

fellow workers

News from around the Presbyterian Church of Victoria

a publication of the PCV **State News Committee**

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contribute

Your contributions to *fellow workers* are welcome! *fellow workers* is now published every quarter (March, June, September & December). The deadline for contributions to the next issue is **November 18th**. Photographs should be digital and sent by email if possible.

real love produces no favourites

james 1:1-13

Mountains out of molehills?

Why does James make such a big deal out of where we get people to sit, giving the rich the best seat – down the back, and the poor people the worst – up the front [vss.2-3]? Is showing a bit of favouritism so bad? After all, the poor person wouldn't be expecting the best seat anyway, so where's the harm. But James does make it a big deal, he says that showing favouritism is evil, sinful, and that those who do it will be shown no mercy by God [vss.1,4,9,13].

An important clue

For genuine faith to survive and grow it must face and overcome many different challenges. James is to the Christian what a personal trainer is to an athlete. He seeks to guide us over, through and under many different tests so that our faith can become strong and useful in a very practical way. One big challenge is our attitude towards life. If life is measured by the wrong standards then the results will not be a strong faith. James 1:9-11 introduces a crucial challenge to all Christians, our attitude to wealth. We mistake wealth with happiness, importance and power. James says that those who love God and are poor are, in fact, rich in God's kingdom (Jam 2:5) and he implies that the worldly rich face the opposite, unless they can exercise humility and faith.

The heart of the matter

The wrong standards

Favouritism is to make unjust distinctions between people by treating one person better than another. We are all the same, sinners in need of God's forgiveness. When we show favouritism we expose ourselves as judging people based on standards other than gospel. If we make distinctions based on wealth we expose ourselves as really having faith in wealth rather than in God. This is not good; this is something that needs to change before we can really grow as Christians.

The wrong motive

We believe that by treating someone better we will receive better treatment or at least not be disadvantaged. This shows then that we are motivated by our self-interest, either for advancement or self-protection. James gives the example of when a rich person comes we treat them well because perhaps we want their favour or perhaps we are afraid of what they may do to us if we don't treat them in a special way. Love is to be the primary motive of Christians, as pointed out in the royal law James 1:8, "you shall love your neighbour as yourself".

The wrong outlook

It is sinful then for Christians to show favouritism because it exposes in us our flawed and worldly outlook on life. We are bound by God to love everyone without worldly distinctions. We are not to judge people by our standards or the world's standards but rather by the standard of love and mercy.

Continued page 3

pyv - recent events help grow a great work

PYV outlook – 22nd-25th april 2005

PYV is expanding and in April held their first of a new type of camp, something called Outlook. The camp was targeted at Christians who are 21-35 year olds, who are looking out for how they can use their gifts to serve in furthering the Kingdom of Christ. Being a joint venture with Shiloh Ranch in Grantville, people from all over Victoria, not just PYVers, turned up for what was to be a surprising weekend, surprising in that, during the first talk by Scott Kroeger, we were told that for the weekend, our life had changed dramatically. The political climate in Australia had changed and now being a Christian was illegal. All of our preachers, pastors and elders had either been murdered or placed in jail. There was no one left to run the church and everyone else we knew had gone underground. The question was "Now what are you going to do?"

The point of it was to get us to see that we shouldn't be looking for someone else to do everything, for example, the minister shouldn't be the one to do everything in a church. We have a responsibility to use the gifts we have been given to serve God and his people. We were challenged to step up and get involved in our church now, not wait until there is no one else to do the job.

With the camp being such a successful and enjoyable weekend, look out for it next year, it's certain to be back!!

PYV Social – 14th may 2005

'A Night with the Stars" turned out to be a night with 150 young people heading to Ballarat for one of the best socials PYV has had. Organized by Ballarat West Presbyterian Church and the capable hands of Jo Hardy and Bec Stasse, the night was bound for success as they are well known for being able to put on a good show. John Stasse delivered an interesting talk all about stars. He showed us some amazing images of some of the closest stars and the sun. He spoke about how we are often told by parents and teachers to "reach for the stars" and obviously that is unachievable and will end in disappointment. We should "reach" for Jesus and we will never be disappointed.

Following the talk, everyone hit the

dance floor in their semi-formal wear with Reuben Owen putting his DJ skills to good use for the night. A yummy supper was also provided and enjoyed by all. All in all, a great night for catching up with friends and having a boogie on the dance floor! A huge thanks to the people of Ballarat West for their hospitality and service and to Ballarat North Presbyterian Church for the use of their hall.

PYV volleyball – 11th june 2005

At least 215 people turned up to play in one of PYV's best attended annual event, the volleyball comp. Run by Dave Gillard (Brimbank PC) this year, the day ran smoothly with many teams from all over Victoria participating. Praise God that this years event went by apparently injury-free.

Congratulations to Korean Presbyterian team who defeated Burwood Community to win the Men's Grand Final by two points. Heathmont Presbyterian Church also deserve a round of applause after defeating Clayton 1 in another tight match for the Mixed Grand Final trophy. Thanks to everyone who turned up to play or support others, that's what makes this day the success that it is. Looking forward to seeing you all there again next year!!



Volleyball

fuelled

Fuelled Training Days are run by the PYV for the CENC (Christian Education and Nurture Committee), and the first of which was held at Heathmont on 23 July 2005. With the Presbyterian Church adopting the child protection policy "Breaking the Silence", the CENC has asked PYV, with their considerable experience at running large events, to run regular training days (two annually) which will include "An Introduction to Breaking the Silence". This policy of the PCV is important for people of all ages within

our denomination but especially for those engaged in leadership (ministers and elders) and those involved in the teaching of children. But Fuelled days are also for the building up and equipping ministers, elders and members for their ministries within the local congregation - especially youth and children's ministry.

About 60 people, of all ages, attended the first event at Heathmont. Each person had a choice of two streams of lectures, youth ministry and children's ministry.

The day ran as follows:-

Servant Leadership Post-what? (Post-modernity) Introducing God to preschoolers Growing Teenagers Through Camps Giving a Kids talk Running a Friday Night Youth Group Holiday Clubs Introduction to Breaking the Silence

Speakers travelled down from NSW to give us Victorians an insight into how they run events up north. With many years of experience they were able to provide tried and tested methods to run fun and effective ministries. If you missed out, CENC, via PYV, will be holding another Fuelled day on 15 October 2005 at Bendigo Presbyterian Church.

See www.pyv.org.au for more details.

PYV junior camp – 16th-19th september 2005

Yeeeeeeehaaaaaaah!! Ok, girls and boys, if you are between grade 6 and year 10, then do we have a camp for you!!! Pull out your flannel shirt and cowboy boots because not just \$25 you can not afford to miss this one!! The World Junior Camp will be held at Lunar Plein Conference Centre in Whittlesea on 16th-19th September. Andrew Matthews (Penrith) will be giving the talks. You can look forward to heaps of activities, taking new friends and catching up with old ones as well as learning more about God. It will be quick because at 5.30 places will be coming up fast. (If you notice red text is due to a generous request left by Mr. Robert Allan way back in 1875). Check out the website www.pyv.org.au to download the registration form or pay online, or you can also contact the Camp Convener Steve Duncanson on (03) 9743 3236 for more details. See ya all there!

CAMP BOOKED OUT!

profiles of our ministry candidates



Ian Hutton

Prior to moving to Melbourne to study at PTC we lived in East Gippsland. I was born and grew up in Bairnsdale and after studying at Latrobe University I eventually returned to Bairnsdale to teach maths/science at the Secondary College as well as farming. Whilst in Melbourne I met my wife Ann at the Reservoir Presbyterian Church and we now have four daughters with the eldest, Roslyn (trained as an occupational therapist), married to Geoff. Debbie is a nurse working at Austin Health, Amy is in her second year of training for primary teaching, and Sarah has just started secondary school. Ann is a primary school teacher.

We attended the Bairnsdale Presbyterian Church from the early 1980s where I became an elder and it was during this time that the seed of ministry work was planted. The Lord challenged me to take further steps towards ministry in 2001 and these were later confirmed. So, we shifted from country to city in 2002 and commenced full-time studies at PTC which have been enjoyable and stimulating.

With the older girls established in their careers and churches in Melbourne, Ann, Sarah and myself are looking forward to the Lord's leading as we prepare for future service for Him and the Presbyterian Church. This next step will mean many more changes and adjustments so please pray for ourselves and the other exit student's as we all face this uncertain and yet exciting time.

Ian Hutton will be exited to the parish of Ararat.



Gary Stephens

With my wife Natalie and three children Kaitlyn (5), Jarrod (4) and Rebecca (9 months) I have spent the last eight years worshipping at the Bundoora congregation in Melbourne's North East suburbs. This year we now attend and minister to the Burwood Chinese congregation before being exited this year. Always committed to ministry in the local congregation, I benefited from an AFES ministry traineeship that gave me opportunity to test the waters of full time ministry, prior to applying for candidacy and attending the PTC Melbourne.

Once in full time parish ministry I hope to bring God's truth and our rich Presbyterian heritage together in such a way as to make them accessible to all and build a team approach to the ministry of the local congregation.

Gary Stephens will be exited to the parish of Bairnsdale.



Bill Medley

Bill is married to Diana and has three children: stepson Rick, age 26 (married to Michelle and both worshipping with the Templestowe congregation); Luke, age 7 and Joshua (trouble), age 4. Bill was converted in 1990 and has worshipped at the Church of Christ Box Hill Nth, Noble Park Baptist and the Wesleyan church at Belgrave. In 1993 Bill and his family joined the South Yarra Presbyterian congregation and, in 2001, relocated to the Templestowe Home Mission Station. Since 2004-5 they have attended the Donvale congregation.

On God's leading to ministry: I have always enjoyed evangelism and the privilege of telling the good news. It seems I have been put on a path since then.

What I hope to accomplish when in ministry: To see Melbourne saved.

Other: I will turn 47 years of age in May. Not much time to do it.

Bill has been exited to The Pines congregation in Frankston.



Tony Johnson

Hi, my name is Tony Johnson and I am a fourth year candidate for the ministry within the Presbyterian Church of Victoria. I have a lovely wife, Jasmine, and have just become parents for the first time at the end of May. Both Jasmine and I came to a personal faith in the Lord Jesus in a Pentecostal Church fourteen years ago. Over the years, the Lord has brought us both to a Reformed understanding of the Christian faith. Our first love is the Lord Jesus Christ and we are both looking forward to serving Him in whatever capacity He has in store for us. It is our desire and prayer that the Lord will provide an exit appointment for us at the end of this year and we are looking

forward to serving Jesus with all of our heart, mind and strength.

Tony has been exited to the Balaclava congregation which is now a preaching place attached to the St. Kilda parish.



Evan Prentice

The Prentice family is made up of Evan and Janine, and their children Thomas, James, Ben, Erin, and Matthew.

Over the last four years Evan has been studying theology at the Presbyterian Theological College. His home church is Eltham Presbyterian Church, but currently he is doing a year of ministry experience at Croydon Hills Presbyterian Church. Before Evan began his studies he was a piano tuner and restorer, a business that he inherited from his father. Evan and Janine bring with them a wealth of experience which will no doubt be a blessing to God's people in Caulfield.

Evan Prentice will be exited to the Caulfield Presbyterian Church.

From page 1

The right standard: love over favouritism and mercy over judgment

Perhaps James hasn't over reacted but rather that we have under reacted to the issue of favouritism. Perhaps we are the ones making mountains into molehills. James has, in fact, touched a raw nerve and exposed a major flaw in our faith and love. When we appreciate what lies beneath favouritism (self-interest and a worldly outlook) we then can begin to work on our faith and love. The goal is to resist making unfair distinctions, judgments about people, about their wealth, class, race, etc. We will work at loving everyone and seeking to be merciful in our thinking rather than making judgments as to whether a person or people are worthy of our love. To do this with any kind of chance of success we must hold fast to the promise made in James 2:13, "that mercy triumphs over judgment".

Chris Perona

ordained... finally!

On Friday the 19th August 2005 the Reverend David Assender was ordained and inducted into the Scots Geelong West Presbyterian Church. This momentous occasion was well attended, with over 200 people present from all regions of Victoria. It was a real blessing to have as guests family, friends, supporters, members of the Presbytery and fellow students of David and Tanya, most of whom had made two and three hour trips (one way!) to share in this special night. In addition, and as a testimony to the work David and Tanya have begun, a number of people attended from the local community.

The night's proceedings were ably led by Rev David Griffin (Inverleigh), Moderator of the Geelong Presbytery and included an excellent sermon by Rev Professor Allan Harman, moderator of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria (PCV).

The Ordination and Induction included a short description of the events leading up to David's ordination by the Rev Graham Hamill, which was followed by a

time of prayer in which Rev. Peter Owen (Melton) prayed for David, his family and the work to be done in Geelong West. A charge was then delivered by Rev. Graeme Weber (St Georges Geelong), Moderator Elect of the PCV, to both David and the Congregation, challenging them to remain faithful to the word of God.

With the formal part of the evening out of the way, and David officially inducted, Miss Dorothy Knight said a few words on behalf of the Scots Geelong West congregation, thanking David and Tanya for their dedicated work amongst us, during the past two years. In appreciation for this work, and as an official welcome, gifts were presented to the Assender family by Miss Knight and Mrs Sue Arundell. Presentations were also made to Rev Professor Allan Harman (currently Moderator of Scots Geelong West) and his wife Dr Mairi Harman in appreciation for the generosity and support they have shown to David and the congregation over the past few years. Miss Knight also paid tribute to the late Rev. Jim Stewart and his wife Fairlie Stewart (present) for the

leadership and supply preaching provided whilst the church was without a minister.

David responded by thanking all those who had helped him to achieve this goal, noting for special thanks his wife (Tanya) for her support and dedication during his time of study. In a fitting end to the evening, David thanked God for the privilege and responsibility of sharing His Word with the Church of Geelong West and the wider community. The whole evening was capped off with a time of fellowship over an abundant supper, generously provided by a group of dedicated helpers (and the help of a refurbished kitchen). A special thanks goes to all those who worked tirelessly to make the night as memorable and as enjoyable as possible.



David and Tanya Assender

Katie Higgins

blessed occasion at brimbank

Andres Miranda's ordination

'This is the day which the Lord has made; We will rejoice and be glad in it.' [Ps. 118.24]

Rejoicing is exactly what did take place when the Brimbank and Melton Presbyterian Churches, together with the Presbytery of Melbourne West, friends, family and visitors from far and wide met on the Sunday 17th July 2005. They had come together to witness the ordination of Andres Arturo Miranda Figueroa to the ministry of the word and sacrament.

Just prior to 4pm, a special meeting of Presbytery was constituted. Following this, in front of the congregation, the normal procedure for ordination was followed, including the call for objections (there were none) and an introduction of proceedings by Rev. Cor Vanderhorn.

Rev. Bruce Riding delivered an informative sermon entitled "Making the Invisible Visible" which explained what the ceremony of ordination symbolises and

the various evidences that the Presbytery considered to determine that Andres is indeed called to the ministry.

Rev. Peter Owen gave a history of the Brimbank Presbyterian Church, which was planted by the Melton Presbyterian Church in February 2004 with the invaluable help of various church committees and the dedication of many faithful individuals. Andres' ordination marked another milestone in the life of this fledgling congregation.

Andres took his vows with determination and dependence on God's grace and the ministers of the Presbytery laid hands on Andres and prayed. Mr Gilbert Bell delivered a moving charge to Andres to go forth in his ministry.

The musical talents of Boyd Owen,



The Miranda family at Andres' ordination

Alex and Jess Venn including a special item they performed for Andres, "Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus", also blessed the congregation.

Following the ordination ceremony, fellowship was enjoyed over an afternoon tea and the local congregation made a special presentation to Andres to commemorate this blessed occasion.

The Lord certainly has blessed Andres and is to be praised for giving him determination to overcome obstacles in his journey to becoming a minister, gifting him with the call to ministry, determination and love of the Word and of God. We pray for the continued blessing of Andres and his family and for the continued growth of the Brimbank congregation to the glory of God's name.

'Oh, give thanks to the Lord, for He is good! For His mercy endures forever.'
[Ps. 136:1]

Mario and Pauline Caruana

around the presbyteries & churches

jubilee of faithful ministry

Ordained in May 6th, 1955, the Reverend Ron Traill celebrated the 50th anniversary this significant achievement this year. His ordination coincided with his induction by the Presbytery of Macedon into the parish of Daylesford, Bullarto, Franklinford and Trentham, which was also his exit appointment. Mt Traill has recently concluded a preaching ministry of sixty two years which commenced in Nathalia, in north eastern Victoria, on January 1st, 1943.

ballarat presbytery experiences encouraging times

During the past twelve to eighteen months we have experienced many blessings, especially since the reorganisation of our parish boundaries. Although there have been some traumas and problems with some minor problems still remaining to be solved, by the grace of God, Presbytery now has significant progress to report.

Daylesford is now an appointment parish with finance sufficient to support a full time ordained ministry that will be aimed at revitalising the new parish with the emphasis on outreach. A new home mission station at Carisbrook and Castlemaine was made possible by funding from the Home Mission Committee which will allow for full-time ministry by a home missionary, Mr John Gething. This ministry constitutes an advantage that Carisbrook has not experienced for many years. Ballarat North, comprising Scots, Ballarat, Mt. Prospect and Smeaton is now also a new appointment parish made possible by funding from the Home Mission and Maintenance of the Ministry committees. Full time ministry is something that neither Smeaton nor Mt. Prospect have experienced for many years. This three-point parish now has ordained ministry provided by Rev. Grant Vayne.

In addition to these advances, the Home Mission Station of Skipton-Lismore now has an appointed home missionary, Mr. George Smith, and is looking forward to consolidation and expansion of ministry under his leadership, while the Home Mission Station of Ararat is about to be declared an appointment parish with full time ministry to be provided by Mr. Ian Hutton, an exit student from the Presbyterian Theological College. A further

blessing for Ararat is that they are about to have access to a building which is being purchased by the Home Mission Committee for the Ararat congregation's exclusive use.

The congregation of Lexton has been amalgamated with the congregation at Ballarat West, (now renamed Grace Presbyterian church). This new parish of Ballarat West (Lexton and Grace congregations), which is progressing well under the ministry of Rev. John Stasse, now has the opportunity to appoint a part time assistant pastor to assist Rev. Stasse in his ministry.

Further to the West, the appointment parish of Horsham-Marnoo, under the ministry of Rev. John Brennan, is continuing to reduce its reliance on subsidies from the Presbyterian Church of Victoria's committees.

Home Missionary, Mr. Ron Williamson leads an enthusiastic and growing congregation at Kaniva-Nhill and the charge of Ballarat South, until recently functioning through the provision of weekly supply, has now progressed to the point where the Lord has provided sufficient funding for them to "call" an ordained minister. Presbytery asks you to pray that the Lord will provide a suitable minister to lead the parish into what appears will be a fruitful the future.

Presbytery gives praise and thanks to our great God who never ceases to show the wonders of His grace to all who come to Him through our Lord Jesus Christ. Please encourage your congregations to join with us in this prayer of thanksgiving and intercession.

From a report presented to the Presbytery of Ballarat by its Moderator, the Rev. John Brennan

hume presbyterian has its first annual camp ... and other matters of interest

The end of June saw the Hume Presbyterian Church engage in their first annual family camp at the Plenty Valley Conference Centre just north of Whittlesea. Some 75% of the congregation attended the weekend event with another 20% rolling up on Saturday to participate in the various activities for the day. The weatherman promised a cold first night and he delivered as temperatures plummeted to near zero degrees over nightfall but a warm fire and a heated floor kept the chills away.

The theme for the week-end was "Loving God" with Pastor Scott Kroeger delivering three talks entitled, "The Loving Christian", "The Committed Christian" and "The Totalled Christian". These talks were enhanced with PowerPoint displays that used a number of visuals to help get the point across. The children were all under the care of Peter and Clare Dunstan from the Heathmont PC who managed to charm them all leaving the adults to enjoy the teaching. The Dunstans had the children develop Biblical play on David and Goliath complete with costumes and memorised verses and lines. They even managed to pull in a ringer from the crowd to play Goliath—it was obvious to the congregation in the evening performance that the pastor had had acting lessons in the past.

The afternoon was spent in free time playing games, hiking, chatting, and catching up. It was a wonderful time of bonding for the entire congregation. The evening saw a talent show of sorts where lots of laughter and cheers were heard. The church music team lead three sessions of praise and worship times which was really good—especially seeing emerging new talent coming along. The Senior Youth Group was in charge of developing and directing the course of the Sunday morning worship. Members of the congregation were overjoyed at with the worship of God as led by these fine young people as the Pastor preached powerfully on the concluding talk of Loving God.

With a great camp site, great food, great hosts, and great teaching the experience of our first family camp was a dandy... and one we will do again next year, God willing!

hume PC mission conference

The World Mission sub-committee of the Hume Presbyterian Church's Out-Reach Committee decided that it was necessary to raise the profile of missions in the congregation by having its first annual missions conference. Having developed a comprehensive missions statement and policy which was backed by the Session of elders, the stage was set for a week of missions emphasis sandwiched between two Sundays.

The first Sunday had Pastor Scott Kroeger preaching from 1 Corinthians 9 on Faith, Promise, Giving. The World Missions sub-committee issued commit-

ment forms in which people were urged to pledge a certain amount of money over the next year, (over and above their normal tithes & offerings) in order to generate income to give to world mission enterprises. Examples were given as to how people might do or create a project that will bring in extra income to fill the promise made to God's cause of the Gospel. Based on the total outcome The Hume PC hopes to increase annually the total amount of mission giving. A sumptuous banquet of international cuisine was shared by all after the morning service.

The second Sunday saw a missionary from the Bush Missionary Society as our special missions speaker. The Bush Mission Society is Australia's oldest mission. The missionary is a long time friend of Scot Kroeger's who does Bible teaching and preaching to people of all ages in many different contexts. His main purpose of inviting him to speak was to hear of his work as a bible teacher with Country Network in Siberia, Islamic Russia, Uzbekistan and Northern India. Because he enters these countries legally, but does missionary work that is highly illegal, we cannot divulge his name. He goes in and teaches seminary level courses to young pastors through an interpreter. This is very dangerous work as working among Orthodox Church officials and militant Islamic and Hindu people has brought about the torture and death of many of those to who he has taught. Some of the stories of his friends and colleagues were horrific.

But the good news is that the Gospel of Jesus Christ is thriving in those areas and the Hume PC is committing itself to assisting the spread of the Gospel there and elsewhere for the cause of Christ.

new ministry position

In what is believed to be a first in our presbytery, if not the denomination, the Hume Presbyterian Church has hired one of its two elders to a part time position of Ministry Coordinator. Elder Bert Zandt will be employed two days a week to help with the church's database, do parish visitation and help implement the Hume PC's Vision Statement regarding the development of small group ministry. In addition to his other duties as Session Clerk, presbytery and GA delegate, Bert will sink his teeth into this additional paid work.

"We have a strong two-office" view of the eldership on this Session and believe there is nothing wrong with employing capable elders to do this kind of work if

called to it", said Pastor Scott Kroeger. Elder Zandt responded, "Since my forced early retirement, I have been looking for such an opportunity as this and praise God for the opportunity." The position is unique in that it is being filled by a member of the Session and not another ordained minister or candidate. This unusual approach to staffing a growing church is hoped to spread among other of our denominations churches.

encouraging growth at croydon hills

At Croydon Hills Presbyterian church recently we celebrated God's faithfulness by holding a special thanksgiving Sunday. We were celebrating the many signs of growth that we have seen in the life of our congregation in recent months. We have been encouraged by a modest growth in the number of people who worship with us at CHPC each week and in a continuing improvement in our financial situation thanks to the generous hearts of our people, and also to the kindness of the Glen Waverley-Knoxfield congregation who remembered our particular needs when making recommendations on the distribution of funds from the sale of their property. The other area of growth that excites us is a spiritual one with the recent ordination of two new elders, Paul Humphreys and Paul Veith. Up until this point we have needed the very able assistance of Colin Morrow as an assessor elder to help us in our session meetings. We are all very thankful to Collin for his commitment to our church, and we give thanks to the Lord for the great wisdom that he has injected into our discussions and planning over the last three plus years.

We are also thankful to God for the part that our congregation has been able to play in supporting, sending, and receiving people from the mission field. We have a good number of people working in missions, both at home and overseas - the Bennet family working in PNG; and the Manley family working in the Middle East. At home in Melbourne, we have Barbara Brown working with the Navigators; Aileen Humphreys working at Melbourne Uni with the Christian Union (CU); and Paul Humphreys, also working with CU at Melbourne Uni.

In addition we have another couple, Graham and Sue Hammond who are ready to go overseas but are waiting now on receiving full support so that they can serve with Wycliffe in Ukarumpa, PNG. I would like to take this opportunity to rec-

ommend them to all the Presbyterian Churches in Victoria. If your missions committee is looking for a new work to support let me encourage you to consider supporting Graham and Sue on a long term basis. They are being trained as centre managers with a key work waiting to be done in PNG and all that is required is further funding.

We thank God for his great faithfulness to his church at Croydon Hills and look forward with joy to what he has in store for us in the future.

God bless you.

Matt James (Minister, Croydon Hills)

young men get wise about relationships at heathmont

How well are young men prepared for entering into relationships - either as preparation for the dating process or, (and especially "or"), when contemplating the huge responsibilities that are assumed in marriage? Andrew Venn realised that some of the younger male members of his congregation seemed to need some help in addressing issues to do with their relationships with girls and thought that even the young marrieds among them could also benefit from frank teaching and discussion around this subject. It occurred to him also that the many failures in marriages (even in Christian marriages) were in no small way the result of sentimental and irresponsible romanticising and degrading of the male-female relationship by popular culture. So, using the lyrics of popular songs and current cultural mores portrayed in film and anecdotally, Andrew has designed a mentoring seminar comprising four segments that goes some way to covering the complexities and pitfalls of male-female relationships from the male perspective. Saturday 16th July was the day set aside for confronting these young married men and young "hopefuls" some of the hard truths about the realities of life where the other sex is concerned. Entitled **Marriage Myths... Busted! Exploding some popular myths about marriage**, Andrew gave an in-your-face dose and don'ts of responsible attitudes and behaviour in relationships, both before and after marriage, all firmly underpinned by Biblical truth. Sixteen young men turned up and were subjected to an intense time of mentoring with opportunity for questioning and exploring this vital subject. The two hours (+ morning tea) allowed to cover the material turned out to be quite inadequate and subsequent presentations

will run to four hours with lunch break. Those who attended were very enthusiastic about the subject matter and the consequences for them in their marriages and hoped-for marriages and most stayed behind at the end to discuss many of the issues touched on during the presentation. Perhaps the most encouraging comment any speaker can hear, "When are you doing this again"? will ensure that there will be another mentoring seminar of the Marriage Myths... Busted! in the new year. Andrew is happy to receive enquiries about his seminar.

selected news from the presbytery of kilnoorat...

Among the young people 32 young people (3 from Koroit, 4 from Noorat, 3 from North Warrnambool, 1 from Terang, 5 from Geelong West, 1 from Portland and 15 from Warrnambool) attended the Presbytery Youth Camp at Nelson over the weekend of April 22-24, 2005. Camp leaders were Philip and Sandra (also chief cook) Burns and Camp Speaker was Ps. David Assender from the Geelong West Church. David led studies on the topic 'Getting Connected', based on the vine and branches relationship found in John 15. The food, teaching, fellowship and fun at the camp were much enjoyed and all are looking forward to the next!

in the warrnambool parish

While gearing up to be ready to host the Assembly in October, the congregation at St John's has adjusted well to the new services times which commenced in February. Services are now held at 9:30am (traditional), 11am (all age) and 7pm. A morning tea between the 9:30 and 11am services is the meeting point between the two morning congregations. The first of a regular 5th Sunday combined service (at 10am) was held for the whole parish in May, followed by a meal of soup and hot dogs. Between 15-20 young people from Warrnambool, North Warrnambool and Koroit also meet each Sunday afternoon at 5:30pm for Bible study, fellowship and food at the Burns'. So far this year the group has completed the course Simply Christianity and is now well into The Bible Explained.

In the North Warrnambool HMS

The new North Warrnambool Home Mission Station (known as North Community Church) began meeting in King's College (in an area central to the growing North Warrnambool area) in

February. Regular supply has been provided by Rev. Neil Benfell and Fraser Diack. Average attendance has been between 20-25 including children and young people.

in the koroit-port fairy parish

In a brave move, Session resolved to disband regular Bible Study groups and instead form nine new Home/Cell groups with the result that numbers in small groups have doubled! Each home group is benefiting from a series of RC Sproul DVD's and fellowship together. A new initiative has also been the commencement of a 5th Sunday combined meal, songs and fellowship night for the 4 congregations. 25-30 attended the first of these held in May.

in casterton?

Presbytery is desirous of setting up a brand new work in Casterton through a tent-making ministry. Funds for this purpose have been made available to the Presbytery through a bequest left to the Trust Corporation. Although advertisements for 'expressions of interest' have gone out far and wide, as yet there has been no response! Please pray with us that God will clearly direct us in this matter.

Philip Burns

new ministry at koo wee rup and cardinia

In January 2004 the Presbytery of Flinders declared that the two preaching places of Koo Wee Rup and Cardinia, formerly part of the Cranbourne Parish, were to be joined to become a new

Home Mission Station. This change was foreshadowed many years ago by the Flinders Presbytery but for various reasons was not acted upon. The Rev Walter Zurrer was appointed Moderator of this newly created home mission station by the Flinders Presbytery in July 2004. Both congregations, though these days small in number, have a long history of Christian witness in their respective communities.

On the 13th November this year (2005), Cardinia will be marking its 90th year of witness with a special service at 11am, to be followed by a luncheon. The members look forward to welcoming former members of the congregation as well as the folk from the Koo Wee Rup congregation to join in that service. The guest preacher for that special service will be the Rev Andrew Bray, who ministered within the Cranbourne parish prior to becoming a candidate to the Presbyterian Theological College.

In March 2006 the Koo-wee-rup congregation will be holding its 110th anniversary service, another milestone in its witness for the Lord in that town and district. Recently, the State Moderator, the Very Rev Dr Allan Harman, accompanied by us wife, Mairi, made his official visit to the Home Mission Station. At a combined service held at Koo Wee Rup, with a good representation from both congregations, the Moderator preached from Rom.8:31 & 32. At the luncheon afterwards, he spoke of his trip to India and his important involvement in the national defence forces chaplaincy committee. It was a very special day for the home mission station when the members were encouraged and the Lord's name uplifted.

To God be the glory and thanks.
[Ps.100:2 & 3]

The Christian Education & Nurture Committee
from a bequest in its care, is offering to fund approved members of the PCV who have attended facilitator training in the *Focus on the Family* program,
how to drug proof your kids
There will be a limited number of funded places available each year.

To receive a full fee refund, members should enclose their receipt from *Focus on the Family*, after undergoing the training, with a letter of recommendation from their session, and send them to **Rev. Andrew Slater** -19 Bond Ave. Blackburn South, 3130.
ph. 9877 5951 email: daslater@alphalink.com.au

sudanese at pioneers

Sundays at Pioneers have become somewhat lively in recent times. Our normal 9.30 am morning congregation usually has 70 to 90 adults and children attending, sometimes more, showing the multi-racial face which is becoming increasingly common in quite a few of our Melbourne congregations. A crèche and two Sunday School classes are in operation, though variable attendance is a concern.

The afternoon Sudanese service (Nuer language), led by Pastor Choul Yat, starts around 3pm and finishes around 5.30pm, with between 70 and 100 adults and young people regularly attending, 0 with about 150 young children meeting in a Sunday School. Once per month we have Sunday Night Alive with 20 plus attending for a shared meal, singing, prayer and, beginning in April, an excellent four-part

video series by Timothy George, entitled "Christianity and Islam".

Combining the original Pioneers community with a new immigrant community from a very different background is quite a challenge and requires lots of patience and prayer! Particular challenges are deepening the understanding of the Christian faith amongst first and second generation Christians, building Christian families, learning to give (including the fact that a 20¢ coin in the collection plate is an inappropriate amount), and getting a properly functioning Sunday School up and running. Pastor Choul Yat is supported by his great friend Tut Jock and a committee of fine Christians. We have been greatly assisted by the purchase of an 11 seater bus made possible by a grant from the St Andrew's Foundation. Pastor Choul (I have become Pastor David!) is married to Katrina and they have four young children,

so typical of all our Sudanese.

Listening to the Sudanese singing with their drums is a wonderful experience and their general enthusiasm a real tonic. Pastor Choul hopes to complete the required studies at the Presbyterian Theological College this year that will enable him to be called as a minister of the Presbyterian Church of Australia. Those 20¢ coins will need to be exchanged for real paper money!

David Palmer

fellow workers – now online

The *fellow workers* website is up and running at www.fellowworkers.pcvic.org.au. Past issues are available online to read or download. There is also an email link on the site so readers can contact the Ed. directly.

by the rivers of babylon

martin de pyle – 30th may 2005

Well the first month has past quickly. The flight from Australia to Kuwait via Diego Garcia was uneventful as were the first 10 days spent in Camp Virginia to the north of Kuwait City. There were some memorable sand storms though!

We then travelled north by road into Iraq and settled into what will be home for the next six to nine months, Camp Smitty. To describe the camp isn't hard. Lot's of tents, huts, military equipment and porta loos all gathered together in a small area surrounded by a berm topped with razor wire. The view over the top is all very much the same, open, flat, barren country with little or no vegetation.

In the middle of the day the heat can only be described as extreme. Most of the work tents are air-conditioned, but if I'm somewhere and the generator fails, I quickly find another place with one that works. The air con's are usually not brilliant, but they're better than nothing.

Australian Forces are sharing the facilities here at Smitty with the Brits. They are good to work with and there is a real sense of co-operation at all operational levels. Their cooks are good too, not least because there is always plenty of gravy to put on my chips! A small number of local civilians have been employed to do some of the general work around the camp and so I've been trying to get them to teach me some basic Arabic.

At this stage there is both a morning and evening worship services on a Sunday. I am sharing the preaching with the British Chaplain but next month he will be away so I'll be covering them both. They have been well attended with some good question times after the service. I have been preaching from Genesis in the mornings with an emphasis upon Abraham and his life of faith. Considering that the Ziggurat of Ur, a large monument to mark the alleged birthplace of Abraham, is close by it seemed only appropriate to start preaching about him. In the evenings I have started a series in 1 John.

I have had lots of discussions about Christianity and what it means to believe in Jesus Christ. As we are so closely involved with the Iraqi people who take their commitment to Islam so seriously, quite a number have taken the opportunity to find out how the Christian faith differs. I pray that God will continue to give me many more opportunities to speak so openly about the glorious truth of His Word.

Although communications are very limited, I have been able to keep in fairly good contact with Kaylene and the boys. They have settled back quickly into the congregation at Swan Hill and I am so thankful they are being well loved and cared for by them.

Thankyou to all who are praying for the Lord's work here in Iraq. I am very conscious of the wider support that I am receiving and I pray that God will bless you in your spheres of service for Him.

Martin de Pyle is the Army Chaplain deployed with Australian soldiers working in the Al Muthanna province of Iraq.