


COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

 Synod of New South Wales and the ACT, Uniting Church in Australia

e-news June 2008

To read this newsletter online, visit <http://nsw.uca.org.au/e-news>



Community Connections is a monthly email which contains news and announcements from the Synod of New South Wales and the ACT, along with items of social, religious or cultural interest and information on upcoming events. Its primary aim is to promote the wider work of the Uniting Church, and how you can support it through the Living is Giving program.

To keep *Community Connections* of interest to the widest possible readership, we welcome for consideration news and information about initiatives, events and activities from all parts of the Synod. Regional contributions, and stories of how your congregation supports Living is Giving, are especially welcome. Send your material (maximum 150 words) to emmah@nsw.uca.org.au.

NEWS AND INITIATIVES

From the Moderator

"I am still convinced that going to church should be as much a part of any holiday as swimming, surfing, sightseeing and sleeping," says the Moderator, the Rev. Niall Reid, reflecting on his recent annual leave, and his 25th wedding anniversary. Read more from the Moderator in June *Insights*.

In June *Insights* ...

June *Insights* carries stories about how lay preachers are making a difference in the Uniting Church. There's also a story about sports chaplain Nett Knox who is heading for Beijing to support the Olympic Games community. Pick up your copy at church or visit <http://insights.uca.org.au/>.

Deep concern for worsening situation in Zimbabwe

The peaceful environment which initially surrounded the March 29 national elections in Zimbabwe has changed significantly, going from bad to worse, and Uniting International Mission is asking people to maintain their interest, support and prayer. For more information, visit <http://www.uim.uca.org.au/>.

Australian Network to Ban Landmines: Could you be a volunteer collector in Sydney during the week beginning June 23?

The Australian Network to Ban Landmines (of which the Uniting Church is an official endorsing body) is seeking volunteers to help with face-to-face collections in Sydney during the week Monday June 23 to Saturday June 28, as part of its Lost Sock Appeal.

The Lost Sock Appeal aims to raise money for projects that assist the victims of landmines, and also to support the work of the Network to make the treaty banning anti-personnel landmines universal, so that no more mines are manufactured, none are laid and existing minefields are cleared.

If you're interested in registering to volunteer, please contact Jill Cooper in the Uniting Church Synod of Victoria and Tasmania via email at Jill.Cooper@victas.uca.org.au or by phoning (03) 9251 5266.

Ecumenical worship services for children with disabilities and their families and carers

WorshAbility is a new venture, supported by Parramatta Nepean Presbytery, aimed at developing worship services for families with children with disabilities. Worship services will be held at Blacktown Uniting Church on August 3 and November 2 at 2.30 pm.

If your child has special needs or sensitivities you would like to make us aware of or for further information contact Sue Scott on 0425 360 826, or email WorshAbility@gmail.com.

inTENTsive care with Médecins Sans Frontières

In August 2008, Médecins Sans Frontières Australia is launching the first Australian tour of *Refugee Camp in your City*, a re-creation of a refugee camp and its facilities. It is open to the public (entry is free) and fully interpreted by Australian returned field workers. Visit

<http://www.msf.org.au/refugeecamp/> for dates and venues in Sydney and Canberra.

EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

Meet the Artist Peng (Faye) Mo at the Centre for Ministry, June 14

The artwork "Mother and Son at the Foot of the Cross" was commissioned for the 2008 Inaugural Lecture of United Theological College. The artwork has been purchased for permanent display in the Chapel of St Andrew.

Artist Peng (Faye) Mo Faye will talk about the process of developing this work on Saturday June 14, 4 to 5.30 pm with drinks and nibbles at the Atrium and Chapel of St Andrew, Centre for Ministry, 16 Masons Drive North Parramatta NSW 2151.

Admission is free.

Contact Anita Monro on 8838 8924 or anitam@nsw.uca.org.au.

Hugh Mackay – 'God and Me', June 20

Social researcher, author and psychologist Hugh Mackay will reflect in, through and around a sense of the experience of God in his life.

When: 7-9 pm Friday June 20

Where: Pitt St Church, 264 Pitt St, Sydney (three doors from Park St in the direction of Central).

Cost: \$15/\$10 (includes supper).

Order your tickets now from Ilona Day 9267 3614 or pittstuc@bigpond.com.

Tuggeranong Uniting Church's 20th anniversary, June 21 to 22

Tuggeranong Uniting Church extends a warm, open invitation to the 20th Anniversary of its ministry centre and faith community on the weekend of June 21 to 22 at Tuggeranong Uniting Church, Comrie Street, Wanniasa ACT.

For information on the weekend's activities, contact Janine Sharwood, 6231 6582 or anniversary@tuc.org.au, or visit www.tuc.org.au/Anniversary.

Lunchtime studies: *Confronting Power and Sex in the Catholic Church*, from July 15

St Stephen's Uniting Church presents an exciting lunchtime studies series on the book *Confronting Power and Sex in the Catholic Church* by Bishop Geoffrey Robinson.

Where: St Stephen's Uniting Church, 197 Macquarie Street, Sydney

When: Tuesdays, commencing July 15, for seven weeks, 1.10 to 1.50 pm

With the subtitle *Reclaiming the Spirit of Jesus*, discussions will centre on each chapter of the book and will relate to issues affecting the whole church in the 21st century. Dates have been re-scheduled to enable Bishop Robinson to attend the final session on August 26. Admission to the discussions is free but donations are always welcome! Phone (02) 9221 1688 or email office@ssms.org.au.

LIVING IS GIVING: PRAYER POINTS AND RESOURCES

Remember to get your Living is Giving choices in by June 27!

Treasurers: the end of the financial year is approaching. If you haven't done so already, it's time to notify the Synod of your Living is Giving mission focus areas for 2008-09, and your anticipated financial targets. You can do this using the *Leaders Guide and Planning Form* you received earlier this year. For more information or a new form, contact Mele Akau on (02) 8267 4394 or melea@nsw.uca.org.au.

Prayer point: Mission focus area 1 – Speaking up for justice, fairness and peace

UnitingCare NSW.ACT does important social justice advocacy work through issuing resolutions, media releases and attending demonstrations. But it also advocates through its practical work and its integrity.

- Give thanks for the decision by UnitingCare to re-open the old Weeroona Nursing Home in Leichhardt and make it available for disabled people whose boarding house has closed; and for the commissioning of a new aged care facility in Sydney with housing for more than 30 homeless people.
- Pray for the recently-launched Indigenous Employment Strategy, which aims to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to become 2 per cent of the total workforce of UnitingCare NSW.ACT.
- Pray for the *1 to 4: Make it Law!* campaign which advocates for appropriate staff to child ratios for children aged two years and under attending childcare in New South Wales. UnitingCare Children's Services has been an active participant in the campaign.

For news on this mission focus area, visit

<http://livingisgiving.nsw.uca.org.au/updates/april08updates/updates04-08mfa01.pdf>.