



December 2006

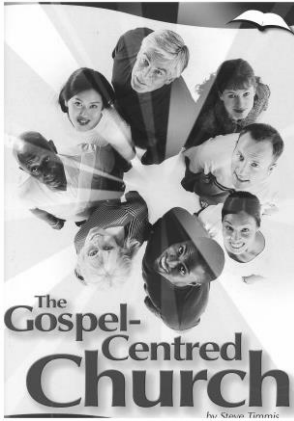
Anglican Church

Newsletter



“Living the heartbeat of God”

Linking ministering communities in East Launceston, George Town, Hillwood, Low Head, Pipers River, Riverside and Trevallyn



HOPE FOR THE CHURCH (FOOD FOR THOUGHT)

As we come to the end of our studies on the Gospel Centred Church [Steve Timmis] I would like to take this opportunity to share with you the notes below which consist of a series of direct quotations and summaries of a book by Archdeacon Bob Jackson of the Church of England. Bob Jackson is 'mission researcher' for Springboard, the Archbishop of Canterbury's advisory body on mission and evangelism. His comments below arise out of many years of experience and from his examination of decades of statistics and surveys (he was a marketing researcher and statistician prior to ordination). I believe the insights Bob offers in this book are directly applicable to the Australian situation, are in line with the studies by Steve Timmis on the Gospel Centred Church, and are worthy of careful consideration by us all.

"All people still need to know that in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, whatever their age, social background,..."

NOTES ON BOB JACKSON, 'HOPE FOR THE CHURCH' PUBLISHED BY CHURCH UNION, THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND 2002
According to all of the key indicators (numbers attending etc.) the Church of England has been in gradual decline for the whole of the twentieth century. The 'peak' year was 1905. Since then the rate of decline has accelerated, especially during the 1980's and 1990's, but the church still has no uniform anti-decline strategy.

Despite this overall pattern of decline, the rate and nature of decline is not uniform. Some dioceses grew and some churches within dioceses grew whilst others lost large amounts. Clearly some parts of the church are finding answers and hope. A key principal is this – there is no use waiting for people to come back to an unreformed church; the church must adapt to its time, the times never adapt to the church.

There is an urgent need to face the facts. Attendance numbers do count, and count for a lot. Healthy organisations are concerned about falling numbers. We need to face our problems and face the truth, not rationalise it or turn away from it. One of the most serious impediments to growth is the church's failure to look decline in the face and address it. It is not as if the world is now so anti-Christian we cannot hope to grow and flourish. All people still need to know that in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, whatever their age, social background, etc. Hardness of heart is not new. Post-modernism is new, but neither God's love nor humanity's need for God has changed. The church is failing to match the two. The statistics show that some churches are growing, and growing fast, in the same spiritual climate in which most are declining.

HOPE FOR THE CHURCH

Clearly these churches have found a means and a way of rejuvenating their spiritual vitality and relevance.

The way forward

(1) Face the reality of decline head on. Churches willing to face the facts and do something about it will have a good chance of arresting and stopping decline. Those which do not have no chance.

(2) Recognise that the nature of faith is changing. The days of calling men and women to commit to what they already knew from Sunday School or from their upbringing (as in the large evangelistic rallies and crusades) are over. People are no longer loyal to particular denominations or institutions and no longer attend church out of a sense of loyalty. Coming to faith is more like a process (e.g. the Alpha model). People today tend to believe after they have first belonged, and this typically takes two to five years. Helping people to belong is the best route to helping them believe.

(3) We need to become an 'engaging faith community' rather than a 'religious institution'. No one wants to belong to an institution any more, especially not a dying one. Relationships and building community will be vital.

The sharing of stories and testimonies should be central.

(4) Diversity and variety are essential. No one 'best practice' model will work in all places. Post-modernism is complex, diverse, and quickly changing. The multi-congregational model is the best way forward – more than one service, different styles and means of worship, a variety of programs, activities, and ministries to reach the variety of people in the community. In its best expression, Anglicanism is not about preserving one particular church style or tradition or method of worship – it is about bringing the Gospel to everyone in the parish. To do this, there will need to be a diversity of worship opportunities to reach the diversity of people.

(5) Welcoming and acceptance are important. Most churches think they are welcoming churches, but many only ever attract people who are 'just like us'. In the past enough people could be found to cohere around a tradition (preaching, music, worship etc) or a national church, but now society is fragmenting fast. We will need to cross boundaries as Jesus did, and to go to, and attract in, people who are not like us.

"In its best expression, Anglicanism is not about preserving one particular church style or tradition or method of worship – it is about bringing the Gospel to everyone in the parish. ..."

HOPE FOR THE CHURCH CONT...

Then Jesus said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

*Matthew
28:18-20
NIV*

(6) We need to 'grow younger'. The strongest single correlation between growth and decline is the age structure of congregations – those with a good mix of ages are more likely to grow. Even so, older members are part of the solution, not the problem, and can be mobilised to help the church grow younger. There will be a need to re-program times and activities to suit younger adults – e.g. most women today work, women's groups during the day will not attract younger women. The key element, and best resource, a church needs to attract young adults are other young adults.

(7) The expectations and demands placed on church leaders need to change.

[I believe this is already happening in Riverlinks through the Enabling Ministry]. Clergy [and laity] need to be equipped for, and released into, the new role of mission and church building. It is no longer possible to sustain the old role, whereby the clergy spent the majority of their time 'pastoring the flock' through routine visiting. Whilst clergy will always respond to emergencies and those in special need, the church of the future will need more clergy who are evangelists and missionaries and fewer pastors.

(8) All of this will, of course, entail significant, and sometimes radical, change. How can we convince our church to prefer 'uncomfortable change' over 'comfortable decline and eventual death'? An uncomfortable reality is that the churches least likely to grow are those resistant to trying new things, which want to hold on to past traditions, and which are paralysed by a fear of failure.

Finally, Christian community is God / Gospel centred or it is nothing. We all need to find the courage to proclaim our faith. There is a 'spiritual market place' out there, filled with all sorts of ideas, philosophies, religions, and ways of reaching God. But, in marketing terms, we Christians have an unbeatable product. Do not water down or dilute the Gospel. The creators of coca-cola would not dream of watering down their product so it is like a cheap no name imitation cola, they know they have the real thing! It is true there needs to be an emphasis on relevance rather than an argument over truth claims in evangelism and mission; however the Christian faith is ultimately only relevant because it is true!

*For God
did not give
us a spirit of
timidity,
but a spirit
of **power**,
of **love**
and of
self-**discipline**.*

2 Timothy 1:7

NIV

WITHOUT LOVE IN IT,



IT'S JUST A SOCK!

Remember, these are the words of Archdeacon Bob Jackson, but I found them so relevant to the studies we have followed this year in Riverlinks on the Gospel Centred Church that I felt compelled to share them with all parishioners.

The important question and challenge I now raise is – where to from here? Some of us have attended a seminar with Steve Timmis, we have all experienced his studies each Sunday from the Gospel Centred Church, we are about to welcome a new enabler into our parish . . . We need to go forward into Mission Mode, to arrest decline, and to extend the kingdom of our creator. I believe it is now up to the LMST, to Parish Council and to us all as individuals to move forward.

Ian Morley
Chairperson
Riverlinks Parish Council

NEW ENABLER IN 2007



From the Bishop's Desk

“The Reverend David Rogers-Smith has been accepted as a member of the BCA field staff. David will be the Enabler to Riverlinks and also available to undertake Diocesan responsibilities in support of Parishes in Bible ministry.”
More information to follow...

A DIFFERENT KIND OF CHRISTMAS

Sometimes Christmas is just overwhelming, it seems,
As we rush around buying up stuff.

We spend without end, and we rack up those bills,
But it feels like it's never enough.

So this Christmas, let's all take a different approach:

Let's try to be more in accord

With God's Christmas gift, the best one of all--

Our sweet Jesus, our Saviour, our Lord.

We'll be gentle and patient, and loving and kind,

And we'll keep our priorities straight;

The gifts of the Spirit, the gifts of the heart

Are the ones that we'll all celebrate.

And our stress will decrease, and we'll feel more at peace,

As we decorate, package, and trim;

Our new Christmas will be a pure joy and delight,

As we try to be much more like Him.

By Joanna Fuchs

LOOKING FOR THE PERFECT GIFT THIS CHRISTMAS?

A little boy was kneeling beside his bed with his mother and grandmother and softly saying his prayers, "Dear God, please bless Mummy and Daddy and all the family and please give me a good night's sleep."

Suddenly he looked up and shouted, "And please give me a bicycle for Christmas!!"

"There is no need to shout like that," said his mother. "God isn't deaf."

"No," said the little boy, "but Grandma is."



Do you ever feel that your friends and family don't really need the gifts you give them? Are you tired of receiving the same kind of presents every year?

TRY SOMETHING DIFFERENT!

The CMS Christmas Gift Catalogue is full of useful and unusual gifts. You will also have the satisfaction of knowing that these gifts are helping to spread the Gospel through CMS, by placing a bible into the hands of a believer, or contributing towards equipping Christian counsellors. With gifts ranging in price from \$9 to \$200 there really is something to suit every budget. Catalogues are available in all centres, or from the Parish office.



RECIPE FOR CHRISTMAS CAKE



Switch on oven, get out utensils and ingredients. Remove block, fire engine and train lines from table. Grease pan and measure 2 cups of flour.

Remove child's hands from flour. Wash child and re-measure flour. Place flour, baking powder and salt in sifter.

Answer telephone. Explain that you don't mind it's a wrong number.



Return to kitchen; remove child's hand from sifter. Wash child again, pick up pan and grease.

Answer doorbell, tell caller "No thanks" you don't want any.

Return to kitchen, remove ¼ inch of salt from greased pan. Find child and put biscuits back into jar. Take sifter and try to remove heavy coating of nutmeg.

Head for child, who runs, knocking bowl off table. Wash kitchen floor, table, walls, utensils. Telephone cake shop. Go and lie down.





CHURCH MISSIONARY SOCIETY
- AUSTRALIA

**CMS Vision
Statement:**

**Proclaiming
the gospel,
serving
God's people
around the
world,
to see lives
transformed
by Christ**

NEPAL: PRO-POOR HYDROPOWER

Nepal is among the poorest and least developed countries in the world with almost one-third of its population living below the poverty line.

Three-quarters of the population depend on agriculture for their livelihood, yet Nepal has considerable scope for exploiting its potential in hydropower.

Mark Glover, a CMS worker in Nepal, is working with Pro-Poor Hydropower (PPHP) to establish commercially profitable and socio-ecologically acceptable hydropower projects where the local poor will gain majority ownership.

Reproduced from an article in the October 2006 edition of CMS Mission Matters

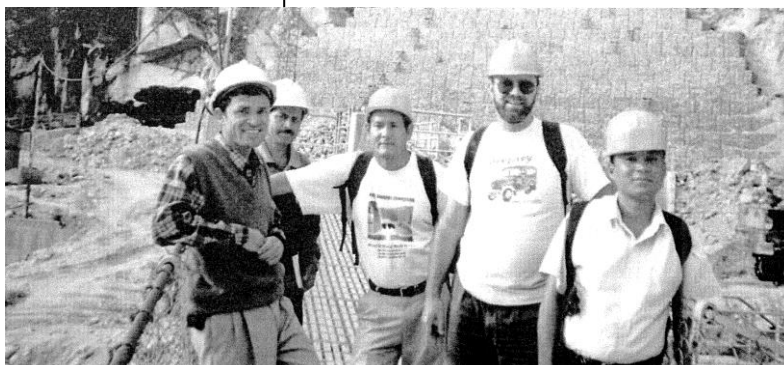
But how can the rural poor attain majority ownership?

With PPHP the local people employed on the project will receive not just cash for their labour, but also shares in the project itself through sacrificing part of their wages.

This sacrifice is then multiplied through a grant and soft loan facility: for each share that is earned through their labour contribution, a second share is granted and a third share is issued on the basis of a soft loan facility.

The flow on from a successful hydropower project is far reaching – electricity, roads, clean water, jobs, training and irrigation.

As Mark spends time with various NGOs, international donors and local communities, he uses these opportunities to explain how his Christian faith motivates him to improve the lives of the poor and disadvantaged of Nepal.



RIVERLINKS

December 2006	
1 st Fri	
2 nd Sat	
3 rd Sun	
4 th Mon	
5 th Tue	<p>BIBLE STUDY Morning Home Group 11:00 am Study St David's Hall, 12:00 pm Prayers</p> <p>Evening Home Group – 7:30 pm – at 43 Cleghorn Ave, Riverside</p> <p>Igglesden Home Group 21 Wongara Ave Legana</p> <p>Women of St Aidan's Prayer Group 6343 4168 or 6343 4133</p>
6 th Wed	<p>St David's Guild – 2:00 pm</p> <p>Evening Home Group 7:30 pm at Bullards, Ph. 6331 8968</p>
7 th Thur	
8 th Fri	
9 th Sat	
10 th Sun	Riverside Carol Service – 9:00 am

December 2006	
11 th Mon	<p>Cadorna – 2:00 pm</p> <p>Combined LMST Meeting – 6:30 pm</p>
12 th Tue	
13 th Wed	<p>Ainslie Service – 2:30 pm</p> <p>St Oswald's Guild – 2:00 pm</p>
14 th Thur	Parish Council – 7:30 pm
15 th Fri	
16 th Sat	
17 th Sun	<p>9 Lessons with Carols – 7:00 pm at George Town</p>
18 th Mon	
19 th Tue	<p>Jesus' Birthday Party – 5:00 pm at George Town</p> <p>Hillwood "Usual Unusual" Christmas Service and Farewell for Chris & Wendy Thiele – 7:00 pm at Hillwood Hall</p>
20 th Wed	Presbyterian Home – 10:40 am
21 st Thur	George Town Healing Service – 1:30 pm

The **deadline** for the next Newsletter edition is **20th January**

WHAT WILL YOU GIVE GOD THIS CHRISTMAS? BY BARRY L. DAVIS

Romans 6:23

*Work hard for
sin your
whole life
and your
pension is
death.*

**But God's gift
is real life,
eternal life,
delivered
by Jesus,
our Master.**

from
The Message

Almost all of us have at least one person that is impossible to buy for at Christmas. What do you buy for the person who has everything? What do you buy for teenagers who don't like anything? What do you buy for your grumpy relative who complains about everything you buy him anyway? Or how about this one - what could you buy for God this Christmas? If you had to come up with a gift to give to God, what would it be? We know that He already owns "the cattle on a thousand hills" (Psalms 50:10). Considering that He created the "heavens and the earth" (Gen. 1:1) I've come to the conclusion He doesn't need the telescope I was considering purchasing. I thought about some homemade cookies, but then I remembered that "God is Spirit" (John 4:24) and probably doesn't get hungry so I gave up on that idea. The fact is, there is no material gift that I could possibly give to God that He does not already own, and even if there was something I'm sure He wouldn't need it.

From searching the Scriptures I have discovered that the one thing I can give to God this Christmas, and for that matter, everyday of my life, is the gift of me. It is the one thing we all possess that God does not always completely own. God in His love has given us the choice to either offer Him the gift of self, or keep the gift of self for ourselves and not share it with Him at all.

What are some ways I can give God the gift of self this Christmas?

▶ I'll give God the gift of my mind (1 Cor. 2:16). Rather than filling my mind with things that keep me from growing closer to God, I'll fill it with things that are good, and pure, and true.

▶ I'll give God the gift of my heart (Mark 7:21). Through compassion, love for others, and refusal to give in to the ways of the world, I'll let my heart be transformed by the power of God so that my life will be a blessing to Him.

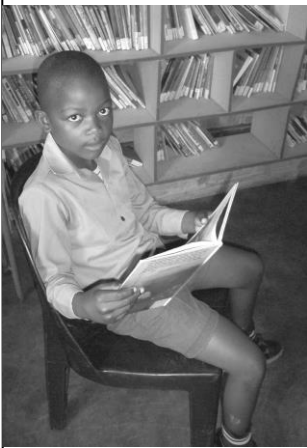
▶ I'll give God the gift of my witness (Acts 20:24). Instead of walking in fear, I'll walk in the boldness of my calling and tell others the good news about Jesus.

▶ I'll give God the gift of my love (Matt. 22:37). Refusing to love the world, I'll replace that desire with the yearning to place God first in every aspect of my life.

▶ I'll give God the gift of my faith (James 2:18). Living out what I claim I believe, God will see that my deeds match my proclamation. Moving from lip service to actual service in God's kingdom will be my living creed.

Those are some of the gifts I plan to give God this Christmas. How about you? Have you made your list yet? Isn't it time that we gave God our very best?





If you have any more questions please feel free to call Linda Abblitt on 6435 1159 (H) or 0408 104 554 (mobile); or email her at library.aid@au.om.org



Imagine you are 10 years old, in Grade 5 at a Christian school near your home; one of 445 students. Your favourite subjects are English and reading, but of the 140 books in your school there are only 12 fiction books you are able to read - and of course you've read them all several times this year. You have no books at home because your parents are illiterate, and there is no local library from which to borrow - but on the way home you occasionally pick up a newspaper someone has abandoned. You're feeling starved of something to read.

Living in a society with so many books, magazines and other reading materials, you may have found it hard to picture this in your mind - but it is reality for thousands of children in developing countries around the world.

Linda Abblitt, was originally a librarian from Burnie, and has been working with Operation Mobilisation for a number of years as an itinerant library consultant. During a Christian teachers' conference in South Africa in 200 she learned the full extent of desperate need of books for schools in South Africa and as soon as she was able Linda returned to work full-time with the Christian schools in South Africa - but after just two years there she felt God was leading her back to Australia in order to expand her ministry - sending containers of books to English speaking countries in the developing world, as well as recruiting librarians willing to go and establish libraries in the schools receiving these books.

And so Library Aid International was born.

Library Aid International is still in its embryonic stages, but it is gradually coming to life. Linda is in the process of setting up a Tasmanian collection depot in Burnie, close to the port - with drop off points in each major centre around the state. The Burnie warehouse will soon be a hive of activity with volunteers collecting, sorting, and packing books ready for shipping.

After the Tasmanian operations are up and running smoothly, this model will be duplicated in other states. And already people in the UK, Canada and the United States are asking Linda to help them set up similar operations in their countries under the Library Aid International banner.

So how can you help?

You could begin by collecting books from friends, neighbours, schools or other sources within your local community. If every Tasmanian donated just one book each year, that would be enough to fill 20 shipping containers - and enough to provide well-stocked libraries for 200 schools. If you can't collect, maybe you could help by having a fundraising event in your area to help with shipping costs. It will cost \$5.00 per box (or about 25c per book) to ship the books to places such as South Africa or India.

Donations and books can be left with Anne at the Parish office.

SPRING ARTS FESTIVAL



THE ARTISTS



THE DANCERS



THE CHEFS



THE MUSICIANS



THE AUDIENCE



For to us a child
is born,
to us a son is
given,
and the
government will
be on his
shoulders.
And he will be
called
Wonderful
Counsellor,
Mighty God,
Everlasting
Father,
Prince of
Peace.
Of the increase
of his
government
and peace,
there will be no
end.
He will reign on
David's throne
and over his
kingdom,
establishing and
upholding it
with justice and
righteousness
from that time
on and forever.

Isaiah 9:6,7
NIV

CHRISTMAS SERVICES AROUND THE PARISH

✓ East Launceston

24th December (Sunday) 10:00 am – Special Christmas Service
(Christmas Party)

25th December (Monday) 9:00 am – Holy Communion

✓ George Town

17th December (Sunday) 7:00 pm – Nine Lessons with Carols

19th December (Tuesday) 5:00 pm – Jesus' Birthday Party

24th December (Sunday) 10:30 am – Holy Communion

25th December (Monday) 8:00 am – Holy Communion

✓ Hillwood

19th December (Tuesday) 7:00 pm – the Usual Unusual Christmas
Service & Farewell for Chris & Wendy Thiele

✓ Low Head

24th December (Sunday) 9:00 am – Holy Communion

25th December (Monday) 9:30 am – Holy Communion

✓ Pipers River

24th December (Sunday) 7:00 pm – Holy Communion

✓ Riverside

10th December (Sunday) 9:00 am – 9 Lessons with Carols

24th December (Sunday) 9:00 am – Holy Communion

25th December (Monday) 9:00 am – Holy Communion

✓ Trevallyn

24th December (Sunday) 11:00 am – Holy Communion

24th December (Sunday) 11:00 pm – Holy Communion



WAY FM

Needs



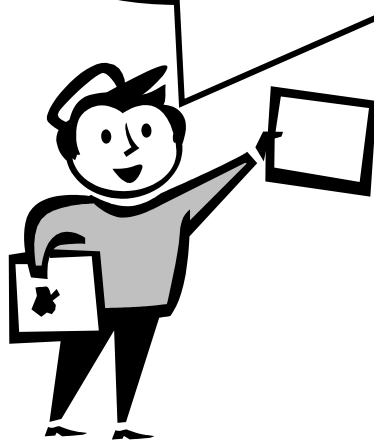
**PEOPLE
who can commit
to this
MISSION
ORGANISATION**

If you are up for
the Challenge

PHONE 6334 0100
to find out more

NOTICES

A farewell for Chris & Wendy Thiele
will be held at the Hillwood Hall
on Tuesday 19th December at 7:00 pm,
following the Hillwood Usual Unusual Service.
Everyone is invited to attend, and there will
be a supper afterwards, so if you are able to
please bring a plate of food to share



Please note:
The Parish Office
will be closed from
5 pm Friday
22nd December
and will re-open
9 am Monday
15th January

You are invited to Bill & Bev Percey's home
at 40 Richard Street, Prospect
for **a shared lunch on Sunday 14th January**
Come at 12 pm for a 12:30 pm start

Please bring a dish to share
casserole, quiche, sandwiches, etc
or something sweet

Directions: Turn right at St Pat's (Westbury Rd) into
Mt Leslie Rd, then left into Richard St (the first
roundabout)



**CMS SUMMERSVIEW
22ND – 26TH JANUARY 2007**

Be refreshed + inspired

Time is running out to register for the state CMS Summer
Conference from Monday 22nd to Friday 26th January.
Register before 5th January by contacting:

Jean Blyth on 6243 7139 or
Sue Morton 6227 8632 rsmorton@bigpond.com

**East Launceston
Worship Centre**
21-23 Arthur St
East Launceston

**George Town
Worship Centre**
3 Anne St
George Town

**Trevallyn
Worship Centre**
34 Bain Tce
Trevallyn

**Riverside
Worship Centre**
399 West Tamar
Highway
Riverside

Parish Office
399 West Tamar
Hwy, Riverside
6327 4742
riverlinks@bigpond.com

**Riverlinks
Anglican
Newsletter**

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SERVICE TIMES FOR WORSHIP CENTRES



East Launceston

3 rd	10:00 am	Holy Communion
10 th	10:00 am	Holy Communion
17 th	10:00 am	Holy Communion
24 th	10:00 am	Special Christmas Service (Christmas Party)
31 st	10:00 am	Morning Prayer

George Town

3 rd	9:00 am 9:00 am 10:30 am	Hillwood Holy Communion Pipers River Holy Communion George Town Holy Communion
10 th	9:00 am 10:30 am	Low Head Holy Communion George Town Morning Prayer
17 th	9:00 am 10:30 am	Pipers River Holy Communion George Town 9 Lessons & Carols
24 th	9:00 am 10:30 am	Low Head Holy Communion George Town Holy Communion
31 st	10:30 am	George Town Morning Prayer

Trevallyn and Riverside

	Riverside	Trevallyn
3 rd	9:00 am Holy Communion	11:00am Holy Communion
10 th	9:00 am Carol Service	
17 th	9:00 am Holy Communion	11:00 am Holy Communion
24 th	9:00 am Holy Communion	11:00am Holy Communion
31 st	9:00 am Morning Prayer	

Each Wednesday there is a Healing Service at St Oswald's based on Holy Communion at 10:00am

Peace Haven

10 th	10:30 am Morning Prayer
17 th	10:30 am Holy Communion
24 th	10:30 am Morning Prayer

MOBILE PHONES:

East Launceston 0438 378 233
Trevallyn/Riverside 0409 799 419
George Town 0439 821 038

RIVERLINKS WEBSITE:

www.riverlinks.net.au