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THE AUSTRALIAN CHRISTIAN

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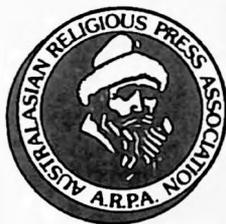
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Guest Editorial

The Priesthood of all Believers

David Cohen

The concept of the priesthood of all believers is one of the least talked about and yet most important teachings of the New Testament. As I reflected on what the New Testament had to say about us as believers in Christ, it became obvious that a priestly role is implicitly a part of the church's nature. It has implications for us, as individuals, our churches, as a community of believers and for the unbelievers we seek to reach with the Good News.

The roots of the priestly role are found in the Old Testament where the priesthood of some was for the bridging of relationship between the Israelites and their God. Through this role as an intermediary, the Israelite priests were able to draw together many people to worship their God, expressed through the covenant. The drawing together of these people in worship and service also created a strong community ethos based on human relationships. However, the priestly role was not exclusively for just a few. In Exodus 19:5-6 we see the whole nation as an intermediary between their God and the rest of the world. So as well as worship and community, there was mission. Jeremiah 31:31-34 makes it obvious that God's desire was to bear testimony to himself through his people so that all would know him.

So how did the Old Testament priesthood concept change with the emergence of the church? In terms of worship, entry into the holy of holies was opened for all believers, not just an elite priesthood. We, as followers of Christ and a new priesthood, have the privilege of coming before the throne of grace without an intermediary. But before we become too casual about that, we must remember that Paul describes us as a sacrifice on the altar before our God (Rom 12:1), as opposed to ancient practice of animal sacrifice. So simultaneously we become the sacrificer and the sacrificed in God's presence. Worship here is absolute and ongoing. Of course the sacrifice doesn't save us, but is a practice expressing our service to God.

It's interesting to me how we 20th century Christians so often individualise the Christian faith when the New Testament so commonly speaks about the community of believers. As a priesthood we are called to "present our bodies" in Romans 12:1. It's a community action by the group

of believers. In Hebrews 13:15-16 to "do good" and "share with others", an integral part of community, is placed alongside our sacrifice to God. The sacrifice on the altar must be grounded in service to our God and to others as a priest serving the believing community.

The New Testament church is called out to testify to God's existence and greatness in precisely the same way as the Israelites were. The description in 1 Peter 2:5, 9 of Christians being "a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God" echoes the desire of God for the Israelites in Exodus 19. God chooses the priesthood of believers to be a living testimony to unbelievers. This is the mission of the church. In fact a reading of 1 Peter 2:1-12 again draws together the importance of sacrifice to God alongside doing good to others. These actions are a clear testimony to God's goodness towards us as a community.

So how do these principles work out in the local church? There is a great need for us to see that we are priests together. Though there may be functional differences in our roles, we are not a part of an ecclesiastical hierarchy. This principle must continually underpin congregational activity. We must have mutual accountability in our worship of God, our relationships with one another and our mission to those who don't know Christ. As we grow in our understanding of this accountability and responsibility, our work will be fruitful, we will see God's royal priesthood and kingdom grow.

Think

Rarely will effective outreach develop without intentional effort by the pastor and by church leaders.

Once the mechanisms are in place, continued effort must be made to see that the mechanisms are operating properly. Left unattended, they will tend to run down.

—C. Kirk Hadaway,
"Church Growth Principles" in
Net Results (Distributed by
Australian Board of Church
Development & Education,
77 Capel St, West Melbourne 3003.)

Mitcham Opening

Worship area extensions opened

The extended worship area of the Mitcham, Vic, church was filled to capacity for a service of celebration and dedication, held on 1 May to mark the completion of their building extensions.

Greetings were given, in the service, by the Mayor of Nunawading, Cr Kevin Abbott, and by Ian Allsop on behalf of Vic/Tas Conference.

Other participants in the service also included Alan

Fraser, who designed the extensions, and Max Moody, the builder.

The service included a responsive act of dedication where the congregation acknowledged the gracious provision of God, exemplified in the new worship area, and expressed an undertaking to use this resource for the work of mission in the wider kingdom of God. To God be the glory!

—Mark Butler



• Ian Allsop speaking at the opening

Outreach to Jews

Melbourne ministry begins

It is an exciting time in the Melbourne Jewish-Christian community, as a new outreach ministry is taking shape. This will be part of the South Melbourne Restoration Community (formerly South Melbourne Church of Christ) and will be based in the suburbs of Caulfield and St Kilda.

Leading this ministry will be Lawrence Hirsch, a Jewish believer who has spent the last six years in South Africa training with 'Jews for Jesus', a worldwide outreach that effectively evangelises the Jewish people. Lawrence is the brother of Alan Hirsch, senior minister of the South Melbourne Restoration Community.

Alan says, "The hope of the Jewish people rests upon the faithfulness of God.

If God is one who would break his promise, they are standing on a very shaky foundation. God made promises to them to keep a covenant with them forever.

He didn't promise to give eternal life to each one of them, but he promised to be their God, and to allow them to be his special people. Throughout history, God proved his love for the people of Israel.

Each time they rebelled against him, he wooed them back to himself, forgave them and loved them tenderly. Now they have rejected his one and only Son.

Yet God's forgiveness, love and faithfulness does have a limit.

God can never forget his people—he has promised."

Woe for Students

Kenmore student outreach



• "Bubbles", entertaining with bubbles

Each year Kenmore Christian College students are involved in a Week of Evangelism (affectionately dubbed as WOE!). This year, however, the woes were left behind as the students participated in the Aussie Awakening '94 program.

Under the direction of Chris Gilbert and Bob Adams, a group of 12 students presented a "Family Festival" program on Thursday evening at the Capalaba Park Shopping Centre. Activities included face-painting, bubble-blowing,

badge-making, jigsaws, giant snakes and ladders and a brief platform program. 500 helium balloons bearing the words "Love, Justice, Compassion" were distributed to the young children. The highlight of the evening was Bubbles the Clown, who entertained young and old alike with her antics.

In a friendly, informal atmosphere, students found many opportunities of sharing their faith with the evening shoppers. It was voted one of the best WOEs ever!

There are no romantic illusions about this ministry, "It will be hard work for us to win over the Jews to our Lord.

It will take many hours of prayer, interceding for the hearts of the Jewish people to be softened.

We will have to risk being hated, ridiculed and abused by the people we love.

Yet, I believe that, in the words of the Psalmist, 'Those who sow in tears Shall reap in joy' (Psalm 126:5).

We shall sow in tears, yet we shall share the joy of the Jewish people when they finally see the merciful face of their Messiah," comments Gavin Brown, organiser of the outreach.

Gavin is very thankful for the work of organisations that

have forged links with the Jewish people, but he believes that this is the time for reaping the harvest. "It is very important for us to obey the command of Scripture and pray for the peace of Jerusalem.

But it is crucial that we also pray for peace in the hearts of the Jewish people. We hope to communicate with them and even help them in financial and practical needs. But we, as Christians, all know that the only way that we can help them in a real way is to tell them the gospel of Y'shua their Messiah."

If you would like to know more about this work, or would like to be involved in any way, please ring Gavin Brown on (03) 525 9164.

Chosen to Go

SA Annual Convention

The recent South Australian Convention (April 30–May 7) was an enjoyable and thought-provoking experience for all participants, representing over 60 congregations throughout the state. Components of the week-long program included:

- "The Main Event" youth spectacular at Marion church, hosted by Paul de Wildt, featuring guest band 'Side Walk Creatures' and introducing Paul Hodgson in his new role as State Youth Liaison Consultant.

- Christian Men's Society Dinner at Marion with Marj. Dredge, retiring State President, as speaker.

- Reunion Day, where those in membership 45 years or more (or aged 60 plus) were treated to lunch and entertainment at Grote Street, Adelaide church.

- Dessert and Coffee Evening for Women at the Brooklyn Park church, with speakers Graham Agnew, Judy Brown and Phil Webber on "Living Confidently and Effectively".

- Women's Day at Grote Street church took the form of a TV Chat show with host Maureen Clarke chatting with several guests about various dimensions of state and local church mission. Guest speaker was David Brooker, State Minister.

- The Thursday evening Open Forum at Prince Alfred College focussed on four current issues for local churches: Membership, Ministry, the Role of Conference and Future Directions. An entertaining skit introduced each issue, and those present were invited (by our very own Rumpole, Brian Phelps) to have their say from the soap box. Comments were noted and will give substance to State Board discussion on these issues over the coming months.

- "Opening Doors in '94" (Friday evening) was an exciting glimpse into some of the creative expressions of church mission that are being developed amongst our churches.

The evening concluded with the launch, by State Minister David Brooker, of the State Board Vision and Mission Statement; a document which will help set the tone and direction for future mission in SA.

Saturday morning was the time allocated for Conference business sessions.

Convention finished with a great Celebration of Worship on Saturday evening at Prince Alfred College, featuring inspirational music, the induction of David Brooker as State Minister, (complete with presentation of "symbols" of office: an Adelaide map and a 'Crows' football!!) acknowledgment of the magnificent leadership of Marj Dredge as President for the past two years, the induction of Keith Ridge (Minister, Hampstead Gardens) as President for 94–95 and the introduction of Paul Hodgson (Associate Minister, Blackwood) as the Youth Liaison Consultant (one day per week).

The address was given by David Brooker who, under the heading "Chosen to Go", encouraged and challenged each person present to discern and respond to the particular mis-

sion for which God has equipped them.

There is a strong recognition amongst the churches in South Australia that God is calling us out in mission and a genuine eagerness to develop creative responses to that challenge.

There are many issues that need to be addressed along the way:

- What constitutes membership in Churches of Christ? Does it matter?

- What relationship exists between membership, baptism and discipleship?

- What is the shape of future ministry for our churches?

- How can gifts and call for ministry best be nurtured by training?

- How can we best support rural churches?

- How can available resources best be utilised?

- How can we ensure relevance without compromising "the essentials"?

These and other questions arising from this year's Conference will provide the basis for discussion and will also end up providing the basis for an exciting future for Churches of Christ in South Australia.

National Celebration Launch

Week of Prayer for Aboriginal Reconciliation

Australia's second national celebration of the week of Prayer for Aboriginal Reconciliation was launched in Sydney 27 May, marking the 27th anniversary of the referendum on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander rights. The referendum was when we voted as a nation to include them on the census and made decision making a commonwealth, rather than state affair.

The National Week of Prayer, which involves all major churches and faith groups, will finish on 3 June, another significant date—the anniversary of the 1992 Mabo native title decision.

The week aims to build better relationships between indigenous Australians and the

wider community. The week has grown considerably since the first event in September 1993, with this year's change of dates making it a permanent spot on the Australian religious calendar, 27 May—3 June.

The Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation, which spans the wide spectrum of Australian politics and culture, believes the Week of Prayer is an essential part of the reconciliation process.

Speaking at the Sydney launch, Council chairperson, Patrick Dodson, said, "Through prayer and resulting action churches and religious groups can help lead the way in reconciliation, which is itself a biblical term and central to many faiths."

Churches of Christ Overseas Missions Committee Missions Youth Rally

Featuring

Island Breeze

at Doncaster Church of Christ
(cnr Doncaster Rd and Short St)
Saturday 9 July, 7.30 pm

Meet the Harmers' kids
How did three Aussie teenagers survive
in the tropical jungles of PNG?
How hard is it to settle back into Oz?

Music and Drama from the Pacific Islands:
"Island Breeze" will take us to Fiji, Samoa, Tonga,
Hawaii, Vanuatu, Cook Islands and New Zealand.

Meet Ian Hunt

A great night out for your Youth Group

More details: Allison Pitt (03) 848 1546
Peter Wing Tang (03) 808 1613

Family Council of Victoria

Philosophy

The Family Council of Victoria regards the family as society's most important and vital institution. Healthy families make for healthy societies, while unhealthy families make for sick societies.

The most simple concept of family comprises a man, woman and their children. In a larger sense, the Family Council of Victoria defines family as a group of people related by blood, heterosexual marriage, adoption or fostering. The concept of marriage between a man

and woman to the exclusion of all others is an integral component of family life.

The Council recognises that there are other forms of family life which might be called incomplete families, e.g. single-parent families. While such groups may need support, the Family Council of Victoria upholds the ideal of the two-parent family.

For various reasons, many people find themselves in incomplete families, for example, due to the death or desertion of a spouse. But on the whole, the

weight of evidence strongly suggests that the two-parent family is the best model for ensuring the cohesion and stability of society, for child rearing and for overall societal well-being.

The Family Council of Victoria, in short, upholds the two-parent family and seeks to promote its importance and value. Public policy should aim to increase the proportion of children who grow up with their two married parents in supportive communities and to decrease the number who do not.

Objectives

1. To cultivate within society an appreciation for and under-

standing of the family as the fundamental and essential unit of society.

2. To promote the value of marriage to society and to strengthen the institution of marriage.

3. To seek community support for the institution of the family.

4. To strengthen relationships between parents and children.

5. To promote government policy in support of traditional family life.

6. To support initiatives taken by other individuals and organisations in support of the family.

7. To undertake and encourage research on family issues.

For details, contact Bill Meulenberg (03) 326 5757.

May Mission Meet

Worthwhile insight

On 19 May, twenty *Mission* subscribers from the eastern Adelaide churches met for morning tea with the South Australian Overseas Mission Committee and the Executive Director, Jeff May.

Together we enjoyed a morning of fellowship and learning, mixed with Jeff May's easy

humour. A tour of the OMB premises followed.

Two random comments: "A worthwhile insight to our task of mission," and, "It should happen again—another Mission Meet!"

—Nancy Coleman
(Chairman SA OM
Committee)



• Ira Raymond, Pat Raymond, Dorothy Pederson

Circus Holiday

Children's Musical

Come to the Circus at Nunawading Church of Christ. Professional magicians, Ric Cutler and Geoff Conrau will take part in a children's musical, involving about 60 children dressed up as circus characters.

Children have been rehearsing this term and organisers say that the show will provide excellent entertainment for families, children's clubs or Sunday schools. The plot involves a Christian message about The Golden Rule.

The dates are Thursday, 23 June at 7 pm and Sunday, 26 June at 4.45 pm. Admission is free, but an offering will be received. Details from Faye Comrie (03) 877 1186 or Rosemary Konig (03) 878 5506.



Computer Technician

We are seeking a person to maintain our sales and service department of IBM compatible computers.

CRMF provides vital radio communications and technical services to the church and mission community throughout Papua New Guinea.

For more information about this position contact:-



The Executive Director, Robin Cole
Christian Radio Missionary Fellowship Inc
PO Box 46, Blackburn South, Vic 3130.
Phone (03) 890 2338 Fax (03) 899 1921

Resurrecting the Planned Giving Dinosaur

Not just financial benefits

Early last year I received an invitation from the Cheltenham, Vic, church to conduct a Planned Giving Program.

I told them that I had not conducted a program such as that for over 20 years. They said they realised that, but were about to resurrect a dinosaur. I rose to the bait and I accepted the challenge, despite the fact that I was now occupied as an Industrial Chaplain, and was entering the early part of my year as President of the largest Rotary Club in our district.

Instead of conducting the program within a three week period, I spread it out over 20 weeks and it worked. It turned out to be the largest program I have ever conducted. There were some 550 basic giving units in the program initially. We had 40 hostesses who invited the families from the three churches to a "Loyalty Dinner" at the Moorabbin Town Hall. 330 sat down to enjoy the meal and a very lively program.

Some 40 visitors pledged themselves to visit all the families in their homes. The families committed themselves to over \$400,000 for the next two

years. This will be an increase on the previous giving level of over \$1,000 per week over the three churches.

The program was based upon five motivational resources:

1. **Compassion** Sharing, caring, giving, loving, serving and supporting. Many people do what they do out of a sense of love and compassion. They do what they do because of their love for their children, their family, their country and/or their love for God and his mission in the world.

2. **Community** Many people are also motivated because of their sense of community. They love their church—the people in their church, the ministry of the church and what the church means to them and the lives of those they love.

3. **Challenge** Many people respond to a challenge. For them life is one challenge after another, they are high achievers and are motivated by the challenge of a big program. This was a big program.

4. **Reasonability/Commonsense** If what is presented to these people makes sense, if it

adds up to something worthwhile, they will support it.

5. **Commitment** These are motivated by their dedication, sense of obligation, faithfulness, duty, and loyalty. They do what they do because of their deep sense of commitment to a cause. It isn't very difficult to apply any of the above motivational resources to our commitment to Christ and the church. Every family in the church made their commitment on the basis of what most appealed to them. The program had some wonderful side benefits and effects for the churches as well as the financial result.

• The men, women and young people of the three churches had the opportunity to work together in a concentrated period of time.

• It drew the churches together in preparation for what has now become a reality—the Southern Community Church of Christ.

• It revealed the strength of the leadership of the senior minister, Gerald Rose, and the ministry team, and the acceptance of that leadership.

• The result will allow the church to plan for the future with great confidence.

• It will allow the church to support the present ministry team and also to expand the ministry team as and when that is opportune.

• It will allow the church to give more generously to the

wider work of the church which is a little unusual in today's economic climate.

• The program has put the income of the church on a solid footing for many years to come.

• For those who pledged, they averaged over \$20 a pledge which is an inspirational figure for other churches.

(Cheltenham is not an affluent area and as I remember there was only one pledge over \$100 which was of \$140.)

In conclusion, I would have to say as well as being the largest program I have ever conducted, it was also one of the most exciting.

The concord and harmony that was evident in the churches came through at all times.

I would also like to thank the ministry team, Gerald Rose, Peter Pitts, Marilyn Hinton, Paul Hammat, Mary Uldrich and Stephen Rose for their strong support at all times.

Dinosaurs do still have a part to play besides being in Jurassic Park.

At the conclusion of the program Gerald Rose wrote: "We built our sense of stewardship by raising our understanding of giving. Our giving is very much related to our philosophy and understanding of life and our life in Christ.

The purpose of stewardship is to develop this understanding of giving and why we give—and that is a lot more than fund-raising.

The money that is raised is secondary, but why we give is primary.

One of the things that happened to us was that the spirit of Christ was released within each one of us and immediately openness and confidence began to grow."

—Allan Avery
Allan Avery is currently employed by ITIM Australia, and serves several industries such as Phillip Morris Tobacco, BHP Steel-Esso as well as the SEC (Vic) and the Victorian Police Department

NEW ZEALAND TOUR—1995—19 DAYS

Departing 2 March. Returning 20 March, 1995.

Travel with the AUSTRALIAN CHRISTIAN TOURING PARTY in association with Kirra Tours and enjoy a comprehensive coverage of both Islands of New Zealand including the Bay of Islands, Auckland, Waitomo Caves, Rotorua's Thermal area, Maori Concert, Wellington, Marlborough Sound, Franz and Fox Glaciers, Queenstown, Milford Sound, Mt. Cook, Christchurch. The world in a nutshell—South Pacific paradise, high class accommodation with private facilities, all dinners and breakfasts included at an economy price. From Sydney to Sydney \$2,415.

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Calendar

Evangelism Conference

The Lausanne organisation, an international evangelical Christian network committed to the growth of the church, is arranging a conference in Melbourne, 10—15 July. The "Building the Future" conference is aimed at preparing tomorrow's leaders for the task of restoration and renaissance within the church. For information contact Lausanne Australia, PO Box 167 Camberwell 3124. Phone (03) 882 8180. Fax (03) 882 7913.

Community and Rural Suicide Conference

The Governor of Victoria, The Hon. Richard McGarvie, will open a conference on community and rural suicide in Ballarat, 16—17 September 1994. Professor Pierre Baume, who is responsible for preparing a National Policy on Suicide Prevention, will be a keynote speaker. Dr Graham Meadows, consultant psychiatrist and senior lecturer at Melbourne University, will address some of the causes of suicide and attempted suicide. Papers to be published in the conference proceedings are also sought (by 5 August). Registration \$200. For details contact: Conference Convenor, Mary Chappell, Lifeline Ballarat, PO Box 646, Ballarat 3353. Phone (053) 32 1009.

International

Khmer New Testament

A new Khmer translation, launched by the Bible Society October 1993, is being acclaimed by many church leaders. There are high hopes it will make a significant contribution to understanding and growth in the Cambodian churches. "There are an influx of cults, denominations and para-church organisations, which is confusing the few bright but untrained church leaders and there is almost no Christian literature available," says Roger Omanson, UBS consultant. Problems in translation occurred because of the lack of equivalents to basic Christian concepts such as 'God', 'eternal life' and 'sin' in Buddhism, the predominant religion of Cambodia. This was exacerbated by Khmer's three different language registers; for use by priests, royalty or common folk.

Refugees

Refugees and the Australian Church

The media regularly brings us the mind-boggling numbers and pitiable pictures of innocent people forced to become refugees and displaced people because of persecution, violence and war, such as the "ethnic cleansing" (genocide) in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Rwanda. What we hear much less of is the contribution that refugee-origin congregations are making within our Australian churches, the creative collaboration between refugee-origin and mainstream congregations and the practical, grass-roots support offered by churches and agencies to newly-arrived refugees and "asylum seekers" (also known as onshore refugee applicants) who await determination of their claims. It is appropriate to make this an ecumenical examination as refugee ministry has historically been, and remains, a strongly ecumenical story of hope and solidarity, locally and internationally.

Coming to Australia

Arriving in a new country, especially for people who have had to flee their home countries, with the trauma, usual lack of resources and disadvantages this involves, brings a range of problems, challenges and opportunities.

There are the basic survival needs of: establishment materials and costs; accommodation; paid employment; English language education; overcoming culture shock, isolation and discrimination; and finding self-esteem, family stability and a spiritual and practical place in Australian society.

English language classes through the Adult Migrant Education Services (AMES) are a big help. However, asylum seekers—those who have first arrived in Australia and then applied for refugee status—are not entitled to AMES classes while their status is being determined. The Uniting Church's Footscray Outreach Mission runs weekly one-day

English as a Second Language (ESL) classes for about 30 people from countries such as East Timor, the former Yugoslavia, the People's Republic of China (PRC) and Ethiopia. St Matthias Anglican Church runs ESL classes for PRC student asylum seekers supported by that congregation.

Adjusting to Australian culture poses tensions, some of which are common across the newly-arrived refugee groups. Compared to East Timor, for example, Australia offers greater freedom to the young, which causes inter-generational tensions. This concern over young people's needs and behaviour is linked with drugs and alcohol and leaving home as early as 16 is also reflected by Captain Almendras of the Salvation Army's Spanish-speaking corp at Springvale.

Dr Hung Pham (Churches of Christ), only 30 years old, explains it takes years for Vietnamese, used to struggle, economic hardship and persecution, to adjust to Australia's quieter lifestyle. Teenagers get restless and trying to learn English and conform, they go overboard and suffer loss of identity and rootlessness. Some teenagers who have come to Australia may be "unattached minors", without immediate family support, or suffer family tensions or break up. Youth "sets" (commonly called "gangs") usually provide a sense of belonging more than anything else.

Common perceptions of the positives of Australia include: education and opportunities for them and their children to work hard, to get rewards and rebuild their lives; freedom of speech, advocacy and lifestyle; no military harassment and the sense of relaxation and less officialdom.

How are Refugees Drawn into the Church?

Refugees may bring their Christian faith with them, but may

change denominations once here because a local congregation or group may have the necessary language skills, ethnic composition, practical support programs or attractive worship style. For example, the Spanish-speaking Springvale Salvation Army Corp has members from El Salvador even though there is no Salvation Army presence there.

An exciting ecumenical venture is the Urban Neighbourhood of Hope Mission (UNOH), mainly in the Springvale, Westall and Noble Park area. UNOH, with about 20 members based in 3 house churches, promotes an understanding of incarnational theology, encouraging Christians to deliberately move into needier suburbs.

It is auspiced by the Churches of Christ but also has Anglican, Baptist and Brethren support. Ashley Barker explains that UNOH organises a youth group of about 30 members of 12—18 year old Vietnamese and Cambodians of Buddhist background, so sensitivity is needed.

Activities include camping, hiking, swimming and informal tutoring in English language.

UNOH provides: contact with schools; accommodation support, mainly for Vietnamese youth until family reunion or longer term options, e.g. group housing, clarify; an employment scheme making BBQ equipment and discipleship, leadership and literacy skills training to help house churches become self-sustaining. In April UNOH opened an outreach centre at 4A Lightwood Road near Springvale railway station. The centre is open 10 am—2 pm weekdays.

UNOH is also soon to join the Community Refugee Settlement Scheme (CRSS), with the help of the Australian Council of Churches and the Immigration Department, to help in the resettlement of refugees. CRSS is a clear avenue of ministry and bridge-building with non-Anglo-Celtic communities

Continued on page 10

Letters to the Editor

Letters are limited to 200 words

Baptismal Regeneration

To the Editor,

The denunciation of "baptismal regeneration" by claiming a Holy Spirit baptism (including Titus 3:5 "regeneration") that is without church action of immersion in water, absurdly both denies and asserts baptismal regeneration. Regeneration and the one continuing New Covenant believers' baptism are inseparable.

As Richards' Philosophy of Rhetoric observes, "one word may simultaneously support 'separate' literal and metaphorical ideas". Romans 6 has simultaneous inclusion (in time) of free-will immersion in water (just water) and metaphorical immersion into the death of Christ (In time and apart from time). These are distinct yet associated acts.

Dismissal of immersion in water of penitent believers, upon the name of the deity, by another church member, as "just an insignificant" symbol, ignores the observation that, "Symbols are metaphors whose associative meaning is permanently fixed" (Altick Professor Ohio 1946.).

Romans' immersion in water, is a "fixed" action, that literally symbolises metaphorical immersion into the death of Christ, and his resurrection (6:3-5). These concurrent acts (by ourselves and God) result in emergence to walk in "new born" life in Christ

-W.E. Hoffman
Paradise Point, Qld.

Flagrant Exhibitionism

To the Editor,

Many correspondents have reflected upon the 'Gay Mardi Gras and upon the behaviour and sexual orientation of its participants.

The news clips of the event led me to reflect that if heterosexuals had behaved in the same fashion then decent minded people would have been outraged at such flagrant exhibitionism in the promotion of sensuality. Which led me to

another thought. The homosexuals that I have known have mostly been men. None of them would have been 'caught dead' at the Mardi Gras. They were all good churchgoing people. Gary and Carlo are a couple, monogamous and deeply committed to one another.

Could it be that there is a differentiation to be made between sexual orientation and sexual behaviour? Could it be that being consistent in trusting, committed relationships, whatever our God-given orientation is the key issue? And that we are quite right to recognise as sin those adulterous, deceitful relationships that treat people as just bodies, denying their spiritual reality?

-Dave Reynolds
(Aldinga Beach, SA)

Whose Opinion?

To the Editor,

In the 21 May edition of the "AC", David Allison stated, regarding my letter, "fancy wanting the Editor to challenge my opinion whilst accepting yours!"

I didn't think that I had made an opinion to the Editor. What I said was, "Recently in *The Australian Christian*, a letter was published by someone who stated that there was no place as a real hell. That letter was published unchallenged by the Editor or Pastor Salt. In the 19 March edition, a letter was published challenging the statement made—but it should have been challenged straight away. To go unchallenged seemed to condone the remarks."

I was not offering my opinion but a comment taken on the authority of God's word. See Matt 5:22, 5:29, 5:30, 10:28, 18:9, 23:33, Mark 9:43, 9:45, 9:47, Luke 12:5, 16:23 and 2 Peter 2:4 (besides others).

-Jim Elliott
(Cardiff, NSW)

Church Government

To the Editor,

Owen Wainright ("AC" 4/6/94) marshalls the awesome resources of the Encyclopedia Britannica to support the concept of autocratic church government in the New Testament,

in reply to Bruce MacIntosh's assertion that the early church practised democracy.

Episcopalians, presbyterialists and congregationalists have all claimed New Testament precedents for their various forms of church government and probably some elements of all three were present in various places from time to time.

However, the New Testament writers, in describing (or rather hinting at) church government in the first half of the first century and in outlining some leadership qualifications, did not think of themselves as setting out a blueprint for church order for all time. Rather, they knew that God's mission for the church was to spread the good news of the risen Christ and to bring those responding to it into the church for nurture, worship and service. This they did and from the first day found that it all needed organisation. So they used whatever form of organisation

that they knew to meet both the local and general situations.

Today, the church has the same mission. To do it well she needs the best contemporary forms of organisation to be found that are in harmony with the spirit of Christ. There is no need to feel obliged to follow slavishly what we think may have been the New Testament forms.

-Gordon Stirling
(Boronia, Vic)

Thanks Barry

To the Editor,

I had hoped to have written this letter some time ago to simply state publicly my deep gratitude and appreciation for the incalculable contribution which Barry McMurtrie has made to my life and, I believe, to the life of our Australian Churches.

Yes, his move to the USA is a sad loss for us, but on the positive side it's fantastic to think that our Movement has been able to produce a man of Bar-

Letters to a Travelling Companion

Going to Church

Dear Daniel,

Your recent questions regarding the necessity of a Christian to be part of a church, caused me to think about my mate next door. He's into hydroponics and grows most of his plants in troughs of water with no soil at all. Every day he mixes up a strange concoction of various nutrients and fertilisers and adds this to the water.

He was having a good deal of success until he left me, the world's most catastrophic gardener, in charge of his garden whilst he was away. "Make sure you feed and water the plants every day," he sternly charged me as he left. But I figured that they were not likely to die if I left them a couple of days before checking them. To my horror, when I finally did check them, the water had all dried up and the plants had followed suit.

The untimely demise of my mate's plants seems a fitting parable of Christians who opt out of the life of the church. To grow and develop, my mate's plants needed a suitable environment. So do we Christians! I believe our faith communities, even with their apparent shortcomings, provide us with that environment of mutual care, love, encouragement and guidance which we all need to continue to grow and develop toward fuller humanity. It may be possible to be a Christian and not go to church—I wouldn't like to try it though!

Write soon,
Pastor Salt.

Continued from page 7

A willingness to reach out, to overcome any latent discrimination, to try to understand cultural differences, to tackle the language needs, to take an interest in the issues and people's needs, and to be prepared to change worship and decision-making styles to better involve different cultures would help build truly multi-cultural churches.

What can refugees offer the church and what can the Christian faith and church members offer refugees? The activities and efforts at bridge-building, practical solidarity and mutual understanding already covered provide some hints.

People's Republic of China student, Ji Zhang, knowing the anguish and uncertainty of so many of his fellow asylum-seeker student friends, reflects: "The church can offer people a sense of hope in their lives. Even when life is hard, like for me, the sense of hope is always there."

—John Ball
(Refugee & Migrant Services,
ACC, Melbourne)

Continued from page 8

ry's calibre who will now make a greater contribution than ever before to the work of the Kingdom, given his potential exposure to the vast millions of people in North America.

Traditionally, we have not looked very favourably on "deserters"—those men and women who for various reasons have chosen to move to minister in the USA. I can only hope and pray that this will never happen to Barry and Gay and that they will always be eagerly welcomed and accepted back into the scene here.

Barry's drive and vision, combined with his incredible gifts in communication, will always be a source of great inspiration for me and, I suspect, for hundreds of other ministers and lay leaders across this nation.

—Graham Agnew
(Marion, SA)

Crafty Outreach

Busy Bees indeed

On moving to Maryborough, Vic, with my husband and children two years ago, I discovered that the area was rich in the traditional crafts: patchwork, lace-making, drawn thread work and the like. Most local towns had quilting guilds and the craft displays at the local shows were amazing.

Imagine my wonder when I found that one of the most skilled needlewomen was in our church. Joy Laby and her friend Merle Thatcher had won many prizes for their beautiful craft work.

These skills couldn't hide under a bushel forever!

In September 1993, we started the Busy Bees Craft



• Mary Pickavance and daughter Sarah, Cathy Clun, Joy Laby & Merle Thatcher

Group and it soon became evident that there were many women who wanted to learn. We now have 35 women on the roll, with an average attendance of about 20. Over the months, strong friendships have developed and we are also seeing some interest in other

church groups. It has given the Maryborough church a face in the community as well as providing a gentle outreach to many isolated or lonely women. We are hoping to hold an exhibition of the quilts and other work early next year.

—C. Clun

Pontius' Puddle



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Books

Faith Alive: An Australian Picture

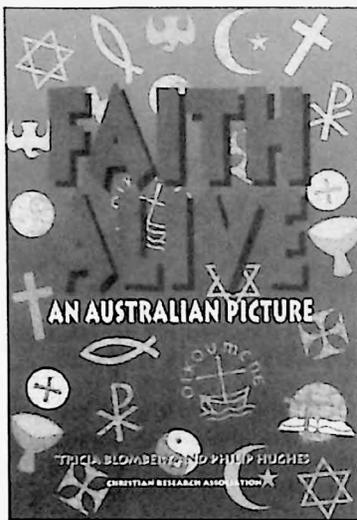
by Tricia Blombery and Philip Hughes (Christian Research Association)

The Christian Research Association has been operating now for over eight years. In this book Tricia Blombery and Philip Hughes have taken material they have gathered over that period, through interviews and research surveys, and compiled a picture of the religious beliefs and practices in Australia today. They examine not only the institutional practice of religion, but the personal religion of individuals (here they have looked at beliefs, people's attitudes to being a Christian and how people see faith working for them in their everyday lives).

The text is written in an easy to understand style that is not over technical and which looks at trends in the broad view. The graphs and illustrations are such that the reader easily understands the implications of the figures.

An interesting survey of material that, read along with material from the National Church Life Survey, should help us all to a better understanding of faith in Australian society and the effect of that faith on individuals. Each chapter also has a small section where two or three reflections on the issues raised can be further worked through and a short further reading list.

Available from the Christian Research Association, Locked Bag 23, Kew 3101. —CRA



tion of the strengths as well as the weaknesses of each. There are three helpful appendices: an outline of the origins of the New Age movement; what we can learn from New Agers; and a reading list. There is an excellent guide for approaching alternative healing p. 90f, which is followed by the description of a healing in Jesus' name.

Adrian Van Leen, from Concerned Christians Growth Ministries, wrote to the authors, "Some will think you have 'sold out to the enemy'. However those mature Christians, concerned about reaching out with the truth of Christ to today's seekers for truth and meaning, will be challenged and gratified by this tool which will aid their own communication of Christ's message for today".

This would be an excellent book to buy, read and donate to libraries of our tertiary colleges. —Barry Jenkins

The Message of Job

by David Atkinson (IVP—The Bible Speaks Today Series)

David Atkinson is chaplain of Corpus Christi College, Oxford, and is a pastoral counsellor. This is a scholarly commentary on Job, but is easily read. With Job, David wrestles with the problem of God and human suffering, especially from a pastoral understanding. He uses the "Job's comforters" as examples of what to do and what not to do in pastoral care. The drama of Job shows that glib answers to afflicted people will not do and that perhaps the only real answer to the why of suffering is that we do not know, but that God knows and can be trusted. But the book of Job is supremely the story of one man who went through hell and ultimately in his hell found God real. David plots the stages of Job's grief. He shows the ancient counsellors preaching to Job, giving him advice, quoting texts at him, all because they cannot handle his suffering and can't identify with him and share his pain. Their theology is fixed and cannot be adjusted to Job's situation. It is a good book in spite of the fact that this reviewer has problems with David's concept of the two wills of God, the absolute will and the permissive will. In the Appendix there is a useful gathering together of the several speeches of each friend into a single speech. —GRS

Living with PMT

by Shirley Jebb (Kingsway Publications) \$8.95

PMT, though often the butt of male humour is a very real condition that affects all women to one extent or another. In some, it may be manifested by extreme nausea; others may have to endure severe headaches; and in many women it causes severe mood swings—depression, panic and lethargy, to name a few.

Queen Victoria suffered from it so badly that Prince Alfred was, apparently, relieved every time she fell pregnant!

This book doesn't condemn or belittle those with PMT—it helps. Written by a Christian lady, it looks at what you can do to relieve the physical discomfort and the emotional merry-go-round. Living with PMT is a good little handbook to have tucked away at the back of the bookshelf (where no-one can see the title). It offers invaluable advice in a sympathetic way to the Christian woman. —Cathy Clun

Shooting for the Stars

by Ross Clifford and Philip Johnson (Albatross Books) \$9.95

The joint authors write their impressions of a dozen different New Age practitioners who they met when they set up a stall at Sydney's Darling Harbour Mind*Body*Spirit Festival. They discuss astrology, near-death experiences, past-life therapy, mind powers and a score of other psycho-technologies. Each topic they deal with is seen sympathetically, recalling the person who they met at each stall. There is also an assessment of each program from the point of view of the Christian Scriptures and an indica-



Australia

Survivors of Abortion

Survivors of Abortion Ltd is an evangelistic ministry to those whose lives have been damaged by abortion, whether their own or someone else's. They are seeking to offer support to those whose lives are affected by abortion and to also campaign against the wide availability of abortion in Australia (their literature claims 90,000 abortions in Australia each year). They can be contacted at PO Box 15, Harlaxton 4350. Phone (076) 38 4685.

Vic Religious Education

In 1993, 4,637 volunteers were teaching Religious Education to 179,335 primary school students in Victoria, representing 58.78% of the school population. The best coverage of Christian religious education is in Gippsland and Central Highlands with 82.3% and 82% of net enrolment. The Christian religious program is in 76.2% of primary schools.

Vic School Chaplaincy

In 1993, two new schools, Dromana and Maryborough Secondary Colleges began chaplaincies organised by the Council for Christian Education in Schools in Victoria. This takes the number of chaplains to 40.

Disunited Church

Two large congregations have withdrawn from the Uniting Church, and ministers and other congregations are understood to be considering their position, in the wake of the Assembly's strong affirmation of infant baptism. The Churchlands parish in Perth (the largest congregation in the WA Synod) formerly left the Uniting Church on 13 March. One week later, most of the members of O'Connor Uniting Church in Canberra left to form Grace Christian Ministry. The departures are a direct result of the assembly Standing Committee's decision last September requiring all ministers and councils of elders to "baptise those who confess the Christian faith, and children who are presented for baptism and for whose instruction and nourishment in the faith the church takes responsibility."

Families of Light

Youth with a Mission declaration

Since 1994 is the International Year of the Family, the Family Ministry Department of Youth With a Mission is calling upon families to stand up and become 'Families of Light'.

We are inviting families to join us in declaring their intention to honour the Lord in their families, as expressed in the following commitment:

Our Commitment

"As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." (Josh 24:15)

1. We will seek to honour the Lord in our family life and give him the place he deserves. (Col 1:17-18)

2. We will seek to honour each family member as a unique individual, created in God's image. (Rom 12:10)

3. We will seek to give our

family life a priority and commit ourselves to spending time together building close family bonds. (Mal 4:6)

4. We will seek God-honouring, biblical patterns of communication in our home. (Eph 4:29, Col 4:6)

5. We will seek to resolve our conflicts quickly and extend unlimited forgiveness to one another. (Eph 4:26, Matt 5:21-26; 18:21-22)

6. We will seek to reach out to the lost and needy families in our neighbourhood, our country and the nations of the world. (Acts 1:8)

7. We will seek to discover our God-given purpose and destiny as a family. (Phil 3:12)

We encourage families to set aside a specific family time to discuss the seven aspects of this commitment. We believe an

appropriate response would be a time of prayer, committing yourselves to becoming a 'Family of Light'.

For those families that would like a frameable copy of this commitment that can be dated and signed by each member of the family, you can obtain one by writing to Family Ministries, 1 Kent Road, Surrey Hills 3127. Telephone (03) 888 6850. Fax (03) 836 9231. A small donation to cover cost of printing and mailing would be appreciated.

We are also calling upon churches throughout the world to set aside Sunday 25 September as 'Families of Light' Sunday. The purpose for this Sunday would include, but not be limited to the following:

1. To observe an international Day of Prayer for the family.

2. To lift up and encourage biblical family values.

3. To call families to commit themselves to become 'Families of Light'.

Faith Promise

Thornleigh, NSW, mission giving

28-29 May was time for taking stock of our giving to the support of Missionaries and Missions, a challenge to give by faith more than in 1993-4.

The program commenced on the Saturday with a three-

course dinner, with entertainment by a string quartet. The main feature was a report by Stuart Wesley and Tony Harris on their recent visit to Romania with James Harris and Greg Kenny. They were the guests of Michael Fackerell of the End Time Harvest Ministries who is one of the missionaries we support. They reported not only on the growth of the church and the great response

to the Gospel, but also on the physical hardships and opposition faced. They gave an overall view of the physical, material and social conditions missionaries face as they serve the Lord in such places.

Our Guest Speaker on Sunday was Robert Mason, currently planting a church in Perth and recently returned from the USA and a ministry trip to Siberia. He brought two challenging messages. Both meetings were well attended. The Faith Promise Offering for 1994 was \$38,000.00.



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Vic-Tas Conference 1994

Salt and light

The theme "You are the salt of the earth and the light of the world" was chosen by Max Gowty for his year as Conference President. Along with the Year of the Family, it was the main theme of the Conference Celebration Event held at the World Congress Centre on Sunday 1 May.

A capacity audience of all ages attended and were challenged by speaker Kim Thoday to look ahead and move with the inevitable changes in our society, and accept people for themselves as Christ accepts and values everyone. Kim carried the theme throughout the evening and linked his thoughts with excellent dramatic and musical presentations, including the 100-voice choir. Keith Milne was inducted as the President for 1994-95 and we look forward to his leadership. Once again, appreciation is expressed to Alison Pitt and

Frazer Wood-Burgess from the Doncaster church for their excellent production of the Celebration event.

The Presidents' Receptions, held this year at six country and city locations, were well attended. Max Gowty and Maureen Daniels were pleased to be able to meet with over 450 people from the churches. In all, over 70 churches were represented at the receptions. There were many comments of appreciation for being able to "get together and share", particularly in the country areas. Thank you to Horsham, Ballarat (Mt Clear), Bendigo, Shepparton, Mulgrave and Northcote churches for hosting the receptions.

Jonathan Moore (Ormond), Merryl Blair (Hartwell) and Darren Kittle (Ballarat) led the worship segments for the Friday night and Saturday morning Business Sessions. There

was much lively debate with many issues being discussed, all of which is very necessary for us as Churches of Christ to face the reality of looking to the future. "Focus" reports on the work of many of the Departments were presented. The need for financial support from the churches was highlighted so that the work being done by the Departments can continue. The hospitality of the Nunawading church for the business sessions was once again greatly appreciated.

The CWF Conference, under the presidency of Maureen Daniels, and Youth Event, arranged by Paul Creasey, were also well attended and successful. They contributed to the overall effectiveness of the Conference.

Churches of Christ are still faced with the challenge of the changing needs in our society and the great needs of many people. This Conference was a positive experience towards meeting such demand.

—Valda Jenkins

International

Gross Domestic Products

Almost one third of the world's Gross Domestic Product is a result of what Bryant Myers calls "structures of sin". Writing in his book, *The Changing Shape of World Mission*, Myers lists pornography, military spending, financial crime, drug trafficking and tax cheating among those contributing to the \$US5.2 trillion in yearly spoils.

Russian Believers

Although 39% of European Russians consider themselves religious, only 6% attend church, according to a survey by the country's Public Opinion and Market Research Organisation. A mere 4% said their beliefs were strong. Three-quarters of all believers declared "complete confidence" in the country's predominant Russian Orthodox Church, compared with a third of all the country's citizens. Of those describing themselves as believers, 70% were women. Although almost one-fifth had higher education, 40% had not finished secondary school. Just under half were over 50.

Brazil Booming

Five new evangelical churches were established every week in Brazil between 1990 and 1992, according to Latin American Ecumenical News. There were 710 such congregations opened in Rio alone, many of them without trained pastors and meeting in private homes.

Religious Radio Revival

Religious programming is the third most common radio format in the US, according to *The New York Times*. Only adult contemporary music and country music formats are more common. The number of religious radio stations has increased by one-third since 1980.

Biggest Bible Exporter

According to the *Guardian* newspaper, South Korea has overtaken the US as the world's biggest exporter of Bibles, exporting 4.7 million Bibles in 102 languages in 1992.

The Need to Plan

Horsham statement

The Horsham, Vic, church has seen the need to plan where it is going and where it should be placing its efforts.

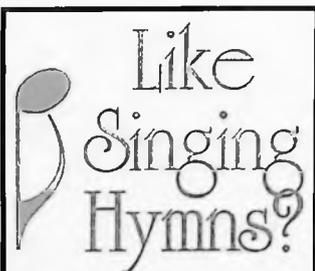
Late last year, some thirty of the fellowship met in sessions, under the leadership of Jim Kollmorgen, to identify the important areas for the church to focus on. As well, we needed to define a simple statement to identify our overall goal. This we called our mission statement. Here are the results:

Mission Statement: "We, the members of the Horsham Church of Christ are committed to honour God by our example, reach people with the message of Christ and provide

an environment where people can grow spiritually."

Eight programs were identified as important to the church and an Elder or Minister has been appointed to be an advocate to promote a particular program. The programs are: Winning People for Christ, Teaching, Prayer, Worship, Fellowship, Youth, Caring and Support Services (Admin).

Specific short and long-term goals have been set for each of these programs. It is intended that at each Elders' meeting, a review will be undertaken of one or two of these programs to ensure that we are attaining our goals.



Why not join us
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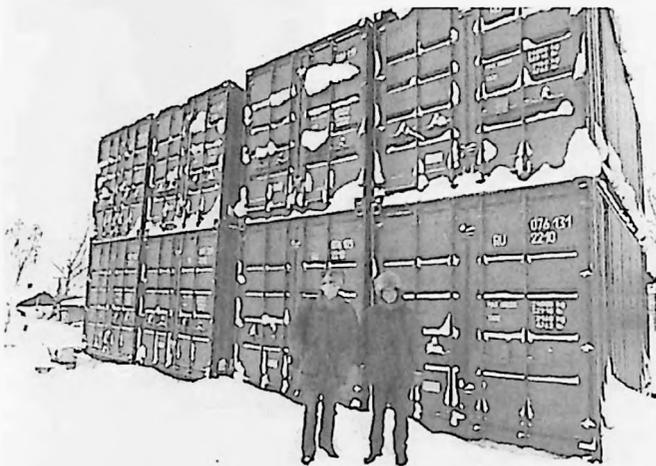
Celebrating the commencement of the
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RSVP 10 July, Pearl & Bruce Alcorn
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Siberian Base

New Bible distribution base



As a first step in the establishment of a Bible distribution base in Siberia, the Bible Society in Russia (BSR) has shipped eight rail containers packed with Bibles to the site of the proposed warehouse in Novosibirsk.

A concrete base is currently being laid on land purchased by BSR and a house on the site will be renovated for use as the depot office.

The Society hopes the new Bible depot will begin to meet the churches' needs across the vastness of Siberia. Two more depots are planned for Usurisk and Vladivostok.

Prior to the shipment of these

containers, some 80,000 Scriptures, mostly Bibles and Children's Bibles, have been sent to Siberia for distribution, but the demand for Scriptures is ever-increasing and needs to be coordinated from a more local point.

BSR hopes that the new depot will handle up to 200,000 Scriptures this year and that this will eventually be increased to at least 300,000 Scriptures a year once the depot is operative.

These plans will depend to a large extent on the provision of funds for the production and supply of these Scriptures.

Pilgrimage to Hell

Increasing need, decreasing funds

New Zealander Russ Kerr treks the world following famine, war, and disaster. After 13 years directing relief resources to an ever-growing number of world crises, Mr Kerr, the head of relief and rehabilitation for World Vision International, admits to moments of depression and anger.

"I seem to be on a pilgrimage to plummet the depths of hell," he said. "I did not think I was going to see anything worse than Somalia, but I did in Rwanda."

To counteract the overwhelming horror of the human suffering he witnesses, Mr Kerr focusses on individuals.

"We would love someone to just reach out a hand and help us if we were that person in need. I see their kids as my kids and their wives as my wife," Mr Kerr explains.

Kerr is in Australia this week to meet with World Vision colleagues and representatives from the Australian International Development Assistance Bureau and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

Ninety-five per cent of World Vision International's relief budget is provided by government donors from developed countries like Australia.

In the face of increasing de-

mand for the relief dollar, Mr Kerr says it is likely to become more difficult to get money from governments facing competing demands in their own countries. "It is not a bottomless pit."

Politicians need to be encouraged to keep funding international relief, and to do this, Mr Kerr said it was imperative that aid and development organisations make sure their projects are cost effective and have a positive impact on human life.

Mr Kerr said that once immediate emergency relief needs are met, one of the most successful ways to continue a relief program is by giving people the means to sustain themselves. Providing ag-packs, which contain farming implements and seeds, enables at-risk communities to break the handout cycle and to become gainfully employed.

Last year in northern Mozambique, \$US5 million bought 5,000 tonnes of seed. Each tonne of seed cultivated produced 50 tonnes of seed, a saving of 250,000 tonnes of relief seed.

"A modest investment in seeds and tools can produce these tremendous returns," he says. This makes government donors more enthusiastic about funding such relief programs.

Rwandan Aid

COCOA sending relief funds

Our Overseas Mission Board has agreed to receive and forward funds for those who are suffering as refugees in the Rwanda situation. Our research

tells us that TEARUK has identified a group of around 14,000 Rwandan refugees in Tanzania who are not receiving help from any other Aid organisation or International body. Funds given through COCOA will be administered through the local Anglican diocese under the guidance of TEAR UK.

Funds for Rwanda may be given to COCOA and are tax-deductible. COCOA has already made available \$5,000 from funds held and any funds over and above this will be forwarded on through TEAR UK.

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People

Now in Print

Mary Hawkins

After fourteen years and fourteen rejection letters from editors, Mrs Mary Hawkins (nee Pedler) is now a published author. Her first inspirational romance novel, *Search for Tomorrow*, was printed last September by the American Christian publisher, Barbour Books, for their Heartsong Presents series. In their book club members' survey last October, it was voted second favourite contemporary novel. It will be available for mass distribution in Australia in June. A second novel, *Damaged Dreams*, has been accepted and is tentatively scheduled for release in the USA in October. They are also considering a third manuscript.

Mary was baptised by Eric Hart at Margaret St Church of

Christ in Queensland. She completed her general nursing training at Toowoomba General Hospital and her midwifery certificate at King George V Hospital in Sydney, attending the Bexley North church in those days.

While studying for two years at the Woolwich Bible College, she met her husband Ray Hawkins, a regular contributor to the *Australian Christian*. He has also had his first Bible study book, *Rekindled*, released by Vital Publications. They have had ministries at Carramar, Tamworth, Orange, Gladstone (Qld), and Mayfield (NSW).

They have been at the Maitland, NSW, church since its commencement in 1980.

Mary has also had success writing for the international romance market.

Three medical romance books have been accepted by Harlequin Mills and Boon. The first, *Priority Care*, was released in paperback in the United Kingdom in April and in May/June here in Australia.

Ongoing Care, a spin off, has been published in hard cover and will be released here in paperback in September. *Burn-out*, the third, will be released in December.

Over the years, Mary certainly hasn't found it easy combining the role of minister's wife and mother of Lance, Craig and Gaylene with her dream of writing. She is quite sure that her first efforts at writing a book would have died a painful death if it had not been for the encouragement of her husband, and the then General Manager



Photo courtesy: The Toowoomba Chronicle

• Mary Hawkins and two of her books

of Anzea Publishers, Jeffrey Blair many years ago. Jeffrey sent her that first rejection letter, but told her to keep trying. She's still doing just that, with more books in the pipeline.

Giving Thanks

Edna Vawser

A thanksgiving service for the life and ministry of Edna Vawser was held at the Belmore, NSW, church on 6 April, with a number of metropolitan churches represented and former missionaries present.

Ed Holt (former chairman, NSW Overseas Mission Committee) led the service, commencing with hymns of praise. Colin Bowser then led in a prayer of thanksgiving.

Noelene Roose read the tribute (supplied by OMB) and Lorraine Hansby sang two solos. Elma Bowser recounted memories of Edna and included snippets from some of her letters written over the years. Richard Powell also recounted memories of the times he and his wife, Jan, served with Edna in India.

Glenyce Gers presented more highlights entitled "Mother's Memories", with notes supplied by Mrs Mona Gers. Ed Hold then presented a challenging message. The hymn "To God be the Glory" was a fitting tribute to Edna Vawser's faithful life. Rosalie

Rofe (former PNG missionary) closed in prayer.

—Elma Bowser

Visiting Musicians

Bill and Jeanine Walker

Bill and Jeanine Walker were in Australia recently to visit Bill's parents, Alf and Beryl Walker of the Earlwood, NSW, church. They gave two musical programs at Belmore, one on Good Friday. Bill is one of America's most prominent orchestra leaders, arrangers,

record producers and television music directors today. In his 30 years in the Nashville, Tennessee, music industry, he has arranged and/or conducted for the biggest names in the entertainment field. He is presently Music Director for the country's top rated music variety television series, *The Statler Brother's Show*. Jeanine is leader of one of Nashville's foremost recording studio background vocal groups, The Sounds Incorporated. Jeanine has sung with most of the major recording artists in the US. Her quartet presently sings with Bill's orchestra on the show.

—Elma Bowser



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125th Anniversary Committee.
403 Elsworth Street West Mount Pleasant
Ballarat 3350. Phone (053) 33 5865
by Friday 24 June.

That Other Australia

Viney Longthorp

Sometimes poets present solid information in their writings. In his poem "Australia", A.G. Hope wrote, *And her five cities, like five teeming sores*

Each drains her, a vast parasite robber state

Where second-hand Europeans pullulate

Timidly on the edge of alien shores.

Since this poem was written, there has been some diluting of the European element due to migration. Even so, the great proportion of us Aussies do live in the great coastal conurbations and the larger provincial centres.

But there is another Australia—the Australia of the bush, the outback, the Australia beyond the "black stump" in which very few of us live, but which, paradoxically, we look to as the locus of our national legend, image and identity. This is the Australia of those vast distances, harsh climatic extremes and difficult living conditions. Much of it is still so remote that some writers have referred to it as "the unknown Australia."

These great spaces and the lifestyles of some of the people who live in them is the subject of a forthcoming Compass program, "Spirit, Faith and Country," to be screened on ABC TV on Sunday 26 June at 10.30 pm.

In brief, it depicts the work and the ministry of the Patrol Padres of the Uniting Church of Australia (UCA). A ministry

which, together with the Royal Flying Doctor Service, expresses much of the "genius" of Australia. The Patrol Padre ministry is now over eighty years old. Both ministries have been shaped by the unique conditions of "God's Own Country"—which is the alternative title of this program. The program may be an eye-opener to many of us.

These frontier ministries of the UCA serve between them some 160 remote cattle stations, 20 mines of all descriptions, countless isolated prospecting leases and many aboriginal communities. As may be imagined, the distances travelled are great. In many cases light aircraft are the only practical means of transport; other conditions make four-wheeled drive vehicles a necessity. In the remote south-west corner of Tasmania, whilst the distances are not all that onerous "as the crow flies", much time is needed to reach the more remote places.

The "voice over" at the beginning of the program sets the tone of this type of ministry. One padre explains how when phoning a particular station to make an appointment [he] was told that: "We are not very religious here." He replied: "Good, I don't always get on well with some very religious people myself." This ministry works on the basis of friendship where, in the main, one listens and shares in the lifestyle of those they visit. One has to earn the right to speak through a close and "genuine" identifica-

tion with these people. This ministry bears out those words of C.S. Lewis, who in a letter to a friend wrote, "What we practise, not (save at rare intervals) what we preach, is usually our great contribution to the conversion of others".

What sort of people do these padres see and what are some of the situations they encounter? One young man whose father died could not take time off to attend the funeral because of a race against time to complete some urgent work on the station. He explains how his dad would have expected him to do this. He worked off his sorrow by hard work.

Women enjoy seeing the women padres; one explains how they miss the cuppa and the friendly gossip. On some stations, women must teach the children their school work, cook at short notice for to up to twenty itinerant workers, muster cattle and help with a lot of other "men's work" on the side. In Tasmania, some families have faced sudden loneliness as their neighbours and friends of many years leave due to the closing of mines and sections of the hydro projects. Small wonder that for these people the visit of the padre is so important. Some comments speak volumes: "We are where they are"; "The padres are the first in and the last out"; others "See Christ in us"; "When we see you coming we know that the church is there".

This ministry is certainly many-sided. One padre explains how they often act as a kind of social service, bringing books and videos as well as picking up essentials for these isolated families. Many feel "frustration because there are some problems (we) cannot do

anything about," such as the effects of the seven-year drought which has devastated many properties in the "top end".

There are many expressions of appreciation for the work of the padres. At Jabiru, one couple explains how "the padres bring something extra", and are seen as "level people". This same couple look forward on these visits to the Bible studies.

There are many examples of a deep spirituality on the part of some people. One miner explains how he believes that the "earth is alive" as he hears the noises of stresses in rocks deep underground. Many white people, no less than the aborigines, feel the sacred claims of this dangerous yet fascinating environment.

Some comments have bearing on one of our important national debates. One property owner, for instance, considers that he "Gets on OK with the aborigines". He adds that, "Their aboriginality is special but they are not special because they are aborigines," and, "It is a pity that some people come and fill their heads with nonsense and cause deterioration. Our destinies (white and black) are interlocked". An aboriginal elder rued that, "Our young people are lost—the government makes it too easy".

Here is a program which helps us understand what it means to be Australian. It will also deepen our appreciation of the positive work of the church in situations which require and admixture of adaptability, friendship, pragmatism and spirituality.

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Compass

Spirit, Faith and Country

ABC TV

Sunday 26 June, 10.30 pm

Classifieds

Crossword

ENGAGEMENTS

SUTCLIFFE-WYTHE Bev and Bill Sutcliffe of Mt Buninyong, Vic, have much pleasure in announcing the engagement of their daughter Pamela to Darren, son of Denise and Rex Wythe, Cheltenham, Vic.

DEATHS

WALKER (LACEY), Gwendoline Isabel. Peacefully at home, Old Sale Road, Westbury, with her loving family on 28 May. Loved wife of Malcolm. Devoted mother and mate of James, Louise and Rachel. Cherished daughter of Walter (dec) and Sue. Loved sister and sister-in-law of David, Rose, Veronica and Rod, Win and Jim, Julie and Murray, and Robert. Loved auntie of Prue, Paul and Luke, Manson and Kelly, Julian and Adam, Jason and Cameron, and Lauren. Now resting in God's rose garden.

IN MEMORIAM

HARTNEY Jim. 22 June 1987. Forever interwoven in my heart and memories. Your ever loving Betty.

JONES Dr Lloyd. In loving memory of our dear husband, father and Grandy, who passed away to be with his Lord, 24.6.86. We continue to see the fruit of his labours and praise God for every precious memory. Still missed and held dear in our hearts—Isabella, David, Wendy and families. "We have this treasure in earthen vessels."

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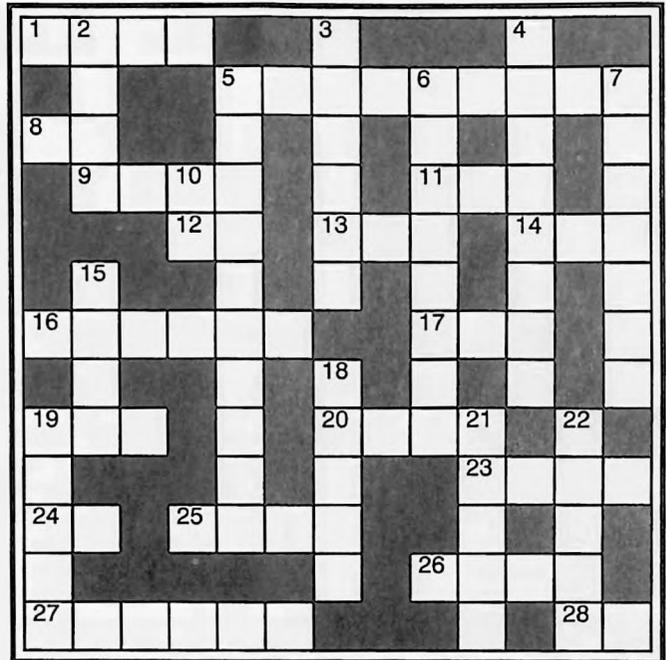
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Clues

ACROSS

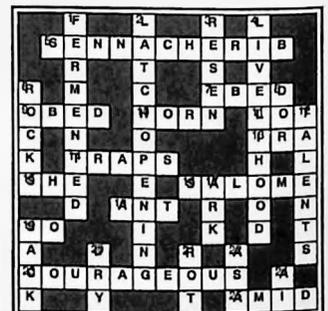
- 1 A stone on the breastplate (Exod 39)
- 5 Oppressors of the Israelites
- 8 Pronoun used 5147 times in the Bible
- 9 The best of these is a Bible book
- 11 Dross of silver (Ezek 22)
- 12 Exclamation in Job 6
- 13 Fate of the wicked's name (Prov 10)
- 14 Paul sailed this side of Cyprus
- 16 Number of Apostles (Luke 24)
- 17 Joshua's father
- 19 Gouge it out if it causes sin
- 20 Anguish will _____ the Philistines (Exod 15)
- 23 Where Paul was to meet the Emperor
- 24 Exclamation by demoniac (Luke 4)
- 25 The new Jerusalem's gates will never be _____
- 26 The fear of the Lord _____ length to life (Prov 10)
- 27 Absalom had no son to carry it for him (2 Sam 18)
- 28 Preposition occurring 2217 times

DOWN

- 2 Professional fisherman's tools of trade
- 3 Priests to ask God to prevent his people becoming a _____ (Joel 2)

- 4 Where were the settlements the Lord threatened to ravage by the sword? (Ezek 26)
 - 5 Year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign when 832 carried into captivity (Jer 52)
 - 6 Governor of Trans-Euphrates and Shethar-Bozenai (Ezra 5)
 - 7 "Should we expect _____ else?" (Luke 7)
 - 10 Opposite of yes
 - 15 Evil's action on the wicked (Psa 34)
 - 18 A stone on the breastplate (Exod 39)
 - 19 Camped here after leaving Succoth (Exod 13)
 - 21 Led to Uzziah's downfall (2 Chron 26)
 - 22 The name of Absalom's commander in 2 Sam 17.
- [NIV version used throughout]

May Solution



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Comment

Mother's Day Prayer

—Roslyn White

Lord, we thank you for creating humankind in your image—for the masculine and feminine characteristics that we share in fascinating combinations that are a reflection of yourself. How precious are the glimpses given us of you, our God, tenderly gathering us to yourself as a mother hen gathers her chickens, and of you, our God as nurturer, suckler, comforter and midwife.

Today is an occasion of celebration and of giving thanks for mothers.

We thank you, Lord, for women who have found joy and delight in their roles as mothers. We thank you for lives of dedication and love. We also give thanks for the children

who have called forth our maternity, who have helped us discover our secret beauty, our capacity to soothe, to give peace and to call forth trust and growth.

We want to remember also, women who have found mothering a thankless task, a nightmare. For those with shattered dreams, unrealised hopes, for those who attempt the impossible task of being both mother and father to their children. Lord, give strength to those whose inner well is dried up, who touch the deepness of their own darkness and are afraid to go on. We pray for mothers of children with disabilities.

We pray for the 'would be' mothers whose arms are empty. For those whose barrenness

hangs like a heavy burden. For those who have relinquished through adoption, foster care or custody. For those who denied their child life, yet continue to wonder and to regret. For those who have become motherless through death, war, abduction or suicide. Bring healing into their lives we pray.

We remember too the grandmothers who share that pain.

Lord, we give thanks for families who have done well, who have responsibly raised children, providing the love and respect that you intended.

Lord we pray for the children we have failed to treasure—the ones who experience abuse and not respect, hatred and not care, fear but not love, or just simple indifference.

Forgive us, Lord, for work left undone.

Help us to see that each of us, regardless of sex or age, can bring life into the world by allowing the living water within to become a source of life; quenching the thirst of others and becoming the bearer of hope and of grace as we breathe your love and life into the spiritually dead and decrepit.

Help us Lord to look for Christ in one another. Give us eyes to see the others' needs and ears to hear the call for help. Stop us from being so busy that we fail to be there for you and for one another. ❖

This was used as the pastoral prayer on Mother's Day at our Nunawading, Vic, church.

A Birth Announcement

Robyn Varpins

Robyn and Juris welcome with love two beautiful boys. Kaspar 6 lb 8 oz (doing fine) and Tristan 6 lb 6 oz (who sadly passed away after two short hours) on the morning of 10.1.94."

This is not the usual announcement with which a couple celebrates becoming a fam-

ily. But for us it was the culmination of five years of longing and effort. We finally took the stressful road of IVF and were overjoyed to find we were carrying twins. To be a family at long last! With the news came all the normal emotions of responsibility which were to be tested before our babies were born. One of them had a deformity that would not allow him to survive after birth. But with three months to prepare

emotionally for the joint birth and death, we were able to gather the support of family and friends around us, and design a fitting tribute to this difficult time of love and sadness. With the help of my father, Alan (Cant), we wrote this funeral service.

A Funeral Service

We are here to be with Robyn, Juris and Kaspar to farewell Tristan in simple ceremony, to

formally mark the passing of that little life: not passing from our memories, but acknowledging that he will not grow up among us. As Kaspar grows he will miss his brother as much as any of us, for they have held hands in the womb and doubtless began that strange and deep bonding only twins know.

Broad indeed is the mystery of life; hard indeed can be its pain. We would prefer a world where children do not die, but the death of a baby is part of the frailty and incompleteness all about us. There is so much of life which is simply given to us—be it in pain or joy—but if we are able to meet all circumstances with love and hope, even the pain loses its sting.

Today we stand together, people who have known sorrow and loss in various ways, feeling deeply this loss close and dear to us all. This will not weaken our love for each other, but verify and confirm it.

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Comment

I believe we are all aware that life's wonder and mystery is not fully explained in material and intellectual ways. Beyond these we are within a spiritual dimension which we cannot grasp or describe, which transcends our limitations. Some of us call this depth beyond life by the name of God some do not try to ascribe a name. But all of us can reach in spirit beyond our own small selves to seek a harmony, peace and acceptance when life overwhelms us.

May we today trust in the spirit of love, find rest in the spirit of peace.

For long months, little Tristan grew in Robyn's body, hoped for, feared for, bearing pain for, and with Juri, cherishing and accepting. Now their responsibility for Tristan is past and he has returned to the source of life. Together we let him go and relinquish our special care for him. We have done what we could.

In committing the body of little Tristan to the elements,

we who remain take up even more strongly our commitment to life: to love tenderly, act justly, walk humbly. May we find these qualities we each most need—compassion, sensitivity and courage. May we accept our grief without fear, so that it does not overshadow our joy in the life of Kaspar.

Farewell little Tristan
Our joys will be greater
Our love will be deeper
Our life will be fuller
Because we shared your moment.

May the grace that enfolds us, the love which undergirds us, and the spirit which transcends us be our benediction today and always.

With a lot of love and having regained our faith in life we are now able to accept our situation. After all, these are among the ingredients needed in a family.

[This material, used with the permission of the families, has been contributed to help us all reflect on IVF in this International Year of the Family.]

New Hope

Top Security

W. Mill

Have you got steel bars on your windows? Deadlocks on your doors? Do you have a security man look in nightly on your workplace or even your home?

This is an age when we need security. We live in a time of break-ins, assaults and robberies. There are a lot of people around today who detest burglar alarms because they disturb them at their work.

Security is a good thing to have. But so often it doesn't work. We regularly hear of places where there have been all sorts of alarms and protective devices and yet the owners got robbed just the same.

But security is something we always look for. So we use padlocks and bolts and electric eyes, watchdogs and even deadly weapons. But they all quite often fail and we suffer damage and loss.

There is, however, another type of security that goes beyond all we meet up with in this life and offers us watertight security in both the age to come and the immediate present. This is the security found in God.

There is a word in the book of Proverbs that it pays to read. It says, "He who trusts in

himself (and, we might add, in his own devices) is a fool, but he who walks in wisdom is kept safe." And there is no better way to walk in wisdom than to put one's trust in God.

God is the supreme provider of security. In the Bible, Job says to the believer, "You will be secure, because there is hope; you will look about you and take your rest in security. You will lie down with no-one to make you afraid." This is a promise for all believers for all time.

God is, above all else, the believer's guardian. The Bible says, God is a fortress. It says he is a rock, a refuge and a shield.

He looks for believers to protect them. In the first book of Chronicles, a faithful servant of God, a prophet, says, "The eyes of the Lord search back and forth across the whole earth, looking for people whose hearts are perfect towards him, so that he can show his great power in helping them." A writer of the Psalms assures the believer, "He will shield you with his wings! They will shelter you. His faithful promises are your armour."

You have probably noticed something particular about all

this. You have to be a believer | generous times there is nothing
to experience it. In these dan- | you need to be more. ❖

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Department of Mission Education and Development

Ashamed of the Gospel

Alan Matheson

Church growth methods and ministry, have driven our Movement for the past two decades. Attempts to engage in a debate, whether at conferences, theological colleges, or departmental committees have failed. The closest we have come to a critical examination of the Biblical basis of the church growth phenomenon, has been a debate on leadership, authority and management, in the pages of the "AC".

Wandering through a Sydney bookshop recently, two books caught my eye: *Marketing the Church—What they never taught you about church growth* (Written by George Barna in 1988, Albatross Books, now remaindered at \$3.95) and *Ashamed of the Gospel* (by John MacArthur). One written for an Australian audience (Barna), and the other, written in the USA, (MacArthur), with the latter, in part, a highly critical analysis of *Marketing the Church*.

Contrasts

The contrasts between the two books is fascinating. Barna includes chapters on the importance of marketing, the market orientated church, creative thinking about marketing and ministry, and developing a market plan.

MacArthur, pastor of one of the ten largest congregations in the USA, in a devastating

critique of Barna, uses chapter headings such as Christianity on the down grade, the 'user friendly church?', gimee that show time religion, all things to all men, and the foolishness of God.

World Vision, commending Barna's book, urges would be buyers: if they didn't know that "Jesus had a marketing strategy" then this is the book for you. MacArthur, in contrast, challenges this general assertion, and that "the first marketeer was Paul". Not so, he writes, "what made Paul effective was not marketing savvy, but a stubborn devotion to truth. He was Christ's ambassador, not his press secretary."

The philosophy, continues MacArthur, "that marries marketing technique with church growth theory is the result of bad theology. It assumes that if you package the gospel right, people will get saved".

Pragmatism

In recent times, there has emerged in the USA a stream of evangelical writing increasingly questioning the directions of current evangelical ministry. Schaller, in a brief but thought-provoking analysis of mega-church developments (*Christianity Today* 5.3.90) worries about "the tendency to depend more on the market than the mission. Should a church formulate its priorities and design its ministries in response

to the expressed needs of people? Or should the driving force be the Bible, the creeds, traditions, and priorities of pastors? To some the popularity and success of the mega-church represents a dangerous concession to the rampant consumerism characteristic of contemporary American society."

Hatch and Hamilton in a major analysis of modern American evangelicalism, note that "by and large the evangelical community has become comfortable with suburban homes and consumer culture. Evangelicals are susceptible to the idols of materialism in part because evangelical success and commercial success are so easily intertwined... It becomes hard to distinguish between marketing the gospel and commercial success." (*Christianity Today* 5.10.92). Charles Colson in another article, "Welcome to Mc-Church", (*Christianity Today* 23.11.92), writes that "cultural values have so captured the church, that we equate success with size. If the church is not growing, someone is doing something wrong. Maybe the pastor and the board haven't analysed the market well enough... That is why church growth has become the hottest business in the religious world today."

For MacArthur it is this pragmatic approach to ministry driven by the market, which needs to be challenged and rejected.

Growth

Numbers, and the high regard our churches give to numbers and size, has always intrigued me.

In the 1960s, as young ministers, we religiously filed report after report on numbers of visits to homes and hospitals, numbers of telephone calls, numbers of letters sent and received, as well as the numbers who came to services.

Our 'successful ministers' ("key" or "senior") are measured in terms of size of congregations. Ministers move from big' congregations to bigger' congregations, and when they run out of bigger' congregations, they swap denominations, or go overseas.

"Is numerical growth," asks MacArthur, "a legitimate goal in church ministry? Is numerical growth always the best gauge of a church's health?"

"Nothing in Scripture," he asserts, "indicates that church leaders should set numerical goals for church growth."

As one who has spent most of his ministry in small congregations, I have always been saddened that we have not been able to measure the life and witness of a congregation, in terms other than numbers baptised, buried and attendance at services.

In my experience of small congregations, rarely is there not a member not intensely involved in evangelism, ie living and working out their faith in the community about them. Some spend half the week visiting the sick and the elderly, some are good neighbours, others give sterling services in community organisations, some keep a pastoral eye on other members of the congregation, while others minister by contributing to retired or "third age" institutions (surely one the most challenging and fastest growing ministries in contemporary Australia). Rarely are members not a source of a com-

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Comment

ment on an interesting book, or not worried about (and praying for) what is happening in Rwanda, or not excited about the way the Bible is being read and distributed in Romania.

Somehow or other, we fail to capture that quality of spiritual growth in our conference statistics. In challenging a ministry driven by marketing and numbers, MacArthur notes, "when the people of God seem weakest, look again Jesus is still building his church."

If you are looking for an evangelical critique of the church

growth movement, then this is the book.

First it provides a harsh, critical analysis of *Marketing the Gospel*. The travesty of the church growth movement for MacArthur, and remember he is pastor of one of the largest congregations in the USA, is its preoccupation with being a "user friendly church". The key concept for such churches is "target marketing". In other words, writes MacArthur, "decide who you're going to minister to, fashion the product to suit the audience, and don't 'waste resources' on people outside the target group."

Why do you suppose, he continues, that "nearly all the user friendly churches identify their target market as young suburban professionals and other moneyed groups?"

Why are so few of these churches targeting poor and inner-city congregations or mixtures of all classes and types of people?"

Second, he makes some uncomfortable comments on doctrine. Speaking of the user friendly church, "their undefined theology and seeker sensitive philosophy do not permit them to take a firm biblical stance."

Finally, he provides a challenging alternative to the kind of ministry so widely promoted in our churches as "successful".

"It should be clear," he writes, "that the church is a supernatural work. Christ himself—not marketing know-how, human cleverness, or church growth techniques—adds to the church, causes its genuine growth and blesses the church with health and vitality."

* *Ashamed of the Gospel: When the Church Becomes Like the World*, John MacArthur, Crossway Books, 1993 \$24.95.

Focus on Prayer

Brian Stitt

As I have listened to the various foci presented tonight, I have come to appreciate the wisdom of our President in asking for this focus on prayer. Each Conference Department has featured their work and laid upon us their various needs for prayers, petitions and intercessions. They are inviting us to share with them their salvation history. Indeed, through prayer they demand that we become stakeholders in the contemporary history of the death and resurrection of Christ in the life of our society.

May I remind you that there is a necessary prayer beyond our prayers, petitions and intercessions, which indeed are part of our necessary work in God's kingdom. As he discussed prayers of petition, Jesus encouraged his disciples with the affirmation that the Father already knew what they needed. As a true father gives good gifts so he would give to them the true gift of prayer, the presence of the Holy Spirit, of himself. Prayer has been defined as the life of Jesus living in our hearts. This Jesus who was crucified, dead and buried, raised by the power of God and ascended to sit on his right hand. This same Jesus who was

available on Easter Day to his troubled, doubting disciples and the faithful women only through the eyes of faith.

The resurrection life of Jesus derives its power not from these few experiences of long ago. The ascended Lord has transcended the limitations of flesh, time and space to stand eternally in the presence of the Father. To share in salvation history is to enter into Christ's resurrection. The gateway to our experience of the resurrection is the prayer of the heart. We are invited through the practice of deep prayer and contemplation to likewise transcend with Jesus the limitations of our humanity and abide in God's eternal presence. Such contemplation of the divine nature emboldens our visions in prayer with the mind of God, enlarges our petitions with the concerns of Christ and fulfils our intercessions by the passionate concern of the Holy Spirit for the world.

Here is prayer beyond our asking or speech itself. Prayer which desires only the presence of the Father in the depth of our hearts. Here, says Paul, the Spirit himself prays within us prayers beyond words. De Melos, as he teaches about prayer, reminds us of an old

man. His custom was to go to the church each day, there he would sit quietly. Intrigued by his faithfulness his young priest asked him, "What do you say to God which takes so long?" "Nothing," was the reply, "I just listen." "What does God say then to you?" he was asked. "Nothing, he just listens also." was the reply.

Our Departments have quite rightly focused on their needs calling us to share with them in salvation history. These prayers, petitions and intercessions are validated and empowered in our common salvation history only as our true prayer rises from the heart where Christ dwells eternally saying Abba Father. Lord teach us to pray. ❖

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Vic-Tas Department of
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At this year's WA Conference, Brian Stitt was asked by Conference President Roger Ryall to make an input at the end of the program. He felt the need that something be said about prayer after the various Conference Departments had made their presentations. As he was also to close with a devotion, when he rose to make his presentation (at 10.25 pm) Brian decided to only lead the devotion and close the meeting (much to everyone's relief?). These reflections on requests for prayer followed that experience.

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owel Street, Camberwell 3124.
Phone (03) 882 4509.

**HURSTBRIDGE: Andrew and
Roslyn George**—716 Main Road,
Hurst-bridge Vic 3099. Phone (03)
718 1847.

Baptisms

•Neil Elliott, Jean Elliott, John Col-
lier, **Burleigh Heads, Qld** •Bob and
Margaret Andersen, Stan Smith,
Rebecca and Jessica White, Eliza-

beth, **SA** •Ben Stanley, **Belcon-
nen, ACT** •Craig Cowan, Sally Grice,
Paul Mutzelburg, Patricia Wilson,
Harlaxton, Qld •Pam Chapman,
Miriam Grey, **Gardiner, Vic** •Colin
Angow, Wendy Angow, Tony Ch'ng,
Natasha Cooper, **Mount Clear, Vic**
•Pamela Hennedy, Adam Parkin-
son, **Carnegie, Vic**

Marriages

•Vicki Ratcliffe and Glenn Douglas,
Knoxfield, Vic •Juanita Smith and
Paul Brown-Duthie, **Robyn Kam-
bouris and Geoffrey Kajewski,**

Adele Davidson and Stephen Lowe,
Noelene Trott and Graham Roberts,
Harlaxton, Qld •Renee Kelk and
Stuart White, **Tweed Heads, NSW**
•Pam Searle and David Thomas,
Thornleigh, NSW •Nicole Finnin
and Shane Adams, **North Essen-
don, Vic**

Deaths

•Phyl Greenway, **Hartwell, Vic**
•Glen Dinning, **Mundulla, SA** •Les
Brown, **Knoxfield, Vic** •Judith
Blake, **Strathmore, Vic** •Herb
Kleese, **Pic Williamson, Harlaxton,
Qld** •Sir Alex Ross, **Tweed Heads,
NSW** •Vera Dean, **Dianella, WA**
•Len Fleeer, **Beth Lancashire, Gar-
diner, Vic** •Mary Freebairn, Jack
Bowden, **Balaklava, SA** •Elsie
Eastwood, **Carnegie, Vic**

Edgar Evans, **WWI**. Educated her
two girls through primary school,
they later became primary teach-
ers. Widowed for 30 years, she
used her home in Gatton to help
others. Each month she conducted
a stall at the local market, raising
thousands to help Amaroo nursing
home. A housekeeper at Kenmore
college, she won many trophies at
Ma Ma Creek exhibition for her
culinary efforts. A sweet sister and
friend. Survived by children Joyce,
Shirley and Edwin; many grand-
children and great-grandchildren;
three sisters and one brother. Well
done!
—LC

Bursill, Agnes
(4.3.94) Agnes was born 19.6.20 in
Kyabram. Her family soon settled
in Maryborough. Agnes attended
the Maryborough Church of Christ
Sunday school and later married
Ron Bursill (1940). They became
members of the church in 1942.
They both remained very active
and encouraging members of our
church. However, it was tragedy
that marked out their lives. All of
their four children predeceased
them: Ronald (1), Dennis (1) Valda
(7) and Robin (18). Yet Agnes was
a loving, encouraging, joy-filled
Christian. We all miss her greatly.
—Louis Clun

Obituaries

Obituaries are limited to 100
words

Evans (nee Cole), Mary Catherine
Mary, the sixth member of the Cole
family, Qld, passed to be with her
Lord 1 April, aged 90 years. She
accepted Christ during the ministry
of H.E. Kingsford. She was super-
intendent of Sunday school and
church organist for a time. Married

Ministry Opportunity

An enthusiastic and progressive minister
is sought to work as part of a small minis-
try team committed to the growth and
development of our church community.

The successful applicant is likely to have
demonstrated effective leadership skills
and flexibility in a ministerial position.

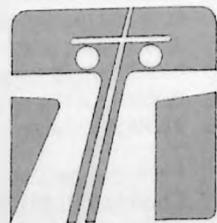
The Avenue Church of Christ has a strong
focus on worship and is committed to
work within the local community.

Written applications should be sent to:

Mr Doug Pallot
Convenor of the Elders
The Avenue Church of Christ
1 The Avenue
Surrey Hills Vic 3127

Initial enquiries should be directed to Mr
Danny Wilson on (03) 817 8582 (Bus
hours) or (03) 873 4078 (After hours).

The Avenue
Church of Christ
Surrey Hills



Church News

Tas

CAVESIDE (John & Colleen Harrison) Working bees completed painting hall ... Ladies responsible for Mother's Day worship ... John & Colleen in Melbourne for son Simon's wedding & Vic/Tas Ministers' Refresher ... Neil Doyle best 2nd year apprentice painter in Tas ... Daniel Tribolet awarded Associate Diploma in Applied Science in Agriculture & top student in course. Now at Hobart Uni ... Monthly evening sing-a-longs successful ... Young people meet fortnightly for Bible Study.

LAUNCESTON (C. Spaulding, D. Tobler) Kylie Birtwistle, Publicity Officer for Radio WAY FM, spoke at CWF ... Greg Crick won second place in recent Cannonball race in NT ... Dedication service for baby Christopher Parry held 5 June.

NUBEENA (C.G. Henderson) Sunday School purchased table tennis table ... Five WEC students worked for two week doing visitations, Ladies coffee morning, men's breakfast, Youth Rally and BBQ, video on missions, school visit, Sunday school, after school fun time, Nursing Home, other meetings and fellowship. Hobart Youth Group joined WEC for activities on the last weekend. Successful and encouraging to the church.

Vic

HARTWELL (Graeme Rogerson, Merryl Blair) Easter services of meditation, quiet reflection & celebration concluded with "Lamb on the Spit" luncheon ... Visiting speakers & interviewees Peter Breen (CBMI), Sr Tess Veenker (Spiritual Director), Noel Mitaxa (SLM), Stephen Lawrence (footballer), Sr Hilda Ross (Anglican chaplain Fairfield Hospital) ... Youth Orchestra rehearsing ... Large group attended 50 & over "Remember When" outing to Monbulk ... "The Welcoming Church" house groups during June.

ECHUCA (Arthur Symes) Many sick in hospital or at home that are being held up in prayer ... Sad to lose two families during the last couple of months. Bob & Barbara Akister & Carol & David Kemp & their children who have all gone to Queensland ... Welcomed two new families and many new people coming who are looking around.

KNOXFIELD (Rod Brown, Jason Potter) Sunday school asking member to "Nurture a Church Kid" where individuals will take a personal interest in a scholar ... Louis van Laar conducting 3-night course on "Living in a Step Family" as part

of Hodos ... Church rallying to support Rod and Lois Brown following tragic loss of infant grandson ... Church also saddened by death of founding member Les Brown.

BURWOOD (Peter Wing-Tang) Meaningful Easter services appreciated by all ... Pleasing to see Jean Grayden return after long illness ... We thank God for Margaret Wing-Tang's swift recovery after operation ... Successful fund-raising through garage sale and car rally. Planning international dinner, 29 July ... Mother's Day posies presented to E.M. Wickham, oldest mother, Beryl Drake, largest family, and Esther, four children in Zaire ... Conference sessions attended.

OAKLEIGH (Jack Edwards) Jean Kennon & Rowland Thomas received by transfer ... Combined Pentecost service with Polish congregation ... Ken Masterton returned from World Conference Executive meeting in US ... Laurel Bromley hospitalised for hip surgery ... Several enrolled for Bible reading program ... Friendship craft group meeting regularly, Barbara Edwards leader ... Contributions being received toward extensive repairs to chapel roof ... Betty Gillespie & Ken Briggs visited.

NORTH ESSENDON (Mike Esbensen) Easter Sunday service included child dedication for April Brooks ... Child dedication for Laura O'Donnell 10 April ... Sympathy to Dot Gillin whose 18 year old grandson accidentally killed ... Annual Meeting 17 April ... Congregation participated in Hand Written Bible Project by Bible Society ... Joyce Wilson needing surgery ... Church took part in ecumenical service, St John's Uniting church, Essendon, 29 May.

GARDINER (Pieter Petrusma) Friendship Club celebrating 37th anniversary. Average 40 attending ... Pottery painting class popular ... Exercise classes twice weekly ... Two baptisms, 29 May, followed by meal in hall provided by Peter and Corry ... Special "Thank you" for many years of beautiful organ music played by Jean Corlett. Jean retired as full-time organist but will still assist. Fortunate to have Pam Chapman as organist ... Church now opened for prayer last Wednesday in the month.

PRESTON (Steve Blacket) Mike Janssen, 1st year CCTC student, engaged to coordinate outreach program. Program directed to contacts through Boomerang Kids Club & other community service

groups using facilities ... Steve Blacket accepted invitation to minister at Horsham next year ... Surprise 70th birthday party for Nancy Garth in church hall.

MARYBOROUGH (L. Clun) Play-group growing, averaging 8 mums. 23 ladies now attending patchwork classes. Both groups providing great outreach ... Sunday School going well. Bible studies well attended ... Prayers being answered. New people coming to church ... Passover lunch great time of fellowship ... Great clean up at working bee ... 132nd anniversary—83 communicants ... Concert raised money for hall heating.

MOUNT CLEAR (Dale White, James Leviston, David Jones) Special Mother's Day service attracted 183 ... Neil Galbraith guest speaker at recent planned giving program, offerings showing steady increase ... Two new cell groups for young adults commenced ... Youth group participated in 40-Hour Famine ... Number of members participating in Ballarat Gospel Radio test broadcasts ... 8 new members in May, including 4 baptisms.

CARNEGIE (P & N Wight) Services well attended ... Dedication service for Joash Yong ... Memorial Thanksgiving Service was held for Els Eastwood ... Service of Thanksgiving and Celebration 5 June, giving praise for the many blessings received during past 12 months. During service, Pamela Kennedy and Adam Parkinson baptised. Luncheon followed ... Inside areas of the chapel and vestries being painted.

ORMOND (Jonathan Moore, Paul Bauer) Special service & tea

for drop-in folk, Peter Bradley speaker, Geraldine Morrow soloist ... Betty Cann & Merrilyn Swankie completed college course on visiting elderly ... EWF 37th birthday celebrated at Sizzlers ... Bible Study commenced for young mums ... Ladies cake stall raised \$152 ... Plant sale raised \$550 ... Jack Edwards speaker pm 15 May ... Merrilyn Swankie received BA degree ... Several in 40-Hour Famine ... Discipleship course commenced ... Box full of spectacles collected for Fred Hollows Foundation.

WA

DIANELLA (Tony Armstrong) Excellent evening service by youth. Dr Neale Fong (WC Eagles chaplain) challenging speaker ... Tony & Lynette home to Tas for Tony's mother's 80th birthday ... Violent storms—no damage, but debris to be cleared ... 5th Sunday in May district combined churches service at Maylands ... Tanya & Ray Tinetti & family in the interior on round Australia trip.

KINGSLEY (Peter Clayton) Successful Ladies' breakfast in April hosted by the men, Sheila Randall speaker ... Fashion parade in May, as fund raiser, surpassed expectations ... Two baptisms ... Home groups well attended ... Continuing to pray for the ill ... Church saddened by Stuart's death ... Peter Clayton ill recently ... Mother's Day saw church full. Cradle roll called ... Congratulation to Graham & Val Underhill, & Ross & Doreen Howlett both celebrating 40th anniversaries ... Church camp planned for August.

OPPORTUNITY SHOP MANAGER

Due to retirement, we need to appoint a manager of our six opportunity shops located within the metropolitan area. The shops, operating as Golden Bargains, are staffed by volunteers and provide funding for our Aged and Residential Care programs. The possibilities are exciting as there are many opportunities for new initiatives with new stores and new staff envisaged.

Ideally, the successful applicant will have retailing experience at a management level, be motivated by results and be able to relate to and lead a loyal team of volunteers. The position would suit a mature person, possibly an early retiree, who has an ethos for Community Care. A salary package including a vehicle is negotiable.

For further details, please contact Ivan Humphreys at Churches Of Christ, Department of Community Care, 77 Capel Street West Melbourne 3003. Phone (03) 326 8977.

Church News

NSW

TWEED HEADS (Richard Oakes)

Alan and Jayne Cann welcomed, Alan assisting with youth work ... Maurie & Deirdre Pieper visited, Maurie sharing work of CBMI ... Justin Whitecross doing youth course at Wollongong & assisting here ... Jeff May visited, brought challenging messages ... Richard to State Conference and ministers' camp. Ray Patterson preached in his absence ... Church saddened at passing of Sir Alex Ross. Ladies provided light luncheon after memorial service.

THORNLEIGH (Franklyn Elliott, Stuart Wesley)

Church supported Combined Pennant Hills-Thornleigh Churches Service, Pentecost Sunday, 7.30 pm ... Early in May, Stuart & Carolyn Wesley flew to USA for wedding of Carolyn's brother David Thomas to Pam Searle on Saturday 7 May.

GILGANDRA (P. ANDERSON)

Dorothy Butler elected secretary at AGM ... Minister attended conference ... Philip & Debbie Mackie in charge of Kids Klub ... Monthly meeting at Cooee Lodge well attended ... Church regretfully accepted minister's resignation & wish Philip, Dorothy & Lachlan God's blessing as they move to Grote St, Adelaide.

Qld

BURLEIGH HEADS (N. Newton)

Two International Year of the Family services involving Bible school & puppet ministry folk ... Kenmore Baptist youth choir "Directions" presented musical "Harry the Prodigal" to a packed youth service. One rededication ... Recent meeting endorsed board recommendation to seek a full-time youth pastor ... 11 welcomed into membership recently (3 baptisms, 8 transfers).

HARLAXTON (Daryl Thorpe, Frank Langford)

72nd anniversary 28-29 May ... David Lowe recognised for service as Sunday School Superintendent since 1977 ... Conference President, Norm Flett, & Far East Broadcasting as speakers ... Mrs Mary Bade celebrated 80th birthday ... Men's Society Dinner, Correctional Services Chaplaincy guests ... KYB continuing to be popular ... Vacation Bible School planned for June holidays ... Church Family Dinner attended by over 200 ... Quarterly prayer & praise nights well supported ... Number attended Missions Camp.

SOUTHPORT (W. Thorburn, J. Hohnke, A. Boutros)

shop established (open daily) ... Parkwood visitation almost complete ... \$500 sent to CBMI & \$2,000 to Rwanda refugees through World Vision ... Seniors' lunch enjoyed indoor bowls & board games ... Family camp planned for Mapleton, June ... Youth activities going well. Study camp for years 11 & 12 at Mt Tamborine with tutors for academic studies & spiritual growth.

SA

MUNDULLA (John Main)

Combined Easter cross service attended by 200 people ... Harvest thanksgiving offering \$600 ...

Chapel interior and exterior painted ... Church organised community seminar on ageing, attended by 50 ... CWF raised \$600 toward chapel refurbishing ... Community Care project raised \$500.

ELIZABETH (Ralph Oke) Mobile Mission Maintenance erected much-needed storage extension, assisted by local men ... Women's Ministry Fellowship organised international coffee & tea evening. \$240 raised for new church curtains ... Following a Soup & Roll Tea, film *Follow Me* screened at evening service ... A family focus & tea, with many families present, puppets & drama part of service ...

Elaine Peddy & Leonie Paddick led nine-week Grief and Loss seminar ... Lindsay Mayes commencing ministry here in New Year.

BALAKLAVA (Graham Lawrie) Richard Webb & Catherine Bennett celebrated 21st birthdays in April ... Youth Group held "Back to Kindy" night, 6 May ... Successful Junior Camp 22-24 April ... Graham Lawrie attended Magarey Lectures following State Convention ... Church hosted combined evening service Pentecost Sunday. Rev Glen Barnett guest speaker ... Lively "Family Fun Night" with games & sausage sizzle supper, 27 May.

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