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Dandenong's New Chapel



The Dandenong, Vic, church opened its third new chapel in its 98-year history on 4 November—story page 5

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Guest Editorial

Where the Buck for Church Growth Stops!

by Brian White

"Let conference provide a vision statement that gives the churches fresh motivation to implement the challenges of the gospel."

"Our churches are not growing. We need leadership and direction from our conference leaders and departments."

These are but two of a growing number of comments I have heard lately suggesting that our conference leaders and departments are being looked to for energising the churches and stimulating growth. However, it also dangerously implies a shift in responsibility for the growth and health of a church from the local church leadership to the departments of conference.

Departments Serve

Conference departments, executives and staff are meant to be servants of the local church, not its leaders. They were brought into being to provide resources for and, where possible, staff to help the local church to fulfil its mission. Nevertheless, the buck for growth stops with the local church leadership.

It would be hoped that local church leaders might draw on the expertise and resources of conference departments to help them fulfil their vision and achieve their goals, but the responsibility for the vision and the subsequent development rests squarely with them.

Motivation for Mission

Vision and mission statements have a place, and may be helpful in that they suggest direction and provide a precise statement of purpose or intent that may create some energy. To provide any real motivation they would have to be "owned" by the local church, especially by its leaders.

What will motivate us to mission?

• **The "Great Commission"**—We must take seriously the command of Jesus to take the Good News into the whole world. In William Carey's words: "The supreme task of the church is the evangelisation of the world." We need to hear that commission repeatedly and respond to it obediently.

• **Close Fellowship with Our Lord**—The deeper our relationship with him the more likely we are to catch what is on his heart. As we meditate on scripture we are likely to catch his compassion for the lost sheep and his sense of urgency for fields that are ready for harvest.

• **A Renewed Conviction That There Is No Hope for Humanity outside of Jesus Christ**—Having confessed him as the Son of God and therefore trustworthy in all that he has said, we must believe that we humans are lost, condemned, without hope and desperately in need of him as our Saviour. As Jesus said: "There is only one way to the Father-God, and that is through me." (John 14:6)

• **A Fresh Experience of the Holy Spirit**—After all God sent the Spirit to empower us in our witnessing for Jesus Christ. (Acts 1:8)

Intentional Mission

Many churches have elected to organise themselves solely on a **pastoral** model that revolves around caring for the struggling, the sick and the weary. They are primarily problem orientated. Others are structured around an **educational** model with a strong emphasis on teaching, training and fellowship programs for the church members.

However, we need more churches built on a **mission** model. They would still exercise effective pastoral care for the needy, and a consistent teaching and training of church members, but would also be committed to seeing their community as the harvest to be brought in, and their neighbours as lost sheep needing to be found.

Growing churches are usually those who accept the responsibility for taking the gospel to their community. The minister and leaders are usually pacesetters in evangelism and outreach, building bridges to the community and opening pathways into the kingdom.

Churches that accept the final responsibility for evangelising their area, will find support, encouragement, resources and help from the staff of our various state conference departments.

As they team together, the Lord's prayer, "Your kingdom come," is more likely to come to fruition. Let's stop trying to pass the buck, and each accept the responsibility to get on with the supreme task to which we have been called.

• *Brian White is a Field Director with both the Vic-Tas Dept of Mission, Education and Development and the Australian Board of Church Development and Education. He is currently the President of the Vic-Tas Conference and Director of Ministry—elect for the Churches of Christ in NSW Theological College.*

Induction of Rosalie Rofe



Ian and Jeannine Alves, Rosalie Rofe and Kevin Crawford at the induction service

Former missionary to Papua New Guinea, Rosalie Rofe, brought 28 years of expertise with her when she started an associate ministry with the Chatswood, NSW, church on 30 September. She will be working very closely with Ian Alves, who has been the minister of the church at Chatswood for nearly three years.

The induction service was presided over by Ian Alves and the "charge" to Rosalie and the congregation was given by Kevin Crawford (Secretary of NSW Conference), who also delivered a challenging sermon to the congregation.

Following the service, Rosalie was able to share informally with the congregation at a light luncheon prepared by the ladies.

As well as fulfilling pastoral duties, Rosalie will be applying her teaching and counselling skills to help build up the church spiritually. She will also be involved in reaching out to the isolated and lonely people in the community.

In the meantime she is simply taking her time to re-adjust to the vastly different Australian culture she left behind so many years ago.

—Ian Alves

OARS: When Dad's Away

Many children every Christmas are affected by the imprisonment of a parent. When father is in gaol, things can be tough for children. There is not much money to spend so they have to be content to stay at home and wear worn clothing.

The Offenders Aid and Rehabilitation Services of South Australia, in its concern for the rehabilitation of offenders and care of their dependents, is able to help such families with emergency food, assist in finding suitable accommodation and supplying warm clothing, blankets, shoes and furniture.

Advice is given on legal aid, budgeting and community services and welfare assistance available.

At this Christmas time the association's auxiliary will provide Christmas cheer—toys for children and gifts for mothers.

Some of the families helped by the association have a long history of being known to welfare agencies—they just do not seem to make it and the odds are always against them—sickness and unemployment, just to name a couple.

Because OARS cares for these families, welfare officers have been engaged to work among them. Financial sponsorship through community groups and individuals is arranged. Activities can include outings to the zoo, cinema, special entertainments, day trips and picnics.

Visitors from the North Liven Up Ararat

Early in the year the Ararat, Vic, church were faced with a dilemma.

"Should we make yet another change in dates for our outreach, or exploit the fact it will coincide with Ararat City's 'Golden Gateway' festival?"

It was decided that the Lord's hand must be in the "coincidence", so we continued planning and making arrangements with Ken Bond and Gordon Barr, the ministry team of the Campbelltown, NSW, church, to work with us.

Ken and Gordon, along with Gordon's wife and daughter, and their driver, Ross, arrived just in time, on Saturday, 13 October, for their introduction to the church at a special barbecue.

By then, it had been decided to really exploit the special festival time in Ararat.

For a start, we publicised the outreach as "Gateway to Life, 1990"!

We were able to organise two seminars at local secondary schools using Ken's appointment as Chaplain to the Canberra Institute of Sport as the special purpose for the visit.

Gordon's expertise as a musician, and his experience of numerous scripture seminars, quickly proved popular to students and staff.

In every case, Gordon prepared the audience for Ken's

messages through his enthusiasm and unashamed testimony, not to mention his expert musicianship.

Our outreach time featured in the local festival in other ways.

Ken and Gordon made a significant contribution in the special commemorative (ecumenical) church service at the local Anglican Church, with a capacity congregation.

On the Saturday morning we held a "sports persons' breakfast", arranged with the co-operation of the city sports and recreation officer.

This was not a large gathering, but since then we have been able to give one of the people who attended some more information about the Christian way of life.

Gordon had been invited, along with ministers Rodney and Marjan Beer, to provide some musical items at the Festival Literary Awards during the afternoon before our final outreach service.

Partway through the week the President of the Writers' Club contacted Marjan to see whether Gordon would be able to provide an extra segment in their program. The special guest who had been programmed for that segment, a Buddhist who was going to read some of his Zen poetry, had experienced an accident and was unable to be involved!

Special "low key" opportunities for sharing the Gospel included a couples' dinner, two coffee mornings and Ken making himself available to counsel anyone who wanted to speak with him.

On the second Saturday night we held a youth concert in the high school auditorium. This had been advertised as a "Golden Gateway" activity, and the Festival queen came along to lend support.

During the final service two young people indicated to the congregation their desire to make Christ Lord of their lives.

—Rodney Beer

Rita Roberts, BEM 1904-1990

From the moment Rita Roberts was baptised at the Maryborough, Vic, church as a 13-year-old girl, she never ceased working for her Lord. She made her commitment at the Clay-Chandler tent mission; her faithful service continued without interruption for the next 73 years.

Undoubtedly her finest contribution to the life of the churches in Victoria was as leader of the Girls' Good Companion Clubs. It was in 1939 that Keith Jones, the director of the then Youth Department, invited Rita to lead the work of providing club activities for girls between the ages of 12 and 15. For the next 40 years Rita headed a team of dedicated leaders in building up this ministry of Christian education. The "Goodies" camps at Monbulk and other places became almost legendary in the friendship, the fun, the faith and the commitment that they generated. By the early 1960s nearly every church in Victoria had a Good Companions Club and the total membership ran into thousands. "Aunty Rita" was the inspiration behind it all; she seemed to be able to bring out the very best in all whom she worked with.

The present Good Companions leader Dorothy Brooker commented: "She was a very dear person. She always made us feel important and loved. In fact that was one of her great qualities—her personal interest in each of us. She was fun loving and had a sense of humour, which was evident in camps, social gatherings and interaction with people. We thank God for her vision."

All her friends felt that it was highly appropriate when the government awarded her the British Empire Medal in 1977; it was a fitting tribute to a life of effective and selfless service. Rita, typically, felt that she was rewarded in other directions.

Rita was born in the little town of Bet Bet, Vic, one of five

children of a miner's family. Rita remembered that the family was very poor and that father had to be away from home a great deal. In 1929 she moved to Melbourne where she became an overseer in a textile mill at Collingwood. The following year she came into membership at the South Yarra church and there she served for the rest of her days.

Her work at South Yarra was also an inspiration. She founded a Christian Endeavour Club for young people; she taught in the Sunday School and for many years was Superintendent of the Primary Department. During the Second World War she wrote regularly to each of the servicemen who were associated with the church—and there were some 20 of them. Needless to say, in all her years at South Yarra, she was the leader of a very large girls' club there.

Her ability to see where the church should be ministering was quite amazing and her vitality in giving a lead equally amazing. She founded the Gospel Singers during the 70s in the South Yarra community. This gave the opportunity to a group of elderly citizens to express their talents and enrich their lives. Another testimony to Rita's abounding zest for life was the fact that right up to her 78th birthday she played competitive tennis.

In 1945 Rita bought a florist shop in Collingwood. For the next 40 years her artistry and care for people manifested itself through this business. (It was really a ministry.) Rita confessed that the shop did not make a lot of money; no wonder! It was really a base of operations for organising club programs and activities within her beloved South Yarra church. All the ministers who served at South Yarra would call in for a "cuppa" and many were the plans discussed for the well-being of the local work.

Rita was immensely involved in the work of Overseas



Mission—especially India. Through her leadership those missionaries received over the years a constant flow of gifts and resources of all types. She used her own time generously, and the wear and tear of her famous black Holden (the Lord's car, as she called it), to collect each year gifts of blankets, groceries and hospital gifts for the chief hospital visitor of the (then) Department of Social Service, "Uncle Charlie" Young.

For years, Rita lived with her elder widowed sister Hilda Barbour. About three years ago

the health of both sisters started to deteriorate. Hilda's death deeply affected Rita and she subsequently moved into one of the homes of our Department of Community Care. Just before her home-call on 24 September she was moved to the W.H. Clay Nursing Home.

The memorial service for Rita, held at the South Yarra church, was full to capacity as friends and family, colleagues and club members of yesteryear came together to give God the thanks for this remarkable servant of the Kingdom of God.

—Viney Longthorpe



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Dandenong Opens Its Third New Chapel in 98 Years

Dandenong, Vic, opened its new building this month, after nearly a century of witness in the area. In September 1892, Mrs J.B. Moysey, a devoted Christian who had for many years cherished the dream of a church in Dandenong, was forced, due to failing health, to give up her weekly trips to Berwick, where she had been meeting with fellow Christians. With the help of members of the family, she visited and brought together a few local people for a 3 pm Sunday communion service. These meetings were held in the old Salvation Army Citadel on the corner of Walker and Langhorne Streets, which was burnt down in 1895. After the fire, meetings were held in several halls and homes until by 1898 only three people were still attending regularly, one of these being Bessie Brown, a daughter of Mrs Moysey. Members of the Brown family are still in fellowship with the church today.

Several families had moved into the area, making meetings in homes too crowded and the old Rechabite Hall on the corner of Mason and Walker streets was used for some years. The little group through sacrificial giving had managed to save £20 and a faith decision was made to use the money for a tent mission. Commencing on 24 April 1904, the meetings were held nightly for seven weeks, the venue being the old Dandenong Showgrounds. Some 40 new members were added to the church in this time. It was only 11 weeks after the conclusion of the mission that a neat little chapel seating 200 was opened on the corner of Robinson and George Streets. This building is still used today, in its original location, by the Christian Revival Crusade. To celebrate the opening, 10 days of special meetings were held with 17 additional members being added, bringing the total membership to 75. Up until January 1905 the church had been served by visiting preachers, but the first resident

minister, W. Hayes, was appointed at that time. A hall was added to the original building by voluntary labour in 1918 at a cost of £150. (The original building cost £500.)

Further tent missions were held in 1910 and 1919 and there was a steady increase in membership. In October 1943 E.C. Hinrichsen and V.B. Morris were invited to conduct a tent mission to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the church. These meetings were a spectacular success with some 100 being baptised. Meetings were held on the corner of Mason and Walker streets diagonally opposite the church. The old minister's residence adjacent to the church was sold in 1949 and a new manse built in Wilma Avenue at a cost of £2,128. This residence is still in use today.

The Diamond Jubilee of the Church was celebrated with special meetings in the Dandenong Town Hall 4-12 October 1952.

Following the Hinrichsen mission in 1943, one of the officers, Clive Warmbrunn, having a vision of the need for a new chapel to house the growing congregation, mortgaged his own home and purchased the site of the mission tent for £500. A short time later, the church purchased the land from Mr Warmbrunn for its original cost, and a building fund was commenced. The foundation stone of the new building was laid on 10 February 1957 by Wilfred Brown, son of David and Bessie Brown (Moysey), two of the founding members, and was opened with much excitement on 21 September in the presence of 600. The key was turned by Mrs Effie Williams (Brown), who as a small child had attended the foundation meetings. Cost of the new complex was £24,000 and to celebrate this worthy achievement a two-week thanksgiving mission was run. The main hall in the complex was dedicated in the name of the then minister, Lloyd Read.

In the late 1950s and early 60s the church reached out to

several neighbouring areas with Sunday schools being established in Dandenong West, Doveton and Noble Park. Although flourishing for several years, these causes, with the exception of Noble Park, declined and eventually closed. However there is still a church in the Noble Park area. In addition to this, one single and two missionary couples have been sent out into the field from the church, while several other members have been through the Churches of Christ Theological College.

Two additional special events in the life of the church were a Spiritual Life Mission in September 1960 and a five-week tent mission in February-March 1961.

With the rapid growth of the Dandenong business centre and the advent of high-rise buildings in the immediate area, the church found itself in a "pocket" with little or no housing area close handy to reach out into. The existing membership all travelled, some quite considerable distances, to meet for services. An offer for the site was received in 1988, and when an increased offer was made early in 1989, the decision was made to relocate. Purchase of a block of land of almost three acres in David Street, just on the east side of Stud Road, was negotiated. On this has been erected the large new complex that is scheduled to be opened on 4 November.

The new chapel complex is set in extensive grounds and there is ample room for future expansion. The chapel is located close to a large established housing area and close to an elderly people's home and village. There is also a large new housing estate presently being developed on the eastern side of the church site, giving good prospects for further outreach.

The congregation has for the last 16 months been meeting at the Cleeland High School during the time the new building was being constructed.

Graeme Foon was called to be the minister of the church in

January 1989. Experience as a mechanic, high school and TAFE college teacher preceded his call and training for the pastoral ministry. Graeme, his wife Julie and children Matthew, 9, and Rebecca, 8, came to Dandenong after four years training in Brisbane. Mark Butler is the student minister, whose involvement is mainly with youth and young adults and their families. Mark comes into the pastoral ministry with nursing and sales experience. Mark came, with his wife Nicola and son Daniel, 3, from Canberra in 1989 to study at the Churches of Christ Theological College at Mulgrave.

In an effort to preserve something of the memory of the previous church building many of the stained glass windows have been used, with beautiful effect, in the new building.

The new building at 139-151 David Street was officially opened on 4 November by Alan Emmett from the Properties Corporation. Mrs Irene Warmbrunn, one of the longest-serving members, turned the key on opening day. Brian White, the 1990-91 State Conference President was the guest speaker. On 10 November the church held an open day and barbecue at the building.

Use of the new building will be shared with the Spanish Baptist Church led by Pastor Fernando Hernandez. This congregation, of 120 members, is made up largely of newly arrived families from South America.

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Aboriginal Issues Task-Force

In the last issue of *The Australian Christian* I reported on much of the discussion at the business sessions of the 43rd Federal Conference held in Brisbane 8-14 October.

This issue I wish to report discussion on a motion on our relationship with Aboriginals.

At the previous Federal Conference held in Canberra a motion was presented regarding the relationship between Aboriginal and other Australians, including an element of repentance.

After much discussion the motion was referred to an Aboriginal Task Force made up of representatives of the Federal Social Justice Committee and leading Aboriginal pastors.

The group had long discussions on the matter and brought a motion to this Federal Conference.

Discussion took up over two full sessions of the business time. Several amendments were proposed and after thoughtful discussion these were rejected.

Delegates were very carefully attempting to show that they were in agreement with the sentiment that we need to ask forgiveness of the Aboriginal people for past injustices and that we need to commence a process of asking for repentance and working towards full reconciliation. At the same time there was concern that this could mean that all past efforts of Churches of Christ were unjust. Conference was also struggling to understand some of the terms used in the motion: "ownership", "rights" and "restitution". Aboriginal understanding of some of these terms is vastly different to a "white" understanding of the same terms. The thought was expressed that there are also differences within the Aboriginal community on meaning of these words.

Several Aboriginal members spoke during the debate on the

need for Churches of Christ to be seen making this first step in repentance and reconciliation. At least one person commented that it will make their task of reaching their own people not as difficult if this motion was passed.

A glossary of meanings was proposed later in Conference. It was agreed to add this to the original motion to help in an understanding of some of the terms used. After this the motion was passed by a wide margin.

The Resolution

That this Conference of Churches of Christ in Australia acknowledge:

1. That Aboriginal people occupied and possessed this land before the arrival of European settlers (and therefore in a legal sense truly "owned" the land).

2. That insofar as the Aboriginal people have not made treaties disposing of the land (due in part because they see it as impossible to own the land), they should still be seen as the legal owners.

3. That violence and injustices have been perpetrated against the Aboriginal people in the colonisation of this continent.

4. That the Church's relationship with Aboriginal people has been ambiguous: that concerns for the physical and spiritual well-being of Aboriginal people have existed alongside:

(a) the needless suppression of some traditional practices,

(b) the disruption of Aboriginal families,

(c) the appropriation of Aboriginal land,

(d) the acceptance of societal attitudes and practices which have contributed to the injustice experienced by Aboriginal people.

5. The experience of many Aboriginal people continues to be one of injustice, lack of understanding by society and inappropriate measures of support and assistance. Furthermore, the impositions and direction of governments continue the process of injustice.

The exploitation associated with various deviant lifestyles of society are leading to the destruction of community life. They feel neglected, their young people suffer from the hopelessness of unemployment, their life is one of ill-health, poor education and housing, too often they find themselves in prison.

Therefore in an act of repentance:

1. We seek forgiveness from the Aboriginal people for our complicity.

2. We seek to build a relationship with Aboriginal people based on respect for their culture, heritage and identity.

3. We seek to support Aboriginal people in their struggle to determine the shape of their own community.

4. We support the concept of:

(a) An agreement to provide a basis for Aboriginal people's legal ownership of this land,

(b) A democratic political process whereby Aboriginal people can determine and implement policies which affect them,

(c) Real rights for tribal Aboriginal families and groups so they can develop their homelands,

(d) Restitution for urban living Aboriginal people.

5. We pledge as a Federal Conference and as representatives of States and as individuals to undertake activities which will:

(a) Make us more aware of the cries and aspirations of the Aboriginal people,

(b) Bring us in solidarity with them in their struggle, and

(c) Lead to a genuine reconciliation.

6. We call upon the churches to show their commitment to this process by ensuring that our work amongst Aboriginal people is adequately resourced.

Glossary

1. Repentance: Change of mind and a change of attitude;

2. Ownership (4a): Custodian responsibility i.e. care for/maintain/preserve land of birth;

3. Real rights (4c): Under current land rights legislation

Aboriginal people do not possess the right to develop/mine and invite their friends onto the land. Churches of Christ to endorse their right for economic development of their choice;

4. Restitution (4d): Demand the Government to recognise restitution to urban Aboriginal people who are currently neglected in all land rights legislation. Where practical, we encourage Churches of Christ as a Conference to pass on to Aboriginal churches, lands no longer required.

Christian Union Resolutions

Three motions from the Department of Christian Union were carried at the 43rd Federal Conference of Churches of Christ in Brisbane.

Model for Order of Service for Christian Unity

That this 43rd Federal Conference endorse the concept of the Sunday preceding Pentecost Sunday being set aside for all member churches of the Conferences of Churches of Christ in Australia to celebrate our concern and plea for the unity of the church, and that the Department of Christian Union be instructed to have prepared a suitable "model for order of service" which may be used or adapted by individual congregations.

Constitution for All Christian Union/Unity Committees

That this Conference urge all State and Territory Conferences, or persons especially appointed for that purpose, to consider separately and together development of a constitution dealing with the aims of Christian Union which could be adopted Federally and by each State and Territory Conference, and

That the constitution drafted by the Federal Department of Christian Union and distributed to the State and Territory Conferences in December 1989 constitute a basis of discussion.

Churches of Christ and the Uniting Church of Australia: Relationships at the Local Level

That this Conference request the Federal Executive to invite State and Territory Conferences and each of their member churches to consider the possibilities of closer relationship with the UCA within their state or local area in the light of the declaration at Seoul (August 1989) between the World Alliance of Reformed Churches and the Disciples Ecumenical Consultative Council.

Environmental Moves

At the recent Federal Conference in Brisbane a motion from the Federal Social Justice Committee was carried concerning the environment:

That this Conference of Churches of Christ in Australia recognise that:

1. God created the world as an act of love. The biblical account of creation affirms that all species have value and are part of God's creation.

2. That the earth is God's who in love entrusted it to our care.

3. That in the past we have sometimes failed to carry out the stewardship entrusted to us.

Conference therefore urges Departments, churches and individuals to consider ways of being more responsible in caring for the environment such as:

(a) The development of a more simple lifestyle.

(b) Reviewing the use of paper and plastic products.

(c) Avoiding wherever possible the use of CFCs.

(d) Recycling material and re-using products wherever possible.

Furthermore we urge both Federal and State Governments to encourage and establish efficient recycling systems.

A report of the workshop and worship life of Federal Conference will appear in the next issue.

—Chris Ambrose

Nunawading Renovations Opened

"We are emphasising that children are welcome at the Nunawading [Vic] Church of Christ," said Mrs Gill Cutler, an elder, during the opening ceremony of the new creche and function room at the Surrey Road buildings. Gill described the development in children's ministry during 1990 with the establishment of a new children's club by Faye Comrie and culminating with the creation of a new brightly lit and roomy creche area.

The creche was dedicated to the memory of Amie Miles, who died earlier this year, a tireless worker in the church, particularly amongst children. Her daughter, Ruth Higgins, unveiled the plaque and photo of her mother and declared the creche open.

Along with the creche, the church hall has been completely renovated and has been transformed from an echoing and little-used gymnasium to a comfortable function room. A



Jenny Jones, with her children, Daniel and Evan, three of the first customers in Nunawading's new creche area

new ceiling, a curtained wall, a carpeted floor and a well-designed sound system mean the former hall now has greater flexibility and will be used for some worship services and community seminars.

The function room and creche project were designed by church member and architect, Ray Drayton, and coordinated by church secretary,

Bruce Graham. Total costs were in the vicinity of \$80,000 and the support of the Vic-Tas Properties Corporation in raising some of this finance was greatly appreciated. The relatively inexpensive project was only made possible with the support of an army of volunteer tradesmen and other helpers from within the congregation.

A Splash of Colour

A large group enjoyed the annual ladies dinner at the Keilor East, Vic, church. The theme of the evening, "A Splash of Colour", extended from invitations to table decorations.

The men of the church served the meal, provided some of the musical entertainment for the evening and even did the dishes!

Guest speaker, Pam Bowers, minister at the Frankston, Vic, church spoke on "A Colourful World of Women". Pam looked at the changing role of women, the ways God calls women to a variety of areas of service and the ways in which women help make a colourful world. The ladies were encouraged to bring life and colour to this world by being a friend and encourager, by being themselves and by using their talents and gifts.



Ruth Higgins unveiling the plaque and photo of her mother, Amie Miles, to whom the new creche was dedicated

Letters to the Editor

Letters are limited to 200 words

Sight Impaired and *The Australian Christian*

To the Editor,

I don't know why I hadn't thought of it before now—and perhaps some people have been doing it for years. The notion suddenly struck me a few days ago that a number of items in *The Australian Christian* each fortnight would make excellent material for reading to sight-impaired people by those of us who have the privilege of doing this small service in nursing homes.

Two good examples from the 20 October issue are the Letter from Tertius (headed "Mindless") and the first one-and-a-half columns of Keith Farmer's interview with Rosalie Rofe—her views on changes in attitudes that have occurred in Australia in the 28 years she has been in Papua New Guinea.

—Jack Ludbrook
(Dulwich-Rose Park, SA)

[I know of several people who read articles to the sight impaired. We have several readers who are sight impaired and they arrange to have relatives and friends read much of *The Australian Christian* to them. We also send a copy of each issue to at least two radio stations (one in Canberra and one in Melbourne) for the sight impaired so that articles and news items can be selected and included in their programs—Editor]

Faith and Sudden Death

To the Editor,

I am moved to respond to A.C. Davey's letter ("AC" 3 November). Is A.C. Davey seriously suggesting that God should have intervened in each of the aircraft accidents described? The inference is that God failed to act and hence the aircraft crashed. If God had altered the physical conditions surrounding each incident to overcome either human error or mechanical failure, consider the disastrous effect on the rest of humanity.

Although it is obvious that the writer maintains a bitterness grounded in the deep hurt of the loss of family members and friends, that bitterness cannot be aimed at God. Our God is not a vindictive God—look at the depth of love poured out on all humanity in the action of God, in Christ, on the cross. It is not good enough to jump around from text to text in the Bible to find words to justify a claim—particularly when the words are taken out of context (see Revelation 21:6-7 for the fate of the "people of the devil"). It is significant that the words of Christ are missing from Davey's argument.

Finally, I pass on the following observations: "God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good." (Genesis 1:31)

Mankind has spent thousands of years altering the environment, creating hazardous occupations (God didn't invent the aeroplane, he gave man that gift) and generally destroying God's work. We are now doing it at an even faster rate than before.

Most accidental sudden deaths are as a result of creations of man, or of man's folly.

Most health-related sudden deaths (heart attacks, strokes etc.) result from diet and lifestyle (environment).

Perhaps it would be helpful to A.C. Davey to read again the words of Christ, especially Matthew 22:37, and of Paul (Romans 5:1-8 for starters); and we might pray that God will enrich her understanding.

—Alan Birkett
(Nunawading, Vic)

[This letter is over the normal 200 word limit. However as it is in reply to a similarly long letter I have allowed it to be over the limit this time—Editor]

British Churches

To the Editor,

I have just returned from the UK where I have had opportunity to meet with members of some of our churches there. I have been challenged and encouraged by what I have seen.

A theological college has been re-established and is beginning to produce graduates, with American support a teacher has been sent to Ghana, a new church has been established at Bromsgrove (about 40 members) and the church at Tunbridge Wells, down to about eight elderly members four or five years ago, now has over 20 members and a viable outreach program. However, the task ahead of our churches there is tremendous.

Ross Wissmann, an Australian who trained at Kenmore Christian College, is minister of the little church at Mildenhall. Ross has established a youth work at Sawbridgeworth (where he lives) and is looking for someone to assist him with the work at Mildenhall (which is an hour's drive away). You published a letter from Ross on this

matter ("AC" 6 October). I spoke briefly with Ross by phone from London prior to our departure on 18 October. Somebody has already responded to Ross's appeal.

Ross and I agree that a higher Australian profile would be beneficial in the efforts to resuscitate the British churches and I gather from Bob Wetzell (Christian Church), Principal of Springdale College, that he would welcome Australian assistance.

One of our British preachers, Orrell Battersby, has expressed interest in ministry in Australia.

—Harold Hayward
(Berowra, NSW)

Women's Status and Role

To the Editor,

In a number of discussion settings at Federal Conference it was said that "in Christ

Letters from Tertius

Big Brother

To the Editor,

The novels of the future that my local library supplies seem to have one thing in common. That is Big Brother, or his equivalent, looking at his beloved compatriots from ever-present television screens, making sure that they are toeing the party line—for their sakes of course.

It seems to me that Big Brother has already arrived on our TV screens and has a lot of us toeing his line. There is no authoritarian face or dictatorial voice, as such, but the "Great Dictator" is there all the time.

Not only does he convince us that life is impossible without the goods and gadgets that he displays so enticingly, but he gives the impression that there are no values besides material ones. Of course we don't believe him, but subtly he sucks us in just the same.

With behind-the-hand female smirk or with libidinous male smarminess, he tells us that sex is a joke to be indulged in whenever and however and with whomsoever we can get it, and has already all but abolished the former national moral code.

He soft soaps us into thinking that the modern family or neighbourhood is not normal unless it is staggering from one crisis to the next.

He assumes that we have lost our reasoning powers and sets out to do our thinking for us. By selective reporting he protects us from truth that he thinks is not good for us.

And he tells us that he is not trying to brainwash us, assuring us that all he is out to do is to entertain us. After all he is Big Brother and only wants to keep his little brothers and sisters amused.

I am, your square-eyed friend,
—Tertius

Letters

Jesus...there is neither male nor female" (Galatians 3:26, 28) has to do with a woman's status before God, not her role in the church (her role being to be silent and be submissive to men). There are difficulties in this interpretation.

1. Paul's claim has to do neither simply nor primarily with personal salvation but with the people of God, the church. His debate is over whether the requirement for membership in the church would result in there being "neither Jew nor Greek, neither slave nor free, neither male nor female" (RSV).

2. If being in Christ does not affect role, what would that mean in regard to Jew and Greek, slave and free? The Jew would still function as Jew and the slave as slave?

3. Paul's argument in Galatians has as much to do with "staying saved" (that is, a Christian way of life) as it has with "getting saved".

4. Paul takes it for granted that women have a very significant role in the church as leaders. See 1 Corinthians 11:5a and 13a, Philippians 4:3 and Romans 16:1-15 (note the many women named and their various roles).

—Ronald Graham
(Johnston, Iowa, USA)

Faith and Sudden Death

To the Editor,

In both the incidents alluded to by A.C. Davey ("AC" 3 November) people whom I knew well and loved were killed. Bob Peaker was a very special man to many many people and news of his death left family and friends reeling with shock.

No doubt, in anger and shock the question, "Why?" came to most of us as it does whenever we hear of or experience an unexpected death.

Is God really to blame as A.C. Davey suggests? Are their deaths untimely and their lives unjustly stolen from them? Was God uncaring and unloving?

We could ask the same questions about Jesus, for surely the cross was a tragedy and Jesus struck down in the

prime of his life when, humanly speaking, there was still so much he could do.

I believe that God is sovereign. Isaiah 55:8, 9 suggest that his mode of operation is different to mine and therefore cannot be judged as I judge. Isaiah 29:16 says, "You turn things upside down, as if the potter were thought to be like the clay! Shall what is formed say to him who formed it, 'He did not make me'? Can the pot say of the potter, 'He knows nothing'?" (NIV)

What we do with and learn from such circumstances is so much more important. Once I could accept that God knew best what he was doing, even though it meant death and heartache for myself and others, I found I could begin to see things a little as God sees them and that helped me to cope.

I believe Bob's funeral and memorial services were occasions of praise and thanksgiving to God that he had allowed Bob into our lives for a few years and had used him to help untold numbers of people. And praise because Bob, far from having his life stolen from him, was already enjoying the abundant life God promises his children and we could look forward to seeing him again.

Let's not limit God by our finite understanding because he is so much bigger than we can ever imagine. I am thankful to be "engraved in the palms of his hands" as Isaiah 49:16 says and can rest in that.

—Rosalie Rofe
(Chatswood, NSW)

[This letter is over the 200-word limit but has been allowed as it is in response to an issue raised when the original correspondent was allowed to exceed the limit—Editor]

Christian View

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News

Scripture and Hymn Numbers

Those torn or tatty hymn numbers and scripture titles can easily be replaced. New sets can be ordered from the Department of Mission, Education and Development, 52 La Trobe Street, Melbourne 3000.

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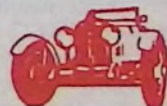
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Papers

Justice for the Earth

1990 Anglican Social Justice Statement

Edited by Duncan Graham \$5

A prayer said often during public worship in the Anglican congregations in Australia: "Give wisdom to those in authority in every land, and guide all peoples in the way of righteousness and peace, so that they may share with justice the resources of the earth, work together in trust and seek the common good," sets the theme for this 70-page study book.

There are five interesting case studies presented: Land Degradation in Victoria—Halt the Salt, Deforestation in Tasmania—Cutting the Forest Down to Size!, Air Pollution in WA—Haze on the Horizon—Kwinana, Water Pollution in NSW—Bondi Beaches! and Toxic Waste Disposal in Queensland—RATS in Action!

The challenges for Christian faith and action, including reflection on key biblical concepts are discussed. The concluding chapter points to signs of hope highlighting things being done and possible in the future.

There are excellent pictures, stories, cartoons, poems, reflection questions and a good reference list for further reading. All these make this an attractive publication, suitable for people of all ages, either for private reading or study groups.

The Uniting Church statement *Healing the Earth* is also concerned with environmental issues. Both papers are recommended reading in the light of the recent Federal Conference discussion on the environment.

—John Somerville

Books

A Brief History of Kenmore Christian College

edited by Rod Tippet (Kenmore Christian College) \$6

In recent weeks Kenmore Christian College has been celebrating its 25th anniversary. As a part of their final-year subject "Church in Australian Society" five students have written material on various aspects of the history of Kenmore. This material has been gathered together with reflections from others who have been intimately involved in the life of KCC over the past 25 years.

Material covered in this booklet, which would be of interest to anyone who has been involved at all with KCC, includes information on why the College was mooted prior to 1965. As with all the colleges in Australia the prime reason that Kenmore was started was because of the drain of ministers and potential ministers to other states or countries because a training college was not available in the appropriate state at the time. This has been a prime reason for the creation of CCTC, the NSW Theological College and KCC.

There are several other areas covered, including material on the Board of Management, various faculty members, students and diplomas and two personal views from graduating students. There is also a chapter that has articles on the five Principals of the College (Dr James Jauncey, Frank Ewers, Dr David Hammer, Randy Edwards and Donald Spencer).

This history is available for \$6, which includes postage, from Kenmore Christian College, PO Box 55, Kenmore 4069.

—CRA

The Evangelicals

An Illustrated History

commentary by J.D. Allan (The Paternoster Press & Baker Book House)

This book is a very potted history of the Christian church. Its main emphasis is on what is described as the "evangelical wing" of the church. The first three chapters look at more general history

up to the 18th century and this is followed by a series of chapters looking at the missionary activity and growth of the church in the various areas of the world. There are special chapters on the growth of the Pentecostal churches, especially in such areas as South America. There is also a chapter on the evangelicals' social concern. There are many historical photographs and illustrations that add to the text. Various well-known world leaders in the evangelical tradition have short contributions in the book. By the way, the author of the text opts for a definition of "evangelical" as: "So 'evangelical' came to mean a return to basics, a desire to be faithful to the spirit of the New Testament. And evangelicals today would claim that their ideas are no exotic, esoteric development of Christian theology: they simply represent the original, orthodox faith of the Church, which is as valid today as it has ever been."

—CRA

The Parent-Child Connection

by Wm Lee Carter (Baker Book House)

The Parent-Child Connection examines a list of ingredients that are necessary to create a healthy home atmosphere, and presents a variety of behavior-management methods and communication techniques.

The three parts of the book focus on the ideas that the parent must assume leadership in the home, the parent must have a well-organised system of managing the child and effective communication is the best tool to help children reach their potential.

This book is written in an American context and I found some of the case studies quite grating, but there are some truths that parents could learn from reading this book.

—CRA



Swanston Street's 125th Anniversary Celebrations

Over the weekend of 19-21 October the Swanston Street, Melbourne, church celebrated its 125th anniversary.

The celebrations commenced on the Friday night with a nine-course Chinese meal in a city restaurant, which was attended by nearly 300 members and friends. At this dinner a 20-minute audio-visual was screened depicting something of the history of the church. Recognition was also given to Allan and Val Webb, who have completed 20 years of ministry with the church.

On the Saturday afternoon the official opening of the newly renovated lower church hall took place. This massive \$465,000 project has been 12 months in progress. It has involved excavating underneath the church and removing truck loads of dirt and completely underpinning the church. Along the way many problems and difficulties were encountered. However, in an amazing way the Lord has enabled every one of them to be overcome and resolved.

At the official opening ceremony Abraham Andrews, the Construction Manager of Johns & Lyng, the building contractors in charge of the project, shared a moving testimony of God's faithfulness and goodness. He shared how not one day was lost through industrial trouble, not one worker suffered any accident or injury, not one union official attempted to interfere or obstruct. (This is all the more amazing when the building industry generally has experienced one of the most turbulent periods in its history.)

The official opening was performed by Max and Joan Walker, whose links with the church can be traced right back to the very beginning.

On the Sunday morning the 125th anniversary worship service was held at the Pharmacy College. Over 600 worshippers jammed into this au-

ditorium and there they were inspired by Stuart Robinson, the senior minister of the Blackburn Baptist Church, on the theme of God's sovereignty. Other outstanding features included magnificent singlingled by a 12-piece orchestra and beautiful items by an overseas



students choir and a graduate students quintet. At this service a special offering was received toward the renovation project. A Prayer Target Goal of \$125,000 had been set.

Over the weekend prior to the anniversary a 40-hour prayer-a-thon had been held to specifically pray over this target goal.

When the offering response of \$125,587 was announced at the final Sunday evening service the church erupted into spontaneous worship and praise. This is by far the largest offering that the church has ever received in any one day—in fact more than double. This means that in the year that the renovation project has been in progress over \$450,000 has been given. The exciting corollary to all of this is that the missionary giving of the church throughout this whole project has been the highest on record.

At the final Sunday evening service Stuart Robinson preached on the Great Commissions as recorded in Matthew, Mark, Luke, John and Acts. He illustrated extensively from his own missionary experiences in Bangladesh, and more recently in the Middle East. One young couple offered themselves in response. This final service was a service that will live forever in the memories of all of those who were present.

—Allan Webb

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Emergency in the Gulf

The Bible Society and Open Doors are responding to an urgent appeal from the Bible Society in Jordan to provide further Scripture supplies for refugees streaming through that country from Kuwait.

Stocks of Scriptures in the main languages of the refugees, Bengali, Sinhala and Tagalog, have been exhausted as churches have held evangelistic services and distributed the Scriptures. There have been hundreds of commitments to Christ, according to Jamal Hashweh, Executive Secretary of the Bible Society in Jordan.

The following Scriptures have been ordered by the Bible Society and are presently being rushed to Amman in Jordan from Hong Kong and the Philippines: 10,000 Tagalog, 2,200 English, 3,500 Sinhala and 200 Bengali New Testaments and 1,200 English and 100 Tagalog Bibles.

The cost of these Scriptures, plus shipping is \$43,000. Christian bookshops in Jordan and

Open Doors are donating \$13,000. The Bible Society is therefore asking Australians to help provide the balance of \$30,000.



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The staff of the DCDE in Queensland are working with churches to help them to discover ways of being more effective in ministry. While each church is different, they can assess their effectiveness by using the 12 characteristics pointed out by Kennon Callahan in his book *Twelve Keys to an Effective Church*.

This approach to long-range planning involves key members of the congregation being familiar with the principles in Callahan's book. They then spend six one-and-a-half-hour sessions in evaluating and planning. Through prayer, the collective wisdom, judgement, common sense and vision, decisions are made that affect the future.

Some principles considered are:

- 20% of the things we do produce 80% of our results.
- We need to learn to work smarter not harder.
- Hope (the future) needs to be stronger than money (the past).
- Mission (serving others) is more important than membership. That is membership will automatically follow mission.

Twelve Keys to an Effective Church

**Kennon L.
Callahan**

Twelve Keys to an Effective Church

Relational Characteristics

1. Specific, concrete missional objectives
2. Minister/lay visitation in community
3. Corporate, dynamic worship
4. Significant relational groups
5. Strong leadership resources
6. Solid, participatory decision making

Functional Characteristics

7. Several competent programs and activities
8. Open accessibility
9. High visibility
10. Adequate parking, land and landscaping
11. Adequate space and facilities
12. Solid financial resources



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Milton Oliver



Hung Pham, Church Secretary, Nathan Nhan, and Dr Cliff Warmbrunn, Department Chairman, following Nathan Nhan's ordination in July



Craig Humphris



Collin Orr

C.R.O.P.—Next Moves

Sunbury, on Melbourne's north-west fringe, is the setting for the newest church planting initiative. Milton Oliver commences in February 1991 under Joint Gisborne-Department auspices in what is Australia's third-fastest-growing municipality. Rowville church, which began in February, has called John Sutton as its first full-time minister in 1991. Finance for both projects will tax Department resources. Sponsorship and direct giving are especially invited.

Moves for 1991

A second Vietnamese congregation in Melbourne's western suburbs is proposed for 1991 with further moves under consideration. The Richmond congregation, under Nathan Nhan's leadership, is thriving, with numerous conversions, baptisms and outreach with Chinese students. Attendances are likely to reach one hundred by the end of the year. A newly established Korean church, under sponsorship from the Montrose congregation, held its inaugural service on 4 November. A new Indian work is expected to commence shortly. The Department is financially committed to most of these projects and needs an additional \$25,000 by 30 June to meet commitments. Development opportunities continue to encourage and offer prospects for significant growth during the decade.

Tasmanian Initiatives

Hobart's outer metropolitan perimeter now has three new locations for church planting. Under the Collins Street church's auspices, house groups have commenced at Kingston-Blackman's Bay (south-west) and Berriedale (north). In the east, the Midway Point congregation, with Department help, has called Craig Humphris from Carlingford College to ministry in 1991. An all-purpose hall is being erected on a recently acquired site. Steady progress continues at Camp Seaview with major construction work planned for March 1991, when the first floor of the new facilities will be poured. This project is under the leadership of Collin Orr, a retired master builder and long-term Department representative in Tasmania. The financial appeal for Camp Seaview is gathering momentum. Good support is evident from the churches for the Department's "Tasmania Grow" evangelism initiative.

**Department of Mission,
Education and Development
Victoria-Tasmania**

52 La Trobe Street, Melbourne 3000

Happenings

Churches and Christians in Victoria are being called to make 25 November a special day of prayer for the current situation of Victoria. Heads of Churches have made statements in support of this special day. Individuals are called to make it a day of prayer and churches are being urged to pray for Victoria in a special segment in the morning service. It is hoped that in country areas churches will combine for a time of prayer during the afternoon. In Melbourne at 3-3.45 pm at 5 sites there will be special prayer times: Parliament House steps, lawns outside the Museum in Swanston St, Flagstaff Gardens, Stock Exchange in Collins St and City Square. At 4.30 a half-hour rally will be held in the City Square.

Alarmed by the recent growth of Pentecostalism, the Roman Catholic bishops of Brazil are stepping up their campaign to curtail the phenomenon. Membership of such groups is currently estimated at between 12 and 16 million. According to the National Council of Christian Churches, by the end of the century that figure will rise to 30 million. The population of Brazil is now about 150 million.

Meeting jointly for the first time representatives of 12 Bible distributors and translation agencies urged more attention to Bible work. They called for efforts by their organisations to avoid "duplication and unproductive competition". Also agreed were joint pilot projects to reach non-literate peoples in Ethiopia and the Philippines. Agencies represented at the conference were United Bible Societies, Wycliffe Bible Translators, Open Doors, Living Bibles International, Scripture Union, Bible League, International Bible Society, Bibles for the World, Institute for Bible Translation, Lutheran Bible Translators,

Evangel Bible Translators and Pioneer Bible Translators.

Some ethnic German Lutheran congregations in Romania are so reduced in size because of emigration to Germany that they can no longer afford to pay a pastor.

The CAPE Centre, an educational resource for the churches and an agency seeking volunteers to care for people living with HIV/AIDS, has sponsored a prayer vigil to be held in St Francis' Church, Lonsdale St, Melbourne on World AIDS Day (30 November) at 7.30 pm.

The Government of Indonesia is planning to issue a new regulation on the construction of places of worship, following reports of public unrest due to the construction of a number of church buildings in Jakarta and in other areas.

The Uniting Church suffers from "appalling worship", falling numbers, ageing membership, frustration about the energy spent serving the church's structures, widespread concern about a lack of leadership, and a weakening of the church's sense of community. That grim picture was given to the annual meeting of the Victorian synod by its retiring Moderator, Rev Rodney Horsfield.

Some of the so-called "major doctrinal divisions" that exist between Christians are really personality problems, according to the new President of the Baptist Union of Victoria, Rev Kingsley Smith. He says, "While doctrine and theology are extremely important, I'm quite sure relationships are equally important, if not more so. I've become very troubled when people allow the strength of their doctrine to make it impossible for them to relate to fellow-believers in a friendly, accepting manner." He said that with Australia as the mission field,

Christians could not afford "the luxury of standing apart from fellow believers. We don't strengthen the cause of Christ by weakening our association of churches and individuals."

A mid-August fire at the warehouse of STL, one of Britain's leading Christian booksellers and wholesale distributors, destroyed several hundred thousand pounds worth of Christian books and music products.

Evangelistic efforts of Muslims are more effective and having a greater impact on the cities of the world than evangelical Christianity is, according to the director of the Zewer Institute of Muslim Studies, a US-based Christian organisation. "Islam always has been able to survive—and thrive—in the cities, whereas Christianity in the West has tended to withdraw from the cities."

Alcohol is "a gift of God's creation that may be accepted and enjoyed with thanksgiving," according to a report from the SA Uniting Church Synod's Social Justice Commission. The church, which has had a tradition of abstinence from alcohol among many of its members since its inception, is about to adopt this radical, public departure from its wowsy image, according to a report in *The Age*. The report says moderate and careful consumption of alcohol by Christians was acceptable. An "ethic of care and responsibility" should be developed that allowed those who wished to abstain from alcohol to do so, and those who wished to consume alcohol to do so "carefully and responsibly".

Turkish Assyrian Christians are reported to be facing extinction as attacks continue against believers in Eastern Turkey. Concern is growing after a spate of murders this year. Local Christians have been under increasing pressure to abandon their faith and integrate into Turkish

Muslim culture, and the latest attacks are believed to be an extension of that.

A 3-day evangelistic mission, organised jointly by the Protestant churches in Leningrad, took place on 19-21 October. A major public meeting was held each day at the city's Lenin sports and entertainment complex, addressed by Finnish evangelist Kalevi Lehtinen. 13 congregations in Leningrad and region, including Baptist, Pentecostal, Lutheran and Adventist churches, took part in the preparations for the mission.

While 95% of Swedish people are members of the state Lutheran Church, only 2% say they believe in Jesus. Another 26% said that they weren't Christian. Most people believe in a supernatural being, prompting one researcher to quip that most Swedes "believe in something but don't know what it is".

More than 2,700 people requested information from the Christian Enquiry Agency after reading advertisements in British newspapers, paid for by contributions by churches. About 20% of enquirers wrote back again asking to be put in touch with a church of their choice. More than half of those responding came from the 21-40-year-old age group, which is sparsely represented in churches.

Alberto Mottesi and his team have recently conducted an evangelistic outreach in the western part of Argentina. During 10-21 October they preached in 5 cities in Mendoza and San Juan. The cumulative attendance was 115,450 and there were 17,550 public decisions of commitment to follow Jesus Christ.

The Dial for New Hope 11610 recorded message service in Melbourne has had 27,250 calls over the past 12 months, which is an average of 75 calls a

day. At the annual meeting recently, praise was given to Bill Mills, a retired Church of Christ minister, who has written 800 scripts over the past 6 years. Over the past year 55 have phoned or written for specific help or for Christian literature after phoning the message service.

Russian television has been showing the children's cartoon series "Superbook", which serialises the Bible from Genesis to Revelation. The programs have an estimated potential audience of 200 million.

A desperate need for Bibles in Ethiopia has brought about the first use of the Bible Society's Rapid Response Reserve fund. Stocks of the Amharic Bible in Ethiopia are exhausted and there have been many appeals by Ethiopian churches to the Bible Society for help in obtaining more Scriptures. \$US122,446 has been made available from the fund for the production and supply of 33,000 Amharic Bibles and 2 shipments have now left for Ethiopia.

The Director of the Hong Kong Christian Institute believes people in Hong Kong are still most worried about their future after the British colony is returned to the sovereignty of China in 1997. This is despite a newspaper poll published on 7 October indicating the three major public concerns were stopping crime and destroying triads (32%), sending back the boat people (17%) and increasing confidence in Hong Kong (15%).

On 21 October, thieves used blowtorches to penetrate a "thief-proof" door of the Italian Baptist Union's Audio-Visual Production Service in Rome. Working undisturbed in the mostly empty building they stole more than \$150,000 worth of video recording equipment.

Valuing Elderly People in Institutional Care

by John Pitchford

I respond to a request to write on this subject knowing the risk of expressing a view that conflicts with what many people want to believe.

Valued people do not live in institutions.

For centuries our society has devalued and treated poorly people who are different, who break our social orders, who become burdensome or who make heavy demands on us.

As Christians, our highest ideals are in conflict with this devaluation process. We desire to love our neighbours as ourselves, to free the oppressed, to honour our parents and to support the widows and the poor, for as we have done it unto the least of these, we have done it unto Christ.

Elderly people in our society are devalued. It often starts at retirement and increases when a person becomes a pensioner, has failing health or has diminished physical and/or mental capacity. Entering an institution is a major step in the devaluing process.

The institution was designed to be an economical way of addressing the needs of people. It may be better than isolation, poor health and poor nutrition in the community, but

in reality it does not adequately address one's needs and certainly does not reverse society's devaluing process. The institution is an instrument and a reflection of our society's values.

Christian institutions are only marginally different to non-Christian institutions.

The motives of care may differ but, to the careful observer, the life realities are the same. Residents are not valued, have little or no power, are made dependent, are often treated as groups, not individuals, have very few links with their past or their community and are stripped of almost all valued roles, even to the extent where it is hard for us to see that they could have or want to have valued roles. We fail to see the indignities, the loneliness and despair and the impact of these things on individuals, preferring to call them symptoms of ageing or dementia rather than

symptoms of devaluation and/or symptoms of life in an institution.

These realities so conflict with our Christian ideals we repress them into our unconsciousness. We don't want to face up to the reality of how much our societal values have invaded our Christian faith and practices. We don't want to think about the influence of mostly non-Christians staffing a Christian service. It hurts us to find fault and make comment about something that is operating in the name of Christ and to which some people have devoted their life's work. We really want to believe that because it is better than existing alternatives, it is the very best we can do.

We can make institutions better and should strive to do so but experience has shown

that institutions are hard to change. The challenge for Christians is to wrestle with the hard questions and spend much time in prayer about how to recognise where our societal values have swamped our Christian values, find ways to reverse the devaluing process well before institutional care and to provide support that maintains dignity and worth, recognise that Government standards or legislation will not change the devaluing process, personally stand by at least one devalued person and support families and carers and share their burdens.

Sentimental valuing of people is not an alternative to having valued roles. The best place to start valuing elderly people is at home and in our churches.

The risk is that those who challenge current practices and stand by devalued people may be unpopular, criticised, ridiculed and rejected, but I guess Christ would understand.

• John Pitchford is a former director of Aged Cottage Homes in SA. He worships at the Meadows Uniting Church.

Survey Winner

On the Sunday night of the SANFL Grand Final, Radio 102FM listeners were joined by the patrons of the Links Hotel to hear Rev Ken Anderson be presented the Most Dedicated Goal Umpire award. The award was given to recognise his efforts in umpiring and work with the Umpire Association's monthly journal.

This announcement followed the release of the most recent Adelaide radio survey showing Radio 102FM had maintained its number one position for Sunday night, a position it has held for 18 months.

Graham Agnew, a member of the ministry team from the Marion, SA, Church of Christ,



contributed to the third survey results. During August he replaced Ken as the host. This was the last survey for the program on the AM band, as in September the program switched to FM.

—Ken Anderson

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THANKS

FOOT Mollie and Geoff Foot of Launceston Church of Christ are most grateful to so many of their friends from all States for greetings and good wishes on their Golden Wedding anniversary.

DEATHS

SAUNDERS, Kathleen Estelle. 29.10.90. Devoted and dearly loved wife of Dick (W.W.), beloved and loving mother of Brian (19) and Valerie (17), both deceased (with seven other young Christians) in the Boronia level-crossing accident, 1.6.52. She loved, and lived for, Christ and his church in quiet, gracious, supportive and steadfast service over her 83 years. She will be greatly missed.

Should I Ask You Back? So you are gone; Now life seems black./ And shall I ask to have you back?/ Back—and leave the Spirit's brightness?/ Back—and leave your robes of whiteness?/ Back—and leave the Rock who feeds you?/ Back—from springs to which he leads you?/ Back—and leave your Heavenly Father?/ Back—to earth and Pain? No, rather, / I would resign to solitude. / I would not ask you if I could, / But patient wait my risen Lord / Till nature cuts this silver cord, / And he who fashions all things new / Shall bring my spirit home to you. (Elizabeth Webb)

IN MEMORIAM

MOTT (PAUL) Myrtle. 16.11.88. Dearly loved wife of Colin. Loved mother of Andrea, Michael and Paul. Treasured and loving memories remain forever with us.

THOMAS In precious memory of our mother, Hilda Thomas, passed

away 17 November 1970, and our father, James E. Thomas, passed away 27 November 1944. "Reunited in glory. Still loved and missed by children, grandchildren and many friends."

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CASTLE HILL Church of Christ requires 30 second-hand copies of the current Churches of Christ Hymnal. If you can help please contact D.R. Garrett, 27 Boyd Ave, West Pennant Hills 2125, or phone (02) 484 4194.

SHAW HOUSE HOSTEL, connected with Pendle Hill, NSW, Retirement Village, needs at least 30 copies of large print "Great Gospel Songs" (blue cover) for their devotions. (This book is now out of print.) If any church has any of these on their shelves not being used and would donate them, the gift would be greatly appreciated. Any postage involved will be refunded. Please forward to E. Stimson, 44/282 Dunmore Street, Pendle Hill 2145.

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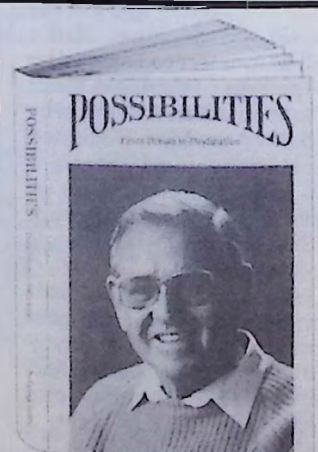
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A Church ABC

Geraldton is a city of 23,000 people, situated approximately 400 km north of Perth, on Western Australia's Batavia Coast. Its major industry is crayfishing and it is a port for the export of the grain grown and mineral sands mined from surrounding areas. The city (and also the Church of Christ) has a good spread of all age groups, with the minor exception of school leavers, who need to seek higher education elsewhere. Aboriginal people comprise 6% of the population.

The church began in 1945, and since that time there has been a steady growth and witness to the community. Today the membership is 80. In 1956 the chapel was built and opened and, with alterations and additions, is a substantial complex well suited to the church's needs. It is L-shaped and includes the chapel and a hall.

Services are held at 9.30 am (average attendance 90) and 7 pm (40).

Prayer meetings are very important in the life of the

church, both for the leadership and for members. There are outreach fellowship-craft evenings and programs for young people for Bible study and evangelism. Recently a disci-

ple was trained in ministry.

Three aspects of the Geraldton church deserve special mention. First is the Faith Promise Program, which has now been running for three

years. This year the church has promised \$28,000 to support mission work, in addition to normal giving. The money will be used locally to support a Fusion youth worker and in work in Australia and overseas, both within and outside Churches of Christ. The Faith Promise Program has prompted generous giving in other areas as well and the church has now cleared up its debts.

pel. Government funding was obtained for seating for this venture, which is starting to produce positive results.

Finally, another key aspect of the church is its small-group Bible study program. Over 50 people meet each week in seven groups for Bible study, fellowship and prayer with an evangelical thrust. The groups are diverse—there are discipleship groups, KYB, women's groups and groups that study material integrated with the Sunday sermon.

In developing the small groups and senior citizens programs is a vision for ministry that recognises the need for the body of the church to be actively participating in a way that builds itself up in love and reaches out showing this love to the community. The Geraldton church supports the family and is seeking ways to increase its evangelistic outreach in the coming decade, realising that evangelism is the responsibility of the whole body, rather than just the minister.

Next is the church's evangelistic outreach to the senior citizens of the city. A monthly morning tea is held, when over 40 (70% from outside the church) are thoroughly spoiled with food and a two-hour program of singing, quizzes etc. and a presentation of the gos-

ple. Government funding was obtained for seating for this venture, which is starting to produce positive results.

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Focus on Geraldton

pleship training course was held. The church is involved in the usual RI work and in annual inter-church evangelical activities. Indeed, inter-church co-operation is quite strong in Geraldton. An interdenominational Christian school was commenced in the Church of Christ in the early eighties and is now in its own complex.

The minister at Geraldton is Rohan Burcham, who, with his wife, Rona, have two children, Jodie, 2, and Hayden, 5 months. Rohan and his wife come from Western Australia, and Rohan studied at the Perth Bible College in 1983-84 before spending four years at Carlingford obtaining his Diploma of Ministry and Bachelor of Theology. This is his second year at

Nelson Mandela in Sydney: "Churches in the Front Line"

The church has become a rallying point for people seeking justice and peace, Nelson Mandela told over 2,000 jammed into St Mary's Cathedral in Sydney. He was speaking at an ecumenical service of prayer for South Africa celebrated on 24 October.

He began his address saying, "I was baptised in the Methodist church and all my life I believe I have lived as a faithful member." He then spoke of the significant roles church people had played in his life.

"In 1964 I was moved to Robben Island where I attended services from almost every priest who visited the island, irrespective of his denomination." Mr Mandela said that, at that time, the church often seemed to side with the status quo.

"What a difference has taken place over the years! The church is now occupying the front line in the struggle against injustice. One of the striking features that has taken place in the world today is the emergence of men and women whose breadth of vision is worldwide."

Leaders and lay people from Catholic, Anglican, Protestant and Orthodox churches were involved in the service, which was sponsored by the Australian Council of Churches and the New South Wales Ecumenical Council. Bishop Oliver Heyward, the President of the Australian Council of Churches, led worship.

Participants confessed that injustice is still inflicted on Aboriginal Australians. They affirmed "that justice, love and truth will always overcome the powers that stand against

them" and committed themselves "to work together until racism is gone from the face of

the earth and all people can live in peace, dignity and mutual respect".

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There Are Two Seas

There are two seas in Palestine. One is fresh, and fish are in it. Splashes of green adorn its banks. Trees spread their branches over it, and stretch out their thirsty roots to sip of its healing water. Along its shores the children play. The River Jordan makes this sea with sparkling water from the hills. So it laughs in the sunshine and men build their houses near to it, and birds their nests, and every kind of life is happier because it is there. The River Jordan flows on south into another sea. Here is no splash of fish, no fluttering leaf, no song of birds, no children's laughter. Travellers choose another route, unless on urgent business. The air hangs heavy above its waters, and neither man nor beast nor fowl will drink it. What makes the difference in these neighbouring seas? Not the River Jordan. It empties the same good water into both. Not the soil in which they lie; nor the country round about.

This is the difference. The Sea of Galilee receives but does not keep the Jordan. For every drop that flows into it another drop flows out. The giving and receiving go on in equal measure. The other sea is shrewder, hoarding its income jealously. It will not be tempted into any generous impulse. For every drop it gets, it keeps. The Sea of Galilee gives and lives. The other sea gives nothing. It is named the Dead Sea.

—Bruce Barton

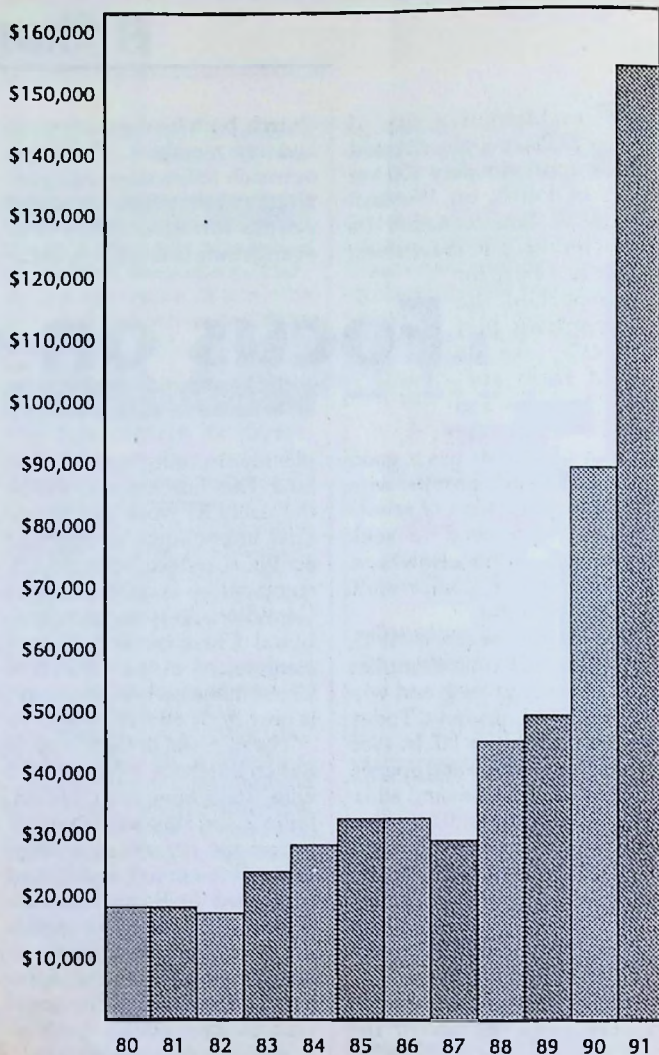
There are two kind of churches and two kinds of people in the world. There are two seas in Palestine.

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Churches of Christ in New South Wales

Department of Church Development and Education

Too Busy?

In a county town near where I grew up, there was a storekeeper who was always in such a hurry that once when his car had a slow-leaking tyre he wouldn't get the puncture mended. Instead, he pumped the tyre up sufficiently each morning to get to work, then again to go home for lunch, and then yet again when he went home at the end of the day. When asked why he didn't change the tyre, he said his spare tyre had a puncture too. When asked why he didn't get both mended, he said he was too busy.

After pumping up the tyre many many times, and by this time becoming the talk of the town, he conceded that he would be saving time to go and get it mended. He got the spare tyre mended at the same time too.

The incident is almost a parable of our own lives. How often we are "too busy" to do those things that will in the long run save us more time in our ability to live life to our full capacity. I'm thinking of the increased and sharpened capacity we have to handle life competently, think through issues, and face difficulties when we have taken the time to develop our relationships—both family and church, and grow in our experience and understanding of Christian faith.

We can easily become "too busy" for anything more than token attendance to worship, such as Christian education, small group involvement or theological study, and yet, without making regular time available for these things, we might easily find that life can become a repetitive process of "pumping up a punctured tyre that is slowly leaking".

—Stephen Curkpatrick

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Youth Ministry

The Value of Camping in the Youth Culture of the 90s

by Lyn Devlin

Our young people today are living in a society consumed with activity and "busyness". More than ever before our camping programs need to be moving away from a model of high activity to a style of camping that is highly relational.

Young people today are coming to us from a culture of fragmented family structures, where there is poor modelling of rich relationships. Sexual and physical abuse has robbed some of them of the safe, loving home environment that is their entitlement. As a consequence they struggle deeply for acceptance and identity.

Where in the nineties do young people look for answers to their concerns for the future with the threat of death through AIDS, suicide, greenhouse and war, which is ever before them?

Where in the nineties do young people hear clear absolutes about the need for a moral standard of behaviour and the need for boundaries to be in place for their lives?

Those in authority over them are so busy that there is little time to relate personal relational skills at any meaningful level.

I believe that we have a unique and exciting opportunity through the camp environment to introduce these young people to an alternative lifestyle. As camp leaders and directors, we have the privilege of entering into their world and being the ones who will stop and listen long enough for them to address their deepest fears for the future.

The camp environment allows for a sense of caring community to develop. Though

temporary, there is still time for the young people to experience a sense of purpose and achievement as they comply to the rules and responsibilities of duties etc. so necessary for the good of the total community.

Above all else Christian camping allows us the time to introduce these young people to the one who loves them deeply and has given them in the cross every hope for the future. As they come face to face with Jesus they meet the one person who gives identity and acceptance by speaking love and direction into lives that are becoming more and more purposeless and empty.

Relationships are becoming a luxury for both Christian and non-Christians alike. There is a deep need for us all to enter into friendships that are meaningful and I believe that Christian camping allows us at least to introduce the way to develop that level of relating.

Christian camping is a tremendous opportunity to demonstrate community life in a way that is educational, positive and lots of fun. Secular organisations are seeing more and more the value of taking young people away from all that entangles their lives.

How much more does the Christian camp environment offer?

• Lyn Devlin is a Field Officer with the WA Youth Ministry Committee.

• Edited by Andrew Ball, Field Director of the Vic-Tas Department of Mission, Education and Development and the Federal Board of Christian Education.

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Women: In the Church?

by Richard Lawton

The Anglican Church in Australia is going through very divisive trauma over the question of the ordination of women. That question cannot be decided congregation by congregation, and maybe not even diocese by diocese.

For years Churches of Christ in Australia have had women ministers. (Well, a few, anyway!)

For many more years our women have taught in Sunday school and served in difficult overseas situations as pioneering missionaries.

I am so used to women in Churches of Christ serving their God in ordained ministry, worship, leading (including communion) and in administration through eldership and board membership, that it comes as a shock to discover that in some of our churches women are told that God has not really called them to do those things.

That is certainly so in the wider church. In Catholic and Anglican churches (two of our big three) women who have been called by God to ministry are told by the men (and sometimes by other women) that they must have been mistaken.

However, we in Churches of Christ cannot be too self-righteous about our progress.

A recent book, *We Will Not Hang Our Harps on the Willows* by Barbel van Warterburg-Potter, jolts our complacency. Barbel is a German Lutheran pastor (yes, they exist!), who spent some years working for the World Council of Churches, being exposed to the whole gamut of the church, and who now teaches theology in the West Indies. (That must be OK: it's almost like being a missionary, isn't it?)

Barbel traces her own pilgrimage and that of many of her own sisters around the world. Hence the title. Remember Psalm 137? The Jews hung their harps in the willows of Babylon (Iraq is still at it today!) because they would not sing the Lord's song in a strange land.

These women find, despite their numerical dominance, that the modern church is a strange land. The hymns we sing say "brother" and "man". (You and I know that those terms include women, but does everyone know that?) The ministers are mostly men. The administrative direction is provided mostly by men.

Barbel claims that the way decisions are made is a masculine way and that many of the justice issues addressed by the church are those that relate more easily to men.

She knows many women who have given up on their lesser place and left the church. However, she refuses to hang up her harp in the nearest willow because she believes that God has called her, so how can she fly in the face of that? And, knowing that Rome was not built in a day, and that slavery was eventually seen by the church to be a sin, she believes that one day we will all be open enough to the Holy Spirit to see that sexism is a sin, too.

Most of us, men and women, may not see ourselves as being directly affected. Most of us see the language issues ("man" "brother", "brotherhood") as being mere semantics: we know that they have wider meanings than appear on the surface.

But, if one of these, our sisters, is hurt, and if God has called us to see Jesus in those who are hurt, and to love those who are hurt, how can we ignore the issue, and how can we react with cynicism and impatience, as many of us do? How dare we sneer or laugh at the sensitive cries of those who are hurting or those who speak on their behalf! (I write before the 1990 Federal Conference: such sneers happened on the floor of the Canberra Federal Conference!)

By the way, Barbel acknowledges that for many women in the Third World sexism is not an issue—they are too busy surviving the injustices of hunger, poverty and death squads to be concerned about injustices to women—but she also has to speak up for that half of the world's population whom she sees offended against.

Barbel provokes some questions for us:

- In this day and age, how can we justify a separate Conference for women, or even an "Department of Women's Ministry"?

- Apart from last year's appointment in Victoria-Tasmania, hasn't there been any other women in our nation or in any of our states capable of being Conference president? Even if we do not like affirmative action and insist on finding the best person for the job, has there never been one other woman from the majority of women who constitute our church membership who was the best person?

- Federally we are ordaining women, but how many of our churches are prepared to employ them? (In the USA, where many more women are being ordained, they find it hardest to get the appointments and, where they do not have recommended salary levels, the ones who are appointed receive much lower salaries, on average.)

- If at the local level we do not consider that we have women capable of presiding, praying and eldering, as men are, what are we doing to redress the balance?

- How many of the heroes of the church that you know of are women? If the answer is "very few", what can you find out about Gladys Aylward,

Theresa of Avila, Damitilla de Chungara of Bolivia, Rigoberta Menchu of Guatemala, the Babushkas of Russia, whom the Holy Spirit used to keep the church alive in the years of persecution, Hildegard of Germany, Idu Ford in El Salvador and Elisabeth Kasemann in Argentina? To whom did Jesus first reveal himself after the Resurrection? What does a study of the women in the Bible teach us?

Oh, I haven't addressed the theological issues yet. (Barbel says that theology—thinking about God—is something that males tend to do more than women do; women are more concerned with experiencing God, personally!) If you think that it is because I have absorbed "There is neither male nor female—but all are one in Christ Jesus" and that I do not take seriously the so-called theological arguments against the ministry of women, you are right!

I trust that God has forgiven those who did not recognise slaves as fully God's people until just over 100 years ago, and I trust that God will forgive us, likewise, for denying the call of God to women, even today.

(*We Will Not Hang Our Harps on the Willows* is one of the RISK series, WCC 1987.)

• Richard Lawton is the minister at the Maylands, NSW, church.

Moving to Melbourne?

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Marriages

•Sally Battle to Ron Stuart,

Carnarvon, WA •Elizabeth Whitten to Wayne Cunningham, Berkeley Vale, NSW

Deaths

•Mrs Rae Kleinig, Numurkah, Vic •Keith Gerrard, Burwood, Vic •Ron Broad, Elsie Bishop, Balaklava, SA •Mrs Elsie Mary Wood, Bowral, NSW •Mrs Iris Whittaker, Ormond, Vic •Andy Muir, Joan Turner, Eileen Bell, George Williamson, May Booth, Bob McGarrity, Berkeley Vale, NSW •Mrs Rene Langley, Bendigo, Vic

Changes

Seven Hills: All correspondence to the church to be addressed to John Willis, 21 Rolyn Street, Blacktown, NSW 2148.

Warragul: Secretary—Ray Earl, 36 Princess St, Warragul, Vic 3820 (056) 23 2881.

Minister Required

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 eld-

erly 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.

CHURCH OF CHRIST—SOUTHPORT

are now accepting applications for the following positions:

1. ASSISTANT PASTOR

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Applications close 15 December 1990 and should be addressed in writing to the Administrator, P O Box 974, Southport 4215.

WA Church News

CARNARVON (D. Bone) CWF encouraged by visit of Prayer & Ministry team—Lesley Hogben, Daphne Isaacs, Jean Edwards & Norma Ellement ... Folk at Olive Laird Memorial Hostel enjoyed unusual but happy event when two elderly folk married—Ron Stuart & Sally Battle. Staff catered. Joan Stutley made & iced cake ... Church choir preparing to present an item at the opening of the new Civic Centre. SUBIACO (Graham Johnston) Minister and wife Tracy have left for America to visit parents. Graham will continue with Leighton Ford group to Romania & Hungary to preach. Church very appreciative of people helping out while Graham

absent ... Eight Bible study & prayer groups active ... Jenny Marshall showed slides of trip to Vanuatu mission areas ... Tennis & basketball teams active ... Bhimrao Thavare & Sam Mantode, Indian Churches of Christ, spoke of work.

ALEXANDER HEIGHTS (John Caporn) Great excitement! First 6 baptisms held at Balga ... Norma McSweeney member of centennial choir ... Brian Brewer (ICA) spoke ... Jason Hemsley departs for army, Wagga ... Craft numbers up ... YP small but sound group ... Kids Klub continues to attract primary children ... Bible study groups continue ... Prayer chain, creche commenced.



CHAPLAINS

—A Challenging Ministry in Schools

The Council for Christian Education in Schools is seeking chaplaincy staff for Victorian government postprimary schools to commence in 1991.

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Telephone (03) 654 2211



Overseas Program Co-ordinator

The Australian Council of Churches is seeking a person with a commitment to the mission of the church in an ecumenical context to assist the Director of its Commission for World Christian Action in the administration and co-ordination of its overseas programs in development, justice and human rights.

The person to be appointed will be able to work as a member of small team with limited secretarial support, be prepared to travel from time to time, be able to represent the Council in its relationships with government departments, overseas churches and on government organisations.

Experience in a Third World situation will be an advantage. Applications should be made in writing to

The Director
World Christian Action
Australian Council of Churches
PO Box C199
Sydney 2000
Phone: (02) 299 2215

from whom further details may be obtained. Names and addresses of referees should be included. Remuneration and starting date are negotiable.

The closing date for application is 7 November 1990.

Obituaries

Obituaries are limited to 100 words

Barnett, Ercl Lorraine

(28.8.90) Ercl Cunningham grew up in Stawell, Vic. She was baptised at the Stawell church. Her work took her to Ballarat where she met Roy. During the war years they moved to Melbourne where they were first associated with the Northcote church. After moving to Highett they joined the Cheltenham church. Ercl took an active role in the life of the church, Sunday School teacher, President of CWF, representative to Women's Conference, deaconess and visitor. Her quiet unassuming service to the work of the Kingdom of God was deeply appreciated by all. Especially she was always there to support her family, Roy and children Yvonne and Frank Perry (USA), Elwyn and Graeme Davies (Vic), Margaret and Jeff Weldon (Qld), Lorraine and Ian Lechmere (Qld) and David and Sue and her 13 grandchildren.

—Gerald Rose

Berlin, Hope Alison

(29.9.90) Born at Turramurra, NSW, on 11.10.12, Hope was the elder of six children. Early years spent in South Queensland. At age of 10 Hope accepted Jesus Christ. Baptised Rosewood, Qld. United in marriage to Bill Berlin 21.8.35 in Anne St, Brisbane. Happy marriage spanned 48 years. No children. Bill's employment necessitated interstate moves including 12 years Papua New Guinea. Hope's later years spent at Redcliff, Qld. Occupied executive positions in Christian Women's Fellowship. Prior to death Hope resided Bribie Island Retirement Village.

—Wayne Kirk

Denmead, Edna K.

(18.9.90) Mrs Denmead passed away on the eve of her 84th birthday, leaving behind many precious memories of a courageous, special lady. 100 attended the service at the La Trobe Terrace, Geelong, church, conducted by Dr Mackenzie with tributes given by two grandchildren. Mrs Denmead became a member in 1966 and was a regular, loyal attendee. She invited and encouraged her friends to come with her. She made every effort to enjoy life. It was due to her influence that the church was featured on 3YR following the dedication of the church renovations. She was an active worker with Cancer After-Care group. Writing, both poetry and prose, was dear to her.

—R. Carr

Ferlissey, William

(18.9.90) Bill was born in Wales. As a 14-year-old he ran away to sea and served in the English merchant marine during World War I. Bill survived his ship being sunk several times. After the war he "jumped" ship at Port Adelaide and became an immigrant to Australia. While working as a chef on coastal ships he met Vera Green. After their marriage they settled in Melbourne, eventually Cheltenham. During World War II he served in the RAAF. When the Christian Retirement Centre at Cheltenham opened, Bill and Vera were two of the first to take up residence. They became members of Cheltenham and Bill became "unofficial" caretaker of the CRC. A few years after Vera's death Bill moved to the Masonic Homes. He is survived by his four daughters, 15 grandchildren and 27 great-grandchildren.

—Gerald Rose

Saunders, Kathleen Estelle

(29.10.90) Kath Wardle was 17 when she met W.W. (Dick) Saunders at the Fremantle, WA, church, where both were in membership. She shared Dick's commitment to ministry, and they waited for marriage until he graduated and was in his first full-time ministry at Northcote, Vic. Kath was supportive throughout Dick's ministries at Northcote, Hindmarsh, Ballarat, Bambra Rd and Balwyn, and during his administrative service with the Social Service Dept, as Secretary of the Vic Temperance Alliance, and as Vic-Tas Conference Secretary. Their children, Brian (19), and Valerie (17), were both killed in the Boronia bus-train accident in 1952. Despite their own tragic loss they gave consolation and inspiration to the other grief-stricken parents. Kath was a gentle, gracious lady, whose example and ministry touched many lives.

—AEW

Turner, Basil

(11.10.90) Born Edmonton, England, 13.6.13, the youngest of five children. The family migrated to Australia in 1920. Married Ann Negus in 1933. Two children, both living. Employed AWA (Australia) as methods engineer. Joined RAAF. Life member RSL and TPI Clubs. Past president Spear Fishermen's Association and bowls club. 1982 accepted Christ as saviour and baptised at Redcliffe, Qld, church. Chairman regional committee brought to fruition Bribie Island church. Overflowing church tribute to standing in public and government association.

—Wayne Kirk

Church News

Vic

ECHUCA (A. Symes) Church is functioning quite well. Attendances steady. Finance about estimated ... The church will have centenary season soon with some older ones sharing perhaps 65 years as Sunday School scholars then as church members, a few having met at the Lord's Table for 65 years ... The minister has returned from leave. Others have led meetings in his place.

NUMURKAH Seventh anniversary held on 21 November. Stan Bannon guest speaker morning & afternoon services. Music & items supplied by Andy & I. A great day of fellowship was enjoyed by all ... Members busy preparing for Gala Day on 3 November ... Church general meeting planned for 2 December with luncheon to follow ... Bible studies & youth clubs all going well.

BURWOOD (Peter Wing-Tang) Pastor course leader at CCTC seminar "Dealing with Family & Sexual Assault" ... Young people raised \$760 sponsoring Carol Nette in bike marathon for Bible Society ... Church saddened at passing of loved member Keith Gerrand ... CWF presented June Andrews with many useful gifts in appreciation of Hospital Visitation Committee ... Best attended AGM in years. New board members Brenton Purdie & Mark Hammer (treasurer).

THE PATCH (Mike Folland) A new vision mission & strategy was defined & presented to church by Mike Folland during service ... Monbulk InterChurch Council met for breakfast. Peter Sumner from Blind Fellowship spoke on caring & catering for disabled in the church. 34 from area participated ... Two series "Christianity Put Simply" presented by minister successful & fulfilling ... Food given for needy in district now being distributed.

YARRAWONGA (Bill Keddie) Heather Miller of RBMU & Walter

Parker of AEF have visited ... Shirley Rogers welcomed into fellowship ... Plans formulated for Mission Nov '91 with Rita & George Gallie ... Barbecue fellowship at delightful river setting at Sharps ... Successful Sunday School picnic ... CWF entertained 30 guests from Wangaratta & Shepparton CWF & local women's guilds. Ria Keddie spoke about Zimbabwe. Thank offering \$450. Trading table to local Nursing Home.

ARARAT (Marjan & Rod Beer) Mid-October outreach "Gateway to Life—1990" coincided with local festival. Guest evangelist Ken Bond & musician Gordon Barr from Campbelltown, NSW. Coffee mornings, school seminars & sports persons' breakfast featured. Two responded to gospel, now baptised. Others challenged & encouraged ... Ted Keating shared at AGM 8 November ... Younger people & families strongly support our more contemporary evening services.

SWAN HILL (L.J. Mayes, S.J. Willis) Nine baptised & welcomed into fellowship during October & November ... Bible School has introduced team teaching to cope with increased numbers of children ... Some members of church family heavily involved in planning for formation of a Christian School in Swan Hill ... Youth group attended "Youth Alive" concert in Melbourne in November.

WARRAGUL (David & Debbie Buesnel) Recent AGM very positive in nature. First time for many years full complement of elders & deacons ... Board retreat conducted at Alambee Campsite ... Holiday fun club saw 60 children attending ... Music ministry, incorporating young musicians from congregation developing ... Evening services are exciting feature of the church program ... Minister & elder attended "Preaching Your Church to Growth" seminar at Wollongong church & greatly inspired.

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Church News

SA

MUNDULLA (K. Wray) 12 months on, only two replacements needed for 75th anniversary memorial tree plantings ... Average attendances since amalgamation with Wamboony 36 ... D. Koennecke third elder after 10 years as secretary. J. Fisher new secretary ... Under leadership of B. Wiese group of young farmers involved in C of C environmental study ... A. & H. Scown transferred to Black Forest ... Farewell tea for M. & E. Milne, moving to Encounter Bay.

GOOLWA (Graeme Ritchie) Gladys Grant & Jim Keatch (Associate State Minister) took services while our minister was on holiday ... Worship celebration on creation held as Inter-Church event with singer/songwriter Leigh Newton as artist ... Tuesday craft groups have helped as contact with townspeople ... Joined in service at Victor Harbor church to hear group "New Connexions" ... Local community helpers spoke at Women's Fellowship.

BALAKLAVA (Graham Lawrie) Church awaits arrival of Dave & Lyz Reynolds & family from Mulgrave College to serve while Graham & Judith Lawrie are on holiday & long service leave ... Steve Kitto, Steve Blackett, Ray Bennett, Murray Gates, Margaret Greenshields & Neville Smith have been recent guest speakers ... Farewells made to Adrian & Janet Shepherd who leave for Tintinara ... Local contingent home from visit to Monohans, Texas, USA.

COWANDILLA (R.S.A. McLean) Bhilmrao Thavare guest speaker at combined gospel rally held Henley Beach church ... Outreach Sunday evening held local council auditorium with film "Distinctively Human" screened & good support from local churches ... Bible Society film & videos effective challenge recent services, also speaker from Far East Broadcasting Company ... Congregation responding to challenge to increase general giving 10%. Consistent giving to missionary projects continues.

PROSPECT (S. Schmaal) Morning service special address by Barry Cox from Gideons. Retiring offering \$140 ... Children's story at morning service by Ken Jacobs, cooked eggs for children ... Quest speaker following basket tea Bob Brady from Bridges ... Daylight saving evening services 7 pm ... Koala Club on increase & request for additional help required to help supervise Camera Club. Winning slides for year judged by visiting judge B. Swanbury.

NSW

SEVEN HILLS (T.J. Beaman) At annual meeting John Willis & John Foote elected elders. They with minister Tom Beaman will have spiritual oversight of church. There will be no management committee. Members will be appointed to carry out everyday working of church ... Marta Fraguas announced engagement to Guiseppe Ilardo. Marriage 30 Nov ... Matilde Granero back from holiday Spain & Wally Malus back from Middle East ...

Doris Avery again in hospital, Reg Holmes had test on throat.

EPPING (S. Curkpatrick, D. Moyes) Keith & Margaret Farmer conducted weekend Family Enrichment seminar ... Tom Feng & Kathryn Liddle baptised ... Mark Robinson received into membership ... AGM included "Looking Back—Looking Forward" session with ministry team sharing future directions for ministry ... John Lee to join ministry team in 1991 ... Fellowship weekend at Katoomba ... Lois Elsmore & Virginia

Curkpatrick organising Craft Bazaar for building funds.

BERKELEY VALE (Gary Hamilton) Last six months very traumatic for Berkeley Vale. Six of our elderly family members have been called home ... Our plans for a new church were set in motion but delays occurred & still awaiting roof ... Very stiff rulings for church pre-school met at last & now operating ... Expanding Sunday School eagerly awaiting new premises ... Choir preparing for Christmas Nursing Home visits.

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God's Word

• Malachi 3:13-18

God's Promise of Mercy

God starts this section of Malachi by accusing the people of saying very harsh things about him. The people are astonished at this and question how they been "bad mouthing" God. God then outlines his grievance with them.

Through the ages people have continually questioned God in the same fashion: Why do the evildoers seem to prosper and the godly suffer in this world? The ancient Israelites were no different and this is the complaint that God is accusing them of bringing. They had been questioning why they should be strict in their worship and honour God when the evildoers in society seemed to be prospering. Being religious and suffering seemed futile in the face of the prosperity of the wicked.

God is asked why he allows it to happen. Surely the religious should prosper and the wicked be punished? This same question is often raised in today's society and we will receive the same answer that Malachi had for his society.

The special Day of the Lord is coming. At that time God will give those who have been faithful to him the rewards and their place in society that they truly deserve. At the same time the evildoers will be punished, and the implication is that the punishment will be terrible. In Malachi the emphasis is on the fact that the remnant (implied in verse 16) will become "treasured possessions" of God.

On the day of the Lord there will be two groups: those who fear and serve the Lord and those who do not. The names of the first group will have been kept in the "book of remembrance". This is not the first time that such a book is mentioned in the Bible (see Exodus 32:32, Psalm 139:16, Ezekiel 13:9).

We need to have the assurance that God will eventually punish the evildoers we see prospering in our society and that God treasures all who trust him and that he will eventually give them their rightful place.

—Chris Ambrose

Pontius' Puddle



The Last Word

I believe that every right implies a responsibility; every opportunity, an obligation; every possession, a duty.

—John D. Rockefeller

The assistant minister was giving the children's message. The scripture was Genesis 1. After reading each verse the assistant minister would pause and say, "And God said..." The children had been coached to respond, "And it was good."

All went well for several verses. Then came the verse, "Let there be dry land; and then God said..."

One child, after some hesitation, shouted, "Look what I did!"

It was break-up day at school, and the teacher said: "Well students, I hope you all have a very happy holiday and that you will come back with a lot more sense in your heads." "Same to you," replied the students politely.

The over-ambitious young executive saw prospects in the death of one of the firm's senior managers. Donning a most determined expression the executive fronted the firm's managing director.

"I'll come straight to the point. I'd like to take the manager's place."

The boss thought for a while. "Well, I don't think it can be done, but I'll have a word with the undertaker."

A couple received two theatre tickets for the opening night of the latest hit show, but they couldn't find out who sent them. After asking all their friends they gave up, and went along to the theatre. When they got back home that night their house had been ransacked. Every single thing of value had been taken, and on the kitchen table was a note that read, "Hope you enjoyed the show."



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