The Richmond Church of Christ, in a suburb of Nelson on the South Island, New Zealand, has a vacancy for a fully trained and qualified minister for a full-time position.

We seek a person who is well experienced and skilled in all aspects of the Churches of Christ ministry. He must be capable of developing the present congregation, which consists of many el-

derly members and the nurturing of the youth within the church, and to have a vision to guide the church into the 1990s on a planned growth path. In return, the church will provide caring and supportive management, a manse and a salary in accordance with experience and qualifications.

For a job description and a copy of the job requirements, write to Mrs Jean Mulhearn, 20 Fauchelle Ave, Richmond, Nelson, NZ, by 25 November.

CHRISTIAN YOUTH TRAVEL ASSOCIATION, with offices at Homebush NSW, a youth accommodation centre at Cooma NSW and a reception and training facility at Silverwater NSW, seek to locate, interview and appoint

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He will also bring wise counsel to the full-time staff and Board of Directors of CYTA.

Experience in a Pastoral role and/or other similar areas of Christian endeavour is a pre-requisite, whilst formal training would be a decided advantage.

Christian Youth Travel Association is an exciting Ministry to young people and the successful person will have those special qualities that today's young people seek in their leaders.

Whilst an applicant who is ordained to The Ministry and married would be preferred, others who may have suitable experience will be considered. Commencement date is early 1991.

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The Chairman, Mr Stuart Gow
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 Level 11, 30 Clarence Street
 SYDNEY NSW 2000

P.S. You may not be the unique person, but you may know one. Suggest they look at this advertisement.

Obituaries

Obituaries are limited to 100 words

Copping, Marjorie Jessie (25.9.90) Born to Alfred and Mabel Shepherd of Balaklava, Marjorie grew up on the family farm, learning elocution and music. In 1953 she entered COB and always remained a loyal supporter. She served the WCTU in Adelaide and as Camp Mother at Longwood. In 1960 she married Bob Copping and moved to Lucindale, where she served in leadership at Naracoorte C of C and Lucindale UC. It is a tribute to her faith that when Bob died in 1977 she continued to be an inspiration to others. Marjorie was a generous, hospitable woman, whose courage in the face of adversity was an example to all.

—Grant Simpson

Dickson, Henry William (26.8.90) Born at Bacchus Marsh, Vic, 1900, Harry Dickson served in France in World War I. He returned to The Basin and was working in a lemon grove when a group of young people on their way to a Sunday School picnic asked for directions. Among the group was Ivy. That's how Ivy and Harry met. They lived in Coburg where Henry was a monumental mason. Harry's

life revolved around his family, work and church. In 1962 they moved to Ivanhoe, in 1965 Rosebud and recently at Emmaus, the C of C home at Murrumbreena. A steady, patient and kindly man, Henry is survived by his wife, his sons Ray and Fred, seven grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren.

Pemberton, Jack (20.9.90) Jack was a stable multi-talented disciple. He and Edna lived in the one home throughout their married life. He began as an apprentice at Kinnear's Rope Works and rose to be purchasing officer. He joined the church at North Essendon, Vic, and became one of its most overworked and faithful servants. He was Sunday School Superintendent, Boys' Explorer leader, bus driver, board member, elder, friend and counsellor. He was well-known as the red-coated Chief Marshall at the Royal Show and was Vice-President of the Dousta Galla Bowling Club. His early death was due to almost forgotten contact with asbestos. His loving care was shared with Edna, his family (John and Claudia, Wayne and Margaret, Ruth and Stephen and six grandchildren) and more close friends than can be counted.

—AEW

Church News

WA

SCARBOROUGH (Nigel Merrick) Folk enjoyed "Spring Bus Excursion" organised by Lally Butt... Half night of prayer held for Fred & Sandy Hay regarding future missionary service ... Brad Parker, Bob Plumb, Fred Hay & Ray Jenner ably filled pulpit while our minister on holidays ... Great joy at recent baptisms.

KALAMUNDA (John Thornhill, Mark Proud, Paul Sanders, Guy Roberts) Preparations in hand for World Mission Week—theme "The Challenge Before Us". Guest speaker Rev. Paul Chang of Christian Nationals Evangelism Commission, Singapore ... Some 100 attended church family camp at Lake Cooloongup. Guest speaker Kel Willis from Christian Growth Ministries, Sydney ... Ladies Spring Seminar with Andrew & Norma Stout centred on relationships. Program included times for discussion, workshops & ministry.

SA

DULWICH-ROSE PARK UNITED PARISH (Rob Williams, Roger Brown) Family quiz night raised \$200 for Mulgrave College ... Parenting service, for which chapel (traditional) & hall congregations combined, was immense success; many non-member parents present ... Parish congratulates its UC minister Rob Williams & wife Colette on safe though early arrival of their third son, born 16 October.

HAMPSTEAD GARDENS (Kelth Ridge) Old pews (ex-Norwood church) replaced by modern seating ... Contemporary family service now able to meet in chapel in "church-in-the-round" format ... Successful Sunday School anniversary service with Jim Keatch & Mark Barnett ... Contact with Cambodian families through provision of free English classes ... Walking group for fitness & pleasure commenced ... "Relationships" theme for church camp at Stansbury.

BROOKLYN PARK (G. Shaw) Phyl Webber & wife Maureen to commence ministry Feb. 1991 ... New system to elect elders. 80% vote, no limit on number ... Speakers am: Herb Prime, Jeff May (Overseas Mission) ... Tennis: five junior teams, four senior teams with Brooklyn Park Uniting ... Family social by Spectrum youth ... Interact—BBQ, games—bridge to couples ... 50 plus group meets monthly.

HENLEY BEACH (Brian Hill) The church witnessed baptism of Vicki Lanyon during Girls' Brigade program. A joy to leaders, church members & many visitors ...

Women's Fellowship celebrated birthday with "Country Evening". Guest Mrs Thompson spoke on "Experiences of a Country Organist" ... Many shared in combined Western Districts service. Church stretched to capacity of seating. Guests from India Sam Mantode & Bhimrao Thavare. A great night.

NSW

COFFS HARBOUR (Steve Rogers) Six teenagers baptised at special service held at site of future building. Tree planting took place with each participant's tree noted for posterity ... Current minister Steve Rogers retiring at end of year. Kevin Simington, presently senior minister at Engadine, NSW, will begin January 1991 ... Luncheon held to celebrate Win Brown's 70th birthday. Over 60 attended ... Plans underway for new church building.

ALBURY (A. Wilson, A. Blyth) Special musicians service in August ... Camp in September. One decision for Christ ... Visits from Allan Windley (Christian Blind Mission), Gideons & Covenant Players ... Chapel renovations allowing one 9.30 am service completed ... 63rd Sunday School anniversary ... Stepping Out in Faith 19-21 October to be followed by retreat ... Three preparing for baptism in November.

PORT MACQUARIE (Barry Brown) Barry and Judy Brown to end 8 years ministry at end of 1990. They will remain in area, as Barry is to take position of Director of Lifeline Mid Coast ... Kym and Milly Steele to commence ministry in January 1991. Kym comes from Institute for Contemporary Church Leadership, Wollongong ... Church saddened by deaths of foundation member Lyndsay Riggall and of David Rhodes.

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Church News

Vic

NORTH ESSENDON (Graham & Bev Burgan) Youth group took part musically at church anniversary. ... Annual showbag packing concluded with 128,000 bags packed. Strathmore, Essendon, Keilor East & Kensington Network helped ... Chapel packed 30 September at memorial service for elder Jack Pemberton who died 23 September ... Special evening youth service held ... Ladies brought groceries CWF October meeting ... George Rowlings & David Ploog hospitalised.

CHELSEA (I. Whitelock) Guest speakers have included Brian Good (Bible Society), Andrew Ball (DMED), Howard Barnden, Ian Tippett (DMED) & Lyndsay Smith during minister's holidays ... House group fellowships organised for three weeks on common interests: music, travel & tall stories ... Monthly Friendship Hour held at Patterson Lakes. 70 attended ... Springtime service included floral display & gifts of food for needy ... Millie Warne in rehabilitation after hip replacement.

ORMOND (G. Stibbe, M. Adamson) Tea table services well attended ... More children attending Bible School ... Bible study, prayer groups continue ... International dinner great success. Eight nationalities represented. 200 attended. All auxiliaries involved in concert ... Interesting format evening services, encouraging visi-

tors & contacts. Younger people attending ... Teen Scene share tea, Bible study ... Lowanna Singers featured in October ... Fair great success ... Bethany Village project well under way.

PRESTON (T. Armstrong) At recent church AGM thanks were extended to retiring Treasurer Les Stirling for his many, many years of service ... Recent Sunday speakers have been Helen Hall (CWF President) & Greg Elsdon (lecturer CCTC) ... 14 folk enjoyed a five-day trip to the Grampians ... Ladies attended Australian Church Women World Community Day at local C of E.

HAMILTON (Ray Eldridge) Inspiring messages by Sonny Pillay during weekend mission. Friday coffee morning & evening coffee shop, Saturday men's breakfast, afternoon teaching time, evening rally. Quite a number of commitments at Sunday morning service. Excellent attendance at Sunday evening service, one recommitment. Many expressed joy over weekend activities & messages ... Meetings held regarding financial situation if Portland subsidy withdrawn.

PORTLAND (R. Hough) Recent speakers Fred & Betty Anderson, Don Smith ... Church blessed by crusade with Sonny Pillay with many rededications ... Minister attended seminar at Wollongong in October ... New leadership in coffee shop in Portland ... Coffee shop in Heywood launched during Pillay Crusade. Also

craft mornings for further outreach ... Starting fortnightly Kid's Club 26 October.

NUNAWADING (E. Keating, D. Hamilton, J. Wright, L. Smith, A. Spoelder) Welcome dinner for new worshippers ... Bike hike organised by Ray de Jager ... Art-craft-collectables display & sale ... Function room completed ... Creche dedicated in memory of Amie Miles ... New group TNT (Twenties & Thirties) for single young adults ... Divorce Recovery Seminar presented by Cheryl Johnson ... Surrey Road Fete for Others raised \$4,400 for overseas poverty relief & Blackburn High School chaplaincy.

CARNEGIE (Norma Hall) Good Companions, "Kidsmin" presented special program on Children's Sunday under leadership of T. Kennedy ... Husband & wife baptised ... Jack Giles speaker on Bible Sunday ... Members enjoying "Victoria GROW" studies ... Hungarian Fellowship meeting in chapel one Sunday each month ... CWF afternoon group celebrated 77th birthday ... Church saddened at sudden death of May Jory ... Monthly 5 pm tea & study/video well attended.

OAKLEIGH (L.S. Dewberry) Jack Edwards accepts ministry call commencing February 1991 ... 74th anniversary celebrated 21 October. Tom Slater spoke. Offering of \$903 ... Church regrets deaths of Ashley Morrall & Alice Hodges ... Representatives from Inter-Church

Council attended service ... Gifts of soft toys received by Hospital Committee representative ... Caserole luncheon served on 21 October ... Marriage of Ruby Fordham & Gordon Clark celebrated in chapel on 27 October.

Qld

ANN ST, BRISBANE Bush dance & progressive dinner held recently. Great success. Everyone enjoyed themselves ... Successful youth camp held at Mt Tambourine ... Church & Sunday School anniversaries celebrated recently. A lot of effort put into all items ... Musical group participated in anniversary ... Interstate visitors welcomed over State/Federal Conference week ... Congratulations to Narelle & Andrew Low on birth of Anthony David.

BUNDABERG (Allan Leane) Kerry Hillyard, Ron Barlow, Jean Herwardine, Adrian Francis, Gweneth O'Sullivan & Vernetta Hillyard welcomed to fellowship ... Bob Hobson (Keswick speaker) Committee finalised details ... DCDE supply bridging funds ... Leaders & children at Camp Cal ... Bikes-for-Bibles riders Derek James & Stephen Knights home safe ... Deputation to Council on future development rezoning application ... 67th anniversary church in Bundaberg & third at Twyford St in November ... AGM 28 November under new by-laws.

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October 1993

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A Church ABC

Flinders Park

Flinders Park, SA, is a western suburb of Adelaide, midway between the city centre and the coast, near the airport. Many of its houses were built following World War II. Its population contains a high proportion of people in their 60s and 70s, but younger families are now moving into the area.

The Church of Christ, too, is predominantly older people, many retired but still very active, but there are a reasonable number of young families, children and young people and a few young marrieds. The numbers are stable but set to rise. The church was built about 30 years ago, and consists of a chapel, other rooms and a large hall, which was used for showing films many years ago.

Two services are held each week: a fairly traditional service at 10 am, attended by about 90, and a more contemporary service at 6.30 pm, which attracts 30 in the winter and 40-50 in summer. The evening service is supported by instrumentalists, and is led by a different person each week.

Flinders Park has many activities during the week. On Tuesday nights the Boys' Brigade meets and there is also a Bible study group. The ladies have their Bible study on Wednesday, and the Kids Club meets later in the day. On Thursday evenings there is a young adults Bible study, and on Friday evenings the "Rappers" (the older teenage group) have a time of discussion and the younger teenagers meet.

The Rappers then meet on Saturday evening.

Flinders Park's minister for the past two years has been Keith Miller, who, with his wife Meredith and primary-school-aged children, Ian, Tony and Rosalie, came from service overseas in Zaire with the Africa Inland Mission. Once a teacher,

Keith trained at the Bible College of South Australia before entering the ministry. Lately Keith has been studying by correspondence with CCTC. He obtained his Diploma of Ministry and this month is looking forward to obtaining a Graduate Diploma in Ministry. This year the Miller family moved into a manse closer to the church.

A project of the Flinders Park church is the sending of one of the young people, Gavin Hedrick, overseas next year as part of "Love Europe 1991" organised by Operation Mobilization. After four weeks training Gavin will go to a country of his choice accompanied by someone who knows the language for personal evangelism. The church is seeking to build on its relationships with families in the community, especially those connected with the church through its programs for children, which is seen as a springboard for reaching out to the wider community. The church has much to offer these people. It has a caring atmosphere and older people who are very welcoming and able to make people feel comfortable.

The Last Word

Discipleship is not a point someone reaches. Rather, it is a process. I am a disciple if I am one who is moving with Jesus and for Jesus, learning from him, reaching out to others because of him.
—Leighton Ford

The way to wipe out a friendship is to sponge on it.

★★★★★

The person who proves to be as meek as a lamb usually gets into a stew.

★★★★★

It's not much use looking ahead unless you walk that way.

★★★★★

If absence makes the heart grow fonder, a lot of people would miss church more than any place in the world.

★★★★★

Three little ink drops were crying because their mother was in the pen and they didn't know how long the sentence was going to be.

★★★★★

A minister was called upon to substitute for the regular minister who had failed to reach the church because of bad weather. The speaker began by explaining the meaning of a substitute: "If you break a window and then place a piece of cardboard instead, that is a substitute."

After the sermon, a member of the congregation who had listened intently shook hands and, wishing to compliment, said, "You were no substitute. You were a real panel!"

★★★★★

At the firm's annual dinner they asked the head clerk from the sales department to say grace. The clerk stood up and, almost without thinking, intoned: "Dear Lord, we are in receipt of your recent delivery of assorted foodstuffs, and we trust that we will find the goods satisfactory. We hope to give you satisfaction and to retain the courtesy of your continued custom. In anticipation of your favourable report, we remain, your obedient servants, Amen."

★★★★★



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