

Celebrate Messiah's Grand Design



Architect's sketch of the planned Caulfield Messianic Centre.

LAWRENCE and Louise Hirsch, Founders of *Celebrate Messiah Australia*, have known the Lord's blessing on their work as Messianic Jews in presenting Jesus to fellow Jews as the Messiah foretold in their own Scriptures. From January 1995 to the present day, *Celebrate Messiah* has used three main strategies in reaching out to Jewish people: making disciples through creative outreach, loving Jewish people in Yeshua's name, and planting communities of believers in Yeshua – and the Lord has been adding to their numbers those who are being saved.

Lawrence says: 'We believe that it is of the utmost importance that when Jewish people come to faith in Messiah they be discipled within communities of believers in Yeshua in a way that fosters their God-given Jewish identity. Messianic congregations typically also have Gentile believers worshipping together with Jewish believers as a testimony of what God has done for us through faith in Yeshua the Messiah.

'In October 1998 *Beit HaMashiach* (*House of Messiah* in Hebrew) Messianic Congregation was officially established and the congregation took up ministry in the heart of the Jewish community of Melbourne – Caulfield, a suburb which has a community of over 75,000 Jewish people, the largest in Australia.

'The Mission of *Beit HaMashiach* is "Building a Messianic Community of Jews and Gentiles who are a living testimony for Messiah Yeshua." A sister congregation, *Dom Missi'ee* (*House of Messiah* in Russian) was also established to reach out to the many Jewish people in Melbourne who were originally from the former Soviet Union.

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FOUNDER:

Eric J. Daley
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EDITOR:

Rev Bob Thomas
Phone: 0417 592 646
Email:
editor@nlife.com.au

BUSINESS MANAGER:

Mignon Goswell
Phone: 0434 313 646
Email:
office@nlife.com.au

POSTAL ADDRESS:

PO Box 457
Mitcham VIC 3132

WEB-SITE:

www.nlife.com.au

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AUSTRALIA'S CHRISTIAN NEWSPAPER

'If My People ... Will Humble Themselves And Pray ...'



OVER 800 people gathered in the Great Hall of Parliament House, Canberra, for the National Day of Prayer and Fasting on Sunday 10 February. The day was celebrated in churches all over Australia and many nations around the world, with many encouraging reports received from all over the nation and the South Pacific.

The good news is that this coming Sunday, 17 February, at 6pm (5pm QLD time) the Trinity Broadcasting Network Pacific will air a half hour special in Australia and New Zealand on the National Day of Prayer and Fasting. This TV special will feature excerpts from the Prayer Service which was held from 10am-4pm on Sunday 10 February. Messages of support were received from church leaders of many denominations and political leaders who spoke on the day.

The half hour TV special also features footage from New Zealand, whose prayer networks partnered with Australia's celebrations by simultaneously declaring the *Great South Land's Salvation Declaration* at 1pm on the day. Fifteen countries took part, including New Zealand, Vanuatu, Solomon Islands, Cook Islands, Papua New Guinea, Cook Islands, Singapore, Malaysia, Philippines, Korea, India, Nepal, Kenya, Israel and the USA.

The National Day of Prayer and Fasting's theme for this year was *LIFE*. Next year the theme will be *REVIVAL*. The date will be Sunday 2 March 2014. The Lord's people are invited to mark it in their diary now and set aside this time in their own church or come in person to the Prayer Service in the Great Hall, Parliament House, Canberra.

Junta In Burma (Myanmar) Escalates War Against Christian Kachin

KACHIN State in Burma's far north has a profoundly Christian culture as the ethnic Kachin are overwhelmingly, devoutly Christian. The fact that Kachin State, which borders China, is rich in jade, timber and water for hydro-electricity is of more interest to Burma's Burman-Buddhist supremacist regime. The regime, which has no interest in the Kachin as human beings, is very interested in exploiting Kachin lands for the benefit of the Burman-Buddhist majority.

The deeply flawed constitution of 2008 mandates centralisation of government and military against the interests and wishes of the long-marginalised and severely persecuted ethnic-religious minorities. In early June 2011 the junta used the Kachin Army's refusal to disarm, dissolve and become part of the National Army as grounds to end the 17-year-long ceasefire and go to war against the Kachin. The junta's aim is that the Christian Kachin will be terrorised into submission or be ethnically cleansed from their lands. This would be doubtless under a banner of 'democracy', for it is indeed what the majority of the 'elected' but junta-controlled parliament wants.

In November 2011 Western governments flocked to praise and reward Burma for its 'irreversible reforms'. However, Religious Liberty Monitoring asserted that the 'token reforms' were nothing more than a smokescreen 'behind which [the junta] can pursue its brutal policies of racial and religious hatred; policies aimed at the subjugation and even extermination of the non-Burman, non-Buddhist ethnic minorities that live around Burma's periphery'. The concern was that the West was so keen to draw Burma out of China's embrace into its own that it might be willing to 'reward the tokens while ignoring the genocide'.

These days it is difficult to tell whether the government of President Thein Sein in Naypyidaw, the capital of Burma, is a powerless front put forward by the military junta for Western consumption, or a chameleon that changes its colours according to the direction it is facing. As many as 100,000 Kachin are now displaced and the same regime that boasts reform continues to deny humanitarian aid to areas under Kachin control.

Consequently 2013 brings with it the prospect of humanitarian catastrophe. Also, while facing the West, the government has been calling for military restraint, but the Tatmadaw (Burmese military) actually has been escalating its war against the Kachin. Laiza is a stronghold of and the headquarters for the Kachin Independence Organisation/Army. More than 15,000 displaced Kachin are sheltered there, struggling to survive despite the junta-imposed aid blockade. In efforts to encircle Laiza, the Tatmadaw has established a base at Lajayang, just 20km from the strategic city. Recently the KIA seized control of the road running from the state capital Myitkyina to Lajayang, cutting the Tatmadaw's supply line. On Christmas Day the junta ordered the KIA to clear the road so the Tatmadaw could re-supply. Naturally the Kachin Army refused to stand aside and let its enemy re-supply for war. The junta has responded with aerial bombardment from fighter jets, strafing from helicopter gunships and mortar shelling. Initially the Burmese government denied that it had been bombing and strafing the Kachin. Later it amended its story, saying that the on-going aerial bombardment was an act of 'self-defence' for the purpose of maintaining security and stability. In Laiza the Kachin are digging trenches and bomb shelters. There are fears a ground invasion or a state of siege may be imminent. *(Cont. p.4)*

Please Pray That God Will:

- hear the cry of His besieged and imperilled people; may the Lord of Hosts intervene for His beloved ones in justice and righteousness, love, mercy and grace.
- intervene in foreign policy, opening eyes and piercing consciences so that the junta might be exposed and held accountable; so that it might no longer be able to persecute, kill, rape and plunder with impunity.
- supply the Christian Kachin with all their needs, spiritually and materially, that they will praise God for His goodness, and that many will see it and believe.

MATTERS FOR PRAYER (2)

Junta In Burma (Myanmar) Escalates War (From p.3)

MP Aung San Suu Kyi said she would not intervene without an official invitation from the government. The truth is Suu Kyi had far more power as a political prisoner with nothing to lose than she has now as a law-maker anxious to preserve her position in parliament. Furthermore, Suu Kyi actually wants what the junta wants: centralised government with the minority Kachin represented in the parliament. But the Kachin know they would be swallowed up in a junta-controlled parliament (just as Suu Kyi has been) through the clever strategy of the junta. The Christian Kachin will defend their lands and continue to press for autonomy, because their lives and liberty depend on it. Thankfully it is their God and ours – who is not subservient to any junta – who has power to save. In God we trust! (Psalm 56.)

– Elizabeth Kendal, Adjunct Research Fellow in the Centre for the Study of Islam and Other Faiths at the Melbourne School of Theology. She is Director of Advocacy for Christian Faith & Freedom based in Canberra, and author of

Turn Back The Battle: Isaiah Speaks To Christians Today (Deror Books, 2012)

<http://turnbackthebattle.com/thebook.html>

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ON THE HOME FRONT

Generous Offer From New Creation Teaching Ministry In Closing

A 'QUIET REVIVAL' of Christian believing and living, in hundreds and thousands of people, has been impacting churches and communities across Australia and overseas for the last 40 years, enabling the New Creation Teaching Ministry, based in South Australia's Adelaide Hills, to announce the completion of its cross-denominational ministry amongst churches and Christian groups, as from the middle of February.

This closure follows their biggest week-long Summer School ever at the resort town of Victor Harbor, attended by 700 eager participants, including hundreds of children and young people. Nevertheless, they say, 'We have a strong sense that God is calling us to finish up. What God is going to do next will not be contained within a teaching ministry structure such as ours, but will emerge in many new and different ways.' New Creation Publications' vast range of resources – over 400 books and thousands of audio and video recordings – will continue to be made available for future generations, mainly in electronic form.

Founded in 1974 by former prisoner-of war, farmer, minister, missionary, and Bible College principal Geoffrey Bingham (1919–2009), New Creation Teaching ministry has brought through, prophetically and at depth, to all who will hear, the grace of the triune God, from the beginning to the end of the Bible, grounded in the cross of Christ, with a view to the ultimate community of God with His people.

As a living testimony to God's faithfulness over the years, it has offered this ministry free of charge, without royalties, stipends or wages, but supported willingly by the gifts of God's people. The story has been told in a newly-published book by Martin Bleby, *A Quiet Revival: Geoffrey Bingham In Life And Ministry*, which is available along with remaining stock of published resources until 15 February 2013 from ministry@newcreation.org.au or call 08 8270 1861.

Celebrate Messiah's Grand Design (2) *Continued from Page One*

'OVER a period of a few years we have seen more than 300 Russian-speaking Jewish people come to faith in Yeshua as Messiah. This has been an unprecedented move of God in Australia amongst Russian-speaking Jews that was parallel with what God was doing amongst Russian Jews in other parts of the world like the USA and Israel. Still today hardly a week goes by in Melbourne without a Russian Jewish person praying to receive Yeshua as Messiah.

'This year we have seen several Jewish people come to faith in Yeshua and, remarkably, we have also seen several people from Muslim backgrounds receive Yeshua as Lord. I wish you could have been at a baptism service we held earlier this year when three Jewish people, four Muslims and one Australian were baptised together as believers in Jesus. It was truly an amazing experience.

'Just as Nehemiah motivated the inhabitants of Jerusalem to rebuild the walls for future generations, the Lord is challenging *Celebrate Messiah* to build the Caulfield Messianic Centre to provide for the needs of the growing Messianic Community in Melbourne and to leave a lasting legacy for future generations.'

The Purpose Of The Caulfield Messianic Centre

The multi-purpose facility will enable the ministries of *Celebrate Messiah* and *Beit HaMashiach* to fulfil their mission of 'taking the Message to the Original Messengers.' The Caulfield Messianic Centre will:

- Create a facility that will be a worship centre (synagogue), community centre (proximity space), creative hub, a place of outreach, education, hospitality, and training for local, national and international missions amongst Jewish people.
- Provide a place of identity and refuge, giving validity and dignity to the Messianic Community and leaving a legacy for future generations.
- Make a public declaration that Yeshua is Israel's Messiah and the Saviour of Jew and Gentile alike.

Further Information:

To obtain further information and/or make a donation, contact Celebrate Messiah, PO Box 304, Caulfield South, Vic, 3162; Phone/fax 61 3 9563 5544; Website: www.caulfieldmessianiccentre.org.au

Read *What Is Hell Like?* by David Holden at:
www.defenceofthefaith.org

HONOURING OUR CHRISTIAN HERITAGE

Richard Johnson's First Service Commemorated



HUNDREDS of Christian citizens crowded Sydney's Richard Johnson Square on Sunday 3 February to commemorate the first Christian Service on Australian soil, held on this spot on the same day in 1788 by the Rev Richard Johnson, Chaplain to the First Fleet and then to the British Colony of New South Wales.

Governor Arthur Phillip authorised the first Christian Service on Sunday 3 February 1788 after the landing on 26 January 1788 in Sydney Cove, and ordered all the British Garrison, families and convicts to attend this historic Christian Service which was held with an attentive audience.

The Service on Sunday 3 February 2013, 225 years later, involved a number of church and community representatives and speakers, including: Dr Peter Bolt, Head of New Testament, Moore College, who spoke on *Richard Johnson And The Australian Church*; Mr Andrew Kokic, Macarthur Anglican School, who spoke on *Richard Johnson And Education*; Philip Benwell, Australian Monarchist League; Jai Martinkovits, Australians for Constitutional Monarchy; Judy Russell on behalf of the Fellowship of First Fleeters; Greg Whitehead on behalf of the Australian Christian Nation Assoc Inc.



Rev Fred Nile, MLC

The Rev Fred Nile MLC opened and closed the Service in prayer. He said, 'I was very pleased with the attendance in spite of the intermittent rain. The service was most inspiring and ABC TV gave it a good report. It is planned to hold an Annual Service on this historic site next to the Richard Johnson Memorial, on the corner of Bligh and Hunter Streets, Sydney.'

Rise Up Australia Party Launch

PASTOR Danny Nalliah will launch his Rise Up Australia Party at the National Press Club in Canberra at 11am on Monday 11 February.

Pastor Nalliah will speak on the vision of the RUA Party, the importance of protecting Australia's Judeo-Christian heritage and taking a stand against political correctness. The guest speaker is Lord Christopher Monckton. Mr Nalliah says, 'We must take a stand for our nation or our children and grandchildren will pay a heavy price to re-take what we have lost. We cannot and must not miss this opportunity.'

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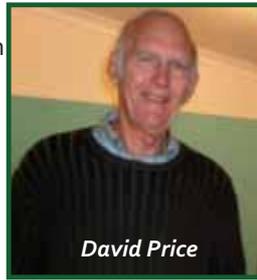
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BELGRAVE HEIGHTS 95TH SUMMER CONVENTION (1)

The Old, Old Story For The Brand New Year

THERE'S no better way to start the New Year than with open Bibles, surrounded by friends, at 'The Convention'.

The weather this year was perfect for campers. Young and old enjoyed the peaceful



David Price



Andrew and Heather Reid



Charles Price



Barbie Prout

bushland setting. Some 20 pre-schoolers were expertly cared for in the crèche. The enthusiastic team from OAC Ministries organised a program full of fun and Bible teaching for about 70 primary aged children showing Jesus as the Supreme Hero. At Master's Manor 40-50 teenagers met to enjoy and learn from Isaiah. The hundreds of adults who came to listen to God's Word were challenged to bring the practicalities of their faith into the reality of daily living. After 15 years of dedicated service, David Price will soon conclude his time as Convention Chairman. We all thank God for his committed ministry.

Dr Charles Price returned for the sixth time to open God's Word in 1 Samuel. Charles has been the Senior Pastor at People's Church, Toronto, Canada, since 2001, with a weekly congregation of 3,500. Charles' grandfather was converted during the Welsh Revival in 1904. Charles himself came to the Lord after seeing the Billy Graham film *Shadow Of The Boomerang* (the 1959 Billy Graham Crusade in Australia), aged 12, in Hereford, England. In 1975 he became field representative of Capernwray Missionary Fellowship of Torchbearers, becoming College Principal in 1993.

Charles gave five Bible studies:

Experiencing Ritual Or Reality...1 Samuel 1-3

It's possible to have correct doctrine yet live at a distance from God. Israel, led by the priests, Eli and his sons, was in a pathetic condition. There was plenty of activity, but little heard from the Lord. The priesthood had become a façade; mechanical, predictable and self-centred. Even today no-one sets out to be hypocritical or phony. But when worship is reduced to ritual routine the art of reliance on God is lost.

Becoming IChabod or Ebenezer...1 Samuel 4-7

Israel was defeated by the Philistines, so they resolved to take the Ark of the Covenant into battle with them. But they put their trust in 'it' rather than God. Again the Philistines won and captured the Ark. We need to pray and rely on God. What God blesses as an expression of Himself, He will curse when it becomes a substitute, an idol in itself. Do we look to ritual, copying programs, music, leaders, or are we relying completely on the Lord in real faith, waiting for Him to work in His way in our lives?

Moving From Right Language To Right Life...1 Samuel 8-17

Saul learned the language of godliness, but lost the reality. David relied completely on God against overwhelming odds. Saul started well. He was tall and handsome; anointed by Samuel and empowered by God's Spirit. Many today start out in commitment and faith but become discouraged and defeated. Despite God's promises, Saul relied on his own wit and he was afraid. David was much younger and smaller but he had proved God in small, everyday affairs. He knew God would keep him safe in the public arena for His own Glory. We can live like Saul, speaking the language of the saved (spiritual jargon), yet rely purely on human resources. Or we can trust and experience God Himself, learning His will for us and knowing that God is bigger than any problem or situation.

Obeying Selectively Or fully...1 Samuel 15

It is possible to lose God's blessing on your life. You may be called by God, and involved in all sorts of ministry, but becoming ineffectual and unfruitful. Saul felt he was above the normal rules and disobeyed by sacrificing the priestly offering. Do we have things in our lives that God has told us to eradicate? Maybe it is greed, lust, idolatry ... yet we rationalise the sin. If we are arrogant, rebellious, or selfish, God has no use for our sacrifices and lip-service. He demands obedience. He wants our hearts wholly and completely. Saul's obedience was selective, which is disobedience. Walking with the Lord means full obedience.

A Man After God's Own Heart...1 Samuel 16

Saul had become arrogant and independent. God rejected him. He selected the insignificant youngest son of Jesse, reminding us that God looks on a man's heart, not the outward trimmings such as wealth, education, appearance. God's man does not make his own plans. David constantly enquired of the Lord. We need to always make time to listen to God. Beware of being theologically correct but theocratically ignorant. How thankful we were for Charles' ministry; how hard we must try to put it into practice!

(Continued on Page Nine)

WITH CHRIST

Nesta May Lewis, 13-3-1921 to 26-12-2012.

NESTA was born in Reservoir, Vic, the fifth child for Robert and Margaret Lewis. In 1930 the family moved to Mason St, Regent. She attended Reservoir Primary School and then Preston Girls High School.

Nesta spent over 40 years working for *New Life Christian Newspaper*. In particular, Nesta was office secretary and manager for most of that time, and editor of the *Women In Focus* and *In The Field* and *Speaking Personally* pages. In 1999 a Life Membership was conferred upon her.

From an early age Nesta was a devout Christian and lived a happy and contented life with the Lord watching over her. As a child she attended Regent

Baptist Church and when she moved to Blackburn North, she attended New Hope Baptist Church.

Nesta always gave freely of herself, and taught Sunday school at Regent Baptist Church for many years. At New Hope Baptist Church she was an enthusiastic member and was actively involved in missionary communication and prayer.

In 2007, Nesta became very ill and it became necessary for Grace, Lily and Nesta to join brother Len at Silverwood in Templestowe. Nesta was relatively well until she turned 90. After that there was a gradual deterioration in her health until her death on Boxing Day 2012.

She is now 'with Christ, which is better by far.'



Gwenda Ruth Steward passed away peacefully into God's presence on 19-12-2012.

Dr Harrold Steward, her husband of 70 years, shared at her memorial service that at an Easter camp in 1939, he recognised Gwenda's godly character. Gwenda wrote over 1,000 letters to Harrold during WW2, carried and nursed seven babies, and after three years of home schooling in East Java, established the family home at St Marys, Adelaide, 55 years ago.

Gwenda led numerous Bible studies locally and in state conventions, supervised 250 KYB groups, and her prayer and Bible study group from 1959 continues. Gwenda also served in leadership in CWCI. She wrote four children's books, articles in *New Life* and *The Christian Woman* and numerous children's stories available on www.biblestories.stellaris.com.au

Gwenda was a devoted mother and beloved help mate and advisor. 'My beloved Gwenda is absent from the body and present with her Lord, who died and rose triumphantly' Dr Steward said.



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BELGRAVE HEIGHTS 95TH SUMMER CONVENTION (FROM P 7)

The Good Old Message For The Brand New Year

DR Andrew Reid has been senior pastor at Holy Trinity Anglican Church, Doncaster, since 2010. He was born in Vanuatu of missionary parents and grandparents. As a boy he moved to PNG, then became a boarder at high school in Melbourne. He rebelled against his Christian heritage until a serious car accident at the age of 18 stopped him in his tracks. He met his wife, Heather, at a NSW beach mission. Heather is a trained physiotherapist with a passion for students, especially international students. She ministers to RMIT students



through Australian Fellowship of Evangelical Students, of which Andrew was the national director. They have two married sons and four grandchildren. Andrew has been in Christian ministry for 30 years, involved in student work, church-planting and pastoring, lecturing at Ridley College and writing a number of books. He spoke on *Justification*. **The Ground Of Justification...Romans 3.21-26.** As humans, we have problems of poverty, injustice, war, brutality, sickness, addiction ... in short, we are sinners! God alone has the solution for the world's problems. Righteousness is available to all men. It is a relational word describing what God does to bring a sinner to Himself. It is God's saving activity. It has nothing to do with my capabilities. Righteousness comes through Jesus. The mechanism is to have faith in Him. Justification means that legally we have been declared righteous because through God's grace, the free gift of salvation is available to anyone through the ransom paid at Calvary. God's provision of a sacrifice for sin enables Him to forgive sin and avert His anger from the sinner.

The Means Of Justification...Romans 4.1-25. Abraham is the first great hero in the Bible. God promised him a countless number of descendants, even though Sarah was beyond the age of child-bearing. He looked beyond his circumstances and trusted God with the impossible ... and God reckoned this as righteousness. Abraham was not justified because he was circumcised, kept the Law, or trusted visible means. Abraham listened to God and took Him at His word. God is holy, righteous, just. We are unholy, unrighteous, unjust. Yet God, in Jesus, died for us. Our response needs to be just like that of Abraham. He was justified long before he had the mark of a Jew, so he is the father of all who believe, whether circumcised or not.

The Blessings Of Justification...Romans 5. Justification is not found in the quality of the person seeking it, but in the One giving it. Faith is not a saving work. We are justified by the shedding of His blood. The blessings we receive are: peace with God, access to God, transformation by God, reconciliation with God, vindication by God. In the past we were ungodly, powerless, sinners, enemies of God. Today we have the blessings of justification. In the future we will share in the glory of God, proclaimed innocent and saved through Christ.

The Hope Of Justification...Romans 8.18-38. God is the answer to the frustrations of life. As believers, our human experience is no longer dominated by sin. There is no condemnation awaiting us. We have been set free. The troubles we encounter are only light and momentary glitches on the road to Eternity. His plan will be brought to fruition on the Day when Jesus returns and a new Heaven and Earth will be revealed. But now we have been loved and chosen to become like Him. We have been justified in Him, soon to be glorified in Him, never to be separated from Him.

The Gospel Of Justification...Galatians 3. Peter had to learn that identity as God's people is found exclusively in Jesus. Justification comes only by faith; not by obeying Jewish laws after salvation is received. The good news is 'Believe in Jesus.' A person can do nothing to achieve this. In Genesis 15.6, and 12.3 belief was credited to Abraham as righteousness. We are his spiritual descendants. The blessing does not flow through the physical family, but through faith. Those who believe are justified by God's grace – not by works, but through faith in Christ.

The Fruit Of Justification...James 2. The test of genuine faith is to be seen in deeds. Abraham believed God (Genesis 15.6), but in chapter 22 he obeyed God by taking Isaac to be sacrificed. His belief was seen to be genuine by his actions. Deeds are evidence of justified faith. God does not justify without sanctifying. The fruit of justification is a life of obedience. God calls us to love our neighbours as ourselves, displayed in kindness and care for others. God's gift demands a response – godly living, and love for others. Obedience is not faith, but the evidence of it. If faith is not accompanied by a changed life it is not real faith!

The Life Of Justification...Galatians 5. As justified people we are in danger. We are right with God and called to obedience, but we need to beware legalism or libertinism. Don't have a list of rules to check the progress of our spiritual lives. Don't believe justification allows us freedom from all moral restraint. With freedom comes responsibility. Jesus came to serve, not to be served. He is our example. We are to become like Him. We need to love as we have been loved. We need to use our freedom to serve and sacrifice as it has been done for us. That is the justified life.

All the messages were powerful challenges to live daily with trust in God. Financially, BHC needs gifts to balance the books for the convention, and for the on-going, and ever increasing costs of maintenance, renovations and new developments planned for the grounds. The target to be reached for this convention was \$44,000. Through the prayerful commitment of God's people we were able to rejoice in receiving \$46,000. – Barbara Prout ('Mrs DP')

PERSECUTION WATCH

Persecution On The Rise For Christians In Eastern Europe

'IT'S been a long road since the revolution that swept away atheistic communism in Eastern Europe 20 years ago. The wave of religious freedom that swept the region now seems to be receding,' said Stan Jeter, CBN News Senior Producer, in a video story. 'Citizens of the former Soviet Union are facing growing restrictions on their religious freedom.' Jeter said that a panel of experts in Washington reported that governments are closing more churches, fining and arresting their religious leaders, and destroying church literature. Jeter said that the situation might not be a return to the Soviet era, but the signs spell trouble.



Russian Christians in church.

'Twenty years ago when the Soviet Union fell apart, collapsed, when the Berlin Wall fell, everybody was sort of excited about all the future possibilities. Twenty years later we are again talking about freedom. What happened?' Victor Ham, Vice President for the Billy Graham Evangelical Association Crusades, said.

'Churches are being torched, crosses are being burned. There's a lot of anti-Semitism, a lot of negative things appearing in the press about different organizations. So there's some reason for concern,' Lauren Homer, with Homer International Law Group, said. 'The atmosphere is thick with intolerance in these countries. Individual pastors are reluctant to speak out against abuses and restrictions.'

In Uzbekistan, another church leader encouraged church members to connect to the outside world as their best defence. 'I think people should all learn how to use the Internet, they should all learn the English language,' he said. 'And these two things will connect them in the future with the rest of the world and especially with the Body of Christ around the world.' To see this video, please go to:

<http://www.cbn.com/cbnnews/world/2013/February/Persecution-on-the-Rise-for-Christians-in-Eastern-Europe/>

– Dan Wooding, Founder of ASSIST

Police In Laos Arrest Three Pastors For 'Spreading The Christian Religion'

THREE Christian pastors in Laos have been arrested and detained for 'spreading the Christian religion' by reproducing a DVD of a Christian film. Pastor Bounma of Alowmai Village Church, Pastor Somkaew of Kengsainoi Village Church and Pastor Bounmee of Savet Village Church, were arrested on 5 February by the Phin District police in Savannakhet province.

According to sources known to Christian Solidarity Worldwide, the pastors took a DVD copy of a film about the *End Times* to a shop in Phin District market in order to make three copies. After the copies were made, the owner of the shop, along with the three pastors, tested one of the DVDs and watched the film through to the end.

'While they were watching, a police officer came to the shop and saw the shop owner and the pastors watching the film,' said a CSW spokesperson. 'The police officer then contacted his superior, Lieutenant Khamvee, who came to the shop accompanied by two deputies. The police arrested the three pastors and took the shop owner to the police station for further questioning. The shop owner was later released without charge. During their interrogation, the pastors claimed that the three copies were for their own use, but the authorities insisted that they were "spreading the Christian religion" through the film. The three pastors are currently being detained in Phin district prison.'

CSW's Advocacy Director Andrew Johnston said, 'CSW is deeply concerned about these arrests, which highlight the restrictions placed on the reproduction and dissemination of religious materials. The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, ratified by Laos in 2009, protects the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion, including the public manifestation of religion and the right to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds in any media. We urge the Lao authorities to release the three men immediately and to lift restrictions on the reproduction and dissemination of religious materials, in line with its obligations under the ICCPR.'

– CSW via ASSIST

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25,000 Converts In The Egyptian Desert

NOW there's an eye-catching headline! Good news has come out of Egypt in recent years but a figure like this is astounding. Yet last October 10,000 young people gathered in the desert north of Cairo to sing, pray and worship the Lord. An even bigger event, organised by the churches in Egypt, followed, drawing 45,000 attendees, of which an estimated 25,000 indicated their acceptance of Christ – it was impossible for the ushers and evangelism team to pray with each one.

Eight thousand requested a follow-up visit by the churches; 2.3 million are estimated to have followed the program on two Christian satellite channels across North America, Australia and the Middle East; 1,000 children participated in a special program prepared for them; 5,000 people attended a one day parallel festival in the Coptic Orthodox Cave Church, located in Cairo's garbage dump, and 6,000 attended another similar gathering from different churches in Assuit, a city about six hours south of Cairo.

Attendees were challenged to put their material things like cigarettes, drugs, magic charms, etc, into large baskets that were passed around the stadium and 12 large wicker baskets were filled with these items. (www.opendoorsusa.org)



DEEPer Indigenous Contact

TEAR's indigenous support program, Dhumba, provides opportunities for small groups to spend a week seeing parts of Australia that few people experience and seeing life from the point of view of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

These are not work experiences or chances to do something for Aboriginal people. They are simply opportunities to meet and chat both with Aboriginal people and with those who work closely with them. And because those meetings are often confronting and raise uncomfortable questions about who we are as Australian Christians, the program is salted with times of Bible study, prayer and reflection. TEAR suggests it's time to forgo our plans for an overseas holiday to go deeper into the heart of Australia. Dates for this year: Far North Queensland DEEP (based in Cairns), 22-29 June; Central Australia DEEP (based in Alice Springs), 10-17 August. Register your interest by contacting Barbara@tear.org.au

DARLING DOWNS EASTER CONVENTION 2013

Slade Campus,
Warwick Christian School
70 Horseman Street, Warwick, Qld.

FRIDAY 29 MARCH TO 1 APRIL.

This year we will be considering the Topic:
Being An Authentic Christian.

**The sessions will be led by the Rev Kel Willis,
Director of Christian Growth Ministries.**

We will be seeking to find more insights from Scripture
on how to be an authentic Christian.

Kel will also use information from one of his books:
Living With Me, Living With You.

There will be five sessions over the weekend:

- *Being An Authentic Christian*
- *God In The Midst Of Trouble*
- *Building Healthy Relationships*
- *The Freedom To Forgive*
- *Sent By The King.*

New Location! New Location! New Location!

HERE, THERE AND EVERYWHERE ... With Barbara Furman

People On The Move

THE Rev **Adrian Lane** has been appointed Victorian Regional Officer for Bush Church Aid beginning this month. He has been associated with Ridley Melbourne for the past 22 years, latterly as senior lecturer. Adrian has a real heart for rural Australia and regional Victoria in particular, as his forbears come from the Wimmera area. Another appointee who studied at Ridley is the Rev **Stephen Holmes**, who with his wife Lana, has been endorsed by Christian Witness to Israel to develop their work in Melbourne. During their ministry in Golden Bay, NZ in the '90's they engaged in a backpacker ministry, hosting some 120 young Israelis in their home. Some lasting relationships developed that are still ongoing today, strengthened by several visits to Israel in the ensuing years. Christian Witness to Israel asks for prayer for them to reach the operational stage for this Victorian ministry, and also for suitable accommodation for the Holmes family and the work in the Melbourne Jewish area.

Christians for Israel Aust have announced that Mr **Ian Worby** is the new leader of their work here in Australia. Ian is the CEO of United Christian Broadcasters Aust and has been involved in Christian media ministry for the past 20 years. He and his wife Mandy have conducted numerous pilgrimage tours to the Holy Land in the past.

Shortwave Radio Crosses Natural Borders

AMONG many great open doors for the Word of God through radio, Far East Broadcasting Co is involved in developing gospel radio in the Muslim nation of Kyrgyzstan. The scars of Soviet domination, then civil unrest, coupled with the challenge of stepping from nomadic lifestyles into the modern world opens up many doubts and fears for the future among the Kyrgyz people. Into this situation FEBC brings programs filled with values and hope from God's Word which can make sense out of a disturbing world. Hidden within nations leaping into the modern world there are also crushed and persecuted minorities often living in remote places, deep poverty or refugee conditions. God's heart is always towards the oppressed, and FEBC continues to broadcast via shortwave in these sometimes forbidden languages. – *Skywaves*

Eleven Books Prepared For Publication By Drs Clifford And Barbara Wilson

<i>The Stones Still Shout</i>	1998	A4	Illustrated liberally	230pp
<i>He's Coming Back Soon</i>	2005	A4	Illustrated liberally	150pp
<i>The Paluxy River Dinosaur Controversy</i>	2007	A4	Illustrated liberally	144pp
<i>Genesis, That Amazing Book Of Beginnings</i>	2003/2008	A5	Illustrated	100pp
<i>New Light On The Gospels</i>	2001/2008	A5	Illustrated	120pp
<i>Meeting Jesus Of Nazareth</i>	2001/2010	A4		90pp
<i>Jesus In The OT Shadows And NT Light</i>	2008/2010	A4		90pp
<i>Jesus The Master Counsellor</i>	2003/2010	A4		100pp
<i>Jesus The Master Teacher</i>	2003/2010	A4		90pp
<i>Crash Go The Skulls And The Hoaxes</i>	2001/2010	A4		90pp
<i>The Way God Works In Nature</i>	2001/2010	A4		90pp

As at 28/11/2012 copies of these 11 titles are available free from New Life Books & Archaeology, 44 Dublin Road, Ringwood East 3135, open Monday-Saturday 10am-2pm, Thursdays 9am-4pm
Website: www.newlifebooks.info Many earlier Wilson titles are available second-hand from New Life Books & Archaeology, a market place for pre-loved Christian books.

A Very Special Offer:

Through the charity of the Dr Wilsons' Estate, one copy of each of the eleven books listed above is now available free to anyone within Australia who requests them AND sends \$20 (AUD) for packing and postage.

Weighing about 4 kg, these books will be posted within Australia in a 5 kg Postal Bag.

Please send a cheque payable to: 'New Life Books & Archaeology', and your address c/o Mr Ron Suter, 167 York Rd, Mt Evelyn VIC 3796.

(Ron is the Honorary Treasurer of NLB&A. His mobile phone number is: 0428 290 341).

EVENTS FOR THE DIARY

Australian Christians' Annual State (Vic) Conference

AUSTRALIAN Christians will hold their Annual Conference on the theme: *Faith, Family, Freedom* at New Hope Baptist Church, 3 Springfield Rd, Blackburn North, on 23 February.

Go to australianchristians.com.au or call Sami Greiss on 0403 533 963 for further details.

CMA Breakfasts

GREAT networking opportunities and inspiration are to be had at the CMA Breakfast on Thursday 21 February in Melbourne. Dr Greg Clarke, CEO of Bible Society Australia, will explore the value of Scripture for re-directing and re-invigorating our working life, as well as practical ways of injecting God's Word into our daily routine. He shares what the Bible Society has learnt from their successful *25 Words* campaign in 2012. Phone 03 9890 1237 for further details. Future Breakfasts are planned for Thursday 2 May, when Dr. Benny Tabalujan, from Melbourne Business School, will be guest speaker, and 8 August, when Mark Scott, CEO of the ABC, will be speaker. Go to: <http://www.cma.net.au> for further details.

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Ramon A Williams - Worldwide Photos -

WANT TO SEE MORE?

New Life can only publish a small selection of photos, but you can see more of those attributed to **Worldwide Photos** by contacting

Ramon Williams,

e-mail: rlgmedia@ozemail.com.au

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Reformed and Evangelical

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Rev Stuart Bonnington

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melbonn@bigpond.com

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Email: lbatchelor36@internode.on.net

Manager – Kingaroy Lodge

A manager or couple are sought for the position of Manager at Kingaroy Lodge. Kingaroy Lodge Inc is a recently registered not-for-profit organization established by the local Christian community in Kingaroy, Qld, to operate a 12 room premises as accommodation for men who are either homeless or at risk of homelessness.

This is an excellent opportunity for a suitably qualified person (or couple) to work with the board and local community to establish this much-needed facility into the future.

For further details contact either:

Brian Stevens (0401 178 703)

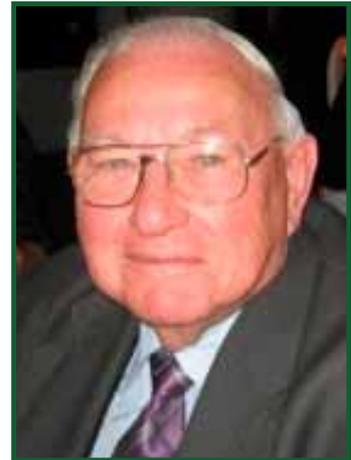
or Ross Norris (0410 557 913).

Applications containing a current resume should be forwarded by 21 March 2013 to:

**The Secretary, Kingaroy Lodge Inc,
54 Baroona St,
ROCHEDALE SOUTH 4123 Qld.**

MEET

Ramon Williams – Unsung Hero Of The Australian Christian Media



If you have read any published Australian Christian news article over the past 50 years, it has almost certainly been distributed by one of the greatest unsung heroes of the Australian Christian movement, the 'AAP-equivalent' of Christian wire news, Ramon Williams, now aged 81. For nigh-on 50 years Ramon Williams has exercised a unique and important ministry in the proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, with his catch cry, 'Telling others what others are doing for the Lord.' **'Go And Tell' Becomes 'Show And Tell'**

In 1959 the newly married Ramon and Dorothy arrived as missionaries in Indonesia with Worldwide Evangelisation Crusade (now Worldwide Evangelisation for Christ). During this time, their first three children were born. After triplets arrived in 1967 they concluded their overseas stint. Then their audio-visual work for WEC grew and became an independent mission, now called 'Worldwide Photos', whose aim was to serve missionaries and Christian organisations by enabling them to better 'show' their work as well as 'tell' of it. This has helped many of them to raise increased interest and support. Today Ramon Williams' work is recognised as he has established a leading Religious Media Agency throughout the world. His distributions have the byline 'Ramon A Williams – Worldwide Photos' with his trade mark email 'rlgmedia' (short for 'Religious Media').

This all functions as a faith-financed mission. Only a very few organisations or individuals make a contribution to the service; most ask whether their story may be of interest, hoping it will be sent around the world for nothing! His coverage of Cyclone Larry with five radio interviews, the stories and photographs cost him \$2,000. No-one paid a cent.

Ramon Williams' photography is renowned, with pictures of such notables as Billy and Franklin Graham, Princess Diana, Prince Charles, Queen Elizabeth II, Malcolm Muggeridge, Mother Theresa, Mary Whitehouse, and many political leaders and musicians.

'All For Jesus'

Ramon is a silent type, unobtrusively floating around during Christian functions, and his subsequent news items are sent to leading daily religious news services around the world. He has won photographic awards, including the prestigious Australasian Religious Press Association's Gutenberg Award in 1987, and has undertaken many media and photographic assignments overseas. Ramon Williams has an eye for media high visibility. His service has been invaluable to many missions including *Well-Being Australia* and *New Life*.

Ramon's effort has been Herculean, his great joy is to see that whatever he 'distributes' is published somewhere (newspapers, magazines, bulletins, on-line), in order that someone might read of the Lord's work. Ramon Williams doesn't have public honours and titles after his name, but his achievements will be 'published' in Heaven, where they will be written in 'Capital Letters'.

Recently Ramon was taken ill and hospitalised for a short period of time, but is home now and under the care of his extensive family. We are praying for his continuing recovery.

The Lord constantly raises up ordinary people such as Ramon Williams who then engage in extraordinary, wonderful, even miraculous Kingdom endeavours for specific needs within the life of a nation's Christian community. Ramon Williams reflects this true history of Australian Christendom. We thank God for him and his extraordinary ministry, and we can say that, like Nathaniel, he is a follower of Christ in whom there is no guile.

– Dr Mark Tronson, retired Baptist minister, author, artist and director of Press Service International.
His archive of articles can be viewed at www.pressserviceinternational.org/mark-tronson.html

HERE TO HELP

Think BEFORE You Tweet:

IN a blog titled *Social Media: Proceed With Caution* Mercer PR Principal Lyall Mercer warned of the dangers of social media, particularly for public figures and companies.

He described the medium as 'a pressure cooker that can explode at any time.' His advice? 'Before you send, consider the potential reaction and possible ramifications. When you do, look through the eyes of those outside your circle or organisation as those close to you will be too subjective.'

Mr Mercer recommends asking these questions before posting comments, photos or videos:

- Could this be misread, misinterpreted, criticised or taken out of context?
- Will it inflame, inspire or interest?
- Will people agree or disagree?
- Will it anger or cause offence with those who see things differently to me?
- Is the subject politically sensitive?
- Will it be re-sent and to whom?
- What will my clients, supporters or financial backers think?
- Will it increase or lose business?

He says: 'If in doubt, don't post. If confused, don't play the social media game. It's not for everyone. I've advised a number of my clients not to embrace social media at this stage – they simply have too much to lose.'

Life In The Jungle

THE *Life In The Jungle* program is designed to help young workers navigate the jungle of full-time work. An older Christian shares from the Scriptures and from their experience of how Jesus equips them for life in the workplace. City Bible Forum, Melbourne, (citybibleforum.org/city/melbourne) has three excellent dinners lined up this year:

- *Welcome To The Jungle* Dinner at 6pm on 19 February at Oriental Tea House (378 Little Collins St). Speaker: Allan Bulman (Director, Takeovers Panel)
- *Life In The Jungle – 'Bosses, Bullies And Building Bridges: Relationships At Work* at 6pm on 6 March at Oriental Tea House (378 Little Collins St). Speaker: Kathy Cranney (HR manager, NAB).
- *Life In The Jungle – 'Time Poor/Soul Rich – Maintaining A Rich Soul In The Context Of A Busy Life'* at 6pm on 21 March at Olio Cucina (30 Block Pl). Speaker: Anne Winckel (Managing Director Delta Partners)

Life@Work

Life@Work is a program designed to assist Christians to live the Christian life better at work. The first Life @ Work breakfast for 2012 will be at 7.30am on Thursday 21 February at Olio Cucina (30 Block Place). Helen Bell (presently AFES staff-worker at La Trobe Uni) will present. Helen worked as a policy advisor in Federal Treasury for five years and will be reflecting on those experiences at this breakfast.

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Living Stones Korean Presbyterian Church. Every Sunday 12.30pm;

St Margaret's, Balaclava, Cnr Hotham St/Denman Rd. Every Sunday 9.30am.

Minister: Rev Bob Thomas 0417 592 646

You're Welcome At The Faith Factory

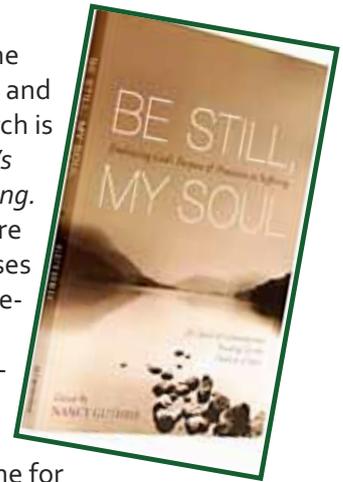
– A Friendly, Caring, Bible-Believing Christian Fellowship –



BOOKS WORTH READING

BE STILL, MY SOUL: EMBRACING GOD'S PURPOSE AND PROVISION IN SUFFERING, Ed: Nancy Guthrie, IVP, Nottingham, 2010.

IN her preface, Nancy Guthrie reveals her motivation for compiling this book: the death of two children devastated her and her husband. They searched the Bible and the writings of Christian people on the topic of suffering. The result of their search is the 25 readings that make up this book. These are divided into three parts: *God's Perspective On Suffering*, *God's Purpose In Suffering* and *God's Provision In Suffering*. The opening paragraph from Tim Keller sets the agenda: 'We are a unique culture ... We are the first culture to be surprised by suffering.' Joni Eareckson Tada causes us to reflect: 'Is suffering God's Plan B'. R.C. Sproul explores the concept of senseless tragedy including a discussion on the devastation felt by the followers of Jesus when He died on the cross. Other contributors all bring their own perspectives with the acknowledgement that, as Os Guinness puts it, one of the inescapable questions that arises in religious discussion is that of 'Is God good?'



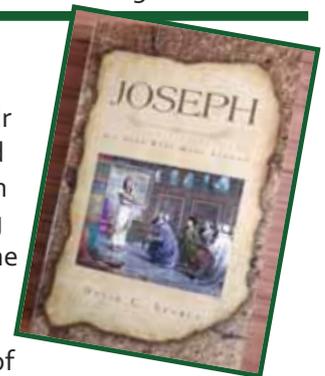
The problem of pain and suffering is a complex, challenging and emotional one for believers and nonbelievers alike though from different points of view. There are very helpful chapters from the writings of Calvin and Luther to Spurgeon, and to others we know who underwent great trials for their faith: Bonhoeffer, Corrie ten Boom, Helen Roseveare to name a few. The reader will gain much from this book.

Jonathan Edwards has the final say: 'Let God's people, therefore, when they are exercised with any of these kinds of weariness make their resort unto Jesus Christ for refuge and rest.' Thus he encourages all who have undergone trials, be they the loss of dearly loved people, health issues, the repeated attacks of Satan or the weariness of combat with enemies.

– Mignon Goswell

JOSEPH – HIS ARMS WERE MADE STRONG, David C. Searle, Banner Of Truth, Edinburgh, 2012.

THE life of Joseph has long been grist for the mill of Sunday School teachers, their pupils often hanging on every word of the story of his remarkable life. Now David Searle has lifted the narrative to a higher level with the publication of this sermon series, making it accessible to those who want to dig deeper into it without going to the trouble of ploughing through the opinions of various scholars, weighing one up against another and risking perplexity rather than enlightenment.



Our author, a highly respected minister within the evangelical wing of the Church of Scotland and no mean scholar as evidenced by his decade as Director of Rutherford House, (a theological research and study centre in Edinburgh) has done the hard yards for us through his own meticulous research, reflection and practical application of the Biblical narrative to Christian faith and life.

So we have here a book which draws us further, much further, into the life of Joseph than ever our Sunday School teachers did all those years ago.

We see how strategic the life of Joseph was in God's plan of salvation, how in so many ways he prefigured the Lord Jesus Christ, how the Lord's people should live in the world without being of the world.

Perhaps the very first page of this book will bring enlightenment to many who ponder the imponderable – the efficacy of Christ's death for those who 'lived by faith' yet predeceased Him. Searle writes: 'But something that would, I suspect, take us rather by surprise and fill us with awe and wonder would be that we would realise that the shadow of the Cross falls both backwards in time as well as forward to its consummation in eternity ... perhaps nowhere in the whole of the Old Testament ... would we see the shadow of the Cross more clearly than in the life of Joseph, for Joseph stands so vividly as a type of Christ ...'

From the beginning to the end this book is packed with fresh insights into the life of Joseph and these are used to challenge us to examine ourselves in the light of Scripture as to our own faithfulness in living our lives for Christ before a watching world.

– Bob Thomas

BOOKS WORTH READING

INTERPRETING DEUTERONOMY: ISSUES AND APPROACHES, Ed David G. Firth And Philip S. Johnston, Nottingham: Apollos, 2012.

THIS is the third volume on interpreting specific OT books (after *Psalms* and *Isaiah*) which have emerged from annual meetings of the Tyndale Old Testament Study Group in Cambridge. Why should we be interested in such a book?

First, *Deuteronomy* is such a foundational book for reading the OT. For example, it rounds off the *Pentateuch* by applying the covenant laws to the new situation Israel will face in the land, distilling the essence of the law. However, *Deuteronomy* also provides the theological principles which shape the understanding of history in *Joshua*, *Judges*, *Samuel* and *Kings*. Reading *Deuteronomy* will help you to understand the history of God's covenant dealings with His people. Secondly, evangelical scholarship on *Deuteronomy* has been quite thin, with many scholars (including some evangelicals) buying in to a late dating of the book in the time of Josiah and reflecting that period rather than the time of Moses. Sensible evangelical studies of the book are needed. Thirdly, *Deuteronomy* is such a great book to shape you so that you will live as God's person in His world. When I began to introduce OT preaching to a church not used to it, I started with *Deuteronomy* because it is accessible, challenging and life-changing.

But what about this book on *Deuteronomy*? It is a scholarly book, not in the sense of being obscure, but showing rigorous thinking and engagement with other views. It is intended for serious readers who want to be stretched. I expect that its primary market will be evangelical scholars, theological students, and ministers/Bible study leaders who are preparing a series of studies on *Deuteronomy*.

How good a job does it do? The outstanding contributions to the book are the two surveys by James Robson (Wycliffe Hall, Oxford) and Paul Barker (formerly of Melbourne, now an itinerant lecturer in Asia). Robson deals with the composition of the book (authorship, dating, unity, relationship to other OT books etc), and gives a clear and coherent argument to take seriously both the book's own assertions and the observations of modern scholars. He doesn't trim the evidence to suit his view, but argues that it has a substantial Mosaic core (the analogy with Gray's Anatomy is useful) and that it should be read against this setting as well as the later setting in exile. Barker surveys theological studies of *Deuteronomy* since 1995, which is very useful if your theological study was completed some time ago. He covers mission, election, war, politics, community, God, grace and covenant. His study is thorough, balanced and wisely critiqued. These chapters alone are worth the price of the book.

The second part covers specific issues in *Deuteronomy*: the Decalogue structure of the book (John Walton); centralisation (Peter Vogt); civil leadership (Philip Johnston); passing on the faith (David Firth); and life and death (Heath Thomas). These are good chapters written by leading evangelical scholars.

The third part of the book, *Reading Deuteronomy*, is perhaps the least useful with one exception. These are mainly papers by recent or current PhD students on areas of their theses which intersect with *Deuteronomy*. They include studies on intermarriage in the time of Ezra-Nehemiah (Csilla Saysell), the alien (Jenny Corcoran), and Christian interpretations of genocide (Christian Hofreiter). My reservation here is not about the quality of the scholarship, but rather about whether they are useful in a book which evangelical OT lecturers might consider adopting as a reading supplement for a course on *Deuteronomy*. They are a little specialised and 'boutique' in their focus. The one exception is the contribution by Greg Goswell (formerly of PTC Melbourne and recently appointed lecturer in Old Testament at PTC Sydney) on *The Paratext Of Deuteronomy*. Despite the unappealing title (at least for me), and some quite technical detail, this contains an important, well-researched discussion of what I would call canonical issues in the book. Do not tread lightly through this book and miss this essay.

Overall, this is an important and much-needed study of *Deuteronomy* from a range of evangelical perspectives. There is so much in it that is very worthwhile, even if no-one will agree with all of it. While my criticisms largely come from disappointment that it might have been even more useful, it does fill a gap that will be very helpful for serious readers of *Deuteronomy*. If you are studying or preaching on *Deuteronomy*, buy it. If you are not, then buy one anyway and give it to your minister in the hope that they might preach on *Deuteronomy* sometime soon.

– Lindsay Wilson, Ridley Melbourne

FROM ALL QUARTERS

New Appointments At ACCESS Ministries

LINDA White commenced on 29 January and will be heading up the ACCESS Ministries training institute as Dean of Studies in a part-time capacity. Linda runs her own business, White Training, and is a certified trainer/lecturer, writer and motivational speaker, as well as having experience as a youth and young adults pastor and high school chaplain.

Peter Botross commences work with ACCESS this month. Peter's experience includes teaching at a Christian college, pastoring a Baptist Church in Gippsland and more recently, filling the position of learning and development manager with Life Education Victoria.

BCA Supporters Help Churches Respond To Fire Challenges

THE generosity of supporters has allowed The Bush Church Aid Society to distribute \$50,000 to areas affected by recent bushfires. BCA launched its bushfire appeal in January and the first instalment of funds has been sent to the Dioceses of Tasmania, Bathurst, Armidale, Canberra-Goulburn, Gippsland and Ballarat. 'BCA's mission is to equip local churches to engage their communities in Christ-honouring ways,' said BCA National Director Dr Mark Short. 'This money will assist Christians on the ground to provide counselling, pastoral care and practical assistance to people whose lives have been turned upside down.' Donations to the fire appeal and for flood affected areas in Southern Queensland can still be made through BCA's website, www.bushchurcaid.com.au

Conferences Everyone Can Get To (If They're Online)

GENEVA Push will be offering a range of online training events for people developing their church planting skills. Each month Al Stewart will interview key thinkers in Australian church planting, including those responsible for starting some of our nation's most prolific and long-lasting works. The emphasis for *The Planter Sessions* is practical, hands-on tips for planning, planting, growing and leading congregations. The aim is to send viewers away with at least one thing they can implement immediately. Each session goes for a tight 30 minutes and includes the opportunity to put questions directly to the speakers. Geneva also provides links to past sessions for reference back to the insights provided. Best of all it's absolutely free, thanks to the generosity of Geneva's supporters. To register go to: www.thegenevapush.com

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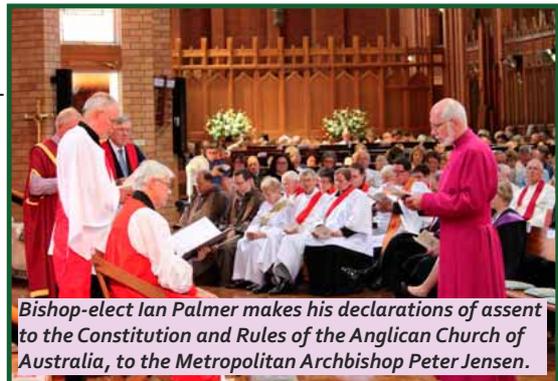
FROM ALL QUARTERS

Bathurst Diocese Welcomes Bishop Ian Palmer

BISHOP Ian Palmer, who was consecrated as the tenth Bishop of the Anglican Diocese of Bathurst on Saturday 9 February, has said that he is very aware of the difficult financial situation facing the Diocese. He also expressed his confidence that these challenges will be overcome.

Speaking in response to the warm welcome expressed by various community leaders after the consecration service in All Saints' Cathedral, Bishop Palmer said: 'I don't know the way that we will walk in the coming years or the dangers that we will face and overcome, but I do know that the honour and glory of our Lord is our goal.'

Bishop Ian Palmer was consecrated by Archbishop Peter Jensen, Metropolitan of NSW, supported by 12 other Bishops from throughout the Australian church. The new Bishop comes to Bathurst from the Diocese of Canberra and Goulburn, where he has served for the last seven years as Rector of the Queanbeyan and District Anglican Church. He has also served as Archdeacon of South Canberra and as Archdeacon for Chaplains. Prior to his appointment to Queanbeyan he was rector of Muswellbrook in Newcastle Diocese.



Bishop-elect Ian Palmer makes his declarations of assent to the Constitution and Rules of the Anglican Church of Australia, to the Metropolitan Archbishop Peter Jensen.

New Location

GLOBAL Recording Network moved their HQ from Castle Hill to Prospect, NSW, late last year. Removalists moved the office in a day – coloured stickers indicating where everything had to go. It took nine men and three trucks 11 hours to finish the job. This was followed by the transfer of the factory on site. The culmination was the official opening and dedication of the property on 3 November. The new address is 1/36 Stoddart Rd, Prospect NSW 2148, phone (02) 9899 2211.

Elderly Not Left Out

OAC Ministries is usually identified with children's work: at beach missions, camps, conventions and in schools. But this versatile outreach work extends also to seniors ministry. Planned itinerary in a regional area usually includes visits to aged care facilities where they are warmly welcomed. Residents and staff appreciate the programs and join in keenly. OAM recently farewelled volunteers Peter and Dorothy Sim who have been actively involved with their seniors' programs for the last 11 years.

Ministry To Migrant Maids

THE life of migrant maids in an unnamed country where MECO Int is working can be similar to that of a slave. Maids come from Asian and African countries to better themselves and provide for their families back home but are at the mercy of their employers. Forced to live with them, many have no set working hours and often have pay withheld. 85% say they have no day off and in some cases maids are not permitted to leave the houses where they work. Verbal and sexual abuse is rife. One of MECO's workers writes that she is assisting a woman pastoring 400 such maids. 'I act as a taxi for her congregation – those who need to go to hospital, clinics, a lawyer, and so on,' she says. The *Jesus* film in DVD format is distributed in multiple languages, an important outreach for illiterate maids. Over 20,000 DVDs have been given out in the last 18 months.

New Anglican Prayer Book

THE Diocese of Sydney has launched the book *Common Prayer: Resources For Gospel-Shaped Gatherings*. Bishop Robert Forsyth, who headed the Archbishop of Sydney's Liturgical Panel that brought the book to fruition, said their hope was that it would help those in the Diocese create services which 'authentically reflect the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. We hope it will be a kind of benchmark,' he said, 'A book that will be used in full in many places... but also a guide to those who are going to be creating services.'

Archbishop Peter Jensen said he was delighted to launch *Common Prayer*, but also spoke of the privilege and importance of having such a book at a time when new congregations and fellowships needed services that could be contemporary and flexible as well as founded on solid biblical theology.