

MORE DEPTH, MORE STORIES AT journeyonline.com.au

HEALTH LINKS

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"We spent a lot of the time helping in the hospital wards, gaining an understanding of the conditions the staff work in." **Wendy Zernike**

PRESIDENT'S OPEN LETTER

"As Christians, we believe that God's will for the earth is for renewal and reconciliation, not destruction by human beings." **Rev Alistair Macrae**

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THE FUTURE IS NOW

By Mardi Lumsden

THE AUSTRALIAN population is in itself ageing but according to National Church Life Survey (NCLS) data, the church still has more people aged over 50 years and fewer under 40 years than the general population.

According to NCLS data, the Uniting Church has the fewest members (8 per cent) aged between 15 and 29 of all Australian mainstream Christian denominations.

In fact, 56 per cent of Uniting Church members are aged over 60 years.

Fast forward twenty years, who will be leading our church?

Moreton Rivers Presbytery Youth, Children's and Families Coordinator, Ms Cox said we often underestimate young people in the church.

"We seem to have very few expectations about what our young people are capable of or might be able to achieve.

"It's not hard to miss the mark when we aim pretty low.

"Perhaps it's time to not simply demand more, but support and

encourage the absolute best from our young people."

One of the Synod functions removed during painful budget cuts in 2009 was the Youth and Children's Ministry Unit (YACMU).

An issue many people are now addressing is how to cater for youth ministry without a central office.

"It is a huge issue when we don't have somewhere central for people to go to for help, resources, encouragement, networking, advocacy and support," said Ms Cox.

"Sharing ideas is helpful but not easy. People are naturally very protective of their own resources.

"It feels a bit like the Church has been willing to cut out resourcing for young people in the cut backs and are slowly starting to see the impact of that filtering through congregations.

"It's not just about money though ... it's about the value we place on having young people being a part of the whole people of God.

"In my mind, the 'space for young people' is not so much about an office at Bayliss Street, but about the space in the hearts and attitudes of all people in our congregations.

"It's about the way we live and work together towards God's mission and ministry here on earth.

"The moment we exclude people of any age we need to stop and reconsider what it is we are doing."

We say that the Uniting Church has no young people but every day thousands of young adults attend our schools and hundreds attend holiday programs and events like the National Christian Youth Convention held on the Gold Coast at the beginning of the year.

It's not that we don't have access to young people; it is just that most of them aren't warming the pews on a Sunday morning.

Clayfield College Principal, Brian Savins, said schools are a place where young people are seeking connection; with each other, with adults (teachers) and with Christ.

Mr Savins said Uniting Church affiliated schools, like Clayfield College, a PMSA school in Brisbane, could be seen as an agency of the Church.

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Allowing real change

"WE HAVE to attract young people into the church because young people are the church of the future."

I remember hearing people speak like this when I was in my late teens in our church.

When I heard that, I wanted to cry out, "But I want to be part of the church today!"

We still say similar things about the church now, wringing our hands and trying to think up ways to attract young people.

We see the growing Pentecostal churches with loud music and apparently lots of young people, so we try to mimic them.

But we don't have the skills or the gifted musicians so we end up doing a pale imitation and wonder why it doesn't work.

When I was 19 or 20 I was invited into the committee responsible for the finance and property life of the church.

I enjoyed the experience because it gave me contact with other men and I enjoyed being involved in working bees because I learnt skills I would not otherwise have learnt.

I learnt to lay concrete, to operate a ride-on mower, to use a chainsaw. Somehow I also got to thinking about how God was

life and was protected from much criticism by the minister and the elders who did all they could to inspire and encourage while allowing us to manage our own affairs.

As I have travelled around our church over the past three years, I find that in most places there are young people in our church.

Maybe only one or two who come rather irregularly.

They probably grew up in the congregation from infancy. They feel a sense of loyalty to those oldies, but they find it hard to be recognised as adults, or to be respected and trusted as committed disciples in their own right.

Too often we who have been around the church a long time think that we must change to attract young people.

In doing so we often try all sorts of things we think they want.

This ignores the fact that there

Are we willing to allow these committed young people to change us?

calling me to live as a disciple of Christ and to wonder what it would mean for me to become a minister.

When I was 22 I moved to Brisbane and became part of a congregation that had a very large youth ministry.

As I reflect upon that time I realise that this group of about 80 young adults managed its own

Message from the Moderator

Rev Bruce Johnson



are young people already there.

The question is not "what do we need to change to attract young people?" but "are we willing to allow these committed young people to change us?"

I know of congregations where experienced gifted older leaders have stepped down and made space for "inexperienced younger leaders" and sought to mentor and encourage their leadership.

It feels risky, but it empowers the next generation of leaders to offer their gifts, enthusiasm and faithfulness to shape our mission and our future.

Can you look for the one or two young people still associated with your congregation and take time to listen to them to see how their skills and passion might enhance and transform your congregation?

When I visit our schools and colleges I see young people in both primary school and high school confidently leading awards nights, being MC at celebrations with amazing confidence.

I find myself thinking that I could never have done that at their age.

Please make space for your high school students and young adults to shape and excite our church.

Our young people are not the church of the future; they are part of the church today.



WEB

Got a smart phone? Why not 'check in' at church this week?

Welcoming the wisdom of the whole

WHEN I was about 19 years old, at the end of the year I dyed my hair bright purple.

I wasn't a rebellious teenager but I never wanted to be just like everyone else my age, I wanted to do something a bit different, and this was it.

But I was terrified of what people at church would say on Sunday morning.

I sheepishly arrived at worship that week and the first person to see me was one of the older members of the congregation. I could tell she was shocked.

My knees sank, there was no going back; this was not a subtle hair colour.

She squealed with delight, "Mardi! You dyed your hair to match the church year! How wonderful!"

It was Advent. She then proceeded to present me to every member of the congregation gloating about how committed I was and that I matched the new banners hanging inside. I instantly remembered that these people accepted me for who I was. (Thanks Lillian!)

This is a great example of how young people were treated in my home church; as one part of the whole body, not just the ones who ran the youth group (and

left a mess) or led worship.

I felt a similar feeling when, at the age of 29, I was offered the position of editor of *Journey* and communications manager for the Synod.

It is wonderful to know that young people are given huge roles of responsibility within the Uniting Church, although in most other parts of the world 29 is not considered particularly young.

In this edition we explore the place of young people in our church; from children to teenagers and those elusive 18 to 30-year-olds.

The comment that kept coming back was that young people don't want to be seen as the future of the church; they want to be part of it now.

We have seen great things happen in the 34 years of the Uniting Church: the passion of Union, the vivid history of young adult fellowship groups and camps.

Where are these young people now?

Many of them are probably reading this and continue to be active in their church communities.

But now the generation who weren't born when Union

happened are adults. The average age of students training to be Ministers of the Word or Deacons this year at Trinity Theological College is just over 38 years old.

The older members of our church, indeed the majority of members of our church, have so much to teach the younger members, but the lessons can go both ways.

How do we enable this even more?

How do we respect the wisdom that comes with age and experience, at the same time as respecting the energy and optimism of youth?

A wise (30-year-old) colleague of mine said recently that young people are disciples in training, not disciples in waiting.

I couldn't put it better myself. I can't tell you how difficult it has been editing stories to fit them in this edition.

Please go online (www.journeyonline.com.au) and read the extended versions we will post throughout August if you are interested in a particular story on the theme.

And 'friend' us on Facebook if you are on it!

Mardi Lumsden
Editor

Sign of the times



Tingalpa Uniting Church's treasurer, Ed, put this sign up as a short and to the point message for people driving past the church in Brisbane's inner east.

Minister, Rev Ruth Tracey, said the simple message has been effective.

"Interestingly, in the two weeks it has been up we've had quite a few non-churchgoers commenting on it and the congregation has been larger than normal," she said.

"In these days of shops open 24/7 we need reminding about the value of setting aside time for a corporate act of worship."

Thanks to Rev Ruth Tracey for sending this in.



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.

Churches join to protect victims of problem gambling

By Amy Goodhew

"LOT OF religious blokes coming through this morning" observed the man in charge of the taxi rank at Canberra airport. "Is something going on?"

"Yeah," answered Rev Alistair Macrae, President of the Uniting Church in Australia, as he clambered into a cab. "We're here for the Australian Churches Gambling Taskforce."

"That's great! You've got my support," said the gentleman.

It was an auspicious start to the day when, on 20 July, the heads of Australian churches and their representatives gathered in Old Parliament House to discuss how they could work together to assist families affected by gambling.

Rev Tim Costello, World Vision CEO, chaired the meeting and reminded the room that gambling has been an issue of concern for Christian leaders for a long time and is one of the issues that unites the churches and allows them to find a common ground.

The Taskforce is putting together a kit for a grassroots campaign aimed at helping people in local congregations share their concerns with their local communities, including their local Federal MP.

It is hoped the message will filter through to local communities through the unique networks of each of the churches represented on the Taskforce.

The Clubs have mounted a marginal seat campaign so it is an important role for church members to remind local politicians that there are two sides to every story.

To this end, Mr Macrae has shot a short video about the issue to let Uniting Church people know about the work being done in this area and the reforms the Uniting Church supports.

The Taskforce will continue to work together to support the Federal Government's historic reforms which will help protect children and families from the impact of problem gambling.



President, Rev Alistair Macrae, at Parliament House in July. Photo by Amy Goodhew

"We'll be keeping the church updated on our work and asking for support over the coming months," said Mr Macrae.

"I'm excited that Australian churches are speaking with one voice to our Federal politicians on this issue and hopeful about the change we can help bring about for families affected by problem gambling."

Mr Costello said, "With 90 000 problem gamblers losing an average of \$21 000 each year, gambling in Australia is a huge issue and more power needs to be

given to the consumer so they can set their loss limits.

"600 000 Australians play poker machines on a weekly basis and around 200 000 of this group are people who have a moderate to severe problem with gambling.

"Mandatory limits allow people, in a sober moment, to say: 'I can't afford another \$300 this month'."

"It's illegal to serve alcohol to someone who is intoxicated.

"It's mandatory to wear a seatbelt even though the catastrophic consequences of car

accidents are rare considering the number of people who travel in a car every day.

"There are limits on where people can smoke in order to limit the impact of passive smoking.

"So it should be that children, families, colleagues and whole communities should be protected from the devastating impact of someone's addiction to poker machines," he said.

See Mr Macrae's video at <http://assembly.uca.org.au>

Micah Challenge welcomes aid review refocus

By Tabitha Horsley

MICAH CHALLENGE Australia has commended the findings of the Independent Review of Aid Effectiveness, announced on 6 July.

A particularly encouraging aspect of the announcement was the affirmation that, "The fundamental purpose of Australian aid is to help people overcome poverty."

Micah Challenge National Coordinator, John Beckett, said, "Both the review and the government's response have acknowledged that poverty reduction is our first priority for the aid budget.

"This, in turn, promotes stability and serves Australia's national interests in our region and beyond."

Micah Challenge is a global movement of Christians speaking out against poverty and injustice

in support of the Millennium Development Goals.

In Australia, more than 50 aid and development agencies, as well as churches, schools, groups and individuals endorse the campaign.

Micah Challenge welcomed the response by Minister for Foreign Affairs, the Hon Kevin Rudd MP, on behalf of the Government, that it will move to adopt 38 of the 39 recommendations made by the review panel.

Many of the recommendations concerning aid effectiveness were made by Micah Challenge in their submission to the review in January 2011.

Micah Challenge's key campaign areas, including water/sanitation, child/maternal health and climate/environment, were all highlighted as priority areas for aid delivery.

The geographic focus of the aid program will remain on the

Asia Pacific region, while also recognising the potential for Australia to contribute to global initiatives focused on Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia where the majority of the world's poor live.

Mr Rudd reaffirmed the existing bipartisan commitment to increase aid to 0.5 per cent of Gross National Income by 2015, and acknowledged the potential for Australia to do more.

"This represents a big change from the 0.23 per cent we fell to in 2002-03. When we reach 0.5 per cent, we will have reached the average of the world's wealthiest countries, but no more," the report stated.

Mr Beckett said the review recommended a new four-year strategy for aid to be implemented from the 2012/13 financial year.

"The coming months will be vital for forming Australia's response to poverty through

until 2015," he said. "Jesus made a point to stand with those on the margins of society – this is not an optional extra."

Micah Challenge is encouraging Christians to speak to their political leaders during the *Voices for Justice* conference in September in Canberra.

"Implementation of targeted and effective aid is what will ultimately make a difference for the poorest people in our region and beyond," said Mr Beckett.

For more information visit www.micahchallenge.org.au



Micah Challenge supporters present letters to the government calling for action to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. Photo courtesy of Micah Challenge Australia



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The big questions

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

Isn't 'church' the people?

I AM AMAZED by the impact of generous people. I was a guest at a Rotary club dinner a few weeks ago, where the group of 45 members gave away \$35 000 to their local community's hospice and a couple of other charities in their neighbourhood! And they do that every year.

A friend from a major Christian aid organisation

told me of a church in Southport as clever as it is generous. These 200 people have a dollar for dollar subsidy with a business. The church gives \$30 000 and the aid agency gets \$60 000 annually.

These two (very different) fellowships share a passion to transform the world. They also lack something in

common: neither of them is saddled with real estate debt.

The Rotary club meets in the local civic centre. The church in Southport leases office space and worships in a school hall.

They don't spend the money their members donate and raise paying off debt.

How many congregations cycle from one stewardship campaign to the next, just trying to make ends meet, dreaming of doing something more than scraping together their Mission and Services Fund commitment?

The Property Trust of the Uniting Church's Queensland Synod lists approximately \$450 million of congregation,

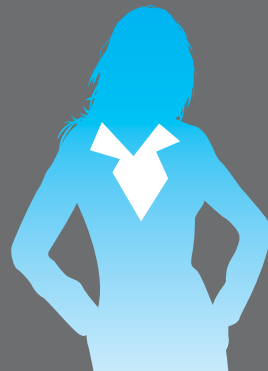
presbytery and synod office property.

That doesn't include church agencies. Is that a measure of what our buildings are worth?

I listened to 612 ABC radio in stunned admiration of the Moggill Uniting Church congregation telling how they sheltered dozens of people during January's floods; sleeping families around the communion table and among the pews.

Another congregation owns a shed. They need it to store the groceries and goods they give away every week.

It's not a simple equation, but perhaps the most meaningful measure of our



property resources is to understand how well we use what we have to fulfil our local mission. And when we need a picture of our church, why do we still photograph the building instead of the people?

Spreading the love at Christmas

IT MAY only be August but the Synod communications team has been hard at work consulting with as many people as possible to help decide on the 2011 Christmas postcard artwork.

This year the slogan is: *Faith Hope Love (but the greatest of these is love).*

The back of the card will say "experience Christmas with us" and have a space for congregations to put their Christmas service and event times.

Communications manager, Mardi Lumsden, said this campaign was once again a great opportunity to invite people

to connect or reconnect with their local Uniting Church at Christmas.

"Not only does the 'Faith Hope Love' concept come from one of the best known bible verses, but it is also part of the Church in Queensland's Call statement," she said.

"In the devastating weather events this year we have seen churches supporting their communities and in so many wonderful ways demonstrating faith, hope and love.

"We wanted to celebrate that and remind local communities that the Church is there for them in times of hardship and joy."

This year's campaign is a collaboration with the Synod of Victoria and Tasmania so even more people will be invited to Uniting Church congregations this Christmas.

"The purpose of this campaign is to raise community awareness of the local Uniting Church at Christmas and to offer people

a place to connect with the real meaning of Christmas.

"We have been doing Christmas postcards for many years but an awareness campaign like this is a long term strategy and takes years of repetition for people to remember who is behind it and perhaps feel comfortable to act on an invitation."

Founder of the Christmas postcard campaign, Bruce Mullan, agreed.

"It is unlikely that hundreds of new visitors will arrive at your church this Christmas just because of a postcard in their letterbox, but you can be sure that at least they'll know you're there," he said in 2005.

"This type of campaign is a long term strategy which will build over future years as people continue to receive warm invitations to worship at their local church at key times of the year."

A starter pack with 3000 postcards and 10 full colour A3

posters is \$165 and includes packing and postage to your congregation. Additional postcards are available at \$130 for 3000 (minimum lot) and posters at \$10 for packs of 10.

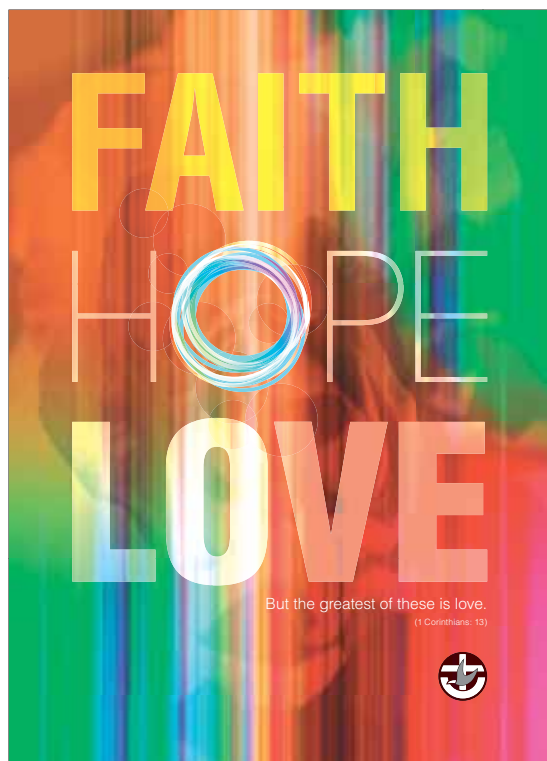
Online registrations will be open from Monday 1 August and closes on Friday 16 September.

Additional resources on the theme will be provided online and will include copies of the artwork for local congregational use, and inclusion in the online list of Christmas service times and locations.

If you have resources or ideas for using this theme and want to share them with the wider church please email journey@ucaqld.com.au.

Final details of event times are needed by Friday 23 September and proofs need to be approved by Friday 30 September 2011.

Register at www.ucaqld.com.au/christmas2011 or for more information email journey@ucaqld.com.au



Connecting with community

By Rev Dr Sue Algate

IN MAY Nanango Uniting Church hosted a Rural Muster, a gathering of lay people and ministers primarily from country congregations, at the Nanango Cultural Centre.

Over 80 people were involved in the weekend and they came from near and far.

Pastor Julie Greig, a Rural Chaplain in New South Wales, was the guest speaker.

A former wheat and sheep farmer, she has much experience of life in the country.

The planning group had no idea of the devastation of floods, cyclones, winds etc that would affect so much of Queensland in the early part of this year.

They were concerned that this may mean some people would not have the financial resources to attend.

So they decided to encourage people to come and pay only what

they were able.

They received donations of over \$3000 (and promised more if required) towards the cost of the Muster, the speaker paid her own fares, about 10 people were fully sponsored and others were partially sponsored or assisted with petrol costs.

Organisers were thankful for practical assistance from Foodworks, the Tourist Centre, Boots 'n' Bullrust, the RSL, and Country Focus.



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Walking on Country

DURING THE first week of July The Gap Uniting Church's Rev Richard Cassady was accompanied by 40 members of the congregation as they journeyed to the Ingham region in Far North Queensland to go 'Walking on Country.'

The group was welcomed as family and hosted at cattle station and tourism location, Mungalla Station, which is owned and managed by the traditional owners of the region, the Nywaigi Aboriginal people.

During the week the group spent time with the Nywaigi people associated with Mungalla

Station, with the Girringung Aboriginal Corporation based in Cardwell and also with the traditional people of Palm Island.

A highlight of the trip was travelling to Palm Island with local Indigenous elder, Walter Palm Island, and being a part of his first ever 'cultural experience tour'.

The trip coincided with NAIDOC Week and was a time of celebrating the richness and diversity of the Aboriginal culture.

The Gap minister, Rev John Ruhle, said, "The group was able to join with our brothers and

sisters in Christ as we celebrated together more of what it means for us to live as Indigenous and non-Indigenous Christians in this great land called Australia.

"The trip was all about relationships," he said.

"As we have come to know and love Richard it seemed like the natural thing to do for our congregation to journey together with him as he introduced us to the land of his youth and also his people and for us to go 'Walking on Country' with him."

For more information visit www.thegapuca.org.au



Rev Richard Cassady. Photo courtesy of John Ruhle



Blankets ready for families in need. Photo by Keith Lawson

Small gifts warm winter in the Lockyer

DURING WINTER Redcliffe Uniting Church had a special \$2 Offering Day where each person in the congregation was asked to bring an extra two dollars over and above their normal tithes and offerings.

Keith Lawson said the purpose of this special offering was two-fold.

"Firstly, it was to demonstrate the power of small gifts, the impact of a community acting together, and the reserve of generosity that is always present in God's people," he said.

"Secondly, it was to bless some people in the community who are still doing it tough as a result of the devastating floods earlier this

year," said Mr Lawson.

We wanted to let them know that, down the track, they have not been forgotten."

Almost \$800 was received from the special offering and, consequently, forty-three blankets were purchased for families in the Lockyer Valley area.

Distributed by Scripture Union Chaplains working in the area, each blanket was accompanied by a message of hope and solidarity.

"We were greatly heartened by the enthusiastic response by members of our congregation to this simple act of generosity."

Fellowship links nations

By Mardi Lumsden

THIS YEAR, Uniting Church Adult Fellowships (UCAF) all over Queensland are raising money for a UnitingWorld supported livelihood project of the United Church of Solomon Islands.

The Women's Leadership and Livelihood project emerged in consultations by the Assembly United Church Women's Fellowship (AUCWF) with women from the Church's four regions of the Solomon Islands.

The objectives of the project are to strengthen leadership roles

and the capacity of women in local Church communities, train women in simple bookkeeping, raise awareness of significant social and health issues from a Christian perspective, share livelihood and skills ideas that can assist the women in income generation, and provide small loans to women to enable them to have initial resources for their chosen livelihood endeavour.

The AUCWF will also assist women in marketing their products.

Training will begin on a trial basis in six circuits of two regions and, if successful, will eventually

be offered in all four regions.

UCAF Queensland Synod Committee President, Patsy Dale, said funds raised at their annual service in September in Caloundra will go towards the project. See 'What's On' (page 12) for details.

"This project has been adopted by our Queensland Adult Fellowships for 2011, following last year's successful project which raised over \$8300 for the Burke and Wills Patrol," she said.

"The Moderator observed the beginning of the project when he and his wife Heather visited the Solomon Islands last year.



Heather Johnson is shown some of the products. Photo by Bruce Johnson

"Already, we have forwarded an advance donation of \$2800 through UnitingWorld and have

received word that the women are greatly encouraged by our support."

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Applications are invited from members of the Uniting Church (or another mainline Christian denomination), either ordained or laypersons, to this senior leadership position within the church.

The successful applicant will be an enthusiastic gifted leader, a person who is able to lead the College in its new direction and vision, and who has the capacity to inspire and empower the College to develop effective leaders of healthy, missional churches throughout the Presbytery and Synod of South Australia who are:

- passionate
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- highly skilled
- mission oriented practitioners

The task embraces the functions of:

- oversight of the life of the College
- promoting the College's new vision and direction and

- ensuring that high quality education and formation is provided for lay and ordained Uniting Church ministries.

This is a challenging role for a church embracing challenging times. A full information pack and Position Description is available from Tracey Bost, Executive Assistant to the CEO/General Secretary, 82364232 or tbost@sa.uca.org.au. Applications close 4pm Friday 16 September 2011.

Please forward applications to Rev Dr Graham Humphris, CEO/General Secretary, GPO Box 2145, Adelaide SA 5001 or ghumphris@sa.uca.org.au

Connections UnitingCare
Anti-Poverty Awards

Do you know?

- A young person who is campaigning to end poverty?
- A school that is involving its student in poverty-related issues?

Recognising young people in Australia who are making a contribution to the eradication of poverty locally, nationally or internationally.

Applications close last day in August. For more information visit connections.org.au/anti-poverty or [facebook.com/connectionsunitingcare](https://www.facebook.com/connectionsunitingcare)

Facebook fans run online for poverty

UNITINGWORLD IS one of many nonprofit organisations exploring the new world of Social Fundraising.

Also known as Peer to Peer fundraising, this involves individuals or teams running or walking for a cause and

enlisting their social media friends to support them.

UnitingWorld Associate Director (Pacific) Bruce Mullan said the trend is now being used in Queensland for the Bridge to Brisbane and the Noosa Challenge.

"Now, UnitingWorld is jumping on board," said Mr Mullan. "Runners can set up a special website accessible to family, friends and colleagues so their social network can sponsor them with online donations.

"They can share messages of inspiration, start a blog and post images or video to help raise funds to alleviate poverty through UnitingWorld community development and peacemaking programs in Asia, Africa and the Pacific," he said.

Donations over \$2 are tax deductible.

To support UnitingWorld in the Bridge to Brisbane on 11 September, go to <http://fundraise.bridgetobrisbane.com.au/event/2011> or for the Noosa Challenge in November, visit [www.everydayhero.com.au/event/noosa_triathlon_multisport_festival_and_search_for \"UnitingWorld\"](http://www.everydayhero.com.au/event/noosa_triathlon_multisport_festival_and_search_for_\).

Nurses learn from Solomon Islands experience

By Raylee Huggett

THE HELENA Goldie Hospital in Munda in the Western Province of the Solomon Islands has one of the few Diploma of Nursing programs in the island nation.

Run by the United Church in Solomon Islands, the Helena Goldie Hospital partners with the Uniting Church in Australia.

As part of the partnership UnitingCare Health is committed to helping the Helena Goldie Hospital and Nursing College through missional work which links strongly to their values of compassion, respect, justice, working together and leading through learning.

Director of Clinical Education at Brisbane's Wesley Hospital and the Helena Goldie Hospital Program Clinical Project Leader, Wendy Zernike, said up to three clinical volunteers from UnitingCare Health hospitals travel to the Solomon Islands twice a year to teach at the Helena Goldie College of Nursing and work in partnership with Helena Goldie Hospital staff.

In May, Ms Zernike was accompanied to Munda by Annette Bailey, Clinical Nurse Manager from St Andrew's War

Memorial Hospital Emergency Unit in Brisbane, and Kathy Johns, Peri-operative Clinical Nurse from St Stephen's Hospital in Maryborough.

"The three-year, diploma level nurse training programs in the Solomon Islands are helping to improve healthcare outcomes for the nation's communities," said Ms Zernike.

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

Ms Zernike said conditions at the 55-bed hospital are basic.

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

The team was joined for two days by UnitingCare Health Executive Director, Richard Royle, and former UnitingCare Health Director of Mission and founder of the Helena Goldie Hospital Program Clinical Project, Rev Robyn Kidd.

Mr Royle said the experience has opened the staff's eyes to

the intricacies and challenges of dealing with remote medicine with very limited resources in a third-world environment.

"We have found that the best way is not to impose our views, but to learn as we work with the Helena Goldie Hospital clinical staff and the remote island nurses," Mr Royle said.

"It's difficult to get supplies and equipment to the hospital and the remote islands.

"It's also difficult to maintain the equipment, so we found the most beneficial way to add value is through education."

The team also travelled to some of the surrounding islands with the remote area health clinic to see how care was provided to people within their own villages.

The remote health clinics occur around every eight weeks when a doctor, specially trained nurses, dentist and a pharmacist spend up to a week visiting the local villages and providing treatment.

Ms Zernike said she was in awe of the work done by the visiting health clinics and the Helena Goldie Hospital staff.

"The health care teams involved do so much incredible work in the most basic of



Annette Bailey training second year Diploma of Nursing student, Angelica, on new equipment. Photo by Wendy Zernike

conditions," she said.

The team will return to the Solomon Islands in September to teach first and second year College of Nursing students.

Ms Zernike said they are looking at opportunities for sponsorship or to fundraise so nurse aides are not financially disadvantaged while they study.

"To train to become diploma qualified the nurse aides would lose their accommodation at the hospital or clinic they work at, lose their wages and have to pay for the course until they are diploma qualified.

"The cost of the course per year, including living in, per student is around \$5000," she said.

Quiet achiever receives recognition

NOMINATIONS FOR the 2011 Moderator's Community Service Medal close on 19 August so get in now if you know someone who has made an outstanding contribution to the Uniting Church's mission in community service in Queensland.

Logan volunteer and quiet achiever Viliami (Willie) Afeaki was presented with a Moderator's Medal in 2010.

He was nominated by Rev Dr Apichart Branjerdporn, Logan Central Multicultural Uniting Church, for his community work "bringing together different cultures to live as one society".

"For more than 10 years Willie had worked tirelessly in youth advocacy and the multicultural community to bring about a better understanding between different generations and different cultures," said Dr Branjerdporn.

"His vision of bringing together different cultures has had a tremendous impact in the community, helping change the attitude and behaviour of many."

Nominees must be volunteers, past or present, in community service work other than congregational work (e.g. for Blue Care, Lifeline Community Care Queensland, UnitingCare Health

Hospitals, or community service agencies outside the Uniting Church).

They need to have exhibited outstanding service over a number of years and should not at any time have been in paid employment connected to their volunteer work.

Announcement of awards will be made at the Synod meeting in October at Alexandra Park Conference Centre and presented by Moderator elect, Rev Kaye Ronalds.

To nominate visit www.ucareqld.com.au



Viliami (Willie) Afeaki receives his 2010 Moderator's Medal. Photo by Osker Lau

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www.lightup.com.au

Young hearts run free

By Mardi Lumsden

IN THE inner-Brisbane congregation of Trinity Wilston Uniting Church there is an exciting undercurrent of supporting those who have a passion for social justice.

Recently, two of the congregation's youngest members staged campaigns to raise funds for worthy causes and minister, Rev Sue Pickering, couldn't be prouder.

Emma Irvine-Collins was 10 when she started a craft stall at the church to raise money for the people of Haiti.

"I saw on the news what had happened to Haiti and I thought it was very bad and I wanted to do something," said the now 12-year-old. "I decided that once a month

I would have a stall for Haiti at my church. I really like art and making things and also baking so I did all three things."

Over 12 months, through her persistence and the support of the congregation, \$1000 was raised for World Vision's Haiti appeal.

She was very appreciative of the support and generosity of congregation members and her family.

"They made me feel that what I was doing was very worthwhile."

"I think it was because since there are quite a few older people in the congregation they wanted to support younger people like me."

Ms Pickering, said watching Emma's determination and conviction was "phenomenal".

"She committed to it for a full

year. She made PowerPoints for the service to remind people that Emma's Haiti stall was on.

"Then Caitlin (7 at the time) saw what Emma was doing and said to her mum, 'Can I do something to raise money for the poor people?'"

"So four times over three months she rocked up with her violin and set up as a busker in the morning tea and raised \$307 for the Refugee Claimant Centre.

"It goes to show that we should never underestimate what one act can do."

Ms Pickering said supporting people with ideas was essential.

"If we don't support these acts of kindness and calling for social justice now, that is where we start to encourage the apathy of 'what's the point?'"



Emma Irvine-Collins at her Haiti stall. Photo by Lesley Irvine

"I think kids have this natural, inbuilt ability for compassion.

"Emma kept Haiti on people's radar for a whole year, when it was well past the newsworthy status.

"Caitlin stood there with her violin and played with a smile on

her face for the Refugee Claimant Centre. This is a 7-year-old who was breaking down the barriers around speaking about refugees.

"This is not about the future of our church; this is about the future of our society and working together for peace."

THE FUTURE IS NOW

From P.1

Clayfield College Chaplain, Rev Paul Yarrow, said Uniting Church schools should seek to live out the values of Christ.

"Many young people simply don't have any firsthand experience of the church or the Christian faith," he said.

"In our church schools we have an opportunity to share about Jesus and as best we can, to live out our Christian values.

"As a church I think we should see our schools as

another part of who we are and how we are present in the community."

Mr Savins said that in our society, attending church was not commonplace among most families like it was in the past.

"Independent schools today are living communities of students, staff and parents and therefore the Uniting Church needs to recognise that in supporting such schools, it is in fact growing its future members.

"Schools are not about converting young people into Christians.

"For me, the most important thing we can give our young people is a belief that Jesus loves each of us and that we can follow his way in loving and caring for the needs of others.

"As a school, we have an

obligation to nurture each child's God-given talents so that they may go into the world and use such skills to the glory of God and for the benefit of humankind."

Catherine Solomon ran one of many successful July holiday camps.

The long-running Moggill and Karana Downs Day Camp is an initiative of the Moggill and Karana Downs Uniting Churches, in conjunction with the local Anglican, Baptist, Catholic and Community Churches.

"As director my purpose for Day Camp was to share God's love with children in the community (whether they go to church or not)," said Ms Solomon.

This year's camp had 231 primary school aged campers, 76 high school aged (or older) helpers,



Sandra Morrison, Nathan Dick and Catherine Solomon at the Moggill and Karana Downs Day Camp. Photo by Mardi Lumsden

32 leaders, and countless volunteers.

Ms Solomon said the camp isn't just focussed on the campers, but also on the leaders.

"We had a training weekend in February for helpers and leaders to train them in practical ways but also spiritually."

She said the flood affected community was ready for some fun after a hard start to the year.

"I thought, not knowing who

was going to come, those flood affected or those not, let's have it as a fun time."

She said building a youth or children's ministry, as with any ministry, was about building relationships.

"We have youth group and even though it's small (with eight to 10 young people, when originally we had two), it's a start.

"They're not huge numbers but we're actually connecting and building relationships with people."

Uniting Mission and Education
Uniting Church in Australia, Synod of NSW & ACT

PROJECT CONSULTANT SYNOD MISSION RESOURCE FUND



A suitable person is being sought to fill the role of Project Consultant for the Synod Mission Resource Fund (SMRF) which seeks to provide funding and support to the Church through a range of diverse missional projects.

Applications for a part-time role will be considered.

The successful applicant will provide ongoing support, management and monitoring of existing projects, support congregations and work with presbyteries in planning, prioritising and preparing project applications for SMRF funding, and work on continuous improvement of SMRF policies, systems and processes.

Applicants will be particularly skilled in policy development and implementation, planning processes and possess a strong ability to build and maintain complex relationships.

Suitably qualified and experienced Ministers of the Word, UCA Deacons or Pastors, or lay persons are invited to apply.

Applications

Please contact umejobs@nsw.uca.org.au to obtain a position description and information package. Applicants must address the position specific criteria, and nominate at least 3 people as referees.

Applications are to be forwarded to Ms Meg Herbert, Synod Associate Secretary (Ministry), PO Box A2178, Sydney South, 1235, or megh@nsw.uca.org.au

Further details including Position Description may be found at <http://www.insights.uca.org.au/jobs/>

Applications close: Monday September 12, 2011

What will you share this Christmas?

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Sign up for the Christmas postcard promotion at www.ucaqld.com.au/christmas2011

Email journey@ucaqld.com.au for more information



Unlocking the secret

By Paul Clark

WHEN I first arrived in the Burdekin, North Queensland, I went on a listening tour to discover what people's hopes and dreams were for the church.

A quite consistent message emerged; they wanted a church where their children, both 40 and 4, could belong.



EVENT

Summer Madness

13-16 January 2012

Sunshine Coast.

Four days of fun, worship, music, speakers and Bible studies with over 300 other young people.

Visit www.summermadness.com.au

I suspect that this is a heart-burst felt across the whole of the Uniting Church – we lament the reality that our children and grandchildren are missing within our fellowships.

Many of our children have not abandoned faith, they have abandoned the church, or particularly the Uniting Church.

Being under 40, with a 4-year-old at the time, I think I bring some different wisdom to the equation. We cannot change them, save through prayer and the Holy Spirit – we can only change ourselves and our fellowships.

Indeed, this I believe is the actual answer to this dilemma.

For far too long in the church we have proudly proclaimed that we are steadfastly holding on to the gospel against modern culture, when what we are really doing is holding on to the previous culture in which the gospel came to us.

We must desperately cling to the gospel message, while

just as desperately learning to communicate this message in a language our children, both 4 and 40, can understand.

Indeed immediately after giving the 10 commandments in Deuteronomy chapter 5, what is the task given? To pass this onto the next generation (Deut 6).

Parents have always had to sacrifice for the next generation.

As Spiritual parents we also must sacrifice our wants, comforts, and needs for the next generation. Are we willing to give up the way we like it, to see our grandchildren in heaven?

Isn't that what it boils down to?

Jesus said, "Unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven." (Matt 18:3)

So what is the secret to connecting/reaching the younger generation?

It isn't fancy technology, but that wouldn't hurt.

It isn't loud music, but you've got to expect that in the long run.



Paul Clark with members of his drama club

It isn't amazingly talented, energetic youth leaders – hopefully they will be the result.

It isn't even profound programs.

The secret I've found is this: an adult, taking an interest in them, doing something cool with them, and letting the gospel naturally leak out.

Kids are desperate for older people to be interested in them, to mentor them.

'Cool' can range from making short films to cooking cakes.

Indeed, if you find it compelling, chances are they will too. What's something you like to

do? Find some young people to invite to do it with you too (in a safe environment) regularly over a long period.

Build a relationship with them, and quite intentionally, but naturally, pass on your faith.

Wayne McHugh does it making candles to sponsor children. I do it through drama. Others are doing it fighting injustice.

Could you do it by knitting, baking, fixing engines, gardening, or walking the dog?

Paul Clark has helped the Burdekin Parish cough and splutter its way to becoming an intergenerational church

Finding the missing generations

ANNE AND Geoff (not their real names) have a familiar story to tell. Highly involved in their

church communities, between them they have run youth groups, taught Sunday School, been on the Church Council and even ran a bible study at their home.

Then, an internal congregational issue not only drove them away from that congregation, but church in general. While they still believe in God, and are teaching their children about God, they now have a private faith.

"Faith still plays a part in my life today but not as much as it used to," said Geoff.

Anne said the experience shook her lifelong faith.

"For a while after leaving the church I questioned a lot of things about what I believed because of the challenges I had faced during the upheaval in our church."

"I always believed that you need

to go to church to be a Christian but that has now changed since my faith was challenged by a minister," said Anne.

"What I believe in is not what I felt he was telling us or what I had been told over the years, so now I believe you can be a Christian but not go to church."

"The enjoyment of going to church is taken away when your beliefs are shaken to the core."

Geoff said, "I now am a firm believer that 'church' is not a building".

Both said the friendships made through their church community are what got them through the drama and what they continue to appreciate most.

"I felt the church community was somewhere I could be accepted for who I was," said

Geoff. "An aspect that has turned me off was being expected, as a young Christian, to lead Sunday school, youth groups etc."

"I felt I was taken for granted and felt overloaded."

Anne said a lack of listening to everyone's opinions was a frustration for her as a young Christian.

They said as a young family getting to a Sunday morning or evening service was difficult.

"We are now living in a 24/7 society and the church hasn't kept up with the times."

"We have children who are involved with sports on the weekend as well as one of us being a shift worker. It is harder to make time available for just family time let alone trying to get to church."

"It would be great to see churches offer worship times other than Sunday morning or evening."



EVENT

Consume: sex, money, power ... God?

9-11 September, 2011
Maleny

A weekend of exploring faith, life and theology for young adults aged 18-30.

Contact Trinity Theological College on 3377 9950 or alice.foo@ucaqld.com.au

Profile: Lauren Ash

Young adult member of Bayside Uniting Church and an Arts (Political Science and Economics) and Law student.

THE CORE way I live out my faith is by trying to love others in every situation, following Christ's example, and thus trying to live out the Kingdom.

I have a particular passion for social justice issues and a vision for a just and compassionate world in which all people have the opportunity to achieve their God-given potential.

My faith and consequent vision for the world has played a crucial part in what I have chosen to study because I recognise these areas as the foundation of

our society and thus, the injustices that exist.

I think the Uniting Church doesn't have many young people for reasons which are mostly an issue for all churches.

Not many young people have a faith. Those who do, don't prioritise actually attending church.

Those who do choose to go to bigger churches that have plenty of young people and more youth friendly services and programs.

Those who do attend [Uniting Churches] sometimes do not

stay around for long because, beyond high school, there is often a lack of programs for young people, and many may move away from the area for university or work.

Also, for the Uniting Church particularly, three things I think may be putting off young people are music, community engagement and learning styles.

Young people love music and the Uniting Church often lacks contemporary music and encouragement for young people to express their creativity.

Young people are passionate

and want to live out their faith, especially through engagement with the wider community and social justice issues, but they often have to do so through other groups, and thus may prioritise these 'active' groups over church groups

The reality is the church as we see it – everyone sitting in pews watching the people up the front and listening for an hour or two – is simply not effective worship or teaching for younger generations that are used to being connected to numerous different mediums and constantly being in conversation with

others. For me, church is more the bible study come Christian book club I attend on a Friday afternoon or the Maccas trip (though at odds with my 'trying to live ethically' lifestyle) after the evening service when I can catch up with the younger kids and debrief thoughts from the service.

This may be because, especially for young people studying, outside of university or school, we seek informal learning that we can engage with together with our friends; we seek to learn and grow in fellowship.

Faith, life and the young adult journey

By Mardi Lumsden

JOURNEY SAT down with the organisers of Summer Madness and asked them about their experiences of being young adults in the Uniting Church.

We started by asking if young people are the future of the church. This is what they said.

Stephen Rothery: Young people are not the future of the church, they are the church of today! We need to ditch that motto as quickly as we can.

Nick Patselis: Their opinions and how they express and connect with God is valid now not just 20 to 30 years from now.

Katie Wallis: The church right now is young people and old people. A true community embraces the value in both.

Young people have as much to answer for as older people do in terms of not respecting wisdom and not respecting people's life journey.

If you're using the term 'young person' as a derogatory thing I don't find that I experience that in my church.

There's an appreciation for new ideas. There might not always be an acceptance of that, but there's definitely always opportunities for young people to have a voice and have an expression.

Josie Nottle: There also needs to be a safe place for that to happen, which doesn't necessarily exist in all churches.

Mark Cornford: For me (and I'm definitely not young anymore), when 'young' is problematic is when it is used to designate something that is not the 'real' church.

Stephen: Yes, and the thought that you have to keep doing the thing that we have been doing and that we are preparing you to do.

Josie: Or the thought that 'you need to do church our way'. This is what church looks like. Don't be creative. Don't think outside

of that box. You might be able to make a pretty banner.

Nick: Or you can do a creative thing once a month on the Sunday youth service, but that's not the real church.

What is it like being a young person in specified ministry?

Josie: I think it affects the way people see you and respond to you. Straight off the bat you have to prove yourself and if you make mistakes they will tell you about it all the time.

On my field placement I was called to sit up the front on the floor for the children's talks because I was the youngest person in the church. I was doing field placement and I received the children's talk every Sunday, by myself, on the floor.

I've experienced some opportunities and some ways where youth are encouraged and given space and respected, however the majority of my experiences have been 'if you don't prove yourself, if you don't fit the way I do things then I'm not going to listen to you until you're prepared to do that'.

I feel sometimes that I almost

The questions you ask about life and how you live out your faith when you're older aren't the same questions you ask when you're young.

have to compromise myself a little bit to fit into their mould, to prove myself so I can actually be who I am and use the gifts that I've been given. It's very difficult.

Katie: I would love to see young people's response to those things not to be a 'rage against the machine' attitude but an attitude of grace and love; how can we be the church as we would want it to be without being renegades who



Tim Griggs and Katie Wallis. Photo by Mardi Lumsden

disrespect everything that has gone before us?

In forty years time we don't want to think that young people will rage against what we've created and accomplished; we want people to know grace, love, fellowship and community.

Josie: The church isn't just for fifty year olds or twenty year olds, it's an intergenerational thing.

If we don't mesh it then we've actually missed the whole point of the body of Christ.

Mark: I was talking with two young women at uni who were very committed, compassionate Christians who engage in their faith. They couldn't see how the church was relevant to them.

Their relationship with God and their gifts were relevant but the church wasn't a place that could provide a meaningful, challenging view of discipleship that fitted into their faith and where they were heading.

Stephen: I think it's about understanding that the questions you ask about life and how you live out your faith when you're older aren't the same questions you ask when you're young.

Mark: Young adults are looking for something that is meaningful and challenging and about their life, not just something that they go to on Sundays to sing a few songs and go home.

Stephen: But the temptation can be to do the opposite. There is that temptation of 'oh quick, we've got two youth, we need to lower the expectations, demand, etc as much as possible so they'll just fall in' as opposed to not being afraid to have some kind of challenge.

What does discipleship actually look like?

Josie: There needs to be a respect of that young person to be able to connect with them and engage with them.

If there was respect young people would blow people's mind

with the way that they care about God and the ways they want to engage God in their lives.

This article only scratches the surface of the conversation with these young adults.

To read more please go to www.journeyonline.com.au



EVENT

FUN Synod

This year's Synod meeting at Alexander Headland in October will have a FUN component: a Synod experience For Under Nineteen's (FUN) and a chance for young people to be involved, heard, and included in the meeting.

For more information contact your local presbytery office.

Profile: Fa Ngaluafe Trinity Theological College student

I REALISED that I was being called into ministry when I was 21.

It was a funny thing to realise because other people got the memo before I did.

After I graduated and was looking for a career my minister, Lu, sat me down encouraged me to take the journey of discernment.

My congregation supported me through prayer and gave me the opportunity to be able to spread my wings in the area of leadership.

You may laugh but at the moment I don't feel so

young.

I turned 25 this year and it was absolutely crushing!

I felt like I should've achieved something by now, have a career, be married.

I see my friends and family chugging towards life, having a career or starting a family and I wish sometimes I could be a normal young person.

But training to be a minister does not fit into 'normal', it's not just a career path, it's your passion, part of who you are.

Not a lot of people I meet know what theology is so it

takes a bit of explaining.

After the explanation there might be a bit of an awkward silence or they tell me that they used to go to church or tell me about family members who still go to church.

So it can either be a good conversation starter or a bit of a dead end depending on the crowd.

As for the people I minister to, I believe that being young and single can prohibit ministering to people who are married and have families, but I know it does not stop me because there are situations that I have faced



that any people young, old, married or single can relate to.

Training to be a minister in the Uniting Church I have learnt a lot about its history and values, which has made me more eager to serve within the Uniting Church.

But I think the main reason why I have stuck with the Uniting Church is because it is a church that values my culture and how that interacts with my faith, values who I am as a woman and values who I am as a young person.



Minor trip for major funds

SERIAL fundraisers, Arnold and Avis Eggins (left), embarked on a 15 000km journey around Australia in their 1954 Morris Minor ute on 5 June to raise funds for the Barnabas Community, a ministry of Lifeline Community Care Queensland.

Last year the couple raised more than \$4000 for the Barnabas Community by walking 100km.

Their latest journey began at Thorneside Uniting Church and they will hopefully return on 4 September.

They won't be living the luxury grey nomad lifestyle though, their 1954 ute consists of a basic do-it-yourself campervan to be set up every evening and packed away every morning.

Along the way they hope to share the Barnabas story to those they meet, as an act of gospel witness and encouragement.

For more information contact Rev Ian Lord on ian.molo@bigpond.com

Men head to the shed in Bayside

THANKS TO a grant from the Brisbane City Council the Bayside congregation launched a Men's Shed program on 19 July.

The first registration came from Syd Abraham, a long-time member of the Wood Turners Association at Wynnum.

Coordinator, Alyson Madsen, said Mr Abraham has a great talent in the wood turning field, making wooden souvenirs for the annual Tremendous Christmas Festival and sharing his gift in a number of ways.

"Last year Syd was keen to help the folk at NCYC and made 80 wooden crosses," said Ms

Madsen. "These were very much treasured by the young people.

"It is a great gesture to the Bayside Uniting Church Men's Shed that Syd now has donated his very treasured lathe to be used in the Shed program."

Ms Madsen expressed deep appreciation of this generous donation and the involvement of many people including Mr Abraham and Keith Jones.

Right: Keith Jones, left, and Syd Abraham in the Men's Shed. Photo courtesy of Alyson Madsen



Nanango celebrates 100

THE UNITING Church building in Nanango is 100 years old this year and the congregation is planning to celebrate in October.

The Uniting Church and those churches that came into union have been serving this community for over 100 years.

Newly inducted Moderator, Rev Kaye Ronalds, will be the guest preacher at the special service in the church on Saturday, 22 October at 4pm.

Congregation members are looking forward to sharing the occasion. For more information contact Ron on 4163 1642 or Sue on 4163 1493.

UNITING MISSION AND EDUCATION

Uniting Church in Australia, Synod of NSW & ACT



The newly formed Division of Uniting Mission and Education (UME) NSW/ACT Synod seeks to equip and empower the Church to engage in God's mission, grow lay and ordained leaders, and be an advocate for creative approaches to mission, education, discipleship and ministry.

Relationships and Resourcing Team – 4 x full-time roles

Do you have proven experience in providing effective and strategic leadership to grow capacity in others? Are you an excellent communicator who can contribute positively in a small team environment, and work with diverse groupings of people across the Synod?

Are you able to reflect and contribute theologically and missionally in prophetic ways to enhance the serving work of UME?

Under the direction of the Team Leader, the R&R team will be responsible for the development

and delivery of resources; consultancy; networking, advocacy, and leadership development in order to resource and build capacity across the Church. In addition to working within a relationally and strategically directed team on a range of team projects, each specific role will focus on 1 of 4 areas as outlined below.

Suitably qualified and experienced Ministers of the Word, UCA Deacons, Pastors or lay persons are invited to apply.

NEXT GENERATIONS

- Focus on children, families, youth and young adults
- Connect with and nurture current leaders, centres and networks to move forward an understanding of effective ministry practice.
- Develop appropriate processes and relationships which create, or respond to new opportunities to grow fresh or new expressions of Church for these target groups.
- Encourage tertiary ministry
- Grow ministry and leadership capacity and opportunities for cross-cultural work with the next generations.

MULTICULTURAL

- Develop strategies and resources that equip non-English and English speaking congregations and Presbytery leaders to more effectively implement processes and practices that will grow an inclusive and multicultural Church at mission in the Australian community
- Develop processes and relationships which create or respond to new opportunities in multicultural contexts and particularly which grow ministry and leadership capacity with second generation leaders
- Grow and encourage partnerships, particularly with Unitingworld, and advocacy for people from different cultural backgrounds in Church processes, policies and strategies.

LAY MINISTRY, DISCIPLESHIP AND RURAL MINISTRY

- Develop educational and other resources, and deliver educational courses and events, particularly which focus on growing discipleship and lay leadership, and including strategies for evangelism and faith sharing.
- Resource and advocate for this focus area in relationships within the team, UME, with presbyteries, other agencies and congregations, and encourage action on issues experienced by those living in rural and remote communities.
- Ensure that Synod strategies and educational programs are suitable or adapted for lay leaders and rural contexts.

NEW INITIATIVES & CONGREGATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- Connect with, and nurture current lay and ordained leaders, centres and networks to move forward an understanding of effective and contextual mission and ministry practice.
- Develop relationships and processes which create or respond to new opportunities, and which prepare the Church to engage these.
- Initiate creative reflection about ongoing cultural and community change, congregational transitions and mission strategy
- explore models and initiatives which empower individuals, congregations and the Church as a whole to follow God's call to mission and ministry.

APPLICATIONS

Please contact Sue Willgoss on 02 82674387, or at suew@nsw.uca.org.au, to obtain a position description and information package. Applicants must address the position specific criteria, and nominate at least 3 people as referees. Applications are to be forwarded to Ms Meg Herbert, Synod Associate Secretary (Ministry), PO Box A2178, Sydney South, 1235, or megh@nsw.uca.org.au Further details including Position Descriptions may be found at <http://www.insights.uca.org.au/jobs/>

Applications close: Monday September 12, 2011



Unity College students with new friends from Peteli Middle School in Tonga. Photo by Phil Smith

Students find unity in solidarity

By Phil Smith

STUDENTS AND staff from Caloundra's Unity College took an opportunity to live Gospel values in an unusual circumstance in the July school holidays.

From a society that promotes careers, possessions, and personal development, eight teenagers and three leaders were welcomed in Tonga to live in village homes where community has priority.

While the cultural experiences were spectacular

and educational, the eight students were amazed by people who live and breathe the Jesus experience in everyday life, from finding the next meal to facing a tsunami warning.

Unity College has a twinning relationship with Peteli Middle School in Tonga through UnitingWorld.

Students from each school visit on alternate years and staff gain immersion experience in very different teaching environments.

Caloundra Uniting Church supports the program and will be sending a dozen members to visit Tonga in September.

Rev Dr Alan and Mrs Judy Morrison have spent four months teaching in Tonga this dry season.

The Uniting Church has longstanding relationships with the Free Wesleyan church in Tonga.

Phil Smith is Campus Minister at Unity College

Boys' Brigade in Pacific partnership

By Phil Smith

EMMANUEL UNITING Church at Enoggera has established an unusual partnership with the Noro Church in the Solomon Islands.

Discussions with Uniting-World followed visits to each church; Rev David Fender visited Noro and then Rev David Vakipide spent six weeks at Emmanuel.

One evening in Brisbane Rev Vakipide visited the 46th Brisbane Boys' Brigade Company and announced that he had been in The Boys' Brigade.

His home church already had a Girls' Brigade so he asked Keith and Barbara Young to train his people. After months of emails, a team of five people formed a training team.

Serving officers Peter Golding and Barbara Young, Old Boys Keith Fanning and Norton

Russell, and 60 year veteran Keith Young headed for Noro.

In one week they worked with the Noro boys and leaders on Christian devotions, arts and crafts, drill and marching skills and Boys' Brigade (BB) knowledge.

Eighteen officers and 40 boys aged 7 to 15 years were involved with the training.

"We experienced the Solomon Islanders' wonderful way of worship and singing," said Mr Young. "By the following weekend 55 boys attended."

A Church Parade of the new company was held when Officers received their officer training certificates.

"At the conclusion of the service, the company paraded for the first time outside the church in front of church Elders, members of the congregation and mums and dads."



Rev David Vakipide and Keith Young with the Anvhor Boys' Brigade. Photo by Barbara Young

Lions roar with Burleigh friends

IF YOU come across any Lions at Burleigh there is no need to fear; they are a friendly pack and ready to help.

The Never Alone Friendship Centre, an outreach program

of the Burleigh Heads Uniting Church found this out recently when the local Lions Club made a donation.

The Lions Club of Burleigh Heads heard about the Centre

and what it is doing to meet the needs of those who are alone or isolated in the community and responded accordingly.

Newly elected Lions Club president, Ross Bussell, visited the group to present a cheque which will go towards purchasing a set of carpet bowls.

"The volunteers at Never Alone do a wonderful job looking after the guests each week and we are only too happy to ensure that their efforts are rewarded by contributing toward equipment that can bring a bit of joy to those who need it most, the sometimes forgotten and lonely," said Mr Bussell.

The Centre opened its doors in September last year and has grown in numbers over recent months. Rev Colin Batt said it had been one of the congregation's outreach success stories.

"We have really tapped into an area in the community that

has identified the needs of those who are alone and lonely for a

variety of reasons," he said. "It is surprising what we can achieve over a cuppa and a chat with our guests and this is an initiative I would encourage other churches to pursue."



Lions Club of Burleigh Heads president, Ross Bussell, presents a cheque to Eddie Lindenberg and guests at the Never Alone Friendship Centre. Photo courtesy of Nev Free



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Applications close 12 August 2011.

August 27, 9am-1pm.

Ministry Expo

Indooroopilly Uniting Church, Brisbane.

A marvellous opportunity for churches, synod and Assembly groups and agencies, along with other Christian organisations, to share the exciting work they are doing in partnering with God in God's mission in their communities and beyond.

Guest presenters include President, Rev Alistair Macrae, and National Consultant for Theology and Discipleship, Rev Dr Christopher Walker. Live music from Remember Seven. Contact Rev David MacGregor on 0414 392 802 or email dmacgreg1@optusnet.com.au.

August 6, 9am-4pm. Engaging with the Divine in the 21st Century. Hear Dr Val Webb present on her new book and discuss questions it raises. \$35 inc lunch. Contact Ross Garnett on 0409 498 402 or drnarn@bigpond.net.au.

August 7, 8.30-11am. Thanksgiving Service and Ekka Breakfast at Brookfield Uniting Church. Opportunity to donate grocery items for families in need in our community. Ekka BBQ Breakfast will follow the service. Special treats for children. Contact George Barnes on 3300 5397 or geobarn39@hotmail.com.

August 9, 5.30-7.30pm. 20th anniversary celebration of the Joint Churches Domestic Violence Prevention Project (JCDVPP) at Indooroopilly Uniting Church. Bookings essential by 2 August. Contact Amanda Moss on 3369 6792 or jcdvpp@qct.org.au.

August 13, 9am-1pm. Northside Uniting Church Annual Community Fair, Mackay. Contact Zelma Wasson on 0749 421 613 or zelmaw@bigpond.com.

August 13, 6.30-9pm. Aunty Jean's Annual Christian Leadership Dinner at St Andrew's Anglican Church Hall, South Brisbane. Entry by donation and all proceeds to Aboriginal Christian Leadership and Ministry issues. Bookings essential. Contact Morris and Robin 3844 1246, Steve and Judy 3846 5828, Chrystal 0402 400 014 or Aunty Jean on 3844 7640.

August 16, 9.30am-12.30pm. UnitingWorld Synod Support Group Qld bi-monthly meeting at Wesley House, Ann St, Brisbane City. Speakers Rev Dr Alan and Mrs Judy Morrison, recently returned from a semester at the Sia'toutai Theological College in Tonga. Contact Judith Finau on 3711 4622 or jlfinau@gmail.com.

August 19-20, 8am-1pm. Garage Sale. Wheller Gardens, Uhl Hall, Chermerside. Contact Barbara Wood on 3359 7010 or trevorjwood@bigpond.com.

August 20, 8am-12pm. Beachmere Uniting Church Jumble Sale. Contact John and Marjorie Horchner on 5496 8371 or marjanhorchner@bigpond.com.

August 27, 9am-2pm. Chermerside Kedron Community Church Fete. Expressions of interest from stall holders open. Contact Kendall Yates on 3359 0975 or yateskj@gmail.com.

August 27, 1.30-5pm. Celebration of Life and Hope - Floral Art. Sandgate Uniting Church. A celebration of life and hope, demonstrated through Floral Art by Robert Manton, followed by afternoon tea. \$10. Contact Jean Kirkegaard on 3269 3386 or maxnjan@bigpond.com.

August 27-28. Tannum Sands Uniting Church 25th anniversary celebrations. Dinner on the Saturday, worship on Sunday and more. Contact Alan Dent on 4973 7396 or alanmargaret@dodo.com.au.

August 28, 10am-3pm. National Day of Thanksgiving Community Festival at Mackay Civic Precinct grounds. The free Festival is supported by churches in Mackay and the Mackay Regional Council. The four Uniting Church congregations in Mackay are heavily involved. Official ceremony 11.30am. Contact Euan McDonald on 4951 3869 or eandymcd@bigpond.net.au.

August 30, 10am-1pm. Retired Ministers and Spouses Luncheon at Emmanuel Uniting Church, Enoggera. Morning tea and a diet-friendly hot meal \$15 per head. Guest speaker, Mardi Lumsden, *Journey* editor. RSVP (essential) through your caller or to Clive George. Please advise of pastoral items and alert new retirees. Contact Clive George on 3885 8062 or macgeorge@optusnet.com.au.

September 3, 9am-1pm. Spirited Generosity Workshop at Beenleigh Uniting Church. A one day workshop supported by the Presbyteries of South Moreton, Bremer Brisbane and Moreton Rivers and led by Carolyn Kitto. Contact Heather Dansie on 3807 7421 or smpres@gmail.com or visit www.spiritedgenerosity.com.

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

Celebrating 20 years of prevention

THE JOINT Churches Domestic Violence Prevention Project (JCDVPP) celebrates 20 years with the launch of a revised booklet to liberate women locked in violent relationships. It coincides with 20 years work breaking the silence.

Questions Women Ask about Domestic Violence and Christian Belief will be launched at Indooroopilly Uniting Church on 9 August by Dr Lynne Baker, a lecturer, counsellor and author who did her PhD on coping strategies employed by Christian women experiencing domestic violence.

The launch will also be a celebration of 20 years since the commencement of the Joint Churches Domestic



Some of the JCDVPP Management Committee members. From left: Lorraine Stafford, Ruth Stewart, Amanda Moss and Hazel Eivers. Photo courtesy of Hazel Eivers

Violence Prevention Project, a commission of Queensland Churches Together. This small band of committed Christians is determined that the church not be silent on this issue and that victims of violence in the home will be freed to live life in abundance.

Some of the outcomes have

been breaking the silence in churches with the distribution of information and resources.

The emphasis has been on educating the churches to be the activators of liberation that Jesus meant us to be.

By Adele Dingle
For more information email jcdvpp@qct.org.au

Blue Care Sunday services

CONGREGATIONS ARE encouraged to celebrate Blue Care's contribution to local communities on Sunday, 21 August.

Blue Care Sunday is an opportunity for congregations to include in their worship services thanks and prayer for care services that are based on the values of the Uniting Church.

Blue Care staff and volunteers provide care based on the compassion of Christ for more than 12 500 people every day.

For more information or to access resources prepared for the day, email marketing@bluecare.org.au

Church celebrations bring back memories

IN APRIL the centenary celebrations of worship at the Lifeworks Uniting Church in Toowoomba, were enjoyed by all who attended.

The gathering brought back many ministers who had served in the parish and also parishioners from far and wide.

The celebrations were opened by Moderator, Rev Bruce Johnson, on 30 April who challenged the congregation to look forward, not back, but learning from the past in our Christian journey.

The display of memorabilia reminded people that the 150th anniversary of the Methodist Church on the Downs passed without recognition.

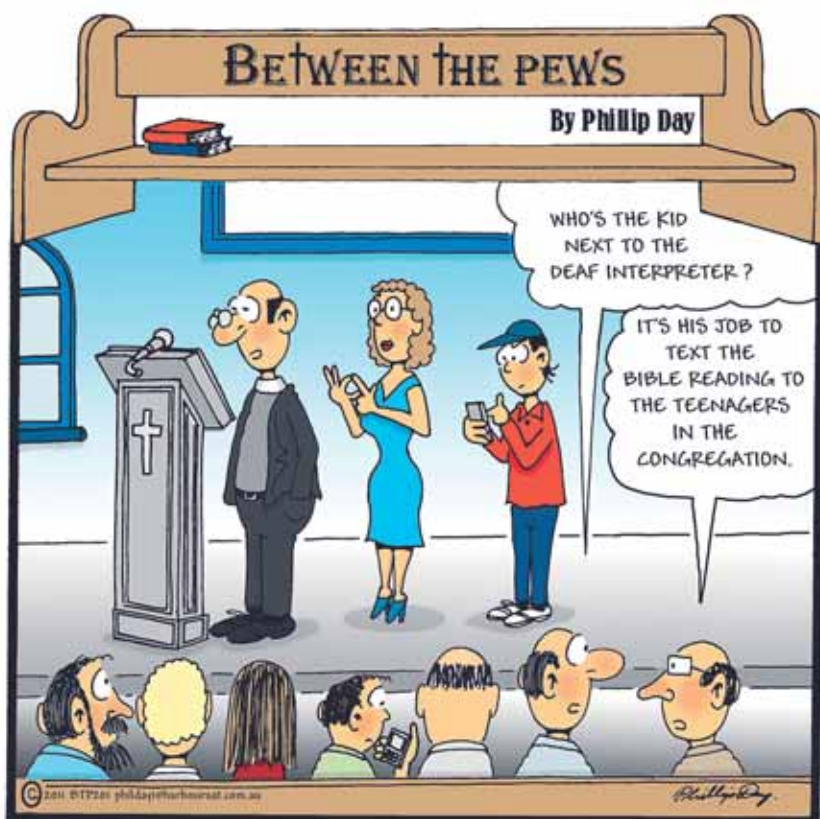
In compiling the story of the past 100 years, the 75th yearbook for Newtown and the 50th yearbook for Scots were

updated and supplements for the other congregations were added and joined together in a book entitled *A Tale of Three Churches - Celebrating One Hundred Years of Worship & Witness in West Toowoomba*. It is available for \$10 and can be ordered by contacting the Lifeworks Office on 4634 9128 or lifeworks202@bigpond.com.

The region also celebrated 10 years since the Newtown, Scots and Westbrook Uniting Churches came together on the Russell Street site.

The congregation now looks forward to the challenges of establishing a new base for ministry on the growing western edge of Toowoomba city.

By Annette King and
Paula Nicholls



Living the Questions 2.0

Video and internet-based small group resource, Developed by United Methodist ministers, Jeff Procter-Murphy and David Felten, RRP \$325

Reviewed by Peter Robinson.

ONE OF the challenges for church lay people is to update knowledge and ideas in response to new information and insights.

In the words of a senior minister, 'the church has failed its lay people badly by not helping adults develop beyond a childhood Sunday School frame of reference'.

People's reaction when it's realised that scholars are saying and thinking things that make better sense of the Christian message than what they themselves may have been brought up to believe, seem to be frustration and anger at not having been told sooner.

We need to be far more intentional in these efforts.

One of the more successful attempts has been the popular

small group study, *Living the Questions*.

Modelled broadly on the Alpha program, it incorporates contemporary biblical scholarship.

The DVD and guided discussion based series, 21 studies in all, may be handled as individual topics or as a series. It includes DVD clips with many of today's leading Christian thinkers.

Segments do vary in audio and visual production quality at times, but the accompanying workbook helps.

It is ideal for individuals and groups who wish to explore beyond the rote traditions and theologies to what a meaningful faith can look like in today's world.

What is needed is a 'safe' environment, where individuals feel they can ask the questions



they've always wanted to, but never had the opportunity.

A good facilitator (and listener) open to people's experiences and ideas is also a plus.

I had heard so many good things about the series, from individuals and groups in other churches and congregations.

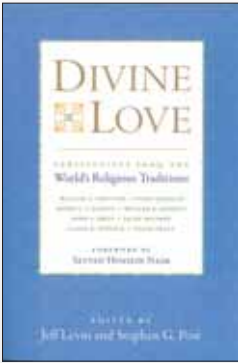
Having now participated, I can recommend it as a way of connecting with what contemporary scholars are saying and thinking, and re-discovering the significance and relevance of Christianity in today's world. It has given me new understanding and helped me grow.

If you have ever felt alone, in being a 'thinking' Christian, maybe this series will be helpful.

Divine Love: Perspectives from the World's Religious Traditions

Edited by Jeff Levin and Stephen Post, Templeton Press, 2010, RRP \$57.95

Reviewed by Rev Dr Lew Born, a member of Robina Uniting Church.



DIVINE LOVE is a significant contribution to creative dialogue among world faiths.

The foreword by Seyyed Nasr, Professor of Islamic Studies at George Washington University, is an adequate summary of the book, its subject and its agenda as noted in his early quote, "Ours is a world in which awareness of the universality of the doctrine of Divine Love in religious worlds other than our own, is a dire necessity."

This reviewer shares a strongly held conviction that understanding towards mutual respect and creative dialogue, is a prerequisite to mutual goodwill among world faiths and peace among nations.

The editors were wise in assuming that the concept of Divine Love could reveal a ready commonality in the various faiths.

Among the numerous learnings for this reviewer, was the depth of insights reflected by each in the variety of words for love and their implications for devotees.

These range from the Greek eros, agape (a fascinating fusion of both in the Islamic text) to the Greek charitas – English grace.

All accord that in both

human and Divine expressions love is not just a sentiment, but an ontological reality, as much a reality as existence itself and therefore it is impossible to experience existence without experiencing some form of love.

In all theologies human love with concomitant responsibilities in behaviour, is a derivative of Divine Love.

Divine Love as Creator, is motivated to be both lover of creation and the beloved by creation.

An African expression of faith, "If God did not love me, God would not have made me", reflects an understanding of creation, motivated by Divine Love common to all religions.

Each chapter is a comprehensive survey by a noted scholar of their particular faith.

Don't expect an easy read, but for those prepared to make the effort it is its own reward.

No Way to Behave at a Funeral: A tale of personal loss through suicide

By Noel Braun, Sid Harta Publishers, 2009, RRP \$24.95

Reviewed by Rev Dr Marian Zaunbrecher.

ONE WEEK before Christmas last year my son attempted suicide.

My family and I are still trying to sort through the pain, grief, hurt, confusion and guilt.

Suicide is the leading cause of death in this country.

More people die from suicide than breast cancer or road accidents.

Yet, our communities, and the church, are yet to face this issue and offer support and care for survivors and family.

So the story of a husband losing a wife to suicide could have helped me understand my own emotions and experiences.

Noel Braun's wife, Maris, had a lifelong history of depression. On 30 October 2004 she took her own life.

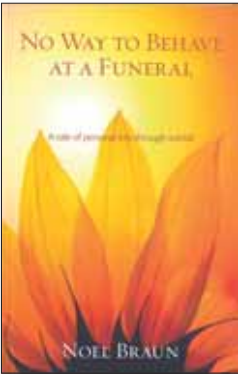
Mr Braun's book was written in the aftermath of her death. It describes their love story and his pain and guilt as he attempted to come to terms with her death.

At all times his memories, love for her and his faith console him.

I found the first few chapters riveting.

My own pain welled up inside me as I read but I found his answers to his grief unsatisfying.

The overwhelming message to me was that it helps to have money so that one can travel the world in order to deal with your



pain. In the long run, I have to find my own solutions to my own grief – and perhaps that was the lesson from the book.

If you do find yourself deeply depressed and hopeless please ring Lifeline 13 11 14 or Beyond Blue 1300 224 636 www.beyondblue.org.au.

Cranky the Crocodile

Written by Gavin Delacour, Illustrated by Gavin Delacour, Black Ink Press, 2009, RRP \$17

Reviewed by the Ruhle family.

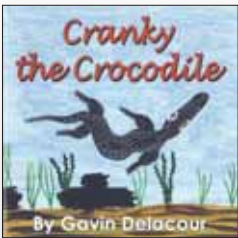
CRANKY THE Crocodile is a great kid's book written and illustrated by an Indigenous man from 'crocodile country' in far north Queensland.

The book tells the story of Cranky trying to find his mother after he became lost once he left his egg.

Through unique illustrations and repetitive text children are able to follow or read the story themselves as Cranky meets with all types of native Australian animals.

I read the story with my 4, 7 and 8-year-old girls and it was really the youngest one who was most interested in the book.

Miss Four said: "I liked it when the baby crocodile said, 'Are you my Mummy?'. I liked



the story and I liked the picture when he found his mother."

Miss Seven said: "It was a bit of a baby book. If I was a bit younger I would have liked it more. I liked the pictures of native Australian animals."

Miss Eight said: "I think the storyline of the book is very similar to *Clifford's Chick*" (a *Clifford the Big Red Dog* book). I liked the pictures though!"

It would be interesting to hear a little boy's perspective as well.

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

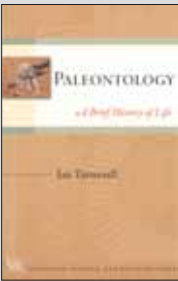
Love Songs and Reproaches: Passionate Conversations with God
By L. William Countryman, Morehouse Publishing, New York, 2010, RRP \$23.95



The Tree of Life
Written and directed by Terrence Malick, Starring Sean Penn, Brad Pitt, Jessica Chastain, Hunter McCracken, Laramie Eppler, 2011, 138 minutes (PG)



Paleontology: A Brief History of Life
By Ian Tattersall, Templeton Press, 2010, RRP \$32.95



Books available from ...

Many of the titles reviewed in *Journey* are available from St Paul's Bookstore in Brisbane city or Christian Supplies in Paddington. 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>.

Week of prayer in Rocky

THE WEEK of Prayer for Christian Unity (5-11 June) began with a combined picnic and worship on 5 June at the Rockhampton Botanical Gardens for

members of the North Rockhampton Anglican and Uniting congregations.

For several years these two congregations in North

Rockhampton have worked together.

Monthly, a representative from one congregation is present at the other's baptismal service, presenting the baptismal candle to the

family and witnessing to the universality of baptism into the Christian faith.

A combined Lenten study group met this year and, for a number of years, teams have served breakfast in two local

schools.

The ministry teams meet bi-monthly to share and plan ways in which their Christian witness into the North Rockhampton community can be shared.

Town turns 100 with churches

THE TOWN of Malanda, on the Atherton Tableland in Far North Queensland, celebrated its centenary on 25-26 June.

The Malanda Uniting Church was asked to conduct a combined churches service for the Sunday.

Margaret Finter said the small congregation did a great job and that it was wonderful to see the church accommodate a large group of worshippers from the Uniting, Catholic and Anglican churches.

The congregation heard of the history of each church and how church buildings came to exist in the town. Both the town's pioneers and current locals were praised for their contribution to community life.



The Malanda town centenary service. Photo courtesy of Margaret Finter

On Sunday 7 August, please pray for Tannum Sands Uniting Church

BOYNE ISLAND/Tannum Sands are twin communities at the mouth of the Boyne River, about 25km south of Gladstone.

Although once tiny beachside holiday villages, in the past 30 years they've grown rapidly with the introduction of the aluminium smelter on Boyne Island and other industry in Gladstone.

We are a small congregation.

Minister, Rev Jan Rossow, combines congregational responsibilities with Blue Care chaplaincy in Gladstone.

This August we are celebrating the 25th anniversary of the opening of our building.

Please pray for:

- this time of rapid growth for Gladstone and district. Resources are stretched. Housing is in short supply and highly priced. Pray for community organisations as they attempt to deal with the social repercussions of this and for all the churches that we might find ways of making contact with those who would rarely consider making contact with us.

- our congregation, for renewed purpose and direction

and a fresh life for home groups.

- the Emmaus movement, its influence in ongoing spiritual growth, growth in love for one another and our God, growth in our influence for good in the community.

- our 'Fun with Music' program for preschoolers and that the contact with those families be a mutual blessing.

- the plans for the anniversary celebrations in August, that they will come together smoothly and produce many positive results.

On Sunday 14 August, please pray for Newlife Uniting Church

OVER THE last five years God has significantly grown the community of Newlife Uniting Church in Robina on the Gold Coast.

We believe God will continue to grow us by his grace in the years to come.

Four years ago God birthed in us a vision to be a church that plants other churches. Last year, together with our friends at Helensvale Baptist, we established Crossroads – Helensvale which now consists of 100 people at weekly worship.

Now, after years of conversation, dreaming and prayer we are planting another campus of Newlife at Pacific Pines on the northern Gold Coast.

The new campus will be

located at Jubilee Primary School and we will begin weekly worship there on Sunday 9 October.

In the meantime we are counting down to this date with a number of exciting preview events and opportunities.

Our first major outreach into the Pacific Pines area was a Kidzlife Funstuff Holiday Program held during the July school holidays.

It was a wonderful success with 135 children taking part. At the end of the program, many of the families joined with their children in a community sausage sizzle.

Our preview family worship services are the next events in our countdown toward weekly worship at Pacific Pines. They will be held on Sunday 14 August, Sunday 11 September, and Sunday 2 October.

We are so grateful to God for his provision this far as we have stepped out into what we believe is his vision – he has opened doors into the local community that we wouldn't have dreamed possible, provided for our financial needs, and planted his vision in the hearts of willing volunteers and others who have chosen to make Pacific Pines their new church home.

Please join us in giving thanks to God and pray that he will continue to grow his church at Pacific Pines.

Particularly pray that those who have not yet experienced his love in that local community will be drawn by the Holy Spirit to encounter the living God.

On Sunday 21 August please pray for the Goodna Uniting Church Flood Relief Group

DURING THE January flooding in Goodna the water came to the edge of our parking area but the Church became the centre of activity for the Goodna business area as there were no other toilets available for people cleaning up.

Rona Sandilands organised helpers to be at the church and it became a centre for donations of goods and food.

Food came in from different groups. Sandwiches were made and these and other food was handed out.

Six hundred homes went under water in Goodna. Rev Linda Hamill from Roma Uniting Church saw the need and arrived to co-ordinate help wherever needed. She and her husband worked tirelessly for a couple of weeks in the area, leading the way for us to carry on with flood relief work.

We received monetary gifts from churches, the synod and presbyteries and so the work began.

Visitors have gone to 80 to 100 homes offering food parcels, vouchers for food or petrol, money where we have seen the need and gifts such as patchwork quilts and kitchen linen in lovely gift parcels sent from churches or presbyteries in NSW.

Our ladies have been busy making hand towels and coat hangers.

On 16 July we hosted a sausage sizzle with lots of fun family activities for flood victims we visited, to help them feel that we continue to care for them.

People are moving back into their homes but many are still waiting to have work done. Some sleep in shells of homes, caravans and tents. Others rent while awaiting their repairs.

Please pray for the people who have lost everything, for the people who are enabling us with their gifts, and for us as we reach out to these people in Christ's name.

On Sunday 28 August please pray for the Burdekin Uniting Church parish

THE BURDEKIN Parish is at the top of Queensland, part of the North Queensland Presbytery.

It is one of the richest agricultural areas and the largest sugar cane producing district in Australia. The region is home to around 18 000 people and has two congregations, one in Home Hill and another in Ayr, on either side of the Burdekin river.

Please pray for the parish as they consider the future of ministry, their current agent, Paul Clark, has been in settlement for nearly 7 years.

The congregation has undergone major changes in those years with a significant number of older, faithful members passing away, moving into nursing homes, or moving away for retirement.

At the same time younger families and older community members have joined the

church, reducing the average age and changing the culture. Pray for a consolidation of these changes.

The congregation has developed a well respected reputation in the community for its outreach work in schools, drama and puppet tours, community events, and this year members have been on 'mission trips' to six other congregations in the North.

Please pray that this ministry bears fruit.

Pray for the district as it recovers from the mild effects of cyclone Yasi but the more damaging effects of a wet sugar harvest that left many people out of pocket.

The denominations work well in the Burdekin with combined youth group, kids klub, RE and Chaplaincy programs.

Pray that the churches will continue to unite and work for the benefit of the Burdekin.

Creation, carbon and Christianity

By Alistair Macrae

RECENTLY THE Federal Government signalled its intention to implement a regime to "put a price on carbon". The Uniting Church, through me as President, and UnitingJustice and UnitingCare, welcomed that announcement.

I know there will be some of our members who take a different view. But our position on this is consistent with our previous commitments and with the broad consensus amongst the scientific community.

When the Uniting Church was inaugurated in 1977 we pledged, in our *Statement to the Nation* that looks increasingly prophetic, that we would be "a voice urging the protection of the environment and the wise use of the earth's resources".

More recently, the Assembly climate change statement *For the Sake of the Planet* articulates our concerns and commitments.

We are becoming freshly aware of God's call to human beings to be stewards and carers of the earth.

The government's package is a positive step towards a clean energy future for Australia.

As Christians, we believe that God's will for the earth is for renewal and reconciliation, not destruction by human beings.

Surely decisive action on climate change is one of the great challenges of our time and should be front and centre in the prayer, thought, and action of all who worship the Creator of all.

UnitingCare has carefully scrutinised the compensation package, especially its impacts on the poorest members of our community, and believe they are adequate.

Some argue that the price on carbon has been set too low or that critically important products such as petrol have been exempted. However, it is an important start.

What is needed internationally is a change of mind-set towards sustainable living.

As a wealthy country Australia has an obligation to show some leadership in this regard.

If countries like ours dither, especially given that we are the highest per capita greenhouse gas emitters on the planet, how can we expect other countries to take up the challenge? The commandment to love our neighbour surely must extend into this debate.

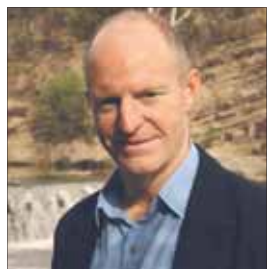
I hope this signal from the government can act as an encouragement to further research and development in the use of renewable energies.

The other perspective we carry arises out of our partnerships with churches in the Pacific for whose countries climate change threatens their very existence.

So while it seems the \$23 price is perhaps on the low side, it has to be seen as the first step towards achieving our committed task of an 80 per cent reduction on 2020 emission levels by 2050.

This will help to ensure that Australia makes a fair contribution to addressing global warming.

Hopefully it will also release significant funds to support low and middle income households, protect jobs, drive innovation in clean energy projects and technologies, and support farmers who want to protect the land for future generations.



Uniting Church President, Rev Alistair Macrae. Photo by Paddy Macrae

CO2 solution

I OFTEN have a wry grin as I read the hyperbole and the titbits of some scientific research in regard to this climate change debate.

From the beginning of mankind, wood and fossil fuels have been used for cooking and warming. But with the advent of electricity the millions of smoking chimneys were replaced by the tall smoke stacks of the generating systems.

I see no imbalance here,

simply a changed scenario. The human race, along with all breathing creatures, would produce more CO2 than all the smoke stacks combined.

The imbalance has been brought about by the destruction of some 45 per cent of the world's forests. This was God's atmospheric cleansing system, which was put out of balance. This must now be restored.

Planting of trees could never replace these lost forests. Nor will the pricing of carbon make any difference to the present imbalance.

The environmental scientists

need to set their minds to re-producing the photosynthesis process which turns the CO2 back into oxygen (which I learnt about at school).

This would gradually bring the world back into balance, as the Lord intended.

I am a retired chipper, yet to me the solution is so simple. Let's look at the wider picture and work together on this most important issue.

Ian Cumming
Marsden



Not minister

IN THE June *Journey* I was surprised to find my name among the ministers going on Nambour Uniting Church's outback *Mission Possible*. I'm not a minister and have never pretended to be one. I am an Elder and Lay Preacher at Maroochydore.

My late father, Rev R S C

Dingle was a Methodist Minister who served the Church in Queensland from 1912 until he died 42 years ago. For many years he was editor of the *Methodist Times*.

The article ('Nambour revisits flying mission') gave details about working on runways on properties to bring them up to Royal Flying Doctor standards.

McKay Patrol Flying Padre,

Rev Garry Hardingham, arranged the project with Rev Darren King of Nambour and several people on this project were on the first trip two years ago. This is another instance of the church responding to a need and showing the love of Christ in practical ways.

Bruce Dingle
Maroochydore



Long term Lent Appeal appreciation

ON BEHALF of a number of people in Queensland, and the theological College at Seghe in the Solomon Islands, I wish to express thanks to the churches of Queensland which, in 2002, gave \$10 150 as part of a Lent Appeal to assist with books for the college library as well as for students.

Several of our retired ministers also contributed books to the project.

Since then over 10 000 books have been forwarded, as well as other useful items for the college, the local school, and some articles for the prison ministry in Honiara.

The remainder of the fund

(\$3000) has now been transferred to UnitingWorld to make it possible to install two small solar panels to provide lights to permit students to work in the evenings.

Thank you for your support.

Doug Jones
Maroochydore



Life not as we know it

I OFTEN think that people who would otherwise accept Jesus' message are put off by it being coupled with the palpably bad science of the Old Testament which represents the view of God by a primitive people in 800 BC.

A more modern view of the universe as we presently understand it is that of Dr Charley Lineweaver of the

Planetary Science Institute, Canberra, who has pointed out that there are billions and billions of stars in the universe and that planets have been detected around some of these stars.

Some of these planets may have the conditions for the development of life.

He considered that the main condition was the presence of liquid water. In this situation it is

egocentric of us to believe that we are God's only people.

This does not distract in any way from Jesus' message. But it does cause us to realise that some of the science in the Old Testament compiled about 800 BC for a primitive people does not fit with our greater but still inadequate knowledge of science.

Colin Laing
Bellbowrie



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.

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Calendar art competition

What does belonging mean to you?

Young people aged five to 17 are invited to creatively express their ideas on the theme *Belonging, together as church* for the 2012 Calendar Art Competition.

Entries close 31 August 2011.

For more information and guidelines for entry, visit
www.together.ucaqld.com.au/artcompetition

The Uniting Church in Australia
Queensland Synod

together on the way
enriching community

Bethel Funerals

Compassion • Peace • Hope

All profits support the work of missions

- Providing Christ like care for grieving families
- Personalised care & support
- Prepaid Funeral Planning

24Hr 7 Day Service
Serving Brisbane, Gold Coast and Sunshine Coast

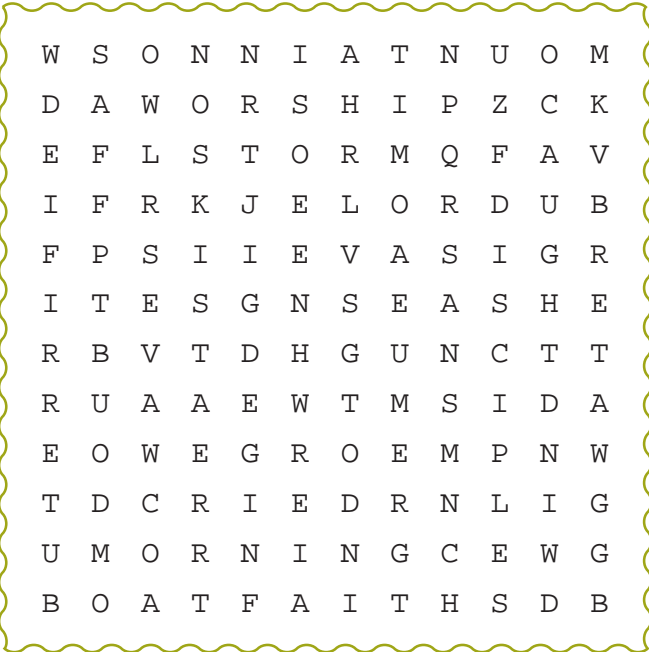
Office
134 Hartford Street,
Upper Mt Gravatt, QLD
07 3343 8444

www.bethelfunerals.com.au

Journey activity sheet

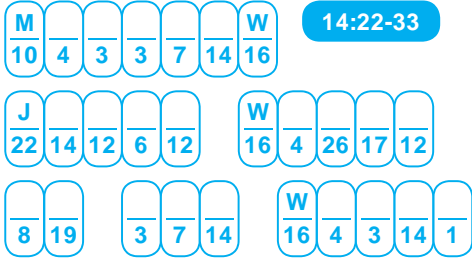
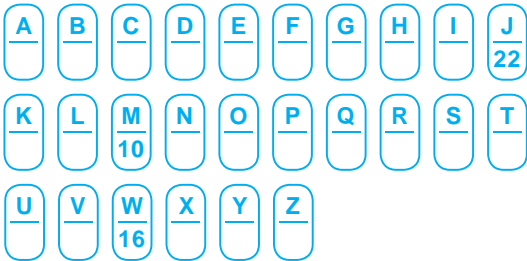
Bible verse word search

- BOAT
- CAUGHT
- CRIED
- CROWDS
- DISCIPLES
- DOUBT
- EVENING
- FAITH
- FRIGHTENED
- JESUS
- LORD
- MORNING
- MOUNTAIN
- PETER
- SAVE
- SEA
- SON
- STORM
- TERRIFIED
- WALKING
- WATER
- WAVES
- WIND
- WORSHIP

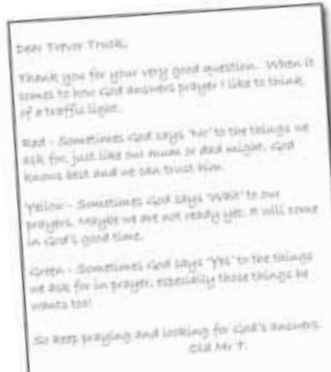
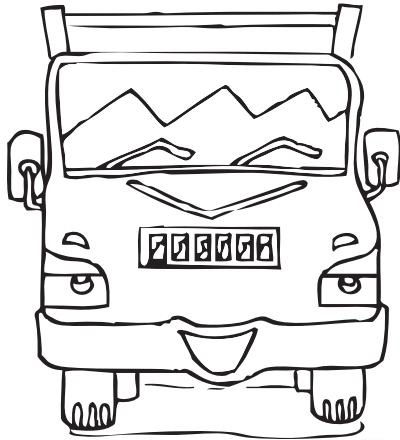
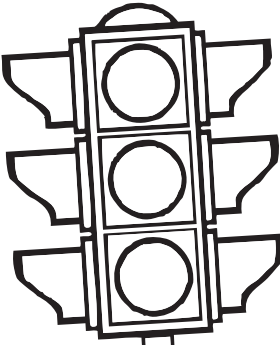
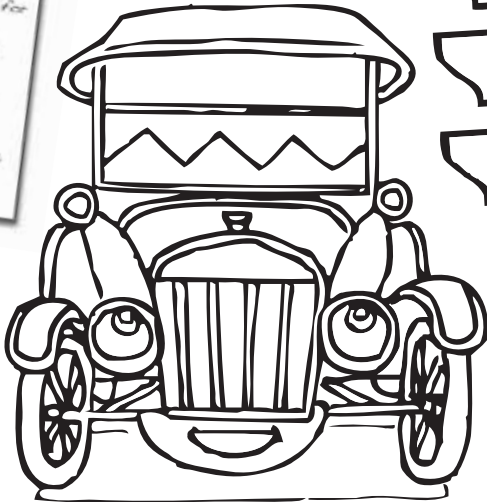


Cryptogram

What verse does the word search fit with?
Match the letters to numbers to find the mystery Bible verse! You might need to guess to get started.



Dear Old Mr T



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Hi my name is Alex Gow!

5th Gow Family Generation

You may have heard me talking on the radio about funeral pre planning. My dad says planning ahead for a funeral service is one of the best things you can do for your family. The Alex Gow 'Guide to Thoughtful Funeral Pre-Planning' will really help.

If you would like a **FREE** copy of the guide please fill out this coupon or call my Dad on 3852 1501 and please mention my name Alex Gow!

Alex Gow Funerals
56 Breakfast Creek Rd,
Newstead, 4006.
Name:
Address:
p/c:

