

# faith in focus

Magazine of the  
Reformed Churches  
of New Zealand

VOLUME 32/8 SEPTEMBER 2005



**And God said,  
“Let the land produce living creatures according to their kinds:  
livestock, creatures that move along the ground, and wild animals,  
each according to its kind.” And it was so.”**

***Genesis 1:24***

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**Copy Deadline:**

Six weeks preceding the month of publication.

All correspondence regarding distribution and payment of subscriptions to:

**The Secretary:**

Mrs Nicola Wharekawa  
79 McLeod Street  
Upper Hutt

**Subscription per volume:**

\$40.00 (eleven issues)  
Bulk Rate: \$35.00  
Overseas: \$60.00  
Electronically Mailed (overseas only): \$40

**Production Staff:**

Distribution: M. & D. van der Zwaag  
Design & Layout: Matrix Typography  
Printed by: Flying Colours

**Editorial**

It's Synod time again - that one week every three years all our churches gather together in our widest assembly to work together on what we have in common.

Notice how I used the expression "widest assembly". For Synod is not the "highest" assembly. It is, actually, an assembly where we deal with the things that we have in common as a denomination. Here we differ from the Presbyterians where all power ultimately lies in the General Assembly. So, for example, all church property is vested in the denomination, whereas in our church government it is vested in the local church. While we have a Synod, it is simply for the matters that concern us in common, as the first Synod of Acts 15 shows us. This is why such work as the Overseas Mission Board, the theological training of our students for ministry and the care of our retired ministers is part of the agenda. It is also where we will meet delegates representing sister-church denominations and consider our on-going contact and interaction with them.

This year Synod is being hosted by the Hamilton congregation, as it is the turn of a church in the Auckland Presbytery to host Synod. In three years it will be hosted by one of the Wellington Presbytery churches.

This is also the month our nation goes to the polls. The long-awaited General Election is happening on September the 17th. For many of youth it will be the first time they have voted. I trust that who we vote for and why we vote has been a subject for discussion. I know it has in our congregation, amongst all the age groups - from the Senior's Fellowship through to the Youth Club. I pray that the article by Evan Whetton will help us further in working for God's glory in this area of our lives.

*"Therefore, you kings, be wise;  
be warned, you rulers of the earth.  
Serve the LORD with fear  
and rejoice with trembling.  
Kiss the Son, lest he be angry  
and you be destroyed in your way,  
for his wrath can flare up in a moment.  
Blessed are all who take refuge in him."*

**Psalm 2:10-12**

The opinions expressed in this magazine are not to be considered the official position of the Reformed Churches of NZ unless they expound the Biblical system of doctrine contained in the Heidelberg Catechism, the Belgic Confession, the Canons of Dordt, or the Westminster Confession of Faith, or reflect the successive Acts of Synod of the Reformed Churches of NZ. On the other hand, care is taken to ensure that articles and opinions do not directly contradict the official position of the Reformed Churches as

# How should we vote?

## A brief look at Party platforms

**Evan Whetton**

Once again the general election is about to take place. Some of us are voting for the first time; many will have voted before. And then there are those who will not vote. The question is, should Christians vote, and if so, how?

Too often the phrase is heard, “No, I’m not going to vote.” Usually it is because “All politicians are liars.” With Christians, it tends to be, “We are ‘in the world but not of the world’. Voting is participating in worldly activities, and therefore Christians should not get involved.” This is an unfortunate point of view. Christ didn’t just ordain the church. He also appointed the “Powers that be.” If they have been distorted, that is our problem. We allowed it to happen.

**A democratic country**

In this country, democracy is an institution. It is government of the people, by the people. If we, the people, do not shoulder our responsibility of making democracy work, we cede our power into the hands of autocrats and bureaucrats. Then we have only ourselves to blame if we end up under tyranny. As Christians, we have a responsibility to see that God-fearing leaders are elected.

There are those who will vote pragmatically. Pragmatism is a man-centred, if not self-centred, outlook that does not weigh things up in terms of what is right and wrong, but instead asks, “What will be most likely to work best for me?”

A typical example are those who will vote with their pockets. They will vote for whichever party they think will deliver the greatest financial advantage for themselves.

Too often, this results in giving power to the party which spends heavily on welfare, because human nature readily jumps at the chance to get something for nothing not too far removed from the ‘lotto ticket mentality’. Pragmatists weigh things up in terms of perceived consequences, and this involves trying to second-guess the future and manipulate it.

**Principles**

The Christian, on the other hand, should always study the principles involved. Proverbs

for a huge variety of viewpoints. Socialist or Capitalist? Left, Right, Red or Blue? How are we to choose?

**Left Wing, or “The Socialists.”**

The left wing may look very attractive, with its promises of a “Caring Government.” It vows to look after the poor and disadvantaged. On the surface this looks great. Who among us wouldn’t want to have poverty eradicated? Who doesn’t want New Zealand to be a great place for the working person? Unfortunately, most of the promises of improving conditions

<i>Left Wing Government</i>	<i>Right Wing Government</i>
State is supreme.	Limited State.
All legal truth based on state decisions	Standards transcend state.
Extensive State involvement - “Social Services.”	State is to protect innocent and punish criminals
Seeks economic equality. Redistribution of wealth.	Encourages personal industry and wealth.
State is responsible for economic and social welfare	State is not directly responsible for its citizens’ economic or social welfare.

3: 5-6 states “Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him and He will direct your path.” The Christian knows that the nation that will not serve God will perish, so he votes for those best suited to lead the country along Biblical principles. A Christian’s concern is to honour God in the way he votes and leave the consequences with Him, knowing that he is Almighty God.

So, how should we vote? There is a large number of political parties, catering

for ordinary people centre around taking money from the rich and giving it to the less wealthy. The Robin Hood aspect of this may strike some people as noble, but couldn’t it be called government theft? It is also against the Biblical principle of, “If a man does not work, neither should he eat” (2 Thess.3:10). Individual philanthropy, which is promoted in the Bible, is laudable. Governmental redistribution of wealth is not philanthropy but injustice. What many governments seem to forget, is that the money we pay in tax isn’t theirs. They have no right to appropriate more than is necessary to carry out the tasks which rightly fall within their jurisdiction. The free attitude with taxpayer’s money is sometimes known as “Social Justice.” What a misnomer!

The left wing agenda places a great deal of emphasis on social engineering. An example of this is the recent Civil Unions Bill. Despite the fact that it undermines marriage and family, the foundation of stable society, it was railroaded through by the government. Anybody who opposed it was intimidated into silence. Then they introduced a bill to outlaw “hate speech.” It was supposed to

The trouble for conservatives is that there is a critical aspect of MMP which most voters do not understand. It is this: if you vote for a minority party which does not make the 5 per cent threshold or get anyone into Parliament, your vote could end up helping a party you would not wish to support.

At the last election there were about 99,000 votes for parties such as Christian Heritage and Aotearoa Legalise Cannabis. These votes were discarded from the total pool, thus boosting other parties’ share. On the night, for example, Labour won 41.26 per cent of the votes, but after the “wasted votes” were eliminated, that share went up to 43.28 per cent.

Big deal? Well, it gave Labour three more seats, which enabled it to pass the Prostitution Reform Bill, for example. So whether they realised it or not, everyone who voted for an unsuccessful party effectively gave Labour more power.

*Sandra Paterson, The New Zealand Herald, 14th May 2005*

This is a short summary of the policies of the parties currently in Parliament. All this information can be found on the websites of the parties. However, some have not yet released all of their 2005 policies. Another party's policies has been difficult to summarise, as it reads like a vision for utopia, but one questions whether the theory and reality add up.

	<i>Act</i>	<i>National</i>	<i>NZ First</i>	<i>United Future</i>	<i>Labour</i>	<i>Greens</i>	<i>Biblical Principles</i>
Defence and Foreign Affairs	Government's first responsibility is to defend its people and their property. Will develop well trained and equipped Defence Forces. Emphasis on defence rather than peace-keeping  Foster diplomatic relations with those with whom we have the strongest common interests in relation to trade and defence	Defence policy not released at time of writing.  Foreign policy not available, but seems to advocate closer ties with Australia and America.	Return Armed Forces combat capabilities.  Supports UN.  Ensure that immigration is in NZ best interest.  Protect NZ industries	Improve political and defence relationships with America and Australia.  Supports free trade. Would explore the benefits of a currency link with Australia.	Emphasis is on peace support operations. Strongly advocates international disarmament , both nuclear and conventional.  The Pacific region the priority for international relationships .  Supports a more powerful UN.	No defence policy available.  Discourage trade with nations that support unethical labour practices	To protect their citizens and their interests.  To deal with discernment with foreign powers.  Genesis 14  Genesis 21 v 22-32
Economics and Taxation	Limited Government  Private property  Encourage industry.  Flat tax rate of 18%in 5 years.	Retain much of state assets so long as they are efficiently run.  Would liquidate some assets.  Lower personal tax rate. Cut business tax to 30c	State ownership of key assets.  No increases in taxation	Minimize Government negative impact on business. Lower income tax rates.  Company tax reduced to 30c Tax relief for new businesses.	Redistribution of wealth by Government. Used to increase the State's influence.	Balance trade with self-reliance.  Economic protection for environmentally-friendly local industry.  Graduated tax rate  Lower income tax rates for low incomes. No alteration to top tax rate. Carbon taxes. Consumption and resource taxes.	The right to own and improve private property through industry. We are to honour God with our possessions.  Prov 3: 9-10  2 Thess 3:10-12  Pay unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's. Pay what the Government requires.  Rom 13: 6-7
Education	Less Government involvement. More parental control	Government funded education. Less Government control. More parental control.  Restore per-student value funding at independent schools	Government controls education. Degree of parental involvement	State funding of education. Recognise parental choice through increased support for private schools .	Government to control education	Government funded education.  Encourage diversity in schooling. Heavy emphasis on teaching environmentalism.	The education of children is the responsibility of the parents.  No Government involvement  Deut 6 v 6-7
Family	Supports traditional family	Parents have final legal and moral responsibility for their children	Family basic unit of society. Traditional family values	Pro-traditional family	Non-traditional Family. Incentives for mothers to join the workforce and leave their children in care. Increase government interference in families	Promotes equality of sexes within workforce. Incentives for women to return to work. Family assistance for lower-income families. Reduce violence on TV.  Ban smacking.	Family is basic unit of society. One man married to one wife, with their offspring.  Genesis 1 v 27-28
Health Welfare	New Zealanders free to choose their own health service providers in a competitive environment. Government to provide for the poor  State supports those unable to look after themselves. 5 year lifetime limit on able-bodied.	Health policy not available at the time of writing.  Government to support only disabled indefinitely. Support for able-bodied conditional on their undertaking community work or approved training. Place restrictions on DPB payments	Encourage private healthcare. Increase public health spending.  If you are on dole, you must work in community	More efficient response to emergencies.  Tax system should empower self-sufficiency rather than creating dependency	Principally Government's responsibility . Priority to low income earners.  Government pays for everything. No real obligation to get job.	Government controls health system.  "Many people in our society do not yet have "enough", hence income support is vital to a sustainable society."	Individuals, families and the Church are to support only those unable to look after themselves.  Luke3: 11 Eph 4:28  1 Tim 6:17-18  Rom 15: 25-27  Acts 6:1-5
Justice Law and Order	Zero tolerance for crime. Life means life for murderers  2500 more police officers.	Abolish parole for all violent and repeat offenders. Greater use of preventative detention for violent repeat offenders. All sentenced should serve their time. Boost	Three strikes and you're out. No concurrent sentences. More victim support.  Double size of police force over	Victim support. Offenders to pay restoration to victims. Promote understanding of self-defence laws. Tougher sentencing and no concurrent sentences. No parole for murderers. No	Has pursued a policy based on moral relativism	Expunging of criminal records for minor offences after a period of 7 years without further convictions. Promoting habilitation and	Government to protect law-abiding citizens  Those guilty are to be punished. Capital Punishment for capital offence.  Restitution of stolen of

	<i>Act</i>	<i>National</i>	<i>NZ First</i>	<i>United Future</i>	<i>Labour</i>	<i>Greens</i>	<i>Biblical Principles</i>
		police numbers. Reduce the age of responsibility from 14 to 12	next 5 years	home detention for dangerous criminals. Increase police force to 10,000		rehabilitation in sentencing, rather than punitive measures.	damaged property. Laws to reflect God's absolute standards. 2 Sam 23:3. Ex 20:1-17
Environment	Opposes Kyoto protocol.	Opposes Kyoto protocol.	Does not support Kyoto Protocol unless our major trading partners agree to it. Sustainable use of resources	Opposes Kyoto Protocol. Sustainable use of resources. Decisions to be made on evidence, not on ideology	Supports Kyoto Protocol. Supports action based on beliefs of climate change	Supports Kyoto Protocol. "A waste free New Zealand and an organic nation"	God created this world for His glory and charged mankind to take dominion of it Genesis 1
Websites	<a href="http://www.act.org.nz">www.act.org.nz</a>	<a href="http://www.national.org.nz">www.national.org.nz</a>  (The information on National's site is far from complete, as they have not yet released their full 2005 policy)	<a href="http://www.nzfirst.org.nz">www.nzfirst.org.nz</a>	<a href="http://www.unitedfuture.org.nz">www.unitedfuture.org.nz</a>	<a href="http://www.labour.org.nz">www.labour.org.nz</a>	<a href="http://www.greens.org.nz">www.greens.org.nz</a>	

There are several other political parties. One is a new party, the Maori Party ([www.maoriparty.com](http://www.maoriparty.com)). Its' aim is "To consistently work for unity among Maori people," and "To establish a political team that can work together and are committed to speaking with a single voice on behalf of Maori."

Christian Heritage New Zealand ([www.chnz.org.nz](http://www.chnz.org.nz)) and Destiny New Zealand ([www.destiny.org.nz](http://www.destiny.org.nz)) are both Christian political parties. In many of their policies they occupy similar positions to Act and National, but they are more overtly Biblically based, holding much stronger positions on issues such as the place of the family. This is highlighted in their position on abortion, which both strongly oppose. CHNZ has "prepared a package of incremental steps" to phase it out, while Destiny New Zealand would "review and dismantle" the legislation allowing abortion. Space does not allow a full run-down on their policies, but those without access to internet can request copies of their policies from their respective head offices: CHNZ Head Office, P.O. Box 10 235 Dominion Rd, Auckland 1030. Destiny New Zealand Party, P O Box 511 35, Pakuranga, Auckland.

protect minorities from verbal assaults. But like all forms of hate speech legislation, it would be used against Christians who spoke out for the truth . Under that law, one could be jailed for calling homosexuality evil, and against nature. Under the guise of caring for minorities, the government has moved to shut up the majority point of view, and especially the Christian one. Fortunately, it hasn't been passed. The socialists, in keeping with their 1960s-70s university Marxist views, are decidedly anti-Christian.

Not only do we have socialists misappropriating what we have worked hard for and giving it to some of those who deserve it least, but we also have them forcing on us standards that are antagonistic to Christianity. Voting for them is totally unbiblical.

**The Right Wing**

Right wing parties are often portrayed as uncaring capitalists, a party catering for the rich and the middle class, who neither know nor care about the poor. This is a gross distortion of what right-wing politics are really about.

The most evident feature of these political parties is their calling for cuts in government spending and for lower taxes. This is because they believe in the right to personal property, otherwise known as Capitalism.

The foundations on which right wing parties rest is far closer to Biblical princi-

ples than those of the left. Their seemingly uncaring stance should not worry Christians. To care for the sick, homeless and disturbed people is the prerogative of individual philanthropists, families and the Church. Education is the responsibility of the parents, not the state. If these areas were placed outside governmental jurisdiction, taxes could be slashed.

A traditional conservative party has a heavy emphasis on justice and the defence of their nation. Welfare usually takes a back seat, unless they are canvassing for votes, in which case they are slipping towards the left. In a conservative viewpoint, the state's job is to protect the lawkeepers, punish lawbreakers and to keep the country secure. In order to uphold the law, they strengthen the police and justice department. The high priority they place on national security results in increased funding for the military, and the border security.

Right-wing governments do not see it as their mission to engineer society. Instead, they attempt to govern as efficiently as possible, interfering as little as possible in the lives of individuals.

To be quite honest, questions could be raised as to where our traditional right wing parties are going. Some of them seem to be slipping left. Instead of sticking to their foundations, they are trying to buy their way back into power. This pragmatic approach

seems to be denying who they are. Might not a traditional conservative government simply go into a holding position, maintaining the status quo?

**Conclusion**

Those who believe that participating in an election is un-Christian are mistaken. Christ may return tomorrow, or in a thousand years, but he charges us "Occupy till I come." Luke 19 v 13 (KJV) Are we then going to hand over to our children a scene out of George Orwell's "1984", with its sinister pictures of total state domination?

We are to be the salt of the earth, and we can expect God's blessing when Christians shoulder their civic responsibilities and vote according to Biblical principles. Remember those words of the principled Christian politician, Edmund Burke: "All it takes for evil to triumph is for good men to do nothing."

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*Reprints of articles in Faith in Focus can be obtained by contacting the Editor*

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## World in focus

### Mississippi is getting rid of abortion clinics

According to an article in Milwaukee Journal, all but one of the seven abortion clinics in the state of Mississippi are gone. The one remaining in Jackson is rumored to not be there much longer as well.

Pro-life activist, Pat Cartrette says that there is no need to wait for the Supreme Court to make a decision. Cartrette believes that by getting rid of abortion clinics the industry will eventually self-destruct and see Mississippi as being the beginning of the end of abortion. [KS]  
+ *The Banner of Truth*, 4732 East C Ave., Kalamazoo, MI 49004

### Third World to evangelise northern hemisphere?

According to Worldwide Faith News, the general secretary of the Baptist World Alliance, Dr. Denton Lotz, has said that Third World "will re-evangelise the Northern Hemisphere." Lotz made this comment at the Biennial Meeting of the American Baptist Churches USA, 1-3 July.

Worldwide Faith News says that, in 1905, Europe and North American contained 80 percent of the world's Christians, but now 60 percent are found in the Third World.

Delegates to the Biennial Meeting issued two statements of concern: "A Call to Responsible Action" and "Re-affirming the Association Principle." The first called members to "disciple one another in the skill of living a Christ-centered life in secular society." The second called members of the denomination to be pro-active and practice "voluntary association at all levels" to facilitate God's work in the church. [JB]  
+ *American Baptist Churches in the USA*, PO Box 851, Valley Forge, PA 19482-0851 (610) 768-2000 or (800) ABC-3USA  
+ *Baptist World Alliance*, 405 N. Washington St., Falls Church, VA 22046 (703) 790-8980

### Abortion due time decision upsets ultrasound expert

The British Medical Association met last week to vote on the upper limit time for abortions to go to 20 weeks instead of 24. To the disappointment of Prof. Stuart Campbell, a London obstetrician, 77 percent of the BMA members decided to keep the current due time at 24 weeks. Campbell had pioneered new ultrasound techniques at the Create Health Centre for Reproduction and Advanced Technology that could show babies stretching, kicking, and leaping at only 12 weeks,

long before the mother can feel anything. Campbell's pictures have also shown the eyelids open at 18 weeks though doctors have believed the lids to be shut until 26 weeks. After his new techniques had spawned many shows that portray the humanity inside the womb earlier than anyone ever imagined, Campbell was optimistic that the vote would have turned out differently. Campbell believes that because there is proof of a fetus showing facial expressions, acting like a baby at 18 weeks yet the abortion time was not reduced is "barbaric." [KS]

+ *British Medical Association*, PO Box 5122, Bourne-mouth, BH8 0WG Phone: 0845 345 5977

### Daily newspaper not trusted by Americans

According to a survey by the Pew Press Research Center for the People and Press, nearly half of Americans believes little or nothing of what they read in daily newspapers. Out of the millions of subscribers of the New York Times, only 21 percent believe what they read. Ben Keller, executive editor of the New York Times believes that covering religion is a way to win back readers. "We could use not only more reporting on religion, but a different tone in our reporting on religion," Keller said. Keller notes that the 2004 election served as a way to learn that reporters should be seeking out stories about how religion effects the lives of Americans. [KS]

+ *Pew Press Research Center for the People and Press*, 1615 L St., NW, Suite 700, Washington, DC 20036 (202) 419-4350

### Serbian Orthodox Archbishop to be jailed

According to Forum 18 News Service, an appeals court in Macedonia has confirmed an 18 month prison sentence for a Serbian Orthodox Archbishop, Jovan of Ohrid. Jovan has reportedly been accused of inciting national, racial, and religious hatred. Specific charges involve the content of a small church calendar, Jovan's recommending two monks for bishop, and holding a liturgy in an apartment. Says Jovan, "They did not prove who wrote, published, or even printed the calendar, although I stated in court that I agree with every sentence printed in it. As for performing the liturgy, they have no legal ground since Macedonia's constitutional court canceled the rule that church services had to be reported to the police several years ago." The sentence was pronounced by a lower Bitola area court in August 2004, and two months later,

another Bitola court upheld the ruling. After this most recent 23 June ruling, no appeal can postpone the jail sentence.

Forum 18 sees this sentence against a Serbian Orthodox Archbishop as a manifestation the Macedonian government's continuing antagonism toward that church in favor of the Macedonian Orthodox Church. Forum 18 said Kite Juzevski, president of Bitola appeal court, refused to discuss the verdict with them, saying it would be "against the law."

+ *Forum 18*, Postboks 6663, Rodelokka, N-0502 Oslo, Norway

### Church breaks US link

Hillsong Church has been embarrassed by a link to Firepower Ministries, an extreme religious group in the US.

Firepower Ministries International preaches a tough stance on homosexuality, a Right-wing political agenda and backs US President George W. Bush. It also warns about sin, punishment and the possibility of going to hell. Hillsong presents a softer pentecostal face to the 18,000 believers who flock to its gatherings.

Maria Ieroianni, a spokesman for Hillsong, said yesterday that she was shocked to read the Firepower website. She said any link to Hillsong would be revoked.

Firepower was founded by a New Zealand expatriate, Jeff Beacham, who claims friendship with the late Frank Houston, whose son Brian is the founder of Hillsong. Mr Beacham claims the power of prophecy and recently led a campaign to outlaw same sex marriage. His ministry is anti-abortion, anti-stem cell research, and anti-euthanasia.  
+ *Lincoln Wright* in 'The Herald Sun', [www.heraldsun.com.au](http://www.heraldsun.com.au)

### Convicted murderer ordained to the priesthood

On 18 Jun., California Episcopal Bishop William E. Swing ordained James Tramel, whom he had earlier ordained a deacon, to the priesthood in a service at the California State Prison in Solano where Tramel is serving a 15-year-to life sentence for the 1986 stabbing death of a homeless man in a Santa Barbara park. Although Tramel was granted a March parole date that decision was reversed by Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger after the Governor determined that he still represented a threat to the community.

When the parole was reversed earlier this year, Swing harshly criticized the Governor's decision; the Bishop had intended for his

deacon to assist him at a service of Holy Communion at Grace Cathedral. Trammel earned a Master of Theological Studies from the Church Divinity School of the Pacific while incarcerated.

+ Rev. Mr. Charles A. Collins Jr., 289 Hastings Dr., Goose Creek, SC 29445

**Violent game sales regulated by retailer Best Buy**

Retailer Best Buy has implemented strict policies to prevent sales of mature-rated video games to children and teens which was reported in the American Family Association Journal.

Christian Brothers Investment Services (CBIS) said Best Buy's new rules may be the toughest policy in place among major retailers in the US.

New provisions include: programming cash registers to prompt cashiers to ask for ID; a "mystery shopper program" to monitor cashiers for compliance; an agreement by employees to enforce store policies; and disciplinary action against employees who sell violent games to minors.

+ Christian Brother Investment Services, 90 Park Ave., New York, NY 10016-1301 (800) 592-8890  
+ American Family Association Journal, PO Drawer, 2440, Tupelo, MS 38803

**Indian court calls for crackdown on "forced conversions"**

In the Indian state of Orissa, according to Gospel For Asia, the region's High Court has ordered the regional government to take legal action against "forced conversions" of Hindus by Christian missionaries.

Gospel For Asia says this is largely a front, because anti-Christian activist use "forced conversion" terminology even when someone freely turns to Christ. The petition that led to the recent court order was

signed by 269 people. This is the same court, Gospel For Asia says, that revoked the death sentence on one of the convicted murderers of missionary Graham Staines and his sons. Staines and his sons were killed in 1999. [JB]

+ Gospel For Asia, 1800 Golden Trail Court, Carrollton, TX 75010 (972) 300-7777

**Baptist churches reaching a crossroad over homosexuality**

The general secretary of the American Baptists Churches USA (ABC) told the members not to let the division over homosexuality threaten the denomination's future. Rev. A. Roy Medley believes that either there can be a split between Baptists or the church can become a shared ministry that has made the denomination so unique. During the biennial

meeting, delegates expressed a "statement of concern" on "Reaffirming the Association Principal" dealing with division among the denomination. The statement said, "some regional associations have shifted their focus from a shared ministry to a shared theology. As a result, our energies are focused on the internal dynamics of our life together, rather than our larger call to ministry in the world." It is believed that the statement was an attack on the Evergreen association, the association that opened up to gays and lesbians, however, the spokesman for the denomination, Richard Schramm, assures people that it was a "very general statement." [KS]

+ Presbyterian News Service, 100 Witherspoon St., Louisville, KY 40202 (888) 728-7228 ext. 5504

**Resolution against religious hatred**

Two pastors have composed a statement against religious hatred, reports ASSIST News Service. Pastor Garry Ansdell of Hosanna Chapel in Bellflower, California, and Ameal Haddad of Bellflower Church of God, hope this document will provide a rallying point to people of different religions all over the

world who want to coexist without violence. Ameal Haddad, who is originally from Jordan, expressed great hope for this project in the Muslim world.

Having previously watched security specialists speak on the Larry King Show, Haddad said, "Over and over again the question of how to separate a good Muslim from a terrorist Muslim came up. And am4peace [their project] does exactly that. The silent majority of the Muslims need to speak up, and here's a way for them to do it. The religious resolution on the site codifies their beliefs in a peaceful coexistence of religious and political beliefs."

Through their program, Ambassadors for Peace, Ansdell and Haddad plan to present this resolution to Christian pastors and lay people in the US, and Jews and Muslims in the Middle East. Ansdell and Haddad also plan to present it to the senate in Egypt. The resolution may be read at <www.am4peace.com/resolution.htm> [JB]

+ Ambassadors For Peace Inc., 16523 Bellflower, Bellflower CA 90706  
+ ASSIST News Service, PO Box 2126, Garden Grove, CA 92842-2126



## John Calvin School

The Albany Free Reformed Church  
Education Association (Inc.)

has vacancies for a rewarding teaching career. The School Committee is therefore seeking applicants for the following positions:

### Lower Primary School Teacher

### Middle School Teacher

(Science Focus)

Applicants will have appropriate academic and personal qualifications for teaching. They will be members of a sister church of the Free Reformed Churches of Australia. They will have a keen desire to serve the cause of Reformed Education. Membership with the WA College of Teaching is required.

An application form and information regarding the criteria/teaching commitments for each of these positions can be obtained from the principal:

**Mr. P. Witten**, phone : **+61 8 9841 3840**, or by email:  
**[pwitten@jcsa.wa.edu.au](mailto:pwitten@jcsa.wa.edu.au)**

Applications or expressions of interest should be addressed to:

Confidential  
John Calvin School Albany  
9 Beaufort Rd  
Albany WA 6330

## Church of England takes another step towards ordaining women bishops

The General Synod met from 8-12 July, in York, England to discuss the ordination of women bishops. In a vote 367 for and 127 against, the Synod now has to consider removing legal obstacles that prevent women from becoming bishops. Also, the Synod invited the House of Bishops along with the Archbishops' Council to report back to by January 2006. Because of the opposition from some Church of England members, the motion asked that specific attention be given "to the issues of canonical obedience and the universal validity of orders throughout the Church of England as it would affect clergy and laity who cannot accept the ordination of women to the episcopate on theological grounds." Christina Rees, chair of WATCH (Women and the Church), embraced the Synod decision and looked at it as a very promising step. As of 1992, when women were first allowed in the church, one in five Church of England priests is female. [KS]  
+ The Church of England National Offices, +44(0)20 7898 1000  
+ Episcopal News Service <www.dfms.org/ens/>

## Kraft Food sponsors Gay Olympic Games

According to American Family Association Journal, Kraft foods is supporting the 2006 Gay Olympic Games in Chicago. The company is the maker of popular items such as Kraft Macaroni and Cheese, Oreo cookies, Maxwell House coffee, Ritz Crackers and many other products.

Kraft donated US\$25,000 to the event and has authorized its company logo to be placed on the Gay Games official Web site as a major corporate sponsor.

Kraft has been ignoring e-mails from concerned customers.

+ Kraft Foods, CEO Roger K. Deromedi, 3 Lakes Dr., Northfield, IL 60093 (847) 646 2000 or (800) 323-0768  
+ American Family Association Journal, PO Drawer, 2440, Tupelo, MS 38803

## Uzbek republic condemns last legal Protestant church

Forum 18 reports that on 5 July, a court in an independent Uzbek republic rejected an appeal and closed the last legal Protestant church in the region. Sources differ as to the reason for the closure of Emmanuel Full Gospel Church, which is in the Karakalpakstan republic. Protestant sources told Forum 18 that the closure was based on a meeting of church leaders in a private home, which Protestant sources further claim was not illegal. The court itself says that the punishment was

because the church refused to stop evangelizing people outside its group. [JB]  
+ Forum 18, Postboks 6663, Rodelokka, N-0502 Oslo, Norway

## US House calls for weekend of prayer for Darfur, Sudan

On 11 July, the House of Representatives passed a resolution endorsing a weekend of prayer and reflection for the human rights violations in Darfur, Sudan. The resolution said that "scholars estimate that as many as 400,000 have died from violence, hunger, and disease since the outbreak of conflict in Darfur began in 2003, and that as many as 10,000 may be dying each month." The resolution quotes George W. Bush and Colin Powell as calling the killings "genocide." The statement also quotes Resolution 1591 of the United Nations Security Council as saying that "all sides in Darfur" had violated the N'djamena Ceasefire Agreement of 8 April 2004 and the Abuja Protocols of 9 November 2004, which resulted in a "negative impact... on humanitarian assistance efforts."

The House "urges all churches, synagogues, mosques, and religious institutions in the United States to consider the issue of Darfur in their activities and to observe the National Weekend of Prayer and Reflection with appropriate activities and services." The National Weekend of Prayer and Reflection will be held from the 15-17 of July. [JB]  
+ The Honorable Jeff Trandahl, Clerk of the US House of Representatives: Office of the Clerk, US Capitol, Room H154, Washington, DC 20515-6601 (202) 225-7000

## Online Spurgeon archive

Referred to by Faith online, the Spurgeon Archive online claims "The largest collection of Spurgeon resources on the world wide web." The site includes a section "About Spurgeon," a section for his sermons, one for The Treasury of David, one containing excerpts from The Sword and the Trowel, along with other various writings and features. The site owner hopes to eventually include the whole of The New Park Street Pulpit series and the Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit series, perhaps as early as 2007. Together, these two series cover from the year 1861 to the end of Spurgeon's preaching ministry in 1891, plus sermons published after Spurgeon's death. [JB]

+ The Spurgeon Archive, <www.spurgeon.org>

## Jewish rapper now follows Christ

Jewish rapper 50 Shekel (the name is a parody on rapper "50 Cent") reports that he has come to believe in Yeshua (Jesus) as Messiah. Then, on 7 July, 50 Shekel an-

nounced on his web site that he was leaving the name 50 Shekel and continuing under his born name, Aviad Cohen. The heading for the announcement read, "50 Shekel Retires Aviad Cohen Reborn." Commenting on the change, Cohen said that in addition to much prayer, "I consulted Rabbi Henry Morse, who mikvah'd (baptised) me soon after I came to faith. He recently mentioned to me that I am a new man in Messiah. It makes sense."

Accused of denying his Judaic roots, Cohen, then 50 Shekel, answered, "It's actually the opposite, I left the cult of Judaism which is not true Jew Torah based, no longer listen to Rabbinical proselytizing in shuls, yeshivas, and all that and have started to be a true Jew . . . a Messianic Jew." Cohen's web site, [www.50shekel.com](http://www.50shekel.com), contains Cohen's testimony. However, Cohen is to transition to his new site, [aviadcohen.com](http://aviadcohen.com). [JB]  
+ Referred by Religion News Service e-newsletter July 14  
+ Aviad Cohen, <[www.50shekel.com](http://www.50shekel.com)>

## Pennsylvania court protects controversial hate crime law

The Commonwealth Court of Pennsylvania declined to hear a complaint about a 2002 state hate crime law, says the American Family Association of Pennsylvania. Through this bill, the language of "actual or perceived sexual orientation, gender and gender identity" was incorporated into the hate crime laws of Pennsylvania.

Diane Gramley and Fran Bevan, who were listed as plaintiffs, were rejected because they "did not have standing in the case," according to the Foundation. Bevan says this bill originally started as an agricultural vandalism bill, but was then changed completely, so that most of its original sponsors removed their names from it. Gramley said, "This bill . . . has already been used by homosexual activists to try to take away the First Amendment rights of 11 Christians in Philadelphia in October." According to the Free Congress Foundation, this refers to an incident in October of 2004 where a group of Christians protested at "Outfest" in Philadelphia, and encountered conflict. [JB]  
+ American Family Association of PA, PO Box 1048, Franklin, PA 16323-1048 (814) 271-9078

## Aspinall elected Australian Primate

The Most Rev. Dr. Phillip Aspinall, Archbishop of Brisbane, was elected Primate of the Anglican Church of Australia by that body's Board of Electors on 9 July. Aspinall, who has served as Archbishop of Brisbane since 2001, was seen as a moderate while his chief opponent, the Most Rev. Peter Jensen,

Archbishop of Sydney, as the choice of conservatives; Jensen is strongly evangelical and confessed that he actually prayed that he would not get the job.

+ Rev. Mr. Charles A. Collins Jr., 289 Hastings Dr., Goose Creek, SC 29445

### **PCA Study Committee on the value of human life**

This year at the 33rd General Assembly of the PCA, delegates voted to erect a Study Committee on the Value of Human Life, at least partially in response to the Terri Schiavo incident of this spring. ByFaith reports that Ruling Elder Howard Davis, moderator of the Committee, has been commissioned to nominate the Committee members. So far William Edgar, John Frame, Hilton Terrell, and John Ward Weiss have accepted nomination. The Committee is to be funded by gifts made through the Administrative Committee, or Office of the Stated Clerk. The list of members is to be published as soon as the nomination process is complete.

+ Presbyterian Church in America Office of the Stated Clerk, Administrative Committee, 1700 N. Brown Rd., Suite 105, Lawrenceville, GA 30043 (678) 825-1000

### **Petition for religious freedom in Iraq**

World Compassion is gathering petitions calling on the Iraqi government to guarantee religious freedom and basic human rights in its forthcoming constitution, according to the World Compassion web site. Terry Law, founder and president of World Compassion, said, "It is my opinion that this war [in Iraq] isn't over until there is a guarantee of religious freedom and basic human rights in the new constitution being created at this very moment." Law noted that the 1948 UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights claims all people are entitled to freedom of religion, including the right to change religions. Law is calling on the Iraqi government to endorse these principles as well, saying he will meet with Iraqi Prime Minister Ibrahim al-Jaafari and other Iraqi leaders in the first week of August, and will bring with him samples of signatures from the World Compassion petition. The petition may be signed online at <www.worldcompassion.tv >. [JB]

+ A. Larry Ross Communications, 12300 Ford Rd., Suite 212, Dallas, TX 75234 (972) 264-1111, Roe Ann Estevez, x222

### **Presbyterian ministers ordained at Takoradi, Ghana**

At the ordination of 17 Reverend Ministers of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana, Mr. Joseph Boahen Aidoo, Western Regional Minister, called on Christians to play an active part in the fight against corruption in the country.

Mr. Aidoo said some churches are afraid of preaching against corruption for fear of losing their members but the churches have a crucial role to play in the campaign against corruption.

Also, the Right Reverend (Dr.) Yaw Frimpong-Manso, Moderator of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana, who ordained the Ministers, advised the ministers to conduct their lives in accordance with the tenets of the Church. Frimpong-Manso said the best way a reverend minister could demonstrate his service to the Lord is to be committed to his spouse and family.

+ Presbyterian Church of Ghana, PO Box 1800, Thorpe Rd., Accra, Ghana +233 21 662-511

### **Evangelicals call for Vatican Concordat to be annulled**

Pastor Reynaldo Franco Aquino, president of the Dominican Confederation of Evangelical Unity (CODUE), has asked for a concordat signed by the Dominican State and the Vatican over 50 years ago to be annulled. He believes that the concordat is discriminatory towards any non-Catholic churches. Franco said that it gives exaggerated privileges to the Catholic Church and abuses religious equality in the country. Under the concordat, the Catholic Church has broad freedoms along with tax benefits and government economic support even though only four percent of Catholics regularly attend religious events while 16-20 percent of Evangelicals actively participate in their churches. [KS]

+ ALC News Service, PO Box 14-225 Lima 14 Peru (51 1) 462 0142

### **Seventh-day Adventist elect officers and add a new belief statement**

At the 58th General Conference of Seventh-day Adventist, in St. Louis, Missouri, held 30 June to 9 July, there was more than 70,000 members from around the world witnessed historic elections and the first new belief statement in 25 years. In the elections, women were in top leadership roles, including Rosa T. Banks being recommended for associate secretary of the General Conference Secretariat. On 4 July, "Growing in Christ" became the newest addition to the 27 fundamental belief statements. The testimony has two main purposes: It addresses Christian growth to exclude spiritual exercises that are not compatible with the Christian gospel. Second, it calls on people to seek freedom through Christ from the fear of demonic powers. [KS]

+ General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD 20904 (301) 680-6000

### **Progeny numbers rising, PCUSA falling**

Statistical data for the year 2004 has recently been released showing that the Presbyterian Church (USA) is steadily declining while its progeny are on a rapid growth spurt. The Presbyterian Church in America (PCA) and the Evangelical Presbyterian Church (EPC) have both shown significant changes in not just members but number of missionaries, worship percentage, and how much money they are giving. With 2,362,136 members in the PCUSA, on average its members gave US\$861 while with only 66,473 members, the EPC gave US\$ 2,787 and the PCA US\$1,655 with 330, 182 members. The EPC also jumps ahead of PCUSA in worship attendance by 44 percent with a 96.1 percent rate versus a 52.1 percent rate. After five years, PCUSA has lost 7.8 percent of its members while the PCA's membership has risen 7.8 percent and the EPC 8.6 percent. [KS]

+ The Presbyterian Church in America, 1700 North Brown Rd., Suite 103, Lawrenceville, GA 30043, (678) 825-1040

+ Office of the General Assembly, 17197 N. Laurel Park Dr., Suite 567, Livonia, MI 48152 (734) 742-2020

### **Church of the Brethren helps Nigerian AIDS/HIV ministry**

In 2004 December, the Church of the Brethren was asked to help the HIV/AIDS ministry of Ekklesiyar Yan'uwa a Nigeria (EYN). In Nigeria, 5-12 percent or, 6-15 million people are infected with the disease. The COB met with the EYN committee to come up with a plan that would be played out over the next three years. They came up with ideas like developing an awareness campaign, create an action team to help lessen the stigma of AIDS/HIV, train 4,000 volunteers to be able to provide education of EYN's 1000 congregations, and other helpful ways to contribute to the cause. [KS]

+ Church of the Brethren, General Offices, 1451 Dundee Ave., Elgin, IL 60120, 1(800)323-8039 or (847) 742-5100

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# The saints in ancient British history

## *A further medley of voices (British figures from c.597)*

### **Patricia van Laar**

Before concluding this series with an account of the man known as the first English scholar, the Venerable Bede, it is fitting that we pay our respects to a few more of the leading characters who played their part in ancient British/English Church history.



### **St Asaph (Dates unknown, but prominent by 570.)**

This Welsh ecclesiastic was [at his peak about 570, but probably spanned the point of division] marked by the arrival of Augustine of Canterbury in 597. He was head of the monastery at the confluence of the rivers Clwyd and Elwy. His predecessor as head of the monastery was St Kentigern, who died in Scotland in 603. As Kentigern was a legendary 185 years old when he died, (although his birth and death are reported as 518 – 603, cutting this age by a century!) this does not help us pinpoint Asaph in any way! Asaph was probably the first Bishop of the see of Llanelwy (Church of Elwy). In his honour, the church was named St Asaph.

### **St Chad d. 672**

Born in Northumbria, Chad was a follower of St Aidan. As one of twelve boys who were chosen by Aidan to be trained as future church leaders, (two of the twelve being his brothers,) he rose to become Bishop of Mercia, with his see at Lichfield.



### **St Hilda 614 – 80**

Related to the Northumbrian Royal Family, Hilda was a great niece of King Edwin, and

was baptised with him. In 647 she became a nun. She progressed to become Abbess of Hartlepool, then she set up a convent on land at Wearside, and in 658 founded and ruled, as Abbess, a double (men and women) monastery at Whitby.



### **St Cuthbert 635 – 87**

The son of low Scottish parents, Cuthbert was probably born in Northumbria. As a child, he was agile, quick witted, sociable and with great physical powers of endurance. At the young age of eight, he was convicted of 'idleness and self indulgence', and set his face towards God. Originally a shepherd, he joined the monastery of Old Melrose in 651. Later he and his abbot went to Lindisfarne, where he adopted the Roman tonsure and date of



Easter. He is described as an attractive figure in the Lindisfarne School, of personal charm, fervent piety, and ascetic rigour. In 661 he was chosen as Prior of this establishment. In 676 Cuthbert became a hermit on Farne Island, but in 684 was persuaded to take the responsibilities of Bishop of Hexham and later still of Lindisfarne.

In 686 he returned to his hermit hut on Farne, where he died within a year.

### **St Wilfrid 634 – 709**

Eddius's book on the life of Wilfrid is one of

the three main sources for the early history of the Church in Britain. It tells Wilfrid's story from Eddius's first hand knowledge, a story that is difficult to reduce to a brief note. The miraculous element is present, yet not at all excessive, none of the episodes being quite beyond credibility. Underlying the surface was a deep respect for the Word of God, and a deep knowledge of it.

The seventh century saw growing conflict between Augustine's mission and the native Celtic Church. Unfortunately, Wilfrid was of the conviction that the Church of Rome should prevail. At the Council of Whitby (664) he took a stand against the representative of Iona, who was not able to answer the logic of Wilfrid, and lacked the quick perception necessary to combat his reasoning. So that it was at this Council that the Roman Church finally gained ascendancy over the ancient British Church.

Because of persecution, Wilfrid was later forced to flee into exile to the one bastion of paganism in England (Sussex), where he preached the gospel, bringing England wholly under the Christian banner. Still pursued, he eventually fled to Friesland, where he preached successfully, laying a foundation that his disciple, the Englishman Willibrord, was able to build on.

The consensus of opinion seems to be that there was admiration, not affection for Wilfrid. He portrayed, not the Celtic church character, seen in what has been described as Cuthbert's charm, but the haughtiness of a "magnificent Benedictine prelate".



### **St Margaret 1045 – 93**

Margaret was the Queen of Malcolm III of Scotland. This devout Christian used her

influence to persuade her husband to reform abuses in the church. [*I say Margaret used her influence to advance the Roman Catholic Church*]

Two girls' schools in New Zealand are named after her, Queen Margaret's College (Wellington) and St Margaret's College (Christchurch).



### The Coming Darkness

All these prominent British Christians made

a significant contribution in transforming the lives of the people from paganism to Christ. But in the rushing torrent of events, thundering waterfalls and jagged rocks loomed. The Word of God was still unavailable to the common people. Although valued by many leaders and scholars, it was increasingly overshadowed in faith and practice, especially from the seventh century onwards, as (like the rest of Europe) Rome exerted more and more influence. The increasing acceptance of the authority of Rome, the veneration of relics, the collection of these, quarrels in the church and much false accusation, troubled its progress. The accumulation of wealth and lands by church and monasteries, increasing veneration of Mary as "Mother of God, ever virgin," belief in her prayers as efficacious and the practice of intercession to her, became commonplace. Paradoxical to his preaching of the gospel, all this is especially evidenced in Wilfrid's life and attitude. He, like Pope Gregory I, is somewhat

of an enigma. He was "speared" by the intercession of the 'Mother of God', and his own followers began designating him 'holy father.' Unfortunately, his support of Rome at the Council of Whitby opened the way to much desecration of truth and sanctity.

### Pre- Reformation Days

The 500 years from the 11th century are a sad, dark story, with flashes of light in the persons of Wycliffe, the Lollards and Tyndale, who were to lead into the glorious age of Reformation that swept across Europe in the sixteenth century. These forerunners of the reformation were shamefully persecuted. How true that God is never without His witnesses.

Then, when God's time was ripe, the English and Scottish Churches were given their faithful martyrs in the age of "Re-formation" of the church, martyrs from highborn to low, from archbishops to the simplest of laymen and women, all to the Glory of God.

## Focus on home

# Gleanings from our bulletins...

**Andrew Reinders**

### Avondale

Cadets & Calvinettes: Our Mission badge this year is to help the girls of Rahab's Children's Home in Dharwad in India. The aim of the home is to introduce Jesus Christ to the Devadasi community of Karnataka. Rescuing these children is very difficult as these temple prostitutes do not like to part with their daughters, otherwise they will be under a curse. They prefer to make them follow in their footsteps so they will be looked after in their old age. Often several visits are necessary to convince the Devadasis to give their daughters in the care of the home. Our club has completed this Mission Badge. We learnt about India, their various religions, and had an Indian meal. We also collected some money to help the purchase some basics such as books for their library.

On Sunday, July 17 during the morning worship service, a number of young people will publicly profess their faith. We thank God for His unconditional grace, and rejoice together with them. We would ask that you bring a plate so that we may enjoy an extended morning tea after the service with these young folk. Those who will be professing their faith on the 17th. include; Toby Dickens, Eloisa Heeringa, Matthew Heeringa, Daniel Hunt, Lisa van den Burg, Sandra van den Burg, and Marjolein Vos. A number of other young people will profess their faith a little later.

### Bishopdale

This morning Anna Verkerk and Nadia Verkerk will make a Public Profession of their faith. It is great to see faith pass on from one generation to the next. Praise the Lord. A special welcome to family and friends who are here for this service.

Last Wednesday night we could testify to God's continued blessing on our congregation at our AGM. We also passed a motion to allow session to Call two fulltime ministers to serve this congregation. This was passed with more than the required two thirds majority. Any candidates presented by session will still have to be approved by the congregation

before the Call is extended. When this will all happen is in God's hand. We make our plans but He orders the steps. Our first priority is to get one minister. In time we hope that we can reflect on this decision as one of vision as we help people grow in faith and help people come to faith.

25th Anniversary Celebrations 1 April 2007. A report was presented by a planning committee on how we could celebrate this event. Rob Moot is the session representative on this committee.

### Bucklands Beach

Profession of Faith: The session is pleased to announce to the congregation that five young people have met with them and asked to be able to proceed to making their public profession of faith. Session met with and examined them and, with joy, accepted their request. These young people all covenant members of our congregation are: Samuel Ataala, Danae Brooks, Amy Munroe, Jonathan Munroe, Kris Strayton. Their public profession of faith will take place, the Lord willing, during the worship service next Sunday morning (July 3rd 2005). Please pray for these young people as they prepare themselves for this special moment in their lives.

Welcome to our former pastors. Welcome br Murray Capill! Good to have you in our fellowship once again. May the Lord bless and use you as you minister to us this morning. This evening it will be another former Pastor John Haverland who leads us in worship! Welcome to both of you.

Martin Luther. Elim Christian College have secured the rights to screen 'Luther', the movie produced about the life of Martin Luther. It is being screened on the big screen at Elim Christian Centre on Wednesday 22 June starting at 7.30pm. It is not being shown in cinemas, yet is a high quality, big budget movie with well-known actors. Martin Luther the German reformer who challenged the papacy at the time, made it possible for each of us today to have our own copy of the bible. This Hollywood blockbuster with Ralf Fiennes and Sir Peter Ustinov is a must see action packed inspiration for all people of Christian faith. Come and be challenged and inspired by his life. Tickets are \$10 and can be purchased at the door on the night or through Elim school office. It is costing Elim \$5 person to show the movie and the other

\$5 is going towards Elim's student trip to Israel in 2006.

### Christchurch

Students' meeting. All tertiary students of the Reformed Churches are warmly invited to an evening of Bible study (led by Mr. Don Capill) and discussion afterwards at the home of Neville and Soesi Watson, 27 Reading Street, Upper Riccarton. This will be a good opportunity to encourage each other in our Christian witness at the various institutions. This meeting will be held from 7.30-9.30 pm on Thursday, 21 July 2005. New students are very welcome to join us. If you have any questions please contact Mr. Don Capill or Neville Watson.

### Dovedale

Mens Breakfast. On Saturday 30 July all men are invited to gather at Bishopdale Reformed Church for a fellowship morning which will include a cooked breakfast and a presentation by a Guest speaker - Hospitality: a man's responsibility.... Mark your calendar, we begin at 7.30am and will conclude by 9.00am and the cost is \$5.00.

### Dunedin

'Celebrating 50 Years in 2005.'

Reformed Church of Dunedin, we are the Oamaru Group, Forty years we've been here, and we are astute.

Not for us the Roman view nor Presbyterianism, No sect or cult or 'changing wind'; give us Calvinism!

Teun and Ann de Reus weren't happy at St. Paul's, Truth was seldom preached there, was Satan at the door?

One day prayers were answered and two men knocked outside, Creeds of Reformation explain God's Word, their daily guide.

The Griffins joined this family and trips down south took place, One Sabbath out of every four, to church to enjoy God's grace, The Pellicaans, the family Storm, the Van der Goots, and more, Took us into their private homes, at one the stockings tore!

The Verheuls once lived behind the Adventist church we shared, One day the walls of our own "home" from paint and grime we bared. Many had come, to stay, to leave, praise God, the numbers grew, And now, today, as we look back, we can see there were a few!

Campfens, van der Loon, Williamson, de Vries, Doff, Goslinga, Szucs, Willemse, Bootsma, Goosselink, Rundin, Angus, de Ruiter, Dijkstra, de Geest. Today more names we see, as we peruse the list, I'll mention them to you, so you will get the gist.

De Reus, that's three, Griffin are two, the Campfens name still stays, De Ruiter, Perniskie, Balchin, with Newton, Galbraith, and Hayes, See Tepper twice, young Miller too, and then the couple Rawcliffe, Arlie and Roland from across the bridge, the Scotsman and his wife.

Weddings, funerals, births and baptisms, many events have passed, Presbyterian dinners were prepared and

**Calling all country boys and girls to become**

# NETWORKERS



***If you have always wanted to be a Cadet or Calvinette but live too far away from a club, we would love to hear from you!***

**NETWORKERS** is for children aged 9-15 years old, and you would be a correspondence member with the closest club, able to attend camps and any club functions that you could make.

Your counsellor and cadre would be your correspondent friends and leader.

**INTERESTED?**

**Then write to me –  
Cr Rob Wierenga, 35 Humber Street  
Island Bay, Wellington**

served, the plates then emptied fast!  
Ministers come from far and near, their wives  
and families with them,  
Leading us in worship and prayers and choos-  
ing psalms and anthems.

A little bit about our group you have read  
today,  
We know our God has blessed us in many  
different ways,  
Lots of happy times we've shared, although  
there have tears,  
May God help us live faithfully throughout  
our remaining years.

Dunedin Church celebrates 50 years, much  
thanks to God we give,  
May each continue in His Grace, every day  
that He gives us to live,  
Temptations come before us, Lord help us  
to be strong,  
So we will, in Eternity, be among Your heav-  
enly throng.

## Foxton

We also rejoice and celebrate with Hessel  
and Blyke Dykstra as they give thanks for 45  
years of marital bliss on Tuesday. May the  
Lord continue to bless them together with  
health and strength and may they continue  
to be a blessing to their family and our fel-  
lowship.

## Hamilton

Wedding banns. Jair Duinkerke and Lairetta  
Den Hartigh have signified their desire to be  
united in marriage in this church on Saturday  
9 July 2005 at 1.00 pm. If there are no law-  
ful objections, the ceremony will take place  
on that date.

Rev. Van der Kolk's visit. First a correction  
to Gerald's profile: The date of Gerald's ap-  
pointment to Sutherland should have read  
1996 not 1989. As to the programme for  
Gerald and Marianne's visit, please note that  
there will be TWO opportunities to meet with  
them during the weekend: Saturday evening  
from 8.00 p.m. in the Church Hall. Coffee  
and Supper will be served at 9.30 p.m. La-  
dies, please bring a plate. Sunday after the  
Morning Worship Service in the Church hall  
for a shared lunch from 12.00 - 1.30 p.m.  
These will be great opportunities to introduce  
yourself and get to know the Vanderkolk's a  
little. Please ensure that you are able to at-  
tend on both occasions: this is a time when  
we all need to do our bit. On behalf of the  
Session, Ben van den Engel

## Hastings

From the pastor. The Lord continues to  
build His church. The Reformed Church of  
Hastings is evidence of the church building  
work of our Lord. 45 years ago the session  
of the Reformed Church of Wellington be-  
gan sending their minister and one of their  
elders "to go into the hinterland to start  
country work". Every two months they spent  
3-4 days including a Sunday visiting families  
with a Reformed background encouraging  
them to make the commitment to start a  
fellowship group. It would involve finding a  
meeting place, obtaining sermons to use  
when no minister was present, teaching  
catechism, etc. The little group of initial  
contacts all agreed that something had to  
be done because "the present status quo  
is far from satisfactory". They worshipped  
regularly together for several months and  
then came to the conviction that they should  
become an instituted church since they  
had 1) a sufficient number of people to  
establish a church, 2) a common purpose  
and determination to do the Lord's will in  
unity, and 3) men who were qualified to  
serve as office bearers. You can find the  
document stating their commitment and  
purpose on the wall behind the organ. At  
the bottom you will find the signatures of the  
25 original adult members of the Reformed  
Church of Hastings. It includes some who  
are still present with us: P. & H. DonK, M.  
Heesterman, D. Nieuwland, Mrs. R. Saathof  
(now Nieuwland), R. & A. Pudney, J. & N.  
(J.A.G.) Saathof, A. van Berkel. These 25  
members with their children struggled for  
many years together through many difficul-  
ties. Now 45 years later the 220+ of us who  
worship and serve the Lord together as the  
Reformed Church of Hastings benefit from  
their faithfulness and perseverance. It is a  
joyful occasion for us all and especially for  
the founding members to witness the re-af-  
firmation or profession of faith of 8 adults  
and the baptism of 2 adults and 6 children  
at one time. It is the biggest reception since  
the formation of the church on the 24th  
of September 1960. How greatly has the  
Lord blessed His people! May we in turn  
give thanks for His blessings and continue  
faithfully to serve Him until that glorious day  
when we see His face.

Two milestones to celebrate. We would like  
to celebrate Mr Van Berkel's 80th Birthday  
and Mr & Mrs Westerlakens' 50th Wedding  
Anniversary with coffee and cake after  
church next Sunday. Would ladies please  
bring a plate.

Mid-winter table tennis fun. Starting soon.....  
a table tennis ladder, Friday nights at the  
church 7-9pm. Please register your interest  
by leaving your name on the notice board  
form. There will be ladder drawn up, the first  
round will be arranged matches, after that  
those who have dropped out may at times  
come back to challenge. This will ensure  
everyone gets regular games. Come along  
for some fun, bring along your chess board  
or cards to fill in time between games, and  
let's get together.

All ladies. As you already know, everyone is  
invited to rejoice with Daniel Wilson, Raewyn  
Couperus, and the Couperus family in the  
marriage of Daniel and Raewyn on 23 July at  
11:00 a.m., followed by light refreshments.  
As ladies we are sharing in providing items  
for the refreshments. Would everyone please  
bring a plate? If it is easier, you may drop  
this off at the church on Friday. Please speak  
to me or to Angela Gulliksen if you have any  
questions. Lois Hoyt

Book review. Some time ago we heard it  
suggested that couples should read a book  
about marriage once a year. We thought it  
a good idea, but many a year has passed  
without us taking up this advice. This year,  
however, we have read a good book on Chris-  
tian marriage – The intimate marriage by R C  
Sproul. In this easy read, Sproul gives practi-  
cal (and sometimes witty) advice, based on  
his knowledge of the Word of God, and his  
40 years of experience as a married man. A  
useful book to read aloud to your husband or  
wife, or to read separately and then discuss.  
Available from our church library. Rob and  
Andy Vosslander

## Hukanui

Need help with odd jobs like cleaning,  
gardening or babysitting? The youth would  
love to hear from you. Please call Jono (829-  
4922) for more information.

## Mangere

The Seven Wonders of the World. A group  
of students was asked to list what they  
thought were the present Seven Wonders  
of the World. Though there was some disa-  
greement, the following got the most votes:  
1. Egypt's Great Pyramids. 2. Taj Mahal. 3.  
Grand Canyon. 4. Panama Canal. 5. Empire  
State Building. 6. St. Peter's Basilica. 7. Chi-  
na's Great Wall. While gathering the votes,  
the teacher noted that one quiet student  
hadn't turned in her paper yet, so she asked

the girl if she was having trouble with her list. The girl replied, "Yes, a little. I couldn't quite make up my mind because there were so many." The teacher said, "Well, tell us what you have, and maybe we can help." The girl hesitated, then read, "I think the Seven Wonders of the World are: 1. TO SEE. 2. TO TASTE. 3. TO TOUCH. 4. TO HEAR." She hesitated a little, and then added, "5. TO FEEL. 6. TO LAUGH. 7. AND TO LOVE." The room was so full of silence you could have heard a pindrop. Those things we overlook as

simple and ordinary are truly wondrous. This is a gentle reminder that the most precious things in life cannot be bought...but are gifts from above. (James 1:17)

### Palmerston North

Mainly Music Family night. Please keep Friday 1 July free for our next mainly music family night. We will begin at 5.30pm and eat at 5.45 sharp! The theme is 'Winter', so come dressed in your woollies, hats,

scarves, raincoat, etc. Could all Church families please bring a generous pot of hot soup to share with the community families. Breads, drinks etc will be provided.

On the evening of Saturday 25th June, various senior members of the congregation were frightened out of their wits by sinister characters knocking on their doors or peeling their doorbells. It took a few moments to recognise that these were not wild west terrorists or early 20th century toffs, but merely harmless chauffeurs to escort us as promised, to our surprise dinner. Thank you to all involved for a most enjoyable night out. To the hosts and hostesses, who deserve special mention - the Minnees (junior of course), the van Seventers, Ilse Boessenkool and the de Vries' (junior), the Fransens. What delights you produced. (By the time we reached the last home, half of us did not have room for more! But we all enjoyed the coffee.) Then our lovely young waiters and waitresses, efficient and attractive. What a talented congregation, too. Violinists, pianists, wind instrumentalists. And no one blew our old ears out with overzealous drums! Thanks young folk, too many to mention by name. It was great fun, especially trying to guess where we were and where we were going. Dizzily up and down and on and on, to say nothing of round and round the roundabout, five carloads, while other motorists patiently waited to enter, wondering who these young hooners were. Just as well it was too dark to see our silver hair. Be assured, your gift to us was greatly appreciated. But we'd better not go on... and on... and on... From the Golden Oldies with the Silver Hair and Big Appetites.

Open House. Colin Koolaard celebrates his 80th birthday soon, DV. There is an open invitation for any and all to come and enjoy a time of celebration and fellowship.

### Pukekohe

It was agreed to establish a committee to draw up a concept plan to build on our current site for the congregation to consider, while also continuing to explore the other options of buying other land and building on it, or purchasing an existing building. We also agreed to establish a building fund.

Last Tuesday we had a meeting of the Reformed pastors in the Auckland area. Andrew MacPherson, pastor of the Presbyterian Church in Takaniini, spoke about the evangelistic work of his church and of the many unchurched people who are coming

## Auckland Presbytery Men's Training Day – 23rd July 2005 at Bucklands Beach

This year the Bucklands Beach congregation hosted the annual Men's Training day. Over fifty attended from the seven churches in our Presbytery.

The speaker was Mal Green, a Youth for Christ worker. His subject revolved around TEENS CHALLENGE TEENS, and involved how we could get the youth of our churches to themselves be effective in their witness to the Lord in our society.

After covering the present context for youth today - the postmodern world with its emphasis on individual journeys and openness to the spiritual things he looked at how we can see and apply the scriptural basis for engagement in today's environment. After lunch we broke into different groups and looked at examples of how this might be done (one of which is produced below).

Our thanks go to the Buckland's Beach folk who put on a good spread for us.

### Movie Analysis – Your turn

As Christians we need to learn the discipline of movie analysis, always employ it, and teach it to the next generation. This is necessary not just to brace us against the wiles of the enemy, but also to draw out aspects of movie culture that we can use to engage the minds of our non-Christian friends for the purpose of evangelism.

The discipline of movie analysis is not difficult to learn. In fact, it hardly needs to be learned at all. It's just a matter of getting into the habit of it. Of making sure we do it after every move – whether just with our spouse or with our whole family, or with a group.

A fun way to start may be to get a group together just to watch and analyse a movie.

Here is a list of questions that you could start with:

1. What is the place, date, time, season, cultural setting?
2. How did this movie make you feel?
3. Discuss specific personalities and character traits.
4. How can we relate this to our real lives?
5. Did good win over evil? Why was the main character good? Is this a right reason?
6. How are Christians portrayed?
7. How can I use the message of this movie in evangelism?
8. Is there a discussion-starter in this movie?
9. Is the gospel linked to the movie by a theme or analogy?

from the surrounding area. He emphasised the need to build bridges with unbelievers as well as the importance of being friendly and hospitable as a church to new people who come. He quoted John Piper who urges his congregation in worship to “come on the lookout for God; leave on the lookout for people.” May that be the focus of our lives and our church.

## Silverstream

Pre-school Programme. We are looking for volunteers to help set up and run a songs and crafts programme for pre-school children and their mothers to be held at the church. Session has given approval in principle to such a programme being set up as a way of sharing the gospel in our community. The Evangelism Committee is looking for volunteers who are interested in using their talents in organising, socialising, making music, playing instruments, setting up and doing arts and crafts. No volunteers will be turned down. Anyone’s help, no matter how small, will be appreciated. Please contact John Steenhof if you are interested, and please keep this matter, and all of the other work that the Evangelism Committee does, in your prayers.

90th Birthday. Congratulations to Martha Vandenberg whose 90th birthday was on 1 July. We praise the Lord for preserving her and may He bless the remaining years of her life.

Pastoral Notes. We give thanks for the birth of Rose-Marie Olive Wharekawa, to Richard & Nicola, last Monday. We rejoice with the family - a girl at last! – thanking the Lord that all is well with both mother and child.

## Wainuiomata

This week Anna Bartlett received the result of her MRI which indicated that she has a brain tumour. I have printed an e-mail from the Bartlett’s (with permission) for your information and fervent prayers. I will send off this email to everyone as a convenient way of speaking to each of you. Thank you for your support and prayers for Anna and us as a family. You are probably aware that a little less than a year ago Anna was diagnosed with mild epilepsy. As a precaution she was to have a MRI scan to rule out anything more sinister. So we have been waiting all this time for her name to come up on the waiting list! Anyway two weeks ago we went off to Palmerston North for the scan. Yesterday she received a phone call from her neurologist to ask her to make an appointment for today. When she pressed him he told her that she has a brain tumour! So most of you will have heard that news yesterday as well. After a tense night Dennis and I went along with Anna to hear the news. And yes, it was confirmed that she has a tumour around 1.5 cm big located basically in the middle of her brain, behind the eyes, in her

temporal lobe. It is around that part that centres on memory (That makes sense to her family!). He confirmed that this has been the cause of the epilepsy and that she has probably had it for up to 5-6 years as this was when the epileptic symptoms first started. He is unable to say at this stage whether it is benign or malignant, without a biopsy. We have an appointment with a neuro-surgeon on Tuesday and he will be the specialist who will deal with the ongoing care of the tumour, (the other doctor will still deal with the epilepsy). It looks likely that because Anna is otherwise very healthy and the epilepsy medications has finally stabilised her condition over the last couple of months (no episodes for 2 months) that the surgeon may recommend that she wait for the next 6 months, have another scan to determine the rate of growth and then reconsider. It will all depend on the frequency and severity of any more epileptic episodes and also her emotional state. This doctor advised that a biopsy will be quite risky and so they wouldn’t do it as a matter of course. So we will patiently wait for the appointment on Tuesday. Anna has a strong faith in her Lord and is resting in His care. She, and we, have been very shocked at the news and quite tearful at times but underlying all this is a real sense that God is in control and we feel blessed to have so many praying for us.

We, and that includes Anna, are quite comfortable to talk to people about any of this and would be happy for you to pass on this email to others. In our history of traumatic events we have always benefited from being very open and honest with people and have appreciated any feedback you might have. – Janette. Anna’s email address - annabartlett@gmail.com

Profession of Faith. This morning we rejoice with Sander Veenstra as he will profess his faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. We will have opportunity to welcome Sander to full communion with the people of God after the service. Our prayer is that the Lord may grant our brother many joyful years of walking diligently with the Lord. (Have you ever noticed that our Form for Profession of Faith teaches that Profession is a person’s response to the promises God made in his or her baptism? It is fitting that on this Lord’s Day we will also have opportunity to witness a baptism!)

Baptism. This afternoon we thank the Lord for His covenant promises as we see them



Oma (Ali Holtslag) with Rose-Marie Olive Wharekawa

signified and sealed to Christian Jacobus Leibbrandt. We pray that the Lord may also grant Gerry and Frances much love, wisdom, and patience as they nurture Christian in the Christian faith.

## Wellington

Mid-Winter Music Evening 30 July, 7PM Should be a lovely evening. Please invite friends/neighbours to come along and enjoy and evening of music and supper after. Is part of our community outreach so your support much appreciated. If you'd like to do an item or two please let Liz know so I can update the programme. Hope you all have a fun time practising! Thanks HOME C

## CHRISTCHURCH PRESBYTERY, 2ND JULY 2005

Elder Fred Braam chaired the meeting on behalf of convening church, the Reformed Church of Bishopdale. Fred opened the meeting with a devotion on Psalm 71.

At the previous meeting Bishopdale delegates were asked to provide a recom-

mendation on the suitable use of \$4500.00 left over since the closure of the Invercargill church. Presbytery agreed to their recommendation that the money be given to the Reformed Church of Nelson.

Presbytery accepted the treasurer's motion that travel costs incurred by delegates on Presbytery business be reimbursed at the cost of 30cents per kilometer in accordance with advice given in a paper from Dunedin session.

Rev. Michael Flinn informed the meeting that a matter of concern over whether or not a possible candidate for ministry could sign the form of subscription while disagreeing with certain aspects of WCF Chapter 21.7&8 has been resolved. (see FiF, ChCh Pres short report May 2005, page 10)

Presbytery agreed to endorse the Reformed Church of Nelson's application to the Church Extension Committee's Needy Church's Fund.

Article 47 and Supplementary Questions were answered positively by delegates from Bishopdale, Dovedale and Nelson congregations. Bishopdale reported on the blessing of 4 professions of faith this year and the conversion of a man who had begun attending services recently. Dovedale delegates

expressed gratitude for the ministry of their pastor and that the congregation were able to celebrate together with Michael and Tina Flinn on the occasion of their 25th wedding anniversary.

Nelson delegates spoke of the blessing of faithful attendances, a new family from the community whom had taken up membership and that the youth group has recommenced regular activities.

An overture to Synod from Bishopdale to change the name of our churches to Christian Reformed Churches of New Zealand was not supported by Presbytery.

An overture to Synod from the Reformed Church of Dovedale requesting the Church Order Committee to provide clarification on the status of various sections of the Office Bearers Handbook was supported by Presbytery.

Presbytery agreed to hold the Preliminary Exam of vicar Robert Van Wichen on Friday the 7th of October commencing 7pm. The next meeting of Presbytery will be held on Saturday 8th of October 2005.

Elder Fred Braam closed the meeting in prayer.

## A feminine focus

# Paul Tripp's 'War of Words' – We read it together!

### Sally Davey

Dear Everyone reading this column:

This article is a joint effort – in fact, it's written by nine of us. We are women from four churches in Christchurch who have got together in a group of about 20 to encourage one another in the reading of good books. We try to motivate each other to get our reading done, and we meet when we've read a book to talk about the biblical teaching we have found in it, and to discuss the ways we could apply its ideas to our lives. The ultimate aim? To help one another become more mature in Christ through the reading of such books. Also, as we go on purchasing and reading the books, we'll begin building a good home

library. On our shelves we'll have books to help our children, and to lend to friends we know will benefit from them. But hopefully we'll be able to do this with conviction because we've read them carefully. Because we've benefited from them ourselves, we'll even be able to suggest ways the books can change lives.

### Careful reading

We're all discovering the benefits of *careful* reading. Many of us are fond of books, and even own quite a few. But we've found that committing ourselves to read slowly enough to grasp the author's argument properly, and to be able to discuss what he says with others later, means that

we are absorbing, and retaining, a lot more of the book. We've taken to underlining and writing pencil notes in the margins of our copies, and this is really useful later on when we want to find a particular point that struck us "somewhere in chapter five..." There are lots of reasons it's good to do justice to a book in this way. For one thing, it's only fair to a worthy author, who has put enormous effort (maybe years of study, wide research, hours of writing and many revisions) into writing his book. Secondly, when we do this we are not wasting the purchase of a worthwhile book. Here is what A.W. Pink, well-known English Christian author, wrote to a correspondent on this subject:

“One book read is worth more to you than a dozen on your shelf unread, and one book read slowly, meditated upon and assimilated is worth twenty skimmed through hurriedly. Many buy good books, go through them quickly ‘to see what is in them’, promising themselves a more careful perusal later on, but few fulfil their intention. Moreover to read rapidly and superficially destroys a person’s power of concentration - that is why they remember so little! But enough: the Lord grant you wisdom and patience.”

So far we have read three books together. We began with Carolyn Custis James’s *When Life and Beliefs Collide*, an appeal for women to read books that increase their knowledge of God and His Word. Doing this, James urges, will help us become more useful, practical Christians in everyday life. We then began J.I. Packer’s *Knowing God*, a clear example of the kind of book that contains practical, theological knowledge. To the amazement of many of us, it turned out to be almost easy to read when tackling it together as a group. We had fun!

Our third book is a practical-application kind of book, based on solid theological truths central to the Scriptures. This is Paul Tripp’s *War of Words: Getting to the Heart of Our Communication Struggles*. As with Tripp’s three other books, it is a warm, helpful, personal account, full of stories about his family’s struggles with speech, and of examples gleaned from his many years’ experience as a biblical counsellor. He is an excellent story-teller, and has a great sense of humour. But his central message is serious: our real problem is not our words, it is our hearts. Working to develop better communication skills will do nothing unless we deal with our hearts. Anger, bitterness, self-pity and the like, harboured in our hearts and unconfessed are what spoil our speech and in turn tempt others to sin. Tripp not only holds up the scriptural mirror and shows us our sin; he also points us to the hope of the gospel. There is tremendous practical help in this book: it is full of useful detail on the ways to put off sin and put on right habits of thought and word choice. We have all been challenged and encouraged by our reading together. Our two discussions on it were quite electric with comment on how Tripp’s advice has helped us personally!

#### Different reflections on the book

We thought you might enjoy reading some of our thoughts on *War of Words*. As you’ll

see, we’re women in a number of ages and stages of life. We want you to know that whatever your age, this is a book to consider reading seriously.

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*War of Words* is a book I would not normally have borrowed from the church library. However, being part of the reading group, it was decided that this book would be read next. Funny enough, it was an immensely enjoyable read. The book confronts us with the fact that life is not a resort but a bumpy pathway that leads to conformity to Christ. We need to remember that we are not here on earth for our agenda but that we are a part of His. And how can we share the gospel but through our speech, and this is where we all struggle with right and Godly words. Paul Tripp helped me here and explained how sin can alter our words resulting in much hurt, confusion and chaos. *War of Words* is easily read and yet is full of biblical advice and truths on our conversations.

Our evenings together encourage us all to read and finish each book so that we can enjoy the fellowship discussing the main principles of each chapter. I can really recommend being part of such a group. (Helen, mid-40s, homemaker)

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There are so many valuable words in this book that a few sentences doesn’t do it justice! I realise now I need to be constantly at war with my own words. I hope and pray that my own words will flow out of my heart that rests in his control and not seek my own control. I also now know that word related problems are always related to heart problems. (Margaret)

This book not only touches the heart of its reader, it also exposes the innermost heart attitudes that determine the words we use and the way in which we use them. It offers hope for seemingly hopeless situations in a most practical and biblical way. I thank God that this book is available today! (Carine)

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“War of Words” is sometimes an apt description of my household (even better perhaps is the title of one of my textbooks, “Nonlinear Dynamics and Chaos”!!). I am continually challenged by my inadequacies in the area of my words. This book has been a tremendous help to me, making me a lot more conscious

of my words and their impact, and bringing continually before me the need for my words to serve God and reflect His character. “War of Words” looks at the heart issues of our words. Full of sound theology and practical help, this book is useful for all of our Christian life, not just our communication. (Phillipa Williams, 43, wife, mother of three teenagers, homemaker, and student....)

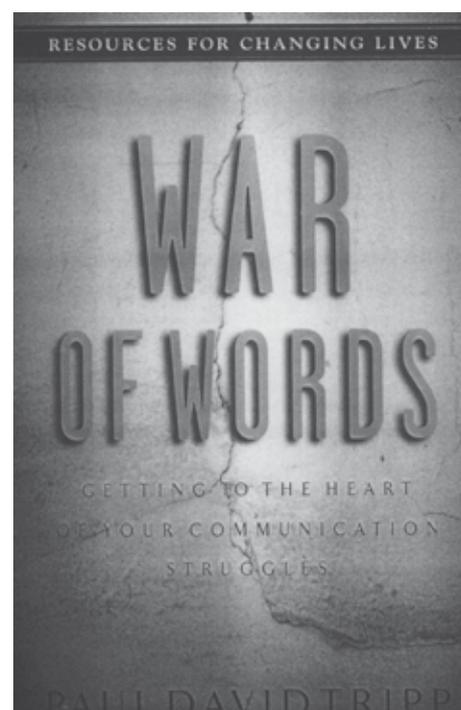
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To be honest, reading a book on communication wasn’t my choice. But I had committed myself to this reading group and I had enjoyed our meetings so much that I didn’t want to back out.

“War of words” comes in a series entitled: “Resources for changing lives” and I am wholeheartedly convinced that the publisher isn’t exaggerating with this title! I haven’t only read the book I’ve chewed and struggled with it. Somehow every chapter seemed to lay open a spiritual truth that I needed to hear exactly at that moment. Not that I have won the war but I do have a vision and tools to make progress.

For me the most important truths in the book are:

- Communication issues on a horizontal level (my neighbor) always reflect how it stands with my vertical relation; my relation with God.
- I am attempting to do with words what only God can do by His Grace and Power.
- God calls me to be His ambassador and



say what He wants me to say in the way He would say it.

This is a very structured and easy to read book, full of examples and humour. My only hope is that none of our children ever wants to publish something, as the food for examples in our family is plentiful indeed. Poor family Tripp! (Jantina, 43 yrs, homemaker)

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What has struck me most in reading and discussing this book is my need to examine my words - and more importantly, the heart attitudes behind my words - to my children in my daily interactions with them. Am I discipling my children? Am I speaking to

build them up? Is my speech in accord with God's redemptive and sanctifying plan? (Liana Havelaar, a wife and mother of two young children)

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This is a very practical book, that helped me understand just how important the words that I speak are (and those I don't speak!). Paul explains the principle behind choosing your words in a very interesting and simple way. It's a matter of our HEART, and the standard, GOD's standard, should be the standard not only for my words, but for every aspect of my life! And wow, it surely is a privilege to be able to learn (especially when it's about using your words in a constructive way in every situation!) from godly ladies who

know so much more about life than we do at this stage! (Elrike)

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*War of Words* has been a delight to read and has challenged me in many ways. Paul Tripp takes the reader right back to Genesis, where the heart of our communication struggles lie, sin; and outlines clearly that our hope lies with Jesus. At one point in the book Tripp mentions we are Christ's Ambassadors in the world and out of love and thankfulness for God, who gave us the gift of speech, we should speak words that reflect God's Will, not our own. (Nynke Pijpker – 21 – Full time student, full time Postie)

Have we convinced you yet? Reading a book together with others is a huge blessing!

## Mission in focus

Janice Reid

**Jared Berends (Bishopdale; Bucklands Beach) has been teaching English in Mongolia for two years, now. He has also been helping the local church—encouraging the leaders in this nation's young church as they grow in biblical understanding and spiritual maturity. The Christians with whom Jared is working have recently been able to send out workers to nearby villages, to do evangelism. Jared talked with two young men from this group: Dawaa and Uniren. This is what they had to say....**

Jared: How did you come to know Christ?

Uniren: I believed in Christ about 8 months ago. Some Christians were traveling to a Bible training seminar from the countryside. These students stopped at a ger [felt tent] to eat lunch. I happened to be in that ger eating food at the time with my friends. They told me about Jesus, how he died for my sins. I believed and accepted Jesus. They then invited me along to the seminar, so I left my friends behind at the ger and journeyed to the seminar with these people. I stayed with them in the town, attended the seminar and began to learn more about Jesus. The seminar was five days long, at the beginning I didn't know how to pray, or anything about the Bible, but I believed in Jesus. After the

seminar my first prayer was answered and somebody gave me a Bible. I went back to the countryside and told my family about Jesus, they all believed (two parents and six brothers and sisters), we worshipped together in our small aul (a group of gers together housing 2-4 families). At that time I wanted to journey into the countryside to tell herding families and friends about Jesus, but I couldn't travel far because of the cold.

Dawaa: My sister is a believer and she invited me to church in 2003. The message was about the Father's love, about faith, hope and love. The pastor told me that Jesus loved me and had forgiven my sins. I received the message and asked Jesus to be my Saviour.

Jared: What were you like before you became a Christian? How has your life changed?

Uniren: Before I became a Christian I was only sometimes working, when I wasn't working I was often drunk and I used to fight a lot with other people. My family was often angry with each other and we were often fighting among ourselves. After I trusted in Jesus, I felt peace. I am no longer angry, I have given up drinking and smoking as have all my family members.

Dawaa: Before I became a Christian I was often drunk, I spent my life going from place to place with no purpose. I never thought

about heaven or life after death. After I believed in Jesus I became God's child. When I first became a believer I used to live at the church so I could spend more time praying.

Jared: Before you became a Christian had you heard about Jesus, what did you think about Christianity?

Uniren: Before I became a Christian I remember hearing three foreign missionaries talking about Jesus in my village in 1996. But since then I always thought that Christianity was a foreign religion and Mongolians had to believe in Buddha.

Dawaa: I read about Jesus in a book some missionaries gave me in 1994. The missionaries were from China and spent a short time in my home village. After that time I thought that Christianity was a foreign religion and never paid it any more attention.

Jared: What are you currently doing now?

Uniren: I came back to the town where I attended the seminar for two months last winter, to have fellowship with the church there and learn more about the Bible. I lived in the church and with people from the church. I went back to my hometown in March and have been preaching the name of Jesus Christ in my hometown and the other nearby villages. I think I have talked to maybe a thousand people about Jesus. We have a

group in each of the two villages meeting every week of between 10 - 15 people and there is also my family and nearby herding families meeting in the countryside for worship once a week as well. I help to lead the worship times and talk with people throughout the week.

Dawaa: I am now organizing small missionary teams. Our plan is to talk to as many people as possible in the capital city of our province, and then in groups of three go to nearby villages and spend between 2 - 4 weeks there, talking about Jesus and setting up small home groups. I will hopefully leave with some other men to a nearby village to evangelize next week.

Jared: How do you speak to people about Jesus?

Uniren: Firstly we talk to people about eternal life, sin, God's love and Jesus. If the person is young they have usually heard about Jesus so I would straight away talk about Jesus with them, no small talk. But if the person is older I would talk with them about the creator of this world and about His work and love.

Jared: What are the obstacles and joys of sharing the Gospel?

Uniren: Often my friends will rebuke me and call me names because I am a Christian. They will still try to pressure me to drink and smoke even though they know I am a believer. Buddhism is still very strong in Mongolia and many people follow this religion. I have no job so there is no money and I rely on people for a place to spend the night and for food when I am traveling to different villages. My joy comes from being together with the Lord.

Dawaa: Many of my friends and family members don't like the new life I have found. I am constantly pressured by them to get drunk. I never drink, not even a drop now and explain to others that I believe it's a sin in front of God for me to do this. Many people rebuke me when I share the gospel with them, they often tell me that I am not a real Mongolian because I believe in Jesus. I love sharing with people in the bus or van on long trips to the countryside. We share with them and when we get to a temple or shrine and don't participate in the rituals but instead pray, they often begin to ask us more questions and our first contacts are made. My joy is sharing the good news with people.



Jared: What's your vision for the future and how can we pray for you?

Uniren: My vision is for all people in the two villages where I work to come to know God. We have many drunks and poor children and I hope to somehow begin to work with them soon. Please pray for my family, for the small churches in these two towns, and for protection for us from the Holy Spirit as we witness to people. Greetings to you all from Mongolia, we are all one in the Faith!

Dawaa: My vision is for all the villages in our province to have believers worshipping the son. I plan to preach the gospel this summer and hopefully start at Bible College in September. Please pray for my Bible College tuition as I have no means at this stage of financing the tuition but I believe God will provide it. Please pray for our Church and my family members, many haven't accepted Christ.

## MIF prayer notes

- 1) Lord willing, as you read this Heidi Posthuma will have just arrived back in the restricted country where she will teach English for a second year. She asks for your prayers as she settles back into the life and culture of the country, re-establishes relationships with friends and colleagues, and gets to know a new team-mate with whom she will work. Pray that the Lord would soften the hearts of many people in her town, and provide them an opportunity to learn more about Him.
- 2) Jared Berends says, "I'll be returning to Mongolia in September. We're asking that as people come back from the countryside they re-establish connections with the group. And the group here continues to look outward to the surrounding countryside towns." Pray for the continuing work of evangelism in the Mongolian countryside, and for God's provision for the physical needs of those who serve in His name.
- 3) Wally and Jeannette Hagoort ask, "Please pray for the first youth camp, that Wally & Jeannette Hagoort are organising in Papua New Guinea. Pray that this will be the start of a vibrant youth programme amongst the churches, that not only helps retain the church youth, but attracts many others also."
- 4) This is Janice Reid's last month in Cambodia. Please pray for effective ministry with FEBC announcers, and for plans for a final announcers' course in Khmer. Janice asks special prayer for those she has been helping during her time in Cambodia: that their material needs would be met, and their relationship with and service for the Lord would continue to grow.
- 5) Frank van Dalen is settling in to his new position as the Director of World Witness, the Foreign Missions Board of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church in the United States. World Witness has approximately 40 missionaries in 7 countries. In September, Frank will visit the mission work in Turkey and Pakistan, as well as speaking in churches in the US to raise missions awareness. Frank's son, Christopher, will be in Cairo, Egypt, from August through December. He is studying Arabic as part of his course at the University of South Carolina.

# Children in focus



# Sonshine Korner



## A Little Fire:

**Read: James 3: 4 – 12**

As Katie stopped in the middle of the mountain trail, her friend Gretchen bumped into her. “Whoa!” exclaimed Gretchen. “Why did you stop?”

Katie pointed to a hillside across the valley. “Mum said we’d see a place where there had been a forest fire-and that’s it!”

“Wow!” exclaimed Gretchen as the girls stared at the charred remains. When they moved on, she turned to Katie. “Did you know Blake cheated on a test and might even get suspended from school?” asked Gretchen.

“Yeah. He says he didn’t do it, but who’s gonna believe that?” replied Katie. “And what about Steve? Mary thinks he stole money from her desk. He should be suspended, too.”

“Want some water?” Turning, the girls saw that Katie’s mother was catching up with them. She held out the canteen, and they sat on a fallen log to rest.

“What caused that forest fire, Mum?” asked Katie, pointing to the hillside again. “It sure destroyed a lot of trees, didn’t it?”

“The newspaper said it started from a little campfire spark,” replied Mum. She frowned as she added, “The words we speak can have the same effect. The tongue is called a ‘fire’ in the Bible.”

Katie grinned. “I can burn down a forest with my mouth?” she asked, knowing that wasn’t right.

Mum smiled. “Your words can’t destroy trees,” she said, “but they can destroy friendships and damage lives. When we say unkind things, it can hurt people’s feelings and their reputations.”

“Isn’t it okay to say things if we know they’re true?” asked Gretchen, remembering what she and Katie had been talking about.

“Not necessarily,” replied Mum. “Unless there’s some useful purpose for repeating it, it’s generally better to keep to yourself anything that would hurt another person. Like a tiny spark, a tiny unkind suggestion can spread and cause a lot of harm.” Mum pointed toward the hillside. “It will take a long time for trees to grow back in that area,” she said, “but it may take even longer to repair damage done by unkind words.”

Gretchen pulled out her camera. “I’m going to take a picture,” she decided, “to remind myself of what a little fire-or a few mean words-can do.”

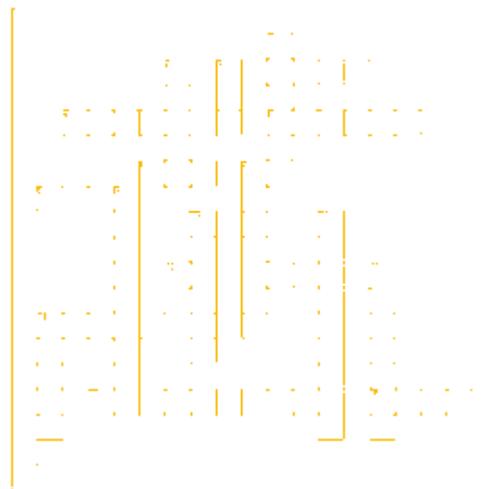
### MEMORY VERSE:

“Likewise the tongue is a small part of the body, but it makes great boasts. Consider what a great forest is set on fire by a small spark.” James 3:5

### HOW ABOUT YOU?

Have you caught yourself spreading personal information about others? Has anyone ever spread gossip about you? Sometimes you may say things without realizing the damage your words can do. It’s a good idea to think before you speak and to ask God to help you keep from starting any “fires” with your tongue.

## A Little Fire Crossword



### Across

1. A word with a small part of the body, but it makes great boasts.
2. What is a great forest set on fire by a small spark?
3. The word for the words that can hurt feelings and damage lives.
4. Part of the body that can hurt feelings and damage lives.
5. What is the word for the words that can hurt feelings and damage lives?
6. The word for the words that can hurt feelings and damage lives.
7. The word for the words that can hurt feelings and damage lives.
8. The word for the words that can hurt feelings and damage lives.
9. The word for the words that can hurt feelings and damage lives.
10. The word for the words that can hurt feelings and damage lives.
11. A word with a small part of the body, but it makes great boasts.
12. What is a great forest set on fire by a small spark?
13. The word for the words that can hurt feelings and damage lives.
14. Part of the body that can hurt feelings and damage lives.
15. What is the word for the words that can hurt feelings and damage lives?

### Down

1. The word for the words that can hurt feelings and damage lives.
2. What is a great forest set on fire by a small spark?
3. The word for the words that can hurt feelings and damage lives.
4. Part of the body that can hurt feelings and damage lives.
5. What is the word for the words that can hurt feelings and damage lives?
6. The word for the words that can hurt feelings and damage lives.
7. The word for the words that can hurt feelings and damage lives.
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15. What is the word for the words that can hurt feelings and damage lives?