



## WALKING 2000KM FOR BIBLES

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"There are millions of people in the world who don't have a single verse of God's Word in a language they can understand." **Andrew Sav**

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# DISTILLING THE CONFLICT MYTH

## Science, religion and the search for truth

By Peter Harrison

IT IS OFTEN assumed that the history of the relations between science and religion is one of unremitting conflict.

The prime examples are Galileo's condemnation by the Inquisition in 1633 and the religious opposition elicited by Darwin's theory of evolution on its inception in 1859.

While this view continues to exercise a great hold on the public imagination, historians of science have long considered "the conflict myth" to be deeply misleading.

It is clear that modern science emerged within the Christian West and that various elements of Christian thought played a positive role in its development.

The scientific revolution of the seventeenth century, which laid the foundations for modern science, was underpinned by religious assumptions and given social legitimacy by religion.

Virtually all of the principal agents of this revolution cherished deep religious convictions.

Johannes Kepler, the brilliant mathematical astronomer who discovered the laws of planetary motion, had originally hoped to

become a Lutheran pastor and regarded himself as a "priest of nature".

Francis Bacon, who laid the foundations for modern scientific method, considered the whole scientific enterprise to be a kind of salvific activity, intended to recover some of the losses that accrued to the human race as a consequence of Adam's fall.

Robert Boyle, the father of experimental science and a key figure in the early Royal Society, was a deeply committed Christian.

He described scientific activity as reasonable worship of God (alluding to Romans 12:1). Isaac Newton, best known of the pioneers of modern science, wrote many more works on religious topics than on scientific ones.

The study of nature, for Newton, led inevitably to God.

But what about the Galileo affair?

Does it challenge this picture of religious support for science?

First, it should be said that Galileo was a pious and committed Catholic.

It is also important to understand

that at the time, his claims were not merely religiously controversial, they were scientifically problematic as well.

At the time there was significant evidence against them and the consensus among astronomers was that Galileo was mistaken.

His chief Catholic opponent, Cardinal Bellarmine, had conceded that if a proof for the motion of the earth could be offered, it would be necessary to reinterpret the Bible accordingly.

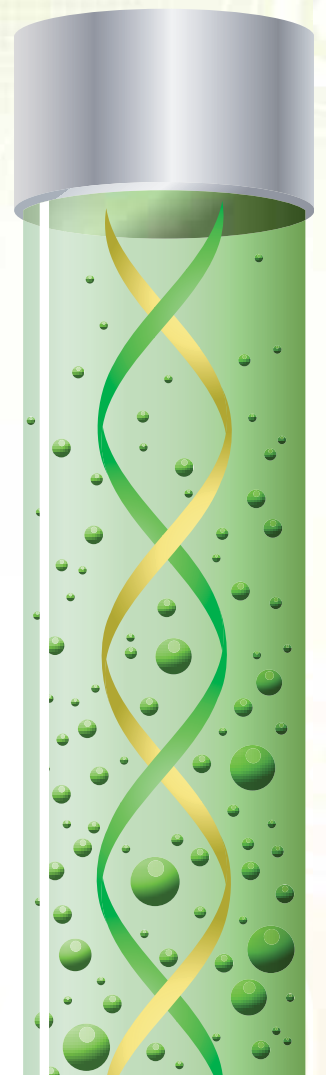
But Galileo did not have direct proof and one of his chief arguments (based on the tides) was simply wrong.

The Galileo affair was also, to some extent, a symptom of the Catholic Church's reaction to challenges to its authority.

But this isolated episode was in no way typical of Catholic attitudes towards science.

From the late Middle Ages to the beginning of the eighteenth century no institution gave more support to the study of astronomy in Europe than the Catholic Church.

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# Engaging science

ACCORDING TO the most recent census statistics, atheism is the fastest growing "religion" in Australia.

So often science is blamed for undermining the faith of people.

It is still popularly believed that science and religion are in opposition.

However historians of science argue that the rise of natural science, what we in the west describe as "modern science", grew out of a new way of viewing the scriptures and the world as a result of the reformation.

Christian thinkers who argued that God was revealing himself to his people through the Book of Scripture and the Book of Nature, engaged in the study of the natural world in order to know and understand its creator.

Even Darwin's *On the Origin of Species* was not rejected by all Christian thinkers at the time.

They sought to understand how this theory might throw light on the processes of creation.

There are many Christian scientists who accept the evolutionary processes as the most satisfactory explanation of the way the natural world has developed.

It doesn't take much effort to show that many of the popular beliefs that pit science against religion are false.

For example there is a popular belief that everybody believed the world was flat until Columbus sailed to America.

Columbus' argument with the prevailing beliefs was about the circumference of the globe, rather than that the earth was flat.

People had believed from many years before Christ that the earth was spherical.

Remember the ancient Greek myth of Atlas who carried the globe on his shoulder.

People had believed from many years before Christ that the earth was spherical.

The American novelist Washington Irving popularised the idea that Columbus set out to show that the earth was not flat.

His book *The Life and Voyages of Christopher Columbus* is primarily a work of fiction, yet is often cited as historical.

It is true that the development of modern science has caused us

to re-think the way we interpreted the scriptures.

However it is worth remembering that it was the close alignment of scriptural interpretation to the current cosmology that led to the conflict between Galileo and the church.

The Christian church had interpreted the scriptures from the perspective that the sun and planets revolved around the earth, because this was the prevailing scientific view.

The theories of Galileo challenged that idea and he had trouble convincing the scientific community, who had the support of the church, that his theory was accurate and that scripture could be interpreted in a different way.

Of course we know that the Galilean view won and the church finally apologised for their treatment of Galileo.

However it is false to characterise this as a conflict between science and religion.

Rather it shows what happens when the church attaches its faith to the prevailing scientific view.

The rise of the "new atheists" has re-invigorated the notion that science is at odds with religious faith.

Many people find their faith

## Message from the Moderator

Rev Bruce Johnson



threatened by most popular conversations about science.

Some come to accept the notion that Christian faith is outmoded in the face of scientific knowledge.

Some try to accommodate their faith to current scientific knowledge, while others try to ignore all science and hold onto what they have always believed.

Rather than retreat from the discoveries of modern science, it is imperative that Christians engage with current scientific thinking.

Not only does this expand our ideas about the world we live in

and our responsibility for the stewardship of this planet, but it also enables Christians to bring some ethical thinking to bear on the way in which scientific knowledge is used.

The tension between science and Christian faith can enrich the community.

If you want a couple of books to help your exploration of these issues Alister E. McGrath has an easily readable book entitled *Science & Religion*, Blackwell Publishing, 1999, and Keith Ward has a good book entitled *The Big Questions in Science and Religion*, Templeton Press, 2008.

## Sign of the times



IN JUNE the Elanora Uniting Church decided to use their church sign to promote the visioning process of the Church in Queensland.

To members of the Uniting Church the phrase *Together on the way, enriching community* hopefully stands as a reminder of the renewal journey the Church is on and our responsibility to the community at local, national and international levels.

To passers-by this sign is a welcoming phrase clearly stating that the Church is continually working towards supporting and being a part of its local community. Thanks to Rev Ian Lord for sending in this photo.



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](http://www.blackstarcoffee.com.au).

## Movie mind games

I HAVE enjoyed two DVDs recently that have made me think about the relationship between faith and belief in a higher power and the mind.

Both films originate from a very secular understanding of faith, which is one of the things I enjoyed about them.

Both films ask if faith and the idea of the soul are purely constructs of the mind.

The first, *The Invention of Lying*, is set in a world where no one can tell a lie.

Life is matter-of-fact and relationships are formed on the basis of the best physical and intellectual match to move the human race forward.

But one day when struggling screenwriter Mark Bellison tells a small lie at the bank he realises he has a unique ability.

When consoling his mother on her death bed to ease her terror of the void of death he makes up a story about what happens after you die.

The hospital staff overhear and Mark becomes an unwilling prophet.

While some people may find this jarring insulting, I found it quirky, funny and interesting.

The plot is, on the surface, calling faith a lie, but Mark's world is still better off believing in something more than the power of genetics.

The second film, *Cold Souls*, follows an actor struggling to cope with the weight of a Broadway role playing Uncle Vayna in the Chekov play of the same name.

He reads about a new procedure: the removal of the soul.

After hesitation he goes through with the "soul extraction" only to find that his soul looks like a chickpea and he is unable to act without it.

So, as you do, he rents the soul of a Russian poet and performs the play to critical acclaim, only to have his personal life crumble around him.

When he finally wants his own



soul back, the company have misplaced it ("It must be in our New Jersey warehouse!").

In this edition we look at the art of science and its relationship to faith.

Christian scientists seem to believe that science is the exploration of creation.

So science is not at odds with faith, rather it is evolving our understanding of the scope of creation, including the human mind.

Mardi Lumsden  
Editor



# World Missionary Conference closes with call for passion

THE 100TH anniversary of the World Missionary Conference held in Edinburgh in June closed with a reminder from Anglican Archbishop of York, Archbishop John Sentamu, for followers to be witnesses.

"Jesus today is on trial in the court of the world by our lips and lives," he said.

Encouragement to exercise loving hospitality towards others and humility in Christian outreach formed the refrains of Edinburgh 2010's closing celebration.

Archbishop Sentamu's voice echoed with an evangelising passion that recalled preachers of the past who spoke in the same space.

In June 1910 a groundbreaking World Missionary Conference drew delegates from churches and mission societies throughout the world to the Assembly Hall of the Church of Scotland, set on The Mound near Edinburgh Castle and St Giles Cathedral.

One hundred years later, on 6 June, more than a thousand worshippers gathered in the Assembly Hall to mark the end of

the Edinburgh 2010 conference, surveying world Christianity and the potential for common witness to Jesus Christ in the 21st century.

Among participants in this closing celebration were the nearly 300 delegates from some 60 nations and a broad range of Orthodox, Catholic, Anglican, Protestant, Evangelical, Pentecostal, independent and uniting churches.

A "Common Call" to renewed commitment was addressed to the Christians of this era and affirmed at the climax of the closing celebration.

Diversity was clearly on display in the ecclesiastical vestments and national dress worn by worshippers in the Assembly Hall.

Indian dancers from Selly Oak Colleges, Birmingham, and an African choir were among the many voices that animated the proceedings.

Bishop Devamani of Dornakal, Church of South India, read excerpts of the speech given in 1910 by a young V.S. Azariah,



An African choir performs at the closing celebration of Edinburgh 2010 held at the Assembly Hall, the venue for the 1910 World Missionary Conference. Photo by Gary Doak and courtesy of WWC

later the first Bishop of Dornakal.

Further presentations stressed the need for mutuality in mission: westerners have much to learn from Christians of the east, and northerners must discover how

to show greater humility and a willingness to learn from the global south.

Archbishop John Sentamu's sermon followed a reading of Ezekiel's prophecy that brought

new life to a valley of dry bones.

"As leaders in mission, we must help our churches by acting prophetically, speaking out for freedom against injustice."

# Election heats up poverty issues

By Mardi Lumsden

THE COUNTDOWN to this year's federal election prompted candidates to address voters in a series of forums in June.

Make Poverty History along with Micah Challenge is arranging around 60 electoral forums in marginal Federal Electorates across Australia.

In Queensland, Make Poverty History forums have been held in the electorates of Moreton, Bonner, Brisbane and Dickson.

More than 70 constituents turned out to hear candidates for the Federal seat of Brisbane address issues of Australia's international aid budget and commitments to the Millennium Development Goals at a forum at Brisbane Girls Grammar School on 8 June.

Make Poverty History forum organiser Ann Matson said it was a chance for voters to learn about their prospective MPs views on important issues including Australia's overseas aid spending and efforts to tackle climate change.

Speakers included sitting ALP member Arch Bevis, LNP candidate Teresa Gambaro and Greens candidate Andrew Bartlett, alongside Gillian Marshall from Make Poverty History and Brisbane Girls Grammar School student Caitlin Clifford.

"These forums are giving voters a chance to show their candidates for Federal Parliament that these issues are important to them," said Ms Matson.

The Make Poverty History campaign is calling on all sides of politics to commit to lifting

Australia's aid spending to 0.7 per cent of gross national income (GNI), doing our fair share to halve global poverty by 2015 by achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and increasing Australia's assistance to poorer countries to help them adapt to climate change and develop along a low-carbon path.

"We welcome the fact that both the Federal Government and Federal Opposition are committed to lift Australia's aid spending to 0.5 per cent of GNI by 2015.

"But this still leaves Australia lagging behind many developed countries when it comes to aid spending."

Dave Martin of World Vision said the Dickson forum on 9 June, attended by Coalition incumbent Peter Dutton and the

ALP candidate Fiona McNamara, attracted 105 local residents.

"A key outcome of the forum was discovering that there is bipartisan support for Australia to be giving up to 0.5 per cent of GNI by 2015 but neither party seems willing to commit to the 0.7 per cent foreign aid target," he said.

Mr Martin said forums are planned for the Queensland Electorates of Herbert, Bowman, Ryan, Griffith and Lilley in the coming months.

"Make the effort to go along and positively influence our political leaders on behalf of people in poverty," he said.



Brisbane electorate candidates, Arch Bevis, MP (ALP), Teresa Gambaro (LNP) and Andrew Bartlett (Greens) with forum attendees. Photo by Ronnie Wright/Oxfam Australia



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# Long walk for Bible translations

By Karyn Markwell

THREE FRIENDS will walk from Cairns to Stanthorpe from August to November this year to spread the word that there are 2000 languages – representing 350 million people – that still don't have the Bible.

Dave Carnell, Andrew Carnell and Andrew Sav will walk 2000km over 80 days.

Mr Sav said he thought it wasn't fair that there are so many English versions of the Bible and yet "there are millions of people in the world who don't have a single verse of God's Word in a language they can understand".

Beginning in Cairns on 25 August, the walk will take the trio south through Townsville, Mackay, Rockhampton, Bundaberg and Toowoomba as well as many smaller towns in between.

If all goes according to plan they will walk into Stanthorpe on 11 November – Remembrance Day.

Mr Sav (48) said God laid the idea for The 2000 Walk on the

father of four's heart a couple of years ago.

He is joined by cousins Dave (23) and Andrew (30).

PE teacher Dave grew up attending Severnlea Uniting Church (10km south of Stanthorpe) with his family.

He recently returned from trekking through Nepal with Operation Mobilisation and has stepped out of his career as a teacher for 2010 to participate in The 2000 Walk.

Apart from walking, Dave is also responsible for logistics along the way – such as coordinating accommodation and meetings in the different towns en route.

On average the trio will hold an evening meeting at local churches and town halls every second day.

Andrew is Queensland's State Director of Operation Mobilisation (OM).

He's a country boy at heart and is looking forward to linking up with country churches.

Just as the walk will be a long, hard process, so is translating the Bible into different languages.

It's too big to tackle alone,



Dave Carnell (front), Andrew Sav and Andrew Carnell (back) train for their 2000km walk to raise money for Bible translations. Photo by Trent Rouillon

which is why the trio are working together with Operation Mobilisation and Wycliffe Bible Translators to make this massive need as widely known as

possible.

"Our aim is that this need will no longer be hidden," said Andrew. "We want the Australian church to become aware."

To follow the group's progress visit [www.the2000walk.com](http://www.the2000walk.com)

Karyn Markwell is from Markwell Publishing

# West Papuans visit Brisbane Valley

By Rosemary Wycherley

WITH HARMONIOUS singing and stories of life back home, a group of West Papuan students recently visited the congregation of the Brisbane Valley Uniting Church.

West Papua, once known as Irian Jaya, lies to the west of Papua New Guinea (PNG) and is part of Indonesia.

The students were in Brisbane to further their English studies.

For the last two years Shelley Houghton of UnitingWorld has been tutoring these students in the city of Jayapura, West Papua.

For three months these young men lived with families in the Brisbane Valley to immerse themselves in the English language.

The Uniting Church in Australia has been in active partnership with the church in West Papua for more than 20 years.

A medical clinic has been supported through UnitingWorld and the Synod of South Australia.

UnitingWorld has facilitated numerous volunteers, such as Ms Houghton, to undertake placements with the Church.

The English language

programs provide young people with an opportunity to develop their communication skills which will help them to assist local government leaders and to be more effective advocates for their people.

Brisbane Valley Uniting Church is now seeking further ways to support this UnitingWorld initiative.

From a colourful and eye-opening presentation, the congregation learned about life in the primitive mountain villages. West Papua has one of the highest mortality rates in the world, with many people dying at around 40.

Arthen, 24, talked about his childhood: "I spent nine years in an orphanage. It was very difficult."

The students spoke of how they will use their new found language

skills when they go home.

Simon explained: "My people need to organise themselves in business; the children need education. Now I can really help them."



Young people from West Papua with their Brisbane Valley hosts. Photo courtesy of Rosemary Wycherley

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# Caloundra wins climate change award

By Mardi Lumsden

ON WORLD Environment Day (5 June) Caloundra Uniting Church was announced a joint winner of The Australian Religious Response to Climate Change (ARRCC) Climate Change Award for communities.

ARRCC is a multi-faith network committed to taking action on this most pressing issue of our time.

Caloundra Uniting Church shares the award with the Anglican Church Diocese, Canberra/Goulburn.

The ARRCC award is the culmination of the congregation's commitment to a "green future".

The judges acknowledged

Caloundra Uniting Church's excellence as a community in taking action and encouraging others.

"This commitment was expressed in a clear vision statement, adopted unanimously by the congregation," said the judges.

"It became the basis of subsequent goals, starting with an energy audit and the installation of a 4.2kw solar power system in the form of a cross.

"The greening of Caloundra Church is designed to influence the whole modus operandi of the Church as a leader and participant in developing a sustainable community."

The award was announced just two weeks after the

congregation held their inaugural Fair Trade and Green Market on 22 May which saw around 500 visitors browsing stalls and engaging in issues including the environment and global warming.

Caloundra Uniting Church member Margaret Landbeck said the organising committee were "blessed to have the support of our church community who assisted in so many practical ways".

She also said a grant from the Sunshine Coast Regional Council was an enormous help in setting up and advertising this event.

"I believe this venture raised our Church's profile in the community and was a witness to the globally caring nature of the Gospel," she said.



A stall at the Fair Trade Fair. Photo courtesy of Margaret Landbeck



Auntie Jean Phillips places her handprint on the 'commitment banner' at West End. Photo courtesy of Andrew Johnson

## Service heals at West End

By Andrew Johnson

THE WEST End Uniting Church Brisbane congregation, together with members from the Brisbane Congress Congregation at Zillmere, participated in a Service of Welcome and Healing on 30 May.

A Welcome to Country was performed by Uncle Joe Kirk, a descendant of the traditional owners of the land.

Significant ceremonial and liturgical acts formed part of a moving and uplifting service including a smoking ceremony, a symbolic hand washing, a blessing of the property and celebration of the Eucharist.

Pastor Rodney Minnecon and

musicians from the Zillmere Uniting Church led the service which was a time to acknowledge serious past wrongs and the church's complicity in many of those wrongs.

It was also an opportunity to move forward together with hope.

At the conclusion of the service members of the congregation were asked to participate in a statement of commitment to an ongoing partnership including sealing it with a handprint.

As the congregation gathered afterwards many people from both congregations and the wider West End community reflected on the significance of the service.

It held together honesty

about the pain of the past with hopefulness for the future.

Brisbane's inner city suburb of West End has been a significant gathering place for Indigenous people for many years.

The West End congregation sees this as a new beginning in an ongoing partnership with the First Peoples.

In light of the proposed preamble this is a local expression of the ongoing Covenant relationship between the Uniting Church and Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress.

Andrew Johnson is Community Justice Minister at West End Uniting Church

## Retirement opens new doors for mission

SANG HEE spent the first three months of her four years in Niger dodging stones thrown by village children.

Prior to that she had been in the upper echelon of the arts community in Seoul, went to France for further education and became a Christian.

She is one of 35 South Korean missionaries currently receiving English instruction at MTI, the Missionary Training Institute, in Yeosu on the Southern coast of South Korea.

After the completion of the course she

is going to Sierra Leone for another four years.

MTI has trained over 1500 missionaries in the past 20 years.

Scarborough's Ken Wakeling and his wife recently spent 10 weeks as volunteer English educators at MTI.

"Though going with more than a little trepidation, the experience has proved to be one of the richest in our lives and we intend to return next year," he said.

"After three years of retirement we had settled into a very comfortable lifestyle.

"MTI provided an opportunity for a new challenge and a feeling of making a difference."

He said the opportunity also allowed them to explore some of the "most unspoiled and delightful places".

Mr Wakeling said Redcliffe Uniting Church currently has several families providing overseas ministry.



MTI teachers and students. Photo courtesy of Ken Wakeling



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# Hospital staff share hope and talents

By Dot King, UnitingCare Queensland

AFTER WEEKS of fundraising and intensive preparation, a UnitingCare Health team made its first visit to the Helena Goldie hospital on Munda in the Solomon Islands in April.

Team members were selected from UnitingCare Health hospitals to take part in a project to support Helena Goldie involving a series of short visits to work alongside staff at the hospital - developing relationships, building skill capacity and providing in-service training to hospital staff.

Registered nurses Wendy Zernike and Natasha Moon from The Wesley Hospital, pharmacist Samantha Nothling, UnitingCare Health, and UnitingCare Director of Mission Rev Robyn Kidd arrived on Munda to discover that they were the first visitors to stay in the newly built guest accommodation Robina House built with funds raised by Newlife Uniting Church, Robina, on the Gold Coast.

The Helena Goldie nursing college was also officially opened

while the UnitingCare Health team was on the island.

Ms Kidd said after the

celebrations it was down to work for the UnitingCare Health team.

"We spent much of the time helping in the hospital wards, gaining an understanding of the conditions that the staff work in, the equipment available and the kind of illnesses and conditions the patients presented with," she said.

Conditions at the 55-bed hospital are basic.

Other than an old X-ray machine there were no diagnostic tools, no running water and two out of three of the sterilising machines weren't working when the team arrived.

"Despite the conditions, we felt that we could never go there and think we could teach the staff our style of nursing - the skills level was just awesome," said Ms Kidd.

"What they lacked in equipment and conditions, they certainly make up for in the level of spiritual care," she said.

"The whole operating theatre

**The whole operating theatre stopped to pray before an emergency caesarean operation.**

stopped to pray before an emergency caesarean operation."

Ms Kidd said a highlight of the



RN Wendy Zernike presents Henry Gumi, Director of nursing at Helena Goldie Nursing College, with Resus Annie. Photo by Robyn Kidd

trip was the opportunity to join the Helena Goldie medical team

for the final day of a five-day health clinic tour around the islands.

"We were blown away

by the work that was done by the visiting health clinic - the medical team involved did so

much incredible work in the most basic of conditions.

"As we walked uphill to the village we could hear people calling from hilltop to hilltop.

"People came from everywhere - they were still climbing the hill after we had been there an hour."

Patients were treated for all kinds of ailments and injuries and there were many vaccinations and health checks to conduct.

"One thing that came out of this trip for us was the importance of continuing to raise money for these clinics, they perform such an extraordinary ministry," she said.

The UnitingCare Health team aims to return to Helena Goldie hospital towards the end of the year and have two trips scheduled for next year.

# Blue Care wins Reconciliation Award

By Hayley Campbell

BLUE CARE was presented with a prestigious Queensland Government Reconciliation Award by Premier Anna Bligh on 28 May at the 2010 Reconciliation Awards for Business ceremony.

The leading not-for-profit community health and aged-care provider was announced the winner of the Community Organisation Category for its contribution to promoting reconciliation in Queensland.

Blue Care Indigenous Coordinator Norelle Watson said it was an honour for Blue Care to accept the award.

"Blue Care is extremely proud of its initiatives to promote reconciliation in Queensland and it's a wonderful achievement for our efforts to be recognised at such a high level," she said.

Blue Care's commitment to encouraging reconciliation is demonstrated through ongoing program development and employment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and improving access to health and aged-care services for Indigenous people.

"Through our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Program we've reached our target of 2.5 per cent of Blue Care's total workforce being Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff in 2009 and hope to increase this to more than 3 per cent by 2013," Ms Watson said.

"Blue Care currently employs more than 180 Indigenous staff in diverse areas of care including nursing, allied health, respite care, disability support and personal care.

"We have established cross-

cultural training programs, mentoring, scholarships and career paths for more than 130 trainees and continue to provide strong support to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health providers across Queensland."

The awards ceremony was held at The Gallery of Modern Art in Brisbane and formed part of the state's Reconciliation Week celebrations.

In 2009 Blue Care was awarded a prestigious 'Queensland Great' Premier's Award for its significant role in the history and development of Queensland and was officially named a Q150 Icon, as voted by the public for being one of the state's most recognisable entities.

Blue Care has grown into one of Australia's leading providers of community health and residential aged care.



Blue Care Northside Indigenous Care Coordinator Shannean Mawn, left, client Barbara Bundle and Blue Care Occupational Therapist Luisa Duplancic share a laugh during a home visit.

Photo courtesy of Blue Care

Blue Care staff and volunteers in the community to remain support the elderly, people with independent for as long as a disability and others in need possible.



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Graham Clarke



# Healing ministries

By Mardi Lumsden

LEARNING ABOUT medical missionaries when in high school was the beginning of a life-long interest and career in medicine for Albert St Uniting Church member and UnitingCare Queensland board member Dr Ian Airey, a specialist anaesthetist and specialist in intensive care.

Dr Airey said it has been a satisfying and humbling privilege to walk with families through confronting medical trials.

"Helping families understand the realities of a loved-one's prognosis is important," he said.

"I am convinced that the life and teachings of Jesus indicate a universal truth which can enrich our lives."

Dr Airey said the biggest issue facing the medical world today is poverty and the western world's ignorance of how that affects developing and third world countries.

"Each day around the world

1500 women die in childbirth and 6800 people die of malaria or gastroenteritis," he said.

"These deaths are largely preventable but we in the west are not prepared to fund simple measures to remedy the situation.

"This is as huge a social justice issue as slavery was in the nineteenth century.

"Poverty is associated with poor sanitation, unclean water, poor nutrition, chronic ill-health, sub-standard housing, poor education, shortened life expectancy etc.

"This reflects poorly on the west which has the capacity but not the will to alleviate profound poverty."

Working on aid projects in Western Samoa and East Timor and being a member of the Wesley Mission Brisbane (WMB) council, Dr Airey learned that the things that unite people are greater than the things that divide them.

"The fundamental things which

make us human are the same, regardless of our race or culture.

"The great un-equaliser is poverty."

According to Dr Airey, we

are at the beginning of another medical revolution.

"There will be ethical questions as genetic manipulation becomes part of daily practice," he said.

"For the church the question as to who we are will come into sharp relief as we learn to switch genes on and off, and particularly as it becomes possible to take cells from a person and grow another

person with an identical genetic profile.

"The immediate challenge is for the church to engage the health industry and community to determine agreed positions on when the use of advanced technologies is inappropriate, and how to support the patient and their loved ones when this position is reached."



# Digging up facts

By Mardi Lumsden

THE UNITING Church is full of highly skilled people in a number of scientific fields. *Journey* was privileged to speak with one such person, Kenmore Uniting Church member Dr Peter Scott.

The geologist, award-winning retired teacher and Adjunct Senior Lecturer at the School of Earth Sciences at the University of Queensland has literally searched for answers about earth's history with a fine tooth comb.

Teaching at Anglican Church Grammar School in Brisbane for 21 years meant Dr Scott was able to help students understand scientific principles and put them into a faith perspective.

"I was virtually saying to the students, 'look at this, isn't this fantastic? This is its cause and, as far as my faith is concerned these are the natural laws of nature and this was all created by God'."

He said he no longer argues with people who insist that the world was created in six days and deny the Big Bang theory.

"I just say 'you can believe in your faith, but scientifically you are wrong'."

"No scientist I know, Stephen Hawkins etc., can tell you what happened before the Big Bang, that is the point where science stops and I say I have faith that this was created by God."

When doing geological research (that proved the land

at Evans Head, NSW, was once attached to New Zealand) he scoured a section of ground looking for fossils.

"For five years I couldn't find anything to tie my rocks to the rocks up here in Queensland or anywhere else."

Then, by accident, he found what he had been looking for.

"Was it an accident? Perhaps I was meant to find it?"

"Science can't prove the existence of God, but atheists can't disprove it either."

"Most of the scientists I run into have some sort of faith base."

"I simply believe that God walks with us all the time, but most of the time we forget that."

Dr Scott said one of the most significant scientific events affecting humanity was climate change.

"Climate change has been happening for a long time, at least

since the end of the last Ice Age," he said. "Most scientists believe that due to the increased CO2 (and probably methane) levels in the atmosphere and oceans (probably natural with significant help from industrial waste emissions) these are warming."

"The church would be involved as a matter of its practical application to human distress and natural disasters, unless you also want to include a political role in convincing politicians that some of their acts or lack of action is immoral."

As an astronomer Dr Scott also believes there must be some form of life on other planets.

He said mathematical probability and astrochemistry leave the possibility wide open.

"I believe that with the great number of possible planets out there and with life being based on one main element (Carbon)



Dr Peter Scott climbing a glacier

with several others (Hydrogen, Oxygen, Nitrogen, Sulphur and Phosphorus) all common in our Universe and God being the creator of all things in the Universe, there must be life on other planets."

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# The future: coming ready or not

By Phil Smith

SCIENCE FICTION may be a thing of the past in future.

According to physicist, physician and futurist Dr Richard

Swenson the stuff of movies and novels five years ago is reality today.

The author of *Balance* and *The Overload Syndrome* was keynote speaker at the 2010 Christian

Management Australia conference in Brisbane in June.

Quoting Albert Einstein, Dr Swenson pointed out that, "the distinction between the past, present and future is only an

illusion, although a stubborn one".

At a time of exponential change with ethical challenges and faith dilemmas, he insisted the church should never be afraid of science.

The futurist who has lectured at NASA and the United Nations said, "Science is not a battering ram to destroy faith".

He said that for 5000 years of recorded history there was little technological or cultural change followed by 250 years off accelerated change into the industrial era.

Dr Swenson said that while progress is both inevitable and God's purpose, the last 25 years have brought change that could leave Christianity suffering vertigo unless it finds balance.

He said at present, individuals deal with 20,000 pieces of technology in a lifetime.

Futurists predict that the next generation will use one million times more technology.

Dr Aubrey de Grey of Britain's Methuselah Foundation forecast a lifespan of up to 600 years for some people alive now.

A United States research

team led by Dr Craig Venter has developed the world's first synthetic living cell, wherein synthetic DNA is reportedly in complete control of the cell.

The already common cloning of pets is not many steps from resurrecting people, while there are cogent arguments for quality controlling all human births in laboratory environments.

The actualities and possibilities leave many Christians' heads spinning as science learns more about the universe.

These are challenging times for those called to chart the future course of progress according to Dr Swenson.

"Not all progress is good," he said.

"But God is the scientist who made all science. He is the Lord and creator of the universe we are discovering."

He pointed his Australian audience to a simple formula:  $E + R = O$ . The events that confront people of faith do not lead to inevitable outcomes.

The equation depends on our response.



## Demographics hold the key

By Phil Smith

IN HIS book *The Four Big Shifts* leading Australian social scientist Mark McCrindle said it is demography, not technology, which shapes the future.

Mr McCrindle recently told a group of business, church and ministry leaders on the Gold Coast that they face an enormous challenge engaging staff, volunteers and members as Australia fast approaches the point of peak labour.

Census figures indicate that in 2011 there will be more Australians leaving full-time work than entering.

The demographer, who has advised Toyota, McDonalds and the Australian Tax Office, sees enormous impacts for organisations, including churches.

Mr McCrindle pointed out that those now entering the work force expect a "portfolio work life" with five careers and 20 employers before retirement.

There will be significant

implications for denominations such as the Uniting Church, which reflects the oldest church demographic.

Is it realistic to expect members to graduate from Sunday School to Youth Group and remain in the pews of one congregation for a lifetime?

"Occasionally in history demographic change coincides with relentless technological change," said Mr McCrindle. "We are living in such an era."

He cited the example

of Microsoft approaching Encyclopaedia Britannica with the idea of moving their content onto something called a CD-ROM.

Reportedly their response was, "Who do you think we are, Funk and Wagnall?"

Encarta accepted the offer and it became the largest selling CD of all time. Encyclopaedia Britannica sales collapsed.

New technology and organisational intransigence brought about generational change.

The public was still seeking truthful information, but delivered in a new way.

The old organisation became irrelevant.



Photo by Flavio Takemoto

## DISTILLING THE CONFLICT MYTH

### Science, religion and the search for truth

From P.1

The Church had been the sponsor of the medieval universities — the chief sites of scientific activity in Europe.

The other supposed example of historical conflict between science and religion — the advent of the theory of evolution by natural selection — shares some features with the Galileo affair.

Significant initial resistance to Darwin's *On The Origin of Species* (1859) came from scientific quarters.

It was thought, based on the estimates of the age of the earth given by the leading physicist of the day,

Lord Kelvin, that there was insufficient time for evolution to have taken place.

Neither was it clear, in the absence of a reliable genetic theory, how the mechanism of natural selection could operate.

If Darwin has scientific critics, he also had religious supporters.

The clergyman Charles Kingsley, best known as author of *The Water Babies*, wrote that Darwin's theory offered a "loftier view of God's work in the creation" than special creation.

That said, the nineteenth century did witness the birth of the conflict myth.

However, this was owing as much to the activities of such apologists for science as 'Darwin's bulldog' T. H. Huxley as to religious opponents of Darwinism.

Huxley and others consciously promoted the myth of a perennial conflict between science and religion as part of a mission to establish the cultural authority of the sciences.

In the ensuing propaganda war, both the Galileo affair and Darwin's *Origin* were presented as exemplifying a supposedly age-old conflict between the two great cultural forces of science and religion.

But Darwin himself never

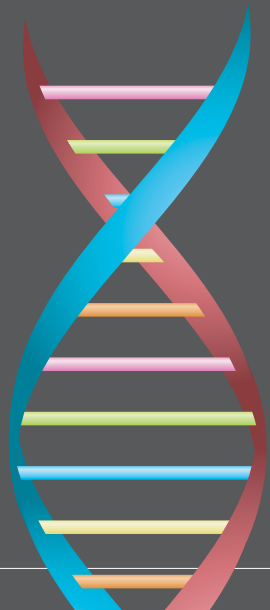
doubted the compatibility of his theory with belief in God.

In May 1879 he wrote to James Fordyce: "It seems to me absurd to doubt that a man may be an ardent theist and an evolutionist ... I have never been an atheist in the sense of denying the existence of God."

In the twenty-first century, both scientific and religious fundamentalists have perpetuated the myth that conflict between science and religion is inevitable.

History shows that this was not true of the past.

It need not be true of the present and future either.





# Stems of potential

By Deb Bennett

IN MARCH last year US president Barak Obama lifted the Bush government's ban on embryonic stem cell research.

No such ban has applied to research in Australia.

While the scientific community throughout the world welcomed the decision, it has reignited debate about the ethics of such research.

Few medical issues are as layered with emotion and rhetoric as embryonic stem cell research.

The debate has yet again exposed the chasm that often exists between the world of science and the world of faith.

*Crosslight*, the magazine of the Synod of Victoria and Tasmania, spoke to Uniting Church member and senior research fellow at Monash University's immunology and stem cell laboratories, Dr David Cram about faith, science and hope for the future.

"My view is that if we have the technologies available, then we need to be able to use them. But of course we need to then balance it out with ethical issues as well."

A Uniting Church member and leader in his chosen field of genetic research, Dr Cram said when he began working with the Monash IVF unit about eleven years ago, part of his research involved screening embryos for genetic diseases.

"When I was interviewed for my current position and started doing work on human embryos one of the things we discussed was whether I was happy doing this particular work," Dr Cram explains.

"I thought really hard about that and drew my own personal line in the sand about what I thought was acceptable and what wasn't.

"As time went by and I met with parents of children with genetic diseases such as cystic fibrosis, my line in the sand shifted.

"When you see what these families go through, of course you want to help them.

"But there are some things I think are not acceptable.

"For example, I don't agree with using the technology for non-medical – or social – sex selection."

Dr Cram feels a responsibility to demystify the highly complex work he is doing.

In doing so, he hopes to generate well-informed community discussions.

He admits that often, much-needed ethical debates have not kept pace with advances in technology.

"In the past, particularly with regard to IVF, we did things without an ethical discussion.

"Things would happen and we'd sort the ethical stuff out later, which is obviously the wrong way around."

Although Dr Cram is keen to

educate people about his work, he speaks without the proselytising fervour of a zealot.

He simply wants people to know the facts and then decide for themselves.

"People have genuine concerns, but often they don't come from a good basis.

"I like to be able to at least give them something else to think about.

"If they've at least got the facts right, then they can think about their attitude and make a bit more of an informed decision."

One of the most common concerns raised, particularly within church communities, is the emotive issue of working with human embryos.

Dr Cram said it was important to understand that in Australia, embryos are not created with the specific intent of harvesting stem cells.

The embryos used in research are excess from IVF procedures.

These unused frozen embryos are kept for five years before being disposed of or used for research.

"A frequent comment is that we shouldn't be messing with embryos," he said.

"We went down the road of making human embryo stem cell lines without any discussion, so these stem cell lines actually exist; we can't take them back.

"So now that we have them, we might as well use them.

"By using them for a good purpose, I believe we give respect back to the embryo it was created from.

"If you just discard those embryos, there is no respect at all.

"Put it this way, if you asked an embryo a question and it could think and answer you, what would the embryo actually say?

"Would you like to be discarded and thrown away? Or 'Would you like to be used for a useful purpose?' What would the embryo say?

"I think the embryo would say 'Well if I've only got those two choices, then perhaps I would want to be remembered and used for something good.'"

As Dr Cram discusses the amazing possibilities of stem cell research it is easy to see why he is so passionate about his work.

"Most scientists are saying that within the next ten years we should be able to understand how to make all the different cells of the body, and use them for treatment of disease.

"Some of the big diseases we can target would be rheumatoid arthritis, insulin dependent diabetes, heart disease and also a whole range of neurological disorders like Alzheimer's disease, Parkinson's and dementia."

Deb Bennett is the editor of *Crosslight*. This article first appeared in *Crosslight*



# Mind your faith

By Phil Smith

FAITH IS not a popular topic in this country. Perhaps that's because we don't know how it works.

Psychoanalyst Sigmund Freud was reported to say religious believers were either mad or severely neurotic.

Neuroscientist Dr Peter Snow, formerly at the University of Queensland researching brain plasticity, recently told a network radio audience that while faith is related to hope, what humans believe is a purely subjective construct in their minds.

Remove the frontal lobes of the brain, he argued, or imprison people in a concentration camp, and they will live only in the present with no hope of a future.

The mind is different to the

brain in the same way the heart can be compared to one's blood pump.

There appears to be a distinction between the electro-chemical processes in the brain and what we think of as our mind.

Psychiatrist, Dr John Warlow was the director of training for child psychiatry with Queensland Health. He expects that in the next 20 years scientists will find a chemical or hormone in the brain that explains faith.

"A much more helpful way to look at the brain is in a functional way, from the 'mind' perspective, especially when we come to abstracts such as faith or indeed any form of relationship," he said.

"Once you come to understand the mind, you may then come to understand the link between the spirit and the body.

"For the spirit to be a reality it must have its outward expression via the mind," he said,

British author of *Is Faith Delusion?* Dr Andrew Sims noted studies that statistically proved that religious belief is good for mental and physical health.

Many child psychiatrists are exploring a link between identity and relationship.

As we begin to know and trust ourselves, we can allow others to be themselves, and come to trust them.

This builds on cognitive theory dating back to Jean Piaget's developmental psychology.

James Fowler, author of *Becoming Adult, Becoming Christian*, is another person researching identity development and why the vast majority of conversion experiences take place in the teen and early adult years.

According to Dr Warlow parents can foster faith through love.

"Faith is the awareness of truth, deeper than the ability to see,

touch or taste something. A parent provides consistency in 'being there' and a child internalises a reality that mum or dad, a real person, looks at me as a real person."

This line of research suggests the teenage years are a crisis of faith and identity as one revisits the truth about who they are.

While faith appears to have been largely scorned by modern psychiatrists, the postmodern era seems to have opened the door to spirituality within our pluralist society.

The Apostle Paul suggested that three things are intertwined in our psyche and are equally difficult to define: faith, hope and love.



# Transforming lives behind bars

By Phil Smith

A NUMBER of Uniting Church chaplains and lay volunteers have pioneered a new program for Queensland prisons.

Kairos Prison Ministry Australia was given approval to conduct a six month pilot comprising the Kairos five day short course and the ongoing fortnightly journey of discovery within the Arthur Gorrie Correctional Centre, Queensland's primary remand centre with a capacity for 890 prisoners, in Wacol, west of Brisbane.

The ultimate goal of Kairos is to build a Christian community inside the institution and to encourage, support and nurture the witness of the chaplains through participation in church services, bible studies and the various other Christian activities held at the Centre.

Management and prison chaplains nominated 24 inmates for whom the program had potential to impact within the Arthur Gorrie Centre.

These inmates were invited to voluntarily attend the Kairos short course.

Twenty-six volunteer team members entered the Arthur Gorrie Centre each day while five other team members worked behind the scenes 'on the outside'.

Kairos volunteer Greg Trosts said the program was designed to "bring Christ's love and forgiveness to the inmates".

"The 'outside' program works with their families to assist in the inmates transition to becoming productive citizens and to foster a reduced incidence of repeat offending," he said.

"We were thrilled to hear from one man who, after experiencing wonderful things of God during

the week, had rung his wife in the evenings to tell her about what was happening.

"His wife googled Kairos and rang the Sydney office to thank them for what they were doing for her husband in prison."

The week-long short course culminated in a closing ceremony in the gymnasium at the Arthur Gorrie Centre.

Fifty invited guests, including denominational leaders and senior correctional managers, attended.

The Kairos ministry was designed for use in men's, women's and juvenile correctional institutions and has been used in prisons interstate and overseas.

It is run by lay and clergy volunteers under the auspices of prison chaplains.

Team members were selected through the Emmaus, Catholic and Anglican Cursillo and similar



Jim Fisher, left, founder and patron of Prison Fellowship Australia, Ron Nikkel, Prison Fellowship International President and Tom Scarlett, right, founding Board Member of Prison Fellowship Queensland. Photo by David Way

faith communities.

In line with the Greek idea of 'kairos', everything has a place and an order in God's special time.

For more information visit [www.kairos.org.au](http://www.kairos.org.au)

# From misdiagnosis to miracle birth



Proud mum Gaye with baby Hannah. Photo courtesy of WMB

By Aileen Wallace/WMB

GAYE IS profoundly Deaf and, having trained at Griffith University, is a teacher of the Deaf at Caboolture State High School.

With the help of the Wesley Mission Brisbane National Auslan Interpreter Booking Service (NABS) support her medical history turned from one of misdiagnosis to the miracle birth of her daughter Hannah Maree – "wished for grace".

Diagnosed with a deteriorating hearing loss at the age of six, doctors had previously told Gaye's parents that she was just naughty or ignoring people.

By her teens she was completely Deaf.

"My parents wanted me to learn to sign and sent me to the Deaf school but medical experts advised them against it," said Gaye.

"Mum regrets not learning to sign. She knows I need the signing to understand what is going on fully."

A series of misdiagnoses, including a stomach haemorrhage that almost killed her, led to Gaye avoiding going to the doctor at all costs.

"I usually ended up being dragged there by my mother most often seriously ill and often ended up in hospital because of a misunderstanding on what medications to take, how much and how often.

"I never got the full story about my health, only bits and pieces, because Mum can't sign and it was too difficult for her to use the language the doctors use.

"When I went on my own to the doctor it meant writing things on paper and most doctors have terrible handwriting."

Consequently NABS, a free service for Deaf people, was a

**I never got the full story about my health, only bits and pieces.**

welcome service.

"I have used interpreters since my uni days ... I really like that NABS asks who I would like to be my interpreter for appointments.

"I have four preferred interpreters and NABS always tries their hardest to get one of my preferred interpreters.

"Family should be there to

support you, but a professional interpreter allows me privacy; there are just some things you don't want a family member to see.

"I have a better relationship with my GP and other specialists.

"I feel more confident about going to the doctor.

"Having support from NABS for interpreting means I can communicate with my GP and other specialists clearly. It means I leave their rooms knowing what the problem is, and what medication I will have."

Gaye's daughter, an IVF baby, is a wonderful example of how

NABS helped in a sensitive situation.

"NABS has been part of the journey from conception to her birth and no doubt will be there for her in the future too as she grows up as a child of a Deaf adult.

"I can't thank NABS enough for the support they gave me through that process, the only thing they were not there for was her actual birth; the interpreter for that came from a different agency. Hannah may not have made it into the world if NABS was not here."



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# Redefining the gospel

*Journey* continues its exploration of Brian McLaren's 10 questions that he says are transforming the church. This month we look at the gospel question.

By Duncan Macleod

I RECENTLY came across a writer who suggested that we should be able to summarise the Christian gospel in 10 words or less.

"If you can't summarise what you believe in 10 words, do you truly understand what you believe? Maybe you can believe without fully understanding," they suggested.

"But hey, it doesn't hurt to burn some mental bandwidth to clarify what you believe. So, consider this micro-theology; petite-worship; nano-sermons."

So what's with the reduction to 10 words?

My first reaction to this exercise was concern that the good news spoken and lived by Jesus and his people is being reduced to one sentence to meet the obsession with conciseness honed in an era of modernism.

I can imagine Jesus sighing and asking, "Why does this generation ask me for a 10 word sentence? I tell you the truth, not one 10 word sentence will be given to it."

He'd then get in the boat and head off somewhere to spend time with people listening to and telling stories, doing life and thinking of all the ways he might give some insight into the Kingdom of God.

So here are a few 10 word sentences and phrases I came up with.

Forgiveness by God invites all people to exercise forgiveness together.

Life given that we might live fully, with destiny beyond this age.

Strangers welcomed home by God to join an inclusive community.

Challenged by Jesus to change ways and transform the world.

The Spirit helps face hardship and inspire courage in others.

Loved unconditionally by God and called to love one another.

Created whole by God to guard the integrity of creation.

God giving capacity for insight and wisdom, exploring truth together.

Shame removed, new identity given, development of restoring community.

Reconciled with God and each other, becoming ambassadors of peace.

God's strength and solidarity with the suffering expressed together.

Healing for broken bodies, emotions, relationships and communities.

Freedom for people trapped in addiction and oppression



becoming liberators.

The Uniting Church's *Basis of Union* encourages us to be people of the gospel in Paragraph Three, with a lot more than 10 words!

"Jesus of Nazareth announced the sovereign grace of God whereby the poor in spirit could receive God's love.

"Jesus himself, in his life and death, made the response of humility, obedience and trust

which God had long sought in vain. In raising him to live and reign, God confirmed and completed the witness which Jesus bore to God on earth, reasserted claim over the whole of creation, pardoned sinners, and made in Jesus a representative beginning of a new order of righteousness and love."

There's a lot of good news in there for us to put into practice:

God's love for the poor in spirit; Jesus showing us who God is, with humility, obedience and trust; God's engagement with all creation; sinners pardoned; Jesus commissioning a new community of justice and compassion.

The gospel is simple and accessible but is deeper and more challenging than anything we could include in a 10 word sentence.

## Multicultural celebrations bring in New Year

By Rebekah Polley

IN ANOTHER first ncyc11 will run over the New Year and preparations are underway for a celebration of global proportions.

Organiser and visionary for the New Year's Eve celebrations Fa Ngaluafé said the events planned for NYE focus on uniting the diverse delegates of the convention in a celebration of different cultures.

"New Year's Eve is important to many different cultures as it is a time of great thankfulness for what the past year has brought and what God has done but also looks forward to what the New

Year will bring," she said.

"We are coming together not as individuals but as family to share this experience.

"All delegates will be able to unite and be part of the many different ways the New Year is celebrated."

Co-director of the program team Stephen Rothery said the night will be an opportunity to be part of an exciting event for those who haven't seen beyond typical parties.

A large feast will follow fireworks and a time of worship lead by different cultures.

"We are reframing the concept of New Year's into an entirely

new perspective and approach so that most importantly New Year's Eve will be a sharing of faith," Mr Rothery said.

"Ncyc11's New Year's celebrations will be a great opportunity to experience a time of worship, prayer and eating as a family."

Alison Cox, ncyc11 coordinator, said the night will be centred on bringing everyone together as one, uniting the different backgrounds of delegates.

"This will not be a spectator event but everyone will be included; it will be life-changing and memorable, the one they won't forget."



Young people at the Tongan National Conference in June.  
Photo by Rev Dr Tony Floyd

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July 10, 2-4pm

## Pet Blessing Service at Thornside Uniting Church



Featuring a RSPCA van, dog obedience trials, professional photographs, with afternoon tea after the service.

Contact Thornside minister Rev Bruce Warren on 3207 2756 or [trinityuc@pacific.net.au](mailto:trinityuc@pacific.net.au).

**July 3, 6.30-11.30pm. Cromwell College 60th Anniversary** of the Foundation Dinner celebration, Hillstone, St Lucia. Contact Anna East on 3377 1300 or [a.east@cromwell.uq.edu.au](mailto:a.east@cromwell.uq.edu.au).

**July 4, 10.30am-2.30pm. Cromwell College 60th Anniversary** Thanksgiving Service and lunch. Griffith Memorial Chapel and College Dining Hall, Cromwell College, Walcott Street, St Lucia. Contact Anna East on 3377 1300 or [a.east@cromwell.uq.edu.au](mailto:a.east@cromwell.uq.edu.au).

**July 10, 8am-12pm. Car Boot and Garage Sale** at Coolum Beach Uniting Church. Proceeds to benefit Kapaldo UC re-stumping project. Sausage sizzle and cake stall. Contact Margaret Hall on 5446 1493 or [mlchall@bigpond.com](mailto:mlchall@bigpond.com).

**July 10, 9am-7pm. Round-About Arts and Craft Show** at Bulimba Uniting Church, Oxford Street, Bulimba. The 7th annual event showcasing some incredibly talented local and Australian artists. Entry \$2, sausage sizzle, jumping castle and entertainment ensures for an event for the whole family. Contact Storme Vunderink on 0411 339 772 or [vunderink@optusnet.com.au](mailto:vunderink@optusnet.com.au).

**July 10, 6-8pm. Blue Care Dance for Fitness** at Municipal Hall Wynnum. Contact Sonia Kennett, clinical nurse, on 0416 082 158 or [skennett@bluecare.org.au](mailto:skennett@bluecare.org.au).

**July 13, 11.30am. Soup and crusty bread luncheon** at Coolum Beach Uniting Church. Tasty home-made soup with crusty bread and delicious dessert to follow and entertainment. Contact Margaret Hall on 5446 1493 or [mlchall@bigpond.com](mailto:mlchall@bigpond.com).

**July 17, 7am-12pm. Brookfield Uniting Church Car Boot Sale**, cnr Rafting Ground and Upper Brookfield Rds. Contact George Barnes on 3374 3835 or visit [www.brookfield.ucaweb.com.au](http://www.brookfield.ucaweb.com.au).

**July 18, 9am-12pm. Trinity Ipswich White Sunday Celebration** at 114 Jacaranda Rd, North Booval. Young people from the Sunday School will be conducting the worship. Contact Church office on 3812 3110 or [viliami\\_anamila@bigpond.com](mailto:viliami_anamila@bigpond.com).

**July 19, 9.30am-3pm. Together for Humanity**, Qld-Cross Cultural Training Day at Sunnybank Hills Library. Expand your skills in cross cultural and interfaith dialog. Free. RSVP by 13 July to 3343 2237 or [ronit@togetherforhumanity.org.au](mailto:ronit@togetherforhumanity.org.au).

**July 24, 2.30-4.45pm. Redcliffe City Choir performance** at Bracken Ridge Uniting Church. A concert of light music featuring highlights of the choir's 25 years. Adults \$10, school-aged children free. Afternoon tea provided. Contact Marilyn Linnett on 3269 3282 or [mardoug3@bigpond.com](mailto:mardoug3@bigpond.com).

**July 29, 7.30pm. Gaelic Tattoo.** A fundraising concert for UQ Multi-Faith Chaplaincy Services and the Multi-Faith Centre, Griffith University at Griffith University. Featuring Scottish and Irish choirs, fiddlers, Highland and Irish dancers and pipers. \$20/\$15. Supper provided. Contact Yaseen Haider on 3735 7052 or [y.haider@griffith.edu.au](mailto:y.haider@griffith.edu.au).

**August 6. Introduction to Theology** in the UCA in the Presbytery of Central Queensland. For people wishing to become lay preachers, existing lay preachers wishing to undertake CEM, and anyone who would like to grow their faith. Contact Caroline Holmes on 4926 1068 or [cholmes@iinet.net.au](mailto:cholmes@iinet.net.au).

**August 7, 9am-3pm. Craft and Hobby Expo** at Coolum Beach Uniting Church. Delicious morning teas, cake stall and plants stall. Contact Margaret Hall on 5446 1493 or [mlchall@bigpond.com](mailto:mlchall@bigpond.com).

Upload your 'What's On' entries at [www.journeyonline.com.au](http://www.journeyonline.com.au).

Items may be shortened due to space limitations.

## Healing book launched

BROADWATER ROAD Uniting Church member Irene Frances launched her inspiring autobiography *Peace and Freedom are My Names* in February.

Ms Frances said the book was about her journey "into and out of madness" and "an account of God's faithfulness throughout that lengthy ordeal".

"*Peace and Freedom are My Names* is an important resource for ministers and pastoral carers who work with people who were abused as children and who continue to struggle with the consequences of those experiences."

Professor Robert Bland, Chair of Mental Health at the University of Queensland and Ms Frances'



Peter Janetzki, author Irene Frances, and Professor Robert Bland at the book launch. Photo courtesy of Irene Frances

former social work lecturer, described it as a story "of the way out of the prison into courage, honesty and faithfulness."

Peter Janetzki, host of Family Radio's *Talking Life* was Master of Ceremonies at the launch.

*Peace and Freedom are My Names* is available from Vision Books, 481 Broadwater Rd, Mansfield, for \$32.95 (plus \$6 postage).

Contact 3849 8548 or [vision.books@iinet.net.au](mailto:vision.books@iinet.net.au)

## UCA congratulates new Prime Minister

THE UNITING Church in Australia has congratulated Australia's first female Prime Minister, Ms Julia Gillard.

Acting President of the Uniting Church National Assembly, Rev Gregor Henderson, said he welcomed Ms Gillard's election as a major step in Australia's commitment to gender equality and hopes she would serve as a role model for young people to show that Australia really does offer a 'fair go' for all people, regardless of their class, gender or race.

"The Uniting Church acknowledges the leadership of Kevin Rudd and congratulates him on the considerable achievements of the Government in the last two and a half years.

"We particularly acknowledge the apology to the Aboriginal people of the Stolen Generations as a momentous occasion in the formation of the Australian nation," said Mr Henderson

"The Uniting Church has welcomed a more compassionate approach to the treatment of asylum seekers under the leadership of Kevin Rudd and hopes the new Prime Minister will show moral courage on this issue."

He said the Church also welcomed the Rudd Government's commitment to action on social inclusion, climate change, and fairer access to education and health services.

"We call on the Gillard Government to continue to

## Blue Sunday

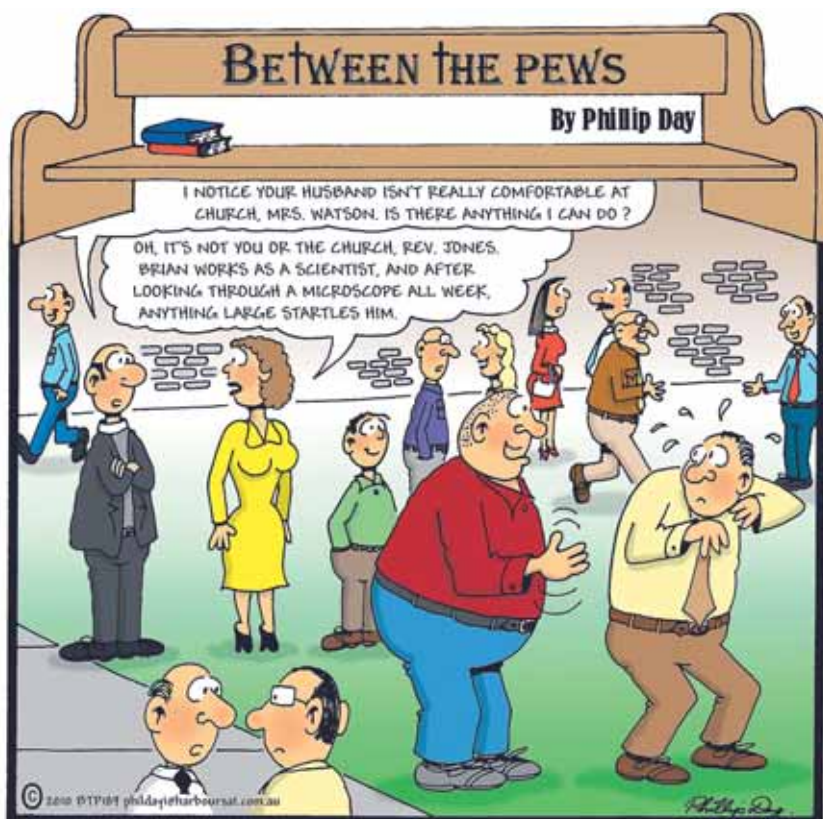
CONGREGATIONS ARE encouraged to celebrate Blue Care's contribution to local communities on Sunday 22 August.

Blue Care Sunday is an opportunity for congregations to include thanks and prayer for care services in their worship services.

For more information visit [www.bluecare.org.au](http://www.bluecare.org.au).

strengthen its efforts to create a fairer, more just Australia.

"The Uniting Church looks forward to a renewed focus on these important issues in the lead up to the Federal Election."





# An Introduction to Bioethics

## Forth edition

By Thomas A. Shannon and Nicholas J. Kockler,  
Published by Paulist Press, 2009, RRP \$39.95

Reviewed by Rev Dr Noel Park, who spent many years as a member of several medical/hospital ethics committees

*AN INTRODUCTION to Bioethics* is a significant contribution in an evolving field of study.

This book opens up issues around human research as well as concerns for feeding a growing world population and our treatment of animals and the earth.

It is an introduction to the topic and, as such, raises the interest of the reader to do further reading on a range of topics without being a definitive text.

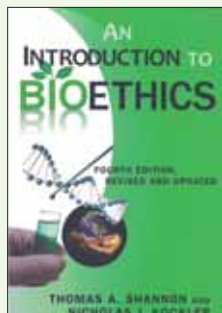
Current political issues at both State and Commonwealth levels regarding provision

and funding of health care are too often debated without examination of the complexity of the ethical considerations facing decision makers.

The authors present the pros and cons of ethical positions clearly and even readers with little previous exposure to the topics will not find their presentation daunting.

Some of the terms may be a little too technical and undefined for some readers.

Euthanasia, assisted suicide, IVF, abortion, and death and dying are issues which our church with its involvement in hospitals, Blue Care and other services must



deal with on a wider basis.

Two areas of caution are needed. Firstly, the case examples and legal comments are based on American laws.

Secondly, both authors write from a Roman Catholic orientation.

If these are kept in mind readers will gain a great deal from this book and almost certainly will be stimulated to pursue particular topics.

## From Galileo to Gell-Mann

By Marco Bersanelli and Mario Gargantini, Templeton Press, 2009, RRP: \$48.95

Reviewed by Phil Smith

THIS BEAUTIFULLY published book is the result of blending wonderful skills and life experiences.

The Italian authors could easily be pigeonholed as an astrophysicist and an electronics engineer.

Mr Bersanelli combines the former with presiding over the EURESIS scientific and cultural association.

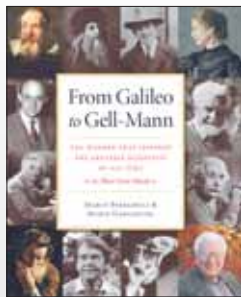
Scientific journalist Mr Gargantini invested 20 years as a high school science teacher and is the author of various books on science and religion.

They provide a human context to the formality of scientific discipline as great scientists throughout the ages meditate on the nature of science and discovery and what those things mean for humanity.

There are many unfamiliar names as well as the likes of Einstein and Galileo.

This is not a set of clichés from the usual suspects haggling over the age of the earth.

Auschwitz survivor and author of *The Periodic Table*, Primo Levi gives a taste of this book at its best: "Distilling is beautiful ... it is a slow, philosophic, and silent occupation which keeps you busy, but gives you time to think of other things. From liquid to vapour (invisible), and from



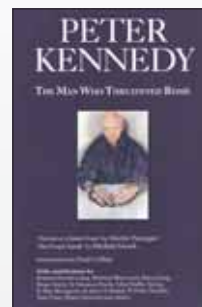
this once again to liquid; but in the double journey, up and down, purity is attained ... the consciousness of repeating a ritual consecrated by the centuries, almost a religious act."

*From Galileo to Gell-Mann* is best absorbed in small doses.

## Peter Kennedy: The Man Who Threatened Rome

By Martin Flanagan et al, One Day Hill, 2010, RRP \$29.95

Reviewed by Karyl Davison, Pilgrim Learning Community and Rural Ministry Coordinator for the Central Queensland and Mary Burnett Presbyteries.



IN FEBRUARY 2009 after a much publicised conflict between St Mary's and the wider Roman Catholic Church one of St Mary's priests Father Peter Kennedy was stood down for contravening aspects of Catholic doctrine.

His charges included allowing priest and people to speak the words of consecration at Mass, allowing women to preach, not using vestments, using inclusive language for baptisms, "soft-peddling" the divinity of Jesus in the liturgy, and making social justice the key issue in his preaching.

At the time attendances at weekend liturgies at St Mary's numbered around 800.

The most informative and moving contributions to this book are from those involved.

Two interviews with Fr Kennedy give us a glimpse of his contemplative and compassionate personality.

Although we don't hear from the other main character in this story, Archbishop Bathersby, we do hear from a range of people intimately involved in St Mary's including Fr Kennedy's colleague, Fr Terry Fitzpatrick.

There are also contributions from beyond the congregation such as Sr Veronica Brady, singer/songwriter Shane Howard, Tom Uren and internationally renowned theologian Hans Kung.

The case against Fr Kennedy is put by Catholic academic Prof Neil Ormerod.

This is a fascinating book that goes well beyond the headlines of February 2009.

It illuminates the dispute that is both smaller and much broader than that shown in the media coverage.

A surprising number of contributors point to an underlying and long running conflict over the reforms of Vatican II as a factor in this dispute.

Other comments point to the tension between the inclusiveness of the St Mary's community and the requirement that St Mary's use the universal liturgy and symbols of the Catholic Church.

This book is the story of a man committed to being part of an inclusive and compassionate Christian community.

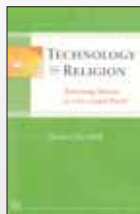
That his words and actions so challenge, for some, the heart of what it means to be Catholic seems to ask more questions of the Catholic Church than it does the ministry of Peter Kennedy and those like him.

At a time when most churches seem unable to speak effectively to the community, this dispute asks what it means to be church in the 21st century.

## Technology and Religion: Remaining Human in a Co-Created World

By Noreen Herzfeld, Templeton Press, USA, 2009, RRP \$33.95

Reviewed by Alan Cook



AUTHOR NOREEN Herzfeld, Professor of Theology and Computer Science at St. John's University, Minnesota, explains why religion has a duty to understand and become involved in the technological changes of today's world because of their individual and societal outcomes.

In the chapter on medicine, issues such as performance enhancing drugs in sport, and prolongation of life by respirators are discussed.

In many areas the question is whether the aim is healing or raising the level of nature

of human performance and consequent societal norms.

The chapter on information technology addresses the effects of constant use of the internet.

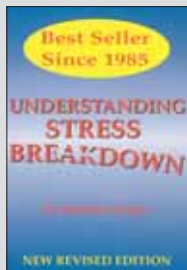
There are similarly thought-provoking chapters on genetically modified crops, and renewable and non-renewable energy sources.

Detailed chapter notes make a useful resource for readers seeking more information.

More reviews online at [www.journeyonline.com.au](http://www.journeyonline.com.au) including:

### Understanding Stress Breakdown

By William Willkie, Self published. New revised ed. n.d. RRP \$14.95



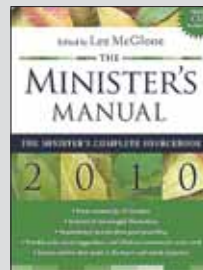
### Pilgrimage: A Spiritual and Cultural Journey

By Ian Bradley, Lion Hudson, RRP \$39.95



### The Minister's Manual 2010

Edited by Lee McGlone, Jossey-Bass 2009, RRP \$32.95



## Books available from ...

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

# Jubilant celebrations for ecumenical school

ECUMENICAL PRIMARY school Jubilee Primary School at Pacific Pines on the Gold Coast celebrated its 10 year anniversary with religious leaders from various traditions on 20 May.

Living Rivers Uniting Church joined their ecumenical covenant partners in the

Anglican, Apostolic and Catholic churches to give thanks.

Living Rivers Uniting Church minister Rev Jim Hohnke and immediate past Moderator Rev Dr David Pitman joined The Most Reverend Dr Phillip Aspinall, Anglican Archbishop of Brisbane, and Pastor Brad

Otto, State Leader of the Apostolic Church Australia and a host of religious leaders from the Anglican, Apostolic, Catholic and Uniting Churches.

Together they joined the Jubilee community to thank God for the work of grace here.

Jubilee was the first dedicated ecumenical school within Brisbane Catholic Education.

Rev Evan Stenlake (a Foundation Pastor) sent his blessings.

"Although it is now 10 years I can remember almost as clearly as yesterday that opening celebration," he said.

"The years of specific preparation that went into this occasion were stimulating, challenging, and powerfully rewarding.

I have used on numerous occasions, both in Queensland and here in New Zealand, the establishment of Jubilee - an act of faith still ahead of its time - as an

example of vision, courage, obedience, wisdom, and understanding of God's people for His Kingdom."

Principal David Sewell said the school thrived on its ecumenical component which fostered unity in diversity and the appreciation of difference.

"We celebrate the common issues across the four faith traditions and respect and value the traditions of each and every one," he said.

Jubilee Primary School's success is testament to the ecumenical vision of local churches, Archbishop Bathersby and the commitment of David Hutton, Executive Director of Brisbane Catholic Education.



The Jubilee Primary School anniversary official party including Rev Dr David Pitman, Rev Jim Hohnke and Archbishop Dr Phillip Aspinall. Photo by Trevor Sketcher

## On Sunday 11 July please pray for West End Uniting Church

WEST END Uniting Church is an intimate community situated in one of the unique parts of inner city Brisbane.

Its building, located metres from the cross-roads of West End, has been there for almost 125 years.

The congregation is made up of older people, younger couples and people from local boarding houses and includes locals as well as people from all over Brisbane.

We are experimenting with a new model of ministry in partnership with Moreton Rivers Presbytery - a part-time Minister of the Word and a part-time Community Justice Minister.

We also auspice the Progressive Spirituality Network. Please pray for:

- Our covenanting relationship with the First Peoples. We particularly give thanks for the service

of welcome and healing and our growing relationship as we seek to better understand Indigenous history and the relationship between Indigenous law, custom and ceremony and the Christian faith.

- Our relationship with the West End community through Micah Projects, Waiters Union, West End Traders Association, *Westender*.

- Our relationship with our ecumenical neighbours.

- Our community with the creep of development, increase in population and changing nature of our community.

- Those in our community experiencing illness, marginalisation or the challenges of changing stages of life.

- The creation as it continues to experience the challenge of the ecological crisis.

## On Sunday 18 July please pray for Emerald Fernlees Uniting Church

THE EMERALD congregation is in the heart of the Central Highlands, three hours drive west of Rockhampton and four hours east of Longreach.

The main industries are coal and agriculture. The community of Emerald continues to grow with more coal mines opening all the time.

The Uniting Church in Emerald seeks to be a church that offers worship, serves the community and cares for one another.

It is a Church that attracts people passing through on holidays and those who come for small periods of time for seasonal packing etc.

Please pray for:

- Our young people as 10 prepare to attend ncycl1. Pray for the new monthly youth service that has commenced and is run by the youth. We

particularly pray that the young people attending our youth groups and their families will attend these new services.

- Our Garage Sale on 24 July. Pray for its success as we seek to raise funds to support other ministries and mission initiatives outside our Church.

- The Emerald Church as they focus on spiritual gifts. Pray for people as they become more aware of their gifts and are encouraged to use them.

- Our pastoral care program as we seek to build a web of care and prayer amongst our Church family.

- Give thanks that our Church building will be paid off this year. We give thanks for the generous support of many people over the past 23 years.

We are now looking at how to redevelop the manse to make it more liveable and meet Synod manse requirements.

## On Sunday 4 July please pray for our world leaders

TODAY LET us pray for the politicians who lead their countries and for the decisions they make.

Please pray:

- For those who have been trusted with positions of responsibility to guide their country through the difficult waters of a Global Financial Crisis and the impacts of climate change.

- For their continued spiritual support and guidance.

- For their families and loved ones as they also live in the spotlight of world politics.

- For the Australian Government and Opposition as they look towards the next federal election. Pray that they put the future of all Australians before any personal or party politics.

- That our leaders fight for the rights of the disadvantaged and poor.

- That indigenous people throughout the world are recognised and supported by our leaders.

- That world leaders will work towards eradicating poverty and reaching the Millennium Development Goals.

- That our leaders seek to understand why people enter countries such as Australia to seek asylum or refugee status.

- For fair and just elections throughout the world.

- For peace.

## On Sunday 25 July please pray for St Paul's Uniting Church, Mackay

VISITORS TO Mackay will find a warm welcome at St Paul's Uniting Church in the city.

Our mission is to make Jesus' love a reality in the city of Mackay and we seek to live that mission in our lives, as we care for each other and for our community, and in the warmth of our welcome to strangers.

We care for street people through our street ministry, for mothers isolated from family and friendship

networks through MOPS, and for grandparents who are raising their grandchildren through our grandparents support group.

We are focusing on our children and young people and encouraging them to connect with God and God's people in life-giving ways as they grow in faith.

We are currently facing difficult decisions about property redevelopment as we upgrade and extend our buildings.

Please pray for:

- Our Street Mission. Pray that individuals and governments will be more aware of the needs of displaced people and families in Mackay and will act to make a difference in their lives.

- Our young people and children. Pray that we will listen to them and to God so that our youth and children's ministry will be relevant and change lives.

- Building redevelopment. Pray that we rely on God to guide our decisions, so that our new buildings will meet all our needs, and provide the best possible facilities to connect with our

community, now and into the future.

- MOPS. Pray that we support and encourage all our MOPS mothers, particularly those whose partners work for mining companies and are away from home for several days each week.

- Grandparent support group. Pray that this group reaches those people who most need it.

- Pray that all we do and say proclaims Jesus' love within the city of Mackay and makes God's heart dance with joy.



## Synod reflection

I RECENTLY heard the ABC the Royal Commission report into the Black Saturday Bushfires in Victoria and have been reflecting on this in terms of our Synod.

The report recommended that the "stay and fight" or "go early" policy should be scrapped. Most people, 80 per cent, don't prepare and simply wait and see.

At Synod it was made clear to us a terrible bush fire is coming in terms of the financial situation.

We have no lack of information or warning.

We even know it is not insurmountable - we can do something about it.

We need to raise \$20 million through the giving of congregational under-utilised property.

The worry is that 80 per cent of our congregations are not going to prepare, and are going to wait and see. If you do that, you probably won't survive.

We'll think someone else will sell their property, our property is too important, or we just can't give it because it would be too hard to convince everyone.

Don't stay and fight for your local church: "no-one's getting their hands on our building".

Stay and fight for your church, the people.

Don't go early and run away to another denomination: go early into your local school hall or community and live out the gospel, go into all the world and make disciples.

Paul Clark  
Burdekin



## Taken children revisited

IN HIS letter "Sorry to all taken children" (June *Journey*), Merv Hurse argues that unmarried mothers whose children were taken away during the years that Indigenous people had children taken should be recognised by "those in power".

Not so.

Unmarried mothers were subjected to family, particularly parental pressures with family concerned about prevailing social attitudes.

With Indigenous families, the removal was forced because of laws passed by Australian Parliaments or because of the implementation of existing regulations.

As for "how often do we have to say sorry"; it is a matter of having commemorative sorry days to acknowledge the

forced removal of Indigenous children and to highlight that Indigenous people are still waiting for justice, reparation and compensation.

"Churches", according to Mr Hurse, "should become more focused on the great commission given by Christ and leave the politics of these issues".

One way this great commission is carried out is through UnitingCare Queensland with its concerns for social justice for, amongst others, Aboriginal Australians.

The government is involved in funding part of UnitingCare's annual budget of about \$950 million dollars so yes, politics is involved with social advocacy.

John Broere  
Kuluin



## Sorry to children

MERV HURSE (June *Journey*) has a very strong point in reminding us of those children removed from our own single mothers in the past.

Some felt compelled by the morals of the time to abandon their babies to the State simply because of the shame.

Those mothers suffered greatly too and it was action taken by their own race.

No doubt this was done in accordance with the morals of the time which reflected church thinking.

Basil Gillespie  
Beachmere



## Onward Christian soldiers

MR DOWLING, "Put up your sword" (June *Journey*), is quite right - Easter should not be compared to Anzac Day.

But why not, after all both commemorate sacrifice, one a spiritual sacrifice by our Lord and the other by our sons and daughters to preserve our freedom.

In my Army years and in subsequent dealings with Army Chaplains I have never heard or spoken with one Chaplain who did not recognise that troops would kill and be killed.

Army Chaplains do their best to comfort the bereaved and bring solace to those who have also killed.

Believe me it is not easy for any soldier to see his enemy fall in front of him and his mate beside him.

We go out and leave our loved ones behind and fight our enemy in an effort to stop those who would deny us our right to enjoy a democratic way of life and the freedom to worship as we please.

If it were not for Christian troops killing and being killed (and Christians do kill Christians) Mr Dowling may very well be enjoying a staple diet of rice and worse still living in a totalitarian state on a state run farm.

Going to war is not an occupational hazard, it is a reality and that is why Australian troops

are among the best trained in the world.

The aim is to get the job done and get them home alive.

Anzac Day this year fell on a Sunday and, as a veteran returned from active service, I proudly wore my medals to Church.

In my Church are families who have been touched by war and families who have currently serving members in the Australian Defence Forces.

Some of these have recently served in Afghanistan and in all likelihood will return to that theatre in the very near future.

James O'Pray  
Pie Creek



## In defence of chaplaincy

IN HIS letter "Put Up your sword" (June *Journey*) Jim Dowling makes several bold claims about how a Christian should view Defence Chaplaincy.

Mr Dowling begins by suggesting that Jesus' final words in Matthew 26:52 are definitive and were taken seriously by his early followers, but he neglects to mention that in Luke 22:36 Jesus suggests that his disciples should sell their cloak and buy a sword if they do not already have one.

Mr Dowling argues that the duty of a Christian Chaplain should be to get people to leave the military.

Chaplains provide hope, comfort and support to soldiers and their families.

The presence of Chaplains in Afghanistan in the last month has been very important to the soldiers who must continue to

do their job in spite of losing some of their comrades.

Another role of Chaplains is to provide ethical and moral training and advice to the commanders and soldiers.

I agree that on Anzac Day the focus seems to be on sacrifice rather than the horrors of war and the fact that from time to time soldiers are required to kill.

It is extremely important to have Christians and Chaplains in the Australian Defence Force.

Their presence can act as a moral compass for those around them and can prevent situations like the My Lai massacre. War will not go away simply because Christians decide they don't want anything to do with it.

John Dansie  
Emmanuel



Send your letters to [journey@ucaqld.com.au](mailto: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.

## Hold defence force in prayer

HAVING ENGAGED in armed conflict I acknowledge that war is a dreadful thing.

I am of the opinion that once a nation is committed to defending noble principles, it is the duty of able bodied men to be chivalrous, to fight and kill in combat, if necessary, for those principles for the sake of future generations and to accept the very real personal consequences they will suffer.

Our Christian heritage and freedom, that we now take for granted, has evolved slowly at the cost of a great many lives.

We do not live in a Utopia.

We live in a very imperfect

world, where the Taliban, for instance, are slaughtering peaceful people unable to defend themselves.

We must uphold and defend our noble principles, even if it means going to war.

While others may sit back and criticise, in a manner of being "holier than thou" we should admire and be thankful to those who give up the comforts of home to fight and die on our behalf for what is right.

In his book *Mere Christianity* author C. S. Lewis explained that the idea of the knight - the Christian in arms for the defence of a good cause - is one of the

great Christian ideas.

John the Baptist seems to support this opinion.

When asked by soldiers what they should do to repent, he did not remotely suggest that they should leave the army (Luke 3:14).

We need to pray for our defence force personnel to be aware of the support of the Holy Spirit within them and pray also for our enemies that they may turn from hate and malevolence.

Collin King  
Indooroopilly



## APOLOGY

Sincere apologies to Eddie Gresha of Kybong who was mistakenly listed as the author of the letter "Put up your sword" (June *Journey*).

The author of that letter was, in fact, Jim Dowling of Ocean View.

## CLASSIFIEDS

### Accommodation

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

**London B & B**. Easy city access; lge double room, ensuite, self-catering. Reas rates. [rachel@brockleybandb.fsnet.co.uk](mailto:rachel@brockleybandb.fsnet.co.uk) Ph/Fax: 001144.2086946538.

### General

**Fresh Steps for Youth**: For enquiring minds, mid-teens to mid twenties. [freshsteps@telstra.com](mailto:freshsteps@telstra.com).

Email your classified advertisements to [journey@ucaqld.com.au](mailto:journey@ucaqld.com.au)

# How do you encounter God in your field of work?

## Dr Frank Stootman

AS A SCIENTIST I have always believed that the world we live in has form.

By this I mean that it has laws, symmetries, and admits to mathematical logic.

These are there to be discovered and are not simply an invention by humankind.

Sure, we label them as well as manipulate what we have discovered, but the intrinsic form of the universe is something we can only discover, not create.

My question, as a physicist, has always been: why is this so?

Over many years the magnificence of the universe has continually inspired and affirmed to me the existence of God.

God has left his calling card wherever I look and despite many proposed alternatives to God, it seems to me more than ever the most reasonable and holistic explanation.

I have chosen the word "holistic" with care, because life is more than things around me to be discovered and observed.

I am also a person and the existence of God - also a person - as revealed in the Bible adds holistic answers to my struggle to be a meaningful human on the personal level in this cosmos.

My encounter with God means a total answer to my inner passion both to understand the world as well as who I am.

Though unseen, God is there in the very nature of reality: externally and internally.

Dr Frank Stootman is Director of the L'Abri Fellowship, Adjunct Associate Professor of Physics at the University of Western Sydney and was a member of the Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence (SETI) Institute

## Eric Woodrow

CREATION HAS an apparent randomness.

Some people I meet demonstrate this more than others.

If I were the creator there would have been a lot more straight lines involved.

There is a natural tendency to seek methods and procedures that bring order.

I feel more control when there is order in my life.

Yet I find fulfilment when I give control to my creator.

This often leads to a time of uncertainty and, as a scientist, this can be disconcerting. Facts and data bring comfort.

Yet prayer brings comfort and friends - cups of coffee are useful too.

As I look at the world as a scientist I see that even in decay there is order.

All chemicals react and decay in an ordered way.

I believe there is a pattern to our world.

The natural order points to a creator who is active at many levels and has left many special signposts to point to his presence.

The order of creation is just one of them.

Spiritual renewal comes from the creator.

Eric Woodrow is a microbiologist in the food technology industry and worships at Indooroopilly Uniting Church

## Rebecca Weatherford

I BELIEVE one of the greatest and most powerful ways we can experience God is through his creation.

I have found this in my own experience of God and seen others, both believers and non-believers, find God in nature.

There is nothing quite like spending a day in the bush or sitting on a beach looking at what is around you.

From intricate details in insects to the magnitude of a starry sky, it's hard to attribute such beauty to anything but God.

I am surrounded by the complexity and glory of God.

One of the first books that I read while at university was *Case for a Creator* by Lee Strobel.

Study after study conducted by award-winning field leading scientists point to the existence of a creator.

As a teacher I see God at work through seeing the wonder of students as they come to understand new things.

Science and nature help me to experience and understand more of God everyday.

Rebecca Weatherford is a high school science teacher

## Michael Knight

A YOUNG child went walking with her dad in a forest.

As some children do, she wandered off without the adults noticing.

Creating obvious panic he searched in vain, calling in everyone to help.

Night fall descended and the search had to be called off.

Before first light the dad was back in the forest searching for his little daughter. He came across a clearing, in the middle of which was a large rock which his daughter had climbed onto and slept upon that night.

She awoke to the sound of someone rushing towards her.

Upon seeing it was her dad she jumped to her feet and exclaimed with joy as she stood on the rock, "Daddy I found you!"

During my day-to-day work, I see not so much me encountering God but the discovery that God is always there and I am waking up to his presence and his revelation of himself to me.

Michael Knight is an "Adolescentologist", co-author of *Being a Bloke* and founder of Brisbane's Peer Power

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