



Award winning
Journey

Page 5



Reality
Television

Page 10

A night worth
sharing

Page 11



School's out - what next?

NOVEMBER IS the whirlwind month of activity around the end of Year 12 as more than 40 000 young Queenslanders finalise their study program; attend graduations; head for Schoolies Week; and negotiate jobs, university entrance, Gap Years, college or other life changes.

It is also the time when young people sweat on their OP scores and renegotiate their relationship with parents and the world.

Almost two-thirds of the school leavers will continue on next year with some form of education, most combining study and part-time work, but first will take time out to let their hair down and party.

Soon the images of drunken, boisterous school leavers crushing into Cavill Avenue at Surfers Paradise will reappear on our

television screens; other young people will seek more benign options to mark this important part of their journey.

Whatever the choices, Schoolies Week is only the marker of the more important transition between school and whatever lies beyond.

Some churches are taking seriously the challenge of supporting their young people through this important life stage and others will work to protect young people from the risky behaviours associated with the Schoolies event.

This month *Journey* looks at life after Year 12 and encourages congregations to take an active interest in a significant group of people at the most crucial transition point in their lives.

More about after school

- | | |
|-------|--|
| P.2 | Editorial |
| P.8 | Growing up, leaving home
College: a place of memories |
| P. 9 | Bridging the Gap
Taking a year off |
| P. 11 | Schoolies: more than a party |
| P. 16 | <i>Journey</i> asks |



Arriving at the Gold Coast for Schoolies in 2006 are Thomas Chadwick (driver), Graham Rigley (white hat) and Nathan Dabicich, all 17, from Redcliffe. Newspix / Riley Paul

Who speaks for the church?

FROM TIME to time I receive correspondence expressing criticism regarding to something I have said or written in my capacity as Moderator.

As Moderator I am expected to keep the church informed with regard to issues that impact on the life and well-being of both church and society, and I am empowered by the Regulations and By-Laws to speak on behalf of the church in the public arena.

I seek to do that as faithfully and as well as I can.

However, in fulfilling my responsibilities I understand that in speaking on behalf of the church I am not just expressing my own personal opinions on the issues under consideration.

I think it is important that everyone appreciate the basis upon which I say and write the things I do.

I am, first of all, guided and informed by the scriptures, as understood and interpreted by scholarly commentators down through the centuries, recognising that God's word is a living word and is not captive to any time or culture.

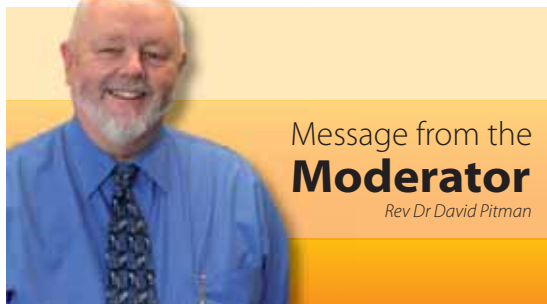
We speak and act as the Holy Spirit continues to inspire us and expand our minds and our hearts in a context of rapid change.

I believe that every statement I make is consistent with those fundamental biblical principles that undergird and guide our Christian discipleship.

I also give heed to previous decisions and statements of the Councils of the Church.

The Assembly and the Synod have, over the 30 years of our life, made a number of quite specific and detailed statements, beginning with the *Statement to the Nation* issued at the time of inauguration in 1977.

Nothing I have ever said or written is in conflict with the official position of the Uniting Church.



Message from the Moderator

Rev Dr David Pitman

It is my privilege to participate in a number of ecumenical activities, including regular meetings with other Heads of Churches and the Executive of Queensland Churches Together.

These forums provide a context in which there is often conversation on matters of concern to all the churches.

I am conscious when I speak publicly that I am frequently

both Government and Non-Government Commissions, independent programs of research, and inquiries initiated by our own and other churches.

Then there is the interaction and conversation I have with hundreds of people as I travel widely across the state, hearing and seeing at first hand the circumstances in which people are living, the challenges they are facing, and the impact of political decisions on their families and communities.

Notwithstanding any of the above, I accept that from time to time some people will disagree with what I have said.

I respect their right to have and express a different opinion but believe that I act and speak responsibly in accordance with the role entrusted to me by the church, and I must continue to do so.

Having said that, we are having discussions at the present time regarding circumstances in which it is entirely appropriate for others in the church to engage with the media and make statements in relation to their particular areas of expertise and responsibility.

With assistance from Phil Smith, our Synod Media Advisor and other experienced people, we are preparing a document to offer guidance to the church on this matter.

Who speaks for the church?

In regard to state-wide and Synod matters it is the Moderator who speaks, but always within the parameters outlined above.

"I am not just expressing my own personal opinions on the issues."

giving expression to convictions held in common by all of us in the ecumenical arena.

This is reinforced when we meet collectively with the Premier or Ministers of the government for conversations about matters that we believe are vital for the health and strength of our State or Nation.

I also have contact with a number of competent and qualified people whose counsel I seek on a regular basis.

These are people whose experience and depth of knowledge I value and respect.

I have available to me up-to-date and detailed information derived from the reports of

From the Editor

HAVING WALKED Cavill Avenue at Surfers Paradise and talked with both school leavers and the adults who provide the emergency support network, I have a word for parents.

There is no question the aim of Schoolies is to party hard and that that the primary lubricant for the event is alcohol which, together with a range of other drug-taking activity, will fuel the boisterous and, at times, risky behaviour.

Research into the Schoolies phenomenon also suggests that two thirds of males and one third of females expect to have sexual intercourse during their Schoolies Week holiday, and 40% will.

Queensland police claim that the widespread binge-drinking can lead to risky behaviour and poor decision-making and that heightened intoxication makes young people more vulnerable to becoming victims of crime.

While nearly every Schoolie will survive with no long-term physical injuries, some will carry significant emotional scars into their post-school life.

While not wanting to be a wower, I struggle to understand why a parent would make easy the participation of their young person in an event where they will be persuaded, if not coerced, into losing control or going beyond their usual moral limits.

And I wonder why some parents would engage in the complicit behaviour of driving their kids to their Surfers Paradise accommodation and helping them carry boxes of alcoholic drinks up to the unit.

Schoolies can only rent expensive Gold Coast units if a parent is prepared to guarantee security on the agreement through the use of that parent's credit card, and participation is often parent funded.

There are lots of other generous gifts that could be offered as an alternative to the traditional Schoolies escape.

While self awareness and a moral understanding of right and wrong should have already been instilled in a child well before she or he reaches adolescence, there ought to be no complacency that allows parents to encourage and facilitate unnecessary risk-taking behaviours.

Yes, the teenage years are a time for parents to let go and encourage their child to make her or his own decisions and learn to deal with the consequences, but there is still a responsibility to promote mature conduct and wise decision making.

Bruce Mullan

Sign of the Times



Photo by Evan Read

A NEW housing estate has recently been built on the block of land next to the Tingalpa Uniting Church.

Thanks to a grant from the UC Foundation, the congregation has been able to deliver "Welcome neighbour packs" containing tea, coffee, fruit cake, Scripture text mugs, vouchers from the local bakery and butcher, information about the area and about the church, and other goodies.

This is their sign of welcome to the new occupants.

JOURNEY

Journey is published 11 times a year for the Queensland Synod of the Uniting Church in Australia. Opinions expressed in Journey do not necessarily reflect those of the editor or the policies of the Uniting Church.

Acceptance of advertising does not imply endorsement; inclusion of advertising material is at the discretion of the publisher.

Journey cannot guarantee the publication and/or return of submissions but makes every effort to do so if requested.

Editor
Associate editor / advertising
Designer

Bruce Mullan
Mardi Lumsden
Osler Lau

Production: Communications Services Unit
Printing: Rural Press (QLD) Printing, Ormiston,
Circulation 15,500
ISSN: 0817-4466

Closing date for editorial and advertising for December Journey is 9 November
Next issue of Journey will be available in churches on Sunday, 2 December

Communications Services Unit
Uniting Church in Australia Queensland Synod
60 Bayliss Street Auchenflower QLD GPO Box 674 Brisbane QLD 4001
Ph: 07 3377 9910 Email: journey@uqaqld.com.au
Fax: 07 3377 9796 Web: www.journeyonline.com.au

Appeal to meet a northerly need

By Bruce Mullan

IN RESPONSE to descriptions of unsatisfactory living conditions for the family of Thursday Island minister Rev Lawes Waia, the Queensland Synod has launched an urgent state-wide appeal for assistance to undertake urgently needed repairs to the manse.

Launching the appeal, the Moderator Rev Dr David Pitman said the most northerly manse in Australia is in such poor condition it does not meet even the most basic standards required by the church.

"Members of the local church and community on Thursday Island have very limited means and the cost of the repairs required is well beyond their capacity," Dr Pitman said.

The manse has been run-down over a number of years and now needs extensive maintenance and renovation to restore it to an acceptable condition.

Once the centre of a lucrative pearling industry, Thursday Island at the tip of the Cape York Peninsula is about 4.5 square kilometres in area with a mostly Indigenous population of around 3000.

North Queensland Presbytery Minister Rev Bruce Cornish said a builder has been found who is



The Thursday Island manse is well below standard. Photo by Bruce Cornish

willing to undertake the work required but the presbytery did not have sufficient funds to finance the project.

"The target for the appeal has been set at \$50 000 towards the total cost of \$67 000," Mr Cornish said.

Dr Pitman said, "We believe that there are individuals and groups in the Uniting Church in Queensland who will want to support this appeal and I urge our members and congregations to contribute to a very worthy cause."

The Synod Leadership Team

has determined that if more than the \$50 000 is raised the balance will be set aside to ensure that a proper schedule of maintenance can be guaranteed into the future.

Details of the appeal will appear in December *Journey* or call the Queensland Synod on 3377 9777.

Uniting Church defends Sudanese refugees

By Phil Smith

THE UNITING Church in Queensland has defended the dignity and good name of Queensland's North African Community from attacks by Immigration Minister Kevin Andrews.

"The government's decision to single out the African community in this way is deeply troubling," according to Queensland Moderator Rev Dr David Pitman.

"Mr Andrews singled out the Sudanese and slurred that entire group within our community on the basis of problems common to many Australians of all backgrounds."

In Queensland, the Uniting Church has welcomed and assisted hundreds of North Africans in recent years.

In Africa, the church's aid partners have witnessed first hand the turmoil from which these families have come.

"The Australian government has acknowledged the suffering and civil unrest in that region and the years refugees spend in camps, yet the Immigration Minister has decided to reduce the number of refugees from Africa."

Dr Pitman pointed out that antisocial behaviour by a small minority of young men is hardly unique to the Sudanese community.

"As an election looms, it seems the Howard government has

chosen an obvious and easy target, ignoring all manner of other gangs formed by young men from particular communities throughout our country.

"If African immigrants are having difficulty settling into the Australian community, the Immigration Minister's job is to ask, 'Why?', and seek the answers to that question," Dr Pitman said.

Bayside Uniting Church Minister Rev Ian Lord said, "These are citizens who have done everything Australia asked of them."

"They have waited patiently, in often dreadful circumstances, while their applications were processed."

"They are not 'queue jumpers'. I am disgusted by this decision."

Mr Lord has attended citizenship ceremonies with local Sudanese families during the past

five years and said there are no prouder new citizens.

"However, this group probably faces a greater cultural shift than any other migrant or refugee group."

"They come from an environment such as Dafour to the suburbs of Brisbane with little experience of a commercial and structured society after years in camps."

"Among the Sudanese workers at the local abattoir and the Port of Brisbane are former lawyers, accountants and police officers."

"Their reputation with service providers such as real estate agents in our area is exemplary," Mr Lord said.

At St David's Uniting Church in Coopers Plains there are more than 100 Sudanese, including young men the church has helped to bring to Australia.

Rev Ivan Kirk told the story of three young men who took five months to walk from Sudan to the United Nations camp in Nairobi, where they waited for seven years until the Australian High Commission gave permission for the trio to resettle at their own expense.

"Our church helped pay their airfares," said Mr Kirk.

"They arrived in January and one of these fellows is already at the University of Queensland studying accounting."

Dr Pitman said, as with every other group of migrants who have

come from the conflict zones of Europe and Asia last century, integration has not been simple, but is very beneficial for Australia.

"It has shaped who we are in the 21st century."

Cautious welcome

THE UNITING Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress (UAICC) of the Uniting Church has welcomed the Government's commitment to a new statement of reconciliation in the preamble of the Constitution, saying its significance would be predicated on its negotiation with Indigenous people.

National (UAICC) Administrator Rev Shayne Blackman said while the proposed constitutional changes are a step in the right direction, a central concern if the Prime Minister is re-elected, will be his willingness to engage the rights of Indigenous people to negotiate how the preamble is to be worded and what socio-economic outcomes it will drive.

"If negotiation with Indigenous people is not central to the proposed constitutional changes then it will have just been symbolism for electioneering and a continuation of forced assimilation of Indigenous people into mainstream ideals."

"Only a system of governance that engages Indigenous people to have a full and non-conditional voice in their destiny through choice will enable a full realisation of their inherent strengths and God given abilities."

"We call upon the Government of the day to put politics aside and to incorporate Indigenous wisdom into their policy programming for Australia's first people."

Powering positive projects

Judy Douglas
Customer Service Officer

Every investment with U.C.I.S is an investment with power.
That's because every dollar invested with U.C.I.S helps us to finance projects such as building new worship centres, classrooms and hospitals.
And with a fixed term investment, you're not only helping others, you're helping yourself.
Invest for between three months and five years, and earn a fixed, tiered rate of interest—so the more you invest, the more you earn.
Right now, if you invest between \$20,000 and \$49,999 for five years, you'll earn interest of five per cent per annum.
So use your power—phone me on 1300 655 653 for an application form and information on the latest rates or visit www.ucis.com.au.

Judy

1300 655 653 | www.ucis.com.au



Moderator Rev Dr David Pitman.
Photo by Oker Lau



World Vision CEO Rev Tim Costello with Rebecca Chan at the Moreton Rivers Presbytery breakfast in September. Photo by Mardi Lumsden

Costello urges redemption is the key

By Mardi Lumsden

WORLD VISION CEO Rev Tim Costello was guest speaker at the Moreton Rivers Presbytery breakfast in September.

Over 200 people from Uniting Churches in the Moreton Rivers Presbytery as well as from other Presbyteries around Brisbane were urged by Mr Costello to focus on the true meaning of the word redemption.

With the film *Amazing Grace* blazing its way through cinemas, Mr Costello reminded attendees that slavery continues to happen today in the form of human trafficking.

He said around 28 million people are trafficked around the world each year, a significant number of these are children.

Mr Costello reminded people that in biblical teachings, after seven years slaves were set free, or 'redeemed', and debts were dropped.

He continued citing John Wesley and William Wilberforce as people who understood the true meaning of redemption and acknowledged that sometimes true redemption means taking risks and doing very unpopular things.

"Unless we arise in spirituality and understand redemption, we will not make poverty history," said Mr Costello.

After his address, Mr Costello fielded questions from the floor on issues including World Vision's work rehabilitating child soldiers in Uganda, housing affordability in Australia, intergenerational justice, and urban development.

Among the many people he chatted with was the Moreton Rivers Presbytery's newest member, Rebecca Chan, who was confirmed the week before the breakfast.

Northern Synod condemns government intervention

By Bruce Mullan

THE NORTHERN Synod of the Uniting Church in Australia has called on the Federal Government to repeal the *NT Emergency Response Act 2007* which authorises intervention in Indigenous communities in the Northern Territory.

Moderator Rev Wendell Flentje said the Synod will ask the Government to start afresh through consultative processes to develop a range of responses that directly address the recommendations of the *Little Children are Sacred* Report.

At the annual meeting of the Northern Synod in October, indigenous and non-indigenous members heard many cries for help and expressions of concern including a child from Galiwin'ku who asked, "Is there a war between black and white people?" and a woman from Ramingining who

said, "We heard they are coming to take away our children."

A statement from the Synod said, "We share a strong sense of betrayal concerning the

Federal Government's lack of consideration and incorporation of the recommendations from the *Little Children are Sacred* Report into its legislative response."

One Arnhem Land church leader said, "We are now under three laws: our own Aboriginal Law, Australian Law for all Australians and this new white man's law for Aboriginal People in the Northern Territory."

While the Northern Synod welcomed government action in seeking to address sexual abuse, it condemned the current legislative response as abusive, intrusive, and damaging.

"Of particular concern is the removal of the Permit System for entry into Aboriginal Land and the lack of consultation with indigenous people on this matter and on other major reforms contained within the various legislative changes that have been enacted."



Northern Synod Moderator Rev Wendell Flentje. Photo courtesy of the Northern Synod



Ronda Downs, Paul Clark and 'the cast' with students from Millaroo State School, Conner Cavallin, Hannah Soper, Lachlan Cavallin and Jacob Kenniff. Photo by Gwen Marshall

Housewife becomes puppet star

RONDA DOWNS, by day housewife and loving mother; but place a puppet on her arm and she becomes a star to children all across the Burdekin.

Ms Downs, along with Gwen

Marshall and Uniting Church Minister Rev Paul Clark, have completed a whirlwind seven day, 21 performance tour of every primary school in the Burdekin with their show, 'You Are Special.'

The presentation aimed to lift the self-esteem of students with the message that they are special; loved and created by God.

The show featured videos made by local year seven students in Religious Education, a puppet play about Dr Marylin Munro, a shady fabric surgeon who for one millions dollars can make you look like 'everyone else has always wanted you to look'; and a touching story by Max Lucado.

Mr Clark said the show has turned Ms Downs into a star.

"They wanted her autograph," he said.

"It's great to watch the young kids so excited by the singing and puppets, and then the older kids, some of whom think they are too old for puppets, unexpectedly engage and concentrate.

"You can see them suddenly realise, 'they are telling my story'.

"Ronda and Gwen are both stars in my books. They devote two solid weeks of their lives, for free, to bring hope to a new generation.

"Kids need adult affirmation."

Are you interested in serving the Uniting Church as a member of a school Board of Governors?

The Synod Schools' Commission is seeking expressions of interest from potential Board members.

For further information concerning the role and current vacancies please contact the Chair of the Synod Schools' Commission, Mrs Elaine Rae, on **3893 0283** or by email: **je.rae@bigpond.com**.

BlueCare
Built on Compassion
Driven on Care

Leave behind a special gift

By remembering us in your Will, you can ensure our work continues, and that your concern for others lives on.

For more information call **1800 001 953**.

www.bluecare.org.au

Christmas postcards



"THERE'S MORE than one man behind Christmas" is the theme of the 2007 Christmas promotion campaign which invites people to "revisit the Jesus story this Christmas".

Manager of the Communications Services Unit Mr Bruce Mullan said the Synod is again partnering with congregations to produce high-quality, low-cost resources for Christmas outreach in local communities.

"This campaign aims to present an image of the local Uniting Church as a place

to worship and reconnect with the Jesus story over Christmas."

Mr Mullan said a special section on the home page of the Synod website www.ucaqld.com.au will list Christmas service times around the state and provide information about church locations.

For Christmas 2006 over 30 000 postcards were printed for distribution and this year for the first time a similar program was available to promote Easter worship services and activities.

Journey: your award winning paper

JOURNEY WAS the outright winner of two major awards at the 2007 Australasian Religious Press Association (ARPA) awards in Auckland last month.

The awards were for "Best Newspaper Front Page", one of the most hotly contested award categories, and for the "Most Improved Newspaper - Ansva Insurance Award".

The "Best Newspaper Front Page" award was for the Christmas 2006 issue of *Journey* (right) which featured the image from the 'Christmas we are not alone' postcard campaign.

Winning these awards is an important acknowledgment of *Journey* staff Mardi Lumsden's journalistic abilities and Osker Lau's graphic design skills.

What the judges said

Best Newspaper Front Page Award

Designers are obviously enjoying the opportunity to experiment with colours and images on the front page of their newspapers. I liked the winning entry, *Journey*, as it followed all the guidelines and provided a high impact image to grab attention, yet still managed to give me a sense of some of the articles contained within the newspaper - and left plenty of space so I did not get a sense of clutter.

Most Improved Newspaper - Ansva Insurance Award

There's an obvious improvement in the presentation of *Journey*, a newspaper published by the Uniting Church of Queensland. Front pages are arresting and there's a much better use of back pages. Quality pictures are well-used and are of a good proportionate size in relation to its tabloid pages. There's also an assured use of colour on newsprint. Writing is strong throughout.



Raymont Lodge Residential College

Fully furnished, single room accommodation for students undertaking tertiary study in Brisbane. The College is located 4km from the heart of Brisbane and in close proximity to the University of Queensland and the Queensland University of Technology. All meals provided, internet access, individual telephones, common room, and swimming pool.

07 3377 9903

www.raymont.com.au

QUALITY EDUCATION FOR A SUCCESSFUL FUTURE



Presbyterian and Methodist
Schools Association
www.pmsa-schools.edu.au

A ministry of the Uniting and Presbyterian Churches, providing excellence in education in a Christian and caring environment.

Somerville House

Day and boarding school for girls
Preparatory to Year 12

07 3248 9200
www.somerville.qld.edu.au

Brisbane Boys' College

Boarding and day school
for boys in Prep to Year 12

07 3309 3500
www.bbc.qld.edu.au

Sunshine Coast Grammar School

Co-educational day school
Preschool to Year 12

07 5445 4444
www.scgs.qld.edu.au

Moreton Bay Boys' College

(In partnership with Moreton Bay College - a Uniting Church School)
Day school for boys
from Prep to Year 7

07 3906 9444
www.mbbc.qld.edu.au

Clayfield College

Girls: Prep to Year 12
Boarding: Girls over 10 years
Boys: Prep to Year 5

07 3262 0262
www.clayfield.qld.edu.au

Cape commissions community minister

PALMER WAPAU has been commissioned as a community minister with the people of Napranum, on the west coast of Cape York.

The commissioning was a community event with Mr Wapau taken to the church doorway by his family who processed singing a language song accompanied by Islander drums.

He was then delivered to the Congregation's elders who led him down the aisle and presented him to local minister Rev Saimoni Davui and Calvary minister Rev Shayne Blackman for commissioning.

Mr Wapau said the experience left him enthusiastic for his new ministry.

"I just felt so much joy as I left the commissioning and spent time with people from my family and community. I am energised, I want to jump up high," he said.



Palmer Wapau is escorted to church for his commissioning. Photo courtesy of the UAICC

Situated 13 kilometres south of Weipa, Napranum is an Aboriginal

Community Council area with a population of around 1000 people.

Prison ministry high flyer

PILOT NEVILLE Wilson was commissioned as chaplain for Capricornia Correctional Centre in Rockhampton in October.

Mr Wilson, who will serve as a prison chaplain for Lifeline Community Care, has served God for years in the mission field with

his wife Lois who has also been involved in prison ministry.

Prison Chaplaincy coordinator Beatriz Skippen said, "It is our pleasure to officially commission Neville for this vital 'hands-on' ministry and to thank him and Lois for their faithful service".



Lifeline prison chaplain Neville Wilson. Photo courtesy of Beatriz Skippen

UC Members join Gore's Climate Project

QUEENSLAND SYNOD'S Justice and International Mission Advocate Andrew Johnson and Wendy Miller, member of Oxley congregation, were among the 180 people from throughout Australia who participated in the Australian Conservation Foundation's Al Gore Climate Project training event in Melbourne in September.

Mr Johnson said the purpose of the weekend was to train 'ordinary Australians' to deliver personalised, 'Australianised' versions of Al Gore's *An Inconvenient Truth* slide show presentation to their communities and work places.

Reflecting on her experiences of the weekend Ms Miller said the science and evidence of climate change presented over the weekend was a stark reminder of the seriousness of climate change.

"Examining the recorded data of a wide series of contemporary catastrophic weather events and

changing climatic conditions in every continent, their increased intensity and frequency, and their cumulative and global implications, highlighted for me the enormity of the problem facing humanity."

"At times I was overwhelmed by the morally and ethically irresponsible way that we have treated the natural system to such an extent that we have thrown it out of balance.

"On the other hand I was buoyed by the commitment, resilience and persistence of a growing number of climate change professionals and ordinary citizens who are committing themselves to tackle the problem head on and drive the changes that need to be made in order to minimise the natural and social impacts."

Mr Johnson agreed, adding that the weekend helped him to gain a much better understanding of the overall picture of climate change

causes and effects, and provided an invaluable framework for thinking about the solutions.

Mr Johnson and Ms Miller are working on the development of the Synod's Green Church program providing an education campaign on climate change for the Uniting Church in Queensland.

It will assist congregations, members and church organisations such as UnitingCare, the Schools' Commission, and Finance and Property Services to undertake energy assessments and seek ways to minimise greenhouse gas emissions.

The program will offer climate change workshops, as well as workshops on actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and workshops on advocacy for social justice in climate change issues.

Subscribe to the Go Green Church Network at www.socialissues.ucaweb.com.au. For more information about the Climate Project visit www.acfonline.org.au.



Wendy Miller and Andrew Johnson attended the Australian Conservation Foundation's Climate Project training with Al Gore in September. Photo by Bruce Johnson

The Queensland Orchestra

Hallelujah! Celebrate the arrival of the festive season with Handel's magnificent *Messiah*. Be uplifted by the majesty of this music as Richard Gill and an all-star cast of Australian singers join TQO in our traditional season finale.

Handel's Messiah


8pm Saturday 1 December
QPAC CONCERT HALL

Tickets \$42-\$66 qtx 136246
Booking fees apply.

www.thequeenslandorchestra.com.au

Media Supporter
612 ABC Brisbane

Australian Government
Queensland Government
Arts Queensland

 Uniting Church in Australia
Queensland Synod

Presbytery of South Moreton

"Fostering a creative, adventurous & inclusive church, celebrating & sharing life in Christ"

The Presbytery of South Moreton is seeking to call to the position of Presbytery Minister a person with vision, energy and a strong team commitment who will provide pastoral oversight, intentional missional leadership and support across the Presbytery. It is envisaged that the role will be one of offering pastoral support and enabling Congregations and Ministers as they explore ways of being the Church.

Information Pack available at <http://www.ucaql.com.au/job.aspx> or contact:

Rev Anne Wright
Email: annerw@netspace.net.au
Ph: (07) 5563 3007

Applications close Friday 23rd November 2007

JOURNEY
www.journeyonline.com.au

Advertise in Journey

Reach 30 000 Uniting Church members throughout Queensland in this award winning paper.

For rates and information visit www.journeyonline.com.au or call Mardi on 07 3377 9795

City boy finds nothing to give

"EVEN THOUGH I was sitting in the middle of the desert in a foreign land, with a foreign language, at that moment I still felt I retained some knowledge about life, faith and the world in general," said Matthew Oliver, a 22-year-old civil and environmental engineering student from New Lambton Uniting Church in New South Wales.

Mr Oliver visited Amata in South Australia as one of the participants in the eighth Uniting Church About FACE program held in July 2007.

About FACE (Faith and Culture Exchange) is a unique opportunity for young adults to spend time in Aboriginal communities around Australia to develop friendships and build bridges of mutual understanding.

"We sat and listened to inma (worship) and would have joined in, however everything was sung in Pitjantjatjara.

"During the service we were asked to share a Bible passage for the people who had come.

"That foundation of knowing a lot of stuff disappeared into nothingness.

"I thought to myself, 'Come on, a well educated young man who has grown up in the church, listened to countless sermons and been to many Bible Studies, surely I should have something to offer these people.'

"I felt I could regurgitate something or make something up. But what truth would these people hear from my babbling."

Mr Oliver said it was at that moment he realised how indoctrinated he was by his own culture back home to believe that we can always provide solutions and solve every problem.

"What I realised was these people didn't need a pious young city boy preaching to them, nor do they need people patronising them telling them how to 'fix' things.

"It shook my foundation on which I drew comfort, yet also offered a new reality which I didn't know existed."



Matthew Oliver reflects in Amata in South Australia. Photo courtesy About FACE 8

Lost in transition

By Bruce Mullan

SHAKEN BY the mass riots and destruction in Nuku'alofa last November, the once friendly islands of Tonga have been flooded with deportees from the US, Australia and New Zealand.

Now, a team from the Free Wesleyan Church of Tonga is coming alongside these unsettled and marginalised youth to disciple and support them.

They meet on the streets but building trust is hard and the work is slow.

Sioleli was one of those deported from San Francisco.

Once a truck driver and family man, he "got mixed up with the wrong group" and became a member

of one of the many Tongan gangs doing drugs and crime.

After four years in jail Sioleli was deported, arriving in Nuku'alofa feeling alone, angry, rejected and outcast.

There he met Stan, a project worker from the Uniting Church in Australia, and soon became a part of the project.

"Three close mates have been killed in gang violence. It's been very tough but I can see it has been God's plan to save me and reconnect through deportation.

"When I was on the streets I thought I was free and could do anything. Now I realise that is not real freedom.

"I want to show youngsters who think that drugs and alcohol make

you look good that there is another way."

Sioleli is now involved with the Free Wesleyan Church as a full-time evangelist in training.

"This is the first step for me.

"I'm looking forward to reaching out to others and sharing the gospel. I'm not too old to do God's work."

Uniting International Mission has committed to support the Free Wesleyan Church \$39 000 each year for this project for the first three start-up years, with the longer term goal of the project being self-supporting.

They are asking churches around Australia and their regular supporters if they will help save those 'lost in transition'.



Please visit www.uim.uca.org.au for more information or call 1800 998 122 to make a Credit Card donation

Australia's dedicated distance theological education provider

Coolamon College

Is now offering BMIN2312 Exploring Cross Cultural Ministry.

This subject is offered at the bachelor's level through the Adelaide College of Divinity and delivered where you are in distance mode.

Visit our website <http://coolamon.org>

or contact us direct
coolamon@flinders.edu.au

1800 639 385 (free call)

A National Agency of the Uniting Church



Trinity Theological College
Learning with heart, soul and mind



ENROL NOW
To learn more about your faith
and Christian discipleship

Study theology at Trinity Theological College
through the Brisbane College of Theology

www.trinity.qld.edu.au



For more information
contact the College
on **07 3377 9951** or
email astrid.hill@ucaql.com.au

College: a place to leave home to

By Bruce Mullan

MICHAEL McCORMACK from Gympie found that living away from home can take some adjustment for a first-year university student.

“The whole idea of moving out from the security of your own home, where you are accepted for who you are and you’re well and truly centred within your own comfort zone (not to mention being able to find the bathroom in the middle of the night with your eyes closed), is and was at first a little overwhelming, fraught with the uncertainty and doubt of where it was that I was moving to.”

But as a resident of Raymont Lodge at Auchenflower, Mr McCormack could not have been happier with the transition.

“Sure the food isn’t exactly Mum or Dad’s specially cooked dish, and there are a lot more people to share the TV with, but as soon as you get into your own room and set yourself up you begin to realise the possibilities for growth standing right in front of you,” he said.

Mr McCormack is just one of thousands of young people who move away from home to study or work at the end of Year 12 and the Uniting Church provides a safe and supportive environment for many of them at its University Colleges.

Cromwell, Grace, Kings and Emmanuel at the University of Queensland, Raymont Lodge at Auchenflower and The John Flynn College in Townsville are all affiliated with the Uniting Church in Australia.

Principal of The John Flynn College at James Cook University Mr Gary Doyle said college is more than just nice buildings and facilities, and stressed that potential students and their parents need to be able to identify with the values of the college.

“We put it all on the table; respect for the individual, a caring community and broad Christian values; and say, ‘if you choose to come to Flynn you choose to live by the values of the college’, and if they can’t we make it

quite clear that they should look at other accommodation options.”

Mr Doyle believes that young people need both structure and pastoral care whether they are coming from home or from boarding school.

“We talk about the Flynn family, and as a family there is structure and rules and regulations that you live by, so that everyone can be themselves but respect everybody else’s right to have a fair go as well.”

Second-year University of Queensland student Angela Day grew up on a farm in a small town near Stanthorpe.

“Coming to college made the transition from home to the city a lot easier as most

of the students living here are also not from Brisbane,” she said.

Ms Day praised the sense of community at Cromwell College which had helped to settle her nerves and feel less homesick.

“College has allowed me to be more independent, be more open-minded and to grow as a person.

“College is like a stepping stone into the real world, there are boundaries however we are still allowed to make our own decisions, within reason.

“This is really important for most people who live here because although we are old enough to be living by ourselves and to be making decisions for ourselves, the guidance we are given here will certainly help me and many of my friends to make the right choices.”

Raymont Lodge student Mel McKechnie from Hervey Bay also found the move to Brisbane a lot harder than she expected.

“I found I was a lot more attached to my family then I realised,” Ms McKechnie said. “If I could still live at home, I would.”

Katie Day from Mackay said living at Raymont Lodge certainly gave her the stability and homely environment she needed when starting at university.

“For me it was a huge relief not to have to think about cooking, cleaning and most of all, paying bills, while I was settling into life at university and in a new city,” she said.

“Convenience was not the only appeal Raymont had for me, but also the support system the college has in place.

“Whether it was a staff member or a fellow student in my unit, someone was always there to lend a helping hand or to listen or even just to keep me company.”

Cromwell student Joshua Greaney said college had definitely been the best option for him, but it is not for everyone.

“There are many distractions such as noise and the fact that you are living so close to a very large group of young and cheerful people,” he said

For all the good and tough times, College life is a place where memories are made.

Angela Day said, “College has allowed me to grow socially, emotionally and spiritually and I am sure my experiences will positively shape my life for the future.”

Mr McCormack said, “Nothing will ever replace the memories of where you grew up, but in terms of moving on to the next phase of your life, I wouldn’t have done it anywhere else other than college.”



A year off and Rohan Salmond is re-energised for his studies. Photo courtesy of Rohan Salmond

YOUNGADULT member of Mudgeeraba Uniting Church Congregation on the Gold Coast, Rohan Salmond did well in Year 12 but struggled to decide where he would go to university.

“I flip-flopped, changed my mind and generally frustrated my careers advisor,” Mr Salmond said.

On the basis that it was very unlikely for there to be any mathematics involved, Mr Salmond commenced a Bachelor of Communications at Griffith University in 2006 but decided he needed a break.

Taking a year off to re-focus

“I found I loved my degree but felt burnt out because I went straight from Year 12 into full-time study.”

This year, Mr Salmond moved to Darwin for a working holiday.

“I didn’t want to get lazy in my study habits though, so I have also been doing a couple of elective units at Charles Darwin University that will count towards my degree.

“Next year I will be moving back to the Gold Coast to finish my course.”

Mr Salmond was a happy and successful high school student but found the move to university liberating and refreshing.

“University has fewer rules than high school, which makes me feel in control of my learning.

“It is also more casual and there are fewer contact hours, meaning that if you are well-organised you have more free time.

“However, if you are a disorganised student you can easily find yourself in a lot of trouble because nobody is there to remind you what is due when.”

Not used to having such a flexible timetable, Mr Salmond found it hard to balance work, study, church and socialising during his first year at university.

“I expected my delayed gap year in Darwin to be more relaxing than full-time study, and in a way it has been.

“Work does not follow you home the same way study does, but it also structures entire days around a single activity, which means less time interacting with people your age.

“I had been afraid that taking my gap year would leave me unenthusiastic about returning to uni but I’m actually looking forward to going back to full-time study.”



Raymont Lodge student Katie Day from Mackay relaxes between classes. Photo by Osker Lau

Growing up, leaving home and celebrating it

By Bruce Mullan

WHETHER IT’S at the end of Year 12 or some other time before or after that date, the inevitability is that young people will eventually leave home.

But leaving home is not just walking out the door with a suitcase in each hand; it’s a significant part of the journey to adult status that can be as painful for the parent as it is for the young person leaving.

International Youth Ministry Consultant Fuzz Kitto says that leaving home is one of the “rites of passage” that mark the transition from youth to adulthood and from dependence to independence.

Mr Kitto believes that when the community doesn’t offer young people adequate and significant rites of passage they will develop their own.

“The school formal is a modern day rite of passage as is losing your virginity, getting drunk for the first time, and getting a licence,” he said.

“Churches are great ritual makers and we need to develop ways of celebrating the transitions that young people experience.

“Confirmation or adult baptisms were rites of passage, but most places have given up on those as important rituals.”

One youth worker who has worked at developing ritual markers is Tim Robinson, Youth Worker with Emmanuel Uniting Church in Enoggera.

Each October the congregation takes time during one of their Sunday worship services, either morning or evening, to affirm and encourage their Year 12 students.

“We get them out the front and pray for them,” Mr Robinson said.

“We interview them about where they are up to and what they have left to do, and ask them about their hopes for next year.

“We also present them with fun gift bags as an encouragement and to help them with their final studies. We include a can of Coke to help keep them awake.”

Mr Kitto believes that those who leave home to live in a University College where there is structure and pastoral support are the lucky ones.

“Most don’t go to college but live in shared households.

“In a share house you have to negotiate

relationships and how you live together, and this is one of the most difficult tasks young people encounter.”

For some young people these can be bad experiences and, after relationship breakdowns or household break-ups, many return home seeking accommodation and support.

“This is what the Institute of Family Studies call the ‘never-empty nest syndrome’,” Mr Kitto said.

When the leaving home transition point is linked with completing Year 12, the difficulties can be compounded.

Veteran Uniting Church Youth Worker and Melbourne-based School Chaplain Rod Dungan said parents need to be talking about things young people are doing, especially at important defining moments.

“No subject should be ‘taboo’, all things over time need discussion.”

Mr Dungan said things will often go wrong and that parent support is crucial at such times.

“When this happens, young people need to experience our support and encouragement, as well as our experience in dealing with emergencies.”

Mr Dungan believes that prevention is better than cure and suggests that strengthening young people’s resilience provides a more positive focus for communities, parents and young people themselves.

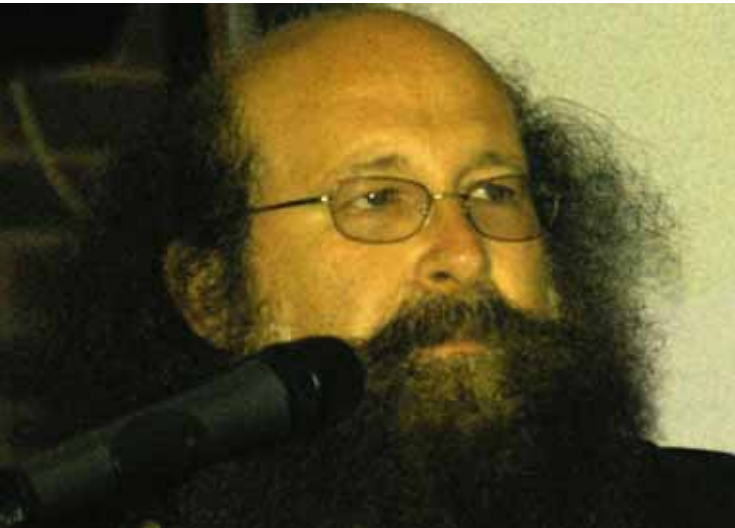
Mr Kitto said that effective church youth ministries will also build resilience by creating helpful boundaries so young people know what it is wise to do.

“We are helping form a faith that means young people don’t have to depend on the protection of the church and youth leaders but learn to cope with their realities and deal with them.

“A key part of faith formation is the building of a flexibility of faith – will faith break or stretch?”

Mr Kitto quoted Roland Martinson who said that the greatest resource for developing this capacity in young people is the congregation.

It is a whole church function as young people are given living examples of faith at different life stages, and the chance to interact and grow through observing and experiencing being a part of a community of faith where they are important and included.



Youth Worker Fuzz Kitto speaking at the UK Greenbelt Festival. Photo courtesy of Spirited Consulting

“Martinson says young people have great ‘crap detectors’. They know if faith is real and if they are important to a congregation.”

Paul in writing to the Corinthians said: “We’re not in charge of how you live out the

faith, looking over your shoulders, suspiciously critical. We’re partners, working alongside you, joyfully expectant. I know that you stand by your own faith, not by ours (2 Corinthians 1:24 - *The Message*).

Fridge resource as part of the Growing Apostles program.

“I think that is really valuable for finding out truly what is you and what you really feel called to,” Ms Moore said.

Other Order of St Stephen candidates have done things from helping plan and run the National Christian Youth Convention to doing administration tasks in a local congregation.

The Lutheran Church’s *Year in the Son* program is also open to people from other denominations and YACMU are getting strongly behind Uniting Church involvement.

YACMU Young Adults Ministry Coordinator Tom Kerr said YACMU staff have been to several planning meetings to formalise the Uniting Church’s part in the program.

“We are right behind this excellent Gap Year program,” said Mr Kerr.

“It will help people develop character, faith and understanding of community.

“What better way to spend a year working out who you are and where you are heading in life than by exploring your faith, developing relationship skills and experimenting in service within the church!”

Mr Kerr said YACMU will be lecturing with the course and offering Uniting Church placements for people to serve in.

Sarah Thompson is now a high school teacher, but after she finished university she took time out to volunteer at Warrambui, a campsite run by the Lutheran church near Canberra. It was projects like this that led to the Lutheran Church’s formalisation of the *Year in the Son* program.

“Warrambui was good because it pushed me outside my comfort zone,” she said.

“It was not all easy or fun, and some days it was incredibly hard work.”

Ms Thompson said the most difficult part of her service was being away from family and friends.

“I have an awesome support network so being on my own, in an unfamiliar place, was particularly hard. However, it was this separation that allowed me to learn and grow so much.

“It also really reaffirmed the direction I was heading career wise, which was invaluable.”

The People in Mission program run by Uniting International Mission could also be used as a Gap Year experience.

Queensland Synod Justice and International Mission Advocate Andrew Johnson said the program is a great opportunity to live and work overseas while serving the church.

“People in Mission placements are an ideal way to spend six to twelve months overseas,” said Mr Johnson.

“It is a fantastic opportunity for young people to share in mission with our Partner Churches in Asia and the Pacific.

“Young people experience so much about different cultures and share with people of faith from very different backgrounds.”

There are countless organisations, both church and non church, which provide Gap Year experiences doing everything from working in schools in remote Aboriginal communities to teaching English in Peru, or working in Aged Care in England.

Even the Australian Defence Force has a “try before you buy” Gap Year for people considering a career in the military.

After her Gap Year experience Ms Thompson recommends the time off to anyone finishing study or changing career.

“If you are unsure what you want to do next, make sure you take the time to check out all your options,” said Ms Thompson.

“There are so many choices out there, don’t just settle for the easy option. Pray to God for guidance, and trust in his quiet leading.”

The next People in Mission training will be conducted over Easter 2008.

For more information visit <http://uim.uca.org.au/peopleinmission>.

Reality television: Why do we watch it?

By Mardi Lumsden

WELL, I had to come clean some time... I am a reformed reality television junkie.

But watching wasn't enough for me. I have auditioned for every reality television program in Australia, apart from *Big Brother*.

I had to draw the line somewhere.

From *Race Around the World* to *Australian Survivor* and *Idol*, there I was, flashing my wares in my quest to, well I don't really know what!

To this day I don't know what the appeal was for me.

Maybe it was the fleetingly cruel glimpse of fame? Maybe it was the challenge of outlasting the physical and emotional challenges?

Or maybe, just maybe, it looked like fun at the time.

It turns out reality television may have a more positive effect on people than first thought.

An Australian Communications and Media Authority report revealed that reality television may have a positive influence on its young audience (15-24-year-olds) by exposing them to situations and ways to deal with those situations they would not otherwise encounter.

"It made them aware of, and more tolerant of social diversity and caused them to reflect on their own behaviours and the impact they have on others," said the report.

But what about the effect reality television has on the contestant?

In July this year, 35-year-old American Cheryl Kosewicz committed suicide after being the fourth person voted off the CBS program *Pirate Master*.

A district attorney in real life, Ms Kosewicz is not the first reality TV casualty.

Numerous contestants from reality TV programs have ended their lives shortly after finishing the series.

The first person voted off the first reality TV series perhaps gave



Photo by Michael Ellis. Graphic by Osker Lau

a hint of the effect of emotional stress on contestants.

The show was Sweden's *Expedition: Robinson* in 1997. The program later became known as *Survivor*.

Sinisa Savija was a 34-year-old Bosnian refugee who was rebuilding his life in Sweden. Two months before the show aired, Mr Saviji walked in front of a train.

Mr Savija's widow said after being voted off the program, he did not react well to his impending nationwide public humiliation. Understandable, don't you think?

Savija's death forced reality programs to make all contestants go through stringent psychological testing before being selected.

Then there was 23-year-old boxer Najai "Nitro" Turpin, who shot himself after losing a match on the Sly Stallone fronted program *The Contender*.

Mr Turpin was raising his two younger siblings and his first child

when he saw *The Contender* as a way for his family to escape the cycle of poverty.

That same year Melanie Bell, a television producer, jumped from a building in Las Vegas while shooting the show *Vegas Elvis* which featured the crew.

In 2005 17-year-old Carina Stephenson from northern England hung herself from a tree near her family home.

Ms Stephenson and her family had spent the previous months filming *The Colony* in Australia for the History Channel.

She had apparently been the main advocate for the family participating in the program where four families lived as early settlers in Australia.

The program was to be aired in England less than a month after her death.

But can we really blame reality TV for killing these people?

All of these contestants

apparently had other issues bothering them.

Mr Savija's memories of war were said to contribute to his demise, friends of Ms Bell said she was battling anorexia, and Ms Stephenson had just told her family she was a lesbian and was frequenting suicide websites.

Perhaps it was the pressure from being watched 24/7 that broke these people.

In 2004 Robert Andersson, another contestant on *Expedition: Robinson*, staged the fake rescue of a rape victim in the hope of positively influencing his public profile.

Mr Andersson even hired fake paparazzi.

He later said in an interview, "I thought it was funny, but I am an idiot... My whole life is a docusoap."

For Mr Andersson it was the pressure of not being watched that drove him to react, but playing up

for the camera is hardly taking your own life.

For Delese Williams the program *Extreme Makeover* changed her life in a way she was not expecting.

As a contestant, the program promised her a new body, face, image and, supposedly, life.

The producers asked family and friends to tell the world what they really thought of her appearance and faults.

The night before the 'magical' makeover Ms Williams was dropped by the show and told to go home, throwing her and her family into turmoil.

Four months later Ms Williams' sister committed suicide, apparently guilt ridden for things she had admitted about her sister's appearance. She was also suffering from bi-polar disorder.

Again, was that the push to the edge that was needed?

Before all of this though, perhaps we should have seen what a little bit of public humiliation on national television could make someone do when a *Jenny Jones* talk show guest shot another guest for saying publicly that he had a gay crush on his friend. That was in 1995.

Before *Expedition: Robinson*, or *Big Brother*, or *Pop Idol* the effect of public humiliation was as evident as two bullets in the chest of a friend.

So when we watch, transfixed, while young hopefuls with stars in their eyes sing their heart out to a backing track of tripe only to be cut down in front of millions of people because they didn't sway their hips enough or lose enough weight to warrant wearing a tight gold dress, what exactly are we watching?

Is the fact that we keep watching part of the problem?

Summer Madness gains momentum

PROGRAM COORDINATOR Tom Kerr said with over 200 registrations and time yet to go, the Summer Madness program to be held at Alexandra Park Conference Centre in January is set to be the largest Synod youth camp for many years.

"Every Presbytery including Calvary will have people there and it's not too late for churches to get on board with it.

"One group is even coming from Weipa."

Tom described the Summer Madness guest speakers as "awesome" and include Irish youth worker Julian Hamilton and Queenslander Alison Cox and game show winner Andrew Fox.

For more information about Summer Madness visit www.yacmu.com.au or call (07) 3377 9782



St Leonard's Uniting Church
50 New Street Brighton VIC 3186

Family Ministry Worker

Full time position in a vibrant Melbourne parish

For further details and position description

[www: stleonards.org.au](http://www.stleonards.org.au)

email: contact@stleonards.org.au

Applications close 16 November 2007



ABERFOYLE UNITING CHURCH
(Adelaide Southern Suburbs)
is seeking to appoint a full-time person to oversee

Children and Families Ministries

This is an exciting opportunity for a mature Christian with a commitment and passion for ministry with children and their families.

This is a full-time church based position.

The role is to oversee and develop the church's ministries with children from birth to Year 7.

Applicants must address the selection criteria in the Job and Person Specifications available by downloading at www.aberfoyle.org.au or contact the church office:

42 Sunnymead Drive, Aberfoyle Park, SA 5159

Telephone: (08) 83706472

Applications Close November 18, 2007

A night worth sharing

One Night with the King will soon be showing in a movie theatre near you so Bruce Mullan checked it out.

HERE IS a movie that will send you back to read the original story.

A Hollywood biblical epic of lavish proportions, *One Night with the King* is the story of Esther, a Jewish girl growing up in foreign land, who risks her own life to save her people.

One Night with the King was filmed in India with a reported budget of \$20 million and will be spectacular on the big screen.

Omar Sharif has only a minor role and Peter O'Toole just a cameo, but the costuming is stunning and the film has an impressive set design and majestic cinematography.

In the story-line, Hadassah (Tiffany Dupont) is an orphaned girl adopted by her uncle, Mordecai (John Rhys-Davies), a scribe to King Xerxes (Luke Goss) in the city of Susa.

When Xerxes banishes his wife Vashti, he sends his soldiers to abduct beautiful young virgins, Hadassah being one of them, to be candidates from whom he will select a new queen.

Mordecai had suggested his niece keep her Jewish heritage a secret if she was seized, and re-named her Esther.

Esther immediately stands out in the eyes of the king's chief eunuch Hagai (Tommy "Tiny" Lister) who befriends the young girl and helps her become Xerxes' choice.

Meanwhile, Xerxes gave his Prime Minister, Haman the Agagite (James Callis), great power and authority.

When Haman rode his horse through the streets all the people would bow to him except for Mordecai, who would bow to no-one but his God.

Infuriated, Haman plotted to have all the Jews killed, but Esther was courageously able to open Xerxes' eyes to this treachery.

While the biblical Esther is a woman of deep faith and courage, willing to risk her life for her uncle Mordecai and the Jewish people, in *One Night with the King* she is as much cabaret as courageous.

Based on the novel *Hadassah*:



Esther and Xerxes share a moment of biblical passion. Photo courtesy of www.8x.com/onenight

One Night with the King by Tommy Tenney and Mark Andrew Olsen, this telling of the story won't please the biblical scholars as many events are out of order and many embellishments to the story are merely speculation.

This deviation from the traditional narrative is hardly surprising.

While conservative scholars argue for the historical integrity

of the biblical story, some more contemporary scholars have understood the book of Esther as a work of fiction or as a Christian allegory.

And while God is not mentioned by name at any time in the biblical story of Esther, this account is not so coy about its religious pedigree.

In the end, this story of the Purim is both familiar and inspirational and, being aware there is some

One Night with the King is distributed by Queensland's Heritage HM Theatrical Promotions who believe faith based films are an encouragement to the church, an opportunity for church folk to invite friends to an outreach event, and an opportunity to run an event as a fundraiser.

The *One Night with the King* trailer can be found at www.onenight.com.au.

For discount groups bookings for *One Night with the King* contact info@onenight.com.au or call 1300 363 074.

violence (PG) and sensuality in the film, it is still a good one to share with friends and family, Christian or otherwise.

Despite its flaws and inadequacies, in these days of limited biblical literacy *One Night with the King* is a satisfactory retelling of the faith story in the contemporary medium of film.

Congregations, groups or individuals could organise theatre outings to acquaint their community with this remarkable tale and yes, they'll go back and read the story themselves, if only to find out whether the film was true to "the book".

Schoolies: more than just a party

By Bruce Mullan

IT MAY be just a week-long party at the Gold Coast or some other popular tourist destination but Schoolies Week has become the biggest youth event and the longest public space event in the Australian social calendar.

Signalling the transition into the adult world beyond high school, Schoolies Week has become perhaps the most significant and conspicuous rite of passage involving tens of thousands of young people and adult support people.

The cumulative Surfers Paradise crowd in 2006 was approximately 125 000, and Surfers Paradise Management CEO, Liliana Montague reported that the program had remained relatively free of serious incidents.

"We need to put it into perspective and when you realise that we've had the equivalent of two football stadiums partying in the one kilometre Schoolies Precinct over 10 nights, it's incredible to think that we've had relatively few serious incidents," said Ms Montague.

Surrounding the mostly inebriated and partying young people is an army of volunteers and adult services including Parents and Friends Associations, State Emergency Service, Police, Fire and Rescue, the Queensland Ambulance Service, city council staff, and the 'Red Frog' Hotel Chaplaincy support network.

The Red Frog team, now in its 11th year of operations, attracts sporting personalities, youth

pastors, youth workers, social workers and other volunteers who provide pastoral care and mediation, and now pre-Schoolies education programs and entertainment programs.

Hotel Chaplaincy founder and youth worker Andy Gourley told *Journey* that the program is now Australia-wide covering 17 schoolies festival locations with support from 1800 youth workers and volunteers.

"We got absolutely mugged for them because Schoolies don't take much food so when you rock up with any kind of food you get mugged, so we gave out the Red Frogs and they loved them," Mr Gourley said.

"We went through about 80kg in our first year then 120kg in the

next year and now we're up to 8.5 tonne of Red Frogs to give away a year."

Mr Gourley said he was "fully stoked" that Allens would be donating \$40 000 worth of Red Frogs this year.

Schoolies is also a business and Premier Anna Bligh said next month's Schoolies would inject \$60 million into the economy.

"Given the magnitude of the event, my Government has decided that it is the State Government that is best placed to co-ordinate the response needed to ensure that our young people can gather in safety," Ms Bligh said.

She said Mayor Ron Clarke had advised her the Gold Coast City Council believed full responsibility was beyond its capabilities.

"The Queensland State Government is not prepared to see this event go backwards," she said.

Not all Year 12 school leavers choose to party in the tourist destinations.

Scripture Union runs Schoolies camps every year, with nearly 500 students attending the events last summer.

"There is a lot of negativity surrounding Schoolies, with many young people getting caught up in the dangers of drugs and alcohol," said SU Queensland's CEO Tim Mander.

"But in keeping with SU's goal of bringing hope and meeting young people 'where they are', we try to provide school leavers with the big week of fun they need and deserve without the substance abuse issues they can encounter at other Schoolies events.

"Our Christian leaders and speakers also help the kids focus on what Jesus has in store for them after school."

Uniting Church Youth Worker Louise Edwards from Broadwater Road Congregations is about to lead her seventh Schoolies trip to Fiji.

Ms Edwards said young people who have participated have found it to be a radical and courageous alternative for Schoolies Week.

"They travel by plane, boat, bus and truck, and end up at Taveuni, the remote Garden Island of Fiji. "Because we live in the village it's a unique opportunity to have an amazing adventure and experience a different culture," Ms Edwards said.

"To walk with the people in Fiji is a life changing experience, in the most positive way."



St Andrew's War Memorial Hospital, Brisbane UnitingCare Health Chaplaincy Co-ordinator

UnitingCare Health is seeking the services of an Ordained person to be the Chaplaincy Co-ordinator at St Andrew's War Memorial Hospital Brisbane. This is a full time position and requires a person well versed in both management and chaplaincy training. Duties include:

- Co-ordinating Chaplaincy within the hospital
- Contributing to the implementation of the mission, vision and values of the hospital and the foundational values of UnitingCare Health Qld.
- Providing Pastoral care in the St Andrew's Hospital community
- Involvement with staff in developing innovative ways of being a Church community within a hospital setting.
- Working ecumenically.

An information Pack is available at www.ucaqld.com.au/Career or contacting the Director of Mission Rev Robyn Kidd on (07) 3511 4860 or robyn.kidd@uhealth.com.au

Applications close on Friday 16th November 2007



Wesley Hospital, Brisbane UnitingCare Health Chaplain – Educator

UnitingCare Health Chaplain-Educator at the Wesley Hospital, Brisbane is a full-time position and would suit a person well versed in both health care chaplaincy and chaplaincy training. Duties include:

- Co-ordinating and lecturing in the Trinity Theological College course in Hospital Ministry and Pastoral Care.
- Contributing to the implementation of the mission, vision and values of the hospital and the foundational values of Uniting HealthCare.
- Providing pastoral care in the Wesley Hospital community.
- Participating as a member of the Wesley Hospital Pastoral Care Team.

An information Pack is available at www.ucaqld.com.au/Career or contact Acting Synod Chaplaincy Co-ordinator, Rev Alan O'Hara on (07) 3377 9721 or alan.ohara@ucaqld.com.au.

Applications close on Friday 30th November 2007

WHAT'S ON

November 3, 9am-12pm. The Church in the Eco-Crisis Seminar at Caloundra Uniting Church, cnr Queen and Ulm Sts Caloundra. For more information contact Lorraine on ph 5491 5353 or email caloundra@dovenetq.net.au.

November 3, 12.30-3pm. Springs of Living Water celebration at Meringandan-Highfields Uniting Church. Open day and activities. Contact Helen Waine on ph 4698 7849 or email hwaine@bigpond.net.au.

November 3, 10am-6pm. Combined Churches of the Toombul District Family Fun Day at Earnshaw College Oval, Banyo. Everything free including entertainment, rides, food and drinks plus much more. Bring your friends and leave your wallet at home. Contact Lorrene Kublick on ph 3266 6085 or email lorrenek@optusnet.com.au.

November 7, 6-8pm. Learnings in Sri Lanka seminar at Old Bishopscourne St Francis College, Milton. Hear Tanya Richards' stories of a recent trip to Sri Lanka. Lights refreshments will be provided. Entry charge to covers costs. Contact Jela Virzi on ph 3369 6792 or email admin@gct.org.au.

November 7-10. Bald Hills/Bracken Ridge Christmas Craft Show at Bracken Ridge Uniting Church, cnr Bracken Street and Pellinore Road, Bracken Ridge. Entertainment from 7.30pm on Wednesday night, \$7.50 (includes supper). Thurs and Fri 9.30am-8pm. Sat 9am-1pm. Gold Coin admission. Contact Pamela Harris on ph 3261 2000 or email pamreg@optusnet.com.au.

November 10, 9.30am-12.30pm. Child Safe Church Training at the UC Centre, 60 Bayliss St, Auchenflower. Last training for 2007. Free with morning tea provided. RSVP by 2 November. Contact Renae Domagala on ph 3377 9833 or email childsafet@ucaqld.com.au.

November 10, 9am-1pm. Trinity Wilston Uniting Church Annual Market Day. Stalls include Trinity Wilston craft group, Red Cross, Prison Ministry support group, Leprosy Mission, Christmas Cakes, and Sweets. Contact Yvonne Liekefett on ph 3356 5572 or email dymon@samford.net.

November 10, 1-5pm. Women's Retreat at The Gap Uniting Church. Take time out to be refreshed. Praying in different ways, a practical time of exploring how our personalities influence the way we are comfortable praying. Contact Jenny Sims or Mel Perkins on ph 0419 745 508 or email jenny.a.sims@gmail.com.

November 14, 9am-4.30pm. How to conduct investigations into formal complaints training. UC Centre 60 Bayliss St, Auchenflower with Ann Warren, Synod HR Officer. Contact Kristine Bromiley on ph 3377 9825 or email kristine.bromiley@ucaqld.com.au.

November 19-30. Chermide Kedron Community Church Christmas Craft Market. Browse through stalls and stop for lunch in the coffee shop. Opening night celebration on 16 November. Contact Christine Di Mauro on ph 3350 4302 or email ckcc@dovenetq.net.au.

November 20, 10am. UCA International Mission Support Group (Qld) annual meeting. St Andrew's Church, Ann Street Brisbane. Sue Pickering will speak on her trip to Chennai, India. Contact Judith Finau on ph 3711 4622 or email ljinu@dovenetq.net.au.

November 22. Frontier Services Auxiliary Christmas Cheer morning tea at St Andrews Uniting Church hall, Creek St Brisbane. Musical program by Les Chamsons. Contact Jessie Logan to book on ph 3278 1868.

November 23-25. Wavell Heights Uniting Church 50th Anniversary Celebrations. Includes an art show and entertainment, plus a celebration service on Sunday morning. Contact Rev Wendi Sargeant on ph 3266 9211 or email geewhbs@bigpond.com.

November 24. Federal election.

December 1-23, 10.30am-3pm. Montville Uniting Church Christmas Display. Contact Helen Jackson on ph 5445 7845 or email eshjay@westnet.com.au.

December 5, 7.30-9.30pm. Interfaith Forum at Aspley Uniting Church, 748 Robinson Road, Aspley. Guest speaker George Negus. Organised in cooperation with people of the Bald Hills Mosque. Contact Garth Read on ph 3263 8068 or email garthread@ecn.net.au.

Want to promote an event?

Go to www.journeyonline.com.au and click on 'What's On'

Church music honoured

PLAYING A pedal organ powered by a vacuum cleaner was one of the hundreds of years of cumulative experience for the retired and current musicians honoured recently at North Rockhampton Uniting Church.

Two current organists topped more than 50 years each in enhancing the congregation's worship with their music, and in some cases the awards were presented to the family members of former organists.

Lyn McLean (nee Wilkings) was a quiet 12 year old waiting for her Circuit Steward father to complete his duties at Archer St Methodist Church in Rockhampton when she was encouraged by Alan Morrison (a church organist before he became an ordained minister) to "have a go" on the Hammond organ.

She went on to give this gift for over fifty years service.

Olga Harris said her first experience as a shy teenager in Roma Methodist Church was on an organ that required pumping the pedals.

"The style of music has changed. In the early days music was chosen from *Alexanders*, the *Sunday School Hymnbook* and the *Methodist Hymn Book*.

"Later we were excited by 20th Century hymns: the *Australian Hymn Book*, *Together in Song*, choruses, Graham Kendrick, etc have all helped us to make music in church more relevant to the needs and concerns of the worshipping community."

Ms Harris said she looks forward to the words and music of the



North Rockhampton Uniting Church Minister Rev Bernie Jarius presenting Olga Harris with her certificate. Photo by Tom Holmes

future as they reflect the changes in our understanding of what the Church believes.

"All hymns were finished off with 'Amen' and this was not always in the music and often I faced mild panic having to make one up on the spot in the correct key; but which verse are we up to?"

"This was a special problem if the tune was not the set one.

"Watching the body language of the singers often saved the day.

"Just as people in the congregation plan to continue going to worship while physical and mental health continue, so will I continue to express my faith and love for God by accompanying the singing on organ or piano and by teaching students who may themselves find music ministry to be what they can do in whatever denomination they worship."

Blind mission for malaria suffers

CHRISTIAN BLIND Mission International (CBMI) has launched an urgent response program to fight malaria in East Africa by committing \$2 million to projects in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania.

In sub-Saharan Africa, malaria kills up to 3000 children a day.

Money will be spent on medicine, health education, vitamin supplements, promoting the use of mosquito nets and long-term rehabilitative care.

On Sunday 28 October CBMI asked churches to unite in prayer for victims of malaria.

CBMI Australia Director John Jeffries said, "The malaria crisis is no longer something we can ignore. It's a waste of young lives that we can do something about."



**Preaching to the Converted:
On Sundays and feast days
throughout the year**
By Richard Leonard, SJ
Paulist Press
RRP \$45

Preaching to the Converted contains short reflections (about 750 words) on the gospel readings from the full three-year lectionary cycle.

These 'story-based' reflections are not meant to replace, or even model, homilies: they are not grounded in the relationship between a pastor and any particular congregation, and although the author is Australian, the reflections are written with an international readership in mind, and hence they lack local colouring or reference to national issues.

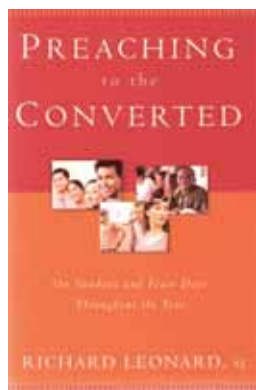
The author acknowledges that these are important aspects of any genuine preaching.

Thus *Preaching to the Converted* is intended instead as a resource to be mined and adapted to whatever is the local situation.

Though written by a Jesuit, with the reflections engage well across the protestant-catholic divide.

This is even true for the reflections on most of the Feast days, where the catholic perspective is most distinctive.

One recurring theme is the need for popular devotional practices to be informed by a solid scriptural understanding, particularly if some



of the past excesses of 'mariology' are to be avoided.

I found several of the reflections of use when preparing 'devotions' for a group of older adults and as discussion starters for a group of younger adults.

They are also helpful for personal reflection on passages from the gospels. However, there is no scripture index, so have a lectionary table handy if you want to look up specific passages.

With its warm pastoral tone, balanced outlook and engagement with the issues facing the community of faith today, *Preaching to the Converted* is an excellent resource for preaching, group and personal reflections, to complement biblical and theological reference works.

**Joel Corney is a physicist and
elder at West End Uniting
Church**

**Australian Religious Diary
2008**
David Lovell Publishing
RRP \$32.00

If you worry about your electronic diary's batteries going flat, perhaps you keep a hard copy diary.

The *Australian Religious Diary 2008* is meant to charge your batteries as you jot in your reminders.

Of course it has all the big events, as well as the dates you might have missed. The second Sunday in Easter next year is also the festival of St. John of the Ladder for our Orthodox friends.

Aside from scriptures on each page, the diary features the artwork of John Coburn.

The Blake prize winning painter, printmaker and designer's works linked faith to the Australian landscape.

On the pages featuring Coburn's work, the illustrations bite into the week-per-double-page format.

Opened, the left side shows the day, date and readings with note space for the morning.

The right hand page lists the 'high days and holy' with notes space for afternoon. It would be cramped for business or student use.

The "completely ecumenical" diary uses the Catholic Lectionary and so you will find readings from 'deutero-canonical' books: Tobit, Wisdom Maccabees etc.

The *Australian Religious Diary 2008* features a selection of Anglican feasts and Uniting Church memorial days, along with holy days from Lutheran, Ukrainian, Maronite, Jewish and Muslim calendars.

I didn't know the UCA marks a memorial day for Caroline Chisholm, but I could see why.

I do not know who Dorothy Day was though or why we have a memorial day in her honour.

**Phil Smith is the Queensland
Synod Media Liaison officer**



Bring On the Day
By Garage Hymnal
Emu Music
RRP \$24.95

Bring on the Day is a worthy successor to 2006's *Take My Life* (the debut CD from Garage Hymnal), harking from evangelical Anglican circles in Sydney, and with a close alignment with Sydney University's Evangelical Union.

REVIEWS



Purchase of *Bring on the Day* entitles the buyer to access a range of resources from the Garage Hymnal website (www.garagehymnal.com); including sheet music, backing tracks and PowerPoint files.

The CD's songs develop the theme of Christ's return, along with the struggles and pain experienced in the broken world in which we live.

This is the strength of Garage Hymnal's approach, something that sets its material apart from many of the songs coming out of the Hillsong and Planet Shakers stables.

Bring on the Day brings it on with maximum impact in the grunge-flavoured opening few tracks, with solid, balanced lyrics alongside plenty of power-chord, distorted guitar.

Who could dispute the soundness of a contemporary song lyric like:

*One message, one commission
Reach out to all the earth
His mercy, our refuge
In Christ alone we stand.*

For those desiring something a shade softer on the earlobes, *Call for Mercy* offers that rarity, a contemporary worship music track that acknowledges the world's brokenness.

*For those who are missing
For those who wait
For anger that threatens to turn
into hate
We pray for your presence in their
pain*

Give the CD a few listens – it took me a few – but now I'm hooked on what this team of Christian musos from Sydney are offering the wider church, especially in theologically-sound, genre-appropriate music for young people.

Praise, lament, intercession, confession, mission – it's all there. What more can I say than "Bring it on!"

**David MacGregor is a musician,
minister at Indooroopilly Uniting
Church, and a National Working
Group on Worship member**

**Simply Wait – Cultivating
Stillness in the Season of
Advent**

By Pamela C. Hawkins
Upper Room Books
RRP \$20.45

Despite some shortcomings, I really appreciated the way *Simply Wait* was written, with a format

designed to help individuals or groups to slow down and create times and places of stillness during Advent.

Simply Wait – Cultivating Stillness in the Season of Advent is intended to be a workbook as well as a guide for leaders, with ample space for individual reflections and helpful guidance for leaders of small groups following the book or individuals working alone.

The language is simple and accessible.

Simply Wait journeys through each day of Advent Year A with each week taking a different theme word.

The first day of each week is designed to be after Sunday – to encourage participants to reflect on the lectionary readings throughout the week and not rush ahead to the following Sunday.

The first day focuses on the word (Anticipation, Hope, Patience or Obedience), the second to fifth days on the lectionary readings, the sixth on connecting the focus word to the world and the seventh on a contemplative prayer practice.

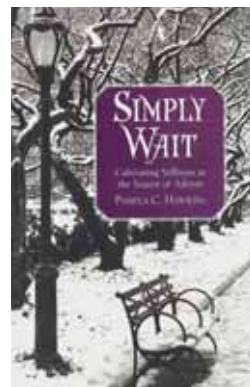
Each prayer practice is clearly explained and has been in use within the Christian Church for many years, although some might seem unfamiliar to those unused to such practices.

Unfortunately, *Simply Wait* has been written with the northern hemisphere in mind (even the cover is 'snowy'), with many references to winter and use of wintery images for Advent.

While I did find this a little off-putting, with some preparatory work, adaptations could be made to suit the Australian climate and the impact that has on our images of Advent.

So although I would be reluctant to use this as is, I think it would be a valuable resource for those seeking to journey more quietly through Advent.

**Mel Perkins studies at Trinity
Theological College, Brisbane**



More reviews available at
www.journeyonline.com.au

PRAYER DIARY

4 November: Capricorn Coast

Capricorn Coast Uniting Church has two churches with one serving Minister.

Yeppoon is the larger Church, much more modern with a bigger congregation, and Emu Park Church, an old weatherboard smaller church with charm, has unfortunately hosted a few white ants.

This does not detract from the warmth of its people.

Emu Park is however in the middle of a big development boom, and if we are going to be out there to welcome new families, we are going to have to look at building a larger Church, in a more accessible area.

Please pray for:

- guidance in purchasing land and the building of a new Church
- those who will find change a challenge

- harmony among our people
- continued unity between the Churches.

- a person in the midst of our congregations willing to undertake the work of leading our youth and young people.

We give thanks for the positive results from the studies of *40 Days of Purpose*.

We pray for continued nurturing of all who participated, especially those experiencing the strength of God's love for the first time.

We pray for our minister and his wife and family.

Lord we give you thanks and glorify your Holy Name.

18 November: Wellers Hill- Tarragindi Uniting Church

Our church is led by Rev Peter Arnett and a part-time Resources Minister, Paul Yarrow.

We also have a terrific group of lay people who play a vital role in the running of the church.

We are located on the southside of Brisbane and are fortunate to have a variety of ages and family stages represented in our congregation.

Many young families live in the area and the church is involved in a wide range of youth and children's activities including playgroups, KFG (run on Sundays during the morning service), JAFFA Club (on Thursday afternoons for primary school age) and youth group.

We also provide Religious Education teachers and a chaplain in the local primary school.

We have a large number of older members who contribute a wealth of experience to the life of the church in many ways.

The 3F's group has been part of the outreach to congregation and community members in this age group for 21 years.

Recently we had a prayer retreat where we were given the opportunity to look back over the history of our congregation and see the high and low points which have shaped us into who and what we are now.

It was with great praise and thanksgiving that we celebrated the past and with excitement we look forward to what God has in store for us in the future.

Please pray for:

- the groups which will be run in this last term of the year.

- our Christmas concert and church services, that they will be an outreach to the local community

- people in leadership positions to be sustained in their tasks and in good health.

Vale Rev Ron Woodgate

MISSIONARY TO Tonga 1947-1961, Rev Ron Woodgate lived in Maryborough Queensland 1961-1965.

Principal Methodist Ladies College 1967-1978.

Loved husband of Ruth, loving father of Helen, Roger and Leith, Grandpa to nine grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

We give thanks for a life well lived.

Mr Woodgate died peacefully at Moorfields, Box Hill Victoria on 6 September 2007, aged 94 years.



Greg Adsett and Peter Waltisbuhl examine the plans for the new Aspley Uniting Church kindergarten. Photo courtesy of Aspley Uniting Church

Vale Rev Lalomilo Lima

BORN ON 31 October 1944 in Samoa, Lalomilo Lima was the son of a Methodist preacher.

He began studies at Piula Theological College then moved on to the Pacific Theological College at Suva in Fiji where he graduated with a Bachelor of Divinity degree. He was ordained in 1975 by the Samoan Methodist Church Conference and was a tutor at the college.

In 1975 he married a deaconess named Terani. They went on to have three children, John, Paul and Margaret.

In 1977 they moved to Brisbane to serve in the Enoggera Circuit under the guidance of Rev Sydney Cassells where they served for six years. After church union in June 1977 Rev Lima was recognised as a Uniting Church minister.

He went on to serve in Mount Gravatt, Redland Bay and Victoria Point, and more recently in Inala.

A wonderfully caring, perceptive pastor and gifted teacher, Mr Lima had a special passion for those people in Brisbane who trace their roots back to Samoa.

The onset of diabetes in 2003 affected circulation in his body

and led to an infection which necessitated the loss of his right leg below the knee. This did not stop his ministry.

Terani and the family would like to sincerely thank the Queensland Synod, the Samoan Conference of the Uniting Church in Australia, and all who have shared with them at this time.



Rev Lalomilo Lima. Photo courtesy of the Lima family

Aspley kindly is on the way back

THE GROUNDWORK is being prepared for an exciting new ministry at Aspley Uniting Church - a kindergarten.

There had been a kindergarten on the site for some 40 years but it was closed many years ago.

The aim for the new Aspley Uniting Church Kindergarten is to provide a Christian educational program, much like any Christian school.

Chair of the Aspley Uniting Church's Developmental Committee Mr Peter Waltisbuhl said the congregation was looking forward to opening the centre.

"Our aim is a Christian childcare centre open to the whole community," he said.

"We will celebrate the great religious festivals of the year.

"We are looking for staff who will enhance the vision and support the congregation as it develops.

"We are more than willing to share our vision with other churches who may be interested."

Rebecca Manley- Pippert to visit Brisbane

Founder of Salt Shaker Ministries and internationally recognised author, Rebecca Manley-Pippert will be visiting Brisbane in December.

Her book *Out of the Salt Shaker* was recently selected by *Christianity Today* as one of the books that has most influenced Christian thought in the past 50 years.

NSW Bible Society CEO Daniel Willis said Ms Manley-Pippert is "Engaging and compelling as she stands before an audience and the passion she has for evangelism is not only evident in her seminars but continues to form her daily life."

Rebecca Manley-Pippert will be at St Andrews Anglican Church, corner of Mount Gravatt-Capalaba Road, Brisbane on Friday 7 December from 7.30pm-9.30pm and Saturday 8 December from 8.45am-to 4.15pm.

On Sunday 9 December she will be at St Andrews Anglican Church, 160 Vulture Street South Brisbane, from 10.30am-12.30pm.

For more information contact Kathy Ewing 3844 3808



Rebecca Manley-Pippert. Photo courtesy of www.saltshaker.org



Mental health

I [have] suffered an emotional break down and serious depression.

It has been hard on our family and it is difficult to be open, honest and authentic about mental health issues.

Having a non-visible problem that is on-going and often manifests itself in ways that are confronting to people who are not used to living with someone who has a mental illness has been hard.

At one time it would have been very easy to walk away from God, church and all that goes with it had it not been for my firm belief that "God is" and "God loves" even when it is not felt.

Devoting a whole issue of *Journey* to mental health issues will hopefully make it easier to talk about this subject that has for so long seemed taboo.

Alan Ross
Petrie

I suffered severe depression in the early forties which kept me at home, not working and getting worse day by day.

We didn't have the same medical help as we have today and we were just put into hospital for long periods and given "shock" treatment which in itself was terrifying to say the least.

I have good days and bad days but I am pleased to say there are more good days than bad.

I joined my church and I am a client of Blue Care and this gives me somewhere to go and look forward to and my medication

has been reduced, it too soon to make much difference but that will come.

The writer has asked to remain
anonymous

Thanks to October *Journey* for the mental health coverage.

A big area not considered was the place of drugs where marijuana and amphetamines can certainly push things along in people with psychotic illnesses, and it is possible that there are people who do not experience those illnesses because they have been clear of drugs.

Overall, it is clear that drug taking is a significant factor associated with the whole mental illness field.

The writer has asked to remain
anonymous

I noticed that in October's *Journey's* 'Mental health: where to go' section, there was no mention of Stepping Stone Clubhouse.

Stepping Stone provides a non-institutional setting where adults with mental illness give each other support as they work to rebuild their confidence, stamina, concentration, social and vocational skills.

It is a voluntary program where participants are members, not patients or clients.

The Clubhouse mission statement is to assist adults with a mental illness in developing the skills and confidence necessary to

LETTERS

lead satisfying and productive lives in the community.

I trust this information will give another option for those afflicted with this debilitating illness.

Shirley Watson
Mt Gravatt

Spong again

I write to commend you for the October *Journey*.

I was especially appreciative of the three commentaries on Bishop Spong's public meeting in Brisbane.

I do not dissent from the impressions reported and share with Bruce Johnson a measure of disappointment that the address I heard from Jack Spong was short on the detail of "a new approach" to theology, though I have great admiration for the positive impact the Bishop has had on behalf of Christian faith throughout a courageous ministry lasting decades.

Your editorial on the subject mused over what it is that causes such a reaction by many to the 78 year old Bishop.

I suspect its intensity has something to do with his determination to profess his allegiance to Jesus Christ despite challenging certain questionable beliefs, moral codes and institutional forms which have been dubiously confused with the essence of the Gospel.

Perhaps his detractors might opine: "If he could just stop pretending to be a disciple it would be easier to tolerate him!"

It is not an unusual story.

As some of your readers would recognise, attempts to be prophetic from within a religious tradition often bring forth a vehement reaction.

Didn't it happen to Jesus of Nazareth?

Noel Preston
Auchenflower

Reading September *Journey* I could not help but comment on Dr Myers statements about Spong's Jesus.

His statement that "a Jesus whose sole commitment is to tolerant inclusiveness is simply not the kind of Jesus anyone would want to crucify" rather beggars belief.

Has he lived in the Uniting Church after a fairly innocuous resolution about Presbyteries choosing who they ordain? And this is a western liberal church.

Try preaching tolerance on a checkpoint in Palestine. Then consider it in the time of Herod?

Yes, the way of Jesus is just a wishy washy postmodern message as hard to live today as it ever was.

Thankfully we don't get stoned so often if we try.

Owen Ronalds
Rockhampton

With regard to your editorial (October *Journey*) and your apparent bewilderment at the reaction to your promotion of Spong.

Wake up editor! This is 2007. No one believes in a devil with horns and pitchfork anymore.

May I suggest you think of it in terms of the metaphor: "wolf in sheep's clothing".

Since when was being 'gracious and polite' substitute for, or indicator of the truth?

Yes, Peter Lockhart, Spong may have 'declared his faith as a follower of Jesus', but what Jesus is he following?

He may also show 'a certain respect for the authority of Scripture', but which parts of Scripture exactly?

Leo Newell
Atherton

I found Rev Bruce Johnson's 'disappointment' with Anglican Bishop Jack Spong (October *Journey*) as sounding artificial.

I gained the impression from Bruce's article that he heard exactly what he was hoping to find: a controversial sound-bite that could be conveniently used to dismiss the topic.

No need to read any of Spong's books now.

Mark Young
Highgate Hill

Editorial errs

I read your editorial in October *Journey* with surprising interest.

A point which raised my eyebrows was your reference to "the church" where, "there is often stigma and discrimination against persons with mental illness".

Without stating the facts – who, what, where, when, why and how – not only abuses the first requirement of journalism but also your fellow Christians.

Does it give you pleasure to further abuse your readers, in that same editorial, by writing that they must be afraid of what they disagree with, while you, on the other hand, are not afraid of what others disagree with?

That is a stupid statement.

Paul Langkamp
Cairns

CLASSIFIEDS

Accommodation

Fantastic location for beachfront holiday in charming cottage at Currumbin Beach, Qld. Phone 07 3376 4247.

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

Email your classified
advertisements to
mardi.lumsden@ucaqld.com.au
or fax 07 3377 9796

Language woes

I'm worried by a language trend in the Church.

Words and phrases that have served to unify and identify us for a couple of thousand years have been hijacked to serve as political wedges.

When Jesus told us we needed to be born again it was a great analogy about the spiritual rebirth in God's kingdom.

Now a 'Born Again' Christian is a fanatic.

An evangelical was someone who brought the Good News.

The Greeks coined the term, but now it's American for a judgemental right wing voter who thinks God endorses George W. Bush.

As I recall, a liberal wasn't the same as a heretic: to be feared and lambasted as a threat to our orthodoxy.

Prosperity wasn't such a bad thing when I was growing up with a new pair of shoes to start the school year.

Now it indicates a shallow Pentecostalism.

When we use these words against each other we stereotype other believers, limiting our view of God at work throughout the life of the Church and the wider world.

P.S. Can anyone help me become spiritually green, or do I just get the water tank rebate forms from the council?

Phil Smith
Pine Rivers

Election time

Politicians in democracies are never quite out of election mode.

The media make "democracy" a game, playing off Howard versus Rudd as though they were *Australian Idol* contestants.

Our media doesn't analyse issues on a rational basis, but the Church could and should.

What society needs is millions of ordinary people living by a God-based culture that is politician-proof and media-proof.

Arnold Jago
Mildura



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

Congratulations on producing one of the most significant issues of *Journey* I can remember.

I would be proud to show the October issue to the most jaded critic of the 'church magazine' as an inward-looking celebration of the (very authentic) niceness of church-goers, often pictured shaking hands with each other.

The coverage of diverse aspects of the challenge of mental health was displayed without censure, the characteristic reaction of society to this still-taboo area acknowledged.

We were pointed towards the need we, as followers of Jesus, have to learn and then to model a truly Christian response to a significant segment of our community that slips between the cracks of our care and attention, and which affects the lives of those around them more drastically than sufferers of physical ailments.

We can be justly proud of our turning away from prejudice based on gender, skin-colour, different beliefs, even physical disability, but still we continue, without ever intending, to treat the sufferers of mental ill-health as outcasts, and embarrassments; like drunks at a wedding service we would rather ignore them.

Few in Australian society are more disenfranchised than the mentally ill.

How could that be in this enlightened day and age?

Simple. Mental and emotional health is still a dark area, it's still unexplored by most of us, so we react to it as we do to anything unknown – we fear it.

We are very glad that there are experts and we are very glad to leave the whole thing to them.

And there's our sin. We fail to truly acknowledge the humanity of the mentally ill, by simply lumping them all together as a problem someone has to solve, like the lepers of old, not as real live individuals, more like us than not.

Because we are afraid. And, of course, so are they.

And part of what we are both afraid of is the stigma.

Let's be the first church to learn, to understand and to love the ones who call out desperately in the absolute silence our unloving world imposes on them.

Kerrin Edwards
Gold Coast

JOURNEY asks...

Most young Queenslanders have what is known as a “Schoolies” adventure in the weeks immediately following the completion of Year 12 at high school. This month *Journey* asked three young women who had very different Schoolies experiences how their Christian faith connected with that event.



Anna Mulcahy

Anna spent Schoolies at the Gold Coast with friends.

Having been brought up in a Christian home and small town, Schoolies was an opportunity for me to dabble in a fabricated snapshot of reality before leaving home and submerging myself in the uni culture.

The beach party phenomenon had infiltrated Noosa High in a way that left Schoolies at the Gold Coast as the most obvious choice for all of our friends.

Our school educated us on the dangers of Schoolies on the Gold Coast and impressed upon us the importance of looking out for each other and sticking together.

Suitably terrified by this scare tactic, I went to Schoolies with three of my closest girlfriends; girls that I trusted with my life,

as we had been warned that they just might need to save it at some point during the week.

Thankfully this did not prove to be the case for my friends or me.

Meeting new people in a one-off encounter that this surreal environment created encouraged traditionally taboo topics of conversation, such as religion, to flow freely.

This prompted some debates about my faith that I had not previously prepared arguments for, revealing to me how easily faith can become a habit rather than an intentional action.

However, the most influential way in which my Christian faith connected with my Schoolies experience was how being faced with the all night drunken dance parties and copious numbers of eligible boys that are synonymous with and readily available at Schoolies, forced me to define and defend my values.

I could no longer rely on my parents' beliefs as an excuse for my decisions.

I had to grow up, stand alone and claim the Christian faith as my own.

In so doing, I made some unreal friends and strengthened the bond with the friends I already had, as together we learnt to negotiate situations that accompanied our first taste of freedom and independence – lessons that High School couldn't teach us.

Anna Mulcahy is the Youth and Children's Ministry worker with Bundaberg and the Coral Coast Uniting Churches

Josie Nottle

Josie went to a Scripture Union (SU) Schoolies camp on the Sunshine Coast.

November 2002; Sunshine Coast; SU Schoolies; a time of celebration; you would think.

School was finally over; it was time to celebrate.

So, what was the problem?

My best friends were living it up on the Gold Coast and I was on the Sunshine Coast with SU.

I spent the week of Schoolies on the phone hearing all these incredible stories of all the fun they were having.

But, I was at a camp site with only a few friends and many people I did not know.

It was a week full of fun activities and opportunities, but I struggled to embrace the fun, because I was too jealous of others who got to have a more 'traditional' Schoolies experience.

There was a dilemma in this for me, because in my heart I knew I was in a place that was not only safer, but inclusive of faith. But still I felt I was missing out.

This was a little silly, considering I knew that if I was on the Gold Coast I would have felt pressured, unsure and I imagine that in the crowd of thousands I would have felt alone.

Although I was at a place that was God-filled and centred, I found it challenging to be excited about God in this time.

I felt excluded from normality because I had chosen to believe in God. I found

it difficult to embrace the opportunity to celebrate.

In hindsight, I look at the situation differently.

I can now see that God is not a God of restrictions and boundaries, nor is he a God of boring activities, as I saw in 2002.

He is God, who can offer us joy that lasts longer and is more substantial than the emotions felt at a party.

Josie Nottle is a candidate for the Specified Ministry of Youth Worker and a member of Aspley Uniting Church Congregation



Jill Prideaux

Jill went on the first Uniting Church Queensland Synod Fiji Schoolies trip.

On the flight to Fiji for my Schoolies trip in 2001, I was absolutely terrified of flying.

In an attempt to block out the sound of the plane engine and convince myself I was anywhere else, I put on some headphones and turned up the music.

As I shifted through the channels, I was astonished to hear the sound of hymns on one of them, and thought that would never happen on a domestic aeroplane in Australia!

My experiences of Christianity in that plane were largely in keeping with that first hint of Fijian Christianity.

Unlike much of the western world where faith is included along with politics as a topic that is impolite to discuss at the dinner table,

many Fijians display their faith naturally and openly.

Probably my most treasured memories of Fiji are from the week I spent on the remote island of Taveuni.

Our group split into three, and my Youth Pastor Louise and I went to stay in Qeleni village with the Reverend Micah and his wife Salome.

I was really impressed by the hospitality of this couple and their village.

They were incredibly generous both with their material possessions and with the amount of time they spent with us, sharing their culture and asking about ours.

Even though by western standards they didn't have much, they shared what they had with us.

Every day, at set hours, including quite early in the morning, long before either I or

the sun could drag ourselves up, a young man would beat on a drum, signalling that it was time for prayer.

There were also regular singing practices for church, and the harmonies at the Sunday service were breathtakingly beautiful.

I feel that going to Fiji with the Uniting Church Schoolie trip taught me some valuable lessons about how generous Christians should be, and how important it is to focus on faith rather than being constantly busy with other things.

I came to further understand just how diverse Christ's body is, and despite our cultural differences, how united we are by our fellowship with him.

Jill Prideaux attends Taringa Baptist Church and is working towards a PhD in International Relations at the University of Queensland

South East Qld's most comprehensive funeral planning guide...



"The Executor Funeral Plan – A Guide to Thoughtful Funeral Preplanning" contains all the information you need to know about arranging or pre-arranging a funeral.

Record your personal information and funeral details in this guide and you will have a permanent record ensuring peace of mind for you and your family. For your **free** copy of the guide, call us on **3852 1501** or complete the coupon and mail to us.

Post the coupon to: Alex Gow Funerals,
56 Breakfast Creek Rd, Newstead, 4006

Name: _____

Address: _____

P/code: _____

