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EASTERFEST WRAP-UP PAGE 4

"That's what Easterfest is all about: the church united taking the hope of the gospel outside the four walls of the church." **Isaac Moody**

FLOOD FINDS SPIRIT

"The dedication and professionalism of our staff and volunteers at times like this never ceases to amaze me." **Stephen Muggleton** PAGE 6



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CALLED TO SERVE

By Mardi Lumsden

Australia runs on volunteers.

These are the people who doorknock for the Leukemia Foundation, help at the Lifeline Bookfest, organise Meals on Wheels and so much more.

In a Productivity Commission report released in February the Australian Government's independent research and advisory body found that 4.6 million volunteers worked with not-for-profits (NFPs) with a wage equivalent value of nearly \$15 billion.

UnitingCare Queensland CEO Anne Cross said there will always be a need for volunteers.

"The need to be a good neighbour, to be a good community member, to participate in activities and services that make the community better will always be necessary," she said.

"Professional services only fill some of the gaps."

Lifeline Brisbane Volunteer Manager Anastasia Magriplis said the face of volunteering was changing and non-profit organisations needed to be flexible to offset the risk of a significant drop in volunteer numbers.

"As a provider of so many essential services to the community, it is one that we are addressing with rigour."

She said they were focussing volunteer recruitment efforts on Baby Boomers, Generation Y, new arrivals and students.

"We are investigating how we can be flexible and responsive to the needs of these groups and how we can develop mutually beneficial arrangements."

According to Ms Cross and Ms Magriplis, the majority of volunteers within Blue Care,

UnitingCare hospitals and Lifeline in Queensland were over the age of 60.

A National Church Life Survey (NCLS) report released in March found that church attendees are more likely to be volunteers than the general community (57% vs 35%).

Ms Cross said that while the roots of UnitingCare lie in the Christian faith the organisation has volunteers from all walks of life and beliefs.

"Many people have personal values and beliefs that draw them to contributing to the common good of the whole community," she said.

"At UnitingCare our job is to seek out and welcome into our work all people of good will who are concerned about the common humanity of all people."

With 35,000 employees and 25,000 volunteers UnitingCare Australia is the largest non-government provider of social services in the country, providing services which are rooted in the dedication of volunteers to two million Australians.

National Director Susan Helyar said with changing demographics and opportunities, the traditional face of volunteering has been transformed in the past couple of decades.

"Whilst many organisations continue to be underpinned by men and women who regularly contribute time and expertise to their communities, there are also many younger people who volunteer their time, and increasing numbers of people who donate their skills and advice on specific projects.

"Volunteering is a very practical expression of mutuality and generosity, qualities that strengthen and give hope to people and communities which are vulnerable or face disadvantage, hardship and loss."

She said it was important to learn from those who had long-term experience in volunteering.

"The contributions of volunteers who have worked for decades in their communities are profound, and we need to make sure that as they reduce their volunteering, we learn all we can from them about how they stuck at it for so long."

Ms Magriplis said the future of volunteering in Australia lies with organisations' ability to be responsive to the changing culture and community.

"The culture of the community bearing witness is still alive and well," she said.

"While we face some difficult times ahead with recruiting and retaining volunteers, our agencies are agile and up for the challenge."



Giving freely for the sake of all

I HAVE just returned from a visit with the United Church of the Solomon Islands where I had the remarkable experience of a church, indeed a country, that exists on the strength of volunteers.

I saw wonderful infrastructure and human services that exist because of volunteers.

I had several conversations with a group of Rotary volunteers from Rockhampton and Bundaberg.

I spent time with local men and women who spend hours serving their communities in a voluntary capacity.

I met with three remarkable women who were planning a five hour trip in an open boat to conduct a seven day workshop with a thousand village women.

In all these situations I see the sort of self giving that builds strong healthy communities.

Volunteering has always been the life blood of the Church.

Today I often hear the lament that it is getting harder to get volunteers.

This gives us a chance to revisit our whole notion of volunteering.

Why do we volunteer?

What makes a person give up time and energy to serve in an organisation without the expectation of financial return?

Apart from the good that it does to those who receive help, it also strengthens a volunteer's sense of self-worth.

It gives you a good feeling.

It makes a person feel like part of the solution rather than part of the problem.

In short, as is often stated by those who volunteer, "I receive far more than I give".

This is wonderful and ensures

We can feel resentful if we are corrected or told that we are not needed in a particular situation.

We can become convinced that we know best what is needed by those we seek to serve, thus disempowering the person.

It is easy to fall into the mistake of thinking that the poor should accept anything we do, because we mean well.

Many community organisations have received donations of goods that are not suitable or useful.

However any suggestion that they should be disposed of brings an outcry.

Sometimes our passion to help has prevented others from learning new skills or participating in their own growth and development.

All of us who volunteer need to be careful to listen to those we serve and learn from them about what help they would like and need from us.

In giving a person or community that sort of respect, we empower them, build their sense of self-worth and their capacity to feel good about themselves.

I believe that it would help all of us who seek to serve others

It is easy to fall into the mistake of thinking that the poor should accept anything we do, because we mean well.

that volunteering will continue and will grow.

However it also presents the danger that volunteering can become selfish and ignore the deeper, more long-term needs of those we seek to help.

When we volunteer we can feel that the organisation owes us something.

We can feel as though we deserve some special privilege.

Minding the Ps and Qs

LIKE SO much of the Church, *Journey* would not function without the help of a merry band of dedicated volunteers.

Each month there are six volunteers who make sure *Journey* gets to you on time and with minimal errors.

There are also the countless people who write stories and find photos for us and others who allow me to brainstorm ideas and work through issues with them.

We have four wonderful proofreaders who read the entire paper, red pens at the ready, to ensure that this editor has crossed and dotted all that needed to be crossed and dotted.

Our proofreaders wish to remain nameless for fear of people rushing up to them on the

first Sunday of the month with news of a typographical error on page two.

They have not read this column so if there are any mistakes here they are not to blame.

Judith Finau and Sue Black also come in each month and hand fold and stuff around 1000 copies of *Journey*.

If your Church or agency receives less than 10 copies you can say thank you to those two women for getting *Journey* to you.

Judith also organises the Prayer Diary each month, even when she is jet-setting around the country or ill, and Sue will pop in and put all the books that are ready for review in a database.

But what strikes me about

these six people is that *Journey* is just one of their many volunteering positions.

From caring for parents, children or grandchildren to helping at schools, cafes and running church groups, their energy seems endless.

I often wonder how they find the time and vigour to do all the things they do – and I don't think it has anything to do with the coffee I supply them with.

Perhaps it is because they are passionate about what they are doing?

I can only hope that when I have time to offer my talents more, I will remember these people and learn from their example.

Mardi Lumsden
Editor

Message from the Moderator

Rev Bruce Johnson



as volunteers to reflect upon these words from the letter to the Philippians 2:1-5.

"If then there is any encouragement in Christ, any consolation from love, any sharing in the Spirit, any compassion and sympathy, make my joy complete: be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind.

"Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves.

"Let each of you look not to

your own interests, but to the interests of others.

"Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus."

Jesus gave of himself so that all the world might be reconciled to God and empowered by the Holy Spirit.

Jesus gave no thought to his own glory, nor his own rights and privileges and so through simple obedience and humility was glorified.

As those who have been called to follow Christ, let all volunteers have that same mind.

Sign of the times



THE GLASSHOUSE Country Uniting Church sign in Beerwah, Sunshine Coast hinterland, had been vandalised each Friday night leading up to Christmas with letters being stolen and derogatory messages written.

The board was left blank for a few weeks as a deterrent but Chris Bell sent in this photo of their Easter sign.

"Our Easter message was one of forgiveness," she said. "We hope to see the perpetrators in church."



Sign of the Times is 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.

Chaplain on the front line this Anzac Day

By Phil Smith

LIKE EASTER less than a month earlier, Anzac Day is a cultural marker for thousands of Australians.

For some, either (or both) of these dates can provide a focus for life's deepest meaning or purpose.

Captain Alamoti Lavaki is serving in Afghanistan as the United Church padre for the current Reconstruction Task Force.

Capt Lavaki sees cultural connection for those of faith, and those without, in the historic and enduring values of Anzac.

"For me Anzac Day follows the example of what Easter is about," he said via phone from Afghanistan.

"The favourite reading for

Anzac Day is, 'There is no such love better than this; he gave up his life for his friends.'

"These soldiers are sacrificing their lives and family relationships that others in this world might have some peace, to make a difference out of care and love for the people here in Afghanistan."

For many Australians who would not acknowledge God, Anzac Day provides a spiritual, or perhaps quasi-religious, occasion.

"In the midst of feeling hopeless, at Easter with the bright dawn we see a new life of salvation, freedom and that sort of thing.

"I can see that too in the way we do the Anzac service in the dawn; not only remembering what they did but celebrating the freedom earned for us."

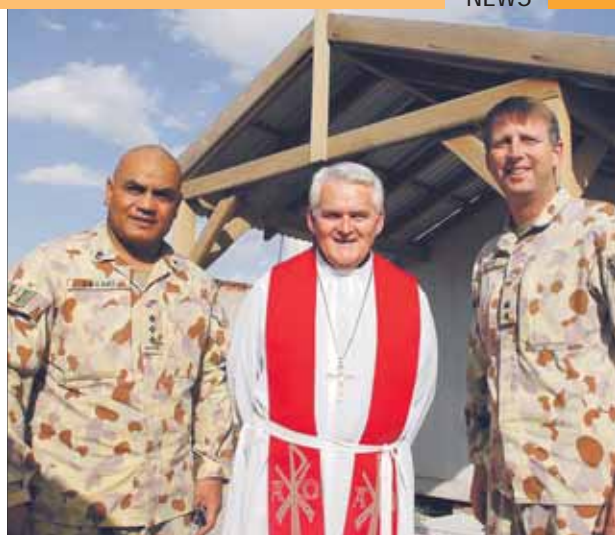
Three months into an eight month tour of duty with the Reconstruction Task Force, he is well aware of the difference between Afghanistan and Gallipoli. Dealing with terrorism is vastly different to a war between nations.

"The focus is still the same," he said. "Making a difference in people's lives in regard to freedom and to have peace."

If the Christian hopes for transformation, Capt Lavaki at least sees change for the most vulnerable; poor women and children who were brutally marginalised under the Taliban regime.

"In small villages people don't understand what's going on, but they feel safe when the Australian soldiers are near.

"The situation in which they



Chaplain Alamoti Lavaki, left, with Commanding Officer of the First Mentoring Task Force, Lieutenant Colonel Jason Blain with Military Ordinary Bishop of Australia Max Davis after the Good Friday service at Tarin Kowt Chapel. Photo courtesy of the Australian Department of Defence

live has been improving with regard to medical [provisions] and buildings, bridges, etc.

"They're little things but they bring joy."

Far from the banners and flags of the Brisbane parade, Anzac Day

was stripped back in Tarin Kowt. So was Easter without chocolate or vestments.

There was no public holiday or hoopla to distract from the significance of commemoration and celebration.

Continuing the journey

By Mardi Lumsden

GROUPS ALL over the State have been participating in *Together on the way*, enriching community workshops with a view to developing a statement of purpose and values as part of the process of discerning the future vision for the Uniting Church in Queensland.

North Queensland Presbytery Minister and Chairperson Rev Bruce Cornish said the Presbytery Leadership Team had worked through the process and submitted its responses.

"We spent two hours going through the process with the ministers and representatives from the congregations with the view to each of them following it through in their ministry setting," said Mr Cornish.

The *Together on the way*, enriching community process is seeking to engage people from across the whole Church

in Queensland to become a grassroots development through that engagement.

This engagement is important if the whole Church is going to identify a common purpose and vision and work towards its expression over the coming decade.

Workshops have been conducted in each Presbytery, but more participation is encouraged.

Rev Leva Pat helped lead a workshop for the Multi Cross Cultural Network's congregation leaders and members which led to the creation of a special section of the Synod website that links to resources, including the *Basis of Union*, in different languages.

Elaine Rae has led a workshop with representatives from Uniting Church schools who are keen to explore what it means to be a Uniting Church school.

If you would like to be involved contact your minister



Joshua Blake shares his vision for the Church at a workshop at Logan Central Multicultural Congregation.

Photo by Leva Pat

or Presbytery minister and ask someone who has done a workshop to run one for your congregation or group.

Moderator Rev Bruce Johnson would like Uniting Churches throughout Queensland to put aside Sunday 20 June as a special Sunday of worship and prayer for the *Together on the way*, enriching community journey and the future of the Church in Queensland.

Closer to the date there will be worship resources available online for use on that day.

For more information and workshop materials visit www.together.ucaqld.com.au

Uniting songs

By Amy Goodhew

SYDNEY SINGER songwriter Ben Grace has won the inaugural *Songs that Unite* competition.

Songs that Unite is a songwriting competition for the Uniting Church in Australia that seeks to encourage the development of Australian Christian music for use in congregations, by recognising high quality material and promoting it across the country.

Mr Grace found out about his win while attending Easterfest in Toowoomba.

"I feel honoured and excited and the news certainly added to our Easterfest!" he said.

His song *Alpha and Omega*

wowed the judging panel with its combination of music and lyrics.

He said the song "came from nowhere".

"It felt like it dropped from above," he said.

Mr Grace's music seems to be wowing a lot of people at the moment.

His song *Lead Me Lord*, based on the Samuel Sebastian Wesley hymn, reached number one on the Australian iTunes Inspirational charts late last year.

Rev Dr Chris Walker, a member of the *Songs that Unite* judging panel and National Consultant for Theology and Discipleship in the Assembly (involving the work of Doctrine, Worship, Mission and Evangelism) said the judges were impressed with the talent on display from entrants.

"We would describe the top 16 songs as really excellent songs – not just the top six which won prizes," he said.

The diverse judging panel was impressed that the Uniting Church had such first rate songwriters all over the country.

For more information visit www.assembly.uca.org.au



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Easterfest explores the city

By Matt Gees

THE POPULATION of Toowoomba increases significantly over Easter as thousands of visitors pour into town to take part in what has become the largest Christian festival in the southern hemisphere – Easterfest.

Held in the centre of the city at Queen's Park, the line up of live music, speakers and fun activities continues to attract crowds 12 years after beginning as the Australian Gospel Music Festival.

This year's festival attracted approximately 40,000 visitors over three days.

Easterfest CEO Isaac Moody was especially excited about this year's return of crowd favourite Newsboys, performing for the first time in Australia with new lead singer former dc Talk singer Michael Tait.

US rapper KJ 52, former garage band Superchic(k) and the newest Australian Idol Stan Walker were also part of the line-up.

But Mr Moody was especially excited about new venture Easterfest City.

"This is a concept that probably hasn't been tried anywhere else in Australia," he said.

"In an age where the gospels are retreating into the four walls of the churches, we're taking the Easter message that 2000 years ago hope and life came into the world out of the park and into the CBD of Toowoomba."

Across the Toowoomba CBD many of the restaurants, cafes, shops, churches and even the cinemas embraced the concept.

There were free live performances from many of the artists in shopping centres, cafes and restaurants, guest speakers mingling amongst the locals sharing the message of Easter.

The local Birch Carroll and Coyle cinema set aside many sessions over the long weekend to show movies with a strong moral and Christian message including the animated *The 10 Commandments* and powerful slave trade exposés *Call+ Response* and *Trade*.

Local churches welcomed festivalgoers to Easter services across the weekend in a variety of ways.

Performances from guest artists Watoto Children's Choir, Jess and Ted, and speakers John Smith and Glen Kaiser were drawcards; as were the variety of



Newsboys perform at Easterfest 2010 with new lead singer Michael Tait. Photo by Matt Gees

styles of worship on offer.

From sunrise services in the park to church in the pub, Toowoomba churches ensured that locals and visitors alike had access to the Easter message in a way that would meet the individual worshipper's expectations.

Overall Mr Moody was very happy with the involvement of the whole community.

"The restaurants and cafes were full and the shopping centre on Saturday was packed solid," said Mr Moody. "Come to Easterfest if you want to be really blessed

individually but get a sense of the bigger picture of what God's doing in taking the gospel message to an entire city.

"That's what Easterfest is all about: the church united taking the hope of the gospel outside the four walls of the church."

Moderators keep in touch through ncyc11

By Rebekah Polley

IN AN ATTEMPT to make Church leadership more aware of issues affecting young people, in the lead up to ncyc11 each Synod's Moderator will be mentored by three to five young people as they discuss issues important to them in life, faith and the Uniting Church.

The mentors and Moderators will meet monthly and will share the insights they gain over that time during panel discussions at ncyc11 on the Gold Coast at the end of this year.

Alison Cox, ncyc11 coordinator, said the program aims to show

the young people of the Uniting Church that they are valued and important in contributing to the Church.

"I'm hoping the mentors will feel truly valued and that the Moderators will gain insight into the lives of young people and be able to encourage them," she said.

"We always talk about wanting young people in our churches and being keen to have them as part of it, but sometimes it seems we don't know how to show that or express that in a way that is meaningful," said Ms Cox.

"A mentor relationship is more about the relationship than the topics discussed."

"I'm hoping a meaningful relationship will be established where there is a ready trust and honesty and willingness to have a shared experience together."

Victoria and Tasmania Synod Moderator Isabel Thomas Dobson places importance in the program as it provides a place for the Moderator and young person to have an open and frank conversation.

"People come from all different church backgrounds and because of the different backgrounds, people's experiences of church all differ," said Ms Thomas Dobson.

"It's important for the Moderator to be aware of the



Synod of Victoria and Tasmania Moderator Isabel Thomas Dobson. Photo courtesy of Crosslight

things occurring in the Church.

"It's also good to hear from the next generation as to how they experience life in the Uniting Church."

As small group's coordinator of the last NCYC, Ms Thomas Dobson had first-hand experience

of the importance of interacting with young people.

"I really saw the benefit of having a group of all ages come together and I'm looking forward to meeting with a group of mentors before and after the Convention," she said.

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David Fanning. Photo by Osker Lau

Fanning farewells his flock

AFTER 10 years David Fanning's placement in the role of Presbytery minister of the Mary Burnett Presbytery will conclude in June following three months long service leave.

At his closing service in March Mr Fanning told the ministers, deacons and

pastors of the Mary Burnett Presbytery that "the priority in their ministry was to know their people and to love their people".

These words were passed on to him in 1993 from Rev Dr David White, a retired United Methodist minister who is currently visiting family in

Australia and attended Mr Fanning's farewell service in March.

Mr Fanning was keeping quiet on his after-leave plans but when *Journey* asked if he would be using his taxi driver's licence the reply was, "Probably not".

Inspiring mission in action

ANDREW LEE, a farmer in Fernlees, near Emerald, is one of the stars of *Mission Stories*, the Queensland Synod's new DVD discussion resource.

Mr Lee takes us behind the scenes of a three week trip to Papua New Guinea with teenagers and their parents.

On returning to Queensland after a two year stint in Papua New Guinea, working alongside local farmers in an agricultural project run by the Lutheran Church, Mr Lee realised how important it was to spend quality time "disciplining" the young people in his district.

Bruce Mullan from UnitingWorld prepared Mr Lee and his team for their trip.

Duncan Macleod, whose role as Vision for Mission Advocate finishes in July, worked with Peter Armstrong and Jason Bray to develop *Mission Stories*, the sequel to *Faith Stories*.

Duncan Macleod said he has been energised by the process.

"It has been inspiring to interview so many people from grassroots Queensland.

"Jason Bray and Mike Crowhurst, the Red Earth Films team, have created a visually appealing resource that will equip

church leaders here in Queensland and across Australia."

The new resource helps local churches learn from the insights gained from new initiatives associated with the Vision for Mission project.

The DVD provides inspiring footage and discussion resources for church leaders who want to grapple with growing a congregation's effectiveness in mission.

The six sessions explore the changing shape of mission, the gospel focus for Christian communities, discipleship, local and global partnerships, entering cultures and subcultures, and holding together the many aspects of God's work in the world.

The stories feature Queenslanders from Townsville, Emerald, Maleny, Caloundra, Brisbane and the Gold Coast, with commentary from guests such as Trinity Theological College Director of Studies in Systematic Theology, Geoff Thompson, Pilgrim Learning Community Director, Rob Bos, and Blue Care Director of Mission, Colleen Geyer.

Each session includes processes for discussion, Biblical reflection,



Andrew Lee. Photo by Red Earth Films

prayer, and engagement with the *Basis of Union* (an additional option for Uniting Church contexts).

At the end of each session groups are provided with a chance to assess their effectiveness by researching their own

commitment, achievements and mission stories.

Mission Stories will be launched at the Signposts of Hope conference being held at Alex Park in the two days before the Synod, 19-20 May.

Visit www.faithstories.org.au for more information.

Register for the Signpost of Hope conference at www.ucaqld.com.au/signpostsofhope

What does Sorry Day mean to you?

By Amanda Lynch

SORRY DAY is an important and significant day. It provides all Australians with the opportunity to reflect on the history of Australia and particularly to acknowledge the pain and suffering experienced by those who were forcibly removed from their families as children.

Having been taken from their families Indigenous people are still grieving from loss of connection and sense of belonging.

I see Sorry Day as an opportunity for us to celebrate past and current achievements in the movement towards addressing these issues.

It is a day which encourages all Australians, Indigenous and non-

Indigenous alike, to advocate for justice.

Amanda Lynch holds an Indigenous Cadetship and is undertaking a dual degree in Aboriginal Studies and Social Work.

She is currently on placement at the UnitingCare Centre for Social Justice



Amanda Lynch. Photo by Osker Lau

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Floods don't dampen community spirit

By Caroline Holland

WHILE THE March flood in Queensland's far south-west caused devastating damage, it brought out only care and action among Blue Care staff and volunteers.

Charleville and Roma were hit hardest by the rising waters, however St George, Dalby, Cunnamulla and many other areas were also affected.

Blue Care Executive Director Stephen Muggleton praised Blue Care staff for their courage and action in dealing with the floods.

"The dedication and professionalism of our staff and volunteers at times like this never ceases to amaze me," he said.

"Staff I spoke to showed great determination and humour in the face of adversity, a genuine team spirit in looking after each other and an incredible focus on the future.

"They just kept saying that's life and you just have to get on with it."

South West / South Burnett Human Resource Officer John Young lives in Roma and said it was chaos, with the town receiving little warning that a flood was coming.

"My house was fully inundated and there was nothing the State Emergency Service could do except make sure everyone was okay," he said.

He was one of two staff trapped in Charleville for several days.

He said he was amazed at the warmth and spirit shown by people at such a time.

"Staff, clients and other locals were not only dealing with the flood on a personal level, often having lost all their possessions, but on work and community levels too.

"Despite all this, it didn't dampen their incredible community spirit," he said.

Mr Young now faces relocation for three to four months while major work is undertaken to repair his home and, since he works from home, must find an alternative work location as well.

"Words cannot express my appreciation for the support given by staff who came around during the clean up to make lunches for the workers and those who called to offer their help," he said.

Service Manager Kelli Partridge said three weeks later some clients in Roma were still unable to return to their homes, but help with repairs was underway.



The flooded streets of Roma. Photo by Annette Mills

"Some clients have relocated, some are staying at the local motel and others have left town," she said.

"We've also had kind donations - supplies of toiletries and warm clothing, like scarves and beanies, to help clients.

"Tradesmen have also started to arrive - I know one contractor is bringing in more than 50 tradesmen to help with repair work."

Charleville Community Care Service Manager Mary Dunne said Charleville was hit badly from the rising waters of Bradley's Gully, which flooded the Blue Care centre, along with the homes of two staff and three volunteers.

"Around 10 centimetres of water washed through our Community Care building with damage to carpets and appliances," she said.

"There was no power or phone

for a few days.

"Some of our clients were evacuated to the showgrounds and we went there to check on them.

"Staff who could get in to work did extra shifts.

"We have been through a flood before so we knew what to expect, how to evacuate, how to quickly contact and assess our clients, and what would need to be done as water receded."

Signposts of Hope

A conference to celebrate and encourage fresh expressions of church

No funds for restart

WESLEY MISSION Brisbane's Restart Alternative Education Program on the Gold Coast will close on 30 June 2010 if funding cannot be found to save the program.

Restart is the only alternative education provider offering free accredited education in numeracy and literacy on the Gold Coast,

other than mainstream school.

It is aimed at people aged 15 to 17 who have disengaged from local high schools.

Restart program coordinator Natasha Milner said closure would increase the gap in educational opportunities for young people on the Gold Coast.

"The program is proven to work and the course has been at full capacity since it began in 2007," she said.

"Students on our waiting list will not have any other options

available to them without this program," she said.

One participant, Neisha, said she appreciated the respect shown to young people by the staff.

"They respect that every one's different so there are team building activities."

Another participant, Taya, agreed.

"Every student has a different reason why they attend Restart, and they all have different experiences, but every person is accepted."

UnitingWorld farewells Laurie Fitzgerald

By Tom Ganderton

UNITINGWORLD has bid farewell to Associate Director for Relief and Development and the longest serving team member, Rev Laurie Fitzgerald.

Mr Fitzgerald retired in April after more than 17 years working to build and foster international partnerships between the Uniting Church in Australia and overseas church partners.

In 1993 Mr Fitzgerald started as the Assembly Development Officer for World Mission.

In this position he initiated a range of new ideas that have allowed the overseas work of the Uniting Church to grow and move from strength to strength.

Mr Fitzgerald said one of the highlights throughout his time at UnitingWorld was leading the Relief and Development Unit into full accreditation with the

Australian Government's overseas aid program program, AusAID, in 2006.

AusAID accreditation has significantly increased the

capacity of UnitingWorld to stand in solidarity with overseas partners.

Rob Floyd will continue to lead the Relief and Development Unit.



Rev Laurie Fitzgerald visiting a water and sanitation project in Vellore, that operates in partnership with UnitingWorld and the Church of South India. Photo courtesy of UnitingWorld

Voluntourism takes off

By Phil Smith

CHRISTIANS CALL it short term mission. The secular world calls it philanthropic travel. The marketing industry calls it voluntourism.

Tens of thousands of people incorporate useful service into their recreational travels, building an orphanage in Africa, filling teeth on a Mercy Ship, teaching in the Pacific or planting trees in the Outback, and numbers are growing.

A recent Travel Industry Association of America survey indicated 24 per cent of travellers said they were interested in taking a volunteer or service-based vacation.

Travelocity research showed the percentage of respondents planning to volunteer during their vacations growing by around four per cent per year since 2006.

Throughout Queensland, Uniting Churches have raised funds for individuals and teams travelling to work on overseas mission and aid projects.

There appears to be a

generation no longer satisfied with putting their donation in the specially marked envelope and leaving it to the church to make something happen.

But this desire to make a difference through personal involvement raises some questions.

What's the difference between an adventure holiday and a mission trip?

Michelle Farrall serves on the board of the Australian cross-cultural mission agency, Global International.

She has raised concerns about the motivation of some people.

"Does volunteering imply a self-sacrificing covenant or is it more akin to a mobile phone contract aimed at the best value for minimal input?" asked Ms Farrall.

She said potentially life transforming experiences can be reduced to a three week feel-good expedition (from which an

impoverished village got wind-powered water pumps).

"Sometimes I worry that long-term change in these communities won't happen unless teams are in there for the long haul."

For more than 50 years the Uniting Church and its predecessors have supported volunteers building schools, manse and medical clinics overseas.

Today the emphasis is on building capacity rather than facilities, imparting skills and establishing long-term relationships between churches here and in developing communities.

For many western Christians it is financially costly but simpler to travel thousands of kilometres once to a project overseas rather than commit long-term to a low cost local ministry.

But volunteering at home is just as important as heading

What's the difference between an adventure holiday and a mission trip?



Peter Gear visited a children's home in Uganda while on a mission trip with his family. Photo by Karen Gear

overseas. Serving people you see in the street, and perhaps in your pews, demands relationships and creates emotional ties.

In Bundaberg the Uniting Church provides most of the volunteers for Andy's Place which runs a cafe for the needy in the Church hall.

They serve alongside other denominations and people with no faith affiliation at all.

Mission and Andy's Place seem to go hand in hand in the Bundaberg congregations according to Rev Ray Nutley.

"Volunteering here creates fellowship and team spirit," said Mr Nutley.

"Lack of time and health issues are the main reasons for the

cessation of a volunteer role."

As with any mission, there are emotional and financial costs.

"At the beginning there was concern about damage to property," recalled Mr Nutley.

"Those fears have dissolved and the facility now has its place within the congregation."

The New Testament clearly speaks of God providing various gifts in different circumstances for local churches to fulfil the commission in the entire world.

Perhaps a twist on the great commission could be a constant call for volunteers turning up in the Sunday school, turning sausages in the refuge kitchen and turning the tap at the water project in Sudan.

Golden years with the Son

By Mardi Lumsden

LIKE SO many retired ministers and church members the list of activities Rev Ron Holt OAM does in retirement seems endless.

Even he had to write them all down so as not to forget one while speaking with *Journey*.

Mr Holt officially retired in April 2006 but has continued to serve in roles from supply ministry to school chaplaincy and said he is blessed with good health and, to date, has not taken any time off due to sickness.

Mr Holt came to faith while attending Boys' Brigade at the Bexley North Church of Christ.

After moving to Brisbane to be minister at the Zillmere and Boondall Church of Christ he became chaplain to Brisbane's notorious Boggo Road Gaol for seven years.

"It was my job to take all the volunteer employers into my care.

"They took considerable numbers of men who were released from there and 90 per cent of those men never re-offended and became secure in the positions which they held," he said.

Mr Holt was also a chaplain

and cricket coach at the Westbrook Training Centre for Boys.

"I was amazed at some of the young lads I met there who I had known previously and obviously hadn't succeeded with," he laughed.

The self-confessed 'ecumaniac' then began a long career in high school chaplaincy and to this day gets phone calls from former students asking him to officiate at their weddings and baptise their children.

From 1974 to 1987 he was chaplain at Brisbane Boys' College (BBC) in Toowong where he and his wife were house parents.

He said current BBC chaplain Graham Cole was one of his student ministers while at BBC.

"I am thrilled about his work"

After being parish minister at Clayfield Hamilton and Graceville Uniting Churches until his retirement Mr Holt never stopped volunteering his time and talents, always supported by his wife Lorna.

He pioneered chaplaincy in the Queensland Fire Department, leading to the provision of employed chaplains to the Fire Department, and helped establish the study of religion in

Queensland schools. Currently he is chaplain at Sunshine Coast Grammar School, but insists they pay him only a minimal allowance.

He said the key for churches to remain relevant is by getting into their local areas.

"You've got to be involved in the community," he said.

"Ministers need to be involved in the community. They need to belong to the Rotary Club or Lions and all the rest of it."

He said Girls' and Boys' Brigades are a great way to connect with young people.

"You have got to get them involved from the schools and it has to be ecumenical."

Mr Holt has been criticised for being chaplain to the Masonic Lodge in Queensland.

"Someone said to me, 'That's of the devil isn't it?'"

"I said well if it is, then isn't it great that I can be chaplain of it?"

Mr Holt also sings and plays piano and keyboard in his spare time and is performing to help raise funds for the Wesley Hospital Auxiliary at the Wesley Hospital new auditorium, Brisbane, at 10am on 10 June



Rev Ron Holt, right, with Sunshine Coast Grammar School (SCGS) chaplain Pastor Jon Taylor. Photo courtesy of SCGS

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Volunteers on the rise at Blue Care

By Hayley Campbell and Mardi Lumsden

BLUE CARE is one organisation that, from its very beginning, has relied on dedicated volunteers.

Blue Care Brisbane Northside volunteer coordinator Fiona Walker has worked for Blue Care for nearly 10 years.

She said non-profit organisations would struggle without the aid of people who were willing to give their time and talents to help others.

"Not only would they suffer financially but, more importantly, they would suffer from the loss of the value-adding and enrichment that volunteers bring to the lives of the people that we care for.

"The relationship that our clients and residents have with their volunteers is something very special," she said.

Ms Walker has noticed an increase in people of all ages offering to volunteer.

"I definitely saw an increase following the economic downturn," she said.

"People had lost their jobs and were potentially looking at a career change, or they were wanting to do something meaningful to fill their time while they were searching for employment.

"At the heart of all volunteers is the desire to help and to make a difference to someone else's life.

"Perhaps people are just becoming more aware that there are opportunities to give back to the community."

She said the view that younger people are not willing to volunteer is incorrect.

"We just need to adjust the way we view traditional volunteering, and as an organisation relying on volunteers, we need to start fitting around this new breed of volunteers," she said.

"We need to accept that they are not going to be around for the next 20 years, but you can be assured that they will give their



Blue Care Brisbane Northside volunteers Vangel Stefanoski, left, and Janette Field, centre, with volunteer coordinator Fiona Walker, right. Photo by Hayley Campbell

all during the time that they are volunteering.

"The young volunteers that I work with have a fantastic sense of community and a willingness to contribute in a meaningful way."

Vangel Stefanoski volunteers at Blue Care's Merriwee Court Aged Care Facility in Hamilton, Brisbane.

"I really enjoy going to visit my resident at Merriwee, to listen to all her stories," he said.

"I also like to see the smile on her face when she shares these stories."

He said time constraints of family and work commitments have made volunteering more

difficult for people starting their careers.

"People my age are too focused on receiving physical gain (money, possessions) for work they do.

"The general perception of volunteers amongst young people is that they are all older and serve biscuits or sell cakes at stalls.

"They are uneducated in just how diverse and rewarding volunteering can be."

Janette Field is a retired nurse and health and safety professional who volunteers at Blue Care Brisbane Northside.

Helping her parents in the last years of their lives created a desire in her to help others in aged care.

She thinks there has been an increase in the number of people wanting to volunteer, but a decrease in the time they can give.

"My current lifestyle often prevents me from volunteering on the same day or time every week," said Ms Field.

This is a common dilemma in modern day volunteering.

But Ms Field enjoys the genuine appreciation shown by clients for the "very small amount of time and effort it takes to help them do things" that able bodied people take for granted.

"It makes me smile from the inside out," she said.

Malcolm still in the middle at Bundaberg

By Frank Millett

AFTER 65 years of faithful service as a Sunday School teacher there is no sign of retirement just yet

for Bundaberg Uniting Church's Malcolm McCracken.

Born in 1929 Malcolm McCracken attended Sunday School at Oakwood Methodist

Church where his father was Superintendent.

In 1945 and having just embarked on his career as an electrician, he started teaching

"little kindy kids" at the Barolin St Methodist church (now Bundaberg Uniting Church).

On his own admission he initially was "scared stiff of them".

Now, in 2010 and fast approaching his 81st birthday, he is still a much loved part of the Sunday School and Church.

In those early post war times Mr McCracken remembered that between the Methodists and Presbyterians there would have been at least 10 Sunday Schools; some with enrolments up to 100 students - a far cry from the situation today.

He reflected that the overall behaviour of contemporary students is much better than those of earlier times, when parents, perhaps thinking it was the right thing to do, packed children off each Sunday, possibly with little personal faith commitment themselves.

At one stage Mr McCracken took classes at Walkervale in the morning and at Barolin Street in the afternoon.

He recalled that even prior to Church union, as numbers waned, Walkervale Methodist Sunday School and Walkervale

Presbyterian Sunday School combined.

He has memories of the large combined Sunday School family picnics when a truck load of gear, including the old copper boiler, and a convoy of other vehicles headed to a favourite spot for fun and games and lots of food.

He's also been involved with youth groups including State Easter Camps and recalls assisting students prepare for voluntary Scripture exams.

Mr McCracken is a humble servant and prefers to "just be a helper" but there have been times when he has found himself running the show and, no doubt, mentoring new and young teachers along the way.

Over the past twenty years he has encouraged the young people through coordinating and participating with them in the 40 Hour Famine.

He is also the main man when it comes to photography within the Sunday School and parish, including Day Camp each July.

Through our Mr Mac hundreds, maybe thousands, of young people have learned about the love and teachings of Jesus.



Malcolm McCracken continues to teach Sunday School after 65 years. Photo by Frank Millett

Treasures in the trash

By Phil Smith

ELIZABETH MULLAN hasn't made the type of career move expected of most teaching graduates.

The former Gold Coast and Canberra resident (via Japan) uses her degrees in Asian Studies, where she was awarded first class honours, Arts (linguistics and anthropology) and her musical aptitude (she has an AMus) to work for a community that lives on an enormous rubbish tip in Manila.

Smokey Mountain II is an infamous place where residents earn a living from sorting an actual mountain of rubbish.

Yet the aspirations of these people are common the world over, and education for their children is highly valued.

Ms Mullan works with local teachers to develop a music education program for the Day Care Centre, introducing music to complement learning in the general curriculum and as a specialist subject one day per week.

The Centre was founded by the United Church of Christ in the Philippines (UCCP) Tondo congregation in 2008.

The Centre provides a one-year pre-school program for

children living on the dumpsite. The 2009-2010 intake consisted of 50 children, aged between 4 and 9.

The goal of the program is to introduce children to a school environment and equip them with reading, writing, counting skills and socialisation, such that at the end of the year they are prepared to enrol in grade one of a local school.

Ms Mullan began her year-long assignment in November last year with the Australian Youth Ambassadors for Development (AYAD) Program through UnitingWorld in Manila, Philippines.

The AYAD program is an Australian Government, AusAID initiative.

Ms Mullan said music enhances children's cognitive, emotional and physical growth and that self-esteem is enhanced as children take turns to lead actions or direct the dynamics of a song.

"Throughout the year the children have had several opportunities to perform special numbers for their parents and the church community," she said.

"I will never forget the first performance where, as the children sang, the parents stood from their seats, eyes shining with pride, and together moved towards the stage without taking their eyes from



Elizabeth Mullan with a class of children at Smokey Mountain II Day Care Center [sic], Manila. Photo courtesy of Elizabeth Mullan and UnitingWorld

their children for a moment!"

After living and studying abroad Ms Mullan approached UnitingWorld, eager to commit a year to volunteering with a partner church project.

UnitingWorld balanced her extensive skills and interests alongside potential placements.

The Manila placement was

developed as an AYAD assignment with UnitingWorld as Australian Partner Organisation.

Ms Mullan's circumstance involves basic development alongside a UnitingWorld partner, with comprehensive training and strong in-country support provided by AYAD in a challenging environment.

"I felt my life was becoming a bit comfortable," she explained.

"I wanted an experience that would keep me from complacency and really challenge me about the choices I make in life.

"I certainly came to the right place – indeed, sometimes I have to remind myself that a challenge was what I was after!"

The Born itinerary

By Phil Smith

IF PAUL and Barnabas had a motorhome like Lew and Betty Born's the apostle may have used his tent making skills setting up the annexe.

At the beginning of a year-long journey of encouragement, fiddling with the annexe and a leaky vent were headline events for Rev and Mrs Born as they travel the highways and byways of country Australia, offering ministry to rural congregations which cannot afford full-time ministers.

Within a month of leaving their home at Robina, on the Gold Coast, they were well into western New South Wales, preaching at Sunday meetings, and attending Bible studies, sewing circles and kids' clubs.

A few weeks later the daily routines are just that.

The Borns are marvelling at the stories of God's people in tiny communities.

As the Uniting Church across Australia seeks ways to support rural congregations and declining towns, the experiences of those at

the coal face (and shearing shed and corner store and B&B) may be a valuable resource for church leaders.

Rather than despatching letters via couriers on the Roman roads, the allegedly retired couple have made good use of the internet, emailing photos and a daily diary back to their prayer supporters and friends.

The example Paul and Barnabas is still important, although setting up the annexe has dropped from a three hour marathon to a 30 minute challenge.



Leslene Woodward in Kiribati. Photo courtesy of UnitingWorld

Read all about it in Kiribati

LESLENE WOODWARD is a long-term UnitingWorld volunteer in Kiribati and has been serving there for five years.

Her project is to set up the library at the Tangintebu Theological College on the island of Tarawa, the main island in the Republic of Kiribati, in the South Pacific Ocean.

"The library was in urgent need of improvement and upgrading, and that is my main role here.

"I have classified the books, created a database and a card catalogue system, and have developed a management system specific to libraries where English is not the first language," she said.

"The library is designed so an administrative person, rather than a qualified librarian, can run it."

Ms Woodward's previous experience teaching English as a second language helped her slip into tutoring students in English.

She has also been lecturing librarians around the islands to assist them to be better qualified.

Ms Woodward said it was important to respect other cultures and faiths while volunteering and not to judge your achievements on a developed world standard.

"In the countries I have worked - Bali, Bangkok, South India and now here - success is achieved by being there, not by the visual improvement we leave behind," she said.

"I was probably more successful as a role model to show that older women still had a useful role in society than in my teaching."



Betty and Lew Born meet a friend along the way. Photo courtesy of Lew Born and Don Hutton

Singing a new song

By Phil Smith

IT WOULD be difficult to imagine an average suburban Uniting Church Sunday worship time without music.

Our musical heritage includes Old Testament psalms, early Church chants and Reformation hymns.

Wesley, Watts and Alexander helped shape the mind and set the rhythm of congregations for generations.

In the 1970s they knew we were Christians by our choruses from Scripture in Song and Maranatha Music.

Graham Kendrick and Matt Redman gave us a sound track for worship through the 1990s and Hillsong music is as much a part of many Uniting Churches as Iona's melodies this century.

Where is music in the mix as we worship Jesus?

For members whose only connection to church is a Sunday 'service', the music and the message are often the two big ticket items.

Rev David Macgregor hosts www.togethertocelbrate.com.au - a worship music resource based on the common lectionary readings.

As a musician and Uniting Church minister, he explores the link between music and worship.

"There's something about music that taps into the human spirit and the spirit of God," said Mr Macgregor.

"At its spirit-filled best, the role of music can be a vehicle for praise, confession and lament, intercession, prayer, enhancing the sacraments and singing the scriptures."

Kerri Gear developed and presented the worship leaders training material used by a number of Queensland presbyteries in recent years.

Music, according to Ms Gear, has the power to move the spirit into action.

"It is one way that the congregation can actively participate in worship, rather than having it done on their behalf by the people at the front," she said.

"It can be a powerful tool in teaching us our theology. It helps us to focus on and connect with God and with each other. It is the voice of encouragement and of unity."

Like good preaching, music in worship must say the right things and say them well.

It's not about entertainment, yet it must be engaging to have an impact.

At first glance it seems many ministers and musicians believe that better, newer, louder music will attract young people to the church.

Ms Gear isn't convinced.

"I believe that it is only when we stop doing what we like in worship and start doing what God wants, that true worship will happen.

"This is what people will be attracted to."

It's no small challenge to graft a better understanding of God into metre, rhyme and rhythm of song.

Few congregations expect a minister of the word to be a one-person band so in recent years the ill-defined role of worship leader has emerged, going beyond conducting the choir or leading the band.

Craig Burnett is Logan Uniting Church's Creative Arts Coordinator.

"A worship leader is trying, usually with some level of pain, to facilitate connection with God," he said.

"It's hard work.

"We bring our insecurities and doubts, we hope this is working, we pray about what we are doing, we have a team with us that we hope we are helping in their journey also."

One of the great challenges for a denomination that emphasises the ministry of all believers is to develop the talents and gifts of



When Craig Burnett isn't being Logan Uniting Church's Creative Arts Coordinator he can be found performing in the jazz band Scat. Photo by Mardi Lumsden

those who may not be tertiary educated experts.

Rev David Fender, of Enoggera's Emmanuel Uniting Church, said his preference is for lyrics and the message they carry, adding that they must sit within music that most members can sing comfortably.

"I plan with my worship teams so we craft the service together.

"One of the evaluation questions that we use is whether the message and the rest of the service were in agreement.

"The message of God is conveyed through the whole service, not just the sermon."

The Uniting Church's recent national songwriting competition, *Songs that Unite*, drew entries from around the country.

The desire to develop music in local churches may be a good reflection of St Paul's emphasis on worship as a daily life activity: not so much a service on Sunday, so much as service throughout the week in the life of community.

The art is in crafting a musical and lyrical expression of proper worship in the context of a congregation's time and place.

Suggested Web Resources

www.togethertocelbrate.com.au is a Lectionary based music resource

www.worshipleader.com includes a sampler CD as part of their magazine subscription

www.resoundworship.com is an open source hub of more theological and justice orientated songs and resources



Oxley-Darra Uniting Church minister and member of the National Working Group on Worship Rev David Macgregor. Photo by Osker Lau

Unanswered questions in a life too big to understand



Journey looks at Brian McLaren's third question that is transforming the church: the God question.

By Colleen Geyer

EVER FLOAT in the pool or in the ocean, your ears submerged and your eyes closed?

You are surrounded by water and you don't hear anything but the depth of the water.

It's just you and a massive expanse that you are suspended in.

This image has long been one of my God images – I am suspended in, held, supported

and surrounded by God. There is nothing else.

But this is an image only for calm waters – other times we get dumped by the waves, or a tsunami hits, floods come, or a creature attacks.

Life is not usually about the calm, it's about a frenetic, challenging, risky reality.

And it's at the epicentre of this reality that we, as individuals and the church, must make sense of who God is.

How we experience life is inextricably linked with how we know God.

We can't ask a question about life (e.g. why is this happening to me?) without also querying how we understand God.

And so the spiral begins.

Is God violent?

Why do innocent people suffer?

Is God just, compassionate?

How does this make sense of some of the things we read in the Bible?

Other questions are closer to home.

Why did my child's child die before it was born?

How is it fair that my wife doesn't know who I am anymore?

Where was God when I lost my family in the bush fire, flood, or car accident?

Sometimes they never end, do they? The questions that is.

So, what do we know?

God is present, with us.

God loves us enormously, extravagantly, to the point of giving his life for us.

God doesn't shy away from the difficult, messy situations.

God is just, compassionate and merciful.

Just when we get overwhelmed by the enormity of our lives or the events in our world; when we

realise our insignificance in the presence of the God who created life – we read that we were made in God's image.

We were loved enough for the all-powerful, all-knowing, ever-present God to come to where we live and show us just how expansive that love is.

And then we realise that the love God has for us gives us value and worth, and the questions that don't have any answers can be lived through in the presence of our God who is with us.

Colleen Geyer is Blue Care's Director of Mission

Creating a web of their own

By Phil Smith

IN THE Information Super Highway terminology of the Keating era, a website is your church's presence beside that virtual freeway.

People on holidays or new to an area – potential worshippers – are most likely to find a church via a Google search than any other means, including the phone book.

What does this vital piece of congregational infrastructure say about Uniting Churches and the mission of our congregations?

The sad fact is many of us are failing miserably.

If we maintained our property the way we maintain our websites passers-by would see buildings with peeling paint and tarped-over roofs.

Taking the analogy a step further, would any congregation try to 'get by' without a cleaning and mowing roster or a property and finance committee?

As a simple test *Journey* googled a certain Uniting Church minister.

A year since he arrived at his current placement the congregation's home page still says the congregation is excited to welcome their new minister.

That same minister is still listed on the team at his previous congregation.

Dr Dave Bourgeois worked in

the IT industry for 15 years before lecturing at Biola University, a private Christian university in Southern California.

He describes the internet as the greatest communication tool ever invented, with an impact that may one day be seen as greater than Gutenberg's printing press.

So why are churches still hesitating to take up such a powerful medium and learn how to use it well?

Many congregational websites are little more than a list of contacts and service times. Well developed sites can provide audio or video streams of meetings, daily

or weekly Bible studies, discussion forums, email addresses for members, fund raising, news from around the congregation, photo galleries and links to other ministries in the wider Church.

Dr Bourgeois said online ministry must dovetail with a congregation's other ministries, connecting with pastoral care, eldership or the outreach and discipling work, even the finance and property committee.

"It all starts with strategy," he said. "If the website (or online presence) is developed so that it has a clear set of objectives that are fully aligned with the church's

own objectives, then there should be a nice alignment between those working on the online presence and those in other ministries.

"In my research I have found that planning is the number one difference between success and failure in online ministry."

That planning should include setting objectives, defining target users, and researching the best way to reach those objectives and target users.

Congregations that value opportunities for connection place a high level of ownership on their website and other online capabilities.

In Western Australia, Canningvale's Billabong Uniting Church members only meet physically once each fortnight.

Members own the website and use it for discussion and fellowship.

Smaller faith communities often value simple web and blog sites where members stay in touch online between meetings.

David Bourgeois said ownership and involvement depend on a website's purpose.

"If your purpose is to build your relationship with your members and help them in their spiritual walk, then this is very important.

"The more relational you make your online presence; the more people will feel ownership.

"And it needs to be more than your website alone.

"For example, many in the church would feel much more 'ownership' if they got daily posts from the church on their Facebook wall."

A church's online presence can be a means by which the traditional model of church communication is turned on its head.

Instead of a one-way flow of information from the pulpit or the office, an effective website allows information, resources, questions and answers to flow amongst church members and the communities they serve.



May 8, 12-2.30pm

20th Anniversary Luncheon of the Timor Children's Foundation at Kenmore Uniting Church, 982 Moggill Rd.



Celebrate the founding of a scholarship scheme for students in East Timor by Arie van Klinken, left with young men in Matata. \$20. Proceeds will fund secondary, tertiary and vocational training scholarships in East Timor. Contact Helen Findlay on 3378 2647 or jfi71567@optusnet.com.au.

May 1-2. Gretta Vosper visits Brisbane. 10am and 7.30pm 1 May at Wesley House 140 Ann St Brisbane. 2 May, 6.30pm at St Mary's Community in Exile and West End Uniting Church. Visit www.layforum.unitingchurch.org.au. Register with Rodney Eivers at eiversrh@Telstra.com.

May 8, 7-9am. Trinity Ipswich Uniting Church men's breakfast, 114 jacaranda rd, north Booval. Contact Jim Bales on 3288 8685, 38123110 or viliami_anamila@bigpond.com.

May 8, 2-4pm. Music for Mothers at St David's Uniting Church Coopers Plains. A delightful hour of music followed by afternoon tea and a Mother's Day stall. Tickets \$10. Contact Lorraine Bence on 3274 3401 or stdavidsnc@bigpond.com.

May 15, 7-9pm. Sacred Sounds at Chermide Kedron Community Church. Music by Marc-Antoine Charpentier, Henry Purcell and Clare Maclean. Choral ensemble Counterpoint, soloists, acclaimed pipe organist Eduarda van Klinken, violinist Atilla Sautov and artists from The Mueller International Chamber Orchestra. Contact 3863 0730 or visit counterpointredcliffe.com.

May 16. Nobby Uniting Church Centenary celebrations. 10am service followed by a light luncheon. Bring a plate to share. Contact Margaret Ferguson on glenvieuglmi@bigpond.com.

May 16-23. Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. Resources and links available at www.ncca.org.au.

May 20-22. Wheller Gardens Rummage Sale, Uhl Hall Wheller Gardens 930 Gympie Road Chermide. Contact M. Herbert on 3857 4668 or billmer@bigpond.com.

May 22. Fair Trade and Green Market in Caloundra Uniting Church. Stalls, educational displays and information on local fair trade outlets. Contact Margaret Landbeck on m.landbeck@ozemail.com.au.

May 22, 9am-3pm. Car Boot sale/Trash & Treasure at Chermide Kedron Community Church cnr Rode and Gympie Rds. \$10 per site. Contact Christine di Mauro on 3350.4302 or office@ckcc.org.au.

May 22, 9.30am-3pm. Australian Christian Meditation Community Day at St Peter Chanel parish hall, The Gap. Contact Gabby Nelson on 3711 4227 or toga@bigpond.net.au.

May 26. National Sorry Day and NATSIEC Week of Prayer for Reconciliation. Prayer material available at www.ncca.org.au.

May 30, 9-11am. The Pentecostal Service - the Spirit of Life at Trinity Ipswich Uniting Church. Contact Viliami Mila on 3812 3110 or viliami_anamila@bigpond.com.

May 30, 9-10am. Frontier Services - Recognition of 84 years service at Albert Street Uniting Church, Brisbane city. Contact Rosemary Hiley on 3031 3030 or r.hiley@wmb.org.au.

May 30, 2-5pm. Pentecost Celebrations and Birthday Bash. Wesley Kangaroo Point Uniting Church and the Hwa Sung Presbyterian Church, Brisbane, host an afternoon of free food, fun and fantastic entertainment. For more information ph 3391 1355 or visit www.wkpuc.org.au.

May 30, 6-8pm. Contact @ Aspley Uniting Church. Worship with band Remember Seven and World Vision. BBQ from 6pm. Contact Reece Weber on 0468 964 212 or reece.weber@gmail.com.



Members of the Royal Youth Organisation at work on a laptop supplied by the Queensland Synod. Photo courtesy of Rassel Chisango and Paul Wildman

Synod taps into Zimbabwe's youth

THREE YEARS after Zimbabwe's Royal Youth Organisation (RYO) Director Rassel Chisango visited Australia the organisation is still thanking Uniting Churches in Queensland.

During his Australian visit in 2007 Mr Chisango was given a laptop computer for his organisation by the Queensland Synod and has received a financial gift from Kairos Uniting Church.

Kairos' Wavell Heights congregation donated \$250 and Mr Chisango could not be happier.

"Although it is not that much in Australian terms it means a lot in Zimbabwean terms," he said.

Kairos Uniting Church, in conjunction with the Nundah Lions group, assisted with funds to help the RYO's Project Reclaim Festival, an event aimed at HIV and AIDS awareness and changing the behaviour of youth.

Soon after the inaugural event the local city council offered unwavering ongoing partnership with RYO to identify land for local recreational facilities.

"As RYO we are humbled by this outcome," said Mr Chisango.

He also paid special tribute to Paul and Annette Wildman, the Synod IT department, Michael Jeffrey, Chris and Caitlyn Szigetvari, and Cameron Neil.

Haigslea correction Order of Knights

LAST EDITION the phone number printed for contributions to the Haigslea Uniting Church centenary was printed incorrectly. The correct number for Mrs Faulkner is 5464 4118.

THE ORDER of Knights, Girls' Comradeship and Rays' reunion will be held on the weekend of 16-17 October at Ipswich City Uniting Church. If you can help contact Paul Coker on 3288 0535 or pcoker1@bigpond.net.au.

Date claimer

Reconciliation service

AN ECUMENICAL reconciliation service will be held at St John's Anglican Cathedral, Brisbane at 7.30pm on 1 June.

The service is one of partnership and reconciliation, bringing together Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Christians and other Christians from diverse churches, and is hosted by QTC's Churches Together Indigenous People's Partnership (CTIPP).

Contact Georgia Corowa on 3369 6792 or ctipp@qct.org.au for more details.

Christology introduction

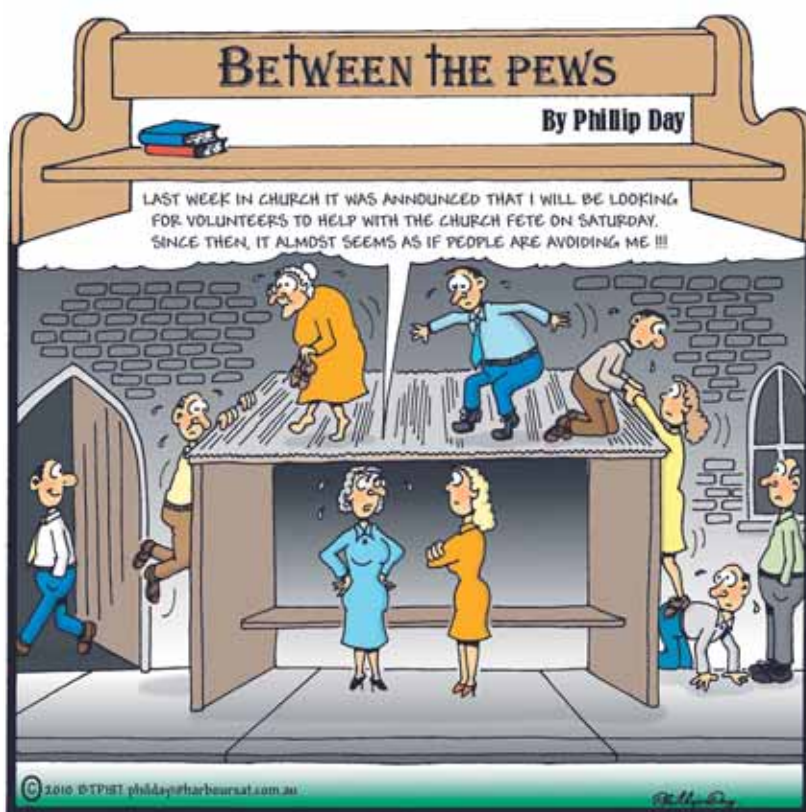
ON 4 JUNE the Mary Burnett Presbytery will host an introductory course on the life and ministry of Christ for people wishing to become a Lay Preachers, Lay Preachers wishing to undertake CEM, and anyone who would like to grow their faith and understanding of Jesus Christ.

Contact Karyl Davison on 0437 600 869 or ruralmin@bigpond.com for more details.

Iona West open hall

IONA WEST Uniting Church, West Mackay, celebrates the opening of their new hall on 5-6 June. Moderator Rev Bruce Johnson will speak at the Annual Dinner and the dedication service for the opening of the new Church hall.

Contact Rev Euan McDonald on 4951 3869 or eandymcd@bigpond.net.au or more details.



Hope is our song:

New hymns and songs from Aotearoa, New Zealand

Publication of the New Zealand Hymnbook Trust, 2009, RRP \$35

Reviewed by Ruth Beasley, a composer and music leader at Mareeba Uniting Church.

READERS WHO are familiar with *Alleluia Aotearoa*, *Faith Forever Singing* and *Carol Our Christmas* will be delighted to see this new book, another publication from the New Zealand Hymnbook Trust.

The quote on the fly leaf, "158 songs for church and community", is an apt summary of the contents and it is that combination that draws me to the book.

Here are singable songs with uncomplicated rhythms, well within the grasp of the average pianist, that express the place of the Christian in community in today's language.

This does not mean that the music is bland, far from it.

The distinct "oom-pah-pah" of *Christians are all kinds of People* resonates aptly with the words, and the gentle flow of Colin Gibson's tune *Forgiveness*

beautifully complements Shirley Murray's words in *Because You Came*.

These two writers have combined to give us a further rich experience in *Simply to Be*, a reflective piece.

When it comes to patriotic occasions it is not easy to find something modern but here we have, from the same two writers, *Honour the Dead* - a hymn specially for Anzac Day.

Jocelyn Marshall's *As sisters, brothers, called by Christ* does not have a set tune but a recommended one.

Through the singing of the songs in this book we can express our relationship with God, our belonging to the whole of creation, including our guardianship of it, our concern for social issues and our sense of community and what that involves.

With separate indexes for



biblical references, themes, the church year and various worship services, access to the contents is made very easy.

Anyone who dips into this book cannot fail to be moved by the breadth of expression to which these songs give rise.

The worshipping community is blessed to have this further publication from the New Zealand Hymnbook Trust.

The Sheep of His Hand: Reflections on the Psalms from a 21st Century Shepherd

By Suzanne Davenport Tietjen, Monarch Books, 2009, RRP \$22.95

Reviewed by Rosemary Wycherley who owns a cattle farm in Esk and is an elder in her local Uniting Church.

THIS GEM of a book takes the reader on a journey into the world of the modern day shepherd, exploring David's Psalms and drawing eye-opening parallels with God's role as the shepherd.

The Sheep of His Hand brings to life the ancient tradition of minding a flock of wilful, longing sheep and provides the reader with a deeper understanding of what it means to walk with God and, more importantly, how to follow him.

Ms Davenport Tietjen poses a simple question.

She writes: "The Shepherd

Psalms resonates with our hearts, but we remain strangers to the rhythms of the pastures, the habit of the sheep and how they perceive the world. God says we are his sheep. David's generation got the meaning. Do we?"

The answer is steadily revealed as she relates everyday events on her sheep farm.

Some are joyful, others heartbreaking, but each provides a powerful insight into what it must mean for God leading his flock of errant Christians.

Each chapter is expertly crafted to capture a characteristic of her sheep in relation to those in God's flock.

The author explores different facets of a Christian's struggle with faith and shows how the Psalms shape Christian understanding of the relationship with God.

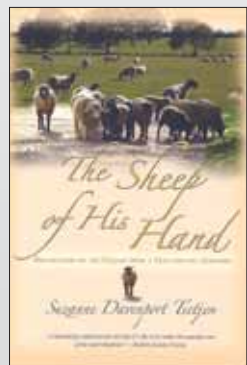
Each chapter ends with lines from a Psalm, some words of wisdom and a prayer.

As Ms Davenport Tietjen lovingly supports her flock, she acknowledges the frailty and dependence of her sheep, just as God accepts and forgives

the fragility of his sheep and their infinite failings.

Christians need look no further than real sheep to better understand how to simply follow.

Readers can be sure that by the end of *The Sheep of His Hand* they will not only feel fully equipped to manage a sheep farm, but also have a deeper appreciation of their relationship with God.



C. S. Lewis on the Fullness of Life: Longing for Deep Heaven

By Dennis J. Billy, Paulist Press, New York, 2009, RRP \$29.95

Reviewed by Rev Anneli Sinkko, a retired Uniting Church minister in Rockhampton.

WHEN I started to read C. S. Lewis on *the Fullness of Life* it took me some time to divorce myself from the image of an old bus puffing towards Deep Heaven - the bus being the transport used by C. S. Lewis in his book *The Great Divorce*.

But, lo and behold, I was caught up in the author's journey.

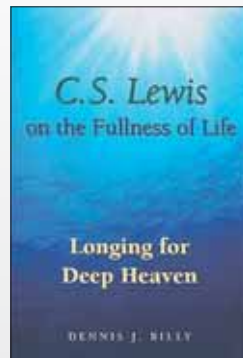
No longer was I on a bus, but now I was travelling on Ezekiel's heavenly wheeled chariots.

The author shares with the reader his tour of discovery.

In it he quite honestly admits that because he didn't know, he had to find out.

It is this genuine search for answers that makes the journey so exhilarating.

He takes us into the depths of divine mystery; he explains so beautifully the agony of God; he explains the forgiveness so well; he teaches us how to seek traces of the divine and he sings of the grace of the Eucharist.



And then he dropped me from my chariot!

The resurrection appearances, the absolute glory and certainty of ascension - they somehow lacked the enthusiasm of the previous chapters.

Perhaps I was just tired - you have to make up your own mind.

But his saving grace remained: the prayers, meditations and questions he presents to the reader are in themselves worth contemplation again and again.

After reading his book I must say that the author has brought me closer to my Lord and almost a shouting distance from the deep heaven.

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

The Lost History of Christianity: The Thousand-year Golden Age of the Church in the Middle East, Africa, and Asia

By Philip Jenkins, Lion, 2008, RRP \$27.95

Reviewed by Jock Dunbar, a Minister of the Word Intern at St Mark's Mount Gravatt Uniting Church.

IN *THE Lost History of Christianity*, Professor Philip Jenkins tells "the story of the churches in the East and how they became extinct" from the years following the fall of the Roman Empire in the West to the fall of the Byzantine Empire.

Christianity has long been defined from the dominant view of the West (e.g. Roman Catholicism and Protestantism).

Mr Jenkins addresses the imbalance in selectively retelling the "successes" of Christianity and ignoring the "failures".

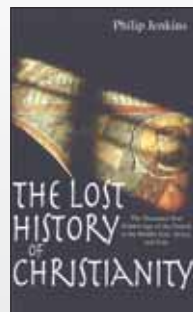
He challenges the conventional understanding that church survival equates with church success.

Mr Jenkins draws the reader to re-evaluate the contribution of the Nestorian and Jacobite churches and appreciate them more like modern day church denominations, rather than dismiss them as heretics.

He covers the relationship between Islam and Christianity, offering a complex story of tolerance in one location and intolerance in another, which provides an interesting point of reference for Christianity's contemporary engagement with other religions and forms of thought, particularly with Islam.

He touches on the decline of the church in the west today and the growth of the church in eastern and developing countries.

Mr Jenkins' analysis of history not only takes into account social



and political situations, but also environmental.

Theologically, he argues that Christianity is essentially defined by failure and from this perspective offers the legitimacy of learning about this period of Christian history.

He sometimes slips into oppositional language, however I highly recommend this book to those interested in the history of Christianity.

New chapel for St Andrew's

By Kath Ryan

ST ANDREW'S War Memorial Hospital, Brisbane, celebrated Easter in a new chapel this year.

Easter was the first major event in the chapel, although the site was already in use for pastoral care.

The hospital was without a chapel for nearly three years during St Andrew's \$76 million redevelopment.

Pastoral care department manager and Uniting Church minister Rev Kath Hobson and Catholic chaplain Mr Peter Murphy believe the wait has been worth it.

The stained glass windows from the old chapel have been incorporated into the new chapel and furniture from the old chapel has also been restored, including the pulpit and altar.

Rev Hobson and Mr Murphy are quick to point out that they offer pastoral care to people of all faiths, but say the chapel is unashamedly Christian.

But they know that the chapel provides a sense of peace and connection to people of all faiths and to some with no religious beliefs.

The staff at the hospital particularly missed having a chapel, as it offers a place to reflect on the times their work can be sad and stressful.

Rev Hobson said the chapel is a place where staff can come together, as well as a place where they can find solitude.

Plans are under way to hold a weekly service at the chapel which will be televised to patients' bedsides via the pastoral care channel on the hospital's television network.

The hospital has six part-time and volunteer chaplains.



Pastoral care department manager, the Rev Kath Hobson in St Andrew's new chapel. Photo by Kath Ryan

On Sunday 9 May please pray for Broadwater Road Uniting Church

THERE IS anticipation in the air at Broadwater Road Uniting Church.

Younger people who used to worship separately in the evenings are now integrating into the morning service.

Five people under the age of 30 will be participating in the Church Council this year.

We began the year with a live-in leaders' retreat with 22 people setting time aside to attend to God and listen to each other.

Our Pastoral Partners take seriously the need to grow in theological reflection, personal skills and self-awareness.

We will shortly embark on a twelve week Lay Leadership Development Course led by Rev Glennis Johnston, exploring the responsible use of the Bible, theology for life, spirituality and understanding our social context.

The Parent Support Groups reach over 60 families in the community each week.

The Boys' and Girls' Brigades, soccer club, and other children's programs are all flourishing thanks to the dedication of Deacon Louise Edwards.

Please pray for:

- our many children's and youth leaders and the love and stamina needed for their outreach.
- the 12-week course – that those participating will discover new insights about themselves and their faith.
- the young people taking on leadership in Council and in music.
- the outreach of the new choir, con Spirito, and our other talented musicians as they provide inspiration in music for those inside and outside the Church.

On Sunday 16 May please pray for 28th Queensland Synod

THE QUEENSLAND Synod will be held at Alexandra Park Conference Centre from 21-25 May.

Please pray for:

- the Moderator and General Secretary of the Synod, Synod staff and all who will be participating from congregations and agencies of the Uniting Church in Queensland.
- wisdom that the discussions and deliberations will be positive and foster understanding as all members of the Church seek to work together for the enrichment of our Community.
- the whole of the Church in Queensland as it discerns its future.

On Sunday 23 May please pray for Emu Park Uniting Church

EMU PARK Uniting Church is a wonderful little church situated on the Capricorn Coast and, with Yeppoon Uniting, forms the Capricorn Coast Parish.

Each Sunday 20 to 35 people gather for worship and sharing.

The congregation is mostly older although we now have two children attending.

The Emu Park Church is characterised by love, laughter and a depth of sharing that is inspiring.

Each Sunday a number of folk share what God has been doing in their lives, as well as prayer concerns.

We are also blessed by a number of visitors who, for a couple of months, come and share our life together.

In recent years there has been a concerted effort to think how we might care for others. Monies have been raised for Frontier Services; more than 40 shoe boxes

sent at Christmas; and one of our ladies (and her band of helpers) has raised \$20,000 in the last two years to support Christian Blind Mission and other organisations.

On the local level the congregation has been giving thought to how we can love and care for our community with the love of Jesus.

To this end every couple of months we have a Christian book store at the local markets.

This month we will be entering a joint venture with the Council to paint picnic facilities at local parks; and when our visitors arrive we will hold church in the park.

Please pray that:

- the Church will be filled more and more with the love of Jesus.
- God will continue to show us how to love and care for our local community and communities in other parts of the world.

On Sunday 30 May please pray for Sandgate Uniting Church

SANDGATE UNITING Church is situated in the northern Bayside suburbs of Brisbane.

The area has an older demographic but is now strongly influenced by the impact of younger families who are choosing to make this Bayside area a positive lifestyle choice.

The congregation has significant missional objectives such as supporting Bramble Bay Family Day Care, conducting an annual Christmas lights display, senior citizens ministries to Yallambee Lodge, Masonic Care, Eventide and other allied residential settings, fostering

ministry to young families through a KUCA Group and other initiatives, R.E. at Brighton Primary School, supporting S.U. chaplains, sponsoring Men's Dinner Group, Ladies Fellowship and other dynamic groups and an emergency relief program.

In recent years the Congregation has sought to emphasise discipleship growth through consistent small group studies including *40 Days of Love* and Lent Event and the congregation has generously supported international mission.

Please pray for:

- the Ministry team: Rev Peter Clark and Rev Ron Holt (Minister in Association), Mrs Betty Clark (Chaplain at Yallambee), Rev

Des Rienecker (retired) Rev Charles Masih (Chaplain), lay preachers, the Church Council, pastoral care executive and the congregational elders.

- an opening to employ a second agent to facilitate family ministry.
- all congregational groups as they seek to build up the Church and share the message of Christ in the community.
- the Families and Youth Task Group as they plan for the future development of family ministry.

Let us give thanks to God for the strong relational and caring spirit that exists in this congregation and for its faithful witness over the years.

You are invited



to the BACK TO GRACE WEEKEND in Celebration of Grace College's 40th Anniversary & the 100th Anniversary of The University of Queensland.

3rd July: 7:00pm Anniversary Dinner (Ladies only) at Grace College, St Lucia
4th July: 11:45am Thanksgiving Service
12:30pm BBQ Lunch (Families invited)

We hope you can join us to reminisce on the good old times.

RSVP: May 31st
Contact Grace College
on 38424000 or grace.college@uq.edu.au



Bringing new life

THANK YOU for your diverse treatment of the subject of death last month.

The Moderator's message was timely but I have to say that my congregation, Newlife Uniting Church at Robina, is not following the tide of loss at any level mentioned by Rev Johnson.

I suppose this has given me an unrealistic expectation of what is happening in the wider church and it concerns me that all is not well with many congregations.

As a Christian who has had wide contact and experience with many different Christian denominations, in latter years I have returned to where I began, the Presbyterian Church now incorporated into the Uniting Church.

At Newlife the Gospel is fearlessly and lovingly preached by all the leaders and lived by an increasing number of people in his body.

Prayer is held high as the reality of communication with our great God.

The ministry of the Holy Spirit is not feared or disparaged, we are led to understand that he is here, now and active if we will but embrace him.

More and more people in the body of Christ are reaching out to God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Baptism and renewal of childhood baptismal vows are

encouraged and acted upon. This Easter fifteen people, from twelve to seventy plus, were totally immersed in Currumbin Creek amongst hundreds of witnesses - praise his name.

I tell you when those who have been called to lead and do just that, lead out without fear or favour; the people will follow.

These are the good shepherds.

Volunteers from our church community, to our secular community, are increasing; people want to serve the God who first loved them.

The reading and the study of the Word of God is increasing.

More and more people, not-yet-Christians and Christians alike, are seeking after truth and find it in Jesus our Lord.

These are the elements tried and true through the millennia that bring life and movement to any congregation.

Death has no place amongst his congregations.

Even physical death is swallowed up in victory.

Trust him and death will flee; our congregations will walk in light and wisdom.

I call upon many to seek the simple but profound truth of the word of God,

It will not disappoint you.

Fay Williams
Burton
Gold Coast



Basis confesses Christ as foundation

PETER FENSHAM (April *Journey*) is surprised by my confidence in the theology of the *Basis of Union*. He suggests that various cultural shifts and recent theological movements warrant revising the *Basis*.

Many responses could be made. I will focus on two.

First, I happily stand by my reference to the 'theologically profound, even daring Biblical core' of the *Basis*.

After centuries of churches differentiating themselves in terms of historically disputed doctrines of scripture, ministry, sacraments, justification, church government etc the *Basis* confesses Jesus Christ himself as foundational to the church's self-understanding.

Proceeding to union on this basis and to do so resisting demands to resolve various pre-existing theological controversies was daring, and was why union almost didn't happen.

Second, it's true that theological debate has radically diversified since union. It is most certainly not true that the exegetical judgements and theological vision informing the *Basis* have thereby been cast aside.

Indeed, if anything, their profile in international theology has risen sharply in recent years.

Be that as it may, all theological movements - including those mentioned by Prof. Fensham - have generated well-documented, established bodies of criticism.

Accordingly, it would be intellectually irresponsible to

promote any theological position because one sector of church membership found it 'attractive'.

Ultimately, the core of the *Basis* isn't a theological position per se: it's a confession of faith.

It keeps before the church the convictions about Jesus without which Christianity would never have emerged, and without which it makes little sense for 21st century Australians to be his disciples or to engage in mission in his name. If the church rests on some other - revised - foundation, what exactly is it?

Geoff Thompson
Trinity Theological
College



Lucky country

"CHURCH LEADERS voice concerns about Christmas Island" (April *Journey*).

I voice concerns about

opinions of these leaders.

If Jesus was not willing to open the doors of the Temple to the moneylenders, why are you so willing to open the doors of Australia to everyone?

Treat the cause not the effect.

How would you treat an intruder in your home?

Sure it's so easy to be a do-

gooder when you're not really affected.

What about the border security at our airports?

Are you willing to throw open those doors too?

Brian Kelly
Mudgeeraba



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.

Don't lose basic message

I WOULD joyfully worship our Lord under a tree or in a tent.

I think magnificent buildings - art works - are Old Testament stuff.

I believe the important thing for the church is to love the Lord our God with all our heart, mind, soul and strength and love our neighbours as ourselves.

When we get away from this basic message we go into decline.

I am told that Christianity is

thriving in countries where the people have very little except basic necessities.

It is declining where we are relatively affluent and put our money into status symbols and great church buildings.

I think the Uniting Church policy makers need to hold these facts in mind when formulating where we proceed in the future.

Eddie Gresha
Kybong



Young people lead the march through the streets of Brisbane on Easter Sunday for Easter Awakening. Photo courtesy of Bowen Miller

Awakening the Easter message

By Bowen Miller

THE JOY of Easter Sunday filled the nation's capitals as thousands of Christians of all denominations marched through the streets for Easter Awakening, with singing, a sea of green and gold balloons, giant sunflowers and enthusiastic young people.

In each city the young people led the way.

In Brisbane the march started at the Botanic Gardens in the CBD with a family festival.

The tradition of handing "Jesus is Risen" balloons to people in open air beer gardens along the march route was once again received with a smile.

The event also made it on

to three major news bulletins celebrating the true meaning of Easter.

Children's prayers were collected all over Australia in the weeks leading up to Easter.

These prayers were then used by Christians from all denominations at Good Friday prayer vigils in cities across Australia.

CLASSIFIEDS

Accommodation

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

General

Scientists, scholars & other young people (mid-teens to mid-twenties) with enquiring minds wanted for Breathing Space network. freshsteps@bigpond.com

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

Why do you volunteer?

Greg Mackay

WE LIVE in a world of opposites; opposites of opportunity, hope, and life itself.

For many of us, and certainly for me, my life lived is a life blessed. And so it is for almost all of my family members, friends, and colleagues.

But for many others, for the majority world, for many, many of our fellow citizens it is decidedly not like that.

So how can I sit by and watch?

This is an ethical question emerging from my Christian beliefs and my desire to try to put my faith into action.

Volunteering for me is about doing justice and justice requires us to stand in solidarity with those not getting a fair go.

I chair a small unfunded community organisation.

We teach people about, and support them in, the way our society marginalises and rejects people and then how they might do something about this.

This rejection includes people with a disability, aged people, people of Indigenous descent, people seeking refuge and many others.

As well as practical work like this, standing in solidarity has many other forms.

I strive to be informed on matters of justice; being informed means I am less able to ignore people's struggles.

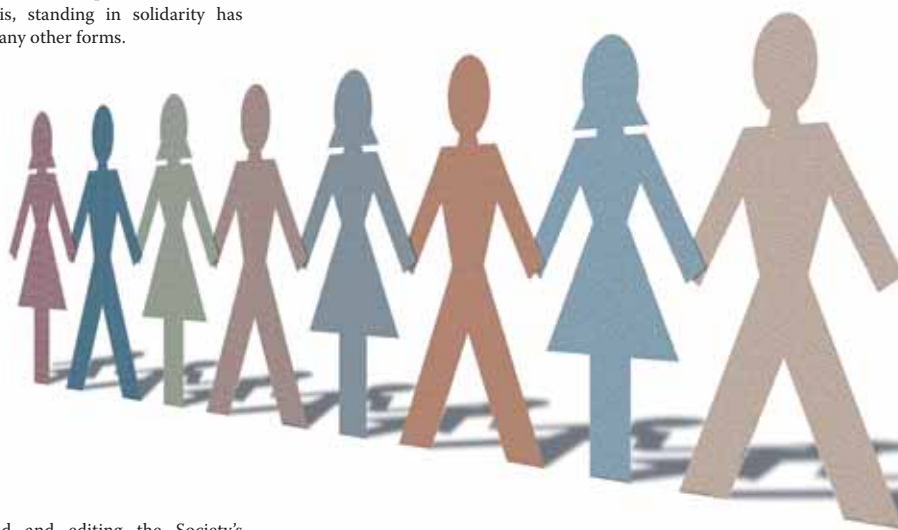
And of course once one is informed one feels compelled to act.

I take my place in public protests, in writing and lobbying, but also in gently asking to enter people's lives, inviting them to enter mine.

Through this forming of relationships I am privileged to gain a sense of what people experience every day, the persistence of rejection, racism, marginalisation, being discounted; I get to stand in their shoes – but get to return to my privileged live.

After all, it is privileged people who live in the luxury of being able to try to change the world.

Greg Mackay is the Director of the UnitingCare Centre for Social Justice



Judith Finau

WHEN ASKED the question "Why do you volunteer?" I had to think about it for a while.

Growing up in the Northmead Methodist Church in New South Wales volunteering has been part of my life for more than 50 years.

It was something I just did.

Volunteering to me means serving without asking for reward and caring for those who need love and support.

Volunteering to me is a form of ministry, whether it be within the church or in the community.

Being married to a Minister for more than 40 years gave me many opportunities to volunteer, and by volunteering I have gained experience which I can still put to good use today.

My first real experience was as a volunteer Telephone Counsellor at the first Life Line Centre in Sydney in 1963.

I also remember my years volunteering with the Fiji Red Cross Society, teaching First

Aid and editing the Society's Magazine, *Crossroads*, when my husband was Vice-Principal of the Pacific Theological College.

And now, since becoming a widow, volunteering has filled a void in my life when I became part of the *Journey* team as volunteer editor of the Prayer Diary.

While I give my time I also gain the friendship and fellowship of the people I work with.

So to me volunteering is a two way process.

It is a process of giving and service, but it is also a process of receiving.

I hope I can continue to volunteer for another year or two.

Judith Finau does many things including being the coordinator of *Journey's* Prayer Diary and assisting in the posting of *Journey*

Mobin Barati

AS A NEW migrant to Australia I need to strengthen my community relations and break down barriers of fear and misunderstanding.

Volunteering helps me meet new people and make new friends.

It promotes my self-growth and I can use my skills and learn new social skills or even technical skills which are related to the Australian social and work culture.

Volunteering makes me feel appreciated and needed, the main reasons for my migration.

It provides an opportunity to give back what has been given to me.

I play a very small part, but I feel blessed to be able to play that

part and I applaud the community and the work done there.

What's more I have too much time on my hands.

I was used to working hard and my migration has caused me to become unemployed temporarily.

Volunteering gives me a new sense of worth and motivation.

In addition, volunteering allows me to keep in touch with people and everyone is always very appreciative of my efforts.

Finally, it sends a signal to my friends, family and future employer that I have strong motivation and a sense of achievement.

Mobin Barati is an IT Service Desk volunteer for Lifeline Community Care

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