

National Journal
of Churches of
Christ in Australia

Vol. 94 • No. 22

14 December 1991

THE AUSTRALIAN CHRISTIAN

Registered by Australia Post
Publication No. VAR 0761



Left to right: Bill Harrison (full-time marriage counsellor, and elder of the Pendle Hill, NSW, church), Roger Brown (associate minister, Dulwich-Rose Park United Parish, SA), Brian Hill (minister, Henley Beach, SA), Dennis Nutt (Senior Lecturer, C of C in NSW Theological College, Carlingford) and Graham Warne (Vice Principal, Kenmore Christian College, Qld). Rhonda Whan (Mudford) and Gail Thornton, who graduated with a two-year certificate at the same time, were unable to attend the reunion, but continue in active Christian service.



25 Years On...

On 18 November 1966, five young men (left) graduated from Woolwich. After 25 years each of these continues in full-time Christian ministry. Recently these same young men (below) had a reunion.

Summer Reading Issue

THE AUSTRALIAN CHRISTIAN

Vol. 94

No. 22

14 December 1991

Managing Editor: Chris Ambrose
Assistant: Geoff Alves

| Issue | Deadline |
|-------------|-------------|
| 8 February | 31 January |
| 22 February | 14 February |
| 7 March | 28 February |

Address for All Correspondence
(including all subscription payments)
PO Box 101

North Essendon 3041
Telephone (03) 379 1219
After Hours (03) 337 8349



Member
publication of the
Australasian
Religious Press
Association

National logo of
Churches of Christ
in Australia



"The Australian Christian" is published
by the Board of Management of the
Australian Christian, a Department of
the National Conference of
Churches of Christ in Australia.

Keith Aird, Chairman (SA)
Don Burdett, Secretary (ACT)
Lindsay Mott, Treasurer (Vic)
John Batchler (Tas)
Steve Downie (NSW)
John Sheriff (Qld)
Allen Smyth (WA)

Printing by New Litho Pty Ltd,
63 Sunbury Cres,
Surrey Hills 3127

Responsibility for electoral material is
accepted by Chris Ambrose,
3 Hamlyn St, Essendon 3040

This publication is indexed in the
Australasian Religion Index

ISSN 0004-8852

Advertising Rates

Displayed: \$4.80 per column
centimetre

Classifieds: \$10 for the first 25 words
and 10c for each additional word

Guest Editorial

• *Those times when we can forget our world of work and listen and watch and note the strength of the elements and the wonder of creation we learn to appreciate the hand that provides*

Be Still and Know That I Am God

by Kingsley Curtis

How often in the rush of our busy lives do we take the opportunity to stop and allow our thoughts to roam and consider the wonder of God's creation?

As I was doing my usual wander around the dining room at one of our retirement villages an elderly lady asked me to come and see her after lunch. Thinking she would wish to talk about a financial, maintenance or some other provision problem, I knocked on the door. She indicated the chair I should use and we got to talking. After

some time I asked if there were any specific issues she wished to talk about. "No," she said, "I just thought we could sit together."

This was a bit of a shock to a person who is always running around doing things. It made me think about how important it is for each of us to stop, to give ourselves the opportunity to cast our thoughts back to times when we have enjoyed a special peace and when we have quietly pondered the wonder and order of our world.

Let me share some moments with you.

I remember sitting alone in the first Anglican church in Western Australia, a small building with traditional decor and stained-glass windows. As I sat quietly I thought of the history of the place, the people who had witnessed there, the struggles they must have faced and the heritage they left. I picked up the prayer book and the reading I opened to was so supportive of my thoughts that I felt that I was meant to be there. This peaceful setting provided what I needed to direct my thoughts and provide a quiet and meaningful time.

The little underground Catholic Church at Coober Pedy provided me with a similar opportunity to sit and meditate one evening. I was mindful of the slow and deliberate movement of the miners and their families as they came in to kneel and pray, and I felt a sense of oneness with these people who shared in worship.



We have all stood on a bleak mountain or hillside and felt the icy wind in our faces or have taken the time to watch the rough sea beat against the rocks along our rugged coast. Some of these times when we can forget our world of work and we can listen and watch and note the strength of these elements and the wonder of creation, we learn to appreciate the structure of the things around us and appreciate the hand that provides.

Early one Sunday morning I climbed Mt Via, which rises over Apia in Western

Samoa, and experienced the wonder of that tropical mountain. At the summit I had rested on the cold concrete slab of Robert Louis Stevenson's tomb and had watched the smoke drifting from the cooking fires in the villages below and the sun sparkling on the waters of the bay. I felt a peace that can only come from taking time out to meditate and think of the beauty that has been created.

With these thoughts on my mind I wandered past the Methodist church in the afternoon. I heard a choir singing so I went in and sat in the back seat. The ages of the members of the choir ranged from about 10 to 80 and the choir leader/organist was a lad of about eighteen. They were singing the old hymns with great skill, and with obvious feeling and conviction. I was able to sit quietly, close my eyes and think of the tie that binds so many together, the love he shows to all people and the opportunities he provides for all of us to share this love with others.

We have all had similar experiences, we need to relive them and we need to make and take the time to experience in new ways the wonder of his world and the beauty he has created.

We should recognise that at times we need to be still, and be receptive, if we are to fully appreciate all he has made available to us.

We need to be still and know him.

• Long service

Old Friends Celebrate 50 Years since Ordination

Jim Wright and Ed Roffey were mates in Sydney before entering the College of the Bible together in 1938. They were ordained for ministry together in the Swanston Street church on 27 November 1941, along with Bruce Coventry, Harold Steele and the late Douglas Pike. That was the first year graduates of the college were given a service of ordination. Today they, with Harold Steele, live within a few kilometres of each other.

Jim has had 50 years continuous service in the pastoral ministry of Churches of Christ in Australia. Churches in which he ministered are Blackburn and North Essendon (Vic), Albion (Qld), Launceston (Tas), Unley and Brighton (SA), Ainslie (ACT) and Glenelg (SA), returning to Blackburn in 1980 when Blackburn and Mitcham united to become Nunawading. He has resigned from Nunawading and leaves the ministry team at the end of 1991.

Before Ed's retirement his ministries were YMCA/RAAF, South Yarra (Vic), Paddington and Lane Cove (NSW), Ivanhoe and Blackburn (Vic) and State Minister for SA. Between 1948 and 1963 Ed was an honorary lecturer at the Woolwich College. He taught at the Sydney Technical College and ministered part-time at Lane Cove until it reached

full-time status. He resigned his technical college appointment and continued at Lane Cove until his move to Melbourne in 1964 and later to Adelaide.

Jim Wright

On 15 November, a gathering of family, colleagues and friends from around the nation met at the Churches of Christ Theological College, Mulgrave, to honour Marj and Jim Wright as Jim completed 50 years of pastoral ministry, which has covered most Australian states.

The evening was sponsored by Clive Ward, National President of Churches of Christ, and had representatives from each of the interstate churches where Marj and Jim had ministered.

Daughter Anne Foot spoke about "My Minister and My Father", highlighting the special bond that Jim had with her and her brother, Peter, the joys and concerns associated with the changes of ministry interstate and the dual role that Jim fulfilled and continues to fulfil for her and her family.

Sir Geoffrey Foot spoke of "My Minister and My Friend", referring to the friendship and fellowship associated within and without the Launceston,



Jim Wright and Ed Roffey (centre) with Harold and Irma Steele (left) and Gwen Roffey (right)

Tas, church, which has a developing richness as they now share grandchildren.

Ferg Minahan spoke of "My Minister" and his unique friendship with Marj and Jim, which began during Jim's first ministry at Blackburn (now Nunawading) and continued when this wonderful couple returned to Nunawading church for 12 years.

Jim's response was just as the thousands who have known him would expect—"Wright Thinking". (This was the title of the column that Jim contributed to *The Australian Christian* over a number of years.) In it he paid tribute to the wonderful

support and love of Marjorie and the pride and pleasure that he has derived from Anne and Peter and their families. He is a very proud and devoted husband, father and grandfather. The college faculty and fellow students played an important task in the formative years of the young minister, and the congregations reinforced his belief in the worth of all God's human creations and kept him humble enough to rely only on God's direction.

He could not resist the humorous anecdotes or the intensely personal references, all of which added to the enjoyment of the evening.



Marj and Jim Wright and Sir Geoffrey Foot

Cover Story



The 16 November cover of *The Australian Christian* featured the Bendigo, Vic, church, which has just celebrated its 125th anniversary.

The cover painting was executed by Cecil Houston, a long-time member at Bendigo, and the painting was used for the cover of the video that traces the history of the Bendigo church.

• Statement by the Churches Working Group on AIDS

World AIDS Day, 1991

In 1981 there were the first reports of a new disease that came to be known as Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome. Eventually a new word, AIDS, came into our language. It is a word that has evoked strong feelings.

AIDS is a disease that has serious implications for human welfare, public health, social services, legal rights and moral values. In some parts of the world the disease has the proportions of a major catastrophe.

Since 1982, when the first case of AIDS was diagnosed in Australia, over 1,500 have died. It is estimated that nearly 18,000 are HIV infected.

The members of the Churches Working Group on AIDS (CWGA) consider it an opportune time to affirm our commitment to work in co-operation with government and other agencies towards a common response to HIV/AIDS.

This response is twofold. First, care and support for those with the disease and those who are affected by it. Second, the prevention of the spread of the disease.

Many individuals, some motivated by their religious faith, have committed themselves to the care of people who live with HIV/AIDS. The CWGA assures them of solidarity and support.

Recognising the worth of all people, the CWGA seeks to ac-

cept and support people with HIV and their loved ones, and to understand the physical, emotional and spiritual resources that they will need. The efforts of researchers to find suitable therapies are applauded and continued efforts are encouraged to educate the community about the ways in which infection can be avoided.

The Working Group regrets that, in some instances, the response to this disease has not been consistent with a vision of human dignity and the loving message of the Christian Gospel.

The CWGA believes there is no place for prejudice or discrimination. There is no place for the view that sees this disease as a punishment wrought by God. There is no place for uninformed public debate or sensationalist media reporting. There is no place for exploitation or the false promise of inappropriate therapies. There is no place for denying people hope or suggesting that their lives are not worth living.

Community groups, including many that are drawn from a religious origin, provide support and help to people meeting the challenges presented by AIDS. The Working Group urges them to continue to direct their efforts to the well-being of those most in need.

The way in which people behave has a direct impact on the risk of contracting this dis-

• Combined services in Adelaide's west

Westside Churches Growing Together

Combined church services, discussions concerning co-operation, ministers coming together for prayer are some of the ways that the Churches of Christ on the west side of Adelaide are growing together.

This year well-attended combined monthly Sunday evening services have been held at Cowandilla, Flinders Park, Brooklyn Park, Mile End, Henley Beach and Semaphore. The Albert Park church will host a combined Christmas evening service on 22 December.

Many Westside churches have small attendances on Sunday nights and to have churches filled with enthusiastic, joyful worshippers, a young people's music group aiding the singing, choirs and challenging guest preachers have been a

significant encouragement to the local church as well as the visitors.

As well as participating in the combined Westside services the Mile End and Cowandilla churches hold a combined service on the first Sunday evening of every month and the Flinders Park and Henley Beach churches share together in some activities. Discussions concerning the possibility of working more closely together have been initiated by some of the Westside churches in close proximity to each other.

Westside ministers have plans underway for the 1992 combined services, the first being held at Queenstown on 16 February with Keith Horne as guest speaker and Barbara Turner arranging a segment in song.

—Ron McLean

ease. There is a serious obligation on people not to act in a way that will put themselves or others at risk.

When human behaviour puts people's health and life at risk, it is necessary to confront questions about the rightness or wrongness of that behaviour. Public policy, including public health policy, must address the importance of behaviour choices that go to the heart of any strategy to minimise the impact of, and hopefully eliminate, this disease.

Education must honestly and openly address all behavioural choices. Moral judgements cannot exclude understanding and an openness to forgiveness and reconciliation if they are to reflect the spirit of the Christian Gospel.

Effective education requires a relationship of mutual respect and trust. This relationship will be established through sincere dialogue and a willingness to let go of prejudice.

Human relationships are often fragile and can easily be destroyed through insensitivity to the worth of others or through rash judgement. Past hurts, as well as fears about the future, can impair present attitudes.

It is not always possible to find easy answers to the hard questions of pain and suffering, sickness and death or the disappointments of a life that is cut short.

Nevertheless, some affected by HIV have found strength, hope and trust in the God who is love.

SUMMER SERIES AT SEVEN "WHERE CAN I FIND LOVE?"

A series with
GERALD ROSE
Cheltenham Church of Christ, Vic

About the cry of human need and the unexpected and surprising grace of God
Special Music—Guest Artists

Interviews with those who have discovered the "Grace Awakening"

*Each Sunday evening of January—7 pm
(5, 12, 19, 26 January)*

*4 Chesterville Rd, Cheltenham, Vic
You are invited*



People

• Ian Alves in Buenos Aires

South American Spiritual Warfare Conference



Ian Alves

only within the context of the church, but throughout our nation's cities and towns.

The plea of the institute was that churches around the world stand together and claim their communities for Jesus Christ. Anglicans, Baptists, members of the Uniting Church and Churches of Christ, Pentecostals, Charismatics and all other evangelicals were urged to co-operate together in an

Ian and Jeannine Alves from the Chatswood, NSW, church attended the first annual Harvest Evangelism International Institute, held in Buenos Aires, Argentina, 11-16 October. They believe that their experience in Argentina will have a direct relevance to ministry both within the church and the local area as well.

The aim of the institute was to show how we can develop ministries of prayer, spiritual warfare and evangelism, not

environment of love, acceptance and humility. The task is to identify and bind through prayer the "territorial" evil spirits preventing people from having the opportunity to hear and respond to the gospel. Other concerns are spirits that bind people to their sins, or who rob Christians of victorious and fruitful lives.

Key speakers at the institute were Luis Bush, Dr Peter Wagner, Paul Cedar, Cindy Jacobs and leaders from large,

rapidly growing churches in Latin America and Asia.

Among the speakers from Asia was Kriengsak Chareonwongsak, who became a Christian while studying at the University of Melbourne. He attended the Clayton, Vic, church before returning to his native Bangkok, Thailand. There he started the "Hope of Bangkok" Church, which now has 6,000 members. It is his vision to have a church planted in every province in Thailand. The principles of spiritual warfare have been the key to victory in this predominantly Buddhist country. Ed Silvano, President of Harvest Evangelism, brought a lot of expertise and wisdom to the area of spiritual warfare, drawing upon experience gained in his native Argentina, which is currently enjoying a spiritual revival.

Ian Alves says, "I believe we saw church history being made at the spiritual retreat at Maximo Paz (one hour's drive from the city). Representatives with diverse Christian backgrounds and from the world's five continents embraced each other and later served the

Lord's Supper as an expression of unity in Christ. Many present were overwhelmed by this beautiful and spontaneous expression of love and acceptance."

Ian represented the Australian continent. Since his return to Chatswood he has been able to share his burden for the City of Willoughby with other ministers in the area, who also see that engaging in spiritual warfare will bear much fruit for the Kingdom of God. Already a spiritual retreat is planned for late January and many local pastors have indicated their desire to attend.

Ian and Jeannine believe God made it possible for them to go to Argentina so that they could be used here in Australia, by his Holy Spirit, to bring Christians together to pray—to be involved in spiritual warfare, so that evil would be bound and Jesus would have the victory.

Their prayer is that blessings will continue to flow from their experience in Buenos Aires. Ian can be contacted on (02) 419 5520 (work) or (02) 412 3986 (home).

• Ministry honoured

Certificate for Eric Hart

Delegates to the 108th Annual Conference of Churches of Christ in Queensland had ample opportunity to study and appreciate the significant pioneering contributions of Eric Hart to the work in Queensland. They were also able to focus upon the national and international influence of his faith. After studying the historic profile prepared from past publications and personal enquiry by Professor Allan Wilson the Conference overwhelmingly carried the following resolution: "That on the fifth day of October in the year of our Lord One Thousand Nine Hundred and Ninety One the Conference of Churches of

Christ in Queensland expresses its appreciation for the years of dedicated zeal and ministry of Eric Thomas Hart, who, having responded to a call to mission, outreach and care, embarked upon an enduring path of encouragement and motivation amongst the Lord's people within Australia, the United Kingdom and abroad.

"His inspirational gifts of planning, development, evangelism and community care were shared with the people of Queensland for twenty-four years, during which he was a motivator in the development of churches in the western and northern regions of the state in concert with the emergence of

a virile Social Service arm of Conference.

"Having also ministered within that term as the first Church of Christ chaplain to emigrants at sea, he later ministered for three years in the United Kingdom. Thereafter he relocated to serve for seven years with the Conference of Churches of Christ in New South Wales and New Zealand, returning again for a further five years from 1981.

"He accepted the call to serve as President of the New South Wales Conference in 1964-65 and as Federal President of Churches of Christ in Australia in 1976.

"Constantly available to those seeking counsel and guidance, his caring quality of encouragement created a vital legacy for emulation by all who

have been beneficiaries through the years.

"Appreciation for thirty-seven years of dedicated service in recognised ministries, and the continuing zeal earmarking his subsequent nine years in retirement, is hereby made a matter of historic record."

A signed, sealed and framed certificate has since been presented on behalf of the Queensland and National Conferences by Kevin Crawford, Conference Secretary in New South Wales.

A typically humble Eric Hart has accepted the recognition happily and gives credit to his Lord for a three-way partnership in which he and Madge have been able to jointly, continuously and selflessly minister as the Lord's servants to the needs of others.

• **Successful year**

Cheltenham's Ministry Team

1991 has been a very successful year for Cheltenham, Vic. The present ministry team of **Gerald Rose, Marilyn Hinton and Paul Hammat** was expanded by the addition of **Beryl Lewis** as part-time lay pastor and **Scott Harrison** as part-time music director. Scott is the organist at the Moorabbin Town Hall and specialises in the theatre organ. Mid-year Scott was in the USA, where he played in Los Angeles. Since coming to Cheltenham, Scott has organised a number of music groups that regularly play in evening and morning services. His style and enthusiasm has provided a new dynamic to the worship services.

Beryl completes her Diploma in Lay Ministry at CCTC this year and as part of her studies was appointed to her home church Cheltenham to assist pastoral care minister Marilyn Hinton. Beryl has been responsible for the organisation of the team of pastoral care visitors who visit church members and contacts. After graduation,

Beryl will move to Adelaide to join husband Neil, who was recently appointed to the staff of Flinders University as a lecturer.

At a board retreat in May, elders, deacons and task-group conveners took the decision to begin renovating the church hall with a view to moving the 9.15am and 7pm services there. This "auditorium" has now been carpeted and the services commenced there with the church anniversary on 20 October. The results, particularly at the 9.15am service, have been very encouraging, with the new location providing more room and greater opportunity for informality and fellowship in a relaxed atmosphere. Parents have room to care for their children and still be part of the service and morning tea and supper can now be shared in by the whole congregation. Major alterations are planned for the auditorium and a complete new sound system with a 24 mixer board is being installed. The informality and



Marilyn Hinton, Paul Hammat, Denise Yabsley, Scott Harrison, Jeanette Shiel, Beryl Lewis and Gerald Rose

inviting atmosphere of the new location has already created a warm and friendly environment that is attractive to those not accustomed to church. The 11 am service, which is also well attended, is still held in the existing chapel. A well-conducted service with a good choir caters for the many people who prefer traditional worship.

Cheltenham has been expanding over recent years and its staff, in addition to the ministry team, includes two secre-

taries, a manager, secretary and nursing staff of the Retirement Centre. Also associated with the church are the co-ordinator, assistant co-ordinator, tutors and staff of the Cheltenham Neighbourhood House.

The church also conducts a **Special Opportunity Play Group** and an **accommodation house for homeless youth**.

In just over a year 65 new members have joined the church. In a special membership month 48 new members joined the church.

• **Leaders remember**

Good Companions Super Reunion



Alma Yewdall, who served as secretary on the Good Companions Executive for many years, Ruth Hood, from Ormond church, completing over 30 years of continuous leadership, and Dot Brooker, Good Companions Chief for 10 years and involved in GC for 46 years

"Do you remember?"
"Whatever happened to...?"
"You haven't changed!"

The chatter, the laughter, the memories abounded as 72 leaders, covering six decades and from various parts of Victoria, gathered together at Surrey Hills church on 21 September.

It was a wonderful evening of renewing friendships and sharing past experiences. The atmosphere was vibrant as we all stood together and repeated our pledge and promise, and sang our Good Companions' hymn—"I Would Be True". This was followed by a time of recognising the years of service and notable leader achievements. Certificates and rosettes were presented for outstanding contributions to club life. To revive the memories of club programming, a game of "Leader Feud" (based on TV's "Family Feud") was enjoyed by both the volunteers and the

audience. To continue our reputation for "fine food", an enjoyable supper was ably served by husbands, daughters and granddaughters.

As we held hands and said our Good Companions closing, there was, for many, an overwhelming feeling of belonging to a great movement, and it was agreed to meet again in another five years time.

—Dot Brooker

Church of Christ
SOUTHPORT

now meets in
Parklands Drive
8.55 am
Worship and Communion
6.30 pm
Gospel Celebration
Minister: **Noel Newton**
(075) 94 6154, 94 6633
31 4353 (AH)

People

• Ray Yerbury in the Hunter Valley Apocalypse...Soon!



Ray Yerbury

"Apocalypse...Soon!" was the theme of an intensive 10 days of meetings with Ray Yerbury at the Maitland, NSW, church. Ray comes from Queensland and has a background in industrial chemistry, with his own business and consultancy and a doctorate in Biblical Studies from Luther Rice Seminary, USA.

The aim of the meetings was to inform people of the Biblical teaching concerning the goal and climax of history. It was to engender hope by showing the reliability of scripture and the promise of Jesus' return.

The programs included a meeting with the Church Council and some leaders at a coffee inn, with exclusive use, to begin the series. He spoke at Salt Ash and Hamilton churches, the Churches of Christ Hunter Valley Ministers' Fraternal, and a business and professional peoples luncheon and to residents of our Greenhills Hostel, and held interviews with 2NURFM, Radio Rhema and the Maitland Mercury.

The evening meetings in our hall were very well attended with 120 on Friday night and 141 on Sunday morning. His use of current events, good overhead projector material, a warm personality and fine Bible knowledge on the premillennial viewpoint of prophecy made a significant impact.

He has an audio-visual of 28 minutes featuring the Passion Play at Oberammergau. This was shown at a Rotary Club as well as a mid-week meeting.

Interested folk can reach him at 6 Andress St, McDowall 4053. —Ray Hawkins

• New additions to ministry team

Six at Epping

Kevin Crawford, recently retired from NSW State Conference Executive, will take on a part-time leadership role in the Epping, NSW, ministry team, beginning in 1992.

Lester Sutton, a graduate from Carlingford College, will join the ministry team full-time, with particular emphasis on youth and preaching ministry, beginning in 1992.

Joseph Han, a graduate from Carlingford College, has now commenced full-time ministry with Epping, giving leadership to the Korean congregation and mission.

Other team ministry members include David Moyes, in



Kevin Crawford

full-time ministry, John Lee, in student ministry, and Lois Elsmore, in administration. This ministry leadership team represents an exciting future for ministry and mission in the community, specialising in children, youth, worship, small-group and cross-cultural ministry.

—Stephen Curkpatrick

• Bond impresses

Watch Out for the Son of Jack

30 years ago I invited Jack Bond to conduct a week's mission in Swan Hill, Vic. It proved to be a great time for the church.

30 years later when we thought it was safe to sit back in our congregations and enjoy relative comfort and ease, up bobs the son of Jack in the person of John Bond.

The Frankston, Vic, congregation has just been through a great time of blessing as John has led us in a vital, inspiring and challenging series of meetings, house parties and coffee mornings and a ladies luncheon, men's breakfast and a youth Rock-On. John showed us that he can preach first-class, up-to-date and relevant sermons that appeal to young people, the married and the unmarried, and we witnessed younger children sitting bolt upright and listening to every word.

Every group felt that he was very much in touch with them and their particular needs. Not an easy agenda.



John Bond

Before the week ended we recorded at least 67 responses to the gospel. These included the following: six people came into membership, four were baptised, 19 indicated they would like to be baptised, 20 made a rededication of their life to the Lord, five indicated their desire to surrender their life to the Lord and 13 indicated that they wanted to join a Bible study group.

Be careful of the son of Jack. Frankston is anxious to invite him back again.

—Allan Avery



Beth and John Bridgford invite you to join them on their personally escorted 1992 tours

THE VERY BEST OF NEW ZEALAND

Departing 12 April 1992

A magnificent tour of both islands, including Christchurch, Mt Cook, Queenstown & environs, Wanaka, Rotorua, Taupo, Waitomo, Bay of Islands, Auckland and more. First-class resorts and hotels, cooked breakfasts and dinners throughout. Internal flight between Islands. Qantas flights. Only \$2,550 twin share.

THE HOLY LAND and/or BRITAIN AS NEVER BEFORE!

Departing September 1992

A comprehensive and inspirational tour through ISRAEL AND SINAI plus a leisurely tour through England, Scotland and Wales, staying at church-owned STATELY HOMES AND CASTLES in England. Also includes unique CANAL CRUISING in the picturesque English canal system. Holy Land and Britain components can be taken separately.

conquest tours
Licence No. 30664

For further details, contact John or Beth at:
5 Camden Crt., Glen Waverley, Vic 3150
Phone (03) 560 3103

Letters to the Editor

Letters are limited to 200 words

Church Buildings

To the Editor,

I was interested in Barry McMurtrie's article "Cultural Relevance" ("AC" 5 October).

It has greatly concerned me too that our denomination has fallen to only approx. 0.25% of the Australian population (one in 400 people) and it appears that it will continue to fall.

However, while our membership has continued to fall the capital investment in church buildings has grown dramatically until we have the absurd situation where large amounts of capital per member are invested in little-used property (in the majority of cases). Surely our priorities are in the wrong place when our overseas missionaries are struggling for funds to carry on, and some 140,000 children are dying each day.

Could not we have a comprehensive survey of all our associated church buildings and at the same time endeavour to cut down on the initial capital cost? After all, one well-known sect puts up their buildings in 48 hours with mostly volunteer labour at a fraction of the cost of ours. There are many of our buildings grossly under-utilised and maybe in some cases we could sell them off (particularly in the case of small congregations) and lease properties, e.g. to schools in the area.

I have an uneasy feeling that we will be held accountable for our poor stewardship.

—Fen Hewitt
(Wembley Downs, WA)

The Importance of the Lord's Supper

To the Editor,

I agree with H.E. Hayward's concern about the Lord's Supper becoming "another item in a concert" ("AC" 16 November). My concern was reinforced when I read in *Australia Grow* (issued by our ABCDE) of a WA church "celebrating communion mid-week in our home groups...to avoid embarrassing the person who has no

idea what is going on". Surely the Sunday celebration of the Lord's Supper is still an essential part of our witness, or is it to become a victim of cultural relevancy?

The early church placed great importance upon the Lord's Supper (Acts 2:42-46, 20:7). The very reason Christians gather together every Sunday is to encounter our risen Lord in the partaking of his Supper. The responsibility of our worship leaders is to create a sense of power and movement through a service whereby the Lord's Supper becomes the climax of our worship experience. "This is my body/blood..." are the words the Holy Spirit conveys to our hearts that brings strength, healing, forgiveness and renewal of faith to worshippers. It is through this encounter with Christ himself that the church (his body) is spiritually fed for its mission or reconciling people to God.

I would assert that if such an encounter does not take place, our Sunday services will lack power and purpose, and thus become irrelevant.

—Keith Ridge
(Hampstead Gardens, SA)

Offerings from the "Unchurched"

To the Editor,

It used to be "bring your unsaved friends along to the Gospel service on Sunday nights (no offering taken)".

Now it is "let's establish a worship service for the unchurched (and take up an offering)".

This change in approach is giving me a bit of theological and emotional unease that some of our wiser readers might solve.

The term "unchurched" is fashionable. It is a nice, soft term for the lost, the unsaved, the backslidden, the unrepentant. Be that as it is, can the "unchurched" really worship in spirit and truth the Lord God Almighty?

Is it the ministry of the saved (presumably called "the churched") to fashion worship services for the "unchurched"? Surely worship is to be given in

accordance with what God has decreed, especially in the New Testament. Such worship will be flavoured by cultural and modern-day circumstances but they will conform to the Word of God.

Why is the "churched" intent upon getting the "unchurched" to worship? This relies upon bringing people to a place rather than sending the "churched" out to disciple the "unchurched" where they are. (This is tough going.)

In the OT God rejected offerings mixed with leaven. I wonder if we have forgotten this principle in our worship?

—Ray Hawkins
(Maitland, NSW)

Ecumenical Co-operation

To the Editor,

Towards the end of the 1960s B. J. Combridge, the past secretary of the Victorian-Tasmanian Department of Home Missions, wrote a history of Home Mis-

sion work. He noted a possible trend towards action on an ecumenical basis in appropriate centres. The comment was based on the new co-operative project at Churchill. From that time the Department was at the heart of the planning for the three further rural joint ventures and offered continuing support as needed. The co-operation trend among other mainline denominations has not continued other than in small rural centres where co-operation appeared basic to survival. Projects commenced in urban areas between other mainline denominations seem to have lapsed after a time and a recent effort in an outer Melbourne area was discontinued. The overall experience has not been encouraging.

It was out of this context that when asked about future Churches of Christ involvement in new projects, the writer replied at State Conference that in the light of limited resources,

Letters from Tertius

Perfection

To the Editor,

I've always had trouble with Jesus' words, "Be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect."

I can't even imagine my wife being that perfect, let alone Tertius the also-ran. But last Sunday our minister solved the problem for me.

It appears that the word that Jesus would have used means "complete" rather than perfect in our sense of the word. Well I don't see how I can be complete either. That's nearly as bad as being perfect.

But then he went on to explain that Jesus had been talking about loving enemies and problem people and unlovely people. So Jesus was really saying, "Let your love be complete as God's love is complete." But I still couldn't see how any one could love like God loves.

Then suddenly the light flooded into the dim recesses of my slow-moving mind. What Jesus was saying is, "God's love is complete, in that no one is left out. So make sure that no one is left out of your love either."

That doesn't make it a lot easier, but at least it makes it possible. It isn't easy for me to get the idea of loving some people I know, let alone some of the terrible people that you hear and read about. I was even brought up with the idea that Christians didn't mix with or love sinners until they were on their way into the church. But apparently God loves them because "he loves the whole world" and I don't think that means the planet, but the people who are on it, the whole lot of them. I'm still getting used to the idea. Hoping you are the same,

—Tertius

Letters

new opportunities and demands and past experience it was unlikely that co-operative ventures would be seen as priorities. As sad as that may be for some of us, this seems to be a reality. Other than B. Burns' letter of 20 July to *The Australian Christian* no comment has been received by Department members or staff on the remarks made at Conference. The reply to the question at Conference and the subsequent letter were carefully considered.

In view of a later comment by A. Matheson (19 October) some response to the issues may be helpful.

On the matter of new ethnic churches, all existing groups clearly use Churches of Christ in their title. Titles such as Grace Church are quite appropriate given Asian custom and desirable where the location may shift over a period. At least two of the ministers of these new churches have significant experience as Churches of Christ leaders, with one being ordained overseas. Others have attended College lectures on our history and witness. Each of the churches is endeavouring to introduce matters relating to Churches of Christ practice into their life.

In the case of the Kensington Christian Network the original leader believed this was an appropriate title given the special mission situation and neither the current leaders or the Department of Mission, Education and Development have felt any change is required. The link with Churches of Christ is clearly seen within Kensington and the wider Churches of Christ community.

—Don H. Smith
(Vic-Tas Department of MED)

Appreciation

To the Editor,

In speaking with staff and fellow chaplains at the Royal Children's Hospital appreciation has been expressed at the appropriateness of the ministry of the ladies of the Churches of Christ who visit with gifts every Monday.

Both those who provide the

gifts and those who so sensitively visit the patients should be aware that their long-term ministry is appreciated.

—Ross Bourdon
(Chaplain, RCH, and minister at Ascot Vale)

Worship Services

To the Editor,

H. Hayward and G. Stirling ("AC" 16 Nov) touched on two related subjects which echo my concern. Having an "infinite variety of times and programs" which water down the Spiritual content and appeal of the Gospel for the sake of numbers forces one to ask: Where are we going? Worship services may be losing their appeal to young people because of our failure to teach them the value of true worship.

Despite the variety of innovations, we in SA are registering a steady decline in membership. We may well ask: Where have all the members gone? Further to "Where Have All the Presidents Gone?" (Keith Milne, "AC" 1 Dec) we may well ask: Where have all the qualified presidents gone? Some presidents unfortunately seem to use style and material which draws attention to themselves rather than to the true purpose of the Lord's Supper, which is to point us to Christ our Sacrifice.

Maybe we should get back to honouring our Lord in the deep Spiritual sense the Lord's Supper and our worship demands. I tend to feel that we as Churches of Christ have lost our way in the maze of innovative programs. Good leaders can be used in many ways other than putting on a "performance". Do we really comprehend what the Church was established for?

—L.W. Marshman
(Victor Harbor, SA)

Visiting Melbourne?

You are welcome at the Richmond Church of Christ cnr Coppin and Murphy Streets Services: 11 am and 7 pm (03) 428 4844

People

• Tributes to Keith Horne

"This Is Your Life"

Mystery voices from off stage, the appearance of surprise interstate guests, lots of laughs and memories from the past—it was all there in true "This Is Your Life" format, as hundreds of people converged on Marion, SA, church on 16 November to pay tribute to Keith and Gwen Horne.

Arriving in a chauffeur-driven limo, Keith and Gwen had absolutely no idea of the surprises that were awaiting them, including an appearance by Dr Keith Farmer of Carlingford College.

There were also six special friends from the Doncaster, Vic, church, where Keith and Gwen ministered for more than 12 years.

Jointly compered by Graham Agnew and Dawn Chivell, the program highlighted the various "eras" in Keith's ministry over more than 40 years, from his early days in Queensland, to the golden days in the South Australian Youth and Home Mission Departments, right up until the last six years at Marion.

Included in the line-up of guests was Chris Gallus, the local Federal member, who paid tribute to Keith's outstanding work in the community,



Keith Horne

particularly his co-ordination of Marion's Pastoral Care and Community Centre.

At the close of the night, Keith was presented with a beautifully inscribed plaque, a bound folder of letters from some of the leading men and women of our Australian Brotherhood, a gift cheque from the church at Marion and a large caricature, drawn by the renowned caricaturist with the *Adelaide Advertiser*, David Schaefer (who happens to be a member at Marion).

In all, a fitting "thank you" to a great man of God and his incredibly supportive wife.



Hey, Christian Single!
Interested in a Gold Coast holiday
with other Christian adults (23+)?

CLUB SOLO

3-11 January

\$295 for nine days shared accommodation of fully catered meals at the National Fitness camp, Burleigh heads, Qld. 130 Christian singles in the holiday capital of Australia. Lighted tennis courts, squash courts, full gym facilities, lighted swimming pool...and all at a beachfront facility. Resort quality dining, including "pig-on-a-spit" and "formal barbecue night". Sightseeing in the day...bonfires on the beach at night. Good biblical preaching. Great Christian fellowship. Definitely a holiday with a difference.

Speaker: Dwight Robertson

(International convention speaker and recording artist)

UPCOMING EVENT

Red Centre Tour, 4-18 July 1992

20 US singles and 20 Australian singles

Counsellor: Dr James Ridgeway

Applications: Club Solo, Steve Mitchell, 1/2 Karoonda Court, Meadow Heights 3048. Phone (03) 305 3486.

Media Review

Books



Canberra Takeaways

What the Assembly Offers a Local Congregation
by John Bluck (Risk Book Series—WCC Publications)

This is a 60-page book examining the recent Assembly of the World Council of Churches held in Canberra. It is an attempt by a committed ecumenist to look for the connection between the experience of the Assembly and the life of the local church. Any book attempting to look at the whole of the Assembly and the diversity of the program and views is only going to touch briefly on each topic, so this is more of a summary of what happened than an examination of the implications for the

local congregation. There is still not a deep enough examination of the problems that the WCC Assembly raised for its own future or of the acceptance of some of the theological positions that were advocated there.

Available from the ACC, Box C199, Clarence Street PO, Sydney 2000.

Religion and Advanced Industrial Society

by James A. Beckford (Unwin Hyman) \$29.95

In a thorough and wide-ranging analysis of the sociology of religion, Beckford locates its origins within the central problematic of the classical tradition of the discipline, with its concern for the relationship between religion and the transition to modern or industrial society, that is, its relationship to social change. But he argues that for the sociology of religion to have a place in the post-modern or post-industrial world—it needs to reappraise its current preoccupations and practice.

Of particular interest and relevance here is the discussion of the development of the sociology of religion within the US and the factors that have made it a specialism that is largely isolated from the mainstream of disciplinary concerns within the advanced industrial societies—concerns that include the potential for nuclear annihilation, the worsening plight of the Third World, changes in the family, rising levels of crime and so on. The writer locates this marginalisation in the development of different schools of thought and research that have, to a large extent, developed around the different branches of the Christian church and the journals these have spawned. The other major contribution to this process that he discusses is more central to the discipline, that is the subsumption of religion as the “central value system” within the normative functionalist perspective that dominated the discipline up until the 1970s. As a result, religion and its relationship with other aspects of society ceased to be an area of research. Beckford argues further, however, that since the 1970s there have been signs of a renewed attempt to study religion in ways that separate it from its preoccupations with churches, sects and so on, and return it to the mainstream and the emergence of new concerns such as the uses to which religion can be put by the powerful, which can be seen by civil religion, those of the powerless, as well as the new religious movements and other similar new social movements such as the peace and environmental movements that adopt religious symbolism.

As there is considerable interest among many ministers and others in leadership within the church in the many studies claiming to derive from a sociological analytical framework, this

book could provide a contextualising base from which the relative merits of these largely empirical studies could be evaluated. Such an informed position could permit a higher level of debate concerning this literature, which at present includes some confusion that presentations of “what is” equate to “what ought to be” and disappointment that “sociology” doesn’t produce better (or more desirable) explanations. Beckford’s analysis points to the potential to overcome the distance between theology (broadly defined) and sociology—and the potential to extricate theology from domination by a highly respected methodologist, Martin Buler regards Beckford’s research with Jehovah’s Witnesses as one of few good examples of the integration of theoretical and empirical research, he practices what he preaches.

For this reason if not those others already cited, this book deserves to be read and taken seriously. —Rosslyn Reed

Grace Abounding The Pilgrim’s Progress

both by John Bunyan (Word Classics Library, Word Publishing) \$11.95 and \$13.95

In any list of Christian “classics”, *The Pilgrim’s Progress* must come close to the top; therefore it is appropriate that Word Publishing should establish its Word Classics Library imprint with this and its companion work, the perhaps less-familiar, *Grace Abounding*. Both date from the 17th Century, but their themes relate directly to the life and daily experience of Christians 300 years later. John Bunyan (1628–1688), the son of a tinker, fought on the side of Parliament during the Civil War and after a period of spiritual torment and guilt became a Non-Conformist preacher at Bedford. On the Restoration of the monarchy he was imprisoned for preaching without a bishop’s licence, and spent a total of 12 years in jail. His only reading was the Bible and *Foxe’s Book of Martyrs*. *Grace Abounding* was developed during this period, and *The Pilgrim’s Progress* was commenced during a subsequent short imprisonment and published in two parts in 1678 and 1684.

“He appeared in countenance to be of a stern and rough temper; but in his conversation mild and affable, not given to



Media Review

loquacity or much discourse in company unless some urgent occasion required it; loving to reconcile differences, and making friendship with all; he was tall of stature, strong boned, though not corpulent, somewhat of a ruddy face, with sparkling eyes."

Grace Abounding is Bunyan's spiritual autobiography and includes a record of his examination before the Justices of Bedford. Much of his writing reveals a prickly Puritanism, but beyond this we see a man of integrity, sincerity and courage.

It is good to be reminded of the trials and sacrifices of our spiritual forebears in their quest for freedom of worship and religious expression. This is surely as valuable a product of British history as parliamentary democracy and the constitutional monarchy.

The Pilgrim's Progress is an allegorical representation of the perils, temptations and triumphs of the Christian life expressed through the journey of Christian—the pilgrim—from the City of Destruction to the glory of the Celestial City. All our old friends and tormentors are here: Apollyon, Faithful, Hopeful, Giant Despair, Ignorance and Talkative. The second part of the book, the journey of Christian, concludes with that beautiful description of the crossing of the river (death) by Mr Valiant-for-truth: "So he passed over, and all the trumpets sounded for him on the other side."

Expressing his attitude to denominational differences, Bunyan, who belonged to a Baptist group, said: "And since you would know by what name I would be distinguished from others, I tell you I would be, and hope I am, a Christian, and choose, if God should count me worthy, to be called a Christian."

Perhaps hard going for the modern reader but revealing great spiritual truths—and great English literature as well.

—Graeme Addicott



Prophecy 2000

Rushing to Armageddon
by David Allen Lewis (New Leaf Press) \$21.90

The blurb on the back of this book states: "This is the book that can help you chart your course in the 1990s! Do troubled waters lie ahead? What will your world be like by the year 2000 if Jesus has not come by then?" It then continues to list some of the questions that this book covers such as: Is Russia the Magog bear of the north? Will Communism fade into oblivion? European Alliance—1992—revived Rome? The great Rapture debate; The United States in prophecy; Future temples in Israel;

Weird winds of doctrine blowing in the churches etc.

I found it depressing to read this book and realise that people swallow some of this imaginative interpretation of history, scripture etc. as being biblical. A very American view of the world, entirely pro-Israel, anti-communist and written from a particular millennialist viewpoint.

Word Australia are the agents for this book in Australia. I just wish that some of these companies would be more discerning about the quality of material they import to Australia from the USA.

—CRA

Ministry in an Urban World

Responding to the City
edited by Tim Costello (Acorn Press) \$9.95

This book is written by various people with experience of ministry in the inner cities of Australian and New Zealand. It is aimed at those involved in ministry in an urban context and while

Ministry in an URBAN World



the primary focus is on the inner city there are still valuable lessons and insights for those attempting to address the problems of the outer suburban fringes. The various authors have drawn together material from biblical, missiological and sociological areas to address the pressing need for ministry in the city. This trend for concern about ministry to the cities is a world-wide phenomenon in the church today and has to be faced if we are to be honest about our call to mission to the whole world. The different contributions vary. Some are very practical ("Urban Ministry and Burn Out") while others are more concerned at setting

a biblical basis for the ministry ("From Country Congregations to City Churches"). If this book is not available from your local Christian bookshop it could be ordered from Acorn Press Ltd, PO Box 282, Brunswick East 3057, and the cost of postage would need to be added to the price.

—CRA

DIAL FOR
NEW HOPE
(03) 11610

L. C. F. Higgins

Chartered
Accountant

7 The Parade
Norwood SA 5067
Phones (08) 362 1665
& (08) 362 8619

- Accountancy Services
- Business Management
- Financial Planning
- Taxation Returns



Kenmore
Christian
College

"Training Servants
for Ministry"

R.W. Tippet
Principal

41 Brookfield Road
Kenmore 4069
Phone (07) 378
7633



El Kanah

CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

Christian Fellowship in a Family Atmosphere

We offer you guest house style accommodation from as low as \$42 a day, home-style cooking. Relax in the mountain playground of Marysville. Experience the comfort of our fully renovated, fire-proof guest house, including spa. Student and pensioner concessions available.

Phone or write to us:
CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY
El Kanah Buxton Rd., Marysville, 3779. (059) 63 3229

Happenings

More than 5 million attended each of 4 broadcasts at 850 satellite locations in 20 countries of the Billy Graham Buenos Aires, Argentina, Crusade. The overflow crowds were beyond expectations of local church leaders.

More than 40,000 visited Sydney's Darling Harbour for the Mind, Body, Spirit Festival. Stalls included Reiki, Theosophy, Grail Movement, Hare Krishna, Mind Powers, astrology, Spiritualist Church, tarot card readings, Kirlian photography (auras), astral travelling and the Community of Hope. The Community of Hope was a Christian stall that involved 50 trained volunteers from basically two churches—Gynea Baptist and St Giles Presbyterian. A specially prepared pamphlet *Journeying with Jesus* was handed to all passers by.

On 3 November, Dr Robert Schuller preached at the Crystal Cathedral, Garden Grove, California, on the theme "Life's Not Fair—But God Is Good". This was his first sermon following his two brain operations, lengthy hospitalisation and recuperation since an accident he had in the Netherlands when he hit his head against the roof of his car.

An Aboriginal and Islander Baptist Conference of Australia was formed by the National Council of the Baptist Union of Australia. The conference brings together Aborigines and islanders from urban and traditional backgrounds attending Baptist churches throughout Australia to develop interchange and fellowship between them and between non-Aboriginal Australians.

The ecumenical women's group in Zurich has launched a signature campaign for a referendum that would change the rules of the Catholic and Reformed churches of the Swiss canton to permit members of either church to hold mem-

bership in the other at the same time. If 3,000 Catholics and 5,000 Protestants sign the petition within 6 months, the two synods will have one year to put the matter to a vote of the churches.

The synod of the Reformed Church of Alsace and Lorraine (France) has taken a decisive step towards unity with the Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession of Alsace and Lorraine (Lutheran).

Christopher Polis, son of Eric and Esther Polis, Australian Baptist Missionary Society staff in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea, was shot while travelling to his hostel on 10 November. His condition is satisfactory.

In the US, Southern Baptist churches baptised 3,000 children aged 5 and under in 1989.

The number of refugees in the world increased again last year to about 18 million without a country of their own.

At least 100 doctors in Tasmania will send a black card to politicians whenever someone in their electorate dies because of smoking. About 1,000 Tasmanians die each year from smoking, which costs Tasmania about \$85 million in health care costs.

Australians spend more on alcohol than they do on fruit and vegetables according to a WA Health Department study.

Christian Blind Mission International again featured at the TDK Australian Audio Book Award, 1991. CBMI's recording of *Touching the Rock* by John Hull and narrated by Lawrence Bruce, was the winning entry in the adult literature category. This was capped by a second overall award, for excellence of production. *Touching the Rock* started out in taped form as John Hull's morning

musings, intended to clarify his experience of blindness.

After 5 months of negotiating permission and making preparations, the largest shipment of Scriptures ever delivered to Iraq arrived in Baghdad on 16 November. The Scriptures delivered comprised 18,500 Bibles, 24,500 New Testaments, 27,240 Scripture portions, 2 16-mm "Jesus" films and some "Jesus" video cassettes. The official registration of the Bible Society in Iraq is being pursued. Previously Bible work in Iraq was carried out either from Iran or Turkey.

At least 2 Christian churches have been started in Albania as a result of evangelistic efforts in July and October. About 100 Albanian Christians converted in the July evangelistic campaign are meeting weekly for worship in the Palace of Culture in Tirana, the capital. The church is called the "Fellowship of the Disciples of the Lord". In the southern city of Korca, a second congregation of about 60 new believers is meeting in the Culture Palace.

Relief work among Iraqi refugees in Jordan has resulted in an "unbelievable" response to the Christian gospel. Iraqi refugees who fled Iraq during the Persian Gulf War are becoming Christians as a result of the Christian and Missionary Alliance Church. At one special meeting in Amman, the entire audience stood in response to the Gospel message, and more than 190 adults, most of them Iraqis, made Christian commitments. An estimated 180,000 Iraqis are now living in Jordan, with 1,000 more arriving each day.

The leader of one of Vietnam's largest independent house church movements, Pastor Tran Mai, has been sentenced to 3 years imprisonment for allegedly "pursuing religious activities without

permission" and using such activities "to fight the government". He is the third prominent Vietnamese house church leader to be imprisoned this year. The leaders are believed to have been targeted by the Communist authorities for their alleged links with overseas Christian organisations.

The World Home Bible League is about to produce another 500,000 Russian New Testaments in Australia to be shipped to the Soviet Union. This will mean they will now have sent 2.7 million New Testaments to Russia.

Membership in the US Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) declined last year for the 26th straight year, but there are hopeful signs. 9 regions showed numerical growth, some of them for the first time in years, and there was an increase in baptisms. The church counts 1,043,943 members in the US and Canada, 681,246 of whom are "participating", or attending or giving financially at some time during the year. A total of 13,704 baptisms were reported during 1990, up 4% from the previous year.

Carey Hauri, an Operation Mobilisation missionary from South Australia working in Hungary, was attacked by a man who stabbed her in the back as she was walking home on 26 November. She was not robbed. The motives remain a mystery.

A complete operating theatre is on its way from Australia to Laos. The medical equipment is a gift from Australia as Laos struggles to cope with the influx of returning refugees. The Monash Medical Centre, which donated the equipment, has been linked with the Ton Peunh Hospital in the north of the country through a United Nations Community Link Enterprise scheme. Monash approached World Vision for

assistance in shipping the equipment to Laos and monitoring its delivery.

Grandparents are being dumped into hospitals and onto rubbish tips as the global recession takes its toll in both rich and poor nations. The dumping of old people by their families, dubbed "granny dumping", has appeared as sociologists struggle to comprehend this most recent product of the recession. There have been no cases yet of "granny dumping" in Australia, however research data indicates it is certainly happening in the US, Asia and Latin America.

Despite pleas to the government from church groups, AIDEX '91, an exhibition promoting the arms trade, was held in Canberra last month. Killing devices were displayed in the same month that Timorese were being massacred in Dili. Contrary to police and media allegations, protesters at AIDEX were non-violent and peaceful. Yet the police arrested 200 for eight hours and used violence and dogs.

The Anglican Archbishop of Adelaide, Dr Ian George, claims that single parents and the long-term unemployed are the most loathed people in the community. He said they are also those least served by government policy and the media. These people are stigmatised as exploiting the system, which is often not true. Sole-parent families have the lowest income per family size of any family group.

The Grote St, Adelaide, SA, church has a vision to reach city street kids. A large hall has been made available as a youth centre. To launch the new venture a Christmas supper and gospel night will be held at 7 pm on Christmas Day for anyone wandering around the city with nowhere to go or no-one to care. Offers of help would be appreciated. Contact John Haycox on (08) 344 7716.

• Pastoral care and community centre

New Appointment



Ros Green

The Marion, SA, church has appointed Ros Green as the co-ordinator of pastoral care and community services as from 1992. Ros has been a member of the church from its commencement and is actively involved in the worship and music ministry. She is a nurse by profession and has an impressive record of service in this field. She is currently the research sister for the Queen Victoria Hospital and has considerable experience in working with teams and counselling patients. Her study has included counsellor training at a postgraduate level and pastoral subjects with Parkin-Wesley Theological College.

Ros will take the role filled by Keith Horne for the past six years and will be located in the church's pastoral care and community centre. The centre is the heart of a program that co-ordinates the pastoral care program of the church and has

developed extensive ministries to the aged, handicapped, emotionally distressed and people facing personal crisis as a result of poverty.

Ros will major on pastoral care, but will also have responsibility for the recruitment, training and support of a large team of volunteers who staff the centre.

The centre has become a vital part of the delivery of care services to the community. Literally hundreds of people a month come to the centre, many for assistance in their financial crises. In any one day a volunteer counsellor could be involved with a solo parent, a case of acute depression, loneliness, shopping assistance, domestic violence, incest, advocacy with a government department, family crisis and more. As well, it is the caring heart of a large congregation and the starting point for a pastoral ministry that includes 140 "over seventies" and a telelink program.

For emergency relief, this year has been a difficult one because of the recession and more than \$50,000 in cash and food parcels has been given to people seeking assistance. The demand for assistance increased 146% over 1990 and 2,147 clients were assisted. The centre is staffed by a team of 22 volunteer counsellors, all of whom have completed the Care Worker's Course of 54 hours class work led by Roger Dufty, Reg Brand, and Keith Horne.



Some of the volunteers at the centre

• Work continues

Capital Fund

The builders have now started the major work on setting up our new office in the North Essendon church complex. It is hoped that the work will be finished by Christmas—leaving only the painting, carpeting and the provision of gas heating to be completed early in 1992. New telephone and fax lines have already been installed—we will advise you of our fax number in the first issue in 1992.

Thank you so much for your generous support of *The Australian Christian Capital Fund* appeal. At the beginning of December donations totalled \$18,163, from 375 donors. This response is excellent, especially in the current economic climate. We very much appreciated the loyalty of our readers.
—Chris Ambrose (Editor)

• Carlingford Graduation, 1991

What a Night!

An excited gathering of 700 met in the new auditorium of the Wesley Central Mission for the 1991 Churches of Christ in NSW Theological College Graduation.

It was a very special night as the first part of the program was devoted to the recognition of Kevin Crawford, who will retire at the end of this year. Kevin has given 37 years to the ministry of the Word and over 30 to the service of the New South Wales Conference in his capacities as Home Missions Director and Conference Secretary. The college is honoured to be able to give this recognition as part of graduation because Kevin has had a close association with the college as treasurer, student and lecturer. Graeme Bagley, the Conference President, made a presentation to Kevin on behalf of a grateful conference.

A number of graduating students shared in the program: Neale Meredith welcomed the guests and opened in prayer, Frank Langford led the praise time and Sheree Hill read the scriptures. Antony Cook spoke on behalf of the graduating class.

The address, given by Ron Hewitt, Director of Church Development and Education, was one of challenge and pastoral care. Dr Keith Farmer, the college principal, presented

the diplomas and certificates and then led in a prayer of commissioning.

Diplomas were awarded to Antony Cook (India and then DCD in New South Wales), Neil Dickinson (Normanton, Qld), Kaye Flett (school chaplaincy, NSW), Sheree Hill (possible further study), Frank Langford, Dean MacPherson (Overseas Mission), Neale Meredith (Mildura, Vic), Kevin O'Brien (Kingsthorpe, Qld), Lester Sutton (Epping, NSW) and Clinton Wardle (Nowra, NSW).

A Christian Service Certificate (two-year course) was presented to Denielle Knight, who will continue studies with Creative Ministries International.

The one-year Church Leadership Certificate was awarded to Jillian O'Brien and Trish Wardle.

A number of students also completed the requirements for the Bachelor of Theology degree from the Sydney College of Divinity. They are Ian Docker (Campbelltown, NSW), Ron Kennedy (currently minister of Beverly Hills, NSW), Colin Murdoch (school religious instruction), Steven Wescombe, Neil Dickinson, Joon Hee Han (Korean Church, Epping, NSW), Sheree Hill, Frank Langford, Neale Meredith, Kevin O'Brien, Eul-Shik Seo and Lester Sutton.

• Vic-Tas Department of Mission, Education and Development news

Moving on All Fronts

Ethnic Church Leaders Confer

Over 50 leaders from Melbourne's new ethnic churches met together for dinner at Nunawading church on 9 November. Those participating came from the Vietnamese, Korean, Grace and Indonesian Churches of Christ. A number of apologies were received from other groups. Chek Chia led the worship and during the evening the various churches reported on their work with ministers contributing musical items. There was good interaction between leaders, special guests and members of the Vic-Tas Department of Mission, Education and Development, which sponsored the event.

Midway Point Opening

Greg Foot, President of Churches of Christ, Tasmania, led the act of dedication for the

new facilities at Midway Point on 24 November. The opening was the culmination of over 12 months of work by volunteers and tradesmen to demolish a disused hall and transport and re-erect it on a magnificent site overlooking the Pittwater. Visitors came from churches throughout Tasmania for the occasion.

Greetings were presented by Don Smith of the Department of Mission, Education and Development, Greg Foot and Jeff Weston and the Warden of Sorell, Theo Casimaty.

Church members are rejoicing in their new modern facility and planning various outreach initiatives to the growing community on Hobart's eastern urban boundary. Midway Point is a major development project for the Department of Mission, Education and Development in Tasmania.



Some of the participants at the ethnic church leaders meeting

Farewell to Camp Seaview

At a special dinner held at the Howrah, Tas, church on 23 November, the retiring managers of Camp Seaview, Basil and Ida Marden, were farewelled.

Basil and Ida have given outstanding service during an important development period at Camp Seaview, a time when major construction work is occurring. A feature of their management has been the growing

number of backpackers using the site during the summer months. Many of these have come from Northern Europe. At their suggestion Bibles and Gospels in European languages have been made available to meet the numerous questions from backpackers about the Christian faith.

Graeme and Marion Spaulding of the Hobart church commenced as managers in November.



Greg Foot, David Llewellyn (Minister for Forests and Primary Industry), Jeff Weston (minister, Hobart City church) and Craig Humphris (minister of Midway Point)



Malcolm Orr, Secretary of the Camp Seaview Tasmania Committee, Basil and Ida Marden, and Ian Cumine, Chairman of the Committee

Les Lawlor says...

I stand behind every Lawlor Pest Control job personally—all types of buildings—anywhere. Everything unconditionally guaranteed! Weeds—birds on roofs—Argentine and all other ants—"white ants"—borers—carpet pests—lawn pests, in fact, any pest that grows, walks or flies.

LAWLORS PTY. LTD.
THE PEST CONTROL PEOPLE
 6-10 Henley St., Torrensville
 Phone (08) 43 9636



Correction

In the 1 December issue of *The Australian Christian* we carried an advertisement for the Bellarine Peninsula Church of Christ. The correct address of the Uniting Church Chapel where services are held is the Wallington—Ocean Grove Road, 4 km north of Ocean Grove.

Summer Reading

16 pages of serious and not-so-serious articles for the holidays

There is just something special about home-made soup. It has flavour, substance, freshness, that indescribable something that canned stuff just doesn't have. And Esau was a soup addict. Returning after an unsuccessful hunt he was hungry. Passing by his brother, Esau was at once tantalised and arrested by the smell of delicious home-made soup. Being a man of the "now", Jacob's soup "kitchen" was too good to pass by. So what if the cost was a bit much, what use a birthright when your stomach rumbles (Genesis 25:19-34). Anyway the service was at least first class and personal.

It is easy to stone Esau over this soup incident and not realise there is a bit of him in all of us. Immediate gratification at the expense of long-term blessing can capture our "taste buds" quite easily. In the soul and in the church "Esau" strives for self satisfaction and prominence, regardless of who is embarrassed, who suffers, what happens later.

Are we in the Australian church scene witnessing the dominance of the "Esau" principle? A willingness to forgo the promised blessing of the Lord Jesus for a moment of "soup"? When the church thinks of popularity instead of proclamation, success instead of sacrifice, partying instead of praying, then the "soup bowl" is close at hand.

So many keep telling us in the church scene that the church is dying, it is irrelevant, unattractive. If such statements are made solely on the basis of statistics and finance then they are being made from the wrong premise. There are unpleasant signs of a church scene in disarray but usually it is from disobedience, not bad location or equipment lack or failure of the Scriptures. To fail to resolve the disobedience issue and take people's attention from it by appealing to their self-inter-

Ray Hawkins

In the Soup



ested satisfaction is a "soup program" and it is a danger to our birthright.

The moment we accept the premise that the church is on the way out, we look for the soup bowl. Membership numbers are decreasing so let us lower the qualification for membership irrespective of Biblical warrant. In the past we may have spoken where the Bible speaks, but today silence is much more profitable. We live in sophisticated times (so they say), therefore we need to tone down the message of the Cross. It is a bit gruesome to our delicate natures. We do not want to offend nice people, especially when they help pay the bills. In a welfare state it seems rather pointless talking

about the providence of God and sacrifice so we satisfy them with entertainment rather than enterprise. Few realise the high price exacted for such a change in priorities. Such things might be sweet to the taste but poison to the body. The church can suffer more than indigestion from such "soup menus".

The church has its charter. The church has its guarantee of continuance (Matthew 16:18). The church has its commission and it all embraces the cross. From there we wear his name, teach his Word, bear his sufferings, feed his sheep (not soup but milk, meat, manna, water) and follow him. His Word does not return void. We will reap in due season if we faint not. We will exercise self-

control in a profligate society and be bold enough to declare that God honours those who honour him, who graciously but firmly reject the pleasures of the self-indulgent. It is good for us to remember that Esau was an unconverted, unbowed and unaccepted person in God's sight. Esau was powerful, he was prosperous and personable, but untouched by God. The final word on Esau in the Old Testament is in Malachi and it simply says, "Esau I have hated."

Surely there is a word there for the church. The soup bowl of Genesis 25 was simply a symptom of a greater problem. Is the church's fascination with "soup" an indication of unbelief in the sufficiency of the Word of God and the preaching of the Cross? If this is true it would explain the spiritual malnutrition of the saints, the shallowness of the servants and the fickleness of the world to the church's endeavours. It is time to look at what we are offering people: a "soup bowl" or "rivers of living water".

Paul's word to the Galatians is a timely reminder in our assessment: "Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, who gave himself for our sins to rescue us from the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen. I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you by the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel—which is really no gospel at all. Evidently some people are throwing you into confusion and are trying to pervert the gospel of Christ. But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let him be eternally condemned!" (Galatians 1:3-8)

• Ray Hawkins is the minister of the Maitland, NSW, church.

Jim Davidson

I Am Fear

I am Fear!
Sometimes I win; other times I lose.

I lost with George. But for a time, I gave him hell. An ex-navy man, 35 years old, George had never thought about life, death, the future. Until the doctor told him he had terminal cancer. Then I stepped in!

And when Christians visited George with their tales of heaven and hell and forgiveness of sins and Jesus Christ—that name frightens me—I was able to build up in George such a barrier of fear he just hid in bed and stared at them, scared stiff at what they said.

That went on for weeks. They spoke, and he listened, but no response. Then one Sunday evening, a new one, younger, pale-faced, came with the older Christians to learn how to counsel before he went to Bible School.

Paleface had a sneaky way about him, not saying anything, but all ears, and praying inside himself for George. His behaviour scared me.

But I had it all sown up. George had only a few days to live, and nothing could shift Fear from his mind.

They'd talked and prayed and they'd failed again, and I breathed easily. George'd be dead before their next visit.

But stop...Paleface had caught George's eye. He was going to speak—hesitated.

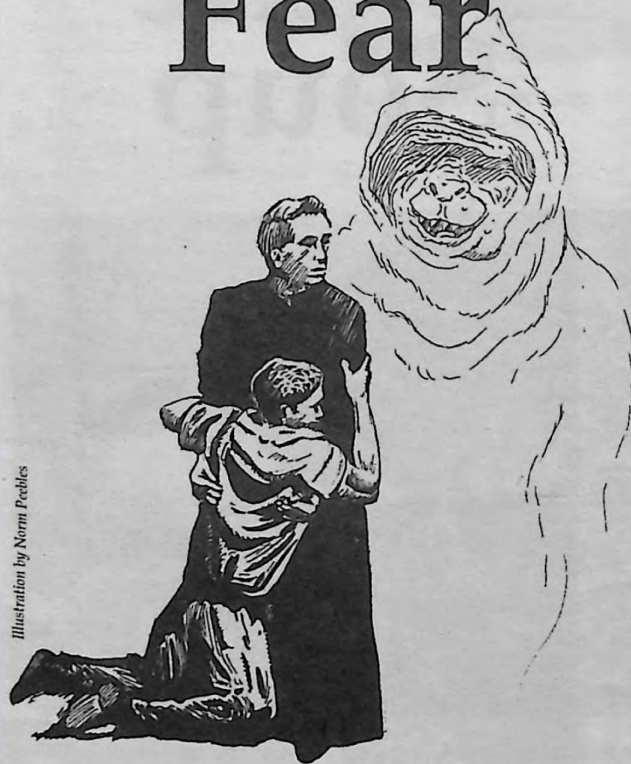
"Don't say it!" I warned. "Your friends will think you're presumptuous." I piled on the fear aspect.

But he ignored me. He spoke: "George, no matter what, remember that God loves you." Simper, simper—Paleface oozed love.

I cringed. It isn't fair! Fear can not fight love. Neither could George. Next thing, he was weeping, praying, confessing sins, the whole works. Result? I was kicked out, and could only watch as God's love undid all my work and George found that detestable peace these humans get from knowing Jesus as their Lord and Saviour. Aaargh—I hate it!

Failure was bitter, with the winning post in sight.

Illustration by Norm Peedles



But I've known success. And I love it. No, not "love", but you know what I mean!

Especially the success of torturing a Christian's peace of mind so he can't serve God.

I've enjoyed myself with Peter. Peter insists he has committed the unforgivable sin.

That's fine by me, for Peter spends all his "spiritual meditation" looking inside himself, moaning about his lost condition. Great! Peter has never learnt to enjoy forgiveness. Or the so-called peace of mind Jesus promised.

The more Peter insists he can not be forgiven, the more he downgrades Jesus' work on the Cross, God's love in action!

Which is fine by me, because love is the weapon I can not fight.

I repeat, the more these humans water down Christ's work on Calvary, the weaker their picture of God's love.

They don't seem to know their Bible tells them: "There is no fear (that's me) in love, but perfect love casts out fear." (1 John 4:18)

Long live ignorance! Because if Peter once grasps God's love, if he begins to understand that God's love applies to him personally, then bang goes my good work. I stand corrected—"evil work".

But there will always be humans who think they're spe-

cial, their sin is noteworthy, mountainously unforgivable. They don't know it, but they are erasing the word "all" from that dangerous Bible passage—"the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin...he is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (1 John 1:7, 9)

Get rid of the word "all", and Fear can reign.

I can hinder God's work in other ways. Eddie was 19 when he claimed that God called him to serve in the ministry. I put Fear into Eddie's mind, and I whispered to his mother. Result? Eddie couldn't say "yes" to God because his mother needed him at home.

And Eddie was miserable from that day onwards. He'd said "no" to God, and his conscience tortured him. Beautiful. 25 years later, he was still miserable. Trapped in his treadmill, working off a bad conscience.

Then at a missionary conference, he met Paleface, the Christian who spoiled things with George. And there he was again—simpering love. I wanted to throw-up!

"Forget the past," said Paleface to Eddie. "Every morning, open yourself to the love of God and say 'yes!' to whatever he asks of you today. Then leave it with him. He knows best. And know this to be true—God loves you and he doesn't want you to be miserable."

At first I thought I was defeated. But Eddie clung to his doubts. He tells himself—it's too good to be true! Which I appreciate. So I keep on whispering. Yet I have an unpleasant feeling that one of these days, Eddie is going to open himself to God's love, and then I'm sunk. When that happens, I, Fear, will bite the dust.

And now for the story of one of my worst defeats. And yes, God's love and Paleface were behind it.

To begin: Kevin, 15 years old, a Christian who loved Jesus, hanged himself on a Saturday morning in the family garage.

His family was devastated. Just ripe for me. And I harvest-

Guess Who

Looking Back

I'd better explain beforehand.

Do you remember the 1930s depression? That's when we got married—on £5 between us! A lass from Middle Brighton married a farmer from Merino, near Hamilton, Vic. I could ride a horse but I'd never seen a cow! There were 90 of the brutes, but I did my best to leg rope, apply milking machines and strip-milk. Phew!

Two months of this and then I got pregnant. No more farm for me. It's back to Melbourne for us—but no car! It's pony and jinker, tent poles tied to shafts, tent, baggage etc. Planning a three-week trip—360 miles. Merino to Mt Gambier to Warrnambool to the Great Ocean Rd to Belgrave to stay.

We arrive at Port Fairy camping ground. I was longing for the taste of fresh fish. A man was there with an open car boot handing out beer to all who arrived. He saw us come in and he handed us a lovely fresh fish to cook. And it was yummy. How did he know we were wowers?

We get to Crowes. Pony needs reshoeing, so camp for the night by an old cancelled



railway station. Tied pony inside entrance of men's toilet out of freezing wind. Wake with crashing noise. Pony has kicked down men's toilet trying to lie down.

Then Apollo Bay. We pull into camping park. Ranger comes to collect our rent. He looks in his book. "Car and tent, so much, car and caravan, so much, horse and jinker? No charge!"

Then Lorne. I needed to go shopping. I walked up the footpath and the pony and jinker went on ahead. Two ladies in front of me. One elbowed the other, pointed to it and said, "I don't like the look of that, do you?" Oh well—that's life for us.

Melbourne at last, 8 am. Spencer Street, under a railway bridge. Train goes over, tram next to pony, he takes fright (country pony), policeman switches traffic for us. We gallop through. Belgrave at last!

• The author is a resident at Emmaus, Vic, who thanks God for the sense of divine care and presence right through life's adventures.

ted well. They were shattered by losing Kevin. But even more, Fear that he had gone to a special hell for suicides made their own lives a hell here and now.

All in all, I'd say that I—Fear—controlled the situation. Tears, misery, helplessness—a delightful scenario.

Then Julie, the older teenage sister, went to a prayer breakfast. And who did she ask to see after the meeting? You've guessed it—Paleface.

He looked suitably sad as he listened, but I didn't trust him. I'd followed his career over the years since he cheated me of George, and I'd often heard him say he'd seen at first-hand the power of God's love. That made me cringe, because I guessed he was referring to George's conversion.

Then he spoke. "You've just said your brother was a Christian and he loved Jesus. Surely you know that hell is not for

Christians."

I clamoured in her mind as loudly as I could but she wasn't paying attention to me. Fear was beginning to lose its grip.

I told you I didn't trust Paleface. Now he sneaked off in a different direction.

"You and your family loved Kevin very much, didn't you?" There was that hated word—"love". I could guess what was coming and I wanted to run for cover.

She nodded agreement through her tears.

Then he went on, "Can't you believe that God also loved him—and still loves him. Even more than you do?"

She'd stopped her sobbing and hiccupping as she thought about it. Humans are so fickle. I can have them filled to overflowing with fear, but the moment they begin to respond to God's love, I'm kicked out.

Paleface was still speaking.

"God knows why Kevin killed himself. Do you think God would abandon someone he loves? Would you?"

As far as I was concerned, the writing was on the wall. Fear doesn't stand a chance against love.

He was telling her that the Bible says that Christians in their weakness do commit sins, but yet they don't get rejected the moment they commit a sin—because, as Paleface said, "If God rejected us for one slip-up, we'd all be lost."

All right, all right! I conceded defeat. Julie went home, peace and joy replacing fear in her heart. And to shorten this unhappy tale, let me tell you that her family believed in God's love, too. From previously lavishing their attention on me, now they ignored me. God's love had taken over.

But I'm not finished. Countless others, Christians and non-

Christians, young and old, are open to my propaganda, and I have scheduled many for attention.

Which leads me to explain why I've written this. It is to warn others of my kind: keep humans away from God's love; we can not fight it.

And what about any humans who may read this? I have to depend on those valuable qualities of forgetfulness, doubt, unbelief, cynicism, lack of interest—the list is so long—qualities that are so useful to our purpose, to blind them to its relevance.

Meantime, I lurk in the background, ready to pounce.

• Jim Davidson, from Peterhead, Scotland (the "Paleface" in this story), was a Salvation Army officer for 22 years. He is now an elder and lay preacher with the Presbyterian Church of Scotland.

Summer Reading

Grant Spangenberg

God As Mother!



In the poem, "The Motherhood of God" by Marj Buckingham ("AC", 27 April) the last verse reads:

"For life is all lopsided,
When we fail to comprehend
That God, our great Creator,
The gender role transcends:
So, call him Father, Mother—
Whatever else you please,
The God revealed in Jesus,
Supersedes—yea, all of
these!"

The whole business of God as our Father or Mother is theologically a very contentious and emotive issue. The result of the publication of the poem was a number of letters to the Editor, each one seeking to add light to this debate.

I would like to present some of the background to this argument to show why it is not appropriate for Christians to address God as "Our Mother..."

Feminist Attack

The doctrine of God is the central point for much of the rest of theology. How we view God is reflected in the total framework of our being and the way we live out our lives. It affects our understanding of who we are as God's creation.

As Christians, what is our response to the feminist attack on our confession of God as Father? Feminism has been with us for over 100 years. Originally it was a movement agitating for women's rights, but "since the rise of the Women's Liberation Movement in the late 1960s feminism has been radicalised to mean rejection of sexism and sex roles, and what radical feminists seek today is the freedom to decide what to do with their lives without the determining mantle of sex limiting or impeding their opportunities." (A. Summers, in *Damned Whores and God's Police: The Colonisation of Women in Australia*)

Sexism refers to a division made between people on sexual grounds that goes beyond the simple biological classifications and into the area of suppositions about personality, ability, equality etc. It is about a series of alleged differences inferred from one basic biological

difference. Since father is a sexist term the feminists see this as being discriminatory and so they counter this by calling God Mother.

However, they (men and women) go beyond this, because, if we are to change the way in which we address God, other changes need to be made in order to maintain uniformity; and so we find ourselves becoming embroiled in inclusive language, i.e. the changing of the wording of the Bible in an attempt to promote non-sexist attitudes among readers. Thus, Jesus the Son of God becomes Jesus the "Child of God", and the Son of Man becomes "the Human One".

By deliberately changing what the Bible says (metagenesis) we make the Bible a human tool for a current social agenda and not the revelation of God's will for our lives. However, unlike the New Lectionary

apologists who said, "The church may make the Bible say whatever the church wishes it to say," (R. and B. Allen, in *Liberated Traditionalism: Men and Women in Balance*) the Bible is not ours to make it say what we want; it is to be heard and we are to listen and learn.

The Church under Siege

While not as prominent now in the development of children as it has been in the past, the church is one of the most influential institutions in our society. To a large degree Western thought and culture have been fashioned on Christian theology, and this is attacked in what feminists have labelled as "sexual stereotypes handed down over the centuries by institutionalised religion, which has manipulated its teachings to constantly reaffirm and reinforce male superiority" (J. Mercer, "Religion, Socialisation and

the Role of Women", in *The Other Half: Women in Australian Society*).

Listen to this comment by Barbara Thiering: "The Christian church in Australia, both RC and Protestant, is one of the main agencies for reinforcing the low status of Australian women. At the most obvious level it does this by discouraging them from positions of leadership or equality within its own ranks...The Australian mateship ethos, by which men only trust one another, has been transferred to church life."

If the church can be made to recognise God as Mother, or as Denise Carmody (a RC feminist scholar) says, "When the ultimate power that runs the universe is symbolised in female terms [then] women [will] gain a tremendous source of self-affirmation," and discrimination within the church will be largely overcome.

Made in the Image of God

Nancy Evans from the Southport church made a comment recently in *The Australian Christian* (20 July), one which I believe accurately reflects our society's preoccupation with sex. She asks, "Why must we, in our search to learn more of what God is like, constantly be worrying about promoting sexual differences. Man and woman complement each other. We are all one in Christ, male and female, Jew and Gentile, and in our newness of life in Christ need to live in unity, love and peace."

J.D. Pawson (an ultra-right winger, in *Leadership Is Male*) believes there is a great deal at stake in this whole issue. He writes, "We are in danger of changing the image of God into a reflection of the sexual confusion of our secular society, a deity who has more in common with Hermaphrodite (i.e. containing sex organs and characteristics of both male and female) than with Yahweh, the Father of Jesus. The biblical word for this is idolatry."

The second commandment forbade the creation of any physical representation of God. This was in complete contrast

Summer Reading

Jim Keatch

Fred's Car

There was a man, call him Fred, who lived in his car. This car had all the facilities that Fred needed to be able to live comfortably.

It was some car! It was expensive and was admired by everybody who thought how nice it would be to live in a car like Fred's.

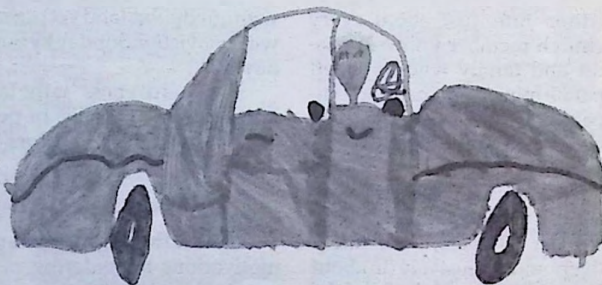
Fred went everywhere in his car. Fred did everything in his car.

Fred never got out of his car and always experienced life from inside his car. That was the way he wanted it to be.

He knew the boundaries of his car. He knew that the sides, made of metal, and the windows, made of strengthened glass, would be able to protect him from anything that occurred outside.

Fred knew what his car could do, how fast it could go, that it needed petrol put in once a week and that if he looked after it then it would last forever.

Illustration by Greg Burgen



He was safe. It was quiet and peaceful in his car. Fred did not let anything upset the situation he had organised for himself.

Fred's car was his life.

But Fred never knew the feel of the sun on his back, he never felt the tug of the wind at his hair or the sting of rain on his face. He never experienced creation in its raw state. He only talked to people through the windows and that muffled what they said so he couldn't hear them properly.

And because Fred never got out of his car he could only help people if they got into his car first.

Fred's car was his life but he never knew what anyone else's life was like. If they were not interested in his car then he was not interested in them.

Fred's car was his god.

• Jim Keatch is the South Australian Associate State Minister.

to the Canaanites and other peoples who fashioned idols of their gods and goddesses to worship. In archaeological excavations no images of the God of Israel have ever been unearthed.

Biblical Hebrew is the only fully developed language that has no specific term for the notion of "goddess". The reason for this was to avoid as strongly as possible the lapse of thinking of Yahweh (or God) as a goddess.

God is Spirit, and, as such, is beyond the categories of male and female. Sexuality as a reflection of the divine person is not a teaching found in the Bible—it is an ancient pagan teaching. What we do read in the Bible is that God created both man and woman in his own image. If anything, we should appreciate the fact that God's creating of male and female points to the wonderful diversity that is in his being. Because he has created us in his likeness, he loves us and wants the best for us; it was on the basis of this love that he sent his Son to die for us. (1 John 4:10)

A Look at the Hebrew

God transcends the masculine and the feminine, yet he relates to his people in analogies of gender. My strong suspicion is that because fatherhood or patriarchal imagery is used much more than feminine imagery to describe God, we with our "cultural baggage" have sought to make God in our sexual image. In the context though of the Old Testament, society of that day was male oriented and male dominated. However, while women may have occupied a secondary position the fact remains they were members of the covenant community with an important role to fulfil, not only as wives and mothers, but as individuals. It is first-century Judaism on the other hand, that presents women as being subordinate and inferior to men in every sphere. (Time and again we read about Jesus seeking to show that this should not be.)

While God plainly states, "I am he who has done these things," (Isa. 46:4, cf 43:13) we see in a number of places where God displays female (or more correctly) maternal character-

istics. When we think of mothers, one of the first thoughts that springs to mind is that of compassion and comfort, and it is in this sense that the majority of references to the maternal attributes of God occur.

As a man it is possible for me to show feminine characteristics without losing my masculinity; and so it is with God. He can reveal himself without sanctioning the use of feminine terminology and without intending to teach anything about his person or "sexuality".

The real clincher from the viewpoint of language is that all the adjectives, verb forms and pronouns referring to God in the Old Testament are masculine.

You see, the Hebrew language, like German, Spanish or French, has gender distinctions for its nouns. The fundamental bases for determining gender are whether a being or thing is animate (m) or inanimate (f), active (m) or inactive (f), and/or evident (m) or obscure (f). In the Bible the words for God are always masculine—not sometimes, frequently, or usually—always.

The Incarnation

The last point I wish to mention and probably the first one that most people think of is that God revealed himself on earth as a man.

Jesus prayed to his Father, referred to his Father and taught his followers to pray, "Our Father..."

While I trust that we will continue to address God as our Father, I would like to think that this whole issue has helped us to appreciate at least that it is perfectly all right to relate to the maternal attributes of God, and our language is inadequate when we try to understand all that God is.

Let us praise God for creating us male and female in his likeness, for making possible in human parenthood a likeness of the divine Fatherhood, and for allowing us to call him Abba, Father.

• Grant Spangenberg, a former schoolteacher and church elder, was co-dux of Kenmore Christian College last year and is currently minister at the Kenmore, Qld, church.

Rowland Croucher

Ex-Pastors

I was talking to a denominational leader about ex-pastors. His wisdom: "Most of them shot themselves in the foot!" My response: "Some did, yes. Others were shot in the back, others from the front; and still others were caught in the cross-fire between other warring factions. Some were in the wrong division, others should not have been in the battle at all, and some should have been given leave earlier. Many collapsed exhausted on the battlefield."

There are 10,000 ex-pastors in Australia—about the same number as those serving in parishes. More pastors and priests may be leaving parish ministry than are lost to any other profession. These ex-pastors were ordained by a recognised Christian denomination, ministered in a local parish and subsequently made a transition to another religious or secular vocation. They left for reasons other than physical sickness, retirement due to age or death. For a few, the transition was relatively stress free, but for most the emotional and spiritual strain associated with exiting what was intended to be a lifelong vocation has been considerable. Divorce and suicide rates among this group are high, and up to half no longer worship regularly in any church.

Some denominations (Salvation Army, Pentecostals) lose significantly more than they keep; others (Baptists, Churches of Christ, Uniting) lose marginally more. Most Anglican dioceses, Presbyterians, Lutherans and Reformed churches keep more than they lose. Each denomination has unique structural factors related to their attrition rates. Denominations majoring on church planting, like the Pentecostals, lose many through lack of adequate support systems, and the pressure these often inexperienced pastors feel to succeed in growing a church.

Ex-pastors, pastors and their lay people are almost unanimous that something be done to investigate this alarming at-

trition rate. Just about every church member knows a pastor and family who have left parish ministry, usually accompanied by great personal pain and sometimes disillusionment.

The following is a summary of my anecdotal research over the last 10 years, both intensively and extensively (in about 30 countries); and some of the variables to be included in a questionnaire to about 1,000 ex-pastors

Self-esteem

Most Western pastors preside over numerically static or declining congregations. Our culture puts a high premium on measurable success as an indicator of vocational worth. Pastors, when they're honest, admit their delight when congregations grow and discouragement or despair when they decline.

Faith Development

How does a pastor maintain spiritual vitality? How is a pastor formed, spiritually? Early faith development in childhood, subsequent conversion experience(s), relationships to mentors during impressionable years and habits of spiritual discipline are all important components of one's faith development. Many pastoral "stayers" are not necessarily multitalented people, but have a strong calling that may withstand pressures to which other more gifted colleagues succumb. And there are many related questions: what do we do

with our doubts (and yet preach with conviction Sunday by Sunday)?

"Spiritual dryness" is the factor that topped the list of personal issues for US pastors in one recent study.

Calling

What are the best reasons and motivations for entering pastoral ministry? What do we mean by "a sense of call"? Pure altruism or unmixed motives are rare commodities in our fallen world—even among prospective pastors!

Seminary Training

Clergy are generally critical of the academic model of their theological training, particularly if they were trained before the 1980s. Two dimensions were inadequate: the formation of the pastor-to-be as a person, and the development of the person for the practice of ministry. When surveys indicate that practising pastors list time and people management as their key frustrations, how might this affect seminary curricula?

Too few theological colleges run courses on conflict management, for example, but every clergyperson will have to manage conflict sooner or later. Then, at least one intern or curacy year before accreditation/ordination is desirable. Too many younger pastors feel they're thrown into the deep end without adequate life-support systems. Some of them get out of the pool altogether after a few of these bitter experiences.

Clergy and Spouse Support

Barbara Gilbert found that male clergy rely mainly on their spouses (followed by God!) for their support; female clergy have a wider network of support systems. American males, she hypothesises, idealise independence rather than interdependence

Roy Oswald, of the Alban Institute, says he's puzzled over why so few clergy take time to build support. "They are not fully aware of how vulnerable they are, and how much more competent and effective they might be if they took time to develop a solid support network for themselves in an intentional way."

The Clergy Spouse

There are at least five factors here: the strength of the marriage and its ability to cope with the unusual demands of parish life; the spouse's personality; some clergy spouses, by their interventionist manner, "create waves"; the nature of the spouse's Christian commitment; whether a "sense of call" is shared by the spouse; and the spouse's profession, which may be incompatible with a pastoral lifestyle or limit the opportunities of moving to another pastoral settlement.

The recent increase of "clergy couples"—sometimes in separate denominations—introduces a new ingredient into the mix.

It is difficult to be both pastor and spouse: clergy spouses are the only Christians without regular access to therapeutic pastoral care.

Role Definition

We may be living in the last generation of "clericalised" Christianity, where lay people viewed their role as "helping the clergy do their job". Ministry is stressful: the pastor offers, not right answers, "but the authenticity of his or her own search". (Fenhagen, 1977, page 105)

Pastors must figure out whether their ministry role/style will be one or a combination of preacher, evangelist, scholar/teacher, enabler/

Summer Reading

counsellor, mentor/discipler, priest, shepherd, team captain, interpreter, administrator/organiser, or catalyst/social reformer/activist. And what about specific church programs, ministry components or target groups: youth work, music, pastoral visitation, denominational or other wider involvement, sacramental ministries, children's ministry, young marrieds, singles, mid-life people, older people, traditionalist/conservative/charismatic/progressive/radical people?

To what extent were these roles/styles negotiated and accepted by the congregation and/or its leaders at the time of call?

Authority and Powerlessness

Most ex-pastors felt powerless to change their situations. Most also allocate a degree of blame towards their bishop or denominational leaders, and towards "permission with-holders" in the church. Generally, it is felt, denominational leaders take the side of the laity in most disputes between pastor and people. The vast majority of ex-pastors feel alienated from or marginalised in respect of their denomination's institutional power.

R & R

So what do we do about stress and burnout? Stress experts are unanimous: learn to rest, externalise anxiety (i.e. talk to someone regularly), "cognitive restructuring" (changing our thinking), get adequate sleep and exercise, reorder priorities.

But above all, we must not derive all our self-esteem from our job performance, hard as that is in our fallen world. Our self-worth is a function of who we are in Christ, not how well we perform compared to someone else.

So let us value ourselves enough to give ourselves permission to rest one day a week, four weeks a year (preferably in one stretch), a large chunk of one year in seven, and take long-service leave.

Theological Issues

Many pastors have inadequate theologies of ministry. Being pastoral (shepherding people where they are) and prophetic (moving them from self-interest and complacency further into the Kingdom) and priestly (passing on the tradition given by Christ through his apostles and prophets to us) are three hats every clergy person must wear, albeit uncomfortably!

Guilt and the Life-long Call

One of the unresolved theological issues in all this is: where did we get the idea of a life-long call to pastoral ministry? All other Christian vocations are flexible in this respect; even cross-cultural missionaries are almost invariably one or two-termers these days. The apostles changed ministries—from itinerant evangelism to teaching/pastoring for short periods. Then, occasionally, the Lord took them out of circulation altogether to do some reflection and letter writing in gaols!

The Local Church as a Therapeutic Community

Pastors function well or poorly largely in response to the presence or absence of "the encouragement factor".

Financial Factors

For most clergy in mainline churches their stipend is, well, "adequate" might be the best word. Adequate, that is, until one of the children becomes chronically ill, or there are four kids in school at the same time, or the mortgage is out-of-sight. (More pastors are being encouraged to purchase their own homes these days—a good move, for many reasons.) I do occasionally meet pastoral families in small Pentecostal/independent churches that miss meals.

One of the sad features of church life is the insensitivity of the church-as-landlord when the pastoral family lives in the church's manse. An elder ought to be deputised to ask, at least three times a year, "How's your accommodation: anything we can do to make your home atmosphere better?"

Gender/Sexual Factors

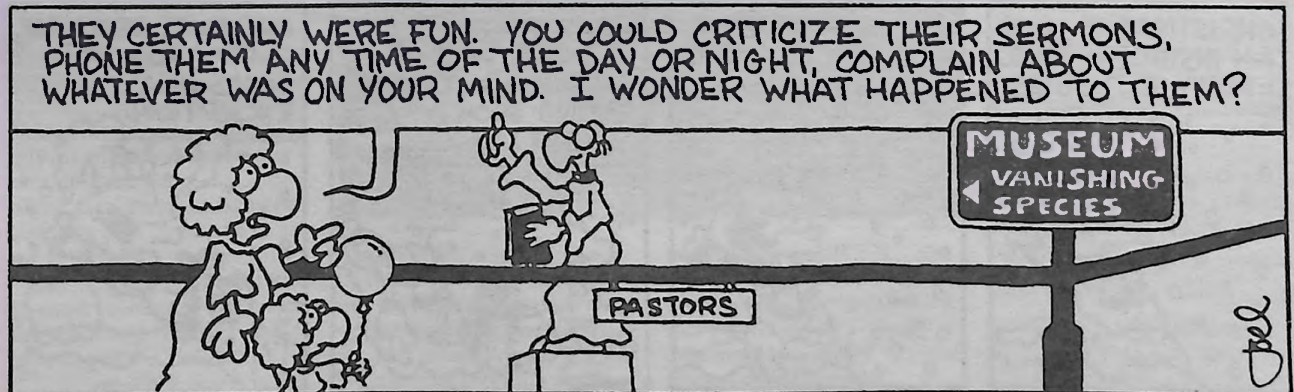
This whole area is a sensitive one. My conversations with denominational leaders around Australia have supplied these generalisations: about 25% of non-Pentecostal pastors are known to have experienced a relationship with a person other than their spouse involving sexual intercourse. For Pentecostals, it's above 30%. Pastors are the last professionals to regularly visit members of the opposite sex alone in their homes.

Finally, the research will explore "presenting" vs "underlying" factors that occasioned pastors leaving their vocation and attitudes to ministry—its joys and frustrations, to denominational bureaucracies and leaders and to colleagues. We want to know what kind of help they received, and from whom during the transition.

Bibliography

- Fenhagen, James C., *Mutual Ministry* (Seabury Press)
Gilbert, Barbara G., *Who Ministers to Ministers? A Study of Support Systems for Clergy and Spouses* (The Alban Institute)
Merrill, Dean *Clergy Couples in Crisis* (Word Books)
Mills, Edgar W., and Koval, John P., *Stress in the Ministry* (Ministry Studies Board)
Oswald, Roy M., "The Vulnerability of Clergy" *Action Information* (The Alban Institute) Nov-Dec 1981
Rice, David, *Shattered Vows: Exodus from the Priesthood* (Michael Joseph)

• Rowland Croucher, an ordained Baptist pastor (and also married to one), is director of John Mark Ministries, serving pastors, ex-pastors, church leaders and their spouses. During 1992, 1,000 Australian ex-pastors will be sent questionnaires, which they may answer anonymously, if desired. Names, addresses, phone numbers, and denominations of these people would be appreciated, as would any monetary donations to help with ongoing expenses. Contact John Mark Ministries, 7 Bangor Court, Heathmont 3135.



Summer Reading

Garry Harris

It's Christmas

It's Christmas, Lord, and I
am out of work...
It's not going to seem like
Christmas this year.
There won't be much for the
children—a tree, some
tinsel, that's it.
What a present to give them,
the memory of Christ-
mas on the dole.
It's not my fault Lord, but,
God, I feel like such a
failure.
It's hard not to be depressed.
The carols and decorations
make it worse,
They speak of celebration,
but I have nothing to
celebrate.
The commercials on televi-
sion are unbearable.
I die a little inside at every
station-break.



I cry in the shower for the
cabbage-patch dolls and
the tinker-toys that will
not be at our house this
year.
Lord, I wonder how Joseph
felt.
Inadequate perhaps?
Was he plagued by this same
self-doubt?
Did he question his capabil-
ity as a provider?

Did self-criticism tear at his
provision of a stable to
welcome your gift of
love?
Did self-reproach batter him
as his wife delivered her
first-born in a stable,
amongst cattle?
Did his self-esteem plummet
as he stooped to lay the
Christ-child in a feed-
trough?
Lord, I identify with Joseph.
I am sure he wanted to do
better but circumstances
prevented him.
Sometimes Christmas comes
at the most awkward
time,
And sometimes, in those
most awkward times,
Christ comes to us.
Amen.

Pontius' Christmas Puddle



Summer Reading

Donald Stewart

So What Happened to the Holy Spirit?

The emergence of persons and practices labelled "charismatic" has unfortunately distorted our understandings of the person and work of the Holy Spirit. Not that we have a clear definition of "charismatic" that has any common ground—we don't.

So the vagaries of being labelled push persons to excesses in both directions to the detriment of the work of the Kingdom of God. That is one of the reasons that we have so much trouble with the introduction of needed change within the churches today.

With society and our culture having changed through the advent of two or three levels of technology we cannot go on believing that the world about us is the same as it was when we were in our formative years. Our language, our ways of doing things—our culture—are very different now to what they were when I was growing up. To me that doesn't seem very long ago—but change there has been in food, in communications, in entertainment, in lighting, in building, in English, in politics, in leisure, in family structure—is there anything that has not changed?

Yes of course there is! God has not changed. The salvation that he offers us has not changed. The Bible has not changed (although I do hope that we now read it in the language of today for only the experts now understand the English of the time of Elizabeth I). And the Holy Spirit has not changed.

No matter what you or I may think, these things have not changed. But if the unchanged message is to go on unchanged then the medium in which that message is delivered must change. It must be made clear with illustrations out of today's world. To keep it in the culture of the past is to make it as irrelevant as past culture is to today's people.

But I really think that our greatest problem is that we no longer have a relevant understanding of the Holy Spirit.

God the Holy Spirit is the

creator spirit, the creative innovator, the wind whose blowing we perceive (or deny) and whose directions and presence we can never predict but yet whose work is certain and pur-

poseful. See John 3:5-8.

He is the Spirit of change. He is the flexible Spirit of God. He is the voice crying, "Today, if you hear his voice do not harden your hearts."

If the Holy Spirit is present the church is changed and renewed, faith is vitalised, passion is unleashed and dead formalism is swept aside. He is the Spirit of newness of heart, of forgiveness and the forgiving spirit. He is love poured out on the unloved and unlovely changing them from "Not Loved" to "Loved", from "Not My People" to "Mine."

I have read with interest the strange debate about leadership—authoritative, democratic etc. etc. But the Holy Spirit can and does use any of the manifestations of human organisation for his work and all forms of leadership can equally be the vehicle for his grace or can equally and vehemently resist his gentle call.

I have noticed that he does not violate the will of any person but he illuminates them with the true interpretation of their acts as he did to a Saul of Tarsus, to C.S. Lewis and to someone like you or me. As he does so in responsive hearts the changes come tumbling over themselves in joyous abandon.

What makes the difference between one who is open to the Spirit's touch and one who is not? It is like the difference between wax and clay when the sun shines on those substances with its summer heat—the wax melts and the clay hardens. Some of us soften to his breath while others become hard-hearted and unyielding.

Above all the Holy Spirit is about making us aware of Jesus Christ and his saving work upon the Cross and the new hope his death and resurrection bring. He desires to see us change to become more Christlike in every way. Slowly or swiftly, quietly or noisily, he seeks to bring the changes about in me purging all that is not of him.

We have difficulty with change in the church because we do not know the Holy Spirit or his work.

• Donald Stewart is the Executive Director of the Old Churches of Christ Social Service Department.



Summer Reading

Shannon O'Bryan

My Life

When I was three I started having epileptic fits. In infants school I remember going to the teacher to have my tablets but I can't remember much else but I know I had heaps of friends in those first few years. When I got to third grade I started to understand about the epilepsy and I would go up to Mum or whoever was there when I was having a fit. My teacher didn't know about the epilepsy so when I was having a fit he thought I was daydreaming. I would get into trouble either from him or the girl that was sitting next to me.

That year I was having problems with friends because of the epilepsy. Other kids would often run away from me because of the epilepsy so a lot of the time I didn't have any friends. The following year (fourth grade) the teacher was really nice. She knew about epilepsy so that was much more comfortable. However that year (1983) I still had problems. I went in to Camperdown Children's Hospital for four days because the fits were getting pretty bad.

Fifth grade was great. The teacher was really nice and I could approach him whenever I was having a fit. I had more friends this time. Some of the parties I had were spoiled because of having fits when I got overexcited. I never belonged to Brownies or anything like that because being on so much medication would make me tired. I would just go to bed as soon as I got home from school. Sometimes there were bad effects like seeing double or feeling giddy. Sometimes I found it hard to concentrate at school. Since my fits were getting worse at the end of 1984 the doctor decided that I should go to the Austin Hospital in Melbourne to see if I could have an operation. I was admitted in February. In my first week I had a lot of tests like EEGs, catscans, memory tests etc. I was put on a monitor, had wires glued to my head and I was hooked up to a machine for about a week. I wasn't allowed to get out of bed even to go to the toilet. To



find out where to implant the wires into my head, which was the task of the first operation, I was put on the monitor again, this time to find out where to operate. Finally I had the major operation, which consisted of actually removing a small portion of my brain. I was very scared. There was a chance I could end up blind or paralysed. Now I haven't had a fit for six years. Through the four months I was in there it was sometimes stressing, such as when they pulled out the wires that went right through my head and some stitches got tangled up in the wires just before the major operation. However some of the time was fun. My parents and relatives took turns in visiting. Mum was there most

of the time. After the stay in hospital I went back to school. A few friends were still faithful to me but a lot of the kids picked on me because of having brain surgery.

Since the operation there have been times when I've had very few friends, making me feel like this:

*Caught in an endless time...
Waiting for a sign...
To show you where to go...
Lost in a silent stare...
Looking anywhere for
answers you don't know...
—from "Emily"
by Michael W. Smith*

At the end of year 7 I was invited to an ISCF (Inter School Christian Fellowship). I became

a Christian at an ISCF breakfast and started to meet people that accepted me, and they're the best friends I've ever had. It's unreal! And the best friend I've got now is Jesus. I can see now that he was the one who brought the operation to a success, who gave people the love to befriend me.

However I soon started to hear voices that weren't mine or anyone else's telling me to run away from fellowship. I was getting visions of snakes (which is not unusual for epileptic sufferers).

While all this was going on I had friends there to help me and a hand to hold onto when I needed it. I went on a camp and there I had people who helped me too. After the camp I went into hospital and I had psychiatrists coming to see me, but I somehow always had someone there to help. I wanted a hand to hold on to but I was afraid to ask. I felt really anxious and insecure. Even the reassuring words from the nurses didn't help me lose that feeling.

It seemed that around June the voices and snakes would come back again. I was running away from fellowship again. This time I was feeling much more frightened and I was tempted to commit suicide, but my friends were very encouraging and they prayed with me, and kindly held my hand and were patient and helped me through.

The snakes and voices came and went. I left school because I was finding the work I was doing very hard and I did a nanny course at technical college called "Family Management". The rest of the year was all right and I had a few friends at college. But I still had heaps of friends at church and I had the first Christmas with my Dad in 10 years. I used to go to his place in the afternoon after Christmas dinner but this was the first time I had spent a whole Christmas day with him. It was great! The youth worker that encouraged me so much in those years left at the end of 1989 and I sadly miss him.

Then 1990 came. I went back

Summer Reading

Neil Marsden

The Lord, Us and Time

So many people look on the future as the be all and end all of everything. Every possible fulfilment of every possible desire is seen in the future; most regrets and sorrows are seen in the past. That's just the way life is. Everything in this modern world is based on "future predictions". Hardly a day goes by when statistics of one kind or another aren't shown to us; or even asked of us. Planning has become an important aspect of nearly everyone's lives. What will you do after school? What will you do for a job? When will you retire? Will you have a family? Get married? Who knows.

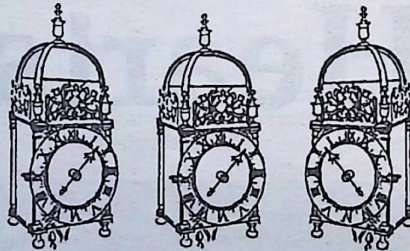
The future is one of the most overriding elements of the world today. There is almost no escape from it. "Time will heal all wounds," they say, and perhaps in many cases it does; but it demonstrates the reliance this world has created on time and the future.

But hand in hand with this is an overriding passion to live for "now". People want what they can get and they want it

now. They want fun when they're young, and beyond that the future isn't thought of. Yet people worry terribly over the future.

How can this be? How can people be concerned over the present and the future while also remembering and perhaps regretting the past? The entire world is caught up in a constant worry about time. "Time is of the essence." "Time is money."

The Bible clearly tells its readers that time means nothing to God. No one even knows when he will return. It is man who attempts to make a timetable "God will follow". If time means nothing to God, then why should we worry about it? God is the only security we need. He tells us, not that everything will be perfect and easy, but that he will always be with us. What more do we need?



• Neil Marsden is an 18-year-old young man who has been writing material for the Hurstville, NSW, church paper. This is one of the editorials he has written.

to college and did a course called Business Catering Assisting. In about Easter that year I left the church I was going to and I went to St Alban's and I've been going there ever since. I went on a camp in August and the voices had gone but the snakes came back, but I wasn't running away this time. Friends again just talked and prayed with me. On the Saturday night I asked one of the leaders to pray with me and he said yes.

The rest of the year I caught up in some subjects I had failed in and I got a job at McDonald's.

This is how I feel now:

Friends will go any where with you.

Friends who really do care.

And the times that I've really needed a friend.

My best friends have always been there.

Whenever my life seems to take me.

God knows how to answer my prayer.



Shannon in the Austin Hospital in 1984

If I'm needing someone to talk to.

A new friend will somehow be there.

—Kenny Marks

The voices haven't come back for the first time in three years! And eventually I'm going to get a full-time job and leave home. I still see the snakes occasionally but I'm learning to cope with them.

The two main reasons why I've written this story is to encourage you as much as I can. If you're in hospital I know how it feels. The other reason is that God's hand is out there waiting for you and he has certainly been a big part of my life.

• Shannon O'Bryan lives in Belrose, NSW. She attends St Alban's Anglican Church and St Stephen's Anglican Church at Belrose and often attends the Northside Community Church of Christ on a Sunday evening.

Kevin Bray

Seeking Peace in Our Hearts

When it was evening on that day, and the doors were locked for fear of the authorities, Jesus came and stood among the disciples. "Peace be with you," he said, and he showed them his hands and his side. "Peace be with you," he said again. "As the Father has sent me, so I send you." Then he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit."

A week later, Thomas was with the disciples in the house and the doors were again locked. Jesus came and stood among them. "Peace be with you," he said. (Based on John 20:19-22, 26)

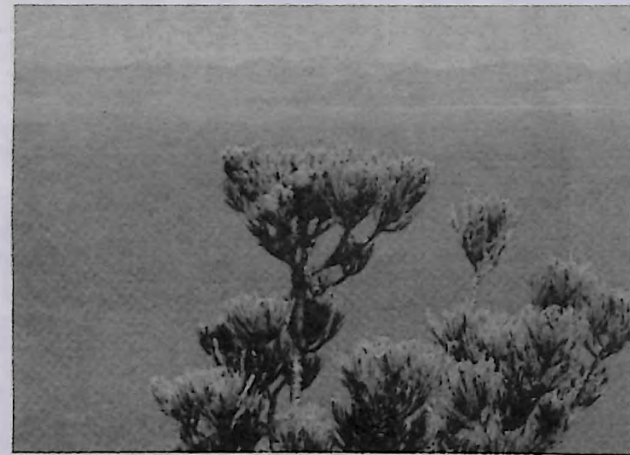
It is good—in a week of prayer for world peace—to be reminded of the simple words of assurance given by Jesus: "Peace be with you." And it seems clear, particularly in the second, poignant occasion involving Thomas, that this is a gift of inner peace, offered by our Lord amidst the turmoil, uncertainty, danger, doubt and chaos of the hour.

What, then, is this inner peace? And how is it relevant to us, now?

One thing it is not—it is not a "peace" based on a withdrawal from the issues and hurts of the community. "Peace," said Jesus, and then, "...I send you."

I have recently searched for a definitive ecumenical statement about seeking peace in our hearts. To be sure, for example in the statements from this year's Canberra Assembly of the World Council of Churches, it is easy to find great slabs about justice, peace and the integrity of creation, with fine—and important—words about the need to renew the international economic order, to empower victims of injustice, to repent of the sins of racism and sexism, and to work for lasting peace and meaningful security. It is good and right to pray about these things this week.

But, with the exception of a few vague generalisations, these statements offer little about inner peace! Of course, they are right to focus our attention on visible, external,



community peace, for we have—many of us—for too long been blind to the truth that Jesus Christ, the prince of peace, calls us to discipleship in community.

It is so easy for our self-perspectives, our inner selves, to create false images, even of peace. We must listen to the wider community, for example to the Aboriginal people of Australia, who see the past 200 years as absolutely inimical to their true peace, and who see the church as having been part of this system of oppression,

and to the indigenous peoples of the Americas, for whom next year, the 500th since Columbus, is the 500th anniversary of genocide, racial oppression and environmental destruction of their peoples and lands.

Today, however, as we reflect on the simple words of Jesus, we are reminded that external, community peace is impossible unless it is rooted in inner peace—peace in our hearts.

This inner peace is not a passive thing, a warm fuzzy feeling. Rather, it is the active ex-

pression of the spirit of peace. It is inclusive and non-discriminatory, transforming, forgiving, self-denying yet self-loving, daring and fully aware. It provides a foundation for living and a basis for all our relationships. It is God's greatest gift, mediating our whole being.

In a world that values things more than relationships, and wealth and health more than service in love, the God of inner peace calls us to different values.

The peace of God in Jesus Christ, freely given to all who receive the Spirit of God, can transform us into peacemakers, and thus we become the children of God.

The challenge is to translate this from personal, introspective living into the life of our wider relationships and into the community at large, including its social, economic and political dimensions and structures.

Let me conclude with a story. Because of its antiquity, its details are rather quaint to modern ears, yet its message is profound.

A master and his student were wandering through a forest when they came to a small stream. A woman stood there, unable to get across. The student, remembering his teaching, averted his eyes and stood away from her, but the master picked her up and cheerfully carried her across the stream.

That night, the student turned angrily on his master. "How could you touch a woman? How could you carry her?" he demanded.

"I carried her for two minutes," the master replied. "You are still carrying her, six hours later."

• Kevin Bray is a member of the Belconnen, ACT, church, and an Australian Churches of Christ representative on the Commission on International Affairs of the Australian Council of Churches. This article is a "reflection" he was invited to present as part of an ecumenical worship service in Canberra during the Week of Prayer for World Peace.

Summer Reading

Henri Pietzsch

Christ Our Salvation

Nicodemus, a Pharisee, ruler of the Jews, well versed in the law given by Moses to Israel, was told by Jesus that he must be born again (John 3:3) by water and of the Spirit (John 3:5).

They who believe on Jesus shall not perish but have everlasting life (John 3:15-16).

The Jews sought to kill Jesus because he had broken the Sabbath and also had said that God was his Father (John 5:18). The law stated: "Thou shalt not kill," and "Thou shalt remember the Sabbath to keep it holy."

There is no salvation in keeping the law—only faith in Jesus Christ (John 5:39-40). "Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart of a good conscience, and faith unfeigned."

Some have turned aside desiring to be teachers of the law, understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm. We know that the law is good, if a person use it lawfully. The law is not made for a righteous person, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners (1 Timothy 1:5-11).

Christ died for us. He bore our sins on the cross. He took our place under wrath and endured the penalty that we deserved.

When we appropriate this by faith it brings salvation from the guilt of sin. This is the meaning of "Christ our salvation"

(Isaiah 53:6 and Hebrews 13:12).

Christ died for us and we died in Christ. God regards us as having been punished in Christ. We make this truth individual in the person of my substitute I bore the penalty of sin. In Jesus Christ the law exhausted its power of death upon me. With reference to the claim of the law and power of sin I am in the sight of God counted as a dead man.

This is what Paul declared: "I am crucified with Christ." (Galatians 2:20)

This is also the clear teaching of such passages as Romans 6:4, 5, 8, 11, 7:4, 2 Corinthians

5:14 and Colossians 2:12 and 3:3.

Believers not only stand related to the crucifixion of Christ, they also stand related to his resurrection, substitution and identification. Christ was our substitute both in crucifixion and resurrection. In this we are identified with Christ.

Paul said, "I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live." (Galatians 2:20) "Crucified with Christ" expresses the death side of our union with the Lord. "Risen with Christ" expresses the life side of our union with Christ. Our identification with his resurrection (Romans 4:25, 1 Corinthians 5:14, 17, 20, Ro-

mans 6:4, 11, 2 Corinthians 5:14, 15, Colossians 2:12, 3:1, 3)

The twofold identification of the believer with Christ is in his death and resurrection by the impressive symbolical representation of baptism. It is the outward sign and visible seal of the inner work of grace, wrought by the Spirit of God in regeneration.

Baptism in its deeper spiritual meaning is a symbol of death—a type of crucifixion and resurrection. (Romans 6:3, 4, Colossians 2:12) The most glorious of all is our victory Christ himself by the Holy Ghost comes and dwells in our hearts living out his own life within us. (Galatians 2:20, John 14:20-21, Colossians 1:27 and Romans 15:29) The Christian life is a Christ-life. It is not an imitation but an incarnation. We do not copy Christ, he produces his own life within us by the indwelling of the Holy Ghost.

• *Henri Pietzsch is a member of the Hurstville, Vic, church. He was moved to write this article on looking at an analysis of the recently released 1986 census figures by denominational affiliation which showed that Churches of Christ declined by 11.6% when population growth over 10 years was taken into account. He is concerned that little of the doctrines of the church are studied by members or preached in sermons.*

Peace and Love

Peace be still

Content am I

To let this world go rushing by
And stop for once, to see the sky
From whence my God
Has now come nigh
To give me peace.

Peace be still

He comes to me.

He has the power to stop the sea,
And better still the rage in me
So that I can his glory scan
Divine perfection in a man
Who gives me peace.

Peace be still

And know that God

In human form this earth has trod,
Creator in his created sphere
By his Spirit inside me here
To give me peace

Peace be still

Take time to see

His hand in all creation round,
In tiny flower or bird's sweet sound,
But more in love on Calvary's tree
He suffered, died and rose for me
To give me peace

Peace be still

His work is done

For when to glory we repair
And see him in his beauty there
We shall forever know his peace
And sing what perfect peace is this—
To know his love.

—Earle Martin (North Haven, NSW)

Summer Reading

A.E. White

Goodbye 43 Beans!

I have switched coffee brands! When the news hits Switzerland, I don't expect Nestlé directors will call a panic meeting to try to woo me back. They ignore more important people and even highly organised boycotts haven't affected them. Therefore, in giving up Nestlé's Instant Coffee I am simply making a personal statement on behalf of mothers and children who have been and are suffering because of the Breastfeed v. Bottlefeed War.

I remind Nestlé that Jesus had some terrible things to say about those who hurt children and Nestlé and other companies have been doing that for years.

The battle began with a pamphlet published in 1974 by Britain's "War on Want". Titled "The Baby Killer", it declared that around the world babies were suffering and dying because of the aggressive marketing of substitute milk formulas.

Companies ignored complaints and continued to push their products, particularly in Third World countries, through radio jingles, giant billboards showing happy babies holding tins of the formula, and saleswomen in nurses' uniforms, giving the impression of medical endorsement as they distributed free samples.

A boycott was organised, by people, not governments, and US investigations led the World Health Organisation and UNICEF to draft a world-wide Code of Marketing of Breastfeeding Substitutes. This code was adopted by the World Health Assembly in 1981 by 118 votes to 1. Nestlé said it would honour the code and withdrew its "milk nurses" but continued with other promotional programs. The boycott was continued in 10 countries until in 1984 Nestlé agreed to observe the Code provisions.

Among other things, the Code said: "No public advertising. No free samples to mothers. No promotion of free supplies through healthcare facilities. No gifts to health workers."



The companies responded by diverting their advertising budget to make free supplies available. Hospitals were flooded with enough free formula to feed every new-born baby. But wasn't this against the Code? Of course! The companies didn't "give" supplies to the hospitals. They "sold" them and then didn't bother to send a bill!

Health workers were trained to treat bottle feeding as the normal method for babies. "Mothers left hospital with

their breast milk unstimulated, their babies accustomed to bottles, and a product apparently endorsed by the medical profession." Mothers had no alternative to bottle feeding and the mothers had to pay. The babies also paid a dreadful cost!

Well, what is wrong with bottle feeding? To start with, UNICEF states that 4 million infants die each year from diarrhoea and that a bottlefed baby is 25 times more likely to die than a breastfed baby.

Milk substitutes require

stringent hygiene controls. These are exceedingly difficult to observe in many Third World countries, where many mothers do not even have facilities to boil water.

The World Health Assembly tried again in 1986. Convinced that free supplies were undermining breastfeeding and were menacing infant health, they passed WHA Resolution 39:28 to clarify the Code by banning free supplies from hospital maternity wards.

Nestlé ignored the Resolution. They argued that individual countries should adopt their own policies, although the Code and Resolution 39:28 were to apply to practices "throughout the world". When countries did adopt WHA 39:28, Nestlé and other companies simply sold the formula to hospitals and never collected payment!

In 1988 Nestlé was asked to implement the 1986 Resolution and it refused. In March 1989 a second boycott was launched in Canada, Germany and the US. They were joined in 1990 by France, Finland, Mexico, the Philippines and Sweden. In 1991, Switzerland (Nestlé's home) began a boycott of its own.

While declaring its support for the Code, Nestlé will not give a stopping date for its harmful practices, saying only that it will halt free supplies "country by country". Thousands of infant deaths each year serve as evidence of Nestlé's true marketing policy.

Brazil provides a startling example of the benefits of changing to breast feeding. In the 1970s Brazil had the lowest rate of breastfeeding in the Third World. Between 1981 and 1987 breastfeeding rose from 41% to 63%, and death from diarrhoea in infants under two months decreased by 46%. Death due to respiratory infection decreased by 23%. In one poor town, Taguatinga, after a maternity ward implemented its "human milk only" policy, not one case of infant diarrhoea has been reported.

The Newsletter of the Nursing Mothers' Association of

Summer Reading

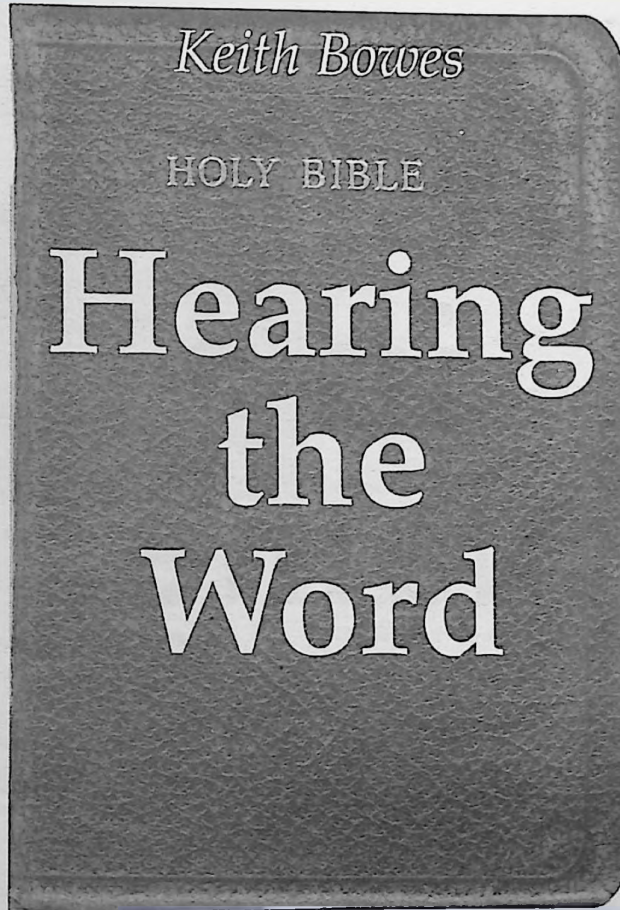
Hearing is a fairly simple process normally. We just listen! Sometimes we have to concentrate hard to hear clearly. At times we need to discipline ourselves to "hear" what another is feeling. Occasionally, when something needs correction, we learn that our hearing mechanism is quite complex. There is a similar range from simple to complex about hearing what God says through his Word. Mostly it is fairly simple and the first guideline is take it—and read. We may not understand every detail, but the basic message can be grasped by people without special training.

Seek to know him through the message he conveys. Our primary purpose is to allow God to meet us. It is not to construct a doctrine nor to find answers for our problems. Both of these have their place but they are not where we begin. In meeting God we will understand ourselves more, becoming people "in Christ" (to use one of Paul's favourite phrases) who are equipped for "right living" (2 Timothy 3:16-17).

Think Hebrew. This is a shorthand statement to remind us that the Bible was written in another culture. Hebraic ways of expression can be quite different from ours, so hearing the message in the way it was intended requires us to listen from within the understanding of that time. There are some simple questions to help us hear the message of God (and not what we read into it to suit ourselves).

• What does the author say is the purpose of the writing?

Australia for Sept-Oct 1991 shows a photo of a Pakistani mother with twins, boy and girl. Her mother-in-law told the twins' mother that she wouldn't have enough milk for both, so the girl was bottle fed. The mother-in-law was almost certainly wrong, but she had her way. The mother is seen nursing both her children and the shrunken undernourished bottle fed baby is in stark contrast to her robust brother at his



Was the author writing for a particular person or situation?

Is the language pictorial?

The Biblical authors frequently give clues about these matters.

If your reaction is to exclaim, "How would I know?" you have correctly identified that a good guide will help you. You are fortunate when you've had

ministers or elders who have provided this kind of guidance in their preaching and teaching. You're doubly fortunate if you've undertaken a Kerygma or Bethel course in your local congregation. If you've had neither, don't despair. Start by investing \$10 to buy the beautifully written and illustrated *User's Guide to the Bible* by

way open to me of putting my hand up to be counted in favour of healthy babies and against corporate callousness. Goodbye 43 beans!

• A.E. White is a retired minister and a former editor of *The Australian Christian*. He writes, "Most of the facts in this article are drawn from 'The Politics of Infant Feeding', an article by Gabrielle Palmer in the Summer

Chris Wright (Lion). There are many other inexpensive books that provide understanding and insight that God has given over the centuries as the Holy Spirit has guided his church.

Widen the circles. Every sentence needs to be understood in the context of the wider unit (incident, parable, block of teaching etc.). The wider unit is best understood within the context of the whole book. Have you read a gospel or a letter right through in one sitting? Skim read so that you pick up the key themes. After all, chapters and verses were added only when Bibles were printed. The authors expected that people would listen to their work in its entirety. We hear the Word when we keep on asking: What did God say originally to these people in this situation? When we've heard that, we can learn what God is saying to us in our situation.

We are not alone. We're part of Christ's church and we are better able to hear the Word when we listen to what God is saying to and through others. Jesus Christ promised that the Holy Spirit would enable the church to understand the truth revealed in him. That promise is fulfilled whenever we open ourselves in humility to listen to the Word.

Then we will find that as we read the Word, the Word reads us.

• Keith Bowes is Principal of Churches of Christ Theological College, Mulgrave, Vic. This article was originally written for *The New Zealand Christian*.

1991 issue of the US magazine *Mothering*. After I had written this *The Age* (19 November 1991) published the winning article in *The Age-AMA Essay Prize*. The winner, Melanie Van Der Weyden, a Year 11 student from Bentleigh, Vic, called her essay 'Babies Suffer as Third-World Pressures Hit Breastfeeding'. The essay contains more information and shows growing opposition to transnational companies that exploit vulnerable mothers and helpless children."

Brian Mee

What's in a Name?

What's in a name?, she sez," wrote C.J. Dennis in his *Sentimental Bloke*. "A rose...be any other name would smell the same."—or would it?

Recently on a visit to the UK my wife and I thought it only proper that we should attend church on Sunday morning, and that it should be one of the denominations most closely related to our own in Australia. So we went to the United Reformed Church of Regents Square in London. Well, that's what the name said outside, but in reality it was still the London Scottish Presbyterian Church, and the Rev Dr proved it when he opened his mouth.

After the service we joined the other 18 members of the congregation for a "cuppa" and got to shake hands with the Rev Dr who, on learning of the name of the conference (an ecumenical one—Brighton '91), told us we should have gone to St Georges, the Anglican church down the road. Very friendly! But then maybe he was correct. Better to look at the nature of the congregation you want to worship with, rather than simply going by a name.

Back here in Queensland we have another problem. Like so many Churches of Christ we were named for a locality, which no longer has (if it ever had) much significance for the congregation. Most of our members do not live in Nerang and we no longer have our place of worship there, it's in Ashmore, but then again Southport Church of Christ is situated in Parklands. How confusing for people—especially when they have to distinguish us from Churches of Christ (non-denominational or non-instrumental), the Church of Jesus Christ (and latter day saints), and now more recently the Boston Church of Christ. Praise God the Mt Warren Park church had the sense to avoid it, while we use the title Church of the Good Shepherd.

Oh—I can hear people saying—how Catholic or something to that effect. So I counter that over 50% of the folk worshipping with us come origi-



Illustration by Simon Mee

nally from that tradition. Anyway, why should the Catholics have all the good ideas? At least it is neutral, non-restrictive and I think it has a nice ring to it. The important thing is, it doesn't lock us into a suburb but allows us to reach out throughout the Gold Coast. There was another thought—maybe the Gold Coast Church of Christ would have been all right!

If the UR Church in Regents Square had told the truth we would probably have looked elsewhere. Then again, if the sign outside our churches told

the truth about the inside, how many folk would come in? But, hang about, maybe it does and that is why growth is so difficult for many congregations. The URC in England is declining at a rate of 18% per year by their own reckoning. I wonder how we hold up?

I believe that we have to seriously consider what we want people to understand by Churches of Christ in general and our congregation in particular. What do we stand for? It is a movement that adopted its name for the same reason the USSR adopted its: in order

to add more republics, or in our case congregations, to the fellowship. We began as a movement committed to the concept of one church, the Body of Christ, believing other congregations and denominations would join—the aim was unity but we have only added more division to the proliferation that already existed and grows daily. We perpetuate division, rather than look for ways to reduce it.

What about our local congregation? What kind of name does it have in the surrounding area? Does it have a name for openness or a reputation for rigidity? Does it have a reputation for being doers of the Word or doctrinal dogmatists? Is there a freedom for people to come in and find Christ or are they told what to believe?

Frankly, I believe our congregation is an embarrassment sometimes to other Churches of Christ, in fact I could even embarrass myself. I have heard us variously referred to as the charismatic, the liberal and the innovative church. At least those are the polite ones. The adjective doesn't matter but that there exists a sweet smelling rose to attract outsiders does. It is important that we are what we say we are. It is vital that when we speak we are straight and honest, with no hidden agendas, so that what people see that is what they get.

There is a large Lutheran Church in the USA that goes under the name "Joy Community". In approximately 10 years they went from 200 members to less than 80, then to the present figure of around 10,000. You don't grow that big by not being what you claim to be. Likewise I hope that our name is not simply practical but serves to witness to Jesus in the Good Shepherd. How much better to focus on him than a denomination or a locality. His is the only name worth focusing on.

• Brian Mee is minister at the Church of the Good Shepherd on the Gold Coast in QLD.

ACT News



Fun and fellowship at the ACT churches camp

• Sharing together

ACT Camp

The ACT Conference Camp was held at the CYTA Lodge, Cooma, NSW. It was a great weekend and provided opportunity for the four ACT churches (Ainslie, Belconnen, Lyons and Tuggeranong) to share together. The studies were led by the ministers, each leading one study on the theme, "Life on the Road", following on from the visit of Dr Athol Gill earlier in the year. The relaxed atmosphere enabled different age groups to share together in study, worship, music, fun and fellowship.

• Terms extended

Ministry

The current ministries at three of the four ACT churches are to continue. Peter Nelson (Ainslie), Paul Potter (Belconnen) and Kevin Caulton (Lyons) commenced their initial five-year terms in February 1987.

These churches have developed significant ministries within the communities in which they are located.

The Ainslie church has a diverse ministry, from a Creative Living Centre for senior members of the community, to a Noisy Hour for young mothers

and babies. It houses an opportunity shop and has a number of house church groups that meet during the week. Peter is involved in a number of community and inter-church committees, and also spends one day each week as chaplain to the Australian Institute of Sport. Peter was President of the ACT Conference for two years.

Paul Potter has given strong leadership to the church at Belconnen, and the church is excited about the future possibilities for mission and ministry.

A very significant growth in ministry to youth and young adults has been developed through study groups and Sunday evening worship. The church has a number of cell and family cluster groups meeting during the week. Worship is a strong aspect of the church,

and many members are involved in planning and participating in services. Paul is actively involved in the Christian Media Association.

The Lyons church has developed an active ministry to singles in the Woden Valley area. A very successful after-school "Kids Club" has developed and is held one night each week in co-operation with the local Anglican church.

Serendipity groups meet during the week. Kevin Caulton is actively involved in ecumenical affairs at the local level and is also active on a number of community committees. The Lyons manse is currently being used for community counselling, one organisation operating privately and the other offering family counselling services funded by the Federal Government and managed by Catholic Social Services.



Peter Nelson, Kevin Caulton and Paul Potter

• Birthday

Belconnen Celebrates

It is now five years since the opening of the Belconnen, ACT, church building and special celebration services were held on 24 November to mark the occasion.

Young people, foundation members and newcomers shared what the church meant to them and why they were part of the church.

The foundation members still present presented the church with a pulpit Bible, and a large birthday cake was built from lamingtons contributed by all those present.

A family concert was held on the Friday evening and the week climaxed with two young people being baptised at the evening service.



The Belconnen birthday cake made out of lamingtons

Classifieds

BIRTHS

DYER (WHITELOCK) Kerryn and Alwyn Dyer of Kaniwa, Vic, thank God for the safe arrival of Colin Daniel. Born 30.11.91. A brother for Jonathan and Angela.

RATTEN David and Julie welcome Liesl Amy into their family. Born 16 November at Mildura. A darling sister for Caitlin, Glen, Bethany and Andrew. 20th grandchild for Graeme and Jean Ratten of Stanwell Tops.

GOLDEN WEDDINGS

KNEE-BLACKWELL Alf and Mavis give thanks to God for 50 years partnership. Married at Ormond 24.12.41 by late C.L. Lang. To God be the glory.

STEELE-SCOTT Harold and Irma, married at Box Hill Church of Christ, 3.2.42 by the late T.H. Scambler. Love and congratulations, Mum and Dad, from Eric and Pam, Graham and Jan, Trev, Gwen and Guy, and grandchildren. Present address: 82 Surrey Road, Blackburn 3130.

DEATHS

CUDDY Tom. 7 November at CGH. Devoted husband of Ida (dec). Loved father of Colin and Norma (Mildura), Rita and Gordon Phillips (Warragul). Loved grandpa of Neil Cuddy, Gayle and Jim Keatch, Elizabeth and Martyn Wilson, Joy and Wayne Foot, Paul and Noelene Phillips, Lois and Ken Bjorksten, Ann and Rod Brough. Much loved Greatpa of their children. Home, safe home at last. Thanks to all at CGH for their care this last year. Our thanks, also, to Dad's "other family", made during his times in WA for FAB, for your loving kindness to him while he was far from us.

EVANS Reginald Thomas. Passed away 23 November at WBH, Horsham. Dearly loved husband of Margaret. Loving and proud father of Kenneth and Meredith, respected father-in-law of Richard and special friend of Julie. God has him in his keeping, we have him in our hearts. **HOOD** Henry Ernest (Harry) passed away peacefully at home on

26.11.91. Loved and loving husband of Ruth, loved father of Lois, Jillian and John, and father-in-law of Ron, Bill and Deirdre, loving grandfather of Brendan and Nigel, Joanne and Melissa. "Underneath are the everlasting arms"—Deuteronomy 33:27.

THOMAS Colin George Verco. On the 21 November 1991. Dearly loved husband of Jean (dec) and of Win. Loving father and father-in-law of Lois and Max, Margaret and Keith, Carolyn and Graeme, Bronwyn and Gordon. Loved Grandfather of 17 grandchildren and 6 great-grandchildren. Second son of the late James E. and Hilda Thomas, brother of Alan, Ruth and Don. In his 82nd year. Forever with the Lord.

IN MEMORIAM

GOLDSWORTHY Loving memories of our parents Reginald (12.1.41) and Amelia (2.1.54). Till we meet again.

SMITH Jack 14.12.86. Loving memories of a wonderful husband. Forever in my heart. Dorothy.

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS

AMBROSE Chris and Mary wish all their friends a joyous Christmas. We thank all *The Australian Christian* subscribers for their loyalty and support during the past year.

FOR SALE

GOOD SOLID HARDWOOD CHURCH PEWS. Enough to seat 100 persons. 4800 mm @ \$240 each; 2400 mm @ 120 each. Contact secretary by phone (055) 62 2385 or minister (055) 62 4337. Postal address PO Box 391, Warrnambool 3280.

TIME SHARE SURFERS PARADISE One week per year forever. Fully furnished 2BR beachfront unit. Bargain at \$4,800 ono. Exchange into anywhere in world. Deltawing to handle sale. Ring Cheryl (06) 286 6192.

HOUSE TO SHARE

SOUTH CAULFIELD AREA Guy/girl. \$50 a week plus expenses. Contact Wendy (03) 523 0038 (AH) or (03) 665 7418 (BH).

SPEAKER AVAILABLE

SPEAKER/PROGRAM LEADER with a creative difference and a challenge for your church or youth camp, Sunday special or Saturday outreach. Tom Toogood, Consultant in Holistic Talent Growth and Leadership Training, Festival of Light field officer, ex-Sturt University and Customs trainer, Many seminars conducted; church testimonials available. 13 Coane Street,

Warners Bay 2282. Phone (049) 48 4759

TAPES

PROFESSIONAL, Christian-produced, fun-to-learn cassettes. Guaranteed effective. 1. Develop Your Leadership Ability—skills you need to motivate, build teams, reach goals. 2. Develop Your Creative Thinking Ability—to create opportunities, solve problems. 3. Manage Your Time...and Your Life!—to realise your dreams. \$15 each. Buy two, get third one free! Order from Tom Toogood (see advertisement above).

BUILDERS

PHILIP KEILAR Fully qualified carpenter & joiner. Carports, decks and pergolas, home maintenance and repairs, home alterations, staircase, handrail specialist. For free quotes please ring (03) 729 6415 or (03) 761 4190.

IAN & L.A. McDONALD Carpenters and builders. Renovations. All new houses, units or alterations. All jobs large and small. For free quotes please ring (03) 557 1257. 41

Somers St, Bentleigh.

HOLIDAYS

GRAMPIANS SUNRISE HOLIDAY UNITS Modern FSC 2-BR units at Pomonal. Superb views, peaceful farm setting. Bertram family resident owners. Phone (053) 56 6300. **HOUSEBOAT** "White Heron" 8-berth. Moored at Blanchetown, SA. Phone (08) 365 1153 or (085) 40 5100 or write 7 Gameau Rd, Paradise 5075.

POINT LONSDALE Holiday house. Excellent position, close to front and back beaches. 3 bedrooms. Modernised. \$200 p.w., \$250 school holidays (not Christmas-January). C.R. Brough (03) 808 2815.

QUEENSLAND GOLD COAST Absolute waterfront unit Runaway Bay Broadwater. Peaceful area. Delightful views. Very reasonable rates. Enquiries: Len Brooks, 118 Wilgaming Street, Stafford Heights 4053. Telephone (07) 359 7227.

VICTOR HARBOR Now available for the summer! Cosy 2BR cottage. Cheaper than a cabin and better! Phone (08) 276 6605.

You are personally invited to the Churches of Christ Theological College **ANNUAL GARDEN PARTY**

4.30-7.30 pm
Saturday, 15 February 1992

Celebration

Music

Childrens Program
by Kidsmin (Vic) Cttee

Inspiration

Fellowship

Fun

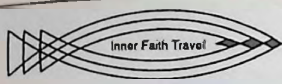
Meet New Students
Presentation of Prizes and Scholarships
Launching of the College Year



ON YOUR OWN, YOU'RE NOT ALONE

Christian Singles Fellowship offers friendship through correspondence with other born-again Christian singles and single-again people. Write enclosing a stamped, self-addressed envelope to: CSF, PO Box 411, Mayfield 2304





INNER FAITH TRAVEL PTY LTD

Our Christian Travel Agency

TOLL FREE 008 074 426

Old National Office PO Box 377, Ashmore 4214 Phone (075) 97 2577 Toll Free 008 074 426 Fax (075) 97 1577
Victoria Office 356 Boundary Road, Dingley 3172 Phone (03) 551 7732 Toll Free 008 339 539 Fax (03) 551 7506
SA Office PO Box 777, Glenside 5065 Phone (08) 364 3877 Toll Free 008 182 195 Fax (08) 364 3846

ACN 010 648 316 Lic No 201



News

• CCTC graduation

Mission— The Heart of Our Calling

The music was superb. The attentive congregation of over 700 had praised God together with some well-loved hymns and songs at the beginning of the 1991 CCTC Graduation and then came the rendering of "How Majestic Is Thy Name" by a trio of students, Merryl Blair, Michelle Martine and Chris Sharpe. The service continued as an experience of praise, joy and commitment to God, punctuated by bursts of spontaneous and sustained applause.

The trio also introduced the theme of mission with "You Can Go" and later the College Community Singers (students, faculty and staff) inspired with their "Here I Am, Lord". You couldn't get more quality anywhere. Principal Keith Bowes reviewed the 1991 year by speaking about people—especially students, faculty and people in the churches—and about the need for any theological college to respond to the changing circumstances of people.

Graduation is the climax of a number of years of great commitment by students as they combine study, student ministry and integration of their learning and experience. Two of the graduates in fact received their diplomas 12 years after beginning, due to family responsibilities.

The graduates were introduced in three groups. First there were those awarded the Graduate Diploma in Ministry—Martin Burgess, Tom Fraser, David Ratten, Ray Smith and Alex Wilson.



Clive Ward and the 1991 CCTC graduates who are entering ministry

Next came those who will serve God in a variety of ministries other than as "minister" and who received a variety of awards: Diploma in Theological Studies—Debbie Short and Mark Thompson; Associate Diploma in Pastoral Care—Martina Osswald; Associate Diploma in Youth Ministry—Paul Douglas; Associate Diploma in Lay Ministry—Beryl Lewis.

Seven students received the Diploma in Ministry. They were Wayne Allen (called to Peel St, Ballarat, Vic), Merryl Blair (Hartwell, Vic), Tim Green (Swan Hill, Vic), Darren Kittel (Kensington Park, SA), David Reynolds (church planting at Aldinga Beach, SA), Judy Rogers (Noble Park, Vic) and John Schulze (Riverland, SA).

Keith Horne, well known to the churches in all states, was the occasional preacher. Speaking specially to those who were to be ordained, he said, "Your ordination is to ministry, and the heart of ministry is mission. And to you comes a special word from the Lord Himself: 'As the Father has sent me, even so I send you.'"

Immediately following the Graduation Service the Ordination Service arranged by the National Conference Council was held. National Conference President, Clive Ward, asked the seven to commit themselves to ministry and invited the congregation to pledge themselves representatively to receive the ordinands as ministers who

together with them will serve in the name of Christ. Seven people chosen from the churches laid hands on the ordinands, according to apostolic custom, as a sign of the concentrated prayer of the people of God and Jim Wright offered the ordination prayer (on the 50th anniversary of his own ordination).

FOR A NEW HOLDEN SEE MURRAY ECKERT

OVER 16 YEARS EXPERIENCE
as a master sales consultant.

Competitive Prices
in a Competitive market.
Guaranteeing Integrity, Service
and Sound Advice.

Member of Blackwood
Church of Christ.

CALL IN OR PHONE MURRAY ON (08) 272 1600
FOR YOUR NEW OR QUALITY USED CAR



Claridge Holden

363 Unley Road, Malvern
Phone (08) 272 1600 A.H (08) 278 4515

• *An incredible journey...*

Convention Day



Lyla Beckingham and Noelene Hudson dressed in costumes of bygone days

For the women of New South Wales Convention Day is a highlight of each year's activities.

On 1 November women, representatives of many CWFs, gathered at Berkeley Vale on the Central Coast.

Lorraine Hensby, State President, welcomed those who had travelled near and far to be part of this special day. The theme was "An Incredible Journey...into the Past, Present and Future" and throughout the day highlights, features and items were given in keeping with this theme.

Lyla Beckingham and Noelene Hudson, dressed in costumes of bygone days, gave a brief history of CWF in New South Wales, beginning with the first President in 1894. Some

Past Presidents were able to attend and were called forward when the year they held office was mentioned.

Lesley Olsen spoke on what is happening at present in the Mt Druitt CWF, with special mention of the "Caring Friends" group who serves soup and sandwiches each Saturday night to those in need.

Ron Hewitt, Executive Director of DCDE, compellingly challenged each one to think about the dramatic changes that have taken place in our lives, particularly in our church life, and how we are going to deal with these changes and make the church relevant to the needs of people today.

Special features were an up-to-date report on COCOA by Noelene Roose, together with

• *New units*

Bethany Close Opened

Over 100 people admired the impressive independent living units now ready for occupation at Bethany Close, Arnott Street, Ormond, Vic.

At the official opening, guest dignitaries paid tribute to the design features and the philosophical approach of the Vic-Tas Department of Community Care towards its services and facilities for aging persons. They all re-iterated the explanatory comments of Trevor Giles, the executive director of the department.

Trevor emphasised the need to have living space that takes into account possible physical and mental difficulties arising

from ageing.

He also affirmed that elderly people deserve still to be part of community life, not to be excluded from it.

Special recognition was given to Bob Alabaster and Lindsay Hunt who, well over a decade ago, began the process of buying properties opposite the Ormond church for the future needs of the elderly persons within the community. Their vision was realised when the Hon Caroline Hogg, Minister for Ethnic, Municipal and Community Affairs, cut the ribbon to clear the way to the units, and Joan Young symbolically "turned the key".



Bob Alabaster and Lindsay Hunt

an audiovisual of this work, and Warren Murray, Director/Manager of Christian Projects, speaking on the history of this organisation, how it works to-

day, and their plans for the future. Items, appropriate to the theme, were beautifully sung by a group of ladies from the North Turrumurra church.

L.M.C.T.
6549

Ken Geyer

SELECT USED CARS

49 Bond Street, Ringwood 3134

Telephone: (03) 879 4004

A.H. (03) 722 1780

CONTACT KEN IF YOU ARE LOOKING FOR
A USED CAR OR NEED TO RENT ONE

News

• A little sadness

Last Meeting

Monday evening, 2 December, was a sad night for many, being the final meeting of the Launceston CWF after 40 years of work, service and fun.

Jean Piper led the 70-80 present down memory lane, recalling the days when Nancy Luff and a small executive met to form a young women's fellowship to meet a need that was then seen in the church.

With verse and slides, Doris Allen recalled the women's initiation into the CWF camping scene, the concerts and the musicals. Others recalled the community service and the fact that the group delivered the first Red Cross Meals on Wheels in Launceston in 1961, a service that continues to this day..

Some women graduated to Afternoon CWF but involvement in other avenues of service and learning have made of office-bearers hard to find.

There are now 14 small groups in the Launceston church meeting the needs of these changing times. Nevertheless those of us who were part of the early years of CWF, who remember the work, service and friendships cannot help feeling a little sadness.

The afternoon CWF is still very strong—so farewell CWF...but welcome to the future!

—P. Harrison

• Brigades' achievements

High Awards to Young South Australians



Back: Daniel Zervaas and Nicholas Durston (Blackwood), Hayley Gloede and Elizabeth Broadfoot (Port Pirie), Karen Walker (Hawthorn). Front: Michelle Carroll (Port Pirie), Karyn Giles (Salisbury East) and Virginia Smith (Port Pirie)

A number of young people from Churches of Christ in South Australia were among the 20 members of Girls' and Boys' Brigades who received the highest international award that can be attained in the brigades at a recent ceremony at Edmund Wright House.

Her Excellency the Honourable Dame Roma Mitchell, AC, DBE, Governor of South Australia, State Patron of both organisations, presented the awards.

Early in brigade history, royal assent was given for this award to be presented to girls and boys who demonstrated outstanding qualities in their

participation in many and varied activities.

This Queen's Badge/Award presentation culminated years

of commitment to all-round excellence and a record of service in the community and church by each recipient.

Visiting Canberra? Stay with a Church Family

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

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

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

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

Advance bookings appreciated

Have you thought of helping

"The Australian Christian"

In its ministry among Churches of Christ?

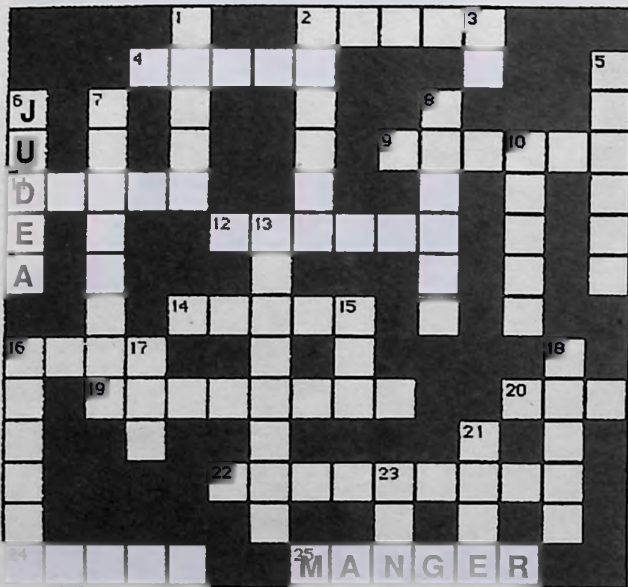
Why not include us in your will?

The following wording could be used in your will:

I give and bequeath \$ (or a percentage of the total estate) to "The Australian Christian", the national journal of Churches of Christ in Australia, absolutely for the use and benefit of the organisation free from all debts, funeral and testamentary expenses.

Crossword

Clueless Christmas Crossword

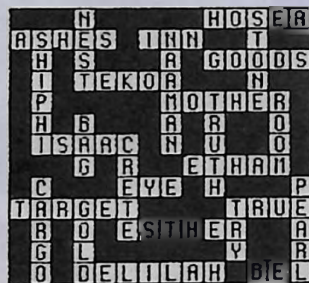


Balook

is a tiny unspoilt hamlet surrounded by the unique Tarra-Bulga National Park, two and a half hours from Melbourne
 Central heating
 Log fires
 Transport from Traralgon station by arrangement
 Fern Valley
 Guest House
 RMB 7565, Balook 3971
 Phone (051) 96 6141

All the answers in this crossword can be found in Luke chapter 2 in the New International Version.

November Solution



Curkpatrick

When God Became Small

The incarnation is that event in which "God became small", as small as a baby in Bethlehem. Yet it is precisely in this event of becoming small that God showed his greatness, for a "small god" would not know how to become small. A small god would be like the Greek gods of Olympus, too insecure to bear the thought that his creatures had autonomous free will—to either love or despise, let alone crucify him. He would be so mean and tightfisted that he would be reluctant to share his gifts and resources for fear they would be misused or even sacrilegiously desecrated. A small god would also enjoy the insatiable power of playing games with human fortune, inflicting tragedy according to whim.

However, our God became small, because he loved this world too much to be perceived as capricious and whimsical, the author of tragic earthquakes, cyclones, floods or drought. God sends his sunshine and rain on the good and evil, in a world where he deliberately, unequivocally gives the abundance of life and goodness of the earth to Christian, Muslim, Hindu and atheist alike. Therefore if drought or flood occur, God isn't the cause of that. It is a "small god" in the tradition of Olympus who is perceived to meddle with the contingencies of nature for the sake of some—with the inverse implication—that the tragedies of cyclone, earthquake, flood or drought are expressions of whimsical divine displeasure on others. That is a truly horrific perception to be ascribed to God!

In the advent of Jesus Christ—the pre-eminent hermeneutical event for all Christian faith, God entered human life and identified fully with human tragedy, which sometimes occurs out of the indiscriminate chance contingencies of nature. This of course is sheer nonsense to those who insist that natural disaster is divinely ordained. If it is, and I refuse to believe it is, then tragedy—at least in this perception, by implication must be deserved, even if by the simple default of not believing in or praying to the right God, or any god. (Some say, "If people are stupid enough to live in flood-, cyclone-, earthquake- or drought-prone areas, it's their own fault." However, this overlooks the fact that economic marginalisation, especially in the emerging world—which we are implicated in sustaining, has given such people no choice but to live in volatile regions. This is a classic case of blaming the victim for their tragedy.)

God who became small at Bethlehem, emptied himself of any perceived power to meddle in the contingencies of nature to inflict the tragedy of natural disaster on anyone, godly or atheist (remember Zeus). He did so in order to reveal his unequivocal love for all people. God has so identified with human life in Jesus Christ, that he has chosen to be perceived as God who cares intimately for all human life, and continues to express that care through his people. Only a big God could become so small, to identify with human tragedy—including the victims of flood and drought, cyclone and earthquake and natural disasters, which crush human hopes, livelihood and lives—tragedies that have and will continue to occur, unluckily and indiscriminately to people. To claim they are not unlucky and indiscriminate is to turn God into a truly small god with volatile emotions, who either meddles with the contingencies of nature with devastating consequences, or doesn't care if they happen. Both possibilities were revoked in Bethlehem.

• Stephen Curkpatrick is now minister at the Brighton, SA, church.



David Pullin & Co.
 Pty Ltd
 9 Sturt Road, Brighton 5048



Phone (08) 298 5500
 Fax (08) 296 6831
 AH (08) 378 3112

Licensed Agents
 Member of the Real Estate Institute



Providing a service in new and established homes, units, townhouses; property management; investment; sales, auctions.

For all your real estate needs

Dean Sander

• Call to the Australian government East Timor

The Executive Committee of the Australian Council of Churches has resolved the following regarding the situation in East Timor:

The Executive Committee of the Australian Council of Churches—

- expresses its sorrow and concern at the tragedy that took place in Dili on 12 November 1991 and at repeated reports of other violations of human rights in East Timor;

- joins the Communion of Churches in Indonesia in its call for problems relating to East Timor to be handled in ways that ensure justice will be done and that preclude any repetition of the tragedy;

- supports calls by the Australian Government for a full and credible inquiry into the tragedy leading to the trial of those responsible, the ending of human rights violations and the resolution of long-standing tensions between the East Timorese people and the Government of Indonesia;

- informs the Australian Government that, should these calls not be heeded, the Australian Council of Churches would expect further initiatives by our Government to press for corrective action by Indonesia, or by the United Nations and Portugal;

- requests the Australian Government to investigate whether any Australian military assistance has contributed to the tragedy or to any other reported violations of human rights in Indonesia.

• Vanuatu rejoicing in God Beginnings Celebrated

When the Churches of Christ in Central Pentecost decided to celebrate the coming of the gospel to their inland villages they invited the late Harold Finger to represent past missionaries. Harold intended to stay three months and visit other islands to see the work the churches are doing.

However, when failing health made him realise he couldn't go he discussed the matter with David Eagling and John Liu as to who should go in his place. I was on their short list and was happy and willing to go. When the people on Pentecost heard of Harold's sudden passing to be with the Lord they called a day of mourning, which concluded with a memorial feast to thank God for his many years of missionary service and as a recognition of his love for them.

So, on 8 November 1991 I had the honour of taking Harold Finger's place as the representative of past missionaries at a village called Levelkatpa, the site of the first baptisms. The first church was established at Naruwa some 10 minutes walk away. It was the 88th anniversary of the Pentecost Church of Christ, and their chosen theme was "Rejoice in God". And they did just that. They dedicated a nukamae (meeting house), a new church, a baby and the memorial to honour the four converted village men who returned from working on the Queensland sugar cane plantations in 1903. Their names were John Woi, Joseph, Eliakim and Samuel. John Woi was poisoned and died because of his witness and he prophesied that if an oak tree grew on his grave the gos-

pel would never die on Pentecost. A large oak tree grows on the grave today with its roots firmly embedded in the grave site.

There were many speeches, many choirs and a challenging sermon delivered in Bislama by Pastor Wilson W. Bebe of the Vila church.

800 people were fed at the luncheon break. Special banners were made and special celebration songs were written and sung in the local language to honour those four Kanakas who returned from Queensland with the gospel. With special banners including some bearing the names of each of the four men carried high, and a choir of 50 they marched to the newly made memorial site, which will have a bronze plaque naming those four men who returned to their own villages to share the light of Christ with their own people still living in darkness.

—Jack Edwards

• Growing

Chinese Church at Cowandilla

Five years ago, a small group of Chinese Malaysian students, known as the Grace Fellowship, which met regularly at the Cowandilla, SA, church, were invited to share in pioneering a new Chinese Church at Woodville Gardens, SA. The students would participate in the communion service at Cowandilla, then gather for their own Bible study and fellowship, have a quick meal and travel to Woodville Gardens to lead the afternoon service.

The Chinese Alliance Church, which was formed, now shares facilities with the Cowandilla church as they wished to locate in a more central position. The church is growing rapidly and on 27 October 13 were baptised making a total of 20 for 1991. Church membership stands at 40, with church attendance averaging 85. Classrooms at the nearby Language Centre are required as well as the facilities at the Cowandilla church to cater for



Pastor Wei Tung Lam with Chi Shing Lam baptising Wai Kit Wu at Cowandilla when 13 were baptised

the growing Sunday School.

The minister is Wei Tung Lam, who, after graduating from Bible College in Hong Kong first served as a mission-

ary in Cambodia, then, with his wife So Chi Lam, ministered in Malaysia and the Philippines.

—Ron McLean

FURNITURE RESTORATIONS
French Polishing and Cabinet Making
Fine Craftsmanship
 Repairs, staining and refinishing of all types of furniture, specialising in antiques
 Furniture made to order
 M.A. W'ing-Tang and B.J. Purdie
 B.H. (03) 723 0363A.H. (03) 720 1629
FREE QUOTES
(03) 723 0363

A Church ABC

Launceston, Tasmania's second-largest city, is situated on the Tamar River in the north-east of the state.

Located on the fringe of the city, the Church of Christ was formerly known as "Margaret Street" but became more generally known as Launceston after it combined with the Invermay church. The church building was a Greek Apostolic Church before it was

taken over by the Church of Christ in 1913. Since then additions and modifications have greatly extended the original building. The chapel has been extended and a hall and other rooms have been added at the back. The latest addition is a new foyer. Even so the building is still not big enough and the church will soon be faced with either more building or relocating.

Launceston has 255 members and there are three services each Sunday.

The largest is at 9.15 am, a service that incorporates the Bible school and junior youth group and attended by over 200, including children. There

is a service at 11 am and one at 7 pm, which attracts about 130, the majority of them young people.

The Launceston church has many strengths. Notable are the small groups within the church. At the moment there are 11



Focus on Launceston

home groups, but next year this will be increased to 14. The groups involve a large percentage of the membership. The church attracts a number of Asian students from the university and a Bible study group is planned for this area of outreach.

Last Monday the church opened an opportunity shop in the suburb of Invermay. It will operate five days a week and it is hoped the shop will give the church a higher profile in the community.

A feature of the Launceston church is the wide range of ages represented. It is not uncommon to have a number of generations of a family worship-

ping at the church. All ages are catered for. The youth work is quite strong. "Unreal" is for young people in years 7-10, and "New Gene" is for the older youth. Both groups have about 40 attending. There is a Bible school, a Girls' Brigade (large)

and a boys club (small). There is a young marrieds group, "Mingles", and last year a singles work, "Us and Co", was commenced, which is now going from strength to strength. "Yummies" is the name of the young mothers group and there are groups that cater for aerobics and basketball.

Launceston has a concern for people. The pastoral care committee reported more than 600 visits last year. The church supports people from the church serving missions overseas. Members are on the management committee of "Prospect Court" a fine, large and growing complex of retirement units.

The ministry team consists

of Rod Foster, Craig Spaulding and Darryl Tobler. Rod is a native Tasmanian, originally from the Howrah church. An accountant and public servant, he spent 1978 as a business manager for OMB in Vanuatu. He then studied at the College of the Bible and ministered at Albury, NSW, before going to Launceston in 1989. He and his wife Jeanette have four children.

Craig Spaulding works with the young marrieds and singles and has a chaplaincy role in the hospital. He is married to Joy and they have a daughter.

Darryl Tobler, who comes from Southport, Qld, is the youth minister and he and his wife Sharon have two boys.

The Launceston church has a rich heritage that it is very dear to its members. They have had a great past, but they are not bogged down by it. The church has a vision and there is a sense of excitement about its future. A strategic planning group meets fortnightly at 6.30 am (enthusiasm) laying the foundations on which to build the church of the future in Launceston.

Growing Spiritually

God provides for all human need. Spiritual growth requires a sound theology and a practical application of its tenets. Our response to God in all of our human existence is important.

In his struggle with the reality and consequences of life, Paul understood God at this level: "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." (2 Corinthians 12:9 (NIV))

These words reflect upon God's sufficiency in all situations encountered by humanity. The most difficult aspect in our Christian life is simply "to let go, and let God". For as long as we feel we retain a measure of control in a given situation we frequently permit our hu-

Let Go, and Let God

by Martin Goldup

man nature to dictate to us by seeing our own solution. This stands in complete contradiction to the biblical requirement of trusting God in all circumstances.

When we encounter a life crisis in which we have no power to control or change the situation, we feel totally helpless. This is especially so when confronted by terminal illness and death. Similar emotions can be experienced in the irretrievable breakdown of a marriage or the loss of employment with few, if any, prospects in sight.

In life's moments of deep crisis our character—as well as our faith—is put to the test.

Responding with, "Why should this happen to me?" or "It's not fair!" provides no solution. If anything, such responses cause a struggling self-esteem to become further eroded. Blaming God doesn't help either. This is simply a ploy to renege on personal human responsibility and becomes an attempt to transfer it to the highest authority.

In our darkest moment it becomes imperative that we

remember God still cares for us. Sometimes our feelings betray us and we doubt the omnipresence of God. Yet God has the answer to our problems—indeed he is the answer!

In dealing with personal crisis it is important we uncover our emotions and share them with God (a trusted friend or a counsellor too, if necessary). We are called to trust God, **unconditionally**. This first step then allows us to proceed and deal with the problem itself.

Essentially, we need to open up to God and allow his grace to work in our lives. It's a humbling experience but it's also character building!

• Martin Goldup is the minister at the Kaniva, Vic, church.

Overseas Mission

Celebrating a Centenary of Overseas Mission 1891-1991

1991

Today Is Tomorrow's History

India

28 November 1991: One young person baptised after finding Christ through the Way of Truth Bible Correspondence course and counselling by the pastor at Pune.

Vanuatu

28-30 October 1991: Conference Committee Planning meeting considering calls to mission in other countries in the South Pacific, including Australia.

Papua New Guinea

24 November 1991: At Dibu village 15 people are baptised. Evangelists continue to respond to invitations to go to new areas and offer ministry.

Zimbabwe

22-25 August 1991: National Conference of Churches of Christ in Zimbabwe at Mashoko an inspiring time.

1 October 1991: Several young people baptised at Mkoba church, Gweru.

Fiji

December 1991: Awaiting news of the availability of a work permit for Peter and Vivienne Clegg and family to minister in Fiji.

And in 1992?

The second century of overseas mission with Churches of Christ will continue.

OMB
Overseas Mission Board



**SWANSTON STREET
CHURCH OF CHRIST**
Melbourne
(cnr Swanston &
Little Lonsdale Streets)

Sunday

9.00 a.m. & 11 a.m.

Worship & Communion
Services

7.00 p.m.

Gospel Celebration

For further enquiries, please ring (03) 663 3884

Youth Ministry

• A basis for youth ministry

Strengthening Family Ties

by Paul Douglas

When one thinks of youth ministry, we immediately opt for the stereotyped youth leader and a band of rowdy young people. Yet youth ministry, to be effective, must be ministry beyond those within the group—it must also be to their families.

The church, like most other institutions, tends to divide people into peer groups. Even when trying to bring the ages together informally the parents will end up drinking coffee and talking while the young people go off and do their own thing. If we limit our "youth" ministry to youth alone, then we are in danger of perpetuating a youth culture that exists outside of the adult world. As youth leaders we are not "pied-pipers" leading youth out of the clutches of the adult world. Instead, we ought to be aiming our ministry to incorporate youth into our churches and society.

With the increasing incidence of family breakdown (divorce and homelessness), young people are feeling an increasing alienation from society. They seek to find their own identity in a variety of (often destructive) means, including gangs, drugs, alcohol and crime. A vital part of our ministry to youth should be in strengthening family units, encouraging adult participation in youth activities, and giving young people worth in the wider family.

Many parents can provide vital resources for youth ministry, including leaders of various groups or activities, camp cooks, drivers, tour guides of work places and supplying equipment or goods. Mike Yaconelli tells the story of one rather "unlovable" mother whom a group of young people scored as their driver for a

youth event. They thought they were in for a dull night. No so! When this mother got behind the wheel of a car, she changed. Those kids had the best night of their lives, being driven around town by this mum whom they hadn't taken the time to get to know.

How many young people in your youth group know their friends' parents? What are you doing to encourage strong adult-youth relationships? By including adults in your youth ministry, you help break down the barriers of fear and mistrust that youth often have of adults. Respected adults can also provide good role models for young people. Even the quietest parent can become the most unlikely "hero" for some young person.

Paul urges unity in the Body of Christ in both 1 Corinthians 12 and Ephesians 4. Unity should not only be in matters of faith or doctrine, but also in purpose and calling. I believe that as a church we ought to be encouraging young and old to work together in fulfilling the Great Commission of Matthew 28. This cannot be achieved effectively if our churches are divided into age groups that have no interaction with each other. As Jesus said, "Every kingdom divided against itself will be ruined, and every city or household divided against itself will not stand." (Matthew 12:25) Are we encouraging our youth to become a new subculture within society or are we building community and including them as part of the Kingdom of God?

• Paul Douglas is the intern youth minister with the Vic-Tas DMED.

Edited by Andrew Ball, Field Director of the Vic-Tas Dept MED and the Aust Board of Church Development and Education.

Obituaries

Obituaries are limited to 100 words

Easton, Harold

10.11.91 at "Curanora" Nursing Home. Born Footscray and spent most of his early life there, serving for 19 years as secretary. 12.8.39 married Agnes Self and they devoted their married life to serving Christ and community. Harold served on Keilor Council for many years, Shire President twice. Also a JP. On moving to Kallista family worshipped at The Patch Church and Harold became caretaker of Monbulk Camp. For the last 10 years membership has been at Boronia where Harold used his practical skills to help Adult Day Care. Daughters Pam (McDowell) and Toni (McLean).

—KRM

Fennell, Ivy Veronique

(10.11.91) Ivy Fennell was a long-time member of Churches of Christ (Newmarket, North Essendon) and her brother Harry Oakley was well known to our Queensland churches. She was born in Warrnambool in 1902 but grew up in Melbourne. She was involved in many volunteer organisations, often by supporting her husband Ted. She was a chief commandant in the VAD in World War II. A lovely lady, she had expected her death to come soon and had made her peace with God and the world. She was in her room at Lionsville lying in bed, holding her daughter's hand when she slipped quietly away.

—JMP

Finger, Harold

(27.9.91) Harold Finger was unexpectedly called home into the presence of his heavenly Father on 27 September. At the time of his death Harold was discussing plans for his forthcoming visit to Vanuatu with David Eagling and John Liu at his home on Bribie Island. While sharing some morning tea and a subsequent time of prayer Harold quietly broke company with David and John and left for a well-prepared and well-earned final journey home. A memorial service was held at the Bribie Island church on 2 October. Harold is fondly remembered by a wide circle of friends encompassing Australia, Vanuatu and PNG, where he pioneered a new work together with Frank Beale. The people of Vanuatu were greatly disappointed that his planned visit did not eventuate but were partly comforted by the fact that John Liu was able to share Harold's last moments on earth in such a special way. Deepest sympathy is expressed to

Stephen and Naree, John and Judy, Lois and David and their families.

Hemer, Jess

(14.7.91) Jess Hemer (nee Richards) was born in Owen, SA in 1912. Jess trained in nursing in Adelaide and Melbourne but never fulfilled a dream to go overseas as a missionary. She married John Hemer in 1940, commencing a 51-year partnership of caring for others. Since 1950 their mission field was Blackwood. Jess was a tireless worker among the needy, using her nursing skills and caring nature. She raised some thousands of dollars from sale of her flowers for Community Aid Abroad. She was a gracious host to newcomers to the church as a welcomer and in provision of meals. Her health had been failing and she died at the conclusion of a morning service, during which John had led communion. Our sympathies are expressed to John and his family.

—CGD

Northeast, Arthur Clifford

(13.11.91) Born at South Melbourne 18.3.33. Married Dorothy Davies. Daughter Paula. Grandchildren Leanne, Kerri and Adrian, great-grandchild Christopher. Dorothy deceased. Later married Jean Norman. Daughter Joy. Grandchildren Natasha, Nicola and Stephanie. Church membership South Melbourne, Northcote and Frankston. Served as secretary, Sunday school teacher, president, reader and helper. Member Kappa Sigma Pi. Keen sportsman. Spent 12 years in wheelchair due to MS. Tremendous faith, acceptance and patience. Committal and thanksgiving service conducted by Harold Bischoff.

—H.C. Bischoff

Staley, Elsie May

(2.10.91) Born in Durban, South Africa, 2.10.04. Elsie Jones came to Australia as a child. She later learned tailoring. She was baptised by Harold Robbins at South Melbourne. She married Edwin (Ted) at Bamba Road, Caulfield, and had six sons: Les, Ken, Noel, Cliff, Geoff and Bruce. After 40 years at Hartwell, Elsie moved to Emmaus Home, Murrumbidgee, where she gardened, arranged flowers, fixed curtains and clothes, and enjoyed many friends. At her funeral at Carnegie, Bruce paid tribute to a practical lady, the focal point of the family, including 20 grandchildren and 14 great-grandchildren. It was a service of thanksgiving for a very special lady.

—Norma Hall

Church News

SA

HAMPSTEAD GARDENS (Keith Ridge) Sunday School anniversary service held with Ron Roberts as guest ... Family camp held at Stansbury ... Jim Keatch conducted a worshipleaders' workshop ... Salisbury East youth joined us for a special youth service led by State Youth Ministry team ... Support given to Coober Pedy Aborigines Church for NADOC Week Rally ... Church barbecue/concert held in conjunction with Kadina church visit & presentation of musical "Bee-attitudes II".
BROOKLYN PARK (P. Webber) Four new members added ... Three senior, two junior tennis teams UC Association ... Nov family services am ... Funds raised men's tea, fashion parade ... Two new small groups ... New elders '92 R. Peacock, R. Webb ... Dinner for prayer groups ... Club 25 active (young adults) ... Goals for '92 emphasis on youth, add 20 new members.

NAILSWORTH (Daryll Telfer) Minister preached series from *Christianity Explained* ... Ross Gaskin (former member), Nairobi Evangelical Graduate School of Theology, recent speaker ... Calendars & invitations to Carols in the Park distributed door to door ... Dinner raised \$355 for piano restoration, Bible School "Walk for Bibles" \$570 ... Musical morning cheered "shut-ins" & lonely ... Indoor bowls team premiers, basketballers runners-up ... Minister's wife recovering from back operation.

PROSPECT (S. Schmaal) Anita Worthen speaker. A Californian working with her husband Frank in the Philippines. Picnic lunch followed in St Johns Park ... Ecumeni-

Thomas, Colin George Verco (21.11.91) Born in Adelaide 3.1.10. Son of the late James E. and Hilda Thomas. Baptised Lygon St, Melbourne at age nine. Spent teenage years with family at Balwyn. Graduate of COB. Ministries: Pakenham (student), West Preston, missionary to India 1935-56, Warracknabeal, Bowral, Peel St (Ballarat) and Chelsea. Married Jean Dare in India 1939. Four daughters Lois (Mrs Birch), Margaret (Mrs Davies, Carolyn (Mrs Wood) and Bronwyn (Mrs Hawkes). 17 grandchildren and six great-grandchildren. Jean died 1964. Married Win Walker, Launceston, Tas, 1966. Moved to Greenways Retirement Village 1985. Active at Greenways and Frankston church. Family graveside service, Templestowe, and thanksgiving service, Balwyn, conducted by Harold Bischoff.

—H.C. Bischoff

cal prayer breakfast on 7 Dec at our church ... Camera Club final meeting, barbecue followed by judging best slide of year ... Dora Bonney is home after a visit to hospital for a cataract operation, Vi McArthur recovering from surgery.

STRATHALBYN (Dick Hayman) Thelma & Alec Keast & Ivy & George Dugmore married 55 years, Glad & Bill Patterson 45 years ... Family get-together & barbecues to keep interest for those who meet with us ... Dick & Pip Hayman's last service with combined luncheon at Milang ... Family praise & worship service held one Sunday evening a month. Baptismal service this night. Dick returning to officiate ... Wesleyans joining for carol service on Christmas Eve.

GLENELG (J.T. Tilson) Grace Hamett died ... Waikerie church adopted as twinning church ... Noarlunga Centre Youth Group led evening service. Graham Mann, speaker ... 3 air conditioners donated for use in hall, minister's study ... Quiz night led by group from Happy Valley ... Kids Club attracts over 50 to activities & evening meal ... Happy Days group held lunch ... Craft Group held last meeting for year, involves 80-100.

DULWICH-ROSE PARK (Rob Williams, Roger Brown) 20th anniversary of parish celebrated. UC Moderator Neale Michael and Rob Williams led worship ... Recent speakers Marj Dredge (Conf Pres-elect), Shirley Burger (Pres Women's Conf), Jim Keatch (Assoc State Minister) ... Marj Dredge received CofC cheque for \$715 for Aldinga church, youth ministry training & CCTC.

KENSINGTON PARK (J. Fewster) Special services for advent ... CWF entertaining people from aged person's homes ... Monthly luncheons for needy people appreciated ... Modbury choir under Carole Fooks led evening service ... Minister attending CofC "Calling, Caring Ministry" Laboratory 1 ... Monthly "Focus" services endeavouring to meet community needs ... New manse purchased.

BICHENO, TASMANIA Seaview Camp

Units for hire
Powered sites
Group camping
Tennis court
An area of great scenic attraction

Manager:

Phone (003) 75 1247

Vic-Tas Department of
Mission, Education and
Development

Personal

Baptisms

•Joe O'Sullivan, Lismore, NSW
•Rod & Clare Butler, Heather Stewart, Rebecca Smit, Kristy & Sarah Kronk, Withcott, Qld •Tina Irwin, Delwyn & Andrew Paech, Horsham, Vic •Allan & Susan McGaughey, Bruce, Estelle & Melinda Vance, Brendan Cooper, Castlemaine, Vic •Christine Joannides, Kaniva, Vic •Mrs Joan McKinnis, Ararat, Vic •Ian Roberts, Doncaster, Vic •Debbie Hocking, Tammy Hocking, Strathmore, Vic •Rick Dumas, Lindsay Gordon, Hampstead Gardens, SA •Samantha Talvik, Craig Brown, Glen Waverley, Vic •Jordana Cooper, Mrs Elizabeth Burns, Sophie Livitsonis, Mrs Pam Oxlade, York St, Ballarat, Vic •Brendon Amos, Jenni Webber, Sarah Wardle, Brooklyn Park, SA •Helen Fyfe,

Economise on Holiday

Tenancy in Private Home
Write Ann Peters
36 Must Street
Portland 3305
Phone (055) 23 6317

Visitors to Port Fairy WELCOME

to
Church of Christ
(William Street)
Christmas Day
9.30 am
Sundays
11 am Communion

Red Hill Church of Christ

Come and visit Red Hill Church of Christ, Main Road, Red Hill, opposite the Showgrounds, during the December-January holiday period. Join in the vital worship and hear challenging messages by Pastor Wally Gibney. Creche provided and a cup of tea or coffee follows the 10 am service. We warmly welcome you to join a family for lunch. Ring Terry Smith (059) 791 563 re hospitality.

Mary Bell, Boronia, Vic •Karen Green, Nick Thompson, Belconnen, ACT •Michelle Butters, Daniel Foster, Katharina Ingles, Mark Wise, Paul Morrison, Tony Coert, Launceston, Tas •Graeme Baldock, Peel St, Ballarat, Vic

Marriages

•Rosemaree Keys to Eric Kinton, Louise Thomas to Greg Arthur, Lismore, NSW •Julie Coupland to Paul Critchley, Castlemaine, Vic •Heidi Williams to Anthony Dessent, Kaniva, Vic •Erin Waite to Marc Polster, Glen Waverley, Vic •Paula Young to Wayne Neubauer, Croydon, Vic •Kylie Hewitt to Andrew Tonkin, York St, Ballarat, Vic •Terri Jose to Sean O'Sullivan, Boronia, Vic

Deaths

•Reg Evans, Horsham, Vic
•Malcolm Launder, Doncaster, Vic
•Bill Simmons, Ararat, Vic •Mrs Maude Skewes, York St, Ballarat, Vic •Harold Easton, Boronia, Vic
•Tom Cuddy, Oakleigh, Vic

Changes

Burnham: Paul and Raelene—287 Canterbury Road, Heathmont, Vic 3135. Phone (03) 870 5638.
Richmond: Minister—Rod and Marjan Beer, 6 Murphy Street, Richmond, Vic 3121. Phone (02) 428 4844. (From 15 January).
Crossman: Geoff—7 Wocton Street, Reservoir, Vic 3073. Phone (03) 354 8721.
Taylor: Millie and Cliff—Phone number given in last issue was wrong. It is now (02) 982 3931.
Ann St, Brisbane: Minister—W.J. Flett, 20 Gable Street, Stafford Heights, Qld 4053. Phone (07) 359 0001.

Is God Calling You?

The Red Cliffs Church of Christ is presently seeking a minister to serve our congregation's needs and help develop the church's program. This position would suit an enthusiastic person who can communicate effectively with all ages. Red Cliffs is part of the fast-developing Mildura area. Warm climate and people.

Please write to: The Secretary
Red Cliffs Church of Christ
PO Box 54
Red Cliffs, Vic 3496

Church of Christ South Melbourne 125th Anniversary

15 March 1992
2 pm

Speaker: Ian Cartmel
Entertainment by the
Salvation Army Melbourne
Staff Singers
All Welcome
RSVP 1.3.92
Elwin (03) 646 2829

Church of Christ Ashburton 50th Anniversary

Sunday, 22 March 1992
10.30 am

Thanksgiving Service
Speaker: Iris Lawson
Past members and friends
welcome to luncheon
at 12 noon
RSVP 8 March 1992
F. Morris
27 Albert Street
East Malvern 3145

Traralgon Church of Christ

need a

Spirit Led, Innovative Pastoral Minister

to focus on Teaching and Pastoral Care, and
to be a formal contact within the community.
Initially the appointment will be part time.

Initial inquiries to Secretary: (051) 76 1884

Churches of Christ in Queensland Social Service Department

Administrator for Fair Haven Retirement Village

The Social Service Department invites applications for the position of Administrator for Fair Haven Retirement Village, Maryborough, Queensland.

This is a full-time position, which will involve responsibility for the administration of the 60-bed Alf Popp Nursing Home, a 50-bed aged-care hostel, 10 studio units, 12 ADPHA units and 35 resident-funded units. An application has been lodged with the Department of Health, Housing and Community Services for a 25-bed aged-care hostel at Tiaro, for which, if the application is successful, the administrator would also be responsible.

The successful applicant will be required to co-ordinate the operation of the retirement village, work in close co-operation with and under the direction of both the Social Service Department and the Maryborough Regional Social Service Department Committee. The administrator will need to develop working relationships with other Social Service Department administrators and with local churches. The administrator is responsible to the Executive Director of the department and to the regional committee for the local management of the village.

Commencement date: 3 February 1992.

Fair Haven Retirement Village is situated at Morning Street, Maryborough, Queensland.

Terms, conditions and job description are available on request. Salary is based on the salary of a director of nursing for a 36-65-bed nursing home in Queensland and a village vehicle is available for the use of the administrator. Applications will be treated confidentially and should be made on the form provided and supported by names, addresses and phone numbers of at least two referees.

Applications close Monday, 30 December 1991, and should be addressed to
The Executive Director
Churches of Christ in Queensland
Social Service Department
PO Box 508
Kenmore 4069
Phone (07) 378 0400, Fax (07) 878 1268

Church News

Vic

HORSHAM (H.A.L. Clark, Ian Hunt) David & Robyn Harmer spoke about their work in PNG at am service ... Keith & Carolyn Barber told of their future work with Wycliffe Bible Translators at Ukarumpa, New Guinea ... Annual church concert resulted in over \$400 being raised for Christmas gifts for missionary children being supported by church ... Morning attendances averaging 250 ... Harvey Clark's ministry term extended to end of 1995.

CASTLEMAINE (P. Haylock) Good News Festival held with evangelists George & Rita Galieh ... Youth ministry developing under Terry Gall's leadership ... Evening service being trialled at 6 pm start ... James Dobson "Focus on the Family" film series being shown with good response ... Several members undertaking short-term missionary ventures ... Special meeting to be held to consider bus ministry.

NORTHCOTE (F.B. Alcorn) G.C. Crossman speaker when minister attended Past President's service & lunch, Footscray ... WCC rep speaker at Third Sunday at 5 pm ... Miss Pannell home after knee reconstruction ... Jack & Win Timmins in Sydney for family wedding & holiday ... Christmas party provided for local primary school for end of RE. Bibles presented to Year 6 pupils ... Church planning to sing carols in Northcote Plaza.

KANIVA (M. Goldup) Interesting visits from missionary Graeme Batley & Carolyn & Keith Barber of Wycliffe Bible Translators ... Sunday evening home groups commenced in Oct ... Visit from June Andrews (hospitable visitation) informative & inspirational ... Don Smith & Ian Tippet to lead am service & afternoon program 1 December.

STRATHMORE (James Pearce) Two successful events run in aid of others. Christmas in September provided Christmas presents for missionaries. Sweets & Coffee night raised funds for Sunbury church ... Held November's evening service at Lancefield ... Debbie & Tammy Hocking baptised 17 Nov ... Involved with Strathmore ICC joint effort for kids with cancer a success.

ASHBURTON (Iris Lawson) 16 participated in successful "Let It Begin with Me" studies ... Kim Pierpoint & Karen Ingram "Two's Company" presented inspirational prelude to Advent with singing in worship ... Special activities for children planned for Advent ... CWF providing program at Murrumbena Nursing Home with

parade of hats ... Members joined Lutherans when Youth With A Mission presented drama "Fragile" ... Mrs Cole (mother of Elsie McCahey) 100 on 27 November.

GLEN WAVERLEY (Ron Elbourne, Lindsay Croxford, Howard Sanders) Mission Group fete will fund special mission features in 1992 ... Meaningful Friday night worship services led by combined youth groups ... Church School picnic held at Nortons Lane Reserve ... Small Group leadership training sessions held ... Large number attended recent Newcomers Dinner ... YP held annual canoe challenge at Aura Vale ... Playgroups enjoyed visit from farm animals ... Full church program for 1992 now distributed.

CROYDON (Martin Burgess) Isobel Marshall appointed pastoral care co-ordinator (part-time) ... Church awaiting council approval Tarralla Village expansion ... Evening services screened James Dobson films ... Current series on relationship well received ... Alan Meyers guest speaker 24 November ... Drama group "Surrender" rehearsing "Scrooge" mission trip fundraiser ... Team to visit Broken Hill in January ... Martin Burgess received Graduate Diploma of Ministry at CCTC service.

YORK ST, BALLARAT (Jim Cunningham, Gary Berry) 98th anniversary celebrated with guest speaker David Ratten ... Cabaret night with church band & the Vernon family from America raised funds for kitchen equipment ... Marriage enrichment seminar with Brian & Joan White ... Ballarat Mayor, Cr Frank Williams, chose York Street as venue for Mayoral dedication service ... Kathy Johnston & band performed concert at church.

SURREY HILLS (David Brooker) Julie Adams, BA, BTheol, invited to be associate minister, two-day appointment, commencing January 1992 ... Minister David Brooker elected Chairman Surrey Hills InterChurch Council ... Good Companions junior & senior & Little One's Club memberships have grown appreciably ... Youth using puppets for storytelling ... Long-term member Rhonda Crisp moving home to Greensborough, will be missed.

BORONIA (Andrew Henley, Keith Milne) 17 welcomed into membership by baptism, transfer & fellowship ... \$2,500 raised for World Vision 40 Hour Famine ... Several members involved in voluntary work at CCTC ... Annual meeting held, new board members Betty Parker (elder), Jack Dow (deacon) ... Separate youth services proving

successful ... Ministers report on Kennon Callahan studies ... Church vote on extension to Keith Milne's term of ministry overwhelmingly supported.

OAKLEIGH (W.J. Edwards) Church gave enthusiastic welcome to minister on return from visiting Vanuatu ... Speakers during minister's absence included Keith Ludgater, Louis van Laar, Dr Keith Bowes ... Tom Cuddy died after short illness ... Fellowship afternoon held at Freda Fraser's on 1 Dec ... CWF break-up held on 3 Dec. Barbara Edwards delivered Christmas monologue interspersed with hymns ... Goods & cash donated to CCTC appeal.

RED CLIFFS (G.R. Sharrad) Max Carter, Vic-Tas Conference President, speaker at morning service on 24 Nov ... Sunraysia Women's Half-yearly Conference held at Redcliffs on 25 Nov. Stella Carter, President Vic-Tas Women's Conference, guest speaker. District churches well represented. Despite a hot day a good conference ... R. Sharrad has kindly agreed to a further three months of ministry, making it four years service in March 1992.

THE PATCH (Mike Folland) Successful family camp held Merricks. 50+ attended ... 24 Nov Carlo Kaabar speaker ... Effective study seminar for VCE students conducted by church ... Thalia Kalkipsakis won English Lit prize, Caltex Award, Monbulk Secondary College ... Peter & Marilyn Mangold leaders Yarrowonga SUFM. Minister & family also part of mission team ... Church preparing to help provide Christmas dinner for local needy on Christmas Day ... New playgroup formed as result of baby boom.

ECHUCA (A. Symes) Young men have been recruited for presiding & waiting on the table, others as readers & leading pre-meeting song service ... Cell groups continue at different homes bringing the Bible into people's focus ... Members will soon know the extent of repairs & extension to the church building ... Attendance & finances fair. Looking forward to new year for the Lord to bless our work.

MANIFOLD HEIGHTS (Max Ball) Progressive dinner, dress according to turn-around age—72 becomes 27, but 44 is a problem ... Sunday School took responsibility for 1 Dec service ... Hec Douglas & Ian Collins improving in health ... Annual meeting appointed sec Karen Hills, treas Ian Wright, SS Supt Robyn Parry ... Church to purchase computer & printer with fete funds ... Church well represented

at graduation Clinton Wardle from Carlingford & induction service, Nowra, for Clinton, Trish & family. **PEEL ST, BALLARAT** Wayne Allen to commence ministry Feb ... Graeme Baldock baptised by Kevin Rankin ... All auxiliaries have functioned well throughout the year ... Church still being served by own men preaching ... Annual board meeting held. Chairman Ed Lenthall, sec Neil Reed, treas Mal Gamston ... 14 attended graduation and ordination followed by supper at Glen Waverley church in Wayne's honour.

WA

ROCKINGHAM (Keith Ware) Home Missions Development Officer, Des Croote, & wife attended the dedication service for Wambro church on 27 October. We praise God for successful commencement for this outreach when church opened on 3 Nov ... Several commitments & baptisms in recent weeks ... Visiting speakers have included team from *MY DOULOS*, Geoff Ramsay from Life in Focus & Ken Williams from Mobile Mission Maintenance.

ALEXANDER HEIGHTS (John Caporn) Church adopted 12 Keys approach for planning and growth. New structure developed to encourage wider involvement of members ... Hornsby family welcomed in ... 8 ladies attended women's retreat ... Craft numbers increasing after advertising ... Church challenged by Gideons speaker ... Basketball/netball breakup very successful ... Special Christmas service planned ... YP visited Sunshine FM radio station.

FRANKSTON CHURCH OF CHRIST



GREENWAYS RETIREMENT VILLAGE
330-356 FRANKSTON-DANDENONG ROAD,
SEAFORD 3198

1 & 2 BR Villas
Motel Type Lodge Suites
PHONE (03) 786 8679
Waiting List Now Open

Church News

ACT

BELCONNEN (Paul and Heather Potter) Board and elders held 24-hour retreat, sharing visions for growth ... 5th anniversary of opening of building celebrated with focus on thanksgiving. Climax of the week of celebration was baptism service for 2 young people ... Plans for the church to launch its theme for 1992 "Year of Compassion" ... Paul and Heather Potter commence a new 5-year term of ministry February 1992.

NSW

LISMORE (I. Phillips) New 18+ group continues to grow ... Keith Farmer speaker at 107th church anniversary ... Men's dinner great success ... "Church on the Lawn" proving worthwhile change each few months ... Numbers increasing at evening services where uni students are helping with the musical program ... New daughter, Emma Lee, for John & Jenny Arthur.

MAITLAND (R.N. Hawkins) Junior church "took over" morning service for their anniversary. Highest attendance so far—177. Ron Schravemade from Tahlee Bible College speaker. His doll "Willie" plus chalk talk held attention of all ages ... Conf Pres G. Bagley speaker at "Dinner Date" & morning service.

CHATSWOOD (Ian Alves, Rosalie Rofe) Minister and wife attended Christian conference in Argentina ... Small groups program planned for 1992 ... \$3,800 raised by Friendship Centre fete for Muscular Dystrophy Association ... Community Care Dept supported with Christmas tree gift project at church entrance in business area ... Pamphlets distributed to passers-by emphasising the real message of Christmas ... Chinese church choir to assist in Christmas Day service.

Qld

WITHCOTT (Steve Fahey) 450 attended church on 17 Nov to celebrate ninth anniversary & official opening of multipurpose building ... Many unchurched visitors indicated they would be back ... In past 12 months 24 baptisms & many recommitments ... Upcoming events include Carols night (20 Dec) & induction service of new associate minister, Graeme Scott, on 19 January at 9 am service.

MARYBOROUGH (David Woodward, Alan Weedon, Allan Cunningham) Centenary preparations 6-8 June 92 ... Pastors

Woodward, Weedon attended seminars NSW ... Small Bible School students presented musical ... Family services well attended ... Film "Super Christian II" ... Favourite hymn night ... Several rededications ... CWF program "Fair Haven" ... CYF raising funds for videos ... Church family picnic & surprise dinner enjoyed ... Guest speakers Pastor David Blackmore & Pastor Chris O'Dempsey (recent courier into Vietnam).

ANERLEY (Richard Pearce) Replacement church bus purchased ... Recent Sunday evening service held as dinner with group from

Withoutt church taking part ... Special Christmas evening services designed for outreach, with the first being taken by Koala Club (under school age) giving a delightful nativity scene & the Kids Club (primary school age) rendering a selection of joyful songs. Richard Pearce spoke on "Caring for Kids".

Tas


LAUNCESTON (R. Foster, C. Spaulding, D. Tobler) Big service on 4 Nov when 6 baptised at 7 pm ... CWFs have held beakup meet-

ings ... Girls' Brigade presentation night on 3 Dec ... 2 further decisions on 24 Nov ... 14 small groups will be in operation next year and 1 Bethel course.

ULVERSTONE (Tom & Ruth Edge) Learn & Share ladies group had successful luncheon 26 Nov, 30 attending ... Monthly family teas well attended ... Mini Fair 30 Nov. Over \$600 raised for tape ministry equipment for shut-in members ... Tom and Ruth Edge on leave in SA ... Steve Tegloan spoke 1 Dec ... Specials at 7 8 Dec will be taped for Christmas Sunday service for Coastal FM.

COCOA

is involved in education
in countries overseas.
Be a caring partner!



Send your cheque to Churches of Christ
Overseas Aid, PO Box 320, Unley 5061.
(Donations of \$2 and over are tax deductible.)

Name

Address

..... Postcode

Amount for COCOA \$

Sports Page

• Top Marks

Cricket Chaplain

"You stand in the middle," implored Merv Hughes, Australia's test cricket fast bowler to Dr Mark Tronson during a photographic session at training at the Gabba on 28 November. Since 1984 Dr Tronson has been team chaplain, part of Specialised Life-Orientated Ministries Inc, the Christian outreach ministry to Australian professional sport.

The format of the Australian cricket team ministry is attending the two training days prior to test matches and the first day's play. In the off season Dr Tronson receives invitations to visit the fellows in their homes and minister to their families.

The cricketers regularly take the opportunity to speak to Dr Tronson or their Sheffield Shield cricket team chaplain. Rev Lionel Rose, the Queensland cricket team chaplain, and Dr Tronson were guests of the Queensland Cricket President Tom Viewers on the first day of the first test on 29 November. Australian Cricket Board Chairman Colin Egar spoke with Dr Tronson, giving his continued full support.



Mark Tronson with Mark Taylor, Australian opening batsman

This summer Dr Tronson will also include in his itinerary the fifth Test in Perth 30 January–2 February and the first match of the Cricket World Cup in Auckland on 22 February 1992.

Meanwhile England has also appointed a chaplain, the Rev Andrew Wingfield-Digby, director of UK Christians in Sport. Last summer Dr Tronson met with England Cricket head Ted Dexter. Ted was keen to see a similar ministry for the England team. Andrew Wingfield-Digby reported he'd been greeted most warmly by the administration and players. The Fleet Street mass media made quite a fuss of the appointment as the MCC performed exceptionally well against the West Indies. Andrew Wingfield-Digby will accompany the English team to Australia for the Cricket World Cup in February–March next year.

The Last Word

We praise God, not for what we expect to happen in or around us, but we praise him for who he is and for where and how we are right now! —Merlin R. Carothers

The Sunday School teacher had been naming various parts of the Christian armour for her class. "Paul named another weapon we should carry—the word of God. What other name did he use to describe it?"

When there was no response, the Sunday school teacher hinted, "It's very sharp, something that cuts."

Finally came an answer: "I know. It's the axe of the apostles!"

★★★★★

Is a person who flies across the Pacific twice without having a shower a dirty double crosser?

★★★★★

Then there was the person who stayed up all night studying for a blood test.

★★★★★

Parent: "Your teacher is very upset because you hit one of the students in the eye. Are you sure it was an accident?"

Child: "Yes it was an accident. I was aiming for the nose."

★★★★★

"I went riding this morning."

"Horseback?"

"Yes. He got back before I did."

★★★★★

New arrival: "Is this a good river for fish?"

Old hand: "It must be. I can't get any of them to come out of it."

★★★★★

There was a young person named Perkins Who simply loved eating gherkins.

In spite of advice, there was so much spice That they pickled the internal workin's.

★★★★★

Patient: "What should I take when I'm run down?"

Doctor: "The number of the car."

★★★★★



Please get to your seats, folks. I have a rather elaborate sermon for today.



A CHRISTMAS GIFT THAT LASTS ALL YEAR

Send "The Australian Christian" to—

Name

Address

Postcode

Church

Amount Enclosed: \$

A gift for 1992 costs just \$25

Payment can be made by Bankcard, Visa or MasterCard

Please charge my—

Bankcard Visa MasterCard

Card number

Expiry date

Signature

We will send a gift card saying "The Australian Christian" is from—

"The Australian Christian", PO Box 101, North Essendon 3041