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# THE AUSTRALIAN CHRISTIAN

## **FEDERAL ABORIGINES BOARD ANNUAL OFFERING—20 MARCH 1994**

### *QUIETLY THINKING TO MYSELF*

*He tells of the times of riding along stock trails through the Kimberleys and the Gascoyne.  
Those long days.*

*Dust, from sun up to sun set.*

*"We'll reach water directly so that the livestock might drink."*

*Sun beaming down.*

*"We were careful to drive the cattle into the wind otherwise the herd might break up."*

*He remembers the times around the camp fire, black coffee, yarns about the day's ride,  
hour upon hour in the saddle.*

*"I taught young white girls to ride and how to work the herd."*

*His hair is no longer black, but silver. Long beard to match.*

*Old age is his lot.*

*Wiry arms and legs, dark skinned.*

*He no longer can ride a horse. His transport is a wheelchair.*

*Always moving.*

*Now when he goes to town, we take him.*

*His tucker is prepared by others, clean clothes are laid out to wear.*

*Nicely folded.*

*We care for him now in the name of Jesus.*

*He is old and frail these days.*

*He is Aboriginal.*

*Do his thoughts dwell on days passed?*

*As he looks at us digging a hole, would he like to arise from his wheelchair to help?*

*When he turns away is it because his memory takes him back to younger days?*

*Agile days.*

*I'm only thinking these things to myself.*



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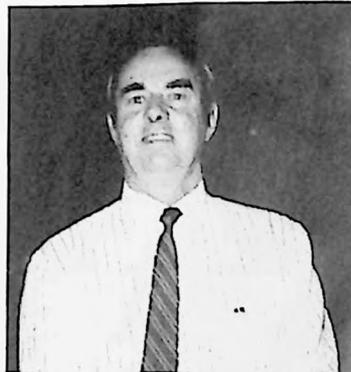
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## Guest Editorial

# IYOIP and the Future

Avon Moyle



**T**he International Year Of Indigenous Peoples has come and gone. What of it? What has been its importance and effect upon us in Australia?

My attention was first drawn to the International Year of the Disabled many years ago when my son's school teacher was brave enough to invite two people confined to wheelchairs into the classroom. It hadn't been done in that little rural school before, but I am forever grateful to that teacher for her initiative. The discussion, the questions, the exposure to those two "handicapped" people made a marked impression on my son. His awareness was raised, his education extended and his attitude to a minority with other aspirations, needs and contributions gave him an altogether more healthy and accepting attitude to others. That attitude won acceptance by our nation and it has been translated into action—employment opportunities, education facilities, building design, public transport, their own Olympic Games and a host of other aspects of modern Australia have recognised and accommodated their special needs.

Sadly, the International Year of Indigenous Peoples seems to have passed us by, with many left wondering what it was all about. Certainly our Federal Government highlighted the year with many celebrations, forums and activities designed to highlight the customs, culture, needs and aspirations of Australia's aborigines. However, I have the fear that as a nation we did not wholeheartedly personalise all that the year was designed to challenge us with, or teach us.

I ask myself why? Did the education program fail to reach, interest or challenge us? Were we open to receive what our Aboriginal brothers and sisters were keen to tell us? Were we not willing to accept some of the disturbing aspects of their lot within their own land?

The dominating issue of last year was the Mabo Case. It so dominated our nation's thinking that Parliament's term was extended so that the enabling legislation could be passed. For many, Mabo somehow was what the IYOIP was all about—when in fact it formed just part of the

whole issue of reconciliation.

As we reflect on last year, I wonder how much more we now know about Aborigines, their cultural heritage, pressures that impinge upon them, how in many cases the lack of even basic housing, schooling, medical treatment and employment opportunities are affecting them and shaping the

world of future generations. I guess only time will tell.

As a family of churches in Australia, our movement had opportunity to educate our members in a couple of important ways, principally as Aboriginal people themselves had the opportunity of speaking in the churches. Cec Grant and Sonny Graham spoke at the evening meeting of a church in suburban Perth last year about what it means to belong to a minority group and of their Christian stance within the culture of their people. That service went for nearly two hours and was concluded then only because of pressing travel commitments. Dawn Gilchrist later, as guest speaker at the church's family camp, chose as her topic "Confronting Your Own racism".

A New South Wales country church has invited Cecil Grant to address them in the coming weeks. That is a significant invitation. Those churches are to be commended for wanting to educate themselves from the correct sources. Education forms perceptions upon which attitudes are based and it is from attitudes that action springs, hence all action (or inaction) depends upon attitude.

The International Year of Indigenous People was all about helping us to confront our fears, stereotypes, perceptions and attitudes—it was about accepting those who are different from us. Its success, or otherwise, will be measured by the way in which we each personally reach out in understanding, with a greater acceptance of our Aboriginal neighbours.

The effects and the benefits of celebrating that year may be slow in coming. In many, I sense no change in attitude. But in others, maybe God is opening our eyes to our responsibilities to those who were here before us. Maybe we will see that translated into action. I hope so.

## New Beginning at Ormond

Joint ministry commences



• Johnathon Moore

Johnathon, Tricia and Denham Moore took up residency in the Ormond, Vic, manse on 19 January. Extensive renovations were done to the manse, mostly by the men of the church, over an eight month period. New kitchen, electrical wiring, painting inside and out, new carpet and floor tiles have brought the manse back to "as new" condition.

On 6 February, Ian McDonald (elder) led the service and Greg Elsdon (Principal of CCTC) inducted Johnathon into the ministry of the church. Ian McDonald, Alf Knee, Bob Alabaster, Betty Cann and Joan Young laid hands on Johnathon during a prayer of blessing.



• Paul Bauer

Johnathon and Tricia were then welcomed into the church.

Paul Bauer was commissioned as assistant minister (Paul will also be a chaplain at Box Hill Hospital three days a week).

Greg Elsdon gave the address, during which he encouraged Johnathon and Paul with experiences he had whilst in his first ministry.

Following the service, a luncheon was held. Both Johnathon and Paul related some of their background before they entered College.

A video and recording of the service was made as neither of their families were able to be present.

—Alf Knee

## The Choice is Yours

Alcohol Education Video

Ansvar has produced an entertaining film that is able to deliver a useful message. The film is a 17-minute video entitled *The Choice is Yours*.

This film is a continuation of the regular program by Ansvar to introduce at least one new initiative regarding alcohol education into the community every year.

The increased success of Ansvar in recent years has enabled the company to commit larger amounts of money to alcohol education. A large number of the videos have been produced and are available from all Ansvar offices throughout Australia for use by schools and church groups.

This particular film has been produced because of approaches by social workers in the field of alcohol education. An update was required to replace the highly successful film,

*Danger Level* which has been in regular use for more than 20 years.

This new film, whilst still addressing the problem of drinking and driving, also covers the wider impact of alcohol in an individual's life and its impact on society.

The film aims to challenge viewers to consider the reasons why choices need to be made regarding alcohol usage. The film is a story about one night in the life of several young people. Each of the people involved in the drama is exposed to a preview of the consequences of their alcohol consumption pattern.

Aimed at young people, the film is ideal as a discussion starter for youth groups. In addition to being available for free loan, copies may also be purchased from Ansvar offices for \$20.



• Ian Williams, General Manager of Ansvar presenting a copy of *The Choice is Yours* to Ian Allsop, President of the Australian Council of Churches

## Manse Has Overhaul



After a season of standing empty, the manse at the Darwin, NT, church was due for a good clean out and going over.

A working bee was held on the New Years Day holiday (3 January) to prepare the place for the onslaught of the Larkham family.

Walls, doors, stair rails (and people) were painted, gardens weeded and pruned, cupboards and fans cleaned and curtains made to make the place presentable.

The photo gives you some idea of the "enjoyable" time had by all!

## Reshaped Plans

### Byron's varied outreach

In January we arrived in the **Shire of Byron, NSW**, with a plan of attack for the new mission sponsored by the NSW Conference, only to have God reshape those plans. The only house available for rent was in a community north of the Shire called **Mullumbimby**. From this has developed a strong, growing fellowship, with attendances reaching 30 in the first month and growing each week.

On 4 March, a kids club is to commence at **Suffolk Park**. This community is just south of Byron Bay, with a strong emphasis on becoming the main residential area for Byron Bay. Byron Bay itself is becoming a centre for holiday makers, with the families moving to the outskirts.

Once the club is established, we intend to develop a seeker friendly service with a strong emphasis on follow-up.

There is no church in this community, making this church its first. What a golden opportunity!

The mission has now changed from being a Byron Bay mission, to that of a Byron shire mission. The main reason for this is the size of the shire, mixed with its attitude and needs as well as what God is doing amongst us. We believe that the best way forward is to develop a ministry of ministers under a senior minister with specialised staff, instead of having a number of smaller ministries struggling to maintain themselves. This way, we will be able to develop minis-

## Nunawading Office Extended

### Expanding to meet needs

Thanks to a generous donor, the **Nunawading, Vic**, church has been able to extend its office space to accommodate its staff, which includes **Ted Keating** (senior minister), **Beryl Graham** (church administrator), **Tracey Ware** (small group director), **John Rowe** (pastoral director), **Anne Spoelder** (outreach secretary/singles director) and **Rohan Waters** (youth director).

The extra space has been welcomed and will enable the staff to cope with the increasing number of interruptions,

tries to reach the diversity of people living here.

—S & D Templeton

phone calls, counselling demands and access to computers. The current office was originally the manse, built in 1948. It was extended in 1966, with a change in ministry, and in 1980 it was converted to office space.

"The more a church attempts to meet the needs of its local community, the busier its office becomes," said **Bruce Graham**, the church secretary, who has helped **Ray Drayton** oversee the project. "We feel it is important for our staff to be housed in offices in close proximity to each other to further develop the liaison and rapport that already exists between the staff. The donation came at an important time for our church."

## Window of Opportunity

### Awakening 94

**Awakening 94** is described as "an exciting window of opportunity for the church."

Since **Easter 90** began in Sydney, with the churches coming together to reclaim Easter as a Christian celebration, the movement has swept across the country, with every capital city marching in 1993 and Christians from all denominations joining together in some 200 cities and towns across the nation to run their local Easter festivals. At this point, there are over 90 areas exploring Easter outreach in Victoria alone, for 1994.

When the Easter Advisory Boards, composed of representatives of the Heads of Churches, were invited to manage the **Global March for Jesus on 25 June, 1994**, it raised a dilemma. Would it compete? Easter seemed so appropriate to united Christian action.

The agreement that emerged from the discussion centred around a program called **Awakening 94**. It would begin as **Easter 94**, with festivals

across the country. From there, it would move into **Operation Reconnect**, or the **Twelve Weeks of Mission**, and finally move to the **Global March for Jesus on 25 June**.

The climax of the **Easter 94** program in Victoria will be a major **family festival in the Southgate Precinct, 2-4.30 pm** on Easter Day. It will have a fast-moving stage program and activities around every corner. Again, the Easter story will be told, in story and drama, not only to those who come along but also to the Southgate shoppers. A highlight will be the performance of a Haka, by "Island Breeze".

The **12 Weeks of Mission** program offers the most comprehensive list of mission strategies ever produced in Australia.

There has been a remarkable level of generosity in sharing insights and ideas.

Manuals have been written by people from every state and virtually every Christian denomination. No one has charged for the work they've

done, and a Christian printer is producing them virtually at cost so that they can be made widely available.

They include a range of material on the family, linking into the **United Nations Year of the Family**. One package, written by **Rachel Hampden** from **Tamworth**, is an eight-week training course on relationship skills for family.

**Christian Aboriginal, Pastor Bill Bird** from **Redfern**, has written a manual on **Reconciliation**, complete with ideas for running reconciliation weeks in country towns.

There's a package, "Where are the Men?", full of ideas from people who've had a go at working in this area.

Packages are available to reach children, teenagers, isolated women, the disabled, those marginalised by unemployment, and the elderly. A big gap in the church is the **20-25 year old group**, and two packages have been written—one particularly focussing on reaching yuppies.

At the end of February there will be **56 Mission Manuals** available with others still in the pipeline.

Ormond Church of Christ  
(Corner North Rd and Arnott St, Ormond)  
**EASTER SERVICES**

- Maundy Thursday 7.30-8.30 pm  
Meal and Service (All welcome)
- Good Friday Service 9.00-10.00 am
- Easter Sunday Special Services  
10.00 am Worship (Morning tea provided)  
7.00 pm Gospel Celebration (Supper will be served)

Come and share with our new ministers  
For further information contact (03) 578 2727 or (03) 578 1236

## Vanuatu Choir

Missionary convention special guests



• Choir of the Sarabetu Church of Christ, Port Vila

The choir of the Sarabetu Church of Christ, Port Vila, Vanuatu, are the featured guests at Swanston Street, Melbourne's Missionary Convention (20-27 March). The choir, which sings in English, French, Bislama and niVanuatu languages, will also be featured at an OMB Rally (20 March, 3 pm, Lygon St church) and will be singing at at least two large shopping complexes as an outreach as well as at various regional rallies (Ballarat and Geelong). They will also be singing

at a meal time meeting that the Minister's Association is holding at Boronia (21 March) to welcome new ministers to Victoria.

Members of the choir will be presenting dramas and skits as part of their program. The tour is being led by Pastor Wilson Wayback and the message theme he will be sharing is "Partnership in Mission".

Contact Doug Carr on (03) 803 9378 at Swanston Street church for details of their itinerary (See also, advert page 16).

## Wild West Christmas

Alternative approaches to Advent

The chapel was crowded twice for the presentation of "The Cowboy Musical" (published by Word Music) which was the format of the annual Christmas musical presented at the Nunawading, Vic, church.

The musical was produced and directed by Juliette Keating and presented the Christmas story in an outback town in Wyoming. A feature of the plot was the regular appearance of the Angel Gabriel, alias "The Lone Ranger" (presented by youth worker Rohan Waters).

The wild west setting provided great music and a lot of

laughs. There was some real barn dancing. The accents were effective. The involvement of musicians, actors and artists had powerfully brought the anguish that Mary and Joseph felt about the surprise pregnancy, as well as the involvement of very ordinary peasant people in the Christmas story.

On Christmas Eve, the church choir, under the direction of Meredith Vincent, presented an inspiring musical that included drama, dance and narration, illustrated visually with slides. Janet Thompson prepared the script. Over 400 attended the two presentations.



• The Cowboy Musical

## Victorian Numbers Up

1,100 increase in two years

Victorian church membership, including Christians in Fellowship, has grown by 1,100 in the 1991-93 period. Membership

statistics in Vic-Tas as of 30 September, 1993, have again shown significant increases. Tasmanian membership and Chris-

tians in fellowship rose by 8.4%. Victoria reported an increase of 4.6% and a net gain of 576. This gain is the third largest since the 1920s when detailed statistics became available. Only two years in these 70 years have exceeded Victoria's 1993 growth. At the height of the tent mission era, with the late E.C. Hinrichsen, in 1926 there was a gain of 787. The only other year was 1959 when a Billy Graham Crusade was held in Melbourne, with a gain of 711 members.

The number of baptisms is also the largest for 15 years. The increase in baptisms has been a rising trend in recent years. The new churches established since the 1988 CROP emphasis of the Department

of Mission, Education and Development and the Properties Corporation have contributed 31.6% of the total growth in 1993.

This is a significant commentary on the importance of the church planting program.

Victoria's membership has now increased by 1,100 since 1991. Tasmania's membership and Christians in fellowship totals are also the highest for a number of years and, on present trends, should pass 1,000 in 1994.

Detailed analysis of congregational trends and metropolitan and country regions is currently taking place. The information will be available from DMED.

—Don Smith



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1.15-1.45 p.m.

Lunchtime Service

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## Two Years On

### National Church Life Survey

The Nunawading, Vic, church compared the National Church Life Survey that was conducted in 1991 with a repeat survey in 1993. In that two year period the face of the church had changed considerably, with three new members of the ministry team and a new emphasis on young adult singles ministry and small groups.

The repeat of the survey showed some amazing differences. The percentage of those aged between 20-29 had risen 5% and there had been a 8% rise in those living alone, or in a single parent family, with people in that category now making up a third of the church. There was a 5% increase in the number renting their homes and the impact of the small group ministry was evident in that 87% reported a strong sense of belonging compared to 81% in 1991.

The analysis went further. With the computer help of a member (Mal Anderson), we

were able to analyse the difference in attitude between those who had been in the church more than five years or less, and also the attitude of different age groups. We had some surprises. The "recents" (less than five years) were more inclined to be single, more approving of the church music, were more inclined to be male. However, there was little difference in the attitudes of the "established" and the "recents" to the quality of preaching, or in their sense of belonging to the congregation.

An age group analysis also told us some amazing stories. The middle age group was more approving of the preaching than any other age group; and the teenagers, while reporting a low approval of the preaching, gave a very high rating to the music life of the church. There was a correlation between the age groups and involvement in small groups. The younger the age

grouping the more inclined they were to be involved in small groups and report a stronger sense of belonging. A surprising exception to this was the 20-29 age group. The teenage group was the most likely to report that the church helped them with their growth in their relationship with God and 100% of teenagers said they felt excited or positive about the church life. The 70+ age group that have been worshipping at Nunawading for more than five years were less enthusiastic about the preaching, the music and their sense of involvement in the life of the church than those in the same age group who had arrived more recently.

Overall, the repetition of the survey has given the church great encouragement and caused the leaders to examine more closely the issues where areas of dissatisfaction have been reported. Copies of the questionnaire, results, analysis and recommendations can be obtained from the **Nunawading Church of Christ, 184 Surrey Rd, Blackburn 3130 for \$3** (including postage).

## Calendar

### 21st YFC Happening

The Youth for Christ March Happening (18-20 March at Belgrave Heights, Vic) is celebrating the 21st year of the event. 5,000 young people are expected to attend the youth festival which has six free rock concerts and a series of forums with youth speakers from across Australia. This March's line-up includes Kathy Johnston & Band, Tim Steen & Band, Next of Kin and Gnosis. Speakers include Steve Clarke and Wes Beavis. Contact Youth for Christ on (03) 877 3844.

### Senior Citizens' Service

During Senior Citizens Week in Victoria (20-27 March) which has the theme "Let Age Expand Your Horizons" an ecumenical service is being held at St Paul's cathedral, Flinders St, Melbourne on 20 March at 3 pm. This year Kevin Mogg, Director of Catholic Social Services will be the preacher and the music will be provided by students from Haileybury College.

### Spirituality and Renewal

An ecumenical experience of deep spirituality and renewal is being organised by the NSW Ecumenical Council. It is expected that over 1,000 will participate in the "Sowing Seeds of Trust" Pilgrimage in Sydney 23-25 April. A brother of the Taize Community (an ecumenical community of Taize, in Burgundy, France, was founded in 1940 by Brother Roger which works for reconciliation and peace) will be leading the pilgrimage. It will be a time of sowing seeds of trust between people from different places and backgrounds. It will be a time of discovery in areas of prayer, listening, sharing and exploring how to be bearers of trust and peace within the human family. The cost is \$25 (non-refundable deposit) plus \$50 with billeted accommodation in private homes for non-Sydney residents. Details from the NSW Ecumenical Council on (02) 299 2215, or the ecumenical council in your state.

## Sunday School Special

### Contributing to the work

13 February was a red letter day for the Harlaxton Sunday



• Rod Tippett (left), Principal of Kenmore Christian College, is presented with a lawn mower by David Lowe on behalf of the Harlaxton Sunday School

School in Toowoomba, Qld. During 1993, the scholars and teachers made an extra gift each Sunday toward some cause outside the church life.

A presentation was made on behalf of the Sunday School by David Lowe and Aileen Draney to Mr and Mrs Rod Tippett. Rod Tippett, the Principal of Kenmore Christian College, accepted a Bolens lawn mower and catcher on behalf of the College. (Lawn mowers have heavy duty use at the College as there are acres of grass to cut.)

He responded to the gift with thanks and presented a framed certificate from KCC and fridge magnets for each of the students.

On the same occasion, Horace Christensen, as Chairman of the Overseas Missions Board, was given two large

plastic bags filled with used postage stamps. These will be sold and the proceeds used to sponsor Bible correspondence courses in Papua New Guinea and India. (Thousands of dollars have been raised over the years by this means.) He thanked the Sunday School scholars for faithfully saving the stamps.

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## People

### Brian's Place

#### Door and ears always open

A full box of tissues, a warm smile and a sympathetic ear are Brian Stitt's tools of trade.

The Dianella man is Mirrabooka [WA] Senior High School's chaplain. He spends several days each week talking to students about their problems.

Whether they are concerned about their home life or not coping with school pressure, his door is always open. Brian has seen many tears flow in his office but he always hopes he can make a little difference.

"It can be very rewarding," he said. "If a student comes in to the office in tears and leaves with a laugh, it makes you feel good. I describe myself as a big ear with a zipped mouth."

Brian said the most common problem faced by students was the breakdown of their parents' marriages. They often felt anger and many blamed themselves for the separation. They were also scared of being rejected by one or both parents.

"This is the students' self-identification period and pa-

rental support is the basis for anyone's self-image," Brian said. "What do you say to a child who is full of bitterness and anger?"

"I try to bring the kids back to reality and give them a sense of perspective. The only way to get on with your own life is to forgive."

Brian also takes his work to the streets. He is happy to speak to parents at home and often provides a shoulder to cry on. He is a regular visitor to staff or students ill in hospital.

Brian began his career as a school teacher but found it unsatisfying and decided to train as a minister. He graduated from theological college with a major in education and youth work and went into the ministry. The isolation of church work soon began to frustrate him and he returned to teaching. Before coming to Mirrabooka, he worked at Lockridge, Girrawheen and North Lake senior high schools. He moved to Mirrabooka about 15 years ago as a history and economics



Photo courtesy of Eastern Suburbs Reporter

#### • Mirrabooka chaplain Brian Stitt welcomes 14-year-old students Damien Merrin, of Yokine and Tara Robinson and Kelly Finigan of Nollamara

teacher but retired at the end of 1992. When the school asked him to come back as its chaplain he could not refuse.

"I am very committed to this school," he said. "I will stay here as long as I'm needed."

Brian spends a lot of time with the students and involves himself in everyday school life. The former state rugby player attends school camps and joins in outdoor education activities. He has even been known to go

abseiling with the kids—an experience he thoroughly enjoyed.

"I call it drumming up business," he laughed.

Brian works very closely with the school's youth education officer who refers students to him. Referrals are also made by teachers who may notice a child appears upset or stressed.

—Leanne Pitcher  
Reprinted from *Eastern Suburbs Reporter*, 23 November 1993.

### Bold Originals

#### Eye for men's fashions



Story and photograph courtesy of Valley View

#### • Pene Warbrick getting set as a men's fashion designer

A young fashion designer is a step closer to sewing up her future after being named runner-up in the 1993 Australian TAFE Student Design Awards.

Pene Warbrick of Kambah, ACT, (a member of the Lyons congregation) dazzled judges with her original and bold range of menswear which has just been launched under the label of Diverse Australia.

Pene also took out the menswear design section award.

She has already begun planning to set up Diverse Australia with friend Frances Taylor. They will probably work from home for around a year and then, once they are established, maybe move to Civic in Canberra. Some of Pene's more unusual garments include an angled or lopsided

suit, jacket with built-in waistcoat and pants with built-in belt and braces.

"I've always wanted to design menswear," Pene said. "I can't see any kind of class in what guys are wearing."

Despite her modern designs, she uses mainly traditional fabrics and colours.

"The angled suit that won the award came from an idea from my fiancée's mother (Alison Gniel who is a board member and worship convener at Lyons). I believe I'm in tune with what guys want, because guys always ask my fiance where he gets his clothes".

—Kym Holthouse

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## Letters to the Editor

### Letters are limited to 200 words

#### Are we Listening for New Truth?

To the Editor,

John 16:13 must surely mean that revelation is a continuing process. We should expect new truths.

I am moved to believe there is no "eternal hell" and that it is of human thinking. Long enmeshed in the Jewish nation and in the minds of the New Testament writers and thus seemingly endorsed by Jesus. We want to punish all wrong doers, but that is not God's way, for God is love, God is eternal and God never changes. He loves the world so much; we love him because he first loved us; he keeps no account of wrong (1 Cor. 13:1-8a); he loves his enemies (Matt. 5:43-48) and he does not kill (Matt. 5:21). As Charles Wesley says (hymn 201), God's love is infinite, therefore, his love must continue after human death.

We know not what "punishment" he will dispense (Matt. 10:15) for "it will be more tolerable" for some than others; but eternal hell can never be the way of a loving and righteous God.

Ah! There is indeed a hell on earth, untold millions experience it today. To save people from this is the urgent task to which God has called his church united. Remember, we too have to face God in the hereafter!

—David Allison  
(Black Rock, Vic)

#### What is Grace?

To the Editor,

The dictionary definition is, "Beauty or charm, favour,

goodwill, mercy, a title of an Archbishop, a delay granted for a payment of an obligation, love and favour of God toward man". But for a Christian, grace means something far more important.

John Newton (18th Century) wrote "Amazing Grace". Grace can also be the giving of thanks for a meal or Paul's benediction in 2 Cor. 13:14.

There is no such thing as cheap grace. We cannot say, "I can go and sin as much as I like, and rely on grace to be forgiven." Jude (v. 4) wrote about certain godless people who had slipped into the apostolic church. They changed the grace of God into a licence for immorality and denial of Jesus Christ. Paul wrestled with cheap grace as well, "Shall we sin, because we are not under law, but under grace?" (Rom. 6:15). Grace cost God the life of his Son.

What is grace? It is God's gift and sacrifice of free love to sinful men and women. Grace is free, but it isn't cheap. Christ died for us, through grace, God justifies us with himself by blotting out the penalty of sin. (Rom. 3:24)

—H.L. Pietzsch  
(Hurstbridge, Vic)

#### Education and Leadership

To the Editor,

Let me say how much I enjoy reading *The Australian Christian*, about so many of the positive happenings within our movement!

However, I cannot help but be annoyed at particular articles that don't gel with our Australian ethos, such as the article supplied by the Australian Board of Church Development titled "Education and Leadership—Does Academic Ability Determine Leadership Effectiveness?" ("AC" 19 February)

The author was subtly trying to suggest that effective ministerial leadership will be found with people who are more likely not to have been theologically trained. Quoting from American findings (hardly relevant to our setting), the inference was that we

should be attempting to develop the same strategy.

In my experience almost all of our "successful" churches are ones where we have highly energetic and creative people who have been theologically trained (e.g. Wollongong, Nunawading, Marion, Warwick and other big growing churches). All the leaders of these churches have been educated at our Colleges. It is apparent that many of our smaller churches that are alive and thriving at present are also being led by women and men who were soundly grounded in astute and rigid theological disciplines. In the last issue on page 7, we read about the exciting developments and growth at Mitcham and a newly formed church at Upper Yarra; both led by young men trained at our national College. 99 times out of 100, these churches are being led by people who have

devoted themselves to earlier ministerial training.

I'm not suggesting that it is impossible for a lay person to lead a congregation, but, in all my observances, it is the educated who are leading our movement into a new and exciting future.

When I go to visit a doctor or solicitor I naturally expect that these people have been thoroughly schooled in their disciplines. If I knew that a bridge or building was built or designed by a non-qualified person then I would hesitate to use these amenities.

Therefore, in an age where society places so much importance and emphasis on sound education, I shudder when I read such articles.

If our Conference leaders are advocating this policy, then heaven help our churches!

—Andrew Henley  
(Boronia, Vic)

## Letters to a Travelling Companion

### Recycling

Dear Daniel,

I write this to you in great sensory discomfort. As I sit in my study typing this letter, the temperature outside is well over 30 degrees and it is so humid that you can hear the blowflies gasping for breath. The cause of my discomfort is not the heat so much, but the fact that my wife, for some mysterious reason, has chosen this time to spread the latest batch of compost on the flower garden immediately under my study window. I keep wondering if she is trying to tell me something.

My wife has really got into this conservation and recycling craze. In fact, it is getting out of hand. When I failed to eat my brussel sprouts at dinner the other night, I got them served to me at breakfast the next morning. Nothing is allowed to go to waste.

She claims that the whole biblical concept of creation places the responsibility for the care of the Earth fairly and squarely on the shoulders of its human inhabitants. According to her, when the Genesis creation stories talk about God giving human beings "dominion" over all the Earth's living things, that means caring for and nurturing them, not recklessly exploiting them. In other words, we are to be partners with God in his ongoing creative process.

Try as I might, I can't fault her arguments. I guess we all must get serious about looking after our world, even if it does have to start right under my study window. Do you know, I think I'll start my recycling efforts this Sunday—I'll recycle one of my old sermons!

Your friend and "born again" greenie,  
—Pastor Salt

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## The Heat Is On

### Warm reception for Darwin's new minister

Even as it started, you could tell it was going to be one of those days! Five minutes after I had my shower in the morning, before I got organised to go to church, I was as wet as I had been after stepping out from the refreshing stream of cool water. It's only a few days a year when the weather in the Top End becomes hard to bear and 23 January was going to be one of them—a great introduction for our new minister, fresh from the relative cool of last year's December in Melbourne.

We had been planning the service for a while, so it was a matter of getting to church early to make sure that everything was organised—the music, the communion emblems, the people involved in the service needing to catch up on a few last minute details. I arrived at church carrying a vast array of things from Mervyn Minister, the puppet, to a dish of curry

for lunch and met members of the board already at church, with preparations well in hand.

In planning the service, Bev Maxwell (our chairperson) and I had endeavoured to get as many people as possible involved, so, to the best of our knowledge, a representative from most families played a part in the service. We felt this was important, as an affirmation of our calling of Jim and Bev Larkham by the whole congregation.

People began arriving soon after all was ready and it was time to spend time in prayer before the service.

We began the service with a call to worship from Deuteronomy 32:1-3 which culminates in an exhortation to "praise the name of the Lord and ... tell of his greatness", which we then did by singing a favourite hymn (of mine at least). This was followed by the mundanities of



• In Mervyn Minister's study

the usual announcements—which, for the first time in months, was supported by copies of the Darwin Church of Christ *News and Views*, ably prepared by Bev Larkham.

Following the reading, we were entertained by the musings of Mervyn Minister (a puppet) as he wrote his first sermon for his first church appointment amid interruptions from members of the congregation who dumped work on him, now that he was the minister and had "nothing to do"—a timely reminder for our members who have spent the last 12 months running a church on their own.

The induction of Jim and Bev into their ministry took the form of a responsive reading between Bev Maxwell as leader, Jim, Bev and the congregation. We formed a circle around Jim and Bev as we read and then, as a congregation, laid hands on them both, praying for them and their family. It was a very moving moment and it was clear that God was there amongst us. Jim then spoke to the congregation focussing his thoughts on the reading for the day (Mark 1:14-19) and followed by leading us in communion.

Lunch was a lavish affair with an array of dishes fit for the induction of a minister. The fellowship over the meal could best be described as "warm", as the temperature and the humidity soared. It must be noted, however, that the Larkham family endured remarkably well, considering even some of the long term tropic residents present were beginning to flag.

Highlights of the meal were the consumption of numerous pizzas supplied by someone's papa Giuseppe and a scrumptious cake prepared by someone else's Aunty Sarah—thanks should go particularly to those two people for their contribution to the feeding of the 5,000 (or perhaps 30 or so).

Despite the heat and humidity, it was an excellent morning and clearly the start of a new beginning for the Darwin church. Already it is evident that there are people around the country praying for us as we enter 1994 with enthusiasm. For the support we are receiving, both through prayer and financially (through Federal Home Evangelism), the church family in Darwin is extremely grateful. It is, therefore, with a strong sense of responsibility that we intend to give this year all that we have to ensure its success in building up our church and reaching out to the community.

It's important to remember that Darwin is hardly ever as uncomfortable as it was on this day. Generally, the warm, sunny days and the balmy nights make it one of the best places in the country to live (why do you think Queensland's cane toads are heading this way?). If you are planning a holiday in the north, don't hesitate to visit us and make yourself known. One of the great delights of living in Darwin is the regular Dry Season visits from many of the folk in the south—keeping us in touch with friends and acquaintances in some of the other states.

—Greg Williams

## New Team Member

### Marion ministry addition

Paul DeWildt, Marion, SA's, new minister, was officially inducted into the ministry team by Keith Horne on 6 February. Charged with the responsibility of developing effective strategies for ministry among the 200 plus "under 35s" at Marion, Paul is off to a good start in his opening weeks of ministry, with plenty of excitement and

expectation in the air. Graham Agnew, the team leader at Marion is excited about the fact that, once again, advertising in *The Australian Christian* has paid off. "Nearly 10 years ago, we landed Keith Horne by advertising for an additional minister and now Paul DeWildt has responded to our latest ad—we're delighted! Without the ad we would have had no idea that Paul was considering a move."

Paul, his wife Lynn and baby Emily were previously ministering at Menai in New South Wales.



• Keith Horne welcoming Paul DeWildt

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# Media Review

## Books

### The Message of Mark

by Donald English (Inter-Varsity Press) \$18.95

This volume well fulfils the aim of *The Bible Speaks Today* series, "to expound the biblical text with accuracy and to relate it to contemporary life".

Donald English often emphasises that the meaning of an incident is more important than the occasion itself, but he doesn't ignore the issues in the question most ask today, "what happened?" His comments on the nature of the healing miracles, for instance, are pertinent, even if necessarily brief.

Readers are encouraged to think seriously about what Mark was saying and to think through implications for such things as stating the gospel in ways that do justice to modern "plausibility structures". His questions in the Study Guide are pertinent and realistic. His involvement in mission in the Methodist church in the UK illumines the book.

Church members would gain great value from working through this book as the Gospel readings from the lectionary (calendar) are followed this year. Ministers should find many seed thoughts as they wrestle with the text to prepare sermons that offer a word from God to people in today's circumstances. —Keith Bowes

### Mark

by J.C. Ryle (Crossway Classic Commentaries).

The Crossway Classic Commentary series consists of re-writes of the works of commentators from the past. This work on Mark was written by the first Bishop of Liverpool in 1857.

The commentary is not exegetical, but expository, aimed at encouraging faith as a response to the Biblical text. As such, the material is not as liable to dating as a more technical work would be. Some of the concerns that a 19th Century author might have could well be deemed unimportant to today's reader, but this is certainly not the case with the bulk of this work, which is concerned with the timeless issue of exhorting to live a faithful and godly life. Useful for general, even devotional, interaction with the Scriptures and for thoughts for sermons or Bible studies. —NDP

# Mark

## Ryle



The Crossway  
Classic Commentaries

Alister McGrath  
J.I. Packer

## Concert

### Once in a Lifetime

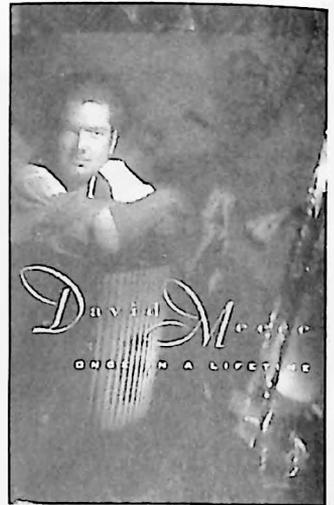
by David Meece.

David Meece has been around the contemporary Christian music scene for a number of years now and is still going strong. His Melbourne concert, on 19 February, was a pleasure to attend. At 30, it was easy to feel a "fossil" amidst the crowd of teens and early twenties. Yet, this also indicates the wide appeal of David's music. Some might have been a little disappointed by David's verbal interludes—which were either very funny (one will never think of showering in the same way again) or moving and personal. Yet, his aim was unashamedly evangelistic and even pastoral, as he touched on the very personal issue of broken

families and the pain and hurt that accompanies growing up in such situations—a situation David has lived and worked through himself, as his current album shows.

His musical expertise was evident in that he had neither backing vocals or band, simply accompanying himself on the piano. The theology presented in word and music was excellent and the atmosphere was both fun and meaningful. Our young folk (and some of the not-so-old "fossils") could do a lot worse than David Meece's music as a means of worship, enjoyment and reflection.

—NDP



## Magazines

### Pulpit Resource, Vol 11

by William H. Willimon (MediaCom, PO Box 610, Unley 5061) \$55 annual subscription, issued as a quarterly.

*Pulpit Resource* has been valued by many ministers for years, but its new format and the material from a worship and preaching craftsman such as William Willimon makes it even better value.

The Scripture readings are from the Revised Common Lectionary and thus usually relate to those on the Churches of Christ calendar. For each Sunday, there is brief statement of the theme, brief introductions to the four readings, a prayer related to the theme and then two major sections on Encountering the Text and Proclaiming the Text. This latter includes excellent quotations and illustrations both from Willimon's experience and many other writers.

All the sections are of high quality. Willimon expects preachers to engage faithfully with the text and life as it is. I have not found the illustrations to be too American. Indeed, many of them have triggered recollection of personal experiences. Not a short-cut for lazy preparation, rather a way of receiving rich resources from the wider church. —Keith Bowes



"Why not? We hafta put something in his when we go to his place!"

## Ed Roffey

### Sudden death

Ed Roffey died suddenly on Saturday 26 February. Ed was a former National Conference Secretary and SA Conference Secretary. He had ministries in NSW, SA and Vic. A thanksgiving service was held at Nunawading, Vic, church on 1 March. Ed was also active in the Australian Committee for World Convention. A tribute to Ed will appear in a subsequent issue.

## People

### MAF Executive Honoured

Max Meyers, Chief Executive Officer of Missionary Aviation Fellowship (MAF), was among those honoured in *Aviation Week and Space Technology's* "Aerospace Laurels" for 1993. The magazine cited Meyers and his staff for "bringing spiritual, medical and educational help to the needy on five continents" and noted that MAF "operates 96 aircraft into some of the most difficult locations in the world, with little fanfare and few accidents".

### Community Care Appointment

The Vic-Tas Department of Community Care has appointed Ian Tippett to a part-time fundraising position. His role is to include the establishment of a capital appeal to assist the rebuilding at Christian Guest Home and to develop the regular fundraising of the Department.

### Girls' Brigade Great

The long serving administrator/secretary of The Girls' Brigade in SA, Necia Higgins resigned at the end of 1993. She worked as a Company Officer (including Captain) in the Loxton Company before moving to Adelaide to take up the position in 1971. She served under five State Commissioners. In the early days, the Northern Territory Companies were administered from SA, which meant a lot of travelling. Her role included that of Training Officer.

## Induction at Henley Beach

### Robyn Walsh

On 30 January, Robyn Walsh was dedicated into ministry at Henley Beach, SA, church. Robyn concluded studies at CCTC, Mulgrave, and was ordained at the end of last year. About 80 attended the morning service including special guests, Mrs Kay Bennett (Mayor, Henley Beach), Jeff May (Overseas Missions), Marj Dredge (Conference President) and David Brooker (State Minister).

Jeff spoke on the marriage between the minister and the congregation. Marj led the dedication part of the service, where the following symbols were presented to Robyn—Bible, communion elements, church directories, street directory, and David presented the State Conference Report Book. A welcome was extended to Robyn



• Lianne Blanch, Ross Strudwick, Marj Dredge, Faye Unsworth, Trudy Richards and Murray Thomas lay hands on Robyn Walsh as she commences ministry at Henley Beach

from members of other churches and received a welcome into our congregation. The

prayer of induction was led by Marj, with laying on of hands by congregation members.

## Warmbrunn Lectures

### Jeffrey Wilson speaker

Jeffrey Wilson, the Vice President of the Centre for Congregational Growth and Vitality of the Disciples of Christ, will give the Leonard P and Dorothy Warmbrunn Memorial Lecture at Doncaster on 25 March. He will be on a private visit to Australia and during this time will visit the Warwick, WA, and Doncaster, Vic, congregations.

Jeff is responsible for a range of Disciples' national programs, including overseeing ministries of Church Growth, Congregational Revitalisation, Member-

ship and Assimilation, Spiritual Development, Asian Ministries and involvement in the Disciples Church Planting initiatives. He is a regular contributor to *Net Results* the monthly evangelism bulletin edited by Herb Miller.

The Lecture is administered by the Vic-Tas Department of Mission, Education and Development.

Further details will shortly be available to churches. Ministers, church leaders and members are invited to attend.

## Belconnen Youth Minister

### Graeme Hush appointed

The ACT Conference and the Belconnen Church of Christ are both pleased to report that, after a long search, Graeme Hush has been appointed, on a part-time basis, as their Minister to Youth.

Graeme was inducted into the ministry on 27 February.

Graeme brings a great deal of experience in youth ministry with him. He has had ministries in both Wollongong, NSW, and Hobart, Tas, and has spent a great deal of time working with young people in many different contexts.

He is a gifted leader and his approach to ministry will assist many to further develop their own ministry skills.

Graeme brings special skills in worship leadership, music and training young people themselves for service.

—Thelma Leach

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- ⇒ Because the need is so GREAT!!
- ⇒ Because the church is not obedient, the needs are greater day by day!!
- ⇒ God blesses those who send and those who go!??
- ⇒ Because as Oswald J. Smith said, "No-one has the right to hear the Gospel twice while there is someone who remains who has not heard it once."
- ⇒ Because time is short!
- ⇒ Because it is clearly God's desire for a great missionary movement before the end of the Age!!
- ⇒ Because those who have never heard are perishing and Lost!!
- ⇒ Because Jesus is the only means of Salvation!?!?



*Will you play your part and ensure that the F.A.B. move forward—*

## ***IN FAITH that***

- the seed sown will bring its harvest.
- that many more Aborigines will come to a saving faith.
- that their churches will continue to grow.

## ***so that***

- Aborigines can minister to Aborigines.
- Worshipping God in culturally relevant ways.



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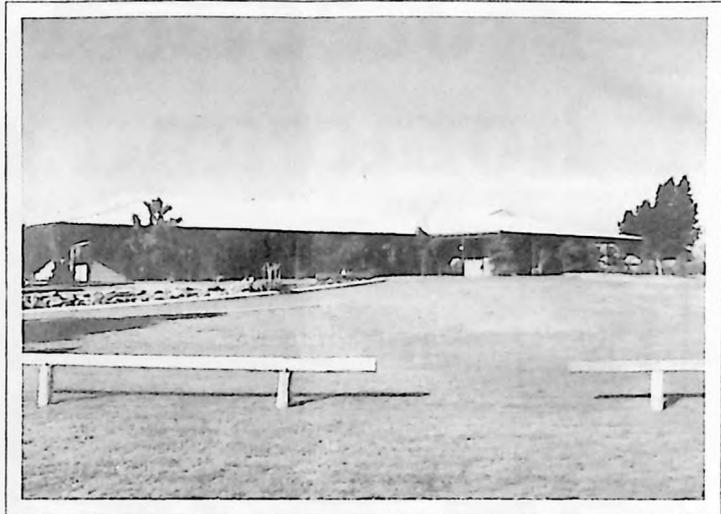
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Will you invest in the spiritual lives of others?

# **YOUR MISSIONARIES ARE**

- building Churches
- operating Christian centres
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## **WHERE DOES FAITH COME IN?**

The Federal Aborigines Board has to operate for the first 9 months of each financial year in anticipation that the Annual Appeal to churches each March will help meet its annual budget. This especially applies to missionary salaries - which are guaranteed by the Board trusting God through His People to supply.

Currently the Board requires approximately \$900,000 p.a. to meet its budget - of which means that about \$300,000 is needed by way of gifts from the churches just to meet these salaries.

The Federal Aborigines Board is confident of its ministry and **MOVING AHEAD** in FAITH trusting God for supply.



## **The FEDERAL ABORIGINES BOARD—**

1. Is thankful that the 3rd Missionary Couple for the Carnarvon Hostel was appointed during last year.
2. Confidently expects to place a couple in Adelaide during 1994.
3. Is anticipating the construction of a building for the Port Hedland Church.
4. Is looking to purchase larger premises in Port Lincoln to meet the growing demand for facilities there.

## **ABORIGINES MISSION—ANNUAL OFFERING**

### **20 MARCH 1994**

Important Message to ALL Churchgoers

# Protection for your home and contents



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## International Missionaries and Growth

Recently published statistics show that countries which lead the way in sending missionaries are growing slowly or actually losing attendees in their annual church growth records. The USA has the highest number of missionaries. Its church growth rate is a mere 0.3%. Spain, Italy, France, Germany and Canada follow. Each has negative church growth. The remaining countries in the top 9 show a similar pattern. Their annual church growth rates are: Netherlands (zero), Britain (-1.5%) and Belgium (0.5%).

### Prayer for Muslims

The second International 30 Days Muslim Prayer Focus hopes to see 1 million praying for the Islamic world throughout the high point of the Muslim calendar, the month of Ramadan, which runs from sunrise on 11 February to sunset on 12 March. By concentrating prayer on the world's second largest religion, with more than 1 billion adherents, organisers hope to see breakthroughs for the Gospel among the largely unevangelised population.

### Wars Increase

As 1993 drew to a close, the Political Institute at the University of Hamburg, Germany, reported that 43 wars were going on in the world: 22 in Asia, 13 in Africa, 5 in Latin America and three in Europe. The average number of wars in the 1950s was 12 and in the 1960s 22. Among current wars, all except the one between Serbia and Croatia are conflicts within a single state.

### Gestetners Wanted

If your church no longer uses a Gestetner and still has Gestetner ink, stencils and spares gathering dust in a back room then they could be used by the Churches of Christ in Vanuatu. Probably the easiest way to get them to Lyall Muller in Vanuatu (PO Box 86, Santo Vanuatu) is through S. Finger, 10 Tuffley Court, Kallangur 4503.

## Building a Bigger Picture

### World Convention

Creating a global picture of the Churches of Christ today is hardly a matter of taking out a canvas and beginning to paint. It is more like putting together a jigsaw puzzle.

The World Convention office and our four-yearly World Conventions focus on building the bigger picture—drawing people together globally and across lines that have developed during the last century.

### Calgary 1996

Since the first World Convention in Washington DC in 1930, World Conventions have been providing an opportunity for fellowship, learning, growing understanding and inspiration.

Our assemblies have had something of the excitement of family reunions. In our case, family members have come together overcoming the difficulties of long distances, cultural differences, theological diversity and even divisive disagreements.

Those who gather in Calgary in Canada in 1996 (and in Sydney, Australia in the year 2000) will be sharing in watershed events which will further develop our togetherness. As we sense our place in the contemporary Christian community and global family, we will be looking for God's leading. Individually and together, we will develop our understanding of our calling and our destiny.

The World Convention office is currently developing a list of countries in which congregations related to the 19th Century "Stone-Campbell" movement can be found today.

We do know there are congregations in at least 125 countries and we hope the "Glimpses of our Work" exhibit at Calgary will show activities in no less than 100 of these countries.

These congregations are often organised nationally or

regionally, but many recognise no organisation beyond themselves or are within just a small group. They may have links with the American "Disciples", "Independent" Christian Churches or "A Cappella" (non-instrument) churches of Christ. They may be Commonwealth churches that owe their origins to settlers from the United Kingdom. They may be missionary or indigenous churches. They may be partner churches or churches within united churches. As time goes on, the weave becomes more complex.

As a people, we have always emphasised the role—and autonomy—of the local congregation. Perhaps paradoxically, we have also had a clear sense of the oneness of the church as the Body of Jesus Christ. Part of that unity is our own global unity.

Not everybody can attend World Convention, but through World Convention everyone can participate in our global fellowship and build up a global view.

At our "flagship" conventions and between conventions the simple structure of World Convention provides us with a unique non-bureaucratic way to develop our global togetherness, understanding, vision and direction within the whole family of God.

### Bridge Building

World Convention also provides a unique opportunity for the streams of the Stone-Campbell movement to come together across the embankment we have created, particularly in the USA.

The story of the church has been the story of division as a solution to differences in understanding.

The path of division has been the "soft option" preventing the whole church from discovering God's leading for the church at each turn.

Even the movement that had "unity as its polar star" has not always been able to work through its own points of tension. There is a good deal of justifiable scepticism that the

different strands can be woven together again.

But the gospel is the gospel of reconciliation—or it is not the gospel. The Lordship of Christ in his church means acknowledging that we are his one church; that we are brothers and sisters. Our witness in the Christian community lacks integrity while our family division stands. Our witness in our world lacks integrity when we don't embody what we proclaim. A world that is becoming more and more fractured, even as it becomes more interdependent, needs the model of the church living and resolving its differences in community.

World Convention is building up fellowship and understanding within our family and for this reason is seen by a growing number of members as one sign of hope.

### A World of Difference

When some of us gather at World Convention in Calgary, we will gather round the theme, "A World of Difference".

There will be differences to appreciate and celebrate. Differences to share. Differences that will enrich our lives. New paths to open up. New horizon to discover. Differences to acknowledge. Differences that, in due course, must be overcome. Above all, there will be the difference that we proclaim—the declaration that the gospel of Jesus Christ is the power that makes a world of difference!

When we put the jigsaw together the pieces will still be visible, as will the links and the picture will be clear.

—Lyndsay Jacobs  
*Lyndsay Jacobs was, until the end of 1992, a High School principal and leader within our New Zealand churches. He is now, with his wife Lorraine, General Secretary of the World Convention of Churches of Christ, which has its offices in Nashville, Tennessee. 1996 World Convention Information/Registration forms are available from Ron Brooker, St Helliers Rd, The Gurdies 3984. Fax (059) 97 6404.*

# Classifieds

## ENGAGEMENTS

**GRAY-BIRD** Jill and Malcolm Gray of Upwey and Elizabeth and Ian Bird of Montrose are happy to announce the engagement of Cinnamon and Andrew.

**PITT-CARR** Frances and Keith Pitt (of Parkdale) together with Brenda and Max Carr (of Balwyn) are delighted to announce the engagement of Alison and Rohan.

## DEATHS

**GAIRNS**, Leonard William (Len). Died suddenly 24 February 1994, aged 79 years. Loving husband of Joy. Much loved father of Debby, Susan and Ian Saunders. Much loved grandfather of Elena and David. In God's care.

**HART**, Madge (nee McWilliam). Quietly passed into God's presence 5 January 1994. Loved wife of Eric. Mother and mother-in-law of Jenny, Marilyn and John. Grandmother of James and baby Amy.

## BUILDERS

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Up to date information of the 1996  
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Any queries, please contact:  
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July 30—August 4  
1996  
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## Itinerary of Vanuatu Choir



*Pastor Wilson Bebe returns with a twenty-voice choir at the invitation of the Swanston Street Church of Christ for their Missionary Convention. Don't miss them!*

### Sunday 20 March

3.00 pm Overseas Missions Rally at Lygon Street Church of Christ chapel  
7.00 pm Swanston Street Church of Christ

### Monday 21 March

Morning Tabor College, Ringwood  
7.00 pm Ministers' dinner at Boronia Church of Christ

### Tuesday 22 March

Morning CCTC, Mulgrave  
7.30 pm Mt Clear Church of Christ Ballarat

### Wednesday 23 March

7.30 pm Delmont Church of Christ Geelong

### Thursday 24—Sunday 27 March

Swanston Street Church of Christ Missionary Convention

### Sunday 27 March

2.30 pm Montrose Church of Christ

Details from: Barry Jenkins (03) 571 7102, Alan Baker (03) 803 9378

## International

### Middle-East Mission

There are some 90 missionary agencies working in the Middle East, with a total funding of around \$US60 million. This represents 0.6% of total world mission funding for a region containing 230 million people (4% of the world's population), over 90% of whom are not Christian. The following were seen as having an important impact on mission work in the Middle East: Islamic fundamentalism, television and direct broadcast satellite TV services and unemployment, set against the background of population growth (2.7% per annum). The emigration of indigenous Christians from some parts of the area is a specific problem, whilst elsewhere the region benefited from the presence of many Christians from the Two-Thirds World.

### Billy Graham in Japan

The more than capacity crowd of 45,000 on Saturday night at the Billy Graham Crusade in Tokyo, Japan (13-16 January) was the largest gathering of Christians in the history of Japan and the most people at one time to hear the Gospel preached. Audiences averaged 31,250 during the crusade, of which an average of 3,025 came forward to make a commitment to Christ. Additional thousands attended at satellite locations around the country, with hundreds more responding each night. Of particular significance was the high percentage of response among men (upwards of 40%).

### Religious Newsmakers

A poll of the US Religious Newswriters Association gave the top religion story of 1993 to the 51 day stand off which ended with the death of 86 Branch Davidians in a compound near Waco, Texas. The writers also named the cult's leader, self-proclaimed Messiah David Koresh, the top religion newsmaker of the year. Ranking second were accusations of sexual abuse by clergy, including Chicago Cardinal Joseph Bernardin who denied the charges. The visit of Pope John Paul II at World Youth Day in Denver, Colorado, ranked third with the Pope as runner-up for religion newsmaker of the year.

## Limb by Limb

### Landmines destroying Cambodia

Cambodia will be destroyed limb by limb unless there is an immediate boost in international support for demining efforts, warns a mines expert. Lieutenant Colonel Georges Focsaneanu (Fox) is chief technical adviser to the Cambodian Mines Action Centre (CMAC), the body commissioned by the Cambodian Government with demining activities.

Canadian Lt Col Fox and Hay Loueth, a Cambodian who lost both legs in a landmine blast, are in Australia to push the government to increase its commitment to demining and to raise public support for an international ban on landmines.

"There are 8-10 million landmines, one for every Cam-

bodian," Lt Col Fox says. "They are destroying the productive engine of the country; the men and women out in the fields who are producing income for their families.

Up to 300 Cambodians are killed by landmines each month and up to twice that many are severely injured. It is not uncommon to find 20 amputees in one small village.

Lt Col Fox commended the Australian government for pledging \$1 million to CMAC activities this year, but he says that unless countries like Australia make a long-term commitment to demining, Cambodia cannot move forward.

CMAC employs 1500 Cambodians in demining and mines

education activities. Its operating budget for 1994 is US\$10 million, but so far only \$US2.5 million has been received.

Lt Col Fox went to Cambodia in February 1993 to establish CMAC. In his travels around Cambodia, he has seen landmines turn an already poor population into a desperate one.

The impact is horrific because there is no social rehabilitation or medical system to cope with all these disabled people. The majority of people who are being disabled are in the prime age group, from 18-30, the future of Cambodia.

The most heavily mined areas of the country are in the west, the most fertile and heavily populated part of Cambodia. It is also the area receiving thousands of refugees returning from Thai border camps.

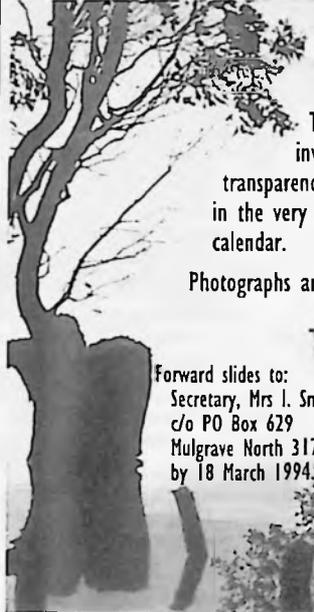
Over the next five to eight years, CMAC aims to reduce the landmines casualty rate from hundreds a month to just a handful.

### 1995 Calendar Photographs Wanted!

The Federal Literature Department invites readers to forward colour transparencies or slides for possible inclusion in the very popular Churches of Christ calendar.

Photographs are needed from all states and territories of Australia, and from PNG and Vanuatu. Criteria for selection include photographic excellence, variety of subject matter and the church year. (Please indicate location of scenes)

Forward slides to:  
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### Pontius' Puddle



# Another Turbulent Priest

Viney Longthorp

**C**hristian commitment can be a dangerous business. Over the years, many committed people who were perceived to be a threat to power in high places have paid with their lives. In this regard, one thinks of Becket, Savonarola, Bonhoeffer, Romero. There are thousands of other saints who, whilst never in danger of their lives, still suffered greatly on account of their loyalty to their Lord, through character assassination, banishment and persecution of all types.

One such was Adolf Daens, a priest of the Roman Catholic Church in 19th century Belgium. The film *Daens* tells of his work and tribulations. Following his ordination in 1879, he moved to the industrial city of Aalst because of his deep interest in the growth of the social movement there. He moved in with his brother, Pieter, a printer. In their paper they denounced the ways in which the textile workers were being abused. Inspired by the papal encyclical, *Rerum Novarum—On the Condition of the Working Classes*, Daens became politically active. He urged among other things, universal suffrage and compulsory education. In Aalst, 10 year old children were working a 14-hour day. Many were maimed or killed by machinery which was both primitive and dangerous. The conditions in the town reminds one of scenes from Charles Dickens. Adult workers were dismissed in preference to child labour when cost-cutting measures were necessary on account of competition from cheaper British textiles.

By 1894, Daens had come into open conflict with Charles Woeste, the chairman of the Catholic Party and an extremely reactionary politician. He was also spokesman for the mill owners federation—a lethal mixture! Woeste mobilised the ecclesiastical and middle

classes authorities against Daens—he was forbidden to read the mass in public and was subject to continual harassment. He was finally defrocked and died in 1907, completely worn out by the unequal fight to bring justice to the oppressed.

There is much to reflect about in this fine film. It puts many of our present-day issues into clear perspective.

- It highlights that old saying: "If we don't learn from the mistakes of the past we are doomed to repeat them." This graphic depiction of scenes from the first industrial revolution alerts us to some of the social and economic issues in the present post-industrial revolution. We see in stark outline the effects of economic policies propounded by the powerful on the weak and helpless. The film shows the operation of those economic factors which dominates our mass-media: "Imports", "productivity", "cost-benefits", "wage levels", "profits" and "employment". In those days of rampant laissez-faire attitudes, economic decisions were taken without regard to wider social values. We have come a long way since then thanks to people with Christian consciences such as Daens, but there are ominous signs that an unbridgeable gap is opening up between rich and poor—and this in our own fair land.

- Daens is no B-grade west-

ern with "goodies" and "baddies." Woeste was a pious and sincere person who argued with much cogency that the community could not afford the costs of reform and justice which this "turbulent priest" demanded. Further, he argued that economic decisions should be left to those who had that particular expertise and that those who put up risk capital should have the right to control it. Sounds familiar?

- We see the church facing, what is for many, an age-old dichotomy. That is, look after the souls of the people with prayer (and soup kitchens), but leave secular affairs, such as politics, to others. Daens was a man of prayer, but he also sought to bring about justice by direct involvement in altering political structures. He led some workers in open revolt. External altering of social structures or the internal renewal of personal being? Some say we should do both, but in fact those who take one approach seriously tend to neglect the other.

- Finally, the film will make us rethink the nature of those ideologies which address social problems and injustice. Since the fall of the Soviet empire, not only has communism become a term of opprobrium, but democratic socialism has been questioned as well. There are those who wilfully confuse the two. Even liberalism as an economic philosophy is being questioned by the economic

rationalists, so called. We see the followers of these philosophies in the streets of Aalst. No true reform can take place without a value system to inspire it and guide it. *Daens* reminds us that this is a good time to get our values and ideals in clear focus.

Hence, in this one man's life we see issues which are still a vital part of the mission of the present church. Daens was so admirable a person because he "incarnated" himself with the poor and the needy. He was rejected for his commitment. Now that we are well into the season of Lent, we may well use a film alongside our readings to help us be sensitive to the place of suffering, both human and divine, in the redemptive processes for the world.

## Daens

a film from Belgium  
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Jan Decler as Fr Adolf Daens

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A public lecture on evangelism  
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# We Would see Jesus ...

Greg Elsdon

**T**he middle verses of John chapter 12 form a crucial turning point in John's story of Jesus. Prior to this, Jesus had consistently indicated that something called his "hour" had not yet arrived. At the marriage in Cana, his mother told him that the hosts of the wedding feast had run out of wine. Jesus responded by saying "Woman, what concern is that to you and to me? My hour has not yet come." (John 2:4) On another occasion, in response to his brothers' suggestion that he go to Jerusalem to help raise his public profile, he replied, "My time has not yet come" (John 7:6). Later in the same chapter, the reader discovers that Jesus did, in fact, go to Jerusalem. Despite his desire for a low profile, it wasn't too long before he is found preaching in the Temple (John 7:14ff). Some of those who heard his preaching were obviously enraged at what they heard and plotted to arrest him. John tells us that they were unable to seize him "because his hour had not yet come" (John 7:30). Similarly, when Jesus declares himself to be the Light of the World, while preaching in the Temple treasury, John implies that at least some of the gathered crowd would have arrested him to silence his teaching—but they couldn't, for "his hour had not yet come" (John 8:20).

The reader of John's Gospel is left wondering what this

"hour" is and when it will arrive. But there is never any doubt that it will indeed arrive. Finally, in chapter 12, after all the anticipation and mounting tension, Jesus himself declares that the moment has now arrived—"the hour has come" (John 12:23). In the immediately preceding passage, John tells of Jesus' arrival in Jerusalem. This is his final trip to the city, which was the very centre of life for those who considered themselves to be at the centre of God's concern. The Pharisees, those who saw themselves as the custodians of Judaism's "specialness", bemoan the popularity which Jesus obviously enjoys among the crowds as he makes his way into Jerusalem. "The whole world has gone after him," they say to one another (John 12:19).

But John tells us that it is some Greeks, some foreigners, outsiders, not the Jews of Jerusalem, who come to Jesus' followers wanting to "see" Jesus. (Remember how, at the very beginning of the Gospel, we read that "He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him." (John 1:11)) The evangelist has already alluded several times to the boundary-breaking character of Jesus' ministry. After declaring himself to be the "Good Shepherd" who lays down his life for his sheep (see John 10:11–18), Jesus informs his hearers that as the Good Shepherd he has responsibility for

other sheep who do not belong to "this fold" (a clear reference to Judaism). The Shepherd, Jesus, must gather in these other sheep and then there will be one flock, and one Shepherd (John 10:16).

In the next chapter, we read the intriguing account of Caiaphas' prophecy to the gathered rulers of Israel that one man should die for the people. John, the narrator of the story, adds the comment that Jesus would die not only for the nation Israel, God's historic people, but for all his children scattered abroad (John 11:51–52). As readers of the Gospel, we sense the growing expectation that this Jesus will cause the categories of "insider" and "outsider" to be radically reassessed.

When Jesus learns from Andrew and Philip about the Greeks who wanted to see him, he does not address these "outsiders" directly. We are not even told that Jesus agrees to speak to them. In a manner typical of John's Gospel, Jesus responds to a specific situation with teaching designed to inform the reader of the full significance of the events being narrated. Jesus now declares that, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified." (John 12:23)

In speaking of his "hour" of glorification, Jesus immediately talks about the necessity for a grain of wheat to fall into the ground and die if it is to be

productive and fruitful. We are left in no doubt that he is speaking of his own destiny. John does not try to hide the distress Jesus experienced as he talked of the arrival of his "hour". He is deeply disturbed at what his obedience to his father will mean. He even contemplates asking his Father to rescue him from the dark shadow which was descending. But we are also told of Jesus' resolve to be true to his father's purpose, regardless of the consequences. With determination which does not diminish his pain, Jesus addresses his Father with the words "... for this purpose I have come to this hour—Father, glorify your name" (John 12:27–28).

The storyline is suddenly invaded by a voice of affirmation and approval from heaven. Some members of the crowd heard only thunder, while others thought it to be the voice of an angel. Jesus rejects both options and identifies the voice as that of his Father. In response to the crowd's confusion Jesus reveals more about his "hour". He would soon be "lifted up" from the earth. John informs the reader that he said this to indicate the way he would die (remember the words to Nicodemus in John 3:14). Jesus, God's beloved Son, was to be crucified. But rather than this being seen as the end of the story, Jesus himself sees it as the beginning of the never-ending story. Jesus will lay down his life and, in so doing, draw all people to himself (John 12:32). It is here that Jesus finally addresses the Greeks, the outsiders, who come to see Jesus. They, like all others, will only truly see Jesus when he is lifted up for the salvation of the world. In his death, Jesus opens the way of faith for all people—Jews and Gentiles. The coming of the Greeks to see Jesus is portrayed by John as the sign that the long awaited "hour" of the Son of Man had arrived.

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## Christian Reflection

# Feelings

Kevin Bray

**F**eeelin' Groovy"? So I sang Simon and Garfunkel a few years ago. Nothing wrong with that—we all enjoy "good feelings" and the sense of self-worth they represent. True worship—that deep sense of "wonder, love and praise" (as Charles Wesley put it even longer ago)—involves our feelings as much as our minds.

I'm no psychologist, but I imagine the distinction we often make (as I just have) between feelings and (calculating?) intellect/mind is pretty rough and superficial.

Certainly God wants us to love him completely—with heart, soul, mind and strength.

Problem is, I guess, that my feelings are the least consistent "part" of me. Today I feel great! My boss liked the work I did, my computer is really humming and my wife and I saw a wonderful movie last night.

But yesterday? I had a serious disagreement with my co-elders (and I lost!), my car needed expensive repairs and I got into trouble for not completing a university assignment. On top of that, I'm struggling with how to deal with

broken marriage relationships in the church!

Yet somehow, in the midst of all these mixed signals, God is calling me to grow "spiritually". The quasi-spiritual is easy. We can all wave our hands and sing self-indulgent songs and "feel spiritual", especially if things are going well (beware the "success syndrome"!).

But I don't imagine Jesus feeling too great on the cross, or in the events in the week before his death.

He was a victim of all that's evil. That's why he can identify with our suffering, and why—

when we are doing justice, loving kindness and walking humbly (Micah 6)—we are at our most "spiritual" in the tough slog of neighbourly servanthood. (Take a look at Matt. 25:35-40, for instance!)

"Spirit" is life itself. Being "born of the Spirit", a revolutionary transformation that penetrates beyond our feelings and changes our whole lives (as it did Zacchaeus in Luke 19), is the one requirement (John 3) for entry into the Kingdom of God.

*Kevin comes from our Belconnen, ACT, church.*

## Ambrosia

# Planning for the 21st Century

Chris Ambrose

**A**nsvar Insurance is sponsoring a series of meetings around Australia at which Gordon Moyes (Superintendent of Wesley Mission in Sydney and a Director of Ansvor) is lecturing on "Planning for Churches in the Twenty-first Century". The following is a summary of the lecture held in Melbourne, when almost 1500 listened to Gordon at the Camberwell Civic Centre on 17 February.

### Megatrends

Gordon began by outlining several "megatrends" which he sees as happening in the worldwide church today:

- God has broken down the walls and opened opportunities for the church around the world.

- God has "changed colour". The majority of Christians now live in the southern hemisphere and the majority of Christians (70%) are black. Gordon commented that is mostly the evan-

gelical church which is growing.

- There are now significant ministries for women around the world. The church has been made to look again at the role of ministry in the church and women's place in that ministry.

- God is giving us the victory now. We are living in the era of the greatest growth of the church ever. This is despite the rise of fundamentalist Islam and the effect of secular humanism on the church of the First World.

- God is bringing his Spirit alive, the 20th century has been the era of the Holy Spirit. This has had a profound effect on worship in the church.

- God has given his church a real sense of mission.

### Mega-facts

Gordon then outlined the need for churches to grow basing their ministry of the "facts of our time".

- Grass-roots unity is here.

- We need to believe in a ministry that is balanced between word, deed and sign. Churches need to be preaching the word, doing the deed and rejoicing in the Spirit. Each needs to be done or we fail in our ministry.

- We need to commit ourselves multiculturally and live and worship multiculturally. People of other ethnic groups must be included in church structures.

- Churches need to disciple the people. We need to help people, individually and in small groups, to understand their faith and this will lead to better and more fulfilling celebration (worship).

### Mega-Challenges

Gordon then challenged his listeners to keep in mind several challenges that will be essential if the church is to grow.

- Allow the church to flourish with enthusiasm. Joy must be present in our services.

- We have to grow management skills.

- We have to hang onto the Scriptures.

- We have to invest our time, etc, in families. The church must do more than just preventative work in this area.

- We need to justify our existence by using our properties to their fullest potential (and time usage).

The implementation of growth in a church comes when a commitment is made to be determined to change your church. This is done by getting a small group to start dreaming dreams, prioritising these dreams (including the long-term), costing the dreams and then going ahead in faith. The dreams need to be sold to the congregation.

A video tape of Gordon's address is available from Ansvor offices around Australia and can be hired at no cost (\$20 security deposit) or purchased for \$20.

# Is God Responsible for Human Sin?

Gordon Stirling

**T**he short answer to this question is yes.

God did not create sin, but he created people with the propensity to sin, and they did sin.

So why didn't God create sinless people? Wouldn't that have been better?

Beings made in such a way that they could not sin would not be real people. They would be strange animals, acting totally by instinct. They would not be able to love, because it is only love if one chooses to be loving. They would not be good, because goodness only happens by choice.

God wanted to create real people, interesting people with character and dynamic for life, creative people, people capable of growth and development, questing, curious people searching for truth. The only way God could create such people was to give them the right

to choose to be people like that or to be people who do not want to be like that.

One can only be good if one can choose not to be evil. One can only love if one chooses to be outgoing to another, rather than being self-centred. One can only be a child of God if one can also choose to turn away from God. (John 1:12).

Strangely then, sin is the result of God's love. God loves us so much that he wants us to become like him in the fullness of creative life (2 Cor. 5:17). But such life would be impossible if we were programmed robots going through the motions of creative living, but not really living creatively. A programmed robot helped to make my car, but I am pleased that some real people also had something to do with it.

The human tragedy, of course, is that people with the right of choice chose sin, vio-

lence, depravity and inhumanity to their fellows; all because God, in his great love, gave us the right to choose the way we want to go.

Would it not have been better then for God not to have created any of us so that our planet could be free from the infestation of human greed and violence and lust and irresponsibility?

Here are some answers to that question.

1. God had no choice but to create people for by his very nature God is a creator. God obviously wanted to create beings of eternal value. Apparently, the only way to do this was to give people an apprenticeship on planet earth until they were ready for more creative living still, in that other dimension of being that God has prepared for those who have responded to him (1 John 3:2).

2. God knew, of course, that people would abuse their freedom of choice and do horrible things to one another and their world, breaking God's heart in the process. The cross of Calvary is a brief picture of the agony of God who is always bearing the pain of human sin. In creating people, God deliberately ran the risk that they would keep him on a continu-

ing cross of pain. But obviously, he knew that it would be worth it because millions would become eternal children of God.

3. God has always gone out of his way to show people the sort of lifestyle that makes sense for life on this planet. He sent prophets and, in the fullness of time, his son to tell people about it (Heb, 1:1-2). People do not have to experiment to find what makes for quality living, although most of us try and end up getting hurt. God has demonstrated quality life for people, in Jesus. We only have to look at him and listen to him and we can know what it is.

4. God's creativity did not end when people appeared on earth. Remember, he is a creator by nature. He will continue his work of creation in every person who is open to his creative activity. God did not only tell us that love and justice and purity and honesty are the best way for us to live in this world. He is willing to continue his eternal work of creation in us, making us into loving, just, pure and honest people, if we want him to. In other words he saves us by faith.

So it was the love of God that made human sin inevitable. Yet it is that same love that conquers sin again and again in your life and mine, and will ultimately conquer it for ever (1 Cor. 15:24-26; Rev. 21:1-4).

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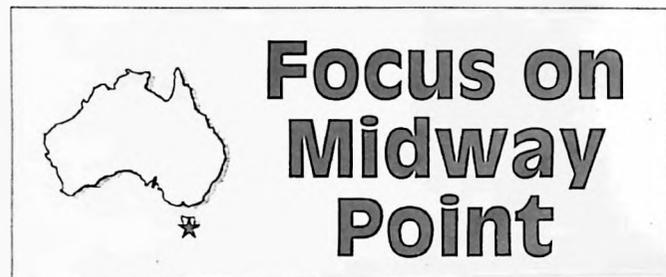
**M**idway Point church is one of our small churches that represents many churches throughout Australia and, in many ways, its struggles parallel those of our own spiritual growth and journey.

Midway Point is a small community located about 25 km east of Hobart. When considered with Sorell, an adjoining town, the population is somewhere between 4-5,000. There is a cross-section of ages with quite a number of families and much of the population being in the middle to lower socioeconomic grouping. Many of the folk live in Midway Point

to do, but time just doesn't allow.

On the up side. The church has bought an old camp building and placed it on site, opening it a year ago—a recent bequest, assistance from the Hobart church and DMED (Vic-Tas conference) has helped meet the costs. Consequently, the church is able to pretty well pay its way. There is a good cross-section of ages and feel in the congregation.

Looking to the future, the church is trying to implement strategies toward growth. They acknowledge that this can be difficult with the small number of people available to help. Yet,



and commute to Hobart for work, as it only takes 15-30 minutes travelling time. In the not too distant future Midway Point is looking at significant growth, with new housing estates on the drawing board, one even opposite the church.

The church, established in 1984, has had a history with its ups and downs and has had its struggles. Currently, the church comes under the auspices (and support) of the Hobart church who are seeking to help the congregation grow and become an independent and vital congregation.

As with any small church, finances and personnel are very real difficulties with an average attendance in worship of 15-25. Errol Gilbert, the minister, is only employed by the church part-time, having to work full-time to pay bills. As such, much of his work occurs on evenings or weekends. This, along with the fact that he lives in Kingston (about 40 km away), also means that he can't just be on call. The limited time can be a real frustration as Errol can see what he'd like to be able

they are seeking to build on the strengths they have, particularly their practical care and love for each other. If they can expand this into the community, people will be attracted to the God whose love they display. They are also trying to implement "seeker" services which will appeal to the unchurched, including the music and language used. One possibility is that the "normal" service might need to be changed to another time. The lack of personnel really shows at this point with a lack of musicians, for instance. The preaching is aimed at encouraging, motivating and challenging the people to do the work of ministry, to be involved.

Errol admits that the church has to experiment to find which method best fits its situation. This will mean that some things do not work and they have to be willing to give it a go and let it go, if necessary. At present, they are trying to hang in there and keep their eyes on God so they may follow the path which he leads them down.

## Baptisms

•Fred Morris, Croydon, Vic •Peter Watts, Knoxfield, Vic •Matthew Kinleyside, Nicole Kinleyside, Shane Alexander, Tony Halpin, Yvonne Halpin, Justin Corrie, Narelle Robinson, Leisha Pound, Christopher Marr, Tim Sherwell, Jenny Sherwell, Susan Page, Kerry Castleman, Karen Laughton, Susan Moritz, Fay Baldwin, Ella Wilkinson, Mildura, Vic •Peter McGaghey, Rhianna McGaghey, Joseph (ex-Iraqi soldier), Tuggeranong, ACT •George Yang, Dalkeith Rd, WA •Charisse Woolcock, Boronia, Vic •Esa Blazeley, Rebecca Osborne, Jan Main, Launceston, Tas •Penny Leszkiewicz, Parkdale, Vic •Ben Prime, Bernie Walker, Warragul, Vic •Jason Turner, David Lietch, Victor Harbor, SA •Damien Barnsdon, Trent McFarlane, Swan Hill, Vic

## Marriages

•Cathy Loft and Robert Coe, Erica Sholl and Peter Bradshaw, North Balwyn, Vic •Tania Handley and Ray Lown, Joanne Gillespie and Peter Ruff, Croydon, Vic •Nancy Simpson and Gary Elverd, Maylands, WA •Danae Freeman and Mark Schmidt, Lisa Douglas and Daren Jenkins, Knoxfield, Vic •Lu Lulu and Dominic Spano, Henley Beach, SA •Susan Kleine and Peter Moritz, Karen Ling and Mitch Boram, Mildura, Vic •Charlie Morris and Ruth Piper, David Carn and Roanna Morgan, Wes Falconer and Loani Moore, Belconnen, ACT •Jenni Ashton and Brady Hislop, Dalkeith Rd, WA •Amanda Lees and Michael Fowler, Boronia, Vic •Robyn Neville and Arthur Newman, Hobart City, Tas •Heather Halls and Paul Clarke, Warragul, Vic

## Deaths

•Anette May O'Brien, Oakleigh, Vic •Ted Clarke, Croydon, Vic •Richard Sobee, Mildura, Vic •Harold Henry James Adams, Taree, NSW •Ken Watson, Boronia, Vic •Anne Nelson, Launceston, Tas •John Charles (Jack) Mathieson, Parkdale, Vic

## Changes

**MULGRAVE: Minister**—John and Robyn Gilmore, 73 Murray Road, North Dandenong, 3175. Phone (03) 701 1367.  
**JONES, Collin and Robyn**—RMB 935 Ackland Hill Road, Coromandel East, 5157. Phone (08) 370 7340 (Collin is now with New Creation Ministries).

## ACT

**BELCONNEN (Paul Potter)** Christmas services well attended ... Church restructured its approach to management. Jeanette Morris to work two days/week (voluntary basis) with more senior members of congregation. Gwenyth Bray working one day/week as administrator (also voluntary) ... Graeme Hush appointed youth minister three days/week ... Church celebrated 20th anniversary, Ted Keating (Nunawading, Vic) guest speaker at both services. Temple Day offering to help reduce building debt.

## NSW

**EPPING (David Moyes, Lester Sutton)** The elders recently invited both our ministers to continue their ministry. David Moyes accepted the five year invitation with an overwhelming support from the church. Sadly, Lester Sutton will conclude his ministry at Epping in 1994. He has had an effective ministry at the church ... The ministry team & elders are presently seeking a minister to youth & young families.

**TAREE (Peter Wallis)** Minister Peter & wife Jenny returned from holidays ... CWF & Friendship Time

**NORTH BALWYN: Student Minister**—Keith Wiggins, 9 Vicars Street, North Balwyn, 3104. Phone (03) 857 6444.

**LAUNCESTON: Minister**—Darryl Tobler, 5 Alice Place, Launceston, 7250. Phone (003) 34 5919.

## Obituaries

Obituaries are limited to 100 words

**MATHIESON, John Charles (Jack)**

(2.1.94) Jack was one of five children born to John and Edith Mathieson. He spent his formative years in Prahran, Vic, where he found faith in Christ at the Prahran church. When Jack, with his wife and two daughters, came to live in Parkdale, he wasted no time in giving his best in service as Sunday School Superintendent, deacon and worship leader. Over many years, Jack endeared himself to the church. Jack enjoyed an active retirement right up until the time of his illness. In the last weeks of his life, Jack demonstrated a peaceful longing to be with the Lord he loved. A packed chapel was a comfort to Alma and daughters Gwenda and Joy (Woolcock) and family.

—Keith Pitts

# Church News

have resumed... Church saddened by passing of Harold Adams at age 89 years. Following burial at Dawson River cemetery, ladies provided luncheon for family & relatives. Our sympathy goes to wife Lily & family. Our minister conducted the service... Concern expressed for Stephen Billingham who was flown to Sydney for treatment.

## WA

**MAYLANDS (Robert Drown)** Interim committee, Hart Smetherham convenor, formed to organise arrangements 90th anniversary 30 September-2 October. Festivities will conclude with picnic day 3 October. Former ministers Lloyd Cooke & Philip Wyllie invited as speakers... Dr Terry & Lisa Stubberfield & family farewell—moved to Victoria... Robert Drown attending seminar Sydney 12 February. Will be joined by wife Beryl later as she travels via Melbourne.

**MERREDIN (David Jolly)** Church arranged carol service which was well attended. David gave Christmas message... Farewell presentation to Baum family... Christmas tea fun nights with skits that produced unknown talent... David officiated at High School presentation day... M&M do Christmas cake decorating... Combined service with Uniting Church... Crossways Bible study begins... Sunday School resumed with new children welcomed... Scripture in all classes of two Merredin Primary Schools.

**DALKEITH RD, NEDLANDS (B.K. Ryall, R. Price, L. Devlin)** Children's vacation activities, "Club 4", very successful. Over 200 at each session... Rob Price (associate minister) & Lyn Devlin (young adult coordinator) inducted into ministry team... Video equipment installed to tape services & to enable people in creche to view & hear services... 250 homes doorknocked in new housing area, Mt Claremont... Jenni Ashton farewell from ministry team. She commences full-time chaplaincy at Bethesda Hospital in March.

## Vic

**NORTH BALWYN (K. Bowes)** Keith Bowes continuing as minister until end of 1994... Keith Wiggins student minister... Two new elders & two new deacons elected at AGM... Don Russell secretary... Positive retreat day for church leaders held... New & more varied format for morning worship & Sunday School introduced... Worship committee actively involved... Leadership & congregation engaged in determining vision & priorities.

**OAKLEIGH (W.J. Edwards)** Bryan O'Neill preached while minister on

holidays... Much sickness among membership—Kit Williams, Andrew Brown, Peter Ponter... Church joins with Inter-Church Council in deliberations... Hilda Brown & Nell Neville each celebrated significant birthdays... Dickson Bani (Vanuatu) spoke at first CWF... Every member present service on 6 February gave good start to church year... Wednesday morning Bible studies recommenced.

**CROYDON (Martin Burgess, Isabel Marshall, Richard Gordon)** Tarralla Retirement Village extension completed. Dedication service held. Six units occupied, six remaining... Judy Kilgour & Karen Morris led Girls' camp at Monbulk... Board met for planning weekend... Dawn prayer meeting on Mt Dandenong, Australia Day... "Prayer Walk" through Croydon 13 February... Church selling hot dogs at Croydon Festival... Plans underway for "Celebration 120" (120 years) community day with free BBQ & concert featuring Arch Stevenson.

**KNOXFIELD (Rod Brown, Jason Potter)** Prior to Christmas, Louis van Laar formally commissioned Knoxfield's Hodos reach-out to the local community. Rod Brown preached sermons on community issues of unemployment, suicide & sexuality... Church gave \$3000 to Christmas Bowl... Recent speaker, Conference President-Elect, Keith Milne... Church is preparing for 30th anniversary celebrations.

**LATROBETCE, GEELONG (David Jones)** After an inspiring six months ministry, Glen & Margaret Wegner farewell at luncheon following service on 23 January... David Jones inducted into ministry on 6 February by Don Smith with Shirley Wallis bringing greetings from CWF. Members joyfully welcomed David & his wife Ruth with daughters Ellen & Laura... First family service for 1994 well attended with musical program by Simon Malcolm.

**BAYSWATER (R. Combridge)** Goyoru from PNG interviewed by George Elliott at evening service... Parents attended Boys Explorers sausage sizzle & evening service... Capacity crowd attended carol service with children & musicians participating... 12 year old Ben Allsop recently played piano in worship service... A number of members have been ill recently... Safeway presentation well attended.

**MILDURA (David Ratten, Neale Meredith, Doug Clarke)** 1994 begun well highlighted by annual Amphitheatre service, 17 January, when 200+ attended church in open... Youth work very strong with four clubs Friday evenings involving 100+ youth from Year 4 up & 18 leaders

... March Focus on Youth month... Three baptisms this year... CCTC OT Bible study course in March with 15+ enrolled... David Ratten announced conclusion of ministry at end of year.

**NUMURKAH** All church activities commenced for new year, including Bible School, Crusaders, youth group & CWF... Home Bible study commencing... Booties given to each new mum in hospital. Planning for follow-up... Pastoral care cards go out each month... Holding World Day of Prayer service 4 March. Speaker Noreen Miles from Shepparton, followed by light luncheon... Holding bimonthly youth services.

**BURWOOD (Peter Wing-Tang)** During our minister's annual holiday, guest speakers were Ray Grayden, Lindsay Chapman, W.W. Saunders, Trevor Robinson & Owen Jones. Messages from all deeply appreciated... Peter Little returned safely from tour Greece, Israel & London where he met his father Keith... Jean Grayden recuperating following heart surgery... Regular meetings resumed Bible study group & CWF.

**BORONIA (Keith Milne, Andrew Henley, Andrew Ratcliff)** Welcome to Andrew & Raeline Ratcliff & family. Andrew, final year student at CCTC, joins ministry team part-time for 1994... Emphasis this year on youth work & International Year of Family... Lynette Leach, DMED, at am service & conducted Kidsmin leadership training in afternoon... New people attending services... Church looking forward to Conference President Max Gowty, a former secretary, speaking at anniversary 20 March.

**WARRAGUL (David & Debble Buesnel)** Successful Christmas Carols on the Hill & Sunday School anniversary... \$10,000 raised for new Sunday School rooms. Building to commence soon... \$1500 raised for Gandup Bible School project... Church day camp held at Allambee Camp... Board retreat held after AGM... Two recent baptisms & a baby dedication... Norma Clinton coordinating Cell groups... Worship leaders meeting regularly.

**SWAN HILL (Lindsay Mayes, Graeme Sonsie)** Graeme Sonsie appointed to ministry team full-time... Two teenage boys baptised during January... Board held retreat at Pental Island with Tim Hanna (senior minister Berwick) on 4-5 February... 30 plus doing "small group" leadership course during first term 1994... Farewell to Kim & Rob Bennetts, moving to Bendigo & Margaret Coburn, now living in Traralgon.

## SA

**HENLEY BEACH (Robyn Walsh)** Mark Dodd welcomed his grandmother Mrs Glad Tregilgas into church membership 19 December... Ron McLean conducted the wedding of Lu Lulu & Dominic Spano, 26 December... Sunday evening outreach programs held in Henley Square during January... Home fellowship groups commencing soon... Mark Dodd returned to CCTC after being student pastor December-January... Robyn Walsh has commenced ministry.

**GROTE ST, ADELAIDE** Over 200 attended our Pipe Organ Recital held on 6 February at 1.30 pm, followed by an afternoon tea. Quite a few past organists played the pipe organ on the day. We also had some solos, a quartet, organ duet & a string trio played for us. "Praise My Soul the King of Heaven" & "Be Thou My Vision" were the two congregational hymns sung.

**CROYDON (Russell Mountford)** Russell Mountford inducted by Neville Moore... Croydon hosts Western Districts Church of Christ combined evening meeting... Community Care benefits from Harvest Festival donations... Church family gets together at a Sunday evening barbecue tea.

**VICTOR HARBOR (Don Wesley)** Sunday School started this year with a teachers' dedication. We have 16 teachers, 80 children & 11 on the Cradle Roll. The church bus is picking up approx. 16 children each week... The church is considering an exciting redevelopment of its properties & future goals for both short & long-term... We have had four welcomed into membership & two baptisms.

## Tas

**HOBART CITY** Farewell service & program held for minister Jeff Weston & family 2 January... Howard Paix re-employed for three days a week with responsibilities for special & new programs of church & oversight of youth work... John Westmore accepted position of treasurer following resignation of Michael Greatbatch... Rosemary Rushton, State Commissioner of Girls' Brigade, headed up National Fonomarae in January... Elders visitation program underway to all members during February.

**LAUNCESTON (C. Spaulding, D. Tobler)** Thurlows farewell as they go to Wollongong... Combined 10 am services being tried for six months... All auxiliaries have resumed... Geo Scott honoured at CWF for her 90th birthday... Tobler family have moved into Alice Place manse... Joy Po recovering in hospital after surgery... Three baptisms 13 February... of the friendship services for 1994 attended.

# Taking Steps in March

## Mareeba ministry

Mareeba Community Church, Qld, has taken a significant step—the calling of their first minister for seven years. Murray and Narelle Thomson arrived fresh from a holiday to begin ministry on 7 March in the tropical town of Mareeba. They and their twin toddlers, Matthew and Joanne, were welcomed warmly into fellowship by the elders, Tom Mitchell, Vincent Mathieson and George Meldrum. Qld Aboriginal and Islander Christian Fellowship state coordinator, Lyle Morris, trekked across from Normanton to be there when they arrived. Murray is no stranger to the town, having served there as an assistant worker for a number of months while Ern and Pam Paddick were ministering in Mareeba.

Mareeba is situated 70 km west of Cairns on the Atherton Tableland. It is the major population centre for the Tableland, with a

large Aboriginal and Islander population. The major industries for the town consist of dairying, tobacco and beef cattle production.

The Mareeba church has a contact and outreach throughout the Gulf Country and Cape York Peninsula, with outreach activities stretching as far away as Chillagoe and Mossman. The Mareeba church is the church home to a group of deeply committed Christians who have a vision for ministry and care. Local major ministries include the Petford Training Farm and the Lotus Glen Correctional Centre where Vincent Mathieson has been appointed as Prison Chaplain. Ministry opportunities include hospital and jail visitation, Sunday School and youth ministries, women's and men's fellowship ministries as well as regular church services.



• Some Mareeba church members

# The Last Word

Joy is the echo of God's life within us.

—Joseph Marmion

God is very providential. He gives us twelve years to develop a love for our children before turning them into teenagers.

\*\*\*\*\*

Father to teenage son, "Do you mind if I use the car tonight? I'm taking your mother out and I would like to impress her."

\*\*\*\*\*

"Dad, will you help me find the least common denominator in this problem?"

"Good heavens, son, don't tell me that hasn't been found yet. They were looking for it when I was a kid."

\*\*\*\*\*

After hearing the story about how God took the rib out of Adam's side, a little boy who had been running and had the stitch said to his mother, "I think I'm going to have a wife."

\*\*\*\*\*

Sunday School teacher, "And where can you find the Beatitudes?"

Pupil, "Have you tried the Yellow Pages?"

\*\*\*\*\*

An old person had the habit of always prophesying great calamities to friends. One day whilst predicting to a disgusted listener that a great famine was coming soon, the question was dolefully asked, "And what would you say, my friend, if in a short time the rivers in our country would all dry up?"

"I'd say," was the tired answer, "go thou and do likewise."

\*\*\*\*\*

I don't want to say that they're fat—but they are definitely over emphasized.

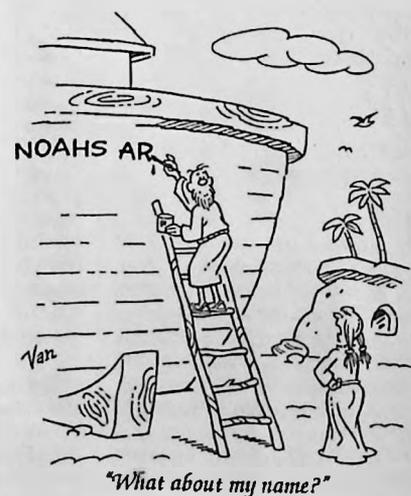
\*\*\*\*\*

Junk is the stuff we throw away. Stuff is the junk we save.

\*\*\*\*\*

What did the leftovers say when they were put into the freezer?

Foiled again.



"What about my name?"



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