‘Face To Face’ – Faith And Inspiration On TV
– New Series Of Australia’s Only Christian Talk Show

FACE TO FACE, Australia’s only Christian TV talk show, has begun a new series on the Australian Christian Channel.

‘This is our sixth series,’ said host and executive producer Karl Faase. ‘Face To Face started life as a Network TEN show produced for the network by Christian Television Australia. I had hosted some other programs for CTA and in 2002 they pitched a late-night talk show to TEN and offered me the host’s role – which I was delighted to accept. We’re now in our sixth year and although we’re no longer on the TEN network, we’re very pleased with the response we’re getting from the audience on the Australian Christian Channel.’

Each Face To Face episode features two guests who are interviewed about their faith. At the end of the show, guest commentator Richard Quadrio, a Sydney-based minister, joins Karl and the two guests.

‘We’ve been very fortunate to have lined up over 30 guests, many of whom are well known in the Christian and secular world. They include singer/songwriter Colin Buchanan; Sydney Anglican Archbishop Peter Jensen; Wesley Mission Superintendent Rev Keith Garner; NSW Police Commissioner Andrew Scipione; stage performer and recording artist Marina Prior and CEO of World Vision, Tim Costello,’ Karl said. ‘But we don’t just focus on well-known people – we have some very moving stories from people like Ron Baker, who turned from being an alcoholic to becoming a travelling evangelist and pastor after he was converted at the 1959 Billy Graham Crusade; Saroeun Keo, who was a Buddhist monk in Cambodia but through a remarkable series of events is now working in a Cambodian church in Sydney.’

Face To Face airs each Monday night at 7.30 and is repeated Tuesdays at 2pm and Sunday mornings at 1am.

George Beverly Shea To Be Honoured At Billy Graham Library

GEORGE Beverly Shea is a man with many life achievements. Living to be 100 is just one of them, and next month the man, his music and his many milestones will be featured at the Billy Graham Library, North Carolina. The two-month-long tribute, George Beverly Shea: How Sweet The Sound, celebrates 100 years of ‘America’s beloved Gospel singer,’ as Bev Shea is known, even though he was born in Canada, but has lived most of his life in the United States.

‘Bev has accomplished so much and I find his life an inspiration; rarely do you meet a man as humble as Bev,’ said Debra Cordial, director of the Billy Graham Library. ‘It is because of his inspiring life that we wanted to honour and bring to light so many of the wonderful milestones that he has achieved during his 80 years of ministry, and 100 years of life.’

The tribute will include items from Shea’s childhood in Canada to his many years spent as an integral part of the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association. Among memorabilia on display at the Library will be: the violin his father gave him when he was a boy; handwritten sheet music by Shea; the first record he ever made; and even a personal note from Ruth Graham to Shea as she attempted to play matchmaker between him and his now wife, Karlene. – Dan Wooding

www.nlife.com.au ‘Tell the people the full message of this new life.’ (Acts 5.20b)
**Here, There and Everywhere with the Wilsons**

**News from the Holy Land**

**First Annual Bike Ride**

On 1 October, during the Feast of Tabernacles, the International Christian Embassy in Jerusalem and ALYN Hospital will be holding a 60K ride around the Sea of Galilee. They expect about 1,200 riders to participate, with a guide to describe what they are seeing.

**Concern Expressed at Sale of Land in Galilee**

Reports are to hand saying that much private, extremely valuable land in Galilee has been purchased by rich Arabs from Persian Gulf countries. Because it was private land it was quite legal to do this, especially as local farmers could not raise sufficient money to buy it.

Gulf Arab patrons have also been buying up properties in Eastern Jerusalem for Arab/Muslims, as have wealthy overseas Jews for poorer local Jews.

**Breaking the Cycle of Poverty**

HOPEBUILDERS International was founded by a group of concerned Australians and it seeks to be actively involved in helping orphaned children and widows in many central African countries by providing hope and breaking the poverty cycle. They have also partnered with an organisation in India to provide medical help, vocational training, agricultural development and micro-enterprise development. For more information go to: www.hopebuilders.org.au; phone 03 9759 9155 or write to: 15 Cavell St, Scoresby Vic 3179.

**For Prayer:**

SEVERAL letters from missionaries remind us of their need to be flexible and ready to hear God’s voice speaking:

- **Jon and Lynndell Paschke, in Vanuatu,** are needing that gift. They have just returned from two weeks on Nguna Island, had five days in Vila and then had to run a Scripture Union Kids Holiday Program. SU has recently moved their office and library to a new building and they are involved in setting it up. Pray for them.

- **Tahlee Bible College:**

  Pray for wisdom regarding future direction – that God will confirm His will.

- **OAC Ministries:**

  Pray for each staff worker and planning for Christmas outreaches.

**Update on David and Margaret Price**

THEY write: ‘We leave early September for another 11 days away at the next Pioneers Leadership training InTent program being held in South Korea with a group of about 40 people from all over the world. What a privilege to share with these passionate people working in many difficult areas where the Gospel is so needed!’ In September they will be handing leadership of the Member Care Team of Pioneers to Brent Allred, who has been transitioning into this role since the start of the year. They will continue as part of the Team as required and also focus more on training.

**The Cuban Church is Growing**

DESPITE 50 years of persecution, churches are now somewhat freer to worship. Revival Prayer Bulletin for August/September reports that last June 10,000 Cubans attended a two-night Christian concert in the city of Jolquin and Christian pastors say the government is finding it more difficult these days to slow the rapid spread of Christianity.

**Attacked by Extremists**

VOICE of the Martyrs reports that the Aras-tamar Evangelical Theology School in Indonesia was attacked on 25 July by a mob of extremists. Since 1991 the school has been training and sending missionaries to unreached people groups and rural villages. The riot, burning and looting followed a student trying to kill a rat with his sandal, which bounced and hit the fence of a neighbour. Police finally evacuated students from the college but not before hundreds of them were wounded – 17 sustained serious injuries from machete cuts and chemical burns. The students have been relocated, but pray for God to heal and strengthen them.

**Nurses Christian Fellowship**

IN NSW the October Houseparty will be held at Budgewoi from 16-18 October. Contact Diana Marshall, 02 9476 4440. In South Australia the AGM will be held on 10 October in Adelaide. Contact 03 9578 1600.

**SU and Prison Fellowship SA**

THESE groups will be combining to run Camps for Kids from 11-13 September. Many of the children have already suffered because of their family situations and PFSA needs financial help to get them to camp and for some of the basic necessities of life. Phone 08 8172 1996 to find out how you can help. Remember Prison Fellowship outreach throughout Australia.

**Middle East Reformed Fellowship**

PRAISE God for MERF’s extensive broadcast ministry in Cairo producing Christian radio programs for the area. Judging by the responses, tens of thousands are listening to the half hour broadcast program.

**News from Mukti**

FOLLOWING the recent passing of Dr Sheela Gupta, it has also been announced that Lorraine Francis has been appointed as the new Superintendent for Pandita Ramabai Mukti Mission in India. Pray for her in this new role.

**Western Gospel Ministries Inc**

PHILL and Wendy Brewster sent an update of their long trips to visit with and share with people in the West Kimberley area of Australia. They shared in several conventions, celebrated marriages and conducted funerals. A lot of counselling, visitation of those in prison, hospital etc was done and much literature was distributed.

**Global Interaction News**

PRAY that the Yao people, an unreached people group in Malawi and Mozambique will open their hearts to God’s Word.

September is the start of the new teaching semester in Central Asia. Pray for the cross-cultural teachers. Sunny is teaching at the seminary in Hong Kong this semester. Pray for him and his family in Australia. Remember in prayer others serving God cross-culturally.

- **Baptists in Western Australia celebrate 400 years of Baptists united in mission.** Praise God for all that has been accomplished for His Kingdom.

- **Pray that the Kazakh people, an unreached group in Kazakhstan, will grow in knowing Jesus and so in transforming their community;** Chris and Bron working with children there.

- **Praise God for the birth of a son to Mazuala and Esther on 20 August. They travel to Mizoram for training and partnership before joining the South East Asia team.**

- **Pray for June Sutton, ex-cross-cultural worker in Hong Kong who is critically ill in hospital. Pray for God to comfort her and to touch her body.**
SHOT was fired at a Mission Aviation Fellowship Twin Otter aircraft as it was landing at a remote airstrip in Papua New Guinea just one day after the tragic Airlines PNG crash near Kokoda that claimed the lives of all on board.

The two incidents are not connected.

The MAF Twin Otter piloted by Richard Marples and Greg Fialand was on its final approach to Aiyura airstrip near the community of Ukarumpa at 9.30am on Wednesday 12 August when a bullet fired from a nearby hillside pierced the rear of the cabin and ejected through the roof.

Neither pilot was aware of the incident at the time and nobody on board was injured.

The pilots later reported they heard a sound like a cargo strap breaking and slapping a coffee bag. This could have been the sound of the bullet passing through the cabin and is consistent with reports of tribal violence taking place at the time. There had also been reports of intermittent gunfire all day at Aiyura.

The bullet hole was found on a subsequent walk-around inspection as the hole is not immediately visible from normal ground perspective.

The bullet entered the rear cabin door and exited through the roof narrowly missing fuel cells, the aircraft’s battery and the elevator trim control cables. Had it hit any of those, the consequences could have been catastrophic.

Damage to the exterior skin of the aircraft has been repaired and it has been released back into service.

There was no cabin attendant on board at the time. If there had been and he was leaning forward or looking out of the window, he could have been killed.

MAF PNG Program Manager, Patrick Williams, said he believed the shot was fired from a hill at the end of Aiyura runway, at Ukarumpa, SIL’s headquarters.

“We consider it a random act of violence at a time of tribal fighting and that MAF was not specifically targeted,” he added.

A report was made at the time of the incident to the Kainantu police station. It is believed that rascals broke into the police station that morning and stole all the police guns. These may have been used in local gun violence around Ukarumpa and possibly in the incident involving the MAF aircraft.

‘I thank the Lord for His protection in this incident, that no-one was injured and the aircraft sustained only superficial damage,’ said Mr Williams.

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**TRAGEDY AVERTED ...**

Shot Fired At MAF PNG Twin Otter – No Harm Done

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**South Korea may ban missionary work in the Middle East**

THE Government of South Korea may be banning missionary work in the Middle East because of safety concerns. The hostage situation in Afghanistan, coupled with the murder of a nurse in Yemen, is contributing to this.

Glenn Penner with Voice of the Martyrs-Canada reports that South Korean Christians say this would be a violation of their religious freedom. Penner says the government is under pressure particularly from Middle Eastern governments who are saying: ‘Your people are too evangelistic. They’re causing problems. Please put a travel ban on allowing your people to come to our countries for evangelistic work.’ Penner says while this could slow the spread of the Gospel, ‘I think it’s likely that they will find creative ways of getting into these countries. When people have the call of God upon their lives, sometimes you do have to make a decision between whether you’re going to obey your government or whether you’re going to obey Christ.’

The government continues its deliberations. Pray that the ban won’t be implemented.
CURRENT COMMENTS – CLIFFORD WILSON

‘HOLDING’S HAPPY ENDING’

I THOUGHT that was a very good heading in reporting the discovery of Victorian Water Minister Tim Holding on a freezing mountain after two nights of freezing temperatures. I don’t know who the writer was but I agree with his sentiments expressed in the Melbourne Herald/Sun that this remarkable story had a happy ending. The writer makes the point that ‘it has been sickening to read and hear the comments of the nasty types that crawled out of the woodwork and spewed out their bile on-line and on talk-back radio … Think of the most awful things you could say about Holding and they said it. One even said it would serve Holding right if he died because he shouldn’t have gone out without a beacon. Another said that Victorians shouldn’t have to waste their money on rescuing Holding.

It was far better to read that ‘decent minded Victorians had held their breath in the hope that he would be found safe and well.’ Barbara and I aligned ourselves with that latter group, and we literally prayed for his safe-keeping and health, especially during that last night.

Our writer in the Herald/Sun also had something that was wonderful to read: ‘A man had been lost, and he was found. What better news could there be?’ Obvi-ously I liked this because of its closeness to the Biblical story of the Good Samaritan who went out of his way to save a man who could hardly be called his friend; a lost sheep that was found and was brought back to the fold where there was great rejoicing; and a prodigal son who came home, and there was great rejoicing on the father’s part because the son who was lost now was found, was dead but was now alive. (Luke 15) How wonderful these Gospel stories are as they remind us of the lost being found!

We Christians have the wonderful privilege of presenting the Gospel of Salvation to those who are far from Christ, spiritually lost, but can be found by coming to Him who can still save the lost!

Teachers Have Responsibilities!

IT’S heartening to see that some writers are challenging a code that virtually omits moral standards. In the Melbourne Herald/Sun Neil Mitchell – a Melbourne radio personality – says: ‘Next time you pack the lunches and send the kids off to school, don’t bother lecturing them about honesty, decency, accountability, or respecting the teacher. There’s no point.’ Neil goes on to suggest that ‘these characteristics seem to matter lit-tle to the teaching profession today – or at least to those who “police” them’.

He tells us there are about 109,000 teachers in Victoria and most of them are earnest, hard-working people. He then goes on to say that they should be shouting loudly because a decision reported from the Victorian Institute of Teaching insults them.

He refers to a teacher, one who had the privilege of educating children, who ‘be-haved as a sleeze’. He had manipulated an emotionally fragile Year 10 student to the point that he expressed his love for her. He sent her many hundreds of text messages, used obscene language, and told her how to act if the principal of the school found out about his telephone calls.

This teacher was working in a country Victorian school, and the VIT disciplinary hearing found him guilty of serious misconduct. But it also found him ‘fit to teach’, and now he has agreed to counselling and has promised to be a good chap – he is back in front of a class at another school.

Neil Mitchell asks the question: ‘How does that uphold professional standards or maintain respect for this grand, occasionally self-indulgent, profession?’

According to Neil Mitchell the man had lied, tried to blame others, been dishonest to the child’s parents, dabbled with the emotions of a fragile girl – and much more. However, despite all that, he was found ‘fit to teach’.

The code of conduct for teachers pledges them to recognise their responsibil-ity in matters of integrity and respect. They accepted the man’s assurance that he had ‘changed his thinking, admitted his lies, and would never offend again.’

Many people would believe that this man’s actions, and then his reactions, make nonsense of the code of conduct – that he had no respect for the rules he knew were supposed to be followed in the teaching profession, and he should not be allowed to teach young people.

Jesus said: ‘Suffer the little children to come to Me’, and Christian parents espe-cially have responsibility to ‘bring up a child in the way he should go’.

Let’s therefore pray for responsible teachers to be raised up, and for responsible teachers in colleges and universities, to know the better life that is offered by our Lord Jesus Christ.

Gangs Of International Pickpockets

IT is reported that gangs of international pick pockets, bag snatchers and frauds have been entering Australia partly because of the relaxed visa restrictions which apply here.

Apparently these gangs have been trained in Eastern Europe and in the past year their numbers have increased by about 1,800 – with an explosion in the stealing of wallets, bags and telephones. It is common practice for these criminals to engage in a wave of crime and then make a swift exit from the country before the police even know they are here, let alone manage to catch up with them.

Many of us have read of these things in the times of Charles Dickens, and it would seem that there are new Fagins about now, with people being trained for this sort of ‘work’ overseas. Matt Johnston reports: ‘They go and have a run of it up in Sydney, and then come down to Melbourne for a week. They do all the busy transport corridors and then they disappear.’

Australian police are greatly concerned about this organised international crime, which even includes drug running. They warn that human trafficking could also be involved.

We have been warned (in Matthew 24.12) that in the last days lawlessness will increase, and surely we are well into those last days now.
Choosing The Right Move

WHEN thinking about euthanasia recently I found myself also thinking about the samurai of ancient Japan. In particular, my thoughts turned to a book titled *Hagakure (Hidden Leaves)* written in 1716 by a samurai called Yamamoto Tsunetomo.

According to Yamamoto, the Way of the Samurai is essentially the way of death. It involves being prepared to lay down one’s life for one’s master, one’s comrades, one’s ideals, one’s honour.

Hence Yamamoto states: ‘the Way of the Samurai is, morning after morning, the practice of death, considering whether it will be here or be there, imagining the most sightly way of dying, and putting one’s mind firmly in death. Although this may be a most difficult thing, if one will do it, it can be done.’ (p.73) ‘When one’s own attitude on courage is fixed in his heart, and when his resolution is devoid of doubt, then when the time comes he will of necessity be able to choose the right move.’ (p.46) ‘Thinking about things previously and then handling them lightly when the time comes is what this is all about.’ (p.27) ‘It is important to have resolution beforehand.’ (p.36)

What have Yamamoto’s precepts got to do with euthanasia? Just this: Yamamoto is profoundly right when he speaks about the need for resolve in advance of the event.

We need to settle our opposition to euthanasia now – now – before we ourselves are faced with dreadful circumstances. We need to resolve now that we are on the side of life, no matter what. We need to resolve now that we will not resort to euthanasia in order to end our own suffering or the suffering of those we love. We need to resolve now that God is good and He will not allow us to suffer beyond our endurance. We need to resolve now that we will not kill ourselves out of rebellion or pride or cowardice, but will rather accept, if God decrees, the humiliation of decrepitude and dependency. We need to resolve now that we will not kill others out of selfishness when they are decrepit and dependent on us. We need to resolve now that the only good death is the death through which the Good Shepherd comforts and accompanies us with His rod and His staff.

In the matter of euthanasia, if we fail to determine our position in the present, we may well fail to perform our duty in the future. For as Yamamoto states: ‘To face an event and solve it lightly is difficult if you are not resolved beforehand, and there will always be uncertainty in hitting your mark.’ (p.27)

Of course, what is true for euthanasia is true for other moral issues as well, issues such as abortion, pre-marital sex, embryonic stem cell research, marriage with unbelievers, homosexuality, et cetera. Long before such issues touch us personally, we need to decide what is right and to determine where we stand. Long before we are faced with an unplanned or unwanted pregnancy, for example, we should determine that the killing of unborn babies is wrong, and determine never to do it. Long before a friend or a relative becomes involved in homosexuality, we should determine that same-gender sex is wrong and determine never to excuse it.

A key reason for moral failure in Christians is a mental failure ‘to have resolution beforehand’. With God’s grace, we can rectify this problem by following the advice of Yamamoto. His advice relates to the Way of the Samurai, which is the way of death. But there is no reason why it cannot be applied to the Way of the Christian, which is the way of life. Accordingly, let us form and fix our intentions in our hearts in advance, ‘then when the time comes [we] will … choose the right move.’

– Andrew Lansdown
Over 1,500 Churches Come Together To Bring The Message Of Jesus To NSW

IN an exceptional show of solidarity, 1,511 Christian Churches from all denominations across the New South Wales have come together to support the largest ever media and advertising campaign undertaken by the Christian Church in Australia.

With the Jesus. All About Life advertising campaign due to start on 14 September, the Bible Society is thrilled to announce it has exceeded its target of 1,500 churches coming on board to actively support the campaign.

The campaign encourages Christians to talk about their personal perspectives on faith with non-Christians. With more than 1,500 churches actively supporting the campaign local events will be hosted across NSW to engage with their communities eg Barbecues, open days, panel discussions.

Daniel Willis, CEO of Bible Society NSW and co-founder of the campaign comments: ‘It’s fantastic that we have reached our target of over 1,500 churches for this campaign and great to see so many people already uniting to spread the message of Jesus. We look forward to more churches joining with us in this campaign.’

Jesus. All About Life has been developed to demonstrate that Christian teachings are modern and Jesus is as relevant today as ever: ‘Our goal is to encourage all people, Christian and non-Christians, to be open to Jesus and His message’, says Daniel. ‘We invite people to engage in a conversation with Jesus, in whatever way suits them; through speaking with other Christians, private contemplation and prayer, or engaging with one of the many events that have been organised by Christian communities across NSW.’

The campaign has seen widespread, cross-denominational support from all major denominations including Anglican, Presbyterian, Baptist Union, Catholic, Seventh Day Adventist, Wesley Mission, Uniting, Hillsong, Scripture Union, C3 Church, Churches of Christ and the Salvation Army.

To support this campaign a series of advertisements will be seen via multiple media platforms, such as bus shelters, bill boards, cinemas, and a TV commercial. The campaign begins on Monday 14 September with outdoor adverts.

Churches are encouraged to log on to www.jesusallaboutlife.com.au to post any details or photos from their events. To participate in the ‘Thank You’ campaign, upload their thanks and see what events are taking place in the local area, individuals can visit www.allaboutlife.com.au

Flooding Affects Child Ministry In Burkina Faso

FLOODING has left its mark on Burkina Faso, in west central Africa. According to Kathy Redmond with Compassion International: ‘What we're seeing is basically 12 inches of water [on the ground] right now. There are 150,000 homeless people taking shelter in public schools and churches. Many homes have collapsed, and buildings, roads, and bridges have been damaged.’ She says the flooding has had an impact on 56 of their child development centres. ‘We have 16,000 children in 80 child development centres. So you're talking about upwards of 10,000 kids and their families affected’. Compassion International works through the local church. That partnership is making the church more relevant.

Earthquake-Relief Workers Tried For 'Disturbing The Peace'

TWO Chinese Christian relief workers have been on trial for their role in helping earthquake survivors in Sichuan Province.

According to ChinaAid, on 28 June, Wei Sanhong and Wu Han were arrested by Nanbu County Public Security Bureau in Sichuan for allegedly disturbing the peace and endangering the health of others.

ChinaAid says that, officially detained for ‘acting under the guise of religion’ and ‘disturbing the society and impairing others’ health’, Wei Sanhong and Wu Han were among several members of the Huaguan Town Church who had previously worked to provide disaster relief to victims of the 2008 Sichuan Earthquake, a deadly earthquake that measured at 8.0 on the Richter Scale and occurred on 12 May 2008 in Sichuan province, killing at least 68,000.

In the aftermath of the disaster, relief workers helped local victims to access medical care, rebuild homes, and receive counselling for grief, mental illness, and alcoholism related to depression.

ChinaAid reported that on 28 June, ‘Ms Wei and Mr Wu were visiting the Huaguan Town House Church from their home in Zhejiang, as members of the extended congregation.

That evening, local police broke into the building without a warrant, illegally searched and confiscated church property, and seized Ms Wei and Mr Wu. They were then interrogated at the police station, without legal notification to their families in Zhejiang.

For further detail go to: www.chinaaid.org

– Michael Ireland, ASSIST News Service
THE Chinese Government’s approach to Christianity is ambiguous to the Western mind. On the one hand we are constantly hearing reports of persecution of Christians and difficulties in getting Bibles into China, while on the other we know that the Chinese Government not only allows but cooperates with United Bible Societies in the setting up of the Amity Press and the printing of Bibles for distribution throughout China.

UBS has simply taken all the opportunities the Chinese Government allows with the use of the Amity Press to print Bibles and related books. For finance and ongoing support, Amity Press needs the help of national Bible Societies around the world, and this is where Wee Sing comes in.

Based in Singapore, Wee Sing is the coordinator of the support program for the Amity Press. Because each national Bible Society is autonomous, Wee Sing’s work assumes real importance in seeking and coordinating this support as well as liaising with the Church in China regarding Bible translation, publishing, printing and distribution.

Funding for the work of Amity Press depends on funds donated by Bible Societies around the world, especially in developed countries. Wee Seng says that Bible Society Victoria is one of the strongest supporters, hence his recent visit to meet some of the most significant donors (both individuals and churches) and to share something of the continuing needs of the Bible Society’s ministry in China.

**Enormous Need For Bibles**

Although Amity Press prints some 3.5 million Bibles per year, even more need to be printed to meet the ever-growing need and demand for Bibles, which far exceeds supply. Forty eight million Bibles have been printed since 1987, but every year there are many more requests than Amity Press can supply, because the Church in China is one of the fastest growing churches in the world.

*World Christian Encyclopaedia* estimates that there are some 90 million Christians in China.

At least 42 million of these people do not have Bibles, and there are many non-Christians wishing to buy a Bible out of curiosity.

The main Bible version published is the *Chinese Union Version*, which Wee Seng equates with the (English) *Revised Version* of 1881. The *Today’s Chinese Version* (*Good News Bible*) is also being published for its usefulness in outreach. Amity Press also publishes a variety of Bibles and portions in local languages and a wide range of Biblical portions and materials in print, CD and DVD formats.

Most particularly, the *Jesus Film* and *To Be Great*, the Gospel of Luke with several testimonies, including that of the captain of the Chinese Women’s Soccer Team, are printed and distributed in large numbers and are having a big impact in evangelism.

Wee Seng is concerned that many Christians still have no idea of the sheer scale of the operation of the Amity Press and the enormous needs still not being met.

Nevertheless he wants to extend thanks on behalf of the millions of Chinese Christians for the prayers and support given by Australian Christians. But he reminds us that there is still the ongoing challenge of fulfilling the Great Commission. One third of the world’s non-Christians live in China, and every effort must still be made to bring the Gospel to these people, especially through the printing and distribution of the Bible in the language the people understand and at a price they can afford.
EU President Asserts Christian Values

THE new President of the European Parliament, Jerzy Buzek, from Poland, has said he wants to ‘deepen dialogue with the continent’s Christian churches’. Mr Buzek is a Lutheran, was Poland’s Prime Minister from 1997-2001 and is the first President of the European Parliament from a post-communist eastern European country. He said: ‘The principles associated with the tradition, culture and, above all, faith of Christianity have fundamental importance for me, as well as for Europe’s future identity and development. A debate with churches and other religions on our continent’s problems is essential. Christian values should be very important at an individual level for each politician and leader, but also collectively since they define and show the key ways a politician can act.’ – FEBC

Israeli Children Clean Up Sea Of Galilee

ISRAELI school children ventured out onto the Sea of Galilee (also known as Lake Kinneret) recently to help preserve its waterways by picking up hard-to-reach trash in the lagoons that has been cluttered every summer by families on vacation.

According to the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem, the operation entailed sending out 10 kayaks full of children, towing other rubber boats to navigate the waterways. The environmental volunteerism campaign called ‘Going clean, it’s our Kinneret,’ is part of a joint initiative by the Environment Protection Ministry and other organizations to protect the landscape and quality of Israel’s largest fresh water source.

‘The clean up project is a timely response to environmental concerns over the Kinneret’s preservation, such as its continuously dropping water levels,’ said a ICEJ spokesperson. ‘Due to lack of rain, the lake is close to reaching the black line where pumps are exposed to air and unable to send water into the National Water Carrier, risking irreversible ecological damage to the unique and – for Christians – sacred reservoir.’ – Dan Wooding, Founder of ASSIST

'No Ordinary View' Wins 2009 Australian Christian Book Of The Year Award

THE 2009 Australian Christian Literature Awards were presented on 26 August at Vaucluse, Sydney. They are:

2009 Australian Christian Book Of The Year Award for a work by an Australian author and published by an Australian publisher:
Winner: No Ordinary View: A Season Of Faith And Mission In The Himalayas, by Naomi Reed (Ark House Press).
Joint 2nd Prize: Catherine’s Gift: Inside The World Of Dr Catherine Hamlin, by John Little (Pan Macmillan Australia); Leadership On The Front Foot, by Zachary Veron (Anglican Press Australia); Preach Or Perish: Reaching The Hearts And Minds Of The World Today, by Donald Howard (ed) (Donald and Nan Howard).


2009 Young Australian Christian Writer of the Year Award for an unpublished manuscript by an Australian under the age of thirty:
Winner: Leng Te, for Into Your Mystery.
2nd Prize: Justin Denholm for; Talking About Ethics

For further information contact: Michael Collie, Awards Co-ordinator, Australian Christian Literature Society, PO Box 198, Forest Hill, Victoria 3131, phone 1300-13-7725, mobile 0423 244 481.

The Australian Christian Literature Society is an activity of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge Australia Inc, www.spcka.org.au

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25 cyclists are currently riding the gruelling 4,100km from Perth to Sydney on the 25th Bikes for Bibles Ride. The riders will help to raise more than $100,000 for various charities as part of the annual Bikes for Bibles event, from the Indian Ocean, across the Nullarbor to the Pacific.

The cyclists and their support vehicles gathered at Cottesloe Beach, Perth, where they ‘dipped their toes’ in the Indian Ocean before they left for the Pacific.

The youngest cyclist in the event is just 18 years old. The eldest is event co-ordinator Jim Blaxland, who is 66.

Each cyclist has a fundraising target, raising money for Australian projects including the provision of chaplains for the Australian Defence Force, emergency services, prisons and hospitals.

They will also raise money and awareness of the Jesus. All About Life campaign which is a massive advertising project set to run in both Western Australia and New South Wales later this month.

The ride takes in amazing areas including Ceduna, Streaky Bay, Port Augusta, Burra, Mildura, Young, Yass and Goulburn.

The riders will stay with locals along the way, while local churches will run BBQ’s and events as the riders come into town.

The ride finishes at Sydney’s Cronulla Beach on 19 September, when the riders will paddle in the Pacific to mark the end of their amazing journey.

– Lindsay Fisher
Kazakhstan: 'Preaching Prohibited By Law'

WITHIN hours of arriving in the town of Uspen to visit a local Christian and set up a local congregation, police broke into the house where members of the Pavlodar Grace Church were staying, church members told Forum 18 News Service (www.forum18.org). One visitor was questioned and a local woman the visitors had prayed with was beaten by police until she signed a statement saying she had been forced to submit to a religious ritual. Two of the visitors were to face trial on 31 August.

Asked why the police targeted the group, Inspector Nurserik Aytzhanov told Forum 18: 'They were imposing their religion on the residents of the town by saying that Jesus Christ is the only God and you must believe in Him.' Asked what was wrong with sharing one’s beliefs with others, he said: ‘Such preaching is prohibited by our law.’

He denied that police beat anyone. Police in Jambeyt likewise denied to Forum 18 that they beat one of ten visiting Baptists they detained.

Dan Wooding, Founder, ASSIST

Sudan: Violence Spreads Fear Among Christians

THOUSANDS of civilians have fled after fresh attacks by the rebel group the Lord’s Resistance Army in Sudan’s remote western Equatoria region. Two people died and three others were injured when the LRA carried out a series of attacks in Ezo district, near the Sudanese border with the DRC, on 12 August. It has also been reported that the rebel group abducted ten girls from a local church, ransacked and torched homes and stole food. They also struck in Bereamburu village, burning a local church and health centre and raiding medical supplies. Local authorities report that up to 5,000 internally displaced people have fled from Ezo and surrounding areas. The UN estimates that hundreds of thousands of people have fled homes and villages in Sudan and the Democratic Republic of the Congo because of the LRA since mid-2008. There is widespread panic and people are too scared to return to the rural areas to cultivate their fields or send their children to school in case the LRA attacks. Recent reports suggest that on Saturday 29 August there was an attack in Jonglei State, where over 40 people, including women and children, were killed or injured, some very seriously with gunshot wounds and broken bones. Among the dead was a senior church leader who was shot as he led the morning service at his church in Wernyol.

Barnabas Fund

PLEASE PRAY FOR THE PERSECUTED CHURCH!

More Bloodshed In Iraq, Christians Cry Out For Help

AFTER a period of relative peace, the situation in Iraq has deteriorated again. There have been explosions, and many people – Christians and Muslims – have been killed in the attacks. The most recent attack claimed the lives of 95 people, while injuring more than 500 in the heart of Baghdad. Carl Moeller with Open Doors says while many Christians have left Iraq, many remain. ‘There are numbers of Christians that have chosen – because they love their country and love the Lord – to stay in a place where He has planted His church. Some of the most dedicated co-workers that we have there are suffering from depression over the hopelessness that is pervading.’ While violence mount, Moeller says: ‘The church is growing. And one of the great testimonies to the power of the Holy Spirit and the witness of Jesus Christ is that He is actually appearing to many ‘seeking Muslims’ in dreams and visions. This is happening all over Iraq.’

Mission Network News

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Nigeria – Christian Pastors Beheaded In Recent Bloodshed – Barnabas Fund Reports …

AT least 12 churches have been burned down and a number of Christians killed in anti-Christian violence in northern Nigeria. The co-ordinated attacks began on 26 July in Maiduguri, capital of Borno state, and spread across the country to Yobe state, Bauchi state and Kano state. Islamic militants targeted Christians and the local police, setting fire to churches and homes of local Christians, as well as a police station, a prison and a customs post. Five police officers and 12 Christians have been confirmed dead, including at least two pastors. Curfews were imposed to ease the violence and security forces were instructed to clamp down on the militants, who belonged to the Boko Haram sect. Barnabas Fund is sending help to the Christian victims.

Perhaps the most shocking element of the recent violence in Nigeria was the brutal murders of the Christian pastors. When asked to convert to Islam, they refused, and were beheaded on the instruction of the sect leader, Mohammed Yusuf. One of them, Sabo Yakubu, was the pastor of a congregation in Maiduguri. The father of seven was hacked to death with a machete.

Another Christian leader, George Orjih, preached to Yusuf about Christ before his martyrdom. He was described as a fearless and hardworking man. A fellow kidnap victim, who was later released, reported: ‘while we were lying there, tied up, George turned to me and said: ‘if you survive, tell my brothers that I died well, and am living with Christ. And if we all die, we know that we die for the Lord’.’

One eye-witness says that Orjih was singing and praying all through the ordeal and encouraging the believers not to give up, even unto death. ‘It was his words of encouragement that kept us till the time we were released.’

Pray that the Nigerian security forces will bring peace and stability to northern Nigeria and ensure freedom and justice for its Christian minority.

Pray that the Lord Jesus will comfort the families of those killed in the attack; pray especially for the loved ones and congregations of the Christian pastors who were murdered. They have been urged to emulate the pastors, who died because of their refusal to betray their faith. (Rev 7.9-15).
'Bringing The Lost To The Light' – Finding Christ In Kurdistan

FOR many Assyrian Christians, Iraqi Kurdistan has become a haven where they can practise their faith in freedom. It is completely different to other parts of war-torn Iraq where almost daily Christian churches are bombed and believers attacked and even killed.

Many have fled from the dangers of practising their faith in the other parts of Iraq and during my recent trip to Kurdistan I had the privilege of meeting with a pastor from the Kurdish capital of Erbil, who agreed to tell me his moving story. Though I will not use his name, the radiance of his faith rings through and I began the interview by asking him about his background.

‘I am 34 years old and I was born in Kirkuk, but moved to Erbil in 1986, which was the city of my family,’ he said. ‘I was raised in a normal middle class Catholic family and have two brothers and one sister. I was the third son in the family.’

How did he become a born-again Christian? ‘I became a believer because of my uncle who had become a Christian in Australia and came to visit his big family in Iraq just to share with them about the Lord Jesus,’ the pastor said. ‘I was 18 years old at that time and I was listening to him while he was sharing. It was then that the Lord touched my heart and I started reading the Bible that he had brought to me and then I got saved. That was back in 1992.’

‘To God Be The Glory
He then told me that he started the church where he now is the senior pastor in September 2003 with two other families and a few single ladies. ‘We now have 120 people attend the Sunday meeting and the average age is 30 years. Most of them are government employees, including lots of engineers and doctors. Since we started the church, I can say that the provision of the Lord has been one of the amazing things for me because when He guides He provides. We have seen non-Christians coming to faith by dreams and visions, and when this occurs I say that He is doing everything and we need to watch what is done by Him so He will have all the glory.’

And God certainly gets all the glory at the church he pastors. I can tell you from first hand experience that they raise the roof with their worship to the Lord and being with this congregation made me realize how the Christian Church has so much in common, wherever its location. I didn’t know most of the songs they sang with a talented worship band and singing group, but I could certainly feel the Spirit of God there.

So now he is a pastor, what kind of theological training had he received? ‘While pastoring the church, I studied some materials of the churches belonging to a Pentecostal denomination and some friends from Calvary Chapel and also a Presbyterian Church. But I don’t have any theology degree,’ he explained.

While I was with the pastor I met his lovely wife, so I asked him about how they met. ‘I met my wife in 1992 in a small town of about 8,000 people where I was living at the time and we went to the same civil engineering college,’ he said. ‘I talked to her about my Lord and she became a believer and we got married in 1996.’

I then asked the pastor to talk about the Assyrian Christians who were the first nation in the world to accept Christianity, and the Assyrian Church which was founded in 33 AD by Thomas, Bartholemew and Thadeues. ‘Today, the majority of Assyrian Christians are Chaldean Catholics, and then there is the Assyrian Church of the East, which is very close to Orthodox. And also there a very few Evangelical churches,’ he explained.

He went on to say that a distinctive of the Assyrians is that many of them still speak Aramaic, a Semitic language with a 3,000-year history. It has been the language of administration of empires and the language of divine worship. It was the day-to-day language of Israel in the Second Temple period, the original language of large sections of the biblical books of Daniel and Ezra, and is said to have been the mother tongue of Jesus of Nazareth as well as the main language of the Talmud.

He explained that although most Assyrians do speak Aramaic, his services are conducted in Arabic. The pastor explained: ‘Most people who come to my church studied Arabic in school, so the Arabic for us is the reading language and Aramaic is the spoken language, but we are praying to have one service in Aramaic in the future.’

I then wondered how he learned to speak English and he explained: ‘I started with English songs and movies at the beginning then I had an Arabic-English Bible so I would read it in both languages, then I worked with UN officers for a while.’

I then asked him if the Christians of Kurdistan face any difficulties at this time and he said: ‘Actually the Christians haven’t had problems with the authorities here but, from time to time, something will happen in individual cases, but really the Government is open for the Christian and for the Gospel too.

What would he like people to know about Kurdistan? ‘It’s a nice place and everyone is welcome to visit this place,’ he said. ‘The people are very friendly towards foreigners and the most important thing is it’s open to the Gospel.’

How can people pray for him and what are their greatest prayer needs? ‘I always ask for wisdom to lead with my wife the flock and we also need prayer to always stay in tune with God and hear what He want us to do next,’ he said.

The pastor concluded by saying: ‘I am very thankful for the global Church that is praying for the Church in Iraq because we are the first generation of the believers in this area and we need lots of prayers. I believe that the Church in Iraq will be used by the Lord to bless all the countries in the Middle East, so please don’t give up praying for this nation because the Lord will use it to bring the lost to the light.’

– Dan Wooding, Founder, ASSIST
According to G.A. Williamson in *The World of Josephus* the passage is linguistically indistinguishable from the context. He points out that because Origen did not quote from the passage as we have it, does not mean he did not read it. The notion that only a Christian could have written the passage comes from misunderstanding the sentence ‘This man was the Christ.’ Williamson writes:

‘Like other Greek writers, Josephus frequently puts an untranslatable article before a proper name; here the article is necessary if, as I believe, he meant “The man I have called Jesus was the man commonly called Christ.” This name was used contemptuously by Latin authors and was obviously the recognized name in non-Christian circles, which is natural since it was coupled, as in the last sentence of the Josephus paragraph, with the name “Christians”, for which there was no alternative. Apart from this sentence there is nothing in the paragraph that cannot be found in other non-Christian sources.’

An unbiased investigation would conclude that Josephus looked back to Jesus as One who undertook the miraculous, and despite attempts by critics to reject the statement quoted above, they have never been successful.

The only grounds on which they can claim it is an interpolation is that it suggests the possibility that Jesus was all He claimed to be, the Son of God. It is little wonder that Josephus spoke as he did of Jesus: ‘Jesus, a wise man, if indeed we should call him a man ...’

It is relevant to comment that Josephus also referred to John the Baptist as a prophet. He tells us that ‘... Herod slew him, who was a good man, and commanded the Jews to exercise virtue, both as to righteousness towards one another, and piety towards God, and so to come to baptism ...’ (Josephus, *Ibid*, p540.)

Over the centuries Jewish people themselves have recognized John the Baptist as a prophet. Luke the Historian has been attacked more than most other Bible writers, but his authenticity has been wonderfully demonstrated. We have chosen Luke’s writings to demonstrate the way modern archaeological findings have come to the support of the Bible writings.

(This summary is based on the outstanding survey by J.J. Thompson, Australian Institute of Archaeology, Melbourne.)


20. He understands local customs and practices, recognising the distinctive speech of the people of Lycaonia (Acts 14.11), and the fact that the City of Ephesus bore the title of ‘Templekeeper of Artemis (Diana)’ (Acts 19.35).

21. He knows titles of local officials even though they varied from city to city: the Proconsul of Cyprus (Acts 13.7); Magistrates at Philippi (Acts 16.20.35); Politarchs at Thessalonica (Acts 17.6); Proconsul of Achaia (Acts 18.12); the Aedile (Treasurer) at Corinth (his name was Erastus); the Town Clerk and ‘Certain Chief’ (Asiarchs) at Ephesus (Acts 19.31), and the Chief Man at Malta (Acts 28.7).

22. He has a precise knowledge of local happenings, such as the famine in the days of Claudias (Acts 11.27-30), and Jews forced to leave Rome after riots – one sequel is seen at Acts 18.2.

23. He knew about varying religious practices, such as Zeus and Hermes being worshipped together at Lystra (Acts 14.11.12), Diana as specially related to Ephesus (Acts 19.28), and trade in religious images (Acts 19.26.27).

24. He knew legal procedures, as in his report of the trial in the market place at Philippi – he has first-hand knowledge of what he describes (Acts 16.19).

25. He also wrote with insight about various local buildings and areas, such as the market place at Philippi (Acts 16.19), the market at Athens (Acts 17.17), the Areopagus at Athens (Acts 17.19.22); the market place and the judgment seat (`bema’) at Corinth (Acts 18.12); the theatre at Ephesus (Acts 19.26.27); and the Temple of Diana in that city (Acts 19.27).


27. Famous archaeologist Sir William Ramsay stated: ‘Luke is an historian of the first rank; not merely are his statements of fact trustworthy; he is possessed of the true historic sense ... in short, this author should be placed along with the very greatest of historians.’

28. The Church Fathers accepted the authenticity of the New Testament Scriptures. In that connection, the famous Bishop Westcott makes the following statements:

‘All the Fathers at the close of the 2nd Century (AD 200) agree in appealing to the testimony of antiquity as proving the authenticity of the books which they used as Christian Scriptures. And the appeal was made at a time when it was easy to try its worth. The links which connected them with the apostolic age were few and known, and, if they had not been continuous, it would have been easy to expose the break. But their appeal was never gainsaid.

‘From the close of the 2nd Century, with the single exception of the Apocalypse, the books acknowledged were always received without doubt, until subjective criticism ventured to set aside the evidence of antiquity.’

29. Dr Ward Gasque has summarised well: ‘Many New Testament scholars are not aware of what has been done in the area of archaeological studies; fewer still have had first-hand experience in archaeological work. Neill observes that this is especially true of German scholars, few of whom ‘have any personal acquaintance with the archaeological evidence, and it is possible that they tend to underestimate its significance.’
A BRITISH-based academic has stumbled upon a previously unseen section of Codex Sinaiticus, the earliest surviving Bible, dating back to the 4th Century. He uncovered a fragment of the world's oldest Bible hiding underneath the binding of an 18th Century book.

Nikolas Sarris spotted a previously unseen section of Codex Sinaiticus, which dates from about AD350, as he was trawling through photographs of manuscripts in the library of St Catherine's Monastery on the Sinai Peninsula in Egypt.

The Codex, handwritten in Greek on animal skin, is the earliest known version of the Bible. Leaves from the priceless tome are divided between four institutions, including St Catherine’s Monastery and the British Library, which has held the largest section of the ancient Bible since the Soviet Union sold its collection to Britain in 1933.

Academics from Britain, America, Egypt and Russia collaborated to put the entire Codex online this year (see NL 2009-07-23, p.1) but new fragments of the book are occasionally rediscovered.

Mr Sarris, 30, chanced upon the fragment as he inspected photographs of a series of book bindings that had been compiled by two monks at the monastery during the 18th Century.

Over the centuries, antique parchment was often re-used by St Catherine's monks in book bindings because of its strength and the relative difficulty of finding fresh parchment in such a remote corner of the world.

A Greek student conservator who is studying for his PhD in Britain, Mr Sarris had been involved in the British Library's project to digitise the Codex and quickly recognised the distinct Greek lettering when he saw it poking through a section of the book binding. Speaking from the Greek island of Palmos, Mr Sarris said: 'It was a really exciting moment. Although it is not my area of expertise, I had helped with the on-line project so the Codex had been heavily imprinted in my memory. I began checking the height of the letters and the columns and quickly realised we were looking at an unseen part of the Codex.'

Only a quarter of the fragment is visible through the book binding but after closer inspection, Father Justin was able to confirm that a previously unseen section of the Codex had indeed been found. The fragment is believed to be the beginning of Joshua 1.10, in which Joshua admonishes the children of Israel as they enter the Promised Land.

– Jerome Taylor

1 Corinthians 13.4-8
What real love is?
Inserted by Ivan Bell
Fellowship Of Confessing Anglicans In South Africa

SEVENTY Anglican clergy and laity attending the launch of the Fellowship of Confessing Anglicans (South Africa) at St John’s Church in Port Elizabeth on 3 September.

FCA, which grew out of the GAFCON Conference in Jerusalem in 2008, has already seen successful national launches of Anglicans signed up to the Jerusalem Declaration across the globe, including in London last June. The Port Elizabeth gathering, called Be Faithful, sent out a clear message that ‘the Scriptures exhort us to remain faithful to the faith “once for all delivered to the saints”, to the Lordship of Christ and hence to Apostolic teaching and practice.’

FCA (South Africa) leaders stress that FCA is not another organization and is not seeking to create another church. They add: ‘It is a spiritual movement and fellowship for renewal, reformation and mission – uniquely bringing together those whose key shaping and commitment, but not exclusive identity, has been through the Anglo-Catholic, conservative evangelical, and charismatic expressions of Anglicanism. The FCA movement unites them in one fellowship defined by its centre in the Christian faith as currently expressed in the Jerusalem Declaration and Statement.’

Anglicans from across South Africa – from the Anglican Church of Southern Africa, the Church of England in South Africa and the Traditional Anglican Communion – were welcomed as an example that the FCA is a body in which healing between different Anglican groups can take place, and not schism.

In his keynote address, Canon Dr Vinay Samuel from India and Oxford, who spoke at the London launch, challenged the participants: ‘Can you bring the Biblical resources of faith to shape the heart of South Africa’s agenda? Will its agenda be shaped by simply an ideology of rights and use the iconic status of leaders such as Desmond Tutu and Nelson Mandela to silence any other view?

‘That is not a great gift to the world from South Africa. You are called to the prophetic stance of the obedient disciple, rather than the stance of political people.’

FCA is being launched to support those in South Africa who hold and support orthodox faith, and at least one annual meeting will be held for teaching and fellowship, to strengthen the quality of Biblical teaching and preaching.

WCC Urges Pakistan To Repeal Blasphemy Law

THE main governing body of the World Council of Churches has called on the government of Pakistan to repeal the section of the country’s penal code which carries a mandatory death penalty for anyone found guilty of blasphemy. At a 26 August to 2 September meeting in Geneva, the WCC’s Central Committee issued a public statement calling on Pakistan to ‘guarantee the rights of all religious minorities in the country’. The church council said it considered the law has become ‘a major source of victimisation and persecution’ of religious minorities who are living ‘in a state of fear and terror’.

Evangelism Training In Congo Produces Results

A TEAM of evangelists with Grace Ministries International have been busy over the last few months in the Democratic Republic of Congo. They’ve visited 16 villages to share the Gospel and train others in evangelism. As a result, 200 church workers were mobilized this summer, and 847 people made professions of faith in Christ. The evangelistic teams plan to visit 100 villages during the last three months of 2009. Please pray for the teams, for smooth training, and for receptive hearts.

Missions Interlink

A MISSIONARY Transition And Re-Entry Retreat will be held from 29 October to 1 November. Contact Pam Thyer for details, 03 9890 0644.

Trans World Radio

TWR’s programs from eight FM stations are reaching one million people in Nepal in the main language of the country, but programs also need to be presented in the Tharu and the Tamang languages. Pray for God’s provision. Contact TWR 1300 123 897 or 03 9870 3195 for further details.

130 Years Of Influence

IT is 130 years since Scripture Union began mission activity in Victoria. Many Christians praise God for the input SU has had in their lives over the years and for the many leaders God has raised up.

Wesley And Esther Dale (World Team)

THESE veteran missionaries have returned to Papua and Wesley hopes to finish the formatting of the Lani Bible in the immediate future. He has felt it was like a job that would never end. Now the completion is in sight, praise the Lord.

They write: ‘Sadly, the school situation here in Wamena has deteriorated so badly, Esther withdrew from involvement there. The board is promising four new teachers who know mathematics from Jakarta, and the removal of the dishonest principal in September, so there is a ray of hope. We have been disappointed to find year 12 students who don’t even know how to divide by 2 or multiply by 1 etc.

‘Esther has kept busy trying to prepare curriculum for teaching the Bible for years 1-6 (in school and church). How blessed we English speakers are in the West, to be able to go to a Christian bookshop and have our choice of Sunday School curriculum, with new materials appearing every year. Here the kids generally get a mini-sermon on some verse the teacher noticed in passing and the rest of the time is filled up with singing the same choruses every week’. Please pray.

SIM Names New US Director

SIM (Serving In Mission) began 116 years ago in Nigeria, Africa and is now an international mission with more than 1,600 people from 55 nations serving on six continents. SIM has named Bruce Johnson as its new United States Director. Johnson, a 35-year veteran in ministry leadership, started on 1 July.

From 1 October he replaces Dr Steve Strauss who is leaving to become Professor of World Missions and Intercultural Studies at Dallas Theological Seminary. Johnson came to SIM from Asian Access where he served seven years as vice president of ministry and interim president. Prior to that he served with Arrow Leadership, NextLevel Leadership, and Campus Crusade for Christ.

Johnson was drawn to SIM because in it he saw ‘(an organisation with) the focus on seeing a global movement by the Church everywhere into mission everywhere.’
Why doesn’t God make everyone clever and healthy?

It was Clubhouse Cleanup Day.
Some of the Hotshots’ parents came to help.
And Alana’s sister Jessica came too, in her now wheelchair.

How come God allows some bodies to not work properly?

The doctors said that Jess might not be able to walk again.

Romans 8:23-25

23 The Spirit makes us sure about what we will be in the future. But now we groan silently, while we wait for God to show that we are his children. This means that our bodies will be set free.
24 And this hope is what saves us. But if we already have what we hope for, there is no need to keep on hoping.
25 However, we hope for something we have not yet seen, and we patiently wait for it.

When God made the world it was perfect!

There was no sickness. But then sin came into the world and changed everything. Then, much later, Jesus came to the rescue.

When we go to heaven and are with Jesus there, everything will be perfect again. But for now, some things are not the way God wants.

Prayer:
Lord Jesus, thank you for our bodies that can do so many things. Please help us to look for ways to help people whose bodies are not working so well.


BOOKS WORTH READING

Stuart Bonnington, Minister of Scots Church, Fremantle, WA, reviews a bundle of ‘Banner’ books ...


This book is filled with the testimonies of 50 ex-Roman priests who have left the ‘true church’ for spiritual freedom in the glorious Gospel of the grace of God in Jesus Christ. While it is powerful, moving and truthful, it avoids the rancour which sometimes would taint such works in a previous generation. Most of the contributors are not well known, an exception being Richard Bennett, who runs the Berean Beacon (www.bereanbeacon) ministry which seeks to help Roman Catholic people evaluate their religious practices in the light of the Bible. Sensitively used Far From Rome, Near To God could do much spiritual good in evangelistic outreach work.


Originally published in 1981 this little book preserves a series of sermons that Dr Ferguson preached during his memorable ministry at the Tron Kirk in central Glasgow. It is good to see it back in print as it is packed full of deeply theological comments focusing on personal spiritual experience and the missionary involvement of Christian people. It could bear the sub-title Evangelism And The Sovereignty Of God, only someone else has already used this! Ferguson’s skill as a sensitive and exegetical theologian shines forth on nearly every page. How fortunate it is that he will be the keynote speaker at the 2010 General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia! This book is a gem.


Written by Peter Barnes, well known contributor to New Life, this little booklet presents the reader with a well written and researched introduction to the great spiritual sickness that has been infecting the western Christian church since the Enlightenment – so called ‘theological’ liberalism. Part church history survey, part practical theology, Barnes warns the reader against this ‘…belief system which rejects the orthodox view of the Christian faith as set out in the Bible and summarized in the historical creeds’! He suggests ‘…a rough kind of chronology is observable in the rise of liberal theology in the modern period. In general, the Old Testament was questioned first, then the writings of the Apostle Paul, and finally Christ Himself was portrayed in a way which differed radically from the eye witness accounts of the New Testament writers…’ (p20). A Handful Of Pebbles is a good place to start if one wishes to understand why the pews are empty and the church doors are closing in so many mainline denominations worldwide and why as the 21st Century dawns ‘the mainline has become the sideline’ as some might say.

SICKNESS, SUFFERING AND SCRIPTURE, David Leyshon, Banner of Truth, 2008; FROM GRIEF TO GLORY: A BOOK OF COMFORT FOR GRIEVING PARENTS, James W. Bruce III, Banner of Truth. These two short books will help pastors and the people of God with heart-rending circumstances that so often are our lot. Sickness, Suffering And Scripture is a series of 13 short Bible studies (consisting of an extensive Bible quote, outline comments and questions) which explore how the Christian’s view of suffering is to be drawn from the teaching of Scripture rather than the siren voices of ‘prosperity’ gospel teaching which comes to us today in so many ways. Compiled by a pastor who himself is afflicted with Parkinson’s disease, it is hard to see how the genuine believer passing through deep trials and looking for ‘answers’ would not get substantial spiritual help from this book. Not only is there much food for thought, but good assistance is given to the one who wishes to preach on the pressing pastoral reality of the believer and pain, trial and distress.

With From Grief To Glory we pass from general suffering to one of the most dreadful trials that can afflict us – the loss of a beloved child. The author writes briefly and movingly of the death of his baby son and then presents a spiritual anthology drawn from the reflections of eminent Christians who have suffered a similar blow. This is a very moving book that joins human suffering with the comfort that only the Christian faith can bring in the face of death of what appears to be the most perplexing kind.

The Great Gain of Godliness, Thomas Watson, Banner of Truth, 2006. This book contains the great Puritan’s thoughts on the teaching of Malachi 3.16-18 (don’t be misled by the title drawn of course from 1 Timothy 6). What a spiritual feast awaits the reader, for this contains important teaching for the sincere but hard pressed Christian in the midst of the pagan and morally bankrupt West.


These two volumes are classic Baner fare – huge works recording the fabulous moves of the Holy Spirit in the 18th Century in Wales. What a great service Banner does to the Christian reader in bringing and keeping such books in print. Both north and south Wales are covered, with well known figures (and many not so well know) placed in the context of the astonishing spiritual revival that transformed the Principality. How the true Christian heart yearns for a return to such days! Don’t be put off by the tongue-twisting Welsh names; these are wonderful books which will bring the patient reader much encouragement and hope!

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Page Sixteen – 17 September 2009 – NEW LIFE
A.A.T. Ehrhardt makes an interesting observation. He notes that historians have generally maintained a much higher estimate of Luke as an historian than many theologians. (Ramsay himself made the same observation on more than one occasion.) And it may be significant that almost every New Testament critic who has had a background in classical studies and a familiarity with archaeological work takes a very high view of Acts.’ (W. Ward Gasque, ‘Sir William M. Ramsay, Archaeologist and New Testament Scholar.’)

30. We conclude with a quotation from Professor F.F. Bruce: ‘The evidence of our New Testament writings is ever so much greater than the evidence of many writings of classical authors, the authenticity of which no-one dreams of questioning.’ (Quoted in ‘These Extra-Ordinary Documents’, Beasley and Thompson, Australian Institute of Archaeology, Melbourne; p. 26.)

Totally Convincing
The evidence is totally convincing – Christianity IS part of history!

The Inspiration Of Scripture
Neither Old nor New Testaments were written in a vacuum. Those holy men of old were not simply mechanical beings totally unconscious of the message they gave. Their message was always clear, though sometimes they did not understand its full significance (eg 1 Peter 1.11 says that they searched for details as to their coming Messiah). Their own personalities shone through their messages, and in the Scriptures we find a fascinating combination of human and divine.

Thus the Code of Hammurabi preceded that of Moses, and we are not surprised that the code of Moses had similarities to that of Hammurabi. But the differences are far more important, especially in the realms of ethics and moral behavior. In these the code of Moses is infinitely superior.

Our Lord Himself referred to the Law, the Writings, and the Prophets as speaking of Him (Luke 24.44). The Psalms were included in ‘the Writings,’ and David was one of the authors of the Psalms.

The Apostle Peter testified to David’s inspiration by the Holy Spirit of God, in Acts 1.16 and 4.24,25. The Holy Spirit spoke – David was merely His mouthpiece. In this connection it is interesting to read in 2 Samuel 23.2 where David himself says: ‘The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and His word was in my tongue.’ This experience of inspiration led David to the authorship of some of the Psalms. (Others besides David were inspired to write some of the Psalms.)

This principle of inspiration is continued into the New Testament, and it is relevant to refer to verses such as John 7.16, 8.14, and 14.26. Our Lord’s teachings were associated with the Holy Spirit, and His teachings were to be brought to memory for the Church by the inspiration of that same Holy Spirit.

The Lord accepted the inspiration of the Old Testament, believing in the historicity of people such as Noah (Matthew 24.37), Jonah (Matthew 12.40), Elijah and the widow who sustained him (Luke 4.25,26), and He made statements such as that in Matthew 5.17,18, that not one jot or one tittle of the Law would be destroyed until all was fulfilled. The jot (or yod) was the smallest Hebrew letter. The tittle was a small part of a letter as with the extension like a dash (-) at the top right hand side of a daleth (d) thus distinguishing it from a resh (r). At Galatians 3.16 an important point is made as to the importance of a word being singular (seed) rather than plural (seeds). Jesus showed that even the smallest letter, and even part of a letter, was important in inspiration.

Our Lord endorsed the inspiration and the authority of the Scriptures. Even when He was tempted by the devil it was to the Old Testament Scriptures He turned, and He declared with authority: ‘It is written!’ ‘It is written!’ (Matthew 4.4,7,10).

The same endorsement and claim for divine inspiration is clearly seen in Scriptures such as 1 Corinthians 2.13 where we read of ‘the words which the Holy Ghost teaches’; again in 1 John 1.5 where John claims he is presenting the message he has heard from God; and even in Revelation 22.19, as the Scriptures draw to a close, we are reminded very strongly of the important principle of inspiration as we read these words: ‘And if any man shall take away from the book of this prophecy God shall take away his part out of the Book of Life.’

Such statements teach quite clearly that the New Testament writings have the same seal of authority as the Old Testament Scriptures. The two stand or fall together – Old and New Testaments are equally inspired of the same Spirit of God.

While it is not always clear where the human and the divine merge in this subject of inspiration it is spiritually wise to recognise that this unique Book is God’s revelation of Himself. In our approach to inspiration we should constantly bear in mind that the great purpose of Scripture is to testify of Christ (John 5.39, Luke 24.27,44). Jesus Christ Himself is the central theme in Scripture, and throughout the Bible there is an increasing revelation of God which has as its ultimate peak the presentation of the Son of God Himself.
ON Thursday, 3 September, the Rev Fred Nile MLC, leader of the Christian Democratic Party, gave the following address before NSW Parliament regarding discriminatory action taken on behalf of the NSW Department of Education:

On Thursday, 11 June 2009, ‘The Choices of Life Inc.’ was suddenly dropped from the Government’s ‘The Wonder of Life (Before Birth)’ program due to the personal Christian beliefs of its Chief Executive Officer, Mr Bruce Coleman. It was not dropped because of the content of the program.

‘The Choices of Life Inc.’ is a registered incorporated association with the specific aim of upholding the value of human life from conception. It has programs to teach in both Government and Non-Government schools appropriately for both the primary and secondary levels of education.

‘On 1 September 2008 Bruce Coleman, Chief Executive Officer of The Choices of Life, began enquiries to have the primary program, entitled ‘The Wonder of Life (Before Birth)’ to become an approved presentation with the New South Wales Department of Education and Training. All the necessary application forms were completed and an appointment was made for 18 March 2009 in a State primary school to make the presentation before a classroom of students under the assessing eye of the Department of Education and Training’s Performance for Schools co-ordinator. The program was given enthusiastic approval and the following description was displayed on the Department of Education and Training Performances for Schools website:

‘This stage 3 [Grades 5 and 6] presentation focuses on the wonder of life between conception and birth. It involves the children in the exciting journey of pre-birth development using life sized foetal models, posters and 3D/4D ultrasound pictures. The presentation is totally positive and highlights the wonderful experiences of the baby while still in utero. It emphasises the beauty of the unborn child and the amazing activities and learning experiences that are necessary pre-requisites for life beyond birth.’

Mr Coleman received a letter confirming the approval and was given an approval number as a reference point for teachers and principals in State primary schools.

However, the approval was short-lived. Mr Coleman received an evening telephone call from Sean Nichols, a Sydney Morning Herald journalist, on Wednesday 10 June enquiring about the program and he was duly informed. On Thursday 11 June, a representative of the Department of Education and Training phoned Mr Coleman informing him that the approval had been rescinded on the basis of a complaint. The details on the department’s website had also been removed. The departmental officer could not state the source or the nature of the complaint. He could indicate only that the department was concerned about information on Mr Coleman’s website that referred to abortion—a topic that was not the subject of the approval. He stated that the department could not be seen to be endorsing one particular point of view.

I questioned him regarding programs conducted by Family Planning Association, a pro-abortion organisation, with the support of the Department of Education and Training. It held one point of view, and that was clear on its website. As I said, there is no reference to abortion in the Choices of Life program that was approved by the department, nor has it been or will it be mentioned in presentations to primary school children.

On Saturday 13 June, an article by Sean Nichols on the front page of the Sydney Morning Herald indicated that the newspaper was indeed the source of the complaint and that the Department of Education and Training had responded immediately. It was implied that Mr Coleman’s personal employment record and political association with me personally were the reasons for the approval being rescinded. Despite all the reasons indicated thus far, when a letter finally arrived from the Deputy Director-General, Mr Trevor Fletcher, on Wednesday 17 June it was stated that the reason for the approval being rescinded was ‘possible irregularities in the processing of your application’. A letter dated 12 June that took five days to reach my post box indicated that a director had been appointed to undertake the review of the approval process.

On the same day, Mr Coleman emailed departmental director Paul Whelan asking a number of questions, which remain unanswered. The questions included: Who notified the Department of Education and Training of the so-called irregularities? If it was the Sydney Morning Herald journalist, how did he know of the irregularities? Why was Mr Coleman denied a right of reply before the program was removed? Who was responsible for the irregularities? Why were the expressed reasons for removal on 11 June different from the reasons in the letter from the department dated 12 June?

Despite following all the department’s requirements, the Choices of Life group has still not received any notification or correspondence from the department. The group has now complained to the Ombudsman. I call on the Department of Education and Training to reinstate the approval and to allow this presentation to continue to be offered in government primary schools in New South Wales. It has been readily and positively received by teachers, parents and, in particular, children. No-one should be discriminated against, treated unfairly or deemed guilty by association.

**OPINION PIECE**

**NSW Education Department Discriminates Against Christians**

ON Thursday, 3 September, the Rev Fred Nile MLC, leader of the Christian Democratic Party, gave the following address before NSW Parliament regarding discriminatory action taken on behalf of the NSW Department of Education:

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**Refrain From Blasphemy**

AN AAP newspaper report (26-8-2009) quotes former rugby player Luke Ricketson, a ‘celebrity’ at an event showcasing new looks in make-up, saying: ‘The funniest thing is Kate’s mother Gai (Kate being his girlfriend) all of sudden got one of these lip glosses, she said: “Oh my God, I love these.”’ Oh yes, ever so funny.

A few days earlier, when Australian Dani Samuels threw the discus over 65 metres to become female world discus champion, the paper quoted her words describing her surprise: ‘When it landed over 65, I thought, “Oh my God, I love these.”’

That’s the way many people talk – nothing intelligent to say, so cover up by blaspheming the name of our Creator.

The first of God’s Ten Commandments is: ‘I am the Lord thy God ... Thou shalt not have strange gods before Me.’ The second goes: ‘Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.’ Australia’s civilisation won’t survive if we continue blaspheming God’s Name. We will become an unpleasant fragment of refuse in the dustbin of history.

Arnold Jago, Mildura, Vic
Perinatal Hospice – Emphasising The Value Of A Life

SOMETIMES it seems that the smarter and more sophisticated we grow technologically, the less able we are to handle the most fundamental issues of life and death. All too often these days, parents whose unborn child is seriously ill, perhaps even fatally ill, are treated coldly and callously by doctors who think that they should just abort the child and get it over with.

The feelings of the parents – their love and grief for their child, their struggle to discern what’s best for that child and for their family – aren’t always taken into account.

But all of that, I’m glad to say, may be changing. In the past few years, a movement called ‘perinatal hospice’ has been gaining widespread attention. In fact, perinatal hospice programs are being formed around the USA. These programs allow and encourage parents to carry their child around the USA. These programs allow and encourage parents to carry their child to term and to treat that child as the unique person that he or she is – and give them the opportunity to say goodbye.

Matt Anderson of World magazine writes: ‘Perinatal hospice honours life. The woman carrying the disabled child receives extensive counselling and birth preparation … She carries the pregnancy to its natural conclusion.’

As Anderson notes, the parents are allowed to ‘grieve and prepare for the short time God may grant them with their child while their baby lives inside or outside the womb.’

I can’t imagine a better way to honour the value of a single precious life, not to mention the value of a loving family. What an incredible difference from the mindset that says that since the baby is going to die anyway, the parents might as well hurry it along. Such sentiments, I believe, fail to grasp hold of what a miraculous gift each human life is.

Genetic counsellor Cheri Schoonveld told MSNBC: ‘It’s the worst news that anyone could get – that your child is going to die. These horrible feelings aren’t going to go away with a termination. But the flip side is that they’re not going to go away after a baby is born either.’

Genevieve Beazley, the founder of the modern hospice movement, Byron Calhoun, quotes Dame Cicely Saunders, the founder of the movement, Byron Calhoun, quotes Dame Cicely Saunders, whose words apply to their unborn child just as much as it does to a fully grown adult. The perinatal hospice movement recognizes this undeniable truth and, in providing loving support for parents and their terminally ill babies, it implicitly acknowledges God’s design for human life and for human families. This is certainly a worthwhile endeavour.

ACL Congratulates Qld Govt For Keeping Abortion Election Commitment – But Warns More Restrictions Needed

THE Australian Christian Lobby has welcomed the Qld Government’s decision to stick by its pre-election commitment not to legalise abortion despite a concerted push from activists for open slather abortion.

ACL Managing Director Jim Wallace said he appreciated the Government’s clearly defined objective ‘not to alter the current law with respect to abortion’ or lead to an increase in the prevalence or availability of abortion in putting forward the Criminal Code (Medical Treatment) Amendment Bill 2009 was passed by parliament.

‘Abortion activists have tried to use emotional leverage surrounding the police prosecution of a 19-year-old woman for procuring her own abortion with allegedly illegally imported RU486, to push for Victorian-style abortion on demand, while ignoring the heart-wrenching consequences for unborn children.

‘We acknowledge that the government has essentially maintained the status quo with its amendments, however we really need to be limiting abortion in the state, particularly after the cruel figures recently released.’

Mr Wallace said that horrifying revelations that in 2007 19 Queensland babies were born alive and then left to die following botched abortions need to be investigated and not swept under the carpet.

‘Figures showing that late term abortions are increasing in Queensland and that from 2003 to 2007 a total of 55 aborted babies were born alive and then left to die are a State shame, which urgently needs to be addressed,’ he said. ‘Not only should Queensland be rejecting calls which would see these tragedies increase, but the parliament should be instigating a parliamentary inquiry into late-term abortion practices and the ethics, morality and legality of leaving these babies to die in pain.

‘Currently more concern and debate seems to be going into the fate of whales off the Kimberley Coast than into the cruelty inflicted on these children left to die after failed abortions and the women left to grieve after them. This is clearly a ridiculous situation.’
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Full Time

Due to the impending retirement of Dr John Reid, a vacancy exists for a Lecturer in Pastoral & Practical Studies at Morling College, to commence in July 2010, although an earlier start could be negotiated.

The successful candidate should be prepared to teach in the areas of pastoral care, skills and methods; Christian spirituality; worship; and ministry formation.

The role is as a full member of the faculty at Morling and is therefore an appointment of the Baptist Churches of NSW & ACT.

The successful candidate would be required to undertake the extra-curricula activities required of all members of faculty.

A full job description is available on request. A copy of the Morling Staff and Faculty Handbook is also available.

Requests for information or the submission of applications can be made to Dr Michael Frost, Vice Principal for Faculty Development, at mikef@morling.edu.au

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WELCOME TO ‘ETERNITY’

‘NEW LIFE’ welcomes Eternity, billed as ‘Australia’s first mass market Christian newspaper’. The concept of its founders, Dave Maigraith and John Sandeman, is that 100,000 copies of Eternity will be distributed in bulk to 2,000 churches Australia-wide monthly from the beginning of 2010. Two pilot issues, one in October and one in December will be distributed this year.

The paper will be free, funding being drawn entirely from advertising, and its founders are well-credentialled for the task: John Sandeman left Fairfax Media Ltd after 28 years of service, culminating in the position of Design and Production Editor for the Sydney Morning Herald; Dave Maigraith has been Marketing Manager for Anglican Media, Sydney, publishers of Southern Cross newspaper and has worked for Church Missionary Society, AC Nielsen and Rolling Stone magazine.

Their concept is to publish a 16 page news magazine similar in format to the Good Weekend supplement of the Saturday papers, drawing on the resources of Christians and churches around Australia for news with a Christian worldview.

They ask for the prayers of the Lord’s people that the Lord will use Eternity to transform the lives of Australians, encourage Christians and recall wanderers to the fold; that the Lord would shield them if opposition arises from within or without the Church; that the paper will have a real impact as a tool to further the proclamation of the Gospel throughout the land.

For further inquiries about Eternity, to order copies (by bulk only, not individual subscription), place advertising or submit materials for publication, go to: www.eternity.biz

Dave and John would be pleased to hear from all interested in the venture.

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Rev D Clarnette, 180 Ninth Ave, Rosebud 3939.)
Frank McInnes was called Home on 9 August 2009. A veteran of WW2, Frank served in the army as a tank driver. Following his discharge, he enrolled at Sydney Missionary and Bible College. In 1947 he joined the full time staff of Open Air Campaigners where he had previously served as a Volunteer Worker. He and Betty Brown were married early in 1949, and together moved to Brisbane to establish a branch of OAC that year. God used his preaching ability to reach many for Christ in New South Wales, Queensland and elsewhere.

Frank became OAC National Director based in Sydney until he resigned in 1958 and took up further service with 2CBA–FM where he was Chairman of the Board for many years before Roger Climpson. His Sunday morning program Christian Growth was broadcast for over 23 years, whilst his active preaching and teaching ministry continued in several parishes such as South Cronulla Congregational from 1962-1974, then to the Board of Evangelism for two years, and at Sylvania Uniting 1976-1979.

Frank and Betty worshipped at Wesley Mission and also Double Bay Uniting from those years until Frank’s health deteriorated in the last three weeks.

He is survived by his widow Kay and his four children, Neil, John, Jill and Robyn, 11 grandchildren and one great grandchild.

A Thanksgiving Service was held at Wesley Mission, Sydney, on 28 August.

— Jim Vines

‘WITH CHRIST’

Winsome Abbott, 1921 – 2009. Winsome was the first child of Douglas and Irene Widdicombe, the older sister of Neysa, Deon, Merle, David and Margaret.

Her family were actively involved in the Armadale, Vic, Baptist Church. Winsome was converted at the Upwey Convention at age 13 through the ministry of Rev John G Ridley. She taught Sunday School and was active in the Christian Endeavour group. At 16 she was baptized by Rev Donovan Mitchell.

Winsome and Ollwyn were married at Armadale Baptist Church in March 1943 and were blessed with four children: Geoff, Elizabeth, Philip and Ian.

In 1957 Winsome had a severe kidney disease and spent several months in hospital before making what was a miraculous recovery for those times.

The family transferred to Ashburton Baptist Church in 1950, where Winsome taught in the Sunday School kindergarten for 20 years. As her children grew up she joined the local Baptist Women’s Fellowship, becoming Treasurer and President.

As the children moved beyond Primary School she enjoyed attending the Victorian BWF meetings. Before long she was Treasurer and then President for a further five years. Winsome was also very active in the Whitley College Ladies’ Auxiliary and for 40 years helped with the Hedley Sutton Ladies’ Auxiliary. In 1985 Winsome became the first lady President of the Baptist Union of Victoria. Winsome was on the Whitley College Council for ten years and chaired the Strathcona School Council for a year.

Winsome showed her love for God and shared her faith, convictions and joy in serving Jesus Christ. She was a dependable and caring mum, a loving and attentive grandma, delighting in visits from the grand-children and their children. She was an admirable and generous servant of her Saviour Jesus Christ.

Indian Christians Mourn State Leader Who Fought For Dalits

CHRISTIANS in India have joined in national mourning following the death of Y. S. Rajasekhara Reddy, Chief Minister of Southern Andhra Pradesh state and a member of the Church of South India. ‘He was a great leader who gave true witness to Christian faith,’ J. A. Oliver, General Secretary of the Andhra Pradesh Council of Churches told Ecumenical News International from the state capital, Hyderabad. There thousands gathered to pay homage to the politician who has been described as the ‘people’s chief minister’. A medical doctor by profession, 60-year-old Reddy died in a helicopter crash near Kurnool on 2 September when his helicopter, with five people on board, crashed into dense jungle in heavy rain.

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NEW LIFE – 17 September 2009 – Page Twenty Three
Chesefu Theological College, Zambia

– ‘The Light Shines In The Darkness’

THE old joke about what the Presbyterians would do if a fire broke out (appoint a commit-
tee) doesn’t apply in Zambia. The former Moderator (who is also Moderator Elect) of the
Church of Central Africa, Presbyterian, Synod of Zambia, Rev Dr Victor Chilenje, had a
vision for a theological college to serve his
denomination. The Rev Maleka Kabandama,
the synod’s ‘can do’ General Secretary shared
the vision. The Presbyterians of Australia,
through PresAID (‘Presbyterians Assisting In
Development’), helped with the funding. So
today, Chesefu Theological College, in the far
north of Zambia’s Eastern Province, having
just graduated its pioneer class of 16 stu-
dents, stands ready to receive its first intake
of full-time students, 12 from Zambia, 5 from
Livingstonia (northern Malawi) and one from
Zimbabwe.

Background
In 1882 the Free Church of Scotland’s Liv-
ingstonia Mission in northern Nyasaland (now
Malawi) established Chesefu as its base for
missionary activity in what is now Zambia (for-
merly Northern Rhodesia). They built a sub-
stantial church, school, hostel, clinic, dispen-
sary, missionary houses and other buildings
needed to establish the work. Sadly, after the
mission had accomplished much, the mission
station fell into disrepair. Buildings crumbled,
the roof of the church fell in, the remaining
buildings were in a sad state of disrepair and
the government took over the school.

But the government has handed Chesefu
School back to the church, and the local chief
set aside extra land for the church to redevel-
op its academy as a theological college.

The north east of Zambia is a remote and
isolated place, but the Zambian Government
has begun to open it up for agricultural devel-
opment and mineral exploration. Roads are
being rebuilt, electricity is being brought in
from neighbouring Malawi, education is be-
coming more widely available, mobile phone
and broadband internet networks are growing
apace – and CCAP is already established and
growing with the area.

Beginnings
In 2007, Rev Dr Victor Chilenje, CCAP Minis-
ter and Theology Lecturer at Justo Mwale
Theological College of the Reformed Church
of Zambia in Lusaka, and Rev David Chibo-
boka, CCAP Minister and Old Testament
Lecturer at Zombe Theological College of
CCAP Malawi com-
nenced classes at
Chesefu Theological
College with 16 stu-
dents who were also
‘evangelists’ who
would travel to
Chesefu for a month
or so at a time for lec-
tures then return to
their villages to com-
plete assignments. In
2007 Rev John Wilson and I, accompanied by
a group of students from PTC Melbourne
spent a week of intensive teaching there.
John and I returned in 2008 for another ‘inten-
sive’ and I have just spent three weeks there
Teaching ‘Creeds and Confessions’ and
‘Pastoral Paraphernalia’.

Buildings
The college began in one room of CCAP’s
Chesefu Comprehensive School, with a ram-
shackle building as a staffroom, office and
library (about 100 books on two bookshelves).
Some of the staff and students were billeted
out with local church people while others
stayed in an old disused house. The ‘Visiting
Professors’ were ferried up and down each
day from a conference centre in the com-
pound of David McConaghy CCAP, Lundasi,
a 90 minute journey each way over a road in
a serious state of disrepair.

Progress
With money raised by PresAID, CTC has
begun to take shape:

• The church has been restored and reroofed
for use of the local congregation on Sundays
and the college during the week.

• An old building adjacent to the schoolroom
block has been restored and furnished to
house the Allan Lendon Memorial Library.
(Allan Lendon was one of our finest young
ministers in Victoria who was called Home
after suffering from a brain tumour for a num-
ber of years. His wife, Narelle, and family do-
ated Allen’s library which was supplemented
with some other donations and shipped over
in a container during 2009 via Blantyre, Mal-
awi.) The library contains more than 2,000 high
quality volumes which we hope to continue
adding to over time.

• A Hall of Residence has been built to ac-
commodate 16 students and four lecturers.

• Both the library and student residence have
been furnished, the students themselves mak-
ing the tables and bookshelves for the library.

• A caretaker’s cottage has been built.

Staff
An enthusiastic group of young and suitably
qualified ministers have taken up appoint-
ments as pastors in Chesefu, Lundazi and
nearby villages and have been appointed as
lecturers at the college, while Victor Chilenje
and David Chiboboka travel in from Lusaka
and Zombe as their own appointments allow.

They are: Victor Chilenje (Principal and
Church History Lecturer), Prince Nkoswe
(Vice Principal, Systematic Theology and
Apologetics), Gift Nyerenda (Old Testament
and Spirituality), Chizason Chunda (Worship,
Preaching and Pastoral Theology), Justin
Zimba (CTC Chaplain, Minister of Chesefu).

Milestones
When I visited CTC in 2007 I delivered the
college’s Inaugural Lecture. In 2008 I was
asked to license the students to preach the
Gospel. In 2009 I dedicated and opened the
Allan Lendon Memorial Library, Chesefu
CCAP Church and the Hall of Residence, and
preached at the Graduation Service of the 16
‘Pioneers’.

Conclusion
This college needs further financial help to
make it fully functional. There is a need for
more housing for lecturers. Fitting out is not
complete, and office space needs to be built.

I once overheard Victor Chilenje say to
one of the other ministers: ‘We must cover
Zambia with CCAP’. Chesefu is one piece of
this giant jigsaw puzzle, but they are working
on it piece by piece, filling in the gaps where
there are no churches, taking opportunities
when and where they arise, and making op-
opportunities as the Lord enables them. What a
privilege it is to partner with such a sister
church as this!

– Bob Thomas
The Somewhere To Go 2009/10 Australian Directory of Christian Conference Centres, Camps And Service Providers

CHRISTIAN Venues Association (an association representing over 200 Conference Centres and Camps with over 25,000 beds nationally, has just released its Seventh Annual comprehensive directory of Conference Centres, Camps and Service Providers across Australia.

16,500 complimentary copies of Somewhere To Go have been mailed to schools and churches during August. They were sent so that teachers, ministers, youth pastors and group organisers have available a resource that informs them of the best destinations when they are looking for somewhere to go with their church or school Group.

Somewhere To Go assists in locating the venue or service provider most suited to their needs. It contains listings and details of conference centres and campsites within each state. It provides catering options, minimum and maximum numbers, facilities on-site and off-site as well as nearby attractions/resources. Centres have also placed advertisements providing extra details.

Centres offer a wide range of activities: environmental education, challenge or high ropes courses, horse riding, canoeing, orienteering and abseiling to name a few. Accommodation ranges from deluxe ensuit rooms to dormitory style for groups of all ages and sizes – something to suit all needs.

A Programming and Services section lists organisations that provide training and/or activity services. Christian Venues Association is pleased to have published this Seventh Annual National Edition of Somewhere To Go which supplements the VenueFinder service also provided by Christian Venues.

VenueFinder.com.au is a web based service that collects a guest group’s booking needs, matches those needs with Christian Venues member centres and informs those centres of the enquiry.

Centres that are available for the specified time will contact the enquirer. Visit www.venuefinder.com.au to process your enquiry.

If your church or school has not received a copy of Somewhere To Go, contact the Christian Venues National Office. Enquiries about Christian Venues Association may also be directed to Christian Venues National Office, PO Box 5552, South Windsor 2756 or phone 1800 009 890.

No Women In Frontline Combat – Fred Nile

CHRISTIAN Democratic Party leader Rev Fred Nile has strongly rejected a proposal by Defence Personnel Minister Greg Combet that woman should be employed in all military roles. Fred Nile said: ‘The Minister is very wrong on this issue and it is a matter of regret that the Leader of the Opposition has failed to reject the use of women in frontline combat roles, especially in the infantry or SAS. In fact, the suggestion that women should be admitted to the SAS is derisory.

‘The Women’s Electoral Lobby has predictably endorsed this proposal, wrongly asserting that chivalry is outdated. CDP believes it is right and proper that Australian men instinctively protect women.

‘In frontline combat roles, many male soldiers will naturally seek to protect female soldiers, which will distract them from their combat role and endanger themselves and others. Combat roles will also expose female soldiers to gunshot injuries, which could prevent them from being able to bear children.

‘The current combat zones in Islamic countries, including Iraq and Afghanistan, will put female soldiers in an impossible situation if captured, concerning rape and torture. Further, it is a fact the Israelis have learned that Muslims readily surrender to men but refuse to surrender to women, the result being unnecessary casualties on both sides.

‘Aside from the natural inclinations of Christian Australian men to protect women from death, injury, rape and torture, the use of women in frontline combat roles threatens the effectiveness of every unit.

‘The simple fact is that in any infantry squad the lightest member must be able to carry to safety the heaviest member. Any attempt to adapt physical standards to accommodate women must lead to a reduction in effectiveness.

The Christian Democratic Party intends to stand its ground on this issue, which will be highlighted in our Bradfield by election campaign.’
IN July 2002, with a very powerful and angry post-9/11 USA breathing down its neck, Sudan’s ruling National Islamic Front somewhat reluctantly signed the historic Machakos Protocol, putting Sudan on the path towards a Comprehensive Peace Agreement. The regime's Islamic backers were strongly opposed to peace on anyone's terms other than their own – and they were demanding the full Islamisation of all of Sudan.

The 31 Dec 2004 signing of the CPA was extremely important because Khartoum had been investing its newfound oil wealth on logistical development. Elevated dual-purpose roads, together with sophisticated weaponry and security, mostly Chinese, were means for a military victory. The CPA provided hope for the predominantly Christian African Southerners who had spent decades fighting Arabisation and Islamisation.

The CPA gives the Southerners a 2011 referendum on secession, which was essential to bring them to the negotiation table. However, it was always known that the North would never just let the South secede, as most of Sudan's oil reserves are in the south. This was one reason why Southern leader Dr John Garang advocated a united, equitable, secular and democratic 'New Sudan' – something to benefit all Sudanese. Garang planned to unite the opposition and win the CPA-mandated national elections in mid-2009. Then (theoretically), Sudan's new, more representative government could work at making unity more attractive than secession, averting war.

But the elections, now postponed until April 2010, have been irretrievably compromised. The most important element of the process is the national census, as the census results will determine the proportional representation in the national assembly. But the census was shamelessly rigged and its results have been clearly revealed as fraudulent. The regime's aim is to secure (albeit fraudulently) an absolute majority in the new assembly so they can re-write the terms of the CPA and scuttle the Southern Self-Determination Referendum.

With the elections ruined and the SSDR under threat, Southern leader Pagan Amum has warned that the South might be forced to declare independence unilaterally, something the Islamist-regime in Khartoum has described as a 'red-line'. There is much concern that Sudan is heading towards a war that would lead to disintegration, chaos and a humanitarian catastrophe of unprecedented scale.

Meanwhile, Khartoum is believed to be behind the massive escalation of violence in the south. Some 2,000 people have died and over 250,000 displaced across southern Sudan since January – more than in Darfur! Moreover, the belligerents are using sophisticated, high-powered weapons and are targeting women and children, developments that are unprecedented in inter-tribal violence.

Notoriously, the Arab-Islamist regime in Khartoum is earning massive funds exporting agricultural produce to Arab states while most non-Arab Sudanese are starving and dependent on foreign aid.

Our Christian brethren whom we prayed for through years of Islamic jihad and a tortured peace process are facing a seriously bleak future as war looms. Last week, Christians in Western Equatoria, South Sudan, held three days of prayer and fasting for an end to LRA terror. Hundreds of believers took part in a 20km walk for peace led by Bishop Edward Hiiboro Kussula of the Catholic diocese of Tombura-Yambio and Bishop Peter Munde of the Episcopal Church of Sudan.

**Please Pray Specifically That God Will:**

- intervene to bring an end to LRA leader Joseph Kony and the Khartoum-sponsored LRA terror he commands.
- frustrate all Khartoum's efforts to destabilise the South with LRA and inter-tribal conflict; may supply lines be severed and communications confused.
- awaken Southern tribesmen to Khartoum's divide-and-conquer strategy and to resist manipulation and exploitation, with hearts inclined toward peace.
- provide the churches of Southern Sudan with everything they need to care for their communities, both physically and spiritually.
- expose Khartoum's duplicity and wickedness in their starving of African Sudan, in arming belligerents and rigging the census.

Arise, O Lord; O God, lift up your hand; forget not the afflicted ... Strengthen their hearts and do justice ... so that man who is of the Earth may strike terror no more. (Psalm 10.12,17,18 excerpts ESV)

This RLPB was written for the Australian Evangelical Alliance Religious Liberty Commission by Elizabeth Kendal, an international religious liberty analyst and advocate, and a member of the AEA RLC team.
NEW LIFE EXTRA:

250 More Workers For The Field – From Every Corner Of The Globe They Came

OVER 250 participants attended Operation Mobilisation's Global Orientation conference at the end of August and together they represented a rainbow of nations. More importantly, those at the biannual event would not be returning home straight afterwards, but leaving to serve God overseas as full-time missionaries.

Each had heard and answered God’s call to join the Great Commission – one lady from Trinidad had even sold her own business to join OM’s work in Cambodia.

Taking place from 20–31 August, in De Kroeze Danne, the Netherlands, the conference covered a range of subjects from cross-cultural communication to God’s heart for mission.

Daily Bible teaching and discussion seminars further developed the participants’ understanding of the challenges they would face while proclaiming Christ overseas. An entire day was also set aside for prayer, with each attendee spending time alone with God and then coming together to intercede for different regions of the world. Among the 250 at the GO Conference were 35 Christians from the UK, heading to join OM’s outreach teams in locations as diverse as East Europe, Central Asia and the Near East. The group also included a family preparing to serve in France. Several of those from the UK had heard about OM through the recent visit of Logos Hope to ports in Britain and Northern Ireland and after the conference were flying out to the Caribbean to join the ship. ‘It was amazing to be with the people of God from so many nations! I loved the focus on knowing God and loving people,’ said Emily, who is now joining an OM team in the UK.

Founded by George Verwer over 50 years ago, presently there are 5,400 OM workers serving in 110 countries and on board two ocean-going vessels. Through friendship evangelism, sports outreach, community development and more, they seek to transform lives and communities with news of God’s love. More details about the organisation and how to be involved can be found at www.uk.om.org

– Peter Wooding, ASSIST News Service

SSCC Principal Thanks Emergency Services

PRINCIPAL of the Sutherland Shire Christian School Nicola Taylor has thanked the emergency service personnel who attended the school bus accident on the Heathcote Road at Lucas Heights at around 8am on 11 September.

‘Following the crash several of the teaching staff including my Co-Principal Andrew Middleton were quickly on the scene as they were just a few cars away from the bus,’ Principal Taylor said. ‘The staff were incredibly impressed with the way the ambulance paramedics, police and fire officers as well as the helicopter crews helped the victims of the accident.

‘To help allay the fears of parents we were able to inform them by mobile phone from the scene that their children had been involved in an accident. This proved an enormous help for the school and parents alike,’ Mrs Taylor said.

‘The 37 children on the bus and three other school children who were following the bus and were uninjured were taken to various hospitals including St George, Sutherland, Liverpool, Bankstown and Westmead Children’s Hospital.

‘We thank God that none of the children were critically injured and we continue to pray for the children and their families as well as the people in the other vehicle and those who witnessed the horrifying scene.’
Kenya Records Worst Drought Since 2000

THE Kenyan Government launched an emergency response to rescue about three million people. But over 10 million Kenyans are at risk of starvation. In one of its worst droughts, food prices have sky-rocketed, and it's not just the poor who are suffering. Kids Alive International, which has four different residential homes in the country, has been trying to help. Linda Mugo with Kids Alive says: ‘Thankfully, all of the children in our homes are able to have food. But the people in our communities also come to us and try to get help just to get enough food to eat.’ While Kids Alive tries to help as many people as they can with their physical needs, they are also focused on their spiritual growth. Mugo says as their children come to Christ, ‘it means that they get healing for their past heartaches. Some of these children come from really, really difficult backgrounds. It’s a challenge for us as their guardians to help, but once they can depend on God for healing from some of those difficult experiences they’ve gone through, it makes a difference.’

US Troops The Focus Of Outreach

9/11 not only saw death and destruction, but it also began the war on terror. Thousands of US troops are now in Afghanistan and Iraq. This opened a huge door for the Military Bible Stick Audio Bibles from Faith Comes By Hearing. The ministry's national director Troy Carl says this little device 'is black and is about the size of a pack of gum. It has all the low light disciplines that are required by the military. And it is designed specifically for ministering to soldiers in those tough and troubled circumstances in which they find themselves.' 15,000 units have been distributed so far. Thousands more are needed, but funding prevents the fulfillment of these needs. $25 will supply one Bible Stick to a soldier and to his family. While FCBH has been focused on making disciples in unreached areas of the world, Carl says: ‘We’re seeing that same kind of transformation in the hearts and minds of those who are receiving these Military Bible Sticks. In some cases, we’re hearing testimonies of up to seven soldiers sharing one Bible Stick, many of whom have never heard the Gospel message.’

Martyr Orphans Receive Hope And Healing

THE 20th Century ended brutally in Maluku, Indonesia. Many children watched their parents die violent deaths in a conflict between Christians and Muslims. Open Doors USA recently gifted an orphanage where these children find refuge: The Caleb Chandler House. Thanks to training provided by Open Doors, counselors help children deal with emotional wounds they’ve had for nearly a decade. Please pray for the children as they work through the trauma of their parents’ deaths.

Full story: http://www.mnnonline.org/article/13220

Christian Leaders Take Ownership Of Rebuilding Uganda

UGANDA is in a time of rebuilding following decades of civil war. It’s a great time to resource and encourage church leaders to do the same. Global Advance just held a Frontline Shepherds Conference and two Marketplace Missions Conferences to help them do just that. David Shibley explains: ‘Uganda is known as the “Pearl of Africa.” Much of the food supply comes from Uganda. I believe that’s indicative of the fact that Uganda also needs to lead the way in providing the Bread of Life not only for the rest of the continent, but for many areas of the world.’ A vision for fulfilling this challenge was set forth at the Conferences. Be praying. ‘Over 300 pastors committed to planting at least one new church within the next year. Also, in co-operation with the Living Word Bible School, there were 85 graduates. These graduates have been commissioned to begin 50 Bible colleges throughout Uganda.’

Full story: http://www.mnnonline.org/article/13220

A Chance At Selfless Service

OVER 300 people groups in India remain without translations of the Bible in their own languages. A team of Bible translators has recognized the need and is working on 154 different translations. A strategic meeting is scheduled for December, but Bible translators who are mums and dads need help with child care during this event. Wycliffe Associates is looking for volunteers to be a part of their KidZone from 26 December to 5 January. For more information on how you can help, visit MMN’s web site (keyword: Mission Groups).

Full story: http://www.mnnonline.org/article/13221