



WHO IS JESUS?

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The search continues

"We need to keep questioning our grasp of Jesus - and his grasp of us." **Rev Dr Paul Walton**

SURVEY

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Journey Readership Survey

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PRESIDENT CALLS FOR NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT - P3

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POVERTY AND THE SOUL

By Mardi Lumsden

OFTEN WHEN we think of people living in poverty we don't think of the family or pensioner next door.

United Nations statistics that half the world lives on less than \$2 a day and that 30 000 children die every day due to poverty are terrifying and can overwhelm us, particularly those of us who have safe housing and three meals a day.

But poverty is also on our doorstep.

Director of UnitingCare's Centre for Social Justice Greg Mackay said many Australians are closer to homelessness than some may think.

"For people living on the margins just one episode of illness is all it takes to push them into a downward spiral of debt and poverty," said Mr Mackay.

"If even marginally better off people were to experience a second or third financial stressor they too would struggle."

Mr Mackay said typical stressors included health related shocks and family break-ups.

"Recent research by the Australia Institute shows women as one of the groups hardest hit by the financial crisis in the workplace. More men have lost full-time jobs but women face worsening underemployment in the form of limited hours and poor pay."

Mt Isa Uniting Church minister Rev Paul MacGregor and his wife Margaret lived and worked in the slums of Bangkok helping young women learn new skills after leaving the sex industry.

"Having spent the last four years in Thailand, and seeing both excessive wealth and incredible poverty existing side-by-side in relative harmony, I have seen financial poverty in a new light," Mr MacGregor said.

He believes Jesus' statement "Blessed are the poor" speaks of a far more serious poverty than lack of money.

"It is speaking of a spiritual poverty of the soul, the importance of which far exceeds any financial poverty," he said.

"It is the poverty that comes from realising our utter spiritual bankruptcy outside of Christ.

"Our response as Christians, to the physical and financial poverty that faces so many people in our society, is then a response to God's grace in our own lives.

"It is not an act of pity or empathy but an act of spiritual obedience.

"My evangelical responsibility is to not only share the good news about Jesus but to put my money where my mouth is, that others may not just hear, but also see the God who loves them."

Deception Bay Uniting Church minister Rev Mark Cornford urged Christians to take on a personal responsibility to help ease poverty in their local community.

"Why is it when we think about doing something about poverty we tend to think of what the church can do, rather than thinking about how I can live my life so that I am part of the good news for people who are struggling?" he said.

Continued P.11



Following the homeless shepherd

I HAVE just listened to an early morning talkback program on Radio National. I came into the conversation during a discussion with a City Councillor from Alice Springs who was defending the Council's decision to introduce a by-law to prohibit begging on the streets of Alice Springs.

It opened up a fascinating conversation about the apparent increase of begging in Australia.

Why do people beg? Are they really poor? Why don't they, or can't they, access welfare services?

What has happened in their lives and within the Australian community that the only option seems to be to beg for help?

Various people rang in with their experiences and explained their decisions to help, or refuse to help, beggars.

One person said that the problem with begging was not that it did any harm rather

that it made the rest of us feel uncomfortable.

This caller suggested that many of us feel embarrassed, guilty, helpless or frightened when approached by a beggar.

It is our discomfort that we are trying to address, rather than the

I follow one who was homeless and who was dependent upon others for his daily sustenance.

plight of the beggar.

I found myself admitting that this is true for me.

However somewhere in the background of my thoughts were the words of Jesus: "Foxes have holes and birds have nests; but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head" (Matt 8:20; Luke 9:58)

I follow one who was homeless and who was dependent upon others for his daily sustenance.

How does this shape my

attitude to those who live that sort of existence in my world?

How do we live out the commitments we made at our last Synod (see page 7)? Why do we want to help those who sleep rough on our streets?

Is it just to appease our consciences or do we have a genuine concern for those who try to live without a place to lay their heads at night?

I am impressed that in the midst of our struggle with the difficult financial situation we face as a Synod, we were prepared to look beyond ourselves and commit ourselves to playing our part in addressing the needs of those who have nothing.

We could dismiss those commitments with the excuse that we don't have the financial resources to do anything; or we can see this as the perfect time to reach out.

Message from the Moderator

Rev Bruce Johnson



As I listen to those who find themselves with no place to call home they talk of their loneliness and isolation.

They lose their sense of identity and worth in the community.

We may not have a simple answer to the lack of affordable housing but we do have the capacity to offer inclusion in our community.

We could move beyond our own feelings of discomfort and embarrassment to acknowledge them, to learn a person's name, and to listen to their story.

One of the talkback callers recalled the day she received her first pay packet.

Her parents had prepared her for this event giving her advice about how to use it wisely and not to allow herself to be cheated out of her hard-earned money by street people.

So when she emerged from the hospital after night shift with her pay in her pocket she knew that she should not hand over money

to the 'bag lady' who pleaded with her for help.

However, she felt for this woman with nothing so she invited her to have breakfast with her.

Together they ate bacon and eggs in the local café. I am sure that both women were blessed that morning; a blessing far richer than if that young nurse had simply handed over a few shillings.

I wonder what stories lay behind the words in Matthew's Gospel about the women who stood at the foot of the cross.

I am glad there were some people who saw more than just the homeless wanderer of Galilee.

Why was that homeless man more deserving of our care and love than those who roam the streets of most cities and towns today?

"Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me." (Matt 25:40)

Navigating Monopoly

HOW DO children learn about the world of property and finance?

They play games that simulate adult experiences.

And one of the world's most famous games is Monopoly.

The history of Monopoly dates back to 1904 when a Quaker named Elizabeth Magie invented The Landlord's Game in an attempt to teach people about Henry George's single tax theory and the dangers of monopolised property ownership.

Fellow American Charles Darrow later sold his similar game, Monopoly, to Parker Brothers which has gone on to become one of the most popular board games of all time.

The object of Monopoly is to bankrupt your opponents and become the wealthiest player. That is, of course, the only way

the game ends – when one player wins and the rest are left with nothing.

All of this happens by the roll of the dice. Much like poverty and homelessness in our society today, it is a game of chance.

What does that teach young people (and not so young people) about how to treat others?

If people land on our property we charge them exorbitant fees and force them to mortgage their own property to stay in the game, we sometimes force them into homelessness or jail, leaving them reliant on those who possess wealth and property.

They are impoverished and vulnerable and we are the winners.

Ms Magie's original concept was to warn people of the evils of a monopolised society.

Yet even the most compassion-



ate person can turn into a tyrant when Monopoly victory is on the line!

So next time you sit down to a game of Monopoly I challenge you to play with a different mindset.

I challenge you to play with compassion and a willingness to help those who are down on their luck.

The only problem will be that by playing this way the game will never end and everyone will have something of value.

Wouldn't it be good if society worked like that?

Mardi Lumsden
Editor

Sign of the times



ONE OF the great things about being located in North Queensland is that you can have church outside in August. The members of Burdekin Uniting Church are lucky enough to be able to have church on the beach. This is their sign from 30 August. Thanks to Minister Paul Clark for sending this in.

Send your Sign of the Times to journey@ucaqld.com.au.



Sign of the Times is now sponsored by Blackstar Coffee. The chosen entry will be contacted by Blackstar to receive their prize of freshly roasted organic fairtrade coffee. www.blackstarcoffee.com.au.

Queensland leads the way in sacrifice

WITH THE Global Financial Crisis looming, the team at Lent Event were preparing themselves to suffer a decline in registrations and support for their annual community event.

But to the surprise and joy of the Lent Event team, Uniting Church congregations and faith groups around Australia have shown their dedication and compassion, raising over \$430 000 to respond to the other GFC – the Global Food Crisis and other vital development work, orchestrated by UnitingWorld through their relief and development projects.

Lent Event Program Director Sarah White said that the support from members of the Queensland Synod was fundamental in achieving this.

"Lent Event was blessed this year by the contributions of Queensland Synod members who raised a total of \$163 715 which is an increase of 76 percent from their previous annual donation," Ms White said.

"We are very thankful for all those who took part in our program, giving up something in their lives during Lent to prioritise the welfare of others."

Lent Event was established five years ago in order to provide a practical way for people to help fight world poverty while developing their understanding of God and the world which he has created.

Participants are asked to give up a non-essential item during Lent and donate the money saved

to projects that offer a better future to some of the world's neediest people.

This sacrifice, in combination with the use of Bible study and worship resources provided by Lent Event, helped many Queensland worship communities develop spiritually in 2009.

As one member of the Cleveland Uniting Church commented:

"Lent Event is drawing our congregation nearer to Jesus' heart for the poor."

The team at Lent Event are busily preparing resources for Lent 2010 including children's programs, worship resources and an inspiring Bible study written by Rev Dr Chris Budden, focusing on the theme *Joining God at*



Erica Harrison with a young disabled child, Lilifaza, at the Orphans and Vulnerable Children centre in Mwandia, Zambia. Photo courtesy of Lent Event

the Edges. The resources will be available in October. Individuals and Church communities are

encouraged to sign up or find out more about Lent Event from www.lentevent.com.

We must believe in true peace

TO CELEBRATE the United Nations International Day of Peace and World Council of Churches' International Day of Prayer for Peace, 21 September, Uniting Church President Rev Alistair Macrae called for churches to truly believe in a world without nuclear weapons.

"As we commemorate this day of peace ... we acknowledge that we have not believed enough in the power of peace," he said.

"We have placed our faith in the ownership of weapons and the idea of 'deterrence' to deliver security for the world's people."

Mr Macrae said the Uniting Church believed there could be no such security in a world where there are around 26 000 nuclear weapons and thousands of those are on "hair trigger alert".

"The nuclear bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945 should have ended the use of all nuclear weapons but instead we have seen their proliferation," he said.

"Fortunately the tide is now turning and this day, 21 September, provides us with the opportunity to build both on the

good work already being done and further strengthen our resolve to build a peaceful world."

Mr Macrae affirmed the efforts of Prime Minister Kevin Rudd and US President Barack Obama in leading a new wave of international commitment and cooperation on nuclear disarmament.

The Uniting Church has long been committed to the elimination of nuclear weapons, most recently lending its voice to the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons, and in 2006 in the statement *Uniting for Peace* the Church declared that ownership, use, or threatened use of nuclear, chemical or biological weapons was evil.

"We continue to call on all nuclear weapons states to completely disarm and on those states seeking to develop nuclear weapons to end their programs.

"And we continue to pray that those who seek security in weapons may discover that genuine security can only be achieved through non-violent means," he said.

Stock Up For Hope drives charity

ON 9 SEPTEMBER 40 corporate city slickers and a few school chaplains drove 500 cattle from Mitchell to Roma in regional Queensland for the Stock Up For Hope charity cattle drive.

The aim was to raise awareness of the crucial role that school chaplains play in the lives of school students in regional Queensland.

Tim Mander, Scripture Union (SU) Qld CEO said Stock Up For Hope would also raise vital funds for school chaplaincy services in rural and regional Queensland.

"Our school chaplains are finding themselves supporting students through issues such as parental separation,

depression, financial problems, and even suicide," he said.

"Many chaplains have found they've replaced counselling or welfare services, and they're not just providing support to students either – that essential assistance and moral support is extending to family members as well.

"But they're making sensational inroads in bringing young people, their families, and entire communities, into a closer relationship with God."

SU Qld is the nation's largest provider of school chaplains.

Mr Mander said 40 representatives from Australia's leading corporations joined the

cattle drive during its four week duration.

Since the Federal Government agreed to fund school chaplains two days a week, two years ago, the scheme has been a resounding success, with a recent study by SU Qld indicating principals were overwhelmingly in favour of maintaining the program.

"While school chaplains are government-funded for two days a week in reality they work many more hours. They are actually on call 24/7 to assist students in need," Mr Mander said.

"We need to raise funds to keep these services up and running."



Dale Watson, Geoff Wilson (Minister for Education and Training), and Brodie Hurley at the launch of Stock Up For Hope. Photo courtesy of SU Qld

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Somerville House celebrates spiritual life of the school

IN AUGUST the Somerville House community held its annual Chapel Week, a five day program of activities commemorating the commissioning of the Chapel and celebrating the spiritual life of the girls' school which is based in South Brisbane.

This year the activities centred around the theme *Friendship* and included a birthday party for the Chapel, a praise celebration lead by the Chapel band and a celebration breakfast for parents, staff and students.

Key elements of friendship such as trust and communication were highlighted through a range of activities including a blind eating activity that challenged blindfolded girls to feed their partners a messy concoction of green jelly and custard.

The School's Senior Chaplain, Chris O'Gorman, said the week's activities had been developed to

help explain and demonstrate the teachings of Jesus to the students in an engaging and relevant way, and to allow the Christian students an opportunity to share their faith at school.

"The theme *Friendship* was extended to look at how we can be God's friends and what we can expect in our relationship with God," said Ms O'Gorman.

Year 12 student and Chapel Prefect Amy Schmidt was also very positive about what Chapel Week achieved.

"It was great to see everyone so enthusiastic and open to God during the week and to see the different year levels mixing so well and having fun," she said.

The 2009 Chapel Week also included the inaugural Chapel Week Breakfast involving more than 80 parents, students and staff coming together to share breakfast while reflecting on the

role of the School in developing the spiritual life of individuals.

Somerville House Principal Dr

Ness Goodwin, parent Dr Ranjeny Thomas and Year 12 student, Tasha Haran, addressed the gathering to reflect on the school's spiritual life from different perspectives.

Ms O'Gorman explained that the breakfast was the School's first gathering of its faith community in this way.

"Now parents and staff members can identify each other as part of the School's faith community and maybe this will lead to further opportunities to support each other in the future."

Student involvement also played a crucial role in the success of Chapel Week with

Chapel Prefect Amy Schmidt and Chapel Convenors Katie Desoe and Monica Craswell having the important role of supporting the School's Chaplains in promoting God's message throughout the School.

Somerville House operates under the ownership and governance of the Presbyterian and Methodist Schools Association (PMSA) and seeks to provide the opportunity for members of the school community to engage meaningfully with the Christian gospel and nurture a sense of a relationship with God for individuals.



Somerville House students cut the Chapel's birthday cake. Photo by Stephanie Grorud and courtesy of Somerville House

Ecumenism crosses the ocean

THE ECUMENICAL spirit of Unity College in Caloundra extended across the Pacific recently when the College welcomed students from Peteli Middle School in Tonga – a

school of the Free Wesley Church of Tonga.

Unity College is an ecumenical school serving the Catholic and Uniting communities of Caloundra on the Sunshine Coast.



Tongan students enjoy a cooking class with students from Unity College. Photo courtesy of Judy Morrison and Unity College

This visit was a dream come true for teachers Karen Harrison and Carmel O'Brien, who caught the vision from Rev Dr Alan Morrison and his wife Judy after they worked in Tonga in 2006 and 2007.

In 2008 they initiated the relationship when they took the first group of students from Unity College to the school in Tonga.

The value of cultural exchange was firmly established and this year, 18 students and four teachers from the Tongan school came to experience life and education in Queensland.

The visit allowed the Tongan students to participate in classes at the College and also to enjoy the tourist attractions available on the Sunshine Coast. They practised their English, learnt to cook Australian-style and

tried computers. Out of school hours, they enjoyed barbecues, went roller-skating, and saw the animals at Australia Zoo.

At the Winter Arts Show the Tongan students almost stole the show with their presentation of songs and dances from their own culture and Christian tradition, complete with traditional costumes made of tapa and pandanus. Judy Morrison said the audience response was ecstatic.

"The students experienced worship in both the Uniting and Catholic churches and were warmly welcomed by both communities. Their voices added an extra dimension to the singing and their unaccompanied songs were so beautiful that it brought tears to the eyes of many," she said.

"They really are beautiful

people," said one of the host parents. "We had them with us for five days and wish we could have had them for the full ten!"

Ms O'Brien said, "It was such a valuable experience for our students to get to know people from a totally different culture."

"It was an eye-opener for them to understand that people from different cultures see things differently; that we are not better or worse than each other but just 'different'."

"They began to learn something of the values that Tongans hold dear: family, faith, and sharing."

There were many tears as the visitors departed but the many generous gifts they left will sustain the memory of an unforgettable experience. Students are already asking about registering for the next trip to Tonga in 2010.



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Graham Clarke

Best gift is time says top dad finalist

By Mardi Lumsden

SCRIPTURE UNION (SU) Queensland Father of the Year finalist and North Rockhampton Uniting Church member Merv Brown said the key to being a good dad is pretty straightforward.

"It is so important to talk to your kids from an early age, read them stories before they go to bed, give them a good hug and tell them you love them," he said.

The father of five adult daughters was nominated by daughter Kayleen Smith who attends Pine Rivers Uniting Church.

Ms Smith said her father gives a lot to the local community as well as to his family.

"He has always given a lot and taught us that we are not just here to get what we can out of life. You have got to put something back in as well.

"He was always on the school P&C and anything we were involved with like hockey, music or church, Mum or Dad always went.

"They were always on a committee, never right up front, but always in the background to make sure things happened."

Mr Brown said it was spending time apart from his own Father

that made him understand the importance of being with your children.

"My Dad wasn't always with us at times. Back in those days they worked away and then he went to Cairns during the war and we were left at home."

Now Mr Brown doesn't just help with his children and grandchildren, he also volunteers at an after-school hockey program.

He said good parents spend quality time with their children.

"Parents have got to sit down and talk and listen to their children.

"Just enjoy what they want to do and not what the parents want the kids to do. In sport or anything, listen to the children and see what they want and like.

"Don't push them into things that they don't want, but you still have to lead them in a way that works best for them."

Ms Smith said one of the lessons she learnt about being a good parent from her Dad was accepting your children for who they are.

"Don't try to turn them into what you want them to be; just love them."

She also sees her parents, Marg and Merv Brown, as a great team.

"Mum and Dad are a partnership.

"They have been married for over 50 years.

"Things weren't easy all the time, but today we spend too much time trying to get the latest stuff, whereas when we were kids

a Sunday afternoon drive or a picnic was a highlight," she said.

Mr Brown also encouraged churches to reach out to young people.

"Keep up the good work. I know we are all battling to try to keep our youth and I don't know

the answer to it. We've just got to keep going and reach out."

SU Queensland Father of the Year was won by Bundaberg resident Richard Baldry who, with his wife, has adopted and fostered 15 children.



Kayleen Smith with her father Merv Brown at the Scripture Union Queensland Father of the Year breakfast. Photo courtesy of Phil Smith

Kairos Union

By Caitlin Harrison

THREE UNITING Church communities have decided to come together as one to utilise resources and worship together.

Congregations from Wavell Heights/Geebung, Toombul District and Clayfield/Hamilton will come together as a cluster to form the Kairos Uniting Church.

Ms Jenny Sugars, Secretary of Wavell Heights/Geebung is excited about the prospects this clustering brings.

"We will have three times everything! Ministerial talent, expertise, experience and enthusiasm – the list is endless.

"An unexpected bonus has been the new friends I have made within our cluster," she said.

The word *kairos* is a Greek word meaning God's time.

Members of all congregations involved in the union were asked

to suggest possible names for the new cluster. The name was submitted by a member of the Geebung congregation, Mr Ian Caitens.

"Kairos was ultimately chosen by the Cluster Committee as they felt this name was most fitting for what was happening to us. This was God's time for this group of churches to come together," said Ms Sugars.

The three congregations will physically stay in their own Churches but made the decision to work as one earlier this year.

Plenty of planning went into the union with a taskforce created by members of all three congregations and guidance from facilitators appointed by Presbytery.

"Our cluster group has been meeting since early 2009 and we have slowly and carefully worked through all the pros and

cons. We provided updates to our congregations' members monthly, and then weekly, and we constantly asked God for his guidance," said Ms Sugars.

Members of the cluster expect some little bumps along the way, but the outlook is overwhelmingly positive.

"I believe some of our elderly members will have difficulty accepting that they will not have the same minister all the time," said Ms Sugars.

"(But) I am so excited about the new opportunities which will come about because we have clustered."

Ken McHugh, Treasurer for Toombul District believes that as long as the congregations are assured that each Church's identity will be retained, people will embrace the union.

"I'm looking forward to the opportunity to develop working relationships with members of our neighbouring communities as we share resources including those of ministry and administration," he said.

What do members of this cluster recommend to other congregations thinking about a union? Keep everyone in the loop!

"Keep your congregation informed of the process of the cluster group, answer their questions and alleviate any fears and worries

they may have," suggested Helen Wilson, Secretary of Clayfield/Hamilton.

Mr McHugh said, "I would advise other congregations considering such a move to enter into negotiations with open minds and a willingness to accept change with a positive attitude."



Graham Power (Toombul District chair), Rev Peter Lockhart, Sandra Jebb, Shirley Coulson (Clayfield / Hamilton chair), Pastor Terry Stanyer, and Alan Bird (Geebung / Wavell Heights chair) at the Kairos Uniting Church signing. Photos by Yvonne McRostie



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Churches snag Fathers' Day

CONGREGATIONS ALL over Queensland paid tribute to fathers on the first Sunday in September.

For the past four years on Fathers' Day the Burdekin Uniting Church congregation in North Queensland have held a community BBQ in Home Hill and given away free newspapers in Ayr from two local newsagents.

Minister Rev Paul Clark said the response has been excellent.

"Although we haven't had many people join our congregation as a result that is not the direct aim," he said.

"We do it to try to change perceptions. Often the church comes to ask for money, not to give it away.

"We want to send a different message to the community - God is a God of grace."

Bayside Uniting Church in Brisbane held a special Fathers' Day service this year with the theme *Sporting Sunday*.

"Invitations were sent encouraging men and women to dress in sporting gear and there was a great response," said Ron Angell.

"All the flowers were removed from the Church to make way for sporting memorabilia, the music team comprised of eight men and the service included a quiz.

"After the benediction all the men came forward and received a sports-themed Fathers' Day card containing characteristics of our Heavenly Father," he said.

"The service was enthusiastically received with an encouraging increase in the number of men attending."



Mary Johnson and Peter Leggo at the Bayside Uniting Church Fathers' Day Service. Photo by Max Johnson



The Brookfield Uniting Church Country Market. Photo by George Barnes

Church market day a hit in Brookfield

ON SATURDAY 12 September hundreds of people enjoyed the sights, sounds and smells of the Brookfield Country Market.

The musical program included choirs from local primary schools, the Brisbane Boys' College Pipe Band, the mellow tones of singer Ian Smallbone (Karana Downs Uniting Church minister), the entertaining Kathy Sunners and organ recitals by Elizabeth Slatter.

Many locals took advantage of the well-priced fresh produce.

The Ipswich Woodies demonstrated their woodturning skills and a range of craft stalls offered everything from cakes to cushions, jams to jewellery, and enough second-hand books and treasures to appeal to everyone's tastes.

The history of the local area was also on display, as was old farm machinery and a lovingly restored Vintage 1911 Renault.

There were plenty of activities for the children as well as food and drinks for all who attended.

By George Barnes

Chaplain's bikers motor through Church and history

HISTORY WAS made on Saturday 29 August as around 100 motorbikes rode through the Glasshouse Country Uniting Church (GHCUC) foyer to raise funds for the local high school Chaplain Mike Turner.

The idea was the brainchild of the local chaplaincy committee member Lisa Kerr who, with her husband Jaimie, organised and coordinated the two hour ride from Beerwah High School out to

Kilcoy. Morning tea at Kilcoy was supplied by Beerwah Church on the Rise and other local Beerwah churches.

The route continued back through Caboolture via Elimbah to Steve Irwin Way, Beerwah where the SES guided the riders safely through the Church to park in the grounds.

Under the leadership of retired minister Rev Keith Ewin, the local UC members were out in full

force, cooking up a storm on the barbecues for the hungry riders.

GHCUC Minister Rev George Woodward (a biker from way back) could not stop grinning all weekend.

Over \$2000 was raised on the day and the local chaplaincy committee hopes to make this an annual event.

By Chris Bell, LCC Chairman



Organiser Jaimie Kerr on his bike with Mike Turner (Beerwah High School Chaplain). Photo by Sam Walker and courtesy of Glasshouse Country News

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Lifeline makes its mark on Indigenous poverty

By Caitlin Harrison

DID YOU know suicide among Indigenous Australians is up to 40 percent* higher than in the general Australian population? It is also believed this figure is under reported.

In less than a minute and with four clicks of your mouse, you can help Lifeline save Indigenous Australians.

The *Make Your Mark* campaign encourages you to create your own unique hand print, symbolising your own contribution to making Indigenous poverty history.

By creating your hand print, you will be showing your support for Indigenous healing, emotional wellbeing and suicide prevention.

Your participation will help Lifeline, a subsidiary of UnitingCare, connect Indigenous communities with services and resources to support individuals and families into the future.

For every handprint created Rugby League's One Community will donate \$1 to Lifeline for this cause up to \$15 000.

The funds raised will be used to support suicide awareness and prevention activities in at risk communities as part of Lifeline's

Indigenous Outreach Program.

The Program will support specifically identified remote and regional Indigenous communities through service delivery and the dissemination of information and self-help resources.

The need for such programs will be determined on a community needs basis – identified by a community assessment and engagement process.

The use of a hand print as the predominant image of the Make Your Mark campaign was determined in collaboration

with Menzies School of Health Research because it symbolically represents a signature and is often found in traditional Indigenous art and rock painting.

Once your mark is made, you can click on a map to see the hand prints of other people in your area to see how many of your friends and family have made their mark.

To make your mark visit www.lifeline.org.au/makeyourmark/home

(*Living is for Everyone, 2008)



A place to call home

AT THE 27th Queensland Synod meeting last November members affirmed a proposal relating to homelessness from Aitkenvale Uniting Church minister Mark Dewar and UnitingCare Chief Executive Officer Anne Cross entitled *A Place to Call Home*.

Ms Cross said the proposal was a step towards congregations and Church agencies making a real difference in the lives of Queensland's homeless community.

The proposal came out of a Housing and Homelessness Forum sponsored by the Synod Leadership Team held in 2008 and explored ways the Church could respond to these major social issues.

A Place to Call Home requests all arms of the Church to form relationships in their local community and to work out ways to assist people struggling with homelessness or in need of emergency accommodation.

It asks the financial and organisational bodies of the Church (including UnitingCare) to investigate appropriate models for structuring the provision of affordable housing, to support congregations who wish to provide support, and to lobby local, state and federal government to amend public policy on the issues involved with homelessness in Australia.

Journey 2009 READERSHIP SURVEY

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Age

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- ☐ 35 - 39
- ☐ 40 - 44
- ☐ 45 - 49
- ☐ 50 - 54
- ☐ 55 - 59
- ☐ 60 - 64
- ☐ 65 - 69
- ☐ 70 - 74
- ☐ 75 - 79
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Sex

- ☐ Female
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Highest Education Achievement

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Are you interested in the environment?

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- ☐ Weekly
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Please rate the following parts of print Journey:

	Boring		Average		Enjoy
Opinion pieces	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5
World news	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5
Stories about UnitingCare, Lifeline and BlueCare and Uniting Church Agencies	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5
Congregations	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5
News	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5
Assembly news	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5
Queensland Synod news	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5
Cartoons	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5
Sign of the times	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5
What's on	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5
Reviews	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5
Prayer diary	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5
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Journey asks	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5
Theme stories	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5

Hospitality on the edge

By Tim Hodgson

RESPONDING TO the issue of homelessness on Brisbane streets, a group of inner-city residents and Albert St Uniting Church members are working together to run a weekly community meal for the poor.

Known as the Wesley Community Meal it began five years ago when some of the Albert St Church members had dinner with a group of homeless people whom they had befriended from street work. It has become a Wednesday night ritual for Wesley Mission's

Servant Network. Each week around 90 people, mostly homeless, attend the meal in Fortitude Valley, Brisbane. They are supported by a diverse group of volunteers from retirees, young adults, overseas students, church members, office workers, ex-prisoners and boarding house

residents, to name a few. Tirelessly the volunteers spend their Wednesday afternoons preparing the food then serving the guests and eating with them. The Wesley Community Meal is an avenue for guests and volunteers to live out and practise the spiritual value of hospitality. The community meal provides a safe place for homeless people, where they feel loved, accepted, supported and respected. Most importantly, there are opportunities to take on positions of responsibility at the meal and develop new skills and knowledge. Many volunteers find the experience of supporting the homeless transformative. Ontologically they come to a new understanding of life, where they realise what it means to be in solidarity with the poor. What unifies such a diverse group of volunteers is the belief that they are part of a movement of hospitality and justice that liberates the poor. Capturing and living out this vision has led to a number of volunteers who have had no connection with the church to explore the Christian faith. In response the Servant Network ran a reflective study

on the Be-Attitudes which gave volunteers a theological framework to articulate their engagement with the homeless. Running a local community meal has allowed Albert St Uniting Church members to serve alongside local city residents and build life-giving relationships with them, whilst connecting effectively and supporting the homeless and disadvantaged in inner city Brisbane. Together they are responding to poverty in their local community. Wesley Mission's Servant Network also runs street work teams, mentoring teams and community development programs. The Network needs occasional cooks for the Wesley Community Meal and is seeking volunteers particularly from Uniting Church multicultural congregations in response to a request for some international dishes at the meal. Contact Melanie Wheeley, Community Meal Coordinator, on 0412 538 015. Rev Deacon Tim Hodgson is the Homelessness and Community Minister with Wesley Mission Brisbane



Volunteers prepare for the Wesley Community Meal in Brisbane. Photo courtesy of Tim Hodgson

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Please rate the following parts of *JourneyOnline*:

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What's on	1	2	3	4	5
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<i>JourneyOnline</i> blog	1	2	3	4	5

Overall, how valuable do you find the following activities of the Communication Services Unit (part of the Queensland Synod Support Services):

	Not Valuable		Average		Valuable
<i>Journey</i> (print)	1	2	3	4	5
<i>JourneyOnline</i>	1	2	3	4	5
Lift outs in <i>Journey</i> (eg: Lent Studies)	1	2	3	4	5
Queensland synod website	1	2	3	4	5
UC Information	1	2	3	4	5
Christmas postcards	1	2	3	4	5
Easter postcards	1	2	3	4	5
<i>JourneyOnline</i> blog	1	2	3	4	5
Synod discussion e-group	1	2	3	4	5

Are there any topics you would like to see covered in *Journey*, *JourneyOnline* or in the *JourneyOnline* blog?

Do you have any further suggestions or comments for the *Journey* team?

Thank you for completing our survey, we really appreciate the time you have spent answering our questions! We will use this information to continue to improve *Journey*.

Thanks again,
The Communication Services Unit and the *Journey* team.

If you would like to go into the draw for a \$250 Biome voucher please provide your contact details below:

Name:

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These details will not be used for any purpose other than this competition and your details will not be kept after the competition is drawn on 10 November.
The winner will be randomly selected and the judges' decision is final.
The winner will be notified via email or phone.

Synod launches housing directory

By Andrew Johnson

A MAN contacted our Church the other day; he was struggling to find secure accommodation for himself and the two young people he cared for, both of whom had complex needs.

Unable to access social housing and finding it impossible to survive in the rental market he came to the Church looking for assistance and a supportive community.

How could I help? I was new to the area, not familiar with the services in the community.

Where could I go to find out what was in my area?

I didn't just want to refer them to someone who might know more than me only to begin a long chain of referrals.

It was this kind of scenario that began the idea of an online homelessness directory launched in September.

This directory is the implementation of a decision

made by the 27th Queensland Synod as part of a comprehensive suite of proposals adopted as a response to homelessness.

Collaboration between UnitingCare's Centre for Social Justice and the Synod Communication Services Unit has made this possible.

Rather than having expert local knowledge, anyone can respond to enquiries using information from one website tailored to the needs of the Uniting Church.

Based on a similar concept to refugee services, the homelessness directory is designed to be a single portal for listing services related to housing and homelessness.

It also provides guides to engaging with people who come seeking assistance.

So often not only are we unaware of the services available but we also lack experience about the best way to help.

Often people will be far from their normal locality when they contact a church. This directory

means someone in Mansfield can find out the services available in Aspley or people in Charters Towers can find the services available in Robina.

This alone will not solve Australia's homelessness crisis.

Homelessness Australia reports that nearly one in every 200 Australians is without safe, secure or affordable housing.

23 percent of Australia's homeless are children, half the people who request accommodation are turned away and two out of every three children who need support are turned away.

Those who work with the most marginalised in our community, including asylum seekers fleeing torture and persecution, report that finding safe secure housing is the most difficult need to meet.

In light of that evidence the website also seeks to inform people about how to engage in advocacy.

It includes details about how to contact your local politician and even sample letters that can be



adapted to local situations.

Later down the track the aim is for congregation members to be able to add their own local services so that it can be more useful across Queensland.

This initiative is another way

the Queensland Synod is seeking to live out its commitment to be a reconciling community called to see Christ in the poor and the marginalised.

Visit

www.housing.ucaqld.com.au



A volunteer prepares for the Wesley Community Meal in Brisbane. Photo courtesy of Tim Hodgson

A home away from home

By Caitlin Harrison

LEAVING YOUR home to move to another country is a hard at the best of times but when the decision isn't yours it can be a nightmare.

Francisca Zingi from Burma and Simon Kueth from Sudan have both left their dangerous homelands in search of a better life in Australia. Their stories are enlightening.

"I was always interested in Australia," said Francisca Zingi, 40. "But whatever we wanted to do, we couldn't," she said, referring to the tight restrictions placed on people entering and leaving Burma by the military government.

About five years ago Ms Zingi travelled to South India on the border of Burma to study at bible college. Through her study she travelled to New Delhi to work with refugees, not realising that she would become one herself.

She loved working with the refugees but didn't realise how much danger it was putting her in back in her homeland.

During her studies she returned to Burma to visit family and realised something wasn't right.

"The military became suspi-

cious of me because I was working with refugees in India," she said.

It was too dangerous for her to stay. If she did she risked imprisonment, so she went back to India.

When she completed her study Ms Zingi knew she could not return home so applied to come to Australia as a refugee and arrived in March 2007.

Ms Zingi had to leave behind not only her parents but her two sons, both now in their twenties.

"I divorced my husband while I was still in Burma, and my sons didn't live with me, but it is still hard," she said.

With support from Rev Dr Apichart Branjerdporn and fellow members of Logan Central Multicultural Uniting Church Ms Zingi has made a new life for herself in Australia.

"The majority (of refugees in our Church) are very happy and are active members of the Church. They interact well with everyone from 15 nations at our multicultural Church," said Dr Branjerdporn.

Simon Kueth fled the civil war in Sudan with his wife and children in September 2002.

When he left, he did not know the whereabouts of his parents and

siblings.

"I was sad to leave (Sudan) but the environment was not peaceful for me and my family," said Mr Kueth.

Life in Australia has not been easy for Mr Kueth and his family.

"It took me time to settle in and I have not settled in well up to now. Australian life is not

the same as Sudan. Australia has different trees from Sudan, the weather is different, and the culture is different. Sudan is a third world country and Australia is a developed country.

"There are a lot of good things in Australia (rather than in) Sudan, for example housing, education, and security. My children are at

school, childcare and university."

The Church played a vital role in Mr Kueth's integration into Australian society.

"The Church gave me a course to know about Christianity better, and assists me with bringing my family for prayers on Sundays."



A young woman selling craft at the Lake Inle market in Burma. Photo by Justin Blethrow



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Christians Against Poverty

By Priscilla Raepom

CHRISTIANS AGAINST Poverty (CAP), a national debt counselling ministry, is calling on churches in Australia to support CAP Sunday: an event created to highlight the reality of debt and poverty in the country and to establish a debt counselling service for church communities.

Communications and partnership director Alison Buttenshaw is expecting about 80 churches to get involved in the event this year which coincides

with National Anti-Poverty Week from 11 to 17 October.

She said churches can either provide debt counselling services and financial education to help individuals start their journey towards financial freedom or take up an offering that will help CAP reach out to more people.

"We are currently in the process of creating a multimedia resource pack that gives churches a couple of options for presentations," she said.

Ms Buttenshaw said the resource pack was user friendly

and included 20 and 60 minute presentations as well as bible study for church and youth groups.

"Ideally we want churches to host CAP Sunday on Sunday 11 October to fit in with National Anti-Poverty Week, but there will be some flexibility," she said.

Ms Buttenshaw said according to the Reserve Bank of Australia, the total amount of Australian household debt has risen almost six-fold in the last 18 years.

"This is an overall increase of around \$910 billion. In 2007 a report from Australia Fair stated that one in 11 families is living below the poverty line.

"We receive dozens of phone calls daily from people who are overwhelmed and trapped by debt," Ms Buttenshaw said.

Currently CAP works in partnership with 64 local churches from various denominations within Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia and the ACT, to service and counsel their clients.

For more information on hosting a CAP Sunday contact Sarah Gentle on (02) 4914 0508, email admin@capaust.org or visit www.capaust.org



A young beggar in India. Photo by Steve Evans and courtesy of Wikimedia Commons

Art helps heal the marginalised

By Aileen Wallace

ART FROM the Margins grew from a conversation at an early morning coffee brigade for the homeless. In its second year, it is now part of the annual Brisbane Festival.

Art from the Margins has received over 300 works of art from Brisbane's homeless and those living with disadvantage or disability.

These creations will be on display this October at Wesley Mission Brisbane - Albert Street Uniting Church, and the Inala Community Art Gallery.

Located in Brisbane's CBD Wesley Mission Brisbane and Albert Street Uniting Church are in an attractive position to the

homeless. The Church building feels safe and, even when closed, the cloisters offer protection from the elements.

This prompted Church members to ask how these people could be helped.

Dr Ian Airey, a board member of UnitingCare Queensland and the Wesley Mission Brisbane Council, and a member of Albert Street Uniting Church for over 18 years, also started looking for a way he could personally help.

He began representing Wesley Mission Brisbane at an early morning coffee brigade which caters for people who are homeless or living on the margins.

"At first I felt like a fish out of water," said Dr Airey, "then I got to be a familiar face.

"I got to know a man called Austin, who came for coffee regularly.

"He is a great ideas person and would constantly throw up challenges for Wesley Mission Brisbane.

"He told me that even if you were living rough there was no need to go hungry but the boredom was crippling.

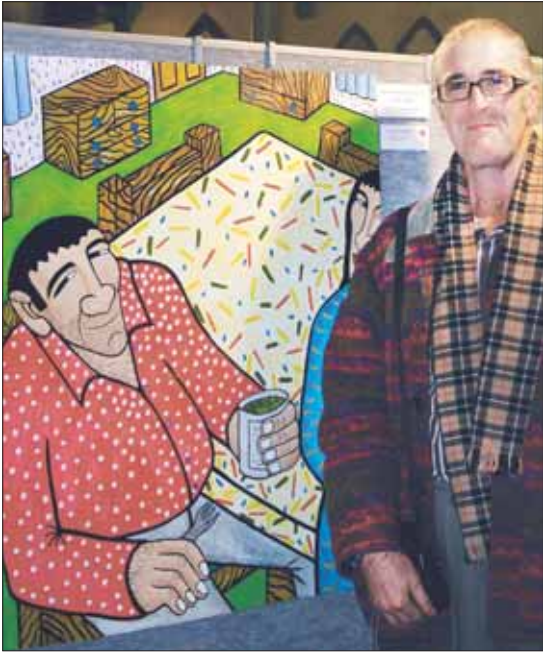
"That was how, and why, Art from the Margins came about. It helps allay boredom through art.

"The public's reaction to the work was very positive and the Brisbane Festival was happy to take the exhibition on as part of their regular program."

This years theme is *One in Spirit*.

The exhibition runs 1-4 October at the Wesley Mission Brisbane - Albert Street Uniting Church, 140 Ann Street in Brisbane, and 1-11 October at the Inala Community Art Gallery.

Entry is free and some artwork will be for sale.



Artist Stephen Corti-Griffith stands with his prizewinning painting. Photo courtesy of Wesley Mission Brisbane

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Who is Jesus?

The search continues

By Mardi Lumsden

THE *JOURNEY* letters section continues to have lively discussion in response to our February edition *Who is Jesus?* and the review of *Who on Earth was Jesus?* a book by Quaker and humanist author David Boulton.

Mr Boulton was in Australia in September to speak at the SoFia conference in Toowoomba.

Journey spoke with Mr Boulton as well as Centenary Uniting Church (Brisbane) minister and National Working Group on Worship chair Rev Dr Paul Walton and former moderator Rev Don Whebell to find out who, on earth, is Jesus and does it matter?

The Basis of Union, the foundation document of the Uniting Church, speaks of Jesus of Nazareth, "Who announced the sovereign grace of God whereby the poor in spirit could receive God's love, Jesus himself, in his life and death, made the response of humility, obedience and trust which God had long sought in vain." (Paragraph three)

"There's a lot in this," said Dr Walton.

"Jesus announced good news to the poor and lived a life fully and uniquely open to God.

"But the *Basis* goes further: 'In raising him to live and reign, God confirmed and completed the witness which Jesus bore to God on earth, reasserted claim over the whole of creation, pardoned sinners, and made in Jesus a representative beginning of a new order of righteousness and love.'"

Mr Whebell said the most we can know about God is "what he has shown of himself in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ".

Dr Walton said it was important

to attempt to understand more about Jesus.

"If nothing else, Jesus is the figure that haunts and inhabits our culture, often unseen, like the third figure who walked the road to Emmaus (Luke 24)," he said.

"He has inspired millions to lives of service. And we are convinced he lives.

"But the bible doesn't give us a psychological profile of Jesus. People simply weren't interested in that kind of thing. We don't and can't understand the person he was, except indirectly and provisionally through the affects he had on peoples' lives."

Mr Boulton said by the end of the first century, when the gospels were written, Jesus had already

"If we find a Jesus that suits us, we've found the wrong Jesus."

David Boulton

been "mythologised, theologised, and re-invented by the church".

"The Christ of faith is a theological construction."

Dr Walton agreed, but said there was no shame in that.

"The Jesus the gospels give us is already theologically constructed, so we shouldn't be apologetic about a theological construct."

When searching for a historical Jesus it is possible that we construct what we find to match our own beliefs and values. Dr Walton, Mr Whebell and Mr Boulton all had issues with this concept.

"If we find a Jesus that suits us, we've found the wrong Jesus," said Mr Boulton. "A Jesus who doesn't challenge us is of no earthly use."

Dr Walton said those who try to construct the historical Jesus usually end up with a Jesus who is very like them.

"Of course, we need to connect to Jesus on a personal level," he said.

"I am sure that the grace of God allows us to know Jesus in real, though incomplete and even inaccurate ways, as part of our spiritual growth and journey.

"Mind you, we need to keep questioning our grasp of Jesus - and his grasp of us."

So during the search for Jesus we may find many different answers but Jesus' key messages about justice and caring for each other shine through all interpretations.

"We need to tell the story of Jesus - we know he transforms lives!" said Dr Walton.

"We should lead in justice and peace-making, receive the stranger with hospitality, be open to God's spirit working in and through unexpected people, including those whose basic sexuality may trouble us, challenge the disregard of the environment and the abuse of the weak, including children."

Mr Whebell agreed.

"Jesus summed it up pretty well when asked about which was the greatest commandment: 'Love God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength - and love your neighbour as you love yourself,'" he said.

Mr Boulton said Jesus' key message was, and is, "Let us try what love will do".

"So simple ... so hard!" he said. "But if we dared to live that way we'd begin to transform the world."

"That Jesus was a trouble-maker, a rebel and a subversive, and that if we are to call ourselves followers of Jesus we must find the courage to be trouble-makers, rebels and subversives. Of such is the kingdom of heaven," said Mr Boulton.



Carl Heinrich Bloch (Danish painter, 1834-90), Christ with Thorns, oil on canvas. Courtesy of www.carlbloch.com

POVERTY AND THE SOUL



From P.1

"That means that we are committed to living here long term, to sending our children to the local state school, to being involved in the local community, to building relationships and practising hospitality with the people around us, and committed to trying to be salt and light both individually and as part of God's church," said Mr Cornford.

Here are some challenges Mr Cornford suggested Jesus is bringing to Uniting Church members:

- seek to be a person of good news in how you live your life
- move to an area that has elements of disadvantage
- commit to living there long-term
- commit to sharing your life with the people around you
- watch the Holy Spirit at work.

"Our most important contribution to being good news to the poor is us," said Mr Cornford.

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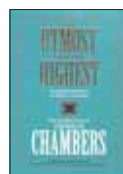
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October 18-21

National Rural Ministry Gathering

A conference for church leaders from rural and remote Synod and Presbytery offices. Contact Peter Harvey on 4741 1865 or flinderspatrol2@bigpond.com

Oct 3. Clayfield Hamilton Garage Sale, Clayfield Uniting Church. Contact Helen Wilson on 3266 5132.

Oct 3, 7pm. Young Adults Trivia Night at Emmanuel Uniting Church, 249 South Pine Rd, Enoggera. \$10. Contact Andrew Taylor at Andrew.Taylor7@gmail.com or on 0438 89 4279.

Oct 8, 7.15pm-9.30pm. Brian McLaren Seminar: Where Faith Meets the World at Chermiside Kedron Uniting Church. \$25. Register online at www.worldvision.com.au/act/attendedevents.

Oct 8-10. Arts and Crafts Christmas Extravaganza at Aspley Uniting Church. Handmade Christmas gifts and decorations. Contact Olwyn Conomos on 3325 0307 or Beth Kemp on bethkemp@optusnet.com.au.

Oct 10, 6am-12pm. Bazaar by the Bay garage sale at Deception Bay Uniting Church, Webster Rd. Contact Monica Hutchinson on 3204 1972 or monh@optusnet.com.au.

Oct 10, 2pm-4pm. A Spring Surprise at Emmanuel Uniting Church, Enoggera. \$12. RSVP by 4 Oct. Contact Bronwyn Kelly on 3351 1153 or ikelly5@bigpond.com.

Oct 15, 10am-2.30pm. Musical morning: An October Affair with Brother James. Hosted by The Gap Uniting Church Day Fellowship and Frontier Services Queensland Support Group. The Gap Uniting Church. \$10. Contact Alma Davie on 3300 3087.

Oct 17, 6am-12pm. Giant Garage Sale at Paradise Point Uniting Church. Contact Peter Alfredson on 5529 3669 or office@ppuca.org.au.

Oct 17, 2pm-8pm. Queensland Synod Lay Preachers' Association Dinner, AGM and In-Service Training. Caboolture Uniting Church. \$12. RSVP 6 Oct. Contact Grahame Tainton on 3279 0185 or qslpa@bigpond.net.au.

Oct 17, 6pm-8pm. Concert by Australian Chamber Musicians at Redland Bay Uniting Church, Gordon Rd. \$15. Tickets from Brenda Brown on 3829 1282 or 0412 565 330.

Oct 17-18. Brookfield Uniting Church 140th Anniversary, Brisbane. Contact George on 0407 178 919.

Oct 18, 2pm. Annual Y Gymanfa Ganu festival (Welsh Hymn Singing). Holy Trinity Anglican Church, Church St Fortitude Valley. Donations appreciated. Contact Kay Mathie 3375 3626.

Oct 17-18, 9.30am-7.30pm. Order of Knights, Rays and Comrades 7th Annual Reunion. Contact Don Hutton on 07 3264 6241 or donhutton@powerup.com.au.

Oct 20, 9.30am-12.30pm. UnitingWorld Support Group. Wesley House, 140 Ann St. Contact Judith Finau, 3711 4622 or ljfinau@dovenetq.net.au.

Oct 22. Prepare training at Chermiside-Kedron Uniting Church. Training to equip you to work effectively with couples. Contact Bob Warrick on 3857 7101 or nolabob@optusnet.com.au.

Oct 24, 8am-3pm. Monster Book and Plant Sale at Caboolture Uniting Church, cnr King St and Smiths Rd. Ph 5496 8128.

Oct 29, 10.30-12.30pm. Bald Hills Ladies Fellowship Annual Musical Luncheon at Bald Hills Memorial Hall, Gympie Rd. \$10. Contact Lesley Fenney on 3261 1997 or lesleyfenney@gmail.com.

Nov 1, 2pm-4pm. Public lecture on Interfaith Dialogue and Reconciliation. Bicentennial Community Centre, Nerang, Gold Coast. Contact Peter Robinson 5577 2142 or pdrob15@optusnet.com.au.

Upload your 'What's On' entries at www.journeyonline.com.au. Items may be shortened due to space limitations.

Granite Belt's blue Sunday

ON SUNDAY 23 August the Granite Belt Uniting Church celebrated Blue Care Sunday in Stanthorpe.

Blue Care staff, committee members, volunteers and clients participated in the service.

Blue Care Service Manager Sandra Bamberry lit a blue candle to represent the special role Blue Care has played in the congregation.

Currently Blue Care in Stanthorpe has 31 paid staff, 70 volunteers, 10 cars, one bus and makes 22 000 calls to



Members of Blue Care staff at morning tea after the service. Photo by Carol Morrison

approximately 400 clients a year.

There have been many changes since Blue Care Stanthorpe commenced in 1965 but one thing that hasn't changed is the wonderful work ethic of all its staff and volunteers and their willingness to go the extra mile.

Granite Belt Uniting Church thanked Blue Care Queensland for the support given to this service and the resources supplied to make this a special time for Blue Care and the Church.

By Carol Morrison

Churches celebrate

BROOKFIELD UNITING Church celebrates its 140th Anniversary this October with a lunch in the Brookfield Uniting Church Hall on 17 October and a celebratory service on Sunday 18 October. All welcome.

For details contact George on 0407 178 919.

Cleveland Uniting Church celebrates its 100th Anniversary with a Centenary Dinner at 6.30pm on Saturday 31 October at which a Centenary Book will be launched.

A celebratory worship service will be held on Sunday 1 November at 9.30am. All welcome.

For details and dinner bookings contact the Church Office on 3286 5627.

Upper Caboolture unearths history

DO YOU have connections with the Upper Caboolture area?

If so the Restoration Committee at the Upper Caboolture Uniting Church would like to hear from you.

As part of celebrating Queensland's 150th anniversary, the committee has been given a grant from the Q150 Community Funding Project to restore the graves in the Upper Caboolture cemetery attached to the church.

Funds will also be used to create a memorial stone to commemorate early residents of the district whose last resting place in the cemetery is unknown, to place names on unmarked graves and to digitise the cemetery records to make them more widely available to the public.

Because the records for the cemetery are incomplete, the committee would like to hear from anyone who believes they may have an ancestor or a relative buried in the cemetery, particularly if they have the



Congregation member Fay McCafferty tends to one of the headstones. Photo by Rhona Collinson

accompanying death certificate.

The unveiling of the memorial and dedication of the restoration will be held at 10am on 7 November.

For more information contact Rhona Collinson on 3482 5120 or rcoll@nlrr.com.au



The Poverty and Justice Bible

Contemporary English Version, Bible Society, 2009, RRP \$30

Reviewed by Andrew Johnson, social justice minister at West End Uniting Church, Brisbane.

LAUNCHED BY the Prime Minister in Parliament House in September *The Poverty and Justice Bible* (Australian Edition) seeks to reverse the approach taken to scripture by Jim Wallis of Sojourners.

Mr Wallis famously cut out all references to poverty and justice as proof of the incompleteness of the bible without those sections.

This new edition of the bible, a joint project between The Bible Society and World

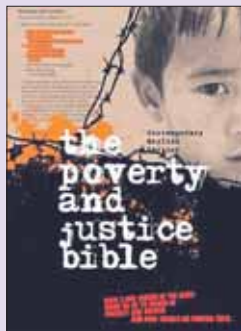
Vision, highlights those passages in bright orange.

With over 2000 verses it makes a powerful point about the centrality of justice to the gospel.

The Australian edition comes with a journal, which provides weekly resources for reading and reflection on the themes of poverty and justice.

However, we should never forget that it is not only those verses highlighted which tell us of the story of God's justice.

The whole scripture tells of



God's abhorrence of poverty and desire for abundant life for all.

Whenever we read scripture in whatever edition we read, we should always be reminded of Luther's passion to let scripture speak for itself.

If we do that we will be constantly reminded of God's call to justice and peace.

Not For Sale: The return of the global slave trade and how we can fight it

By David Batstone, HarperOne, 2007, RRP \$24.95

Reviewed by Marian Zaunbrecher, Associate General Secretary of the Queensland Synod.

NOT FOR Sale met my desire for more information on the issue of people trafficking but also challenged me to further pursue the area using the extensive website resources listed at the back of the book.

According to *Not For Sale*, 27 million individuals in our world today live as slaves.

Human trafficking generates US \$31 billion annually.

The commerce in humans today rivals drug trafficking and the illegal arms trade for the top criminal activity on the planet.

Half of these slaves are under the age of 18 and 80% are females.

More slaves are in bondage

today than were traded in four centuries of the transatlantic slave trade.

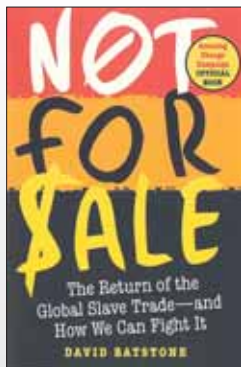
And most of the chocolate we eat is produced by child slaves.

This book could produce a feeling of impotence as the writer researches slavery throughout the world.

However what is so positive about this book is that it also looks at the stories of modern day abolitionists, many of them motivated by their faith.

Their stories inspire and move, often in the face of large scale corruption.

This book encourages the reader to become involved in action and shows how this can be done. As one abolitionist said,



"We badly need a movement of the Spirit in the global church." (p 65)

The author of Ecclesiastes expresses the desperation of the powerless today, "Look, the tears of the oppressed - with no one to comfort them! On the side of their oppressors there was power." (Eccles. 4:1)

I pray that Christians will act.

Another Way to Love

Edited by Tim Costello and Rod Yule, Acorn Press, 2009, RRP \$25.00 (including postage)

Reviewed by Dr Brian Edgar, Professor of Theological Studies, Asbury Theological Seminary, New York

ANOTHER WAY to Love is a production of World Vision which not only sets out reasons for Christians to be involved in advocacy, aid and development but also delineates some of the specifically Christian attitudes and actions that influence the form and structure of a Christian response.

Overall, it is an argument that there is a particular way of loving which emerges out of having a relationship with Jesus Christ.

Those who read books like this hardly need persuading that injustice and poverty are global realities and this book does not spend much time persuading people of this.

It focuses on developing an explicitly Christian framework for advocacy, aid and development and exploring certain aspects of social reform relating to fair trade, climate change, child slavery, the Micah Challenge, debt relief and public services.

The various contributors make it clear that a Christian perspective makes a difference.

The second half of the book has useful and encouraging examples of the way that



focused advocacy really works. Examples include the effect of a fair trade program on coffee growers in Ethiopia, child slavery in the production of chocolate, and advocacy concerning Make Poverty History.

The theology is very accessible and the contributors all speak from experience. The book is extremely positive and demonstrates that 'faith active in love' (Galatians 5:6) produces *Another Way to Love* which can really make a difference. It is a book about success and change and the way that focused advocacy can help the world's poor.

Another Way to Love is available from the World Vision website www.worldvision.com.au

Only a Woman: Waine Tuga

By Patricia Riddel, Self Published, RRP \$28.00 (including postage)

Reviewed by Bruce Mullan, Associate Director Church Solidarity (Pacific) with UnitingWorld.

ONLY A Woman is based on letters the author sent home to her mother and a friend in the 1950s and 60s while she was teaching in the Papuan Islands Region of Papua New Guinea.

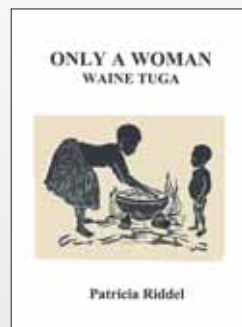
When Patricia Riddel stumbled across her letters again almost 40 years later, she was determined to write her book - and what a great read it is.

From this isolated part of the mission field comes a story of an extraordinary woman having the adventure of a lifetime as she serves and educates a generation of young Papuans.

Only a Woman introduces us to many people who worked in or visited the area and is peppered with light-hearted detail.

Ms Riddel doesn't shy away from her homesickness or frustrations but brings to the reader a positive experience of Christian service above and beyond the call of duty.

This is not a polished autobiography but a collection of memories that provide a



mental picture of a place most of us have never been to. It will be an important record of the church's mission engagement in this part of the Pacific.

Ms Riddel's humour and faith shine through the book and mirror how she served in PNG.

Any profits from the sale of *Only a Woman* will buy library books for children in the Papuan Islands.

Only a Woman is available from the author on 07 5496 7418

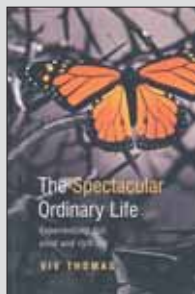
More reviews online at www.journeyonline.com.au including:

Spirit and Song 2: More Resources for Prayer and Worship Assembly/Guitar Edition
OCP Publications, 2005
RRP \$19.95



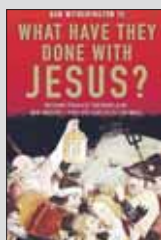
The Spectacular Ordinary Life

By Viv Thomas, Authentic Lifestyle, 2008, RRP \$24.95



What Have They Done With Jesus? Beyond Strange Theories and Bad History

By Ben Witherington III, Monarch Books, RRP \$24.95



Reviews available from ...

Many of the titles reviewed in *Journey* are available from C.M.S Bookstore, St Paul's Bookstore, or Christian Supplies in Brisbane city. Books can usually be ordered from Vision Books at Broadwater Road Uniting Church, Mansfield, or may be available from www.mosaicresources.com.au



Megan from Crows Nest gets her face painted. Photo courtesy of Kirsty Lewis and Girls' Brigade Queensland

Girls' Brigade Queensland turns 60

OVER THE 2009 June long weekend, girls, boys, leaders and parents came together to celebrate 60 years of Girls' Brigade. From small beginnings at 1st Brisbane Girls' Life Brigade Company at Rosalie Baptist, Girls' Brigade continues today with 44 Companies throughout Queensland. Celebrations were marked with the Aussie Arvo Adventure at Grace

Lutheran College, Rothwell where activities such as rock climbing, giant board games, obstacle races and a volleyball competition were enjoyed. The evening featured a trivia competition with various groups competing against a 'brains trust' group. On Sunday morning a service of praise and worship was

held in the chapel at Grace Lutheran College. Worship was led by Judy Scott and a team of singers and band members from the 2nd Brisbane Division. The guest speaker was Peter Kane from Discovery Baptist. The National Commissioner, Mrs Coral Anderson was a guest of Girls' Brigade Queensland for the weekend.

Sunday 4 October: Cloncurry Uniting Church

THE CLONCURRY Uniting Church is a small ecumenical congregation serving the outback town of Cloncurry and supporting the McKay Aerial Patrol. The diverse members of the Church are intimately involved in the cattle, mining and transport industries that flourish in and around the northwest region. 2009 has brought both hardship and joy to the Church community. The floods earlier in the year have given over to months of endless blue skies with a bitterly cold winter and a complete lack of any winter rain. The once green outback has returned to red and white as cattle stations which transported cattle back from agistment now need to consider de-stocking again.

This uncertainty affects the mood of the whole community and the appearance of even the smallest cloud brings hopeful whispers in the streets. Please pray for rain. We long for a consistent, sustained wet season that will fill the rivers and dams and bring hope for the cattle industry into the next few years. We also ask for thanksgiving that with just a few committed people, a community can come alive, particularly when a Church community is bold in their proclamation and humble in their service. Finally, please pray for our minister Rev Garry Hardingham as he continues to strive to serve a huge area of Queensland while continually seeking ways to finance the operating costs of the McKay Patrol.

Sunday 18 October: Kingaroy Uniting Church

KINGAROY IS set in the South Burnett region and is a service centre for the surrounding districts. The Kingaroy Uniting Church congregations include the town of Kumbia and the district of Corndale with ministry provided to Wondai and Proston. Over the past years the farming community has suffered from the drought and we thank God for the good season earlier in the year, although much more rain is needed to fill dams and make the rivers flow. Recently the Church was involved with the South Burnett Day Camp which caters for children from the whole region and is supported by leaders from the other Uniting Church congregations. Our theme this year was *Journeying*

- our journeying with Jesus. We give thanks to God for the children and the leaders and the wonderful time they had. Please pray for those whose journey with Jesus has just begun and those who received a help in their journey. One of the ways we reach out to the community is by conducting marriage courses. This course is designed for married couples and enriches the marriage experience; recently we also had a couple who used it in preparation for their marriage. We ask you to pray for those who will lead the next course and for the participants that their marriages will be enriched. We ask for your prayers for our leadership, our members and the community that God's work will continue to grow and flourish.

Do you remember Greenwood?

THE GREENWOOD Memorial Conference Centre is being redeveloped into recreational parkland as part of Kumbartcho Sanctuary by the Moreton Bay Regional Council. In recognition of the part played by the Uniting Church in the development of the conference centre there will be an

afternoon tea and a presentation of photos from the early days on 22 November from 3pm. If you have photos to donate or display contact Shirley Martin on shirleymartin@optushome.com.au or 0412 604 973 or Michael Pope on mpope@chariot.com.au or 0488 763 328.

Church funds not so super

By John Harrison

CHURCH-RUN superannuation funds have not performed well over the past five years, according to figures released in August by government regulator the Australian Prudential Regulation Authority (APRA). The Uniting Church Beneficiary Fund, the superannuation fund for ministers, had a growth of -12% in 2008 and a net annual return of 5.4% over the five years to 31 December 2008. The real return is lower when adjusted for inflation. Inflation averaged 3.08% per annum (pa) and the inflation adjusted return for the period is 2.81% on an asset portfolio valued in 2008 at \$313 million. The APRA figures were

for the top 200 super funds in Australia. The best performing fund was the Goldman Sachs JB Were Fund with a return of 14% pa over the past five years, followed by the motor trades fund with 12.8% pa. The Uniting Church Superannuation Fund which has just over 12 000 members, mainly lay staff, managed an annual 8.5% pa rate of return over the past five years. The Fund had growth of -8.5% in 2008, and a net return after inflation of 5.8% pa over the past five years. The fund has an asset portfolio valued at \$282 million at 30 June, 2008. Precise comparisons of performance between the two Uniting Church funds are complicated by the fact that one runs to the financial year; the other the calendar year. All four Catholic funds in the

top 200 averaged better returns than the two Uniting Church funds. Returns ranged from 9.5% pa to 11% pa for the five years ending 30 June 2008. The Lutheran Church fund fared worst of all churches reported, with a nil rate of return for the three years 2006 to 2008, and a 4.8% pa return over the past five years, dropping a whopping 16.6% in 2008 on an asset portfolio of just under \$255 million. Funds run by the Anglican, Baptist, Salvation Army and Pentecostal churches were not reported in APRA's top 200 funds, but an industry source said that it was expected that returns from the Pentecostal Church funds would be "out of this world". Source: Australian Prudential Regulation Authority www.apra.gov.au

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Preamble matters

I WISH to raise my concerns again, as I did in July *Journey*, regarding the preamble that has now been adopted by Assembly.

Is it appropriate / legitimate to use the language of "First Peoples" and "Second Peoples" in the Body of Christ? Are we creating a class or caste system within the Church? Rev Lulu Senituli raised this important issue at Assembly.

Is it accurate / true to say that the "same love was in the Creator God which was finally and fully revealed in Christ"?

Are we introducing a new understanding of revelation as Rev Doug Jones appropriately asked at the Assembly meeting, to which Congress unjustly responded by saying that they now felt unsafe and left the building?

There is no attempt to link the preamble with what the Basis of Union says about the saving grace of God in Christ.

Prof James Haire moved an amended motion to try and create this vital link which was initially supported by the majority of Assembly except for about three members.

How this motion was then taken off the agenda without debate is a mystery?

The irresponsible and unrealistic process and expectation put upon Synods and Presbyteries by the Assembly Standing Committee to canvas their mind on this vital issue has contributed, I believe, to a pseudo-consensus decision at Assembly, where "the issues have not been fully aired and where some members do not feel they have been heard – or even that they are free to express doubts or alternative ideas" (Manual for meetings 4.1).

Rev Dr Hedley Fihaki Cairns



Fiji Methodists the problem

WHY IS IT that the only articles I see published in *Journey* about the recent cancellation of the Methodist Church Conference in Fiji contain lines like: "The military government seems determined to cripple the Methodist Church of Fiji and Rotuma," but make no mention of the fact that the Methodist Church in Fiji has been part of the problem in Fiji since the 1987 coup?

If the coup culture of Fiji is to be stopped, the Methodist Church must acknowledge its guilt too and honestly participate in the solution.

This Church has been

the voice of the powerful establishment in Fiji, much like the Anglican Church was in the United Kingdom.

Many ordinary village members of the Methodist Church are relieved that the fundraising rort of the choir competition that occurs during the Conference did not take place this year.

Why are funds from the Uniting Church of Australia unquestioningly supporting the "chiefs" (vanua and church) and not the ordinary members?

Why did the Assembly of the Uniting Church of [sic] Australia listen only to the voices of the powerful?

Jesus calls us to listen to the voices of the poor and disempowered too!

Lesley Bryant Elanora



The way ...

JESUS SAID he was the way, the truth and the life.

Some would say he wouldn't use three definite articles now in this post-modern age which insists on continuing doubt and indefiniteness.

The text in John's Gospel quotes Jesus as placing "I am" at the beginning of his claim.

This is unacceptable, otherwise he would be making himself equal with God!

The fact is, that in any age when people unequivocally believe the definite-article statement and bow to him as "my Lord and my God", there is progress.

Bruce Gulley Moggill



Steer clear of secular writing

I HAVE just finished reading September issue of *Journey*.

How encouraging it was to read the excellent articles, particularly the opinion piece by Rev Bruce Johnson *Wellbeing in Abundance: Lessons from John*.

It is obvious to me that in reading *Journey* I am receiving a diversity of opinion on different matters but all have in common their reference to our Lord's words written in the word of God and for that I am very thankful.

Diversity in the body of Christ is to be expected and applauded whilst ever there is this constant referencing to the founder of the faith.

It's when Christians fail to give due honour and glory to Jesus when they speak or write on issues of concern to our heavenly father; that is where they lose me.

I cannot see the value of a secular writing being included in a Christian paper as was the case in the article, *Flight 22 ... a plane crash survivor's story*.

I am very pleased the woman in question did not lose her life but the god she prays to is not the God of the Bible with whom I speak and know.

I really object to the blurring of the lines between Islam and Christianity as though both communities are involved with the same god.

This is not to say that God,

taking the initiative if he so wills, does not speak to all humans; the difference is in what we choose to do with that encounter that is important.

Secular writing is not appreciated by me in my denomination's magazine.

There are any number of secular papers, journals, and internet sites in which secular writing can occur. There is much less space available for the expression of Christian thought and opinion. What is available needs to be used judiciously.

Fay Williams Burton
Via email



Fiji a delicate situation

UNITINGWORLD IS grateful that Ms Bryant forwarded a copy of her letter to *Journey* giving us the opportunity to respond.

The Methodist Church in Fiji and Rotuma has at times

adopted approaches its moderate leaders and the Uniting Church strongly opposed.

At its last Annual Conference the Methodists elected what they see as a new generation of leaders.

We believe those leaders are doing their best to find a way forward in a complex situation.

They acknowledge errors and are looking to move beyond them.

UnitingWorld is working with

those leaders to build a relief and development program that serves the diverse peoples of Fiji, especially the estimated 50 per cent in poverty.

UnitingWorld believes now is the time to work with the Methodist Church to achieve the kind of vision Ms Bryant upholds.

Rev Dr Kerry Enright
National Director,
UnitingWorld



Jesus in my heart: not the creeds

I AM SO grateful I was accepted as a little boy at Sunday School ... and came to love Jesus, his teachings and all the good people of the Church.

To me Jesus saved me from a probable bad life and later when cancer came to visit I was able to say truthfully to family and friends,

"Don't be worried".

But I also realised early on that snakes don't talk, no woman was made from a rib and a chariot pulled by horses doesn't fly to heaven.

So it hurts me when my fundamentalist friends use the dogma of the Creed as a weapon because I cannot honestly stand

up and say I believe Mary was a virgin, or that Jesus literally came back to life.

But I have a wonderful image of Mary and I believe Jesus died even for the likes of me.

Ted Stainsby Bundaberg



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Position Vacant

Office Secretary - Applications invited permanent part-time position at Broadwater Road Uniting Church. Hours: Tuesday-Friday, 9am-2pm. Send applications to Mrs Anne McKay, Secretary, Church Council, c/- 481 Broadwater Road, Wishart 4122 by Friday 9 October 2009. Ph Office on 3849 8548 for more information.

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What does the passage "Blessed are you who are poor, for yours in the kingdom of God" (Luke 6:20) mean to you?

Rev Ainslie Scott

THOSE WHO work in our community service agencies have specific factual information on poverty in our society.

All I can do is to offer some personal reflections about some people in our community who are struggling – these being people who live with severe and ongoing mental illness.

As I see it, we are all on some form of mental health / wellness continuum.

For some, life goes on pretty well as normal once the chemical imbalance in the brain, which often triggers a mental illness episode, is brought back into balance.

For others, life changes dramatically.

Those living with severe mental illness are often caught in a cyclical situation – brief periods of wellness, followed by returns to hospital, work disrupted, family relationships strained to breaking point; financially things begin to tilt downwards.

Those I work with grieve so many things – loss of family connection, loss of job, inability to make house repayments, dependence on pensions and support services. For many, self-esteem and sense of self-worth plummets, and life takes on a nightmarish aspect as the attainment of once cherished dreams and ambitions seem to evaporate.

The once hopeful become discouraged, the confident, vulnerable and the once sure, uncertain.

As I write I'm reading an article by Sean Gilbert based on the Gospel of Mark 9:36, 37, Jesus' welcome of the children.

Jesus, Mr Gilbert said, is counteracting society's competitive ruthlessness and survival strategies by suggesting relationships be replaced by another form of interaction: that of raw and tender vulnerability, even unto suffering and death.

Children in Jesus' day were pushed to

the margins of society.

Jesus is advocating a radical and just ordering of society.

Jesus' goals for community are those of compassion and inclusion.

The poor are with us because we push the vulnerable and those with particular needs to the edge.

If worth was no longer determined by wealth but by the sharing of lived experiences, and if we intentionally acted as a voice for the voiceless and demonstrated courageous advocacy for those who, for a time, are unable to speak, then the poor in the community might be our teachers, helping us to see and know ourselves more honestly.

We might grow to be that society Jesus spoke of – one characterised by justice, kindness and where we walk humbly with God and with one another.



Rev Ainslie Scott is a part-time minister at Cooroy and Pomona Uniting Church and is exploring Mental Health Ministry for the Mary Burnett Presbytery. In 2005 she worked in the Diocese of Madras Church of South India



Robert Brier

"BLESSED ARE you who are poor for yours is the kingdom of God." (Luke 60:20).

Read in conjunction with verse 24 we see that Jesus is referring literally to those who are poor in this world.

In Matthew 25:40 Jesus said: "Just as you did it to one of the least who are members of my family, you did it to me."

His identification with the poor demonstrates that they do have the kingdom. This calls for celebration. Those who had nothing but pain and suffering now have hope.

But shamefully we who are rich are often jealous. Like the older brother of the prodigal son (Luke 15) we complain.

We rob the poor of joy that is rightly theirs by spiritualising the verse.

We forget the gifts and promises the Lord has given to us. God is gracious to those who take up their cross and also to those who have no choice but to carry it.

This truth also calls us to use our ungodly mammon to serve the poor. In this way we find that we make friends who welcome us into the kingdom (Luke 16:9). My own experience testifies to this.

From those who are poor in the world's eyes I have learnt about prayer, honesty and friendship. I have felt genuine welcome and acceptance and seen contentment and joy in the small pleasures of life. The care they show for each other challenges the individualism of our society.

The kingdom belongs to the poor, but God has not abandoned the rich.

He calls everyone to seek the kingdom, sometimes radically.

We need to be faithful to respond to it, to see that God is with the poor, and go share our lives with them.

Robert Brier is a member of a community house in West End, Brisbane, associated with the Waiters Union

Hedley Fihaki

A REPORT released by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (9 July, 2009) pointed out that nearly 27 000 people are homeless in Queensland and that Queensland has the second highest rate of homelessness (behind the Northern Territory) in Australia.

The report also said that Cairns had the second highest rate of homelessness in Queensland, after Brisbane.

The Queensland Synod's Housing and Homeless Forum says, "Each night in Australia approximately 100 000 people are homeless. About half of these people are under 25 years old and 10 000 are

children under 12. Indigenous people are over-represented with three times the rate of homelessness of other Australians."

As part of our response to the calling of God regarding this situation, the congregation at Cairns Emmanuel Uniting Church established the Good Samaritan Ministry Centre three years ago to provide crisis and transitional accommodation. This centre is located within the old BlueCare nursing home in Cairns.

We are currently using 32 rooms for this purpose and would ideally like to use another 60 rooms to increase and expand this vital ministry, particularly in the

light of the alarming statistics mentioned above.

If we are to be truly an interconciliatory church, I believe the Queensland Synod and the Uniting Church as a whole need to take more seriously what God might be saying through local congregations by allowing local congregations the opportunity to fully participate in the decision-making processes regarding how we are to use our property to foster the mission of Christ's church for the sake of the world.

Rev Dr Hedley Fihaki is minister with Cairns Emmanuel Uniting Church



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