

by Rev Mike Emslie

A few years ago I was listening to a radio talk show on the current problems of crime and violence in South Africa. One of the speakers quoted four very powerful words from a book by Nadine Gordimer: "Crime is the punishment."

One of the main reasons crime is so bad in our country now, is because of the way the oppression of apartheid systematically unravelled the social structure of the majority of people in this country—creating the crime-ridden culture we now have. I was an eyewitness to it happening during my time in the police force from the end of 1980 to the beginning of 1985.

As the saying goes, "What goes around comes around" – or in more biblical terms, "What you sow, you reap!"

The fifth principle (beatitude) that Jesus gives us in order to live life to the full is about tolerance and intolerance – or in biblical terms ... mercy.

Jesus was big on mercy. On two occasions he wrapped the Pharisees over the knuckles for being intolerant or unmerciful. He did that by saying that if they knew their Bible better they would know that mercy rules over little rules and regulations (Matt 9: 9–13, 12:1–8).

On both occasions, Jesus quotes from His Bible (the Old Testament) and particularly from Hosea 6:6. He tells the Pharisees that if they had understood the Bible properly, they would know that God requires mercy from them much more than legalistic religious intolerance. (In the OT, love and mercy mean the same thing—to show compassion to someone in need, regardless of whether that person deserves it or not).

Hosea 6: 4–10 help us understand the mercy of Matthew 5:7. We see in vs 4 that Israel and Judah's love (mercy) is like "morning mist... early dew... that disappears"—it is superficial. In vs 6 (which Jesus quotes), on the other hand, God desires a constant flow of mercy, love and acknowledgement of Him. That is what counts. It is more important than daily sacrifices and burnt offerings that were so crucial to the Jewish way of life and which God had instituted.



"Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy" (Matthew 5:7)

But what does He find amongst His people (vs 7–10)? He finds unfaithfulness like with Adam in the Garden of Eden. Wickedness. Bloodshed. Crime. Sure, God's people are still performing all the right sacrifices and religious rituals, but there is no mercy and love, no concern about justice and godliness. And so God would judge and punish them as He did in 722 BC when Israel was taken into exile by Assyria... and in 597 BC when Judah was taken into exile by Babylon.

The only hope for Israel and Judah is if they admit their guilt (Hosea 5:14–6:3), repent of it and commit to being faithful to Him again... then God will nourish and heal them, revive and restore them to being His people living with Him again.

Finding mercy

Jesus Christ is mercy. He is the fulfillment of the mercy promised in Hosea. He came into the world as a healer and restorer, but not much had changed in the hearts of God's people. The leaders were just like during the time of Hosea. And Jesus was serious about addressing that (Matt 23:23).

Jesus came as the doctor to mercifully heal the sick (those who understand their need for mercy and healing) through His death on the

cross and resurrection from the dead. And then when people choose to accept His mercy and follow Him, Jesus says in Matthew 5:7, "Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy".

Sharing mercy

Being merciful, loving and forgiving, is often a sign of those who have received mercy, love and forgiveness. And being unmerciful, unloving and unforgiving is often a sign of those who have not yet received mercy from Jesus.

Those who receive mercy from Jesus (by faith) show that their faith is real (and not just a religious or psychological kick) by adopting a lifestyle of mercy.

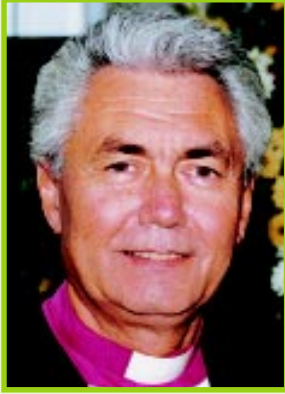
Are we known as a people who share mercy? Jesus says mercy flows to the merciful! We also must show mercy, love and forgiveness to others, whether they deserve it or not. If our lives are characterised not by mercy but by revenge (always getting your own back), hate (which Jesus equates with murder), intolerance or discrimination towards people different to us—then it is quite appropriate to question whether we have understood mercy and our own need for mercy. And then Hosea and Jesus would suggest >>



Mike Emslie

Dear Colleagues

Synod is upon us again. We meet at Emmanuel Church Bellville on Tuesday 7 September. Several matters will occupy our mind. The first is how we should position ourselves for Gospel work within the next five years. At the end of five years I am due to lay down the reins as Presiding Bishop. We need to discuss our evangelistic strategies, leadership succession and the ongoing recruitment of students for George Whitefield College, amongst other things.



It is a great pleasure to have David and Heather Jackman with us this year. They have been friends for many years, and have constantly encouraged and helped us here in South Africa. David is much in demand as a conference speaker and has authored many very helpful books. He has been the Director of the Cornhill Training Course for many years.

In this issue you will read snippets of news from around the country. Please keep our denomination in your prayers—you will see additional prayer needs in the prayer guide. The article by Mike Emslie is very timely. It seems as if South Africans live constantly on the

verge of anger and cynicism. Psychologically there are enormous pressures on us all. Crime is a constant threat; we cannot even walk on our beautiful beaches without taking safety precautions. How do we cope with this and all the other stresses and disappointments of life, as Christian people? Mike's words are a help.

At this Synod a new Cape Area Bishop will be elected. This will free me up considerably to devote my time to the larger task of encouraging evangelistic and training activities around the country.

If you are able to be at Synod I hope to see you there: if not, please pray for us.

Sincerely
Frank J Retief
 Presiding Bishop

BOOKSHELF

Especially for Youth

A Hell of a Life: From Manger to Megastar

by John Dickson, Matthias Media, R60 (including postage in SA)

John Dickson's evangelistic book for young people (18–30 years) is already establishing itself as another classic. The usual Dickson trademarks are all there—clarity, simplicity, an engaging style, and a very firm grasp of the issues. *A Hell of a Life* focuses on Jesus: His life, His death and resurrection, His supreme and abiding relevance for everyone. A great book to introduce people to the true Jesus of history—the Jesus of the Bible—rather than the distorted image built up in their minds from a variety of misleading sources.

Of Pastoral Interest

Feed My Sheep: A Passionate Plea for Preaching

A selection of articles by various authors, including James Boice, Sinclair Ferguson and John MacArthur, Soli Deo Gloria, R110 (including postage)

Biblical preaching is nearing extermination in our day. There is 'sharing,' 'suggesting,' plenty of storytelling, and lots of preaching to 'felt needs'. But the authoritative, expositional opening of the Word of God is harder to find all the time. In the Old Testament God decried the fact that His people were perishing for lack of knowledge about Himself. Too often, those who have been called to feed Christ's sheep with the Word of God do little more than pet them. This book is a plea for preachers to 'preach the Word.' It will encourage pastors to strive to maintain their calling. However, it is not intended just for pastors; it will also be useful in guiding congregations to know what to look for in a pastor and in holding their preachers to this biblical standard.

Phone or Fax (021) 685 3663 or email peter@christianbooks.co.za to order

>> that maybe we are not yet recipients of God's mercy.

And don't let's evaluate ourselves on whether we are merciful to those whom it is easy to be merciful to, but on how we are progressing in being merciful to those whom it is difficult to be merciful to. It is always worth reminding ourselves that we only love God as much as we love the person we love the least. Those words are really a different way of looking at this passage – "Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy".

Consider the following two questions: **Have you received mercy?**

Do you understand that that you need mercy? Do you understand that you are born a sinner, and as such are under the condemnation of God? But that God has been merciful in sending Jesus to deal with your sin on the cross? Have you asked God to forgive your sin? Have you committed to living your life His way? God's mercy wipes away your sin and allows you to make a fresh start; it puts you in a right relationship with Him and brings purpose and meaning to your life; and it provides you with a secure eternal future.

Are you merciful?

If the truth were told, we are not merciful. We are incredibly judgmental, although we often hide behind all sorts of sometimes fine-sounding excuses. We want to be shown understanding, mercy, love and forgiveness by others but we are quick to judge. Are we not often unaccepting of other's explanations, quick to gossip about others and what they have done against us, quick to pull people down? We treat people as we would never want to be treated.

All of that is sin! We must repent—not just ask for forgiveness so we can satisfy our guilty consciences. We must put things right between ourselves and God, between ourselves and the people we have not been merciful to.

This is a great opportunity to throw off chains of bondage and to walk in the relational freedom that God saved us for! Why don't you write down the name/s of a few people you need to show mercy to and ask God's guidance to help you do so.

● **In his book *Why Me, Lord?*** Bp Frank Retief answers the question: How do Christians respond to evil? He gives helpful insights into the Christian act of forgiveness and the steps towards achieving it. "By choosing to forgive you are not condoning what happened. Christian forgiveness does not say, 'What you did is okay.' On the contrary, it says, 'What you did is not okay. It was wrong and wicked and deserves to be punished. But I myself won't punish you. I will leave it to the law and to God.'" To order, see details alongside.

A Passion for the Gospel

The life of The Rt Rev SC Bradley. By Brian Cameron

The consecration of Stephen Bradley by Bp Fred Morris caused quite a stir in Anglican circles worldwide and resulted in many denying that he had been properly consecrated. The reason for this was that Bp Morris acted alone in the consecration service. Traditionally in Anglican circles there would be more than one bishop present at such a service. But the Church of England in South Africa only had one bishop at that time, namely Fred Morris. He had drawn the wrath of many within the Anglican establishment, including that of the then Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Fisher, when he had accepted the position of bishop within the small, struggling Church of England in South Africa. The Archbishop was not prepared to consider that there might be two Anglican Churches within one geographical zone.

Bp Morris had retired from the position of Bishop of North Africa before he came to South Africa in 1955 and thus was getting on in years. After giving careful consideration and also taking advice from friends in Australia, Bp Morris proceeded to carry out a decision taken at the Synod of 1957, namely to elect Stephen Bradley as assistant bishop. Whilst this step was unusual it was by no means the first time that one bishop had consecrated another in Anglican history.

Stephen Bradley was born in Egypt to missionary parents. He grew up in Australia and came to know the Lord as his personal Saviour as a young man. He entered Bible College in Sydney. One of his fellow students was Paul White, the famous Jungle Doctor, who once complained that, no matter how hard he studied, he could never beat Stephen Bradley. Shortly after ordination Stephen Bradley was asked by Archbishop Howard Mowll of Sydney to come to South Africa. Archbishop Mowll described him as one of the most promising younger men in the diocese. This was in 1936.

His first assignment was to Christ Church, Addington in Durban. This entailed not only the rectorship of the local church but also oversight of work amongst the Zulu-speaking congregations, an interest he never lost. During World War II he served with the Australian forces and then returned to South Africa in 1945 to become rector of Holy Trinity Church in Cape Town. Over

the years that followed he served in a number of Churches, including St Paul's Church, Kenilworth in Johannesburg, Christ Church, Pinetown and lastly in St Stephen's Church, Claremont.

In 1965 he took over as Presiding Bishop from Bp Fred Morris and continued in this office until he finally retired at the age of 75 in 1984. He had seen the Church through traumatic days and is owed a debt, which humanly speaking, can never be repaid. He saw four other bishops consecrated to the ministry of CESA with many new churches opened, particularly in KwaZulu-Natal and the Western Cape.

Retirement from office did not stop him from the principle love of his life, namely preaching the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. He was still preaching into his 90s as well as preparing messages for Zulu-speaking catechists. Just two weeks before God called him home he was still going to the office once a week to continue his writing and preparation. It can be fully expected that he would have received a warm, "Well done, good and faithful servant" on passing into glory at the age of 93 in 2003.



XHOSA MESSAGE

Ubungqina

Igama lam nguMinah Koela nditshate noBrian ndinabantwana abathathu uSihle, uErnie noWa-hae. Ndazalelwa eGugulethu, ndakhulela eCrossroads ndafunda apha eKapa. Ngo1980 ndaya emaxhoseni (Eastern cape) ndayokufunda khona ndihlala nomakhulu wam nabanye abantwana basekhaya nezihlobo zam. Ngo1986 abazali bafudukela ekhayelitsha, nathi sabuya emaxhoseni sazokuhlala apha ekapa. Utata wam wayokulanda umfazi wakhe wokuqala ukusweleka kukamakhulu ngo1987. Kwangaloo nyaka mnye umama notata bohlokana. Besingahlali ndaweni nye ngoba umama ligqirha ubesoloko esendleni. Besisoloko sihlala nabantu abohlukeneyo. Ukwahlukana kwabo besiphakathi kokuhlala kwindlu kamama okanye eka tata. Ngelaxesha ndandisemaxhoseni kwakunyanzelekile ukuba uye ecaweni nokuba ufike seyiza kuphuma kuba esikolwini ububethwa ukuba awuyanga. Icawe kamakhulu yayiyi Wesile. Ukuhlala kwethu ekapa kwasenza singayi nokuya ecaweni siye nge new year qha. Lonto yenza ukuba kubemnandi kakhulu apha ekapa, nenxaxheba yam yanda kakhulu apha ebugqirheni. Ngo1991 ndabanomntwana, ngo1993 ndabanomnye.

Indlela endasindiswa ngayo yenzeka ngoluhlobo.

Ngo1994 umhlobo wam wandixelela ukuba enkonzweni yakhe kufunwa umntu ozakusebenza nabantu abatsha. Loo mntu kwakufuneka aye eywam (indawo yokuqeqeshela izifundo zokuba ngumfundi kaYesu).

Nam ngokundweba okukhulu ndalangazelela ukuya, kuba zange andicacisele ukuba kufunwa abantu abasindisiweyo. Into awandixelela yona kukuba ndizakucula ndidanise kwaye ndibemgumdlali weqonga. Zezi zinto zonke ezandinika umdla ukuba ndiye apho. Ngobabalo lwenkosi ndasindiswa khona.

Lolu babalo olwandenza ukuba nam ndibuyele ekhayelitsha ndisebenze nolutsha. Uthixo wandisikelela ngomyeni owandithatha nabantwana bam. Naye wazokusebenza njengomfundisi eSite B. Ngenxa yenguquko awayenzayo uYesu ebomini bam ndilangazelela ukufundisa ilizwi lenkosi kubantu abangomama namantombazana.



Brian & Minah

I was born in Gugulethu, grew up in Crossroads. My parents got divorced when I was still at school in Khayelitsha and I became an unmarried mum of two children before I was 20. A friend invited me to the CESA church in Site B, Khayelitsha and I was selected to attend classes at YWAM where, by the Lord's grace, I became a Christian. After my conversion I joined in evangelism work among the youth in Khayelitsha and met Brian Koela, who not only loved me but accepted my two boys as his own. I now teach the Bible and the gospel message to the women in Khayelitsha and support my husband's ministry.

—Minah Koela

Ready, Steady . . . GO!

By Jolene Ridler (St Matthews Church, Table View)

This year 100 people from 10 different churches (including 7 CESA churches) attended the annual winter GO Mission to Franschhoek Valley. Four young delegates came from abroad—three from Australia and one from the US. Throughout the week the gospel was shared and taught to about 1000 children, teenagers and adults.

No-one turned up on the first day for the first two events. The delegates at GO did not despair, but turned to prayer and action in going out and inviting people anew. Their faith was rewarded in that large numbers of people turned up for the second day's meetings and continued to do so throughout the week.

A new three-year approach was implemented this year, with people assigned to the first, second or third-year groups, depending on the number of times they've been on GO before. Apart from reaching people with the message of the gospel, the main focus in all three groups was to equip people in a practical way with the skills to "Go home and GO" at the individual churches they came from.

The first year programme resembles the traditional GO experience of a carefully constructed syllabus for working with the children of the very poor farm labourer communities of Franschhoek. This year the kids learned about Jesus through Aldo Aap and a band of jungle animals, vibrantly enacted by the first years with drama, song and story telling. This was a fun way to share the love of Christ with these emotionally and spiritually starved children.

The second-year programme is slightly less structured and draws more on the input of the delegates in applying themselves creatively for the gospel. The programme has taken the form of a coffee bar for the teenagers of the rural Franschhoek community. Although a basic Bible teaching programme was outlined for the second-years, they had to be flexible in their application of the programme to the changing situation. This turned out to be a marvellous success as between 80 to 100 teenagers turned up each night to gather around tables, drinking coffee, eating biscuits, chatting with the leaders, and discovering Jesus through the Gospel of Mark. What a privilege it was to



Carrie Hickman and Kimmy



Chané Pretorius & Karen Bittmer



Jolene Ridler



Tom Vervecken

see young people who usually hang out in shebeens (we were told), grapple with salvation issues, many of them understanding the gospel for the first time and consequently giving their lives to the Lord!

The third-year programme is as close to a real-life missionary experience as you will find on a training conference. The third-year team had to find out what would interest the residents of Franschhoek and the tourists passing through the town and develop a relevant programme. They decided to run a programme for children in the mornings and a swanky coffee shop in the town hall in the evenings. They had to learn through experience what would and would

not work and after some serious prayer time managed to draw large crowds to their programme, and consequently seeing many people come to Christ, too.

What a blessing GO 2004 was to me and to many others. There is something so right about spending a week with Christian brothers and sisters in the breath-taking Franschhoek valley, strengthening our own relationships with the Lord whilst sharing it with people who know of Him but have rarely experienced Him as a personal saviour. You have to make a plan to be there next year!

GWNC NEWS



A Strategy for Mission

Paul thanks God that the gospel is having a profound affect on the Colossians, “just as it is bearing fruit and increasing in all the world” (Colossians 1:5–6). Forget the exaggeration, it is an impressive testimony to how far the faith had spread by AD60. How did it spread? It began with a band of apostles and evangelists; there couldn’t have been more than fifty of them at the start. By AD55 Paul can say of his part of the outreach: “from Jerusalem all the way round to Illyricum, I have fully proclaimed the gospel of Christ” (Romans 15:19).

Illyricum means he has gone to the end of the Egnatian Way, the great East-West road beginning at the Bosphorus and ending on the Yugoslavian coast opposite the Italian port of Brindisi whence the Appian Way lead on to Rome. More exaggeration? No, Paul had preached in many of the major cities and established missionary bases in Damascus and Antioch (Syria), Ephesus (Asia Minor), Corinth (Greece), and perhaps one or two others we don’t know about. From these centres a small army of enthusiastic believers had fanned out into the neighbouring territories; most of their names will not be heard again until the roll is called on the Last Day. Among them, however, was a significant group of trained “fellow workers”, some whose names we do know: Timothy, Titus, Silas, Epaphras, Priscilla, Aquila, Phoebe and company. Churches were planted along Paul’s way in towns he may never have visited: Colossae, Hierapolis, Laodicea, Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyatira, Philadelphia are a few we know about. Enough had been done for Paul to conclude that the gospel was well established in these parts and he could begin to dream of fields as far to the west as Spain.

Will a day come when a future leader of CESA will say, “From Cape Town to the Limpopo, we have fully proclaimed the gospel of Christ?” Only when we are sure that the gospel is known and the Scriptures are being explained in every part of South Africa. An impossible dream? Not if we work hard—first to establish outreach-minded training churches in all the big towns; not if where we already have churches a vigorous missionary outlook can develop; not if our Ministry Apprenticeship Programme (MAP) is taken up by more and more ministers and churches; not if more and more “fellow workers” take up the challenge to train—for evangelistic and church planting ministries, for church leadership, for children’s, youth and women’s work, for mission and for teaching. Let’s pray to God to spread this vision amongst more and more of our people.

David Seccombe

Who Should Come?

GWC is presently looking hard at student recruitment. We put some questions to the Principal, Dr David Seccombe.

How many students would you like to have at GWC?

There is no reason we should not have 200. Our Strategic Plan sets that as the aim for 2010. It’s the ideal number given the teachers, facilities and resources God has given us to steward. Of course, we don’t expect to get them all in one hit. It would be good if next year we could have 100.

Do you expect to get all these from CESA?

GWC is training a lot of non-CESA people. We welcome anyone who wants academically rigorous, Bible-based ministry training. But it would be sad if the day ever came when CESA people were not in the majority. At the moment there are 48 CESA students out of the 80 students. There are 160 churches listed in our Year Book. I don’t see why at any one time we shouldn’t have about that many CESA students in the college. Don’t forget, we are not just training pastors, but also woman’s workers, children’s and student workers and missionaries.

Continued over the page



Better Deal for Students

GWC’s current “project” is a new students’ residence. After years of trying the college was successful in purchasing Coastal Lodge in December 2003. A derelict hundred-year-old hotel, Coastal Lodge with its 40 bedrooms and large communal spaces, offers itself as a student facility. For the first time there is a prospect of lounge and recreational areas for GWC’s students. Foord House is at capacity with 30 students and its communal facilities are limited. GWC has no dedicated accommodation for single females. A renovated, renamed Coastal Lodge could accommodate over 50 single male students, a small dining room and kitchen, a quiet lounge, TV lounge, and recreation area. Women students could then take over the upstairs area of Foord House. Plans and costs for renovation are presently under consideration. Anyone interested in the project should contact **Arnie Muller on 021 7881652.**

SUNETTE ALLEN
Soprano

**Performing at a Benefit Dinner
For the new Student Centre**

**Lindbergh Arts Centre,
Muizenberg**

Friday 10th September

**Enquiries: Pat Munro
021 7882795**

That is a lot of CESA churches without a student at the college. Can you explain that?

There are many reasons: financial, educational; some congregations are small. I remember the church that I went to as a kid. It was not CESA, nor was it small, but there was no vision for ministry or missions, not even a sense that the congregation should one day replace its own minister. So when someone at last did go forward for the ministry it was thought to be an amazing thing. It should not be like that in gospel and mission-focused CESA churches. Where people are genuine Christians, seeking and praying for the kingdom of God, and where the Christian ministry is held high and prayer going forth for the lost, people will come forward for ministry.

What sort of people should be coming to the college?

Let me say first that any Christian who has the chance to take a year out ought to think seriously of some solid Christian training. I don't mean they should all come to GWC. The college maintains a university entrance requirement and teaches at a tertiary level for those who want that. But there are other possibilities: Trinity Academy, Bible Institute, *Explore* are three that come to mind where there are programmes at different levels. GWC has at least a dozen one-year students. Some of these are wondering and praying if they should do more, and some go on to further studies and leadership in our churches. Most go back to their jobs, better equipped for Christian ministry as a layperson. For full-time studies I would give this as a general rule of thumb: If you are involved in some form of Christian ministry in your church or

Equipping Africans

2004 saw the commencement of a new GWC venture to help in the training of African church leaders. One of the fruits of abolishing the apartheid 'dividing wall of partition' has been an increasing stream of African Christian scholars and leaders coming to South African universities to study for higher degrees. Many are convinced, warm-hearted evangelical brothers. Often they find themselves in liberal institutions with a liberal supervisor and no classmates (post-grads mostly read alone pursuing particular research projects). It can be a lonely three years. Many are also pastors who are cut off in this time from regular ministry.

To meet this need and opportunity GWC is inviting such people to come and live at the college and join its "Evangelical Post-Graduate Research Fellowship". They will still enrol at a university and go there from time to time for meetings with their supervisor, but otherwise they are part of the learning, ministering, worshipping fellowship of the college. Dr James Krohn who recently completed a ThD at Stellenbosch University, mentors the group. The scholars have the use of GWC's library and other resources, including computer facilities and a dedicated work place (desk, bookshelf) in the new Faculty Centre. They share their work with each other, read and hear papers at a weekly seminar, as well as having full access to discuss their work with faculty members. Our hope is that they will return home wiser, better-trained practical teachers and pastors to give godly leadership in their country's theological colleges and churches.

Among the 17 students this year are Victor Nakah, Principal of the Theological College of Zimbabwe, reading for his ThD at Stellenbosch; Canon John Garba from the Diocese of Kaduna in Nigeria doing Honours; Rev Brian Koela (CESA) doing Honours and Masters; Simon Banda (Namibia) doing Masters; Peter Manzanga (Zimbabwe) doing Masters and Abdelaziz Bashier (Sudan) doing Honours.

Pray this fellowship grows and bears much fruit in future years. These people will have a great influence on many in their own countries. Pray it will be a gospel influence.

workplace or community and find it absorbing and giving you joy, and if others are being benefited by your work, then consider carefully whether you should not develop your knowledge and gifts. Make it a matter of prayer. CESA needs—the kingdom



**Front (L-R): Innocencio Varine, Simon Banda
Middle (L-R): Abdelaziz Bashier, Victor Owuor
Back (L-R): John Garba Danbinta, Daniel Emoru**

needs—pastors and teachers for congregations of every hue and shade and every specialist target audience: children, youth, women, men, believers and unbelievers. GWC presently has some who have just left school, an engineer and his wife in their 50s who have come from Australia, and everything in between. There is need for them all.

Is there some way for people who are interested but uncertain to find out?

Talk to others. Your minister is the obvious person. Write to the college for information. GWC intends running Enquirers' Days in Cape Town, KZN and Johannesburg later this year. This will be a chance for people to meet others with the same interest, hear a lecturer from GWC talk about theological studies, and ask questions. It would be great if we could do this every year.

GWC SAYS thank you

GWC would like to thank those who have prayed for its Library & Study Centre Project.

The South Peninsula Subcommittee met on 13 May to consider the objections to the development. They voted with one abstention to approve the plans and sent them forward to the Spatial Planning, Environment and Land Use Management Committee (SPELUM). The college does not yet know the date of SPELUM's meeting. It is likely the opposing parties will need to appear before the committee and argue their cases. Pray the project is approved at this final stage, and that there is no appeal against the decision.

News from churches around the country . . .

Blantyre Community Church: Gideon Manda is now being assisted in his ministry by Charles Tembo, who graduated last year from the Bible Institute in Cape Town with his Masters in Theology. Charles has been made responsible for overseeing the six rural churches, enabling Gideon to focus on growing the urban church. A visit by Bishop Frank Retief and a team from Emmanuel Church, Bellville is scheduled for October this year, in order to meet the leadership and congregation as well as to officiate at a combined ordination and confirmation service.

Barbara Ludditt, Emmanuel Church

Christ Church Newlands, Durban: The Rev Billy and Freda Farr, pioneers of gospel work among the Indian community in Durban, were the special guests at the opening of our new hall at the end of March this year attended by 250 people. The new building, aptly named Farr Hall, was officially opened by Bishops Warwick Cole-Edwards and Moses Ndlovu. The hall is helping us to better serve the needs of the community with Aids-awareness training and counselling, conferences and the activities of Hands of Compassion, a section 21 company formed by a group of ministers, teachers and a medical doctor to address the needs of the poor in our community—which stood at 100 000 at the last count and is growing as more and more low-cost housing is being built in the area. Among other things, we have been able to intervene to prevent the abuse of a disabled middle-aged woman by people who attempted to fraudulently sign papers on her behalf with a view to collect her disability grant for their own use. Our thanks goes especially to Christ Church Pinetown and La-Lucia for their generous donations in enabling us to complete the hall which stood incomplete for three years and to all who stood by us in prayer and in support.

Rev Raj Moodley

Holy Trinity Church, Weltevreden Park, Johannesburg: We've had our building vandalised and set alight in mid-July. Fortunately, the roof collapsed, extinguishing the fire before too much damage was done. The pulpit, organ, guitar stands and lectern as well as a few other incidentals were destroyed. The communion table and the Bible withstood the flames. We are worshipping as usual, but using the large Sunday school room. A bit of a squash, but we are coping well. The spirits of the con-

gregation were not dampened. We continue to serve our God who gives us strength. In May we invited the President of the West Rand Christian Motor Cycle Club as our guest speaker at our Fellowship Breakfast to learn more about the ministry work being done among motorcyclists. We are planning a Spring Festival in September, which is normally an outreach evening where favourite songs of praise are sung, poetry and verses from Scripture are recited, while fellowship is enjoyed over a meal. We've invited gospel singer Cathy Viljoen to the event.

Rev Philip Howes

Christ Church Horison, Roodepoort: We held a very successful and well-attended children's holiday Bible club for a week during the April school holidays. A family breakfast was held in June where Alistair McKenzie presented a most informative talk on the history of missions and Christianity in Southern Africa through the medium of his unique collections of letters and postcards, and postage stamps from previous eras. A 'Special Guest' Sunday was recently held with the speaker from the Evangelical and Reformed Conference of Skogheim, Rev David Murray of the Free Church of Scotland. This young preacher (mid-30s) gave two outstanding addresses on the Free Offer of the Gospel and the Cross of Christ. These sermons really were a tremendous encouragement and reminder of the power and strength of the classic reformed presentation of the gospel. His talks at Skogheim on the Christ of the Covenants were equally substantial and greatly used of the Lord. The attendance for our guest service Sunday was very good with many coming from quite far away. We recently officially dedicated our new venue for a church plant in Braamfischerville, adjacent to Soweto. We have been holding services there for quite a while and have just completed a building with seating for sixty people. We hope this will soon be an official daughter church.

Rev Dr Neil Beatson

Christ Church Midrand: We drew 120 children to a week-long holiday programme for children during June. The theme was "God's Zoo" and we did an overview of the Bible using stories with different animals to share the gospel with the kids. We went from creation and the serpent in the garden to Noah and the ark, the bronze snake on the pole, and all the way to Jesus'

parable about the sheep and the goats. We managed to make contact with many new children and hope to be drawing them into our regular children's ministry programmes. A number of children's workers came up from Christ Church, Glenwood and Christ Church, La Lucia, and were a great help to us. Shaun Storer ran an evening programme for teenagers during the same week. They met for supper and a series of talks looking at Romans 5–8 under the title "Jesus—a king to live and die for". The talks were followed by table discussions in small groups. Shaun managed to draw in a few new teenagers and also to involve a lot more of our young adults in ministry as table leaders to interact with the teens.

Rory Bell

St Matthews, Leondale, Germiston: We had a Revive Us Again conference for two nights in July and our guest speaker was Rev Canny Sofe. It was a time of seeking for God's fresh visitation, and we were encouraged as people came in good numbers. On a Sunday prior to the conference we saw God's hand fanning into flame the ordinary service. Two women remained after the service, one a psychologist by profession, and the other an assistant to her husband, who is a lawyer. Both these women were in tears, and felt there was no better time than this to surrender their lives to the Lord. In fact, God was so amazing, the psychologist about two weeks ago shared her testimony of how God had blessed her with a senior position within the Department of Labour.

Eric Sabela

St Mary's Church, Ehlanzeni: More than 100 youth and 30 adults gathered for the regular annual winter holiday prayer and training meeting organised by the Mpumalanga district youth committee, near Hammersdale. The youth gathering took place on 3 and 4 June this year and the main guest speakers were the Rev Emmanuel Hadebe from Pietermaritzburg and the new Mpumalanga district rector, the Rev Thulani Ngubane. It was a busy time for the leaders as the youth prayer meeting coincided with the training meeting for leaders at Imbali Holy Trinity Church and many of them moved between the two meetings. The positive response impressed upon all present that when the church council is formed, a forum should also be created for the church youth.

E Mdluli

Let us know what's happening in your church. Send your news to Erina Botha at erinab@absamail.co.za or call her on 082 920 6559.

PRAYER diary

Please pray for . . .

- 7–10 September: The CESA Ministry Conference and Synod to be held at Emmanuel Church, Bellville. Pray for God's will to be done in decisions made, for God's wisdom to be sought during discussions, and for God's presence to be known during this important time in the denomination.
- Travel mercies for ministers and delegates, as well as for Emmanuel Church as they organise the event, that all may run smoothly and give testimony to the goodness of our Lord.
- The nomination and election of a new Cape Area Bishop to be held at our forthcoming Synod.

Eastern Cape:

- 1 Members of St Philip's Church, George, who are undergoing training to assist the Department of Education to help pupils in literacy skills. Many of the parents are illiterate and cannot help their children. A pilot scheme is to be put into place soon and the churches in George have been approached to provide volunteers.
- 2 God's wisdom as St Philip's is considering building extensions in the face of substantial growth in numbers.
- 3 More young families attending our church as we reach out to residents in a number of new housing developments that are taking place near the church.

Gauteng:

- 1 18 Sept: The Sunday School Teachers/Children's Workers training day with Michael Lush at Christ Church, Midrand, and that those participating will be greatly blessed by the teaching and, through them, the children to whom they minister.
- 2 Nov: The forthcoming month of evangelism at St Paul's, Kenilworth (7–28 Nov) and preceding week of prayer (1–6 Nov). Pray that we will be enabled to reach the vast number of unsaved people in Kenilworth and the surrounding areas with the gospel, and that many will surrender their lives to Christ.
- 3 The staff and administrators at Christ Church, Hillbrow's Care Centre, that they may be strengthened to face the daily challenges of ministering in a densely populated and very needy area. Pray, too, for the HIV positive babies in their care and also for the school children at the centre, who will soon be writing exams, that they may be encouraged by achieving good results. In 2003 they had an 80% pass rate.

KwaZulu-Natal:

- 1 For tensions in some of the KZN churches to be resolved.
- 2 Our emphasis of training for 2004 as we seek to encourage rectors, equip our post ordinands and train our lay people for ministry.
- 3 Our second CESA Day in October—the purpose is to again work through the Handbook of Procedures so that we all work together.
- 4 Our Missionaries—the Zumas in Zululand, the Reyneckes in Mozambique, the Ivins in Lily of the Valley Conference Centre, the Grahams in India, and our new couple applying to SIM for Nepal.
- 5 The Lily of the Valley Home, which houses 60 orphan children affected by HIV/Aids.
- 6 The Conference Centre to be a great asset for ministry in KZN.

Western Cape:

- 1 Muizenberg Community Church to re-think its strategy on reaching people in the area, many of whom are refugees.
- 2 Our churches in Mandela Park, especially as we try to get re-established in Site B where all the buildings we built have been confiscated from us.
- 3 St Matthew's Church, Table View, as they plan for a new church plant in Parklands, north of Table View.

Namibia:

- 1 The Rev Colin Banfield, who is currently in Namibia to investigate how best he can assist our churches in Ovamboland.
- 2 God to raise up two young Ovambo men who can be trained to work with their own people.



Long Service Appreciated

By Brian Cameron

In 1981 Jan and Fieke van Bever Donker recognised the need for a programme to assist couples who were planning to be married after many married couples who had run into difficulties were referred to them for counselling. It soon became clear that many of the problems would never have arisen if the couple had been properly instructed before they were married.

Jan and Fieke drew up a course, which has been used at St James and a number of other CESA churches, and also headed up a pre-marital course at St James. The course consisted of six joint meetings and six face-to-face meetings with each participating couple.

The time came for them to lay down the responsibility of running the course. In addition to being the Dean of the Faculty of Science at the University of the Western Cape, Jan is also an ordained CESA minister and rector of two churches in Mitchell's Plain where he preaches, teaches and counsels on a regular basis. Fieke, who is a medical doctor, works with him in the churches and also runs special courses for disabled children in the area.

The staff of St James thanked Jan and Fieke for their long service at St James—where Jan had previously served as people's warden for 18 years—at a special lunch and then they were publicly thanked at a church service early in August.

Well done good and faithful servants!



Editorial director:

Bishop Frank Retief

Editor:

Erina Botha | 082 920 6559

erinab@absamail.co.za

Designer:

Marc de Chazal

083 395 1252

dechaz@mweb.co.za