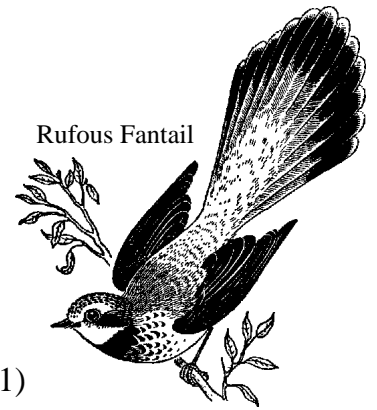


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## September 2005 Newsletter

from Neil & June Prott

Supporting and encouraging gospel ministry, including listening, resourcing, strategizing, trouble-shooting, brain-storming, networking. Our work is: Bible-based, freelance (supported by friends), trans-denominational, strictly confidential.



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"Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; his love endures for ever." (Ps 107:1)

Dear Friends,

We write this letter with thankfulness to our Lord for the many who give moral, financial and prayer support as we labour for Him. When we began this work in May, 1998, there were many unknowns. However, we did know that the Lord is faithful and that He does not call us to a work without giving us the resources. He has sustained us with good health so that we can keep serving the saints in the bush. We have travelled 100,000's kilometres in safety on all kinds of roads and often in severe weather. The travelling and accommodation costs have been met by the contributions of believers.

We are grateful to Him for the high privilege of sharing His Word with so many Christians, sometimes in 1's and 2's, sometimes in large congregations. Time and again we have shared the joys and the sorrows experienced by faithful people in various walks of life. In particular, we have rejoiced to see men and women taking a stand on the Bible and spreading the gospel message in their communities. We especially appreciate your partnership with us as we strengthen and encourage believers in the bush. Thankyou.

### Neil and June

#### PRAYING FOR YOUR COUNTRY COUSINS

In every newsletter we include prayer points because it is by prayer that we call down God's blessing on ourselves and others. Christian prayer is not wishful thinking but is based on God's promises. Furthermore, mature Christians realise that the Lord will not give us answers that are out of keeping with His perfect nature. Therefore the Bible is crucial to the exercise. It reveals to us the God to whom we pray. It also encourages us with His gracious promises and builds our confidence in prayer.

There are several ways in which your prayers for us have been answered in recent days. *Firstly*, there is the timing. On many occasions, we have met with people who said: "I can't believe it. Only last week this happened, and here we are talking about it today." (At the time when the trip was planned, neither of us knew what would happen before I got there!). *Secondly*, although the Lord certainly works through our convictions, and contacts by others, it's fascinating to see how things fall into place (cf. Prov. 16;9). *Thirdly*, there is the openness to me, and to the Word (cf. Ac 16;14). You will appreciate that on a tour of 3,000+ km with many appointments, there is no time to beat around the bush. And yet, even with those who have never met me before, there has been consistent openness. *Fourthly*, it is wonderful to see deep Christian unity expressed between visitor and visited. In many homes I feel like "family". I have countless brothers and sisters. It is always a joy to meet up with them again. *Fifthly*, there is a notable absence of defensiveness and willingness to look at tough issues when that is appropriate. In all these respects we see the Lord's hand at work in answer to believing prayer. Thankyou for your prayers. Thank Him for the answers.

#### SMALLER TOWN CHURCHES: BACK TO THE FUTURE?

In previous newsletters we have referred to the closure of many rural denominational churches in recent years. The reasons are various: economic downturn, changing weather patterns and drought, population shift, uncertain markets, loss of infrastructure, and churches' unwillingness to change. Some congregations have disappeared or diminished. others have resorted to house church arrangements. The previously heavy dependence on professional ministers has left many unprepared to run their own churches. However, in some cases, the laity have taken up the challenge. New ministry models are needed and experiments will be necessary. No doubt some will fail. But out of it all, we may see a new awakening of spiritual life.

In the first 300 years of the Christian Church, there were no professional ministers and no special church buildings. Many of the factors that we have thought essential to Christian ministry were entirely absent. However, the gospel spread across the Roman Empire through the patient work and witness of 'lay' Christians. We should view the present developments positively and expect much good to come out of the difficulties. In particular, we should be praying that believers will be equipped to maintain a faithful biblical witness in rural areas. Already, many are benefitting from regular convention ministries across the State, especially those at Katoomba.

### ALL ROADS LEAD TO KATOOMBA

For many years the Katoomba Christian Convention has provided Bible teaching to Christians of all denominations. In recent years, the ministry has expanded to provide specific input for youth, men, and women, as well as more general conferences such as CMS Summer School, and the Easter Convention. believers from both country and city have benefitted greatly from these opportunities. A young woman said to me recently: "We decided to take a group to the Youth Leadership conference last January. Everyone enjoyed it. We learnt new skills, and one of our girls was converted. We can't wait for the next one." A man who drove more than 7 hours to attend the Men's Convention said: "It was inspiring: to stand there with 3,000 other blokes and sing praises to God. The messages were fantastic."

Lower down we give details of coming Katoomba events. Why not put them in your diary now, and encourage your friends (esp. those in the bush) to catch up with you there?

### UP ONE STEP

In 2005 I have had several opportunities to run training workshops for people with upfront responsibilities in service, and those who are leaders of local congregations. It is always exciting to see how people can improve their skills even in the space of a couple of hours. Although many lay people have received little or no training, they have continued to keep churches going even when pastors have been unavailable. In cases where a pastor can no longer be employed, it is vital to equip and support these people. The thinking: let's all move up one step! If everyone with responsibility will lift their game a notch, we will improve our service for Christ. A minister in the north of the State sent several emails recently which included these comments . . . .

"We have a bunch of very keen Christians who need leadership development and training in ministry, so if there is anything you think you could contribute in those areas then let me know."

"Upfront training (around 10 people) and preachers (2-3) would be great - probably get it all done on Saturday. Would you like to preach that Sunday? "

"Bear in mind that in the upfront leaders' group, perhaps half will be new Christians with virtually no experience - you can start with a clean slate."

"God's timing is perfect - I have only just begun to train this group of new people into ministry - having someone come in from the outside has some great advantages."

"Thanks heaps. Neil"

Please pray that these keen Christians and many others will be excited and encouraged as they continue to serve the Lord in leadership roles.

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## SOME POINTS FOR PRAYER

### **PRAISE** the Lord

1. for His great kindness in sending His Son Jesus to die so that we might live for ever.
2. for His goodness in providing faithful messengers who have shared His saving Word with us and many thousands across our land.
3. for strengthening His people to serve Him faithfully in all kinds of situations.
4. for keeping us humble in success and comforting us in times of difficulty.
5. for the gospel heritage that is ours in NSW ever since Richard Johnson landed with the First Fleet.

### **THANK** the Lord

1. for the great opportunities of gospel ministry that surround us.
2. for the gospel which saves those who are lost. Rom.1:16
3. for the excellent work being done in many churches, city and country.
4. for those who have recently come to Christ and are now being equipped as disciples
5. for the commitment and generosity of those who are praying and financially supporting Neil and June's ministry, and for Ken and Jeanette Lenord's fellowship in the work.

**CONFESS** and ask forgiveness for

1. the self-dependence that denies our need to depend on Him. Jn 15;4-5 Ac 17;28
2. the shallowness of our understanding of the love of Christ for us. Eph.3;17-19
3. the complacency that stifles our spiritual growth.
4. any unwillingness to reach out to the lost with the message of Christ's love.
5. resistance to change in matters unimportant, so as to hinder effective gospel outreach to the unchurched.

**ASK**

1. for the heart and mind of Christ. Phil.2;3-8 Matt.9;36-38
2. for the strengthening and encouragement of the Holy Spirit in the lives of those who preach the gospel in rural areas
3. for clear guidance for all those who are considering new strategies for reaching the unchurched with the saving message, including tentmaking and other church planting.
4. for the wives and children of rural pastors some of whom may be away for weeks at a time, and for ministry families whose problems are compounded by their isolation.
5. for the Lord to raise up more men and women who will serve Christ in rural areas.
6. for wisdom for June and Neil as they set their priorities, plan tours, and minister to a wide range of people in the months ahead.

**Katoomba Convention - 2005-6**

(please pre-register)

**2005****Women's Katoomba Convention**

WKC2005 #1, #2 10-11 & 17-18 September 2005 Theme: Looking Out

Speakers: Elizabeth Foord, Christine Dillon, Kara Gilbert, Wendy Potts

**Katoomba Convention Plus**

KC+2005 1-3 October 2005 Theme: Diving into Ministry Speakers: Bryson Smith, Stuart Coulton

**Working Bee** 26 November 2005 At Katoomba Site

**2006****Katoomba Youth Leadership Conference**

KYLC2006#1 & #2 16-20 & 23-27 January 2006 Theme: Echoes in Eternity

Speakers: Al Stewart (Wk1), Paul Dale (Wk1), Kirk Patston (Wk2), Grant Retief (Wk2)

**Katoomba Youth Convention**

KYC2006 27-29 January 2006 Theme: Encountering God Speakers: Ray Galea, Sam Chan

**Men's Katoomba Convention**

MKC2006 #1,#2,#3 17-18 Feb, 24-25 Feb & 3-4 Mar 2006

Speakers: David Cook, Mike Raiter, Leigh Trevaskis

**Katoomba Easter Convention**

KEC2006 14 - 17 April 2006 Speakers: Peter Adam, Nigel Lee, Simon Manchester

**Kyckstart**

KYCK2006 #1,#2 21-23 & 28-30 April 2006

**Katoomba Christian Convention**

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## To support us in our ministry . . .

you can use any one (or more) of the following easy methods

1. send **cheques** to Neil and June Prott, 18 Parr Pde, FAULCONBRIDGE, NSW 2776  
but **payable to "MTS Ltd"\*\*\***
2. pay by **direct debit** from your bank account to:- **MTS Ltd** Commonwealth Bank Kingsford  
account no. 10048657 BSB No. 62188  
*~~~ Be sure to tell Lois your payment is for the support of Neil Prott's ministry ~~~*

3. use your **credit card** (Master or Visa) and send these details **to Lois** by letter or by fax

Card Type (Master or Visa?)..... Expiry date: \_\_ \_\_ / \_\_ \_\_ Amount: \$.....

Card No. \_\_ \_\_ \_\_ \_\_ \_\_ \_\_ \_\_ \_\_ \_\_ \_\_

Name on Card: ..... Signature: .....

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*\*\*\* This allows N & J to acknowledge gifts sooner than is possible otherwise.*

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