

# THE AUSTRALIAN CHRISTIAN

NATIONAL JOURNAL OF CHURCHES OF CHRIST IN AUSTRALIA

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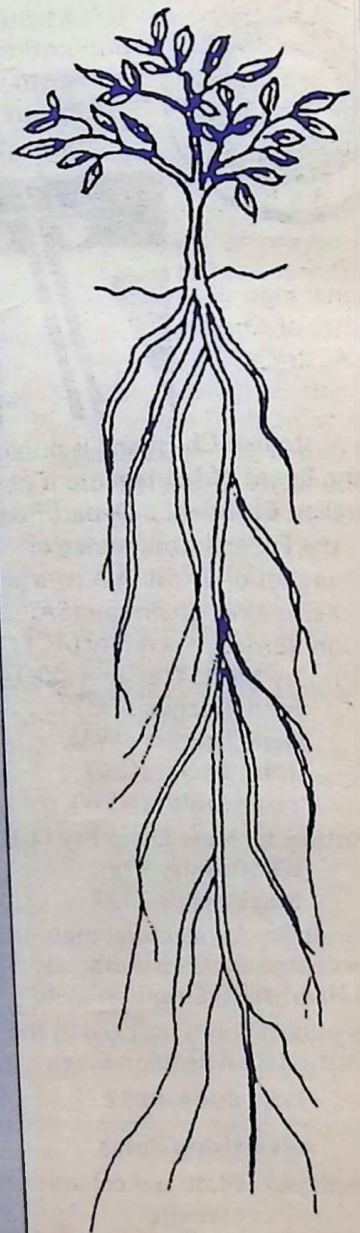
"A tree planted by the rivers of water...bringing forth fruit"  
Psalm 1:3

#### *In this issue:*

<i>Shark Proof</i> .....	7
<i>Ministers' Temptations</i> .....	22
<i>Spiritualism</i> .....	23
<i>Marketing Churches of Christ</i> .....	24

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# THE AUSTRALIAN CHRISTIAN

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## Guest Editorial

*Naturally, we would all jump at the opportunity to  
"Advance Churches of Christ"...wouldn't we?*

# Keep It in the Family

by Bob Smith

**M**any of you will remember the former campaign to encourage Australians to choose Australian products rather than imports. Its theme was "Be Australian, Buy Australian".

Like the more recent "Advance Australia" program, it was an appeal to patriotism.

The logic behind it was that by buying Australian products we would support the national economy and ultimately ourselves.

How could any real Australian do less?

Experience, through this campaign and others since, has shown that more is needed than mere appeals to patriotism or long-term self-interest.

For most people the decision over which product to purchase is made on the basis of price, quality and brand name.

The general assumption (often, but not always, correct) is that locally produced goods are not as good as the imports.

Patriotism can't compete with price, despite what the current account deficit is doing to us!

Imagine, for a moment, a situation whereby churches and church members could purchase goods and services through the church and have the profits channelled back into the work of the church.

Would that fact alone be enough to change our buying habits even if, by shopping around, we could do a little better?

What if the church organisation was prepared to lower its profit to match our best price?

Naturally we would all jump at the opportunity to "Advance the Churches of Christ" just as we want to "Advance Australia"—or would we?

Christian Projects is, by now, well known in Churches of Christ.

Its aims are to fund innovative programs that develop leadership and outreach and help build an Australia-wide identity for Churches of Christ.

In support of this it has donated just under \$300,000 to members, local churches and brotherhood departments.

Its aim is to be giving away \$10,000 each week by the year 2000.

To make this possible, CP is building its fund through a commercial arm that provides a range of goods and services to departments, churches and members.

These include a full range of stationery items, Christian videos, insurance, an investment bond, investment advice, travel (both personal and group), offering envelopes and other goods and services.

For no charge you can phone us for details and place your orders (008 242 904). If your church has a CP agency, we will even share our profits with you.

I appeal to all of you, particularly ministers, church and departmental leaders: In the long-term interest of Churches of Christ, keep your business in the family.

• Bob Smith is the Executive Director of the NSW Department of Church Development and Education and is the Chairman of Christian Projects.

## Three Colleges Discuss Vital Issues

Representatives of the three Churches of Christ theological colleges met at Mulgrave to discuss matters of vital importance related to training ministers for Churches of Christ throughout Australia.

The principals and some board and faculty members of Kenmore Christian College, the Churches of Christ in NSW Theological College and the Churches of Christ Theological College spent two full days (24-25 January) getting to know each other more and talking about their goals and visions. The gathering was chaired by Dr Lew Born and minutes were taken by Joan Pye.

One very helpful part of the process was the sharing of perceptions. Participants met, first, in their own college groups to list perceptions of their own college and of the other two colleges.

These perceptions were then shared with the others in a combined group consisting of all participants. This honest sharing cleared up a number of

misconceptions about each college.

As one person said later, "We have become aware that many of our ideas are misconceptions, perhaps related to the past, but certainly not applicable to the present."

This sharing also generated some important agenda items for discussion.

Other agenda items were taken from the various recommendations made by the Federal Conference's Task Force on Theological Education and Ministerial Training.

The two days allowed discussion of only some of these agenda items in depth, but it was agreed that from now on representatives of the three colleges would meet on at least an annual basis to discuss matters of mutual concern.

By continuing to meet the colleges will be able to learn even more about each other's approach to ministerial training and to strengthen and support each other in their common goals.

## Easter '90: Christians Unite to Take the Initiative



Easter '90 is an ecumenical gathering in NSW expected to draw tens of thousands of Christians into a bold public statement of unity, faith and commitment.

For the 50,000 Christians who attended the National Prayer Gathering in Canberra in 1988 there was a strong sense that it was the start of a new beginning for the church in Australia.

Many felt that the gathering, and the encircling of the new Parliament House with prayer, represented a major spiritual victory.

Since then the mainline churches have committed themselves to making the 90s a decade of mission. This Easter will be a time of strong Christian witness. Through a wide range of activities, Australian Christians will reaffirm the great truths of Easter. In NSW the churches are coming together under the banner of the "Easter '90, Aussie Awakening" to celebrate, and reflect on the meaning of Easter and pray for their city and nation. The emphasis will be on those aspects of the faith that all Christians share.

The event will be launched by a unity dinner for church heads on 28 March at Parliament House.

On 1 April a rally will be held in Canberra from where the torch run around the world from the Mount of Ascension in Israel by YWAM will once more be sent forth for Palm Sunday rallies in four regional centres around Sydney. During Holy Week the torches will

converge on Parramatta, the geographic heart of Sydney, for a Good Friday rally.

The quiet, reflective nature of the Good Friday rally will be transformed on Easter Sunday by a massive celebration march. Three contingents of marchers will converge on the centre of Sydney to form a giant cross in George Street. Here there will be a period of prayer before children release hundreds of green and gold balloons representing the prayers of the people of God.

The march will then progress to the Domain, where the celebration will climax with a time of music, testimony, worship and prayer for Sydney and the nation.

Other Christian events will include a special Youth Alive Easter program at Homebush for youth from charismatic churches and a sunrise service on Easter day on the forecourt of the Sydney Opera House, hosted by Wesley Central Mission and telecast nationally by Channel 7.

For the first time, the official entertainment at the Royal Easter Show on Easter Sunday night will be a large-scale dramatic presentation of the life of Christ, "Easter Alive", produced and directed by David Johnston, from International Creative Ministries.

In Griffith an original, high quality musical, "Nicodemus", will be presented.

A special 24-hour info-line has been established to provide updated information on the Easter '90 event. The number is 00555 2115.



Participants in the discussions outside the Churches of Christ Theological College at Mulgrave

## Induction at Owen



Julie, Kristina, Luke and Doug Walladge

Doug Walladge was inducted as the first Churches of Christ minister of the Owen, SA, Combined Congregation at a service on 12 February.

Doug, Julie and their children, Luke and Kristina, had spent the previous month in Owen while undertaking deputation work following their return in December from Vanuatu.

During their three-and-a-half-year ministry there Doug had been a lecturer at Banmatmat Bible College.

He also updated the college library.

Ministers from Churches of Christ and the Uniting Church were involved in the induction, as well as representatives from the seven churches in the parish.

Doug's major responsibility will be for the oversight of the Owen, Pinery and Windsor congregations.

State Minister, Keith Horne, preached the message and Rev Kelvin Benn led the service. Keith Aird was among those who took part and Overseas Missions Board Executive Director, Jeff May, also attended.

## New Minister for Werribee

Werribee, Vic, Church was crowded for the recent induction of Roger Risson to ministry there.

The Sunday afternoon service began with singing led by Rosemary Wilkinson, and the service itself was conducted by Daryl Wilkinson, elder of the church. Bob Geake, a senior member, welcomed Roger and his family to the fellowship in Werribee.

The charge to Roger was given by Ted Keating, minister of Nunawading, Vic, church, and the words of Paul to Timothy—the words of encouragement for his ministry and his faith—were read.

Ted Keating reminded the congregation of their responsibility in a priesthood of all believers; this did not mean church members do all the serv-

ice and only let the minister choose the last hymn; nor the church board automatically vetoing any new idea the minister might have. It was to mean that the ministry of the church in Werribee was to be shared by all who worshipped there.

Roger Risson recently concluded nine years of ministry with the church at York Street, Ballarat, Vic.

Originally a primary school teacher, he has had 15 years in the ministry, at North Turramurra (Sydney), Albert Park (Adelaide), then York Street. His wife Anne is a nurse; their son Simon is working in Ballarat, while Anthony and Jarrod are attending secondary college in Werribee.

Werribee church is looking forward to its ministry in the future with Roger's leadership.



Ted Keating with Roger Risson during the induction service at Werribee



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### —PROGRAM MARCH—JUNE—

- 31 March Faith Issues Encountered by Survivors of Sexual Abuse
- 29 April Women and Worship
- 17 June Is Healing Possible for Survivors of Sexual Abuse?

Retreat Leader: Des Purnell  
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## The Scriptures in 1,928 Languages

1,928 is the total number of languages into which at least one book of the Bible has been translated, according to the 1989 Scripture Language Report published by the United Bible Societies (UBS).

21 languages last year received at least one book of the Bible for the first time. It is estimated there are between 3,000 and 6,000 languages in the world. Translators with the UBS are currently working on first-time translation projects in 424 languages.

Tens of thousands in Papua New Guinea rejoiced to have the whole Bible for the first time in their major lingua franca, Tok Pisin, and complete Bibles were also produced in Bawm (Bangladesh), Lahu (Northern Thailand and Myanmar—formerly Burma) and Trukese (Micronesia). Three of these productions were by Bible Societies.

Bible Societies also produced three of the five New Testaments in languages for which these are the first recorded Scriptures. Entirely new ground was also broken in Saame, a Lapp language used in the USSR and Scandinavia, Romani, the gypsy language of Yugoslavia, and Gumatj, an Aboriginal language of Australia. Some North American Indians gladly received their first complete New Testament in Ojibwe.

In theory, more than 80% of the world's population has access to the Bible or at least a portion of it in a language they can speak or understand. But

this estimate is misleading considering factors of availability (such as the great lack of Bibles in Eastern Europe), geographical isolation, illiteracy, political and social problems, and the difficulty of grasping meaning in a language which is not the mother tongue.

General Secretary of UBS, Dr Cirilo Rigos, said, "Although we are breaking new ground in languages that have never before had translations of the Scriptures, and this is important, we must not forget the work of significant revision and new translation that is going on and is often overlooked. Many cultures and languages have no access to a modern version of the Scriptures and the translation they are using is sometimes over 100 years old."

Some of the languages listed in the Scripture Language Report are ancient and others, used at one time for missionary outreach, have fallen into disuse because of ethnographic changes.

It must also be remembered that a listed language does not necessarily mean those Scriptures are currently available in that language. The report includes Scriptures translated and published by many agencies, not just the United Bible Societies.

A summary, by geographical area and type of publication, of the number of different languages and dialects in which publication of at least one book of the Bible ("portions") had been registered as of 31 December 1989.

Continent or Region	Portions	Testaments	Bibles	Total
Africa	228	206	119	553
Asia	225	158	96	479
Oceania	152	125	26	303
Europe	105	24	58	187
North America	43	19	7	69
Latin America	144	183	7	334
Constructed Languages	2	0	1	3
<b>Totals</b>	<b>899</b>	<b>715</b>	<b>314</b>	<b>1,928</b>

## Shepherding Sheripha

During the 1973-74 famine two sisters, Suverna and Sheripha, were assisted by the Churches of Christ feeding program at Baramati, India. There were 10 centres in the villages and two in Baramati. After we had closed the programs the two girls continued to come each day to be fed.

I was away from Baramati for two months. When I returned I made inquiries as to where the two girls were and found that they had been sold to a circus that was passing through. Some interested people managed to get them back. From June 1975 they were in the Shrigonda Girls' Home.

In March 1989 Sheripha sat for her matric exam but failed. She returned to Baramati to be with her mother and her married brother to study for the subjects that she had to resit. In October Sheripha started work at the Ashwood Memorial Hospital as a nurses aide.

Both Suverna and Sheripha have wanted to be baptised. Suverna must wait until she comes of age. On 10 December Sheripha was baptised at the Daund church. I was present with Nalini Jadhav who had cared for Sheripha at Shrigonda for 14 years. Pastor Benjamin Tiwari, in welcoming Sheripha into the church, challenged the congregation to help in shepherding this new member of the church family who had



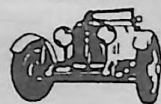
Sheripha Ajit Shaikh

come from a Muslim background. To the family in Australia who supported Sheripha for 14 years, from Nalini and myself, I say thank you for helping by your prayers to bring Sheripha to the Lord.

Today at least 50% of the children in Baramati Boys' Home and Shrigonda Girls' Home are from a nominal Christian background or a non-Christian background. You too can help by your prayers and support to bring these young people to the Lord.

More sponsors are needed to assist in the Indian child support program. Sponsorship is \$160 per year. If you are interested please contact the Overseas Mission Board, PO Box 320, Unley 5061. —Hazel Skuce

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## Glen Waverley's "New Building"



Part of the revamped "New Horizons" Bookroom

The Glen Waverley, Vic, church celebrated a further chapter in its history on 11 February when, after almost eight months of disruption to the activities of the church, the "new building" was opened. More than 500 attended a special worship service in the afternoon led by the senior minister, Ron Elbourne. The building was officially opened by Phyl Davis, Vic-Tas Conference President. One of the hymns sung on the occasion was written especially for the day by Margaret Croxford, one of the secretarial staff of the church.

The service also marked the 19th anniversary of Ron Elbourne's ministry with the church at Glen Waverley.

The Mayor of Waverley, Cr Barbara Thompson, a member of the Uniting Church, brought the best wishes of the city. She outlined some of the ways that the Glen Waverley church has been providing a community service throughout its history and how it is continuing this service.

The architect, Robert Bienvenu, explained how the decision was made to remodel the church building. Robert grew up at Glen Waverley. He also explained that the builders,

Merkon Constructions Pty Ltd, were selected even they were not the lowest tenderer as they were willing to work alongside the church to ensure that services and other church activities could continue in the building during construction. Peter Mercoullia, representing the builders, then handed over the keys to the building to the two secretarial staff (Margaret Croxford and Pam Steele).

Other members of the ministry team, Lindsay Croxford (pastoral minister) and Doug Fitzpatrick (youth minister) participated. Music items were brought by "Frontier" and John Marshall. It was announced to the congregation that John Marshall has been appointed as part-time musical director of the church. It was also announced that Dianne Whiteside had been appointed for two half-days a week to develop the church growth aspects of the church.

### Renovations

The final cost of the project including all furnishings etc is in the vicinity of \$5.5 million. The church has given sacrificially and were also assisted by the Properties Corporation, who loaned the church \$500,000, one of the

Corporation's largest loans. The church, however, sees this as just one further development in its life. It is looking forward to further expansion as the evangelistic impact of its services meets the needs of people in the community.

The church's outside appearance has changed little. The only alteration was at the entrance, which was "tidied up", enabling the development of a foyer and access to offices. The office staff have better working areas and the pastoral minister and youth minister now have their own offices. There is also an office for a Christian education minister, and the church is looking to make an appointment to develop this area of church life in the future.

A "Community Centre" has been developed. This room, set out with tables and chairs, is available for the community to drop in and enjoy fellowship. Tea and coffee and light meals are available. The "New Horizons" Bookroom is open four days a week and is well-stocked for use by both church people and the community, providing not only an outreach ministry but also one of encouragement to Christians in developing their faith.

The main development in the alteration has been to fully revamp the auditorium. By pulling out one internal wall and turning the auditorium around, 500 can be seated instead of 200. An extensive sound system was installed including an hearing loop in the building to aid those with hearing problems.

Work was also carried out on the other two halls in the complex to make them more attractive and functional. About the only area in which little was altered was the kitchen facilities and even here there are plans for improvements.

### Programs

All involved with the church are now looking forward to living out the slogan of the church, "A Community

Church, in the Heart of the Community, with the Community at Heart", in the new complex.

The Community Centre has really seen people making use of the facility since the opening.

It is an ideal location for meeting the needs of the lonely and for friendship evangelism, linked through the bookroom.

"The Back Door", a drop-in centre for youth under age 18 is now operating on Mondays and Wednesdays from 3.15-5.30 pm. Doug Fitzpatrick arranged for a special door at the rear of the church for this group's use. The centre has been awaiting the completion of the building for its launch.

A program for 1990 has been released, with an extensive list of activities in the church.

Two new evening fellowship groups have commenced in the last couple of weeks on both Tuesday and Wednesday evenings.

Ron Elbourne is offering a seminar on "Self Esteem" through the church's College for Christians program, which has many community people attending.



Peter Mercoullia (builder) handing over the keys to the building to office staff Pam Steele and Margaret Croxford

# Shark Proof

by Merle Peacock

**O**n 4 February, the Warwick, WA, church paper asked the question "Would you believe Merle Peacock caught a shark on Wednesday?" Fortunately Merle had photographic proof of the event in her handbag but still had to explain how she achieved her great "catch".

No, she didn't have a special rod, or line, or bait. In fact, she simply walked down to the beach at Marmion to have an early morning swim, decided to go for a walk to get warmed up before braving the chilly waters, and happened to see the 85 cm shark stranded on the reef in a very low tide. It was still breathing so she tried to do her RSPCA life-saving act for the day, picked up the shark and carried it to the Lennard Street pool and hoped to see the creature swim away to freedom. But no, poor Sammy (or Samantha?) was too exhausted to swim and was soon washed

up on the sandy shore. Merle next attempted baptising the shark in a nearby rock pool while she re-baptised herself in the Indian Ocean (by total immersion of course). Ten minutes later it was obvious that the poor shark was almost at death's door, so Merle wrapped it up in her beach towel and carried it home to show Mum! To mum's horror the beautiful grey sea creature actually moved while on the back patio table—its last and final movement.

By this time Merle's sister, brother-in-law and neighbours had become involved in the drama, photographs were taken, and Merle and sister Beryl spent two and a half hours working out how to cut a gummy shark into meal size steaks. The slimy unwanted parts were given to a fisherman neighbour for bait.

Spinster Merle now considers she is better qualified to be



Merle Peacock with the shark

a "fisher of fish" rather than a "fisher of men"! Could it possibly have something to do with the fact that she is a female, which resulted in her call to discipleship being reversed from the Matthew 4 account?

Remembering Simon Peter's vision at Joppa (Acts 10), the Peacocks and Hancocks decided that what God had provided, although without scales, could not be called common or unclean and was meant to be eaten. Be assured, dear readers, the solid white flesh is extremely palatable—and isn't the freezer a blessing?

Octogenarian, Elsie Peacock, appreciated the unexpected gift from her daughters for her 59th wedding anniversary on 31 January 1990.

And this is one "fishy" story that is absolutely true.

• Merle Peacock is a member of the Warwick, WA, church.

## Victorian Postprimary School Chaplains

**T**here are eight Churches of Christ chaplains who are working in postprimary state schools in Victoria through the Council for Christian Education in Schools. These chaplains have roles of teaching and pastoral care to the students, staff and parents of the school, but also extend their work in their local communities.

All positions are financially supported by a group of hard-working people who are members of chaplaincy committees.



Back row: Peter Cannon (Shepparton High School), Leigh Mellberg (Mildura Secondary College), Warren Condron (Sale Technical School), front row: Cliff Blowers (Croydon High School), Bruce Waldron (Warragul High School), Russell Wesley (Geelong High School), Lawrie Barker (Oberon High School, Geelong) and Peter Richter (Kerang Technical High School)

Have you thought of helping  
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Why not include us in your will?  
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## Letters to the Editor

### Youth Camping

To the Editor,

I was very interested to read Ken Patterson's letter ("AC" 3 February) concerning the first youth camps held in Victoria. Actually, my father, Leslie McCallum, when secretary of the Young People's Department, organised the first two camps over the Christmas-New Year periods of 1927-28 and 1928-29. These camps were held at Geelong and Ballarat.

In 1987 Miss Vi Crouch, one of the first campers, alerted the Victorian Department of Mission, Education and Development to the fact that it was 60 years since the first camp was held. Don Smith then arranged a lunch at the Nunawading church, which several of the early campers were able to attend.

When my father moved from Melbourne to the ministry of the Balaklava, SA, church in April 1929, William Gale took over as secretary of the Young People's Department. I remember the leadlight-fronted cabinet that belonged to the Department being taken from our front room and handed over to Mr Gale before we left for South Australia.

—Marjorie Whiting  
(Mt Waverley, Vic)

### Breaking Down Walls

To the Editor,

Keste Lamb, a member of the Modbury, SA, church, recently returned from a student exchange in West Germany. She brought back a chunk of the once infamous but now celebrated Berlin Wall!

This morsel of masonry was a focus in 11 February's service for an open time of church prayer. We remembered how, just as even that most impenetrable of human barriers was broken down—as is now happening in the Eastern bloc and, dare we hope, beginning to take place in South Africa—the Holy Spirit penetrates the walls that separate human beings. Many took part in the open prayer session, giving thanks that many were discovering new freedoms, and interceding

because of the responsibilities and risks that accompany those freedoms—globally and within our own church communities.

Often the "Letters to the Editor" page reveals the ugly walls that continue to isolate folk in our churches. This "revealing", far from being bad, can inform our efforts in intercession and action to prepare the way for the Spirit to break down the walls that continue to separate.

—Dennis Ryle  
(Modbury, SA)

### Christian Political Candidates

To the Editor,

Christians should support their brothers and sisters in Christ.

Unless a man knows how to run his family well he has no hope of assisting in the running of the church—let alone a nation!

Candidates must be of elder character for a start. Assessing this in relation to each electorate is the duty of every Christian.

What did Jesus do? He related to several groups: (1) to close friends and to sinners; (2) to the religious leaders; (3) to the political leaders of his day.

How are we to handle this third area as Christians today? One can write letters, or one can visit a parliamentarian. However, to be able to speak to the debate it is essential a voice of truth be elected.

A voice unaffected by the Labor or Liberal "party policy" is required. A voice that will be strong, and sure to speak the truth, despite the lobby pressure from different groups.

I therefore appeal to the people who stand for Christ to join with the others who care. Pray for the wisdom to know where this nation is heading, and to have the fortitude to vote effectively for the sake of the kingdom of God.

—Peter D. Olney  
(Chairman, Victorian Executive, Call to Australia)

[This letter has been edited to fit the 200 word limit for Letters to the Editor. We believe that there

are Christians standing for all political parties and among the independent candidates at this election. The point this letter makes about considering the qualities of all candidates needs to be considered by all readers. Printing this letter does not imply a recommendation for any one party or group.—Editor]

### I'm In Debt

To the Editor,

Some time ago you printed an item regarding my health and pointing up my likely future ("AC" 2 December). Within a few days people from all over our Australian brotherhood made contact with Fern and me, expressing their concern and assuring us of their continued prayers. Friends whose hands and voices we have not touched or heard since

college days, folk from early ministries and many with whom we had lost all touch called in via the mail.

It is an almost impossible task to write to all, so through the church paper may I say "thankyou" for your concern, your prayers and for once again being part of my immediate scene. You'll never know how much it has meant to Fern and me, and we feel a real sense of belonging to "something" far larger than any earthly expression of humankind.

According to the medicos I will never walk again, but as I said to one them, "All things are possible to God!" So, through your continued prayers and good will I may yet walk in on you sometime!

—Eric and Fern Hollard  
(Glenelg, SA)

## Letters from Tertius

### Why Go to Church?

To the Editor,

Last Sunday night we had a sort of "testimony" time about why people go to church.

Some said because the Bible said we should. Others were attracted by the fellowship. Some said they went to get spiritual food, and others a shot in the arm. Some liked the singing, especially when it was jazzed up a bit, and the more intellectual types liked the sermons. A few even said that they went to worship God, which of course we all do at church, but we can worship him anywhere nevertheless.

It was all a bit of a surprise to me. I had always thought that we go to church because we are the church. If our bit of the church happens to meet at the Lord's Table at a particular time, we are there because we are part of that bit of the church.

My wife reminds me of this brilliant logic of mine when I renege about going out on Sunday nights. She says that the church is making its corporate witness (she's up on these expressions), and we are the church, so we can't stand (or sit in front of telly) aside from it.

For the same reason I go to working bees (often grumbling and reluctant) because if the church property needs attention, the church attends to it. I don't expect my neighbours to mow my lawn.

I suppose there's a limit to such involvement, but if the church does important major things, then I'll be part of them, because as the church I can't contract out.

Nothing terribly righteous or spiritual about this! Just common sense! I elected to become part of the church, so what the church does I have elected to do.

If the singing is good and the people friendly and the sermons are short and sharp and to the point, that is a bonus.

See you in church,  
Tertius

## Federal Home Evangelism

Each year many of the major agencies of Federal Conference have special offering dates to raise a large proportion of their finance. One department that is not very well known and does not have a special offering day is **Federal Home Evangelism**, which raises its money by a letter to churches once a year asking for a contribution equivalent to 75 cents per member to finance the work.

### What Does FHE Do?

The Federal Conference constitution requires the FHE Board "be entrusted with the provision of assistance for evangelism and church development in the Australian Territories, and subject to approval by Federal Conference, in any place within the States where the Board's assistance is requested by the relevant State."

Currently FHE is supporting the churches at Darwin, Tuggeranong, ACT, and Cairns (through the Queensland Department of Church Development & Education).

### History

The first church to receive FHE (not its name at the time) was **Canberra**. A lease was made to Churches of Christ in June 1952 for the land on which the Ainslie church is now situated. In 1945 Gordon Stirling became the first Church of Christ minister in Canberra.

The next church to receive federal assistance was **Townsville**. This support terminated in October 1972. It was to have ended at the end of 1971 but Cyclone Althea postponed things a little.

In 1967 churches being supported were Canberra (Ainslie and Lyons), Townsville, Broken Hill and Albany, WA. At that time \$4,000 was raised annually and the subsidy to the church was \$30 per week for Canberra and \$41 per week for the other churches. The suggested contribution rate was 20 cents per member.

In October 1969 the subsidy for the Canberra church was transferred from the Lyons

church to the newly formed **Belconnen** congregation.

Assistance for the new work at Darwin commenced in 1979. At that time the suggested contribution was raised to 50 cents per member.

By 1983 there were only three churches being supported through FHE: Darwin, Canberra (Belconnen) and Cairns. During 1989 the subsidy paid to the Canberra churches was transferred to the new congregation at Tuggeranong.

Currently the churches receive a subsidy of \$100 per week.

### Tuggeranong

Situated in the growing southern area of Canberra this church currently meets in the **Wanniassa Primary School**. In December Don Herbert was inducted as its first full-time minister. Attendances have been excellent since his arrival, with an average attendance of 70 every Sunday morning. Cell groups are operating well. At the moment the church is featuring the James Dobson film series "Focus on the Family" over six Sunday nights as an outreach to the community. It is also having a special emphasis on the Christian side of the Passover on 24 March with Reuben Gossens, a Christian Jew who formerly held a leadership role in the Sydney Synagogue.

### Darwin

Currently the Darwin church is looking at building up its core membership of those who plan to stay long-term in Darwin rather than relying on the leadership of transients. Darwin has for many years suffered as those in leadership have left after several years in the church. Currently the church is again recovering from the annual December exodus.

The church has just planned its religious education program at Malak Primary. The RED (Religious Education & Development) program is conducted in four blocks of three days throughout the year. Over 1,500

children are contacted through this program, which is so popular that parents are now allowing their children to take part in the program following pressure from the children.

Tony Osche, the minister, is continuing the "Nightline" radio talkback program on 8DN (an AM commercial station, Monday evenings 10-12). On average 15 calls are dealt with on air each program and there are also facilities for off-air counselling. The church has commenced Sunday evening "Gospel Grills". This is a Sunday evening time of fellowship, tea, devotional talk and a swim afterwards.

The church is also developing a special biannual publication that will be sent to all former members (they are scattered around Australia) to enable them to learn what is happening in the Darwin church.

### Cairns

Cairns also tends to lose a large number of people over December-January and then gradually build back their numbers by the end of the year. This year numbers stayed up well during the exodus. Currently attendances are good—110 (60 adults and 50 children). 17 were welcomed into membership in January. The youth area is growing with three groups, two teenagers and a Kids Klub (9-12 year olds), operating.

A fortnightly "Gospel Celebration" was commenced in February with a singing group

and a drama group. The church is planning a mission with Kel Willis 4-13 May.

### Donations

Churches or individuals who wish to contribute towards the work of Federal Home Evangelism should contact the Federal Conference Secretary, c/o Churches of Christ Centre, 52 La Trobe St, Melbourne 3000.

### BUCKINGHAM MEMORIAL CENTRE

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38 Lockwood Rd,  
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9.00 a.m. & 11 a.m. Worship & Communion Services  
7.00 p.m. Gospel Celebration

For further enquiries, please ring (03) 663 3884

## Net Results

New subscriptions to *Net Results*, the US Disciples-sponsored bulletin edited by Herb Miller, continue to climb. This evangelical resource is now being distributed nationally by the Federal Board of Christian Education, 52 La Trobe Street, Melbourne 3000, at a cost of \$30 per annum.

The January 1990 issue contains articles on when to add new staff by Lyle Schaller, "Ministers Self Education" by Herb Miller, and other contributions on visitation, leadership, and new ways of making contact with people. All the material is adaptable to our Australian scene. The bulletin notes 1987 statistics from the National Council of Churches, where mainline denominations show a continuing downward trend in membership, with the smaller evangelical bodies marking up continued growth between 2-5%. Of interest is the growth of the Roman Catholic Church up from 52.89 million to 53.49 million.

—Don Smith

## Papers

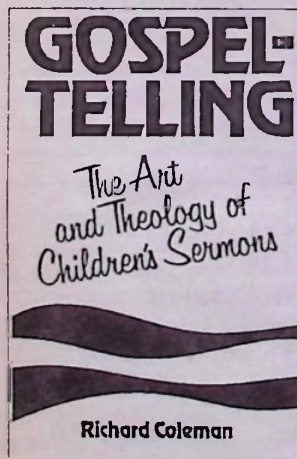
### Evangelicals and Welfare in Australia

A paper, published by the Zadok Institute, reviews the activities of evangelical Christians in the field of social welfare in Australia since 1788. The whole field of Christians and social welfare is very important and it is crucial that we understand our past if we are to consider how we should respond today. Brian Dickey concentrates on the welfare activities of those Christians who call themselves evangelical.

This paper challenges the myth that evangelical Christians have been especially good at loving their neighbours. The great exceptions are often given a high profile, but this tends to mask the fact that work among the needy in Australian society has not in the past been high on the agenda of evangelicals.

*Evangelicals and Welfare in Australia*, Zadok Series 1 Paper S44, is available from the Zadok Institute for Christianity and Society, Blackall Street, Barton 2600, phone (062) 73 1634, for \$2 plus 80 cents postage.

## Books



### Gospel-Telling

The Art and Theology of Children's Sermons by Richard J. Coleman (William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company) \$9.95

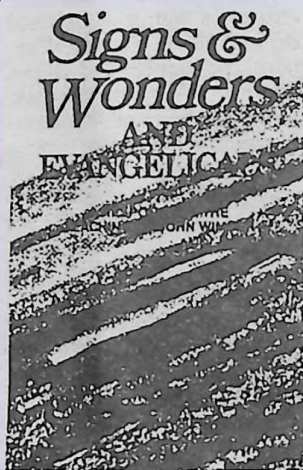
In the preface to this book Richard Coleman states: "In this handbook my purpose is not to provide the minister or religious educator with the usual thirty to forty object lessons or children's sermons. My goal is to help the pastor create his own gospel stories by sensitising him to what constitutes a good children's sermon and by illustrating the methodology outlined here with a variety of homilies."

The first 40 pages of this book contain excellent material on the reasons for children's sermons and their preparation. At the end of this section there is a 10-point summary of the author's conclusions regarding children's sermons that are the best summary of the basis of preparing this sort of material I have ever seen.

Following the general introduction Robert Coleman gives a collection of sample sermons which illustrate the principles developed in the first part of the book. These are grouped under the headings: Let's Pretend; Visual Demonstration; Dramatic Participation; The Pantomime and the Echo; The Story and the Prophets.

An excellent resource that anyone giving children's addresses should read and work through.

—CRA



### Signs and Wonders and Evangelicals

A Response to the teaching of John Wimber edited by R. Doyle (Anzea Publications) \$7.95

John Wimber has been and gone. The pages of Australia's leading evangelical weekly, *New Life*, have reflected the varying degrees of support for his interpretation of power and healing.

In one comment, Dr Ward Powers, of the Sydney Missionary and Bible College, warned of false messiahs and false prophets and said, "God does not need the trappings of their 'signs and wonders' ministry and the emphasis upon this type of ministry, especially when the miraculous clement is publicised to attract people, is incompatible with the spirit of the New Testament."

If you missed the *New Life* discussion then Robert Doyle's book should not be missed.

With impeccable evangelical credentials, the authors include lecturers at Moore Theological College and Bishop John Reid.

While a most sympathetic critique of "Signs and Wonders" the authors conclude that "John Wimber's prescription...is wrong."



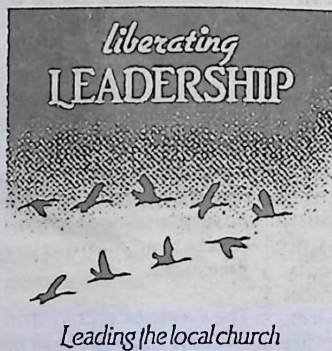
## Media Review

Further, "the program offered by [him] looks successful, and attractive...However it is an unacceptable alternative because of wrong expectations and emphasis. It is unacceptable because it diverts evangelicals from addressing the real problems associated with effective evangelism and church life."

It is a most readable 130 pages. If you have ever wondered about the Wimber ministry then this is a book which will assist you. If you are a convert to the Wimber message then you will be challenged by this book.

If you are one of those concerned with the increasing American-based Pentecostal takeover of Australian church life then this should be on your bookshelf.

—Alan Matheson



Gilbert Cann

### Liberating Leadership

by Gilbert Cann (TLC Publications) \$9

This book, subtitled "Leading the Local Church", comes out of the experiences of an Australian pastor Gil Cann, who originally pastored in Methodist churches, Campaigners for Christ and the Fellowship for Revival in the Uniting Church before becoming one of the pastoral team of Truth and Liberation Concern in Bayswater, Vic. In 1989 Gil took a year off for a sabbatical and one of the fruits of that year has been

this book, which reflects many aspects of his ministry.

The book is easy to read and relevant for many in our churches. Each one of the chapters is followed by questions to consider. Gil is clearly one of those pastors who is not comfortable with the status quo and is attracted by the radical, revolutionary and counterculture nature of the Christian faith. He emphasises the need for us in the church to get our priorities right, to major on the areas of greatest importance, especially areas of discipline and worship. He exposes several of the areas where we get our priorities wrong in the local church, chasing after respectability and status in the community, buildings and perhaps trying to please everybody in the congregation.

This is a book written with a great deal of sensitivity from a pastor's heart and, being Australian, relates very much to the Australian church. I think it would be a valued tool for every church to have in its library. An ideal gift for your minister, your elders or, if you are feeling generous, for your church board members.

Copies are available from Truth and Liberation, 265 Canterbury Rd, North Bayswater 3153.

—Barry Jenkins

### Getting Started with Computing

A Guide for Church Archivists, Librarians and Administrators by David Parker (Church Archivists' Society) \$11.95

David Parker, a Baptist minister, uses computers extensively in his work for writing academic papers and managing administrative and research data in connection with his theological lecturing and pastoral ministry. This book is aimed particularly at those who have been encouraged to take up the use of computers later in life.

The book is clearly written in easy-to-read language and is designed for the totally uninitiated. However it is also useful for those with a practical, although limited, knowledge of IBM and compatible computers.

The introduction spells out clearly why we need a computer and what work it can do. Examples relating to church activities make this book particularly useful for church office use.

Some chapters are rather lengthy and detailed. To simplify this Andrew Vella has written a one-page summary at the end of each chapter, followed by a chapter glossary. These glossaries are excellent.

This book is available from the Church Archivists' Society, PO Box 756, Toowoomba 4350, and the price includes postage.

—David Hansen

### Easter Enigma

Are the Resurrection Stories in Conflict?

by John Wenham (The Paternoster Press)

The subject of this 160-page book, as the subtitle indicates, is the apparent discrepancies in the resurrection accounts of Matthew, Mark, Luke, John and Paul in 1 Corinthians 15.

It's a very important subject. Not long ago, we witnessed the conversion of an intelligent man, who was soon confronted with this problem of seeming contradiction in the accounts of the resurrection. I searched my library for the answers he wanted. He was not satisfied until I located *Easter Enigma* by John Wenham.

As for the scholars, to quote Michael Green, "Virtually the whole New Testament establishment believe that there is no possibility of harmonising the five accounts." He added, "John Wenham takes them on with charm, commonsense and erudition in this brilliant book."

In his introduction, Wenham says, "If, however, it can be shown at the point where the evangelists are thought to be most at sixes and sevens that their account can be reconciled in detail and without strain, it suggests that much of the modern critical structure is on the wrong line, and indeed that the God who reveals himself in Jesus Christ saw to it that the church had a trustworthy record of that tremendous happening."

I think he shows it convincingly. The book was written in 1984 and my copy is the third impression dated 1987. The writer is a Bible scholar who writes with humility, clarity and authority. This is a much-needed book that fills a very real gap.

—Bill Gaunson

### The Fifth Gospel

A Handbook on Evangelism

by Dan Armstrong with Alan Williams (Anzea Books)

Dan Armstrong is the founder of Kairos Ministries and senior partner of the O'Connor Uniting Church in Canberra. He has had an extensive ministry as an evangelist and many of the illustrations he uses in this book come from within a mission situation. His particular concern has been with the Aborigines of the outback.

Dan Armstrong sees evangelism as having the highest priority for every Christian. He believes and cites scripture to show that we are called to be witnesses to Jesus Christ. His first four chapters cover the issues of what is evangelism, why we should evangelise, who is an evangelist (the answer is, as already stated, all of us although there are some people upon whom God has laid a special ministry gift) and what is the message.

Following this introduction the rest of the book examines the ways that Christians can be witnesses. This is a practical consideration of various aspects of evangelism and includes discussion of rallies and also a look at the whole issue of revival. One-on-one and friendship evangelism (which to the reviewer seem the most effective methods of evangelism) are both well covered.

Each chapter has questions designed to aid in personal study, as well as in small groups and church outreach.

—CRA

# Happenings

The Churches of Christ Stamp Group is operating one of the stalls at the stamp market at the Blackburn Baptist church, Holland Rd, Blackburn South, on 24 March.

In a major policy reversal the Singapore government is phasing out compulsory religious classes in schools and trying to promote harmony by passing a law to separate politics and religion. Religious groups have been warned against over-zealous evangelism and aggressive competition for converts among Buddhists, Christians, Muslims and others.

An American survey of Protestant churches revealed that half of the churches surveyed currently own or use computers in their ministry. This is a dramatic increase from the last survey in 1985, when only 21% used computers.

Bill Newman is conducting crusades in Santo and Port Vila in Vanuatu in July. Churches involved in the crusades, including Churches of Christ, are training follow-up counsellors and are training ni-Vanuatu people in this role.

After a 3-day meeting in West Germany the church leaders of the Protestant bodies in the 2 German states committed their churches to re-unification, declaring this unity would not depend on the political unity of the 2 counties, which they also supported.

Graeme Rule has been appointed General Secretary of the Victorian Temperance Alliance. He is currently chairman of elders and a lay preacher in the Uniting Church at Ashburton and formerly served with SUM Fellowship in Nigeria in radio and television.

More than 5,100 made a public commitment to follow Jesus Christ during Luis Palau's "Festival of Joy & Hope" in Madras 16-21

January. In November 1988 4,116 made that decision during a similar festival in the city of Cuttack.

It has been decided to hold a Lausanne-style Congress on Evangelisation in and from the Soviet Union. The preferred time is 1-6 October 1990, and the authorities are giving a favourable consideration of the proposal.

Investigations to locate a missing Canadian missionary last seen in Pakistan in November have not produced any results. Mission officials have accused police of an inadequate investigation. John Tarzwell was working with the humanitarian and assistance organisation Serve, and was scheduled to leave Pakistan. His pregnant wife and son had already left the country ahead of him.

The Berlin Bishops' Conference (of the Catholic Church) estimates there are 6.2 million Christians in East Germany. This is 37.4% of the population. They calculate there are 5.1 million Protestants, 1.05 million Roman Catholics and 71,400 members of other churches. Keston College claims the figures for Protestants and Roman Catholics are estimations and would include many who are inactive while the other groups figure is a serious underestimation—perhaps one third the true numbers.

Hungary's most senior church officials have tried to stop the lower clergy from participating in unofficial ecumenical activity and playing an independent role in public affairs.

Baptism of 4 adults by immersion in the sea was held by the Seaton Uniting Church in Adelaide in late 1989. The baptism was followed by a membership service and the whole occasion was described by one participant as "a beautiful service—the Spirit of God was very present".

The Koran is to be published in the Russian language journal, Pamir, during 1990. The report says there has been a growth of interest in the Koran, until now "virtually inaccessible to the Russian reader", and that many poets have begun to make references to it.

A consignment of Bibles, New Testaments and other religious literature requested by the unregistered Baptist church in Brest, USSR, was turned back by Soviet customs at the border last September.

Erich Honecher, the denounced former head of state for East Germany, has been given a temporary home by the Protestant church. He awaits trial, but has been declared medically unfit for prison, as a result of his recent extensive surgery. He and his wife are paying guests of Pastor Uwe Holmer, near Bernau.

Recent news reports indicate that UK Christians give just £2 a week to support the work of the church.

Evangelist Billy Graham is to hold an outdoor evangelistic rally in Berlin on 10 March in what is being described as the first truly ecumenical gathering uniting East and West Germany in over 30 years. The rally is being held at the Plats der Republik, in front of the Reichstag (the former Parliament building), next to the historic Brandenburg Gate.

John Smith, founder and president of "God Squad", is to address the United Nations Human Rights Commission on religious freedom in Nepal on behalf of "Jubilee Campaign", a London-based human rights organisation working for the release of prisoners of faith and conscience.

US African-Americans, who rank among the lowest paid group in the country, still top the list when it comes to giving their money away.

Australia's longest-serving YFC Director is retiring at the end of March after 36 years as Director of Melbourne Youth For Christ. Clive Stebbins will present his last official message as Director at the YFC Happening at Belgrave Heights on 17 March.

An Interdenominational prayer meeting attended by some 160 in the greater Mexico City area was violently broken up around midnight on 2 February after the group was attacked by a hostile mob, who used stones, machetes, and sticks to disperse the gathering.

For the first time in 15 years, Protestant churches in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, are once again free to meet together for public services. In a surprising move, the Cambodian government has officially recognised 9 church groups in the capital city, following high-level negotiations on 20 January between Cambodian church and government officials.

The cases of some 168 Nepali Christians are currently working their way through Nepal's court system following charges stemming from the alleged violation of the Hindu country's strict penal laws. 25 Christians are in detention while their cases are tried, 143 are currently free on bail but with cases pending and 5 have already been convicted and are now serving prison terms. Nepal's constitution allows for the freedom of religion, but the penal code levies a 1-year sentence on individuals who convert from one religion to another and a 6-year sentence on those accused of proselytising.

High-ranking clerics who publicly supported policies of Romanian's late dictator, Nicolae Ceausescu, have either fled the country or been ordered to step down by government officials, leaving a church primed for what are ex-

pected to be critical power struggles in establishing the new hierarchies.

In South Australia the numbers of students at state schools has increased for the first time in 15 years.

A theologian from the Catholic University of America says he has found no "fitting" reason why women should not be ordained priests in the Catholic Church.

According to *Synaps Messages*, 50,000-100,000 Americans die each year from diseases caused by illegal and preventable exposure to toxic chemicals, wastes and industrial processes.

The average Central American eats less meat than the average American house cat. *Diet for a New America* figures the US imports 200 million pounds of meat from Central America annually.

Hungary and the Vatican have resumed diplomatic relations after a break of 45 years. The agreement was signed in the Hungarian Parliament on 9 February.

The "Protestant" unofficial Baptist group in Moscow has just organised its second month-long Bible course. The first course took place in October with 4 regular teachers and individual lectures given by a number of other Moscow Christians. It covered apologetics, New Testament Greek, Christian history, creationism and English language. 20 Christians from all over the Soviet Union participated, taking a month's holiday or unpaid leave to attend.

The Bible Society of Malawi has made a gift of 11,000 Portuguese Bibles, New Testaments and Gospels in both Portuguese and Chichewa to refugees from Mozambique through the Students' Christian Organisation of Malawi.

## Integrity

by Kaye Wray

Shocked, appalled, saddened, grieving...they are just some of the emotions I, and Christians worldwide, experienced during that terrible period when TV evangelists and other prominent Christians made headlines in the media for their exposed wrongdoings.

What a field day the secular press had! What a field day many Christians had! A wave of phrases like "we knew they were no better than us", "hypocrites", "only in it for the money and prestige" and the inevitable "I told you so" rolled across society with each new revelation.

I confess to being in shock for a while, and thinking how glad I was that the world media is not interested in my life. Then it hit me.

How would I stand up to public scrutiny? No—how do I stand up to public scrutiny? Because, like Christians everywhere, I am in the spotlight. Not with the glare of the media focused on me, but with the eyes of my family, friends, sporting associates, neighbours, workmates and acquaintances within my community focused on me.

I am watched by them every day. They see my actions, hear my words and see through any

hypocrisy. What is my life showing them? What are my words and actions saying about my relationship with God?

Does it all "add up" in their eyes, or is my Christian commitment and integrity in question? Will others be attracted to Jesus because of what they see in me, or will they be turned away? Am I giving (in my own part of the world) the church and Christianity a bad name as those "fallen televangelists" were accused of?

Philippians 1:27 says, "the important thing is that your way of life should be as the gospel of Christ requires..." Long after the sensational media revelations are gone our neighbours will still be watching us.

And no-one sees Christian integrity, or the lack of it, as clearly as an unbeliever!

• Kaye Wray is a member of the Owen, SA, combined congregation.

### L. C. F. Higgins

Chartered Accountant

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### Maidstone Church of Christ

Richelieu St, Maidstone  
Sunday, 25 March, 2 pm  
Official opening  
of the eight elderly persons  
cottages  
by the Ministry of Housing  
and the Mayor of Sunshine,  
Cr Don McKay.  
Please advise Dorothy Johns  
if you wish to attend on  
(03) 689 2763  
Afternoon tea provided.

### Christian Women's Fellowship "Project 90"

"Once upon a Time"

Everyone is invited to share this night of fun, fellowship and entertaining memorabilia

Wednesday, 21 March,  
at 7.30 pm

Hawthorn State College,  
422 Auburn Road

All proceeds to DEBRA  
(Dystrophic Epidermolysis  
Bullosa Research  
Association)

"Cotton Wool Bables"

Admission Enquiries  
Adults \$5 Eunice Reidy  
Children \$2.50 (03) 725 5328

## Stewards Wanted

Applications are being invited for young people wishing to act as stewards for the WCC Assembly in Canberra in February 1991.

Stewards have an opportunity to encounter the ecumenical movement from the inside and to work with a community of other young people from different churches, countries, cultures and traditions.

It is hard work. Stewards distribute documents, run messages, assist with registration, set up conference rooms, give directions, staff bookstalls and perform a variety of other tasks.

Stewards should be 18-30 years of age. Knowledge of additional languages would help. Patience, an ability to work with people from other

cultures, and a willingness to work with a team are requirements. Board and pocket money are provided.

Further details and application forms are available from Anne Marshall, WCC Assembly Office, PO Box C199 Clarence St, Sydney 2000. Phone (02) 29 2215.

Applications close on 1 May.

## Fern Valley Guest House

Two and a half hours drive from Melbourne, 50 m from Tarra-Bulga National Park  
40 mins to Ninety Mile Beach  
11 comfortable bedrooms with doonas, spacious lounge, piano, organ, library and open fire, games room with pool table etc.  
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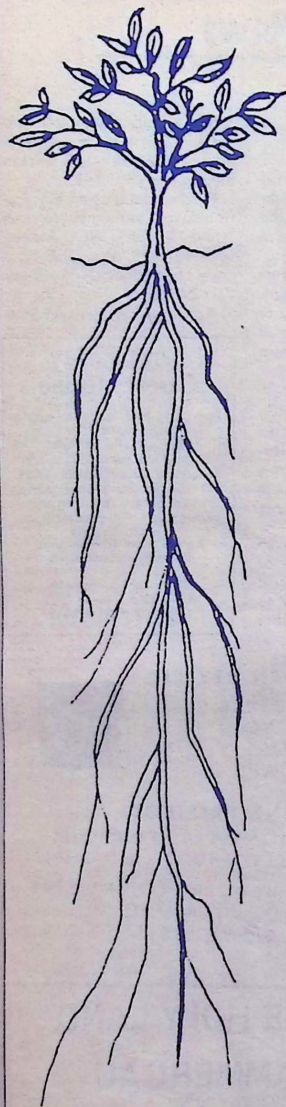
Personally escorted by John and Beth Bridgford

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For further details on itineraries and cost options, contact John or Beth at

5 Camden Court, Glen Waverley 3150  
Tel (03) 560 3103



For 50 years Churches of Christ have been working among Aborigines around Australia. The early ministry of child care has gone. In its place a ministry to establish and develop Aboriginal churches has become the main thrust of the

## Federal Aborigines Board

Aboriginal churches are still relatively small—but their roots run deep. They are making steady growth.

The root system of any tree transmits the nourishment and support. The root system is unseen but vital. The churches are firmly grounded in the word of God. They still need the support of others as they grow towards self-sufficiency and become self-governing.

### Churches of Christ

continue to provide close support—

- providing pastors for the churches
- helping financially
- giving limited training
- encouraging Aboriginal leadership
- providing a prayer backing

### so that

Aboriginal churches shall be  
*“...as a tree planted by the waters...spreading out their roots...yielding fruit”*

Jeremiah 17:8



*Mooroopna, Vic, church*



*Naomi and Max Wright, Pt Lincoln, SA*

## The Past Year

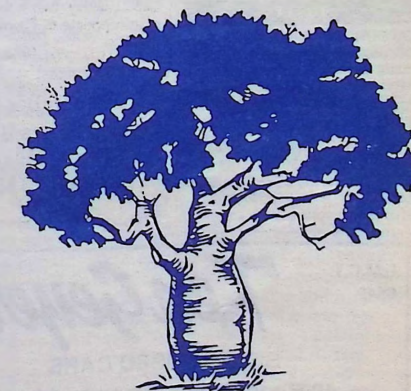
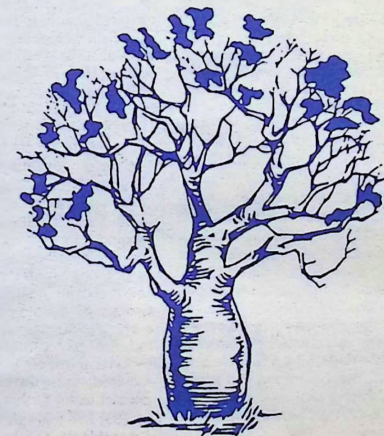
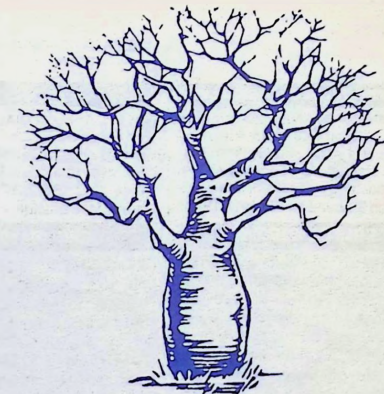
has been characterised by steady growth at the local church level.

- The Esperance church opened its own building.
- The Port Lincoln church (Pastor Max Wright) is providing spiritual leadership to several groups within that community.
- The Mooroopna church supports a youth ministry and outreach program locally as well as into the community at Cummeragunja.
- The Port Hedland church has so many attending that its premises are inadequate.
- The Marble Bar church reached out to the tribal people of the hot, arid areas of WA's Pilbara.
- The Albury church through Pastor Cec Grant continues to provide leadership and encouragement to several groups with no pastor in central NSW.
- The Aged Person's Hostel in Carnarvon is ministering to 15 residents; also providing care to others in the fully occupied pensioner flats nearby.

## Future Plans

include—

- The recruitment of pastors to maintain present ministries—and provide for future developments.
- A new church building in Port Hedland in 1990-91.
- More in-service training opportunities.
- Encouraging the local churches to greater self-support (some are already well on the way).
- Ministries in key areas such as:  
 Cummeragunja (Vic) Albany (WA)  
 Ceduna (SA) Canberra (ACT)



*“I will multiply the fruit of the tree...”*

Ezekiel 36:30



*Frail Aged Hostel, Carnarvon, WA*

The opportunities to help in church development are **ever before us**.  
 Your support—prayer and financial—is **vital**—never more important—  
 never more necessary.  
 Your support will bring **plans to realities**.  
**Remember:**

**Aborigines Board Annual Offering  
 Sunday, 18 March**

# Classifieds

## APPROACHING MARRIAGES

**GREAVES—KRANEN** Jeanette and Alan of Warragul (formerly Adelaide) and Anne and Henk of Brisbane are pleased to announce the approaching marriage of Mark and Jenni in Brisbane on 10 March 1990.

## GOLDEN WEDDINGS

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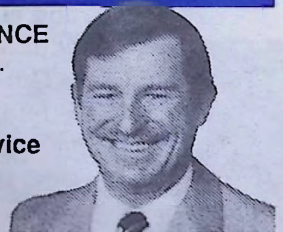
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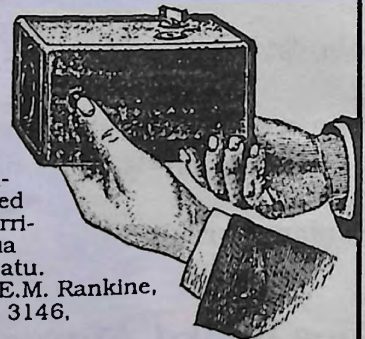


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The Federal Literature Department invites readers to forward 35 mm colour transparencies or slides for possible inclusion in the 1991 Churches of Christ calendar. Slides are needed from each state and territory in Australia, Papua New Guinea and Vanuatu. Please forward to Mrs E.M. Rankine, 5 Atkins Ave, Glen Iris 3146, by 30 March 1990.

Criteria for selection includes photographic excellence, variety of subject matter and the church year.



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Cliff Richard, currently on tour in Australia, was interviewed last year by Gordon Moyes on his TV program "Sunday Night Live"

## "Single Minded" Cliff Richard

• **Gordon** What has enabled you to beat the top of rock'n'roll for 30 years?

• **Cliff** Music and art is all subjective, so it seems to me that I've held a lot of people together who actually like my stuff. They probably wouldn't be able to tell you why they like my music. I record a song because I like it and if loads of other people like it, then I have a hit; if loads of other people don't, I have a flop.

• **Gordon** You were romantically linked with Sue Barker, the tennis player, for sometime. What's the state of play now?

• **Cliff** Well, Sue is married, and not to me! But we had a great relationship for about three years and she's a very, very sweet girl.

• **Gordon** However, with two lovely people in love the gossip columnists were looking for you to get married. When you didn't they suggested it was because you were homosexual.

**"If I had to choose between being a Christian and a rock'n'roll singer I would choose just to be a Christian, because it's the only thing that offers us eternity"**

• **Cliff** Yes, I've almost become on the offensive now as opposed to defensive because a lot of people come up and say things like, "Well, you know we can't wait for you to be settled and happy." I don't think marriage is necessarily synonymous with happiness. In my new book *Single Minded*

what I tried to do was to write a whole chapter on "How To Be Single". I know how to be single and I'm happy being single. Not that I'm against marriage but marriage is not necessarily for everybody.

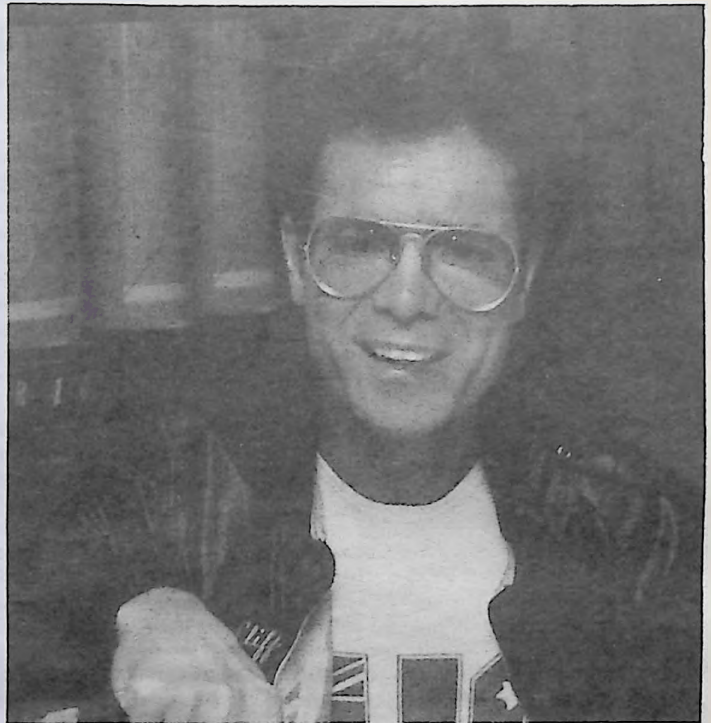
• **Gordon** You have made the point that you can have a completely fulfilled life as a single person.

• **Cliff** Oh, absolutely, and that's what I've tried to do in the book because I know that some people feel that they have been left on the shelf. I remember as a youngster when my friends were getting married left, right and centre the temptation was to just marry the next person I fell in love with. We feel we're missing out on something, rather than seeing what we've got and saying let's make the best of this. You'll soon know whether it's the right thing to be married or not married, but if you're single then be single and be positive about it so that you can actually be part of society. As a Christian I've got far more to offer than if I was married.

• **Gordon** You're famous because of your charity work. What motivates you in this type of work?

• **Cliff** When you first become a Christian the first thing that dawns upon you is the relief of having made the most major step you're ever likely to make.

Once I started to live the Christian life I began to have all



Cliff Richard: At the top of the pops for over 30 years

sorts of guilty feelings. So I thought, well, why am I feeling guilty? Is it because I've got money and I'm famous? And the answer was yes, it was. So I thought, does it solve the problem just to give it all away? No, it doesn't. So what I do now is tithe my money and tithe my time.

Christianity certainly cannot be condemned for not attempting to alleviate suffering around the world. So whereas I cannot give an injection and I don't know how to be an agriculturalist, I can help those who do have those qualifications and want to in the name of God give it to others. So I'm happy to be involved and certainly TEAR Fund has become the closest charity to my heart.

• **Gordon** What does your Christian faith mean to you?

• **Cliff** It's the total meaning of my being, really, I mean everything I do tends to be aimed at how I can best be a Christian in the public eye because for me, you see, there is no comparison between Christianity or being a rock'n'roll singer. If I had to choose between being a Christian and a rock'n'roll singer I would choose just to be a Christian, because it's the only thing that offers us eternity.

If I had to have something written on a tombstone I'd quote a newspaper that gave me the most wonderful headline I ever had. It said, "God and rock'n'roll go well together in the hands of someone who loves them both."

—Reprinted, with permission, from *Impact*, the magazine of Wesley Central Mission, Sydney

**T**he Nunawading, Vic, church in the eastern suburbs of Melbourne is one congregation meeting in two places—at Surrey Road, Blackburn, and Springfield Road, Mitcham. The Mitcham and Blackburn churches amalgamated in 1980. It is a large church. There are 498

members plus an extra 250 who are part of the fellowship. There are four services each Sunday—at 9.30 am at Springfield Road, and at 8.30 am (an informal service), 10 am and 7 pm at Surrey Road. The Surrey Road complex includes a chapel that seats 350, a large foyer, a hall, supper room and other ancillary rooms. The former manse next door has been converted into the church office, and adjoining houses have been purchased for car parking (even one of the church's three tennis courts has been taken over for parking). The Springfield Road building was recently renovated using voluntary labour, and includes a chapel seating 80, a function room and a foyer/crying room.

The ministry team at Nunawading includes Ted Keating, Jim Wright and Dean Hamilton. Ted Keating has been at the church for 16 years. Formerly a primary teacher and with the old Vic-Tas Home

include a playgroup that involves 70 families, a very active senior citizens group and a large singles ministry—over a hundred of those who attend the church are or have been divorced. There is also a "prime

The membership mix of the church includes 60% with no Churches of Christ background. 30% have not had any previous church connection. The turnover is such that only 10% of the members who were

at the church when Ted Keating arrived are still there. After a slow period in the late 70s

## Focus on Nunawading

Missions Department, he is married to Marge and has three grown-up children. Jim Wright, has been at the church for a decade and is semi-retired. This is his second stint at Blackburn, having been a minister there in the 1940s. The newest member of the team is Dean Hamilton, who started last year. Dean has had 30 years of ministry in three states, most recently as state minister in SA. He is married to Glenys, Harold Norris's daughter, and they too have three grown children. Nunawading's staff also includes Linda Smith, youth worker, Anne Spoelder, singles co-ordinator and outreach secretary, and Beryl Graham, administrator

Features of Nunawading

of life" group for people who are about to retire. Music plays a very important part in the life of the church. There is a choir, three other young people's music groups and an instrumental group. The Surrey Road chapel has a Yamaha FX20, an incredible machine with buttons everywhere for imitating all other instruments.

In such a large organisation the need for small group fellowship is very important. Dean Hamilton's role is to develop the group life of the church. Under the one umbrella there is a multiplicity of styles of groups. Some cater for young adults or youth, some are cell groups, some are care groups and others are for Bible study (including Bethel groups).

and early 80s the church is growing again. Although the area has an ageing population, there has been an upsurge of young married couples in the church, requiring special facilities to be provided for babies and small children.

Nunawading aims to continue to make more space available to come to grips with its local community in a greater way. It intends to strengthen even more its music ministry and its outreach to families and to young adults who require a contemporary form of Bible teaching. Nunawading believes that, regardless of its size it can still maintain its personal contact. With its groups, specialised staff and administration, it intends that people will still be featured as individuals.

### Growing in Christ Frankston Church of Christ

Special series with Graeme Chapman, MA

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Three Sunday evenings

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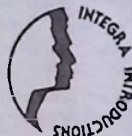


Graeme Chapman is a lecturer at the newly established Churches of Christ Theological College at Mulgrave. He is regarded as a specialist in the field of spirituality, spiritual counselling and development.

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*We need to take the time to see the beauties God would show us in others, and not just proceed with our rush through life*

# "Narrow Is the Way"

by Colleen Harrison

**T**he Caveside church is situated in an area of Tasmania rich in natural beauty and also rich in history. On 5 February, a group of 18 from the church (aged between 12 and 60), set out on a bushwalk to such an area, known locally as "Lees Paddocks". These paddocks are natural mountain pasture lands in the Western Tiers, high up in the Mersey River Valley. They have been used for many years (to the present day) by the "Mountain Cattlemen" as grazing land for their cattle.

After a one-hour drive to Lake Rowallan, the walk began. The track passed through beautiful myrtle forest with many different ferns growing beneath the tall trees.

After a dry summer the usually muddy track was easy to negotiate and the youthful members were soon well ahead. They did stop long enough to watch the older members cross the first river on a fallen log bridge. The young people reached Lee's Hut in one and a half hours, with the older ones taking two hours.

Lunch was eaten beside a beautiful waterfall, and then most of the group walked on further to a second hut.

Once again this church outing proved to be a time of learning as well as a time of fun and fellowship. One lesson we learned was about leadership. Our guide was a young man who went ahead with the younger members. This caused some difficulties for the second, slower group (especially when trying

to cross the second river!) If you wish to be a leader in God's Kingdom, set a pace that all your members can follow. We all find it easy to rush ahead without giving thought to those who proceed more slowly.

On the return journey one young lady who had gone up quickly, returned with the older group. She commented at how much more she noticed on the way back—bracket fungi on the trees and wild flowers and other beauties of God's creation around her.

It's like that in life, too. We need to take the time to see the beauties God would show us in others, and not just proceed with our rush through life.

At two points on our journey some of the group took the wrong track for a short time and had to retrace their steps. I was in the second group that did this and we found we had followed the 4-wheel-drive track instead of the walking track.

When we returned to the junction of the tracks and saw



Phyllis Byard (church secretary) crossing the first bridge

that it was even signposted, we realised that we had been looking down at our feet instead of

looking up to find our true direction. To me it was a classic reminder of the two ways of Matthew 7:13-14. It was definitely a case of "narrow is the way", and we had missed it! We could well have done without the 20 minutes extra walk in drizzling rain, but then we might have missed the lesson God had for us in that incident.

We trust we will have many more such outings in the beautiful country around us, and we are sure they too, will be used by God to teach us more of himself and his ways.

• Colleen Harrison is part of the ministry team at the Caveside, Tas, church.



The track to Lees Paddocks

# A Calling Too Strong to Deny...

Ron and Lyn Chapman have spent all their working lives in "the people business", living in NSW and Queensland for a time before returning to their home state of Tasmania.

The past four years they have actively shared in the fellowship at Howrah Church of Christ with their four children, Joanne, 13, Mathew, 11, Michael, 10, and Nathan, 6, before moving to Melbourne to enable Ron to commence full-time study at the Churches of Christ Theological College, Mulgrave, this year.

It's strange how an idea...or "calling" can come into your mind and hover on the "outer edge" for many years without being really noticed.

Lyn and I met each other in our teens, and from that time on God's calling was always there, though often not acknowledged, and sometimes even denied. But the Lord is very patient—and very persistent. We had times when we felt close to his will, and times when we were truly in the wilderness. Even when we thought we were too far away, God would reach out and draw us back.

My work in crisis counseling highlighted strongly the real needs we all have. Time and time again I listened as broken people shared their traumas and questioned the meaning of life. Many wanted to talk about spiritual issues, and I often felt inadequate.



Ron, Joanne, Lyn, Mathew, Michael and (in front) Nathan Chapman

Deep down I knew I had to do something. I feel I have been fighting God's will for my life for quite some time. Always making excuses, always telling myself, "Not yet, I'm not ready. I'm not good enough."

But the Lord knew better. We finally made the decision to go to college in late 1988, planning to undertake part-time external studies in 1989 and move into full-time study in 1990.

1989 turned out to be some year! We both attended the CCTC orientation camp in February and came away extremely enthusiastic and confi-

dent about the direction God was leading us in. But back home, with the normal pressures of four children and work commitments, the vision began to fade. The external studies never really got off the ground and our commitment to them fizzled out by mid-year. The comforts we had and the pleasure we gained from seeing our self-built stone house near completion made us reconsider the path we had chosen to take. Maybe God did not want us to go to college after all—we worked with people now. I was working as a social worker with the State Community Services

Crisis Unit and Lyn was coordinating a family day care scheme. Surely we could continue our ministry without having to give up what we had worked so hard for. We had almost convinced ourselves that we should keep on as we were but the feelings, and the calling, wouldn't go away. Finally, one rather sleepless night, we made a recommitment and we prayed that God would keep us in his will.

After that it was amazing how everything fell into place and we felt at peace with our decision. There are still moments of doubt and times when I struggle to know why God wants me...me of all people! But these fade into insignificance as God's plan unfolds before my eyes. Our house, which we once said we would never sell, sold for a good price the first day it was advertised. We were able to clear all debts, buy a small house to let out, and have enough money to see us through the move to Melbourne and my first year of study. Accommodation in Melbourne was arranged by the college, schools were contacted, fares and removal costs paid and good tenants found for our house. In all things, big and small, we felt God's presence and peace. We continue to wonder at the Lord's generous provision for all our needs—and more.

Although we made enquiries at several colleges there was no doubt that the Churches of Christ Theological College was where God wanted us to be. Over the months we have been keenly aware of ongoing prayer support and caring by the college community, and we are deeply grateful.

I am not certain at this point where the Lord will lead us, but I know that commencing study at CCTC is the first step—after that our future is in the Lord's hands and we journey on in faith knowing he will never fail us and never leave us.

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# Fields Ripe for Harvest

by Simon Moore

I have recently returned from a five-week study tour in Indonesia with a team from Overseas Missionary Fellowship. God really opened my eyes and challenged me in a new way about the needs in countries such as Indonesia and the responsibilities that we as "Western Christians" have in taking the Gospel there. It is easy to become complacent in a country like Australia, where we live such a comfortable Christianity and our main concern is in self-maintenance and "navel gazing".

Throughout my time in Indonesia, the words of Jesus in Matthew 9:35-38 became more and more relevant, as I had opportunity to see first hand the "harvest field" God has prepared. I was shocked to discover how few workers there are working in the fields of Asia. In Indonesia there is one full-time Christian worker for every 120,000 people, which, when compared to the Australian and American figure of one worker to every 250 people, doesn't put us in a good light. We have so much, they have so little, yet we seem to be able to close our eyes to an outside world that is

dying—physically and spiritually.

The final challenge from the words of our Lord in Matthew 9 is a command to pray. Generally we are not consistent, persistent, earnest nor steadfast in our prayers for world mission, but I have been convicted of my responsibility in this area. We need more than a general "missions prayer" as part of our Sunday worship service. God is looking for people prepared to covenant in prayer for specific missions, missionaries and people groups, so that the work of his great commission may finally be fulfilled. As a suggestion, the book *Operation World* is an excellent starting point for regular prayer regarding world mission.

God needed to take me out of my normal routine, to get through to me the need for a commitment to world mission. Perhaps he won't need to do that in your situation, but there is no escaping the responsibility each Christian has to share the Gospel in a world that will be lost without it.

• Simon Moore is a member of the Townsville, Qld, church.

• Ephesians 6:13-18

# The Enemy We Face

by Greg Murphy

The passage of scripture that draws together some of the most significant theological concepts in the New Testament is worthy of our attention. Ephesians 6:13-18 is such a passage. Truth, Righteousness, Peace, Faith, Salvation, Revelation and Prayer are all key words in the Christian faith. Yet it was not in the interest of scholarship nor only for the learned that Paul married these concepts. This passage was written for the perusal of all Christians in the interest of practical survival in spiritual warfare. Before we look at the "how" of spiritual warfare, let's start with a look at the "who" with whom we struggle.

"Satan" is used today as a proper name for the devil but it was not always this way. The word itself comes into English from the Hebrew word made up of the same letters. This Hebrew word does not always refer to the devil. It appears 32 times in the Old Testament with 14 of these occurrences coming in two short passages in Job. In 12 of the remaining 18 references the subject is a human being. It is used to describe the

military foes of Israel in 1 Kings 11:14, 23, and 25 where it is translated as "opponent" or "adversary". In Psalm 109:6, 20, and 29 the word "satan" is used of the "accusers" of David who seek his downfall by way of slandering him. A "satan" then is an opponent who seeks by force or by deceit to overpower people.

It is easy to see why the Jews chose this word to describe the one who sought to damage the relationship between man and God. With only one exception the Hebrew *satan* is always accompanied by the definite article and could aptly be translated as "The Spoiler". The New Testament usage of the Greek word *satanas* follows this pattern. Satan is the archrival of the human race who seeks to oppress and slander every member.

By the time Jesus arrived on the earthly scene Satan had done a pretty good job. The gospel writers describe his desperate attempts to overpower or outwit Jesus so as to hold onto the territory he had gained. Yet Colossians 2:15 describes how Jesus in fact both overpowered and ridiculed Satan by his death on the cross.

It is sometimes said that Satan doesn't need to worry about non-Christians because he has power over them already. However Paul wrote in 2 Thessalonians 2:9-10 that the work of Satan was characterised by "all kinds of counterfeit miracles, signs and wonders, and...every sort of evil that deceives those who are perishing...because they refused to love the truth." Ever since Calvary Satan has been trying to play down the victory Jesus won on our behalf. If Satan is opposed to Christians it is not so much to win individual victories as it is to halt the power of the Christian gospel to release the multitudes who have not yet responded to its victorious message.

It is not in weakness that we face "The Spoiler" but rather with the full armour of God at our disposal.

• Greg Murphy is minister at the Arana Hills, Qld, church. This is the first of a series of articles on the theological concepts contained in Ephesians 6:13-18.

IN GOD WE SHOULD EVENTUALLY PUT OUR TRUST -- BUT IT ONLY SEEMS FAIR TO GIVE MONEY, POWER, SEX, SPORTS, PRESTIGE AND LITIGATION A SHOT FIRST!



## The Divine Transition

Not death but fellowship,  
Not sacrifice but friendship,  
Not blood but praise.  
Lord, you have banished  
the altar and replaced  
it with a table.

—Garry Harris

# Handling Our Temptations

by Brian White

**A** friend of mine jokes: "I can resist anything but temptation!" So far he has done well, except for gorging copious amounts of good food. We ministers are vulnerable to all sorts of temptations. Despite our high aspirations we have "feet of clay". We are definitely human, not divine, or put another way, "none of us is perfect".

Our temptation area is likely to be quite individual. For some of us it is ego-tripping. Others struggle with a love for the big dollar or have difficulty handling finances. For others sensuality is the major area of vulnerability.

There is no doubt in my mind that in terms of effect, the most disastrous results flow from ministers who become involved in "romantic" affairs with members of their congregation.

### Vulnerability

Vulnerability to illicit sexual encounters is increased in a number of situations.

The first of these is when we have been over-busy, stress levels are high or we are close to experiencing burnout. This often causes diminishing positive feelings in our own marriage and the excitement of a possible illicit relationship intensifies.

The second is just the opposite. Boredom can make us vulnerable. If we have no challenging goals in our ministry that we are working at achieving, if we are not experiencing a sense of purpose and fulfilment in our ministry, then an outside relationship can appear to provide the excitement missing in our work.

The third possible cause of vulnerability is lack of intimacy and fulfilment in our own marriage relationship. If we are not working on having our needs met within our marriage we leave ourselves open to the temptation of wanting them met outside of the marriage.

What can we do about it?

### Consider the Consequences

It just isn't worth it! It usually results in a ruined career. The sense of call into ministry for Christ is thwarted, as few churches are keen to call a minister who has been unfaithful to his or her marriage partner.

It ruins a marriage, leaves one partner deeply hurt with feelings of rejection and failure to work through, and usually severe financial difficulties. It wastes a whole lot of shared experiences.

The effect on the children can also be quite significant. They survive, but not without some scars, hurts and changes in attitude towards the opposite sex. Some experience quite traumatic insecurity, and they all grow up with inadequate role modelling for marriage and family life. Broken marriages also make it difficult to enjoy the children's subsequent engagements, marriages and especially the grandchildren.

Finally there is the hurt in the lives of those who have trusted us, our church. The first poem in David Steele's book by the same name is "Dr Goliath". It says a lot.

### Dr Goliath, BA, DD

Was humanity raised to the Nth degree  
As he smiled benignly atop his perch  
In the lofty pulpit of Old First Church.  
He spoke of faith with firm conviction,  
With dulcet tones and perfect diction  
Till I, and all within that place,  
Were lifted to the throne of Grace.

The scepticism I had borne  
All week was gone on Sunday morn,  
For then I'd see that Doctor G.  
Was never plagued by doubts like me.  
How he preached the Word of God!  
My friends and I were overawed;  
His words of faith renewed, restored  
Our contact with the Living Lord.

Often he'd be asked to pray  
At Rotary or PTA.  
With depth of feeling Dr G.  
Brought God to our community.  
And no mere teacher could surpass  
The power of his Bible class,  
For in his presence we all knew  
That God was real and faith was true.

So, every weekly day of rest  
We felt ourselves at peace and blessed.  
We praised our gracious Lord and Master  
For sending us this godly pastor.

Then one day in February,  
He ran off with his secretary!  
A Frog! That was my holy Prince!  
(I haven't been to worship since.)

Fortunately most Christians cope better than that, but it does take its toll. There are always those who react like the member of Dr Goliath's church. Because we enjoy the privileges of being a pastor and leader, more is expected of us. What may be taken for granted in the morals of our members can never be taken for granted in the moral life of a minister. James says, "Not many of you should presume to be teachers, my brothers, because you know that we who teach will be judged more strictly." (James 3:1)

### Nip It in the Bud

We need to know ourselves and be aware of the area of our greatest vulnerability. Then we can take care to keep our head out of the lion's mouth.

When conscious of a developing sexual attraction towards someone other than our marriage partner we must deal with it immediately. It is not unusual to be attracted to another person. Accept the feeling as being normal, but determine that it can never be transferred into action.

We can share the problem with our partner and work together at maintaining higher intimacy levels in our relationship until the danger has passed. Definite decisions should be made about never

being alone with the person to whom we have felt attracted.

### Work Hard on Your Own Marriage

Spend adequate time together. Maintain open communication. Resolve conflicts as they arise. Continue to court each other. Have occasional romantic weekends away without the children. Take each other out to dinner, to a show, go bushwalking or spend a day at the beach together. Not with friends, there will be other times for that, but give quality time to each other. Work hard at deepening the affection, intimacy and sexual levels of the marriage. It decreases vulnerability. As Tim LaHaye says in *The Act of Marriage*, "Who would want to steal a Volkswagen off the street when you have a Rolls Royce in the garage?"

### Take Care in Counselling

If counselling a member of the opposite sex at home, we need to make sure our partner is nearby or even involved. If at the office, have staff nearby, or leave a door open or, as in some churches, have glass wall panels so the office is open to the view of others. Always act professionally.

We also need to be aware that some counsellees are likely to transfer to the counsellor suppressed feelings they should be expressing to others. A well-trained counsellor may use this to advantage, however as ministers we should never enter into long-term counselling without a very adequate understanding of the psychology of transference. If we become aware that the counsellee is beginning to transfer affection to us, we should immediately refer them to another professional counsellor. They may feel hurt, let down, rejected or even angry with us, but that is far better than compromising ourselves. Prevention is better than disaster. ➤

# Voices from the Other Side?

## Part 1

by Adrian van Leen

Since the beginning of history people have struggled to face the reality of death. Elaborate ceremonies, including gifts of food, clothing and wealth, have been used to provide the deceased with the necessities of life on the "other side", in a denial of the permanence of death.

From ancient Egypt to ancient Europe, from Asia to the Americas, graves from long ago have yielded evidence of the belief and hope of an afterlife.

In the belief that people don't die, but simply "cross over to the other side", there have always been those who thought they could communicate with the departed to gain wisdom and insight for life on this side.

Necromancy was practised in Egypt before Moses led the Israelites through the wilderness. God regarded necromancy an abomination. His people were to seek guidance from him, and not from the spirits or the dead. (For example see Leviticus 19:31, 20:6, 20:27, Deuteronomy 18, 1 Samuel 28:3-25, 2 Kings 17:17, 21:6, 23:24, 1 Chronicles 10:13, 2 Chronicles 33:6, Isaiah 8:19-20, 19:3, Luke 16:19-31.)

Yet necromancy, expressed

today as spiritualism, and the more faddish and expensive "channelling", is more common now than it was 200 years ago.

All sorts of people are involved with trying to contact those "on the other side"—from your friend's aunty or granny to entertainer/film star, Shirley MacLaine, to well-known psychiatrist of *Death and Dying* fame, Elisabeth Kübler-Ross. In fact, Kübler-Ross was involved in a spiritualist group that was so extreme it believed members could have sexual intercourse with the spirits. (Not what your average Aussie spiritualist is into!)

Modern spiritualism had its beginnings in the USA in 1847. The Fox sisters, with their table rapping, helped to foster faith in communication with the spirit world in this modern era.

In 1851 the Fox sisters were carefully monitored by investigators from Buffalo University. It was discovered that the "spirit rappings" were actually the sounds of the sisters snapping their toe and knee joints. A relative gave a sworn statement that the girls had confessed to her how they faked their "spirit sounds".

Some 38 years later, the Fox sisters themselves publicly confessed their fraud, and even gave toe-joint snapping demonstrations.

Perhaps Alexander Campbell was unaware of the Buffalo University exposé when he spoke on spiritualism at Washington College in 1852. He certainly would not have known about the sisters' later confessions.

He accepted the observed claims of the Fox family as fact, and mentioned other apparently authentic spirit contacts. As a Christian he accepted the reality of the spirit realm, and therefore could accept the possible veracity of such claims. He could not, however, condone such activity.

His concern was for the gullibility of people wanting to consult the spirits, when such things contradicted the clear guidance of scripture.

Many of his comments are as pertinent today as when he made them more than a hundred years ago.

He stated: "...There is, indeed, more to fear than to hope, from the tendencies and developments of both the American and European schools of phrenology, mesmerism, clairvoyance and spiritual rappings, especially amongst an uneducated population. Christianity, however, fears nothing from any truescience of body or soul, matter or spirit. But there is now, as well as in former ages, much which is 'science falsely so called'.

"...There are at this very hour, I am constrained to think, myriads of persons more laborious and indefatigable in their inquiries after mesmerism, clairvoyance and spiritual rappings, than they have ever been to investigate the claims of Moses or of the Messiah."

Many of those things that were regarded as base superstition and pseudoscience more than a hundred years ago, have

today come back into vogue, almost with a vengeance.

Campbell recognised that many spiritualists were putting on an act, but even more disturbingly, were teaching false doctrine that is still popular today.

"Never were actors more true and faithful to their calling than these pretended spirit-rappers. They are always communing with the spirits of the dead. They are asking and obtaining messages from them, but only from the wicked dead. They are lying spirits, pretending to speak from heaven above, but they speak from the earth and below the earth. They are true to their prophetic character; and alas for them that consult these too familiar spirits, whether real or pretended, which peep, and rap, and mutter! They are all genuine Universalians. They take away from sinners the fear of death and hell. Not one of them, so far as I have heard, gives a single intimation of hell. All their communications allude to the belief that the friends of all inquirers are now in Abraham's bosom."

Spiritualists, and their New Age friends, still deny the reality of sin and judgement. Therefore there is nothing to fear in death, regardless of belief or life style—and there is no validity in the atoning death of Jesus Christ (who many regard as nothing more than a "super" spiritualist).

In Part 2 of this article we will look at several spiritualists who came from the ranks of the Disciples of Christ, and obviously ignored both Campbell's comments, and the Bible, on this issue.

• *Adrian van Leen is Director of Concerned Christians Growth Ministries, which is dedicated to informing the church about cults and ministering to people involved in them. This article is one of a series on our church's links with various cults.*

### Run

Joseph had an encounter with the amorous wife of Potiphar. "She caught him by his cloak and said, 'Come to bed with me!' But he left his cloak in her hand and ran out of the house." (Genesis 39:12) He did the right thing! Christian standards of morality must be maintained, especially in ministry, and as we know Joseph went on to achieve great things for God.

There are occasions when ministers feel involvement with someone else is getting out of hand. That may well be the time to move to another church, even interstate, to "do a Joseph", and run. This can achieve a break in

the relationship, get away from the environment of the temptation and give opportunity for strengthening the marriage.

We are all vulnerable to temptation, and opportunities for immorality will no doubt present themselves. But we can fight it, and we can beat it. Our marriage partners, our kids, our peers, our churches and our Lord will all be grateful to us when as ministers we maintain a high standard of Christian morality.

• *Brian White is the Field Director of the Vic-Tas Department of Mission, Education and Development and the Federal Board of Christian Education.*

*If a professional advertising agency were commissioned by Churches of Christ to market our movement in Australia what would they come up with?*

# Finding a Niche

by Steve Downie

Following the earthquake in Newcastle the Anglican Cathedral was the focal point for Australia's memorial service to the victims, their families and the renewal of the City of Newcastle in rebuilding its spirit. The service was attended by 1,000 people, including the Governor-General, the Prime Minister and the NSW State Premier.

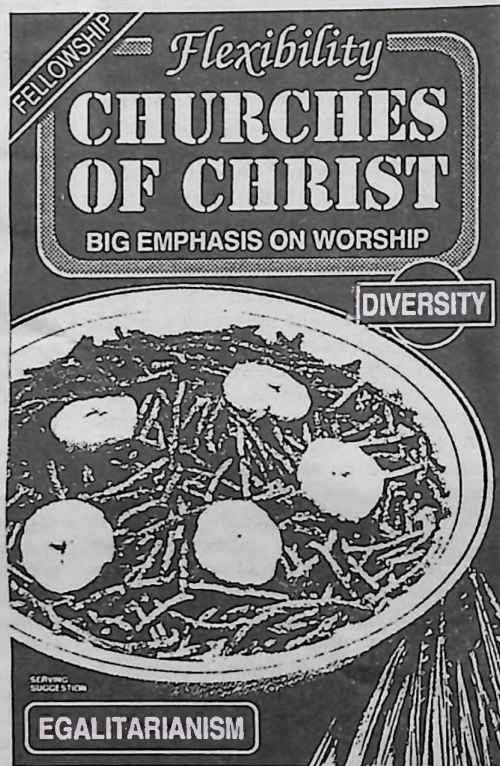
Immediately after the earthquake it was clear the Salvation Army had the trust of the community. They served cups of tea, provided clothing, worked alongside rescue workers and had full access behind barricades and co-operated with officials.

It was a time when the church expressed a ministry of integrity, compassion and a pastoral and prophetic presence. What of Churches of Christ?

If a professional advertising agency were commissioned by Churches of Christ to market our movement in Australia what elements would be used?

Would they be able to come up with a slogan that epitomises the spiritual distinctiveness of our church such as "Come on Aussie, come on" or "All-Bran keeps you fit on the inside" do for their products? All-Bran has been around for a long time, but its recent advertising image has increased its sales to record levels. We know what has happened to one-day cricket.

The word flexibility is a recognisable image in Churches of Christ. We do not have the uniformity, the authoritarian-



ism, the ritualism or the dogmatism that is the hallmark of other church movements, but we do have diversity, egalitarianism and community.

Many of us believe we are uniquely placed to be relevant to the Australian community. The question is: Is Churches of Christ meant to have a more prominent role in the influence of the nation and an increasing impact upon people for God?

An advertising agency would want to know what our recognisable symbols are. We do not have a uniform; we do not have a ritual and our flexibility and biblical integrity has shed a lot of the dogmas that make other movements separate. Even more difficult, making it harder to find a recognisable image, is the broadness of

our Christian community. However Coca-Cola has shown you can associate a product with the themes of happiness and animated friendship.

What would professional research reveal as the targeted audience for Churches of Christ? It could narrow down to disaffected members of other churches and non-Christians in the community.

It would have to be a masterly piece of creative work because those from other churches looking for formalism, ritual and authoritarianism would have to be convinced that our flexibility with style is not to be equated with liberalism and lack of direction.

Another major task would be to influence a community that its informality would be very comfortable with our flexibility, but that it is not to be associated with casualness and cheap commitment. It would be a long and costly campaign.

It may be important for the advertising thrust to begin with us. We may need to be convinced of who we are. The yearn for the past, which did have slogans, trying to be what we are not and the conflict of being who we are would have to be resolved before we market the product.

There are a number of our churches that have put together a package that has credibility, community respect and spiritual endorsement. They have

successfully marketed the flexibility element with biblical authority, strong Christian fellowship, confident leadership, a big emphasis on worship, a high standard of presentation, a teaching model, a community spirit and a mature administrative team of elders and deacons.

Churches of Christ may never be meant to be the pastoral figurehead in times of national crisis. The recent earthquake has shown that this role is limited in its spiritual impact.

Churches of Christ have always been a communion that celebrates a living Lord who does not stand still with time but moves his people on to new beginnings, while having the certainty that the witness of Scripture is the authority to guide us.

It would be a nightmare for an advertising agency to come up with a slogan we could all agree upon, but it's worth pondering that Kelloggs thought it was worth the effort and the cost.

Recent articles have been a valuable guide to our evolving image and this can only be encouraged.



• Steve Downie is the minister at the Mayfield, NSW, church.

## Discipleship

•Mrs Julie Forbes, Mrs Ivy Waters, Redcliffe, Qld •Rachel Neale, Portland, Vic •Phil Drayton, Manifold Heights, Vic •Matthew Britton, Wembley, WA •Anthony Jackson, Gilgandra, NSW •Loris McClaren, Billie (Isabell) Neuberry, Cameron Habermann, Bundaberg, Qld •Leroy, Beverley, Jared & Darren Zahnnow, Mt Walker, Qld •Raymond & Ann Mandelkow, Silverdale, Qld •Karen Peart, Carolyn Foster, Danielle Larsen, Launceston, Tas •Rex Gray, Darryl Baker, Dianella, WA •Amanda Collett, Margaret Chew, Mt Gambler, SA

## Marriages

•Nenette Abancio to David Wyllie, Jan Neale to Colin Donehue, Portland, Vic •Kathryn Skewes to Danny Smith, Goolwa, SA •Allyson Fulcher to Sjef Klaassen, Mt Walker, Qld •Andrea Ladner to Mark Lane, Kristine Chapman to Robert Tree, Katrina Mountain to David Cuddon, Glen Waverley, Vic •Sharron Robinson to John Parry, Launceston, Tas

## Deaths

•Mrs Lillian Arndt, Mrs Margaret Cummings, Mrs Archer, Redcliffe, Qld •Mrs Gwen Griffith, Noble Park, Vic •William John Mudford, Gilgandra, NSW •Dorothy Reed, Goolwa, SA •Evelyn Boettcher, East Ipswich, Qld •Bruce Matthews, Dianella, WA

## Changes

Ararat: Secretary—The Secretariat, 88 High Street, Ararat, Vic 3377.  
Werribee: Minister—Roger Risson, 17 Whitehaven Street, Wyndham Vale, Vic 3030. Phone (03) 742 4637 (Home), (03) 741 6051 (Office).  
Cheltenham: Minister—Paul Hammat, 9 Ramsay Court, Cheltenham, Vic 3192. Phone (03) 584 2185.  
Grainger, George A.—18 Nankoor Street, Golden Square, Vic 3555. Phone (054) 47 7720.  
Box Hill: Secretary—Mrs Elizabeth Loyd, 1 Mervyn Street, Doncaster, Vic 3108. Phone (03) 848 7491.  
Warwick: Minister—Ron Goodwin, 40 Wantley St, Warwick, Qld 4370.

**Boettcher, Evelyn** (30.1.90) Mrs Boettcher, wife of V.G. Boettcher, MBE, was the eldest of nine children born to Mr and Mrs Fred Schmidt (née Lily Baills). Born in Maryborough, Qld, in 1908, the family moved to the property at Fernvale where she was laid to rest. She spent 1931 in Melbourne awaiting the graduation of Vic from the College of the Bible and they were married at Fernvale on 16 April 1932. They had three sons, Ken, Viv and Noel, and one daughter, Dorothy, 16 grandchildren and 13 great-grandchildren. Mrs Boettcher was a loving, caring and devoted wife and mother and grandmother. Through almost 60 years she supported Vic as they served Christ within the Queensland Brotherhood in full-time ministry with the churches at Townsville, Ma Ma Creek, Kingaroy, Roma, Toowoomba (Margaret St/Harlaxton), Boonah and the West Morton circuit, and from 1961 to 1985 in interim ministries for extended periods with the churches at Roma, Rockhampton, Warwick, Maryborough, Hervey Bay, Sunnybank, Acacia Ridge and Ma Ma Creek. In 1966 the onset of her illness first became apparent, and it was controlled until 10 years ago when further deterioration became

evident and subsequently slowly worsened. She bore her pain and suffering with outstanding patience, fortitude and a never-wavering faith in her Lord. She was possessed of a very strong and steadfast faith, and perfect trust in her Lord. She was one of God's kind and gracious women. The chapel of the East Ipswich church was crowded for the service conducted by Norm Flett, assisted by Ian Richer, who delivered the eulogy. —N. Watson

**Mudford, William John (Bill)** (16.1.90) Suddenly called home aged 62, after suffering various illnesses and great pain for years, the Gilgandra, NSW, church has been deprived of a man who loved and served his Lord all his life as elder, deacon, treasurer and other practical ways. He leaves a wife, Roma (née Hilford), children Dianne, Glenda, Cheryl, David and spouses, grandchildren, sisters Thelma, Lorna (Risson) and Ruth (Barter), brother Arthur and many friends who will remember him with joy. Quiet, shy, honest, dependable, he did not consider he had great gifts, but was loved deeply by all who knew him well. His influence will be greatly missed. —D. Butler

### The Queensland Aborigines and Islanders Board Annual Offering—March 1990

Churches of Christ in Queensland have taken up the responsibility for the ministry among Aboriginal and Islander peoples in Queensland.

There are four centres operating—

- **Normanton** A church to outreach to the Aboriginal people in the Gulf Country and along the west side of Cape York Peninsula. A centre that assists with welfare needs through the operation of a Social Security agency and provides a clothing program.
- **Mareeba** A church in a strategic location in North Queensland with the highest concentration of Aboriginal people in Australia in its vicinity and servicing along the east side of Cape York Peninsula.
- **Eidsvoll** A church in a strategic location in Central Queensland, with the support of a special childrens ministry and a clothing program.
- **Logan City** A church located in the southern suburbs of the Brisbane metropolitan area and well placed for an expanded ministry into the Brisbane area.

This is your opportunity for Ministry!  
There are other opportunities for which the Board has been approached—your support is needed now.

Please pray and send your gifts to:  
QAIB, PO Box 508, Kenmore 4069

### C•T•B•Y•P•S•C•E REUNION

Saturday, 17 March 1990  
Stanwell Tops  
Christian Conference  
Centre  
(Boronia Site)  
Info & Registration Forms  
in NSW churches or  
contact John Hunter  
(02) 451 4187  
Fax (02) 316 6048  
Box 39, PO Botany 2019

### South East District Womens Conference 30th Anniversary

Naracoorte, SA

Wed, 23 May, 10 am  
Any ladies associated  
with this conference are  
invited to share in this  
special day

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# Church News

## Tas

**ULVERSTONE** (Tom & Ruth Edge) Christmas—New year period has been an exciting time here ... "Night of Miracles" performed at Caveside on 10 Dec & at Ulverstone on 16 Dec ... Meaningful midnight service on Christmas Eve following Christmas tea for the lonely in the community ... January services well sustained with welcome visitors ... Several members slowly recovering from accident or illness.

**CAVESIDE** (John & Colleen Harrison) Church shared with Deloraine & district churches in posting over 2,200 Christmas letters to every household advising of Christmas services & bringing greetings ... Christmas cantata "Night of Miracles" presented by Ulverstone church on 16 Dec ... "Come Back Home for Christmas" theme of Christmas Eve family carol service. Sunday School children & choir participated ... Planning outdoor gospel music concert with singer & evangelist Jim Muir 28 Feb with CBMC.

**LAUNCESTON** (Rod Foster, John Rees) John Rees, intern minister, conducted all services while Foster family on holidays ... All programs resumed ... Karen Peart, Carolyn Foster & Danielle Larsen baptised on 18 Feb when dedication service for elders & deacons also held ... Harvest Thanksgiving services well attended ... Tribute paid to Barry

Birtwistle, retired after 20 years as music director. Gwen Byard appointed music co-ordinator & Nerida Green her assistant.

## SA

**OWEN COMBINED** (Doug Walladge) Walladge family welcomed at informal barbecue prior to commencing ministry ... Town Hall packed for farewell to the Gardner family, now ministering in the Kalgangadoo parish ... Dedication service held to begin the Sunday School year ... 25 members attended Bible overview seminars ... New PA system installed.

**GOOLWA** (Graeme Ritchie) Average of 84 school-age children attended daily Holiday Bible Adventure held in January ... Members attended farewell to Victor Harbor minister Adrian Clark ... Christmas Eve Carols by Candlelight, Christmas Day service & interchurch worship & drama all well attended ... Memorial service held for pioneer member Dorrie Reed ... Dedication of teachers (for Sunday Youth) segment in morning worship.

**HAPPY VALLEY** (Russell Allison) Russell, Dorothy & family on holidays in January ... Guest speakers were David Jolly, Earl Martin, Richard Hayman (army chaplain) & Keith Bowes ... Sunday School still need another teacher ... Averil & Fred Hermann welcomed into

membership ... Church 11th anniversary 11 February. Family tea to celebrate ... In November babies born to Andrew & Karen Bowden, Bob & Sue Clarke, Marie & Stuart Anson.

**MOUNT GAMBIER** (Anthony Boucher) We rejoice in welcoming our new minister Anthony Boucher, wife Annette & family ... Church working together on a vision of unity, restoration & growth ... Elders Malcolm Collett & John McKinlay actively lay preaching at Tarpeena & Mt Gambier ... New house churches held every Sunday evening ... New format of Sunday School "Kid's Time" well accepted ... Solo Group for lonely singles growing.

## Qld

**REDCLIFFE** (A. Risson) CWF breakup held at Kenmore Christian College—a Christmas program with each lady sharing a Christmas thought. There were a few well-chosen musical items & Mrs Nancy Spencer gave a thoughtful & appropriate talk. We had lunch in the College dining room and viewed the new units in front of College.

**TOWNSVILLE** (Greg Muller) Welcomed into membership Les & Fiona Shelly & family, Tom & Jill Cummins & family ... Dedication of Lauren E. Shelley ... Les new music director ... Sunday School has resumed, Ingrid Harris is co-ordinator ... Home Fellowship groups underway, study on "Revival" ... Australia Day picnic at Alligator Creek enjoyable & relaxing day ... Planning well under way for Northern Convention in June.

**BUNDABERG** (Alan Leane) 155 attended Christmas service ... Average attendances 115 am, 61 pm ... Bible School Super Judy Wait ... Committees John Bond crusade active ... DCDE youth worker Sheryl Hoffman forms Drop-In Centre & "Christianity Explained" ... TWAM Camp Bargara funded by car wash. 19 attend. Leaders Barbara & Dennis Trebbin, Derek & Trixie James & S. Hoffman ... Choir leader Grace Pohle ... Much spiritual growth all round.

**MT WALKER** (Ralph Bennett, David Mansell) Ralph & Barbara Bennett visited relatives, friends in US during 10-week vacation ... Church rejoicing in results of challenging messages & extensive visitation resulting in six adult baptisms ... David Mansell's inspirational messages creating interest ... Church appreciated services of David Kickbusch, student minister during 1989 ... Pre-schooler group "Kiddies Kapers", held each Tues-

day under leadership of Barbara Byram & Trish Deakin assisted by Ruth Ruhland.

**WARWICK** (Ron Goodwin) Church farewelled the Ewers family. Thanks them for their faithful service ... K/Club numbers up & youth group also. Len Doneathy youth leader ... Prayer meetings are a joy to attend ... Church camp in March, fete in April, bus trip in May are activities we are looking forward to ... Minister now lives in the manse ... Three families welcomed into the church.

**PINE RIVERS** (Neale Proellocks, Ian Todd) Church held successful Bethlehem Market 16-17 December. Over 600 attended, donating food for needy in community ... 131 attended Christmas Day service ... 4 February welcomed Neale & Kerry Proellocks & Ian & Dianne Todd & families into ministry at Pine Rivers. Neale returns after three years absence & Ian commences full-time after completing studies at Kenmore ... Church anniversary 25 February with Adrian Risson guest speaker.

## NSW

**GILGANDRA** (George Arundell) George Arundell's interim ministry completed this month. Church is looking for part-time pastor ... At combined meeting with AIM Marie Jones (AIM) & Anthony Jackson baptised ... Church saddened by home call of dearly loved William John Mudford. He is sadly missed & sympathy is extended to his family ... 21st congratulations to Sandra Walker, who has transferred from Georgetown.

**EPPING** (Stephen Curkpatrick, David Moyes) Dr Lionel Berthelson guest speaker at dedication service for auxiliary leaders ... First stage of church renovations commenced ... PM services increased substantially ... Over 30 attending pastoral care course run by Stephen Curkpatrick. Up to 30 young people attending Sunday afternoon Bible study with David Moyes ... Church members becoming "grandparents" to children in the Kid's Club as part of outreach ministry.

**SEVEN HILLS** (T.J. Beaman) Many thanks to John Hanna & Jan Macrae as guest pianists for January ... The church heartened by new members John & Sylvia Foote. John is our new song leader ... Fred Paris-Smith was guest soloist on 11 Feb. His arrangement of "What a Friend We Have in Jesus" was beautifully rendered ... Mt Druitt YP were guests on 18 Feb ... Andrew Stott is new youth leader for 1990. 15 YP attended first meeting of year.

## The Assembly Line is moving and there's a place for you!

In February 1991, Australia will host the seventh Assembly of the World Council of Churches. It will be the most diverse and representative Christian gathering in the world.

Your congregation can be part of the action by joining the Assembly Line, which is a group of churches and individuals making special preparations to prepare themselves, and Australia, for the Assembly.

You can also take part in a specially written series of Bible studies, which launch the Year of Ecumenical Sharing, Pentecost 1990—Pentecost 1991. The six studies explore Assembly themes and local ecumenical activity will be a special focus.

Yes! we want to help Australia prepare for the Assembly!

Please send us more information about:

- The Assembly Line
- The Year of Ecumenical Sharing
- The Bible Studies

Name of Church .....

Contact Person: Name .....

Position .....

Address .....

..... Telephone .....

Send your coupon to Jean Skuse, National Co-ordinator  
Box C199, Clarence Street, Sydney 2000

# Church News

## Vic

**PORTLAND (R. Hough)** Annual meeting well attended. A. Butler, S. Brown, K. Johnson, N. Pritchard elected elders. Agreed to support Hamilton for another two years ... Christmas services well attended ... 50th anniversary very successful. Many returned ... CSSM & Theos shared in services during Jan ... Minister on holidays Jan. Services taken by members ... All auxiliaries functioning for the new year ... Monthly services going well at Heywood.

**MANIFOLD HEIGHTS (Max Ball)** Recognition service & presentation to Paul, Anne Downie & family, praising God with thankful hearts for their ministry with us ... Prayerful concern for improved health for Hec & Jean Douglas ... Members involved in "Close to the Edge Ministry", leader Rick Wright & Prison Fellowship, Errol Aitken ... Presentation to Mrs Ethel Jakobi, who is now to live at Southport ... Baptism of Phil Drayton.

**ECHUCA (A. Symes)** The Echuca church will be host to the Northern District Conference on 3 March. A Mildura group will spend the weekend here ... Ladies busy, two stalls, catering, trading table, Meals on Wheels ... Kitchen stove. All money & goods donated ... CWF joined Yarrowonga ... Annual meeting coming soon. Require four deacons ... Most members returned from holidays.

**CHELSEA (I. Whitelock)** Ian & Jean

Whitelock welcomed into fellowship 4 Feb. Ian inducted as minister by Phyl Davis (Conf Pres) ... Keith Pitt (Parkdale), Wayne Allen (Camberwell) & Howard Barnden gave addresses in interim ... Church Fishing Fellowship outing to Bunyip River. Several visitors ... Sunday School recommenced with eight scholars. Joanne Scott Superintendent ... Church board had "forward retreat" to plan church life with minister.

**ESSENDON (Ken Stothard)** Church saddened at passing of Mrs Myrtle Nicholson on 27 Nov ... Dee Lambert departed for Queensland Dec after happy fellowship with church ... Christmas Carol service great success. Over 150 present ... CWF participated in Bethlehem Market for Children with Cancer. \$301 raised ... Temple Day raised \$3,000 ... Social break-up for Wed afternoon group on 13 Dec. J. Wright soloist on trumpet.

**PRESTON (Tony Armstrong)** Tony Armstrong commenced part-time ministry on 4 Feb when both Tony & Lynette were welcomed into the fellowship of the church ... Our church was represented at CCTC garden party. On that day Tony Armstrong received the community life award. We congratulate him on this achievement ... Nina Pinches has just celebrated 84 years.

**SURREY HILLS (D. Brooker, Julie Adam)** Many visitors at induction of David Brooker on 4 Feb. An informal lunch to welcome family ... Julie Adam, completing BTheol

studies, commissioned as student minister at family service on 18 Feb. Young people took part in service ... Presentation made, appreciation expressed to Mr & Mrs A. Withers after 18 months pastoral ministry with us ... All weekday programs recommenced.

**GLEN WAVERLEY (Ron Elbourne, Doug Fitzpatrick, Lindsay Croxford)** On 11 Feb we celebrated in worship, praise & thanksgiving to our God as we opened our new building complex & recognised the spiritual significance of the event ... Senior minister leading four weekly seminars on "Self-Esteem" for church & community ... John Marshall has been appointed church musical director ... "New Horizons" bookroom reopened & expanding ... Four new evening fellowship groups commenced.

**TRARALGON** Rejoiced in the marriage of Peter & Sandy ... Farewelled Chris & Ian Henry & family ... Board retreat to plan programs for 1990, restructure administration & evaluate a building extension program ... Plans for youth work & a community-based outreach program underway ... Sunday School recommenced with four classes, 25 students & a teaching team of eight.

**BRUNSWICK (Vic Quayle)** Christmas for Others party with 85 people ... Senior Citizens & Leisure Games afternoon recommenced for the year ... Death of Flo Copland from MOH flats, Barky St ... Celebrating with Amy & Paul Kettner on grand-

son Steven winning three bronze medals in Commonwealth Games ... Unveiling of plaque to celebrate lives of Robin & Ruth Gray.

## WA

**WEMBLEY (John Timms)** Matthew Britton baptised January. Also Andrew Britton made rededication ... Barbecue party held at Eric & Lesley Hogben's home to celebrate engagement of their son Roger to Laura Wilson ... Auxiliaries have commenced functioning again after holiday break ... Film *The Shepherd* screened evening service Australia Day weekend.

**DIANELLA (John Spencer)** Church looking forward to recommencement of a youth group ... Family camp planned for mid-March ... Chinese dinner night enjoyed by ladies ... FAB expressed appreciation for financial assistance to pastor's conference ... Church saddened by death of well-loved board member Bruce Matthews after extended illness ... Heartened by baptisms of Rex Gray & Darryl Baker.

**FREMANTLE (D. Good)** Our minister presented "Heroes of the Faith" series ... Harvest Thanksgiving food items given to Christian Welfare Centre ... Bible study "year" opened with customary barbecue at which Dr David Bambach (Interserve) spoke of work & witness for Christ in Nepal. David honoured by the King of Nepal for his contribution to education there.

## 43rd FEDERAL CONFERENCE

CHURCHES OF CHRIST IN AUSTRALIA

8-14 October 1990

THEME: NOW IS THE TIME TO SERVE THE LORD

CONFERENCE PRESIDENT: Dr Don Stewart, PO Box 508, Kenmore 4069

CONFERENCE ARRANGEMENTS SECRETARY: Mrs C. Forster, PO Box 508, Kenmore 4069 Phone (07) 378 0400

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# The Top Ten of 1989

**E**ach year *The Christian Century* and *Christianity Today*, both respected American Christian newsmagazines, issue a list of the top news stories with have religious importance. We published a summary of the *Christianity Today* list in our 17 February issue. In this issue we look at *The Christian Century's* list of the top news stories for 1989. Readers who compare the two lists will find interesting differences in the way two areas of the church examine news priorities.

## 1. Political Changes in Eastern Europe

"In this year of stunning political changes in Eastern Europe, we have been struck repeatedly by the power and endurance of religious communities in those lands. Churches have been examples of resistance, protectors of human dignity, and resources for political and social change—a saga that is, in our view, the top story of the year in religion."

## 2. Repression in El Salvador

The church-state conflict that is part of El Salvador's protracted civil war escalated markedly, most notably and most tragically with the 16 November mutilation and murder of six Jesuit priests, their housekeeper and her daughter.

## 3. Abortion Revisited

While the US Supreme Court did not overturn *Roe v. Wade*, which effectively made abortion legal in 1973, it did open the way for state legislatures to impose new curbs on abortion. A new era of debate has commenced on the whole abortion issue which is sharply dividing many Christian communities.

## 4. The Rushdie Affair

The publication of *The Satanic Verses* brought cries of protest from the Muslim community and raised issues of blasphemy and the issue of freedom of belief and expression. The call by the Ayatollah Khomeini for the author to be killed for his blasphemy of Allah has led to Salman Rushdie being in hiding all year.

## 5. Mainline Restructuring

This item places together the continuing financial crisis in mainline Protestant churches in the US with conflict in the National Council of Churches in the US.

## 6. Bakker and Televangelism

The continued stories coming from the trial and conviction of Jim Bakker and other developments amongst televangelists.

## 7. Convent Controversy

Tensions between Catholics and Jews arose during the controversy over the Carmelite convent at Auschwitz, the site where Nazis killed an estimated 2.5 million Jews.

## 8. African-American Catholics

Fiery, charismatic priest George A. Stallings Jr, of Washington, DC, sent shockwaves through the Roman Catholic Church by breaking with his archbishop and forming his own congregation, the Imani Temple African-American Catholic Congregation ("imani" is Swahili for "faith").

## 9. Gays in the Church

Churches continue to debate the place of homosexuals in the church, particularly in the ordained ministry.

## 10. Dalai Lama and Nonviolence

The granting of the Noble Peace Prize in 1989 to the Dalai Lama contrasted with the political crackdowns that occurred when the Chinese suppressed moves for greater independence in Lhasa.

# The Last Word

Christian service is to offer to others from that which is ours.

—Paul Tournier

A young person was applying for a first job. "I see," said the prospective employer, "that you have a reference from your Sunday School teacher and one from your minister. Can't you get one from somebody who knows you on week days?"

\*\*\*\*\*

"Now children, I want you to write me an essay without a theme—just put down what is in you."

Ten minutes later a student handed in the following: "In me there is a heart, a lung and an appendix. And then there is a stomach with two pieces of bread and butter, an apple and five caramels."

\*\*\*\*\*

"My children's saxophone lessons have been a very good proposition."

"Have they been able to get into a band?" "No, but I've been able to buy the neighbouring houses very cheap."

\*\*\*\*\*

A small parishioner in Aberdeen brought a basket of strawberries to the minister very early on Monday morning.

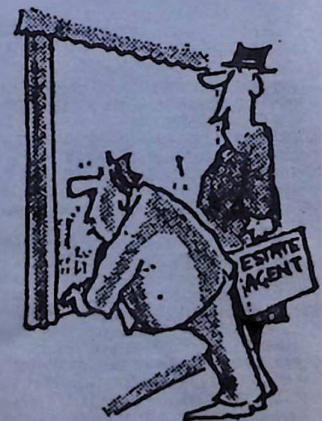
"Thank you, my child," said the minister, "they are very beautiful. But I hope you didn't gather them yesterday, which was the Sabbath Day?"

"No," replied the child; "I picked them this morning. But they was growin' all yesterday."

\*\*\*\*\*

Ad placed in a local weekly newspaper: "Notice: To the person who took my all-weather coat and gloves from the Baptist Church on 5 January—God loves you, and I am trying. (Signed by the owner of these items.)"

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Breathtaking, isn't it? Especially on a day like this, when the lift is out of order!

THE AUSTRALIAN CHRISTIAN

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