


COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

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

e-news July 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

Moderator the Rev. Niall Reid asks those who are coming to Synod to prepare themselves not only by reading the papers they will receive but also through prayer and reflection, both individually and with others in their congregations and presbyteries.

"My hope is that members will come to Synod prepared to worship God, wait upon God's word and with expectation that Christ will speak through the Synod to the church and the world." Read more from the Moderator in July *Insights*.

Howard Packer to lead Synod Bible studies

Can the church define itself by its inclusiveness? What might it be able to learn from the ideas of the Democratic Presidential Candidate, Barack Obama, who is said to have inspired Americans with his imagination? Synod members will be challenged to consider questions like these during daily Bible studies at Synod 2008, led by lay preacher and UnitingCare board member Howard Packer. Visit <http://nsw.uca.org.au/synod2008/> for more news on Synod.

Get your message out by advertising in *Insights*

Advertising in the now full-colour *Insights* magazine and on the *Insights* website is the best way to reach Uniting Church members in New South Wales and the ACT. For more information about recruitment ads and contract bookings, contact Adrian Drayton on (02) 8267 4304.

Byte-sized theology ...

The National Working Group on Doctrine has prepared the first three discussion starters in a series of "DocBytes", which aim to encourage theological thinking on specific topics across the Uniting Church. The first three are on Apologetics, Doctrine and Marriage, and future DocBytes are being prepared on Evangelism, the Christian Life, Baptism and Peacemaking. For more information, contact Penny Monger, pennym@nat.uca.org.au or visit <http://www.assembly.uca.org.au/resources/newbytes>.

Support action on climate change on Sunday July 13

On Sunday July 13, hundreds of people from across the country, including Christians, will take part in Australia's biggest single direct action protest against coal and climate change. For more information, see <http://www.climatecamp.org.au/>. Please pray for this action in your churches on Sunday July 13, for progress on the prevention of climate change, and for people who are already suffering from climate change such as drought affected communities and our Pacific Island neighbours. Please also consider being a part of this historic movement. The protest begins with a colourful rally and march to Carrington coal terminal. The march begins at Islington Park at 10am. For more information, see <http://www.climatecamp.org.au/sunday-july-13th-community-protest-stop-coal-expor>.

EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

Lecture — Religion and freedom: this world and the holy, July 10

The Australian National University Chaplaincy presents a special lecture by Archbishop Bruno Forte (Chieti-Vasto, Italy), on "Religion and freedom: this world and the holy", on Thursday July 10, 12.30 to 1.30 pm at The Hall, University House, Balmain Crescent, Australian National University. Archbishop Forte, a prominent thinker who has been a professor of philosophy and theology, and who has many publications in seven languages, will talk about meaning, suffering, death, mystery and the modern world. He will discuss practical ways we can promote a true and creative relationship between religion and freedom in our uncertain and turbulent times.

Seminar: Would Jesus Burn Coal? Faith and Climate Change in Newcastle, July 12

Around Australia and around the world, communities are coming together to work for a socially and environmentally just future, free from the ravages of climate change. The speakers at this seminar are all Christians who are active on climate change in their faith communities and beyond. Their actions include church-based practical projects, education and awareness raising, lobbying, and direct action. Come along and learn about the issue of climate change, why it is of concern for Christians, and what you can do about it.

When: Saturday July 12, 1:30 to 3:30 pm

Where: Hamilton Wesley Uniting Church Senior Citizens Hall, 21 William Street, Hamilton, Newcastle

Chair: the Rev. Dr Jonathan Inkpin, General Secretary of the NSW Ecumenical Council

Speakers: Jonathan Moylan, Uniting Church in Australia Tertiary Students Association and Rising Tide Newcastle; Dr Miriam Pepper, Project Green Church and the Australian Religious Response to Climate Change; and Justin Whelan, Pace e Bene Nonviolence Service.

Supported by Project Green Church and the Hunter Presbytery Justice Committee

For more information, contact Miriam Pepper, projectgreenchurch@gmail.com or 0447 730 772. A leaflet is available at <http://www.mjuniting.org.au/greenchurch>.

Burwood Evening Soiree, August 2

The Burwood Evening Soiree is coming to town. Come and join in a fun night of entertainment while raising funds for Habitat for Humanity (both for international projects and projects in rural New South Wales).

Saturday August 2, 6.30 pm, at Malvern Hill Uniting Church (cnr Malvern Ave and Murray Street, Croydon). Proudly presented by the Burwood–Croydon Uniting Church; phone (02) 9744 9635.

Seminar: The church, the state, the media — Who sets the nation's social justice agenda? August 30

Who determines our nation's social justice policy, and to what extent should Christians, journalists or citizens through their politicians be involved in trying to influence policy?

St Ninian's Uniting Church Social Action Group has been pondering these questions and is holding a seminar entitled "The church, the state, the media — Who sets the nation's social justice agenda?" on Saturday August 30 at St Ninian's Uniting Church, Lyneham. The Rev. Elenie Poulos, National Director Uniting Justice, Jack Waterford, Editor at Large, The Canberra Times, Professor John Langmore, former Federal Member for Canberra and Professor John Warhurst, Australian National University, are all participating. Further information or brochures and registration forms are now available at www.stninians.org.au.

LIVING IS GIVING: PRAYER POINTS AND RESOURCES

Prayer point: Mission focus area 14 — Including children in the life of our church

With support from the Board of Education and Kentigern Books, a new venture is under way — "worshAbility", a quarterly worship service for children with disabilities, their families and carers.

- Pray for those who attended the inaugural worshAbility service in June — that they were encouraged, nurtured and strengthened by the experience.
- Pray for upcoming services on August 3 and November 2 at St Matthew's Uniting Church Baulkham Hills.
- Pray for the Rev. Sue Scott and the Rev. Christine Bayliss Kelly who are facilitating worshAbility.

For more information on worshAbility and news on this mission focus area, visit <http://livingisgiving.nsw.uca.org.au/updates/july08updates/updates07-08mfa14.pdf>.