

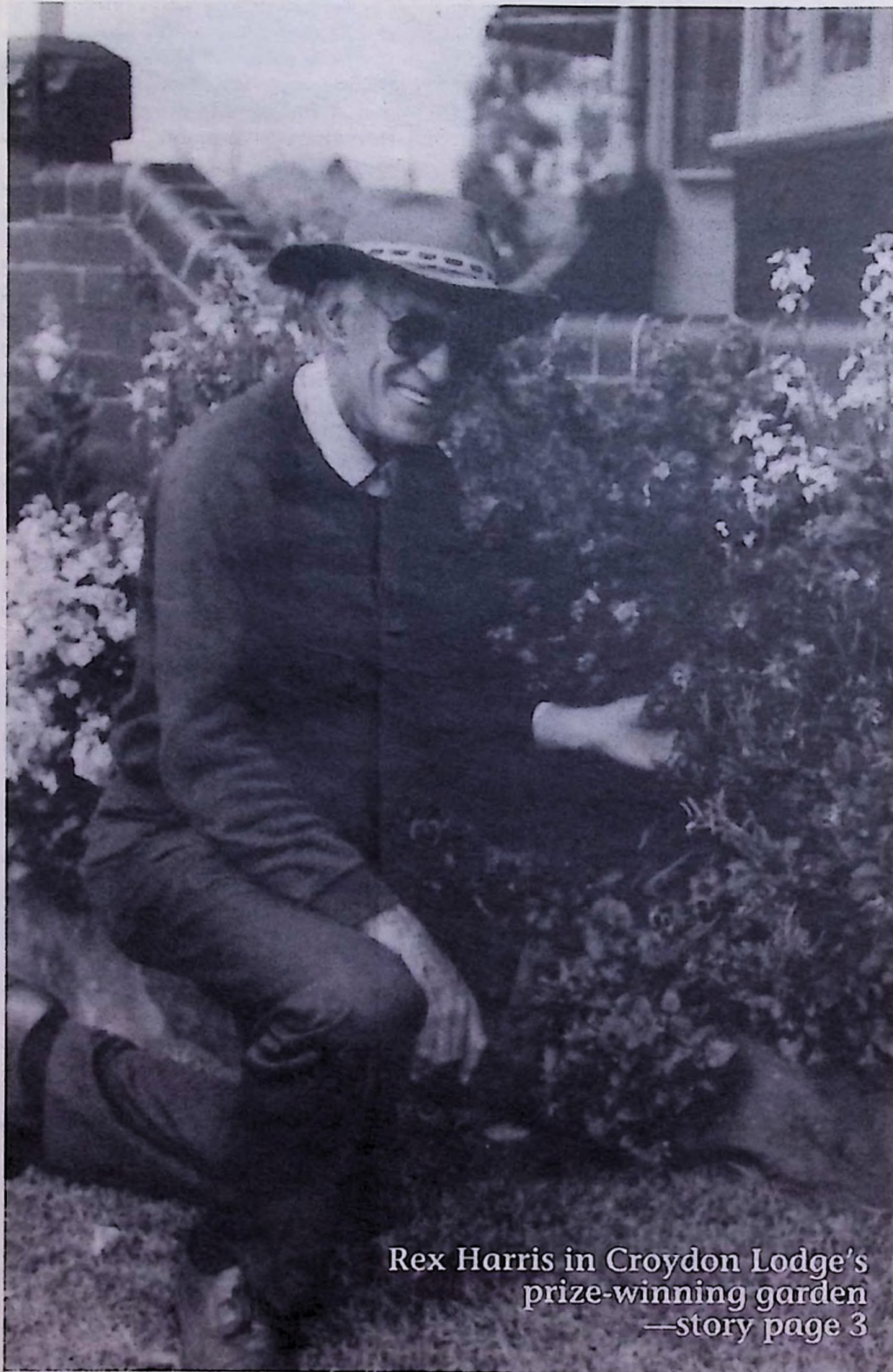
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THE AUSTRALIAN CHRISTIAN



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THE AUSTRALIAN CHRISTIAN

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Comment

Dead Stones of Holy Land Pilgrimages

Alan Matheson

He was a Palestinian Christian. His office was on the roof of the British Council building in Jerusalem next door to the YMCA, only a few hundred metres from the Old City.

His job was to help visiting Christians to Jerusalem, Israel and the Occupied Territories. While travel agents would prefer to talk of the "Holy Land" it needs to be clear that in fact they are also talking, in part, of visiting an "occupied territory".

For him the sadness and tragedy was that many Christians were only interested in the "dead stones" of history—the Church of Nativity, Peter's House and Rachel's tomb.

"Do they not know," he said, "that here in Jerusalem, in Bethlehem, in Nazareth, in Gaza, are the "living stones" of the Christian church? We need their love, their understanding, their support and their prayer. But few have any interest in meeting with or listening to our story."

Pilgrimage

Arriving back in Australia and catching up on my reading after nearly two months overseas, I was reminded of my conversation with Zoughbi when I came across an advertisement in a recent issue of *The Australian Christian* (3 October).

It was an invitation to join the 1993 "Easter Pilgrimage to the Holy Land". It promised a visit to "most of the important Christian sites in the Middle East... Mount of Olives, Garden of Gethsemane, Nazareth and Bethlehem" (the latter a city in the Occupied Territory).

I hope, incidentally, it was a mistake to include the Holocaust Memorial in a list which could be interpreted as a list of "important Christian sites".

The church has little to be proud of in its anti-Semitism, persecution and harassment of the Jewish community and we need to be sensitive and understanding in the way we describe such brutal traumas of Israel as the Holocaust.

Awareness

Christians visiting Israel need to understand that the church is a community living under occupation.

This was my second visit in three years and I came away more pessimistic about the future than in any of my previous visits. A day spent in Gaza is a sobering

and depressing experience. However, with the support of churches around the world, a vital creative ministry continues to provide hope.

There are now an estimated 17,000 Palestinians in Israeli jails. During the time we were there in September, eight Palestinians were killed, 473 were wounded and a further 244 were arrested. Stone throwing was common. Three Israelis were injured in one incident, a Molotov bomb was thrown into the Israeli military office in Nablus and a soldier was seriously wounded in Gaza.

Yet for all of the violence, Israel and the Occupied Territories should be visited.

Taking coffee in a footpath cafe in Bethlehem, swimming in the Dead Sea, participating in a service in St George's Cathedral or standing in the midst of the shimmering heat of the silence of Masada are experiences not to be missed.

There are a number of things you can do when visiting Israel and the Occupied Territories individually or with a group.

If travelling with a group get an assurance from your tour leader that you will be provided with opportunities to meet with Palestinian Christians. Why not have coffee with Canon Riah Abu El Assal (Nazareth Episcopal Church) or spend an hour with Father Elias Chacour, a Greek Catholic (Melkite) priest in Ibillim (a small village between Nazareth and Haifa).

At the very least make sure you read Chacour's book, *Blood Brothers: A Palestinian Struggle for Reconciliation in the Middle East* before you go.

Remember that if you are a part of a tour group your guides will be employees of the Israeli Government, your hotels will be Israeli, your buses will be Israeli and every step will be taken to ensure that you see the Middle East through Israeli eyes. It is one perspective but not the whole picture.

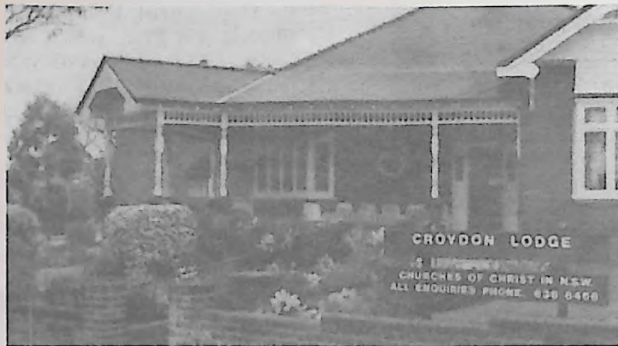
As Charles Kimball (in a book which should be in your luggage: *Angle of Vision: Christians and the Middle East*, Friendship Press 1992) notes, "For hundreds of thousands of Western Christians, Holy Land tourism is the primary way of connecting personally with Christians in the Middle East. We should make the most of it."

I couldn't agree more.

• Alan Matheson is a member of the Camberwell, Vic, church.

The Power of Flowers

Second place in garden competition



• Croydon Lodge's prize-winning garden

Croydon Lodge, a 27-bed aged care hostel operated by the NSW Churches of Christ Community Care Department, is part of the Federation Preservation Area of the Burwood Municipality.

The building was opened as an hostel on 14 November 1964 by Conference President Eric Hart. His daughter Jennifer is currently the supervisor of Croydon Lodge.

This year for the first time the hostel was entered in the annual garden competition organised by the Burwood Coun-

cil in co-operation with Flower Power. The hostel was entered in the business/commercial section of Federation Gardens. The result was that Alderman Peggy Brown from the council presented the hostel with a certificate for second place in the competition and an open order at Flower Power for \$50.

Gardener for the hostel is Rex Harris, a member of the Padstow, NSW, church. Rex has been responsible for the landscaping and garden layout for most of the department's Sydney aged care sites.



• Rex Harris

1993 CCTC Handbooks

Many subjects available

The 1993 Churches of Christ Theological College Handbook is now available for those interested in the many semester units offered during the day, in evening or on Saturday morning.

Ring the Registrar on (03) 790 1000 for a free copy.

The companion 1993 ETA Handbook, with details of units for the BTheol degree, is also available for \$4 (refunded on registration for a unit).



Spring Conference

New directions set

The 350 participants at the Wollongong, NSW, Spring Conference held 17-19 October have acclaimed the event as an outstanding seminar. This year the Wollongong church linked with the Australian Board of Church Development and Education in joint sponsorship. All states and the ACT were represented. On the Sunday, conference participants joined with Wollongong members in two great services with over 700 at the morning service and close to 900 at the evening service.

Dr T. Garrott Benjamin, senior minister of the Light of the World Christian Church, Indianapolis, was the guest preacher. Dr Benjamin's outstanding preaching challenged his audiences with his vigorous proclamation of the Gospel, his vision for the church and our response in adequate worship and praise. His commitment to social justice issues and his challenge to Australian stereotyping about reserved attitudes in worship made a profound impact on participants. Dr Benjamin also led electives to great effect with vigorous dialogue a characteristic of these events.

Other guest presenters were Dr Gordon Moyes and Dr Dean Drayton of the Uniting Church Board of Mission in NSW. Dr Drayton spoke thoughtfully on the Australian church and the future role of the denomination in church life.

Dr Keith Farmer, Don Smith, Ian Tippett (panel chairman) and Jay Bacik (hypothetical) led other public sessions. Elective contributors were Wes Beavis of "Powerborn", Maurice

Hodgson, the National Director of Lifeline, and Wollongong church staff members Barry McMurtrie, Allan Anderson, Dr Carol Preston, Larry Galbraith, Tammy Tolman and Elizabeth Hoh.

The great worship and preaching events were marked by the audiences expressing a deep involvement in a spirit of praise and commitment to ministry and service. A significant number of conference participants expressed their response through acts of rededication and shared in a ministry of intercession with Wollongong elders.

On every hand Wollongong and Australian Board of Church Development and Education staff members are receiving positive comments about the event. There were many at the conference who believe that the event has set new directions in visionary thinking, worship and evangelism for our Australian churches.



• T. Garrott Benjamin

Eastern Wheatbelt Family Camps

People of all ages come together

The Bruce Rock and Narembreen, WA, churches have just held their 18th family camp, which caters for Christians from the WA Wheatbelt churches and a few city folk.

The camps were first commenced in 1974, with the late Doug Good having a large input over many years. Doug had to endure many pranks from young people during that time and he was loved by all.

Many local members and ministers have contributed to produce successful camps. A number of marriages have resulted from the humble beginning of a "Camp Night Hike". Many of our young married couples of today were only children themselves when they first tasted the pleasures of a family camp. They are now bringing their offspring along to participate in the unique experience of queues (for meals), table tennis in the garages, singing and meetings in sheds, dirt floors, quiz nights, concerts, discussion groups, films, hikes, tents,

caravans, bush dances, renewing friendships and meeting new folks each year, camp cooking, watching the Eagles grand finals via hastily erected TV aerials, singing and eating toast around barbeques late at night, good music with numbers of musicians and instruments, a variety of study leaders, witnessing city people bog their cars and our admirable cooks.

We feel there is great value in "family" camps, where people of all ages come together to have fun, worship and praise our God. Experience, youth and innocence merge and learn from and encourage each other.

Our camps are viewed as a missionary outreach in today's society. A gospel service is held at the close of each year's camp, with many having come to know the Lord as their own Saviour.

Camp study leaders over the years have been: Kevin Berston (1974 and 1976), Bill Gaunson (1975), no camp was held in 1977, Graham Carslake (1987), Brice Wells (1979), Dennis Hughes (1980), Des Croot (1981), Des Nelson (1982), Tim Hanna (1983), Nigel Merrick (1984), Graham Laycock (1985), Peter Moyle (1986), Ken Laffer (1987), Errol Kirk (1988), John Tocknell (1989), John Bond (1990), John Thornhill (1991) and Ross Burton (1992).

—Gwen Butler

Queensland Conference

Full program

The Queensland churches met in conference in October about the time the jacarandas come into bloom.

The conference was preceded by the Ministers' and Spouses Seminar at Camp Cal, Caloundra, 5-7 October. The guest teacher was Alan Webb, the minister of the Swanston Street, Melbourne, church. His Bible studies from 1 Thessalonians were well received.

One of the features of the seminar was a visit from members of the Sarabetu Church of Christ in Port Vila, Vanuatu, who formed a choir with their own instrumental backing. They were led by their pastor Wilson Bebe.

8 October was Queensland Christian Women's Fellowship Conference, which was led by Julia Flood, the President of QCWF. One of the important moves was a name and some constitutional changes to broaden the representation of women's groups. The new name is Queensland Christian Women's Ministries. The President for 1992-93 is Gloria Fleet. Thursday night was the President's Rally and Fellowship Tea. 150 crowded into the

Annerley facilities for this occasion. There was a focus on several aspects of the conference work: on the Social Service Department, through the Mutual Aid Plan, which has replaced CFA, on domestic violence, brought by Thelma Cornell, and on the Overseas Mission work, which was reinforced by the Vanuatu Choir. Browns Plains church also brought a focus.

Friday night was a packed gathering at a special youth program at the Sunnybank church.

Saturday was the business session, which was held in the Sunnybank High School Auditorium. Alan Webb led in devotions and later spoke on "The Road Ahead" following an open forum in which conference looked at a strategy for future mission and outreach.

Five new congregations, Monkland, Suncoast, Garden City, Browns Plains and Brisbane North, were admitted into the conference. Brisbane North is an amalgamation of the former Albion and Kedron congregations.

During the business session it was announced that Rodney W. Foster, presently the senior minister of Launceston, Tas, church would be the new General Secretary and would be taking up the position in January 1993.

It was also announced that Jim Deutschmann, the Executive Director of the Department of Church Development and Education, would be resigning from that position early in 1993 to take up the position of minister of the Arana Hills church.

Fay and Janice Rostvit from Colorado, USA, led the praise sessions and brought special items in song.

On Sunday morning there was the conference communion service, also held in the Sunnybank High School Auditorium, with about 900 present. Alan Webb was the guest speaker.

At the conclusion of the worship service Conference President Colin Deacon handed the Presidency over to Noel W.T. Leitch for the coming year.

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Rev Dr Gordon Moyes, AM
Superintendent of Wesley
Mission, Sydney

A Life of Service

Arthur Blackmore Withers

Almost 500 relatives and friends gathered at the Ivanhoe, Vic, church on 4 November to pay their tributes and thank God for the life of their loved one, minister and friend, **Arthur Blackmore Withers**. The service was led by **Bruce Alcorn**, minister of the Northcote church, **Alf White** paid his tribute as a fellow minister, **Paul Burnham**, minister of the North Balwyn church, led in a prayer of thanksgiving and the eulogy was presented by **Clive Ward**, National Conference President. On the Tuesday of the previous week, Arthur suffered a severe stroke and passed away peacefully on 29 October.

Arthur loved God, responded to his call and never deviated from that call. He was born to Christian parents in **Lismore, NSW**, on 29 January 1902. His family moved to Victoria in 1914 and became associated with the church at **Moreland**.

The next year Arthur committed his life to Christ and was baptised in Moreland church by **Will Ewers**. He undertook an apprenticeship as a manufacturing jeweller and during the latter part of the apprenticeship he attended night school in the city so that he could attain the secular qualifications required for his entrance to the **College of the Bible, Glen Iris**. His apprenticeship completed, he responded to the call of God and entered the college in 1923, graduating in 1925. As part of his training for ministry, he served as student minister with the churches at **Red Hill, Blackburn, Moreland and Ivanhoe, Vic**.

Arthur believed he was called not to a profession, but to serve, to minister from the time of his graduation until God called him home. In response to the call of God he gave his whole life in service.

He was a great lover of books and read extensively. It was written of him, "He was a daily

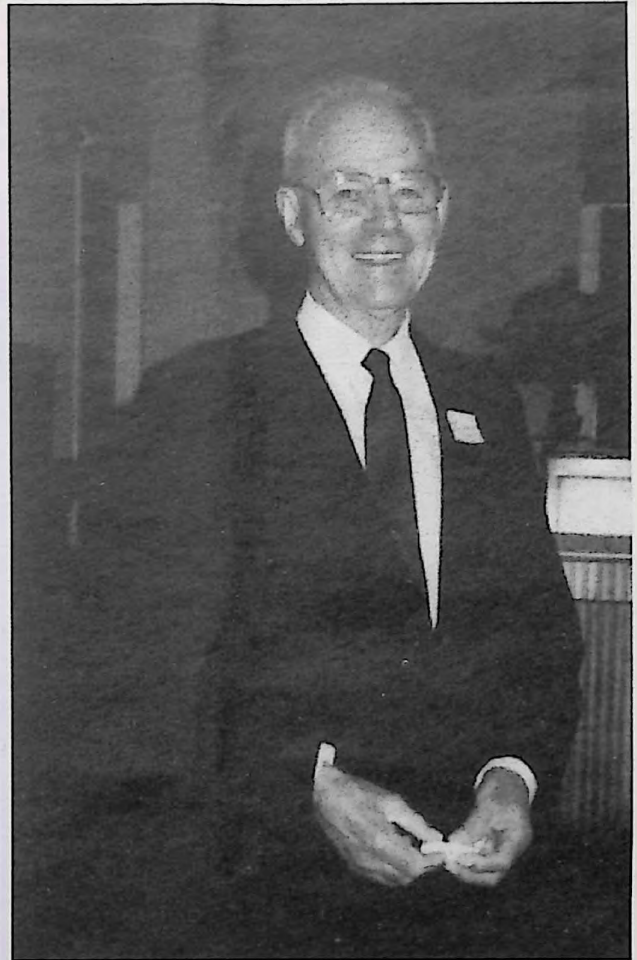
student of the best in biblical scholarship and fine literature." He recently presented part of his library to the Churches of Christ Theological College.

His knowledge and understanding of the Scriptures enabled him to preach from his heart with simplicity and the utmost integrity. In his preaching, he was conscious of the needs of his people for he knew them. He understood the many experiences of life through which they were passing and endeavoured to respond to their needs. He constantly felt the compulsion of the Gospel and to preach that Gospel was his great delight.

Arthur was a great pastor. This was for him an important part of the call of God—to be Christ's servant among his people. A wise confidant, he was understanding, sensitive, thoughtful, kind, encouraging, conscientious, a true listener, totally honest, faithful and humble.

He reflected the qualities of the Master whom he represented in his ministry. He talked with God, he walked with God. This was the source of his inner strength, the strength that enabled him to return, for the hurt he sometimes experienced, forgiveness and love to those who had caused the hurt.

Arthur loved the church. Having prepared himself to minister, Arthur began a chapter of his life that was only to finish with his death. Arthur's first call was to **Ivanhoe** in 1926, followed by calls to the churches at **Maryborough, Kaniva, Brighton, West Preston, Northcote and Wangaratta**. In 1975 he answered the call to return to **Ivanhoe** for a five-year ministry. Although he was 77, he still made himself available and responded to the particular needs of churches as he fulfilled interim ministries at **Kaniva, Footscray, Balwyn, Mount Gambier, Greensborough, Essendon and Surrey Hills**.



• Arthur Withers

Arthur loved Churches of Christ and was true to our distinctive plea as a people. He supported every aspect of the life of our conference of Churches.

He was a member of the State Committee of the Overseas Mission Department for 20 years and served as secretary for most of that period. He was aware of a sense of partnership with those whom we sent to our various mission fields and all were constantly remembered in his prayer and encouraged by his support.

In 1950 he was appointed as president of Vic-Tas Conference and fulfilled that role with commitment and dignity. He was a great encourager and used letters as a means of expressing his encouragement

and many of our people are grateful for his interest and concern.

Arthur loved his family. **Clare Withers**, Arthur's wife, partner, companion and support, is honoured, loved and appreciated as a special person among us. Their journey together began with their marriage in the **Coburg** church in 1926 and continued through over 65 wonderful years. One of Arthur's great pleasures was that his children embraced his faith and made it their own. He delighted to see their involvement in and service to Christ's church. To **Clara, Les and Judy, Jean and Max**, eight loving grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren we extend our love, our thoughts and our support. —Clive Ward

Music in the Mud

Happening a success



• Merelyn Watson and Third Degree

Rain and mud did not dampen the spirits of thousands of teenagers from throughout Victoria and New South Wales as they attended the *Happening* produced by Youth For Christ 16-18 October at Belgrave Heights Convention Centre.

The weekend provides a non-threatening atmosphere for Christians to bring their non-Christian friends. A wide range of young people from low socioeconomic groups and middle-class backgrounds come to listen to the presentation of the Gospel in contemporary format. Young lives are challenged, changed and given hope about a God who listens, cares and wants the best for their lives.

This year's messages were given by Mal Fletcher (National Director of Youth Alive) and David Wraight (Director of Youth For Christ Melbourne). The central theme of the messages presented encouraged young people to "Walk the Walk of Christian Discipleship, Not to Just Talk the Talk".

Scores of young people responded to the gospel invitation given on the Saturday night.

Contemporary Christian music is a large drawcard for the weekend, with top bands including Guns of Fire (Sydney), Merelyn Watson and Third Degree, Taylor and the YFC Music Team performing on main stage. Other bands performing at the Dive-In included Shelly Barnes and Band, Equity, Janine Maunder and Band and Witness Acts 22.

Mission displays throughout the weekend included Overseas Mission, SIM, CRMF, God Squad, YWAM, Harvest Bible College, MAF, CCM, TEAR Aust, School of World Mission, Christian Life Clothing, Tent Makers, ABMS, HCJB, Keswick Bookstores and Bible Society of Australia.

Youth For Christ training and education programs were presented in a series of workshops for youth leaders, addressing such issues as youth homeless-

ness, urban mission with at risk kids, and working with young offenders. A wide network of volunteers (numbering over 200) assist YFC to make the *Happening* possible.

The *Happening* is staged twice yearly in the third weekends of March and October at

Belgrave Heights Convention Centre. Next March marks the 20th year celebration of the *Happening* and thousands are expected to attend. The dates are 19-21 March and bookings will commence in January 1993. For further details contact YFC on (03) 877 3844.

Beyond Blackstump

Make a difference!

This was the message for the youth of Australia at this year's *Beyond the Blackstump*. Ron Hutchcraft urged those attending the Christian music and arts festival to go out and make a difference in the world around them. Judging by the response from the 7,000 plus who attended the 2-5 October event we can expect some changes.

The lineup of musicians and artists at the 1992 Festival read like a Who's Who of top Australian entertainers. Young people at the Stump heard Tommy Emmanuel, Spy vs Spy, Quick and the Dead (formerly Danger UXB), Guns of Fire, Hugh Wilson the Blue Phoenix, Allan Caswell, Colin Buchanan and many others.

The arts program exploded this year with the talents of photographer Ken Duncan, storyteller Burnam, Dennis and Ian Clare, and an array of actors, comedians, puppeteers, dancers, artists and craftspeople. *Craft World*, with its variety of displays and demonstrators, proved a popular new venue for the "hands on" experience that has become the trademark of *Blackstump* activity.

Additionally, \$18,800 was donated to help the rehabilitation of young apartheid victims in South Africa, the reforestation of Ethiopia and the needs of young people in Melbourne facing homelessness and alienation.

Balwyn Is 70 Not Out!

1922-1992

11 October marked the 70th anniversary at Balwyn, Vic. Services had begun in July 1922 with a tent mission led by Gilbert Chandler, but 8 October was the occasion of the first services in the new building.

The weather was kind and more than 190 were present for the morning service with George Warren, Conference President and previous minister, as guest speaker. As the sun broke through, the gathering of present and former members, many coming from country and interstate, moved to the hall for the lunch catered for by the Box Hill and Balwyn ladies.

The afternoon continued with excellent music from the Greensborough Church Choir interspersed with former members recalling memories of the

earlier days and highlights. Marj Verco (Hare), Pauline Fynemore (Kelson), and Keith and Leighton Sharp were those present who had attended the opening service in October 1922.

The evening was enjoyed by a 100 or more when the musical "Daniel, Darius and DeLion" was presented. This production was directed and produced by June St Aubyn and featured church and Sunday school members. Leigh Evans as "DeLion" was outstanding.

Early afternoon the history of the Balwyn church *Seventy Not Out* was launched. Proceeds from the sale of the book will go to the E.L. Williams Lectureship at CCTC. Copies are available from the secretary, Heath Wells, PO Box 226, Balwyn 3103, for \$5, which includes postage.

Ararat's Changes Help Both Church and School

Part-time ministry



• Phil Stevens, Ararat minister and Ararat Secondary College chaplain

At the end of 1991, the church at Ararat, Vic, had a change of ministry in a number of ways. Rodney and Marjan Beer, who had been ministering in Ararat for two years, moved on to Richmond and the church had to make some decisions regarding future ministry.

The town of Ararat had fallen on "hard times", and industries were closing down and

people moving away. While this provides numerous avenues of service for the church, decisions had to be made as to how this could happen. Not only had the town found the going hard, so too had the church. Numbers and finances were down and so it was thought a new approach should be taken. The concept of a part-time ministry was raised, which

seems fair enough, but what does the minister do with the other half? The Ararat Secondary College was approached regarding a part-time chaplain. Initially the idea was to have a chaplain for one day, then it grew to two days and is now a two-and-a-half-day appointment.

The Council for Christian Education in Schools (CCES) handled all the negotiations and now the Ararat church has a half-time ministry in conjunction with the Ararat Secondary College, who has a half-time chaplain. The two positions complement each other and the

work in both areas is proving to be productive. The church closed its evening service, which may seem contradictory to the idea of productivity, but it has been a time of assessing the present to plan for the future. Bible studies have been operating with good numbers attending. Sunday School and Kid's Club continue to function, there have been two decisions, Heather Joiner has been elected as an elder and the format of the morning service has been changed. There aren't huge numbers of people attending but the Ararat church is working on it.

Churches of Christ Theological College 1993 Course Offerings

Applications are now being received for full & part-time courses for:

- Diploma in Ministry
- Diploma in Ministerial Studies
- Associate Diploma in Pastoral Care
- Associate Diploma in Christian Studies
- Certificate in Christian Leadership
- Certificate in Christian Studies
- Bachelor of Theology
- BA/BTheol (Monash or Melbourne)
- Master in Ministry
- Master of Theology
- Doctor of Theology

The following first-level single subjects are also offered:

- Interpreting the New Testament
- Introduction to the Hebrew Bible
- Old Testament Survey
- The Mission of the People of God
- Christianity: Early Church to Middle Ages
- Christianity: Reformation to Modern
- Introduction to Pastoral Care & Counselling
- Introduction to Preaching & Worship
- Ministering to People

Two units are offered as intensives during 3 weeks in February:

- Evangelism and the Modern World
- Introduction to Ministerial Studies

Five short courses will also be offered:

- Creative Worship
- Building Effective Churches
- Effective Care of the Elderly
- Public Speaking/Preaching
- Jesus: Then and Now—A Biblical Study

For further details ask for the College Handbook
Ring (03) 790 1000

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Take an elder from a busy, growing church with heaps of life experience, great wisdom, sound practical common sense and a deep love for his Lord and the church and throw him into the midst of a bunch of keen, enthusiastic and somewhat apprehensive students at the Churches of Christ Theological College, Mulgrave, Vic, for a three-week preessional course and what is the result? Doug Clark from Mildura did just that and discovered a great opportunity to learn and grow in an open and challenging environment, and found and gave support and encouragement on the way.

What about you? If you can give three to four days a week

(Monday–Thursday) 8–25 February next year then come and share your experiences as a part of the first preessional course to be run by Alan Niven.

You will be exposed to a variety of ministry settings on field visits, hone up on your public-speaking skills, enter the exciting world of biblical studies and theology, visit an undertaker, affirm with confidence the essentials of the faith, discuss the reality of ministry, spirituality and family life and through it all enjoy rich fellowship and support.

Interested? Give me a ring on (03) 790 1000 or write to me at CCTC, PO Box 629, Mulgrave North 3170.

—Alan Niven

Letters to the Editor

Letters are limited to 200 words

The Proselytising Church

To the Editor

I am perplexed but not surprised. Happenings ("AC" 17 October, page 12) reports that WCC condemns missionary work among the Jews, condemns proselytising and "that 'claims of faith' should not be 'used as weapons against anyone'". See Acts 4:18-25.

Most churches support and encourage missionary effort.

This accords with the Lord's teaching recorded in the last verses of Matthew and Mark, is implied in John and is the action in the Acts and some parts of the letters to the churches.

The charge in Acts 1 is "Jerusalem, Judea (Jews), Samaria (Semitic) and the ends of the earth (Gentiles)".

Jesus went to the Jew first, then the Samaritan and Syrophenician women.

Peter (Acts 10) had the vision of clean and unclean animals, which he interpreted to mean all nations, tribes and nations, an extension of the experiences of the Day of Pentecost.

In Acts 4:19 and 5:29 Peter told the Sanhedrin, "We must obey God rather than men." Joshua told the Israelites, "Choose you this day whom you will serve. As for me and my house we will serve the Lord."

Jonah was told to call the people of Nineveh to repentance.

Whom should Churches of Christ, Baptist or other denominations heed—the Lord or the WCC? At Canberra, the WCC showed its (true?) colours—no particular faith but all faiths acceptable, even atheist and pagan, I believe.

Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth and the life; no-one comes to the Father but by me." See also Acts 4:12.

How shall the people of the non-Christian world hear the Gospel except someone tells them? Proselytise or not proselytise?

—E.M. Brough
(Kerang, Vic)

Today's Hypocrites

To the Editor,

I love the church but I hate her hypocrisy. I have just celebrated my 80th birthday and I am angry—angry and sad with the priests and prelates of today who tolerate, even uphold and teach, a double standard.

Questions: Did Christ cleanse the temple with his blood? Was his sacrificial death for the sin of all mankind? If this is so—why are women still stuck in the mire of Eve's sin?

Why is man master over woman? Is it because tradition has put a label of inferiority on her?

Are (some) of Paul's words of more importance than the Holy Spirit's decree on the Day of Pentecost? (Acts 2:17-21) Does the church worship Christ or the "vain traditions of the fathers"?

The result of this double standard is ugly. Men are threatened, as women become educated and self-supportive. Their self-esteem, built up over generations of the superior male status, is collapsing, so they hit out in frustration at their wives and children.

God is mocked and the cross of Jesus trampled on as spoilt little-boys strike out against a society that speaks about "equality". And the church upholds them: "Eve was deceived but Adam was not."

She can never regain her former place of equality. The cross left her guilty? Paul preaches "another gospel", she is to be saved through having children! (1 Timothy 2:11-15) Does the church worship Christ or Paul?

—Gladys Butler
(Bruce Rock, WA)

Conference Organisation

To The Editor,

The time is approaching when we will be thinking about the 1993 Vic-Tas Conference. As one who has attended conference since 1932, when we sat in conference through Easter, I am very concerned that Vic-Tas Conference, and I suspect all states, has become merely a convention and the opportuni-

ties for churches and individuals to ventilate and discuss matters of importance is being lost.

It is true that Churches of Christ are autonomous bodies and conference has no authority but all the time we are associated with conference we should endeavour to reach consensus on much of our teaching and principles instead of each church hiving off on its own.

Last conference allowed six and a half hours of business time which probably produced nearer five and a half hours of actual discussion. In the handbook for 1958 there were 15 hours 50 minutes.

Why are we afraid to permit discussion? Is it because we do not want to rock our comfortable boat?

There are several matters which need to be opened up:

- Regularise our thinking

and reporting about Christians in Fellowship. Our statistical report reveals that many churches, including some large ones, do not report these. Are we to assume that their reported membership includes Christians in Fellowship and if so what happens to our plea for immersion baptism?

• Our church planting policy in relation to our plea for unity and the economic waste of resources at a time when the church should be relating to the poor and powerless.

• The Christian response to issues of justice, peace and the integrity of creation and our responsibility to open up discussion with governments on these matters.

And we could go on and on. Let us not be afraid of discussion. It is only through discussion that we can progress.

—Max Collyer
(Boronia, Vic)

Letters from Tertius

Pharisees

To the Editor,

I've always been perplexed about Pharisees. Jesus seemed to be in conflict with them. Because of that I had always thought of them as being a nasty, scheming, evil lot. But apparently that isn't the case. They were exceptionally well behaved.

This was on my mind after Sunday lunch, so I reached for my concordance and found Pharisee(s). First of all I discovered in the introduction that there were only about 6,000 of them. Although I suppose that would have been enough to make a nuisance of themselves if they wanted to upset Jesus' ministry. I was also surprised to find only 30 references to them. Maybe preachers give them a lot more publicity than they really rate.

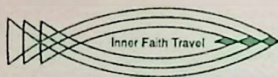
I discovered that by and large they were good people by modern standards of church membership. They prayed five times a day. They tithed. They never missed church and sat up near the front. They had evangelistic zeal. They fasted. They took part in open-air meetings. They were clean and environmentally conscious. They gave to the poor. They were morally respectable. They avoided all appearance of evil. They were law abiding.

Apparently they didn't like religion to be mixed with politics because they were a bit thick when matters of social justice and a fair go for the disadvantaged came up.

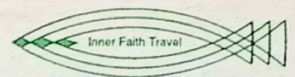
Jesus called them for everything and yet they were so much like us good modern Christians. So I looked hard to see what one reason there might be for his fierce denunciations of them. I think I found it in Luke 18:9. They were proud of their goodness and sat in judgment on those who were not so good.

It seems that we pillars of the church had better watch ourselves. For all our goodness we could still be on the Devil's side.

—Tertius



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AC

Media Review

Books



Rekindled!

by R.N. Hawkins (Vital Publications) \$4

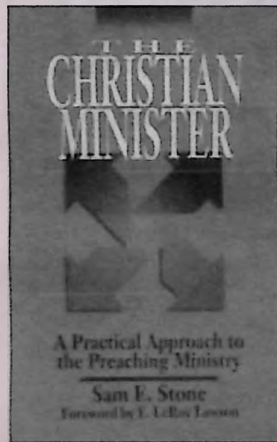
In an age where our culture encourages a superficial Christianity, God is moving by his Spirit to draw many Aussies into a deeper relationship with himself. Problem: what resources exist to help people rekindle that "fading ember to an intense flame that feeds on the mercy of God"? Ray Hawkins has met that need with *Rekindled!*—an excellent study booklet for people in our churches.

Often people make a dinkum "spur of the moment" rededication but fail to deal with the real spiritual issues. Within the eight studies in this book Ray uses God's Word to encourage people to tackle underlying problems holding them back from a "full on" walk with Jesus.

I appreciated the helpful blend of input and insightful questions on scripture passages in each study. The thrust of the studies is positive and not designed to give users a bad case of "the blues". Presentation is sharp and stylish. Vital Publications is to be commended for publishing another superb resource that will meet a real need in the local church.

—Ross Wakeley

Available from state departments of mission or from the Federal Literature Department, c/o PO Box 629, Mulgrave 3170, for \$4 plus postage.



The Christian Minister A Practical Approach to the Preaching Ministry

by Sam E. Stone (Standard Publishing)

Sam Stone starts his book on practical ministry hints with the words: "I love the ministry!" What follows is an examination of the practical workings of ministry written from within the Christian Church tradition in the USA. (The author is currently editor of the *Christian Standard*, and has had over 20 years involvement in preaching ministry.) He commences by looking at the role of the minister and examines the minister as depicted in the New Testament. He then looks at

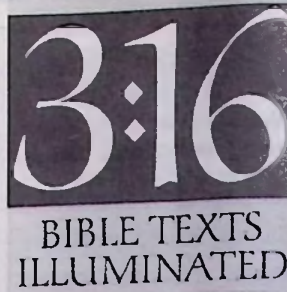
characteristics of the minister as a "man". (This book is from within the independent tradition in the USA, where all ministers are men.) There is some excellent practical advice in this area, not often dealt with in other books on ministry. The third section deals with relationships. It is only in the final section that Sam Stone deals with the job of ministry.

While not always applicable to our Australian understanding of ministry, there are some excellent chapters that ministers could read and learn from.

Unfortunately this book is difficult to obtain in Australia. Anyone interested in a copy should contact *The Australian Christian* office and we will see what arrangements can be made.

—CRA

DONALD E. KNUTH



3:16 Bible Texts Illuminated

by Donald E. Knuth (A-R Editions Inc)

Donald Knuth is a professor of computer science. When leading a Bible study in his local church he opted to use an unusual method of selection of the Bible verses for study. Being a scientist he was interested in stratified sampling. He therefore decided to select the sixteenth verse of the third chapter of each book of the Bible. Where a book did not contain three chapters he did not include it. Where a chapter was shorter than 16 verses he chose the sixteenth verse after the commencement of the third chapter. The Bible studies went very well and the material gave a great overview of the entire Bible and its teachings.

This book is a result of those Bible studies. Donald Knuth was later to work on the production of beautiful books and he came to know a noted calligrapher Hermann Zapf. He was very happy to work with the author on the production of a book based on the 3:16 verses. Hermann Zapf organised 58 other calligraphers from around the world to illustrate each of the individual verses. The book itself is very well produced, pleasing to the eye and a delight to hold and read.

Four pages illustrate each 3:16 verse. One page sets the context of the book and the verse within the book. Then there is one page devoted to the calligraphic interpretation of the verse based on Donald Knuth's own translation. Then two pages follow of a study on the individual verse.

This is a very interesting, well-presented book and through this particular selection of verses (not wholly random) the basic truths of the Bible are well covered.

Unfortunately it will be difficult to obtain in Australia. We were offered the book for review from a publisher we had never heard of. If any readers are interested in obtaining a copy please contact *The Australian Christian* office and we will see what arrangements can be made.

—CRA



Happenings

The Albanian parliament initiated on 16 October deliberations on a restrictive new draft law on religion that Protestants fear may "severely handicap the growth of the evangelical church in Albania". The proposed legislation grants official recognition to the 4 "traditional Albanian religious communities": Muslims, Bektashi (a Muslim sect), the Albanian Orthodox Church and the Roman Catholic Church. The law would force all others, classified as "religious sects", to seek recognition under the law through the approval of one of Albania's "traditional religious communities".

Crowds averaging over 45,000 packed into Moscow's Indoor Olympic Stadium during Billy Graham's two-week crusade in the Russian capital during October. This broke the record for the stadium of 38,000 set at the 1988 Goodwill Games. At the final meeting 50,000 jammed the stadium, with police estimating that 20,000 were unable to gain admittance. An average of over 14,000, more than one-quarter of the audiences, responded to the invitation to make a commitment to Christ. Billy Graham com-

mented: "I've never seen such a hunger in people for spiritual things. Over here there's been a spiritual starvation for many years. I seriously doubt that there is a place in the world so open to the Gospel."

A census of Romanians held in January this year revealed that 19.8 million out of a population of 22.8 million consider themselves Orthodox. The census was the first since World War II to include a question about religious affiliation. Latin-rite Catholics make up 5% of the population; Eastern-rite (Uniat) Catholics 1%. About 5% said they were Protestant—3.5% Reformed, 1% Pentecostal and 0.5% Baptist.

The Theological Education Committee of the China Christian Council says that 367 theological students graduated from China's 14 theological institutions this year. Since 1985 more than 1,500 students have graduated from Chinese seminaries and 1,300 of them now serve in local churches.

The 4th mini-Bible in an Aboriginal language published by the Bible Society this year was dedicated at

Numbulwar in the Northern Territory on 27 September. Nungubuyu is spoken by some 400 Aborigines in the remote coastal region of Numbulwar in the Gulf of Carpentaria. 200 copies of the mini-Bible have been published.

Alcohol consumption declines as church attendance increases, the National Church Life Survey has found. 25% of those who attend church once a month or less saw themselves as abstainers, compared to 44% of those who came once a week or more often. Some 12% of those who came to church less than once a week were regular drinkers, compared to 5% of those attending weekly or more often. Only 23% of newcomers to church life were abstainers, compared to 39% of all attenders. Attenders' attitudes to the Bible also affected the level of alcohol consumption. Those who took a more literal view of the Bible were more likely to be abstainers (54%). Only 4% of this group were regular drinkers. Attenders belonging to the Salvation Army (89%), Baptists and the Uniting Church all reported high levels of abstinence. The largest numbers of occasional drinkers were found amongst Lutherans (75%) and Anglicans (68%).

More than half of Australian Protestant churchgoers read their Bible on their own several times a week and a further 6% once a week, according to the latest results from the National Church Life Survey. Some 36% read their Bibles daily with a further 17% several times a week. The survey revealed that Protestant churchgoers from non-English speaking backgrounds appear to be better Bible readers than Australian-born attenders (62% as against 52%). Some 56% of migrants from English-speaking back-

grounds read their Bible several times a week. From a list of 10 possible versions the most popular was the Good News Bible (33%), NIV (25%) and the King James Version (13%).

The Chinese State Statistical Bureau has spent two years conducting a survey on the number of religious believers in the country. Although the results may never officially be released sources say the survey found 200 million professing religious belief. Of these, 100 million claim to be Buddhists. The Protestant Church was reported to have 63 million adherents, with Catholics numbering 12 million. The previous highest official estimate was over 10 million. The figure of 5 million Protestants released by the Three Self Patriotic Movement and the China Christian Council reflected only those Christians tied to the official church.

Opportunities for Ministry in Music

The Patch Church of Christ is growing and vibrant church nestled in the heart of the Dandenong Ranges. We are a group dedicated to communicating the Gospel within our community and see relevant music as a vital part of this mission.

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Church planting is an essential, integral part of the mission of the church, and rises out of the intention of the Father, is grounded in the lordship of Jesus Christ, and in the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

—Charles Chaney

Progress since 1988



Ian Cartmel began the CROP emphasis by planting a church at Mornington in 1988. The church is now self-supporting. Since then the rate of Victorian new church development is the fastest experienced

this century. These churches have created points of entry for newcomers. New ethnic churches enable a greater openness to our increasingly diverse population.

New Phase



The Church Reach Out Plan will move into a new phase following the appeal launch on 12 March 1993. Churches will be challenged to consider church planting moves and support for these

initiatives. CROP is a joint Department and Properties Corporation venture. **Ian Tippett** will be the appeal director. Strong interest in church planting is evident. Vision church was launched in September and Dawson Street, Ballarat, will sponsor a daughter church at Haddon in November.

Church Revitalisation

Alan Hirsch, South Melbourne's minister, is consulting with various smaller churches to assist a process of revitalisation. South Melbourne has moved from under twenty attenders to over one hundred. Planning for ministry in the St Kilda area is well advanced. The Department is supporting Moses Abbatangelo in outreach ministry. Swanston Street, Melbourne, church is sponsoring new initiatives at Brunswick and South Yarra in association with these congregations.

Achievements, Needs and Opportunities



Grace church celebrated its tenth anniversary in March with six hundred attenders. The church commenced with Department support. Church leaders have backed Department initia-

tives and encouraged minister **Chek Chia** to be involved in planting ventures and the Department's strategic planning. After twenty-three months Sunbury church, under Milton Oliver's leadership, expects to be self-supporting and active in further church planting moves. Existing Department commitments to new churches and support for a possible three or four new projects in 1993 mean a possible \$25,000 deficit. Church support and group and personal gifts are urgent needs.

Tasmanian Progress



Field director **Lynette Leach's** October visit to all Tasmanian churches revealed a positive situation. The rural churches at Caveside, Nubeena and the Huon evidenced strengths

in fellowship and outreach. Family, children's and youth ministry were highlights. Ulverstone, Devonport, Launceston, Howrah and Hobart showed a commitment to growth and an awareness of creating points of entry for newcomers. The Department assists Ulverstone financially. Self-support is anticipated in 1993. Midway Point is working with Hobart in a joint development program with Department assistance. The commitment of ministers was especially recognised.

VITAL CHRISTIANITY

New Youth Director Gordon Barr



Gordon Barr is enthusiastic about his new role as our **Youth Director**.

His background is a great indication to the key ministry he'll have in NSW.

Gordon's been the Youth Minister at local churches in Western Australia and NSW and he comes to us after a ministry at Hobart church in music and arts. In addition, **Gordon's** a well-known musician around Australia!

Gordon is married to **Kendal** and they will start their new role in late November, along with their children **Kyle** and **Justine**.

Gordon is keen to be a servant to your church in the years ahead.

New "Babies" Arrive in '93!



Wyoming church is excited about their "new baby" to commence at **Ourimbah** early in 1993.

The founding pastor will be **Leigh Orton**, joined by his wife **Linda** and their two children.

Adrian Jackson, with his wife **Heather** and their new daughter, will commence another "new baby" at **Quaker's Hill** in 1993. **Castle Hill** church is helping with people, resources and prayer.

Ourimbah and **Quaker's Hill** churches will be financially assisted by funds from **Church Development & Education** during the next three years.

Your prayers are needed.

Ethnic Ministry

Belmore church continues to move ahead with its ethnic ministry. 1993 will see the **Korean** work extending, with the ministry to make use of **Earlwood's** building.

Korean pastor, **David Kim**, will head up this exciting expansion.

Support from other local churches with prayer, phone calls or a visit is appreciated. Contact **Wayne Shepherd** on (02) 759 6465 for details.



Benjamin Kim, **Rajend Prasad** and **David Kim** are three of the pastors in the expanding multicultural work at our **Belmore** and **Earlwood** churches.

Your financial and prayer support assists **Church Development & Education** to continue to serve God's people. PO Box 140, Carlingford 2122.

Graham Carslake in Indianapolis

Ministers trade jobs



• Graham Carslake with George and Elizabeth Sublette

Graham Carslake, the senior minister at Warwick, WA, church, traded places with an American minister, George Sublette, of Crestview Christian Church in Indianapolis, Indiana, as part of a ministry exchange program for nearly five months.

The ministers wanted to learn more about Australian and American stereotypes and broaden their perspectives on ministry. The men agreed to swap houses and cars as well as parish responsibilities.

Pastoral duties included not only preaching on Sunday mornings but also counselling parishioners and comforting them during times of crisis.

Graham said Australia was more secular than the United States, with only about 17% at-

tending church regularly. In America, 42% do, according to a recent survey.

"Animosity towards the church is still prevalent in Australia, perhaps because it was settled as a penal colony in the 1800s and many of the convicts were forced to attend worship services. Despite the low percentage of Australians attending church, the commitment of those who do seems stronger than that in the United States."

Although Graham observed that most churchgoing Americans aren't that heavily involved in parish activities, he says religion in America is an accepted part of life: "It is discussed freely in all kinds of settings." He was also amazed at the number of denominations in America, the number of

Silver for Russ Wesley at Bathurst

Positive attitude

Over 200 transplant recipients, representing each Australian state, New Zealand, Thailand, the Philippines and Japan, gathered for the 3rd National Transplant Games 4-11 October in Bathurst, NSW. Eight different sports (track and field, tennis, table tennis, snooker, lawn and tenpin bowling, golf and swimming) were competed in.

Russ Wesley, a Churches of Christ minister and chaplain at Geelong High School who had a heart transplant in May 1989, was a member of the Victorian team. Russ finished with two silver medals in athletics,

coming second in the 200 m and 400 m events in his age group. On a time trial he was also second in the 1500 m event and was the first Victorian and heart transplant recipient over the line for each of these events. In the 6 km run he was 10th overall and the second fastest for Victoria.

With Russ's cycling performance in March in Tasmania and his results in Bathurst he is eligible for selection for the World Games to be held in Vancouver, Canada, in July 1993. The team of 40 will be selected in early December.

Russ attributes his achievements to God's miracle of healing and God's continued faithfulness, along with a positive attitude and strong spiritual approach to life. He also reaffirms that words cannot express his thankfulness to the donor and the donor's family that have made his continuation of life possible.

churches and their size. Congregations were able to build such big places because donations to churches were tax deductible.

Graham found Australians and Americans have many misconceptions about each others country. "They expected me to speak the colloquial language of Crocodile Dundee and they also thought Australia was full of kangaroos and Aborigines throwing boomerangs."

George and Graham found they had much in common besides their common affiliation with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)/Churches of Christ movement. Both see the church ministering in the community and meeting people's needs.

—from the *Indianapolis Star*



• Russell Wesley

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Front Line Fiji

Village outreach



• Anita Vimpani will be taking the gospel from high-rise Melbourne to a low-rise Fijian village

Two Monash University students, Scott Thomson and Anita Vimpani, will be part of a group of 20 Australian undergraduates who will be involved in Fijian village outreach in December.

Scott became a Christian in his final year of high school at a Tony Campolo talk. He currently attends St Jude's Anglican Church, Carlton, where he leads a Bible study group. He is studying science at Monash.

Anita became a Christian in 1985. She currently attends Wesley Uniting Church, East Doncaster, Vic, where she is involved in leading the youth group and singing. She is studying civil engineering.

Both Scott and Anita are members of the Monash Christian Union, which is one of 60

groups across Australia sponsored by the Australian Fellowship of Evangelical Students (AFES). AFES seeks to establish and maintain such groups due to its conviction that the time a person spends at university is often one of great change (and not always for the better). A student is exposed to new ideas and pressures. In this context, the AFES groups promote Christ by encouraging Christians to become more like him and also to proclaim him to non-Christians.

The opportunity to join with other students for outreach in Fiji is a great opportunity for both Scott and Anita to build on what they are learning about ministry on their campuses. It will be of particular value as they are considering the possi-

bility of mission work in the future.

There are four other Victorians making the trip, along with students from SA, ACT, Tasmania and NSW. The students come from a range of denominational backgrounds (Baptist, Anglican, Uniting, Presbyterian and Lutheran) and will be led by Kim Little (a Sydney staffworker) and Barb Allison (AFES Mission Secretary).

The first part of the trip involves attending the International Fellowship of Evangelical Students (IFES) South Pacific Regional Conference in Suva. Here the Australians will meet students from Papua New Guinea, Fiji and New Zealand and take their turn in leading worship and reporting on campus activities.

After the conference, the students will embark on a week of village outreach sponsored by the Fijian Methodist Church, and will live with families in the villages.

The group will be split into two teams, working in separate villages. Mornings will see them working with the women in the fields, fishing, making mats or whatever. The guys may also be involved in a village building project. There will be ample opportunities for personal witnessing during this time, and helping to carry the load instead of freeloaders will be part of the witness.

In the afternoon, the groups will run a children's program for about two hours, along similar lines to a Scripture Union beach mission.

In the evening, they will have the opportunity to present the gospel using various means. They will be using the themes raised in *Christianity Explained* as the basis of each evening's presentation. All students will work on music and skits to demonstrate the themes, while each male student will have the opportunity to present part of the *Christianity Explained* outline.

Scott Thomson will be responsible for communicating that Jesus is the Son of God and what his death on the cross means. Anita Vimpani will help design a skit to demonstrate Christ's death and its implications.

At this stage, all the students are busy preparing themselves (while juggling uni work) for the trip.

Vaccinations aside, they have to get to know each other, prepare their conference reports, personal testimonies, and outreach programs and continue to be prayerful about their endeavours.

If you would like to find out more about the work of AFES on your local campus, contact the AFES National Office, 16 Mill Hill Rd, Bondi Junction 2026. Phone (02) 369 1688.

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ENGAGEMENTS

McHUGH—WHITBOURNE Glen, our son, has recently announced his engagement to Pauline. Our love and blessings for your future happiness together—June and Bob (Mum and Dad). Chelsea, Vic.

GOLDEN WEDDINGS

BYARD (FLEMING) Huon and Iris give thanks to God for 50 years of marriage. Married at Invermay Church of Christ by the late F.T. Morgan on 5 December 1942. Present address: 16 Low Head Rd, George Town, Tas.

ROFFEY An invitation to share with Ed and Gwen Roffey this anniversary at Church of Christ, Berry Street, North Essendon, on Sunday, 13 December. At 2.30 pm a service of thanksgiving in the church and afternoon tea in the hall. No presents please. Phone (03) 874 3917.

DEATHS

GRIEVE, J.R. (Jock) On 31 October 1992, suddenly while on holiday. Loved and caring husband of Thelma. Dearly loved Dad of Barbara, Ellen, Val and Rosemary. Loved father-in-law of Charles and Keith and friend of Nick. Proud Grandpa of his 14 grandchildren. Aged 80 years. "All things work together for good to them who love God and live according to his purpose." (Romans 8:28)

STIDWILL (DOWELL), Rita. God called Rita to her rest at Stawell, 1 November 1992, in her 89th year. Much loved and caring sister of Alice, Hilda, Fred, Bert and Essie. Peacefully resting in God's care.

WITHERS, Arthur Blackmore. 29 October 1992. Devoted and dearly loved husband of Clara, loving and much-loved father of Les, Jean and John (dec), father-in-law of Judy and Max, loved Grandpa and Poppa of Debbie, Chris and Lisa, Michelle and Robyn, Rachel, Rebecca and Jane, and great-grandfather of nine. "How precious is thy steadfast love, O God!"

Parkdale

Church of Christ Homecoming

29 November

at 10.15 am

Speaker: K. Pitt

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Enquiries (03) 580 6224

PROFESSIONAL NOTICES

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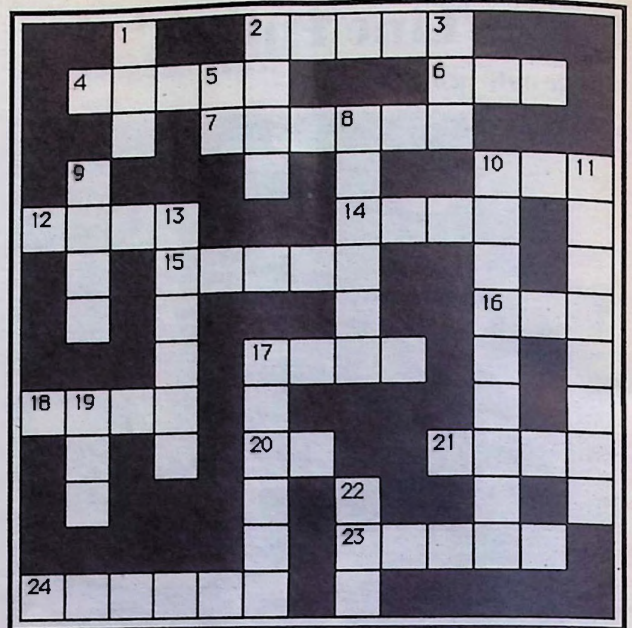
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Crossword



Across

- 2 Bird not to be eaten (Deuteronomy 14:12)
- 4 Member of tribe of Manasseh (1 Chronicles 7:18) (KJV)
- 6 Holy reverence
- 7 Symbolises salvation in Ephesians 6:17
- 10 No-one — serve two masters (Matthew 6:24)
- 12 Virtue
- 14 He who wants to save his life will — it (Matthew 16:25)
- 15 We are — by hope (Romans 8:24)
- 16 Insect recommended to be studied

- 17 When did the women go to the tomb
- 18 May be bought with tithe (Deuteronomy 14:26)
- 20 Abram came from here
- 21 Siloam, for example (John 9:7)
- 23 Food for heavenly messengers (Genesis 18:8)
- 24 River beyond Eden (Genesis 2)

Down

- 1 King of Israel
- 2 Son of Mushi (1 Chronicles 23:23)
- 3 Whenever you — this bread
- 5 Exclamation
- 8 Regulations governed its spread (Leviticus 14:33)
- 9 Giant Philistine had 12 of these (2 Samuel 21:20)
- 10 Used in purification recipe (Leviticus 14:51)
- 11 The breathe of life was breathed into Adam's -----
- 13 OT heroine
- 17 Thomas had these
- 19 There was no room here
- 22 --- blast (Psalm 147:17)

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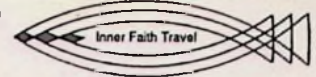
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Evangelism

Be Available

God used a "burning bush", a stuttering Moses, a fearful Jeremiah and an embarrassed Peter because they were available. The average Christian doesn't share his faith for a number of reasons—fear, ignorance, lack of knowledge, indifference—but the greatest of these is "indifference". Often, the indifference in the church to real, practical, face-to-face evangelism is one of the major contributing factors to the demise of the Christian church. We often have simply not cared enough about the eternal state of those close to us to be motivated to share the message when God gives the opportunities. It is often just simply a matter that it is not on our comfortable middle-class agenda in a place of priority. We plainly and simply are just not available.

On the other hand, I think of the housewife who after prayer and sensing a direction from God cared enough to invite her neighbours to a Bible study. Thirteen neighbours and friends attended the study for over two years! The majority became Christians. This woman had not even led a Bible study before, but was available.

Be Real

People need to see a "flesh and blood" Christianity in action. We need to be real. We must walk our talk. The average church or parachurch organisation has us so committed to the running of their programs that there is little time left over for real evangelism to take place.

I am absolutely convinced that when we live for Christ according to his standards of discipleship there will be numerous opportunities to share

Reaching the Average Aussie

John Bond

the credibility of the Gospel. (1 Peter 3:15 and 16) There are several families in the life of my local church who came to Christ because Christians provided practical support in the way of food and help in their times of need.

Establish Relationships

Over 90% of people become Christians because of a significant relationship with another Christian. There are very few who walk off the street to find a relationship with God without significant help from another person who cared enough to share.

Surveys reveal that the average Christian family has little time left over from their church or Christian activities to establish meaningful relationships with neighbours, friends and family who don't know the Lord, let alone their own family. I urge church boards everywhere to make sure they have at least two free nights every week where there is no church program or church-related activities. It's time the Christian church took the mandate seriously and "go into the world".

We need time to do that! It needs to be a priority. Jesus spent 46.3% of his recorded time with those who were either neutral or negative to his ministry. (Gene Getz, *Sharpening the Focus of the Church*, Moody Press) Oh that we as the church today would do likewise. We too need to become the friend of sinners. (Luke 7:33-35)

Focus on Young People and Be Young at Heart!

Between 80-90% of all people come to Christ before they are 25. This must say something about the priorities of evangelism and ministry. Young people are flexible and we the not-so-young need to free up a little and accommodate the young people and their ways a little more readily.

We have a lost generation of young people who know little to nothing about God, who will listen to truth if there are the people who are prepared to make the time and effort to share with them.

We need to be led of the Holy Spirit flexible in evangelism. A study of the gospels reveals that

Jesus varied and tailored his approach to suit every person's situation. We must not rely or become dependent upon methods, programs or a particular style.

Pray

We must talk to God about people before we talk to people about God. When we pray, we must remember that it involves us listening, and us being prepared to be the answer to the prayers we pray. We must be sensitive to God's leading. He promises to direct us and to answer our prayers. (Psalm 32:8, 1 John 5:14, 15) When God lays people upon our heart, we need to respond.

There was a young couple in one of our churches who were challenged to pray for several people they knew who didn't know and love the Lord. They had neighbours of many years with whom they hadn't even shared a meal! They took a natural opportunity, had the family for a meal, following natural opportunities to share. Within a week the whole family came to Christ.

They were available, flexible, real, established a relationship and saturated the situation in prayer. Are you prepared to do the same and follow the Lord's direction? It's an exciting pathway to walk on.

• John Bond is minister-elect of the South Perth, WA, church.

THOSE WILLING TO THEOLOGIZE ABOUT, EXPOUND UPON, ANALYZE, FORM COMMITTEES TO STUDY, ADMINISTER, FACILITATE, AND CONTRIBUTE MONEY TOWARDS THE WORK OF THE CHURCH.



THOSE WILLING TO DO THE WORK OF THE CHURCH.



Eternal Life. We're In It!

In Sunday school we invariably learnt that heaven is somewhere up in the bright blue sky, and that salvation is about getting to heaven when you die. This perception has spawned numerous images in popular cartoons and humour—like St Peter at the pearly gates, sitting behind an antique desk, checking entries in the register of heaven; or people with halos sitting on clouds playing harps, surrounded by chubby little baroque cherubs. Such images, however, work against the most central themes of Biblical salvation.

The metaphor "heaven" is a metaphor for the presence, reality and eternity of the living God—a dynamic, ubiquitous reality, not the topography of the stratosphere. The writer to the Ephesians states that "we are enthroned with him (Christ) in heavenly places"—a present experience and therefore a non-spatial reality. While Matthew speaks of the Kingdom of Heaven (a Jewish periphrasis for God), Mark and Luke refer to the Kingdom of God—the presence and reign of God in human life. In the Gospel narratives Jesus announces that the Kingdom of God... is at hand, near, upon you, here, has come among you—which has astonishingly different implications for salvation than the idea of cashing in the ultimate insurance policy when you die. The metaphors of God's reality and presence in our world—such as Kingdom of Heaven or God, are used by the Gospel narrators in the context of liberating encounters where people experience and celebrate the serendipitous life and grace of God.

When we pray, "Your Kingdom come, your will be done," we are making it our passion and hope to see God's salvation—God's grace, compassion, wholeness, justice, and shalom prevail in human life, as indeed the Biblical narrative seeks progressively to show, these are intrinsic to the very

nature and passion of God. Perhaps that is why the images of "getting to heaven" have prevailed. The personal crises of perception and the birthing of new lifestyle that the presence of the Kingdom precipitates in our lives are too precarious. The vulnerable journey with God toward wholeness is too risky. It is ultimately more comfortable, more predictable, to live with images of salvation tethered to the afterlife. Furthermore, while shocking disparities in people's capacity to live with human dignity are assumed to be redressed in the afterlife, there is no need to question or involve God with them now. However, the Biblical narratives are rich with diverse images of salvation that relate to human life and dignity now—such as liberation, deliverance, reconciliation, wholeness and God's compassionate redemption and healing of the sacred Imago Dei in all people.*

Despite the excellent scholarship achieved in the Biblical imagery of salvation and its powerful personal and social implications for us in the complex world we live in, most people in the community, and even some in the church, still have a perception of Christian salvation as cashing in the ultimate insurance policy when they die. (That's what going to church is supposed to be all about, isn't it?) However, the Biblical narrators are passionately concerned with the reality of God's salvation now—the New Testament writers are concerned with the experience of living in that gracious, liberating gift of God's eternal quality of life, even now.

Eternal life is that quality of life Jesus spoke about when he said, "I have come that you might have life—life in all its fullness," both personally and in community with others. It is that quality of life that enables us to experience profound grace in the face of failure and wrong choices, regret and despair, tragedy and even death.

It is a quality of life that enables us—as community—to live out the compassionate lifestyle of the Kingdom in emulation of the self-giving of Jesus for others.

A few years ago Philip Adams coined the phrase "Life. Be In It." The subsequent popularity of the slogan suggests it touched a deep subconscious longing in people's lives. "Life. Be In It." That's what the early Christian communities are telling us, aren't they? The Good News of a whole new quality of life we can have in Jesus Christ right now, a quality of life which is Real Life, God's life, Eternal life—an inexhaustible source of compassion, joy, wholeness, grace and hope—those qualities we all need to make life real living in our homes, vocation, and relationships with others. This new life we have from God in Jesus Christ is so powerful, so vibrant, that it will last forever, for life in communion with the life of God—brought into sharp focus in the risen Christ—will endure forever. You don't have to wait until you die to experience eternal life, as Jesus reminds Martha: "Whoever lives and believes in me will never die."¹ Eternal life is "life which has survival value."² Nothing can touch it. It will survive anything, even death.

Now if some of you are wondering about heaven and its mansions along streets of gold, paradisiac gardens with aesculapian trees on the shores of a crystal sea, St Peter at the pearly gates with his keys to the eternal city: remember that these powerful images are metaphors. The writers use the most vivid, exquisite images they know of to point to the reality and eternity of God, in the same way the Psalmist describes God's protection metaphorically, as a broody mother hiding her chicks under her wing. As metaphors they are of themselves inadequate to describe the reality they point to.³ If we interpret such images literally, we risk turning them into a cartoonist's paradise, and

losing the richness of the metaphors that bring surplus not paucity of meaning to our lives, as they consistently point to the ultimate purpose of life—communion with the living God. When we recognise they are evocative images of that which is beyond human imagination, we are compelled to explore in other Biblical metaphors of God—such as liberator, parent, friend, lover—what God can be to us eternally, now—and forever.

—Stephen Curkpatrick

*For some people, salvation is liberation from other people's sins. How would the children of Somalia experience God's salvation today?

¹While the Synoptic narratives speak of the presence of the Kingdom in Jesus' ministry, the Johannine narratives speak of eternal life in the midst of this life-crystallised in the gift of the Spirit and faith in the risen Christ. Matthew, Luke and John reflect the early Christian communities' coming to terms with an indefinite delay of the "imminent parousia".

²I am indebted to Gordon Stirling for this indelible phrase.

³The writer who says, "I had a vision... I saw... a new heaven," is being consistent with the popular contemporary apocalyptic genre with its penchant for visions and dreams. On the other hand, the apostle Paul, acutely aware of the limits of language and the dangers of literalism, is content to say, "These things are unspeakable."

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Are We Communicating?

Making the best use of the medium of print

The Women's Ministry in South Australia continues to reach women of the churches because of the special events held throughout the year. Recent events include the Study Day, the Women's Camp at Mylor and the country visit to Keith.

The women who attended the Women's Ministry Study Day in August, at the Grote Street church, were faced with the challenge of whether, in sharing the gospel, our churches were making the best use of the print medium.

As an introduction, the guest speaker, Ken Packer, spoke of three misconceptions that often hinder us from "getting on with the job" of making effective use of this medium.

First, there is the idea that secular newspapers are antagonistic towards the gospel and therefore out of our reach. Ken said that this isn't so, and that too often we have not taken the trouble to learn (and obey) the journalistic requirements of a newspaper.

"For example, Paul went into potentially hostile territory, the synagogues scattered across the Roman Empire. When he was given the opportunity to speak, he used the right format, namely, their own Old Testament scriptures. If we today are wise enough to find out the format used by secular newspapers and learn how to use it, we too will have an open door to the hearts of the uncommitted," he said.

Second, we may think that learning how to use the print medium is too complicated, too difficult and too expensive.



• Ken Packer

Again, this is not so. For an outlay of about \$10 on two paperback books that Ken has written, any church can find out what to do.

The third misconception is, "If anything can be done to get us into the newspaper, it will take a man to do it!" This too is wrong.

Ken asked, "Does God only give writing talent to men? Of course not. And does God give spiritual gifts only to men? Not according to Paul, who said, 'The Holy Spirit displays God's power through each of us as a means of helping the entire church.'" (1 Corinthians 12:7 (LB))

The study day continued with Ken providing practical and visual demonstrations of the three areas that could be considered accessible to Christians as they seek to reach out in their communities. Ken spoke of the local church bulletin or newsletter, the "wayside pulpit" (the noticeboard out the front of church properties) and the local district weekly newspaper.

The Sunday Bulletin

"Are we communicating effectively via the Sunday bulletin/newsletter, which we give to the congregation each week or monthly? Most of the church news bulletins I see amount to nothing more than Christians talking to Christians!" Ken said. He urged that we should widen our target readership by including some material that speaks to Christian and non-Christian readers at the same time. "Why not include articles that give a Christian view on such matters as home and family, parent-child conflicts, husband-wife issues and other issues? Such material will speak to church and unchurched alike."

To show what can be done, one of the paperbacks he has produced, *Leap Those Hurdles*, contains 52 down-to-earth messages ready to photocopy straight into the Sunday bulletin—one for each week of the year. They are practical messages that appeal to all readers, whether they are churchgoers or not, and the messages being relevant make the church bulletin suitable to pass on to friends and neighbours.

The Wayside Pulpit

Another avenue for using the print medium is by means of "one-liners" placed on a wayside pulpit (noticeboard) at the front of our church premises. Ken said, "By using movable letters (on the noticeboard), we can share a new message with thousands of motorists every week. It will thereby speak to people who may never enter a church, and it is free advertising because we own the premises! So why aren't we doing it?" Ken demonstrated the variety of ineffective "wayside pulpits" using slides taken around South Australia, and some interstate, which simply advertised what was going on inside the church, with no gospel message to the unsaved.

Ken Packer's other paperback *Putting Christ Back in the News* has a chapter on the subject of wayside pulpits, including "10 commandments for roadside witness".

The Local Newspaper

Ken spoke about the importance of using suburban and country newspapers, and gave pointers on how to go about it if we want local citizens to know what our church's role is in the community. "If we don't tell them why we exist, who will?" he said. Ken has outlined in

detail, in his book *Putting Christ Back in the News*, the way we can "hone in" on this very available print media. The book is a must for those who want to know why their church is not in the news, how to communicate effectively with one's neighbourhood, and how to reach those who have deep needs but don't know that Christ is the answer.

Local churches consider themselves ill-equipped if they don't have a church secretary, a treasurer and a church cleaner. "But," Ken says, "what about a journalist? Such a person is not even on the agenda! Yet this is the person vitally needed if a suburban or rural church wants to make effective use of the local press."

For those who have a desire to write, or feel they have a bent for writing but need help in developing their talent, Ken Packer began the non-profit Christian Writers' School of South Australia in 1979 and it is available as a correspondence course for an outlay of \$55. Ken can be contacted to speak at seminars or gatherings to help ministers, church editors, or other Christian communicators to improve the church's outreach through better use of the print mass media.

Ken concluded the Women's Study Day with, "How important is the art of writing? So important that, of all the media God could have chosen for the preservation of his Word, he chose the written page. He even saw to it that the very first book ever to be put into print was the Bible. We might wonder why the church isn't still leading the world in the matter of how best to use the print media."

—Lori McDonald
(Editor, CALL Newsletter)



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A Church ABC

Joondalup is situated 30 km north of Perth, WA, the centre of the new City of Wanneroo, which has the second-fastest growth rate in Australia. A new railway will connect the area with the capital in the next couple of months and by the year 2010 35,000 are expected to be working in this the most northerly Perth suburb, and 10-15,000 at the university there. It was important to establish a church in this rapidly expanding area.

Last week the Joondalup Community Church officially affiliated with the WA Conference. The church began just two years ago, a joint venture by the Whitfords church, who wished to sponsor a work to their north, and what is now known as the Department of Church Development. Glen Smyth and his wife and another couple commenced the work, meeting as a home group for the first couple of months. Glen's salary for the first year was paid and a house supplied by money earned by the sale of property owned by the Whitfords church and much of the

first year of the life the church was spent in advertising.

The vision and the investment have reaped dividends. The Joondalup church now has 100 attending its services and there are 56 members. In the last year 22 people have joined the church, 14 by faith and bap-

services that people feel comfortable attending and feel happy about inviting their friends to. There are guest singers and musicians, testimonies and drama and messages that are topical and relevant to people from outside the church. One series was "Your journey

the faith, providing Biblical teaching, fostering fellowship support and building up leadership.

Sunday school is held in conjunction with the morning service and a youth ministry started this year. Another major outreach is organising the local candles by candlelight at Christmas time. This year over 5,000 are expected; an event that will

give exposure to the church.

Glen Smyth, the minister, was born and bred in Perth and came from the Wembley church. He studied at Carlingford in 1983-86, and from 1987 was the youth pastor at the South Perth church. He and his wife Avril have two boys, and are expecting another child.

The Joondalup church is looking to making Christianity relevant to more and more people moving to this growing area, making the church important to new people. Joondalup is willing and able to try new things to attract people and the opportunities for the future can only be described as "fantastic".

tism. The main thrust of the work in this new area is to reach out to those who have not attended church before. Planning emphasis is therefore on how to interest these people. The aim is to have services that will attract people and in which those who have not attended church before feel comfortable.

The church now meets at 9.30 am in a lecture theatre at the Joondalup Campus of Edith Cowan University. There is comfortable seating for 250 and the facilities are magnificent—including full audiovisual equipment and a grand piano. The services are uplifting and informal. They are services that people can enjoy and have a good time at and the sort of

to a successful life", including coping with stress and past memories; another was on such topics as abortion, evolution and the end of the world. An interesting aspect at Joondalup is that there is no communion at the Sunday service—this is however a very important part of the home group meetings during the week.

The expectation of members is that they attend the Sunday morning service and also participate in a home group. There are now four home groups involving 60 people, held in different areas and on different nights of the week. The two elders, the minister and another member lead these groups, which are vital in encouraging

Focus on Joondalup



Eric Hollard

Eric Hollard died on 2 November after a long period of ill-health, just weeks before his 81st birthday. Eric had significant ministries in South Australia, Victoria, New Zealand and the United States.

An obituary will appear in a future issue.

Rod Foster

The Queensland Conference Executive has appointed Rodney Foster to the position of General Secretary of Queensland Conference.

Rod is the senior minister of the Launceston, Tas, church and has had considerable ex-

perience in a range of aspects that will be valuable as general secretary. He is a qualified accountant and was formerly State Accountant for the Tasmanian Police Department, where he was also responsible for investments related to the Police Provident Fund.

For a period of 18 months Rod served in Papua New Guinea as the Business Manager for the Churches of Christ Mission. Following missionary service he entered the College of the Bible at Glen Iris and obtained the Diploma in Ministry and a Bachelor of Theology.

Following student ministries at Surrey Hills and Glen

People

Waverley, Vic, Rod had ministries in Albury, NSW, and Launceston, where he is cur-



• Rod Foster

rently the senior minister of a ministry team of three.

Rod is married to Jeanette and they have four children, Jodie, 18, Carolyn, 16, Daniel, 11, and Leanne, 9. Jodie is intending to remain in Tasmania.

Rod is expecting to commence duties with the Queensland Conference in January 1993.

Alan Male

Following his recent surgery, Alan Male was able to return to his home on 4 November. He is recovering slowly but has been able to get out and water the garden this week.

Alan and Cathy wish to express their appreciation to our readers for their prayers and support during Alan's illness.

Personal

Baptisms

•Lynda Lee, Sylvia Membery, Tanya Membery, Elizabeth Simons, Barbara Simons, Warrnambool, Vic •Daniel Helps, Happy Valley, SA •Betty Jenner, Trish Witney, Michael Ely, Adrian Looney, Ivan Grant, Swan Hill, Vic •Anita Ang, Howrah, Tas •David Eley, South Perth, WA

Marriages

•Charmaine Ranford to Bob Scott, Elizabeth & Keith Burrows, Carnarvon, WA

Deaths

•Ted Wooles, Warrnambool, Vic
•Arthur Withers, North Balwyn, Vic
•Stephen Russell, Launceston, Tas

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This person will need to work closely with the facilities senior staff as well as with
the ministry team at Southport Church of Christ.

The chaplain will be a recognised minister and will be offered a salary package
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Phone (075) 71 1288 (BH) for—

an application form;
terms and conditions of employment;
a job description.

Completed details, together with your curriculum vitae, should be forwarded
before 30 November 1992 to—

Phil Kennedy, Senior Administrator,
Churches of Christ in Qld Social Service Department,
Gold Coast Region, Marana Gardens,
10 Ridgeway Ave, Southport 4215

Obituaries

Obituaries are limited to 100 words

Clampett, Edna

Edna was born at Port Melbourne in 1914. Both she and brother Keith, who died five years ago, were unable to walk. After her parents died they boarded with the Ross family at Moreland. Sylvia Davis became a close friend to Edna and faithfully took Edna to Endeavour and church services—usually in the old can wheelchair. For many years Edna resided at Mount Royal, but life really opened up for Edna when Fred Combridge House opened in 1979. Here she was often the "life of the party" and made many friends with residents and regular visitors to the home. In spite of her infirmities she was often seen with friends at conference rallies and other outings. 23 August was her 78th birthday and a lovely party was organised at the home. It was only a short time later that Edna took a bad turn. As she lay in bed on that last day, almost the last words to her carer who held her hand were, "I am going home to my mother." The chapel was filled with many friends to say farewell at the service of thanksgiving for a wonderfully full life in spite of adversity.

—Don A.V. Thomas

Dewar, Robert

(23.9.92) The family arrived in Sydney on the SS *Orantes* from Scotland in 1929 when Robert was six. Bob learned early that to succeed in this new country demanded a tenacity of purpose. In his early twenties on a visit to Queensland he'd met a nursing sister, Laurel Cole. Laurel and Bob were married at Ma Ma Creek, June 1950. He excelled as a precision toolmaker and easily found work in the Bundaberg Foundry. Here, impressed by Vic Dallinger's practical Christianity, Bob could not resist the claims of Jesus. Once having put his hand to the plough, he did not look back. He shared his new faith with his apprentices at the foundry and they responded to this man who lived what he preached. Many became Christians. His work took him to Mackay and finally Brisbane. Wherever he went he served the Lord and his church faithfully in teaching, counselling, ministering in solo and choir, and as a much-loved elder. Bob was a devoted husband and father to his sons, Bruce and Laurie. He delighted in his grandchildren, Tracey and Robert. During 1988-89 Bob and Laurel relieved as business manager with our PNG mission. He spent long hours learning the com-

puter to be adequately equipped for the job. He loved the PNG people and their faith. At the time of his passing he was on the OMB and conference secretariat. Bob handled the diagnosis of his terminal illness and the short weeks of his suffering with great dignity. At the services held at Annerley and at the Ma Ma Creek interment many gathered to give glory to God for this wise, loving man.

—Fran Chadwick

Long, Sylvia Cora Heather

(3.11.92) The passing of an era in both the Mylor district and the Aldgate Valley, SA, church was marked with the death of Cora, aged 90. Widowed six months before, Cora continued to demonstrate her strong, independent style of living until 10 days before her death. She was a highly valued member of the church, participating as fully as she was able, expressing her generous and interested spirit to the end. Her greatest desire was that her memorial service would draw attention to her Lord and not to herself. What became evident to the many gathered was that her Lord shone through her life. Cora Long will be well remembered for years to come.

—Dennis Ryle

Morris, Dr Murray Wynne

(9.10.92) Born in Ballarat, Vic, 1911, passed away at Maryville, Geelong. He took up membership in July 1955 at La Trobe Terrace, Geelong. Educated in Ballarat and at the University of Melbourne, at 20 he became a pharmacist in Footscray. He then studied medicine, graduating in 1944. He was a resident doctor at Geelong Hospital and later practised privately. He was responsible for the pioneering work in mouth-to-mouth resuscitation and developed a mouthpiece for that purpose. Dr Morris regularly presided in worship and was deacon for 20 years. He is remembered as a man who loved his church, his family and work and for his sacrificial service to others. Throughout his life he was wonderfully supported by his wife Connie and children Belinda and Richard. Dr Morris was a great friend and a Christian gentleman.

—CJM

Shanks, Kath

(2.11.92) Kath Shanks was another Aldgate Valley, SA, identity whose passing at the age of 91 marks the end of an era. Arriving in Shanks Rd, Aldgate Valley as a British war bride in the early 1920s, Kath made her home not far from where the church stands in the same road.

Church News

Old

BRIBIE ISLAND (Wayne Kirk) Welcome Joanne Elizabeth Kirk, our youngest addition ... Mrs Flo Thomas, oldest member, 97 ... Wayne completes term end of year. Will be chaplain to Retirement Village 1993 ... Bruce Roberts will take over in mid-January as new minister ... Kids Club presented play called "The Night before Christmas" at their break-up ... Guest speakers Rod Tippet (Principal KCC), Evan Adermann, Dr Don Stewart.

Tas

HOWRAH (Allan Blyth) Church anniversary held 1 Nov. Craig Spaulding & singing group Adoration (from Launceston) were guests. Over 300 attended the services ... Lynette Leach (Field Director DMED) conducted special leadership seminar ... Eight ladies attended CWF camp at Camp Seaview, Bicheno ... Cec Neville guest speaker at recent morning service ... Five attended Spring Conference, Wollongong ... Three young people recently acknowledged Christ as their Saviour. **LAUNCESTON** (R. Foster, C. Spaulding, D. Tobler) 50 of our young people attended camp at Camp Seaview over November long weekend ... Our ladies responsible for conduct of World Community Day on 26 Oct ... Greg Foot, State Manager of World Vision, guest speaker at CWF 11 Nov ... Andrew Rothwell, one of the young people, spoke at youth service on 8 Nov.

WA

CARNARVON Conference President John Fabry & wife Betty brought Sunday messages while touring northern FAB centres ... Visiting speakers Max Downes (David House) & Mr & Mrs R. Holmes (missionaries-elect to South

She raised a large family in the small four-roomed cottage, caring for her husband's ailing parents at the same time. She also nursed her husband before he died at an early age. Many members of the Aldgate Valley church remember this quiet, unassuming, yet determined lady as a great encourager to them in their younger years. She was remembered well as we gave thanks for her life at a burial service conducted by long-time family friend and previous minister at Aldgate Valley, Bruce Coventry.

—Dennis Ryle

America with SIM) ... Families enjoyed social & barbecue to farewell Don & Aileen Bone & CWF held farewell gathering ... New babies "showered" at morning tea at Olive Laird Hostel. They were Hannah Cuttifford & Joshua Cox.

ROCKINGHAM (Keith Ware) Church has recently held a week of outreach activities conducted by Rob Adams from OAC Ministries. All meetings well attended ... Keith Ware attended Spring Conference on "Ministering in the 90s" at Wollongong ... Kidz Club & all youth groups growing in numbers ... Six commitments in recent times. Four baptisms & six welcomed into fellowship.

FREMANTLE (W.W. Saunders) Time of blessing during this church's centenary celebrations. Thanksgiving offering \$1,374 ... Plaque in memory of Douglas Good unveiled in church hall ... New PA system installed ... Church Parade of local St John Ambulance Brigade's girl cadets on 8 Nov ... That evening "Music of the Gospel" featured Ron Raymond as guest organist ... CWF held annual talent night.

SOUTH PERTH (David Stanford) Recent speakers Dr Neale Fong, Bruce Eagles, John Fabry (Conference President), Jeff Ramsay ... David Stanford arranged weekend camp to paint a home at Roelands Village ... CWF organised a Christmas hamper for Life in Focus ... 8 November 45th anniversary. Speaker Graham Agnew, Marion, SA. Special youth night & men's breakfast arranged with Graham Agnew as speaker.

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Church News

SA

HAPPY VALLEY (Russell Allison) Annual basketball service. Alistair Cranney guest speaker. Kirrilie Baggs showed slides from Barcelona ... KYB groups studying Habakkuk & Zephaniah this term ... Family camp at Victor Harbor over October long weekend ... Youth group lead worship at Mt Barker 18 October. Peter Haydon speaker ... Ron Holmes spoke about Vital Publications books ... Daniel Helps baptised.

COWANDILLA (Russell Mountford) Letterbox distribution of promotional leaflets continued over recent months ... Celebrations for church's 70th anniversary on 6 December ... Distribution of 1993 calendars to local community giving opportunities for outreach ... Outdoor Christmas service being planned with other local churches ... Russell Mountford to continue ministry at Cowandilla in 1993.

DULWICH-ROSE PARK UNITED (Roger Brown, Rob Williams) The psalmist's injunction for praise with trumpet, other brass & organ was obeyed in 8.30 am Grand Prix day service. West Side Brass Quintet (leader Neville James) joined with our organist, Keith Stephens, in mildly thunderous greetings to the car races 250 metres away. Emily Drummond sang "The Last Supper" from "Jesus Christ Superstar" ... Progressive dinner raised \$605 for mission projects.

NOARLUNGACENTRE (Ross Pelling, Graham Nann, Cathy Slade) Recent special services include basketball service with Mark Davis (36ers); Understanding Your Partner seminar with Kevin Harvey; 30th church anniversary "thankyou" service on 1 November ... Lorraine Ridderhof appointed as new paid part-time Community Care Director ... 12 graduated from two year Bethel Study course ... Paul Lindner retired as Boys' Brigade captain after 12 years service ... Peter Russell reappointed to eldership.

Vic

WARRNAMBOOL (Peter Broadbent) Many reasons for thanksgiving—two mothers & daughters recently baptised; steady growth in numbers attending worship, Sunday School & home groups ... Resumed weekly evening services ... Rodger Brough & Beth Hounslow have joined church board ... Minister completed building own home. Manse being rented ... Fay Christensen gave short focus on PNG at church AGM ... Addition of drummer enhancing music & worship.

NORTH BALWYN (Paul Burnham) Janene Drummy leaves for six weeks Romania end November gaining mission experience ... Gaye & Max Drummy accepted short-term teaching appointment Woodstock Boarding School, Mussoorie, India ... David Russell had serious accident performing motor bike stunt at Wagga. Falling 30-40 feet David has multiple injuries. Now recovering after surgery ... Farewell service & luncheon held for Paul & Raelene Burnham who are to minister with Heathmont Baptists.

CHADSTONE (P. Bradley) Very successful "Chaddy Red Faces" was held

with 35 members & children participating in front of a large audience ... Music Ministry group very much appreciated in worship services ... Beryl & Ian Field, Kim, Jane & Kieron Stokie have all returned from overseas trips ... \$1,200 raised for the Kensington Christian Network from various functions ... 28 have been meeting in weekly cell groups.

PEEL ST, BALLARAT (Wayne Allen) Church sorry to be losing Dr Robert & Ruth Corrie. Robert has been transferred to Bendigo ... Church supporting changes in morning & evening services ... Church agreed at annual general meeting we adopt

the name "The AUSSIE Church of Christ" with the theme for 1993 "Breaking Down the Barriers" ... Monthly church luncheons continue to be a great success.

SWAN HILL (Lindsay Mayes, Tim Green) Both ministers & seven others attended Spring Conference at Wollongong ... Five baptisms in recent weeks ... Wilson Bebe & Albert Vira (Vanuatu) visited church with Barry Jenkins during October ... Yolande Willis & daughter Tahlia moved from Sydney to live in Swan Hill ... Church continues to contact new people through services & small groups.

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Commentary

World AIDS Day—1 December

Reflections on the texts set for 6 December

Victorians had the past premier, Mrs Kirner, remind them prior to the state election that a clear-cut choice faced them. That choice was: what sort of community did they want? The people made their choice, and now Mr Kennett, the current premier, informs Victorians that they gave him a clear mandate for the way he is about to change their community life.

The challenge of Matthew, expressed through the content and structure of the gospel, is a challenge to choose our type of community: will it reflect God's values or our own? Matthew uses the words and stories about Jesus to clarify for the reader the values of true Christian community. He asks, at the end: how will you live? Like those who have chosen to live by money and lies? (28:11-15) Or do you live in obedience to the risen Lord? (28:16-20) This choice is expressed throughout the gospel in different ways—see 7:13f, 15-20, 24-27; 13:24-30, 36-43, 47-50; 21:28-32; 24:45-51; 25:1-13 and 31-46.

The same challenge confronts us in 3:1-12. Response to the Kingdom community requires repentance, the fruit of repentance and bearing good fruit. (3:2, 8-10) For Matthew this "good fruit" means to reflect the Kingdom value of practical care and involvement with others. (chapters 5-7 and 25:31-46) The words of John the Baptist here chorus the words of the psalmist and Isaiah.

The psalmist tells us of the necessary qualities of any community through focusing on the essential qualities of kingship. Righteousness and justice bring the community prosperity as they protect the marginalised and destroy the oppressor. This way the community reflects the dynamic action of God. (3:1-4)

Isaiah affirms this vision of God's community through a focus on its leader. The spirit of the Lord infuses such a community and its leadership. Again, the weak and marginalised are supported and the oppressor is eradicated. (3:1-5) The competitive and destructive aspects of society are transformed. (3:6-9) The apostle Paul helps us to recognise that this is made possible through the obedience of one, Jesus. (Romans 5:19) His challenge to reflect Kingdom community values is expressed in the words, "Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the Glory of God." (15:7)

For the last few days our attention has been on people living with HIV and AIDS. As Christians who have chosen to reflect God's values for community, a righteousness/justice that includes the marginalised and eradicates oppression, we must reach out in practical ways towards those with the virus. We must resist attempts to marginalise those with the virus. We must remember how Christ has welcomed us, and welcome others in like manner.

—Louis van Laar

The Last Word

The world has a lot of glitter, but it doesn't have the glow.

—Bill Frye

We live in the Metal Age:
Silver in the hair,
Gold in the teeth,
Lead in the pants,
Iron in the veins.

A passerby stopped and commented: "I see you're digging some holes."
"No," was the reply. "I'm digging out the dirt and leaving the holes."

"Do you like raisin bread?"
"Don't know, I never tried raisin' any."

"Did you ever hear the rope joke?"
"No."
"Skip it."

The telephone rang, and a little boy's voice whispered: "Hello?"

The man who was calling replied, "Hello, is your mummy there, please?"

"Sorry, she's busy," the little boy whispered.

"Well, can I speak to your daddy, then?" the man asked.

"He's busy, too," the little boy whispered.

"Well, is there anyone else there in the house?" asked the man.

The little boy whispered, "My aunt and uncle."

"Can I speak to your aunt?" the man asked.

"She's busy," whispered the boy.

"Your uncle, then?" said the man.

"He's busy, too," the little boy whispered.

"Look, is there anybody else there?" the man asked.

"The police," whispered the little boy.

"The police?" exclaimed the man. "Your mum, your dad, your aunt, your uncle and the police? And they're all busy? What on earth are they all doing?"

The little boy whispered: "They're looking for me."



Yes, he left a tip—then shot off without paying the bill.

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