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Through the disaster at Beaconsfield, Chris quickly developed strong relationships with many of the miners, family members, union officials and other people involved in the rescue operations.

"People started asking me profound spiritual questions of faith. I had people I would never have expected opening up and talking about their faith, I had people crying on my shoulder that surprised me; tough miners, union officials, senior police officer."

Chris was even invited into the closed AWU meetings, where he was introduced by Bill Shorten, head of the AWU, who told miners not to tough it out but to go and talk to Chris!

So does Chris think the local churches will have to change to make the gospel relevant for working class miners?

"This is a critical question," agrees Chris. "Many miners have already indicated that we will never see them in Church."

However when Chris asked them, "What about a barbie, beer and

chat at a mates place?" the miners' attitudes were entirely different.

"At the moment we are asking the question, what should Church look like for miners?"

Perhaps the example of local parishioner Steve East, offers an inkling into the way forward.

Steve, who has just been accepted as a Church Army candidate, had already established a ministry called 'Backyard Angels': a small scale backyard blitz for those in need. This ministry meant Chris, and the Anglican Church, already had much needed credibility with working-class 'Beaky' even before the accident.

"Steve has managed to co-opt other people in the community to share, people who are not yet Christians," explained Chris. "Steve has a Bible reading and prayer with them each time before they set off to blitz another yard."

"He will make a great Church Army officer," says Chris.

Lost People Matter to God!



Last Friday morning I woke at 3am with much on my mind as I prepared that day to depart for an overseas trip. My mind was dominated with the thought: "Lost people matter to God." Over the previous two weeks I had been heartened by the six "Unleashing the Mission-shaped Church" conferences and what I sense is the beginning of a fresh movement of God within His church. That movement is putting Christ and his mission back at the centre.

Our conference tour with George Lings, director of Church Army's Sheffield Centre in the UK and Bob and Mary Hopkins from the Archbishop of Canterbury's new Fresh Expressions team took us to Sydney, Melbourne, Launceston, Orange, Brisbane and Canberra. Over 520 attended the events including 12 Anglican bishops as

well as leaders from Lutheran, Baptist, Uniting and the Church of Christ to name some.

I sensed a lot of excitement and hope for the future. The feedback was extraordinarily positive. The team was energized by the interaction, news of pioneering works underway and the nearly 200 that have indicated interest in being part of Regional Forums that will provide a supportive learning environment for those starting Fresh Expressions of church.

One of the great encouragements for me was the huge turnout in Brisbane. St Francis College was buzzing – you would have thought they were giving away free beer at the brewery next door!

Two of the most popular workshops offered (out of 7) proved to be "Tackling the Rural Challenge" and "Anglo Catholic Fresh Expressions". Never before can I remember the issue of Mission being so prominent across the dioceses and across the traditions of the Anglican Church. God is up to something! Let's keep the momentum rolling and remember "Lost people matter to God!"

Tim Scheuer

PIONEER



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Mine Miracle Turns Town to God



The Church Army officer who found himself at ground zero of the Beaconsfield mine disaster has revealed exclusively to Pioneer the hopelessness felt by mining experts during the first five days, and the extent of the miracle that followed.

The Rev Chris Theile, priest-in-charge of West Tamar parish, admits he had been a 'doubting Thomas', certain that Todd Russell and Brant Webb were dead. After all, Chris had been given an insight into the geologist's report, which clearly stated that no one could have survived a rock-fall of that magnitude.

"I was present when the Coroner spoke to all three families, just after the body of Larry Knight had been found," Chris says. "He informed all three families that there was no chance that anyone would be alive because of the quantity of rock that had fallen."

"In the midst of this knowledge, I, like many others, thought that all three were dead. Yet when I prayed with some of the women from one of the families I suddenly felt compelled to pray for a miracle for the two that had not yet been found. I even felt guilty praying the prayer because I was offering false hope. Yet the Spirit of God compelled me to pray that way."

So it is somewhat ironic that early Sunday evening, the first person the family rang to tell news of the miners' survival was Chris Thiele.

"They screamed and screamed, 'It's a miracle! It's a miracle!'" says Chris.

From this moment on until the miners were rescued, Chris' conversations would be dominated by the theme of miracles.

And then came the 'electric' moment when Todd and Brant came out of the mine.

"Film and photos will never capture the emotion," he says.

What is also extraordinary about Chris' role in the unfolding events is that he had only commenced ministry in the West Tamar region in January this year. How could Chris respond when he knew so few people?

Chris was driving to Beaconsfield when he heard news of the disaster on the car radio. He went straight to the community centre, where a crises centre had been set up, and met some family members.

"I made the decision from day one that I would go where the family and miners were. I went to the homes of the family and sat with them, listened, said very little and waited."

Chris also went to the mine, where he met miners, mine management and union officials. When either union officials or mine management said they had to go and speak to the families, Chris offered to go with them for support.

"Yes please!" was the relieved reply," says Chris.

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Yes! I will be your Partner in Evangelism

A. Yes! I want to be a Church Army Prayer Partner

Send me regular Prayer Updates

B. Yes! Church Army can count on me regularly

By Direct Debit By Credit Card Debit Monthly

Tick this box and we will post you the direct debit form.

\$25 \$50 \$75 \$100 \$ _____

C. Yes! Church Army can count on me for a special gift



My cheque/money order/credit card for

\$15 \$25 \$150 \$300 \$ _____

Visa Bankcard Mastercard

Name _____
as it appears on card

Signature _____ Expiry date ____ / ____ / ____

Name (Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms/Rev/Dr) _____

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THIS ISSUE

- Letter from Nairobi
- Revealed: Secrets to Tomorrow's Church
- Lost People Matter to God

Letter from Nairobi

TRAINING FOR CROSS CULTURAL MISSION

Australia's changing cultural landscape has confronted us with a startling new reality. It is no longer enough to train missionaries in Australia and send them overseas. We need them to engage in cross-cultural mission at home.

Q: What is the best way to train people for cross-cultural mission?

A: Send them to a different culture to learn.

I'm writing from Nairobi, the capital of Kenya in Africa where I am with Janice Thiele and Kelly Smith, two students in Church Army's Global Gap year program. After completing the three month residential component of the course, they now find themselves on the ground at their global internship site where they have joined two Kenyan interns, Dedan and Dennis.

The internship program comprises a study schedule, participation in the Soul Nairobi community service mission targeting 500 000 Kenyans, and cooperation with the Church planting team planting the 'New Hope Celebration' in Nairobi city.

The Reverend Steve Maina, General Secretary for Church Army Africa, invited me to witness the progress of a church he pastored seven years ago. In October 2005, this church had divided into five separate plants and since then has grown from 3000 to 6000 members! The service I visited was attended by 150 people, with a team of about 10 people on stage singing songs, some in Swahili, some in English.



Our Global Gap year students, Janice and Kelly, in Kenya with local interns Dedan and Dennis

New Hope Celebration, a new church plant that Global Gap Year students are involved with during their internship, has hired a room on the third floor of a building in Nairobi city where it currently conducts services, lunchtime prayer meetings, and serves to provide as a space for ministering with those who have been engaged on the street. The church has grown to about 20 over the first 4 months of operation.

For a long time now our pulpits have been resounding with the call to "Go", yet many of us have not known how, where, and when to go, or how to effectively engage the communities surrounding our churches when we do. Our methods of evangelism have been limited and so have the results. That need no longer be the case. Church Army provides training and process for students, church planters, and existing churches to tackle the task of cross-cultural mission in their area.

When Janice and Kelly return from Nairobi in mid November to complete the final two weeks of their Church Army Global Gap year course, they will not be confined by inherited methods of evangelism, nor will they feel out of their depth when faced with the task of cross cultural mission to their surrounding communities.

by Jon Bennett



The team prepare for a lunchtime church meeting in Nairobi



SOME INTERESTING FACTS:

- Less than 10% of Kenyans have hot running water. The rest stand in a tub of warm water from boiling the jug and splash it over themselves.
- 60% of employable Kenyans are unemployed. Of those the vast majority have university degrees.
- A large percentage of people in Kibera slum have university degrees.
- About 500 000 people walk 20 kms from Kibera to the city to try and get work for each day. The people are about 10-15 wide across the road side and the line goes for the whole 20kms from Kibera to the city.
- Life expectancy in Kenya is 44 years.
- School teacher is the second lowest paid profession. Pastor is the lowest!
- The government does not recognise Kibera as a suburb. Its 1 million people do not exist and Kibera is not on the map.
- It takes around 7-8 years for a claim to go through court.
- Steve Maina wore his first pair of shoes at age 12.
- Kenyan Christians do not drink alcohol at all. It is considered sin.

Revealed: Secrets to tomorrow's church

A key strategic thinker behind Church Army UK's fresh expression movement says Australian Anglicans have much to learn from the British experience.

"It will have to diversify who they look for to train for ministry, and that's a good thing," he told Pioneer during his conference tour of Australia last month. "You can not try to initiate something from the top artificially."

On a positive note, Mr Lings notes that people from 'a variety of traditions' are interested in fresh expressions.

George Lings, director of the Sheffield Centre in the UK, has spent many years researching fresh expressions of church.

"It's not as hard as it might seem and there are lots of new initiatives out there."

Mr Lings said that we must see that "it's not the Church of God that has a mission in the world but the God of Mission who has a church in the world".

He explained that we must think of church in terms of the biblical images of 'a light to the world'.

"It is dangerous to say the church is the agent of Mission. The role of agent in Mission belongs to the Holy Spirit - though it is entirely acceptable that the church is a sign of God."

"This gives us both accuracy and modesty about the church's role," he said.



George Lings (left) listens to the experience of church planter Andrew Knight at Wentworth Falls in the Blue Mountains, NSW.

How to set up a fresh expression

What are the stages?

• Four aspects to growing an FXC



1. Loving service and forming community (note they are not sequential but overlap):
 - a. The team serve others around them. This builds community.
 - b. The team live out being servants of one another. This also builds community.
2. Evangelism and making disciples
 - a. Serving others leads naturally to deeper relationships. Questions about life start.
 - b. Official courses can be good, but may not start far enough back
 - c. Some team members may need help sharing their faith, while others may have evangelism gifts which need encouraging and equipping
 - d. New Christians will have life-style issues. Offer acceptance but expect inner transformation.
3. Evolving worship
 - a. Worship should grow out of the community
 - b. Engage with Scripture and explore sacraments, but experiment and allow mistakes
 - c. Find your poets and artists and use what fits from the past.

The Church Army is a growing movement of pioneering evangelists who declare the good news of Jesus Christ in word and action so that many more people will follow Him and be established in healthy communities of faith.

Our dream is to become the "Spearhead of the Church" as we serve the Anglican Communion through evangelism, disciple making and church planting.