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THE AUSTRALIAN CHRISTIAN

Maryborough's Centenary

The Maryborough, Qld,
church people begin the
Sunday morning of their
centenary celebrations
with a march of witness
down the main street

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Youth Evangelism in WA

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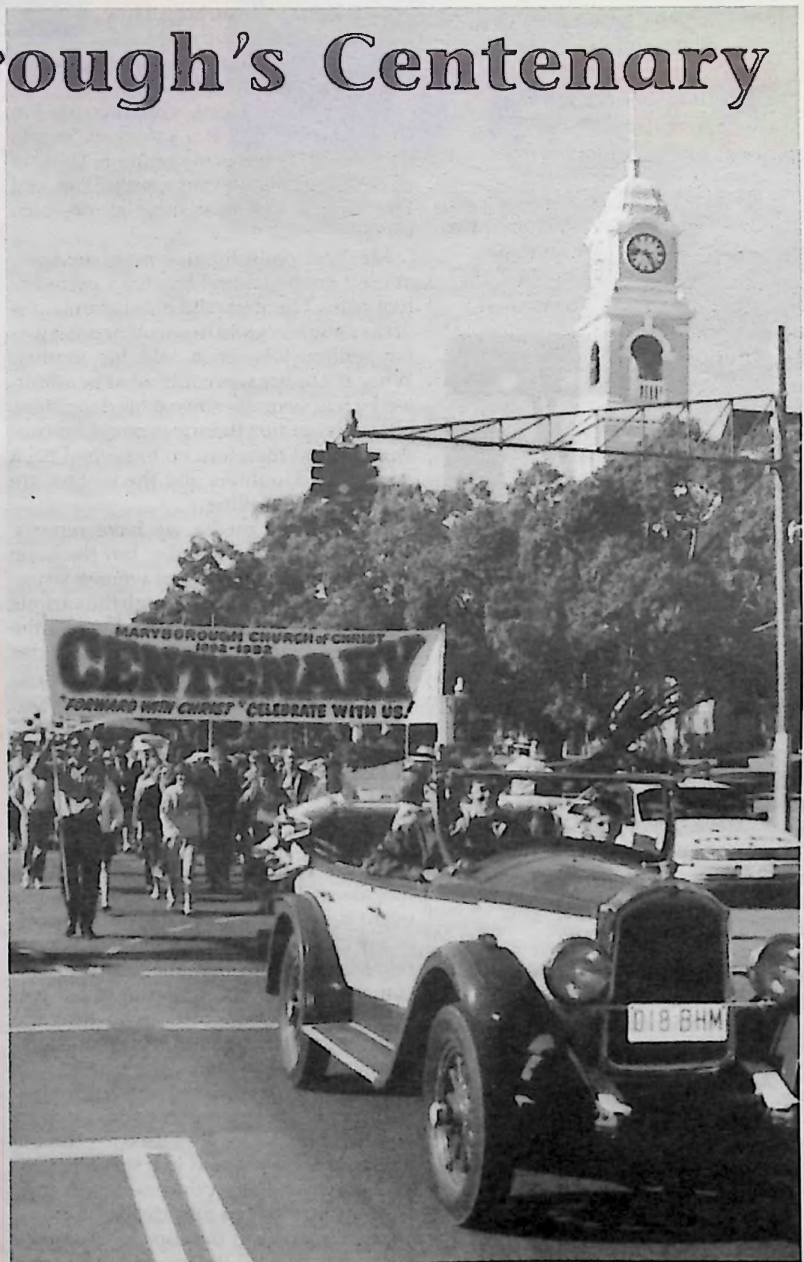
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**Pamphlet:
The John 3:16
Syndrome**





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She Did Not Ask for It

Joy Butler

When will the message that "no means no" get through? Why is it so difficult for women to receive respect and justice? Despite the efforts of some individuals and organisations to raise public awareness around the following issues, the response from the public arena is disturbing. How would you feel if one of the following stories or scenarios was about someone important to you?

Let me share a story, which occurred in the last six months. It is a story of "everyday people", and not uncommon. Those of us working in relevant counselling and referral agencies hear these stories continually.

Mr X, a churchgoing man, sexually abused his two daughters for a period of five years. The abuse did not stop until one of the daughters told her brother what was happening, who then told his mother. When the father was confronted he admitted he had sexually abused his daughters, but in his opinion there was no evidence of damage and therefore no harm had been done. The daughters and the mother are receiving counselling.

Through the media we have reports, sensationalised admittedly, but the basic facts cannot be ignored, of women struggling to receive justice through the various layers of our judicial system. Despite the supposed change in community attitudes victims of sexual assault/rape are still told "they asked for it". Let us be clear about one thing here—sexual assault/rape leaves the victim physically and spiritually attacked. The damage done cannot be measured. It is a crime of violence. No-one asks for it.

Responses to the issue of sexual harassment are varied. However, they always include such comments as "it is not a relevant issue for us" or "it does not happen in my church/workplace". If that is your response it means that, for whatever reason, women are choosing not to tell you their stories. Those of us who hear the stories know it to be a real issue that affects women and some men.

What do we learn about ourselves when we evaluate the entertainment we support and condone? Video clips used to promote the latest song are sold in a sexually provocative style. The producers of these clips have acknowledged they deliberately use women sexually in the clips because they know that will sell the product. The same technique is applied for the promotion of a



wide range of products. It does not matter what the product is—to guarantee a sale you "use" a woman.

One of the most popular movies at the moment is one that through a particular scene actually condones date-rape. The movie reinforces the myth that when a woman says no she really mean yes. People in their

thousands will go to see this movie and have their minds shaped by what they see.

Recently a program was screened on television that raised the issue of sexual abuse by the clergy. The general public and media reaction was to say how dare such accusations be made of the clergy. As one who has heard some of the stories of clergy abuse I was appalled that not one public response said, "What if this is true? What can we do about it?" Instead there was instant dismissal of the women who have the courage to come forward with their stories. (In the two weeks following the screening of the program nine sexual assault centres across Australia received over 270 calls. More than half these calls were women, for the first time, telling their story of church leader and clergy assault.)

It is time to be courageous. It is time to be honest. Why do these scenarios happen? I suggest it is because we as individuals and as a society allow them to happen. It is time, and also an act of justice, to stop blaming the victim. Instead we need to take a critical look at the use and abuse of power and structure in our society and to have the courage to change where necessary. Let us say in a loud, clear voice to the perpetrator, "From here on in you are responsible for your actions!"

As God's precious beings each of us is entitled to a safe and nurturing environment. If we are in fact doing God's work then surely one of our responsibilities is to ensure such an environment exists.

• *Following a childhood spent in the Western District of Victoria Joy Butler moved to Geelong to complete her teacher training. This preceded a teaching career of four and a half years in Melbourne's western suburbs. Since then her employment has had a focus on low-income and/or those who are marginalised. These community work/ministry activities have been with churches, local government and community-based agencies. Except for a short stint elsewhere her employment has been Melbourne based and she is currently with the Vic-Tas Department of Community Care.*

Tributes to Doug Good

Gracious minister remembered across Australia

The news that Doug Good had been stabbed to death shocked all Fremantle, WA, and Churches of Christ throughout Australia. The tragedy took place in the Fremantle manse at about 6.30 am on 3 June.

An Iranian national, Hassan Baharestan, has been charged with wilful murder and remanded in custody. This man is one of many Iranians Doug had been helping, yet, knowing Doug's character, he would no doubt share Christ's sentiments, "Father, forgive, he knows not what he has done."

As the news spread through the WA Brotherhood to the wheatbelt communities of Merredin and Bruce Rock, where Doug ministered for 15 years, it was greeted with total disbelief.

Doug's gentle graciousness and wonderful sense of humour have left an unforgettable impression where he shared and ministered.

A thanksgiving/funeral service was conducted at the Fremantle church, led by two of Doug's long-time friends, Ken Patterson and Ken Duffy. The chapel was packed, as was the rear hall, where closed-circuit TV was installed to cater for the more than 500 who attended.

Doug's brother and sister-in-law, Rex and Lenore, came from South Australia and received loving support.

Ken Patterson led the service with quiet dignity and gave interesting historical details of the Good family involvement in Churches of Christ. Then in a moving tribute, Ken Duffy brought touches of humour, all of which were characteristic of Doug. A poem by Mandylee Munro (nee Duffy) was a fitting close to the tribute.

The Merredin and Bruce Rock churches held services in the same week. Both these services were well attended and led by another college mate, Don Sonsee.

A special thanksgiving service for all Doug's South Aus-

tralian friends and relations was held at the Prospect church, led by Brian Hill. There was also a service held at the Enfield Crematorium, where Doug's ashes were interred with those of his mother. This service was conducted by John Baker.

Doug had won a special place in all our hearts for the sincere, gracious, gentle man and friend he was. He had a unique chuckly laugh and a sense of humour that never minded a joke at his expense. In the College of the Bible he was called "thumbs Good" on account of those long turned-up thumbs of his, or "Doug Blue Hills Good" after his favourite radio program. He played his tennis and table tennis with the same tenacity and persistence he lived his life.

His student ministry days endeared him to the folk at Tootgarook and Red Hill.

As a Christian he felt inferior to others because he never had a dramatic conversion from a sordid life of sin. Instead he just grew up a Christian and one day blossomed into the beauty of its maturity.

As a farmer, where better could he go than Merredin-Bruce Rock for his first ministry out of college? For 15 years he laughed, cried, shared and loved with these towns—he literally became part of them.

Fremantle too, had been blessed having Doug for six years enjoying the same love and humour. It was here he found a new ministry among refugees and ethnic groups, giving so much of his financial and personal resources to help them in a new country.

Ken Patterson says: "Dearest Doug, an example of a model minister who lived for his people and those needing help; gracious, gentle and generous. Like Jesus struck down by one he befriended!"

Doug Good was born in Balaklava, SA, on 28 June 1937, the son of Aleck and Ellen Good of Long Plains, and he

"Make a Joyful Noise"

Children's musical at Nunawading



• (back) Simon Dewbury, Lucinda and Tamara White, Nicholas Haines, (front) Matthew, Lauren, Warren, Kate and James Cutler

The children's musical, "Make a Joyful Noise", was staged at the Nunawading, Vic, church, Surrey Road, Blackburn, on 28 June at 5 and 7 pm.

Singing Swagman Sam, played by Warren Cutler, meets some children on holiday and shares the good news of Jesus Christ with them.

The Cutler family is well represented, with Warren's four children taking part—Mat-

thew, James, Lauren and Kate. Gaby Cutler, Warren's niece, is also involved as a teacher/helper.

Producer, Rosemary König, says that the show has an entertaining message for children of all ages. It is an ideal show for a family or Sunday school class.

An offering was taken for Vanuatu Cyclone Relief.

—Rosemary König

was raised on the family farm. He drew deeply on his rich inheritance and the brotherhood of faith about him as he grew up in the Long Plains church. Doug attended Nailsworth Technical School in Adelaide after which he worked for Harris Scarfe, the largest general merchandise store in Adelaide. In 1959 he returned to work on the family farm.

The Northern District Conference had formed a youth activities committee to which Doug was enlisted, becoming secretary. One of the activities organised was a weekend camp in January at the Longwood camp. They were wonderful times and are fondly remembered by many. A quote from a 1965 magazine paid tribute to Doug's involvement with these

camp: "Much of the work of camp was carried out by a young man for whom we have the highest regard. Our Camp Secretary, Doug Good, seems to relish in the hard work of preparing for camp. A successful camp is his only ambition, and all his efforts are geared to that end. His consecrated efforts for his Master whom he serves so willingly are appreciated not only by the young people who attend camp, but also by the whole of the Northern District churches. We are very fortunate to have a young man of his ability who is so willing to undertake many jobs which have to be done which make for a successful camp."

The next year Doug entered the College of the Bible in Melbourne.

SLM Conference

Executive and tourism workshops

Executive Ministries and Tourism Ministry will each host three workshops at the SLM National Conference (Specialised Life-Orientated Ministries) 1-2 September in Wollongong. SLM is better known for its sports ministry, serving 81 sports with chaplains and 18 regional and state Christians in Sport fellowship groups.

Other "specialised" areas within the orbit of SLM ministry are Executives, Tourism, Entertainment, Media and Postgraduate Studies. The workshop program will include two of these—Executives and Tourism.

Rev Terry Ayling, the SLM's National Tourism Ministry Co-ordinator, will lead the three tourism ministry workshops. He comes from a family business background in tourism. A committed evangelist, Terry Ayling has recognised the real potential in this area for the Australian church. These workshops are also highly recommended for anyone interested in "tourism" as a specialised ministry.

Executive Ministries is a different type of ministry. SLM Chairman Rev Ross Clifford is co-ordinating these three workshops. He is the author of the book *Leading Lawyers Look at the Resurrection*. He has recently returned from Russia, where he addressed judges on "Principles of Justice". SLM has been ministering to those in the corporate world, parliamentarians, business people, judiciary, the arts and opera for several years.

This ministry initially came from sport chaplaincy. Such people are often members of professional sport management boards.

These Executive Ministry workshops are ideal for people interested in having such a specialised ministry, or those Christian business people wish-

ing mutual fellowship for support and to be better equipped for one-to-one ministry.

People interested in attending the workshops and/or conference should contact SLM's National Co-ordinator, Dr Mark Tronson, at SLM's Sanctuary Lodge on (044) 74 3554 or fax (044) 74 4043.

Pentecost at Aldgate Valley

Gifts fall on worshippers

Worshippers entered the small bush chapel in some trepidation. Looming overhead, suspended from the ceiling, was a net filled to the brim with balloons. Someone had written on the balloons words like "joy", "teaching", "patience", "discernment"—in fact it seemed the whole catalogue of gifts and fruits of the Holy Spirit were caught up in that net.

The service began—bright songs, some new, that the congregation learnt quickly and heartily. A puppet show in which the bush animals related the tale of the first Pentecost enthralled young and old. A time of celebrating church news came next, including Mrs Long's 90th birthday and the celebratory cake to follow. There was the meaningful remembering at communion. Then the minister spoke of mission.

The church at Aldgate Valley, SA, is entering a time of review. It is time to assess again objectives for Christ's mission in the district and the church's part in them.

As the minister spoke, the vibrant strains of Morricone's "The Mission" began to play. The balloons descended, dancing around the heads of delighted worshippers, who batted and played.

Finally the balloons settled amongst the congregation. The minister asked what "gifts" they had received and explained how they were given to empower the ministry of the

church. How the Holy Spirit was selective and discriminatory in the distribution of the gifts depending on the church's mission, but developed his "fruit" in all who were growing into Christ-likeness. In an act of dedication, the congregation filed out to place their balloons on the platform.

This showed that the gifts and fruits belong to the church for the church's purpose and mission.

Aldgate Valley is more than 100 years old. Yet Pentecost 1992 revealed an openness and anticipation for involvement in today's mission that is filled with energy and vitality.

—Dennis Ryle

Progressive Service

Going out with joy

The churches of Yarrowonga and Mulwala held a progressive church service on 2 June to celebrate the Week of Prayer for Christian unity. It was considered that this would be a practical demonstration of the fellowship that we are able to share.

The service commenced with worship and prayer at St Brigid's Catholic Church. Everyone then moved on to St Andrew's Anglican Church, where the emphasis was on the reading of the Scriptures.

The sermon was preached at St Andrew's Uniting Church by the Ven. Ken Patfield, Archdeacon of the Riverina Diocese. He stressed the unity of the believers who are in Jesus Christ by faith—those who the Father had given into his care. He reminded us that while there may be different theology, variation in forms of worship and administration, there is but one God and one Lord. He asked how a broken world could be expected to take notice of a church that talked of love, but could not work with fellow believers.

He concluded by calling on all present to go out as witnesses to the power of Jesus

Christ. The gathering then proceeded to the Church of Christ for prayer and closing worship, which was followed by supper.

A choir had been formed from the various participating churches. They added to the sense of worship and spiritual presence evident during the service. Those present left each building with the words "You shall go out with joy", and this summed up the feelings of those who were able to share in this activity. The attendance ensured that there will be a similar program next year.

—W.L. Keddie

Effective Worship Seminar

Relevant resources

There is little doubt that one of the most legitimate concerns of our churches is to make worship more effective and relevant.

This was certainly borne out recently when the NSW Department of Church Development and Education sponsored an "Effective Worship" Seminar at Telopea Christian Centre.

The seminar was an initiative of the Telopea, NSW, church, which ran the seminar on 4 April. Over 100 attended and participated, making it one of the most effective seminars conducted by DCD in recent years.

Rick Lewis, senior minister at Telopea, and Robyn Moses, former music director at the church and Carlingford College, conducted general sessions, with Robyn also running a series of three electives for pastors. Electives series were also run for musicians and singers, and for worship leaders.

"Effective Worship" is part of the continuing desire of the NSWDCDE to provide relevant resources for the enhancement of the ministry of our local churches.

—Chris Hutton

100 Years of Service and Witness

Maryborough's centenary celebrations

The Maryborough, Qld, church celebrated 100 years of service and witness on the Queen's Birthday weekend (4-7 June). The theme was "Forward with Christ". Guest speaker for the weekend was Pastor Des Nelson, who ministered at Maryborough from 1961 to 1967.

The weekend was the culmination of three years of planning by the local Centenary Committee. Visitors came from all over Australia, including former ministers Roy and Muriel Roberts, Don and Verna Mortimer, Tom and Julie Ede, Reg and Sue Charles, Jim and Ann Deutschmann, Chris O'Dempsey, and Ray and Wilma Patterson. Special guests were the grandsons of the founder of the church, Stephen O'Brien. Mr O'Brien was the Posts and Telegraphs Master when the first church meetings were held in the Post Office residence in 1892.

The celebrations began on Thursday morning when the CWF hosted a meeting of some 250 women, representing approximately 15 Maryborough churches. CWF President, Helen McDonald, led the meeting, and Des Nelson spoke.

On Friday night associate minister Alan Weedon led an Encouragement Night Rally. Music was provided by Sharon

Fitness, Cameron Bottcher and Wendy Cunningham. Des Nelson spoke on God's power at work in the church today.

At the monthly Saturday Prayer Breakfast Des shared a testimony of what the Lord has been doing in his life and the life of the Kelmscott, WA, church, where he is in his 13th year of ministry. In between morning tea and lunch visitors had opportunity to renew old acquaintances and to view the extensive memorabilia that had been gathered for the occasion. This was followed by a bus tour of Maryborough and Hervey Bay, including Fair Haven Retirement Village and the heritage buildings of the area.

Nearly 200 gathered for the Centenary Dinner on the Saturday evening, which was led by senior minister David Woodward. Past members Lucille Newman and Lynn Parry provided a musical ministry, along with Davin Patterson, grandson of late elder, Alf Popp. Betty Ogden recited a poem she had specially written and a group of church members, led by Mavis Goodwin, provided a medley of old-time hymns. The centenary cake was cut by Jessie Brooks, oldest church member in attendance.

Sunday morning began with a March of Witness from the



• Jessie Brooks cuts the centenary cake

Post Office, past the site of the old church building in Adelaide Street, then to the present church building complex in Kent Street. The procession included both the Girls' and Boys' Brigades in uniform, the Sunday School, representatives from Family Day Care and a bus load of residents from Fair Haven Retirement Village.

David Woodward led both Sunday services, which saw the chapel filled. Music was provided by past and present members. A special presentation, in the form of a framed painting of the historic Maryborough Town Hall, was made to Des Nelson by Chairman, Bob Cloherty. Fair Haven Retirement Village was open for visitors on Sunday afternoon where a sheath of flowers was presented to Mrs Fawcett, the oldest living member of the

church.

At both Sunday services Des spoke regarding God's power available today to reach the lost and to make Christians effective witnesses for Christ. In the evening service seven indicated a desire to walk with the Lord. This represented both deeper walk commitments and firm rededications. In the days following the celebrations there have been more rededications and at least one first-time commitment to Christ.

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A FAB Story

50th birthday celebration in Victoria

A weekend focus on the **Aborigines Mission Board** will be held in Melbourne, Vic, on 7 and 8 August, to recognise 50 years of missionary service to our Aboriginal people. It is intended to be mostly an informal get together and a happy reunion.

This particular sphere of service in Churches of Christ had its beginnings in **Norseman, WA**, as far back as 1936, when a New Zealander, Miss Eadie, together with a Miss Bentley from Victoria, began a work of faith among the Aboriginal people of the town. Because of the work of these two women there was formed, in 1941, a workable policy for a Federal Aborigines Mission Board.

Roy Raymond and **Maston Bell** were the instigators when they asked the 1941 Federal Conference to "create a board to attend to the evangelisation and general uplift of the Australia Aborigine".

The work grew in **Norseman**, so much so that after nine years operation in a small Aboriginal reserve, it was moved to a larger area of land nine miles out of town. **Pastor Sonny Graham** was, at one time, superintendent of that mission.

When Miss Bentley, for health reasons, returned to Victoria and Miss Eadie wished to return to New Zealand to look after her aged mother, **Sister Joan Saunders** and **Elsie Roxburgh** stepped into their shoes. **Joan Saunders** married **K.N. Roberts** in **Kalgoorlie** early in 1944 and they took over the superintendency of the **Norseman Mission Station**.

The great work further north at **Carnarvon** was commenced when **Dr and Mrs Hammer** and their four children travelled there in an ex-army truck in 1945. They lived in army tents until sheds could be built. **Betty Sewell**, nee **Schurmann**, author of the book on **Carnarvon**, arrived in 1946 as the **Hammer's** first helper. The pattern of setting up a mission in those

early days seemed to be first the missionaries, then the helpers, then the site. Essential needs were always water, shelter and then schooling. This was where the work parties entered the scene. Over the years workers have come from all states, at their own expense, usually in their holiday periods, and worked from daylight to dusk building dormitories, family homes, chapels, schools etc., and connecting water, electricity and, in latter years, the telephone system.

Over the 50 years that has passed since those two Christian ladies moved out in faith and love, the work of the FAB has grown greatly in WA and spread to the eastern states.

Ex-mission people are now employed as stockmen, station hands, Main Roads employees, motor mechanics, television and radio artists, school teachers, pastors and so on.

God is still working on the mission stations through the missionaries, the helpers, the work parties, the Board, the churches, the departments and the people themselves.

Invitations have gone out to all, including ex-missionaries, work party members and ex-members of the Aborigines Mission Department, inviting them to the celebration of 50 years of vision and dedication.

They will share their stories with us on 7 August at the CWF monthly meeting in **Little Collins Street, Melbourne**, and on 8 August, when it is hoped the weather will allow a barbecue lunch in the **Box Hill Gardens** and an afternoon tea at the **Box Hill church**. Should the weather be inclement the lunch will also be held at the church.

Miss Bentley, the pioneer, still resides in Melbourne and it is hoped that she will be able to attend.

Further details can be obtained from **Jean Hillier**, **Malcolm Anderson** or **Allen Carr**.

—Betty Bantow

Basketball Action

Competition with local teams

Athletes in Action, a Christian team of basketballers drawn from the professional US ranks, will be touring Australia 20 July to 3 August.

Australia's National Basketball League has endorsed the tour and the team will play the **Perth Wildcats**, the **Adelaide 36ers**, the **North Melbourne Giants** and the **Geelong Supercats**.

Noel Mitaxa, Victorian coordinator for **Specialised Life-Orientated Ministries**, is excited about the visit. "The clubs have jumped at the opportunity to play against AIA because they will be a great test for local players, especially while the league is not operating while players are competing in the Olympic Games."

Matches will be against the **Perth Wildcats** in **Bunbury** on 23 July and at the **Lakeside Recreation Centre** on 25 July, against the **Adelaide 36ers** on 27 July, against the **North Melbourne Giants** at the **Glasshouse** on 30 July and against the **Geelong Supercats** at the **Geelong Arena** on 31 July.

Half-time breaks in each match will feature Christian testimonies and the **Geelong** match will be preceded by an outreach dinner.

Noel commented that there is an increasing openness of NBL personnel to the Christian faith. Three of the four Victorian teams now have chaplains—**Rev Pat Casalenuovo** at the **Giants**, **Paul Creasey** (minister of the **Gardiner, Vic**, church) with the **Magics** and

Pastor Gerry Riviere with the **Supercats**.

Noel said: "We are confident that the gospel will take root in some of the players so they will become more complete role models for youth. Then as they move from playing to coaching, administration or media positions their Christian witness will have an even greater effect. Now that is an exciting prospect! The **Athletes in Action** team will also be exposed to sports fans, school assemblies and school sports clinics and they will be available for church services on 2 August.

A special feature of their Victorian visit will be a **Sports Ministry Seminar** on 1 August. This will be aimed at helping young sports people with issues such as Christianity and competition, Sunday sport, discipline, team responsibilities and handling bad decisions by umpires and officials. (The venue is not known at the time of going to press.)

Tickets for games will be available through **Bass** but anyone wishing to help with billets, team transport, school clinics or church services should contact **Noel Mitaxa** on (052) 44 2464 or by writing to him at 98 **Barrabool Rd, Highton 3216**.

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Alan Anderson for Wollongong Ministry

Educational role

Alan Anderson commences as associate minister at the Wollongong, NSW, church in September. He will concentrate in the area of Christian Education and work with the ministry team led by Barry McMurtrie.

Alan graduated in 1964 from Woolwich Bible College and had two distinguished ministries in Western Australia before commencing an educational role in the funeral industry.

For the past eight years he has worked as a lecturer in grief counselling. In this role he has taught various school and community groups as well as training professionals.

The church at Wollongong has over 800 members and



• Alan Anderson

Alan's skills as an educator will be greatly appreciated.

John Godby Update

Good recovery

In the 20 June issue we reported that John Godby, Conference Secretary in Queensland, had suffered a stroke. John has rung to inform readers that he is recovering well.

He had regained all faculties within a week and although currently suffering from the flu and not feeling 100% he is resting and looking towards full recovery eventually. John has retired from the position as

Queensland Conference Secretary early. (He was due to retire on 30 June anyway.)

Dr Don Stewart has taken over the position in the interim while the Conference Executive looks for a new secretary.

[John was also wondering where the third John Godby had come from. The typeface of the heading made "ill" appear to read "III".]

Awards

Churches of Christ men honoured

Robert Leane and Clive Ward have been made Members of the Order of Australia, General Division (AM).

Robert Leane, AM

Robert was honoured for his involvement in the St John Ambulance. He has been involved with that organisation for over 40 years as a volunteer and this has included many years in training. He has been chairman of the Training Committee for many years. With the society he has been honoured by being made an Officer of the Order of St John.



Within his professional field of schools administration he was first Executive Officer and then with a title change Director of the South Australian Independent Schools Board since its inception since 1974. He has had national involvement in schools administration and has been recognised within his own profession.

In Churches of Christ circles Robert is involved with the Blackwood, SA, church, where he has been an elder for 15 years and chairman of the board for over a decade. He has just completed a two-year term as Conference President in South Australia and has had involvement in the State Board and currently the Ministry Committee of Conference.

Robert is the National Conference President elect and will take over the role of President from Clive Ward for the 1995 National Conference in Adelaide.

Robert has also been busy increasing his Christian knowledge and has completed the ICEM Graduate Diploma in Ministry and is currently completing the Associate Diploma in Lay Ministry with the Churches of Christ Theological College.

Clive Ward, AM

Clive Ward is well known in Churches of Christ in Victoria and Tasmania. He currently attends the Ivanhoe, Vic, church where he is an elder. He was for many years, 1961-87, the treasurer of the Home Missions Department (now the Department of Mission, Education and Development) and has been involved in Conference Executive since 1962. Clive became the honorary part-time Secretary of Conference in 1976 and kept that role until 1990, except for the period during 1987-88 when he was Conference President. Clive's service at that time was certainly a great help to the conference finances.

Since 1990 Clive has been National Conference President. He was the Victorian Vice-President of Federal Conference 1977-90 and served as Chairman of the Federal Conference Executive 1987-90.

In the sporting arena Clive was treasurer of the Bulleen-Templestowe Basketball Association, 1976-83, and has had an active involvement with the Essendon Football Club, serving as Vice President (1962-71) and treasurer (1971-76).

In recent years Clive has been on the board of the Box Hill Hospital, being president since 1984.



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Letters to the Editor

Letters are limited to
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South Yarra Stories Sought

To the Editor,

It is fitting that as churches become older their history should be put into written form. The church at South Yarra, Vic, will reach its centenary next year and I have been asked to write the history of those 100 years.

In addition to the impressions gained through my own years of association, I am finding through my research that South Yarra's story is quite an exciting one. I have received some very fine testimonies from past members of how their lives found real meaning through its witness and fellowship.

Readers of this letter who have been associated with South Yarra in the past and who care to help me in writing this history by sending me information, photographs etc. are warmly invited to do so. But please act immediately as the constraint of time is now upon us. Make sure that anything you want returned is clearly marked with your name and address.

Send to E.R. Sherman, 62 Bayswater Road, Croydon 3136. Phone (03) 723 2894.

—E.R. Sherman

A Comment on a Comment

To the Editor,

I can sympathise with Neil Marsden's desire to elevate Jesus Christ ("AC" 23 May) since Jesus Christ is the church's greatest asset and is the proximate reason for its existence (God being the ultimate reason), but I did not find his "Comment" helpful and do not

think it was altogether biblically accurate.

Neil claims too much when he says both that "throughout the Bible Jesus is spoken about as being equal to God" and that "Jesus has absolute power over all things".

First, the historical Jesus does not appear until the New Testament and therefore no claims are made for him in the Old.

Second, the New Testament writers do not unequivocally claim that Jesus was God's equal. In the New Testament, no-one presents a higher doctrine of Jesus Christ than John in the Gospel, yet the Jesus of John is one who is sent by God, so the one who sends must in some sense be greater than the one who is sent, and is also one who is utterly dependent upon God, so the one who provides is in some way greater than the one who is provided for.

Third, in giving us the freedom to choose (which is another of Neil's points), God has forfeited absolute power. "The mind persuaded against itself is still of the same mind," and a faithful Creator will not go back on that. In keeping with that, the Jesus of the Book of Revelation stands at the door and knocks. He does not break in.

If the central truth about God is that "God is love," then the deity of Jesus has to be defined in terms of his loving and his equality with God in terms of their union in love.

—Ronald Graham
(Johnston, Iowa, USA)

Bolduan versus Curkpatrick

To the Editor,

I write not to defend Curkpatrick against Bolduan's sweeping criticism ("AC" 6 June)—Stephen does not need my defence—but to debate Mark on two counts. He takes Stephen to task for saying (1) that the Gospels are not "chronological documentaries" and (2) that they are "faith speaking to faith."

(1) The Gospels have in common that there was a beginning, middle and end to the story of Jesus of Nazareth. But beyond that, what is the meas-

ure of their chronological agreement? To take but one example of the problem, last week I wrote a sermon on Luke 13:22-30. What Luke brings together in one continuous passage is scattered in five different chapters in Matthew, from 7 to 25. (Only verse 30 is found in Mark; none appear in John.) One or the other has it right, but not both; but which one? Or perhaps neither is correct, both using a tradition that differed from each of them.

(2) John explicitly says that he wrote his Gospel "to faith" (either to continue in it or to elicit it, or both: "These are written that you may believe," (20:31, RSV). And all the Gospels are written "from faith." It is a striking fact that in the Gospels it is only those who were already disciples of Jesus who recognised him in risen form.

Paul said that the good news he proclaimed included three elements: "Christ died"—facts

of history—"for our sins"—an interpretation of those facts from the point of view of faith—"in accordance with the scriptures"—his (and the tradition's) category of interpretation (1 Corinthians 15:1-3).

—Ronald Graham
(Johnston, Iowa, USA)

Stephen Curkpatrick Responds

To the Editor,

Before launching into critical mode, Mark Bolduan and Bill Gaunson could have...

- discovered the rich stratum of mainstream theological scholarship on the Gospels that deals with issues raised in "Faith Speaking to Faith" ("AC" 23 May);

- read more carefully "Faith Speaking to Faith" and noted my integration of history and faith in the phrases "events surrounding Christ", "acting decisively in history" and "the advent of Jesus Christ!";

Letters from Tertius

Me-Songs

To the Editor,

I know that one's relationship with Jesus Christ has to be deeply personal, but surely it doesn't have to be self-centred! In fact I've always been taught that a personal relationship with Jesus Christ means getting our ego out of the way and putting him in the centre. And I've always been taught that worship is supposed to be directed towards God and away from ourselves.

Yet so many of our hymns and choruses are "me-songs". Of course some of our most beautiful hymns and choruses reflect deep personal experiences of God from "Abide with Me" to "When I Survey", but a lot of songs seem to give the impression that the singer is enjoying some sort of monopoly of the Divine.

The ones that disturb me most are the "glory for me" and the "Jesus is mine" kind that give the impression of "hands off the rest of you" or even "I'm not even conscious of the rest of you".

I know that it is easier to find rhyming words for "me" and "mine" than it is for "us" and "ours".

"O that will be / Glory for me" obviously sounds better than "O that will be glory for us, / As we arrive in the heavenly bus", but that latter at least recognises that God's benefits are shared by all of us.

In our public prayers "we" and "us" and "our" are always used because those who pray are conscious of the rest of us who are also worshipping, so I can't understand why our songs forget this. I've been having a look at some of them and there is no reason why our worship leaders shouldn't ask us to substitute plural pronouns for singular ones.

"Thou O Christ art all we want,
More than all in thee we find."

—Tertius

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Letters to the Editor

• understood the difference between scientifically verifiable facts and historical integrity. Neither God or the resurrection are scientifically verifiable. All we have are documents from people who relate their experiences of the advent of God in Christ, interpreted through the eyes of faith. They are believers, not detached observers. The historical integrity of their accounts we can only accept by faith. That's the point of the Thomas story, isn't it! "Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe."

My passion is to understand—

• how the Gospels speak to us, with their variety of literary genres, metaphors and theological composition;

• how we can live and communicate their message with integrity today.

That quest, contrary to Mark Bolduan and Bill Gaunson's assertions, is intrinsically Christian and Biblical.

—Stephen Curkpatrick
(Brighton, SA)

The Resurrection

Dear Editor,

Further to recent letters re resurrection accounts, there is no doubt that the very earliest strata of Biblical evidence testifies to the resurrection. The earliest Christians, according to the NT, believed that Jesus rose from the dead. The issue is not whether he rose but is it legitimate to "harmonise" their records of the resurrection. Many have endeavoured to do this and we can conclude that, yes, they can be harmonised—but only at the cost of making some huge and unwarranted assumptions about the meaning of the text. But do we need to harmonise them and what does it do to the various NT author's intentions if we do? Without doubt, we completely obscure each of the author's intentions and as well certainly miss the point that each of them is trying to make. It is both not necessary and in fact quite misleading for scriptural truth to try to push their records into one "unified" account for whatever reason (fear of contradic-

tion or fear of existentialism). Leave the harmonising to Hollywood and let us as Christians study the text as it stands.

—Gerald Rose
(Cheltenham, Vic)

Old Testament Prophecy and Israel

To the Editor,

I have always admired Gladys Butler's forthright letters to *The Australian Christian* on a variety of subjects, including her latest on Old Testament prophecy and the modern State of Israel. ("AC" 20 June)

Could I respectfully suggest to her that the OT prophecies concerning the return of the Jews to Israel were fulfilled when they returned from Babylon to restore the nation, the City of Jerusalem and the temple, and that their ultimate fulfilment was in the coming of Jesus to be the Messiah (Christ). This is what the first-century church believed and preached as they set out to convince the Jews that Jesus was the Messiah "according to the Scriptures" and that Israel's hope was to be found in him. Some Jews believed but most did not, as they were looking for a different sort of Messiah and a different sort of destiny for Israel.

Present-day Zionists, of course, believe that the present nation of Israel is the fulfilment of the OT prophecies because they do not believe that Jesus is the Christ (Messiah) and the fulfilment of the ancient prophecies concerning Israel.

—Gordon Stirling
(Boronia, Vic.)

Image

To the Editor,

What a wonderful day for Churches of Christ, and for *The Australian Christian* (June 20)!

The "AC" hits us in the eye with the image of a man "in combat order" swinging from a rope, and then regales us with a Guest Editorial entitled "Manhood". What a feast that editorial offers. Its argument is that "Manhood and Christlikeness are synonymous" and that modern Christian men should stand up and be more respon-

sible, accountable, trustworthy. "Real men like Jesus bite the bullet...", they are not weak-kneed and wimpish.

All this brings tears to the eyes of this "outspoken woman". I had been working on the principle (and the life experience) that the men I love are gentle, loving, strong, sharing, like Jesus. They don't "bite bullets" but seek mutuality and peace. I have been admiring that range of God-given qualities in women I revere too. What a fool I've been! I now realise that "being a (Christian) man" and "being a (Christian) woman" are two utterly separate, box-like cages to which I must conform.

One last question puzzles though. When I replace the word "man" with "person" in the editorial, I come up with a statement which thrills my soul: "True people ... recognise and fulfil ... their responsibilities in every aspect of their lives. They are people ... accountable before God for their actions or

inactions ... they are people like Jesus." Why does this make infinitely more sense to me?

—Dr Lyn McCredden
(Northcote, Vic)

Doug Good

To the Editor,

I write in a state of shock after reading in the "AC" of the murder of Doug Good.

We were in college together in the mid-sixties, and Doug showed me it is possible to do two things simultaneously. He taught me how to milk the college cow and listen to Blue Hills at the same time.

Many other fond memories flood my mind at this time, and I am so glad that another milker, Ken Duffy, participated in the services. I feel as though Ken represented the college family at a time when we could not all be present.

I thank God for Doug Good.
—Malcolm Gray
(Upwey, Vic)

Letters continued on page 11

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of reaching
kids in
your area?



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together, our dreams
become the beginning
of reality"
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Books

Escape the Coming Night

by D. Jeremiah with C.C. Carlson (Word Publishing) \$12.95

In the introduction to his book, David Jeremiah states that he has written it with the intent of helping people to make sense of Revelation. Coupled with this is an obvious desire that whoever reads this book will be challenged by its content, particularly as it is interpreted in the light of current world-wide events, and thus make a decision for Christ.

As a pre-millennialist, Jeremiah refers to all the contentious issues of the end times: wars, environmental catastrophes, 666 and the Antichrist, and, while any reader interested in the "end times" will have read it all before, the style of writing makes the content easy to follow and absorb. For anyone studying Revelation, this book would provide an interesting overview to further in-depth study.

Jeremiah presents a vital challenge to today's church from the point of view of its relevance in the world and its mission in witnessing to lost souls so that they will escape God's impending judgment. The church also must not allow the present world events to distract it from proclaiming the truth of things to come.

An aspect I'm sure people would enjoy following up is that of the material concerning each of the letters to the seven churches. Each one has a challenge that applies to us today. The author states that "prophecy is the most absorbing study in the Bible". As one reads this book, one can sense Jeremiah's enthusiasm for his task. Revelation is a book not to be taken lightly. Jeremiah believes "we are in the time before Christ will come again".

Therefore, the only response is to accept God's gift of salvation in Christ, and, assured of this hope, one will be able to escape the coming night.

A challenging book and one well worth reading.

—Grant Spangenberg

What Should My Child Read?

by Susan Moore (Albatross Books) \$7.95

In this compact book, Australian educator, speaker and writer, Susan Moore, surveys approximately 200 currently available novels for young people with the express purpose of providing parents and teachers with a guide to good literature for children. She has avoided those books that she considers "crass or nihilistic, schmalzy or slick" concentrating instead on books which are "nourishing as well as entertaining" and of "enduring value". She has succeeded in this aim very well, for the book presents an informed selection of titles from some of the world's finest writers of children's literature, carefully chosen for their appeal and readability, language quality, depth of imagination and balanced approach to life.

What Should My Child Read? is divided into two parts: Books for Younger Readers (Junior Fiction) and Books for Older Readers (Teenage Fiction). Under these headings novels are categorised into two distinct genres: Realism and Fantasy. Books are further grouped into appropriate themes. For younger readers these include Time Travel, Talking Creatures, Animals/Outdoor Life, Historical Adventure, Family Life/School/Friendship and Mysterious Adventure. For adolescent readers themes include Spiritual Quests/Spiritual Warfare and Coming of Age.

In her concise, informative and easy-to-read annotations Susan Moore shares with the reader her extensive knowledge of literature for young people. She provides valuable information about each novel, including a brief outline of the plot, major literary

prizes it has won, where the book can be easily obtained, its strengths and weaknesses and its appeal. Other books by the same author are also given. Books of outstanding quality are highlighted and there is a useful appendix of major awards for children's fiction written in the last 30 years.

A handy and practical reference tool, this little book will meet a real need among concerned parents and teachers, both Christian and non-Christian, who are faced with the dilemma of choosing quality books that children will find enjoyable and entertaining. The book is not specifically "Christian" but the sensitivity and soundness of judgment displayed by Susan Moore in both selection and annotation is admirable and in accord with an informed Christian world view. Those Christians who believe that suitable works of fiction for young people must be overtly moralistic, didactic or evangelistic may quibble with some of her selections. The rest of us can only be most grateful for her efforts in producing a book that enables us to negotiate our way through the minefield of modern children's literature avoiding those novels which merely offer "phantom pleasures but no real hope" to lay hold of those which are life affirming and life enhancing.

—Mark Gosling

Song of Triumph

by Eleanor Veldman Grotenhuis (Baker Book House)

Dealing with death is, perhaps, the ultimate test of faith. To focus on Christ through the pain and despair of loss is one of our greatest challenges as Christians.

Song of Triumph is an honest account of grief within a Christian family, written by a mother whose son died at 27 years of age.

The book both pays tribute to this young man, and takes us through his family's moments of agony, anguish and acceptance as they "journey back to life" after his death.

Song of Triumph offers the comfort of knowing that others have walked in "the valley of the shadow of Death" and found their God sufficient, as well as providing a practical handbook to bereaved people and those who seek to support them.

Written in a simple, conversational style and divided into short chapters for easy digestion, the book is peppered with checklists, verses and text, which offer encouragement and guidance.

As you read, you will find yourself sharing the family's pain, shedding some tears, and smiling at the memories shared.

For anyone who has faced the death of a loved one, or sought to offer comfort to a grieving friend, *Song of Triumph* is a must.

—Robyn Frampton



Letters to the Editor

Racial and Religious Vilification Bill

To the Editor,

As a retired science teacher, I write to express concern at the Victorian Government's Racial and Religious Vilification Bill.

Reading through the clauses, I believe the bill will place in jeopardy the teaching of many sciences, including biology, ecology, geology and astronomy.

In March 1925 the State of Tennessee passed a law prohibiting the teaching in public (state) schools of any theory contrary to the Genesis story of creation. In July of that year a science teacher, John Scopes, was convicted under this law for teaching in biology Darwin's theory of evolution. Fortunately, his conviction was later overturned by the State Supreme Court.

The Victorian Government's Racial and Religious Vilification Bill does not prohibit the teaching of Darwin's theory. However, it does place that power in the hands of an individual or groups of individuals.

In the general community there are many religious groups who believe passionately in the Genesis story of creation. I support the right of these groups to do so provided they respect the freedom of others to disagree and without initiating criminal proceedings on the basis of vilification of their religious beliefs.

State schools are the only schools defined in the government's bill as a public place where it is forbidden to vilify a person's religious beliefs. It is science teachers in these schools who may be in danger of criminal charges. As the charges of vilification are to be heard before a magistrate, one could legitimately enquire to what extent the religious beliefs of the magistrate would influence the final verdict.

Are we to see a return to those religious courts which in years past condemned for vilification of then accepted "truths" Giordano Bruno and Galileo for teaching what today we know as basic facts in

the science of astronomy?

The religious segment of the bill is an attack on science and should be scrapped.

—A.N. Homan
(Reservoir, Vic)

Phil Wyllie's South American Visit

To the Editor,

Philip Wyllie (Iglesia de Cristo, Fairfield) is back in Australia. He has left a trail of Christians behind him in Argentina and Chile, praise God! Not bad going for the successful pastor who was turned down for overseas mission.

He has in twelve months learned the Spanish language (incredible considering he is dyslexic), he has established a Spanish-speaking church in Fairfield, and on a six-week language acquisition trip to South America, he shared his testimony and preached the gospel, winning lost souls to the Lord.

All this was accomplished by faith. He believed in his call to do mission, he believed in God's provision and lived by faith, and he believed that with hard work he could learn another language.

Philip is available for speaking engagements. Just phone (02) 724 0607 or write to Philip Wyllie, c/o 5/30 Hardy St, Fairfield 2165.

A Dios sea la gloria!

—Debby Wyllie
(Fairfield, NSW)

"Manhood"

To the Editor,

I am spending this week as guest speaker for the ACT Conference of Churches of Christ, and much enjoying the interaction with Christians of a different tradition from my Anglican one. My subject for the week is issues of power and authority in the New Testament and in our contemporary world, and in the light of that topic I am bold enough to write in response to the guest editorial by Don Herbert in the 20 June issue.

Four comments need to be made. First, the editorial is shot through with very doubtful sociological assertions and as-

sumptions. The picture Don paints of men is a caricature, and far from the reality. Of course, any generalisation will tend to do this, but in this context generalisations are very dangerous; they exclude too many people of integrity, and add to the confusion men suffer, rather than reducing it. The editorial mistakenly assumes that equality between men and women will not work, and offers no help to single-parent families. Its net effect would be to maintain imbalanced power relationships in families, which in the end does far more harm than good.

Second, the exclusion of women is terrifying. Perhaps as the item is about men that exclusion is not surprising; but it is the exclusion of women from Christian discipleship that is destructive: "Manhood and Christlikeness are synonymous." If that is the case, women are not made in the image of God and no woman can be a Christian; we are back to the middle ages when such things were openly said by (male) theologians. My wife Jill, also an Anglican minister, wept when she read that sentence in the editorial.

Third, the interpretation of Genesis 3 is bizarre and unbiblical. It assumes much that is not stated in the text, and follows the worst tradition of exegesis, making the text say what you would like it to say. This is no way to treat the Word of God.

Fourth, there is an assumption that male headship is a

biblical pattern. Don needs to know that the so-called "headship" passages in the New Testament are, in fact, attempts by the early church to respond in a Christian way to a social pattern that came from Greek society, not from God. In 1 Peter 2 and 3, Colossians 3 and especially in Ephesians 5:21-6:18, the writers are trying to help the readers find a way forward in an oppressive male-dominant society. Paul does it best in Ephesians, where he enjoins the powerful (husband, father, slave, master—in most households, the one person) to move in the direction of equality; the guiding principle for Paul is "submit (i.e. offer) yourselves to one another out of reverence for Christ (who came not to be served, but to serve, and to give himself)." (Ephesians 5:21)

Don says much that is valuable in the last part of the editorial about the need for integrity in men. It is a pity that his good intentions should be so misdirected. Wholeness for men is fervently to be desired, but the gospel is about wholeness for all people.

—Peter M. Mendham
(Academic Dean and

Senior Lecturer in Biblical Studies, St Mark's National Theological Centre, Canberra) [This letter is longer than the normal limit but has been allowed because of its content and addition to the discussion. Peter's wife Jill is one of the 11 Anglican women who are at present precluded from ordination by a court injunction—Editor]

Invitation

Albury-Wodonga Churches of Christ Back To Celebration and Reunion Easter 1993

RSVP November 1992

We would appreciate names, addresses and phone numbers of past members and associates, including those involved in Sunday school, youth groups, sporting groups etc.

Replies to

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Val Combridge (060) 26 4410

or Vince Hawkins (06) 25 4409

Happenings

According to reliable sources, Moses Xie (Xie Moshan), one of China's best-known house-church leaders, was arrested at the end of April. On 5 May authorities informed his relatives that he had been arrested for the "crime" of itinerant evangelism. Moses Xie, the author of several Christian books actively circulating among Chinese Christians worldwide, has had an active ministry of evangelism within China. His arrest is regarded by some Chinese Christians as an ominous sign, as a possible precursor to still greater repression against China's growing house-church community.

The Baptist World Alliance is appointing a Special Commission of Baptists against Racism, chaired by former US President Jimmy Carter, to study the causes of racism, the Biblical answer to it and what Baptists can do to confront and defeat it.

In the year 100 there were 360 non-Christians for every one believer. By the year 1000 this had dropped to 220, and continued to fall, until in 1990 there were just 7 non-Christians in this world for every Christian. Every day 70,000 new believers are reborn and every week 3,500 new churches are opened.

The Narwee Baptist Church in Sydney was severely damaged by fire in the early hours of 29 May. The fire broke out at 3 am and destroyed the main sanctuary area and roof. A recently opened Christian Education centre at the site of the main church does not appear to have been affected by the fire. The church's community radio station, 2NBC-FM, has also survived, having moved into the new building over a year ago. There have been 6 break-ins by vandals since Christmas, and it is possible that such people could be behind this latest catastrophe.

The 4 millionth Chinese Bible was printed on the Am-

ity Printing press in Nanjing, China, on 29 February. More than 1 million Bibles were produced last year.

The Bible has become such a sought-after book in Russia that as soon as the local production of Children's Bibles got underway in Moscow recently, teams of security guards with dogs were hired to patrol the warehouse where the books were stored.

As part of its plans to broadcast readings from the writings of the major world religions, the BBC has said it is keen to serialise the Koran in the 15-minute weekday morning slot currently occupied by readings from the Bible.

The next exhibition at the Jewish Museum of Australia (cnr Toorak Rd and Arnold St, South Yarra, Vic) is "Courage to Care" on rescuers of Jews during the Holocaust. This exhibition will run from 1 July to 24 September. The exhibition is a small tribute to the few, but significant people who risked their lives during the Holocaust to help save Jews. The exhibition is planned to coincide with the 80th birthday of Raoul Wallenberg, the Swede who rescued nearly 100,000 Hungarian Jews by providing them with false Swedish passports. Museum hours are Wednesday and Thursday 11 am-4 pm, Sunday 2 pm-5 pm.

Joni Eareckson Tada, known universally as Joni, has just completed an intensive week in Moscow as part of the year-long training and preparation for Vozrozhdeniye (Revival) '92, evangelist Billy Graham's crusade in the CIS, to be held 23-25 October in Moscow's 40,000-seat Olympic Stadium. Nearly 4,000 attended 2 premieres of the Russian-dubbed version of the film Joni.

David Barrett, a renowned missiologist, has calculated that there were

67,440 new Christian book titles published in 1992 and that there are 26,000 Christian periodicals published. There are 2,520 Christian radio/TV stations in the world and there are 5,409,000 Christian workers both domestic and foreign.

Linda Bell, a Presbyterian pastor from the province of Ontario has become the first woman to be elected to the position of moderator of the Presbyterian Church in Canada.

The possibility of autonomy for the Lutheran Church of New Zealand is the subject of exploratory talks being conducted by church officials. The 2,300-member church is a district of the Lutheran Church of Australia.

The Zadok Institute for Christianity and Society is moving its main office from Canberra to Melbourne in a bid to bring the centre closer to the institutions and people it aims to serve.

The US National Council of Churches, backing away from one of the most controversial issues facing churches this decade, voted on 19 May to scrap plans for a series of meetings with a largely homosexual denomination, the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches. The vote came after the executive learned that only 3 or 4 of its 32 Protestant and Orthodox member denominations were interested in the meetings.

The US Christian magazine *Christianity Today* has annual book awards. There were readers-choice awards chosen by ballot and critics-choice awards chosen by a panel of judges. The book of the year for 1991 was *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood: A Response to Evangelical Feminism* edited by John Piper and Wayne Grudem (Crossway). Two books tied as the runners-up: *Darwin on Trail* by Phillip Johnson (InterVarsity Press) and

Made in America: The Shape of Modern Evangelism by Michael S. Horton (Baker Book House).

To celebrate the 70th anniversary of the Nurses Christian Fellowship in NSW an ANCM-NCF reunion luncheon is being held at Concord West Uniting Church at 12.30 pm on 1 August. The special speaker will be Grace Wallace, who was for many years Director of NCF in the USA.

The two books to win the Christian Blind Mission International Audio Book of the Year were *Greyback* by Eleanor Watkins (Lion Publishing), narrated by Ralph Millett, and *The Politics of Love* by Michael Cassidy (Hodder & Stoughton) narrated by Lawrence Bruce. Christian Blind Mission International provides a wide range of good books and magazines to people with print disabilities, throughout Australia through a mail service, free of charge. Anyone who has difficulty reading an ordinary print copy of a book, whatever their age, may apply to become a member by calling the Librarian on (03) 817 4566 during office hours.

In the 20 June issue of *The Australian Christian* we reported that US Christian broadcaster Pat Robertson was offering to buy the international news agency United Press International. The offer to buy the bankrupt news service has now been withdrawn following extensive analysis of UPI.

Veterans Christian Outreach Australia is a non-profit para-church organisation that aims to produce 5,000 special Vietnam Veterans Memorial Bibles by 3 October for the National Vietnam Veterans Memorial dedication in Anzac Parade, Canberra. The cost of the project is over \$10,000. Inserts will be placed in the Bibles that will include testimonies from Vietnam veterans and the names of all Australian and New Zealanders who died in the

conflict. Some 557 military and civilian workers died during 1962-1975 in Vietnam. Once the Bible is produced it will be offered free to all families who lost a member during the war and also to veterans and their families. Details from Veterans Christian Outreach Australia, PO Box 231, Gosford 2250. Phone (043) 28 4325 (office).

In Hong Kong nearly 600 Protestant churches and individual Christians published a full-page advertisement in a Chinese daily newspaper marking the 3rd anniversary of the 4 June massacre in Beijing.

More than 500,000 evangelical Christians marched in the second-largest public demonstration in Brazil's history during the UN-sponsored Earth Summit in June in Rio de Janeiro. They marched to express their theme "Celebrating God with the Planet Earth". The believers from 39 denominations sang hymns and carried Bibles and signs with Christian slogans.

The North Korean government is working with a Korean-American Christian to build a teaching hospital in Pyongyang, the communist nation's capital. Government officials reportedly know and approve of the fact that Kim Chin Kyung is an outspoken Christian and that Western Christians will teach at the hospital in an effort to improve North Korean health care.

A group of 15 from several Camberwell, Vic, churches, including the Surrey Hills Church of Christ, have taken part in a 7-week community education program being offered by John Allison/Monkhouse Funeral Directors. The program is aimed to enhance the participant's knowledge of basic communication, the process of grief and ultimately to give them an overall awareness of self. Heather McLaren on (03) 889 0299 will discuss running future programs in other local areas.

one is lost! Therefore not to be born anew is fatal! If someone comes to the position of believing in the Lord Jesus Christ, so that they "may" be saved, and yet does not become saved, that is fatal.

Is that too strong a statement? Scripture is very clear about it! We are commanded to be "filled with the Spirit". We are told to repent and to be baptised, and all that means, for the forgiveness of sin and the receiving of the Holy Spirit (regeneration). We are told to "abide in me, and I in you" (John 15:4), and then told that if we do not "abide" we can do nothing but be cast forth as a branch and wither, and the branches are cast into the fire and burned. If that is to be applied to my life, surely that is fatal!

Yet Mark 16:16 says, "He who believes and is baptised will be saved." Does that cancel out all the directives mentioned, and so many others? No, that verse is a command for us to go into all the world and preach the gospel. It surely means to also make sure that gospel includes becoming a child of God. Whoever believes that gospel certainly will be saved!

Conclusion: What Is To Be Done Then?

The command of Christ is to "go and make disciples", not go and make members of the church. We know that a disciple is one who follows closely, learning and growing to maturity, and becoming someone who is given to the one we follow. We need to carry out this command and minister to all those who have not become disciples of Christ, for whatever reason. For want of a better guide to what a disciple really is, I choose the prayer Paul prays in Ephesians that seeks for that church to be "filled with all the fullness of God" (Ephesians 3:19). Surely another term that means to be in the position that the Father seeks for each one of us. Watchman Nee once called this "The Normal Christian Life" and surely we would seek this for every member of our churches.

So what must we do about it? Surely the only thing to do is for each of us, and especially those who are called to ministry, to so serve God in the Spirit, prayerfully, so as to strain every muscle and sinew, as it were, "until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ!" (Ephesians 4:13)

Peter Pitts is the minister of the Hampton Street, Vic, church.

Opinions and viewpoints in issues of the Pamphlet Club are the authors',
and do not necessarily reflect those of the publisher.

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12 Cornwall Avenue, Keysborough 3173
Supplement to *The Australian Christian*
4 July 1992

The For God so loved the world that
John he gave his only begotten Son that
3:16 whoever believes in him shall
Syndrome not perish but have eternal life.
Peter Pitts
Pamphlet Club • 378

It seems to me that there is a fatal malady very prevalent in the church. Something very serious, deceptive enough to be frightening, and a massive hindrance to the ministry of Christ. I am going to attempt to research and describe it, because I believe that the church should acknowledge its existence, and openly come to terms with it.

"I Have Arrived!"

For years I have been aware of a certain attitude that we as members of the Churches of Christ carry in our worship and service for the Lord. At first I thought it to be pride in our tradition and our New Testament restoration beliefs. And although that may be a part of it, there was more, it was something else. For I have found that other denominations also have a similar pride, some a lot worse than us. So there must be something else that is causing this thing that I am calling a "fatal malady"!

As a young Christian, for many years I was mystified by this attitude that so many people seemed to display. It seemed to say, "I have arrived. I am a member of the church and that's enough for me. I have been baptized and I don't need to do anything else."

What is it that makes so many members of the church just attending members—what some call "pew-sitters" or "nominal members"? The Bible seems to speak in terms of "carnal people" or "immature Christians" and perhaps these are all names for the same thing. Is it nominalism and, if so, what causes it?

I first became aware of it when taking an active part in the Christian Endeavour Movement. Our young people's CE was a part of the team from my church that held meetings on street corners of a Saturday night. Petrified of the ordeal each week, yet continually encouraged, I remember forcing myself to maintain this discipline as a duty. This made me notice only too easily that there were many adults who would not be a part of this work for the Lord. I could not understand their attitude, but it could have been that they were satisfied with the church as it was and didn't see the need for bringing others into it. Or was it that they were satisfied with their lives, and didn't see the need to be vulnerable on a street corner?

It was very noticeable when anything arose that was in any way, "evangelistic". Those who were smitten were always missing from groups to do with house visitation, or counselling, or to attend prayer meetings or even Bible studies.

What Can We Blame for This? Was It the Colleges?

I was always taught when I was young that the colleges were different, and one was always worse than the others. I have studied in one since and have seen the others as well and I am now better able to judge the truth of that belief. Perhaps there were certain differences in the past, but it does not seem to me that those differences would have caused the problem that concerns me.

Every college produces ministers who are dedicated and sincere in serving Christ and who certainly are not smitten with the malady. When there are so many college graduates moving out into the churches, there are bound to be different emphases in style, teaching and the way of leading, but none of these would teach people to be "nominal", other than through ignorance of the cause!

The graduates from each college have moved out into each of the states over the years and so it is not a "state problem". Certainly the Churches of Christ in the different states are different on a state basis, but that does not include the "syndrome" I am talking about. Every state has churches whose members are of a similar make-up. All have similar problems, and the members are there almost in the same proportions Australia wide.

A certain percentage of every church, say ten to fifteen, even twenty per cent are those who serve sacrificially, and the majority, to one degree or another, make up the members whom we regretfully have to refer to as "carnal", "nominal" or "immature"—members who need to be loved and ministered to, but people who cannot be relied upon, on the whole, to be in the front line for the Lord.

Therefore it seems that the malady is Australia wide! It is not caused by the different colleges and far be it from me to suggest that it is caused by any minister, whatever type, personality, emphasis or spirituality!

Billy Graham also tells us that there is the need to be "born again" to become a Child of God, yielding the life completely to make Christ "Lord".

Jeff Weston of the Hobart church, writing in *The Australian Christian*, 23 March 1991, calls spiritual maturity "growing up as a Christian" and I am sure we would agree with him. But he used one of the terms I have been using earlier on in this article and was perhaps rather more kind to those so designated. Jeff says, "By far the most dramatic change has been the way God has matured and developed my faith in him. The pivotal point for this change was when I decided to stop fooling around as a nominal Christian and invest my small amount of faith... My whole life was turned inside out and a living faith...developed!"

Some might argue that this "holiness" of life is only for those who are called to special commitment to God, yet I see that the Scriptures make it a general call to all who would follow Christ. Hebrews 12:14 seems to sum up what so much other Scripture says: "Strive for peace with all men, and for holiness without which no-one will see the Lord!"

The text seems to say that we are not to allow our sinful human lusts and desires to rule us like Esau did, or to be carnal. The writer urges the Hebrews to endure discipline and to allow nothing to grow up as a "root of bitterness" that will stop them from becoming "holy" and "seeing the Lord". Surely self-righteousness and pride in "having arrived" could be described as "a root of bitterness".

The attitude of Esau was also associated with immorality, idolatry and in seeking vengeance. In opposition to those qualities, the one who is filled with the Spirit of God, and has the desire to act as Christ would act, will love as God loves, and those qualities will not be allowed to grow up to cause that one to "fail to obtain the grace of God" (Hebrews 12:15).

Jesus taught us to "be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect". This is in Matthew 5:48 when he was telling us that we would love even our enemies, and pray for those who persecute us, "so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven", in other words, children of God, controlled by the Spirit of God, who indwells us, holy, or mature, or regenerated and subsequently acting in the same way as the nature of God would act.

Everyone is called by God in this way, not just those who are called to special ministry. God seeks that each of us "present our bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God", not conformed to this world, but "transformed" (Romans 12:1-2).

Should I Call It a "Fatal" Malady?

To this point in history millions of Christians have put their faith in Christ trusting in the "believing position" if I can call it that. What has happened to those who have gone from this world is surely up to God, and it is not for us to debate whether or not they actually were saved. But now we must consider those who are still with us as "carnal" or in the "believing in him" position. Christians, unable to take the meat, but still on the milk of the Word. Whatever name we may give them, they are in that state of faith today, and need to go on to maturity as is urged upon us by Ephesians 4:13, or to be "born of the Spirit" as we have been studying, or "filled with the Holy Spirit" (Ephesians. 5:18), another term indicating God's desire for us to become members of his family. Surely they must be implored to go on to fully yield themselves in full surrender.

But what if they don't? What if those who have this malady that I have called the John 3:16 Syndrome do not go on to be born again or any of these other conditions, which all amount to becoming a Child of God? Is it really a fatal condition? Will those people go to heaven or not?

I am sure that you will agree with me that we never do have the right to say one or the other. Only God has that right. Yet each of us does need to have the full assurance of salvation, and in our own integrity we can only go by the words of Scripture. So what do we have? Where is the line drawn? Surely we need to make absolutely sure of our condition and to comply with all that we see is a directive for us to gain our salvation.

When the Lord Jesus Christ says, "Truly, truly, I say unto you, unless one is born anew, he cannot see the Kingdom of God," we have a directive for our life that has a dire consequence if not carried out. Re-iterating this again he says, "Unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the Kingdom of God." Surely that is plain enough! It is be born anew, or

step! Either because they refuse to do so, or they do not know of the need. All who are evangelists or preachers need to give people the chance to take that further step. And pray for them to do so.

Believing "in" Christ Is the Key

As I study the Scriptures I find that there is a difference in the two phrases, believe "in" the Lord Jesus Christ, and believe "on" him. We have traditionally dealt with the believing "in" and have taken it to mean putting trust in, accepting Jesus as Saviour and Lord, and the gaining of salvation and eternal life. Yet I see that wherever the "in" is used there seems to be something else to go on to, to seal the gift of eternal life. And where the "on" is used, that something else is not necessary. Essentially the believing "in" Jesus has the meaning of putting oneself in the position where God can do a work upon us. We believe in or trust what Jesus said, enough to be able to put our faith in God to carry out his work of cleansing and regeneration.

The Philippian jailer of Acts 16:31 is told to believe "in" the Lord Jesus Christ and "you will be saved", but then Paul went on to teach him about his being willing to yield himself to Christ in baptism. There is a lesson here for us! Those at the "believing in" stage of John 3:16 need to be taught "the word of the Lord" before they are saved!

Some will argue against this, because Paul did say, "Believe in...and you will be saved." The only answer that I have to that is that the Apostle Paul had the intention of bringing that jailer all the way to salvation and spoke with that confidence that we know he had. He certainly carried out that intention, and the intention of Jesus, in bringing the jailer to believe in Jesus, to where he was in the position to go on, and then taking him on to baptism, which in those days was a very real yielding up of life.

The Doctrine of Holiness

We have mentioned the evangelists and the preachers of the past and present and queried as to whether or not they have been a part of the problem. I believe that in the areas mentioned they have! Yet in many other ways they too saw the problem. So many great preachers of the past and the present have repeated the words of Jesus in John 3:5, and called on congregations to take the further step of being holy as God said he is holy, with reference to 1 Peter 1:16. The call to holiness of life can of course come under several names, as the Bible speaks of "walking in the light", being "filled with the Spirit", making Christ "Lord", "regeneration", being "born from above", being "in Christ", and so on. Preachers of great note have always called for this commitment from people.

The Puritan William Gurnell preached, "Say not that you have royal blood in your veins, and are born of God, except you can prove your pedigree by daring to be holy!"

George Whitefield roared, "Dare to be singularly good. Why should we be dwarfs in holiness?"

Charles H. Spurgeon said, "Holiness is the visible side of salvation!"

J.C. Ryle wrote, "Where there is no sanctification there is no regeneration....where there is no holy living there is no new birth....where there is no holy life there is no Holy Ghost!" Perhaps there is no need to go any further than that, it seems to say it all.

General William Booth wrote, "I am a child of God. I can with confidence call God Father. I believe that the blessing of holiness is offered to me in the Bible, and urged upon my acceptance by the Holy Spirit."

F.B. Meyer said that "Christ is not meant just to be present or prominent, but pre-eminent in our lives."

Dr J. Sidlow Baxter, preaching at Belgrave Heights in December 1985, said, "The degree to which we are filled with the Holy Spirit is the degree of Christ seen in us. The Holy Spirit glorifies Christ." He emphasised that God calls us to live a life of true and practical holiness, and that "the call to sanctification rings out to all believers from the pages of the New Testament!" It is interesting to note that the operative word for our present discussion is that the call is to all "believers".

Can We Blame the Evangelists of Old?

This seems to be getting closer to those responsible! Can we lay the fault on the shoulders of the great pulpit warriors of the past? They certainly preached to thousands at a time, and were responsible for many who came to Christ all at once with little or no teaching on the Scriptures and who were baptised almost immediately on "coming to the front"! Those evangelists were the front-line soldiers of our Australian churches in the past and we owe them a tremendous debt, but were they so quick to gain converts as to cause the future "churchyness" of their converts to be our problem? Or were they ignorant of the deeper answer to the problem, so as to be in some way a part of the cause?

I went to many missions over the years! E.C. Hinrichsen was my favourite! I can still remember his peculiar voice, and his thunderous call: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved!" Certainly scriptural, but—dare I say it?—I think it is a part of the problem that I see today! It is too simplistic! People want it simple, but should it be at the cost of causing misunderstanding and a life-long problem? Perhaps even a life-and-death-long problem!

Several missions of which I have been a part have all had the same call. We were often challenged with the KISS maxim: "Keep It Simple Stupid!" In preaching and counselling, not to complicate the message and confuse the enquirer. Keep the Scriptures and the teaching to the simple Gospel message of belief in Christ, and trust in his death and resurrection. And surely there cannot be anything wrong with that—or is there? For this malady is in people who have come to Christ at missions just as much as it is in the people who come to him in any other way. Then again perhaps the evangelist left it to the local church after the mission to do the teaching necessary to disciple the converts, but they failed to do so.

I seem to be on some sort of a lead here, so I'll keep going. What else was used at missions in the preaching, and the counselling? What simple Scriptures and phrases?

John 3:16 was used a lot and commended as the promise of God to the repentant believer. The church has used it continually, pointing people to God's great love for us and that he gave Christ to prove it. It is a special verse that we have always referred to as having "the Gospel in a nutshell". The promise of God, of salvation through Christ because of his great love for the whole "world", which includes each of us. And it has been a favourite suggestion for people to put their own name in place of "the world" to make it more personalised.

We have done this too down through the years, in our preaching and teaching and maintaining the churches. So if we are to blame the evangelist and the preachers of old, then we must share the blame with them, because the problem is still with us, and even increasing. We of the church today are continuing to keep this "fatal syndrome" alive.

A little time ago I think I discovered what the "fatal malady" actually is, and, believe it or not, it is in John 3:16. It's not caused by that famous verse but in our misuse of it. Our continual ignorance of it, our uneducated use of the text in the wrong way and our preconceived wrong understanding of it and other Scriptures that contain similar meanings. It seems to have come from the past, and we have just kept it going, without giving it enough thought, study, prayer or research.

The Assurance of Salvation

This has always been one of the great doctrines of our teaching. Those who have come to Christ should know for sure that they are heaven bound. The "assurance of salvation" is taught to everyone who is ever counselled, surely! John 3:18 can even help us here. We should know for sure because "He that believes in him is not condemned" and "He that believes not is condemned already!" We should not be in any doubt about it. We should never just "hope" we have eternal life with the Lord. For we know whether or not we sincerely believe and trust in Christ. And we teach 1 John 5:11 and 12 as well, so that believers will know. Yet, unfortunately, the assurance of salvation is decidedly lacking in the one whom we are talking about here as "carnal", "immature", "nominal" or with the fatal malady.

Is it because of our human nature perhaps? That could be something else to blame. Our sinful human natures are made up of many things to blame:

The laziness to only go as far as we need to go to gain salvation. It seems we only have to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. That is easy.

The fear of yielding our all in discipleship, in case God calls us to some unacceptable life or work.

The human willingness to give in to the temptation to take it easy and not have to inconvenience ourselves.

The selfishness to be careful that no-one gets the opportunity to label us as "pious" or "holier than thou" in our Christian life.

Or the love of self to be free to indulge in secret sin, or to just please ourselves how we serve God.

All of this is of course a part of our sinful human nature, or "of the flesh" as the Apostle Paul calls it, and it is at war with the Spirit. If this part of our make-up rules us, then it is impossible for us to become a child of God or regenerated. Consequently the "John 3:16 syndrome" has itself firmly embedded in our life, and all those things mentioned previously apply to us.

God has always been very aware of our unregenerate nature, and the struggle that we have to die to self. One illustration of this is in the way Jesus spoke about "drawing" us to himself. He tells Nicodemus in John 3 some things about being "lifted up" and he mentions being lifted up at other times too, adding that he "will draw all" to himself (John 12:32). Then in John 6:44 he says, "No-one can come to me unless the Father...draws him!"

The interesting thing about this being "drawn" is that the word infers some sort of resistance. In our sinful human nature, we resist being drawn to Christ. The word is used in John 18:10 when it says Peter had a sword and drew it and cut off the ear of the High Priest's slave. There is resistance to the sword coming out of its scabbard. In John 21:6 and 11 the word is used for drawing in a heavily laden net full of fish. It resists coming! And in Acts 16:19, when Paul and Silas were taken before the magistrate in Philippi, it says they were dragged. It is the same basic word.

There is the idea of resistance in the word. God can, and does, draw people to Christ, but our free-will resistance can defeat the pull of God. We can give in to our sinful human nature and refuse to be drawn, especially if we are self-righteous about having done all we have to do to be "saved".

Therefore because of all of this we cannot have the assurance of salvation because the Spirit of God does not witness with our spirit about it. Our human nature does produce self-righteousness though, and we think we have arrived. The reason is because we have "believed on the Lord Jesus Christ" and we have followed that with baptism after further teaching on Acts 2:38 where we are told to "repent and be baptised". All of this has been followed by being "welcomed into the fellowship of the church" and if good teaching does not occur at this point it seems that this is where we start to build up that sense of having arrived.

The Bible calls us to have a desire to lead a life that is worthy of being a member of the Kingdom of God. This incorporates the continual growth in our faith, through repentance, confession, faith, baptism, good works, Holy Spirit filling, Lordship of Christ and so on. Yet in contrast to this we generally have emphasised repentance and baptism, and once that has been complied with, a sense of well-being seems to be encouraged, with the result that we develop a sense of having become a member of a "club fellowship".

Consequently our churches seem to be more geared to maintenance than to making disciples and leading members into a life of holiness. This also, in turn, inevitably builds up the sense of being a member of a "club," a "club" of people who unfortunately do not have the assurance of salvation.

Faith in Christ "Lifted Up"

It seems that Jesus gave Nicodemus the teaching as recorded in John 3 so that he would come to the position where he would be able to claim the assurance needed to be saved. But as usual the Lord started teaching him at the place of his understanding. He went right back to Numbers 21 and reminded him of the poisonous vipers sent to punish the Israelites for their murmuring and complaining in the wilderness. We too need to see what he meant by that.

God told Moses to make a brass or bronze serpent and to lift it up on a pole, then to tell the people that if they looked up at that bronze serpent and trusted God they would be healed

of the poison given by the snakes. Now we all realise that the serpent did not heal the people, it was only putting them in the position where they could be healed by God. God healed them. The healing power of the bronze serpent was that it led the people to trust God, to put their faith in him to heal them.

Then when talking to Nicodemus, Jesus told him that he, Jesus the Son of Man, would also be lifted up like that bronze serpent. And in the same way, as people looked to him, the Son of Man lifted up, it would be like they were trusting God. They would be putting their faith in God, and they would be putting themselves in the position where God could heal them too!

Whatever you may think the "raising up" of Jesus actually is, whether his crucifixion, or his ascension, does not matter at this stage. I am not concerned with that in the matter that we are addressing. The "raising up" is to draw people to come to him, to bring them to the point of being in the position where God can heal their sin.

At this point we need to see how they have come to that position. It is tied up with the belief mentioned. What did Jesus say? "Whoever believes in him", his only begotten Son. And we should know that this word "believes in" really means to so trust Jesus that we believe what he says. We believe that Jesus is the Son of God because he said he was! We believe Jesus really did know God, because he said he did! We believe he could tell us the truth about God, because he said he could! And we believe that "God so loved the world" because Jesus said he did! So when we see Jesus lifted up, like the serpent was, it draws us to put our faith in, and to trust God to heal us, because we "believe in" Jesus and what he said.

Let me repeat that. We believe in Jesus Christ, and because of that belief, we trust God to heal us. We are now in the position, as the Israelites were, where God could heal them. Where God can give us eternal life. To all intents and purposes, we should be healed, we should have eternal life. And that is what the actual text says: "...should not perish but inherit eternal life."

The Scripture says we should have it, or to be more accurate, we may have eternal life. We are in the position to have it. We trust in God, we believe in Christ, so we can now be healed of sin, we should not perish, and we may inherit eternal life. But it definitely does not say we shall!

Yet that is what we say the verse says! We use the verse as a positive affirmation that eternal life is absolutely sure as long as we believe in Christ. It does not say that! It says we are in the position at that stage to be healed of sin and receive eternal life. There is still a lot of real commitment to come to at that stage, before eternal life is guaranteed.

Yet traditionally we have taught that it is guaranteed at that stage. Millions of people have gone to their grave in the believing stage, or if I can put it this way, suffering from the "John Three Sixteen Syndrome!" Millions of churchgoers today are in the grip of this malady that really means that they "may not" be healed of their sin and born again! They are trusting in the John 3:16 position of "believing in" Christ! To all intents and purposes they should be, and may be Children of God, but they just may not be. It is very possible that they are not.

Is it any wonder then that they "hope" they are saved? That they lack the very assurance of salvation that God wants us to have. That they are lukewarm, and all those other names we put on people who are immature in faith. They are still having that inner battle of spirit against the flesh. How then can they be a part of the vital, ministering, sacrificing, disciples of God? They desperately need to be shown how to come to the position where they "receive" Christ, where they "yield" completely to him as Lord, and are "born again from above" as Jesus told Nicodemus. Remember that the whole context of the passage in these verses in John 3 was to show Nicodemus the need to be "born of the spirit".

To believe in the Son of Man lifted up, was how to come to the position where it is possible for God to forgive sin, and grant eternal life. But the Apostle John had already taught us in chapter 1 that there is a need to "receive" as well as "believe" in Christ. It was then we were able to be made Children of God. Not at the stage of John 3:16 and believing. For many, many believe and are doomed. We know the devil and all his angels believe. "Believing in" means to be open to the Spirit of God to do his work. For that work to take place we need to consciously invite Christ to take over. So many do not go on to take that all important further

People

Overseas Leader for Spring Conference

T. Garrett Benjamin

A distinguished African-American, Dr T. Garrett Benjamin, will be the special guest and presenter for the Spring Conference to be held at Wollongong, NSW, 17-19 October, under the joint sponsorship of the Wollongong church and the Australian Board of Church Development and Education.

Dr Benjamin is the senior minister of the Light of the World Christian Church, Indianapolis, a 3,000-member congregation. He has extensive experience in television and is a host producer of the longest-running public affairs program in Indianapolis. Dr Benjamin is the founder and president of an organisation that is responsible for a program with national television coverage and beamed by satellite to the US Armed Forces Network to over 70 overseas countries, military bases and naval ships. The Light of the World Christian Church was featured on a Christmas special on the American ABC network in recent years. Dr Benjamin is an outstanding communicator, preacher and evangelist. Dr Keith Farmer attended the church in 1986 and 1989 and describes Dr Benjamin as a person of great personal dynamic and vitality. While attending the 1989 Disciples Assembly he noted Dr Benjamin's significant

contribution to the Assembly, and his deep commitment to outreach and evangelism.

Dr Benjamin has links with the National Evangelistic Association and has served on most of the Disciples National Committees. He is deeply involved in community service in Indianapolis and a number of major race relations groups. He was recently inducted into the Board of Distinguished Preachers whose membership includes Billy Graham and Robert Schuller and has received many awards for community leadership and service to tertiary education and inter-church affairs.

He will be the preacher at the Spring Conference public rallies, lead seminars for ministers and address sessions for church leaders. Churches are invited to plan for the attendance of their church leaders and ministers. Reservations for accommodation at the Stanwell Tops Centre should be made through the Wollongong church by contacting Pertain meccano at the church on (042) 26 5022. At the same time as the Spring Conference an international convention of firemen will be held so accommodation facilities will be stretched to the limits. Early applications for accommodation are requested.



• T. Garrett Benjamin

Four Students

Team operating at Berkeley Vale



• Gary Hamilton (minister), Russell Morrison, Joanna Reid and Tim Clark

The Berkeley Vale, NSW, church has been fortunate in acquiring the assistance of four students studying full-time at Carlingford College to assist in ministry.

They join the church each Sunday and have become a very real part of the church family.

In the absence of the minister on holidays in Queensland they

organised the evening services.

The students are Craig Purkiss, Russell Morrison, Joanna Reid and Tim Clark. Craig is lucky enough to live close to the college. Russell is married to Cathy and they have three children. Joanna hails from Avalon and Tim comes from south of the border, originally from Ballarat, Vic.

Mad Dog and Wydeman at Epping

Not your usual preachers

Recently Epping, NSW, had two men preach who are not your usual orthodox preachers.

On Easter Sunday night, Kevin "Mad Dog" Mudford preached a powerful message, with 12 coming forward to deepen their life with Christ.

Mad Dog was considered a hopeless case. He went through 30 institutions and prisons. He was literally a mad dog. Yet today, through the grace of God, Kevin is a changed person. He still looks the same—bald, bushy beard, leathers, a studded collar with a padlock on it—but God uses this man! On 31 May Epping hosted a

pot luck dinner with Jervis Wydeman as the guest speaker. Jervis gave his testimony and challenged all of us with his experiences from crime to Christ. Jervis almost destroyed his life through alcohol and crime until he gave his life to Christ. With the help of his wife, Jervis runs the Palmer Peace House, a project of Northside Community Church, where people who have been abused or are depressed can find refuge. They also receive assistance from the NSW Community Care Department.

How wonderful it was to witness the unloved being used as powerful preachers!

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The Family of God

Yokohama contact



• Kazuyo and Mayo Toyoshima

Do you know that there is a Church of Christ in Yokohama, Japan?

We came upon it a few years ago, when our ship pulled into Yokohama. It was not open, so

we took a couple of photos of the building and notice board.

This year as we travelled on the S.S. *Canberra*, we met a Japanese couple who attended our regular Bible study group on

board. One day while having afternoon tea with them I asked what city they came from. "Yokohama," was the reply. I said: "There's one of our churches in Yokohama". "Which one?" they asked. I replied: "The Church of Christ, which is not far from the harbour."

They became so excited, "That's our church," they both chorused. "We were both baptised and married there," they said, "and together with all our family and grandchildren we still attend there. We are all Christians."

They told us how in recent years the church had amalgamated with the Presbyterians but that they still practiced weekly communion and believers baptism.

We became good friends for the remainder of their journey, from Sydney to Japan. They plan to visit us one day and hopefully attend Hurstville, NSW, church with us.

"I'm glad that I'm a part of the family of God."

—Nancy Souness

[The church was started by our American churches many years ago.]

Mission Today

SA ministers hear new concepts

The 1992 annual Magarey Lectures for South Australian Churches of Christ ministers changed location to the Latvian campsite "Dzintari", near Normanville, 80 kilometres south of Adelaide. Guest lecturer was Ross Langmead, a member of the ministry team of Westgate Baptist Church (near Melbourne). He led six stimulating, entertaining and challenging sessions on "Mission Today". Through singing, small groups and thoughtful presentations Ross invited the participants to consider new understandings of mission and community. His variety, flexible teaching and clear thinking enabled the group to plan creatively for ministry.

Almost 60 attended, including many spouses and children. The campsite contained family units and special facilities ideally suited for a ministry retreat. Most of our rural ministers attended.

The ministers appointed John Gilmore, currently ministering at the Magill church, to be the Ministers' Association President for the coming year. —Rob Combridge

Aborigines Department Farewells

New Vic-Tas committee

It was with a great deal of regret that the Vic-Tas Aborigines Mission Department accepted the resignations of two long-serving and much-valued members in Bruce Alcorn and Lance Fisher.

Bruce, who has had ministries in Queensland, Victoria and throughout metropolitan Melbourne, and was President of the Vic-Tas Conference in 1982-83, had been an elected

member of the department for eight years. Alan Carr presented Bruce with a book in recognition of his long involvement. Lance Fisher is a well-known name in Churches of Christ. He is an elder of the Camberwell church and has had 30 years involvement as a missionary to the Aboriginal people behind him. Avon Moyle, who was in Melbourne on deputation work, presented Lance with a book.

Just a few days later, after attending his last Northern Outreach Committee meeting at Mooroopna with department secretary Harold Taylor, Lance suffered a heart attack and was admitted to Shepparton Hospital. He is now recovering at home.

New Office Bearers

The Aborigines Mission De-

partment welcomed new members to its first meeting since conference and elected new office-bearers.

New members are Graham Woodward and Stan Bannon from Morwell and Ruth Rackerman of Montrose.

Once again former chairman, Alan Carr, and Cec Grant of Albury North, are Vic-Tas members of the Federal Aborigines Board.

The new chairman is Harold Taylor, Malcolm Anderson is secretary/treasurer and Keith MacGregor is vice-chairman and project officer. Elected member Jean Hillier is CWF representative and David Hillier represents the men's fellowship. Betty Bantow, second representative for the CWF, has been co-opted again as publicity officer.

—Betty Bantow

BUCKINGHAM MEMORIAL CENTRE

Self-catering camp site

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Lay Preaching Course

Eight graduate on Sunshine Coast

On 19 May the Caloundra, Qld, church celebrated as eight men graduated from their Lay Preaching course. Nearly 50 members joined with them in a formal dinner (complete with bow ties). The night was one of humour, music, poetry and singing, put together and catered for by the CWF.

The course had commenced on 4 February with an ordained minister Kevin Jenner was challenged to provide lectures, guidance, training and spiritual oversight. Through the 13 weeks the eight laboured and wrestled with the lectures, discussions, sermons, comment, appraisal and homework. There was a tremendous amount of input by Kevin and his pupils, elder Col Deacon (current Queensland Conference President), elder George Haigh, chairman Russell Cobine, treasurer Ray Gallas, Neville Green, Ern Smith, Darryl Lindemann and secretary Peter Marcollo.

Some of the subject matter covered was taken from Gordon Stirling's book *How to Preach* and other material from Kevin's own experiences and college notes.

Topical and expository sermons were examined, dis-

sected, bisected and reconstructed and the graduates looked into sermon preparation, illustration, introduction, conclusion, style and principles.

Caloundra first conceived the idea when it foresaw a 12-month period without a professional in the pulpit, and approached Kevin who reluctantly agreed to conduct the course. The amount of work he put in through lecture preparation, notes, handouts, OHP sheets and evaluation forms was tremendous. This was an added strain on Kevin who, in addition to his screen printing business and family life is involved with the Blue Nurses as their treasurer and with Rotary. He also arranges the music for Sundays, plays the organ and prints the church newsletter. Not bad for a dedicated man of 35 years of preaching that included 17 years of pulpit ministry.

Kevin has defined this course as being "Level One" and certificates were presented to the graduates on the night. "Level Two" may centre on the theological content of sermons, with a further stage covering visual presentations, choreography and animation.

English-Polish Service

Churches combine

For over a decade the Polish (Slavic) Church have worshipped in the hall of the Oakleigh, Vic, church.

The church was begun at the La Trobe Terrace, Geelong, Vic, church by the late John Wladysiuk, a Churches of Christ pastor in Poland before World War II.

On Pentecost Sunday (7 June) a combined service was held with the Oakleigh church. Congregational hymns were sung in both English and Polish si-

multaneously. Pastor Serg Jakemiuk read the Gospel in Polish. Ben Wladysiuk, son of the late John Wladysiuk, sang a solo in English and Jack Edwards, Oakleigh's minister, preached.

Following the service a pot luck dinner was shared in the hall and concluded with community hymn singing.

Both congregations are looking forward to further combined services.

—Jack Edwards

The course received the high level of attendance of 82.7% over the 13 weeks and was enjoyed by all participants.

Caloundra now has, in addition to its student minister, Keith MacDonald, and two former ministers Kevin Jenner and Jeff Welden, eight lay preachers capable of presenting an enjoyable, worthwhile and contemporary sermon bringing further glory to our Lord.

While Caloundra has had its ups and downs during its 18 years it has a nucleus of hardworking dedicated people. With careful planning for the future the church looks to have a strong and meaningful exist-

ence and with its Kids Club (average attendance 90) and Junior Youth (75), nearly all of whom come from outside the church, the growth will be good.

At present there are two services being run, 9 am and 6.30 pm with the "graduates" being principally occupied with the evening service.

There is a feeling of purpose, direction, love and fellowship existing at this Sunshine Coast church and this was really borne out when the class received their plaudits, not only for graduating but also for their dedication to the Lord's work.

—Peter Marcollo

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Classifieds

BIRTHS

ANDREWS (STEELE) After months of wondering and watching and waiting, Katelyn Louise arrived safely on 14.6.92. First daughter to Mark and Carolyn of Adelaide. What a joy it is to welcome a precious gift from God.

Diamond Wedding

Jenner, Alf and Jane

"Golden Age"
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Southport, Qld

Married 2.7.32 in the
Rosewood Chapel

Alf and Jane have faithfully served Christ and his church at Boonah (where Alf was a deacon and secretary for many years), Ipswich and now at "Golden Age" Retirement Village.

We love you for your devotion to each other and your abiding influence on our lives.

Thanks be to God.
Merle and family

BYRNE (BROWN) Alan and Patsy give thanks to God for prayer answered with the safe arrival of Samuel Alan on 20 June at Box Hill Hospital. 7lb 11½oz. Brother for Simon, Nathan and Sarah (in heaven). Mother and son both well. **KRUGER (DAY)** Jonathan and Merrilyn thank God for their precious gift and daughter "Elycia" Joan. Sister for Tyson. Born 30 May 1992 at the Burnside Hospital, SA. We count our blessings. Psalm 107:1.

ENGAGEMENTS

GEYER—COLEMAN Robyn and Ken of Ringwood, together with Netta of Geelong, are happy to announce the engagement of Adele and Graeme.

HEAD—THURLOW Robert and June Head, together with Robert and Ruth Thurlow, are very happy to announce the engagement of Nola and Michael at Launceston on 18 June 1982. May God bless you both.

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The **Canley Heights** church will no longer be meeting in the chapel—communion and worship services will take place in the rear hall, same property (cnr Cumberland Hwy and Canley Vale Rd).

Times

English church
4.30–5.45 pm (Sunday school during service)
Slavic church
6.30–7.30 pm

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I have heard nothing but tremendous reports of the ministry of Willow Creek Community Church, and especially its leadership conferences... Billy Graham

*Everyone, who has seen their work and heard Bill, tells of their complete dedication to the work of leading people to Christ and how they have geared their church life to that end. ...John Chapman
Director, Anglican Department of Evangelism, Sydney*

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OR

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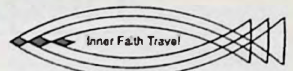
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As a youth minister, I am very much aware that people grow in their faith when put in situations where they are constantly sharing their faith and being stretched. In the past year some young people in WA have been involved in some interesting evangelism experiences. The following is a description of some recent events.

• For two weeks in July a group of 40 young people travelled north to Fitzroy Crossing, Halls Creek and One Arm Point to be involved in outreach to the Aboriginal people. We ran basketball tournaments where each of the young people were assigned to teams to coach, make friends and share Christ with the players. This was very popular and the Gospel was shared clearly to many people. We were also involved in children and youth ministry (games, singing, puppets, drama, stories etc.). A lot of seeds were sown, some fruit was seen, and the Christians there have a good group of young people to continue working with. Seeing the growth and changes in the young people from Perth was also very exciting and satisfying.

• For two weeks in August, 18 high schools were turned upside down by Youth For Christ School Tour '91. This consisted of a basketball exhibition game between teams made up of Christian young people plus several students and staff (who were brave enough) from each particular school. At half time, Tom Randall, a sports missionary working in the Philippines, entertained everyone with juggling and other basketball tricks and antics together with unicycle riding. The finale was a student precariously perched on Tom's shoulders as he was riding furiously along on his unicycle. Tom then told the enthralled spectators how

Youth Ministry

Youth Evangelism

David Stanford

Christ had changed his life. Everyone was then given an invite to a basketball extravaganza on the Saturday night at a nearby stadium. At these (we did three) the Gospel was clearly explained publicly, and through each of the players who had been assigned to a small team of students. About 16 responded to Christ and many others for the first time heard

the Gospel clearly. At the high schools after the game, each of the players would share Christ with the students and staff. Over 5,000 were given an opportunity to respond to Christ through this ministry and Christian teachers and chaplains were excited and left with interested contacts to follow up. What God did in the lives of the Christian players was fantas-

Motivation

More often than not people are more interested with what they can get, rather than what they already have or what they can do for others. Let's face it, it's almost part of human nature. Modern society is based on the greed principle, and "what's mine is mine, and what's yours is mine too if I can get my hands on it." That's how things work. Nothing is for real. The love and care supposedly shown by many television networks is not for the morality side, but for the money side—ratings. Businesses that bring out new wonder inventions designed to save lives aren't originally designed to save lives but to make money out of saving lives. It's all around us. No one is denying that despite the motivation, television networks and businesses do help people; and so would say that it doesn't matter what the motivation is, as long as the right

thing is done. Fair enough. I just wish they'd stop telling everyone they're doing it out of a "community love and responsibility".

This is also seen on a personal level. People want what is best for them, and try to make it look good to others. This sort of thing leads to "image". People want an image to be seen by, so they buy the best clothes and the best cars and the best houses. If they can afford the best they'll try to buy it. A mixture of greed and desire, through which they try to impress and make an impact. All under the banner of "following the fashions" or "buying Australian cars" or perhaps no banner at all. They want to show off, they want to be the best.

If hidden under excuse, or simply done for obvious reasons with no attempt at hiding, it still boils down to the same thing. The wrong things motivate us. —Neil Marsden

tic. For some this was the first time they had actually shared Christ with anyone and they got excited. They realised that Australian teenagers are open to the Gospel and God can use them if they are available. Paul says, "I have become all things to all men, that I may by all means save some." Basketball was the common ground we used to gain a chance to share the Lord with school students.

• In October a group of 10 basketballers joined Tom Randall to minister in the Philippines. We played 21 games, against local selection teams, in 13 days in front of 35,000. Tom did his half-time show, we sang choruses, shared testimonies, gave a short message and invited the people to sign up for a free Bible correspondence course. After the game each player would head off to different areas of the crowd collecting the Bible course slips, hand out the first part of the course and share Christ with the people. Over 5,500 signed up for the Bible course and 50 committed their lives to Christ. The local pastors were excited as they had many people to follow up, and several churches were planted. To God be the Glory for the ministry he did in and through each player. He protected, provided for, led, refreshed, strengthened, unified and excited us in conditions that were rather tough and at times dangerous. For each player this was a life-changing experience. What also thrills me is that each player on returning home has shared excitedly what God did and this has affected many others for Christ. When people are available for God to use he will use them. God is able to do exceeding abundantly beyond all that we ask or think—to him be the glory.

• David Stanford is the associate minister at the South Perth, WA, church.

Naked Man in a Ditch

In the story of the Good Samaritan there is one character in the narrative we often overlook—the naked man, slumped in a roadside ditch. The man in the ditch is the helpless recipient of a Samaritan's compassion. As a Jew he may not like receiving compassion from a Samaritan, but in his circumstances he has no choice. To a surprised Jew lying in a roadside ditch, compassion comes not from the priest or Levite, which is expected, but from the Samaritan, which is unexpected. Theologian Robert Funk drew attention to "the man in the ditch" as a little recognised key character in the parable, especially for Jewish listeners. As subversive as the parable is in its incongruous combination of Samaritan and compassion, the narrative also places the listeners in the precarious position of having to identify with their fellow Jew—the naked man in the ditch.

The parable with its particular participants, plot and audience suggests that the listener also "climb into the ditch" with their compatriot, a helpless naked Jew, and receive compassion from a Samaritan, a despised foreigner, traditional enemy and religious heretic. The man in the ditch has no choice as to who expresses compassion. He is utterly dependent on grace. Likewise, in the Kingdom of God, compassion comes from the source that one does not and cannot logically expect it. Grace is always a surprise. It wouldn't be grace if it were not.

In telling the parable, the participation of the listeners is as crucial to its performative meaning (how it is "heard"), as the details of the narrative. The parable gestures beyond the narrative interplay of participants and plot to refract unexpected dimensions of grace through the story, challenging the listener's perception of reality, soliciting a response to a new reality: the compassionate presence of the Kingdom. This

is a reality we are not only challenged to live out, but also to receive. For a Jew to receive compassion from a Samaritan requires a major shift in perspective that negates the old Jew-Samaritan hostility, and therefore social, racial, and theological dichotomies based on suspicion, racism and bigotry.

We, like the Jew slumped in a roadside ditch, have no choice from whom God's compassion comes to us. To the person who is hostile to women in ministry, the most sensitive pastoral care may come in a time of crisis from an elder or minister who is a woman. To the person who is harshly critical and judgmental of those who have failed in marriage, the most profound empathy may come at a time of personal failure from a divorcee. To the person whose life is filled with a fearful xenophobia, the most discerning and enduring friendship may come from an Aboriginal or Asian. To a bigoted Protestant fundamentalist, spiritual solace may come from an ecumenical Catholic priest.

We, like the Jew slumped in a roadside ditch, have no choice, if we are genuinely open to the Kingdom, from whom God's compassion comes to us. To the naked Jew, the victim in the ditch, compassion came unexpectedly from a Samaritan—a despised foreigner, traditional enemy and religious heretic. In the Kingdom, compassion comes from the source one does not and cannot logically expect. To be open to the Kingdom is to receive it when it comes, from whoever it comes from. So who will allow themselves to be helped by a "Samaritan". Or should I say who will allow themselves to be helped by a woman, or a divorcee, or an Aboriginal, or a Catholic? I invite you into a "roadside ditch", alongside a naked helpless Jew, to receive God's grace and compassion from the "Samaritan" in your life.

—Stephen Curkpatrick

A New Life

Volunteers at Mulgrave

"I have very much enjoyed getting to know many of the students. My wife and I have invited a few of them to a meal and that has been great. Altogether I have gained a lot from my involvement here. And I get enjoyment out of the tasks I do. I can still make a contribution through my skills."

This was the immediate answer that Jack gave when I asked him recently what he thought about his work as a volunteer at CCTC, Mulgrave, Vic. When I have asked other volunteers, they have said, in a variety of ways, that they have found a new life in their retirement because they now help in a caring and alive environment where people are clearly committed to God.

CCTC needs more than the present 20 volunteers. We have need for two or three who have business management or accountancy skills and who would be willing to give one or two days a week to the college.

There is need also for a few who would help with preparing rooms and looking after the community and business groups who hire the facilities (that is, help us produce income).

There are teams that help with the gardens and grounds, with routine maintenance of the buildings and in the library. If you have the willingness, we can probably find a task that you will enjoy. Most of the tasks enable the volunteer to choose the time they want to work and we expect that they will want to disappear for short or long holidays!

If you live in Melbourne, especially in the eastern and southern suburbs and are looking for a way to assist the ministry of God in a way that brings you "life" in your present or impending retirement, give CCTC a call on (03) 790 1000. You'll be glad you did.

—Lyn McCredden
(Deputy Chairman)

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Comment

Prophecy Being Fulfilled

Gladys Butler

Prophecy being fulfilled is not generally easy to recognise; otherwise the people responsible for the crucifixion of Jesus would not have gone ahead with their plan to rid themselves of his inconvenient first appearance in Israel. Even so it is still probably very difficult for both the Jewish people and the Gentile nations to understand the times they and ourselves are now confronted with.

Rapid changes are taking place today, particularly in Europe and in the Middle East. The sign of the Jews coming back to their homeland from the countries into which they have been dispersed since the first coming of Jesus until this century may not be noted as having any bearing on the return of the Messiah of the Jews. Not unless we are wide awake (lamps all trimmed and burning brightly with the fire of the Holy Spirit).

Yet it could be the very fulfilment of the time spoken of by Jesus in the prophecy of Matthew 23:29!

My husband and I were privileged to stay with a young couple in Jerusalem for one month in 1985.

Our purpose for the visit was to attend the annual observance of the **Festival of Shelters or Feast of Tabernacles** as it is more generally known.

While the Jews have been faithfully carrying out the observance of this festival since its inauguration back in Moses' day (Leviticus 23:33-44), now we have Christians in Jerusalem showing the face of love towards God's elect nation by celebrating this festival in Jerusalem with them, but incorporating Jesus into their worship.

Naturally there is division; the observances are not combined, excepting for those Jews

who have been converted. The **International Christian Embassy Jerusalem**, opened at the time of the Festival of Tabernacles in 1980, continues in Jerusalem. Delegates and visitors attending the Jewish festivals each year number around 4-6,000.

All have the same yearning to take part in the restoration of Israel. This, they believe, is part of God's plan to "reconcile both Jews and Gentiles in one body in Christ".

The miracle of this embassy is that it is so well received by the Jewish nation, which is still unconvinced that our Lord Jesus is their rejected but long-looked-for Messiah.

Each year the Mayor of Jerusalem, **Teddy Kollek**, welcomes the Christians, and the people in the city show a ready hand of friendship.

The welcome from both the Mayor and **Prime Minister, Shimon Peres**, we must admit came very near to saying: "God bless him who comes in the name of the Lord."

There was a tremendous show of friendship and welcome from the people at the close of the feast when we all walked from the Mount of Olives back into the city.

Many nations were represented, marching under their own national flag.

Old wounds are slowly healing; continue to pray for this old/new nation, now adamantly clinging to their ancient "Promised Land".

"Comfort my people," says our God, "Comfort them! Encourage the people of Jerusalem." (Isaiah 40:1) This is the text that the ICEJ believe that God gave to **Johann Luckoff** as the foundation for its work.

• Gladys Butler is a member of the **Bruce Rock, WA, church**.

Mission Minded

A Word from Home

Multiple partnership and interdependence

We arrived in Vanuatu ready to be God's warriors, confident that we were adequately equipped to do the task, confident that we could handle the changes that we were going to face.

Less than 24 hours after arriving we began to feel a lot less confident as it dawned that the separation from family and friends was for three years, that the culture was more different than we thought and that we were cut off from most of our often-used resources. But we were not as cut off as we thought we were.

The letters arrived and were eagerly read—anything for news from "home". Many wrote because they were asked to by their church—they hadn't written to a missionary before and didn't think that we would be interested in the activities of their daily living.

For nine years many people wrote to us faithfully and we felt like we were almost part of their family. How many times a letter arrived encouraging us when the going was hard. How often we felt humble as parcels arrived for adults and children showing that someone whom we hadn't met cared for us and was sharing in our ministry. Our first Christmas was made a very blessed time by the many, many greetings that came. Sharing through letter writing and remembering children's birthdays is a blessing and encouragement to those that receive. However, replying in person to all of those letters is mostly impossible and so the missionary has to resort to the newsletter approach with handwritten comments.

So many wrote to say they were praying for us. We know that there were possibly over

200 praying for us daily. What an important aspect of the ministry that was. Each of these people became partners in the ministry. On a few occasions there was personal danger and we heard that a person was praying specifically at that time.

So much did we value this specific prayer that since returning to Australia I have put forward the suggestion that members of local churches should be praying for each other in this way.

Churches, youth groups and Sunday school classes wrote and shared in various ways. Mostly this was positive but there were occasions when these groups, through ignorance, made unreasonable requests. Specific photographs were not always available and some did not understand that the missionary had to use up a whole film for one or two photos of somebody that may not even be on the same island.

Missionaries value your written contact and especially value the prayer backing that supports them. Each of us can become partners in this way. So, the partnership continues as missionaries support local churches and, in turn, people in Australia support the missionaries.

Together, with God at the centre of the partnership, great things have and will be done.

—Roger W. Bawden



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A Church ABC

Chadstone, Vic, is a south-eastern suburb of Melbourne, in the City of Waverley. The Chadstone Church of Christ is well situated in Waverley Road, near the South Eastern Arterial and not far from Chadstone Shopping Centre, one of the first large shopping complexes in

Australia. The church buildings consist of a small chapel and a large kitchen and hall, with the manse next door.

For many years the Chadstone church had been struggling—both financially and numerically, but now with an increasing number of young families coming to the church this has changed. It means that the 55-60 who now attend the 10.30 am service are older people and young marrieds with not many in between.

There is a young families group that operates within the church, which is active in a variety of areas: social get togethers, Bible studies and fundraising (at the moment for

the Kensington Christian Network in inner-suburban Melbourne). There is a friendship group for the older people, and the CWF is active; they raise money locally and through the Oakleigh Op Shop. Because of

pointment. Married to Cathy, he has two young daughters, aged three and one.

The Chadstone church is poised for growth. The turnaround has been achieved with a long-term part-time ministry

worship style. They have changed from a presidential style to a gift-based worship ministry. This means that people work in the areas they have talent for. The worship service is planned co-operatively, and

the music life of the church has been enriched. In the past six months a number of in-

Focus on Chadstone



the make-up of the church, there are some very young children but no childrens or youth groups—as yet.

The minister at Chadstone is Peter Bradley, who is now in his sixth year with the church. He is part-time with the church; the rest of his week is served as chaplain to the Churches of Christ homes at Murrumbena and Oakleigh. Peter's home church is the Dulwich-Rose Park United Parish in Adelaide, SA. He started as a teacher and taught technical studies in Adelaide and in an Aboriginal school in Amata in central Australia before entering the College of the Bible in Victoria. Chadstone was his first ap-

allied with active lay participation. The church's strength has been to reach out to young families.

A number of factors have contributed to make a church that is now growing. A key was the appointment of Peter Bradley to a long ministry. Peter has been able to spend time in steady development. He and Cathy are at the life stage of the people being attracted to the church. Then, some years ago Peter and a couple of other men in the church conducted a lawn-mowing service. This raised over \$15,000 and overcame some of the financial worries. Further, the church has been working hard to develop its

strumentalists have walked in the door, and their gifts are being used to enhance the worship still further. The contemporary style of worship has proved attractive to members. Change has come about slowly and carefully.

The Chadstone church has now left the struggling stage, of just surviving, and is ready for great things and what it has to offer to the community. By developing their friendship networks and their talents, Chadstone's members can now turn from just running a church, to reach out as a church. They wish to be known as a church that has much to offer to families.

Growing Spiritually

I read recently of a video on "Growth through Life's Experiences". How true and valuable that can be, especially when the growth includes spiritual growth.

Over the past two years or so, and partly as a consequence of my age, I have been included in numerous "significant" events and celebrations. These have involved 70th birthdays (including my own and that of a cousin who really wanted to be 70!), 80th birthdays and over and wedding anniversaries of 40, 50 and 60 years. All these were happy and enjoyable social and/or family occasions, shared with relatives and friends of many years. But they were more than just that; they were also experiences of spiritual growth. We listened to the glowing tributes made by

More Than a Party

Ken Barton

friends of long standing to the guests of honour, and then to the responses, made with gratitude and sincerity, and mostly with a touch of suitable humour. Many of those being honoured spoke of how their Christian faith had been so important to them through the years, and a vital part of their marriages. Sometimes there were grandchildren and even great-grandchildren present at these parties, all showing an obvious love and affection for these senior family members,

also revealing evidence of following their example in the Christian way. We felt privileged to be part of such happy functions.

Usually the mood was one of joyous thanksgiving, with the honoured guests giving thanks to God and family for having reached a particular milestone in life; this was especially so at one celebration accompanied by a golden wedding thanksgiving segment in a church service. Almost without exception we found inspiration in

hearing our friends and relatives speak of their faith in God and of their love for the church. This was all so uplifting and moving, touching the emotions, a sharing in some of the deeper things of the spirit. As such they were more than birthdays and wedding anniversaries with a party atmosphere; they added to the quality of our life's experiences, and because spiritual values were evident they became for us a means of spiritual growth. There are many avenues of spiritual growth available to us, but the one I have been reflecting upon, hearing these testimonies of the years of Christian experience, must surely be one of the most enriching and enduring.

• *Ken Barton, a retired minister, is the Victorian State Historian.*

Personal

Baptisms

•Tracey Baker, Louise Johnson, Leslie Fernie, Bendigo, Vic •Keith Siviour, David Mitchell, Judith Gregory, Balaklava, SA •Narelle Sanders, Aron Baker, Modbury, SA •Peter McPheat, Magill, SA •Michael & Carol Schneider, Virginia & Kylie Schneider, Lyn McIntyre, Philip & Roslyn Andrews, Simon Hunt, Bruce Heid, Hugh Widdison, Horsham, Vic •Terry & Amanda Peake, Carolyn Holmes, Graham Smith, Vanessa Wiggerman, Sarah Butt, Natasha Wright, David Barkess, Warwick, WA •Nancy Wagner, Jayne Chambers, Gail Norman, Mark Buettel, Fred Lassig, Joyce Richardson, Bundaberg, Qld •Naomi Paton, Simon Briggs, Berkeley Vale, NSW •Amanda Baggs, Victor Harbor, SA •Tracy Spintal, Joanne Turner, Stephen Earl, Warragul, Vic •Peter Chomel, Gaylene Lawrence, Max Webb, Melinda Ridderhof, Sally Trueman, Noarlunga Centre, SA •Jenny Muirhead, Barry Stone, Centenary, Qld •Hayley Brennan, Essendon, Vic

Marriages

•Linda Siviour to Laurence Whitelaw, Nailsworth, SA •Julie-

Ann Glenie to Kevin Evans, Warwick, WA •Dorothy Chapelle to Ted Gowling, Berkeley Vale, NSW •Kay Strudwick to Steve Hutchinson, Carolyn Butler to Chris Aird, Victor Harbor, SA •Gina Alderton to Mark Byard, Launceston, Tas •Margaret Willcocks to Robin Stanton, Noarlunga Centre, SA

Deaths

•Mrs Amelia (Doll) McCarty, Carnegie, Vic •John K. Martin, Bendigo, SA •Mrs Jean Young, Modbury, SA •Dorothy Bollen Young, Nailsworth, SA •Vera Johnson, Bundaberg, Qld •Jim Haslam, Berkeley Vale, NSW •Ken Sinkinson, John Thorpe, Adele Coote, Victor Harbor, SA •Peter Dawson, Doris E. Parker, Bill Hodge, Noarlunga Centre, SA •Joan Cooper, Belconnen, ACT •Keenie Dyson, Essendon, Vic

Changes

Hall, Norma—Unit 1, 2 Dick Street, Castlemaine, Vic 3450.
Clymer, Bob and Shirley—c/o Churches of Christ Theological College, Unit 8, 40-60 Jacksons Road, Mulgrave, Vic 3170. Phone (03) 701 1887.

Obituaries

Obituaries are limited to 100 words

Brand, Edmund Moss

(5.4.92) Eddy was a long-term member of Colonel Light Gardens, SA, church. He served on the board and as chapel steward for many years and was honoured as a deacon emeritus. He was the handyman at the church who built, fixed or installed nearly everything that is about the place. He is remembered as one of those people who made the church an enjoyable place. He was a fellowship person. Eddy was married to Lucy, who predeceased him by 10 years. He missed her desperately. They gave birth to three children: Reg, Fay and Diedre, all active Christian people and the latter two members of CLG with their families. Eddy's family and friends at the church remember him warmly and miss him deeply.

—Adrian Clark

Fleer, Gladys Jean

(11.6.92) Gladys Cooper was born at Prahran in 1914, the youngest of a family of nine. She grew up in the Prahran church and, in the early 1930s, gained the Gold Medal for 10 years unbroken conduct at Sunday school. In 1935 she was married to Len Fleer by A.W. Connor. During their married life they lived in Malvern, Glen Iris and Ashwood. For most of that time they were in membership at Gardiner. Glad developed an early interest in sporting activities, competing for many years in tennis tournaments with the Baptist-Churches of Christ Association, and in later years in local competitions in lawn bowls. She was active in the Evening Women's Fellowship, was a cheerful person, never known to criticise and always ready to encourage. Glad was a devoted wife, mother and grandmother and is survived by her husband, her two children, seven grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. Gardiner church was filled with family and friends for the thanksgiving service conducted by the writer and Paul Creasey, the present minister.

—Harold Steele

Hunting, Joseph Henry

(5.6.92) Born in 1915 at the age of 17 Jock made the good confession and was baptised, but until the age of 30 when he came under conviction of the Holy Spirit God played little part in his life. In 1946 just before his discharge he went to Port Pirie, SA, to help dismantle the air school after the war and here met his future wife and came under

God's leading. 18 months after their wedding God called Jock Hunting into the full-time ministry to the lost sheep of the house of Israel (a ministry now called David House Fellowship). On 14 May 1948 when the state of Israel was re-established, Joseph was inducted into his ministry. In 1964, after serving in the Adelaide and Perth branches he was appointed International Director of the Fellowship based in Melbourne. During the mid-sixties he felt the need for punch-line booklets on God's plan and purpose for Israel so he wrote *Israel: A Modern Miracle*. Several more books were written highlighting Israel's role in God's prophetic plan. In 1970 the literary work was expanded with the commencement of *The Vineyard*, a monthly magazine that highlighted Messianic redemption. The ministry of editor to *The Vineyard* was Joseph's prime concern although David House Fellowship did develop many areas of ministry over the years. The funeral service was conducted at the Oakleigh Baptist Church.

Mortyn, Eric

(6.6.92) Eric Mortyn, aged 98 and a half, entered his Lord's presence after five days in the Stawell Hospital. When in a semiconscious state, "Jesus is with you," was spoken in his ear. A firm "Praise the Lord" were his last spoken words. The farewell service, taken by Stephen McElwee, was a time of praise and thanksgiving to God for his faithful, consistent Christian life. It culminated in the triumphant singing of Wesley's hymn "And Can It Be". He is greatly missed by his daughters Margaret and June, as well as the Stawell, Vic, church family, where he was loved and respected.

—June Mortyn

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6 pm Service of thanksgiving

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Berwick Regional Church of Christ
PO Box 75, Berwick 3806

Phone (03) 702 1011, after hours (03) 703 1131

Church News

NSW

TWEED HEADS (Richard Oakes) Richard Oakes to continue another term from March '93 ... John Liu, Vanuatu, brought inspiring message ... Excellent response to "reachout" group for "young mums" of Playgroup, run by Janet Oakes ... Morning worship continues in Civic Centre ... Young people organised dinner to raise money for support for World Vision orphan ... Several involved in 40 Hour Famine ... 13 received into fellowship in recent months.

BERKELEY VALE (Gary Hamilton) Pre-school outreach has proved an outstanding success. The Sunday School has gained some of the children & the parents join in the monthly family service. Financially a great help in paying off new church loan ... Recently two young people, Naomi & Simon, baptised ... A Christian Women's Fellowship commenced & meeting each month ... Sudden death of Jim Haslam great loss to us & to overseas missionaries.

Qld

MAROOCHYDORE (G. Risson) A visit by Kenmore College students door-knocked in the Buderim North area, where the church has purchased land, resulting in some contacts for future outreach ... CWF presented a "Women's Pageant" as a monthly function & in international luncheon as a fundraiser for the building fund ... A church development plan has been initiated by the board, submissions from which are now being considered.

BUNDABERG (Alan Leane) Much rejoicing. Souls being won. Further confessions. New contacts. Counselling actively continuing. 29 commitments ... Prayer committal 8 July 9 am-9 pm Brotherhood needs. Also each Sat 8-9 am. Corporate prayer ... 500 children in two sessions assembled chapel special activities from neighbouring Avoca

School ... 29 youth plus leaders competed Sunshine Games Sunnybank ... Margaret Nowitzke home for holiday ... Jim Deutschmann, Executive DCDE, visited.

CENTENARY (Reg Charles, Chris Kindred) Average attendance exceeds 110 ... Buildings modified & office demountable purchased to cope ... 14 families with infants in morning dedication service ... Wonderful "Teddy Bear's Picnic" with dozens of Mary Biddle's valuable bears at Kiah Child Day Care Centre ... Vision '92 & beyond continues in co-operation with congregation ... Darryl McLeod & Roger Bawden join Jef Gordon & Charles Kimber as elders.

SA

BALAKLAVA (Graham Lawrie) John Bond led challenging week of meetings—Dinkum Dynamite seminar, men's prayer breakfast, barnyard barbecue, coffee "Meet the Mum's" morning & prayer meetings brought many into fellowship to hear his inspirational messages ... Effective Communicating sessions held in Education Centre conducted by Chris Bartholomeusz ... Wakefield Plains Parent Controlled Christia School Association contacting those interested in local private school ... Open Forum on "Families in Worship" held to review Sunday morning program.

MODBURY (Dean Hamilton) Maurice Keatch interim term completed April. Farewelled for four-month travel ... New young adult group. 20 meeting monthly ... 25 new attenders given lunch by elders, executive ... Sunday School cake & craft stall. Over \$300 raised for missionary support ... Worship leaders seminar held. Two three-hour sessions, three electives ... "Tale of Two Kingdoms" drama in am service by youth ... Six leaders attending Callahan "Leaders" seminar.

NAILSWORTH (Daryl Telfer) Visiting speakers—Charles Price of

Capernwray Fellowship, Kevin May of Wycliffe Bible Translators, Charles & Lorna Stilwell CLTC Mt Hagan PNG ... Sponsored special presentation excerpts from Jerusalem Passion for churches in district ... Ron Saunders (elder) part-time minister Keith/Mundulla circuit ... Handwritten Bible Project raised \$265 ... Walk-Thru-The-Bible (NT). 35 participated ... Sunday School running Walk for Bibles for Indonesia ... Neighbourhood Watch meets in hall.

MAGILL (John Gilmore) Elders retreat held to set framework for future developments ... Sunday School regularly involved in 9.30 service ... Two new midweek Bible studies commenced ... Magill a part of newly created Inter Church Council. John Gilmore elected President ... Youth group camp at Aldinga June long weekend.

VICTOR HARBOR (Don Wesley) Sunday School picnic enjoyed at Port Elliot ... Outdoor service held at Primary School followed by barbecue ... CWF dinner raised \$791 for Overseas Missions ... Young women's coffee mornings changed format to regular Bible study blocks ... Luncheon hosted in members' homes well attended ... Evening services to be held at 5.30 pm during winter followed by soup & toast.

DULWICH-ROSE PARK UNITED PARISH (Roger Brown, Rob Williams) Brian Phelps dedicated church officers ... Jack Ludbrook recovering from surgery ... Colin Wormald new parish chairman ... Three adults immersed by UCA minister ... Adam Hartley (SA junior cycling champion) addressed parish fellowship ... Roger Brown's research into co-operating congregations published in two state UCA journals ... Rob Williams completed four weeks in-service training ... New student minister, Gladys Moeller, appointed.

NOARLUNGA CENTRE (Ross Pelling, Graham Mann) Recent Youth Spectacular with Jim Keatch. 270 attended ... Over 40 new

attenders over last six months ... Ladies breakfast run by men saw over 70 attend ... Current film series, including "Twice Pardoned", on Sunday evenings during June ... 10 new members via baptism or transfer in ... Graham Mann resigning at end of year. New associate minister being interviewed.

HAPPY VALLEY (Russell Allison) Day of prayer held 8 am-8 pm 30 May ... Kirillie Baggs selected as SA Youth Ambassador for Barcelona Olympic Games ... "Cross Culture" music group led very uplifting evening service ... Ecumenical Pentecost service at Uniting Church ... 12 teams in CofC basketball competition ... Older youth class led morning service ... Many involved in 40 Hour Famine.

Tas

DEVONPORT (B. Butler) Much activity in last month ... Youth arranged black & white progressive supper engagement party ... CWCI had summing-up day for Bible studies conducted last quarter ... Combined churches tea & service filled chapel to overflowing ... Refocusing process continued with Ministry Model workshop ... Youth group expanding with four couples from older group accepting responsibility for high school group.

LAUNCESTON (R. Foster, C. Spaulding, D. Tobler) Linden Martin first to obtain licence to drive new church bus ... Children's Church commenced on 21 June ... Babies Richard Arnot & Sarah MacReadie dedicated at morning service on 21 June when Greg Foot, President, Tas Convention, spoke at 11 am. He was interviewed at 7 pm in his role as Director of World Vision in Tasmania ... Gwen McLennan & Johanna McMaster in hospital.

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Church News

Vic

CARNEGIE (Ron Braun) Memorial service held for the late Mrs Amelia (Doll) McCarty ... The 99th Temple Day anniversary had many earlier members returning for the service & luncheon. Guest speaker was Greg Elsdon, lecturer CCTC ... Bible studies well supported ... Members of Singles Group attended progressive dinner ... Friendship Centre members celebrated leader's birthday with an outing for dinner ... Sausage sizzle & cake stall held.

BENDIGO (John Sweetman) Church entered float in Easter procession ... Church saddened by passing of John Martin, elder emeritus & former pastor of Kangaroo Flat church. Sympathy extended to Betty, Ken, Vic & families ... Services well attended ... Marj Buckingham took all three services CWF Sunday ... K. Lacy & I. Lacy attended to services while minister on holidays ... Church extended missionary support to fourth family serving in Thailand.

HORSHAM (Harvey Clark) Barry Smith visit, sponsored by the Assembly of God church, results in many commitments & recommitments to Christ. 10, including married couple & two of their children, baptised on one day ... Discipleship course begins for these & others requesting refreshment in discipleship.

OAKLEIGH (W.J. Edwards) Glenys Reaby, Pres State CWF,

spoke at local CWF meeting ... Pentecost Sunday Polish Church, which meets in hall, combined with congregation for worship & lunch ... Peter Bradley spoke at evening service 28 June while minister was at Cheltenham for OMB ... May Williams back after surgery in Hobart ... Elsie Tulloch back in Emmaus after hospitalisation ... Ken Masterton represented church at CMF seminar.

WARRAGUL (David & Debbie Buesnel) CWF Sunday speaker Robyn Schaefer ... Men hosted "Girl's night out" dinner for women ... Three baptismal services held ... 170 at evening service with guest local band ... Grant Ward once again guest at both services ... New seating purchased ... Sunday School picnic held ... Discipleship classes commenced for children who made recent commitments ... Recent speakers Ken Clinton, Don Smith ... Average attendance increased.

LA TROBE TERR, GEELONG (Dr C.J. Mackenzie) Young marrieds conducted family service with play "Are You Going to Heaven?", using speech & sign language ... Many members participated in 40 Hour Famine ... Bob Drayton home after several weeks in hospital ... CWF provided large supply of groceries to "Concern" ... Dept of Christian Union selected Paul Bauer to visit Bangkok on behalf of World Christian Action ... Congregation blessed by Laurie Barker's ministry.

NORTH BALWYN (Paul Burnham) Stable Association now

supervising two emergency accommodation homes ... Peter Robson finished in top 30 in Melbourne marathon ... Seven small groups in operation ... New rustic sign erected in front of church ... Aerobics held three times weekly ... Phil Wright celebrated 90th birthday ... Church saddened by death of Bill Orr ... Paul Burnham commencing associate ministry Heathmont Baptist November '92. **PEEL ST, BALLARAT (Wayne Allan)** New revamp service am meeting needs all ages. Attendances best for three years ... Evening services led by various church families before minister preaches ... Pauline McHugh & Glen Whitbourne welcomed into fellowship by transfer ... Young adult cell group formed ... Recent morning speaker Greg Elsdon, lecturer CCTC ... Years 5 & 6 held red faces night to provide invalid ramp ... Sunday Seekers held luncheon for all church members.

ESSENDON (Ken Stothard) Enjoying ministry of Ken Stothard ... Bible study all keen ... CWF, Friendship Group, church dinners well attended & appreciated ... Lebanese Fellowship enthusiastic group meeting regularly mid-week praise and study ... Manse improved with renovated kitchen & bathroom ... Saddened by death of loved member Keeney Dyson, who resided in units at church rear ... Rejoice in Hayley Brennan's baptism by Chris Ambrose at Williamstown Beach 14 June.

WA

DIANELLA (Brian Stitt) Following a sermon series on commitment a number made decisions & have been baptised & received into fellowship ... Church farewelled June & Ron Skinner to York, some 100 km from Perth ... Ladies ran very successful stall for Mother's Day weekend ... Church gearing up for anniversary weekend, which will feature reunion of many old Girls' & Boys' Brigaders who passed through church companies.

WARWICK (B. Eagles, R. Mason, S. Kelly) New administrative centre, seminar & teaching areas now completed. Our thanksgiving weekend for the new buildings & ministry of George & Elizabeth Sublette a real highlight ... Graham & Freda now on long service leave in America ... The Lab 1 Caring & Healing Seminar completed ... Ruth Wilson recently commissioned as full-time worker with Youth For Christ ... 55 young people attended State Youth Games at Bunbury.

ALEXANDER HEIGHTS (John Caporn) Church now meeting in Illawarra Primary School, Ballajura ... 9 am Sunday School & Teen Scene with 10 am worship ... Craft reaching community with up to 40 women attending ... YP meeting regularly ... Ladies group enjoying fellowship while fundraising for building fund ... Black & White social night held recently ... Board & minister door-knocking ... Scout parade & quiz night planned.



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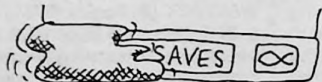
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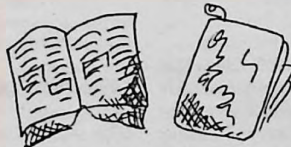
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—Ideas courtesy of the New Zealand Baptist.

The Last Word

Saints are persons who make it easier for others to believe in God.
—Nathan Soderblom

Patient: I've got butterflies in my stomach.
Doctor: Did you try an aspirin?
Patient: Yes, and they are playing ping pong with it.

★★★★★

"Why do you think you have so many friends?"

"I guess it is because I always play my tuba when I am lonely."

★★★★★

Calories don't count—they multiply and divide all over the body.

★★★★★

What do you get when you cross a skunk with a bear?

Winnie the Phew.

★★★★★

Boaster: Why I once saw someone swim up Niagra Falls!

Bored Listener: I didn't know anyone was watching.

★★★★★

Doctor to patient: You need a good brisk workout twice a day, so instead of walking to and from work I advise you to take the bus.

★★★★★

Did you hear of the cat that ate cheese and then waited at a mousehole with baited breath?

★★★★★

One day I went to the zoo
As I wanted to see the old gnu.
But the old gnu was dead
And there was a new gnu instead.
And the new gnu knew it was new.

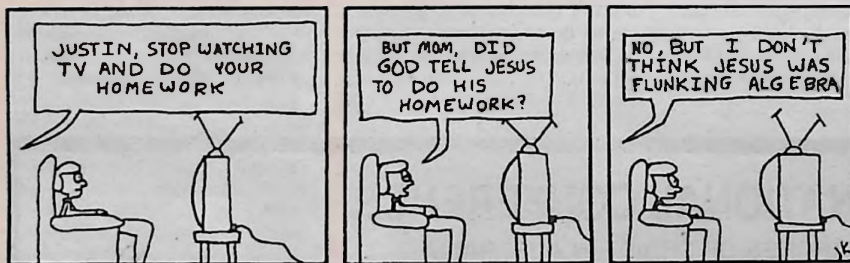
★★★★★

Irate customer: I'd like to see someone with a little authority around here.

Sales assistant: Maybe I can help. I have about as little as anybody.

★★★★★

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Pastor, could you please make your deposits a little more conventional?