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MAVOR LAUNCHES MEMOIRS PAGE 5

"The grace, integrity and courage of his leadership was one of God's gifts to the church." **David Busch**

LIVING WITH HOPE PAGE 11

"My hope is in the change that God will bring about in the Uniting Church as we seek to be faithful to the call to spread the gospel." **David Nix**

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MENDING MASCULINITY

WHY ILLNESS IS NOT WEAKNESS

By Mardi Lumsden

THE AUSTRALIAN Bureau of Statistics states that men have an average life expectancy of 78 years old, around five years less than women.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men can expect to live around 17 years less than that.

According to the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) for men living in rural and remote areas, health issues can be exacerbated because of location, work and lifestyle and compounded by barriers to accessing those services.

The AIHW also acknowledged that women in the same areas have similar and specific health needs.

During the month of November, men all over the world will grow moustaches in an attempt to raise awareness and money for men's health issues.

After beginning in Australia seven years ago the initiators, the Movember Foundation, now run campaigns all over the world.

University of Adelaide Department of Medicine Associate Professor Gary Wittert told the Movember Foundation that men suffer higher death rates from nearly all non-sex specific leading causes of death.

"Heart disease and cancer occur more frequently in males than in females at all ages, and until very old age, men have the overwhelming majority of accidents and injuries," he said.

According to the Movember Foundation, men access health services less frequently than women and when they do visit the doctor, it is typically when their illness is established, thereby denying themselves the chance of early detection and treatment of common diseases.

The Foundation, which in Australia specifically focuses on prostate cancer and depression in men, said the result of that is a lack of awareness around men's health with many men not fully understanding the risks they face.

"Through increased education and awareness, the Movember Foundation aims to enable men to identify issues, seek effective treatments and look out for one another for years to come," they said.

In our western context it is easy just to look at men's health with a medical eye, but it is important to look at all aspects of men's health be they physical, emotional or even spiritual.

Spiritual health check up time

MAYBE IT is the result of recovering from open heart surgery, but I wonder how Adam felt about having his chest ripped open so God could take a rib to make his helper.

This story in Genesis 2 teaches us that from the very beginning a man was not supposed to go it alone.

However as a general rule most Australian men try to live life independently, avoiding asking for help or seeking advice.

We men know what's wrong with us without going to a doctor.

When I felt the chest pains I knew I just needed more exercise.

It was a couple of months before I went to ask my doctor if my diagnosis was accurate. It seems I was just in time.

Even after being told that I should have an angiogram to see what was wrong, I went and mowed the lawn two days before going into hospital.

I wasn't an invalid; I didn't need a helper.

Some years ago I journeyed with a father whose daughter had been killed in an horrific accident.

A few weeks after the funeral he was having trouble sleeping and it seemed to me he was becoming depressed.

I suggested that he visit his doctor and see if there was something the doctor could do that might help.

He said, "No, I just need to be strong".

I suggested that if he had broken his leg he would never have suggested that he should not have it splinted, that he should just be strong.

What had happened to him was far more devastating than a broken leg.

Why not get some professional

Spiritually healthy people know that the journey of faith must be made in fellowship with others.

help to support him through this experience.

Why is it that Australian men in particular will not accept the support of other people, even close family?

There is something spiritually unhealthy about that.

It is clear that humans were never solitary creatures.

There are any number of biblical pointers to the idea that we need one another.

Genesis 1 says that we are created in the image of God and Christians believe that God is known to us as three in one, God in community.

Therefore, maybe we too are created to be in community with God and with one another.

Genesis 2:18 says, "Then the Lord God said, 'It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper as his partner.'"

Paul speaks about the church as community.

In 1 Corinthians 12:27 Paul says, "Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it".

Our identity in Christ is found within the body of Christ, the Church, and in that community we find our true individual identity.

Spiritually healthy people know that the journey of faith must be made in fellowship with others.

Message from the Moderator

Rev Bruce Johnson



Every Christian should seek out a companion for their faith journey.

We need someone who will call us to account; someone who will encourage us; someone who will share our joys and our sorrows.

It may be a spouse, a minister, a close friend in your church or another church.

We cannot grow as Christian learners on our own.

This also means that the gathering together of Christians as congregations should be a community in which every person can find support, encouragement, hope, challenge and the positive nurturing that we become spiritually healthy and grow in the fullness of Jesus Christ.

One of the positive signs of hope for men is the growing

formation of Men's Sheds. Many are started by churches, but some are simply community based initiatives offering a welcoming place where men are able to talk with and support one another.

I think they are places where real physical, emotional and spiritual health can be encouraged.

This month I encourage all men to take stock of their own spiritual health.

If you are trying to go it alone and diagnose your own health, either physical or spiritual, I urge you to find the courage to seek the companionship of someone else, a helper.

If you can't think of anyone else to speak with about these things, contact your local minister and make a time for a spiritual health check.

Small steps make big difference

IN PREPARING this edition of *Journey* Phil Smith reminded me of the story of the healing of Naaman in 2 Kings 5.

Naaman was a soldier – the essence of what we still consider a strong man.

But despite being physically strong, wealthy and respected by royalty he had leprosy, a disease which threatened his livelihood, standing in society and even his masculinity.

In a show of his wealth and social standing Naaman took his servants, horses and chariots to visit Elisha, whom he may have thought of as some crazy hippie doctor.

But when threatened with death, even the toughest men will try alternative medicines.

He was enraged when Elisha told him, via a messenger, to wash himself seven times in the local river, the Jordan.

He'd travelled all that way, he was important, he had a big problem and Elisha not only didn't



come out to see him personally but also told him to do something simple! He reluctantly did it and was healed.

How many times has a doctor told you just to exercise a little more or eat a little less?

So often we think small changes won't make the difference; that the problem is too large.

We think big problems call for big solutions, but sometimes God has other ideas and we need to be faithful.

Naaman reminds us that sometimes the simplest act can be the hardest step to take.

Wealth, power and status will never be able to shield us from the harsh realities of life.

But that simple act could fix the problem or create a chain of life-changing events.

Cherish the men (and women) in your life. They won't be around for ever.

And for our female readers, I recommend an episode of BBC comedy *Man Stroke Woman* called 'Man Cold': You can find it on YouTube.

Enjoy!

Mardi Lumsden
Editor



DURING Mental Health Week in October Redcliffe Uniting Church held a seminar on depression. Redcliffe minister Rev Lynne Davis said with one in five Australians suffering from depression it was important to be open about mental health issues.

"As a church we need to take time to be informed so we can care for each other and remove some of the unwarranted stigma attached to Mental Health problems," she said.



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.

Church's creative calling

By Mardi Lumsden

AS PART of the *Together on the way, enriching community* journey to discern the direction of the Uniting Church in Queensland, *Journey* invites people to explore the Call through a photographic competition.

The competition is open to all people to submit photos that represent one of the five sections of the Call – Uniting

in Christ; acting with love; living with hope; witnessing in faith; working for justice.

The aim of the competition is to creatively explore and present the church's Call and how that can be interpreted by different people.

Inspired by the 12th Assembly and recent Downs Presbytery photographic competitions, the *Journey* photographic competition will



Zillmere Uniting Church Pastor Rodney Minniecon. Photo by Osker Lau

run from November 2010 to 2 April, 2011.

There will also be a youth section for those 20 years old and under.

Photographs will be displayed in an online photo gallery with the winning photographs shown at the 2011 Synod meeting.

Entries will only be

accepted through the online application.

For more information or to enter visit www.journeyonline.com.au/photographicCompetition

Ministers on a mission from God

By Mardi Lumsden

TRINITY THEOLOGICAL College celebrated the graduation of six Ministers of the Word on 25 October.

The group, four women and two men, look forward to sharing their diverse skills and passions with the church throughout Australia.

Artist Dona Spencer said her hope for her ministry was to continue to walk the path God has chosen for her.

"I hope to be faithful to my call and that I will walk in obedience to my call," she said.

Suzie Castle said her passion was for mission.

"I can't wait to go and share what we have learnt and I can't wait to do that in a community that grows in faith together."

Narelle Collas is seeking a placement in Western Australia as she returns there.

"I'm seeking to be involved in parish ministry and with people who are struggling and growing in their faith and working out what God's call is for them," she said.

Somporn (Lek) Branjerdporn

hopes to find a placement in Queensland to "be able to serve the Lord faithfully".

He said he was open to many kinds of ministry and was particularly interested in cross-cultural ministry.

Mr Branjerdporn's hope for the church was that it would be the contemporary voice of faith in the community and do "something innovative that will challenge us to open ourselves to understand the people out there".

Lin Lin Chew said her hope for the church was one of unity.

"That we work together as a church, we unite in Christ even with our different ethnic backgrounds."

Ms Chew finished her studies mid-year.

"It has been nearly four years of formation and studying.

"I have been transformed during formation to serve in the church and in God's kingdom.

"I'm glad I did it in the Uniting Church in Australia ... because there are so many different ethnic groups and they are so rich with that.

"I really appreciate the difference and that we can still



Trinity graduates (from left): Suzie Castle, Narelle Collas, Lin Lin Chew, Somporn (Lek) Branjerdporn, Harlee Cooper, and Dona Spencer. Photo by Osker Lau

come together as a church.

"I'm ready to be serving in the church and in God's kingdom."

Harlee Cooper has been working at Emmanuel Uniting Church in Brisbane's Enoggera for six months.

"It's new, exciting and challenging," he said.

Mr Cooper said working in

a ministry team has helped him adjust to life as a minister.

He said the biggest lesson he has learnt so far was to trust that God is faithful.

"God's faithfulness continues to astound me," he said. "That what God calls us to, God equips and sometimes it seems to be at the last minute, and that's a bit

scary, but we get there."

He hoped the church would continue to "struggle with what it means to be relevant to our society without letting who we are as a church be dictated by society, grounding ourselves in Christ but never forgetting that call to be Christ to the community and what that looks like".



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Footpath dining helps chaplains

By Phil Smith

LOCAL CHAPLAINCY took to the street in Albany Creek when nearby churches and businesses supported the Coffee Club's Longest Dinner.

Dozens of diners ate out in support of the chaplaincy in three local schools.

Albany Creek Uniting Church is a long-term supporter, providing a governance role

with several congregation members participating on the Local Area Committee, planning and attending fundraising events throughout the year.

Albany Creek Uniting Church congregation member John Dangerfield said the Church raises money for their school chaplaincy obligations each year by holding four garage sales.

"Our Church's long-term involvement with chaplaincy reflects the congregation's view that our young people in nearby schools are a Christian mission priority," he said.

"We work to support the positive role chaplaincy has in lives of school community, the children and their families."



Dining alfresco for school chaplaincy. Photo courtesy of Albany Creek Uniting Church

Kids get the flick in Burdekin



Members of the Burdekin Uniting Church Creative Ministries group perform on Father's Day. Photo by Paul Clark

By Mardi Lumsden

THE CREATIVE Ministries Group in Burdekin, North Queensland, won a national film award in October for a short film they made on the theme of love.

Burdekin Uniting Church minister Rev Paul Clark coordinates the group of 15 young people who meet each week to create and then perform in worship using puppets, drama and video.

They won the Schools' section of *Ignite*, Australia's premier Christian short film festival.

Mr Clark said the group was very excited about the win.

"We're really rap! We've won a data projector for the work we do and a trophy," he said.

Mr Clark said the young people helped write the script which is a humorous look at one of the best know Bible passages on love.

"We looked at 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 and asked what the

opposite would look like."

Starting in 2004, *Ignite* is based in Sydney, and receives entries from all over the world.

Its major aims are to develop young Christian film makers and to encourage people to be creative about communicating the truths of the Bible.

The video has already been used in worship, including a wedding.

Some senior members of the Creative Ministries Group also used it while on a mini mission to Magnetic Island.

Mr Clark has also had success with his children's books with illustrator Graham Preston, two of which (*The Prodigal Ute* and *The Strange Car*) were short listed for a 2010 CALEB Prize for faith-inspired writing.

The CALEB Prize is run by Omega Writers.

To view all the winning entries visit www.ignitefilmfest.com

Friendship for the lonely

By Neville Free

THE BURLEIGH Heads Uniting Church has undertaken an initiative to reach lonely and isolated people in their community.

Rev Colin Batt said the idea for the Never Alone Friendship Centre, launched in September, came from two new congregation members who, through their involvement in voluntary

community work, knew of many people who lived alone and had very little contact with others.

"There are many people who have for various reasons found themselves isolated from family and friends and need somewhere to go, to feel they have a purpose in life and to break the boredom," said Mr Batt.

"To be welcomed and to sit and have a cuppa and a chat means so much to them."

The group runs once a week with a variety of activities as well as the occasional guest speaker and outing and, where possible, volunteer drivers take people to and from their homes.

"It not only brightens the lives of our guests but also brings a feeling of fulfillment to the volunteers," said Mr Batt.

"People can see the church at work and the message of Christ clearly being demonstrated."



People enjoying the Never Alone Friendship Centre. Photo courtesy of Neville Free



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Personal story tells Church's journey

REV JOHN Mavor's newly-released autobiography is not just a compelling account of one minister's amazing life, it is also a valuable social history of church and community life in Australia and the Pacific over seven decades said ABC religious programs executive producer David Busch.

Mr Busch made the comment in launching Mr Mavor's book, *Come On! Come On! A Journey in Ministry*, at Chermeside-Kedron Uniting Church on 15 October.

Mr Busch said the book's comprehensive detail provided a rich context of social and church history ranging from Mr Mavor's childhood and Methodist upbringing in Beaudesert in southern Queensland to his

ordination, circuit ministry, extensive work in education, youth and parish mission in the Queensland and NSW Synods, his years in the Pacific, heading up National Mission and Evangelism with the Assembly, and his term as President-elect and President of the Assembly.

"The clarity, affection and detail of his stories demonstrate that John is intensely interested in people and places and their history," said Mr Busch.

"These matter because John is first and foremost a disciple of Jesus with a passion for education and mission, both of which must be grounded in local realities and love for the people there."

Of particular note was the

chapter on his Presidency, a period when controversy over sexuality erupted across the church.

"John prayerfully came to his own position on these issues, but as President he carried deep in his own spirit and heart the hurts and tensions of the whole church," said Mr Busch.

"The grace, integrity and courage of his leadership was one of God's gifts to the church for such a time."

Come On! Come On! A Journey in Ministry is \$45 plus \$10 postage. Copies are available from the author on (07) 5578 8112 or raejohn3@bigpond.com



David Busch (right) congratulates Rev John Mavor at the launch of his autobiography. Photo by Glenn Mulcahy

Rolling rewards for riders

By Mardi Lumsden

A NUMBER of Uniting Church congregations around the country got behind the *Ride to Worship Week* initiative of multi-faith network the Australian Religious Response to Climate Change (ARRCC).

ARRCC President Thea Ormerod said the inaugural event, held 9-15 October, was an opportunity for religious communities to reduce their carbon footprint and promote the benefits of regular exercise.

"All religions agree that we have a responsibility to care for

the earth," said Ms Ormerod. "Just think of the difference Australia's faith communities could make if everyone committed to cycling to their worship activities instead of driving."

For St Davids Coopers Plains Uniting Church member Cameron Todd most Sundays are a *Ride to Worship* day as he peddles his Chinese-designed Cargocycle around Brisbane.

Mr Todd said when Brisbane's traffic congestion made travelling by car take longer than necessary he started riding a bike.

"It wasn't until I read that over 60 per cent of all private motor vehicle trips in Australia are for a distance of less than six kilometres that it dawned on me that most of my regular trips – to the local shopping centre, cinemas and to church – were well below this distance," he said.

Initially put off by the need to carry work and groceries by bike, Mr Todd found a practical solution in the Cargocycle.

"There are thousands of similar utilitarian pedal-powered vehicles like these across Asia

and even more so in Europe, where car ownership as a rite of passage is well out of reach (and psyche) of the general populace.

"These places with much larger populations than Australia are not experiencing the relative levels of traffic paralysis that we do locally."

Mr Todd admits that being younger and mobile made his ethical lifestyle change easier, as did the Cargocycle's rain cover and fold-down bench seat which helps carry two children to and from prep.

"With a load capability of 150kg (including the rider) I can easily carry heavy bags of groceries, pick up bulky mail packages from the post office or deliver a decent-sized fold back wedge to church."

"Being a bike rider you generally discover first-hand how polluting motor vehicles are, which instils not just an awareness for our obligations regarding the stewardship of the earth and its resources, but also a concern for the health of fellow community members and an urge to minimise my own driving as much as possible."



Cameron Todd with his Cargocycle

Uniting Church Safaris closes

By Doug Fergusson

AFTER 27 years of Christian-based tours Queensland's Uniting Church Safari (UC Safaris) wound up operations in August.

The brainchild of Rev Aub Baker (the then Burke and Wills Patrol Padre) and the late Jim Smallbone during a Synod meeting in 1983, UC Safaris has raised much needed funds for the work of the Church in Western Queensland and around Australia and built relationships between country and city church members.

To date, forty-four tours have taken place.

In 1999 a Board of Management was formed under the auspicious of the Downs Presbytery.

In the 12 years of operation the Board has distributed in excess of \$210,000 to the many needy causes of our church community including Frontier Services, the McKay Patrol, and the appeal to repair the Thursday Island manse.

UNITING CHURCH STUDIES

DEBATING THE PREAMBLE

The most recent issue of *Uniting Church Studies* explores the theological debates surrounding the Assembly's proposed new preamble to the UCA's Constitution.

Authors include: Associate Professor Clive Pearson (NSW Synod), Dr Geoffrey Thompson (Qld Synod), Dr Dominic O'Sullivan (NZ), Dr Benjamin Myers (NSW Synod), Ms Katalina Tahaefe-Williams (NSW Synod), Professor John D'Arcy May (Ireland), Dr Alexander Jensen (WA Synod), and Dr Wesley Campbell (VIC Synod).

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Dreams come true in Delhi

MORETON BAY College (MBC) and her Australian team mates, Rhythmic Gymnast Danni Prince Naazmi Johnston (NSW) and



Janine Murray (WA) created history for Australia by securing the coveted Rhythmic Gymnastic Team Gold Medal at the Delhi Commonwealth Games in October.

A Uniting Church school, MBC has a world class Centre for Excellence in Gymnastics which Commonwealth Games rhythmic gymnastics all-around champion Naazmi Johnston also attended until moving back to Sydney.

MBC Head of Gymnastics

Danni Prince (far left), Naazmi Johnston (centre) and Janine Murray show off their gold medals. Photo by Tess Prince

Peter Dowdell said it was a great moment for the sport in Australia.

"This is a momentous win and marks the first time that Australia has won the team gold medal at a Commonwealth Games."

In a sport that is usually divided by a fraction of a point, the team placed more than 10 points ahead of second place.

A university student, Ms Prince said winning gold was a dream come true.

"Although we were expected to win the gold, nothing prepares you for standing on the podium.

"No words can describe it," she told *Journey*.

"Representing your country at such a large scale event and

being part of such a successful team most definitely motivated me to aim high at the games with so many amazing athletes to look up to.

"Hearing the national anthem was definitely a very special moment."

Ms Prince was accompanied by one of her MBC coaches, Gina Peluso, who acted as the Australian judge for this Commonwealth Games.

Other past MBC students participating at the Games included Olivia Wright (bronze medal diving), Peri Campbell-Innis (table tennis) and Alice Mills (swimming).

By Mardi Lumsden

Funding lifeline for school

By Christie Turner

LIFELINE GOLD Coast is proud to join with Benowa State High School to celebrate \$25,000 in funding for the Schools First Local Seed Funding Award.

The funding will be used to increase support for students with a range of mental health, social and emotional concerns through a Peer Skills Leadership Program.

The Schools First Local Seed

Funding Award is an initiative of National Australia Bank in partnership with the Foundation for Young Australians (FYA) and the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER).

Lifeline Gold Coast's Team Leader for Child Youth and Family Services Simone Silberberg said the school-based partnership, iCare, was a great way for Lifeline to support young people.

"The partnership will create peer-to-peer training programs

to equip students to assist and support each other, and in turn learn valuable leadership skills," she said.

"This project is a wonderful example of how a local school and community organisation can work together to enhance the social wellbeing and educational outcomes of young people in our community.

"Both partners are eager to establish a program that is sustainable and has long-term



Photo courtesy of Lifeline Gold Coast

impacts on the school culture and the young people's lives."

The awards are part of \$5.2

million in funding that Schools First will provide to 108 schools in 2010.

Peace services Caloundra

THE SECOND annual International Peace Day Interfaith Service was held at the Caloundra Rise Retirement Village community hall on 21 September.

Unity College's Judy Morrison said students from the College, a Catholic and Uniting Church school in Caloundra on the Sunshine Coast, visit the Village regularly and were very involved in the preparations for the day.

"It might have been school holidays, but they came anyway. And in school uniform," she marvelled.

"The community hall was decorated with messages of peace and appropriately 1000 paper cranes made by students at Unity College," said Ms Morrison.

Year 10 student Daniel Bellini unveiled a Peace Day DVD which had been prepared by the

students during their visits to the centre during the term.

"They interviewed residents about what peace means to them and used these to create their DVD," said Ms Morrison.

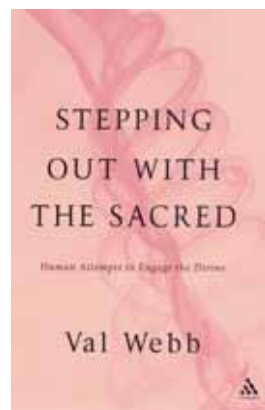
"Many of the residents had lost fathers, husbands and sons in wars and are keen to spread the message of peace in the world so that others will not have to experience the same loss."

Unity College has also welcomed their new Campus Minister, *Journey's* Phil Smith.

He shares the part-time role with his Catholic counterpart, John Manion, to care for the spiritual development of students.

Rev Brian Gilbert led Mr Smith's commissioning service at Caloundra Uniting Church in October.

Lorna Toombs (Caloundra Catholic Pastoral Team) and Unity College student Daniel Bellini at the Peace Day service. Photo by the Sunshine Coast Daily



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"Val Webb has convincingly shown that the vast knowledge of world religions can lead us to a new more inclusive appreciation of God, which can deepen our spiritual experience as well as forge bridges of understanding between faiths." Dr. Rachael Kohn, The Spirit of Things, ABC Radio National.

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Secret men's business

By Phil Smith

ALL THINGS considered, it is not surprising many men don't want to talk about prostate cancer, or even think about it.

Prostate cancer ranks alongside testicular cancer in the way it threatens masculinity.

The intimate, embarrassing check process, the fear of impotence after surgery: all these pale in comparison to the ultimate threat of death.

Now the most common cancer in Australian men, after non-melanoma skin cancer, the Cancer Council stated that more than 17,400 cases of prostate cancer (nearly 30% of male cancers) are diagnosed in Australia each year.

But statistics have a limited effect.

Media campaigns come and go but Australian men are legendary for an attitude that says, "It won't happen to me".

Of course it does, and the impact is far wider than only the individual.

Ian 'Watto' Watson is a truck driving instructor and national leader in men's ministry.

He is also a former soldier, state level Aussie Rules player, a big bloke the far side of fifty who knows trucks and loves Collingwood football club.

"When the doctor says, 'We've got a problem', and the word

When the doctor says, 'We've got a problem', and the word cancer applies to you, it's scary.

cancer applies to you, it's scary," he said.

"You can talk to other people about what they're going through, but when it's you it's more than a word and you think - When am I going to die?"

It's been seven years since his prostate was removed and Mr Watson has been back in hospital for treatment since, yet he says the journey actually made him a "more whole person".

"When I realised I was in the palm of the creator's hand, for the next five years I grew closer to God.

"I know my wife and family love me, but man, God is the giver of life and he's the hope of life!

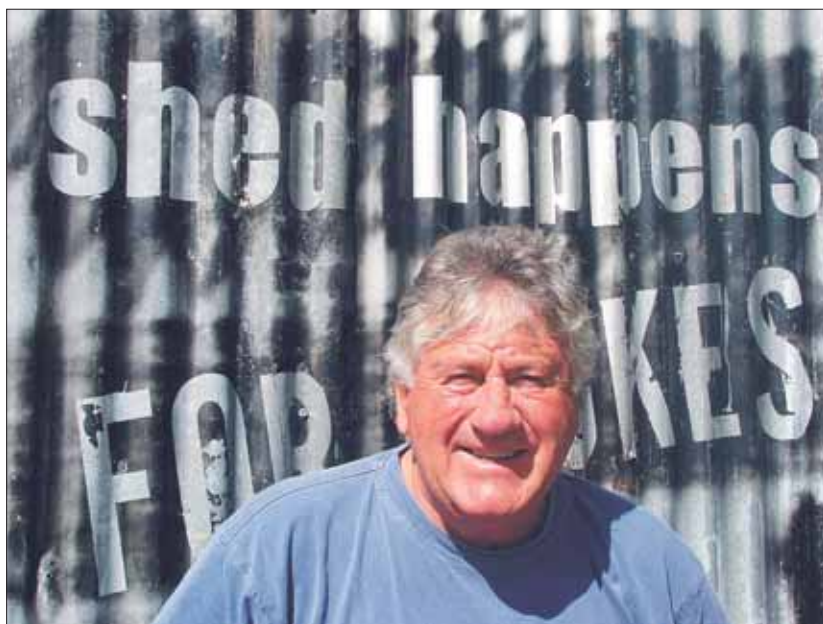
"I think it's the best thing that has ever happened to me," said a man who perhaps is still skating close to the edge.

"I see things more clearly: I love my wife more, I love my kids more, but I don't hold onto my life.

"Yes, I love Margaret and I'd like to live into my eighties and be relevant, but she is who she is and I am who I am and my life is in the control of my creator."

If the saying is true, that an authentic life requires a resolute confrontation with death, it may not necessarily be one's own death.

Pine Rivers Uniting Church member Wal Lawrie has a family history of cancer.



Shed Happens' Ian 'Watto' Watson. Photo by John Hoens

When his brother died, as a result of prostate cancer, shortly after retiring, Mr Lawrie realised that cancer has an impact on everyone.

He engaged the men of his congregation at Pine Rivers, north of Brisbane, in Movember - an international event each November raising funds and awareness for men's health, specifically prostate cancer and depression.

The idea is that men get sponsored to grow a moustache.

"I thought, 'I can do a little bit

here," he said.

"I got a few friends to get involved and grew a (fairly dismal) moustache.

"Perhaps we should have started earlier for a better result!"

The effort raised more than \$2000.

"We just asked people to help and they either said yes or no," recalled Mr Lawrie.

"Most people said yes because there's been a lot more publicity in recent years. People are taking more responsibility for their own health."

He summed up his own attitude quite simply as only having one chance with health, encouraging men to talk to their health professionals.

"If you don't get onto it early, it may be too late."

For more information on Movember visit www.movember.com

For more information on Men's Sheds visit www.shednight.com

Tips for a healthy life

ACCORDING TO the International Men's Health Week team the best thing Australian men can do in 2010 about their health is to get proactive.

Men's Health Week, held in Australia last June, aims to increase awareness of male health issues on a global scale and to encourage the development of health policies and services that meet men's specific needs.

Here are a few simple ways

they suggested to wise-up and get healthy.

Visit a GP for an annual check-up and know your family history.

Regular exercise and healthy eating has positive outcomes for physical and mental health.

They recommend making small changes at first then gradually building up to bigger exercise and diet changes.

Smoking causes 40 per cent of deaths in men aged under 65, so the Men's Health Week team recommend giving up smoking.

Maintain a healthy mind. Recognising the symptoms of depression in yourself and others can be the first step to beating it.

Also look out for risk factors such as a family history of mental illness, excessive alcohol consumption, drug use, stress, unemployment



and chronic illness.

The team also said maintaining healthy relationships with family, friends and mates can be the cornerstone for a man's life and wellbeing.

"They are the most important source of love, support and understanding available and often underpin a man's sense of self," they said.

For more information visit www.menshealthweek.com.au

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Living life in abundance

By Phil Smith

WESTERN CULTURE has tended to divide life into physical, mental, and emotional.

Jesus, however, speaks of an abundant life, a total experience from the giver of life.

If men are reticent about going to their doctor about routine physical health at the best of times, where do they find a GP in regards to spiritual and emotional health?

In church tradition, the minister has often been cast in the role of spiritual GP.

Caloundra Uniting Church minister Rev Brian Gilbert put forward a definition of spiritual health from the *Journal of Gerontological Nursing*.

The writers defined spiritual distress as the impaired ability to experience and integrate meaning and purpose in life through connectedness with self, others, art, music, literature, nature, or a power greater than oneself.

"That's a general definition," said Mr Gilbert, "but it does hold true for us as Christians as we find a specific interpretation of the power greater than ourselves."

He said the answers to questions of meaning and purpose are defined in the scriptures.

But Mr Gilbert said spiritual health professionals (ministers, spiritual directors and pastors) aren't the only people who can help with personal reflection and finding connectedness.

"The important thing is to have people you can trust, people with whom you can share frustrations and fears, people who will listen and not give pat answers, people who themselves have a clear understanding of God's purpose or are at least willing to continue to explore this.

"These people may not be professional, but they are true saints and each congregation has them."

He warned against those who quickly prescribe a scripture verse to solve the problem and suggested we need people who can listen.

Peter Janetski is a Brisbane based counselor and Family Radio host.

He gets his check-up from other men he trusts.

"For me it is the key blokes who are the core of my community of

men," said Mr Janetski. "These guys are safe enough for me to take the risk to get real about the important matters of my heart."

He said men who care about the state of their hearts need to be intentional about investing time in these relationships.

If a key to men's spiritual health is connectedness in community, recovering addicts at the Salvation Army's Brisbane Moonyah programme provide a practical example.

The framework of the program is the HALT acronym

If men are hungry, angry, lonely or tired, they are at risk of spiralling down internally and cutting themselves off.

National Shed Night founder Ian Watson said isolation is the greatest killer of Australian men.

"We go inside ourselves and shut down, then suicide," he said.

"Most of what's wrong with us blokes is between our ears."

Mr Watson addressed the Senate Select Committee on Men's health issues earlier this year.

"I think we spend a lot of time on issues of health, but the real issue of men's total wellbeing is



Stock image by Martin Carter

emotions: the head, heart, spirit and soul," he said.

"Most of my life I spent spiritually dead.

"My head was OK and so was my body, but one day a bloke challenged me, saying, 'You're spiritually dead'.

"I thought, 'Who do you think you are?' But he was right."

In 1624 John Donne said, "No man is an island".

Almost 400 years later, clichés about manhood still hold sway: buck up, pull yourself together and tough it out.

Mr Watson said he now sees a resurgence in men supporting one another as community, with a foundation in the scriptures.

FAST FACTS

One in 11 Australian men will develop prostate cancer by age 70. (*November Foundation*)

Around one in eight men in Australia will experience depression in their lifetime, and one in four men will experience an anxiety disorder. (*beyondblue*)

Men in their 40s and 50s are the fastest growing part of Australia's living-alone population. (*Living alone in Australia*)

In Queensland in 2007, 1558 men and 1110 women were diagnosed with skin cancer. Queensland has the highest rate of skin cancer in the world. (*Cancer Council Queensland*)

Keeping the engine running longer

By Phil Smith

I HAVE a 49-year-old body and a 15 year old Mazda campervan. There are similarities beyond the mileage on the clock.

Sadly, there are also some big differences, but blokes like me are not smart enough to see those until we start blowing smoke, our suspension sags or we run out of puff going up hill.

I'd love to have a shiny Winnebago with plenty of grunt, all the gear and a customized body.

Still, I like to polish up what I do have and it feels good when someone admires what I'm getting around in.

My van, also known as the Boardroom, isn't just a van. It has the pop-top roof, microwave oven, gas stove, bed-come-couch and table, cupboards and a kitchen sink. It now has an annex as well.

I could have settled for a basic van with a mattress thrown in the back, but the Boardroom came with the whole road trip, surf adventure, abundant lifestyle.

When it needs something

repaired or serviced – and I don't have a clue – I have options.

There's a mechanic and a transmission specialist.

I've also found a gas fitter, cabinetmaker, caravan repairer and upholsterer.

I tell them what I think is wrong and leave it there.

I pay big bucks when I pick it up later.

Or I can call Daryl first. He's a friend of mine who knows about stuff and can usually show me what's going wrong.

So what do I do with the 49-year-old body I get around in?

I have an optometrist, physiotherapist, dentist, and a general practitioner. They do the basic mechanical repairs.

I also have a wife, an elder, a pastor, and even a counsellor from time to time to work on the other parts.

The danger is that I do the same thing as with the van: ignore the problem until something leaks, then take it along to an expert and say, "Fix it".

Or I could call a friend of mine



Phil Smith and the Boardroom. Photo by Glenn Weatherford

early on who knows about stuff and can usually show me what's going wrong.

I can settle for a basic life that gets me from A to B that just keeps going on the road.

Or I can look for the whole

abundant life, complete with breakdowns and stuff I don't understand, that bring me joy and take me to places I long for.

Oh, and the campervan is called the Boardroom because my long board fits inside.

Shaping up for God

By Nicole Reardon

THERE IS plenty of talk about body image issues in young women but men can also be prone to having low self esteem and self worth.

We find out how some Australian Christian men perceive their own bodies and to ask whether physical appearance relates to a person's potential.

Jonathan Foye: 24, freelance journalist and a Uniting Church Chaplaincy Associate, NSW

Do you lead a healthy lifestyle? I lead a busy lifestyle.

I do find the time to exercise though. I go to the gym a couple of times a week.

I find I work better once I've done some exercise.

So you go to the gym in order to function better rather than to improve your physical appearance? Yes. I don't have any physical target or weight — it's simply for the sake of getting exercise and for my mental health.

How do you perceive yourself? I don't perceive myself in terms of my body or my body image.

I care more about my brain and personality and who I am as a Christian.

Are those the characteristics

you value in other people as well? Yes, I think so.

I don't think the body is something you judge someone on in the long term.

It may be the first thing you notice about someone but that impression may dissipate when you have a conversation with them.

Did you always hold such a strong perspective on body image?

Coming to this view was a gradual thing for me. I didn't always feel so comfortable about my body image — especially in my teens.

My perception started to change as I got older, especially after I exited high school and started to mature.

Andrew Johnson: 28, Social Justice Minister at West End Uniting Church, Brisbane

Do you lead a healthy lifestyle? Now that I'm a bit older I'm a little bit more careful about what I eat.

When I was younger I had one of those bodies where I could eat whatever I liked and I would put on no weight ... it negated the need for me to eat right or do any exercise.

How do you perceive yourself? Tall, skinny and scrawny.

I try and project my character rather than my

actual body and I generally do this through how I dress. I try to look trendy and confident.

At job interviews for instance, I always overdress.

I wear my favourite tie and my favourite shirt and cufflinks.

Do you judge other people on their appearance? We all do it.

I do it subconsciously.

It's the first thing you see of a person and you make your judgments accordingly.

How do you think Christians should perceive other people?

I think judgments made on stereotypes and misconceptions are something we've got to guard against.

However, someone's physical appearance or characteristics can often reflect something about their inner self and we should recognise this as well.

It is a bit simple to ride off one's physical appearance saying, "It's only the inside which counts". It's more complex than that.

James Matthews, 45: Minister at Mt Pleasant Uniting Church, WA

Do you live a healthy lifestyle? I live by the guideline, "Too busy not to exercise and too busy not to pray".

I have two children and a wife as well as being a Uniting Church Minister and I exercise regularly.

When I'm training for something I do at least one [training session] per day.

I find that exercise improves my life at home and work as well as keeping me fit.

Is keeping fit a part of your spiritual life?

Oh yes. I believe that if you truly want to be healthy all round then it actually requires some emotional, physical, spiritual and even, healthy thinking.

Do you believe we are made in the image of God? Yes I do. We can be compassionate, generous, sacrificial and a whole heap of attributes that are like God.

I am happy knowing there is something about our humanness that reveals God in some way.

This article was first printed in www.thetransitlounge.com.au



Men's sheds do mental health check

By Mardi Lumsden

THE MEN'S shed movement has taken off throughout Australia with many groups realising the importance of a space for men to talk about life, health and faith, or just have a cuppa or build something.

The movement also helps older men maintain contact with others when there may be the tendency to keep to themselves.

Blue Care Noosa Community Care's new men's group, Nuts & Bolts, was launched in October at the Noosa Surf Lifesaving Club.

Blue Care Project Worker

Mischelle Surawski said the group came together after it was recognised there were a number of men Blue Care supported who were isolated or didn't have an opportunity to connect with other men.

"Unlike women, men don't usually come together just to chat

or socialise — there is usually some other purpose involved, hence why our new men's club congregates to investigate the nuts and bolts of different places and things," she said.

Iona West Uniting Church in Mackay opened their Men's Shed in September and minister Rev Euan McDonald said the program has already attracted a lot of interest, especially the breakfast run in conjunction with it.

Even the Mackay Regional Council recognised the importance the Men's Shed has in the community, giving the group \$5000 to equip the Shed.

There are also plenty of groups focussing on depression including OzHelp Queensland, a registered charity aimed at improving mental health and wellbeing for workers in the Queensland construction industry.

According to *beyondblue*, a national, independent, not-for-profit organisation addressing issues associated with depression, anxiety and related substance misuse disorders in Australia, over one million Australian adults live with depression each year and men account for 80 per cent of deaths by suicide.

While the Australian Bureau of Statistics (2008) results showed that one in eight men and one in five women will experience depression in their adult lifetime, *beyondblue* suggested that men often let symptoms go untreated for a long time.

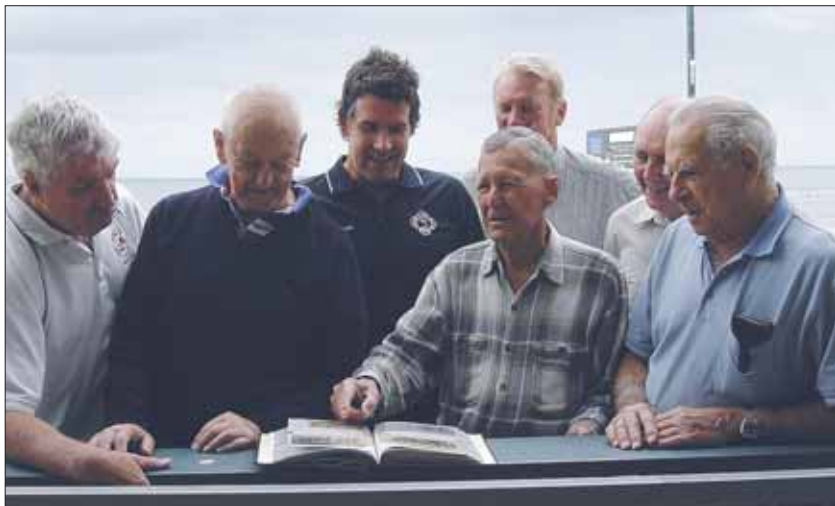
According to their *Depression in Men* fact sheet, "Men tend to put off getting help for health problems, as they may think they are supposed to be tough, self-reliant, manage pain and take charge of situations.

"This can make it hard for men to acknowledge they have a health problem, especially a mental health problem.

"It is also very common for men, in particular, to manage their symptoms by using alcohol and other drugs which make the symptoms worse."

Other major causes of depression include physical health problems, relationship or employment problems, social isolation, significant changes in living arrangements (e.g. separation or divorce), and the birth of a baby.

For more information visit www.beyondblue.org.au



Ken Edward, John Stanley, Darren Mercer, Alan Thompson, Col Monks, David Fanning and Athol Courtney of the new Nuts & Bolts men's group. Photo by Mischelle Surawski, Blue Care Noosa

Forming Fiji's new foundation

By Mardi Lumsden

THE METHODIST Church of Fiji and Rotuma is in a mid-life crisis according to Rev James Bhagwan, faculty member of Davuilevu Theological College and the Associate Minister of Dudley Methodist Circuit in Suva, Fiji.

The contextual theologian was in Australia in October to speak at a series of UnitingWorld *World View* forums to share stories of the situation in Fiji and the relationship between the Uniting Church in Australia and our

partner church there.

He said after celebrating the 40th birthday of the Methodist Church in Fiji it was time for some things to change.

"The church has been called to take a really hard look at itself," he said. "The reality is that for many years we have been part of the political situation in Fiji.

"It's time to re-look at that because we live in a multicultural, pluralistic environment.

"As we struggle we can learn a lot from the struggles of the early church."

A former actor, award-winning producer and journalist, Mr Bhagwan writes a weekly column in the *Fiji Times* and his own blog.

During a time when government censorship has tight control over news media, Mr Bhagwan seeks to be a voice of faith through the daily news.

Having worked in government communications he is able to craft his column and blog to fit within the government censorship.

"One of the key areas of this is the language that you use and knowing the key words censors look for.

"The challenge for me has been to think about what is important as a minister and what is my role in what I write.

"It is about writing things that will encourage the readers."

And those readers are most of the people in the country.

A new law that media organisations needed to be 90 per cent locally owned forced the sale of the *Fiji Times*.

"As a result of that the Editor-in-Chief has resigned and the second in command has gone on leave."

He said the new owners are changing the focus to be less confrontational with the government.

"I've been trying to push peace journalism and slowly people are

starting to think that we need to look at the way we do journalism in Fiji."

Growing up in a strong Methodist family Mr Bhagwan learnt the importance of putting faith in action, particularly in social justice.

"We always saw our parents putting their faith into action."

Working in commercial media burnt him out at a young age.

"I started studying theology and found that I was good at it and developed a passion for it.

"When you spend time studying anything it is going to change who you are."

He came to a point where he needed to work out what he was going to do with his new passion.

"I could be a theologian but do everything from outside the church or I could work within the church.

"My father, having worked as a lay leader in the church, said it was a lot harder to do things from inside, but you can do more."

The year after graduating from theological college he returned as a lecturer.

"For me it is about using what gifts I have been blessed with to help God's people in Fiji."

The self titled "mystic in training" said his Indian Fijian heritage meant he has a great appreciation for contemplation.

"I come from a culture where spirituality is very important.

"From a Methodist tradition it is about being moved by the spirit; the whole idea of us being part of a mystical communion as Christians.

"Being a Christian is more than going to church and more than just living the commandments and teachings of Christ, it is about a union with God.

"Sometimes we neglect the spiritual aspect of our relationship with God."

Mr Bhagwan suggested the lack of contemplative time is a global issue.

"I think it is becoming a world-wide phenomenon with the growth of secularism and materialism.

"That is where the Pacific can offer something to the rest of the world; our deep spirituality, our sense that our identity is not based on what we have and what we consume but based on our relationship with people."

He asked members of the church in Queensland to pray for Fiji.

"Fiji is going through a very big change.

"Only God knows and time will tell what sort of change is taking place.

"We are trying to discern what God's will is for our nation."



Rev James Bhagwan of the Methodist Church of Fiji and Rotuma. Photo by Mardi Lumsden

NCYC heroes build community

By Jane Moad

ASK ANYONE who has been to the National Christian Youth Convention (NCYC) their most memorable moment and the common theme will be community.

Whether it is time spent in worship with hundreds of others on the beach at sunset, a protest in the heart of Melbourne's CBD, or a long road trip to an NCYC destination, NCYC wouldn't be the same without the people who make it happen.

It's not just the speakers, bands and the people up the front who play an important role in connecting young people to God.

It is also the unsung heroes of NCYC, often in the background, who allow community to happen.

This year's ncyc11 on the Gold

Coast will be no different.

Ken Crisp is an unsung hero of NCYC who always felt a responsibility to youth, that they might also discover God's love.

According to Jo Crisp, Ken's ex-wife, NCYC 1987 in Ballarat was probably his favourite.

"He was involved in the tech crew and organised the sound and lighting for each event," she said. "Archbishop Desmond Tutu was a part of NCYC in Ballarat and Ken spoke of this for many years.

"Toowoomba in 1991 was a very different experience as Ken drove one of the coaches from Melbourne."

For Ken and Jo, the experience of NCYC community was not limited to one week every two years.

"After our trip to Toowoomba

we opened our home for the young people to visit," said Ms Crisp.

"The relationship the young people had with Ken was built on genuineness and respect."

At NCYC 2009 Ken was excited that Jo, the children and their church community were involved with Shane Claiborne's public speech in Melbourne's Federation Square.

Not yet old enough to attend the full NCYC program for 16 to 25 year olds, Emily, Daniel, Ashlee and Megan got a glimpse of what to expect from future NCYC's.

Tragically, Ken passed away as a result of a motor bike accident in April 2009, aged 42.

The Crisp family miss Ken, but as Ms Crisp reflected, "Our children will always remember a dad who showed passion and

commitment to everything he did in life."

It's this passion and commitment to serving young people with everyday talents and God given gifts that makes an NCYC hero.

Know an unsung hero of NCYC? Email their story to ncyc.communications@ucaqld.com.au

Experience community volunteering at ncyc11. Visit www.ncyc11.com.au to find out how



Archbishop Desmond Tutu with the NCYC 1987 tech crew which included Ken Crisp (blue jacket, front row). Photo by Jo Crisp

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Living with hope

THE 28TH Synod affirmed a five line Call for the Uniting Church in Queensland in discerning the future of the Church. This edition we look at the third phrase: Living with hope.



By David Nix

LIVING WITH hope conjures up mixed images for me.

I have tended to use the word hope in situations where something is unlikely to happen but I really hope that it will.

Using hope as part of our Call as a church puts it in a different light entirely.

As a candidate for the Ministry of Deacon my hope is for the

ministry of the church to be experienced in a wide variety of ways and places.

Being a part of the Community Meal at Wesley Mission Brisbane I have found that this hope is well founded.

Lives have been, and are being, changed simply by the presence and activity of God's people living out the gospel.

It is not a case of preaching and it is not a handout from the church to the non-church.

It is the hope of the gospel of love that goes beyond a superficial 'bless you' in the provision of

physical help. It is the hope of the gospel of love that goes deeper than sitting beside a person in a church service and having no interaction with them outside that context.

It is the hope that comes within a community of real mutual support and care. That support and care includes sharing the very best things we have with each other.

Through the loving support of members of this community I have been changed in ways that would not be possible without them.

For me, hope is all about change and where that change comes from.

In the Community Meal I have found the gospel of Jesus being preached (mostly without words)

and lived in practical ways that make a real difference in people.

God is working in places like this through the church right now.

I am sure God will show us more and more how we can make the gospel come alive in all sorts of contexts in Australia in the 21st century.

My hope is in the change that God will bring about in the Uniting Church as we seek to be faithful to the call to spread the gospel.

We may look different and work differently as time goes by but, in the process of changing from the familiar to the new, God will be able to do things that wouldn't be possible any other way.

That is something to hope for.

Pluralism helps deepen person faith

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

By Robert Bos

IN 2008 eleven people from the Uniting Church in Australia travelled to North India as guests of the Diocese of Amritsar.

The Diocese covers three states: Punjab, Jammu-Kashmir and Himachal Pradesh.

Punjab has a Sikh majority, with the magnificent Golden Temple of Amritsar as the world headquarters and pilgrimage site of Sikhism.

Kashmir has a Muslim majority. Himachal Pradesh has a Hindu majority. The Dalai Lama, head of Tibetan Buddhism, lives at Dharamsala in Himachal Pradesh.

Those of us from the Uniting Church who went wanted to learn about relations between Christians and people of other faiths.

Indian Christians have a long history of living side-by-side with

people of other faiths, often as neighbours, or even as relatives.

For us in Australia, this is something which we are only now beginning to come to terms with.

In our travels we visited a Hindu temple, Muslim mosques, the Sikh Golden Temple and local gurudwaras, and a Buddhist temple.

We had long conversations with devotees of Hinduism and representatives of various kinds of Muslims.

We also met with a number of Sikhs and had conversations with a Buddhist monk and other Tibetans.

We also met with various Christian communities in towns and villages.

One notable visit was to a Christian congregation who worshipped in a former Muslim mosque. The Muslims had been forced to migrate to Pakistan after partition in 1947.

The Christian community agreed to care for the property until such time as the Muslims needed it again.

While the sanctuary has Christian symbols, there is no structural change to the building, so it is always ready to return to the Muslims.

The Australian Christians in the group were surprised by their own reactions to the visit.

Firstly, they came away overwhelmed by the gracious hospitality of people of other faiths who were ready to explain their faith and how it impacted on their daily lives in the family and the wider community.

Secondly, first-hand encounters meant that we understood other faiths better.

Meeting people who adhere to other faiths was very different from reading about them in books.

And thirdly, and perhaps most importantly, we all returned having been more deeply confirmed and committed to our own Christian faith.

As one participant put it, "While I appreciate other

faiths more, I am more deeply committed to Jesus and his vision of the Kingdom of God in our midst".

Perhaps it is only when we know where our own deepest convictions and commitments lie that we can be open to people of other faiths, and respect them as people whom God also loves and for whom Christ died.

Is Jesus the only way?

We are committed to Jesus as the ultimate revelation of the ineffable God.

Of course we would love others to know Jesus also, but conflict, confrontation, prejudice and judgementalism will not attract anyone to Jesus.

Honest, open dialogue opens up opportunities for listening, and sharing faith.

The Diocese has a partnership arrangement with the Uniting Church through Uniting World (formerly Uniting International Mission).

Robert Bos is Director of Pilgrim Learning Community



Members of Queensland Uniting Churches at the magnificent Sikh Golden Temple in Amritsar. Photo courtesy of Rob Bos



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November 6, 6.30pm.

Car Park Parables combined book launch

Broadwater Road Uniting Church Mansfield, Brisbane.

Meet and greet three authors including Paul Clark (left).

Children welcome. Free pizza.

Contact Rochelle Manners on info@thewordwriters.com.



November 6, 9am-5pm. Word Writers Fair at Bayside Christian Church, Moreton Bay Rd, Capalaba. Meet Christian Writers and publishers and attend workshops for budding writers, hone your blogging skills, find out how to get published and more. Contact Rochelle Manners on info@thewordwriters.com.

November 20, 8am-3pm. Bulimba Uniting Church Garage Sale, at the round about, Oxford Street, Bulimba. Books, clothes, furniture and more. To donate items contact Marnix on 0419 176 227 or vunderink@optusnet.com.au.

November 7, 9-11am. Yoga in the Park with Blue Care. Blue Care Community Wellness Program at Little Bayside Park, Manly Esplanade. Contact Blue Care on 3308 5861 or Sonia Kennett Clinical Nurse on 0416 082 158.

November 7, 9-11am. Zumba and Yoga Community Wellness Program for over 40's with Blue Care Wynnum. Free. Morning tea provided. Mellaueca Place Aged Care Facility, 166 Sibley Rd, Wynnum West. RSVP to Sonia Kennett on 0416 082 158.

November 16, 9.30-12.30pm. UnitingWorld Synod Support Group (Qld) Annual General Meeting. Wesley House, 140 Ann St, Brisbane. Contact Judith Finau on 3711 4622 or ljfinau@gmail.com.

November 19-20, 8am-3pm. Wheller Gardens Garage Sale, Uhl Hall 930 Gympie Rd Chermside. Preloved clothes, books and knick-knacks. Contact Barbara Woodon on 3325 0204 or trevorjwood@bigpond.com.

November 21, 9am-12:30pm. Redcliffe Uniting Church Celebrates 20 years since opening and opens a new courtyard. Everyone who has been a part of the journey is invited to the 9am service followed by the opening of the new courtyard and lunch. Guest preacher Rev Don Whebell. Contact Robyne Everitt on 4283 4066 or redcliffeuc@dovenet.net.au.

November 21, 2-4pm. Make Indigenous Poverty History meeting. Come along to discuss this issue and how we can get involved. West End Uniting Church, Cnr Sussex and Vulture St, West End, Brisbane. Contact Morris and Robin on 3844 1246, Steve Collins Haynes 3846 5828, or Phil and Fiona 3844 1740.

November 27, 9.30am-2pm. Australian Christian Meditation Community Day. Learning from Teresa of Avila - a day of meditation, teaching and reflection with Rev Greg McGroty. Contact Gabby Nelson on 0488 592 770 or toga@bigpond.net.au.

December 4, 2pm. Opening of Redeveloped Indooroopilly Uniting Church. Service of Dedication of the Church, with afternoon tea to follow. RSVP to Sam Teo on 3878 9535 or ipillyuc@bigpond.com.

December 11-12. Glasshouse Country 10th Anniversary Celebration. Glasshouse Country Uniting Church celebrates ten years in their new building in Beerwah where four congregations of Glasshouse, Beerwah, Landsborough and Mooloolah merged in December 2000. Following a casual meal on Saturday night, Phil Smith will speak and the GHUC Ensemble will perform. Moderator Rev Bruce Johnson will speak at the Sunday service. Contact Chris Bell on 5492 5883 or chrisbell@tadaust.org.au.

December 12, 7pm. Sing-it-Yourself Messiah at Albert Street Uniting Church, cnr Albert and Ann Sts, Brisbane City. Guest artists and Greg Hartay-Szabo playing the famous Albert Street pipe organ. Performance 7pm. Choir rehearsal open to all at 5pm. Admission is \$7.50. Contact Rosemary Hiley on 3031 3030 or R.Hiley@wmb.org.au.

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

Chaplaincy dines out

By Mark Badham

SCRIPTURE UNION (SU) Queensland's annual Frontline Appeal Dinner celebrated its 10th anniversary on 11 October.

Tom Burlinson, best known for his role in *The Man From Snowy River*, entertained a large crowd of School Chaplaincy supporters, including MC Phil Smith, Queensland Synod Moderator Rev Bruce Johnson and Chaplaincy Coordinator Rev John Cox, at the Brisbane Convention Centre.

Mr Burlinson sang the praises of the work of school chaplains.

"This provides an exceptional opportunity to give back to kids in need and the SU QLD school chaplains who so generously give



John Cox, left, with Heather and Bruce Johnson at the Frontline dinner. Photo by Greg Miller Photography

of themselves to support our young people," he said.

Keynote speaker Maggie Dent, a specialist in parenting and resilience, said chaplains helped remind young people that they are important.

"Kids these days are hungry for relationships.

"Our young people are saying to us adults, 'Make me feel like I

matter,'" she said.

SU QLD CEO Tim Mander said every Queensland student should have access to a school chaplain.

"Chaplains are 'on the ground,' connecting with students on an everyday basis, and walking with them through the difficult situations that face so many of our young people today," he said.

Camp not just for families

IT'S NEARLY Family Camp time again but organisers are reminding people that it is not just families who are welcome.

The annual Family Camp is held at Alexandra Park Conference Centre at Alexandra Headland on the Sunshine Coast from 27 December to 6 January.

Jim Kessels, one of the organisers, said the camp is a chance to catch up with old friends and meet new ones.

"It's a great time to share with other families, relax, surf at nearby Alexandra Headland, do studies, children's activities, sport, and celebrate the New

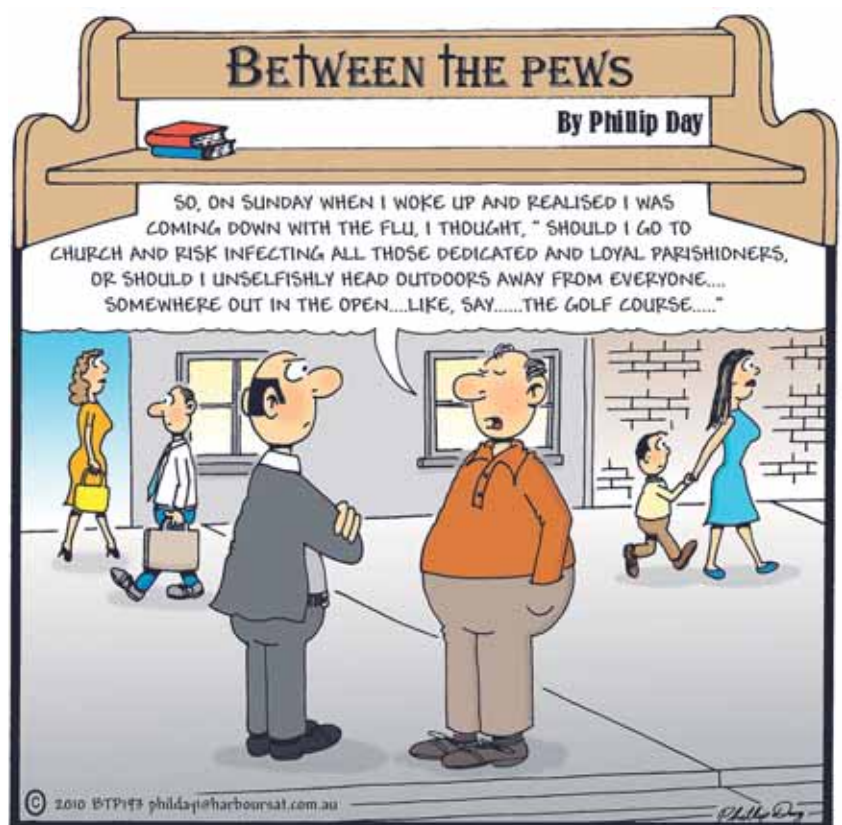


John Bingley and Owen Kessels enjoy a cuppa at Family Camp. Photo by Fiona Stevenson

Year," he said.

Camp chaplain this year will be Phil Smith.

For more information contact Jim Kessels on 3886 6739 or ucfamilycamp@gmail.com



Being a Bloke: Discover the essence of authentic Aussie masculinity

By Peter Janetski and Michael Knight, Red Hill Publishing, 2010, RRP \$32.95

Reviewed by Phil Smith

HOW HARD can it be to be an authentic Aussie male?

As Mr Janetski and Mr Knight point out with good humour and mostly easy to follow arguments, it can be very tough if one isn't sure what constitutes the essence of masculinity.

They invest quite a few pages discussing what masculinity is not, by locating blokes who live on this island in the context of our history of invasion, penal servitude and migration.

I suspect most readers will be able to identify the males

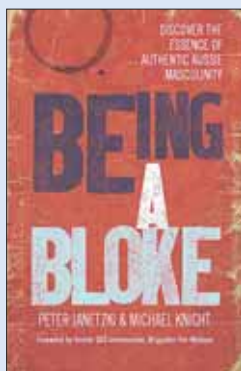
that make them cringe within the types of men the authors outline.

Mr Knight and Mr Janetski identify fearful blokes with no strength; the Peter Pan men who do not want to grow up, passive blokes; incapable of decisive action, allowing societal trends to shape their lives, and arrogant blokes; the narcissists with no character behind their reputation.

So they come to an essence of manhood; a potent bloke whose strength is shown in action for others that reflect true character.

Discussing being a man in this era is as fraught as discussing what it means to be an Australian.

Everyone has an opinion on what it's not.



Mr Janetski and Mr Knight have tried to sift that and give a start point to what it is.

Being a Bloke makes a good start, written by Australians in our language and engaging the stories of average men alongside the obvious extraordinary examples.

The Prodigal Ute

By Paul Clark, Wombat Books, 2010, RRP \$5.95

Reviewed by children from Emerald Christian College

WHAT IS the story about?

The story is about a Ute that complains about the farm and a robber takes him and does the wrong thing. (Lara, 7 years)

The Ute that got lost and his owner found the lost Ute. (Chantelle, 7 years)

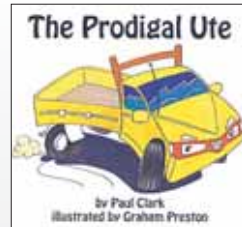
A Ute that got kidnapped and found again by his owner. They celebrated at the car wash and lived happily ever after. (Katie, 7 years)

Why did you enjoy the story?

Because it tells that God doesn't mind if we are dirty and smelly. (Katie 7 years)

Because it is a bible story told by the cars. (Savannah, 7 years)

Because it was interesting and it had good pictures. (Lara, 7 years)



What was the best part of the story?

When they went to the car wash. (Peter, 8 years)

When Lucy said sorry. (Dani, 7 years)

When he came home and they celebrated. (Jayna, 8 years)

When the Ute was doing burn outs and screeches. (Michelle, 7 years)

This story is part of a great series of stories for children to read or have read to them. The children's comments say it all.

They would be a perfect gift for Sunday School children for end of year break ups. (Rev Russell Reynoldson)

The Secrets of Jonathan Sperry (DVD)

Directed by Rich Christiano, Five and Two Pictures in association with Christiano Film Group, 2010, PG

Reviewed by Tara Burton, Journey community liaison officer and movie buff

THE SECRETS of Jonathan Sperry is an inspiring and touching film about the unexpected friendship between twelve-year-old Dustin and seventy-five-year-old Jonathan.

The movie explores themes such as bullying, puppy love and teamwork.

However, most importantly Mr Sperry stresses to the youngsters of the importance

of the Bible. He teaches Dustin and his friends that they must pray for their enemies, rather than be angered by them and that good deeds will never go unnoticed.

The film also emphasises the importance of forgiveness, even in extreme circumstances.

The characters are relatable and Jansen Panettiere (who plays Dustin) was an exceptional actor.

It was great to watch the main characters overcome their fears and form friendships they did not think would be possible.

The storyline is a simple one,

yet I found it engaging. It was a perfect mix of comedy and drama.

The take home message of this film is that regardless of age; friendship has no limits and the Bible can be considered the street directory for life.

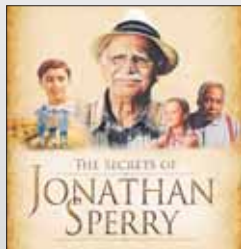
By the end of *The Secrets*

of Jonathan Sperry I was deeply touched and enlightened by Mr Sperry's character.

I watched this with my family and I would recommend that you do so too.

Definitely a must have for every Christian families' DVD collection.

Thanks to Heritage HM Journey has four DVD copies of *The Secrets of Jonathan Sperry* to give away! Simply email your postal address to journey@ucaqld.com.au and tell us the name of the actor who plays the character, Dustin



Warrior Princess

By Princess Kasune Zulu, Intervarsity Press, 2009, RRP \$24.95

Reviewed by Rev Dr Marian Zaunbrecher, Synod Associate General Secretary

PRINCESS KASUNE Zulu grew up in Zambia.

As a child she was shattered when her little sister died before she was two years old.

Then, for no explicable reason, her mother and then her father wasted away and died when she was in the eighth grade.

When she was 21, after reading about HIV/AIDS, she convinced her husband to go with her to be tested. They discovered they were both HIV positive.

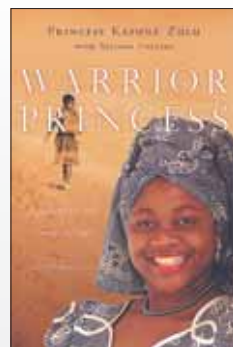
Empowered by her faith, Princess then embarked on a journey.

At the time of writing her book the number of people living with HIV/AIDS in Sub-Saharan Africa was over 22 million (5.2 per cent of the Sub-Saharan African population aged 15 years and over).

Another 1.4 million adults and children had died from it.

In 2008, Sub-Saharan Africa saw 67 per cent of all people living with HIV and nearly three quarters (72 per cent) of AIDS-related deaths.

More than 14 million



children in Sub-Saharan Africa were orphaned and 60 per cent of those infected are women.

A passion to teach Zambians about HIV led Ms Kasune Zulu to start a school for orphans of Aids victims.

She started a personal journey of informing truckies who were in danger of spreading the disease, by impersonating a prostitute, hitching rides, and teaching the drivers about the dangers of AIDS.

She was asked by the local radio station to start an information program about AIDS, a journey which was to lead her eventually to the White House as the invited guest of the President.

This autobiography is inspiring reading, informative about HIV/AIDS in Africa and about the ability of one woman to make a difference.

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

Traveling Together: A guide for disciple-forming congregations

By Jeffrey D Jones, Alban Institute, 2006, RRP \$27.95



Comfort Chair (CD)

By Chrissie Pearce, Independent, 2010, RRP \$20



Legend of the Guardians: The Owls of Ga'Hoole (Film)

Directed by Zack Snyder, Village Roadshow Pictures, 2010, PG



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

Spreading Christmas cheer in Burma

THE THEME of the Christmas Bowl this year is *Share Christmas*, focussing on the plight of a Burmese family living in a refugee camp on the Thai-Burma border.

Alistair Gee, Executive Director of Act for Peace, the international aid agency of the National Council of Churches in Australia, encouraged people to show their support for refugees. "The Christmas Bowl

supports programs helping over a million refugees from Burma and around the world to help rebuild their lives."

Burma's military dictatorship has bombed and burnt down over 7000 villages in eastern Burma, resulting in 500,000 internally displaced people living near the eastern Burmese border with Thailand, and 140,000 refugees in camps across the border.

The military continues to lay landmines around thousands of villages.

The people of Burma (also known as Myanmar) go to the polls on 7 November.

"Supporting the Christmas Bowl is a vote for Burmese refugees in many ways," said Mr Gee.

"As it has done for over 20 years, the Christmas Bowl continues to provide food,

shelter and support for refugees in the camps.

"The Christmas Bowl also provides emergency food for the most vulnerable hiding in the mountains of eastern Burma, prosthetic limbs for landmine victims, mapping

of mine fields and human rights training for vulnerable communities."

For more information call 1800 025 101 or visit www.actforpeace.org.au



Hsar Htoo (left, five years old) and Si Si Paw (right, 12 years old) have been living in the camps for all of their young lives after their family fled the conflict caused by Burma's military dictatorship. Photo by Janet Cousens/Act for Peace

On Sunday 7 November please pray for Mooloolaba Uniting Church

AT MOOLOOLABA Uniting Church we give thanks to God for our heritage and the founders of our church here, for those who have persisted as this area has grown from a tiny fishing village to a major tourist destination.

The illuminated cross on the Church remains God's visible presence in the community.

We give thanks for the way God is opening opportunities for us to reach into the community and seek prayer support.

We are seeking, with the support of SU, to commence chaplaincy in the Mooloolaba State School in 2011; we need

prayer for meetings with the school principal and community and for funding to be raised.

Please also pray:

- For other outreaches into the school including mentoring, playgroup programs and a music therapy playgroup trailing in November
- For the ecumenical thanksgiving service at the surf club on 21 November for emergency and community organisations
- For ongoing work of building supportive relationships with those who struggle with addictions who use our church hall for meetings and programs, and for the BBQ we put on for them each month

• That, as a congregation, we will have eyes alert to respond to the needs we see and the will and courage to do our best to make a positive difference in the lives of those we meet

• That we will continue to make Mooloolaba a welcoming place for young families. We celebrate new people who are joining us

• For the caring networks within the congregation, such as Adult Fellowship and Friday Fellowship, for the faithfulness of all those who in practical and in myriads of other ways contribute to the ongoing life of our faith community.

On 21 November please pray for Beaudesert District Uniting Churches

THE BEAUDESERT District Uniting Churches consist of congregations at Beaudesert, Canungra, Rathdowney, Lamington and Barney View in Queensland's far south east.

Congregations sizes vary from 60 people to a handful.

The larger towns of Beaudesert and Canungra are within an hour of Brisbane and the Gold Coast, but the district still has a country feel to it.

Beaudesert and Canungra have some younger people, but not as many as we would like to see.

Beaudesert has both a band and a choir involved in leading worship and has two small youth groups for different ages.

A Community House, staffed by volunteers, has been established in Beaudesert to provide administrative support to our minister, but more importantly, it is a place where people can come for a chat and a cuppa.

The communities are facing significant social changes as people come seeking cheaper rent. The towns are growing and changing, a process that is expected to accelerate.

One of our major challenges is to connect with a more mobile population. We are seeking ways to re-connect with families in our communities.

Please pray for:

- A continuing, growing sense of vision and energy
- To be better able to connect with new people in the community
- To grow more small groups
- For an ever growing ability to receive and share the love of Jesus.

On 14 November please pray for Mareeba Uniting Church

MAREEBA SHIRE has been titled "Shire of Diversity" and the Mareeba Uniting Church reflects this diversity in its range of activities.

The Church's involvement extends to prison chaplaincy, Blue Care chaplaincy and pastoral oversight of Kuranda Faith Community.

The Church has a usual attendance of around 50 on a Sunday, with a significant and growing number of children.

Two years ago, Patrick and Michelle Huber formed MUCK Club (Mareeba Uniting Church Kids) and the highlight of their year's activities is their annual camp.

While on camp the children developed their own church service which they shared with the congregation the following Sunday.

Recently we celebrated the 50 year anniversary of the opening of our Church.

A number of former ministers and their spouses

returned for the weekend.

We were privileged to have in attendance the Assembly President, Alistair McRae, who preached on the Sunday.

Lotus Glen Correctional Centre, situated 22 kilometres from Mareeba, has around 500 inmates, many from indigenous communities.

A number of inmates have made a commitment to faith while in prison.

Chaplaincy services are also provided for the Blue Care agencies.

Mareeba is also a base for Frontier Services Remote Area Family Services.

Please pray for:

- Continued growth in the Kuranda Faith Community
- The Mareeba Uniting Church, particularly the younger people
- Chaplaincy at Lotus Glen Blue Care chaplaincy
- The leadership in Mareeba as we seek God's guidance in future directions.

On 28 November please pray for Karana Downs Uniting Church

KARANA DOWNS Uniting Church is on the border of Brisbane and Ipswich and draws its members from Karana Downs, Mt Crosby, Chuwar, Karalee, Anstead, Bellbowrie and further west to Blacksoil.

Our congregation is largely made up of families with school-aged children, as well as a few tertiary students. We also have a few retirees and empty nesters.

We meet weekly in our unique little Besser block building which was built by community volunteers who began work in the 1970s and finally had a functional building after two decades of fundraising and labour.

Our morning services are well attended with 60 to 70 worshippers most weeks.

Once a month during school term, we have Café Church at 6pm. This combines contemporary worship led by our young people's band with the opportunity for food, a fellowship and the occasional guest artist.

Other programs include Sunday School, youth bible study, a fortnightly friendship group, Connect for school years 5 to 8 and the Girl Guides use our premises each week.

Men's breakfasts and women's retreat are also special events and a number of our people teach RE.

A feature of our life is our annual stewardship program run on a chocolate theme and this is happening this month.

A significant outreach that we're involved in each year is Day Camp in July where we work with Moggill Uniting to provide a program for 200 plus primary school children.

Our people are involved in praying, working bees, setting up and taking down, as leaders, helpers, chaplains, catering and art/craft coordinators, bus supervision, as well as serving on the management committee.

We'll be on camp the fourth weekend in November; please pray that this will be a significant and safe time for all.

Leading women

WE ARE members of a mixed gender Bible Study group, and express our concern for Elaine McKinnon (October *Journey*) who apparently struggles with our UCA's *Basis of Union* statement that God calls and gifts both men and women for service in the church.

We encourage Ms McKinnon to continue referring to her Bible and to explore such passages as Gen 1:27 and Gal 3:28 where there is clear teaching that social distinctions are irrelevant to those in faith.

This may also assist what we assume to be Ms McKinnon's

struggle to accept leadership from a female Premier, a female Prime Minister, and a female Head of the British Commonwealth with her female representative, the Governor General.

Members of North
Rockhampton
Uniting Church



Keep asylum politics out of church

YOUR MAGAZINE of September was on the subject of asylum seekers.

Your coverage was biased towards the "left" of politics.

Also you didn't give any credence to other people's opinions.

We have to have compassion for the genuine Asylum Seeker.

I also agree that the government processes take far too long.

The fact still exists that there are people seeking to migrate to Australia as refugees, and some are deliberately jumping

the gun by trying to get here before their applications have been processed. Therefore there is a metaphorical "queue".

How can these boat people afford the prices being charged to get them into Australia.

I couldn't afford it!

Therefore they are comparably wealthy people.

If they can afford the travel prices, they should apply for the normal migration processes.

We spend too much time in inter-faith discussions.

Let us understand others in our community.

Let us live in peace and acceptance with them.

But there can be no recognition between true Christianity and Islam!

I applaud those who are assisting boat people.

They are doing a compassionate thing.

But, let us keep politics out of it!

That is not our task as Christians.

Eddie Free
Deception Bay



Still seeking asylum

IT WAS interesting to see the comments in the Letters section of the October edition of *Journey* in response to the articles on asylum seekers in September.

I applaud *Journey* in its courage to publish both sides of the debate.

The articles were balanced, accurate, and wholesome.

They reflected the best in Christian teaching on this very real situation of people fleeing deadly and brutal regimes, and it warmed my heart to read that this compassionate view and stance is the direction of the leadership of the UCA.

I remember when the Tampa was callously turned away from Australian shores.

I wrote a letter to *Journey* expressing my dismay at the silence of the church in voicing its concern to the Howard Government, only to receive a very intimidating phone call from an irate parishioner admonishing me as an 'ill-informed do-gooder'.

He had read my letter!

At the end of the phone call a great sadness came over me as I reflected on the seriousness of the mean-spirited attitude of that caller.

Since that time I have made a habit of reading Matthew 25, where the voice of Jesus comes down through the centuries to challenge us now, and into the future as to how we respond to oppressed, brutalised, and traumatised people seeking shelter and a future in our land.

The views expressed by John Broere are to be encouraged and nurtured.

This is fleshing out the Gospel.

The situation is complex, but we as a church must be found resonating the teachings of Christ in how we respond to these people in practical and constructive ways to bring about healing and restoration that we can be proud of.

If, as a church, we are not defined by love, we are not defined.

Neville Wilson
Gracemere



Facts or figures?

THE ARTICLE by Rev Kaye Ronalds "Sexuality secrets set church doors swinging" (September *Journey*) is disturbing.

While stating the obvious that we should have a listening ear to other's "deeply held beliefs", Ms Ronalds seems to be giving a non-to-subtle suggestion that the whole question of homosexual behaviors be revisited.

This will ring alarm bells in the minds of many Uniting Church members, especially given that the Queensland Synod has spoken decisively on this matter on three occasions.

Of particular concern is Ms Ronalds's statement that

"Some have left the Uniting Church because of it (the UC Assembly's resolutions on homosexuality and leadership) and some have joined the church because of it".

Figures from detailed and careful research from [former UCA member] Dr Howard Bradbury AM show the following: In the wake of the 1997 Eighth Assembly and the 2003 Tenth Assembly, 6500 people left the Uniting Church. There were 41 new congregations formed outside the UCA with 43 ministers resigned or retired early.

Donald McKay
Laidley



God's wisdom vs world's wisdom

I'M NOT sure which Jesus Lloyd Geering (October *Journey*) and the Lay Forum (exponents for so called "progressive" theology in the Uniting Church) wish to discuss, but clearly it is not the one Lord Jesus Christ, upon whom the church is built.

Reg Collard the church to "listen" to the likes of Mr Geering, on the basis of his impressive academic qualifications.

It is a timely reminder for us to hear afresh the words of the first 2 chapters of 1 Corinthians, where the apostle Paul explains how it is precisely those who excel in

worldly wisdom who reject the wisdom of God.

We may not share Mr Geering's academic qualifications, but we do share, along with the church in Corinth, the absolute privilege of being a part of God's wisdom, that comes by faith.

Jesus lives.

A dying church looks to worldly wisdom, which ultimately promotes an impotent God.

A living church lives because Jesus lives.

Michael Brumpton
St George



Minister's duty

IN PAST times to be ordained as a Methodist minister we made a solemn promise that if our beliefs changed we would quietly withdraw. For Presbyterians, it was a case of taking a vow to uphold the essential doctrines.

The vows for ordination to the UCA are likewise emphatic and binding.

When ministers in our church no longer believe the essential doctrines and no longer accept the authority of the *Basis of Union* it is surely unjust and dishonest to remain.

Bruce Gullely
Moggill



Double standard

MS WILLIAMS Burton (October *Journey*) said boat people arriving in Australia should be classified as illegal immigrants.

Christ said, "He who is without sin, let him cast the first stone".

Can the world stand on the same moral ground and condemn the illegal invasion of Iraq by western countries which was overwhelmingly condemned by the United Nations?

Which is more evil, illegal and wrong: illegal immigrants or a war which has now probably claimed

over a million people dead, children orphaned, families annihilated, people maimed and infrastructure destroyed?

Or, is it that the wars by the West are considered legal but the spill out of victims into western countries is considered illegal?

By all means send illegal immigrants home, if that is what the good Australian law demands ... but is there not also a law that those whose actions precipitate situations that bring death, destruction and misery to the millions are also responsible in some way?

Derrick Fernando
Calamvale



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

Letters may be edited due to space limitations.
Please keep letters to a maximum of 250 words.

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How was your faith impacted by a health scare?

Adele Dingle

7 DECEMBER 1997: Frank and I talk of it as a dividing line between two worlds.

The world that was: With so many dreams on the eve of an early retirement.

Then the world that followed a cardiac arrest with no heartbeat for 25 minutes, causing oxygen deprivation to Frank's brain.

As with most losses we experienced the frightening shattering that comes when the old assumptions do not fit any more.

While I had many times heard quote, "The rain falls on the just and the unjust", I had not really believed that it happens to both.

Surely no one in their all-mighty, all-knowing state would want to give generous, warm-hearted, honest, hard-working Frank anything but good rewards.



However, when someone fresh out of Trinity College asked me not so sensitively, as I stood beside Frank's unconscious body on day two, "Where is God in this for you Adele?" I had an answer.

My experience of God is: knowing I am loved, knowing Frank is loved and there is no other absolute worth believing.

Love and loving is all that matters.

Frank and Monty Python share similar views on the mystery and meaning of life finding most words inadequate but try to look on the bright side.

A big help in Frank rehabilitating without depression came from the fact that his personhood was not tied up in a macho view of himself and his roles.

Although he had lost some key skills he had others and tried to learn new ones so he could contribute to family and community.

His heart will continue to need the correction at times of his defibrillator.

At times there is anxiety and the losses still hit us, but we know we are loved and want to love back and we are grateful.

This way we connect with the God within and sense the true humanity we are called to.

Adele and Frank Dingle attend Indooroopilly Uniting Church.

As this goes to press Frank is recuperating in St Andrews Hospital after a serious trauma following a threatened cardiac arrest

Steve Bagi

AFTER 21 years in pastoral ministry the stress had caught up with me.

The thumping of my overworked heart and the barrage of other stress-related symptoms got to a stage where I felt that some internal tube would surely burst if the pressure continued.

I had been reluctant to see my doctor as I felt that by sharing my stressed out state I would in some way be letting God down.

I had always tried to be a good witness to my doctor, but now I felt too embarrassed to admit that the peace and joy that comes from knowing Jesus just wasn't something that I was experiencing.

As over the years I had preached many sermons on trusting God and allowing the Holy Spirit to give us peace, I now felt like a hypocrite and poor advertisement for my faith.

Despite these misgivings I went along, as I thought that at least an ineffective witness is better than a dead one.

As I shared with my doctor the anxiety and depression rollercoaster that I had been on he was really supportive and put me on some medication that would restore the balance of substances in the brain that had been affected by many years of stress.

Sometimes we face physical challenges that are so hard that some of us need a little help from the medical profession.

Guys, don't let pride or your fear of admitting your struggles to others stop you.

In the months that lay ahead not only did I start to feel much better but, by being vulnerable, God opened new doors for me to share about him.



Rev Steve Bagi is a consulting psychologist, former Baptist minister and author of the book *Pastor Pain*



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