


COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

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

e-news August 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

The drought's not over ... nor the appeal for funds

The Rev. Niall Reid, Moderator of the Synod of New South Wales and the ACT, is encouraging congregations and community members to give generously to the Uniting Church Drought appeal to be relaunched on August 11.

In a downloadable YouTube video clip the Moderator outlines the strain the ongoing drought is placing on rural communities and families but how the Uniting Church can help.

On the new drought appeal website <http://droughtappeal.nsw.uca.org.au/> you can also read about recently-appointed Rural Chaplain Julie Greig who says: "I have a passion for the church helping to address injustices and inequalities like lack of services, lack of educational opportunities, even lack of social opportunities in the bush."

The website contains downloadable donation coupons, liturgies and prayers for use in services, information about how the drought appeal funds have and will help sustain rural communities and information about existing twinning relationships between Uniting Church urban and rural congregations.

In *Insights* this month

How can working with people facing death change your priorities? How can we help make a dying person's journey more meaningful? Chaplains candidly answer these questions in August *Insights* and gently warn us, as Seneca did centuries before, not to forget death's inevitability but live life to the full, now. Pick up your copy of *Insights* at church this Sunday.

From the Moderator — We have a good news story to tell!

I believe we have a story to tell and we need to share the story of what we do and why we do it — it is good news, it is gospel," writes Moderator the Rev. Niall Reid. Read more in August *Insights*.

Meet the 'Mod Squad' at Synod 2008

This is not a reference to a '70s TV series or to a procession of large bikers in leathers. It is the irreverent description given to a scheme by staff from the Synod Youth Unit and some former moderators to build a network of connection between young Uniting Church leaders and some much older people.

Read more about the Mod Squad, and other news about the Synod meeting (September 27 to 30) at <http://nsw.uca.org.au/synod2008/index.htm>.

What would Jesus buy?

If you missed the *Insights* WWJB feature in July see www.whatwouldjesusbuy.org.au/ to help simplify your life and shop more ethically.

EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

Muslims and Christians Living in Peace? August 15

Affinity Intercultural Foundation in conjunction with Catholic, Uniting and Anglican Churches on the Northern Beaches of Sydney welcomes you to a forum on Muslim–Christian relations.

Friday August 15, 7.15 pm for 7.30 pm start at Cromer Hall, Dee Why. Free admission.

As places are limited, please register on (02) 9702 0789 or registrations@affinity.org.au. For a flier, go to http://www.affinity.org.au/html/dialogue/interfaith/panels/panel17/C_MlivinginPeaceFlyer.pdf

St Clair Uniting Church 25th Anniversary, August 30

There'll be a 25th anniversary with an open day and fair on Saturday August 30, from 8.30 am, corner of Bennett Road and Autumnleaf Parade, St Clair. Book, cake and craft stalls, sausage sizzle, jumping castle, face painting and information displays. Contact Wendy, (02) 8214 8600.

Daffodil Stroll, September 13

Visit six gardens in the Blue Mountains, a display of daffodils and sale of daffodil bulbs at Leura Uniting Church, and enjoy morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea.

Saturday September 13, 10.00 am to 4.00 pm

For more information or to book, contact Betty Allen, 4757 3435, or Bob Coote, 4757 1788.

Proceeds of the day go to Uniting Church mission projects.

Pre-Christmas craft show, Weston Creek Uniting Church, October 24-25

Weston Creek Uniting Church's Pre-Christmas Craft Show will be held at the Weston Creek Uniting Church Parish Centre, 16 Parkinson Street, Weston, on Friday October 24 and Saturday October 25. Admission is by donation — morning and afternoon tea will be available. Commission on work sold will be used to assist the Church for its work in the wider community. This is an opportunity to shop early for Christmas gifts.

LIVING IS GIVING: PRAYER POINTS AND RESOURCES

2007–08 Living is Giving financial results

Thanks to more targeted promotional efforts and generosity from congregations and individuals, Living is Giving contributions increased in the last financial year, marking a much-needed upturn in giving after several years of decline. This is exciting and encouraging news! Sincere thanks to all congregations and individuals who contribute to Living is Giving — this support is vital if the important wider work of our Uniting Church is to be maintained. So please continue to support Living is Giving, financially and in prayer. If you are not already contributing to Living is Giving, please contact Mele Akau on (02) 8267 4393 or melea@nsw.uca.org.au for more information on how you can participate.

July Living is Giving updates are on their way

If they haven't already, your church secretary will soon receive the July Living is Giving updates and thank you letter. The update posters have some great stories about the wider work of the church, and you should see them displayed on a noticeboard somewhere in your church building. If not, have a chat to your church secretary!

Prayer point: Mission focus area 6 — Understanding our faith and sharing our hope

Theological education and ministry formation are crucial to the Synod as it seeks to grow and develop leadership. The student body at United Theological College is extremely diverse in terms of age, ethnicity, gender and theological persuasion. While some are candidates for ministry, many are studying at UTC in order to better understand their faith.

- Pray for students as they balance their studies with work, family and other commitments. You can read about UTC student Nigel Hawken in the July Living is Giving update on this mission focus area: <http://livingisgiving.nsw.uca.org.au/updates/july08updates/updates07-08mfa06.pdf>.
 - Pray for the upcoming inaugural *Communitas* annual lecture, to be held at the Centre for Ministry on September 5, and for speaker the Rev. Gregor Henderson, President of the Uniting Church in Australia.
 - For regular news about UTC, subscribe to *Out and About* — visit <http://www.utc.uca.org.au>
- For more information on this mission focus area, visit <http://livingisgiving.nsw.uca.org.au/updates/july08updates/updates07-08mfa06.pdf>.