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THE AUSTRALIAN CHRISTIAN

Vol. 96

No. 10

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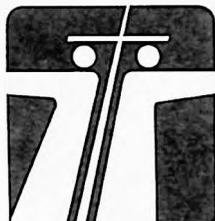
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White Papers

An Omnibus Phrase

A E White

Once in a blue moon there is an addition to our language which grows like a rose or spreads like a disease, according to your bias or prejudice. One such phrase has become such a part of our language that no one on the planet can fail to hear it at least a dozen times a day.

Our radio presenters, TV gurus, news readers, politicians, sports commentators (especially sports commentators!), would be tongue-tied half the day if the phrase were banned!

It is an all-inclusive comprehensive phrase which can be used on any imaginable occasion: when shopping, visiting the sick, passing the time of day, polling for an election, talking to the kids, closing a telephone conversation, farewelling a friend, opening a bank account, commenting on the weather, reflecting on the price of wool or sympathising with the unemployed. It can mean anything, anywhere, or it can mean nothing.

It can be pensive, seductive, informative (sort of!), hopeful, admonishing, caring, watchful, hopeful, anticipatory. This very ragbag of a phrase can be used equally by PhDs, BAs, waitresses, schoolteachers, publicans, nurses, wharf labourers, doctors, dads and kids.

The phrase, of course, is "There you go!" The words in themselves mean almost nothing. It is tone and length and pitch and body language that convey whatever it is that is being conveyed. The sense of the phrase depends entirely upon the event and the relationship of the speaker to the hearer.

For example, a waitress says "There you go!" meaning "Get stuck into the Four 'n Twenty!" she has just dumped in front of you. A greenie says, "There you go!" meaning "We've just lost another 100 whales or a couple of thousand hectares of tropical rain forest!" The sports commentator says "Well, there you go!" meaning our famous cricket captain has just made his third duck in a row. The bank manager says "There you go!" meaning that you are \$1000 overdrawn and you are really gone! The doctor says gravely, "There you go!" meaning "We'll have to take off a bit here and a bit there. Do you have private insurance?"

I guess that the phrase "There you go!" is in natural succession to that earlier phrase "How 'ya going?" That phrase had nothing to do with your mode of travel, your destination, or a query about your health or happiness. It was just a conversation

starter. Having started, there was need for a conversation stopper. Now we have it: "There you go!"

Our minister has not yet caught up with this universal phrase. But I guess that it is inevitable that, one Sunday as the service nears its close he will look caringly over his congregation and, instead of a customary "Dismiss us with Thy blessing," he will say slowly and reverently, "Well ... there ... you ... go!"

When you think about it, it may not be such a bad idea. Some folk become so used to the conventional benediction that it may not register. Some accept it as a signal to plan their next move, such as whether or not to stay for a cuppa! Some may react as though it is akin to the curtain coming down in a theatre.

The very familiar words have been heard so often that we no longer have to think about them. If, one day, we lost them, we might be persuaded to consider just what it is that we have lost.

"There you go!" We are going somewhere! We are going out into the world and much of it will be unknown territory. Before we meet again in church we could suffer bereavement, lose our job, win a fortune, enter a new and exciting relationship, or have much to learn or unlearn.

This most often heard verse is designed to give us assurance. "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all."

Every week we begin a new stage of the journey the New Testament called *The Way*. We may be able to hide the old phrase in the new. "There you go!" (Make sure you go prepared for whatever happens, with the assurance of your Father's love, with confidence in the constant presence of your friend, and with the knowledge that the material world has a spiritual dimension, you can meet the days with faith and hope and love!)

I guess that we can read all of that into a new short-cut blessing, if your minister uses it but, somehow, I have a preference for the way our fathers, and mothers, did it.

Well, there you go! Have a nice day! No worries, mate!

Alf White is one of our retired ministers, having worked both in Australia and New Zealand. Alf has also served as a lecturer at the College of the Bible and as editor of The Australian Christian

Bethesda Hospital's Strategic Planning

Setting goals and directions



• The works, Senior Staff and Management and Board Members

El Caballo Mansion, nestled in the mountain valleys of Wooroloo, Perth, WA, was the chosen site for the Bethesda Hospital Strategic Planning Retreat, held 16-18 April.

The retreat was organised to enable members of the Board of Management and senior managers to spend time together identifying, discussing, exploring ideas and setting goals for the future ministry of Bethesda.

This certainly occurred—in the midst of good food and fellowship, with an atmosphere of hope and vision.

Friday night's program allowed Board members to focus on the spiritual dimension of our Hospital and its future ministry. As we spent time in prayer and worship we were very conscious of God's leading throughout the history of Bethesda, and were inspired by those who had gone before us in such faith and trust. Saturday morning the senior management group arrived and it was heads down to some solid strategic planning. After reading background papers on topics such as the history of the Hospital; State and Federal health policies; strategic procedures for hospital planning; and the importance of total quality management, we were

more than prepared for the tasks ahead.

After breaking into smaller groups, we worked together on the essential elements of our mission statement and core values. After discussion and debate, we finally decided that our mission statement should read:

"Our mission is to provide high quality health care, recognising the physical and spiritual needs of the individual, delivered with respect and compassion, reflecting God's love for all".

Our motto for staff development and enrichment now reads: "Bethesda Hospital—reflecting God's love".

Whilst we recognise there is still much work to be done with the clarification and expansion of these statements, they formulate the basis on which we would like our Hospital, and the way in which it functions, known. Spurred on by the development of a mission statement, we again formed smaller groups to discuss strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT analysis).

This was both an affirming and provocative exercise, with many new ideas being formulated.

Keeping in mind the community in which we minister,

Sunbury Self-Supporting

Successful church planting venture



• Milton Oliver

Just 26 months after commencement the Sunbury, Vic, church has achieved financial self-support. This new project, launched in January 1991, under the leadership of Milton Oliver, was assisted by the Vic-Tas Department of Mission, Education and Development and Gisborne church. Strathmore, Northcote, Camberwell and Fountain Gate churches were among others assisting with special gifts.

The new church expects to move to its fourth venue later this year. Membership is cur-

we then summarised all our comments. These initiatives included, increasing our profile in the community through marketing and educational programs; extending our benevolent services to include the possible support of a third world health facility; strengthening our chaplaincy service; and being committed to the ongoing development and empowerment of staff.

Sunday morning commenced with an outdoor communion service which linked elements of the original vision that led to the development of Bethesda, to our participation in that vision today.

The final session summarised our findings and goals, and objectives were set.

—Jenni Ashton
(Chaplain)

rently 52 with a further 13 being prepared for baptism and another 33 about membership. Morning services have recently peaked at 110 with some 140 attenders anticipated by October. Of interest is the fact that only five people have transferred into the congregation from Churches of Christ. All other additions have been evangelised or "re-evangelised" from the community.

The church's goal for the year 2000 is an active membership of 600 and two new churches planted during the period.

The church is on the outer western metropolitan fringe of Melbourne. The congregation is currently seeking new premises such as a factory or warehouse to give the group a semi-permanent base for some years.

Sunbury has been an integral part of the CROP Initiative of the Department of Mission, Education and Development and the Properties Corporation.

The minister, Milton Oliver, was recently elected to the Department of Mission, Education and Development and brings his insights and experience in church planting to the Department's church planting initiatives.

—Don Smith

John Farnham At Nunawading

Come to a children's musical about a boy who invites John Farnham to the church's "Kids and Co." club at the Nunawading, Vic, church at 4.45 and 7 pm on 27 June. A great outing for families, or Sunday School or Kids' clubs. Free admission, but a donation will be collected for missions. Stay for a \$5 meal between the shows. Where? Church of Christ, Surrey Road, Blackburn. Bookings on (03) 877 6077.

North-Western Districts Annerley Now 80 CWF Camp

Continuing a long tradition

This year was the 22nd year of CWF members and friends camping at Halls Gap, Vic, continuing a long tradition of an annual weekend of women coming together for praise, worship, Bible study, fellowship and sharing.

"The Promises of God" was the theme on which Mrs Marion Kitchen centred her studies, emphasising God's peace, presence person and promise.

Dorothy Geyerably assisted Dorothy Holstein, our missionary speaker, to inform us of her work in India, giving highlights and insights into the Community Health Care pro-

gram she is helping to coordinate in various regions.

Mrs Maureen Daniels, Conference President, and other executive personnel assisted the Horsham committee to organise and present a varied program.

The Sunday morning communion service, where our thoughts were focused on Christ and his enabling for change as we reach out to others, was a highlight along with "the concert" (best ever) according to some.

\$230 was given for Living Link Harmer family PNG.

—Jan Smith
(Camp Convenor)

Special celebrations

The Annerley, Qld, church in Brisbane is celebrating 80 years of outreach and ministry in July. Annerley is a southside suburb, only 10 minutes from the city centre, and the church is finding itself with a changing role in ministry. This is being brought about as the older houses in the area are being removed, with blocks of units for rental, or accommodation for solo mums, are appearing in their place. The church has an active membership of 150, a team ministry, Boys' and Girls' Brigade Companies, preschool and primary age programs, touch football teams and a very visible young adults group. The elderly are catered for through an "Old Time Music Hall" pro-

gram featured each month. All Age Bible School programs are running successfully on Sundays as are home Bible study groups during the week. Special services and events are strategically placed during the year as a means of encouraging friends and families of members to hear and examine the Christian faith.

The anniversary celebrations will extend over the weekend of 16-18 July and include a Youth Concert and Coffee Shop on the Friday night, the family musical "Sir Oliver's Song", on the Saturday night, and special services on Sunday. Guest speaker for the weekend is Randy Edwards of Kenmore Christian College.

Plant the Seed—Nurture the Child

Christian education in schools

The Council for Christian Education in Schools is about planting the seed of the good news of Jesus Christ in the lives of children and in nurturing our young people in schools.

A Religious Education teacher shares one of the joys of

planting seeds. "Planting the seed in a child's mind can be effective not only for the child ... the Easter story lesson, taught by me to a Grade 2 class, was to prove how great the Good News can be! The child retold the story at home to

Mum—retold it well too, it seems. Mum was so impressed by the story it changed her life.

I met Mum, an acquaintance, up the street who told me happily of her new found faith in Jesus through the Easter story as told by her daughter one day after school."

You can be a part of planting seeds and nurturing young

people by supporting the work of the Council at the annual Religious Education Sunday to be held on 8 August. If you would like to learn more about the ministry of the Council or obtain details of Religious Education Sunday please contact Keith Amos at The Council for Christian Education in Schools on (03) 602 1993.



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Solution To Church Copyright Problems

Avoiding a legal and administrative nightmare

What has been called "an administrative nightmare" for churches has a new solution, through **Christian Copyright Licensing Asia-Pacific Pty Ltd (CCL)**. The service gives music directors and ministers permission to make copies of copyrighted materials for their congregations to use in services. This service enables churches to save the time and expense of tracking down the publishers and paying royalty fees for each and every song, because CCL has done that for them.

Christian music publishers are working in harmony through CCL, who has gathered the rights for much religious music, and offers them to churches on a one-fee-per-year basis. More than 400 publisher catalogues currently participate, making available over 100,000 songs.

"This service could be of great value to churches that regularly use worship aids, such as overhead projectors and song sheets", according to

David Garratt from **Scripture in Song**. "For every church trying to locate a song owner and comply with the copyright law, there were hundreds that weren't bothering at all." "It became an administrative nightmare. There was a need for a clearinghouse."

Many hear a song and assume they have the right to reproduce that song for their congregations to use. But to even type or hand write words to a song and project it before a church to sing—let alone printing copies without obtaining permission and paying the copyright owner a fee—is a violation of copyright law.

The issue became urgent for churches as a result of the tremendous utilisation of technology such as the overhead projector and the photocopy machine.

Trying to comply meant many hours of research to find copyright holders, and hundreds, perhaps thousands of dollars in royalties.

Dial for New Hope

Phone contacts

Over 250,000 have now phoned "Dial for New Hope" in Melbourne in the nine years since it first began. Many have been counselled by phone and by letter, and some have linked up with a local church. Dial for New Hope is a recorded telephone message that is changed daily. The message are helpful, relevant and evangelical. Currently, more than 1,400 messages have been recorded and are available on cassette. The phone service (phone number (03) 1 1 610) is advertised in every Victorian telephone directory, *New Life*, *The Australian Christian*, *Challenge* newspaper and through a mailing list of 600. To raise more local involvement, 10 churches have letter box dropped up to 1,000 leaflets, each with three months Dial for New Hope messages listed on it. The drop also in-

cluded the church address and contact person for those wanting help (material or spiritual).

Churches or groups that would be interested in setting up Dial for New Hope, outside the 03 telephone district, on a local phone and answering machine, should make contact with **Jack Edwards** at **New Hope Ministries**, PO Box 160, **Burwood 3125**. Churches interested in making use of a letter box drop, should also contact Jack Edwards.

Churches of Christ have had an active involvement in Dial for New Hope since its commencement. **Jack Edwards**, minister of the **Oakleigh, Vic**, church, has been chairman for the past eight years; **Bill Mills** has been writing the scripts for the messages since September 1984, and has now written more than 1,380 scripts.

The fee CCL charges is based on the size of the congregation—churches with fewer than 50 attenders, paying only \$55 per year and churches with 1,000 attenders paying only \$410.

Many talented Christian songwriters are involved in producing songs and hymns which enrich worship. The rev-

enues from the licence are shared among these people to enable them to continue and develop their ministry.

Application forms to join this scheme can be obtained from **Christian Copyright Licensing Asia-Pacific Pty Ltd**, PO Box 1254, **Castle Hill 2154**. Once the application form is completed the church will be sent a Licence Certificate and a full Licence Kit which will provide assistance in complying with copyright law.

If you wish to make overhead transparencies, duplicate or print song-sheets, make song books, reproduce songs in the weekly service sheets or bulletins or record worship services then you need copyright permission. If you use only commercially printed hymnbooks, song books or commercially produced overhead projector transparencies then you may not require a licence.

Telephone contacts are NSW (02) 894 5386 or 938 6177, ACT (06) 551 2199, Qld (07) 875 1281 or (076) 39 3211 or Vic (03) 729 3777. Other states should contact any of these numbers.

The 1993 Winter Series

The Challenge of the Nineties

Empowering People



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Empowering the 'Third' World
- 11 July **Thorwald Lorenzen** (Switzerland)
Human Rights in Christian Perspective
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Empowering the Urban Poor
- 25 July **Moses Abbatangelo**
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Getting Involved in Aboriginal Reconciliation

Week of prayer for reconciliation

Reconciliation is an important concept for Christians: reconciliation with God and reconciliation with each other.

This year, you have the opportunity to focus on a particular relationship—the relationship between Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders and the wider community. This is a relationship which needs healing.

To help this healing process, you can join a Week of Prayer for reconciliation between Australia's indigenous peoples and the broader Australian community.

The Week of Prayer will take place 20–26 September and will be preceded by a series of studies within each church and faith group.

The week will coincide in some churches with the observance of Social Justice Sunday, and will also highlight the reconciliation process during the United Nations International

Year for the World's Indigenous Peoples.

The week is the result of a series of meetings between representatives of different churches and faith groups earlier this year.

Churches involved in the Week of Prayer include the Salvation Army, the Churches of Christ, the Anglican, Uniting, Presbyterian, Lutheran, Assemblies of God, Catholic, Society of Friends, Greek and Antiochian Orthodox churches, as well as the Australian Council of Churches. Other faith groups involved include the Jewish, Islamic, Hindu, Baha'i and Buddhist communities.

The week is an activity of the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation. Its task is to promote reconciliation between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and the wider community.

One of its major roles is to enhance—through education

Horsham Seminars

Focus on Evangelism

The Horsham, Vic, church has recently conducted two special seminars as part of its church program.

The first was a Church Growth Seminar on 24 April, led by Allan Meyer, pastor of the Mount Evelyn, Vic, church. 35 attended.

The seminar covered areas such as: a church wanting to grow needing to be well based in the Bible, with a strong sense of destiny and knowing the leading of the Holy Spirit; using the particular gifts and abilities that are within the fellowship to advantage; leadership roles of ministers and elders; identifying the particular people that we can reach; making church services credible and relevant to the non-churched; having and maintaining a missionary vision; creating church

programs that will meet needs within the community; and finances helping us to grow.

The second special program was a Church Communication night, on 25 May. 100 attended. The elders presented the aims for the church, a document setting out important principles for the future of the church. The fellowship had the opportunity to ask the elders and ministers any questions relating to the church and to make any statements that they wished. The general thrust of the statements and questions helped those present to focus upon our responsibilities of outreach in Horsham.

Those present appreciated the opportunity to discuss, in a spirit of love and openness, the important issues facing the church.

and discussion—a deeper understanding by all Australians of the history and culture of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders, and of the need to address continuing disadvantage. A statement of principle has been adopted by the faith communities involved in the Week of Prayer. It reads: "Acknowledging that we have not yet put right the continuing injustices that have characterised the history of this country since 1788, we representatives of religious communities are determined to take action to restore justice and community, and to

work together with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to identify the specific actions that we must take together for justice and the healing of relationships."

The Week of Prayer is your opportunity to do something: to think, to talk, to pray, to seek out avenues of communication, to do something positive.

To get involved in the week contact Ian Allsop, the convener of the Reconciliation Advisory Group for Religious Communities, 77 Capel St, West Melbourne 3003. Toll-free phone (008) 81 0378.

Employment Position Available Workcover Rehabilitation Officer

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- Reasonable computer skills will be an advantage and favourable consideration will be given to applicants who have worked in, or have a knowledge of, nursing homes and hostels.
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Enquiries to:

Ms Jean Weise
Phone, 326 8977

Applications close 2 July, 1993

Visiting Canberra? Stay with a Church Family

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

If you would like to enjoy friendly "one of the family" hospitality in Canberra write for particulars to:

Lyn Swift
34 Yiman Street,
Waramanga 2611
Phone (062) 88 2050

Barbara Kennedy
6 Sharp Place,
Melba 2615
Phone (062) 58 1360

Advance bookings appreciated

Disciple Making Challenge

National Minister's Seminar

It's taking place at Phillip Island, one of the top tourist spots in Victoria. The penguins are famous residents of the Island and the food and accommodation will be excellent.

The main sessions will be presented by one of the world's leaders in disciple making—**Bill Hull**. Bill has a real concern for helping leaders apply Biblical principles in practical, contemporary ways.

Sessions with Bill will be short and practical with plenty of room for questions. Each participant will be given time with Bill in a smaller group to give opportunity for more focussed discussion.

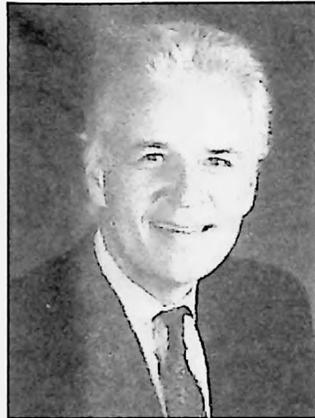
Numerous MTI's will take place. These ministry trends and insights will be short, sharp events scattered throughout the program, given by folks who are doing something especially creative, unique or significant in ministry.

It will be a great way to get in touch with the latest action and will give conference delegates contact points for informal discussion in areas of interest.

Worship will be inspirational, with **Wes Beavis** giving us leadership in this important area.

The Refresher is being planned to give time to relax and enjoy meeting friends and colleagues in ministry.

In short, it will be one of the



• **Bill Hull—disciple maker**

most inspiring, practical and relaxing refreshers our ministers will ever have experienced.

General Conferences

These too will have many of the marks of the National Minister's Refresher, but with a real desire to equip, encourage and inspire the leaders of local churches who work alongside their minister.

The greatest benefit will come to those who attend as a team from individual churches.

Opportunity will be given for these teams to begin working out the principles in the light of their particular local circumstances.

Phillip Bradley, one of the organisers for the conferences, emphasises the purpose of the

Stepping out together *in Christ*



• **The recently purchased land**

Stepping Out Together In Christ is not only our theme for the year, it's a description of what we are doing!

The Frankston, Vic, church have purchased six acres of land on the eastern edge of Frankston, in a bold new move to make an impact on their city for Christ.

A recent meeting overwhelmingly approved a proposal from the senior minister, **Phillip Bradley**, that the church relocate. It was presented with the unanimous support of the ministry team, eldership and board of management.

Six days later, **Alan Emmett**, from Properties Corporation, was bidding at auction for a prime piece of land located on the corner of McClelland Drive and Cranbourne Road. It seemed like a fair price at \$174,000. The difficulties of pur-

chasing an equivalent amount of land at our current location at a cost in excess of \$2 million seemed a touch overwhelming.

Adjacent to the new location are the developing areas of Langwarrin, Carrum Downs and Baxter. Official estimates foreshadow population growth between 40–60,000 in the next 10–20 years.

Phillip says, "Australia is a secular society with an overwhelming number of people who are lost and isolated from God. Frankston is no different! We need to find much more effective ways of reaching our community for Christ".

There is a fresh emphasis at Frankston to see every member becoming an active disciple. "My task is to help equip folks in the congregation so that they can have greater confidence in doing the work that Jesus has given us", he said. "As we take time to enjoy our relationships and encourage those around us, we will find opportunities to share our faith. If we are ready and able to do it, we are going to see the sort of growth that will demand larger facilities."

The current chapel seats around 130. With up to 300 worshipping in four services each Sunday, this sort of project will help pave the way for some exciting, future possibilities.

gatherings: "We want to make this count for the local church", he said. "Our aim is to send encouraged and inspired leaders back to their churches with practical ideas that will lead to more effective disciple making"

Ministers registering with three or more other full registrations will be admitted without cost. Its only eight weeks away. Early bird discounts close with mail dated 16 July.



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Letters to the Editor

Letters are limited to 200 words

Number of Colleges

To the Editor,

Unfortunately I was not surprised at Bruce Burn's letter ("AC" 22 May).

I wish I was. He voiced a concern about a waste of limited resources, namely unamalgamated theological colleges.

I believe God's will is to have hundreds of such colleges across Australia and the world, training thousands to be mature in the faith. Instead, too often, the church opts for inadequate training and half-hearted commitment from its leaders, and continually employs those in full-time ministry who may sometimes give them what their itchy ears want to hear.

Paul's advice to Timothy in 2 Tim 4:3-5 is appropriate for our day, when some of the church is too ready to jettison support for colleges on some minor rumour of theological import.

In the words of Dr Tom Benjamin, during his recent visit to Melbourne and Wollongong, you misunderstand the purpose of the theological college.

It is to stop us running off on our personal heresies.

A refining by fire occurs in that those truly called of God to serve, as they discover what they truly believe, discover by sweat and tears the truth about who is Jesus Christ and then, and only then, are they fit to put their hand to the plough of leadership.

Such people are no better before God than anyone else, they are just fitter to sustain the church like a trained athlete runs a race.

The colleges do not always succeed in this, but they do enough to give God glory.

The church would do well to take heed, and make the colleges accountable, not withdraw support. God is not glorified by closing churches, nor amalgamating colleges of theology.

—Bryan O'Neill
(Mulgrave, Vic)

Number of Colleges

To the Editor,

Is Bruce Burn aware that the issues he raises ("AC" May 22) are among many that were considered by the "Task Force on Theological Education and Ministry Training" set up by Federal Conference in 1987? I raised another recently about the current "polity" arrangement between the colleges.

The report from the Task Force was presented to the following Federal Conference in Canberra. It listed some 39 recommendations for change. Apparently, the document was politically too hot to handle on the floor of Conference, and at the suggestion of the College Principals, it was placed back into the hands of the colleges to work through.

While expedient at the time, one has to wonder about the wisdom of such a move.

Are the college faculties (and boards), with their vested interests and narrow institutional and parochial perspectives, best placed to be deciding these issues? Have the points raised and recommendations made in the report, really been seriously considered? Where is the communication and accountability?

My fear is that what could have been a positive opportunity for creative thinking and visionary planning has been treated as a problem which "could upset the apple cart". The response seems to be "if we do nothing and say nothing, hopefully this will go away".

I hope I'm mistaken, but I think not. —Jeff Deuble
(Castle Hill, NSW)

Divided Churches

To the Editor,

I agree with the Guest Editorial by Norm Flett ("AC" 22 May), that many churches are divided or have problems and struggles.

Individuals make up the church, the family of God, and when they hang on to hurts, pride or other sins, then the whole church suffers.

I pray that all concerned Christians take heed of the three points he lists—"Restoration of

the Holy Spirit; of godly leadership and of discipleship of evangelism". Following and obeying the teachings of Jesus is a total commitment of every part of our lives—no holding back!

Its no good saying you're committed, if you are not trying your hardest, and daily, to evidence the fruits of the Spirit. Glorify God, not yourself!

Sadly, there are many in our churches who don't believe the Holy Spirit is for them—yet, if this were true, how can they believe in God and Jesus and not believe in the Holy Spirit?

Don't get so caught up in the "ceremony and theory" that you forget about the love and personal relationship you can have with Jesus.

Love one another, as he loves you; live your life for him who gives you life everlasting.

—P. DeBrevi
(Maidstone, Vic)

Death of Murray Sweetman

To the Editor,

The Associated Churches of Christ in New Zealand have sustained a great loss in the death of Murray Sweetman, in Auckland, on 31 May.

Murray was an active and loyal member for many years, prominent in the affairs of the churches from his membership and work in the Onehunga church, Auckland through to being involved with the old General Executive of the Churches to World Convention in Auckland several years ago.

He had also been the Chairman of what was the Home Mission Committee of the Churches of Christ. The Christian Hospital Trust Board was fortunate to have him as Chairman from its inception in 1961, where he gave tremendous leadership, until the time of his death.

Letters from Tertius

Thunder And Lightning

To the Editor,

I sometimes find myself dipping into the Book of Revelation and wandering through uncharted territory and getting quickly and hopelessly lost. I have listened to many "experts" who have claimed to have the key to unlock the mysteries, but they have all lost me. So I can lose myself without their help.

But sometimes when I read bits of it "the penny drops" and "the light comes on". I happened to have dipped into chapter eight, where "the prayers of the saints" are offered to God on a golden censer, whatever that is! Then having delivered the prayers to God an angel fills the censer with coals from the altar and throws them earthwards. The result—"peals of thunder, voices, flashes of lightning and an earthquake!" Wow! Some praying!

And I wondered why the prayers of modern saints don't have such cataclysmic results.

Maybe we are praying for the wrong things. In the prayer time in our Bible study group we ask God to bless us. Why? He's already doing it—far beyond what any of us deserve. And we pray for the missionaries and promptly hand them over to God to look after, and that lets us off the hook. And we pray for our church, yet every one of us knows how to resist the nudging of God, and our minister, when it suits us.

And then I thought that maybe the prayers of the saints, for all their limitations, are being answered with thunder and lightning—not spectacular like the Australia Day fireworks display—but in the lives of people all over the world whom God is changing—and even in us lot who'd be pretty hopeless if God hadn't got hold of us.

—Tertius

Letters to the Editor

Murray was also a well known member of the Electricity Association and was an excellent member in his own profession.

The minister of the Onehunga church was assisted by Roger Russ, retired minister of our churches, when the service was held on 3 June at the Presbyterian Church, Onehunga.

We uphold Nessie his wife and family members at this time.

Personally I am grateful to Ian Ogier, from Palmerston North and past editor of *The New Zealand Christian*, who contacted Jim Pope from Kew by radio, who then contacted me through the Morwell minister.

—Bruce Burn
(Morwell, Vic)

Naming Violence Against Women

To the Editor,

I would like to think that no Christian man would condone physical or sexual violence

against women. However, it seems that many people are distressed by the suggestion that men can deliberately, or inadvertently, behave in a manner which, although not violent, may make women feel uncomfortable.

There is an old-fashioned but effective remedy which would prevent many such situations arising. That is: a man should never be alone with a woman in a counselling, professional, business or pastoral situation. A third person should always be present, or the door of the room should be left open. During a medical examination, for instance, a patient who feels nervous should always ask for a chaperone.

I find it hard to believe that any ministers, professional or lay people would leave themselves vulnerable to accusations of impropriety by neglecting such a basic necessity.

—Mary Ambrose
(East Keilor, Vic)

Wanted: Definition Of Christian Unity

To the Editor,

Joan Pye's letter ("AC" 5 June) sensibly questions some of the implied assumptions in Norm Flett's Guest Editorial ("AC" 22 May) on the question "Denomination or Restoration Movement?"

Much has been said about Christian unity, but very little about what it means.

It is easy to quote the prayer of Jesus in John 17 "that they all may be one".

But how is that to be understood as a practical possibility? What kind of church is envisaged? What is one-ness, anyway?

I should like to invite your readers to attempt a definition of Christian unity, spelt out in understandable and, indeed, workable terms.

This is an SOS. Somebody please tell me!

—Hal Head
(Tootgarook, Vic)

Assistance Required

To the Editor,

It was wonderful to read Bruce Burn's letter "Cooperation." ("AC" 5 June)

Our church is in the situation where it is being raised, literally from the dead, by the Lord.

Our numbers have risen by some 200% this year.

We have stepped out in faith and are being wonderfully blessed.

Our major problem is not what to do, but something as paltry as a lack of funds.

If more of our churches would look beyond themselves, if they would accept not just the challenge but the responsibility as partners in the gospel, they would find churches like ours—growing; ministering; alive; evangelical churches, and all we need is some money.

In short, our situation is we are in need of doing some major repairs to our church building and hall; our pastor, who has five dependants, needs to be paid properly; and our manse is in need of major repair or relocation.

There are churches in our Conference that could stop our scratching and hardly feel an itch.

After all, it's only money.

—Max Watson
(Seven Hills, NSW)

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Papers



Trade Unions, Churches and Industrial Relations

(ACTU) \$3, including postage.

This publication is a selection of material published within the last 12 months that reflects on the relationship between the trade union movement and Australian churches. It contains articles from various Christian publications, items in various daily papers, press releases and some of the discussion that occurred over church spokespersons' comments on both Labor and Liberal policy prior to the last Federal election.

During this period the trade union movement has moved to develop a more effective working relationship with the churches and this is reflected in the joint statement issues by the Victorian Trades Hall Council and the Victorian Council of Churches.

There are 14 different documents contained in this collection and several of them raise interesting points regarding the relationship between the church and organised labour.

Copies of the document can be obtained from the Australian Council of Trade Unions, ACTU House, 393-397 Swanston St, Melbourne 3000.

—CRA

Books



44 Steps up off the Plateau

by Lyle Schaller (Abingdon Press) \$21 plus postage.

Lyle Schaller's work as a church consultant and writer is widely known in the Western church. His latest book is a practical guide for leaders to help move churches from the plateau to growth.

The matter is relevant to our small and middle-sized churches.

Reasons why churches plateau are analysed and the way forward, to growth, are set out in clear steps. Many ideas are transferable to our Australian situation. Evangelism, prospect lists, outreach, relocation, group life, change, planning, staffing and worship are among the suggestions. Highly commended.

Available from the Vic-Tas Department of Mission, Education & Development, 77 Capel St, West Melbourne 3003 (Phone (03) 326 8900).

—Don Smith

Wine in the Bible

by Samuele Bacchiocchi (Biblical Perspectives) \$16.

Christians must take much of the blame for the epidemic of alcohol usage. The national bill for alcohol in Australia is calculated at over \$6 billion annually, and problem drinkers and alcoholics number above 1.5 million.

Dr Bacchiocchi is an American Adventist of Italian origin who was admitted to the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome where he graduated and received a gold medal.

Alcohol in any form is a matter for perennial debate, even in the church, and the author has opened up the subject of the Christian ambivalence to alcohol in a scholarly and comprehensive manner. The main thrust of this momentous book is that Jesus did not use alcohol and that his followers would be well rewarded by disavowing its use. In a non-dogmatic way Bacchiocchi states his reasons.

The fact that the term "vineyard" appears 94 times in the Old Testament and 23 times in the New is abundant evidence that the vineyard with its products of grapes and wine were central to biblical economy and theology. All too often the only Scriptural wine that many Christians know about is fermented. Bacchiocchi has amassed a vast range of information from both Bible and ancient history to stimulate fresh thinking, though some of his information has been available for decades.

Worldwide, the accepted definition of wine is "fermented grape juice". This explains mainly why many Christians believe the "wine" mentioned in the Bible is, invariably, alcoholic. Much Christian scholarship rests on this assumption and some, at least, of the standard textbooks that ministers and divinity students rely on have spawned this notion. The crucial point is that the Bible knows of two distinct grape beverages—one unfermented and healthy; the other fermented and stupefying.

The culminating point in the controversy over alcohol emerges in the Lord's Supper. Millions contend with dogmatic and fervent certainty that the wine that Jesus and his disciples drank at the Last Supper in old Jerusalem was alcoholic. They assert that he commanded it as a permanent element of this Sacrament, and there is no further argument. Bacchiocchi has news for those whose minds are not set interminably in steel. Many may not consider it too high a price to crawl over broken glass to obtain a copy of this book, even for the thrill of an enlarged mind.

Resourceful and suggestive as this book is, it is fair to intimate that a couple of the author's American reviewers who agree with his main thesis, think it is conceivable that he may have "strained" some biblical material in his effort. There are some examples of poor editing.

The NSW. Drug Awareness Council, PO Box 82, Parramatta 2124, will supply copies. Cost \$16, plus \$3.50 postage.

—Rev Gar Dillon.



"And I say this is no time to be calling around for estimates!"

People

Induction at Werribee

Call to mutual service and ministry



• Children from Explorers and Good Companions present Peter and Michelle with a street directory

"We have not called a minister to be the 'professional Christian' and do our job in the community." With that reminder, Werribee, Vic, church celebrated the induction of their new minister, Peter Lyne, on 30 May.

Graeme Batley, who had served as interim part-time minister, led the congregation as Peter and his wife Michelle and their three boys Ben, Daniel and Josh were welcomed into the fellowship at Werribee.

"The Scriptures tell us plainly that the minister's role is to prepare God's people to do God's work," Graeme said.

The involvement of the whole church community was symbolised in the gifts brought to Peter and Michelle by members of the congregation. The Explorers and Good Compan-

ions presented him with a street directory, symbol of the area in which he will serve. The Men's and Women's Fellowship groups gave a copy of the church newsletter; the Bible study and prayer groups a copy of the church directory, symbols of the welcome offered by each home and of the demands of ministering to the whole congregation. The Playgroups representative and the office secretary presented Peter with the key to the building, and the elders and church board brought a Conference Handbook to remind him of the church's wider involvement in the Brotherhood. Sunday School, youth group, singles group and an older member of the congregation presented a Bible, and a new member and a long-serving member brought

Pastor Benjamin Tiwari

Visit by overseas church leaders

In June and July, the Overseas Mission Board will bring several overseas leaders of our churches to Australia. They will attend the annual meetings of the OMB in Adelaide and then visit various centres around Australia. Pastor Benjamin Tiwari is coming to Tasmania and Victoria. Pastor Tiwari is a well respected preacher and pastor. For several years he acted as the secretary for the Conference of Churches of Christ in Western India. In this role he had the responsibility of the administration of conference and communication with the Australian Mission Board.

At present he is the pastor of a strong, outreaching congregation at Daund, Maharashtra State. This is where our Christian Hospital is found. Daund is at the geographical centre of

a bowl and a towel, as a symbol of service. Peter responded to each gift, reminding the church members of their part in the ministry he was taking up.

As the song, "Welcome to the Family" was sung, members of the church family went forward individually to offer their greetings. It was a moving ceremony for Peter and Michelle and the boys who, in their two months in Werribee, have already become very much involved in the life of the church.

At the end of the service, members and a large number of visitors shared lunch together.

our conference work. Benjamin Tiwari is a preacher who will bring a strong message from God.

In Victoria his meetings are: 29 June, 8 pm at Cheltenham; 30 June at Morwell; 1 July, 7.45 pm at Burwood (together with Vision Church); 2 July, 7.30 pm a youth rally at Malvern; 3 July, 8 pm at North Balwyn; 4 July, 11 am at Bayswater and 7 pm at Montrose; 7 July, 8 pm at Noble Park; 8 July, 1 pm at Oakleigh CWF; 9 July, 7.30 pm, regional rally at Footscray; 10 July, Ballarat; and 11 July, 11 am Richmond; 3 pm rally at Hartwell and 7 pm at Croydon.

40 Years Service Recognised

Thornleigh acknowledges John Ellerby's contribution

On 19 April the Thornleigh, NSW, church celebrated the 40 years that John Ellerby has been either secretary, an elder, or for many years, both.

John has chosen to resign as an elder and special recognition was made of his many services to the church, and the blessing he has been over this time.

John made an appreciative and heartfelt reply, which was followed by a standing ovation from the congregation.

A special morning tea followed and the congregation look forward to continuing to share with John and Lorna for many years to come.

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Happenings

After more than 2 years of research and negotiations, Trans World Radio and HCJB World Radio have agreed to establish a 24-hour satellite service that will be available to all radio stations in Spanish-speaking Latin America. Target date for initiating the service is 20 November.

The Sydney City Mission, which provides accommodation for over 700 homeless men, women, young people and families every night in its 38 crisis care centres throughout Sydney and the Southern Highlands, has conducted a major survey of homeless men and women. The survey covered 8,136 people who stayed in some of the Sydney City Mission's adult centres last year. 79.9% were Australian born, whilst 11% were English speaking people born overseas. 4.7% were Aboriginal people. The most predominant age of homeless people were those aged 26-30 and 53.5% of homeless people were aged under 40. 36% of homeless people were invalid pensioners whilst 27.8% were on unemployment benefits. 40.2% who made contact with the Mission made that contact because of homelessness and 32% were homeless and alcoholic.

A major national conference has been organised

at Macquarie University, 14-16 July, to assess the impact of the Christian church on Australian society. The Conference is being organised by the Centre for the Study of Australian Christianity and the Catholic Institute of Sydney. The conference will focus on the challenges facing Christianity in Australia as it moves into the next century. There will be over 60 papers grouped in 11 different themes. The themes include sections on renewal, revival, women, parties and power, the media, politics, Australian colonial Christianity, contemporary Australian Christianity, ethnicity, comparative perspectives, inculturation and Australian Christian spirituality. Enquiries to Dr Mark Hutchinson, Director, Centre for the Study of Australian Christianity, Robert Menzies College on (02) 888 7133.

In the city of Yokohama, Japan, \$18 million has been spent on a high-tech chapel with a robot priest who bows his head and moves his lips in time with a religious chant available in 7 Buddhist versions, 2 Christian scripts and a Shinto one. A hydraulic lift can bring onto stage one of two Christs on a cross or one of seven different Buddas. The chapel is beside a cemetery where the company hopes to make a profit by selling

grave sites, cared for by robots too.

A Dutch housing association is to issue specially designed cardboard boxes to homeless people in Rotterdam where between 1000-2500 sleep on the streets.

Chinese authorities have arrested more than 90 Christians in Shaanxi Province following a brutal assault on 5 house church Christians in March. One of the 5 Christians died shortly after being severely beaten by Public Security Bureau officers.

Christian radio broadcasters in Argentina fear government officials may soon order the closure of a large number of stations operated by evangelical Protestants. In recent months, the Federal Committee of Radio Broadcasting has closed 3 Christian stations. The threat comes at a time when the Roman Catholic Church is rapidly expanding its radio broadcasting activity. CONFER granted the Roman Catholic Church licences to create 75 FM and 15 AM stations just last October. Argentina's political charter states that the government of Argentina sustains the Roman Catholic faith.

Russian President Boris Yeltsin has announced that the government will establish a new department to oversee reli-

gious affairs, following a meeting with religious leaders in late April. According to statements by Yeltsin, the new department will give "concrete assistance" to religious communities and regulate religious activities.

At a recent assembly at the Churches of Christ Theological College, Mulgrave, Vic, a cheque for \$1,520 was presented to the College. This was the proceeds of the special concert by the Welsh Male Voice Choir, held at Glen Waverley church on 4 April, which had been organised by Jack Edwards of the Oakleigh, Vic, church.

The Pfitzner/Becker bill to prohibit the display of category 1 pornography was passed by 28 votes to 14 in the South Australia House of Assembly on 7 May. When proclaimed, the law will require all category 1 magazines, currently displayed in newsagents, delis (milk bars) and service stations in clear plastic bags, to be in opaque bags or placed behind blinder racks.

Some believe that Afghanistan is on the verge of going the way of Yugoslavia. After 15 years of war, 80% of the villages have been destroyed, half the population has been displaced, over 1 million have been killed, and many more become handi-

capped. The education system has been destroyed, medical services are very poor, food and fuel are scarce, law and order has broken down, the economy is in shambles and the people have lost their faith and hope. Fighting within Kabul, since last August, has destroyed nearly half the city.

Churches in the UK notched up a net 13% attendance rise in Oxfordshire last Christmas due to a major advertising campaign, using the slogan "Christmas—it's enough to bring anyone to their knees", on posters, radio and car stickers.

One of the largest Anglican congregations in London has voted unanimously to convert, as a group, to Roman Catholicism, a decision announced just hours after England's Catholic bishops said they would accept Anglican congregations en bloc along with their priests. Under guidelines announced by the Catholic bishops, converting Anglican congregations will be allowed to retain some Anglican practices during the transition; however, eventually all Catholic beliefs and practices will have to be accepted. St Matthew's Church is among a group of about 10 traditionalist parishes expected to convert to Catholicism in the wake of the Church of England's decision in November to allow women priests.

JUSTIN TIME



I believe we have to move on to a new maturity. We must have new questions to ask.

How do we, acknowledging our history with praise and thanksgiving to God, go on to seriously face the question, "How do we become a church to reach the unchurched?" How do we make the unchurched feel comfortable within our fellowships? What have we got to do to make that change possible?

The grassroots local church climate is one in which our message about Christian unity ought to have wide appeal, because the "denominational" ties are not so strong, the "traditions of men" have been weakened, but in the process our own "traditions" are tripping us up. How do we take advantage of the situation when so much of "our traditions" are right—dead right!

1993 can be a watershed, if we honestly recognise who we are, where we have come from, face our present crisis and begin to seek answers as to how we reach the truly unchurched and help our membership to accept the unchurched. We have a task of rediscovering the Gospel we know so well, but this time, for the non-Christians of our society.

The choice is ours. If we stick to the old "true and tried" ways we will begin the long drawn out process of death. Small churches take a long time to die.

The other choice is a painful and difficult reassessment of taking the Gospel to "strangers", the unchurched, the ethnic minorities and the pagans of our society. But that very sharing of the old Gospel can give us life for the future. It is our future.

Presented as one of a series of papers at a
Queensland Conference
Strategic Planning Summit,
Kenmore, Qld, March 1993.

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Reflections on the History of Churches of Christ in Queensland



Donald E. Stewart

Pamphlet Club • 383

Introduction

I have been asked to present a paper as a reflection of the history of Churches of Christ in Queensland, to endeavour to give us some perspective on where we are at the present time, and as to how we have arrived at the current situation.

I do not find this an easy task.

I have, therefore, endeavoured to search back into my memories and also to draw upon my own historical researches, and, in the process, to try to understand and put together what has been happening; and of greater importance, to consider the forces that have been driving us over the years of our history in Queensland.

I grew up in the Ma Ma Creek and East Ipswich churches with strong links into the West Moreton and also Brisbane churches. I took an early interest in what was happening in the churches. I was involved in the planting of the churches at Leichardt, Hervey Bay and Arana Hills. I served on the boards of both Maryborough and Albion churches before going to Kenmore Christian College as the second student to enrol. My student ministries were at Stafford, Leichardt and East Ipswich—Bundamba—Leichardt. I had two interstate ministries over a period of ten years at Traralgon in Victoria and Hobart in Tasmania, where I was involved in the planting of a new church at Howrah.

I have a strong belief that when laying foundations, a particular kind of ethos is generated which tends to permeate the organisation on into the future. Churches of Christ in Queensland have been affected by such an ethos. My evidence of that is the similarity of the Southern Tasmanian country churches founded by Stephen Cheek with the Queensland churches in which I grew up, which were also founded by Stephen Cheek. Despite a hundred years of history, the ethos persists.

This history is therefore impressionistic. I will raise issues that we may have thought to be carefully buried, because I am of the belief that some of these things are important evidence in our search to understand our present situation more clearly. It is possible that some of the material may well be debatable, but I hope that I will be able to reflect some important issues for consideration.

Beginnings

In July of 1882 Stephen Cheek landed in Brisbane, having sailed from Victoria in response to a plea from some folk in Queensland for the Restoration Movement to be planted there. An earlier plea to the Victorian Conference had been rejected because of a shortage of resources.

Stephen Cheek laboured in the establishment of churches in Queensland until his death at Warwick in February 1883. History records a

us because that audience has dried up. Denominational loyalties are no longer so important. What is important is a local church that meets the needs of people. The change is more than logic and reason, it is also about emotion. It is about feeling. It is about meeting needs.

To the older members this change has become distressing, because we are no longer preaching the old logic. We are starting to think of the "unchurched", but we are largely inexperienced in that field. We do not know how to welcome or deal with such people. Why can't we have people come from the denominations and we will preach to them about "baptism"? But how can our preachers preach about "baptism" when all the audience is baptised, and the real issue is about "faith" in Jesus Christ?

We have been hit by a double whammy—the loss of the ghetto and the drying up of our source of converts.

We have traditionally had a potent rationalistic approach in which the truth of the Scriptures has been our strong point. We have had a sound logic for Christians. We have been very right about the things that we believe. But we have some gaps. We have problems with the unpredictability of the Holy Spirit. We are not sure about how to use people's needs as a basis for evangelism. Our German heritage, with its logic, moves uncertainly where emotion is expressed.

It should not be surprising that at this point of time we should be confused. It seems to me there is no common theme running through the papers that have been presented. There is no common agreement as to what our problem is. Actually, that is what should be expected if what I am saying is correct.

I want to take a moment to affirm some things. The truth of the Gospel remains unchanged. The good news of salvation has not changed. But what we do needs to change. In this new era, instead of preaching "baptism", we need to baptise. Instead of preaching "unity on the basis of the New Testament", we need to bring the unchurched into a fellowship where the Scriptures unite us in Christ. Instead of preaching the "Lord's Supper", we need to conduct the Lord's Supper in more meaningful ways. Instead of colourless logic, we need more colour and movement and music in our worship that touches us in our hearts as well as our heads.

Some Thoughts on Building a New Future

Today we are in a crisis. We are emerging from our ghetto after a century of being comfortable in it. It is not there any longer. In our frustration we are turning on each other. We are looking for scapegoats for our failure. Despite trying hard and working hard, we are not seeing results for our efforts. We are critical over a range of things that we perceive to be inadequate. Will moving the deck chairs around again stop the Titanic from sinking?

ing a far more radical society, the old field of church membership was drying up and there was a frustration growing because the old logic was no longer working. Graduates from the College of the Bible appeared to be becoming more "liberal" in their thinking. This slowly developed a factionalism within the Queensland ministers, which came to represent two camps during the 1970s. Those tensions prevented consideration of the situation that was steadily growing upon us.

In 1965 the Queensland Conference, against the wishes of the Federal Conference, established Kenmore Christian College. It was established not because of any theological discontent, but for practical reasons related to the problem of the supply of ministers to Queensland. There was a group in Victoria, the "Churches of Christ Christian Fellowship", that sought to hijack the reasons as being theological, but in the main they were unsuccessful and have since disappeared from the scene.

Dr Jauncey set the college firmly on the track of the old logic, as "Simply Churches of Christ" amply illustrates.

The traumatic issues of the 1960s largely passed by Churches of Christ in Queensland because we were still firmly entrenched in the ghetto mentality, pressing on with the conversion of Christians. Queensland's conservatism was a blessing to us.

But change was coming, and the results of the 1960s social revolution had to catch up with us. I believe that 1983 marked the end of an era.

The 1970s had seen some of our best growth. Bruce Roberts, as the Home Missions director, led an important church planting program and we saw good growth at a time when our southern state conferences were experiencing some rapid decline. I was absent from Queensland for the 10 year period 1969-1979.

The End of the Ghetto

The plurality of colleges providing ministers to Queensland, the growth of the churches, a new generation of emerging leadership, the Church Growth Movement and the changing social conditions all conspired to break up the ghetto mentality.

The sense of closeness disappeared over a short period of time. People stopped going to functions in other churches. We were now too big for everyone to know everybody. There was growing diversity. Change was in the air. But of even greater impact were the social changes that came out of the social revolution of the 1960s.

Everyone no longer belonged to a church. Hierarchical structures were breaking down. Catholics defied their Pope and went on the pill. What was emerging was a "post-church" society. The problem for us is that our old logic, which largely applies to a denominational audience, no longer helps

remarkable achievement, for in seven months Stephen Cheek had established some four churches and had a further three about to commence. He had done this over a distance that stretched for about 160 km. By comparison, the Tasmanian churches had been established in two fairly compact areas around Esperance Bay and the Huon River, which flowed into the Bay and on the Tasman Peninsula.

I asked myself, "How is it possible for a man on foot to be able to complete such a remarkable feat over such a distance, in such a short time?" It was not until I began to ask questions and to seek to establish more accurately what had occurred, that some of the truth emerged. One of the keys to understanding what had happened was the role played by Carl Fischer.

Carl Fischer was a German Baptist lay preacher. In 1882 Stephen Cheek apparently met up with Fischer and went back with him to Zillman's Waterholes where there was a migrant German Baptist group. Following Cheek's and Fischer's presentation, they decided to form a Church of Christ. It seems then, that Fischer took Cheek around his preaching circuit and the former German Baptists became German Churches of Christ. I have been told that the sermons in those early days were in German.

Cheek apparently left Fischer and the German folk at Middle Ridge, Toowoomba, and went on to Warwick to seek to establish the Restoration Movement among the British settlers, but did not have the same success that he had achieved with Fischer among the German migrants.

In 1883, the first Churches of Christ Conference was held in Queensland, at Toowoomba. It is interesting that a motion taken by the Queensland Conference to the Intercolonial Conference at the end of the 19th century was a motion to establish an overseas missions work in Germany. Carl Fischer went on to serve as Conference President in 1886, 1893-94, and 1902-03.

The period up to the outbreak of World War I was one in which there was increasing prejudice against German people; with the outbreak of War that prejudice became extreme. People born in Germany were interned, because they might be German spies. My grandmother received a letter asking her to report to a certain point because she had been born in Germany. She refused, claiming, "I have married an Englishman!"

There are some interesting relics of that era of prejudice. The chairs behind the communion table at Zillmere have Union Jacks carved into them with the Southern Cross superimposed. The tradition of the motion of Loyalty was important to the conference because it was necessary to declare our loyalty, and in doing this we had to provide demonstrations of loyalty to Britain, with a zealotness even greater than the British. The Charters Towers church was originally built by the German Lutherans and,

when they were interned during World War I, they sold the building to the Churches of Christ, but the local name by which it is still known today is the "German Church".

Into the Ghetto

The result of the World War I prejudice was a need to bury the sense of having been of German origin. The process was so thorough that that piece of our history was almost lost. But look around and see the large numbers of German surnames that still persist in the Queensland Churches of Christ, and most of the "English" surnames reflect marriages to German lasses such as my grandmother.

The Church became in effect a ghetto. When I was overseas in 1980 looking at aged care facilities, I asked of one facility in Europe if there was some fear of creating an aged care ghetto. The response was, "Do you know what a ghetto is?" I knew that was a time to be quiet and listen. "A ghetto is a place where people without power go to give each other strength and support." In effect, we needed to have a ghetto mentality to survive the difficult period of prejudice.

This meant that evangelism was hampered and Queensland Conference did not grow like those in the southern states. Growth was painfully slow. They needed to keep their heads down and out of the limelight. They spent a lot of time supporting each other. They needed each other's support and encouragement. Strong inter-congregational bonds and a warm rich fellowship were built. People travelled great distances to be at functions. This ghetto mentality isolated them from the mainstreams of thought. There was no real contact with the other churches. The conference was an important rallying point within the ghetto.

Out of the German migrants came a new generation of Australians who had been brought up in the ghetto mentality. They did not see themselves as German, but British, speaking only English. They were also fairly aggressive and ambitious. They had a desire to establish themselves clearly as an effective church. The commencement of the College of the Bible in Melbourne, in the early 1900s, provided a further impetus to get trained ministers who could be evangelists.

It is interesting that the real impact from the college's foundation probably did not come for about 20 years. It takes time for new graduates to establish themselves and to become people who in turn influence the course of events. The period of the 1920s and 30s was a period of evangelistic expansion, not only in Queensland where there was still slower growth than elsewhere, but also in other Australian states.

We need to look closely at the type of growth that was occurring. It was really addressing the position of the "denominations" and a turning over of

Christians from the denominations. We were good at convincing others of the correctness of our positions with respect to the issues of "baptism", "the Lord's supper" and "the priesthood of all believers". Our movement had its beginnings in the rationalism of the 18th century and the Campbells were the ecclesiastical equivalent of the enlightenment. Logic is our strong point.

Our slogans say it well—"No creed but Christ", "No name but the Divine", "Bible names for Bible things", "Where the Scriptures speak, we speak, where the Scriptures are silent we are silent", "We are Christians only, but not the only Christians", "In things essential, unity, in non-essentials, liberty, in all things love" and "Abandon the traditions of men for the truth of the Scriptures". In a sense, these were motherhood statements for the church. Who could argue successfully with us with a logic like that. We knew that we were right. We had confidence. After all, everyone belonged to one church or another—the whole of society was our mission field.

We continued in our ghetto mentality long after the need for a ghetto had ceased to exist. The ghetto was comfortable. We strongly supported each other. We travelled to distant functions, we encouraged and we rejoiced together. We celebrated each other's successes. We all knew what was happening among our churches and we all knew one another. The membership of the church in 1945 was 2,378. We were small enough for the ghetto.

Following World War II, from 1945 to 1983, there was a long period of steady growth. But it was growth which resulted mainly from converting Christians from the denominations. The Church membership in 1983 was 6,108. But I have skipped over a number of important issues and we must retreat to pick them up.

The early conferences were firmly based on the Victorian model. The 1930 motion to set up the Social Service Department specified that it should follow the Victorian model. The powerful influence of A. R. Main, Principal of the College of the Bible, provided a firm, scholarly rendition of our ministry, which followed the logic with which the Campbells had endowed the movement. This scholarly influence linked us firmly to the Victorian conference.

The establishment of the Woolwich Bible College in 1944, amid some theological controversy concerning "liberalism" in the College of the Bible, really did not touch the Queensland conference. There were, in those days, few dealings with the New South Wales conference. However, by the 1950s, there began a steady influx of ministers who had trained at the Woolwich Bible College. The Woolwich graduates brought a warm, strong message with which we were familiar and we pressed on with the business of our logic in converting people from the denominations. In Victoria, which was becom-

People

Sixty Years Together

A milestone in marriage

After a week of lovely weather, a downpour on 30 May could not dampen the feelings of all at the special luncheon arranged in the foyer of the Launceston, Tas, church. Why? Because it followed the 11 am service, for family and friends to celebrate the 60th Wedding Anniversary of Jack and Elsie Edwards. There were a number of expressions of appreciation of the life and witness of Jack and Elsie over their association of 50 years with the Launceston church, particularly from several who, as young people, had shared in the Edwards' home.

After lunch, and the cutting of a cake, a moving reaffirmation service, led by son Kevin, was held in the church. Barry Birtwistle sang and Kevin finally pronounced Jack and Elsie "still married"!



• Jack and Elsie Edwards, still together after 60 years

President of Regent College visits Perth

Input on leadership and the church

Dr Walt Wright, President of Regent College, Vancouver, Canada, and his wife Beverley spent a week in Perth 23-30 May at the invitation of Regent alumnus Dr Neale Fong, Director of Youth Vision WA (Churches of Christ Youth Ministries) and the Chairman of Perth City Mission.

Dr Wright has just been appointed President for a further five year term. He also is the professor of Christian leadership and Management at Regent and was formerly Founding Director of the Institute for Christian Organisational Development and Associate Provost for Continuing Education at Fuller Seminary.

During his time in Perth, Dr Wright addressed over 40 denominational and para-church agency leaders at a breakfast meeting on the roles of boards in Christian organisations. He also conducted a workshop on strategic planning for Christian organisations, attended by over 30 Christian leaders.

Regent College continues to attract attention as one of the world's leading graduate theological schools, with its emphasis on equipping the laity and the integration of theology into the marketplace.

A highlight of Dr Wright's visit was a formal paper presented to a meeting of evangelical theological educators, including new board members of the WA Ministry Training Centre, on "The Future of Theological Education".

Youth Vision was particularly pleased to be associated with Dr Wright's visit, and churches and organisations in WA were stimulated greatly by his input and expertise.

—Dr Neale Fong

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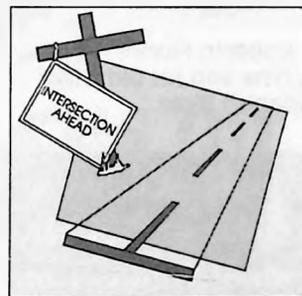
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Bibles on Loan in Cuban Churches

A problem of supply and demand

Cuba is still a communist country and Fidel Castro is still its President. But things have changed. Churches are overflowing and the most wanted book today is the Bible. Roberto Florios, a Church of Christ leader in Consolation del Sur, a town of about 45,000, says, "In previous years we had many obstacles to our proclaiming the gospel message, but now we give thanks that we can reach so many more people with the message of the Bible". Speaking to a team from the United Bible Societies, the only Bible organisation with government permission to send Bibles to Cuba, Roberto said, "Some of the older Christians have Bibles but many new Christians do not. We give priority to these but we still do not have enough Bibles for our new converts. Some of our people lend their own Bible to families for maybe one or two weeks, and then the Bible is passed on to another family."

In some cases, churches give their new converts a second-hand Bible until their declaration of faith is seen as genuine. This practice is common among several of Cuba's 56 Christian denominations. Since new permissions were given for Scripture imports early in 1991,

more than 1 million Scriptures have been shipped to Cuba, but it is not possible to match the demand for a book that everyone seems to want to read.

Mr Florios is excited that more Scriptures are now being made available in portions and selections. A Scripture portion usually comprises one book of the Bible. One of the reasons given for the growth of the church is that people become interested through reading these small Scripture items. Many people who have never been to Roberto's church enquire about obtaining a Bible, having first read one of these smaller Scriptures.



• Roberto Florios, holding a new and his old, 1948, Spanish Bible

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The Church Catholic

Worshipping with other Christians

Some months ago, Alan Matheson suggested that on vacation we worship according to some tradition other than the one we are most used to ("AC" 19 December). On 9 May we followed his advice, worshipping with San Marco Catholic Church on Marco Island, off the south-west coast of Florida (some 2,600 km from home).

This magnificent Spanish-style, chaste sanctuary was dedicated in 1989. The church appears to have a staff of seven—two priests, a deacon, two laywomen as parish manager and computer operator, and two laymen as director of Religious Education and organist/choirmaster.

The preparation program for marriage runs for six months. Bible study is every Wednesday and Bible sharing every Thursday.

Communion is taken regularly to shut-ins.

There were maybe 600 present at the third service, which began with a layman making a splendid statement on the reason for our worshipping the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

This church heeds the admonition of Pope John XXIII, namely, that we should sit at the table of the Word as well as at the table of the Bread. One layman read from Acts and another from 1 Peter. The choirmaster sang Psalm 33 with the congregation singing a response to each verse. One priest

read the Gospel of John and gave a meaningful 10-minute Johannine homily on "Home" (it was Mother's Day).

A layman gave the antiphonal pastoral prayer; the offering was taken up by women and men; we were served the Bread by women. The organ, beautifully played, was close to one of the front pews, and the organist announced the hymns.

The first hymn was "Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee" and the last, "Faith Of Our Fathers". There were a number of responses sung by the congregation. The first line of the second hymn referred to Mary but the rest of the four verses pertained to the incarnation (If Jesus was God, Mary would have been the mother of God, but in the hymn she was spoken of as the mother of Jesus). Tunes were pitched at a level that all could manage.

A second priest celebrated the Eucharist, at the beginning of which he said, "Jesus invites us all to feast with him at this Table".

Minds and hearts were engaged in this unhurried, hour-long service of worship, not least because the several leaders of worship hid themselves behind the Word they commended.

(Ronald Graham is Professor Emeritus of New Testament, Lexington Theological Seminary, Kentucky, and now lives in Johnston, Iowa, USA.)

—Ronald Graham

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Foodbanks now in Australia

In late April the official launch of the Melbourne Foodbank was held. There is also a foodbank operating in Sydney.

Foodbanks were first established 25 years ago when John van Hengel, a volunteer with a mission in Phoenix, Arizona, hit upon the idea of collecting surplus produce for distribution to needy people through the mission soup kitchen. From there it was only a short step to the foodbank concept—a central clearing house which could handle food supplies for all agencies working with people.

Large food companies produce quantities of food which cannot be sold through their normal outlets, either because of mislabelling, packaging problems or other minor faults. Likewise, fresh food outlets (bakeries, restaurants, green-grocers etc) are forced to dump many tonnes of edible, nutritious food. A study in the US

estimated that more than 20% of all food produced has to be wasted for a variety of reasons. In Australia a similar figure applies.

The foodbank allows the food companies to give their unsaleable stock to welfare agencies without the difficulty of finding groups to take the stocks, especially if they are large quantities of one particular type of food. The food companies deliver the surplus material to a central warehouse which the welfare agencies then visit to collect material to make into food parcels for their clients.

The foodbank is a system of streamlining the distribution system to allow for large amounts and varieties of food, it also enables them to handle perishable material without too much wastage.

The major food manufacturers have welcomed the scheme, and groups such as

the wholesale markets for vegetables have also made significant contributions to the foodbank in Melbourne.

The Melbourne Foodbank, situated in a donated warehouse in Airport West, has taken over two years to get off the ground. Aided by various grants, the Melbourne Foodbank hopes to distribute over 800,000 kg of food (worth in excess of \$9 million) in its first year of operation. This is anticipated to grow to over 1.5 million kg of food distributed by the third year of operation.

At the moment, various charitable organisations have to register to be eligible to make withdrawals from the Foodbank.

Currently, there is no cost for registration, however, to help cover costs in future years, it is anticipated that participating welfare organisations will pay an annual fee for use of the service. This will help pay the

operating costs of the quite large organisation. The Melbourne Foodbank can be contacted at 55 Parer Rd, Airport West 3042 (Phone (03) 338 3769). Individual churches are able to register and to collect food for use in food parcels. This is an excellent source of good, nutritious food for those who are homeless, or needy in any way, that a church has contact with.

One spin-off from the Melbourne Foodbank is that the agencies involved in setting up the project have had many unemployed people working in the Foodbank. The skills they have developed there have enabled some of them to gain full-time employment.

Unfortunately, it seems that there will always be the need for such an operation to make effective use of food that would otherwise be wasted. Hopefully, such a concept will spread and be available all around Australia.

A Church ABC

Tumby Bay church is one of our smaller country churches situated on the lower Eyre Peninsula, South Australia. Tumby Bay is in a popular tourist area, 45 km north of Port Lincoln on the eastern coastline of the peninsula. The church itself fronts onto the foreshore and is graced with magnificent views. The building was constructed in 1912, using granite that sailing ships used as ballast. The ships paid the church to be able to off-load the ballast prior to their return journey.

At present, the church has no minister and lets the manse for people to use for holidays, with the main reason for this being the current financial situation. Their average attendance at services is 25-30 and this is boosted during the tourist season, sometimes almost doubling the regular membership,

as Tumby Bay and the surrounding areas are a popular spot for holidaying and fish-

congregation who speak and by visiting speakers, including one retired minister who lives

a sense of isolation and separation from the wider sense of Churches of Christ, and emphasise the joint nature of our ministry.

All of the peninsula churches are involved in the Red Cliffs holiday camp and because of its proximity to the campsite, the Tumby Bay church has a lot to do with its oversight.

The church has the usual services and groups running, with the women's fellowship's craft group contributing toward community care projects.

The church also has links with the People's Church—an aboriginal church—where they contribute toward the work under the leadership of Max Wright. The church is involved in the local inter-church council, sharing in combined services, such as Easter, and RE in schools and services in the local aged persons' hostel.

ing. The church's position is advantageous in this respect, having a large number of passers-by, and being located close to the caravan park.

The township has a large number of retired folk as residents. Many are retired business folk or retired farmers, Tumby Bay being situated in a grain growing area.

Their lack of a minister is made up by a number from the

in the area. The church is particularly encouraged by the regular visits of ministers from Adelaide on the first Sunday of each month, the metropolitan churches releasing their minister to come and help on these days. Tumby Bay is also encouraged by their connections with the Grote Street, city, church who are their metropolitan friendship link. Both of these connections work against



Focus on Tumby Bay

Classifieds

DEATHS

PAGE Alan Vere. Passed away 9 June, aged 63. Loving husband of Iris, and father of Alan and Sue, Dawn and Peter, and Stephen and Maureen. Beloved Grandpa of Aimee, Alexis, Karen, Sandra, David, Christopher, Kylie and Sarah. At peace in God's care.

ROWLINGS, George Geldert. Passed away on 25 May 1993. Loved and loving husband of Elsie. Father of Allan and Anne. Dearly loved father-in-law of Wendy and George. Much loved grandad of Sandra, Steve, Robyn, David, Jonathon and Kerrie. Always in our hearts.

IN MEMORIAM

HARTNEY, Jim 22.6.87. Treasured memories of the love and life we shared. I miss you every day. Your loving wife Betty.

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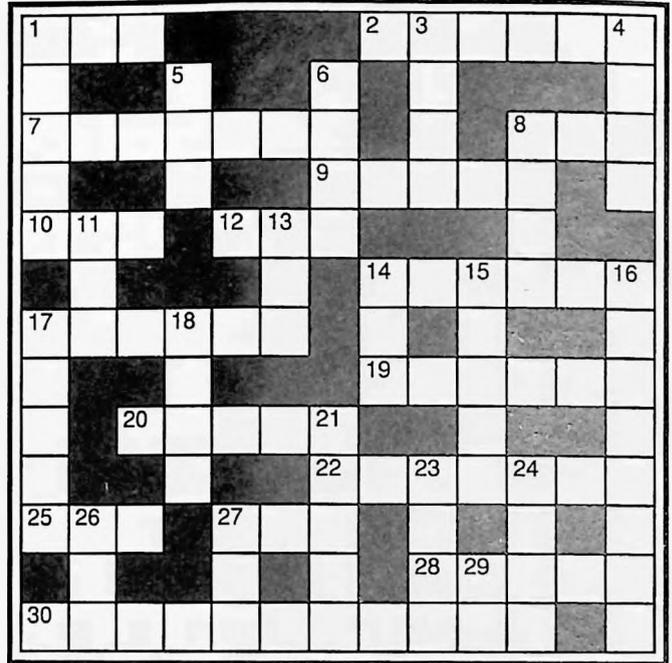
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Crossword



Clues

ACROSS

- 1 Aramaic for "son of"
- 2 Solomon had 12,000 of these (1 Kings 4)
- 7 City of the tribe of Benjamin (Joshua 18)
- 8 Number of great lights
- 9 Israelites' time in Babylon
- 10 Bleeding woman touched this
- 12 Son of Noah
- 14 Bovine colouring
- 17 Temptation was to turn these into bread
- 19 City in the mountains of Judea (Judges 19)
- 20 Shepherd king
- 22 Palace administrator (2 Kings 18)
- 25 Stood still (Joshua 10)
- 27 "Mother" in Bible
- 28 Prophet with family problems
- 30 Occupation of Demetrius (Acts 19)

DOWN

- Noah
- 8 David's job with the sheep (1 Samuel 16)
- 11 Command given at instigation of Lord's Supper
- 13 Balaam spoke with one
- 14 Ruler of Magog
- 15 Country mentioned in Acts 2
- 16 Governor of Jerusalem
- 17 Seven of these on the scrolls
- 18 The day of the Lord is coming (James 5:8)
- 21 Baruch put these in a clay jar (Jer 32)
- 23 Name for God (Hosea 2) KJV
- 24 Father of Saul (1 Sam 10)
- 26 Guilty of intermarriage (Ezra 10)
- 27 One of part of Jacob's gift to Esau (Gen 32)
- 29 David took bronze from this town (2 Samuel 8 marg.), Hebrew text



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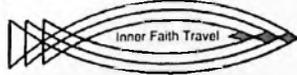
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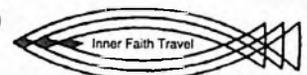
DOWN

- 1 David took bronze from this town (2 Samuel 8), Hebrew text
- 3 Bad king of Israel
- 4 God's anger is (Joel 2)
- 5 Part of Abram's offering (Gen 15)
- 6 Another son of



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Curkpatrick

Sacred Space, Insiders and Outsiders

Stephen Curkpatrick

The parable of Publican and Pharisee is the only parable set in an essentially religious context, with two men who "went up to the temple to pray..." This phrase creates certain expectations for the listeners. The locale of this parable—the temple, will determine who the listeners choose to identify with. This will be the model believer, the Pharisee, an outstanding example of morality and orthodoxy in the Jewish world. The unfolding narrative has a comparable effect to "a parson and pimp went up to the cathedral to pray". Parsons, not pimps, go to cathedrals, as indeed Pharisees, not tax collectors, are "appropriate" visitors to the temple.

The locale of a parable* determines how the listener will respond to the unfolding story. It ensures the Pharisee—on "homeground" in the temple—is expected to be the "good character" of the story. By contrast, the tax collector, an irreligious parasite, is utterly out of context in the temple's setting, and will, the listener expects, be shown to be so. He even stands "far off" from other worshippers to pray. The temple as "sacred space"† culturally defines who is insider and outsider, and the narrative appears to show who is comfortable there and who is not. Sacred space belongs to sacred people, and not secular people, especially the ritually impure. The sacred space justifies the Pharisee's prayer—outlining his right-

eousness, expressing disdain for the ungodly—which is not inconsistent with orthodox Jewish prayers.

However, the ending of the parable subverts the implicit assumptions which the temple, as "sacred space", will create for orthodox Jewish listeners. The Pharisee, who is at home in the temple, whose perception of God and religious life will be affirmed by his presence in the temple, is undercut by a declaration of righteousness for a penitent tax collector, who has no right to be in the temple. In the parable, the temple does not affirm the Pharisee's righteousness, therefore, the parable will not affirm any "sacred space" as a guarantee of God's favour.

The parable breaks down the assumption that the temple context can define who is a recipient of God's favour and who is not. The Publican who goes away justified, undercuts an expectation that temple and Pharisee form a natural corollary. They do not. Likewise the parable breaks down the assumption that any "sacred space", a church for example, can define who is a recipient of God's grace and who is not, who is an insider and who is not.

In a post-Christendom society, "church" as a traditional sacred space still has certain innuendoes and expectations. For some, "to go to church" (which is a theological anachronism), is to be encompassed in a set of theological assump-

tions, church—holiness—God. Therefore, it is a natural reflex for people to claim the "church is full of hypocrites", when the lifestyle of those who frequent this "sacred space" on Sundays, doesn't equate with lingering cultural expectations attached to such sacred space. This is a perception which has continuity with the idea of temple—righteousness—God. However, if the temple will not affirm a righteous man's righteousness, but becomes the context for a secularised outcast's encounter with God, our implicit assumptions about sacred space, including church, are turned upside down. The culturally incongruous association of temple—tax collector—God is being duplicated today, perhaps to the shock and discomfort of those who have come to regard church—holiness—God as an inseparable combination.

If sacred space, temple or church, will not confirm the righteousness of the righteous—the world has been turned upside down. If the unrighteous leave a sacred space justified with God, then temple or church as "sacred space" no longer belongs to the righteous, but to the unrighteous, not to the religious but to the irreligious. Therefore, the Kingdom of God subverts the assumption that sacred space, temple or church, belongs to insiders as distinct from outsiders. There is no longer sacred space in which Pharisees can retreat to pray in self-righteousness, venting

their disdain for the people of the world, however "ritually impure" and secularised they have become. Cultural "sacred spaces", such as temple in the orthodox Jewish world and church in Western society, cannot designate who does and who does not belong to the Kingdom.

* The internal locale of a parable is to be distinguished from its (Lukan) literary frame.

† Bernard Scott, among others, points out that the cultural-social map from which the parable's auditors read and interpret their world, consists of coordinates such as ritual-purity, honour-shame, kinship-power, prosperity-righteousness, patron-client, food-community, and sacred space-insider.

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Are We Wrong About Christian Unity?

Gordon Stirling

There is no doubt that traditionally Churches of Christ are committed to strive for what our predecessors called "the organic unity of the church".

The American Disciples grew from the Christian Association of Washington, probably the first ecumenical fellowship of more modern times. Its "Declaration" was that there is but one church, and it called on all Christians to manifest that "oneness". Later, Alexander Campbell was to call on all denominations, including the Roman Catholics, to confer together with the Scriptures to discover together the unity that Christ intends for his church.

The other branch of our American heritage, the Christians, began as an interdenominational revival that brought Christians of several denominations together. It led to the dissolution of their Springfield Presbytery as they committed themselves to unity with "the church at large".

In 1832 the Disciples and Christians united without a credal agreement and without property settlements and without even deciding on a common name, but with "a handshake". The Plea (as they called it) of this united church was for "Christian unity through the restoration of New Testament Christianity".

British Churches of Christ began with a restoration emphasis. But in the middle of the nineteenth century they were greatly influenced by the writings of Alexander Campbell and a transatlantic fellowship came into being, and British Churches of Christ became unity conscious.

Australian Churches of Christ were established by immigrants from British Churches of Christ, led by American evangelists and are thus a blend

of the two traditions, inheriting both the concept of organic unity of the church and the restoration of New Testament Christianity.

In 1909 Australian Churches of Christ published a 221 page book entitled *That They May Be One*, edited by T.J. Gore, G.T. Walden and A.E. Illingworth, with chapters by such well known writers as D.A. Ewers, Joseph Pittman, Thomas Hagger, A.R. Main and D.M. Wilson. In its introduction there is a reference to "the zeal, loyalty and devotion of those who by faith and doctrine and in ordinance and life, are seeking to attain the great consummation so earnestly desired by our Lord, 'that they all may be one.'"

Our predecessors did not spell out what the "organic union" that they dreamed of would look like. If they thought about it at all, it would have been a loose fellowship of churches at national and international level, all wearing one or other of the scriptural names of the church, and all worshipping and praising very largely as Churches of Christ had been doing for a century. It would have been a union without a creed, but with a consensus about essentials and wide liberty on matters of opinion.

But in Australian Churches of Christ we seem to have "gone cold" on the Plea for Unity, as it was called. Where they exist, Christian Union Committees

are the cinderellas of our conferences. But we cannot "get off the hook" that easily. We owe it to our predecessors, and ourselves, and to our integrity as a people to ask ourselves some serious questions. And here are some of them.

1. Were our predecessors wrong in their plea for organic union? If so, what do we stand for now?

2. Has the dream of our predecessors now been fulfilled in the greater spirit of unity that prevails today among Christians? In the Stone-Campbell days there was fierce denominational rivalry. In earlier times, Europe had been torn apart by religious wars. But today, most denominations accept that all churches are genuine Christian churches, and ecumenical cooperation has become, the order of the day. Is this enough to satisfy the implications of our "Plea"? Would Thomas and Alexander Campbell say, "That's great. That is exactly what we were on about"?

3. Churches of Christ are not alone in their lukewarmness about Christian unity. It exists in most denominations. So we must ask, "Is denominational division still the "scandal" or "the sin of division of the Body of Christ" that it was once con-

sidered to be? "Is it still a detriment to the gospel?" "Is it still wasteful of the resources of the Kingdom?"

4. If the unity that our predecessors dreamed about has now arrived, is it possible for Churches of Christ to cooperate more actively with other churches in worship and mission, while remaining true to our historic witness?

5. Our commitment to "No creed but Christ" has to mean that we accept as fellow Christians all who accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour. How much more would we require of them before we could enter into organic unity with some of them?

6. In the secular world, it seems to be assumed that the "in thing" is the "market economy", with competition as the dynamic that keeps it working for the good of all. In the world of the Kingdom does the same principle apply, that Kingdom growth is promoted more by healthy competition, than it is by cooperation?

We really have no right to abandon our historic Plea without asking ourselves these questions and others like them.

(Next time we will ask, "What about Satan", in "The Devil's Lament".)

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A Movement in Search of a Purpose?

Alan Hermann

If the number of books, articles, seminars and surveys on the subject are any guide, then there is general agreement that the church in Australia is in crisis. People are staying away in droves. Those who do attend find general lack of direction and, in consequence, change both local church and denomination frequently.¹ The solutions offered to this problem are many and varied. Overseas specialists such as Herb Miller, Kennon Callahan and Bill Hybells are still popular, even though George Barna has warned that imitation leads to ruin.² Australians, such as Mal Garvin³ and John Hannaford,⁴ call for a distinctively Aussie gospel despite the fact that America, with a distinctively American gospel, faces a similar crisis. Other Australians, such as Alan Bailey,⁵ remind us of the importance of friendship evangelism, but don't explain why it is not happening even though the principles have been clear for many years.⁶ The list could be extended indefinitely, ranging from Fred Nile's call to purity, to the completely social gospel of some sectors of the mainstream churches.

All of these approaches contain truth but, in concentrating on methodology, miss the heart of the problem. It is here that the Restoration movement has a crucial contribution to make. In essence, we need to understand the nature of Christianity and the church, and re-emphasise the central importance of Christian unity, properly understood, as the basis of an

effective church. Thomas Campbell stated this clearly in his *Declaration and Address* in 1809 and it is equally true today.

"The Church of Christ upon earth is essentially, intentionally, and constitutionally, one; consisting of all those in every place that profess their faith in Christ and obedience to him in all things according to the Scriptures."

What then, is Christian unity and how does it contribute to the effectiveness of the church? "Christian Unity is essentially an interpersonal relationship... The Church is Christ's fellowship with God, shared with believers."⁷ Once this is accepted, all aspects of our Christian life are seen differently. Christianity is a relationship with a living person, who is both saviour (to which we respond with thankful love) and Lord (to which we respond with obedience). The nature of unity is, then, best expressed in its purpose of relationship (as expressed vertically, with Christ, and horizontally, with all others who are in relationship with him) rather than in attempts to describe set organisational or structural forms it might take.⁸ All who are in relationship with Christ are in relationship with one another and, therefore, in unity.

With this unity of relationship as its basis, all activities of the church are transformed. Outreach becomes the sharing of the most important relationship in our lives with others, so they also may be one with us and him. Christ's love for us is expressed in our active love for the lost. Christian service is living out the relationship in ways that reflect the love and compassion we have been shown. Prayer becomes the talking and listening part of the relationship, not a duty to be performed. We open our Bibles to meet a person and learn of him, how he would have us live out

the relationship we share. In all of this there is unity of being and so unity of purpose, as all Christians strive to please him.

What is needed in Churches of Christ is to rediscover our role in being used by God to rekindle this unity within the church. We will do this best by becoming once again a movement with the church as a whole. Robert Fife defines a movement as "a community of understanding and concern which exists within the fellowship of the faith".⁹ By regarding ourselves, or allowing ourselves to be regarded, as a denomination, we both add to division rather than unity and weaken our ability to speak on matters of concern to the church as a whole. As a movement, we become "an intentional community of understanding, concerned to serve the church in her calling".¹⁰

If, however, we are to be effective as a movement, reminding the church of its essential unity in relationship and urging the church to once again become effective as the body of Christ on earth, we must first express this unity within the movement itself. Until what we have to offer becomes real within ourselves, we have nothing to offer, and the church as a whole is poorer. As a denomination holding on to its distinctive beliefs and practices, we have little reason to exist. As a movement, committed to Christian unity based on relationship, we can offer direction and life to the church. Our role is not to promote ecumenical structures, but to remind the church, within which we operate and of which we are part, of its nature and role. Only as we model Christian unity and so show its effectiveness to the church, do we have a right to exist. And yet, paradoxically, the more we are an effective movement, the more likely it is we will cease to exist. As Robert Fife explains:

"The distinctiveness of a movement is not in its structures, but in its witness. As its witness becomes effectual in the fellowship of the faith, the movement is subsumed within the Church. The whole Body becomes involved in the witness or the endeavour for the sake of which the movement came into being."¹¹

My prayer is that we will fill our role so well that we will no longer be needed.

Then indeed, the church will be the Body of Christ and the Kingdom of God will grow like the mustard seed and yeast our Lord intended it to be (Luke 13:18-20).

Alan Hermann is Acting Executive Director of Queensland's Department of Church Development and Education.

- 1 Peter Kaldor, *First Look in the Mirror: Initial Findings of the 1991 National Church Life Survey*, Lancer, Homebush, 1992. See also Peter & Sue Kaldor, *Where the River Flows*, Lancer, Homebush, 1988.
- 2 George Barna, *User Friendly Churches*, Regal, California, 1991, p. 16.
- 3 Mal Garvin, *Us Aussies*, Haydon, Sale, 1987.
- 4 John Hannaford, *Under a Southern Cross*, House of Tabor, Unley Park, 1985.
- 5 Alan Bailey, *Good News Down Under*, Anzea, Homebush, 1992.
- 6 Joseph Aldrich, *Lifestyle Evangelism*, Multnomah, Oregon, 1981.
- 7 Robert Oldham Fife, *Celebration of Heritage*, College Press, Joplin, 1992, pp. 189-190.
- 8 See discussion in Dean Walker, "The Validity of the Restoration Idea", in *Advocating for Christian Unity and Other Essays*, Emmanuel School of Religion, USA, 1992, pp. 297-308.
- 9 Fife op. cit. p. 271.
- 10 Ibid p. 272.
- 11 Ibid.

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Oz Liturgy

Viney Longthorp

On 4 July at 11 am on ABC-TV, there will be a presentation of a special hour-long program exploring contemporary attitudes to new and old forms of church worship in Australia. The program will have as a resource some of the leaders and participants in the National Liturgical Music Convention, held in Melbourne last April. Examples will be given of some of the liturgies performed there. Other offerings will be comments, reviews and opinions by specialists in liturgy, both from Australia and overseas.

It should be a significant program which will help us to sharpen our approach to the basics of church life. For worship is about the basics. The church, rightly, has always proclaimed the centrality of worship in its life. Indeed, every theologian worth his salt claims that without worship the church is simply not the church. The old Shorter Catechism got it right when it proclaimed that, "Man's chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy him for ever".

But the practicalities of worship services can, at times, be a veritable minefield in many of our churches, especially in regard to the choices of music. In the eighteenth century, one great versifier wrote about one of those archetypal squires, who:

"... to church did repair,
Not for the doctrine,

But the music there."

It was intended as a rebuke, that the good squire should prefer music, with its attendant feelings of pleasure, to that of the sermon and Scripture which made greater demands on thinking and the formation of beliefs.

However, that squire may have had the right approach after all, for there are many who would claim that music has the greater influence on our beliefs and the shaping of our approach to God; and that further, it is the key element in all that we regard as liturgical.

Many churches reveal their priorities in matters of liturgy by those conflicts and tensions which result from different emphases and convictions about doctrine and beliefs. However, the focus seems to have shifted to the types of music used. We appear not to be overly fazed about accurate or pure belief structures in worship; rather it is the choice of music that seems to be at the centre of most differences.

Some suggest that it comes down to the differences between the Trads and the Trendies. This was clearly recognised at the National Liturgical Music Convention. Thus the Trads say that only the very best music is a good enough vehicle by which to address and honour Almighty God. On the

other hand the Trendies say, "How are you going to hold the young people and attract the man in street, who find traditional music boring?"

The traditional viewpoint was put by the Archbishop of Milwaukee, Rembert Weakland, who is a world authority on the music of the Gregorian chant. He said, among other things: "music should be a heightened form of communication that helps the listener realise that a religious service is an encounter with something divine and luminous. It should not be entertainment," and again, "musically we went to the common denominator."

The influence of the trendies is seen in a recent wedding ceremony where the bride walked down the aisle to Noel Paul Stookey's 'The Wedding Song'. Then, at the funeral of a friend of mine who was a keen cyclist, the tune, 'A Bicycle Built For Two', was included in the service.

Most of us who have to put together worship services for congregations where there is a wide range of musical tastes and appreciations, often wonder what is the best thing to do in order to make such services meaningful for all. Where is that elusive *Via Media*—the fabled middle way to be found?

Well, this program should

provide, if not definitive answers, at least food for thought—better still, deepen insights. To end on a practical note: the musical among us have at least four options.

- Ask the ABC to screen such programs at a more convenient hour for those people who have the deeper interest in them;

- Bring a TV to church that morning and have the local worship committee watch the program after the service;

- Set your own VCR and view it at your leisure;

- Maybe some members who have significant inputs into worship services could play hooky that morning and report back about the program.

OZ

Liturgy

11 am-12 noon

Sunday 4 July

ABC-TV

Correction

OMB Vic-Tas Rally will be at Hartwell, not Lygon Street as notified in *Vic-Tas News*.

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Understanding the Doctrine of the Covenants

Ken Stothard

In 2 Cor. 3:14-16 Paul tells us that a veil lies over the minds of his Jewish contemporaries when they read the old covenant. Put more simply and bluntly, he is saying that they don't understand their own Scriptures (cf. Matt. 22:29).

Alexander Campbell, having already rejected the Presbyterianism of his younger days and the stance adopted by the Calvinistic Baptists of his early days in America, suggested that "till the present generation, the gospel of Jesus Christ has not been laid open to mankind in its original plainness, simplicity, and majesty" (*The Christian System*, p.192). He went on to say that "A veil in reading the New Institution has been on the hearts of Christians." Campbell was rather too optimistic regarding his own generation, for things seem to have improved little since his time. As I suggested previously, it would appear that Campbell didn't take his thoughts far enough. So I am forced to assert strenuously that a partial veil still lies over Christian hearts in our own day. The problem is to be located primarily in our continued failure to comprehend the Bible's covenant theology.

We have already seen that the Reformed tradition has largely obliterated fundamental distinctions in order to bolster its dogmatic system and, in consequence, has turned even the Mosaic covenant into a covenant of grace. Still worse, in some ways, has been the Dispensational approach which, while sharply and surely correctly distinguishing between law and grace in accordance with the clear teaching of the Bible, has posited different programs for Jew and Gentile. Apart from implicitly destroying the unity of the Bible on the one hand and of mankind on

the other, such teaching appears to cut across what is plainly taught in Ephesians 2 and Hebrews 11. It is my strong contention that neither the Reformed program of assimilation, nor the Dispensational scheme of differentiation, is correct. But to say this immediately prompts the question, "How should the covenant be understood?"

Turning to the Bible itself, we must first dispense with the notion of a covenant of redemption. The term leads to confusion as some Reformed theologians themselves have admitted, referring instead to the counsel of redemption or the plan of salvation. Next, it needs to be laid down quite categorically that God never made a covenant with Adam. Ever if we were to admit Hos. 6:7 (which is disputed) as a possible reference, it is too flimsy a foundation on which to build. So we come to the covenant with Noah in Gen. 9 which embraces all flesh, i.e. the entire animal kingdom as well as humanity, in spite of the fact that the latter is a sinner (Gen. 8:21). The obvious inference to be drawn from this is that God proposes to preserve creation (vv. 21-22) in order to fulfil its original purpose, though in a somewhat different way from that apparently intended in Gen. 2. But whereas the animal kingdom is guaranteed preservation, mankind, who has the capacity to understand, is called on to respond in faith to the covenant promise of the stability and fruitfulness of nature symbolised by the rainbow (Gen 8:21f; 9:14-17; Acts 14:17; 17:24-28; cf. Matt. 5:45). In other words, despite the devastation of the deluge, humanity can rely on the continuance of creation. The conclusion that we need to draw from this is, first, that we are the beneficiaries of

this covenant or we would all be dead; and, second, it will remain in operation until God's purpose for us in the world has been achieved (Jer. 31:35f; 33:19ff; Isa. 54:9f). The Noachian covenant, then, is indispensable to all succeeding covenants.

It is on the basis of the covenant with Noah that God eventually calls the heathen Abram and reveals his purpose for mankind to him. In Gen. 12:2-3 three wonderful promises are made—Abram himself will be made a great nation, he will become a blessing to the world, and his posterity will inherit the land of Canaan. In chapter 15 a covenant is made and in 17 it is sealed with the sign of circumcision. It is important to remember, however, that there is an element of differentiation in chapter 17, for Abraham himself is a believer (cf. 15:6), but the rest of his household, notably Ishmael, are circumcised irrespective of their faith. So far as the future is concerned this will certainly be the case since the sign will be applied to the male children only on the eighth day of life (17:12).

Though the covenant with Abraham requires a great deal more elaboration and explanation, in the interests of brevity I pass on to the covenant made with the children of Abraham now redeemed from Egypt under the leadership of Moses (Exod. 20; cf. Deut. 5:2-6). The essence of this covenant is enshrined in the ten words written on stone by the finger of God (Exod. 20:3-17; 24:12). In effect, God imposes on the people of his own possession, now a nation, his law or instruction (*Torah*). While it is true that the people express their willingness to commit themselves after a fashion (20:19), especially when the covenant is ratified (24:3,7), the fact is that it brooks

no refusal (Exod. 20:19f; Deut. 5:23-27). This is unquestionably the case with future generations of Israelites on whom the law is imposed irrespective of their wishes (Deut. 11:2f; 29:14f; 31:12f.). In the upshot, then, the posterity of Abraham, all who have received the covenant sign (Gen. 17:9-14), which now clearly symbolises law (Lev. 12:3; cf. Gal. 5:1f), are under a perpetual obligation to be obedient on pain of punishment. (Heb. 2:2; 10:23).

On the face of it, though the Mosaic covenant followed the Abrahamic covenant of promise, it was clearly a covenant of works which brought blessing or curse depending on whether or not it was obeyed (eg Deut. 28; Isa. 1:19f). Given man's moral and spiritual weakness and propensity to sin it was curse that dominated, as practically the whole of the OT makes plain (see 2 Kgs 17:7-23; Rom. 3:4-20). Though the law is seen as a priceless gift relative to the heathen (Psa. 119; Rom. 3:2), its inevitable tendency was to witness against the people (Deut. 31:26f; Josh. 24:22, 27), rather than for them. In other words, it pointed up their sin (Rom. 7:7f). In such a situation something different, in fact a better covenant was necessary, but it was a long time in coming (cf. Jer 31:31-34). (To be continued)

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Marriages

•Roslyn Armstrong to Andrew George, Surrey Hills, Vic

Deaths

•Gladys Hynes, Thornleigh, NSW •Con Crittle, Ormond, Vic •Mrs Ramaiya (Fiji), Fairfield, NSW •Cyril (Blue) Barkas, Mount Clear, Vic •Gladys Barker, Doug Adam, Surrey Hills, Vic

Obituaries

Obituaries are limited to 100 words

Dunn, Ivy Pearl

(20.5.93) Born 20 June 1905, baptised in the Brighton, Vic, church, Pearl Stanley came to the Hampton church in 1913, becoming a part of Hampton's history as an active member until she married Alan Edwards in 1926. They moved to Silvan, raised five children, returning in 1947, whereupon Pearl rejoined Hampton, and an active work of faith. Regular in attendance until the last, active in the CWF and other activities, Pearl was a beautifully gentle lady who always had an encouraging word, and lived out her love for Jesus. Widowed in 1950 and again in 1975, after marrying Harry Dunn, Pearl had 22 grandchildren, and 39 great grandchildren. —PAP

Rowe, Beryl

Beryl Rowe was born in 1912 and grew up in the Fremantle, WA, district. She married Albert (Bob) in 1935. Her death ended a 58 year marriage. Beryl spent many years as a farmer's wife, first at Latham and later at Childow, before returning to Fremantle. She was a practical woman who loved her family and church and exercised her gift of hospitality. Her example of faith will be missed, but we are glad she has achieved her heavenly reward. We pray her husband Bob, children and grandchildren will be comforted in their loss, and thank God for her life and contribution to the Fremantle church. —John Caporn

Vic

MAIDSTONE Recent guest speakers—Padre Andrew Simpler, Graeme Batley, Andrew McMillan (Mother's Day), Mike Esbensen, Explorer boys & Morrie Slocombe ... Explorer Boy's Club recently started (Geoffrey Frieberg leader) ... Church rejoices in baptisms of Sue Ellen Jackson & Wayne Fox ... Successful CWF mini fete raised over \$400 ... All looking forward to coming of new minister, Andrew McMillan, in August.

CASTLEMAINE (Peter Haylock) Recent walk through the Bible seminars (OT & NT) very successful ... Young people performed "First Love" musical at Swan Hill ... Several members accepted for missionary service & Bible college ... Missionary committee functioning well. Recent guest speakers Shalom Israel & Dorothy Holstein.

ORMOND (J. Larkham) Glen & Betty Stibbe farewelled after 13 years, greatly respected & loved by all, now ministering at Bellarine Peninsula ... Jim & Bev Larkham welcomed as they lead us this year ... Bible study groups continue. John Kay now leading Tuesday group ... \$3,500 raised at church fete ... Working bees being held at manse ... Church ratified recommendation of appointment to ministry of Jonathan & Trish Moore, 1994. **PRESTON (Steve Blacket)** Ron Mill progressing satisfactorily following surgery ... Lovely to have Olwyn Shannon (Dalkeith Rd, WA) at morning coffee recently ... Recent fete raised \$800 ... Jean & Roy Weir home from visit to daughter in Darwin ... Men spent a day doing maintenance at CCTC ... Margaret Crossman spoke to CWF on newborn emergency transport service.

KANIVA (Martin Goldup) Musical group "Corazon" from Ballarat appreciated during visits to schools, concert evenings & pm service ... Several members recently hospitalised. Harold Wheaton & Bess Crouch home, Bess after hip replacement. Elder Doug Thomas in Melbourne & Elva Crouch in Stirling for knee surgery ... Enjoyable family service. Theme "God loves. We care" ... Beales family, after six months in Kaniva, transferred to Bordertown.

SWANSTON ST (Allan Webb) Packed services for Pentecost Sunday. Five different nationalities bap-

Changes

COBURG: Sunday morning service time now 10 am.

tised & welcomed into fellowship ... Average 409 communicant in May ... Special events included Lay Pastors training seminar, regional prayer dinners & day of prayer & fasting ... Special thanksgiving service held to recognise 11 years of missionary service by Ray & Shamini Haverfield in East Malaysia ... Calvin & Joyce Ma accepted by OMF to serve in Korea.

SUNSHINE (Barry Jenkins) In move to help newly established Chinese church, at special meeting 6 June, Sunshine agreed to invite Chinese congregation to worship in chapel commencing 13 June. As Chinese service starts at 9 am, new time for English service, 10.30 am. This will enable Chinese to use heating, PA system & cry room. It will also enable congregations to meet between services.

LA TROBE TERR, GEELONG (Dr C.J. Mackenzie) Dr Mackenzie, who came for six months & stayed for seven years, concludes ministry 27 June. Church greatly blessed by ministry ... Latest messages on "Laughing Together with God" ... Youth coordinator, David Shrimpton, concludes his services in June ... Six ladies enjoyed CWF camp ... 20 enjoyed Japanese dinner prepared by Don & Joan Drayton ... CWF collected groceries for needy ... A. Brown welcomed back after stroke.

OAKLEIGH (W.J. Edwards) Pentecost Sunday combined service held with Polish church which meets in hall. Sermons preached in each language by Serg Jackiamuk & Jack Edwards. Service was followed by fellowship lunch ... Ross Lloyd received into membership ... Concern felt for Clyde Taylor who has undergone heart surgery ... Peter Ponter home from hospital ... Chapel floor reblocked & sprayed for borers ... Dorothy Holstein preached 23 May.

NORTHCOTE (F.B. Alcorn) June focus is "The Holy Spirit" ... June, July & August evening services 5 pm ... Excellent service for Pentecost was arranged by minister in our chapel. Northcote City Council & most churches represented. People from Tonga, China & Aborigines took part. Supper served afterwards ... CWF had speaker from Road Safety Authority ... Committee has been formed to plan our 90th church anniversary in October.

BOX HILL (Jim Longbottom) 60 attended church camp at Adanac Lodge (23-25 April) ... 140 attended 82nd anniversary service 16 May. Ian Allsop guest speaker ... Contracts let to extend new foyer area ... Fellowship tea & evening serv-

ice well attended 30 May ... Adrian & Sylvia Morley (OMS) speaking at evening meeting 16 June ... Jim Longbottom undertaking chaplaincy at a local child-care centre.

MOUNT CLEAR (Dale White, David Jones) About 50 attended church camp at Halls Gap, early June ... May set a new record for average attendances—154 am & 110 pm ... Half night of prayer continuing every Friday 8-12 ... Church manse recently sold ... Minister going to America for Leadership 2000 & study tour ... Elder Bill Sutcliffe appointed State Director of Prison Fellowship Victoria.

SURREY HILLS (David Brooker, Julie Adam, Frank Langford) Easter services: Palm Sunday prepared & led by "Fish" youth group; Maundy Thursday reflective & powerful; Good Friday with UC in our chapel; Sunday hope proclaimed ... Pentecost banner "Spirit, Heal Your World!" ... Recent death of long-time member Glad Baker. Sadly missed ... Doug Adam, elder, board chairman, newsletter editor & much more, died suddenly aged 57. Church grieving & concerned for Lola & family.

Qld

PINE RIVERS (Neale Proellocks, Ian Todd) Representatives from World Vision & Compassion shared in morning services ... First seeker service held evening 30 May. Program on communication included guest artist Rex Eggmolesse, bright singing, instrumental items & drama. 150 shared light supper that followed. New contacts made ... Plans in hand for next evening program 25 July ... AM attendances steadily increasing. Approximately 160 sharing ... Mary Treloar made decision.

Tas

LAUNCESTON (C. Spaulding, D. Tobler) 60th wedding anniversary lunch for Jack & Elsie Edwards 30 May ... WEC students interviewed on contact visitation in Invermay. Some contacts present ... Christianity Explained course began at Op Shop ... 6 June workshop & tea for church newcomers ... Two baptisms ... M. Marshman back at church & John returned to Launceston after kidney transplant ... Church glad to make baptistry available to Uniting Church for six baptisms.

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Church News

NSW

THORNLEIGH (F. Elliott, S. Wesley) Missions Week theme, "A Heart for the Lost". All speakers from World-Wide Evangelisation for Christ. Wednesday speaker (26 May) Ian Allan (youth director). Sunday morning Ken Booth (East Asia director) spoke. Ian Walker interviewed about Prison Fellowship in Sydney, Goulburn & Hunter Valley. Evening speaker Trevor Kallmier (Australian director). Merrilyn Stubbin interviewed about study with YWAM in Canada. Faith promise giving \$40,000.

FAIRFIELD (Clive Berrick) Clive & Helen creating warm bond of fellowship ... Visitors enjoying caring community ... Three home Bible study groups ... Clive chaplain Westfields High School ... Cooperating Spanish & Vietnamese churches ... Bjorems left for US, 1 June ... Five local ministers' wives pray each Thursday ... Two talented young men preach when needed ... Evening service for young people includes clarinet, flute, bass, electric guitar & organ accompanying singing.

TAREE (Peter Wallis) Church 130th anniversary celebrations well attended. Graham Warne brought encouraging messages. 120 at dinner on Saturday night ... Six CWF ladies were able to travel to Sydney for CWF Conference. Many old friendships renewed ... Congratulations to Win & Fred Murray celebrating 50 years of marriage. They are grateful for many messages of congratulations ... Lily Adam recovering well following hip replacement surgery.

SA

HENLEY BEACH (Ron McLean) Mrs Muriel Williamson welcomed into membership on 9 May ... Flinders Park, Brooklyn Park & Henley Beach combined quiz night on 15 May ... Churches also combined for a morning service, Pentecost Sunday, over 200 in attendance ... Mrs Lianne Blanch & her husband Stuart were welcomed into membership after Lianne's baptism on 30 May.

BORDERTOWN (Noel Baxter) Elders & deacons restructured into areas of responsibility ... Wednesday night prayer meeting taking new direction with prayer workshop, video input & prayer time ... Large group undertaking "Christianity Explained" course for outreach program ... Fiona Walters studying for mission with

YWAM, Qld ... Theme for SE District Conference, Mt Gambier, "Mission". Rob Combridge very challenging ... Great to have John & Valerie Main at Keith sharing in ministry with Noel & Sandra.

WA

CARNARVON (Kevin O'Brien) Newly formed church band in operation ... Baby shower party held at Olive Laird for Sinead O'Brien & Amber Seidel ... New youth group, "Domino", for 12-15 year-olds proving popular ... Ladies held outreach meeting, theme: "books"—

guest speaker a librarian clerk ... New deacons Alan Day & Ken Birch commissioned ... Ladies held two sewing nights at Olive Laird Hostel. **BUSSELTON (Graeme Ritchie)** Easter very special time. Maundy Thursday Passover supper enjoyed by 75. Good Friday service well attended. Easter Day saw whole church blacked out to represent tomb. Over 200 attended ... 2 May, church rejoiced in opening of third stage classrooms at Cornerstone Christian Community School. Classrooms, administration area & staff facilities built with help from Mobile Mission Maintenance. Many

parents helped. School has enrolment of 104. Principal: Keith Newby. **MAYLANDS (Robert Drown)** Inter-church service 30 May with Inglewood & Perth City congregations sharing ... Robert & Beryl Drown have been on holidays in Eastern States ... Ken Laffer, Avon Moyle, Trevor Streeton, Ron Jones, George Eaves shared preaching ... Hospitality Sunday concept introduced ... Church supportive of Trevor Streeton, WA Conference President-Elect ... Young adults recently conducted evening service with testimony from Craig Jones & message by Andrew Thorn.

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Poetry

Let's Take The World By Storm

My life is on a cloud
A raindrop, oh so small
Thunder is God's voice
The signal for my fall

If alone I were to fall
My effort would be such
That I would evaporate
And not mean very much.

But if together we should fall
We'd create quite a storm
Falling on the land
A river for to form

You could stand on either side
And watch life drift on past
Or get caught in a stagnant pool
And be left out, be last

But we must act together
Working as a team
So that as a Church
We are Christ's life-giving stream

—Sarah Harmer

(Sarah is the eldest daughter of David and Robyn Harmer who are serving with the Churches of Christ Overseas Mission Board in PNG. Sarah (15) is currently a student at Ukarumpa High School in the PNG Highlands)

The Last Word

Prayer is the breath of the new-born soul, and there can be no Christian life without it.

—Rowland Hill

Little boy to mother, getting changed after Sunday School: "Mum, is it true that we come from dust?"

Mother: "Yes, dear."

Little boy: "Mum, is it true that we also go back to dust?"

Mother: "Yes, dear. Why do you ask?"

Little boy: "Well, there's someone either coming or going under my bed."

★★★★★

An antique collector, passing through a small village, stopped to watch an old man chopping wood with an ancient axe.

"That's a mighty old axe you have there, remarked the collector.

"Yes," said the villager, "it once belonged to George Washington."

"Really," gasped the collector. "It's certainly survived well."

"Of course," admitted the old man, "it's had three new handles and two new heads."

★★★★★

What is the difference between the North and South Pole?

All the difference in the world.

★★★★★

If a man crosses the ocean twice without taking a bath, what is he called?

A dirty double crosser.

★★★★★

What animal has the smallest appetite?

A moth. It just eats holes.

★★★★★

What book contains more stirring pages than any other book?

A cookbook.

★★★★★

An ocean liner was sinking and the captain yelled: "Does anybody know how to pray?"

A minister on board said, "I do."

"Good," said the captain. "You start praying.

The rest of us will put on the life belts. We're one belt short."

★★★★★



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