

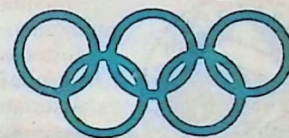
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THE AUSTRALIAN CHRISTIAN



Off to Barce- lona!

Kirrilie Baggs, from
the Happy Valley,
SA, church, has been
selected as South
Australia's Youth
Ambassador to the
Olympic Games
—story page 3

Photo by Kevin Bull courtesy of the
Adelaide Advertiser

Bringing Light to St Kilda

—pages 12-13



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Guest Editorial

Women's Ministry: What Does the Future Hold?

Shirley Burger

The two key words in *The Australian Christian* recently would have to be "change" and "leadership". In South Australia this has also been the case in the area of women's ministry—that is, women ministering in service and fellowship to each other, the church and the wider community.

Organisations evolve over a period of time and often practices are well entrenched before we acknowledge that change is needed. But last year the SA Women's Ministry Committee reached a stage where a decision for change had to be made: not one person accepted nomination for the committee, and without leadership it seemed that women's ministry would founder. We needed to examine the reasons why this was happening and to make those changes constructive rather than destructive.

We wrote to the women's ministry coordinators of our churches seeking the views of all the women of their church. We held regional meetings at which the past, present and future of women's ministry were frankly discussed. We received letters from women who had prayerfully thought the matter through and were not afraid to be honest.

Our review showed that for many years the women's work, through the Dorcas groups and CWF, had fulfilled women's need to serve their Lord. There was emphasis on supporting overseas and Aborigines mission, welfare, spiritual growth and personal support, craft and friendship groups reaching out into the community, and other activities as need arose.

However, over the past 20 years or so numbers and support have dwindled, the younger women are not interested or involved and the women still supporting the work are growing older. Who, they ask, will continue when they are gone? So we looked at what has happened in these years to cause this demise.

Radical changes have taken place in the role of women in society. Many women have entered the workforce, a choice they didn't have until comparatively recent times. This has increased their sense of self-worth and value as people and they



are no longer satisfied with traditional "women's work", nor do they have the energy or inclination to take on extra activities away from their families. Also, the need to meet people socially is being met through daily contact with others in the workplace. Curtailment of their time dictates that they focus their energies into service suited to their particular gifts, rather than women's ministry generally.

The needs in our community have changed too, with people crying out for help in crisis situations.

Government agencies partly fill the need, but many Christian women are out there too, helping with Christian compassion.

We also have to remember that historically only men had the oversight and administration of the church, and the only avenue of service open to women was through the traditional "women's work". Here again, women increasingly are being given a wider role. Men and women are now working together as the whole church, respecting each other's gifts, which are complementary and provide a balance, and with tolerance of each other's growth and expectations.

A whole generation of women has grown up knowing no other way than that men and women work alongside each other, both in society and in the church. They wonder why should they be expected to work separately "as women".

Summing up, we came to several conclusions: that the women's work in the past has been of enormous value to the overall mission of our churches and was right for that time, that there would be great loss to the church and to women if women no longer supported church projects due to lack of cohesive leadership, that today's world is different and women have different expectations of Christian service, but that there is still a need for women occasionally to meet together as women.

As of 7 May 1992, Women's Day of our State Convention, the Women's Ministry Committee ceased to exist. The pattern currently being implemented is that we will work closer with State Board of Churches of Christ in SA. We are seeking

People

Michael Janssen

Fusion team leader joins York Street ministry team

The York Street, Ballarat, Vic, church has appointed former Fusion team leader, Michael Janssen, to the position of part-time associate minister.

Michael came to Ballarat five years ago and has been involved in the establishment of employment workshops, a very successful Australia Day outreach and Matilda's Cafe, a community project run by volunteers, providing a venue for Ballarat youth.



Michael was born in Sydney and at the age of 21 became challenged by the Christian message through association with Christian young people.

Married to Glenys, with a son, Martin, Michael felt that the work of Fusion in Ballarat had "come of age" and was looking for the next step in his Christian walk when he was approached by the York Street church.

His aims in his new position include the support of the church's youth leaders through the continuation of training programs, general co-ordination and encouragement of the youth work and participation in the teaching and preaching ministry of the church.

Senior minister, Jim Cunningham, said that he was delighted that Michael had accepted the position and looked forward to another year of positive growth at York Street.

Olympic Youth Ambassador

Kirrilie to Barcelona



Kirrilie Baggs from the Happy Valley, SA, church has been selected by the Australian Olympic Committee and the Adelaide Advertiser as South Australia's Youth Ambassador to the Barcelona Olympics. In Spain Kirrilie will be with over 400 other youth ambassadors from all parts of the globe learning about each other's countries and cultures. She will also attend a variety of Olympic sporting events and report her impressions in a daily column for the Advertiser.

Kirrilie is a second-year university student who teaches a youth class in the Sunday school, plays her clarinet regularly at worship, serves on the State Youth Committee, assists with the church youth group and still finds time for her studies, netball and basketball.

No-one at the Happy Valley church was surprised when this thoughtful, well-spoken, gifted young person with a vital faith and a zest for living was selected from a field of over 150 applicants. Kirrilie will be a great ambassador for South Australia—she is already a great ambassador for her Christian faith.

The aims of the camp are to unite young people in the values of the Olympic movement, provide a place for them to meet in peace, promote cultural and sporting exchanges and educate them about Spanish culture and history.

Lets Hear It for Eddy!

A lifetime of work

Eddy Brand, who passed away on 5 April 1992, was one of those gems of the church who give their lives in service, who are recognised periodically but rarely applauded. Let's hear it for Eddy—who was the handyman around the Colonel Light Gardens, SA, church for almost 44 years. Eddy made a complete set of children's tables and chairs, kitchen cupboards, a

special cupboard for communion glasses, mirror fixtures, trestles, display boards, etc.—a lifetime of work! This was Eddy's skill and gift and the church showed its appreciation with a display in the foyer of his work.

Eddy was appreciated in his lifetime by being made a deacon emeritus for his years of service. Thank you Eddy for a job well done! —Adrian Clark



• The display set up in the Colonel Light Gardens church foyer to commemorate the efforts of Eddy Brand

the appointment of a Women's Ministry Co-ordinator who would be located at the Conference Centre in North Adelaide. Women's camps, study days and any meetings deemed necessary to meet the needs and interests of various age groups will be organised through co-opted task forces. Leadership in Overseas Mission, Aborigines Mission and Community Care will come via State Board work groups' women's representatives. Call, the SA women's newsletter, will continue to be a vital source of information and unity.

Our "modus operandi" may be changing, but our goals remain the same. To be a witness to Jesus Christ, expressed in spiritual nurture, pastoral care and mission.

As we work in these areas we have fellowship in the Lord and ideally that fellowship should be on a wider scale than just in individual churches and should foster that sense of belonging to a wider group of women, working together in service for the whole church and its outreach, not just for women only, encouraging and supporting each other, affirming the giftedness of women and providing opportunity and encouragement to develop and use those gifts and, in so doing, affirming our sense of worth as women, that we all have something to contribute to God's work and God's world. And all of these things encompassed in a joy in the Lord that is passed on and "caught" by the "unchurched".

• Shirley Burger is immediate past chairperson of the former SA Women's Ministry Committee. She is a member of the Elizabeth church and at various times has served as deacon, chairman of the officers' board, Sunday school teacher, president and secretary of the CWF, and women's ministry co-ordinator. She is currently a member of the SA Council of Churches' Local Ecumenism Commission and "Churches and Women" Task Group. Shirley is married to Frank and they have two adult daughters.

Milestone

Australian Church Women's 50th anniversary

A significant milestone was celebrated on 24 April at the Swanston St, Melbourne, church when a representative gathering of women marked 50 years of ecumenical endeavour by Australian Church Women in Victoria. The celebration was planned and led by Marion Dodds, assisted by past and present members.

The service of worship and thanksgiving included a homily presented by Phyl Davis reminding members of all the work done by women in the church, and exhorting those present to go forth and continue this work, remembering that which does not change alongside the pilgrim role of the church as people of God. A segment of nostalgia was presented by several long-serving members, with much appreciated reminiscences. The service was followed by a luncheon, when a beautiful cake made by Jean Rose was cut and distributed. A new symbolic banner was dedicated during the service, and will be used to represent the Victorian Unit at all gatherings. During the luncheon an updated history of Victorian Unit was launched. Copies are available at \$5.

Australian Church Women is an organisation representing the mainline churches, with the motto, "Christian Women Working Together to Change the World". —Helen Hall

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Churchgoers Shopping Around

National Church Life Survey results

Nearly one in eight Australian Protestant churchgoers have changed denominations during the past five years but the vast majority have a growing sense of belonging to their church.

These are some of the initial results of the National Church Life Survey (NCLS) released in late June.

The survey, which covered 305,000 churchgoers, revealed that 12% of respondents had switched denominations within the previous five years, while 15% had moved to another congregation of the same denomination.

Of all those who transferred congregations 44% switched denominations. That's some 36,000 churchgoers!

NCLS researcher Peter Kaldor commented: "We are seeing the emergence of a kind of Protestant supermarket where people are willing to cross denominational barriers in their search for the right church. In this game of religious musical pews denominational loyalty is not always high."

A further 3% were visiting a congregation, while 8% were

newcomers who had been at a church less than five years and were previously not attending anywhere else on a regular basis.

The survey, conducted in August last year, involved 6,500 congregations and 19 denominations. Attenders over 15 years of age were surveyed during a one-week period.

A change of home is not always the contributing factor. Some 34% of those who have switched denominations have lived in their present home for more than five years.

Marriage (4%) and changing family needs (7%) were cited as other reasons for switching. However another major reason for switching was discontent with the style of the previous church.

An encouraging sign for churches is that 62% of respondents said they had a strong and growing sense of belonging to their church while another 22% said their feeling of belonging had remained about the same as the previous year.

In addition, some 35% of respondents had an official role in their congregation and a further 14% said they had an unof-

ficial role.

Other important results are:

- 71% of respondents attend church once a week or more.

- 63% are members of fellowships, church Bible study or small sharing groups.

- Between 1986 and 1991 church attendances in the participating churches grew by about 2% per annum on average.

An upcoming book, *First Look in the Mirror*, and future printouts will examine in detail other aspects of church life.

Early figures indicate that 61% of churchgoers believe that life-time denominational loyalty is no longer important, while only 25% see it as important.

Anglicans and Uniting Church members are more likely to be involved in community service than members of other denominations.

Almost one-third of respondents are involved in evangelism, social service or mission activities of their congregation.

Printout 1, which covers these issues of congregational involvement, is being distributed to participating congregations around Australia.

Living under the Southern Cross

ACC visitors' program

Ed Walker, general secretary of Finance and Property for the Uniting Church in NSW, describes it as "a wonderfully creative experience of inspiration, stimulation and cementing of relationships across all denominations in Australia".

Baptist Aboriginal ministry leader, the Rev Graham Paulson, will be there—on the program. And so far more than 300 Christians from across Australia have registered interest in coming.

What is it? "Living under the Southern Cross", a follow-up event to the highly success-

ful visitors' program that ran during the World Council of Churches' Assembly in Canberra last year. It will be held in the Hawkesbury Valley near Sydney next January, sponsored by the Australian Council of Churches.

Like the assembly visitors' program, "Living under the Southern Cross" will include input by ecumenical leaders from Australia and overseas, over 40 workshops, a special evening program and opportunity for fellowship and interaction. Worship will be held



daily in a huge tent, as in Canberra.

Keynotespeakers include lay training director Dr Charles Amjad-Ali of Pakistan, theologian and biologist Suliana Siwatibau of Fiji, feminist theologian and author Dr Mary Hunt of USA, and Graham Paulson, who is co-ordinator of the Aboriginal and Islander Baptist Conference of Australia.

Registration forms are now available and early bookings are advised. "Living under the Southern Cross" is being held 19-24 January 1993 at Hawkesbury College, Richmond, NSW. The cost is \$408 live in, with other options available. Details and registration forms from PO Box 224, Rozelle 2039. Phone (02) 810 7864.

Double Delight

Twins celebrate 90th birthday

Twins **Walter** and **Stephen Bartlett** were honoured recently when about 140 friends and relatives helped them celebrate their 90th birthday.

Born at **Strathalbyn, SA**, on 5 July 1902, the brothers received their schooling there and became members of the **Strathalbyn** church at the age of 12. They have both lived in **SA** all their lives, with the exception of three years for **Walter** when he was a student at the **College of the Bible** in the 1920s.

At the age of 13 **Steve** went to work as a farm hand for the **Verco** family on their property a few miles out of **Strathalbyn**. Later he began working at **Jacklings Lime Kiln**, ultimately becoming the manager and owner in 1949. In addition to this, he also owned and worked a fruit block. Later, when changes in technology meant the lime kiln was no longer a viable operation, **Steve** became an almond grower and merchant, with his own very noisy almond cracker.

Steve married **Johnny Jackling's** daughter, **Edith**, and they were partners for 40 years until her death in 1974. For many years, **Steve** and **Ede** were loyal and hardworking members of the **Strathalbyn** church. Amongst the many practical ways in which **Steve** supported the work there, his son, **Roland**, recalls that the lime kiln truck was frequently used as a means of transporting people to and from church picnics.

In 1969 **Steve** and **Ede** moved to **Middletown** and transferred their membership to the **Goolwa** church. **Steve** is now a resident of the **Ross Robertson Nursing Home** at **Victor Harbor**.

Walter commenced work at the **Strathalbyn Post Office** when he was 15 and was employed in the **Commonwealth Civil Service** for the next 10 years, first as a postman then later as a clerk with the **Weather Bureau** on **West Terrace**. He recalls that it was his neat hand-

writing that largely secured for him the job at the **Bureau**, as it was his task to fill in the weather details on the maps by hand.

During these years, **Wally** felt the call to ministry, so in addition to his work, he studied part time in order to qualify for entry into **Glen Iris**. It was also during that time when he made numerous trips between **Strathalbyn** and **Adelaide** on his pushbike—no gears in those days!

Park Street, Unley, became his place of worship and it was there he met his match in **Gladys Cutts** and they were engaged before he left for **Victoria** in 1928. This was a most fortunate situation, for although college students had to be single, it seemed churches had a distinct preference for married ministers, so **Gladys** and **Walter** were married early in 1931 before moving to **Berri** for their first ministry. This was followed by ministries at **Balaklava**, **Gawler-Williams-town circuit**, **Croydon**, **Kensington Park** and an interim ministry at **Dulwich-Rose**



• **Walter and Stephen Bartlett**

Park. He also served a term as **SA Conference President** and throughout all his ministries he supported, promoted and encouraged the work of both **State** and **Federal Conference** Departments.

In many ways, **Wally** has been a man "ahead of his time" with his progressive thought and open, accepting attitudes, and there are many people within our churches who are grateful for such leadership.

Wally and **Gladys** have now shared over 61 years of their

lives together in a happy and rewarding partnership. They are both residents at **Parkrose Village, Everard Park**.

Throughout their lives, **Wally** and **Steve** have been hardworking and tenacious, but at the same time have been cheerful and caring men who looked for and saw the good in other people and situations.

All their children—**Leita**, **Jim** and **Marlene** (children of **Walter**) and **Roland** (son of **Steve**)—are active members of our churches in **SA**.

Bob Clymer Retires

Four states and 45 years

28 June marked the end of 42 years full-time ministry for **Bob** and **Shirley Clymer**, which commenced in **Roma, Qld**, involved a number of ministries, including a year as **Conference President** in **South Australia**, and concluded in **Victoria**. When we add his training at **Woolwich College** in his home state of **NSW**, **Bob** and **Shirley** **Clymer** served their **Lord** and **Churches of Christ** in four states and for 45 years.

Graeme Fleet, chairman of the board of the **Belmont, Vic**, church, expressed the appreciation of the congregation for **Bob** and **Shirley's** five years of ministry there.

The building was full for **Bob's** final service at **Belmont** on the Sunday morning, when

he preached on the subject "The Call of God". Worship was followed by a dinner attended by 150 who gathered to celebrate the ministry of **Bob** and **Shirley** and to wish them well in their retirement.

Greetings were received from the churches where they had served and some people from those churches were able to be present. **Ed Roffey**, former **Secretary of Federal Conference** and **Bob's** lecturer in **NT Greek**, spoke of their work throughout **Australia**. **Ian Allsop**, current **National Secretary**, sent greetings expressing appreciation.

Representatives of the **City of South Barwon**, the local primary school, the **Belmont-Highton Ministers Association**

and **Churches of Christ** in greater **Geelong** commented on his work and care shown to many people. Among the many spoken and read words of the day, these words from **Keith Horne**, longtime friend and co-worker, sums up much of what was said: "Always there was warmth, understanding and a special brand of humour that has endeared **Bob** to so many people. He has carved himself a place in the lives of many people across **Australia** that lives on to this day. Of course, you cannot think of **Bob** without his partner in marriage and ministry. **Shirley** has been the kind of minister's wife that not only supported **Bob**, but freed **Bob's** ministry."

The church at **Belmont** made a gift, which it is hoped will be of use to **Bob** and **Shirley** as they move into their own home at **Mulgrave**. —**Trevor Banks**

Ian Allsop New ACC President



• Ian Allsop

Ian Allsop was recently unanimously elected the new President of the Australian Council of Churches. He succeeds Bishop Oliver Heyward (Anglican) who has retired after serving as ACC President since 1989.

Ian is the Vic-Tas Conference Secretary and the National Conference Secretary. He graduated from the College of the Bible in 1965 and has served in local church ministries in Victoria and Western Australia, worked in Christian education at the Joint Board of Christian Education and the former Federal Board of Christian Education, and taught in mission at

the Churches of Christ Theological College at Mulgrave, Vic.

Ian is working towards a doctorate in organisational behaviour at the Monash Graduate School of Management and his doctoral thesis is on the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne.

Ian commented: "This puts me in a unique position, as I have worked closely with the Uniting Church at the Joint Board and the Anglican Church through my studies.

Ian is the second Churches of Christ person to become ACC President. Neil Gilmore held the position in 1973-76.

"I believe Churches of Christ have a real contribution to make to the ecumenical movement, as a small, vital and mission-driven church that seeks to be relevant to contemporary society," Ian said.

"The early church was 'one', and it was motivated by mission.

"The essential 'oneness' of the church is important as we seek to struggle with the real issues of today's society. We need to be able in our unity to present the redeeming Christ who offers newness and hope in a society where there is not much of either."

ACC Concern for Unemployed

The Australian Council of Churches resolved to send a delegation to the Prime Minister expressing deep concern about the plight of unemployed people and to urge him to implement policies to create employment opportunities.

Mover of the resolution, Ian Allsop, said: "The 88% of the workforce who are employed have never had it so good—in terms of the combination of low interest rates and almost zero inflation—yet the unemployed rate continues to rise.

"This is a matter of gravest concern to the churches."

Towards Fellowship

Dr Gassman speaks to ACC

The final decade of the 20th century means many things to many different people. For German theologian Dr Gunther Gassman, the approach of a new millennium means an opportunity for churches to draw closer towards "koinonia" (communion).

Dr Gassman was the key speaker at the 35th general meeting of the Australian Council of Churches (ACC), which met in Melbourne 26-30 June. He is the Director of the WCC Commission on Faith and Order, a position he has held since 1984.

Dr Gassman described some expectations of churches in their involvement in this "ecumenical century", particularly as that involvement related to the WCC. He described three categories of "unity" that may be expected to emerge from the churches working together.

First, as part of the great ecumenical missionary movement of the earlier part of the 20th century, there was a "spiritual" union, arising from common prayer, a "unity of heart and souls".

Then, from towards the liberal end of the ecclesiastical spectrum came what Dr Gassman described as a federation of churches, which based their unity on common concerns for action in the world.

Thirdly, there were those who were seeking a unity that was nothing less than full communion—"koinonia", based on a common confession of faith, and common understanding of

how the church works and is structured.

Dr Gassman said the question, "What is the unity we seek?" is fundamental. "When that question is no longer asked, the ecumenical movement loses its identity in the world church history and becomes irrelevant."

The move towards unity in the church is not a move towards uniformity, according to Dr Gassman. "What a boring 'communion' of churches it would be if we all thought the same and acted the same," he said.

When questioned about the Lund principle—that churches should do together all things except those which as a matter of conscience they must do separately—he agreed that a lot more could be done in this area.

—Andrew Demack

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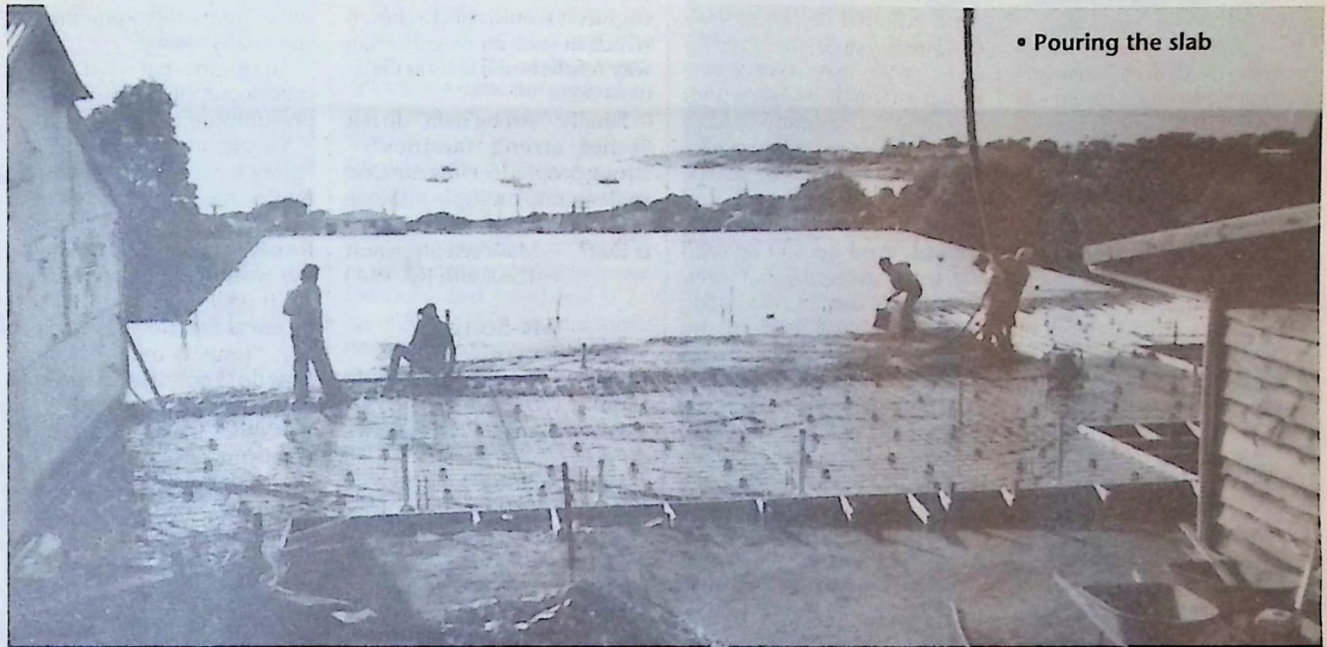
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Volunteers Contribute \$96,330 in Work

Camp Seaview slab poured



Tradesman and general helpers have contributed an estimated \$96,330 in voluntary work to bring the first stage of the building project at Camp Seaview, Bicheno, Tas, to completion. Colin Orr, the project manager, submitted these estimates to the Tasmanian government as part of the Churches of Christ contribution to the project, which will draw an anticipated \$60,000 government grant.

A major step in the project was completed on 6 June, with the pouring of a large slab of concrete to complete the ceiling of the ground floor level

and the floor base for the first storey yet to be completed. Some 75 m³ of concrete and 12 t of steel for reinforcement went into the work. Pouring of the concrete commenced at 7.30 am and was completed by mid-day. Work continued at two-hourly intervals until 9.30 am the next morning to finish and trowel the concrete.

When the ground floor level is fitted out by late this year,

two new family units, four cabins and a bunkroom for 20 campers, plus toilet facilities, will have been added. Colin Orr, a retired master builder and a Department of Mission, Education and Development representative for Tasmania, has supervised the project. The camp development committee, under the chairmanship of Ian Cumine and secretary Malcolm Orr, have been active

in support. Camp site managers are Graeme and Marion Spaulding.

Camp Seaview is administered by the Vic-Tas Department of Mission, Education and Development. The Victorian Properties Corporation has loaned \$80,000 towards the project. A celebration service is planned for later this year following completion of the final stage.



• Colin Orr

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Letters to the Editor

Letters to the editor are limited to 200 words

Don Milne and Coburg

To the Editor,

We wish to correct a statement that may be read wrongly in Gordon Stirling's recent letter ("AC" 20 June).

Gordon commented, "It was with this sense of mission that Doncaster has set aside Don and Tops Milne for their excellent lay ministry in Coburg."

Don was approached to undertake a part-time lay ministry with the Coburg church by the Coburg LMC. This was initially for a 12-month period and has recently been extended for a further three years.

At the time of the initial approach Don and Tops were in membership at the Doncaster church and Don was one of the elders of that church. The approach was made to Don and Tops and not the church. They accepted the call and commenced ministry in February this year. As Gordon noted, their ministry is very much appreciated by folk at Coburg.

The Doncaster church is not supporting Don and Tops or the Coburg church in any way financially. However Don and Tops' many friends at Doncaster are supporting them in prayer and the Coburg church is very grateful for the support of Doncaster members in occasional attendance and some assistance in leading in worship etc.

—Chris Ambrose
(Coburg LMC Chairman)

Curkpatrick Enjoyed

To the Editor,

I'd just like to say how much I enjoyed Stephen Curkpatrick's column in the 20 June issue of *The Australian Christian*. I thought it was an excellent and creative theological application of Coleridge's *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, with which anyone could relate. It was one of the best ways I've heard or read whereby redemption has been linked to our continuity with creation.

Great reading—thanks.

—Maureen Stepanoff
(Dalkeith Rd, WA)

"Manhood"

To the Editor,

I have just read, with horror and sadness, Don Herbert's guest editorial in *The Australian Christian* of 20 June. I recognise that he may have a particular interest in working with men, and that he seems to have addressed his article primarily to men—but doesn't he realise his editorial ignores over half our readers by ignoring women? And doesn't he realise the difference between "manhood" and "humanhood" or "personhood"? Even my eight-year-old daughter, on reading this article, objected very definitely to several of his statements!

Principally, I object very strongly to his support of the statement "Manhood and Christlikeness are synonymous", as he thereby infers that women cannot be Christlike. "Christlikeness" is not a gender-related characteristic at all—it is a set of principles and behaviours which are pleasing to God which Jesus modelled for us in his human form, and which we can all aim to follow through the process of sanctification. Don actually lists some of those values, but attributes them only to men. Aren't women, too, expected to be responsible, be accountable, be a person of integrity, honesty and truth? Are not many, many women actually describable by these adjectives of Christlikeness? No, Jesus was not a "man's man, portraying all the attributes and the quality of manhood"—he was (and is) a person's man, portraying all the attributes and quality of personhood or humanhood that God wants for all people.

Secondly (and I realise this will cause some contention), I object to his image of the family, and the man's role therein. His image is based largely on misinterpretation of Paul, discounting of the social situations in which and to which the New Testament (especially) was written, and an outmoded and extra-biblical patriarchal perspective. It is also, in today's circumstances, isolatory and rejectionist—how many sincere

Christian people today honestly believe that the man's role is to "guide, guard and govern", and how many sincere enquirers would reject a church which in such an inequalitarian way refuted such texts as Galatians 3:28?

Finally, "strong men" do not "build strong families"—strong people do. How can Don so denigrate multiple millions of women? How "Christlike" is that? —Maureen Stepanoff
(Dalkeith Rd, WA)

"Me-Songs"

To the Editor,

Oh: What weirdness we do show

When from the Scriptures we do go!

When (Oh so long ago....) "Tertius" the first was contributing to your paper, he wrote as one who knew what he wanted to say, knew how to say it, and knew how to drive home his message with pure wit. Oh! Bring back Tertius I.

I refer to his "letter" in 4 July issue, titled "Me-Songs". A strange contribution, to be sure. When one confuses ego with

exclamations of praise and thankfulness to Father and Son for the personal relationship they have provided with themselves for us, then something is spiritually astray.

To assume that what one experiences applies to all is plainly presumptuous—and wrong.

To use an example given, "glory for us" immediately removes the personal relationship. It also assumes to speak for everyone else! Which makes the words immediately in error if only one person present be not at that time saved. I can say, "Jesus is mine," but just how do I know if Jesus is yours? Or, as suggested, "ours"?

If other than "mine", it becomes pure assumption, at best. For, if the words are untrue, what then will be God's response?

Let us keep it personal, for it is personal. When we lose the personal relationship, we've lost the lot. I can sing, "That will be glory for me," but I certainly cannot sing it for everyone else.

In public prayer it is right to petition for all, but this writer,

Letters from Tertius

The Sign of the Fish

To the Editor,

Religious car stickers still seem to be in. If I could give them a word of humble advice it would be, "Choose your sticker carefully, someone may be watching you."

"Jesus is Lord" was the prominent announcement on his rear window. As I pulled up alongside him at the lights I was curious to see what a brother Christian might look like. I never saw such a scowl! As the lights changed he was off like a shot, only to have to brake suddenly as a late starter swung round in front of him. I didn't hear what he muttered, but it didn't look like words of blessing! Jesus Christ might have been his Lord, but his face didn't seem to have found out.

I was still meditating upon this as we came closer to the city. There is a side street that always has a long line of traffic waiting to get out. The faces of the drivers are usually a picture of fatalistic resignation. The driver in front of me signalled in good time that he was going to stop. As he pulled up he motioned the whole lane of waiting drivers through. He started again having delayed himself by a little less than 50 seconds. On his rear window was the familiar sign of the fish.

I found myself saying a little prayer of thanks to God for his gracious gesture and a prayer for forgiveness for the drivers behind me for their impatient klaxon chorus.

—Tertius

Letters

in over 60 years, cannot recall any prayer claim being made that all are saved.

Obviously, praying for all is vastly different from knowing that a spiritual victory applies to all (glory for us?). Such a claim could well be greatly in error, and in all too many churches, would be. "Jesus is mine" and "Glory for me" is simply right.

—L.C. Hughes
(Bayswater, Vic)

Spiritualising Israel

To the Editor,

I am writing regarding the letter in the 20 June issue by Gladys Butler. I would like to echo some of the sentiments expressed by her on "Spiritualising Israel".

Yes, we do not generally hear very much these days regarding Israel and the end time. As Bible students we should be watching with interest what happens in the Middle East in regard to Israel and the promised land. In fact, reading Leviticus 25:23 we find that the "Land" referred to in the Scripture, including the West Bank (Samaria) and the Golan Heights, were all God's plan for his people in preparation for the coming of God's Son, our Lord Jesus Christ.

The day will come when Christ will return and a "whole nation will repent in a day".

The West Bank, Gaza Strip and the Golan Heights are part of the "land" promised by God to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and their descendants for ever.

There is plenty of room in all the Arab countries for the Palestinians to have a homeland of their own and sojourn there.

Remember Israel was not allowed by God to even put so much as a foot inside these other countries on the exodus march from Egypt. God is fair and just to all his creation and does not desire any should perish.

Hallelujah!

—Dorothy Dallinger

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Still More on Curkpatrick

To the Editor,

Bill Gaunson says in his letter ("AC" 20 June), citing John Wenham, that "the gospel writers were competent and truthful witnesses, as Luke says in his preface". Luke says no such thing (1:1-4). What he does say is that "many have undertaken...", but he does not identify the "many".

We do not know that he knew Matthew and John; and if he knew Mark in its present form, he deemed it necessary to improve on that gospel in some respects.

Bill further states that those who see the books of the New Testament as examples of "Faith Speaking to Faith" divorce "the Christ of faith" from "the Jesus of history".

Not necessarily so. One, there are differences between the Christ of faith and the Jesus of history that have to be dealt with. Two, I contend that in the NT faith speaks to faith. (Though that is not all: unless I can put content into "Jesus" in the confession "Jesus is Lord" I do not know what I am saying.) I'm with Curkpatrick: surely the gospels were written by followers of Jesus, that is, those who placed a faith interpretation on certain historical events—does Bill not believe that?

Surely they were written to elicit and nurture faith—does Bill not concede that? (Matthew 1:1; Mark 1:1; Luke 1:4; John 1:14, 20:31)

Bill also uses the big sticks of irrationality and existentialism to beat Curkpatrick with. To comment only on the latter: there is much diversity among existentialists. Many, for instance, advocate that we be involved, rather than detached, committed rather than uninterested; they protest dehumanisation and a rationalistic reduction of human existence; and they point up our finite freedom (and therefore the relativity of our judgments). Would that we were all existentialists of that stripe.

—Ronald Graham
(Johnston, Iowa, USA)

News

Holiday Club

Potential for future



• Some of the older holiday club children doing craft work

During the first week of the June school holidays the Launceston, Tas, church ran a holiday club. This catered for children of primary-school age. 44 children attended throughout the week and for many this was their first-ever church contact. Family night on the Thursday evening saw 72 parents and children enjoy a meal together, then participate in crafts and

games and see a drama. This gave everyone a glimpse of the holiday club's program.

A number of high school and college students were given valuable leadership training and experience and were a crucial part of the program.

The leadership team is now looking at the potential of holiday clubs for the future.

—Darryl Tobler

Visiting Canberra? Stay with a Church Family

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

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Advance bookings appreciated

Music



On the Way to the Wedding

by Wes Beavis (Powerborn 031062)

"He takes my prayers/And I no longer carry them alone/I'm yielded to my God/I pour out my heart/He attendeth me/Such is God, his love envelops me."

These high-powered lyrics come from the voice of Wollongong singer/songwriter Wes Beavis.

"On the Way to the Wedding" is the title of Beavis' new album, which includes not only superb lyrics but also an array of singing talent that is not surpassed by many other performers. Singing prowess is evident in "I feel your presence", a duet between Beavis and female guest vocalist Sancha Smith. Wes has obviously put a great deal of thought into the lyrical content of his songs, as each track challenges the listener to re-think the walk with the Lord.

Musically, "On the Way to the Wedding", has a beautifully balanced sound, with touches of studio brilliance. Not a live powerful sound, Wes has instead opted instead for an album with catchy drum beats and powerful guitar overtones. The musical highlight on the album would have to be the delightful brass work from Bruce Allan, Peter Stacey and Graham Kettlewell. Wes Beavis also puts his talents to the musical side of things, with some delicate keyboard work and some occasional drum programming. To add variety to his accomplished album, Wes Beavis also puts together a well-presented rap, "Walter Scott Rap".

The best track on the album is "Soldier", which talks about the crucifixion of Jesus Christ from the viewpoint of the soldier in charge of the hanging. It is a highly emotional song, well presented and that caps off an album of high class from yet another rising Australian talent.

—Shaun White

The CD or cassette is available from Powerborn, PO Box 192, Figtree 2525.

Books



Equal to Serve

Women and Men in the Church and Home by Gretchen Gaebelein Hull (Fleming H. Revell Company)

I managed to obtain a copy of this book after reading a very complimentary review in an American magazine. Gretchen Gaebelein Hull comes from a very active family in the American evangelical stream of the church. She had always had a view of the place of women in the church and in marriage. After a time she was being asked

to take on more teaching roles in her church and was even involved on a committee to select elders and ministers, yet the minister who had asked her to assist in this committee stated that he would never allow a woman to be an elder. This book is the result of her starting to look seriously at the issues of men and women being called to be Christ's ambassadors. She sees the issues in the church as primarily being an issue of justice and thus of vital concern if the church is to be truly biblical.

Equal to Serve has some very interested chapters in which the author looks at some of the issues that are raised in the whole debate and sees that many of the arguments are the philosophical equivalent of a scarecrow. They are devices designed to frighten people away from examining the crucial questions. With evidence that women in the Old and New Testament had a wide freedom of service, she questions the traditions many Christians blindly accept today. *Equal to Serve* considers the ramifications of mutual submission and sacrifice to God.

I found the book very helpful in an understanding of the place of women (and men) in serving together in the church. —CRA

The Forgotten Factor

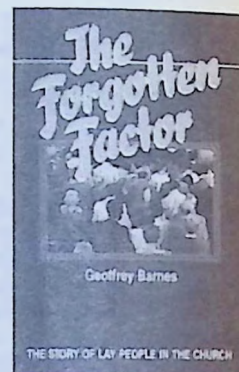
The Story of Lay People in the Church by Geoffrey Barnes (Joint Board of Christian Education)

This book should strike appropriate chords for those people who place a major emphasis on mutual ministry.

Using historical examples, the author shows how the relationship between clergy and laity has been uneasy. He illustrates the power of the bishops, who were able to control the work of lay people. Both church and society felt comfortable when clergy did this, especially when the use of spiritual gifts threatened church stability.

Many times lay people found freedom to use their gifts, only to be stopped by the church institution. It is interesting that, in early years, Protestantism gave women with gifts the right to use them. When the Protestant movement became more structured, there was a resurgence of the previous practices, again inhibiting lay involvement.

This book is written with a Uniting Church perspective, but raises an important issue, which makes it worth reading. Do Churches of Christ affirm lay people who use God's gifts or do we venerate our clergy at the expense of the laity? —John Caporn



When Famine Strikes

India, June 1992

Things are really bad, specially for the poorer farmers.

They will need seed to sow when the rain comes.

But people have eaten the little crop they had. People are becoming ill.

Drinking water is the problem. It is being carted to hundreds of hamlets and villages. Every day now we watch for

rain. In a hot country water is so essential.

Thank you for sending money for famine relief. How wonderful it is to know money is coming to help.

—Edna Vawser
[\$10,000 has been sent from the Churches of Christ Overseas Aid fund to assist with needs in Maharashtra.]

Scripture Union Leaders Challenged

Seeking out young people wherever they are

Emmanuel Oladipo from Nigeria was commissioned as Scripture Union's next International Secretary at SU's International Conference held in the Netherlands 19-25 May, which was attended by 680 delegates from 90 countries. Currently SU's Africa Regional secretary, he will succeed Nigel Sylvester at the end of the year.

"A world that wants quick success may not find SU's vision particularly attractive," stressed Emmanuel Oladipo, speaking on the conference theme. "Evangelising children cannot be done in a hurry. But we are going to continue to take the pains and the time necessary to reach the children of the world with the love of Jesus."

"We are going to seek out young people wherever they

are. We shall do so in places that are not glamorous, at times that are not convenient and in a manner that may not be considered respectable, but we shall seek out the young people of the world and present them with the claims of Christ."

Speaking of SU's vision for the underprivileged, Paul Clark from Peru described SU Peru's ministry to street kids in Lima and Iquitos.

Two of the Peruvian staff members at the conference had themselves been street kids in Lima.

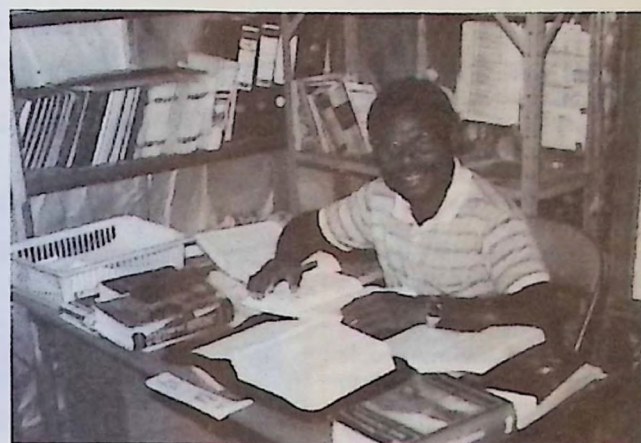
By the year 2000 the numbers of street children will have doubled. There will be 24 cities in the world with populations over 10 million. It will be 10 times more likely for a young person in the jungles to have heard the Gospel than a boy or girl in our megacities.

Speaking from his experience of youth work amidst the turmoil and violence in Northern Ireland, Joe Campbell proposed that every SU movement should establish at least "one piece of work with marginalised young people which would proudly take its place alongside our more traditional work".

Danilo Gay from Switzerland urged delegates to "break out of their circles of middle-class attitudes and individual piety" to reach others.

Working Partners

PNG church advisers' workshop



• Jose Sali

On 30 April eight people met at Chungribu, PNG, for the second Church Advisers' Workshop. John Bassett couldn't be there because of sickness but four Papua New Guineans, one ni-Vanuatu and three Australians spent a week looking at PNG church issues.

When Tony Williamson was asked to lead five Bible studies in Pidgin, he flipped! After only a couple of months in PNG he was very unsure of his ability. But the first Bible study set the tone. Tony only got a few verses done of his chapter-long first study. Everyone became involved in finding meaning for Papuan New Guineans in what was brought out. After that it didn't really matter who led a study—everyone became involved.

The revival of 1984 is still relevant among the churches in PNG. For Papua New Guineans the spirit world is very much a reality. So manifestations are expected when the Holy Spirit gets involved in a person's life. The difficulty is for people to be able to distinguish what is from God, what from evil and what is just human. Jose could bring his experience from Vanuatu to the issue. David, Tony and Frank could bring the Bible knowledge. Pekene, Gromnari, Mukok and Yamli could bring their knowledge of custom and

culture. Together some guidelines were worked out so that local pastors could have something to use for teaching and guiding people's enthusiasm.

The same thing happened when Pekene brought up the issue of restoring people back into church life. Culture, Bible knowledge and practical knowledge combined to bring guidance that can be worked into local church life.

By the end of the week in a time of ministry to each other, each Papua New Guinean ministered to those from Vanuatu and Australia and vice versa. Each contributed, each learnt, each received ministry and each returned to their own work enriched.

—Frank Beale



• Pekene

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Bringing Light to St Kilda

Alan Hirsch

For those who are unfamiliar with the landscape of Melbourne, St Kilda is a high-density inner-city suburb located due south of the central business district. However St Kilda is an inner city neighbourhood with a difference. It happens to be the mecca of the city's street subcultures, it has the highest proportion of homeless and destitute people in Victoria (comparable only to Kings Cross in Sydney) and, not surprisingly, it also happens to be the centre of drug, crime, pornography and prostitution in Melbourne.

Now without wishing to sound too dramatic, it can be said that by all accounts St Kilda is a very dark place—dark spiritually, morally and socially. A darkness that is sometimes so pervasive and smothering that, sadly, only very few lights have been able to endure the oppression that seems to come with the territory. This is no exaggeration! Not many churches have been able to maintain an adequate and life-giving Christian witness in St Kilda. Our Prahran church attempted a very brave "church-plant" in the area only five years ago. Most of the churches in the area have struggled to maintain their witness, with the exception of possibly one or two proactive fellowships.

St Kilda has proved to be a tough testing ground for the Gospel and, quite honestly, it yet awaits to experience the fulfilment of the Biblical promise that "those enveloped in darkness have seen a great light and for those living in the land of the shadow of death, light has dawned". (Matthew 4:16) A liberating encounter with Jesus eludes these people because of the lack of an adequate strategic and holistic Christian witness in the area.

Please understand me, I do not mean by this to diminish the excellent work done by fine Christians and churches in the



area (particularly that of the St Kilda Baptist Church). I merely wish to note that there is not enough of this kind of holistic ministry approach. From what I can gather, mission in St Kilda has tended to lack a "strategic approach", an approach required to truly evangelise this oppressed area of our city. From what I can observe at least, Christian mission in St Kilda has tended to break down either into mere social work (feeding and housing programs) or the other extreme—"soul-saving"—an approach which, for all its good intentions, has nonetheless failed to see the person as a whole—body, soul and spirit—and has therefore failed in truly evan-

gelising the city. Either approach, it seems, has tended to lack the holism that the Gospel to the poor and broken hearted demands. St Kilda, or Kings Cross for that matter, will never be won on either of these two approaches.

It is my humble belief and opinion that to succeed, Christian witness in the inner city must deal with the all-too-real spiritual realities that plague our world—with the demonic dimensions of the pervading darkness, it must seek to bring about the life-transforming encounter with Jesus experienced in conversion (Colossians 1:13) and it must deal definitively and biblically with the "darkness within" by calling for the

repentance appropriate to the presence of the Kingdom of God. But if urban mission must challenge people at their spiritual epicentre, then urban ministry must also look after the total person: it must feed and house and clothe them and so embody the Gospel with the kind of compassion and vulnerability that true incarnation demands.

The people of God who worship at South Melbourne humbly believe that God is raising us up to attempt such a ministry in St Kilda. Our church is not at all dissimilar—South Melbourne is a church comprised largely of people who come from the subcultures and who have a definite mission focus: to reach and heal the broken hearted and to bind up their wounds. Under the watchful care of the church at "South", a new strategy to plant a church in St Kilda is currently being implemented.

In our attempt to be strategic in our approach to mission in St Kilda, we have adopted the dual and complementary ministries of Teen Challenge and Exodus Victoria. (Our church has been asked to take over the ministry of Teen Challenge by the end of the year.) The ministry of Exodus is well established at "South" and is based there.

Exodus has as its mission and ministry focus those that it calls "the sexually broken". It provides counselling and supportive care for people struggling



Profile

A New Model of Urban Ministry

with all kinds of sexual problems, and assists in training churches who wish to provide effective pastoral care to such people. Teen Challenge had its origins in the pioneering work of David Wilkerson, the author of *The Cross and the Switchblade*. As an operating ministry, Teen Challenge has been in St Kilda for 18 years, and provides counselling and pastoral care to the "street culture" of the area. Its historical focus has been on drug rehabilitation and evangelism to the street subcultures and other fringe groups. Teen Challenge operates the most successful drug rehabilitation program worldwide. It is expected that these two ministries will provide the operating base and outreach arm of the new (worshipping) church to be initiated sometime next year.

Under South Melbourne's direction, the strategy to achieve our ministry goals in St Kilda will be to try to broaden the ministry style and base by setting up and operating a medical, health and counselling centre, which will provide a more holistic approach to mission to these broken people. Such a "nerve-centre of

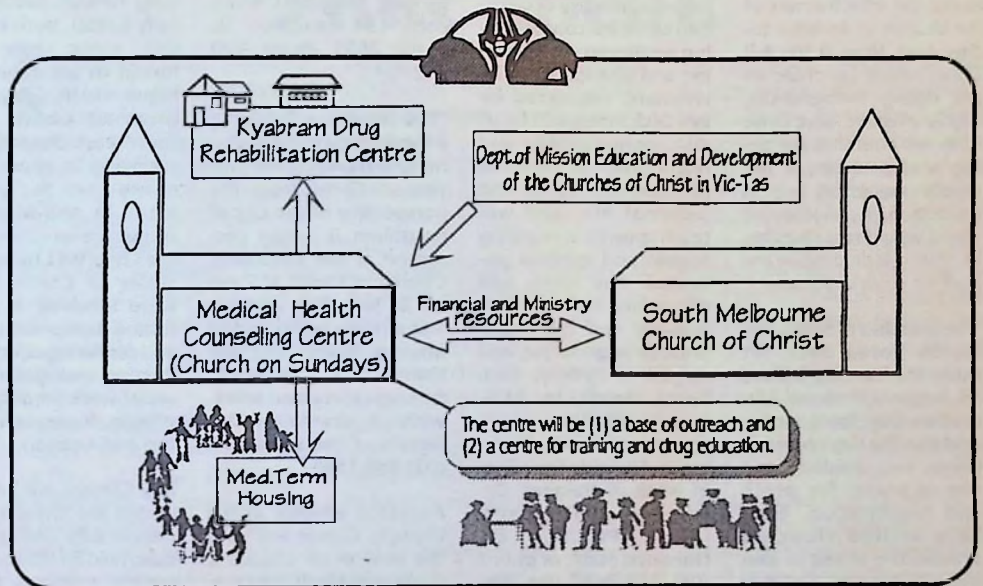
mission" will eventually provide a stable source of finance and resources through bulk billing, community health nursing and counselling fees. We hope to have the centre operating by the end of the year, at least in its seminal form. The Lord has already marvellously provided a site for our medium-term housing program in Lower Plenty, a place of safety, recovery and restoration for the broken. We also hope to start a

program for street kids on the same property. All in all, we believe that this ministry will be on the cutting edge of mission in the inner city and will pave the way and provide a new model of ministry for the 90s and beyond.

We have invited the Vic-Tas Department of Mission, Education and Development to assist us in our efforts. We are hoping for a favourable response but quite frankly funds are lacking. Furthermore we are putting together a proposal for funding from the St Kilda Council and it is hoped that they will support us as well. In the meantime we are in desperate need of funds. Moses Abbatangelo, the Teen Chal-

lenge worker responsible for the transfer of the ministry to our church, has had to be re-trenched and unless we are able to raise around \$250 per week for his support until the centre is operating efficiently, the whole mission strategy is in jeopardy. It is my hope that in writing this article you will not only find it challenging, stimulating and exciting but it is my prayer that some of you will support us and financially assist us in the vital and formative period. All gifts are tax deductible if you send a cheque or even credit card number.

• Alan Hirsch is the minister of the South Melbourne and St Kilda, Vic, churches.



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Happenings

A recent Barna Research Group survey of church pastors asked them how Jesus Christ would probably assess the effectiveness of the church in America today. Less than 0.5% felt Christ would say churches are doing tremendous, highly effective work while 43% felt churches are doing a respectable, if not wholly successful, job. A majority, 53%, said they felt Christ would rate churches as having little positive impact on souls or society.

The churches of South and North Korea have set aside the Sunday before 15 August (National Liberation Day from Japan, and also the day on which Korea was divided) as a day of prayer for peace and reunification. They have invited churches around the world to join them in prayers that day for an end to the division which has separated them from one another for 47 years.

Seven of the 10 most widely sung hymns in the US Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) are Christmas carols. Topping the list of hymn favourites was "Joy to the World". 25% of all Disciples congregations in the US and Canada were surveyed. The other 6 carols in the top 10 are "O Little Town of Bethlehem", "Silent Night", "Away in a Manger", "O Come, All Ye Faithful", "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing" and "Angels We Have Heard on High". The Top 10 hymns excluding carols were 1. "All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name", 2. "Holy, Holy, Holy", 3. "Break Thou the Bread of Life", 4. (equal) "Beneath the Cross of Jesus" and "Crown Him with Many Crowns", 6. "The Church's One Foundation", 7. (equal) "Come, Thou Almighty King" and "Take My Life and Let It Be", 9. "When I Survey the Wondrous Cross" and 10. "Have Thine Own Way, Lord".

A series of seminars on "Loving and Understanding Yourself and Others" will be conducted

throughout Australia during July and August. The seminars are being sponsored by ACTS International, a ministry of Christian outreach concentrating on literature publishing and distribution. The seminars, conducted by Rev Dick Innes, will focus on communications and relationships in the fields of marriage, family and personal life, and will teach growth in reaching human and spiritual potential. The series will commence in Brisbane in mid-July and then continue throughout July and August in Sydney, Canberra, Adelaide, Melbourne, Hobart, Launceston and Perth, finishing in Adelaide for a live-in week of training. Details from ACTS International, PO Box 88, Norwood 5067, or phone (08) 362 7687, fax (08) 362 7247.

In the 6 June issue of *The Australian Christian* we ran a story on the Amnesty International Religious Network. The main story was on the Victorian branch. The Religious Network Co-ordinator of Amnesty International in Western Australia is Merle Peacock, a well-known member of our churches in WA. Those interested in this work can contact her at Amnesty International (WA Branch), PO Box 8255, Stirling Street 6000.

In a recent *National Business Review*-Matingly poll in New Zealand most Kiwis believe New Zealand is still a Christian society. 54% of New Zealanders believe the country is Christian, 39% say it is not and 7% don't know. 50% thought people should swear on the Bible with 43% disagreeing with that view.

The 8th Annual Psychiatry and Religion Conference on "Power in Politics, Psychology and Religion" is being held 26 and 27 September at the National Library of Australia, Canberra. Invited speakers include Professor A.C.P. Sims (President of the Royal College of Psy-

chiatrists) and Michael Leunig (cartoonist for the *Sunday Age*, Melbourne). Information from Psychiatry and Religion Conference, 134 Carruthers St, Curtin 2605. Phone (06) 282 4545.

"The Jerusalem Passion", a modern classical oratorio which relates the passion of Christ from the perspective of the city of Jerusalem is being presented at the Doncaster Church of Christ at 7 pm on 26 July. The oratorio was written by Australian Murray Wylie and the theme is "orated" through song and voice, without drama or set. Details of the service on (03) 848 1546.

Australian athletes at the Olympic Games will have the services of chaplains. Rev Russell Hinds, who was chaplain at the Seoul Olympics, will be in Barcelona 20-30 July. Ken Bond, a chaplain at the Australian Institute of Sport in Canberra, will take over duties on 30 July to the end of the Olympics on 9 August.

A young Presbyterian lay preacher was brutally murdered in an ambush on 3 June. It is believed that the ambush was staged by local community leaders attempting to eradicate Protestants from villages in the southern Mexican state of Chiapas. He was reportedly shot over 30 times and his body hacked with machetes.

Converted Muslim Christians face verbal and sometimes physical attacks as they seek to evangelise Muslims in northern and central Ghana, according to one such believer. Muslim clerics, however, deny knowledge of any such violent confrontations between the two religious communities.

An American missionary couple who have worked in the central Indian state of Madhya Pradesh for the past 40 years were ordered to leave the coun-

try in early June after the state's Hindu-dominated government alleged they were involved in proselytising Hindus. Bernel and Sally Getter, both in their 60s, were reportedly forced to abandon their home and ministry in the town of Chatis Garh (northeast Bhopal) after receiving a deportation notice from the government in mid-May. The couple are associated with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). They were involved in establishing numerous schools and orphanages, and conducting evangelism and social work among tribal groups, lower-caste Hindus and beggars.

Billy Graham has just concluded the Greater Philadelphia Billy Graham Crusade, held 24-28 June. The crowds averaged 40,150 per night with an average of over 2,700 responding to an invitation to make a commitment to Christ at each meeting.

Ray Harrison from New Zealand will be in Melbourne on 30 July. He will be the special guest speaker at a coffee and dessert evening at the Nunawading, Vic, Church of Christ (182 Surrey Rd, Blackburn) at 8 pm. Ray Harrison is the Founder President of International Needs, a worldwide missionary agency that supports national workers in 25 countries. Ray Harrison was for many years involved with Youth for Christ both in New Zealand and internationally. Reservations for the evening through International Needs secretary, Glenda de Jager, on (03) 873 2138, or by writing to International Needs, PO Box 121, Mitcham 3132.

"Personal and Social Holiness" is the theme of the 7th Pacific Convention on the Holy Spirit. It will be held in Sydney 21-24 August at the Pacific College for Evangelism at North Parramatta. The convention grapples with the polarity between Charismatic and

more traditional Christians. This year it is bringing together personal and social holiness. Delegates can either live in or attend on a daily basis. Enquiries and registrations to Dr Alan Walker, Pacific College for Evangelism, 6 Lincluden Place, North Parramatta 2151. Phone (02) 630 0777.

A new large-print Chinese Bible recently came off the Amity printing press in Nanjing, China, and went out to churches. 20,000 copies have been printed, with 30,000 more scheduled for printing this year. The Bible Society in Australia continues to help provide paper for the Amity Press so that the Scripture needs of the Chinese may be filled. They are currently sending 630 t of paper to China each year.

The Vic-Tas Adventure Committee Skiing Club is holding its second cross-country skiing weekend over the weekend 7-9 August. Details from Steve Smith on (03) 557 2778.

Vineyard owners in South Africa's main wine-growing region, the Hex River Valley area, are giving their workers time off to study the Bible. The labourers and their families are attending weekly meetings, led by a multi-racial team from Youth With A Mission, which gives biblical principles intended to combat the high level of family breakdown and alcoholism among grape farm workers.

The ACC Commission on Church and Society has been renamed the Commission on Justice, Peace and Creation, and moved from Brisbane to Adelaide. The new commission will "help Australian churches work towards a mutual commitment to justice, peace and the integrity of creation, through challenging unjust structures that promote poverty and promoting the responsible and sustainable use of the earth's resources".

Missions Week at Thornleigh

Hearing the voice of God

Missions Week, 24-31 May, was another highlight in the life of the Thornleigh, NSW, church. The theme of the week was "Hearing the Voice of God". God spoke to us through the mission programs we support and messages at services. God spoke through the interviews on 24 May, first at the morning service when Franklyn Elliott interviewed Pat Wallace about Christ at work in crisis in "The Love in the Name of Christ" program sponsored by the churches in the Hornsby-Thornleigh area and second at an interview in the evening service with Colin Murdoch, a full-time worker at the Normanhurst Boys High School.

God spoke to us through the guest speaker on 31 May, who was Susan Larkins of the Golden Grove Healing Ministry Centre, St Andrews Anglican Cathedral, Sydney, challenging all on "How can I be sure it's God?"

Highlight of the week was the breakfast on the Saturday at which over 100 attended. God spoke as David Chapman spoke on China and Biblemania and Peter Heggie on miracles in Russia as God through Christ touched and transformed lives.

On 31 May, the Faith Promise Giving was received for 1992-93. The target figure was \$30,000. God spoke, the church responded and over \$31,000 was promised. —J.V. Ellerby



Silent Parables That Speak

In our society we are familiar with the gestures of symbolic protest, such as a respected magistrate being arrested for a conscientious but illegal expression of protest, or a Greenpeace flotilla making a daring but dangerous protest that results in arrests. The arrests or, even worse, the physical harming of innocent people are symbolic and call into question an accepted assumption, that is "what the government or state does is always right". Clearly, that is not true. According to New Testament scholar John Crossan, several of Jesus' actions function in a similar way as "parabolic deeds", calling into question unquestioned assumptions of Jewish religious orthodoxy. His actions of cleansing the temple, healing on the sabbath and associating with women, outcasts, publicans and sinners are among many powerfully symbolic and provocative actions in the Gospel narratives. They are silent parables that speak.

The meals Jesus ate with "tax collectors and sinners" functioned as parable in action, calling into question accepted religious assumptions of the day, such as the belief that God's goodness and blessing are only experienced in the fellowship solidarity of the righteous. To do the opposite, and mix with socially and morally questionable people, inverted that assumption and threatened the "spiritual cohesion" and "moral purity" of the nation. The meals in which Jesus shared with sinners and the "socially impaired" outcasts from the congregation of Israel were powerfully symbolic actions in which Jesus was effectively inverting the attitude of his contemporaries and re-interpreting the religious tradition of Israel in a radical way.

Jesus' table fellowship, expressed in both parable (the Great Feast) and action (feasting at the house of Levi) to name

two examples, makes an unequivocal statement about the kind of community that is appropriate to the Kingdom's presence. The action of table fellowship was essentially provocative, comparable to the subversive irony of many Lucan parables in which social destinies and religious values are turned upside down, and where predictable rewards for the "deserving" are inverted to become unpredictable, extravagant expressions of grace for the "undeserving". This destabilised and subverted religious perceptions as to who were the appropriate insiders and outsiders of the community of the Kingdom. In fact, the unequivocal acceptance of outsiders, in parable and action, was nothing short of shocking to the orthodox status quo.

The destabilisation of insider-outsider categories determining the "appropriate" community of the Kingdom was further demonstrated unequivocally in the cross. There is a continuity between parable, table fellowship as parable in action, and the cross as supreme paradox with the execution of Jesus as an outcast, rejected by

the righteous because of his subversive parables and symbolic actions. The impact of all three is inseparable. This raises a striking question. Does our perception of the cross include its subversive propensity to upset normality as society and, indeed, as we in the church often perceive it? A simple but profound way in which the scandal of the cross might be demonstrated in our churches is through the unequivocal acceptance and compassionate inclusion of those who are not "our kind of people", either morally or socially, in the banquets of the Kingdom, a banquet which began in the ministry of Jesus. While that may be shocking to those who prefer to maintain an enclavist perception of the church in the world it is a powerful action that will always speak louder than our words to society as we invite people to enjoy the community of the Kingdom.

—Stephen Curkpatrick
Correction: In the article "Naked Man in a Ditch" ("AC" 4 July), "Grace is always a surprise" (second last line of second paragraph) should have been cited as a direct quote from Robert Funk. My apologies for this oversight—SC

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Classifieds

BIRTHS

HILFORD To Anne and Philip, at Redcliffe, Queensland, on 2.7.92, God's gift of a daughter, Kaitlin Anne. Sister for Kylie, Matthew and Rachael.

A DOUBLE BLESSING

BAKER (FATCHEN) To Karen and Phil of Clovelly Park, SA, a daughter Emily Jane. A sister for Jonathan. On 1.7.92.

RIPPIN (BAKER) To Fiona and Bruce of Flagstaff Hill, SA, a son Thomas William. A brother for Lisa and Sarah. 28.4.92.

ENGAGEMENTS

FLETT—WHAN Bill and Judy, Stafford Heights, Qld, together with Bob and Rhonda, Wagga Wagga, NSW, are pleased to announce the engagement of Jillian and Peter.

HEAD—THURLOW Robert and June Head together with Robert and Ruth Thurlow are very happy to announce the engagement of Nola and Michael at Launceston on 18 June 1992. May God please you both.

MARR—STORMONTH The families of Natalie Marr and Colin Stormonth are delighted to announce their engagement on 5 July 1992.

DEATHS

HENDERSON Ernest Richard. On 2 July after a short illness. Loving husband of Gwen. Loved husband of Karen and Scott Milan, Narelle and Mal Salmon and Richard.

LANG Norman Henry Douglas. Suddenly, at Warrigal Hospital on 17 June. Loving husband of Lily (dec). Greatest Dad of Joy and Ken (dec) Pinches, Doug and Beryl, Gordon (dec), Stewart and Mary, Gloria and Jim McPherson, Elaine and Allan Dennis, Heather and Gary Forbes. Grandfather of 24 grandchildren and 26 great grandchildren.

LANG Norman Henry Douglas. Loved son of James Douglas and Elsie (dec). Much loved brother of Elsie (dec) Frecker and Harold. Aged 89 years. Foundation member at West Preston.

LANG Norman Henry Douglas. Suddenly, at Warrigal Hospital on

17 June. Great and loving dad to Joy and Ken (dec) Pinches. Loved and respected Pappa Norm to David and Joy, Neil, Julie, Sue and Pat, Phil and Cait. To his great grandchildren—Cameron, Brendan, Lauren, Allysha; Tristan, Kasey; Jessica, Amy-Rose he was Special Pappa Norm. Those we love don't go away./They walk beside us every day.

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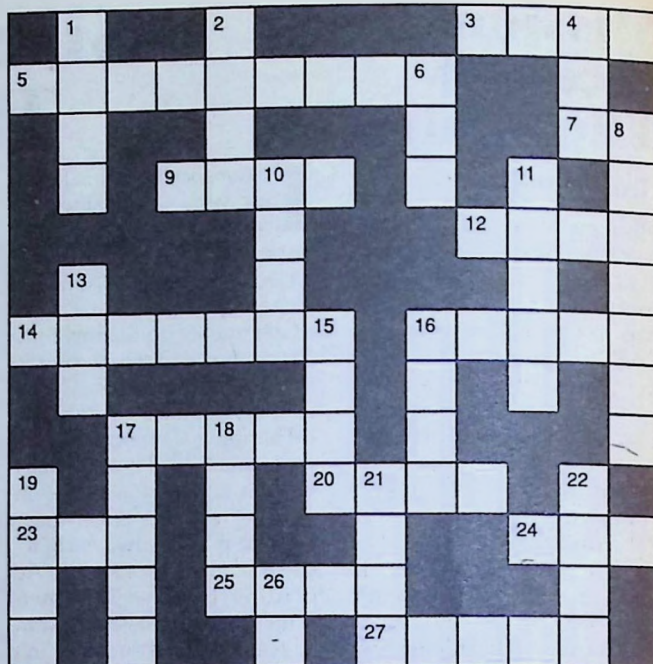
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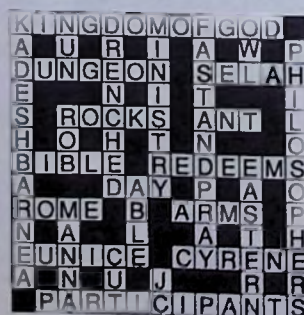
Across

3. Phoenician city featured in the Bible
5. Jacob's sons answered Shechem in a ----- way (Genesis 34:13)
7. Short form of name for God used at the start of many place names
9. Jacob's hairy brother
12. But don't put on a sad face (Matthew 6:16)
14. High Babylonian officials wore fancy ones (Ezekiel 23:15)
16. You are saved by -----
17. Caused water and blood to flow (John 19:34)
20. City in the foothills (Joshua 15:34)
23. Fortified city (Joshua 19:35)
24. Transgression
25. Part of a ship mentioned in Bible (Isaiah 23:23)
27. A descendant of Shem (Genesis 11:20)

Down

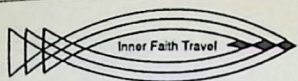
1. Son of Jacob (Genesis 29:34)
2. Sign of betrayal
4. Herb mentioned in Luke 11:42
6. Abraham's nephew
8. Messages from Paul
10. The last word
11. He built a section of wall (Nehemiah 3:25)
13. Bethel's former name (Genesis 28:19)
15. Reddish-brown ----- on his head (Leviticus 13:42)
16. Philistine city (Judges 16:1)
17. The Son of Man came to ----- (Mark 10:45)
18. Samson's place of refuge (Judges 15:8)
19. Book of the Bible
21. Produce mentioned in Genesis 43:11
22. Worn by Pharaoh (Genesis 41:42)
26. City captured by Joshua

June Solution



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Comment

Bible Concordances

Do you ever use a concordance in your Bible study? They can help you to find a particular verse, or in studying a particular part of the Bible by investigating the writer's (or writers') use of language.

When I was at Bible college we used three main concordances: Strong's, Young's and Cruden's. People used to say "Strong's for the strong (it was the biggest and most complete one), Young's for the young, and Cruden's for the crude." We students had a pretty strange sense of humour! (Another joke from student days: Before I came to college I didn't know what a theologian was, and now I am one!)

Concordances are useful when you're looking for a quotation, but can't find it. You usually find that your memory was faulty and there's no such verse in the Bible! It also helps if you remember which version of the Bible the quote is from!

They also help in topic study (what the Bible has to say about "eternal life", for example). However, a writer can talk about a subject without men-

tioning a given word, so you need to be cautious in using this approach. (For example the book of Esther never once mentions the word God, but has lots to say about him looking after the Jews, for example.)

I have been using a cheap Bible concordance, which I find very useful. It is a computer program, available only for the Atari ST. It is the fastest database I have (you can get to any part of the Bible in about two seconds) and is well worth the \$US40 I paid for it. It can do complex searches easily (e.g. all the places in the Bible, or in a part of the Bible, where "love" and "faith" are mentioned together) but these take longer than a simple search for a verse or book.

Sometimes it is easier to use a book rather than a computer, but the program comes into its own for complex searches. The people who produce the program have a sense of humour. They suggest you search for all

the verses that contain the words "spirit" and "baptism": there aren't any!

Bible texts it supports are the King James and New International versions, and there will soon be a German Bible and a super duper Greek-English New Testament with definitions and parsing and the ability to print Greek.

You need to have a hard disk as the program and text take up 2 Mb. Without one, you can only access parts of the Bible, unless you have a computer with about 4 Mb of memory.

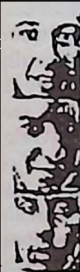
It is produced by SpiritWare, which is a small organisation from a Seattle, Washington, church. They have 450 registered users of their concordances. They have never advertised, which is why I'm writing this article. Someone you know may be interested. (Perhaps a musician, as many of us use Atari for its superb music software.) Their address is: Don Clifton SpiritWare, Fifteenth

Avenue Bible Church, 15211 15th Avenue NE, Seattle, WA 98155, USA.

I am willing to send a legal demo version to you if you send me \$5 for postage and the cost of a disk. It includes Paul's letters in the KJV only, but gives you a guide to what the program can do.

Maybe someone could fill us in on similar products for IBM and Macintosh computers.

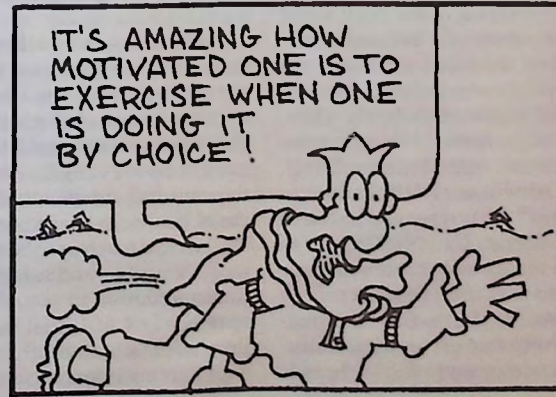
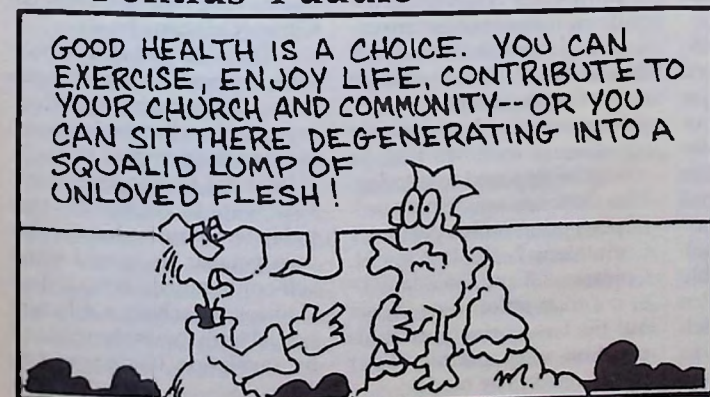
—David McKay
[At the "AC" office we use a program called "The Word" on our Macintoshes. This program includes a desk accessory that enables us to paste in any verse in the Bible in a matter of seconds. We used it to look up John 3:16 for the cover of the pamphlet included in the last issue.—GTA]



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Defending the Faith

Ken Stothard

It is with great reluctance that I take up my pen to respond to "Voting with the Devil" ("AC" 21 March). I hoped that someone else would undertake the task. Anyone who sets out to teach justification by faith in Christ unavoidably runs the risk of being falsely accused like Paul of antinomianism (literally opposition to law but more generally anti- or at least sub-Christian behaviour) by those of a legalistic cast of mind (Romans 3:8). A.E. White has thrown down the gauntlet in a most provocative manner and it apparently falls to me to take it up.

First Mr White fails to understand the nature of the objection to what he calls the "tame" but really volatile motion at the 1991 Vic-Tas Conference. I was not objecting to total abstinence (TA) as such but to (public) pressure being exerted in its support. It is idle to pretend that TA is based purely on personal conviction when Conference votes to recommend it. "Voluntary" in this context is the thin end of the legalist wedge. My contention was and is that the use of factional muscle to push for a stance that is not intrinsically Christian is biblically illegitimate (NB Acts 15) for it destroys Christian liberty (Galatians 1-6). While Conference has a right, even a duty, to urge churches to consider seriously TA as an option, as one among other strategies, it manifestly has no more right to recommend it to all than it has to recommend indulgence to all or that all should become missionaries, teachers or nurses.

It is no more the Lord's will that all should become teetallers than that all should abstain from sex as both Jesus and Paul make abundantly clear, for all do not have the gift or the vocation (see Matthew 19:11f, 1 Corinthians 7:1ff). Failure to note this has wreaked havoc in the Roman Catholic Church as the media have hastened to inform us during the past month or so. The fact is that in principle what we eat or drink is simply irrelevant to the faith, as is

circumcision, gender, race etc. (1 Corinthians 8:8, Romans 14:17, 1 Corinthians 7:19, Galatians 5:6, 6:15 and 3:28, Colossians 3:11)

Next, Mr White is concerned, as I trust we all are along with the biblical writers, about the stumbling block that alcohol constitutes. This is and always has been a problem not least because we are caught in a Catch 22 situation as Jesus clearly recognised (Matthew 11:18f). John the Baptist, who didn't imbibe "the demon drink", was ironically accused of having a demon, while Jesus himself who did was charged with being a drunkard and a glutton. Obviously what is a stumbling block for one is not for another and vice versa. To exercise one's Christian freedom to consume alcoholic beverages in a youth club, a Sunday School or on the mission field would be recklessly irresponsible, but to fail to do so in, say, the senior common room at the University of Melbourne might well be tantamount to a denial of the faith. Paul saw this very plainly when Peter tailored his Christian conduct to suit the Judaisers at Antioch and squarely confronted him with the issue (Galatians 2:11ff). Peter had the grace to see his mistake.

For all of us to adopt the same stance as if we all always faced the same situation sets up false barriers, gives us a ghetto or monastic mentality and stymies our efforts to evangelise across the cultural, intellectual and racial board. In sharp contrast Paul would teach us to be much more sensitive and adaptable to our situation in accordance with the law of Christ (which precludes "situation ethics") to avoid giving offence to anyone

(1 Corinthians 10:32). That trundling the TA barrow is highly offensive to many is a matter of common experience. But Paul is anxious, like Jesus before him, to ensure we act as free people meeting as far as possible everyone on his or her own ground (1 Corinthians 9:19-23). The ascetic or wowser image that Paul so vehemently opposed is something we need to shed as quickly as possible (see Colossians 2:16-23). It is fundamentally anti-Christian. Its results are at best negative (I personally discovered to my chagrin that I impressed no one in my TA days) and frequently pernicious as both history and experience teach us. The truth is that we need strong people the nature of whose life and witness makes it proper, even expedient, for them to drink in moderation and equally strong people who out of personal conviction and the nature of their circumstances abstain totally. And between both groups there should be mutual respect and a realisation that they can each act as a support and a foil to the other, thereby preventing each other from being disqualified by overreaction (1 Corinthians 9:24-27, cf Colossians 2:18).

Thirdly, Mr White offers the quite gratuitous conjecture entirely at odds with the evidence that we don't know enough about Paul to use him to support moderate drinking, yet nonetheless assumes that he would be opposed to it today. This shows an astonishing lack of perception on his part for 1 Corinthians 7-10, Romans 14, Colossians 2 and Galatians 1-6, not to mention Acts 15, set out the basic principles of his position very plainly. Four points need to be made.

• The implication is that the problem is new. But this reflects ignorance of history. An Irish Catholic priest interviewed recently in connection with the Bishop Casey affair rightly asserted that Punch (alcohol) and Judy (sex) have always been problems in the church. But we can go back much further, to the dawn of history and the world's oldest profession (e.g. Genesis 9:21-24, 38:1f) and the later prophetic denunciation of drunkenness (see Isaiah 5:11, 22; 22:13; 28:1, 7, 8; 56:12 and note Proverbs 23:29-35; 31:4-7). Yet nowhere even under the law was there either a prohibition against or a call to abstain from the drinking of wine. (The Nazirites and the Rechabites were exceptions. There was a special minority calling.) Considering that Israel was the vineyard of the Lord (Isaiah 5) and awash with wine, this is hardly surprising (see 2 Chronicles 2:10, 15; Nehemiah 5:11, 18; 10:37, 39; 13:5, 12; Jeremiah 40:10, 12). The same holds true for those who are branches of the true vine (John 15), for it is he who miraculously turns water into wine to glorify God (John 2:1-11). Tragically, those who would bind their fellow believers in general to TA try to perform that miracle in reverse and turn wine into water (or orange juice). Hence Geoff Alves' vexation "AC" 23 May.) In OT times God did this to punish his disobedient people (Deuteronomy 28:39; Isaiah 16:10; 24:9). But when modern men do it they prove themselves false prophets for they lead the people astray (Deuteronomy 13:1-5) destroying their liberty in Christ (Galatians 3:1-5).

• The idea that Paul would now support TA undermines his apostolic authority, which is precisely what the Judaisers in Corinth attempted to do.

We need to recognise that if Paul were to change his tack today he would be hoist on his own petard. He would stand self-condemned, accursed of God for preaching a different gospel from the one he received by revelation (Galatians 1:6-10).

Comment

• It ought to strike readers as singularly odd that the Council of Jerusalem (Acts 15), surrounded as it was by a sea of paganism with its appallingly low moral standards, omitted to recommend TA. If Mr White is right, its failure to do so is absolutely inexplicable. But the fact that it didn't points unerringly to the conclusion that the early church saw no value in it, indeed, perceived it as inherently opposed to the gospel (Colossians 2:16-23). That surely is why the ban on meat offered to idols must be seen as a matter of expedience to be later withdrawn (1 Corinthians 8). The truth is that TA is a pagan, and not even a Jewish solution to an age-old problem. (While paganism had nothing else to offer, we have the gospel.) It achieves only moderate success when set in a legalistic framework appropriate to the immature (Galatians 3:23). So how can it possibly be true that a solution that was rejected by the church 2000 years ago will be effective today when, for all our shortcomings, we are much more civilised, educated and sophisticated, and even the general public is showing concern about abuse?

• Paul makes it quite plain in 1 Corinthians 10:27ff that he would eat and drink whatever was set before him provided that his host raised no scruples. (Note the fact that Luke 17:36 is preceded by verses 33-35!)

At this point it needs to be stressed that in order to make his case Mr White employs extraordinarily meagre but highly selective reference to the Bible on the one hand and restricts his subject matter on the other. With regard to the latter, why aim his barbs solely at alcohol? Why not at the demon sex, TV, films, cars, guns, knives, practically everything that is capable of use and abuse? But if his logic fails here, he nonetheless repeats the tired old argument that use leads inexorably to abuse in the area of drink. Similar logic employed elsewhere reveals the absurdity of this. For example, on his thesis legitimates sex in marriage should lead to adultery through pro-

miscuity to rape, homosexuality and deviant sex. The fact is that in the vast majority of cases this does not happen. But the danger that confronts us in modern society arguably stems in part not from the church's failure to observe TA but to preach the full gospel.

TA that is not based on personal conviction but is the result of pressure brought to bear on us by our fellow believers gravitates remorselessly into hypocrisy. On the private level it produces now secrecy and subterfuge, now crises of conscience and/or rebellious frustration. Clearly the only acceptable form of TA is that which arises from personal conviction and vocation. Uncommitted soldiers are worse than useless as the history of warfare makes plain.

In denying that wine is "a gift of God's creation ... [to] be accepted and enjoyed with thanksgiving" Mr White betrays the fact that he is a modern Manichee. Manicheism, like Gnostic dualism, was an ancient heresy that separated the Creator from his creation and Christ from his incarnation by teaching that matter was essentially evil. It also disastrously influenced Augustine of Hippo, convincing him that sex was sinful. But how one avoids the plain implication of texts like Genesis 27:28; Deuteronomy 33:28; 7:13; Proverbs 9:2, 5; Psalm 104:15 and especially 1 Corinthians 10:25-33; Romans 14:6b and 1 Timothy 4:1-5 etc. is beyond my powers to fathom. But worse, its rejection impugns God himself and implicitly accuses him of sin for bringing into being not only grapes but women, racehorses and a host of other potential sources of temptation. It is at this point that Mr White's argument reaches its nadir. It is manifestly false. Finally it remains to say that the article under review is fundamentally flawed, first, in its conception, for whenever an attempt is made to foist TA on one's fellow believers there are unavoidable legalistic overtones. Secondly, proof of this is brought out by the fact that it is

glaringly self-contradictory. For if wine and wine drinking are inherently evil, as Mr White maintains, then they inevitably constitute a forbidden tree (cf Genesis 3:1-6). This being so TA is absolutely mandatory, uncompromisingly compulsory. How then can "voluntary" and "recommends" be key words? Since when did the voice of God inform us that we are free to partake of evil? Unintentionally, I am sure, Mr White is speaking with a forked tongue: he is basically at odds with himself, guilty of doublethink, of trying to mix the oil of the gospel with the water of the law. On examination his overt tolerance proves to be covert coercion.

The self-contradictory and manifestly dissonant note that reverberates throughout Mr White's article can be made still plainer. For Paul clearly deplored the factionalism and party-strife evident among the superspiritual Corinthians. Yet even when some of them got drunk in church, far from fomenting division by issuing a censorious and judgemental prohibition or by thumping the teetotalitarian (sic!) tub, he simply remonstrated with them over their unchristian conduct (1 Corinthians 11:17-22). (This latter would of course have led to excommunication had it not been corrected.) In contrast Mr White, for all his proclaimed concern with abuse, in rescuing from oblivion Conference motions that have been conclusively demonstrated to be divisive, is unceremoniously if paradoxically lumped with the licentious whom he claims to oppose (Galatians 5:19-21). Does he not realise that the sins of the flesh and those of the spirit are in bed together? Again, all this shows that for Paul TA was not a viable solution. Far from being recommendable and voluntary it causes dissension, party-spirit, envy! Always has, always will.

The great merit of Mr White's article is that it highlights beyond cavil that the two sides are permanently at loggerheads, locked in mortal combat

in fact. Thus the logic of the situation is relentless. For here, on the one side, Mr White and his ilk skulk in the camp of the Judaisers insisting that we, the so-called devil's advocates, be circumcised (i.e. become members of the falsely named temperance societies) in order to be saved (Acts 15:1,5). There, on the other side, are those who refuse to be thus mutilated (cf Galatians 5:12) but are consequently forced to suffer abuse outside the camp (cf Hebrews 13:12) maligned as Satan's minions.

In reality, however, in calling down the fire of judgement from heaven on those who disagree with him, it is Mr White himself who is blackened by the flames (Luke 9:54 f).

As for me, far from voting with the Devil, I have sought to defend the glorious gospel of grace and freedom in Christ (Galatians 5:1, etc.) compared with which wowerism is rubbish (Philippians 3:8).

• Ken Stothard is the minister at the Essendon, Vic, church.

Additional note: I would solemnly urge all readers to consider TA as a personal option. No-one can make up your mind for you for no-one else in the whole world is precisely in your situation. Whether you decide for or against, bear in mind that the Christian sails in dangerous waters between the Scylla of licentiousness and the Charybdis of legalism. If you decide in favour of moderate and/or social drinking, read Mr White, the prophets and Paul on the risks involved. If you opt for TA, beware of the fact that the slightest hint of compulsion distorts a beautiful image, for the NT and church history teach that legalism, coupled with spiritual pride, has always been the greatest scourge of true believers and the gospel of grace. Compulsory TA wears the mask of a persecutor.

Remember also that before your own master you stand or fall (Romans 14:4), so be fully convinced in your own mind (Romans 14:5b).

A Church ABC

Dubbo is a large city of over 35,000 residents in the central west of New South Wales. It is the main service and distribution area for a large farming area, mainly sheep and grain.

The Church of Christ is relatively new. It was started half a dozen years ago when Graeme Sonsee travelled from Orange to meet with a few families who were meeting in homes. The fellowship has grown, and over 60 meet weekly in the Seventh Day Adventist hall at the two services: 9.30 am and 7 pm. The church has now purchased 22 acres outside the town. It had been impossible to buy land close to the centre, but the property is in a new area that will be developed. Dubbo is still growing. By the year 2000 an extra 10-15,000 people will be living in the area, and the church is well placed for this. The members have all sorts of ideas for the use of their property in the future.

The Dubbo church has been successful in attracting to its

membership new people, people who have not been in attendance in other churches. They have also attracted many young people. Of course, in common with most country areas they lose a lot of these young people when they move away for work or study, but the church has been encouraged



Focus on Dubbo

by reports of what their young people are now doing for the Lord elsewhere. Transfers of people in, for example, the public sector also mean a loss of members, but lately the church has been encouraged by new young families joining the church. Three baptisms recently have also been encouraging.

Although restricted by not having their own buildings, the Dubbo church nevertheless manages to run Bible studies and youth groups. The younger youth meet at the SDA hall on

Sunday afternoons, and the older youth meet in homes on Friday evenings. Recently a band has been formed providing the music for the evening service, of benefit to the worship and the young people. 90% of the membership is involved in a cell groups, each group of about three families meeting in

homes once a month for prayer, and often a meal. These groups also serve as support structures for newcomers and to support those who need help in these hard times with the recession and drought.

The church also has a strong social side. Activities are held such as after-church fellowship meals—of particular value to people from out of town on farms.

The minister at Dubbo is Jeff Hutchison. Jeff had been working in Wollongong, NSW, with the Anglican Home Mission

Society, especially amongst the unemployed and with single parents. People were being won to Christ and many became involved with the Church of Christ in Wollongong, which eventually took over the care side of the program using volunteers. Jeff commenced studies with Carlingford and moved to Dubbo to work for Rowntrees. Then Jeff had an accident that left him a quadriplegic and he was unable to work or complete his studies. While re-

covering Graeme Sonsee asked him to pastor the church on a part-time basis. The ministry is a team effort with Jeff and his wife Kathy. The Hutchisons have two teenage daughters and one married son.

The future for the Dubbo church is exciting and encouraging as new people continue to join the church. Most of these are young people or a little older, people who are new Christians and not from other churches. It can be seen that God has a purpose for the Church of Christ in Dubbo.

Growing Spiritually

Get Out of the Church and Be the Church!

Ian Richer

Isaw virgin land where once cattle grazed yield to the power of a dozer blade. I saw a seam of coal exposed. I saw a mighty and spectacular blast and the whole earth shook. The seam of coal was shattered and loosened and a dragline accepted its spoil, 150 t in each scoop, 170 t truckloads to the bin. Conveyor belts, sifting, grading, shifting, washing for the domestic and overseas markets. So many years to form the seam of coal but so little time to produce products of far greater value than the coal in the ground—power, steel, heat—worldwide. I saw the soil returned to the hole. People

with scientific skills have returned the land to high-producing paddocks where cattle graze and crops of high quality are gracing the countryside again.

And God said, "Go forth and produce!"

The faith of humanity took centuries to develop. The Old Testament is the record of humanity's worship, faith and development—a rich resource waiting to produce. Then the power of humanity's injustice to its own kind reached a peak and its achievement was marked by three crosses and a

grave!

An Almighty blast! The whole place shook. And the Holy Spirit loosened the tongues of people "to go to the whole world and preach the gospel". "Produce! Produce!" says the Lord! 3,000 men followed God that day! The faith of the Old Testament is of such great value that when the Holy Spirit takes the raw material of "people of faith", the value of products escalates beyond belief. The hole left in humanity's search for truth and life is filled with the love of God. We celebrate life in all its beauty—

that life that was blasted and shattered has become a product of God's creative power and the effects of that new life is felt worldwide!

Get out of the church and be the church!

As all in Adam died, so all in Christ shall live!

Blast me Lord! Shatter me Lord! Shift me Lord to the places in the world where my life in Christ will produce products of faith beyond belief! Come, Holy Spirit! Come!

The faith of today will be the church of tomorrow!

• Ian Richer is an ITIM industrial chaplain in NSW.

Baptisms

•Christine McNiven, Jodie Hoath, Harlaxton, Toowoomba, Qld
•Maude King, Wesley Davidson, Bill Sculz, Grote St, Adelaide, SA
•Stewart Taffe, Elisa Shaw, Troy

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Church of Christ North Balwyn

is seeking expressions of interest from ministers

with a desire to lead our church into the 20th century, in accord with the Lord's purpose and plan, and our community's needs.

You may register your interest by phoning (03) 859 9692 or (03) 859 5870 (AH) following which an appointment for initial discussion will be negotiated.

The church embodies its principal desire in its motto:

"Being There for Others"

Platt, Janet Miller, Andrea Harris, Melissa Knight, Rod Giles, Ben Jones, Vanessa Knight, Jane Robinson, Maree Watkins, Vanessa Cowell, Vicki Tucker, Andrew Chappell, Dawson St, Ballarat, Vic •Dearne Howard, Manifold Heights, Vic •Andrew Whiteley, Leonie Clydesdale, Berwick, Vic •Alicia Hughes, Mount Clear, Vic

Marriages

•Sonya Lowe to Gilberto Vargas, Leanne Kajewski to Richard Case, Harlaxton, Toowoomba, Qld
•Dianne Cooksley to Phillip Adams, Greensborough, Vic •Bronwyn Sobey to Stephen Barwick, York St, Ballarat, Vic •Andrea Innes to Daryl Albert, Warrnambool, Vic •Rochelle Jensz to Peter Shattock, Boronia, Vic •Sandra McCaffrey to Steve Milligan, Manning Valley, NSW •Fiona Hill to David Elliott, Thornleigh, NSW

Deaths

•Fred Gowland, Harlaxton, Toowoomba, Qld •Ted ("Ned") Martin, Bayswater, Vic •Mrs Clowes, Mrs Biziky, Nancy Gatsing, Wilbur Mathieson, Mrs Hill, Glen Cook, Warrnambool, Vic •Martin Maiden, Manning Valley, NSW •Benjamin Perry, Clive Kelly, Carnarvon, WA •June West, Thornleigh, NSW •Ian Collins, Manifold Heights, Vic •Mrs Edna Wilson, Mount Clear, Vic

Obituaries are limited to 100 words

Dyson, Keenie

(27.5.92) Keenie Dyson was born, baptised, and married in Williamstown. For brief periods of her life she lived in Broadmeadows, Carnegie and Wangaratta. The last four years of her life she enjoyed living at Essendon and appreciated the warmth and friendship of the Essendon church. Keenie and George (dec.) had six children, Lorraine, Graeme, Douglas, Ronald, Lennard and Malcolm. Throughout her life Keenie was involved in Women's Fellowship, in Sunday School, as a deacon, plus contributed much to the church through her gift in crafts. Keenie was a good organiser, a good cook, a good worker, an encourager and enjoyed a good laugh. The service was held at the Williamstown church and the Essendon folk provided a beautiful arrangement of flowers to express their appreciation.

—Cheryl Johnson

West, June Kathleen

(24.6.92) Born in East Fremantle, WA, 10.7.41. As a teenager June (nee Whitmore) committed her life to Christ at Applecross, WA, and in 1963 was married to John West. As well as Perth they lived for some years in Dowerin, WA, in Melbourne, where they were heavily involved in the Glen Waverley church, and for the last eight years in Sydney. June was a supportive, loyal and caring friend to all and in the work at Thornleigh she was a faithful and tireless worker, more recently serving as church secretary. Notwithstanding a number of physical burdens, including severe asthma for most of life, June faithfully and inconspicuously served her Lord in practical ways wherever the family worshipped. June endeared herself to many with her

matter-of-fact honesty and openness before the Lord. Known by some as the "cup of tea" evangelist, her faith was genuine, unpretentious yet powerful. Her sudden passing is an inestimable loss to her many, many friends. She was greatly loved. The Thornleigh church was filled to capacity as we shared in a thanksgiving service and our love and sympathy is expressed to her devoted husband, John, and to her family, Robyn, Colin and Lachlan, Graeme and Kirsty, Sharon and Matt and grandson Lachlan.

—Franklyn Elliott

Wieland, Alan Harold

(10.5.92) Alan was the last of the foundation members of The Patch, Vic, church. A former member at Ringwood, he was actively involved in almost every area of the church's life right up until his death. In some ways a difficult and pedantic person with very strong opinions, he is most strongly remembered for his genuine concern and integrity. His compassionate care for others will be missed, particularly by the residents of Tangeil, for whom he was a special "shepherd".

Werribee Church of Christ 20th Birthday Celebrations

Saturday, 25 July

Square Dance

6.30 pm for 7 pm

Sunday, 26 July

Morning worship, 10 am

Followed by morning tea and lunch

Speaker: Alan Niven

Contact Elwyn Blight

church office (03) 741 6051

home (03) 749 3791



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Worship & Communion Services

7.00 p.m.

Gospel Celebration

Wednesday

1.15-1.45 p.m.

Lunchtime Service

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Church News

NSW

MANNING VALLEY (Barry Rice, Ross Norling, Guy Cooper) Fifth anniversary held with Gordon Moyes. Input by Gordon to leaders very helpful ... Men's camp held with Keith Farmer as speaker ... Church has leased third shop in Bushland Fair Shopping Centre for expanding ministry ... Guy conducting ISCF at Taree & Chatham high schools. Also chaplain to Taree, Chatham & Christian community high schools ... Several camps planned for July holidays.

THORNLEIGH (Franklyn Elliott, Stuart West) The church was saddened to learn of the sudden passing of June West on 24 June but rejoice that she is now with her Lord. June was a tireless worker in the church, especially as church secretary & editor of the weekly church paper. She was held in such high esteem that on 29 June three memorial services were held, at Thornleigh, Glen Waverley, Vic, & Applecross, WA.

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HARLAXTON, TOOWOOMBA (Daryl Thorpe) Dobson film series "Turn Your Heart toward Home" series was well received ... 70th church anniversary speaker Rod Tippet, Principal KCC ... Daryl Thorpe visited PNG to share at conference & with missionaries ... Vacation Bible School held during the school holidays.

ALBION A general meeting of the church voted in favour of amalgamation with Kedron church. An interim board of officers has been formed with Len Brooks & Allan Dunn as co-chairman ... CWF stall returned \$474 for Living Links (Jan & Fay Christensen & Kathy Bird) ... Clayfield Uniting Church joined with Albion church for a baptismal service conducted by Rev Ron Holt. **BURLEIGH HEADS** (Noel Newton) 10 welcomed into fellowship ... Principal Adelaide School of Ministry, Dean Wells, & four students visited. Dean speaker morning service & our student Peter Connell evening speaker ... Noel Newton, leader of Turkey-Israel tour, showed slides ... Substantial increase Sunday attendances & offerings past two months ... Church grateful interim ministry Harry Davies pending arrival Noel Newton ... Church fully carpeted & renovated, kitchen tiled ... CWF street stall netted \$800.

SA

SALISBURY EAST (Will Philp) Salisbury East church welcomes their new minister Will Philp, who was inducted on 12 June by Jim Keatch. The presence of Will & his wife Melva is much appreciated, especially after six months without regular pastoral care. We trust that under their leadership the church will continue to grow as in the past. **GROTE ST, ADELAIDE** (I. Adams) Three baptisms in recent months ... Annual service & fellowship tea for Churches of Christ Basketball Association on 14 June with testimonies from Wes Davidson (new member) & 36ers chaplain Scott Davies ... "Open Door" ministry held Wednesdays, now Fridays also. Chapel available for prayer & counsellors assist those in need. Meals, food parcels & clothing are provided free ... Lunchtime Bible studies held Wednesdays.

Tas

NUBEENA (C.G. Henderson) Mother's Day services held. Flowers presented by Sunday School ... Sunday School Fun Day 23 May enjoyed ... Visit from Gideons by

Conrad Hodgman & Athol Holton enjoyable ... Several members have been overseas on holidays ... Cake stall held monthly towards replacement fund ... Prayer of blessing for baby Dale Batchelor 5 July ... Glenyce Batchelor (Dale's mother) reaffirmed her faith ... 40 Hour Famine held. Several took part.

LAUNCESTON (R. Foster, C. Spaulding, D. Tobler) Children's Church commenced on 28 June ... Young people led service on 5 July following tea in hall hosting YP from Devonport ... First free bus run to services on 5 July ... Gwen McLennan & Johanna McMaster home from hospital ... Trevor Orr leaves for five-month Diploma of Travel International course in Melbourne.

HUON (Steve Warwick, Kathy Rochester) Dover Pentecost service coincided with 115th anniversary church building, celebrated by cake ... Geeveston "Talent Fund" raised \$1,700 for building maintenance ... Geeveston members involved in Christian Option program in high school ... Huonville hosting regional youth training day with Graeme Hush (Hobart City) & Bruce Mullan (Youth Consultant, UCA). New "youth" group started for people in 40s & 50s ... Youth worker Ani Wierenga involved with new youth groups in Huonville & Cygnet ... Churches combined in district for Midwinter feast with shared entertainment.

Vic

GREENSBOROUGH (G. Warren) Church elections held for elders, secretary & treasurer. All nominees elected ... Under restructured church management, deacons are elected separately to committees covering the church functions ... Contracts for Gracevale community signed. Work commencing ... New Bible study series commenced ... Platform extensions completed in time for wedding of Dianne Cooksley & Phillip Adams ... Max Grant recently preached in George's absence on presidential duties.

BAYSWATER (R.C. Combridge) Sunday School gave musical "It's Cool in the Furnace" for anniversary. Great performance with a challenge to non-Christians present ... Passing of long-time member Ned Martin saddened church ... Sermon series "Walking with Jesus" currently challenging church to spiritual growth ... Church rallied after serious fire destroyed much of the Davis' home. God's after-provision acknowledged gratefully.

DAWSON ST, BALLARAT

(Stephen Templeton, Tracey Wickham, Rodney Ratcliffe) Mother's Day service led by Sunday School included special items ... Sunday buildings in process of renovations to accommodate growing numbers ... Rodney Moyle from WA welcomed into church fellowship (working with MAF Air) ... "Family Fun Night" featured auction of mystery parcels. Auctioneer Jim Cunningham. Proceeds \$580 for missionaries Papua New Guinea ... 21 June 330 attended successful Winter Coffee Cabaret at Holloake Park.

YORK ST, BALLARAT (Jim Cunningham, Michael Janssen) Induction of Michael Janssen to York St ministry team ... Seminar conducted by Wes Beavis focusing on worship ... "Meaning of Life" series conducted during evening services ... Steve Grace concert with 530 in attendance ... Endless Praise concert ... Dramatic presentation entitled "Spotlight on Peter" performed by Alan Bailey ... Other guest artists performing during evening services included Rhonda Richter & the Holmes family.

WARRNAMBOOL (Peter Broadbent) After weeks of hard work chapel was beautifully renovated ready for rededication service 31 May. Many attended weekend activities including concert, service & lunch ... Evening family services fortnightly with alternate services at Neighbourhood House in Commission area ... Minister & family building own house. Board praying about future of manse ... Many funerals recently, including those of some older much-loved members.

BORONIA (Keith Milne, Andrew Henley) Opening rebuilt halls 19 July ... 100 plus involved Kenneth Callahan principles studies ... 35 young people took part Youth Conference Celebration ... Church represented on Conference committees ... World Vision 40 Hour Famine well supported ... Ministers attended annual Minister's Refresher ... A number of new people sharing in worship ... Recent speakers Gail McDonald (USA), Jack McCormack (CCTC), Don Milne (Coburg), Ted Jensen (Amnesty International). **ORMOND** (Glen Stibbe, Sean Bainbridge) Retreat, planning for future, held ... CWF purchased Xerox photocopier ... Leisegan overhead projector now operational ... Church picnic great day ... Colin Heath upgraded microphone system ... Bethany Close units fully occupied ... Church had participants in 40 Hour Famine ... Job Search workshops commenced 14 July ... David Mansell guest speaker

Church News

67th anniversary. Our singing group "Shades of Soul" sang. Luncheon followed ... Annual meeting 12 July.

NORTHCOTE (F.B. Alcorn) 5 July W.W. Saunders, former minister, speaker at worship. 3 pm service of celebration to mark 60th anniversary of conversion of late Sir Douglas Nicholls held and representatives from government, Council, family & Aborigines from across Victoria present ... Local CoFC ministers met for lunch & meeting ... F.B. Alcorn's ministry extended by three years ... Still plenty of sickness among members ... Regular walking group formed.

MITCHAM (Ron Chapman, Jim Wright) Family camp at Fraser National Park Queen's Birthday weekend ... Church representatives at ecumenical celebration at Greek Orthodox Church during Week of Prayer for Christian Unity ... Working bee on property well attended ... Encouraging reports presented at Church Life celebration followed by fellowship luncheon. Activities for outreach include prayer breakfasts, playgroups, youth activities, cell groups ... Dawn Rolls, Estelle Hurren, Nell Pfeifer recovering from surgery.

MANIFOLD HEIGHTS (Greg Illingworth) Sadness at passing of Ian Collins ... Mother's Day am service with ladies leading. Preacher Kay Kirby ... Seminar for men "The Role of a Christian Man" by Alan Bailey ... Guest speakers have been Gideons, Scott Hesler, L. Barlow, Jim Bosma (European Christian Mission), R. Broheir (YFC) ... June weekend family camp Baanya Biami, Anakie, very good with many renewals ... Sunday School chocolate drive raised \$300.

BERWICK (Tim Hanna, Andrew Ball) Marriage, family & the home series morning services ... 170 senior citizens entertained at musical afternoon ... Competition to name kids newspaper ... Scott White guest evening service ... Longriders Christian Motorcycle Club shared their ministry ... Sunday School & members participated in 40 Hour Famine ... Understanding Genesis video series to run for 10 weeks ... Lyn Pentland returns from overseas teaching, witnessing for Christ in Russia.

MOUNT CLEAR (Dale White) Church saddened at death of Edna Wilson, longest-standing member ... Easter offering \$304 for COCOA ... Attendances at both services June best ever—nearly 200! ... Young people participated in youth service. 106 attended & \$196 raised for Lighthouse Ministries, Ballarat ... Baby boom, with eight new babies

so far 1992 ... Early morning prayer group commenced ... Successful "Christianity Explained" course completed with 13 enquirers.

WA

WEMBLEY DOWNS (Eira & John Clapp) "Peanuts" girl's club & congregation members raised \$333 in Walk against Want ... Tenebrae service held Maundy Thursday ... Toy library held successful Easter activities morning for families ... Bethel class continues ... Robyn Somerville home from overseas travels (April) ... Guest speakers in May-June in-

cluded Keith Wilson (Health Minister), Peter Clayton (Kingsley church), Harvey Miller (CCTC) & Wes Hartley ... Pot luck lunch enjoyed in June.

GERALDTON (Rohan Burcham) Grant & Emma Murray on deputation from New Tribes Mission. Visit by NTM choir & speaker from Sydney ... Owen Cahill home after completing training with Fusion, Melbourne, prior to possible appointment Canberra ... Rohan Burcham attended Minister's Retreat then annual leave with Rona & family ... George Edland retired as manager SU bookshop ... Com-

bined service to mark Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. Speaker Deane Metheringham from SA.

CARNARVON (D. Bone) Women's Auxiliary prayer & ministry team held two meetings ... Congregation shocked when stone shattered chapel window during gospel service. Men gave chase & one taken into custody. Several windows broken over past two years but not so blatantly ... John Doubikin elected elder ... Ken & Shirley Birch looking into commencing Sunday School at local Aboriginal village. Elders there in favour. They agreed to clean & repair hall in readiness.

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Mission Minded

Returned Missionaries: What Are They Good for?

Returned missionaries should be considered for the following:

Promotion of Mission Work

This would include speaking, giving testimonies, showing slides, presenting videos at churches, youth groups, home groups and other venues to keep the vision of Christ's mission to the world before our people. We should do all we can to encourage churches to give the opportunity for this to happen. It is also essential that our theological colleges really invite and welcome missionaries; sometimes returned missionaries have found that colleges do not seem to be interested in their contribution.

Policy-making

Returned missionaries ought to be invited to join the Overseas Mission Board, State Committees, or sub-committees where appropriate. They will bring to these committees a great amount of experience; especially in relation to the field where they have worked.

Support and Encouragement of Missionaries

There are three stages requiring different styles of support. The outgoing missionary (and family) will need advice about what to take and adjustment to a new environment will need to be discussed. Once there, letters and on-field support is needed. Re-entry has its own problems and needs sympathetic and maybe long-term support.

Return Visits to the Field

This may be with a work party, for a holiday or part of a formal visit from the OMB. These visits will be of great value in keeping ties with established leadership groups, but should be careful to avoid rekindling old arguments or giving preference to previous close friends.

A Recruitment Source

Many former missionaries have returned home for health or family reasons. As families grow up, these experienced workers, sometimes still with relevant language skills, may be considered again for overseas appointment.

The OMB should not hesitate to approach suitable leaders directly, nor should our returned missionaries be ignored when it comes to leadership appointments in home churches (even if initially they might not have all the academic qualifications) as elders, pastors and leadership in local missionary communities.

Conclusion

Do not forget missionary wives—they have been active on the field and may be neglected at home. Do not forget the children—some would need to be encouraged in leadership as they were overseas, others will need a good deal of long-term support. Allow time before offering positions of leadership at home. There will need to be a time of healing and a time for the missionary to be re-established. Do not pressurise.

—Barry Jenkins

The Last Word

The Christian who has the smile of God needs no status symbols.

—Leonard Ravenhill

Inferiority complex: Any teenagers who feel their parents are smarter than they are.

Definition of a doctor: Someone who tells you if you don't cut something out, he will.

Show-offs: Every time they open their mouths, they put their feats in.

The old bus chugged through the countryside at a pretty slow pace. A passenger, obviously in a hurry, said to the driver, "Can't you go any faster?" "I can," answered the driver, "but I'm not allowed to leave the bus!"

A: Could you lend me five...

B: No...

A: ...minutes?

B: ...trouble at all.

Employer: Do you want to work for me?

Prospective Employee: What'll you pay?

Employer: I'll pay you what you're worth.

Prospective Employee: Blow working for that!

Service station attendant: What do you want a can of petrol for?

Student: The school's on fire.

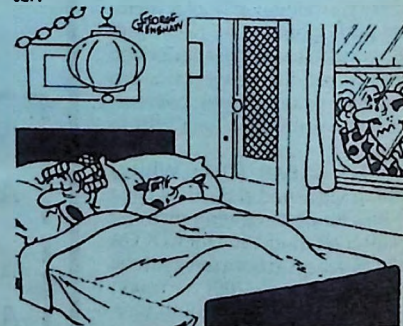
Guest artist: They tell me you love music.

Member of the congregation: Yes, I do. But never mind—keep playing.

Teacher: I can hardly read your writing. You must learn to write more clearly.

Student: What's the use? If I wrote any better, you'd complain about my spelling.

At the youth camp the strict leader saw two campers carrying a large saucepan. "Get me a spoon, I want to taste that, the leader ordered. The campers started to object, but all they got was, "Do as I tell you!" They brought a spoon and the leader took a large mouthful. Spluttering angrily, the leader yelled, "You don't call that soup do you?" "Oh no," came the reply. "That's dishwasher!"



Better open the side door, dear.
I think Spot wants to come in.



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