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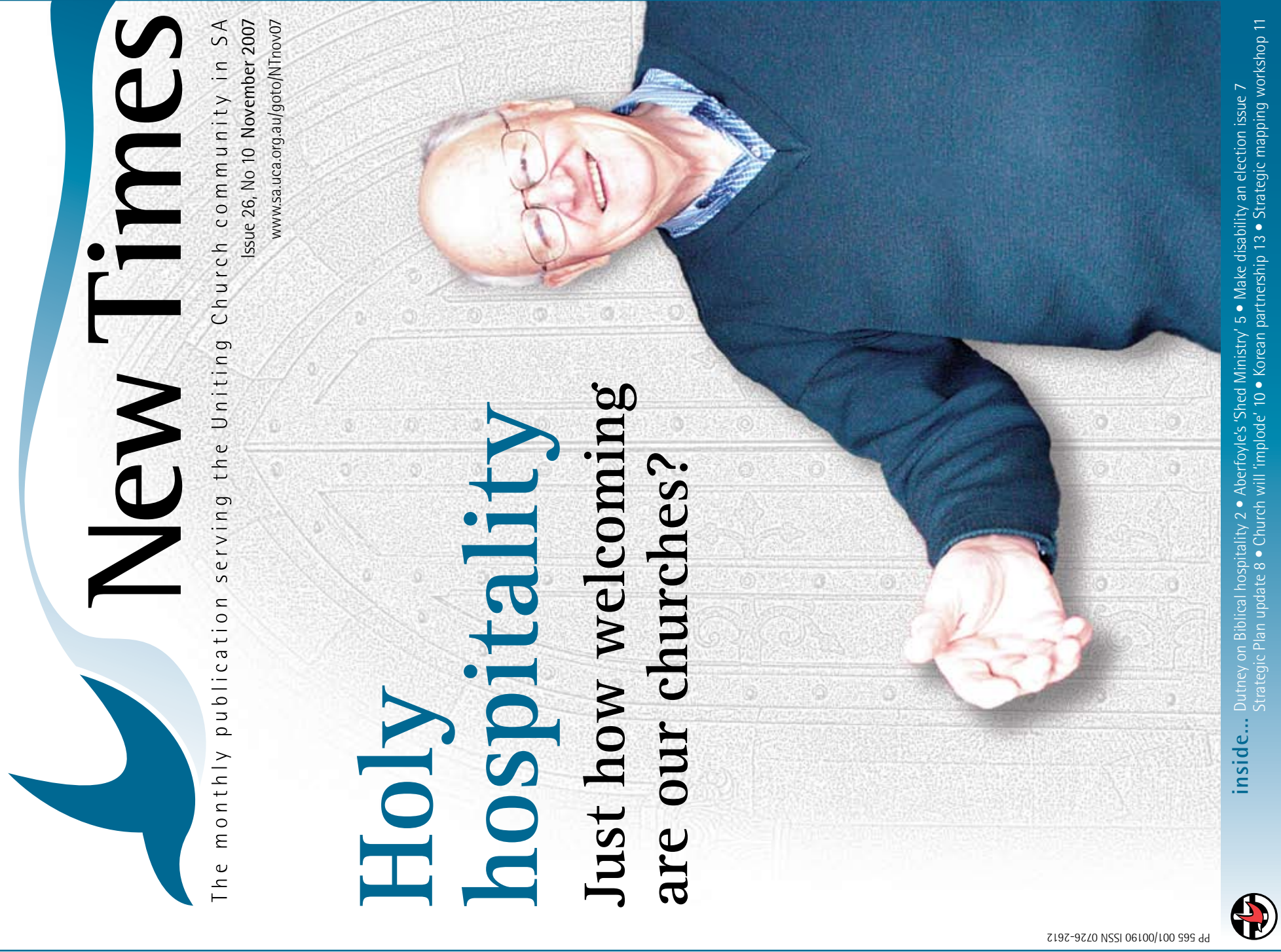
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**New Times**  
The monthly publication serving the Uniting Church community in SA  
Issue 26, No 10 November 2007  
[www.sa.uca.org.au/goto/NTnov07](http://www.sa.uca.org.au/goto/NTnov07)

**Holy hospitality**  
Just how welcoming are our churches?

PP 565 001/00190 ISSN 0726-2612

**inside...** Dutney on Biblical hospitality 2 • Aberfoyle's 'Shed Ministry' 5 • Make disability an election issue 7  
Strategic Plan update 8 • Church will 'implode' 10 • Korcan partnership 13 • Strategic mapping workshop 11





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# Reconciliation statement welcomed

THE UNITING Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress (UAICC) has cautiously welcomed the Government's apparent commitment to a new statement of reconciliation in the preamble to the Constitution.

However UAICC national administrator Rev Shayne Blackman warns its significance will depend on whether Indigenous people will have input into how the preamble is worded and what socio-economic outcomes it will drive. 'If negotiation with Indigenous people is not central to the proposed constitutional changes then John Howard's statement will be dismissed as simple electioneering,' said Shayne. 'Nevertheless we welcome this as a constructive

move that affirms the unique place of Indigenous people in Australia.

"Indigenous people have long wanted their identity and rights affirmed in the Constitution. They see this as a prelude to an effective national framework of Indigenous policy and programs that will deliver equitable socio-economic outcomes.

"Success in any Indigenous endeavour is undergirded by a system that enables personal and collective decision-making based on our unique cultural values and expressions. "We call upon the government of the day to put politics aside and incorporate Indigenous wisdom into their policy programming."

# New look for 'New Times'

WELCOME to the new look 'New Times' which focuses on the theme of 'Holy hospitality' this month. This issue may cause many of us to reconsider the way we engage in the Biblical imperative to be hospitable to strangers.

*Don't forget to show hospitality to strangers, for in doing so, some have entertained angels without knowing it. Hebrews 13:2.*

We are trialling several new concepts in this issue to recapture reader attention and encourage church members to look at 'New Times' afresh. We are testing a new style

cover and improved paper stock. We are also focusing on a theme which links to an online poll and forum on The Uniting Church SA's website. This month's issue has its own web page, visit: [www.sa.uca.org.au/goto/NTnov07](http://www.sa.uca.org.au/goto/NTnov07). Parkin-Wesley College principal Rev Dr Andrew Dutney is our November guest columnist and he unpacks the essential meaning of Biblical hospitality.

We look at how two of our congregations are demonstrating Biblical hospitality - Aberfoyle Uniting Church through its new Life Shed Ministry and Mount

Barker Uniting Church through its Hungry No More outreach project.

There's also an account from a former drug addict about why he joined the Uniting Church and a confronting story from a former member about why he no longer attends.

We hope you enjoy this issue and strongly encourage you to provide valuable feedback by completing the Communications Survey on page 15 or online. Your thoughts will help us shape the future of 'New Times' and other church communications.

*Jill Freear, Acting editor*

Online poll



## Holy Hospitality

In this month's issue we are attempting to open up discussion in the church by inviting 'New Times' readers to participate in an online poll and forum.

Keeping in mind the examples of The Life Shed Ministry and Hungry No More (both featured on page 5), this month's poll explores whether our church does enough to provide hospitality to strangers.

Cast your vote by Friday November 9 so we can report the results in the December 'New Times'.

Go online to answer this question:

- Do you think your congregation focuses too much on its membership and not enough on providing hospitality to those on the fringes of the church, to strangers and to marginalised people?

To take part in this poll go to [www.sa.uca.org.au/goto/NTpoll](http://www.sa.uca.org.au/goto/NTpoll)

Online forum



## Is our church hospitable?

According to the latest National Church Life Survey, only 33 percent of us have invited someone to church in the last 12 months. In this issue Andrew Dutney (page 3) reminds us that hospitality is much more than "Being nice to visitors". So are we doing enough? What is your church doing? Share your thoughts on what is working well in your local setting. What ideas do you have for welcoming the stranger?

To take part in this forum go to [www.sa.uca.org.au/goto/NTforum](http://www.sa.uca.org.au/goto/NTforum)



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Acting editor: Jill Freear, Ph 8236 4230, email [newtimes@sa.uca.org.au](mailto:newtimes@sa.uca.org.au)

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# Biblical hospitality Why we left the Uniting Church

*Parkin-Wesley College principal Rev Dr Andrew Dutney writes a guest column this month about Biblical hospitality.*

BEFORE hospitality was an “industry” it was a virtue – one central to the lives of Christians. The people of God knew themselves to be foreigners and strangers who had been welcomed by God into the household of faith. They in turn were called to extend that welcome to others (e.g. Leviticus 19:33-34, Ephesians 2:11-21). It meant offering hospitality not just in the household of faith but also in their own, private households. It was, and is, a normative biblical practice. And Christians learn it by doing it.

The biblical meaning of hospitality is to make room for the stranger and especially those in acute need – even your enemy. Hospitality transgresses social boundaries. It flies in the face of self-interest. It makes everyone uncomfortable while the last become first and the kingdom of God comes near. Biblical hospitality has nothing to do with being nice to visitors who turn up at church services in the hope that they might stay. That’s important, but that’s

marketing not hospitality. It has nothing to do with social entertaining. Family and friends are really important, but that’s etiquette not hospitality.

Abraham modeled hospitality in the extravagant welcome he gave the “three men” who turned up at his camp by the oaks of Mamre (Genesis 18:1-5). That encounter was recalled as part of the birth of the nation and was imitated by the children of Abraham who remembered their own reliance on the hospitality of foreigners as they wandered in the wilderness. Abraham’s hospitality to the “three men” is also well known to Christians as the subject of the famous icon of the Trinity by Rubelev (1410 AD). It’s a powerful connection – Abraham’s welcome of the strangers becomes a glimpse of the being of the triune God. There’s something very godly, even sacramental, in hospitality.

Jesus’ own ministry relied on the hospitality of others and the practice of hospitality was woven into his message. He taught his disciples to proclaim the nearness of the kingdom of God by sharing its peace with those who gave them hospitality and its judgment with those who did not (Luke 10:1-12). He taught them to extend hospitality in a way that would be a parable of the kingdom (Luke 14:12-24).

From the earliest times the church extended hospitality. Bishops had a particular responsibility and were the first to develop institutions of hospitality that are now part of the infrastructure of our society – hospitals, hospices, hostels and even hotels (it’s no



Rev Dr Andrew Dutney.

accident that they all share the same root word).

Over the last couple of centuries hospitality slipped off the list of Christian norms and even off the agenda of Christian theology and ethics. It may have something to do with the expanding role of agencies that care for people in acute need. Those agencies are important and deserve our support, but they do not relieve us of the call to show hospitality to the stranger or the needy.

Once “mission” was something that specialist missionaries did on the church’s behalf in the “mission field”. These days we understand that mission is the church’s core business and we are all called to participate. We need to learn the same lesson with “hospitality”. Making room for strangers and caring for the needy has become something that specialists like UnitingCare do on our behalf somewhere else. And they do it well. But it’s the core business of the whole church and everyone is called to practice it – in our own neighbourhood and even in our own homes.

*We can learn much about hospitality by listening to people who have joined our church. What did they connect with? What helped them to feel comfortable? We can also learn from those who have not found hospitality in Christian community.*

*We need to hear the things that alienate, disappoint and frustrate and to ask the hard questions about how our behaviour gets in the way of others experiencing Christian community. Here is the story of one family that left the church after a series of disappointments.*

I GREW UP in the Church of Christ and during my youth my life revolved around the church: church sporting groups, church youth group and other church social activities.

When I was newly married I started attending the Uniting Church. When we moved with our young family to the Hills we couldn’t find a Uniting Church congregation that welcomed young people with children and also had a strong social justice focus.

So we joined another metropolitan Uniting Church congregation and went there for more than a decade before a series of things happened that caused us to leave.

While the church community was good with young children, once our kids got to High School age and were no longer cute and no longer did what they were told, the congregation didn’t want to know them. Our teenagers felt alienated.

We felt the congregation merely paid lip service to children being welcome and included in the life of the church. The reality was that our kids were ignored and excluded. On one occasion we were actually told we were bad parents.

My wife and I were also excluded from a range of activities such as worship planning. There was a lack of inclusion and controlling behaviour by a small group of people on church council.

The final straw was when my wife got sick and no one made any attempt to be in touch. The congregation would claim to have good pastoral care, but that wasn’t our experience. My wife was quite hurt and felt badly let down.

*Continued on page 4*



Rubelev's famous Trinity icon.

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Applications Close November 18, 2007

# Why I joined the Uniting Church

David Sinclair joined the Uniting Church because of a Uniting Church lay pastor and prison visitor called Eric Paschke.

David claims Eric saved his life after he befriended him in Mobilong Prison.

Up until then David's life had been a sad tale. He emigrated with his family from Scotland when he was 11. But his mother was an alcoholic and his parents' marriage soon disintegrated. When his father remarried David was left to fend for himself. He left school at 15, started drinking and smoking marijuana and eventually became addicted to heroin.

David takes up the story.

I WAS initially sent to Pentridge Prison for selling heroin. I didn't know how I would cope with the nine year sentence. Three months into my term I found myself in the foetal position crying out to God. I asked God for two things – firstly to help me get through my jail sentence and secondly to show me a new way of life.

After several years I was moved to Mobilong Prison. That's where I met Eric. We started talking and he spent about two hours just getting to know me. After that he'd come to the jail and we would talk about Jesus and other religions. Eventually he gave me a Bible.

When we first met Eric was 70 and I was 41. I



Eric Paschke who met David in Mobilong Prison.

knew there was something in this man that I wanted. The spirit of God shone through him. He was very gracious and understanding. He got to know me as a person. He never Bible bashed me. He had so much wisdom. He'd give me scriptures to read and when I read them in my cell at night the tears would flow.

After 18 months of Eric witnessing to me I decided to give my heart to Jesus – in the dining room of Mobilong prison. It was very humbling. I shed lots of tears and my gangster friends walked past and saw me. They didn't bag me for it. Not one negative thing was said about me giving my heart to Jesus.

Eric was very concerned about me getting out of jail. I had been using heroin for 20 odd years, even in jail. I was concerned too, because I was scared I would return to the only way of life I knew.

Eric found me a place to live at the back of the Christian Outreach Centre in Mount Barker. He kept in contact and mentored me. He would take me out to churches and I gave my testimony all around the district.

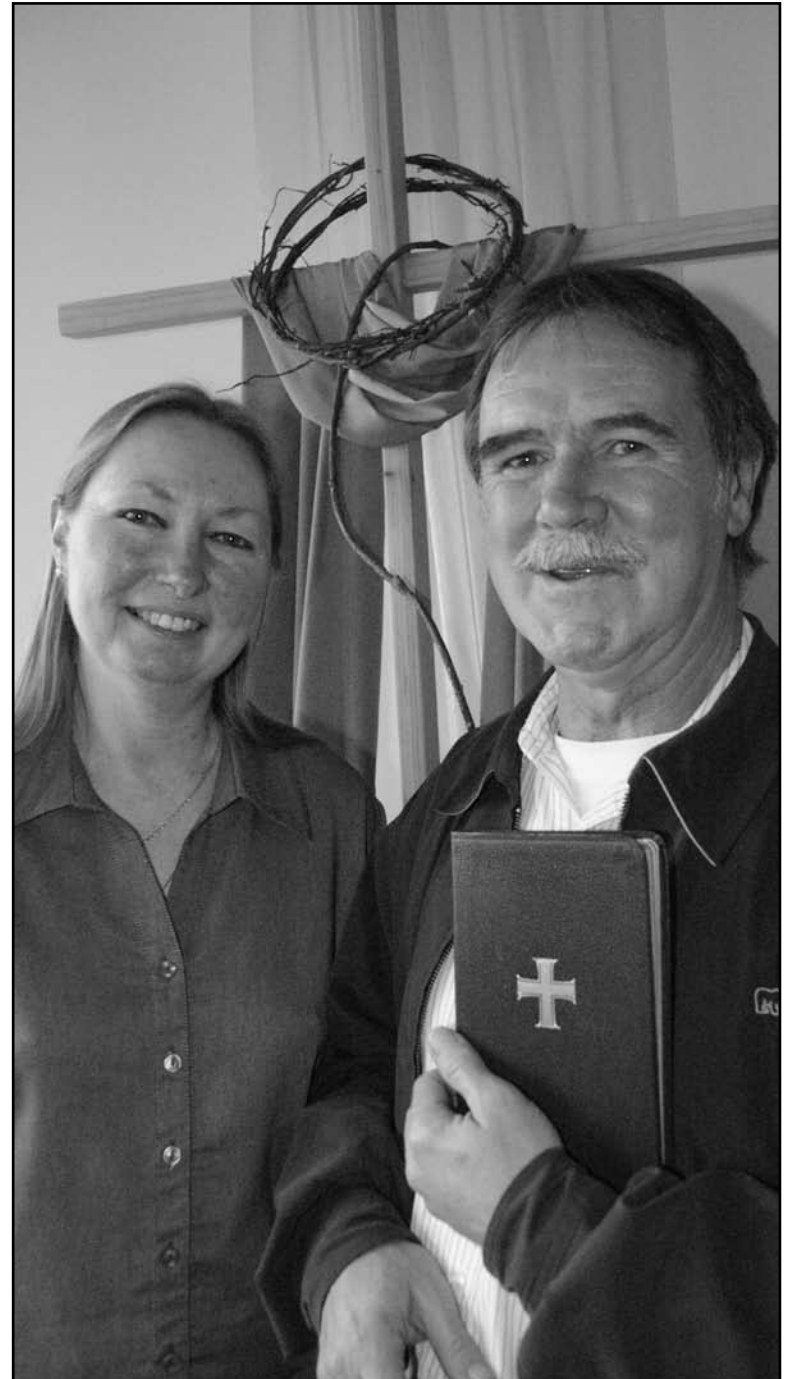
I went to a Pentecostal Church for about 16 months. One day Eric invited me to a coffee outreach group run by his congregation – called 'Prime Time'. He knew I needed Christian community around me, but he also knew I didn't feel worthy to sit in a church pew.

At 'Prime Time' there were single mums with kids and ex-prisoners. That's where I met my wife Linda. I eventually left the Pentecostals because I was looking for something more traditional. I became a Uniting Church member before Linda and I got married.

I still struggled with my demons. I was finding it really hard to fit into church life and to be normal. I felt unworthy. One day in the depths of despair I cried out to God. God spoke to me and said 'David you are well loved and accepted. You are my child and I want you to go and tell others just like you, about my great love for them'. I immediately questioned this, but God affirmed me and repeated it. From that moment on I had this great passion to tell people of God's great love for them.

• David is studying for a diploma in Christian Studies at Tabor College. He recently received a Uniting Foundation grant which will help cover his remaining study expenses.

He supports marginalised people at the 'Hungry No More' Sunday night outreach program at Mount Barker Uniting Church. (See story on page 5).



David Sinclair with his wife Linda.

## Why we left the Uniting Church

From page 3

For all that the congregation claimed to be inclusive, open and welcoming, our experience was the opposite. We felt many members treated the church as a club where they wanted to feel comfortable. Congregational life revolved around the organ and maintaining the heritage of the old church building.

We stopped attending when my wife got sick. When she recovered we felt we no longer had a reason to attend church; we had drifted away.

We tried other local congregations but are yet to find one that really meets our needs. We fronted up at several that made us feel like we were invisible or didn't exist. I'm sure if we had hung around a bit longer or had pushed our way in, we might have eventually been included.

We still live by Christian values and have a Christian view of the world. We have been to one local Uniting Church congregation that is quite good. But it's a small congregation and we fear we may be dragged into things. Now we don't want to get heavily involved. Small congregations may have expectations we can't meet.

You'd be surprised at how liberating it is to have Sunday mornings free.

I still read and contemplate religious issues but essentially our experience of the structured institutionalised church is disappointing.

When I grew up church was a central part of family life. But today things are quite different. My kids' lives have revolved more around their school. Their core friendships were made in a different place. Church has played a much smaller role for people of their generation.

\* Author's name withheld to enable him to write freely.

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# Blokes are simply blokes at Aberfoyle's Shed Ministry

ABERFOYLE Uniting Church's Life Shed Ministry project is proving an innovative and powerful way of connecting church people with the local community.

Aberfoyle's shed pastor Roger Modra is behind the project. It has grown out of his belief that the church has to find new and relevant ways to reach the community.

"People simply won't come to anything that looks churchy or has a 'God factor' in it," says Roger.

"We wanted to break down the bad perceptions of the church so that people could begin to view the church as a place that does great things for the community.

"We needed to find a way to help people to feel comfortable enough to walk through the front doors to see what God is doing here."

## Skim board project

One of the Shed's first ventures was a skim board making project. Aberfoyle Uniting Church youth were invited to bring non-church friends along to make skim boards designed for surfing on the sand.

The Shed sessions were strategically timed to finish at 7.30pm on a Friday night; the same time that the church's youth group was swinging into action next door.

Roger says the project resulted in a couple of kids without church connections building relationships with the Shed people and one girl from the group being baptised.

## Fishing project

The Shed's next outreach project aimed to teach fishing skills to boys who were lacking male role models.

Shed members went to local primary schools and intentionally targeted boys between the ages of eight and 12 who were from single mother households.

During a series of Wednesday nights the boys were given their own rod and reel and taught how to tie knots and practised cleaning, gutting and filleting fish.

"The blokes then took the kids fishing in boats one Sunday and caught squid, garfish and blueys," says Roger.

"Some parents said that what we are doing here is fantastic. Our volunteers made some really deep connections with these kids. One boy who was deeply introverted and didn't have many friends really blossomed."

## Backyard Bless

The Backyard Bless program was another Shed initiative.

Church volunteers looked for sick and needy people in the community and cleaned up



Some of the boys taught fishing skills by volunteers from Aberfoyle Uniting Church's Life Shed Ministry project.

their gardens, refusing to take money or donations for their efforts.

"We simply said we wanted to give to them because God had given to us," says Roger.

It seems that the Shed is never short of ideas and projects to help it connect with people in the community.

The Shed is about to start a dementia support program one day a week. "Men with dementia seem to really come alive in this environment," Roger says.

"We're also investigating being a 'Rush Branch' - this

is a one-to-one mentoring program with troubled disconnected youth.

"Musicians could also get involved in the Shed. It could be a place where they come on Friday and Saturday nights to jam and form a worship group."

Roger believes the Life Shed Ministry is successful because it's about "blokes being blokes, working together and giving their gifts".

The group is very intentional about including Christianity in everything they do. "We don't want to be just another

community project but a community project that is intentionally evangelistic.

"Whether it's through saying grace over a meal or talking about Him in our lives, we place the Lord in front of people, so they might grow to experience His love."

The Life Shed has received funding from the Uniting Foundation. Initially \$15,000 was granted for a feasibility study. In September last year the project was granted a further \$150,000 which is administered through Aberfoyle Uniting Church.

# Nourishing mind, body and soul

Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will not be hungry, and he who believes in me will never be thirsty." John 6:35.

MOUNT Barker Uniting Church is operating a ministry of hospitality through its 'Hungry No More' (HNM) Sunday night outreach project.

The congregation is assisted by other local churches and a service club to provide a free community meal where the focus is on Christian community.

The project has been running in the Mount Barker Uniting Church hall since 2000 and now between 40 and 50 people are served each Sunday night.

One of the key organisers Juleen Villis said the aim is to emulate Jesus; to love and serve the poor and the broken-hearted, to free those who are captive to addictions and life-controlling problems and to

tell all the good news of 'Christ among us' (Lk 4:18).

"HNM grew out of the recognition that relationship is the most important thing," said Juleen. "Relationship is the essence of the Trinity. It's how we are made, to be in relationship.

"We strive to build relationships with God and each other and treat our guests with dignity, respect and genuine friendliness."

Between the main meal and dessert, there is an informal and interactive time of teaching and worship. During this period the children enjoy time with children and youth workers.

All meal preparation, kitchen work and childcare is carried out by volunteers. All food is donated by churches, individuals and service clubs in the district.

Mount Barker Uniting Church member David Sinclair (see David's story on page 4) also plays a key role in HNM, connecting with and encouraging marginalised people.

"I want people to know that God loves them, no matter what their background may be," David said. "There is hope for them, just like there was for me.

"My heart is for the broken people. We've never had to advertise. God just brings people to our door. A lot of them are lonely but while they are here they can experience Christian community and hospitality.

"After seven years people are starting to ask questions of a spiritual nature. I feel the spirit of God is really moving in there.

"After the meal I go outside for a smoke with some of our



Receiving hospitality at Hungry No More are seated (l to r) Yvette Hoy, Sharna Daniels, Jeff Wayne, Kerry Beviss and Tahlia Bickerton. They are served by Marlene Kelly (Mt Barker Uniting Church elder) and Ian Rose (Mt Barker Rotary Club).

visitors and I talk to them about their problems. I tell them I'm still struggling with the same issues they are, the only difference is, I've got Jesus in my life.

"Through me they see that a

Christian life is obtainable.

"We don't expect these people to become part of the Sunday morning congregation. All we hope for is that they will have a personal relationship with God."



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### Last funding round for 2007 closes

**5pm November 15**

#### Want to know more?

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The Uniting Foundation is a major provider of funding for exciting & forward looking projects that are expected to have a major impact on the future mission and ministry of the Uniting Church to the SA community.

The Foundation is also a proud sponsor of the future dreams and visions of the Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress.

*Congratulations to the following successful applicants:*

### Leadership Development Projects

Applicant Name	Project	Amount
Parkin Wesley College	Big Year Out – Young Adult Year of Discipleship and Learning.	<b>\$70,000</b>
Strategic Planning Leadership Team	Extension of Mentoring/Coaching pilot project. Funding will provide sponsorship for up to 12 people to be coached/mentored through Ministry Advantage in 2008.	<b>Up to \$40,000</b>

### Seed Funding and Innovative Project Grants

Applicant	Project	Amount
Kalparrin Faith Community	Start up funds for communion table, equipment and musical instruments.	<b>\$10,000</b>
Marnie Agnew	Set up and produce KUCA News for on line subscription.	<b>\$31,000</b>
Jason John	Continuation of Eco-Faith Community.	<b>\$70,000 over two years</b>

### Gift Funding

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Hallett	2,000	Repair work
Padthaway	3,000	Audiovisual equipment
Port Elliot	8,640	Port Elliot Computer Kids
Woodville	32,000	QEH Hospital Chaplaincy
Maitland	1,000	OH&S Kitchen upgrade
Wandearah	15,000	Upgrade of building exterior
Nunyara	20,000	Fire Safety Upgrade
Woodville Gardens	35,000	Westwood Outreach Worker
Parafield Gardens	35,000	Youth pastor





*Demanding Indigenous health equality on behalf of the Uniting Church SA are Uniting Church SA covenanting coordinator Peter Russell, UAICC outreach and development officer Ken Sumner and General Secretary Graham Humphris.*

## ‘Close the Gap’

THE UNITING CHURCH SA is the first local denomination to sign a petition demanding Indigenous health equality within a generation.

Last month the church signed the ‘Close the Gap’ petition which calls on federal, state and territory governments to commit to closing the life expectancy gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians within a generation.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders have a life expectancy 17 years less than other Australians.

‘Close the Gap’ petitioners are calling for Indigenous health funding to be increased by \$450 million a year to enable Indigenous people to have equal access to health services.

The campaign also calls for increased Indigenous control and participation in health service delivery and for critical social issues like Indigenous housing, education and self-determination to be addressed.

Uniting Church SA covenanting coordinator Peter Russell said the ‘Close the Gap’ campaign is in keeping with UCA policy.

“The church strongly supports the campaign’s aims and I would urge all local congregations to visit the Oxfam website: [www.oxfam.org.au/campaigns/](http://www.oxfam.org.au/campaigns/), to sign the ‘Close the Gap’ pledge online.

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**Telephone: 8396 0788**  
**Email: [office@hopevalleyuc.org.au](mailto:office@hopevalleyuc.org.au)**  
**Website: [www.hopevalleyuc.org.au](http://www.hopevalleyuc.org.au)**

**Applications close 9 November 2007**

# Disability: an election issue

VARIOUS ADVOCACY organisations have been promoting urgent disability issues in readiness for the upcoming Federal Election on November 24. A national voice is striving to be heard on various disability causes that have been ignored politically for far too long.

Some progress on certain issues has been acknowledged. Both major parties have just promised greater support for families with children diagnosed with autism. Also, there has been a little progress on the critical need for more accommodation and respite for young people with disabilities being cared for by elderly parents. Through the Commonwealth Assistance Package some respite and accommodation for these younger people has been made available, but so many have not been included under this funding package.

The needs of disability carers have been critically under-valued and under-funded. Carers under stress, whether they be parents looking after children with critical disability needs, or children looking after parents with disabilities, have been left to cope for themselves despite the best efforts of Carers’ organisations.

Advocacy organisations are pointing to the lack of government consultation with individuals and grassroots disability organisations in the formulation of policy and disability initiatives. Too many initiatives emerge from a bureaucratic level, with little consultation with those living with the daily consequences of disability.

A much-welcomed offer by the Federal Government to match state funding for accommodation and respite services was recently withdrawn without notice. This was a huge disappointment to people with disabilities and their families, who are struggling to access the services they need to live a decent life.

Politically, people living with disabilities have struggled to have their needs and injustices addressed. Why? Because there are just not many votes in supporting the disability community.

Our church lays claim to a proud biblical and social tradition of reaching out to those in our community who are often considered to be of little worth, such as those living with disabilities, whose voices too often go unheard, and whose needs too often go unaddressed.

As concerned Christians I urge you to lobby local candidates and members to support disability needs. Please also support local disability advocacy organisations such as Dignity for Disabled - [www.dignity4disabled.com.au](http://www.dignity4disabled.com.au) - in its effort to bring about political change.

And as we consider our voting intentions for this impending Federal Election may we direct our vote to those who might best address the critical needs of those so easily ignored in our community, such as those living with disability.

- Trevor Whitney,  
Uniting Church SA Disabilities Ministry chaplain

# Crippling food prices

THE RISING cost of food is crippling members of remote Indigenous communities and is a major policy concern for the Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress (UAICC).

UAICC national administrator Rev Shayne Blackman said the health and socio-economic conditions of remote communities will continue to decline unless the problem is addressed.

“Indigenous communities have limited fresh food and in some cases face prices that are up to three times higher than major cities,” said Shayne. “And these are the very communities that can least afford to pay.

“The availability of nutritious food is fundamental to addressing the array of poor Indigenous health issues, such as diabetes, which are so prevalent in remote communities.”

The UAICC wants the Federal Government to subsidise local stores and food transport costs; to create a climate for competition and potential monopoly regulation in communities; and to encourage local food production and bush tucker where feasible.

“The Government has the ability to improve nutrition in remote communities,” said Shayne. “I urge them to take this issue as seriously as they purport to treat it in mainstream Australia.”

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Your donation will help UnitingCare Wesley Adelaide to distribute Festive food hampers and toys to 1,300 families in our community this Christmas. For many people who struggle to overcome disadvantage or isolation, these gifts will bring joy and the encouragement of knowing that someone cares.

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Gifts of money or new toys can be sent to:  
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**10 Pitt Street Adelaide SA 5000**  
**For more details refer [www.ucwesleyadelaide.org.au](http://www.ucwesleyadelaide.org.au)**

or ring **Pam Jones 8202 5177**

*‘We’ll now be able to enjoy Christmas dinner & have gifts under our tree ... thank you so much’ said a grateful parent.*

**UnitingCare Wesley**



## Heading towards a brighter future

### Updating the Uniting Church SA's Strategic Plan



Much has happened in the past 12 months since members attending the November 2006 Presbytery and Synod meeting voted to adopt a new Strategic Plan for the church.

A Strategic Planning Steering Group was convened in January this year and has been meeting monthly to oversee the Strategic Plan's development and implementation.

Six Core Teams have been established to put the six Key Directions into action. These teams have been working hard to further develop and refine their goals and objectives.

The Steering Group is excited by the many stimulating prospects emerging from each of the six key areas and believes they will greatly enhance our church's missional effectiveness.

The Group is now drawing up timelines to help steer the plan's implementation and ensure that the various activities are managed in an integrated fashion.

In short, we've made a great start. We've done a lot, but there is still much more to be done.

Please keep praying for our church and the Strategic Plan. While we are working hard in all of the above areas – we are very much aware of our dependence on God in this planning. Ultimately it's only God who changes lives and brings about growth.

These two pages offer a progress report from the convenors of the Six Core Teams.

**Graham Humphris**

*Uniting Church SA General Secretary*

*Strategic Planning Steering Group chairperson*

#### Key Direction 1: Fostering a Culture of Conversion Growth

##### Objectives:

- Resource congregations to achieve 10 percent growth per annum.
- Raise leaders' morale and develop evangelism skills.
- Assist ministry centres to develop conversion growth strategies.

Fostering a culture of conversion within the Uniting Church SA is a vital part of the new Strategic Plan.

The Core Team first met in March this year and by July the team had grown substantially after being joined by two leaders from ten diverse congregations and their mentors.

These ten congregations are Adelaide West, Blackwood, Christ Church, Port Adelaide, Port Pirie, Rosefield, Tea Tree Gully, The Shed (Men's Spirituality group at Aberfoyle UC), Waikerie and Whyalla.

The team has met monthly to explore what it might mean to create a culture of conversion in our congregations. Visiting academics have assisted our group of resident thinkers.

Changing a congregation's culture will demand fearlessness, energy and passion. Congregational change will be natural and inevitable as vital resources are directed to ministries which will create new doorways into the life of our worship and fellowship.

It will mean opening the doorways of our hearts and will be a sincere reflection on our hospitality and our ability to befriend strangers.

Each of the ten congregations involved will ultimately create their own conversion growth plan to share, in time, with the wider church.



**Beth Seaman**

*Conversion Growth Core Team convenor.*

*Other team members include Tony Eldridge, Jonathon Davies and Ian Price.*

#### Key Direction 2: Raising Leaders

##### Objectives:

- Establish a Leadership Institute.
- Develop excellent leaders.
- Recruit gifted and talented people.
- Value and affirm leaders.
- Improve leaders' education and supervision.

Establishing a Leadership Institute is a top priority under the church's new Strategic Plan. The proposed new Leadership Institute will be based at Parkin-Wesley Theological College.

The Institute and College will be collectively known as the Centre for Leadership Development. The two institutions will share administrative resources and facilities.

The church is seeking a director for the Leadership Institute and hopes to appoint someone to the position early next year.

The rationale behind the Centre for Leadership Development is that the church needs to sharpen its focus on raising excellent ministers and lay leaders because we live in a changing world.

Australian sociologist Gary Bouma, a leading commentator on Australian religious trends and author of "Australian Soul", recently identified that in an era of renewed interest in religion and spirituality, the three key areas for the church to embrace are experimental faith, using the Internet highway and forming Christian communities that are not connected to Sunday morning worship.

Our ministers and lay leaders need to adapt to this new environment.

Today's leaders still need good Biblical knowledge and sound theological understanding. However, to build effective, healthy churches for the future, we also need leaders who are proactive, mission-orientated and committed to life-long learning.



**Ian Price**

*Conversion Growth Core Team convenor.*

*Other team members include Andrew Dutney and Graham Humphris.*



### Key Direction 3: Growing Disciples

#### Objectives:

- Identify elements of authentic discipleship and develop discipleship pathways.
- Provide resources to enhance biblical literacy and spiritual maturity.
- Improve stewardship of God's gifts.
- Assist congregations to engage in ethical issues.

The Book of Jeremiah tells the extraordinary story of a young prophet whose call from God led him to challenge the leaders of his day. This story caused my team to ponder the question - what kind of church gives birth to prophets?

The Discipleship teams wants to help congregations identify the steps and find the tools to nurture life-long discipleship and enable people to hear afresh Christ's radical call to leave everything behind and follow him.

Developing spiritual growth is also high on our agenda. There is probably no better way to increase Biblical literacy and spiritual maturity than to regularly read the Bible and apply learnings to everyday life. We're planning to develop a spiritual growth journal to encourage Uniting Church people to read and reflect on the Bible each day.

The team is also investigating a process called "Pathways" which is designed to help congregations identify gaps in the process of nurturing faith and developing disciples.



**Peter Morel**

*Discipleship Core Team convenor.*

*Other team members include Sandy Boyce, Simon Dent, Craig Mitchell and Matt Sarre.*

### Key Direction 4: Developing New Models

#### Objectives:

- Encourage fresh expressions of church.
- Encourage 'edge' ministries.
- Plant churches for younger people.
- Integrate ethic worship communities.

A key item on the Developing New Models team's agenda is to influence the presbytery's culture so that we become more open to developing fresh ways of being church. This will involve nurturing a permission-giving culture through presbytery structures that allows new models of church to be flexible in the way ministry is offered and resourced.

The team also plans to prepare resources (such as brochures and DVDs) to explain what it means to be a fresh expression of church. We will also investigate ways that these new models can be developed and resourced. Our promotional tools will provide local examples of fresh expressions which will encourage others to simply have a go.

We would like every congregation, agency and ministry centre to establish one new group that engages with those beyond the church. In time it is hoped that these initiatives will have the potential to become self-sufficient new expressions of church

Next year we would like to fund three new and different fresh expressions of church and hold these up to the wider church as examples of what can be achieved.



**Rob Stoner**

*New Models Core Team convenor.*

*Other team members include Peter Bicknell, Ruthmary Bond, Phil Pynor and Andrew Robertson.*

### Key Direction 5: Expanding our Profile

#### Objectives:

- Develop a communications plan for the Uniting Church SA.
- Develop a coordinated media strategy.
- Investigate new ways of promoting UCA ministries.
- Increase the interactivity of the Uniting Church SA website.

The core team charged with expanding the church's profile wants to tell the world how the Uniting Church SA makes a difference in people's lives.

The team has been busy viewing church promotional campaigns from the United States, Canada and the United Kingdom to see what concepts might be adapted to the Australian context.

We are mulling over ideas for a Uniting Church SA branding campaign which may involve mainstream media advertising and public relations related activities.

Whatever we do, we must engage people and help them see the church afresh as a place that is relevant with something practical to offer.

We would also like to develop, train and promote a team of media spokespeople – so the media know who to contact for comment on social justice issues, questions of theology and other matters.

The church's website will also come under scrutiny. We will explore the possibility of adding live news feeds, blogs and pod casts to make it more interactive.

Before the end of the year we will be conducting market research to find out what people actually think about the Uniting Church SA. This will provide us with a benchmark against which we can measure the effectiveness of any future promotional activities.



**Shannon Short**

*Profile raising Core Team convenor.*

*Other team members include Jill Freear, Julie Johninke, Mark Henley and Tony Nancarrow.*

### Key Direction 6: Championing Justice

#### Objectives:

- Develop new justice communities to expand social justice awareness.
- Increase the church's capacity to engage with and respond to justice issues.
- Resource ministries with marginalised groups unable to fund themselves.

A commitment to Justice is a key part of the Strategic Plan and the Justice Core Team is keen to discover the broad range of ways the church is already involved in championing justice and to identify new justice areas where the church may be able to make a difference.

The Core Team, along with a yet to be appointed project worker, intends to discover where and how congregations, faith communities, agencies and schools are engaged directly with marginalised people or with social justice issues. This will help to pinpoint gaps and potential ministry opportunities.

Next year the team plans to identify two communities working in specific social justice areas, which with additional resources will be able to grow the wider church's capacity to engage and respond to these justice issues.

We also hope to identify new opportunities for ministries with marginalized groups that can't afford to fund their own ministries and to develop effective ministry models for these groups.

Alongside this we will also be working to pair up local congregations with congregations from our overseas partner churches. Similarly we intend to establish supportive one-to-one relationships between indigenous communities and local congregations and agency groups.



**Michaela Tiller**

*Justice Core Team convenor.*

*Other team members include Deana Howland, Ian Hunter, Peter Russell and Kate Tretheway (until December 07).*

If you would like to know more about the Strategic Plan's progress and implementation, sign up for the regular Strategic Plan newsletter called "future@sa.uca". Other information is also published on our website: [www.sa.uca.org.au/goto/strategicplan](http://www.sa.uca.org.au/goto/strategicplan). If you would like a Strategic Plan speaker to visit your congregation or mission network contact the project manager Linda Bastick on 8236 4212 or email [future@sa.uca.org.au](mailto:future@sa.uca.org.au).

# 'Church needs to manage implosion'

Jill Freear

THERE IS nothing much the Uniting Church can do to get "more bums on pews" and the best it may be able to do is to "manage implosion", according to Monash University sociologist, Gary Bouma.

Bouma is the author of 'Australian Soul' and is regarded as a leading commentator on religious and spiritual trends in Australia.

Born in Grand Rapids, Michigan, Bouma has served in more than eight denominations, including the Presbyterian Church, the Quakers and the United Church of Canada, before finally joining the Anglican Church as a part-time priest in Victoria.

Sporting a bow-tie, a ring on nearly every finger and a stud in one ear, Bouma is not what one would typically expect of a theologian or a social commentator.

His conversation is at times cynical and tongue-in-cheek and punctuated with throw-away one-liners such as: "something has to be wrong in the church if I'm still a member of the youth group". (A reference to the aging profile of Australia's mainstream denominations).

## Religious resurgence

Bouma believes there are many signs that religion and spirituality are alive and well in Australia.

"We live in a society that is less secular than it was five to eight years ago," he says. "The media is devoting a lot of time to religious issues and

politicians are talking to church leaders."

But he doesn't believe the revival will help populate mainstream churches.

Bouma says while the Catholic Church has grown because of immigration and a higher birth rate, the Anglican and Uniting Churches are imploding, aging organisations.

"We will have to accept becoming smaller while learning how to be strategic in ascertaining what our ministry is in the 21st century.

"In the average Uniting Church congregation you will find people exhausting themselves, trying to reproduce ministry that was crafted at best in the 1950s, and probably more likely in the 1850s, and that ran entirely on volunteer labour. That simply doesn't work today when women have joined the workforce to pay off mortgages and put kids through private schools."

Bouma says the traditional Australian church has an infrastructure that is ill-suited to delivering the goods.

## Mega church model

"The Methodist church in the US has big barn campuses that take up whole city blocks - holding up to 8,000 people. They have coffee shops and lecture halls to make a university weep. And they have well trained people providing excellent teaching.

"That mega church model is also working in Australia - the big successful ones have thousands of people attending every Sunday.



Monash University sociologist Gary Bouma with Rev Beth Seaman who heads the team creating a culture of conversion growth in the church.

"While there may be criticism of 'the revolving door', at least if people do go out the back door, they go with some Christian teaching and after an encounter with God."

Bouma believes the Uniting Church's chaplaincy model is another form of ministry that is working. "Today school chaplains have more opportunity to engage kids and talk about spirituality than churches. Your chaplains are also out in the community in industry, hospitals and schools - that is a strength."

## Faith sharing

On the subject of faith-sharing, Bouma believes Australians struggle to share their faith because they are "simply inarticulate and incapable of talking about anything spiritual".

He says interfaith dialogue has helped, as it encourages Christians to think about what they believe in and to express those beliefs.

On conversion growth, Bouma says if the aim is to get the under 50s to engage in the

Gospel - "that's good". But if it is to get them into church on a Sunday morning - "get over it. It's straight uphill - people would rather be in bed.

"But if your aim is to detect what it is that God's up to in the 21st century and you want to extend the Kingdom of God, His compassion, grace, forgiveness and love - then do it. After all, Jesus wandered around, saw a need and did something about it. But I do not find a single place where he said - come with me to the Synagogue."



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A Job Description can be obtained by phoning (08) 8278 1883 or by email [eo.ucacccb@senet.com.au](mailto:eo.ucacccb@senet.com.au)

Written applications with the names and contract details of three referees should be marked 'confidential' and forwarded by 5.00pm Friday, 9th November 2007 to:

**Executive Officer**  
UCA Conference Centres  
5 Burnell Drive, Belair SA 5052  
Email to: [eo.ucacccb@senet.com.au](mailto:eo.ucacccb@senet.com.au)

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# Shaping the church's future

CONGREGATION and mission network representatives gathered last month for a two day Strategic Mapping workshop to discuss issues relating to the future shape of the Uniting Church SA.

Under the Strategic Mapping project every congregation and faith community will have its vitality and viability assessed to assist with future resource allocations.

Project officer Charlene Kent has been appointed to collate congregational data.

Project manager Rob Stoner said the Strategic Map will help the Presbytery build the church we would like to have in the future.

"We need to look at the resources at our disposal and how they will be deployed. The project will help inform our critical future choices about placements, property development, grants and mission planning.

"I stress that we have no hidden agenda to close congregations. But this may mean we choose not to invest our resources in unproductive areas."

Workshop members were asked to consider if the project had identified appropriate characteristics to measure congregational viability and if the Presbytery was justified in using those characteristics to allocate future resources.

Some felt the project did not take into account the way congregations impact their surrounding communities.

Others asked how the Presbytery could continue to support congregations that weren't considered viable.

Concern was expressed that the project attempts to apply secular economic rationalist theories to ministry and does not take into account the church's diversity or the faith dynamic at work in congregations.



Discussing the future shape of the church are (from left) Strategic Mapping project manager Rob Stoner, Standing Committee member Gwenda Kerley, Strategic Mapping project officer Charlene Kent and Presbytery and Synod member Don Sarre.

## Concern over African refugee ban SW Ministry Centre to be open for Xmas

UNITING CHURCH leaders have expressed deep concern and disappointment at the Government's decision to prohibit Africans from coming to Australia under the present humanitarian refugee program.

Rev David Pargeter, from the Synod of Victoria and Tasmania, is concerned that racism has motivated Immigration Minister Kevin Andrews' announcement that no African refugees will be allowed into Australia until at least July next year.

The minister said integration problems and a lack of education were factors in his decision.

However Rev Pargeter said "when a Government Minister, on the eve of an election, connects violent action with one particular cultural group, we know we have reached deeply into the darkness of racial politics.

"This, coupled with punitive action against one of the most traumatized refugee groups in Australia, exposes once again this Government's lack of understanding of what life is like for a refugee. Refugees from the Sudan need support, not vilification."

Andrew Clarke, who heads the Uniting Church SA's Centre for Ministry with Refugees, said congregations relating to Sudanese people had expressed concern about the effects of the Government's policy on people from African countries.

"Uniting Church SA congregations and the Synod Refugee Support Fund have provided assistance to refugees in a variety of ways," said Andrew. "And our congregations value these pastoral relationships."

THE new South West Regional Ministry Centre in Warradale, designed with outreach and community service in mind, is nearing completion.

Members of the Oaklands and Wesley Warradale linked congregations and the Fishgate congregation plan to move into the centre just before Christmas, although the official opening will not be held until May next year.

The landmark \$3 million development on the corner of Oaklands and Diagonal Roads will have a drop-in café serving the wider community and an Op Shop, as well as offering worship and a host of mission and ministry activities.

The double storey, multi-purpose facility has a worship space capable of holding up to 450 people.

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**NOTICE**, is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting of the Association will be held on Wednesday, November 21st 2007 @ 7.00pm in the Lecture Hall, Clayton-Wesley Uniting Church complex, The Parade and Portrush Road, Beulah Park SA 5069.

Documentation for the meeting will be available to the public from Thursday, November 15th 2007 from the Head Office, UnitingCare Adelaide East at the Clayton-Wesley Uniting Church complex.

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# Big savings for church

LOCAL Uniting Church congregations and agencies are being encouraged to save money by using the services of CCI (Combined Charities Incorporated) Group Purchasing and the Synergy project.

CCI is a South Australian based association of not-for-profit organisations which has been brokering highly competitive prices for members since 1976.

Synergy is a UnitingCare SA project which negotiates great deals on a range of goods and services for local church agencies, schools and congregations.

## Congregations automatically eligible

The Uniting Church SA is a member of CCI which means that all local congregations are automatically eligible for membership benefits.

CCI Group Purchasing executive officer Tony Marshall said the group not only negotiates savings for members, it can also assist with buying decisions and provide advice on legislation and regulation compliance.

"We have negotiated agreements on an extensive range of products and services including catering supplies, (dry groceries and fresh and frozen foodstuffs), clinical supplies, office equipment and supplies, housekeeping supplies, corporate and administrative services," said Tony.

## At least 15 percent below wholesale

"All members, regardless of size, can access competitive prices which are usually at least 15 percent below wholesale.

"CCI works particularly well

for smaller organisations which don't purchase in high volumes and are therefore unable to negotiate as effectively as larger organisations. Through the collective purchasing power of CCI, a 16-bed aged care facility can purchase goods and services at the same low prices as a 1600-bed facility.

"Members are able to access preferred supplier information directly from the CCI website: [www.ccigrouppurchasing.org.au](http://www.ccigrouppurchasing.org.au) and order directly from the supplier.

"We ensure that preferred suppliers conform to the required industry standards and hold relevant certification and insurance.

CCI represents more than 200 member sites that in turn provide services to more than 20,000 individuals in SA. Membership fees range from \$25 to \$100 a year, depending on the size of the organisation. Fees are waived for congregations.

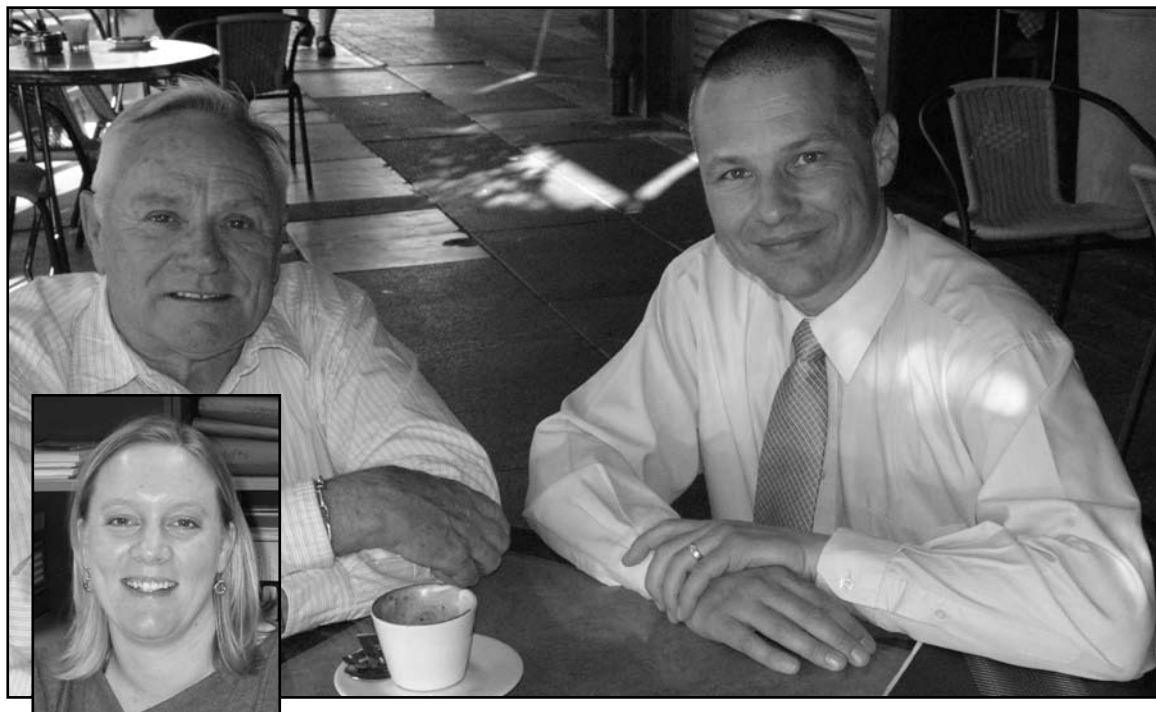
CCI membership is open to any not-for-profit or community based organisation such as providers of aged care, childcare, acute care and education and welfare agencies.

CCI represents more than 200 member sites that represents for more than 20,000 individuals in SA.

Membership ranges from \$25 to \$100 a year, depending on the size of the organisation.

Surplus funds are returned to members in the form of support services, and sponsorships for education and training.

Uniting Church congregations interested in accessing CCI member benefits should ring Tony on 8245 7110



Tony Marshall from CCI Group Purchasing (left) and Mark Dickens from Synergy are helping to broker competitive deals on goods and services for Uniting Church SA congregations, schools and agencies. Insert: Synergy Manager Collette Houlahan will return from maternity leave early next year.

or email: [cci@ucwb.org.au](mailto:cci@ucwb.org.au) for the password granting access to the CCI website's member area.

## Synergy

The Synergy Project compliments and extends the purchasing opportunities offered by CCI. Where CCI is more involved with consumable goods, Synergy is more focused on the provision of maintenance and services.

Synergy has been operating for approximately five years, using the collective size and bargaining power of Uniting Church SA agencies and schools to negotiate competitive prices and conditions.

Up until now Synergy has negotiated mainly on behalf of the church agencies and schools; however Synergy manager Mark Dickens said

the project is now seeking to expand its focus to include congregational needs.

Mark is working for the project for three days a week until Collette Houlahan returns to the position early next year from maternity leave.

## Competitive prices and conditions

"The focus is on supporting each other, drawing on the combined expertise within the agencies and ensuring all parts of the church, regardless of size, have access to competitive prices and conditions," said Mark.

The project is jointly funded and managed by the larger Uniting Church SA agencies, schools, and the South Australian Presbytery and Synod.

All Uniting Church SA congregations and agencies may use Synergy negotiated contracts.

Synergy has preferred providers for air conditioning maintenance, fire and lift maintenance services, fire and emergency response training, pest control services, beds and furniture for hospitals and aged care facilities, Internet services, office equipment and telecommunications.

Next year the Synergy project intends to explore Green Power and other environmentally friendly options for church groups.

Further information about the Synergy project can be found on the UnitingCare SA website: [www.sa.uca.org.au/site/page.cfm?u=33](http://www.sa.uca.org.au/site/page.cfm?u=33) or by contacting Mark on 8236 4263 or email [synergy@sa.uca.org.au](mailto:synergy@sa.uca.org.au).

## Save money with CCI Group Purchasing and the Synergy project

Brokering competitive deals on goods and services for Uniting Church SA agencies, schools and congregations.

### Interested in below wholesale prices for:

- groceries and fresh and frozen foodstuffs
- clinical supplies
- office equipment and supplies
- housekeeping supplies
- corporate and administrative services.

Call CCI executive officer Tony Marshall on 8245 7110  
or email: [cci@ucwb.org.au](mailto:cci@ucwb.org.au)

Check out CCI online at: [www.ccigrouppurchasing.org.au](http://www.ccigrouppurchasing.org.au)

### Interested in competitive rates on:

- air conditioning maintenance
- fire and lift maintenance
- fire and emergency response training
- pest control services
- hospital beds and furniture
- Internet services
- office equipment
- telecommunications.

Call Synergy project manager Mark Dickens on 8236 4263  
or email: [synergy@sa.uca.org.au](mailto:synergy@sa.uca.org.au)

Check out Synergy online, listed under UnitingCare at: [www.sa.uca.org.au](http://www.sa.uca.org.au)



# 'Sunshine policy' brings sense of hope to Korea

Rev Lawrie Linggood

TEN YEARS ago I stood on the border between South Korea and North Korea, a four kilometre wide no-go-zone, with more than a million troops lining it and more than a million land mines within it. Representing one of the first and last remaining landmarks of the cold war, it is potentially one of the most dangerous places on earth.

There is no peace agreement between the countries, just an armistice agreement. Ten years ago when I looked towards North Korea, peace between the two countries seemed impossible. I was full of despair; such were the hostilities between the two nations.

In September I stood at the border again. Many things have not changed; the soldiers are still there, as are the land mines. The tension is still there but now there is also a sense of hope.

Eight years ago there was considerable change in the South Korean Government's policy towards the North which has come to be known as "the sunshine policy." The South Koreans decided they would no longer be hostile towards the North, but they would embrace the North Koreans. Amidst much criticism, the South Korean government began giving food and medicine to their northern neighbours. Then there were exchanges that reunited families, some of which had been separated for more than 50 years.

The South is now working towards reconciliation by sending food and equipment across the border, with no strings attached. South Korean companies are setting up factories in the North, employing people and helping the North's struggling economy.

Life is still hard and regimented in the North but I now feel more optimistic about the future.

Our Korean brothers and sisters also have that sense of hope. While unification is a long way off; there is a calm and patient confidence that it will come. Hostilities are slowly breaking down. As the North is continuously showered with gifts, it is beginning to engage with the South.

It reminded me that Jesus showered us with the gift of life. While we were still sinners God reconciled us to him. Romans 5:10 says "for if, when we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life!"

I believe that the Koreans have a model of reconciliation which we too can use in our personal relationships, that in giving and sharing all we have with others, we too can win them over.

• *Lawrie and his wife Cathy were Uniting Church mission co-workers in South Korea in the late 1990s. He heads the Uniting Church SA's Korean partnership team.*

## South Korean partnership

Since 1991, the former Mt Lofty Presbytery had a partnership with the West Chunbuk Presbytery in South Korea.

There have been many visits by Koreans from the Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea (PROK) to Adelaide and of Uniting Church SA members to Seoul.

The South Korea partnership is now being continued by the Presbytery and Synod of South Australia.

In September a Uniting Church SA delegation including MRN team leader Ian Price, International Mission officer Lyn Leane, Lawrie Linggood, Disabilities Ministry chaplain Trevor Whitney, and Korean congregational minister John Oh, visited South Korea and signed a Memorandum of Understanding for the next three years for the partnership.

There are now plans for some of our Korean partners to visit South Australia next year and a reciprocal visit by South Australia is planned in 2009.

# Rev Philip Potter

Obituary by his nephew Rev George Potter

"THERE ARE many affinities between inspiration and perspiration and Mr Potter has grown into most of them. He has become a self-made man without relieving the Almighty of either responsibility or opportunity." So said the Rev principal P.C. Eckersley upon Philip Potter's election in 1965 to President Elect of the SA Methodist conference.

In 1929 the year the Depression 'bit'; Philip left school to find work. He cracked stone on the road for one shilling and nine pence a yard and worked as a farm labourer.

At 18 he was called to ministry and started preaching in the Salisbury Methodist Circuit. At 19 he was appointed a Home Missioner to Elliston and Wirrula.

In 1936 Philip was accepted as a candidate. In 1938 his studies were interrupted by the death of a minister at Wallaroo and he was sent there as a supply. He was ordained in March 1941 and in July of that year married Norva Dohnt. His Circuits spanned SA: Burra, Cummins, Millicent, Ardrossan, Rose Park, Pirie Street, Glenelg, and Clarence Park from where he retired in 1980.

Philip pioneered religious instruction for the boys at Magill Reformatory, was editor of the SA Methodist, chaplain of the Methodist Ladies College, chairman of the School Board of management and also chaired the Conference Commission on "The Church and its relationship to its schools".

In November 1960 he conducted the first telecast worship service from a Methodist Church in SA. He officiated at some two thousand weddings and with Rev Merv Trenorden initiated a program for pre-marriage counselling in the Methodist Church.

Among his gifts was that of preaching; a sleuth-like persistence and patience in seeking the truth behind scripture and a fearless wedding of Biblical truth to social issues. He is remembered by many as one of the last great orators.

### Vacancy for a Children's and Family Pastor. Is God calling you to a challenge? We want your help!

Trinity Alberton Uniting Church is looking for a "Children's and Family Pastor" to help us develop a children's and family ministry.

- 1) We want to make our current contemporary worship service more family friendly.
- 2) We want to develop a kid's worship/church which will be an integral part of this contemporary worship service.
- 3) The successful applicant will have experience in working with children and families from all types of backgrounds and situations.

The successful applicant must value, evangelism, building a loving and inclusive community, inclusive and creative kid's and family worship, helping kids and their families to feel they belong and helping people to identify the gifts that Jesus has given them.

The position is .2 FTE. For more information and a position and person specification please contact the Rev Darren Lovell on 8244 2337 or Anne Thyne on 0417 868 253.

Applications close at 5.00pm on Friday the 30th of November.

## Enfield Uniting Church

The Church in the Market Place

Invites applications for an

### Emerging Generation Ministry Worker

A multi cultural ministry with children and youth

### A Half Time Position

Enquiries and Inquires Rhonda Amber, 2 Park Street, Sefton Park 8344 7857 enfieldc@chariot.com.au



## Buy your books from UNICHURCH BOOKSHOP

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Talk to the staff at UNICHURCH for friendly, efficient service.

e-mail: unichurch@vic.uca.org.au  
fax: (03) 9650 7019  
ph: (03) 9251 5291

Or write: Uniting Church Centre, 130 Lt. Collins St., Melbourne 3000.

## What's Goin' On?

### Gambling over Breakfast with UnitingCare Wesley

Poker machines and Texas Holdem Poker are having a negative impact on our community.

Come and hear what the pubs and clubs are up to as well as what we can do about it.



An Open Invitation to Breakfast  
Friday 9th November 2007  
10 Pitt St Adelaide  
7.15am for 7.30 start. Finished by 8.45am  
Parking in the Central Markets - just \$2.60!

RSVP Beth Alcock by 7/11/07  
beth.alcock@ucwesleyadelaide.org.au or 8202 5886

This event is fully sponsored by UnitingCare Wesley for members and supporters of the Uniting Church in Australia.

I hope to see you at breakfast!

Rev Peter McDonald



Uniting Church in Australia  
Queensland Synod

## Presbytery of South Moreton

"Fostering a creative, adventurous & inclusive church, celebrating & sharing life in Christ"

The Presbytery of South Moreton is seeking to call to the position of Presbytery Minister a person with vision, energy and a strong team commitment who will provide pastoral oversight, intentional missional leadership and support across the Presbytery. It is envisaged that the role will be one of offering pastoral support and enabling Congregations and Ministers as they explore ways of being the Church.

Information Pack available at <http://www.ucaql.com.au/job.aspx> or contact:

Rev Anne Wright  
Email: [annerw@netspace.net.au](mailto:annerw@netspace.net.au)  
Ph: (07) 5563 3007

Applications close Friday 23rd November 2007

WHO IS MY NEIGHBOUR?  
AN EXPO AT PILGRIM  
Friday  
November 23rd  
2007  
10am to 4.00pm

Displays presented by Church and Community Groups, who serve neighbours near and far

Pilgrim Uniting Church  
12 Flinders Street Adelaide  
Phone: 82123295  
[www.pilgrim.org.au](http://www.pilgrim.org.au)

# Letters

## LAY PREACHERS

I was delighted to read in the September issue of New Times reference to the recognition of the many years of devoted service rendered by lay preachers in the Uniting Church, most of whom commenced their ministry before Union in 1977.

However the majority were from the Adelaide metropolitan area and its immediate environs. Where are the country lay preachers and are they too being recognised? Lay preachers in country parishes and congregations make substantial and sacrificial contributions to the ongoing life of their congregations and parishes.

I commend the secretary of the Synod Lay Preachers Committee for seeking information from lay preachers of their service to update records. This should help towards an adequate recognition of the inestimable value of the Ministry of Lay Preaching across the whole Synod, both city and country. Perhaps the various Networks could help in this regard.

Ralph Harwood  
McLaren Vale

## RELECTIONS ON BAXTER

Thank you for the reflections on Baxter Detention Centre in the October New Times. I particularly identify with

Darren Lovell's feelings of frustration about the views of uninformed people. It is hard to decide whether the inhumane Government policy of indefinite imprisonment of traumatised refugees is more abhorrent than the indifference to their suffering from some Christians and others who claim to be compassionate.

The grim reality of Australia's treatment of asylum seekers continues to manifest in the shattered confidence and mental illness of those finally given refugee status. There is despair at the hurdles put in the way of family reunions and the unspeakable suffering of those being deported back to the countries from which they fled.

Immigration Minister Kevin Andrews refuses to grant humanitarian visas to deserving people who have fallen through the cracks in a flawed system. These innocent people who came seeking protection under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights are now effectively on death row. Weep with me for these people and for our nation.

Allan Nield  
Whyalla Norrie

## BAXTER'S ROLE

As a third generation Australian whose family members have fought in both great wars, I believe we live in the best country in the world.

There are two ways to enter our country. The first is to apply for a visa and in due course apply to become a citizen. The other is to enter illegally, and if found, be held for processing in

a detention centre like Baxter to ascertain whether they qualify for refugee status.

I was disappointed in the anti Baxter articles in the October New Times as most of the detainees were here illegally, came from shockingly primitive refugee camps and for a change had proper sleeping quarters, three good meals a day, medical attention and no need to live in fear. Better circumstances than those from which they had left.

There are two sides to the refugee question. It is for us to decide who we want to live among us and share the good life.

Barry Barratt  
Burnside

## JOHN SPONG

Along with many other 21st century scientists, I find no conflict between miracles and physical science. Any god who is constrained by the physical realm and its laws is too small a god to create the universe and have a relationship with each of His creatures formed in His own image. Faith does not require the surrender of human intellect.

I am saddened that John Spong demands knowledge and understanding without faith. To me, his position is untenable as a Christian, called to believe what I cannot understand. His grace and my willingness to receive it are not scientific.

Ross Lee  
Moonta NYP

## SPONG RESPONSE

If, as Andrew Dutney claims (October New Times),

## About your letters

Please keep your letters short – about 150 words is ideal. Longer letters will be cut or rejected. You're welcome to email letters to [newtimes@sa.uca.org.au](mailto:newtimes@sa.uca.org.au) or they can be posted to us at GPO Box 2145, Adelaide 5001

John Spong is "stuck in the theological debates of the 1960s", perhaps he could use your columns to inform us of contemporary issues in theology and their proponents.

Brian Ward  
Marden

Andrew has promised to elaborate on his comments in an upcoming issue of New Times. In this issue he writes about Christian hospitality, (page 3).

Acting editor

## WORTHY READING

After reading in the October New Times of recent atheistic onslaughts against religion by such people as Richard Dawkins, Sam Harris and Christopher Hitchens with the mild rejoinder, 'Is Religion Dangerous?' from Keith Ward, I would like to commend three books by Alister McGrath, professor of Historical Theology at Oxford University. McGrath has written many books and has a doctorate in science. I would recommend 'The Twilight of Atheism - The Rise and Fall of Disbelief in the Modern World', 'Dawkins' God - Genes, Memes, and the Meaning of Life' and 'The Dawkins Delusion' - the latter being co-authored with his wife, Joanna McGrath. This slim volume is an international bestseller and cogently answers Dawkins and

people of his ilk. On the cover is a quote from Michael Ruse, professor of Philosophy, Florida State University, who says "The God Delusion makes me embarrassed to be an atheist and the McGrath's show why".

Lewis Kelsall  
Port Elliot

## CHRISTMAS BOWL

Last Christmas SA Christians were even more open hearted towards the world's most needy than the year before. South Australians gave a total of \$280,204 to the Christmas Bowl Appeal – an increase of around 13 per cent on the previous year. Our church was extremely generous.

Christian World Service is the work of the Churches together helping to alleviate poverty, oppression and injustice in Australia and overseas and is part of the National Council of Churches in Australia.

We've found that the congregations which have a formal Christmas Bowl launch are often the most committed to the Christmas Bowl. Kits have been sent to all churches. Resources are also available at [www.ncca.org.au/\\_data/page/39/Worship\\_Resources.pdf](http://www.ncca.org.au/_data/page/39/Worship_Resources.pdf) or by contacting the SA Council of Churches.

If anyone would like to volunteer for the Christmas Bowl Badge Day on Friday December 14, please call 8221 6633.

Margaret Harris

## Classifieds

### WORK WANTED

CARPETS LAID. Expert repairs. 0417 872 105 or 8344 4725.

EXPERIENCED HANDYMAN  
Rose pruning. \$15 per hour.  
Your spare pair of hands.  
Phone 8346 0933.

### ACCOMMODATION

ACCOMMODATION TERTIARY STUDENTS VACANCIES IMMEDIATELY AND FOR 2008

Morialta Uniting Church Students Houses – undergraduate university/ TAFE students. Furnished single bedrooms, shared bathrooms, living areas. Proximity UniSA, Magill. Easy travel to northern campus and city for Adelaide University and UniSA. Mary Thornley (8332 2041), Church Office (8331 9344). Rent \$280 monthly.

### WANTED

Old postcards, old postmarks, any memorabilia of Riverton, Peter's Hill and towns within 20 miles. Phone 0409 282 076 or 8847 2044

### ARTIST IN RESIDENCE:

Reaching Beyond Words. A week with Doug Purnell experiencing and encouraging the creative Spirit, beginning November 5. Enquiries to the Effective Living Centre: 8271 0329 or office@effectiveliving.org.

EDEN HILLS Uniting Church is celebrating 70 years of worship and 50 years since the dedication of the present church building. A Celebration Service will be held on Sunday November 18, at 9.30 am, in the Church in Willora Street, Eden Hills. New Moderator, Rev Rod Dyson, will preach. Enquiries to 8278 8294 or 8278 4210.

WILLUNGA UNITING Church will celebrate its fifth annual Christmas Tree Festival this year on Saturday November 24 and Saturday November 25th, and also on December 1 from 10am to 4pm. Entry by gold coin donation. Enquiries to 8556 2758 or 8556 4023.

THE MINISTRY team at Aldersgate Chapel at the Aldersgate Aged Care Complex in Felixstow is looking for pastoral care volunteers to help with Thursday afternoon chapel services. Church choirs, singing groups and soloists are sought. Enquiries to Rev Jim Winn on 8206 0409 or 0408 852 925 or email [jim.winn@ucwesleyadelaide.org.au](mailto:jim.winn@ucwesleyadelaide.org.au).

## Notebook

For more Uniting Church events, visit Uniting Church online [www.sa.uca.org.au](http://www.sa.uca.org.au) and click on "What's On". There is an online form which you can fill out to contribute notices to Notebook.

THE WELLSRING Community in SA invites you to a seminar entitled "Addictions – What helps?" On Wednesday November 21 at the Julia Farr Chapel, Gate 2, 103 Fisher Street, Fullarton at 6.30pm for a shared meal. Speaker: Nadine Pelling. Enquiries to 8270 8870.

STATE MISSION FELLOWSHIP "Mission Thanksgiving Day" Service will be held on Tuesday November 27 at 10.30am at Scots Church, North Terrace. Speakers include International Mission officer Lyn Leane and Dr Swati Singh on medical work in North India. Enquiries to 8295 7745.

THE MODERATOR Rev Rod Dyson will open and dedicate the recent developments of the Bethany section of the Adare Conference Centre at Victor Harbor on Sunday December 2. Refreshments and inspection from 3pm with the official opening at 4pm. Enquiries and RSVP to 8552 1657.

THE OAKLANDS and Wesley Warradale Congregation's worship site at 395 Morphett

Road, Oaklands Park will close after a Thanksgiving Service on Sunday December 9, at 10am. For catering purposes, RSVP by November 24, to 8296 1694.

"ZEMIROT" - a Celebration of Praise through Psalms and Songs of the Jewish and Christian Traditions will be held on Sunday November 11 at 3pm at the Church of the Trinity, 318 Goodwood Road, Clarence Park. Gold coin donation appreciated.

AN EASTER '08 preparation workshop (covering everything from music to activities), will be held in the Payneham Road Uniting Church Hall, 343 Payneham Road, on Friday November 30, from 10am til 3pm. RSVP and inquiries to Lindsay Faulkner on 8365 5664 or email [nessiefaulkner@bigpond.com](mailto:nessiefaulkner@bigpond.com).

### Ministry Moves

Rev Gary Stuckey will be appointed to the Stillpoint Faith Community from 1.2.08 and Roger Brook to Hope Valley from 1.11.07.

## Nick's new DVD



### No Arms, No Legs, No Worries

Captured on this motivational DVD is over two hours of eye-catching footage and heart-warming words from one of Australia's most unique and inspiring young people. It features messages given by Nick to Teens, Children and Parents. Plus segments: Nick's Story, Motivational Media, Corporate Showreel, Photo Gallery, Bloopers & Deleted Scenes.

Cost: \$33 (posted) for home use, (a) Electronic – details via [nickdvd@bigpond.com](mailto:nickdvd@bigpond.com), or (b) Cheque – LC & JM Blackburn PO Box 203 Pottsville Beach NSW 2489. Ph 02 6676 2611

Remember to take part in this month's online poll and forum on Holy hospitality.

[www.sa.uca.org.au/goto/NTnov07](http://www.sa.uca.org.au/goto/NTnov07)

# Uniting Church SA Communications Survey

You can help shape the future direction of the Uniting Church SA's communications by completing this survey online at [www.sa.uca.org.au/goto/NTsurvey](http://www.sa.uca.org.au/goto/NTsurvey). Or you may complete this form and return it to Communications Survey, Reply paid 2145, Uniting Church SA, Adelaide SA 5001.

Please return your survey by **Monday November 12**.

This survey will help us check that we understand your needs and provide feedback on communication tasks. You will notice that some of the questions go beyond our present range of activities. Your responses will help identify new ways of communicating in future that will be more efficient and effective.

Name of the church you attend \_\_\_\_\_  Less than 5 years  5 - 20 years

Which age group do you belong to?  0 - 18  19 - 30  31-50  51-70  71+

What is your gender?  Male  Female

How would you describe your association with the Uniting Church? (You may tick more than one)

- Congregation member
- Involved in local church leadership
- Minister in placement (includes deacon, community minister etc)
- Staff Member - Uniting Church SA Presbytery and Synod
- Member of the Presbytery and Synod 2007

How long have you participated in the Uniting Church?  0-5 years  More than 5 years  More than 20 years

How often do you do the following?

	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Occasionally	Never
Use the internet					
Send / receive emails					
Use MySpace or Facebook					
Read a blog					
Read an electronic newsletter					
Participate in online discussion groups					
Listen to a podcast					
Read a newspaper					
Read 'New Times'					
Use the Uniting Church SA website					

Do you have access to a broadband internet connection? Y / N

Below are some key church areas we communicate about. Please rate their level of importance to you.

	Not important 1	Occasionally important 2	Generally important 3	Quite Important 4	Very important 5
News from the Assembly (national church)					
News from the Presbytery and Synod					
News from Uniting Church agencies					
News from local congregations					
News from other denominations					
Theological reflection on social issues					
Uniting Church SA Strategic Plan					
Spiritual and faith development					
Social justice					
Children's and youth ministry					
Upcoming events					
Presbytery and Synod staff appointments					

How do you believe we can improve communication across the Uniting Church SA? \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Would the following make you more or less interested in reading 'New Times'?

	Less interested	No difference	More interested
Electronic online version of 'New Times'			
More photos, graphics and cartoons			
More local church news			
Book, DVD and movie reviews			
Better quality paper (trialled this issue)			
New style cover (trialled this issue)			
Monthly theme (trialled this issue)			
Online poll (trialled this issue)			
Online forum (trialled this issue)			

Are you generally happy with the content of 'New Times'? Y / N

What themes would you like to see in future issues of 'New Times'? \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Do you feel that it is important for the Uniting Church SA to produce 'New Times'? Y / N

Thanks for taking the time to complete this survey. We value your input.  
 Uniting Church SA Communications and Public Relations Unit



# Sharing the faith

WHILE developing a culture of conversion growth has been identified as a key direction in the Uniting Church SA's Strategic Plan, many church members struggle when it comes to sharing their faith.

One Uniting Church congregation has found Bill Hybels' "Just Walk Across the Room" resource an effective way to help steer people towards faith.

Hybels is the senior pastor of Willow Creek Community Church in South Barrington, Illinois. He believes in relational evangelism and says success can be achieved through implementing 3Ds – developing friendships, discovering stories and discerning next steps.

Naracoorte Uniting Church's 80-strong @night congregation implemented the "Just Walk Across the Room" four week program earlier this year and found it empowering and practical.

Leah Davenport, @night's administration coordinator, said the program took the "cringe factor" out of evangelism.

"The course has given us a new language, instead of talking about sharing our testimonies we talk about the power of sharing our stories.

"It's also helped us consolidate our culture about evangelism, so that members are more comfortable about naturally evangelising and making the most of what Hybels' terms 'spirit-led' opportunities.

"Now when there's an opening in the conversation we know how to share our faith.

"We can tell people how God has changed our lives, using non-religious, everyday language.

"Building relationships comes first and then when there is a spirit-led opportunity we are confident and capable of sharing our faith.

"New people have come along to church as a result of this program. It has inspired us to get out of our safe, comfortable Christian circles and to develop friendships in the hope of pointing others towards faith."

Since completing the Hybels' program the @night congregation has been involved in a series of assignments caring for people in the community.

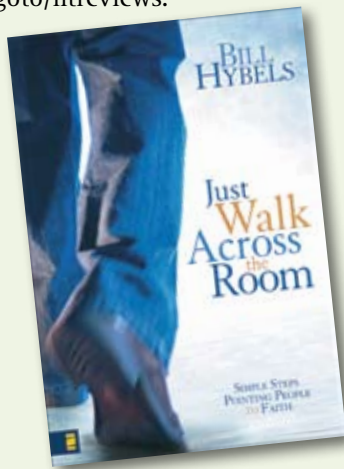
Leah said the congregation's activities have attracted media attention and nearly every week they

have been featured in the local newspaper.

"Though one of the projects we gave \$100 to 20 church-related groups as 'spiritual food'," said Leah. "The church youth group, Blitz, used their \$100 to raise \$5,000 in goods and services to refurbish the chaplain's office at the Naracoorte High School."

• The 'Walk Across the Room' resource kit which includes books, guides and DVDs is available from the MRN Resource Centre. Contact Heather Bald on 8236 4243.

Other books on faith-sharing, outreach, hospitality and inclusion are featured on the Uniting Church SA website: [www.sa.uca.org.au/goto/ntreviews](http://www.sa.uca.org.au/goto/ntreviews).



Bill Hybels' 'Just Walk Across the Room' resource is helping Naracoorte Uniting Church's @night congregation share their faith.



UnitingCare Wesley Adelaide has launched its annual Christmas Hampers and Toys Appeal with the help of Minister Dr Jane Lomax-Smith and Kym Just from the AMP Foundation.

## Christmas joy

"NONE OF us can enjoy Christmas with the knowledge that others are going without," said Dr Jane Lomax Smith, as she helped launch UnitingCare Wesley Adelaide's annual Christmas Hampers and Toys Appeal last month.

The Minister for Education and Children's Services, Tourism and the City of Adelaide said Christmas can be a peculiar time. "It can be the best of times and the worst of times. But we can all find joy and happiness in giving. There is no better gift to ourselves than giving to others."

Last year UnitingCare Wesley Adelaide delivered 1,325 food hampers to people in need and also distributed toys to 870 families.

CEO Sue Park said the agency was grateful for the support of several corporate sponsors such as the AMP Foundation which was willing to match appeal donations of up to \$10,000.

Sue urged others to support the appeal saying that every child deserves to feel joy at Christmas.

Financial donations may be sent to: Christmas Hampers and Toys 2007, Reply Paid 2534, Adelaide, SA 5001 or fax (08) 8202 5842.

Toys may be given to UnitingCare Agencies via Target stores.

## UNITING CHURCH SCHOOLS SOUTH AUSTRALIA



Dequetteville Terrace  
Kent Town, SA 5067  
Boys, K-12, Boarding  
Tel: (08) 8334 1200  
Fax: (08) 8363 0702  
[pac.edu.au](http://pac.edu.au)



Pilgrim School, Campus Drive  
Aberfoyle Park, SA 5159  
Co-ed, R-7  
Tel: (08) 8270 3033  
Fax: (08) 8370 7734  
[pilgrim.sa.edu.au](http://pilgrim.sa.edu.au)



546 Portrush Road  
Glen Osmond, SA 5064  
Girls, preschool-12, Boarding  
Tel: (08) 8379 0011  
Fax: (08) 8379 9796  
[seymour.sa.edu.au](http://seymour.sa.edu.au)



Annesley College, 89 Greenhill Road  
Wayville, SA 5034  
Girls, Pre-school-12, Boarding  
Tel: (08) 8422 2288  
Fax: (08) 8272 0142  
[annesley.sa.edu.au](http://annesley.sa.edu.au)



Alison Avenue  
Marion, SA 5043  
Co-ed, R-12, Boarding  
Tel: (08) 8276 0276  
Fax: (08) 8276 0277  
[westminster.sa.edu.au](http://westminster.sa.edu.au)

FOR INFORMATION ABOUT ENROLMENTS AND SCHOLARSHIPS APPLY TO THE REGISTRAR.  
ENROLMENT SEVERAL YEARS IN ADVANCE OF SUBMISSION IS DESIRABLE, BUT NOT NECESSARILY ESSENTIAL. ENQUIRIES ARE WELCOME FROM TEACHERS WITH CHRISTIAN COMMITMENT, WHO ARE PREPARED TO INVOLVE THEMSELVES IN THE LIFE OF THE SCHOOL.

## Green light for Willunga

WILLUNGA Uniting Church members are celebrating after attracting government funding which will enable them to proceed with a long awaited hall redevelopment.

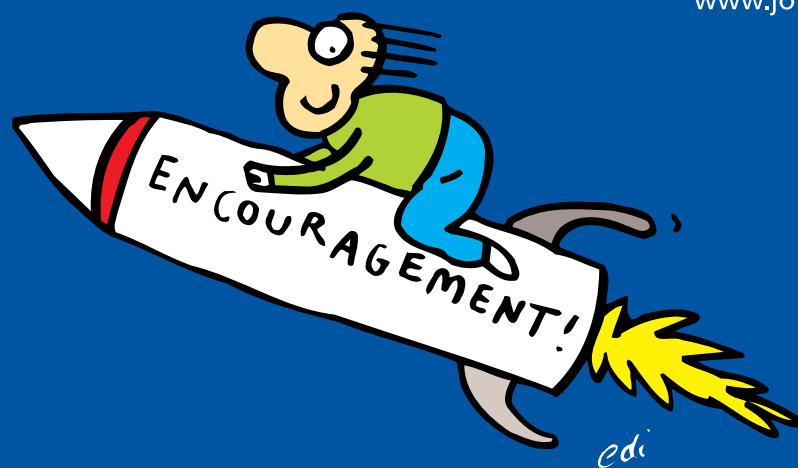
The congregation has raised more than \$200,000 during the last six years and has just gained a Federal Government Regional Partnerships Grant of more than 270,000.

The additional funding will enable redevelopment work to start early next year. During the anticipated five months of work, hall

activities will be held in the church.

The heritage nature of the hall will be retained - a besser brick 'add on' will be demolished and the stone façade will again be revealed.

The hall development, which includes upgraded kitchen and toilet facilities, will provide more scope and opportunities for community and church groups, including the congregation's annual Christmas Tree Festival.



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