

Journey

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Journey

Cover: Former Mapoon resident Florence Luff.
Photo: Dominic Chaplin

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Closing date for editorial and advertising for June *Journey* is Monday 15 July. The next issue of *Journey* will be available on Sunday 4 August.



Rohan Salmond
Cross-platform editor

Working hard to renew community

We are always trying to engage with a wide range of issues in *Journey*, with the goal of sparking fruitful conversations among people across Queensland. This month we were reminded of *Journey's* influence by an email from John Butters, a Uniting Church member and founder of the Redlands branch of the University of the Third Age (U3A). John recently participated in a U3A class about the ethics of sport and the question "Is sport Australia's religion?" inspired by our July 2012 issue—how about that! If anyone else has similar stories I would love to hear them.

We often talk about the Uniting Church as a diverse community and many of the stories in this edition explore this idea.

Our cover story covers the enforced closure of Mapoon mission (page 6), a community almost at the tip of Cape York. This year marks the 50th anniversary of that event, which was a turning point for Indigenous rights in Queensland. Reflecting on that action, we are confronted by past hurts and encouraged by the renewal we have seen in Mapoon since that time.

Living in community and experiencing renewal of relationships are themes I also explore in a feature about my previous work on Iona (page 12). I lived on the Scottish isle for nearly two years before returning to Queensland in April, and have been encouraged to share my thoughts about it here.

Communication is vital to maintaining a healthy community, so we had a chat to former ABC broadcaster David Busch (page 10). David tells us a little about his history and his thoughts on being a Christian and a journalist—something we are all very interested in at *Journey*!

This is also a sad time in the office. Tara, our advertising manager, is leaving us to work with the RSPCA. After three years we are sad to see her go, and we wish her all the best with her new job.



Diverse, dispersed community

Jeff and Jean, from Oregon, USA, are part of my community. I have never met them.

Years ago my husband used to order bicycle parts from a mail order catalogue, but in time orders were placed by email. Little notes, photographs and snippets of family news started appearing on the emails as the orders went back and forth.

This year their son visited Australia and came to our home for a few days. He said, "My parents have been talking about you guys for years!" This month our daughter and her fiancé went to the States to visit Jeff and Jean in their home.

In our churches we need to understand that community now includes a virtual component. People may not physically gather, but they build community by interactions on Facebook, email, text, Twitter and Skype. I am still learning some of that way of being Church.

It is not so different from a congregation I visited recently. About 40 people were in the building but when it was time to bring our prayers for others I heard about another 15 people who were part of that community. Sickness, frailty, family responsibilities, travel and work commitments kept them from being physically present but the care and prayer connected them.

Scripture suggests that the early church experimented with living in community and sharing all things in common. Maybe they thought it would only be for a short time but they committed themselves to each other and became known for their love for each other. Sometimes the best kind of community occurs when people are simply offering generous hospitality rather than setting out to build community.

While it is possible to be a Christian in isolation, there is something quite challenging and rewarding about being a Christian in community. It is easy to love others "in theory" but when you hear them spout different political views, or give expression to a different kind of Christianity, or they have annoying habits or choose an alternative lifestyle, love can be tested and community can become fractured.

I have been around the church long enough to know that sometimes people feel betrayed, ripped off, misunderstood, heartbroken or angry about the behaviour of people with whom they thought

they were in community. That is why Jesus spoke so much about forgiveness, but at times it is a hard ideal to fulfil.

I think Bonhoeffer captures this in his book *Life Together and Prayerbook of the Bible*, "Just as Christians should not be constantly feeling the pulse of their spiritual life, so too the Christian community has not been given to us by God for us to be continually taking its temperature. The more thankfully we daily receive what is given to us, the more assuredly and consistently will community increase and grow ... " Over to you.

Rev Kaye Ronalds
Queensland Synod Moderator

Monday Midday Prayer

God of life,

help us to appreciate our differences so that we can all have a place and contribute to our community.

Amen



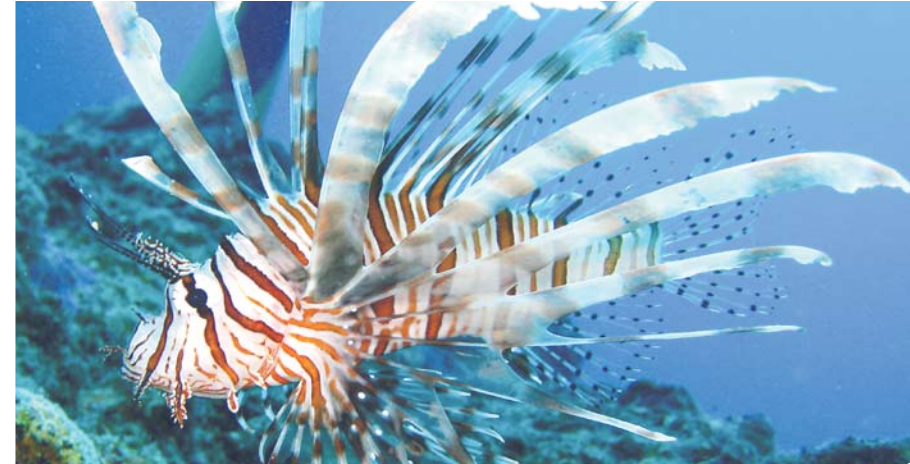
Moderator's diary

5-6 July
Synod Standing Committee, live-in meeting

23 July
Opening of Men's Shed at Moorooka

26-28 July
Central Queensland Presbytery meeting

2-4 August
Rural Muster, Biloela



Striped Lion fish on the Great Barrier Reef, Queensland.
Photo: Istock photo

Reef danger declaration postponed

The Great Barrier Reef's delicate ecosystem is under continued strain. **Katie Lewis** reports.

The decision to add the Great Barrier Reef to UNESCO's World Heritage in Danger list has been deferred to 2014. Louise Mathieson from Greenpeace says the decision gives the Queensland and Federal governments a chance to improve the quality of the reef and wind back port developments.

Federal Environment Minister, Tony Burke, welcomed the decision.

"The Australian Government is committed to working with the World Heritage Committee to protect the outstanding universal values of the Great Barrier Reef.

"We are currently undertaking a comprehensive strategic assessment of the Great Barrier Reef to ensure its protection, while at the same time enabling sustainable, long-term development in the Great Barrier Reef coastal area," he said.

The Queensland Government has also announced that it will continue the \$35 million Reef program, however, there is little information regarding what the money will be spent on.

At a meeting of the World Heritage Committee on 18 June, UNESCO noted with great concern "the unprecedented scale of coastal development currently being proposed and further requests the State Party to not permit any new port development or associated infrastructure outside of the existing and long established major port areas".

Felicity Wishart from the Australian Marine Conservation Society said "Australian state and federal governments must heed the World Heritage Committee recommendation and put the brakes on the rapid industrialisation of the coastline. There should be no more port development or dredging and dumping until a plan to properly protect the reef is in place".

Programme Specialist for UNESCO, Dr Fanny Douvere, said Australia had made progress but moved slower on issues related to coastal development.

"There is for example new legislation by the Queensland government on coastal development planning that seems inconsistent with recommendations of the (World Heritage) Committee," she said.

“There should be no more port development or dredging and dumping until a plan to properly protect the reef is in place”

Felicity Wishart



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The day they burned Mapoon

Fifty years on, the spectre of burning buildings at Mapoon mission still haunts Queensland. Dianne Jensen reports.



Mapoon Uniting Church member Marda Pitt and daughter Zion enjoy fishing on the beach. Photo: Michelle Cook

The police arrived at Mapoon mission in Cape York under cover of darkness. The 23 Aboriginal people still living there were told to pack their suitcases, and were escorted down to the beach. Later, the government boat *Gelam* took them to the newly constructed New Mapoon, near Bamaga. It was 15 November 1963.

Several houses were set alight by a work party. Within six months all of the remaining residents had left and many of the mission buildings, including the church, were gone.

The battle for Mapoon marked a turning point in Indigenous rights in Queensland.

The draconian control wielded by the *Aboriginals Preservation and Protection Act (1939)* was exposed to national scrutiny, fuelling the momentum for constitutional change and civil rights for Indigenous Australians. Churches and missionary organisations, including the Presbyterian Church, began to reappraise their role in Indigenous communities.

Mission days

Mapoon was established by Moravian missionaries on behalf of the Presbyterian Church of Australia, with Queensland Government financial assistance, on land reserved under the *Crown Lands Act (1884)*.

The three villages and outstation became home to a number of Indigenous groups. After 1901, when Mapoon was gazetted as an industrial school, many mixed-descent children removed from their families by the Protector of Aborigines were sent to the mission.

By the 1950s, after decades of financial hardship, government neglect, drought and economic collapse, Mapoon was one of many Queensland missions pleading for more government funds to address the derelict housing, food shortages and unsafe water supplies.

The missions were in crisis, with the Presbyterian mission committee running a deficit of £10 000 by 1952.

Closing the doors

The initial impetus to close the mission came in 1953, when the Department of Native Affairs (DNA) advised that no further aid would be forthcoming unless the church rehabilitated the buildings and made the mission more self-supporting.

A year later, without any community consultation, church and government officials made the decision to close Mapoon and evacuate the people to Weipa or other stations, or to “assimilate those ready for exemption [from the *Protection Act*] into the Australian way of life elsewhere”.

Rich bauxite deposits had been uncovered on Cape York Peninsula, and powerful enterprises had the land in their sights. The Commonwealth Aluminium Corporation Pty Ltd (Comalco) negotiated an 84-year lease with the Queensland government in 1958. Comalco was granted 2270 square miles of Cape York, including the land occupied by both Weipa and Mapoon Missions.

The government and the church were determined to dissolve the mission, running down the store and closing the school, demolishing buildings and refusing to allow the return of those leaving the community for work or health reasons.

The Presbyterian Church handed over control of Mapoon to the government in July 1963.

A core group of residents refused to leave, keen to establish local industries such as crocodile shooting. As supplies dwindled, organisations such as the Cairns Aboriginal Advancement League acted as a conduit for goods, and the Federal Council of Aboriginal Advancement lobbied Prime Minister Robert Menzies and the United Nations.

But there was no reprieve for Mapoon.

The new policy of “assimilation” had commenced; an impetus to push mission and settlement residents into the general community to lessen the economic burden on the State; to help them “live like white people”. New battles lay ahead.

Nearly 20 years later Eddie Mabo and four other Torres Strait Islanders began proceedings which would lead to the historic 1992 Mabo decision in the High Court and the *Native Title Act (1993)*.

But on that night 50 years ago, the police took the people away, and their homes and belongings were burnt to the ground.

Coming home

Some former residents refused to give up. Led by traditional people such as Jean Jimmy, they continued to lobby for the re-opening of their community.

In 1974 several families led by Jerry and Ina Hudson returned and began re-building their houses and gardens.

Ten years later the Marpuna Community Aboriginal Corporation was established, gradually building up the community at Rugapayn (Red Beach) to a stage where people were able to resettle permanently.

A Deed of Grant of Land in Trust (DOGIT) for Aboriginal Reserve Purposes was handed over to the Mapoon people by the Queensland Government in 1989, and the inaugural Mapoon Aboriginal Council was formed in 2000.

Currently the town has a primary school, nursing station, council office and small shop providing fuel and food. Local people are employed on the council and there is also a productive fishing business.

A new ministry

Deacon Michelle Cook is the minister of the Uniting Church in Mapoon. Calvary Presbytery, (Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress). Her husband James Hughes is the youth worker for the Western Cape.

They describe Mapoon as a fantastic place to live and work, where children are keen to go to school and most families are keen to get them there, and where people look out for one another.

“The people are welcoming and willing. The land is beautiful,” says Ms Cook. “People have chosen to come back here and they want this to be a good place for their families.

“Our role in the community is to help facilitate the local community’s events and dreams, as well as encouraging people’s faith and helping them be self-starters in discipleship. This is not too different to what usual clergy do—help people be disciples—just the context is different.”

Mostly, the ministry couple provide an “incarnational presence”, which Ms Cook defines as “loitering with intent”.

“We are here for people, whoever they are, pointing to the work of the Spirit. ‘Preach always, if necessary use words,’ is the approach.”



Former Mapoon resident Florence Luff. Photo: Dominic Chaplin

Memories of home

Former Mapoon resident **Florence Luff** is 83 years old and lives in Cairns with her daughter Lottie.

Florence Luff is proud of her three children, 11 grandchildren, 39 great-grandchildren and one great-great-grandchild.

Mrs Luff was in her 30s when the mission was closed.

“We had a good life there,” she recalls, describing a busy community where people were employed working around mission, doing stock work, working with boats, and crocodile shooting.

“There was a lot of bush hunting, we would go camping and hunting.”

She has many happy memories of the mission school and of swimming and fishing.

Years later, married with three children, she remembers being told that Mapoon was not a good place, and that it was going to be closed.

“The missionaries told us we have to move, because it was unhealthy to live there

anymore. The sand was no good, the soil was no good—it was hookworm soils—and the water was no good ... I think they told us a lie.

“Some stayed on, like Jean Jimmy’s family. We left because we were scared of them moving us to some other community. We all had to get out in so-and-so time because the mining was just waiting to move in. We all had to leave in a rush.

“They gave us a choice, who wants to go out? They can go and get a job, take their family out of there. Whoever was left there would be under the government, and they could move them wherever they want to move them.”

Mrs Luff returns occasionally to Mapoon for meetings.

“There are a lot of memories. I feel sad, you know, to see it. It’s a real small community; nice, with plenty of room to move around but not much housing.

“It was a beautiful mission with a lot of people.”



Coorparoo community garden coordinator John Loneragan with some of the garden produce. Photo: Holly Jewell

Coorparoo sews seeds for mission

Some congregations look at a large grassy block and worry about the mowing roster. Others, like the members of Coorparoo Uniting Church, think about the possibilities. **Dianne Jensen** reports.

Coorparoo is one of Brisbane's oldest suburbs. Its central location and traditional housing are prime targets for redevelopment, and green space is precious.

Four years ago the congregation (then led by Rev Yvonne McRostie) offered church land for a community garden. Since then, the space has been transformed into a food-growing precinct used by locals including the nearby Stepping Stone Clubhouse, an organisation established by the Schizophrenia Fellowship of Queensland.

Brisbane City Council has assisted with set-up funds, including grants for the 10 000 litre water tank and a planned upgrade of the toilet facilities.

Architect John Loneragan is the coordinator, and the project reflects his passion for enabling inner-city institutions to fully utilise their property.

"Institutions are often well located with wonderful assets," he says. "Places like churches have facilities which are not really being used."

This means thinking differently about the use of both buildings and land, and considering new ways of connecting to the community. In doing

so, congregations can foster the small-scale social interactions which help re-vitalise communities.

"Our senior generation find it interesting as a lot of them used to do this growing up—they grew their own vegetables, had a few chooks ... for younger people it is a way of showing how food gets to the table," says Mr Loneragan.

The community garden is full of life. Raised garden beds are lush with eggplants, rampaging tomatoes, basil, passionfruit and leafy plants. There are bees and ladybugs, compost bins, garden benches, and an impressive pizza oven.

The Coorparoo garden runs on a relaxed model, with participants sharing the care and the bounty of the common garden beds. There is a regular gardening session on Saturday afternoons, and the monthly working bee followed by home-made pizzas laden with garden produce attracts between 20 and 30 people.

"The pizza oven project means we can grow and cook, which is a great asset. Young families love it. The children garden, run around, and help make the pizzas," says Mr Loneragan.

Four years into the project, he describes the community garden as "a work in progress", an idea which has evolved into a vibrant local mission outreach venture, replete with possibilities.

"We can be too occupied with just keeping our doors open," he says. "We are only the custodians of these resources. They should be shared."

Discipleship



Make disciples; love our neighbours

The Year of Discipleship is part of the Uniting Church in Queensland's Vision 2020, focusing on the call to form active and accountable disciples. Catholic chaplain **Gary Stone** elaborates on his Norman and Mary Miller address to the 30th Synod.

I was delighted to be able to come and share my story during the 2013 Queensland Synod. I was so impressed by the energy, vitality and commitment of those gathered.

For those who did not hear me speak, I simply shared some of my experiences of being a disciple of Jesus, principally in the military as an infantry officer and a chaplain and also as a chaplain to the Australian Federal Police. I also spoke about founding the humanitarian organisation Friends and Partners of East Timor.

I am amazed how God has called me to work in so many places beyond the established frameworks of church, particularly to work as a peacemaker, especially in the countries of our region. In Matthew 28, Jesus commissions us to go out into the world and make disciples, and that is what I have made myself available for.

The other foundation scripture that has empowered me has been Jesus' reminder in Luke 11 that we should not only love God, but that we should also love our neighbour. When you look at the impoverished nations in our region you will find there is a lot of loving needed. My parish has established a partnership with a remote parish in East Timor and together we have raised and distributed one million dollars for capacity development over 12 years.

Indeed I can't imagine any Christian community in Australia being true disciples of Jesus if they are

not engaged in some practical way in loving our neighbours through sharing our surpluses. While it is always important to sustain a healthy church base, we are all called to be missionary. What I have found is that when we make ourselves available and interested in truly loving our neighbours, the Holy Spirit will bless us and open the doors to new ways of being church. I have come to see that all people of the world are our brothers and sisters, and we must work together in unity and solidarity to live out our Christian vocation with integrity.

I would encourage anyone who has not yet given attention to overseas mission to seriously consider what you can do for the neighbours we have in our region. There are many ways to do this both from home and abroad, and I am sure UnitingWorld could guide you into some practical projects should you see scope to assist in this area.

May God continue to bless the mission and ministry of the Uniting Church in Australia. I was delighted to study with many of your ministers through the Brisbane College of Theology and continue to work in chaplaincy with many more Uniting Church ministers. Together we can make the world a better place. I am sure that Jesus delights in seeing us as his disciples.

Chaplain Gary Stone has served in the Australian Army and Federal Police, and is now heavily involved in aid and development work in East Timor.

The audio from Gary Stone's Norman and Mary Miller lecture can be heard on JourneyOnline.

"I can't imagine any Christian community in Australia being true disciples of Jesus if they are not engaged in some practical way in loving our neighbours through sharing our surpluses"



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David Busch's discipleship journey has taken him to many places. On the way, he found his voice and continues to help others find theirs.
Photo: Holly Jewell

Identity, loss and finding your voice

David Busch has spent years working for the ABC and in media roles across three synods, including at *Journey* and its predecessor, *Life and Times*. He has just completed a Period of Discernment and begun supply ministry as a pastor at Trinity Wellington Point Uniting Church while he considers whether to candidate for ordination. **Tara Burton** reports.

"Through all my Christian life there has been an interest and a draw for me to congregational ministry, leading worship and linking the body of Christ in mission to the local community," says Mr Busch.

Mr Busch was introduced to Christianity at the age of 13 when his friend brought him along to the West End Methodist Mission in 1973.

"The thing that struck me when I went to that church was not a doctrine of Christian faith, which I had never had any exposure to as my family was not Christian. This church was a community and I discovered that in this community of people of all ages and backgrounds there was a sense of taking seriously the claims of Jesus Christ and being a service of ministry in the community," he says.

As a teenager Mr Busch found this experience very inspiring and uplifting.

"The congregation welcomed me and enabled me to find my voice. Before long I was involved in Christian discussion groups on a Sunday morning. I brought all my questions and people heard me, and I was able to learn as the conversations were inclusive of everyone," he reflects.

"I'm not one to seek the limelight. It's curious that one of my formative experiences of church as a teenager was being given a voice, and I then moved into a career where my journalism had a focus of giving others a voice."

Faith in journalism

Mr Busch had been a religious programs specialist at the ABC since 1994 and Executive Producer for 10 years before leaving in early May this year. Mr Busch found it an exciting and empowering environment for a Christian to be working in.

"The ABC sees its role as informing a national conversation, helping shape the Australian identity, whether it's about entertainment or information, and its religious programs were part of that, both in exploring issues in communities of faith from within and in taking a critically detached view about religion in society," he says.

Mr Busch values his tenure at the ABC as he shared a very similar ethos.

"I have found no clash between being a Christian and the principles of good journalism," he says.

"Broadly, the ABC was consistent with my personal Christian vocation in having a high regard for how we live with diverse people with inclusion and respect, without ignoring the big differences between people or avoiding vigorous debates. Personally it has enriched my view as a Christian on how to understand the activity of God."

Mr Busch says that in relation to his Period of Discernment and his eventual decision to offer for ministry, he received good support from his former colleagues, friends and family.

"When the news came that I was resigning from the ABC, I think it did come as a shock to quite a few people, but one of the real things that I treasured very deeply was that, at the point of my going, people affirmed how they had perceived me in the ABC acting pastorally as a colleague and manager. I was quite surprised at that. I think that was an affirmation that maybe some of my natural working instincts and the way I relate to people comes out of a pastoral sense of care," he recalls.

Wholeness amidst loss

In 1998 Mr Busch grappled with the passing of his wife Heather who had battled for six months with cancer.

"It was a very distressing and confusing time to find my beloved wife's life would be drawn short in such an abrupt, untimely way. There is no easy resolution of this kind of tragedy theologically," he says.

"I don't think that God 'takes' people. I do accept that in every circumstance God works to bring life and wholeness.

"In Christ, we are all on a lifetime journey of healing and wholeness. I believe that in ways that God only knows, Heather experienced that journey even in her dying, and in the years that followed God has continued a work in me of life and wholeness as well, and an amazing part of that has been the friendship with, and then marriage to, my wife Jenny."

Mr Busch notes that his life is a work in progress and it's really about what God is doing.

"Empathy, inclusion, respect for truth and difference, and the challenge of building community have become core to my Christian discipleship. In my radio programs I have sought to be a channel of the questions, wisdom and experiences of others rather than being too prescriptive or present myself," he says.

"So being on this end of the interview process is not my preferred place! But if God is using me as a part of God's story and for God's purposes, then I would celebrate that and set it free."

Audio from this interview is available at journeyonline.com.au

“Empathy, inclusion, respect for truth and difference, and the challenge of building community have become core to my Christian discipleship”

Living in a thin place

Life on Iona



Before becoming the cross-platform editor of *Journey*, Rohan Salmond spent two years living and working with the Iona Community on an isolated island off the west coast of Scotland. It was here he truly understood the link between community and communion.

St Martin's Cross in front of Iona Abbey.
Photo: Jen Ross
jenross.co.uk

Volunteer and resident staff gather around the table.
Photo: Jen Ross

It is a strange thing to live in a place totally romanticised by the people who visit. Iona is a small island, three miles long and one mile across, located in the Inner Hebrides off the west coast of Scotland. It was the site of St Columba's monastery, which was the locus of Christianity in the British Isles for hundreds of years. Because of its historic and religious significance, Iona attracts many thousands of tourists and pilgrims every year, despite its remote location six hours from Glasgow.

‘Iona is a thin place not because it is inherently charged with special spiritual energy, but because the ordinary things that happen there are infused with special significance’

‘That must have been an experience! How was that for you?’ people ask, often in awe. Many want to know if it was a mystical experience. This isn’t surprising; George MacLeod, the founder of the Iona Community, described Iona as a “thin place” where the veil between heaven and earth is drawn especially thin. It’s a sentiment carried by many of the visitors to the island, who walk off the ferry wide-eyed and giddy; for them a visit to Iona has been their life’s ambition.

A thin place

I once had a pilgrim ask me how to get to the Hill of the Angels, where St Columba is said to have met and talked with angels in the flesh. She was shocked when I pointed out an unmarked,

grass-covered mound sitting in a field in front of someone’s house. Instead of angels on the hill there were grazing sheep. She wanted something special—and it was!—but she didn’t recognise it.

I think that is important.

Iona is a thin place not because it is inherently charged with special spiritual energy, but because the ordinary things that happen there are infused with special significance. The Iona Community began in 1938 when George MacLeod brought unemployed, skilled craftsmen and trainee clergy together to rebuild the living quarters of Iona Abbey. The idea was to foster a sense of community between these two otherwise very different groups, and the guests who now stay in those living quarters continue to build community today. Were it not for that sense of community, Iona would be like any other picturesque, historical site in Europe. Iona becomes what it is because the people who visit are intentional about building relationships with one another and with God. That is what makes Iona a thin place.

Life in community

The thing about building community is that it’s hard work. Maintaining relationships is difficult and fraught with problems, especially when living in such close proximity.

When I was a full-time employee on Iona I lived in a house with seven of my co-workers. We lived, ate, worked and worshipped together every day. I made lifelong friendships in that time, but it was often challenging. As in any group of people, conflict would arise from time to time, and I learned it was important to reconcile conflict because one embittered relationship would put strain on the community as a whole. I say “reconcile” rather than “resolve” because a win-lose resolution was not enough; for our staff community to grow and thrive we needed restoration.

Restoration of my relationships often came in surprising ways. Sometimes it was necessary to sit down with the other person and talk honestly and vulnerably about the problem, but there were other times when simply sitting across the table and eating a meal with someone was enough. The shared time, food and table reminded us that we were part of the same family worshipping the same God. For me, it was a demonstration of mutual care and understanding which helped us see the best in each other when it came time to have difficult conversations. For a staff group composed of members from an array of cultural backgrounds and liturgical traditions it was easy to miscommunicate, so this reminder was vital. My experience of Iona, and of eating together at the

dinner table, reminds me of the communion meal: ordinary things infused with special significance, drawing disparate people together as one family.

Uniting in Christ

It was a real privilege to be able to live and work on that far-flung, windy little isle. It’s undeniable that I grew in my personal and spiritual life while I was there, but it’s important to recognise this isn’t something unique to Iona. My experience of Iona as a community and a thin place can be found wherever people are intentional about coming together to grow in their understanding of one another and of God. This is why church is important to me, and I hope we continue this pursuit of understanding together, uniting in Christ.

For more information about the Iona Community visit iona.org.uk

A video to accompany this story is available at journeyonline.com.au

‘My experience of Iona, and of eating together at the dinner table, reminds me of the communion meal’



UnitingJustice election resource pack. Photo: Holly Jewell

Voting for justice

Working for a just society is an integral part of the Uniting Church. In the lead-up to the federal election UnitingJustice calls Christians to vote ethically.

“As Christians, we have a responsibility to think carefully and cast our vote with the needs of the most vulnerable in mind,” says UnitingJustice National Director, Rev Elenie Poulos.

As the justice unit of the National Assembly, UnitingJustice Australia pursues national matters of social and economic justice, human rights, peace and the environment.

As part of this call, UnitingJustice launched a Federal election resource, *A Just Society: Your Faith, Your Voice, Your Vote*, in Canberra last month. Each Queensland congregation received a copy of this resource in their congregation pack at the 30th Queensland Synod.

Ms Poulos says the resource is an expression of Christian faith and hope, focusing on the good of all people and the planet.

“This resource is a call for all Christians to raise their voice and share in the Church’s vision for a just society.”

A Just Society enables people to think through the values underpinning political policies in the upcoming election. The materials identify

important issues facing Australia, including issues the Uniting Church has spoken publicly about, and encourages people to listen to politicians with discernment.

“This is a time when many are disappointed in the lack of vision and passion in the current political climate,” says Ms Poulos.

“As Christian voters we can make an impact before, during and after the election—sharing and working for a vision for the future of our country that arises out of a deep and abiding Christian hope.

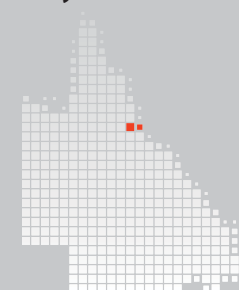
“It is my hope that we see a vision for a just society not only for this election, but for the years to come.”

As the justice policy and advocacy unit of the Assembly, UnitingJustice supports the Uniting Church in its response to contemporary social and political concerns including lobbying government, producing resources for church members and collaborating through ecumenical alliances, like the newly appointed Australian Churches Refugee Taskforce.

The 2013 election resources are available at unitingjustice.org.au/election2013. Some print copies are available from Uniting Communications via research.officer@ucaql.com.au or phone 3377 9910.

“As Christian voters we can make an impact before, during and after the election”

Townsville Central City Mission



Fast facts:

Community:

- > Townsville is the industrial, educational, medical, commercial and community service centre for North Queensland
- > Population 196 219

Values:

- > Faith in the living God
- > Openness to all people
- > Justice for the poor and marginalised
- > Strong families building strong communities
- > The power of God to heal

What’s new:

- > Volunteer workers for Mobile Mission Maintenance
- > Prayer ministry using Elijah House Ministry techniques
- > Marriage ministry (Growing Together in Marriage)
- > Food parcels ministry

Social media:

- > centralcitymission.org
- > Podcast entitled *Godcast*



Townsville Central City Mission prison and street chaplains Ian and Jenny Pack. Photo: Peace Kam

Mission alive in Townsville

Tara Burton speaks to Bob Beasley about Townsville Central City Mission.

What is your mission?

Townsville Central City Mission is a strategic city church committed to proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ and ministering to human need by providing personal and family care through the ministry of word and deed.

What’s happening in your church?

At the moment a Joint Nomination Committee is being selected to call a minister to the congregation. Rev David and Glenda Wiltshire will supply the ministry of the word from July to November. We are currently working towards the church fete in September. It is an innovative community outreach. It will be held in the Strand Park on the seashore, which is a popular venue for the community. Preparation has already started on the Christmas festival, Stable on the Strand, as 40 of our congregation members will join with 1000 volunteers from 65 different Townsville churches. An administration office is currently being constructed for the Korean congregation. The manse building is also undergoing a refurbishing and members enjoy fellowship and morning tea.

What does creating disciples mean for your church community?

We recently saw the way God follows through with his calling when a member felt called to organise

a commemorative service reflecting the important role the evening service had during the war years. The historic car club established a display of cars from the war era. The street was closed to traffic while the Sunday school gave demonstrations of hopscotch, skipping and jump rope. The whole community was invited, and on the night there were people from all walks of life and a number of other churches represented in the congregation. Miraculously, within two weeks, a choir was raised from our church ranks. In the service 16 people in fine voice sang Rudyard Kipling’s poem, *Recessional*. This was such an act of faith as we had never tried anything like this before. Choir conductor Joyce Chapman was in her element. With precision that could only be created in God’s perfect timing, we were blessed with two men singing “I’ll walk with God” as part of the service. The singing was so inspirational and people were moved. Supper saw over 500 pikelets consumed while watching old Cinesound news reels.

What new ministries are happening at your church?

With a new generation of youth, our pastor has partnered with some of the young people from YWAM who are part of our congregation, to run a six week Cross Examination, looking at the cross, Jesus, and our relationship to God, based on the popular *Christianity Explained* course.



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Leonardo DiCaprio and Carey Mulligan play Jay Gatsby and Daisy Buchanan in *The Great Gatsby*
Photo: Warner Bros. Pictures

Love misimagined

Baz Luhrmann's adaptation of *The Great Gatsby* lacks the sly, subversive quality of F. Scott Fitzgerald's original novel, but it still captures its essence, retelling it in Luhrmann's flashy, theatrical style.

Imagination is one of the most important human qualities; it is how we overcome problems, navigate our futures and—perhaps most importantly—empathise with people around us. *The Great Gatsby* is at its core a film about the power and folly of the human imagination.

Fitzgerald's 1925 novel, widely regarded as one of the finest examples of American literature, is set in and around New York City. Although the novel is famous for its critique of 1920s excess, Luhrmann is clear his film isn't only making commentary of the hedonistic Roaring Twenties. *The Great Gatsby*'s anachronistic flourishes, particularly the modern soundtrack, pull the Jazz Age firmly into the present.

The aspirational Jay Gatsby (Leonardo DiCaprio) is an enigma to everyone who knows him. ("He's a German spy!" "I heard he killed a man!" "He's certainly richer than God!") Gatsby has made real all his imaginings in order to woo back his former sweetheart Daisy Buchanan (Carey Mulligan). His sprawling house, opulent parties and mysterious persona have all been created—seemingly from nothing—with this goal in mind.

"Was all this made entirely from your own imagination?" asks Daisy.

"No," says Gatsby, "You see you were there all along. In every idea, every decision. Of course if anything is not to your liking I'll change it."

"It's perfect," replies Daisy, "From your perfect, irresistible imagination."

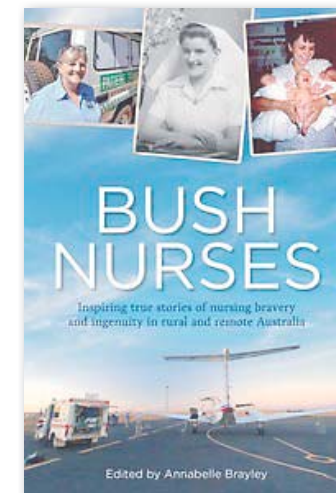
But Gatsby and Daisy do not love each other for who they really are. Gatsby's love is purely

nostalgic; Daisy's is socially opportunistic. As the fiction upon which their love is based begins to crumble, so does Gatsby's elaborately-constructed persona. It is clear: everything that can be imagined can be created—except love. Love cannot be imagined into being, it can only be given.

These are often unlikable characters seeing only skewed, funhouse mirror versions of everyone else around them. Whether distorted by nostalgia, money, power or spectacle, not once does any character see the others for who they really are. Only the godlike gaze of an oculist's billboard seems to pierce these illusions.

The Great Gatsby urges us to try and know people for who they are, not simply imagine them as who we'd like them to be. Without a complex imagining of the people around us, we too can fall victim to Gatsby's fate.

Rohan Salmond



Bush Nurses
Edited by Annabelle Brayley
Penguin Books Australia, 2013
RRP \$29.99

Nursing the outback

***Bush Nurses* starts with a story about a nurse who saves a baby in-utero by physically holding the cord off the baby's neck until the flying doctor can arrive as backup. Right from the beginning this book consistently delivers fascinating stories.**

Healthcare is offered very differently away from the big city in regional areas, and between regional and remote country areas there's an even bigger difference. But it takes a pretty special kind of person to undertake nursing in outback clinics when the nearest doctor is only available by calling in the Royal Flying Doctor Service. Anything can and usually does happen. *Bush Nurses* celebrates the special people who provide this care and allows them to offer some insight into their world in their own words.

Author Annabelle Brayley is a retired nurse who loves to hear people tell their stories. Now, as a regular contributor to *OUTBACK* magazine, she often gets to indulge this passion. The stories contained in *Bush Nurses* give just a glimpse into the world of life and work in an outback clinic. There are tear-jerking moments including the account of a tragic weekend in north-west

New South Wales where a long-awaited holiday was interrupted by a house fire, killing two children. There is also the heartbreaking story of a fatal car rollover on the way to a race meet. But there are laugh-out-loud moments too, including the story of a nurse who, although trained to help human patients, ends up working on an animal companion instead. It goes to show that an understanding of veterinary medicine doesn't go astray if heading outback.

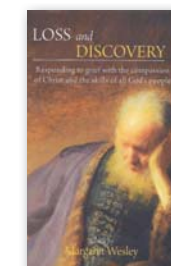
The stories contained in these pages are ones of resilience, self-discovery and creative engagement with the bureaucratic rules made by people who don't understand outback communities. *Bush Nurses* also offers rare insights into some of the earliest Australian Inland Mission nurses and the way they handled the isolation and limited medical facilities to help provide the "mantle of safety" John Flynn envisaged. It is these continuing ideals and commitment lived out in outback Australia which have inspired Penguin books to donate royalties from the sale of this book to Frontier Services in recognition of 100 years of service to rural and remote Australia.

Matt Gees

Reviews available at journeyonline.com.au



Immense, unfathomed, unconfined: the grace of God in creation, church and community
Edited by Sean Winter
Uniting Academic Press, Melbourne, 2013
RRP \$45



Loss and Discovery
Edited by Margaret Wesley
Mosaic Press, 2013
RRP \$29.99



Love, tears & autism
By Cecily Patterson
Ark House Press, 2011
RRP \$19.99



101 Great Ideas for Growing Healthy Churches
Edited by John Nelson, Michael Lofthouse, and Anton Muller
Canterbury Press, 2011
RRP \$39.95



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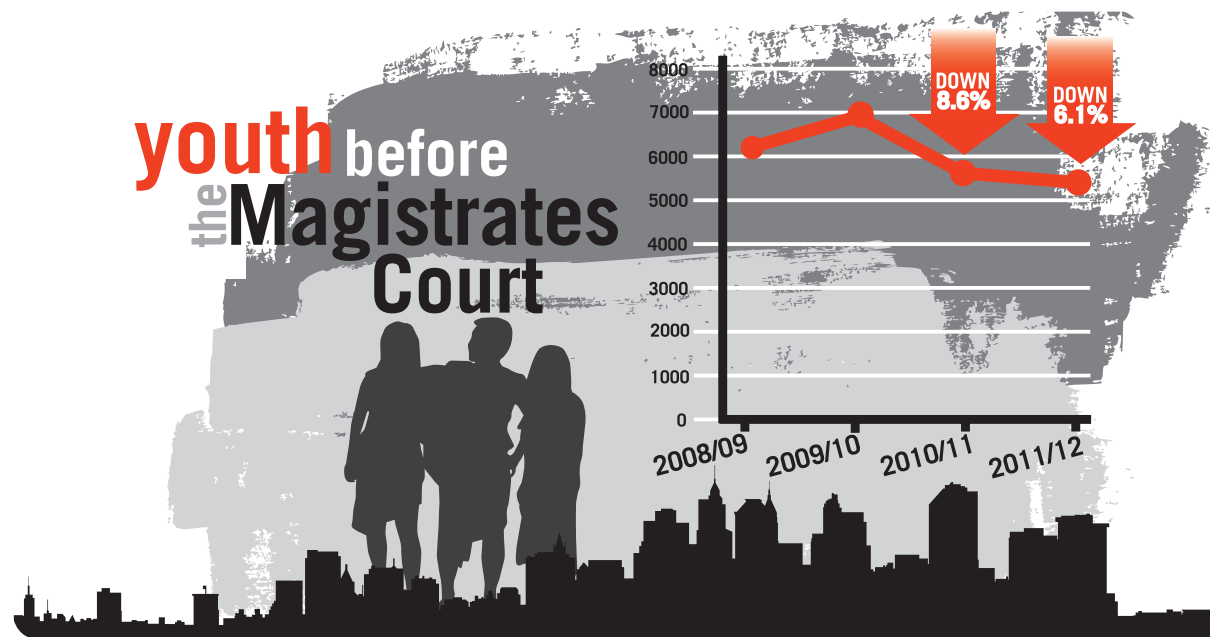
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Politicising youth justice

Recent changes to the Juvenile Justice Act have gone largely unreported, but were highly politicised and do nothing to prevent reoffending, says **Steve Skitmore** from Youth Affairs Network Queensland.

It's been a long time coming. In June 2009, then-Queensland Deputy Opposition Leader Lawrence Springborg flagged huge changes to the Juvenile Justice Act under a Liberal National Party Government in Queensland. Three years later, a newly elected LNP Government with a massive majority quietly passed the most far-reaching amendments to the Act in over two decades. Detention is no longer a last resort, Youth Justice Conferencing and Special Circumstances Courts have been scrapped and army-style "Boot Camps" are now an option for magistrates when sentencing juvenile offenders.

Back in 2009 Mr Springborg said the amendments were to be implemented to "uphold community expectations on how young offenders should be sentenced". A scan through *The Courier-Mail* archives of commentary around offences committed by young people quickly shows community expectations over many years can be summed up by the "do the crime, do the time" cliché. Articles on youth crime are largely underpinned by an irrational community fear of "youths" which does not match the reality of rates of crime committed (which are actually decreasing according to a recent Youth Advocacy Centre review).

The newly scrapped Youth Justice Conferencing was one of the most successful programs in the juvenile justice system, with numerous evaluations attesting to the satisfaction of all involved—victims, perpetrators, coordinators and departmental staff. The Youth Justice Conferencing program brought the victim, young person and their family together to come up with an agreement about how the young person could begin to repair the harm caused by the offence. Unfortunately, the program was quickly dismissed by the LNP as being part of "Labor's soft-on-crime" platform.

The problems with the politicisation of recidivism and with the LNP's one-size-fits-all, tough-on-crime approach are manifest. In the words of Associate Professor of Criminology Robyn Lincoln, sending young people to detention, or in the best case boot camps, is based on "a fundamental lack of appreciation of the causes of crime ... [rather,] it signals a vengeful justice system".

This should be the real concern around youth crime. Pandering to community expectations that do not understand what actually works for young people does nothing to change the actual rates of offending amongst young people. Seeking revenge based on incorrect and hysterical assumptions of youth crime will not make the community safer.

For more information visit yanq.org.au

“Seeking revenge based on incorrect and hysterical assumptions of youth crime will not make the community safer”

UnitingCare hospitals honoured with awards

Two UnitingCare hospitals have been recognised for excellence in the last month.

St Andrew's War Memorial Hospital has been crowned International Healthcare Organisation of 2013. Quarter Two—only the second Australian hospital to win the prestigious Studer Group award.

The Brisbane hospital was selected for the award by the Studer Group, an international healthcare consultancy, for its achievements in improving patient safety, increasing patient satisfaction, improved staff satisfaction, low staff turnover, and improved clinical quality.

Additionally, the Sunshine Coast Private Hospital was rated third in Australia and first in Queensland in Medibank's recent annual, national survey into maternity hospital experiences in private hospitals.

Parents were able to rate hospital performance, environment, staff and support throughout the pregnancy, birth and early parenthood. The survey, which is run independently of any hospital and is based on feedback directly from the patients themselves, evaluated the experiences of over 1500 women who have given birth in private hospitals across Australia.

Wesley Hospital admitting patients again

The Wesley Hospital received clear test results for its East Wing on 18 June following a comprehensive and systematic cleansing of the water system.

UnitingCare Health Executive Director Richard Royle said patients were able to shower and new patients were being progressively admitted to the wing.

"Given our current timetable of cleansing and testing The Wesley Hospital will be back to full services in approximately the first week of July if test results continue to be clear," Mr Royle said.

"I am very confident we will have the safest, cleanest water of any hospital in Queensland," he said.

"We will keep it that way with permanent chlorine feeders maintaining a water environment which kills legionella and testing will also continue regularly."

Wesley Hospital staff wish to thank the Uniting Church for all the support and prayer during this time.

For the most up-to-date information visit the website at wesley.com.au

Kairos celebrates confirmations

Sunday 16 June was a day of rejoicing at Kairos Uniting Church Earnshaw Road as eight young people were confirmed.

"These young disciples are the future leaders of the church and it is our responsibility with God's help to continue to nurture their faith and growth," said Rev Sandra Jebb.

"It was inspiring to see these young people make their public commitment to Christ and promise to participate in God's mission to the world," said Pastor Gabriel Manuelli.

Christian climate change action

The Australian Religious Response to Climate Change (ARRCC)'s Christian Climate Change Action Kit is now available online.

The Kit's launch on 16 June at Pitt Street Uniting Church in Sydney featured guest speaker Rev Tara Curlewis, General Secretary of the National Council of Churches in Australia.

"ARRCC's Christian Climate Action Kit provides a wide range of well-grounded, easy-to-use, creative ideas to assist communities to make creation care a reality. From encouraging an appreciation of our connections with creation to the basic science, from liturgy to advocacy, it's a comprehensive resource, with links to other excellent resources. Readers will find it's beautifully presented and it's free," said ARRCC'S president, Thea Ormerod.

Download the Christian Climate Change Action Kit at arrcc.org.au/climate-action-kit

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SEMINAR 1

Rev. Dr. John Bodycomb

"Reactive or Proactive Inhibition or Innovation"

Saturday 3rd August 2013
9:30am - 4:00pm
Cost: \$25 (includes lunch)

The Caloundra August week of seminars

SEMINAR 2

Rev. Dr. Lorraine Parkinson

"Why Jesus of Nazareth, the prophet/teacher became Jesus the Messiah/Christ"

Saturday 10th August 2013
10:00am - 4:00pm
Cost: \$25 (includes lunch)



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