



## NEW NAME FOR LIFELINE

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"The focus on 'Community' is important as our work is all about supporting the wellbeing of individuals and families in the context of their community" **UnitingCare Queensland CEO Anne Cross**

## REFUGEE DEBATE

"We need to be able to have a balanced discussion." **Darren Hassan**

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# MIND OVER MATTER

## How what we think shapes us

By Mardi Lumsden

DESPITE AMAZING technological advances over the years, there is one thing scientists still struggle to completely understand: the human brain.

Dr Nancey Murphy, Professor of Christian Philosophy at the Fuller Theological Seminary in California, was in Australia in August and delivered the annual Rollie Busch Memorial Lecture at Trinity Theological College in Brisbane.

The seminar, entitled "Did My Neurons Make Me Do It?", delved into the concepts of physicalism ("the rejection of dualism of body and mind or soul") and why it is an acceptable position for Christians.

"My interest in this topic is both philosophical and theological," she said.

"Most philosophers of mind now count themselves as physicalists, and the main topic of discussion is whether physicalism necessarily implies reductionism.

"This is the thesis that all human thought and behaviour are determined by the laws of neurobiology.

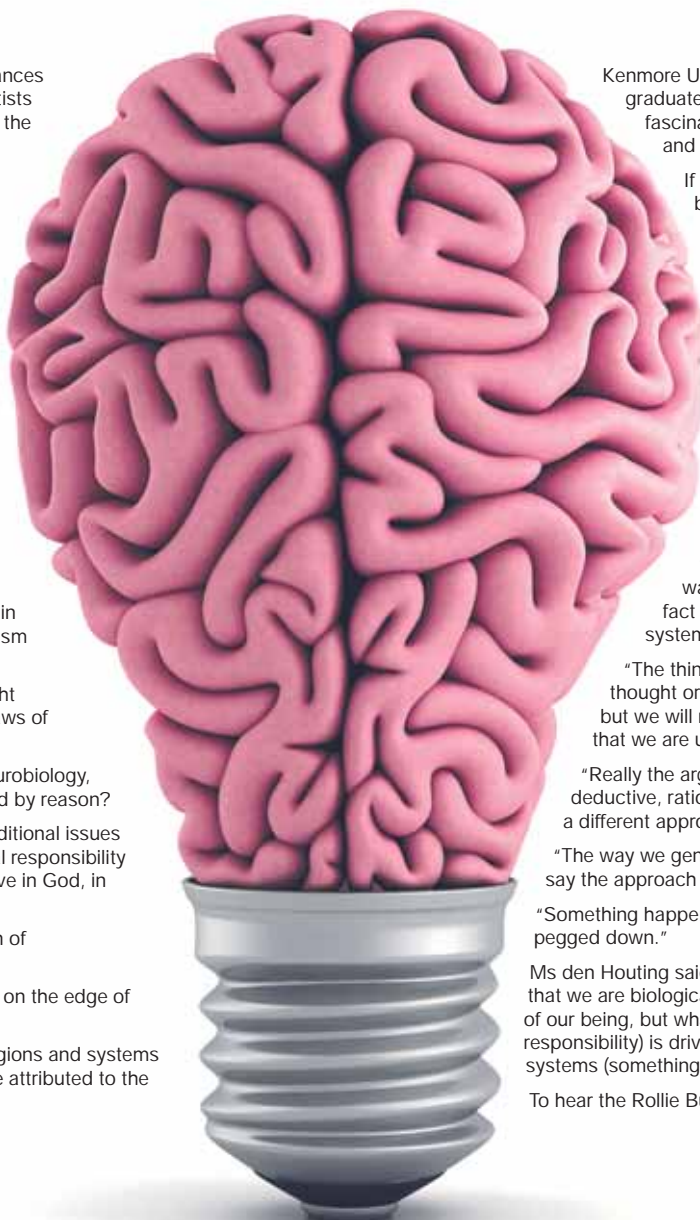
"If human thought is determined by neurobiology, then in what sense can it be determined by reason?"

"For Christian physicalists there are additional issues at stake: can we still speak of our moral responsibility before God, or even of coming to believe in God, in part at least, on the basis of reason?"

"Or do we have a new scientific version of predestination?"

Dr Murphy said scientific advances are on the edge of beginning to understand the brain.

"Neuroscience is now locating brain regions and systems responsible for all of the functions once attributed to the soul or mind," she said.



Kenmore Uniting Church minister and post graduate student, Rev Heather den Houting, is fascinated in the dialogue between science and religion.

If neuroscience is discovering that our brains may be hardwired for religious belief, how do we know God is not just a construct of our mind?

"That question is almost impossible to answer," said Ms den Houting.

"It is really the philosophy of knowledge.

"How do we know things are real or truthful?"

"How do we know about how we know things?"

"When it comes to things like maths and science, you have to ask, do those things exist independently of the way that we think about them or by the fact that we have constructed a pattern or system around them."

"The things that will never be subject to rational thought or deductive reasoning could still exist, but we will never encounter it because the tools that we are using won't let us get there.

"Really the argument is that faith does not have a deductive, rational or scientific approach; it has to be a different approach.

"The way we generally do it, through religion, is that we say the approach is through revelation.

"Something happens to encounter the divine that can't be pegged down."

Ms den Houting said as a physicalist, Ms Murphy "posits that we are biological beings and can accept the reality of our being, but what we can know (in terms of moral responsibility) is driven by autonomous complex adaptive systems (something beyond our biological makeup)."

To hear the Rollie Busch lecture visit [www.trinity.qld.edu.au](http://www.trinity.qld.edu.au)

# Loving with all your mind

YOU SHALL love the Lord your God with all your heart and all your soul and all your mind and all your strength. (Deut 6:5; Matt 22:37; Mark 12:30; Luke 10:27)

This, we are told, is the first and greatest commandment.

It has been the subject of much thought and prayer for thousands of years. But what does it mean for you?

Christians place great emphasis to loving God with all their heart.

However, since we in the west tend to equate the concepts of 'love' and 'heart' with emotions, much of our faith expression is emotive.

We sing countless emotional songs about loving God.

This is not wrong. We need disciples who are passionate about living out their faith in this way.

However, unless we recognise that in both Old and New Testaments, the 'heart' was considered the very core of our being, the source of not only emotions, but of life and intellect as well, we will live very unbalanced Christian lives.

Paul said in Romans 12:1-2: "I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable

to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect."

It was some time before I realised that when I thought about Christ being in my heart I needed to go much deeper than allowing God to impact my emotions.

I had to take seriously the biblical understanding of 'heart' and allow God to shape my whole being, including my intellect.

Many people outside the church are convinced that they

There is no other area of our lives in which we are satisfied with thinking the way we did as children.

are expected to 'leave their brains at the door' if they come to church.

Sadly many of us have not really considered what it means to love God with our minds.

Too often I come across Christians who seek to end a conversation about faith by the words, "But I have always believed ...".

This implies that such a follower of Jesus already knows

all there is to know about Jesus; about the Christian faith; about real discipleship.

Yet there is no other area of our lives in which we are satisfied with thinking the way we did as children.

In every aspect of our living we expect that we will grow, that our ideas will mature, that what we learnt at an earlier stage of our lives will be enriched by deeper understanding and new knowledge.

In the letter to the Ephesians Paul suggests that God has gifted apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers to equip us "until all of us come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ". (Eph 4:13)

As a disciple of Jesus I can't be satisfied until I reach the "full stature of Christ".

Growing in our understanding of God has a vital evangelical purpose.

We live in a society that believes that science will provide all the answers and solve all of our problems.

This, of course, is nonsense.

Yet unless we engage in serious conversations that help those who have turned away from religious faith to realise that such faith is

## Message from the Moderator

Rev Bruce Johnson



not irrational or simple fantasy we will not be able to win them for Christ.

We need disciples who can speak intellectually about their faith, not just emotionally. We need a renewed passion that reflects the conversations that Paul had with those who dismissed his preaching as fantasy.

Despite all the difficulties we are going through as a Synod there have been some really exciting movements in recent years.

The Pilgrim Learning Community (PLC) began about four years ago and has been facilitating learning opportunities for hundreds of members of our church.

These men and women have engaged in study that has both excited and renewed their faith and commitment to serve Christ through their congregations.

Over the past year a few of us have been developing a program

called Stretching Faith for young adults in our church.

This small, but growing, group of young adults have been reflecting on their approach to the scriptures, their understanding of the vision of the Uniting Church and the way that faith in Jesus Christ confronts the values and assumptions of our culture.

I have been encouraged to see these young adults engage their whole being in an exploration of faith.

If you feel unsure about your faith, if you have not been involved in study of the scriptures for years, why not contact PLC and see what opportunities might be open for you.

Christ still needs disciples who can follow Paul's example in Athens and give an intelligent defence of their life in Christ so that others might come to see that God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself.

Those who feel lost want to find the way home.

# Deifying Einstein

FOR THE past few months we here in the Communication Services Unit and other Synod departments have been working on how we can be a more effective, productive and creative team for the church we serve.

It is part of the *Together on the way, enriching community* journey and our part of the Church's goal for developing sustainable and mission oriented organisation for the Church in Queensland.

We called it a re-imagining process because a lot of it is about being creative in our thinking and allowing people the space and time to produce innovative and useful communications tools for the whole Church.

Plus, "re-imagining" sounds like much more fun than "review".

It is funny that words hold such connotations.

They too are embedded in the

context we put them in.

Which leads me to the theme for this month – the power of the mind.

We wanted to explore different aspects of how our minds, the way we think and see the world, shape us.

We also wanted to look at the importance of mental health.

Albert Einstein said, "Before God we are all equally wise and equally foolish".

He also said that insanity was doing the same thing over and over, expecting different results.

Many people may look at the *Together on the way, enriching community* journey and see the multitude of reviews and reports that have gone before.

This isn't just a review for its own sake.

Some major things need to change if the Uniting Church in Queensland is going to survive.

The question is, how can we ensure that this journey is not

just doing the same thing over and over, expecting different results. How are we going to change it?

What are we going to do to make sure the result reflects our 2020 Vision for the Church in Queensland.

To see the 2020 Vision visit [www.together.ucaqld.com.au](http://www.together.ucaqld.com.au)

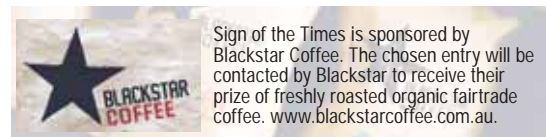
Mardi Lumsden  
Editor



# Sign of the times



KENMORE UNITING Church in Brisbane's west, posted this sign in August to remind people of their recycled and fair trade store. Thanks to minister, Rev Heather den Houting, for sending it 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](http://www.blackstarcoffee.com.au).



# Church farewells family

By Mardi Lumsden

IN THE early hours of 24 August, a house fire in Slacks Creek, Brisbane, took the lives of members of three generations of a family who attend Logan Central Multicultural Uniting Church.

News reports suggest it was one of the worst house fires in Australian history.

Moderator, Rev Bruce Johnson, said it was a sad day for the whole Church.

"It is with deep sadness that we heard the news of the fire that took the lives of eleven people this morning at Slacks Creek," he said.

"We are now aware that this family was related to and closely connected with many of our Tongan clergy and the Tongan and Samoan communities within the Uniting Church.

"Our hearts go out to the extended family and friends as they mourn the deaths of those they loved.

"Please pray for the many people deeply hurt by this tragedy and pray for those who will provide immediate support and pastoral care.

"In times like this we recall Paul's words that when one part of the Body of Christ suffers, we all suffer together."

A prayer vigil held in front of the burnt-out house on Wednesday 24 August saw close to a hundred relatives, friends and neighbours pray with the family.



Women decorate the front table of the Community Prayer Gathering at the Logan Metro Sports Centre. Photo by Osker Lau

A community prayer service on 25 August saw thousands of people squeeze into the Logan Metro Sports Centre as people showed their support for the family and the community.

Premier Anna Bligh and Logan Mayor Pam Parker spoke alongside relative of the family Rev Seone Afu, Logan Central Multicultural congregation minister Rev Dr Apichart Brandjerporn Moderator Rev Bruce Johnson, South Moreton

Presbytery minister, Rev Gwen Fisher, and many others.

Rev Lu Senituli, a relative of Mr Afu and minister at Bayside Uniting Church, said this event will deeply effect the Tongan and Samoan communities right across Australia for many years.

He was honoured to be part of a group of Uniting Church ministers the family asked to go into the property only hours after the blaze to say a prayer for those who perished.

"We went there and stood at the house," he said.

"After the prayer we noticed that two of the police officers were in tears.

"We thanked them and they thanked us for allowing them to be part of the prayer."

People kept a constant vigil outside the house, singing hymns and praying, until all the bodies had been removed.

"This is a powerful reminder of how much we all need each other

and it cuts right across cultures," said Mr Senituli.

"When tragedy happens it is indiscriminate, but standing shoulder to shoulder with strangers, supporting the family and the public lament, they formed a community of grief.

"The community is a very resilient one because it is a community brought together firstly, and mostly, by their Christian faith and then by their culture."



After trekking for a month across East Africa, two Somali women wait with their children to be registered in the Dadaab refugee camp in northeastern Kenya. Tens of thousands of newly arrived Somalis have swelled the population of what was already the world's largest refugee camp. Photo by Paul Jeffrey/ACT Alliance

## Action needed for Horn of Africa appeal

By Emma Halgren

THE UNITED Nations reports that the number of people needing assistance in the Horn of Africa crisis has now risen to 12.4 million, with drought declared in three more areas of Somalia.

Alistair Gee, Executive Director of Act for Peace, the international aid agency of the National Council of Churches in Australia, said the situation is worse than ever.

"Act for Peace is working with long-term partners in Somalia in providing both humanitarian assistance to those in greatest need and disarmament of those

with weapons," he said.

"There has been civil war and no central government in Somalia since 1991.

"The lack of centralised control, combined with widespread insecurity and a thriving illicit arms trade has led to protracted periods of fighting and widespread use of small arms.

"This war has displaced 20 per cent of the entire population and made it the least peaceful country on earth according to the Global Peace Index.

"Last month alone, 55000 Somalis fled across the borders into Ethiopia and Kenya."

Rebecca Larson, Deputy

General Secretary of Act for Peace's global partner, ACT Alliance, reported that members globally are working tirelessly to raise funds and to keep at bay the worst effects of famine and drought.

Ms Larson said the underlying drivers of vulnerability in the region — conflict, poverty and food insecurity — demand that emergency relief be provided in a way that promotes long term sustainability.

For more information or to give to Act for Peace's Horn of Africa emergency appeal visit [www.actforpeace.org.au](http://www.actforpeace.org.au)



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# Focusing on the journey

By Mardi Lumsden

AS THE *Together on the way, enriching community* journey continues Church members from all over Queensland are reflecting on the future of the Church in their own context.

In the light of the Church's 2020 Call and Vision, five areas of priority for the next two years have been identified.

Focus Group C is working on "developing sustainable, mission oriented organisation for the Church in Queensland".

Focus Group C convener and General Secretary, Dr Shirley Coulson, said it was challenging but exciting work.

"As a 'way of being' it is about relationships and resources; culture and structure," she said.

"Synod Leadership Team and Focus Group members have been

working very hard in this area to develop goals into action plans.

"Some significant changes are being suggested."

Some of these changes went to Synod Standing Committee in August and will be going to the Synod in session in October.

Focus Group D is looking at "facilitating renewal of leadership for the mission of the Church".

Focus Group D convener and Principal of Trinity Theological College, Rev Dr Geoff Thompson, said leadership was a God-given gift to the church and therefore, the church should be wise in the stewardship of it.

"That means being intentional about how we discern, foster and nurture leaders," he said. "One of the desired outcomes is a change in the way we imagine leadership."

"One of the issues the Group addressed was the polarised nature of the discussion

about leadership within the contemporary church.

"We came to the view that one way of reducing that polarisation is to see that leadership must emerge out of discipleship."

"We can't impose styles or patterns of leadership on the Christian community unless those styles and patterns are themselves reflections of the life of discipleship to which Jesus calls us."

"We'd like to see the whole Synod explore how we are presently forming disciples and what we can learn from the ways leadership is already being nurtured within the framework of discipleship."

Rev Andrew Gillies said discipleship was the way forward to "missional leadership".

"There is a sense that what we are doing is impossible; we are asked to do what in some sense is



Tim Hein from Capacity Builders with Shirley Coulson at a workshop to re-imagine Synod communications. Photo by Osler Lau

Christ's alone to do – renew the church," he said.

Nonetheless I am reminded of the various accounts of the feeding of the 5000.

"I think in the face of the hunger of the world and the church Jesus says to us as he said to the disciples 'you give them something to eat'."

"The story of our task group is that all we have to offer is two dried fish and a few loaves of bread – it is what Christ and His body (the church) do with it that will be the real story."

Rev Peter Armstrong, said it was the uncommon stories that give life to the church's vision.

"It is the uncommon story of a young woman who spends

as much of her time as possible with teenagers, listening, serving and mentoring them through the challenges of life.

"It is the uncommon story of a bloke on a harvester responding to God's call to work on God's business rather than his own and finding himself discipling young leaders eager to follow Jesus."

"Maybe these uncommon stories are becoming more common? Maybe God's future vision is being seen by some and not yet by all."

To be involved email Ana. Mila@ucaqld.com.au.

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



Long-term Op Shop volunteers enjoy a thank you lunch. Photo by Peter Taubner

## Doors closing and opening in Isis

AFTER TWENTY-SEVEN years the Childers Uniting Church Op Shop has closed its doors.

Isis Uniting Church Congregations minister, Rev Peter Taubner, said the closure was due to ageing volunteers and climbing costs.

"Although the decision to close was sad we now are searching for other ways we can serve the community," he said. "The whole exercise has been a real revitaliser

and has generated much community interest because we had also decided that after a winter and closing down sale, we would offer all our remaining stock, shop furniture and fittings to the folk in the Central Burnett."

"Mainly Mundubbera and mainly the Uniting Church, although the Anglicans already have a shop front in the town and both denominations and congregations are working

together to help out their community.

"It really turned out to be a bittersweet moment for all concerned here in Childers."

The local paper even picked up the story of the local icon's closure and generous gift.

The Childers Uniting Church Adult Fellowship hosted a thank you lunch on 3 August for all those who have been involved in the Op Shop over the years.

## Fellowship enjoyed at Christmas in July

FOR THE past 22 years the Flinders Uniting Church, Peak Crossing, Ladies Fellowship has held a Christmas in July Dinner.

Guests from near and far travel to celebrate this special meal and enjoy the friendship of people they may seldom see.

Over the years the guest list has reached over 100 people, filling the church hall to capacity.

Preparations start early in the

morning and the kitchen aroma flows through the hall.

Homemade sweets are always a tasty and talked about topic and Christmas decorations are a highlight with the manger scene the focal point. As the lights are turned low and 'Silent Night' is sung it is no wonder one can feel the presence of the Holy Spirit spreading throughout the people.

The group thank and praise

God that over the years they have been privileged to have guest speakers and musicians to entertain during the evening.

God willing, they look forward to celebrating their 23rd Christmas in July dinner and 140th Church Anniversary in 2012.

By Fay Hohenhaus for Beth Gamlin



Joshua O'Donnell preparing dinner. Photo by Fay Hohenhaus

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# Community sleeps rough in Mackay

By Mardi Lumsden

CHURCHES AND community service providers joined forces in Mackay to raise awareness of the rising homeless population in the town by hosting the Mackay Sleepout in August.

The event coincided with National Homeless Persons' Week and saw members of the Mackay community, including students, church leaders and even an MP, sleep rough on 2 August.

St Paul's Uniting Church in Mackay's Ken Whyte said the idea came from fellow Church member Don Leckenby.

"Four years ago he took up the plight of the homeless people living around St Paul's," said Mr Whyte. "There have been

homeless people around the church for about 50 years because it is an inner-city church."

The inaugural Mackay Sleepout attracted 86 registrations and ended up raising over \$1500 to assist the Mackay Homelessness Outreach Partnership (MHOP) in their aim to open a drop-in centre.

"There were four of our homeless people from St Paul's who came down and gave us support too," said Mr Whyte.

"We said as this was our first, we were doing it for awareness rather than money."

In true community spirit, four radio presenters, the Federal Member for Dawson, George Christensen MP, local clergy, and UnitingCare Community

(formally Lifeline) Area Manager, Frank Gilbert, slept out. Speakers from Relationships Australia and Queensland Health also provided insight into homelessness.

The local Dominos Pizza provided dinner and the Lions Club cooked up a sausage sizzle for all those sleeping rough.

MHOP is a combined group of people in community services, government departments and faith-based groups all working together to find a solution for people experiencing homelessness in Mackay.

Organised in six weeks, the inaugural event was a success.

"We ran it as an experiential event. It cost us very little to run and we got a lot of publicity from the community who are



Ken Whyte. Photo by Osker Lau

concerned about the people on the streets," he said.

"We've built up a lot of relationships in doing what we

have done with those people who are either in community welfare organisations or government departments."



Hard at work painting in Hughenden. Photo by Ian Laurie

## Hughenden works the frontier

IN JUNE the small town of Hughenden, 320km south-west of Townsville, became a hive of activity as a Frontier Services work party restored the old Hughenden Uniting Church and hall.

Queenslanders Ian and Fay Laurie along with Lindsay and Roslyn Thomson (NSW), Graham Reid, Jim and Julie Rees, and Ian and Joan Cook (VIC) worked tirelessly to support the work of

Frontier Service Flinders Patrol Minister, Rev Peter Harvey, their host for the trip.

Work Party coordinator, Ian Laurie, said the locals appreciated the work of Frontier Services, particularly the ministry of Mr Harvey, after this year's cyclone.

"The 'work' aim of the activity was to paint the church and the hall and decommission a toilet block," said Mr Laurie.

"The 'party' aim was to [engage

in] fellowship with the locals, the congregation and with each other."

Repairs included fixing weatherboards and fascia, painting, installing wire to prevent bird access to ceilings, stump adjustments and reinstalling an air control unit.

The team thanked Mr Harvey for his organisation and the community for donating the use of equipment.

## Rocky hosts President

ON 31 JULY South Rockhampton Uniting Church hosted Uniting Church President, Rev Alistair Macrae, as he spent the weekend in Rockhampton, speaking at a Saturday night dinner and again during worship on Sunday.

Minister, Rev Jennifer Roberts, said Mr Macrae's visit caused great excitement for the congregation.

"As I spoke with people after Alistair's visit it became clear that a strong sense of encouragement

and inspiration to 'be the voice of the missional church', along with a strong sense of connection with the wider Uniting Church was experienced by many," she said.

One parishioner, Aurile Augustine, said she was excited to have shared a meal with "a most likeable, down-to-earth President".

"It was great to discuss a range of issues from how do we attract/keep young people within the church, to which way forward

and lots in between," said Ms Augustine.

Mr Macrae spoke about the advocacy work of the Church in regard to asylum seekers and gambling.

"This was wonderful as I feel that as individuals we have opinions on such topics but we often tend to shy away from discussing them as a church community," said Ms Augustine.

"I came away from our weekend with the President feeling thankful and a little bit proud of belonging to the Uniting Church"



Rev Jennifer Roberts, Rev Alistair Macrae, Molly and Grace Roberts. Photo courtesy of Jennifer Roberts

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# Lifeline name change better reflects service

By Dot King

FROM MID August many Lifeline Community Care Queensland services became known as UnitingCare Community.

The change of name will more accurately reflect who the organisation is (part of UnitingCare Queensland and the Uniting Church) and provide transparency for stakeholders and clients.

UnitingCare Queensland CEO, Anne Cross, informed *Journey* that there will be no change to services and the Lifeline brand will not be lost.

Traditional Lifeline services such as telephone counselling, suicide prevention and Lifeline shops will continue under the Lifeline name and as part of the

national Lifeline network and be operated in Queensland by UnitingCare Community.

Other services such as disability services, child protection services, refugee support programs, older person's programs, women's refuges and many others, have moved to the UnitingCare Community brand.

The decision to change the name was made because retaining it was no longer an option for a number of reasons.

"We have been developing and delivering programs and services for many years as part of the Lifeline Australia network, yet many of the services had very little to do with what sat within the suite of national Lifeline services," she said. "There were risks associated with the fact

that we do not own the Lifeline brand and the UnitingCare Board and Executive believed that the Lifeline name didn't accurately reflect who Lifeline Community Care Queensland was as an organisation.

"The focus on 'Community' is important as our work is all about supporting the wellbeing of individuals and families in the context of their community.

"It's very outward looking and speaks strongly to our role in contributing to and building stronger communities.

"The decision to rebrand was made with the key objective of how best to continue to develop and deliver the professional and compassionate services we provide to Queensland communities every day," she said.



UnitingCare Queensland CEO, Anne Cross, and UnitingCare Community Executive Director, Bob Gilkes, launch the rebrand. Photo courtesy of UnitingCare Community

## Mateship amidst chaos

By Tara Burton

IN AUGUST Army Chaplain, Rev Alamoti Lavaki, was awarded the Silver Commendation for his work with grief stricken soldiers in Afghanistan.

"It was a very difficult deployment where so many Australians were killed in action," he said. "I was awarded the Silver Commendation for just doing my job by refocusing the soldiers to get on and finish the job in the midst of sadness and trouble."

Mr Lavaki said that in the nine months he was in Afghanistan 10 soldiers had died and more than sixty-five were wounded in action.

"When one of your mates dies,

everyone is affected," he said.

"I encouraged them not to allow the sacrifice of their mates to go down in vain."

He emphasised that the Army mateship and sense of family and friendship was what kept him going during difficult circumstances.

"As a chaplain, you cry with them and laugh with them. We are there as one big family and fighting for each other," he said.

Mr Lavaki experienced the dangers of living in Afghanistan when he visited patrol bases to support the soldiers.

"It was very difficult because there is no place in Afghanistan that is safe," he said.

"Whether I went by helicopter

or by vehicle on the road, you just don't know what is out there because there is danger everywhere.

"I had a few near misses but you just have to go and do your job. Thankfully I knew that there were lots of people who were praying for me."

Mr Lavaki described the importance of Army chaplaincy as "a channel of Christ's love and hope to the soldiers".

"The only sad thing about this job is you are away from home many times, either being deployed overseas or on bush exercises nearly every month.

"Thankfully I have a very supportive family and I salute them."



Chaplain Alamoti Lavaki. Photo courtesy of the Australian Department of Defence

## Boyz Toyz reconnects men to community

IN LATE July the John Thomas Wilson Endowment managed by Perpetual presented Blue Care with \$150,000 for a project which aims to reconnect men with their communities.

Under the Boyz Toyz project, a shed at Blue Care Ashgrove Respite Care will be transformed into a men's shed for the over 65s – complete with television, billiard table and a kitchenette.

Blue Care Executive Director Robyn Batten said with health problems, isolation, loneliness and depression becoming more prevalent among older men, the project aimed to give men an exclusive area to socialise and take part in male-oriented activities.

"We are really pleased to receive this funding," Ms Batten

said. "The John Thomas Wilson Endowment supported Blue Care with \$165,000 last year for a sensory garden project in Brisbane's south and this extra funding will help us provide another much-needed community service in the city's inner west and north-west suburbs.

"The Lions Club of Ashgrove/The Gap has also supported our project by contributing raised garden beds, which will be used for vegetable cultivation.

"Produce from the garden will be used at our Ashgrove and Kenmore centres or in the community."

Boyz Toyz is expected to be operational in about May next year.

"Ultimately this will be a men's club not only for our centre members in Ashgrove and Kenmore but we also envisage asking men in the community who have retired to join us or drop in for a coffee," Ms Batten said.

"This project is a win-win for everyone as it's going to help rekindle those lost community connections which seem to have occurred during the past 20 years as urbanisation of our older suburbs has taken place."

The new shed will also host Blue Care's regular respite, tai chi, falls prevention and physiotherapy sessions.

The Blue Care men's shed is registered with the Australian Men's Shed Association.



Blue Care Executive Director, Robyn Batten, accepts a cheque from The John Thomas Wilson Endowment General Manager, Philanthropy, Andrew Thomas, alongside Ashgrove manager, Caroline McCormack, Blue Care Community Support Officer, Debbie Gibbons, and Blue Care Brisbane Community Care Manager, Cathy Thomas. Photo courtesy of Blue Care



# Reading the bible through new eyes

By Michelle Cook

WE, IN THE Western World, live in a time and space that has been moulded by the concept of modernity and a scientific world view.

But do we realise when we read Scripture that the places we have come from – our cultural heritage, church tradition, the understanding of the world that we have been schooled in, our family etc – influence how we interpret and apply this “unique and apostolic testimony” to our lives as Christians in community with one another?

In some ways this is how it should be. Our interpretation of Scripture needs to be relevant to our own time and context, but realising that other people's contexts are different from ours can open up Scripture in surprising and exciting ways.

During the Protestant Reformation reformers like Calvin rejected the emphasis on the tradition of the church, found in the Catholic Church, in favour of a doctrine of Scripture that emphasised the work of the Holy Spirit in the formulation of Scripture.

This development in theology

coincided with the rise of humanist thought, scientific method and individualism and has influenced how people read Scripture in the West today.

At the beginning of the Twentieth Century there were two main conflicting biblical interpretive camps.

The first was that Scripture is Holy Spirit inspired, therefore inerrant and therefore authoritative on all subjects, including science and geology.

In essence, Christian scholars taking this approach were buying into the modern ideology of rationality.

Instead of seeking understanding through faith, these scholars sought to prove the Bible was authoritative by proving, scientifically, that everything it said on any subject was scientifically as well as spiritually true.

This approach is still found in arguments surrounding intelligent design's place in the biology curriculum.

The second camp looked at Scripture as merely a by-product of its time and place.

Scripture, in this instance, lost its place as the ultimate authority for Christian life and became a

kind of sourcebook from which passages deemed as keeping with modern thinking were praised and those deemed primitive dismissed.

Both these camps accepted the modern world view of a scientific, rationalist approach.

I too am a product of this rationalist, modernist approach to Scripture, although I do not see myself in either of these two camps.

This was made clear to me while I was teaching a unit for Yalga Binbi, the Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress training organisation for Indigenous leaders in the Uniting Church.

School, university and theological college all reinforced a certain world view for me: read (or watch or listen), analyse, interpret, summarise.

During the week that I taught this course in Worship and Preaching I realised how close, and unexamined, this approach to understanding the bible is to me.

The course was fantastic. Eight leaders of churches from the Indigenous communities of Aurukun and Napranum participated. What struck me was



Photo by Jim Larranaga

how different some of the groups' approaches to understanding and applying the Scripture were to mine.

My world is one of analysing and abstracting general concepts.

The world I entered was one of story and sharing – there was a spiralling circularity to the conversations.

The biblical passages we looked at were spoken again and again – stories relating to these passages were spoken again and again.

These are stories and links to Scripture that come from their cultural ways of understanding the world and my Christian journey was richer having heard these stories and being challenged about how my own world view shapes my interpretation of the Scriptures.

Rev Michelle Cook is a Deacon with the UAICC Western Cape in Mapoon, Far North Queensland



Carer Shirley Johnston enjoyed her first visit to Coopers Café.  
Photo by Sam Marsh and courtesy of Blue Print

## Multiple pathways of dementia care

By Tara Burton

ACROSS QUEENSLAND Blue Care is working to assist people with dementia and their carers.

Dementia is a group of diseases of the brain that attacks memory, speech, behaviour and emotion, and affects an estimated 250 000 Australians.

A new café at Blue Care Coopers Plains Respite Care opened in August to provide an informal way for people with dementia and their carers to connect with others in a similar position and with support staff.

Assistant Coordinator, Ruth Mackinnon, said the café offers much needed respite for carers who are often isolated by their caring role as well as a safe social opportunity and the chance to chat with staff about care issues.

“It is very difficult for carers to find time for themselves to recharge,” she said.

“Social isolation can be unbearable.

“The café enables people to have coffee in lovely, quiet surroundings and to meet others.

“It is quiet and safe, and there is no feeling of awkwardness about behaviour.”

Ms Mackinnon said not only had clients and carers benefited from the café, currently open on the first Saturday of every month, but staff had also volunteered their time and enjoyed meeting carers in the informal setting.

“From a staff point of view it is really nice to have the time to talk with carers without phones going or a program running.

“It's important so we can help them find any support they need, or just to listen,” she said.

Elsewhere, Blue Care Pine Woods Aged Care Facility has been successfully running an innovative program for the past six years that assists patients with dementia, particularly women.

Clinical manager Suzanne Meakin said giving women a doll to take care of (‘doll therapy’)

can give some women a sense of purpose and self worth. “It gives them something to do, something to care for,” she said,

“I think a lot of ladies in particular get their self worth from caring for others and being needed and suddenly they're needed by this ‘baby.’”

Ms Meakin emphasised that the treatment doesn't work for everybody.

“Sometimes it's very successful and sometimes it hasn't worked at all. It depends on the individual case.”

Pine Woods also runs an interactive support group for people whose relatives have had to be admitted to residential facilities for dementia care.

“People who have relatives with dementia are in the grieving process because obviously the person that they used to know is no longer here,” she said.

“We provide education on dementia, advanced care planning, grief and loss.”



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# Meditating on God

By Mardi Lumsden

THE PRACTICES of meditation and yoga are often thought of as part of Eastern religions.

Rev Dr Amos Manoharan, minister at Holland Park Central Uniting Church, south of Brisbane, disagrees.

"There are some wrong notions about yoga," he said.

"Sometimes, the word yoga creates some prejudices.

"Some call it a new age concept or Hinduism or devilish. There is no basis for this.

"Yoga is a branch of Indian philosophy and falls into the non-theistic group of philosophy.

"Christian church leaders make use of yoga for health and vitality and add to it a Christian faith dimension.

"Other faiths, such as Hinduism and Buddhism, long ago absorbed yoga and meditation as part of their faith practice."

Dr Manoharan said the word yoga is derived from the Sanskrit word "yuj", which means to join, unite, combine or integrate.

"In Christian terms it can be described as 'yoked together'. So yoga integrates three levels: body, mind and soul," he said.

Dr Manoharan conducts weekly Christian meditation and yoga classes at Holland Park.

He said the congregation were supportive from the start, but the program required careful planning and implementation.

"After taking time to build relationships with the congregation and with the ecumenical ministers' fraternal, I eventually shared my concept and meditation program in order to gain their support.

"I also invited anyone who may have had doubt, or perhaps needed more information, to come and sit as an observer.

"The word travelled around

and the program became an evangelistic tool reaching out to the non Christians to experience shalom in their life."

Congregation member, Megan Evans, said the classes were an important part of her faith practice.

"Firstly, there is a time to relax and then stretches to prepare for yoga postures.

"After a series of postures ... we have breathing and Christian Meditation exercises.

"Numbers grew throughout the year with people joining us from other churches and the wider community."

Dr Manoharan said in our busy world people are searching for peace, relaxation, vitality, strength, healing and harmony.

"There is also a longing to experience God," he said. "One of my main objectives is to see how the spiritual traditions of East and West can enrich each other.

"The major concept for participants of the program is 'let go, let God'.

"Christina yoga can also cure and prevent some common illness and that is one of the reasons I started this program and wrote a book on Christian Yoga and Meditation."

The Gap Uniting Church member, Shirley Sargeant, has been practicing Christian meditation for 26 years.

"Meditation is not something we do; it's something the Holy Spirit does in and through us," she said.

"Meditation is really about developing your relationship with God in a whole kind of way.

"Meditation is paying attention.

"If we want to be close to the heart of God we have to be willing to listen to God as well as speak to him."

Ms Sargeant said although meditation is quite foreign to many people, it has been a central part of Christian devotion throughout the centuries.

"It wasn't foreign to the authors of scripture at all," she said.

In her meditation classes the first thing she does is give people a handout of scripture quotes about meditating.

"In the gospel it is often referred to as prayer, that Jesus went up the hill to pray.

"I'm quite certain that wasn't just a one-way prayer.

"It was listening to God and a reconnecting when he was tired, because he was human. We have to remember that."

Dr Manoharan agreed.

"There is no rigid demarcation between prayer, meditation and contemplation," he said.

"All these may be happening in prayer.



WEB

The Stillpoint Centre for Personal and Spiritual Growth

[www.stillpoint.org.au](http://www.stillpoint.org.au)

"We may say that the words of my mouth as oral prayer, the meditation of the heart as the prayer of the heart, and contemplation as pondering over or communion with God's presence."

Ms Sargeant said she felt people were yearning for a deep spiritual connection with God and that practicing meditation is one way of finding that.

"It is a spiritual discipline," she said.

"John Wesley was committed to daily meditation.

"You only need to practice when you're beginning five to ten minutes a day and gradually you'll become more comfortable and you'll want that time.

"In the Christian life there needs to be a balance between contemplation and action.

"Meditation is contemplation with a focus. Focussing on God is really what it's about.

"It's just a door that we open to experience God. There are thousands of ways that human beings experience God."

Ms Sargeant runs a monthly class at Stillpoint, an ecumenical centre in Toowoong for personal and spiritual growth and Dr Manoharan runs a weekly class at Holland Park Central Uniting Church.



EVENT

The Taizé Community in Brisbane and Toowoomba.

16-17 September. See What's On for details



Photo by Kim Hattaway

## Facebook becomes users' lifeline

FACEBOOK AND Lifeline Australia have initiated an important relationship to better monitor and manage the safety and wellbeing of Facebook users who are generating suicidal content or behaviour online.

Lifeline's Director of Communications, Chris Wagner, said they had been talking with Facebook for some time about how to help people who are experiencing thoughts or feelings of suicide.

"We have jointly prepared messages that are generated and sent privately to the person of concern when they display suicidal ideation.

"The messages encourage the person to contact Lifeline's crisis line on 13 11 14 or to access Lifeline's online crisis chat service.

"Those in immediate danger are encouraged to contact 000," he said.

As a further measure to promote help-seeking, Lifeline's details are also listed on Facebook pages dealing with suicide and mental health content to be visible to all Australian users.

"Facebook have initiated this important step to better monitor the wellbeing of their account holders by providing Lifeline's details as a pathway

to care.

"Lifeline is committed to strengthening this relationship with Facebook to ensure that help-seekers have access to our services in their time of need, now and into the future," Mr Wagner said.

Facebook spokesperson Debbie Frost said they were pleased to welcome the expertise of Lifeline.

"They will help to make our robust reporting system even more effective as friends are encouraged to look out for one another on Facebook, as they do in the real world," said Ms Frost.



"This supplements the number of ways to get help already available on Facebook."

As Australia's largest provider of crisis support services, Lifeline counsellors speak to over 1250 people in crisis every day, including up to 50

people at high risk of suicide.

If you or someone you know is experiencing an emotional crisis, call Lifeline on 13 11 14.

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



# Shining through grey clouds

By Tara Burton and  
Mardi Lumsden

IN APRIL, in response to the flooding in Brisbane in January, a few Uniting Church members opened a support centre to help community members suffering from grief, pain, bereavement, and life direction and relationship issues.

Known as the Grey Clouds Blue Skies Support Centre, it provides free workshops,

seminars, small group and one-on-one counselling by a trained, compassionate and dedicated team of volunteers.

Based at the Indooroopilly Uniting Church, the centre is located opposite one of Queensland's largest shopping centres.

Convenor, Rev Ruth Hill, a retired deacon, said the location makes it easy for people to drop in.

"We're only a bus or train trip

away. What we're doing here is just growing," said Ms Hill.

She also emphasised that the purpose of the centre is not to try to solve problems, but to listen and let people share their stories.

"I had a lady who came in and she had lost her dog to cancer," Ms Hill said.

"She really didn't know why she was here exactly, except that she was hurting.

"I said 'tell me about your doggie' ... and when she left she

bounded out of the church," said Ms Hill.

Dr Tracey Burgess-Limerick, a registered psychologist who volunteers at the support centre, said that at the start of the year setting up such a centre seemed like an impossible task.

But after plenty of prayer and the determination of those involved (especially Ms Hill), they were off and running.

She agreed that listening was the best medicine.

"We're here to listen to you, to walk with you and help you find your way," she said.

Grey Clouds Blue Skies has conducted two workshops since opening, *Riding the Waves: handling the post flood ups and downs and Happiness Happens*.

Fifteen people attended the *Happiness Happens* workshop with guest speakers Rev Dr Elizabeth Nolan and Rev Dr Geoff Thompson.

Dr Burgess-Limerick said that by the end of the workshop all participants were well and truly on board.

"It's about just being happy first and then you will do amazing things, you will have everything you want.

"It's so simple and it's so obvious and we all know it but to actually hear it is quite powerful."

Ms Hill said the Support

Centre is something that other congregations could also do to help those in the community who are feeling blue, but the most important thing was to do what you feel called to do.

"You have to work with what you've got," she said.

"When you have five [people with] PhDs show up at your meeting you work with them."

Dr Burgess-Limerick said, "It's about finding the gifts that people have and having fun with it and not overwhelming them and asking for more than what their gifts are.

"It's exciting to see people getting more energy.

"I think one of the talents that we've got is coaching people when they get passionate.

"If you follow that spirit, if you follow that passion, the things that erupt are amazing."

Ms Hill said it is important to share ideas and knowledge across the Church and the community.

"My hope for the future is that we'll be able to say to the church, and to the Presbytery as a whole, this is what we do here, what do you do there?" she said.

"How can we work in with you?

"What can we do for you that you can't do for yourself?

"And what can you do for us that we can't do for ourselves?"



Dr Tracey Burgess-Limerick and Rev Ruth Hill at the Grey Clouds Blue Skies Support Centre.  
Photo by Mardi Lumsden

## Australia's secret

By Rev Sarah Williamson

SUICIDE IS an abrasive word. I don't even like writing it, let alone saying it.

In 2009, we lost 1633 men and 499 women to suicide.

That's 2132 people with mums, dads, wives, husbands, brothers,

sisters and children.

In the same year, 1507 people lost their lives in road crashes.

I don't wish to detract from the tragic loss of life on our roads, and the communities this affects.

But I do wish to point out that, despite the number of people dying by suicide being higher

than our road toll, responsible discussion about the issue by the media, and in our own communities, is muted.

This is partly what led South Australia's Moderator, Rev Rob Williams, and myself to create an awareness campaign called *Suicide: It's no secret*.

"I want to do something tangible to promote responsible and healthy media and community discussion about

suicide so that people can be offered support, grieve – and find hope – together," said Mr Williams.

Silence and shame are not the answer: we want to help open the discussion and the normalising of depression and mental ill health so that lives can be saved.

Growing up in a rural area, I have been particularly keen to see open discussion about suicide be able to flourish in our rural areas.

I fundamentally believe discussion is the starter for true change and the actual saving of lives.

As a church, we have a central role in many of our communities, especially rural communities.

We care for those who are hurting and bury those who die.

Many of our ministers can testify to the incredible sadness of walking alongside another precious life lost to intentional self-harm.

Rev Rob Stoner is one minister who sees the desperation that can set a course of anxiety, depression and, sadly, suicide.

"The rural downturn (drought and now various circumstances affecting fruit growers beyond our control in the Riverland) has meant for many people whose crops fail, they feel the failure personally," he said.

"Suicide prevention begins by recognising the social needs of the farmers, the bad times they



READ

*Praying in Secret* by  
Hedley and Lyn Beare



WEB

World Suicide  
Prevention Day  
10 September  
[www.iasp.info](http://www.iasp.info)



Photo by sanja gjenero

are experiencing and how that leads into depression."

The campaign began on 28 August at Scots Church, Adelaide, with spokespeople addressing the media, followed by a Service of Remembrance.

The following six week period after the launch will see approximately a dozen services held throughout South Australia in rural areas.

Rev Sarah Williamson (Deacon) is the Uniting Church South Australia's Solidarity and Justice Officer in Mission Resourcing SA

For more information or resources to run similar services visit [nosecret.org.au](http://nosecret.org.au)

# Energy report names Queensland Church

By Jane Moad

IN THE 2009-10 National Greenhouse and Energy Report, The Uniting Church in Australia Property Trust (Q.) is listed as having a significant impact on the environment, having reported its energy consumption to be more than 500 Terajoules.

The Uniting Church in Queensland reports its energy consumption as a group (the Property Trust),

supplying the consumption information from UnitingCare, Wesley Mission Brisbane, Alexandra Park conference centre, the Synod office, schools and a representative sample of congregations.

The information reported under the National Greenhouse and Energy Reporting Act includes electricity and gas usage, as well as fuel consumption where applicable.

As the Property Trust has reported its consumption to be more than 500 Terajoules, this benchmark means that we also now need to report under the Energy Efficiency Opportunities Act by preparing and providing an assessment plan which outlines how the organisation will become more energy efficient in the future.

According to Gary Adsett, Property Services Manager, rather than thinking of the Church in Queensland as being a big polluter, this figure reflects the energy required to perform ministry and mission across a large, multi-site organisation.

"Blue Care staff drive hundreds of kilometres to visit patients and there would be significant energy used in diagnosing and treating patients in hospitals," said Mr Adsett.

Based on the assessments of data to date, 80 per cent of the Church's energy

consumption comes from the activities of UnitingCare, which will coordinate the Church's reporting to the Department of Resources, Energy and Tourism.

"UnitingCare has established a project control group to represent agencies in assessing and analysing energy consumption and look for alternative strategies to reduce the Church's impact on the environment," said Mr Adsett.

"The Synod office, schools and congregations also have a role to play in regularly reviewing their energy consumption practices and looking for opportunities for continual improvement.

"In particular, when buildings are constructed or renovated, as well as following legislation, we exercise a preference for energy efficient design, materials and equipment where possible."



Queensland Synod Property Services Manager, Gary Adsett.  
Photo by Holly Jewell

## Vale John Stott

By Wendy Toulmin

JOHN R W Stott CBE, the former Rector of All Souls Church, Langham Place, London, and one of the most significant Christian leaders of the 20th century, died on 27 July, aged 90.

*Time* Magazine named him alongside Nelson Mandela and Bill Gates in its "most influential people" list of 2005.

He was once described by Billy Graham as the "most respected clergyman in the world today".

His leadership of the evangelical movement helped move it from a narrow-minded fundamentalism after the Second World War to the fastest growing section of global Christianity.

He was a significant leader of the Lausanne Movement which promotes worldwide Christian evangelism.

George Carey, former Archbishop of Canterbury, said, "John Stott's contribution to developing a balanced evangelical faith and to a biblically rooted Anglican communion is probably without parallel in our generation."

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

- Advertisement -

## Blue Care Launches Carina Community

Azure Blue Lifestyle Communities continue to be a popular choice among Brisbane retirees, with more than 45 per cent of the Carina apartments reserved well ahead of their construction.

Blue Care Executive Director, Robyn Batten, said the new \$80 million community, within a four-hectare site on Richmond Road, has struck a chord with buyers in Carina and neighbouring suburbs.

Upon its completion, Azure Blue Carina will consist of 98 independent retirement living apartments, including six single level villas and a separate component offering care.

Well-elevated the majority of the apartments will have panoramic views over the suburbs and surrounding districts.

Amenities will include a swimming pool, children's play area, café, barbecue area, library, gym, hair salon, function room and cinema.

Co-located services will include allied health services and a 128-bed residential aged-care facility where care staff will have access to the latest equipment and residents will enjoy modern facilities.

Ms Batten said careful planning and consideration has been given to preserving as much of the site's natural environment as possible. "More than half the site will be retained as natural bushland reserve or landscaping with buildings on the site connected via pathways".

To register your interest for Azure Blue Carina telephone 1800 007 218



Artist Impression - Azure Blue Carina

## Azure Blue Redcliffe Under Construction



Artist Impression - Azure Blue Redcliffe - Completion Anticipated Mid 2012

This is the first of the Blue Care's Azure Blue Lifestyle Communities to launch, located on Anzac Avenue at Redcliffe, opposite the Redcliffe Hospital.

With its completion anticipated in 2012 the apartment buildings are well under construction on this site. This integrated retirement community will feature 122 independent living apartments consisting of three multi-storey building as well as a 128-bed residential aged-care facility.

Amenities will include a swimming pool, barbecue area, community centre, and café, dining area, library and media room.

Village Manager Vikki Mitchell said the development was creating a buzz in the local community, with many people stopping by the sales office. "The people who have reserved their apartments here are looking forward to enjoying the resort-style living with the assurance that Blue Care's full range of services is available should they require it in the future."

An information centre at 99 Anzac Avenue, Redcliffe is open Monday to Saturday from 10am to 4pm.

Visit the web site [www.azureblue.com.au](http://www.azureblue.com.au) or telephone 1800 007 218



# Middle ground lost in refugee debate

By Caryn Rogers

WITH THE refugee 'issue' in Australia, it seems like you can only be 'bleeding heart' pro or a 'get lost, we're full' against - or so most media outlets, bumper stickers and political powers would have us believe.

Three Australians keen to invest in a more constructive dialogue are Darren Hassan, Brad Chilcott and Benson Saulo. They have found their paths crossing over the issue of what it means to be Australian, and what a 'fair go' looks like.

Darren Hassan, after participating in SBS's four part documentary, *Go Back to Where You Came From*, came away from the experience affected spiritually, but labelled as a racist by the greater part of Australia's online community.

Brad Chilcott, an Assemblies of God pastor and founder of Welcome to Australia, grew tired of the brewing unwelcome and 'policy-over-people' based discussions around asylum seekers.

Benson Saulo, the first Indigenous Australian Youth Representative to the United Nations, has spent the past few months on his tour of engagement, with the focus solely on a unified Australia - for all who arrive on our shores, no matter how or when they arrived.

The three find themselves on the compassionate side of moderation and frustrated at the inability to dialogue with any sense of dignity - for their own points of view, and dignity for the people their opinions involve.

For 42-year-old Darren Hassan, *Go Back to Where You Came From* changed his understanding of, "how massive and complex the issue really is; I think it's given me more information on how sad it is," he told *New Times*, the magazine of the Uniting Church in South Australia.

The series saw six ordinary Australians agree to challenge their preconceived notions about refugees and asylum seekers.

They embarked on a confronting 25-day journey tracing, in reverse, the journeys that refugees have taken to reach Australia.

An ex-Army officer, Mr Hassan was shocked to emerge from the documentary series to find himself an easily recognised, and largely disliked, personality because of his outspoken, unemotional on-screen persona.

"I'm not anti-refugee, but I think there should be order and control.

"I vehemently oppose people getting on a boat, but it doesn't

**They should stay, or go, feeling like they were valued as human beings, that their human rights were upheld and that their humanity was valued.**

mean I hate them. I had plenty of people, hiding from a safe place online, calling me a racist. I don't understand that or find it intelligent.

"I try and look at things practically and politically.

"With all the millions of refugees we agree to assist with the UN Charter - although I think we should be taking more through

the humanitarian program - we need to be practical, we need a place to put them and we need a plan to integrate them."

"We need to be able to have a balanced discussion.

"I'm not an expert on this, I'm just a guy who was thrown into a scenario on TV and asked to share my views and experience."

Thirty-two-year-old Brad Chilcott founded Welcome to Australia in 2010 in a bid to stem the simmering culture of unwelcome against refugees in general, but against so-called 'boat people' in particular.

"I think the volume of the whole debate is disproportionate - these people are being used as a political football."

Mr Chilcott, considered a 'bleeding heart', is clear that the 42 million refugees in the world can't all be settled in Australia.

"I don't think anyone on the left or compassionate end of the issue thinks that we can, or should, put them all up here," he said.

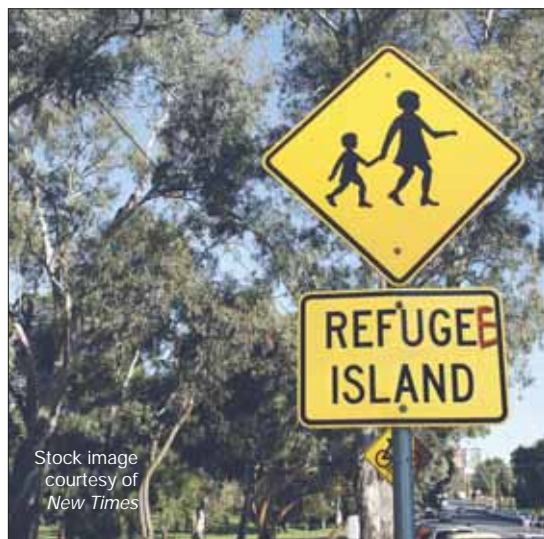
"When they come into our area of international responsibilities, they should be treated as human beings.

"They should stay, or go, feeling like they were valued as human beings, that their human rights were upheld and that their humanity was valued.

"I think the issue with the media and political debate is that it operates in a register where everyday Australians wouldn't naturally talk about politics.

"The whole debate is about numbers and boats and refugee conventions. Australia, largely, doesn't engage in that.

"When the media shows that all sides of political parties



Stock image courtesy of New Times

can't agree, Australians have a tendency to think that there is no solution.

"The general population, and the church, are reluctant to say there is a solution because the major players haven't come together on one."

For Benson Saulo, it's the idea of a fair go that is a large part of how he believes we can move towards a unified Australia.

He's not out to reinvent the wheel, he just wants to see organisations already at work, working more effectively for a holistic approach that works.

A 23-year-old professional, Mr Saulo has been the poster boy for Indigenous employment, but that's not the role he's taking on as a representative to the UN.

His engagement base is broader than Indigenous issues, though they are a key part of his focus work.

A firm believer that education is a critical part to sound and holistic human rights, Mr Saulo said that to push forward together as Australians is to embrace diversity.

"I'm looking at what's happening in policy and practice," he said. "With Indigenous affairs and with asylum seekers, this is the stuff where political leaders need to be bipartisan.

"People have wanted to become a reconciled nation, bridging all sorts of inequalities.

"We want leaders who are mature enough to form joint partnerships to create solutions - not just use reconciliation as a political power play."

Largely, the problem in discussing the issue is that the rhetoric being used is recycled, and often quite offensive.

Imagine a refugee who, after escaping a war-ravaged country to try to make a new life here, reads the 'get lost, we're full' bumper stickers and feels that hostility endorsed by stares, rhetoric and racist attitudes.

Part of engaging a broader cross-section of opinions is allowing for the language usage to change and the name-calling and political show-boating to stop.

It might even mean caring more about why asylum seekers came here than how.

It's not as simple as being 'for' or 'against' refugees - there's a very large spectrum in between the two which must be explored with intellect, compassion and generous spirits.

Then we might manage to uphold, with integrity, Australia's belief in a 'fair go'.

This article first appeared in *New Times*

## 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:

### What don't you believe?

WHAT DO you get when you combine Yusuf Islam, progressive Uniting Church members, an altar call and the school chaplaincy program? It started with a brilliant documentary about singer-songwriter Cat Stevens (now known as Yusuf Islam).

Essentially a series of monologues, he began as

Steven Demetriou Giorgio (Yusuf's birth name) and progressed through his long search for meaning, rejecting Greek Orthodox and Baptist Christianity, his wandering along Buddhist paths, the darkness of Cat Stevens' dabbling in magic and spiritualism, and the sense of purpose and peace Yusuf Islam found when he

converted and made his statement of faith to Islam. He knows and states clearly what he believes.

I watched a news story about the High Court challenge to Federal Government funding of state school chaplaincy.

A protagonist said it's not about promoting atheism, but there's no room for God or religion in schools. He wouldn't get a place on a school debating team, but he knows and states what he believes.

I visited a Uniting Church the following Sunday as the congregation celebrated an adult Baptism.

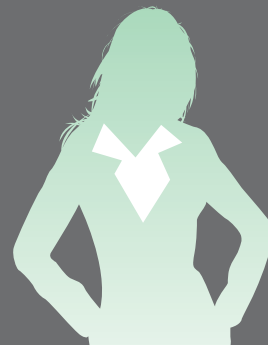
The minister preached from Paul's letter to the Romans,

about being baptised into Christ's death and resurrection. It was basic and powerful stuff.

At the end she made an 'altar call'. If anyone wanted to repent and express their faith in the risen Jesus, they could see her in the corner room after the worship. Two people did.

Smiling as I left, I was given a visitor's card to complete. The lady with the card indicated the discussion taking place with the minister.

She assured me, "Some of us are progressive. We don't all believe that stuff about Jesus actually rising from the dead." I wasn't sure what that makes those who do.



More importantly it left me wondering why many Christians are quick to say what we reject and what we don't believe.

Can we stand in the marketplace of ideas and state clearly what we do believe?

September 16-17

## Taizé Community visits Brisbane and Toowoomba

This September members of the Taizé Community and Queensland Churches Together (QCT) will host ecumenical events in Brisbane and Toowoomba. September 16, 7.30-9.30pm, ecumenical evening prayer in Toowoomba at St. Luke's Anglican Church.

September 17, 10am-5pm, prayer and worship workshop at St Andrew's Lutheran Church, Wickham Tce, Brisbane City. Musicians have the opportunity to work with the Brothers from Taizé. Contact [admin@qct.org.au](mailto:admin@qct.org.au).

September 17, 7pm-9pm, ecumenical evening prayer, St Martin's House, St John's Cathedral, Brisbane City. QCT 20th Anniversary celebrations Br. Ghislain and Br. Matthew from The Taizé Community will lead Ecumenical Evening Prayer in the Taizé's particular style. Preceded by a shared meal at 5.30pm. RSVP to [gfinn@anglicanbrisbane.org.au](mailto:gfinn@anglicanbrisbane.org.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](mailto:smpres@gmail.com) or visit [www.spiritedgenerosity.com](http://www.spiritedgenerosity.com).

**September 5, 10am- 12pm. The Uniting Church Adult Fellowship** Queensland Synod Committee annual service at Caloundra Uniting Church. The Moderator will speak. A basket lunch will follow the service. Contact Patsy Dale

**September 9, 6-9pm. Aunty Jean's Soup Night** presents The Future of Aboriginal Christian Leadership at Kenmore Uniting Church. A delicious soup dinner and you will hear young Indigenous leaders talk about their Christian ministry in the community. Contact Heather den Houting on 3772 8420 or [kenmoreminister@dovenetq.net.au](mailto:kenmoreminister@dovenetq.net.au).

**September 10. World Suicide Prevention Day.**

**September 10, 8am-1pm. Brookfield Country Market** at Brookfield Uniting Church. If you would like a stall please contact E Mcphee on 3374 1404 or [emcphee@westnet.com.au](mailto:emcphee@westnet.com.au).

**September 10, 8am-1pm. Spring Fair and Flower Show** at Elanora Uniting Church. Entertainment, stalls, competitions in cooking, cut flowers, floral art, and food. Contact Mary Flynn on 5598 8733 or [flynn10@bigpond.com](mailto:flynn10@bigpond.com).

**September 10, 12-2pm. The Beauty of Creation** with Floral Art Designer Robert Manton at Redcliffe Uniting Church. An afternoon of music and spectacular floral art designs. Afternoon Tea will be served. Adults \$10. Children free. Contact Robyne Everitt on 3283 4066 or [redcliffeuc@dovenetq.net.au](mailto:redcliffeuc@dovenetq.net.au).

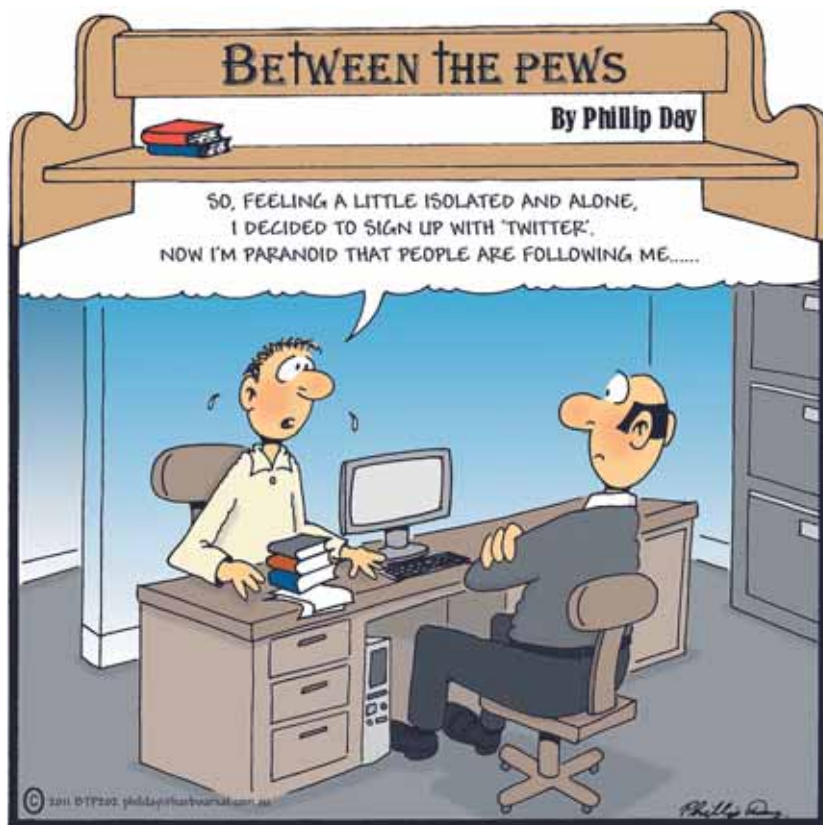
**September 10-23, 10am-4pm. Art from the Margins**, at Inala Community Art Gallery and Cultural Centre, Brisbane Institute of Art, and Wesley House. A free exhibition showcasing the creative talents of artists who are disadvantaged, disenfranchised or isolated. This year, enjoy markets, cool jazzy tunes and other live music at the various exhibition venues. Contact Emma Tucker on 3621 4520 or [e.tucker@wmb.org.au](mailto:e.tucker@wmb.org.au).

**September 18, 6.30-9.30pm. Information on Sri Lankan Situation** at Aspley Uniting Church. Guest speaker Dr Brian Senewiratne (well known human rights activist). Contact Rev Manopavan on 3261 2256 or [manopavans@bigpond.com](mailto:manopavans@bigpond.com).

**September 28-October 1, 9am-5pm. The GOOD NEWS** according to Mark seminars at Middle Ridge Uniting Church, Toowoomba. This four-day workshop will provide historical, literary and theological background to Mark's gospel valuable for preaching and worship leading. \$60 full course, \$15 Saturday only. Contact Rev Rob Callow on 4636 3850 or [rob.callow@bigpond.com](mailto:rob.callow@bigpond.com).

**7-12 October. 29th Queensland Synod** meeting at Alexandra Park Conference Centre.

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



BUNDABERG UNITING Church took part in their very first Cancer Council Relay for Life in August. They entered two teams and survived the walking and the cold nights to complete the 18 hour event. The event raised over \$100 000. Team members are already talking about being back for next year's event. Photo By Matt Gees

## Stop and smell the flowers

ON FRIDAY 2 and Saturday 3 September, Boonah Uniting Church will hold their annual fete.

Mary Gasteen is a keen floral artist and her artwork will be featured at the fete.

She was amazed at the impact the floral art had on so many people who attended in previous years.

"For the first time some churchgoers were saying they could see the sequence in the Bible story," she said. "And others who were not churchgoers were seeing the story for the very first time."

Fassifern Uniting Church Ladies Fellowship Secretary, Kaye Stegeman, said this year the hall display themes will be floral and the scriptural displays will be based on a hymn of the entrant's choice.

"For the first time, the scriptural displays will be open to individuals as well as local churches and people from out of the district are welcome to enter as well," she said. "We feel we have been guided to make changes that have turned this annual event into a blessing for our congregation and our community."

"We hope other churches will consider floral art as a way of helping people speak about their faith as well"

For more information contact Kaye Stegeman on [stegeman@harboursat.com.au](mailto:stegeman@harboursat.com.au)

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### Find the Church





## Economics for Life: An economist reflects on the meaning of life, money and what really matters

By Ian Harper, Acorn Press, 2011, RRP \$30

Reviewed by Terry Edwinsth, a member of The Gap Uniting Church.

*ECONOMICS FOR Life* relates the journey of a hands-on academic economist who has contributed to Australia's recent economic policy input to various Federal governments over the past 20 years.

He has done so from a Christian point of view.

It has been this marriage of Christianity with contemporary economic principles that has driven the author in his daily job and also in the writing of this book.

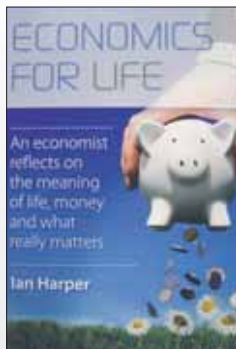
The chapters are a mix of economics written for both lay and professional readers alike interspersed with Ian's testimony of his recent

Christian journey.

Many readers would empathise with Mr Harper concerning his daily Christian witness in Australia's secular society.

Mr Harper has an intimate understanding of Australia's economic history up to and including the Global Financial Crisis and the public policy that governments have employed to distribute wealth to citizens and the laws enacted to enable equitable operation of the Australian financial system.

*Economics for Life* is easy to read and understand. It provides valuable insight into contemporary Australian society as viewed by a Christian economic commentator.



The founder of modern economics, Adam Smith, a professor of moral philosophy at the University of Glasgow, wrote the economic text *Wealth of Nations* published in 1776.

Mr Harper's book endeavours to bring moral judgment to the fore in his everyday economic deliberations in 2011.

It is a fascinating blend of seemingly two disparate subjects but one that should interest most readers interested in God and mammon.

I certainly drew inspiration from his insights both secular and spiritual.

## A 30 Day Retreat: A personal guide to spiritual renewal

By Fr William C Mills, Paulist Press, 2010, RRP \$27.95

Reviewed by Barbara Bailey.

*A 30 DAY Retreat* is a rich resource for those who seek a deeper spirituality; those who are prepared to find a quiet place and listen to the voice of the Triune God as it comes through scripture and prayer, meditation and reflection.

This guide is a treasure chest of experience and imagination presented in such a way that anyone can participate and feel renewed.

The writer leads the reader through some of the well loved Gospel stories and through a

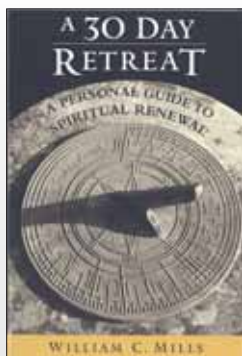
deep reflection of a few of Paul's letters.

Father Mills writes with warm and engaging words showing he lives in the real world full of the distractions of everyday life such as the challenges of rearing children and paying mortgages.

He leads the reader to take time out to reflect and discern, to focus on the important amid the distractions.

His method of slow meditative reflection follows the thought that reading less is more.

There are 30 sections for the month cycle each ending with a section which offers further



reading, reflection and questions.

*A 30 Day Retreat* is suitable for individual study but is also highly recommended for small group studies.

## Belief: Readings on the reason for faith

Selected and with an introduction by Francis S. Collins, Harper One, 2010, RRP \$19.99

Reviewed by Karyl Davison.

WITH THE rise of 'new' atheism and the often unhelpful debates about faith in God, this collection of writings is timely.

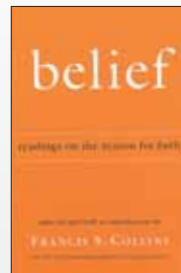
*Belief* is a collection of writings from thoughtful men and women throughout the ages (beginning with Plato) who, using their intellect and reason, explain the basis for their faith-based belief system.

It seeks to answer the fundamental question, "Is there a God?" as it examines the nature and possibilities of faith and belief, leaving readers to draw their own conclusions.

There are a number of faith perspectives represented, although the majority are written from a Christian perspective.

Some readings are fairly accessible, others fairly dense but all represent the writer's own exploration of faith.

Some topics covered are: NT Wright on justice and spirituality; classic conceptions of faith from Plato, Augustine, Anselm, Aquinas, Locke



and Pascal, Desmond Tutu and Elie Wiesel write on the problem of evil and suffering and John Polkinghorne on the relationship between faith and science.

Other contributors include CS Lewis, Thomas Merton, Alistair McGrath, Mother Teresa, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Martin Luther King Jr, Gandhi and the Dalai Lama.

I think the collection is poorer for the lack of an Islamic perspective and the absence of voices from Latin America and Indigenous people.

However, anyone really seeking to explore faith and reason would find this book helpful. It would also be valuable for a study group or reading group to work through.

## This country anytime anywhere: An anthology of new indigenous writing from the Northern Territory

By Karl Jananbi Dank, Nova Vista Publishing, 2010, RRP \$19.95

Reviewed by John Ruhle.

WHAT A great little book! *This country anytime anywhere* is a collection of short stories and poems, some translated from language written by first time Indigenous authors from the Northern Territory.

The stories are fun, insightful, heartfelt, revolving around country and full of a depth of meaning that comes from being intimately connected to country and kin.

The stories represent good news stories in that they are written by authors who were encouraged and tutored to tell their stories through a series of workshops across the Northern Territory.

They are also good news stories because they help maintain an ancient and wonderful culture through telling stories in language and they are good news stories

because of the hope, integrity and worth they give to the first time authors and also us as readers.

As the foreword says, "The multilingual aspect of this anthology is groundbreaking. With eight NT Indigenous languages as well as English included, some of the strength and beauty of NT Aboriginal languages is conveyed."

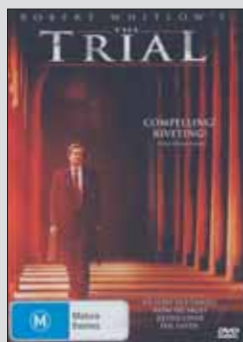
I highly recommend *This country anytime anywhere* to anyone wanting a good read, a bit of a chuckle and an insight into one of the oldest cultures and peoples on this planet.



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

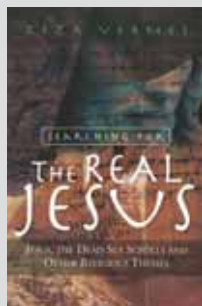
### The Trial (DVD)

Directed by Gary Wheeler, CONDIAS Entertainment, 2011, RRP \$29.95



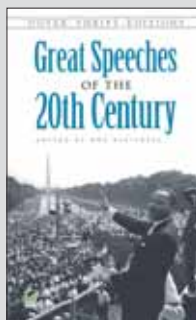
### Searching for the REAL JESUS: Jesus, The Dead Sea Scrolls and Other Religious Thoughts

By Geza Vermes, SCM Press, 2009, RRP \$39.95



### Great Speeches of the 20th Century

Edited by Bob Blaisdell, Dover Publications, New York, 2008, RRP \$5.95



## 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](http://www.mosaicresources.com.au) or <http://rainbowbooks.com.au>.

# Pushing the peloton to worship

UNITING CHURCH members across Australia have been invited to leave their cars at home and cycle to church during the second annual Ride to Worship Week, October 7-13.

The event, an initiative of the Australian Religious Response to Climate Change (ARRCC), encourages people of all faiths to help tackle climate change through a fun, healthy community activity.

Sydney Uniting Church member Miriam Pepper is the National Ride to Worship coordinator.

She hopes participating in the event will encourage people to cycle regularly throughout the year.

"It reduces greenhouse gas emissions, other air pollutants and noise and it also lowers our dependency on oil," she said.

"We can also improve our physical and mental health and reduce the risk of life threatening illnesses including heart disease,

obesity and diabetes."

Uniting Church President, Rev Alistair Macrae, is an enthusiastic supporter of Ride to Worship.

"Too often we get caught up indoors and focused on our 'to do' list rather than taking pleasure in God's creation," he said.

"Riding to worship can provide

an opportunity to reflect, enjoy our beautiful world and save on fossil fuels."

Ms Pepper said people who could not cycle could still participate by walking, catching public transport or car pooling.

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



Uniting Church President, Rev Alistair Macrae, enjoys cycling around his hometown. Photo courtesy of *Insights*

## On Sunday 4 September please pray for Moggill Uniting Church

THE ORIGINAL occupants of Moggill, in Brisbane's west, were Aboriginal.

Moggill is the name of the creek in the area and is derived from 'Maggil', a word from the Yugarubul language of the Jagara people meaning 'home of the water dragon'.

In January Moggill was visited by the 'water dragon' as it quietly and insidiously reclaimed land taking no cognisance of the houses and buildings in its way.

In the darkness the eerie sound of the Shopping Centre alarm alerted the local residents that the water was on the move.

This whole Centre was flooded leaving residents with only one small store and totally cut off from the rest of Brisbane.

The Moggill Uniting Church became the unofficial evacuation centre and an amazing story of teamwork, self-sacrifice, resilience and hospitality (even for pets) emerged. So many different people stood together to help those affected: a superb medical team, catering groups, accommodation for all, food distribution, emotional care, etc.

This caring has not abated through the ensuing months.

We ask for your prayers:

- to thank God for so many blessings during and after the

crisis, for all the heroes who selflessly cared for others, the service groups and for the various help agencies of the Australian government

- for those who have not been able, as yet, to return to their homes

- for the children who lost all their precious toys and belongings

- for those who were not able to cope with the damage of their homes

- for those who are beginning to dread the wet season for fear of more floods

- for us all to continue to reach out to the community in love and care.

## On Sunday 18 September please pray for Holland Park Central Uniting Church

ALTHOUGH A lot smaller in attendance numbers than during the heyday of the 1960s and 70s, enthusiasm and commitment continue to be high in the well-known A-frame church at Holland Park.

Whilst the majority of congregation members are retirees, some of whom are in care facilities, we have a number of workers and a few young families.

We request prayer for our much-loved minister, Rev Dr Amos Manoharan and his wife Shanthi. Amos spends long hours in visitation, one of his

many gifts that we value so highly.

He also leads our weekly Bible studies and on Friday nights his course, Christian Yoga and Meditation – a wonderful way to finish the working week.

Our small Sunday School class is taught by the inimitable Bronwyn Boyce, a woman of boundless energy and patience.

She would value your prayer not only for her young charges, but also for herself as she seeks to impart God's vision to each of them.

Towards the end of 2009 we invited the Korean Crossway Congregation, under the leadership of minister, Rev David

Won Kim, to share our venue.

What a valuable collaboration this has proved to be.

Even though the congregations are entirely separate, there are times when we join together for special events, services and combined Church Council meetings.

Please pray for both congregations as we continue to exist in harmony.

We appreciate your prayers as we try to determine and live out God's will for the people of the Holland Park Central church and our wider community.

## On Sunday 11 September please pray for Maranoa Uniting Church

MARANOA UNITING Church is made up of six distinct communities.

While some needs overlap there is a unique character and there are needs specific to each community.

The centre of Maranoa is Roma.

The church building there hosts Uniting Church and Lutheran Church congregations who at this time worship, share ministry and fellowship together.

Wallumbilla and Yuleba to the east of Roma are small communities, primarily agriculture dependent.

The coal seam gas industry is putting pressures on the land and producers. People in these areas work together as community and work together as Church.

Injune and Arcadia Valley are to the north of Roma and again are mostly agriculture dependent, now having the same pressures from coal seam gas exploration.

There is tourism in that area as it is near the beautiful Carnarvon Gorge.

Denominational barriers are few in these communities

and in Injune people worship at Injune Churches Together.

Mitchell is to the west where ordained ministers are fewer and travel farther.

For these communities pray:

- that the Church will build on community relationships and be able to discern and respond to the needs of individuals and groups within the community

- for those who are isolated by distance and economics

- for the people who find themselves on the fringe

- for local government to be effective and efficient in stewarding resources of the region

- that the gas industry treat people with equity and demonstrate care for the environment which produces so much of the nation's food supply

- for the Church, as it responds ecumenically to the region's needs.

On this day please also pray for those affected by the 10th anniversary of the bombing of the World Trade Center in New York City and the subsequent events.

## On Sunday 25 September please pray for the Nanango, Yarraman and Blackbutt congregations

WE ARE situated about two hour's drive north-west of Brisbane in a beautiful rural setting.

Our communities are small, but there are always plenty of things happening in our area.

We would appreciate your prayers for our churches and for our communities.

There are still many here who are suffering emotionally and financially from the January floods.

Farmers lost their summer crops and some are reporting that their income is 70 per cent less than it was 12 months ago.

This makes a real difference to the viability of businesses and the churches in the area.

In the September school holidays there will once again be a South Burnett UCA Day Camp.

Please support us in prayer for the planning of the Day Camp and that both campers and leaders will be blessed as they participate in it together.

This is one of our key outreaches to children who

come to the camp, and training for our youth who provide leadership.

On 22 October the Nanango congregation will be celebrating the 100 year anniversary of our church building.

The churches that became part of the Uniting Church have been active in this area for well over 100 years, but we will use this opportunity to both give thanks for God's faithfulness over the years and to entrust the future to God as we seek to continue to serve this community in the name of Jesus.

Please join us in giving thanks for the two school chaplains who are working in the Nanango High School and the schools in Blackbutt and Yarraman.

We have funding for a chaplain in Nanango Primary School, but as yet have had no suitable applicants. Please pray that God will lead a person with appropriate skills to apply for this position.



# AA knows true happiness

I APPRECIATED *Journey's* commentary on the *Happiness and its Causes* conference in Brisbane.

I managed to attend one session, but my comment is from the time I first heard of the promotion of the Conference.

I wonder if they will call any representatives of Alcoholics Anonymous, or a representative of some of the 300 or more related groups based on the Twelve Steps of AA?

From my experience, if any person searching for happiness requires a reliable guide, surely one whose search for happiness took him or her to the depths of despair in the first instance, and secondly, dawning insight and realisation that they had been looking in many wrong places, and finally, almost as a last resort, like The Buddha (Guatama), turned and found "Serenity".

That person is surely one who may provide insight into unhappiness and its causes today and point toward healing that we may name 'wellbeing', 'wholeness', 'peace', 'shalom' or

'serenity'. Within our Christian tradition, we are regularly reminded of Jesus words, in John 16:33: "I have told you these things so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble, but take heart, I have overcome the world".

The Recovery Devotional Bible (Life Connection) notes, that Jesus offers serenity.

It is of interest that John Wesley in his sermon X1V "Marks of the New Birth" quotes John 16:33 saying, "This is that peace of God which passeth all understanding that serenity of soul which it hath not entered into the heart of the natural man to conceive".

Perhaps that is one good reason why we may give greater value to the so called Serenity Prayer.

There are interesting parallels between the Sermon on the Mount, The Prayer of St' Francis and the 12 Steps of AA.

Rec. John Tully  
OAM  
Gold Coast



# No 'New' without 'Old'

COLIN LAING (August letters) states that perhaps more people would accept Jesus' message if it wasn't "coupled with the palpably bad science of the Old Testament".

Why would anyone believe in a Jesus whose life and teachings were based on a book which would be untrue if, as Colin states, it was

"compiled about 800 BC for a primitive people"?

The Old and New Testaments stand as one book. You cannot dispense with the Old without doing irreparable damage to the New. In fact the beauty and depth of the Gospel is only properly understood in the light of the Old Testament Scriptures (and that includes Genesis).

"The New is in the Old contained, the Old is in the New explained."

The Bible can't be tailored to accommodate people's unbelief, but if accepted in its entirety as God's Word, it holds the only answer for this messed up world.

Val Pym  
Mackay



# Pastoral care thanks

ON 29 APRIL I became the centre of a great dramatic production when I collapsed as I was about to participate in Assembly at the Lakes College.

This was followed by a number of coincidences, which I believe to be God controlled.

This whole story is too detailed to recount in this letter.

I've already shown appreciation to all including ambulance, surgeons, nurses and all carers. Only a fifth of us who encounter this survive it!

This letter is to thank all those involved in pastoral care given to me, my wife Lorna, and daughter Geraldine.

Our own ministers at Sandgate Uniting, our Synod and Presbytery

leaders and members, the Lakes College and the school where I am in my fourth year as a part time assistant Chaplain, the Sunshine Coast Grammar School (PMSA), have been and are continuing to be a great strength to us.

I am making excellent progress, slow but sure!

Ron Holt  
Boondall



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

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

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

# Kids club turns 10

By Matt Gees

ON 31 JULY the Wellers Hill – Tarragindi congregation marked 10 years since the formation of a very successful and popular children's ministry.

The JAFFA (Jesus A Friend For All) Club began as a way to reconnect with young people who had been part of the annual holiday club run by the church.

Stephanie Kennedy, who has been there since the beginning, said it has grown and changed over the years.

"JAFFA Club started out as an idea by our then student minister Bradley Foote and members of the Church Council who had seen

an opportunity to connect weekly with the children who came every year to our Holiday Club," she said.

"It has grown from an average attendance of 9 children to an average weekly attendance of 65 in recent years."

The inter-generational worship service involved a number of creative elements led by the children as well as a video message from Mr Foote reminiscing and reflecting on how the ministry has grown.

The ministry now incorporates a "walking bus" from Wellers Hill State School, which attracts children from the congregation, the school and nearby suburbs.



Stephanie Kennedy and Rev Peter Arnett (far right) with original Jaffa Club members Cameron Keogh and Josh Wood. Photo by Matt Gees



# Never Too Young!

**WHAT IS INSPIRING THESE YOUNG PEOPLE TO WANT TO LEARN TO PLAY THE ORGAN?**

## Never Too Young

*What is inspiring these young people to want to learn to play the organ?*

Come and meet these and other young organists as they demonstrate the tuition method that has been responsible for their enthusiasm.

**Date:** Wednesday 28 September  
**Time:** 7.00pm

**Location:** Catholic church (Corner Merivale and Peel Sts) South Brisbane.

## Never Too Young Recital

*One whole lot of fun!*

Experience the music of a 4 x 2 (4 organists, 2 organs). Plus an additional 3 musicians.

**Date:** Thursday 29 September  
**Time:** 7.00pm

**Location:** Catholic church (Corner Merivale and Peel Sts) South Brisbane.



An initiative of the Organ Society of Qld. Sponsored by All Organs Australia Pty Ltd.

**For tickets and more information please phone Jim on 3349-0547 or 0412-758651.**

# What is it like to live with mental health issues?

## Craig Watson

ONE OF the main hurdles I face in life is social phobia. For me, this means that I fear people will think shamefully of me.

There are many labels of shame society can place upon a person. I fear some of these labels being placed upon me.

I also fear that false judgements and labels could result in persecution.

It leads to a lot of paranoia and foreboding about going out in public.

It affects me on buses and trains, going

to church, going shopping; in almost any public place.

This does not mean I avoid all these places, but insecurity can strike at any time.

And if I think I'm being judged and given a label, it usually makes me feel anxious and angry.

All this thought takes place inside me, and there's usually no visible sign of it. A lot of the suffering of a mentally ill person takes place quietly and invisibly.

My diagnosis is schizophrenia, for

which I engage in a whole-of-life treatment package.

This includes taking medication, regular exercise, eating well, getting enough sleep, managing stress, and working through my issues with my doctor, using Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT).

I also have many friends I talk to, whose support I find invaluable. But I find I need all these things to stay well.

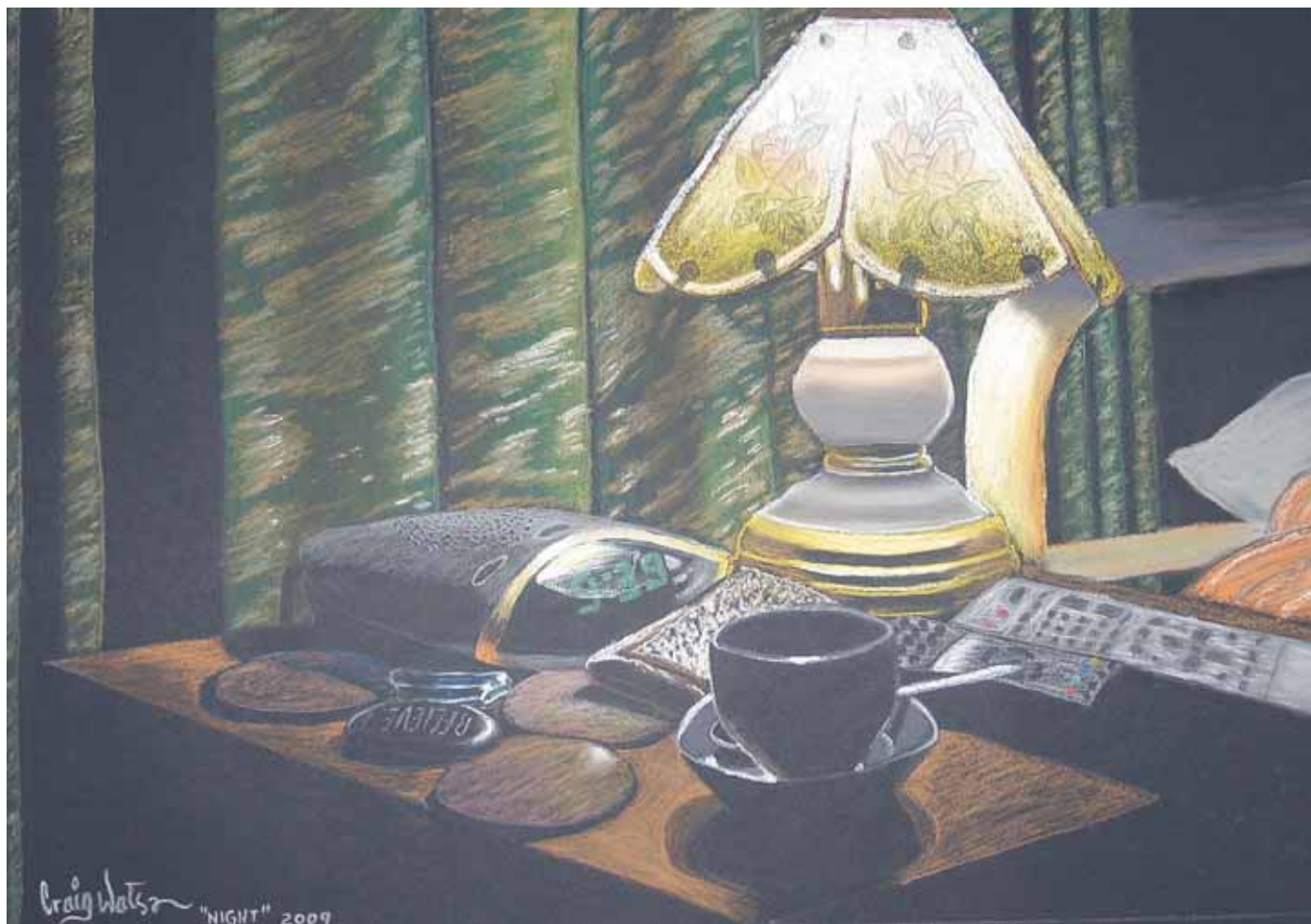
One thought a friend gave me that I found helpful is about Jesus and Zacchaeus,

a man who was an outcast, a tax collector.

My friend said that, like Zacchaeus, many of us at times think, "I'm this, I'm that ...", but Jesus sees past this, eats with us, and has a plan for us.

I believe his plan for me involves artwork. Here is one of my chalk pastel works entitled, "Night". I hope you like it.

Craig Watson is an artist and Nowuen Network member who uses art to deal with mental health issues he has experienced for many years.



## Linda Thompson

I THINK that I would have to say I didn't live with depression; I just somehow managed to stay alive until it was gone.

During the worst times, it wasn't living; it was existing.

The real me was gone and the shell that was left had the job of filling in for her, of going through the motions and attempting to maintain the semblance of her life and her person.

It wasn't all doom and gloom; there were moments of light and colour, but

much of those 15 years were periods of blank nothingness, just sitting in a holding pattern waiting to get at least a little bit better.

It was like a persistent vegetative state where, cruelly, I was conscious but able to recognise my state and grieve for my loss of life.

There wasn't as much awareness back then as there is now of depression as an illness and I found that it's a human trait to dismiss or minimise what we don't understand.

Depression isn't the same as the temporary sadness that we all experience from time to time.

It's not something you can just snap out of. It's a potentially permanent illness untouched by the natural healing that occurs with time.

The practical side of managing life fell to my husband who picked up the tab for running the household, taking care of the kids and looking after me.

I was grateful to those who assisted him with this.

Those who helped me the most personally during those long awful years were those who knew they couldn't help much anyway, those who were able to realise that they didn't understand but were willing to sit with me anyway.

Linda Thompson is a project manager with a Brisbane software company. She's married and has two adult children.



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