



ARTIST ON THE MARGINS

"I believe my job is to let people know that people with disabilities can communicate and contribute to society." **Peter Rowe**

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REBUILDING COMMUNITY

"We should be in the middle of the mustering season, but no one's got out. What that means is there's no cash flow." **Peter Harvey**

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OUR OLDEST MINISTER? - P4

HIGH PRAISE IN DAYBORO - P11

COUPLES CLUB TURNS 50 - P14

LOST LIBERATION

Women's rights in a post-feminist world

By **Mardi Lumsden**

AUSTRALIA WAS one of the first countries in the world to give women the right to vote and sit in parliament (federally in 1902).

Yet according to the Australian Government Office for Women, it was not until 1943 that the nation elected women to Federal Parliament.

Until 1966, women working in the federal public service had to resign when they were married. But in 1969 women in Australia were awarded 'equal pay for work of equal value'.

The 1970s and 1980s saw huge social change relating to the role of women including the introduction of federal legislation in 1984 to ban discrimination on the basis of sex.

Current reports from the Office for Women say that more women than men are now educated at secondary schools and universities in

Australia and more women than men graduate from university with bachelor degrees.

In January 2008, 58 per cent of Australia's work forces were women.

Yet women only hold around 36 per cent of public service senior executive positions. In the private sector, the percentage of women in management drops to around 12 per cent.

Now, Australia's Prime Minister, the Governor-General and even the General Secretary of the National Council of Churches in Australia are women.

At Trinity Theological College, Brisbane, eight out of the 17 ministry candidates are women.

In Australia the popular 1990s saying "women can do anything" is, for the most part true.

In July 2010, the United Nations General Assembly

created UN Women, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women.

In March this year, the 100th Anniversary of International Women's Day (IWD) was celebrated all over the world.

The theme for this year's event was "Equal access to education, training and science and technology: Pathway to decent work for women".

It is hard to believe that in 2011 these things would still be an issue.

The third of the United Nations' Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) is to "promote gender equality and empower women".

Yet according to UN statistics (2004) Sub-Sahara Africa, Southern and Western Asia, and some Pacific nations around Australia and New Zealand are lagging in the three target areas of ratios of girls to boys in primary,

secondary and tertiary education, share of women in wage employment in the non-agricultural sector and proportion of seats held by women in national parliament.

On IWD on 8 March, United Nations Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon, said despite progress there are still too many societies where women remain second-class citizens.

"Only through women's full and equal participation in all areas of public and private life can we hope to achieve the sustainable, peaceful and just society promised in the United Nations Charter," said Mr Ban.

UN Women Executive Director, Michelle Bachelet, highlighted the gains made since the first IWD 100 years ago but said there was still a long way to go for global women's rights.

"I suspect those courageous pioneers would look at our world today with a mixture of

pride and disappointment," she said.

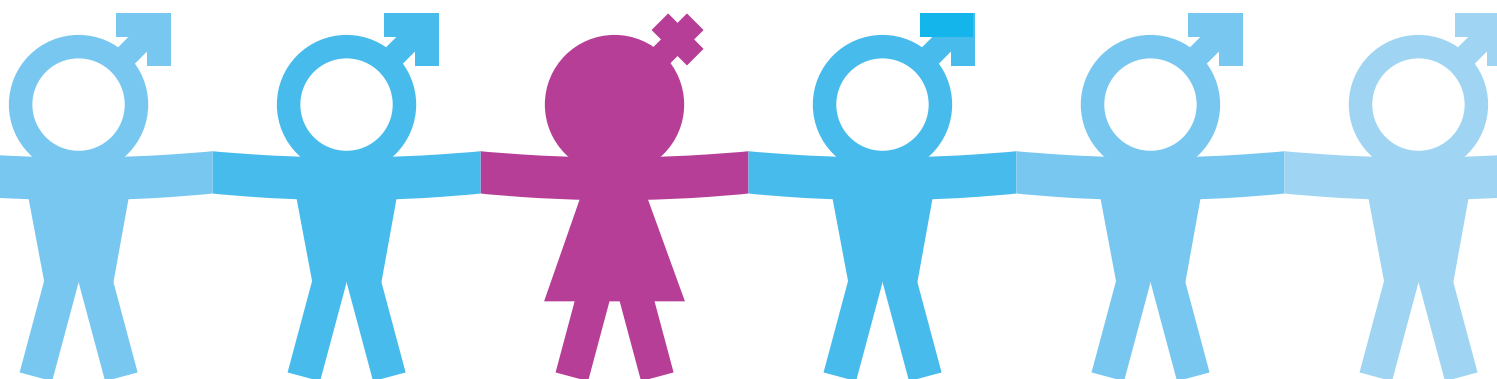
"There has been remarkable progress as the last century has seen an unprecedented expansion of women's legal rights and entitlements.

"But despite this progress over the last century, the hopes of equality expressed on that first International Women's Day are a long way from being realised.

"Almost two out of three illiterate adults are women. Girls are still less likely to be in school than boys."

She added that even in the healthcare sector women are disadvantaged.

"Every 90 seconds of every day, a woman dies in pregnancy or due to childbirth-related complications despite us having the knowledge and resources to make birth safe."



Uniting gifts for the whole

AS I THINK about the place of women in the Uniting Church today, I find myself reflecting on the number of comments that have been made about the fact that the last Synod meeting appointed a female General Secretary and elected a female Moderator.

I have heard no negative comments, in fact most have been affirming. Yet I have never heard anyone previously remark on the phenomena that we have had a male General Secretary and a male Moderator. Aren't we interesting people?

Women have always had a profound influence within the life of the church.

When I was growing up women were never part of the formal councils and committees of the church.

However they were the backbone of the Sunday School, the teaching of RE in schools, the organisation of social activities

and, especially, the fund raising.

Without the deep faith, dedication and hard work of women, the life and mission of the church would have been greatly impoverished.

Women have always influenced the culture and mission of the Church, but had to do so from beyond the formal structures. It

proclaimed the resurrection of Jesus, but they were not believed by the men.

In the book of Acts we come across a number of women who were very significant in the development and growth of the early church.

It must be frustrating to have so much to offer the mission of Christ, but to be expected to offer those gifts in roundabout ways.

While Paul's attitude to the place of women in the Church is often debated, it seems that his most profound vision of the new creation wrought by Christ was that all past division and distinctions have been destroyed and

all are one in Jesus. (Eph 2)

There is now neither Jew nor Gentile, slave nor free, male nor female. (Gal 3)

There are now no longer any racial, social or gender barriers among those who are united in Christ.

Paul calls us to live the new

It may be that having two capable and inspiring women in leadership roles in our Synod is a sign that we are a little closer to this vision of a renewed humanity.

seems that this was true even in Jesus' ministry.

Luke 8:2,3 tells us that besides the 12 disciples there were many women who shared in Christ's ministry, but they too did so from the margins.

The Gospel accounts tell us that it was women who first

Message from the Moderator

Rev Bruce Johnson



life of Jesus, to be a new creation, a new humanity where no one has to live and serve from the margins.

Sadly even a cursory glance at the history of the Church shows that we find it very difficult to live out such an inspired vision.

It seems that all too often we define our own place in the world and in the church by comparing ourselves to others.

We see our differences far more clearly than we see our unity in Jesus Christ.

It may be that having two capable and inspiring women in leadership roles in our Synod is a sign that we are a little closer to this vision of a renewed humanity.

Dr Shirley Coulson (General Secretary) and Rev Kaye Ronalds (Moderator-elect) were chosen by the Synod because we believed that they are God's gifts for the journey ahead.

During the thousand years of Christendom the Church became used to living from the centre of

western society. We had respect, power and influence by right.

Now we find ourselves on the margins of society.

Occasionally the churches are listened to and we sometimes are included in the formal structures of society but more often than not we lead from the edge. These days we find ourselves standing with Jesus on the fringes, longing to call people's attention to the Kingdom of God in their midst.

As we try to understand how we are to live the Mission of Christ in these unfamiliar circumstances, it will be wonderful to be led by those for whom the experience of leading from the edge is familiar.

Let's rejoice that the appointments of Kaye and Shirley are a sign that some barriers in our midst are being broken down.

But more importantly let us rejoice that they are gifts to help us live as God's new humanity in circumstances that are not familiar to those who have learnt to lead from the centre of things.

Reclaiming feminism

I HAVE a lot of respect for the feminists and feminist theologians, both men and women, who have worked hard for the privileges we enjoy today.

Yes, I used the 'f' word – feminism.

The word gets a bad wrap these days.

Feminism is about defining, establishing and defending equal political, economic, and social rights and opportunities for women.

Feminism in the church is not, as one Australian church website said, "urging women to sin against God's plan by usurping authority over men in the religious sphere".

Rather, it is, in part, the living out of Galatians 3:28: "There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus."

If you look around our world today there are women in some of the most powerful leadership

positions, not just because they met board quotas, but because they earned their position.

By the end of this year the Uniting Church in Queensland will be in a new and interesting position. The majority of people in leadership across the life of the Synod will be women.

By the end of 2011, the Moderator, General Secretary, CEO of UnitingCare, and Superintendent Minister of Wesley Mission Brisbane will all be women.

There are numerous women in ministry, as presbytery ministers, and Synod office staff (including in the *Journey* office).

The editors of all but one Synod and Assembly magazines are women.

And have things changed drastically over the years?

As the Uniting Church is a series of interrelated councils I suspect the influence of women has always shone through.

Many of the people I spoke to

for this edition agreed that the Church has been at the forefront of the women's rights movement over the years, but that there has been a general lack of passion for continuing to push those boundaries.

The use of inclusive language in worship is possibly the most obvious place to start, yet so often we forget that it is still important.

I recently heard a child say, "God is not a boy's name".

Let's not make it one.

Mardi Lumsden
Editor



Sign of the times



BEENLEIGH REGION Uniting Church, in the Logan City area, seeks to be a congregation that is alive in Christ, making disciples, and reaching out in love.

Here their sign sheds some light on a fairly overcast month in Brisbane. Photo by Clive Finter.



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.

Top award for former president

FORMER UNITING Church president and one of the world's leading scholars and promoters of interfaith dialogue, Rev Professor James Haire AM KSJ, was awarded Australian Catholic University's highest honour, Doctor of the University, in Sydney on 5 April.

He received the award in recognition of his service to the community, particularly through his contributions to interfaith dialogue.

Originally from Belfast, Professor Haire was ordained as a minister in the Presbyterian Church in Ireland in 1972 before his first appointment as a missionary to Indonesia – where he spent the next 13 years.

His longstanding involvement in Muslim-Christian dialogue in south-east Asia, and close relations with Muslim leaders such as former Indonesian President Abdurrahman Wahid, were to stand him in good stead.

Between 2001 and 2005, Professor Haire played an important role in peace and reconciliation negotiations between Christians and Muslims in the Molucca Islands in Indonesia.

His commitment to interfaith relations continued when he came to Australia in 1985 as minister for the Darwin city parish of the Uniting Church.

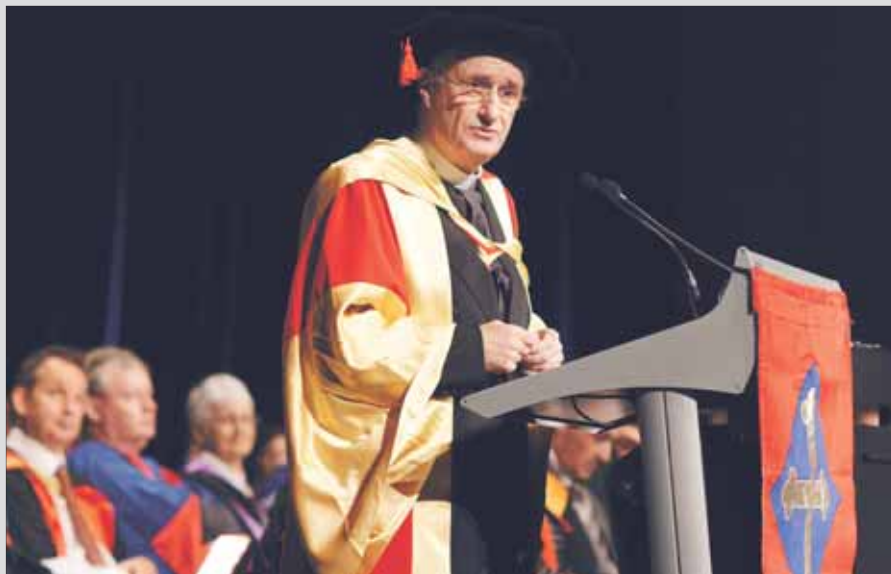
Professor Haire actively sought cooperation between the various denominations, and from 1992 to 2004 co-chaired the National Dialogue between the Uniting Church and Catholic Church in Australia.

Since 2002 he has been a member of the Joint International Commission between the Vatican and the World Methodist Council.

Professor Haire has also served as Head of the School of Theology at Griffith University in Brisbane, Professor of New Testament Studies, Dean and President of the Brisbane School of Theology and Principal of Trinity Theological College in Brisbane.

He was chairperson of the National Heads of Churches from 2000 to 2003.

He served as President of the National Council of Churches in Australia (NCCA) and has received numerous honours including becoming a Knight of St John (2000), being named



Former Uniting Church president Rev Professor James Haire AM KSJ. Photo courtesy of ACU

a Rotary Honorary Peace Ambassador (2001), and being appointed a Member of the Order of Australia (2006).

Now based in Canberra, Professor Haire is Executive Director of the Australian Centre

for Christianity and Culture, Professor of Theology of Charles Sturt University, and Director of the Public and Contextual Theology Strategic Research Centre.

ACU Vice-Chancellor, Profes-

sor Greg Craven, said Australia was indebted to Professor Haire for his work in encouraging understanding between not only the Christian churches, but also between people of different faiths.

Nature at your service

UNITINGJUSTICE Australia has produced a collection of worship and education resources for Church members to coincide with World Environment Day on Sunday 5 June.

Themed as *Nature at your service*, the free resources include tools for educational use, theological reflections, liturgical

resources, sermon starters and activities for children and families.

Established in 1972, World Environment Day is celebrated annually on 5 June. Over the past 39 years it has become one of the main vehicles the United Nations uses to stimulate worldwide awareness of the environment

and encourage political attention and action.

2011 is the International Year of Forests and this year's World Environment Day will focus on the importance of the world's forests in the created order, and their connectedness with human survival.

The resources highlight some important relationships, discussing the role forests play in the bigger picture of how we relate to creation as a whole.

UnitingJustice hope congregations will use the resources to engage in environmental discussion.

UnitingJustice appreciated the assistance of Cath James, Environment Project Officer at the Synod of Victoria and Tasmania, in this project, and the contributions from people around the Church.

Downloaded the *Nature at your service* resources from <http://unitingjustice.org.au>



Removing death threats



Photo by Sean Sutton, MAG

By Caryn Rogers

AUSTRALIA IS currently considering legislation to ratify the Convention on Cluster Munitions, an international treaty which bans the use, production, stockpiling and transfer of cluster munitions.

Act for Peace, the international aid agency of the National Council of Churches in Australia, is concerned that the Australian legislation contains loopholes allowing for use of cluster bombs under certain circumstances.

Cluster bombs, or cluster munitions, are weapons which

can be dropped from the air or fired from the ground releasing hundreds of smaller bomblets, or submunitions.

Bomblets which fail to explode on impact pose the threat of death or injury long after their deployment.

The presence of cluster bombs means a lack of access to safe land, limiting agricultural development, the reconstruction of vital infrastructure, and the work of relief and development agencies.

98 per cent of the victims of unexploded cluster bombs are civilians. One third are children.

With support from Act for Peace, mine action teams have cleared land northeast of Baghdad, Iraq, and delivered mine risk education to villagers, helping them recover and earn a living from the land again.

Act for Peace has launched an online petition telling the Attorney General, the Hon Robert McClelland MP, that they don't want Australia to assist in the use of cluster bombs under any circumstances.

For more information or to sign the petition visit actforpeace.org.au/clusterbombs

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Clayfield College

Girls: PrePrep to Year 12 Boarding: Girls over 10 years
Boys: PrePrep to Year 5
(07) 3262 0262 www.clayfield.qld.edu.au

Brisbane Boys' College

Boarding and day school for boys in Prep to Year 12
boarding Years 5 to 12
(07) 3309 3500 www.bbc.qld.edu.au

The big questions

This year *Journey* explores questions from the pews, namely from a (fictitious) person exploring faith and the Uniting Church. This month a friend asks Nova B Lever:

Church? Do I just turn up?

A FEW weeks ago a work colleague and I had one of those water cooler conversations about "God, church and stuff".

I suggested my friend visit a local church but he joked that the roof would fall in if he went into a church. The next day however, he emailed.

"I have never been in any sort of place of worship," he wrote. "Can I just turn up to your church, or are there preparation classes to learn

what to do at a service. Oh, and I hate singing."

I promised he'd be welcome.

There are millions of Australians like my work friend.

What we do on Sunday mornings is completely foreign to them: sit in rows, stand up, sing along, repeat after me, raise your hands, kneel down, close your eyes and so on.

He didn't turn up that Sunday and I was nervous when I saw him at the coffee pot on Monday morning.

Maybe my friend was too self-conscious. I know how it feels to turn up by myself, without a clue.

I was wrong. He had changed his mind after reading the *Weekend Australian* magazine letters.

People were responding to an article about young Pentecostal Christians.

One person described them as "Bogans with Bibles".

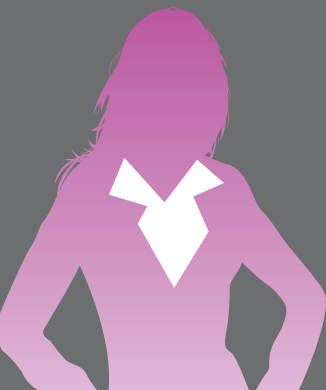
Another wrote, "I suspect other churches and their happy clappers are popular because it's simply easier to go along to church for a good old sing-along than it is to have to wrestle with any of the intellectual complexities of theology. It's the dumbing-down of Christianity; and why not? As a society we're dumbing down in general, which of course includes our churches."

My work friend wasn't ready for intellectual complexities or feeling "dumb".

I think he's still feeling his way and we're talking about going to an Alpha course together or something similar.

I'm praying my friend will turn up one Sunday.

I hope Mr and Mrs Bellamy are at the church door with that special smile and handshake.



47 years of camping

THE MARY Burnett Presbytery celebrated again in March. Adult Fellowship Camp was Starting 46 years ago with a

Presbyterian group at Torquay, the camp was moved to Luther Heights, Coolool, and continued to provide a space for women of the Presbytery to meet and share in fellowship, fun, friendship, studies, concerts, and worship.

Camp Committee secretary Eva Donaldson said the camps have been great experiences.

"No matter who the leader happened to be, there have always been rich moments of inspiration and a deepening of faith as we were challenged and shared in our life journeys," she said.

This year study leader, Pastor Trish Milne, focused on the Mary/Martha challenge. Other input also came from Ainslie and Rob Bos and National Adult Fellowship Chair Rev Alistair Christie.

"I have always found camp



Rev Ellis Bramley. Photo by Glenn Mulcahy

a time of blessing; renewing friendships and making new ones, sharing faith and being challenged to go deeper, enjoying the fun of happy relaxing times together, then going home ready to pick up the threads again."

However Ms Donaldson said the March 2012 camp will be the last, citing rising costs and increasing years as the deciding factors ending the camp in its present form.

"Campers past, present and future please take note," she said.

"2012 will bring us a camp of Celebration: celebration for the wonderful 47 years of camping, celebration that God has been with us all in very special ways, celebration for the lives of all those who have been involved over the years.

"Come and join with us as we celebrate."

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Some of the 2006 campers. Photo by Eva Donaldson

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Synod appoints recovery coordinator



Synod Community Recovery Coordinator volunteer Ian Laurie.
Photo by Osker Lau

FOLLOWING THE 2011 Central Queensland and Brisbane floods, Cyclone Yasi and continuing flooding rains in North Queensland, the Uniting Church, Queensland Synod, is developing a practical response to support those whose first line of duty is to support community disaster response and recovery, employed and volunteer agents, and their congregations and communities.

The Synod recognises the support already provided by these people in responding to a call to sustain communities facing trauma of this kind.

The Queensland Synod

Disaster Relief Funds Distribution Committee (convened by Rev Kaye Ronalds) has been created to disperse funds to support community recovery projects and meet specific needs in the community.

The fund has a responsibility to meet specific Australian Government accountability requirements for its distribution.

To help applicants for funds in meeting these responsibilities and to coordinate support efforts across Queensland, Ian Laurie has been appointed as Community Recovery Coordinator to liaise with congregations, members

and the Disaster Relief Funds Distribution Committee.

Mr Laurie will volunteer his time of two days per week and plans to be at the Synod Office on Mondays and Tuesdays in the first instance.

The Synod is grateful that Mr Laurie is willing to share his many gifts in this important support role for community recovery.

For information on applying for financial or other support to engage in community recovery contact ian.laurie@ucaqld.com.au or 07 3377 9935

From Tassie to Tully with love

By Phil Smith

OTHER CONGREGATIONS sent money to help the people of Tully after Cyclone Yasi. The communities linked by Frontier Services' Midlands Patrol in Tasmania sent Rev Meg Evans.

Ms Evans candidated from Edmonton and served for some years in Far North Queensland, so she was on the phone to friends immediately after the cyclone wrecked Tully and the surrounding area. They joked

about a pastoral visit, but the church could see the possibility.

"The communities saw it as a way we can support Tully," said Ms Evans.

"It's a privilege to be here."

She described how Uniting Church members in the region held a round table meeting, listing people they knew in need and then distributing the funds and resources sent to them.

"What was donated to them has gone to others," she said.

"The church people here are

very positive."

While there is great frustration with unrelenting rain, tangled bureaucracy and insurance process, Ms Evans finds hope in front yard signs such as, "Bit by bit, day by day".

She says local people may be more comfortable talking to a woman about emotional matters.

"Perhaps it's less threatening," she mused.

"Blokes on their own, widowers especially, are happy to talk from the heart."



Meg Evans in cooler weather in Tasmania. Photo courtesy of Frontier Services

The journey continues together

ON SATURDAY 9 April the *Together on the way, enriching community journey* continued

to discern the direction of the Uniting Church in Queensland during a workshop with members

of five Focus Groups sharing their progress.

In the light of the Church's 2020

Vision, the five areas of priority in the next two years are: enabling a demonstrated commitment to the shared call and vision, promoting a discipline of prayer and spirituality (individual and corporate), developing sustainable mission oriented organisation for the Church in Queensland, facilitating renewal of leadership for the mission of the Church and, providing opportunities for intentional, open community connections and partnerships.

During the workshop each Focus Group presented its progress with respect to its focus direction.

The groups discussed the potential outcomes and goals for this phase of the journey to 2013, enabling processes and steps

along the way, who needs to be involved and what resources are needed.

Dr Shirley Coulson, General Secretary, thanked all involved for their time and efforts.

"The shared wisdom of the wider group was sought and participants engaged in discussion about adjustments to the goals and steps in the light of this feedback," she said.

"At the conclusion of a long day with lots of discussion the general feeling was that much progress had been made.

"The next step is for this work to be collated and recorded for distribution to the wider reference group for their comment."

To see the 2020 Vision or for more information visit <http://together.ucaqld.com.au>



Dr Shirley Coulson and Gavin Caird at the last workshop of 2010. Photo by Mardi Lumsden



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MBC students Emily Johnson, Emma Cafferky and Samantha Kacin with some of the origami hearts. Photo courtesy of MBC

To Japan, with love

FOLLOWING THE series of disasters in Japan this year, students at Moreton Bay College (MBC), Brisbane, have shown the children of Japan that they are in their thoughts and hearts.

Over two weeks students hand made over 1000 origami hearts which are now on their way to the United Church of Christ in Japan, a Uniting Church partner church in the earthquake affected area.

MBC staff member, Angela Bailey, said students have written a short message of hope and cheer on the inside of each origami heart.

"Responding to the succession of natural disasters this year has been an unexpected element of this first term of the school year for the students," she said.

The hearts were blessed at a chapel service dedicated to victims of the earthquake.

The United Church of Christ in Japan has facilities that survived the devastation and which sit amid affected communities and are now centres of care, providing clean water, distributing necessities and offering shelter and support.

"The gesture is a small and simple one, but a very human one, which seeks to build a person-to person connection of compassion and care," said Ms Bailey.

Artist finds release

FOR NEARLY 30 years Peter Rowe could communicate only on a very restricted level because his speech is severely affected by Down syndrome.

All that time, his family and those who knew him believed he had very little understanding and comprehension.

But Mr Rowe's life changed dramatically in 1994 when he was introduced to Facilitated Communication, a strategy which may enable people with severe communication impairment to point to objects, pictures, symbols, words and letters to communicate.

Since that monumental day, Mr Rowe has become a published writer, poet, artist and musician.

Mr Rowe is an entrant in this year's Art From The Margins, a project of Wesley Mission Brisbane and part of Brisbane Festival.

"I cried when it was discovered that I could communicate and understand," he said.

"It was the most amazing thing when Jane presented this communication board to me and I knew instinctively how to write what I couldn't say.

"I hated not being able to speak, to let people know that I

understood everything that was happening and being said.

"Nobody had any idea and they just treated me like an idiot."

Mr Rowe originally began art therapy to assist in working through the emotional scars of abuse at a care facility.

"The abuse I suffered at the care facility hurts me every day of my life.

"It keeps me awake at night because I feel none of the people there were given justice in the court system.

"So many went through this but very few got help. I have probably been the luckiest of the

lot because I have mum and dad who have devoted the last years of their life to making me safe.

"My recovery started with art therapy. I did very explicit paintings and people realised that I was suffering."

In 2010 Mr Rowe won the Fulton Trotter Award, a major award in Art From The Margins.

"It just blew me away because I had never expected to be recognised in that manner," he said. "I believe my job is to let people know that people with disabilities can communicate and contribute to society.

"Then maybe we will be valued as people, not just objects to be pitied."

Mr Rowe was interviewed by Ben Pennings.



Artist Peter Rowe. Photo courtesy of Ben Pennings

Art From The Margins entries close on 11 June. For more information or to enter contact Anthony Anderton on 3621 4540 or a.anderton@wmb.org.au

College opens new auditorium

By Phil Smith

UNITY COLLEGE, Caloundra, celebrated the official opening of the third stage of construction of the Building Education Revolution Project on 8 April.

Access to \$3 million under the recent Federal school building initiative allowed the College to implement plans resulting in a new, state of the art auditorium.

The new building is already

booked as a venue for basketball games and international choir performances.

Its 1000 seats can be rolled away under the stage area in less than an hour. The stage is fully equipped with lighting and sound systems.

With a student enrolment of almost 1000, the combined Catholic and Uniting Church College celebrated its first graduation of Year 12 students in 2010.

Roman Catholic Bishop Brian Finnigan and Uniting Church Moderator Bruce Johnson officiated at the opening and blessing ceremony in April.

The College, in partnership with the Uniting Church, has established an exchange program with the Peteli Middle School in Tonga and is building a partnership with a school in Shimla, India.



Fr John Dobson, Rev Bruce Johnson and Dianne Goosem (Catholic Education) unveil the plaque. Photo by Phil Smith

Away for Christmas

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Limited availability, bookings close soon.



The Uniting Church in Australia
Queensland Synod



The Queensland Synod Lay Preachers' Association offers "**Recognition Certificates**" to people within our Uniting Church who have served as Accredited Lay Preachers/ Local Preachers for a period of 25, 30, 40, or 50 years and "on the occasion of retirement from active Lay Preaching".

More detail contact Mr Graham Tainton - Queensland Synod Lay Preachers Association.

07 3279 0185 or gwtandwt@bigpond.net.au

The Australian Research Theology Foundation Inc.



is inviting applications for grants for 2011-2012.

The purpose of these grants is to support theological research and education for formal academic research, new projects or other related concepts.

Further information regarding the Foundation and detail of the application process can be obtained directly from

our website www.artfinc.org.au

in writing to The Administrative Officer A.R.T.F. Inc.

PO Box 7418 Geelong West Victoria 3218

or by email to inquiries@artfinc.org.au

Applications* must be received by the 31st of May. Notification of Grants will be made from the end of July.

*Applicants are requested to provide one emailed application and one paper copy as outlined in the application form.

Women clothed with the sun

By Mardi Lumsden

WHAT STARTED as planning a simple conference for the Assembly agency The Commission on Women and Men (later renamed Gospel and Gender) turned into a gathering that shook the foundation of what it meant to be a Christian woman in Australia.

The 1996 gathering, *Women Clothed with the Sun*, held during a steamy Brisbane January, is still remembered fondly as the place many women changed the way they saw their faith, world, church and themselves.

One of the organisers, Colleen Geyer, said the group set out to run a conference like no one had experienced before.

"If this was about reframing the church and how it understood who it was, could you do that with the event itself?" said Ms Geyer, who is now Blue Care Director of Mission.

"It was about what language we would use to describe it.

What would the images be that we would use? How would the event happen if it wasn't a conference with keynote speakers? That was how everything was run at the time, and still is today.

"It wasn't a conference, it was a gathering. There weren't sessions with events, there were spaces to explore the story. It didn't focus on an issue or conference theme, it focused on a passage in the Bible that wasn't really used in the

wider church (Revelation 12:1).

"How could we have Indigenous women as part of the planning so that their stories and reflections influenced how we would run the event?"

"How do you re-vision worship to make it something that was enough about what we understood of worship but used music and form that would inspire us as well?"

Ms Geyer still has women wanting to talk to her about the gathering.

"I have women from all over Australia say, 'Women Clothed with the Sun was the beginning of me changing how I thought about my faith,' or 'I've grown so much since then. I can't believe I'm the same woman I was before I went'.

"I also have people say, 'I'm one of the ones who never came' and I'm really sad about that.

"When you are involved in something like that you don't

There was a language change, resources, worship ... Things like that impacted people's lives.

understand what is going to be the impact and how it will keep having an influence on people's lives.

"There were amazing things that came out of it as well. There was a language change, resources, worship, a music group that recorded. Things like that

impacted people's lives.

Rev Yvonne McRostie, minister with the South East Uniting Church Community in Brisbane, said the gathering altered many aspects of her life.

"I was mainly involved in the music. I was young (30) and quite a new student. I hadn't really gotten into the whole feminist theology," she said.

"It was like I had been given an opportunity to be something that I always knew that I was, but had never really been given permission to express it or to say it or be a 'woman'.

"It was really quite eye-opening. Through the music I think a lot of people felt that.

"The type of music that we were singing was quite rhythmic and very repetitive. We had great musicians who were able to write songs that reflected the freedom of being a woman."

Ms McRostie was part of the music group, *Seeds of Wild Honey*, which formed as a result of the gathering.

Rev Wendi Sargeant was a Minister of the Word candidate on field placement in Brisbane at the time of the gathering.

The minister she was working with refused to let her attend.

"It was considered to be 'a bit radical' and 'not really something that would contribute to your learning,'" she said.

"At the time I felt disappointed because a number of my friends from college were going. That dis-



Jayne Clapton (left) and Colleen Geyer prepare for the gathering. Photo courtesy of the *Journey* archives

appointment has only increased over the years. People still talk about this gathering as a turning point in their lives and ministries."

Looking back, Ms Geyer said the church still has more to learn.

"I think there is an amazing difference in where women can be in the church," she said.

"The Uniting Church has always believed that there is equality for the genders holding leadership positions and in representation, but we still, even today, struggle with that.

"One of the big issues was around inclusive language. How do we see that in our scriptures

and documents? *The Basis of Union* was rewritten in 1992.

"But there are still places where we say 'language has to be this way or it is not the right way', instead of saying 'language can be used in many different ways to help us have a rich and varied experience of what our Christian faith could be'.

"I still think that its message to the Church was that we can be creative and innovative and we can think of new ways of being and doing that don't take away from what is the core of our faith."

It is a message we still need to hear.

Losing my mum

By Rev Louise Edwards

I SAT in a church service a few years ago and the person giving the message that day talked about the reasons we celebrate Mother's Day.

I found myself getting angry as I thought of the people for whom this would not be the case.

My Mum died very suddenly of an asthma attack. I miss her every day.

We don't all have amazing, loving and nurturing mothers

here with us so I find it difficult to celebrate Mother's Day.

Every day I give thanks to God for blessing me with the most amazing mother.

She was everything you could ever wish for in a mother.

I certainly have a lot to celebrate when it comes to mothers and yet for me Mother's Day is a day of pain and sadness.

It is a reminder of how

blessed I was to have her as a mother, but it also reminds me how much I miss her and how much we have missed sharing together.

It has been 20 years now since my Mum died but I still miss her and Mother's Day is still a difficult day for me.

What helps me get through this day is other people acknowledging that for some, Mother's Day is not a day of celebration and for whatever reason is a difficult day to get through.

We need to make sure we keep these people in our prayers as well.



Louise Edwards (back left) and her mum Leone Edwards hold Louise's niece and nephew in one of the last photos of Louise and her mum.



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Open Question Day, 20 May 2011, 9 am - 12 noon



Church support helps violence recovery

By Denise Secomb

IT TAKES an average of seven attempts for an Australian, English or American person to move permanently out of a relationship characterised by domestic violence, according to the most recent studies.

Many years ago it took me fewer than seven attempts to throw my daughter's father out for good. Several weeks later he broke through our back door with a pickaxe, took a swing at me, then assaulted me before help arrived in the form of three burly male neighbours.

In the time leading up to this assault I had sought a temporary Domestic Violence Order (DVO) from the courts, stayed with my parents until a full DVO application was heard and had the good fortune to be able to call on church elders for a bed for the night with the additional blessing of a barge ticket from them so I

could take my car to town.

While I took fewer than the seven attempts to get it right and finish with such a violent man, it had not helped that the elders of his tribal group told me I was not to keep my daughter from him.

They had not prepared me for a man whose absolute contempt for the law meant that he would use these opportunities to see his daughter as a time to stand over me.

With nowhere else to stay, he had visited me and thrown out the anchor each time he came down from Far North Queensland.

I was fortunate in having good church friends as neighbours to whom I could turn for help.

I am a university educated multi-generational church person. My grandfather's cousin was Rev Dr Herbert Garfield Secomb, President-General of the General Conference Of the Methodist Church of Australasia (1948-1950).

Yet I experienced domestic violence on two occasions: once at a time in my life when I had turned away from the church and the next at a time when I had returned to the church.

The difference between the two experiences was palpable.

However, I know that is not always the case.

I have a friend recovering from an alleged rape after ending a relationship who, until recently, had received only one visitor from her church.

It is time we got our heads around all facets of domestic violence and supported all members of our church who experience such problems, not just the ones with whom we are comfortable dealing.

Talking and listening as support is one thing. But opening up our homes is sometimes what's really needed to help fellow church members end a relationship while they look for somewhere else to

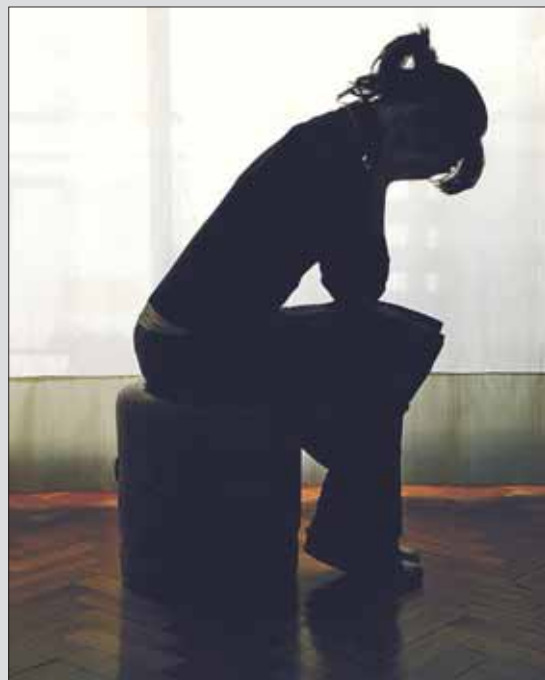


Photo by Glenda Oter

live, understanding that, going back to that relationship may be a part of the process of ultimate separation.

My daughter was baptised in 2009 and, like me, draws on her faith and worship for strength during times of trouble.

Denise Secomb is a Uniting Church member in North Queensland. This is a shortened version. To read the full story go to www.journeyonline.com.au

Leading lady

By Rev Kaye Ronalds

I REMEMBER that my Grade Three teacher had to resign because she was getting married.

On parade we gave her a shiny new electric kettle, but I now realise that the gift was little compensation for giving up the vocation for which she had trained.

Later I learned that her wages would not have been equal to the Grade Four teacher who had asked her to marry him.

In my teenage years I had Helen Reddy singing "I am woman" in one ear and Olivia Newton John singing "I honestly love you" in the other.

I am enormously grateful to the women and men of previous generations who fought for the changes in society that have allowed women to vote, take public office and train for professions and vocations previously only open to men.

A number of capable and competent female leaders have been in this synod during the almost 35 years since church union but for various reasons did not get the opportunity that has been presented to me.

Other synods and the Assembly of the Uniting Church have appointed women in key roles.

Being elected as the next moderator is both an honour

and a heavy responsibility – "to whom much is given much will be required".

Already, people are hinting at things which they believe should be part of my agenda.

In the past some people have been alienated by the aggressive tendencies of some feminists while, at the same time, oblivious to the sometimes patronising dominant patriarchy of the church and society.

Change often requires a radical swing before settling into a new normal.

I am the product of my generation, a graduate and beneficiary of the women's movement.

Out of that I formed the opinion that as a church we need to attend to the voices that are silenced if they are not represented around the tables of our councils.

Even in the church there are new peoples who need liberating both here and overseas.

As a young person I benefited from the regulation in place for the first six years of the Uniting Church (1977-1982) that required one third of the membership of Councils and Committees to be women.

In 1992 I joined the Army Reserve and became the first female army chaplain.

Will I bring a woman's perspective to the role of



Rev Kaye Ronalds. Photo by Osker Lau

moderator? Probably.

I won't stop being a wife, mother, sister, daughter and auntie during my term.

I will try to bring the qualities of the best relationships that I have shared with men and women.

Previous moderators have brought their own personality, personal history, passions and wisdom to the role and they have all been different from each other even though they were all male.

I have had many conversations about whether women could represent God and what the Apostle Paul taught about relationships, difference and how God's Spirit gifts individuals for service.

There are people who express a view that women have no place in leadership.

The Bible abounds with stories in which women were agents of God's purposes and they continue to give me inspiration.



WATCH

Born Into Brothels: Calcutta's Red Light Kids (2004).

Academy Award winning documentary.



WEB

TED online seminar: Kavita Ramdas on Radical women, embracing tradition.

www.ted.com



READ

Eat, Pray, Love: One Woman's Search for Everything.

By Elizabeth Gilbert



LISTEN

The Story (2010) by Naarah.

Rev Kaye Ronalds is the Moderator-elect of the Queensland Synod. She will be inducted as the Moderator at the 29th Synod meeting in October this year and will be the first woman to hold this position

Being a mum

By Elaine Rae

AS AN ONLY child with little extended family, my childhood days were not filled with large family gatherings.

The joy of a large family became a dream, but little did I know what God had in store.

Early in our married life, John and I made a decision to foster. As a result, our family grew from one child to three as a ten-year-old foster daughter, Janet, arrived soon after the birth of our second child.

Family numbers fluctuated in the years ahead.

In holiday times our place became home to other children in care such as Cindy and Peter.

We grieved when Janet returned to the care of her own

mother and rejoiced when our own family grew to four.

Four soon became seven as we embraced the care of our orphaned nephews.

The logistical challenges of looking after a family of nine and working were interesting – transport and bedrooms being the hardest with one car and basically a three bedroom home (it's amazing where you can make bedrooms).

Blending essentially two families of the same ages together also had its challenges.

Looking back, in one way we wonder how we managed.

But, in fact, the answer is quite simple – we had the most incredible support from our church family and our neighbours.



Elaine Rae with her favourite family photo of all her children and grandchildren. Photo by Osker Lau

And we learnt that God is always faithful even if sometimes we were really stretched financially, physically and

emotionally.

Two of our greatest joys today are noting the great relationships that exist between the families of

the next generation and watching our many grandchildren grow and express their individual personalities.



Dr Elizabeth Boase (left) and Dr Vicky Balabanski, Co-Directors of Biblical Studies at Uniting College for Leadership and Theology in South Australia. Photo by Caryn Rogers

Biblical scholars' revelations

By Caryn Rogers

DR ELIZABETH Boase and Dr Vicky Balabanski hold almost 30 published works between them, have two Bachelor degrees apiece and PhDs in their respective Testamental theologies: Dr Boase in Old Testament, and Dr Balabanski in New Testament.

Though the Co-Directors of Biblical Studies at Uniting College for Leadership and Theology in South Australia have both proven to be extremely successful in their field of choice, the path hasn't always been straight forward.

"My parents died when I was in primary school," said Dr Balabanski. "For me that was the beginning of taking very seriously the faith they had instilled in me. It confronted me with big questions.

"I was really into the bible, unlike everyone at my school and in my whole universe. At

Methodist Ladies' College in Melbourne, I was the only student in biblical studies in Year 12. It meant I had night time classes and put me a bit out of kilter with the rest of my peers.

"People said to me, 'You can't study theology straight after school – you need experience'.

"I allowed myself to be talked into it, and went on to Ormond College to do an Arts degree, graduating with honours. I met and married my husband.

"But after that – I went into theology," said Dr Balabanski.

After working as a speech pathologist for five years Dr Boase was challenged by her minister about the thought of ordination.

"After I picked myself up off the floor, I told my husband – he said he could picture it," she recalled.

"So I enrolled in a couple of units at Murdoch University (WA).

"A lot of things started making

sense, and stopped making sense, during that time.

"What became clear over a few years of study was that ordination wasn't right for me, but biblical studies was.

"My Old Testament teachers really encouraged me to do my own thinking, creating a place where I could use my brain in ways I'd never been encouraged to before.

"I wanted people to catch a picture of how wonderful the Old Testament is.

"The sense of a Creator God who encounters us in our full humanity is what I find in the Old Testament; it resonates in a way with who I am. I struggle with a whole lot of Old Testament elements too, but there's something profound in the divine human encounter that helps me to understand.

Continued P.10

Biblical women complete the story

By Rev Dr Geraldine Wheeler

OVER THIRTY years ago I began to study the stories of women told in the Bible.

I was not the first. In the nineteenth century Harriet Beecher Stowe, author of the American classic *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, wrote *Woman in Sacred History*.

Nor will I be the last, as each generation seeks to understand how various women have played a role in God's history with the human race.

I sought not only to study these women in their own contexts but to visualise them, sometimes in their own setting, and sometimes in a contemporary setting.

This led to my doing a series of gouache stencil prints.

So far I have pictured about 18 of them, which are on display at the Brookfield Centre for Spirituality in Brisbane's west, until 20 June.

In the Old Testament there are women such as Sarah, the mother of the nation of Israel (with Abraham as the father) and Hagar, the rejected one, the mother of a gentile nation whose father is also Abraham.

Other mothers whose stories are told include Hannah, the mother of Samuel, and Ruth the great grandmother of King David.

The women are not only mothers. There is Miriam, the sister of Moses and Aaron, who danced and sang after the

crossing of the sea.

Described as a prophet, her song is recorded in Exodus 15:20-21.

Deborah was one of the judges and led the army to victory (Judges 4-5).

Queen Esther played a crucial diplomatic role in saving her people.

The book of Proverbs has a strong feminine note with the wisdom of God personified as a woman and the picture of the wise woman (Ch. 31:10 ff) as a very capable economic manager for her household.

In the New Testament many women are named.

Apart from Mary, the mother of Jesus, and Elizabeth, the mother of John the Baptist, there are

the women who followed Jesus, particularly Mary Magdalene, Martha and Mary.

Women also feature in the story of the early church, several of them working with and respected by Paul.

A married couple, Priscilla and Aquila, shared in ministry with Paul (Acts 18) and in Philippi there was Lydia (Acts 16:11-15) who was the first believer in that congregation of which Paul was so fond.

Lydia is described as a dealer in purple goods (the cloth worn by society leaders), thus a business woman in her own right and head of her household.

"The Lord opened her heart to listen eagerly to what was said by Paul." (Acts 16:14)

She and her household were baptised and she invited Paul



Lydia dealer in purple goods by Geraldine Wheeler

and his companions to stay in her home.

These women fit no stereotype, but have played diverse roles in the purposes of God with humanity.

Cyclone affected graziers meet

By Rebecca Beisler

GRAZIERS ROCKED by Cyclone Yasi – many of whom have barely left their properties since the natural disaster in February – met in April to find out about services to help their recovery.

The “Let’s Do Lunch” gathering was organised by Frontier Services and held at Lynd Junction, 186km from Georgetown, to provide support to the community which has been largely overlooked by official recovery efforts.

The event provided a much-needed opportunity for graziers and their families in the Gulf Savannah region to debrief, access help and spend time with each other.

Frontier Services Patrol Minister, Pastor Peter Harvey, said continued rain, felled trees and water-logged land had made it hard for graziers to assess the

damage, let alone track down their herd.

“Some families didn’t get off the block for five or six weeks following the cyclone,” Mr Harvey said.

“One property, northeast of Greenvale, experienced 80 per cent loss of timber, that’s 80 per cent of trees on about 80,000 acres.”

Adding to the burden, Mr Harvey said the Government’s assistance had been “extremely biased towards the coastal strip”.

The graziers are now beginning to face the financial impact on their families.

“We should be in the middle of the mustering season, but no one’s got out. What that means is there’s no cash flow,” Mr Harvey said.

“The trucking companies have no work, because there’s no movement of cattle. There’s

going to be a roll-on effect for 12 months.”

“People do not see where things are going, it’s difficult to see an outcome.”

Frontier Services Savannah Regional Health Services team leader, Anna Burley, said the meeting would allow the community to share some of the issues they are experiencing.

“Everybody has that much work going on, they do not have the time to stop and just get together and talk. But a problem shared is a problem halved in a way,” she said. “This event aims to build resilience among those affected by the cyclone.”

Mr Harvey said: “Days like this are fantastic. People around the area can talk to others who have been through the same things as them. It’s a whole community thing – actually being able to be with other people again.”



The Frontier Service team (from left) Barb Hawes, Peter Harvey, Di Sherman, Anna Burley and Jeannie Brook at “Let’s do Lunch”. Photo courtesy of Rebecca Beisler

A number of service providers attended the gathering including four Frontier Services programs: the Savannah Regional Health Service, the North Queensland

Remote Area Families Service, Dalrymple Rural Family Support Service and Flinders Patrol Ministry.

Blue Care ‘leg club’ opens



Blue Care client Leanne Laver has her leg bandaged by Blue Care Clinical Nurse Maree Morris. Photo courtesy of Blue Care

BLUE CARE Springwood Community Care Leg Club celebrated its opening during Wound Awareness Week (28 March – 3 April).

Blue Care Springwood Community Care Service Manager Alicia Wooding said the idea of the club was to create a social environment where clients can come together to have their wounds dressed, receive information about health and active leg care and also have a bit of a chat and a laugh.

“Research has found that social factors and isolation can

significantly affect leg ulcer patients’ response to treatment,” Ms Wooding said.

“We’re challenging traditional nursing practices by focusing on preventative chronic disease management and educating our clients to take control of their own treatment and recognise risk factors.”

“The members of the club really support each other which is an important part of the healing process.”

Ms Wooding said with no appointments necessary, the drop-in nature of the club’s weekly meetings adds to its relaxed approach to wound care.

“We have garden clubs and book clubs – why not have a leg club for older people living with a

chronic leg wound,” she said.

The club is off to a flying start with over a dozen members.

Blue Care client Yvonne Maslen has been attending the club since it began.

“I look forward to catching up with everyone over the lovely scones and tea,” she said.

“Sometimes wounds can affect your confidence; however this club encourages everyone to get out of the house and feel part of the group.”

Blue Care Leg Club meets at Blue Care Springwood Community Care, 129 Dennis Road, Springwood, every Monday from 12-4pm. For more information phone Blue Care Springwood Community Care on (07) 3290 9921.

Biblical scholars’ revelations

From P.9

“If I were transported back to my life as a 14-year-old, I definitely looked like I’d pursue Old Testament – everyone at school thought I was Jewish with how much I enjoyed talks from the Rabbi!” she laughed.

Dr Balabanski puts pursuing New Testament studies down to “the providence of God”.

“I love literature, language,

ideas and specific narrative,” she said. “When I’d finished my honours degree in Divinity, I felt I just hadn’t gotten to the bottom of the Synoptic gospels, so I took my studies further in that.”

Dr Boase was also caught up in the literature and language, initially captivated through the book of Job.

“I can still remember writing a paper on Job 42, having a six month old child, and never wanting the essay to finish because I was so caught up in thinking about the big questions of who God is in all that!”

When asked to define ‘women of faith’ the pair share that this immediately assumes the form of pious and proper women, which neither of them believe themselves to be.

“I think of women of faith as being people other than who I am!” Dr Boase quips. “It’s

silly though, my faith is really important to me. When I think deeply about the title, it’s the image of a strength and surety of who you are before God that sticks with me.

Dr Balabanski said that as women come in many shapes and forms, so too do women of faith.

“I feel very privileged in what God, in faith, has enabled me to see and do and be.

“I don’t carry my faith as a badge of honour; it’s a privilege that I’ve participated in.

“Particularly at the time when I came into biblical studies, I was riding on the wave of others’ commitment to feminist theology and women’s participation in the church.”

“I didn’t have to fight the nasty fights; I got to enjoy the benefits. My predecessors took the knocks, so I feel a bit of a weakling in some ways,” Dr Balabanski admitted.

Although around the same age Dr Boase came into biblical studies, career-wise, 10 years after Dr Balabanski.

“Apart from my early days of studying, the issues of women’s roles in the church had, at one level, been neatly packed away,” said Dr Boase.

“What’s interesting now though is that we sometimes have to go back and address those issues, language issues, roles etc.”

Dr Balabanski said there is work still to be done.

“Sometimes when we speak about women in ministry the attitude is that we’ve done that, we’ve moved on from there,” she said.

“But inclusive language has disappeared off the radar really; people aren’t putting the same level of energy into its importance,” said Dr Balabanski.

Dr Boase said that while she hadn’t written anything that has feminist critique she is still shaped by it.

“The way I talk about God and

human beings in relationship with God, the feminist critique is there informing everything I do.”

Dr Balabanski said people shroud the word ‘feminism’ in various guises.

“For me feminism is a benign word, but that’s not the case in other circles.

“It can be an emotive thing. For the generation of believers who came after me, feminism became just an awkward word, with that movement being associated with ‘man-haters’ and gender-polarising.”

Dr Boase said gender roles in the church are an ongoing challenge today, particularly in positions of leadership.

Dr Balabanski said the challenge is in finding coherent ways to have leadership while looking ultimately to God.

“In the end it’s not the final responsibility of one leader to bring about the reign of God.”

Caryn Rogers is editor of *New Times*



High praise for child care

TWO OF Wesley Mission Brisbane's child care services have been named State finalists for Children's Service of the Year in the Australian Family Awards 2010-2011.

The centres, Toowong Child Care Centre and Wesley Mission Brisbane Family Day Care, are two of the four State finalists.

Wesley Mission Brisbane's Child Care Manager, Dianne Holman, said they were committed to delivering "best practice and innovation across all of our services" and building outstanding models of service delivery.

"Both of the services that are

being recognised are examples of that commitment and we will continue to expand and grow as we respond to the needs of the community."

Toowong Child Care Centre, based at Toowong Uniting Church, has been operating for 46 years, providing centre based care for children in the local community and surrounding suburbs.

The Centre has a rich history within the community with many children returning as parents when they've had families of their own.

Wesley Mission Brisbane Family Day Care operates from

a co-ordination unit in Yeronga and has registered educators providing quality home based child care throughout the Brisbane and Logan Regions.

The service has been operating for 35 years with a strong commitment to children, families and staff, as well as engaging in the broader community.

The Australian Family Awards recognise the outstanding individuals and teams who make an important difference to the lives of children and families around Australia.

For more information visit www.wmb.org.au



Toowong Child Care Centre's Natalie Potter (back left) with children and parent Justin Musgrave. Photo by Osker Lau



Attendees at the Lay Ministry Inservice. Photo courtesy of Karyl Davison

Inservice grows new leaders

FOR FIVE days in late March a group of people involved in lay ministry in the Uniting Church, some new Pastors among them, gathered at Alexandra Park Conference Centre on the Sunshine Coast for Christian formation, training and education.

Pilgrim Learning Community lecturer, Karyl Davison, said there was a lot of learning, forming new friendships and fun.

"With keynote speaker, Rev Dr Jenny Byrnes, from the Synod of Victoria/Tasmania, we learned what Christian formation is,

how to maintain appropriate boundaries in ministry and how adults learn," said Ms Davison.

"Through personal sharing and teaching we gained some tools to help us be sustained and healthy in our ministry.

"We also explored some of the cultural changes in our world and how that might need to impact on the church today, including in preaching and worship.

"Don Whebell shared some of his passion about the *Basis of Union*.

"Our Trivia Night was great fun as well as another learning

opportunity – apparently the theological discipline that has emerged from Latin America is Zumbala!"

Ms Davison said the group also appreciated the wisdom and input of Moderator Rev Bruce Johnson, General Secretary Shirley Coulson, Associate General Secretary Rev Dr Marian Zaunbrecher and Synod Human Relations Advisor Ann Warren.

The next Lay Ministry Inservice will be at Alexandra Headlands Conference Centre from June 11–15, 2012.

Community service awarded

DAYBORO UNITING Church community minister, Dr Paul Inglis, was presented with the Pine Rivers Combined Services Community Service Award at the annual gathering of the districts services clubs at Murrumba Downs, north of Brisbane, on 6 April.

He accepted it "on behalf of the many people who pulled together after a fire and flood in Dayboro".

After studying theology, the former teacher and lecturer in education accepted the position in Dayboro and Mt Mee in 2001.

Dr Inglis' vision saw the establishment of an effective welfare program supported by the community and the churches to provide relief for families and individuals in the area.

A close working relationship with the local medical centre and

the school has helped many to benefit from the generosity and closeness which is an integral part of the Dayboro community.

He is a driving force behind the Combined Churches Welfare Fund as well as overseeing the operation of the distribution of provisions from the community "pantry" and casserole bank.

In early 2011 Dr Inglis coordinated an enthusiastic and

dedicated committee to organise the Flood and Fire Concert.

The event raised \$31,500 for community members affected by the floods in January. A local family whose house burned down was given \$10,000 assistance.

Encouraging the community to help others has always been a passion for Dr Inglis and wherever he finds himself, he endeavours to assist people in organising self-help welfare programs.

By Wendy Keeble and Mardi Lumsden



Dr Paul Inglis (right) receives his award. Photo courtesy of Wendy Keeble



ADMINISTRATION OFFICER

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Moreton Rivers Presbytery has a position for an experienced administrative officer to work 20 hours/week in our Presbytery office in Ashgrove.

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Applications close on 20 May 2011.



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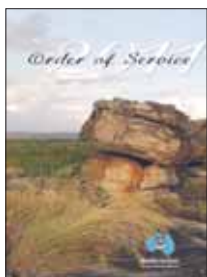
May 29, 9am.

Frontier Services Sunday

Albert Street Uniting Church/Wesley Mission Brisbane, Brisbane city.

Join us to celebrate the 85th anniversary of the formation of the Federal Methodist Inland Mission.

For more information contact Rev Paul Bartlett, Frontier Services, on (02) 8270 1346 or Rev Lyn Burden, Superintendent Minister WMB, on 3031 3030.



April 30-May 2, 10.30am-4pm. Elanora Uniting Church Art Show. Enjoy afternoon tea in the courtyard. 17 Applecross Way, Elanora 4221. Contact Dianne Malimonenko on 5522 5102 or church@elanorauuniting.com.au.

April 30-May 2, 9am-2pm. School of Discipleship, at Glebe Road Uniting Church, Ipswich. Visit <http://tinyurl.com/SchoolOfDiscipleship>, ph 3377 9724 or pilgrim@ucaqld.com.au.

May 1. National Prayer Day for School Chaplaincy. For more information visit www.suqld.org.au.

May 1, 9am. Walk by the Bay with Blue Care. Get active with Blue Care Eastside in this fun walk to raise money for the Heart Foundation and celebrate Heart Week. Manly Pool. Contact Sonia 0416 082 158 or email s.kennett@bluecare.org.au.

May 1, 2.30-4.30pm. Heart Foundation Memorial and Thanksgiving Service at Albert St Uniting Church, Brisbane city. Afternoon tea. Contact Debbie or Karen on 3872 2512 or 3872 2529 or memorial_qld@heartfoundation.org.au.

May 7, 9.30am-3pm. Australian Christian Meditation Community Qld "Walking a Labyrinth" with Rick Zwech. St Peter Chanel Parish Hall, 41 Chaprowe Rd, The Gap. Contact Marlyn Chester on 0439 678 881 or marlches@bigpond.net.au.

May 13-15. Partners in Ministry Retreat, Qld Synod. Guest speaker, Grace Harwood. Alexandra Park Conference Centre, Alexandra Headland, Sunshine Coast. Contact Andi Griggs on 0403 804 814 or andi.griggs@gmail.com.

May 14, 8am-12pm. Morningside Uniting Church Vintage Sale, 43 Thynne Rd. Contact Gail Matheson on 3390 5937 or macmathanj@bigpond.com.

May 14, 9am-12pm. Lay Preaching Enrichment Day, Geebung Uniting Church, 59 Simla Ave. Training, networking, and encouragement for Lay Preachers, worship leaders, and potential Lay Preachers. Presenters include Rev David MacGregor and Rev Yvonne Sutherland. Contact Aaron Ghiloni on 3369 8929 or aaron@moretonriverspresbytery.org.au.

May 14, 9am-12.30pm. Heritage Festival at Graceville Uniting Church, cnr Oxley Rd and Verney Rd East, Graceville. Celebrating our cathedral in its 81st year. Contact Rev Christopher Barr on 3379 6372 or ucgrace@bigpond.net.au.

May 14, 12-2.30pm. Timor Children's Foundation Annual Luncheon, 982 Moggill Rd, Kenmore. Guest Speaker Rev Henry Swindon. \$20 (sandwich lunch). RSVP to Helen Findlay on 3378 2647 or Sandy Nolde on 3851 2192 or sandy.nolde@gmail.com.

May 15-22. Schizophrenia Awareness Week. A national event that highlights the prevalence of schizophrenia in our community. Contact Jane Frazer Cosgrove on 0416 649 474 or nouwen-network@optusnet.com.au.

May 20-21, 8am-3pm. Wheller Gardens Giant Garage Sale. 930 Gympie Rd, Chermiside. Contact Barbara Wood on 3359 7010 or trevorjwood@bigpond.com.

May 21, 11.30am. Methodist Training College and Bible School Reunion (for students years 1964 to 1967). Grace College, St Lucia. Contact Merlene Wilson on 5597 6807 or kbrand@bigpond.net.au.

May 21-22, 10am-4pm. Art in the Old Church, Living Rivers Uniting Church, Pimpama. Activities for the whole family and great food and refreshments on sale. Contact Jim Hohnke on 0428 129 462 or jebtrece@bigpond.com.

May 22, 2-4pm. Sacred Music Live 2011. QUT Caboolture. Free. Visit www.moretonbay.qld.gov.au/libraries.

May 28, 7am-12pm. May Fair and Garage Sale at Redcliffe Uniting Church, cnr Richens St and Anzac Ave. Contact 3283 4066 or redcliffeuc@dovenetq.net.au.

Musical gifts?

HAVE YOU got a gift to share?

Wesley Mission Brisbane's Wheller Gardens at Chermiside needs musicians to assist with worship services at the Sanctuary and other facilities.

There is a worship service every Sunday at 9.30am and fortnightly services at their high and low care facilities.

A love of sharing with older people and an energy to be a part of a community on a fortnightly/monthly basis would be an asset and a gift to the people who share in this community.

For more information contact the Wheller Gardens chaplains on 3621 4512 or 3621 4521

Two schools, one mission

By Elaine Rae

THE CHAIRMAN of Moreton Bay College, Mr Geoff Diehm QC, has announced an amalgamation of the governance structures for Moreton Bay College (MBC) and Moreton Bay Boys' College (MBBC) from 1 July, 2011.

The first steps in the amalgamation will be to reorganise the current Board structure. While there will still be a separate Board for each school, they will have common membership.

The members will be drawn from the existing MBBC and MBC Boards.

Following the departure

of Dr Rod Crouch (Principal MBBC) in June to take up a position overseas, Ms Jennifer Haynes, current MBC Principal, has been appointed to the position of Principal at both Colleges from 1 July, 2011.

Since the establishment of MBBC in 2003, both Boards have worked closely together to ensure consistency of ethos and values across the schools and this step will strengthen that relationship.

The Queensland Synod of the Uniting Church will continue to appoint a majority of the members of the new Board.

New faces on UnitingCare Board

THE BOARD of UnitingCare Queensland has appointed two new members – former Queensland Synod Moderator, Rev Dr David Pitman and Scenic Rim Regional Council CEO, Mr Craig Barke.

UnitingCare Queensland CEO Anne Cross said, "These new Board members will bring a wealth of knowledge, skills and personal qualities that will enable them to provide valuable input to the work we do in UnitingCare Queensland".

Dr Pitman has previously served on the Board as an ex officio member during his time as Moderator.

"He brings great wisdom and a deep knowledge of the life of the Church and its outreach to those

we support every day of the year, through our network of health and community services," said Ms Cross.

"Craig has a proven track record of excellent organisational skills and creative leadership gained through a range of executive roles in local government and industry, as well as having a keen interest in the work of community organisations."

Mr Barke is an active member of Logan Uniting Church and is presently a member of the Church Council.

He and his wife feel called to serve the young and disempowered in the community.

Ms Cross thanked retiring Board members Pam Spall, Dr Ian Airey and Rick Strangman for

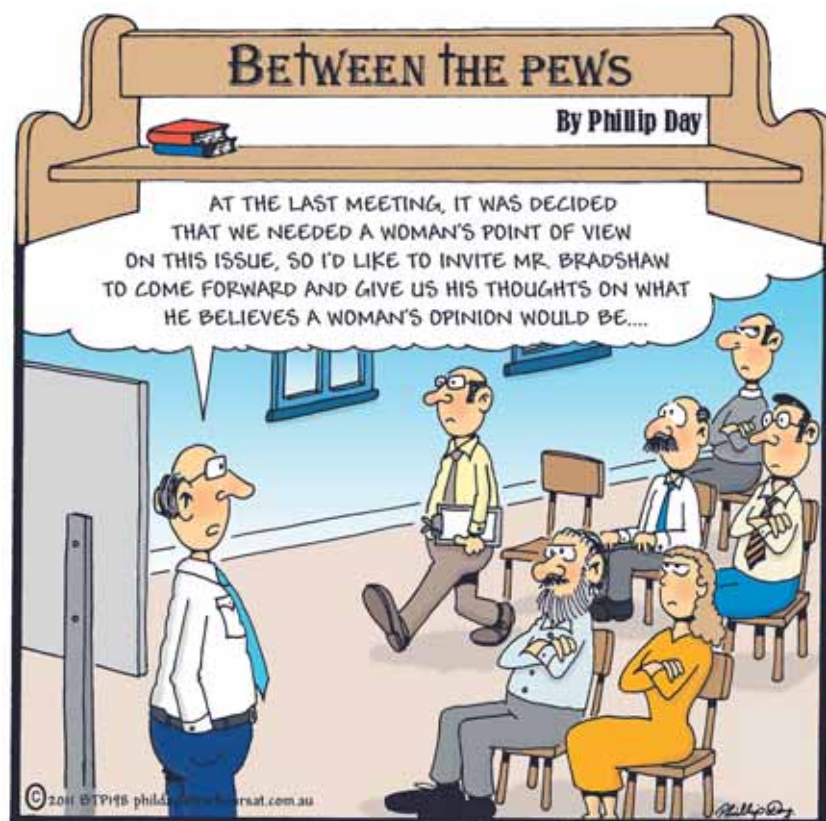


Rev Dr David Pitman.
Photo by Osker Lau

all their valued work over their many years of service.

Dr Airey and Mr Strangman both served on the Board for nine years and Ms Spall served on the Board for six years.

"The contribution of Pam, Ian and Rick has been much valued and appreciated," said Ms Cross.



Women's Uncommon Prayers: Our lives revealed, nurtured, celebrated

Edited by Elizabeth Rankin Geitz, Marjorie A Burke and Ann Smith, Morehouse Publishing, 2000, RRP \$38.95

Reviewed by Karyl Davison.

WHAT AN amazingly beautiful collection of prayers from the voices of women.

These wide ranging prayers speak from a woman's perspective, reflecting experiences and feelings that are very real; the ordinary experiences of human life.

Despite the book's title, many of the prayers would be appropriate for both men and women.

Women's Uncommon Prayers covers an amazing array of topic areas (detailed in a very good index).

There are prayers for daily living, thanksgiving, for those

experiencing abuse, and those who are ageing.

There are prayers to include in your spiritual life, for ministry and for many stages of life.

The prayers contain rich imagery and help connect with God in some wonderful ways.

I was moved to tears when reading a Lament on the experience of mothering, and the Lament for a Broken Child.

Others helped me connect better with some women in the Bible: The Many Faces of Rachel and I Am Martha, I Am Mary.

Others reflect the everyday, like A Dieter's Prayer and the reflection Ten Things I've Learned



in the Garden.

If you are a man, this book presents a rare opportunity to gain a peek into the hearts of women and their prayers to God.

If you are a woman, these prayers will enable you to speak some prayers you have not being able to utter.

This is the best resource for intercessory prayer I have found in recent times and I highly recommend it for both individual devotions and ministry life.

How to Feel Good Naked: Learning to love the body you've got

By Sheila Bridge, Monarch Books 2010, RRP \$19.99

Reviewed by Bob Warrick, a husband, father of two daughters and grandfather of two granddaughters.

THE AUTHOR assures us that she does not want to make the reader guilty or miserable – she wants us to feel at home in our beautiful body whatever shape it's in, and this reviewer thinks she has achieved that.

Ms Bridge starts by examining the word 'perfect' and the message of magazines and advertisers that we are all inadequate, before reminding us that each one of us is unique; a one off masterpiece.

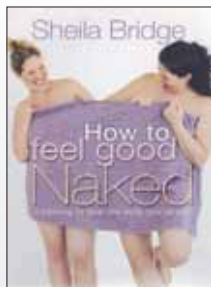
Regardless of how we feel about our body she reminds us that it is an amazing gift and says we need to celebrate all the incredible things our body does.

She urges us to be 'content' rather than famous and tells us that it is easier to achieve this when surrounded by affirmation.

While clearly being a book by a woman for women, it is for men too ... because men are subjected to similar pressures and influences and through what men say can find themselves putting unreasonable expectations on the women – or everyone – around them.

Her chapters on "what to do" explore exercise (walking, running and swimming), beating boredom, clothes and makeup, and include ten useful pages on eating disorders.

One of the keys to loving the



body we've got is changing the way we feel about ourselves, gaining self respect and self confidence.

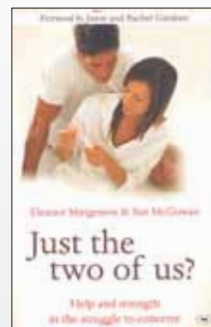
Ms Bridges believes that this is not only possible but also vital.

Look out for the quote from Dawn French who describes herself as "almost completely spherical" and tells the story of what her wonderful Dad said to her when she was 13 – it has great advice for all men and women.

Just the Two of Us?: Help and strength in the struggle to conceive

By Eleanor Margesson and Sue McGowan, Inter-Varsity Press, 2010, RRP \$17.95

Reviewed by John and Debbie Nickerson, a young married couple from Pine Rivers Uniting Church who would like to have children.



JUST THE Two of Us talks about how God works in our lives without children, and what he has promised to us as believers, as well as what he requires of us.

The book is clearly targeted at Christian couples struggling to have children, but also speaks about being unable to have a second or third child after one successful pregnancy.

Couples like this, or their friends and family, will find the book useful and will likely see many familiar sentiments and emotions expressed in the stories.

The style is easy to follow, even in the chapters with a more medical focus.

Each section and chapter is followed by discussion and reflection questions that help to process the information.

The book is careful to avoid mentioning whether any of the stories they tell ended with children, because that's not the focus or message here.

The authors are not trying

to say "have faith and you will have children".

Readers are encouraged to re-evaluate their focus: what are we here for, as Christians, and how can we serve God with or without children.

Advice is also offered on maintaining relationships during the struggle to conceive.

We found the book very helpful, raising the right questions at the right time and giving us new focus and perspective when we needed it.

Many times during our reading we found ourselves saying "this is exactly how we feel", which helped us recognise we are not alone in this.

We recommend *Just the Two of Us?* to anyone who is struggling to conceive.

Counselling Christian Women, on how to deal with domestic violence

By Lynne M. Baker, Australian Academic Press, 2010, RRP \$34.95

Reviewed by Rev Dr Marian Zauchenbrecher.

ACCORDING TO author Lynne Baker, domestic abuse is the elephant in the room whenever the church gathers to worship.

She estimates that one out of three women suffer from domestic abuse, be it physical, emotional, psychological or economic abuse or a combination of these, yet it is rarely named and confronted.

Counselling Christian Women is a PhD thesis published as a book. The author's research of the literature, prevalence of abuse, coupled with her interviews with 20 Australian Christian women is sound and makes a great contribution to the subject.

Unfortunately it often reads like a PhD thesis.

What Dr Baker has to say is important for all counsellors and Christian clergy to assist them in the support of abused victims.

Dr Baker gives good advice, exploring various

aspects such as the issues of forgiveness and repentance, divorce and separation, as well as mediation which assumes that there is equality within the relationship and therefore often not a practicable course of action.

Above all, it shows to women suffering abuse (and it is usually women) that abuse is the choice of the abuser in order to control and to dominate, it is not her own behaviour that is responsible.

It is important that the abused know they are not alone, and there is a predictable cycle of behaviour by the abuser. Abuse does not reflect the Divine purposes for relationships.

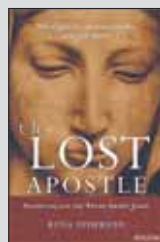
This book is a great resource for the whole church and is available from www.aapbooks.com.



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

The Lost Apostle: Searching for the truth about Junia

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



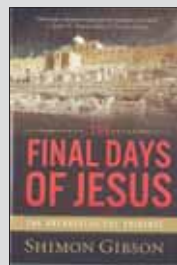
Soul-Shaping Small Groups

By Kim V Engelmann, IVP Connect, 2010, RRP \$19.95



The Final Days of Jesus: The archaeological evidence

By Shimon Gibson, HarperOne, 2009, RRP \$25.99



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 or <http://rainbowbooks.com.au>.

Church member motors on

LONGREACH UNITING Church member Stan Emslie thinks his Aunt, Lil Keene, may be the oldest Uniting Church member in Queensland still driving herself to church.

This photo (right) was taken as Mrs Keene arrived at Church on Sunday 27 February.

Mrs Keene celebrated her 97th birthday on 25 March and she attends worship nearly every week.

Born Lily Stinson, she has lived in Central Queensland all her life.

Together with her husband George Campbell, she raised six children.

Some years after George's death she married Charlie Keene and took over the role of raising his young family.

Mrs Keene has been an active member of both the Barcaldine and the Longreach Uniting Churches.



Lil Keene arrives at church in February. Photo by Stan Emslie

She is still cooking for church fundraising stalls and remains a very capable knitter, providing the Christmas manger scene for the congregation each year.

For over 20 years members of the Church entertained residents of the Pioneer

Retirement Home and Mrs Keene had a large repertoire of poems which she used to recite.

Mr Emslie said Mrs Keene's eyesight and hearing may be deteriorating, but her faith in her God has never failed.

Couples Club turns 50

A GROUP of current and former members of Albert Street church may have set a record for the longest running fellowship.

In today's parlance of Small Groups, the Albert Street Couples Club has been a stand out success for 50 years, with 50 members celebrating the occasion with a lunch at Wheller Gardens in Chermiside in March.

As in the beginning, Rev Ray Hunt spoke at the celebration, recalling how he and Fay organised the fellowship in early 1961.

"Since then more than 100 people would have met regularly

to enjoy Christian fellowship and friendship," said foundation member Wilf Wheatley. The Wheatleys and Reids have remained with the Couples Club since the beginning.

Originals through to present day members brought photos and memorabilia to the lunch. Some recalled how the matron of Raymont Lodge arranged for female students to come and serve as baby sitters. Arrangements were made for boys from Primmer Lodge to escort the young ladies home, perhaps ensuring the long term future of the Albert Street Couples Club.



Couples Club members (from left) Don and Lorraine Reid, Fay and Ray Hunt, Wilf and Kath Wheatley. Photo by Osker Lau

On Sunday 8 May please pray for the Central West Uniting Churches

THE CENTRAL West Uniting Churches are a cluster of congregations spread over hundreds of kilometres.

Our congregations are made up of people who have lived in the west their whole lives and some who have come for work or a change of pace and scenery.

We have morning services at Barcaldine and Blackall each Sunday and in Jericho and Alpha every second week.

We are blessed with having a number of visitors who come

for holidays and make the church their spiritual home while they are here.

Some come for a week or two, others come for 3-6 months each year and these visitors become members of our congregations while they are here.

As with any western community we face the challenge of distance and travelling for services many other people have on their doorstep.

Please pray for our Bible study groups, Kid's Club, Faith Girlz, Sunday Night Live and assorted ecumenical services we have coming up.

Please pray for our communities as they continue to recover from flood damage and rebuild.

Please pray for the continued vibrant life of our congregation and that we might be effective witnesses for Jesus Christ in our community.

On Sunday 15 May please pray for the South East Uniting Community

SOUTH EAST Uniting Community is Eastside Trinity Uniting Church, Coorparoo Uniting Church and Morningside Uniting Church in Brisbane together to worship, witness to, and serve God.

We would appreciate the prayers of the wider church for:

- a review process, both internally to see if there are better ways of being faithful to God's call together, and externally as the Presbytery looks at the strengths and needs for whole community. Prayers for the team who will conduct the reviews
- the leaders of the Church Council, each of the Mission Leadership teams, and our ministry team

- Eastside Trinity Uniting Church beginning a community consultation process and a proposed property redevelopment to better serve and witness to the local community and the growing Sudanese Faith community

- the leaders of the Sudanese Faith Community and the opportunities for deeper connections with one another

- the volunteers of Trinity Thrift Shop as they continue to be the face of Jesus to the community

- Coorparoo Uniting Church as it builds relationships with the local community through the Coorparoo Community Garden. As we work more closely with

Steppingstone Clubhouse, local government and other community garden networks to grow in our understanding of how we can live sustainably and build healthy communities

- Morningside Uniting Church as it celebrates the commissioning of two new Lay Preachers, Chris Mathers and Maria Narua. We thank God for raising up new leaders and for the encouragement and witness this is to others.

- the positive ministry of the Balmoral Uniting Community Centre, under Wesley Mission Brisbane, for the manager Terry and all the staff, volunteers and clients.

On Sunday 22 May please pray for North Cairns Uniting Church

LOCATED AMONGST the northern suburbs of Cairns, our parish falls into two distinct geographic areas: the northern beach suburbs of Cairns (where one worship centre is located in Smithfield) and the suburbs broadly associated with the Freshwater Creek Valley, the hub of which is Redlynch where we also have a place of worship.

The congregation at Smithfield is very diverse both ethnically and in age.

It ranges from a vibrant Sunday school (Kids in Christ) to some youth and young adults, the parents of those young people, others in their age range and older worshippers.

One morning worship gathering at Smithfield each Sunday caters for that diversity both in the worship and in the fellowship afterwards.

Worship at Redlynch takes place within a chapel in the beautiful new Glenmead Aged Care Village.

Residents from the Village are joined by a number of people from the local community for worship each Sunday afternoon.

Cairns as a city was mercifully spared the worst

of the destruction wrought by Cyclone Yasi, and being on the north side of the city we were also that little bit further away from the destructive core.

A number of parishioners were evacuated as a precaution, but their properties were largely untouched.

A large amount of fallen timber had to be cut up and moved to the kerb; I have never seen a larger pile of kerbside vegetation than the one outside the Smithfield church after our clean-up.

But again God was good; no trees fell on buildings and many hands combined with skilled chain saw operators made a big task manageable.

It was a memorable worship service and holy communion in the Smithfield church the first Sunday after the cyclone.

We sat in a semi-circle, had no power and a huge rainstorm made the building very dark inside.

But the testimonies of thankfulness for mercy received and supplication for those we knew had fared far worse than we had were very real indeed.

We continue to pray for Tully, Mission Beach and Cardwell.

Carbon price?

AFTER READING the last issue of *Journey* (April) I would like to ask why UnitingCare can use this journal to not only promote the acceptance of a Carbon Price, which has got nothing to do with Christ's work and ministry, but also indicate that it is the accepted belief of the Uniting Church or maybe more specifically "the whole UnitingCare organisation".

Could it be that the UnitingCare organisation has been used to promote political tax propaganda and left the work of Christ on the 'back burner'?

Maurice Herron
Pittsworth



Celebrate chaplains on 22 May

UNITING CHURCHES around the country are asked to celebrate the work of chaplains on Chaplaincy Sunday, 22 May.

After nearly 20 years of congregational youth ministry Andrew Fox felt a call to chaplaincy.

Now a chaplain with Blue Care Aged Services on the Sunshine Coast he was not convinced God had put him in the right place.

"As part of my preparation for ordination I was appointed one-day-a-week as an aged-care chaplain at Ninderry High Care Unit at Blue Care Bli Bli.

"When I was first asked it seemed like a good idea, but as I sat in my car outside on that first day, I came within moments of backing out."

Seeking a new placement, Mr Fox wrestled with where God wanted him to be.

"I spoke to a number of congregations but nothing seemed to feel right until one Sunday evening, as I sat in an ordination service and heard again the story of Peter stepping out of the boat I realised that god was calling me to step out of the boat; to leave behind the relative security of the ministry that I had known for 20 years into Chaplaincy.

"What I love about Chaplaincy is the sense that I am actually making a difference in people's lives and am really at the cutting edge/coal-face as far as mission and pastoral care are concerned.

I laugh and cry with people as they live their lives and as they let me in to share with them," he said.

Read more about chaplaincy making a difference at www.journeyonline.com.au

School chaplaincy questions

ON 27 MARCH our Uniting Church congregation was asked to take part in a National Day of Prayer for School Chaplains on 1 May.

This is because the High Court is to make a ruling later in May about the constitutionality of the Australian Government's funding of School Chaplains.

What are we to pray about?

That God will intervene and ensure the High Court will find in favour of continued funding.

The request goes further

and asks that: "Those who oppose School Chaplaincy on ideological grounds will not have their way".

By implication this means those who support funding on ideological grounds should have God's and the High Court's favour.

There is no recognition that Christians can also be opposed to the present very ad hoc funding arrangement for chaplains in today's multi-faith society in Australia.

This is a legal issue to be determined in our type of

democracy by our system of courts.

If it is constitutional, funding will continue.

If it is unconstitutional then those in favour have recourse to the political processes that lead to constitutional change.

This is not an issue for which some in the Christian churches should seek special status and authority.

Peter J Fensham
West End



Wanting detention solutions

TO GABRIELLE Lloyd:

In your highly critical, flagrantly one-sided article "Church calls for end to detention ..." (April *Journey*) is there any reason why you were unable to offer any alternative to the situation?

Brian Kelly
Mudgeeraba



Food not secure

I WAS very interested to read your article on global food production in the April *Journey*.

While I agree with most of what you said I feel that you are mistaken if you believe that Australia is safe from famine that strikes other countries.

Australian farmers are under constant pressure to produce food and to do it as efficiently as they do is a remarkable achievement given the interference by government and other agencies.

Australian farmers cannot

clear land to produce food crops even though there is more soil erosion in treed areas than there is in well grassed areas.

Governments, both state and federal, support the mining and gas industries over farming.

Farmers have no rights if their land has a mining lease over it.

Government departments have no real knowledge of the effects of coal seam gas production on our long term farming production.

The report written by the Murray Darling Commission has recommended that irrigation licences be reduced by up to 40

per cent in some cases.

This will impact on the viability of many rural communities in ways that government has not considered such as a cotton gin must have a certain production to remain financial.

When this production is not available then the gin will close.

No cotton gin, no cotton farms, no employment in towns.

Food crops that can be grown easily in Australia are now being imported into Australia with the risk of disease outbreaks.

When these pests (e.g. fire ants) are out in the environment they are virtually impossible to control.

Exotic diseases such as

mad cow disease and foot and mouth disease would destroy our animal industries overnight.

Because of government deregulation this would severely effect the dairy industry as it is confined to a very small area of Australia.

These are just some of the issues affecting rural people at the moment and if we are to be food producers for the next century, as is our moral responsibility, then farmers will have to be given a fair go.

Greg McKay
Dalby



Global warming assumptions

I WAS interested to read in the April edition of *Journey* the article "Uniting Care welcomes Carbon price" in which Lin Hatfield Dodds makes the assumption that CO2 causes "global warming."

I think it must be said that there is in fact absolutely no proof that CO2 causes the planet to warm.

In medieval times the planet was warmer than it is now, and there were no cars, power stations etc. in those times.

The Intergovernmental Panel for Climate Change has never produced any proof, and since 1990 Western Governments have spent a reported 50 billion dollars trying to find evidence that carbon produces "global warming" and have never found any.

The atmosphere around

us contains about 78 per cent nitrogen, about 21 per cent oxygen etc. and CO2 (which is not a poison but is absolutely necessary for life on this planet) is a minute gas at 0.038 per cent and of that about 98 per cent is completely natural, which means that humans world wide produce about 2 per cent of that 0.038 per cent.

When one considers the tiny percentage of CO2 in the atmosphere and the very small human contribution it's abundantly clear that it does not amount to serious pollution. Without CO2 we would have a huge environmental problem because CO2 is absolutely necessary for our plants, our trees and forests to flourish.

A W Ken Cutmore
Golden Beach



CLASSIFIEDS

Accommodation

Holiday unit, modern, pool. 100m from Kings Beach Caloundra from \$390/wk. Ph Ray 04279 90161.

London B & B. Lovely home, reasonable rates. Ph 0011442086946538. rachel@brockleybandb.fsnet.co.uk

Studio Apartment. Fully furnished, fully self-contained, with quality fittings for rent in Grange. Single person or couple. Rent: \$200 per week (incl. utilities). Contact: 33114671, or Neil on 0437180653, or Janelle on 0407898363.

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

An *eco-conference* FOR Christians wanting to integrate their *faith* with ENVIRONMENTAL concern and action

Sat 4 June 2011
9.30am to 4pm
(registration and cuppa from 9am)

West End Uniting Church Hall
Cnr Vulture and Sussex Street
West End, Brisbane.

\$45 (\$35 early bird or concession)

For more information and registration
www.tendashoot.net.au
or ring Helen on 07 3846 3832

CRY OF THE EARTH

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

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

Preference will be given to letters responding to articles or letters in the most recent edition of *Journey*.

Who inspires you?

Anne Cross

WHO INSPIRES me? My grandmother who died when I was 18.

She was a strong, gentle woman who had a close circle of friends and was deeply involved in her Church and community; one of my first role models of an independent woman.

It was Kierkegaard who said that life must be lived forward but it can only be understood backwards.

Looking back I know I gravitate to those

who catalyse people to act and who compel me to consider new ways of thinking about issues.

I was lucky to be at university at a time of activism – Vietnam, the Springboks, corruption in Queensland's public life; so many campaigns.

I love to learn from people who challenge the status quo, who are open to new ways and who inspire others to look beyond limitations.

As a young professional learning from

those people who fought for and pioneered de-institutionalisation – those courageous families and committed professionals inspired me to reject prevailing life limiting views about children 'in care' and people with disabilities.

I know now that life has no smooth path for any of us and I am inspired by ordinary people who simply do the very best they can.

I am inspired by those who have taught me the inestimable power of

intention; applying focus, imagination, solid methodology and staying power to solve real problems that confront ordinary people and communities.

People who imagine better for their families, their communities, our country, and the world and who are open to learning inspire me and help me dream.

And I am in awe of those who make dreams come true!

Anne Cross is the CEO of UnitingCare Queensland

Heather Watson

IN 1994 I attended the Uniting Church's National Assembly in Sydney at which Dr Jill Tabart was inducted as President.

Jill's election to President was unusual in a number of respects – she was a woman, a lay person and a Tasmanian.

She remains the only woman and the second lay person in the Uniting Church's history to have held that role.

My observations and experience of that Assembly, and particularly of Jill as she took up that role, have had significant impact on me.

It was at that Assembly that the Manual for Meetings, outlining the church's consensus decision-making processes, was adopted.

Jill had been one of the architects of that framework, having successfully introduced a similar framework at a World Council of Church's meeting.

Having had some experience of "Westminster" meeting procedures I was sceptical about the capacity of a consensus model in a forum of over 300 people to be effective.

However, my experience of that Assembly, and in particular the role Jill played in facilitating the processes as President, gave me some insight into the fact that our consensus decision-making as contained in the Manual for Meetings was ahead of its time and truly a gift to the Church.

It's a gift that has the most to offer when

people with the right skills and experience are exercising leadership within the framework.

What particularly resonated with me was Jill's calm but firm approach, her capacity to demonstrate empathy to those who were passionate but whose views were not universally supported, and her ability to correctly identify the mood of the meeting in terms of moving on, or taking more time to work through the issues.

In various roles related to the church and in my professional life I often facilitate group discussions and sometimes chair meetings.

I have implemented the consensus decision-making framework and, in other contexts, adopted the principles but

modified its application in appropriate ways.

When I have received positive feedback about my own roles, I often reflect on the significance of my experience of Dr Tabart at that Assembly meeting and how that inspirational experience has continued to positively impact me.

Heather Watson is Chair of the UnitingCare Queensland Board, a partner of McCullough Robertson Lawyers, and a director of a number of charitable and non-profit companies

Lyn Burden

THERE ARE many courageous people in this world whose stories are inspiring.

On a personal level I have been inspired by the person who was my supervisor during the field year of ministry training, Rev Dr Norma Spear (although she was still working on her doctorate in those days).

Norma was the minister of the Glebe Road Uniting Church congregation, a vibrant strong congregation in Ipswich, which, under Norma's leadership, had been formed as a result of three congregations merging.

The visionary leadership of Norma was what first inspired me to ask if I could be a student at Glebe Road, and thus (I discovered) become one of "Norma's boys" (a name for the large group of students who trained under her).

As a student I came to appreciate Norma's commitment to her call from God to be a minister in an era where women didn't serve the

church in that capacity.

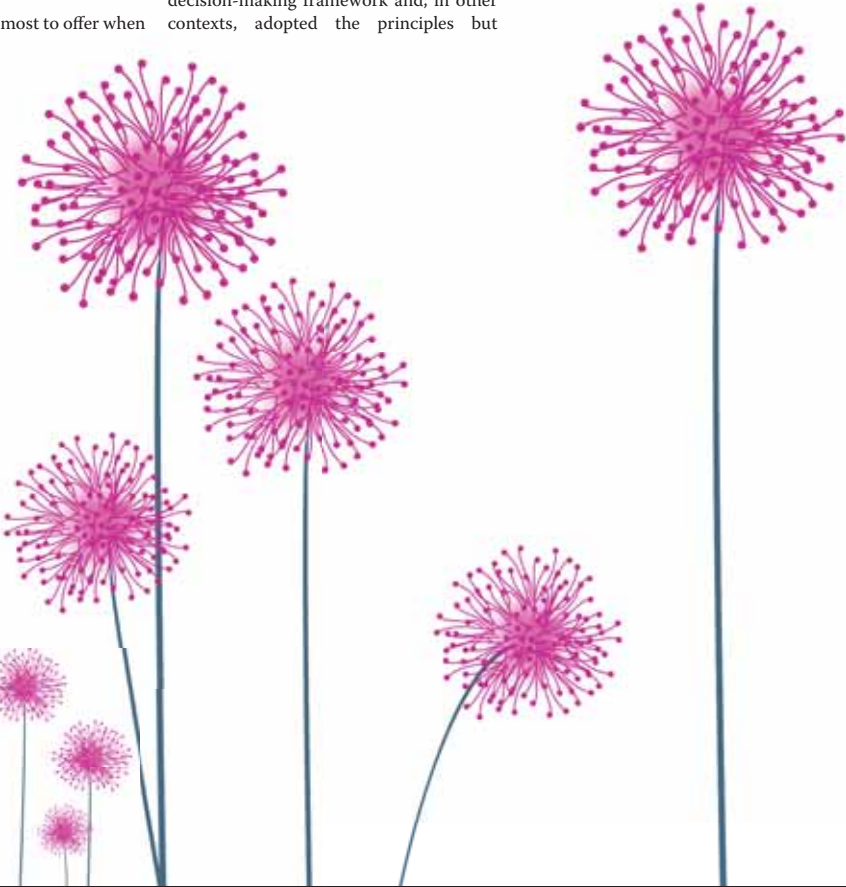
She responded to that call and, because women didn't become ministers, trained as a Methodist Deaconess.


Deaconesses at that time were often considered lower in status in the ministry team than (male) student ministers, but Norma willingly obeyed her call to ministry.

After many years of faithful service, Norma became the first woman to be ordained as a Minister of the Word in the Methodist Church in Queensland, when the church gave women the opportunity for women to be ordained as ministers.

Norma is a visionary who has the capacity to implement that vision within a congregation by seeing all who participate as part of the ministry team and encouraging people to use their gifts and graces in serving God.

Rev Lyn Burden is Superintendent Minister at Wesley Mission Brisbane






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