

July 2007

JOURNEY

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WHAT THE SYNOD DID

- Established a Network of Christian Formation to deliver theological education from one day seminars to doctorates in a variety of ways and in a variety of locations, including a learning community offering educational opportunities for lay and specified ministries.
- Addressed climate change issues by requesting the Synod, congregations and individual members to audit their energy use and minimise their production of greenhouse gas emissions.
- Realigned Synod roles and functions to improve the service focus of the Synod, enhance communications and strengthen relationships between the strategic missional activities of the Synod and Presbyteries.
- Called on the State Government to end the practice of incarcerating seventeen year olds in adult prisons.
- Reshaped existing Synod funds to ensure the church has adequate reserves to meet any potential unforeseen emergency, to provide adequate resources for strategic purchase of land in new areas and for capital development, and to develop missional strategies across the Synod.
- Encouraged the use of bio-fuels in Uniting Church vehicles.
- Approved the position of part-time Multi-Cross Cultural Advocate and established by-laws for a Multi-Cross Cultural Committee.
- Expressed concern at the damage being done to the social fabric of the Mary Valley by the proposed construction of the Traveston Crossing Dam and urged the Queensland Government to seek alternative methods of water conservation.
- Sought to enhance relationships between the Synod and Uniting Church schools by appointing a part-time Executive Officer to the Schools Commission.
- Affirmed the work of the Chaplaincy Commission and strengthened the relationships between chaplains and the wider work of the church.
- Elected Rev Bruce Johnson as Moderator-Elect, to take up his appointment as moderator for a three year term at the 27th Synod in October 2008.

Read more about what the Synod did
on pages 2,3,5, 8, 9 and 16.



An intimate conversation amongst friends?

ON THE SUNDAY morning of Synod I preached on the theme, "Running Free".

It was a sermon about the sinful burdens we choose to carry and how, as a result, our lives and relationships are inevitably damaged.

It was also a clear declaration of the good news that in Jesus Christ we can know the reality of forgiveness and new beginnings and be set free to live as God intends.

You can listen to that sermon (and many other contributions to the life of the Synod) by connecting with the *Journey Online* website at www.journeyonline.com.au.

The sermon was intended to be a reminder to us all that whenever we gather as the people of God, for whatever reason, we invariably bring some baggage with us.

That is why our prayers of confession are such an essential and life-giving dimension of our corporate worship.

We cannot fully worship God, or express our fellowship with one another, while weighed down with guilt, or fear, or prejudice, or unforgiveness, or mistrust, or disrespect, or anger!

What we take with us into all our expressions of being church largely determines the outcomes we will experience.

I went to Synod expecting to be inspired by the worship, stimulated by the Bible studies, encouraged by stories from the congregations and the reports provided by our various agencies, commissions and boards, and challenged by proposals charting the future of our ministry and mission.



Message from the Moderator

Rev Dr David Pitman

I was not disappointed in regard to any of these matters.

As I heard someone say recently in another context, "What we do for people as a church is truly amazing!"

The Synod Celebration, the opportunity to remember and give thanks for the first 30 years of the UCA, was a great event, particularly memorable for the contribution made by about 150 students and staff from three of our schools: Calvary College, Moreton Bay College and Forest Lake College.

It was our privilege to have the President and General Secretary of the Assembly with us for this special occasion.

A number of the decisions we made were enormously important!

The determination to establish a synod-wide Network for Christian Formation, adequately staffed and resourced, was perhaps the most vital and strategic.

In addition we affirmed the integral place of Multi-Cross Cultural Ministry in the life of our church and the key role our schools can exercise as missional environments, and committed to providing part-time support staff for both these aspects of our work.

We were confronted, yet again, with the strategic nature of chaplaincy in a wide variety of church and community contexts.

We were moved by the profound contribution made by the Rev Ronan Gurrawarra, who delivered

the Norman and Mary Miller Memorial Lecture.

His insight into conflict resolution, grounded in traditional indigenous culture and practice, was illuminating and timely.

It was also significant that we heard Ronan speak in his own language as well as in English.

This was both an invitation to careful and respectful listening, as well as a reminder of the cultural diversity that is such a rich dimension of our life together.

Not all my expectations were fulfilled and I learnt something very important about my own humanity and vulnerability when that occurs.

I also discovered that we are not yet as far advanced on our journey as a church as I had believed.

There is still much to do in nurturing honesty and building bridges of trust and respect across the divides that we have created.

No matter whether we were delighted or disconsolate about certain outcomes, none of us is ever exempted from the obligation of being pilgrims together on the way to the promised end.

As I was myself reminded during Synod: "Once the decision has been made, it becomes *our* decision!"

The vast majority of those who are reading these words were not members of Synod.

Nonetheless, these insights and lessons are relevant for us all.

As I have had cause to say on many occasions, the unity that is ours in Christ transcends our differences and disagreements.

It is only in our commitment to live and express that unity that we honour Christ.

It is only within the security of that unity that we can speak honestly with one another in a spirit of love and acceptance.

I encouraged the Synod on the first afternoon to take to heart the words of C.H. Dodd, who, in his commentary on John's Gospel, chapters 13-15, writes, "The implication is that the interchange of intimate conversation among friends... is itself the process of uniting (people) with Christ."

It is my prayer that we could dare to see all our times of meeting together as a sustained period of intimate conversation among friends, with Jesus in our midst, constantly reminding us that the source and content of our unity lies in mutual service and love for one another.

From the Editor

SYNOD CAN be a pretty emotional time.

When things are going well it's a bit like being on a natural high. All is well with the world, faith is encouraged, and hope runs amok.

When things are going badly, or even just badly from my point of view, it is hard to stay optimistic, easy to be discouraged and tempting to become cynical.

This issue of *Journey* is filled with stories of the meeting of the 26th Queensland Synod – not all of the stories, but just enough to give you a taste of some of the things that happened there.

There was laughter and tears, and it all seemed pretty important at the time.

But then, in conversation with World Vision CEO Rev Tim Costello about progress on the Millennium Development Goals, it struck home that during the five days the Synod met at Alexandra Park more than 100,000 children somewhere in the developing world died of hunger and easily preventable diseases.

Suddenly, what seemed important at the time fades into insignificance.

Try this test. Meditate on all the good and wonderful things that happened at Synod and then think about the billion people who live on less than one dollar a day and ask yourself what really matters.

Mr Costello tells us that, "We can actually halve the number of destitute people living in the poorest countries without having to sacrifice our own lifestyle."

John F Kennedy made the same point back in 1963 when he said, "Never before has man [sic] had such capacity to control his own environment, to end thirst and hunger, to conquer poverty and disease, to banish illiteracy and massive human misery. We have the power to make this the best generation of mankind in the history of the world – or to make it the last."

Well, we avoided the nuclear holocaust, but as Jesus said, the poor are still with us and, thanks to our neglect, are dying in their tens of thousands.

Yes, it is hard to stay optimistic, easy to be discouraged and tempting to become cynical but when I ask my self the WWJD (What Would Jesus Do) question I hear a clear response.

"For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me."

Get on with it, Bruce...

Bruce Mullan

Sign of the Times



This none-too-subtle sign with a great invitation comes from the St George Uniting Church congregation. Photo by Rev Michael Brumpton. Send your *Signs of the Times* to journey@ucaql.com.au.

JOURNEY

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Bruce Johnson is Moderator-Elect

By Bruce Mullan

REV BRUCE Johnson, currently minister of Broadwater Road Uniting Church in Mansfield in Brisbane, has been elected by the Queensland Synod to be its next Moderator.

Synod members were amused that Mr Johnson was visiting the bathroom when his appointment was announced and greeted his belated entry to the auditorium with a standing ovation.

Mr Johnson will take up the appointment as Moderator at the commencement of the 27th Synod in 2008 and will be known as Moderator-Elect through to that time.

Mr Johnson was accepted as a candidate for Minister of the Word in 1979, graduated from Trinity College in 1983 and was ordained in 1984.

Prior to taking up his appointment at Broadwater Road Mr Johnson served as minister of

Clermont-Capella and Gladstone and was full-time Chairperson of the Central Queensland Presbytery.

He has also worked closely with BlueCare in Gladstone, was Chair of the Lifeline Board in Rockhampton, and has served on the Presbytery Pastoral Relations Committees of Central Queensland and South Moreton.

Mr Johnson is well known for his passion to see the vision of the *Basis of Union* lived out within the Uniting Church in Queensland.

"I have a strong commitment to the inter-related councils of The Uniting Church. I believe that this is a unique gift of God to The Uniting Church in Australia," Mr Johnson said in his Moderatorial profile.

"I believe that we were called by God to be a unifying force among Christians, and that wherever possible we should be a catalyst that brings the many congregations of God's people in an area together

to bear a united witness to Christ and see his mission is carried out."

In his acceptance speech Mr Johnson recollected that he had joined the Uniting Church in Australia in response to Jesus' prayer "that we might be one so that the world might believe that God had sent his Son".

Former Moderator Rev Alan Kuchler said that the Moderatorial Candidature Task Group had identified key characteristics with the intention of providing a 'picture' of the kind of person a moderator needs to be in order to fulfil the ministry, duties and responsibilities required.

These included a capacity to exercise pastoral care and discipline, the ability to moderate, chair and facilitate discussion and decision making in meetings, and respected within the life of the church.

"The nominee will be a skilled and gifted communicator and, as the public 'face' of the church, will be articulate and competent in

working with the media," said Mr Kuchler.

Mr Johnson spoke about his desire to recover focus on the "Great Commission".

"Denominations focus on centralised unified control; missionary movements allow freedom to those called to particular places and situations of mission," he said.

"The *Basis of Union* envisages us to be a missionary movement, so we need to create a culture of permission that inspires local congregations to engage with their communities as Christ's presence.

"I believe that the debate about people in same gender relationships serving in specified ministry has been a terrible distraction from our primary calling to make disciples."

Mr Johnson said he believed the Uniting Church in Australia had allowed this issue to take too much time and energy from its central calling.

"I believe that unless we heed Jesus' 'Great Commission' to go into all the world and make disciples of all nations, it won't matter how careful we are about choosing leaders we will have failed our calling."



Rev Bruce Johnson will be the next Moderator of the Queensland Synod. Photo by Osker Lau

Uniting Members honoured on Queen's Birthday

By Bruce Mullan

A MODEST recipient, Southport Director for Crossroads Dr Barbara Craig, almost turned down her Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) but agreed to accept it on behalf of everyone.

Also Co-Director of the Gold Coast Breast Screening Services and Assistant Professor at Bond University, Dr Craig was awarded her Medal for service to medicine in the areas of palliative care, women's health and medical ethics; and to the community.

Dr Craig has achieved much of her remarkable community work while living with multiple sclerosis (MS) which has confined her to a wheelchair.

Dr Craig initially became involved in Crossroads, the Uniting Church ministry with people with disabilities, because of her son Tim who is intellectually disabled.

Included in the Queen's Birthday 2007 Honours List announced by the Governor-General Major General Michael Jeffery was another Gold Coast resident Mr Jack Chapman from Burleigh Heads. Mr Chapman received his OAM for service to the community through a range of church and service organisations, particularly in the field of choral performance, and to the optical lens manufacturing industry.

As Choir Master for the Burleigh Heads Uniting Church for the last six years, Mr Chapman has organised choir performances at local nursing homes and assisted a choir of local residents to sing at the Probus National Rendezvous to be held on the Gold Coast in 2007.

Other Uniting Church Queen's Birthday OAM honours recipients included elder of St Stephen's

Uniting Church in Toowoomba Mr Norman Jenner for service to the community, church, sporting and youth organisations, Ms Elaine Unkles of Kelvin Grove for service to physiotherapy and health administration, and to the community through Wesley Mission Brisbane, and Joy van de Meene of Carindale for service to people with a disability, particularly through Crossroads Queensland Holiday Tours.

Ms Unkles has been a member of the Wesley Mission Brisbane

Council for seven years and Chair since 2004 and Mrs van de Meene served for many years as the nurse for the Crossroads holiday program.

Chairman of the Council of the Order Sir James Gobbo encouraged community members to nominate people who provide outstanding community service for national recognition in the Honours List.

"These awards recognise particularly the quiet achievers who serve the community but do not seek accolades for themselves."



Queen's Birthday Honours recipient Dr Barbara Craig. Photo courtesy of The Gold Coast Bulletin

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Where are our young people?

YOUTH MINISTRY Coordinator for the Queensland Synod Mr Stephen Kersnovske has expressed alarm at recent findings from the National Church Life Survey (2006) that the average age of Uniting Church congregations members is 51.

"Only 3% of our congregations are in the 15 to 19 year olds age range and these confronting statistics should create a sense

of urgency to think about what we can do to turn these figures around," he said.

A common myth in congregations is that, while it is perfectly normal for this particular age group to drop out of church due to life transitions and social experimentation, they will return to church later in life.

However, landmark research by Dr Roland D Martinson, Professor of Children Youth and Family Ministry from Luther Seminary in St Paul Minnesota, contradicts this common myth.

Dr Martinson reports young people who drop out generally do not return to church, but he is not without hope.

"As challenging as the overall picture remains, practitioners and educators know

from experience that there are remarkable exceptions to this trend across denominations – vibrant, thriving youth ministries – and young people exist for whom faith is a deep commitment," he said.

The research team led by Dr Martinson identified a certain culture in congregations where exemplary youth ministry was taking place and young people were growing in their faith.

One common factor was that these congregations placed a high value on spiritual growth, discipleship and vocation.

Another quality was that the congregation encouraged young people to be engaged in mission and outreach.

Mr Kersnovske has observed comparable

trends in Queensland where young people are growing in their faith and are connecting with the life of a church.

"Congregations that are placing a high priority on discipleship are seeing young people becoming passionate about their relationship with Christ and connecting into the life of their faith community."

Dr Martinson is the keynote speaker at the Queensland State Youth Ministry Conference hosted by the Youth and Children's Ministry Unit.

For more information contact Colleen Castray on 3377 9782 or visit www.yacmu.com.au

Moderator drives the smallest car in the fleet

THE MODERATOR of the Queensland Synod Rev Dr David Pitman and his wife Marcia visited the Whitsundays at the end of May for the inaugural "Festival of the Wind" celebrations organised by Whitsunday Tourism Chaplain Rev Terry Ayling.

Seen here in the new buggy known as the Hope Mobile, provided by the Synod to assist the Chaplain's work amongst the Hamilton Island Community, the Moderator expressed his hope that this vehicle would further increase the visibility and awareness of the Chaplain's role amongst guests,

staff and residents of the largest resort community in the southern hemisphere.

In addition to providing transport around the island for his work, Mr Ayling said the buggy provides another opportunity to connect with holiday-makers and residents offering transport to those who are weary, carrying heavy loads or lost.

"I've found that through these brief encounters and simple expressions of kindness, the unsuspecting traveller is surprised by grace and that hope is enlivened," he said.



Rev Dr David Pitman and his wife Marcia in the Hope Mobile.
Photo by Terry Ayling



Uniting Church Overseas Aid
Annual Report 2006 is
available for downloading
at www.overseasaid.org

Uniting Church
Overseas Aid



Vietnam Veteran and "tunnel rat" Bill Coolburra with his wife Edna at the Indigenous Veterans Ceremony.
Photo courtesy of *The Townsville Bulletin*

Remembering Indigenous veterans

By Mardi Lumsden

NATIONAL Reconciliation Week was marked by numerous services and celebrations around the country.

North Queensland Presbyterian minister Rev Bruce Cornish was honoured to participate in a service of recognition for Indigenous veterans.

Indigenous Australians have been in active service since the Boar War and the commemoration ceremony honouring Indigenous

veterans focused on the mateship that has always existed between Indigenous and non-Indigenous service personnel.

Mr Cornish said over 200 attended the ceremony held at the Strand Park Anzac memorial.

"I began by reading part of the Statement of Commitment issued by Queensland Churches Together on the 40th Anniversary of the referendum. I then read a prayer written by Rev Lazarus Lamalami, the first ordained Aboriginal minister of the Uniting Church," said Mr Cornish.

"I was very honoured to be a part of this important ceremony.

"One of the overall impressions I have of the day was the dignity and pride in their cultural heritage and in Australia that these veterans exhibited.

"It must be remembered that these Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men and women volunteered to serve their country even though they were not seen as citizens of Australia, not allowed to vote, and not really recognised as Australians.

"They only became citizens after

the conclusion of all the major conflicts.

"They were officially given the right to citizenship in 1967, just 40 years ago.

"That fact really hit home to me as I sat, listened and observed this very special and moving ceremony.

"I could not help but reflect if I could have been so gracious and committed to a nation that did not recognise me as one of its citizens."

One such veteran was Bill Coolburra who as a 19-year-old was one of the first 'tunnel rats' in Vietnam.

Mr Coolburra told *The Townsville Bulletin* his job was to go through the Viet Cong tunnels and clear the way armed only with a torch and a pistol.

"We had to fight against the Viet Cong. There was 500 kilometres of tunnels, like an underground city.

"I had to check the tunnels and see what was in there.

"It was very dangerous."

Mr Coolburra was recently given a kidney by his best mate and fellow 'tunnel rat' George 'Snow' Wilson.

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seeks a senior minister to lead a vibrant, diverse, growing congregation. St John's is a central city parish with a strong focus on young people and children.
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NO GEN. SEC. APPOINTED YET

By Bruce Mullan

THE 26th QUEENSLAND Synod of the Uniting Church was thrown into confusion when the recommendation of the Nominating Selection Committee for the appointment of a new General Secretary was not confirmed.

The Committee which included two former Moderators reported that it had interviewed four applicants for the position and was bringing its preferred candidate as a unanimous recommendation.

The General Secretary of the Synod is effectively the Chief Executive Officer of the Uniting Church in Queensland and is expected to provide leadership for the Synod in its ministry and mission, give leadership to the synod staff team and provide executive support for the Synod's many boards and councils.

Members of the Synod had been provided with a written report describing the preferred candidate's qualifications and experience for the position and a verbal report was presented to the Synod meeting on Sunday morning.

There were few questions directed to the Nominating Selection Committee from Synod members but many expressed annoyance that a question about the nominated person's marital status and family situation was asked.

A proposal from a Synod member that 75% be required to confirm the appointment was passed by a show of cards.

Some later expressed regret that a simple majority was not seen to be enough.

When the Convenor of the Ballot Committee Rev David Wiltshire returned with the results of the ballot, the Moderator Rev Dr David Pitman closed the meeting to observers.

Journey staff and other non-members were required to leave while the Synod had what was later termed a "heart-to-heart" conversation.

Despite an attempt during a subsequent session to reopen the discussion on the recommendation the Synod was clear that it would not re-visit the matter.

The Moderator subsequently wrote to the candidate saying, "I want to assure you that the decision of the Synod does not reflect in any way on your personal integrity or your professional competence."

Sunnybank Minister Rev Andrew Ross said, "For me the Gen. Sec. stuff was not about the person as such, for whom I have great respect... but rather a process of discernment."

Banora Point Minister Rev

Robert Brennan believed the Synod may have heard the Spirit though he was "reluctant to say that with too much strength".

"Those who know me know I consider it heretical to say that, 'God speaks to us in the councils of the church,' rather than the more appropriate and accurate, 'in the councils of the church we are most likely to hear God speak.'"

"The proof... is in the fruit a council's decisions bears after the event."

With a departure date set for current Synod General Secretary Rev Jenny Tymms, the Synod faced the dilemma of not having someone to fill the position and the Synod revisited this issue a number of times over the next two days.

The final decision of the Synod was that the Council of Synod, which acts for the Synod between meetings, would meet urgently to recommence the process for the selection of a General Secretary and appoint an Acting General Secretary if required.

The Synod also determined that a new Search Committee should bring the names of two acceptable

“Synod faced the dilemma of not having someone to fill the position”

candidates to a special meeting of the Synod expected to be held later in the year.

Frustrated by the proposed process Rev Dr Robert Bos of Bundamba said, "The irony is that we will probably now appoint a General Secretary who will gain a lesser percentage of support from the Synod than the person whose name was put forward by the search committee and, in the process, spend a good deal of money which could be better spent."

Journey has since been advised that Rev Jenny Tymms will indicate to the Council of Synod that, if necessary, she is available to continue in the role of General Secretary for the remainder of the year.

In a Pastoral Letter to the church following the Synod the Moderator asked for prayer support for the work of the Council of Synod, Search Committee and subsequent Synod meeting.

"We seek your prayers for this very important process and for the ongoing life and witness of the Uniting Church."



Photo by Rev Michael Brumpton

St George Uniting Church goes green

SOME PEOPLE might talk about being an ecologically friendly church but Allan and Kerrie Neale and their daughters Clarissa and Rebecca led the way when they jumped on their quadracycle and rode ten kilometres to town for church.

When the Uniting Church throughout Queensland began encouraging all members to "go green", the Neale family of St. George figured it was

only ten kilometres from their farm to church. So they were off for a Sunday ride that's become a part of their routine.

Going green is one thing, but not being carbon neutral weighs heavily on Allen's mind when they hits the hills and he asks, "Are you all pedalling back there?"

Driving to connect with the community

CENTENARY UNITING Church has been busy getting to know their local area with their South West Outreach Van.

The van has been in operation since January this year going out twice a week to offer food, drinks, and friendship through the south west suburbs of Brisbane including Centenary, Carole Park, and Inala.

Centenary Youth Worker Jason Bray said the van was a great way to connect with the community.

"The South West Outreach Van is about us getting amongst the marginalised and troubled youth in our community and building relationships with these people that are genuine, caring and compassionate," Mr Bray said.

The van has struck a chord with local business and councils with the local councillor Felicity Farmer giving \$2500 for van repairs, and

a large majority of future funding also coming from corporate sponsorship.

With the help of a UC Foundation Grant, the van has been

a great success and will continue to help marginalised youth in South West Brisbane.

By Mardi Lumsden



Centenary Youth Worker Jason Bray, Lizzy Richardson and Sharon Darlington prepare to hit the streets.

Photo courtesy of Centenary Uniting Church

WHICH SCHOOL FOR YOUR CHILD ?

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Somerville House Day and boarding school for girls Preparatory to Year 12 07 3248 9200 www.somerville.qld.edu.au	Brisbane Boys' College Boarding and day school for boys in Prep to Year 12 07 3309 3500 www.bbc.qld.edu.au
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Money makes the world go round

By Mardi Lumsden

JULY 2007 marks the half way point for the United Nations Millennium Development Goals which range from halving extreme poverty to halting the spread of HIV/AIDS.

While Australia has increased its volume of aid since 2005, it still falls a long way short of the 2010 target set by 22 member nations of the Development Assistance Committee (DAC).

The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) DAC preliminary data released in April 2006 placed Australia 19th out of the 22 aid donors in the international comparison of aid levels calculated as a proportion of Gross National Income. Norway was in the lead with 0.93%, far above Australian on 0.25%.

According to World Vision Australia's paper *How are the Neighbours?* eight of Australia's 22 neighbouring countries are on track with the Millennium Development Goals, but the rest are struggling.

Papua New Guinea was rated as unlikely to achieve any of the eight Millennium Development Goals.

Uniting International Mission National Director Rev Dr Kerry

Enright said one of Australia's closest neighbours is also one of the poorest performing nations.

"The World Bank recently released a progress report on the Goals and, whilst some progress is being made, it is still patchy.

"The report indicates that the worst performing of the developing nations is the Solomon Islands, a nation in which the Uniting Church and its predecessors have been involved for over 100 years," he said.

"Our partner church, the United Church in Solomon Islands needs our support. The recent earthquake and tsunami have had a considerable impact."

Dr Enright has welcomed promises from the Australian Government to increase aid and encouraged people to keep the Millennium Development Goals on the political agenda by talking to their parliamentarians.

"As we review policies, we need to listen carefully to what parties say about aid, development and foreign policy.

"This generation has a special opportunity to end extreme poverty, so we can question whether policies will sufficiently assist us in that goal.

"The Federal Government's recent budget increase in overseas aid spending is welcome but there is much to be done if we are to reach the target of \$4 Billion by 2010.

"Australia is a wealthy country with a large surplus, yet we remain at the lower end of international generosity for government aid.

"We encourage you to quiz parliamentary candidates, write letters to your local MPs and to the government, and keep pressing our leaders to increase the budget."



Uniting International Mission
National Director
Rev Dr Kerry Enright

UN Millennium Development Goals

- Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
- Achieve universal primary education
- Promote gender equality and empower women
- Reduce child mortality
- Improve maternal health
- Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases
- Ensure environmental sustainability
- Develop a global partnership for development



Africans want a fair go

NOBEL PEACE Prize Laureate Archbishop Desmond Tutu has joined other religious leaders and globalisation critics in sending an anti-poverty message to leaders of the Group of Eight industrial nations who met in Germany in early June.

"We can survive only together, we can be free only together, we can be prosperous only together, we can be human only together," said the former Anglican archbishop of Cape Town to lively applause at a rally during the Kirchentag, the once-every-two-years German Protestant convention, meeting this year in Cologne.

The 7 June rally, outside the city's cathedral, took place the day before the heads of six African nations were due to join the leaders of the G8 countries - Britain, Canada, France, Italy, Japan, Germany, Russia and the United States - for the final day of their northern German summit.

"I want to say to the leaders of the G8, 'I am an African. I am a man. I am a human being... I am not an object of pity. I am not an object of charity,'" said Tutu.

"I am an African. I am your brother."

"The message of the Kirchentag is clear. We say, 'Pull down the barriers between those who decide and those who are affected by the decisions,'" the president of the Protestant convention, Reinhard Höppner, told the Cologne rally.

"We say, do not put your efforts into growth that violates the dignity of people."

Rev Mvume Dandala, general secretary of the Nairobi-based All Africa Conference of Churches, said spiritual leaders needed to take responsibility to scrutinise the actions of the G8 leaders.

"It is time to stop letting politicians and economists have a monopoly on what is happening in the world," said Dandala, a Methodist from Africa.



Uniting Church in Australia
QUEENSLAND SYNOD

GENERAL SECRETARY OF THE SYNOD

(Full time; 5 year initial contract)

The General Secretary's position is a significant leadership role for a Church facing a challenging context.

Working with other key leaders, this important position will focus on strategically facilitating the Queensland Synod's capacity for mission and ministry in partnership with Presbyteries, Congregations and Agencies. The position will also co-ordinate the oversight and development of the Synod staff team.

The successful applicant (lay or ordained) will be a member of the Uniting Church in Australia with a commitment to, and understanding of, the mission and ethos of the Uniting Church. She/he will have extensive experience in the management of large organisations and/or complex systems, a comprehensive understanding of Church governance and have demonstrated exceptional leadership, team building, and strategic planning skills that concentrate on delivering quality service provision that will energise a complex organisation.

The Synod is seeking applicants who have:

- Demonstrated working knowledge of the Church and the polity of the Church,
- Demonstrated capacity to think strategically and to facilitate strategic discussions within complex organisations, preferably in the context of the Church,
- Demonstrated disciplined thinking, decision making and problem solving on complex organisational issues, in particular change management and quality service delivery,
- Demonstrated ability to implement key organisational resolutions, decisions and strategies within financial and time constraints, coupled with compassion,
- Demonstrated capacity to provide strong leadership on issues confronting the Church in its ministry and mission within the current social context,
- Demonstrated team leadership, negotiation, conflict management, pastoral care, and written and oral communication skills, including the ability to deal with the wide range of stakeholders associated with the Church, and sensitive/confidential issues.

This position will be based in Brisbane, with travel throughout Queensland and interstate as required.

An information pack is available via the website (<http://www.ucaqld.com.au/career.php>) or by contacting Ana Mila (07) 3377 9709 or ana.mila@ucaqld.com.au

Applications close Tuesday 31 July 2007.

SANDERSON RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP

Uniting Church Theological College, Melbourne

Applications are invited for the Sanderson Research Fellowship in the Uniting Church Theological College, Melbourne.

The Fellowship is tenable either half-time for one year or full-time for six months, commencing in mid February 2008.

Particulars about the Fellowship may be obtained from Heather Cameron, Uniting Church Theological College, 1 Morrison Close, Parkville, Victoria 3052, Australia. Email: heather.cameron@ctm.uca.edu.au.

Applications close on 17 August 2007.



Millennium Development Goals are a spiritual issue

By Bruce Mullan

WITH THE Millennium Goals at their midpoint *Journey* spoke to Chief Executive of World Vision Australia Rev Tim Costello about the progress so far.

One of Australia's most outspoken voices for international justice, Baptist Minister Mr Costello is convinced that the Millennium Goals are not only realistic but are achievable.

"These goals were only agreed to by 190 countries because there was a very strong economic and intellectual case made that these goals were achievable and we had the technical and economic means to achieve them."

Mr Costello claimed that the "breathtaking" opportunity of the Millennium Development Goals is that we can actually halve the number of destitute people living in the poorest countries without having to sacrifice our own lifestyle.

"This is what is so morally compelling about the Millennium Goals. No one in any rich country actually has to give up anything in order to achieve these goals."

"Think about the extraordinary wealth of Australia which has had 13 consecutive surpluses.

"Australia doesn't have to choose at all between investing in broadband or education and health, and meeting its promise on Millennium Development Goals. We can do both!"

Mr Costello was critical that

Europe and Britain are spending 0.5% of their GDP on overseas development aid and Australia is only up to 0.3%.

"We just haven't kept our promise and this has been the moral failure of our government."

Mr Costello dismissed the common sentiment that Australia should just concentrate of working with the poor in our own country.

"By a very clear statistic of people who live in absolute poverty – one billion people living on less than one dollar a day – there is no one in Australia like that."

"No Australian who is poor was ever going to lose out if Australia kept its promise to meet Millennium Development Goal targets."

"We have far more wealth than we literally know what to do with."

Mr Costello said the Millennium Goals do not just take the GDP of poor countries as the measure of whether the Goals are being achieved.

"The Millennium Development Goals were very specific. They were saying, 'Halve the number of people actually living on less than one dollar a day by 2015 and to end people living on less than a dollar a day by 2030."

"There is no achievement made if a poor country's GDP goes up and the money flows to their rich and middle class."

Mr Costello claimed that the Millennium Development Goals



Chief Executive of World Vision Australia Rev Tim Costello.
Photo courtesy of World Vision Australia

also anticipate the potential problem of resources ending up in the hands of military dictatorships.

Where governments are oppressing their people, aid money is not given bilaterally (government to government) but channelled directly to the poor through non-

government aid agencies.

As Australia's largest aid and development organisation World Vision has formed a business for poverty alliance to encourage Australian business suppliers to ask their third world suppliers, "Do your workers get paid enough for their kids to get primary education and to get some health care?"

"Just to ask that question actually helps the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals," Mr Costello said.

Mr Costello was critical of

those countries who are selling armaments to third world dictatorships, claiming the second biggest industry in the world is armaments.

"Why are Britain and America selling weapons to tin-pot dictators?"

"To put it in perspective, the United States of America is spending nearly a trillion dollars a year on weapons and the world is asking for just \$150 billion in aid. The meagre aid given is currently about \$80 billion by all OECD nations."

Mr Costello believes that individual Christians have responsibility to be personally committed to the world's poor.

"When Jesus said, 'The poor you will have with you always', I think he meant, 'If you are my disciples you will always be close to the poor... You can't follow me and ignore the poor'."

"To be personally generous might mean supporting a child through World Vision or through a Uniting Church agency or any number of non-government organisations."

Mr Costello said there is also a moral challenge to be an advocate for the 30,000 children who are made in the image of God and die each day – "literally too poor to live".

"This is a spiritual issue. Anything that cripples that image [of God] – lack of food, lack of education, lack of health – is sinful."

"And anything that helps restore that image – enough food, health care, education – is part of God's salvation at work."

Visit World Vision's Website at www.worldvision.com.au

BlueCare nurse is a winner

"I DO WHAT thousands of nurses do everyday," said the winner of the Hesta Australian Nurse of the Year 2007 award, Robyn Williams.

Ms Williams who works at Wynnum BlueCare Community Nursing in Brisbane was nominated for the incredible support she provided to a terminally ill lung cancer client who was living without running water, a toilet, fridge or stove.

"As a community nurse it's my role to care for people in their home, wherever that may be."

The Uniting Church's community care agency BlueCare employs more than 3,000 nurses across the State who work in people's homes, aged care facilities, watch house custody locations, boarding houses, hostels and in research and policy areas.



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Call for change in policy on 17-year-olds in prison

THE QUEENSLAND SYNOD has requested an immediate change to the Queensland Government policy of incarcerating 17-year-olds in adult prisons.

A resolution of the Synod asked the Moderator Rev Dr David Pitman to write to the Premier expressing the church's dissatisfaction with the current practice and requesting an immediate change.

Justice and International Mission Advocate Andrew Johnson who visited Queensland prisons with Dr Pitman only a few weeks earlier said the church holds a moral responsibility to stand with the marginalised.

"In this case we seek to stand up for some of the most vulnerable in our society, children, and advocate for their fair treatment in the criminal justice system," Mr. Johnson said.

The Synod denounced the State

Government for continuing to ignore international conventions and its own commitments dating back to 1992.

Mr Johnson said there was no legislative amendment required to implement this change. "The Government has passed the legislation fifteen years ago; all they have to do is make the provision operational."

In a statement nine days after the Synod decision, the Queensland Government's Communities Minister Warren Pitt said the government felt there were more significant priorities to be addressed within the juvenile justice system.

Mr Pitt said the government had considered whether a change was required in the treatment of 17-year-olds charged with offences committed after they turned 17, but had decided the status quo would

continue.

"This group of 17-year-olds will continue to be treated as adults within the Queensland criminal justice system."

Director of UnitingCare Queensland, the Uniting Church's community services arm, Ms Anne Cross said the practice of incarcerating 17-year-olds in adult prisons is a breach of our international obligations under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

"As far back as 1992 the Queensland Labor Government made a commitment to end the practice," said Ms Cross. "No other Australian state subjects children to adult prisons and this must stop."

"If children cannot vote, sit on juries, drink alcohol, buy cigarettes, enter marriage, undertake foreign travel, make wills, get tattoos, be



Director of UnitingCare Queensland Ms Anne Cross points to a breach in international obligations. Photo by Osker Lau

parties to lawsuits, or decide on medical treatment until they become eighteen, they should not be treated as adults under criminal law," said Ms Cross.

"Being exposed to adult prisons only increases their chances of remaining in the system and becoming re-offenders".

Demonstrators greet members arriving at Synod

By Bruce Mullan

MEMBERS ARRIVING for the 26th Uniting Church Queensland Synod meeting at Alexandra Park Conference Centre on the Sunshine Coast were greeted by 30 peaceful and vocal protesters from the Queensland Independent Education Union (QIEU).

The Union was demonstrating in support of Shalom Christian College employees who are rejecting Australian Workplace Agreements (AWAs) and seeking a union collective agreement.

The Union claims that under the proposed AWAs teachers' weekly hours of work would be increased, non-contact time would be no longer guaranteed and teachers' annual leave would be reduced to four weeks.

Shalom College is an activity of Congress Community Development and Education Ltd, an independent corporation with links to the Uniting Church in Australia.

It is governed by an independent Board and the Synod of Queensland has no direct control over the governance of the College or the conduct of its day-to-day activities.

Moderator of the Queensland Synod Rev Dr David Pitman said that the Uniting Church, both nationally and within Queensland, has adopted a strong stance in relation to some aspects of the new industrial relations legislation.

"The Uniting Church is concerned that the legislation provides inadequate protection for employees overall and could leave unscrupulous employers with the opportunity to deal unfairly and unjustly with employees in certain situations," Dr Pitman said.

"The Uniting Church is also deeply concerned about the potential



Demonstrators met members as they arrived at Alexandra Park for the meeting of the 26th Synod. Photo by Bruce Mullan

impact of this legislation on the wellbeing of individual workers and their families.

"As a major employer in its own right, the Uniting Church maintains an excellent record of employer-employee relationships."

Assistant General Secretary of the QIEU Ros McLennan said that Union membership at Shalom College is nearly 100% and that a series of union collective agreements has been in place for almost 10 years.

In a Fact Sheet presented to Synod members arriving at the Conference Centre the Union said, "Staff and their unions are not standing in the way of the Board's objective of delivering quality education to Shalom Christian College students;

rather staff ask to be treated with dignity, respect and as partners in this shared endeavour."

Dr Pitman said that while the church has a strong policy on the current industrial relations legislation, the church also has an unwavering commitment to ensuring that Indigenous people and Aboriginal and Islander agencies within the church are able to exercise their activities in an autonomous and independent manner.

"Our commitment to the right of self-determination in this matter is unequivocal and those with questions about the specific aspects of the workplace negotiations at Shalom Christian College should address those directly to the College Board," Dr Pitman said.

Dr Pitman said he had consulted with members of the Shalom College Board and believes the Board is committed to dealing justly and fairly with the staff and is seeking to negotiate new workplace agreements in an open and transparent manner.

"Our support for the Board of Shalom Christian College in this instance in no way diminishes our concerns and criticism regarding the current industrial legislation."

Dr Pitman said the Uniting Church is proud of Shalom Christian College and all that it has achieved for and on behalf of Indigenous children.

Both the QIEU and Uniting Church leaders have appealed for further negotiation between the

Moderator's Medals for marvellous church members

By Mardi Lumsden

THREE OF EIGHT people awarded Moderator's community service medals were present to receive their awards at the 26th

Synod meeting.

Gloria Malone who has been a volunteer at Blue Care and Lifeline for the past 18 years was recognised for her work within the community of Warwick including fundraising

with the Blue Care Auxiliary, as Chair of Lifeline Warwick and as a driver for Warwick Meals on Wheels. She also volunteers at the Akooramak Home for the Aged in Warwick.



Gwenda Spencer from The Gap receives her Moderator's Medal from Rev Dr David Pitman. Photo by Osker Lau

UnitingCare Director Anne Cross said, "Gloria gives of her time and energy unstintingly, with a smile and very caring attitude."

Isabelle Kearsley, a member of Rosewood Uniting Church for 40 years, received a Moderator's Medal in recognition of her work at Toastmasters including running a group at Borallon Prison for 14 years.

In 1999 Ms Kearsley was the Blue Nurse Citizen of the Year for South East Queensland.

She has also taped lectures and books for visually impaired students for the past 25 years and has volunteered for numerous community organisations.

Ms Cross said, "Isabelle is a remarkable person with so much talent and represents the many unsung heroes of the faith who worship every week in so many of our country congregations."

The third recipient at the Synod meeting Gwenda Spencer has worked in the refugee community through a local ecumenical group based at The Gap.

Church goes green

THE QUEENSLAND Synod has acted in response to the threat of climate change.

In recognising the threat climate change poses to our nation and the world, the Queensland Synod has committed itself to reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

It has requested all congregations to undertake energy audits of their property. The Synod Office of the Uniting Church will also be subject to an energy audit.

The Synod also encouraged members to undertake energy audits of their own homes and encouraged people to use "green power".

Synod members were reminded of the Uniting Church's foundational statements, which in 1977 declared it would "urge the wise use of energy, the protection of the environment and the replenishment of the earth's resources".

In passing this proposal, members also noted the Assembly statement on climate change which says, "The Uniting Church regards climate change as a serious threat to the future and integrity of life on earth."

Justice and International Mission Advocate



City wins convincingly over Country

By Special Sports Reporter Peter Smale

DURING THE lunch break on Sunday, Synod members entered combat in the City vs. Country annual Charles Farnsworth Memorial Touch Football clash.

The Farnsworth Trophy was named for a mythological student of Trinity Theological College, and a grudge match was expected after a strongly contested draw at the 25th Queensland Synod at Carrara in 2006.

After several comments about the playing surface resembling a car park, play began with opening forays into opposition territory.

An evenly matched contest seemed on the cards until City's Rev Peter Lockhart ran, stepped and passed to ministerial candidate Viliame Mila who scored in the



Players celebrate the Farnsworth Memorial football clash. Photo by Osker Lau

corner mere seconds later.

City's Monica Hackwood from Bayside Uniting, who made a scything midfield run and delivered a perfectly timed pass to Rev Lu Senituli to finish, also delivered the final pass for City's third try scored by Youth Worker Tim Griggs.

Country seemed doomed but fine tries either side of half time to Kent Benn and Rev Linda Hanson breathed fresh life into an absorbing contest.

Final tries to Tim Griggs, Rev Andrew Gunton and Monica Hackwood sealed a convincing 6-2 victory to City.

Is this our Australia?

By Scott Stephens

IN LATE 1847, Karl Marx and his fellow communists were accused by some of the bourgeois elite of undermining the most fundamental of social institutions – private property and the family. His response was characteristically scathing, and ingenious:

"You are horrified at our intending to do away with private property. But in your existing society, private property is already done away with for nine tenths of the population ... Abolition of the family! On what foundation is the present family, the bourgeois family based? On capital, on private gain."

The uneven distribution inherent to capitalism, Marx claimed, had already corrupted these older forms of social life, reducing them to parodies of their former selves. He thus dismissed the accusation as entirely bogus, akin to being charged with the murder of someone who is already dead.

I am reminded of Marx's words often these days, especially when I hear claims that unintegrated ethnic groups are eroding Australian identity. We are then told that the answer is a return to traditional "Australian values" as the rite of passage to full participation in the benefits and privileges of civil society.

But the truth of our situation is that the unenlightened self-interest and moral decadence that have sustained this country's much touted economic growth have already hollowed out Australian identity.

The mantra-like use of the terms "Australian" or "un-Australian" are thus little more than empty nostalgia, hearkening back to a time when such terms actually meant something.

The clearest indication of the loss of our national identity has been the changes in foreign policy



Police officers hold back the crowd at Cronulla railway station in Sydney December 2005 AAP/Paul Muller © 2006 AAP

and immigration under Paul Keating and John Howard.

For Keating, the willingness to engage with the life and economy of the Asia-Pacific was an expression of the strength of Australian identity – which he saw as sustained by national remorse for past crimes, prodded by a government unafraid of moral leadership, codified in an Australian Republic, and nourished by the depth of artistic imagination.

Such an Australia, said Keating, has nothing to fear from the prospect of Asian immigration because our internal fortitude could withstand the tide, and the sheer attractiveness of our generous way of life couldn't be resisted for long.

Of course, his robust vision had to distinguish between the 'real' Australia – whose racist feeling and addition to sport inspired nothing but disdain from Keating – and

that grander reality which could be modelled, aspired to, achieved in our time.

The greatest threat to progress is for the people to fall out of step with the government, and not the other way around. Keating recognised, better than any other politician, that in order to achieve our nation, it is necessary, as Bertolt Brecht put it, "to dissolve a people and elect another."

In contrast, Howard's "relaxed and comfortable" approach to national life was not simply a rejection of Keating's aggressive, deliberate reforms. It represented a vile affirmation of our basest tendencies.

And while there was little room for sport in Keating's Australia-to-come, Howard's immigration policy seems modelled after his sports obsession: it is a chest-beating, green-and-gold type of national

pride that is most keenly felt when staring down a formidable foe.

In a manner every bit as shameless and recalcitrant as Hewson's opposition to Mabo, Howard's persistent appeal to this country's latent racism has re-energized the role of fear in the national psyche – fear that our prized possessions might be taken from us by some foreign intruder, that we ourselves might be dispossessed of our cultural birthright.

There was thus something terrifyingly accurate in the comments of one of the participants in the Cronulla riots of 11 December 2005:

"It was better than Australia Day ... I had the best time of my life. Not because we were there fighting Lebos, but just the atmosphere, you know. Everyone has had enough of them."

Isn't this what "Australia" has come to mean after eleven long years under Howard? Beneath the thin veneer of our hackneyed national myths, it stands for the conversion of our love for sporting rivalry into populist hostility against foreigners, whether on the

beaches of Cronulla, or in the form of anti-immigration sentiment expressed by recent immigrants, wanting, as it were, to close the door behind them.

The fault is not with the government. It is with us. We have valued the promise of bulging back-pockets and strong national borders over the possibility of a different kind of Australia.

And we have succumbed to the fear of uncertainty rather than embracing the promise of a just society.

I wrote last month that the Uniting Church has become more symptomatic of our culture than it has been truly prophetic. Our churches continue to reflect so much of the same selfishness, racism and fear of intruders that we see all around us.

It is high-time that we had the courage to embody God's "No!" to our godless culture, so that we can also proclaim the "Yes!" of the new creation in Jesus Christ.

Scott Stephens is an author, theologian and minister at Chermide Kedron Uniting Church and teaches ethics at Trinity Theological College.

COMMON DREAMS

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SYDNEY - 16th to 19th August, 2007

Bishop Spong will launch his new book *Jesus for the Non-Religious* on Thursday, 16th August, 7.30pm at the Pitt St Uniting Church, Sydney. He will also be speaking in Canberra, Melbourne, Adelaide and Brisbane as part of a post-conference lecture tour.

Early Bird and Concessional Discounts available. For Program and Registration details:

www.commondreams.org.au or phone (02) 9267 3614

Centre for Theology & Ministry



Children Youth and Family Ministry Coordinator

The Uniting Church Centre for Theology and Ministry (CTM) seeks a full time Children Youth and Family Ministry Coordinator, commencing November, 2007. The position's main purposes are to:

- resource congregations, presbyteries and other facets of the church for contextually appropriate ministry with children, youth, and families.
- provide leadership and coordination for CTM auspiced events/activities, advocacy, research, and resourcing for ministry with children, youth and families.
- manage and coordinate the CTM children, youth and family staff team.

The position will sit within the Discipleship Education unit of the CTM – Synod of Victoria and Tasmania

A position description is available from Carolyn Jung (03 9251 5207) or by emailing hr@vic.uca.org.au

Applications close: Friday August 10th 2007.

Fraudsters prey on the trust of church members

By Bruce Mullan

WHEN AUSTRALIAN Capital Reserve was placed in voluntary administration two weeks ago it was the life savings of mum and dad investors, up to \$330 million worth, that were at greatest risk.

Real estate agent Sam Pogson and many of the company's founders are members of the Christadelphian church, pointing again to how vulnerable churches are to a scam known as "Affinity Fraud".

Professor McGregor Lowndes from The Centre of Philanthropy and Nonprofit Studies at the Queensland University of Technology describes the scenario where the minister introduces a congregation member to a relatively new member who from their appearance is an obviously wealthy, but devout business person.

"You already know this because within a week of joining worship, this person has approached you about a weekly pledge offering and volunteering their services to the property and finance committee," he said.

"Very shortly this person has the church and many of its senior members investing in schemes which have unbelievably high returns.

"What's more the monthly returns on the investments are actually equal to or exceeding the promises – in cold hard cash."

Professor McGregor Lowndes said even those who were a bit cautious at first become convinced, investing in the scheme and telling all their friends.

"You can't believe your blessings, because a percentage of all the investments made by church members is donated to the church by the new member."

Professor McGregor Lowndes said what happens next is that monthly cheques become delayed

and only the very noisy are paid, often with postdated cheques.

"Our new found member then publicly asks for forgiveness from the congregation and explains how the devil has attacked their good works.

"The person will have to start all over again in business to repay their debts but this won't happen if the police are involved as the devil would want."

Pastors and members of the congregation of a Sunshine Coast

"The fraudster works on the relationships and trust they have developed by their involvement in the congregation"

church found themselves in a similar position.

They were some of the investors in a "bank debenture trading program" and another scheme which offered rental rights to caravans.

The perpetrator of the scheme obtained over \$190,000 in the period August 1997 to March 1998 on the premise of investing the money into the schemes but instead all the money was put to his own use.

Affinity Fraud is ranked in the top 10 frauds in the United States and has been reported as being Australia's "most insidious scam".

The Australian Securities and Investment Commission (ASIC) is also concerned about the rising number of Affinity Fraud cases, particularly in religious communities.

A member of the Beenleigh Uniting Church congregation who serves on the Assembly Legal Reference Committee Professor McGregor Lowndes and his research assistant Zenova Pappas have been investigating the impact of Affinity Fraud on close-knit religious communities.

He says the fraudster works on the relationships and trust they have developed by their involvement in the congregation and persuades someone else like a leader or well respected and trusted member of the group to use their influence to convince people to invest in financial schemes which are only intended to make the fraudster rich and to dupe those who invest.

"This is why the word 'Affinity' is used to describe this type of fraud. Members of a group have an affinity to each other because of, for example, shared beliefs and interests, or commonalities in ethnic or religious backgrounds which drew them to that group in the first place.

"The fraudsters take advantage of a person's trust, goodwill and dedication, and the perpetrators often make faith in God synonymous with faith in their investment plan.

"Examples have shown that, where Affinity Fraud has taken place, a vast number of people have been affected.

"In spite of this fact, it is reported that people are often too embarrassed to come forward because they have been conned or feel guilty because they feel that they are also somehow implicated in the scheme."

A full report on how Affinity Fraud works and how to avoid it is available in a more detailed article by Professor McGregor Lowndes and Ms Pappas on the Journey website www.journeyonline.com.au



HEAR SYNOD

PEOPLE ATTENDING the 26th synod at Alexandra Park in May have been joined by thousands of others listening to what happened on their computers and iPods.

Synod Communications Manager Mr Bruce Mullan said downloadable podcasts of the Synod are available on the *Journeyonline* website and can be easily accessed by anyone with an internet-connected personal computer.

"This will enable everyone to hear exactly what was happening at different key points of the Synod," Mr Mullan said.

Recordings include the Synod Bible Studies; the opening address by the Moderator Rev Dr David Pitman; reports to the Synod by the General Secretary Rev Jenny Tymms; the Theological Education Task Group; retiring Director of the Department for Financial and Property Services Mr Bruce Binnie; the Director of UnitingCare Queensland Ms Anne Cross; Rev Bruce Johnson's Moderator-Elect acceptance speech; and Rev Jenny Tymms preaching at the closing service of the Synod.

To hear recordings of the 26th Synod go to www.journeyonline.com.au

The National Assembly of The Uniting Church in Australia Uniting International Mission



People in Mission Coordinator

Uniting International Mission facilitates means by which the Uniting Church participates in the mission of Jesus Christ, through working with partners beyond Australia.

One key aspect is through UCA people serving, short or longer term, with partner churches.

The **People in Mission Coordinator** works with partner churches and others to identify opportunities; highlights opportunities and recruits people; facilitates preparation and placements; supports people who serve; facilitates debriefing and reflection; provides leadership in missiological and theological reflection; liaises with government agencies; promotes and informs the missional identity of the Church; and will be based in Sydney.

If you have a passion for mission beyond Australia; want to contribute to the renewal of the Uniting Church in mission; reflect theologically; communicate effectively; network especially among younger people; organize and follow-up; and have cross-cultural experience, we encourage you to apply.

A copy of the position description can be obtained from contacting Lynda Moschioni on 02 8267 4267 or from the UIM website www.uim.uca.org.au.

Applications to **Lynda Moschioni** at lyndam@nat.uca.org.au or via mail to PO Box A2266, Sydney South NSW 1235 by **Wednesday 18 July 2007**.

DIRECTOR, CENTRE FOR LEADERSHIP

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The successful applicant will have a passion and drive for leadership development and will have demonstrated exceptional skills in leadership, team building, innovation, education and strategic planning.

He or she will also have "runs on the board" in practical ministry.

This is a visionary role in a church embracing new possibilities.

All initial enquiries should be referred to Rev Dr Ian Price by phoning (08) 8236 4236 or email ian@sa.uca.org.au

Applications close at 5pm on 27 July 2007.

MINISTER OF THE WORD Oatley Uniting Church



We are seeking a full time Minister to teach, preach and model Jesus Christ in the life of the Oatley congregation and the community we serve.

Oatley is a village in southern Sydney on the Georges River. Over 200 people participate in our Sunday worship activities involving devoted seniors, mission focussed adults, dynamic youth and energetic Sunday School.

We thirst for solid Bible based teaching, and are seeking a minister to encourage us to

- grow in faith and
- develop and use our spiritual gifts in serving the congregation and community

For an information pack contact Helen Phillips 9579 3578 or phillips@cougar.net.au. Information is also available on our website www.oatley.org.

Applications are to be sent to Mrs Meg Herbert, Associate Secretary NSW Synod, PO Box A2178 SYDNEY SOUTH 1235.

Closing date: 20th July 2007.

WHAT'S ON

June 14-August 2, John Dominic Crossan's study *Victory and Peace or Justice and Peace?* Four sessions hosted by Caloundra Uniting church. Day and evening sessions available. Contact ph 5491 5353 or email caloundra@dovenetq.net.au.

June 30, 6.30-10pm. Charles Nalder Celebration of Ministry at Broadwater Road Uniting Church, Mansfield. Charles Nalder is retiring after 45 years of serving the Church. Broadwater Road invites all those who have valued Charles' ministry through books to celebrate with us. Light meal provided. RSVP by 22 June to Susan Paton ph 3849 8548 or email mguca@ozemail.com.au.

July 6, 7.30-9.30pm. Combined Men's Fellowship at Pine Rivers Uniting Church. Hear Pastor Isaac Khan's journey from a western Sydney mosque to a Brisbane suburban church. Good music and supper. Gold coin. Come and make new mates. RSVP to Phil Smith on ph 0414 823125 or email spunryarn@bigpond.net.au.

July 6-13, 7.30pm. *Joseph - The Musical* at Mary MacKillop Church cnr Birdwood & Hardy Rds Birkdale. Tickets on sale now! Contact Margaret Ryrie ph 3396 3244 or 0415 432 649.

July 8, 8.45am. Parish Divides to Multiply at the Eastern Downs Parish - Nobby and Cambooya. A celebration of Cambooya's move from the Eastern Downs Parish for their independent mission activities under a Mentoring relationship with the Middle Ridge Congregation in Toowoomba. Contact Rev Evan Stenlake ph 4638 9989 or email downspres@dovenetq.net.au.

July 13-14, 9am-5pm. Forge Missional Training Seminar at Bracken Ridge Baptist Church. Second of two weekends on spirituality, discipleship and sustainability. Speakers include Stephen Said, Duncan Macleod and David Chatelier. Contact Duncan Macleod ph 0439 828 718 or email duncan.macleod@ucaqlld.com.au.

July 15. Children's Ministry Workshop at Broadwater Rd UC, Mansfield. Discover how the community of faith can assist children to enter into God's hospitality. Contact Paul Yarrow ph 3377 9866 or email Paul.Yarrow@yacmu.com.au.

July 16-20. Theology for Youth Ministry presented by Rev Anita Monro (United Theological College, Sydney). An intensive course held at Uniting Church Synod Centre, Brisbane. The course explores the Bible, wrestles with theology, reads popular culture and may be taken for credit into undergraduate degrees. For more information or enrolment forms contact Astrid Hill at Trinity Theological College ph 3377 9951 or email astrid.hill@ucaqlld.com.au.

July 24, 7.30-9.30pm. Financial planning night for young adults at Toowong Uniting Church. A Tandem Financial Advice and YACMU session specifically with the young adult lifestyle in mind. Focusing on financial goals and wealth creation. Guest speakers discuss topics of income protection, using your money to achieve your life goals, and investing in property. Contact Tom Kerr ph 3377 9935 or email kerr@yacmu.ucaqlld.com.au.

July 26, 7.30pm. Prayer in the City. Ecumenical evening prayer with a brother of the Taizé community. Cathedral of St Stephen, 249 Elizabeth St, Brisbane. Enquiries contact James Andrew ph 3391 3915.

July 27, 10.30am. Australian Church Women Fellowship Days service. Beatriz Skippen will speak on the theme 'Heaven's Bread'. Service will be held at the Church of Christ, Ann St Brisbane. Enquiries to M.J. Hunt ph 3358 4349.

July 28, 9am-1pm. Family Fun Day at Moggill Uniting Church. Stalls, quilt show, arts and crafts, jumping castle, animal nursery, face painting and much more. Ph 3202 7045.

August 3-14. The Christian face of Bali tour. A fully escorted 10 day tour to Bali. Contact Rev Brian and Lorraine Niblock, tour leaders ph 03 5981 8716 or email lb.niblock@optusnet.com.au.

August 9, 10am. Bremer Brisbane Adult Fellowship fashion parade. \$5 with a light lunch. Moggill Uniting Church. Ph 3202 7045.

August 16-19 Common Dreams Conference at Pitt Street Uniting Church, Sydney. Organised by "Progressive Religion as Transforming Agents". Visit www.commondreams.org.au.



Trinity graduates Mosese Fangupo, Peter Blauw, and John Gill.
Photo by Osker Lau

Trinity graduates ready to serve

THREE STUDENTS completed formal studies at Trinity Theological College in May.

Prior to graduation Ministry of the Word students John Gill, Peter Blauw, and Mosese Fangupo were already serving in either Lay Ministry or supply ministry placements.

John Gill has been in Lay Ministry at Merthyr Uniting Church in New Farm, Brisbane, while studying and looks forward to continuing in that placement.

"We have just planted a new church within a church at Merthyr.

"So we have grown it from a zero community to about 60 or 70 people. I am looking forward to growing that even more."

Peter Blauw is currently doing supply ministry but hopes

to eventually work in rural communities.

"I want to bring some hope to those people," he said.

Mosese Fangupo is currently in supply ministry at Rosewood which involves looking after three congregations.

"I don't know what is going to happen in the future but I am focusing on my supply at the moment," he said.

To congratulate them on their achievement, the Uniting Church Investment Service presented portable communion sets to the graduates.

John Gill, Peter Blauw, and Mosese Fangupo are three diverse graduates who will serve the church in many different areas in the future.

Mardi Lumsden

Correction

THE EMAIL address published with the review of Rev Dr Stephen Robinson *Ministry in Disaster Settings: Lessons from the Edge* in the June Journey should have read emergencyministry@puc.org.au, not @1puc.org.au.

Buderim celebrations

BUDERIM UNITING Church, Sunshine Coast, Celebrates its Centenary over the 2nd weekend in October.

There will be open Church, music, services, social activities and a banquet dinner. You are invited to join and enjoy these special events.

Billeting and accommodation is available.

More information contact Lionel Ash ph 07 5445 3537 or Max Fenn ph 07 54768158.

Communications Training Day

RAISE YOUR local church media profile, build your communication skills, take better photos!

The staff of *Focus* (Anglican Diocese of Brisbane), *The Eagle* (St John's Cathedral), and *Journey* present a communications training day for anyone involved in promoting the activities of the church or church agencies.

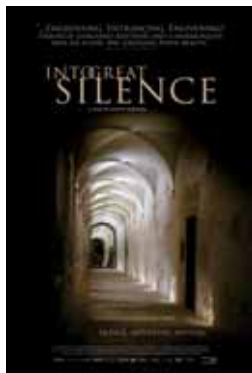
10am - 4pm, Saturday, 11 August at the Uniting Church Centre, Auchenflower.

\$25 (including refreshments and lunch). Register online and pay on the day. Bookings essential. Book online at www.ucaqlld.com.au.

For more information email focus@anglicanbrisbane.org.au.



Want to promote an event?
Go to www.journeyonline.com.au and click on 'What's On'



Into Great Silence

Directed by Philip Gröning
Documentary film
Rated G

For anyone interested in prayer and spirituality, seeing the film *Into Great Silence* is a must.

Subtitled in German and English, this is like no other film you have ever seen: there is no plot, nor dialogue, and not much action.

Into Great Silence looks at life inside the Grande Chartreuse, the head monastery of the Carthusian Order in the French Alps.

The Carthusians are a 900 year old enclosed religious order, living in silence, apart from their three times daily community prayer.

While Carthusians don't actually take a "vow of silence" the monks speak only when really necessary in order to foster a spirit of silence and create an atmosphere of serenity.

German filmmaker and director Philip Gröning waited 16 years to make this film.

He had to accept rigorous conditions imposed by the order for permission to film for six months inside the monastery and has developed a beautiful film with stunning scenery.

Into Great Silence follows the seasons of the year as the monks go about their work of prayer leaving the lay brothers to do most of the practical work.

And yes, there is a soundtrack – the chanting will transport you.

Gröning made the film out of a conviction that the movie business is over-organised and over-technical.

"I wanted to get back to what I think is a real artist's work, which is trying to search for some kind of truth and convey that," he told the Salvation Army's *Wary* magazine.

The film highlights the passage from 1 Kings 19, where Elijah encounters God in the "still, small voice" and the passage in the New Testament about leaving all for the sake of Christ.

At one point, in raising the question about the point of this life devoted solely to prayer in solitude, the response is, "That we may hear one word from God. That He is".

The film is 2 hours and 45 minutes long, but I was not bored for a minute.

It's a bit like a mini-retreat.

Rev Dr Rob Bos is a Uniting Church National Consultant for Theology and Discipleship

What is the Point of Being a Christian?

By Timothy Radcliffe
Burnes & Oates 2006
RRP \$32
Vision Books/St Paul's Bookshop

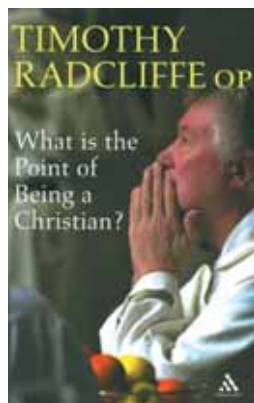
When asked the question "What is the Point of Being a Christian?" Timothy Radcliffe, former Master of the Order of the Dominicans, replied from a standpoint of logic – "Because it's true."

But logical truth was not enough for the questioner who wanted to know what kind of difference being a Christian made to one's life. It was this encounter that led Radcliffe to write this book.

To give a bit of an insight into his thinking on the question, Radcliffe declares in his introduction: "The point of Christianity is to point to God as the meaning of our lives."

Radcliffe's style is easy to read and accessible as he confronts key issues for the Christian life in a conversational and reflective way. He draws on a wealth of experience in his travels and encounters as Master of the Order, as well as his obvious depth in reading and personal reflection.

In comparison, having also recently read and reviewed Rick



Warren's *Purpose Driven Life*, whilst Radcliffe may not quote scriptures as often, I found greater depth and purpose in his witness to the Christian faith.

Radcliffe is not afraid to tackle difficult issues: the gift freedom, our confrontation with death, issues of sexuality, our consumer society and the problems of the divided church, to name a few.

Yet even in engaging these serious topics there is at times a sense of playfulness and joy in his writing.

I particularly appreciated his metaphor for theologians working towards common understanding being like "breeding pandas".

I found myself referring to Radcliffe's thoughts and ideas in conversations, in teaching and in sermons.

This book is certainly worth the read and moreover is worth taking time in doing so to ponder insights on the journey rather than race to the back cover.

Rev Peter Lockhart is a minister with Clayfield and Hamilton Uniting Church congregations

REVIEWS

Yes: A Positive Faith

By David L Edwards
Darton Longman Todd
RRP \$39-95

Edwards brings to bear on this discussion, his experience and thinking consequent upon being a Priest for 50 years and his experience as an academic within the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge.

He examines many traditional Christian beliefs, the basis on which these beliefs developed and the validity when consideration is given to the question, "Is this belief consistent with our knowledge of the world, God, Christ and God's Spirit?"

Some of his conclusions may be controversial.

Truths evident in psychology, e.g. the crippling effect of cold, unloving parents, rejection and abuse, are contrasted with the stronger experience of unlocking our innate capacity to love.

To quote Edwards on this corner-stone of belief in the Triune God, "The essential message of Christ's Cross... He died to show us that God loves us and pays the price of love." (Page 96)

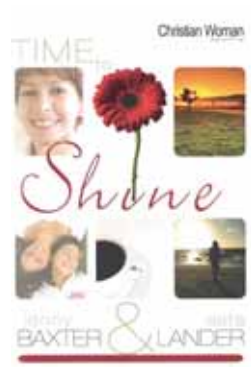
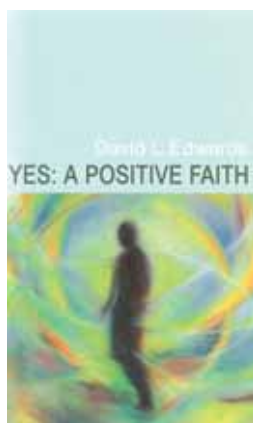
Christianity and the work of the Holy Spirit are shown to be relevant factors in the lives of people who allow the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, thereby influencing whole societies.

The influence of Spirituality is explored and its sinister side considered.

The claims made by contrasting aspects of Christianity – Pentecostal and Charismatic – are laid out and examined.

All in all, *Yes: A Positive Faith* presents an in depth consideration of Christianity, the contrasting aspects evident in the past, raises questions which are vital to attracting people to a relationship with the eternal God and ways in which the body of Christ (the Church) can respond to the challenge.

Grahame Tainton is the Secretary of the Queensland Lay Preacher's Association



Time to Shine

By Jenny Baxter and Asta Lander
Ark House
RRP \$19.95

I was pleasantly surprised reading *Time to Shine*. The last few articles I read in *Christian Woman* magazine were not to their usually high standard.

However, as the devotional book is a 'best of' compilation, the articles chosen from the magazine were all very good. But it wasn't the articles that made *Time to Shine* a great devotional book for women of all ages and walks of life – it was the way in which the articles were used.

Each article is followed by *Time to Shine* tips. These were an excellent way of helping put what you had gained by reading the article into practice.

I also loved the resources section in each chapter. The authors direct you to movies, books and music that related to the article. I really appreciated their choice of movies.

The book can be read going from chapter to chapter or one can pick it up and read a chapter that appeals.

Each chapter is stand alone covering areas including dying, spiritual disciplines, beauty, busyness and your walk with God.

The title *Time to Shine* is apt as the book is aimed at encouraging all women to let their light shine.

I recommend it to all women looking for a fresh, light, practical and encouraging devotional book.

Rev Linda Hanson is a minister in Gympie

1 Peter, Living Hope

By Paul Barnett
Aquila Press
RRP \$19.95

James, The wisdom of the brother of Jesus

By John Dickson
Aquila Press
RRP \$19.95

Reading the Bible Today Series

My first frustration with coming to these books is that nowhere

did they self-define what they are trying to do.

I wasn't quite sure what approach they were taking and felt that if I had come across them in a bookshop I'm not sure I would have purchased them.

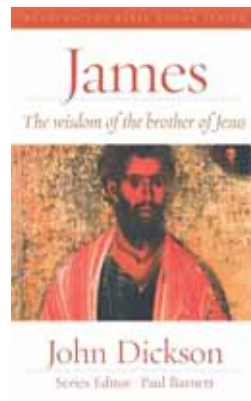
Only if I had known the authors or the stable would I have known what type of books they were.

I found an online catalogue that helpfully describes the series as "non-technical commentaries devoted to presenting careful scholarship in a way that everyone can understand and enjoy."

The books come from an Evangelical outlook generally associated with Sydney Anglicans (Barnett is former Anglican Bishop of North Sydney).

Before you dismiss the books, what I find excellent about their approach is that they take seriously what the Scriptures are trying to say in their original context, and what that might mean for us.

I appreciate this wrestling, as much of the church these days is quite biblically illiterate. While we might have other methods for understanding Scriptures, it seems



to me that most of us have never understood the original biblical ideas that we are passing over.

Both authors come to Scripture as Scripture. They don't address issues of text and source, etc but simply try to exegete the text.

This is not to suggest they are unaware of other issues; they make a decision on where they stand on the issue and get on with it.

While 'non-technical' commentaries, they are very rigorous and robust in their thinking.

They are unafraid to get into the Greek and at times would leave some people behind.

I found Dickson to be the more accessible author for the average person, with Barnett sometimes becoming quite ponderous.

Barnett seems to find it difficult to step out of his doctrinal stance.

This makes his book feel like a lecture where the answers are given, rather than a discussion or journey of discovery.

All in all these are good books to grab if you are preaching or leading a Bible study on James or 1 Peter, but don't want to wade through all the academic issues, but want to seriously wrestle with the meaning of the texts in their contexts.

Rev Paul Clark is a minister in Burdekin

8 July:
Lockyer

The Lockyer congregations of Gattton and Mt Sylvia have been severely affected as a result of the church's ongoing sexuality debate and by the prolonged drought.

In the wake of Resolution 84, over 60% of the congregation left the Uniting Church.

Consequently the two remaining congregations were unable to support a full time ministerial placement.

For the past three and half years they have been served by a part time supply and lay ministry.

The two congregations, although very committed and loyal, are quite aged.

The Gattton congregation has experienced some modest growth, with an average attendance of around 35. The long term future remains uncertain.

We give thanks for:

- The way members have taken on responsibilities previously undertaken by those who left the church.

- The network of lay pastoral care now in place.

PRAYER DIARY

- The quality of fellowship enjoyed.

- The effectiveness of the monthly Men's lunch.

Please pray for:

- The establishment of a Bible study group.

- Health and strength for the loyal but ageing workers.

- Wisdom in making decisions about the future.

15 July: Clermont and Capella

Clermont and Capella are mixed rural and mining towns with some tourism thrown in for good luck.

They are situated in Central Queensland about three hours south-west of Mackay and four and a half north-west of Rockhampton.

Unlike some other coal mining towns, they are both over 100 years old. Both congregations are small but both have a mix of ages.

They don't just say they are

friendly, they actually are.

Please pray for our community.

Give thanks for the coal mining boom that is bringing economic development to our towns.

The coal boom is making housing very expensive. For low and middle income earners it is prohibitive to rent or buy.

Some long term residents are being forced out by increases in rents. Pray for those who are feeling the squeeze. Pray for governments and mining companies to take low cost housing needs seriously.

Pray for Clermont as it deals with the impact of an old mine winding down and a new, larger mine being established.

Pray for Capella as the town prepares to celebrate the 125th anniversary of the school. The first schoolroom was the current and original church.

Pray for both towns as they face the uncertainties of shire amalgamations.

Give thanks for the great 2006 most farmers and graziers had and pray for those who missed out, and for rain for the winter crops.

Pray for the 'grey nomads' who visit on holiday and to prospect for gold and gemstones.

Please pray for our church and give thanks for the 125 years the Methodist and Uniting churches have witnessed in Capella.

Pray that both the Clermont and Capella congregations will get on with ministry and mission, and not be tied down by concerns about finances and possible lack of a Minister in the future.

Give thanks for and pray for fruit from our strong schools' ministry.

Pray for our Minister, Andrew Gillies, and his new wife Heather, as they seek to serve God by service to the church and community.

Pray for those who recently made a reaffirmation of faith in Clermont.



Br Ghislain brings Taizé to Brisbane. Photo by Mardi Lumsden

Pilgrimage Continues

By James Andrew

BR GHISLAIN, of the French ecumenical community of Taizé, will be visiting Brisbane from 23 to 27 July.

This visit is part of the latest stage of the 'Pilgrimage of Trust on Earth', initiated several years ago by the founder of the Taizé community, Br Roger.

Following the death of Br Roger in August 2005 the community of Taizé has not rested from its ecumenical mission.

This year, Br Ghislain will be leading discussions on the theme, 'choosing to love, choosing hope'.

Br Ghislain's visit has been organised by Queensland Churches Together.

Queensland Churches Together shares with Taizé a commitment to fostering understanding and solidarity between different Christian traditions.

Br Ghislain will be meeting students at three Brisbane secondary schools, Padua College, Cannon Hill Anglican College, and The Southport School.

He will also lead a public evening prayer service at the Cathedral of St Stephen on July 26, starting 7.30pm.

This is an ecumenical service, using the songs and prayers of the Taizé community, and all are welcome.

For more information on Prayer in the City, contact Br James Andrew on phone 07 3391 3915.

James Andrew is a Brisbane based member of an Anglican Franciscan community, the Society of St Francis

Centre for Theology & Ministry



Lay Education Adviser

The Uniting Church Centre for Theology and Ministry seeks a Lay Education Adviser to organize and provide lay education and training throughout the Synod, commencing Jan 1, 2008. The role will be responsible, among other things, for:

- Arranging training and continuing education for Lay Preachers
- Continuing education of Lay Pastors, Pastors and other lay leaders
- Oversight of people engaged in the Period of Discernment

Tertiary qualifications in theology and education are highly desirable in this role. The position will sit within the Discipleship Education unit of the CTM. The Position Description is available on request from: Heather Cameron, phone (03) 9340 8832 or email Heather.Cameron@ctm.uca.edu.au

Applications close July 16 2007

Centre for Theology & Ministry



Director of Discipleship Education

The Uniting Church Centre for Theology and Ministry seeks a Director of its Discipleship Education unit to manage and coordinate lay Christian education and congregational mission leadership across the Synod, commencing Jan 1, 2008. As well as having a significant staff management role (Youth, Family and Children's Ministries, Spiritual Advisor, Lay Education, NCYC09, Arts Development) the successful applicant will teach and offer resources in their own area of educational expertise. The role will, as part of the small CTM Executive, offer significant leadership in planning and implementing new directions in education for ministry in the Synod. The position requires tertiary qualifications in theology and similar qualifications in education are highly desirable.

The Position Description is available on request from: Heather Cameron, phone (03) 9340 8832 or email Heather.Cameron@ctm.uca.edu.au

Applications close July 16 2007

National Conference - 20-24 August

Hidden Histories: Untold Stories of the UCA

Celebrating 30 years of the Uniting Church

With Prof. Barbara Brown Zikmund, Theologian and Historian at the Uniting Church Centre for Ministry, North Parramatta

- * **Keynote presentations** on Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday
- * **Youth Forum - "Vision for the Future"** - Thursday morning
- * **An Evening with the UCA Former Presidents:** (Tuesday: \$10)
- * **Seminar Week Dinner:** Speaker: Rev. Gregor Henderson, President of the Uniting Church in Australia (Wednesday: \$40)
- * **Thatcher Lecture** at 7.30 pm on Thursday 23 August: "Radical Hospitality: A new vision of Christian unity."

Lectures & workshops daily: Stories from the history of the UCA, and issues for today's church

Costs: \$50 per day, \$150 for all sessions, 50% discount for unwaged and F/T Students, meals extra, accommodation available

Registrations & Enquiries to School of Continuing Education: 16 Masons Dr, North Parramatta 2151

email to sce@nsw.uca.org.au or phone 02 8838 8936

Seminar Week is an activity of the National Assembly Historical Reference Committee, United Theological College and the School of Continuing Education



Photo courtesy of www.innsida.no

Middle East peace builder visits Brisbane

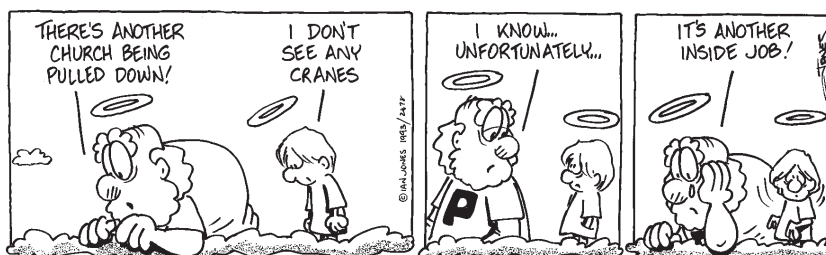
SYLVIA HADDAD (left), Executive Secretary of the Joint Christian Committee of Lebanon, is in Australia in July to speak at the National Council of Churches' 6th Nations Forum on the Sunshine Coast.

Her visit includes a stop in Brisbane on 17 July.

The Joint Christian Committee is one of five regional committees of the Department of Service to Palestinian Refugees of the Middle East Council of Churches; the others being Gaza, Jordan, Nazareth and the West Bank. They believe in empowering Palestinians, regardless of age or gender, with knowledge and skill leading to self reliance, to create in each person a provider for the family and community, and to preserve Palestinian identity, heritage and culture.

For more information visit the National Council of Churches Forum.

Visit www.ncca.org.au/about_us/national_forums/6th_national_forum



Having read *Journey's* 30th anniversary of Uniting Church edition, may I congratulate the church on its passion for Christ and his desire to see all people reconciled and recognised as those for whom he gave his life.

I started out wanting to say a big thank you to the *Journey* team for this edition, but the bigger picture just got in the way.

This is an edition which will be one of the many markers of those men and women who have been faithful to their Lord, and it is an example of the faithfulness that Jesus is seeking.

Thank you to *Journey*, the Moderator and all who are the Uniting Church in Australia.

George Nicholls
Cleveland

Foundational cracks?

I write to reflect on the 30th Anniversary of the UCA.

I was ordained a UCA Minister of the Word in 1979. I served in fifteen parishes for periods of nine years to a few months.

I am deeply grateful for that experience and some of the fine people I was able to serve in the work of the Gospel.

However, today, I look back with a profound sense of grief. I believe the UCA was a tragic mistake created by well meaning but self deceived church leaders.

The UCA was and is a tragic mistake because it was built on a rotten foundation; the rotten foundation being the *Basis of Union*.

The *Basis* is full of high sounding generalisations through which a coach and eight horses can be driven.

It could mean all things to all people; an umbrella under which narrow fundamentalists and free wheeling liberals could uneasily stand.

So, today, the chickens have come home to roost.

The UCA is not uniting but disintegrating. I blame the rotten foundation!

Rev Ray Lindenmayer
Manly

For some of us it has been a privilege to have experienced the leadership, the inspiration and the influence given by women ministers.

Some will agree that it is not how one is seen, it is "How Christ is seen...until I lose all sight of you and see the Christ in you".

I am sure that Jesus would still say to the women of today, "Come follow me"; the same as he had said to his disciples of old.

Embrace unity within the Uniting Church, continue to support women ministers who are already at work.

"The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few."

I find that women have more understanding when it comes to relating to women not only in this country, but also to women of other cultures and background.

The support given to the work of women in ministry in the Uniting Church will encourage the young women of tomorrow.

My own introductions to the life of the Presbyterian Church in Australia (then) and now with the Uniting Church has been with women friends.

It was through fellowship and sharing together I came to know others in the wider Church under the same banner of Christian love now, Uniting Church.

Mercy Dunn
Emu Park

Council amalgamation

I read with interest the small article in the *Sunday Mail* 20-5-07, titled "Church Joins Attack"

The church is not always innocent in these matters either but it is human and I, also being human, must forgive it.

I wonder if "attack" is the correct word.

Having a number of years in Victoria as a Uniting Church Minister in an area that was far more isolated than any I experienced in South West Queensland, I shared the pain of communities that faced an uncompromising government that amalgamated councils.

Communities predicted their own demise and gloom overwhelmed them.

The amalgamation of councils went ahead. Omeo Shire Council ceased to be and the Shire became part of a much larger one.

The Hospital was reduced in status and a Nursing Home was attached so aged people could continue to be close to their family and friends.

The hospital became an outpost of the Bairnsdale Hospital some 140 kilometres away down a winding road.

The Bairnsdale hospital enabled more effective attention to be given to people with special needs.

Instead of three men in a truck patching roads on a constant basis with a shovel full of tar and gravel, people came in with good expensive machinery, dug up the sagging portions of road and reset it with new strong foundations that would last.

Some of the worst road bends were improved and now, right over the range through Swifts Creek, Omeo and Mt. Hotham and down to Bright we have a road that does the Country proud...The Alpine Way!

What happened to the communities?

They found new and creative ways of being Community.

The towns freshened up and became more Tourist Friendly, had a far better self image resulting in a more inviting presentation to people coming through.

The pain passed, some recalled "the good old days" but most of those recollections belonged to years long before the changes that caused the Councils to be amalgamated.

I feel for communities facing amalgamation but plead for them to consider what has caused these changes.

If the Church is theologically alert surely it will point to the Resurrection Life for communities and that the best is yet to come.

Rev Ossie Kadel
Rothwell



Have your say

Letters to the editor may be edited due to space limitations.

Post:
Journey GPO Box 674
Brisbane 4001

Email:
journey@ucaqld.com.au

LETTERS

Advertising concern

I have hesitated to write to you about the advertisement for a meeting with Bishop Spong which appeared in the April edition of *Journey*.

However I am concerned that there must be a line within the policy of the paper and denomination beyond which it will not go, even though your policy states that 'advertising does not imply endorsement'.

Presumably you do have discretion as a publisher, and as such have responsibility for the influence that advertisements may have.

You will be aware that Bishop Spong denies the central articles of the faith, says that the incarnation is 'nonsense', that the resurrection of Jesus is fiction, that the Bible is propaganda, etc.

It seems sad to me that by advertising this meeting your paper

implicitly supports the breaking down of beliefs which Christians throughout the history of the Church have died for.

It seems to me that the influence of great Christians over the centuries, and the growth of the Church today, is directly related to belief in the historic orthodox Christian faith, not the revisionism espoused by Bishop Spong.

Blessings in your important ministry.

Bruce Morey
Highland Park

A copy of the *Journey* advertising policy is available at www.journeyonline.com.au.

The advertisement in question does not breach that policy nor does its inclusion in *Journey* imply any endorsement by the editor of *Journey* or the Uniting Church in Australia for Bishop Spong's opinions.

Editor.

Historically Speaking



THE CATHEDRAL WHICH NEVER WAS

It was to have seated 4,000, its Romanesque basilica dominating Brisbane's skyline. Inspired by a cathedral of the same name in Chicago, the Cathedral of the Holy Name had been the vision of Catholic Archbishop James Duhig.

The long-serving archbishop, known as James the Builder, laid the foundation stone of the cathedral in 1928. Such was his passion for the project, he was prepared to demolish his own residence, the imposing Dara, to ensure the realisation of his vision.

For many years, the city held its breath, awaiting word of the commencement of construction from within the sandstone walls. But in the late nineties, the site was sold for a multi-unit development.

All that remains of the vision are the architectural drawings for the cathedral that never was.

Alex Gow Funerals

A Brisbane-owned family business, established in 1840.

Phone 3852 1501

CLASSIFIEDS

ACCOMMODATION

Holiday unit, modern, pool, 100m from Kings Beach Caloundra from \$300/wk. Phone Ray 0427 990 161.

Fantastic location for beachfront holiday in charming cottage at Currumbin Beach, Qld. Ph 33764247.

Bribie Island Holiday Unit. Welsby Court No. 4, overlooking Bribie passage, 2 b'rm, LUG, reasonable rates. Frank & Elva Dixon Phone 07 3264 8080.

FOR SALE

L'Abri Christian Retreat, Tamborine Village for details ph Jo 55438856

POSITION VACANT

Youth Leader - Eastwood UC, Sydney - Full Time. For position description or further information email janelle_dodd@hotmail.com or call Janelle on 02 99807337.

Email your classified to
mardi.lumsden@ucaqld.com.au

JOURNEY asks...

Where did you find hope at the Synod?



Much of Synod had a very positive focus which gives hope for tolerance, understanding and compassion.
Angela Lester



From our current leadership and future leadership we have strong guidance for our church as we strive to continue to be a "Uniting" church.
Matt Gees



I found my call renewed at Synod.
Linda Hanson



I found hope in the knowledge that we are a multi-cultural church ... This no longer surprises us, it is accepted as a "given".
Rowena Harris



I found hope in the daily worship sessions.
Graham Jecard



I found hope in the stories about what is happening in churches and communities throughout Queensland.
Jenny Coombes



The mission of our church is alive and well. People are coming to acknowledge Jesus as Lord and some of our churches are growing - sometimes despite ourselves. That gives me hope.
Dave Thomas



This has been the best point of view - there have been at least 50 to 60 people speak.
Dennis Robinson



The Vision for Mission stories, the Bible Studies, the grace and humility shown by the Moderator, and the conversations, friendships made and stories shared.
Philipa Core



The venue was brilliant and the serving or food went like clockwork. The staff were friendly, cheerful and eager to help.
Robert Bos



I am excited by the work of Andrew Johnson as the Justice and International Mission Advocate, the work of the Vision for Mission Team and the initiatives of the YACMU team.
Glenys McKee



I found signs of hope in new initiatives in outreach to those "outside".
Brian Henman