

# THE AUSTRALIAN CHRISTIAN

NATIONAL JOURNAL OF CHURCHES OF CHRIST IN AUSTRALIA

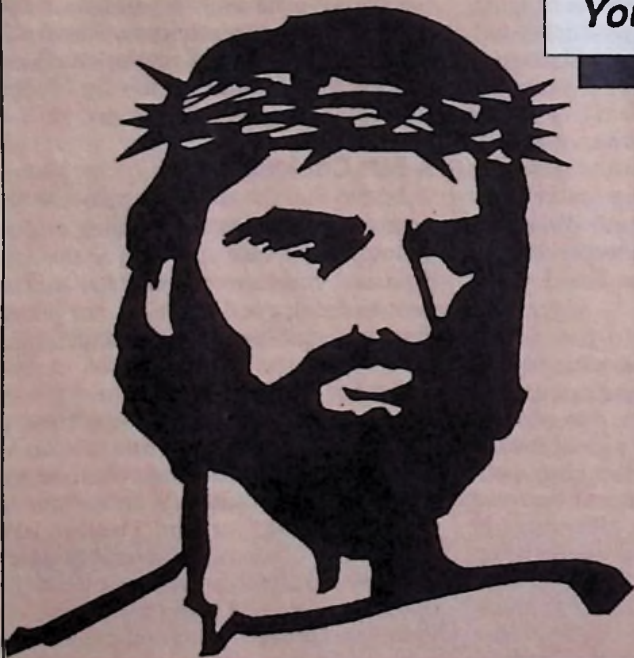
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18 March 1989

*Federal Board of Christian Education  
Special Feature:*

|                                  |              |
|----------------------------------|--------------|
| <i>Emotional Wholeness .....</i> | <i>13</i>    |
| <i>Resources .....</i>           | <i>14-15</i> |
| <i>Youth Ministry .....</i>      | <i>16</i>    |



## EASTER 1989

**“Why do you look for the  
living among the dead?  
Here is not here;  
he has risen!”**

**—Luke 24:5-6 (NIV)**

### ***In this issue:***

|   |                  |
|---|------------------|
| <b><i>The Federal Conference Problem.....</i></b> | <b><i>2</i></b>  |
| <b><i>The Cultic Connection—</i></b>              |                  |
| <b><i>Mormonism .....</i></b>                     | <b><i>22</i></b> |
| <b><i>What You See Is What You Get.....</i></b>   | <b><i>24</i></b> |

# THE AUSTRALIAN CHRISTIAN

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18 March 1989

Managing Editor  
Chris Ambrose

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## Guest Editorial

### The Federal Conference Problem

by Donald E. Stewart

#### History

Each of our individual state conferences has a unique history of how it came into being. Some such as Queensland were automatic, others like New South Wales had a long, difficult period of formation. The development of the Inter-colonial Conference in the 1890s was the forerunner of the Federal Conference, which came into being with the formation of the Commonwealth of Australia.

Unlike the Commonwealth there was never a federation of our state conferences and to the present day they remain quite autonomous. Because of the great distances and the costs that those distances impose the early formation of federal conference bodies was achieved basically by asking individual state conferences to accept responsibility for the operation of the Federal conference agency.

#### Shared Responsibility

As a result of this approach Victoria was given responsibility for the College of the Bible, South Australia Overseas Mission, New South Wales the Provident Fund, Western Australia the Federal Aborigines Missions Board etc. Over the years the system seemed to work fairly well, but there were murmurings of discontent. The expression of that discontent can be seen in the formation of state colleges for the training of ministers in New South Wales and Queensland, and the more recent concern over the Federal Aborigines Board.

#### Discontent

Behind the discontent lie some important issues. Our churches and our conferences have become far more diverse over time. So that now we have a great deal of diversity in theological thinking both within the state conference and between each state conference. The differences in values that this diversity presents bring with them a level of uncertainty and suspicion, which, when fed by rumour, innuendo and half truth has developed some very real strains in our federal system. There are now a number of issues that no-one in leadership is really prepared to raise for fear of the rupture it might cause.

#### Danger

This is a dangerous situation to be in, for it only requires a firebrand radical reformer to blow the whole arrangement apart. Such a situation would only fragment the already scarce resources available to our churches and conferences.

Federal Conference has a problem in doing business so that the resources may

be shared across state conference boundaries and so that there can be a greater understanding of the directions of our diversity and the reasons why some conferences are resistant to such things as "Christians in Fellowship".

#### A Conference of Conferences

Federal Conference is meant to be a conference of conferences. However its present structure is not that at all. Those who go to the biannual assemblies fall broadly into two categories, tourists and conference leaders. But less and less of the leaders in our state conferences are going and the opportunities for the doing of real business when state conferences have around 30 or 40 representatives each is very markedly diminished. The representatives who attend have, in the main, no responsibility back to their state conference for the decisions that are made.

#### Futility

As a consequence state conferences often do not even table let alone act upon Federal Conference decisions. This futility has turned off many of the conference leaders from participation in Federal Conference. A possibility is lost.

#### A Flat Cocktail

Add to that the attempt to provide both an inspirational-learning setting and the attempt to do business both at the same time and you have a pretty flat cocktail; neither doing good business, nor providing the best of inspiration and learning.

#### Time for Change

It is time for a change. It is time we worked out a new structure so that we may assist each other across the state frontiers and more suitably utilise our resources. The way forward, I believe, is not the creation of a national assembly with its narrower leadership base, but the development of new and better mechanisms for interstate conference co-operation.

*• Dr Donald E. Stewart was the first graduate of Kenmore Christian College to be appointed President of Federal Conference. He has had ministries in Traralgon, Vic (with involvement at Morwell), Collins St, Hobart, Tas (commencement of Howrah) and as the Executive Director of the Social Service Department in Queensland. He is president of the Voluntary Care Association of Queensland. Don is married to Margaret, a social worker with the Qld Dept of Family Services, and they have three children and two grandchildren.*

## Gorillas on the Mountain

*Gorillas in the Mist* is a popular film currently being screened. The Vic Country Churches Ministers' Seminar held at Camp Waterman late last year had gorillas on the mountain when Doug Adam, Deputy Chairman of the Vic-Tas Department of Mission, Education and Development, retold his adventures in Africa. Doug was part of a group who climbed Kilimanjaro and came face to face with gorillas in their natural environment. He shared his trip with the ministers in the context of health and fitness in the ministry.

The 25 ministers and a number of wives who shared in the three day seminar enjoyed input across a wide range of



Country churches ministers on the mountain

subjects including issues confronted in the minister's study, caring for the dying, youth ministry, church budgeting, development issues for the country churches, music, USA trends, church architecture and camping. Input was given by

Cliff Warmbrunn, Ted Keating, Trevor Banks, Ray Drayton and Allan Blyth. Department staff, who organised the event, also shared in various presentations.

Peter Broadbent, Warmambool, led the morning Bible

studies, and Brian White challenged the group to maintain a sense of vitality and vision in ministry.

Those who attended agreed it was a significant event and that it would be good to meet again in a similar way.

## Short Courses at Theological College Meeting Need

The introduction of short evening courses this year by the Churches of Christ Theological College (CCTC), Mulgrave, Vic, has proven extremely popular. It has opened up opportunities for a much wider cross section of people to become involved in study and in-service training. Over 60 enrolled in the first course.

Ian Allsop, the College lecturer in Mission and Church development, focused attention on church leadership.

Following an explanation of how and why churches behave the way they do, Ian offered

practical insights to enable churches to function better. He discussed leadership styles of ministers, he provided suggestions for developing effective elders and deacons, gave practical advice to achieve maximum involvement and effectiveness at board meetings and promoted ways to activate and mobilise church members. He addressed the issue of local church planning and offered sound advice on the formation of strategies and programs to achieve accepted goals.

The presentation was well received, not only because it was based on sound biblical

principles and thorough research, but because of Ian's easy lecturing style. The numerous practical examples he shared from the wealth of his own practical ministry experience added meaning to the concepts he raised and enabled his audience to relate them to their own church settings.

Directions for People "On the Go" is the title of the second six week evening course to be presented by Ron Elbourne, senior minister at Glen Waverley, Vic, on Wednesday evenings beginning on 10 May. The focus will be on mission and evangelism and will provide

both challenging and practical suggestions for those who are willing to take seriously the great commission of Jesus.

The third six week evening course will address the question of Christian spirituality and will be held at the College on Monday evenings beginning 7 August. This series will be presented by Graeme Chapman the College lecturer in Christian Thought and History.

Readers are encouraged to phone the College on (03) 790 1000 to register for either or both of these courses.



First lecture in new college with Ian Allsop lecturing at the first short course

## 1988 Index

The 1988 index of *The Australian Christian* has been prepared and is available to any reader who requests a copy. Readers who have requested copies in past years will be forwarded them in the next couple of weeks. Anyone wishing to obtain an index should contact the office on (03) 379 1219 or by writing to *The Australian Christian*, PO Box 101, Essendon North 3041.

# People

## "Australia Day" Goes International



State Senator Mark Snyder (left) and Edmond City manager Max Speegle greet Phil Kennedy along with State Representative Ray Vaughn at Oklahoma Christian Home's Australia Day celebrations

The Queensland Social Service Department's Gold Coast Administrator, Phil Kennedy, and his family, have been serving in the heart of the USA as part of a 12 month administrative exchange between the Department and the National Benevolent Association of the Christian Church in the USA.

Phil, Lynn and daughters Michelle and Lisa will return

to the Gold Coast during March. The Kennedy family have been sharing extensively with churches in Oklahoma (formerly Indian Territory) and particularly within the community of Edmond.

Phil writes: "On 23 January we, as a family, were honoured when the Mayor and the City Council of Edmond at their meeting proclaimed that 26 January 1989 shall be 'Australia Day' in Edmond and that the flag of the great nation of Australia shall be flown over City Hall."

The proclamation stated that the family be given the keys to the city and that they shall be forever entitled to be known as distinguished citizens of Edmond, Oklahoma, USA.

Phil says that, "Australia Day arrived and the Australian flag flew proudly at City Hall and was silhouetted beautifully against a clear blue sky.

"On that evening residents and friends of Oklahoma Christian Home gathered for a lovely steak supper (evening meal) which was followed by a program presented by the family. Naturally we sang 'Advance Australia Fair', 'Click Go the Shears' and 'Waltzing Matilda' with a lot of help from those present. A contest was held for the best kookaburra mimic, which brought the house down.

"We were further honoured with a beautiful citation from

the Legislature of the State of Oklahoma together with a State flag and Edmond City flag."

Phil concluded that the exchange was a wonderful blessing to the family and he considers himself privileged to be part of such an experience.

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Past members and friends are invited to the

**75th Anniversary  
of the**

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**Church of Christ**

**9 April**

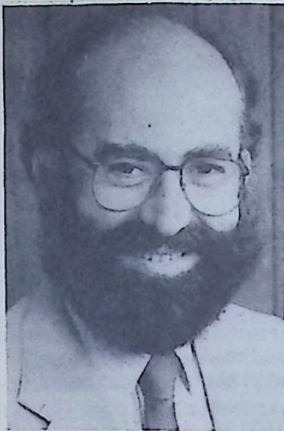
9.30 am Communion Service Preacher: Cliff Taylor

4.00 pm Musical program followed by fellowship tea at 5 pm

7.00 pm Thanksgiving service Preacher: Peter Dixon

RSVP for tea or any inquires to (02) 419 5520

## South Yarra Homecoming



Dr Bill Tabbernee

The 56th annual homecoming was celebrated at South Yarra, Vic, on 26 February. Every year the building is filled with people eager to worship God in their old home church and to have rich fellowship with one another. Returning members will share in the service with remembrance of days long gone when they as children attended Sunday School, boys' and girls' clubs, Christian Endeavour and church. Occasionally we are privileged to have a minister or missionary who was with us 50 years ago when the building in those days was filled to capacity.

This year South Yarra has entered into an association with the Prahran church and have Graeme Bradley and his helpers conduct the evening service. Graeme was given opportunity during the afternoon service to introduce the work which they hope to accomplish.

The speaker this year for the morning service was Dr Bill Tabbernee with E. Wilson as president, readers Harry McDonald and V.J. McKerran. The organist was Jock Roper and a quartette, led by Mrs Nancy Martine, from Cheltenham sang.

The afternoon service was more casual but no less inspiring. It was led by the minister, Allan Clark. Marian Walters led a marvellous service of song. The soloist was Mrs Jane Brewer, who was accompanied by Philip Wilson, while the La'El group from Bayswater also entertained. John Tudor gave a wonderful message. Some members gave humorous reminiscences of days gone by. A tape of greeting was played from Hazel Skuce, who was the advertised speaker, but who had been required to return to India earlier than expected.

—Louisa Clark

## Christian Info

As communication media technology changes at a rapid rate the church can easily fail to take advantage of its opportunities. An opportunity existed in the area of computer based information which is accessed by phone. A number of Christians took up this idea in January and established Christian Info.

The technology is a nationally based computer system linked to digitally stored messages (not taped based recordings) which allow people immediate access to individually tailored information quickly and easily via the telephone.

You can access the computer and obtain information by calling the following numbers:

### 0055 51777 Directory

The director number gives a list of all the messages available immediately in the Christian Info series.

### 0055 52140 Fred Nile

A Senator in the NSW Parliament for the Call to Australia Party will bring regular political updates. The message will be daily during parliamentary sitting days and at least weekly during non-sitting days.

### 0055 52141 Mal Garvin

Winner of a Pater award for the best independent program for his *Breakthrough Generation* radio item will be repeating these messages daily for Christian Info.

### 0055 52142 Creation Science

Creation science expositions given by Dr Carl Wieland and other prominent creationists.

### 0055 52143 Hit Song

Denny Joiner a disc jockey from Manly Warringah Radio releases his hit of the week.

### 0055 52144 Phil Pringle

The senior minister of Christian City Church (charismatic) will be supplying a word to build up the faith of the listener.



### 0055 52145 Christian News

To get news of the body of Christ in Australia and worldwide call Ramon Williams for a daily news update.

### 0055 52151 Christian Calendar of Events

Coming Christian events Australia wide will be advertised.

### 0055 52153 Prayer

Des Higgs, leader of 10,000 Men of Prayer, will lead the largest, longest prayer meeting in the world. The aim is to have at least 100,000 pray ever fortnight.

### 0055 51666 Testimonies

People say how God has blessed them with salvation, healing and miracles.

Other numbers soon to be released will include prayers and prophecies for Australia, a Federal political update and youth messages.

The cost depends upon the duration of the call and the time of day at which the call is made. The cheapest time is after 10 pm and before 8 am Monday to Friday and from 6 pm Friday to 8 am Monday when the cost is 30 cents/minute. The costs at other times will be up to 63 cents/minute.

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# People

## New Minister for Vietnamese Church



Nathan Nhan

Nathan Nhan was inducted to ministry of the Richmond, Vic, Vietnamese congregation in January.

Nathan graduated from the Bible College of Victoria last year with a Diploma in Ministry. He has also done some other tertiary studies in Australia. This year he has commenced a Graduate Diploma in Applied Psychology. Prior to living in Australia he was a medical student in Vietnam.

The church is responding well to his leadership and four baptisms are planned for Easter Sunday. A special meal is planned to celebrate the occasion and the church's anniversary. Nathan is emphasising

discipleship and leader development programs during this year.

The church is endeavouring to develop an evangelistic focus in Richmond, while drawing members and contacts from all over Melbourne's suburbs. Church members are offering strong support to recent newcomers and to Vietnamese families and young people who have lost their ties with beliefs from earlier days. Such contacts are best reached within the context of a Vietnamese speaking group. Here the newcomers feel at home and can discuss faith issues within a fellowship that clearly understands the situations from which they have come. The experience of the church and its recent success in evangelism confirms the view that people are most likely to join a group of like minded people with which they can readily identify.

The congregation is being supported by the Vic-Tas Department of Mission, Education and Development. There is an urgent need for funds to help bridge the gap between available local and Department resources and the total cost of ministry.

Intercession for Nathan's ministry and the growth of the church is invited.

## Darwin Induction



Don Stewart, Federal Conference President with Tony Ochse, Darwin minister, and Darryl Manzie, local member of parliament

5 February was a happy and joyous occasion for the Darwin church when the new minister Tony Ochse was inducted. Among those present were representatives from local Darwin churches and Christian organisations, the local member of Parliament, Darryl Manzie and his wife, and Don Stewart, Federal Conference President.

A children's story is usually part of the morning service and this Sunday was no exception with a story on the "One Way"

to God being through Jesus Christ presented by Ken Leeden.

During the induction service, conducted by Don Stewart, Tony reaffirmed his calling by God to Darwin and the church members pledged their support of Tony. A prayer of dedication was given by Don while the elders Mark Smith and Ken Leeden laid hands on Tony.

Tony's first "official" action was to lead the communion service which immediately followed the induction.

## Ministry Appointment at Manning Valley

Ross and Helen Norling, who have served with the Federal Aborigines Board in WA for the past 13 years returned to Taree in January, and on 5 February Ross was inducted as associate minister of the Manning Valley, NSW, church.

During their six years at Port Hedland contact was made with Aboriginal people living in Marble Bar and as a result of continuing outreach trips a work was also established there.

In 1981 Ross and Helen moved to Marble Bar to assist this new church.

Ross joins the present team of Barry Rice and Noela Mobbs and will have particular responsibility in the area of evangelism.

Plans are underway for training people in areas of evangelism, and the first of a series of evangelistic study groups has already been formed.

In recent months a number of people have either begun worshipping with the church, or have made contact with the pastoral team, who will be key people in working with Ross in his ministry.

The church has shown rapid growth already this year with the result that major changes have needed to be made to the Sunday morning program to accommodate the number attending.

With Ross being added to the ministry team, and his gifts being utilised, the church is looking forward to continued growth during the year.

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## Project Triple Care

In the light of the tragic findings of the Human Rights Commission's report on homeless youth, the Sydney City Mission launched a public appeal for \$1 million to establish a new program to assist homeless teenagers.

The new program, to be known as Project Triple Care will be a three stage program through which a young person can evolve from crisis care to rehabilitation to self reliance.

The first stage deals with crisis care, the frontline of youth rehabilitation. A new short term crisis centre will operate from the hub of homeless youth—Kings Cross, offering shelter, food and counselling. The centre will have a dual role as a referral centre. Workers will assess the problems of the youth, referring them to the relevant agencies or, when applicable, to stage two.

The second stage is the crux of the the program. It is an intensive 8-16 week stint in medium term accommodation (probably on a farm), focusing on living, work and social skills. The youth will be supported but encouraged to be independent.

The ultimate aim is to equip the youth to gain full-time employment and live socially within the community. As an extension of their development they may spend some time in one of the Mission's four Youth Support Centres before moving on to the next stage.

In stage three the youth will learn to live independently with as little support as possible. The Mission is seeking to

acquire "head leases" on suburban homes and units for the purpose of settling the youth into organised group homes. By now they will be at a stage to be relatively independent, though support will still be available for those who need it.

Anyone wishing to make tax deductible donations to project Triple Care should send them to Sydney City Mission, 28 Regent Street, Chippendale 2008.

## Advanced Driving Course

The Adventure Committee of the Vic-Tas Department of Mission, Education and Development is sponsoring a new activity—an advanced driving course. It will be held at the Winton Raceway, Benalla, Vic, in association with the Christian Autosports Club of Australia. Brian White, a Department field director, was the founding chaplain of this organisation in the late 1960s.

The event, on 22 April, is open to both licensed and under-age drivers. The course aims to develop a wide range of skills for the driver. Cost of the training is \$60.

Inquiries should be directed to Vin Waters on (03) 337 7061. Application forms are available from the Department office or youth contacts in local churches.

The first course can take a maximum of 30 participants.

## VISITING CANBERRA?

### Stay with a Church Family

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

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

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|----------------------|--------------------|
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| CURTIN 2605          | MELBA 2615         |
| Phone (062)81 3088   | Phone (062)58 1360 |

Advance bookings appreciated

## On the Move with the President

On 18 February Dr Don Stewart, Federal Conference President, was at the Harlaxton, Qld, church meeting with the elders and deacons to lead a days workshop on strategic planning for the church. It was an interesting process of writing a basic mission statement, a basic statement of philosophy and of principles as well as beginning the process of formulating specific objectives for the church.

The week beginning 20 February involved visits to the Gold Coast Retirement Villages. The first meeting of the Federal Conference Arrangements Committee was an exciting meeting. The basic program format has been agreed to and from this point it is a matter of filling in all the details. 24 February was the Convocation for Kenmore Christian College marking the

commencement of the academic year and the awarding of the first BTh degree to Greg Murphy.

The Queensland Conference Council, a widely representative body which acts as the Conference between conferences, met on the Saturday and considered a wide range of important matters. Sunday involved a meeting of the Queensland Aborigines and Islanders Board to consider a report of the visit of Robert Clancy and Lyle Morris to Normanton and Mareeba. Sunday night Don was given the beautiful task of baptising nine year old Kylie Damrow in the East Ipswich church.

The week beginning 27 February started with a meeting with Queensland Council of Social Services to consider the formation of a broad coalition of interested parties to put forward policies in an election year. Three days were spent in Sydney at a meeting of the Australian Affiliation of Voluntary Care Associations which included negotiations with the senior officers of Commonwealth Department of Community Services and Health about nursing homes.

5 March was a delightful opportunity to attend the golden wedding anniversary for Charles and Beryl Cole, firstly at the Wynnum church then later at their home. Charles Cole served for 23 years as the Director of the NSW Churches Social Service Department and is Don Stewart's uncle.

## Les Lawlor says...

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# Letters to the Editor

## ROLE OF WOMEN

To the Editor,

As with Gladys Butler ("AC" 18 February) I too would like to see Churches of Christ making a stand on the role of women in the church. However we cannot just disregard those scriptures which don't agree with our preconceived ideas.

Firstly, we must decide whether we believe the whole of the scriptures to be inspired by the Holy Spirit. Secondly, we must decide whether we are prepared to obey God by acting on those instructions.

Gladys mentions three different scriptures:

1. Acts 21:21-26. Paul is not just joining in an old ceremony but identifying with four Nazarenes in a purification ceremony. He was not a Nazarene (Numbers 6).

2. 1 Timothy 2:8-15. It is sad to see the way in which Gladys has distorted this scripture in an attempt to mock the ideas being conveyed there.

3. 1 Corinthians 14:34-35 is quite clear but Gladys would have discovered that Paul's command is irrefutable if she read on to verse 37. We cannot speak of "the Holy Spirit taking second place to Paul" if we believe Paul's writings to be inspired by the Holy Spirit as Peter did (2 Peter 3:14-16).

Women experience "the liberating power of the Holy Spirit" but that does not give us the right to disobey God nor does it change the divine order in which God has arranged his creation.

Fulfilling the role God has given us to the best of our ability is a truly challenging and enjoyable goal for our lives.

—Suzanne Byrnes  
(Goonellabah, NSW)

## THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN THE CHURCH

To the Editor,

In recent months this column has seen some proposed solutions to the difficult texts regarding women's role in the church. Gladys Butler ("AC" 18 February) apparently argues that Paul was simply wrong in his judgement on this issue.

Ronald Graham ("AC" 29 October) solves the problem by what I regard to be strained exegesis of 1 Corinthians and by disregarding 1 Timothy because of alleged non-Pauline authorship.

None of these approaches is acceptable to someone who wishes to weigh carefully all the NT evidence. Traditional Christian teaching is that the words of the Bible constitute the Word of God written. They were "breathed out" by God as Paul notes. So who are we to say that Paul was wrong? There is a big difference between cultural accommodation and error. Paul's own letters are described in 2 Peter 3:16 as "Scriptures". If the Holy Spirit is the inspirer of Scripture then we cannot set up a false dichotomy between the Holy Spirit's words and Paul's, as Gladys Butler does.

Ron Graham's approach is also subject to the same criticisms. Ron argues that since Paul didn't write 1 Timothy he is not of a divided mind, but rather, the NT is. This opens up the whole question of the NT canon and the inclusion of fraudulent and erroneous documents. Shall we limit ourselves to a "canon within the canon".

Rather than solving the problems the approaches described open a Pandora's Box and challenge the whole Christian doctrine of Scripture.

—Michael Hannah  
(Cranebrook, NSW)

## MULTICULTURALISM

To the Editor,

We could all name a dozen things such as multiculturalism that are splendid ideas, but equally "pie in the sky". One difficulty lies in what we believe multiculturalism to be. When we began our immigration drive after World War II we believed that the picturesque customs of the new settlers would add colour and variety to our own culture, that is, one day per year the Scots could play their bagpipes, the Poles could dance in the streets and the Italians make their

grappa. This, to many today, is all that multiculturalism means.

But this sells culture pretty short indeed. Culture is fundamentally an expression of one's society, that is society produces its culture. But society is a mass of social mores and laws which govern marriage, inheritance and redistribution of wealth; that is, who enters whose family on marriage and on what terms, and to whose family do the children belong, and who is one's heir. Our parliaments can legislate for one (our) society alone, and all other cultures must exist, if they can, in a vacuum. They can't.

The position is impossible. So let's stop kidding ourselves that our country can perform miracles. It can't, and we are luring people here under false pretences, however noble our aim.

—John J. Alderson  
(Havelock, Vic)

## Declaration and Address

As a tribute to Thomas and Alexander Campbell in Alexander's bicentennial year the Department of Christian Union invited Churches of Christ members to submit entries for an essay competition on "The Relevance of the Declaration and Address to Churches of Christ in the 1990s".

The Department is pleased to announce that John Somerville, minister of the Wembley Downs, WA, church, has been awarded the first prize of \$250 donated by Christian Projects.

The Department congratulates John and thanks Christian Projects and also all who made time to research the subject and submit entries. It is hoped that the winning essay will be published in the near future.

—David Allison (Secretary)

## Letters from Tertius

### Three Booths

To the Editor,

Last Sunday our minister preached on the transfiguration of Jesus. He emphasised Peter's offer to make three booths for Jesus and Moses and Elijah. The point of the sermon was that we can't stay on top of the mountain all the time; people need us down in the valley of the real world.

I'm afraid I had other thoughts. If Peter and the others were to stay on the mountain, they also would need booths, making it a sort of mini-camp-convention. But Peter was only talking about booths for the "stars".

I began to wonder what was in Peter's mind. Maybe his business acumen, repressed since leaving the fishing business, was firing again. What an opportunity! Three booths in a sideshow alley for the Galilean Prophet and none other than Moses and Elijah...and a mountain top view thrown in! The paying public would flock to it, and thus finance the Kingdom of God handsomely. The Son of Man would never have to say again that he had nowhere to lay his head.

There would be funds for a suite of buildings on the mountain with adequate parking for camels and donkeys, and maybe a Simon Bar Joseph University (after all it was Peter's idea!)

Whatever was in Peter's mind, God didn't agree with it. He said clearly and simply, "You'd better listen to my Son!"

Maybe it is essential to enshrine the work of God's Kingdom in buildings and institutions. I can't think of any better way of doing it. But that may be why we had better listen to God's Son. He may have better ideas than booths.

Yours curiously,  
Tertius

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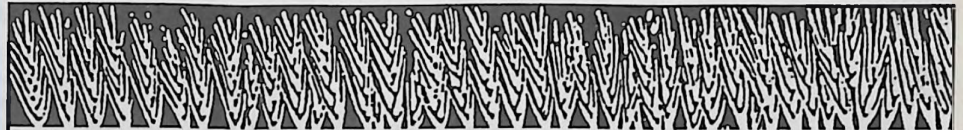
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# Media Review

## Papers

### PRISON: THE LAST RESORT A Christian Response to Australian Prisons

(Collins Dove) \$1.95

This publication is an examination of various aspects of the current prison system and those involved in it and makes many recommendations. The statement was prepared by members of the Anglican General Synod Social Responsibilities Commission, the Australian Catholic Social Justice Council, the Australian Council of Churches Commission on Church and Society and the Uniting Church in Australia Assembly Social Responsibility and Justice Committee and is not the statement on prisons from the Victorian UCA which has led to controversy.

This statement looks at those who are in prison and examines some of the imbalances among prison populations and also some discussion on life in prison itself including comments not only from prisoners but also from warders and their families (they are often as much a victim of the system as the prisoners). The third section has some comments and thoughts under the heading "Christian Reflections on Prisons and Punishment" which is followed by some alternative suggestions to the current prison system. Finally some recommendations have been made for a variety of groups and circumstances.

This material is important and should be considered by all in society. The growth of the current Australian prison population, the cost to the society and the high recidivist rate means that we need to be examining the whole prison system and the philosophy it is based upon very carefully. This statement is a helpful input into the discussion even if you do not agree with everything that it says.

## Books

### AN INTRODUCTION TO THE OLD TESTAMENT PROPHETIC BOOKS by C. Hassell Bullock (Moody Press) \$29.50

The author of this book has chosen to examine each of the prophetic books of the Old Testament in a historical order rather than the usual canonical order. He sees the Old Testament prophets and their writings as clustering in three basic historical eras. The first of these periods is classified as the Neo-Assyrian period and here he focuses his attention on those prophets (Jonah, Amos, Hosea, Micah and Isaiah) who were concerned about the circumstances and results of the fall of the Northern Kingdom (Israel) in 722BC. The second era is the Neo-Babylonian period when the prophets (Zephaniah, Jeremiah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Ezekiel, Obadiah and Lamentations) focused on the fall of the Southern Kingdom (Judah) in 586BC. The final era is the Persian period when the prophets (Daniel, Haggai, Zechariah, Joel and Malachi) were concerned about the Jewish return to Israel after exile.

Apart from a general introductory chapter about the prophets the rest of the book looks in some detail on each of the prophets. The author looks carefully at each of the prophets in turn. What historical information about each of the prophets that is known is examined and some dating of each of the books is attempted. C. Hassell Bullock then examines the literary style of each of the prophets and the final section of each chapter examines the special theological reflections of each prophet.

The author's interpretation is conservative, an example of this is that of his treatment of Isaiah as a whole and giving it an early date, however there is much substance for any reader with an interest in the Old Testament prophets. This is an excellent introductory book for anyone studying the Old Testament prophets or for anyone preparing studies or sermons using the prophets. —CRA

### HOW TO LIVE THE KIND OF LIFE YOU'VE ALWAYS WANTED TO LIVE

by Barry Chant (The House of Tabor)

Described as a book about creative living, *How to Live the Kind of Life You've Always Wanted to Live* deals with factors seen as fundamental for a fulfilled life: a sense of dignity, an attitude of mastery, a spirit of creativity and an ability to love. Barry Chant emphasises that our power to live a victorious life comes from God and that we should accept the fullness of life which God offers us. The author's anecdotal style and use of biblical references, without interrupting the flow of his writing, make the book easy to read and interesting.

At times the 'positive thinking' approach in the book leads the reader to conclude that those living a truly Christian life will never know failure. The author does allow that when we step out in faith failure is a risk we take (stressing that there will be positive results, in the long run), yet the emphasis is on the Christian taking control of his or her life. "If you plan properly you will avoid stress, frustration and tension and achieve a tranquil, fulfilling life." (p.99) I don't agree that it is always possible to avoid such emotions, or situations, by careful planning.

This book challenges its readers to be aware of the creative power of imagination, and to be open to change. Barry Chant mentions such men as David, Nehemiah, Abraham and Joseph, who used their imaginations, dreaming of what might be and seeing their dreams fulfilled. The author writes that our greatest need is the ability to love. This is dealt with in the last, longest section of the book which includes a detailed consideration of various kinds of love. In a short epilogue the author discusses the power of the Spirit which transforms our lives, enabling us to be all that God has planned for us to be.

The author's anecdotal style and use of biblical references, without interrupting the flow of his writing, make the book easy to read and interesting. —JT

### LAMENT FOR A SON

by Nicholas Wolterstorff (Eerdmans) \$12.65

"The world is emptier. My son is gone." The author's son was 25 when he died in an accident. The book comprises a series of personal reflections on grief, suffering and faith in God, written by a Christian professor of philosophy.

The hope of resurrection did not stop Wolterstorff from grieving for the son who was no longer with him, but it did mean that his grieving was not for one lost for ever. He offers no reason for suffering, calling it a mystery. "In commanding us to love," he writes, "God invites us to suffer."

Anyone who has lost a loved one will identify with the difficulty of becoming accustomed to the permanent absence of that person. Anyone who has lost a child will know the difficulty of answering the question, "How many children do you have?" in the months following the death of one of them. This book will strike a chord with some who, themselves, are grieving and with those who (as does the author) repulse the "obscene thought" that God causes a loved one's death to make better people of those who grieve.


The book concludes with a requiem composed mainly of biblical selections. —CRA

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## Concern in China

A controversial administrative code allowing a Chinese provincial government to tighten control over religious activities has prompted strong reaction from Christians in both Hong Kong and China.

Among other things, it requires that places where any kind of religious activity is held be registered with the authorities of Guangdong Province, whose government promulgated the code.

Amid fears that such sensitive codes would have adverse effects on religious freedom in Hong Kong once it reverts to Chinese control in 1997, some Christians there voiced their concerns at a special meeting.

Hong Kong Christians are studying the issue via the Joint Conference of Christians on the Response to the Basic Law (guidelines being prepared in connection with the incorporation of Hong Kong into China as a 'special administrative region').

The Basic Law contains clauses related to religious activities; a draft is currently under public debate. Among clauses of particular concern are those dealing with freedom of religious belief and the autonomy of religious organisations from state intervention.

The appearance of the Guangdong administrative code led some Christians to conclude that China has a different concept of freedom of religious belief, as the Chinese constitution also guarantees it.

In the latest issue of *Bridge*, an English language magazine about the church in China, K.H. Ting, the bishop who is president of the China Christian Council, said in an interview that his office has written to the Religious Affairs Bureau about the provincial regulations. 'If this is a measure aimed at eliminating meetings of Christians in homes without first providing more suitable places for them, it is an infringement on religious freedom,' Ting said.

—EPS

## Seminar Concludes Visit to India



Christian workers at the preacher's seminar at Ammambakkam

Doug Willis concluded his recent visit to India by conducting a two day seminar for preachers on 10 February in the village of Ammambakkam, Madras district.

T. John Samuel, the director of village evangelistic work, organised the seminar. He and his family live in Ammambakkam.

Evangelists, team workers,

located preachers, voluntary workers and a few members from a couple of nearby churches attended. It was a time of great fellowship, prayer and instruction. It was a beautiful experience to be woken early in the morning by the group's full throated singing during their morning prayers.

Doug comments: "It was a privilege to teach men sitting

cross-legged on the floor for hours, hanging on every word."

The whole of Friday was taken up with seven hours (including translation) teaching from the book of Exodus. Half day Saturday was given over to the Gospel of John. The entire time was spent "feasting on the spiritual blessings" and becoming familiar with the content.

During question time some rich insights were shared by the preachers present.

## Victory Dinner

A victory dinner closed two weeks of evangelism in South India. Three teams conducted 70 meetings resulting in 2,144 responses to the gospel by confession and baptism.

On 1 February Doug Willis joined the three teams in Ma-

dras, South India, to report and rejoice in the wonderful response in the area of Northern Tamil Nadu and Southern Andhra Pradesh.

Over the past 15 years Doug has visited and evangelised in this area resulting in thousands of conversions. Village evangelism teams have been sponsored over the years by White Fields. At present T. John

Samuel, a respected evangelist in South India, is directing the ministry.

Doug Willis was in India to investigate several self-help projects and to invest locally a gift of \$30,000 to provide ongoing support for the evangelists.

An evangelistic trip is being planned for July. Invitations have come from Northern and Central India. Doors are also opening in Sri Lanka and Malaysia. Anyone interested in the ministry of White Fields should contact Doug Willis at PO Box 291, Kenmore 4069.



Reggle Thomas (left), Director of White Fields, and Doug Willis (far right) at the victory dinner. In front are the leaders of the three teams

### Church of Christ SOUTHPORT

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# Happenings

*Turn Around Australia* has just celebrated its 10th birthday. Hosted by Gordon Moyes and a part of the ministry of Sydney's Wesley Central Mission it is now seen on more than 45 stations each week and has the widest audience of any religious program in Australia.

The Evangelical Alliance are holding a rally on 18 March at the Blackburn North Baptist Church, Springfield Road, Blackburn to commemorate the 30th anniversary of the 1959 Billy Graham Crusade. The rally commences at 8 pm and the speaker will be Sherwood Wirt, Editor Emeritus of *Decision* magazine.

Two young evangelical workers were stoned to death by angry mobs in two separate incidents on 15 January in Mexico.

The Queensland Division of Men's Work is holding a musical family concert at the Albion church on 1 April at 7.30 pm.

World Vision projects in Ethiopia are being threatened by serious outbreaks of meningitis and malaria. The two diseases have already claimed thousands of lives.

The 1989 Northern Men's Camp in Queensland will be held at the Northern Barga Youth Centre, via Bundaberg, 21-23 April. Hayden Francis will be study leader. Registration forms from Chris Pohle, 39 Gerbera Cres, Strathpine 4500. Phone (07) 205 7081.

The 14 year conflict in Angola has left more than 1 million destitute, 600,000 are displaced, 100,000 have been killed and at least 30,000 have been handicapped. As many as one third of children will die before seeing their 5th birthday.

Four Christian aid agencies expelled from Sudan in October 1986 might be allowed by the govern-

ment to resume their operations. The Minister for Social Welfare is in favour of allowing World Vision, Across, Lutheran World Federation and Swedish Free Mission to resume relief work in war torn southern Sudan. More than 3.5 million Sudanese are in dire need of food assistance both in government areas and behind Sudan People's Liberation Army lines.

For the first time since the founding of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea) in 1948, a building specifically for the purpose of Christian worship has been built. It was opened for use in November 1988, and visited for the first time by a foreign group of believers in late January. The church is located in the centre of the capital, Pyongyang, and is run by the Korean Christian Federation, an organisation of obscure origins that boasts 5,000 members and 500 pastors.

A secret document from Yugoslavia's Macedonian Communist Party states that it will try to introduce a law forbidding religious education for children under the age of 16.

Officials in the Ukrainian city of Kiev disrupted a meeting sponsored by the Baptist Church of Kiev and declared the gathering illegal in mid-January. The meeting, which took place in the confines of the church building, was organised for the congregation's teenagers as a time of fellowship consisting of singing, reciting Bible verses, and recreational activities.

The Pavilion of Promise, which was a Christian witness at Expo '88, will be moving to Singapore where the project will be undertaken by the Evangelical Fellowship of Singapore. The Pavilion of Promise will be located on the fourth level of the Marina Square Hotel/ Shopping Complex. It is planned to begin opera-

tions on 1 August and run until 31 December.

Last year 245 Christian books were published each working day world-wide, the majority of them in English.

Spanish police have arrested more than 50 leaders of the Church of Scientology on charges of extortion, forgery and tax offences.

A study by the Victorian Council of Homeless Persons, released in January, indicates that about half of the homeless people in the inner areas of Melbourne had severe mental disorders, and 22% were psychotics. The most common disorders were schizophrenia, depression and dependence on alcohol and other drugs.

The new President of the US called on the US Supreme Court in January to reverse the 1973 decision which gave women a constitutional right to have an abortion. Each year about 1.5 million babies are aborted in the US.

Terminally ill patients had "no legal right to die" ruled the Victorian Supreme Court in January. The Court ruled that the relatives of a man who tried to commit suicide could not stop doctors from trying to save his life.

The Bible Society has started a search for 600 cyclists. They are needed for the "Bike for Bibles '89". It's hoped that through sponsorship the riders will raise \$650,000 for the Bible Society's literature programs in Africa. This year the rides will all be within state boundaries during the September school holidays. Information at local Bible Society offices.

IBM has donated \$80,000 worth of new computers and furniture to help establish five new classrooms built by the Wesley central Mission in Sydney to train unemployed people in of-

fice and work skills.

Sanctuary is a de facto denomination set up in the US. With 36 congregations the group ministers to young people who became Christians through listening to Christian heavy-metal music.

The Australian Institute of Archaeology hold an annual series of lectures at Ancient Times House, 116 Little Bourke St, Melbourne. On 16 April they are conducting a lecture for Heritage Week on the Pyramids of Giza and the lecturer is Piers Crocker the Director. Lectures start at 3 pm but Ancient Times House is open from 2.30 pm. The admission charge is \$3 adults, \$2 concession and \$6 family.

Hungarians can now hear a multi-religious, 30 minute, news magazine, *Religious World View*, on Hungarian national radio.

The Cove Marino Baptist Church, situated at Hallett Cove near Adelaide, SA, is looking at constructing its church/community complex by the "quick build" method commencing on 8 January 1990. The project is anticipated to take six days of hard work. Many volunteers are needed. Accommodation and all meals will be provided. Anyone interested in registering an interest to help in this project should contact Lynette Walker at 3 Falcon Court, Hallett Cove 5158 or by phoning her on (08) 381 4107.

A synodical commission of the Russian Orthodox Church has proposed the canonisation of members of the clergy killed since the Communist revolution of 1917.

Italian Protestants are battling with the state authorities to allow alternatives to Catholic run religious education in the country's schools.

Anglican Television is producing a new series

of their children's program "Sing Me a Rainbow" for the Seven Network on Friday afternoons 4.30-5.00 pm. The program commenced screening on 3 March. The program features stories, puppets, songs, nature studies and other items to entertain young people. It will also teach the Christian faith in many varied and interesting ways. It's the first religious program to be telecast nationwide by a network.

In an endeavour to counter the excesses of teenage drinking and the continued high levels of traffic accidents associated with drink driving the Victorian Temperance Alliance has arranged to have an anti-drink driving video shown on Melbourne TV channels 7, 9 and 10. The video has the slogan "Zero is Safe." In the days leading up to Easter commercial radio spots are being sponsored by the VTA on 3AK, 3KZ, 3MMM. Their objectives will be to help teenagers stand up against their peers who maintain alcohol is a "must" for fun at a party.

In Lae, Papua New Guinea, an Anglican congregation has purchased the Taraka picture theatre which it is transforming into a 450 seat church with vestry, parish office, meeting room and small shop. The complex was built in 1985 and closed because of continuing armed hold ups.

The General Secretary of the Christian Conference of Asia, Rev park Sang Jung and the CCA Communications Secretary Stephen Webb (an Australian) were deported from Indonesia when they had travelled there to attend a planning meeting for a regional ecumenical mission conference.

Recommend "The Australian Christian" to a friend. Subscriptions can be arranged simply by phoning (03) 379 1219.

# FEDERAL BOARD OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION SPECIAL FEATURE

## Emotional Wholeness

God created us as emotional beings, so we are able to experience a whole range of emotions both positive and negative. Without our feelings, of course, we would hardly be human.

Whilst we enjoy positive emotions like love, happiness, joy and peace, most of us become uncomfortable when experiencing the more negative feelings like anger, depression, guilt and low self-esteem. To be emotionally whole we need to learn to identify our feelings, accept them for what they are, and express them in a mature, healthy, Christian manner.

God doesn't expect us to be perfect, but he does want us to experience wholeness.

### Sometimes Depressed

—Pat Greig

There was a heaviness about her. Her eyes were downcast and she looked as if she would burst into tears at any minute. Her first words were, "I feel so hopeless." Then she told me that she was sleeping poorly and always felt tired. She was irritable with her husband and her children. Everything was an effort and some days she just sat mindlessly in front of the TV, the dishes undone, the beds unmade; it was even a struggle to prepare a meal. Sharon was suffering from depression and was just one of ten or twelve million people who suffer from an episode of depression in any one year.

Depression is different from just feeling sad or blue, for everyone has times when they feel out of sorts. Depression is much more intense, lasts longer and often interferes with daily activities. It is usually accompanied with a very deep sense of despair and hopelessness.

Depression is a very complex disorder and may have a number of causes. An individual may feel depressed as a result of a serious illness or even the flu. When we suffer a loss such as the death of a loved one, separation or divorce, or the loss of a job, depression is likely. This is "reactive depression" as it is a reaction to the events of life. Depression can also be a disease in itself. Endogenous depression results from an imbalance in the body's biochemistry.

There is not one of us who is immune to depression. The question is sometimes asked, "Should Christians be depressed?" Archibald Hart in his book *Depression in Ministry and Other Helping Professions* suggests that we ought to ask instead, "Why shouldn't Christians get depressed?" There is nothing in being a Christian that gives an immunity to the pressures of daily living. However, as we allow the power of the Holy Spirit to work in us, we do have an added resource to enable us to cope with the down times.

Feelings of depression may not be really intense and may dissipate in a week or two or even a couple of days. No real treatment is required except perhaps some extra understanding and TLC. When the depression is intense and lasts longer it is clinical depression and requires professional help.

Most of us will, in our journey through life, encounter a fellow traveller who feels hopeless and despairing. We need to be compassionate, to listen without judging or criticising and even sometimes without talking, and to show patience and understanding.

### How We Feel about Ourselves

—Brian White

How we feel about ourselves, usually called our "self-esteem", significantly affects our ability to maintain good relationships and influences our response to challenges and problems.

People with a high self-esteem are more likely to feel secure in their relationships, enjoy good friendships and respond positively and confidently to difficulties and opportunities. They are more likely to achieve their goals, believe in themselves and appear comfortable and poised.

Low self-esteem, on the other hand, may keep people from achieving their potential, make it more difficult for them to keep close friends and cause them to project their negative rather than their positive qualities. They are more likely to be miserable, depressed and non-achievers.

So a healthy self-esteem is crucial to a fulfilled life. It affects how we interpret life's events and helps us to develop a sense of wholeness and well-being.

God is interested in how we feel about ourselves. Instead of feeling guilty he wants us to feel forgiven. Rather than feel alienated he wants us to feel that we belong.

He prefers that we feel the full measure of his love and grace, and not feel unloved. He desires that we feel worthwhile instead of unworthy and that we experience the joy of being one of his children rather than be overwhelmed with feelings of insignificance.

In Christ, we are not "nothings"—we are important to God. He loves us. We are not worthless. Sinners? Yes, but not without worth. He sent his only Son to die for us. Lazy? Sometimes, but not without value. He makes us part of his divine family. Sometimes hard to live with? Possibly, but not insignificant. He has called us into his "royal priesthood".

Nor would God leave us incompetent. He will equip us to achieve all he wants us to achieve—our potential. "I can do all things through him who strengthens me."

God is certainly keen to help us develop a healthier sense of self-worth and so to feel better about ourselves.



Pat Greig

Available from:  
Federal Board of Christian Education,  
52 La Trobe Street, Melbourne 3000  
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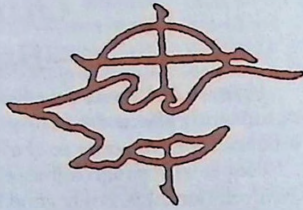


Brian White

## The Youth Event of the Decade

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52 La Trobe Street, Melbourne 3000.  
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## N.E.W.

### National Education Workshop

In 1988 the Board approved a range of recommendations from the National Education Workshop held in 1987.

The workshop covered three areas of educational ministry and was designed to set directions for the 1990s. The recommendations and proposals will be released to churches later this year. Implementation procedures are now in place.

### Three Areas

In the areas of Adult Education—Lay Training, Family Life Ministry, and Children's Ministry there will be a new range of study and training resources, both printed and videos. Bulletins, seminars and new field services will progressively become available.

These initiatives are planned to commence from 1990 onward and shall flow on into the mid 1990s.

The strong response to recently produced resources augurs well for the new initiatives.

## New for the Nineties

The Federal Board of Christian Education is working hard to produce new resources to help make local church ministry more effective for the 1990s. Work has already started on the following:

### Communion and You

Being written by Alan Niven, and planned as a small booklet similar to *Your Baptism* and designed to help new members understand the Lord's Supper.

### Being Young Being a Believer

Six studies for older youth and young adults which explains the meaning of discipleship. Being written by Graham Hyman of Youth Specialities Australia.

### Welcome Child

Another small booklet in the "Baptism and Communion" series being prepared by Brian White. For those who have asked for child dedication.

### Spring Growth in Autumn

This will be a further addition to our popular "National Study" series. It will be five studies on the latter half of life. Designed especially as small group studies for those fifty and over.

### "Effective" Series

Being added to the best selling *Effective Eldership* are three new titles—*Effective People Care* by Louis van Laar, *Effective Assimilation* by Ian Tippett and *Effective Worship* written by a consortium of writers.

### New Bible Study Series

A new series of exciting, low budget Bible studies are being prepared by Cath Greatbatch on Acts 1-8, 1 John, Ephesians, Joshua and the "Great I Ams". The questions Cath asks about a passage of scripture will stimulate considerable discussion in small Bible study groups.

## Finances

### Potential

Treasurer Bob Barreau reports that 25% of our churches gave \$10,000 to the Board's work in 1987-88. On this basis we have at least a potential of \$40,000 per annum. Ensure your church makes a gift this year.

### Needs

Gifts will be used to fund the ambitious program of new publications and resources planned for the 1990s. These resources will be directed to the practical needs of local church development.

### Services

Nationwide field services with state co-operation are a part of our issues for the 1990s.

## Resources



### Basics—Keith Farmer

Subtitled "Steps To a Christian Lifestyle", this resource has six sections on the themes faith, repentance, forgiveness, baptism and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. The themes are examined in terms of ongoing discipleship. 28pp. \$2.50



### Welcome to Your Church Family

This is an attractive folder designed for presentation to new members. It takes A4 size papers, reports and literature. There are appropriate comments on the inside and back cover. Now in its second printing. \$1.25



### Beyond Your Local Church

A four page folder setting out brief details of the state and national co-operative work of our churches. Suitable for distribution to new members. 40c



### Effective Eldership—Jeff Deuble

Now in a second edition, this training resource has won Australia-wide acclaim for its spiritual perception and practical help. The various sections are designed for study and discussion. 88pp. \$8.50

A video, which introduces each section of the book, is available for sale at \$40.



### Susan and Asnet—A Story of Vanuatu —Jadie Hyman

This is a children's project resource for use in two sessions. It deals with an Australian family who go to live with Vanuatu Christians on a work project. Includes notes for teachers. 95c per copy



### Build My Church—Barry McMurtrie

Now in its third printing, this resource contains five studies on the New Testament church, leadership, gifts and growth. 30pp. \$2.50



### They're Hurting, You Can Help

—Graham Hyman

This study is designed to help local youth group leaders examine community needs. There are activities and assignments which could help in project development. Notebook \$2.00 Video \$15.00



### For Release Shortly

Footsteps

A new young adult and adult discipleship study written by Geoff Rowcroft and Jeff Deuble. The resource has been extensively field tested. Release date April–May 1989.



### Lord Make Me Whole

This study is part of the National Study Program. Written by Melbourne psychologist, Pat Greig, and Brian White, it examines feelings—grief, anger, depression and self-esteem, all issues in personal growth. Release date April 1989.



### Your Baptism

—Brian White

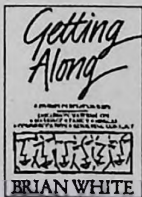
This booklet contains Biblical and personal insights on baptism. It is most suitable for those contemplating baptism or those recently baptised. Sales have been substantial. 16pp. \$1.50



### Churches of Christ—A Movement within the Church

—Randall Edwards

Randall Edwards, the past principal of Kenmore College, has produced five studies on basic issues relating to our ongoing life. The studies include a leaders' guide. 32pp. \$3.50



### Getting Along

—Brian White

Five studies on relationship issues comprise this study resource. They include the areas of marriage, family, singles, communication and conflict resolution. 32pp. \$3

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# FEDERAL BOARD OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION SPECIAL FEATURE

## Bridging the Gap

—Andrew Ball

Future Challenges in Youth Ministry for Australian Churches

### Defining the Gap

In July 1988, the Commission for the Future produced a report entitled "Casualties of Change: The Predicament of Youth in Australia". The opening paragraph of the report states: "Australians are not facing up to the seriousness of the predicament confronting youth today. Because of our failure, more young people each year become casualties of the changes sweeping our society."

The extent to which young people fall victim to our society is characterised by the alarming escalation in drug abuse, teenage alcoholism, crime, serious assault and suicide. Sadly we lack the patience and insight to recognise that these behavioural traits are symptomatic of inner insecurity, fear and hopelessness within our youth. And even if we as churches are able to raise our awareness of such issues, in the minds of many the gap between where the church is and where we find young people is nothing short of a chasm.

Young people themselves don't assist their own plight. For many the most convenient solution to the social and psychological problems facing them is to withdraw into an unreal subculture which I call the "Entertainment Mode". The Entertainment Mode is their way out. Totally engrossed in the latest beats enshrined in rock music or fantasising on some futuristic movie they unknowingly escape from the world as we might see it.

## National Youth Forum 1989—

Canberra

—Chris Hutton

It is always exciting when God takes a group of people who know little about each other and enables them to work together to produce something worthwhile, like the National Youth Forum.

The Forum resulted from an invitation by the 42nd Federal Conference, under the leadership of the NSW Youth Ministry Council, to say to Federal Conference what young people want to say to our churches as we prepare to enter the final decade of this century.

And it happened! 29 young people from around Australia brought together their concerns, frustrations, ideas and gifts for three exciting days and nights. Our ultimate goals were a presentation to Conference and to lead a morning worship session.

Numerous issues were highlighted. Using a courtroom setting to link the presentation together and to provide some moments of humour, we expressed the following to Conference.

Young people want and need to be a part of the church, not separated from it. They need to have their gifts recognised and be given the opportunity to minister alongside other members of the body. They are ready and willing to be life to the church today, but need encouragement, training and the wisdom of those more experienced. A number of the social needs of young people were also presented and the church challenged to consider an answer for those who see little or no hope and are turning to various means of escape including suicide.

We believe the church does have the answer in Jesus. We know there will be differences but they are not insurmountable. We proved it ourselves in the way we worked together.

Our prayer is that all of us who were there will make sure that the impact of the Forum will go well beyond the Thursday night of Conference.

Chris Hutton is the Field Director responsible for youth with the NSW Department of Church Development and Education.

Yes, there is a gap—a big gap. And to expect young people to make the transition easily into your church is to be unrealistic.



Andrew Ball

### Building the Bridge

Where can we start? How can we effectively minister to young people when their needs are so great? These and many more questions are often left unanswered by churches. The trend in the past has been to appoint leaders to almost "baby sit" the church's young people and keep them out of mischief. This won't work any more.

So, how can you start to build the bridge? Here are some parts you will need in order to build the bridge.

1. Leaders who are called by God and have a heart for young people.

You don't necessarily need to be young to minister effectively to young people. You need to be called by God. Just as importantly, you must have a heart for young people. You must love them. Has your church got a job description for your youth leader/s? Take time to appoint the right leaders. The average period of service for a youth leader in any one church is only eighteen months! Youth leaders need to be committed and willing to accept the challenge. They also need lots of support.

2. A Vision for the future.

The changes in society are causing substantial problems for young people. This means there are ample opportunities to significantly influence their lives with God's love. But we need to discover a vision in order to effect change. Something to work towards which will inspire your church and leaders to be motivated and committed to the future. A VISION will generate energy and prevent you from perishing.

3. An outreach mentality.

It's not enough to advertise a youth program on the church's notice board and believe young people will flock to the church. Or to expect that young people will automatically bring their friends along.

So, where will you find the young people to work with? That's easy. Where in your community are their outlets for food, sport and entertainment? Have your church present in some ways at these locations and you will begin to bridge the gap.

4. A healthy body—the church.

A healthy body is a growing body. A growing body is one which is prepared to love, to accept, and to serve. Unemployment, family breakdown, peer pressure and the sheer pace of society are a few of the problems eating away at young people. They will very quickly see through a shallow church front which is not backed by genuine care and concern. We need to work at developing practical ways of assisting young people and helping them develop a meaningful relationship with God.

### On the Otherside

So you bridge the gap and your church is alive and ministering to young people in the community. But what's in it for them? What's their reward?

The answer to this is really the focus of any youth ministry. Paul in Colossians 1:28-29 writes: "We proclaim him, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone perfect in Christ. To this end I labour, struggling with all his energy which so powerfully works in me."(NIV) This is the goal. This is the reward. To be made perfect and mature in Christ. To know him and to have a personal relationship with him.

When this happens we will know that the church is facing up to the seriousness of the predicament confronting youth today. We will know we are bridging the gap so together we can glorify our father by building his kingdom.

Andrew Ball is the Field Director responsible for youth with the Vic-Tas Department of Mission, Education and Development.

# People

## Commissioning Service for Hannes Schaefer

On 5 March an induction service was held at the Warragul, Vic, church for Hannes Schaefer as he entered into a ministry with the Inter-Church Trade and Industry Mission (Victoria).

Robyn Schaefer gave the opening prayer. Robyn and Hannes had previously shared in joint ministry with the North Essendon, Vic, church. David Buesnel, Warragul minister, welcomed visitors. Bruce Waldron, a school chaplain, led the service and conducted communion. Robin Harrison, ITIM chaplain from Traralgon, brought the reading from Luke 10.

Other ITIM personnel also took part in the service. Dare Stevens, airport chaplain at Tullamarine, spoke about the

meaning of the ministry of industrial mission as it seeks to serve others.

Rev Brian Kuchel, Assistant Manager, Chaplaincy Division, ITIM, along with Wal Fordham, Chairman of the Department of Community Care, commissioned Hannes to his work.

Rev Sid Sijbranda, Gippsland team leader for ITIM, led in a prayer of intercession and Marilyn Ross, an ITIM chaplain from Moe, read from Romans 12.

The sermon was delivered by Dr Peter Marshall, State Director of ITIM and focused attention on the continuing need for "mercy" as part of the gospel.

— Bruce Burn  
(former ITIM chaplain)

## Recognition for Secretary



Russell and Gwen Wright with presentation

20 February marked a milestone in the life of the church at Torrensville, SA. Following his resignation at the end of 1988 because of health problems, Russell Wright ended 24 years of service as church secretary, having served on the board for 30 years. A presentation was made to Russell for his untiring service.

His role as secretary had widened over the years and the church thanked him for keeping Torrensville together as a family church, in ensuring

speakers were available to nurture the church's faith, in encouraging them to loyalty to both the church and to the Lord Jesus Christ, and in liaising with the Flinders Park church in their "sharing ministry."

The inscription on the gift read: "We, the Torrensville Church of Christ, have been abundantly blessed to have such a competent man of God to conduct the business of God's Church. — From past and present members over a span of 30 years."

## New Chairman for Vic-Tas Adventure Committee



Mike Folland, final year student at the Churches of Christ Theological College, has been elected as the new chairman of the Department of Mission, Education and

Development Adventure Committee.

Mike, who is originally from South Australia, completes his Bachelor of Theology this year. He has an active history in youth and adventure work and already has contributed substantially to the work of the committee.

New initiatives are high on Mike's agenda and with the recent successful completion of a surf camp Mike is keen to recruit new helpers. Among the activities offered by the committee are bushwalking, bike riding, surfing, ski touring, running, canoeing and white water rafting.

People interested in helping the committee should contact Mike through the Department of Mission, Education and Development on (03) 662 2377.

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#### Sunday

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Services

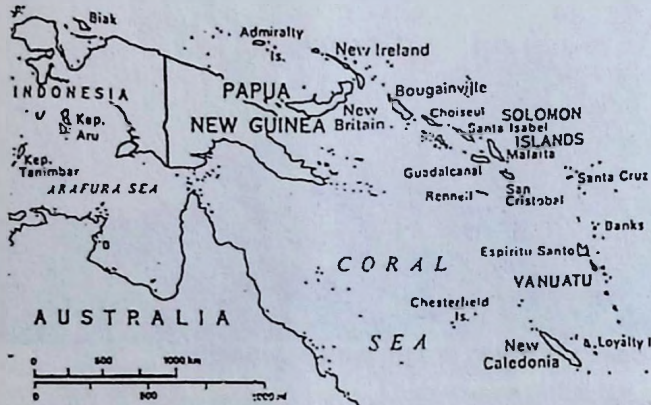
7.00 p.m. Gospel Celebration

#### Wednesday

1.15 p.m. to 1.45 p.m. Lunchtime Service

For further enquiries, please ring (03) 663 3884

## Solomon Islanders Work Together for Change



The Solomon Islands are a small Pacific nation with a population of about 300,000. In recent years the drift of young people to the capital, Honiara, and the lack of development in the rural areas have caused local churches and communities to take action.

Force Ten, an aid and development program of the Australian Council of Churches and Australian Catholic Relief, is supporting a range of rural development projects in the Solomon Islands. Most of these require small amounts of money.

In the district of Marovo, local people felt that government funded projects ignored their rural community. They organised a farmers' association called the Marovo Association of Cocoa Farmers and agreed that each member would grow one acre of cocoa. This in turn will be marketed by the Association, and profits used for community initiatives such as health clinics, roads and education programs. Funds are needed for tools and equipment. The 250 families who belong to the Association will contribute their land and labour.

In North Choiseul, the United Church Women's Fellowship saw a great need to give local women and girls the chance for education and training. The UCWF has planned a series of training courses designed to be relevant to rural

women. Topics include poultry raising, farming, nutrition and child health. The women need the funds to build a Resource Centre which will include classrooms and accommodation for course participants.

The UCWF plans to set a revolving loan fund so that women who have taken part in courses can borrow money for income generating projects. These will be designed to benefit the whole community.

## The Top Ten News Stories (Second Helping)

In our last issue ("AC" 4 March, page 14) we ran the list of *The Christian Century's* top ten news stories of 1988. Now *Christianity Today* has also compiled a top ten list. Its news staff selected the top stories reported in the magazine during 1988 and their list, which differs in many respects from that of *The Christian Century*, is as follows:

1. **The presidential election.** In the process, Christians lined up behind different candidates, but abortion opponents considered George Bush's election an important victory.

2. **Religious glasnost.** The celebration of 1,000 years of Christianity in the Soviet Union appeared to loosen the bonds of religious oppression.

3. **Jimmy Swaggart.** The downfall of the former top television preacher cast further

## Life after Revival

In August I conducted a two week Bible School at Tumba, PNG. This was to cover the Keram churches with some in depth teaching. What I experienced there convinced me that revival had occurred.

The Bible School was attended by people from all the churches in the area. Some of them I was surprised to see (I was judging from past interaction with them). As our two weeks together progressed I could see that these men and women had experienced Christ personally in a new way. They were diligent in meeting together for worship and sharing in prayer, the Tumba church has become a "giving" church as it has become aware of its responsibilities and the leadership is developing and maturing in Christ. There are problem areas but these are being dealt with as individuals allow the Spirit of God to work in their lives. Corporately the church needs to find ways of enabling individuals to use the gifts God has given them for the effective building up of the whole body.



There has been a post revival "slump" but this in no way negates the movement of God's Spirit. By and large the churches today are certainly not the same as they were before the revival. Many individuals were changed and their experience of Christ renewed to the extent that they could not go back to what they were before. They are maturing in their faith and reaching out to others. Fellowship and prayer nights continue to be a feature of church life.

—Rosalie Rofe

doubt on the integrity of televangelism.

4. **The rescue movement.** Thousands of abortion opponents, most of them Christians, were arrested for blocking entrances to abortion clinics.

5. **The Last Temptation of Christ.** A controversial movie about Jesus Christ directed by Martin Scorsese spawned a wave of protest co-ordinated by Christian leaders.

6. **Mainliners move right.** Led by the largest mainline Protestant denomination, the United Methodist Church, there was a general conservative shift on social and theological issues.

7. **Billy Graham in China.** During his three week visit, the world's best known evangelist received Chinese media attention unprecedented for a Western religious figure.

8. **Pat Robertson falls short.** After making waves in Iowa, the founder of the Christian Broadcasting Network faded fast, but nevertheless addressed the Republican party's national convention.

9. **Sun Myung Moon's quest for legitimacy.** The Unification Church continued to seek support from conservative Christians, partly through seeking participation in a political coalition with Unification Church ties.

10. **AIDS.** Despite their continued condemnation of homosexual behaviour, still the biggest cause for the spread of the disease, conservative believers moved in the direction of ministry to AIDS victims.

Subscribe to "The Australian Christian"

# Growing Spiritually

## Growth throughout Life

by Roger Ryall

Baptism and being welcomed into the life of the church mark only the beginning of the Christian life. From there our growth can proceed in three dimensions—down deeper into Christ our Saviour, upwards to God and outwards towards others.

These dimensions of our spiritual growth need to continue for a lifetime. As children of a living and caring God, we are always in the process of becoming who we are. Like Paul humbly recognising that we have not "arrived", are we just as purposeful as he was about our Christian growth? "I go straight for the goal—my reward the honour of being called by God in Christ." (See Philippians 3:13-14.)

The essential channel for our spiritual growth is our personal relationship with Christ. Our pioneers were scripturally right in seeing that the heart of our faith is our commitment to him. That commitment can be fed by regular daily prayer, the nourishment of Bible reading and the joyful sharing of the church's worship.

To say that is to indicate that spiritual growth can only take place when we con-

stantly put ourselves in the environment of growth, that is, in the realm of the Holy Spirit. On a recent holiday in Yanchep I was looking at some tall palm trees. The lower palm branches had fallen back dead, but the branches that reach up to the sky are the ones that are green and alive.

The Christian life is a corporate experience. Hence our growth can only take place through a commitment to fellowship. Dr Robert Banks emphasises that, in Paul's understanding, participation in the Christian community "centred primarily around fellowship, expressed in word and deed, of the members with one another". This is the sphere where the ministry of reconciliation is expressed and deepened.

I believe there needs to be a balance between fellowship with others and planned times for withdrawal and reflection. There is a growing Christian literature in the areas of journal writing and spiritual direction. Six years ago I was terrified at the prospect of my first two-day "silent retreat". But thanks to wise leadership, I learned that silence can be

alive with God and with creative enjoyment in prayer, writing, reflection and play.

Many Christians are discovering that to have a "soul friend" (perhaps outside our own congregation) can be a great help in assessing spiritual growth. A soul friend is another Christian who can be trusted for honesty and keeping of confidences and who will hold us accountable for making progress towards our own chosen life goals.

I also believe that we grow as Christians when we encourage a genuine honouring of our feelings, e.g. joy, love and anger. Paul urged Christians to "rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep" (Romans 12:15). In the latter part of the twentieth century we are learning the value of emotional honesty and how to attain it. In the process we are beginning to understand the factors that enrich marriages and families and that deepen the church's fellowship.

• Roger Ryall is the minister at the Mandurah, WA, church.

## Jesus to Judas—Betrayed Compassion

So this is farewell, my once-trusted friend and companion.

I remember the first day I saw you, you never did look me straight in the eye.

But your warmth—your outward affection made up for it.

It always was your saving grace—pity it wasn't real.

And you, the intellectual! How often you put the fishermen to shame.

Yet where did we go wrong?

At first I was your inspiration—you said it yourself.

Our discussions were a great sharing, there was no end to our possibilities.

Yet ever so gradually we began to differ — and suspicion began to taint my every thought of you.

Your disillusionment turned to aggression beneath my very eyes and though you were with us in body, you drifted so far away in spirit.

Your brooding silence became an omen, as I dipped bread into what would soon become my blood—and handed it to you.

Seduced by 30 pieces of silver, it wasn't the bribe that saddened me so much as the betrayal of my compassion for you.

I can imagine you now in the flickering torchlight, your grey and contorted face still avoiding my eyes.

My only crime must have been the vain hope that you'd stay true to me.

As they rammed the nails through me, I felt your pain also.

In my mind's eye I saw the blackened, twisted tree on which you hung.

Limp and lifeless, swaying in the breeze.

Oh Judas, if only we could have held back the tide!

Oh Judas, was my love not enough?

—Lorraine Rogers

# Classifieds

## IN MEMORIAM

**CHALK** Doreen June. 29.3.1987. In God's care. Precious thoughts of years together hold memories that will last forever. Lovingly remembered by husband Graham, daughters Bev, Jenny and Denise, sons-in-law and grandchildren.

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6 pm Tea

7.30 pm Family Program

Sunday 26 March  
Hindmarsh Church of Christ  
10 am Church Service

Speaker: Bruce Roberts

Enquiries: Malcolm Roberts

(08) 29 6101

## WA

**CARNARVON (D. Bone)** Following Sunday services chapel was broken into & four electric guitars stolen & glass door smashed. Praise God that all guitars were recovered undamaged ... Bob & Queenie Scott celebrated 50th wedding anniversary ... First CWF for 1989 a dinner at the Camp School ... Third KYB group commenced ... Day family home from Eastern States trip.

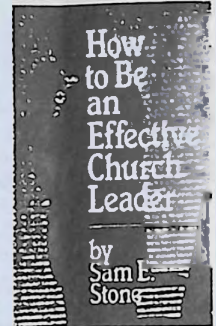
**WEMBLEY (J.T. Timms)** Exciting things happening at Wembley ... Playgroup full to capacity ... Primary age group had over 100 present at family night ... Many young people added to church through conversion ... Women's Fellowship in exciting time of change and growth ... Birth of Daniel Mark to Mark and Karen Wilson a real blessing ... Monthly guest speakers in services ... Youth growing spiritually through Bible study.

# Media

## HOW TO BE AN EFFECTIVE CHURCH LEADER

by Sam E. Stone (Standard Publishing) \$6.95

Written for the person who is contemplating becoming a leader in a local congregation or for someone who is new to church leadership this book should be read by all who are in leadership, or thinking about leadership in our churches today. Sam Stone commences by looking at who should be running the church and his emphatic answer is that it should be Jesus. He then develops his understanding of the biblical model of church leader. This book is also a very practical manual on areas of church leadership and covers such matters as time management, public speaking, the practicalities of board meetings and visiting. Sam Stone has also included material that should help anyone in leadership or contemplating leadership reflect upon their personal life and spiritual growth and their motivation for leadership. At the end of each short chapter there are some suggestions of further action/activity



which means that this book could be used in a group situation. I gather that it is being used in a course at Kenmore Christian College. As it is written for an American situation some of the additional resources suggested are not readily available in Australia. Sam Stone is the Editor of *The Christian Standard*, a magazine that is published by Standard Publishing, which circulates among the Christian Churches (Independents) in the US, one of our sister Stone-Campbell movement churches. —CRA

## UNIFIED IN HOPE

Arabs and Jews Talk About Peace

Interviews by Carol J. Birkland (World Council of Churches)

This book is an attempt, through the personal statements of 19 selected Palestinian Arabs and Israeli Jews with a commitment to the legitimacy of both peoples to a shared occupancy of Palestine/Israel, to show that there is hope, however slight, for a moderate outcome to the Arab/Jewish conflict in that troubled land.

It is highly recommended, despite some deficiencies, because it helps to fill the great gap in our understanding of this subject that most of us, to our shame, need to acknowledge. In doing so, it gives attention to possibilities for reconciliation, that are quintessentially Christian in scope and implementation, puts paid to all of the extreme solutions/justifications (including those advocated by Christians who see the rise of the modern Israeli state as the fulfillment of prophecy), and allows us a glimpse of some remarkable people.

Jesus said: "Blessed are the peacemakers for they are the children of God", and this book is truly "Christian" in that fundamental sense. Here are flesh and blood children of God, with real hangups and prejudices, many of whom have experienced deep personal loss because of the conflict, but who share the one dream, of a personal solution that is fair to both sides, and are working against great odds to try to achieve it.

The two most surprising parts of the book for me were to discover the strong, long established Christian element of Palestinian society and to 'see' the present situation through Palestinian eyes (as well as through the more familiar Jewish eyes).

The most interesting statement was that of Yehezkel Landau, of Oz veShalom (Strength and Peace—Psalm 29:11). Landau calls for Christians to become much more biblical in their statements on the Arab/Jewish issue.

My one criticism of the book is its lack of a brief historical Introduction, to put the personal statements into context. Granted, the neutrality of the book precludes any interpretive context, but even a simple list of historical events would be helpful.

My other concern is that the selected contributors are undoubtedly unrepresentative. They are well educated, articulate, widely travelled and, generally, well-to-do. I fear that their moderate, peace-making views are not only out of line with those of the extremist leaders on both sides, but also with those of the vast majority of ordinary people.

Despite that, there is no other hope. We should read this book and seek ways, by prayer and action, to join in the process of peaceful reconciliation. —Kevin Bray

## We invite you to the BELGRAVE HEIGHTS EASTER CONVENTION

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Tuesday afternoon 28 March

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Hear:

Dr Ronald Dunn from USA

Bishop Dudley Foord from Sydney

Rev Robin Pocklington from Melbourne

Meeting times are 10.45 am (11.00 am Sunday),  
3.00 pm and 7.00 pm.

Day visitors welcome

Picnic facilities, light refreshments, bookroom, CSSM  
and teenage program.

Further details from Convention Office,

5 Court Street, Box Hill 3128.

Phone (03) 898 4318.

# A Church ABC

Queenstown, the only Church of Christ in Australia beginning with the letter Q, is set amid the factories of a semi-industrial area close to Port Adelaide, SA. Queenstown is an old, historic area, being only about a kilometre from Pt Misery, where the first settlers to South Australia landed. The population today includes many

elderly people and ethnic groups; other churches in the vicinity include Russian and Greek orthodox and evangelic.

The church is situated on the main Port Road. The building was bought from the Primitive Methodists in 1900, but the members had been meeting in different places for 31 years before that. It is a typical old-fashioned chapel with a gable roof, well kept, well loved and well looked af-

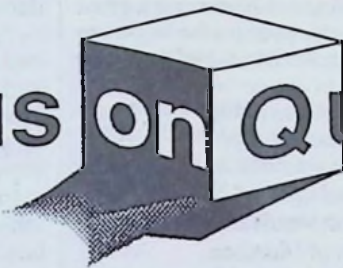
ter. There is also a large hall. There are approximately 30 members, with an average attendance of 24. They range in age from 85 down to 17. Queenstown has two organists who have long periods of service—Elsie Mildrum has been an organist for 50

years; A d a C a v e somewhat less.

last full time ministry finished in 1970. Queenstown has had a glorious past. W.C. Brooker was minister for 42 years, from 1905 to 1947. There were tent missions with people such as American evangelist T.H. Gore and John Vercoe.

Nowadays services are held at 10.25 am starting with a praise time, and a prayer

## Focus on Queenstown



meeting beforehand at 10.15. There is a CWF group, and Dorcas has been meeting for over 80 years. Even members of Dorcas now in nursing homes themselves knit all winter (and summer) long. A Montessori play group uses the hall each day.

This year, Queenstown celebrates its 120th anniversary, and while the activities in the present will remember the wonderful days in the past, the church is also praying for the future.

The church is filled by visiting ministers from local churches and laymen. Queenstown's

## Comment

### The Universal Declaration of Human Rights

by Bruce McIntosh



**"While Australians could readily name nations that violate the Declaration, they will be disturbed to realise that Australia has been listed by Amnesty International for the first time..."**

On 10 December 1988 the General Assembly of the United Nations celebrated the 40th anniversary of the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The signatory nations, including Australia, were asked to put the Declaration into effect by enacting enabling legislation. The following Australian legislation resulted: The Racial Discrimination Act 1975; The Sex Discrimination Act 1986; The Human Rights and Equal Employment Opportunity Commission Act 1986. State legislation followed.

The Declaration contains 30 articles. The following is a summary of the main articles that are important to the church's life and practice:

- All humans are born free and equal;
- All are entitled to this right and freedom regardless of their race, colour, sex, language, religion, politics, national or social origin, birth or status;
- Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person;
- No one shall be held in slavery or servitude;
- No one shall be subjected to arbitrary interference with his/her privacy, family life, home or correspondence, nor to at-

tacks upon his/her honour and reputation;

- Men and women have the right to marry and to found a family. They are entitled to equal rights as to marriage, during marriage and at its dissolution;
- All have the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion, including the freedom to change their religion.

Other articles cover rights to education, employment, social security, fair legal treatment and freedom of movement and travel.

Human Rights organisations such as the United Nations Human Rights Commission and Amnesty International use the

Declaration as the basis for their monitoring of human rights issues.

While Australians could readily name nations that violate the Declaration they will be disturbed to realise that Australia has been listed in the 1988 Amnesty International Report for the first time because of our treatment of Aborigines in prison.

While most churches support the rights and freedoms listed in the Declaration some exempt themselves regarding leadership roles for women. This attitude, no matter how well it is argued with supporting biblical texts, is seen as discriminatory by non-believers. Churches such as ourselves, who have women in ministry and eldership, do not escape the charge of discrimination, if we treat our female leaders less favourably.

Copies of the Declaration of Human Rights (free) and a very impressive poster (\$6.00) are available from the United Nations Association, 328 Flinders St., Melbourne 3000.

• Bruce McIntosh is an elder at the Boronia, Vic, church and is the Manager, Equal Employment Opportunity, State Electricity Commission of Victoria.

# The Cultic Connection

## Mormonism

by W.A. van Leen

Churches of Christ has had a tradition of "unity in essentials, liberty in opinion, and love in all things".

This idealistic tradition has, unfortunately, not always worked. While it has led to some deep and great thinking, it has also led to judgemental small-mindedness and some weak, woolly, syncretistic thinking. Sadly there has been division over what exactly is essential, and our churches in America fragmented into three major branches.

Even more sadly, the creedless liberty of our churches has also opened the door for the cultic connection to be formed. This has been most evident in America.

### Mormonism

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, better known by the collective nickname Mormons, have closer connections with our churches than the fact that both movements developed in the early eighteenth centuries.

Much of the language of our churches is still part of Mormonism. The Mormon "gospel" is called "the Restored Gospel", and numerous other terms which were found in Campbell's many publications (and which were aired publicly in those days) are an essential part of Mormonism.

The first name that the Mormons used when Joseph Smith founded his church in 1830 was "The Church of Christ".

Mormonism teaches that salvation requires faith, repentance, baptism, and the laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Spirit. Without elaborating the fact that what Mormonism means with those terms is not what we would understand nor what the Bible teaches, those terms are very familiar to Churches of Christ members, and for good reasons.

### Sidney Rigdon

One of the earliest Mormon leaders was Sidney Rigdon.

Rigdon was a Baptist minister who was most impressed with Campbell's debate with John Walker and visited Campbell, along with another leading Baptist, Adamson Bentley, in 1821. In 1822 Campbell, impressed with Rigdon's skills as a great speaker, encouraged him to pastor the church in Pittsburgh and introduced him to Walter Scott.

Scott was also an outstanding preacher and has been remembered for his "five-

finger" exercise—a simple explanation of the basic essentials of the gospel.

Rigdon was overshadowed by Scott and Campbell. His efforts at becoming a great leader failed. In the process he began to develop teachings on visions and dramatic experiences.

For a number of years Rigdon was an influential preacher amongst the Disciples. But his influence was not as great as he apparently wanted and in 1830 he became a convert to Joseph Smith and his "Golden Bible"—the Book of Mormon.

Another Disciples minister, little-known Parley P. Pratt, met Smith, became an instant convert, and then visited Rigdon, who soon joined.

There is some dispute about Rigdon knowing Smith earlier, and being a major influence in the production of the Book of Mormon, but there is no doubt that Rigdon was one of the early major leaders of Mormonism. He led quite a number of his church members into Mormonism when he joined.

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### *"Many of the first leading Mormons had been Disciples of Christ"*

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He was instrumental in changing the first name that the Mormon Church used; he introduced their priesthood system; he was responsible for aspects of church structure and some of the "Revelations" that came after the publication of the Book of Mormon; he was also instrumental in the formation (some 10 years after joining) of the Danites—who cut the throats of apostate Mormons and others; his signature also appears on phony Mormon currency.

When Joseph Smith was killed by a mob in 1844, Rigdon seemed set to become the next leader of Mormonism—but once again he missed out. The hierarchy voted on Brigham Young to take control and lead the Mormons west.

Rigdon led a small break-away group but ended by dying a disillusioned and lonely man with no following in 1876.

### The Campbells

The first evangelists, and a couple of early major Mormon leaders, were ministers involved in the Campbell movement.

When Rigdon first went over to Mormonism, Thomas Campbell, uncharacteristically, challenged him to a public debate.

The elder Campbell declared Rigdon had now become: "the professed disciple and public teacher of the infernal book of Mormon" while he himself had remained "a professed disciple and teacher of the supernal book of the Old and New Testaments of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ which you now say is superseded by the book of Mormon".

Rigdon refused to debate with Thomas.

Alexander Campbell expressed his regret at Rigdon joining Joseph Smith. Writing in 1831 he stated: "It was with mingled emotions of regret and surprise that we have learned that Sidney Rigdon has renounced the ancient gospel, and declared that he was not sincere in his profession of it; and that he has fallen into the snare of the Devil in joining the Mormonites. He has led away a number of the disciples with him."

As the years went on Alexander Campbell used much stronger language than his father, Thomas.

He saw most Mormons as hopeless and without much understanding. In 1831 he stated (of Joseph Smith's followers): "So far gone are some of his adherents that nothing but starvation can cure them. Even Sidney Rigdon told me that 'were Joseph to be proved a liar, or say himself that he never found the Book of Mormon as he reported, still he would believe it, and believe that all who do not believe it shall be damned.' But very few, however, have attained to this faith of assurance; and it is more than probable that none of the late converts ever will."

In this last statement Campbell was naively wrong. In spite of the wealth of evidence brought out against Mormonism by Campbell himself, and by others since his time, thousands continue their blind faith in Mormonism and its many false Scriptures.

It may be that he realised he had underestimated the Mormon movement. In 1835 Campbell commented: "perhaps we were too sanguine when we thought that the fable was so barefaced that it could not stand upon its legs or palms in the face of day and the American people; but it appears that there are some great knaves, some as great simpletons, and some as dark spots in the United States as in any land on earth."

The fact that Mormonism continued, in spite of critical analysis, and scholarly re-

## The Child and the First Two Years

by Dave Vincent

buttal, of the Book of Mormon, in 1831; and in spite of the efforts of many others; led Alexander Campbell to denounce this movement, so closely linked with his own, in the strongest possible terms. In 1842 and 1843 he described Mormonism as: "This meanest, vilest, and most diabolical of frauds ever practiced in the encyclopedia of delusions and impostures, has grown up to such an enormous stature of impudence, arrogance, and malignity, as to call forth the attention, remonstrance, and abhorrence of all well meaning men, religious, moral, and political. Its arrogance and impiety are daily growing more and more obnoxious to the reprobation of all sorts and degrees of philanthropists...the meanest, vilest, and most infamous humbug ever promulgated in any age, language, or country under these broad and high heavens. It is a sacramental seal of the Devilism on the 19th century—an impersonation of Bible ignorance, infidel impudence, and heaven-defying impiety."

### Gullibility

What upset Campbell so much was not just the outrageously distorted claims of Mormonism, but the fact that people were so gullible as to accept and believe these claims. The hurt and frustration must have gone deeper still with the knowledge that many of the first Mormon leaders had been Disciples of Christ, including not only Sidney Rigdon, but also Orson Hyde\*, Edward Partridge, Orson Pratt\*, Parley Pratt\*, Lyman Wight\*, and Frederic G. Williams (the four men with asterisks after their names were all amongst the original Twelve Apostles of the Mormon Church; Rigdon and Williams first and second counsellors to the Mormon President; and Partridge was the first Mormon Bishop).

Campbell may have been wrong, when in frustration, in 1839, he wrote: "The gullibility of the present generation has not, in the memory of history, been often equalled—never surpassed."

But he was not wrong, when he wrote: "Most of the disciples of Christ are in much need of being taught the foundations on which their faith should rest in the sacred writings... A people ignorant of the Bible are always an easy prey to ministers of delusion and error."

*• Adrian van Leen is Director of Concerned Christians Growth Ministries, a ministry dedicated to informing the church about the cults and also ministering to people involved in various cults. Adrian trained for ministry at the College of the Bible, in Melbourne and is currently based in Perth, WA. In future issues he will examine our Brotherhood links to the Christadelphians, Spiritualism and the People's Temple.*

Problem children are everywhere—at school, at home, at Sunday School. No matter how much discipline, how much patience, how much love is given, often many are unresponsive, at least on the surface. Is there an answer?

Talking to the children's parents about their child's problems often creates no solution. Sometimes the cause can be found.

Let me ask you a question—could the answer be contained in the first two years of a child's life? I believe yes! cement cracks if not mixed and laid correctly. Cement often looks good but the test of time reveals the hidden truths. So with the child's first two years of life.

Just two short years. A mere 730 days compared to a lifetime, e.g., the biblical 70 years or 25,575 days.

For a child to really know its parents, to feel them, then its parents must spend as much time with their child as possible.

Security, comfort, trust and deep love are some of the "fruit" a child needs to develop correctly—all in two years. A child so very young and defenceless needs all we can give them. This "cementing period" is a major reason for problem children. Orphans and foster children will all naturally have problems in later life. Children with parents, Christian and non-Christian, will also develop into problem children. This is not just a theory of mine but facts backed by child psychologists. The first two years are of immense importance. They must not be ignored.

I will always remember what a mother said to me: "If a child is meant to be bad then he'll be bad—you cannot change him." How dangerously wrong! Yet how many parents think the same way?

What about the child before birth—the child in the womb?

A mother had just given birth to her baby. Immediately a problem arose. The baby would not take its mother's milk. No matter how hard she tried the mother could not get her baby to her breast. Then something remarkable happened. The nurse took the baby from its mother, gave the

baby to another mother who exposed her breasts and immediately the baby sucked for milk.

The mother was advised to go to a psychologist who found the reason for the baby rejecting her milk. Before the baby was born, while still in the womb, its mother did not want it. She wanted an abortion. The baby had felt its mother's rejection even from inside the "safety" of the womb.

When my three children were babies I looked for signs of this cementing process. The holding of my hand, the sucking of my finger, the cuddle of my body, the intense

look into the depths of my eyes. Eye to eye contact I believe to be the most important in this cementing process.

If we neglect our own bodies we get sick, tired and depressed. If we neglect our own flesh and blood then they will suffer too. The world and Australia is full of problem children.

Could this be the result of their first two years being sadly and badly neglected by both mother and father?

As Christian parents we need to realise that God himself gave us our children. He expects us to do the very best for our children. Be the example to your children, of praying with them, reading the Bible (or Bible stories), taking them to church before they are two years old. Little children look, listen and remember even though they might not understand.

As Christians God also expects us to give all we can to our children. We must not fail them.

If we fail them what hope is there for our children, for Australian children and Australia? Our Lord was himself an example. God approved of him. His parents, Mary and Joseph, would not have ignored any part of Jesus' childhood, including his first two years and before that in the womb. His parents were answerable to God for Jesus and their other children. So are we. They knew what God expected of them. Shouldn't we?

*• Dave Vincent is a member of the Mt Druitt, NSW, church. He and his wife Beverley have three children. He has been involved in children's ministry since 1979.*



# Comment

## What You See Is What You Get

by Bob Smith

Thursday nights will never be the same again. That's the night I cook dinner. Actually I manage to get out of cooking by bringing home pizza.

Unfortunately my favourite pizza place has closed down through lack of business. Now this is really sad, because Joe makes wonderful pizzas; much better than the stuff churned out by that international company that packs customers into its attractive premises with their neat, smiling waitresses.

The trouble with Joe's place was that it looked as grotty as he did. Only his friends, and people like me who wandered in through desperation, know what great pizzas he made.

But now he makes them no longer, and even his faithful customers go to the local branch of the international chain. Joe's problem wasn't his pizza; it was his image.

Like it or not, image is an integral part of communicating. We are bombarded daily by people trying to sell products, political parties, ideologies and goodness knows what else.

Most of us have developed efficient methods of closing our minds to this constant information overload. It is just not possible for us to absorb it all.

That makes it all the more vital for communicators to ensure that those first fleeting impressions are as positive as they can possibly be. In most cases people will look no further than that, no matter how good the end product may be.

We in the church are, if we are anything at all, communicators. Our message is the Good News that God loves people and has wonderful plans for their lives. Essentially

it is a message about life—a life that is deeply satisfying, filled with meaning and never ending. But if the impression that meets the church visitor contradicts that message, then nothing we say, write or sing about will count for very much.



The last couple of decades have seen the traditional, mainline denominations throughout the Western world losing mem-

bers quite dramatically. Sadly, included among the drop-outs are large numbers of people whose parents were strong supporters. Barry McMurtrie is quite right when he identifies these people, not as those who have no faith, but rather as those who gave up on the church years ago because it was so deadly boring. They are the products of an image that is the very opposite of the message.

In stark contrast, charismatic churches, to a large extent, are experiencing unprecedented growth. Regardless of what we may think of their theology or practices, their whole ambience is one of life, vitality and joy. The image fits the message.

I firmly believe that the way ahead for Churches of Christ is to occupy the ground between traditional Protestantism, with its (often) theological correctness but air of decay, and the charismatic churches with their (often) theological shakiness but boundless vitality. We should aim for the best of both—sound theology and a vitality that is obvious in the faces of those who greet us even before we enter the church.

The vitality is born in the prayers of the church leaders and nurtured in the sort of worship experience that lifts people out of the dullness of life into the transforming experience of joy.

You never get a second chance to make a first impression.

• Bob Smith is the editor of the *Christian Messenger*, published by the Department of Church Development and Education of Churches of Christ in NSW. This article is reprinted, with permission, from the *Christian Messenger*

## Pontius' Puddle





# Obituaries

## GOWER, Isabel

(18.1.89) Mrs Isabel Gower died suddenly aged 77, and will be sadly missed. For many years Isabel had been under medical care, but seldom did she show her pain or lose her smile; her thought and concern were, as always, for others more than for herself. She was an active member of the church all her life, firstly as a member of the Carlton, Vic. Church of Christ, and latterly, for nearly 30 years, at the Pt Lonsdale Uniting Church where she was an elder. Her community involvement ranged from the Tennis Club (playing competitively until two years ago), Red Cross and the Cottage by the Sea, to generous kindness for all.

## NSW

**LISMORE (Ian Phillips)** 19 students commencing Bethel studies of New Testament ... Great fellowship for 48 who participated in "Guess Who's Coming to Dinner" evening ... Guest speakers included Ransce Salan & George Davis while minister on holidays ... Home Fellowship group continuing second Thursday nights ... Commissioning & dedication of Sunday School & scripture teachers during morning service.

**THORNLEIGH (Franklyn Elliott, Stuart Wesley)** Franklyn & Deanne Elliott & Don McElvenny attended John Wimber's seminar in Melbourne in Feb ... Speakers on 26 Feb were Alan Norton & Phil Scherrer ... Stuart Wesley returned to Thornleigh from WA after the Carlingford College vacation. Two additional first year students from Carlingford have been allocated to Thornleigh namely Trudy Armstrong & Keith Morgan ... Women's World Day of Prayer held in chapel 3 March, guest speaker Marjorie Baker.

**MAITLAND (R.N. Hawkins)** George Capsis, chaplain to Cro-

nulla Rugby League team, guest speaker at Friday family service. At our Saturday morning Celebrity Breakfast spoke on his pioneer work with folk at Kings Cross ... Dr K. Johnston & G. Rose speakers whilst minister fulfilling Conf Pres responsibilities ... Mrs Hawkins speaker at Tamworth's Womens World Day of Prayer ... Eastercamp at Swansea campsite looking good. Lloyd Irwin youth minister Turramurra is leader. Theme "True Colours."

## Vic

**CHADSTONE (P & C Bradley)** Peter & Cathy have commenced a team ministry ... Thelma Adams farewelled prior to her move to Mitcham ... A delegate from World Peace Conference a recent speaker ... Peter Bradley's parents visited from SA ... 19 shared in a barbecue on the Yarra ... 14 travelled to Frankston to share in worship & fellowship ... Australian Church Women meet for World Day of Prayer in our chapel for this year.

**BURWOOD (Peter Wing-Tang)** Mission goal fulfilled with \$1,500 forwarded to Federal Aborigines Board ... Two members of church board currently attending special church leaders seminar ... 17 young adults & three leaders enjoyed weekend at Rye thanks to hospitality of Wilson family ... Building extensions including enlarged foyer & entrance, prayer room & ministers study etc. nearing completion ... 66 members & friends enjoyed evening at home of Joy & Graeme Hammer raising over \$450 towards building fund.

**RED HILL (Ken Clinton)** Two much loved couples, Harold & Lois Galbraith (to Montrose) & George & Jean Mullen (to Warburton) were farewelled recently ... 40 men inspired by visiting Noble Park team at breakfast on 18 Feb ... 20 young people enjoyed picnic at Shoreham Beach 26 Feb ... Box Hill &

Red Hill Prime of Life groups combined for fun, fellowship & a BBQ at George & Shirley Daff's home 18 Feb.

**DANDENONG (G. Foon, G. Elsdon)** Induction service held on 5 February for new ministers Graeme Foon & Greg Elsdon. This was followed by morning tea ... Young people raising money for bus by doing different projects ... Small groups still meeting & doing Serendipity series ... Malcolm Drew had his appendix removed ... Wynne & Clarrie Brough celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary recently.

**RICHMOND (J. Sharpe)** John & Christine Sharpe welcomed into membership & commenced a part-time ministry for 1989 while studying at CCTC ... Trilingual service held with Greek & Vietnamese congregations on 12 Feb followed by fellowship tea & farewell to Daryl Colless & Fofey Katsila ... Church has appreciated the contribution of visiting speakers I. Lawson, A. Matheson & E. Ots ... Mrs Wardrope improved in health but still not well enough to attend services ... Planning is underway for centenary celebrations in Oct.

**OAKLEIGH (L.S. Dewberry)** Church has invited minister to continue ministry until Jan 1991 ... Dorothy Geyer spoke at morning service ... CWF enjoyed coach trip to Tootgarook & Sea Wind Nepean State Park ... Jenny Ashton, a student at Mulgrave Theological College, has been commissioned as pastoral visitor to church ... Reg Woodward & Alf Neville in hospital ... Annual reports show slight decline in membership but church hopeful of future.

**WARRNAMBOOL (Peter Broadbent)** World day of Prayer held in our chapel, hosted by our ladies and CRC ladies. Speaker Joan Gordon, CRC pastor's wife ... Over 50 attended church family camp at Halls Gap led by Sunshine Ministries ... Bill Crouch of Baptist Church recent guest speaker ... Pastor & married couple teaching

RE this year.

**PRESTON (J McCormick)** Glad Cooksley & Linda Morgan attended Federal Conference in Canberra ... Dorothy Geyer spoke at a morning service ... CWF President Lois Smith spoke at our Women's Fellowship group ... Open Door is being very well attended.

**MANIFOLD HEIGHTS (Paul Downie, Max Ball)** Sunday School different this year. Good News Club transferred from Monday to being held during church service after communion. Former teachers were thanked, especially Superintendent Mrs Jeanne Bain (34 years), Mrs Miriam Mann (35 years), Mrs Audrey Milligan ... CWF birthday enjoyed. Speaker Mrs Gladys McKenzie ... 12 members attended Wimber Conference ... Minister Paul Downie attending Grad Dip Min intensive study at Mulgrave campus ... Planned giving leader Ian Tippet. Offerings increased ... Loving sympathy extended to Smith family.

**BAYSWATER (Reg Cambridge)** Two new groups commenced Feb. Drop In Centre & a Friendship Group. Encouraging start ... Youth camp at Walkerville ... Special guest service with Andre Voth from Mission USSR. This service was a real eye-opener ... Ian Hughes new Sunday School Superintendent ... Board held special meeting to discuss 1989 a year of consolidation & outreach.

**WARRACKNABEAL, BRIM (Rhonda & Kevin Luttrell)** On 12 Feb the induction of Rhonda & Kevin Luttrell took place. It was conducted by Rhonda's brother Keith Pitt of the Parkdale church. Afternoon tea followed the well attended service & a time of fellowship when the whole family was welcomed by members of other churches in the town ... Three Bible study prayer groups have recommenced with good numbers attending ... Also good attendances at morning worship services ... David & Robyn Harmer & family farewelled to Papua New Guinea.

# Church News

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# Church News

SA

**OWEN COMBINED (Phillip Gardner)** New year began with a covenant service ... Youth Club recommenced with 39 high school students, many without church backgrounds. The club combined with the Mallala club three years ago & provides social activities in a Christian setting ... Fellowship catered for a wedding raising funds for necessary building maintenance ... Sunday School involved in Harvest Thanksgiving service with emphasis on the many gifts & talents God gives ... One new elder elected ... Minister & wife attended John Wimber conference.

**HENLEY BEACH (Brian Hill)** Film "The Calling", true story on missionaries in Chile, shown on 12 Feb ... Hazel Skuce at fellowship tea & evening service on 19 Feb. She showed slides on India. Hazel returned to India on 25 Feb ... Church again financially supporting Shirin, Hazel's Indian student, this year ... Combined communion service held in the St Agnes Anglican Church at Grange on 21 Feb ... Church involved in the Bill Newman Crusade in Adelaide, 10-19 March.

**DULWICH/ROSE PARK UNITED (Rob Williams, Roger Brown)** AGM of Dulwich church (which retains identity for some purposes) was told membership increased from 40 to 45; year's giving to Brotherhood \$8,000. Uniting Church members held their AGM at same time. Unity of parish shown when some were not sure which meeting to attend ... Newly enlarged Parish Fellowship group's opening 1989 meeting was at Valmai & Deane Radbone's home at Belair.

**FLINDERS PARK (Keith Miller)** Four baptisms in Dec ... In Jan Keith Miller was inducted into ministry by Herb Prime. Keith, Meredith & family welcomed into fellowship at Flinders Park/Torrens ville ... Evening services focussing on Genesis, numbers increasing weekly. Musical backing by young people ... Junior youth group, Rappers, & Kids Club resumed averaging 74 young people weekly ... AGM preceded by tea. 92 present. Great time of fellowship.

Qld

**CAMP HILL (D.F. Smith)** Church attendance has doubled in past two years ... Monthly men's FISH group (Fishermen Interested in Spiritual Happiness) very success-

ful ... Five new members welcomed in recently. Clive Muller baptised by Vic Boettcher MBE ... 12 babies born to church families over past two years & another four soon ... Church saddened at death of Henry Gruber, aged 87 ... Boys' Brigade restarted after many years with eight trained leaders & 30 boys ... Ladies Bible studies commenced Thursday mornings & Wednesday nights ... Church congratulates Craig Sherrin MLA, church deacon, on his appointment as Minister for Family Services in the Queensland Government.

**SUNNYBANK (Mark Willis, Randy Edwards)** Randy Edwards ministry began 5 Feb ... Church attendance up 20. Midweek Bible study attendance average 65, Randy leading ... Senior youth group Bible study attendance 20-25. Number of university students attending ... Tweenagers group started ... Junior youth led by Lisa Willis ... Valentines day banquet great success ... Sonshine Games 9-12 June ... Welcomed into fellowship: Randy & Marie Edwards, Andrew Richards, Kieron Morgan-Caine (student minister).

Tas

**LAUNCESTON (Rod Foster)** Henry Dubbeld interviewed on 26 Feb about his year in Scotland exchange teaching ... Pastoral Care Committee kept busy with visitation ... Colin Cripps underwent successful heart surgery in Adelaide on 28 Feb.

Recommend "The Australian Christian"

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Re: Staff Aptitude Evaluation

Thank you for submitting the resumes of the 12 men you have picked for management positions in your new organisation. All of them have now taken our battery of tests, and we have not only run the results through our computer but have also arranged personal interviews for each of them with our psychologist and vocational aptitude consultant.

It is the staff opinion that most of your nominees are lacking in background, education and vocational aptitude for the type of enterprise you are undertaking. They do not have a team concept. We would recommend that you continue your search for persons of experience in managerial ability and proven capability.

Simon-Peter is emotionally unstable and given to fits of temper. Andrew has absolutely no qualities of leadership. The two brothers, James and John, the sons of Zebedee, place personal interest above company loyalty. Thomas demonstrates a questioning attitude that would tend to undermine morale. We feel that it is our duty to tell you that Matthew has been blacklisted by the Greater Jerusalem Better Business Bureau. James, the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddeus definitely have radical leanings, and they both registered a high score on the manic depressive scale.

One of the candidates, however, shows great potential. He is a man of ability and resourcefulness, meets people well, has a keen business mind and has contacts in high places. He is highly motivated, ambitious and innovative. We recommend Judas Iscariot as your controller and right hand man. All the other profiles are self-explanatory.

We wish you every success in your new venture.

(Author unknown. Reprinted, with permission, from World Evangelization.)

# The Last Word

There is no rest for a messenger till the message is delivered.

—Joseph Conrad

I love this place. I've come here for the last ten years and I look back on them as the best years of my life. Which'll give you some idea of what a miserable life I've been leading!

\*\*\*\*\*

Teacher: I have went. That's wrong isn't it?

Student: Yes, teacher.

Teacher: Why is it wrong?

Student: Because you ain't went yet.

\*\*\*\*\*

Boy, to butcher: Is killing a pig murder?

Butcher: No, my boy. Murder is assaulting with intent to kill. The other is killing with intent to salt.

\*\*\*\*\*

I bought a wooden whistle and it wooden whistle. I bought a steel whistle and it steel wooden whistle. So I bought a tin whistle and now I tin whistle.

\*\*\*\*\*

What's your name?

Herbert.

But what's your full name?

I'm still Herbert, empty or full.

\*\*\*\*\*

Walker: Excuse me, but if I cut through this paddock would I be able to catch the 5.15 train?

Farmer: I think so. But if my bull sees you you'll catch the 4.30!

\*\*\*\*\*

Art Teacher: With one stroke of a brush the great painter Joshua Reynolds could change the smile on a face to a frown.

Student: So can my mother!

\*\*\*\*\*

Dad, I ran all the way home today behind a bus and saved 50c!

Stupid child! Why didn't you run home behind a taxi and save \$10!

\*\*\*\*\*

Left ear to right ear:

"Funny we haven't met as we live on the same block."

\*\*\*\*\*



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