



Puppet minister's  
new books

Page 5



Financial crisis  
hits church

Page 6

Uniting Church  
in the news

Page 11



## Switching off: living with television

The average Australian watches over 25 hours of television a week and 99.7% per cent of Australian homes have a television set. This month *Journey* asks: who is the head of every house, the unseen guest at every meal, the (not so) silent listener to every conversation?

THE AUSTRALIAN Bureau of Statistics reports that watching television is Australia's most popular leisure activity and 13.4 million of us tune in every day.

This familiar litany of statistics captures only part of the omnipresent and overwhelming impact of television on our modern society.

Frontier Services Patrol Minister, Deacon Michelle Cook said she and her husband James gave up TV for Lent.

"I saw it as distracting myself from tackling issues in my work and in my relationship with God. I would just sit and flick through shows that weren't even interesting.

"I did a lot of gardening which I found gave me time to think, pray and reflect," Ms Cook said.

"Since being allowed to watch TV again I find I am much more disciplined about turning it off when there is nothing on, and I do spend more time in prayer and doing devotions with James.

"There are better ways to switch off than watch TV."

Television dominates modern life, shaping common perspectives and telling us what and how to think. We are at risk of becoming victims of the technology we have made.

It may even be dangerous. Much television programming involves excessive violence, overt sexualisation, idol fixation, and serves as little more than junk food for the mind.

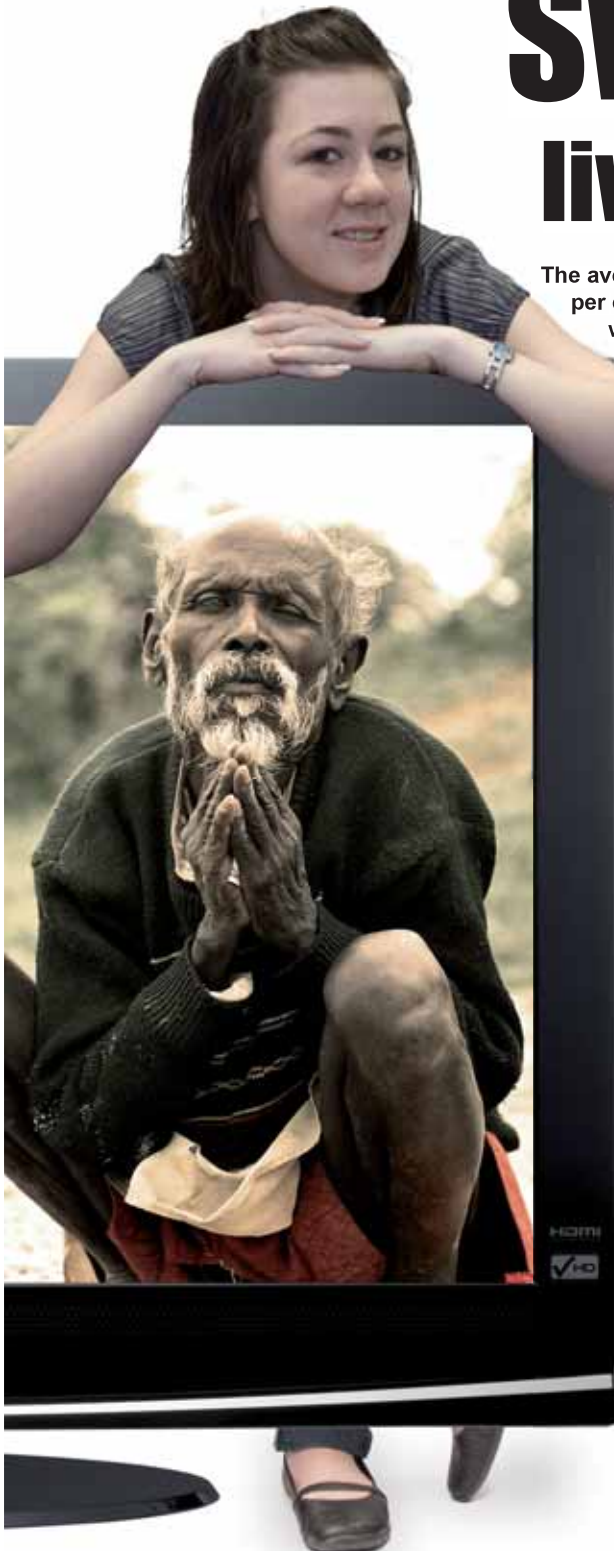
Burdekin Uniting Church Minister Rev Paul Clark said, "Parents and interactions with real people will always assert more influence. But in the absence of these, television is doing a mighty fine job."

When the history of our generation is written, our epitaph may be that we entertained ourselves into moral paralysis, or as Neil Postman suggested, amused ourselves to death.

Malcolm Muggeridge in his book *Christ and the Media* fantasised about Jesus, having survived three temptations in the wilderness being offered a fourth: a contract from Lucifer Inc. to go to Rome and anchor his very own TV network variety show.

Jesus, "concerned with truth and reality" rather than "fantasy and images", refused.

By Bruce Mullan



### More on television

- P. 2 A watching brief
- P. 7 How TV changes Christianity
- P. 8 The unreality of reality TV  
Costing Television
- P. 9 Open to persuasion  
Where faithful dollars go
- P. 10 World in your living room
- P. 16 *Journey* asks



# A watching brief

IN JANUARY 1970 I arrived in Renmark, a vibrant community in the Riverland of SA, to commence my first ministry placement.

At that time the town congregation met for worship both Sunday morning and evening and the church was full on both occasions.

TV arrived in the Riverland some time in 1971. Within six months, while attendances at morning worship remained excellent, the evening service had diminished to the point that it was discontinued.

We should never underestimate the degree of influence that TV has on just about every aspect of people's lives.

Sometimes that influence is subtle, sometimes quite overt, but it is very real.

We are most at risk when we assume that we are immune from the impact that TV has on our values, our attitudes, and our lifestyle.

The incessant and awful advertising, the constant depiction of dysfunctional and destructive relationships as normal, the shallowness and bias of most news and current affairs programs, the sheer volume of violence... all have the capacity to do us harm in fundamental ways.

The statistics regarding the number of hours that people watch TV are disturbing, especially in relation to children.

The fact that TV is the default method used to keep children occupied is a real worry.

The degree to which the TV watching habits of children are unsupervised is of even greater concern.

In principle, there is nothing wrong with watching TV for relaxation and entertainment.

It can also be a valuable source of information when the facts are presented accurately and without prejudice.



## Message from the Moderator

Rev Dr David Pitman

It can help keep us in touch with significant national and global events and it has considerable potential as a tool for educational purposes.

Proportionately, there is very little specifically Christian content on TV.

Those who subscribe to cable television will know that there is a channel devoted to Christian

The Christian Television Association did some creative things in past years, but the cost has often been prohibitive.

The Apostle Paul encourages us to take time to reflect on those things that are true, honorable, just, pure, pleasing and commendable (Philippians 4:8), and there are programs on TV that enable us to do that.

However, there is a great deal that communicates, and seeks to justify, the exact opposite.

Sometimes there will be the option not only to be discerning about what we watch, but to use selected TV programs as a basis for critical conversation and theological reflection, both within our own families and as a resource in our congregations.

Otherwise, on many occasions it is better to turn the TV off and do something else altogether. If for no other reason, we should do this for the sake of our children.

TV is with us to stay. Options will continue to proliferate. The challenges and issues involved can only increase in degree and complexity.

It is best then to make some wise decisions, implement appropriate safeguards and disciplines, diminish the pitfalls and maximise the benefits.

It's up to us.

“The incessant and awful advertising, the constant depiction of dysfunctional and destructive relationships as normal, the shallowness and bias of most news and current affairs programs, the sheer volume of violence... all have the capacity to do us harm in fundamental ways.”

programs, but the quality is often dubious.

It does remind us, however, that we have never really been able to harness TV in Australia as a vehicle for effectively sharing the Gospel.

## 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 August Journey is 11 July  
Next issue of Journey will be available in churches on Sunday, 3 August

Communications Services Unit  
Uniting Church in Australia Queensland Synod  
60 Bayliss Street Auchenflower QLD GPO Box 674 Brisbane QLD 4001  
Ph: 07 3377 9910  
Fax: 07 3377 9796

Email: [journey@uqaqld.com.au](mailto:journey@uqaqld.com.au)  
Web: [www.journeyonline.com.au](http://www.journeyonline.com.au)

## From the Editor

When I was a very small child growing up in a very Presbyterian home, once each year the Moderator would come to visit to congregation.

I remember it being something akin to a visit from Santa Claus. He (and it was always a "he") didn't bring presents, but he wore a particularly distinctive outfit that made a huge impact on us kids.

The Moderator wore antiquated court dress: a frock coat with a lace jabot on the coat, a shirt with ruffles on the sleeves and preaching bands, breeches, white stockings, and shiny black patent leather shoes with large silver buckles.

It was a wondrous sight to behold and the memories came back while working on this "television" issue of Journey and pondering the kind of visual image ministers present to the world today.

While there are still some who continue to wear clerical attire – be it a clerical collar, crosses on the shirt collar or a large cross worn on a chain around the neck – the practice has virtually died out in Protestant circles.

It elicits the question, how do ordained ministers and church workers make their presence visible in everyday life, particularly in contemporary culture which, while secularised, is particularly sensitive to visual imagery.

For all its faults, the clichéd religious dress was a sign, and the wearer was instantly recognised as a minister of the church and all that that meant.

Critics claimed lifestyle rather than garb should communicate faith and contended that religious dress created an undesirable barrier between ministers and laity with whom they wished to communicate.

It has been an interesting move as Protestant clergy have become less or non-accepting of any distinctive clerical dress while having no difficulty accepting it for other vocations: fire officers, police officers, nurses, and countless other professions.

This is not about vestments (what ministers wear when leading the faithful in worship and sacrament) it is about the church becoming increasingly invisible in a world where most everything else is reduced to visual eye-bites.

Historically, distinct vocations and callings have often been distinguished by particular clothing and uniforms.

Imagine what our society would be like if police officers never wore a uniform to differentiate themselves from the rest of society.

It may be worth considering again how those set apart to undertake particular ministries on behalf of the church might maintain their community visibility in a very visually oriented world.

\*\*\*\*\*

As this Journey goes to press I will be leaving for three months long service leave and Mardi, Phil and Osler will be looking after the next few issues.

Happy reading and God bless.

Bruce Mullan

## Sign of the Times



BEENLEIGH REGIONAL Uniting Church hosted an ecumenical dedication service for the Chaplains and RE Teachers serving in the local state schools.

Among the 140 people attending the service were clergy, chaplains, RE teachers, Scripture Union representatives, school principals and a good number of teachers. A freewill offering taken to support local chaplaincy raised almost \$1,000.

The two high school and seven primary school chaplains are supplemented by a team of around 20 RE teachers who make contact with around 2,000 children each week.

Send your Signs of the Times photographs to [journey@uqaqld.com.au](mailto:journey@uqaqld.com.au).



# Lay book stirs controversy

By Bruce Mullan

THE PUBLICATION *Two Small Books on Lay People and the Church* was always going to be controversial, and the controversy generated by the launch was no surprise to its author, Professor Emeritus Rod Jensen.

Kenmore Uniting Church Lay Minister Heather den Houting was uncompromising, describing herself as "angry, distressed, confused and irritated" by the book.

Ms den Houting said Dr Jensen's description of church was "profoundly limited", and claimed the book delivered the voice of the disappearing laity of the church through statistical analysis and personal anecdote.

"No philosophy and especially no theology required".

Moderator of the Queensland Synod Rev Dr David Pitman also described the book as difficult and painful reading.

"The first thing I had to do

was switch off my clergy defence button," Dr Pitman said.

"Regardless of whether we are right or wrong or just misguided at any particular point in time, those of us who are ordained into the specified ministries of the church have to learn that there is a time to speak and a time to be silent.

"The capacity to listen is critically important. Becoming defensive blocks our ears to the many voices we need to be hearing."

Along with the book launch Uniting Church member Dr Roderick Rogers introduced the Lay Forum and expressed his desire to see laypeople taking a progressive stance on the future of the Uniting Church.

Dr Rogers described the role of the Lay Forum as facilitating lively discussion within the Uniting Church and promoting the role of laypeople within that community. There was certainly "lively discussion" at the launch.

Another Lay Forum member

Mr Reg Collard said modern biblical scholarship and 21st century world views are legitimate topics too rarely discussed in the pews, if at all.

"In the Lay Forum we are committed to future church and making it relevant to 21st century people, unafraid to ask questions and foster renewal within diversity," he said.

Professor Jensen was philosophical about the reaction.

"One indisputable truth seems to be obvious to all. We can't go on as we are," he said.

"If this book stirs anyone to recognise the truth which is facing us in the churches and stirs anyone to make a difference, it has been well worth the time and effort.

"Whether this book is right or wrong, whether you see it as truth or heresy or see me as a nuisance is not important.

"If it challenges you to rethink the church model we have, it will have justified its existence."



Descendant of the original settlers Mr Ralph Lawrance from Ipswich stands near the headstones now mounted on a plinth 800 metres from the old church site. Photo by David Baker

## Historic gravestones in a new place

THE RELOCATION of headstones from a historic graveyard at Rosevale was marked by a thanksgiving service in June.

After extended conversations with descendants of the early white settlers in the area, the Church moved the headstones to a nearby park and established memorials to commemorate the pioneers.

Bremer Brisbane Presbytery Minister Rev David Baker, who led the service at the site of the original Rosevale graves, said the memorial now in place listed the names of the people known to have been buried there.

"We then met on the bank of the Bremer River to commemorate the establishment of the newly placed gravestones there and unveil a plaque to commemorate the pioneers of the area."

The land on which the burial place was located was originally given to the Methodist Church in the 1800s and subsequently became Uniting Church land in 1977 at the time of Church Union.

The land was sold in 1989 after legal advice that the land was not gazetted as a cemetery and there were no legal or health reasons that the land could not be transferred.

The Moderator of the Uniting Church in Queensland Rev Dr David Pitman said, "The church understands that the existence of such monuments can provide people with a sense of connectedness with those they have lost and helps them to cope with their loss and grief."

Mr Baker said he was very pleased the church and the families will have a sense of closure on the matter.

By Bruce Mullan

## UnitingCare partners UQ research

By Bruce Mullan

THE UNITINGCARE Chair in Social Policy and Research established in partnership with The University of Queensland was launched on 3 June in Brisbane.

This is the first time the University of Queensland's School of Social Work and Applied Human Services has established a Joint Chair with a non-profit organisation.

Chief Executive Officer of UnitingCare Queensland Anne Cross said that the importance of evidenced based research in shaping the future development of UnitingCare Queensland's service delivery agenda could not be underestimated.

"The people we serve include children and families caught up in domestic violence, frail older people who might be leaving their family home for the first time to enter accommodation with supported care, and older people who rely on support so they can continue to live in their own home," she said.

"They include patients in our hospitals, children or adults with disabilities, individuals who are marginalised for whatever reason, and other members of the community who are going through rough times.

"The development and implementation of a clear research agenda will enable us to better understand the complex and changing needs of the thousands of people that we help each year and to better tailor our services to meet those needs.

"We will seek to invest in research that will result in practical



UnitingCare Chair in Social Policy and Research Professor Jill Wilson. Photo courtesy of UnitingCare

outcomes by informing the services we provide across our agencies in the future and how these can provide the best outcomes for our clients."

Professor Jill Wilson AO, the inaugural Chair introduced at the launch has been associated for more than 30 years with the health and community services of the Uniting Church, including 10 years as Chair of the UnitingCare Queensland Board.

Professor Wilson has a strong national and international profile as a researcher and as an academic in social work and human service

practice and until recently she was Head of the School of Social Work and Applied Human Sciences at The University of Queensland.

"It is a great honour to be the first incumbent in this key position," Professor Wilson said.

"UnitingCare has taken a clear and innovative lead in the non-profit sector in establishing this Joint Chair with the University of Queensland and in planning to develop a research framework that will ensure that the organisation manages its sustainability into the future by providing services that are responsive and relevant."

7.6%

p.a.

**Make an ethical investment choice and be rewarded with a great rate.**

During July, invest any amount up to \$49,999 for three months and you'll earn 7.6 percent per annum, paid at maturity.

But get moving—this is a special offer for new amounts invested at U.C.I.S and is valid for a limited time.

For full terms and conditions, visit [www.ucis.com.au](http://www.ucis.com.au) or call us on 1300 655 653.



**U.C.I.S**  
THE UNITING CHURCH INVESTMENT SERVICE

[www.ucis.com.au](http://www.ucis.com.au) | 1300 655 653



Heather Anderson (left) and Reannea Wirth cake cutting at St Andrew's Uniting Church, Hughenden. Photo courtesy of Peter Harvey

## Century of witness and worship in Cleveland

CLEVELAND UNITING Church invites anyone with any connections, memorabilia, publications, photographs and items from the life of this church and congregation over the past 100 years to share such information with the Centenary Celebrations Committee.

The committee will put together a Centenary Booklet and welcomes any contributions.

They are also working on a Centenary Commemorative Project and plan to celebrate God's faithfulness in the history of Cleveland Uniting Church. Contributions should be sent to PO BOX 351 Cleveland 4164.

For more information contact Ann Richardson, Church Administrator, on 3286 5627 or email [redlanduc@dovenetq.net.au](mailto:redlanduc@dovenetq.net.au)

# IF IT'S YOUR WILL THERE'S HOPE.



© UNICEF/HQ04-0236/Ben Parker

It's never too late to make a difference. By remembering UNICEF Australia in your will, you'll be giving hope to the millions of children who need it. UNICEF, a global organisation that works specifically for children's rights and survival, relies on voluntary donations. That's why your bequest is so important in helping fund programs that deliver healthcare, education and protection to children in over 150 developing countries. If as little as \$2.50 can save a child's life through vital immunisations and \$13,000 can provide drinking water for a whole village, imagine what your will can do.

To find out more, visit [www.unicef.org.au](http://www.unicef.org.au) or call (02) 9261 2811 for a legacy brochure.

**unicef**

UNI0264/50S

## 100 years in Hughenden

ST ANDREW'S Church in Hughenden celebrated 100 years on 25 May 2008.

The church was originally opened on 16 May 1908 with the first full-time minister Rev A Hutson commencing in August after a long journey from Scotland to take up the post.

Hugenden minister Pastor Peter Harvey said the centenary was celebrated with a service focused on building on the past for a strong future.

"We learn from those who have paved the way for our church in our community, and hold firm to the faith of our forebears as a sure sign of the faithfulness of God in all times," Mr Harvey said.

Heather Anderson (left) and Reannea Wirth (right) helped by cutting the anniversary cake.

## Fiji Schoolies

SCHOOLIES IN Fiji is happening again in 2008.

The trip is an opportunity for young people who are not interested in going to the coast



Louise Edwards is at home in the Fijian island of Taveuni. Photo courtesy of Louise Edwards

for their end of year Schoolies, and is designed for people who want to do something different, experience another culture, meet some amazing people and have a life changing experience.

Schoolies stay in traditional villages on Taveuni where many home comforts are absent.

Electricity is only switched on for four hours each night but the hospitality is continuous.

One participant said, "Both the people we stayed with and their whole village pitched in to make our stay enjoyable.

"They are probably the most generous and friendly people on earth."

Tour leader Louise Edwards is the youth worker at Broadwater Road Uniting Church and a veteran of seven previous Schoolies visits to Fiji.

For more information or for an application form contact Louise Edwards on 3849 8548 or [edwardslj@hotmail.com](mailto:edwardslj@hotmail.com)



John Saunders, Sue Pickering, Rob Cowen (U.C.I.S.) and Josie Nottle. Photo by Mardi Lumsden

## Trinity of graduates head out into church

THREE STUDENTS completed formal studies in three different focuses of study at Trinity Theological College this semester.

John Saunders completed course work in Ministry of the Word,

Sue Pickering in the Ministry of Deacon, and Josie Nottle in the Ministry of Youth Worker.

Each heads out to work for the church in their field of interest and passion.

Ms Nottle was enthusiastic about beginning work in her chosen field.

"I am excited about entering a new stage in my ministry and being involved in youth ministry in a new setting," she said.

Ms Pickering will be working part-time with the Trinity Wilston congregation in the Moreton Rivers Presbytery.

Mr Saunders will be working as the Minister with the North Lakes congregation.

To congratulate them on their achievement, the Uniting Church Investment Service presented portable communion sets to Mr Saunders and Ms Pickering and a book voucher to Ms Nottle.

By Mardi Lumsden

**LECTURER  
IN SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY**

United Theological College Sydney is seeking to appoint a lecturer responsible for the teaching and oversight of Systematic Theology.

The appointee would be expected also to demonstrate an academic interest in one of the following areas: a contextual theology; a reformed and evangelical theology; a feminist theology; theological ethics; a philosophical theology; a Christian theology of other faiths; the relationship of postmodern theology to the systematic core.

The appointee would be involved in the formation of candidates for specified ministries and would become an academic associate of the School of Theology, CSU.

United Theological College is the constituted college for the Uniting Church in the Synod of NSW-ACT. It is also a partner in the School of Theology, Charles Sturt University.

The position is available from 1 February 2009. Full details of the position may be obtained from: the Acting Principal, Revd. Dr. Dean Drayton, United Theological College, 16 Masons Drive, North Parramatta NSW 2151 Australia. Phone: +61 2 8838 8927; Fax +61 2 9683 6617 or email [utc@nsw.uca.org.au](mailto:utc@nsw.uca.org.au). Applications for this position close on **15 September 2008**.



# Living Rivers seizes the opportunity

LIVING RIVERS, the Uniting Church congregations at Nerang, Coomera and Pimpama, is the most recent Uniting Church to open its own Opportunity Shop.

Based in the shopping centre at Coomera Village just along the road from Dreamworld, the second hand clothing and goods outlet will fund church programs and provide a source of second hand goods for the local community.

Rob Sandilands from the Nerang Uniting Church congregation and Jane Conlon from Coomera Uniting Church

are the management team of the new shop.

The gala opening attracted a large crowd and featured the Gold Coast City Brass Band.

Queensland Synod Vision for Mission Advocate Rev Duncan Macleod is putting together a resource on Op Shops and congregational mission and is keen to hear the stories of congregations who have been down this track.

For more information on Vision for Mission projects contact Duncan Macleod on [duncan.macleod@ucaqld.com.au](mailto:duncan.macleod@ucaqld.com.au)



Burdekin Uniting Church Rev Paul Clark with one of his puppet creations. Photo by Bruce Mullan



Jane Conlon and Rob Sandilands try out the change rooms at the Living Rivers Op Shop at Coomera. Photo by Duncan Macleod

## Generous Safaris heading off again

UNITING CHURCH Safaris continue to support the work of the church in rural Queensland and this year has provided for equipment upgrades to keep the McKay Patrol Padre flying and contributed towards the cost of the two recently appointed Rural Ministry Coordinators in central and south west Queensland.

Since inception, Uniting Church Safaris has donated in excess of \$200,000 to support rural and outback ministry.

It recently celebrated its 25th anniversary with 108 past tour leaders, coach drivers, cooks,

chaplains and travellers attending.

Uniting Church Safaris is planning two tours in 2009.

"Outback 'n' Ocean - Down South" will be 19 days from 27 April by Coach from Brisbane, through Dubbo, Geelong, Great Ocean Road, Kangaroo Island (3 nights), Coober Pedy, Broken Hill, Cobar and home.

The other tour will be one week on Lord Howe Island from 20 September.

To register interest in either tour contact Rhonda Heathwood on 0428 850 100 or email [rhonda.heathwood@bigpond.com](mailto:rhonda.heathwood@bigpond.com)

## Minister launches resources for busy churches

By Phil Smith

MOST VISITORS to Burdekin Uniting Church are struck by the number of early teens in the congregation.

There can be dozens of them and a big group are on the edge of their seats in the front row.

They would be members of the Creative Ministry Group and they would be about to lead the worship in drama, with puppets, or perhaps using a video they've produced.

The young people usually work with scripts written by their minister Rev Paul Clark and soon churches around Australia could be doing the same.

Burdekin dignitaries and arts supporters turned out recently for the launch of Mr Clark's home grown series of books.

After 15 years of writing and refining his plays, Paul Clark has secured national distribution for a series of five books: *Sam the Lamb*, *I'm Telling*, *Is This the End?*, *Clueless Christmas* and *The Sermon on the Mount Morgan Pub Veranda*.

Arts Queensland and the Burdekin Shire joined with the

Regional Arts Development Program to develop the series of dramas for children and adults available through Rainbow Books.

The dramas produced by 'The Hive' don't require a performing arts degree or three years at acting school.

They were written to be useful in churches large and small, secular venues, Sunday schools and small groups.

Burdekin Mayor, Lyn McLaughlin - a former primary teacher - described the scripts as a great result of local enthusiasm and talent.

"These will be great value beyond churches and youth groups," said Mayor McLaughlin.

"I'm sure Paul's plays will take to the stages of cisteddods and other venues as their popularity grows."

Rainbow Books picked up the local writer's work, saying many organisations are looking for good quality youth drama material, but look for it from sources in the United Kingdom and USA.

The national distributor is confident there's a market for good

quality scripts from Australian playwrights.

Having grown up in country NSW, Mr Clark's own passion for drama dates back to puppets and travelling drama groups.

"This is about the power of story telling," he said. "I've seen audiences of children and parents mesmerised by a good yarn, well told."

When God gives you something to say you find the best way to say it.

Jeremiah got dramatic using strange props.

Jesus just told the story and left folk to think and talk about it on the way home."

Local Burdekin puppeteers 'The Burpettes' have performed in every school throughout the region, to more than 1000 children, incorporating many of Paul Clark's dramas.

The series of plays and individual titles are available through all Christian book stores.

For more information contact Paul Clark on 4783 2251 or 0404 856778



Southport, Gold Coast  
UNITING CHURCH IN AUSTRALIA

### MINISTER OF THE WORD

The Southport Uniting Church is located right in the heart of the rapidly growing Southport Business District which is becoming the second major centre of high rise residential and business development on the Gold Coast. It is seeking a full time Minister of the Word, commencing early 2009, to lead the ministry team. This Church in the City which has at its base a wide and varied ministry has the opportunity to pioneer urban ministry in a growing and increasingly diverse community.

The Church has a history of growing its congregations and has developed a detailed strategy to maintain this growth and increase its outreach, service and witness, so as to help people discover their life transforming relationship with Christ. The congregation is committed to being a risk taking people of faith. It is looking to extend the present empowering leadership enabling it to continue to undertake this ministry of discipleship.

The congregation is totally committed to "Connecting to the Heart" and invites applications from persons interested in accepting the challenge.

Further information may be obtained from our website: [www.southport.ucaweb.com.au](http://www.southport.ucaweb.com.au) or email — [sportuc@internode.on.net](mailto:sportuc@internode.on.net)

Apply in the first instance to Secretary Placements Committee, UCA Qld Synod, GPO Box 674, Brisbane Qld 4001 not later than **14th July 2008**.

## SCHOOLS FOR DISCERNING PARENTS



<b>Brisbane Boys' College</b>	
Boarding and day school for boys in Prep to Year 12	07 3309 3500 <a href="http://www.bbc.qld.edu.au">www.bbc.qld.edu.au</a>
<b>Sunshine Coast Grammar School</b>	
Co-educational day school Preschool to Year 12	07 5445 4444 <a href="http://www.scgss.qld.edu.au">www.scgss.qld.edu.au</a>
<b>Clayfield College</b>	
Girls: Prep to Year 12 Boarding: Girls over 10 years Boys: Prep to Year 5	07 3262 0262 <a href="http://www.clayfield.qld.edu.au">www.clayfield.qld.edu.au</a>
<b>Somerville House</b>	
Day and boarding school for girls Preparatory to Year 12	07 3248 9200 <a href="http://www.somerville.qld.edu.au">www.somerville.qld.edu.au</a>

**Presbyterian and Methodist Schools Association**  
[www.pmsa-schools.edu.au](http://www.pmsa-schools.edu.au)

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

# Global financial crisis hits the church

By Bruce Mullan

AS INTERNATIONAL financial markets continue their roller coaster ride and economists draw parallels with the Great Depression of the 1930s and predict a global meltdown, the Uniting Church in Queensland has not escaped the economic fallout.

Expressing deep regret, the General Secretary of the Queensland Synod Rev Douglas Jones recently reported that the negative impact of the volatile and uncertain financial, banking and property environment had made it necessary to revise the projected 2008 Synod budget income downward by \$2 million – a reduction of 20% on the original estimates.

Mr Jones said while total income from congregations across the Synod has been on a plateau for at least the past 10 years, expenditure has continued to increase.

"Consequently the Mission and Service Fund Budget has become increasingly reliant upon contributions from other areas of the Synod such as U.C.I.S, UnitingCare, UC Insurance and Mission Support Enterprises," he said.

Uniting Church Investment Service (U.C.I.S) General Manager, Stephen Peake said the economic uncertainty in world markets evidenced by wild fluctuations in commodities, interest rates and share prices had affected the performance of U.C.I.S and it will be reporting a substantial loss for the 2007 period.

"U.C.I.S has experienced a number of years of buoyant activity and excellent results. What we're now experiencing is that some of these investment strategies aren't as profitable as they once were," Mr Peake said.



General Secretary of the Queensland Synod Rev Douglas Jones and Director of the Department for Financial and Property Services Mr Robert Packer working on the Synod budget. Photo by Osker Lau

"Because of the shift in the market cycle, certain property values are down from initial assessments.

"This means that some of the properties U.C.I.S has invested in are just not going to give us the returns we anticipated.

"Unfortunately, reserves that have been built up over recent years will be impacted by this.

"We're not alone in what we're experiencing. Uncertainty in the market is causing fluctuations in cash rates and pressure on inflation, retail spending, housing and corporate investment costs.

"A number of financial institutions both locally and internationally have been reporting significant losses.

"Banks are experiencing a shortage of liquidity and are attempting to source more funds from new sources.

"And market forecasters are telling us to 'expect a continued period of flat performance'."

Mr Jones said the Council of Synod has determined its immediate response will be to reshape the 2008 Mission and Service Fund Budget and develop an appropriate budget for 2009.

The longer term response will be to sharpen the focus of our human and financial resources on mission and ministry outcomes within the context of the Synod's Intentional Missional Strategy – A Future with Heart and Soul.

"The Finance, Investment and Property Board, Synod Leadership Team, Department for Financial and Property Services and the broader Synod staff team are working together on ways of responding to the need to reduce expenditure, increase income and manage the tighter financial situation," Mr Jones said.

A meeting of the Council of Synod in late May resolved that in achieving reductions in expenditure any impact on individual roles and jobs within the Synod is to be minimised.

Where this is not possible all necessary steps will be taken to redeploy staff and to support people to find alternative roles.

Unfilled roles and any anticipated new positions will be reassessed and decisions made subject to the adoption in August of a revised 2008 Mission and Service Fund Budget.

"Current staff will be asked to respond with flexibility to changes in responsibilities and refocused priorities so the Synod can achieve its ministry and mission outcomes within the resources available," Mr Jones said.

He also indicated the Synod will work to minimise impact on the ministry and mission of congregations, particularly those in rural areas.

Another church agency impacted by the economic turmoil is UCSuper which provides superannuation services for approximately twelve thousand employees of Uniting Church organisations around Australia.

UCSuper General Manager Mr Neil Kent said the recent investment market volatility had also impacted on superannuation investments after a number of years of relatively high returns.

"This is not unusual for investment markets. If we go back in time, we can see this sort of activity has always been there, however on this occasion, it has been very noticeable through the press releases," he said.

Mr Kent said UCSuper's investment options were constructed with varying degrees of diversity to share the volatility across a number of asset classes and that currently most of the asset classes have experienced volatility at the same time, which is unusual.

"Past performance is not an indicator of future performance, as investment markets are not predictable and members should seek professional financial advice when making important decisions about their investments."

Mr Peake said U.C.I.S will also need to ride through this difficult period, at the same time adapting to a different market environment.

"We're keeping our focus on the core business of resourcing the church, but also looking at ways to minimise our cost of funds and doing what we do better.

"We're trying new things that will be both attractive to our customers and have a positive result for U.C.I.S.

"An example of this is the special we're running on our fixed term investments – we're returning a competitive rate to our customers as well as increasing the capacity for U.C.I.S to finance church projects."

Mr Jones said responding to the situation facing us will be a "whole of church responsibility".

"The Council of Synod asks all presbyteries, congregations, agencies, boards and committees, and the Synod Office staff team to work together to find creative and shared ways to meet the tougher times ahead of us."

## What caused the financial meltdown?

*JOURNEY ASKED* Ralph Collins, a member of the Synod's Finance, Investment and Property Board and General Manager Sales and Service Delivery for a large superannuation fund for an explanation of what is happening in the world financial scene. At the risk of gross generalisation, Mr Collins offered this "plain English" explanation.

Many countries, companies and individuals borrow money, either because they are spending more money than they are earning or to invest for the future.

On the other side, those with available money lend their excess to those who need to borrow.

In recent times, there has been plenty of money in the system, and so interest rates have been at all time lows.

However, some loans were made to groups of people who normally would not have been eligible to borrow money, as they have limited income and assets (a new term was defined being NINJA, No Income, No Jobs or Assets).

Those loans were then put together into big investment portfolios and sold on to other big and small investors who expected that the value of the investments would go up.

When the NINJA people stopped making their interest payments, the loans became worthless to those who had lent the money.

Massive amounts of money were lost in this global meltdown (billions of dollars and counting) and the reaction to this event has been to increase the interest rates now being charged on loans.

The increased interest rates have made it harder for those trying to repay their loans, and this has led to even more people being unable to meet their commitments, and so it continues.

Beyond the losses incurred on the loans, companies who make their money from borrowing and lending (banks, financial institutions) have seen their share price dive, which has further reduced people's assets (through their own shareholdings or superannuation funds).

While this is bad news for most individuals, the general view is that investment markets go in cycles and we are going through a down time after many years of boom times.

This does not of course help in meeting the higher mortgage repayments that will be required right now.



## Associate Chaplain

Brisbane Boys' College, a day and boarding school with an enrolment of 1560 boys from Prep to Year 12, has been preparing students for the challenges of life since 1902.

Applications are invited for the position of Associate Chaplain to join a team consisting of the Chaplain, two full-time Christian Education teachers and three other teachers with part-time Christian Education loads.

The appointee will be a registered teacher with Christian theological training. Applicants should be sympathetic to the aims and ethos of independent schools and be prepared to give keen, active support to the College's Christian faith and principles. There is also an expectation of participation in the College's wider program.

For a position description, including selection criteria, please visit the College website at [www.bbc.qld.edu.au](http://www.bbc.qld.edu.au)

Applications including a CV, statement addressing the selection criteria, and the names and contact details of at least two recent referees should be received (preferably by email) by COB Friday 11 July 2008, addressed to:

Mr Graeme McDonald, Headmaster  
Brisbane Boys' College, Toowong Qld 4066  
Email [kferguson@bbc.qld.edu.au](mailto:kferguson@bbc.qld.edu.au)

A MEMBER OF THE PRESBYTERIAN AND METHODIST SCHOOLS' ASSOCIATION



# How TV changes Christianity

*Leading academic Peter Horsfield says Christianity doesn't just use communication. Everything that Christianity is and does is an act of communication in a form available in the wider culture. When that wider culture of communication changes, Christianity itself is changed.*

By Peter Horsfield

THE QUESTION we ask about the effects television has had on Christianity are no different from questions that can be asked about how writing, Greek, Latin, icons, statues, churches and cathedrals, painting, printed bibles and academic theology have changed the original speaking of Jesus in Hebrew.

Television can't be understood on its own.

It drew on and extended a number of social and cultural developments that were already shaping the 20th century: the visual culture of photography and popular use of cameras; the mass audience concept of newspapers and radio; the novel idea of "broadcasting" developed by radio; the sound technologies of radio and the phonograph; the electrification of music, of rock and roll; moving images of the cinema; practices of visual advertising from newspapers and magazines; and attracting people by flashing lights from neon signs.

Television also took over from newspapers and radios the commercial idea of creating news, drama and stories to assemble an audience to sell to corporations, so



corporations could sell products to the audience by advertising.

Television's novelty came from putting together in a new way things that were already there.

But it rapidly became the dominant social mass medium of the twentieth century.

Television's ability to catch people's attention and lock up people's time at home was so great that almost everybody reorganised their social lives and communication practices to stay at home and watch it.

Television's formats, audio-visual aesthetics, rapid stories, easy accessibility and lack of demand produced a change in culture that was unmatched since the 15th century, when the printing press sparked a transformation of the

religious, social and political life of Europe.

Every other form of social communication has had to adapt to the television challenge or die.

After initial downturns, radio, magazines, newspapers, the cinema, and book publishing have adapted, redefined themselves, and successfully forged a new place for themselves in the media marketplace.

Magazines, for example, abandoned the old strategy of a small number of huge circulation mass market magazines and successfully redefined themselves as niche market, low circulation, highly visual, specialist publications.

Christianity, as another major form of social communication, has been faced with the same challenge:

adapt or die. The result is a mixed one.

Some "brands" or denominations of Christianity have been so deeply rooted in the old culture of print that they have not been able to adapt successfully, are seen as "old" cultures and are declining in numbers. The Uniting Church in Australia generally is one of these.

Those brands of Christianity that are doing well are those which have redefined Christianity in a quite different cultural and communication style.

In general they tend to emphasise greater dynamism in worship and activities, use more (loud) electric sound, are more visual, present a theology that reflects television's narrative view of insiders-outsiders, dramatic

conversion, and the impression of exciting things happening, create opportunities for intimate community, actively recruit new members from the marketplace, build and promote their particular "brand" of Christianity, emphasise the practical benefits of believing, and frequently link faith to material possessions, success and prosperity.

There are mixed opinions about whether these changes are necessarily good ones. Many question whether, in the process of embracing the new, something essentially Christian has been lost.

It's interesting to note, though, that historically the same objections were raised when Christians started using new media like writing, painting, printing and vernacular languages, things we now readily take for granted.

Christianity is always embodied in particular mediated forms that colour tastes and opinions about whether something is right or not.

All of that is changing again, of course. The previously dominant medium of television is now just one aspect of a wider screen culture that young people live in.

Broadcast and cable television are losing their younger audiences to web 2.0 internet and mobile phone based television, downloaded movies, short films, multi-media newspapers, blogs and vlogs, computer gaming, and global networking.

Here we go again.

Peter Horsfield is Associate Professor of Communication at RMIT University in Melbourne

## UCA Congratulates Rudd Government

THE UNITING Church in Australia has congratulated the Rudd Government on its decisions to abolish the Temporary Protection Visa regime.

National Director of UnitingJustice Australia Rev Elenie Poulos wrote to Senator Christopher Evans, Minister for Immigration and Citizenship, commending the Australian Government's decisions.

The Uniting Church has campaigned for many years for the abolition of the Temporary Protection Visas and an increase in Humanitarian Program places.

"The Uniting Church advocates for a just response to the needs of refugees that recognises Australia's responsibilities as a wealthy global citizen, upholds the human rights and safety of all people, and is based on just and humane treatment, including non-discriminatory practices and accountable, transparent processes."

Ms Poulos commended the Rudd Government on its decisions to increase the number of places in its Humanitarian Program intake.

## Blue Care honours carers Outback crying out for carers

BLUE CARE staff and volunteers celebrated Blue Care Awareness Week in June by reaffirming their commitment to promoting and delivering quality care services based on the compassion of Christ.

Blue Care Director of Mission Colleen Geyer led church service dedications at Springwood and Robina during the week, blessing staff and volunteers and praying for them to hold on to that commitment and devotion during the year.

"Our volunteers and staff have a very important job to do and the care they provide is vital to the community," Ms Geyer said.

"They provide care to more than 12,500 people across Queensland and northern New South Wales every day."

"It takes strong commitment and devotion to give 100 per cent every day to every client."

Ms Geyer said holding a dedication service during Blue Care Awareness Week was ideal.

"It reminded participants of the importance of their role in the

community, something we promote to the entire community during this important week," she said.

Committed, dedicated, caring and loyal are some of the words Ms Geyer used to describe the Blue Care staff and volunteers she had met since starting with the not-for-profit organisation in August 2007.

"Most of all, our staff and volunteers go above and beyond to help make someone's life easier or more comfortable," she said.

Blue Care was originally called the Blue Nursing Service and has been providing quality residential and community aged care for over 50 years.

Blue Care Regional Business Manager Rodney Taylor said the dedication service provided an opportunity for staff and volunteers to be recognised and formally acknowledged for their contribution to Blue Care and the local community.

"The dedication service is an important opportunity to reiterate Blue Care's relationship and origins with the community," he said.

FRONTIER SERVICES is offering people a way to combine Christian care with an Outback adventure.

There is an urgent need for child carers for Frontier Services In-home Care program which operates throughout rural and remote Queensland.

The program places paid child carers on properties for up to three weeks to help out families who are a bit stretched through work or illness.

"There also appears to be a baby boom in remote Queensland this year, and demands on the program are up 20% on last year," Brisbane-based co-ordinator Danielle Prickett said.

Carers typically fall into two groups: those aged 18-25 and those aged 50+, although anyone can apply.

No formal child care qualifications are required, but applicants need a police clearance and a first aid certificate.

"It also helps to enjoy children and have a sense of adventure," Danielle said.

And what do the carers get out of the experience?



Offering time as an Outback Carer. Photo courtesy of Frontier Services

"They consistently report enjoying the interaction with the host families and the other people they meet," Danielle said.

Frontier Services is a Uniting Church agency providing aged care, health and community services, and pastoral support to people in Outback Australia.

To find out more about In-home Care can contact Danielle on 1300 731 572



# The Unreality of reality TV



University of Queensland postdoctoral reality TV researcher  
Dr Mark Andrejevic. Photo by Mardi Lumsden

## Costing television

By Mardi Lumsden

ACCORDING TO The Australian Bureau of Statistics there are approximately 2.4 televisions in each Australian household. They estimated there were over 18 million television receivers in Australia in 2007. Even when televisions are not on, they consume energy. According to Queensland Synod Justice and International Mission Advocate Andrew Johnson, televisions are one of the most popular and used appliances in the Australian household. “Televisions are now the fourth largest user of electricity after water heating, the fridge and lights,” said Mr Johnson. “Total energy consumption from television is predicted to triple by 2020.” Yet the energy consumption of televisions has been difficult for the average TV owner to assess. “While it has become well known that new plasma and LCD televisions are power hungry it has been difficult for people to determine the relative efficiency of various models.

By Mardi Lumsden

REALITY TELEVISION has relentlessly stimulated the voyeuristic infatuations of Australian television viewers for the last 15 years. What started out as documented sociological experiments has morphed into a new breed of TV genre incorporating two main formats: documenting the rhythm of daily life (e.g. *Big Brother*) and celebrating exceptional moments (e.g. *Australian Idol*). Dr Mark Andrejevic has written and edited numerous books and articles on reality TV including his 2004 book *Reality TV: The Work of Being Watched*. Dr Andrejevic has recently taken up a position as a Postdoctoral Fellow at the University of Queensland Centre for Critical and Cultural Studies. During his studies into Reality TV, Dr Andrejevic found there were many aspects that attract viewers. “A lot of the time people who watch these shows won’t describe themselves so much as fans in terms of liking the show, but fans in terms of enjoying the train wreck,” he said. “The themes that came up over and over again were one: reality TV was more compelling than scripted dramas because it seemed less formulaic and less predictable. “Whether or not that is the case is an interesting question, but it was perceived that way. “The second thing people said

a lot was that they found it easier to identify with people on the shows because they could imagine themselves being in that situation on that show. “The shows encourage that kind of identification.” But how real is reality TV and does it even matter? According to Dr Andrejevic’s research, apparently not. “For some reason the punditry and the academics were always trying to prove that this isn’t real, but the viewers knew that from the start. “They understood that this is not reality, it is reality TV,” he said. “The question then becomes, if it is not real, then what is the element and appeal associated with reality TV that people connect to?” Dr Andrejevic made said the audience made a comparison between reality TV and laboratory experiments. “Viewers would say, ‘I know there is nothing real about a bunch of people living in a house in a studio’, but when they are forced to engage in activities that sometimes trigger emotional responses or as a result of being in this house they have conflicts or romantic entanglements with other people, those things the viewer saw as real.” Since studying the initial rise of reality TV Dr Andrejevic has seen many changes in the format of the programs. “I think one of the things that has happened is that more and more viewers have come to realise that people go on these shows in order to gain a certain degree of celebrity or perhaps gain access to some kind of entertainment career. “Viewers are even becoming sceptical about whether the emotional performances they see actually do reflect the authentic emotions of these people on the shows or whether they are magnified or manipulated by the people on the shows in order to gain more airtime.” Dr Andrejevic said the audience has seen a formula emerge to these programs and even certain characters and plot developments appear. People trying to get into the entertainment industry auditioning for the programs has forced a certain professionalisation of the cast. “As formats get tired and played out, the producers want to pep them up and they look for specific types of characters,” he said. “That seems very apparent on *Big Brother* Australia. They want to get young wild people in there who are going to mix things up and so there is an attempt to try to squeeze as much drama in as possible.” So despite the move of reality TV programs to more extreme sociological experiments, for the audience it is just another TV program. After all, it’s not reality... it’s reality TV.

## TV facts

“Good evening and welcome to television,” were the first words spoken on Australian television by Bruce Gyngell in Sydney on 16 September 1956. Today 99.7% of Australian homes have a television and 68% have two or more. By the end of 1956 only 1% of Sydney residents and 5% of Melbourne residents owned a television set, which cost about six to ten weeks pay for the average worker of the time. According to the ABS, watching TV is Australia’s most popular leisure activity with Australians watching on average over 3.5 hours of television a day. Research shows television attracts the highest rates of advertising recall. The total expenditure on television advertising in Australia in 2006 was \$3,265million. Early childhood experts say that by the time the average child finishes primary school, he or she will have watched 8,000 murders and 100,000 other acts of violence on television. 38% of television programs are imported from the United States. In January 2008 Panasonic unveiled the world’s largest plasma high-definition television measuring 381 centimetres diagonally.

## The couch potato

A couch potato refers to a person who spends most of his/her free time sitting or lying on a couch. This stereotype often refers to lazy and overweight men who watch a lot of television, sometimes in their underwear and sometimes drinking beer. Generally speaking, the term refers to a lifestyle in which children or adults don’t get enough physical activity. The term “Couch Potato” was first coined in 1976 by American underground comic artist Robert Armstrong. In the early-1980s, he registered the term as a trademark with the US government. He also co-authored a book with Jack Mingo, called *The Official Couch Potato Handbook*, which delves into the lives and secrets of Couch Potatoes. The phrase was entered into the *Oxford English Dictionary* in 1993. Some research suggests that being a couch potato could make a person a decade older biologically than someone who is physically active (Source: *Wikipedia*)

# Are we open to persuasion?

By Duncan Macleod

EVERY TIME we turn on the television or enter a movie theatre we open our minds and hearts to the influence of the advertising industry. Companies and organisations are competing for our attention, our loyalty and our love. So what does the advertising industry say to us in the ad breaks? Marketers and advertising agencies know that they’re tapping into the values of people already immersed in consumerism. Unconsciously we are given the message that personal fulfilment is more important than anything else. That fulfilment, we’re told, is made possible by purchasing and owning commodities. We’re invited to reinvent ourselves by changing our appearance, aligning with new brands, and even becoming our own brand. Consumerism is the system that underlies the whole experience of television. We’re not invited to co-create. We’re invited to watch, receive and consume our choice of product – be that sport, drama or news. Generally the only way we can interact with this experience is by responding to the advertising. The overriding value behind the television medium is entertainment. Commercials with clichés, hard sell and shoddy production make it easy to change channels or walk away from the screen. What makes us stay and take notice? Short stories that invite us to watch again and again; skillful use of sound and music inspires, chills or moves us to connect emotionally; visual effects earn our admiration; and humour that has us talking about the ad the next day. Effective advertising campaigns connect their products with our preferred lifestyle. They link in with our values, hopes, fears and passions. Products are targeted at the hopes and fears of specific people groups. Connect the ads with the demographic expected to be watching. Facial cleansing products aimed at teenagers will focus on anxiety about blemished skin, sexual attractiveness and rejection. Similar products aimed at women are likely to address a fear of ageing. Sports utility vehicles, barbecues and beers are generally linked with the aspirations of stereotypical Australian males and promoted during sports broadcasts. It’s all about personal image management.



“It must be true - I saw it on television.” Image from [www.duncans.tv](http://www.duncans.tv)

There are exceptions to the rule of consumption. Public service Announcements (PSA) are specifically designed to shape our priorities and behaviours: Slow down on the roads, stop smoking and take checks for breast cancer, look after the environment, look out for terrorists, look after your pets, speak up against human rights abuses, and be careful at work. But the agencies behind these campaigns know that these messages will not be received unless they begin with a shared resonance with existing public values. There is no ‘one’ advertising voice. The marketing personnel employed by companies and organisations are given the task of raising brand awareness and increasing response, whether that be sales or action. A range of advertising agencies fiercely competes for the task of creating campaigns that achieve these goals. Once they’ve won the contract they create ‘short films’ with the help of film directors and cinematographers, along with producers, post production teams, editors, visual effects artists, animators, sound engineers and composers. Television advertising is usually supplemented with print, billboard, online, point-of-sale and direct marketing. Detailed information is usually not provided on television. So how do we respond to the advertising world? One positive step is recognising advertisements as art forms, providing valuable insights into the cultural framework in which we live.

Duncan Macleod has been writing about television commercials since 2003, when he first started using them as a cultural reference point in his workshops

Duncan’s TV Ad Land began as an experiment in the art of blogging and has turned into a site visited by over 5000 people a day from around the world. [www.duncans.tv](http://www.duncans.tv)

## Where the faithful dollars go

By Bruce Mullan

US TELEVANGELISTS troubled by sex and money scandals in the 1980s are now under investigation for alleged financial misconduct. A top Republican on the US Senate Finance Committee Senator Chuck Grassley of Iowa is investigating the expenses, salaries and perks given to the executives of six Christian television ministries. “The allegations involve governing boards that aren’t independent and allow generous salaries and housing allowances and amenities such as private jets and Rolls Royces,” Grassley said. “I don’t want to conclude that there’s a problem, but I have an obligation to donors and the taxpayers to find out more” Some of those under investigation are well known on Australian television and include Benny Hinn, Creflo A. Dollar and Kenneth Copeland. All are reported to live extremely lavish lifestyles and promise big monetary rewards to those who send the money to their ministries. Grassley’s committee has authority over tax-exempt organisations and late last year sent letters asking detailed questions about their financial operations and seeking credit card records, as well as information about executive compensation and amenities including use of fancy cars and private jets. Kenneth Copeland launched a website criticising the enquiry and claimed Grassley was in league with Satan.



US Senator Chuck Grassley is chasing accountability from televangelists. Photo from [www.senate.gov/~finance](http://www.senate.gov/~finance)



# The world in your living room

By Mardi Lumsden

DO YOU remember where you were when JFK was assassinated or Princess Diana died?

Can you still see the grainy image of Neil Armstrong stepping on to the moon?

How about watching, live, as the second plane flew into the World Trade Center?

Television news brings the world to us. Our knowledge and opinions of the world are shaped by what is beamed through to the evening news bulletin.

The lack of coverage for certain events, for example the 1994 Rwanda genocide, means enormous events can be unfolding in one country with little action or assistance from the outside world.

This still happens in countries such as North Korea where media access is under tight restrictions. For the people behind the camera, covering these events is more than a job. It is a passion.

Simon Fuller is a freelance camera operator based in London and has worked with numerous broadcasters around the globe including BBC, BSkyB, National Geographic Channel, Nine Network Australia, and many more.

Mr Fuller spent his 30th birthday covering the Beslan school siege in Russia.

In a complete juxtaposition, Mr Fuller's coverage was nominated for a Logie Award the following year.

"Whenever I am covering a major news event around the world the first thing I think about is what is in front of me and how I can use my skills and attributes to portray the story honestly and fairly," he said.

"You just have to think straight and logically about how you are going to get the shot.

"You just don't get involved in terms of emotion when you are doing things like Beslan."

"A black and white view-finder is a good safety net because you see it as you would on TV and you become mechanical about what you are doing in terms of the technical aspects of a shot... it does help desensitise you and keep you sane.

"Adrenalin helps too. Everything goes at a hundred miles an hour and you are just reacting to the situation around you."

Mr Fuller has also covered news events in conflict hotspots including Afghanistan and Iraq.

"I was nearly shot in Iraq by American soldiers at a checkpoint through a misunderstanding.

"I was in Athens covering the Mokbel trial and was arrested for filming the courthouse. Then, after several tense hours in a police station, I was released without charge.

"I sit back and laugh about it now, but at the time it was very, very scary."

After being released from jail, Mr Fuller went straight back to work.

"I was sitting in Athens for 38 hours waiting for a plane to land and then depart.

"It was taking Tony Mokbel back to Australia.

"It all happened at the end of the third day very suddenly. The Greek security guards (not the police) didn't want me to film so they blocked my view to the aircraft.

"So I called up the satellite truck, climbed on top of it and I got a view over their trucks and cars and got the shot of one T. Mokbel getting on board," he said.



Freelance camera operator Simon Fuller on location in a Mexican jungle in 2007. Photo courtesy of Simon Fuller

Kiri Lumsden has worked in television news in the UK for the past six years in roles that include producer and bureau manager.

While working at the London bureau of the Nine Network Australia, Ms Lumsden was involved in the race to get news

"If someone puts a gun to my head and says not to film, I'm going to put the camera down, but I might keep rolling."

crews into Iraq after American troops invaded in 2003 and to Italy when Pope John Paul II died.

When it comes to TV news, speed is the most important thing.

Getting the images as events are unfolding is the aim.

For a short time Ms Lumsden worked for both Sky News and Al Jazeera (English), two news stations that have very different audiences and takes on what is 'news'.

"Certainly each network has its own agenda. Personally I think it is much more about who their audience is and what they want to watch rather than the networks boss's own bias," said Ms Lumsden.

"You have to tailor for your market.

"While Channel 9 will go big on a story of Anzac Day celebrations or a bus full of Aussie tourists crashing in Egypt, for example, those stories wouldn't make it onto the BBC.

"Big stories like the Boxing Day tsunami or 9/11 transcend all news boundaries and every network in the world would run those stories because they have a much wider appeal on so many levels.

"It's all about who is watching your program."

While working for both Sky and Al Jazeera, more evidence regarding the disappearance of English girl Madeleine McCann came to light. Every popular news channel in Europe jumped on the story.

"Al Jazeera wouldn't run the missing Madeleine McCann story because their viewing audience is primarily Muslim and based in South East Asia, Africa and the Middle East," said Ms Lumsden.

"To them that is a local story with no interest, whereas Sky went big because it's a populist news program, delivering news to the British middle of the road masses who identify with the McCann's because they're white, British, middle class and holidaying in a very popular British destination."

To deal with the story, Al Jazeera ran a story on children disappearing in South America and highlighted the large number of children who go missing every day.

For Mr Fuller, the dangers of

working as a camera man are not just about going to conflict areas.

"Just everyday working is a hazard in London," said Mr Fuller.

"If you haven't got the parking warden chasing you, you have got people dressed in fluorescent vests wanting to know what you are doing and taking down your details for alleged terrorism offences.

"I have been in a couple of situations where I haven't stopped filming but I've put the camera down to make it look like I wasn't filming for my own health and safety.

"At the end of the day, my health and safety is my concern. If someone puts a gun to my head and says not to film, I'm going to put the camera down but I might keep it rolling. You just have got to judge the moment."

Despite the potential dangers of his job, Mr Fuller said being a camera man is just what he loves to do.

"I guess it is in my blood.

"You get to go to some amazing places. A lot of the time you get to go behind the scenes, you meet a lot of interesting people and you see some things you normally wouldn't see.

"I've got to meet members of the Royal Family of England and super stars. I've got to meet normal people.

"It beats working for a living."

Kiri Lumsden is the sister of Mardi Lumsden, the Associate Editor of *Journey*

## ABERFOYLE UNITING CHURCH (Adelaide Southern Suburbs)

### Discipleship Pastor

Applications are sought from suitably qualified and experienced Ministers of the Word or lay people for the role of Pastor with responsibility for the development and oversight of activities and processes that intentionally encourage members of the congregation and others to grow in their faith to become passionate disciples of Jesus Christ.

The Pastor will report to the Senior Pastor and work collaboratively with other members of the Pastor's Team. A special focus of the role is the further development and expansion of small groups, welcoming and pastoral ministries within the Church community.

Aberfoyle Uniting Church is a large, growing, well resourced church operating from a number of sites. The Church is blessed with a team of dedicated and highly skilled Pastors supported by a large number of committed and Christ loving volunteers.

The appointee must be able to develop and implement a workable vision for the Discipleship Ministry. The role will suit a person who is deeply committed to Jesus Christ and open to the power and direction of the Holy Spirit and has a genuine love for people. Together with the capacity to organize and plan, appropriate leadership, pastoral and people engagement and relational skills are essential. The terms and conditions of employment including salary and allowances are consistent with that applicable to a Minister of the Word in the Uniting Church of Australia.

Applicants must address the selection criteria in the Job and Person Specifications available by downloading at [www.aberfoyle.org.au](http://www.aberfoyle.org.au) or email [marianne.topham@aberfoyle.org.au](mailto:marianne.topham@aberfoyle.org.au). Telephone enquiries may be directed to Craig Bailey (Senior Pastor) 0414 726 424. Applications will be received up until the close of business on July 30, 2008 by email to [marianne.topham@aberfoyle.org.au](mailto:marianne.topham@aberfoyle.org.au) or post to Marianne Topham, HR Administrator, Aberfoyle Uniting Church, 42 Sunnymead Drive, Aberfoyle Park, SA 5159

## More red tape for blue cards

NEW LAWS regarding Working with Children blue cards were introduced at the start of June to strengthen current safeguards for children and young people.

The new laws prevent certain people up-front from applying for a blue card and it is now an offence for a disqualified person to apply for a blue card.

A person is disqualified if they have been convicted of a disqualifying offence; are a

reportable offender with current reporting obligations; are subject to a child protection prohibition order; or are subject to a disqualification order from a court prohibiting them from applying for, or holding a blue card.

The Working With Children check remains the same, but the changes affect blue card obligations for paid employees and volunteers working with young people in the church.

Employers are now obliged to warn every person applying for a blue card.

It is an offence for a disqualified person to sign the application form.

Blue card application forms have been updated to conform with the new regulations so be sure not to apply for or update your blue card with an out of date form.

For more information visit [www.bluecard.qld.gov.au](http://www.bluecard.qld.gov.au)

# Uniting Church in the news

UNITINGCARE AUSTRALIA has signed off on a merger with the Uniting Missions Network (UMN) which has agreed to wind up and transfer all assets to UnitingCare Australia.

UnitingCare Australia National Director, Lin Hatfield Dodds said, "It is also a strong and public statement of our shared identity in the Uniting Church and our genuine commitment to working together for the common good."

\*\*\*\*\*

President of the Uniting Church, the Rev Gregor Henderson has called on the Australian Government to address the humanitarian crisis affecting Iraq, even though Australian troops are on the way home.

Mr Henderson said while the Church commended the decision to withdraw 500 Australian troops, the Federal Government should commit more funding to rebuild the country and asked the Government to spend as much on rebuilding, reconstructing and healing the desperately battered nation over the next five years, as was spent on the military effort.

"We urge the Australian government not to abandon the Iraqi people, most of whom are without food and adequate water, are displaced and living in absolute poverty, and who have little access to basic medical services," Mr Henderson said.

"Providing increased aid to Iraq would at least give priority to peace and the needs of people who have suffered far too long."

\*\*\*\*\*

National Director of UnitingJustice Australia Rev Elenie Poulos commended the Federal Government for its latest efforts towards banning nuclear weapons.

"The Uniting Church has been consistent in its calls on successive Australian Governments to take a strong stand on nuclear disarmament and to advocate for the complete elimination of all nuclear weapons," Ms Poulos said.

"We believe there is no greater threat to the peace of God in this world than that posed by weapons of mass destruction."

"The Uniting Church in Australia welcomes the Prime Minister's initiative and looks forward to working with the Government to end the threat of nuclear weapons once and for all."

\*\*\*\*\*

The Uniting Church Assembly Standing Committee has called for the abolition of the citizenship test.

"It's an English literacy test," said National Director of UnitingJustice Rev Elenie Poulos.

"It's exclusionary, because many humanitarian entrants — refugees and asylum seekers and those given special entry because they're at risk in their countries — don't even have literacy in their first language let alone English."

While the Church acknowledges the requirements of the citizenship



National Director of UnitingJustice Australia Rev Elenie Poulos. Photo courtesy of *New Times*

legislation and the importance of ensuring people understand the rights and responsibilities of citizenship, it objects to an English language test.

"Citizenship is a significant thing and it matters to people who come to Australia and want to become citizens," said Ms Poulos.

"The process they go through should reflect seriously on the nature of citizenship but should also be something that enables people to demonstrate their understanding of what citizenship means in ways that are appropriate for them."

\*\*\*\*\*

Uniting Church President Rev Gregor Henderson has congratulated the newly consecrated Assistant Bishop of the Diocese of Perth, the Right Rev Kay Goldsworthy.

He said the appointment of Australia's first female Anglican Bishop was a historic occasion.

"The Uniting Church in Australia has long been committed to gender equity in all areas of life and society," said Mr Henderson.

"We therefore particularly rejoice that the Anglican Church in Australia has taken the key step to include women in its three orders of ministry."

\*\*\*\*\*

Uniting Church National Assembly Associate General Secretary Rev Glenda Blakefield, was invited by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade to join a delegation to The Fourth Asia-Pacific Regional Interfaith Dialogue in Cambodia in April.

Fifteen nations representing 620 million people met in Phnom Penh and Ms Blakefield says the dialogue was a re-affirmation of the

role that faith and the spirituality of each faith tradition plays in peace-making.

"We focused on interfaith education and looked at what each of us would be doing in terms of growing our children into being peacemakers able to provide leadership for the future," she said.

\*\*\*\*\*

Uniting International Mission National Director Rev Kerry

## PNG Warriors to sign peace treaty

THIRTY-TWO warrior tribes in the Southern Highlands of Papua New Guinea are set to sign a historic peace treaty thanks to the mediation skills and passion of Australian Joy Balazo, founder of Young Ambassadors for Peace (YAP), a Uniting International Mission Program.

For generations, the 32 tribes have lived as warriors and enemies; fighting, killing and plundering as a way of life.

A simple mistake like stepping on a garden bed could result in tribal warfare.

These PNG tribes were stuck in a vicious cycle of violence, living by the mantra, 'once an enemy, enemies forever'.

As a result, no aid and development or progress has been able to happen in the area, and no foreigners could ever visit.

Now, all 32 tribes have come together and agreed to a peace process.

Temporary agreements have enabled the tribes to put down their weapons and pay compensation for the property that they have destroyed, as well as for the people they have killed.

Local police officer Jacob Ten was thrilled to be a part of this historic reconciliation.

"The Taro warrior men break down into tears. It is a miracle in itself to watch them cry. Every one of them is broken," he said.

Enright has strongly encouraged prayer support for our partner churches in Zimbabwe and for the next stage of presidential elections.

"The continued worsening in this humanitarian situation calls for continued scrutiny," he said.

"We are concerned for signs of brutality against those who do not support the current President, and for increasing poverty and starvation in Zimbabwe."



### Brisbane North Church of Christ, Kedron Qld

Expressions of Interest are invited for a ministry position, which includes a component of Community Outreach, for 5 or 4 days per week.

The length of term is open to negotiation.

Remuneration will be in accordance with Churches of Christ Guidelines for Ministers' Salaries.

For full Position Description or further details, please contact:

Colin Stafford (Elder) Ph. (07) 3359 0756 or email cstafford1@optusnet.com.au

Expressions of interest to be submitted by 31st July 2008



Mosman Uniting Church in Australia  
NSW Synod

### MINISTER of the WORD

Mosman is a diverse vibrant community on the lower North Shore of Sydney Harbour. Mosman Uniting is an open inclusive Church with an educated, committed congregation. We seek a full time placement of an energetic Minister of the Word who will nurture the Congregation and who shares the vision for a modern effective Church that is ecumenical, interested in social justice, culturally relevant and active in the local community.

There is a spacious family manse close to transport, schools, shops and the beach. Please visit our website to see our church in action.

For information: Rev Michael Thomas, phone (02) 9411 7637  
Miss Alison Vickery, Mosman Church Council Chairman, phone (02) 9953 6376 or www.mosmanuniting.org.

Applications should be sent to Mrs Meg Herbert, Associate Secretary (Ministry), NSW Synod, PO Box A2178, Sydney South, NSW 1235.



# WHAT'S ON

**June 26, 10.30am. Mission Thanksgiving Service** at St Andrew's Uniting Church, Ann St Brisbane. Guest speaker Paul Bartlett, Frontier Services Sydney. Bring your lunch and meet for fellowship after the service. Tea/coffee available. Supported by Frontier Services Queensland support group. Contact Lorraine Bettenay on [randlbettenay@bigpond.com](mailto:randlbettenay@bigpond.com).

**June 29, 6-7.30pm. JAM@Emmanuel UC** (featuring Chris Poulsen Trio). 249 South Pine Rd, Enoggera. The Chris Poulsen trio (CP3) is one of Brisbane's premier contemporary jazz groups. Come for an exciting night of some very hip music. BBQ on sale from 5pm, band starts at 6pm. An offering will be taken. [www.myspace.com/chrispoulsentrio](http://www.myspace.com/chrispoulsentrio). Contact Tim Robinson on 3355 2162 or [robos78@hotmail.com](mailto:robos78@hotmail.com).

**July 1, 5.30. An Evening with Ryan Moore** at St Francis' College (Lecture Room 1) Baroona Rd, Milton. Ryan is a young Christian from Northern Ireland who lived for three months in a Palestinian village in the West Bank as part of WCC's Ecumenical Accompaniment Program. A light supper will be provided. Cost is \$20 and includes a donation to projects in the Middle East supported by Christian World Service. RSVP to Jela Virzi at Queensland Churches Together on 3369 6792 or [admin@qct.org.au](mailto:admin@qct.org.au).

**July 18, 7.30-9pm. Assembly of Confessing Congregations public meeting** at the UC Centre Chapel, 60 Bayliss St Auchenflower. Guest Speaker Rev Prof Ian Breward will speak on 'The future of our heritage', preceded by brief AGM. For more information contact Ivan Kirk on 3323 3483 or [ivankirk@bigpondnet.au](mailto:ivankirk@bigpondnet.au).

**July 27, 1.30-8pm. Re-Imagining the World in Parables seminar** at West End Uniting Church, corner Vulture and Sussex Streets. Speaker is B. Brandon Scott, Darbeth Distinguished Professor of New Testament at Phillips Theological Seminary, University of Tulsa and a charter member of the Jesus Seminar. Cost \$30 (evening only, \$5). For more information visit [www.progressivespirituality.net](http://www.progressivespirituality.net) or contact Ray and Elaine Richmond on 3488 2300 or [psnwestend@inet.net.au](mailto:psnwestend@inet.net.au).

**July 31, 10.15am. Musical morning and luncheon** hosted by the Bald Hills Uniting Church at the Bald Hills Memorial Hall, 2126 Gympie Rd with popular orchestra Geo Verdi Musica. Cost \$10 with a 'Cuppa' on arrival and includes lunch after the concert. The Bald Hills Memorial Hall is opposite the Uniting Church. For more information contact Lesley Fenney on 3261 1997 or [lesleyfenney@gmail.com](mailto:lesleyfenney@gmail.com).

**August 1-3. Faith Inkubators Conference** at Redeemer College, Rochedale. An event for parents and leaders interested in ministry with upper primary children. Discover how to effectively respond to the challenges of working with children today. Mobilise your church community to incubating faith every night at home. Contact Paul Yarrow on 0418 765 712 or [Paul.Yarrow@yacmu.ucaqlld.com.au](mailto:Paul.Yarrow@yacmu.ucaqlld.com.au).

**August 2, 9.30am-3pm. Old-Fashioned Village Fair** at Chermiside Kedron Community Church. Come and experience an old fashioned village fair - pony rides, animal farm, and traditional stalls. Entertainment includes magician, Mango Jam Jazz band, floral demonstration by Robert Manton, jigsaw, quilting displays, children's activities. For more information contact the church office on 3350 4302 or Kendall Yates on [yateskj@gmail.com](mailto:yateskj@gmail.com).

**August 15-17. A La Card Craft Retreat** at Tamborine Lodge, Mount Tamborine. Meet new friends and enjoy a great weekend of craft. Various demonstrations and great prizes. Hosted by Beenleigh Uniting Church. For more information or a registration form contact Vicki Stewart on 3807 3324.

**August 17-22. YASKI 2008.** Thinking of skiing this year? YASKI is for young adults, families and adults at Perisher Blue in the Snowy Mountains. Detailed information can be downloaded from Cleveland Uniting Church website [www.cleveland.ucaweb.com.au](http://www.cleveland.ucaweb.com.au) or email YASKI coordinator Beth Nicholls (Youth Worker with Redland Uniting Churches) on [bethn@dovenetq.net.au](mailto:bethn@dovenetq.net.au).

**August 24. A Celebration of over 50 years** of Bardon Uniting Church, formerly Bardon Methodist Church, closing at the end of August. This celebration will reflect the positive effect of significant life and faith experiences at Bardon for many people. For more information contact Desley Garnett on 3254 1449 or [dragn@bigpond.net.au](mailto:dragn@bigpond.net.au).

Want to promote an event?  
Go to [www.journeyonline.com.au](http://www.journeyonline.com.au) and click on 'What's On'

## CQ Rendezvous

SEAFORTH, NORTH of Mackay, was the venue for the 2008 CQ Rendezvous, the legendary youth camp of the Central Queensland Presbytery.

Music, painting, evangelism, sound, technology, and prayer were all linked to the "God in the Everyday" theme led by guest speaker Alison Cox.

The youth band (right) included Peter Read (drums), Nathan Elvery (guitar) Chelsea Rhode (trumpet) and David Miller (keyboard).



Photo courtesy of Jeff Savage

## Managing in Ministry

By Phil Smith

DOES A theological degree make anyone a good manager?

What is a biblical perspective on competition?

How does a Christian manager sack workers in a faith-based organisation?

What does church look like where we are called to worship five or six days per week: our workplace?



Commissioner Christine MacMillan.  
Photo courtesy of Ramon Williams, Worldwide Photos

These are only a few of the questions discussed at this year's national Christian Management Australia conference.

The Uniting Church was well represented among delegates and lecturers, with U.C.I.S a major sponsor.

Under the theme 'Different Gifts Same Spirit', speakers addressed the need for justice and integrity in profitable businesses, charities and missions.

On the global scale head of the Salvation Army's International Social Justice Commission, Christine MacMillan, reported the desire among some of the world's wealthiest business leaders to mobilise their huge resources.

At the local level, delegates debated the apparent dualism of Sunday worship and workday service, the separation of ministry and business.

"Whether we like it or not, ministers and pastors, as in most other professions, need to have management skills," said Albert Street's Rev Anne Hulbert.

"Listening, interacting, networking, and sharing with other people in similar vocations enhance our approaches to leadership in ministry."

"It may even lead to refining our abilities so that we can spend more time in the areas to which God has called us to minister!"

Samford Valley Uniting Church minister, Rev Don McKay said the international speakers give a global Christian perspective.

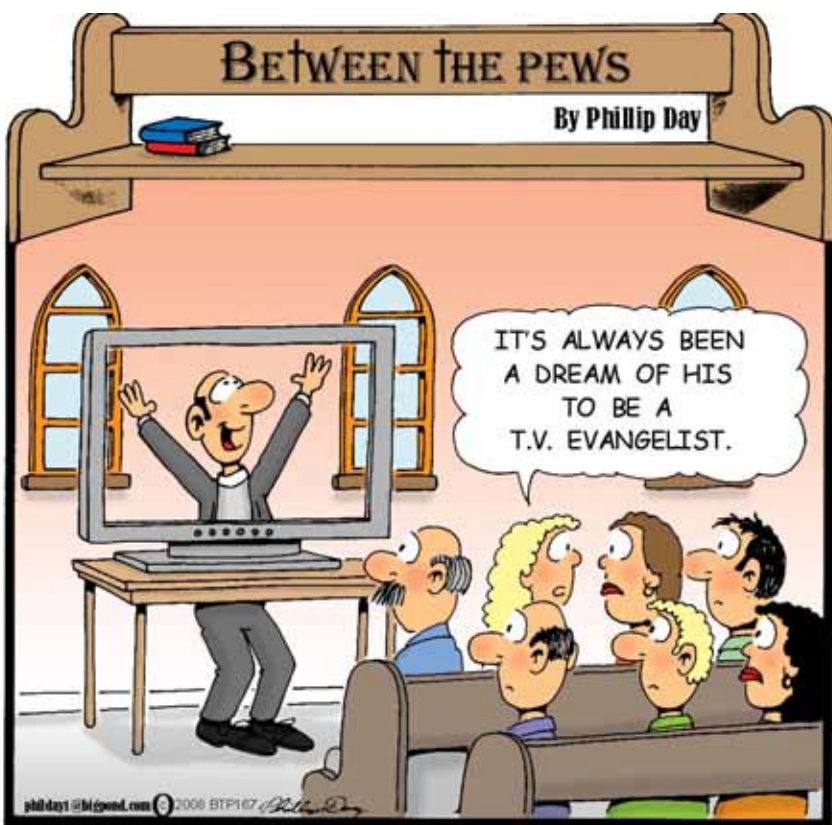
"Yet I always come away from CMA conference with a number of practical ideas that I can implement in the church context."

Mark Holbrook of the Evangelical Christian Credit Union (ECCU) gave a radical perspective on work and faith.

The Credit Union has grown 25% for ten years, serving 2500 international Christian organisations.

ECCU has taken a sabbatical year, with no new projects, as it seeks God's future direction for the business.

The 2008 conference was the largest in the history of Christian Management Australia with over 340 people in attendance.



### Forty-Sixty: a study for midlife adults who want to make a difference

By Richard H. Gentzler Jr and Craig Kennet Millar  
Discipleship Resources  
RRP \$16.00

The *Forty-Sixty* study book is crafted around ten significant issues facing people in their 40s, 50s and 60s.

Each chapter explores a mid-life issue such as children, ageing parents, pre-retirement, loss and death.

In theory I had a few issues with this material but actually found it really worked with our weekly small group.

The material is very middle class (as am I), it misses a little taking account of gender differences (two male authors), the Biblical materials sometimes didn't always connect all that well, and although it recommends closing each session with prayer there were no helpful suggestions about how to do that.

But we *really* talked; people genuinely connected with the issues, the questions and each other in a way few other print based studies have been able to help us do.

We were in the demographic and found the studies helped us engage with the issues constructively and vigorously with no effort at all.

There is a big chunk of reading at the start of each session. This would probably be best done before you meet but we lack that kind of discipline.

So much material was covered we wondered if it might have been better to intersperse the text with question rather than having them all at the end.

It also seemed strange to have

### Angels of Augustus: Pioneers of the Living Inland

By Stephanie Somerville  
Elk & Ice Books (Noosaville)  
RRP \$29.95

Most of us take for granted health services that are readily available. But back in the 1940s there were still immense areas of this continent had no ready access to basic health or medical services.

The Flying Doctor Service was still in its infancy and bush nurses and hospitals were few and far between.

Two young women had a vision supported by their church to make a difference in this critical situation.

Armed only with their training (both medical and theological) and a converted Ford ambulance nicknamed 'Augustus', Marjorie Wilkinson and Ethel Helyar, two nursing deaconesses, set out to base themselves in Brewarrina to cover a huge tract of outback NSW and Queensland, to provide free health and pastoral care to all in need through the first Methodist Nursing Service.

*Angels of Augustus*, their story as told by one of their daughters, is very readable.

There's heaps of humour as only the bush can bring, but that's only part of what is a lively narrative of the heart warming and heartbreaking experiences of these nursing pioneers.

The way these two women adapted to their isolated situation and overcame the various hindrances to the acceptance of their service has really inspired me in the work that I'm involved in with Frontier Services.

I believe *Angels of Augustus* will play a unique and important part in the understanding of our outback social and medical heritage, as well as the outback lifestyle with all its ups and downs.

Reviewed by Peter Harvey from Frontier Services' Flinders Patrol

the discussion starters after such a detailed introduction to the topic.

Despite the criticisms, this study series really got our group engaged.

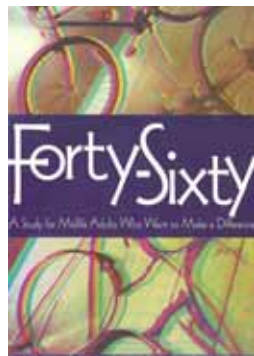
Everyone was animated and interested and we rarely finished the whole study in the time available.

If you want to get your mid-life adults talking, then *Forty-Sixty* will definitely do it.

Highly recommended.

Available from MediaCom Education Inc. Order online at [www.mediacom.org.au](http://www.mediacom.org.au) or phone toll free 1800 811 311

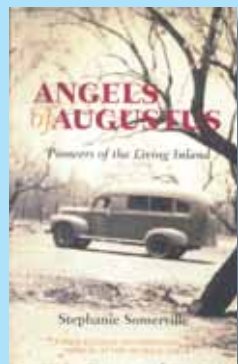
Reviewed by Bruce Mullan, editor of *Journey*



### The Rugmaker of Mazar-E-Sharif

By Najaf Mazari and Robert Hillman  
Insight Publications  
RRP \$24.95

Today's Christians are faced with the challenge of understanding better the faith and customs of Muslims who are a small minority in our country.



## REVIEWS

A charming yet confronting way to do so is to read this account by a Melbourne Afghan refugee of his life, his gruesome persecution and of his sustaining faith.

*The Rugmaker of Mazar-E-Sharif* is an inspiring story of optimism, goodness and thankfulness.

In the great oral tradition of the Hazara who were so often denied access to education, Najaf tells his story of life as a simple shepherd boy and a 12-year-old passionate apprentice rugmaker.

His Shia Muslim faith provides the whole framework and wisdom for life. It imbues every moment of his waking.

The reader/listener begins to understand the everyday life, the culture and relationships within the family and tribe and also the external evils of ethnic and religious fanaticism that destroy his home, his beloved family and community.

Nothing beats this personal story of why refugees leave the country and people they love.

This is very troubling for Australians who did not know what happens in immigration detention centres to the boat people who come here seeking peace and a safe haven.

This is the sensitive and honest description of the toxic environment in Woomera. It was hell on earth.

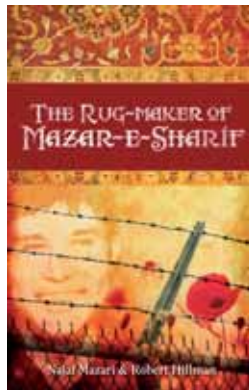
Najaf survived the damaging detention experience to rebuild a life in Melbourne and be reunited with his wife and daughter after years of forced separation.

*The Rugmaker of Mazar-E-Sharif* is a fine testament to a good man, a faithful Muslim man, one of many who came to these shores and found a new life. But it did not have to be so hard.

Reviewed by Frederika Steen, volunteer Information Officer at the Romero Centre (3846 3250) which provides support to Afghan, Iraqi and Iranian refugees on Temporary Protection Visas.

Now under the auspices of the Sisters of Mercy, the community based centre is faith-based and ecumenical and remains dependent on support mainly from religious orders, organisations and generous individuals.

Donations are tax free



**Songs of Praise**  
ABC1 Television  
Sundays at 11.30am

It is usual for us to arrive home from morning worship feeling uplifted by the service and the fellowship of our community of faith, to put our feet up and be blessed by *Songs of Praise*.

Certainly to chill out in front of the TV is relaxing, but as soon as the opening musical bars herald its beginning there is for me the assurance of substance and quality to follow.

And it's not just that participants are of the same age range as Uniting Church members.

Recent junior and high school choral competitions gave us weeks of inspirational hymns and secular songs.

The vibrancy and enthusiasm of the participants held us in awe of those who had trained them.

The *Songs of Praise* format incorporates some of the following elements that give variety:

- the awesome beauty and age of the great cathedrals and the village churches;
- the amazing scenery which so reminds us of our travels to the British Isles and;
- the music, traditional and contemporary, sung by people just like us.

There are great performances of solo artists who are at the top of their class and testimony from ordinary folk whose lives have been touched by the healing hand of our God?

It is all of the above and more.

The production shows excellence and professionalism, yet these are people worshipping in congregations just like ours.

We feel akin to them; they sing our songs and are one with us in worship.

But there is much more. As I looked at these recent programs, I thought of the myriad of people who would not necessarily tick "Christian" on the census form, but who may choose to watch *Songs of Praise*.

But does this program replace our weekly worship?

I would have to respond with a resounding "no" but we should appreciate *Songs of Praise* for what it is, especially for those confined to their home.

Reviewed by Rev Barbara Bailey, a retired minister living in Caloundra

**PocketLight NIV Bible**  
AcroDesign Technologies  
Can be downloaded online for \$34.95 (US)

I don't own a PDA but trialled this *PocketLight NIV Bible* software loaded on a smartphone.

The first problem was I couldn't read the text without my glasses and I couldn't work out if it was possible to increase the font size – I assume not.

The advertising claims the *PocketLight Bible* will "enhance your personal knowledge and reading of the Bible, and help you minister to others through the scriptures".

I'm not sure to what extent that would be true.

Yes, you can read the whole Bible and quickly find chapter and verse (once you get used to using the pointer).

There is also a pretty good search function that works with single or multiple words.

Interestingly, *PocketLight* can track your Bible reading keeping a record of each chapter you read so that you can see how much of the Bible you have actually covered.

There is a note taking feature and a topical index with a list of "salvation verses" that the manufacturer claims is "great for sharing your faith with others".

I wasn't sure whose faith I was sharing though; it is classical atonement proof-texting.

*PocketLight* features one memory verse game where the words of a particular verse are scrambled and you click on the words in correct order to win the game.

There are 80 preloaded verses to memorise but you can select others.

I was bored after only five attempts.

The *PocketLight NIV Bible* only gives you the one translation in the basic form.

Extra translations are available and the King James Version is free.

There is no support for commentaries, dictionaries or maps.

It will take up 2.2MB of your available memory.

Personally, when I need a portable Bible to read I think I'll stick to a book.

Reviewed by Bruce Mullan, editor of *Journey*





## 6 July: Innisfail Uniting Church

Innisfail is recovering well from Cyclone Larry. We are now 2 ½ years on since the big blow and life is returning to normality.

There are however some properties that still have tarps covering their roofs and homes waiting for repairs to be completed on the inside.

Even the church is still waiting for water damage to be repaired.

The devastation of the cyclone drew the town of Innisfail to the attention of Australia and now we are seeing significant growth occurring in the town.

Town planners are predicting the town to double in size over the next 10-20 years and already we are seeing new areas of growth in the area.

We ask for prayer for the following:

The sugar industry: many sugar cane farms are being bought out by tree growing companies, which are in some small way a tax haven; with the demise of the cane farm comes doubt over the viability of the sugar mills.

The sugar mills employ a large number of people in the community.

The price of petrol: Petrol prices are making many of the rural industries unviable due to the increased cost of production and the cost of getting produce to the mills or the market.

July is a big month in Innisfail. The annual show is on (10-11 July).

The church runs a food stall to raise funds to help meet the annual church budget.

We need helpers and weather conditions that make it conducive for people to buy food.

Mobile Maintenance Ministries are coming to build a shower and toilet room at the manse.

Thank you for your prayers.

## 13 July: Dawson Valley Uniting Church

We are a cluster of four independent congregations based in the townships of Moura, Theodore, Banana and Baralaba that agree to function in co-operation together as part of the Presbytery of Central Queensland.

Each of our worship centres is small in size but big enough to feel a part of the community they serve and always ready to welcome visitors.

We are a group of Churches that strive to meet the needs of

# PRAYER DIARY

our community, even though our people resources and financial limitations mean we cannot always do it in the best way possible.

Our members are mainly long-term residents of the region who know about rural life and the struggles that it can bring.

Recent arrivals have helped us appreciate newcomers and those with a fresh outlook on our towns and region.

Together we aim to be a worshipping community first, but a caring and helping community as well.

Moura congregation supports a developing ecumenical partnership involving six denominations.

Moura Blue Care offers numerous program based and support services to the elderly, infirm and disabled.

Theodore congregation members are actively involved in many community and service groups.

Banana congregation is the only church building in Banana, so the Uniting Church has a high level of goodwill in the community.

The Mothers Day Markets were well attended, as is the Banana Buddies kids club.

Many of the congregation members are involved in a variety of community events.

A special UCA Anniversary Dinner is being planned and regular ecumenical services linked to Baralaba State School are organised.

Both the Banana and Baralaba congregations have recently sold some excess land and are now working through the process of improving their properties

Minister Peter Taubner (based in Moura) drives a lot as he seeks to spend time in each centre as well as with the Callide Valley.

Please pray for his time management, spiritual leadership and pastoral gifts.

All of our congregations are well served by lay preachers and we give thanks for their willingness to take on this role in all parts of the Dawson Valley.

We also support two chaplains in local schools. Pray that their influence will be beneficial and that further community and government funding will be forthcoming.

Pray that Christians everywhere can express and interpret the Gospel, with particular relevance to the needs of their community.

[www.dawsonvalley.ucaweb.com.au](http://www.dawsonvalley.ucaweb.com.au)

## 20 July: Sherwood Uniting Church

The Sherwood Uniting Church building is a heritage church located at one end of the commercial area of Sherwood.

We call ourselves "the Church in the Market Place" and we are seeking to combine this with our vision of enabling people to grow spiritually.

The congregation is made up of older folk, unfortunately decreasing in number, and young families which are increasing in number.

Our numbers are thin in the 45-65 age group and almost non-existent in the 17-25 age group.

This has led to what seems like a complex arrangement of services that enables freedom for both young and old.

There is a great desire that we respect and enjoy each other and that we treasure the variety of worship styles.

Sherwood Uniting has a strong youth ministry with P1 attracting over 30 Year 7 children.

Younger children have Play Group or Kids Club and these activities are growing.

We are involved with the local community and them with us in a variety of ways.

One night each year in November the Sherwood Street Festival is held.

Space is at a premium in the church grounds that night.

Market days are also held four times a year in the church grounds as another means of connecting with community.

People also connect through special interest groups: indoor bowls, painting, quilting, adult fellowship and music making.

We also connect with the wider community through our Mission and Social Justice Group, focusing on five main areas - Uniting International Mission, Community Bridges Prison Ministry, the Micah Challenge/Make Poverty History, local school chaplaincy and the Sherwood Neighbourhood Centre which distributes emergency relief to local people in need.

As you pray for us this week please focus particularly on our youth ministry and our interaction and involvement with the wider community.

Pray that in all we do we are faithful to the God who has called us.



Trinity Theological College student Matt Gees. Photo by Mardi Lumsden

## Australia's biggest morning tea

TRINITY THEOLOGICAL College student Matt Gees hosted an Australia's Biggest Morning Tea event in May to raise money for the Cancer Council.

"It is important because one in three Australians are diagnosed with cancer every year," said Mr Gees.

"It was an opportunity for the college community to share with the Synod and Brisbane community to raise money for a great cause in a social setting."

The event ended up raising over \$300.

"The Cancer Council is a personal thing for me because my Dad was diagnosed with cancer last year.

"Your help in supporting this great cause and donating money to the Cancer Council Queensland has not only reached my goal of funding a clinical trial (\$200) but the extra \$100 will go a long way to providing the much needed support and services that the Cancer Council offers cancer sufferers state wide.

"I am overjoyed at the result."

## UCA friends awarded honours

FORMER MODERATOR of the Queensland Synod, Dr John Frank Roulston has been awarded a Member (AM) of the Order of Australia announced by the Governor-General, Major General Michael Jeffery.

Dr Roulston was Moderator in 1990 and 1991 and has been awarded for his services to education, particularly through administrative and teaching roles in the independent schools sector, to the development of schools-based drug prevention programs and contributions to professional organisations.

Currently the Executive Director for Independent Schools Queensland, Dr Roulston was Director of the Synod's Department for Education and Communication from 1984 to 1995.

On 1 June, Queensland Premier Anna Bligh named a *Journey* contributor as Suncorp Young Queenslander of the Year.

Young Muslim woman Homa Forotan who arrived in Queensland as a refugee from Afghanistan in 2005 wrote for *'Journey asks'* in May.

Despite the limited education she received in Afghanistan, Ms Forotan achieved remarkable academic results at Yeronga State High School receiving an OP1.

Ms Forotan speaks at schools around Queensland to encourage tolerance and acceptance, and tutors refugee students.

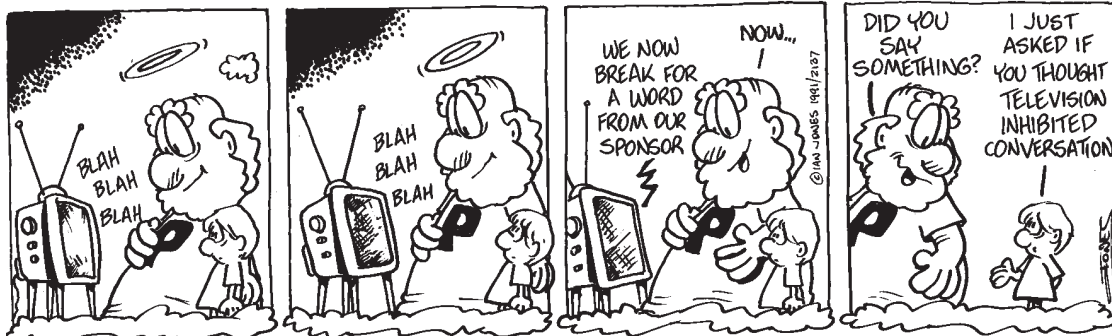
Now 21, she is currently studying a Bachelor of Biotechnology at the University of Queensland.

Another 2008 Young Queenslander of the Year finalist Samantha Jockel was also a *'Journey asks'* writer (March 2008).

Ms Jockel is creator of Biddy Bags, an inter-generational social enterprise that fuses craft, business and community to produce one-off hand made products.

The Biddy Bags story was featured in the April issue of *Journey* which told how Ms Jockel connects crafting seniors with the fashion industry through the production of hand-knitted bags.

Printed on every unique bag is the story of its maker - connecting the purchaser with the creator.



## Looking for ways to talk about God

By Stu Cameron



### Far from vacuous

I don't usually respond to letters to the editor, but Stu Cameron's comments on my article on metaphors for God (*May Journey*) call for a response.

Mr Cameron said that, "The Jesus story and how it was interpreted by those who followed him first, defines the Christian community."

Yet New Testament and Church history show that the understanding of Jesus and his mission evolved, even within the New Testament, and continued to do so in the early centuries.

Three hundred years after the death of Jesus, church bishops were meeting in a series of councils to decide whether Jesus was actually God or like God, resulting in our creeds, yet these were hardly those who followed him first.

Mr Cameron suggests that by moving beyond "metaphors bound by the witness of scripture," we "spiral down the lifeless path that defines vacuous, designer, new-age spirituality," leaving "thousands of Queensland young adults more anxious and depressed."

Yet the metaphors I suggest that better fit a scientific, technological age are deeply grounded in the witness of scripture and respect the ancient command not to image God in any form, including "the likeness of male or female" (Deuteronomy 4).

We first meet God in Genesis as formless, immanent Breath, Life and Spirit, filling us and the universe, the God "in whom we live and move and have our being," as Paul said – hardly "vacuous, designer, new-age spirituality."

By concentrating on human-like, theistic God metaphors of King, Father and Lord, which banish God to somewhere beyond the world, we have ignored the Biblical command not to make idols of God.

As for the anxious, depressed Queensland youth, let them speak for themselves as to what sort of theology has driven them from church.

I agree with Mr Cameron that the gospel story "still changes lives," but which interpretation of this story?

Mr Cameron sees "no need to change from offering my community Christ crucified and risen and the gospel it tells," yet the explanation of Jesus' death (atonement theory) has changed with the centuries.

Origen (3rd Century) called Jesus a ransom paid to a devil who won rights over humanity through the fall.

Athanasius (4th Century) said Jesus took our nature on himself, thus affecting a change in human nature.

Augustine (4th Century) introduced "original sin," inherited like a defective gene from Adam.

The Patristic Fathers saw Jesus as our representative rather than a substitutionary sacrifice.

Anselm (11th Century) moved from paying off the Devil to a debt owed to God, offended like some feudal lord, by human disobedience. Only a death satisfied such offence, but no human was "good enough to pay the price of sin," thus the Father solved his offence by sacrificing his son instead.

Anselm's contemporary, Abelard, rejected this violent imagery, saying that Jesus demonstrated God's love, even to death, such that humankind learned Divine love from his example.

Luther (16th Century) also rejected Anselm's theory, calling Jesus a volunteer substitution reckoned by God as a sinner in place of humankind.

Theologians continue to offer new understandings of the person and work of Jesus, just as God-talk (theology) continually changes as worldviews, knowledge, language and context change.

If this were not so, training for ministry would take two weeks and a slim textbook!

In the last months, I have spoken on this material in churches around Australia and have heard the same comments from faithful church members – "I've been waiting for someone to say that in church for years," or "If these questions have been discussed in theological circles for centuries, why haven't they told us?"

We have dumbed down Christianity with "correct" doctrines to be believed without question and glorified a "simple gospel," such that intelligent lay people are left to struggle alone with their doubts.

For these people, I go back to the Bible to explore what good news, freed from ancient desert lore and medieval worldviews, might look like today, believing that God will shed more light and truth for our time and place.

I invite Stu Cameron to read my whole book *Like Catching Water in a Net: Human Attempts to Describe the Divine* (winner, general religion category, USA Best Books 2007 Awards) which is far from "vacuous, designer, new-age spirituality".

Dr Val Webb  
Mudgee

## LETTERS

### Hi ho, hi know

The article 'Hi ho, hi ho: It's off to work we go' (*June Journey*) drew attention to the theory that the 'Protestant work ethic' (ie that individuals could and should serve God through work) was the foundation of national prosperity in Northern European societies.

Might I respectfully suggest that this is unrealistic, because prosperity is not a product of working harder (consider the fate of rural peasants) but of working 'smarter'.

There is a reasonable basis for suspecting that 'smarter' work became possible as a result of the individual liberty which can emerge in societies whose leaders assume that moral behaviour is best ensured by individual consciences responsible to God.

Unfortunately Australian society seems currently to be losing its ability to rely on individual consciences responsible to God to ensure moral behaviour, and 'authorities' are thus trying to take the role of moral enforcers.

If the theory outlined above is correct, this trend is likely eventually to have the same sort of adverse economic and political effects that arise from enforcement of individual moral standards by human authorities in Muslim dominated societies.

John Craig  
Centre for Policy and  
Development Systems

### Elected to work

Double predestination, penal substitution, the Protestant work ethic, the rise of capitalism.... Calvin is blamed for many things but not all of it can be justified.

Into this category fall some of the comments on the front of June's *Journey*.

Far from seeing austerity and busyness to work as signs of God's favour (and, conversely, idleness as a sign of rejection) Calvin denied that election could be ascertained (let alone merited) by behaviour and attitudes.

He also actively discouraged speculation on who might be 'in' or 'out'; to seek for such external signs is to tangle oneself "in innumerable and inextricable snares".

Instead, he points us to Christ as the one sign of our election, and our communion with him as the assurance of having been accepted into God's family.

"Those whom God has adopted as [children] are said to have been chosen not in themselves but in Christ" and "We have been inscribed in the book of life if we are in communion with Christ."

It is a pity that the Christ-centred focus espoused here by Calvin was lost by later 'Calvinists'. (To be fair, Calvin himself did not always maintain this focus, and it was left to 20th Century theologian Karl Barth to articulate a fully

and consistently Christ-centred doctrine of election.)

Our election is, for Calvin, realised in our calling.

But primarily this is our being called into the fellowship of Christ's body, where the real work is that done by the Holy Spirit in the renewing of our hearts.

Certainly, our calling is to be lived out in the world, but election serves to remind us that it is not our efforts that are important, but God's grace.

Joel Corney  
Sherwood Uniting Church

### Pray for Mornington

Since Federal Government's intervention, goal posts on Aboriginal issues are shifting to target those most in need: Aboriginals in remote communities.

Mornington Island is one such community.

Our Church is the only church there serving a population of 1200 people (40% under 19).

There is no religious education at the school and our church consists of approximately ten loyal but elderly members from mission days.

Mornington Island is a very, very troubled community requiring our Church's spiritual intervention.

Ben de Nys  
Toowoomba

### Saints get serious

Increasingly, *Journey's* writings appear to reflect the ongoing skirmishes between different theological perspectives.

This diversity of opinion can be a strength of the Uniting Church.

Liberal theologians and writers do make a contribution to mainstream Christian thinking, challenging and provoking consideration of issues often not fully thought through or even considered by Conservatives.

But, they do not appear to offer a way to experience the reality of that 'presence', who in the 'darkest hours' of personal or family crises, enables noble responses.

A reading of the lives of the saints of the church mostly includes an initial supernatural experience

rather than an intellectual response to a particular theological emphasis; C.S. Lewis is possibly one notable exception.

These 'saints' have invariably also demonstrated their faith by significant works.

Michael Casey powerfully makes the point when he says that real religion requires a blend of sobriety and affectivity.

K Wakeling  
Scarborough

### Early green church

The country is ahead of the city in green churches.

In Carbethon (a folk museum in Crows Nest) are photos from around 1900 of the Thargomindah Methodist Church which Joseph White (member of Ray White's family from Crows Nest) helped build.

Not a small church, it was built of reeds, the only building material available.

One day, a herd of goats broke through the surrounding fence and ate the church.

Ah well, it was a good idea.  
Lesley Holt  
Crows Nest

### Not in a box

Three thousand years ago an obscure tribe in the Near East received a revelation from God.

Our Christian Faith as we know it today developed from this, largely due to the influence of the Roman Emperor Constantine.

We must also be aware that God was revealed to people in other parts of the world in times past and to each of these various peoples according to their levels of comprehension.

Today there is a strong move towards Interfaith.

As a beginning there is dialogue between Jews, Moslems and Christians. Later this must extend to the other major eastern religions.

We are all God's children and it is incumbent upon us as Christians to try to appreciate the differences and similarities in an overall understanding of God.

It would be fatal to believe that we have God "in our box".

God does not fit in a box.  
Basil Gillespie  
Beachmere

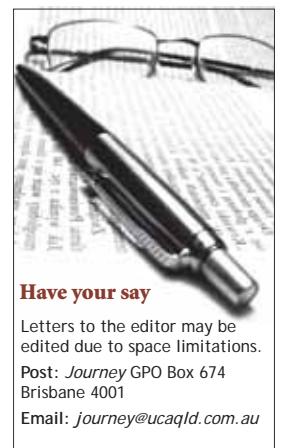
## CLASSIFIEDS

### Accommodation

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

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

**Email your classified advertisements to**  
[mardi.lumsden@ucaqld.com.au](mailto:mardi.lumsden@ucaqld.com.au)  
or fax 07 3377 9796



### 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](mailto:journey@ucaqld.com.au)



# JOURNEY asks...

*As a Christian parent how do you manage television in your home?*

Paul Yarrow

We've chosen not to get pay TV because Kathryn and I think we already watch too much TV. I'm sure our two kids wouldn't agree.

When our children arrive home after school they have afternoon tea, complete any homework tasks that need to be done, and then watch some kids shows on ABC TV.

We tend to sit down together for dinner during the 6 o'clock TV news - sometimes we watch it together and talk about some of the news events, but often it is background noise during dinner.

After dinner kids can watch TV only if they've had their showers, finished their chores and done some piano practice.

They are not allowed to watch TV before school except when there is some special event coverage like the Olympic Games.

Weekend viewing is a bit different. Having a sports fanatic in the family means that there are lots of potential programs for viewing so these have to be restricted.

On Saturday mornings our daughter likes to watch the children's shows on Channel 7 from when she wakes up until 9am.

But for the remainder of the weekend we check the program guide and then decide if there's anything worth watching.

Sometimes Saturday night we get a rental DVD or view a favourite from our own collection.

It has troubled us that there are often ads shown in "family viewing time" for movies later in the night, and at times these ads show material that is violent.

We have discussed as a family why movies and TV shows are rated in different categories and why it isn't appropriate for our 8 year old (or our 12 year old for that matter!) see an M rated program.

Recently we found that we were watching a show which had lots of sexual innuendo and decided that it wasn't a show that we wanted to be watching.

So we talked with our kids about why we felt it wasn't appropriate and have stopped watching it.

As Christian parents there are two main things we consider: is this program appropriate for primary age children, and how much time have we spent watching TV today?



Paul Yarrow is the Children and Family Ministry Coordinator with the Synod Youth and Children's Ministry Unit (YACMU).

Cheryl Foote

I am one of those parents who once plonked their child/children down in front of the television, so I could get my jobs done.

This led to the practice of allowing them to watch TV before school and before I knew it the habit had started for the children to watch TV in the afternoons, sometimes right up until bath time / dinner time, all in the name of getting some peace and quiet to do the things I needed to do.



What I hadn't realised was that I was reinforcing a habit for them to just turn the box on and watch whatever was on.

At one stage I moved into a new home and the TV point was not ready to "plug in" until an electrician could come in a few week's time.

During those few weeks I saw how the children were playing games together, talking more kindly to each other, reading books and dare I say helping me in the kitchen!

It was then, that it dawned on me how much the TV was a time thief.

I made a conscious decision as a young single mum to control the amount and quality of TV watching.

Now remarried, I still hold fast to the idea of minimal TV.

We have no TV before school, no TV until homework has been completed, no TV watching at the dinner table, and no watching sitcoms night after night just to follow the story.

I am not against watching TV, but what I am against is when it creeps in night after night and steals families' connecting together; stopping families from doing things together or simply individuals doing things that are worth while.

I have come to the conclusion that there is a time and a place for TV.

School holidays are a great time to veg out in front of the TV from time to time as long as it is balanced with doing things with friends or family that is not confined to sitting in front of a box or screen.

Screens? Now there's another story....

Cheryl Foote and her husband Bradley live on the Gold Coast with their family of seven children aged from 9 to 18.

Dennis Shanks

I am a recent immigrant to Australia and my family consisting of my wife and our two teenage children do not have a working television in our home.

For a while we lived with my parents who have a television in nearly every room. I found that I really could not read in a room where the television was on as my attention was always being deflected elsewhere.

Television and the on-going noise it created just seemed to push into the available space and fill any mental voids.

I had to turn the television off just to ask my children a question and have them respond.

One never stops being your parent's child, but I became convinced that we had to try something different when we moved into our own home.

On arriving in Australia, I did not purchase a television. This did not go over well with the children, but largely they adapted by reading more and spending strictly allotted time on the computer/internet which my wife and I closely monitored.

From our distant hunter/gatherer past, humans have been conditioned to listen subconsciously to small noises around them to detect predators.

Our brains are still wired that way and the "always on" position of modern electronics fills up both our conscious and unconscious attention.

If you doubt this, then turn off the television when someone has fallen asleep on the lounge and watch the silence awaken them.

Constant visual/auditory input is wearing and produces a great deal of the stress of modern life.

I believe that one has to choose a lower stimulation level, and for my family the way to accomplish this was to not have television.

Other solutions exist but we cannot pretend that the increasingly frenetic activity of modern life is healthy.

One has to choose a lower noise level otherwise when God speaks, his voice will simply not be heard.



Father of two teenage children, Dr G. Dennis Shanks is a member of the Emmanuel Uniting Church at Enoggera and is Director of the Army Malaria Institute, a world-recognised centre for malaria research and training.

## Obligation free funeral pre-planning...

ALEX GOW  
FUNERALS  
100% Australian-owned family company

"The Executor Funeral Plan - A Guide to Thoughtful Funeral Preplanning" is South East Qld's most comprehensive funeral guide. It contains all the information you need to know about arranging or pre-arranging a funeral.

By completing the details in the "Funeral Preplanning Book" provided, you will have a written record of your personal information and funeral wishes you can leave behind for 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: \_\_\_\_\_

