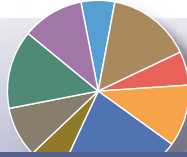




Challenge in
Chennai

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Director

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Thou shalt not Rev

By Bruce Mullan

WITH THE QUEENSLAND Road Toll for 2007 already a record at more than 200 deaths, groundbreaking research into the driving behaviour of 102 Uniting Church Ministers has reported they were involved in 32 crashes in the past two years.

The research conducted by the Centre of Philanthropy and Nonprofit Studies at the Queensland University of Technology (QUT) identified four problem driving behaviours for ministers including deliberate speeding, unintentional speeding, lack of concentration, and driving while tired.

QUT Postdoctoral Research Fellow Sharon Newman said inattentive driving behaviours included driving while thinking about how to get to the destination, driving while thinking about work-related problems, and driving while thinking about work tasks.

"Drivers most frequently report engaging in behaviours that result in a lack of concentration," she said.

Ministers who had reported one of the problem driving behaviours were more likely to report occasions when they had lost demerit points, and one-third of the ministers surveyed had lost demerit points during the past two years.

Ministers who drove while tired were also more likely to be involved in a rear end crash.

The research also found a significant relationship between the safety climate of a congregation and its minister's driving behaviours.

A minister who perceived that his or her congregation valued safety was less likely to engage in either intentional or unintentional speeding.

The researchers concluded that interventions aimed at improving the safety climate within the congregations could reduce both intentional and unintentional speeding.

More about road safety

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Sitting in the driving seat

I'VE DRIVEN from Brisbane to St George today.

There were quite a few dead kangaroos on the side of the road, and a disturbing number of crosses marking the spots where human deaths have occurred as the result of road accidents.

I don't know about you, but having acknowledged them as I drive past, the memory is soon relegated to the back of my mind.

There are, after all, many other things to see.

It's now 50 years since I received my first driving licence on the back of answering ten written questions in the local Police Station and no practical test of any kind.

I'm very grateful that in all that time I've never been involved in an accident.

Over the years I have been the subject of various derogatory comments from our children about being a bit of a "fuddy-duddy" when it comes to driving.

They also have had occasion to comment about my sometimes intemperate language in response to the recklessness of other drivers!

These days, driving is a risky business.

People are killed and injured in alarming numbers. Almost all these accidents are preventable.

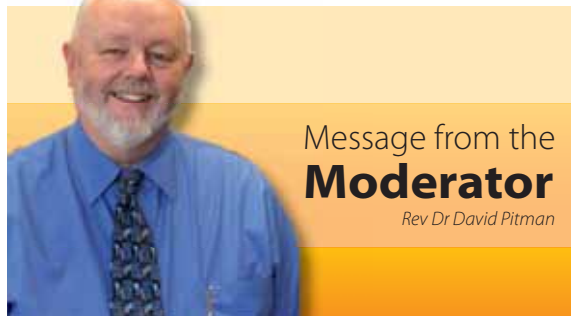
We know that speed and alcohol, along with inexperience and stupidity, are major contributors to our national road toll.

People being the way they are, the terrible images we see on our TV screens and the various educational campaigns advocating safe driving don't seem to make any difference.

Perhaps we think it could never happen to us.

Now, it's not surprising that we're going to look in vain for passages in the Bible that address issues of road safety in any overt way.

There's not even a verse or two about keeping your donkey or



Message from the Moderator

Rev Dr David Pitman

camel on the right side of the road (whatever side that may have been in biblical times), or speed limits for chariots.

I think the road rules then were mostly determined by how much

as to other aspects of life.

God loves every person and every person is precious.

Any action of ours that threatens the life or wellbeing of another person is to be abhorred and avoided.

Motor vehicles are potentially lethal weapons. We have to drive accordingly.

It must be an awful thing to live with the memory of being responsible for the death or injury of another person or persons.

Respect for life tells us to be responsible, to slow down and take care.

Secondly, we must not overlook the fact that the way we drive is one aspect of our Christian witness to those around us.

Whether or not other people are aware that our courtesy and care are an expression of our faith is irrelevant. We know and God knows!

This is yet another way in which we build consistency in our lives between what we say and how we behave.

The anger that so often boils over in exchanges between impatient and inconsiderate drivers has no place in the actions of those called to evidence the fruits of the Spirit in every area of their daily lives.

Being a careful and considerate driver is not especially difficult.

It represents a key dimension of responsible citizenship and it is what God expects!

“Whether or not other people are aware that our courtesy and care is an expression of our faith is irrelevant. We know and God knows!”

bigger or more important you were.

However, we should not be surprised by the fact that there is a great deal in scripture to inform and challenge us about our behaviour on the road.

Firstly, there is the principle of respect for life, especially the lives of other human beings. It is just as relevant in relation to our driving

From the Editor

WWJD – a quick Google search for the phrase “What would Jesus drive?” gave 63 500 hits.

This has been a hot topic around eco-Christian circles as people argue for hybrids, diesel or small economy vehicles and a lively debate is still raging.

Some cheekily propose that Jesus would drive a Honda citing John 12:49 – “For I did not speak of my own Accord...”

But while working on this edition of *Journey* the question occupying my theological musings has been, “How would Jesus drive?”

Would Jesus ever be caught speeding, lacking concentration, driving tired to his next important appointment, or even copping a parking ticket?

During my motor-car-obsessed youth I had plenty of preachers and youth leaders warn me of the dangers of smoking, alcohol, dancing and even, sometimes, sexual promiscuity.

No one ever suggested that as a young adult I should see my driving behaviour, one of my most potentially lethal behaviours, as a key aspect of my Christian discipleship.

And no one has said much about it since.

So, why do Christians (and not just ministers) drive so badly? How could we begin to develop some accountability among our faith communities for the way we conduct ourselves as road users?

There is no excuse for the kind of “road-rage” feelings I direct towards others when my driver frustrations boil over because of their stupidity or just because I am running late.

Nor is there any excuse for speeding – either intentional or otherwise. How can we justify breaking this particular law of the land when we are so fastidious about keeping others?

I have been reflecting as we prepared this issue of *Journey* on how I might drive if Jesus was a passenger in my car or one of the other drivers with whom I share the road.

Would my driving behaviour be any different were that the case?

But it is the case.

To extrapolate Matthew 25 – “I was a passenger and you put my life at risk...”

And then another thought crossed my mind... “Would Jesus drive?”

Bruce Mullan

PS In the September issue of *Journey* our theme is Evangelism but we will also turn our attention to the visit of Bishop John Shelby Spong and ask how far has he wandered from theological orthodoxy.

Sign of the Times



YOU DON'T choose to be affected by Breast Cancer, but you do have “Choices”.

Wesley Hospital's Kim Walters Choices Program (Choices) is a free community service that supports women and men diagnosed with breast cancer, and their families, regardless of where treatment has been undertaken.

The Choices program offers support, information, programs and counselling.

The Wesley Hospital is part of the UnitingCare Health network of services and employs over 1 900 full-time, part-time and casual staff, and serves more than 75 000 people each year.

Choices is funded through a community fundraising campaign “Think Pink” which is organised and coordinated by the Wesley Hospital marketing team.

You can read the story of Kim Walters at www.uhc.com.au/choices

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Church numbers are down - spirits are up

By Bruce Mullan

MEDIA DOOMSAYERS have been quick to highlight the 2006 Census data showing a significant decline nationally in those who listed their religious affiliation as Uniting Church (down by 15% to 1.1 million since the Census of 1996).

The data for Queensland was more encouraging and showed less than 8% decline (to 282 103).

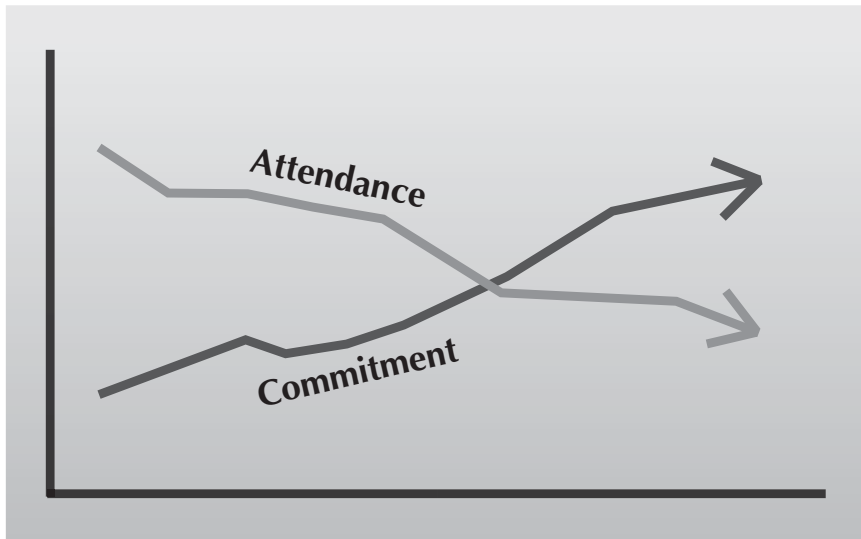
While the *Sunday Mail* was quick to stereotype Uniting Church members as silver-haired octogenarians, the Census figures do not indicate the numbers of people who actually attend Uniting Church services of worship, or what proportion of those who identify the Uniting Church as their religious affiliation are merely "nominal".

Synod Mission Consultant Rev Dr Graham Beattie believes that the figures from the National Church Life Survey (NCLS) also held in the second half of 2006 may be more comprehensive and helpful.

For Uniting Church congregations in Queensland the 2006 NCLS data indicated an increase in the proportion of attendees who reported a growth in faith over the past year, with one-half of all attendees reporting God as the most important reality in their life.

"The interesting feature is that 42% of respondents indicated one or more specific moments of faith commitment (up from 29% in 2001)," Dr Beattie said.

"Across the Uniting Church nationally we are seeing a rising recognition of personal faith as a decisive moment, with this trend heightened in Queensland."



An increase in the percentage of people attending a small study or prayer group was also reported as was their awareness and commitment to the vision, goals and directions of their church.

Queensland Uniting Church attendees involved regularly in community service, social justice or welfare activities connected to their congregation also increased since the previous NCLS research undertaken five years earlier.

Dr Beattie said the average age of Queensland Uniting Church attendees had increased but only by two years over the five year period, and 97% give financial support to their congregation.

"In fact, 18% of Uniting Church attendees in Queensland are regularly giving 10% or more of their net income," Dr Beattie said.

"Uniting Church attendees in Queensland also reported attending church more frequently than they had 12 months earlier; one fifth say

their attendance patterns are more regular than previously."

Moderator of the Queensland Synod Rev Dr David Pitman said that the Uniting Church did have many relatively small and ageing congregations and that there was an increasing number of growing congregations.

"The decline in numbers in some ways is an indication that people who belong to a church now are committed."

Dr Pitman reported that the Uniting Church in Queensland is experiencing a resurgence in the number of people training for one of the specified ministries of the church.

There are currently 31 Candidates for the various ministries of the church undertaking their preparation and training for ministry through Trinity Theological College.

Over 400 000 church attendees from 6 000 local churches over

more than 22 denominations were surveyed in detail about the health and vitality of their churches.

NCLS Research Director Keith Castle said the church in Australia may be moving beyond the sense of despair that has permeated its life (particularly in the mainstream churches) for possibly two decades.

"I see glimpses of a new determination to present the gospel of Jesus Christ in creative and relevant ways in this complex society in which we live."

Dr Beattie agreed. "While there are concerns around age and decline, the church's strong faith base, spiritual experience and devotional practice do provide the basis under sensitive, Spirit-directed leadership for outward focused growth and mission."

Kirk to lead Downs Presbytery

SECRETARY OF the Presbytery of Central Queensland Mrs Sharon Kirk has been appointed to replace Rev Evan Stenlake as Presbytery Minister of the Presbytery of the Downs.

Mrs Kirk who has a background and training in education will provide spiritual leadership for the congregations in the region, many of which are led by Lay Ministry Teams.

Expressing a clear call to offer leadership in the Uniting Church as a lay person, Mrs Kirk said that the breadth of theological thought within the Uniting Church is a gift from God.

"I believe the Uniting Church's ability to work within the tensions is the Uniting Church's gift to the world - our unity in Christ Jesus."

Mrs Kirk said unity was the basis on which dialogue with other denominations took place.

"In order to do this well we must first embrace the diversity of theological thought and position in our own denomination."

Coordinator for the Trinity College Regional Campus in Central Queensland, Mrs Kirk is married to David and is a keen gardener with a passion for wildlife.

New Director builds faith foundations

FORMER COORDINATOR of Pastoral Care and Counselling Services at St. Andrew's War Memorial Hospital Rev Robyn Kidd has been appointed as Director of Mission for UnitingCare and UnitingCare Health.

Ms Kidd will be responsible for ensuring that the work of UnitingCare Health reflects the faith foundations and mission of the Uniting Church in Australia.

For Ms Kidd this means lots of conversations with CEOs, executive teams, and also conversations with those who deliver outstanding healthcare services on behalf of the Uniting Church.

UnitingCare Health was formed in June 2000 to bring together into one organisation the various hospitals operated by the Uniting Church in Queensland.

Uniting Church hospitals are Wesley and St Andrew's in Brisbane, St Stephen's Private



Director of Mission for UnitingCare and UnitingCare Health
Rev Robyn Kidd

Hospital in Maryborough and Hervey Bay, and the Sunshine Coast Private Hospital.

Uniting Church hospitals employ over 3 200 people and treat around 100 000 patients each year.

"One of my goals is to strengthen the sense of mission within our

agencies and to express this to the wider church," Ms Kidd said.

Ms Kidd's seven and a half years at St Andrew's has given her extensive experience in ethics, the psychosocial impacts of healthcare projects, education, risk and quality management, and the challenge of raising the profile of pastoral care in the Church's hospitals.

Current projects occupying Ms Kidd's time include developing shared values across UnitingCare, and work on the ethics and theology of termination of pregnancy.

Ms Kidd will continue to build relationships with hospitals in the Pacific and provide orientation to the Uniting Church for executive level staff.

"I am passionate about the Uniting Church, and I have a strong heart for listening to the stories of the people served through our hospitals and agencies, and therein discover the Christ already present."

Elizabeth Danes Customer Service Officer

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Sue and Alan Pickering with children in Tiruttani. Photo courtesy of Sue Pickering

Challenged and moved in Chennai

By Mardi Lumsden

THE CULTURE shock hit hard when Deacon Candidate Sue Pickering and family packed up in May and headed to Chennai, India, for five weeks to work with the Church of South India.

Ms Pickering said she, her husband Alan and two teenage daughters, Abbie and Mollie, first had to adjust to the heat, food, overwhelming hospitality and the extreme juxtaposition of wealth and poverty.

"As we have been driving around we have seen so much poverty, it has been very challenging," said Ms Pickering in her email update.

"We drove through an organised slum area that was set up after the Tsunami and it is hard to take in that people have to live in these conditions in the 21st century.

"While I have always known that is the case, it is very different to drive down the very streets in which people live. My mind is in overdrive thinking of the issues faced by people living in Chennai.

"The children are beautiful and we had one girl just come up to us in the street look at us and say hello before running off.

"People are so friendly and will always greet you.

"The hospitality is amazing. Today at the women's centre there were some street kids who performed a song and dance for us, then some young women sang then finally some older women danced.

"It was all beautiful but challenging too because we were sat in chairs in front of the people as honoured guests which is a world away from what we are used to."

Ms Pickering worked at a centre for women, while Alan helped at a technical college teaching trade skills.

Mollie and Abbie participated in a Bridge course and enjoyed singing with the children and helping them develop English conversation skills.

In their spare time the family visited hospitals, orphanages, churches and countless villages around Chennai.

While the trip seems to have challenged and moved the family deeply, Ms Pickering said the hardest thing was preparing to leave.

"Our short encounter here has been deeply carved in my heart and mind.

"I think that we are now heading into what is possibly the hardest phase of this experience - there is a sense of grief and loss with the knowledge that we are preparing to return to a culture that is a million miles from India."

Ms Pickering and family are now back in Australia going about their daily life with their eyes opened to life outside that which they knew before.

For this family, life will never be the same.

Getting set for schoolies in Fiji

By Mardi Lumsden

THIS WILL be the seventh year Broadwater Road youth worker Louise Edwards has taken a group of school leavers to Fiji and for her the experience is one of going home.

"As I am on the boat when Taveuni is in sight, for me it is like going home and visiting my family," she said.

"As much as I feel like that, the participants also feel like that very quickly.

"With the hospitality that is shown to us, the young people who come on the trip feel like that as well."

The two week Fiji trip is an alternative to schoolies week celebrations along the coasts and Ms Edwards said it is a great

environment in which to celebrate the end of high school.

"For me it is about giving young people an alternative to schoolies but within that exposing them to other cultures.

"It's also about living, connecting and journeying with the locals and sharing in their lives.

"If young people want to do something different from going to the coast, then going to Fiji is an experience that will challenge them and make a difference in their lives as well as in the lives of the people they meet."

Ms Edwards said the trip doesn't just expose the schoolies to new cultures but villagers also.

She said for some children her initial visit was the first time they had seen white people.

"The last couple of years we have taken books to the school.

"It has exposed them to our culture as well.

"It is the sharing of the cultures. They will ask about Australia and the church and our family and culture."

This year the aim is to take a second-hand laptop computer to donate to the minister to assist in his work and also for the children to learn computer skills.

If anyone has a laptop they would like to donate please contact Louise on the details below.

The trip is expected to cost around \$1495 which covers everything except personal spending money.

For more information go to www.yacmu.com.au or email Louise Edwards on edwardslj@hotmail.com



Youth Worker Louise Edwards with some of her extended family on the Fijian island of Taveuni. Photo courtesy of Andrew Johnson



McKay Patrol minister Rev Garry Hardingham with his beloved plane.

Photo by Bruce Mullan

Credit Union's rescue flight

THE MCKAY Patrol has been awarded a Queensland Country Credit Union Community Grant to the value of \$10 000.

The Queensland Country Credit Union, which started in Mt Isa, has given the money to help support the Patrol, mostly assisting with aircraft repairs and maintenance.

North Queensland Presbytery Chairperson Rev Bruce Cornish said the grant is much appreciated and will benefit the rural and remote communities serviced by

the McKay Patrol aircraft and minister Rev Garry Hardingham.

"The Presbytery and especially the people in Western Queensland are very grateful for the grant from the QCCU which has continued to support the western area as one of the financial institutions that has stayed," said Mr Cornish.

"This assistance is very welcome and comes at just the right time to keep our noses above water and keep Garry flying for a bit longer."

Mardi Lumsden

Boy from the bush goes to Uganda

By Matt Gees

DAVID BIRCH is your typical 16-year-old country boy growing up on a farm in Corndale, just out of Kingaroy.

But this November he will do something extraordinary with his life in helping to build homes for up to 24 orphans in Uganda, Africa.

"I've always wanted to help people less privileged than myself, not just physically but spiritually as well," David said.

"When I was at a youth conference in January, there was an opportunity to go on a trip like this to Africa. That one unfortunately

fell through, however my minister John Selwood knew of a trip that was going from Brisbane."

Project coordinator and Bayside Uniting Church Youth Worker Tim Griggs is excited about the project and how it came about.

"At the time our youth group was looking at ways that we could look outside our own comfort zone and our own area to make an impact in the world and, at that time, the Watoto Children's Choir from Uganda come to the Bayside Churches.

"We were just so inspired by their smiles and their laughter that we investigated a little further about what we could do to help out.

"We decided that instead of just giving money, we'd actually go across there and help them out with the building project."

David speaks with passion and conviction far beyond his 16 years and is excited about the possibilities of serving God in this way.

"It's been great to see all through this how God's hand has been on it and has been able to guide me through."

He's also surprised at the reaction he gets from his community and school about the trip away.

"I tell people and they just get really excited and they think it's a great idea and say that they want to go."



David Birch, on the way from Kingaroy to Uganda



Pacific PeaceBuilding Initiatives Director Rev Ian Stehbins (left) met with former President of Indonesia Megawati Soekarnoputri. Photo courtesy of PPBI Ltd

Council hear of Palestinian struggle

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY of the Joint Christian Committee (JCC) for Social Service in Lebanon Sylvia Haddad visited Brisbane recently as part of the National Council of Churches Australia national forum.

The forum, held at the Sunshine Coast in July, was a gathering of around 110 people consisting of national leaders and representatives from 15 member Churches.

NCCA General Secretary Rev

John Henderson said the forum set the Council's objectives for the next three years.

"This Forum is a chance for churches to grow in understanding each other and working together in our Australian society," he said

Ms Haddad spoke of her work in Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon and thanked NCCA and Christian World Service for the financial assistance provided by events like the Christmas Bowl Appeal.

Ms Haddad said when Palestinians first entered the camps in the 1940s 90% were educated.

These days many are illiterate so the JCC focuses on educating and training young people through a school within one of the 12 camps, and training classes in trades and services such as hair dressing.

"All this would not have been possible if the churches did not help us in our work because our financial and our moral support really comes from the churches," she said.

"It is really important that we keep a Christian presence in the camps so that we can show our faith in the Lord Jesus through our work."



Sylvia Haddad.
Photo by Mardi Lumsden

Finding peace among the pieces in Bali

By Bruce Mullan

TERRORIST BOMBS tore the heart out of Bali in 2002 but, on the insistence of two Balinese Christians who had attended Pacific PeaceBuilding Initiatives training (PPBI), the Protestant Church in Bali (GKPB) decided to change its own sense of identity.

Bali could not "forgive and forget".

It was psychologically impossible, sociologically dangerous, and it is not the way of Christ.

Rather it could remember its deep experience of pain and so choose to forgive. "We forgive because we can't forget!"

More delegates were trained in peace building by PPBI and when the second assault of terrorism exploded on Jimbaran Beach and in Raja Restaurant in 2005, the Bali Church had the resources and commitment to respond.

PPBI's CEO Rev Ian Stehbins said instead of being a persecuted church bearing a deep new wound, it embarked on becoming a healed church that would bless the nation and give public leadership.

In a program partly sponsored by the 2006 Queensland Synod Lent Appeal Offering, a PPBI team

worked with Balinese religious leaders from various faiths.

Some Bali authorities doubted the conference would last more than two days but the Hindus, Muslims, Buddhists, Catholics and Protestants worked together for the planned two weeks, without discord.

Mr Stehbins described it as a "miracle".

"Not only did they remain together, but when it came to making plans for the future, each regional group made constructive plans to work together to build peace."

Mr Stehbins said the Bali course was held in conjunction with a national consultation.

A former Vice President of the Republic of Indonesia attended as did former President Megawati Soekarnoputri.

Top level contacts between some of these leaders and PPBI indicated that Indonesian leaders want to develop a relationship with PPBI to continue work on a wider scale beyond Bali.

Grateful for the Lenten Appeal support for the work of peace building over recent years, Mr Stehbins said the downstream

effects of the Bali course were continuing to provide national leadership for peace building in Indonesia.

"The challenge will be to provide the resources, including human and financial, to meet this request from the top level in Indonesia."



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Driving under influence

Synod Workplace Health and Safety Advisor Ms Charlotte Tyrrell said driving behaviour of ministers and other church employees was both a safety and financial concern for the church.

Ms Tyrrell and the QUT research team are undertaking a process of consultation with presbyteries to develop proactive strategies and to foster a safety culture among ministers and church leaders.

"Ministers can have tight deadlines when driving between Sunday morning services in different locations and congregation members need to be aware that if ministers are late because they are choosing to drive safely that should be affirmed," Ms Tyrrell said.

"Ministers generally do not consider driving between appointments as work."

Ms Newman said road crashes have become the most common form of work-related injury, death, and absence from work in Australia.

"Road safety should be an important concern for all organisations where employees are engaged in work-related driving."

A similar study was also conducted with a sample of over 600 Blue Care staff across the South-East corner of the state.

Blue Care has more than 1 400 fleet vehicles, which travel more than 2 000 000 kilometres every year - the equivalent of driving around Australia's 25 760 kilometre coastline approximately 77 times.

The research results indicated that improving the safety climate of Blue Care could reduce excessive and unintentional driving speeds, improve concentration and reduce tiredness while driving.

The three-year study aims to develop a model of the factors influencing the safety of drivers in nonprofit organisations and to design and implement fleet safety procedures.

"It is expected that the results of the study will reduce the economic and social impact of work-related driving crashes and improve the safety of employed and volunteer drivers within the Uniting Church," Ms Newman said.

Synod Vision for Mission Advocate Rev Duncan Macleod has a personal investment in road safety. His 18 month old daughter was hit by a car and killed in 1992. The driver was traveling at ten kilometres over the speed limit.

IT'S DIFFICULT to watch some of the commercials that show similar scenarios. The agony is all too familiar.

But they remind me of the potential I have as a driver to be part of someone else's nightmare.

I believe road safety TV ads are only as effective as the conversations they start.

In Australia, state governments are pouring millions of dollars into telling stories that encourage drivers to consider the impact of their driving habits, speed, alcohol consumption, and use of mobile phones.

Those stories provide us with opportunities for keeping each other accountable for how we drive.

Queensland Transport has led the way in advertising campaigns

that demonstrate the grim reality of speed-related accidents.

A man and his son speed through their suburb to get their gas bottle refilled in time for a barbecue. Tragically the car hits a woman pushing a pram.

A woman and her son are delayed by a spillage in the supermarket car park. As she speeds to pick up her son from soccer, she hits a teenage girl crossing the road.

Victoria's Transport Accident Commission has encouraged motorists to consider the difference five kilometres over the speed limit

will make to road safety.

A television advertisement featuring Professor Ian Johnston from Monash University's Accident Research Centre shows viewers, in slow motion, just how hard it is to stop in time.

In New South Wales, the Road and Traffic Authority aims to change young driver behaviour by making speeding socially unacceptable.

Their research suggests that young drivers in 2007 are increasingly desensitised to the images associated with shock-horror campaigns.

The first TV ad in the RTA campaign shows a young man speeding through a built up area, hoping to impress his mates.

Two young women on the pavement wave their little fingers indicating their estimation of the size of his private parts.

The gesture is repeated by an older woman when the young man almost hits a pedestrian on a crossing.

The young man finally realises he's blown it when his back seat passengers wave their pinkies.

It takes a village to raise a child. It takes a community to educate, mentor, and shape the way we drive.

Duncan Macleod reviews television advertisements, including these campaigns, at Duncan's TV Ad Land, www.duncans.tv



Young women in a TV advertisement indicate what they think of a dangerous driver. Photo courtesy of the New South Wales the Road and Traffic Authority

Faith emergency

By Mardi Lumsden

IMAGES OF car accidents on television or in news papers can be a harrowing sight.

Sometimes these images make people reassess their faith and try to find where God is in such a devastating event.

But there are those people who don't just watch from afar.

Police officers, paramedics, nurses and many more see firsthand the damage caused by accidents on our roads.

Sometimes, as Christians, this makes them question their faith and sometimes it makes it stronger.

Bulimba Uniting Church minister Rev Bruce Raymond was a Police Officer for 32 years before training to be a minister.

He has been called out to and investigated countless serious traffic incidents, and the thing that struck him many times was split second decisions that can change a life.

"It all happened so quick. That's the comment I would invariably hear from those involved in any serious traffic incident I investigated.

"The change of state from normalcy and safe cruising in a motor vehicle to smouldering wreckage and life altering pain and suffering is a case of only micro-seconds," he said.

"With my accident investigations, I often wondered about the acute unpredictability of this drama and what we can do to offset it."

Pat Imhoff is a prison chaplain and has seen some hard things in her time, but it is the experiences of her husband Bob that she reflected on.

Bob Imhoff has been an Ambulance Officer for 33 years and has struggled over that time with issues of faith when faced with the day-to-day trauma of his profession.

"His daily contact with suffering, trauma and death, plus the lighter side of delivering babies (helping the miracle of new life come into the world) caused him to search for answers to the hard questions of, 'Where is God in all of this?' and 'Where does my responsibility end and God's begin?'," said Mrs Imhoff.

"He has come to a strong faith in God on whom he relies moment by moment for strength,

wisdom, safety, peace, joy, and most important of all, love, to minister to people going through these situations.

"He feels humbled and somewhat awed by the responsibility, but knows that it is in God's power that he works.

"He brings such compassion and peace into situations of panic and chaos.

"He may not be an ordained minister, but his ministry is a vital one in our district and within the wider field of touching his fellow officers, his own staff, and senior management."

Mr Raymond said sometimes no one can escape a road accident, no matter who you are.

"Statistically, we can play with the figures and convince ourselves the odds are in our favour.

"But in the movement of vehicular traffic, no matter what we might wish to do avoiding an accident in those tiny critical units of time, there comes a point of no return.

"The course is set, no matter how alert or well prepared, or even how innocent we might be," he said.

"We travel on our roadways under God's protection. Each and every time we arrive safely at our destination, we do so solely by God's mercy.

"Most times I remember that, and give him thanks. Not always, I must confess, but most times."



Former Police Officer Rev Bruce Raymond. Photo by Osker Lau

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Addressing the need for speed

By Bruce Mullan

IN A SOCIETY bereft of community "rites of passage", young males in particular see gaining a drivers licence and owning a motor vehicle as a mark of the transition from boyhood to manhood.

Owning and driving a car is one of the clearest means of achieving power through independence from the family, and young males demonstrate substantially higher rates of minor accidents, crashes resulting in injuries, and fatal accidents.

In many cultures courage and a willingness to take risks in the face of danger is a requirement of manhood but in Australian society it often takes the lethal form of dangerous driving as young men not only accept the risks of driving, but also seek them out.

When a group of adolescent friends meet together in a car, the elation of the peer group combined with the quest for danger can quickly lead to reckless driving.

The question, "How fast can this machine go?" urges the driver to show off, overtake dangerously or exceed a safe speed round the next bend.

Consequently motor vehicle death rates for under-25s are double those of older drivers and the more young passengers the young driver carries the greater the probability of an accident.



Despite their self-perceptions, young men have below-average driving skill but, as for all motorists, the main problem is not so much the lack of skill as over-confidence, distraction, competitiveness, showing off, aggression, drugs, alcohol and fatigue.

For parents and congregation members keen to exercise their

Christian social responsibility for the driving and safety culture in which their young men grow up, the problems are complex but not insurmountable.

Bayside Uniting Church Youth Worker Tim Griggs knows first hand how important this is and is working to make a difference.

After a late night accident

involving young people from his youth group, his congregation has some clear policies regarding their youth activities and road safety.

"We have a policy that you have to have an open licence for two years before you are allowed to drive other youth group members on an outing or event.

"If we're going on an excursion I'll have a list of who is in each car and who is the driver of that car and we get all the kids together.

"We also have a prayer before we go and say a few short words

about respect for the driver and the driver's concentration."

Mr Griggs said the majority of young people in his youth group are approaching the age when they would be going for their driver's licences and it is time to consider doing something intentional about driver safety education.

Congregations cannot wave a magic wand to make young drivers safer overnight and there are no short cuts to experience, but there are steps that can be taken to reduce the risks associated with young people's driving behaviour.

Road Rules Quiz

www.transport.qld.gov.au
Answers Page 8

1. What does a sign that says FORD mean?
2. In Queensland, what is the maximum speed in a built up area?
3. When can you use the horn?

4. Can you perform a U-turn at traffic lights if there is no signage excluding it?
5. What should you do if someone riding a horse raises their hand and points at the animal?
6. When can you drive a car in a bicycle lane?
7. When can you drive without wearing a seatbelt?
8. How far in front of you does another vehicle need to be before can you put high beam on?
9. When can a learner driver under the age of 25 use a mobile phone?
10. Are you an organ donor if you once ticked 'yes' on your licence application?

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The mourning make their own memorial memories

By Bruce Mullan

ALONG THE margins of our highways white crosses, trinkets and flowers have become shrines to those who have tragically lost their lives in motor vehicle accidents.

They range from simple to ornate and are the public symbols of the personal grief and anguish of those who mourn and look for an explanation.

Another sign of the changing spiritual context in which we live, these roadside markers often use religious symbols which may not necessarily be connected with Christian faith.

University of New England academics Lecturer in the School of Classics, History and Religion Dr Jennifer Clark and Professor of Studies in Religion Majella Franzmann suggest that the existence of roadside memorials indicate that people are not satisfied by cemeteries or crematoriums as a focal point for their personal mourning.

They suggest that for many, the place of death holds a stronger spiritual connection with those they have lost than the place of final rest of the body.

Dr Clark told ABC Radio's *Compass* program that most highways are littered with crash debris.

"One of the interesting things I have found in photographing roadside memorials is that, when I get out of the car and quickly

hurry down the highway and try to keep out of the road of the trucks, I crunch debris related to car crashes – bits of hardened tyre, bits of Perspex, glass, number plate holders, all kinds of road debris.

"And although road death has been so common, it is only with roadside memorials that we are beginning slowly to understand the impact of road death, and to see the connection between the road and death."

Dr Clark said the tragedy of road trauma is that it has traditionally been an invisible death.

"People who died on the road, and you must remember that more people have died on Australian roads than have ever died at war, were always just seen as a statistic."

Journey spoke with a number of Uniting Church ministers about roadside memorials and heard that some who place flowers or symbols are partly creating a warning for others that this is a potentially dangerous location.

South East Uniting Community minister Peter Smale spoke of the death of a student outside a school and why the school community

had established a memorial at that place.

"There were two reasons: one was to remember the child who was killed, and the other was as a warning to parents and other drivers that this was a dangerous place."

Although some local government authorities prohibit or restrict roadside memorials, estimates suggest that around 20 percent of road fatalities are now marked in some way, turning highways into sacred spaces by the families and loved ones who use them to both

express their grief and to maintain a connection with the deceased.

Professor Franzmann points out that roadside memorials are not blessed by any church but are people establishing their own sacred space in a public place.

"They take that authority to make something sacred themselves where normally that would require some kind of church ritual or blessing," he said.

Dr Clark said the use of the cross as a symbol in roadside memorials is not necessarily Christian.

"For many people the cross is nothing more than a symbol of death and we have to recognise that there are not necessarily people putting up crosses to make a Christian statement.

"On the other hand, there are cases where the cross was particularly chosen to make a statement of Christian forgiveness towards the person who had caused the crash, where the victim had actually died."

Roadside memorials are yet another example of spirituality beyond established religion.

As Dr Clark and Professor Franzmann suggest, "Their existence and tacit approval from the public suggests that as a community we are searching for more meaningful ways than those provided by institutional religion to express our spiritual selves when we are most vulnerable."



A roadside memorial on the Moonie Highway between Dalby and St George. Photo by Bruce Mullan

Pray and stay alive

IN EARLY 1985 the news that a carload of Uniting Church young people were killed in a road accident on their way home from a youth event sent shock waves throughout the Uniting Church in Queensland.

Rev Dr Lew Born, who ran the YAF rallies at the time, decided

to organise a rally in Brisbane City's King George Square to raise awareness of the need for young and old to be careful on the roads.

Launched in a car wrecking yard, the campaign was called "Pray and Stay Alive in 1985" and an all night prayer vigil was held on the Wednesday night before Easter.

"We made the appeal a couple of months before to Pray and Stay Alive," said Dr Born.

"The publicity officer that came to see me about it was offended and wanted to have a lot of theological arguments about 'do you mean to say that as long as you pray you

won't have an accident on the road?'

"It was a very simplistic attitude to prayer.

"Our attitude was to mount this campaign for all the benefits of prayer, namely an implicit expression that we can not do this ourselves (we need some help please) and raising the consciousness level to the need to those who would pray, for the same reason which motivates a heightened sense of responsibility to drive carefully ourselves."

Around 2 000 people filled King George Square for the vigil.

Among those who attended was the then Premier Jo Bjelke-Petersen.

Asked if he thought the campaign was a success, Dr Born said raising awareness of the issue was just as important as the statistics.

"Apparently the numbers went up, but we don't know what would have happened if some people weren't praying and being a bit more careful on the roads themselves."

Then a Regional Education Officer for the West Moreton Presbytery, Bruce Mullan said he was much more conscious of his

driving behaviour when he had the "Pray and Stay Alive" sticker on his car.

22 years later Dr Born said perhaps it is time to reignite the campaign and once again raise awareness of road safety, especially among young people.

"I believe a whole world called to prayer about our courtesy on the roads and consideration for others would be worth the effort."

By Mardi Lumsden

Thou shalt not drive badly

THE VATICAN has issued "Ten Commandments" for motorists to help them avoid road rage, to make sure their vehicles are safe, and to ensure they do not put other road users' lives at risk.

"Unbalanced behaviour varies according to individuals and circumstances, and may include impoliteness, rude gestures, cursing, blasphemy, loss of sense of responsibility, or deliberate infringement of the Highway Code," said the document entitled *Guidelines for the Pastoral Care of the Road*.

"For some drivers, the unbalanced behaviour is expressed in insignificant ways, whilst in others it may produce serious

excesses that depend on character, level of education, an incapacity for self-control and the lack of a sense of responsibility," the guidelines note.

The document also records that during the 20th century approximately 35 million people lost their lives in road accidents, whilst around one and a half billion were injured.

In 2000, there were 1 260 000 road deaths worldwide, the guidelines explain, and about 90 per cent of accidents were due to human error.

The exercise of charity by drivers has a "dual" dimension, says the pontifical council: "The first regards looking after one's vehicle, which

means making sure that it is safe from a technical point of view, so as not to knowingly put one's own or other people's lives at risk."

The second dimension is about the "love of travellers whose lives should not be endangered by incorrect and careless manoeuvres that may cause harm to both passengers and pedestrians".

Good drivers, the guidelines say, "courteously give way to pedestrians, are not offended when overtaken, allow someone who wishes to drive faster to pass and do not seek revenge".

The Vatican's "Ten Commandments" for motorists:

I. You shall not kill.

II. The road shall be for you a means of communion between people and not of mortal harm.

III. Courtesy, uprightness and

prudence will help you deal with unforeseen events.

IV. Be charitable and help your neighbour in need, especially victims of accidents.

V. Cars shall not be for you an expression of power and domination, and an occasion of sin.

VI. Charitably convince the young and not so young not to drive when they are not in a fitting condition to do so.

VII. Support the families of accident victims.

VIII. Bring guilty motorists and their victims together, at the appropriate time, so that they can undergo the liberating experience of forgiveness.

IX. On the road, protect the more vulnerable party.

X. Feel responsible towards others.

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loudspeaker 10. No. You must now
banned from using mobiles on
Passengers or supervisors are also
9. They can't not even hands free.
wearing a seatbelt. 8. 200 metres.
stating medical reasons for not
or if you have a medical certificate
goods (driving less than 25 km/h).
vehicle while engaged in delivery of
required to get in and out of the
7. When reversing, driving a taxi,
traffic from the side of the road,
or enter a marked lane or line of
right from the centre of the road
overtake a vehicle that is turning
When you enter or leave a road,
will further upset the horse. 6.
noise or movement of your vehicle
no reasonable chance that engine
engine. Stay there until there is
side of the road and turn off the
You must give way, drive to the
is a U-turns Permitted sign. 5.
approach. 4. No. Only when there
3. Only to warn others of your
hour unless signed otherwise.
1. Water flows across road 2. 50km/h
Road Rules Quiz answers

ANNUAL REPORT 2006



The Uniting Church in Australia Queensland Synod



When I read this Annual Report I am immediately impressed by the wide range of situations and initiatives described in it. It has been my privilege to witness many of them personally during my time as Moderator. Nonetheless, there is something special about collecting all these reflections and stories together in this way.

During our recent Synod we had the opportunity yet again to listen to stories about ministry and mission from many different places. We are invariably encouraged and inspired by what people are doing in the life of the church as they share the love and grace of God with others.

This report reminds us that we are a worshipping, witnessing and serving church. It reminds us that God's people, our sisters and brothers in Christ, are faithfully and energetically proclaiming the Good News in word and action. It reminds us that the mission field is incredibly diverse and challenging. It reminds us that God continues to raise up leaders and equip them for service with the gifts of the Spirit.

These stories also affirm the fundamental qualities that characterise the church of Jesus Christ: hospitality, generosity, acceptance, inclusiveness, compassion, selflessness, and a passion to share the gospel with others.

The record of the early church in the Book of Acts tells us that these were the defining marks of true Christian community from the beginning. They still are and thank God for that!

David Pitman

Rev Dr David Pitman
Moderator

Working together

For we are God's servants, working together.

1 Corinthians 3: 9

The Queensland Synod is the presbyteries and congregations working together across our vast state bringing the good news of Jesus Christ to the spiritually hungry, and care and compassion to those in need of support.

Uniting Church congregations throughout Queensland can vary from churches with hundreds of members to small communities of a dozen people spread across our cities and remote rural communities. The Synod works together with these congregations and the presbyteries encouraging church members to live as faithful disciples of Jesus Christ and as active citizens in their communities.

The Synod also undertakes the tasks of promoting justice, reconciliation and peace; ministering to the hurting and distressed through more than one hundred Uniting Church chaplains; and providing services to the most disadvantaged and needy through UnitingCare agencies.

In all this the Synod works together with the whole church to preach the crucified and risen Christ, bear witness to the unity of faith, and nurture the spiritual growth of God's people.

This Annual Report is a snapshot of the many transforming activities of the Uniting Church in Queensland.

In the power of God great things are happening and will continue to happen through the ministry of this very wide-ranging and diverse part of God's church.

The church is richly blessed by the generosity of Uniting Church members and careful stewardship of the many resources available to the Synod. These funds are used to support both local congregations and the wider work of the church, providing strong leadership, effective governance, and dynamic ministry and mission across the state.

This work continues, and your gifts to the Mission and Service Fund made through offerings in your local Uniting Church will enable more people to hear the good news, more needs to be met, more leaders to be trained and more ministries to be resourced.

You can also contribute to this mission of God through your savings in the Uniting Church Investment Service or give directly to the Queensland Synod of the Uniting Church at GPO Box 674, Brisbane QLD, 4001 now, or through a bequest.

Please call 07 3377 9777 or email gensec@ucaql.com.au for further information about how you can support the work of the Uniting Church in Queensland.

2006: a year of working together

Trinity Theological College established regional campuses in partnership with the Presbyteries of North Queensland, Central Queensland, Mary Burnett and The Downs.

Financial and Property Services introduced a streamlined and structured approach to Mission and Service Fund budget management processes.

Appointment of a Vision for Mission Facilitation Team and Vision for Mission Advocate.

An additional regional Youth and Children's Ministry Unit staff member appointed for Central Queensland.

Journey newspaper received two prestigious Australasian Religious Press Association commendations.

A successful upgrade of the Synod's financial management systems.

A three year forecast was prepared as part of the 2007 Mission and Service Fund budget process.

100 youth leaders attended the State Youth Ministry Conference in August.

A review of existing capital expenditure processes was undertaken resulting in new capital expenditure guidelines.

Ten new U.C.I.S Giving Direct programs were established during 2006, allowing church members to automatically give their tithes and offerings directly from their bank, building society or credit union account.

A UC Insurance internet site was launched providing online information and access for congregations and agencies.

A Synod Safety Resource Advisor was appointed to contribute across the church to the creation of a safe environment in the areas of workplace health and safety, and child safety.

Thirty congregations committed to a Growing Apostles approach to Youth Ministry

U.C.I.S had another great year, with a 22% increase in loans outstanding to \$424 million.

Construction of a 360sqm extension of the Alexandra Park Auditorium providing a home for the Queensland Synod in Session.

Five new Synod-resourced camping programs were initiated around the state

More than 800 individuals and organisations are now helping their congregation pay off its loan faster by opening a U.C.I.S Mutual Support Investment.

Over 300 000 "We are not alone" invitational postcards distributed by congregations inviting people to attend Christmas worship services.

Release of the 'The Fridge', a personal discipleship resource for young adults



Working with congregations

Central Queensland Presbytery stretches from Monto to Mackay and west to the Northern Territory border. With broad expanses of drought-ridden farmlands, the mining boom area of the Bowen Basin and the rapidly developing industrial areas of Boyne Island, Gladstone and the Callide Valley, the church in Central Queensland faces unique challenges. The Presbytery is responsible for the pastoral and administrative oversight of the congregations in the area and seeks to stimulate and encourage them in their challenging task.

Presbytery Minister with Central Queensland Presbytery Rev Kaye Ronalds works to resource and support congregations in their ministry and mission. Ms Ronalds recognises that the shape of ministry is changing and there are fewer ordained ministers to provide leadership across the region. Together with the Presbytery and wider church she has committed herself to equip lay people for leadership. "Last year the six presbytery presenters travelled 14,300 kilometres to help 24 local people build their skills for worship leading and preaching."

Your contribution to the Mission and Service Fund enables ministry in rural and remote areas to happen in creative and exciting ways.

For we are God's servants, working together.

(1 Corinthians 3: 9)



Working with mental health patients

Rev Helen Prior is one of over 100 Uniting Church chaplains working in schools, hospitals and aged care, and ministering with police, armed forces and in industry. The difference for Ms Prior is that, in her chaplaincy work at the Princess Alexandra Hospital in Brisbane, one day a week is spent with the Mental Health Unit. While all chaplains are the church's face ministering in word and deed and offering the sacraments of the church as a sign of grace, Ms Prior is providing pastoral care and support for particularly troubled people.

Ms Prior said that working with mental health patients had particularly challenged her own capacity to interact with people appropriately. She works with people in groups and one-on-one and finds that people with a mental illness are often very spiritual and have thought deeply about God in relation to suffering. "It is such a privilege to minister to and receive ministry from this group of people who are so often marginalised and neglected," Ms Prior said.

Your Mission and Service Fund contribution helps support the work of Chaplains as they offer care and compassion for many people across the Queensland Community.



Theological College goes bush

Aware of a need for training for laypersons exercising primary ministry roles in remote locations, Trinity Theological College has established a network of regional campuses to train lay ministry teams and individuals. The training needs were greatest in presbyteries beyond the South East Corner of the state. Working together with the Presbyteries of North Queensland, Central Queensland, Mary Burnett and The Downs, Trinity Theological College established regional campuses voluntarily staffed by a local regional coordinator and local faculty with administrative and other support provided by the Brisbane campus. Principal of Trinity Theological College Rev Dr David Rankin said 120 people participated in programs offered by the regional campuses in the second half of 2006.

Theological education for lay people in regional areas is supported by your gifts to the Mission and Service Fund of the Queensland Synod.

Supporting congregational ministry

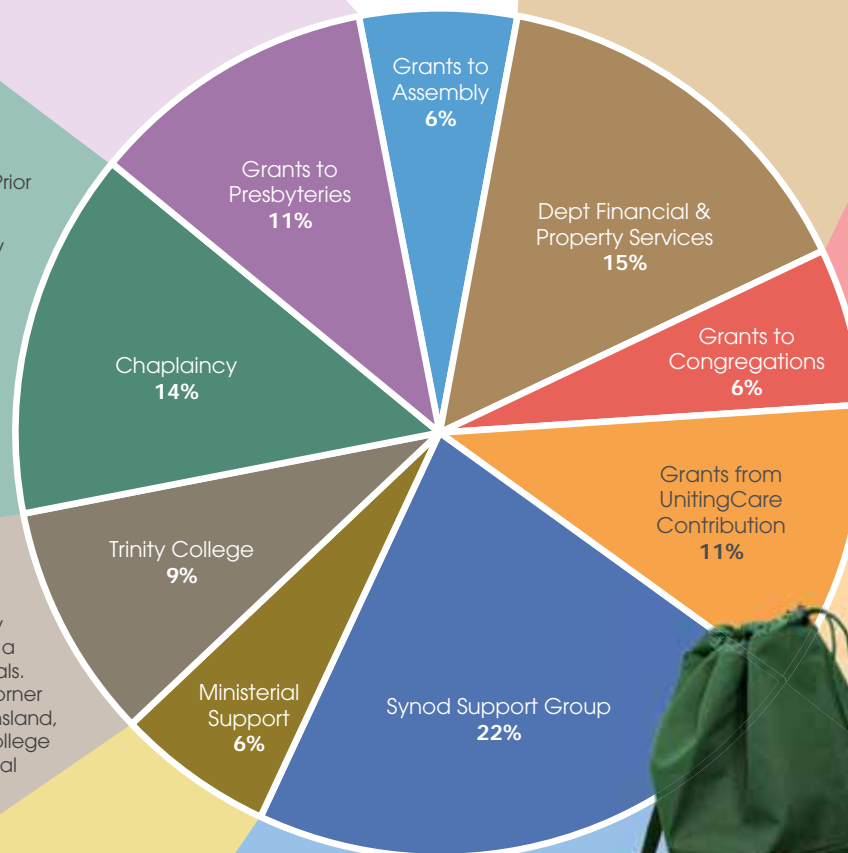
Like many others in the community, after ten years of service ministers are eligible to take some Long Service Leave. To enable ministry to continue in those congregations with minimum disruption the Synod provides for supply ministry. The cost of the supply is provided from the Synod Long Service Leave Fund so the congregation is not out of pocket while their minister is away.

Arrangements for the Long Service Leave are made with the presbytery and approved by the joint Synod/Presbytery Placements Committee and the supply minister is then available to serve the congregation. During 2006, retired minister Rev Hendrika De Nys from Toowoomba went to Mornington Island for nine

weeks as supply minister while the regular minister was on Long Service Leave.

Working with an indigenous congregation in a restricted access community was a very different experience for Mrs De Nys. "To my knowledge the people there had never experienced a woman minister but were very welcoming. Among other duties, my husband Ben ran the Post Office while we were there and I also cooked for the Mornington Island Meals on Wheels service."

Provision of ministerial support for Long Service Leave supply is another way Queensland Uniting Churches work together and support each other through the Mission and Service Fund.



School packs

Things are usually tough in the Solomon Islands. Continuing conflict has made the country unstable and interrupted education, services and business for the small nation's half million inhabitants. Few children complete primary school, education services have been seriously disrupted, education facilities are deficient and instructional materials are non-existent in most schools.

As part of its international commitment to partnership with other churches, the Synod launched the "School Packs for the Solomons" campaign so Queenslanders could provide educational resources for children in the Solomon Islands and do something tangible for our Pacific neighbour churches. Project coordinator Heather den Houting was overwhelmed by the response from individuals and congregations working together on the project. "We

Hospitality for the church

In July 2006 the Queensland Synod hosted the 11th National Assembly of the Uniting Church in Australia in Brisbane. With responsibility for local arrangements such as accommodation, meals, meeting venue, audiovisual and technology resources, communications, ground transport and registrations, the Synod jumped into action. 15 000 cups of tea and coffee were served, 6 000 meals provided, and guests travelled from around the nation and across the world. Management of the 11th Assembly was an enormous task for the team of Synod staff and volunteers who prepared for three years to host this important event in the life of the church.

Queensland Moderator Rev Dr David Pitman described results as "magnificent". "The team had obviously very intentionally thought through the whole program and ways in which they could ensure that people

would be welcomed and supported and made comfortable." Highlight of the week was the Sunday evening Assembly Celebration in City Hall where local Uniting Church members joined the Assembly in a 2000 strong crowd to enjoy a potpourri of music, drama and prayer. Victorian minister Rev Harriet Ziegler was enthusiastic about the Celebration. "It lives in my memory as the best part of the Assembly. I loved it," she said.

Hard working Assembly Coordinator Tony-Liffin said it was an honour to be working together with such a capable group of people. "Nothing was too much trouble, and there was no shortage of people doing all they could to make things easier and more comfortable for others."



A congregation without a home

The church in Mapoon (far North Queensland) doesn't yet have a church building but shares its vibrant worship life on the verandah of the Health clinic. The congregation has a number of children and young people who have grown strongly in their faith and actively participate in worship through their prayers, confident scripture reading and enthusiastic singing.

If ministry development worker James Hughes is late picking them up from their houses (up to 10km away), they start walking to church along the dusty road and the young people who live nearby work together to set up the chairs for church. The Mapoon church is negotiating for land in the community to build some accommodation for the minister and congregation. There's a long way to go but the dreams are alive and the energy is there.

The church at Mapoon is one of many missional congregations supported through your giving to the Mission and Service fund.



The church in action

With 15 000 staff in more than 400 geographic locations throughout Queensland, the Uniting Church's health and community services provider UnitingCare is one of Australia's largest not-for-profit health and community service providers. UnitingCare's agencies work together everyday to provide care and support to more than 14 000 people in Queensland in the form of residential and community services to older people; people with a disability; youth at risk; services to strengthen families and children; crisis support, counselling and acute health care.

The UnitingCare agencies include Lifeline Community Care, Blue Care and UnitingCare Health. Director Ms Anne Cross said that the service offered by UnitingCare in Queensland "is distinctive because of its strong focus on mission, the scale and breadth of its service, its reputation for service reliability and quality and its local focus."

TheservicesprovidedthroughUnitingCare are a practical demonstration of the church in action.



Financials

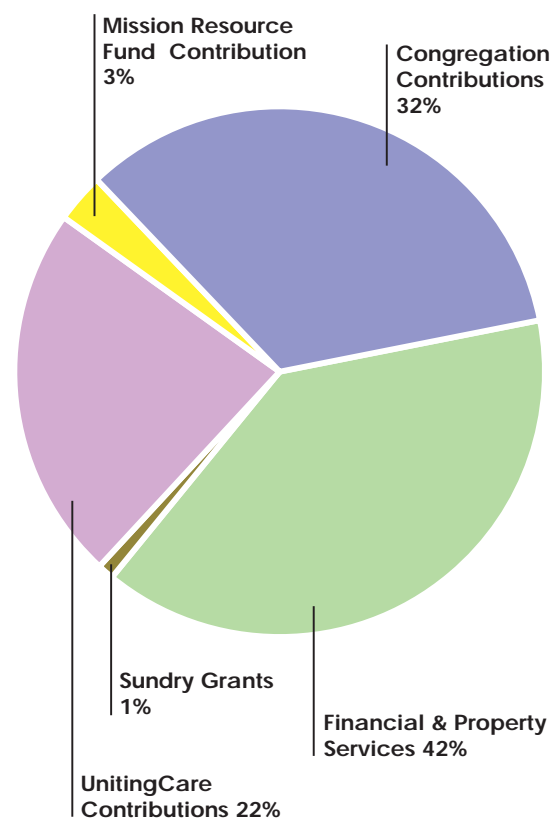
Concise Consolidated Income Statement

	2006	2005
Revenue	16,360,124	14,792,242
Other income	12,886	448,254
	16,373,010	15,240,496
Employee benefits expense	(6,510,518)	(5,933,222)
Depreciation and amortisation expense	(624,722)	(630,230)
Finance costs	(33,035)	(52,835)
Gifts, donations and grants	(1,997,102)	(1,715,587)
Lease expenses	(189,192)	(135,958)
Other expenses	(4,660,509)	(4,315,803)
Loss on disposal of property, plant and equipment	(903,960)	(2,515)
	(14,919,038)	(12,786,150)
Surplus for the period	1,453,972	2,454,345

Concise Consolidated Balance Sheet

	2006	2005
ASSETS		
Current assets		
Cash and cash equivalents	17,994,290	15,221,413
Trade and other receivables	1,303,180	4,400,892
Inventories	40,041	37,998
Other Assets	48,313	36,202
Total current assets	19,385,824	19,696,505
Non-current assets		
Trade and other receivables	1,012,523	1,493,688
Other financial assets	31,390,758	26,629,305
Property, plant and equipment	31,570,062	32,874,230
Intangibles	55,305	46,988
Total non-current assets	64,028,648	61,044,211
Total Assets	83,414,472	80,740,716
LIABILITIES		
Current liabilities		
Trade and other payables	11,026,539	9,439,672
Short term provisions	132,231	419,210
Total current liabilities	11,158,770	9,858,882
Non-current liabilities		
Trade and other payables	16,546,683	16,419,068
Long term borrowings	310,817	488,071
Long term provisions	239,970	213,895
Specific Purpose funds	1,532,420	1,609,893
Total non-current liabilities	18,629,890	18,730,926
Total Liabilities	29,788,660	28,589,808
Net Assets	53,625,812	52,150,908
EQUITY		
Contributed Equity	791,288	791,288
Reserves	19,632,421	19,611,489
Retained Earnings	33,202,103	31,748,131
Total Equity	53,625,812	52,150,908

MISSION & SERVICE FUND INCOME 2006



IBDO BDO Kendaib

The Uniting Church in Australia - Queensland Synod

Independent Audit Report to the Members of The Finance and Property Board

Scope

The Financial Report and Directors' Responsibility

We have audited the attached financial report being a special purpose financial report comprising the income statement, balance sheet, statement of changes in equity, accompanying notes to the financial statements, and the members' declaration for the Uniting Church in Australia - Queensland Synod, for the year ended 31 December 2006.

The Board is responsible for the financial report and have determined that the accounting policies used and described in Note 1 to the financial statements are consistent with the financial reporting requirements of the entity's constitution and are appropriate to meet the requirements of the members. This includes responsibility for the maintenance of adequate accounting records and internal controls that are designed to prevent and detect fraud and error, and for the accounting policies and accounting estimates inherent in the financial report. No opinion is expressed as to whether the accounting policies used and described in Note 1, are appropriate to the needs of the members.

The financial report has been prepared for distribution to members for the purpose of fulfilling the financial reporting requirements under the Synod constitution. We disclaim any assumption of responsibility for any reliance on this report or on the financial report to which it relates to any person other than the members, or for any purpose other than that for which it was prepared.

Audit Approach

We conducted an independent audit in order to express an opinion to the members of the Finance and Property Board. Our audit was conducted in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards in order to provide reasonable assurance as to whether the financial report is free of material misstatement. The nature of an audit is influenced by factors such as the use of professional judgment, selective testing, the inherent limitations of internal control, and the availability of persuasive rather than conclusive evidence. Therefore, an audit cannot guarantee that all material misstatements have been detected.

We performed procedures to assess whether in all material respects the financial report presents fairly, including compliance with Accounting Standards and other mandatory financial reporting requirements in Australia to the extent described in Note 1, a view which is consistent with our understanding of the entity's financial position, and of its performance as represented by the results of its operations.

We formed our audit opinion on the basis of these procedures, which included:

- examining, on a test basis, information to provide evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial report, and
- assessing the appropriateness of the accounting policies and disclosures used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by the members of the Finance and Property Board.

While we considered the effectiveness of management's internal controls over financial reporting when determining the nature and extent of our procedures, our audit was not designed to provide assurance on internal controls.

Audit opinion

In our opinion, the financial report presents fairly in accordance with the accounting policies described in Note 1 to the financial report the financial position of the Uniting Church in Australia - Queensland Synod as at 31 December 2006 and the results of its operations for the year then ended.

BDO Kendaib
BDO Kendaib (OLD)

T J Kendall
T J Kendall
Partner

Brisbane
Dated: 27 April 2007

Top management achiever appointed as FAPs Director

BEINGTHE treasurer for St Paul's Uniting Church congregation at Stafford is a great background for a job as the new Director for the Synod's Department for Financial and Property Services.

Appointed to succeed Mr Bruce

Binnie in the role, Mr Robert Packer was previously the CEO of one of Australia's largest leather manufacturers and comes to this significant role keen to apply his professional skills to serve the Church.

General Secretary of the Synod Rev Jenny Tymms said Mr Packer is an outcomes and service focused person with highly developed skills in team building.

"As a qualified accounting professional with a Masters Degree in Financial Management and extensive experience at a senior financial and managerial level in both government and private industry, Robert Packer has a track record that made him an ideal choice for the position."

Mr Packer said he believed the church's mission comes first and that great mission activities will provide the impetus to find resources.

"I see that the Church is on the cusp of an exciting new era and, with God's help, we will be able to focus our energies and support the various activities aimed at growing the kingdom," Mr Packer said.

The new director described the key tasks for his department as providing financial and property services to congregations and presbyteries and supporting their mission and financial and property stewardship.

Mr Packer is married to Julie, has four adult children and relaxes by playing golf.



Director for the Synod's Department for Financial and Property Services Mr Robert Packer. Photo by Osker Lau

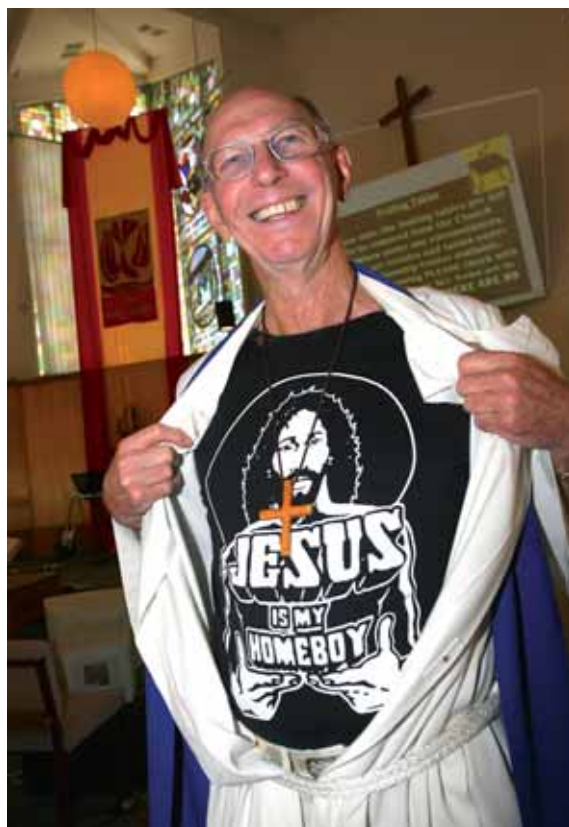


Photo courtesy of the Queensland Times

Chairman of the original Parish Council and the congregation's minister at the time of Union Rev Trevor Foote was invited back to the Glebe Road Church in Ipswich for the celebration of the 30th Anniversary of the Uniting Church in June. Recently retired Mr Foote has settled in Ipswich but it was only after the service that the congregation became aware of what the reverend gentleman was wearing under his ministerial alb.

Migration Act power must be checked

UNITINGJUSTICE says that by revoking the visa of Dr Mohammed Haneef the Howard Government is using the Migration Act to undermine the legal system.

Director of UnitingJustice, the justice agency of the Uniting Church in Australia's National Assembly, Rev Elenie Poulos said, "We are outraged at the abuse of Ministerial power shown by this decision. It is hard to believe that the Minister's action is not related to the Court's decision to grant bail to Dr Haneef."

"A person's guilt or innocence is a matter for the courts not the Minister."

"It is naïve to believe that this action will not prejudice Dr Haneef's right to a fair trial."

"We are also concerned about his detention in Villawood which is so far from his legal team in Brisbane."

"It appears that the Government intends to make it as hard as possible for Dr Haneef to access all the legal support he is entitled to."

"We do not condone terrorism and believe that terrorists should be brought to justice, but justice is not served when the right to a fair trial is jeopardised," said Ms Poulos.

The Uniting Church has long held concerns about the power of Ministerial Discretion under the Migration Act.

"While it is important that

the system has enough flexibility to deal with unusual cases, as it currently stands the Minister can make decisions based solely on his or her own sense of what is reasonable and the decision is non-reviewable.

"It is inconsistent with a healthy, functioning democracy that such

power should be held by one individual," said Ms Poulos.

"Australia's national interest is not served by undermining our legal system."

"Mohammed Haneef deserves to be treated like any other person in this country – innocent until proven guilty by a fair trial."

Top Foundation grant goes west

WIDE GEOGRAPHIC spread through five presbyteries has again been a feature of the successful applicants for the first round of UC Foundation grants in 2007, with the top grant of \$10 500 going to Burke and Wills Patrol's Rev John Case in Charleville.

After receiving 15 applications deliberations by the Foundation's Board resulted in 12 applications for \$46 506 being successful.

The successful applicants in this round were:

- Ashgrove West UC Christmas Tree and Craft Fair, \$1 000
- Aspley UC Developing Young Families Ministry through commencement of Child Care Centre, \$3 500
- Bayside UC Team training camp for Watoto building project, \$4 000
- Burdekin UC Craft Spectacular Outreach, \$1 000
- Burdekin UC IT Religious Instruction Course, \$4 000
- Edmonton UC Family Festival Days, \$5 000
- Frontier Services, Burke and Wills Patrol Drought Morale-lifting Concerts, \$10 500
- Glebe Rd UC "Mainly Music" Program for parents and young children, \$1 050
- Maranoa Congregations Maranoa Reconnect, \$2 456
- St George UC Day Camp, \$6 500
- Sunnybank UC Mentoring Initiative, \$3 500
- Tingalpa UC Welcome, neighbour, \$4 000

Total \$46 506

Closing date for the next round of grants is 30 September for disbursement in December. Visit www.foundation.ucaqld.com.au for more information.

Bishop John Shelby Spong

Public lecture: Jesus for the Non-Religious

Saturday 1 September
6.30 for 7.00pm

Performing Arts Centre,
St Aidan's AGS, Corinda

Information & ticket sales -136100
or www.ticketmaster.com.au

ticketmaster

www.progressivespirituality.net



THE UNITING CHURCH IN AUSTRALIA QUEENSLAND SYNOD



POSITION - SYNOD CHAPLAINCY CO-ORDINATOR

Applications are invited from interested and qualified persons, ordained or lay members of the Uniting Church, for the position of Synod Chaplaincy Co-ordinator to be based in Brisbane.

The 26th Synod affirmed the value of the role and agree to continue "...to fund a full-time Chaplaincy Coordinator whose main focus will be strategic leadership and co-ordination of the work of the sector area coordinators."

It is anticipated that the appointee will have experience and knowledge of chaplaincy training and ministry, as well as demonstrated skills in leadership and project management. The initial appointment will be for a term of five years.

The position description and key selection criteria are available from the Acting Synod Chaplaincy Coordinator, Rev Don Whebell, telephone (07) 3377 9822 or e-mail don.whebell@ucaqld.com.au

Applications including a detailed Curriculum Vitae and References, marked "Confidential" should be received at the following address by **31st August 2007**:

The Moderator
Uniting Church Queensland Synod
GPO Box 674
BRISBANE QLD 4001



Moggill quilting instructor Lyn Smith, right, and her assistant Judy Walford with quilts in progress.
Photo by Mardi Lumsden

Moggill calls it quilts

By Mardi Lumsden

AFTER A brief encounter with a young woman struggling with drug addiction and in an abusive relationship, Moggill Uniting Church member Lyn Smith decided she wanted to do more for people in similar situations.

She decided to ask the local craft and quilting group to make quilts for a women's shelter in nearby Ipswich.

The plan was not just to make quilts for the shelter itself, but for the children currently living there, something they can take with them when they leave.

"My original aim was to give the children quilts that become theirs. We have little labels on them and it says that the quilt was made with love for them. There is a space for them to write their name. Hopefully they will remember that someone cared," she said.

After speaking with her minister, Deva Sugirtharaj, Ms Smith contacted Domestic Violence Advocacy who passed on her details to the Ipswich Women's Shelter.

"They thought it was a great idea so I put it to all the quilters here and it grew from there.

"Maybe I had the idea and got it started, but it only works when all the machinery works, not just the driver!

"Everyone puts in so much of their time and effort. People from the church have donated fabric."

The community centre, based at Moggill Uniting, bought 30 metres of wadding (enough to make around 20 quilts) sold at cost price from an Ipswich quilting shop.

13 quilts have been donated so far and the women are busy making another batch to be ready before Christmas.

A representative from the shelter visited the quilting group to pick up the quilts and has since written to say the children and mothers were very happy to receive them.

"She said the kids just loved them and the mothers were really happy that someone cared. I guess that is what it's all about."

The Moggill Uniting Church is not the only group to be donating hand made goods to charities.

In response to hearing how many HIV/AIDS babies in Africa are sent home wrapped in newspaper a group of women at Deception Bay Uniting Church decided that they could do something to help.

Led by Elder Lorraine Smith, people from the church and all around started knitting.

Knitters from Palm Lakes retirement villa, the Dutch Ladies Group and others were also busy knitting and within a couple of months 350 jumpers had been knitted.

These were blessed in a service and sent off to find new homes with babies in Malawi, Sudan, South Africa, and Zambia.

"It can be so hard to know how to help people who are suffering in ways we can't imagine, and this was a very practical way that we could show that God cares and that we care – which is the motto of our church," said Lorraine Smith.

The members of the Knitters' Friendship Group at the Kangaroo Point Uniting Church have also been busy knitting blankets and scarves for Drug Arm.

This is the third time the group has donated to DRUG ARM, but has been giving their blankets to charities for many years.

For more information about this project or to knit a jumper go to <http://www.aids.org.au/aids-global-malawi-20061104.htm>



Knitters from Deception Bay Uniting Church with some of their babywear

History makes way for future

WESLEY HOUSE in Ann Street, Brisbane, will be demolished this year to make way for a nine-storey office building.

The original building which was opened in 1940 and extensively renovated in 1959 has housed the superintendent minister's and congregation offices as well as the pre-Union Methodist Connexional offices, emergency relief, Crossroads and other events and programs.

Wesley Mission Superintendent Minister Rev Lyn Burden said the challenge is for the congregation to continue to follow its missional call during the next 18 months without the building.



The new Wesley House will have a 5½ star green rating

"This is a time that we can grow new ministry opportunities for people within the city," she said.

The development will have a 5½ star green rating making it suitable for supporting the ministry of the church well into the 21st century.



Prison Ministry Senior Chaplain Beatriz Skippen, The Gap Mission and Outreach committee chair Graham Ross, and The Gap minister Rev Gwen Fisher

The Gap helps behind bars

PRISON MINISTRY Senior Chaplain Beatriz Skippen visited The Gap Uniting Church in July to present a certificate of appreciation for the support The Gap congregation has given to Prison Ministry.

Last year alone The Gap provided toys for Christmas for 79 children of families of prisoners.

They also gave presents for the mothers of those children where their fathers are in prison.

The Gap contributed with groceries for the Christmas Hampers that Prison Ministry prepared and distributed to families of prisoners.

Every week The Gap collects

groceries that go to Prison Ministry's emergency food bank.

A banner was made for the service depicting prison bars and a butterfly.

"The butterfly represents the power of Christ's love that can bring metamorphosis, transformation to the lives of prisoners, the chance for new beginnings," said Ms Skippen.

Several members of the congregation have become involved in prison ministry and some attended the Prison Ministry in-service held earlier this year, to learn more about ministering to people within the corrective services.

SUNSHINE COAST

UNITING CHURCH - BUDERIM



INVITES YOU TO JOIN US AS WE CELEBRATE
100 YEARS OF MINISTRY

Saturday 13th October – 6 for 6.30 pm BANQUET DINNER.

Sunday 14th October – 9.30 am CENTENARY CHURCH SERVICE.

For further information please 'phone:

Lionel Ash – 54453537 or Max Fenn 54768158

Kenmore Uniting Church
in suburban Brisbane, Queensland
is seeking a

Minister of the Word

- A spiritual leader with a broad theology to explore fresh biblical insights and current social and ethical concerns
- A person who is interested in developing and extending connections with our local community

For a copy of the Congregational Profile contact:
Rev Henry Swindon at swindonhs@bigpond.com
or 24 Tucker St, Chapel Hill, QLD 4069

Applications close 20 August 2007

Communications Training Day

Raise your local church media profile, build your communication skills, and take better photos

Saturday 11 August at the Uniting Church Centre, Auchenflower

Register at www.ucaqld.com.au

Happy day camp's here again

By **Mardi Lumsden**

THE MID-YEAR school holiday is the season of Day Camps around the Uniting Church in Queensland.

This year the Oxley Uniting Church Day Camp celebrated 30 years with 125 campers, 55 high school-aged leaders and 40 adult helpers.

Gail Rankin grew up attending Day Camp, then became a leader and is now co-director with Jenny Hudson.

Ms Rankin said the camp is always well attended with children travelling from around Brisbane to attend.

"We get a lot of kids from the Uniting Church but also other churches around the area and people from outside the area. This Day Camp is 30 this year and we're still going!" she said.

Oxley Uniting Church member Carol King also attended as a camper before continuing to enjoy the fun of Day Camp each year as a leader.

"The little boys are just so cute and it is really nice when they say that they like you and that they are having a good time. It's really fun," she said.

Campers enjoyed music and worship, painting, rock climbing, games, cooking on a fire and much more.

Seven hours west at St George the Uniting Church Day Camp was also underway.

For the past three years the Go West volunteer team from the Redlands Uniting Churches has been offering leadership and training local leaders, and this year the St George team took the leadership with Go West support.

St George Day Camp coordinator and local school teacher Sue Anderson said next year the local Uniting Church team will be doing it on their own.

"This year we had 54 children attending the camp which was held right on the riverbank in a bush environment.

"The kids go off into the bush every morning and build their own little gunyah or shelter which is their headquarters for three days."

As well as the usual flying fox, archery, parallel ropes and craft activities, this year St George Day Camp featured a chapel staffed by two of the leaders with guitars.

"Groups could book in to come for singing and learning their Bible memory verses and it worked really beautifully," Mrs Anderson said.

"This year in particular it's been wonderful seeing our years eight, nine and ten young people sharing faith with the smaller children and for the children to look up to these young adults and say it's OK to be a Christian, it's OK to talk about God and it's OK to believe," said Mrs Anderson.

"The Go West team has just



St George Day Camper Teri Strugnell learns the ropes.
Photo by Robyn Brumpton

given us such an amazing gift and it's up to us now to grow with that and maybe it's something we can do for someone else at some stage too.

"I can just imagine us, getting on a bus and going west to somewhere else a little further out and teaching someone else how to do it."

Go West team member Emma Nichols said, "It has been a great experience and it's exciting to see the talent in the St George team and the potential for the future."

Oxley Day Camper Jack said his favourite activities were "Painting and plastering".

Jack said if he wasn't at Day

Camp he would be "staying home a lot".

Jack's friend Jai enjoyed the games, singing and thought his leader Carol was great.

The great tradition of Day Camps will continue next year with camps all over Queensland, but in the meantime the children and leaders will have fond memories of smoky clothes, unusually cold weather, tasty damper, and lots of laughter.

This year the St George Day Camp was also supported by a grant from the Uniting Church Foundation.

www.foundation.ucaql.com.au



Oxley Day Campers Jai and Jack enjoy time with their leader Carol King.
Photo by Mardi Lumsden

Thank you Margate

AFTER A long and proud history Margate Uniting Church Conference Centre on the Redcliffe Peninsula will close its doors on 31 December.

The decision made late last year by the former Finance and Property Board was announced at the recent Synod at Alexandra Park.

Synod Property Services Manager Mark Lee said the decision had not been taken lightly.

"We conducted a number of feasibility studies regarding the long term viability of the Margate and Alexandra Park Centres and the long term viability of camping within the Uniting Church as a whole," he said.

"It was determined that the best strategy was to consolidate our camping enterprises on one site where there has already been considerable recent reinvestment.

"Alex Park has been renewed as a new home for the Synod and is a sustainable first class facility which meets the growing demands of today's campers and increasingly demanding legislative requirements."

Moderator of the Queensland Synod Rev Dr David Pitman said the Uniting Church's conference centres have served the church well for a long time.

"People remember them for the special moments in their personal and faith journeys that occurred there; however, the face of camping has changed dramatically and new strategies are needed for the emerging challenges and opportunities of the present and future.

"The sale of Margate and the further development of Alexandra Park are important dimensions of our response to those realities."



Margate Uniting Church Conference Centre was opened on 8 April 1961. Photo by Mark Lee

Minister of the Redcliffe Uniting Church Rev Peter Armstrong also gave thanks for the gift that Margate Conference Centre has been to the church over many years.

"We are sad to have to let go of this place but glad to hang on to the memories of ministry and mission that this centre has provided."

Mr Armstrong said that in the

end buildings don't carry on but love, faith and hope carried in people does.

"We celebrate the past, grieve some in this moment, and hope in the future of conference centre ministry and mission through the wider life of our church.

"We also pray that the Spirit of Christ will continue to lead us in our work with people, young

and old, as we are challenged by the legacy of those who worked to bring about the resources of the Margate Conference Centre to the church and wider community.

"Let us continue to do likewise."

A service to mark the closure of the Margate Conference Centre will be held on Sunday 2 December 2007 commencing at 3.00pm.

WHAT'S ON

August 3, 7-8.45am. Breakfast Dialogue with Steve Chalke & Tim Costello at Greek Club & Convention Centre, South Brisbane. For more information contact Theo Masselos on ph 3387 2700 or email theo.masselos@worldvision.com.au.

August 3, 9.30-11.30am. Steve Chalke (Oasis UK) Workshop on Practical Mission at Greek Club & Convention Centre, South Brisbane. For more information contact Theo Masselos on ph 3387 2700 or email theo.masselos@worldvision.com.au.

August 9. United Nations International Day of the World's Indigenous People.

August 9, 10am. Bremmer Brisbane Adult Fellowship fashion parade. \$5 with a light lunch. For more information phone Moggill Uniting Church on ph 3202 7045.

August 11, 10am-4pm. Communications Training Day at the UC Centre 60 Bayliss St Auchenflower Brisbane. Journey and the Australasian Religious Press Association (ARPA) present a communications training day for people promoting church activities. For information email journey@ucaqld.com.au or call 3377 9910. To register go to www.ucaqld.com.au.

August 12. United Nations International Youth Day.

August 16-18. Wheller Gardens Auxiliary rummage sale. Uhl Hall 930 Gympie Rd, Chermside. 16-17th open 8.30am-3pm. 18th open 8.30am-12 noon. Pre-loved clothes, books and knick-knacks.

August 21, 10am. UC Queensland Synod International Mission Support Group meeting at St Andrew's Church Hall, Ann Street Brisbane. Coffee from 9.30am. Help support Mission Staff working in our Partner Churches overseas and in North Australia and promote the work of International Mission in our Uniting Church Congregations in Queensland. For more information contact Judith Finau on ph 3711 4622 or email lifinau@dovenetq.net.au.

September 1, 7pm. An Evening with Bishop John Shelby Spong at St Aidan's Anglican Girls School, Corinda. A lecture by the well-known and controversial author to coincide with the release of his latest book *Jesus for the Non-Religious*. Tickets \$25 from Ticketmaster 136 100 or ticketmaster.com.au. Contact Ross Garnett on ph 3254 1449 or email drarn@bigpond.net.au for more information.

September 6-8. 9am-5.30pm. Laidley Uniting Church Quilt & Craft Expo. 45 Patrick St, Laidley. Displays of quilts and fine arts/demonstrations of pottery/ folk art/wood turning and more. Morning/ afternoon tea and lunch available. Contact Robyn Muller on ph 5466 5436 or email rob.mul@bigpond.com.au.

September 9. Glebe Road Uniting Church Building 20th Anniversary, cnr Glebe and Ellen St, Ipswich. A special Worship Celebration of the coming together of the three congregations into a new building 20 Years ago. For more information contact Pastor Vi Beaumont on ph 3288 6358 or email vbeaum@optusnet.com.au.

September 20-22. Sandgate Uniting Church Craft Fair at 116 Board Street, Deagon. Exhibition and sale of craft goods and cookery. Craft demonstrations. Admission gold coin. Teas and light lunches available. Contact Bobbie Jeays on ph 3269 6565 or email djeays@bigpond.net.au or Jean Paterson on ph 3265 2412 or email paterson@bigpond.com.au for more information.

October 5-6, 7am-4pm. Theological Reflections on diakonia: from Scripture to...? at Clairvaux MacKillop College, Klumpp Road, Upper Mt Gravatt. With world renowned Roman Catholic scholar Dr John N Collins, Uniting Church Deacon Rev Alison McRae and Anglican Deacon Rev Dr Peter Pocock. For more information contact Douglas Jones on ph 3377 9868 or email douglas.jones@ucaqld.com.au.

October 13-14. Buderim Uniting Church Centenary celebration. Open Church, music, services, social activities and a banquet dinner. You are invited to join and enjoy these special events. Billeting and accommodation available for those coming from afar. Programme details to follow. For more information contact Lionel Ash on ph 5445 3537 or Max Fenn on ph 5476 8158.

19 November. World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims.

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

Love will be their home

"PEOPLE WHO love each other should be able to get married regardless of their social status," said Deacon Rev Tim Hodgson from Wesley Mission Brisbane who married Darren Murray and Rachael Pola at Albert Street Uniting Church in June.

Mr Hodgson met Rachael and Darren at the Community Mill weekly meal for Homeless people at Wesley House where they came each week.

At the time both Rachael and Darren, who describe themselves as 'streeties', were living under the Captain Cook Bridge.

"They came to see me and we went through the wedding preparation process like any other couple," Mr Hodgson said.

There was no charge for the wedding and local hotel provided a reception lunch. The couple sold *The Big Issue* magazine on the streets of Brisbane so they could pay for the bridesmaids' dresses.

They are now living happy as husband and wife in hostel accommodation.



Rachael Pola and Darren Murray on their wedding day at Albert Street Uniting Church. Photo by Kathrin Koenning

Ninety, not out

Norman Park Uniting Church celebrated 90 years of community life in one of Brisbane's most historic suburbs with an anniversary service and display of historic items and photographs in the church hall on 22 July.

Originally opened in 1917 as the National Park Methodist Church, local history buff Yvonne Pick said the buildings have a rich heritage in the community.

Blue Care Sunday

Congregations are encouraged to celebrate Blue Care Sunday on 19 August.

Acting Director of Mission Rev Jan Chalmers said Blue Care provides care for over 11 000 Queenslanders each day.

"The people who need our services are the reason the Uniting Church puts so much of itself and its resources into social and welfare services," she said.

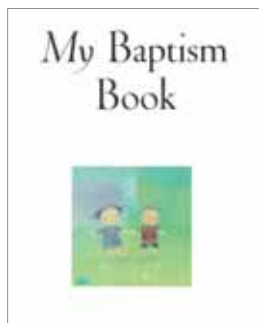
A very big cross

The world's largest cross will be built in the Israeli Arab town of Nazareth in an attempt to draw millions of Christian tourists to the boyhood town of Jesus, according to an initial building plan.

The massive structure, dubbed "The Nazareth Cross," would tower 60 metres high, and would be decorated by some 7.2 million brilliant mosaic tiles made of Nazareth stone.



My Baptism Book
By Sophie Piper
Illustrated by Dubravka Kolanovic
Lion Children's
RRP \$18.95



This little hard-covered book is a lovely collection of poems, bible stories and verses relating to the theme of a child's baptism.

The book is easily readable for a young person and easy to listen to when read aloud, with language that is very child friendly and engaging.

Some stories of Jesus are retold in easy and concise vocabulary, and other bible verses are simple enough for children to understand.

Some of the poems I can remember from my childhood. They are a part of my heritage and

it is good to see them presented to another generation of children.

The illustrations are very well drawn and add to the overall presentation of the book.

The book not only talks about baptism, but places it in the context of what God has done for us by

loving us and sending his son Jesus to die for us.

It also relates how the Holy Spirit is our friend and guide.

It would make a great gift and keepsake for any child being baptised.

It would be a useful tool for any church to use during a Baptism service and is also an appropriate book to teach your child simple prayers or bible verses.

The stories, verses and poetry are concise and easily learnt, but the message it brings will be remembered long into the child's life.

Becky Clark is a member of the Ayr congregation

Capture Me
By Kellie Hansen
CD
RRP \$13 + postage

25-year-old Kellie Hansen is an up and coming independent musician from Toowoomba in Queensland.

Capture Me is her very first effort at recording her own material and what a job she does.

It's a very back to basics sound with Kellie injecting her faith and spiritual beliefs into this album which has made it a very personal sounding recording.

Kellie is open and up front with the fact that this recording is part of her understanding of her own faith and as such that is what the songs reflect.

The music is very much a guitar and vocal driven sound and Kellie has certainly made it obvious that she enjoys the music and has loved the process of making her EP.

With only six tracks *Capture Me* doesn't take long to listen to, but it's a really nice album to relax and enjoy.

To purchase the CD go to www.myspace.com/kelliehansenacoustic.

Matt Gees is an online reporter for ABC radio

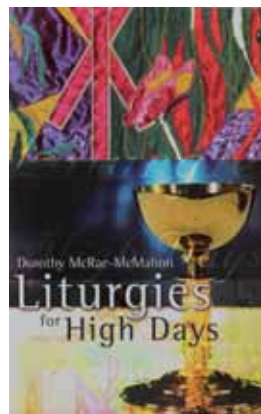


Liturgies for High Days
By Dorothy McRae-McMahon
MediaCom Education Inc
RRP \$29.95

This is a terrific resource from a woman who has given much to the Church.

I am grateful to Dorothy McRae-McMahon for these liturgies for the 'high days' of the church year, from Advent to Christ the King and a few more besides. There is often just the right phrase at just the right time; for example, in a Prayer of Intercession Palm Sunday service:

REVIEWS



Praise to the One who looks upon the suffering of the people with gentle eyes in a face like flint forever steadfast in love and courage never turning away from all that would challenge good and truth.

So many good words!

It's not perfect though; I miss the note of Adoration in these liturgies - Prayers of Adoration are the hardest corporate prayers to write, and it would be good to have more.

The Great Thanksgiving prayers towards the end give a great opening, then leave the leader to her own devices. I would have appreciated more filling out of these prayers.

I also think that some of the Affirmations of Faith are better as simple Affirmations, perhaps to be used after a Prayer of Lament, or as part of a Dismissal at the end of a service.

I could say more, but why quibble about such a useful work?

In her preface, Dorothy writes: "Obviously all good leaders of worship decide what suits their church culture and practice."

We all take the ideas of others and evolve and adapt for best use. I certainly do!

And I'll be taking *Liturgies for High Days* and setting it alongside *Uniting in Worship 2* in the future.

Paul Walton is a minister at Centenary Uniting Church and Chair of the National Working Group on Worship

The Lamb Enters the Dreaming: Nathanael Pepper & the Ruptured World
By Robert Kenny
Scribe Publications
RRP \$39.95

Robert Kenny presents a biographical exploration of the conversion and life of Nathanael Pepper, who is recorded in Australian history as the first real Aboriginal convert to Christianity.

It is set in the country side of pastoral Victoria in the mid-eighteen hundreds, in the midst of a climate of pessimism as to the future of the "Aboriginal race".

As much as this is a book about Pepper it is also the story of Christianity in the colonisation of

Australia, and its early engagement with Aboriginal people.

Throughout *The Lamb Enters the Dreaming* Kenny speculates about the impact of settlers, livestock, and disease on the beliefs of Aboriginal people, and the consequences for their acceptance of Jesus Christ, the god of the invaders. If there is a fault with the book it is such speculation.

However, Kenny's speculations are both reasonable and insightful, giving us an opportunity to imagine the difficulties of understanding Christ the Shepherd and the Lamb, from a world where both sheep and the shepherds were foreign intruders.

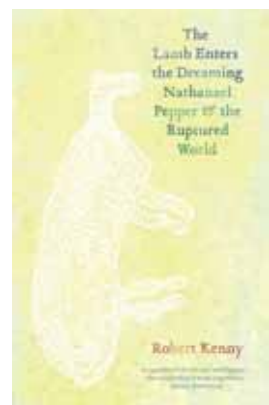
Although Kenny is not a Christian, he displays a sensitivity and understanding of the Christian missionary that is unexpected, and he challenges modern interpretations that describe aboriginal conversion to Christianity as necessarily coerced or destructive.

The Lamb Enters the Dreaming is a wonderful piece of historical exploration; it is extremely well researched, and imbued with humanity. It is an enjoyable read with straightforward modern language, but at 341 pages and the occasional scholarly reference it is not light reading.

Consequently the reader will find some prior historical knowledge helpful, although not essential. I learnt a lot of history from this book.

Those with an interest in Indigenous and colonial Australian history, or the history of religion in Australia, will devour this book.

Timothy Trudgen is a Cross-Cultural Consultant and anthropology student



More reviews available at www.journeyonline.com.au including:

Breaking the Chains of Abuse: A Practical Guide
By Sue Atkinson

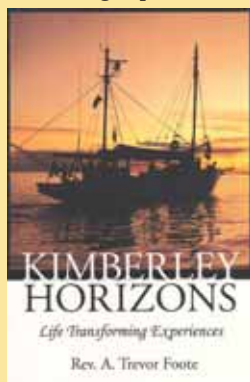
This is more than a self-help book about abuse. It is a dichotomy of listed practical solutions, as well as a collection of moving insights for any reader; either victim, carer, or the curious.

Bruce Raymond



Kimberley Horizons – Life Transforming Experiences

By Rev A. Trevor Foote
Ark House Press
RRP \$20



What an inspirational and exciting read! This book is more than a book about a family's ministry; it is also about serving and sacrifice, life and longings, mission and mystery, people and priorities, charm and challenge.

In many ways this is a simple story of a man (and his family) called by God to be his workers and do his work in a place that many of us would only ever visit, and never stay.

And yet, just as the pages became chapters, so did my initial curiosity become an unquenchable thirst.

I just had to keep reading to see what next was going to happen – who next would be drawn into dialogue, what next would beckon this Pastor's heart?

Kimberley Horizons is an autobiography of four years of ministry by Rev Trevor Foote and his wife and kids in the remote area (much more remote then compared to now) of the Kimberleys in north west Western Australia.

It is relatively short, easy to read, thought provoking, soul enriching, captivating and even has pictures.

It is informative, educational, historical and motivational.

It includes a plethora of illustrations and insights catapulting the reader into thoughts and feelings of light and dark, good and bad, dust and death, wet and dry – simultaneously.

As I read, it's as though the very words and pages sprang to life.

One cannot read this with integrity and not feel the array of feelings that this family experienced.

I became so entrenched in the experiences, the heartaches, the joys, the learnings, the newness, and the diversity of people and the vastness of the territory, that at times I truly felt I was there too.

Kimberley Horizons packs a punch because it is true – because it speaks of reality – because it pays tribute to God's awesome presence with, protection of, and provision for his people – but perhaps mostly because it challenges the reader to engage with the same God who called and equipped this particular 'Minister'.

On completing *Kimberley Horizons* I had no doubt that this four years 'experience', certainly shaped a servant, framed a family, and moulded both minister and ministry.

Anyone can value from reading this book, particularly if one is prepared to launch into the life issues that it raises.

For me, while it obviously is based on a certain timeframe, a specific place, and a particular family, the lessons learnt – the people ministered to – the distances covered – the loneliness felt and the friendships made can be applied to almost any environment.

They have a universal appeal to any who are called by God to be extended beyond their current place. Highly recommended.

Kimberley Horizons is available from Trevor Foote at 40 Taylor St Ipswich 07 3812 7889 or email footeatthur@dodo.com.au or from Vision Bookshop at Mount Gravatt.

Dave Thomas is a Community Minister at Tallebudgera on the Gold Coast

12 August: Graceville

The suburb of Graceville is about seven kilometres from the Brisbane CBD, practically enclosed on three sides by the Brisbane River.

The heritage-listed church is a miniature cathedral in the suburbs, affectionately known as the "wedding cake church".

The congregation is led by Rev Christopher Barr and comprises a group of faithful and gifted workers for Christ who care greatly for one another and whose influence permeates the local community and beyond.

We give thanks to God for all those involved in the various ministries of the church, each doing a wonderful job according to the gifts they have been given for the building up of the church.

We also give thanks for good ecumenical relationships, expressed primarily through R.E., school chaplaincy, and shared worship.

Please pray for members of the congregation and the wider community who are suffering illness at this time, and those who are caring for them.

May they know God's peace, strength and healing presence.

Please pray for the new ministry of The Steeple Op Shop, which will open on Saturday 18 August, that we may continue to develop further connections with the wider community.

Please pray that we might be attentive to the wisdom and guidance of the Holy Spirit as we consider how best to fulfil our high calling as servants of Christ in this place and time, and how we can be faithful stewards of all that has been placed in our care, especially as we explore options for the continued maintenance and development of our properties.

19 August: Merthyr Road

Merthyr Road Uniting Church is situated in the New Farm inner city area of Brisbane.

Please pray that the Lord would grow us in grace and care for each other and the community that surrounds us.

Pray that the newly formed Church Council would clearly hear the voice of the Holy Spirit in discerning missional directions for the future, and be emboldened to step out with even more new initiatives.

Pray for those running the low

PRAYER DIARY

income Brekky Club and Food co-op program, that God would refresh them, and lead many new volunteers to help out.

Pray that God would send us volunteer children's workers to start up the new kids club on a Sunday night.

Pray that God would refresh the ministry team at Merthyr, with peace, joy, and energy for the years to come.

Pray that God would send the necessary people with his gifts for the ministries he wants to grow at Merthyr.

Pray for our new contemporary service.

We give thanks for the growth and pray for many more new young people to come through our doors and find Sunday Night Live a safe place to worship God and to meet friends.

Pray for refreshing of our volunteers who have worked very hard in establishing the new service as we continue to move forward.

Pray for an excellent response from our local area to the mail-out regarding Sunday Night Live.

May God, by his Spirit, draw many people who have been inactive in their faith, and who are seeking to know more about the faith.

Pray for our faithful Sunday morning congregation, that God would continue to grow them and bring many more to join their community. We pray for their well-being and refreshing as they have served faithfully for many years. We give God thanks for them.

We pray that the young people who have been investigating faith in the Thursday night group would continue to make commitments to Christ and to the worshipping community at Merthyr in service.

We ask that the new Xplore course would attract many seekers who are wanting to learn about the Christian faith, and that there would be a wonderful sense of welcoming amongst the new people.

26 August: Newlife Uniting Church Robina

Newlife Uniting Church is a regional church and community centre located in the central Gold Coast area.

We have recently embarked on a

visioning process and our vision is to seek to become a loving, Christ centred community transforming the world with the gospel.

We would appreciate prayers that the vision might become a reality and that we honour it and our slogan - "Changing Lives, Transforming the World".

While the Gold Coast may seem to be a place of wealth and a large playground, there are many who suffer from poverty, health and mental illness. The latest census supported what we already knew.

Please pray for our community and our involvement within it, especially our understanding of new life in the context of the gospel.

Pray for the other Christian churches of all denominations that we might work together to make a difference to those issues.

We give thanks for the growth in all ministry areas and the finances to continue to provide services across a large range of ministries; the playgroup, children's, youth and young adults ministries; and the continued growth of Crossroads Gold Coast and the support from Home and Community Care Program.

Please pray for the recruitment of staff to fulfil two important roles:

The Youth and Young Adults Pastor, and the CEO of Newlife Care Inc, the caring arm of the church.

Both are vital roles and ministries and we seek God's wisdom and the discernment of the Holy Spirit in finding the right staff members.

Please pray for other members of the ministry team who take on an extra load to cover the roles and for existing staff and their positions in a variety of ministry areas.

Pray that we continue to bring the good news of Christ to peoples of all ages.

Pray for upcoming events at the church including the Creating a Conversion Culture Conference for the Local Church Development network for the Uniting Church in Queensland to be held in September and the visit by Peter Pollock a great South African Christian cricketer from 5-7 October.

Pray for our new Elders Council, this now also forms our Church Council.

Pray for wisdom, guidance, discernment and love.

30 years of ordination



Just prior to the Uniting Church in Australia's 30th birthday, (from left) Rev Harold Kilah, Rev Cecil Geyer, Rev Pam Russell, Rev Noel Crowther and Rev Ray Herman celebrated the 30th anniversary of their ordination at St Andrew's Uniting Church, Brisbane City on Sunday 27 May.

Far from rotten foundations

Ray Lindenmayer must be passing through a bad patch! His jaundiced letter in the July *Journey* asserts that the Uniting Church is disintegrating, and blames the Basis of Union.

Is our church disintegrating? He gives no evidence. Attendance at services may be declining, but that isn't the most important measure.

Christ gave us far more important criteria in his portrayal of the final judgement and here the Uniting Church has no reason to be ashamed: the hungry have been fed; refugees have been welcomed and settled; the naked have been clothed; the sick have been visited and cared for; those in prison and their families have been given pastoral care and support. The range of social services provided by the Uniting Church is impressive.

He attacks the Basis of Union as a "rotten foundation" on which our church is built. As a member of the Joint Commission on Church Union which drew up the Basis, may I say emphatically that it was never intended to be the foundation of the Uniting Church. Christ crucified and risen is the foundation.

He asserts that 'free wheeling liberals' fit in comfortably. Well, maybe as members, but not as Ministers of the Word, required to adhere to the Basis. The Basis of Union affirms that "The Uniting Church lives and works within the faith ... of the One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church." Again, it affirms the faith as spelt out in the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds. Hardly free wheeling liberalism!

In 1979, when he was ordained, Mr Lindenmayer promised to adhere to the Basis of Union. He now describes it as a "rotten foundation." He obviously no longer adheres to it.

Perhaps he should examine his conscience and take the next step.

Bruce Upham
Kenmore

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

CLASSIFIEDS

Accommodation

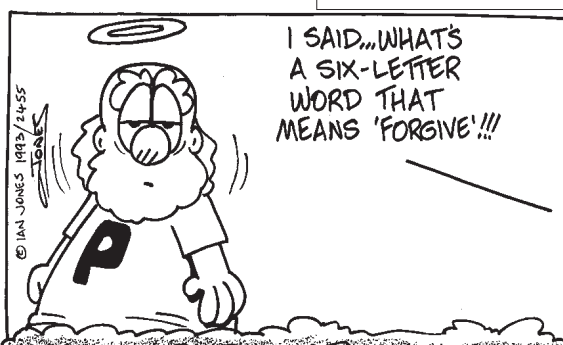
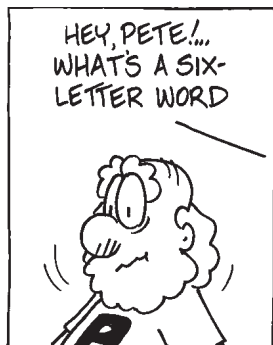
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Not agreement, love

I write to express my disagreement with Rev Ray Lindenmeyer (July *Journey*).

Although he does not say so explicitly, he appears to think that the church should be an organisation of people who are alike and hold similar views.

Fortunately for us, God pours his gracious love on the just and the unjust; on the "narrow fundamentalists and free wheeling liberals". So all of us there in the church!

And we owe one another not agreement, but love, which includes respect.

David Shield
Nhulunbuy

No to Spong

I refer to the advertisement in the July *Journey*, promoting the "Common Dreams" tour with Bishop John Shelby Spong.

I must register my absolute disgust at finding such an advertisement in our church paper. This man holds views on religion that are so divergent from traditional Christian belief and practice that it is impossible to even classify them as Christian.

Genuine seekers, the marginalised and yes, even some mature Christians who have questions and doubts, could easily be persuaded that some of the things he says might be true. The results of his efforts could cause many souls to fall and be lost to the kingdom of God.

So I say, people, be on your guard! Bishop Spong's so-called Progressive Religion is heresy!

Jenny Shaw
Rosewood

Mr Spong denies the cultural articles of the faith, says that the incarnation is "nonsense", that the resurrection of Jesus is fiction, and that the Bible is propaganda.

I think that the influence of great Christians over the centuries, and the growth of the church today, is related to belief in the historic orthodox Christian faith, not the revisionism stated by John Shelby Spong.

Lilian Stephens
Fig Tree Pocket

Mr Morey (July *Journey*) put the case for editorial discretion very succinctly yet the Spong advertisement repeats on page 10 in the same edition!

The pedantic response was that the advertisement does not breach advertising policy as does not imply any endorsement etc!

It seems that warm fuzzy thinking has created a modern, wide and secular super-highway on which to journey to that 'narrow gate'.

Is *Journey* so needy for dollars or is this the quivering future of the UCA, now that we are in the third millennium?

Give him back his advertising money and let him grandstand elsewhere...please.

Diane Strub
Burnett Heads

LETTERS

Yes to Spong

I think it is true to say that evolution has been a dirty word for far too long in our church.

The process of evolution affects all processes of living, the physical as well as the social and the religious.

There is so much absolute proof that the process of evolution is irrevocably progressing in all fields of life that all we have to do is to think a bit harder and read and compare our present circumstances with those of a few years ago.

We can even go to the Bible to carefully observe how our insights have changed.

We no longer hear the voice of God saying: "Kill them all, women and children" (read Joshua).

Even by reading the New Testament we can see evolution in action. Love thy neighbour as thyself! Did the voice of God change? How? Why? Did the mind of God change? How can that be? Why would God need to change his mind?

It looks to me like Bruce Morey (July *Journey*) has given little thought to these questions, or are we not allowed to ask them?

People like Bishop Spong are light years ahead in their understanding of scripture.

Len Notenboom
Elanora

Traveston still Cross

This letter came from Rev Iain Watt after the brief note in the July Journey about the decision of the Synod to support the people of the Mary Valley. Mr Watt refers people to the website http://www.savethemaryriver.com/_mgxroot/page_10724.html for more information.

We are still subject to lies and insensitivity on the nightly news by our state leadership. People are losing friends; businesses are closing or headed that way.

We are drought declared, farmers have no feed and insufficient water allocations to irrigate.

Destroying dairy cows will be the end for some.

This has been a year of real suffering. Unbelief in the proposal has gone through anger to fear, always insufficient information, and now the growing distasteful experience of hatred toward the premier and his smiling face.

One girl in Imbil after proudly receiving a Premier's award for reading proficiency noticed an offensive name at the bottom, she asked her mother, "Is this the man that wants our valley for water?"

Finding the truth she cut off the offensive part, then with mixed feelings destroyed the rest of the award. Her mum said she is proud of her daughter's stand but sad that she felt she had to do it.

Hate is sliding into many hearts young and old.

Iain Watt
Imbil

Compromise = death

Re: Scott Stephens essay, "Have We Lost Ourselves Along the Way?" (June *Journey*).

A confronting question!

On further reflection I realise that the social Christian and their social ethics has certainly paved the way to a well worn path of compromise and to a duality of compromise that offers unthinking comfort to the social Christian.

It certainly seems that man has chosen the easier path of such compromise in the religious institution of the church and constantly diverts from the original challenge of Christianity.

Surely the highest value of Christian teaching and the most exalted is the teaching of the understanding of our spiritually and the love of nature and all creation.

Jesus realised his own spirituality and divinity was within him and not out there. He urged us to love our sister and our brother and ourselves. This is not a teaching that has prevailed, as the history of Christianity is largely of dissension and intolerance and self doubt.

Has the church ears to listen to and evaluate the possibility that by not adapting to our spiritual involvement and evolution that, by denying it, one must ask is Christianity failing, fading or dying?

Janet Noble
Chermside/Kedron

Some respect please

Scott Stephens' article "Is this our Australia" (July *Journey*) refers to our Prime Minister's "vile affirmation of our basest tendencies".

It is outrageous to use an expression such as vile in association with the nation's Prime Minister.

It is little wonder the Uniting Church is rapidly losing members when our theologians and ministers alienate a large section of membership by such language about the nation's Prime Minister.

Warren Brown
Hendra

The people's theology

The Synod is to be congratulated on establishing the Network of Christian Formation to provide learning opportunities for lay and specified ministry workers (though one might never know from the title).

The Uniting Church is uniquely placed to stimulate discussion on matters of faith and belief.

My hope is that our theological colleges might also be encouraged to step outside the cloisters to make biblical scholarship available generally to lay people and the interested public.

A program of regional seminars on contemporary theological issues, for example, might be welcomed

by those who wish to keep in touch with theological insights and developments yet feel their parish life does not afford them this opportunity.

If it is the intention of the Formation program to engage people at the 'grassroots' in a broadening and constructive interaction on theological and related cultural issues, my feeling is that the church as a whole will emerge the stronger for it.

When people seriously engage the questions of faith and belief, it is my experience that faith is enhanced rather than diminished.

Peter Robinson
Paradise Point

Child Abuse incursion

Our Moderator, Rev Dr David Pitman, has written, "It is deplorable that it (the government) should use the threat of withholding welfare from already desperately needy families in order to impose its will on this matter".

I cannot agree with this statement. I feel that it is not "deplorable".

In communities where child abuse is evident it is necessary to have some strong and sympathetic entity to intervene in an endeavour to eliminate, as much as possible, the bad habits that exist.

If the desired result does not eventuate, then the government's action may, at least, break the cycle, and influence the children and future generations in a better way of life.

Nev J Cole
Indooroopilly

God has better ideas

Those who set themselves up in the Church as exclusive guardians of orthodoxy should carefully study Christ's relationship with people of his own time who claimed the same privilege.

The moral and liturgical police keep lighting small fires that absorb much energy, time and goodwill.

The sad thing is those fires will not go out but will smoulder waiting for a wind of self-righteousness to fan them.

The only real faith life is the one the Scriptures call witness. And witness is borne in works.

To believe is to practise. In the deed our faith becomes truth, not only for others, but for ourselves as well.

We become Christians by acting as Christians.

Our witness is validated by the deed of deliverance.

Duane A Vachon
Richlands

Historically Speaking



FROM PADDLEWHEELERS TO THE CITY CATS

Today, sleek, fast City Cats, with aboriginal names associated with areas of the Brisbane River, dart to and fro, up and down the river, while many continue to mourn the loss of the city's cross-river ferries.

One special cross-river ferry was the steam-driven paddlewheeler vehicular vessel, the Hetherington, which saw more than 40 years service on the river. Named after a Brisbane City Council alderman, the Hetherington initially linked Kangaroo Point to Charlotte Street in the city in a service which operated from 1913 to 1921.

From 1925, this slow, but stable lady of the river moved downstream to the Bulimba reach, linking Oxford Street, Bulimba to Commercial Road, Teneriffe. Her original passengers were intended to be horse-drawn vehicles but her latter years coincided with the arrival of the car in numbers and the construction of the Story Bridge, which, ultimately, contributed to her demise in 1953.

Alex Gow Funerals

A Brisbane-owned family business, established in 1840.

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JOURNEY asks...

How has road trauma impacted on your faith journey?

Lynne Davis

In a split second, my life changed.

I went from being an able bodied person to one who from that point would be labelled "disabled", my appearance was changed and my ability to work ever again, to care for my kids and even my ability to care for myself was in question.

For the next four years I was in and out of hospital and had countless operations.

Those early years were not easy. I was angry. I hated what had happened to me and most of all I hated the way I looked. I was not impressed with God.

If God cared for me where was he when that car hit mine?

During the early years I travelled to a place I had not experienced before.

Death sounded like a great option and several times I contemplated suicide. Why hadn't I died? Living was too hard.

I'm not exactly sure what happened. As I look back it is as if it was out of my control.

Somehow, in a miraculous, illogical way, I realised I needed to forgive the man who caused the accident, myself and even God.

Not easy under the circumstances but it happened, I believe, because God is faithful, God can and God does bring about transformation in the lives of those



who trust him and slowly, but surely, God began to heal my body, mind and spirit.

Somehow I learned, as did Paul, that it is when I am weak that I am strong.

I discovered that it is when I have nothing left, when all of me is gone, that I am a powerful weapon in the hands of God and that God has my attention.

It sounds incredible but I am who I am today because of the way this event has shaped my life.

A close encounter with death, like I had, sure made me realise what my life was about. I discovered that 'things' are not important.

What is important is the transforming, recreating love of God that can take the impossible and make it possible.

Lynne Davis is minister at St Marks Uniting Church Mt Gravatt. You can read more of her story (in the name Lynne Barklem) in chapter 30 of the book *Growing Disciples* edited by John E. Mavor, JBCE 1995

Marguerite Chapman

On Sunday 28 November 1993 while driving to Giru to conduct the 9.30am worship service I was involved in a vehicle accident.

I was told that the engine came through the firewall – whatever that means – and the driver's door had to be cut open to release me.

I was initially attended to in Ayr but within 24 hours I was taken to Wesley-Parkhaven Hospital in Townsville for orthopaedic surgery.

Considerable damage was done to my lower legs and I was originally given the option of amputation.

My G.P. thought that I would be confined to a wheelchair but after some time on crutches and a wheeled walker by August 1994, by then using a walking stick, I began to drive again.

Presbytery people and the hospital chaplain called in on a daily basis while I was there and on my return to Ayr Hospital I experienced God's call and love in unusual yet special ways.

Staff queried the contents of devotional books left on the top of my locker and I was able to share with them.

One evening a nurse came and asked me to share with her because it was the first time she had a death on a shift while she was in charge. We talked and prayed.

A couple of ladies from our congregation (I didn't know them very well) visited regularly and we shared faith stories.

A few years later I sat with one of them and her family while she died and was able to tell them things about her faith journey that she hadn't shared with them.

When I left hospital at the end of 14 weeks I started preaching again. A suitable



stool was bought so that I had no excuse. I couldn't have stood long enough.

Although I'm never free of pain I believe that I received God's healing touch – I have never been bitter about the accident, I've never said, "Why me?" and I'm accepted by the handicapped and frail as one of them.

Some of them have actually said, "I know you understand how I feel". My walking stick has opened doors into hearts.

Because of my handicap my type of ministry is different to what I had envisaged

in early 1993, however when God calls he also equips. Praise him!

As I reflect on what my life has become I affirm that there is nothing – no pain or ministry task – that the team of God and Marguerite can't manage.

Marguerite Chapman is a member of the Ayr congregation and a former Chairperson of the North Queensland Presbytery. At the age of 78 she still works for 12 hours each week helping out in the Church Office

June Ehrenberg

A peaceful stretch of the Bruce Highway just to the north of Yandina was shattered on the evening of 7 December 1978 when eight people lost their lives in a tragic multi-vehicle accident. June Ehrenberg is a mother whose life was changed forever as a result of the accident.

Our daughter Annette was going to see the film *Jesus of Nazareth*. We weren't religious and my husband wasn't very happy about her going to see this film.

I thought surely if there is a God he wouldn't let anything happen to an 11-year-old girl going to see a film about Jesus. And besides, it was so hard to say no to Irene who was taking her.

We went down to the corner to meet Irene and she was late and I got a bit angry about that and I would have come home but another lady came along and talked.

We were there when Irene came and they carefully buckled Annette into the car and they were off.

I woke up the next morning at 1am and saw the light was still on so I woke my husband and said we'd better go looking for them.

We started off towards Nambour and came to the turnoff leading to the Bruce Highway and saw there had been an accident.

There were police cars, fire brigade and ambulances all there.

We went over to the policeman and described our daughter and he said the

bodies had been taken to the morgue.

The attendant at the hospital showed us Annette's body and we identified it.

We arranged a funeral. We didn't want anything in a church because we hadn't been to church before and we didn't want to be hypocrites.

The minister interviewed us in his study and he kept on quoting from the Bible and I was getting really angry because our



daughter was dead and what good was that going to do?

Little did I expect that it wouldn't be long before I would have walked barefoot over broken glass to hear what that man had to say about God.

I had an old Bible I'd been given when

I was about ten so I started reading it at Genesis because I didn't know any different.

That's where you usually start a book – at the beginning.

I must have got into the New Testament and I remember one night kneeling beside the bed and saying, "I believe".

I thought, "No, I'm still not sure. Oh God, I don't believe and you know I don't, but I want to. Help me to believe."

I dreamed that I was sitting at the kitchen table and Annette was standing there and she said, "Why are you so sad?" And I said, "Because you're dead".

When I woke up I knew there was a God, she is with him and she is not dead. Spirituality she is alive.

June and Rod Ehrenberg found fellowship and support in the Nambour Uniting Church where, all these years later, they continue to worship and serve God.

June shares her story with the prayer that others may find strength on God for their own journey. Their story is told on the DVD *Faith Journeys* produced by Amity Care Inc (Productions) part of the ministry of Nambour Uniting Church. To purchase copies of the DVD or details of other worship resources please contact Greg Ross on 07 5441 1135 or email

Nambouruca@internode.on.net