

Northern Synod News

Issue No 82 July 2005

HALFWAY OUT

Half Way Out are a six piece rock 'n' roll outfit. Their music is defined as SKA - a fast paced, energetic, and highly melodic style of music.

Thus, Half Way Out have a great stage show with loads of energy bursting forth in their antics.

But don't be fooled into categorising them too neatly, these guys like to throw a bit of everything into their music and have a wide musical diversity.



The band itself consists of Guitar, Bass, Drums, Trombone, Sax, Trumpet, and three part vocal harmony.

The guys in the band are: Tristan Heath, Matt Palmer, Jono Pukallus, James McEwan, Dave "Lips" Kidstino and Joel Bagnall. The band hails from Brisbane.

Half Way Out's target audience is the teens to twenty somethings, but their music is greatly appreciated by Mums and Dads, Grandparents, Preschoolers and Toddlers.

Continued next page

Inside this issue...

- | | | | |
|------------------------------------|----|---------------------------------|----|
| • Halfway Out | 1 | • Mowanjum Baptism | 13 |
| • John Bell visits Darwin | 3 | • News Roundup | 14 |
| • Western Alliance meets in Darwin | 5 | • UnitingJustice | 15 |
| • Presbytery | 6 | • UnitingCare's Budget Response | 16 |
| • Moderator's Letter | 7 | • Frontier Services /YAP | 17 |
| • Reverend Arch Grant | 8 | • Books to Read | 18 |
| • Sir Ronal Wilson | 9 | • Yalga-binbi Institute | 19 |
| • A Faith Response to terrorism | 11 | • Provocations | 20 |

John Bell visits Darwin

The Iona Community's Reverend John Bell visited Darwin in May and conducted a number of seminars and workshops.

John Bell is perhaps best known for the music which speaks both of good liturgy and a passion for social justice in the name of Jesus Christ. Currently Bell and Graham Maule, his musical collaborator are the Resource Team for the Iona Community's Wild Goose Resource Group.

Bell's visit to Darwin, from May 19—22, was part of tour which had taken in Europe and America before Australia. Mindful of the impact of his Glaswegian accent on Australian ears, Bell initially regaled his audience with some tales from his travels "to tune in your ears", as he said.

Having spent a day working with Religious Education teachers from the Darwin region, on Friday and Saturday the seminars were directed more at a "general Christian audience".

Listening to Bell for even a short time is to realise that he moves effortlessly across traditional denominational and liturgical boundaries as if they were non-existent.

How is Jesus portrayed?

This was the focus of Bell's first seminar, "10 things they never told me about Jesus".

Arguing that Jesus has become an icon domesticated by the Western Church, Bell pointed out that there is a separation between the reality and the icon. He pointed to as an example to the Book of Kells where Jesus is portrayed as having red hair, as did his mother—a buxom red haired woman. In this image Jesus is Irish (with a touch of Norwegian!)

The Irish monks who created the Book of Kells created an Irish Jesus with red hair

The ten facts about the real Jesus that Bell advanced were as follows.

1. Jesus is neither white, English speaking, Protestant or Roman Catholic. When Jesus is iconised by the dominant sector of any society, Jesus is separated from ordinary people. An indigenised Jesus opens up new visions of Jesus and of God.

2. Jesus enjoyed eating! The Gospel of Luke alone records about sixteen meals in which Jesus was involved. There are many parables about food. How then did Jesus become an icon of anorexia, Bell asked. He pointed out that the Gospel tells us that

hospitality is a cardinal virtue.

3. Jesus was not always "gentle, meek and mild", Cecil Frances Alexander notwithstanding. Jesus became angry about big issues—injustice, evil, malicious gossip and the like. But Bell acknowledged that we are often uncomfortable with the idea of an angry Jesus.

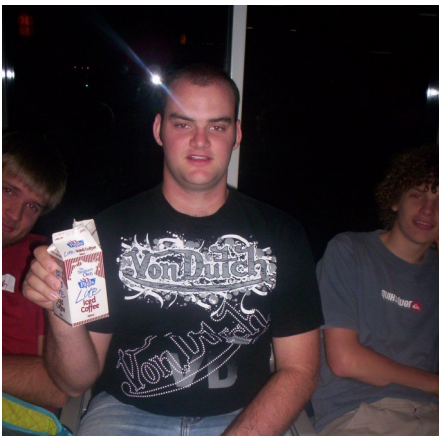
4. There were skeletons hanging on Jesus family tree—or lurking in the family cupboard. The four women included in Matthew's genealogy all have some stigma attached to them. Bell pointed out that their presence demonstrates Jesus' inclusivity. Jesus despises no-one.

5. There were female as well as male disciples. Jesus takes women as models of virtue, generosity and faith. Women, he pointed out were the first witnesses to the resurrection.

6. Jesus did not extol family values as we understand them. There is no basis in Scripture for the religious right's stress on family values. The nuclear family is not a scriptural idea.

It takes a village to rear a child is more scriptural notion.

Continued on page 4



Halfway Out having fun



Photos: Felicity Amery

Continued on page 10

7. When Jesus spoke of himself he never used militaristic terms. It is Paul who uses militaristic language and metaphors, not Jesus.

At this point Bell ran out of time and so the final points were simple “headlines”.

8. Jesus has a sense of humour.

9. Jesus has a fully functioning human body. Christianity, Bell argues, is a faith to do with the flesh, sacralising the body.

10. Jesus’ most fervent critics were religious people.

Bell summarised this seminar by pointing out that traditionally there is a focus on Jesus birth and death but little focus on his actual life. He claims that the birth and death make little sense without due consideration of Jesus’ life.

The imagination is a resource for faith

In his second session Bell explored the idea that the imagination is a resource for faith.

He pointed out that while we extol imagination in children, we suspect it in adults.

The Bible, Bell argues, appeals as much to the imagination as to reason. The parables, he says are “illogical stories which require the hearers to use their imagination”

Through a series of exercises

Bell encouraged participants to explore how their imaginations colour their expectations of the various images and characters in Scripture.

Imagination and experience can take us where scholarship cannot, Bell stated.

Stumbling Blocks and Stepping Stones in Liturgy.

In this session John Bell explored the nature of liturgy ... how good worship can happen.

One of the keys to unlocking



liturgy is the rumours we spread about our own community and its liturgy. Our often endless criticism of what we do is what turns people away according to Bell.

Bell argues that we need “to celebrate ageing rather than to complain about it.” He also pointed out that to call a new minister is an opportunity “to take the ‘let’s dream approach”.

Belonging, according to Bell, is the key to seeing the church as a community to

which and in which we belong. This he argues is the idea foreshadowed in the Passover. Traditionally the church has been based on belonging to a community, although the notion of individualism, Bell suggests is undermining that belief.

Today people often choose as individuals to worship in places where they have no geographical belonging. Are we in danger of disintegrating the body of Christ in this way?

Bell pointed out that we will not have good challenging worship “if we rely on the trickle down effect—great preacher, great organist Great worship bubbles up from within a unified congregation.”

The architecture of the congregational space could be either a stumbling block or a stepping stone to worship, Bell claims. So could change.

The rumours we spread about ourselves and our worship ... wear us down.

In a provocative statement Bell claimed that “today people come to church, to public worship to have a private experience of God”. This experience that we seek as individuals is “often not the one God seeks to give us”. †

Wendy Beresford-Maning

In the next issue ... John Bell on Lay Leadership.

Western Alliance



Representatives at worship



Representatives of the Western Alliance which brings together the Northern, South Australian and Western Australian Synods met in Darwin in June this year.

The Alliance representatives began their meetings in 2004 and as they have continued to meet they have been clarifying the potential role of the Western Alliance. Originally mooted as a possible merger of the three synods, the Western Alliance has now agreed that the three synods will each continue as separately constituted Synods of the Uniting Church in Australia.

Recognising that they have areas of overlapping concern,

however, the Alliance members have also resolved to continue to meet regularly and to work together on aspects of church life which they have in common, and which may be less a focus of the life and work of the Eastern synods.

At their June meeting the Alliance representatives acknowledged the ongoing need for the Uniting Church to have well equipped and trained lay and ordained ministerial leadership both in the present and into the future.

Such leadership training, they recognised, needs to encompass academic study, ministerial formation, ongoing continual ministerial education and lay leadership training. "Leadership development is a critical strategic intent of each synod and significant reviews of theological education are being undertaken in other Uniting Church synods," the Alliance

representatives stated.

As a result of these deliberations the Western Alliance representatives agreed to the following undertakings.

First, that each synod, will at the earliest possible time, review their theological education and ministerial leadership training needs and new directions.

Second, that as they undertake their reviews, each synod will as far as possible use the same terms of reference and the same expert advice to ensure consistency across the three synods. They will also consider areas of co-operation and cross-synod structures which may enhance ministerial education.

The third agreed proposal relates directly to the West Australian Synod which is currently looking at filling a

Continued on page 17.



Pilgrim Presbytery



The Pilgrim Presbytery held its first meeting for 2005 in March at Humpty Doo.



Although it might look like there was a lot of fellowship time over food there were business sessions and worship times as well!



Kids at Presbytery ... page 10

from the Moderator ...

Commissioning of Daḡataḡa Gondarra as Community Minister for Barrkirra and its homelands



Sunday, April 24th was a busy day on the airstrip at the Barrkirra community, northwest from Nhulunbuy across Melville Bay and east from Galiwinku.

People gathered from across Arnhemland for the commissioning of Daḡataḡa Gondarra as a Community Minister.

The Moderator and Ros Marshall, from ARDS Family Services, flew in from Darwin.

The Barrkirra community had worked hard preparing for the special day.

A month before, the eye of Cyclone Ingrid had passed close to the community, stripping trees and destroying the generator.

All debris had been cleared, the generator replaced, and a place for the ceremony constructed.



A barbecue lunch was offered to the visitors. After lunch, the special service of commissioning commenced.

The Māripulu clan/nation presented Daḡataḡa and his wife Bandil in traditional ceremonial way.

Prayers were said over the community members gathered around the ceremonial fire.

Continued on page 12

Reverend Arch Grant

Archibald Wesley Grant was well known to many in the Northern Synod.

He was born in New Zealand to Australian parents on 5 February 1911. He graduated from St Andrews Theological College and, after working for a time in the motor industry and as a cinema projectionist, Arch entered the ministry of the Presbyterian Church. He accepted a call to the Australian Inland Mission (AIM) and served with the Mission in Tennant Creek, Darwin and Alice Springs.

Arch's first posting in Tennant Creek in 1939 saw him extend the AIM welfare hut to provide an additional room in which he and his wife could live. His congregation here consisted of the miners of the Tennant Creek region and their families. His ministry to them was made easier once he was provided with a car. In 1940 he attended the opening of the Inter-Church Club in Darwin.

Arch was also an A.I.F. chaplain, serving in the Northern Territory, New Guinea and Borneo, between 1941 and 1946. In early 1942 he was appointed Chaplain to the troops in the Adelaide River area—which stretched from Manton Dam to Katherine. Following the bombing of Darwin Arch, like many others was involved with the care and welfare of both evacuees and seamen whose ships had been sunk.

Arch selected the site for the Adelaide River War Cemetery, now the largest war cemetery in Australia. He conducted many of the early burials there.

Between 1943 and 1945 Arch served in other parts of Australia and overseas, returning to Darwin in as a Presbyterian minister in 1946.

Together with the Rev C D Alcorn, Methodist minister in Darwin and the Rev Dr John Flynn, Arch formed the United Church of North Australia—a union of Congregational, Methodist and Presbyterian churches which foreshadowed the later creation of the Uniting Church of Australia, although it was primarily a missionary arrangement.

After a stint in New South Wales from 1950—55, Arch returned to the Territory and was the Minister at the John Flynn Memorial Church in Alice Springs, 1956-60, and an executive member of the Australian Council of Churches, 1966-67.

Arch then returned to New South Wales and finally retired in 1977. He maintained a lively interest in the Territory, however, and was a frequent visitor to the North.

Many will remember his vocal opposition to the removal

of the old MOM building from Knuckey Street and its 'restoration' in the George Brown Botanical Gardens. Accepting the inevitable, Arch spoke at the ceremony to mark the completion of the restoration of the old building in its new location.

Arch is the author of four books: *Camel train & aeroplane: the story of Skipper Partridge* (1981), *Palmerston to Darwin: 75 years service on the frontier* (1990), *Australia's frontline matron, Edith McQuade White* (1991) and *Aliens in Arnhem Land* (1995). These are available from Frontier Services.

Wendy Beresford-Maning
with additional information from
Professor David Carment



The Wesleyan Church and manse in Knuckey Street, Port Darwin, 1888.

Photo 0001/0015 from the Tracey Collection of the Northern Territory Library and Information Service. Territory Images.



Sir Ronald Wilson



Sir Ronald Wilson and Wollongong elders Aunt Mary Davis (left) and Aunt Jean Morris. *File photo, University of Wollongong.*

Sir Ronald Wilson, first lay President of the Uniting Church, died at his home in Perth on Friday, July 15th at the age of 82 after a period of illness.

Sir Ronald was an important figure not only in the Uniting Church but in many areas of public life in Australia.

During World War II, Sir Ronald was a Spitfire pilot in the Royal Australian Air Force. In that role he was involved in the Battle of Britain.

On his return to Australia he embarked on what was to become a distinguished legal career, finally becoming a

judge of the High Court of Australia.

Following his retirement from the High Court in 1989 he went on to become the President of the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission.

The highlight of Sir Ronald's commitment to both the principles and practicalities of social justice came when, on behalf of the Commonwealth Government he investigated the forced removal of aboriginal children from their communities and families. He co-authored the report *Bringing Them Home*.

Leader of the Opposition and fellow West Australian Kim Beazley said of Sir Ronald, "He was a very good man. He used his forensic skills not for the creation of his own wealth but for the good of our society. His contribution to public life in Australia is unsurpassed."



About FACE 7

FAITH AND CULTURE EXCHANGE

Applications now accepted

The [application forms](#) and other information are now available on the Assembly Website for you to sign up for **About FACE 7**. Remember that the program will be limited to 40 participants and **applications must be received by 31st August, 2005**

About FACE 7 is an opportunity for you to spend time in Aboriginal communities around Australia in order to

- develop friendships
- build bridges of mutual understanding
- share stories
- integrate reconciliation with relationships
- Create an experience which encourages an about face in in the attitude and lifestyles of the participants.

The program will run from January 2—23, 2006.

About FACE is a national youth program of the Uniting Church in Australia.

If you would like more information about **About FACE**, there is information, including stories from participants in About FACE 6 on the Assembly website.

To contact the About FACE co-ordinators you can email: aboutface@sa.uca.org.au or phone (08) 8236-4240.



Kids at Presbytery



And a few older kids



Yirrkala celebrates

From September 23—25, 2005 the Yirrkala community will be celebrating 70 years of the church at Yirrkala.

If anyone was working at Yirrkala during the years 1935 to 1980 and has any photos or memorabilia that could be of use to the community at this time of anniversary celebration, Rev Hala Tupou would be very happy to hear from you.

It is hoped that the anniversary will be an opportunity for a reunion of the “Oldies” so that the youngsters can hear and share their stories.



Fritz Momuat of the **Indonesian Missionary congregation** tells us that the IMC has held Tsunami fundraising activities with the wider Indonesian community in Darwin. These activities were held at Palmerston Shopping Centre and the Indonesian Consulate and raised \$3656 . 00. The funds have been forwarded to Uniting Church Overseas Aid.

The NT Government has promised to match donations.

Continued from page 2



“Our Darwin tour has been awesome so far, God has continually blessed us while we've been up here. We've made some great friends and played some cool gigs. The weather is hot, but we're not letting that stop us from rocking out.”

A Faith Response to Terrorism

'Their god is not recognisable to religious people'.

A edited version of the homily preached by Cardinal Cormac Murphy-O'Connor at Westminster Cathedral, 8 July, 2005.

The attacks on London yesterday have brought home to us, as never before, the horror of September 11, Madrid, and Bali.

It is easier to feel the agony of those we work with and live next door to. But it is easier, too, to feel anger and disgust at those who perpetrate evil.

These are days when we must be attentive to our reactions. We rightly feel pain, horror, confusion and anxiety.

Evil has erupted at the heart of our city, at a moment when we are most vulnerable - when we are innocently going about our daily tasks. The knowledge that vulnerability and innocence can be exploited by evil can lead us to wish to be invulnerable.

It can lead us to anger and vengeance. It can lead us to scapegoat entire sectors of the population. And that is exactly what yesterday's acts were designed to bring about.

But it is precisely when we are confronted with evil that we must cling with greater deter-

mination to what is good.

We must be compassionate and above all patient, because it is not we, but God, who is in charge of history. St Paul said "Do not be overcome by evil: but overcome evil with good" (Romans 12: 21).

The law of history is not on the side of the terrorists. The past is littered with the burned-out husks of attempts at bringing about political change through violence. Violence, as we know, breeds violence, and violence ultimately destroys itself. If we stand firm, if we believe in peace, then terror will not succeed; it will exhaust itself in time.

This evil ... can lead us to scapegoat entire sectors of the population

Yesterday brought havoc and tragedy and pain to the streets of London. But evil also summons forth good. Almost as soon as the wounds appeared in the heart of our capital there was healing: in the efficiency and care shown by the emergency services, in the calm response of London's commuters, in the way that Londoners put their arms around each other, and nursed each other... God was there, in the healing, in the compassion, in the patience. God may be mocked by acts of hate, but he is never defeated or reduced. ...

The people who carried out these monstrous acts with chilling efficiency and fore-

The law of history is not on the side of the terrorists.

thought are believed to have acted in the name of religion. If so, it is not a religion recognisable to the religious people of this world.

Who is their god?

It is not the God who revealed himself to Moses and Jacob; nor the God who, in Jesus Christ, walked this earth and died and rose to save humanity; nor the God worshipped by the Muslim people, who is a God Almighty and Merciful.

Who is the god of the men of hate? It is a false god; one projected from the darkest recesses of the human heart.

The name of God is peace.

Cardinal Cormac Murphy O'Connor is the Roman Catholic primate of England.



Former NSW Police Commissioner, Peter Ryan, when asked if the war on terrorism could be won said simply, "No. For too long we [the West] have sent out warriors rather than emissaries."

We can only pray that he is wrong.

Continued from page 7

Barrkirra youth sang and danced before the Lord to celebrate the commissioning.

Banners adorned that community.

The respect and affection from members of the community for their spiritual leader was obvious.



In the absence of the Chairperson and vice Chairperson of NRCC due to illnesses, Mrs Marrpalawuy Marika was chosen by the Arnhem Land Ministry Council to lead the service.

Rev Jovilisi Ragata gave the pastoral charge and the Moderator offered prayers.

The commissioning was organised by Rev Dhalḡanda Garrawarra.

After the commissioning, the members of the community greeted Daḡataḡa and Bandil.

Daḡataḡa then led the community in the celebration of the Holy Communion.

The commissioning was not the beginning of Daḡataḡa's ministry. He had been recognised by the Presbytery as acting in that capacity since 1996. It was a day of celebration and recognition for his ongoing ministry.



Thanks to Margaret Miller from Galiwinku for the photographs.

Steve Orme

Baptism at Mowanjum



Mowanjum Community Minister, Roger Burgu baptises Eloise as she is held by elder Janet Oobagooma. Eloise is watching every move!



Roger and Alison lead the singing, accompanied by Alphonse.

The Mowanjum Community gathered for the celebration of the Baptism of Eloise Watts on June 12 this year.

Eloise is the third child of the Rev Andrew and Mrs Jody Watts. Big brothers, Liam and Alec were also at the baptism.

Andrew, who spent some of his own childhood at Mowanjum when his father was minister to the community there, is currently the Ministry Development Worker at Mowanjum. He is also the Frontier Patrol Minister for the West Kimberley Patrol.

The family is based at Derby in Western Australia.

Also present for the celebrations were Andrew's mother, Win, and his sisters Helen, Christine, and Julie and friends from Broome Uniting Church and other churches in Derby.

In the photo below, elder Janet Oobagooma leads Andrew and Jody through their responses at the baptism. Roger Burgu and other community representatives are present together with Eloise's brothers, Liam and Alec.



Roger Burgu, Janet Oobagooma and Eloise all look suitably delighted with the baptism.



News Roundup

around the synod



Erica Bell, long time member of Darwin Memorial celebrated her 90th birthday in June. Congratulations, Erica.



Congratulations are also due to Jane Aagard, MLA who was re-elected at the recent NT election as the Member for Nightcliff in the Northern Territory House of Assembly. On the resumption of Parliament Mrs Aagard was

also elected as Speaker of the House of Assembly.

Jane Aagard is a member of the Nightcliff UCA congregation



The Philadelphia Indonesian congregation in Karama in the northern suburbs of Darwin recently celebrated their seventh anniversary.



In a service led by Rev Deacon Felicity Amery, Chair of Pilgrim Presbytery, Rev Thresi Mauboy of the Indonesian Missionary congregation was recognised as a minister in the Uniting Church. ✝

After 28 years, the Jennings family are leaving the Northern Territory to establish themselves in Adelaide.

Phil Jennings has been the organist at Darwin Memorial for a number of years.

Maureen is well known to many in the Synod from her time working in the Synod Office where she became “the telephone voice of the Northern Synod”.

Andrew, currently studying at the University of Queensland is well known for his music and youth ministry.

Rachel is already in Adelaide, studying at Adelaide University.



around the nation ...

Tsunami Appeal

The total for the Uniting Church Overseas Aid's appeal is now \$2,355,846. Thank you again to all those individuals and churches that have supported this appeal. For more information contact us or log on to our website at www.overseasaid.org/tsunami.htm

New Anglican Primate.

The new head of the Anglican Church in Australia is the Right Reverend Phillip Aspinall, Archbishop of Brisbane.

Archbishop Aspinall takes over from the previous Primate, the Right Reverend Dr Peter Carnley, Archbishop of Perth.



The Northern Synod will present a “snapshot” of its life and work at the **July meeting of Assembly Standing Committee.**

At this meeting Standing Committee will also consider a report from the Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress regarding some restructuring. Neither the Northern Synod nor Northern Regional Christian Congress (NRCC) has been represented on the planning group which will present the report. ✝

Church Welcomes Changes For a Decent Immigration Policy

Call to action!

We are very keen that the community should have as much input as possible into both policies affecting asylum seekers and the Federal industrial relations agenda.

* UnitingJustice has published fact sheets and action resources on the proposed Federal Industrial Relations reforms. These can be accessed via the website at <http://nat.uca.org.au/unitingjustice/transformingsociety/economicsforpeople/index.htm#info>.

- Our media releases, fact sheets, resources and policy statements on refugees and asylum seekers can be accessed at <http://nat.uca.org.au/unitingjustice/reconcilinghumanity/asylumrefugees/index.htm>.

June 5th 2005 is World Environment Day. UnitingJustice, in conjunction with the Australian Conservation Foundation and other church organisations, is publishing an information pamphlet on climate change. For further information and to order copies of the pamphlet, see our website www.nat.uca.org.au/unitingjustice/ or email to unitingjustice@nat.uca.org.au.

From: Rev. Elenie Poulos, National Director, UnitingJustice

© 2005 Assembly Update, June.

In a media release on May 25th, 2005, the Uniting Church welcomed proposed changes to the Migration Act 1958 and urged the Coalition backbench to support the Private Members Bills when they come before Parliament.

The President of the Uniting Church, the Reverend Dr Dean Drayton, expressed the Church's thanks to Petro Georgiou, Judi Moylan and Bruce Baird for their ongoing commitment to changing what is an inhumane and unjust policy.

"We know that they are not the only Coalition members to visit immigration detention centres and we call on those who have to remember the faces of the people they met and the hopelessness in their eyes. These are people who have done nothing more than seek our protection and care but we have destroyed their lives with a harsh and unjust policy. We ask Government members to support these Bills so we can have a decent immigration policy," Rev. Drayton said.

"The proposed changes to the mandatory detention regime recognise that the current policy is unsustainable and damaging to people's well-being, as well as being contrary to our international human rights obligations.

"They propose a fairer and more accountable system, providing checks and

balances such as judicial and independent review. They seek an end to the indiscriminate and indefinite detention of asylum seekers in favour of a system that is a more accurate reflection of Australia's generous and compassionate heart," he said.

"These Bills show that what the Uniting Church has long been calling for is possible. It is possible for identity and security checks to be done quickly and for people's refugee claims to be assessed while they are living in the community. It is possible to institute a more flexible, transparent and accountable system.

"They acknowledge that there is no evidence or reason to believe that people who are seeking our protection would abscond. There is no need to detain or demonise people assuming that they are a threat to Australian society and there is no need to expose them to such damaging environments.

"Last year I wrote to the Prime Minister asking for an act of compassion similar to the one being proposed in the second Bill. We have been seeking permanent protection for refugees and for those who cannot be returned home. We have asked for the release of all children and their families and for compassion to be extended to long-term detainees. These proposals offer some hope of a decent life to those whose lives we have made a misery.

Continued on page 17

UnitingCare responds to Budget 2005.

UnitingCare Australia has given the 2005 Federal Budget an overall failing grade whilst “welcoming its focus on and investment in Australia’s unemployed”.

Director of UnitingCare, Lin Hatfield Dodds said those groups targeted in the Budget—single parents, those living with a disability, the long term unemployed and older Australians who have been out of work for a long time—formed the core of clients assisted by UnitingCare agencies across Australia.

“Our experience is that people do want to work and do not want to remain dependent on Government payments. We know that secure, stable employment is the best foundation for secure stable families and a stronger Australia,” said Ms

Hatfield Dodds.

“What the government has done has raised the bar and asked for more from jobseekers but not offered enough to give them a leg up into work and a helping hand to stay there,” she said.

UnitingCare is particularly concerned about Budget proposals that would see Job Network provider reports trigger instant suspension of income support payments from Centrelink. UnitingCare is part of the Job Network.

“Although the Budget stopped short of requiring Job Network providers to directly suspend income support payments, providers could now act as de facto Centrelink offices with reports generated

causing immediate financial penalties on jobseekers,” Ms Hatfield Dodds added.

The introduction of such a system threatens the essential trust relationships which UnitingCare has built up with its clients.

“Out of work Australians are looking for a hand up from their employment agency, not a kick in the teeth. These changes could compromise our mission,” Ms Hatfield Dodds said.

UnitingCare as an agency of the Uniting Church is concerned that the new arrangements imposed by the Budget blur the lines between welfare payments and job placement.

Further information is available on the UCA Assembly website.



United
Theological
College

PRINCIPAL

Applications are called for the position of Principal of United Theological College, Sydney. Applicants should be highly qualified in some field of theological education and possess skills in administration and institutional leadership. Applications are welcomed from qualified women and men who are members either of the Uniting Church in Australia, or members of a church in a related tradition. The appointee must be willing to accept and adhere to the Basis of Union of the Uniting Church in Australia. The position is available from 1 January 2006.

Full details of the position may be obtained from

Professor Barry Leal, Chairperson of the College Council,
16 Masons Drive, North Parramatta NSW 2151
Fax +61 2 9683 6617 or email utc@nsw.uca.org.au

with whom applications close on 31 August 2005.

Continued from page 13

“This year the Uniting Church celebrates its 20th year as a multicultural church. Our church has been formed out of the multicultural diversity of Australia. Most of us began our life in this land as strangers – we are who we are, as a church and as a nation, because those before us welcomed strangers and because we have continued to do the same. We believe that it is time our immigration policies reflected our true identity,” Rev. Drayton said.

“It is time for a policy that welcomes all strangers and treats them with the dignity and respect they deserve as human beings.”

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Young Ambassadors for Peace (YAP)

Joy Balazo has just returned from two YAP workshops, held in Ambon and the Philippines. Both workshops were a success.

Two YAP members from Ambon accompanied Joy to the Philippines to help lead a workshop.

The second half of 2005 will continue to be busy for YAP. The next workshop will be held in the Solomon Islands from June 20. For more information contact us on (02) 8267 4269 or team@nat.uca.org.au and ask to subscribe to the YAP newsletter.

Northern Synod members of the Western Alliance group at work.
L-R: Moderator, Rev Steve Orme; Interim Gen. Sec. Kevin Davis and Lyn Bleakley



Continued from page 5.

Frontier Services ...

Outback Links

Frontier Services has launched a new volunteer scheme that aims to provide much-needed relief to families that are struggling with the affects of drought and the resulting financial and emotional pressures.

Outback Links will recruit skilled volunteers to provide assistance to families and individuals with pressing short-term needs which may include such things as general maintenance, caring for children, household tasks, assistance with property jobs, IT support - anything that might help to relieve the pressures being experienced by those in rural and remote communities.

The scheme will be run in partnership with the Commonwealth Bank of Australia which has provided the funds for the first year of operation and is likely to extend its support over 3 years.

Continued next column

Western Alliance

vacancy created by the resignation of the Reverend Professor Bill Loader of Murdoch University.

They agreed to encourage the West Australian Synod to take this opportunity to consider new structures in theological education which would enhance lay and clerical leadership education, not only in Western Australia, but also across the boundaries of the three synods.

Finally, it was agreed that each synod would appoint a representative to finalise the terms of reference for such a review. The Northern Synod's representative is Kevin Davis.

Outback Links

Those interested in volunteering should contact the Coordinator, Noela Schloss on 1300 731 349 or email outbacklinks@bigpond.com

Recent Books

HOLY MACKEREL! Written by Maisie McKenzie. Copyright Publishing. 2004.

Subtitled *Doug and Maisie McKenzie 20th century pilgrims* this is the story of the McKenzies' ministry adventures around the world. Northern Synod people will no doubt remember that Doug was the minister of Darwin Memorial at the time of Cyclone Tracey.

Copies are still available from the Synod Office for \$29.95. Get yours before they are all gone!

THE McDONALDIZATION OF THE CHURCH: Spirituality, creativity and the future of the Church by John Drane.

Drane argues that churches have become stereotyped structures, offering uninventive pre-packaged worship to a dwindling minority; and identifies exciting opportunities for growth when churches rediscover their creativity and flexibility. ISBN 0232522596 \$31.95

HOW WE BELIEVE
The search for God in an age of science by Michael Shermer

This is a detached and objective exploration of what drives us to believe, to have faith, and to create and flock to religions the world over, even in this age of science. ISBN 071673561X \$19.95

ISLAM A short history
Karen Armstrong.

Armstrong's account begins with the flight of Muhammad and his family from Medina in the seventh century; the first mosques, the origins of the split between Shiite and Sunni Muslims; the emergence of Sufi mysticism; the spread of Islam; the Crusades; the flowering of imperial Islam in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries into the world's greatest and most sophisticated power; and the origins and impact of revolutionary Islam.

ISBN 1842125834 \$14.95

MAKING CHURCH BUILDINGS WORK Maggie Durran

In an intensely practical book, Durran shows a clear way forward for how churches can be adapted for shared use with community, social or business groups: playgroups, baby clinics, youth clubs, day care centres, lunch clubs, offices, etc., with advice on each stage of development, from identifying local needs to arranging insurance. ISBN 1853115975 \$49.95

THE HEART OF CHRISTIANITY Marcus Borg

World renowned Jesus scholar Marcus Borg shows how we can live passionately as

Christians in today's world by practising the timeless elements of Christian faith. Borg offers a personal plea for what he hopes is an emerging approach to Christianity that breaks ties with fundamentalism... In this his newest book, he describes a compassionate, intellectual form of Christianity he believes can emerge from modern interpretation of sacred texts. ISBN 0-06-073068-4 Price: \$26.95

THE PURPOSE-DRIVEN LIFE. Rick Warren.

This is the book on which the "Purpose-Filled Life" study series is based. Despite its American cultural bias, it has already been used by a number of congregations in the Synod.



UC Invest, formerly the Uniting Church Investment Fund, manages investments on behalf of the Northern Synod Development Fund

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Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress

Official Opening of Yalga-Binbi Training Unit

From: Rev. Shayne Blackman, National Administrator UAICC

Successful Indigenous community development is to a large extent, underpinned by the quality of its leadership at both an individual and community level.

In recognition and support of this aim, on Wednesday, May 4, the Yalga-binbi Institute for Community Development (an initiative of Congress) officially opened the Yalga-binbi Training Unit and celebrated the inauguration of its Diploma of Community Development course with staff, students, government officials and many supportive friends.

The Diploma has been specially designed to equip and empower Indigenous students with the skills to manage the theoretical and practical aspects of researching, planning and managing a community development strategy. Currently there is an enrolment of 54 Indigenous students from across Queensland.

The course has been nationally accredited with the Australian National Training Authority (ANTA) and is to be delivered over 4 years through

a mixed mode of in-community and on-campus study. The special 'in-community' mode of study allows students to continue to live and work in their communities while undertaking practical projects and locally related assignments relevant to their community involvement and life.

Residential workshops are to be held in Townsville, or occasionally in other suitable locations. Students work through assignments and reading materials, undertake work placements and field work and prepare reports. Core study units have been designed to be responsive to the diverse needs of Indigenous communities and range from developing and implementing a community development strategy to identifying and accessing community resources.

Community development purely for a development outcome is not the sole focus of this course as is often the case with programs in this field.

As such this course has been tailored to the contemporary Indigenous context. It provides students with a holistic approach to community development and a practical understanding of why the benefits of Indigenous community development are important. In addition it addresses the question of how best to achieve community driven progressive outcomes in the circumstance and environment from which students come.

Successful Indigenous community development is best achieved when residents tasked with the responsibility of driving the development process are engaged, understand and are empowered to take ownership of the strategies that lead to a better quality of life for them and their communities.

Rev. Richard Wallace is involved with this project.

Students interested to find out more about this progressive course can call the Yalga-binbi Institute for Community Development on (07) 4773 5077.



Provocations ... ideas to make you think

Modern toys are anti-
imagination devices.

John Bell



A huge church building with
the congregation widely
scattered is like the body of
Christ with acne.

John Bell



Ignorance costs more than
education.

John Flynn



At the end of the day wor-
ship, the church even, is not
about “me” - it is about the
living God and what God has
done for the world through
the unique work of Jesus
Christ.

Terence Corkin



The Lord doesn't like the re-
ligion of Sunday worship and
unfair weekdays.

Oscar Romero



There are currently 1.5million
unemployed Australians.



It is a good idea never to con-
demn anyone whom you have
not tried to the utmost of your
power to save.

John Flynn



Peace is not the product of
terror and fear. Peace is not
the silence of cemeteries.
Peace is not the product of
violence and repression.

True peace is achieved only
through justice

Oscar Romero



If Einstein's $e = mc^2$ is
applied to the human body,
then the average human
contains energy equivalent to
that of three hydrogen bombs.

Bill Bryson



2005 is the United Na-
tions Year of Micro-
Credit.



Once we had First, Second
and Third world countries.
Then we had the North-
South divide.

Now the world has an
increasing number of
Highly Indebted Poor
Countries (HIPC).

Twenty nine of these
HIPCs are in sub-Saharan
Africa. In many of these
HIPCs, attempts to meet
the debt repayment
schedules of the
International Monetary
Fund is not only
entrenching but deepening
the poverty cycle.



Faith lived out in isolation
from life is not true faith.

Oscar Romero



Next Edition of *Northern Syn-
od News*

September/October 2005

To contribute news items or
articles contact the
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Diary Dates

- September 21—deadline
for next issue of *Northern
Synod News*
- September 23-25, 70th
anniversary rally at Yirrkala
- Sept 30—Oct 1, Pilgrim
Presbytery meets at Darwin
Memorial.
- Oct 2—5, Northern Synod
meets at Charles Darwin
University.

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