

National Journal
of Churches of
Christ in Australia

Vol. 95 • No. 7

9 May 1992

Registered by Australia Post
Publication No. VAR 0761

THE AUSTRALIAN CHRISTIAN



From Pipes to Pews

Hobart moves into
its new church
—story page 3

WELCOME TO



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CHURCH OF CHRIST**

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Member
publication of the
Australasian
Religious Press
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"The Australian Christian" is published
by the Board of Management of the
Australian Christian, a Department of
the National Conference of
Churches of Christ in Australia.

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

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

This publication is indexed in the
Australasian Religion Index
ISSN 0004-8852

Advertising Rates

Displayed: \$5 per column
centimetre

Classifieds: \$12 for the first 25 words
and 20c for each additional word

Guest Editorial

To Be Like Jesus

Allan Blyth

Our Ultimate Purpose

I recall our studies in church history: "The divine became human that the human might become divine"—a maxim that I understand rests easily in Eastern Christian tradition, though perhaps not so easily in our own Western thought system. "Becoming divine" could conjure up thoughts of Christians as godlets (or little Gods), highly unacceptable to our monotheistic theology, yet we have no difficulty with the phrase "children of God".

I know as a child growing up I was often identified by family resemblances, e.g. "It's easy to see you're one of Ernie and Flo's children," visitors to our home would repeatedly observe. Likewise, the resemblance with my brother and sister were frequently noted.

I wonder how often the comment is made of us as members of the body of Christ: "It's plain to see you are one of Christ's children," or "Dear, you remind me of Jesus Christ, you're so alike!" For after all, the ultimate goal for every Christian is to be like Christ. (Romans 8:29)

(Thinking about this I realise there is little likelihood of such comment except from within the church, for few others have a personal knowledge of Jesus Christ.)

But what if we as Christians were to be so God-like, so Christ-like, true brothers and sisters to Christ, who was given up for us all so that we might be conformed to his likeness, that he indeed might be the firstborn of many brothers—what would be the implications of such godliness and Christlikeness?

Church Growth

In his community Christ was obviously a magnetic personality with great crowds following, keen to hear his word and witness the impact of his ministry.

Try to imagine the consequences for church growth today were every Christian Christ-like! How many church buildings



would be unroofed, not by cyclones, but (like the place where Jesus ministered in Capernaum (Mark 2:1-) by frustrated worshippers desperate to gain access to the ministry we have to offer, unable to enter by the door because of the press of followers standing outside.

Could this ever be? Certainly it was the case in Jesus' day and has been with numerous individuals and local fellowships around the world in every age since.

I remember witnessing that kind of enthusiasm for the gospel at a service in Moscow some years ago, where every seat was taken, where every space was occupied, where dozens listened through speakers in adjoining rooms, where Bibles and song books were shared, where tears flowed as powerful testimonies were given by young and old.

But, regretfully, this has not really been the case in any of the churches where I have served, which has led me now to adopt as a personal goal "to be like Jesus", hoping that as I become more like my Lord in both nature and purpose that I will reflect the Lord's glory as I am transformed into his likeness with ever-

increasing glory. (See 2 Corinthians 3:18.)

In the overwhelming flood of contemporary planning, growth principles, programming and activity it is very easy to lose consciousness of what is in fact our ultimate goal, that our lowly bodies might be transformed to be like his glorious body. (Philippians 3:21)

You, me, truly reflecting Christ in our community today? Imagine the consequences! Perhaps not even standing room!

• Allan Blyth has been actively involved in Christian churches since his baptism at the Wagga Wagga, NSW, church in 1967. With his wife Julie and teenagers Katherine, Mitchell and Benjamin, Allan is now in his second year of ministry at Howrah on Hobart's eastern shore, where the church is witnessing some encouraging conversions and growth.

From Pipes to Pews

Hobart church moves to new premises

Wayne Crawford, a member of the Hobart City church, wrote the following report for "The Mercury", of which he is a staff member.

At a time when church attendances have been in decline, one of Hobart's oldest city churches, the Church of Christ, found it had to build a new chapel to accommodate an increasing congregation.

The Australian National University found in a 1990 survey that less than 20% of Australians who considered themselves Christians attended church weekly, compared with 25% in the 1960s, yet the Hobart City church has, in the past three years, had a consistent growth in attendances of about 20% a year.

Jeff Weston, the church's senior minister, says that nationally it has been mainly the charismatic churches that have been growing, with most of the mainline congregations in decline. One of those exceptions has been the Hobart City Church of Christ, which on 29 March held a dedication service for its new, \$1 million Goulburn Street chapel complex.

The chapel—on the site of what was Hobart Plumbing Supplies—was built when the congregation outgrew the Collins Street chapel. The old chapel, National Trust listed and with an unusual high wooden ceiling, served the church for about 120 years, but the size of the congregation grew to the point that two services had to be held on Sunday mornings.

When Jeff Weston arrived in 1988 from Darwin the average Sunday morning attendance at the Collins St chapel was 106 in a building that could accommodate about 150.

As the congregation continued to grow to a total of more than 150 in the two morning services, the church looked for other premises.

"All the experts on church growth say that once a church gets to 80% full attendances begin to drop off," Jeff said.

Since last October, when the congregation moved in to the new complex, where the chapel will accommodate 400, the average Sunday morning attendance in a single service has grown to more than 170.

The church also has a Sunday evening service, intended mainly for young people, and has a special service for its congregation of about 30 Hmong people in their own language.

Jeff attributed the growth to "being prepared to adapt worship to where people are at—making services happy celebrations with contemporary images and without 'churchy' language."

He says that when a church clings to a style of worship with liturgy and "heavy hymns", prospective members tend to be discouraged from attending.

Statistics indicated that, typically, church members invited a non-member to accompany them to a church service only once in 10–15 years.

"So you have to make the most of it—if services are not warm and welcoming, visitors will not come back."

The guest speaker at the service of dedication was Barry McMurtrie, senior minister of the Wollongong, NSW, church, whose congregation has grown from fewer than 100 to more than 1,000 in 10 years, making it one of the fastest-growing churches in Australia.

The dedication of the new chapel was performed by National President Clive Ward with the Tasmanian President Greg Foot.

With the growth of the church, the congregation has appointed a second minister, Graeme Hush, as its minister to youth, as well as a music and arts director, Gordon Barr. Both Graeme and Gordon have a background in professional Christian music and have made recordings. Gordon still has an



• Senior minister Jeff Weston, music and arts director Gordon Barr, and youth director Graeme Hush

itinerant ministry in music, performing at conferences, conventions and other church functions, both in Tasmania and interstate.

The new complex includes not only the chapel, but also offices for the ministers, a library and resource centre with tapes and books, a meeting room for church and community groups and an area that eventually will be used as a drop-in centre and soup kitchen.

There is also a Christian Education annex used for the Discipleship Training Institute, at which more than 15 full-time and part-time students are studying theology.

Music plays an important role in the services, hence the new chapel's \$15,000 sound system and auditorium lighting.

The church, when still in Collins Street, was the first in Australia to use a system called "Telelink", which has also been installed at the new chapel, to enable families who cannot attend church to listen to services on the telephone.

Jeff said that, as the church grew, it was planned eventually to take over the Electrolux premises in Liverpool St—which forms part of the same building and is owned by the church—and turn it into an expanded drop-in centre.

The church has invested

about \$1 million in buying and renovating the premises. Jeff said about another \$500,000 worth of volunteer work had been done by church members.

Howard Higham, who sent this report to us, comments in his letter that there is an air of excitement at the church. The new building is fantastic and a source of amazement for those who remember it as a plumbing supply warehouse. It is receiving plenty of use during the week and there seem to be people coming and going all the time.

A "Feel Good about Your Church" seminar was held on the Saturday prior to the opening. This was conducted by Barry McMurtrie. A large contingent from the Launceston church came to the seminar, with many staying overnight for the dedication service.

1991 Index

Copies of the 1991 Index to *The Australian Christian* are now available and all subscribers who requested them in past years should have received their copy by now.

Other readers interested in receiving an index should contact the "AC" office at PO Box 101, Essendon North 3041, phone (03) 379 1219 or fax (03) 379 0015.

Partners in Mission

Spanish-speaking Baptist church at Dandenong



• Graeme Foon with Pastor Fernando Hernandez after the baptism of 18 people at Avra Vale Lake

Ours is a cosmopolitan society made up of people representing 163 nationalities who speak more than 100 different languages. Of the 17 million who make up our nation over 2 million prefer to use a language other than English at home or when involved in worship. Along with most Pentecostal and Charismatic churches, ethnic churches are growing and have the potential for ongoing growth. On the other hand, the majority of mainstream churches are generally in a state of numerical stagnation or decline. Ironically these stagnating and declining churches often have the land, buildings and/or financial resources most needed by the growing but financially insecure ethnic churches.

16 months ago the Dandenong, Vic, church was approached by a Spanish-speaking Baptist congregation for use of the new Church of Christ building in David Street. Since using our magnificent new building, the Baptist congregation, which is made up predominantly of families from Central and South America, has seen phenomenal growth. In the last 16 months 50 people have been baptised and another 20 are presently being prepared for baptism. Sunday afternoon worship attendance has

jumped from 90 to over 160. To allow for anticipated growth the Spanish-speaking congregation has offered to buy extra chairs for our 200-seat chapel. The Dandenong church has been greatly encouraged to see moderate growth in its own ranks, and to witness God's Spirit doing mighty things through the outreach and ministry of the Spanish-speaking congregation, led by their pastor, Fernando Hernandez.

As local churches, considering the most effective way to use our buildings and other resources for the extension of the Kingdom of God, let us not forget the needs of ethnic churches.

From a purely pragmatic point of view we all understand that most of the children growing up in ethnic churches will eventually settle in those Australian churches where they are made to feel welcome. Australian churches will eventually reap the harvest prepared, sown and nurtured by the ethnic churches. It therefore behoves us as Churches of Christ to do all we can to promote and support the mission and ministry of the many ethnic churches in our society.

This is one area where God is at work and he calls us to work with him.

—Graeme Foon

Church Reborn

Mitcham makes a new beginning

After 12 years of amalgamation with the Blackburn church (during which time both churches were known as the Nunawading Churches of Christ) Mitcham, Vic, people are now taking charge of their own affairs. A new constitution has been adopted, and at the inaugural service on 5 April at which 125 were present, the newly elected elders and deacons were inducted, eight new members received into fellowship and the young people presented with New Testaments to mark the occasion. This inaugural service expressed the commitment, excitement and expectancy of the people. Following the service photos were taken, morning tea was served in the hall, and a "re-birthday" cake, especially iced and decorated for the occasion, was shared. Ron Chapman and Jim Wright, who have been work-



• Joyce Williams, member for 58 years, cuts the re-birthday cake

ing together since the end of 1991, have been appointed to the ministry team for 1992, and the church hopes to appoint a full-time minister in 1993.



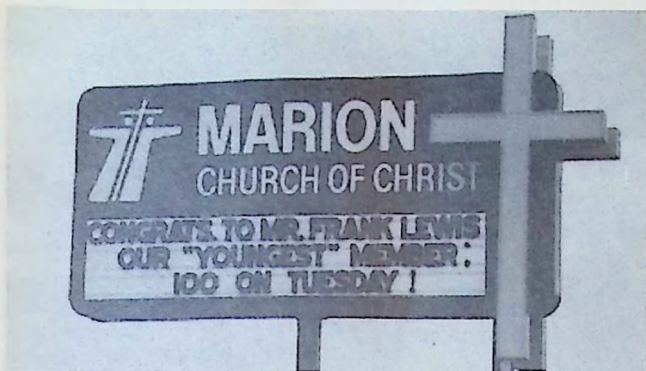
• The Mitcham people

100th Anniversary Church of Christ Fremantle

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People



• A rather large "birthday card" for Frank Lewis

Frank Lewis Turns 100!

Christian for 85 years

What better way to announce the 100th birthday of a much-loved church member than to put his name in lights for all to see! Thousands of motorists passing Marion's very large neon sign were advised of this special event.

Having someone in your congregation turn 100 doesn't really hit you until you realise that Frank was born in Melbourne on 7 April 1892 when Victoria was still a colony! He was 11 when the Wright Brothers soared briefly at Kittyhawk, he has seen Halley's Comet twice and has sung the National Anthem to six monarchs.



• Frank Lewis

Frank is a Galipoli veteran, who served his country with great distinction both there and in other parts of Europe. He made his commitment to Christ 85 years ago at the age of 15 and has served his Lord faithfully in Churches of Christ ever since. He was in membership at our Mile End church from 1914 to 1985 and during that time served in just about every leadership position that you can think of.

He and his wife, Mary, joined the Marion church in 1985 and since that time Frank has been a faithful member and an encourager, particularly of young people. He is in church every Sunday morning (and some Sunday nights) and is as sharp as a tack in every way.

We at Marion rejoice in having someone of Frank's age, experience and background, constantly enriching the life of our fellowship. Friends and relatives came from as far away as Devonport for the celebrations. —Marlene Messent

Southport Farewells Noel Newton

Long ministry appreciated

The Newton family were guests of honour at a concert held at the Southport, Qld, church on 29 February.

The concert was attended by over 600 people anxious to pay tribute to a couple who had pastored them during a ministry of 19 years.

Among the expressions during the evening was that their example had furnished much of the credibility to the Southport motto: "The Church That Cares".



• Noel and Trish Newton

Burleigh Heads Welcomes Noel Newton

First minister returns

On 3 May, the Burleigh Heads, Qld, church entered into a new era when Noel Newton was inducted into the church ministry by the Queensland Conference Secretary, John Godby. The service was followed by a dinner to welcome Noel with his wife Trish and their youngest son, Jaye.

The church had spent four months prayerfully preparing for this new ministry under the guidance of our elder, Pastor Harry Davies (retired), who has been conducting an interim ministry. Noel was instrumental in commencing the work of

the Lord in the primary school hall at Burleigh Heads in October 1975 with the assistance of several members of his congregation from the Southport church. For two years he faithfully ministered to the growing congregation each Sunday, as well as conducting the service in his own church, until it was possible to support the first full-time ministry. Now, after 17 years, he has returned to Burleigh Heads to conduct a full-time ministry in the growing church.

In 1982 the worship centre was built on land purchased at Burleigh West and in 1990 the first stage of extensions, the youth hall and Sunday school, was opened and the long-awaited baptistry installed in the worship centre. In recent weeks, the kitchen has been enlarged to accommodate the fellowship dinners undertaken by the CWF.

The leadership team, in conjunction with the church family, are now looking forward in faith to the time when our third stage of development will be necessary to accommodate the growing congregation under Noel's ministry. —Jack Elsey



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City-Country Fellowship

Women meet to share experiences

On the weekend of 28 February-1 March, representatives of Victorian churches, Wangaratta, Montrose and Mitcham CWF groups met for study and fellowship at Rita Roberts Lodge, Monbulk. The theme for the weekend was "Facing Challenges and Overcoming Obstacles", using Joshua 1:9 as a guide. Myra Claydon from Wangaratta was the study leader.

On the Saturday evening 16 ladies heard the experiences of May Searle and Eunice Reidy as they related events in their lives to the theme of camp.

On Sunday morning around the communion table each lady shared her particular challenge and obstacle at present. These were dedicated to the Lord, thus bringing a wonderful weekend of country and city CWF group participation to a close.

—Dorothy Quantrelle

Witness Walk

Palm Sunday in East Keilor

The East Keilor, Vic, church joined with local Uniting and Anglican churches in a Palm Sunday witness walk along busy Milleara Road, East Keilor. This is the second year in which the East Keilor church has participated in the Palm Sunday walk, which has created great community interest in the real message of Easter.

This year members of four congregations met for a short time of worship at St Mark's Uniting Church. One of the young people, dressed as Jesus and mounted on a donkey, then led the walk along Milleara Road to the Centreway Shopping Centre.

At the Centreway the assembled congregations shared in singing and heard Rev Peter Ralphs, Minister of St Mark's, speak on the Easter theme. After the service at the Centreway a light lunch was served at the East Keilor Church of Christ.

—Garnet Johnson

Blackburn Shop Celebrates 20 Years

Half a million thanks for the opportunity

Forty-four past and present helpers at the Blackburn Opportunity Shop met for afternoon tea at the Mitcham, Vic, church on 25 March. Some have been associated with the shop for the entire 20 years.

Begun by Eva and George Grainger at Railway Road in February 1972, and continued by May and Harold Smedley, the shop operated there for five years with a total takings of \$42,000.

The shop transferred to larger premises at Springfield Road in February 1977. The next 15 years brought \$460,000, a total of \$502,000 for the work of Vic-Tas Community Care Department.

Ron Mill, shops manager, presided and reminiscences, anecdotes, appreciation, congratulations and a birthday cake were part of the proceedings.

Trevor Giles, Community Care Department, brought appreciation and congratulations, with information on current plans.

Acknowledgement was made of the goodwill of the local community in donating goods, of the helpers who oversee specific sections of the shop's operation, of J. Graham and I. Steele, who co-ordinated the shop's work for many years, and of N. Pfeifer and M. Barnes, the present coordinators.

—Irma Steele



• I. Steele, M. Barnes and Nell Pfeifer with J. Graham (seated) at the op shop celebration



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Superannuation Guarantee

Provident Fund meets standards

Churches and conference committees, as employers, would have received recently from the Commissioner of Taxation "An Important Message for All Employers about the New Superannuation Guarantee".

Please note that the Churches of Christ Provident Fund is a vested and fully preserved fund and also meets the standards set out under the Occupational Superannuation Standards Act.

—Jim Ashley

Teaching Ministry

CCTC activities

In an emergency teamwork enables essentials to be dealt with. That's what happened during the absence of the CCTC Principal, Dr Keith Bowes, for eight weeks following his heart attack. Faculty and board members and volunteers accepted additional responsibilities so that the teaching ministry of the college could proceed. Keith Bowes resumed work on 28 April, beginning with about a 50% load.

Dimensions

During semester one, the two ministers in residence have been Cheryl Johnson (minister at Williamstown, Vic, and Singles Ministry Coordinator) and Don Smith (Vic-Tas DMED). They shared for two days each providing input both formally and informally and being available for personal discussions with students.

During semester two the ministers in residence will be drawn from a country church and from interstate. This is another invaluable link with the life of the churches.

Dr Joey Jeeter, Professor of Preaching at the Brite Divinity School of our churches in the US, visited for a week in March and gave stimulating input in worship, assembly and preaching classes.

Spiritual Retreat

The venue for the full-day spiritual retreat was deliberately programmed in the week preceding Easter and was held

at the ITIM Centre, La Verna. Reflection on gospel accounts, times of prayer and creative activities enabled students and faculty to soak in the crucial message of the cross and resurrection.

Students

For semester one, CCTC had 49 full-time students, 30 of whom are undertaking the Diploma in Ministry and Associate Diplomas (especially in Pastoral Care and Lay Ministry).

Another 74 are part-time students, 18 of whom are undertaking the Diploma in Lay Ministry or Associate Diplomas. Many of the others are undertaking single subjects at degree level because they see the value for their Christian life and service. Classes on four evenings and Saturday mornings make this possible.

Enrolment for mid-year intensives and semester two are being received.

Berwick Easter Drama

Moving portrayal of the crucifixion



• Geoff Healey, Roy Armitage, Len Davis, Mal Austin, Ron Brooker and Greg Waterhouse

An Easter drama was the feature of Berwick Regional, Vic, church's evening service on Palm Sunday. It was led by Mal Austin and Liz Smith. The drama/musical was performed by about 30 members of the congregation. The service commenced under the leadership of associate minister Andrew Ball and one of the church's music groups.

The first scene showed the disciples (in full costume) around the table in the Upper Room, which was well spotlighted in the church's new auditorium. A crowd of about 400 were in attendance.

Jesus was played by Mal Austin. As part of the familiar Easter story, Mal sang several solo numbers, including "Take My Body".

The second scene was in

Gethsemane, where Jesus prayed and was later arrested. Mal sang "Just an Ordinary Man" and Peter, Graeme Burgess, sang "Wind beneath My Wings" as Jesus was led away.

The third scene was the crucifixion. Stan Sheppard was dragged from the congregation to carry the cross. Mal Austin sang again with his arms held horizontal and his back to the congregation as the jeering crowd yelled out their abuse at him on the cross. He sang "Lonely" and Lyn Oliver sang "I Surrender" and "Goodbye, My Friend" as the soldiers Wayne, Jonathan and Steve Fletcher carried Mal out on their shoulders.

The whole service was very moving as it dramatically portrayed the crucifixion in full costume. This is now the second year that the church has put the drama on. The cast was—Jesus: Mal Austin, Peter: Graeme Burgess, John: Ron Brooker, James: Len Davis, Judas: Tim Burke. Other disciples were Alan Crowden, Ray Chapman, Geoff Healey, Roy Armitage, Greg Waterhouse, Les Reader, Rob Wilson and Robert Power.

Church elder, Malcolm Gray, was full of praise for the production and said that the church should run with programs such as this to highlight to our community what the real story of Easter is about.



• John Sharpe, Gerry Doyle and Greg Elsdon during a break at the spiritual retreat

Letters to the Editor

Letters are limited to
200 words

"Voting with the Enemy"

To the Editor,

I write to commend the "White Paper" of A.E. White ("AC" 21 March), "Voting with the Enemy". It restates what has been the long-held stand of many Christians but which, I fear, may not have been faced up to by a number who sit in the pews today. I trust that readers will disseminate the sentiments of this article to others in their churches beyond the comparatively few who subscribe to this magazine.

It carries a message that needs to be heard.

—Trevor Streeter
(Mallands, WA)

[While Trevor notes that "comparatively few" subscribe to "The Australian Christian" our research shows that about 30-35% of all members of Churches of Christ in Australia read at least a proportion of each issue. Any new readers (especially as subscribers) would be welcome—Editor]

"Voting with the Enemy"

To the Editor,

The White Paper ("AC" 21 March) entitled "Voting with the Enemy" should have brought a barrage of letters from the fifth columnists in our ranks.

A few expletives may have blasted them out.

Churches of Christ were amongst the last churches to stand up and fight the liquor interests. With 45% as an internal fifth column, that leaves only 13.75% on each flank. The war is lost on that count!

There is a lessening gap between the church and the world. Sometimes the church sounds like the world, and the world sounds like the church which used to be.

It was not the church which put smoking into the ashpan. It is not the church which is highlighting the stupidity of tipping. The church applause for doctors, hospitals and govern-

ments is rarely if ever heard in the fight for clean and healthy living.

The church must restate its position clearly on alcohol. It must be said from the conference level, the ministry, the colleges, the family homes and the church members.

The church cannot fight on the flanks when there are knives at the backs of those waging warfare.

Pop a cork, crack a can and pour the stuff out if it's in the fridge.

Be a winner for the Lord!

—Frank Gason
(Ararat, Vic)

Appreciation

To the Editor,

I am grateful for the magazines you sent me recently. *The Australian Christian* is full, didactic and expository. I wish you could make it regular so that I can enjoy the best from them.

The Curkpatrick column "The Serendipity of Free Will" ("AC" 1 December 1991) settled my mind after reading it. The writer affirmed that "the theology of grace means that we can make the best (emphasis mine) of a bad situation if we do fail, for God is infinitely creative and always able to create unique possibilities out of failure".

His write up is sound and witty.

I pray that our good God would give you more divine wisdom, knowledge and understanding so that your visions would be brightened.

—Lanre Ogunraku
(Lagos, Nigeria)

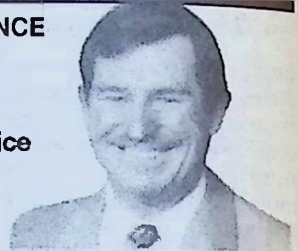
[This letter is an example of many we receive from overseas asking us to send them regular subscriptions. We cannot afford to do so and generally send each such person a bundle of back issues. We do ensure that all missionaries with the Overseas Mission Board and the Federal Aborigines Board receive copies and many churches help us in this endeavour. Any readers or churches who would like to help with this ministry should contact the office—Editor]

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Letters from Tertius

Oh, Hell!

To the Editor,

So the Queensland Christian Television Association is in trouble for its TV commercials warning people that they might be going to hell. The public don't like it, just as they don't like being reminded of anything unpleasant such as death and AIDS and a third of the world starving. But a lot of church people don't like the commercials either. They say that fear is the wrong motivation for getting people into the church.

It seems that part of the problem is that people don't believe in hell any more because their image of it is great cauldrons of fire and brimstone and devils pitchforking people into them, with Satan presiding over it all with a look of glee, and in the background God with an "I told you so" look on his face.

I'm no Bible scholar, but I don't remember reading about that sort of hell in the Bible. And I'm no theologian, but it seems to me that in the Bible God is saying that there is a lifestyle that is good for people and the world and that there is another lifestyle that automatically gets them and their world into serious trouble, both in this life and the next. And the Bible seems to make it clear that the trouble that the wrong lifestyle gets us into is horrific, both in this life and the next. And it is not God who "clouts" us for making wrong choices, but we do it to ourselves for choosing lifestyles that inevitably end up that way. Maybe if the word "hell" is so much misunderstood we'd better find another word so that we can at least let people know what they are in for.

I'm sure that if most people knew, they would choose rightly. But there are plenty who won't, so maybe they have to be scared into it. And if it is so horrific, why not a bit of scaring? We do it in telly to show kids what happens when they muck about in cars, and to show the general public what happens when they drink and drive and to show those who sleep around what happens when they won't use condoms. Are we then being a bit squeamish when we are scared to scare people into the Kingdom when they don't have the good sense to come in in any other way?

—Tertius

East Malvern/Ashburton's Fiftieth Anniversary

A golden time

With the theme "To God Be the Glory" the Ashburton, Vic, church celebrated its 50th anniversary on 22 March. 170 past and present members and friends overflowed the chapel and enjoyed the reunion luncheon.

Land for the church was originally purchased for £245 from the Gardiner church's New Cause Fund. The foundation meeting in April 1941 saw a covenant signed by 26 and



• The children's mime at the anniversary service



• Nell Collyer and Gwen McCann, in whose homes the church started

nine of these covenantors were present at the celebration.

The war caused deferment of plans to build and weekly communion services were commenced in the home of Neil and Gwen McCann in March 1942 and the East Malvern church was admitted to conference in April. A Sunday school and women's group were already established.

The church moved from

home to house to hall to chapel over the years with a name change to Ashburton to fit in with district changes.

The thanksgiving service was presided over by Ron Strongman (foundation member and present elder) and former and present members participated.

Iris Lawson (present minister) gave the address and presented a delightful mime to

music by the children. Features of the day were a banner made by Edith Barton, a historical display mounted by Ken Barton and speeches on remembered highlights by four former members. There were nine former ministers (two from interstate) present.

Each family was presented with a small booklet on the first 50 years at Ashburton.

—Freda Morris

Team Returns Home

FAB visitors have a busy month

Thousands of kilometres have been covered, dozens of churches visited, many talks given and received and the deputation team, consisting of Avon and Deslee Moyle and

Frank and Rose Johnson, has returned to Perth, exhausted but pleased with its visit to Victoria and Tasmania.

When they arrived there Cec and Laurel Grant from Albury

and Dennis and Wilma Jetta from Mooroopna joined the team. In more than a month of travelling around, the team only had six free days. The trip to Tasmania was extended by a day so that more churches could be included in the visit.

Frank and Rose Johnson stayed overnight in Morwell to fulfil their task there and also spent a long weekend in Warrnambool as surrounding churches met to hear of the work of the Aborigines Mission Department.

There was a combined evening service arranged between Mooroopna and Shepparton churches and the team then moved on, with Dennis and Wilma Jetta, to take in Bendigo, Box Hill and Springvale.

The CWF responded wonderfully with invitations to the team and they were able to meet with many of the ladies groups

in the suburbs and city. They considered their visit to the Churches of Christ Theological College one of the highlights of their busy schedule. The climax of the month-long deputation was the last Sunday night at Cheltenham.

A request was put in to the CWF a short time ago for squares of material for Carnarvon Mission craft work and a slightly overwhelmed team left for WA with a trailer full. There should be some beautiful quilts coming out of Carnarvon in the near future.

—Betty Bantow

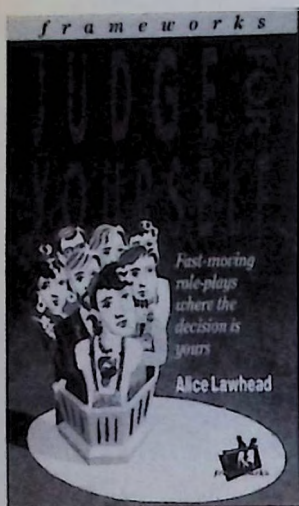


• Frank and Rose Johnson and Deslee and Avon Moyle

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Media Review

Books



Judge for Yourself

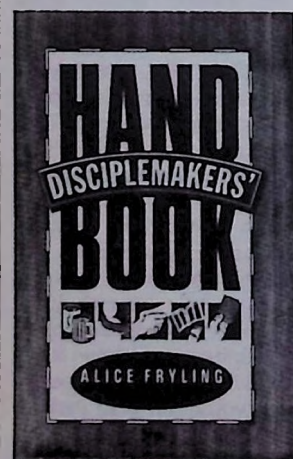
by Alice Lawhead (Frameworks)

What would you do if your church decided on a particular course of action and you were the only person in the congregation who disagreed with it? If the decision was immoral you would have no difficulty but most situations are not so clear cut. How do you arrive at an answer? This is where ethics take over in our lives. What are the guidelines for making such decisions? Whose ethics are right anyway? Alice Lawhead's book is designed to both challenge and educate its readers in the process of making ethical decisions.

While this book is about ethics, it is unlike most books on the subject in that it is not a dry-as-dust treatise on complex philosophical or theological propositions. Instead it is an entertaining and challenging presentation of ethical problems, in a story format, that challenge the reader to make personal judgements on the behaviour of various individuals. In a courtroom situation you, the reader, are the jury and have to decide, after listening to the prosecution and defence cases, whether the character from the story is guilty of unethical behaviour. You then have to justify your position as more information is revealed, which shows that ethical decisions are much harder in borderline areas.

Judge for Yourself can be read by individuals, but it would be best suited for youth or small groups to work through the various stories and discuss the cases for and against the character accused of unethical behaviour.

—JMP



Disciplemakers' Handbook

by Alice Fryling and others (InterVarsity Press)

What an exciting book! How neglected are the new Christians in the churches. This has got to be the most fantastic time in their lives and more often than not it is a big fizz because nobody helps them to understand their excitement. It is my conviction that we should make the most of these newly created lives and this is what *Disciplemakers' Handbook* is about.

Discipleship is not easy. It requires time, effort, love and prayer and this book is a must for anyone who wants to be a serious discipler.

It doesn't set out a series of Bible studies or Bible readings to share with the new disciple. Instead it helps the enthusiastic discipler to understand just what is involved in this commitment and discusses some very good principles to help him or her get started.

I found the book readable and enjoyable. There are touches of humour and the authors are not afraid to admit failing. They show themselves not to be super Christians but to be simple

people just like you and me who want to share the joy of the Christian life with others.

It is a warm book that does not make readers think that they are not capable of making disciples but showing how they can become capable. The reader is assured that it is OK to be scared and it is acceptable to ask for help. The book challenges the discipler to model the qualities that he or she is trying to teach.

After spending time studying discipleship at college and then reading this book, I could thoroughly recommend it to both the pastor and the layman. It should be essential reading for those involved in discipleship programs in the church.

—Stephanie Jarvis

Medicine in Crisis

A Christian Response

Edited by Ian L. Brown and Nigel M. de S. Cameron (Rutherford House Books)

The main thesis of this 128-page book is that "the old axis of sanctity-of-life and healing is rapidly being replaced by a new one of quality-of-life and relief-of-suffering" (page 13). The authors of the articles dealing with genetic engineering and IVF, embryo research, antenatal screening, abortion, infanticide and euthanasia all repeat the need to affirm the sanctity of life as a moral absolute. This basic tenet creates difficulties for various aspects of medical practice within these areas, e.g. the destruction of embryos not used in IVF.

I found the book useful in its (somewhat clumsy) clarification of the shift in the medical paradigm. The expert writers helped me to understand what is happening within their fields. However I believe the book fails in its stated purpose: "A Christian Response". The chapter on the sanctity of life is extremely disappointing, failing, as far as I could see, to deliver the arguments it promised in its own introduction. The so-called "Christian response" consists merely of a repetition of the texts dealing with the "image of God" and quotes from Calvin and Keil and Delitzsch—hardly contemporary thinkers. What intrigued me was a secondary agenda to argue for the justification for the death penalty for those who took the life of others (pages 18, 21, 116).

The book is a useful basic introduction to what is happening in medical practice. It fails to offer a genuine thought-through theological response—it merely appeals to accept the sanctity of life as a moral absolute.

—Louis van Laar



All right, where's the fire?

Saying Goodbye

Blest be the tie that binds

Since saying goodbye to family and friends in Australia to come to PNG, we have said many hellos in meeting new people, but have also said a number of goodbyes.

Some of these goodbyes have been to people going on furlough, so we will see them again soon. Some of the goodbyes have been to people returning to Australia, so there is the possibility that our paths may cross again at a later time. Some of the goodbyes have been to people we may not see again in this life but can look forward to seeing in eternity.

No doubt you have experienced some goodbyes in your own life and you know and understand that saying goodbye is not always easy.

Recently, we said goodbye to a good friend as he returned to Australia. It was hard for us and his many national friends to say goodbye. Memories continue and I recall he often whistled the tune (Dennis) to this hymn by John Fawcett:

Blest be the tie that binds
Our hearts in Christian love;
The fellowship of kindred minds
Is like to that above.

When for a while we part
This thought will soothe our pain,
That we shall still be joined in heart
And one day meet again.

This glorious hope revives
Our courage by the way;
While each in expectation lives,
And longs to see the day.

From sorrow, toil and pain
And sin we shall be free,
And perfect love and friendship reign
Through all eternity.

What blessed assurance we have in the love of Jesus Christ that binds us together across the miles and oceans, and beyond this earth, for eternity.

—Helen Nolan

Introducing Fe

Wherever he leads...

I'm Fe Agulto of the Philippines, 25, and an evangelical Christian. I started as a new homcraft teacher in Ranwadi School at Pentecost, Vanuatu, in February. I'm here because God clearly directed my path.

It was last January 1992 when our church had a vision. We organised Binan World Mission, planning to send missionaries abroad to preach God's word. With a target of 2 million for the mission, the church really prayed for it. We started to include in our prayers the few members of the church abroad to give their financial support for the mission, because the church really didn't know where to get the funds, but to lean on God's power and mercy. Every night in my prayers I cried to the Lord because I wanted to be a part of our mission. Though I had a job I thought my salary was not sufficient. (Of course I could not give all because I have my father and a sister to support.)

Until one day, opportunity knocked at my door. The former homcraft teacher of Ranwadi, who happened to be our neighbour, needed a substitute to replace her in Pentecost. She called me up, for she had no other choice but me. I couldn't easily decide for we didn't have any means for transportation. My father told me that we couldn't afford it. That night, I cried to the Lord. I told him, "Lord, if it is your will, work on it and make everything possible to me. Though I'm afraid to go abroad, especially as I do not know the place and the people, well, still your will be done."

After a week, God provided everything! I can't really imagine God's greatness in my life! Then I decided to follow the leading of the Lord in my life. I left my beloved family, friends, boyfriend and my students. They loved me very much and were greatly concerned for my safety in this faraway land. Some of them pleaded with me not to go.



• Fe Agulto

Through God's guidance, my journey was smooth. When I came here in Ranwadi I was greatly amazed because I expected the school to be made only of local materials, and that the people were quarrelsome. But I was wrong! It's an opposite of it. The people are friendly, loving and the students are refined in manners. The place is very beautiful with lots of food to eat. Besides, the school is a Christian school. I really thanked God for I have a job (which would be of a great help to the church and to my family) and at the same time God can use me as his instrument in preaching his word.

Isn't it that God is wonderful!

Now, I have decided to stay longer in this place. As long as God needs me in his ministry. Wherever he leads me, I will follow him. "In all your ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct your path." (Proverbs 3:6). You too can lean on this wonderful verse for your support as you face the unknown tomorrow. God will direct your paths.

—Fe Agulto

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Happenings

A new improved Dial a Prayer service operated from Good Friday. Callers who phone 0055 25 777 will find a Dial a Prayer service designed to record their feedback and comments. It will offer callers free New Testaments, record their "bouquets and brickbats" for the church, listen to their prayer requests as well as the expected encouragement and prayer associated with the earlier service. It is available nationally and is sponsored by Christian Resource Trust and several churches. The service can handle up to 72 callers at any given time 24 hours a day utilising over \$350,000 worth of computer voice recording equipment.

The threat of Sharia (Islamic) law to Christianity in Sudan is real and is an obstacle to a negotiated settlement of the civil war there, according to an official of the New Sudan Council of Churches. The NSCC was founded in November 1989 by Christian jurisdictions in parts of Sudan controlled by the Sudan Peoples Liberation Army. The southern part of Sudan is predominantly Christian.

The International Bible Society and the Living Bible International, two established worldwide Scripture evangelism organisations, have merged to form a single organisation. The new entity will go under the

name of International Bible Society. The International Bible Society has distributed more than 300 million scriptures in 480 languages since its inception in 1809, and Living Bibles International has provided easy-to-understand scriptures in 117 languages for more than 300 Christian organisations worldwide.

Meeting in homes, churches, office buildings and colleges across the US and Canada, church members of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) were brought together by satellite technology, television sets and telephone lines on 29 March. In an hour-long broadcast, viewers at more than 100 sites heard General Minister and President C. William Nichols and Moderator Marilyn Moffett speak on the denomination's future. Then the two leaders responded to questions phoned by viewers. As part of the denomination's churchwide "Season of Prayer" the program ended with worship.

Rev Dr Gunther Gassmann, who heads the World Council of Churches' Faith and Order work, will be the guest of the ACC later this year. He will be keynote speaker at the 36th general meeting of the ACC. His keynote address will take place on 27 June at Ormond College, Royal Parade, Parkville (Melbourne), at 8 pm. This meeting is open to the public. In Sydney there is a meeting at 6 pm for dinner followed by an address and discussion, at St Andrew's Greek Orthodox College, 242 Cleveland St, Redfern, on 24 June (details from NSW Ecumenical Council on (02) 299 2215) and in Adelaide he is undertaking activities over the period 1-5 July (details from SA Council of Churches on (08) 232 0070).

"Looking to the Future—A Conference on the Roles of the Churches in Accommodation for People with Disabilities" is being held on 23 May 10 am-3 pm at the Glen Waverley Uniting Church in Melbourne (corner Bogong Ave and Kingsway, Glen Waverley). The cost of the conference is \$10 (\$5 concession). The conference is being sponsored by Accommodation for Disabled Persons under the Auspices of the Christian Church and the Ecumenical Housing Unit of the VCC. Further details and information from (03) 808 3677 or (03) 819 8783 or from PO Box 637, Box Hill 3128.

Maria Jepsen was elected bishop of Hamburg, Germany, in the North Elbian Evangelical Lutheran Church on 4 April. She is the first woman to be chosen to be a Lutheran bishop. The Hamburg diocese includes 208 congregations with a total of 940,000 members and 334 pastors.

For the first time, a Christian weekly newspaper is to be published in South Korea. The paper has been tentatively named *The Church Growth Newspaper*.

Over 135,000 participated in "Easter '92" programs in over 105 cities and towns around Australia. Prayer vigils were held in cities on Good Friday, from dusk to dawn, with churches being responsible for the periods of prayer throughout the night. On Easter Sunday 15-20,000 took part in Sydney, 12,000 in Melbourne, 10,000 in Perth and 3,000 turned up in Hobart (only 1,500 were expected). Radio hookups and 28 broadcasters kept all the marchers informed on what was happening in each city and created the atmosphere of being part of a nation-wide witness for Jesus.

On 23 April St Luke's Anglican Church in Adelaide was destroyed by fire. Evidence points to arson. The blaze caused an estimated \$1 million worth

of damage. All that remained when the fire was extinguished were the thick bluestone walls—many buckled by the heat—and piles of ashes that were once elegant timber pews. The only reminders of the elaborate stained-glass windows that had recently been restored at a cost of about \$30,000 were the screens that protected them from damage by vandals. The blaze was the third at an Anglican church in Adelaide in the past 3 years. Others destroyed by fire were St Chad's at Fullarton and St John's at Salisbury.

The Southern Baptist Convention plans to start 4 new churches each day, aiming to have 50,000 churches in the US by the year 2000. They have been planting 3 churches a day over the last decade.

11 were killed and 67 other injured when a grenade was lobbed into a crowd of worshippers on Easter Sunday outside St Michel's Cathedral in Iligan, a port city on the southern island of Mindanao in the Philippines. Initial police findings indicate that the episode was motivated by a vendetta involving Catholics and Maranao Muslim teenagers.

Hindu fundamentalists are stepping up attacks against Christian ministries throughout India, carrying out at least 3 violent assaults against Christian workers in northern, central and southern Indian states in March. The organisations involved were Operation Mobilization, the Pocket Testament League and Cornerstone World Challenge.

The Deo Gloria Trust Fiction Prize in the UK of £5,000 is awarded annually to encourage popular adult fic-

tion written from a positive Christian viewpoint. This year it has gone to Australian Tim Winton for *Cloud Street*.

Senior pastor Bill Hybels and a team of 25 associates from the Willow Creek Community Church, Chicago, USA, are conducting two 3-day conferences "Building a Church for the Unchurched". The first is at the Sydney Convention Centre, Darling Harbour, 11-13 November and the second is in Brisbane at the Garden City Christian Church, Mt Gravatt, 18-20 November. Details and brochures from PO Box 954, Sutherland 2232. Phone (02) 545 2308. Fax (02) 545 2309.

The WA Churches of Christ Ecumenical Fellowship will be held at 29 Kalgoorlie St, Mt Hawthorn, on 21 May at 8 pm. The speaker will be Wes Hartley, the recently appointed Executive Officer of the WA Conference. Further information from John Somerville on (09) 341 5086.

The Vic-Tas Adventure Committee Cycling Club is holding a barbecue lunch and family ride from Westfolds Park, Porter Street, Templestowe, on 30 May. The leaving time for the bike ride is 1.15 pm. Further details from Gordon Smith on (03) 802 3249.

Following quite extensive alterations to their chapel the Warrnambool Church of Christ is having a rededication on 31 May 1992.

All past members and associates are invited.

Family concert Saturday evening, praise and worship Sunday morning followed by luncheon.

RSVP to PO Box 291, Warrnambool 3280, for catering.

Important Events

Boronia Church of Christ

Sunday, 10 May, 10 am
Guest Preacher:
Gall MacDonald
Renowned speaker,
author

Tuesday Nights, 7.30 pm
12, 19, 26 May
Grief Seminar
With Allan Anderson
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The Word on Tape

The Bible on cassette for every Christian home



• Roger, Diane, Betty and Lisa Gibbons of Perth with a set of the Bible tapes

Agape International, a non-denominational Christian organisation founded last year in Melbourne, has vowed to bring the Bible on cassette to every Christian home in Australia.

Modern-day living and non-Christian activities leave very little time and opportunity for Bible reading for adults, youth and children alike. Even family worship is on decline in Christian homes. This difficulty of spare time for formal devotion constitutes an obstacle to daily relationship with the Lord and continuous growth, thus weakening the urge to share the gospel.

After months of praying and research, the Bible on cassette appealed to Agape as the best solution to the problem.

If the experience of those who have already acquired the tapes is to be believed, daily listening has brought a new dimension to their spiritual walk and a sense of purpose to life.

The complete set, comprising the whole Bible from Genesis to Revelation, fully dramatised, with musical background and sound effects, is for sale at less than \$3.50 per cassette to the general public and under \$3 per cassette to members. The organisation needs a whole network of agents across Australia, having already established

some coverage in Melbourne and Perth.

Christians who want to contribute can buy the cassettes, become members of Agape International or make donations by phoning (03) 648 0834 (for the eastern States) or (09) 480 5414 (for Western Australia) or by writing to Agape International, PO Box 474, Mulgrave 3170. —Christian S. Michel

Year of Growth Planned

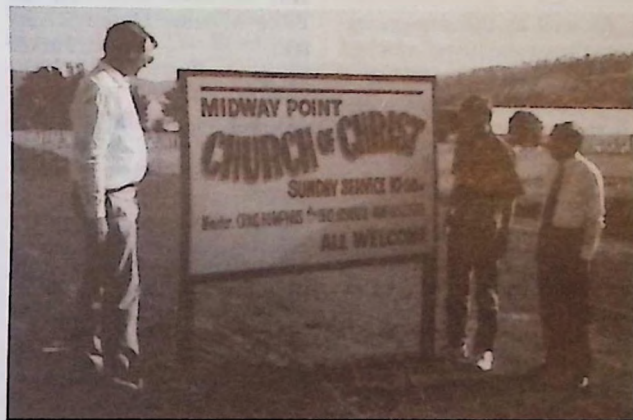
New Tasmanian church underway

The Midway Point, Tas, church, on Hobart's eastern fringe is located on a large site that adjoins Pitt Water, one of Tasmania's many inlets.

In November last year the church completed its new building. Already this year the church has welcomed in a number of new people and is

looking to a year of growth. The church is located in an expanding area that will continue to see new housing development.

A new playgroup is one of the outreach points for young members. The project is being supported by Tasmanian churches through DMED.



• Gavin Thompson, a Tasmanian representative on the Vic-Tas Department of Mission, Education and Development, Craig Humphris, minister, and Allan Emmett of the Properties Corporation inspecting the new notice board

Away from It All

Retreat to the retreat house

Do you ever feel that the pressures, the domestic upsets, or the noise and pace of life are getting you down? In fact you want to get away from it all to some peaceful place where you can have time and space to think?

Well, there is such a place, a lovely old house, set in spacious grounds, and it is the Retreat House at 32 Cavanagh Street, Cheltenham, Vic. Although its main purpose is to provide accommodation for retreats, it is also available for weekend conferences or quiet days; and for anyone in need of a rest or who is recovering from an operation or an illness there is a part called "Bethany", where one can stay and be given

TLC (tender loving care) by the sister in that section.

People go to Retreat House for Bible study weekends and seminars, and recently a couple celebrated a wedding anniversary. Last year it was threatened with closure; but there was such a public protest that at least for the present it remains open. All who have been there and have enjoyed the atmosphere of peace and stillness want to keep it that way.

Naturally it needs to be kept busy and occupied because of the costs of keeping it in good order. It has been closed for a short period for necessary alterations of rewiring and fire protection but will be available again after the Easter weekend.

If your group would like to book in for a weekend or even for a day, telephone the sister-in-charge to ask about charges and suitable dates on (03) 583 2076.

—A Regular Customer

PS: The Retreat House is run by a group of the Sisters of the Community of the Holy Name, which is Anglican, but it is patronised by people of different denominations.

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Craft Expo Project '92

All types of crafts

On 18 March 400 ladies attended **Craft Expo** at the Blackman Hall in Hawthorn, Vic.

It was a great night with demonstrations of all types of crafts, including chocolate making, lace making, crocheting, upholstery, advanced knitting, tapestry, decorated eggs, fabric painting, cross stitch, machine embroidery, patchwork and quilting.

As well as the demonstrations there were 10 well-stocked

and patronised stalls, with lots of delicious cakes and clever crafts.

Then followed the fantastic apron parade, which was the highlight of the night, where 92 aprons were paraded and 86 sold. Groups from all over Victoria made aprons and either brought or sent them for the parade—it was wonderful that so many CWFs participated and we raised \$3,000 for the **Bone Marrow Donor Registry**.
—Anthea Parker

Tassie Convention '92

Ulverstone hosts day

Ulverstone, Tas, church was the host to this year's annual **Convention of Churches of Christ in Tasmania**, on 14 March.

More than 100 delegates were present for the day and all agreed that the venue for the day, the Ulverstone Civic Centre, was ideal.

The day began with worship led by Max Carter, the President of Vic-Tas Conference. The keynote speaker for convention was **Rob Combridge** from the Blackwood, SA, church, who took as his theme "Mission—The Essential Theology of the Church".

The input sessions and the afternoon workshop were greatly appreciated as all present were challenged to rec-



• **Rob Combridge**

ognise compassion, community and commitment as relevant evangelistic strategies for the church today.

Greg Foot, President of Convention, directed the day's events and led the all-age inspirational rally in the evening. The groups "Adoration" from Launceston and "Tapestry" from Devonport, together with locals, Sue and Kelvin Maxwell, helped make the evening celebration a great success.

Many of the visitors extended their visit to share worship next morning in the local chapel where there was only just room for the crowd of over 100 worshippers.
—Tom Edge

Off to a Good Start

Mount Clear Explorers say "thanks"



• Explorers leaders **Ross Firth** (Mount Clear) and **Daryl Wilkinson** (Werribee) with **Peter Booth**, **Stewart Cook** and **Alicia Hughes**

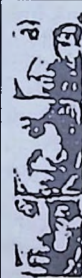
It's 1992—and a group of explorers have discovered Mount Clear! Or perhaps we should say that **Mount Clear, Vic**, has discovered Explorers.

In February a new club for boys and girls commenced at the Mount Clear church, with an emphasis on fun and the great outdoors. It was decided that this group, under the leadership of **Ross Firth** and a committed group of volunteers, would link with the **Vic-Tas Explorers** movement. Now there is also a Junior Explorers club (years Prep-2), which meets after school on Wednesdays. The congregation is delighted to see these new clubs get underway!

On 25 March, the new Mount Clear Explorers received a very special visit from the Werribee Explorers. After some combined games and activities, the Werribee club made a presentation to the newly formed Explorers at Mount Clear—a starters pack, designed to help a new club get established. The pack included rope, games, equipment, frisbees, balls and camping supplies.

Explorers **Peter Booth** and **Alicia Hughes** expressed their thanks on behalf of the Mount Clear group for Werribee's gen-

erous gift and for their effort in coming to Ballarat for a fun night. The gifts were much appreciated, and came in handy at their first camp on 28-29 March, in which 12 intrepid Explorers—boys and girls—set off for Mt Cole.



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Metaphors, Motherhood and God

The Bible, unfortunately, is often read in the same way as an instruction manual for the latest kitchen or workshop gadgetry, where it can always be assumed there is a literal correlation between text and meaning, unlike the rich metaphorical language with which the Biblical narrative is imbued. According to theologian Sallie McFague, the strong iconoclasm in the Old Testament—that is, the prohibition on making graven images—resulted in an abundance of verbal imagery, metaphors that describe God as water, rock, fire, fortress, shepherd, lover and vinedresser, images that were not taken literally but, instead, that spoke vividly to the imagination to stimulate faith. The Hebrews used metaphors in abundance for God, undercutting any idolatrous inclination to create graven images. And indeed, the power of metaphorical language is in its polyvalence, that is, it is rich and diverse in its expression, and can be applied creatively in an infinite variation of striking images for the divine-human relationship. The propensity to create rich, diverse metaphors for God was developed even further in the parables of Jesus.

Failure to perceive the distinction between vivid meta-

phorical language that speaks to the imagination and a modern instruction manual that has nothing but a literal correlation between text and meaning is at the root of animosity toward legitimate "feminine images of God" in the Biblical narrative. And there are many. The Deuteronomist describes God's love and care for Israel with the androgynous image of an eagle, who "watches over its nest, hovers above its young, spreads its pinions and takes them up and bears them on its wings..." a powerful image of an eagle pushing her fledglings out of the nest, watching them fly, swooping down to catch them and bear them up again. In the poetry of Isaiah God is likened to a mother who gives birth and comforts her suckling young. In his lament over Jerusalem, Jesus creates a poignant image of God: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem...how often I would have gathered your children, as a hen (rooster?) gathers her chicks under her wing..." Theo-

logical problems abound if such imagery is read literally. (God as a chook, sitting on a brood?) But as a metaphor, it speaks vividly to the imagination, giving us a powerful, moving image of care and nurture at a moment of deep personal pathos for Jesus. The Bible has many rich images of God's nurturing care, love and tenderness—those qualities that we have traditionally associated with femininity, but which we all, female and male, should express. Even Jesus' use of "Abba", according to Jeremias, who researched this word exhaustively, affirms qualities associated with maternal intimacy rather than patriarchal sternness and authority. The failure to perceive the androgynous dimension of God as life-giver and nurturer, the feminine "ruah" or brooding, life-giving spirit—is due to an impoverished literal reading of the rich, polyvalent metaphorical language of the Bible.

Biblical metaphors not only

work as similitude, but also work to create dissonance or tension between conventional and prophetic perspectives of life. They do so by juxtaposing the conventional (strident transcendent patriarchal images) with the surprising (immanent, birthing or life-giving, nurturing feminine images). While that may be threatening for those who absolutise and consequently distort male images of God, dissonant images that depict God in feminine imagery are liberating to those at the "liminal" edges of the Christian faith, who are conscious that their experience of God is an anomaly that doesn't correlate with more dominant culturally conceived and articulated metaphors for God. Ultimately, no metaphor can define God, although God embraces the most diverse images of relational interaction with people. God is greater than, and cannot be confined by our metaphors, male or female, whether culturally or prophetically conceived or expressed. However, it is important that we use a diversity of metaphors, Biblical and secular, for God and the divine-human relationship, and that those metaphors we do use for God are not anachronistic but contemporary, not oppressive but liberating.

—Stephen Curkpatrick

Growing Spiritually

I Am Always with You

Sonny Graham

I have had reason recently to reflect on the words of Jesus that are found at the very end of Matthew's gospel: "And surely I am with you always to the very end of the age." These words have meant much to me because Jesus has always been there to listen, to lift and to love. I have had this assurance over 18 years of missionary service in Norseman, followed by eight years of pastoral ministry divided between Esperance and Port Hedland. My present ministry is that of an Aboriginal Education Worker at the Hedland Senior High School.

Jesus is always there to listen.

We have found this to be true in times of deep family crisis and at times when we were

dealing with simple everyday problems. He has answered our prayers so many times. We feel so thankful that we have someone there to listen to us in our times of need.

Jesus is always there to lift.

The burdens and the problems of life get so heavy at times.

The parable about the two footprints in the sand, rings true to our experience. I feel sure that the Lord has carried us in his arms during the times when our strength was about to cave in and when we felt we were unable to cope with the grind of life.

Jesus is always there to love.

I am part Aboriginal and earlier in life when I looked at the early history of colonisation and much of the present-day treatment of Aborigines, I was tempted to believe that we were inferior to other people. The love and the salvation that I found in the Lord Jesus convinced me that I am a child of God and equal to anyone. His great love changed my life.

Jesus is always there to listen, to lift and to love. I have found him to be someone who is true to his word: "And surely I am with you always to the very end of the age."

• Sonny Graham, a CofC minister, is an Aboriginal education worker in Port Hedland, WA.

Classifieds

ENGAGEMENTS

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DEATHS

MARTIN John Kenneth (JK). Passed away at Bendigo on 17 April 1992. In his 90th year. Dearly loved husband of Phyllis Myrtle (dec.). Dearly loved father of Betty, Ken and Viv. Loved father-in-law of Bob, Mary and Freda. Loved Grandfather of 12 grandchildren and 8 great-grandchildren. Psalm 42:1.
MATHIESON George M. Aged 88 years. God called him peacefully to his rest on Thursday, 23 April 1992, after a long life lived in service to others. Loved and loving husband of Alice. A wonderful partnership of 62 years. Caring and much-loved father of George, John and Margaret. Dear Grandpa of Mark, Susan and Sally. "We thank God for every remembrance of him."

IN MEMORIAM

MURNANE Loving memories of Jack. Passed away 11.5.73. Devoted husband, father and grandfather. Amy and family.

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News

Feeling at Home at Church

A family worth belonging to

What do I need and seek in a church community?

Perhaps the most basic need is for a church family I can call "home". My present church family has felt that way ever since I visited it five years ago. Why do I feel that it is home? The reasons are complex and varied. This is a church family that truly allows for diversity. I can dress up as much as I please. Yes, I can even wear a hat without feeling out of place. Alternatively, I can wear jeans and a T-shirt and have bare feet and still feel accepted. This is a church family that accepts my middle-class outlook and the working-class outlook of others with equal equanimity. It does not require its members to be white, middle class and predictable.

I can be myself without others trying to impose change upon me. I know that I can share fully in the leadership of the church—including preaching—or choose to take a quiet back seat and no one will say, "You are wrong." The closest that such comments are likely to come is, "I disagree with you because..."

This is a church family that cares what happens to its members. It also cares what happens in the broader community and seeks to meet the needs that come to our attention.

It is a family that prays. We have prayer chains that are open to any member who wishes to share in the prayer life of the church, but we can also contact any other member on an informal basis without people getting embarrassed.

It is a family that allows its members to socialise in a variety of ways, both formal and informal, and yes, we also have a home Bible study each week.

It is a family that is constantly seeking new ways to meet the needs of members and ac-

quaintances alike. But most of all, it is a family that puts love into practice.

Such a family allows me to grow. I am not limited in the understanding that I can develop of who God is, of who I can be, of the Bible, what prayer is, how worship should be conducted or in my development of any aspects of spiritual development by the preconceptions of any other member of this church community, so I am free to grow as far as my own limitations will allow. This frees me to allow others to grow also.

It is this that keeps me coming back each week. Yes, there are other churches that are closer to my home but I will continue to drive past them while I know that I can find nourishment of a continually richer kind at the Morwell, Vic, church.

—Fiona Ogilvie

Open Doors

WA women's conference

10 April was an exciting day for 175 ladies who met in the Christian Centre for the 87th WA Women's Conference.

The meetings were jointly led by two past presidents, Norma Ellement and Betty Sewell, because there had been no president this year. Conference had the theme "Open Doors".

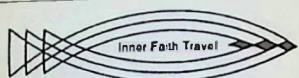
The opening time of praise was led by Merle Peacock and J. Trail (York) gave a challenging devotional message.

Barry Ryall (Conference President) brought greetings and made a presentation of a Bible to B. McIlwraith in recognition of her many years service as secretary.

Roses for Remembrance is a very important segment of the program. B. O'Meara read the names of those who had died during the year and N. Moignard placed a rose in the bowl for each name.

Julie Trinnick, Associate Director of the Overseas Mission Board, was the guest speaker. Julie encouraged the support of mission work in prayer.

—B. McIlwraith



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Youth Ministry

Effective Ministry to Youth

Jim Keatch

I have sometimes heard people in our churches say, "What is wrong with our youth group that there are no young people becoming members of our church?" This response indicates a possible lack of understanding of expectations and certainly means that the church is abdicating its responsibility in evangelism from the total to a few (the few being the youth leaders). This is unfair, and it happens because the church does not understand its role in youth work.

For too long some things have been happening in youth work that need to change. Let me focus on two of these:

- The way the church views youth work.

- How youth leaders are selected/appointed.

For the last 40 or so years when we have talked about youth ministry we have meant whatever happens on Friday night, perhaps a mid-week or Sunday morning Bible study, the occasional youth service and the mandatory, annual car wash to raise funds for something. The leaders are the frazzled-looking members of the church who wear ageing Adidas runners with holes in them. The church sees youth ministry as evangelism "out there", which ensures there will still be a church "in here" in 10 years time. The church's attitude towards youth ministry of "leave them alone and they will come home dragging their tails behind them" needs to change.

We need to be Good Shepherd congregations not Little Bo Peep churches.

We should be talking about ministry to youth, not youth ministry. What's the difference? Youth ministry too easily allows us to slot young people into their own little box, to

put them in a corner of the church building and forget them. Ministry to youth forces us to look at the whole of a young person's life. For the church this takes young people out of the category of detached and puts them into the realm of concerned. How does the church minister to young people in all of their life—family, school, recreation (to name three major areas)? How the church impacts on these areas will influence the young people's relationship with and perspective of the church.

In too many youth groups in our churches we have the wrong people in the wrong places trying to do the right jobs. This task is impossible! It leads to burn-out, frustration, despair and resentment. The best way to achieve this scenario is to advertise the position of youth leader in the local church newsletter and appoint the first person who offers. What often happens is that inappropriate people offer who are placed in leadership because the church is desperate to fill the position. Sooner or later this causes problems that are not easy to deal with. These people have the best intentions and great care and concern, but gifts, talents and abilities that are inappropriate for the area of ministry to youth.

We need to have the right people in the right places doing

the right jobs. Let me suggest how this can be done.

First, I believe, it is more appropriate and biblical for the leadership of the church (minister, elders) to appoint the youth leaders. After the right amount of prayer and consideration they should appoint those with the gifts to be good youth leaders. They should approach the prospective youth leader carefully, outline the reasons for their selection, list the gifts and talents the person has and ask the person to prayerfully consider the position of youth leader. In the discussion there should be some focus on what benefits the person will receive from being a youth leader.

Secondly the person who is being asked to become a youth leader needs to know for how long they will be the youth leader. For example, it may be decided that this person be asked to work with the youth for two years. It should be understood that at the end of that time either the position finishes or is renegotiated. There needs to be a stated end time.

Thirdly, when a person is asked by the church leadership to be the youth leader an indication of the tasks and objectives to be achieved needs to be given. This is so the youth leader has a clear understanding of what needs to be done. It also presupposes that the

church leadership are in touch with the needs of the young people in their church, something which is not always the case.

Fourthly, it is totally irresponsible for the church leadership to put someone into a youth leadership position and then leave them there with no support or encouragement. No one can do the job by themselves.

The last point is this. When someone is given responsibility they must also be given authority. A youth leader who has to keep running back to the church leadership for permission will always feel hamstrung and unsupported. To give people responsibility and authority is to assume that they know what they are doing and are mature enough to be the right people in the right place doing the right job.

• *Jim Keatch is the Associate State Minister in South Australia.*

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What Are We Actually Listening To?

The importance of lyrics in rock'n'roll

Unless you happen to be into musical instrumentals or interludes of pure musical pleasure, lyrics play a major part of today's rock'n'roll scene. That's a reason why performers write and perform songs that have lyrics relating to issues that are important to them and in turn important to the musical world.

Love and sex are issues in today's society that many secular performers believe need talking about. Roxettes' "The Big L" is a classic example of the message that performers are trying to highlight. However, it tends to be that the issue of love and sex is explicitly over-used and totally downgraded. Melissa's "Sexy Is the Word" is another example of performers trying to sell sex and lust through the medium of music: "I never thought I'd lose control of my world./I'm not usually that kind of girl./I wanna reach you touch you capture you./Sexy is the word (sexy)."

Don't get me wrong, not all secular performers are into selling lust to the public. Marky Mark and the Funky Bunch's latest hit "Good Vibrations" actually talks about being drug free: "Donnie D's on the backup,/Drug free so put the crack up./No need for speed,/"

I'm anti D-R-U-G-G-I-E./My body is healthy."

Christian performers have often taken a completely different line in regards to the message that they are portraying through their lyrics.

Christian heavy rock band Stryper have often been, criticised for their musical behaviour and style of music, however upon examination of their lyrics you will find that they often deal with subjects such as adultery, "Not That Kind of Guy" and being ambassadors for Christ, "Soldiers under Command".

Other Christian performers have based their lyrics on the important aspects of a Christian's walk with God, such as the reading of the Bible, (Whiteheart's "Read the Book, Don't Wait for the Movie") or daily prayer, such as Petra's "Prayer" or Michael W. Smith's "Pray for Me".

It is not uncommon to see music lovers singing the lyrics of their favourite performers, so as Christians should we be spending our time and money benefiting commercial secular artists or instead should we endeavour to support our local and overseas Christian artists?

—Shaun White

Keep It Live!

David McKay

Why do so many Christian performers these days sing (and sometimes play) to a tape? We accompanists are insulted! We think that we usually sound better than canned music. We also think that more often than not the elaborate arrangements don't seem to suit the singer.

I would ask singers to listen to others performing to a tape and notice how often the music is not set to the right level, so that it sounds like someone singing along with the radio! Notice also how often the performance sounds like a million-dollar accompaniment to a 50c voice! Not always because the voice is bad, but because the prerecorded, mass-produced accompaniments don't suit the person or the situation.

Some of the tapes would sound great on a record, but sound unreal in a church service. In a recent outdoor carol service a singer used a tape that included a thunderstorm as an introduction. It was a shame that we were all just getting over three days of non-stop rain!

I guess people use tapes because, like the man in the ad who brings his own toilet paper, "they never know what they'll find" when they get to your church! But a simple solution would be to either bring

your own accompanist or have a rehearsal with the local accompanist.

Singers need a live accompanist who can respond to their interpretation of the song. The accompanist should be following the singers—not the other way round! There is a lack of good accompanists in our churches, yet this is a skill that is being taught in conservatoriums around the country. Maybe we should be paying our church musicians to be trained in this essential ability.

Even singers on television sound better when they use a simple live accompaniment, rather than singing (or even miming) to a backing tape! A mistake or two is worth the buzz we get from hearing live music! If you watch "Hey Hey It's Saturday" don't you enjoy it when the occasional performer has a live accompaniment? I think this is one of the reasons why the mediocre performers on the Red Faces segment are enjoyed so much.

• David McKay, LMusA, DipMusEd, trained at the Newcastle Conservatorium of Music and at Kenmore Christian College. He now worships at the Glenbrook, NSW, Baptist church.

It seems that the transition, so quickly realised by Saul to Paul in his conversion from Judaism to Christianity, will take us nearly 2000 years!

Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 8:5 and 6: "We know that there is only one God. Even if there are so-called 'gods', whether in heaven or on earth, and even though there are many of these 'gods' and 'lords', yet there is for us only one God, the Father...and there is only one Lord, Jesus Christ."

But we—constantly observed by me in our own and other churches and circumstances—still hear the New Testament title "Lord"—now

• Comment

O Lord, How Long?

Earle Martin

rightly ascribed to Jesus—conferred on God our Father, who has long transferred the title to his Son.

The intermixing in prayer of the name "Father" and the title "Lord" is an anachronism—a paucity of expression, a bad habit equivalent to the expressions "ya know", "I mean" and "stuff like that".

Is it also an indictment on our teaching and the practice of those who lead in prayer that we do not understand that

God has revealed himself to be Father, Son and Holy Spirit and as Father has made "this same Jesus both Lord and Christ"? Else we would not hear responses indiscriminately given in thanks at the Supper to the Father for dying and shedding his blood for us. Such a heresy has nothing to do with the transition from Judaism to Christianity but how long will it take us to understand the basic truths of our gospel?

Now I realise that we may

address God still in the terms of the Old Testament as Lord but how do we tell a new believer or a stranger in our midst that we mean it in capitals—a most uncertain sound! The LORD of lords in the Old Testament (Deuteronomy 10:17, Psalm 136:3) is now known in the Lord Jesus, who is King of kings and Lord of lords.

The investiture of the awards given in the New Year's honours list may take a few months. Are we to take thousands of years to get the New Testament's honours list into action?

• Earle Martin is minister at the North Haven, NSW, church.

Comment

When I was in the Australian Army someone was surprised that a person with a name such as mine didn't enjoy the odd ale. "If I had a name like yours I'd be really living it up!" he said. I replied to the effect that I was too busy living it down!

I was brought up in a Christian home. Dad quit drinking as an example to us when I was about 11. I have a 16-years-old brother who, to my knowledge, has never touched alcohol. Such a stand had been to his advantage as far as I could see. Then there's the promise I made to my mother never to touch alcohol.

None of these explain why I don't drink.

After serving a five-year apprenticeship I was conscripted for military service in South Vietnam. By then I'd promised a drunk on the local railway station I'd never drink.

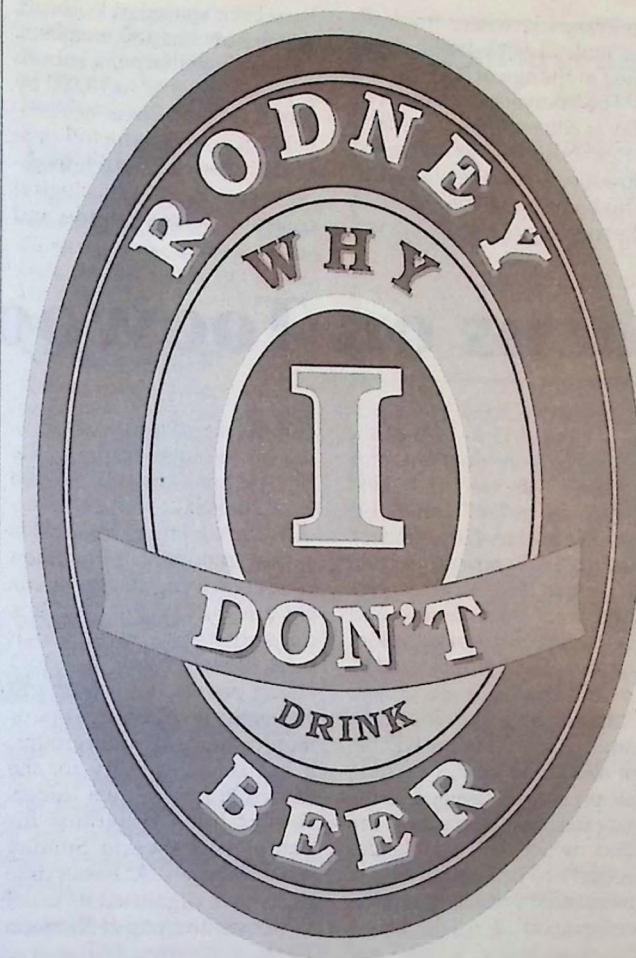
That isn't why I don't drink.

During eleven and a half years in the Royal Australian Air Force, I tasted two or three varieties of wine at a social night. Others whose social lifestyle revolved around the cask or keg noticed I drank. Not how little or how much. They didn't notice that at all.

I decided not to drink again as a result of that night.

That is why I don't drink.

In the Air Force I gave my class of apprentices a social at my home without alcohol. They had the choice to have the event



in the home of another instructor who would have made alcohol available. They voted 23:1 to come to the Beers' with no beer. Later I found out most of them were relieved not to have been under pressure to drink alcohol to be "one of the boys".

That is why I don't drink.

That afternoon with the apprentices, I had promised, would be one they'd enjoy and never forget. With the help of another Christian friend and Marjan my wife, we did just that.

The other six classes who had alcohol at their functions had forgotten by the next day what had happened. As a Christian instructor in an environment where pressure to take part is immense I had to be an example beyond reproach.

That is why I don't drink.

Both in the workforce and in the Defence Forces I had opportunities to share my faith. I will never enjoy as a minister, pastor or chaplain. What opened these up to me? People wanted to know how a non-drinker could survive—let alone actually enjoy life!

That is why I don't drink.

At every stage of life (apart from Bible college and in the ministry) people told me that to get on I'd have to prove myself to be "one of the boys" by drinking. Following the example of a relatively small minority I proved them wrong. It never was easy. Pressures on the young people of today are much stronger. They need the example of people who have even made mistakes trying, but are convinced there is no other way. They need our encouragement and prayers, but these don't show what example demonstrates.

That is why I don't drink.

• Rodney Beer is currently the minister at the Richmond, Vic, church. He wrote this article after reading "White Papers" in the 21 March issue, which greatly impressed him.

Am I a Pharisee? A Topical Question

A Pharisee—am I?

Certainly not, comes my quick reply!

I don't go about with a holy frown, Reciting my prayers in the heart of the town!

I don't wear my faith on my sleeve, Dictating to others what they should believe!

I know all the rules—yes, better than most,

But of my righteous living I never would boast!

I walk a straight line; my conscience is clear;

To the left or the right I never would veer;

And in judgment on others I never would sit, For I am truly no hypocrite...

No unseemly word ever passes my lips With that sort of people I never could mix!

I don't speak their language—nor do they speak mine, So I keep my distance; that suits me just fine!

I thank the good Lord for his blessings to me, And mind my own business—whatever I see: For I have achieved a much-honoured place Within my own circle, and I must "keep face".

So I'm never found in the haunts of shame; (Those who live that way have themselves to blame.) If their burdens are heavy, I just let them be—

And I'm sure that they'd never ask help from me!

Oh, it's just that we really are poles apart— The slaves of sin—and the pure in heart...

Yet I wonder, sometimes, in my "holiness" hour, As I sit alone in my ivory tower—

If the Master himself were here today,

And I happened to meet him along the way—

If he turned his searching eyes on me,

Would he quietly whisper, "Pharisee!"? —Marj Buckingham

A Church ABC

Toowoomba, Qld, is two hours drive west of Brisbane on top of the Great Dividing Range. With a population of 80,000 it is the largest inland city in Australia after Canberra. It is the gateway to the Darling Downs, one of the richest farming areas in the country, and noted for its

to Warwick, where tragically he took ill with typhoid and died at the age of 32.

The Toowoomba church today is situated in a distinctive brick building in Margaret Street, opposite the post office. This building had been built by the congregationalists, but was

have been started at Withcott, which now has 180 members, and at Kingsthorpe, a suburb expected to grow to 10,000 by 2000. Margaret Street has provided many people for full-time Christian service. Twelve members have gone to theological college in the past decade, and

He acts as chaplain to a local high school and, recently, when that school bussed its pupils to their respective churches for their quarterly day of religious instruction, 260 students turned up at the Church of Christ. Ross, who is married with two young children puts much emphasis



Focus on Toowoomba

grain growing, cattle and other farming. Being 3,000 feet up its climate is much milder than its latitude would suggest, and the city is well known for its beautiful gardens. Indeed it is known as the "Garden City". The council actively promotes this with competitions and festivals, and is now establishing a number of international gardens. Toowoomba is a very important commercial and educational centre. It is the home of the University of Southern Queensland and there are many schools, including private boarding schools. The university is actively involved in working in other countries.

The Church of Christ began in Toowoomba 110 years ago, when Tasmanian Stephen Cheek was persuaded to come from Victoria by Toowoomba resident J.H. Johnson and local preacher F.W. Troy. Troy and Cheek held evangelistic meetings in Zillmere, and began the church there. They then moved to Toowoomba and established the Church of Christ on 22 October 1882. Stephen then moved

used from 1919 to 1929 as the trades hall. A double-storey building was erected behind the chapel in 1967, but as the church now has 470 members, the building is now strained to the limit. In 1986 five acres were purchased 3 km away, and work has begun on a large \$3m complex. Earthworks, sewerage and drainage are almost complete and the footings, foundations and floors will begin soon. The heritage listing that previously applied to the Margaret Street chapel has been lifted, which will enable this property to be sold at a more commercial price, and tenders are being called. All this is necessary to house a large and growing church, which averages 500 at Sunday services (at 8.30, 10 and 7). At Christmas and Easter they hire the city hall.

The Toowoomba church is well known for moving out. Ever since Stephen Cheek it has been involved in church planting, and there are now over five Churches of Christ in the city. In the last decade churches

currently two families are serving on the mission field—the Mullers in Vanuatu and the Hines in PNG.

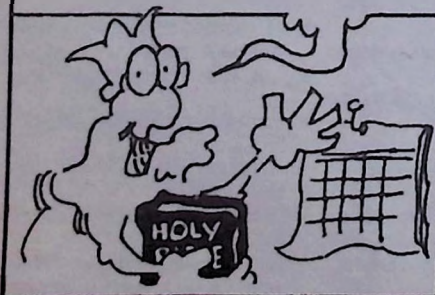
In such a large church it is almost impossible to mention here everything that happens but a feature of the church is certainly its youth work. Each week three to four hundred young people, from year 1 to university level, meet in one or more of the many youth groups. It has been necessary for the church to run its own leadership training programs for youth workers and Sunday school teachers. At Easter time the church organised its usual Easter youth camp at Shannon Park. 150 attended and a number of people made decisions to follow Christ or to enter full-time service. A new venture is an after-school tutoring service, funded by DEET and giving one-to-one assistance to thirty young people by qualified church members. Ross Savill is the youth and family welfare officer of the church. A trained social worker, he is widely respected in the area.

on leadership training.

The senior minister at Toowoomba is Bruce Armstrong. Now in his 13th year at the church, Bruce is married to Iris and they have five very talented daughters. Bruce is well-known in the area because of his radio work. He has a talkback session and regular spots. The ministry team includes his son-in-law Ross Savill, and Garry Hills, who serves as associate minister in Christian education. Garry is a Carlingford graduate and works with Mingles, the singles and married without children group, and with the youth Bible study. He and Bruce also serve as chaplains to the Mylo and Nubeena hostel, village and nursing homes. Kay Higlett serves full-time in the office.

The Toowoomba church is a large church that has a large vision to reach as many people in the area for the Lord as it can. It is planning large structures and dreams large dreams. No one in the Garden City could be unaware of its presence.

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ALMOST ON



Personal

Baptisms

•Peter Johnson, Bundaberg, Qld
•Mrs E. Kepreotes, Maitland, NSW
•Jacqui Waddell, Lismore, NSW
•David Saunders, Val Saunders, Stephen Haggarty, Norman Whitfield, Avril Whitfield, Jan McNeill, Gerri McNamara, Amanda Turner, Castlemaine, Vic •Philip Bloomfield, Nubeena, Tas •Linda Shaw, Boronia, Vic •Annette Meyer, Magill, SA •Patsy White, Launceston, Tas

Marriages

•Kay Saddler to Gary Atkinson, Knoxfield, Vic •Sharon Barnier to Mark Skinner, Denise Mower to Richard Connolly, Maitland, NSW
•Melinda Davis to Tony Paddick, Lydia Stephensen to Allyn Smith,

Lismore, NSW •Sonia Blenkiron to Eden Cartwright, Nancy Martin to John McPheat, Natalie Phillips to Anthony Bennett, Magill, SA

Deaths

•Tom Burt, Ulverstone, Tas
•Muriel Parsons, North Essendon, Vic •Erwin Lange, Goolwa, SA •Mrs Nola Smith, Ermin Armstrong, Lismore, NSW

Changes

Telopea: Minister—Ken Mason, 5 Wassell Street, Dundas, NSW 2117. Phone (02) 638 1796.

Vic—Tas CWF: Secretary—Mrs Lois Tagg, 1 Higham Street, Cheltenham, Vic 3192. Phone (03) 584 9871.

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Obituaries

Obituaries are limited to 100 words

Clay, Maisie

(4.2.92) Maisie Clay was born in 1909 and grew up in Doncaster, Vic, a fourth-generation member of the pioneer Crouch family. She committed her life to Christ in her youth and was an active member of the Doncaster, Red Hill and latterly Mornington churches. In 1933 Maisie married Vern Clay, who died in 1981. They had three children, Barbara, Trevor and Linton. Maisie was skilled in needlework and other craft work. She maintained a keen interest in many areas of life in the church and in her family and is remembered as a gracious and loving lady. —Ian Cartmel

SA

GOOLWA (Roger Risson) On Easter Sunday church filled for communion service when music group from Blackwood led singing ... Good Friday morning service held ... We joined other Goolwa churches for Sunday Dawn service (6.15 am) held on banks of Murray River ... Prior to Easter Lenten study groups held in homes ... "Setting Apart" service for all leaders in our church held during morning worship. **MAGILL** (John Gilmore) Great debate night. Topic "Should Church Seating Be Comfortable". Fire & brimstone presentation from Robyn Gilmore convinced adjudicators that they should not! ... John Gilmore assisting at Whyalla 26 April ... Jonathon Grear back in Adelaide after three years at Bordertown ... Easter program included Tennebrae service & meal on Maundy Thursday.

WA

MAYLANDS (Robert Drown) Trevor Streeton & Connie Eaves organised successful Maundy Thursday celebration 16 April. Presentation of scripture readings & guest musicians & soloists under direction of Trevor Streeton ... Pastor Robert Drown led well-attended Good Friday service ... Sally Graham & Glenys Revett back after illness ... Andrew Streeton presently in Holland ... Grace Taylor welcomed into membership ... Congratulations to Rod O'Donnell & Michelle Moyle on their engagement. **SCARBOROUGH** (Nigel Merrick, Raye & Mike Hasleby) In just under six years building loan of \$300,000 repaid to ICA. Praise offering \$9,400 plus Market Day \$4,000 enabled us to complete payments ... Series of sermons by

Nigel, "The Six Miracles on Calvary" ... Dr Ray Yerbury spoke on "Living in the Light of Christ's Coming" ... Supper chat time commenced for senior youth ... Geoff Dunning & Dwight Randall brought sermons. **FREMANTLE** (D. Good) The Easter cantata, "Calvary's Love" was brought to us by the choir of Becton Uniting Church ... Combined service with Fremantle UC held there on Maundy Thursday ... The poem "His Hands" featured at pm service on Easter Sunday ... Some ex-service personnel shared reflections on their wartime experiences ... Fruit project underway again. Cooked fruit going to Life in Focus.

NSW

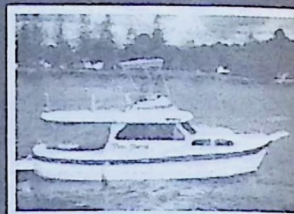
BATHURST (David Gurney) The Sunday School picnic day was attended by a number of families for a great time of fellowship & fun ... The evening service was organised by the young people of the church. For many this was the first time they had been involved in the preparation of such a service. It proved to be a very rewarding experience for all.

MAITLAND (R.N. Hawkins) Use of SDA facilities proving very beneficial ... Ian Richer, ITIM to mines around Singleton, induction 10 May ... Mrs J. Low shared singing ministry in morning service ... Mrs E. Kepreotes baptised ... Youth took evening service. First time for some. Went well ... Passover service at home helped appreciate background to communion ... Venture International team, Canada, took evening service.

LISMORE (Ian Phillips) Senior youth involved in a houseparty camp at Horseshoe Creek ... "Growing as a Christian" nights held for eight Wednesday nights ... Garage sale raised \$652 for Religious Education Association of Lismore ... New baby boys for Andrea & Doug Hughes, Kym & Brendan Davis, Ray & Marianne Cox ... Church on the Lawn nights are popular & draw good crowds ... Church family saddened by death of Nola Smith.

Church News

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THORNLEIGH (F. Elliott, S. Wesley) Special Easter program commencing Palm Sunday with combined service with Thornleigh City Christian Church. A Christian Passover service held Easter Thursday led by Dr D. Chapman fol-

lowed by traditional lamb dinner. Stuart Wesley led Good Friday service at which Franklyn Elliott was speaker. Climax to program was combined Easter special at Christian City Church featuring YWAM team. All meetings well attended.

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Church News

Tas

ULVERSTONE (Tom & Ruth Edge) State Convention 14 & 15 March held Civic Centre, Ulverstone. About 100 attended. Guest speaker Rob Combridge, SA. Afternoon CWF Women's Celebration, Glenys Reaby, Vic-Tas CWF Pres-elect, spoke & sang. Evening inspirational rally great evening. Sunday worship 108 attended chapel Queen St. Greg Foot, Tas Pres, presided, Max Carter preached. Luncheon followed ... 20 March men's getaway mystery car tour ... Children's church attendance growing.

NUBEENA (C.G. Henderson) Guest speakers Avon & Desley Moyle & David Whiting ... World Day of Prayer held ... Three attended State Conference, Ulverstone ... House meetings held Thursday evenings ... Craft group held once a month ... Easter services well attended ... Sunday School going well under the leadership of Kaye Triffett & teachers ... Improvements to church hall & kitchen floor ... Church lending library formed ... Baptism of Phillip Bloomfield on 5 April.

LAUNCESTON (R. Foster, C. Spaulding, D. Tobler) Op Shop market day successful ... One baptism on 26 April when Ian Webber (World Vision) spoke at both morning services ... Second of church lunches held to enable members to get to know each other better.

CAVESIDE (John & Colleen Harrison) Church appreciated fellowship with Launceston church during afternoon 5 April ... Combined churches procession of witness held Deloraine Palm Sunday ... Church full for combined Good Friday service with guest speaker

Rev Trevor Fist (Trevor pastored local Baptist church during 1950s, now retired in NSW) ... Enjoyable evening praise time Easter Sunday ... Easter Monday picnic washed out but rain appreciated by farming community.

Qld

BUNDABERG (Alan Leane) Praise God Peter Johnson's decision & baptism ... 270 enjoyed "Gems of Joy", Buettel family ... Stephen Knights home 18th birthday. Anita Brown, Brady Pohle home Easter ... Peter Baker & Sharon Allen God's blessings new life together ... Em & Alice Linderberg supporting family Mackay ... Dennis & Barbara Treebin, Derek & Trixie James holidays Camp Cal ... Graham Warne & wife visit tracing footsteps Kanakas in 1800s ... David & Cheryl Phillips & family returned Townsville.

Vic

MAIDSTONE (Wes Rodgers) Church half-yearly business meeting held. Well attended ... Ladies coffee morning Betty Baruch spoke on a Passover presentation ... During Wes & Rita's absence on holidays Pauline de Brevi, Jean Cooper & Arthur Lewis were the speakers ... Church praying for several sick people ... On Good Friday service shared with Tottenham Baptists. Bill Amor speaker.

RED CLIFFS 29 March saw Mr Sharrad's official retirement from ministry. Presentation of cash & basket of flowers to Mrs Sharrad at smorgasbord luncheon after service. Many churches & organisa-

tions represented ... Through kindness of Glen Waverley church & cash donation church has Conn organ. This replaces an organ, donated by a member 22 years ago ... Speakers have been arranged until new minister starts in July.

NORTH ESSENDON (Graham & Bev Burgan) Men's prayer breakfast & trivia night held 28 March ... Annual general meeting 5 April. Thelma Lucas & Jim Lycett elected to board. Thanks to June Follett & Geoff Alves (secretary)—retiring ... Congregation saddened by death of Muriel Parsons, also Edie Haydon's great-niece ... Keilor Road Uniting joined us on Palm Sunday ... Combined Churches of Christ Maundy Thursday at Berry Street. **NORTHCOTE** (F.B. Alcorn) Good Friday service combined with Baptists ... Some members went to Easter '92 celebrations ... Anzac Day special prayer meeting for Brotherhood. Conference President & others present ... Sunday special worship service with "Testimonies" arranged by young people ... Heather Carbis has had surgery at St Vincents Hospital. Ivy Bangsund in Macleod Repat. Hospital. A number of members missing owing to ill health.

CASTLEMAINE (P. Haylock) Successful day of prayer held for church goals & needs ... Numerous recent baptisms ... Andrew Furlong doing short-term mission work in Philippines with FEBC ... Bus ministry being trialled as a community outreach ... Letterbox drop & personal follow-up planned ... Youth ministry bearing fruit.

PRESTON (Tony Armstrong) CWF presented Maundy Thursday service "Roses of Remembrance". The seven roses being the roses of re-

joicing, redemption, revelation, repentance, reconciliation, righteousness & resurrection. The last one of course being the most important one for Christians. This was a very moving service. Betty Quaife was soloist ... Open Door has celebrated its 17th birthday ... Recent visitors Olwyn & Peter Shannon, Dalkeith Rd, WA.

BORONIA (A. Henley, K. Milne) First anniversary of church fire combined with 71st church anniversary. Services 10 am & 7 pm. 300 in attendance. Four past ministers shared in 7 pm service. Special offering \$2,646 ... Rebuilding of halls underway ... Harvey & Lyn Miller & family farewelled as they leave district ... Senior Citizens service. Dr Geoff Whiting speaker ... CWF service with Heather Marshall, Uniting Church minister.

LA TROBE TERRACE, GEELONG (Dr C.J. Mackenzie) Laurie Barker ministering to church during Dr Mackenzie's holiday overseas ... CWF collected groceries for Salvation Army & morning coffee resulted in over \$90 raised for beds in Indian hospital ... Colin Grieve welcomed into fellowship ... Four-member team from CCTC led family service with music, drama & message ... East Geelong & Terrace united for Good Friday service ... Church & CWF represented at annual conference.

EAST KEW (Ed Roffey) After 69 years of service Fred & Doris Elliott, through failing health, have moved into the Manchester Unity Aged Members Centre at Coleman Pde, Glen Waverley. They will be missed very much from our services ... Three members planning to attend World Convention and US tour ... Many away interstate on holidays.

44th NATIONAL CONFERENCE

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Young Writers

Words about Words

As Christians living in a society today where pressures are high and the spoken word is often carefree and meaningless, our feelings and Christian faith frequently seem to be misunderstood. Dealing with this age-old problem can be quite a struggle, for being open and honest with our deep feelings and needs to a person that has hurt them, not understood or does not know they exist is like exposing an open wound. We feel they will not understand or be seriously interested, which adds more hurt and confusion to the problem. So the saying "silence is a virtue" comes into practice but solves nothing. This should not be so, for when hurt feelings are bottled up they tend to become more con-

fused and very strong and angry. It then becomes a case of the feelings coming first, not the tongue to be tamed.

As a young Christian I am learning that the spoken word can be very powerful and achieve much. If we turn to our Father God and ask for his guidance in our words we can then speak with his authority, knowledge and wisdom.

So when we are hurting we should be honest with people and use the power of words to reflect how we feel, resolve the problem and free ourselves from hurt and anger. This restores us to having inner peace with ourselves and earns peoples' respect of our Christian faith.

—Sue Knox

A Friend to Everybody

Jesus is the friend of everyone, no matter who they are, what they think or what they do. He's prepared to help and simply be there for anyone who comes to him.

Again and again in the Bible Jesus is shown to be full of love and care for the people around him. If anyone came to him he helped them. And that hasn't changed, even today, with a world so full of violence, hatred and atheism. Jesus still loves everyone, and it is through him that we can see exactly what real love is all about.

Jesus shows us that it's not about what you can get, but what you can give—something easily forgotten. Jesus gave and gave and yet rarely received. He loved the people so much he never forced them to give; though I'm sure he was sad when they took and then turned their back on him. Jesus literally gave until it hurt. He allowed his body to be beaten, spat upon, ripped and eventually hung upon a cross.

Jesus went to the extent of giving his own life away for all of us. You can't ask for more love than that—or more proof of his love and care for us.

Jesus wants to give and look after his children, but more often than not his efforts go unrewarded. People take and take and as long as they get what they want they don't care about anything else. How often is this shown on TV: when characters get into a whole lot of trouble or are incredibly scared they suddenly turn to God. And then, if he does give, they forget him when things get better. Yet God keeps on giving and giving. Perhaps we should all try to emulate him. The Lord is superior to everything and if he's willing to give, what keeps us from doing the same? Jesus was a friend to everyone, and so, I guess, we all should be too. A friend. That's what people need. We need to be a friend to everybody.

—Neil Marsden

The Last Word

God is the owner of all things, not a fraction of the world, but all of it. You and I are stewards of the whole life, not a fraction of it, but all of it.

—John M. McBain

Middle age is when all one's energy goes to waist.

★★★★★

"I never have any trouble with back seat drivers. I never hear a word from behind."

"What do you drive?"

"A hearse."

★★★★★

"I'd give a thousand dollars to anyone who would do my worrying for me."

"You're on. Where's the thousand?"

"That's your first worry."

★★★★★

I hold people open-mouthed with my conversations. They can't stop yawning.

★★★★★

I have been told that the mind cannot absorb any more than the seat can endure.

★★★★★

Conceited: "I can tell just by looking into people's eyes exactly how they feel about me."

Bored: "That must be embarrassing for you."

★★★★★

A: "I think I'm in love."

B: "Really?"

A: "Yes. Now all I need to do is to find someone."

★★★★★

A garage sale is a technique for distributing all the junk in your garage among all the other garages in the neighbourhood.

★★★★★

Don't knock the weather. Nine-tenths of the population couldn't start a conversation if it didn't change once in a while.

★★★★★



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