

ROYAL HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF VICTORIA
BENDIGO
BRANCH

D 1712



Forward Forest Street

1924

Dedication . . .

THIS BOOKLET IS DEDICATED:

To the glory of God.

To the generous pioneers of the past who
made possible the Church which we
have.

To the generations for whom we are
building.

Minister's Message



Rev. Trevor M. Byard, Minister

Dear Friends,

I have often been asked "Why did you become a Minister?" The answer in brief, would be much the same as the answer to the question "Why should we be part of the 'Forward Forest Street' Project."

My answer to both questions is—

- **Because spiritual values and principles are fundamentally important for full human living.**
- **Because the present secularized age puts material values above spiritual values.**
- **Because I want to be part of the cure and not just a part of the disease.**
- **Because a vigorously promoted lie can outstrip the truth if that truth be held carelessly without real self-commitment.**
- **Because God raised up the Church that the Living Christ might be operative in the world through ordinary people.**

Read the above five points again. This Project affords you an opportunity to cast your vote in their support. My chief concern is that you are fully aware of all the implications of your vote.

This is no begging appeal for money or for patronage, but a stirring challenge to all who will, to share in relevant worship, vital witness and creative service.

With confidence and faith,

Yours sincerely,

Trevor M. Byard.

Of the Past . . .

History is something to feel rather than to learn. It is all around us in Bendigo.

Think of the Rev. A. D. Lelean's grandfather who pushed a barrow containing all his worldly goods over Big Hill into the diggings. His barrow contained his tools, food, blankets and a piece of hoop iron. This hoop iron as he used to tell in later more civilised days, was to scrape the mud from his moleskins when he went to Church on Sundays.

Those few devout diggers were the beginnings of Bendigo's Methodism. Jimmy Jeffrey preached the first Methodist sermon from a stump at Golden Square.

Similar services were begun near the Bridge and McCrae Street corner, close to the present Y.W.C.A. in 1852. In the next year a large canvas tent housed the Church near the Law Courts Hotel.

In August, 1852, the Rev. Thomas Raston arrived as the first minister of the Sandhurst Methodist Circuit, and land was acquired in Forest Street and a wooden framed canvas covered chapel was erected in 1853. This was the beginning of Forest Street Methodism, and in 1854 the foundation stone of the first stone building was laid by Lt. Governor Hotham and the Church was opened on January 21st, 1855.

The growth of the Church was such that a new larger building was needed and thus our present Church was opened in 1863, and two years later additions and improvements, including the organ, were added. So our history unfolded.

Is its present and future to compare with its past?

We are asking you—because it depends on YOU !

For the Future . . .

Our Church has these Needs

Firstly it needs you, or to be more correct, you need it. Our Church is NOT just a building of brick and mortar, a cold inanimate structure.

It IS a group of families meeting together as Christians, for the Worship of God, through every phase of their life.

Not just the faithful few who have given generously of their time and talent over the years but every single person and every family who make use of and enjoy its services and expect these services to be available when they want or need them.

Many have criticised the Church in one way or another, what they don't realise, is that when they criticise the Church, they are in fact expressing dissatisfaction in themselves, for they are the Church.

Therefore it is true when we head this page "Our Church has these Needs," they are needs not wants.

NECESSARY to keep our families together, to bring others in to share with us in the great work we attempt.

NECESSARY to provide facilities to attract young people, who will take over from us, as the leaders of "tomorrow."

NECESSARY so that we do not leave, to these future leaders, buildings in a state of decay, and a group of people, "Our Church," wandering aimlessly, bereft of leadership and vision.

to Fulfil its Function

Some are obvious and are concerned with the serious deteriorating fabric of the Church and Hall, involving walls, floors, shabby entrances, roofs, etc. We are awaiting architectural report and advice on these. The most pressing material needs are—

Provision of foyer entrance to the Church;

Re-flooring of School Hall;

Attention to roofs, walls and floors, where serious deterioration is evident.

Other needs are not so obvious but even more pressing—

The extension of our Church's witness in this community;

The promotion of our Church's programme of worship and service to all our families;

The appointment of additional trained staff for pastoral oversight and youth leadership.

Our most urgent need is for the Forest Street Church to be the Church in outreach, challenge and Christian nurture, and that means—more people—more vision—more money.

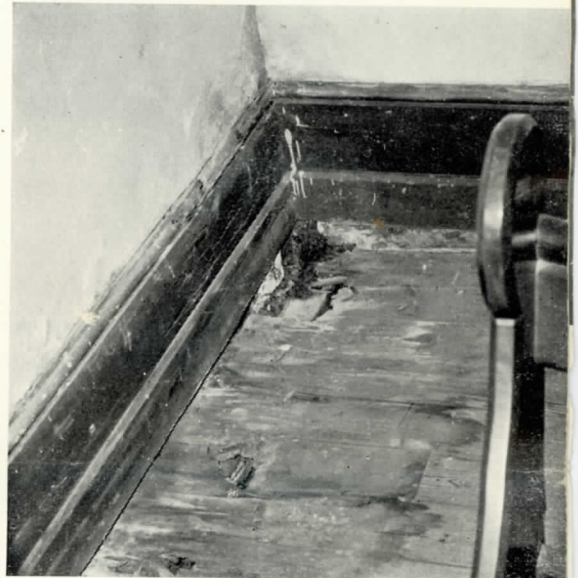
THE CHALLENGE IS CLEAR—

THE RESPONSE DEPENDS ON YOU.

THIS IS A CHALLENGE TO EACH AND EVERY FAMILY.



The Outside



The Inside



The Entrance



Mr C. H. Jeffrey, General Chairman

How we plan to meet this Challenge

During the next few days a member of the Project Committee will visit you in your own home to discuss your Church and more particularly your generous financial pledge.

This visitation will not be prolonged or haphazard. It will be conducted over the next ten days, by a team of Church men who have been properly trained to answer your questions.

There is nothing complicated or high-pressure about this plan. We are simply asking each family to take a realistic look at your association with your Church and to make a sacrificial pledge to support its financial and other plans.

Straight cash donations will not be sought. A weekly pledge will mean far more to you, as with most cash donations, they are given and forgotten. A pledge will give you at least a weekly reminder of the sacrifices made by previous generations for our welfare and the complete sacrifice made by our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Pledge Card is not a legal, binding document, it is a statement of intention, that you will TRY to give a certain amount each week for a 156 week (Three Year) period.

If something unforeseen happens, which makes it impossible to continue the pledged amount, you should not feel embarrassed but simply advise one of the Church officers of your changed circumstances. They will understand and may be able to help you with your problem.

Needs of the Church are transient: they change from one generation to the next or from one day to another. But God's will endures. The highest type of giving one can attain is based upon a fundamental acceptance of giving as a way of life, quite apart from the worthiness of the recipient.

Some Questions

Answered



Mr I. M. HALL
Initial Pledges Chairman

Question: Why should I sign a pledge to do this? Can't we appeal to our people some other way?

Answer: The Church has tried all the conventional methods without any significant increase in the regular giving habits and attitudes of its families. If we are to make a forward move at this critical time the Church must be in a position to anticipate with reasonable accuracy a minimum revenue considerably in excess of present resources—it can only know this through a definite undertaking and commitment on the part of our families.

Question: Is it possible to raise a large sum of money in this way?

Answer: Most definitely—Yes ! Other Churches are proving that it is entirely possible when the majority of their families decide to support such a programme regularly and generously.

Question: How will my weekly gifts be made?

Answer: By means of a weekly offering envelope, sets of which will be delivered to every participating family. It is our hope that our Church families will regard it as their personal responsibility to get their contribution to the Church as regularly as possible and come to regard their giving as an act of worship.

Question: Is there not the danger that the Church is placing too much emphasis on Money?

Answer: Admittedly there could be this danger if our motives are misunderstood. The Trust has carefully considered these needs and is convinced of their urgency. Moreover, it would be failing in its duty not to point out to our Parishioners that they exist and that they can only be met by a substantial increase in income over the next few years. It has been pointed out that one-sixth of Christ's teaching concerned money, while it cannot be denied that generous giving is a Christian attribute.

Question: What should I do now?

Answer: Study this Brochure, which will give you most of the details necessary to understand this Plan and begin now to discuss in your family circle the amount of your regular future contributions. You may expect to receive a call by one of our volunteer Counsellors shortly.



Mr E. F. Granger
Project Committee Chairman

About Pledging

"Upon the first day of the week, let every one of you lay by him in store as God hath prospered him."

Some folks say: "I'll give to the Church, but I won't pledge." If this statement echoes your sentiment, then we ask that you prayerfully re-think your personal philosophy about pledging or making a gift to your Church.

Our parents pledged themselves when they had us baptised, and we pledged when we joined our Church. If we are married we made a pledge when we repeated the marriage vows.

We often pledge to commercial firms. We finance refrigerators, motor cars, wireless sets, and our homes. Few of us are able to pay cash for a house. We must sign a mortgage—a pledge to pay. We naturally place great importance upon having home appliances, a car, and a house.

Do we place less value upon the benefits of our Church?

A weekly gift to your Church is a statement of faith. Faith that other members will make similar gifts, faith that God will preserve our incomes, faith that our support and our gift will encourage and strengthen our Church.

As was written by a philosopher, "I would give, but only to the deserving, but the trees in your orchard say not so, nor the flocks in your pasture. They give that they may live." Why is there a need for the giver to give?

TO WITHHOLD IS TO PERISH, TO GIVE IS TO LIVE!



We Pledge ——— A Christian Example

What Part

can I Play?

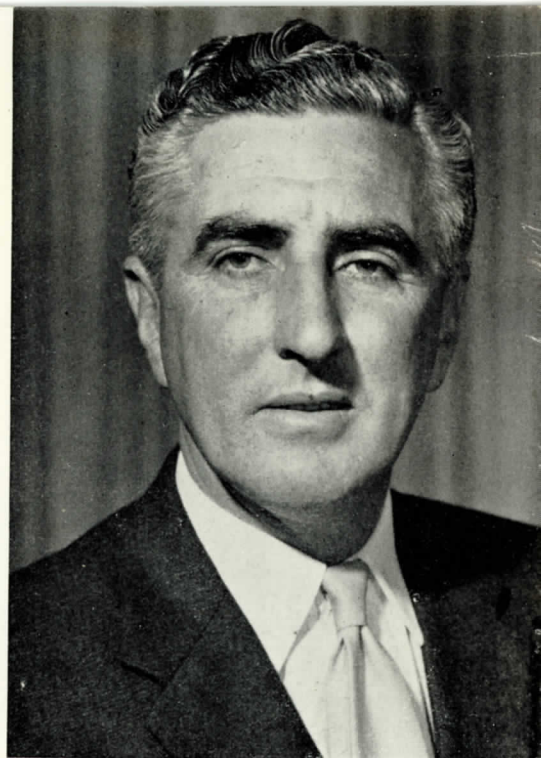
We are not seeking gifts of cash, for if we were, you could perhaps say, the Church is always after our money or something similar to this.

We are asking you to make a **GENEROUS WEEKLY PLEDGE**.

Why **GENEROUS**? Because other than a generous pledge, sacrificial if you like, will not mean enough to you and your family. You will not remove the feeling that "you could really give more but" If your pledge is truly generous in relation to your ability to give, you will feel clear in mind and conscience because you know you are doing all you can.

Why **WEEKLY**? Christian giving is as much a part of worship as praying, the reading of God's Word, singing hymns and so on. It is **NOT** something to be divorced from our normal Church life. A generous **WEEKLY** pledge will serve as a constant reminder to us that what we possess is not really our own, we can't take it with us when we depart this earthly life, we are, or should be stewards, good stewards of whatever God has chosen to give to us in reward for our labours.

Why a **PLEDGE**? The **PLEDGE** card you will be asked to sign is **NOT** a legally binding document, it is simply a statement of intention that you will **TRY** with God's help to give a stated sum each week to **YOUR** Church. The signing of the card helps to impress in your mind, the fact that providing circumstances don't alter materially, you will give a stated sum each week. It is so easy to say to someone "Oh yes I'll do this or that," and then due to any one of many reasons, your intention passes from your mind. Sign your name to it and you are not likely to forget.



Mr D. S. Dungey, Top Gift Chairman



Mr Clark Jeffrey, Counsellors' Chairman

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The Man who

will Visit You

He is very likely to be someone well-known by you.
He will certainly have affiliation with our Church

He won't be coming to tell you what you should give, but rather as a friend and counsellor to discuss this Project in particular, and its part in the overall life of the Church as a whole.

He will be well qualified to help and guide you in your decision, as he has made a generous family pledge and hopes you will follow his example.

His task is not easy but we feel sure you will help by extending a warm welcome and listening to his story.

PROJECT PRAYER

Teach us good Lord to serve Thee as Thou deservest,
To give, and not to count the cost,
To fight, and not to heed the wounds,
To toil, and not to seek for any reward,
Save that of knowing we do Thy will.

—Amen.



Some of those who are helping

General Chairman:

Mr C. H. JEFFREY

Top Gifts Chairman:

Mr D. S. DUNGEY

Project Committee Chairman:

Mr E. F. GRANGER

Initial Pledges Chairman:

Mr I. M. HALL

Group Leaders:

Mr R. H. TRETHERWEY

Mr A. R. HAM

Mr D. L. EVERY

Counsellors Chairman:

Mr CLARK JEFFREY

Ladies' Committee Chairwoman:

Mrs A. GRIERSON

OF GIVING

You give but little when you give of your possessions.
It is when you give of yourself that you truly give.

For what are your possessions but things you keep and guard for fear that you may need them tomorrow? And what is fear of need but fear itself?

There are those who give little of the much which they have—and they give it for recognition and their hidden desire makes their gifts unwholesome.

And there are those who have little and give it all. These are the believers in life and the bounty of life, and their coffer is never empty.

There are those who give with joy, and that joy is their reward.

There are those who give with pain, and their pain is their baptism.

And there are those who give and know not pain in giving, nor do they seek joy, nor give with mindfulness of virtue. They give as in yonder valley the myrtle breathes its fragrance into space.

Through the hands of such as these, God speaks, and from behind their eyes, He smiles upon the earth.

Kahlil Gibran in "The Prophet."
