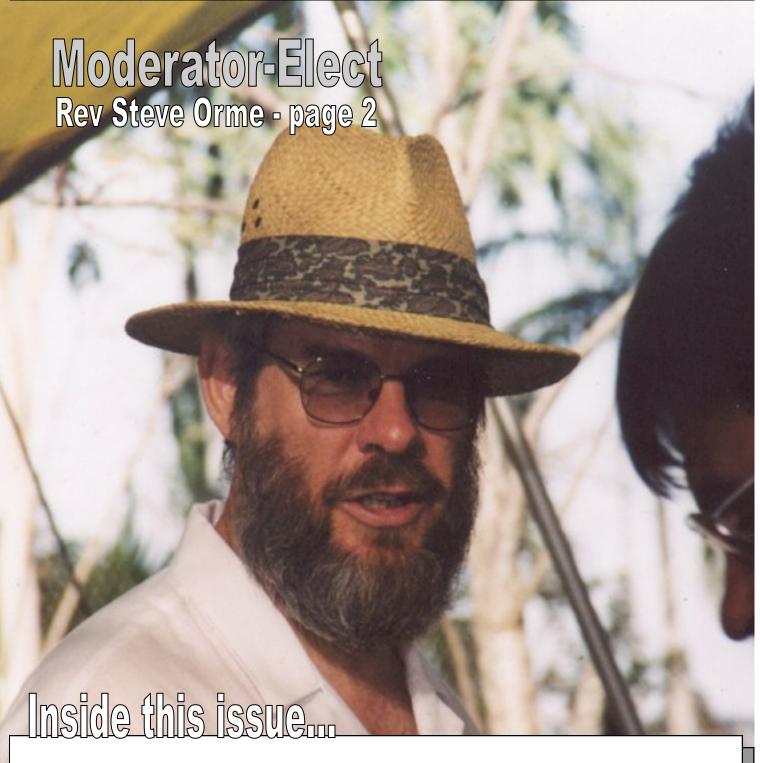
Northern Syned News Issue No 79 September 2004



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Meet the Moderator

The incoming Moderator, Steve Orme, is in his tenth year of ministry in the Northern Synod. accepted a call to the Nightcliff and Karama congregations from Queensland in 1995. He had previously served in North Toowoomba, the Burdekin and Thursday Island /New Mapoon. In his first year on Thursday Island, he married Judy. Their two children, now young adults, were born there. Judy works in the Synod office in the accounts section.

After eight years with the Nightcliff congregation including the last two as coordinating chaplain at the Darwin prison. Steve moved the Darwin city congregation. Steve motivated by the challenge of ministry with the city longest congregation, the existing in the Synod but situated rapidly in the

changing environment of Darwin's central business district. "We have considerable resources in God's gifted people and the property we have inherited. A challenge is to effectively deploy those resources in the service of God, worshipping, witnessing and serving within dynamic

Living Together in the Love of Christ What Future for Us?

community," Steve said.

A further challenge is becoming Moderator of the Synod at a time when the future of the Synod is being questioned and the purpose and direction of the Synod needs clarifying. "The cutting edge of Christian ministry is where spirit-filled followers of Jesus engage with their communities in the love of God, witnessing to their faith and bringing hope," Steve said. "The structures and

organization of the church exist only to enable that to happen effectively."

Steve sees Moderator's role as guiding the Synod in giving oversight and policy direction to the church in the north. The Secretary is Synod "public face" of the Synod, liaising with the Presbyteries and Agencies of the Synod and the wider church and community, and managing the business of the Synod. The report from the recent review of the General Secretary's position makes the point that, for effective leadership, the Synod needs to be clear about its goals and directions. In the implementation of those goals and directions clarity is needed as to who accountable for what. "It is a matter of discerning our own and each other's gifts and trusting each other to use our gifts in the service of Christ within clear guidelines. We are the Body of Christ. His Spirit is with us. We can only move forward when all the separate parts are working together." Steve said.

The focus of this Synod meeting will be establishing the goals and direction of the Synod. The theme from last meeting "Living together in love of Christ" continued with the added question, "What future for us?" "God has a purpose for us. When we come together in our Synod meeting, we come to discern what that purpose is at this particular time in our life together, and we come to find ways to express that purpose so the



Rev Lindsay and Nessie Faullkner at John Flynn's Memorial, Alice Springs

Faulkner Farewell

When Lindsay and Nessie's Faulkner's celebrate cutting of ties on October 31st this year after 42 years of ministry, they will be doing it in the same place where Lindsay first felt the call to ministry - Alice Springs.

It was in 1956, while working as a cook at Griffiths House in Alice Springs, that sixteen year old Lindsay felt the call to dedicate his life in service to God and the Church.

Since then, as well as serving in Northern Territory, the Faulkners have shared ministry in Salisbury, Semaphore, Lock, Pt Pirie and Pt. Augusta in South

Australia, Wynyard in Tasmania, Mildura, St Arnaud, Bendigo and Dandenong in Victoria.

Lindsay's Akubra hat is a familiar sight at events around town. As well as his role directly related to the ministry in the iconic John Flynn Memorial Church, he has become a well-known identity in the community, and has put the Alice Springs Uniting Church on the map.

A former Moderator of the Northern Synod, he has actively witnessed in a wide variety of fields since coming to the Centre, and many community initiatives are a testimony to his service. They include his role as the

conveners of completely new initiatives in Alice Springs -Interfaith **Fellowship** the that has brought together the different faith groups of Alice Springs, and chairperson of the steering committee of Lifeline. He has also been an active voice in the People's Alcohol Action Coalition, at becoming times conscience and spokesperson. Through his role in Prison Fellowship, he has also been a regular presence at the Alice Springs Correctional Centre.

Through his Chaplaincy to the Alice Springs Town Council, he has spoken with the mayor and counsellors about personal issues. organised prayer before council meetings, and been an active member of the Town Council Committee. Cemetery Lindsay was appointed by the Ministers Fellowship as one of the chaplains to the Masters Games shortly after his arrival. Through his involvement in Rotary, he worked on a number of the main town events like the Bang-Tail Muster Parade and Henley-on-Todd, as well as working for their overseas projects and Student Exchange program. He has held membership on the governance councils of St Philip's College and the Institute for Aboriginal Development. He was also appointed as one of the minister's fellowship representatives to the Christian Book Shop committee.

(Continued on page 6)

The de Vries family in Delhi



Delhi, India, has been home to Australians Rick and Julie de Vries for the past nine years. Their two boys, James and Allan, were born there. They live in the Janata Community, a squatter settlement of about 80,000 people.

Julie and Rick are members of "Servants", an international group of Christians committed working with the poorest of the poor. Other members live in the Philippines, Cambodia and Thailand. Their particular calling is to the slums of Asia's megacities "participating with the poor to bring hope and justice through Jesus Christ". They speak of it as "incarnational ministry". Their support is raised through churches and friends, although they are careful not to live at a standard too much higher than the people among whom they live.

Several years ago, the de Vries family lived in a slum in South Delhi, which was home to about 4,000 people.

Shortly after they moved out, community that was bulldozed and the people "relocated". During the upheavals of that time, Julie Rick supported the residents by explaining how the government bureaucracy worked and helping people to contact those who could help. They put people in touch with lawyers, advised on where to get needed medical advice. supported people with showed people disabilities, how to catch buses. They also helped people to organise to achieve common goals. They frequently have opportunities to pray with people.

All this, of course, first required being proficient in Hindi-Urdu and earning people's trust.

Once their neighbours from the slum were scattered, the de Vries family moved to Janata. Julie, like her Muslim neighbours, covers her head when she goes out -a sign of respect appreciated by the locals. Rick, a lawyer by doing training, is postgraduate studies community development. James, the older of their boys,

attends the local school. Allan is good friends with Gulnaz, Soni and Shabbo, who live downstairs.

We met up in the midst of the national election campaign. Julie and Rick toss around the idea of suggesting to the local community that they offer one of the aspiring politicians a block of 20,000 votes in exchange for an iron clad promise that he will do what he can to legalise the community, thereby giving people security of tenure over the houses they have built.

We bought lunch in tiny shops run by local residents. Back in the de Vries' single room which serves as their living quarters, we shared a simple meal of roti, banana and vegetables. In an Indian slum, we broke bread – the sign of incarnational ministry.

For more information: www.servantsasia.org

See page 11 for the story on Riazzudin's factory.

Robert Bos

National Consultant, Theology and Discipleship



Rev Tom Verrier and wife Dawn (centre) have been offering supply ministry at Tennant Creek since March. Seen here outside the Tennant Creek church after Tom's induction with Jim and Sylvia Phillips (left) and Lisa Pearce. Tom and Dawn will be at Tennant Creek until later in the year when they will return to Queensland for Dawn's mother's 100th birthday.

If you're ready to get serious about saving ... we're offering a whopping -60% p.a. on 9 month term deposits until 15 October 2004 minimum deposit \$500 Call us on 08 8236 4220 for an application form Uniting Church Investment Fund Level 2, 212 Pirie Street, Adelaide SA 5001 web: www.sa.uca.org.au email:investment@sa.uca.org.au

"They plough the field and scatter..."



The General Secretary looks to be struggling with a horseless plough. He could phone for help—except he is out of range outside Tennant Creek.

SYNOD MISSION CONSULTANT

The Uniting Church in Australia Queensland Synod

Applications are invited for the position of **Synod Mission Consultant** within the Queensland Synod.

Working in a team of three, the Synod Mission Consultant resources local churches, wider church systems and congregational leaders to grow the mission of God within their contexts and entrepreneurial services to the Church ad wider community as an active member of Uniting Church Consultancies

The Synod Mission Consultant is required to work in a variety of ways to energise and resource the Church in the key areas of mission and discipleship within contemporary contexts. Specific focus areas for the medium term future work of the Synod Mission Consultant includes new congregations, Christian education, evangelism, leadership development, congregational revitalization, prayer / spirituality and stewardship.

The Synod Mission Consultant will have excellent communication skills (oral and written) and is expected to be conversant with the various forms of electronic communication. S/he will be a team player and have the capacity to reflect theologically. It is essential that the Synod Mission Consultant has a good knowledge of the mission of the Church in contemporary Australian society and, in particular, the polity of the Uniting Church.

Applicants will be committed to the ethos of The Uniting Church in Australia, which is an equal opportunity employer.

This full-time position is to commence October 2004 and will be based in Brisbane, with travel throughout Queensland required.

For an information pack to apply for the position, please contact Vivienne Rance, (07) 3377 9705 or vivienner@uccentre.ucaqld.com.au

APPLICATIONS marked CONFIDENTIAL and addressed to: Rev Jenny Tymms, General Secretary Qld Synod, GPO Box 674, Brisbane Q 4001 CLOSE MONDAY 30 AUGUST 2004.

Position Vacant

Chairperson, Presbytery of North Queensland

Applications are invited from suitably qualified ordained or lay persons to be appointed to the position of Chairperson, Presbytery of North Queensland. The successful applicant will reside in Townsville.

For copies of the Position Description, Key Selection Criteria, and Terms and Conditions of Placement, please contact Ms Vivienne Rance, Personal Assistant to the Moderator, Queensland Synod, The Uniting Church in Australia, at the following address: GPO Box 674, Brisbane Q4001, or by telephone: (07) 33779705.

Applications for the position close on Friday 17 September 2004. The expected commencement date for the position is 1 January 2005.

Rev Allan Kuchler, Moderator

Faulkner Farewell

(Continued from page 3)

Both Lindsay and Nessie have been actively involved with the Frontier Services Old Timers Village, leading the worship each month, as well as being a part of the Auxiliary, which runs the annual fete.

Married since 1967, the Faulkners have three adult children, Doug in Darwin, Jennie in Sunbury Vic. and Mark in London. Those who know Nessie can appreciate that as well as being an energetic and good-humoured ministry partner volunteer, she is also a verv creative person. In the five years that they have been in Alice Springs, Nessie has been helping in Op. Shops, Fetes and at the Adelaide House Museum (the first Hospital established by the Rev. John Flynn). In the past she has also worked in Aged Care as an Activities Officer. Involved with the U.C.A.F. since union and fellowships before union, Nessie has been has been President of the U.C.A.F. Group in Alice Springs for the last three years. Nessie has also always had a great interest in children's ministry. Her contributions to the Singing Group as well as her cooking skills have also been greatly appreciated.

Nessie's hobbies include gardening, floral art and seeking God's beauty in creation. These gifts have certainly been demonstrated. both in the church and beyond. After contributing each year as the Convenor of the Plant Stall at the Old Timers Fete, she has 'set the standard' and will be a hard act to follow. Not only that, exhibits Horticulture Section at the Alice Springs Show are also going to look very depleted in the future, as Nessie has taken out many awards during their time in the Centre.

The Congregation of the Alice Springs Uniting Church will celebrate the 42 years of Lindsay and Nessie's Faulkner's service to God and the Church at the Cutting of Ties Worship Service at 9:30am on October 31st 2004.

An invitation behalf of the congregation of the Alice Springs Uniting Church is extended to colleagues, friends and former parishioners to attend the Closure of Ministry Service. followed by Retirement Function and If distance Shared Lunch. prohibits your attendance, a message regarding Lindsay's ministry and association with your congregation would be valued, which will be shared celebration. at the Representatives from Northern Synod participating in the service will include the General Secretary, Rev. John Rowland, as well as the chairman of the Pilgrim Presbytery, **Felicity** Rev. Amery. The Guest preacher for the Service will be Rev. Chris Howard of Geelong Victoria.

More information can be obtained from Leoni Read, phone (08) 8952 1935(ah) or Alice Springs Uniting Church, PO Box 6, Alice Springs NT 0871.









The 'Morning Club at Nightcliff

John Rowland reports

The 'Morning Club is a strange association of individuals, of various ages, ethnicities, degrees of fitness and modes of mobility.

The club has no membership role or fees, yet there is a high degree of commitment amongst the members, and many know each other on first name terms.

The 'Morning Club meets along the foreshore path from the Nightcliff shops around to Trower Road, usually from pre-dawn through to about 7:30am. The agenda is walking, talking, running, riding, jogging or being pushed in a stroller. The activity can be done singly, as couples, or in small groups—with or without dogs.

Members of the 'Morning Club offer each other a morning greeting. "Morning", of course, is the generic utterance, and its variants of 'Good Morning', 'G'day', 'Hello' and any manner of grunts indicating the same sort of greeting are equally welcome.

The evangelists in the club take great delight in offering the club greeting to non-members in the hope of

gaining a convert to the club.

As with all respectable clubs, there are certain rules members follow. As membership is voluntary, a greeting is not normally offered if the passing walker/jogger/rider indicates by their fixed gaze or averted eyes that their current thoughts should not be interrupted.

With couples it is normal etiquette to offer the greeting to the male partner, unless the female indicates with eye contact or a smile that she is willing to receive the greeting on their behalf. Two women walking together may be greeted, unless their demeanor indicates otherwise.

The purpose of the 'Morning Club is to affirm the goodness of life and the members' place in it. The ethos of the Club is widely inclusive, and quite happily accepts the spiritual dimension of blessing that some members infer when they offer their morning greeting to others. Because most verbal interaction is less that .25 sec, there is no opportunity to trip over the more theological dimensions of feeling good about walking in the morning and greeting others doing likewise.

The Club offers afterhours activities in addition to the early morning activity and Α number greeting. members take their greetings to work and share their sense of being welcomed to the day with work colleagues. It has been reported that more zealous members of the Club actually pray for other members between club meetings.

As with other extreme sports, the activities of the 'Morning Club can be addictive. Hard core members, still in regulation Club uniform, braved near freezing temperatures during this Dry Season, just for the endorphin high of greeting other members. Some have been known to arrive in late on the 'Red-Eye', and still be out on the track for the predawn Club meeting! During the Wet umbrellas are optional, especially for members who wear glasses.

Membership of the 'Morning Club is free, and there are affiliated clubs in most capital cities. The level of friendliness at the Nightcliff 'Morning Club is, however, exceptional.

You can join by just putting on your sneakers and wandering down at your own pace.

Can you see any similarities to life in the Church?

On the road with the General Secretary



Darwin—Nungalinya College Board



Back row: Bp Ted Collins, Fr Mike Connelly, Bp Phillip Freier, Ms Dawn Cardon (Principal), Rev John Rowland, Front row: Nelson Varcoe, Rev Dhalnganda Garrawurra, Galiliwa Wurramara, Rev Djawanydjawany Gondarra, Br Peter Brogan, Dr Murray Seiffert

John Rowland is Secretary to the Nungalinya College Board and a member of the Finance Committee along with Mervvn Brown, Group Accountant ARDS.

The College is working with the Assembly Ministerial Education Commission to clarify its future as a recognized theological college Congress develops its regional leadership training program.

Sydney—General Secretary's Meeting



(From left) Robert Johnson—VIC/TAS; Stu Cameron—SA; Jenny Tymms—QLD; John Evans—WA; Terence Corkin—Assembly; Wendie Wilkie—Assembly; Chris Budden—NSW; John Rowland (in the back) - NS

The General Secretaries meet prior the Assembly Standing Committee and discuss such matters national protocols for handling complaints of sexual child harassment, abuse. reception of ministers from overseas and other denominations, a range of legal matters that have implications for all synods, relations with Congress, the Church's contribution to debates affecting the forthcoming Federal elections, preparation for the 2006 Assembly meeting and the ongoing fall-out from Resolution 84, national

The General Secretaries meet for a day and a half before the Assembly Standing Committee to discuss issues common to the Synods. As non-voting members of the Assembly Standing Committee, the General Secretaries contribute to the debate but then leave the elected members to vote on the issues. Wendie Wilkie retires in October after six years serving as Associate General Secretary

training programs sexual harassment awareness.

Mutual pastoral care and collegiality is very important amongst the General Secretaries, and we usually manage to eat out together on our spare night.

Perth—Inter-Synod Cooperation



The Inter-Synod working party meeting in Perth, July 2004. The photographer asked me to sign something—the group said it was *not* an agreement for the Northern Synod to take over!

The synods of SA, WA and the North are exploring inter-synod cooperation. There is agreement to share information about placements, and a list of future possibilities is on the table for discussion.

The next meeting of the working party is planned for Darwin in March 2005. Both South Australia and the West are looking at presbytery boundaries, and while that is not an issue for the North we are interested in sharing resources on insurance and property management. The Standing Committee is being kept informed on the discussions.

Melbourne and Halls Gap—Mission Planning

The synod mission educators met on 19-20 July to discuss possible responses to the Thomas Bandy Conferences held in SA, Vic and Qld.

The promise of more *Thriving Congregations* was considered against our *addictive behaviours*, or our commitment to the old way of doing things. An enthusiastic study group is meeting in Darwin to

continue working on Bandy's material.

The Rural Ministry Conference at Halls Gap *The Church can be different* looked at enhancing the gifts and skills of lay people sharing in the ministry of the church. While remote area ministry is different from rural, some valuable insights were brought back.



Al McRae responds to group comments at *The Church can be different* Rural Ministry Conference, Halls Gap, Vic.

Sydney—National Presbytery Ministers' Retreat

Worship on the theme *Burnt—but not consumed* was led by Rev Helen Richmond, National Director, Multicultural Ministries. Sharing in small groups, discussions of items on

concern, key-note speakers, some free time and wonderful meals filled the day at Mt St Benedict Conference Centre, Pennant Hills. Wednesday evening's meal was at Manley and we traveled over

on the ferry at dusk. Its hard to over-estimate the value of time talking over issues with colleagues in ministry. The glory of the sunset seemed to be a seal of God's blessing on a very special time.



A Report from the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Lands SA

Stuart McMillan - Resource Worker Northern Regional Council UAICC



The Ernabella Choir—courtesy The Kori Times

Seven scrapping camp dogs, eight faithful women, seven playful children, and one man—freezing (yours truly), gathered around a pitifully small fire at the foot of the Musgrove ranges, under a crescent moon and clear star filled sky, children making a joyful noise unto the Lord.

The Council Meeting

So began our fifth and last night at Fregon (Kaltjiti), on the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Lands SA. This last Inma (fellowship) would conclude the Ananguku Area Ministry Council meeting which had taken place over the preceding days. Many of those who had been with us from Amata, Pukatja, Turkey Bore, David's Well, Mimili, Aputula, and some of the smaller homelands had already left to get back for work and school.

The delight of people in renewing there long standing relationship with Miss Margaret Bain, who accompanied me from Alice Springs, was very evident in the laughter and story telling which eschewed.

Emerging from the meting discussions was a renewed model of care/ministry across this vast area which picked up again an Anangu concept – Atunymankupai – the one who cares for others sacrificially; Jesus being the perfect example.

Shepherd of the sheep

This concept, together with a contemporary model from the mission time – *shepherd*, became the discussion focus and renewed model. For in this part of the Northern Synod there had been sheep camps scattered throughout the Lands. Each camp had a

shepherd/Atunymankupai to care for the sheep. Margaret and one or two of the men (now Tjilpi – old wise men) would go each evening to a camp for Bible study, prayer and fellowship – see John 10.

Please continue to pray for the Anangu people as they seek to faithfully minister and care for their people. We saw at Fregon and heard from other places a strong and renewed emphasis on Sunday School, which happens in some places every day! We heard of the concern for vouth and the developments of homeland areas as places for teaching and having fun with young people. There was sadness that in a lot of places wati weya i.e. there are no men (or not many).

New possibilities for links with Rev Raymond Bandicha and Flynn Church in ministry in Alice Springs are emerging, including ministry in the hospital, which in Margaret has been involved.

The Ministry Council will again meet in early September at Mimili. Please pray for Katrina Tjitayi in her role as Convenor of the council. for Rev Nyaningu (Pukatja), Graham Kulyuru (Community Minister – perhaps Fregon), Kinyin McKenzie (Outreach Ministry), Rev Raymond & Mrs Yanyi Bandicha (Aputula & Alice Springs), and many other faithful elders throughout the Ananguku Ministry Council area.



Riazzudin's factory

Rob Bos National Consultant, Theology and Discipleship

Riazzudin proudly invites me into his factory. Inside the small room he has fifteen men working sewing machines, making jeans. They are all delighted to meet Australian and, with Australian Rick de Vries as our interpreter, readily tell me about their work and give permission to take photographs. I promise to send copies.

We are in the Janata Community in Delhi, India. Janata is an illegal squatter community of about 80,000 people, mostly Muslims, tightly packed into a triangle with 500 metre sides. Some of the houses are makeshift (black plastic on flimsy frames); others are more durable brick. Water and electricity are supplied by entrepreneurs who have "unofficially" tapped into the grid and make a small charge to each household. All waste

is carried away in open drains.

The men doing the sewing work 12 hours per day, with the hours varying, depending on the unreliable electricity supply. They earn about Rs per 2,000 month (\$60 Australian at the current exchange rate). To be able to support a family costs Rs 100 (\$3) per day or Rs 3000 per month, so women and girls supplement the income by sewing beads onto vinyl strips for shoes. They earn Rs 10 (30c) per pair; about two hours' work. Families get by provided there are no expensive weddings medical emergencies, and the police do not take one of your young men into custody on a trumped up charge and demand payment in exchange for his release.

Some of the better-off families – those with enough people employed to manage a

Rs 1,000 (\$30) per month surplus - have devised an ingenious way of achieving their financial goals more quickly. Twenty families club together and each contribute Rs 1,000 to a pool. Each month the name of one of the families is drawn by lot and they receive the whole Rs 20,000 (\$600). The next another month family receives the full amount. This continues until all twenty families have Rs 20,000. No one loses. Nineteen families achieve their goals sooner. The money may be used for adding a room, or paying debts, or covering other urgent bills.

Their fondest hope is that the government will legalise the community and give people title to their houses. Their biggest fear is that the government will bulldoze the community.

Education is a priority, and those families with a number of people working pay to send their children to somewhat better schools. They hope that the next generation will have things a little easier.

I am impressed by Riazzadin's quiet dignity, and his workers' friendly smiles and warm handshakes. I am inspired by their acceptance of the will of God in all things. They have taught me something about the apostle Paul's dictum "I have learned to be content with whatever I have" (Phil. 4:11).

Palmerston celebrates new members

Estelle Schabort





Anso, Brendan, Michael and Matthias making their commitment to Christ, supported by their mentors.

During late 2003, a few young people in the congregation expressed interest in finding out about membership to the congregation. They approached the Palmerston minister, Rev Brian Morgan, who considered various approaches to address this query.

As these are all very busy secondary students, Brian suggested a study involving church membership to be presented over a period of weekend retreats at the church from February till May 2004, concluding with a formal ceremony to welcome those, who expressed this desire, into membership.

The young people all agreed that this seemed to be the best way to meet their needs. Each young person was provided with a mentor to share this special time – mentors were to be a source of support and a resource for any queries. The group consisting of Anso, Brendan,

Michael and Matthias was presented to the congregation at the start of this journey. Each was provided with a Bible and book to make notes.

The retreats covered Jesus' authority as the Son of God; the meaning of the Cross; the Resurrection and salvation. Discussions were also held about the Uniting Church structure and where it fits within the churches of Australia

Mentors shared their conversion experiences with the group. Gifts and talents and their use within the church was also discussed. As part of the retreats, the group also attended the induction of Rev Wendell Flentje at the Casuarina Uniting Church. The group built a model of a church which they thought best represented the Uniting Church. They also read Mark, Luke, Acts and Romans as part of their study material.

This period was a great learning experience for all. Brian Morgan also discovered that the students found a Friday evening and all day Saturday session too much for the group, so this led to a condensing of material to be discussed and shorter sessions. A great solution welcomed by all! Fun times included a swim at a pool, eating out at all Palmerston's take-aways and lots of laughs!

Sunday, 6 June 2004 was the highlight of the group's study time! The congregation was to celebrate these 4 young people giving their lives to Christ and becoming members of Palmerston congregation in a formal ceremony, which was attended by Rev George Woodward. The ceremony involved each being asked to express their belief in and acceptance of Jesus Christ as Saviour and their commitment to the congregation.

Each signed their commitment card, received their certificate of confirmation, a years subscription to DevoZine, a daily teenage devotion booklet and concordance. The congregation warmly received them into membership by hugging kissing them. Each young person also responded by thanking their mentor, and Brian for the assistance on their journey to commitment. The joyous day concluded with morning tea and a huge cake to share.

Congregation prays for and supports new members

Next Edition of Northern Synod News November 2004

Watch for our new Editor and a new look to the NSN

Diary Dates

- Installation of Rev Steve Orme as Moderator, Sunday 26th September 7:30pm Darwin Memorial Uniting Church
- Synod meeting Monday 27th to Wednesday 29th September Kormilda College 9:00am start

Bible Society Hymnfest

Darwin Memorial Sunday 31st October 04 2.00pm