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THE AUSTRALIAN CHRISTIAN

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THE AUSTRALIAN CHRISTIAN

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Gordon Stirling

Our Denomination!

Gordon Stirling

When we were at the College of the Bible, Eric Hollard and I used to go to the Glen Iris school for religious instruction. On one occasion the convener for RI approached us and asked, "Do you think that your denomination could provide another two teachers?" Eric rose to his full five feet four and replied, "Sir, we are not a denomination!" After some silence the convener said, "Well whatever you are, we want two more teachers."

That is the way it was in Churches of Christ in those days. We insisted that we were not a denomination. We were a movement within the whole Body of Christ. A movement that accepted the genuineness of other Christians, but at the same time had a mission to the whole church.

That mission was to convince all Christians that denominationalism is contrary to the mind of Christ for his church. That denominationalism should be set aside as all Christians together seek the will of Christ for the church, as revealed in the New Testament.

That instead of encasing different emphases inside denominational walls, that there should be one church consisting of all who accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, and containing within it wide diversities of worship, doctrinal emphases, and practices.

Our "fathers and mothers in the faith" in Great Britain and the USA attempted to get fellow Christians together into this reforming mission within the church. But they were ahead of their time and were forced against their will into separate existence from the denominations. But they did not see themselves as another denomination but still as a reform movement within the whole church. "Movement" was the operative word.

When I was a boy, if any one used the word "denomination" to describe Churches of Christ, he or she would be graciously taken aside and informed of the reasons why "we are not a denomination". But at the recent Vic-Tas state conference, several speakers referred to "our denomi-



nation", even when rising to defend our historic witness.

At the same conference, a couple of speakers commenced sentences with the phrase, "Churches of Christ is ...", which is not only bad grammar but also out of step with our historic witness. What they were really saying, and intended to mean, was "the Churches of Christ denomination is ...!"

Originally, we called our churches "Churches of Christ", not in any exclusive denominational sense, but because all Christian churches are churches of Christ. Our forebears decided to call their churches what they are, Churches of Christ. They hoped that all local churches would forego their denominational labels and do likewise, calling themselves simply, "Churches of Christ". So separately, each of our churches is a Church of Christ. All together we are associated Churches of Christ, doing things together that are best done cooperatively.

Of course, in one sense, we are a denomination; in that, against our best desires, we often have to act denominationally for legal and commercial and inter-church purposes.

But we do not have to like it!

And we do not have to emphasise our reluctant denominationalism by referring to "our denomination" or by calling ourselves the "Church of Christ denomination". What a contradiction in terms that is!

I believe that we should be getting used to describing ourselves as a "movement" again. To be a denomination is to think of ourselves as having achieved our goals as a people, and now being able to settle down behind our denominational wall, leaving the gate open for any who might care to wander in, making occasional forays to bring in a few more captives. But to be a movement within the Body of Christ as a whole, is to continue actively to pursue our historic objectives, one of which is to break down denominational barriers in order for the whole church to be increasingly one in Christ; as together we seek his will for the contemporary church with the New Testament as our reference. ❖

Ringwood Rediscovery

A church on the move

Seventy-five years ago, the Ringwood, Vic, church was built in a day by faithful people of vision determined to plant a church for the long haul. Today, Ringwood continues with that same foresight and tenacity. It has grown so well that we are now out of room.

Following a fire in 1992, which destroyed part of the church's property, the fellowship has been doing a total rethink of its needs and future direction. As a consequence of this, permits were granted by local council for a master plan that takes the site to its optimum development.

In February, the church unanimously accepted a stage one concept proposal which incorporates strategic changes to the toilets, kitchen and chapel

space, which not only provide for current needs, but allows for ongoing redevelopment within a long-term framework.

We are excited about this integrated and purposeful vision. We are attempting to create these changes with careful stewardship of resources. The truth is, we don't have bundles of money and we are conscientiously working as a team to achieve these changes without creating a crippling debt that damages our aspirations for increasing ministry.

If you are a past member or simply think that we should be helping each other in mission, then, please, your donations are welcome. We won't be embarrassed!

You can help by also being our eyes and ears. If you are



• Children's performance—"The Best You Can Be"

aware of carpets, baptistry ideas, building materials, sound systems or other useful items for low cost, let us know. We are also keen to compile a list of people who are willing to donate time or skills to help us complete the project. We are particularly interested in any retired people with expertise in building or site management.

We figure that if the JWs can band together to create quick-build Kingdom Halls, then why can't we rediscover old fashioned networking within our conference to get the job done.

Folk interested in offering time and skills, are invited to contact our Building Committee Convener, Arthur Martin on (03) 8708169 (church office).

Berwick—Project 2000

Trying to find solutions

The Berwick, Vic, Regional church relocated for the third time two and a half years ago. The present attractive mud brick structure occupies a two hectare site on Centre Road.

Until the early 1980s, open paddocks dominated the flat expanse of land south of the railway line. Today, housing subdivisions have completely changed the landscape. A new primary school, Berwick's third, will open in 1996 with an initial intake of 350 children.

Right in the midst of this flourishing growth stands the Berwick church. The building, with its pleasing appearance, attractive landscaping and ample car parking, speaks volumes for the relevance of the Christian church.

The building is designed to seat over 1000. The 10 am and 7 pm services at present draw 750 each Sunday. A vital youth group caters for 150 young people of secondary school age; a week-night Kids Klub has 50 mainly unchurched attenders; an excellent Sunday School sees 135 children squeezed into temporary and totally inadequate accommodation.

Relocation, of course, was not met with 100% approval. There was comfort and logic in staying put in Lyall Road. The building was quite new, attractive and in an established area. It was adequate. What foolishness to buy up a pea paddock in the outskirts of town! Why saddle God's people with a huge debt?

The move was made and there are few now who doubt its wisdom. The temporary factory premises proved an exciting challenge. Enthusiasm abounded when members and friends made and laid the necessary 16,000 mud bricks. Cemented were not just walls, but lasting bonds of friendship.

Now a financial problem looms, with solutions hard to find.

The church is burdened by the interest and repayments on a five year bank loan. The weekly offerings fall well below the required budget each week currently. The church has a ministry team of three (Tim Hanna, Andrew Ball and Ross Pelling); heavy administration and running costs; it also supports five missionary families.

Elder, Len Davis has put forward Project 2000 as a proposal. The plan would wipe the bank debt in one fell swoop at a special service on 7 August. This would leave only the long-term Properties Corporation loan for repayment.

Project 2000 needs every family within the church to take upon itself a part of the church's debt. Each family unit is asked

to "own", or accept \$2000 of the church's debt and deal with it in a personal way, eg add it to an existing loan. If the bank debt can be cleared on 7 August, important work can go ahead. The most pressing need is proper accommodation for the children's ministry.

There are many who have had past associations with Berwick. They may like to help. Some churches, their own membership reduced as people move away, may be in a position to assist.

Berwick dates back to the 1880s. Less than 100 years later a tiny congregation struggled to keep its doors open. Wonderful blessings followed. The church found itself called to serve a rapidly growing, changing community. It was faithful to God's call to progress.

Project 2000 culminates in the morning worship service on 7 August. A warm welcome is extended to come and worship at Berwick on that day.

For further information contact the church at 432-446 Centre Road (PO Box 75) Berwick 3806. Phone number (03) 702 1011.

—Katherine Merbis



• The current complex whilst under construction

Some Things Have to Change

Postal Changes and the "AC"

Subscribers would have noticed changes with the arrival of their last issue of *The Australian Christian*.

From 1 July, we lost the use of Australia Post's Registered Publications service. Following a careful examination of our various options, we are now distributing copies through Australia Post's Print Post service.

This service has some different conditions applying to it from the old system, one which is that the articles must be flat and not wrapped as they were in the past. To be able to do this we have had to shift our wrapping contract from our printers to a mailing house (Automail) where they are being plastic wrapped.

The new system has meant some changes in our procedures. First, we had to print new flysheets and redesign the way our computer printed your name and address on them.

The new arrangement means that we are more likely to have delays in posting an issue. We now have to deal with two companies instead of one and since we are now a small client of a large agency we have to fit tight schedules which could easily be missed. In all probability, we will now be mailing copies on a Friday (instead of Thursdays), which means you will receive your copies a day later in many cases.

The first issue (2 July) saw one such hiccup. Because of misunderstandings, the new wrappers were one centimetre too long to go through the automated wrapping machines. They had to have this small amount guillotined to make them fit. At the same time, we have taken back our new stocks (100,000 wrappers) to have them cut to fit also.

During all the changes, our faithful printer started to play up. This part of our computer system we had originally estimated would last 1-2 years. It has, over six years, produced in excess of one million wrap-

pers and caused us very few problems. One of the requirements of the mailing house is that we use a heavier stock of paper in our wrappers, but this caused the printer to act up, so this week we have raced it off for a service and new roller assembly (we have also just replaced the cut sheet feeder which was refusing to work properly).

Hopefully, we will have ironed out all the bugs in the system and ensured both our printer and mailing house are happy with the new arrangements so that copies will arrive on time in the future.

Will the new system save money? The answer is No! Print Post postage per copy is more expensive than Registered Publications and we will have higher mailing house costs. The best deal we could arrange will see costs rise by over \$5,000 a year at a time when we have held or cut all our other costs. Unfortunately, we will eventually have to pass this on in a price rise.

—Chris Ambrose

Calendar

Church's Role in Society

The Anglican Home Missionary Society, Sydney, is holding a public forum, "Responsible Charity or Social Conscience" to look at the question—is the church realistic about its role in the modern state? It is being held at New College, Anzac Pde, Kensington, University of NSW, on 20 July at 7.30 pm. Speakers will include leading welfare figures from the Anglican, Uniting and Roman Catholic churches and the Salvation Army. Churches are caring for an increasing number of Australia's poor, homeless youth, sole parents and the frail aged when governments are increasingly withdrawing from social welfare areas.

Qld CWF Camp

Queensland CWF are holding a women's camp at Magnetic Island 5-7 August. The study topic is "An alabaster jar" led by Jill Blackmore. Cost is \$28 plus bus and ferry fares. Registrations to Mrs Freda Tangye, 42 Wotton St, Aitkenvale 4814. Enquiries to Ann on (077) 79 1766.

Winter Sleepout

More than 6,000 will give up the warmth of their beds on 12 August to identify with Victoria's homeless, participating in Melbourne City Mission's Winter Sleepout. Youth groups will be sleeping out either in the Prahran Town Hall, or in their schools or church halls. Other city missions around Australia are taking part as part of National Homeless Person's Week (7-14 August). Anyone wishing to participate or give a donation can phone 1 800 064 430 or write to Winter Sleepout, PO Box 1200, Nth Fitzroy 3068.

Worship With Children

On 27 August the Victorian Council of Christian Education is holding a seminar on worship with children. The keynote speaker is Ian Allsop on "What is Worship?" The day will comprise three workshops looking at worship with children at home, in groups (such as Sunday School, Kids Clubs and CRE) and at church. The seminar is at Surrey Hills Uniting Church, cnr Valonia Ave and Canterbury Rd from 9.15 am-4.30 pm and the cost is \$20 (concession \$15). Further details from Gail Wager at VCCE on (03) 529 4377.

1993 Index

The index of 1993 issues of *The Australian Christian* has been sent recently to all subscribers who have requested a copy in past years. If any current subscriber would like a copy of this index they can contact us at *The Australian Christian*, PO Box 101, Essendon North 3041. Phone (03) 379 1219 or fax (03) 379 0015.

Churches of Christ

Brim Centenary Sunday

11 September 1994

9.15 am Speaker R.W. Marshall

10.45 am Unveiling Plaque

12.00 noon Basket Lunch

Applications are invited for the position of GENERAL SECRETARY of the VICTORIAN COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

Duties:

To establish and maintain contact with member churches and encourage cooperation between them
To promote ecumenical enterprises at the local church level
To liaise with the National Council of Churches in Australia and other Councils of Churches

Qualifications:

The successful applicant will be a committed member of the Church, ordained or lay, theologically and ecumenically aware, with strengths in organisation and administration.

Terms of Appointment:

The position is full-time. The initial appointment will be for three years from 1 February, 1995.

For further information apply in writing to:

The President,
Victorian Council of Churches,
Causeway House,
306 Lt Collins Street,
MELBOURNE VIC 3000

Applications will close on 31 August, 1994

Only the Start

The day that changed more than the world

One of the most ambitious events in the history of Christendom took place around the world on 25 June. The "Global March For Jesus" was described as a "call to unity, worship and prayer".

Around the world, 12 million Christians in 178 countries had been preparing for the day which was claimed to be "The Day to Change the World", a big difference from the first March for Jesus seven years ago when 15,000 gathered to march and pray in the City of London.

Major Christian radio ministries and local FM stations made much of the coordination possible and kept Christians around the world informed.

In the first time zone, the King of Tonga, King Taufu'Alau Tupou IV, led the proceedings himself and wept as he rededicated his nation to God before 12,000 of his fellow citizens.

In New Zealand, one of the founders of the March for Jesus movement, Graham Kendrick, complete with a BBC TV crew, sounded in the day with a trumpet call at 8 am on Mount Cavedish near Christchurch. An estimated 80,000 marched

in 85 towns throughout New Zealand, with the largest group of 30,000 marching in Auckland.

In Sydney, groups decked out in the five colours of the Olympic symbol, representing the continents of the world, met at five rallying points, then converged at the Sydney Opera House.

National Coordinator, Mal Garvin, looked over the crowd of 50,000 with standing-room only on the steps of the Opera House and commented, "Just like the fall of the Berlin Wall, the Global March is only the start of a new era".

Emphasis was placed on a program that catered for all ages. Musical items, testimonies from sports personalities and politicians built up to the moving sight of tens of thousands of balloons being released, to go into the world with their messages of "Jesus is Lord" and "Justice, Liberty, Compassion".

Fireworks brought the afternoon program to a close. Then followed all-night prayer vigils, from 6 pm to 6 am Sunday, remembering brothers and sisters in Christ around the globe.



• Releasing the balloons at the Sydney Opera House

Meanwhile in Brisbane (16,000), Melbourne (25,000) and Hobart (2,500) people marched in witness to their Lord.

Altogether an estimated 252,000 marched in every capital city and 45 regional areas of Australia.

In some countries, it was not possible to march, such as in Singapore. The organisers hired the largest open-air stadium available.

In Mongolia, 500-600 believers started their March for Jesus under a cloud.

They fully expected official opposition, but instead received help along their way from the police!

In Korea, a million believers held a prayer rally in Seoul, while in Cambodia 1,000 marched around a city square.

In Burundi, 7,000 Hutus and Tutsis marched side by side, through the capital, witnessing to the love of Jesus. In London, 75,000 marched from the Embankment to Hyde Park, with a further 15,000 marching throughout the United Kingdom. In Sao Paulo, Brazil, 850,000 danced and sang in the pouring rain, on the coldest day ever recorded for 25 June.

Finally, the first "Global March For Jesus" came to an end in Samoa.

The next is planned for 1996.
—Worldwide Photos

Superannuation Guarantee Charge

Payments coming due

The Manager of the Churches of Christ Provident Fund brings to the notice of all employees (which includes churches, Conference committees and Theological Colleges) that the Superannuation Guarantee Charge ("SGC") for the year ended 30 June 1994 in respect of their employees (excluding exempted employees) has to be paid to a complying superannuation fund no later than 28 July.

Exempted employees include those who:

- earn less than \$450 per month (they are excluded only for the month in which they receive less than \$450)

- are aged under 18 years and work 30 hours a week or less

- are aged 65 or over.

A complying superannuation fund is one that meets the requirements of the SGC legislation on vesting and preservation and the rules of the Insurance and Superannuation Commission. The Churches of Christ Provident Fund is a complying fund.

Note: The Federal Treasurer released on 28 June a statement on superannuation policy, one of the advices being that the "Government will also maintain the present annual contribution requirement for the SG

in 1994-95 and subsequently until the SG regime is suffi-

ciently settled to enable the requirement for quarterly contributions to be introduced." Accordingly, SGC contributions for the year to 30 June 1995 are not payable until July 1995.



SWANSTON STREET CHURCH OF CHRIST

Melbourne
(cnr Swanston & Little Lonsdale Streets)

Sunday

9.00 a.m. & 11 a.m.

7.00 p.m.

Wednesday

1.15-1.45 p.m.

Worship & Communion Services
Gospel Celebration

Lunchtime Service

For further enquiries, please ring (03) 663 3884

No Place to Lay their Heads

National Homeless Person's Week

In order to draw attention to the huge social problem of homelessness, the independent City Missions of Australia will promote **National Homeless Person's Week, 7-14 August.**

Across Australia, non-denominational City Missions operate in Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Adelaide, Perth, Hobart, Launceston, Wollongong, the Hunter Valley and Wagga Wagga to assist and provide accommodation for thousands of homeless and disadvantaged people. According to a recent report by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, there are currently as many as 61,000 homeless people in Australia, with most denied basic emergency shelter.

The **Sydney City Mission** operates a total of 57 centres and each night accommodates 664 homeless men, women, young people and families. Over the last year, the Mission provided 554,012 meals to homeless people and **Missionbeat Street Patrol** picked up or assisted over 43,000 clients.

Last year, **Melbourne City Mission** was able to house and find accommodation for 9,000 homeless people, as well as running an "Info Deli" at **Flinders Street railway station** which provides information for homeless and "at risk" youth, counselling, referrals, showers as well as providing a postal address for the homeless.

In **Adelaide, Mission SA** runs a "sobering up" unit for drug or alcohol affected young people, assisting 150 homeless young people a month.

Brisbane City Mission provides emergency relief such as food and clothing to the homeless and people in need. Last year they received 11,471 requests.

The **Launceston City Mission** accommodated 187 homeless men last year, as well as assisting a further 490 men in crisis, 410 women and 900 families.

In the same time, **Hobart City Mission** accommodated 60 homeless families, provided 6,500 meals and assisted ap-

proximately 5,000 people in need with food, clothing or counselling.

Perth City Mission provides emergency accommodation, a drug and alcohol abuse centre for youth and a range of counselling and referral programs in its 16 centres.

Last year, **Wollongong City Mission** accommodated 12 homeless young people in its semi-independent living program and interviewed a further 263 young people. The Mission also assisted almost 300 men and women "at risk" of homelessness.

In **Newcastle, the Hunter Mission** has a youth worker who provides a counselling service for many of the young people who live on the streets, as well as a drop-in and referral service.

The **Adolph Basser House and Acacia Lodge, run by Wagga Wagga City Mission**, both provide medium to long-term accommodation for eight homeless young people at any one time.

Australia

Worldwide Mission

Australians will be able to participate in a worldwide crusade via satellite, conducted by the **Billy Graham Association**, in March 1995. The mission, broadcast from **Puerto Rico**, will be available in English and other languages and is expected to be the most far-reaching evangelistic outreach in the church's history. "The technology revolution has shrunk the world to a global village, with instant access to world news in even the most remote areas," Mr Graham said. "It is time for the church to utilise this technology to make a worldwide statement that in the midst of chaos, emptiness and despair, there is hope in the person of Jesus Christ." Metropolitan and regional churches will be able to participate in the mission at a delayed convenient local time. For further information contact the **Billy Graham Evangelistic Association in Australia**, GPO Box 4807, Sydney 2001.

Sounds of the Street

A professionally produced CD and cassette, song writing and recording skills and increased self-esteem are just some of the end results of the **Sydney City Mission's "Sounds of the Street"** music course for long-term unemployed and homeless young people. Ten young people who took part in the 12-week course were given tuition in singing, song writing, guitar and keyboards. Accredited by the **CES and Ausmusic**, graduates from the "Sounds of the Street" course have the opportunity to go on and do further study in other industry-approved music courses.

Lutherans not members

The **Lutheran Church of Australia (LCA)** voted not to become a foundation member of the **National Council of Churches in Australia (NCAA)**. A postal ballot of general synod members resulted in a vote of 228 for and 127 against, just missing the required two-thirds majority. Of the 127 who voted against, 74 indicated that they would be happy for the decision to be reviewed at the next **LCA synod**, due in 1997.

A Lad in Vanuatu

Burning problem

A lad called his dad from Vanuatu. His dad called us and we are passing the message on to you.

Some will remember kerosene fridges better than others. The lad (**Craig Francis**) has a kero fridge where he works as a teacher at **Ranwadi High School**. The burner has burned out and at around \$150 each, it's a bit expensive to replace.

So a lad in Vanuatu wants to know if there are any **Aladdin No 23 Kerosene** fridge burners lying around your house that you don't need. This lad and his dad would be glad if you let us know at **180a Gray Street, Adelaide 5000**, phone (08) 212 4446. —Jeff May (Overseas Mission Board)

Correction

As **David Brooker** noted in his letter ("AC" 2 July), there was a word missing in a quote from **Alan Hirsch** in the article "Outreach to Jews" ("AC" 18 June).

The quote from Alan should have read, "Yet God's forgiveness, love and faithfulness does

not have a limit." The word "not" was omitted in sending the article to us.

The contention is that God has made an everlasting covenant and promises to these people (the Jews) which will not be broken.

Visiting Canberra?

Stay with a Church Family

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

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

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

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

Advance bookings appreciated

Women in Action

South Australian activities

Even though the women of South Australia no longer operate as a Women's Conference (since May 1992), there is plenty of "action".

At the 120th Annual Conference in SA, which incorporated the May 1994 Convention, we saw big changes in what the women respond to in the way of state events. The Reunion Day luncheon, the coffee and dessert evening and the morning tea program this year, were exceptionally well attended by both women and men in some instances.

The Reunion Day convener, Mrs Shirley Burger, said that approximately 190 men and women in the 60 plus age group, enjoyed catching up with each other. Following the introduction of David Brooker, new State Minister, a light

luncheon was served. Roger Brown presented a visionary segment on the new Northfield Outreach Project, which was launched earlier this year by the Hampstead Gardens church.

Marj Dredge reflected on her two years as State Conference President and introduced incoming President Keith Ridge, who shared his feelings and hopes as he looks forward to the year ahead.

The coffee and dessert evening was so successful last year that organiser Maureen Webber, with the assistance of the women from the Brooklyn Park church, invited women of all ages to enjoy the homemade desserts with coffee, then discover the skills of "Developing Confidence and Effectiveness". 120 women heard speakers

Graham Agnew, Phil Webber and Judy Brown develop the theme.

The Thursday morning tea featured an in-house live TV chat show. An estimated 300 women and men were an enthralled audience as Maureen Clark, the presenter and interviewer, chatted with each of her guests in a studio setting. In a relaxed atmosphere, with the cameraman unobtrusively zooming-in to better present the show, the studio audience could clearly see and follow everything as it was relayed to the monitor TV. The "show" centred on that we are ordinary people with an extraordinary God. We are a people with a "chosen-ness" to go—a fitting way to express what Marj Dredge has encouraged throughout these past two years, with her theme. Jesus works with us—ordinary individuals. In the program, the audience was introduced to

David Brooker, who told of why he accepted being the State Minister and Marj Dredge reflected on her two years as President. Also interviewed was Shirley Burger, who was asked "what is happening for our women these days?" Shirley's answer included going on to tell about all the events that both women and men are attending and enjoying. She mentioned the next calendar event which is the Study Day early in August, to be led by Jenni Wright; the annual Women's Camp in late October, with Major Margaret Armstrong leading the studies; the country visit to Berri (Riverland), in November; the Christmas get-together in December. (Shirley is the women's State Board representative.) She also talked about *Call*, the state women's monthly newsletter and its modified layout, presentation and "new look" from this year.

—Lori McDonald

Positive Family Living

Year of the Family event

Dr Moira Eastman, Coordinator of a Pastoral Studies course at the Australian Catholic University, addressed a seminar for parents, organised by Nuna-

wading, Vic, and Vic-Tas Department of Mission, Education and Development.

She outlined the significant impact that families have on

intellectual development and learning in school, social competence and skills, mental, emotional and physical health, moral and spiritual development, effectiveness at work, and happiness and contentment. Healthy families are characterised by the way that they communicate, express appreciation, support and affection, maintain spiritual values, guard family time, express love and have fun.

The uniqueness of each family member is to be valued, as is the wise use of power by parents. Parents working strongly together as a team have a positive influence on the family. Opportunities for fun and humour are unmistakable signs of effective families.

She said that the church has an important role to play in the support of families through pre-marriage education, early marriage education and education for parents.

This combined event, together with the seminars being

held in local churches, is part of the educational ministry which seeks to equip people with skills for everyday life.

Dr Eastman's latest book, *We're OK: Secrets of Happy Families*, is available from DMED, 77 Capel St, West Melbourne 3003 (Phone (03) 326 8900). It is worth reading as an encouragement to positive family living.



• (L to R) Lynette Leach (DMED), Dr Moira Eastman and John Rowe (Nunawading) discuss Dr Eastman's latest book

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.

Price from other States available on application.

For complete details write to:

Mr R Bowen, Lot 18 Johns Road,
WYONG NORTH NSW 2259

Phone (043) 52 1738 (after 6.00 pm)

Letters to the Editor

Letters are limited to 200 words

Homosexual Christians

To the Editor,

Dave Reynold's letter ("AC" 18 June), compassionate and sympathetic as it may be, does give the impression that God could make an exception to classing homosexuals and lesbians as "continuing in sin", provided that relationship was monogamous.

Dave must see this as a "cop out" for ministers, rather than taking the hard road of teaching sinners that repentance and cleansing through the blood of Jesus is the only right way to live without guilt.

Inherited sin of any type is not an excuse. We are told that child abusers and wife beaters have come from the same type of background. They do begin life with a handicap, which God knows all about. He is a compassionate and forgiving, loving God, but he does command repentance.

No, Dave, Gary and Carlo and other "good churchgoing" homosexuals cannot, on the grounds that their relationship is monogamous, make God a party to their sin. Nor can any of us—we have to face facts squarely, repent and do battle with sin in our lives. I think you know this too Dave.

—Gladys Butler
(Bruce Rock, WA)

People Versus Numbers

To the Editor,

Thanks to Alan Matheson for reviewing *Ashamed of the Gospel* by John MacArthur ("AC" 18 June). At least one "AC" subscriber will not now be terribly keen to open the book if he ever comes across it.

Why was it necessary for MacArthur to launch into a "devastating critique" of church marketing practices? Why could he not simply make the case that the church growth movement needs to pay more attention to certain values and possibly less to some others?

"Non-pragmatic" preachers have achieved a lot, but they have also left in their wakesome

critically injured patients, of whom, many years ago, yours truly was one. When operators in the church growth movement have been instrumental in rescuing one from abject horror, one thanks God for them, an attitude one replicates with some hesitation in respect of those who think that numbers do not matter.

When we are talking about people, numbers do matter because every increment in numbers is a human being.

—I. Altonen
(Queanbeyan, NSW)

Homosexuality

To the Editor,

I was really disturbed by Dave Reynold's letter on homosexuality ("AC" 18 June). What are you getting at Dave? Your letter was very clever, but no matter how we may justify our actions or feelings, God's laws don't change and we can't change them to suit ourselves.

How can practising homosexuals be "good churchgoing people" when they disobey the God they worship? If "Gary and Carlo are a couple" they are blatantly practising sin before God, no matter how nice they may seem as people!

I don't care what society says or accepts, we have to stand by what God declares and he declares that this is sin and those who don't repent of it will find themselves in hell with murderers, adulterers, thieves, etc. Homosexuality is not a "God-given orientation". God would not give what he himself despises and rejects!

Oh Australia! What sort of society do we live in where good and bad merge together until its hard to tell right from wrong. It's time for the church to stand up for God's word! Thank goodness that his laws never change and he remains the same forever.

—Robyn Dodd
(Maitland, NSW)

Have we Lost our Way?

To The Editor,

I write to commend Alan Matheson for his timely comment "Ashamed Of The Gospel" ("AC" 18 June).

Few of our churches today do not have need for concern over the lack of growth—both numerically and spiritually. A type of witch-hunt is attempting to determine where lies the responsibility for that. Some are vocal in blaming the leadership, whilst others are critical of the colleges and others attribute it to the lack of commitment on the part of church members.

We would do well, I believe, to think hard and long on the quoted concern of Schaller: "the tendency to depend more on the market than the mission". My concern is that, as a people, we have detoured in an endeavour to change with the times, in an effort to attract people and arrest the decline. But somehow, somewhere, we have lost our way and our mission. Mission Statements have become the "in thing"—but in themselves will not bring us back to fundamental basics and the challenge of the Gospel.

No longer are we a distinctive people, with a distinctive message and mission. We seem to have lost our evangelical zeal and thrust.

The Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ never changes, and I am still old-fashioned enough to believe what Paul wrote to the church at Rome: "I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation of everyone who believes". (Rom 1:16)

—N. Watson
(Ann St, Brisbane, Qld)

"How Do You Read It?"

To the Editor,

The question posed by Jesus to the crafty lawyer (Luke 10) has implications for all who study the Scriptures—"How do you read it?"

This man's knowledge of the Scriptures was not in question. He was a teacher of the Law; he knew it all. His problem was "interpretation". But after listening to Jesus, he was enlight-

Letters to a Travelling Companion

Tests of Faith

Dear Daniel,

I enjoyed reading your last letter, inasmuch as it gave me a lot of food for thought. In particular, your comments about recent mishaps in your life, which you described as "tests of faith sent from God", made me think long and hard.

I have a number of close friends and colleagues who seem to believe that God puts occasional "stumbling blocks" in our way to test our faith in him or to build our endurance and tenacity. However, I find it difficult to agree with them. Such an idea conjures up in my mind a picture of God as a manipulative, cosmic game-master who moves the human race around like pawns on a chess board, deliberately putting his creation at risk or in danger, simply to try out their allegiance to him. I find such a concept of God very difficult to digest.

It seems to me that the reality of life on earth itself is able to produce enough problems, dangers and crises (some purely accidental, others the result of our behaviour) without having to rely on divine manipulation. God, however, is not out of the picture by any means. He continually offers his power, love and inspiration as resources which enable us to confront, survive and grow through these inevitable "mishaps". What God asks of us is that we prayerfully trust his guidance and inspiration when these times of crisis occur and depend on him to travel the journey of life with us.

Until next time,
Pastor Salt

Kid's Stuff

Kidsmin Events

Kidsmin (Vic) held a dinner at **Box Hill** for leaders involved in children's ministry. It was a night of inspiration, featuring **Trudy Beasley** from **Box Hill**, a storyteller, and a young girl, **Jolene Attard**, from the **Boomerang Kids Club** at **Preston**, who sang.

Alan Niven, from the Churches of Christ Theological College, **Mulgrave**, challenged leaders to consider how children worship and how they need to be cared for, pastorally. Children need to be involved in many levels of church life. In

a display of colourful banners, he showed how children express their spirituality. They observe and absorb the life of the faith community.

He stressed the need to recognise important occasions and transition times, which can include children: commencing school, new children entering a foster care situation and children being adopted. Children are sometimes aware of conflict and tension in the church, but do they see the resolution of that conflict? To regard children seriously, the church

needs to integrate them into its life, respect them and listen to them.

Pastoral care of other leaders is important too, so coping abilities need to be monitored. If time out is needed, then leaders should recognise this in themselves and not be afraid to take it.

The **State Children's Games** provided an opportunity for groups to participate in indoor sports. It was a colourful, noisy and happy event for children, leaders and parents. **Boronia** won the Junior competition,

with **Ringwood** and **Croydon** equal winners in the Intermediate section.

Kidsmin is the committee of the **Vic-Tas Department of Mission, Education and Development** which is responsible for coordinating children's groups throughout Victoria. The annual dinner and **State Children's Games** are two of many combined events for children and leaders. Kidsmin holds the conviction that children have a vital place in the life of the church.

Fund raising program

River City Christian College

River City Christian College, in **Echuca, Vic**, has launched a fund raising program to raise \$525,000 over the next two years. The College began in 1981 when a group of concerned parents met in the Church of Christ manse to pray for a Christian school. Later that year, 22 students met for the

first time in the offices of a munitions depot to study under the ACE curriculum. Today, that number has grown to more than 60 and the college rents premises on seven and a half acres of land.

Neil Schroder, the College administrator, says "It is a joy to see young lives change as children learn in a Christian environment". One surprising fact is that, after 13 years, not one student who has passed through the college is unemployed.

The appeal will enable the College to purchase the land it presently rents. The balance of funds will then go to much needed improvements on the buildings. The college is situated at **13 Rose St, Echuca**.

Continued from page 8

ened; he began to understand what the sacred Scriptures were really saying. So it is with us. Surely today we need the Spirit's guidance in our reading and spiritual comprehension of God's Word.

It isn't easy for our analytical Western minds to relate to the Oriental, with its extravagant imagery and figures of speech, but we can at least try to be consistent. If the words of Jesus recorded in **Mark 9** regarding "hell fire" are to be taken literally, what of the rest of his teaching in the same chapter—verses 43-48?

We may well ask: where are the one-handed, one-footed, one-eyed literalist students of the Bible? They can't have it both ways!

—**Marj Buckingham**
(Caulfield, Vic)

Springboard

Program for Women

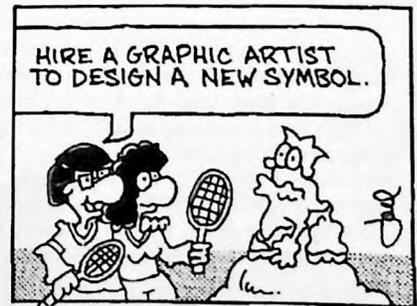
Chadstone, Vic, church, in conjunction with the **Vic-Tas Department of Mission, Education and Development** and the **Vic-Tas Department of Community Care**, is hosting a professional development course for women.

Usually, these programs are offered in business and management settings. **Springboard** meets the Australian Training Guarantee requirements and in 1993 won the National Training Award for excellence and quality. It caters for the different needs of women, whether they work full or part-time, have their own business, care for a family or are planning retirement. The skills developed can be applied to any avenue of life.

Issues such as confidence building, conflict resolution, self-awareness, problem solving, motivation and handling stress will be covered. The training consultant for this course is **Gillian Carpenter**, an accredited trainer. The course will be offered in four one-day workshops on Saturdays: **6 August**, **3 September**, **8 October** and **5 November** at the **Chadstone church**. The fee is \$375, which includes the workshops, refreshments and lunches, and a personal copy of the **Springboard Workbook**.

For registration forms and information, please contact **Chadstone church** on (03) 888 2696, or **DMED** on (03) 326 8900, or **Department of Community Care** on (03) 326 8977.

Pontius' Puddle



Media Review

Papers

The Church Secretary

by Sydney R. Beck (Kenmore Christian College) \$5.

Syd Beck notes in his introduction, "It is surprising that so little has been written regarding the function of a church secretary and that very meagre efforts have been made to assist that important office bearer in his/her duties." In this booklet, Syd has gone a long way to assisting those who have been willing to take on the task of church secretary, especially if they have never undertaken such a role before.

The material presented here provides guidelines for various of the tasks that a secretary may have to perform and, very helpfully, the final half of the booklet is a series of sample presentations. Most of the major tasks have very helpful and logical steps outlined in non-technical language.

In just a couple of places, the relevant state information needs inclusion where specific Queensland information is found.

A very helpful resource that all church secretaries should have available and that all new secretaries should read as the first step in taking office. Highly recommended.

Available from Kenmore Christian College, PO Box 55, Kenmore 4069.
—CRA



Books

How to Pray for Inner Healing and Making Peace with your Inner Child (One volume)

by Rita Bennett (Kingsway Publications) \$9.95.

After years of stress on physical healing, many churches are now placing greater emphasis on the healing of emotions and of memories. Rita Bennett, along with her husband Dennis, has spent many years counselling and conducting seminars in this field, especially in the USA.

The last two in a trilogy of inner healing books have now been produced in one volume. These may be helpful for those who openly practise this form of healing and for all who find interest in the subject.

How to Pray for Inner Healing not only gives helpful advice on praying for healing, but also practical helps in preparation for prayer and counselling. The advice given also assists the counsellors at looking at themselves with honesty.

Making Peace with your Inner Child includes a number of in-depth prayer sessions and case studies. The author claims to have received many testimonies from those helped by the books.

Not included in the volume under review is the first book in the trilogy, *Emotionally Free*. Much gain will be achieved if this book is read first as the author refers a number of times to it in these books. Some may find these books disturbing as there is the possibility that, as one reads, hidden hurts of the past may emerge that need to be dealt with.

A book for both clergy and lay people, it is one of a number of volumes now being published which deal with a subject neglected, unfortunately, by the majority of the church over the years. A reading of the trilogy will help throw some light on the subject.
—THF

(Marketed in Australia by Christian Marketing Australia)

Fix Your Eyes on Jesus by Anne Ortlund (Word Publishing) \$13.95.

Keep Your Eyes On Jesus is a book that will assist readers, on a day to day basis, to keep their focus of priority on Christ.

This is Anne Ortlund's second book, the first being a best seller called *Disciplines of the Beautiful Woman*. Again Anne shows her excellence as a writer and as a Christian with a message to help all people in their day-to-day struggles to keep their focus on Jesus.

Anne is married to a minister and draws from her experiences as such. The book has 46 short easy to read chapters that are divided into four sections—1) Fix your eyes on Jesus to get practical help, 2) to reshape your life, 3) to get Biblical understanding, and 4) to get focus. Using practical insight and understanding, Anne draws upon 20 centuries of Christian wisdom and explores the benefits of keeping your eyes on the person of Christ. Anne cites many personal examples when she herself stumbles as a Christian and takes her eyes off Jesus

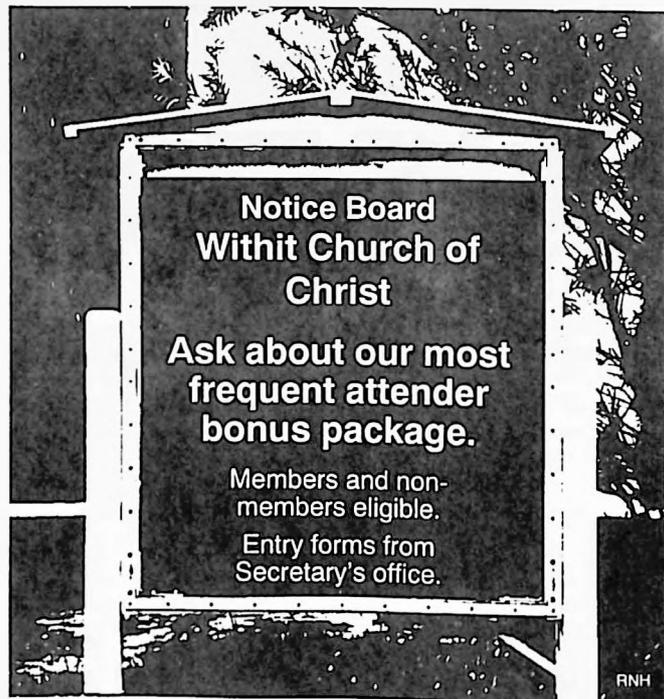
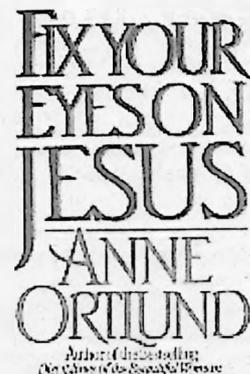
Fix Your Eyes On Jesus is a deeply personal book with a beautifully written prayer at the end of each chapter.

The book quotes many Bible verses in each chapter, which will have you searching the Scriptures, finding deeper understanding and meaning to varying subjects and struggles in keeping your focus on Jesus.

Fix your Eyes On Jesus is an ideal book for a quiet time and would make an excellent book for small group Bible studies.

Without a doubt, there is something in this book for everyone and it would make an excellent Christmas gift.

—David Jolly



Australia

Entertaining Strangers

In response to the growing problem of youth homelessness, Youth For Christ announce the commencement of a new Melbourne-wide "adolescent community placement" program. They are seeking volunteer families, couples and single adults who are interested in providing short or long-term accommodation for young people aged 12-18 years who are homeless. Training and support by YFC staff and financial support will be provided. For more information contact Mark Watt (03) 877 3844.

Funds Shortage

Fundraising for the Sydney City Mission has decreased this year leaving the Mission \$500,000 short of its target. The Sydney City Mission now has over 40 centres for homeless people in Sydney and overall a total of 62 centres in NSW, operate at an annual running cost of \$27 million. It is estimated that the mission now assists over 150,000 people in need every year.

Pray for Rain

The Uniting Church has called its members in NSW to recognise 14-20 August as "a week of prayer for drought-breaking rain". Initiating the call to prayer, Gloria Carter, from the church's Hunter Presbytery, said the drying up of the Darling River had brought the plight of drought-stricken people more sharply into focus and could be seen as just one consequence of our "failure to love and respect God's creation".

Religious Press Directory

More than 180 periodicals are listed in the 1994-95 Directory of Christian Press in Australia and New Zealand, released by the Australasian Religious Press Association. This directory (the third annual directory) is the most comprehensive of its kind. Listings include the Editor's name, all contact details, information about format, frequency, size and circulation, and advertising data and includes whether or not they are members of ARPA. Copies cost \$15.95 and are available from ARPA, 83 Smith St, Cleveland 4163. Phone (07) 821 3383 or fax (07) 286 3225.

Next Weekend

Tasmanian Camp

On the long weekend, 10-12 June, the Launceston, Tas, church ran a state wide youth camp for high school aged children at Camp Seaview, Bicheno. The camp was enjoyed by all attending from Howrah, Hobart, Launceston and Ulverstone. Basil and Ida, Camp Managers, once again did an excellent job of catering for 46.

Darryl Tobler coordinated and conducted the worship and input sessions for the weekend in a series entitled "Stand by me", which resulted in 18 young people making a com-

mitment to Christ in the Sunday evening service.

Events during the weekend included a day's bush walk via the coast to a beach at Courlands Bay, a magnificent beach to the south of Bicheno; an evening trip to the Dennison River to "storm the fort"; various sports on the camp site and a surfing trip to Farm Point. In conversation with the young people in following weeks, the general opinion was "Great, let's do it again next weekend," and "Can't wait till next year."

—Peter and Sue Daniel
(Camp Directors)

Sowing Some Seed

Missions Sunday at Launceston

Missions Sunday was held at Launceston, Tas, on 19 June. Guest speakers were Keith and Ruth Stevens, former members at Margaret Street and now on the staff of WEC International in Sydney.

At the morning service Keith and Ruth spoke on the topic "Mission—The Near Side" and brought to our attention the fact that those at home who support cross-cultural missionaries, are a vital link in supporting those who take the gospel to the unsaved. The example was Moses in the Old Testament and the Israelite's battle with the Amalekites, illustrating that as long as we support missionaries, people will respond to the gospel.

At the evening service the topic was "Mission—The Far Side". Through audio-visual and the spoken word, we were reminded that in the world today there are approximately one and a half billion people who have no functioning church among them.

The world, we were told, is still ripe for the gospel.

But there are so few people who are willing to go out to other countries.

People will respond to the message of Jesus, if they are given the opportunity.

The mission focus was a great success and made us more aware of the missionary task of the church. We pray that seeds have been sown in some hearts that will result in volunteers for future full-time missionary service.

—George Green

Strathalbyn Church of Christ SA

125 years Celebrations

6 November 1994

All past members and families are invited to return for a day of reflecting on the past and looking forward to the future.

Guest Speaker, 11.00 am service
Allan Moyle

Luncheon and afternoon program to follow

RSVP Robert Patterson
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Stones Into Bread

And into taro, vegetables, bullock and rice



• The kitchen at Enna

Travel to a convention centre, pay your registration, attend the first meeting and what is the most important announcement that people wait to hear? Often it's the one about arrangements for meals. No one wants to miss out on their food. The organisers want to ensure that everyone is fed and happy.

The delegates at the Churches of Christ Conference in Vanuatu in May were provided with delicious food over the week of the Conference meetings. The people of Central Pentecost gave generously and worked long hours

to provide tasty and nourishing meals. But how did they know how many to cater for? At the first meeting, Barnabas, who was in charge of arrangements, asked that as everyone walked to the dining area for their first lunch at Conference, they should pick up a stone and drop it into the box provided. Afterwards, the stones were counted. In some people's thinking it wasn't as simple as that. "How big should my stone be?" asked one larger person with a good appetite, and a sense of humour, who thought that perhaps we should choose

the size of the stone depending on how much food we needed (or wanted).

Fortunately, the road from the Enna church to the eating area is very stony, as the over 100 delegates and other visitors took the number requiring meals to about 200. Breakfast each day was tea and freshly baked bread. For lunch and dinner the plates were loaded with rice, taro, yam, greens, lap lap at some meals, and meat or chicken. The final meal was a smorgasbord with many delicacies on offer.

People from middle and south Pentecost also assisted with the food required for the Conference. I had the privilege of sharing a boat trip with a slaughtered and quartered bullock, a small part of which I consumed one or two days later. All this without the aid of refrigeration or large cooking stoves! We might say that the meal arrangements are an unimportant part of the activities of a Conference, however at Enna they reflected the care, planning and prayer that went into all aspects of the organisation for the meetings. As a result, those who attended Conference were blessed with the spiritual food that they received through the week and the people of Central Pentecost were able to share in those blessings.

—Julie Trinnick

Thank You From Tanna

To the churches in Vanuatu

"Jon Frum is strong, God is stronger," said a man from Tanna when sharing in an evening service at the Vunamele Church of Christ on Santo island, Vanuatu. A team from Tanna, one of the southern islands of Vanuatu, had travelled by ship from Tanna to Vila, ministered with the churches there, then continued to Pentecost where they visited several areas and led people in worship.

They experienced God's blessings as they travelled and ministered. Accommodation and food was provided, and

the fare to Pentecost, which was usually 7,800 Vtu, was reduced to Vt5,800 (about \$70). While on Pentecost island, the Tanna group attended the annual conference of Churches of Christ. Santo island was their last stop before returning to Tanna after an absence of about a month.

At the service at Vunamele, Deacon Nathan, who teaches at the Churches of Christ primary school on Tanna and is deacon at the Leneae church, shared verses from Psalm 95 and talked about the way that God has been working in his

life. "Jon Frum" is worshipped by people in some areas of Tanna and the challenge for the church is to communicate to these people the fullness of life that is found in Christ.

Tanna is an outreach area of the Churches of Christ in Vanuatu. The first church began there in the mid-1980s.

Deacon Nathan expressed the thanks of the Tanna church members for the work of missionaries from Ambae, Maewo and Pentecost islands, "Without them we would not be here today". He also gave the greetings of the Tanna churches (there are now four) to Churches of Christ in Australia.

—Julie Trinnick

International

Expensive Book

The British Library will pay \$1.5 million for a copy of the first English edition of the Bible that is still intact. The book, from the 16th century, is one of two known copies of William Tyndale's New Testament translation. The other copy, at St Paul's cathedral, is missing 71 pages. Almost all the 3000 copies of the book printed in Germany in 1526 were burned by the Bishop of London.

Joint NZ Outreach

The Anglican, Methodist and Presbyterian Churches in the Howick/Pakuranga area of South East Auckland have made a covenant to work together and establish a church presence and ministry in the heart of a new commercial centre to be built in the Botany area. The aim is to offer ministry both to those who work at the centre and those who visit for other purposes as well as people living in the surrounding residential area.

Unbelievable Church

Newspapers and television news are rated higher than the church in terms of believability and being a good influence in the US, Canada and five Western European countries according to a survey conducted by the Times Mirror Center. 60% of Americans find the church to be believable, while 68% find newspapers believable and 73% TV news credible. The Canadian figures were 47% for the church, 71% for newspapers and 81% who trust TV news.

Unintelligible Churches

The church has a message for America but most Americans can't understand what the church is saying, according to a study by the Barna Research Group. The study found that the meaning of phrases like "the Great Commission," "John 3:16," and "the gospel" are unknown to the majority of Americans.

Marathon Sermon

The Rev Jim Wilson, pastor of the Heaton Baptist Church in the UK, preached a 24-hour sermon as part of a weekend of fundraising to pay for clean water and effective sewage treatment for a village in Romania.

People

Bible Society Director, SA

John Gaghan has been appointed State Director of the Bible Society in South Australia. He comes from a long banking and accounting background, is married to Raelene and they have two adult daughters. John is an accredited lay preacher in the Uniting Church and has considerable experience in church administration. Retiring State Director, John Phelps, has served for 11 years.



• John Gaghan

Aborigines Dept Chair

The Vic-Tas Aborigines Mission Dept has appointed Mrs Jean Hillier as the chairperson of the Department. Harold Taylor had held this position for the last two years. The secretary/treasurer is Malcolm Anderson and Debbie Bishop and Gwen Moore are new members of the Department.

Mission Coordinator

Kel Richards has been appointed National Coordinator for Australia of the Billy Graham Global Mission '95. Kel's experience as an itinerant evangelist, together with his background as a radio and television journalist and program maker, means he is well equipped to coordinate this satellite-based outreach mission. The Billy Graham Global Mission '95 will originate in San Juan, Puerto Rico, in mid-March next year. From there it will be beamed to some 170 countries around the world. As the signal arrives in Australia, it will be redirected to local churches participating in the mission. Churches interested in participating or seeking more information should contact Kel Richards, phone or fax (02) 427 4197 or write Billy Graham Evangelistic Association, GPO Box 4807, Sydney 2001.

Song of Justice

Doug MacFarlane



"Doug MacFarlane is not only a gifted musician, he is also a very competent communicator. His humour and warmth draw audiences in and he is able to communicate the Good News of Jesus with sincerity, clarity and relevance to people of all ages and backgrounds", said Kevin Simington of Telopea, NSW, Church of Christ.

Doug is no newcomer to the Australian Gospel music scene. For five years he has traversed the country, sharing his brand of acoustic blues/rock and ballad songs with enthusiastic audiences.

Song of Justice, his latest album, picks up where his first album *Immocence* left off. His song writing is sensitive yet powerful. They speak directly about people, their relationships, the issues affecting their lives—and their deep need to be brought back into relationship with God through Jesus Christ.

Tim Hanna, senior minister at Berwick, Vic, was equally excited. He said, "Doug has ministered here on several occasions. His lyrics are clear and uncompromising. He sings of real issues facing people, with a clear message of hope that Christ can bring."

Doug said, "I love sharing this message of hope in the more rural and regional areas of the country, as well as the big cities. It's exciting to see a town and district join together for a special outreach event—

all ages, and denominations. That sort of unity releases God's power in a unique way!"

Based in Wollongong, NSW, (just south of Sydney), Doug, his wife Sharon, and daughters Stevie-Lee and Shanah, are closely supported by their home church at Wollongong Christian City Church.

The music of Doug MacFarlane is different. It is music which expresses the heart of a searching and hurt generation, confronting specific issues, but always offering hope. Hope in salvation through Jesus Christ. His heart and anointing is that of a "modern-day prophet."

Steve Grace said, "Doug is an old mate of mine. He and I started out in a band in Wollongong called 'The Steadfast Steamer Band' and we played together for four years. Doug MacFarlane would be one of the better Christian songwriters in Australia today. His songs reflect his deep commitment to his faith."

This year's schedule is a hectic one. By the end of the year he would have ministered in over 100 centres, in six states.

Some of his concerts include: 23-24 July—Dawson St, Ballarat, Vic, Church of Christ; 5 August—Annerley, Qld, Church of Christ; 6 August—Burleigh Heads, Qld, Church of Christ; 13-14 August—Warrigal Community Centre, Vic; 26 August—Whitfords, WA, Church of Christ; 28 August—Joondalup Community Church (am) and Whitfords Church of Christ (pm), WA; 2 September—Swan Hill, Vic, outreach concert; 3 September—Echuca, Vic, outreach concert; 4 September—Echuca, Vic, Church of Christ (am); 9 September—Bowral, NSW, outreach concert; 10 September—Liverpool, NSW, Church of Christ; 17 September—Hobart, Tas, outreach concert; 23 September—Launceston, Tas, outreach concert.

Doug is currently taking bookings for his 1995 itinerary and can be contacted by phoning (042) 85 2999 or by writing to Truth & Life Music, PO Box 2106, Wollongong 2500.

Queen's Birthday Honours

Edward Albert Terry, OAM



Congratulations to Ted Terry on being awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia (General Division) for services to photography.

Ted's achievements in photography are widely known—among his awards the Exceptional Service Award of the Australian Photographic Society (ESAPS) and the International Award for Artistic Photography (AFLAP). This latest honour is the outcome of many years dedication to achieving excellence in his craft.

Born in England, Ted served with the Royal Navy in World War II spending some time in Australia. After the war, he was invited by the Melbourne *Herald-Sun* to accept a position in the printing industry, training apprentices. This he did, remaining with the firm until his retirement 40 years later, then being Head of the Photographic Section.

Ted and his wife Mavis settled in Caulfield, Vic, and have been closely associated with our Caulfield church ever since.

Following his retirement, Ted has devoted time and talent to sharing his craft on a voluntary basis with young people and in the wider community, with the presentation of slide and photographic exhibitions for charitable causes.

Ted has also been featured in the annual Churches of Christ calendars for many years.

May Days

Events at Nunawading



• Ted and Marge Keating

The farewell services for Ted and Marge Keating climaxed a month of recognition and appreciation for their 20 years of ministry at Nunawading, Vic.

On 1 May, a large gathering attended the "Back to Nunawading" celebrations and

shared in lunch and an afternoon program. Memories were relived as slides and tributes highlighted the progress of the church and the significant achievements during Ted's ministry. Playgroups, singles' ministry, outreach emphasis,

Kid's Club, preaching and teaching, were some of the particular initiatives inspired by Ted's leadership and remembered with appreciation. A suitably inscribed "pew" was presented to Marge and Ted to remind them of the recent alteration to new seating for the chapel.

A dinner on 25 May was attended by over 200 family, friends and Conference representatives. Tributes were made by Ian Allsop (Conference Secretary), Don Smith (Department of Mission, Education & Development), Max Carter (Department of Ministry); Tracey Ware (ministry team), Beryl Graham (administrative secretary), and Doug Warmbrunn (congregation). All spoke highly of Ted's commitment to Christ, the church both locally and worldwide, his counselling skills with individuals and churches, and his leadership qualities (especially with Leadership 2000). His sense of humour, encouragement, wisdom

and integrity will be missed greatly. Marge's support for Ted's wide range of ministries was acknowledged as well as the contribution she too had made in so many areas.

Musical items were presented by the Keating family—Tim and Juliette, Jane and Lyndell and a Barber Shop Quartet. A skit was presented by Ted's small group (which meets at 6.30 am each Thursday).

The final services on 29 May were sad, as we farewelled these two people who have shared in so many areas of our lives. Their leadership, friendship and encouragement will always be remembered and we thank God for the outstanding contribution they have made over 20 years.

The church is looking forward to the ministry of David Ratten, later this year. Until then, the ministry team, along with some visiting speakers, will continue to serve the church. —Eleanor Roberts

Trekking in Nepal

It was worth it all

Ruth Rackemann, from the church at Upper Yarra, Vic, has just returned from Nepal with a team from Youth With A Mission. One of their primary objectives has been to encourage small groups of Christians in isolated mountain villages,

but they have also been involved in street witnessing.

In her latest letter Ruth writes, "So far I have preached three sermons and given several testimonies (Sometimes at three minutes' notice!). A lot of the young Hindus are inter-

ested to know about Jesus. The Spirit is really moving in this place. The churches are unreal. The Christians are so dedicated.

In one village seven young men gave their lives to the Lord. This was the village where we had an open-air service. It was fantastic to see them kneeling on the dirt floor praying and repenting, and to see the change on their faces. It was worth everything to see that."

Ruth also advises, "If you want to lose weight: live on rice, climb mountains all day and include an attack of dysentery." The team have had to

deal with bed bugs, and mice and rats crawling over them during the night. On a brief visit to India, they had to take cover when shooting erupted in the street.



• Ruth Rackemann

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About Ourselves

Viney Longthorp

In a faraway time, March 1851, a census was held to determine the numbers attending worship in England and Wales. Many were shocked to discover that a little under half the population attended any church. At that time their population was about the same as Australia is now. Today, if a census found that about half us Aussies attended church, many would consider that it marked that longed-for Revival.

In August 1991, a **National Church Life Survey** was held in this country under the leadership of Dr Peter Kaldor. Unlike the British survey, this one was not concerned with numbers as such; rather information was sought about a wide spectrum of issues such as demographic variables, attitudes to worship and preaching, movements between churches, self-perceptions of churches, etc. Thanks to that miracle of modern technology, the computer, the great mass of information elicited has been reduced to meaningful and understandable statistics, together with helpful interpretations.

All this is now contained in the report of the survey, published under the title *Winds Of*

Change. The book is now readily available.

The significance of the findings may be gauged by the fact that 19 denominations were surveyed; some 300,000 people responded to a wide range of questions from within 6,700 congregations, and this was across 70 different regional units of our nation. Also, leaders of congregations and heads of denominations had input.

The main aim of the project was to give participating churches a mirror to their own life and mission. The report, then, may be likened to a photograph as to where God's people were at one point in time. It offers important clues as to where churches have come from with respect to their ministries and traditions. This report, however, is no exercise in that paralysis of analysis which so often besets us; rather it is a creative resource in our interpreting the leading of the Spirit in our ongoing mission.

The book is a big one—some 350 pages. The tables and comments are many, gathered together in 21 chapters. The material is so comprehensive that a neat summary is not possible; rather, these few random samples indicate what a reader may expect.

• **Satisfaction with music and preaching:** For Churches of Christ, 80% of us were satis-

fied on the whole with music whilst 18% returned a "not really" verdict. With preaching, 81% of us were "mainly satisfied" but 17% were less enthusiastic. Our ratings here were very close to the overall denominational average.

• One section asks: **Where are all the men?** In general, males make up 38% of all attenders. There are variations between denominations. For Churches of Christ the figures are 41% male and 59% female. The largest differences between male and female involvement are in the mainline churches, and least in the Pentecostal groups.

• There is a decreasing **loyalty** to denominations. Attenders shop around for a church that suits their needs and many willingly switch denominations to find a "style" of worship and a theological emphasis with which they are comfortable.

• Australia is a nation of **small congregations**. More than half have fewer than 50 people. At the same time, most growth is occurring in larger congregations. These are particularly attractive to the post World War II generations.

• Only 34% of attenders are aware of, and committed to, the vision of their senior minister/leader for the growth of their congregation. Another 24% are only partially or not committed to it. The remaining 42% are not aware of a clear vision.

• Nine out of 10 attenders drive to church. Young people are more likely to travel some distance to church.

• There is hope in the findings that most younger attenders want to play an active, participatory role where they can contribute their personal gifts, skills, and experience in the best way possible. Also, the figures put paid to that tired old stereotype that older people are more con-

servative in religious outlook. In this regard, it is not a matter of age but a collection of many other factors. However, concerning social action and evangelism, those aged 20-50 show a deeper concern than their older friends.

In launching the report, Peter Kaldor stated that *Winds Of Change* showed that the church is in a period of transition. Many church attenders have recognised the need to move on from old models of ministry, but congregations are still seeking new directions. NCLS researcher, Ms Merilyn Correy said that the crucial question facing churches was the way we responded both as a church and culture to a culture of continuous change. "The only constant these days is change."

Ms Correy used the following illustration, as to what the report revealed about the churches: The church is not a big ocean liner, but a flotilla of smaller boats all going in different directions. Some are sinking; some are tentatively tacking in new directions; others are sitting back and looking, waiting for a more certain direction; some are checking their compasses; some have their spinnakers up and are off and running, confident in their chosen course.

Thus *Winds Of Change* is a positive statement and a sign of hope for our churches. In so far as it is true that finding answers to problems lies in facing up to the relevant facts, this book certainly "tells us the way it is". It enables us to test all our impressions and anecdotes about the condition of the churches.

A further positive and practical aspect of the book is that print-outs are available to any participating congregation. Refer to page 354 as to what may be expected. Contact **Uniting Church Board of Missions**, Phone (02) 285 4594 or PO Box E178, St James 2000. ❖



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Think

A focus on stewardship of talents at the same time as a financial stewardship emphasis tends to weaken the results in both areas.

—Herb Miller in *Net Results* (Distributed by Australian Board of Church Development & Education, 77 Capel St, West Melbourne 3003.)

Classifieds

July Crossword

90TH BIRTHDAY

WRAY, Olive (Owen, SA) Happy 90th birthday on 23 July to a wonderful Mum. Love from Ken and Joan, Daphne and Brian, Phyllis and Keith, Reg and Kaye, Marj and Murray, Kath and Bryan and their families.

GOLDEN WEDDINGS

CLARKE-GORDON Norman and Jean of Blakehurst, NSW, married 15.7.44 at Belmore Church of Christ by P.E. Thomas. Congratulations and love from Gregory, Michael, Kathryn and families.

DEATHS

ADDICOTT (BRODIE) Jean (formerly of North Richmond) on 9 June. Loved wife of Bob (dec). Much loved mother, friend and grandmother to Graeme and Star, Glenda and Archie, and Philip and June, and their families. Mum and Dad reunited.

COMBER (BUTLER, nee ALDERSON) Olive Jean. Passed away peacefully at Bendigo 26 June 1994, aged 81 years. Beloved wife of Walter and Charles (dec). Dearly loved mother of Majory (Birkett). Mother-in-law of Ian. Loving Nan of Stephen, and Heather and Leo Phillipone. Loving Great Nan of Joshua. "Well done thou good and faithful servant." At peace with her Lord whom she dearly loved and faithfully served.

IN MEMORIAM

BURNHAM Frank 14.7.92. Thinking of you as always, even after two years memories linger on. From your loving wife Pris and children Peter, Paul and Cherry.
BURNHAM Frank. Dear Dad, 11.15 every morning is very special to me, that's when I said goodbye to you and you entered into the presence of Jesus. "Hold my hand all the way, from here to your heavenly home. Let me stand where no one stands alone." Dad you'll never walk alone—your son Paul.

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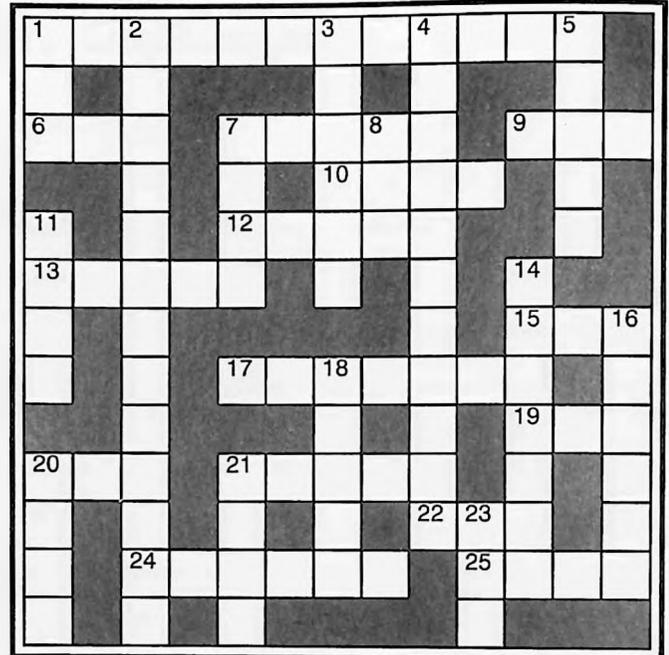
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ACROSS

- 1 This portion of the bull's was towards the centre of the Sea (1 Kings 7)
- 6 Wicked man's disease may cause his limbs to — (Job 18)
- 7 Shortened form of word in Psa 18
- 9 Saul's uncle (1 Sam 14)
- 10 Done to bread (Gen 18)
- 12 Set _____ the foundations of the mountains (Deut 32)
- 13 Descendent of Asher (1 Chr 7)
- 15 Fortified city (Josh 19)
- 17 Fragrance sold by traders (Song)
- 19 Ruth was near _____ (Ruth 3)
- 20 Unclean food (Lev 11)
- 21 Lover's is like myrrh (Song)
- 22 Need to take plank out of it
- 24 Paul had to _____ from Damascus in a basket
- 25 Son of Shem (Gen 10)

DOWN

- 1 Member of tribe of Judah (Exod 35)
- 2 People became Jews from other ones (Esth 8)
- 3 Paul went there (Gal 1)
- 4 Family of one of David's mighty men (2 Sam 23)
- 5 Peter was told to feed them
- 7 Early boat-builder
- 8 Siddim Valley was full of _____ pits (Gen 14)
- 11 Sea-monster may (Amos 9)
- 14 Visionary prophet
- 16 Life given as a _____ (Mark 10)
- 18 David's method of approach in 1 Sam 24
- 20 _____ your heart and not your garments (Joel)
- 21 All Joseph's brothers had one (Gen 42-44)
- 23 The first word of the altar's reply (Rev 16)

June Solution



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A Church ABC

Taree Church of Christ, NSW, can be found on the main highway through the town of Taree about two hours north of Newcastle on the Manning River. The Manning Valley is a very picturesque area some 20 minutes from the mountains, coast and lakes. The town and environs support both rural (mainly dairy and cattle) and light industry.

Unemployment in the area is fairly high, with many school leavers and young people leaving the area to find work. Like many country towns, Taree has a definite identity and so many of those who leave in search of work later return. This movement of late teens and early 20s is reflected in a dearth of numbers in this age group within the church. With this constant movement of people in and out of town, Taree is a dynamic place, not stagnant and focused on the past.

The church itself is one of the older churches in NSW, having just celebrated their 131st anniversary. Their history has been one of strong support for other churches and the wider work

The challenge the church is currently facing is, common to many of our churches—how to move from a more traditional format to contemporary whilst still meeting needs at both ends



Focus on Taree

with a number having also gone into full-time Christian work.

Ministry to children is a significant part of the church's work, with "Playmates" (a playgroup) for pre-schoolers and Kids Club and Sunday School for older children. Obviously, the ministry includes the parents. Also under consideration is how to better utilise the older folk in the church, as it is an often neglected store of talent and ability.

of the scale. One advantage the church has is that they are willing to experiment with different approaches and formats, examining whether they have something to offer.

Another challenge is to connect both ends of the age spectrum. As a whole, the older Christians have a strong identity as Churches of Christ folk, whilst the younger folk identify themselves as Christians who attend the Church of

Christ. Inherent in this is a different set of expectations for behaviour and what church should be. A positive the church has in this is an openness to congregational feedback. Social events and activities such as church fetes help build a sense of unity and togetherness and goes a long way to undercutting the aforementioned differences.

Whilst the church, like the town, is constantly changing due to the movement of people and the consequent movement of ideas, they do not want to lose their sense of history. What they are trying to achieve is to remain alive and dynamic, incorporating ongoing change, without necessarily having huge dramatic changes all at once. Such an approach keeps the church moving into the future whilst keeping connections with the past and avoids large shocks and hurts in the process. ❖

Think

Evangelism—That which happens when someone personally and powerfully experiences Christ to the point that they feel compelled to share that reconciliation with another person.

Church Growth—The systematic and/or methodological approach of practising evangelism in order to increase the numbers and vitality of a congregation.

Mission—The act of moving out into the community, global and local, in the name of Jesus and doing all we can in order to meet the spiritual and physical needs of people.

—Jeffrey Wilson, US Disciples leader for Congregational Growth and Vitality, in *Net Results*

(Distributed by Australian Board of Church Development & Education, 77 Capel St, West Melbourne 3003.)

Comment

The Humble Coffee Mug

Pam Hine

As I took the first sip of my morning coffee, my mind flooded with thoughts.

This is a special coffee mug. It was given to me by someone I cared deeply for, but who had rejected me at one time. It was a Christmas gift, but was much more than that.

This gift had been the first contact for over a year, the beginning of reconciliation, an "I'm sorry, please forgive me?" gesture. It had brought tears of joy to my eyes when I was handed it.

Now the years have passed, the mug has a few chips and is starting to crack, but it is still my special mug.

It has such sentimental value that I'd be heartbroken if it ever broke and I had to throw it away.

As I sipped my coffee, I thought of the Lord's love for me. He cares deeply for me and yet so many years I rejected him.

My life is like this coffee mug. I gave my life as a gift to God as a sign of reconciliation and the beginning of a new relationship. It had also been an "I'm sorry, please forgive me?" gesture.

I'm sure the Lord had tears of joy at that point, just as I had when I received my gift.

As time has passed, my life has had bumps and chips and at times I feel the cracks appearing. But I know I am special to the Lord. Life is tough sometimes, but I am sure the Lord would be heartbroken if I did ever break completely and have to be thrown away. However, isn't it wonderful to know

that even if I do fall apart, our Lord has the power to stick me back together and make me whole.

Then in eternity, I will be like a "brand new" coffee mug, without blemish or defect. ❖

L. C. F. Higgins

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Minister's Musings

Sunday

Of course, we sang "We plough the fields and scatter" for our Harvest Thanksgiving, isn't it obligatory? The hymn talks of the partnership between us and God. We plough the field and scatter the seed; God feeds and waters it and makes it grow; we come in and harvest it. Isn't all of life such a partnership? Without God there is a great big gap, but God doesn't do it all alone. Someone said, "Pray as if everything depends on God and then work as if everything depends on you." That has some theological holes in it, but it does point again to the partnership. Today we celebrated the fact that God took us on as partners, but that God also gives unerring leadership.

Monday

In the car park of the funeral parlour, the cars of two of the mourners backed into each other—not much damage, but enough to be an expense and an inconvenience. The big man got out and stood over the woman sitting in her car: "Didn't you see me?" (The funeral director later said to me, "Of course she didn't see him, or she wouldn't have hit him.") She said, "It wasn't my fault." He said, "Whose fault do you think it was?" We went on to the cemetery, with feelings intensified. Everyone is a loser in a situation like that, but accidents happen! I still favour some mutual apologies and graciousness. Isn't that part of the Gospel?

Tuesday

The man I buried yesterday was not a churchgoer, yet he was widely regarded as a happy, relaxed person. I naturally wrote "yet" in the previous sentence, but the truth is that many of us within the church are not happy and relaxed people. Why not? It is not just that we carry around the cares of the world: surely, Jesus does that for us! Is

it that we have not caught the wonder of the gospel: that God loves us, guides us, gives us strength to cope with life, deepens our love for each other? Provided it did not mean that we didn't care about anyone or anything, "a happy and relaxed person" sounds a pretty good epitaph to me.

Wednesday

Still on the funeral, I suggested to the congregation that one of the things that we were doing was reflecting for ourselves on the meaning of life (and death). Although the man was not a churchgoer, I pulled out all the stops, talked of resurrection and eternal life and did not attempt to exclude him from that. Someone may have wondered whether I was being true to the faith or whether I was pandering to a folk religion that says that everyone will make it. I was sharing the gospel with the living. Despite the outward signs, I do not know the nature of the man's relationship with God. I am happy to leave the judgments of the dead to God, but somehow I can't see God doing the human legalistic thing and denying the nature of God's love. Why be Christian, then? Well, aren't the rewards in this life as well as in the next?

Thursday

The Catholic priest came over to dinner so that we could talk over a pastoral matter that concerned us both and so we could extend him some hospitality. We both realised that even 30 years ago we probably would not have done that. Although the priest could not bend his church's rules on the matter we were discussing, he was quite

happy for the people concerned to be fully committed to Christ within our church rather than not be committed at all. I welcome the changes in attitude, but am embarrassed that, by our divisions, the church still places people in positions of tension and of having to make choices between "brands" of the faith. How often do we confess to God such sins?

Friday

A man gave me some Jehovah's Witnesses literature that had come his way. Everything had a proof text, so it must be all right! You and I know that being able to quote a text is not enough: the Bible is a living, dynamic book, containing great and essential teaching. Any small sentence or two within it needs to be seen in context; we need to understand what the author was saying; we need to see it in relation to other teaching on the same topic. It underlines the need for a strong teaching program in the church so that our people can truly hear and grasp the word of God. However, unless it is done in the Sunday worship service, this man probably would not

come. Yet I don't see the Sunday worship service as the best time to do this. How compatible is it with worship and inspiration?

Saturday

Today's newspaper talked of a racist demonstration, which attracted anti-racists, and trouble. I have always taught tolerance, but it is hard to be tolerant of people who are not tolerant! For Christians there can be no compromise: people of other races are God's people. "There is neither Jew nor Greek". Full stop. We dare not discriminate on racial grounds, at our peril. So, how do we treat those who are not tolerant? Ignore them and hope they will go away, or come to nothing (like Gamaliel and the Christians)? Counter demonstrate? Write positive letters to the editor? Take positive action such as inviting people of other races into our homes? After Hitler, and Bosnia's ethnic cleansing, and the (hopefully) minority troublemakers in our own society, should the church and individual Christians not be in the vanguard, leading with the voice of God's love? ❖

Hymn for Christian Unity

Tune: Finlandia

You want us one, Lord, one church serving you,
Not pulling all ways, but one under you.
This way the world will know you are its Lord
And will believe that Christ has come from you.
O Lord, we hear your message loud and clear:
We should, be one if true to you we be.
Lord we confess your church is not yet one;
We're still divided, your work's still not done;
We stay apart because we're still not true;
Our ways and thoughts we care for more than you.
Lord, wake us up: this world not ours but yours;
We shame your cause, we show the world our flaws.
People are different, even in your church;
We cut them off and hinder in their search.
May we be one, Lord, as Christ prayed for us,
Reach out around us, no, more make a fuss.
You give us love, Lord, and you call us, too,
To love your people, and your will to do.

—Richard Lawton

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Year of the Family

David Jolly

Is your home, marriage, family in trouble?

Today we live in a world of radical change. People's hearts are filled with fear, frustration and despair. What's right? What's wrong?

These two questions, once opposed each other, but today the emphasis on what is wrong

has a far greater tolerance in our society.

Today's problems seem endless. There is economic instability, a rising crime rate, drug and alcohol addiction, child abuse, attacks on the elderly, a climbing divorce rate, etc. What's gone wrong? Our marriage, our home, our family is

under attack from all directions. This poses the question, "Why?"

Is your marriage in trouble?

Marriage means working together, growing together and staying together through the good as well as the bad times.

It is working through issues together that strengthens a marriage. Seek advice from a counsellor if need be, but be honest and talk with each other.

God performed the first marriage in the Garden of Eden. He established the home before there were schools and governments. Indeed, even before the church!

Jesus is the head of the home, the unseen guest at the table, the silent listener to every conversation. What's happening in your home? What are your children hearing and seeing?

Statistics in Australia show that one marriage in three breaks down. One of the biggest reasons for this is the lack of communication. Talk to your wife or husband and children. Communicate!

Is there love in your marriage in your family?

Jesus said, "This is my commandment that you love one another, as I have loved you." **This must begin at home.**

Love is a very complex word that has several meanings. It does not just mean a sexual relationship. The type of love that is needed in a marriage, in a home and in a family is an all-embracing love that is not selfish and does not seek to get its own way. It proceeds from the heart with understanding and forgiveness. It values the other person and does not merely use them as a means to an end. The source of this love is found in God who first loved us. By such love, the most essential and abiding qualities in human life are to be recognised.

Do you accept your partner and your children?

We need to show acceptance and appreciation to each other in the same way God has shown it to us.

We are all different, yet God accepts us this way. Too many parents refuse to accept and appreciate their children for the person they are. That is why so many Australian children ran away from home last year.

As parents we must be there for them.

We must listen to what they have to say. Parents need to take an interest in whatever their children are doing, or proposing to do. How long has it been since you praised your children instead of criticising them?

Praise your wife or husband. I find that praise goes a lot further than criticism. Everybody needs to be appreciated.

Discipline in love and acceptance.

It is important to have training and discipline in the home.

Crime is out of hand in our society because discipline has been taken out of many homes. The Bible says "train up a child in the way he/she should go"—not the way he/she "wants" to go.

Discipline must be used in love.

When children see no joy in their home or their parents marriage, they will not be attracted to be there. But when they see you excited about something the family can do together, they will know what joy is, feeling accepted and part of the family.

A family that prays and plays together, stays together. ❖

Reproduced from the "Wheatbelt Mercury" where David Jolly, minister at Bruce Rock and Merredin, WA, contributed this article for the International Year of the Family.

The Screaming

Did you hear the screaming,
the last words spoken,
that final yell for freedom.
Did you hear the screaming.
A curtain tears,
dangling answers in the wind.
The sky turns black,
night has come to the day,
no words can explain.
Did you see the tears,
the drops of disappearing life
pooled with blood on the ground,
mixed with vinegar,
stained by lies.
Did you hear the screaming
expelled by a cold steel thrust,
the pain of loss,
a desperate gasp for air.
Can you feel the sorrow,
now that the deed's been done.
A will received
while mockery yells,
deceit now has control,
a life breathes no more.
Did you hear the teacher,
the preacher,
the friend.
Did you rejoice in his joy,
cry with his honesty,
laugh at his modesty.
Did you drink from his cup,
eat from his bowl,
share in his troubled thoughts.
Did you stay by his side
to hear the last words,
to receive what he gave.
Did you hear the screaming.

—Robert Stephenson

Watching your Language

Ray Hawkins

Body language is an intriguing form of communication.

From those with the skills of interpretation comes all types of knowledge about attitudes, relationships, and interest. I must admit that by and large I am rather "deaf" (or is it blind?) to this language, except when the host rattles keys and looks for the cat.

However there is a body language I am discovering in my relationship with God. It is one that has made me "look and listen" more intently to my moods in prayer as well as my expectations.

I can remember reading many books about prayer and enduring countless sermons on the subject. Some made me feel guilty, others made me sleepy. Overall I guess they impressed upon me the awesomeness associated with prayer. That wasn't too bad, especially for a person such as I, who is a bit casual in attitude and outlook.

On reflection, I perceive that prayer is flavoured by moods that flow through my being. That in turn affects, or is it infects(?) the body language I exhibit before God. This in turn impacts upon my view of God at the time of prayer. One of the great things about God is that he is the master interpreter of body language. There is no "hard of hearing or seeing" with him. He sees the total being.

There are times when the mood of my being is for that of a friend to sit with me on the back verandah. I am so grateful that God in Jesus Christ has called me his friend. Some of the most satisfying times in prayer have been in this position. On some occasions we go for a walk as friends as we talk things over, you know "man to man"!

Have you ever enjoyed being in someone's presence and enjoyed the beauty of silence. The warmth of acceptance,

companionship and trust where you are lost in your own thoughts. Lovers can appreciate such moments. There is a depth of meaning when you and God are as lovers lost in each others solitude. The sheer pleasure of thinking your thoughts before the God who loves you is a communication beyond words.

Remember those nights when the curtains seemed to "breed" monsters that were peering at you waiting for you to go to sleep? How reassuring it was to have mum sit with you as you shared your fears. There are times when I see God as "Mum". I still have my fears of the night as I stare at the ceiling wondering what is happening in my body, or in my business, etc. It is just so comforting to have the impression that God is "sitting beside the bed" listening to my silent (and not so silent) musings.

Of course, most people know the majestic title for God in the Lord's prayer, "Our Father", resounds with strength and assurance that makes the rest of the prayer believable. When I am in the midst of grappling with some major decisions, or faced by the need of God's providence, what a thrill to call him Father.

I don't mind visualising myself as a small son relying upon the care of a tenderly strong and wise father. There are times when the mood of my heart longs for such treatment from the eternal creator-redeemer. What grace he shows when he reads my heart and body language and responds.

Some people look on God as some form of aloof and sour sovereign. The Bible shows me that God in Christ has called me "brother". You know that is significant, for it implies that he is willing to enter into my play. To have a brother with whom you relate and respect is to do those special things. I sometimes see God as the one

with whom I share those special brotherly secrets, laugh at some in-house joke, rejoice in some close shave. When God and you relate to each other as brothers (or brother and sister), it means that you and he are smiling at life.

We all know that life is not all smiles and that God is not a mere "fun factory". There are times when the mood of my heart and the language of my body moves me to seek a counsellor. In previous centuries, or another concept of the faith, I would have called God not counsellor, but confessor. What a privilege he has given us to see him in this role. To unburden the heart, to spill the sordid details, to be crude, savage or whimpering before him and know he is unoffended is a therapy in itself. King David knew all about it and shared that with us in Psalm 51, and elsewhere.

What a relief to know that when God pronounces the absolution it is real and he has the power to forget the things confessed.

There are times when God and I are in a much more formal relationship. God hasn't changed, nor in a sense, have I. The situation and demands of the moment have. There is a spiritual battle erupting. The church is under attack. The "bugle" has sounded. I am expected at the front. As my Commanding Officer he posts me to the sector that he deems needs me for what ever reason. I am but a private in his army so when he "dons" his military uniform and talks with me every word is an order. There is no mistaking the time when this is appropriate. Prayer under these circumstances is one of listening, obeying and obtaining the necessary equipment.

Two other expressions of the mood of the heart and the position for prayer come to my mind. One implies a certain right of entrance, the other, no

rights at all. It is in moments such as these that I must admit I "feel" overwhelmed by the awesomeness of prayer. I cannot sit on the verandah nor romp in the park or even be silent. It is in such moments that my body language has a touch of Gethsemane. The awareness that God is master and I but a slave, or that he is ruler and I a citizen of his realm, drives me to my knees. In those moments there is an interaction, a communication, a relationship that goes beyond words and into energy used of the Holy Spirit to achieve what God and God alone decides.

I used to be afraid of my moods and felt that there was only one form of body language for prayer. That is too restrictive. It robs us of our personality and temperaments and doesn't do justice to our varying circumstances and the way God wants to relate to us in them all.

Maybe it is time for you to reassess your impressions and expressions of your body language in the presence of God. Maybe you are trying to be what you are not at that particular moment. The only one you are fooling is yourself, and you are probably defrauding yourself of a significant encounter with God.

So, watch your language! ❖

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Worship

Battlefield of Selfishness or Expression of Community

Alan Niven

Why do we all have to be so different?

Scattered, diverse, faces unseen for a week, stories untold, needs undisclosed, hands untouched, voices unheard—we are the gathered community. Some of us have a need to hide, others are almost bursting to see each other in worship.

Before the service begins some will share at a very deep level, others are simply relieved to have a friendly person to talk to since it has been so lonely this week. Some will listen, quietly observe the flow and close their eyes in meditation, while others will chat, nod, and pass the time of day like busy sparrows before the first "official" words are spoken; but for all of us, worship has already begun.

This polarisation is normal and neither practice has greater value. It is simply our task to allow the Spirit to take us (hopefully with the prompting of the worship leader) along one particular path or another, with all kinds of ways of travelling since we are all so different. It's a beautiful, crazy, frustrating scenario that our Lord accepts better than we do.

His spiritual presence is real and it is within us! In recognising our diversity we are recognising Christ. (1 Cor 12:12-13, 25-26)

What was it Like in the Beginning?

We know it was different in the early days of the church, but that doesn't mean we're wrong if we do things differently now.

The Lord's Supper is usually celebrated in a different setting today.

There is no table talk, no time to perceive and respond to the nuances and looks of joy, pain, despair, exuberance or sheer mischief in the joy and awesome awareness of being table companions of Jesus.

How can we be true to Paul's pastoral guidance in 1 Cor 11:28-29?

We are called to "recognise the body" (i.e. be sensitive to the brothers and sisters who share with us).

Otherwise, we are rendering the Lord's Supper of limited value.

In the communion meal we are committed to discovering the riches of fellowship as in no other way in our Christian experience.

Our Lord will never permit us to focus on him without being aware of what is going on around us with our fellow worshippers.

Our culturally-influenced, individual style of worship would seem strange to most of the world's Christian communities.

We know this. We need God's patience and forgiveness because we are sometimes at our most selfish, demanding and intolerant when we are together in worship. This is a pity since we are all trying to do the best we can!

How do we Express our Togetherness?

What happens in the average church? Well, we sing together, we pray together; sometimes audibly (responsive readings and prayers) and sometimes silently. We listen together, we laugh together, we eat together and so on.

We may have prayers requested by the worship leader which provide a window on our concerns, but very rarely do people ask for prayer for themselves.

Open prayer by five or six people can be enjoyed by many, but some feel awkward with this.

Time for silence may be given and some people really enjoy this, others find it awkward, boring or confusing. Prayers using visuals of some kind are stimulating to some and intrusive to others.

How then should we pray together?

We're not all the same when it comes to choice of music, but we all have some good songs and committed musicians, and we do mean what we sing.

When we invite people to come to the front and stand with those who are being prayed for, there are those who would feel very uncomfortable. That's fine. Others enjoy this and will express their feelings outwardly with a hug, a touch, a handshake or a ruffle of someone's hair, depending on their personality or sense of what is appropriate and comfortable. As we greet one another with the Peace, we will all do so in a variety of ways.

Even the way the Lord's Supper is celebrated will be as diverse and colourful as the person leading. We can experience great solemnity, joy and excitement, a homely sense of hospitality, a personal and emotional

reflection, a matter-of-fact reminder of our essential beliefs, and so on.

The hug which warms the heart of one person, will embarrass another.

The religious words used to introduce some aspect of the service which bring comfort to one, will sound alien and forbidding to another. The flip-pant wink and humorous comment signals acceptance and a common bond to one, while a whispered prayer and blessing will give strength and hope to another. (Phil 2:1-5, Jerusalem Bible)

We move from the transcendent to the immanent; from the holy place to the ordinary fabric of the lounge-room; from the mysterious to the apparent; from the inexplicable to the obvious. How? Through the things that we, as human beings in whom Christ lives, do and say in worship.

Unfortunately, we are not programmed to do all this in the same way at the same time. With goodwill, humour and a desire to "acknowledge the body" we'll explore the differences of our ways of responding to God in our corporate worship.

Let's make worship an expression of community, not a battlefield of selfish egos.

Where do we go From Here?

Can we ever truly begin to be the presence of Christ to others if we do not begin to practise the presence of Christ to one another in our worship? To do so is an act of worship in itself. The one will give the lie to the other, or indeed lead on to the other. Of what value is our worship of God if we fail to acknowledge Christ in our brothers and sisters? (James 3:17-18, Good News Bible) ❖

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Obituaries

Obituaries are limited to 100 words

Blake, Judith

(24.5.94) Born on 21.2.38 Judith was the third child of Fred and Jessie Carter, growing up in the Moreland, Vic, church. She met and married her husband Kevin in 1965 and their four children Michael, Warren, Richard and Suzanne followed at regular two-year intervals. An active member at Strathmore, and of both the CWF and CWA, Judith was much loved by those who knew her. All have felt her passing deeply. Over the last few years, she has had a tremendous battle with cancer. Through it all, her faith, secure on the rock of Jesus Christ, remained strong and sure. Her homecoming call found her ready and prepared for the journey. —James Pearce

Hoens, Naomi (Nim) Ada

(10.6.94) Naomiedied at Nunyara Nursing Home, Brisbane, in her 82nd year, after suffering Alzheimer's for eight years. She had a life-long association with the Ann Street, Brisbane, church. Her father was the minister for five years from 1927. Nim was baptised there, married there, and her funeral service, conducted by L.G. Armstrong assisted by W.J. Flett, was held there. She served faithfully and well in various capacities, strongly and loyally supporting all activities. She supported conference activities at State and National levels. She was always active in the women's work, serving as president of the church CWF and as State President 1959-60. She was an asset to the church and conference choirs. Always in a quiet and gracious manner, she performed her great service of love for her Lord and his church. —N. Watson

Personal

Baptisms

•Bonnie McCulloch, Michelle Medcraft, David Richards, Devonport, Tas •Jennifer Verco, Daniel Kitto, Naracoorte, SA

Marriages

•Sharon Love and Jeff Haseldon, Byron, NSW

Deaths

•Jack Cugley, Hurstbridge, Vic
•Naomi (Nim) Hoens, Ann St, Brisbane, Qld

Changes

WATSON: Alan and Eleanor—Unit 6A Salford Park, 100 Harold St, Wantima Vic 3152. Ph (03) 801 6082.

Church News

WA

ALBANY (John Spencer) Our evening services at present are being held as cottage meetings at different members' homes ... A youth group for high school age has commenced ... A 20s & 30s group has been established ... Several members have bought the New Testament on tape from the Bible Society & will endeavour to listen to it during the month of July as faith comes by hearing plan.

NSW

BYRON (Stephen Templeton) The mission continues to progress, average June attendance of 54 ... John & Angie Wilson accepted the call to join the team ministry as music/worship minister in '95 ... Ron Saw & Jenny Templeton to become student ministers in '95 ... Two fellowships meeting each week, one at Suffolk Park & the other at Mullumbimby ... First wedding on 18 June—Jeff & Sharon Haseldon.

Caringbah Church of Christ, NSW

We are seeking a Collegiate Minister to commence in 1995 or 1996.

The applicant will have leadership skills, a vision and commitment for growth and abilities to capitalise on the opportunities open to this well-established church and able to work in a team. Proven communication skills are essential with the ability to motivate and encourage a strong, talented under 35s group. The church is well-known in the community and has developed well-balanced and contemporary worship services.

Applications in writing, including resume should be sent to R. Broady, 11 Gordon Street, Caringbah 2229. Further information/job descriptions: Brian White, (02) 524 8849 (office), (02) 540 1662 (home).

Swan Hill Church of Christ, Victoria

invites expressions of interest for the positions of

Senior and Associate Pastor

We seek two pastors who are called by God to Swan Hill and can work together in a team ministry.

For further information please contact:

David Holt
Box 932
Swan Hill 3585
Phone (050) 32 9719

or The Secretary
Department of Ministry
M.J. Carter
7 Furphy Close
Romsey 3434
Phone (054) 29 6098

Office Manager

We are seeking a person to maintain our office at Goroka in Papua New Guinea. This position involves both management and supervision and requires some bookkeeping knowledge. 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

Ballarat Churches of Christ Peel Street

We invite expressions of interest from ordained ministers who would prayerfully consider a ministry in Ballarat, Victoria.

Our church has recently seen growth and change and we desire the right person to capture God's vision to inspire and challenge us as we "move forward in faith to serve".

Written applications should be sent to:

Mr N. Reed
307 Windermere St,
Ballarat 3350.

Initial enquiries should be directed to:

Mr Peter Elshaug
(053) 33 1836 (after hours)

Church News

Tas

DEVONPORT (R. Chapman) Church helped with banners, music, singing & organisation of March for Jesus. Mayor & Chris Miles MHR joined in march, lead in prayer. 800 participated ... CCTC deputation ... Missionary month speakers J. May (OMB), K. Edwards (WEC), G. Buntrock (OMF), L. Raynor (SU) ... Gospel country band played to capacity crowd ... Bible Society hearing tapes purchased ... Video library commenced ... Seven welcomed into membership.

LAUNCESTON (C. Spaulding, D. Tobler) Team from Theological College led 7 pm service, 26 June ... 10 am service to continue in present format ... Dedication of Cowley children at morning service 26 June & babies of Tony & Michelle Walters & Michael & Nola Thurlow dedicated on 3 July ... Working bee on relocation site 2 July ... Jeff Weston speaker at 7 pm, 3 July, on "Catching the Vision".

HOWRAH (A. Blyth) 17 March, Jeff May (OMB) speaker ... 1 May, Graham Buntrock (OMF) spoke ... Allan Blyth & Ray Morfew attended Vic-Tas Conference ... Anzac weekend church family camp at Bicheno. 48 attended ... 5 June, Rowland Croucher speaker ... Intending missionaries to PNG, Hunt family, Howrah's chosen "Living Link" ... 3 July, Les Medley speaker with CCTC delegation ... Stage one of building alterations about to proceed.

Vic

HURSTBRIDGE (Andrew George) Over 100 celebrated 40th anniversary of church building. Excellent luncheon catered for ... Recycled can collection raised \$80 for missions ... Andrew & Roslyn now district residents ... Minister conducted chapel & grave side thanksgiving services for the life of Jack Cugley. Sympathy extended to his wife Lydia & family.

MARYBOROUGH (Louls Clun) 132nd church anniversary celebrated with two nights of concert led by Merle Burton, followed by packed church for worship, 83 communicants. Many visitors stayed for fellowship luncheon ... 40 Hour Famine well supported ... Visiting speakers from Bible Society & World Vision.

NORTHCOTE (F.B. Alcorn) Many away through sickness during past weeks ... Jack Timmins home after hip replacement, wife Win not very well ... Minister now recovered after knee surgery ... Bible Society's Listening-to-the-Bible plan introduced by minister. Ten

sets sold ... Presentation to Heather & Colin Carbis & family who now live in Mill Park & have transferred to local Baptists ... \$288 given to World Vision Bosnia Food appeal.

SA

OWEN COMMUNITY (Doug Walladge) Three groups involved in studies on the early church prior to visit by Sue Armstrong, June ... Congregation review being held on aspects of Christian/church life ... Fellowship hosted UCA parish rally. \$416 raised for Frontier Services ... Several in-

volved in arts & crafts exhibition at Balaklava gallery ... Adelaide Plains Male Voice Choir, including many church members, performed at parish fund raiser & induction service in Gawler.

DULWICH/ROSE PARK UNITED PARISH (Garry Harris, Jo-Anne Fulton) "Going Through the Valley of the Shadow" title of special address by Garry Harris on bereavement. Full scripts available afterwards ... Craft & fitness classes have steady support ... Raymond Lam, from Hong Kong, spoke at hall service (contemporary)—part-time student at Tabor Bible College, commerce student at Flinders

Uni, member Australian Asian Christian Fellowship at Norwood & president Overseas Christian Fellowship at Flinders.

NARACOORTE (Steve Kitto) Recently Naracoorte Community Church combined with us for weekend with Alan Bailey. Weekend theme was "Focus on the Family". Men's breakfast went well with over 30 men attending. Saturday evening focussed on families & was well attended & worthwhile to all. Weekend ended with drama on Sunday evening "Spotlight on St Peter". This was performed by Alan, an excellent production & well received by all.

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Reuniting Refugees

Practical Christian caring

An ambitious national appeal has been launched by the Australian Council of Churches (ACC) to fund a loan scheme which will help refugees already granted visas to actually come to Australia.

Anglican Archbishop of Melbourne, Keith Rayner, and Sir James Gobbo, former Victorian Supreme Court judge, appealed to the public to support the scheme which will supply interest free loans to individuals so they can pay the airfare of spouses and children currently trapped in refugee camps around the world. In every case, family members already have entry permits to Australia, but do not have the resources to pay for a one way ticket for family reunion.

Archbishop Rayner said, "the scheme is an exercise in practical Christianity", which could help many people who daily suffer the agony of family separation. "Through this scheme, the church is seeking to give a lead to government by setting a practical pattern of human and Christian concern."

Mr Justice Omenihu's story is sadly, all too familiar. He is a refugee from Nigeria, displaced because of political persecution. He came to Australia via Greece in 1989. His wife and a child whom he has not seen languish in poverty in Nigeria.

He daily survives on an Austudy allowance as he tries to upgrade his legal qualifications to Australian standards. His wife has an Australian visa, but between them they cannot afford the airfare from Africa.

Australian Council of Churches Refugee and Migrant Coordinator, Hermine Partamian, said that in the International Year of the Family, we cannot ignore the situation of refugee families like this.

Fellow refugee, Pikre Wereta, originally from Ethiopia, has a wife and family languishing in a refugee camp in southern Sudan. He likens the situation to being like inviting his wife and children to dinner but then locking the front door. "We are welcome, but we cannot get in."



• Mr Justice Omenihu, a refugee from Nigeria

The loan scheme is a revitalisation of a similar 1952 program and would work in a similar way. \$40,000 from this original scheme is already fully committed and the appeal for new funds will provide a self-sustaining capital base. As money is repaid, it will then be used to help reunite more and more families in Australia.

The ACC has called upon the Federal Government to initiate a similar scheme. The US and Canada already have government financial refugee repatriation loan policies.

There are currently about 9,000 broken refugee families in Australia, with little likelihood of them getting back together without outside help.

The ACC hopes to raise \$100,000 through this appeal. Donations can be sent to ACC Refugee and Migrant Services, Causeway House, 306 Little Collins St, Melbourne 3000. Phone (03) 650 6811.

The Last Word

Patient waiting is often the highest way of doing God's will.

—Jeremy Collier

An executive came home and slumped in his favourite chair with a discouraged look. His spouse asked what was wrong. "You know these aptitude tests we're giving at the office? Well, I took one today for fun. It's a good thing I own the company!"

Why are people born with two eyes and one tongue?

So they can see twice as much as they say.

What is the best way to keep fish from smelling?

Cut off their noses.

Well, in a way, it's a two-week vacation. I take a week and then the boss takes a week.

Nobody is sicker than the person who is sick on their day off.

A storekeeper stated in his will: "I want six of my creditors for pall bearers—they have carried me for so long they may as well finish the job."

"Do you have an opening for a very bright young person?"

"Yes, and don't slam it on the way out!"

The news that Bill had lost his job got around quickly. A friend asked, "Why did the supervisor fire you?"

"You know what a supervisor is?" Bill shrugged, "The one who stands around and watches the others work."

"What's that got to do with it?" his friend wanted to know.

"Well, it was a case of jealousy," Bill explained. "Everyone thought I was the supervisor."

What do you call a person who keeps on talking when people are no longer interested?

A teacher.



"Ace Stereo Repair."



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