

Northern Synod News

Issue No 88
March/April 2007



The Hospitality of God

The season of Lent has lead us towards the joyous celebration of Christ's resurrection at Easter. Through Christ we are invited into the family and household of God.

The recent meeting of the Pilgrim Presbytery explored this theme by treating members to a progressive meal visiting congregational properties in Darwin, Palmerston and



Andrew Watts - West Kimberley Ministry, Julie Watts - Presbytery Treasurer, Thien Hawks and Salomo Bangun - Philadelphia Indonesian Congregation, David Young - Alice Springs share together during the Pilgrim Presbytery meeting.

God's hospitality is extended to us and demonstrated to us through the love and care we experience in our congregations, in our small groups, in our worship.

We, in turn, extend the hospitality of God to others through our concern for our communities, through our involvement in issues of justice and reconciliation, through our support for programs of outreach and service.

Humpty Doo. Members heard how these congregations extend the hospitality of God to members, to visitors and to those who call on the church for assistance and support.

'Out of Darwin' congregations told their stories too throughout the meeting.

How do you demonstrate the hospitality of God?

Stories from the east.....

Featured in this issue of Northern Synod News are stories from Nhulunbuy, Jabiru, Humpty Doo and Palmerston.

There's also a report from one young person who attended Na-

tional Christian Youth Convention 2007 and a page of comings and goings of people you might know.

Centralian Patrol Minister Rev Tony Davies shares his experience of God in the desert

and offers the chance to participate in Spirit Journeys in 2007.

....or you may prefer a trip to Kupang (details on page 3).

All this and more to enjoy over a good cuppa.....

Living Water Congregation.....

Connecting Community with the Love of Jesus

Living Water Congregation at Humpty Doo is best known as the 'church without walls'. As well as worship and prayer the building is utilized three times a week for the Op Shop.

The community house is the home for Arise Out of School Hours Care which provides after school care and vacation care programs.

Living Water Congregation now leases the former AIM property in Humpty Doo. The Meeting Place provides a range of services and activities to rural area residents including crisis accommodation, counselling, training programs and welfare services.

Living Water Chaplaincy Services currently has a formalised arrangement with Taminmin High School to provide chaplaincy services to the school community. Pastors Ros & Stuart McMillan have been part-time Chaplains in this school since 2004.

Chaplaincy Services has been approached by the Principals of four primary schools in Darwin's rural area to provide specific services for each school community.

At the request of one primary school Ros has prepared a values-based program, linked to the curriculum framework outcomes,

for delivery across the whole school. This has now been further developed for the middle school years and is being considered by secondary teachers.

Principals in Darwin's rural area schools cluster are now talking about 'cluster approaches' to chaplaincy & the 'cluster' has also been introduced to the values education program.

These exciting developments, if they proceed, will require additional chaplains working in a multi-skilled team to meet the variety of needs and expectations Principals see as important for their school communities.

Hopes High for Home Help

Living Water has just delivered a 4-session community service training program for teenagers & adults. The program grew out of the Sunday Teens discussions about practical evangelism.

Having undertaken the training together, the participants will letter-box drop the local community living in flats opposite the church advising that, in a couple of weeks, people from Living Water will be dropping in to see if there is gardening, cleaning,

maintenance or other home help which people would like support with. The aim of the project is to connect with the local community in real ways, and to share the love of Christ through service.

The church has sought a Community Benefit Grant to cover some of the out-of-pocket expenses. However, the program will go ahead in some form re-

ardless of the success of the grant application.

The aim of the project is to connect with the local community.....

The participants of the training program are full of enthusiasm & will speak at a congregation discussion time soon to encourage other members to get excited about the potential of such a practical display of Christ's love.



Left: Some of Friday Friendzy group which now numbers over 30, at a 1920's night. Many of these young people have completed the Community Service training. Above: Church without walls

National Christian Youth Convention 2007

Becoming an Agent of Change



Jennifer Davies from Alice Springs shares some of her experience at NCYC'07

NCYC 2007 was my second convention, having been to Adelaide in 2005. This trip began for me in Adelaide after a brief visit with family after Christmas. Being the way that things are, I met up with a group travelling to Perth from Adelaide, also for NCYC. From that group, I made one of my soon to be closest friends, so had a ball.

Catching up with old friends and making new ones was one of the greatest highlights of the convention for me, making friends from all over the country. Thank God for email!

The week to follow would be full of life changing moments, new friendships, bible studies, small group times, electives, bands, worship and as little sleep as possible.

I had Peter Rollins as my bible study leader this year, a Northern Irishman, philosopher and key note speaker for the conference.

Small groups provided the chance to make sense of what was said, and then share together in conversation and lunch. The highlights of the convention would have to have been Mission Immersion, Sunday church and community time.

Mission Immersion saw delegates sent off to different groups across Perth, with a mission to experience. Mine was to be sent off to Trinity Uniting Church, and to experience the program they have created, called True Colours: Coming out Alone. It was an immersion which was nearly cancelled due to the homosexuality debate and issues surrounding it.

The church there has created this service for mainly the young people of Perth, who may be homosexual or doubting their sexuality. A confidential service, it provides support, counselling and other required support to young people, to aid them in their questioning and often frightening time. Allowing them then to find themselves, come to terms with it, and allow their families to do the same in time also. It was definitely an eye opening experience, run with complete sensitivity by all involved, and enjoyed by all - it was a real

privilege to experience such a time.

Sunday we were sent off to church in groups, and again, I was sent to Trinity Uniting. It was an experience in itself, with lunch provided after the service by the congregation - 31 pizzas for 26 delegates. But the interest and hospitality of the congregation was an experience in itself. It was a chance for us to meet with some of the people who were supporting the convention and showing an interest in the youth of the church.

The whole convention gave me hope, and the chance to again meet with people of all ages to share and worship. After this, I had a month with my family, before I moved away to commence university studies in Early Childhood Education, at Charles Sturt University, Albury NSW.

To all those who have been supporting the convention and its delegates, thank you. To anyone who is considering attending a convention, the next will be in Melbourne 2009. It's set to be an amazing time, with Vic/Tas Synod housing some amazing talent in its youth ministries teams. Come and Converge in Melbourne, 2009.

INVITATION TO KUPANG NEW TESTAMENT DEDICATION

Rev Ayub Ranoh, head of GMIT Synod in West Timor, has extended an invitation for overseas guests to attend the dedication of the Kupang New Testament to be held in Kupang on Friday 7 September 2007.



Help celebrate this milestone for the people of Kupang (at your own expense of course).

It may be possible to stay with church members and also to visit areas around Kupang. Travel and accommodation options are being co-ordinated through Chuck and Barbara Grimes of AusIL.

Expressions of interest in travelling in a Uniting Church Group should be directed to Kevin Davis in the Northern Synod Office by 30 June 2007.

Gove Churches Pray Together

Uniting Church member, Judy Chesson, tells of God's guiding hand in the establishment of a combined churches prayer group in Nhulunbuy....

On a Wednesday evening in Nhulunbuy Uniting Church, I sat with three other members of our church while eight other people gathered around us, gently laid hands upon us, and lovingly and earnestly prayed for God to bless our ministry, enlarge our vision and help us connect more effectively with our community. The people who prayed for us included leaders or other members of the other six churches in Nhulunbuy and Yirrkala – the Catholic, Baptist, Assemblies of God, Seventh Day Adventist, Wesleyan Tongan and Yirrkala Uniting congregations.

Two weeks later, we gathered at the Assemblies of God church. After a time of teaching and encouragement led by one of our core members, we invited those from the host church to share their joys and struggles, and what God is doing in their church. Then we gathered round our Assemblies of God representatives and prayed for their church.

Later in the meeting, we shared concerns and prayer needs for our community and region, and prayed in small groups for these needs.

I have just given a brief overview of what happens when the Combined Churches of Gove Prayer Group meets each fortnight. It is an amazing time – I have never been so excited about a prayer group before. This group is now a year old, and has grown in numbers as well as in openness to the Holy Spirit, love and unity. We have seen wonderful answers to prayer and significant healings. Barriers and division between churches are breaking down, and understanding and appreciation for other churches has grown enormously.

This group has grown from the prayers of two or three women in Nhulunbuy, meeting together regu-

larly and praying for unity and transformation. One of these women was Ibu Neddy, an Indonesian exchange teacher who was here for a year. I was inspired by Neddy, and in December 2005 God gave me a vision for this group, and a strategy for its establishment. God led me to find three other women so we could form a Core Group, representing the four main churches in Nhulunbuy and becoming, in effect, a steering committee. How excited I was to find that God had gone ahead of me, planting a passion for prayer and unity in each of these ladies. We



Members of the Combined Churches of Gove Prayer Group, meeting at the AOG church in Nhulunbuy

embarked together on an adventure, not knowing how God would work to grow and use the group.

The group is no longer a women's group, as several men attend regularly. We meet at a different venue each fortnight, so that every church has a chance to host the group and tell their stories of what God is doing. Everyone that comes along goes home excited about what God is doing through our prayers.

Recently, the Uniting Church hosted the annual World Day of Prayer service. This year, we had a record number of people attending – 48 adults and 5 children – and all seven churches participated. It was a vibrant celebration – and a visible sign of the growing unity between the churches. What a joy it is to pray together and to welcome the new things that the God is doing in our midst.

From the Moderator



The older I get, the more convinced I become that what we celebrate at Easter is central to all human experience. Just as the death and resurrection of Jesus is central in human history, it is central to our personal history.

Human life is about dying and rising to new life. At birth, we die to

life in the womb and break out into a new life in the outside world as an independent human being. Throughout life, we are dying to old things and rising to new experiences and situations. We all face death, the end of physical life, even if we ignore it or deny it in life. How do we cope?

The writer to the Hebrews describes Jesus as “the pioneer and perfecter of our faith”(12:2 NRSV).

As God with us, he shows the way through all the circumstances we encounter. He suffered in such a way that he understands any human suffering. We are never alone in our dying or our dealing with

death. Jesus is with us. And we are assured that any death we experience is not just an ending but also the way to a new beginning.

Easter is a celebration of the victory of life over death, of love over hate, of grace over sin. It gives courage to face the many deaths in life and trust in God to raise up new life. It gives hope in the midst of loss and despair, hope for a new tomorrow and a brighter future. For all of our life, it is very Good News.

May you have a joyous and holy Easter.

Steve Orme

Nungalinya College Update

At last year's Synod the topic of whether "to stay or not to stay" with Nungalinya College was debated. Both the Synod and Northern Regional Council of Congress (NRCC) committed themselves to renew their relationship with Nungalinya College. There were a number of conditions required of the College to change some of its way of delivering courses. The NRCC representatives particularly wanted the College to deliver programs in the home communities as well as at the College.

The commitment of resources from NRCC and the Synod has allowed the Rev Jovilisi Ragata to be appointed as a Theological Lecturer and the Dean of UCA students.

Representatives from the three churches involved in Nungalinya have been gathering to look at the current Constitu-

tion. There are components of the Constitution, particularly the Board of Governance, that have not been working well. There is renewed vigour coming from the three churches to tackle this task.

There is a general agreement that there should be a focus on founda-

There is a great deal of enthusiasm and optimism about what is happening at Nungalinya College

tion subjects. UCA congregations in particular are desiring short programs focusing on lay training and leadership. Emphasis is also on delivering

these programs in a multicultural environment.

An administration review is being undertaken by Mr John Ingram, the former Director of Batchelor College. The three churches are gearing up to present to the Board a new strategic plan proposal.

There is a great deal of enthusiasm and optimism about what is happening at Nungalinya College at the moment.

*Kevin Davis AM
General Secretary*



Rev Jovilisi Ragata, Sister Mary Louise Slattery, Acting Principal and Ms Amanda Donohoe, Head of the School of Family and Community Services

Comings and goings..... Who is moving in, out or around the Synod

Rev Jovilisi Ragata has returned to the staff of Nungalinya College as Teacher of Theology. Jovilisi has a long connection with Nungalinya College commencing as a student there in 1981. Jovilisi was Co-ordinator for the Community Development School and lecturer in theology at Nungalinya until 1988 and was responsible for external studies. He spent nine years in Queensland working for Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress (UAICC), returning to work in Yirrkala as a Presbytery Minister within the Northern Regional Council of Congress (NRCC). Jovilisi also managed the Community and Employment Development Program for Marthakal Homeland Resource Centre at Galiwin'ku. He moved back to Darwin in mid 2006 to work at Kormilda College as Uniting Church Chaplain.



Amele and Jovilisi Ragata came to Australia from Fiji in 1970. Jovilisi worked as an agriculturist missionary at Milingimbi, Goulbourn Island and at Ramingining.

Rev George Woodward has become minister on half time basis with the congregation of Glasshouse Country in the Mary Burnett Presbytery in Queensland. George worked in many places across the Synod coming first to Arnhem Land to work as a horticulturist at Yirrkala. George began his theological study at Nungalinya before completing the requirements for ordination in Queensland. George and Bernadette raised their family in the north - in Derby, Jabiru and in Darwin. George has warned his new congregation that 'we may have taken the boy out of the north but you'll never take the north out of the boy'.



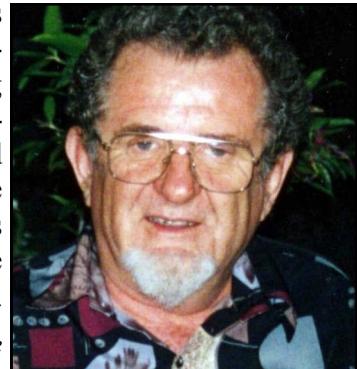
On Saturday 10 March 2007 Rev Peter Richter was inducted into the Synod placement of Uniting Church Chaplain at Kormilda College, Darwin. Peter has spent 23 years in various chaplaincies in secondary schools in Victoria. As part of the Student Services Team, Peter provides pastoral care and spiritual guidance to both students and staff of Kormilda. Peter is excited to be working in a Christian school environment which has the added challenge of dealing with cultural differences within both the school and the wider community. Judy and Peter with their grandson Angus live on the campus.



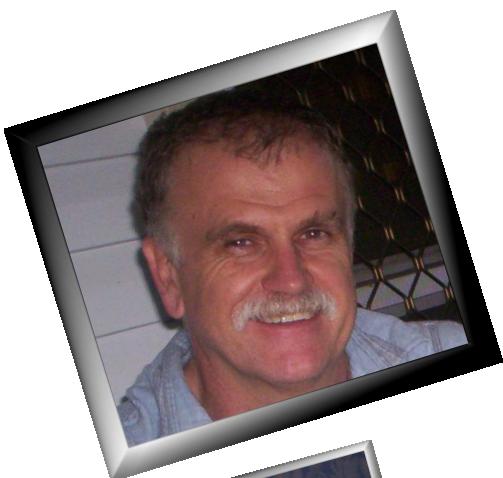
Comings and goings..... Who is moving in, out or around the Synod

The Northern Synod was saddened to learn of the death of **Rev Rob Saunders** who died in Brisbane on 3rd November 2006 after a short illness. Rob was minister with the Casuarina congregation from 1988 to 1998. Here he discovered the significance of the Alpha course as a tool for evangelism, teaching and training for ministry in small groups. He also spent three years as part-time assistant pastor with the Darwin Baptist Church. Late in 2001, Rob and Bev moved to Banora Point on the northern NSW coast. Rob was valued there for his pastoral care and visits, teaching and preaching, music, art and his sense of humour. Rob died three weeks before his 63rd birthday and on the weekend which was to have been his final one in full-time parish ministry.

Thanks to Bev Saunders for sending the Northern Synod a copy of the Memorial Minute prepared for the South Moreton Presbytery in the Queensland Synod.



Howard Amery has worked with Aboriginal Resource and Development Services Inc. (ARDS) since 1979 in community development, language, education and health related areas. During 2006, Howard moved into the position of Resource Worker with the Northern Regional Council of UAICC (NRCC). Howard is able to use his administrative, pastoral and language skills to support NRCC ministry in communities across the Synod.



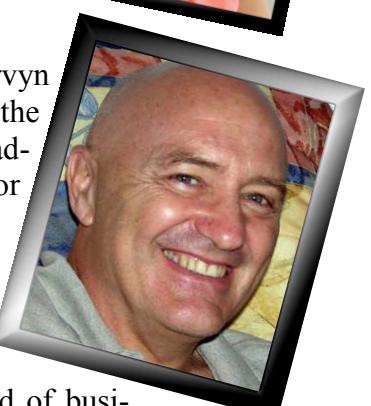
Robynann Dixon was appointed in 2006 as General Manager of Aboriginal Resource and Development Services Inc. For 10 years previously, she worked with SIL/Wycliffe both overseas and in Darwin.

Neil Leek answered God's call to become Business Manager with ARDS in November 2006 replacing Mervyn Brown. Neil worked most recently with NT Christian Schools Association.



Stuart McMillan (pictured left) and Mervyn Brown (right) were valuable members of the NRCC/ARDS team. Together they provided administrative, financial and education support for around 27 years.

Stuart and Ros McMillan currently work as lay pastors with Living Water Congregation in Humpty Doo.



Mervyn Brown moved in 2006 into the world of business outside of the church as a financial and property consultant.

Jabiru.....baptism, barbecue and bush tucker



Mitch Fialkowski with Steven and Tania Chapman celebrates the baptism of nine month old Julia at St. Peter's Church, Jabiru

Steve and Tania Chapman have only been in Jabiru for a few months. Steve is a Park Ranger and a member of the Catholic Church. Tania is a Uniting Church member and is looking forward to being part of the church in Jabiru.

Mitch Fialkowski baptised their baby daughter, Julia, on 25 February 2007.



Magpie geese, barramundi and turtle were on the menu for Christmas celebrations at Jabiru

Christmas 2006 service at Jabiru was celebrated on Sunday with a 10.30am service which started by 11.13am, followed by a bring and share BBQ. It was a simple service, with 8 or 10 people from town and a couple of families from the camps.

In the service the children did some action songs which is strongly encouraged by the ladies who have taken the lead in encouraging the children's involvement. The church was decorated with prayer chains made during worship the previous week. Lunch consisted of bush tucker: Magpie geese (which I strongly recommend) Barra and turtle (a bit stringy and chewy

but it grows on you). It was amazing to watch the ladies take over the bush tucker and carve it up - they were in their element; and we also had a good supply of salad, meat, drinks and lollies for the children, but no Santa - he must have left to go on holidays.

The afternoon was enjoyed by all and as the fellowship drew to a close the food that was left was shared around.

My thanks go to Joanne and her family, Russell, David and Pat, also PPNA for their support which enabled it to happen.

Thanks to Rev Mitch Fialkowski for providing these photos and stories.

Exciting New Placement
Jabiru
Partnership between Frontier Services,
Northern Regional Council of Congress,
Pilgrim Presbytery of Northern Australia

The placement is multi-faceted, working alongside indigenous and non indigenous people, in a region that is both beautiful and rugged.

We are seeking an ordained person who will have:

- A willingness to learn the local language.
- A respect for indigenous theologies and spirituality and for Aboriginal cultural ways of being and knowing.
- A sensitivity to Aboriginal decision-making processes, time frames and cultural ways of relating to people.
- A capacity to develop and maintain relationships in ways that reflect the high value placed on relationships by indigenous communities.
- An informed community development and principles approach that seeks to foster empowerment, self-reliance and decreased dependency.
- A capacity to contextualise the Gospel in word and deed within the diverse cultures of the Aboriginal communities within which they will minister.
- A commitment to ongoing learning as they seek to deepen their understanding of Aboriginal culture, knowledge and spirituality and appropriate approaches to ministry in this context.
- A consciousness of the power dynamics that arise from their non-indigenous status and "ministerial role" and of the limitations and benefits of a non-indigenous person ministering within indigenous communities.

For more information contact NRCC or PPNA
on Ph: (08) 8982 3400

Pilgrim Presbytery Ministers in Retreat



Rev Thresi Mauboy, Indonesian Missionary Congregation; Rev Bill Loader, Retreat Leader; Rev Felicity Amery, Chairperson of Pilgrim Presbytery of Northern Australia.

Thresi presented Bill with woven scarves as a symbol of appreciation for his leadership of the retreat.

Pilgrim Presbytery ministers and pastors took over two accommodation venues in Batchelor for their annual retreat in March. The Historic Retreat B&B also known as the Mine Manager's Residence and the Rum Jungle Bungalows were booked out by the group.

Rev Bill Loader lead the retreat on the theme "The Gospel of Luke and the Gospel Today". Felicity Amery reports that 'it was very exciting to have someone of Bill Loader's wisdom and experience sharing with us'.



Rev Mitch Fialkowski, Katherine Patrol and Rev Salomo Bangun, Philadelphia Indonesian Congregation pitch in with the meal preparation at Rum Jungle Bungalows.



As part of the evening program, ministers reflected on the spirituality of Luke's Gospel using Fimo - a modelling material which was later oven-baked to produce a collage tile. Participants were asked to design a piece of the tile based on their understanding of the good news reflected in Luke.



REGIONAL RETREATS

Pilgrim Presbytery ministers and pastors are also looking forward to meeting for retreat with Northern Regional Council of Congress colleagues later this year. Rev Tim Bose and Rev Ronang Garrawurra will lead four retreats in different regions looking at the Book of Ruth. These will be significant times of sharing, providing encouragement for people in leadership who are often isolated from such opportunities.

Palmerston..... Home to Terrace Gardens Aged Care

A recent success at Terrace Gardens in Palmerston (NT) has been the growth of the ROST program (Respite Options for Senior Territorians) run by Jane McQuade.

Terrace Gardens is a 58-place high care residential aged care service run by Frontier Services under Director of Nursing Maryanne Walton.

"The ROST program complements our residential focus by offering a day respite centre for aged people who are still being cared for in their homes," according to Ms Walton.

"They come into Terrace Gardens for the day, and sometimes overnight or longer, to give those caring for them a break or to allow them to work.

"The aged people get a chance to socialise as well as feel comfortable at Terrace Gardens, which is where they may eventually move to. It also allows our permanent residents to mix with people from the wider community through special shared activities and lunches."

Around 20 people are currently involved in the



ROST program and Frontier Services will build a dedicated respite centre to cater for the growing demand.

Meanwhile, eight carers at Terrace Gardens are taking advantage of special Federal Government funding to complete Enrolled Nurse qualifications.

Thanks to Frontier Services staff for this article and photos of clients participating in Respite Options at Palmerston.



Demonstrating hospitality.....



Rev Steve Orme and Mr Simon Morris offer Darwin Memorial's style of hospitality to Presbytery members during the progressive dinner.

Congregations in Darwin, Palmerston and Humpty Doo offered members of presbytery glimpses of the ways in which they offer the 'hospitality of God' to their local communities.

Darwin Memorial Uniting Church, in the centre of the city, offers tinned foods to people seeking a meal or assistance with grocery items. As well as hosting pre-dinner drinks for the Friday evening program of Presbytery, Mission Support Worker Simon Morris and Minister Steve Orme handed out tinned food and a plastic spoon - a practical sign of their ministry in the city. Steve informed members that though they were welcome to sleep in the shelter of the verandahs, they must clean up any rubbish when they go.

While enjoying hors d'oeuvres at Palmerston, members learnt of the commitment of the congregation to providing cold water, tea and coffee at the Friday night markets in Palmerston.

Living Water offered members a tour of their facilities at "The Meeting Place", formerly the AIM property in Humpty Doo. The congregation supports a range of activities including after school and vacation care, Op Shop, welfare, counselling and training programs.

Kindness to strangers has been demonstrated many times by Casuarina's volunteer support group working with Melaleuca Refugee Centre. This group help supports refugees as they settle into Australian society.

A Christmas event saw hospitality extended by the Nightcliff congregation with a Nativity play featuring live animals, lots of children and a shared meal. A great way of connecting with the local community.

Indonesian Missionary Uniting Church Congregation which shares the Nightcliff facility invited members to share the hospitality of God through song as part of the closing devotions.

The business session of the presbytery meeting held on Saturday, heard reports from presbytery officers and committees and appointed a number of people to committees of the presbytery. The Mission and Congregational Services Network introduced three young people who had received financial support through the network. Rosie O'Reilly shared her experience of attending Amnesty International Youth Conferences; Emily Morris brought back photos and stories from NCYC'07; and Carly Gardner's presentation on her visit to the Philippines with a UIM Short Term Exposure Tour was a moving and powerful account of her experience.

Two workshops were offered at the meeting. One focussed on the discussion paper from the Assembly 'A Church of passionate disciples: rethinking church membership'. The purpose of the paper is to encourage councils of the church to reconsider how we define membership in the Uniting Church.

Members also discussed what issues of social justice affect their congregations and communities.



Members enjoyed the hospitality of Darwin Memorial Uniting Church's facilities

Desert Journeys 2007



Rev Tony Davies takes us on a Desert Journey.....

With the warmth of the campfire at my back, I look up at the night sky and see the millions of stars that can only be seen away from the bright lights of the city. If I walk away from the fire in any direction, I know that the nearest “civilization” is days away, even by car.

The desert sand is soft beneath my feet and walking away from the fire, I fix my eyes on a star. I wonder just how far away it is. It is in moments like these, and there have been many such moments over the previous few days, that I realize how small and insignificant in the scheme of things I really am. Protected from the elements in my comfortable home in Alice Springs, I can seem really big and significant, but here, that illusion is stripped away and I see things as they really are.

And yet I am known and loved by the very author of all that I see.

It has always intrigued me that many of the most powerful stories of God and God’s people take place in the desert. The desert is a favourite place for God to bring his people for what we would call

today, “spiritual formation”.

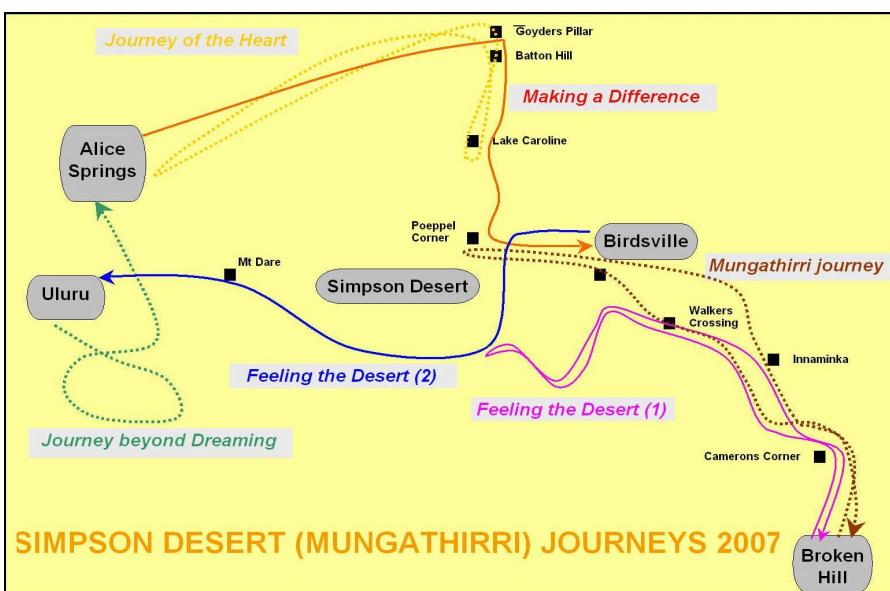
Abraham is a sojourner in desert regions, and it is here that God’s covenant with him is re-affirmed. Moses and the people of Israel are led from Egypt into the desert so that they might learn the nature of the God who has called them, and to trust him for everything. John the Baptist cries out from the desert, and calls God’s people back into the desert to repent, and to rediscover the wonder of their relationship with him. Jesus is led by the Spirit into the desert to be tested by Satan. All of these are examples of God provid-

ing the space and opportunity for the formation of faith.

As a patrol minister, I have the opportunity of visiting desert regions often, but few others do. However, for the last two years, a group like minded colleagues and friends in the Uniting Church have opened up this possibility to anybody who wants to try it. Spirit Journeys is a group auspiced by the NSW Synod Board of Mission, and to date we have taken nearly a hundred people into the desert regions of Australia, and brought them back again, safely, but changed.

This year we have seven journeys planned, including two in WA. Each journey lasts for about week, and is affordably priced. We provide the vehicles, much of the camping gear, the leadership, some resources, and God does the rest. While these are not tours, we do see some pretty amazing things, and share some unique experiences.

Check out our website www.spiritjourneys.com for details of this year’s journeys or talk to our administrator Carolyn Robertson on 0425 314 863. Places are filling up!



Desert Journeys 2007

Mungathirri Journeying

When: 3-13 May

Starting point: Broken Hill

Finishing in: Birdsville or Broken Hill

Cost: about \$890*

Travel in 4WDs out into the vastness of Mungathirri / Simpson desert country. Hopefully some time will be spent with Don Rowlands, a warm and wise local aboriginal elder and National Parks Ranger, and his wife Lyn. Participants can conclude either in Birdsville with connecting flights possible to Brisbane and beyond, or return to Broken Hill.

Journey of the Heart

When: 1-7 July

Starting and finishing point: Alice Springs

Cost: about \$690*

Camp in the desert landscapes with a small group of people wanting to deepen their understanding

of themselves and their lives, and to open themselves up to connect with their spirit and Creator. Suitable for families and children, and people with limited energy. Also those wishing to explore their creativity and responses to the experience through art, or music.

Making a Difference with our lives

Alice Springs to Birdsville (for young adults aged 20-35)

When: 7-16 July

Starting point: Alice Springs Finishing in: Birdsville

Cost: about \$720*

After getting to know the people and different groups of the community of Alice, travel in 4WD's into the vastness of the Simpson Desert, taking time to reflect on life and priorities in a unique setting. There is opportunity to extend this journey back to Uluru or Broken Hill with a Feeling the Desert connection.

Feeling the Desert (1)

Broken Hill and the Simpson Desert

When: 14-22 July

Starting point: Broken Hill Finishing in: Broken Hill or Uluru

Cost: about \$720*

A journey from Broken Hill into the southern and central Simpson Desert for those wishing to intentionally reflect on who they are, their faith and place in the cosmos.

Feeling the Desert (2)

Birdsville to Uluru

When: 16-22 July

Starting point: Birdsville

Finishing in: Uluru or Broken Hill

Cost: about \$690*

A journey of contrasts across the vastness of the desert dunes of the Simpson from the unique and different community of Birdsville to Uluru, a place of awe and significance at the heart of our country.

* Allow \$15 per day for a food kitty and \$100 for fuel.

UNITING

The partnership of LabOra, the



WORSHIP

the Uniting Church Assembly's Working Group on Liturgy and MediaCom, bring you this Worship Planner. The Uniting Church's Worship Planner is a custom-made program designed to meet the needs of those in the Uniting Church who plan and prepare for Sunday worship.

Resources at your fingertips:

- Smart Start – an online tutorial to get you up to speed on the basics
- The Bible in the NRSV translation
- Lectionary readings for each Sunday
- All liturgies featured in Uniting in Worship 2
- The first line of all hymns/songs in Together in Song
- Click and Print ready-to-print bulletins
- Power Point compatible
- Easy import/export of information
- Easy synchronization of calendar and worship information to your Outlook agenda
- Use the Word processor you prefer: the LabOra word processor, MS Word or Word Perfect
- Thematic Clip Art
- Words for Worship – a previous three year cycle of MediaCom's popular Words for Worship
- Children's Activity Sheets
- Extensive help-file (F1)
- Sermon tool
- Database
- WORDsearch Bible Software

PLANNER

LIMITED TIME SPECIAL OFFER

Order and pay through the Northern Synod Office for the exceptional price of \$499

(includes the planner and mandatory annual licence update fee until December 2007)

Normally priced at \$695 this offer is only available until 30 April 2007

Contact: Kevin Davis Ph: 08) 8982 3400 Email: kevin.davis@ns.uca.org.au

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The Northern Synod News is published by the
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All enquiries should be directed to the Editorial
Committee at the address above.

***The next edition will feature stories from
Central Australia, the Tennant Barkly region
and Katherine***

Deadline for articles 1 June 2007

Articles and photographs for this edition were provided by Judy Chesson, Mitch Fialkowski, Kevin Davis, Stuart McMillan, Jennifer Davies, Tony Davies, Frontier Services National Office.

The Editorial Committee appreciates the support of all contributors.

Nurses

*translate your faith into action serving the people
of the Top End*

Frontier Services is the major provider of aged and community care across Australia's remote Top End. For more than 90 years we have been serving the people of the Outback by providing a growing range of residential and in-home care in regional centres and beyond.

We need Registered and Enrolled Nurses who can combine professional skills with the flexibility, commitment, cross-cultural understanding and humour that working in the Outback demands. Various full-time and relief positions are available in the Kimberley region of WA and the Northern Territory.

In return, Frontier Services – which has a reputation as an employer of choice – can offer a working environment that is supportive, professional and fun, with flexible conditions and salary arrangements. There are also the many intangible rewards of working in this unique part of Australia (and the world!) and bringing much-needed services to remote communities.

To find out more about this special opportunity to translate faith into action, call Greta Howard on (02) 8270 1344.

Pancake Day 2007

UnitingCare's Pancake Day is an annual event that raises awareness of the impact of poverty in Australia and raises funds for UnitingCare's work with disadvantaged and vulnerable Australians.

Somerville Community Services co-ordinates Pancake Day activities in the Northern Synod and encourages congregations and agencies to "share it round" - the catch-cry of the appeal - as a fundraising activity for UnitingCare services in the synod.

The Moderator was kept busy this year participating in three local events. First there was breakfast

at the Synod Offices for ministers, staff and invited guests. Then followed the official launch of the Appeal at the offices of Somerville Community Services with members of the Somerville Board, staff and clients.



Carolyn Cendo and Steve Orme set the flipping example at Somerville Community Services Pancake Day Launch in Darwin

Members of Darwin Memorial Uniting Church supplied the patrons of Tim's Surf and Turf Restaurant in Darwin with pancake dessert. Tim and his staff generously provided space and facilities to the congregation as well as donating their tips for the evening.

The 2006 appeal raised \$609,000 for UnitingCare nationally with \$5,000 raised for Somerville Community Services.

Pancake mix and maple syrup is donated for the appeal by Green's General Foods. Toll IPEC distributes the packs to registered groups.

Register early for Pancake Day 2008 by contacting Carolyn Cendo at Somerville Community Services on (08) 8945 1533