



## AUSTRALIA VOTES PAGE 9

Four Senate candidates answer questions on policy and issues important to the Uniting Church.

## HEALING ACROSS NATIONS

"In a population of 40 million, we have more than two million orphaned or vulnerable children." Astonishment Mapurisa PAGE 10



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# ELECTING LEADERS

By Phil Smith

Around election time there is often the conversation about whether we expect normal moral standards in our elected leaders.

It would seem reasonable to expect the same values of honesty, loyalty and integrity in our national and state leaders as we look for in ourselves, our friends, workmates and family.

Generally, we don't.

Voters are no longer surprised by expediency that professes decades of friendship, but initiates a coup.

It would seem few speak with their vote when told a promise may not be a core commitment or that truth isn't the same as absolute honesty.

However, this may not be a case of

our disheartenment with those we trust as leaders.

It may be a recognition of our own low standards.

Alan Demack, a Uniting Church member in Rockhampton, was Queensland's first Integrity Commissioner.

The former Supreme Court Judge said the very nature of our democratic system lends itself to self-centredness.

"When we have an election we put our votes up to auction," said Mr Demack.

"The political aspirants put in their bids and our vote goes to the most attractive bid. So it's inevitable

that political parties put polls and perception ahead of principle."

He compares the process to the consumer decisions we make when brand loyalty loses out to low price.

"If we're honest with ourselves, according to the old word "sin" there's always a degree of dishonesty in our relationships with other people.

"We are very rarely fully frank with anyone and we will always seek our best advantage."

Dr William Ransome, Research Fellow at Griffith University's Key Centre for Ethics, Law, Justice and Governance, suggests cynical voters who choose to label elected officials as bad people working in a ruthless

business, should reconsider a leader's role.

"First and foremost, we expect our political leaders to act efficiently and effectively for the vision of our common good for which a majority of us has voted," said Dr Ransome.

"In doing this, we can recognise that they are often under pressure from an extraordinary range of competing interests and must act in the full glare of public attention.

"Our political leaders also have to deal with a level of pragmatic detail that is more complex, urgent and important for the whole community than most of us will ever face."

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# Politics in a pluralistic place

ONE OF the most common questions I've been asked in the past few weeks is, "What do you think about a PM who does not believe in God?"

This causes us to think about how Christians engage in the political arena in a pluralistic society.

Julia Gillard is not the first Australian Prime Minister who has not claimed to hold the Christian faith.

Gough Whitlam used to describe himself as a "fellow traveller" with Christians.

Bob Hawke described himself as an agnostic.

However I don't remember any previous leader being asked point blank, "Do you believe in God?"

I was rather impressed that Ms Gillard responded honestly with, "No, I don't believe in God".

She went on to say, "For people of faith, I think the greatest compliment I could pay to them is to respect their genuinely held beliefs and not to engage in some pretence about mine."

Tony Abbot and Kevin Rudd both declared openly that they were Christian, however each held different opinions about how their personal faith shaped the leadership of their parties.

Each of these men also had to recognise that, since not all Australians shared their faith,

they could not use their power in government to impose their values upon the nation.

This same difficulty faces every person of faith when they enter the political arena.

In a pluralist multi-cultural society can we expect our governments to legislate according to the beliefs and values of Christians?

Should the beliefs of the leader of the government shape the way they legislate?

The same challenge also faces those who hold no faith.

If a Christian or Muslim politician must be careful not to discriminate against others of different beliefs and values, so a person who holds no religious

We need to find a way of helping to develop a unifying vision for our nation that embraces all its citizens.

beliefs must be careful not to discriminate against those who do.

This creates a dilemma.

Do Christians band together and try to dominate the political debate and have our opinions shape all legislation or do we work with people of other beliefs

and values to develop a common consensus that will build a better nation for all?

While we remember that the arrival of the first boat people in 1788 and subsequent immigration had a devastating impact upon the Indigenous people of this country, we have gradually built a relatively unified and harmonious nation.

We have been able to accommodate the most diverse range of cultures and religions without resorting to civil war.

We have learned to tolerate, even respect each other, and sometimes even celebrate our diversity.

Often this has been achieved by quietly agreeing not to discuss contentious issues.

We have begun to openly discuss our differences and even apologise to one another for past hurts and failures of love.

It is this respect, understanding and maturity that I would like to see grow from the conversation about our political leaders' revelations about faith and belief.

The current Roman Catholic – Uniting Church dialogue has begun to tackle the challenge to build a common understanding about "Theology in the Public Space".

We are trying to find common ground that will allow us to

## Message from the Moderator

Rev Bruce Johnson



engage in public theological conversations without falling into the old sectarian divisions of our past.

We are convinced that it is important that the insights of the Christian Church be heard not out of a desire to dominate, but with a desire to serve the well-being of all in our nation.

We need to find a way of helping to develop a unifying vision for our nation that embraces all its citizens.

Election campaign battles hold up a mirror to our society.

The issues that are at the forefront of campaigns point to our shared fears and greed. Political candidates are keen to tell us how they can protect us from our fears and meet our wants. These conversations rarely help us find a noble vision for our country but simply promise to satisfy individual voters.

I don't believe that the national debate should surround the

particular religious beliefs of any political candidates, but rather we need a conversation about what sort of nation we want to build.

Jesus said he came to proclaim the reign of God and his actions and teaching showed us that this reign was a compassionate, inclusive vision that offered abundant life for all.

If we could help our nation catch this vision, we might also find that more people might begin to see how faith in Jesus Christ can transform and renew individuals and communities and want to join us in the mission of God.

The Assembly's 2010 election resource *Building an Economy for Life* is a useful tool for those wanting to grapple with some of the issues facing Australia and the Church's response to them.

Visit [www.assembly.uca.org.au/election2010](http://www.assembly.uca.org.au/election2010) for more information

## Voting for values

I WAS exposed to and involved in politics from an early age.

My Dad consistently stood as the opposition candidate (ALP) in Queensland's safest Liberal seat.

Over 12 long years he made it a marginal seat.

One year someone even voted for our dog, which travelled around with Dad on election day.

From 13 I was handing out How to Vote cards and at around 15 I was spat on while doing that.

On another election day I was verbally abused by a so-called family friend who was handing out How to Vote cards for another candidate.

I wondered why people became so irrational when it came to

politics.

To me state government elections were very grass-roots, unlike federal elections which seemed to be about issues too large for me to grasp.

They didn't seem to be about power, but about people working together for the common good of their community.

At the booths I enjoyed intelligent conversations with mostly amiable people who all believed in shaping their local community for the better.

At church, people were always congratulatory and open that they (mostly) did not vote for my Dad, but appreciated his running.

The final year my Dad ran I was

taking the numbers phoned in by the scrutineers.

It was looking close and our traditional election 'wake' was surprisingly jovial.

Then television crews started arriving and the TV results changed from "too close to call" to "Lumsden".

In the end he lost by fewer than 200 votes; mostly postal.

He worked hard to provide an alternative and went out of his way (using his own time and money) to meet people and find out what they wanted and needed.

Through hard work and dedication he strived to make the community the best place it could be.

These are the values I expect in candidates.

Mardi Lumsden



Toowong Uniting Church sends a message to passers-by that prayer is the basis of faith.



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).



# Peace call for Palestine

By Debra Porter

DURING ITS seventh triennial Forum, held in July, the National Council of Churches in Australia (NCCA) announced it will continue to add its voice to the call for an end to Israel's occupation of Palestine and condemning all acts of terrorism.

Uniting Church minister and NCCA General Secretary Rev Tara Curlewis said the NCCA asks member churches and the wider Australian community to consider a boycott of goods produced by Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

"It is hoped that such actions will liberate the people from an experience of injustice to one where a just and definitive peace may be reached," she said.

Israel and Palestine's right to exist within secure internationally recognised borders was affirmed in a motion moved by the Uniting Church and seconded by the Anglican Church.

The motion noted that there must be an early end to the occupation of Palestine through freely and peacefully negotiated solutions in accordance with international law and United Nations resolutions.

"The NCCA welcomes the

easing of the Israeli blockade of Gaza in recent days and calls for an immediate end to the blockade," said Ms Curlewis.

"The NCCA will stand in solidarity with the people of Palestine and act for an end to the injustice and suffering borne by the people".

Ms Curlewis will convey the resolutions to the Prime Minister, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, members of Federal Parliament, the Executive Council of Australian Jewry and the Australian Federation of Islamic Councils, amongst other interest groups.

The NCCA's aid agency, Act for



NCCA General Secretary Rev Tara Curlewis.  
Photo by Dan McAlloon

Peace, will continue to encourage churches around Australia to assist ongoing actions on the boycott and support advocacy initiatives calling for a just peace

as all parties work toward an end to the conflict.

Debra Porter is in media and communications for NCCA

## Getting into the spirit

IT MAY only be August but the Synod Communication Services Unit (CSU) has been hard at work consulting as many people as possible to help decide on the 2010 Christmas postcard theme.

This year the slogan is: "This seat is reserved for you this Christmas."

The back of the card will say

"Worship with us" and have a space for congregations to put their Christmas service and event times.

CSU manager Mardi Lumsden said this campaign once again invited people to connect or reconnect with their local Uniting Church this Christmas.

"Everyone we spoke to loved the

welcoming nature of this slogan," she said. "But of course you need to make sure there actually is a seat and a warm welcome for people if they turn up to a church event this Christmas!"

This year churches from all over Australia will be using the Queensland Synod's Christmas postcards.

Ms Lumsden said they hoped the image would attract people outside the church as well as church goers.

"We liked the idea of Santa going to church at Christmas and the welcoming hand of Jesus offering a seat."

A starter pack with 3000 postcards and 10 full colour A3 posters is \$165 and includes packing and postage to your congregation.

Additional postcards are available at \$130 for 3000 (minimum lot) and posters at \$10 for packs of 10.

Online registrations for the Christmas campaign will be open from Monday 2 August (register at [www.ucaqld.com.au](http://www.ucaqld.com.au)) and close Thursday 16 September.

Congregations can also sign up to a special section on the Synod website which will list Christmas service times around the state.

Congregations that do not participate in the Christmas campaign can still have their information added to this page.

Final information and service times need to be completed by Thursday 30 September.

Register at [www.ucaqld.com.au/christmas2010](http://www.ucaqld.com.au/christmas2010)

## Aged care interest group

UNITINGCARE Queensland has started an interest group for those concerned with issues relating to aged care funding.

Sue Hutchinson from UnitingCare's Centre for Social Justice said residential aged care is seriously underfunded. "There are particular issues with the residential aged care system which are of great concern for the Church and UnitingCare Queensland," she said.

"The real costs of providing quality services are not fully covered by funding and [the gap] is ever widening.

"The result is that the financial viability of aged care providers has seriously declined in recent years.

"The government needs to be reminded that Australians care a great deal about this issue."

Register with UnitingCare Queensland's Interest Group – Aged Care at [www.ucareqld.com.au](http://www.ucareqld.com.au)

This seat is reserved  
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# Special treat for Home Hill kids

HOME HILL Combined Church Kids Club members in Burdekin, North Queensland, were treated to a special guest in June - the Stig.

The Stig is the name given to the racing driver on the BBC program *Top Gear*.

Burdekin's the Stig was a guest for the final week of the four-week Kids Club that focused on cars.

He was there to judge the racing of model cars which the children had made.

Burdekin Uniting Church minister Rev Paul Clarke said the Stig did a great job pointing to the winners and signing "no" when people asked if they could have his autograph.

The Home Hill Kids Club runs for four weeks each term and is a combined effort of the Uniting, Anglican and Presbyterian churches - none of which have enough leaders to run their own club.

It has a four-week theme and rotates venues including

using the local school with help from the Scripture Union chaplain from the Baptist Church.

A real ecumenical endeavour, the Kids Club is a way to reach out for three small churches that have very few families attending and mainly older members.

"We didn't want to give up on reaching the next generation," said Mr Clark.

"So we did what we could, something manageable. So far so good."



Home Hill Combined Church Kids Club members with the Stig. Photo courtesy of Paul Clark

## Day campers love dirt, damper and dancing



Moggill Day Camp leaders and helpers Brandon Strangman, Shauna Swanepoel, Sam Hartung, and Kurtis Strangman. Photo by Mardi Lumsden

CHILDREN ENJOYED getting back to nature at Day Camps held all over the state in the July school holidays.

Numerous presbyteries and congregations helped primary school aged children get back to basics and learn about God in Caboolture, Moggill, Oxley, and Samford to name a few.

Many of these were hosted through a joint effort from local churches.

Cleveland Uniting Church members headed west to attend the Central Burnett Day Camp.

Youth worker Rev Beth Nicholls said the "Go West" team enjoyed "abundant country hospitality, whilst spreading the good news of a mighty God at Day Camp where 90 excited youngsters came along and thoroughly enjoyed themselves".

The Moggill Karana Day Camp, west of Brisbane, was the largest in its long history.

Camper Mitch from Moggill said he enjoyed canoeing and playing with the giant earth ball.

Team helper Kurtis Strangman has been attending Day

Camp since he was in Year one.

He said after eight Day Camps it was the kids that kept him going back for more.

"They are great fun!"

Liam Megizil of Pullenvale said he liked having fun outdoors and getting muddy.

"The only bad thing is that you freeze a bit after."

"I like working on the gunya and it is really fun at the assemblies when we sing."

## Prison's master chef

By Mardi Lumsden

YOUNG COOK and part-time theological student Daniel Singer has had a life-changing year after moving from working in the kitchen at Raymont Lodge, the Uniting Church residential college attached to the Synod office, to the Arthur Gorrie Correctional Centre, Queensland's largest prison.

As cook supervisor Mr Singer works with a manager and four other supervisors to assist and teach a changing crew of 25 inmates working in the kitchen - a very privileged job.

Mr Singer said one of the Raymont Lodge cooks insisted he apply for the prison role.

"She basically pushed the job ad in my face and said 'you are going for this whether you like it or not,'" he laughed.

"It's very different to anywhere else I have worked.

"But in other ways it is very similar - you are still catering for large numbers of people.

"The inmates who work in the kitchen are very well-behaved because it is such a prestigious place to work."

The kitchen inmates are even housed together in a separate unit in the prison.

The recent bail of one prominent kitchen worker made the staff realise how much they rely on the inmates.

"It was quite a shock to us because he was sort of the PA to the manager.

"We sort of took his position for granted.

"It impacted us a lot. The whole place crumbled a little bit."

Mr Singer agreed that even in a prison that houses everyone from minor offenders

to those deemed Australia's hardest criminals, a person's crime should not define them.

"I only know the background of a couple of them and it means nothing to me.

"It's none of my concern. I'm there as a trade instructor and to try to teach them life skills and how to cook for when they get out."

And as Mr Singer studies for the ministry of pastor what better place to learn not to judge than in a prison?

"I don't go in there and Bible bash," he said.

"I just try to be a good role model, which is harder than it sounds, but I am getting there.

"I've learnt to stand on my own two feet and be confident.

"That is the biggest lesson I have learnt and am learning still."

And what do the approximately 850 Arthur Gorrie inmates like to eat?

"They always like the braised steak and the carbonara."



Theological student and prison cook Daniel Singer. Photo by Osker Lau

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# Pastoral carers link churches

THE CHURCHES of Christ and the Uniting Church in Queensland signed a landmark joint agreement regarding the Certificate IV in Pastoral Care in July.

Queensland Synod Chaplaincy coordinator Rev John Cox said the agreement will benefit both churches.

"It is an opportunity for the Uniting Church to build on the great work the Churches of Christ have done," he said.

"The possibilities are endless with this."

He said one of the passions of the Chaplaincy Commission was to "provide excellent chaplaincy across the life of our services that the gospel may be expressed".

Churches of Christ in Queensland pastoral care training team leader Mark Kirk said the joint agreement was a significant event.

"The partnership we are signing today is a huge step in the direction of setting a standard of pastoral care that the industry

can follow," he said.

"We've got a long way to go but I am excited at what the prospects might look like in the future given the pilot work we've done."

"It has been a real privilege to be part of this journey and this occasion."

Churches of Christ in Queensland Executive Director Dean Phelan said he was excited by the partnership.

"We see the significant benefits the Uniting Church will bring to this."

"I think it is significant for pastoral carers."

"To put a framework around what is effective pastoral care is a very significant thing."

"Most importantly it is significant for the people in need."

Queensland Synod moderator Rev Bruce Johnson said it was always important to look for what you can learn from other churches.

"We are doing this very small thing ... yet it is part of what God



Churches of Christ in Queensland Executive Director Dean Phelan and Synod Moderator Rev Bruce Johnson sign the joint agreement. Photo by Mardi Lumsden

seems to be doing globally. For me that is exciting."

Mr Johnson thanked all those

who had been involved in the journey to signing the agreement.

"The signing of this agreement

seems to me to have a much bigger significance than we probably imagine at this point."

## Patrol awarded Order

By Mardi Lumsden

CLONCURRYUNITINGChurch and McKay Patrol minister Rev Garry Hardingham was honoured with an Order of the Outback by

the Burke Shire at the Burketown Ball on 3 July.

Rev Hardingham and the Cloncurry Uniting Church shared the award with fellow flying padre Simon Steele from the Salvation

Army. Burke Shire Mayor Annie Clarke said the night was a time to honour the flying padres who play a vital role in the community and celebrate the courage shown by the shire when it was hit by

massive flooding last Easter.

The Order of the Outback Award honours those people or organisations who selflessly provide service, support and recognition to the people of the outback.

"Both Garry and Simon play a vital role in outback communities bringing support and spiritual guidance services to those in remote towns and properties," said the Order of the Outback report.

Mr Hardingham said the award was quite unexpected and he was not planning on attending the ball until someone strongly suggested he should.

"That coming weekend was chock-a-block with the internment of some ashes on Friday arvo at Nardoo station (300k north), a baptism at a station 100kms south of Hughenden (400k east of here) and then church services on Sunday at Cloncurry, Dajarra and Boulia," said Mr Hardingham.

"It wasn't until we got there and the Burketown Ball began that I sort of realised what was going on."

"The mayor got up and she started talking about this award called the Order of the Outback and how it had been presented to people and organisations,

such as Ram Chandra, the snake bloke who helped develop Taipan antivenene, the CWA and the RFDS.

"She then started to read out a heap of stuff I'd done in the area over the past seven years, from playing guitar and doing sing-alongs for the School of the Air to building airstrips, doing food drops, evacuations, baptisms, weddings, worship services, mediation work with the mines and succession planning with some families.

"I'm doing the work God has called me to and no matter how tough it might be to raise the money to keep MJZ [aircraft] in the air, I'm doing the best that I can."

"This hard work is making real changes to people's lives."

"I'm very proud to be a minister of the Uniting Church ... a church that sees that rock turning and loitering about in the outback as worthwhile things to keep doing."

To donate to the McKay Patrol contact Garry Hardingham on 4742 1441 or [mckaypatrol@bigpond.com](mailto:mckaypatrol@bigpond.com) or visit [www.mckaypatrol.ucaqld.com.au](http://www.mckaypatrol.ucaqld.com.au)



Burke Shire Mayor Annie Clark, with Order of the Outback Award recipients Garry Hardingham, left, and Simon Steele, right. Photo courtesy of the Burke Shire Council



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# NAIDOC heroes help close gap

By Mardi Lumsden

THE THEME of the 2010 NAIDOC (National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committee) Week in July was *Unsung Heroes - Closing the Gap by Leading Their Way*.

*Journey* asked two people who their unsung hero was and why.

Uniting Church President Rev Alistair Macrae said his unsung hero is a representative of a whole group of unsung heroes.

"His name is Maratja Dhamarrandji and for about 30 years he has worked in bible translation work in Arnhem Land," said Mr Macrae.

"The most recent achievement of his group of translators was the publication of the Djambarrupnyu New Testament.

"This painstaking labour of love involved large numbers of very skilled Indigenous and non-Indigenous linguists in the deeply cross-cultural exercise of translation.

"It helps keep Indigenous languages alive and thereby represents an honouring not only of the language but of the culture as well.

"Maratja and his family live at Galiwinku on Elcho Island and recently moved out of town onto his clan homeland.

"In his quiet way Maratja and his colleagues in translation are heroes in communication, celebration of culture and commitment to sharing the good news in the language of their people."

Tilly Jarvis of the UnitingCare Centre for Social Justice said her unsung hero was Jeffrey Smith.

"Jeff is one of the most intelligent and thought provoking people I know," she said.

"I first met Jeff seven years ago when he was living in a vineyard's workers quarters on his own and about to become homeless.

"He was 17 at the time.

"Jeff's parents were both suffering serious addictions and

Centrelink was threatening to cut off his Abstudy," she said.

"At the same time he was attending high school, trying to cope with his parents' divorce and grieving his eight missing siblings.

"Jeff was housed through our community centre and was able to continue his senior schooling.

"He always went above and beyond and was able to grasp things on such a high level that we were always learning through him.

"After school Jeff successfully applied for a position at the state museum and has since worked in educational and arts organisations. He now has an IT position in a government department.

"It astounds me that even when Jeff was faced with so many challenges, he would not only succeed, but do it in a way that had style and meaning.

"He continues to give me strength when my own challenges arise."



Maritja Dhamarrandji, centre, accepts his team's 2010 General Practice Network NT Administrator's Medal for Primary Health Care. Photo by Peter Jones

## Stepping up to the challenge

By Aileen Wallace

AN ESTIMATED one in four Queenslanders live in some kind of poverty according to the Queensland Council of Social Services.

Every day Wesley Mission Brisbane (WMB) helps over 3000 people.

WMB Executive Director Geoff Batkin said their annual fundraiser Footloose Friday, this year held on Friday 20 August, was about supporting people in need.

"The work WMB does helps people when they need it most, giving people the opportunities they need to try and reach their potential.

"Your donation can make a

world of difference," he said.

"Our mission statement is all about walking alongside and in relationship with people to enhance their lives.

"It is a living mission of true

social justice and equity and that is what we do."

The compassionate stories from WMB are limitless. For example Chloe, a 13-year-old living with her alcoholic mother.



People enjoy the 2009 Footloose Friday. Photo courtesy of WMB

breakfast at Chermide and lunch at Sinnamon Village.

Merchandise is also available to sell at schools, workplaces and churches.

"We don't mind how you celebrate – whether it is on the Friday or on the following Sunday – but please support us; help us help those in need," said Mr Batkin.

"God has given to each of us dreams, skills and abilities.

"Sometimes, for whatever reason, people find themselves in difficulty, travelling a path other than that which they may have intended.

"Giving a little to help someone get back on their feet isn't a lot to ask, but it is a lot to receive and it can literally turn a person's life around."

For more information  
ph 3621 4677 or visit  
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When WMB met her she was struggling to stay in school, and was aggressive, unresponsive and troubled.

WMB helped both Chloe and her mother get the support they needed.

Now Chloe attends school full-time and during the weekend she is learning to surf. Her mother is also improving and together they are learning to have a healthy mother/daughter relationship.

WMB will be holding a number of events throughout Brisbane on Footloose Friday, 20 August, including a cake stall outside Albert Street Uniting Church in the CBD.

There will be collectors selling merchandise at various points throughout the city, a community



National Assembly of the  
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### POSITION VACANT

Research Fellowship – Christian Education

The Uniting Church in Australia National Assembly offers a full-time position, of two years duration within the collegial staff team known as Uniting Faith and Discipleship. This position has a key strategic relationship with the Christian Education Reference Committee and is open to lay and ordained people.

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- experience and working knowledge of emerging technologies.

Applications close on Wednesday 1st September, 2010.

Please visit the Assembly website for the full position description and other information [www.assembly.uca.org.au](http://www.assembly.uca.org.au) or call Anna Catliffe on (02) 8267 4262 to receive this material.

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# Assembly calls for campaigns with vision

By Amy Goodhew

THE UNITING Church in Australia has called on politicians running in the 2010 federal election to share their vision for Australia and not to limit their discussions to cheap populism and slogans.

Uniting Church President Rev Alistair Macrae said he believes Australians are eager to hear messages of hope for the future and expressed his disappointment at the tone and quality of political debate thus far.

"I'm hearing plenty of sound-bites but no real substance," he said. "Australians are looking to our politicians to display real leadership and talk honestly about

their vision for our country.

"Instead we're seeing cheap political point-scoring that's not connected to any substantial vision for our future.

"Political candidates are asking us to trust them with our future.

"We need to hear what they believe and what they genuinely hope to achieve.

"Australians deserve better than to be patronised by cheap promises and slogans designed to do nothing more than win votes," he said.

The Uniting Church has articulated its vision for Australia's future in a series of election resources titled *Building an Economy for Life*.

These resources invite people to consider their vote in light of the values they hold as Christians and the ideas they have about the kind of Australia they want to build. The resources address key election issues including the state of Indigenous health, welfare management, climate change, rural Australia and asylum seekers.

They have been distributed to Uniting Church congregations

and agencies throughout Australia.

"Our 2010 Election Resources articulate Christian concerns for the future of our country around the theme of 'the economy'," said Mr Macrae.

"They are based on the idea that the economy is not an end in itself but a tool that should be used to ensure that all people are treated with dignity; a tool for building a country where the values of justice, equity, hospitality, generosity, peace and care for the natural environment find expression in what we prioritise for action and how we direct our services," said Mr Macrae.

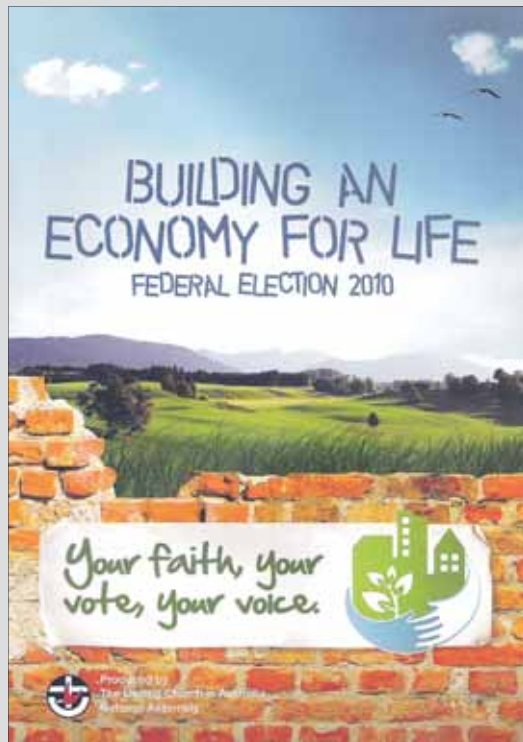
"It is time to hear the deep aspirations and vision of the candidates and the parties that are asking for our votes.

"Now is the time for authentic leadership that offers genuine hope for a vibrant and flourishing future."

*Building an Economy for Life* Election Resources are available at [www.assembly.uca.org.au/election2010](http://www.assembly.uca.org.au/election2010)



Rev Alistair Macrae.  
Photo by Paddy Macrae



## ELECTING LEADERS

From P.1

Situational ethics seem to outweigh absolute morality.

Mr Demack questioned whether there is such a thing as absolute honesty unless it's applied in very uncomplicated situations.

It may be simplistic to view events such as the replacement of the Prime Minister through the selective filter of the 24-hour news cycle.

According to Mr Demack terms such as "betrayal" spring easily to our lips and headlines.

"We do that sort of thing regularly and not only in politics.

"That is normal human behaviour, but we dress it up in various ways to feel better."

By the nature of their work, politicians' decisions have consequences reaching far beyond the personal.

Dr Ransome said we should expect our political leaders to have integrity, be loyal, and to behave honestly.

"We should also hold them publicly to those standards, whether at the ballot box, in the media, or at town hall meetings.

"But we also owe it to our political leaders to recognise the special and sometimes extraordinary circumstances in which we expect them to live up to our standards, and to accept that, like all of us, they will occasionally fail to live up to those standards."



**Who will you invite to Turn Up their faith at ncyc11?**

29 December 2010 - 4 January 2011 | 16-25 year olds | Gold Coast  
[www.ncyc11.com.au](http://www.ncyc11.com.au) | [www.facebook.com.au/ncyc11](http://www.facebook.com.au/ncyc11) | [www.twitter.com/ncyc11](http://www.twitter.com/ncyc11)



An activity of the Uniting Church in Australia



# Are we the Greens at prayer?

By Phil Smith

THE UNITING Church has always prided itself on being engaged in politics.

In Queensland, during its early years, the Uniting Church was vocal and well-known in the public debate of issues such as Indigenous rights, land use and conservation, and state government corruption.

During that period, Uniting Church presidents such as Davis McCaughey, Rollie Busch and Sir Ronald Wilson were recognised public intellectuals.

Dr John Harrison, author of *Baptism of Fire*, said the impact of the Uniting Church on politics was strongest in its first decade from 1977 to the Bicentennial.

"After that," said Dr Harrison, "throughout much of the 90s and beyond the church was self-obsessed by its own internal life.

"Churches failed to maintain control of the social agenda as they had in the past."

Journalist and Broadcaster Steve Austin said the Uniting Church was initially concerned with being real about Jesus.

"I loved that," he said.

"The Uniting Church engaged the nation strongly on issues like caring for widows, the poor and the oppressed."

However, he recalled the rise of the counterculture and protest movement had a significant effect on the Uniting Church, rather than the other way around.

"Initially this was not an issue, but I think it became one," said Mr Austin.

"While many Christian counterculture leaders came from the Uniting Church, they left it because it lost sight of the core of our faith: a resurrected Jesus."

As an interviewer covering a wide range of political and social issues, Mr Austin believes the Uniting Church leans to the left of the political spectrum in its social justice aims, and appears pleased when the church is praised by the left of Australia's politics.

"However, much of the time I cannot tell the difference between a Uniting Church spokesperson and any well meaning person with a cause and a brand," he said.

"Today I meet many so-called leaders in the Uniting Church

who say they don't believe Jesus was actually resurrected!"

Mr Austin acknowledged how important it is for the Uniting Church to speak the Good News for the marginalised and powerless, in spite of the possible political consequences when political forces reject that faith base to the church's actions.

"The embrace of the political left to protestant Christianity is about to end if it hasn't already. When it becomes clear that we are no longer the 'useful idiots' they speak about behind our backs then our faith will really be tested."

Dr Harrison said that while the church has overtly avoided party political alignment, ordained members and laity have joined the major parties and held public office.

"When churches have become attached to political parties the results are invariably a disaster," he said.

"The damage to the credibility of the Christian faith by Family First Senator Steve Fielding is incalculable."

The lecturer in communication and public relations at the University of Queensland insisted it was essential, for the sake of the Gospel, that the Church remain politically unaligned in order to speak fearlessly of the truth to whomever is in power.

Dr Harrison also questioned whether the whole denomination is engaged, or if the public perception of the Uniting Church's political stance stems from elite decision making.

"Today, my sense is that resolutions on questions of social justice are formulated by social justice professionals in synod and assembly bureaucracies.

"I cannot recall any recent call by any agency or committee of the wider church for the input of the whole people of God into the Uniting Church's position on a particular social question."

This raises a significant question about how the Uniting Church might use the membership resources available around business board rooms, farm kitchens and in academic common rooms.

"Has the Uniting Church become the Greens at prayer?" asked Dr Harrison.

# ELECTION



**Senator the Hon Joe Ludwig**  
Senator for Queensland  
**Australian Labor Party (ALP)**  
Cabinet Secretary  
and Special Minister of State

How will you ensure fair and just treatment of refugees and asylum seekers?

The Gillard Labor Government is committed to strong border protection and ending the business of people smugglers. Labor will implement an effective, sustainable, long term regional solution to deal with the challenge of irregular arrivals. We will treat people with decency and work to stop the boats before they head to our shores.

How will you care for the environment in response to climate change?

The scientific evidence is overwhelming, climate change is real. We have always said the best and most efficient way to reduce carbon pollution is to put a price on carbon. Labor will re-prosecute the case for a carbon price at home and abroad. We will do so as global economic conditions improve and as our economy continues to strengthen.

How will you ensure a just tax system as the population ages?

Labor understands that despite our national economic successes, some Australians are still doing it tough. So we're doing everything we can to ease the costs of living. We're delivering three rounds of tax cuts, we've put the pension system on a sustainable footing and through tax reform we're boosting the superannuation of all Australians to give them dignity in retirement.

How will you work on 'closing the gap' for Indigenous Australians?

Labor will build on the Government's investments in closing the gap on Indigenous disadvantage by improving Indigenous employment, recruitment and retention practices in the public service. We will work in partnership with Indigenous Australians and the states and territories to improve the safety of Indigenous communities and maximise the impact of investment in education and housing.

What responsibilities does Australia have to our less wealthy Pacific neighbours?

Australia must be actively engaged in international efforts to meet the global challenges affecting us all. Labor will continue to strengthen ties with Pacific nations to help shape the future of regional architecture and strengthen economic integration. We will sustain foreign aid to support economic and employment growth, and improve working and living conditions for people in the region.

How do you see the future of chaplaincy in state schools?

Australia's education institutions provide a strong framework to support the values and beliefs of our young people. Labor will support the continuation of the National School Chaplaincy Program to assist schools and their communities to provide a supportive environment for the wellbeing of students and their families.



# 2010

For this election edition *Journey* contacted four Queensland Senate candidates and asked them to answer six questions on policy. Each candidate was given the same questions and their answers have not been edited. The candidate's responses are presented in alphabetical order according to party. We hope this material will assist Uniting Church members to make informed choices and strongly encourages people to research further and visit the candidate's websites.

**Authorised by Mardi Lumsden 60 Bayliss St Auchenflower 4066.**



**Wendy Francis**  
Lead Senate candidate for Queensland  
**Family First**



**Larissa Waters**  
Lead Senate candidate for Queensland  
**Greens**



**Senator the Hon Brett Mason**  
Senator for Queensland  
**Liberal National Party (LNP)**  
Shadow Parliamentary  
Secretary for Education

I believe in controlling our borders. That said, we must lead by example in showing compassion to those who are here and genuine refugees. They deserve dignity. There but by the grace of God go each one of us. I will fight to decrease the processing time on each applicant.

No matter which side of the climate change fence you sit on, there is an undeniable fact that we have not cared adequately for the world. Measures need to be taken to care for our environment. We must take a balanced approach though. Our priority is still to look after people. I believe in people before politics.

I support a simpler, more efficient and fairer tax system that will promote greater opportunities for Australians of all ages. However it will be my role to be the voice of the people and stand up for the best interests of Australians including the elderly and small business people, through any proposed tax changes.

Governments have played politics with Indigenous issues for decades. Throwing money at the problem doesn't work. The prosperity and opportunity gap is huge and we need to address the real - not political issues. I will support any move to correct this imbalance. It's time to put these wonderful people before politics. I want to be their voice.

Australia has a particular and strategic responsibility towards its neighbours in the South Pacific. Not only are they important to us from a national security perspective but we can use our aid and trade policies to help fight poverty in the region and lift the standard of living in these nations.

Chaplains bring hope to young Australians. The most recent survey showed that 84% of principals indicated that feedback from parents about chaplaincy had been strongly positive. With ongoing funding at serious risk of being cut from the current Labor government it is more important than ever for me to stand up for this in the senate.

The Greens are committed to a long-term, practical and humane approach to immigration that rejects the failed policies of mandatory detention, detention of children, indefinite detention and offshore processing. We understand that seeking asylum is not illegal. The Greens will: prioritise the timely processing of asylum claims, increase Australia's humanitarian intake and introduce a new visa subclass for people displaced by climate change.

Australia must contribute fairly to the global challenge of reducing greenhouse gas emissions. This means we need an emission target of 25-40% below 1990 levels by 2020, and a range of policies to ensure we meet it. The Greens' Safe Climate Bill addresses renewable energy, energy efficiency, clean transport and forest protection, supported by an environmentally effective and economically efficient carbon pricing scheme.

The Greens believe greater investment into Indigenous community-controlled organisations with a proven record of making a difference is the only way to deliver real and lasting outcomes on social, economic and health disadvantage. We are the only political party standing with Indigenous communities to oppose to imposing punitive measures like national income management and believe you cannot separate physical, emotional and spiritual health.

The Greens strongly believe in a progressive tax system. We have proposed an additional tax bracket of 50% for those earning more than \$1million. We are also aware that our tax system provides too many subsidies and concessions to those that don't need them to the detriment of more revenue to be spent on services and assistance to those in need.

The Greens support increasing Australia's overseas aid budget to the level agreed for developed nations - 0.7 percent of Gross National Income by 2015. The Hawke Government had a Minister for Trade and Overseas Development, but it was only in place for one term. We propose that the next government should establish a new Ministry for Overseas Aid and International Development.

The Greens have proposed replacing the National School Chaplaincy program with an expanded Schools Community Resourcing Program. Under our proposal public schools can apply for funding to provide important student well-being and support services. We recognise schools often need additional support but that it is principals, teachers, parents and students who know what would add the most value to their school community.

Each year Australia accepts 13,750 people under our refugee and humanitarian programme. This is the most generous resettlement programme per capita in the world today. The Coalition will restore a border protection regime that aids genuine refugees, and not just the people smugglers who earned an estimated \$25 million in 2009/10 under the current failed arrangements.

The Coalition supports strong and effective direct action to improve the environment and to reduce CO2 emissions by five per cent by 2020. This will be achieved through the operation of the Emissions Reduction Fund and bio-sequestration initiatives, and without new or increased taxes on Australian industries or increased costs to Australian households and families.

It was the previous Coalition government which first tackled this crucial issue by introducing "Intergenerational Reports" in 2002 in order to better plan for the fiscal impact of an ageing population. In order to be best placed to meet these future challenges we need to get our financial house in order today, and that means paying off government debt and returning to budget surpluses.

The Coalition supports real action and practical measured to "close the gap" on Indigenous disadvantage, rather than merely symbolic "feel-good" gestures. The key to improving the lives of Indigenous Australians is through fostering educational opportunities and economic development in Indigenous communities, as well as through direct action to improve health and wellbeing outcomes.

Australia has a proud history as an aid donor and peace-keeper in our region. The Coalition believes that the key to ensuring the long-term stability and prosperity of our neighbours lies in assistance to develop and maintain transparent and accountable democratic institutions, as well as fostering free trade and economic development.

The Coalition launched the school chaplaincy program and we are committed to its continuation. Chaplains play a valuable role in schools, supporting students and school communities by offering pastoral care and guidance across religious denominations and beliefs. A Coalition Government will make it an ongoing program and will continue funding at its present levels - \$165 million over 3 years.

# Generosity astonishes in Zimbabwe

By Phil Smith

IN RECENT months Zimbabwe has only hit Australian news headlines for the politics of cricket or conflict, but Mr Astonishment Mapurisa has arrived in this country with good news of an effective long-term partnership between UnitingWorld and a number of projects near Zimbabwe's capital, Harare.

For five years Mr Mapurisa has served as the Director of the Matthew Rusike Children's Home, about 20 kilometres north of Harare's centre.

A social worker by profession, he has worked for the United Nations High Commission for Refugees and Zimbabwe's Department of Social Welfare and Ministry of Justice.

Mr Mapurisa was in Australia in July to meet with church partners to highlight the good work of the home Rev Matthew Rusike established 60 years ago.

His visit has been made possible by UnitingWorld, Qantas Airways, and the Presbytery of Bremer Brisbane.

The past eight years have

seen the home change from a dormitory-style institution to small home-style accommodation units, providing individual care plans for the children with a focus on cultural and spiritual heritage.

The home now cares for over 6000 children in its residential and community-based orphan care schemes.

The UnitingWorld partnership serves to promote the special gifts and talents of each child as they overcome trauma and realise their full potential.

Mr Mapurisa said this work helped take the gospel message out of the pulpit and into the lives of the world's most vulnerable.

"In a population of 40 million, we have more than two million orphaned or vulnerable children," he told *Journey*.

The residential program provides 145 children with accommodation, food and education through school fees and books.

"The Church has also set up community resource centres across the country," he said.

"In this way we also provide for

children in communities, foster care or adoptive households and even child-headed families."

Mr Mapurisa seemed anything but astonished as he spoke about fourteen-year-olds caring for four or five siblings or grandparents caring for up to 14 children.

"Our residential home has become so important to provide some relief.

"Across the country our community resource centres try to develop livelihood support programs to create income to help with food and school fees."

Flight attendant Kellie Adams of Karana Downs Uniting Church recently spent time at the Matthew Rusike Children's Home as a volunteer.

"Despite the poverty the staff and children are very happy," said Ms Adams.

"It's a family environment where their love and graciousness toward one another was so obvious to me."

Ms Adams has visited the home several times since she was introduced to it while on a trip with the Qantas Cabin Crew Team (QCC), a charity



Director of the Matthew Rusike Children's Home Astonishment Mapurisa. Photo by Osker Lau

consisting of volunteers from the Qantas network.

Now her congregation, Karana Downs Uniting Church, is raising funds to install water tanks that will change lives as children will no longer have to cart heavy buckets of drinking water from a bore.

Mr Mapurisa's visit takes place as the Zimbabwe Council of

Churches continues to demand that Zimbabwe's political leaders fully implement the signed Global Political Agreement (GPA) to repair the economy, improve access to education and health care, decrease the high unemployment rate, and improve food security.

For more information visit [www.matthewrusike.org](http://www.matthewrusike.org) or

## Pilgrim preachers graduate

AFTER TWO years of work, the first group of 19 students completed the academic requirements of the Lay Preachers' course through Pilgrim Learning Community.

Director of Pilgrim Learning Community Rev Dr Rob Bos said most of the students came from various migrant-ethnic backgrounds and were studying in English as a second language.

"They showed determination and commitment," he said.

"I'm sure they will bring these

same qualities of discipleship to their ministries in the church and the wider society.

"The whole church in Queensland will find their work a huge encouragement and inspiration."

Queensland Synod Moderator Rev Bruce Johnson said it was a pleasure to see such a large group graduating from our Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) congregations.

"This demonstrates their passion and commitment to

providing good leadership within their congregations and engaging in the vision of the Uniting Church," he said.

"I hope that this inspires others to listen for the call of God and to engage in serious Christian Education.

"The energy and missional vision of our CALD congregations is exciting and may encourage other lay people across our Church to also become involved in education for life and ministry," he said.



Salote Tuinona is congratulated by Moderator Rev Bruce Johnson. Photo by Gary Garner



### Ministry Placement in Hobart

Community Development Ministry and Social Justice Advocacy

Challenging Full Time - **Ministry Placement in Hobart.** (Community Development Ministry and Social Justice Advocacy.)

Bridgewater Gagebrook parish mission is located in one of the most disadvantaged communities in Australia.

The emergency relief program has recently transferred to UnitingCare Tasmania who is looking to expand services in the community as partners with the congregation.

The tiny congregation is deeply involved in volunteering in the centre and in the 'OP Shop'

The placement seeks a 'community development' minister or suitable lay person to explore new ways of being church in the community. (3 Days)

The Presbytery of Tasmania and the Justice and International Mission (JIM) Unit of the VicTas Synod have created a (2 Days a week) position as part of this placement to research and campaign on Tasmanian social justice issues as well as build the supporter base of the JIM Unit.

Profile and PD for the Social Justice component are available from Chair of the JNC Rev David Parker **Ph 03 6239 3530 or [dcparker44@bigpond.com](mailto:dcparker44@bigpond.com)**

Expressions of Interest should be addressed Chair of Placements Committee Rev Dr Peter Blackwood Synod of Victoria and Tasmania 130 Lt Collins St Melbourne VIC 3000

**[Peter.Blackwood@victas.uca.org.au](mailto:Peter.Blackwood@victas.uca.org.au)**



### Mission Pastor

Noarlunga, South Australia

As part of its five year strategic plan, the **Noarlunga Uniting Church** is seeking to employ a **Mission Pastor** to lead the congregation's evangelistic ministry in the local community. This strategic ministry role will focus upon creating new faith/worshipping communities of previously unchurched or de-churched people within the local community.

The **Mission Pastor** will, in collaboration with the Lead Minister and the Mission Council, share in the leadership of the congregation and provide a hands-on ministry within the community.

This full time position is funded for five years and is open to lay or ordained persons.

To obtain further details and download information packs, visit <http://resources.sa.uca.org.au/current-positions.html> and look for "Mission Pastor" at Noarlunga Uniting Church.

**Applications close 4 pm Tuesday 31st August 2010.**



# What is the church?

*Journey* continues its exploration of Brian McLaren's 10 questions he says are transforming the church. This month is the church question.

By Phil Smith

**ADULTEROUS LIAISONS**, wealthy church members showing off, the personality cults of leaders in sharp suits, and the rest of the community shaking its head as factions break up a growing charismatic church: it's the tale of woe from a fast growing church in a multi-cultural metropolis – Corinth.

One need not add a rock band and cable TV ministry to Paul's story to bring it into the 21st Century.

It's very easy to criticise churches. It always has been.

Paul wrote to a church with immorality so awful "even the heathen would not be guilty of it".

Yet he "always gives thanks to God for you because of the grace he has given you through Jesus Christ".

My Dad's tongue in cheek advice struck me as I considered the church question in Brian McLaren's continuing series.

"If you find the perfect church,

don't join it. You'll ruin it," Dad said.

Mr McLaren, author of *A New Kind of Christianity*, suggested that churches save people in some ways and afflict them in others.

He asked people to honestly consider how we might have experienced both sides of that coin.

He takes church as a "given", just as Christ told us to be one as he and the Father are one, and Paul spoke of building blocks and body parts joined and growing together in some strange unity. Somehow we know we belong together.

Paul told the Corinthians, "We belong to Christ and Christ belongs to God".

We complain about everything from how loud the music is to how we will pay the bills.

We get stuck into roast preacher after the Sunday gathering. Yet we recall the joy on the face of the young guitarist, the way an anonymous donation filled the coffers and how that same

minister visited you in hospital.

A few weeks ago a member of a Uniting Church parish put an idea to his congregation in a story.

Headmitted he often wondered why he went to worship.

"Compare me to a sports car I owned: British designed, two doors, soft top, green with a six cylinder engine," he said.

"I would never lie to you, but I have deceived you.

"The car was an ex-Army Land Rover! Behind my mask I'm not the man I want to be or the bloke I want you to see.

"Sometimes I don't want to be here, church makes me aware of my failings, my sin – and yet I can come and trust you.

"I take that mask off and let you see me as I really am."

People can get badly hurt

letting their guard down like that.

Many of us can tell the same stories as the Corinthians.

We've been the victims of abuse or power plays, been made to feel ignorant or silly by those who claim to be wise or mature.

Yet we are members of the body of Christ.

In each other we see pettiness, selfishness, worldly ambitions and the image of God.

Together, we are called to become more like Jesus.

German martyr Dietrich Bonhoeffer warned against taking for granted the "privilege of living among other Christians".

In *Life Together* Bonhoeffer wrote, "The physical presence of other Christians is a source of incomparable joy and strength to the believer".

The church's grand mission, according to Brian McLaren, is the formation of Christ-like people. He asked us to recall the most Christ-like people we have encountered.

How has your church experience helped you become more Christ-like and loving?

What could your church do to help you in the pursuit of becoming more like Christ?

Despite our imperfect faith and fellowship we still stand together and proclaim, "We believe in one God the Father Almighty. We believe in Jesus Christ His only son, our Lord. We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of Life".

It takes faith to say the last part: "We believe in the holy catholic and apostolic church."



## Pipes of praise organist

IN JULY Chermide Kedron Community Church held a lunch to honour the many years Darcy Gough has played the organ for their worship services.

In 1994 Mr Gough began playing at the Hamilton Road, Chermide Church.

In 2001 members from the Hamilton Rd and the Strathmore

St, Kedron, congregations joined and moved to the new complex.

Mr Gough was instrumental in having the Whitehouse-built organs from the two churches combined and installed in 2002.

He has played for Sunday worship services, Thursday morning services in the Chapel and evening choir rehearsals.

In the 1950s Mr Gough played the organ for the weekly radio broadcasts of "Voice of Christian Endeavour", then for Billy Graham's Crusade Choir.

At Mr Gough's home church, City Baptist Tabernacle, he was organist for more than 15 years.

Mr Gough's service is a great testament to faith in his Lord.



Janet Brandon presenting a gift to Darcy Gough. Photo courtesy of Janet Brandon

### FIND A CHURCH

Are your details up-to-date?

Modify your congregation details at the **Find a Church** page at [ucaql.com.au](http://ucaql.com.au)



### Chaplain Educator and Course Co-ordinator (0.5)

Applications are invited for the position of **Chaplain Educator**. This is an exciting ministry opportunity that resources chaplaincy by coordinating and providing a Certificate IV in Pastoral care. The successful applicant will have Theological qualifications, a Certificate IV in Workplace Training and Assessment, and a passion for education and training.

The appointed Educator will be a suitably qualified Minister of the Word, Deacon, or lay person and will have education and experience in pastoral care. For an information pack, please contact Rev John Cox - [john.cox@ucaql.com.au](mailto:john.cox@ucaql.com.au).

Completed applications should be sent to Rev Dr. Marian Zaunbrecher, Associate General Secretary Qld Synod, GPO Box 674 Brisbane Q 4001.

**Applications close 5pm Monday 30th August 2010.**



Frontier Services  
Serving Outback Australia

Atherton

### STUDENT GROUP HOME PARENTS

Frontier Services operates a student group home in Atherton, rural Queensland, providing accommodation and care for secondary school students.

Couples are invited to apply for the joint position of Student Group Home Parents, commencing Term 1, 2011. Couples need to enjoy working with young people, have a sense of humour and a lot of patience. Responsibilities include daily management of the home, providing a caring, positive environment for up to 10 students and working closely with families and schools.

The salary package includes accommodation, shared salary, superannuation, vehicle and five weeks annual leave in addition to school holidays. Salary packaging is available.

All applicants must have a current Working with Children Blue Card. For further information contact Marina Izatt on 07 3870 8605 or [m.izatt@bigpond.com](mailto:m.izatt@bigpond.com)

Applications close Friday 1st October 2010

Written applications: Marina Izatt, Frontier Services, GPO Box 674, Brisbane QLD 4001



**August 28, 1-4.30pm**

## Telling our story in the big wide world - seminar

Join John Cleary as he explores how we can tell our story effectively using today's media.

Participate in a panel discussion, led by high-profile communicators including David Busch and John Harrison, on how Christians can have a voice in the world of secular communication.



Sir Llew Edwards Building (Building 14) University of Queensland, St. Lucia. Cost (inc afternoon tea): earlybird \$35, payable by 18 August; on the day \$45. Registrations essential at [www.arpa.net.au](http://www.arpa.net.au) or email Allan Sauer on [sauer@ecn.net.au](mailto:sauer@ecn.net.au).

Hosted by the Australasian Religious Press Association - Queensland Chapter (including *Journey* staff).

**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 Coolom 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).

**August 14, 8am-12pm. Beachmere Uniting Church Jumble Sale**, cnr Moreton Tce and Second Ave Beachmere. Sale of cakes and jams, plants, books, clothing, manchester, craft, records, bric-a-brac, morning tea and much more. Contact John and Marjorie Horchner on 5496 8371 or [marjanhorchner@bigpond.com](mailto:marjanhorchner@bigpond.com).

**August 14, 9am-1pm. Northside Uniting Church Community Fair**, cnr Bedford Rd and Fluers Way, Andergrove, Mackay. Help us celebrate the many gifts and talents of our wider Mackay community. Contact Zelma Wasson on 4942 1613 or [zelma@bigpond.com](mailto:zelma@bigpond.com).

**August 14, 7-10pm. Step up to take back the Islands concert** at Marymac Hall, 616 Ipswich Rd Annerley. Featuring dancers from a variety of countries. \$10 for 13-17 years. \$15 for 18+. Light supper provided. Contact Aggie Lale on 0403 389 082 or [aggie87@live.com.au](mailto:aggie87@live.com.au).

**August 17, 9.30am-12.30pm. UnitingWorld Support Group meeting** at Wesley House, 140 Ann St Brisbane (roof top). Congregations are invited to send representatives. Contact Judith Finau on 3711 4622 or [ljfinau@dovenetq.net.au](mailto:ljfinau@dovenetq.net.au).

**August 19-20, 8am-3pm. Wheller Gardens garage sale** at Uhl Hall 930 Gympie Rd Chermerside. Preloved clothes, books, knick-knacks. Contact Barbara Wood on 3325 0204 or [trevorjwood@bigpond.com](mailto:trevorjwood@bigpond.com).

**August 21. Federal election.**

**August 21-22. Sunnybank Church Anniversary celebrations**, cnr Hellawell Rd and Hillcrest St, Sunnybank Hills. Sunnybank Uniting is celebrating 30 years of ministry on our current site and more than 80 years of ministry in the community. 21 Aug 2pm - enjoy the historical display and afternoon tea, a cake competition and auctioning, and BBQ. Sun 22 Aug celebrations continue with an anniversary service, followed by lunch. RSVP to Kym by 15 August on 3273 4433, or [kym@sunnybankuc.org.au](http://kym@sunnybankuc.org.au).

**August 22, 9-11am. Tai Chi with Blue Care Allied Health Team** at Little Bayside Park, Manly Esplanade. Contact Blue Care on 3308 5861 or Sonia Kennett on [skennett@bluecare.org.au](mailto:skennett@bluecare.org.au).

**September 4-5. Biggenden Uniting Church Centenary.** Celebrating 100 years of the Biggenden church starting with a Gospel concert on the Saturday night at the Show Hall followed by a Church service and lunch on Sunday. Help us celebrate. If you have news, photos or information to share please contact Bronwyn on 0741 271 273 (between 1-6pm), Wynsome on 0741 271 294 or Joanne on [iantrigger@activ8.net.au](mailto:iantrigger@activ8.net.au).

Upload your 'What's On' entries at [www.journeyonline.com.au](http://www.journeyonline.com.au). Items may be shortened due to space limitations.



Rev Samson Lowa and wife Jessie. Photo by Malcolm Bottrill

## Friends bring calm and healing

THE GROWING relationship between the Presbytery of North Queensland and the United Church of Papua New Guinea (PNG) enabled Rev Samson Lowa, his wife Jessie and two adult children to enjoy a week of rest and renewal with Rev Malcolm and Judy Bottrill at Lake Eacham in the Atherton Tablelands.

Mr Lowa has been on leave since suffering a stroke on 3 May.

The Bottrill's home, in a rainforest setting, has given them peace, quiet and safety.

Mr Bottrill said to witness Mr Lowa's daily journey of healing and to share faith and rich relationships was a great joy.

In 1997 Mr Lowa and Mr

Bottrill studied peace building, reconciliation and mediation at the Alan Walker College in New South Wales.

In 1999 Mr Bottrill led a team to Bougainville (PNG) doing post-trauma counselling, peace building, mediation and reconciliation.

## Date Claimer

THE TOOGLOOLAWAH Uniting Church Fellowship will celebrate its 70th Anniversary on 22 May, 2011.

Any photos, newspaper clippings, stories, etc relating to the Toogoolawah Methodist Guild or Uniting Church Ladies Fellowship would be appreciated for a booklet.

Contact Robyn Kirby on [butterfly58@skymesh.com.au](mailto:butterfly58@skymesh.com.au) or 5423 0069.

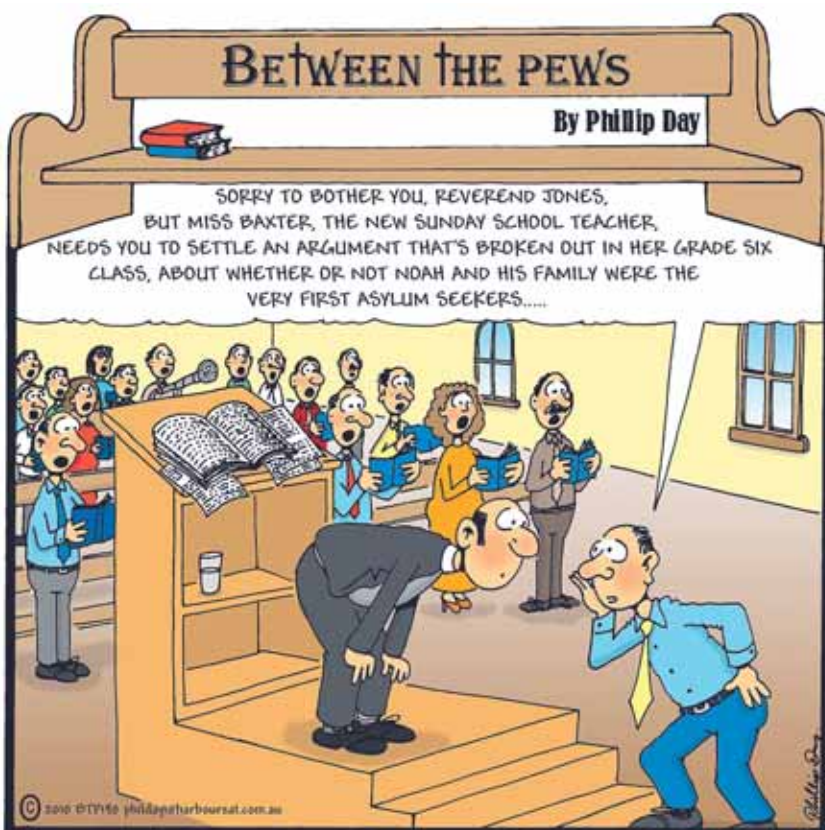
## Calvary links encouraged

MODERATOR REV Bruce Johnson said his recent visit to Mornington Island showed that there are wonderful opportunities for building partnerships between the Gununa Congregation on Mornington Island and other congregations across Queensland.

"Not only could Gununa be assisted by a visiting work

party to help with repairs and maintenance on their Church and manse, but there would also be opportunities for cross-cultural experiences and learning something of the way Indigenous Christians see the relationship between their traditional culture and their faith in Christ."

If interested email [bruce.johnson@ucaql.com.au](mailto:bruce.johnson@ucaql.com.au).





# Scars and Stilettos

By Harmony Dust, Monarch Books, 2009, RRP \$19.99

Tara Burton is the community liaison officer for *Journey* and as a teenager she suffered from self-esteem issues.

*SCARS AND Stilettos* is a compelling story of an exotic dancer, Harmony, who found Christianity and transformed her life.

The title sums up this true story perfectly.

This is a book for any woman who has suffered from low self-confidence, an abusive partner or simply lived a life thinking there was no way out.

When I first started reading Harmony's story I felt like I could relate, yet it was traumatic to travel with her on her journey of heartbreak and despair.

Rather than following the destructive path that she was

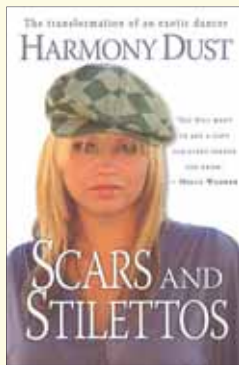
on, she found peace and her ultimate purpose in God and Christianity.

Her story is honest and confronting and will open your eyes to a world that is a taboo topic amongst many.

However, *Scars and Stilettos* is certainly not for the faint hearted. But ultimately, that is what makes her story so powerful.

The book ends with a detailed explanation of the various organisations Harmony has founded (including the non-profit Treasures) and is now associated with.

Treasures helps women in the sex industry discover their true worth.



*Scars and Stilettos* will make you laugh and cry. It will reinforce your beliefs in religion, when you feel that you have nowhere else to turn.

Harmony's story is inspiring and uplifting and I thoroughly enjoyed reading it.

I would recommend *Scars and Stilettos* to all of my girlfriends.

# Horizons of Cosmology: Exploring Worlds Seen and Unseen

By Joseph Silk, Templeton Press, 2009, RRP \$34.95

Reviewed by Rev Heather den Houting, minister at Kenmore Uniting Church.

THIS IS an exciting book for anyone interested in the nature and function of the universe.

Author Joseph Silk is an eminent astrophysicist who has written extensively on the relationship between science and religion.

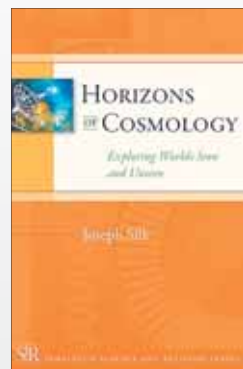
*Horizons of Cosmology* is good solid stuff and will bring you up-to-date with recent developments.

For instance, did you know that not only is the universe expanding, but the expansion is actually accelerating as a result of "dark energy"?

You may have heard of wormholes in black holes, but did you know that time travel is theoretically possible through a wormhole?

Most fascinating is the struggle to explain the most abundant matter in the universe, named "dark matter" because we haven't been able to directly locate it.

Mr Silk concludes that we are at a time in physics where our theories and equipment are no longer sufficient and there will have to be a leap forward in physics to allow us to explain some of the things



being observed.

He deals briefly with creationism (it is not supported by the data, while the big bang theory certainly is) and the more recent discussions about fine tuning of the universe.

There is some rather complex thinking going on about our universe at the moment and Mr Silk covers a fair bit of it.

However, I found that word pictures are not always enough to explain some pretty counter-intuitive stuff, or to illustrate some of the new thinking that opposes what we were taught in high school.

More diagrams would have helped me.

# The Lost Apostle: Searching for the Truth About Junia

By Rena Pederson, Wiley, 2006, RRP \$19.95

Phil Smith is a journalist, an elder at Pine Rivers Uniting Church, and has an interest in early church history.

WHILE HUNTING for a biography of Saint Benedict at a council library I marvelled at how fiction such as *The Da Vinci Code* mingles with non-fiction in the religious categories.

If author Rena Pederson was not a Pulitzer nominee and a significant Washington speech writer, I would have put *The Lost Apostle* back.

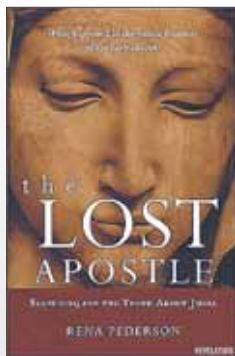
This is quality journalism

applied to a snippet of Paul's greatest work, with implications for every believer in the 21st Century.

If you've stumbled through Romans, got to chapter sixteen and rolled past the credits, you have missed a great story.

"Greetings ... to those outstanding apostles Andronicus and Junia, my compatriots and fellow prisoners who became Christians before me."

Ms Pederson wants to know about this female apostle, Junia, and why one of the heroes among the very first followers of Jesus became the victim of identity



theft around the 4th century.

It seems likely the church fathers decided on a sex change for Junia and made her a man as the centuries went by and blokes ruled as priests.

Ms Pederson's research takes her from Durham to Rome and to the Harvard University and Union

Seminary. She draws on historical material: canonical, apocryphal and secular, as she touches on the stories of women evangelists in the two or three decades after the resurrection.

Inevitably we must ask why the Western church made women support actors when God gave them leading roles.

Ms Pederson interviews and quotes those who strongly disagree with her thesis and

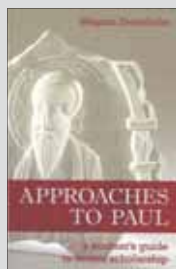
does not shy away from the apparent contradictions in other letters attributed to Paul.

Two thousand years after the risen Christ showed himself to Mary, and sent her with the good news, this book will give you an insight into life in the Jesus Movement in those explosive first years of growth, persecution, and world change.

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

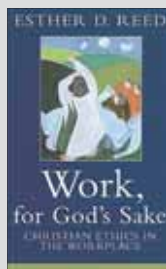
## Approaches to Paul: a student's guide to recent scholarship

By Magnus Zetterholm, Fortress Press Minneapolis, 2009, RRP \$44.95



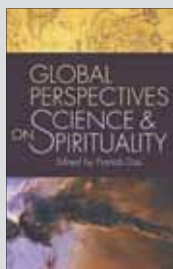
## Work, for God's Sake: Christian Ethics in the Workplace

By Esther D Reed, Darton, Longman and Todd, 2010, RRP \$34.95



## Global Perspectives on Science & Spirituality

Edited by Pranab Das, Templeton Press, 2009, RRP – not provided



## 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)

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Photo and story  
by Matt Gees

## Flying bid to ground malaria

TWO VICTORIAN pilots, Ken Evers and Tim Pryse, pictured left with Jonathan from Mission Aviation Fellowship (MAF) (centre), have completed a circumnavigation of the world to raise money for malaria programs.

On the Millions against Malaria journey they visited places like

New Orleans, Uganda, and Papua New Guinea taking photos, collecting data and shooting footage for a documentary.

"If we work together we can make a big difference. People in malaria affected countries aren't asking for millions of dollars, they're asking for one net," said Mr Evers.

### On Sunday 1 August please pray for Beenleigh Region Uniting Church

BEENLEIGH REGION Uniting Church is located in the heart of Mt Warren Park and surrounded by a shopping centre, Beenleigh Community Health Centre and Beenleigh Special School.

Our region has generally low income levels, high mobility and low education levels with an even spread of ages (highest by 2% is children 0-14yrs and adults 35-44yrs).

Rev Alan Robinson and his wife Sharyn commenced ministry in September 2009.

With their arrival the Church has seen a time of visioning for our future.

The congregation has many points of connection to its local community.

In recent months our Emergency Relief (ER) funding ministry has sought to provide financial assistance to people in

crisis and to reach out relationally by hosting a free coffee shop once a month.

We give thanks and praise to God for the Beenleigh Region's support for community issues such as School Chaplaincy and invite you to pray for this significant ministry.

Please pray for:

- the future of Beenleigh Region Uniting Church as we seek to hear God's will. Pray that we

will be consistent in the dreaming, planning and fulfilling of God's vision for this congregation, undergirded, strengthened and empowered by the spirit of God

- the ER ministry: that people find hope through the alleviation of immediate physical needs and through the bonds of relationship
- the ministry and work of Blue Care, which shares this property, that they might be a reflection of the hands and feet of Jesus to people in need and

that our congregation may continue to assist in relevant and effective ways

- our annual Stewardship program.

Praise God and give thanks for:

- the recent confirmation of five young people
- the growing momentum of our Youth Group as they get ready for ncyc11
- a successful Day Camp in the bushland of Bahrs Scrub.

### On Sunday 15 August please pray for Bli Bli Uniting Church

BLI BLI Uniting Church is nestled in a semi-rural area north-east of Nambour, yet this scene is changing as developers move in.

Within the next few years at least another 600 houses will be built.

The Uniting Church (previously Presbyterian) has been a part of the Bli Bli

community and surrounds for over 70 years.

The congregation is mainly middle to mature aged people, who enjoy worshipping and fellowshiping together.

The Adult Fellowship meets monthly and organises various functions (e.g. the fashion parade and community luncheons).

Open Door is a low-key once

a month outreach with a varied program and morning tea which is a great time to chat with visitors.

Bli Bli Tours has been an activity of this congregation for 22 years and happens bi-monthly with visits to various places of interest around South-East Queensland.

In November each year they travel further afield and have a

tour which includes an overnight stopover.

The Spring Fair is another opportunity to involve the community.

At Christmas the churches join together with local businesses to organise Christmas carols at the local school with a free sausage sizzle, cakes and drinks.

The congregation also supports the primary school SU chaplain and she joins us in worship several

times a year to share stories and concerns with us.

Please pray for:

- guidance and inspiration in how to engage with people moving into the new housing developments
- members of the congregation that they may grow and deepen their faith and relationship as we explore Green Church issues with God's guidance.

### On Sunday 29 August please pray for Middle Ridge Uniting Church

MIDDLE RIDGE Uniting Church is situated about 10 minutes from the centre of Toowoomba.

We have recently welcomed minister Rev Rob Callow and his family.

Our Church has two morning congregations - a contemporary style and a more traditional.

Recently our elders hosted

an afternoon tea and information session for newcomers.

We are looking to become a regional Church and already have several teams/task groups in place - worship, mission and outreach, pastoral care, property and stewardship, children, youth and families. These teams have permission to self-govern and report to Church Council.

Until recently we have

employed a part-time Youth Worker. We are now looking for volunteers for this position.

We are also looking for an office coordinator. Our office is staffed every morning by volunteers.

There are many groups meeting for worship, service, and fellowship including Adult Fellowship, Friendship Circle, Child Friendly Bible Study, Choir, Blokes Breakfast, Girls Night Out,

Circle of Care, Indoor Bowls, Crafty Creations, and Guardian Angel Busy Bees.

Through prayer, fundraising, and direct action MRUC supports many others such as Chaplaincy, Frontier Services, Least Coin, Leprosy Mission, and Overseas Mission. Please pray for:

- our minister and Church council as we look to the future
- the Holy Spirit to convince people to step forward to serve in many areas

- Bible study groups to meet regularly

- young families who bring their children for baptism
- development of our Pastoral Care program
- our Christian Community that we will show love to one another and develop Mission Outreach in Toowoomba
- children and youth that they may come to know Jesus as their saviour.



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Graham Clarke



# Believing the science

THE MODERATOR is to be congratulated by opening up the question of the relationship between science and religion.

The helpful article by Peter Harrison introduced readers to his excellent historical work.

I wish Peter had included the evidence he has unearthed from the earliest years of the Church for a metaphorical reading, rather than a literalist one, of the Bible.

The Moderator ... recognises that science is an evolving human process, but gives no parallel indication that theological thinking and liturgical practices and language of the Church also need to change and progress if "the tension between science and Christian faith is to be enriching".

Despite almost 50 years awareness of the damage humans have done to the

biosphere, an authentic eco-theology is still hardly evident in our church life.

Even more unlikely is that our theology can develop so that it is able to relate the enormous importance we give to the Jesus events 2000 years ago in just one small geographical region of Earth, to the science that indicates that the whole history of the human race is just a short blip in the vastness of time and space that is the universe.

It is helpful to think of science as a human invention rather than an uncovering of eternal truths.

Like all inventions, science has been improved, replaced and discarded when a better understanding of nature has appeared.

In the same vein, it could be helpful if we began to think of religions, and God's place in them, as human inventions that have been, and still can be, very

important for the well-being of individuals and societies and now for the global community.

This would limit the task of theology to making sense of the human condition within our immediate environmental context.

In that context, prayer to renew the creation makes urgent sense, whereas prayer to renew the whole creation makes no sense at all.

The sense of religion as "useful", rather than "true", would also foster the much more complex ecumenical relations that now make up modern Australia.

Peter J Fensham  
Adj. Professor  
of Science  
Education, QUT  
West End UCA



## Evolving science and faith?

IT WAS very interesting reading the *Journey* articles regarding conflict between science and religion.

The wonderful thing is that there is no conflict between proven science and the Bible!

Isn't that great?

If we can know and believe that God had it right all along, how much better we will be able to trust and obey him.

Then I notice that evolution was brought into the equation.

That will never agree with God's word, for the simple

reason that it is man's idea.

All real evidence for evolution actually fits the Bible better.

Has anyone actually seen something evolve (without intelligent help), or have most missing links actually proven to be hoaxes?

God said that he spoke and things were created. Doesn't that sound OK?

We have a designer and the designed; we even have the instruction manual (Bible).

Evolution said that something came from nothing and got

smarter and formed all kinds of amazing and wonderful parts. How?

Long ages do not cause fossilisation; they cause decay and total disintegration.

Covering things rapidly and quickly with water and pressure (maybe a flood?) would cause the fossils at all different layers in the earth.

I think it sounds reasonable enough.

It's the way God said things happened.

Cathy Hawkins  
Mannum



## Prayer for Synod

IN HIS letter regarding the serious financial crisis that our Queensland Church finds itself in (*July Journey*), Paul Clark said that "80 per cent of our congregations are not going to prepare".

We at Redcliffe Uniting have committed to praying each Wednesday night for the Queensland Synod and also for our own Church Council and congregation in relation to

this crisis.

The Samford Valley Community Church has also committed to praying for Synod and its leaders.

We invite all Uniting Churches in Queensland to join us in prayer for God's guidance, wisdom and discernment for our leaders.

He is calling us to "humble ourselves and pray and seek his face".

Many of us are longing and

praying for revival in our Churches.

Prayer is the key!

This financial situation has not caught God unawares.

Maybe, he is calling us to let go of things we have held dear (too dear?) – ie; buildings, traditions, our own way of doing things, so that he can build his kingdom in us, in his church and in the world.

Will you join us?

Claire Lawson  
Redcliffe



## Darwin vs the Bible

THE CONFLICT between Darwinian evolution and Biblical truth is not a myth and will remain while Darwinian evolution is considered science.

The generally accepted theory of evolution is a philosophical worldview with a smattering of science thrown in.

The Biblical revelation of God is irreconcilably different in nature and character from the god who may have used random mutation and natural selection as the means of creation.

"True" science will never contradict the truth of Scripture, and creation, in all its complexity, will reveal God – after all it is his handiwork and designed to do

just that. The biased opinion of people who have intentionally either ruled out God the Creator or remoulded him in their own image to fit their worldview, will always be in conflict with Biblical revelation and Christian belief.

Bruce Waller  
Townsville



## Transforming the church?

THERE ARE times when I wonder just where *Journey* is heading, and just where some contributors are coming from, and just where "transformation" may be taking us.

In "Redefining the Gospel" (*July Journey*) I read 13 attempts to capture, in ten words, the essence of the Christian Gospel.

How amazing is it that in those 130 words the name of Jesus appears but once; the singular, first person pronoun, not at all.

But as I read to the end of the edition I find Dr Stootman's profound statement: "God is there in the very nature of reality".

Nine words which follow a lengthy personal explanation of his commitment to his science and to his God.

Or Mr Woodrow's gem: "I find fulfilment when I give control to my creator".

Or Ms Weatherford's: "I am surrounded by the complexity and glory of God."

Still no "Jesus" but acknowledgement that there is no vicarious Christian faith, and that God's salvation (Jesus' salvation) is there for me, and accepting it I am his, he is mine, and some part of his work, great or small, is specifically mine to do.

Perhaps "Redefining the Gospel" is just another caution against a mindless rush to modernism, at the expense of some simple and irreplaceable principles of faith: Jesus loves me, this I know!

He lives, he lives, he lives within my heart.

And, for good measure, as a succinct ten-worder of mission yesterday, today and tomorrow: "Rescue the perishing. Care for the dying. Jesus will save".

Not logical argument; not modern politically correct verbosity; simply Jesus, through me or through you, or as he may have a mission, through us.

Frank Putland  
Oxley



## Singing praises

SEVEN MAY 2010 is a date Esk Community Choir members will recall with great sadness.

Thirty-two years of collected treasures including musical instruments, an extensive library of music, costumes and backdrops reduced to ashes in 45 minutes.

With the loss of the 101 year old Lyceum Hall we came the realisation of a new beginning for the choir.

With choral commitments and the firm belief that "the Lord will provide" choir members rallied and rehearsals began with the characteristic dedication and the conviction that the choir was again on its way.

In the past month the choir's spirits were uplifted by generosity shown by friends and supporters but our miracle

was yet to happen.

In a most unexpected and unbelievable way ... Esk Community Choir was once again the proud owners of an extensive and valuable library of music.

The choir will be forever grateful and indebted to Emmanuel Uniting Church of Enoggera, Brisbane, for their overwhelming gift of music and one which will live on in the life of the choir as it continues to live its motto "service in song".

Our voices will be raised in praise of the members of Emmanuel Uniting Church and the miracle of music given to Esk Community Choir.

Alexis Fitzgerald  
Music Director



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250 words.

# How is volunteering for a political party an expression of your faith?

**Richard Tetley**

I BELONG to the local branch of the Labor Party.

I hold social justice dear to my heart and I am a member because I believe it has good social justice policies.

Being a member gives me the opportunity to reflect those ideals and have an input to debate as well as put up motions in support of that.

If I feel the government is lacking in this area, then, through attendance at meetings, I have the opportunity to bring these concerns to the table.

I do have a concern for the way Prime Minister Julia Gillard was elected and feel disappointed that she has professed to not being a believer.

When the Commonwealth came into being Australia was considered a Christian nation.

References to God are still in our Constitution and I have no hesitation praying for that to continue.

Our local member, Michael Choi, is a Christian and whenever I get the opportunity to have prayer time in his office I ask God to continue to bless and uphold him as he carries out his duties.

Whilst Labor is in power I uphold them in my prayers, however, when they are in opposition and I don't like the alternative government, I find that I can turn to Paul's letters where he tells me to "respect those in authority and pray for them".

Richard Tetley is a member of Capalaba Uniting Church

**Judi Hinspeter**

MARK TWAIN once said: "Some people think the world owes them a living. Someone should tell them the world was here first!"

This feeling that I am responsible for my own welfare, combined with a strong work ethic was stamped on my psyche from childhood.

I have been a member of the Liberal Party (now LNP) for many years and find that the ideals and aspirations of the conservative side of politics match mine.

In fact both Jesus and Paul exemplify personal responsibility and a work ethic as an integral part of life. [Said in good humour.]

I am proud that it was the Howard Government that brought the initiative of (non-denominational) chaplains in schools into being.

Slowly we see the value of Christianity being erased from our nation – being replaced by the so-called tolerance of humanism.

We need to take this ground back and Christian school chaplains stand at the forefront of this battle.

Sir Robert Menzies said that human nature is at its greatest when it combines dependence upon God with independence of man.

This in no way diminishes the value in society of those who need to depend on the State for their livelihood.

We are a compassionate nation, built on a strong Judeo-Christian heritage.

Judi Hinspeter is an elder at Townsville Central City Mission

**Jenny Stirling**

MY JOURNEY into politics was marked out for me even as a child: it was in my blood so to speak.

My father is a great story teller and I was brought up with stories of the Irish Struggles and of his mother, Claire Harding.

A strong Catholic and Labor Party activist in the 1930s, Claire shared the bounty of her vegetable garden, considerable musical talents and practical skills for living with other families struggling to raise children at that time.

When I was 12, God and I bumped into each other through the lens of creation. I grew up in Innisfail, North Queensland, and was surrounded by a multi-cultural community, cane fields, rainforests, rivers, beaches, torrential downpours and the odd cyclone.

When my darling mother developed rheumatoid arthritis I began to be interested in Jesus the man: the God of compassion, who promised healing, peace and justice.

Two years later my family moved to a coal mining community in central Queensland and I learned about social justice in a community setting and the overwhelming rationale for non-violence as part of social change.

When I was 42, my children and I moved to Townsville where I studied to become a social worker, joined the Greens, and became a chaplain with Blue Care.

Finally I was able to weave together the threads of social justice, environmental conservation, grass-roots democracy and non-violence into a life-fulfilling work and identity.

Jenny Stirling is convenor of the Queensland Greens, a chaplain for Blue Care and a social worker with Blue Care Community Care in Townsville

**Bob Day**

THE BOOK of Proverbs tells us to "speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, for the rights of all who are destitute. Speak up and judge fairly; defend the rights of the poor and needy."

If that isn't an invitation to apply one's Christian faith to the political sphere, I don't know what is!

When values and ideals are expressed through action in wider society - as happens through the political process, they shape our community and the world in which we live – ask William Wilberforce.

The equality of all human beings is a Christian idea which led to democracy, international human rights and the abolition of slavery.

And wherever Christianity goes in the world the status of women improves dramatically in that culture.

My involvement in politics is an expression of my Christian faith and is my contribution towards helping restore confidence in our political process.

I can be active in shaping society in ways that accord with the values Jesus taught throughout the gospels – compassion, respect for life, care for the disadvantaged and above all, love expressed through action.

Bob Day is a member of the Houghton Uniting Church in South Australia and is the Federal Chairman (and Senate candidate) for Family First in that State

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