

# Welcome to a centre of warmth and joy

A new era in the history of Christ Church Anglican Church, Melton, Victoria, began on August 11 when Archbishop David Penman of Melbourne dedicated their new worship centre.

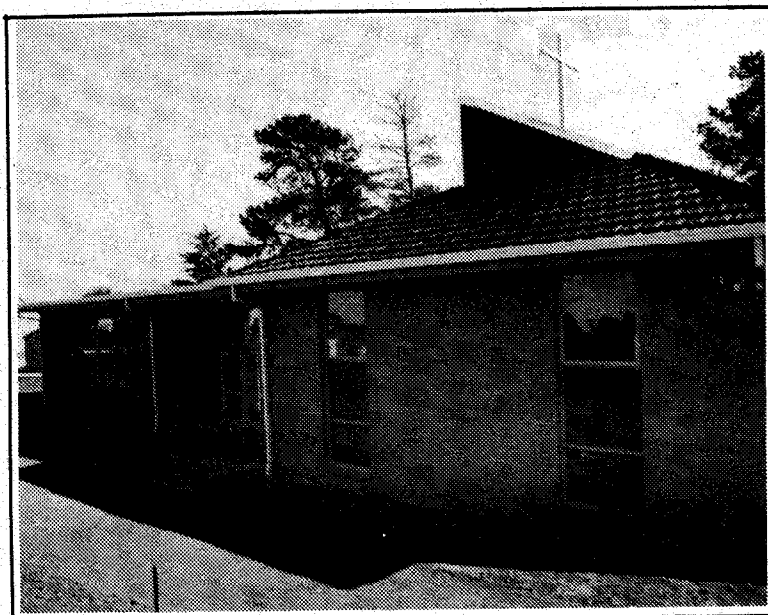
The centre has a church which seats 150 people, and this area has a "float-away glass wall" which separates the church and the narthex, and lifts up for large crowds.

A feature of the new centre is its openness and natural light in all areas. The vicar, the Revd Roy Gabb, said the real effect of the glass behind the altar would not be seen until the memorial garden, which joins the old building and the new, is completed.

It was fitting that a thanksgiving eucharist was combined with the dedication as the people of Christ Church know they have much to be thankful for. The archbishop, in his sermon used as his text, Psalm 34:5: "We look up to Jesus for in Him is our strength when we are weak."

He reminded the congregation that in the years ahead of paying off the loans they need to "look up to Him." It is from Him that they will receive their motivation, and their face will shine, so that those who come to the centre will find warmth and joy as they enter.

As one entered the centre on dedication day there was an atmosphere of warmth among the people. Participation by the lay people was evident with the readings, and the donors of the new sanctuary furniture each offering a prayer prior to the



● *The new worship centre for Christ Church, Melton, in Victoria.*

This brought the estimated cost to just over \$250,000, and again the people accepted the challenge to raise an extra \$10,000 as their share, and permission was given by the diocese to borrow another \$44,000 from the bank. The tender was finally accepted in October, 1984, and work commenced mid-November.

In the two and a half years the church raised over \$50,000 by the end of 1984. This was achieved through their opportunity shop, fete and wool exhibitions once a year, a talents appeal where people were given \$10 and asked to use their talents to increase the amount, and this year a "buy a brick" appeal. In addition a \$5000

experienced growth in the same period.

The vicar, the Revd Roy Gabb, said there was great potential for the parish to grow in the future, not just numerically, but in a spiritual sense as members serve the community using their gifts and talents.

The parish has just over 200 on the parish roll with an average attendance of 100 each Sunday. There is a very small ladies guild and fellowship group, and a Sunday school which meets in the old vicarage under difficult conditions. They will now meet in the new hall from September.

The parish does not have a pledge system, again believing in faith that when there is a commitment to Christ, and

archbishop dedicating the font, prayer desk, lectern and altar.

The sanctuary furniture was designed by Mr Vince Ryant, the vicar's warden. Mr Ryant also made the altar, flower stands and credence table, while the prayer desk, font and lectern were made by Norm Bailey, a parishioner of St Matthew's, Glenroy.

### **A venture in faith**

It was late in November, 1982, when the parishioners were faced with the prospect of building a new worship centre, owing to the deterioration of the old bluestone building.

At their annual meeting in February, 1983, they accepted the challenge to build a new worship centre at a cost of \$200,000, as an adventure in faith.

This figure was frightening at first, but with the assistance of the diocese with loans of \$80,000 from the Rolling Fund, and \$40,000 from the Development Fund, plus \$40,000 from the bank, they were challenged to raise the other \$40,000 by the end of 1984.

A set back was experienced in August, 1984, when the tenders were received with the price escalating to over \$260,000. It was felt this was beyond the parish. Following discussion with parishioners, the memorial garden was deleted from the plan, as the vestry felt this could be done by voluntary labour later.

appeal. In addition a \$6000 donation was received from their neighbouring parish, Holy Trinity, Bacchus Marsh.

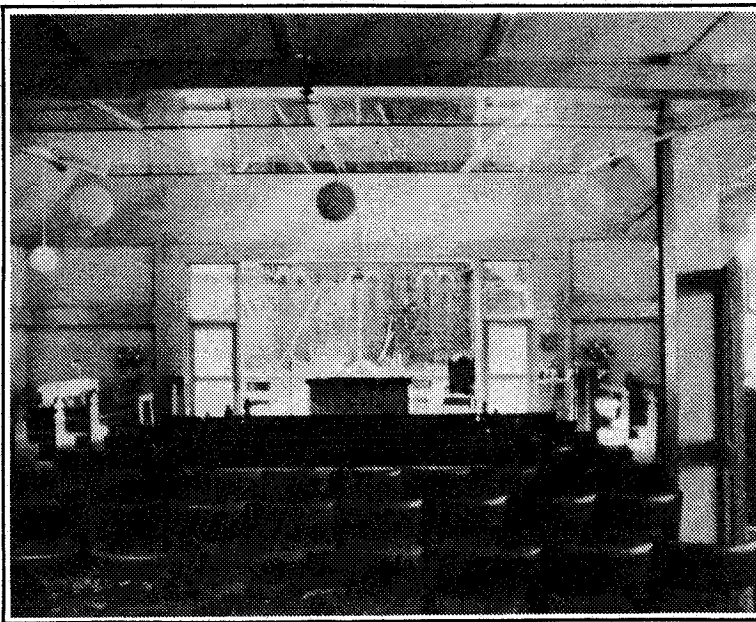
With the increased cost of the building, they were unable to have new pews. However, when they transferred the old pews to the new church it was discovered they match in with the new sanctuary furniture and new single chairs purchased to use in the hall and church.

Melton, situated 30kms north-west of Melbourne is one of the state's fastest growing towns. In the last six years the population has grown from 19,099 to nearly 30,000. The church also has

commitment to Christ, and people know and understand what the requirements of the parish are, the people will give. This system was adopted in 1982, and each year they have finished in credit, maintaining their 10 per cent to "mission."

Each year, when the new offering envelopes are available, a prayer vigil is held for either 12 or 24 hours, and the vicar believes it is from this that their financial needs are met. He himself has pushed the theme that "God is Good" and has been to the parish in its 125 years of history.

**A report from the PARISH**



● The float away glass wall which separates the church and the narthex can be seen at the top of the picture.