

# Interaction

Quarterly Publication of the Cross Cultural & Multicultural Ministry Unit  
Board of Mission NSW Synod  
Print Post Publication Number PP244187/00009



Issue 1  
March 2010

## Bankstown UC Youth Awarded

About two month ago, Rev Gaby Kobrossi (Youth Worker) of YUCB Bankstown District Uniting Church-Youth Group, received a letter from Bankstown City Council that left him “shocked, in the good sense, and surprised. More than anything else,” he added, “I was moved.”

The letter was to let him know that the YUCB youth group would be one of this year’s recipients of the Australia Day Award for outstanding community service.

On January 26th 2010 at Garrison Point, Georges Hall, the Bankstown Council’s celebrations started at 2pm with an official ceremony announcing the winners of our Australia Day Awards.

The event at Garrison Point was packed with over 50,000 people to celebrate Australia Day.

The most notable of these is the combining of the Australia Day Citizenship and Award Ceremony with the afternoon entertainment.

Awards were presented in the following categories: Citizen of the Year; Young Citizen of the Year; Individual Community Service; Community Service by an Organization and Sports Award.

“These awards honor residents who have made an outstanding contribution to our local community.” said the Mayor of Bankstown.

Yes it was a great ceremony and the YUCB received the Australia Day Award of being named one of the Top 5 for 2010 .

Congratulation to all the winners and nominees.

Congratulation to Bankstown District Uniting Church and the YUCB Youth Group.

The celebrations end edat 9pm with the Torch firework display.



Picture: the Bankstown UC Youth Group are with the Mayor Councillor Tania Mihailuk and Deputy Mayor Councillor Khal Asfour

## Rotuman Retreat written on behalf of The Drummoyne Rotuman Congregation

On the weekend of 12-14 February 2010, the Drummoyne Rotuman Congregation held its annual Camp/Retreat at Rathane Conference Centre in Port Hacking. Mrs Charissa Suli (Cross-Cultural Consultant-Pacific) was invited to conduct a Workshop at the camp entitled "Who Do You Think You Are?". This was a

follow-up session to the one we had in 2009 - "Shaping Pacific Generations". Charissa was assisted by Mr Salesi Faupula (who is now a 2nd year candidate at UTC). The number of attendees that weekend totalled 71 (48 adults and 23 children). We were fortunate to have in attendance a few Tongan young

people from the Dee Why Youth Group. The theme was very relevant to Pacific Islanders living in Australia. It remains a big challenge for parents of Islander background in raising their families to accommodate a balance of both cultures. Those present freely expressed their views and thoughts on subject matter and contribution from attendees was well received. The workshop was extremely well run; the content was inspirational and the participation/involvement of everyone in group discussions was a key factor in overall presentation. There were some "first-timers" in attendance and it was heartening to get such a positive feedback on all aspects of the workshop.

All was not just serious study and discussions.

(continue page 3)



## Book Review



**Title: Witnessing Grace**

**Author: John P Brown**

**Publisher: PCK Publishing House, 2009**

This bi-lingual publication is a history of missions comprising partly of brief biographies and personal testimonies. It presents the personal testimonies of faith, commitment, suffering and devotion of the 126 missionaries who came to Korea and, at the same time, narrates the larger story of the missionary principles that run through the 120 years of Australian missionary service in Korea. The author Rev Dr John Brown concludes the book by confessing that the 120 years history were possible by the Grace of God and as such all the missionaries were privileged in "Witnessing Grace". John also humbly states that the missionaries received far more from the Korean people than they gave stating, "We gave so little; we received so much."

I am quite confident that this book will become a useful textbook for missionaries in Korea and elsewhere, as well as being an invaluable resource book on faith for all clergy and laity alike.

By Rev Dr Kim Sam-Whan, Moderator of the 93rd General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Korea

**(continue from page 2) Rotuman Retreat**

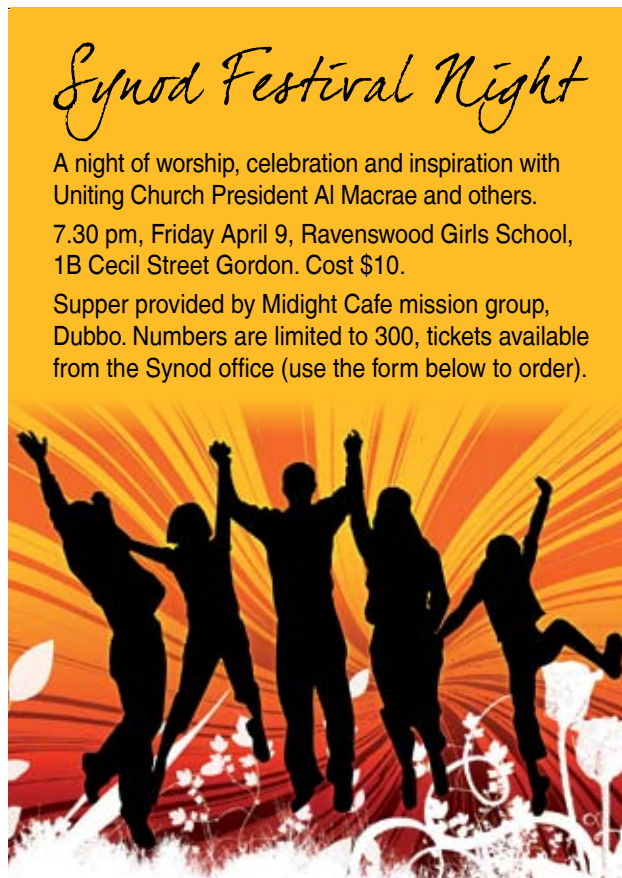
Saturday afternoon saw the energetic out canoeing and water sliding; parents with young children enjoying family time in the pool; and others mingling over that afternoon cup of tea and catching up.

We had our lighter moments as well in the form of a social night on Saturday. The evening was one of abso-

lute hilarity which left everyone in stitches. Out came the clowns, the crooners, the actors, the singers - you name it, we have it. There was laughter and there were tears. To sum it up, it was an evening of good, clean, healthy and hearty fun. Sunday morning was a time of reflection. The weekend workshop was summarised; and the small group exercises that morning - helped individuals understand both generations

and ways in which they can both work together. Emotions were high.

There was a deep sense of community and bonding over that weekend. We made new friends with our Tongan attendees and we hope to continue this 'relationship' in the future.



NAME .....

ADDRESS .....

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EMAIL.....

PAYMENT METHOD: cheque for \$ ..... Number of tickets .....

or credit card (Please circle type: VISA • MASTERCARD • BANKCARD)

Name of cardholder..... Amount \$ .....

Credit Card #..... / ..... / ..... / ..... Expiry date .....

Signature of cardholder.....

**Please return form to Ms Mersini Avierinos, Synod Secretariat, PO Box A2178, Sydney South NSW 1235 or fax to 9261 4359. Closing date: March 26, 2010.**

## 10 Years of Cross Cultural Relations Workshops



On 1-2 Feb, 2010 there was a Cross-cultural relations workshop at the Centre for Ministry. This was part of the orientation for the new students at United Theological College which went for a week. Twenty three people from various congregations participated in the workshop, including incoming candidates for ministry of the word.

This workshop arranged by the Board of Mission was piloted in 2001 with some leaders from the Synod and presbyteries and since then,

many congregations and presbyteries have hosted the two days workshop. This workshop has also introduced to the Synod of Victoria and Tasmania, West Australia, Northern Territory and South Australia. The Youth Unit of Board of Education also conducted it among the youth network in regional cities, funded by the Living in Harmony of the Local Government.

This workshop addresses issues involving Race and Culture, Biblical stories, Overcoming Ethnocentrism, Power and Privilege, Action Steps. Our Synod has been urging all ministry agents to experience this workshop.

Following are some comment from the participants early this year.

“This was a very well planned workshop. I really learnt a lot from it.....”.

“This project is not only useful but also insightful, sometimes inspirational”.

“Thank you for the diversity of teaching mediums; videos, games, talks, small groups. It really helps keep participants engaged.”

“The most significant thing I have learnt from the workshop is: the extent of the chasm to be bridged and the depth of the pain and isolation felt by minority groups.”

Appreciation goes to the dozen trained cross-cultural facilitators for their contribution and vulnerability. Rev Myong Duk Yang who initiated this workshop ten years ago says “The journey of this workshop has been extraordinary. For the last ten years, I have seen many people experiencing transformation through this workshop in relating to people from ethnic backgrounds. After ten years, the need for this kind of education is still strong. I hope this workshop will be updated and continue to provide opportunities for learning and growing.”



# Commissioning of Rev Sara Lee

## Burwood Congregation

On the 7th of Feb this year, there was a significant development in the Burwood congregation.

Rev Sara Lee has been commissioned as a Pastor in the Uniting Church of Australia and the Korean faith Community within the congregation has been recognized by the Presbytery of Sydney.

At the service, the Chairperson of the Presbytery Rev Neil Ericsson welcomed Sara and the Korean Faith Community to the Uniting Church. The church was full of people to support Sara and the congregation. After the service there was a wonderful concert and sharing food. Below is the story from Sara about her journey with the congregation.

### **Sara's Story: Her Faith and Call to Ministry**

God has had a call on me all of my life.

This is not my career; God leads me and I am part of his plan.

When I was a child, I was inspired by my grandmother's faith. I learned about God and the life of Jesus from her.

I thank God that I learned about God from an early age. From early on, it was my habit to talk to God.

In the 1970s, I felt God calling me to become a servant of his mission, and I promised God, "Yes". Since then, God has been my guide, and I have been used by him, sometimes through miraculous survival.

In 1978, I wanted to learn more about God, and to become better equipped for mission, so I chose theological college training. God helped me do this.

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In 1982, I became a missionary in Korea, and was appointed to special ministry work at the theological college. I also worked in childrens' ministry, elderly pastoral care and counselling with a small established church.

In 1984, I went on a short term mission to Taiwan. Also, in later years, I visited Israel, Egypt and Peru as part of a faith journey. At this time, God opened my eyes to the vision of people united in the love of Jesus Christ through the Spirit. We are all God's children, God's family, God's kingdom. I took Acts 1:8 to heart: "you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

So at this time I was on fire with the conviction that Christ's true love unites us all.

On 16 April 1988 I arrived at Sydney Airport, at the invitation of the ChungHyon Korean Congregation of the Presbyterian Church of Australia, to assist in their education programme as a missionary. At that time, I felt that Australia was a special country: here were people from all over the world. This was

a wonderful feeling. However, I knew I needed to adapt in order to reach out to others. I asked God, "What shall I do next?" He led me to understand that two things were necessary "language" and "culture". These early days – learning English and understanding others - were difficult, whilst I was still working with the elderly and children, this time the children were from multiple cultures. A new experience was working with over-seas visitors and migrants.

In 1994 I attended Burwood Uniting Church, where I could see there was a diversity of cultures. Many over-seas people gathered there. I was very happy to help out in this place, helping people to belong together as one. This was an answer to my early prayer.

In 1998, I became an elder of Burwood Uniting Church. In addition to pastoral care duties, I helped out with English Conversation, with a culturally diverse Bible Study group and with helping overseas people in various ways – with translation, accommodation, etc.

## ABC APPEAL - 2010

### PROJECT 1 – KIDS HOMEWORK AND FUN ACTIVITIES CLUB

This project of the Cessnock/Bellbird Uniting Church aims to provide a place where, one afternoon a week, school aged children receive homework support in a positive and caring atmosphere. Although the main focus is on homework, other activities will include afternoon tea as well as indoor/outdoor recreation.

### PROJECT 2 - KIRIBATI CHAPLAINCY MISSION ENLARGEMENT PROGRAMME

The inhabitants of Kiribati live on the equator where the effects of global warming are now a stark reality. In this context the Kiribati Protestant Church has a number of chaplains who facilitate important pastoral care in their communities. Your contribution will enable the UCA, as a partner church, to respond to a request for some formal chaplaincy training in Australia.

### PROJECT 3 - COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT THROUGH OUTINGS

The staff of Parrahouse Youth Refuge support young people in their late teens who have been the victims of mental or physical abuse. The result of this treatment often leaves the young people with limited social skills and

low self esteem. It is hoped that this appeal will enable the residents to attend paid outings with the Youth Workers to develop and support positive relationships, team building skills and positive community involvement.

### PROJECT 4 – LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT IN EAST TIMOR

Throughout this developing nation, the Protestant Church in East Timor serves the community and witnesses to Christ where more than 60% of all protestant congregations have no trained leadership. Local churches are often abandoned while many others struggle without a pastor to address their critical needs.

In 2009, an initiative of the Moderator and General Secretary led to the implementation of an intensive training program in West Timor to prepare local pastors for full time ministry. A further program is being arranged for 2010-2011 and funds raised will assist the UCA in its ongoing commitment to equip leaders to minister within the East Timor CONTEXT.

## EASTER THANK OFFERING - 2010

### PROJECT 1 - KITCHEN UPGRADE FOR USE AS COMMUNITY KITCHEN

Over the last two years the members of Inverell Congregation have joined with a local organisation, Linking Together, to provide meals for 40 – 60 people who have a disability or are disadvantaged in some way. However, in order to continue this service there is an urgent need to ensure the kitchen facilities meet local council regulations. Contributions to this project will meet the costs for labour required to install new fixtures and fittings.

### PROJECT 2 - PACIFIC THEOLOGY TEACHERS

Many of our Pacific church partners want to make a difference to their communities where, increasingly impacted by westernisation, the church needs to provide a prophetic voice in response to complex political contexts, the effects of climate change and economic decline.

Your donations will enable four theology teachers to serve for one semester in a Pacific partner church.

### PROJECT 3 - CARPENTRY WORKSHOP UBUYA VOCATIONAL TRAINING SCHOOL

As an activity of our partner church in Papua New Guinea, the Ubuya Centre provides accredited training for 200 students in a remote isle off the coast of PNG. This project will finance the building of a carpentry and furniture making workshop. Currently, the students work under a mango tree with no shelter for tools and equipment. It is anticipated that the students will take part in construction of the workshop as part of their training.

### PROJECT 4 - HEALTHY BODIES = HEALTHY MINDS

This project aims to improve the living standards of young people under the age of 18 who are participating in drug and alcohol recovery programs. Based at the Parramatta Mission Induction Unit, young people are encouraged to change their lifestyle by experiencing the benefits of improved fitness and understanding the positive impacts of good nutrition to their bodies.

#### PLEASE POST YOUR DONATION TO:

ABC Appeal 2008/2009, Board of Mission, PO Box A2178, Sydney South NSW 1235

(cheques/money orders should be made payable to: BOARD OF MISSION)

A video or DVD of the ABC projects is also available through your Presbytery Office or the Board of Mission office.

Any enquiries please contact Veronica Rebelledo on phone no. 8267 4390

# World Mission

## Sydney Day Mission Support Group

MEETINGS ARE HELD IN THE MEETING ROOM, LEVEL 10, 222 PITT STREET, SYDNEY ON THE 3RD THURSDAY OF EACH MONTH FROM FEBRUARY TO NOVEMBER.

Thursday 18th February - Our Speaker will be Kathy Pereira - Associate Director - Experience Programs  
UnitingWorld

Any enquiries, please contact:

Chairperson: Mrs Joy Brookes, Ph: 4321 0033 or the Secretary Mrs Jan Dunstan, Ph: 9876 3344

### MEETING DATES FOR 2010

Level 10, 222 Pitt Street, Sydney. 10am-12pm

Thursday 18th March - Our Speaker will be Charissa Suli - Cross Cultural Consultant (Pacific) for the NSW Board of Mission

Monday 29th March - The Annual Mission Get-together at Jannali Uniting Church - Our Guest Speaker will be Rev Dr Kerry Enright, Executive Director Uniting World

Thursday 15th April our Speaker will be Rev John Jegasothy who will share with us about his work with Tamil Refugees

Thursday 20th May our speaker will be Rev David Buxton from Frontier Services

Thursday 17th June - Rob Floyd, Associate Director - Relief and Development - UnitingWorld

Monday 9th August - Thank Offering Service at Roseville UC

### Dates for your 2010 diary

Monday 29th March - The Annual Mission Get-together at Jannali Uniting Church - Our Guest Speaker will be Rev Dr Kerry Enright, Executive Director UnitingWorld

Monday 9th August - Thank Offering Service at Roseville UC

## FRIENDSHIP NOTELETS AND PENS

Joint Project Convenors

Mrs. Norma Chambers - PO Box 165 West Pennant Hills NSW 2125

Telephone: (02) 9484 1993

Mrs. Margaret Dibdin - 9/47 Woniara Road, Hurstville NSW 2220

Telephone: (02) 9570 8544

**Friendship Notelets** - Single fold notelets in 2 designs

'Bird on Bottlebrush' and 'Golden Plains'. Packets of 8 with envelopes \$3.00. all items display UCA emblem

## TEA TOWELS, PLACEMATS AND APRONS

**Teatowels, placemats, aprons and hankerchiefs available from:**

Joint Project Convenors

Mrs. Norma Chambers - PO Box 165 West Pennant Hills NSW 2125

Telephone: (02) 9484 1993

Mrs. Margaret Dibdin - 9/47 Woniara Road, Hurstville NSW 2220

Telephone: (02) 9570 8544

**Tea Towels are available in 22 designs for \$6.50 each Some are linen/cotton, most are now 100% cotton.**

**Sets of four placemats are \$14 per set. Blue Wren and Bottlebrush -only 2 designs now available.**

**Aprons are available in two designs - Willow Pattern (linen and cotton for \$11 each) Cottage Garden (cotton for \$9 each).**

**Handkerchiefs in five designs - Birds, Butterflies, Flowers, Kangaroo and Koala at \$1.50 each.**

**Supper Tablecloths - 93cmx93cm 100% cotton Australiana Wildflowers \$16 each.**

**All these items are ideal gifts, particularly for friends overseas**

**ORDERS ARE SUPPLIED ON INVOICE, BUT THE COST OF POSTAGE MUST BE ADDED.**

PLEASE NOTE: Teatowels, Placemats, Aprons, Hankerchiefs, Notelets are also available from the Board of Mission, Level 9, 222 Pitt Street, Sydney, NSW.

# BOARD OF MISSION CHRISTMAS CARDS

The Board of Mission wishes to say a BIG THANK YOU to individuals, Congregations and Fellowship Groups who have sold CHRISTMAS CARDS this last year. If you have any remaining stock, could you please return them with your cheque, to the Board of Mission as soon as possible.

If you have any queries, please contact Veronica Rebolledo on 8267 4390. Please post your cheque to: Uniting Church Board of Mission, PO Box A2178, Sydney South 1235

**The 2010 Christmas card brochure will be posted with the June Interaction. If you or others would like to be on the mailing list for the 2010 Christmas card brochure, please contact**

Belinda Fry, Board of Mission, PO Box A2178, Sydney South NSW 1235  
or phone 02 8267 4270 or email [belindaf@nsw.uca.org.au](mailto:belindaf@nsw.uca.org.au)

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## BOARD OF MISSION VOLUNTEERS - THANK YOU

At different times during the year, volunteers from the Sydney Day Mission Support Group come into the Board of Mission office to help with mailouts for the latest edition of In-A-State of Prayer, Interaction, Easter Thank Offering envelopes, Christmas cards and brochures, ABC Appeal Information, Project Leader etc.

From the Board of Mission we would like to say THANK YOU for your helpful support of this Board.

**Would you like to be a volunteer???** For further information, please contact Sue Willgoss on 8267 4387 or email [suew@nsw.uca.org.au](mailto:suew@nsw.uca.org.au)

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