

October 23
2010

IntraVic

How can anyone put his faith in Christ if he's never even heard about Him? How can he hear about Him if no one tells?

Romans 10:14 (Clear Word)

Carers

Going Above and Beyond



ROAD to BETHLEHEM™

Road To Bethlehem™ wishes to thank you and invite you to rejoice in the prosperous fruits of last year's event. Once again, your continual support, contributions, participation and encouragement have carried this outreach program to new heights.

Last year, RtB took pre-booked ticket reservations of over 13,500 people!

Many requested subscriptions to 'Signs of the Times' (52) and teenage Christian novel 'Finding David' (70).

Not only this, but a number of visitors to Road To Bethlehem™ moved by the community spirit and the real message of Christ's birth made requests for pastoral visits and continual Bible-studies.

This would not have been achieved without the generous input from the 445 volunteers that give to the community in order to make Road To Bethlehem™ a blessing to all at Christmas.

Thank you! *"As a non church goer I found it amazing. Thankyou"*
- Sally

"Wonderful witness. God bless you all!"
- Garry

"It gets better every year! Thankyou for this gift to us. God bless all involved."
- A & J

"Truly awe inspiring!"
- Fiona

"This is the highlight of our year. Thankyou."
- Michelle

"Such a beautiful spirit about every one of the volunteers. This event is truly special. This is love. This is a witness."
- Beau

"THE BEST CHANCE TO SPEND A NIGHT WITH JESUS"
- CAMERON

A Note from the Editor...



Carers. Do you ever give a moment's thought to carers? Do you even notice them? They come in all shapes and forms. Some do it because they are paid to; still it takes a special kind of person to fill their working hours helping others exist in their world. Others choose to do it, preferring not to put their loved one into care. And there are those who have it thrust upon them; it is not how they saw their life playing out but, having no other option, they soldier on stoically, doing the best they can.

Carers. We work beside them, sit with them in church, socialise with them. We know their situation. But do we ever consider it? Or, through familiarity, has their plight become invisible? Forgotten?

In our own state, there are over 700,000 Victorians caring for a family member or friend with a disability, chronic illness or who is frail, not to mention the many grandparents and single parents with sole responsibility for the care of young children.

Our secular world is making an effort to remember. Carers Victoria is a state wide voice for family carers, family members and friends of those needing care. Its website offers facts and resources, advice for carers and advice for friends of carers, with suggestions of how the community as a whole can help. Its vision? To see caring become a shared community responsibility.

Last year saw Australia's annual Carers Week launched by our Governor-General as a time to celebrate and acknowledge the vital role carers play in our wider society. This last week, October 17-23, was Carers Week, 2010 and saw a range of activities across the nation connecting carers, reaching out to the hidden ones and increasing general awareness. The Tuesday just gone was Carers Day – a day for all Australians to think about the contribution of carers to their community and consider doing something in return: take them out; drop around a home cooked meal; a bunch of flowers; pay for a neck massage. Anything, just to say 'thanks' to a carer they know.

Did you remember? Do you remember? Do we, as a church, remember these hidden ones, who go about their duties of caring because it is what they do?

Why should we let the secular world lead in this area; shouldn't we, as Christ's hands and feet in this life, be leading the way? He lovingly supports the Marthas of this world, gently reminding them to care for themselves too. He upholds the Good Samaritans, telling us to 'go and do the same.' He tells the Jairuses among us not to fear and commends the Syrophoenecians for their persistent faith in spite of obstacles life throws at them.

We celebrate Mothers and Fathers Day, lets add Carers Day to our calendar. But don't not stop there – find ways to acknowledge and care for our carers all year round, just as they do - all year round.

Carers, we acknowledge you and thank you.

CARERS - WE SALUTE YOU!

YOU ARE DOING YOUR GOD-GIVEN BEST, SO...

- KNOW that you are loved beyond measure
- BELIEVE that with God all things are possible
- ASK boldly and you will receive abundantly
- REST from you fretting and perceived failures
- FEEL revived and in communion with God and others
- ACT from gratitude to God as you recall His blessings
- REMEMBER you can cast all your cares on Him

"I just wanted to say thanks for putting an issue out about the role and lives of carers in our church. Often we feel alone in our journey, especially when you go to church and see what you think are perfect and happy families but your own is anything but perfect. So thank you for highlighting awareness to an important group of people in our church. Being acknowledged is priceless."
CARER

In this issue...

Carers - the Quiet Achievers	pg 4-5
Devotional - Who Cares Anyway?	pg 6-7
Carers - No Greater Love	pg 8-9
As we reflect His Light - Stories of God's Grace... God's Cushions	pg 12-13
Stories of Caring from our Churches	pg 12-13
News from our Churches	pg 14-17
A Tribute to Aged Carers	pg 18-19
Conference News	pg 20-21
Bible Adventures in Victoria with Pastor Dave	pg 22-23
More Conference News	pg 24-25
Notices	pg 26-28

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The Quiet Achievers

There is a good chance that you have 'brushed shoulders' with a carer this week, but they probably didn't point out that they were one of 2.6 million Australians who provide care for a family member or friend who is frail aged or has a disability, a terminal or mental illness, not to mention the untold number who suddenly find themselves with sole care of young children.

These achievers don't usually talk about what they do - they just roll up their sleeves, get in and do it; caring for their loved one or a friend each and every day.

I think of some of the carers I have met recently:

- A woman whose 30 year old son has severe autism and cannot be left on his own. He has no control of his bowel or bladder. Only close friends or family members can care for him as his condition means that he needs a lot of familiarity in his surroundings and cannot cope with change.
- A 71 year old woman whose husband is completely paralysed due to advanced motor neurone disease. She cares for him at home with the help of a nursing service that comes once a day. He wakes up several times a night and is fearful of being alone in his room if he is awake.
- An 85 year old man whose wife is suffering with advanced Parkinson's disease. He has learned to cook her favourite recipes and bathes, dresses and feeds her every day. She has hallucinations and sometimes she accuses him of doing terrible things. Or becomes aggressive. She can't even thank him for his care.

• A Turkish woman who cares for her elderly father-in-law. He is a large man and has no mobility and she uses a hoist to lift him and to transfer him from his bedroom to the lounge room each morning. He cannot do anything for himself.

• A couple in Geelong who have five children – two of them with autism. They have both given up their jobs and work full time caring for their children. It's not easy financially or emotionally, but they don't complain.

• A mother in Wodonga whose 17 year old son has multiple severe disabilities. She told me that people sometimes ask her if she ever wishes he hadn't been born. Her response, "How could anyone say that? I love him".

"Church friends built a wood shed for me and one of them keeps it filled. He also mows my lawn but won't accept any pay - This is all a huge comfort and help to me..."
WIFE OF A STROKE VICTIM.

When you are a full time carer, sometimes people just don't know what to say, so they don't say anything! But a smile or a hug is always appreciated and can convey what words cannot."
A CARER

Maybe you have come across some similar examples in your family or neighbourhood. Many of these people become invisible to their friends and neighbours as they seldom leave the house and have little time for sport, recreation or socialising. But you don't often hear them complain.

There is, however, another group of carers we tend to overlook whom I would like to draw your attention to: young children of parents with a mental illness. It is estimated that in Australia about 23% of children live in a household where at least one parent has a mental illness¹. Some of them have to help with providing care for a parent who may be unable to cope with the responsibilities of daily living. These children (of whom about 50,000 are preschool aged) will often be responsible for cooking, cleaning, shopping and managing household budgets, caring for younger siblings, sometimes even administering their parents medication and supervising their basic daily activities.

In one study, 40% of children reported that no one ever speaks to them about their parent's illness. The stigma associated with mental illness also means that children may be reluctant to speak out about their situation so it often happens that these young ones take on these roles with little or no support.

¹ All information about Children of Parents with a Mental Illness (COPMI) was sourced from www.copmi.net.au. For more information about carers resources and supports contact Carers Victoria or check out www.carersvic.org.au

Carers won't say much about the work they do – maybe we have to talk about it for them. Maybe we need to take the time to listen to their story... Sometimes that is the best we can do.

Martina Stanley

"They'd drop in randomly, for a chat. And while we talk, they would do some dishes or mop the floor – whatever they saw needed doing. I really appreciate it, now I'm over the embarrassment of being caught needing help!"
INDEPENDENT BUT GRATEFUL CARER



Devotional...

Who Cares, Anyway?

Catchy phrases such as 'Born to Care', as well as a deep yearning within us, have often initiated our desire to share in God's care for those less fortunate than ourselves. Yet as caregivers, intent on providing support and nurture to others, our perception of the evidence of God's blessings toward us may become dulled by the duty of care.

In any situation, things change, stress mounts, obstacles oppose and anyone can begin to feel they are losing altitude to their high calling, whatever that may be. Carers are not immune to this. In addition they can be attacked in another way, allowing the ugliness of the 'Sad, Mad and Bad' to affect their daily joy as God's 'healing apprentices'. Overwhelmed, they may see challenges; limitations; social leprosy; cynicism and invisibility as their only visitors.

So what do we do when the blessings we want to count, refuse to add up?

The Gehazi Syndrome

With the opportunity to observe God's power on a daily basis, Gehazi became immune to the majesty and might of his God.

Gerald A Klingbell, in a recent article in the *Ministry* magazine (May 2010, pp16-19), highlighted the pitfall of becoming so familiar with the Holy we forget who our God really is. He noted that despite our "front-seat ministry" with God we become world-weary and choose to act out of fear rather than love. As a result we are often blinded to God's blessings towards us and the blessing that we are to others. Klingbell diagnoses this as *The Gehazi Syndrome*.

Like Gehazi, as caring carers, we have the opportunity to see God's hand in dispelling both the illusion and pain caused by suffering. But we should take care not to become numb to God's Holiness, as he did.

Elisha noted his servant's frailty of faith and sought to remediate it by calling on God to open the man's eyes so that he could see God's blessings and protection (2Kings 6:17). Do we echo the beating of Gehazi's heart of fear today? Have we, as workers for God, lavishing love, support, empathy and attention on those we have been called to care for, become overwhelmed by the enormity of the task, by financial fear, by worry we can no longer cope? Do we look at our own limitations and cry "I can't do this!" as crises and troubles appear to surround us?

If so, then Gehazi's learning is also ours as we are reminded that we do have a choice - to quiver in fear, or look up and see the angels that God has camped around about us to strengthen us. It is only then we realise that it was never the difficulty, but only the fear of it, that has kept us trapped in our anxiety, doubt and yes, even self pity. We can, through faith, be enriched to accomplish something extraordinary by doing the ordinary with love, each and every day.

Replenish the Supply

We have been invited to revel in God's healing, thus refocusing our efforts simply by resting in His arms.

As in the story of Job, Satan may rob us of everything material, yet he cannot cheat us of the virtue and integrity that God imparts through our caring. But we can. Christ told us to love others as our selves - there would not have been much point to this if we are not to respect ourselves, to have a sense of self worth. Carers, like everyone, need caring for too - they are worthy of it. During His busy ministry years, Christ Himself took time out to replenish and commune with His Father, and told His disciples to 'Come... to a quiet place and get some rest' (Mark 6:31). While caring for someone is a gift the carer offers with no expectation of repayment, like an empty jug, it must be refilled for it to continue to flow. Without replenishing, we rob ourselves. Realising this important truth can lead to satisfaction and a re-partnering with our commitment to this gift of caring.

We have been invited to abandon our fears and to be 'careless in the care of God'; not to become apathetic, jaded and disingenuous, but rather, to revel in His healing and refocus our efforts through simply resting in His arms.

Let Go and Let God

God gives us a key to happiness here on this earth when He invites us to 'Let go and let God.' If we were offered a guaranteed way to cure every pain and heartache, what price would we pay? As caregivers, we need to remember that God has already paid it.

However He also declares us to be worthy of the care that we give to others. So, count it all good. Difficulties serve a purpose in our lives - by 'letting go and letting God' we, like Gehazi and Job, discover that the stresses and struggles of 'caring' become blessings in disguise. We can understand the wisdom of Elisha in asking for a 'double portion' of God's Spirit (2 Kings 2:9) to provide hope and healing. We witness God's love in action. We comprehend that caring can only be done through God's grace and our will.

We can thank God that as the Chief Carer He 'cared' enough for us to send His only Son Jesus to give His life, to die in our place, to provide an eternity of being 'careless' in His care.

Caring for the Carer

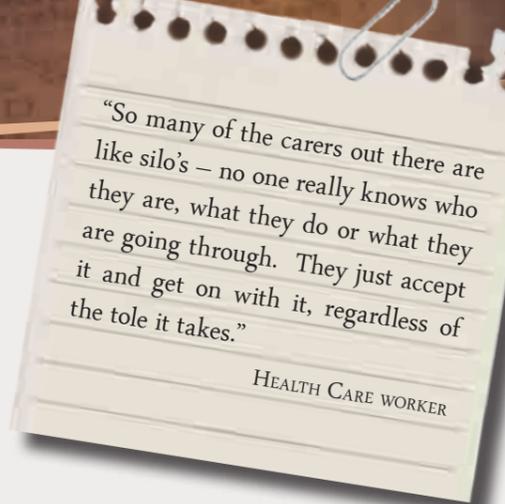
What is your viewpoint of caring? Do you see it as being troubled with uncertainty? A gift or a burden? The supreme sacrifice? And What happens when the helper needs the help?

It is the responsibility of friends, family, churches and schools to give support to these dedicated and valuable people and to carry these carers in our hearts as God does. It is our privilege to uphold them in our prayers and to seek to bless them with our listening ears. John Donne rightly stated that no man [or woman] is an island.

"Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their work: if one falls down, his friend can help him up. But pity the man who falls and has no one to help him up" (Ecclesiastes 4:9-11).

Who cares? HE CARES! Further, He commends us with, "As you have done it unto the least of these my brethren, you have done it unto me" (Matt 25:40).

If you decided for God, living a life of God-worship, it follows that you don't fuss... Look at the birds, free and unfettered, not tied down... Careless in the care of God. And you count far more to Him than birds!... What I am trying to do here is get you to relax, to not be so preoccupied with getting, so you can respond to God's giving... Steep your life in God-reality, God-initiative, God-provisions. Don't worry about missing out. You'll find all your everyday human concerns will be met. Matthew 6:26-33 (the Message)



SUE MERCER
SAFE PLACES COORDINATOR



JAN PETRIE

No Greater Love

Greater love has no man, than that he lay down his life for his friends. (John 15:13)

The life of a carer is, in many ways, a life of death to self: taking on the role of carer, it is as if they have given up their own life, no longer able to make decisions, even on day to day activities, with freedom, leaving many to feel they have indeed lost their own identity, so consuming is the task.

This role is all-encompassing. It could refer to a parent caring for a child, an adult child caring for a parent, a person caring for a friend, sibling or spouse. Anyone, in fact, who has a loved one who, through birth, illness, accident or age, has become disabled and unable to care for themselves.

The words of the song 'He ain't heavy, he's my brother' may well describe the experience of some carers. They carry out their tasks with joy, gladly giving up other options and cheerfully growing in depth of character and understanding of the meaning of life. For others, it is a deeply scarring experience. Perhaps they were abused by the very ones who they are now caring for. Or the one in their care has become demanding, rude, ungrateful and abusive.

And it is often near impossible to find someone with whom they can be completely honest about how tough their life is.

For the majority, however, it is a bitter/sweet experience; glad to be able to give care, comfort and support to someone they love and value deeply, while also being aware of the cost to themselves in physical and emotional health. Many carers carry enormous grief and guilt over the times when they have 'snapped' under the strain and said or done hurtful things to the person they are caring for. What is more, rates of depression are high among carers, which is hardly surprising.

For those who have never taken on this role, well, we acknowledge it is a tough experience, but do we, perhaps, take it for granted that it is just what some people do, not thinking too closely about what it actually means?

Close your eyes for a moment and imagine being on duty seven days a week, constantly supervising, watchful in case of accidents, responsible for every sip of water or mouthful of food, every trip to the bathroom day and night, as well as sharing the emotional journey of the person you are caring for.

In centuries past, people generally lived in smaller communities and extended family groupings, where the load of caring for someone with disabilities was shared among many. In our modern society with its nuclear family – and increasingly single parent families – this is no longer the case. Caring can be extremely isolating. Spare a thought for those who do not have good supportive networks, friends or family, who are naturally introverted or non-assertive; or who begin missing church on just a few Sabbaths but step-by-step slip into an isolated life caring for someone who asks the same question over and over, a dozen times in an hour. Or who begin caring for their loved one

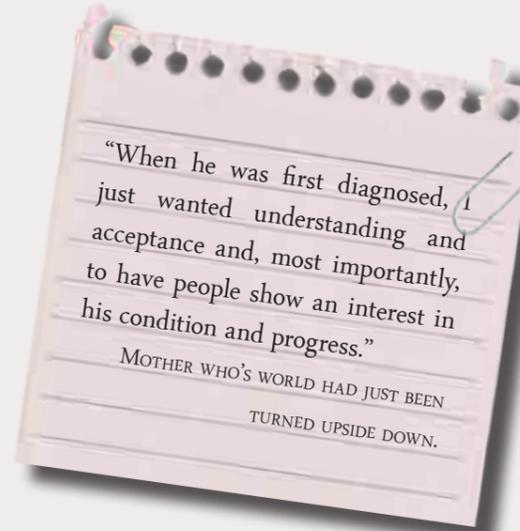
suddenly disabled through an accident, surrounded by supportive friends in the early stages of the crisis, but finds the support dwindles through the long haul?

Years ago, as a student social worker, I had a placement in the Shire of Yarra Ranges. My project was to do an accommodation needs survey for people who through age, intellectual or psychiatric disability required extra support. I remember being told by one of the service providers that there was a greater need for services in the Healesville corridor, as in the Warburton corridor there was a large Seventh-day Adventist presence, and they

were 'very good at looking after their own'. It was good to know our church had that reputation. I pray that we can continue to offer that level of support to those in our community.

We aren't saved by works, but we are told in Scripture that our works do follow us to heaven, and that we will be rewarded according to our works (Matt 16:27, Rev 22:12). I believe that carers have a special place in God's heart, and that he will be busy preparing a special reward for those who have missed out on much that this life offers through taking on the role of carer.

Jan Petrie
Social worker



Welcome to Holland

While this poem by Emily Perl Kingsley describes the experience of raising a child with a disability, much of what she says could also apply to many who find themselves unexpectedly taking on the role of a full time carer to someone they love.

"...It's like this..."

When you're going to have a baby, it's like planning a fabulous vacation trip – to Italy. You buy a bunch of guide books and make your wonderful plans. The Coliseum. The Michelangelo, David. The gondolas in Venice. You may learn some handy phrases in Italian. It's all very exciting.

After months of eager anticipation, the day finally arrives. You pack your bags and off you go. Several hours later, the plane lands. The stewardess comes in and says, "Welcome to Holland".

"Holland?!" you say. "What do you mean Holland?? I signed up for Italy! I'm supposed to be in Italy. All my life I've dreamed of going to Italy."

But there's been a change in the flight plan. They've landed in Holland and there you must stay.

The important thing is that they haven't taken you to a horrible, disgusting, filthy place, full of pestilence, famine and disease. It's just a different place.

So you must go out and buy new guide books. And you must learn a whole new language. And you will meet a whole new group of people you would never have met.

It's just a different place. It's slower paced than Italy, less flashy than Italy. But after you've been there for a while and you catch your breath, you look around. . . . And you begin to notice that Holland has windmills. . . . and Holland has tulips. Holland even has Rembrandts.

But everyone you know is busy coming and going from Italy. . . . and they're all bragging about what a wonderful time they had there. And for the rest of your life, you will say "Yes, that's where I was supposed to go. That's what I had planned."

And the pain of that will never, ever, ever, ever go away. . . . because the loss of that dream is a very, very significant loss. But. . . if you spend your life mourning the fact that you didn't get to Italy, you may never be free to enjoy the very special, the very lovely things about Holland."



As We Reflect His Light ...stories of God's Grace

God's Cushions

Where to start? How do I even begin to tell of the fall? A fall so sudden, into a deep, dark tunnel that was to become the beginning of a new life path that I had never imagined would be mine? Perhaps the words of Emily in *Welcome to Holland* (PREVIOUS PAGE), say it all – over the years I have identified acutely with this poem, which means so much to me.

When I gave birth to my beautiful boy, when I first heard that musical cry only a newborn baby can give, I knew my family was complete. Together with my husband and gorgeous 19 month old daughter, my dream of the happy family behind the white picket fence was well and truly under way.

The early days of running a young family was tiring and at times overwhelming, but I was more than content. As the children grew life got busier. Their development and involvement in everything was typical - or so I thought; Jack was just an incredibly active child, never sitting still for a moment. He was, however, difficult to engage in activities for any length of time and terribly hard to settle at night, waking repeatedly and taking half an hour or more to resettle each time; I was more exhausted than I even realised.

Time moved on, as it does, and occasionally we had the odd social issue with Jack but I thought that this too, was just a passing phase - he displayed signs of being a very intelligent little fellow - he'd soon learn. I remember walking into Knox Shopping Centre when he was three. He looked up and me and asked why Knox was spelt with a K. He listened intently as I explained what a silent letter was, inwardly thinking what a bright little boy I had, revelling in his uniqueness. Now, if only I could get his behaviour under control!

Friends and family noticed little things about Jack but I quickly reassured them it was just a phase. With the year-end approaching, Jack's 3-year-old kinder teacher approached me with some concerning social observations that she planned to make next year's teacher (who was to become a wonderful supportive friend) aware of. A preschool field officer observed Jack and offered various strategies to help with his increasingly difficult behaviour, social inappropriateness, extreme tantrums and melt downs. But I had already tried most of them and with nothing working, I seemed to be losing control and, more importantly, understanding of my son.

Finally, the word *Autism* was mentioned and a paediatrician recommended. I had only vaguely heard of this thing and seen extreme cases of it on TV shows. Now they were telling me my son had it! What did this mean?

With my head spinning, the ground beneath my feet gave way to the dark lonely tunnel. I was sliding down rapidly, desperately grabbing at anything to remain upright.

The paint on my white picket fence was peeling.

The paediatrician diagnosed Jack as High Functioning Autistic. Even now as I write this four years later, tears well up and my heart is heavy with memory and knowledge of what was to come. In the blink of an eye, my Jack had died – leaving me a son I did not know, whom I could not reach. What did the future hold? How could I help him? Keep my family together? Survive this nightmare whole?

The grief... loss... fear... It was more than I could stand. Yet stand I must.

I ranted at God. How could He have let this to happen? I told Him in no uncertain terms that He was wrong - He *had* given me too much this time. I was *not* up to the job. My life was consumed by Autism. I lived it. Ate it. Breathed it. It plagued my dreams at night and my thoughts during the day. In my head was a constant pressure. It gave me headaches.



I could not control my emotions, tearing up at any time in front of anyone. The responsibility was mine alone to bear. The stress was impossible.

Previously unacknowledged cracks in our marriage became too big to ignore. I guess, in a crisis of this size, one of two things happen between the two of you. You either draw together, strengthening and supporting each other with mutual love and respect, or you run the other way. Sadly, our marriage was not strong enough to weather the storm. More grief and loss.

My picket fence had truly collapsed.

Enter the endless round of professionals and people ready to help. And help they did. I began to realise several things. I was learning who my son was. I was learning how to understand him, communicate with him and most importantly help him understand the world around. But it took me a year to reconnect with him. The boy I thought I had was the dream, but just look at the real deal - a very special, remarkable, affectionate and loving boy who was more intelligent than ever.

No, God did not prevent my fall into that terrible, terrible tunnel, but He was right there in it with me. As I pictured and felt myself falling, crashing into the tunnel sides on my way down, the sides were not sharp, they did not wound me or kill me but in fact, they seemed to be cushioned. I soon realised that the cushioning of the sides were all the wonderful people God had sent into my life to help me on the journey down. Family, friends, professionals. They were there softening the blow. God knew the fall was coming – nothing takes Him by surprise. And He knew how to help me through it. He knew the right people to send and He knew that with His help and love He would bring me through, stronger than ever.

Four years on, we are thriving. Jack is in a mainstream school, surrounded by loving and dedicated teachers who understand him and draw the best out of him. He is happy, healthy and understands the world around him. On the occasions he doesn't, I am right there to explain, teach and love him. Autism is no longer a dirty word; for us it is a normal part of our life and will always be. I too, see windmills, tulips and even Rembrandts. Life is never straight; it is hilly, up and down, full of good bits and bad. But most of all it is happy.

My advise for us as a church community, when you find one of your members in a similar life crisis, don't turn away because you don't know what to say, even when you don't understand what it is that person is trying to deal with and come to terms with. Instead, allow yourself to be available. Let yourself be one of the cushions Gods sends into their lives, to soften their fall. Acknowledge their pain and grief even when you can't comprehend it. You may never know how much it means to be cared for in such a way.

Isn't that what we should be for each other, as a community? Living Cushions. *(name withheld)*

"Let me give you a new command:
Love one another. In the same way I
love you, you should love one another.
This is how everyone will recognise that
you are my disciples – when they see
the love you have for each other."
John 13: 34-35 The Message Bible

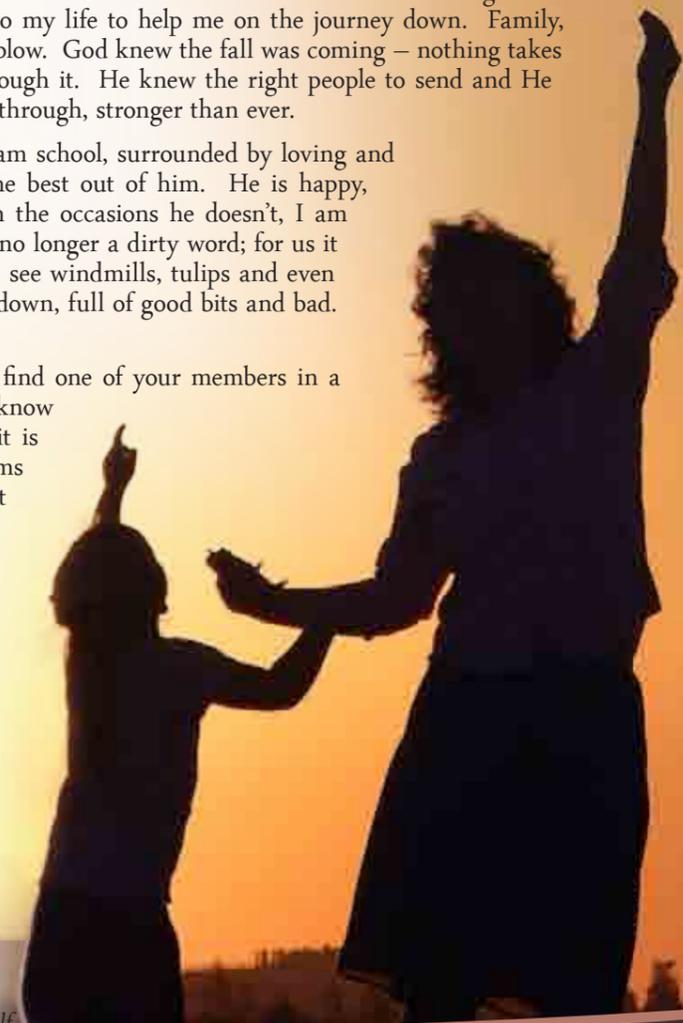


photo by Shlomit Wolf

Caring for Andrea

Late in June 1999, Andrea was diagnosed with hereditary Motor Neurone Disease (MND), an insidious illness which destroys the body but not the mind. Her condition usually causes death within 18 months of diagnosis but in Andrea's case, it took nearly six years.

Her husband, Bruce Petrie tells us of the bitter sweet experience of caring for Andrea during her illness.

I became Andrea's full time carer at the end of June 2000, which was something I really wanted to do. Blessed with a redundancy, we were able to extend our home to cater for Andrea's needs and purchase a new vehicle with an electric lift and wheelchair facilities.

Determined to enjoy what remaining life we had together we travelled, visiting friends all over Australia.

By late 2000, not only was Andrea wheelchair bound but she had lost the ability to speak. One thing we never did get around to doing was to record her voice; only the home message-bank had a recording and I still have a copy on tape.

From the beginning I knew I would not be able to do this on my own. My mum helped while she could, but when she also got sick my elder sister, Diane, stepped in, becoming my relief shift when things worsened.

As MND takes its stranglehold muscles cramp and Andrea had cramp from head to foot. Because of this, and the inability to change positions easily, she grunted and moaned loudly many times during the night. Her distress would wake me, even when sleeping at the other end of the house and some nights I could barely get two hours sleep. This went on for many months until our Case Manager found out and arranged for the top carer package available; I had 36 hours each week to sleep, relax or do something else, and four days a month where Andy would go into respite care and I could get up to 14 hours sleep each night. But that relief was not without its own problems. In respite, they were understaffed at night, causing much anxiety for Andrea and myself. But it was necessary if I was to continue looking after her. At least the respite care, despite its shortcomings, saved my sanity.

Andrea and I never lost the enjoyment of being together nor of going places or doing things together. With a bit extra planning we could go shopping or even out to a favourite restaurant. It took more time but we were together doing things we liked. We were often amazed at how helpful people were wherever we went. Our agency carers became our friends and often one would come with us if we wanted to go somewhere during their shift, or even accompany us so we could continue going on holidays.



BRUCE LOVED ANDY'S EVER READY SMILE

While Andrea could understand everything being said to her, it took persistence and patience to understand what she wanted to say, as we needed to use a letter board with each letter of the alphabet plus the numbers 1-10 on one side and frequently used words on the other. The person caring for Andrea would have to point to each letter to try to form a word. Guesswork and familiarity often helped! So when the agency carers got the hang of using the letter-board, or got familiar with her routine, it made things much easier.

I found it interesting watching people's responses when they wanted to be friendly and say 'Hi'. They would talk to me in front of Andrea as if her disability was mental, not physical. I'd explain that she understood everything and show them the letter-board, but most found that too hard and gave up. Still, Andrea saw it as a blessing when anyone came to talk and beamed at them with delight.

We were blessed when family and friends would drop in even for just a few minutes chat, telling of the goings on in the church and in their own social networks. Some would pray with us. Some would just come and sit, giving me a chance to do something else.

Andrea's walk with God grew closer during her illness and she showed everyone she came in contact with how one can live and die in such a manner yet still love God and praise His name. Not once in the entire six years of her debilitating illness did she complain about it. She finally succumbed on April 13, 2005, while in respite care. My sister and I spent that last day with her; Andrea was ready for her final rest, looking forward to Christ's return.

I have no regrets about my decision to care for Andrea. God certainly walked with me and carried me through some horrendously difficult times. Somehow, even from the very depths of the earth, He could still reach me, and He did. We had some extremely frank discussions but, like a best friend, He was patient and loving.

I wish to thank all those who helped in any way - there were so many who just loved Andrea and did what they could to help. But most of all I want to thank God and praise His name for being so close to both of us and carrying us through that painful time.

Bruce Petrie

And Then There Were...Thirteen

Lesley and Don Rantall have not had it easy. You may have seen their story on A Current Affair several years ago. Not only did they lose their second daughter to Acute Myeloid Leukaemia and willingly take on the care of her children, Don has recently been unwell. Yet in spite of all this, when one talks to Lesley, her love for others and her gratitude for their care and support just overflows. She was more than happy to share some of her story with readers.

"To begin our story - Tamra was diagnosed in September 2004 and underwent many months of painful treatment. Aware of the situation, church families all over Australia began praying for her and our family. Sadly it was not in God's plan for her to recover and she passed away after battling the illness for twelve months. *To this very day I do not understand why. But still, I know He always makes the right decisions for us because He loves us.*

Before she died, Tam and eleven of her twelve children came to live with us and we eventually took steps to become the children's legal guardians. Our home is an old church, which Don is making into a beautiful place, just the right size for our family. Some young people came for a working bee and that made a real change too - in many different ways. *With all that happens and needs doing around here it's hard to get time to sneeze let alone sit and think AND write. I'll keep trying.*

It is school holidays now and yesterday we went to the Melbourne Zoo, thanks to the Yr 9 kids at Gilson College. I managed to lose one child on the train at Flinders Street Station, but with God's help we got her back. We also visited the local theatre to watch 'Despicable Me' in 3D, (much to the kids delight as trips to the theatre are usually out of our price range) and are now members of our local attraction, Flagstaff Hill. Shortly we will be joining our local swimming pool as members too, all due to the love and care of the teachers and students at the college. For the last few years, we have been the Yr 9 class project and they

have supported us in many ways, for which we are so grateful. From time to time, we have experienced a range of problems trying to manage eleven kids, there are some behavioural problems as you could well imagine, but we have fantastic support from our Warrnambool church family and I can honestly say they are folk we would not have made it this far without.

The people of Australia gave us fantastic support through the A Current Affair appeal. Not only did their financial support prove very valuable, but the letters (and particularly the thoughts from other Christians) and other gifts forwarded to us were so encouraging, yet humbling at the same time.

I'm trying to cook tea and finish this and I think I just turned the steamed spuds into baked spuds, the kids will love it!

One of the difficulties we are journeying through at the moment, adding a lot of pressure to our lives, is the fact that Don, who has been suffering with a number of debilitating problems for many months, has been diagnosed with dilated cardiomyopathy and cannot resume his occupation. He finds life an uphill battle at the moment, and it is particularly sad for us to watch him go through this time as he has not yet given his heart to our Lord. This is one area of our life that we would really appreciate your prayers for us.

It is my prayer that God uses us to make an difference in our kids lives, and I constantly thank Him for them.

Thank you, Lesley, for taking the time to share this with us. And to our readers, we hope you have been inspired by this story. Please pray for Lesley, Don and their wonderful family, and reach out to someone near you - help them care.



"Just knowing they were thinking of me helped - it gave me a chance for a normal conversation too"

RANDOM PHONE CALLS FROM FRIENDS

"When you can't make it to church regularly, you just get forgotten about. If someone would just visit him once in a while and sit with him, or perhaps take him out occasionally..."

WIFE CARING FOR HUSBAND WITH LONG TERM ILLNESS.

Get Involved!

...in Church and Family Life HORSHAM CHURCH

In December 2009, IntraVic shared with its readers the story of Kerri and Dutch Vanderhorst and their spiritual journey. The amazing miracle of their story was how many people God used to reach out to them – people who did not necessarily set out to do anything other than make themselves available to the Holy Spirit, who did the rest. Kerri recently drew our attention to what has been happening at Horsham and Nhill churches, where, including her own family, there have been fifteen baptisms in two years.



parents who are committed to making God real in the lives of their children.” All five young people are vitally involved in the life of the church - playing music, leading out in worship services and organising Sabbath school activities and two (Daniel and Anna) recently participated in a Fly'n'Build to Papua New Guinea.

Friends and family came from other parts of Victoria to share in this special day and many of them commented on how much they appreciated the service. Pastor Graham Sutherland prayed for each young person individually just before they were baptised which added further warmth and spiritual depth to the occasion.

“As Anna’s father it was a real blessing to participate in her baptism and Leisa and I feel intensely proud of her, and the other young people, for their commitment to God and His truth. We feel blessed to be part of a healthy, growing congregation and a worldwide family of believers,” concludes Andrew.

Thank you to Kerri and Andrew for story.

The minister for these churches, Andrew Wilson says, any baptism is a miracle of God working through a number of people. A warm and caring person, he commends the members for their work for the Lord: “I personally believe that when a church is moving in the right direction, baptisms will follow. These recent baptisms are a testimony to the good work the families have done in their homes, week in and week out.” Members study the Word together and work closely with seekers in their communities. They keep active for their Lord. “We may have up to 100 members at Horsham some time next year and I praise God for that.”

On September 11, the church members celebrated as five young people (Katie Ladlow, Rachel Ebenezer, Anna Wilson, Kimberly Ebenezer and Daniel Ladlow) were baptised.

“What a lovely day it was,” said Kerri, “to watch these young lives go in the direction the Lord intended.”

Andrew says that the young people have been meeting in two groups, studying the Bible over the past eighteen months and have experienced a deepening knowledge of and commitment to God. “Studying together, sharing meals, playing and praying together has allowed these boys and girls to develop friendships with each other and most importantly with Jesus. These baptisms are a testimony to the value of family worship and having



ANNA WILSON & HER FATHER ANDREW



KIMBERLY & RACHEL EBENEZER



KATIE & DANIEL LADLOW



... and at School

BURWOOD CHURCH

Sabbath, October 2 dawned clear and sunny– a beautiful Spring day on which stand by the banks of the Yarra River at Jumping Creek Reserve and celebrate the baptism and 18th birthday of Mark Singh.

Mark was welcomed into church membership, subject to baptism, during the church service in the morning, then members joined together for a special fellowship lunch before travelling to Jumping Creek Reserve.

Once there, Pr Moe Ioane Stiles spoke briefly of her association with Mark throughout his years at Nunawading Christian College: from the talkative Yr-7 boy in the school choir, to the mature young Christian who is now the school captain and about to sit his final exams.

It was some time last year, that Moe noticed a change in Mark, a new depth to him. He had met Christ. Mark told those present, his peers, family, teachers and friends from

Burwood Church, about that time, attributing the change to getting involved – stepping out and doing something – and growing on from there.

“There was Festival of Faith, and I did things for that, and then the schools’ Combined Day of Worship, and then just every chance I had, to get in there and do something, like with StormCo. And being school captain has been part of it too.”

Mark’s life has impacted on his peers. As one younger student excitedly said at the time, “Guess what! Mark said he wants to be baptised!” Clearly his decision had made an impact. And by the time the Combined Day of Worship came around, his fire was being felt. “When we were getting ready to give our testimonies up the front of all the kids, it was so cool, he got us together to pray

before going onto the stage. It is just so... well, so Cool!” Well done, Mark, in taking The Stand for God, rising up to the challenge and accepting the responsibility that goes with it. It was an honour to celebrate this special day with you.
Sherrie Courtney

**...So I’ll stand, with arms high and heart abandoned, in awe of the one who gave it all ...
So I’ll stand, my soul, Lord to you surrendered.**

All I am is Yours.... Hillsong United



A Special Day

LEONGATHA CHURCH

In August, church members participated in a special children's day, with the entire church service being dedicated to and run by their children.

The music was composed of children's songs, the offerings were taken up by children, a story was illustrated with each child receiving a helium filled balloon they then released inside the church to drift up to the ceiling, representing how when we are filled with the Holy Spirit we too can 'soar with wings like eagles'.

Pr David Edgren, Conference Children's Ministries Director, took the sermon, entitled "How to defeat your enemy" telling the story of Elisha, Gehazi and the Syrian army (2 Kings 6). And how do you defeat your enemies? As the story illustrated, make friends with them!

A delicious fellowship meal followed the church service and in the afternoon Pr Edgren conducted a fascinating seminar on "Storytelling" which was very informative and



taught how to make stories come to life.

The Storytelling seminar is a service of the Children's Ministries Department for the benefit of our churches.

When asked, 'what did you think of the service today?' many responded with words such as it was magical. It truly was an inspiring and uplifting Sabbath that everyone enjoyed.
Valma Kane

Faith in Action

WARBURTON CHURCH

The children of the church conducted the entire service at Warburton in early September.

It included a welcome, praise, prayer, offering, a delightful special item featuring piano and violin, five sermonettes, a hymn and a benediction. The children, aged from eight to fifteen, knew exactly what they were about, under the guidance of Children's Ministries coordinator, Mrs Carol Barber.

The sermonettes focussed on FAITH.

F - being for Friendship

A - for Authentic role models

I - for Involvement (Which is what they were doing!)

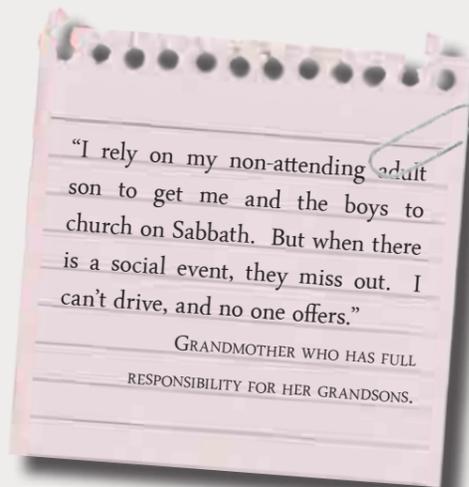
T - for Tradition

H - for Heart Habits, such as prayer and Bible study.

At the conclusion, Mrs Barber encouraged the congregation to learn the children's names, take an interest in them and put into practice all that they had shared with us.

Pr Richard Araya-Bishop said the main vision for Warburton Church is to encourage participation from all the different groups within the church. Children are the most important as they are the future of the church and if they participate and get involved now, they will be involved in church in the future. It is also a good preparation for life.

Thank you to the children who took part in this service - Alana, Ally, Benjamin, Calla, Callista, Cyrus, Eileen, Elijah, Jackson, Jemima, John, Johannes, Katrina, Mereta, Michael, Mitchell, Natalie, Paloma, Rachel, Rhiannon, Savanna, Tiana and Tilly.
Sue Marshall



"A mother of a disabled child I know has changed churches. Where she goes now, they take her son out, spend time with him - it gives her a break. She got to know about them through school - the church is heavily involved with its local school community, helping wherever there is a need. They rallied around her and now she is one of them."

SADDENED FRIEND.

her to choose a career in nursing and she has worked in both Australia and Switzerland.

Ursula decided to keep an eye on Jim when he was 85. She cooked for him, cleaned his house, and as he became more dependant, continued to support him so he could stay at home, which he did until he was 103!

Returning to Switzerland for about twelve months, to care for an elderly aunt who was fragile and needed company, Ursula didn't leave without arranging for church members from Glenhuntly to visit and care for Jim while she was

So to all you Ursula's out there, we would like to acknowledge what you do and say Thank You. Thank You for your generosity of spirit and for your loving heart. Thank You for being Jesus' hands and feet, here today.

To All the 'Ursula's' Out There...

COULD BE ANY CHURCH

Ursula quietly goes about the business of caring. It is just what she does. She could be anyone - in fact, you may well know her - or someone like her. But do you know what she does? The ways she finds to care?

Being a caring sort of person, it was only natural for

Gone. Jim even began attending Glenhuntly Church.

Ursula also became involved with a neighbour, Gwen, taking her shopping, to the Library or doctors' appointments, eventually even cleaning her house too. But her love and care didn't stop there with acts of service.

In her generosity and desire to make these dear people comfortable, Ursula paid for much of the food, medical needs and special mattresses for both Gwen and Jim.

When Jim turned 100, she and her husband took him to Point Cook, and spotting a flying school, organised a one hour flying lesson for him.

In his last two years, Jim needed nursing home care, and Ursula continued to visit, feeding and showering him, and doing his laundry, as she did for Gwen, when she too, needed nursing home care.
Deb O'Mahony

Supporting Orphans

BAIRNSDALE CHURCH

Following the overwhelming success Bairnsdale church has had with its regular street stalls, plus the build up of donated goods that come in from members and the local community, it was decided to open an opportunity centre, named 'Gems 'n' Jams', in a building adjoining the church.

Clothing for every age, shelves of books, crockery and glassware, toys and plants are among the items sold.

Gems 'n' Jams opened on 30th September and operates 3 days a week. We would like to open five days, but at present do not have enough stock. On its opening day over \$1200 was made.

God certainly works within all of us. From the beginning of the street stalls right through to the opening of the centre, He has supplied our needs; whether it be bread crates or plant pots, we only had to think and God was fifty steps ahead! He even had non-members lined up to help when we needed. We have a great team of volunteers and wonderful support from the local people.

This is a grass roots outreach; the centre gives us the opportunity to make friends with people whom we may never have met otherwise. Isn't it so much like our God - giving us a double blessing!

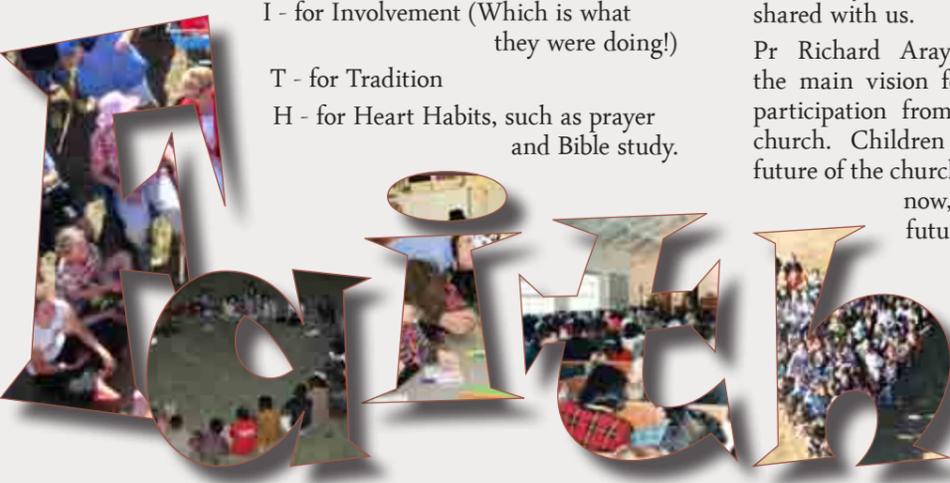


Funds from the opportunity centre will go to help orphan children as well as Helen Hall, in Thailand, and local community outreach.

The Bairnsdale church would appreciate donation of items from any city or town in Victoria. Members are willing to collect items during school holidays, so if your church could collect donations and contact us when a trailer load is ready to be picked up, this would really be appreciated.

For more information or to let us know if you have items to be collected, please email hanna@wideband.net.au or phone Pearl on 5150 4815 (work) or 5152 5373 (home) or Carol on 5152 4622 (work) 5156 8623 (Home).

Carol Stoneman





VALMA KANE

Who Cares for the Aged?

Occasionally someone dropped off a meal for us. We weren't having any crisis, just day to day existence, but the thought of someone going to that sort of trouble for us... it bought me to my knees."
 CARER OF AILING AND FRAIL FATHER.

Often there comes a point in the life of the carer, where they have to make a choice about continuing to care for their loved one. Some times that choice is made for them. Either way, it is never an easy thing to face. In these next two articles, Donna Anderson spoke with a gentleman who decided to place his beloved wife in the AdventCare Whitehorse nursing home, and Val Kane pays tribute to the carers who come through her office.

A Tribute to Carers of the Aged

Carers are the most selfless people I have ever met. Their family member or friend comes first. In my work in Aged Care I oversee three Aged Care facilities and manage the waiting lists. The Carer never wants to give up and feels that they have failed when, through ill health themselves or the urgent need of respite due to pending surgery or another family commitment, they seek respite or in some cases permanent care.

I have the privilege of affirming them for what a wonderful job they have done, I talk to them about feelings of guilt, anxiety and separation when there is a need for intervention.

Surprisingly many people do not even know where to start, not realising that there is help 'out there'. As you can imagine I need a ready supply of tissues in my office. These dear ones don't realise what a superb job they are doing. I see the exhaustion, anxiety and feelings of helplessness on their faces, so independent they don't want to worry their children, or in other cases, with no one else to turn to.

There is a lot of information out there but often it means lining up in queues or "surfing" the internet, skills which the older generation do not always have. But let me assure you that there is help – a starting point can be through your GP or self referral to an Aged Care Assessment Service (ACAT) or a social worker attached to a hospital.

Don't give up if you need help – it is there for you.

My tribute is to all those selfless carers out there who put the needs of others often before their very own. God Bless all those Carers, and as the song says "Be Bold, be Strong, for the Lord your God is with you."
 Valma Kane

Handing Over the Reins.

Donna Anderson also manages waiting lists and helps guide potential residents and their families through a maze of questions, financial arrangements and paperwork at AdventCare. She finds a sense of purpose in her job and is satisfied when told "I am so glad I had this meeting - you have made the whole process seem so easy now..."

Each person has a different story to tell, and here is one such story Donna asked one of her carers to share.

"We have being married for 50 years, with three children, all girls. I worked most of my life as a telephone technician with PMG or as we

"I just wanted someone to listen to me... I still do."
 DAUGHTER WHO GAVE UP WORK TO CARE FOR INFIRM PARENT FOR SEVERAL YEARS, UNTIL MORE CARE WAS NEEDED THAN SHE COULD GIVE.

know today "Telstra". My wife was a stenographer until our firstborn and then she was a "stay at home" mum. When the girls left home we had the time to take extra holidays, day trips and social outings, I even joined a walking club.

After some time, my wife became ill. With time the illness progressed and I became her full time carer. For a number of years this was fine and we coped well. But then there were a few accidents involving the car, night times became increasingly disturbed and other concerns were developing. I was showing signs of exhaustion and stress and it was becoming harder for me to care for her.

I thought I would be able to care for her until she went to sleep permanently but unfortunately that could not be. One of my daughters, a nurse, said "Dad, I am really worried about you - you could have a stroke!" She suggested I make enquiries at AdventCare - Whitehorse Nursing Home to discuss the options for my dear wife and how the facility could accommodate her needs.

After speaking with the family, the decision was made and I entered my wife into permanent care. I felt very positive and relieved about my decision and have often thought, "Why did I take so long to decide?" We live across the road from the nursing home, so I can visit daily. I have flexibility of time for my own appointments and I can go away knowing that my wife is getting the care she needs. Actually, I have just come back from a trip to Cape York feeling very refreshed.

We have lived in Nunawading all our married lives and have followed the progress of AdventCare Whitehorse from a 27 bed Nursing Home to a vibrant and growing Aged Care Facility with a reputation in the Whitehorse Community and surrounding areas of being one of the most up to date Aged Care facility in the Eastern suburbs.

I didn't hesitate with my choice of care for my wife, she deserved the best and that is what she has been receiving since her day of admission."
 Donna Anderson

It's Not Just a Job

Staff at AdventCare are not just doing their jobs. They have the hearts of carers and a genuine compassion for the people they work with every day, finding that caring is a two way street. Here are some of their comments:

"I go home with a smile on my face knowing that I have helped the residents with their day."

"I feel that I am an advocate for our elderly. They depend on us to look after them and to meet their needs."

"I know it's my job but to me it's not work, it's a day looking after our residents, which I love doing. It gives me a real sense of purpose and satisfaction."

"When I see a resident distressed or needing assistance, I love that I can help them feel comfortable and resolve the issue."

"You build up friendships, not just with the residents but their families also. It is so sad when they are no longer with us – but knowing we have helped make their last days comfortable and happy helps."

"I dress up for the residents! It puts a smile on their faces and diverts their thoughts from their worries. And later, when they are together at the dinner table, I get a kick out of hearing them talk about the silly outfits and how I looked!"

"A few people offered to give me a break, take him out for a bit. I was grateful, really, although maybe I didn't seem like it – 'cause what I really wanted was a break from myself... not to be left alone with my sad, lonely thoughts."
 CARER, REMINISCING ON THE EARLY DAYS.



"There were two friends from church who visited her every week during the 13 months she was in a nursing home. This meant so much to me when I was in the States and could not be by her side. That kind of caring can never be repaid."
 DAUGHTER WHO DESPERATELY WISHED SHE COULD CARE FOR HER MOTHER.



Meet the Principal

NUNAWADING CHRISTIAN COLLEGE

We asked the principal of the primary campus, Peter Michalski, several questions about his school.

What is your vision for the school? My vision for Nunawading Christian College Primary is to assist parents in educating their child/ren to be Christ-focused, well-educated, responsible community members.

What do you believe is the Mission of Adventist Education? I believe the mission is dual, one of Ministry and Service. The ministry part brings Jesus to our school community and the school community to Jesus. As a school we are Christ-centred through worship and practical Christian life style. We:

Value Relationships - Trust, Respect, Kindness, Sportsmanship
Appreciate Diversity - Tolerance, Acceptance, Sensitivity
Act with Integrity - Responsible, Patience, Self-Control
Commit to Service - Compassion, Thoughtfulness, Generosity
Celebrate Achievement - Creativity, Initiative, Excellence,

Enthusiasm

Practise Christianity - Forgiveness, Truthfulness, Obedience
Develop Resilience - Perseverance, Resourcefulness, Flexibility,

Loyalty

The educational service part promotes a quality holistic education of each child, expressed in learning excellence and outstanding outcomes.

What do you like about NCCP? I like the people. We are a growing learning community and as such, we

endeavour to do our very best to achieve our God given potential. This is clearly evident in the outstanding results we achieve in National Assessment Program (NAPLAN) and in student classroom engagement, positive student behaviour and participation in the many extra curricula activities on offer. We are successful because a very active and positive team of people (Adventist Schools Victoria, School Council, Home and School Committee, Prayer Teams, Teaching Staff, Support staff, Parent Volunteers) supports us.

And anything else you might like to add? We are truly a blessed school. To God be the glory for the great things He is doing at Nunawading Christian College Primary. Each week we have two parent prayer teams who pray for our school, right here on the premises and the blessings are evident in our learning community.

We welcome any child who wants to become a part of our community here at Nunawading Christian College Primary.



Our new Assistant Youth Director

VICYOUTH

I thought I would take this opportunity to let you know of our newly appointed Assistant Youth Director. As most of you are aware, we said goodbye to the great Redman a little while back and now we have been blessed with another great man to take on this role. I for one am encouraged by this appointment and looking forward to wonderful blessings ahead as we continue to move forward in Youth Ministries here in our beautiful State of Victoria.

It is with great pleasure that I announce Mr Phillip Hyland as the new addition to our VicYouth Team. Phil has been working for Sanitarium in Victoria for many years while also having an active role in his local church, Lilydale. In addition to this Phil has played a very significant ongoing role with VicYouth for many years as the Eastern Metro Regional Coordinator, as part of our Advisory Team and through his involvement with StormCo. Phil

comes into this role with familiar eyes and ears to the youth scene in Victoria and we are expecting a smooth transition for him.

Please join me in welcoming Phil Hyland to our Leadership Team. And please continue to pray for us as we seek God's wisdom and guidance in our every step towards leading our young people into a loving and saving relationship with Jesus and helping them find their place in His Service.



Pr Moe Ioane Stiles Youth Director

Blessed by God, through Music

VICTORIAN CONFERENCE

The Conference recently had the opportunity to host a concert featuring three magnificent artists, Rudy Micelli, Jennifer La Mountain and Steve Darmody. It was a challenge – not being flush with funds, much thought was given to whether or not the offer could be accepted. We were, however, blessed by the generosity of certain church members and would like to thank them for their support which helped enable the concert to proceed.

Those blessings flowed on to the many people who were able to attend on September 25. Organisers and artists arrived an hour early to set up for the 3:30 concert, only to find the church almost full already, with more people streaming in as artists were doing sound checks and getting prepared.

In a church that seats 500, over 600 people managed to find seats or standing room, and a venue seating 1000 could easily have been filled.

With the overwhelming response, the tentative second concert became definite and those not arriving early enough to fit in were asked to return at 7pm. Sadly not everyone

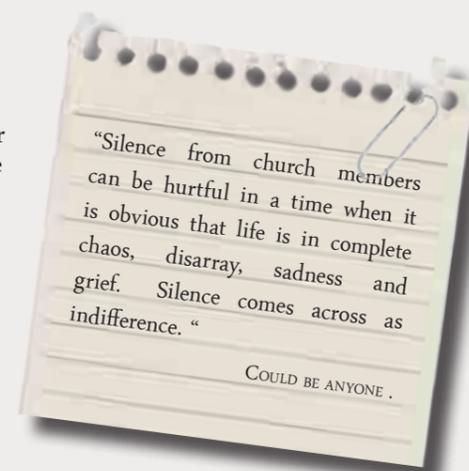
was able to do so, for which organisers are very sorry.

The trio was magnificent and the audience was most certainly blessed by their music. Comments such as "Steve's voice was like velvet"; "when Jennifer sang it was like an angel";

"Rudy's powerful voice gives you goose bumps" cannot be ignored. Their choice of music and the variety of solos, duets and trios were outstanding.

Throughout both sessions, listeners were blessed and God was glorified... and many have asked when is the next Concert!

Cveta Bakof
 photos of event can be viewed on vic.adventist.org.au



WHAT I LIKE ABOUT NCC PRIMARY



I like NCCP because the teachers are kind hearted and they always make sure that everything is going well around the classroom and outside where all the students like to play. The teachers also teach us that we can do all things through God even when we are falling down. They are a fantastic influence when it comes to trying new things in class because they encourage us even when we think that we are not doing as well as we would like.

Another thing that is fantastic about this school is the students, because when somebody is sad or hurt they are willing to help and take care of them. They also have some great positive things to say not only about themselves but about others too. The students are very well mannered and they do the tasks that the teachers ask them to do straight away without complaining.
 Erin - Year 5

Bytes of VicNEWS

• **Did you know...** In response to January's devastating earthquake in Haiti, 25% of the Sabbath School offering collected on Christmas day will go to help rebuild the infrastructure of the our Church in this needy country.

• The **Western District region** held it's annual

Family Camp in September, at Tandara, Halls Gap. Including day visitors, over 200 people gathered to enjoy the peaceful surrounds as well as worship and fellowship with each other on the Sabbath. Representatives from the Conference joined in, and the guest speaker for the day was Dr Wayne Piez.

• The **Minister's Family Retreat**,

in the first weekend of the September school holidays, saw many ministers and their families gathering together for a time of fun, relaxation and fellowship.

Held at Howqua, the weekend included great meals, worships, an Aussie Banquet and fun activities, emphasising the importance of fun family times together, even for ministers!

• **Heritage College** has just hosted Alphabet Ark, the unique preschool adventures program which provides an excellent opportunity to showcase the school to the surrounding community, with student, teacher and parent involvement in a fun environment.

• As we approach the end of the year, **Victorian**

Conference membership figures are approaching 10,000! At the time of print, our numbers are 9955. Praise the Lord.

• Gateway's multi-campus **iDiscover Revelation Series** recently concluded and now the hard work begins! **Over 35 decisions for baptism were made.** Each soul is precious and church members are praying for

wisdom as they follow up their contacts. They ask that you pray for them too.

• With careful planning, **Church plants can happen** as some of our Western churches are finding. **Preston's** planting efforts are well underway. Looking at the Northern suburbs, the team has been doing a lot of

grass roots work such as training, planning and sowing, and engaging with the communities. Some organisation and form is beginning now, too, with a monthly meeting of all the people involved (members, contacts, friends etc) for fellowship and worship having just started.

• At 9am on a recent Sunday Morning 6 faithful

church clerks were first to be trained in the Church's new Electronic Membership Database. Over the coming months more groups of church clerks will be trained in the workings of the new Membership database. This will result in streamlined processes for Church transfers, speeding the process and reducing paperwork.

BIBLE ADVENTURES IN VICTORIA

With
Pastor Dave



Josh Goes Home

Josh pulled his feet out of the river and dried them off as best he could before putting his socks and shoes on. "Going somewhere?" Lance asked. "Yeah," I think I better go home," Josh said. Lance stared at Josh, "I thought you said your brother wants to kill you?" "He did yesterday," Josh mumbled. "You can stay at my house again," Lance offered. "You can stay as long as you want!" "Yeah, I know," replied Josh, "but sooner or later I'll need to face reality." The two boys started to walk away from the swimming hole. "Hey, where are you guys going?" a friend shouted from the water. "Josh's going home," Lance called back. "... he wants to get thrashed by his brother!" "We'll come with you," the friend suggested. "C'mon guys, let's go protect Josh!" Nearly the whole class of Yr 7 students from the nearby college were at the water hole, cooling off. Quickly shrugging their uniforms over their bathers, they joined Lance and Josh. Lance laughed, "You'll be safe now. You're brother might be bigger than you - but he's not bigger than all of us!" The boys and girls started walking to Josh's house. With each step, Josh got more nervous. Finally he turned to Lance and said, "Maybe we should send someone ahead to see if Eric is still angry." "Good idea," replied Lance. "Hey Joel, come here." A scrawny boy joined them. "Yeah?" Joel asked.

"You're the fastest runner in our class," Lance said. "Run to Josh's house and see if Eric is still mad. Tell him Josh is coming home and see how he reacts. If he looks threatening, just run—he'll never catch you!"

Joel laughed, "Yep - be right back!" With that he sprinted away.

In what seemed only minutes, Joel was back. "That's some seriously low flying, mate!" Lance laughed.

"What did he say?" asked Josh, anxiously.

"There's a group of seniors watching football with him," Joel panted. "Eric said they'll all come to meet you."

Josh's face fell in horror. "I know some of those guys," he said, trembling.

"I'm dead if I don't change Eric's mind." He stood still, thinking. His

Author
Pastor David Edgren
Children's Ministries Director



THANK YOU TO STUDENTS OF NCC FOR PHOTOS

group of friends gathered around. "Does anyone have any money?" Josh asked, finally. The boys pooled their pocket money. "Here's \$22.45," Lance said as he handed a hat, filled with money, to Josh. "If it keeps you alive, you can have it!"

Josh turned and gave the hat to Joel. "Here. Run! Take it to Eric. Tell him I'm sorry and I have more in the bank!"

Joel took off sprinting again. The group of boys could see Eric's mob just across the park. They watched as Joel made it to Eric. A burst of laughter drifted across to where they stood, as Joel handed the hat over.

Joel sprinted back, just gaining on Eric who was hot on his heels. The rest of the group jogged along behind. With a sigh of resignation, Josh walking forward to face his fate.

He met Eric in the clearing between the two groups of school kids. As they reached each other Eric held out the hat full of money. "What's this?"

Josh hung his head, "I didn't want you to kill me."

Eric hugged his little brother. "Mate! I'm sorry for getting mad at you yesterday. Mum and Dad are worried sick!" He turned to his group of friends as they approached. "He's fine!"

The group whooped with joy. "Let's get back to the football," one of them laughed.

Eric wrapped his arm around Josh, "I'm so glad you're coming home."



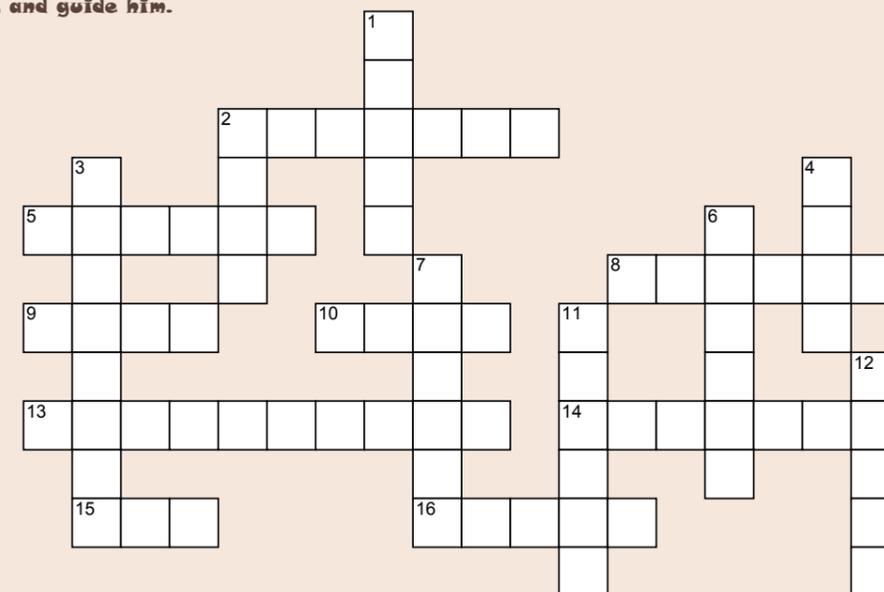
THIS STORY IS SIMILAR TO ONE IN THE OLD TESTAMENT - DO YOU KNOW IT? YOU CAN READ IT IN GENESIS 33.

When you read the story of Jacob, it is easy to think he deserved all the trickery he received at his uncle's hands and he deserved to be afraid of his brother.

But what is really good about the story of Jacob, is that even though he made so many wrong choices, God did not forget him but continued to love and guide him.

DOWN

1. What Bible character is Josh based on?
4. What did Jacob do to his father?
6. What did he do to Esau that made Jacob afraid of his brother?
3. What good thing did Jacob want so much that he did these wrong things to get it?
7. Who was Jacob's favourite wife?
11. What was Jacob's name changed to after the all night wrestling match?
12. Who was the man who had tricked Jacob many times?
2. After the brothers had made up, Esau returned to his home in



www.CrosswordWeaver.com

ACROSS

9. What Bible character is Eric based on?
13. When they were younger, Jacob had tricked his brother into giving this to him.
14. This person encouraged Jacob to lie and steal

10. Who was Jacob's first wife?
5. How many children did Jacob have when he met Esau?
8. Because of his bad choices, Jacob had to leave home and never saw his again.
15. Before meeting his brother,

- Jacob spent a night wrestling with whom?
2. After meeting his brother, Jacob built a house and shelter in.....
16. Even though Jacob made so many mistakes, God still him.

Food Habits for a Lifetime

SIBILLA JOHNSON, DIRECTOR OF HEALTH MINISTRIES

Our children are a precious gift. We all want to give them the best possible start in life. Establishing healthy eating habits at an early age will help give them a head start that can protect them into their teen years and well into their adult life.

To this end, Sibilla has been working on a project which will help make understanding the principles of healthy eating that much more accessible.

Recently launched in the ABC is a set of three DVD's on Child Nutrition.

A series of 3 lectures, (1) Food Habits for a Lifetime, (2) Ten Golden Rules for Feeding Children, and (3) The Importance of Good Nutrition for Children, each DVD has a couple of cooking demos and a health talk.

But why is it so important to tackle this subject when the children are young? Isn't it more important when they are in their teens?

As Sibilla points out, establishing healthy food habits at an early age will provide children with a healthy head start that can protect them in their teen years and well into their adult life.

Attitudes to food are shaped quite early in life and examples from parents and guardians can strongly influence a child's attitude for a lifetime.

As you already know feeding children can be a big challenge! When it comes to food, children can be very fussy eaters, with particular likes and dislikes. Sometimes they will appear uninterested in eating, and at other times they will eat you out of house and home. And just to increase the challenge, this is the time children need to learn the importance of good food and healthy eating habits!

Of course, children don't usually have heart disease or high blood pressure, but what they eat now can set the

stage for these diet-related diseases later in life. So, if you want children to be healthy adults, now is the time to teach them about good food.

Primary school children, in the 5 to 12 age group, are at a stage where physical growth is slow but steady. However, intellectual and social development is very progressive during this time. Food is also linked with emotional growth and development. Eating habits are disturbed when children are worried and anxious. Children who are poorly nourished are likely to become tired and cranky. Life is more difficult at school and at home. So learning about food and health should be a priority in this period of the child's life.

Healthy eating, regular exercise and plenty of relaxation and sleep combine to provide the foundation for good health at all ages.

Encourage children to make healthy food choices, allowing them to be involved when planning meals, shopping and cooking. Children like to feel involved in family and school activities.

But this is not all that is involved in this recently launched project; The Child Nutrition Set is only the first in a planned series soon to be made available. The next one will be aimed at youth, 'Give Your Body the Best'. It will include alcohol and the damage it does to every cell of your body, as well as smoking, and healthy eating and living of course. Another set will be aimed at adults, and a final series will target retirees, discussing how to maintain or improve quality of life as we age.



From the Treasurer's Desk

PETER LYNCH

Greetings. The last couple of the months have been very full with visits to local churches around Victoria and getting to meet church members and of course our individual church treasurers. I have also been involved with a number of churches with their building works and projects.

As you are aware, this month's IntraVic is acknowledging parents and carers. This brings to mind a story from 2 Corinthians 8 that tells of the people who cared for the believers in Jerusalem. Even though they were poor themselves, they gave much and wanted to give more than they could afford. The story is a good one and very much affirms all the parents and carers within our Adventist community. I do know many parents who are in difficult circumstances and they are very selfless in what they do. At times I would love to be more like them, but then I think of this story and am encouraged by their example. If you have not read this story recently, do so and I am sure you will be encouraged by their selflessness and further, by the sacrifice our Lord has done for us.

It is this same type of commitment as seen in our parents and carers that also gives a little back by way of tithes and offerings.

Tithe has started to lift, which is encouraging for me. At this time, of the tithe received, the conference has been able to return 63% back to the work in the field. This money has gone to pay for the wages of field staff, allowances for tithe reversion for each church and evangelism applications.

I am pleased to see that some churches have been very proactive and making very good use of the tithe reversion and evangelism funds. In the next issue, I will write of some of the stories and successes which will be good for you to hear. For those churches that have not had a chance to start projects, please remember this source of funding (being tithe reversion) that is available for evangelism projects.

Until next issue then, Peter.

Secondary Health Week

GILSON COLLEGE

How to encourage teenagers to think about improving their health, fitness and diet in a world of fast food, hectic lifestyle and instant, self-gratification? Gilson College decided to do this during Health Week in August.

Through morning programs teachers discussed a range of topics that helped students to learn about how everyday habits affect their lives and well being. Topics included the importance of a healthy breakfast, the benefits of water on our bodies, why good sleep patterns are necessary, exercising effectively, and how eating the right foods benefit our health.

The problems of unhealthy living were also presented with the harmful effects of alcohol, smoking and drugs, the negative impact of stress and why we need to look after our mental health. Throughout the week students were able to participate in a variety of activities including staff versus student's basketball, netball and soccer games and a healthy food fundraiser.

The highlight of Health Week was the presentation by special guest Tommy Hafey, former coach of Richmond, Collingwood, Geelong and the Sydney Swans AFL teams. He provided an excellent role model to the students, inspiring them to, "be the best they could be." Even at 79 years of age Tommy still runs 6 kilometres, does 200 push ups, 700 abdominals and swims in Port Phillip Bay each weekday. He advised students to

make smart choices and to live lives that they feel proud of. His motto in life is, "If it is to be, it is up to me!"

At the conclusion of Health Week students were given time to think about goals they would like to set and were inspired to make responsible, healthy choices for the future.

Adele Bergmann with Anna Jackson and Neil McAndrew
Photos by Mladen Kukolja



"Inclusion. Talking to her, making her feel a part of something is so important. It gives her the opportunity to shine, to show her wonderful personality, sense of humour and special gifts. It shows her she is part of the church community, and that boosts our own morale."

PARENT OF DISABLED CHILD.

"Kids with autism can often be unpredictable and when things go wrong (and they often do) an accepting smile and kind word can mean the world and make us want to give it another go the next week."

FAMILY COPING WITH AUTISM.

"A couple of families babysat whenever I needed it, and a few others left food in the fridge at church for me. It was sort of hard to accept, but sure did make life a little easier - helped me feel I still belonged somewhere - less out on a limb."

SINGLE FATHER OF A YOUNG BOY

BIRTH NOTICES

Jenni de Silva has been working at the Conference for some years now, as PA. In August she took maternity leave and on September 9, 2010 gave birth to a beautiful baby girl, named Shanaei Estelle.

Congratulations Jen and Denham, and may the Lord bless you and your family. Congratulations too, to the proud grandparents, Susie Potts, who also works at the Conference Office, and Pastor Errol de Silva and his wife Corrine.



Ellie Walczak

was born May 1, 2010, proudly welcomed by parents, Marek and Ania. A baby sister for Adam and the Mont Albert church family

Davie and Rhonda Arnold of Mildura welcomed their first child, Maddison Kimberly, on September 5, 2010



ADS AND NOTICES

WEDNESDAY NIGHT SERIES

Commencing Wednesday Night 22nd September at 7:30pm, Pastor Rod Anderson will be commencing a series on the "Writings of Ellen White," in Bethel Hall at Nunawading Church. In this series you learn of the life and writings of Ellen White and will also be given reading material from the Testimonies to study and fill in answer sheets at home. It is a tremendous opportunity for everyone in the church to discover an essential part of our church history and how the gift of prophecy has shaped our church and what the Spirit of Prophecy means for God's people today and in the future. For further information please contact Pastor Rod Anderson 0439 615 250

EAST PRAHRAN CHURCH SERIES ON CHRIST IN THE EPISTLES

Continues on Sabbath, November 6. Commencing at 10 am, Dr Peter Mc Gowan will take the combined Sabbath School discussion, followed by Laurie Landers at 11 am.

His presentation will be on

CHRIST IN THE BOOKS OF JAMES AND PETER.

So come to East Prahran, enjoy a challenging program and stay for the potluck lunch.

ATTENTION NORTH WEST VICTORIA

Brendan Vanderhorst is in need of a lift to and from VicYouth's Junior Summer Camp this year. He is all paid up and ready to go, but his family are unable to get him there because of their financial and physical situation, although they can drive him partway to the Bendigo, Ballarat, Swan Hill region, to meet you. Please call Kerri on 5390 4370 if you can squeeze him in. And for the rest of you who can't help, please pray we can find him a lift - it is the highlight of his year!

NORTH WEST BUSH CAMP

Friday 29th October to Tuesday 2nd November 2010 at Kelso Station, Wentworth, NSW. Guest Speaker - Troy Fitzgerald, Pastor for Youth & Evangelism at Walla Walla College Church, Washington. All enquiries please contact Rhonda or Suzanne on 03 5021 3633.

RETIRED WORKERS PROGRAM

The next event is on November 24. Come and join us for a Luncheon Meeting at Warburton Church Hall. For further information, call Ken Killoway on 9801 8986

CONFERENCE OFFICE CLOSURE OVER CHRISTMAS

The office will be closed at 5pm on Thursday December 23, reopening on Tuesday January 4, 2011.

OFFERING SCHEDULE - NOV-DEC

- Nov 6 Local Church Budget
- Nov 13 World Mission Budget Unusual Opportunities
- Nov 20 Education/Camping Ministry
- Nov 27 Local Church Budget



- Dec 4 Local Church Budget
- Dec 10 Conference - New Church Buildings
- Dec 18 Education/Camping Ministry
- Dec 25 Mission Extension

SUNSET TIMES

Bairnsdale time is 10 minutes EARLIER & at Hamilton the time is 12 minutes LATER

Sabbath	Opening	Closing
Oct 29,30	7.51	7.52
Nov 5,6	7.59	8.00
Nov 12,13	8.06	8.07
Nov 19,20	8.14	8.15
Nov 26,27	8.21	8.22

BIG CAMP 2011

Plans for 2011 are well underway. Pastor Wayne Stanley, Conference President, is very keen to have more input from our church members at all levels, from planning through to implementing the program. With this in mind, the committee has met and is exploring the possibility of involving our church members to help in the following areas:

- Construction and demolition
- Kitchen duties
- Running the children's programs
- Assisting with planning the Camp program

If you are interested in helping in any of these areas, please contact Cyeta on 03 9264 7777 to register your interest.

POSITION AVAILABLE:

Stock Controller/ Data Entry Clerk for the Pacific Islands. Involves keeping track of and ordering stock for ABC's in Samoa, Solomon Islands, Papua New Guinea, Vanuatu, Tahiti, New Caledonia and Fiji. This is a part time position of approximately 24 hours per week. Excellent data entry skills, knowledge of Microsoft office, excellent communication skills necessary. This job is based in the Publishing Department of the South Pacific Division at Signs Publishing Company in Warburton. Please post or email your CV to John Brereton, PO Box 201, Warburton, Vic., 3799 or email to JohnBrereton@adventist.org.au

Trust Services

Do you need your will made or amended?

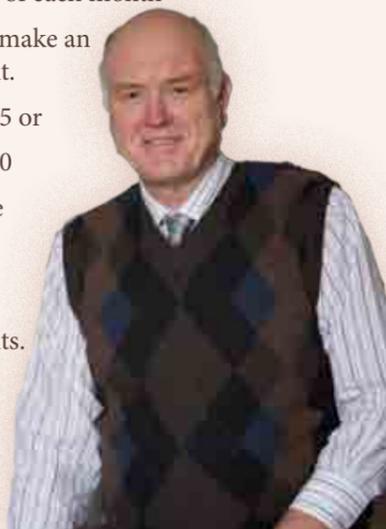
Steve Whitson is available by appointment, during office hours, in the evenings and the first Sunday of each month

Call him to make an appointment.

03 9264 7725 or

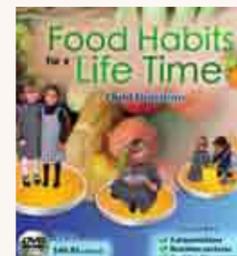
0423 784 000

Steve will be in Mildura November 7&8 for appointments.



Visit the ABC for all your music, reading and gift needs! Located at the Conference Office at Central Rd Nunawading and open 9-5 Mon-Thurs and 9-12:30 Fridays.

NOW AVAILABLE



MultiCul Praise Ministry 2010

5TH ANNUAL

PUBLIC EVANGELISM EVENT

SABBATH NOVEMBER 13

FROM 10.30 TO 4.30

AT THE

WILD WOODS COUNTRY CHURCH

7 Darwin Street, Warragul

The kingdom of heaven is like unto a NET

that was cast into the sea and gathered of every kind...

All are welcome to come, fellowship and share, to come and be encouraged and empowered by the good news about The Net.

If you would like to be involved, call Allan Amaru on 0419 972 005 or email on multicultpraisemin@gmail.com.au

Hope Café

Come join us every Friday night
from 6.30pm - 9.30pm

Free coffee
Free light su
Music
friendship



Wantirna Seventh Day Adventist Church
119 Mountain Highway, Wantirna. All are welcome.
For more info, call 0430 087 055 or find us on Facebook.

CRAZY



if you dont...



...MAD
if you do!

HIGH SCHOOL/PATHFINDER

RALLY DAY

with Mel Lemke

November 20th 2010

Munawading Christian College - 161 Central Rd, Munawading

Morning session starts 10am, afternoon session @ 2pm

Don't forget to bring a picnic lunch!

CONCERT EXTRAVAGANZA

Presenting

THE LE ROUX BROTHERS IN CONCERT NOVEMBER 27

DANNY (EX JOHANNESBURG) - ORGAN, CHRIS - PIANO

Wantirna Adventist Church, 119 Mountain
Highway Wantirna,
Seating at 7:20 for 7:30pm start

Also featuring Helena Ring (Vocals and Trumpet),
Lisa Ring (Flute and Trombone) as well as Josh Potts
(Cello) accompanied by Judy Bottrell.

BE SURE TO ATTEND THIS EVENING OF MUSIC
FOR ALL TASTES AND SUPPORT THE WANTIRNA
CHURCH BUILDING FUND (10% OF PROCEEDS)

For pre concert tickets and enquiries call 03 8740 3345. Prices \$12
Adults, \$8 Concession and \$25 Family (Door sales available
\$15 Adults, \$10
Concession & \$30
Family.)

The Domino Effect

SPONSORED BY GEELONG ADVENTIST CHURCH

MUSIC//DRAMA//INSPIRATIONAL TALKS//VIDEOS

If someone asked you what the signs of
the end of time are, would your answer be
largely related to physical events? Yet the
first answer Jesus gave was "Let no man
deceive you."

Come and explore
Matthew 24 as we prepare
ourselves to share the
Gospel message with
others.

03 5222 1153
geelong.adventist.org.au
or Facebook - The
Domino Effect
for more information

7pm (2pm Sat)

4th to 6th November

Mercure Function Centre

Corner Gheringhap St
& Myers St, Geelong

be a piece of it...

FREE
EVENT

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