

the presbyterian banner

December 2010

*The grass withers and the flowers fall,
but the word of our God stands forever.
Isaiah 40:8*

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Editorial

A recent survey apparently showed that there is definitely less respect amongst younger people today than there has been before. So – what's new? Anyone would realise this with a simple perusal of the news headlines. Senior citizens everyday in our land are being beaten up and robbed and otherwise dispossessed.

I got to wondering, though: How could that be so? Where did this lack of respect actually come from?

I heard a story that gave one reason for the disrespect. It involved a young Christian man who was waiting for the train. While he was doing that, he sat on one of many seats at the railway station. Further along from him was a personal shopping trolley. Nearby an elderly man was speaking to a middle-aged man. After two minutes the elderly man approached the young man and said, 'You stole my seat.' Then he and his companion began to tongue-lash the young man over the matter.

The young man expressed his surprise. He pointed out there were empty seats next to him and that what they were saying was quite illogical.

This did not stop the older man, though. He went on and on about lack of respect by the young for their elders, and ended by saying that when the young man was a boy he should have been appropriately physically punished for such disrespect.

To this the young man replied, 'You're telling me to respect my elders, yet you're not showing respect for me by threatening me.'

The middle-aged man responded to this by saying that he would have bashed him except for the cameras all around them.

We are reaping what we sow. One selfish generation begets another selfish generation. So let's be all the more sure that we are shining out Christ's light and showing others the difference faith makes. Let's care for all people because of the One who ultimately cared for us—and still does.

With this issue we come to the end of *The Presbyterian Banner* for 2010. But, Lord willing, we will be back in the New Year. And that work of the Lord's will be helped by His people supporting our work through their prayers and their subscriptions and gifts for the magazine. Renew as soon as you can, if you haven't already done so, or take out a subscription for yourself or through a bulk effort in your local congregation. We have aimed to be a 'coffee table' periodical — one that our folk will feel happy to share with their visitors and others. We look forward to further exhorting and encouraging you in the next new year of our Lord.

*A new command I give you: Love one another.
As I have loved you, so must you love one another.
By this all men will know you are my disciples,
if you love one another.*

John 13:34-35

Cover Photo: A scene in King's Park, Perth, Western Australia

The Presbyterian Banner is the official magazine of the Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia. The PCEA was established in 1846 and adheres to the Westminster Confession of Faith (1647) as its doctrinal standard.

Literary contributions are welcome. Submission by email is preferred.

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This magazine is available as a pdf file on the Church Website: www.pcea.org.au

The Banner on the wider Church

Free Church Stance On Worship

I confess very happily that I am an inclusive Presbyterian: I've very ready, despite my own prejudices, to live in the same church with office-bearers who have different viewpoints on many issues that are not decided by our Confession of Faith. I'm also very happy to have close fellowship with churches like the Orthodox Presbyterian Church in the USA that do not have the same form of worship as ourselves, but do cling loyally to the Reformed Faith. Still, I'm very sorry to see that the Free Church of Scotland on 19 November voted 98-84 to change its position on unaccompanied singing of inspired material in public worship.

The matter of the propriety of limiting sung praise in public worship to inspired material without musical accompaniment has been under discussion in the Free Church for several years. Of course our sister is entitled to make its own decisions in accordance with its constitution. Still, it's the way the matter has been raised and dealt with that is of particular concern.

As well as rescinding certain past decisions (1905, 1910, 1932) – not a bad idea if simply replaced with a simple Declaratory Act as to the meaning of the vows – the Assembly resolved:

“5. The General Assembly declare that purity of worship requires that every aspect of worship services, including sung praise, be consistent with the Word of God and with the whole doctrine of the Confession of Faith approved by previous Assemblies of this Church.

“6. The General Assembly ordain that every service of congregational worship shall include the singing of Psalms.

“7. The General Assembly ordain that, with regard to the sung praise of congregations in worship, each Kirk Session shall have freedom, either to restrict the sung praise to the Psalms, or to include paraphrases of Scripture,

and hymns and spiritual songs consistent with the doctrine of the Confession of Faith; that each Kirk Session shall have freedom whether to permit musical accompaniment to the sung praise in worship, or not.

“8. The General Assembly advise that, notwithstanding the foregoing, no Kirk Session should agree to a change in sung praise or musical accompaniment against the wishes of the minister of the congregation, and that a visiting minister, presiding at a service in a congregation where the aforementioned freedom to use uninspired materials of praise and musical instruments has been exercised, may exercise that freedom or not as he sees fit.

“9. The General Assembly ordain that in meetings of Church Courts the use



of uninspired materials of praise and of instrumental music will be avoided.

“10. The General Assembly appoint a Special Committee (using consultants as required) to investigate the feasibility and desirability of producing a recommended list of paraphrases of Scripture and hymns and spiritual songs consistent with the Word of God and the whole doctrine of the Confession of Faith, and whether the Free Church ought to produce a praise resource supplementary to the Psalter, and to report to the 2011 General Assembly.”

These decisions arise from a plenary Assembly of all ministers and an

Rowland S. Ward

equal number of elders. Against the advice of the Assembly Clerk, James Maciver, it was claimed that the plenary nature of the Assembly rendered Barrier Act procedure unnecessary. Barrier Act procedure dates from 1697 as a method for regulating the exercise of the lawful power of the church. The relevant part reads:

“...considering...that it will mightily conduce to the exact obedience of the Acts of Assemblies, that General Assemblies be very deliberate in making of the same, and that the whole Church have a previous knowledge thereof, and their opinion be had therein, and for preventing any sudden alteration or innovation, or other prejudice to the Church, in either doctrine or worship or discipline, or government thereof, now happily established; do, therefore,

appoint, enact, and declare, that before any General Assembly of this Church shall pass any Acts, which are to be binding Rules and Constitutions to the Church, the same Acts be first proposed as overtures to the Assembly, and, being by them passed as such, be remitted to the consideration of the several Presbyteries of this Church, and their opinions and consent reported by their commissioners to the next General Assembly following, who may then pass the same in Acts, if the more general opinion of the Church thus had agreed thereunto.”

The proposal passed was not what was recommended by the relevant Assembly Committee (which essentially recommended the *status quo*), but was an amendment not considered by presbyteries beforehand. In the setting of the plenary Assembly a decision might well be taken that was not sufficiently weighed and considered, although a majority of Sessions were known to be opposed to change. I have the very distinct impression that a significant number of commissioners were anx-

The Free Church Weakens

The Free Church of Scotland has voted to relax its rules to allow hymn singing and the use of instruments in its churches. Such a decision must be principial, thus based on scripture and follow due process, not as a result of incessant white-anting. And there is the rub. For wherever you turn to read of this quite momentous decision the only cause given is that it is being done to attract new worshippers, particularly those disenchanted with the Church of Scotland. However much may be said about the process leading up to this point and the recent history of discussing it, there are no clear scriptural and confessional grounds given to support this.

Further Relevant recent History

There is also even more relevant recent history than that mentioned in the grounds of the decision made. That history involved the departure of 20% of the Free Church ministers and 10% of the total membership into the Free Church Continuing some ten years ago. That effectively took out more of the more conservative clergy and lay people and made it easier for this more liberal position to be adopted.

One only needs to recall the departure of 10% of the membership from the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands in 1944-45 to realize that that hastened the liberalism with the Reformed Churches there (GKN). Within a generation all was lost biblically. And there is even more relevant older history of Presbyterian churches, in Scotland and elsewhere, with the turning away from inspired songs part of the turning away from the Bible in the late 19th century. Within a generation all was lost biblically.

The failure to involve the wider membership

There is also the factor that here the wider church membership was not involved in this decision. That will mean much unhappiness. Their distinct identity has been subverted and this it will also invariably mean further splitting within our sister church, and that is only to be mourned. Just think, they've only just got a new psalter!

Sjirk Bajema

ious to avoid another split after the division in 2000, and so accepted the proposal as the best obtainable, but in the setting of Presbytery meetings it might well have been rejected. The decision also might have had something to do with the long-standing lack of a positive and succinct statement on the vows about worship, as well as the rather complicated legislation of the Free Church hitherto which might convey to sensitive consciences the thought that other forms of worship were of necessity to be regarded as sinful.

An Unwise Procedure

So the Free Church, by the barest of margins, has enacted new binding laws without Barrier Act procedure, and rescinded a contrary position adopted in 1910, again without the Barrier Act procedure required by the Act of 1736. I don't think this was wise procedure and I'm afraid it may cause trouble. I confess some sympathy with the supporters of the substance of the decision, but their

pushing the matter through as they have is disappointing. (I guess as a Church we can't be too critical since we did something similar re our relations with the Free Church in 2005, but I was opposed then to not following Barrier Act procedure.) William Mackay, a former elder in Melbourne, rightly pointed out in debate how inappropriate it was to make this decision so soon after the new Psalter had been produced.

I know that there was frustration that the Free Church worship style seemed a barrier to evangelicals disillusioned with the now so liberal Church of Scotland, but I hardly imagine introducing hymns and musical instruments is really the solution, assuming that it is within the church's constitutional power to do so. If we have a proper balance in our practice, singing the psalms is liberating, honours the word, protects the conscience and is truly ecumenical.

Ultimately Liberalism?

The decision will not of itself lead to theological liberalism in the Free Church but when a few high flyers thumb their noses at the vows and garner support from others, with good men caving in for the sake of peace, you have pragmatism operating and ultimately you will get liberalism.

Of course most Free Church congregations will not change from exclusive use of the psalms, but some will. I remain very happy to have close relations with the Free Church, our sister if not our mother, but have no desire to follow in her direction on the worship issue. One very happily supports the superiority of the Psalms of the word of God, and it was pleasing to note at our second Leaders' Training day in Melbourne on 20 November that our two newest ministers in Southern Presbytery (Messrs Bajema and Miranda) spoke so positively of their use in public worship.

Was this space for your church news and photographs?

Ask your minister or elder how your congregation can be part of this positive promotion of the denomination, as well as keeping the rest of us up with what's happening!

Camps, special events, youth news, seniors, engagements, marriages, births, anniversaries, obituaries... the list goes on and on!

Perhaps you could volunteer to send in some news and photos?

The Past for Today

Why Study *The Westminster Assembly*? Chad B. van Dixhoorn

Last year my wife announced that I had been studying the Westminster Assembly longer than the gathering had met. She was amused. I had been working on the Assembly for eleven years; the Assembly had met for ten. In defense of myself, I should say that I discovered recently that the Assembly actually met for eleven years. But since it took me another year to figure this out, Emily's point still stands: this has taken a while. When a person spends a decade of life working on a single project, it requires some justification. Really, what is so special about the Westminster Assembly anyway? Since this is a question that I am often asked, and since by now I ought to have an answer, I want to provide the readers of *New Horizons* with that answer. Elsewhere and on another occasion it might be appropriate to mention some of the failures of the Assembly. Here and now I wish to catalogue six reasons why various people, myself included, continue to find the Westminster Assembly an event worthy of their attention.

A Great Story

The first reason why the Assembly is worth noticing, is that it is a great story. The Westminster Assembly — what foreigners then called the 'Synod of London' — was in many ways the high point of the Puritan experiment. The synod came after years of suffering by godly people, and although some of that suffering was self-induced through bad decisions and ill-timed confrontations, most of it was not. Indeed, the plight of the godly, never good, had reached one of its all-time lows in the 1630s. But then, unexpectedly, events in England, Scotland, and Ireland conspired together to produce a war, and the war called for a religious solution to the religious problems, and eventually an Assembly of 121 godly divines (theologians) was called, plus thirty political observers.

The Assembly opened on July 1, 1643, and from that point forward the gathering was celebrated or hated as

the mastermind behind a revolution in the church — but never ignored. Members of the Assembly were paraded down London's streets and feasted at banquets. People across Britain and Europe sought the Assembly's patronage and approval. Everyone from an unknown Muslim to an aristocrat hoping to secure the English throne made their way to Westminster Abbey to meet with the Assembly or to ask permission to hear them debate. People wrote from



The Assertion of Liberty of Conscience by the Independents at the Westminster Assembly of Divines. Painted by John Rogers Herbert, R.A. (1810-1890)

Europe to present the Assembly with their cases of conscience. Printers tried to get the rights to the Assembly's productions and pirated them if they could not. Booksellers promoted the works of Assembly members, and newspapers reported their activities — or, in the absence of any real news, simply made something up. The assembly had been called by the English Parliament to reform the doctrine, liturgy, and discipline of the Church of England, and it did much more than it was asked. It reformed the church and the universities. From birth to marriage to the grave, no ceremony or symbol was left untouched. Its impact, after the signing of a Solemn League and Covenant with England's neighbours to the north and west, was also felt in Scotland and Ireland. Often at great risk to themselves, their families, and their property, Assembly members continued to meet through three civil wars, notable London riots, and one showdown with Parliament.

Set in an ancient abbey, across the street from the rebel parliament and a constant fairground of activity, the Assembly enjoyed a storybook setting and enough messy drama and high politics to entertain Christians and non-Christians alike. Perhaps that is why much of the work on the Assembly has been supported by the British Academy and the Leverhulme Trust, and is to be published by a university press. The Assembly was a major player in one of the most significant decades in British history, and historians recognize a good story when they see one.

An Unusual Assembly

The second reason why the Assembly is fascinating is that it left behind a documentary record almost unparalleled in the history of Christianity. Most of the work of the Christian church is done by ordinary people, but most of its history is told through the lens of great theological heroes. The reason for this, in part, is that

the records of synods and councils are often sparse. Heroes have biographers; church councils do not. Celebrated people often leave behind their writings, whereas councils leave a creed, some canons or resolutions, and perhaps their votes and less significant decisions. The Westminster Assembly is different. Most of the men who attended were not already legends in their own day. Membership at the Assembly made a reputation, not the other way around. The Assembly is remembered more than its participants — not least because one of the synod's scribes spent much of his time working as the Assembly's historian. In thousands of pages, he not only recorded Assembly decisions, but also speeches, comments, and the arguments of individual members. In a treasure trove for historians and biographers alike, he left a record of events and a window into personalities that is unique, or virtually unique, in the history of

Christian synods and councils.

The Assembly also produced dozens of papers, petitions, and directories, along with two confessions (one shorter, one longer) and two catechisms (one shorter, one longer). The extant minutes document almost two thousand examinations of preachers for churches, fellows for colleges, and heretics for heresy. More than twice that number came before the Assembly.

The surviving record, it must be said, will never be easy to read, nor is it complete. Some sessions have multiple accounts, some hardly anything at all. Some debates are summarized in a line, some in thousands of words. But if one adds to the Assembly's own records the journal of an Assembly member discovered in 2001, we now, at least, have information about every day that the Assembly met, excepting the last year of its meetings, where we have newspaper reports only. Nonetheless, the story of the Westminster Assembly can be told like few other stories of major Christian assemblies, and for this reason, too, it is worthy of our attention.

Surprising Relevance

In the third place, the Westminster Assembly is useful — especially when compared to some other turning points in Christian history — because of the surprising contemporaneity of its events. Many aspects of the Assembly's situation were much like our own.

The English civil wars of the 1640s and early 1650s, especially the first and longest war, led to a peculiar time in English social and religious history. One result of a government in Oxford (the King's) pitched against another in Westminster (Parliament's) was a lack of control over the printing press. The existence of two governments did not make printers twice as careful about what they published. Some of the political ideas that circulated were seen as revolutionary. Others, sometimes promoted by the same people, were judged heterodox theological ideas. Some were new, many were old, but for whatever reason, London's muddy streets had somehow proved, by 1643, to be an ideal seedbed for sectarian ideas. The war served as a stimulus to social and religious radicalism and raised new challenges for

reform-minded people.

This has proved to be a simply wonderful stroke of Providence, although no orthodox person at the time of the Assembly would have thought so. The Assembly was confronted with a huge variety of deviant theologies, not simply the traditional foes of Roman Catholics and 'High Church,' 'hard-hearted' Episcopalians. Suddenly it was not enough to deal with traditional errorists. Sceptics, atheists, antinomians, and 'Spirit-led' fanatics of all sorts were attacking the Assembly and the Christian faith. Respect for learned ministers disappeared almost overnight. Assailants laboured to find just the right phrase to express their contempt for 'the holy fatherhoods' and 'the reverend and most sanctified assembly'.

Assembly members were privileged to speak into this context in the 1640s — a context much more like our own than that of, say, the 1630s. This challenging context has given the writings of the Assembly a surprising freshness to generations of readers. Many people who have suffered from some of the worst side effects of evangelicalism and have subsequently stumbled across the Westminster Confession of Faith or Catechisms have wondered why these old texts speak so clearly to their current issues. A focus on the Assembly in its historical context helps us see why.



The Westminster Houses of Parliament

Doctrinal Discoveries

Creed-making assemblies do not make doctrine, they discover it. Despite the Reformation's great leap forward in understanding the Bible, inconsistencies and errors in thought persisted among many Reformed ministers. Scratch some of them hard, and you would find a medieval theologian with a Protestant veneer.

The Westminster Assembly provided an opportunity for men to ask their questions, expose their ignorance, learn from one another, and in the process become more Reformed. They debated the law, the gospel, Christology, the Trinity, justification, faith, repentance, adoption, grace, and glory. They hammered out the best support for biblical doctrines, answers to their opponents, and — very significantly — the best way of expressing those doctrines. The members of the Assembly, all of them learned men, held to an astonishing variety of formulations and expressions of what they considered to be biblical truth. Many of them appear to have clarified their ideas, or at least better understood their Reformed brothers, through their years at the Assembly.

My fourth reason for spending time with the Assembly was that it gave me — and could give you — an opportunity to listen in on a thoughtful conversation about almost every aspect of systematic and practical theology, from the problem of perfectionism in the Christian life to the difficulty of deciding whether there is an office of 'widow' in the church, to the challenge of ministering to people with the plague.

A Solid Trust in the Scriptures

The fifth reason why the Assembly is worthy of our attention is its thorough study of the Scriptures. Long before the Westminster Assembly was convened in July 1643, leading Puritans knew that they needed more than a dawn raid on the traditions of the English church. They needed a war. They had to completely eradicate the church's unbiblical elements and erect a strong doctrine of Scripture, properly applied.

The Westminster Assembly needed to create clear statements about what Holy Scripture is — as it did in the opening chapter of the Confession of Faith. It also had to state what Scripture is for and how it is to be used — as it did in its two catechisms, the directory for worship, and the directory for church government. And then it had to clarify how Scripture applies to matters of doctrine, life, worship, and church government — as it did in a chapter on

the liberty of conscience and in its various directories.

The minutes of the Assembly are filled with references to Scripture. All arguments needed to be supported by Scripture. It is impossible to read the records of the Assembly and not come away with the impression that these men loved God's revelation of himself, that they knew it, and that they knew it to be 'living and active'. They expected to shape others by wielding the Scriptures properly. It seems imperative to me that any body of Christians setting out to write a confession of faith needs to have the highest confidence in God's gracious self-revelation. The Assembly rejected offers of artificial light from the self-identified spiritual giants of their day, they remained open to all natural light when deciding matters in the realm of wisdom and prudence, and they endeavoured to judge all things by the divine light found in Scripture. Study the Assembly and you will see how difficult this can be — and how important.

Landmark Texts

The final reason why I study the Assembly is my interest in its landmark confessional and catechetical texts. I'm a minister, and it seems to me that a minister needs to be both steeped in the Word of God and familiar with the



*John Lightfoot, 1602-1675,
one of the clergy delegates*

best statements of faith produced by the Christian Church. These are prerequisites for usefulness to the Church. My confession is the Westminster Confession of Faith as revised in some parts by early American Presbyterians. When introduced to these texts as a young adult, I became increasingly interested in knowing enough about the Assembly, its members, and the seventeenth century that I could enjoy reading the Westminster Confession of Faith with

historical sensitivity. Eventually my hobby became my job.

Along the way, I found out that the Assembly produced more than a hundred other petitions, letters, and explanatory documents, many of which have survived. Some of these are significant texts in their own right, but I often find myself reading them in order to understand more precisely those greater texts now known as the Westminster Standards.

A million-word edition of the Assembly's records, both its minutes (which record speeches) and a documentary calendar (which reproduces most of the assembly's papers) is now with a publisher. With the introduction, appendixes, notes, and many smaller introductions and summaries throughout the edition, it offers a do-it-yourself history of the Westminster Assembly. I am hopeful that others will find these texts as helpful to read as I have myself. I also hope that time spent with the Assembly will help readers appreciate a confession of faith so rich in theology and full of scriptural truth.

The author is associate pastor of Grace OPC in Vienna, Va. Reprinted from New Horizons, Oct. 2010.

Obituary - Corrie van der Neut (1926-2010)

Corrie van der Neut (nee van Tatenhove) was born in Axel in the Dutch Province of Zeeland on 16 January 1926 and grew up in the dark days of Nazi occupation of The Netherlands in May 1940. She married John and they had three children, Levina, Wilma and Len. Levina died at age 3 but brought much love into the home. In 1956 the family came to Tasmania and lived in primitive accommodation for a while until they moved into a quaint and distinctive timber house in Main Street Ulverstone where they cared for an old lady, and later purchased the property. Eric was born in Tasmania, two girls, Veronica and Sandra were adopted, and other children fostered. About 40 years ago John, a painter, injured his back in a fall and was not able to work again, but it was a loving home. Corrie and John joined the congregation from the Reformed



Church in Rev Angus Beaton's time (1969-74). John was from the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands and Corrie from the so-called Liberated Churches which had separated in 1944. Corrie was a person who, once met, was not forgotten. She had the Frisian characteristic of outspokenness but she was full of practical good

sense and a godly approach to life. For a good number of years she was housebound but delighted in listening to the sermons and keeping up with church doings. She died on 2 November 2010 following a short illness but had been able to see all her family before she passed away. Following a short graveside service on 8 November conducted by David Kerridge, about 170 people crowded the funeral parlour for a thanksgiving service conducted by Dr Rowland Ward, her minister 1975-81. The large attendance, which included a woman from Western Australia she had fostered as a girl years before, and friends from other parts of Tasmania, attested to the high regard in which Corrie was held. 'The memory of the just is blessed.' - RSW

The World in the Banner

Crystal Cathedral Files for Bankruptcy Protection

An 18 October 2010 article by Michael Ireland of ASSIST News Service titled 'Crystal Cathedral Files for Bankruptcy Protection' reports that the Crystal Cathedral, the mega-church founded by the Rev. Robert H. Schuller in 1956 in a drive-in theater, has filed for bankruptcy protection. Mr Ireland cites a January 2010 Los Angeles Times report saying that church revenues began falling off after the Rev Robert A. Schuller, son of the church's founding pastor, left the Crystal Cathedral ministry in 2008 after having disagreements with the Rev. Robert H. Schuller, who had earlier made the Rev. Robert A. Schuller senior pastor of the Crystal Cathedral after the senior Schuller's retirement.

Current Crystal Cathedral leader Sheila Schuller Coleman, daughter of the Rev. Robert H. Schuller and sister of the Rev. Robert A. Schuller, said the bankruptcy declaration 'is just one more chapter in the book that He is continuing to write -- and we know that God's plans are good -- we have no doubt His chapter will be good!' The article 'Rev. Robert A. Schuller Removed as Senior Pastor of Crystal Cathedral by Rev. Robert H. Schuller' in the 29 October 2008 issue of *Presbyterians Week* cited a Crystal Cathedral church member who said that she preferred the younger Schuller's Scripture-laden sermons, and quoted the senior Schuller's 27 October 2008 sermon given two days after removing the Rev. Robert A. Schuller from the pulpit:

'I was called to start a mission, not a church... You don't try to preach... what is sin and what isn't sin. A mission is a place where you ask non-believers to come and find faith and hope and feel love.'

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+ Reformed Church in America, questions@rca.org

PCUSA Presbytery of Albany Unsuccessful in Closing Watervliet, New York, Church

A 6 October 2010 article by Danielle Sanzone in The Record titled 'Watervliet Congregation Takes Back Its Church, Joins New Presbytery' reports that the Jermain Memorial Presbyterian Church (JMPC) (Presbyterian Church (PCUSA)) in Watervliet, New York, was closed in May 2010 by the Albany Presbytery, who changed the locks and padlocked the church due to what the presbytery said was declining membership. One of the church members though, pointed out that the PCUSA had been making similar closures throughout the U.S. with at least one thing in common — a substantial endowment — US\$169,000+ in JMPC's case. The congregation on 5 October 2010 reclaimed the church because a provision in the Jermain will had the property returned to the nearest family heir if the church ever ceased to be used. A possible heir that lives in New York City deeded the church back to the congregation in March 2010, but the matter is still in process at the New York Supreme Court.

The Albany Presbytery denied that they are after the JMPC endowment, and contend that the JMPC celebration is premature. The presbytery though, has not so far contested the March 2010 deed ceding the church back to its congregation.

The congregation has renounced the jurisdiction of the Albany Presbytery and the PCUSA, and has presumably joined the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, termed the 'Evangelical Presbytery' in the The Record article.

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+ Evangelical Presbyterian Church, webmaster@epc.org

The Presbyterian Guardian Archives Now Available Online

The Presbyterian Guardian (1935-1979) was an important voice in the early years of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church in its vigorous opposition to modernism and its proclamation and defense of Reformed orthodoxy. Established on the eve of the founding of the denomination, it was closely associated with the OPC, although it remained an independent magazine.

Editors of the *Guardian* during its forty-four-year publishing history included H. McAllister Griffiths, J. Gresham Machen, Ned B. Stonehouse, Charles J. Woodbridge, Paul Woolley, Leslie W. Sloat, Robert E. Nicholas, John J. Mitchell, and J. Cameron Fraser.

The Presbyterian Guardian Archives are available at: <http://www.opc.org/guardian.html>
+ *The Orthodox Presbyterian Church, 607 North Easton Road, Building E, Box P, Willow Grove, Pennsylvania 19090*

Michigan Woman Charged with Housing Discrimination for Posting Ad Specifying a Christian Roommate on Church Bulletin Board

A 22 October 2010 article by Nathan Black in The Christian Post titled 'Christian Roommate Seeker Accused of Discrimination' reports that a thirty-one-year-old, single Michigan woman was charged with housing discrimination by the Fair Housing Center of West Michigan after she posted an ad for a 'Christian' roommate on the woman's church bulletin board. The civil rights complaint, filed in July 2010, accuses the woman of posting 'an advertisement which contained the following sentence: 'I am looking for a Christian roommate.' Alliance Defense Fund Senior Legal Counsel Joel Oster, who is representing the woman, said in a 21 October 2010 statement: 'It is completely absurd to try to penalize a single Christian woman for privately seeking a Christian room-

mate at church — an obviously legal and constitutionally protected activity. 'Not content to just lock Christians and their beliefs into the four walls of their church or home, some groups also want to invade those walls and force their own ideas upon them by force of law.'

+ *The Christian Post*,
info@christianpost.com

Egypt: Serious Incitement Against Coptic Christians Escalates

Persecution is escalating against Egypt's Christians — particularly the indigenous (non-Arab) Copts — as the government implements Sharia provisions that prohibit Christians from testifying against Muslims, enabling radicalised Muslims to assault, rob and even kill Christians with impunity. In May 2010 Youssef Ibrahim (a New York Sun reporter) claimed President Mubarak had brokered a quid pro quo deal with the Muslim Brotherhood: they would accept dynastic succession of power to Mubarak's son, Gamal, in exchange for freedom to advance Sharia (Islamic law) as well as restore over the Copts the rules of dhimmitude (i.e. accept subjugation or face jihad <http://www.dhimmitude.org/d_history_dhimmitude.html>).

On 15 September Muhammad Salim al-Awwa, former secretary-general of the International Union for Muslim Scholars, raged against Egypt's minority Copts on Aljazeera TV, falsely

accusing them of planning a coup against the Muslims. He claimed the Copts were importing weapons from Israel, that were being stockpiled in churches. Equally ridiculous was his claim that Egypt's security forces are unable to gain access to churches and monasteries to investigate. At the same time, Islamic inciters are spreading rumours that the Coptic Church is kidnapping converts to Islam and whisking them away to desert monasteries where they are tortured back to Christianity — the exact opposite of what actually happens. (Muslim converts to Christianity have been kidnapped and tortured to revert.)

Muslims have staged at least ten mass demonstrations since September with calls to massacre the Copts. Muslim demonstrators burned an effigy of Coptic Pope Shenouda (86) on 8 October while chanting, 'Shenouda, just wait, we will dig your grave with our own hands.' As incitement escalates and genocidal violence looms, the government of President Hosni Mubarak remains totally silent. The situation is extremely dangerous. Please pray for God to intervene, drawing the Copts into prayerful dependence and then answering their prayers for the glory of his own holy name. (Isaiah 37:20.)

+ *Religious Liberty Prayer Bulletin* | RLPB 079 | Wed 27 Oct 2010

PCA Church Denies Sponsored Cub Scout Pack Leadership to Mormon Parents

A 19 October 2010 article by Tom Breen in the Charlotte Observer titled 'No Scout Leadership Post in NC for Mormon Parents' reports that the parents of two members of the Cub Scout Pack chartered by Christ Covenant Church (CCC) (Presbyterian Church in America (PCA)) in Matthews, North Carolina, Jeremy and Jodi Stokes, were denied leadership roles in the Cub Scout Pack because the family members belong to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, a.k.a. the Mormons, because the sponsoring church does not consider Mormons to be Christians. The Stokes boys were allowed to remain in the Cub Scout Pack if the parents desired.

Mrs. Stokes commented: 'I can't believe they had the audacity to say, 'You can't be leaders but we want your boys. Are you kidding me? Do you really think I'd let my boys go there now?'

A spokesman for CCC said in an 18 October 2010 e-mail that CCC was taking action to 'assure that our parameters for leaders are clearly defined and well-communicated to volunteers and those interested in leadership roles for church sponsored programs such as the Boy Scouts.' The CCC e-mail message

Please note new subscription prices for 2011

Due to increased printing and postage costs the annual subscription rate for The Presbyterian Banner has had to be increased.

The new prices are \$30 per annum within a bulk order (5 or more), \$35 per annum for an individual subscription within Australia, and \$AU50 for individual overseas subscriptions.

We also welcome any donations to this ministry within our wider church life, as that helps sending our magazine to theological colleges and elsewhere.

Please send your subs in by mid-January to ensure continued reception

included a link to a site explaining the differences between Mormon and historical Christian doctrine.
+ *Charlotte Observer*, 600 South Tryon Street, Charlotte, North Carolina 28202, 704-358-5000, acaulkins@charlotteobserver.com

PCA Standing Judicial Commission Issues Rulings

The Presbyterian Church in America (PCA)'s Standing Judicial Commission (SJC) has recently released two decisions regarding respectively the Siouxlands Presbytery and the Nashville Presbytery.

A final decision was issued in SJC Case 2010-04 — [Teaching Elder] Art Sartorius, et al vs. Presbytery Of The Siouxlands regarding an October 2009 overture from the Foothills Community Church (FCC) asking the Siouxlands Presbytery to investigate Teaching Elder (TE) Dr. Joshua Moon based on statements in a paper TE Moon wrote in defense of TE Gregory Lawrence, who was being investigated for TE Lawrence's views on baptism considered by the majority of the investigating committee to lead to a "...strong presumption of guilt that TE Lawrence is teaching contrary to the Standards in a way that strikes at the fundamentals of the system and/or the vitals of religion in its doctrine of baptism,' i.e. doctrine congruent with doctrines of the New Perspective(s) on Paul, the theology of Norman Shepherd, and the Federal Vision, which in January of 2007 the Siouxlands Presbytery found to be unfavorable in comparison to the teaching of the Westminster Standards. The Siouxlands Presbytery voted to find no strong presumption of guilt in TE Joshua Moon. In November 2009, TE Brian Carpenter of the FCC complained against the Siouxlands Presbytery's response to the FCC overture.

The Presbytery denied the complaint. In January 2010, TEs Art Sartorius, Brian Carpenter, and Wes White forwarded the Carpenter complaint to the PCA General Assembly.

The issues considered by the SJC were '1) With respect to certain reports concerning TE Joshua Moon, was Siouxlands Presbytery sufficiently diligent and careful in compliance with

its responsibilities under BCO 31-2 [Procedure for deciding whether or not to initiate church discipline]?'; and '2) With respect to certain reports concerning TE Joshua Moon, did Siouxlands Presbytery err in finding TE Moon's testimony a satisfactory explanation concerning the reports and finding no strong presumption of guilt in TE Moon related to the reports?' The SJC's final rulings were respectively Yes and No.

A final decision was issued in SJC Case No. 2009-28 — Matt Ruff vs. Nashville Presbytery regarding accusations filed with the Nashville Presbytery of "deceit, manipulation, and schism" made by Matt Ruff against TE Dr. George Grant, pastor of Parish Presbyterian Church in Franklin, Tennessee, and Mr. Ruff's subsequent charges of a lack of appropriate action by the Nashville Presbytery in response to the findings about TE Grant.

The issues considered by the SJC were '1) Did Nashville Presbytery err by failing to conduct an adequate investigation pursuant to BCO 31-2 after receiving an adverse report concerning the character of one of its members?'; and .2) Did Nashville Presbytery err when, on the basis of the evidence before it, it failed to find a strong presumption of guilt as to offenses allegedly committed by one of its members?' The SJC's final rulings were respectively Yes and Yes, Mr. Ruff's complaint was sustained, and the matter was remanded to the Nashville Presbytery for further proceedings consistent with the SJC opinion.

+ *Presbyterian Church in America*, ac@pcanet.org

Faculty of Free Reformed Theology now the Faculty of John Calvin

The Faculté Libre de Théologie Réformée was inaugurated on 1st October 1974. The opening of the new Seminary was the result of cooperation on the part of three different groups working together to set up a centre for theological education independent of any of the existing church denominations. The Seminary adopted as its doctrinal standard the French Confession of Faith, *La Confession de La-Rochelle* (1559) and the *Declaration*

of Faith of the World Evangelical Alliance.

The Faculté was set up as a registered charity with independent funding. One of the bodies involved in agreement with the confessional basis and the organisational structure, was the *Evangelical Reformed Church of France (EREI)*. As the official Seminary of this denomination, the Faculté de Théologie Protestante had closed some years earlier owing to lack of candidates for the ministry. In 1973 and 1974 two synods voted to set up the new Seminary under the authority of an independent Board, on which the church was to have significant representation.

The second body involved was another registered charity, the legal owner of the property in Aix-en-Provence. It adopted the project in May 1974, allowing the new Seminary use of its premises.

Finally the new Seminary Board was made up of representatives of these two bodies and the three professors present at the time: evangelist Eugène Boyer, Paul Wells and François Gonin, the pastor of the Evangelical Reformed congregation in Aix. They were subsequently joined by Peter

Jones, fresh from Princeton Seminary and Pierre Courthial, whose arrival from the Reformed Congregation in Passy, Paris, gave a new impetus to the newly founded Seminary. Pierre Berthoud came a year later from l'Abri in Switzerland. So the Faculté Libre de Théologie Réformée was born. Its name indicated what its founders intended it to be. Now a more clearer, more explicit name has been chosen.

May the Lord bless His work amongst our fellow Calvinists in Calvin's country of birth. And we may rejoice too, for aren't we all now spiritual children of his?

+ *Taken from the College's September 2010 Newsletter*

Another Road Leading To Rome

A 29 October 2010 article on CatholicCulture.org titled 'US Bishops, Reformed Communities Move towards Mutual Recognition of Baptism' reports that the seventh round of the official Catholic-

Reformed dialogue in the United States concluded 8 October 2010 with the release of two documents, 1) 'These Living Waters: Common Agreement on Mutual Recognition of Baptism' — documents the movement towards an official recognition of one another's baptisms, and 2) 'This Bread of Life' — which explores the convergences and divergences of Catholic and Reformed teaching on the Lord's Supper.

Members of the dialogue process include the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, the Christian Reformed Church in North America, the Presbyterian Church (PCUSA), the Reformed Church in America, and the United Church of Christ.

+ *CatholicCulture.org*, c/o *Trinity Communications*, Post Office Box 582, Manassas, Virginia 20108, 703-636-7640

Lima News from Clive Bailey

Excerpt from his Nov 2010 Newsletter
The International Missions Board has asked that I continue in post beyond the end of my contracted period (the end of 2011), and that I give them an answer by the end of this year. A decision has to be made, soon, and I

would ask you to pray earnestly that we would know clearly the right way. The task that I was given to do, the handing over of the school to a local school board, has been caught up in the issues surrounding the forthcoming court case, in which a parent of one of the boys who died in the tragic accident in Scotland in July 2006 alleges negligence against the Free Church, Colegio San Andres and the former headmaster. That trial is scheduled to begin here in Lima in the Supreme Court on 1st December 2010. Please pray for a just decision, and remember too the families of the boys who died, as well as the San Andres community of staff, pupils and parents. As a result of these delays, the new local board for the school (ready and waiting) has yet to be formed, although there are signs that we may get the go-ahead from Edinburgh soon.

+ *cliveandruth@gmail.com*

Al-Qaeda Announces Christians Everywhere Are Legitimate Targets

Al-Qaeda front group The Islamic State of Iraq (ISI) on 2 November 2010 claimed responsibility for the 31 October 2010 attack and siege of the Our Lady of Salvation Church (Holy

Apostolic Catholic Assyrian Church of the East) in Baghdad, Iraq, in which fifty-eight persons were killed when security forces ended the siege 1 November 2010, and additionally stated that "all Christian centres, organisations and institutions, leaders and followers" are "legitimate targets."

ISI is demanding the release of two women in Egypt, the wives of Christian Coptic Orthodox Church of Egypt (CCOCE) priests, of whom the ISI claims one converted to Islam and the other wants to convert to Islam, and that both are being held against their will in CCOCE churches.

+ *Barnabas Aid*,

usa@barnabasaid.org

Trowel & Sword to be 'rested'

The denominational magazine of the Christian Reformed Church of Australia, *Trowel & Sword*, is likely to be out of publication for some time as a new editor has not been found.

Initially the magazine was going to be only available on-line as from next year but with the added factor of no editor being found, it will cease altogether for the meantime.

+ *Trowel & Sword*, November 2010

Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia

FAMILY CAMP

at

**The Tops Conference Centre,
Stanwell Tops, NSW**

**5 pm Monday 3rd January to
2 pm Friday 7th January 2011 (DV)**

Theme: The Holy Spirit in Biblical Christianity

Main Speaker: Rev. Iain Smith, (SPC, Hobart)

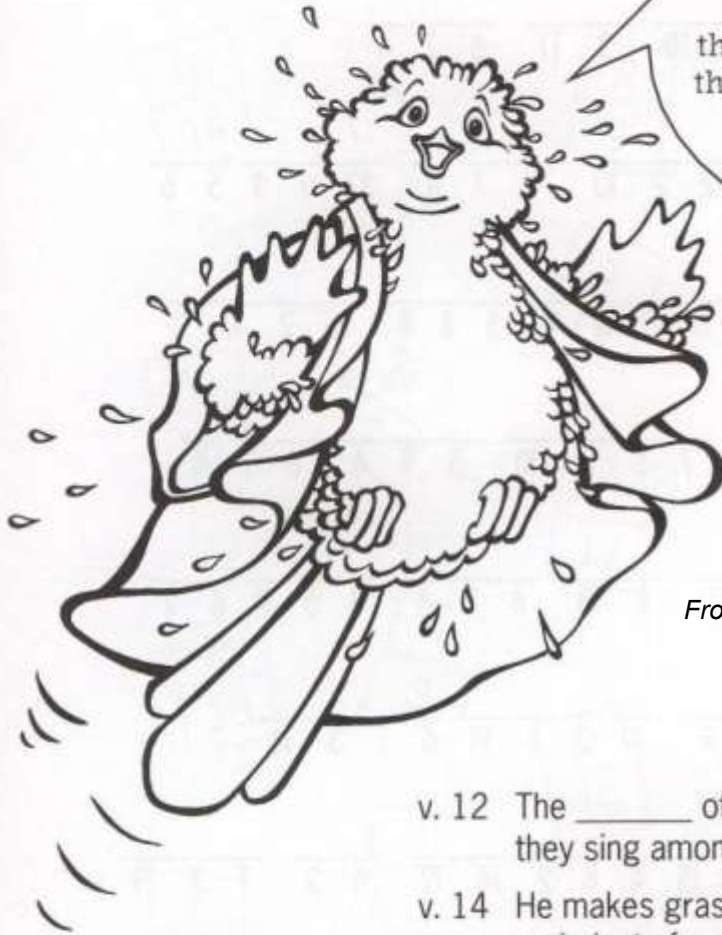
Opening speaker: Rev. George Ball

Missions night: MERF, CWI

Registration required by 3rd December (forms available at your local PCEA)

Children under the Banner

God's World



Psalm
104 is a song to
God the Creator. Many
of its verses talk about
things God has made. Fill in
the blanks and then find the
objects hidden in the
picture on the next
page.

*From: 'Search and Solve: Bible Activity Sheet',
by Betty De Vries,
[Illustrated by Donna Greenlee]
Baker Books, 1998*

- v. 12 The _____ of the air nest by the waters;
they sing among their branches.
- v. 14 He makes grass grow for the _____,
and plants for man to cultivate—
bringing forth food from the earth.
- v. 16 The _____ of the LORD are well watered,
the cedars of Lebanon that he planted.
- v. 17 There the birds make their _____;
the _____ has its home in the pine trees.
- v. 18 The high _____ belong to the wild goats;
the crags are a refuge for the coney.
- v. 19 The _____ marks off the seasons,
and the _____ knows when to go down.
- v. 21 The _____ roar for their prey
and seek their food from God.

Prescribed Search / Youth Work

DECEMBER 2010

SENIOR and INTERMEDIATE (Intermediate omit questions 2 and 6)

MATTHEW 27:50---28:20

1. What happened to the veil of the temple when Jesus died?
2. How did the events affect the centurion?
3. What did Joseph of Arimathea do with Jesus' body? (2 verses)
4. For what reason did the chief priests ask Pilate to make the sepulchre (tomb) secure?
5. How was the stone removed from the door of the tomb?
6. What were the angel's words to the women? (3 verses)
7. What lie did the chief priests pay the soldiers to tell?
8. What were the disciples to do because Jesus had all power in heaven and earth? (2 verses)

JUNIOR

MATTHEW 28

1. What had happened before the two Marys came to the sepulchre (tomb)?
2. What did the angel say to the women? (3 verses)
3. What lie did the chief priests and elders of the Jews ask the soldiers to tell about Jesus' body?
4. What command did Jesus give his disciples, beginning with the words, "Go (ye) therefore..."? (2 verses)

Please send the answers to:
Mrs I Steel
PO Box 942
Epping NSW 1710
Or email to: iesteel@gmail.com

Books in the Banner

Reviewed by Kenneth Macleod

'Our Great God and Saviour'; by Eric Alexander

The contents of this Book are based on studies given over a period of years to the Philadelphia Conference on Reformed Theology (known as PCRT), held annually in The Tenth Presbyterian Church Philadelphia and at various other venues throughout The United States. Much of the material also derives from expositions given in St George's Tron Church, Glasgow, where Eric Alexander exercised an influential and much appreciated Reformed ministry not only in that City, but throughout the U.K and the United States for 20 years till 1997. He is still a much sought after speaker and preacher. This book is testimony to that fact. The Book also reflects the fact that PCRT conferences are designed 'not for academic theologians, but for thoughtful church members who are hungry for the truth of Scripture which was rediscovered at the Reformation, and which our Lord told His disciples was the instrument of sanctification'. The Book further reflects the fact that each PCRT week-end focuses on a particular theme of the Theology of The Reformation, hence Part 1 of this book is devoted to the theme **The Attributes of God**; Part 2 considers **The Salvation of God** and Part 3 is on **The Church of God**.

Another pleasing feature of the Book is that each chapter is an exposition of a verse or a chapter of Scripture and will afford insight and spiritual enrichment not only for 'thoughtful Church members' but also as an aid in preparing sermons.

The exposition of God's Attributes is based on Isaiah 40. Here the author considers:

God's uniqueness within creation
(verse 12)

God's independence from creation
(verse 13-14)

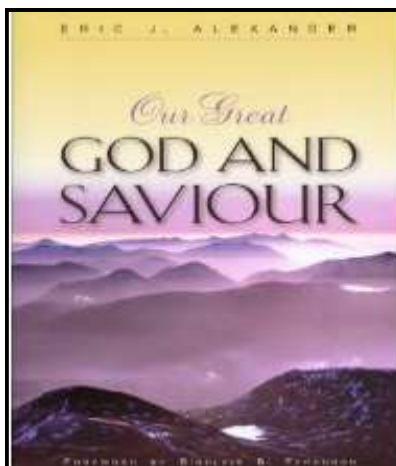
God's Supremacy above creation (15-20)

God's Sovereignty over creation (21-24)

Application of every exposition is

made as it applied to The Church and individuals in the past and for the Church and individuals in our contemporary world situation.

The **Chapter on the Sovereignty of God** is an exposition of Acts 4 23-31 He speaks of Him as the Lord of Creation; The Lord of History; The Lord Of Redemption; and Lord of the Contemporary scene.



As **the Lord of History** he reminds us how ludicrous it is for mere man to think that he can frustrate the purposes of God, reminding us of the folly of it in the words of the Psalmist ('He who in heaven sits shall laugh') and also reminds us that 'the real decisions are and have always been taken not in Beijing, New York, London or wherever. Rather the real decisions that will ultimately determine the consummation of human history are being taken on the throne of God'.

This is but a taste of the 'feast of fat things' that belongs to the family of God and which are beautifully exhibited in this little volume.

Eric Alexander's design in these biblical expositions is to demonstrate to believers how rich they are and how **Great** their Saviour is. I believe that he has achieved his goal to the glory of God and the good of His People. The Book is easy devotional reading, of the most profound teachings of Scripture simply and attractively expressed. Teachings that will humble you, enrich you and energise you. Read it and your faith will be

strengthened and challenged, your love enlarged and your hope established on the solid foundation of your Great God and Saviour The Lord Jesus Christ.

The Banner of Truth has rendered the Church a great service in publishing this book. It is real value for money at approx.\$16 and is available on line.

Selections from 'Wise Counsel': John Newton's Letters to John Ryland Jnr. Published Banner of Truth. Edited by Gordon Grant.

This pocket edition of 110 pages is intended, I presume, to advertise and whet the appetite of the readers for the complete book 'Wise Counsel'.

It has a detailed and informative Introduction (it takes up almost half the book) of the friendship that developed between two people who were so far different to one another; in age, in their formative years, and in their denominational background. In age John Ryland was 15 years and John Newton almost 3 times his age when they first met. In his formative years John Ryland was the son of a Baptist minister and became assistant to his father while still in his teens at Olney near Northampton, where John Newton was curate. On the other hand, John Newton led a chequered life. He joined his father at sea when he was 11 years old.

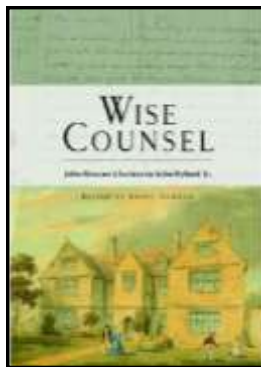
When he was 17, John Newton visited friends in London. He met and fell in love with 13-year-old Mary Catlett, who later became his wife. On a later visit to see her, he was press-ganged into the Royal Navy. He deserted, was caught and publicly whipped. It was decline from then on till 'Amazing Grace' so dramatically and powerfully changed the course of his life. In his own words, he lived a wretched life engaged in the slave trade both on shore in Africa as a trader, and as captain of a slave ship.

That two such diverse characters

should form a friendship that has produced correspondence which has been of spiritual help to the Church down through the centuries and still does, demonstrates the Power of the Love of Christ which surpasses knowledge.

Newton's book 'Cardiphonia', published in 1780, contained 9 letters addressed to Mr R.'. It was not till years after Newton's death that the identity of Mr R. was revealed by his biographer. Mr R. had become in the course of time the President of the Bristol Baptist College.

Over thirty years ago, it was discovered that there was stored in the archives of the Bristol Baptist College a large collection of Newton's letters to Ryland. All but 10 of them were hitherto unpublished.



'Wise Counsel' is the result and contains letters that are mostly unknown to readers.

'Selections' contains only 3 letters. Letter 1 is a rebuke to John Ryland when his mentor felt that he

'was thinking of himself more highly than he should' after the publication of some of his poems and articles in the Calvinistic *Gospel Magazine* with, in Newton's opinion, undeserved high praise from the editor. Also in uncharitable tones, John Ryland includes this sentiment: 'I have aimed to displease the Arminians'.

This attitude receives Newton's condemnation in no uncertain terms. However, in the language of Scripture they were the 'faithful wounds of a friend' and obviously received in that spirit.

Letter 5 is in response to a question about fluctuating spiritual feeling and emotions. Letter 28 is on Courtship and Marriage.

There is *Wise Counsel* in all three letters. There are 6 pocket-sized booklets in the series. If you intend to carry them about on your person, that's fine — but for the price and with the strong dollar the more economical course, I think, would be to get the complete volume at 18 pounds sterling. That is what I did.

Churches in the Banner

A new sign, a new congregation, and a new doctor!

Manning River News

A group of congregational members and guests travelled to 'Dingo Tops' for a very pleasant excursion and 'sumptuous' barbecue. This involved a lengthy trip inland and up the steep 'mountains'. Mr Tom Woollard gave a running commentary of places and past events and this was appreciated by all.



Neil carefully watching the man with the knife - Paul Dyson

Our 'Friendship Group' is able to make use of Government contract community buses and several of our men have licences - Neil Robinson and Paul Dyson.

Neil and Wilma Robinson have organised these monthly activities and all have proved to be a great success. This month will see the annual Christ-

mas dinner and usually about 50 plus are present. It is a form of outreach into our community as the gospel is presented at each outing. The 'friendship Group' was the outcome of suggestions by the late Jan Dyson. Our photographer, Jeanette Burton is to be thanked for the beautiful photographs of the outing.

A new sign

Recently the Deacons' Court approved a suggestion that was proposed at a recent meeting of the Congregation, for the erection of a sign in front of the Taree Church building. The sign has changeable letters which allows us to display Biblical texts for the passers-by the see. The sign was erected with Council



Working on Taree's new sign

approval - and the payment of the Council fees - by the able-bodied men in the Congregation. Bruno Bouchet has been a driving force in the project and has accepted the responsibility for overseeing the sign changes.



Michael Alley and friends

Mission Gift Afternoon

The annual Mission Gift meeting resulted in about 60 people gathering to hear Michael Alley speak about his work with AIM in Kenya. His illustrated talk was very well received by everyone present. The offering for our Church missions amounted to almost \$1,300. With Tim Shaw, Michael spent 12 months in northern Kenya teaching English and Bible studies. Several students were converted and with money donated from many was able

to have 3 young men spend a year in a Bible teaching school. Michael hopes, D.V. to return to Kenya later this year to visit the people in the area where he taught and arrange for further studies at the Bible school for more young Christians. \$1,000 is sufficient to cover the cost of a year's tuition - with all expenses paid - for one student. We wish Mick God's richest blessings in this work which the Lord has laid on his heart.



Taree's new sign

Southern Presbytery

Although it was the first meeting since Synod in May the meeting of Southern Presbytery in Mulgrave on 22 October was an important one. Mr Kerridge had accepted a call to the Hastings and would have his last service in Ulverstone 14 November. Dr Ward replaced Mr Smith as Interim-Moderator and steps to supply the congregation are in process. There have been a number of relocations of recent times so numbers are down. Your prayers would be appreciated. Reports from other congregations were received. Geelong appears to have turned the corner spiritually although numbers are still down. Other centres seem to be moving positively in most departments.

A significant decision arose from a



Carrum Downs Petition presentation

petition by 14 persons including their minister Rev David Kumnick (63) to be received and recognised as a preaching station in Carrum Downs. Suitable investigation of this a capella psalm-singing group had occurred beforehand. The petition was agreed to and placed under the Knox elders as an interim session. Mr Kumnick plans to seek recognition as a minister of the PCEA at Synod 2012 and meantime has been appointed supply for the next two years. The location of the work is some 20 kms south of our All Nations work in Mulgrave and a similar distance from the Narre Warren congregation where Mr and Mrs Kumnick have worshipped in the evening for some time. It is in an area previously identified as suitable for church extension work. Presbytery also decided to write again to the Southern Presbyterian Church, which has work principally in Hobart and Launceston, suggesting closer relations. Relations have been most cordial and the time seems right to build on this with the hope that eventually the SPC might become part of the PCEA that an enlarged body might more effectively minister the gospel to needy communities.

The following day we held the first leaders' training morning ever held so far as we are aware. There was an excellent attendance of 14 men, at All Nations, Mulgrave, including 5 of our younger (under 40!) members. It was good to see the mix of older and younger men, and the good discussion. Sjirk Bajema led the subject of qualifications for office, and Rowland Ward that on the vows of subscription. The format was an hour for each topic with a 30 minute morning break. A further session is planned in the next month. RSW



Beautiful Dingo Tops

Dr Edwin R Lee

It was announced at the end of October that Rev Edwin R Lee, former minister of St Kilda PCEA (1959-66) and the Manning River (1970-90) has completed his PhD on John Buchan, The Moderate Man, through the University of Melbourne. This is a fine achievement particularly for one aged 88. Buchan (1875-1940) was the son of a Free Church of Scotland minister, joined the United Free Church on its formation in 1900 and continued an active Presbyterian Christian all his life. He was a writer (eg. The Thirty-Nine Steps) and diplomat and became Governor General of Canada in 1935, shortly after he was created the first Baron Tweedsmuir. The term 'Moderate' in the title of the dissertation does not refer to the ecclesiastical moderates in the Church of Scotland of the 18th century, but to the way Buchan as a Christian



Training Day participants

Platonist lived in some reaction (or over-reaction) to the imbalanced Calvinism that was influential in the English context of his time. Dr Lee has been urged to turn his work into a book, and we hope this will come to pass. RSW

