

THE AUSTRALIAN



# Christian

NATIONAL JOURNAL OF CHURCHES OF CHRIST IN AUSTRALIA

Vol. 100 No. 17, 4 October 1997

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 Initiator  
 Preacher  
 Friend  
 Messenger  
 Prophet  
 Encourager  
 Teacher  
 Leader  
 Pastor  
 Visionary  
 Shepherd  
 Counsellor  
 Evangelist  
 Witness

[ Ministry ]



THE AUSTRALIAN

# Christian

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Vol. 100 No. 17, 4 October 1997

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# Editorial

## Mission 2030

DON SMITH

In Helen Oatley's contribution to our Ministry feature she recalls the influence of a minister on her uncle who himself later became a minister. Her comments led me to reflect upon my early experience. It was similar. From my mid teens to early twenties I recall with gratitude the contact I had with ministers of the Blackburn, Vic, church. They encouraged, stimulated and affirmed me. Hospitality was another of their strengths. My contact with other ministers during training and the years in Victoria and South Australia only confirmed my earlier experience. \*



I can also relate to the comments by Rick Lewis in our interview feature as he expresses his good feelings about the Telopea, NSW congregation. Regrettably not every minister has such a positive experience. The reasons will vary as our feature writers note. There are some very sad experiences for ministers and churches alike. \* Ministry today seems ever more demanding. Whatever the size or setting of the local church good leadership is paramount. Collectively we need ministers of mature personality, with visionary and insightful leadership. Whether churches are large, small or middle-sized, each needs the most able leadership we can provide. \* The training offered now and the initial experiences of younger ministers in churches will influence our future as a movement through to at least the first third of the next century. If that leadership or vision falters we shall pay a great price! \* How encouraging it is to hear Rick Lewis refer to a visionary training program being developed at our Springdale College in Birmingham, UK. It is all the more encouraging that here is a small part of our world movement embarking upon an initiative where the focus and priority is mission in the Western World. With our own ever-increasing national unity, this is an opportune time at a national level for reassessment of our training and ministry leadership initiatives. This is a time for nurturing leaders possessed of intellectual rigour, passionate faith, deep spirituality and a sacrificial spirit. We live in a new era where many of the old landmarks have been uprooted. By 2030 the battle for Australian Churches of Christ will be won or lost on the commitment of our ministry leadership to the missionary task. \*

## Ministry

**What do churches look for? What are some of the personal issues for those in ministry?**

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## Rick Lewis

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**The Australian Christian welcomes letters from its readers. Short letters up to 175 words stand the best chance of publication. All letters may be edited. We reserve the right to omit letters altogether.**

## Thanks for the "Lasting Investment"

To the Editor,  
With great interest and pleasure I read Jeff Weston's article, "A Lasting Investment" ("AC" 5.7.97). I have clipped it to keep in my family archive file. In 1923 my mother, nursing sister Adelaide Masters from New Zealand, with Dr Ray Killmier and his fiancée Gladys Mudford and Grace Metzentine, also from NZ and related to my mother through family marriage, travelled to China. En route to Shanghai, she met my father, A.G. Saunders, and later they were married in Shanghai. However, in 1923 the marriages of the Killmiers and Watermans took place, and the group travelled with Albert and Eva Anderson to Hueli-jo.

To learn that the church established by Albert Anderson is still operating is really good news. I have photos of my mother in riding clothes and also of Mrs Killmier. They both travelled part of the way on ponies, my mother's feet not far off the ground. Yes there were bandits on the way, they sometimes saw heads peeking out from behind rocks. I rather think our missionaries may have envied Jeff Weston and his train travel.

I am very impressed by the persistence of this group of Christians in such difficult circumstances and grateful to Jeff for undertaking the trip to locate them. I deeply appreciate his writ-

ing this report to let us know about the church in Hueli-jo

—St Clair Oldfield  
(Balwyn, Vic.)

## Hanson Paranoia?


To the Editor,  
May I suggest to Eric Loo ("Hanson Paranoia", "AC" 5 July) that good journalism needs to deal with cause and effect to prevent biased presentation and understanding. The question remains, is Asia listening to Hanson or misleading reports of what she has said. While we can agree that relevant points were raised in Eric's article, may I suggest that Hanson would have gained little of her support if mainstream politics was carrying out loyal representative government—government for the people by the people. The fact remains that Hanson's following is coming from loyal conservative Australians that help make the backbone of our nation and that they can be belittled and disregarded only at the jeopardy of Australian culture. While we can agree that Hanson may not have all the answers, neither do the major parties, nor the bureaucrats that have them under their thumb; but at least she is nominating issues that are tearing our nation apart socially. Is it too much to ask that we seek unity where we are all accountable to one another as one nation under our Christian heritage?

If good manners are any indication of mature character, I am glad that I am not associated with some of the anti-Hanson paranoia.

—Tom Fraser  
(Maitland, NSW)

## Justice Issues

To the Editor,  
Congratulations! After reading every word (including the ads) in your issue of 6 September, I at last found the word "justice" used in

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# Letters to the Editor

connection with the church. Only once it is true, but there it was! It was in Ian Corlett's article "Mission in the Market Place". Ian wrote of "mission by which the local community is engaged in dialogue and action. Such mission takes seriously the justice issues of the community and sets the call of Jesus to discipleship in that context".

I ask again, where else can social justice be found in today's economic-rationalist society except in the teachings of Christ throughout the church?

A church which accepts, as we do, a fringe role in society must not be surprised if soon it is given no role at all.

—Max Collyer  
(Boronia, Vic)



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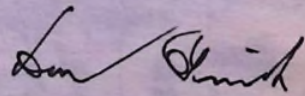
## Update

Dear Readers,

From this issue you will note that along with this paper we have another centenarian. We congratulate Louisa Russell who looks a remarkably young 100 years judged by her photo. It must have been a vintage year! We have also appreciated three churches celebrating our one hundred years with a generous gift from their funds. First, second and third gifts to hand came from Mornington, Indonesian Praise Church and Mt. Evelyn. Thankyou, this is a great start. Marking up another 100 record is Viney Longthorp our regular *Media Matters* writer. This issue marks the 100th contribution from Viney. His first contribution was published 20 February 1993 entitled "Two British Masterpieces". Well Viney has led his readers along many paths since then and introduced us to new ideas and experiences. As a volunteer it takes considerable dedication to meet the requirements of 22 issues for a year. Thanks Viney on behalf of all your fans. Viney tells me the cruse of oil is not running dry! He also wishes readers to note that the ABC Television History Series "The Big Picture: The

Peoples' Century" referred to in Issue 16 will now commence 2 October.

We are taking a big leap this Christmas and inviting primary-school-aged children in any state or territory to submit a drawing illustrating a Christmas theme, biblical or Australian, on white A4-sized paper and using the vertical dimension of the paper for the drawing. Drawings should be done in one colour either black, dark blue or dark red. The name, age and address of the artist and church should be clearly marked on the back. Entries are invited from any children associated in some way with one of our churches. Entries must reach the office by 7 November. This is a chance to involve children from families associated with your church or club work. Talk to leaders about the possibilities of entries from your church. Any publication of drawings will be assessed on grounds of suitability for reproduction and quality of the work. Entries will not be returned.



### PSYCHOLOGIST

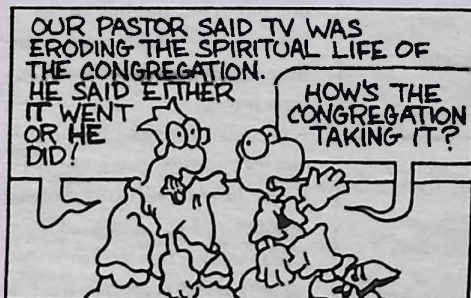
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*for appointment.*

### Pontius' Puddle



## Minister for Families

New appointment at Ballarat



*Pam Harrison (Ministry Support Worker), Melinda and Isaac Khan and Darren Kittel*

With the recent induction of Isaac Khan as Minister for Families the Ballarat Family Church of Christ is excited about the recent expansion of its ministry team.

Isaac is commencing his first full-time ministry appointment following completion of his training through the Institute for Contemporary Church Leadership in Wollongong. With outreach to families a core purpose of the church, Isaac will be responsible for giving support and direction to existing family ministries and respective leadership, developing new initiatives to further expand the evangelistic aspect of ministering to young families, pastoring young

families and sharing in the development of the discipleship ministry to facilitate growth and maturity.

Senior minister, Darren Kittel, reports, "We are thrilled to have Isaac on board. He is one of the most gifted young ministers to have trained in recent times and we thank God for his leading Isaac and his wife Melinda to join us in ministry."

The church is confident that Isaac will assist it to catch the wave of potential that God has sent. In doing so, the Ballarat Family Church will continue to be faithful and fruitful in its mission to help more people experience the wonderful life that God intends.

## Retirement Village, not Retirement

Retired minister still leads a very active life



*Colin Curtis, refusing to retire at Parkrose Village*

For Colin Curtis, who turned 88 on 4 September 1997, coming to Parkrose Village has not meant retirement. Officially retiring from Brighton, SA, in January 1976, Colin remained at that church as honorary associate minister for many years. He became involved with the Brighton Senior Citizens' Club, becoming a qualified instructor and running a "Keep Fit" class for two years. For ten years he also ran a "Keep Fit" class at Parkrose Village, until 1987.

Moving to the Village in 1989 with his wife Vida, Colin maintained his interest in people through pastoral care. When Fred Combridge and Emily Simpson died in a short space of time, he took over their positions of chairman and secretary of Parkrose Village church in 1994, and only recently has Elizabeth Pittaway taken over as secretary.

Sunday mornings find Colin busy with worship preparation: checking the sound and heating, video-

taping the hymns, and checking the church plan that he prepares for readers, helpers and speakers for the service. The church is affiliated with the SA Conference with 14 people who have transferred their membership from Uniting Church and Church of Christ congregations. Up to 55 attend morning worship, with an average of 46.

His competing spirit is now removed from the tennis court to the Bowls Club. The Village team has this year come out minor premiers. As if he wasn't busy enough, Colin finds time to visit residents, welcoming them to the Village, inviting them to services and being available to people who come to him for advice. Residents also seek his assistance with odd jobs such as changing hearing aid batteries. Pruning roses was another speciality. Colin has lived a very fruitful life and is enjoying immensely this "Third Age" of living.

—Trevor Lawrie, Chaplain

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## New Role for Old Church

Services cease, but service doesn't

The Hawthorne Church of Christ, Qld, closed from the beginning of July 1997. The church was known for many years as the "little church with a big welcome" and more recently also as a "church in service to the community", through the Limited Hours Child Care Centre, its involvement with the Grow Association and as a venue for Neighbourhood Watch meetings.

The church had a very long history, with the original building being built in one day by voluntary labour on the 14 November 1914. They stopped work at 8.00 pm and held the first service.

There have been many ups and downs over the years, but unfortunately, now, due to a big drop in membership and the imminent departure of the current pastor,

the decision to cease holding services has been taken.

We are pleased that the building is not being sold, as the Child Care Centre, which is a great success, will continue to be operated under the direction of the Care Department, who will be using the upper part of the building as offices for the Child Care section of the Department. Also the Neighbourhood Watch meetings are expected to continue there. The final service was held on Sunday morning, 29 June. The closure of the church was also commemorated with a sunrise visit to Mount Tamborine on the Saturday, a trip that the youth group had enjoyed quite a few times over the past years, and a lunch at a Sizzlers restaurant after the Sunday service.

## Librarians' Network

New Christian group for librarians

A Christian Librarians' Network has been established in Australia and New Zealand and publishes a newsletter. This network serves interested librarians in or associated with all major types of library and information services.

It complements more specialised groups, such as the Australian Church Libraries Association, and the Australian and New Zealand Theological Library Association. Interested librarians are invited to obtain a copy of the questionnaire

on the network and sample contents list of the CLN Newsletter and to attend the dinner on 20 October in Melbourne to be addressed by Len Woodley on "A Case of Curiosities".

Len is General Secretary of SPCK, Chairman of the Australian Christian Literature Society, an antiquarian bookseller, and commentator on religious books for ABC radio.

(See advertisement on page 20 for details.)

## Simply Great

Queensland churches men's camp 1997

Great location! Great food! Great fellowship! Great program! Our guest speaker, Dr Keith Farmer shared three down to earth and challenging studies with 56 men who came from 17 churches from south east Queensland at Camp Cal over the second weekend in September.

Last year only 23 men shared men's camp and next year we are hoping for well over 100 men to attend.

More than half of the campers were first timers and many of them were young men, which was very encouraging.

During the camp over \$800 was raised toward the cost of installing a telephone at Banmatmat Bi-

ble College in Vanuatu. Communicating within Vanuatu from the college is restricted to radio only and to countries such as Australia it is almost impossible.

A member of a recent work party to Vanuatu took over five hours, with numerous calls within Vanuatu, to reach Australia by telephone.

Should you wish to contribute to the telephone fund, donations should be sent to: Mr D. Lowe, 97 North Street, Toowoomba Qld 4350.

Men's Camp 1998 has been booked from 11-13 September, with Keith Farmer being the speaker. Make it a date!

—John Lowe

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## Centenary Celebration

Celebration and the lessons of a long life



*Louisa (Aunty Lou) Russell speaking at the celebration of her 100th birthday*

Louisa (Aunty Lou) Russell, who turned 100 on 3 September, celebrated her birthday at the Church of Christ, Brisbane North, on Sunday 30 August.

More than 150 friends worshipped at the morning service and renewed old friendships during a meal.

Among those present were her two sisters, Nell and Edna, her son Merv, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Aunty Lou has sat under the ministry of many ministers and she enjoyed once again sharing stories and hearty chuckles with Les Armstrong and Ron Sansome.

Graeme Chapman, a past minister who had boarded with the Russell family when he first ministered at Kedron, sent a taped greeting reflecting upon what he had learnt from Aunty Lou.

The morning service theme, hymns and Bible reading (1 Corinthians 13) were chosen by Aunty Lou.

She is still an active member of the church.

Graham Woodward, the current minister, shared some of the "lessons of life" that Aunty Lou could pass on to us "younger folk"—the need for prayer, the centrality of love as motivation for Christian living, the necessity of having a "sober estimate" of yourself and most important of all, the development of a vibrant relationship with God.

Aunty Lou, together with her husband Robert, who passed away in 1959, became members of Kedron church following a Hinrichsen Tent Mission in 1933.

Over the years, she has ministered in a variety of capacities within the congregation and in the wider community. Aunty Lou has an effective ministry of prayer for individuals and the wider ministry.

She resides at Southerden Lodge, Grange, where family and friends gathered for another celebration on her actual birthday.

## Induction of National Coordinator

Bob Smith to coordinate our national work



*Robert Leane, National President, with Marilyn and Bob Smith, and Gavin Thompson and Peter Overton*

Robert (Bob) Smith was inducted as National Coordinator of Churches of Christ in Australia on 7 September 1997 at Northside Community Church in Sydney. As Robert Leane (SA) National President, intoned the words of induction, representatives from across Australia and members of the church filled the platform.

Peter Overton (Qld) consecrated the induction with a prayer as the people on the platform laid hands on Bob.

Gavin Thompson (Tas), Treasurer, read the Scripture for the service.

Jim Ashley from the Churches of Christ Provident Fund and Wendy Parish, NSW Community Welfare, represented some of the many church networks being coordinated through the National Office.

Bob was also inducted as Director of Ministries at Northside,

where the National Office is now located.

"Churches of Christ in Australia," Bob explains, "have a vision of uncluttered, compassionate Christianity.

"As National Coordinator my task will be to harness the synergy of this enormously creative and committed association of churches in bringing this vision to reality.

"As part of this, I will ensure that the decisions of the National Council are carried out, coordinate the many and varied ministries of our National Agencies, facilitate the development of a whole range of national ministry networks and represent Churches of Christ in the wider community."

To contact the National Office, write to PO Box 1628, Crows Nest NSW 2065, or phone (02) 9437 0992.

## Fun and Meaningful

### Women's Camp in Mildura



#### Competition was keen for the Camp Cowra Cup

Twenty-five women managed to escape their busy lifestyles, husbands, children and careers to attend the first Women's Camp organised by Mildura Church of Christ, Vic, 8-10 August.

What a great time we had at the picturesque Cowra Station only 30 minutes from Mildura on the banks of the tranquil Murray River. On Friday night we played some "getting to know you" games, sang songs then closed the night with a beautiful devotion on "friendship" from Maxine King.

Saturday began with a quiet time and breakfast. Leanne Beasy led the morning Bible study on "It's never my fault, or is it?" Acknowledging our changing environments from childhood through to the present, we need to be accountable and responsible for the choices and actions we make in our lives. A BBQ lunch in the sunshine prompted some energetic ladies to go for a stroll along the majestic Murray. Others discovered, joyfully, that new friends shared the same interests in

cross-stitch, embroidery and knitting.

At 4.00 pm everyone was eager to participate in team events to win the Camp Cowra Cup. Competition was keen while racing with balloons between knees, or dressing as maids carrying breakfast trays. The spirit was to win.

Our theme for the Saturday night concert was "Childhood". Flamboyant skits of all shapes and sizes brought peals of laughter as a baby learned to feed herself, and children and fairies recited prose from yesteryear. Jenny Hawke, a mum of three sons under four, reflected on how she became a mum. Her joys and frustrations of coping with motherhood moved us all.

Ruth Edge speaking on "Forgiveness" led us in communion on Sunday morning. Ruth Mansell closed the weekend with her devotion tying all the threads we had discovered together, into a neat bow. A big thankyou to the eleven dads who triumphantly looked after the 27 young children left behind.

## Seniors Ministry Beyond 2000

### Adapting to the needs of a changing Australia

In the 1950s many of our churches boasted bulging Sunday Schools. These same children (lost to affluent Australia over the years) are soon to enter their senior years (55+). They represent a new generation of seniors—better educated, longer living and more affluent than any generation of seniors before them. Demographers, social scientists and marketing analysts are already trying to predict the impact of this large group upon Australian society.

How will our churches respond? On 9 August at Monash City Church, Vic, 40 people came together from a range of churches to consider this question. Pam Clapshaw, Ministry Leader Seniors, for the NSW Conference, provided great quality input over a range of topics: The "Age Wave", diversity within the seniors spectrum, models of seniors ministry and moving from a social program to faith.



*Pam Clapshaw providing quality input*

The Steering Group for this Seniors Seminar (under the auspices of the Department of Community Care), Gordon Stirling, Doreen Strack, Lindsay Croxford and Convenor, Peter Bradley, are now looking at implications for our churches. Ministers interested in this area of church ministry may like to contact Peter Bradley on (03) 9567 1177.

### Mitcham Church of Christ

invite you to join them in celebrating their

#### 68<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

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### Here and There

From the Kingdom

A Virginian man was arrested because his number plate, driver's licence and registration all said he was from the Kingdom of Heaven. William De Lashmutt was convicted of operating an unregistered vehicle. But the judge dropped all other charges including a fictitious number plate because no one could believe the licence was valid. Mr De Lashmutt belongs to the Embassy of Heaven Church, which is claiming independence from the US government. (*Southern Cross*)

## A Miracle in China

**Fifteen million Bibles in less than ten years**



Bible Society South Australian State Director, John Gaghan (pictured above), and his wife Raelene recently visited China where they attended a ceremony to celebrate the completion of fifteen million Bibles at the Amity Press, Nanjing. John says, "Nobody at the celebration doubted that what happened in less than ten years was a miracle that God had brought about. Prayers have been answered and lives changed." They attended the Chong Wen Men church in Beijing and were impressed by the enthusiasm of the 1500-strong congregation, a good percentage of whom clutched well-read Bibles.

After the service a queue of about 50 people waited patiently to buy Amity Bibles, and other religious material. Their joy when they received their Bibles was very evident. One woman said to John, "I really love the Lord." During their time in China, John and Raelene met a number of Christian leaders including Dr Han Wenzao—President of the China Christian Council. Upon departing China, the Gaghans felt as though they had left something precious behind such as the depth of their spiritual experience and the warmth and friendliness of the Chinese people.

## Packers not a Baseball Team

**Show bags packing, not the World Series, but still an annual event**



*Members of the North Essendon Packers team, Ethel Trott, Bob Savill and Wal Johnson*

The North Essendon packers are no baseball team, but twenty four years on, the show bag packers at the North Essendon Church of Christ reckon their team of volunteers have packed between 2-3 million show bags for the Royal Melbourne Show. This year 40 volunteers from the North Essendon, Essendon, East Keilor and Strathmore Churches of Christ and the Keilor Road Uniting Church have packed show bags in three shifts per day for five and a half days per week for just on six weeks. Sometimes they have been still packing at 1.00-2.00 am to meet the demand.

The whole project requires efficient organisation to manage the volunteer teams and cope with incoming and outgoing goods. The benefits include great fellowship and fun as team members pack bags of potato and corn chips and other similar items. Sometimes packers even manage to ensure quality as they taste test the ingredients! This year's efforts will raise some \$12,000 - \$14, 000, which will be split between the churches according to their supply of packers. Team members range from children to older adults .

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## Remembrance and Thanksgiving

**A special ministry for those dealing with grief**

Earlier this year, the Blackburn Community Church of Christ invited all those who wished to remember the life of a relative or friend who had been taken from them by death, to a Remembrance and Thanksgiving Service.

The ministry team sent a letter to the relatives of those for whom they had conducted a funeral and also invited people through the church paper to indicate the name

of a person they wanted remembered in this special service.

Over 80 names were given to the ministry team to be read out in the service.

During the service, opportunity was given for people to remember those who had died and to take a flower from the basket of flowers at the front of the church, which could be used in further times of remembrance.

A most significant moment of this service was when the names of people were read out.

Possibly it was the first time for a while they had heard the name of their relative or friend being spoken of in a public setting. The fact that over 100 gathered, helped people to know that they were not alone in the challenge of learning to live with grief.

This proved to be a special time of remembrance and was considered by the ministry team as a

great opportunity to offer pastoral care and support for those who were grieving.

It also gave opportunity to remember those who had been loyal members of the church and whose presence was now missed.

A copy of the Remembrance and Thanksgiving Service can be obtained from the Blackburn Community Church of Christ. Contact John Rowe or David Ratten. Phone(03) 9877 6077.

## Beach Baptism at Mornington

**Two young people choose outdoor baptism**



*Allan Avery, Interim Minister of the Mornington Church of Christ, Vic, is seen baptising Anna Nelson-Gracie at Mills Beach, Mornington on Sunday 17 August. There were two baptisms, Anna and Luke Gillham. The young people were asked what their preference was and they chose the sea. It was a very cold, windy day, but we did have some sunshine. Fortunately the tide was in and the baptisms were conducted close to the shore. Immediately after the baptisms the congregation celebrated with communion. Many friends and relatives attended the service.*

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# Ministry

## What Are We Looking For?

HELEN OATLEY

**T**here are some things none of us would dispute in our search for a minister. That this person should have a love for God, his word and his people, and be open to the leading of the Holy Spirit are surely basic to our search. We only have to study the advertisements regularly placed in this journal to see that a wide diversity of gifts and attributes are sought by churches. We read such stipulations as "must be evangelical in outlook ... must have creative approach to problem solving, must be a visionary and vision-caster", and in the same breath "must be a good team-person". An unlikely

*It would appear that a kind of spiritual super hero is needed to fill these requirements.*

combination one would think. It would appear that a kind of spiritual super hero is needed to fill these requirements. I wonder what measure of success these ads bring and what the results would be if the seeking churches adopted the thinking of the late J.F. Kennedy when he advised "ask not what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country"? Perhaps a list of what is being offered by the seeking church would bring results. For example, warm supportive environment assured ... every opportunity to develop personal skills guaranteed, etc. \*

As we in the southern rural area of Strathalbyn and Milang have recently been engaged in the quest for a new minister this subject is one that has

raised many questions. What do we value most in a minister? Whose ministries have blessed us most—and why? Whose ministry has failed to bless? Have we for our part always been supportive and encouraging? Have we regularly prayed for and loved our minister and family? I personally counted a total of eighteen people I have experienced in ministry in Churches of Christ, over a period of 42 years. Most of that time was spent in a semi-rural church that grew along with a population explosion, with the last six years in the small and struggling church in Milang. I reflected upon all these ministries ... asking myself which ones had blessed me and why! Then I set out to ask others far and wide to drop their guard and share with me what they really valued in a minister. \*

The results surprised and touched me. I was told it first with a blush of shyness by a woman who struggles with a severe inferiority complex. It was said firmly by the seventeen-year-old lad who is our youngest member. It was stated with quiet dignity by the eighty-two-year-old who is our oldest active member. It was confided over tea cups in the front room of our newest adherent. It was told to me "straight" by an articulate shut-in who is renowned for clear-thinking and practical wisdom. It was proffered thoughtfully by one of the church's male "fringe" people and by the university graduate at her desk. It was shared with confident directness by a city person of extensive experience and skills. All these people, among others, shared something that underlined my own heart's sure conviction. \*

Do I have your attention? Are you ready to hear what the x factor is? To digress a fraction. The late Pastor H.R. Taylor, my uncle, mentions in his memoirs an



item concerning his own conversion. He was largely disinterested in Christianity, he writes, until a particular minister took to accompanying him on his rabbit shooting expeditions. A camaraderie developed between them that led ultimately to his conversion. That was about one hundred years ago. It is still relevant today. For this is what all these people want in their minister. Someone who treats young and old (or old and young!) the same. Someone who relates to me **where I am**. Someone who speaks simply to me in words I can understand. \*

It seems clear that much will be overlooked if a minister shows a genuine Christlike love and compassion for people. Simple homely words still have the power to help and heal. People are always hungry for love and acceptance and that faithful and committed friendship is a greater gift by far than eloquence in the pulpit. That is what we are looking for and value most in ministry. A friend who cares! \*

Helen Oatley is an elder of the Milang church, which is in cooperation with the Strathalbyn church, in South Australia.

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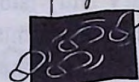
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# Ministry

## Care of the Minister

JOAN FURLONGER

**I** read in Hebrews 13, "Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as those who must give account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no advantage to you." \*

Yes, we all should be giving much thought to caring for, and encouraging our minister, and also his or her spouse and family. This can begin in practical ways before they even arrive to take up their ministry, so that they will feel welcome and as comfortable as possible right from the beginning. It can be a difficult and lonely time for them as they try to become part of the church family where they probably know no

*Offer words of encouragement wherever possible.*

one. Make sure you go out of your way to make them feel welcome and part of the group. \*

Once the minister and his/her family are established and settled, the minister will probably begin to introduce new ideas and plans into the church program. Do not discourage these ideas, even if they have been tried before. Maybe things have changed or they may take a new format, whatever the case, listen and encourage and support the things the minister seeks to introduce. **Get behind it and help it work.** \*

We all like to have encouraging things said to us and our minister is no exception. Offer words of encouragement wherever possible. We must be careful not to have unreasonable expectations of our minister. Sometimes we have a

long list of requirements and expect them to be all things to all people, but like us, they have their limitations. Min-

*Sometimes it can be quite lonely for the minister and his or her family.*

isters will have strengths in certain areas, but remember no one can be a super person. \*

One aspect of our care of the minister is faithfulness in praying and letting them know that we are praying for them, and sometimes take the time to pray with them. The elders in the congregation should lead the way in praying with, and for, the minister. This will encourage the congregation to do likewise. \*

Sometimes members will complain that the minister did not visit when they had a special need. Keep in mind that your minister is not a mind reader. If you are ill, going to hospital, have a spiritual need, are hurting and need some special care, let the minister know. In this way your minister will be able to care for you in your time of need. But remember not to have unreasonable expectations, for after all he/she is only one person. Remember, also, that your minister will at some time, most probably have the same needs as you, so make sure that you are there to minister to them in their time of need. \*

Sometimes it can be quite lonely for the minister and his or her family. They can be friends with the whole congregation, but not feel as though they are part of any one group, especially when they are newly arrived. Do all you can to make sure they feel loved and welcome.



Invite them over for a meal so that they can get to know you and you them. Hospitality should be part of our ministry to one another at all times. \*

Keep in mind that when we call and employ a minister we do not employ their spouse. They will bring their own talents and gifts of ministry, but we should expect no more of them than we do of ourselves. Also, on the subject of employment, the church should pay the minister the salary as recommended by Conference including the special allowances. Our minister should never be asked to manage on any less. \*

The congregation should ensure the minister is kept free of mundane tasks. In this way your minister will be able to carry out the many tasks that are specifically part of ministry. \*

Finally, work harmoniously for common good. \*

Joan Furlonger has attended the Sunnybank, Qld, church for most of her life. She is currently a ministry team leader and serves on the Conference Council. She is married to James and has four daughters and ten grandchildren.

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# Ministry

## The Minister in Conflict

GRAEME CANN

**N**ewton Maloney of Fuller Seminary once defined conflict in the following way: "Conflict is a moment in time when my own personal survival looms larger than the issues or the people involved." \*

Test this definition by remembering the last time you were criticised, put down, ignored or gossiped about by a significant person in your world. What did you feel at the time? Fear! Anger! Depression! Guilt! Whatever the feeling was the truth is this, you have at that pre-

*If there is such a thing as a "Devil's Lie" this is it.*

cise moment in time gone into conflict. Your self esteem, your significance or your security are under attack. Right now your need to survive dominates your thoughts. The importance or otherwise of the issue you are discussing pales into insignificance compared to this need to survive. \*

Here is an enlightening fact. Most ministers and leaders go into external conflicts, that is, sensitive issues, significant change or issues of discipline, already in internal conflict. They have already made emotional responses to what they perceive to be attacks on their security, significance and self esteem, and as a result respond inappropriately to the external conflict. Aggression, verbal attacks, withdrawal, accusations and perceptions of betrayal and rejection are behaviours which are not related to the external conflict, but are triggered by the internal emotions. James 4:1 says, "What leads to strife and how do conflicts originate among

you? Do they not arise from your sensual desires that are ever warring in your bodily members?" \*

What then are some helpful ways of using this information for minimising the destructive effects of conflict and finding creative ways of conflict resolution? \*

**Learn to challenge your perceptions of what is happening.**

Tired or threatened people will frequently misinterpret what others do or say. A differing opinion will be perceived as criticism. A negative response to an idea will be seen as rejection. A strong position taken by another might be seen as a threat to leadership. These perceptions may well be wrong, or at best exaggerated. Having a trusted friend, or even better a mentor, means that we can run our perceptions past someone else, who, because they are not as close to the issue, can help us decide whether or not our perception is accurate. \*

**Own our emotional responses to what we perceive to be happening.**

"I am being aggressive because I am really passionate about this issue," probably should be understood as "I am being aggressive because I feel that my leadership is being threatened by your position on this issue." It is important that we recognise the effect that fear, anger or guilt might be having on the way we behave in a conflict situation. Owning these emotions means that we stop blaming other people for what we feel, and accept the responsibility for resolving these feelings ourselves. \*

**Learn not to accept responsibility for other people's negative responses.**

Many conflict situations deteriorate quickly when we allow others to make us responsible for their anger or hurt.



Anger and hurt are feelings not behaviours. You are responsible for how you behave, but not for how other people feel. \*

**Be committed to both achieving personal growth and facilitating others' growth through conflict.**

Acknowledging inner conflict is the first step towards real personal growth. Identifying the cause of the conflict and discovering ways to resolve it are further steps. What then flows from such growth is a significant capacity to help others both resolve and grow through their conflicts. \*

The most distressing reality about conflicts in church life is that we seem to fatalistically accept that they will happen because people think so differently about some issues and feel so deeply about them. If there is such a thing as a "Devil's Lie" this is it. God's truth is that loving one another is a command of Christ, tolerance is a fruit of the Spirit and unity is the exclusive and undeniable trademark of a Christian community. \*

Graeme Cann is a member of the ministerial team at Berwick Regional Church of Christ and a founding member of the Christian Counsellors Association.

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# Ministry

## The Minister's Personal Life

BARRY RYALL

**M**inistry families experience unique pressures and stresses. There are few occupations where you are called to lead people who are your bosses. If members take exception to a minister's theology, philosophy of ministry, personality or style they can vote with their feet or their offering envelope. \* Unfortunately due to some high profile clergy getting their lifestyle out of kilter

*There are few occupations where you are called to lead your bosses.*

with their faithstyle, the minister's image has changed in the past decade. From a position of esteem, with trusted respect, clergy are often viewed with suspicion in the community and deemed "out of touch" with the real world. \*

So what's happening in the minister's personal life? The indicators show that the level of stress and pressure related illnesses are rising. From my anecdotal evidence, there is a rising number of ministers in Australia coming to grips with depressive illnesses, burn-out issues and what I would call on occasions "clergy abuse". \*

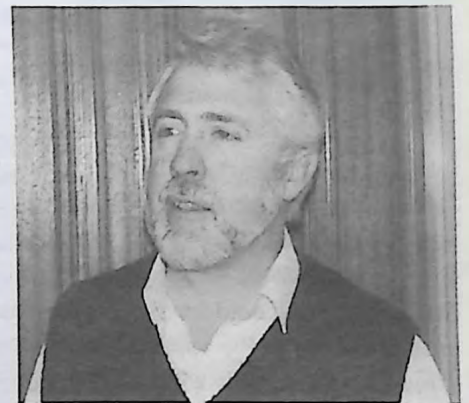
A USA trend which we appear to be following, is the forced removal of pastors. Some estimates put these figures at one pastor being "forced out" every six minutes in the USA. What are these trends doing to conscientious ministers in Australia? How is it affecting their personal life? And why is it happening? \* One answer is to blame the ministers themselves. They aren't like ministers in "the good old days", who worked so

hard, did so much more and didn't have any of these problems. If you think this is true, ask a number of older ministers how they achieved these superhuman feats and what was the actual effect upon them. And then the crunch question, would they do it that way again? \* Perhaps an even better test would be to ask some ministers who didn't survive the local church ministry to share their experience. The personhood, dedication and "calling" issues are real, but they don't provide us with the easy answers we would like. \*

Another solution is to blame the training ministers receive. We can always improve, but I don't believe changes to training will answer many of these questions. In fact, some suggest that improved training actually makes the problem worse, because the power is equal in our church leadership structures, but the training and perceptions are not, making for conflict. \*

Some conflict is inevitable in most areas of our lives, so why does conflict in the church have such a profound influence on people in general and on ministry families in particular? Halverstadt an American writer argues that it is because "our core identities are at risk". He contends that "spiritual commitments and faith understandings are central to our psychological identity". When we differ over these issues our spirituality, character and our self-esteem may be damaged, or at least threatened. \*

The minister's self esteem is often threatened when he or she seeks to lead the church through the inevitable changes which happen in a healthy congregation. The message stays the same, but the methods change as we apply Biblical principles, such as in Paul's message on Mars Hill (Acts



17:22f) and in 1 Cor 9:22. It is my experience that many ministers face attacks on their spirituality, character and theology because they seek to be faithful to these principles. Another area where ministers feel under attack is that of remuneration. A significant number of our ministers, particularly in our smaller churches, are not being paid the recommended minimum salary, but are clearly expected to work more hours than most workers. Some are even seriously questioned as to the need for a "day off". This is an incredible pressure to place on someone who works in a profession in which no matter how much you do, you are never finished. \*

We need to educate people with regard to the actual salaries ministers receive. The fringe benefit exempt accounts are for most ministers not a salary "perk" but a means to provide resources for their ministry which most employers rightfully see as their cost. Most employers provide computers, resources, training and travel costs without seeing them as part of a salary. \*

With Nouwen I believe ministers are called to be "wounded healers", but many are more wounded than they need to be. \*

Barry Ryall currently serves as the Minister's Pastor in Western Australia.

# Ministry

## Equipping for Ministry

KEITH FARMER

**J**esus' invitation and challenge to "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men" (Matt 4:19), is our call to discipleship, which involves witness (service). Thus a call to ministry comes to every Christian as a result of acceptance of the call to be a Christian. It would be great to think that each of us could have the experience of having Jesus approach us personally and physically with the call; but it is unrealistic. However it is not unre-

*It is important that we accept a stewardship responsibility to "fan into flames" God's gifts to us*

alistic to believe that God does call each Christian today to a life of discipleship and service in a way which is personal and compelling. \*

For most of us this will revolve around our commitment to Jesus and to the message of the gospel as presented in Scripture. We will express this in Christian ministry, which comes out of a growing relationship with God (Christian maturity) and a growing appreciation of the gifts he has given us. The strength or power of our service will be determined by our "maturity in Christ", while the scope will be delineated by our gifts. Our involvement in the community of God (usually a local church) will be invaluable in affirming the areas of our gifts, as the purpose of the gifts is the building up of the body of Christ (Eph 4:12-13). It may be that the local congregation helps clarify a sense of calling to a specific ministry

and pledges support for equipping for that ministry. \*

For others there will be a personally experienced call which we interpret as God breaking through to us in ways which have very special meaning and motivation. Whatever the specific nature of our call, we will need to hold strongly to it in order to persevere when ministry gets tough, but a continuing sense of call is a basis for all ministry. \*

There is no difference in essence between "full-time local church pastoral ministry" and other ministry. Some will sense a call to ministry which will be undertaken most effectively as a vocation, and therefore will be supported by the financial stewardship of Christian people. The Christian role of pastoral leadership (eldership) is a ministry which may be exercised in this way. However there is no reason why any area of ministry, e.g. pastoral care, compassion and mercy ministry, administration, youth, could not be undertaken on a paid basis. It should be noted that the reason for financial payment in such circumstances is to allow the person to allocate full-time resources to the ministry, rather than needing to earn money in a way which distracts from the time and other resources which a person could give. \*

Whatever the ministry God calls us to, it is important that we accept a stewardship responsibility to "fan into flame" (1 Tim 4:14) God's gifts to us. The servant who buried what the master had entrusted to him was censured as being too cautious and therefore unproductive (Matt 25:26-27). \*

The specific training which is best suited to a person will be determined, to some extent, by the ministry or ministries to which the person is called.

*The strength or power of our service will be determined by our "maturity in Christ", while the scope will be delineated by our gifts.*

Therefore a ministry in Christian Education would involve training in areas relevant to that ministry. However the essential foundation for all ministry is the growth to maturity in Christ to which we are called. The depth and length of ministry will be largely determined by issues of Christian character and personal maturity. Thus any training should have these emphases as foundational. The degree to which a person has accepted or wishes to accept the privilege and responsibility of ministry through a sense of call, will determine the rigour and therefore possibly the duration of the training undertaken, e.g. training for Sunday school teaching will not need to be as rigorous and comprehensive as training for pastoral leadership within a local congregation. \*

It may be that the resources for effective equipping for ministry need to be shared between local congregations, e.g. as in a Conference, but the ministry equipping should be strongly related to local congregations in terms of the motivation of a call, the "fanning into flame" of the gifts and the fundamental Christian character development. \*

Keith Farmer is Principal of the Churches of Christ Theological College, Carlingford, NSW.

# Interview **Rick Lewis**

**DON SMITH**

**R**ick you are completing 13 years of full-time ministry with the Telopea, NSW, church. What has led you to move to Birmingham, England, in January? *Our decision to minister with Trinity Church of Christ in Bournville has a number of strands to it. In January 1995 I visited Vancouver, Toronto and London. While in the United*

*Yet there has been a growing sense of God's call to the British churches.*

*Kingdom I had the opportunity to talk with Martin Robinson, who is actively associated with British Churches of Christ. I learned of the opportunities among the churches and heard of the emerging "green shoots". I found myself pondering whether*

*there was a place for me there in some way.*

So your thoughts about working in there have developed over several years.

*Yes that's so. In November 1996 Martin was in Australia for the Queensland State Conference and he talked with me about opportunities for leadership. There is another personal factor which was also nudging me along. My grandfather was English and my father has Welsh ancestry. I've always had an interest in Churches of Christ work around the world and felt sad about the little I knew of the British churches. Things have not been easy for them. I am also aware that it was through their initiative that our Australian churches had their origins.*

I understand that you and Heather visited Birmingham in August. What was the outcome of that visit?

*Yes we were in Birmingham in August and met with the leadership of the church in Bournville, a suburb of Birmingham, which is England's second largest city*

*with a population of four million. Trinity Church of Christ has taken over the management of a community centre which they are in the process of refurbishing. Hundreds of people use the centre each week.*

Your experience at Telopea could be useful in that context.

*Yes, a lot of what has been done in Telopea, in the large urban setting, will be directly applicable to Trinity's new project.*

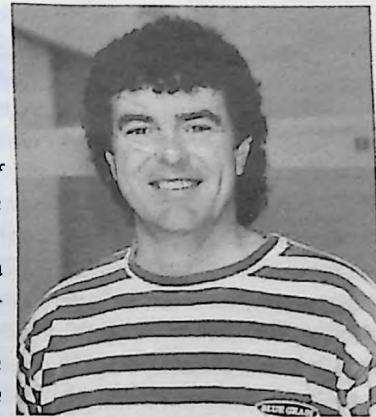
How else might you expect to be involved while you are in the UK?

*Our Springdale Theological College commences a new program in September 1998 in association with the University of Birmingham. I have talked informally with Denis Lindsay, the Principal, about being involved in some way. The College will offer a BA in Missiology with a definite orientation to Mission in the Western World. It is a significant program. There is nothing like it that I'm aware of. It is likely to attract students from all over Europe. Springdale is committed to this strategic mission initiative for the next century and the new millennium. What a great project for one of our colleges!*

Are there other forms of involvement you can envisage? *Well I believe my experience with churches with memberships over 100 could be useful. I visited five British churches which are all moving forward. I hope I can encourage the leaders of these congregations. I believe Australians have a lot in common with the British situation.*

It must have been hard to come to the decision to move!

*Yes it was. My ministry at Telopea has been a joy and a delight and I'll miss the people very*



*much. Yet there has been a growing sense of God's call to the British churches.*

I understand you have some substantial financial commitments.

*Yes Trinity will rent a house for us. Our salary will come from our savings and any gifts which may come to us from Australian or other sources. We are really trusting God to provide for us. It's a small church with big commitments, but they are also hoping to assist with our fares.*

How else may Australians help you?

*Well apart from the financial aspect we shall really value prayer support as we leave at the end of December. Without prayer we're sunk.*

And where will your allegiance be when it comes to cricket while you are in "perfidious Albion". The rivalry seems to run pretty deep doesn't it?

*Don, I'll keep the faith. "Australia forever!"*

Rick Lewis can be reached at 6 Oatlands Cres, Oatlands NSW 2117 or through his e-mail address <rickl@tpgi.com.au>. We shall keep readers informed of Rick's Birmingham address and look forward to hearing from him next year. Why not contact him to express your support. This venture is an opportunity for Australian and United Kingdom churches to draw together.

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**DOW** We surround Katie and Calum, son of Kathleen Tiller and the late Jim Dow, with our loving prayers as they make their marriage vows on 18 October at the Uniting Church, Balaklava 5461.

## DEATHS

**CARSLAKE, George Dunlop** (8.9.97) Loved husband of Connie and father of Graham, Helen, Barbara, Warren and Joy. He lived, he laughed, he loved and now he lives again.

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# Pastoral Care Accept Me as you Find Me

GLEN WEGNER

**A**s a pastoral visitor we sometimes think the purpose of our visit is to cheer another up. Perhaps we've been asked to visit an ill person, so we assume our task must be to make the recipient of our visit feel better. \*

There are two problems we create if our assumption is to cheer someone up. First, we have predetermined the nature of our



*The way to begin to help is not to try to cheer them up.*

visit, and have therefore set the agenda. Second, because we have set the agenda for discussion, it's unlikely that we will accept the person as we find him or her. \*

If we set the agenda when making a pastoral call, we may be visiting from our own set of needs, rather than being there for the needs for the one we are trying to help. \*

In most situations, when making a pastoral visit it's best if we can suspend our own agenda and come with an open heart and mind, being available, so the recipient of our call has opportunity to set the agenda, and therefore focus on his or her needs. \*

Sometimes we find it difficult to accept others as we find them. If we find someone who is depressed, anxious or angry, we want to change them. We want them to feel better. However, the way to begin to help is not to try to cheer them up, but to accept them as they are and feel comfortable in so doing. \*

If we find someone depressed, it may be best to sit with them in their shadows of depression, providing them opportunity to share some of their darkness, by talking about it. Or if a person is angry, the temptation is to attempt to placate the anger, pouring oil on troubled water. However a wiser response is to hear and accept the anger, thus helping the angry person to unload the energy of their anger or hostility. \*

On the other hand if a person is happy, we can celebrate the joy of the occasion with them. All of this involves our being sufficiently at ease to accept others as we find them. This is consistent with our Lord's example, where he was able to rejoice with those who were happy and be sad with those who were weeping. \*

We are most likely to cheer others up, if we accept them as they are and encourage them to set the agenda for conversation. \*



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# Media Matters Men In Black

VINEY LONGTHORP

**B**y now, it is impossible that there would be any who do not know what MIB stands for. If any there should be ask your resident twelve-year-old. Yes, MIB is the movie, *Men in Black*; the required viewing at present, especially for the Baby Buster generation. The media hype has made it certain that the MIB have the same celebrity status as Tony Modra and Pat Rafter. The distributors claim—and who can doubt them—that this movie is among the top ten earners of all time. In “corporationspeak”, what else matters when it comes to judging success? \*

## *It's really a case of computer-created images in pursuit of a narrative.*

MIB is not the sort of movie I normally attend. However, thanks to the offices of a “kind” manager, I took my courage in hand, there to encounter a stunning barrage of audio and visual wizardry, accompanied by about 500 beboppers and the aromas of 500 buckets of popcorn. \*

After the credits had stopped rolling I took a brief straw poll among some of the kids sitting behind me. They seemed strangely muted about the whole experience: none of the usual “cool”, “radical”, or even a “great”. What a contrast to many years ago when I escorted a similar clientele to see the young Steve Spielberg's *Jaws*. After that movie most of the kids were speechless with shock! \*

But we must be fair to MIB. It is a fairly new genre, science fiction in the comic mode. And the story? It's really a case of computer-created images in pursuit of a narrative. Or as Jim Schembri wrote: “Its bark is worse than its bite.” (Or should that be byte?) \*

Tommy Lee Jones and Will Smith are on a mission to save earth from inter-galactic scum. These aliens want to migrate to earth for our highly desirable lifestyle. Our intrepid two have to keep them out, to keep the world safe for “Homo Sapien Sapiens”. But many aliens do slip through and assume human disguise. These have to be winked out and sent packing. \*

In an odd twist to the story some aliens, in their original form (Yuk!) are retained by the government to do menial tasks, confined in a building that looks suspiciously like the Pentagon. To complicate matters some nasties assume the form of certain American leaders; among the mug-shots studied by the MIB I'm certain I identified Newt Gingrich and Madeleine Albright—American audiences would recognise them and enjoy these visual gags. \*

And should any good citizen actually experience an alien in their true appearance most horrible, Jones and Smith have a

state of the art item of technology called a Neuralizer; one zap produces controlled amnesia so that there will be no panic. (I'll bet that in my days as a teacher many of the students had one of these in their school bags). \* MIB has been described then, as unbridled escapist fun. Again to be fair, there are some hilarious scenes. One of these is the ultimate Inspector Gadget. Our duo have to drive through a tunnel under the Hudson River in order to reach a flying saucer in time to save the earth. There is a traffic jam; but “Presto”, at the touch of a button their car becomes rocket propelled and they zoom upside down on the roof of said tunnel. \* But in spite of some laughs, one feels that the movie has been oversold. In America Jones and Smith are celebrities in their own right; this movie merely gives their fans another chance to indulge in them. There are no acting skills, no character development or a depicting of fine emotional states. \*

This movie confirmed my belief that Sci Fi is more convincing and the more entertaining in literary form—as for example in the stories of Isaac Asimov, A.C. Clarke or H.G. Wells. \*

Many movies can transcend the immediate intention of their makers. It doesn't take a Carl Jung to point out that MIB expresses yearnings for a “saviour” figure. MIB rightly viewed is but another of these comic-strip stories such as Superman and Captain Marvel where puny humans are saved from situations which threaten their very being. And Jung would say that this salvation pertains to the

psyche as well as to the physical. \*

Movies about aliens are one expression of our primeval fears of evil and the dark side of our nature. So pervasive are these fears and the sense of insecurity they engender that it should come as no surprise to learn of the claim that about 20 % of Americans believe in aliens; and worse, that aliens exist in the corridors of power. Indeed, MIB reflects this belief. \*

But we Aussies should not feel too smug. A young friend of mine who pilots a small aircraft reports that local air traffic authorities received many phone calls about a dirigible prowling Melbourne skies during the footy finals week, even though it was obviously advertising a brand of chocolate. There were apparently anxious mutterings about “little green men” and “what was it really up to?” I kid you not. \* \*

The Gospel is certainly and primarily about the world's need for a Saviour authentic and true. But given the mood of our times as reflected in MIB, the church may also have as part of its ministry the upholding of the rational spirit and healthy scepticism. \*

And a quote to send us on our way. In his book, *The End of Evolution*, Peter Ward writes, “The real aliens are us.” \*

\*See David Wilkinson, *Alone in the Universe? The X-Files, Aliens and God* as reported in *The Australian Christian*, 20.9.97. Also possible repeats of the ABC broadcast of 5 October 1997 6.30 pm on Radio National, of *Aliens, Priests and Messiahs*, hosted by Dr Rachael Kohn.

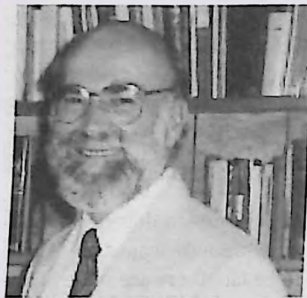


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# AUGUSTINE: "DOCTOR OF LOVE"

BILL TABBERNEE

**P**erhaps the most famous of all early-church figures is Augustine. Born in 354 AD of a Christian mother (Monica) and a non-Christian father (Patricius) in Roman North Africa, Augustine was destined for a prominent civic career when, in 386, he was converted to Christianity in Milan. Baptised



in the "total depravity of human kind". His view of the sacraments has, at times, led to a mechanistic approach to the sacraments. Augustine himself in his *City of God* developed a theological system which maintains a careful balance between God's grace and human responsibility. The church is an imperfect group of pilgrims struggling to become what they ultimately will be: citizens of a city founded on love of God rather than love of self. \*

Among Augustine's other masterpieces is his treatise *On the Trinity*, which remains a classic. His total literary output was so great that Isidore of Seville declared that anyone claiming to have read all of Augustine's writings should be deemed a liar. In the last thirty years alone, numerous of Augustine's sermons and 27 genuine new letters spanning the latter years of Augustine's life have been discovered. These reveal much about Augustine the bishop and pastor. He died on 28 August 430 while dictating a letter to his clergy, setting out their pastoral responsibilities of promoting love during the siege of Hippo by the Vandals, which was then in its third month. No wonder that Augustine is remembered as the "Doctor of Love". \*

## *The church is an imperfect group of pilgrims*

by Bishop Ambrose on Easter Day 387, he soon returned to North Africa where, in 396, he became bishop of Hippo. \*

Augustine is best known for his *Confessions*. In this autobiographical account, Augustine not only "confesses" the sins of his youth but also "confesses" the greatness of God. Using his own life as a "case study", he explains the condition of humankind: as a result of "original sin" we have all rejected God, but God's love pursues us relentlessly until we, of our own free will, return to God. \*

Against Pelagius, a British monk, Augustine argues that nothing we can do is good enough to merit salvation. Only Christ's death provides the way back to God. Against the Donatists, a schismatic (but majority) church in North Africa, Augustine argues that even sacraments performed by fallible priests are valid. \*

Augustine's view of human nature has, at times, led to belief

## CHANGES

**CAVESIDE, TAS**—Secretary Sally Byard, 17 Beefeater St, Deloraine Tas 7304.

## BAPTISMS

•Donald Davey, Launceston, Tas •Liz Forbes, Mark Selke, Rosemary Scown, Maureen Ward, Mandy Jones, Carol Wiese, Andrew Clarke, Shayne Mogg, Noarlunga Centre, SA •Brett Westall, Paul Dutton, Lynton Shreeve, Garth Toovey, Warwick, WA •Glenda Bowkett, Tweed Heads-Coolangatta, NSW •Edith Butler, David Cecil, Simone Power, Footscray, Vic •Glenn Kirsopp, Horsham, Vic

## MARRIAGES

•Marg Irwin and Jack Clarke, Alaine Heenan and Alan Hutchins, Shepparton, Vic

## DEATHS

•Marion Armstrong, Launceston, Tas •Isa Taylor, John Harpham, Cliff Jones, Alf Smith, Noarlunga Centre, SA •Bert Schook, George Carslake, Warwick, WA •Lyn Chislett, Red Cliffs, Vic •Jean Lang, Lil Constable, Sylvia Welsh, Footscray, Vic

## OBITUARIES

**Obituaries are limited to 100 words**  
**CAMERON, Dorothy Eva** (7.9.97) Born to Gilbert and Margaret Washbourne 3 May 1918, the family moved to East Kew, Vic, where Dorothy became very involved with the church. She was baptised at age sixteen. During this time she received a certificate marking 14 years' unbroken Sunday attendance. Dorothy married Cliff in 1947, and in 1948 moved to Pakenham. They joined the Berwick church where Dorothy was always actively in-

involved. She was a caring and friendly person. Dorothy died peacefully at home after a long illness. Her community activities included Meals on Wheels, Red Cross and the Pakenham Care Group. She greatly loved Cliff and her family and is now with her Lord.

**HENDERSON, Laurel Agnes** (15.8.97) Laurel began her association with the Kalgoorlie Church of Christ in 1926 when her mother, Mrs Varney, confessed Christ at the Hinrichsen-Brooker Mission. Laurel made her confession of faith and was baptised by the late Will Waterman in June 1929. She held many positions, including Sunday School Superintendent, editor of the church paper for 20 years, deacon, and was one of the first women to preside at the Lord's Supper. After 45 years as a teacher, Laurel became involved with the Senior Citizens, organising a choir and various activities. The Kalgoorlie church was crowded with those who gave thanks for her life.

**PALLOT Vi (nee Farmer)** (1915-1997) Vi's love for people gave her great insight. New Christians, lonely and shut ins, leaders, children and young people all received support. As a child in Kalgoorlie, WA, Vi became aware of the plight of Aborigines. Throughout her life she worked to help them. She served on the State Aborigines Committee for 31 years, encouraging missionaries and aboriginal friends. Vi was in membership in Kalgoorlie, Subiaco and South Perth for 50 years. She was a CWF Federal President and State President three times. Vi married John Pallot when he returned from the war. They had two daughters Betty (Fabry) and Dianne (Bond) and grandchildren David, Jenni and Susan, Bradley, Sherie and Aleece.

## NSW

**TWEED HEADS-COOLANGATTA (Bruce Warwick)** Morning service to commence at 10.00 am during DST ... Mal & Kristy North home from China for brief time ... Two baby dedications, one baptism in last two months ... Seven participating in Kenmore College study course at Burleigh Heads ... Special mid-week service before Drop-In well attended ... Afternoon "Hymn Sing" of old favourites greatly enjoyed ... Robyn Pieper shared on her work with WEC in Gambia ... Trivia night for support of deaf orphans in Philippines raised over \$860.

## QLD

**TWYFORD ST, BUNDABERG (Paul Scully)** A great day with church Kids Fun Fair. Raised several hundreds of dollars ... Church continues to support overseas missions, raising over \$1,500 just by 50¢ coins ... Teen group had a 50s & 60s night ... Church running "Growing Kids God's Way" parenting program ... Church members training for outreach with "Two Ways to Live" ... CWM had great time with a social fundraiser ... "Covenant Players" challenged church in night service.

## SA

**NOARLUNGA CENTRE (Roger Risson, Tony Gibson)** Started prayer triplets &

monthly day of prayer ... Church successfully held faith-giving project & purchased second manse ... Newer attenders enjoying orientation group ... Ten people currently discipling others ... Small-group leaders network commencing soon ... New youth groups "Fungus" & "Star" commenced.

## TAS

**LAUNCESTON (C. Spaulding, W. Kerrison, T. Gray)** Yvonne Harrison attended World Day of Prayer Conference in New York in July ... Girls' Brigade members raising funds to send four to Fonomarae in January 1998 ... Good Gear op shop providing appreciated friendship to many patrons of the shop ... All Launceston churches preparing for Impact World Tour.

**ULVERSTONE (Arthur Symes)** Church involved with Alpha, first course completed, third course started involving 22 people ... 5-7 September family camp at Camp Seaview, Bicheno, combined with Geeveston Community Church. 54 attended. Ron Chapman led studies on "Daniel". Great weekend ... Annual Launceston, Devonport, Ulverstone visit to Caveside on 10 September with 45 attending. Wonderful day of friendship and sunshine. 10 of our ladies present ... Ministry encouraged by weekly service attendances.

**DEVONPORT (Peter Willis)** Church involved with organisation for Bill Newman Rally 22 October. Dinner on

27 September to encourage & motivate intending participants ... Peter Willis attended annual Minister's Retreat. David Pearson spoke in his absence. Carol Preston from Wollongong Institute was facilitator for retreat ... Bibles rally to be held 4 October ... Young adults group planning trip to Mazes at Tazmazia ... Building options task force presented final report to church board.

## VIC

**SHEPPARTON (Robert Hough)** Many ministered to during weekend of Mission Outreach with Canadian guest Case Schrage ... Ministry term extended for pastor for further three years ... Youth ministry refocussed with new leadership team ... Cooperation with Combined Churches continues to grow.

**MOUNT CLEAR (Dale White)** 80 people enjoyed a variety concert organised by Simon Hitchcock ... Church hosted thanksgiving service for Girl Guide movement, with 200 attending ... "Parenting Young Children" seminar conducted by psychologist Mary Dewberry ... Special guests "Covenant Players" performed at recent evening service ... Recent guest speakers include Lindsay Dewberry, Conference President, & Brian White.

**KANIVA (Paul Bauer)** Inter-generational service held at Uniting Church, with youth band participating ... Ian & Jean Whitelock welcome visitors during absence overseas of daughter Kerryn Dyer & her husband Aywyn ... CWF ladies attended NWD Conference at Brim ... Wilma Nash held plant sale, with proceeds to Christian Blind Mission ... Growth groups studying Eugene Petersen's book *Perseverance* ... Neil Macdonald recovering after surgery in Melbourne.

**RED CLIFFS** Recent speakers John Everingham (Gideons), John Gilmore, Arthur McWilliams, Anne Mansell, Romanus Mphanbe (CCTC), Colin Cole (Chaplain), & Rex Sharrad. Rex appointed a pastoral carer to the church

... Several members away ill during winter months ... Congratulations to Margaret Hensgen on 90th birthday also to Angela & Dale Stewart on birth of a second son ... Sympathy extended to Chislett family in passing of Lyn.

**HORSHAM (Steve Blacket, Julie Trinnick)** David Ratten visited in September for forum on healthy churches, with people from Horsham, Warrnambool, Kaniva, Bordertown & Haddon attending ... Following visit, church held week of prayer for people & programs ... Divorce & Separation group meeting monthly ... Free community counselling offered two days per week by church's counsellor, Julie Edmonds ... Three babies, Sarah, Ikechukwu and Regan dedicated 14 September ... Action Stations holiday program in school holidays.

## WA

**ALBANY (John Spencer)** James & Kathleen Dorn & family from New Tribes Mission guests 10 August. James spoke of their impending departure to the Philippines ... Several members attended BBQ lunch at Middleton Beach ... John Bardsley from WEC spoke at service & at combined gospel service in the Town Hall ... John & Heather Spencer recently attended minister's retreat & ministers & pastors school ... Val Sprigg had 16 speaking engagements with women from CWCI in South West towns.

**WARWICK (Jim Longbottom, Keith Bowes, Rod Ratcliffe, Brad Lewin)** In August & September new minister Jim Longbottom, church members, spouses & friends appreciated getting to know one another in informal meetings ... An "Open Forum" after morning service on 31 August gave members opportunity to discuss "The kind of church we want at Warwick in the year 2000". Elders will give attention to answers submitted by four groups ... A thanksgiving service for the life of George Carslake held in chapel 12 September.

## NORTHCOTE CHURCH OF CHRIST 94<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY

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# Exploring the Day Saying Grace

JANET THOMPSON

It was late, so I hurried into church a few seconds before the service began, and slid into a seat—slightly out of breath. \*

With a sigh of relief (I hate being late) I bowed my head and closed my eyes for a brief moment of prayer. \*

As the sentence took shape, I suddenly realised what I was thinking, and almost burst out laughing. "For what I am about to receive, may the Lord make me truly thankful." I was saying grace—the same words I use almost every time I sit down to a meal. In my haste I had stopped thinking, and habit had taken over. \*

Then it occurred to me that there was something appropriate about the traditional request for a blessing in this situation. \*

I go to church expecting to receive. What is the difference between nourishment for the body and nourishment for the soul? \*

My usual prayer before a service is that I will be open to the atmosphere of worship—ready to participate, and to hear and appreciate what is being presented. \*

The more I thought about it, the better it became. I don't always expect to enjoy the food I am about to eat, but I am thankful for the particular qualities that broccoli and raw bran bring to my life! The sermon may not be to my liking either, but it is often the message I like the least that is most likely to make me stop and think—not always a comfortable process, but it has definite benefits. \*



I remembered something that G.K. Chesterton wrote on this topic, so I looked it up when I got home. \*

He suggested saying grace before opening a book, before a play or a concert, before walking, swimming, playing ... you get the picture. \*

Why stop with meals, when everything I do can give me something for which I will be thankful? \*

There shouldn't be any limits, although I'm not always prepared to go into tough situations expecting to be thankful for the horrors ahead. I do really well with hindsight! \*

Experience is a great teacher, and I continue to learn. In everything, give thanks! (All this was over in a few moments, so I didn't miss the sermon!) \*

## The Last Word

It is better to win all hearts than cut off all ears.

—Walter Scott

**Mother:** "Glen, the canary has disappeared."

**Glen:** "That's funny. It was there just now when I tried to clean the cage with the vacuum cleaner."

"Here's the manuscript I offered you last year."

"What's the idea of bringing that thing back when I rejected it once?"

"You've had a year's experience since then."

"I thought I told you to stand at the end of the line!" said the teacher crossly at morning assembly.

"I did, sir" said the new boy miserably, "but there was someone there already!"

**Doctor:** "Your husband must have absolute rest and quiet. Here are some sleeping pills."

**Wife:** "When must I give them to him?"

**Doctor:** "They're for you."

A nervous tourist peered down from the top of the cathedral and asked the guide, "Do people fall off here often?"

"Oh, no, sir," said the guide. "Only once!"

## Pontius' Puddle



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