

LIFE matters

Volume 1

Issue 4

WHERE IS YOUR HOME?

A song to sing & a place to be

SONG – A GIFT FROM GOD

Refreshment in a dry place

THE SONG OF IDENTITY

A Christmas Miracle

THE SOUND OF
HOME

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...and coffee + couch multiplies
fun for mum

Playcafé



Commencing Thursday 10 February 2011

For all information on Playcafé Please visit our
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189 Midland Road, Hazelmere 6055

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Editorial

Song is synonymous with a Christian's walk. Because God sings* and we enter into His life when we become His sons & daughters, His song becomes our song.

We sing often in our homes and when we meet together; we love to share our faith in music and song. In effect, the song that we sing – the song of our lives – is His song. It's not about words and music; it's joyful and worshipful expression of our faith, growing as we know and love the Lord who is the source of our life, our naming, our being, our predestination and our song.

The song we learn and sing is His song which calls us with the Sound of Home, reinforcing who we are and reminding us of the promise of life for eternity. The Sound of Home is the call of loving, like-minded hearts, growing in fullness of life here and now and looking forward to everlasting life with Him.

There is no more peaceful sound!

* Zephaniah 3:17 'The LORD your God in your midst, the Mighty One, will save; He will rejoice over you with gladness, He will quiet you with His love, He will rejoice over you with singing'.

Editor





PLAYCAFÉ

Sliding head first into something new

by Jennifer Gale

As of this month, I'll be mum of three. Three little ones under the age of three! So looking forward to this next bundle of joy...although, that said, I can see the challenge ahead.

It would be good to have the perfect place, to accommodate the three pint sized and me!
At home each day...what to do? Where to go? The place to be?

A place for them all...a three year old? She loves imaginative play!
A two year old boy who likes the cars, zooming around, keeping busy all day!
A new born of course, just a place to rest, to feed and burp, what she'll do best!

'PlayCafé' is where I'll be on Midland Road with my three...a playground suitable up to preschool age, imaginative play corner, swings and slides. A toddler climbing maze, to challenge age two and

bikes and cars to zoom around too!

Please come and join me, with all of my three, not forgetting of course coffee and tea!

Couches for mum to relax, take a break, a good book, as well as a piece of cake. Friendships to build, support and care will always be available at 'PlayCafé'... love to see you there!

When: Every Thursday in school term

Time: 9.00am – 12.15pm

Where: 189 Midland Rd, Hazelmere

Cost: \$7 per child; \$12 family of 2 or more children; includes coffee, cake & morning tea (for kids too)

Discount booklets available

For more information email us at playcafe@pcf.org.au or go to www.pcf.org.au/playcafe

Starting: 10th February 2011

where is your home?

by Bob Wagner

A song to sing and a place to be

In the Old Testament there is a story about the nation of Israel, who found themselves as prisoners in the great city of Babylon. The dramatic account of how they were taken captive is found in the book of 2 Kings, chapter 25.

Those of a certain generation might remember a popular 1970s song about these people – a setting of Psalm 137, which says:

By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down.

Yes, we wept, when we remembered Zion.

On the willow in the midst of it, we hung up our harps.

For there, those who led us captive asked us for songs.

Those who tormented us demanded Songs of joy:

“Sing us one of the songs of Zion!”

How can we sing the Lord’s song in a foreign land?

The Israelites had no song to sing, and their captors mocked them because of this. Why couldn’t they sing? Because they were away from their homeland; they were in a place that was foreign and hostile to them.

Where is your home? The Bible tells

us that a Christian’s citizenship is in heaven. This doesn’t mean that if you are a Christian you should burn your passport but it does mean that your sense of belonging and your family’s culture should come from being a member of the kingdom of God.

Many people have lost this sense of belonging. They feel isolated; they feel far away from God; they don’t want to be. They find that walking a life in the strength and grace of God is elusive. There is little joy in their lives – shall we say that they, like the Israelites in Babylon, have no song to sing.

If you are in this position then please know that God wants to bring you back to his kingdom, to bring you back to where you are supposed to be. As you respond to the call of Jesus Christ, who loves you, you will find that you will have a new song to sing. Great joy and peace will not be long coming to you.

More than once in the Bible are found the words: “The Lord is my strength and my song, and He has become my salvation”. May this become your song too.



song - a gift from God

by Stuart Gale

I love to sing – especially in the car when I’m on my own. I’ll turn the music up really loud and sing away without a care in the world. Of course, if I have to stop at the lights, I’ll turn the music down and stop singing. I don’t want to look silly to the cars next to me. Once the lights go green though, I’m off again.

The only trouble is I’m not a very good singer at all. But there is something in me that loves to sing. I’m not a very good musician either but I have found that I can appreciate the complexity of musical theory.

In most of us there is an inbuilt appreciation of rhythm, beat and melody. We know a good song when we hear it. Our spirits seem to lift when we hear a song that connects with us. But why does this happen?

Singing and music is a creation and a gift from God. Like most things though it has been hijacked and twisted to be something other than what God intended. We can clearly see in our world today that music has a huge capacity to lift our spirits and bring joy to us but it can also be something that can drag us down and darken our souls.

The Bible is full of examples of what happens when we sing. One of the best examples is of Paul and Silas in jail. As they were locked in their prison cells, chained to the walls, they sang a song to God. As they sang, quite literally their chains came off and they were free.

We can sometimes feel that we are in a prison; that things are happening out of our control. As we have seen, a simple answer to this can be to sing – to sing a simple song to the Lord. The words don’t mean much – it’s all in the heart.

Another story tells of the Israelites wandering around the desert. They came to a well but it was dry. They were told to sing to the well. They did and immediately it sprang up with fresh, pure, clean water.

Again we can often feel dry and worn out. Life’s circumstances can take a lot out of us. But if we can, in the middle of all that is going on, sing a song to the Lord, He has promised He will refresh us, loose the chains and fill our empty, dry wells. He has promised us a “peace that surpasses all understanding” if we will turn to Him. One of the simplest ways we can start is to sing. ■



the song of identity

by Jeff Baldock

A Christmas Miracle

Imagine – on the most important day of your life, you’re found in a foreign town, where people from your background are hated and scorned; you’re pregnant and about to give birth. What’s more, there’s a festival in the town and all accommodation is booked out!

Finally, a hotel keeper begrudgingly makes room for you in the back stable where the animals sleep out of the weather.

And it’s here that your baby boy is born; not just any boy (as marvellous and wonderful as any new-born is) but Jesus, the Son of God, in human form.

So to Mary a child is born and His name is “Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Saviour, the Prince of Peace”. Here in this tiny stable, on a bed of hay, Mary gives birth to her child and husband Joseph lends support.

How disconcerting, even frightening, for them. The surrounding noises of chickens, donkeys, maybe sheep,

perhaps little creepy crawlies, would seem far different from those of their home. Despite their joy in the birth of Jesus they must have longed for the comforting sounds of home; the familiar smells of a contented household left behind in Nazareth.

But they found delight in knowing they were participating in the birth of the long-promised Messiah, obeying God’s plan for them. Their lives were fulfilling and outworking all that had been planned for them if you like, the song of their lives was being sung and the sound was majestic and dynamic, yet beautiful in its meekness. The stark cacophony of sounds around them could not phase them. The longing for the familiar sounds and feel of home brought no deep tearing of their hearts, for the song of their lives was sounding forth with clarity and joy, accompanied by the Heavenly choir singing “Glory in the Highest”.

Here were simple lives, humbly but fully offered to God’s plan for them. Their willingness to give in the most demeaning of circumstances ensured that not only was God’s plan accomplished, but their lives were



the song of identity (cont.)

filling out what had been planned for them from before time began.

So it is for us. From the very outset of our creation in Christ, the song of our lives, the song of our identity rang out, joining the song that God himself sings (Zephaniah 3:17). Even though we were only in seed form there, our identity (our name; our song) was meticulously and magnificently planned by the Father before creation.

So it is for us. From the very outset of our creation in Christ, the song of our lives, the song of our identity rang out.

When our time on earth arrives, that song is to resound, with our lives a true testimony expression of the indwelling life of God. Mary & Joseph sang His song when they obeyed His word to – and for – them.

This song must not be our own version, a song of our own making.

With all the outward evidence that seemed to mitigate against what God had told them, it would have been so

easy for Mary & Joseph to doubt and attempt to take control of the situation in their own hands – to attempt to be masters of their own identity; to ‘name’ themselves; to ‘write’ their own song.

And this is a familiar way for all of mankind. An endless variety of self-determining methods and techniques demand us to ‘find ourselves’, to be ‘true to who we are’, offering to help us fight to source and control our own lives. But these only produce a song which – while it may initially sound lovely to human ears – soon becomes a plaintive hollow cry for reality, clashing harshly with the glorious song of what is – and can be – for us in Christ.

The true song for each of us is found in Christ and is the song of the soul set free of the struggle to find identity. It is the peaceful refrain of the one who knows the sound of the Lord’s voice and song – the Sound of Home.

‘O God, my heart is steadfast; I will sing and give praise, even with my glory (my whole being and identity)... I will praise You, O LORD, among the peoples. And I will sing praises to You among the nations’ Psalm 108:1-3. ■

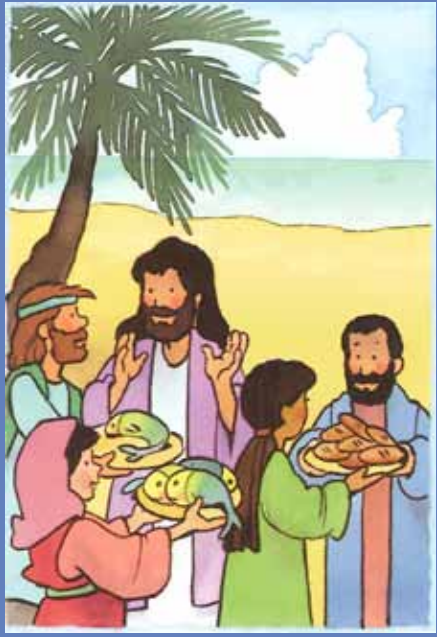
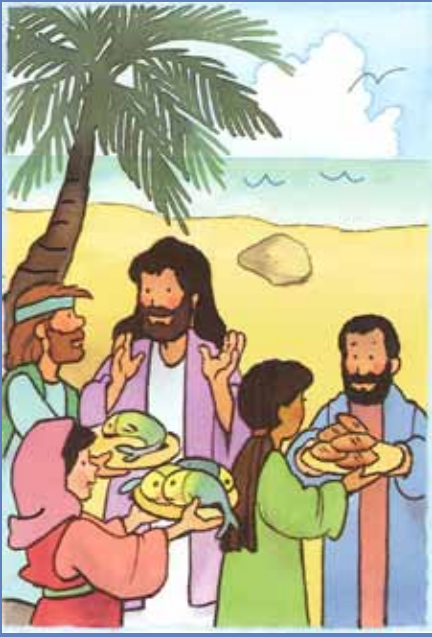


JUST 4 KIDS



By Taylor Watson

This month's Just 4 Kids is a "Spot the Difference". This picture is a well known story in the bible where Jesus fed the 5,000 from five loaves and two fishes. Try your best to spot the 7 differences in the two pictures. So have fun while learning about the bible with Just 4 Kids!



Go to page 12 for answers

Next Edition: Maze

A Senior's Moment "The Ultimate Family Reunion"

by Ruth Gale

There comes a time in everyone's life when one has to admit the years ahead are much less than those years that are behind.

This is a strange and somewhat daunting thought. Life on the whole is good, it is what we know, and the thought of leaving it is discomfoting. However the one thing we can be sure about is that our days are numbered and we are all going to die. We are all going to have an eternity, and for those who have given their life into God's hands while on earth, eternity with Him will be a time of reunion, joy, and celebration.

I'm looking forward to seeing Him face to face and thanking this God who not only gave me life to live here, but has also made a way for me to live forever with Him.

I'm excited about seeing those who have gone before me, particularly those whose life was shortened. I will be able to make up for those lost years and get to know and enjoy them. To see my parents, extended family and friends - what a grand reunion that will be!

The Bible tells us there is a choir in that city. It is made up of "thousands

upon thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand angels" joined by people "too many to number, from every tribe, nation and language." Can you imagine the sound? The most glorious music we have heard here will be insignificant by comparison.

I'm expecting to have a job to do, one that is totally suited to who I am and the capabilities I have been given. We all know, during our life experience - to a smaller or larger degree - grief, sickness, even tragedy. We are told in that heavenly city a river flows through it, with healing trees on either side. There will be no more thirsting, no more mourning or crying or pain for God will wipe away every tear from our eyes. What a restful, peaceful, joyful place this sounds!

I love my life, my family and friends; I'm hoping for many years of life yet; I am not in any hurry to leave, but when the time comes, how great to know this glorious home that God has prepared for me is just a breath away.

coming home - part two

by Elja Maurice

‘Peace I leave with you, my peace I give to you; not as the world gives, give I to you.’ John 14:27.

To me, knowing God is like ‘coming home’ in a few different ways. Last issue we talked about knowing God as a loving Father. This time I’d like to talk about the peace we can find when we receive God’s word to us.

The Bible is very clear that God had a plan in mind when he made us. He made us to be a certain kind of person with a particular kind of work to do, for him (Psalm 139: 13-16, Ephesians 2:10). However it takes a supernatural encounter with God for us to come alive to the reality of his interest in our lives, and to find the peace and rest which comes from being aligned with his will.

At one point during his life on earth, Jesus sent 70 men to different towns around Israel to find people who would gladly receive God’s message. He called the men and women who received the messenger – disciples, ‘sons of peace’. And Jesus promised that peace would remain on the households of these sons (Luke 10-17).

Who doesn’t want peace? We all do.

And it is true that we lack internal peace until we receive the message of Jesus. However, I find that even having made a commitment to Christ, I can sometimes live in a state of mild internal conflict and dystrophy.

The amazing thing is that until God’s word comes to me, I can be unaware of the state that I am in. However, when I receive the particular message God has for me straight into my heart, that same word can bring me to life and align me to the reality of who I am made to be. He establishes his life in me when I receive his word simply. The result is peace and rest.

God’s word brings us closer to him, and in another way, you could say that the word brings us ‘to ourselves’ – to the person we are created to be.

God intends for Christians to mature ‘line upon line’. We grow up here a little, there a little as we receive his word and walk in it. But sometimes, God needs to bring a dramatic realignment to our lives. This is never more so than when we first commit our lives to Jesus Christ as our Lord and Saviour, but the process continues as we walk on with him. When I am ‘dead’ to God in some aspect of sin or maladjustment, I won’t always know it

at home with myself

by Jenny Gale

Are you someone totally at home in yourself, satisfied and at rest in who you are and where you are going? Or maybe like me, you've had times of feeling anything but at home, not satisfied in who you are and what life has brought your way. I think we all feel like this at times, and long to feel at home and to be well satisfied with our lot.

I have found there is a way to 'come home'. Not in my own striving and understanding but in answering the call to come and meet with my Heavenly Father, for He has created you and I to have relationship with Him and dwell with Him in His house. In our Heavenly Father we have an inheritance and a life that has been preordained for us before the beginning of time. We have a sure place to dwell that will satisfy our souls in this life we have to live.

Psalm 65:4 "Blessed is the man You choose and cause to approach you, that he may dwell in Your courts, we shall be satisfied with the goodness of Your house, of Your Holy temple."

So how do we come home?

God's word says we only need to ask, to seek and we will find, to knock and the door will be opened. We can acknowledge that in our own self we can not be truly at home or completely satisfied. We have been designed to come into relationship with our Heavenly Father to find His home, dwelling in Him, not bound in the strivings of this earth but finding life.

We only need to look for Him today and to believe that as we ask, seek and knock that His life will be opened unto us. ■

Coming Home - Part Two (continued from page 10)

until the word proclaims "life!", and I become aware of my condition. Time and time again I have found great peace when I accept what God is saying to me (often through other people) and I commit my life to those people and the word they are bringing.

He says that if we search for him, he will be found, if we search with all our hearts (Jeremiah 29:13). This is an ongoing call to us all. Jesus is still looking for sons of peace. May we have such a heart; receive Christ's messengers and his message! And may we have the conviction and compassion to share the peace we have found, with others. ■

Who we are

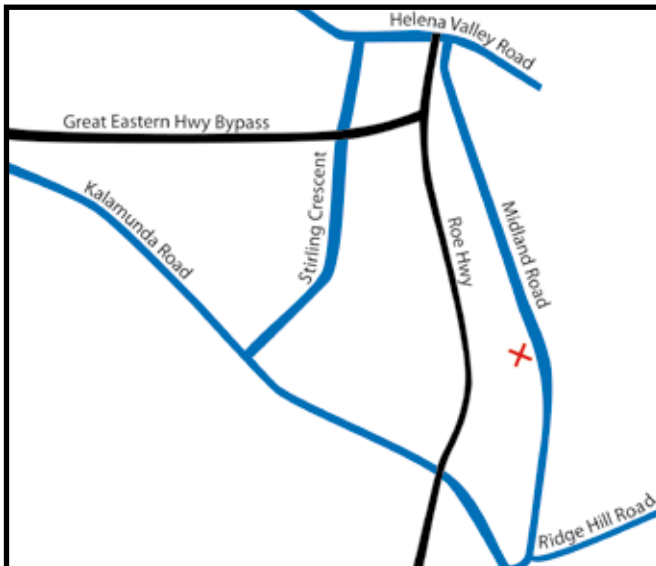
Perth Christian Fellowship is a community based group who meet together to share in the hope of the unity of the body of Christ. That hope is expressed in the broader sense by our close ties with a stream of Christian Fellowships across the country, including an active connection to churches in Papua New Guinea, New Zealand, Indonesia, Singapore, Malaysia and Pakistan.

We believe that God has a plan for everyone and that the gospel is able to restore each person to that plan by embracing the message of the bible. Every individual is encouraged to express themselves in fellowship, prayer and worship in song for the building up of the church as a whole.

We value family life, believing that God seeks to bless every home and see each individual established in the Life of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, and to see that Life overflowing to the Church and the wider community.

You are most welcome to join with us.

Communion Service every Sunday at 9.30 am
Perth Christian Fellowship
189 Midland Road, Hazelmere 6055
Phone: 08 9274 3920
Email: ask-us@pcf.org.au



A place for you at PCF

A place to sing the song of your life

Communion Service

9.30 am every Sunday

Our Sunday Communion Service is an opportunity for all to gather and express the life of Christ in Word, Testimony and Song. We have no restricted membership and invite all who believe in Christ to participate in the communion elements with us.

Bible Study

11.15 am every Sunday

Bible study sessions run weekly on Sunday mornings. In this time we look at historical aspects of the bible and their practical application to our daily life, with a view to encourage each one in walking the life of a Christian.

Sunday School

11.00 am every Sunday

'Sonseekers' kids programme runs every Sunday during school term. All kids aged 4 to 12 are welcome. We learn about people in the bible and build friendships through games, songs, creative craft and exciting stories.

PlayCafe

9.00 am every Thursday during school term

A morning for mums - good coffee and cake. While the kids are safe and secure in a choice of three play areas. Then there's music, story time, bubbles and craft, morning tea for the kids and a lot of laughs.

Christian Women's Fellowship

7.30 pm on the third Friday of every other month

Christian Women's Fellowship is a group of women of all ages committed to Christ. Our vision is to see every woman at the heart of church and family life, sharing and finding genuine friendship together. Our gatherings are an expression of the unique life of faith and fellowship that we share.

Coffee, Craft & Chat

Home Groups

Currently in recess, over the Christmas break, Coffee, Craft & Chat and Home Groups will recommence in the New Year.

Phone 08 9274 3920, or email us at ask-us@pcf.org.au,
for more information.

Come celebrate with us...

Christmas Service

Sunday 19 December

9.30am – 10.30am



Carols Musical items Children's music Morning tea

189 Midland Road

Hazelmere

Phone Steve: (08) 9471 9399