

## HELP WANTED

Unsolicited enquiries that come to Pastors of the AELC and Newsletter office from widespread areas indicate growing interest in the church.

Keeping in touch with people scattered over a wide area of our continent is not too difficult with modern phones, emails and fax. Personal contact poses much greater difficulties.

There is also active mission work under way in Brisbane with pastoral service and care having to travel a long way.

This problem was discussed at length at the meeting of the Co-ordinating Committee on 9th July.

A full-time or part-time pastor or layman to fulfil the requirements outlined above is a desired option.

**The AELC therefore invites enquiries from men who would like to help in a role that is important to God's Kingdom.**

There is provision for those who would wish to train for the ministry. Pastors C.R. Priebbenow and V.S. Grieger are available for teaching and courses that can be conducted by correspondence, helped by email and fax where these can be utilised.

Pastors Grieger and Priebbenow are to draw up a document setting out the courses that will be available.

Background, age, and present or former vocation are not such important factors as dedication.

All enquiries are welcome. Please contact any Pastor or member of the AELC, or forward your requests to Newsletter at the address on this publication, or to The Secretary, Paul Hoopert, M/S 497, Evanslea Rd, Jondaryan. 4403, QLD.

### EDITORIAL

#### A NATIONAL DILEMMA

The bombing attacks occurring around the world are signs foreshadowing a conflict of worldwide proportions. In considering this we make one very important point. The background to our comments is that we confirm that all Scripture is given by inspiration and that every word of the canonical Scripture is "God breathed." Further, that we are bound to believe and accept the Scriptures as the truth, unequivocally and without reservation. This is the foundation of our faith and not to accept this will eventually destroy the whole structure of the Christian Church.

Further, we reject the false philosophy of the ecumenical movement that has convinced an apostate generation that "all religions are much the same and all have valid points to commend them." Therefore, with all respect we cannot accept, for example, that Buddhism, Islam, Hinduism and all other man-made philosophies are reliable ways to salvation.

There has only been one God-given message that deals with man's creation, waywardness, salvation, and eternal destiny, and that is contained in the Scriptures on which the Christian church is founded.

These were the principles that the Christian church flourished since its inception. They provided the motive for Christians to travel to all parts of the globe, teaching and preaching. It was these principles upon which

the framework of Western society was built and from which we derive our system of democratic government.

This whole framework is now under attack as seen by the bombings in London and around the world.

This is not a conventional military attack as we formerly understood a military conflict. But of greater importance, and more alarmingly, it is an attack on our culture and way of life. Whilst we acknowledge that it is not the role of a government to restore or carry out the mission work of the Christian Church, in the present situation, Prime Minister Howard would be well advised to spend as much time and resources in protecting the nation's heritage as the nation does in combating the terrorists and their weapons.

The operations of the "terrorists" have been seen until now largely as a political and military campaign. But their long-term effects will be devastating for the Christian Church.

It is an assault on a church that will have great difficulty in defending itself, because it has in far too many areas forsaken the principles enumerated at the beginning of this article. It has also failed to speak out against immoral legislation introduced by governments in the guise of "social change".

Assisted by the greatest mass migration programme seen for over one thousand years, Islam has stepped into a worldwide spiritual vacuum created by the declining influence of the Christian churches. The number

of people on the move is sufficient to change the culture of the destination where they settle.

Who would have thought 40 years ago that an Australian Anglo- European nation, steeped in British constitutional democratic government, would be faced with tectonic change, a situation that has the capacity to challenge both the accepted way of government and our heritage, as well as the nation's religion? Whilst the mainline churches may have been showing signs of decline, with people staying away from the conventional Christian services, the nation as a whole accepted that Australia, if it had any religion at all, was Christian.

For several decades we have seen in Australia a massive migration programme that has placed, according to some reports, up to 500,000 Muslims in our midst. Australians should prepare for the distinct possibility that the culture that has sustained us for 200 years will be drastically changed. Governments will bow to pressure to introduce laws that allow Muslims to live under Islamic customs and law. An aggressive and dedicated Islam will expand at the expense of the Christian churches.

It is hardly likely that the mainline Christian churches have the will or capacity to defend what was once the faith of the nation.

Should this concern us? As Christians we are bound to obey the divine command of our Lord to preach the Gospel to the world, to all people regardless of their race, colour or religion.

If this is beyond the capacity of the existing church structure, then the Word will be preserved, (and we are assured it always will be), by faithful little groups and individuals across the nation, as it was in Russia under the brutal Communist rule.

In the situation that Christians may well find themselves in the coming years, they will need all the courage, hope, comfort, and faithfulness they can muster. What better advice to give than in the words of a fine old hymn:

If dangers gather round,  
Still keep me calm and fearless;  
Help me to bear the cross  
When life is dark and cheerless;  
And let me win my foe  
With words and actions kind,  
When counsel I would know,  
Good counsel let me find.

By Johann Heermann 1585-1647

In our May edition we printed Part I of Tim Stiller's review of Professor Koch's Law and the Gospel. We have much pleasure in now following with Part II, dealing with the Gospel. Professor Koch's work has been reprinted and orders can be placed with Mr P. Lienert, 13 Kooyong St, Horsham 3400, Victoria. Price \$20 includes postage. In Part I Tim Stiller wrote that in today's church it "is more than ever necessary to again restore the wonderful balance of Law and Gospel, as did Dr. Martin Luther so faithfully at the time of the Reformation." This balance has long since gone from many Lutheran congregations. Having this quote in mind, we recommend this work for study by our readers.

A Review of the Book Titled:

**"LAW AND GOSPEL OR THE WAY OF LIFE"**

Written by G.C. KOCH

PART II:

**GOSPEL. Again, from the foreword of the above-mentioned book come these words: "The treatise on "Law and Gospel" contained in this publication is offered as a clear testimony concerning the "one thing needful," as an unequivocal statement of the old scriptural truth, "There is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved" than the name of Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God."**

The coming to earth of the Son of God and His atoning death for all mankind are the heart of the Gospel.

The writer makes a very valuable point early in this Gospel section, as follows: "The Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ is the most valuable treasure that the sons and daughters of Adam can ever have in this world. Nothing on earth can even so much as compare with it in its vital importance for human welfare, both for time and for eternity. ...All time spent with the Gospel is temporal and eternal gain."

The writer's starting point after concluding the Law section of this book is to establish that, unlike the Law, the Gospel is not a natural endowment of man, but a supernatural Revelation of God to man.

He then goes on to tell of the widespread neglect by many preachers of the Gospel of current times, to preach the true meaning and vital importance of the death of Jesus Christ. These preachers make much of Jesus, the great Teacher of moral excellence. They also teach further that whosoever in sincerity of heart, with purity of motive, follows "the Master," endeavouring to become more and more like Him, will by so doing also become a son of God and some day enter into his well-earned reward. This is commonly known as 'Social Gospel.'

But the reader is presented with the full and true meaning of the death of Christ, which was the death of a sinless man. It was a vicarious death, a voluntary death,

the death of the Son of God. It was the highest manifestation of the love of God toward sinners.

The writer then proceeds to point out that the resurrection of Christ is of the highest possible importance for our faith and life. He says: "For if the death of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, may be called the heart of the Gospel, His resurrection can be said to be its very life, its divine seal and confirmation, its glorious crown."

It is made quite clear that not only was it absolutely necessary for Christ to bear the world's sin into death, but that He had to rise again, whereby God proclaims to the world of lost sinners that He has accepted the sacrifice of this great Substitute. As a result of this "acceptable sacrifice," peace with God and full forgiveness of sins through repentance is offered to all people.

However, by the resurrection of our Lord and Saviour the Gospel also pours out its hope. It provides a sure and living hope to all believers for a bodily resurrection to eternal life.

The second to last chapter deals with several important aspects of the Gospel as follows:

**1) The Gospel is a free gift of God's grace.**

Here grace is expounded.

**2) The Gospel of Jesus Christ is all-sufficient for man's spiritual needs.**

"My grace is sufficient for thee," says the Lord to His Apostle Paul.

**3) The Gospel is universal in its application.**

Christ died for all and offers His salvation to all.

**4) The Gospel is exclusive.**

It absolutely excludes all other teachings concerning man's salvation. All other teachings are false! Here also the writer most necessarily warns of the danger that evolution is to the foundation of the Gospel, making mention that many so-called Christians are indifferent to this terrible danger.

**5) The Gospel is final.**

The Holy Spirit is no longer the Revealer of things before unknown, as He was for the apostles and evangelists, but is now the Interpreter.

The final chapter gives a good outline of the Holy Spirit's work through the means of grace, in that, He creates, sustains, and increases in the hearts of men a new life – the life of faith, which works by love.

**A summary of the Gospel section and the book as a whole.**

What a blessed joy this "*one thing needful*," is to the soul of the broken sinner, broken by the Law!

When the Law is rightfully applied, there is no other cure than that of the sweet Gospel of Jesus Christ.

This book brings out all that divine sweetness, which, if received in a true state of humbleness, can only strengthen, comfort, and keep the reader in the one-true-

faith.

I can thoroughly recommend this book to all families and individuals alike. It is a book for the Christian Home. It is not difficult for the reader of average ability. It is a book that you don't want to put down after you pick it up.

May this book be a blessing to all who read it in these times of apostasy in the church! May our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ receive all the glory as is rightfully His.

Tim Stiller, November 2004

**MULTI-CULTURISM GONE MAD**

The Torbay Council, in the County of Devon, United Kingdom, passed a resolution to remove the cross from a crematorium chapel.

Alan Faulkner, who claims to be a Christian, and is Torbay Council's executive member for Environmental Services, said that the decision to remove the cross was because "we live in a diverse multi-faith society and many people have no specific faith at all." The Crematorium Chapel was renamed a "ceremony hall."

Fortunately there are Devon clergy who are prepared to fight back. Following strong protests the Council is to reconsider the decision to have the 5 foot high gilded cross removed.

**TRAVELOGUE**

A cruise of the Baltic Sea visiting the main ports and capital cities takes the traveller into places that were formerly bastions of Lutheranism.

In Copenhagen a must is a visit to the Kobenhavns Domkirke, the cathedral that carries the title "The Church of our Lady", a leftover from the past.

Many Australians have happy memories of this cathedral where Crown Prince Frederick and the now Princess Mary were married.

Small by standards set by Canterbury and Westminster Abbey, it is nevertheless an inspiring place. For on this site since 1191 Christians, and since 1536, Lutherans have worshipped here.

The present church was consecrated in 1829, but the site has been a place of Christian worship since 1191. The most imposing features are the statues of the Apostles, huge marble figures set in niches in the walls.

Visitors can purchase a fine booklet setting out the history of the cathedral, but sadly in 24 pages of script and colour photos the word Lutheran does not appear and the Reformation is glossed over.

Another church which is a "must" to visit is the Marmion or marble church adjacent to the royal residences. Around the outside of this church are statues of the great figures of the Danish reformation, including a number whose names are familiar, such as Thomas Kingo,

by virtue of the hymns that they wrote and that appear in the Australian Lutheran Hymnal. Very moving to stand in the places where these great Reformers worked.

#### STATISTICS AND REALITY

Once upon a time it was reassuring to be told that the Scandinavian countries were 80 to 90 percent Lutheran. This was a matter of some pride as these countries were held up as models, and they made Lutheran statistics look very handsome. It is a sad fact that the church in the Baltic cities, like the church throughout the West has lost much of its former influence and glory.

On a half day cruise along the canals of Stockholm, the guide, when commenting on the religion of Sweden, told the audience that Sweden was Roman Catholic until in the 1500s. Then the King realised that the church was extremely wealthy. So he decided to cash in and made a change to Lutheranism, after which everyone who did not join the new church was ostracised or driven out. There was nothing about Gustavus Adolphus or the great Reformers who enlightened the people.

In the former Russian provinces of Latvia and Estonia the population is now composed of up to 40 or 50 percent of Russians. Our guides in Riga and Tallinn said in answer to questions that since freedom from communist rule there had been a small return to the churches as people searched for old values. Although the state religion was officially Lutheran, statistics showed that nearly half the population were Russian Orthodox and in some places Roman Catholics and other denominations were active and increasing.

We came across an interesting comment revealing the state of the church. In the delightful port town of Warrnamunde, north Germany, a taxi was hired to drive into the centre of the town. Arriving at the town square named the Kirkenplatz there was a very imposing church in the middle of the square. In northern Germany the Lutheran Church had been strong since the early days of the Reformation. So I asked if this was a Lutheran church. The taxi driver replied that he did not know for sure. He thought it might be Catholic.

#### BOOK REVIEW

##### **FOOTPRINTS IN THE ASH THE STORY OF MT St. HELENS**

Ever get confused by the arguments and theories about evolution, the age of the earth, and Creation?

It is rewarding to pick up a book that is easy to read and attractive with many colourful and awesome photos.

Mt. St. Helens is in the State of Washington in northwest USA. In May 1980 it shocked the world with an awesome display of unbridled power as it erupted.

The eruption had been threatening for some

months, so for the first time geologists from around the world were able to gather with all the most modern equipment to record the lead up to, and then the explosion that followed.

The documented results from the findings of geologists demonstrate that much of what evolutionists claim took millions of years can actually happen in days or months.

Two eminent authorities have presented their findings for all to read. Dr. John Morris is a Ph. D. in Geological Engineering, and the author of many books including "*The Young Earth*," and Dr. Steven Austin, who is a specialist in the sedimentary processes that form rock strata and fossil fuels and fossils.

Together they have put together a very readable book which includes many magnificent photos of the eruption and the aftermath.

"*Footprints in the Ash*" can be purchased for \$25 plus postage and ordered from Answers in Genesis, P.O. Box 6302, Acacia Ridge, 4110 QLD.

Phone 07 32737650, or email enquiries to sales@answersingenesis.com

A highly recommended book, easy to read and a great reinforcement for our faith.

#### THE EMAIL POST

Our email news service has been launched with a number of news items not normally seen in the press or on TV being emailed out to those people on our address list.

More subscribers are welcome. Write, phone, or email your wish to be included in this up to date service. The editor can be contacted at the address below.

We also appreciate receiving Letters to the Editor. If you would like to comment on anything, please let us know.

#### NEWSLETTER'S ADDRESS

THE EDITOR,  
A.E.L.C. NEWSLETTER  
PO BOX 1312  
RUNAWAY BAY Q 4216  
PHONE/FAX (07) 55290058  
EMAIL: david.mattiske2@bigpond.com

This Newsletter is for and on behalf of the Australian Evangelical Lutheran Church.

Newsletter Management Committee:  
Pastor Clarence Priebbenow  
Pastor Peter Ziebell  
Pastor Mark Hampel  
Errol Noble  
David Mattiske - Editor