

CHURCH RESPONDS TO HAITI PAGE 3

"Our prayers are with the people of Haiti following the earthquake that has added huge suffering to a country already burdened by extreme poverty and political corruption." **Rev Alistair Macrae**

CRICKET AND RELIGION PAGE 11

"How many Christians have taken their bat and ball and gone somewhere else?" **Phil Smith**



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GIVING THE GIFT OF LOVE

*O perfect Love, all human thought transcending,
lowly we kneel in prayer before thy throne,
that theirs may be the love which knows no ending,
whom thou forevermore dost join in one.*

O perfect Love words by Dorothy Frances Blomfield Gurney, 1883

By Mardi Lumsden

FEBRUARY IS often known as the month of love.

Even from the origins of St Valentine's Day (see page 9) the month has been associated with romance and love.

As we prepare for Easter we are reminded that love first comes from God.

Blue Care Director of Mission Rev Colleen Geyer said God's love for the world is reflected in how we treat others.

"Every act of kindness, every gentle caring way, every bold act of justice, every honouring of our humanness is created in the image of God," she said.

"This shows us that God is present in our world and that we hold within our being the responsibility to be God's love for others."

Rev Dr Apichart Branjerdporn, Minister at Logan Central Multicultural Uniting Church, agreed.

"God's love is evidenced in our goodwill for all people," he said.

"Within our community there is a sense of awareness of the Almighty.

"Within our Church, I believe there is a greater awareness of each other no matter what culture or colour we come from or what creed we believe."

Ms Geyer said reflecting God's love is best done humbly.

"Without acknowledgement, and with as much honesty as we can find, our quiet, faithful ways reflect a God that is with us in all that we experience, or that others we encounter experience," she said.

"Bad things will happen, questions will remain unanswered, injustice will require constant attention – but in all of this, God is with us."

Dr Branjerdporn said the openness shown to refugees was a wonderful example of how the Church in Queensland demonstrates God's love.

"I have had the opportunity to welcome a number of refugees from Burma, Sudan, Afghanistan and China.

"The Church has welcomed them as brothers and sisters in Christ with respect and dignity and we have seen them love us back.

"This I believe is the Christian's spirit of love."

Paragraph 15 of the *Basis of Union* tells us that congregations are, "to hear God's Word, to celebrate the sacraments, to build one another up in love, to share in the wider responsibilities of the Church, and to serve the world".

To reflect God's love in the world it is first necessary to reflect God's love in our homes and churches.



Love is a many-splendoured thing

FOR MANY people, love is a crazy mixture of emotions: joy, pain, guilt and deep satisfaction.

However it is often reduced to a shallow sentimentality that does little for anyone.

This issue of *Journey* invites us to consider love in many ways.

Of course Christians believe that one of the greatest descriptions of love is in Paul's Letter to the Corinthians.

"Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things." (1 Cor 13:4-7)

Jesus offered two clear commands about love to his followers: "Love one another as I have loved you" and "Love your enemies".

Since it is not possible to command another's emotions, it is clear that like Paul, Jesus was also speaking about attitudes and actions.

The problem is that there are

no Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to help us measure the level of our commitment to love.

How can I be sure that I am acting with love rather than self-interest or worse still, manipulation?

Let me give you a couple of examples.

My wife and I have very different attitudes to expressions

Love is deeper than emotion; it is a decision to act in ways that bring the best for another person.

of love. I find it easy to tell Heather that I love her and to do so regularly.

Heather however considers such repeated assurances of love as unnecessary.

Her response is, "I told you when I married you that I loved you. Don't you believe me?"

Do my repeated verbal affirmations mean I love more than my wife?

Of course not, just saying I love

doesn't prove that I do.

Once I said to Heather, "If you love me, you'll clear all that stuff out of the car".

Her response was, "You're wrong because I do and I won't".

It took me somewhat longer to realise that what she said was very true.

She did love me, but that didn't mean that she would necessarily do what I wanted her to do.

So we can't measure a person's love on the basis of their willingness to comply with our wishes.

My statement was an attempt to manipulate, but Heather would not let me do that.

Having discussed the concept with several other people I do not believe that we can create KPIs for evaluating love.

Love comes from a deep personal commitment and can only be measured by those who receive or experience our attitudes and actions.

One thing Heather and I have agreed together is that we would believe the other loved us no

Message from the Moderator

Rev Bruce Johnson



matter what we said or did.

If we hurt one another, this does not alter the conviction that we are loved. We may have an issue to deal with, but that does not diminish our commitment to love each other.

Love is deeper than emotion; it is a decision to act in ways that bring the best for another person.

Even if we fail to act lovingly at times, our love may still be real and strong.

If we choose to love in all situations we will have to make some tough decisions.

We have to choose to love when we feel hurt or betrayed.

We have to learn to love

when we get no thanks or loving response in return.

We have to learn to love those with whom we passionately disagree.

As followers of Christ we must learn to love deeply, unconditionally, faithfully and honestly.

We can't do it alone, but are offered the gift and power of the Holy Spirit to make it possible.

God is love and those who live in love live in God, says the first letter of John.

As we experience the forgiving unconditional love of God within our own lives, we will find the power and confidence to love.

Sign of the times



PAUL CLARK of Burdekin Uniting Church sent us this sign on behalf of Bruce Cornish and the North Queensland Presbytery.

This is apparently one of many such signs which will be erected along highways in North Queensland.

Mr Clark said that as people drive the long stretches of highway between towns the signs will announce a vibrant North Queensland Uniting Church.

"The workers who put this one up said it was their first sign from God!" he said.



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.

Translating the universal language

LOVE IS the theme of so many songs, films, operas and plays.

Everyone from Shakespeare to Britney Spears has been inspired by the consequences of love.

But for all the joy love can bring it can also be the cause of great pain, even heartbreak.

Since its release in 1992, American author and counsellor Dr Gary Chapman's book *The Five Love Languages* has sold over five million copies.

After many other versions, including men's and women's editions and one called *God Speaks Your Love Language*, Dr Chapman's simple theory continues to fascinate me.

His premise is that there are five languages of love in which people give and receive love best: words of affirmation, quality time, receiving gifts, acts of service, and physical touch.

Dr Chapman says that each

person has a "primary way of expressing and interpreting love".

Some people love giving.

They are the people who take time and think about what to get someone. They probably even have a 'gifts' drawer in their house!

I never understood why people wanted to give me things I didn't need.

Clearly my language of love is not "receiving gifts".

But it is the language of two members of my family. So despite not really speaking that language I must remember to post their birthday gifts on time and even to

get them gifts for no reason at all. Simple really.

It is amazing how understanding another language can open your eyes.

Give it a try. What love language do you speak?

What language do your children or parents speak?

I can't think of a better Valentine's Day gift than that of understanding ... after all, "receiving gifts" is not my love language.

Find out more at www.5lovelanguages.com

The *Journey* office is particularly full of love this month. Our designer Osker Lau will be married on 13 February.

Congratulations Osker and Naoko!

Mardi Lumsden
Editor



Finding God in disaster

By Mardi Lumsden

WHILE AFTERSHOCKS continue to jolt the people of Haiti into the terrible reality of an ever-increasing death toll after the massive earthquake on 12 January, Christians around the world have been called into prayer for the nation.

Uniting Church in Australia President Rev Alistair Macrae has offered prayers and support for the Haitian community.

"Our prayers are with the people of Haiti following the earthquake that has added huge suffering to a country already burdened by extreme poverty and political corruption," he said.

The national Assembly and UnitingWorld have asked people to donate to appeals through Act for Peace, the overseas aid arm of the National Council of Churches, or the Anglican Board of Mission. The Uniting Church is not running a separate appeal.

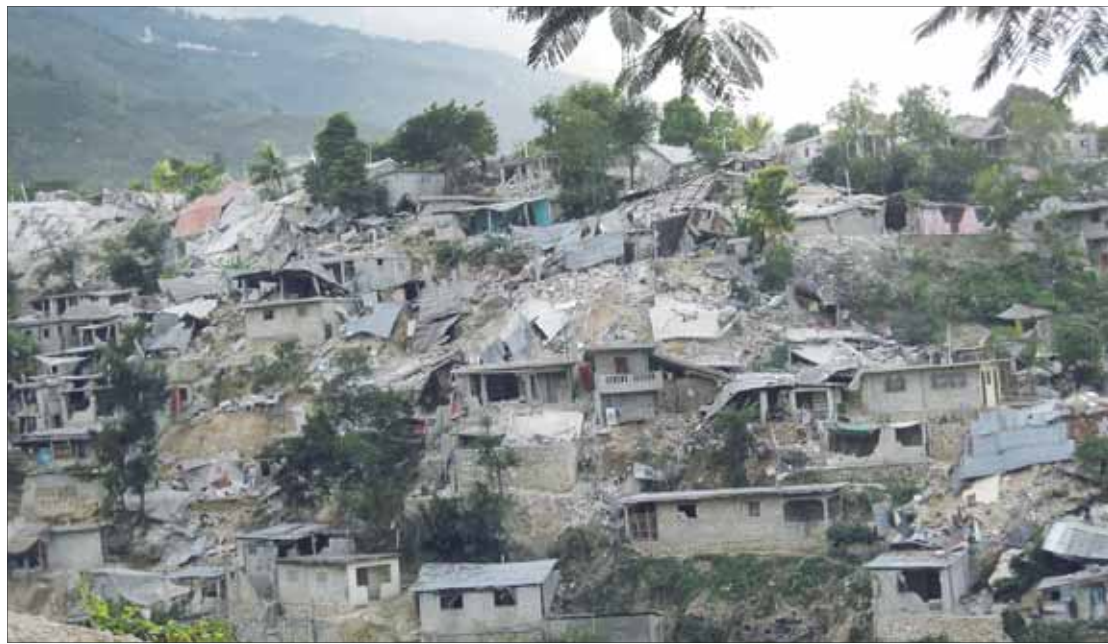
"Please consider responding to this tragic event not only with your prayers but with much needed financial assistance to send a signal of solidarity with those who suffer," said Mr Macrae.

The Queensland Synod has personal links to the disaster.

Christian aid workers Joel and Rachel Colbourne Hoffman, the Australian-American couple who survived the Haitian earthquake by digging their way out of the rubble, attended Merthyr Road Uniting Church in New Farm, Brisbane, prior to leaving to work in Haiti.

Journey has been in contact with the couple and they were safe in the United States, but hoping to return to Haiti to help with cleanup efforts.

Mr Macrae said even Jesus' life



A scene of devastation in Port au Prince, Haiti. Photo courtesy of DCA/ACT

was not sheltered from suffering, humiliation or death.

"Nowhere did he promise us a life sheltered from such contingencies," said Mr Macrae.

"However he did promise to be with us in every circumstance, even in death."

Mr Macrae refuted claims by some televangelists that the earthquake was the result of witchcraft in the nation of Haiti.

"To those who seek to make judgements about direct connections between human sin and suffering, scripture would counsel extreme caution lest God be represented as vindictive, arbitrary and punitive.

"So often attempts to draw explicit links between cause and effect compound the suffering of

victims of disaster and paint a picture of God we are more likely to hate than love."

A similar response was made by previous Uniting Church President Rev Gregor Henderson after Victoria's 2009 bushfires.

"God is, in fact, there with the people, in the middle of their suffering; God is made known through the love that is extended to those most in need," he said.

UnitingWorld's Geoff Dornan said it is in times of great suffering that God's love is best expressed by action.

"It is in the suffering of others and in the various responses we make to restore those who have suffered that we find God's love," he said.

"Power becomes most power-

ful when it is surrendered or let go of in the interests of others, especially those others who are victims.

"This is what is currently happening in the relief efforts in Haiti.

"To be part of that from this distance means to get in on the act by helping resource agencies directly involved: Uniting World is channelling donations through Act for Peace and the Anglican Board of Mission."

Mr Dornan also refuted claims that the quake was a form of celestial punishment.

"These totally speculative sorts of responses are really wrong-headed and dangerous on two grounds: firstly, human compassion and secondly,

misunderstanding of the best of the biblical tradition," he said.

"It is clear that within the biblical tradition there are significant voices raised against this moralising of tragedy.

"Religion can either reinforce this sort of violence against outsiders by lending it a sacred weight or challenging it by uncovering its perversity."

Mr Dornan said the best way to refute such messages was to live compassionately.

"We can tie ourselves in knots with theological argument alone. What we do renders our theology credible."

To donate to appeals for Haiti visit www.abmission.org or www.actforpeace.org

Getting ready for Lent Event

By Nicole Readon

FOR MANY people, the start of a new year provides time to reflect on life, get priorities in order, and begin life's journey afresh.

The annual Assembly-run Lent Event will kick-start 2010 in the right direction starting 17 February.

With 199 Uniting Church congregations from Queensland

signed up to take action against poverty it looks like being another strong year for Lent Event in Queensland.

During Lent, participants are asked to reduce their consumption by eliminating non-essentials (such as coffee, snacks, fast food or newspapers) and donate the money saved to aid life-giving projects, thereby challenging themselves spiritually rather than

straining themselves financially.

Individuals and faith communities are encouraged to support six of UnitingWorld's vital projects through prayer, reflection, worship, Bible study and sacrifice.

To date, Lent Event has raised \$1.3 million which has provided vital clean water, education, employment, healthcare and childcare in East Timor, Papua

New Guinea, South India, Solomon Islands, Sudan and Zambia. These provisions mean life is no longer the same for people such as Maureen from the Solomon Islands.

Maureen is the Nurse in charge of the Rural Health Centre in the remote village of Buni in the Western Province of the Solomon Islands and is responsible for the care of over 20,000 people.

Her training and appointment to this region would not have been possible without the funds

provided by UnitingWorld.

By training and providing employment and supplies for Maureen, UnitingWorld has changed the lives of thousands in the Solomon Islands.

Lent Event is ready to provide resources including Bible studies, youth studies, children's materials and worship resources as well as a promotional pack.

For more information contact the Lent Event office on 1300 536 838 or visit www.lentevent.com



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Craig Collard enjoys last year's Easter Family Venture Camp.
Photo by Clive Finter

Calling all Easter campers

Townsville Easter Call

OVER EASTER this year the Uniting Churches in Townsville are inviting the congregations all over North Queensland to a special event called Easter Call.

Mt Lousia House of Praise, Townsville, will play host to the event which will accommodate sessions and activities for adults, youth and children.

Speakers are former moderator Rev David Pitman and minister Rev Rodney Minniecon.

Mt Lousia House of Praise minister and Australian of the

Year local hero State finalist, Rev Anne Harley, said the theme, *The Call*, asks people to be challenged to know God, and to be called into ministry and / or mission.

"We believe it will be a huge event to stir up the spirit of God and bring significant change to his church," she said.

Visit www.eastercall.net

years. This year the camp will be held at the Rocky Creek Scout Camp at Landsborough, near the Sunshine Coast.

Camp secretary Clive Finter said the camp caters for all ages, energy levels and camping styles.

"You can be as energetic as you feel comfortable with. There is some structure to the weekend but everyone is free to participate in whatever suits them."

Contact Clive Finter on 3287 2659 or cfinter1@bigpond.com or visit www.qleastercamp.ucaweb.com.au

Family Venture Camp

THE EASTER Family Venture Camp has been an activity of the Queensland Synod for over 40

Volunteers link to outback rescue

By Felicita Benedikovics

THESE DAYS, being a hero can be as simple as offering your time, skills and talents as a volunteer, sometimes at short notice.

Frontier Services' volunteer program Outback Links responds to requests for help and assistance from communities and people living on remote properties and stations. It links them up with people from Australia's towns and cities who have useful skills and caring hearts.

Outback Links coordinator Davida Melksham said they respond to all types of calls for help.

"It could be to help clean up in the wake of a flood or fire or when a family member is called away from their property unexpectedly.

"We are looking for volunteers who are ready, willing and able to travel, sometimes long distances, to help out."

South Australian Outback Links volunteer and retired diesel mechanic David Elson was

travelling through Queensland when he responded to a request from a family living on a station near Quilpie for a caretaker.

The wife and children had to leave the property upon news of her grandmother's ill-health.

It was during mustering, the rounding up of livestock, which meant her husband was also away from the station house, garden and equipment.

For security reasons, the 300,000 hectare property simply couldn't be left unattended.

Mr Elson was only too happy to provide his services to the family.

"I like the isolation of the bush," said Mr Elson.

"I enjoy relying on my wits and the responsibility that comes with caretaking. It was also nice to be of assistance when it was needed."

Ms Melksham said there are many ways to get involved.

"Outback Links is not just an emergency service. It also responds to persistent needs that build up over time – a mother on a remote station coping with a

disabled child, a family needing help to rewire a home and sheds.

"Volunteers often like to combine an outback holiday with their volunteer placements."

For more information phone 1300 731 349, email outbacklinks@bigpond.com or visit www.frontierservices.org/outbacklinks



Outback Links volunteer David Elson.
Photo courtesy of David Elson and Frontier Services

National survey explores church life

AUSTRALIAN CHURCHES are encouraged to take part in the 2011 National Church Life Survey (NCLS), a nationwide survey of churchgoers.

The NCLS Research team is an ecumenical body that aims to provide evidence-based results to help churches connect with the wider community.

The survey will take place across Australian churches in the second half of 2011.

Uniting Church Board of Mission (Synod of NSW/ACT) Director Tina Rendell said the NCLS gives a realistic overview of Australian churches.

"The information assists churches identify strengths to grow and challenges to be faced," she said.

"NCLS is beneficial to both local and denominational leaders as churches shape their mission and ministry into the future."

NCLS Research National Director

Dr Ruth Powell hopes to build on previous strengths of the Survey as well as introduce some innovations.

"We hope that 500,000 church attendees in 7000 local churches from 25 denominations will participate in the survey," she said.

Since 1991, NCLS has provided Australian churches with information about their own vitality and mission that is unmatched worldwide.



Uniting Church in Australia
Queensland Synod

Communication Services Unit

Community Liaison Officer (2 days per week, 12 month contract)

A part-time position is available working in the small team responsible for implementing the Queensland Synod's communications strategy including production of the news magazine *Journey*, internal communications, electronic and web communications, liaising with media, and public relations.

The Community Liaison Officer would be in charge of organising and seeking advertisers for *Journey*, as well as associated administration and assistance with marketing campaigns and liaising with the wider community.

The position requires a dynamic, well organised

person with a passion for marketing, social media and customer service.

Strong inter-personal skills and a proven capacity to work well in a team are necessary.

Applicants will be committed to the ethos of the Uniting Church in Australia, which is an equal opportunity employer.

For an information pack to apply for the position please contact Kristine Bromiley on 07-3377 9825 or email kristine.bromiley@ucaqld.com.au

Applications close at COB Monday 1 March 2010

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Forming faith for the whole family

By Phil Smith

WHILE PARENTS and grandparents marvel at what new things await the next generation, a handful of Uniting Church educators, youth workers and ministers in Queensland are planning to pass on an heirloom thousands of years old: faith.

Edited and written by Alison Cox and Aaron Ghiloni, *Faith Formation in Families* is a series of family discussions drawing on the ideas of Heather Allison, Sue Pickering, Katherine Ruhle, John Ruhle, Wendi Sargeant, Wendy Shurey, and Ben Webb, and was

designed by Jodie Ghiloni.

Aaron Ghiloni described the aim of the new material as nothing less than the sacred work of forming faith.

"Parents nurture their child's Christian imagination," he said.

"Families discuss telling God's story in scripture, interacting with God through prayer, living like God with justice and mercy and celebrating God in worship."

In each discussion parents and children look at three themes; God creates, God saves, and Jesus.

The steps move back and forth between the participants'



Aaron, Noah and Jodie Ghiloni. Photo courtesy of Aaron Ghiloni

personal experiences and Christian teaching.

This interplay allows people to think critically about their experience in light of Scripture and about Scripture in light of their experience.

Director of the Pilgrim Learning Community and grandfather

Rob Bos, delights in faith that deeply enriches lives.

"We would love nothing more than for our children and grandchildren also to experience this life-transforming faith."

Since first running as a pilot program through Emmanuel Uniting Church in Enoggera,

Brisbane, *Faith Formation in Families* is now available free to the entire Church.

Faith Formation in Families can be downloaded from www.moretonrivers.ucaweb.com.au and through the Moreton Rivers Presbytery office

Breathing fresh Ayre

RETIRED MINISTER Clive Ayre will be a part-time volunteer to the Queensland Synod to work on the green church model and identified issues.

"As a retirement project I completed a PhD in ecotheology in which I related the theology of mission to practical expressions as it applied to the care of creation."

"I'll be liaising not only with the Assembly, but also with congregations, agencies, presbyteries and no doubt other Synods."



Rev Dr Clive Ayre.
Photo by Mardi Lumsden

Dr Ayre said there was the possibility of his leading seminars on ecotheology, researching and accessing funding and data and collating responses from congregations.

"My passion is to see the Church embrace the care of creation as an essential part of our overall mission, and to do that on the basis of an underlying theological imperative."

"The Church needs to be in the vanguard of the current concern about climate change, and to be a catalyst for bringing various groups and individuals together in a positive response."

Dr Ayre said the Church had given him many opportunities over the years and he was looking forward to giving something back.

"I sense that there is an openness to this issue in many congregations, but what they need is some initial guidance and resources."

Shared values shape Moderator's medals

By Dot King

THE MODERATOR'S Community Service Medal is now open for nominations but this year the judging panel is asking for something new - each application will need to reflect one of UnitingCare's Shared Values - Compassion, Respect, Justice, Working Together and Leading Through Learning.

One or more medals will be awarded in each of the new categories.

A medal for general excellence could be awarded if there is a deserving nominee whose work does not fit easily into one of these, or who shows outstanding merit in a number of categories.

UnitingCare Queensland CEO, Anne Cross said the Shared Values were launched last year after consultation with staff.

"We feel these values that are shared across all our agencies are very important because they speak to who we are as part of the Uniting Church," she said.

"The Shared Values are not just about what we do - but more importantly - are about the way we do things and they provide a guide for all who work in our organisation from the Board to every staff member and volunteer and so it was for this reason that

we decided to incorporate them into the Moderator's Community Service Medal this year," she said.

To be considered for the medal nominees must be a volunteer, past or present, and have exhibited outstanding service over a number of years.

Nominees will need to have been involved in community service work other than congregational work (e.g. Blue Care, Lifeline Community Care, UnitingCare hospitals, Wesley Mission Brisbane or community service agencies outside the Uniting Church) and must not be in paid employment connected to their volunteer work.

The nominee's level and length of service will be taken

into consideration by the judging panel in addition to how well the nomination reflects one of the UnitingCare Shared Values.

Nominations for this year's Moderator's Community Service Medal close on Monday 5 April and the Medal presentations will take place during the Uniting Church in Queensland's 28th Synod meeting at Alexandra Park Conference Centre on the Sunshine Coast from 21-25 May, 2010.

If you would like to nominate someone who has displayed outstanding service in one of the Shared Value categories complete the online form at www.ucareqld.com.au



Eric and Win Westacott receive a Moderator's Medal from Rev Bruce Johnson at the 2008 Synod. Photo by Osker Lau



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ncyc11 brings in the new year

FOR THE first time in the history of the National Christian Youth Convention (NCYC) the event will begin in December, meaning ncyc11 attendees will welcome 2011 with a special New Year's Eve celebration.

Confirmed speakers for the conference include Gillian Best, speaker and Youth Ministry coordinator for the Irish Methodist Church and Australian Christian comedian and magician, Christopher Wayne.

NCYC is a national Uniting Church event held every two years. The 2011 event will be held on the Gold Coast.

Alison Cox, ncyc11 coordinator, said her most memorable NCYC experience was in 1991 in Toowoomba.

"We were at an evening worship time where Tony Campolo had spoken. The question posed that night was: God is calling you, are you going to sit there or do something about it?"

"I'd planned to be a psychologist in South Australia and now I'm ordained in the Uniting Church," she said.

At the age of 23 Allison Tyquin is an NCYC veteran and ncyc11 will be Ms Tyquin's fifth.

"The environment created

at NCYC is like nothing I had experienced before.

"You never know what you might take away from it," she said.

Ms Cox said the best way to prepare for ncyc11 was to have a "head and heart ready for anything, open to what God might be saying".

To register visit www.ncyc11.com.au and follow ncyc11 at facebook.com/ncyc11 or twitter.com/ncyc11

For other information contact Alison Cox on 07 3377 9750 or alison.cox@ucaqld.com.au



Alison Cox, left, and Allison Tyquin prepare for ncyc11. Photo by Jane Moad

Youth mad for faith

By Mardi Lumsden

OVER 250 high school students and youth leaders from more than 50 Uniting Churches around Queensland celebrated a long weekend of discipleship training and fun at Summer Madness in January.

Coordinator Tom Kerr said the biennial event had attendees from St George to Far North Queensland, Toowoomba to Gladstone and was a great success where young people had their faith rekindled or found for the first time.

"The Uniting Church in Queensland can do great things when we pull together as a team."

Summer Madness visitors included Uniting Church President Rev Alistair Macrae and Queensland Synod Moderator Rev Bruce Johnson.

For the young people from Weipa and the Western Cape, Summer Madness was the

pinnacle of a larger journey.

Thirteen young people visited Uluru prior to joining the rest of their group at Summer Madness.

Michelle Cook said it was a chance to learn what life is like outside their communities.

"They get to meet Christian kids from other places and know that being part of a church is not just about Napranum or Mapoon," she said.

The trip was made possible with airfares provided by the Western Cape Communities Co-existence Agreement.

Alstan Sigai from Weipa said his highlights were the trip to Uluru and the worship at Summer Madness which was led by the Glebe Rd and Newlife Robina worship bands.

"It really opened up my heart to God and my faith was stronger," he said.

"We won the air guitar competition and after that we gained our confidence."

Joyce Waia, also from Weipa, said the trip had helped her be more confident in herself and her faith.

"I've never gone this far in my life," she said. "Since my dad died we stopped going to church a bit but now I'm not going to give up."

Iesha Woodley, 13, said back at home in Old Mapoon there aren't many people her age who go to

church. "I like how we got to meet new people and make friends."

Ina Savo, 14 from Napranum, also enjoyed visiting Uluru, despite getting bitten by a centipede during a bug infestation of their camp.

She also said she learnt how to "talk about God".

Rev David Kim said the Brisbane Korean congregation,

Crossways, have hosted their friends from Weipa twice and looked forward to paying them a visit later this year.

"By spending time together that proves that we are indeed brothers and sisters," he said.

Michelle Cook said the Western Cape group had been "blown away by the hospitality of the Korean congregation".



Members of the Crossways Korean congregation and young people from the Western Cape of Queensland enjoy time together at Southbank after Summer Madness. Photo by Mardi Lumsden

 **Uniting Church in Australia
Queensland Synod**

General Secretary Synod of Queensland

The Synod of Queensland is seeking a new General Secretary to commence from December 2010 due to the retirement of Rev Douglas Jones.

Expressions of interest are encouraged in writing to the Moderator, the Rev. Bruce Johnson (on behalf of the General Secretary Nominating Committee).

A full advertisement will be published online in February at www.ucaqld.com.au/job.aspx when the job description will also be available.

Please mark correspondence with the title **General Secretary** – Expression of Interest to ana.mila@ucaqld.com.au or Rev Bruce Johnson, GPO Box 674, BRISBANE 4001

 **Uniting Church in Australia
Queensland Synod**

MINISTER OF THE WORD BRISBANE TAIWANESE UNITING CHURCH

The Brisbane Taiwanese Congregation is a diversified congregation filled with people of all ages ranging from kindergarten through to active seniors, located in the south side of Brisbane.

We are committed to reaching into the local community, and proclaiming the word of God in Taiwanese, Mandarin and English.

We are seeking to appoint a Minister of the Word for a minimum 5-year term to:

- Lead and pastor our congregation;
- Train, resource and develop new leaders;
- Lead outreach into the community; and
- Resource the young adult ministry.

Applicants must be prepared to work within the polity and ethos of the Uniting Church in Australia as described in the Basis of Union. Language skills in Taiwanese, Mandarin and English will be necessary and a "Working with Children Check" for a positive notice Blue Card will be required.

For further information and to make an application, please contact:

Chairperson JNC Brisbane Taiwanese Congregation
C/- Secretary of Synod Placements Committee
Uniting Church in Australia (Old Synod)
GPO Box 674 BRISBANE QLD 4001

Applications close: Monday, 1 March 2009

The real meaning of agape

By Bob Harriman

IN THE English language there is one word for love, which we use to describe different sorts of love.

However in the Greek language, at the time of Jesus and the early church, love was translated from at least four different words: eros, storge, philia, and agape.

Eros is understood to be the love of intimacy and sexuality.

Storge is understood to be the love found in family groups.

It is the love expressed between parent and child, between siblings and grandparents, where there are expectations, duties, and privileges.

Philia is understood to be the

love of friendship. It does not have the intimacy of eros, nor the expectations of storge, rather philia is less encumbered and more mutual and free.

Agape can be understood as a giving of self for the benefit of others.

It could be described as a love committed to social wellbeing.

The Apostle Paul co-opted this word and declared that agape is the love that God has for us.

Rather than a divine desire for intimacy with humans, or relationships of conditional expectation, or out of a need for mutually free friendship, God loves us because it is within the nature of God to love and to be

self-giving for our benefit.

When we are motivated by agape love, as workers in human services or as members of a church, we are living up to our calling in God, we are giving of ourselves for the benefit of others.

This does not mean that we are to become all things to all people on a path towards burnout.

The energy to keep giving comes from the Spirit who energises us to keep journeying together.

Agape opens us up to the mystery of the other and, as we listen and learn from each other, we can grow and become the people we are called to be, in the



Image by Bharatha Kumar

spirit of humility, compassion and reconciliation.

Agape is not a possession of the church, nor even an exclusive gift for the church.

Agape is the gift of God for all people everywhere and as such

can become the core motivation for all human service work.

Bob Harriman is Chaplain at Lifeline Community Care Queensland

Love your work

By Aileen Wallace

IT IS LUCKY people who can say they honestly love their job.

Raewyn Fraser, a Centenary Uniting Church member and the Central Activities Co-ordinator at Wesley Mission Brisbane Sinnamon Village Retirement Home, is one of those people.

"I feel so overwhelmed and

happy at getting the perfect job, well for me anyway!

"I tell everyone I love it so much," she said.

After two-and-a-half years Ms Fraser continues to love her job scheduling outings, activities and entertainment for residents in independent communities and those at Sinnamon Village who have higher care needs and are less mobile.

"I love the residents from



Raewyn Fraser.
Photo by Aileen Wallace, WMB

whom I get a lot of joy and I find every day rewarding. How could I not when I am providing entertainment and watching them smile, clap, cry with memories, and move to the music.

"I get to take them on outings and see the joy they get through all the places we go to."

After 17 years as a Lifeline receptionist who admired the life changing work of counsellors, Ms Fraser wanted to end her day feeling as though she had helped someone.

"I go home every night buzzing and I look forward to going to

work in the morning," she said.

"I wish I could do more for them but there aren't enough hours in the day.

"A bigger bus is about the only thing missing so I could take more people out at once.

"For those who can't come on the outings I arrange concerts including magicians, ballroom dancers and musicians and they love it.

"I can't explain the immense pleasure I get from seeing how happy these things make them.

"I love my job and you can't ask for much more than that."

Bev's sea of faith

By Phil Smith

A CONGREGATION mostly interested in a good time, a work place that literally shifts underfoot and the death of a parishioner you've only just met – these are some of the challenges of any new ministry.

They were also a few of the circumstances retired Uniting Church minister Rev Bev Ham encountered on what some would consider a dream job; chaplain on an international cruise liner with the Holland America Line.

Ms Ham's chaplaincy was an opportunity to introduce people to God outside regular church structures. The opportunity arrived after Ms Ham attended a Sunday church service aboard a liner while on holidays last year.

"When this opportunity came up, I hadn't written a resume in 40 years," she said. "I began listing High School chaplain in Rabaul, chaplain to the mine at Greenvale, Scout chaplain at Biloela, and the first woman police chaplain at Longreach."

During a 17-night voyage around New Zealand she led worship on Sundays and at Christmas, and provided counselling for crew and passengers.

"Over the years I have realised that many congregations have no idea how to relate to the community, in its environment, on behalf of Christ.

"Chaplaincy is one avenue to broaden ministry," she said.

"On a cruise ship, chaplaincy in a relaxed atmosphere offers space to listen and time to encourage people to tell their stories.

"Through my life's experience I have come to understand God can work in all situations."

If the high point was the Christmas Eve service, the biggest challenge on Ms Ham's maiden voyage was the sudden death of a passenger while at sea.

"I was very involved with the medical staff who tried to save the man and also comforting the widow," she recounted.

"They were from Texas so there was the whole issue of getting his body out of Australia and back to the USA."

Perhaps Ms Ham's experience with Boy Scouts decades ago allowed her to be prepared, as she had taken a funeral book with her just in case.

"Many people worked as a team in a crisis ... from the Captain down to medical and guest assistance people.

"They helped the widow contact her children in the States and moved her and another couple they were travelling with into a hotel at Darling Harbour."

In retirement, Bev Ham hasn't been called to walk on water, but she has taken the opportunity to put out from the shore and spend time journeying with people through the storms and calmer waters of life.



Rev Bev Ham, right, celebrates Christmas with one of the ship's dining stewards. Photo courtesy of Bev Ham

2010 MODERATOR'S COMMUNITY SERVICE MEDAL

Do you know a volunteer who has contributed in an outstanding way to the Church's mission in community service in Queensland? The Moderator's Medal is one way to honour them. This year we are looking for nominations that reflect the UnitingCare Shared Values as we believe that these are fundamental to the work we do and express the mission of God being present in our lives to offer hope, healing and transformation.

Our Shared Values are:

- Compassion
- Respect
- Justice
- Working together
- Leading through Learning

Medals will be awarded for each category and if there is a deserving nominee whose work is exceptional but does not fit easily into one of these categories a Moderator's medal for general excellence might be awarded.

Nominees must:

- be a volunteer, past or present
- have exhibited outstanding service over a number of years
- be involved in community service work other than congregational work (e.g. Blue Care, Lifeline Community Care, UnitingCare Hospitals, Wesley

Mission Brisbane or community service agencies outside the Uniting Church)

- were/are not in paid employment connected to their volunteer work

Nominations should be submitted electronically, a link to the form can be found on the UnitingCare Queensland website <http://www.ucareqld.com.au>

NOMINATIONS CLOSE COB Monday 5 April 2010

Uniting Church in Australia
Queensland Synod

UnitingCare
Queensland

Spreading the love

By Phil Smith

WHAT'S THE similarity between marriage and mowing the lawn? There are catches in both, but sometimes both are done out of

love and some days they're chores.

Twenty-seven years ago a youth worker told a young man considering marriage not to always expect to feel "in love".

"There will be days when you

wake up and you won't feel all the romantic stuff," he warned.

"That's OK because those are the days you dig deep and remember the commitment, the public promises, you made.



Photo by Andrea Kratzenberg, Germany

"The feelings will come around again."

In church, as in marriage, sometimes love is about keeping your promises.

During the Christmas period congregations loudly proclaimed God's love for humanity.

In Moorooka the John Knox Uniting Church sang along at the local school carols event.

The Charleville Faith Community moved their Christmas Day service to the Waroona aged care home to spend time with residents.

In Townsville the Mt Louisa House of Praise congregation spearheaded the Stable on the Strand event.

Thousands of Queenslanders experienced the loving feeling, that warm glow, as churches held out the joyful promise that God is with us.

Then, during January, the happy holiday feelings may have been replaced by emotions associated with ordering school books, going back to work, paying off credit cards and mowing the lawn.

It's time to keep the promise.

In the big picture, the Edmon-ton and The Gap congregations are preparing community garage sales, funding local ministries and making connections with their communities.

The UnitingWorld support group faces the aid agency's big challenges.

Frontier Services patrol ministers are waiting for rain soaked roads to open.

On a smaller scale, one sweaty young man from a Uniting Church congregation probably didn't feel especially loving as he pushed the mower and wielded a hedge trimmer in the yard of a sole parent recently arrived in his congregation.

Still, the Church had promised to look after things while she took her son to see his grandparents over Christmas.

The wow factor came when a neighbour asked who had mowed her lawn.

"One of the men from my church," was the reply.

"Wow! That's lovely."

More to love?

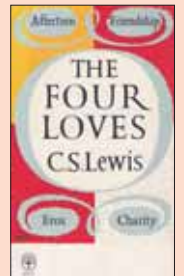
Explore

Love to the World is a daily Bible reading guide based on the Revised Common Lectionary as adapted for use in the Uniting Church in Australia. It is produced by a committee of people from the Uniting Churches in Strathfield, NSW, and from the United Theological College. There are four issues per year. For more information visit <http://www.uca.org.au>.

Read

Author C.S. Lewis' explored the different meanings of love

in his 1960 book *The Four Loves*. The book delves into how each of the four loves (affection, friendship, eros, and charity) merges into another, can become another and yet remain quite different from each other.



Camp proves engaging

How Barbara Met Jim – a youth camp love story from 1957

THE CHRISTIAN youth movement of the three denominations that became the Uniting Church in Australia achieved many things, but the greatest of them is love.

Jim Kessels recalls N.E. Nelson asking the teenagers at a Sunshine Coast youth camp in the 1950s, "What is the most important thing you can do with your life?"

Young Jim thought about education, a job and "a lovely Christian girl to share my life".

Mr Nelson assured the campers that to be put right with God was getting first things first. Jim loved God but he thought a lot about finding that lovely Christian girl.

Then in 1957, in the recreation hut at Alex Park, he saw the lovely Barbara Bell.

Jim describes the experience like, "some enchanted evening, across a ping pong table!"

Young Mr Kessels was somewhat reserved and uncertain about how to approach the belle, Barbara.

"Heading home on the train from Woombye, I got off at North-gate," he recalls. "I just walked up to her and said, 'Goodbye,' but later I heard that Barbara thought I might be interested in her."

Indooroopilly PFA held a dance in May that year. Jim hatched a plan to meet Barbara during the progressive barn dance, but the circle was so big that the music stopped before they could be partners.

"The night rolled on and when the last dance was announced, I looked for her on the verandah. As she came through the door I asked for the dance and the rest is history."

Many couples now celebrating decades of marriage will identify with Mr and Mrs Kessels' story from a time they treasure in the life of the church.

Barbara and Jim courted for more than three years, announcing their engagement in mid 1961.

Forty eight years, five children and 13 grandchildren adorn their relationship.

They moved to Narangba in 1976 and have worshipped at the Pine Rivers Uniting Church since.

In the foyer of the camp site where they met is a poem Jim wrote. The last two verses read:

"Yes, things have changed up Alex way, as we look back to yesterday.

"But there are things of lasting joy for it was here that girl met boy.

"It's time to leave and head back home, so now to close another poem.

"Yesterday, today, whatever – Jesus Christ the same forever."

By Phil Smith and Jim Kessels



Jim and Barbara at a National Service Our Company Dance at Riverside Ballroom, New Farm, in 1958.
Photo courtesy of Jim Kessels

Learning to love the ones who leave

By Phil Smith

EVERYONE KNOWS the old adage, "You can choose your friends but you can't choose your family".

The New Testament describes us as being like family.

So where is the love when people choose to leave?

Faith family break-up isn't easy to talk about.

Yet a significant proportion of members leave our congregations each year, slipping out the back door, often unnoticed, while congregations invest their energy in welcoming anyone arriving at the front.

Recent National Church Life Survey figures indicate 10 per cent of the Uniting Church members leaving the denomination over a five year period switch to another denomination.

Another seven per cent drift away from the church altogether.

With the oldest age profile of any Protestant denomination in Australia, the Uniting Church has been through a difficult period in the past decade.

At its lowest point, the National Church Life Survey recorded a 12 per cent decline, including mortality, in the period leading up to the 2001 survey.

That's a steady proportion of people looking for the exit sign and may well reflect on congregations that don't see the signs of our brothers and sisters heading for the door.

Canadian writer Gordon Turner interviewed those he called "church dropouts" in Canada, Australia, the UK and the USA.

In his book *Outside Looking In*, Mr Turner uncovered five basic reasons why even long-term members leave churches.

They were: inadequate ministry in crisis times, church not meeting personal needs, changes in lifestyle, conflict with the pastor or a church member, and a crisis of faith.

Loving people as they leave is not about manipulating them to change their mind, according to Rev Brian Hoole of Hervey Bay Uniting Church.

"Some who leave may, or may not, come back to our fellowship," said Mr Hoole.

"But I would rather they went somewhere and remained within the church. The door is always open of course."

He says one part of that complex equation is having local ecumenical confidence, allowing a church to recommend another fellowship for those who feel they must leave.

Few church leavers formalise

their departure with a letter to the church council.

Many congregations just don't talk about it.

They hope whatever the problem, it will fade away and be forgotten.

Some find fault, assuming the majority must be right and those leaving are wrong.

Others genuinely try to bless leavers as they go, in the hope that faith will grow as they find fellowship elsewhere.

Psychologist Coral Palmer left a congregation to which her family had belonged for four generations to explore a wider experience of church.

Ms Palmer has counselled many clients about the impact of leaving a congregation.

She said people who leave a church have generally agonised over the decision for a long time.

Congregational leaders face the significant challenge of noticing the early glances at the exit sign and trying to understand the reasons behind a departure.

"They are less likely to be understood if they have grown up in the church and have family members still there," she said.

"There can be a lot of grief in leaving and also a sense of freedom if the person has felt constricted by the church's approach."

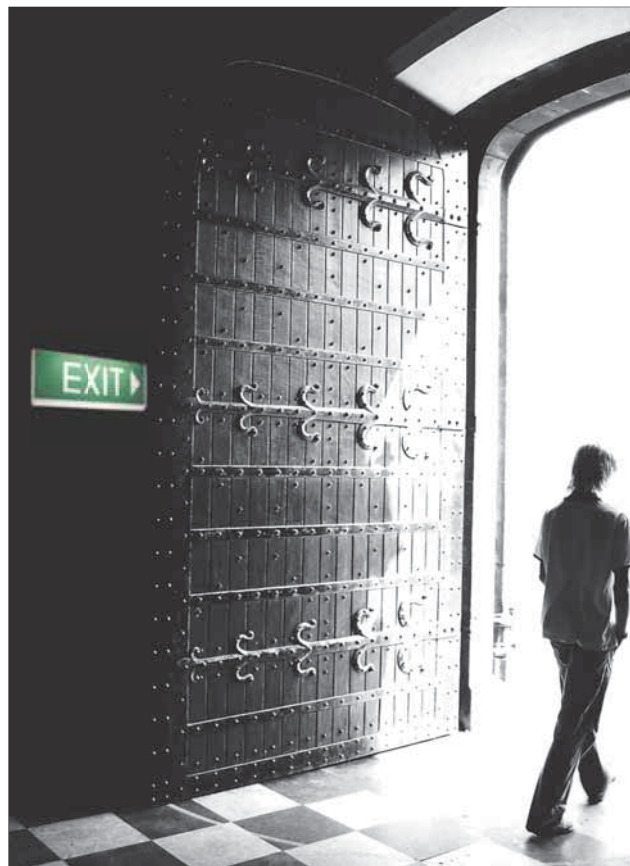


Photo by Bjorn de Leeuw, Netherlands, and edited by Osker Lau

She said former members are often uncertain about staying in touch with friends they no longer see at Sunday services.

Podcaster at TheGodJourney.com Brad Cummings says Jesus' claim to the title of The Good Shepherd, indicates his right to lead his sheep on a different path or somewhere else.

"There's a sad tendency for church leaders to take someone's departure personally," said Mr Cummings.

"It leaves both parties hurting, the relationship broken, and fails to completely recognise the larger ... body of Christ.

"There are some healthy, but

rare, environments that recognise people's time may be just for a season as they move on in their journey.

"They seek to love, invest in, care for, and then celebrate God's direction in leading someone on," he said.

In Uniting Church terms, in Queensland, that could be a big investment with enormous potential returns.

According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics 2006 census, more than 280,000 Queenslanders claim to be affiliated with the Uniting Church.

Fewer than 30,000 people regularly attend.

Who was St Valentine?

Patron saint of love, young people, happy marriages, bee keepers and against epilepsy, fainting and plague.

THERE ARE many stories about the origins of St Valentine.

In reality Valentine was probably the name of several martyred saints.

The most common story is one of a Roman priest who assisted those under persecution from Claudius II (Roman Emperor from 268-270) and was caught marrying couples.

Claudius II had apparently outlawed marriage as he thought single men made better soldiers.

Valentine was said to have been beheaded on 14 February around the year 270.

One legend says that while awaiting execution, Valentine restored the

sight of the jailer's blind daughter.

Another says, on the eve of his death, he penned a farewell note to the jailer's daughter, signing it, "From your Valentine".

Archaeologists have unearthed a Roman catacomb and an ancient church dedicated to Saint Valentine.

It is also suggested that Pope Gelasius declared 14 February as St Valentine's Day around the year 498 as the middle of February lined up with the ancient Roman official beginning of Spring.

The Roman festival of Lupercalia was already held on 15 February as a celebration of purification and fertility. It is suggested that the church lined up the two festivals as they did with many other festivals.

One ritual was for young women to

place their names in a large urn and for young men to pull out a name.

This match-making tradition appeared again in the Middle Ages when young men and women drew names from a bowl to see who their Valentine would be.

They would wear these names on their sleeves for one week arguably giving meaning to the phrase "wearing your heart on your sleeve".

It is said the oldest known Valentine in existence was a poem written by Charles, Duke of Orleans, to his wife while he was imprisoned in the Tower of London in 1415.

The poem is held in the British Library in London.

According to the Greeting Card Association in the US around 1 billion Valentine's Day cards are purchased



each year, making it the second most popular seasonal card after Christmas cards.

By Mardi Lumsden

Illustration from the Nuremberg Chronicle (1493) by Michel Wolgemut and Wilhelm Pleydenwurff.

Remembering the call

By Scott Stephens

OVER THIRTY years ago the Uniting Church in Australia embarked on what could have been a remarkable journey, but has it abandoned its original course?

It is now a shell of its former self, like so much Liberal Protestantism throughout the West.

The past decade has witnessed the Uniting Church rid itself of any prophetic vocation it might once have possessed.

In an extraordinary act of apostasy, the Uniting Church has decided to stand for the path of least resistance, a facile alternative to fundamentalism, evangelicalism and pentecostalism.

The Uniting Church's inaugural President Davis McCaughey warned against this possibility.

In his address to the 1979 Assembly, Dr McCaughey expressed his fear that the Church would be hijacked by bureaucrats and pedants — specifically that: "Our Constitution, Regulations and Procedures are ... in danger ... of becoming ends in themselves".

He also warned against the temptation to adopt any kind of Church patriotism, believing it would obscure and ultimately destroy the Church's vocation to carry on the mission of Christ.

"In an important sense, we in the Uniting Church in Australia have no identity, no distinctive marks other than

belonging with the people of God brought into being by the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ," he said.

Dr McCaughey argued against any suggestion that the *Basis of Union*, the foundational document of The Uniting Church in Australia, was merely an aspirational document or some transitional text that brought the uniting churches together.

The *Basis* has been bequeathed to the Church as a liturgical document, shaped by the logic of Christian worship.

It is intended to inform communal prayer just as much as confession. Just notice the prominence of prayer-language, confession and doxology throughout the *Basis*.

In the opening paragraph, the uniting churches "pray that this act [of union] may be to the glory of God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit".

Following the proclamation of the gospel (paragraphs 2-8) and affirmation of the Faith of the Church (paragraph 9), the *Basis* "prays that she may be ready

The *Basis* has been bequeathed to the Church as a liturgical document, shaped by the logic of Christian worship.

when occasion demands to confess her Lord in fresh words and deeds" (paragraph 11).



Rev Dr Davis McCaughey preaches at the inaugural Assembly of the Uniting Church in Australia, 1977. Photo courtesy of the Journey archives

Paragraph 18 concludes: "She prays God that, through the gift of the Spirit, he will constantly correct that which is erroneous in her life, will bring her into deeper unity with other Churches, and will use her worship, witness and service to his eternal glory through Jesus Christ the Lord. Amen."

The *Basis of Union* provides the Church with the prayers it needs to keep it faithful and to keep renewal possible.

But the Uniting Church has

traded its birthright, thereby following the rest of the Liberal Protestant herd in its head-long rush into oblivion.

This opens up a truly terrifying possibility.

What if God is killing the Uniting Church?

Here is what Stanley Hauerwas told the congregation of Broadway United Methodist Church in South Bend, Indiana, in 1993: "The plain truth is that Broadway survives as part of a larger church that is dying. Mainstream Protestantism in America is dying. Actually I prefer to put the

matter in more positive terms: God is killing Protestantism and perhaps Christianity in America and we deserve it."

Either way, the Church is left with only two options: to go on indulging in Church patriotism and erecting stop-gap measures in the hope of delaying the inevitable, or to embrace God's gracious judgment with joyful repentance.

For is this not the hope that the prophets extended to that pilgrim people in exile: repent, and return, for who knows what God may yet do?

All about face



Amanda Helwig, left, with other participants of AboutFACE 2009. Photo courtesy of Amanda Helwig

By Amanda Helwig

IN JUNE and July 2009 I participated in an amazing experience AboutFACE, a Faith and Cultural Exchange for young adults between the ages of 18 and 30.

Since 1982 this program has been bringing young people together for a once in a lifetime experience.

We flew to Perth for the Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress (UAICC) meeting and then Adelaide to our placements. Being invited to Congress was a huge honour.

Around 120 Aboriginal and Islander elders and National elders from all over Australia met for their triennial meeting.

We heard stories that were good, bad and emotionally challenging. I felt a little ashamed that I had no idea how big Congress is.

I felt a sense of love and belonging amongst all the Congress members. I started questioning what I could do.

How I could make a difference to the gaps in health.

After Congress I went to Nepabunna with two other AboutFACE participants. It is eight hours drive north of Adelaide and it took us two days to get there.

Once there we were involved in a Gymkhana — a horse racing festival and the National Aboriginal and Islander Day of Celebration (NAIDOC) week.

Our hosts, Uncle Kelvin and Aunt Judy, are Andnamutnya people, meaning people of the rocks and hills.

We were adopted as Minerra people of the North wind. The wind that blows through Nepabunna never stops as the Northern Flinders ranges and the Gammon ranges surround the town.

The Andnamutnya people were originally nomadic and were placed in Missions when the pastoral leaseholders came through.

We went to a number of these sites to see how they lived during these times. We

were also taken to sites of Dreamtime stories.

We visited sites of rock paintings and were encouraged to take photos.

The Andnamutnya people strive to share their stories and tell (and show) people about their people and places. They also have photos of elders and ancestors up in their community centre.

On our third day we travelled to Red Gorge where we were amazed by the colours of the rocks.

At first we didn't notice anything but then Kelvin pointed out various rocks and the carvings on them. Archaeologists have named these as some of the oldest carvings in Australia dating back more than 60,000 years.

I want to thank Southport Uniting Church for the continued support of me.

AboutFACE will run again in June 2010. For more information visit www.aboutface.unitingchurch.org.au

Journeying to the heart

THIS AUGUST a team of people bereaved by suicide will walk 482 kilometres in 16 days, from Alice Springs to Uluru, to raise awareness and an active response to this significant social issue within Australian culture.

A documentary film crew will capture the journey that will culminate in a healing and honouring ceremony in what is named the *Journey to the Heart*.

In association with Amanda Flynn Charity Ltd, and various corporate sponsors, the *Journey to the Heart* (J2TH) group and their supporters have planned a journey to metaphorically replicate the gruelling pathway of survivors and fellow travellers – a journey

which necessitates the development of personal resilience as well as the capacity to support and be supported by one another.

The team plans to reach Uluru on World Suicide Awareness Day, 10 September, 2010.

According to 2006 Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) data, 1799 people per year take their own lives.

Suicide accounts for more deaths than road fatalities yet is so often not discussed.

It is estimated that for every completed suicide, 10 people are directly affected.

The very nature of suicide means it incurs feelings of social isolation, shame and stigmatisation in addition to

the effort to somehow cope with loss.

Queensland Institute of Medical Research supports the journey in line with its own commitment to enhancing medical and scientific understanding of suicide.

Invitation to participate

is open to those touched by suicide, with various participation levels; the entire trip, stages of the trip or travelling in the support vehicle as an encourager.

In addition to the awareness-raising component, funds will be raised and redirected to nationally and internationally

accredited suicide prevention training.

In this way the *Journey to the Heart* team will travel the full circle – from bereavement support to awareness and prevention.

For more information visit www.journey2theheart.org.au



Christianity: It's just not cricket

By Phil Smith

I KNOW it is summer when the ABC tells me cricket is on the radio.

I'm not a cricket fan.

It's a peculiar game.

I'm keener about religion than I am about cricket, because I don't understand all the intricacies and petty rules applied by the governing cricket bodies.

That said, I was interested in the news stories when Australians began a debate about excluding the West Indies from test competition.

A proud country, successful at playing the game, was telling another country it wasn't good enough.

Two things struck me.

There's at least one good reason why the West Indies isn't the

cricket nation it was a generation ago.

Cricket used to be a shared thing, enjoyed and understood in community. It was played in back streets and school yards for its own sake.

The West Indies has a peculiar geography.

The Caribbean is no longer a British colonial outpost. Today it's a stepping off point for the USA where professional sport provides an education or a big income.

Athletes leave cricket to play basketball, football or baseball and the results are obvious.

How does our game stack up in the seductive society of multi-cultural, multi-car, multi-faith, multiple-investment options?

How many Christians have taken their bat and ball and gone somewhere else?

Christianity isn't the only game in town. It isn't a game at all.

Part of the problem is the way we play around with the gospel that makes Christianity unique.

In cricketing terms, the W.G. Grace approach is purely about getting runs on the board, training harder, playing better, knowing the rules and beating the competition.

Then it's no wonder that successful players become proud and want to exclude others who don't seem to measure up.

In gospel terms, the J.C. grace approach is very different.

It's an honour to be chosen on the representative side and a privilege to be coached.

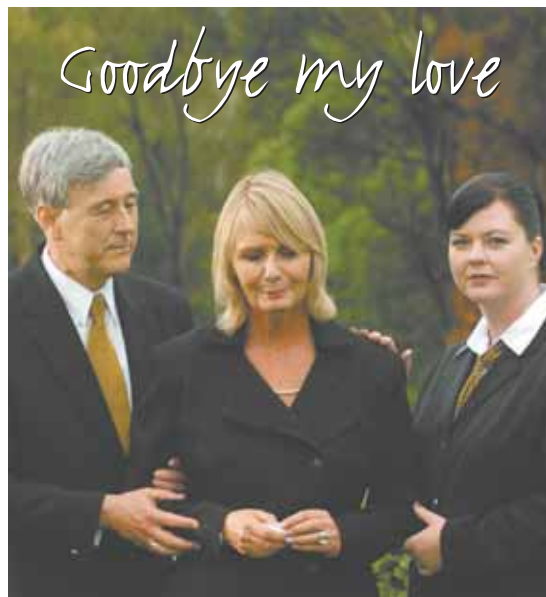
There's joy in sharing the experience with all manner of players, passionately enjoying a team event (that may take an

eternity to reach a conclusion).

I still think cricket is a peculiar game.

For the sake of comparison,

we are "a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people".



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Phil Smith balances the pros and cons of cricket. Photo by Osker Lau

March 6, 9.30am-12.30pm

Geoff Bullock seminar

Songwriter and Author, Geoff Bullock visits Caboolture Uniting Church to lead a morning seminar on *Worship - a response to Grace*.



He will challenge us to re-evaluate our inspiration and motivation in our worship life

He will also give a concert at 7.30pm that night in the Caboolture Memorial Hall.

Contact Rose Joyner on 07 5496 0157 or rejoyner@tpg.com.au.

Feb 5. Ecumenical Retreat in Toowoomba. Looking forward to positive models of being Church together, addressing the difficult issues of Orders and Church Leadership (episcopate) and Eucharistic Hospitality. Speakers from Anglican, Catholic, Lutheran and Uniting traditions. Contact Rev Brian Sparksman on 07 4632 8835 or achance@twb.catholic.org.au.

Feb 9-May 25. Learning for Living: A Course in Spirituality, Mission, and Service coordinated by the Pilgrim Learning Community and the Moreton Rivers Presbytery. Providing lay education focusing on the enrichment of personal spirituality, as well as preparation for the ministry of lay preacher. Topic: Understanding the Hebrew Scriptures. Contact Aaron Ghiloni at aaron@moretonriverspresbytery.org.au.

Feb 12, 9.30am-1pm. Christian Meditation Community Day with Fr. Laurence Freeman, World Director of the Christian Meditation Community, at the Marymac Community Centre, 616 Ipswich Rd, Annerley. Bring lunch to share. Suggested donation \$10. Contact Gabby Nelson on 3711 4227 or toga@bigpond.net.au.

Feb 16, 9.30am-12.30pm. UnitingWorld Support Group meeting at Wesley House, 140 Ann St, Brisbane. Congregations are invited to send representatives. Contact Judith Finau on 3711 4622 or ljfinau@doventeq.net.au.

Feb 17, 10.30am. UCAF Qld Synod committee AGM and covenant service at Bayside Uniting Church, 420 Wondall Rd, Manly. All welcome. Please bring plate to share for lunch. Contact Keith Lawson on 3203 1788 or kclawson@gotalk.net.au.

Feb 18-20. Wheller Gardens Rummage Sale, Uhl Hall, 930 Gympie Rd., Cherside. Feb 18/19, 8.30am- 3pm, Feb 20, 8am-12 noon. Clothes, books, knick-knacks. Contact Merrill Herbert on 3857 4668 or billmerr@bigpond.com.

March 6, 9am-4pm. Life Needs Religion Renewed seminar at Merthyr Road Uniting Church Centre, 52 Merthyr Rd, New Farm. Progressive Spirituality Network and St Mary's Community in Exile present a one day seminar with Dr Val Webb (Does God create religion or religion create God?) and Father Peter Kennedy (Divisions created by religion). \$50 inc morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea. Registrations essential. Contact Ross on 0409 498 402 or dr_garn@bigpond.net.au.

March 6, 7am-12pm. Edmonton Uniting Church Monster Garage Sale. Everything from clothes, toys, manchester, books, furniture and much more. All Welcome. Contact Anita Brown on 07 4036 4199 or anitarbrown@hotmail.com.

March 13, 6am-12pm. The Gap Uniting Church Garage Sale. Hunt for all the bargains you can! Selling kitchenware, furniture, electrical items, gardening and sports equipment, and much more. 10 per cent of money raised goes towards local chaplaincy. Contact Scott McDonald on 0419 927 988 or you_got_what_i_want@hotmail.com.

March 13, 9am-12pm. Church ministry enrichment day at Cherside Kedron Community Church. Practical workshops, networking and sharing among lay leaders. Sponsored by the Moreton Rivers Presbytery. Contact Aaron Ghiloni on 3369 8929 or aaron@moretonriverspresbytery.org.au.



The congregation enjoy the first service at the new Bargara Uniting Church. Photo by Frank Millett

New Church opens in Bargara

AFTER MANY years of thoughtful planning, hard work and prayer the new Bargara Uniting Church was opened on 29 November.

Bargara is a popular seaside area near Bundaberg and architect David Hackwood designed a building which suited the climate and caught breezes.

Over 230 people attended the opening service which was led by Mary Burnett Presbytery Minister Rev David Fanning, Bundaberg and Coral Coast Uniting Church

minister Rev Ray Nutley and members of the Bargara and Burnett Heads congregations.

There were visitors from other Uniting Churches, ecumenical representatives and interested local residents.

Organist David Hackwood, a member of Bayside Uniting Church in Brisbane, also played for the event.

The members of the Bargara congregation have worked

very hard putting the finishing touches on the project but they now look forward to the task ahead - encouraging people from the surrounding building estates to become part of the church family.

With an already active playgroup, the congregation looks forward to sharing the joy of being part of God's family with those around them.

Story submitted by
Lyn Payne

Church members receive Australia Day honours

ONCE AGAIN many church members have been announced on the Australia Day Honours List.

Three Uniting Church members were awarded an Order of Australia (AM) including Professor David Black from Western Australia, Philip Bruem from New South Wales and former New South Wales and ACT Synod moderator James Mein.

Ten Uniting Church members received the Medal (OAM) of the Order of Australia.

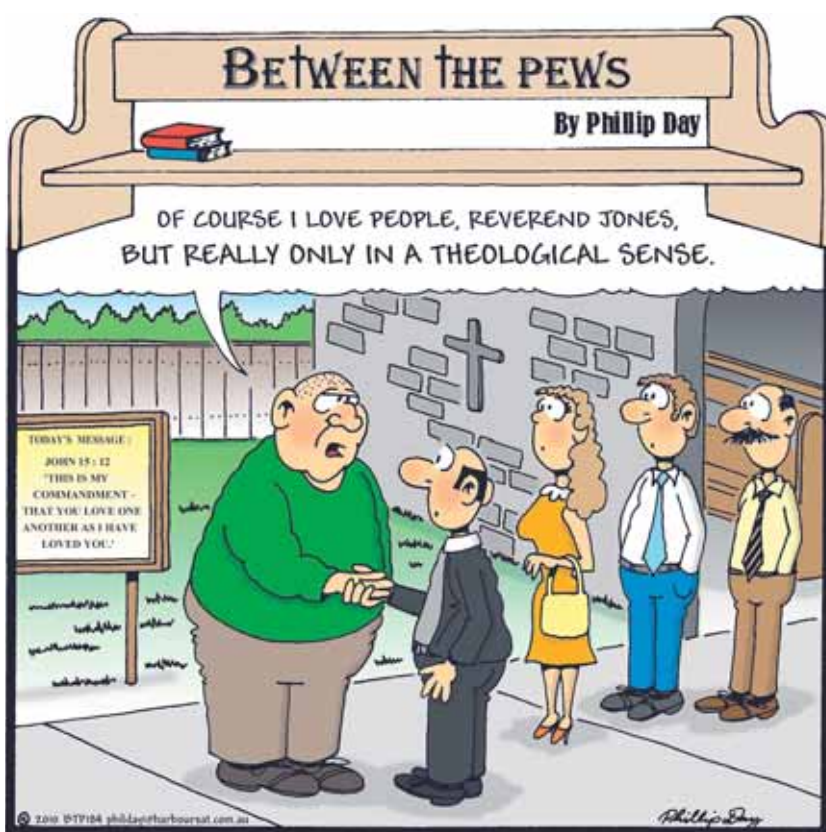
One Queenslander on the list was Stephen Paul, Principal of John Paul College, Daisy Hill, from 1998-2008.

John Paul College was Queensland's first ecumenical school and was built through the co-operation of the Anglican, Uniting and Catholic churches.

Governor-General, Her Ex-

cellency Quentin Bryce AC, said the 446 recipients were recognised for their diverse contributions and service to fellow citizens.

McKay Patrol minister Rev Garry Hardingham also received a Special Achievement Award for the work he and the Nambour Uniting Church youth did rebuilding airstrips after floods last year.



God with Skin On:

Finding God's Love in Human Relationships

By Anne Robertson, Morehouse Publishing, 2009, RRP \$34.95

Reviewed by Rev Mel Perkins, Families Minister at Aspley Uniting Church

THE AUTHOR starts her introduction with the story of the little boy who needs "God with skin on" to help him through his night-time fears.

We all need "God with skin on" in our lives.

Ms Robertson's premise is that we, particularly those of us who profess to be Christian, all need to realise how we often represent God for others, whether we are aware of it or not.

She says that we need to be intentional in being God for others – "You might be the only Jesus/God some people ever meet".

This understanding is not particularly new; many have spoken and written on this before.

But there are a number of things about *God with Skin On* that would cause me to recommend it to others.

I loved Ms Robertson's

thoughtful and insightful way of writing –her writing displays honesty and humour.

I found it a seamless mix of theology, personal stories, stories about others, biblical stories and psychology.

The writing is natural and almost casual at times, as though it was a discussion over coffee.

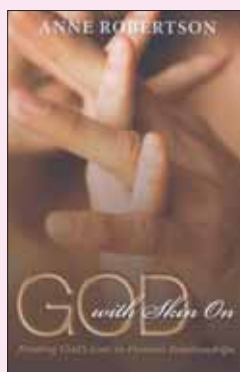
The chapters are structured in a way that takes us from our family of origin out into the world of school and work.

Different chapters deal with siblings, authority, parents, intimate partners, and friends.

In this way, Ms Robertson seeks to demonstrate how we represent God in different ways in different types of relationships.

At the end of each chapter is a set of discussion questions that would be useful if reading the book with a group.

Ms Robertson looks at our relationships with the animal kingdom, virtual relationships and



relationships with the spiritual world – three areas which are important in many people's lives but ones that are not given perhaps as much emphasis as human relationships (except our relationship with God, of course).

I think *God with Skin On* would be an interesting book for a group study, or even a whole congregation study, but it can easily be read alone.

It certainly provides much food for thought.

Stop the Traffik: People shouldn't be bought and sold

By Steve Chalk with a chapter by Cherie Blair, Lion Books, 2009, RRP \$19.95

Reviewed by Sue Pickering, minister at Trinity Wilston Uniting Church and a passionate social justice advocate

PEOPLE ALL over the world are victims of trafficking with around 80 per cent of trafficked people being women and girls with up to 50 per cent being children.

The total profit from human trafficking is second only to the trafficking of drugs.

Stop the Traffik gives an overview of the campaign to fight human trafficking and offers ideas and resources for taking action.

It provides facts and figures in relation to this shocking trade; however, as with all statistics, the reader needs to be mindful of the fact that the nature of this trade means that the true extent is unknown.

The book is easy to read and contains a number of personal stories.

Many of the stories originate from the developing world, the



reason being that people living in extreme poverty are more vulnerable to traffickers who use abusive, and exploitative measures to lure people into the world of trafficking.

However there are accounts of young girls in the UK who are groomed and sold; a sober reminder to all that trafficking can happen in our own backyards.

Stop the Traffik is a great book for anyone who wants to learn more about human trafficking.

As the book says, humanity should not be turned into a commodity.

Bedtime Stories for Little Angels

By Sarah J. Dodd and illustrated by Dubravka Kolanovic, Lion Children's, 2009, RRP \$19.95

Reviewed by John Ruhle, minister at The Gap Uniting Church

BEDTIME STORIES for Little Angels is a collection of 10 "delightful stories of mirth and mischief which will bring every little angel's day to a perfect ending" and bring sweet dreams.

I read the stories with my three, five and seven-year-old girls and it was the older two girls who were most interested.

Each story contains a learning experience.

There are stories based on friendship, sharing and not being afraid of what is under the bed, just to name a few.

Each story is accompanied by cute pastel drawings that really add to the whole reading experience.

Bedtime Stories for Little Angels would be suitable for boys



or girls from toddlers up to the age of 10.

The book is a part of a series which also includes *Prayers for Little Angels* and *Christmas Stories for Little Angels*.

Etty Hillesum: A Life Transformed

By Patrick Woodhouse, Continuum 2009, RRP \$30.95

Reviewed by Alan Renton

DURING MORE than 50 years as country minister and retired minister I have made many friends with men and women whose lives have been distorted and traumatised by dysfunctional homes, unsatisfactory child-care "homes" and abuse.

This book is a must read for those who believe that the God we know in Christ is able to transform, ennoble-ise and send into ministry every one of his children.

I wish that I had had it at the beginning of my ministry, but would I have had the wisdom to understand it?

It tells of a young Dutch-Jewish girl from a dysfunctional family who through the most unlikely of God's agents, found her faith and her ministry of compassion and understanding.

I remember reading of a great Christian minister (possibly John Wesley) who rode with criminals to the gallows, giving comfort along the way. Etty went further than that.

When the Nazis invaded



Holland they found that the Dutch registers contained the names and particulars of all Jews in the country, over 100,000 all told.

This was a death sentence for just over 100,000 men, women, and children who were then exterminated.

Some few thousand escaped by hiding. Etty could have been among them.

With her new-found faith she chose to accompany them.

For the six or so months in the staging camps she ministered to them and then died with them in Auschwitz-Birkenau.

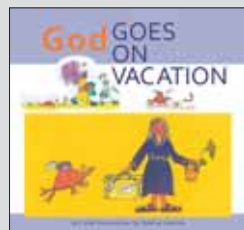
There are many quotations from her diary.

To feel her incredible story you must read this book.

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

God Goes on Vacation

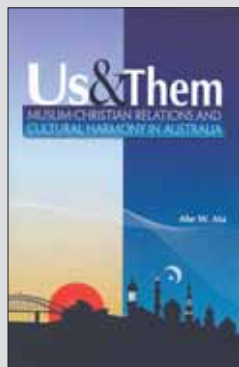
Text and illustrations by Edwina Gately, Paulist Press, 2009, RRP \$19.95



Us and Them:

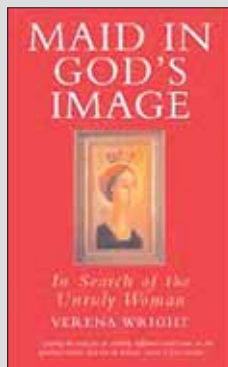
Muslim-Christian relations and cultural harmony in Australia

By Dr Abe W Ata, Australian Academic Press, 2009, RRP \$29.95



Maid in God's Image: In Search of the Unruly Woman

By Verena Wright, Darton, Longman & Todd, 2008, RRP \$38.95



Books available from ...

Many of the titles reviewed in *Journey* are available from 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

Aub Baker ends his innings

TWENTY YEARS after his retirement, Rev Aubrey Baker celebrated the official end of ministry with a service at Lifeworks Uniting Church, Toowoomba, on 3 January.

The date also marked Mr Baker and wife Ailsa's 57th wedding anniversary.

Since being ordained in 1951 with the Methodist Church Mr Baker has had a vast a varied ministry that has taken him all over the State including Barcaldine, Rockhampton, and Townsville where he oversaw the building of the John Flynn College at James Cook University.

In 1975 Mr Baker was director of Toowoomba's Blue Nursing before becoming a Frontier Services Patrol Padre.

His retirement in 1990 took him to serve in the church in New Zealand, Alice Springs, Birdsville and, Toowoomba.

Former Uniting Church President Rev John Mavor and wife Rae remembered Mr Baker's "effective ministry in

circuits" and his involvement in teacher and leader training camps and the Home Mission Department.

Elaine Atkinson and family expressed their heartfelt thanks and appreciation to Mr Baker for 30 years of spiritual and pastoral care to the Blackall congregation.

"As a family we have been blessed to have someone with the integrity and compassion of Aub to provide religious services to the people of the bush," she said.

The Crook-King family of Morven, 87kms from Charleville, paid tribute to Mr Baker's support of rural families.

Peter and Marie Crook-King remembered Mr Baker rallying for farmers from afar after the Charleville flood in 1990.

"Within a year the wool market had almost totally collapsed and the drought set in again. We had a negative income, two young children to educate and an impatient bank manager.



Rev Aub Baker gets ready for his final service. Photo by Dave Noonan and courtesy of *The Chronicle*

"It seemed that no one out there cared, until one day I heard Aubrey being interviewed on the radio in Toowoomba, rallying for some financial support for farmers out in the southwest," they said.

"It gave me a tremendous lift

to know that Aub was on the case.

"Food parcels started arriving at every property and for us there were also very useful cheques in the mail to help with education expenses and this kept up for maybe two years."

Mr Baker told Toowoomba's *The Chronicle* that in retirement he planned to enjoy some cricket.

"I'm a cricket tragic," he said.

"And I've decided to declare my innings closed."



Shania Dekkers, centre, receives her award with Rev Glen Ingram, left, and Mr Rod Page, Fair Trading representative (Rockhampton). Photo by Sharon Dekkers

Smart buying starts young

SHANIA DEKKERS from Rockhampton South Uniting Church Youth Group took out third place at the Queensland government's Buy Smart competition (in the Year 5-7 category) at the end of last year.

Shania made an educational video on purchasing practises and making good decisions when buying things.

It also included a song, winning her a personal prize of \$150, along with \$500 for her youth group.

Minister for Fair Trading Peter Lawlor MP praised the

innovation of this year's entries.

"The Buy Smart competition challenges school students to create fun and innovative ways to spread important financial and consumer messages," Mr Lawlor said.

"This year's entries were very original and I was impressed with the imaginative use of different media to fulfil the judges' requirements."

Member for Rockhampton Robert Schwarten also congratulated Shania.

"This was a tough competition with 380 students from 26 schools across Queensland entering the competition this year," he said.

"What a wonderful achievement for Shania.

"This is also the fourth year Shania has entered the competition and each year she has achieved a placing.

"What a remarkable and talented young lady."

Mr Lawlor said this year's entrants had risen to the creative challenge set by the Buy Smart competition and learnt some important lessons along the way.

"Many young people do not understand the consequences of running up high debts," he said.

"This competition invites students to work out the best ways of informing other young people about these issues."

Sunday 7 February: Fernvale and Lowood Uniting Church

THE UNITING Churches in Fernvale and Lowood are in the beautiful Brisbane Valley.

The congregations work together to obey our Lord's commands to love one another and help those in need.

This is done by congregation members delivering Meals on Wheels and by supporting the school chaplaincy program.

Blue Care runs Glenwood Hostel and assists people to continue living in their own homes.

The Blue Nurses Thrift Shops at Lowood and Rosewood raise funds to provide extra resources for Blue Care and the Glenwood Hostel.

Annually the Adult Fellowship organise a progressive dinner, pie drive and fashion parade to which members of the community and local churches are invited to attend and participate.

During the Harvest Festival,

the church is decorated with produce, which is later auctioned.

During 2009, after two years of discussion, research, and much prayer, the two congregations decided to join as one congregation on the Fernvale site.

Please pray for:

- The granting of permission to build a new multipurpose worship centre on the Fernvale site, and that the new building will be in use by the end of 2010.

- The school chaplaincy service and that Federal funding will be permanent.

- The Blue Nurses Thrift Shops to continue serving the community and for the shop and Meals on Wheels volunteers.

- Glenwood Hostel and that resources will be available for expansion.

- Spiritual guidance in all our work.

Sunday 21 February: Gympie Uniting Church

GYMPIE UNITING Church shares its life in a region rich in history, tourism, timber, farming and cattle.

Seven years ago the Gympie congregation joined two worshipping groups together at Red Hill, but have retained the heritage listed site at Surface Hill.

Services are held at Gympie, Imbil, Amamoor, Theebine, and Rainbow Beach.

Combined services are held throughout the parish on the 5th Sundays of the month.

Praise God for 2009 and all his goodness to us.

Pray we will all be able to continue to serve him wholeheartedly in the new year, that the fear of the Lord will increase amongst us and that many will come to know Christ as Lord and grow in the knowledge of him.

Pray for Gympie as Pastor Graham Bizzell leads a process of review of priorities, mission practices, meeting structures and best use of facilities.

This year Mary Valley and Gympie Church councillors plan to share their meetings and study times together to grow the life of the two pastorates closer together.

Pray that leaders hear wisely and follow God's peaceful promptings.

Pray for the Mary Valley congregation and Rev Iain Watt as they are involved in the support and reconstruction of community in the Mary Valley following Peter Garrett's decision to stop the building of the dam in the heart of their community. Pray for peace, reconciliation and hope as hurt, mistrust, grief and confusion are dispelled.



Future of the Church lies in present

AMERICAN M.E. Van Nostrand gave a year of his ministry to suburban Brisbane.

In addition he gave a gift to the Synod – his study of evangelism, as he saw it here.

This was in June 1981.

He added to it a 17 page appendix from which I quote: "Isn't the problem a matter

of evangelising the existing church people? Stimulating them to be more caring, more effective, more outreaching to the community at large?"

If he included our preachers with "church people" I agree and rest my case.

Phillip Ramsay
Manley West



Ideas to slow rising seas

REGARDING YOUR article *Lowest people on earth have highest priorities from COP15 talks* (December *JourneyOnline*).

I have spoken to the people of the Torres Strait and they too are having problems with sea level rise.

I have been aware of the islanders' plight for some years and thought to mention the following ideas which could be helpful in coping with sea level rise until such times as more permanent arrangements are in place.

Regarding the growing of crops and useful plants on these affected Pacific Islands, it would seem the short-term option (10-20 years) is to grow salt tolerant species.

The long term option is obvious and they need to move to places with higher ground.

To help stabilise the soil at the water's edge and stop the trees being washed away, there are many species of sedges and grasses that are salt tolerant and grow in the sand of the Australian coastline.

These species would grow around the edge of the islands and would hold the coral sand together, more so than without these species.

The loose nature of the gravel and coral detritus at the water's edge would make it susceptible to eroding wave action, especially at king high tides and result in ready intrusion of the salt water into their living and agricultural space.

Planting mangroves has been suggested and should be encouraged.

If a few mangrove plants are noticed and can survive then they could experiment with species from other tropical island countries that have mangroves.

There are publications on the internet from the US Agroforestry Information Service entitled *Agroforestry of the Pacific Technologies*.

I studied botany ... and hope these ideas are useful to the people of Tuvalu and all the island communities affected by sea level rise.

Merilyn Thomas
Townsville



Confused by funds

I COMMEND the Caloundra Uniting Church for taking the initiative and installing solar panels in the form of a Cross on the roof of their Church, and in so doing helping to reduce their greenhouse gases by 65 per cent.

But I do question their decision to source a major portion of their finance for the project, from monies originating from a source which I am sure they would have, or should have, known, inflicts financial misery upon many of its contributing participants.

There always have to be more losers than winners in any gambling operation.

The question I ask is: where is the church heading?

For an organisation which would not even hold a local raffle to raise funds, but is quite happy to obtain funds from a similar but much more elaborate gambling scheme, what is the reasoning?

The Lord works in some mysterious ways.

John Wells
Peachester



The way, truth and the light

ROB PYM (December *Journey*) is correct in that John 14:6 cannot be taken out of context but unfortunately "those people" who came to "certain conclusions" about Christ and the Bible were the very ones who buried Jesus under all that rubbish and not the ones being accused of that crime today.

Recent research into the character and political intentions of those in Roman times, involved in assembling the Bible that we have inherited today, has cleared away a lot of misconceptions that are puzzling many seekers after spiritual truth today.

Basil Gillespie
Beachmere



Lesson learnt

I ATTENDED Dutch theologian Dr Geursen's lectures at a YMCA college class in Melbourne in the 1950s.

He started off by saying that he would probably shock us because he said the Old and the New Testament needed to be "demythologised".

I indeed I was shocked but I knew that I would have the opportunity to carefully question him and so I listened carefully to what he had to say.

I believe Michael Brumpton (December *Journey*) could also have done with another lecture by Dr Geursen in which he explained that the origin of the word faith is not belief but trust.

Just imagine if Christians, Jews and Moslems started trusting each other.

Would that change our world?

The sad thing is that we have far too many people in the church who believe and not enough who trust.

We should not confuse something the church has done for ages; the meaning of the words 'faith' and 'belief'.

We cannot even begin to

have a good understanding of what the Bible says unless we are prepared to study psychological insights and historical knowledge of the people who wrote the book.

Len Notenboom
Elanora



CLASSIFIEDS

Accommodation

Brick Holiday House – Coolumb Beach QLD. Walk to patrolled beach & shops. Seniors & Ministers 25% discount. Website: <http://users.tpg.com.au/coolumb>.

London B & B. Easy city access; 1ge double room, ensuite, self-catering. Reas rates. rachel@brockleybandb.fsnet.co.uk Ph/Fax: 001144.2086946538.

Holiday unit, modern, pool. 100m from Kings Beach Caloundra from \$360/wk. Ph Ray 0427990161.

General

Uniting Church Institute: Expressions of interest are sought for participation, on a paid or voluntary basis, in exploring and trying out fresh expressions of Christian faith and practice in association with the Uniting Church. Although commitment to what is coming to be known as Progressive Christianity is not necessary, it will be helpful to be familiar with that approach. Enquiries: eiversrh@telstra.com

Email your classified advertisements to journey@ucaqld.com.au

Position Vacant Chaplain Wesley Mission Brisbane



wesley
mission
brisbane

Applications are invited for the position of fulltime Chaplain with Wesley Mission Brisbane, Aged Care Services. The appointed chaplain may be a lay person, or an ordained Minister of Religion and will have experience with Aged Care. Chaplains work as part of a team so the applicant will need to be able to demonstrate proven team work.

Chaplains walk alongside residents and staff and families, showing God's love in action. They support people according to their individual needs, be these physical, emotional or spiritual, and allow people to work through life issues with confidentiality and assist in times of crisis especially at the end of their life.

For more information or a Position Description please contact

Chairperson JNC, Wesley Mission Brisbane Chaplain
C/- Secretary Synod Placements Committee
Uniting Church in Australia (QLD Synod)
GPO Box 674, Brisbane 4001, Qld
Or phone 07 3031 3030

Applications close on February 22, 2010

www.wmb.org.au



SCHOOL CHAPLAINS

SU Qld, a Christian interchurch youth and children's agency, invites applications for the following positions of School Chaplain:

Ravenshoe P-12 School
Mount Garnet State School

Applicants will need to embrace the mission of SU Qld, and demonstrate their suitability to provide support and care to young people.

More information and apply online at www.apply-su-chaplain.com or Katie Cade on 0428 402 918

Send your letters to
journey@ucaqld.com.au or
Journey GPO Box 674,
Brisbane QLD 4001.

Letters may be edited
due to space limitations.

Please keep letters to a
maximum of 250 words.

How do you know God loves you?



I know God loves me because it tells me that in the Bible. Harish 10

When we're scared he helps us not be scared. He cares for us. Isaak 7

God gives us lots of good things. I think that is how I know he loves me. Sarah 11

My minister tells me. Alister 7

My Mummy and Daddy love me. Kate 6



Because God loved people in the Bible and he loves me too. Jordy 9

The Bible tells us that God loves us. Brian 10

From the Bible. Jess 8



Because of Jesus. Jesus loves me and us. Jasmin 10

Journey thanks Simon Gomersall and the children of Toowong Uniting Church for their answers and Gracie Kessels and Zoe and Jacob Schweitzer for their beautiful drawings.

It's always easier when you have a plan...



We all make plans as we go through life; each time we plan we make things easier for ourselves and for others. South East Qld's most comprehensive funeral guide the "Executors Funeral Plan - A Guide to Thoughtful Funeral Pre-Planning" has been designed for you, as a simple, convenient way to preplan your funeral arrangements. 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

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