



UAM Ministries

January - March 2000

Messenger

Prayer Meetings

VICTORIA

First Monday:

LADIES AUXILIARY 1.30pm
To be advised

Third Sunday:

Federal Prayer Meeting
Bimonthly 3.00 pm
Details: Phone: Federal Office
(03) 9841 6029

Third Tuesday:

2.00 pm
Mrs H. Green
24 Pitt Street Ringwood

Second Thursday:

7.45 pm
Williamstown Gospel Mission
8-10 Electra Street Williamstown

Prayer Convener:

Mr Ron Smith
(03) 9726 0949
0411 462 061

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Second Saturday:

Bimonthly 2.30 pm
Jan - Nov
Miss M Wiley
Unit 9, James Evans Court
122 St Bernards Road
Magill

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Second Thursday:

2.30 pm

Head Office:

23 Pine Way, East Doncaster, Victoria 3109.

Phone: (03) 9841 6029 Fax: (03) 9841 6033

Email address: uam@uam.org.au

Postal address: PO Box 1071, East Doncaster,
Vic 3109

President: Mr C. Jones

Vice-President: Mr B. Challoner

Secretary: Mr B. Hammen

Prayer Convener: Mr R. Smith

Editor: Mr C. Jones, email: editor@uam.org.au

Queensland:

Mr. S. P. Walker, 99 Waverley Road, Camp Hill
4152

New Zealand:

Mr G. Scott, PO Box 52, Paeroa

British Isles:

Mr R. Hughes, 110 Gowing Road, Norwich,
Norfolk NR6 6UH England

For mailing: Add 'UAM Ministries'
before given address.

NEW SOUTH WALES:**North Nowra, Unit 3**

3/207 Illaroo Rd 2541

Adams, Miss A.

Orient Point, 25 Orsova Ave 2540

Berry, Mr & Mrs P.

Walgett, 47 Namoi Street 2832

Mitchell, Mr & Mrs M.

SOUTH AUSTRALIA:

Vacant

WESTERN AUSTRALIA:

KIMBERLEY:

Kununurra (PO Box 38) 6743

C/- Shedley, Mr & Mrs D.

Halls Creek (PO Box 17) 6770

Bates, Pastor & Mrs J.

Fitzroy Crossing (PO Box 13) 6765

Cranwell, Mr & Mrs G.

Wyndham 6740

In association with The Peoples Church

SOUTHERN:**Gnowangerup,****7 Macdonald Street 6335**

Way, Mr & Mrs L.

DESERT DISTRICT:**Leonora 6438**

Vacant

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President's Comments

As I look at the photographs of the children in this issue I am reminded that when Jesus was on earth, the scriptures tell us, children held a special place in his heart.

The occasion was when parents and maybe grandparents brought children to him that he might touch them.

Mark 10: 13 Then they brought little children to Him, that He might touch them; but the disciples rebuked those who brought them. 14 But when Jesus saw it, He was greatly displeased and said to them, "Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of God.

15 "Assuredly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will by no means enter it."

16 And He took them up in His arms, put His hands on them, and blessed them.

Children's ministry has always been a special part of our work as we seek to further the cause of Christ among the Aboriginal people of Australia. The Christian church has the duty to explain the gospel message to every new generation of children, whether they be Aboriginal or non aboriginal.

Today the opportunity for children's ministry is as open as ever before, but the need is greater today than ever before, if only for the reason that there is now a far greater population of Aboriginal children in need of hearing the Gospel message of hope and salvation in Christ. But there are other reasons too why we can say that the need is greater. Let me list them for you.

1. The future of our nation will eventually depend on what the Christian churches are able to do today in their ministry to children. Today's children are tomorrows leaders. If they grow up without Christ in their hearts, then how can they bring peace and prosperity to this nation? To neglect this ministry of the gospel will be to imperil future generations of Australians.
2. Educational opportunities for children today are far greater and more readily available than ever before in our history. Children are being given knowledge of things previously unknown and are being confronted with issues and decisions most of us didn't confront until we were older and had more maturity.
3. Other belief systems and lifestyles are making their claims on the young more than ever before.
4. With youth suicide levels at unprecedented levels it is critical that the Christian church respond in the best possible way, not with more welfare but with the Gospel message that purpose and meaning and thus hope are found through faith in Christ alone.

When the people brought the little children to Jesus that he might touch them, I believe their prime concern was for the welfare of their souls. They believed that Christ's touch could reach into the hearts of the children and bring about a change which they themselves could not bring with all their love and care.

This is the same reason why, I believe, people bring or send their children today to Christian activities such as Kid's clubs, youth activities and Sunday School, that they might be changed. Parents may not understand all that the change involves, yet their belief is that sending them along 'will do them good'. Indeed, if Christ touches their lives, then they will be kept from the forces in society which wreak such havoc among the young.

As we move forward in our history let us renew our efforts to find new workers who are equipped and ready to minister to Aboriginal children and young people in our day.

Christopher Jones
President

Mark 9: 37 "Whoever receives one of these little children in My name receives Me; and whoever receives Me, receives not Me but Him who sent Me."

Visit to Walgett

In October last I was able to visit the Mitchell family in Walgett NSW and see first hand some of the work and activities which they are involved in.

As Walgett is about 1300 km from Melbourne it is a day and a half journey each way.

Though servicing the local primary industry, Walgett is not a large town by any means but one is struck by the large crops of wheat and cotton and the large numbers of sheep and cattle on the farms in the surrounding area. Visiting one of the local farms in the area where Matt occasionally helps out I was kindly given a tour of the wheat crops which were nearly ready for harvesting. As a flock of emus trampled their way through the crop I was mindful of Jesus parable of the Sower. (Mk4)

Matt is the Pastor of the local Aboriginal church. While it is only a small church it is able to maintain a good number of activities for the local believers. Not all who attend are Aboriginal as a good number of non Aboriginal people join in the services morning and evening on Sundays.

Wednesday evening is a time for Bible study, prayer and fellowship and again the group is mixed.

On Friday evening activities are held for the children in the church hall.

After some rather strenuous games and other activities the children hear something from the Bible explained to them and after refreshments they depart.

Matt and Jan are then able to clean up and go home for a well deserved rest if nothing else crops up to demand their attention.

Sunday morning sees Matt and Jan down at the church early to run the Sunday School. There were about 20 children there the Sunday I was there but sometimes the numbers are much greater. While many of the children at Sunday School were involved in the Friday night activities the group was quieter and the children broke up into groups for their class work after the story and some singing. (there was plenty of gusto)

After lunch it was out to pick up aunty Ivy and then on out to the small community of Gingy, about 10 km out of Walgett. There a small number of children gathered for Sunday School of a slightly different sort but again the children were keen and sang lustily as aunty Ivy led them.

Matt and Jan are involved in many other activities each week including regular visitation, hospitality, counseling, taking scripture in the local school, occasionally a wedding, all too frequently it seems conducting funerals, and other community activities like soccer and cricket and P & C at the school.

All in all Matt and Jan are kept very busy and though that's the way they like things, after 10 years of this sort of activity week in and week out the time has come for them to have a well deserved break.

Beginning in January the Mitchell's are taking three months leave away from their ministry activities for rest and recuperation. James will be doing distance education for the time they are away so will find that an interesting experience.

At the end of their leave the Mitchell's hope to be available for deputation in both NSW and Victoria, so if you would like them to visit your church or prayer group then please contact the office and we would be happy to discuss arrangements with you.

C.J. UAM

News Update

Walgett

Matt and Jan Mitchell are currently on 3 months leave from Walgett. Their daughter Joanne has now completed her Dip Ed. and has a job with the Bega High school as a Physical Education teacher. Geoffrey completed year 12 in 1999 and has been accepted into university to study Eco Tourism at Charles Sturt University, Albury.

Joel, who has employment in Walgett will be looking after things while Matt and Jan are away on long service leave.

Just in is news that Matt Mitchell and his son Geoffrey have both received an Australia Day Award. Matt was awarded the Citizen of the year and Geoffrey the Junior Citizen of the year for the Walgett Shire. Well done Matt and Geoffrey.

Halls Creek

Jonathan and Kathleen Bates report that the Halls Creek People's church is still seeking someone suitable to work with the Aboriginal young people of the area as there is a continuing interest among the youth and young adults in the things of the Lord.

Jonathan and Kathleen are looking forward to a break away from Halls Creek for a complete rest, Kathleen's health has not been the best lately.

Geraldton

Glyn and Pam report that their trip down from Fitzroy Crossing at the end of last year at the time of the cyclone went without incident and they arrived in Geraldton after spending Christmas with Pam's family.

Work is proceeding well with their new home and the new studio building has now been completed.

While visiting Geraldton in July last year my wife and I together with Matt Mitchell were able to visit the small Aboriginal church Pastored by Arnold Dann. This is the church where Mr & Mrs S Williams fellowshipped and Glyn and Pam anticipate sharing in fellowship there too.

Gnowangerup

Laurie and Eris report that things are going well in their part of the world. John has started an apprenticeship in panel beating and is keenly involved in the local Baptist youth group, the SES as well as enjoying playing golf and hockey.

Laurie has spent 2.5 weeks in the Philippines helping in a church building project and visiting missionaries from their home church in Gnowangerup.

Orient Point

Peter and Sue Berry are changing the Kid's church from Wednesday afternoon to Sunday evening and these meetings will be held on the Roseby Park Reserve. Sue begins B. Ed. Studies this year and Heather begins year 12 so we wish them all the best for their studies this year. Mark meanwhile has discovered surfing and Peter reports that he basically surfs 24 hrs a day. The fishing up there is also pretty good at the moment.

News Update

North Nowra

Alicia Adams reports that her hand has healed well after a carpal tunnel operation and is now able to write again. Alicia continues to visit Koori's and enjoys witnessing to them when she meets them in town. The cottage meetings continue which she and Aunty Belle run.

Pt. Augusta

Willie and Vera Austin write that they had a blessed time at the AEF convention at Ceduna in January and Willie spoke at one of the evening sessions with a good response to the gospel message. Small groups of young people at Marree and Nepabunna are willing to learn about God and Willie and Vera are keen to nurture these groups.

Melbourne

Alterations have been completed at East Doncaster to create an additional office and our computers are now networked with printer sharing.

Members of the council are keen to participate in deputation opportunities so if you would like someone to come and speak at your Church or fellowship group please contact us at the office.

C.J. UAM

The Badjaling Story

Wilf and Beth Douglas have worked on compiling this history of the Badjaling Mission. It is the story of how Misses Belshaw and McRidge founded a successful work among the Aborigines near the wheatbelt town of Quairading, WA. Both Wilf and Beth worked at the station at separate times in the early thirties. Wilf was teaching 38 Nyungar children there when he was called up for Army service during WWII.

This book contains photos and testimonies of Aboriginal people who appreciated the love and ministry of Misses Belshaw and McRidge. The book is available from Mission Publications of Australia, PO Box 21, Lawson NSW 2785. (Ph 02 4759 1003) for \$9.95 per copy.

We recommend this book and hope that you read it.

Who is our God?

"... the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Matthew 16:16)

In the July-September 1999 edition (p17), we looked at the first in a three part series on what it means to say that Jesus is the Christ. We saw that Jesus is described in the Bible as our prophet, our priest and our king. On that occasion we considered what it means to say that Jesus is our prophet. This time, we are thinking about Jesus our priest.

Jesus our priest

When most people think of a priest, they have an idea of someone in special clothing doing some particularly religious work. What does the Bible say about priests? In particular, how is a priest different from a prophet?

The Bible makes a very important distinction between a prophet and a priest. The prophet was appointed to be God's representative with man, whose primary role was to receive and communicate God's word. The prophet was a religious teacher. The priest, on the other hand, was man's representative with God, whose primary role was to approach God, and speak and act on behalf of the people. When the priests taught the people, their teaching was about the things that the people had to observe in their approach to God.

The writer of the New Testament letter to the Hebrews describes clearly the work of an Old Testament priest in chapter 5, verse 1. The priest:

- was selected from among men (one of us)
- was appointed by God
- represented men in matters related to God
- offered gifts and sacrifices for sin

and he also made intercession for the people. The Old Testament predicted that the Christ, when he came, would be the priest for his people. For example, this is clearly stated in Psalm 110:4 and in Zechariah 6:13. The promised Messiah (or Christ) is described in Isaiah 53 as doing the work of a priest for his people. The very detailed and lengthy passages of instruction for the priests (such as Leviticus) were written to show us that when the Christ came, he would be the priest.

In the New Testament, it is only in the book of Hebrews that Jesus is called priest, in chapters 3- 8. However, in the gospels, and in the letters of Paul, John and Peter there is repeated reference to his doing the work of a priest (for example, Mark 10:45; John 1:29; Romans 3:24,25; 1 Cor 5:7; Eph 5:2; 1 John 2:2, 4:10; 1 Pet 2:24, 3:18.)

What was the priestly work of Jesus?

The primary work of a priest was to bring a sacrifice for sin. The Old Testament sacrifices were of various types: there were sin- and trespass-offerings to make atonement for sin; burnt offerings of whole-hearted commitment to God; and peace offerings through which sinners entered into fellowship with God. Of course none of these ritual offerings had any power in and of themselves, as the writer to the Hebrews makes clear. Their function was to show people that they are truly sinners, in need of a saviour, and to point them to the coming Saviour from sin, the Christ.

Jesus came to bring a sacrifice for sin. We are the sinners, and he is the one taken from among us, and appointed by God to make a sacrifice for our sin. The unique thing about Christ is that he offered up *himself* as the sacrifice for our sins. He laid down his life for sinners, taking in his body the punishment that our sins deserve, so that we might enter into fellowship with God.

The Old Testament sacrifices were pointers to Christ. For example, Jesus is described in the New Testament as our Passover (1 Cor 5:7). That reference is designed to make us think of the Passover lamb, the sacrifice that was offered each year to remind the people of Israel of how God had rescued them from captivity in Egypt. In a number of places the New Testament states that Christ was the fulfillment of all the things the Old Testament sacrifices were describing (Col 2:17; Heb 9:23,24; 10:1; 13:11,12). In other places we read that Christ accomplished for his people what the Old Testament sacrifices were said to have done, and that he did it in a similar manner (2 Cor 5:21; Gal 3:13; 1 John 1:7).

What did Jesus accomplish by his priestly work?

The resounding message of the New Testament is that Jesus Christ, who was taken from among his people, has taken the place of his people and offered himself up as a once for all perfect sacrifice. The Old Testament priesthood is finished, says the writer to the Hebrews, because it was no longer needed once Christ had accomplished his work. What a wonderful Saviour he is! This is our gospel message: Christ died for sinners.

Who is our God?

What more can he do?

We noted that the Old Testament priest not only brought sacrifices; he also made intercession, that is, he came before God on behalf of people. He was the people's representative, their advocate.

Christ is our advocate. He intercedes with God on our behalf (Rom 8:24; Heb 7:25; 9:24). That coming before God is always on the basis of his atoning sacrifice: because he gave his life for his people, he pleads this fact before his Father.

His priestly work, his sacrifice of himself, is the ground on which he makes the claim for every spiritual blessing needed by his people: an answer to the accusations of the devil, of the law, and of their conscience; forgiveness for all that they are truly guilty of; and an acceptance of the worship that they bring to God, made acceptable to God only because of his perfect righteousness.

What he asks for his people, he asks as a matter of right. There is no doubt that he will secure from his Father all that he asks of him, a fact that he plainly declares (John 16:15). There can never be a legal basis for a challenge to any blessing obtained by Christ for his people. It is for that reason that he tells us (John 17) that he prays for us: not only for those who are now believers, but also for all those who ever will be believers.

When the Bible tells us that all of the promises of God are "yes and amen" (2 Cor 1) in Christ, it is because Jesus is our high priest: he gave himself for us, to bring us to God.

Think about this:

Why do we need a priest?

How has Jesus dealt with this need?

How do we know that Jesus' intercession is always effective?

Next time, we will think about Jesus our king.

D.R.UAM

MPA New Directions

MPA was set up in 1960 as the joint publishing arm of the two missions, United Aborigines Mission and the Aborigines Inland Mission. Over the years its work has grown and MPA developed into a substantial operation, much bigger than originally envisaged, undertaking work for many Christian organizations and commercial businesses.

In July 1998 a consultant was engaged to undertake a review of the operations of MPA because of the concern UAM had for the future viability of the printing operations at MPA and its expanded role in printing for the wider community. With net losses of \$66,114.00 and \$23,104.00 for the years 1996 and 1997 respectively and a projected loss of a further \$22,00.00 for 1998 UAM realised that as responsible partners we should see some action to stem the losses.

The consultant listed three options. 1. To close MPA down and for the mission partners to get their printing done elsewhere; 2. Restructure MPA and change its focus to providing a normal commercial printing service to the community at large with a special focus to the wider Christian community; or 3. continue as they were.

UAM was not convinced that even with the most optimistic outlook that MPA could succeed in the very competitive business of commercial printing. Further, our purposes are exclusively for ministry among Aboriginal people. To continue to be financially committed to a loss making business which was only partially associated with Aboriginal ministry would have been contrary to our purposes.

With AIM's commitment to retaining the operations at MPA with a new direction in line with the consultants recommendation, there was no alternative but to seek an honourable dissolution of the partnership.

After some months of discussions, agreement was reached between AIM and UAM to the dissolution of the partnership.

AIM elected to purchase UAM's half share in the operation. However, one difficulty in this respect was the valuation of the complete MPA operation and property assets held by the MPA property Holding Co. at over \$685,000. (1997/1998 Audited Accounts)

The AIM leadership indicated to us that they would find it hard to obtain the finance necessary to buy out our interest even though they had substantial asset holdings. Vendor terms were discussed but this proved not to be a viable option.

This together with the difficult trading position of MPA led UAM to make an offer of sale for \$200,000 on the condition that the outstanding interest free loan of \$69,925.00 to MPA be repaid. By doing this UAM effectively was offering a donation of over \$140,000 to AIM to assist them in this transition to financial viability. This arrangement was accepted by AIM in May last year.

The proceeds of this sale will be used by UAM for our ongoing publishing and printing needs as we maintain our focus in the work of the gospel among the Australian Aborigines.

AIM is now the sole custodian of all the property, machinery, stock and materials, good will, and the legacy of the sacrificial work undertaken by the many staff from both UAM and AIM who have served in this venture since its beginning. Moreover the AIM leadership has accepted an optimistic forecast for MPA and has expressly accepted full responsibility for its future operation, care of staff and all financial benefits and liabilities.

We wish those staff continuing to work at MPA every success in their endeavours to achieve commercial success and we pay tribute to the dedication and sacrifice of all those who have served in the past in the missionary work of MPA.

C.J. UAM

The Great Evangelist

The great evangelist D. L. Moody was once asked, "How many converts did you have last night." He answered, "Two and one-half."

"You mean two adults and a child?"

"No," he replied. "Two children and one adult."

A child converted is an entire life converted.

*Some would gather money
Along the path of life;
Some would gather roses
And rest from worldly strife.
But I would gather children
From among the thorns of sin;
I would seek a golden curl
And a freckled, toothless grin.
For money cannot enter
In that land of endless day,
And the roses that are gathered
Soon will wilt along the way.
But, oh, the laughing children,
As I cross the Sunset Sea;
As the gates swing wide to Heaven,
I can take them in with me!*

Billie Crawford

Opportunities to Serve

Opportunities to Serve in the Outback of Australia

"We would like to place suitably trained and experienced workers in some places almost immediately"

Some of the areas where possibilities exist for ministry are:

**Kimberly Western Australia
Gold Fields and Great Victoria Desert
Western Australia
Northern New South Wales
South Australia**

Please pray that God will call those He would have to serve in these or other areas. Has God called you to some sphere of service for Him among the Australian Aborigines? If you believe so then we would be happy to begin discussions with you. Please contact our office by phoning and leaving a message or writing or by sending an email to us. Refer to the Directory on page 2 for contact details.