



Presbytery News

Uniting Church in Australia, Presbytery of Canberra Region
A member of the Australasian Religious Press Association

Volume 17 Issue 82

November 2011 ISSN – 1322-8323

QUC attending Blackstump

October long weekend: gumboots are an essential item

For years Queanbeyan Uniting Church has been attending Blackstump. This year sixteen young people made the trek from QUC to Cataract Scout Park, Appin, to be part of one of the largest Christian music festivals in Australia.

For those who don't know about Blackstump it is a festival that's been running since 1985.

There are bands to see, workshops to go to, bible studies to attend, world class speakers to listen to and comedy acts to enjoy. It runs over the October long weekend and while much of it is about having fun, God is the reason everyone gets together.

Oh, and one other thing, it seems to rain every year, so gumboots are an essential item.

This year our crew left bright and early on the Friday to ensure we could find an ideal camp site and to set up our mega tent haven. We found an area close to the action, close to the amenities block and in a place that had great drainage in case of rain.

After setting up camp, we looked through our programmes and decided which bands we wanted to see, which speakers we wanted to listen to and what other cool stuff we could do over the course of the weekend. Then we set about achieving our objective.

QUC definitely made the most of what stump had to offer. I reckon we saw as many bands as was physically possible that weekend. We survived

the 12 hours of rain and finished the weekend on a massive high, even though some of us desperately needed a good sleep and a shower.

Bands like Drawing North and the Outback Hippies, were highlights. Throwing ourselves around a mosh pit, while rocking out to great music is always a blast. Hanging out with

1000s of other young people was awesome. We always meet some really cool people that share our love of God and that's what Stumpy is all about.

We'll be there again next year ready to do it all again!

**- Jeff Toone
Queanbeyan**



QUC's mascot "Stumpy".
Image by Jeff Toone

Presbytery News archives

When God seemed close

From time to time we reprint articles from past issues of Presbytery News. This one is from the November 2002 issue.

On Monday 21 October I attended the National Parliamentary Prayer Breakfast, People had come from all over Australia to join many of the Parliamentary Christian Prayer Fellowship members at breakfast.

At my table was a young man who had left Sydney at 4am to be in time for breakfast. He was the President of the Ambassadors Christian Motorcycle Club.

Other people at the table had travelled from Melbourne, country NSW and Brisbane to “support these blokes here in Canberra”.

As the program began we heard from each of the political leaders as they shared not their political ambitions but their faith story.

It was truly moving and a rare insight into our political leaders. There was a real sense of God’s presence amongst the group as member after member spoke of their sense of call and their Christian conviction as well as their political perceptions.

Several of the people who had been to previous breakfasts commented on the Spirit in the atmosphere.

The address was given by Miss Diana Thomas who related her experience of being captured by the Taliban in Afghanistan.

She told of the harrowing experience and emphasised God’s presence with the captives as they prayed constantly. She spoke softly but powerfully of her experience.

Once again I could feel the presence of God as she concluded by inviting us to pray for the people of Afghanistan.

The whole morning was a reminder that God is present in our parliament and even in war zones.

- Brian Thompson

(What would today’s political leaders share at the same event now?)



Above: Sheridan Hall (left) and Ruth Davy, both attended Blackstump as part of the QUC crowd. Image: Jeff Toone.

Reflection on Advent

Owe no man anything but to love one another



Above: Dorothy Bennett
Image by Bill Lang

Having grown up in an Anglican minister's family, I was from an early age conscious of the seasons of the church year. Although Advent comes at the end of the calendar year it is the beginning of the Church's year and there was a sense of new beginnings as we came to the end of all the Sundays of Trinity.

Even so I always found the Collect, Epistle and Gospel in the Book of Common Prayer for Advent Sunday somewhat surprising. Although the Collect speaks of Christ coming in great humility, it goes on to mention his second coming in glorious majesty to judge both the quick and the dead. The Gospel tells the story of Palm Sunday, but after the triumphal entry into Jerusalem Christ in anger cleanses the temple of money lenders.

The Epistle from Romans xiii starts comfortingly - Owe no man anything but to love one another - but then continues with the ten commandments and concludes with warnings against the lusts of the flesh.

Traditionally Advent is focused on

Christmas Day and the Birth of Christ. Our children and grandchildren enjoyed Advent Calendars, where the little door opened each day brought them closer to the final door which always revealed the scene in the stable. A more recent development was placing a chocolate behind each window and cartoon characters on the front and the meaning of the Advent calendar was obscured. Perhaps the church leaders who chose the Epistle for Advent Sunday were warning against this development and the associated commercialisation of Christmas.

To me the choice of the Collect, Epistle and Gospel makes sense if we regard Advent as just the beginning of the whole Christian story. It leads the way not only to the Birth of Christ but to his life and ministry, his suffering and death, his resurrection and the birth and growth of the Christian Church.

So the message of Advent can't just be expectation of happiness and joy. The search of the Magi for the birth of the King brings them to the court of Herod with the threat of persecution and violence. The Christian journey which begins at Advent covers the whole spectrum of joy and hope, pain and suffering, peace and violence.

The Anniversary of the Declaration of Human Rights falls in the middle of Advent on December 10. The Preamble asserts "... recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world". This echoes the message of Paul when he says "Owe no man anything but to love one another".

I would like to share with you a poem on Advent written by a nurse, Eve

Dobell, who served in the battlefields of France in WW1

ADVENT 16

I dreamt last night Christ came to earth again
To bless his own. My soul from place to place
on her dream-quest sped, seeking for his face
Through temple and town and lovely land, in vain.
Then came I to a place where death and pain
Had made of God's sweet world a waste forlorn
with shattered trees and meadows gashed and torn
Where grim trenches scarred the shell-sheared plain.
And through that Golgotha of blood and clay
Where watchers cursed the sick dawn, heavy-eyed
There (in my dream) Christ passed along his way,
where his cross marks their nameless graves who died
Slain for the world's salvation where all day
For other's sake strong men are crucified.

This is an intensely sad poem mourning the suffering brought by war, but despite man making "of God's sweet world a waste forlorn" Christ comes again "to bless his own".

For me, this is the message of Advent. It leads us to the birth of Christ who will be with us for whatever the journey of life brings and whatever our failings and shortcomings.

Love was born at Christmas and that is the promise of Advent.

- Dorothy Bennett



The view from the Chair

We are called to be sensitive in our listening

I am not sure what happens when a chair stops being a chair. Maybe my destiny is to become a bit like a sofa - a little soft around the edges and worn a bit. But if that is the case, I count it as a privilege to join the other sofas that are scattered across the Presbytery (and those who have moved beyond the Presbytery) in an arrangement of ecclesiastical furniture.

Throughout November, congregations across the life of the Presbytery will be participating in the National Church Life Survey. Its aim is to help create an accurate picture of who we are and where we are as a church. Its deeper purpose is to help us reflect on how it is that we are called to live as people of God in this region and in our various communities. I encourage people's participation in it, and then participation next year in times of reflection and discernment using the resources that will be provided. But we are not called to determine our ministry by focus groups and popularity. That is not the aim of the NCLS and will not be the ministry of any congregation which seeks to be faithful to the call of Jesus Christ.

We are called to be sensitive in our listening to each other and to God. We are called to be wise in our discernment of God's call. We are called to be compassionate and grace-filled in the living out of our ministry. As a Presbytery I commend us to an ongoing life of sensitivity, wisdom, compassion and grace.

In a recent report I was asked to prepare for the Synod meeting, we spent considerable time affirming the mission of the church, the relationships between members and councils of the church and the purpose of particular elements of the church. It is then that we were able to look at activities, ministries, structures. I believe that we must always remind ourselves of our identity and our calling. Too often, I believe, as individuals and as groups or councils of the church, we look at **what** to do or **how** we can do it, without trying to remember **why** we would do anything, or **who** we are as we do it.

My final request to the Presbytery as chair, before I soften around the edges to become a sofa, is that we would always remember who we are –



people of God, called by the grace of God to live the ways of God.

Thank to you everyone for your support, prayers and co-work with me over the past 2 years. I commend the incoming Chairperson of the Presbytery to your prayers and your support as you have offered me in my time in the role. Special thanks to Duncan, Harold, Ross, Kevin, Harvey, Mark and Graeme whose work has been and remains foundational for the ongoing life of this part of the body of Christ.

**Grace and peace be with you all
Gordon Ramsay**

Limerick competition results

So many entries, so let's just say these are the joint winners

Chain Reaction – by Ron Reeson

It was born in the Weston Creek manse,
Probably in a drama and dance;
Chain Reaction's their name,
Puppets, music their game,
And their goal - faith and love to enhance.

Glee – by Doug Parker

Two Likeable blokes Geoff & Nic
Decided it would be quite chic
To help spread some glee
With their coffee & tea
For those on their way to the Nick

A haka – by Maggie Watts

A foolhardy Minister, Ivan
Attempted something other than jiving'

He performed in the haka –

Was it a disaster?

No – next week he's tryin' hang glidin'!

Tanner Ministry – by Derek Watson

A model of ministry stirred
A lowly but grandiose word.
So let's wield a spanner
To facilitate Tanner
And silence the critics absurd.

City's affordable Housing – by Don Costello

When City Uniting sees need
It acts with all practical speed
To house Christian scholars.
Rent: one-sixty dollars!

God's love is the motive, not greed.

Gordon Retirement – by Alf Greenwood

The State of the Art "waiting room"
Has "baldies" and "grey heads" in gloom
For one and all
Receive the call
To stoke the fires or play a tune.

Honorary Doctorate – by Wayne Hart

I hear, there came here, a James Haire
Who from the start t'was fast as a hare,
From UCA in Centenary
To ACC&C in "Canberry"
Whence ACU awarded him "honoraire"

(More entries on pages 8 and 10)

Commissioning at Eden

A road of faithfulness and gradual growth

Hi, I'm Pam Skelton, recently commissioned as the lay specified minister of Pastor at St George's, Eden. The service was conducted on Sunday 23 October 2011. This was a very joyous occasion at which Duncan Macleod, Presbytery minister, and Harold Small, Presbytery Secretary, officiated. A celebration of this new commitment in ministry for me, shared with the congregation, friends and visitors.

My journey to this position has not been one of blinding lights and sudden epiphanies; rather, a road of faithfulness and gradual growth, gently illuminated by God as the way to grace and wisdom and service.

I was born in Llantrisant, South Wales, in the shadow of castle ruins. Some of my earliest memories are of walking through the eerie graveyard of the Parish Church of The Three Saints, to Sunday School. Llantrisant has been a place of Christian worship since the 7th Century, generations of Christians like me walking the same path to where today stands the 'new' Norman church of 1246. Despite well-loved traditions and family connections the cold stone and the grey weather of South Wales was ample motivation for my family to migrate to sunny New Zealand in 1958. Here, I spent my childhood and youth. The church life was the life of the town of Blenheim or so I saw it! Growing up in the sixties 'all the kids' went to a Sunday School of one denomination or another. I was confirmed in the Church of England and rarely crossed the thresh-hold of another church. Youth groups, Scripture Union camps, sport, fetes and plays, Christian calendar events, en- masse we grew and were nourished in the faith.

At 'Varsity', Wellington, I met and married Peter. We returned to his home city of Sydney to complete our studies and to qualify as teachers. Our Christian encouragement now came

from many sources, various denominations and individuals, broadening our perspective and deepening our faith.

Eventually it was Eden, NSW, where we settled to rear our family. The newly formed Uniting Church was the place where our four children's needs were met and where the after-church fellowship was, to us, as important as the teaching within the service. We travelled in from our alternative existence in the 'Bush', to participate in the life of St George's. Over the next decades a whole new cycle of encouragement was shared in Sunday Schools, Youth Groups, outings and then the same cycle with the next generation and the highlight of each year, Black Stump!

St George's aims to be a place of belonging. I have been encouraged to share my passion for children and teaching to serve families. This will be the focus of my role as pastor. There is opportunity and encouragement for anyone who wants to express their calling. God provides. We have been blessed with teachers, musicians, visionaries, every practical and spiritual gift. God's Spirit has knit us together as a body, together in love and challenges us to reach out in faith.

We are commissioned by Jesus, each of us, to deliver the gospel afresh to a new generation. Ministry in the Christian family in Eden is diverse, vibrant and meaningful, a consequence of collaborative effort and new expressions of ministry. Community engagement is with people 'on their own turf', figuratively and literally, in our case, through the Garden of Eden Community Garden Project. This is part of our Mission Statement, 'we acknowledge God loves us where we are in our individual and corporate journeys but expects change as He loves us too much to leave us there'.

As we minister inside and outside the



Above: Pam Skelton, daughter Stephanie and grand-daughter Arlie in the doorway of St George's.

Image by Alan Pitman.

church walls we accept that many folk still find worship strange and difficult to understand. We need both qualified teachers, pastoral carers and all God's gifted individuals to continue to nourish each other and every individual who walks the path to the 'new' St George's, moving forward as a continuous, faithful family since 1866. May it continue to be a place of true Christian fellowship!

**- Love in Christ
Pastor Pam Skelton**

Now 'St George's U. C.' is suspicious
Old stories of dragons so vicious?
To sort out the threads
fills me with dread,
I'm thankful St George is fictitious.

Theer once was a Pam called a 'Pasta'
do you eat her, don't know, 'I will ask her!
Well its some knd of dish
Said peter, 'I wish!
and her spelling is quite a disaster!

What do you want?

Introducing spiritual direction

Sue Dunbar is the new director of Barnabas Ministries Inc now that Ross Kingham has retired. Sue has expertise in spiritual direction and supervision as well as many years experience as a presenter and workshop leader. Prior to coming to Canberra she spent 5 years in the Mid Lachlan Mission Area introducing and facilitating process of spiritual formation. She used the following books in preparing this article:

The Practice of Spiritual Direction, Barry, W. A. & Connolly, W. J. (San Francisco: HarperCollins 1986)

Holy Listening, The Art of Spiritual Direction, Guenther, M (London: Darton Longman & Todd, 1992)

Spiritual Direction Beyond the Beginnings, Ruffing, J (New Jersey: Paulist Press, 2000)

The New Dictionary of Catholic Spirituality, Downey, M (Minnesota: Liturgical Press 1993)

A Return to the Spirit. Desmond Murphy D, (The Crossroad Publishing Company, Inc. 1997)

We do not usually run articles of this length but, in the absence of other material, we are doing so on this occasion.

It's Christmas time!! Once again we are caught up in the bombardment of advertising, piped carols and frenetic preparations. Two images vie for attention: the huge Christmas tree piled high with presents, and often in a secondary position, a nativity setting. As Christmas approaches the question on everyone's lips is "What do you want?" This is a vexing question because, already we seem to have much more than we need and so we answer, "I don't know". All the while the merchandising message insinuates

that we will not be satisfied until we have this item or that experience.

On the surface, the question "What do you want?" seems to express the ethos of our age of consumerism and self indulgence. It may come as a surprise to discover that this is a question that Jesus often asked either explicitly or implicitly. In Matthew 20:29-34 Jesus asks the blind men directly, "What do you want me to do for you?" Their answer is simple and direct, "We want to see." They were prepared to let go of their current lives as blind beggars; the predictability of begging each day with a handicap that guaranteed some income. They wanted to step into the new world of sight with all the demands that vision brings. Their desire was clear and unambiguous however in a second gospel story the rich young man is more ambivalent. In Mark 10:17-22 we meet this young man who wants a relationship with God but wants other things as well. Jesus enters into conversation with this young man, seeking to uncover what he really wants. Jesus offered the man the opportunity to change the priorities in his life or, to say this differently, to re-order his desires. In the story, it seems that he is unwilling to do that at the time, and his love of riches wins out. I always hope that some time later his desire for God will take central place in his life.

This question; "What do you want?" ... "What do you really want?" is one that Jesus continues to ask today. It is an invitation to journey into the depths of our being, to uncover what our core desires are and perhaps recognise them clearly for the first time. These deeper desires are connected to our authenticity, to the kind of people we are becoming and to our sense of vocation/call. This interior journey is often a perplexing one and difficult to make on our own. Spiritual direction, as a ministry of the church, seeks to give people opportunity to undertake this journey with an experi-

enced guide. Such a person is called a spiritual director, guide or companion. (*A spiritual director is someone who has "been on the path we are walking and knows something about it."* Brian C. Taylor)

"What is spiritual direction?" you may be asking. We can say that it refers to the active conversation between two people that centers on one person's relationship with God. As the conversation unfolds both the director and directee seek to recognise the action of the Holy Spirit in the directee's life. There is a God-component in all human experience even when there is pain and feelings of remoteness from God. As the directee's story is shared, the director has the task of helping the directee connect their story to the Christ story and thereby claim their identity in Christ.

The director is not 'better' or 'holier' than the directee but the director has agreed to put him/herself aside so that his/her total attention can be focused on the person sitting in the other chair. Many of the people who come for direction say that just being deeply listened to, has had a profound effect on their spiritual life. (*Listen to your life. See it for the fathomless mystery that it is...All moments are key moments and life itself is grace.* Frederick Buechner)

Discovering our Deepest Desires

Following the example of Jesus, a director can assist a person on their journey by asking simple, direct questions that can help the directee get to the heart of the matter. As with the rich, young man, the questions help the directee discover what they desire. Many people find it uncomfortable to say what they really want and need reassurance that it's alright to have desires. A process then goes on, like peeling an onion, where the layers of

(continued next page)

wants and needs are uncovered, choices made, motivations examined and desires re-ordered. Finally as the directee remains faithful to the process, they discover at the deepest level their desire for God and God's desire for them. This is a profound moment of grace in a person's life. Many people come to direction weighed down by the "shoulds" of their lives (I should pray more or better, I should know more about God, I should read the bible more, I should have more faith...) and feel that they will never measure up. It is a great relief and joy for them to discover that deep within them dwells this desire for God. It can sometimes take a long time to get to it but it is worth persevering. *(I am convinced that many Christians never entertain their desires long enough to know what they really want. If we habitually suppress our wants, we may never discover the true core of our longings that can lead us more deeply into God. Janet Ruffing)*

I am reminded of a mother with a young family who began the direction relationship concerned that God was going to demand something from her that she was unable to give and so encountered some resistance in getting close to God. She had spent a long time re-ordering her life and family/church commitments so that she could cope with all the demands of life and maintain her own emotional health and family's well being. As we talked and reflected together, she recognized in her strong mothering instinct the passion of God as parent within her as well as an experiential realization of the depth of love that God feels for her. Now the strong feelings of mothering are a source of connection with God rather than a distraction from God. This has opened up a whole new area of possibility for how she lives her faith. This illustrates that spiritual direction is not only about growth in self knowledge that can lead us to our deepest desires and ultimately to God.

Discerning God's Invitation

It is also about discernment. "Where is God in my life?" "What is God's

invitation to me now?" are two more questions at the heart of the direction process. As the person tells their story in the monthly direction sessions hints of God and God's purposes in the person's life begin to emerge. I liken this to watching a flower unfold using time-lapse photography. The unfolding of the flower is clear and obvious when everything is sped up but in real time the change is almost too slow to perceive. Over a period of time the 'monthly snapshot' of the person's life offered in the direction session begins to reveal a pattern, a movement or direction. At some point there is a moment of recognition; "This is where God is" "That's what God is saying" and a deeper sense of connection with God is reached. *(Discernment is the ability to see the revelatory meaning in the ongoing process of one's, or another's life, to see "with the eyes of faith" the salvific significance of what seems like ordinary events. S. Schneidners)*

The second Christmas image; the nativity scene, is helpful here. This process of discernment in the directee's life can be likened to pregnancy and giving birth with the director as midwife. One of the roles for the director here is to encourage the directee in the waiting time particularly when they feel that nothing is happening. This can be a difficult time for the directee because they have a sense of something going on in their life but nothing is clear. There can be frustration, self condemnation, resignation, confusion and simultaneously a niggle, an irritation or intuition that can not be ignored. In this gestation period, God is mysteriously bringing something new to birth in the person's life but it is not ready to come to the light just yet. A couple of my directees are in this place at the moment. Each month, I explore a little more of the "not knowing" with them, while holding them in the deeper reality that God is at work within them. Waiting is difficult and can also be a spiritually productive time. *(Above all, trust in the slow work of God... Only God could say what this new spirit forming within you will be. Give our Lord the benefit of your believing that his hand is leading you*

and of your accepting the anxiety of feeling yourself in suspense and incomplete. Teilhard de Chardin)

Once the labour pains start the director is there to guide and assist the process, drawing the directee's attention to what is unfolding in their life. The role of the midwife is to ease the birth, to help it go a little more smoothly. Again I think of a directee who had a strong sense of being called to 'something new/ something more' in her life but couldn't see what it was. Over a number of months, together we explored this sense of call. In each session she articulated a little more clearly what she was feeling. As I reflected back to her what I was hearing, there was further clarity. Then in a recent session, there was the moment of birth, she knew what God's invitation to her was. It seemed so obvious now it had arrived that she wondered why she hadn't seen it sooner but the journey to that point had prepared her, so, like Mary, she was ready to say "Yes". *(The spiritual midwife is humble, always clear about her own identity and role in the drama of birthing. For spiritual directors the Holy Spirit is the true director. Margaret Guenther)*

Seeing as God Sees

This also illustrates another aspect of spiritual direction. The interior journey, that we make together in the direction process, is not only about developing a deeper relationship with God. It has a prophetic edge to it. In direction we are invited to see as God sees, to become seers. Initially we see our own lives, "the good, the bad and the ugly" of them, through the lens of God's loving gaze. Once we begin to see ourselves as God see us, then we begin to look at others, our world, with God's eyes. This new way of seeing connects with our deepest desires and we begin to recognize God's invitation to respond to God's love in ways that are just, healing and reconciling for all creation.

Why Come to spiritual direction?

There are many reasons why people
(continued next page)

come for spiritual direction. For some it is a spiritual practice which supports their faith life in an ongoing way. For others, ordinary life transitions can be so confusing and pain-filled that they lose direction. The death of a loved one, job loss, divorce, chronic illness – any of these may cause them to question the meaning of life and yearn for hope. Spiritual direction is often sought in such times of crisis. Others struggle to believe that God awaits them, ever present, and not only in their prayer times or when they are ‘good’. In spiritual direction people became aware of the reality of God present in all aspects of their lives. Spiritual direction is an open-ended process that seeks to reveal a person’s

own inner wisdom in order to be attentive to the spiritual journey. This is a life long process.

As Christmas approaches this year, I invite you to spend a little time with the question “What do you really want?” You may discover a treasure that’s the real present of Christmas.

If you would like to know more about spiritual direction, contact Sue Dunbar at Barnabas Ministries Inc. P: 6295 6766 or E: suedunbar53@yahoo.com.

Sue Dunbar
Director, Barnabas Ministries

THE 2012 UNITING CHURCH FELLOWSHIP RALLY WILL BE HELD ON THURSDAY 3 MAY 2012 AT YARRALUMLA UNITING CHURCH. THE GUEST SPEAKER WILL BE REV KERRY ENRIGHT, NATIONAL DIRECTOR UNITING WORLD.



<p><u>Rev Apelu Tielu – by Ron Reeson</u></p> <p>Samoa excelled in their winning On that day of Apelu's ordaining; Rugby shows him a way In his work with folks 'lay', That the player-coach style's best for leading.</p> <p><u>This 'n That - by Frank Millburn</u></p> <p>Once a year I go to church To pay a little visit</p>	<p>So when it's time to carry me out The Lord won't say Who is it?</p> <p><u>Wesley music – by Derek Watson</u></p> <p>There was a contralto named Leslie Used to claim she sounded like Presley; But she joined the church choir And sang higher and higher And now sings soprano at Wesley.</p>
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Project Reconnect consultant Kingsley Murphy, one of the speakers at the November 2011 meeting of Canberra Region Presbytery, is excited about small congregations becoming a strength of the future Christian church.

Project Reconnect is centred around creating DVD resources for small gatherings of God’s people, helping people recognise the strength they have within themselves, the strength of their own congregation, the strength they have to change the world around them.

The project began in the Mid Lachlan Mission Area, in which large churches in rural town centres supported small rural congregations by providing resources for their regular worship services. The project has grown to include input from the wider church, including sermons and material from Kippax and Gungahlin Uniting Church in the Canberra Region Presbytery. The DVDs are now used by congregations all over Australia.

Congregations using the DVDs are provided with conversations starters, a short message, a children’s talk, and songs. The discussion time invites faith-sharing, helps people to be fully engaged in their worship, challenges set ideas and encourages them to consider what they really believe.

To learn more about Project Reconnect, or to become a partner in the ongoing support of the project, visit www.projectreconnect.com.au or phone Kingsley Murphy, 02 68855778.

– Duncan McLeod



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2012 Joan Stott Bursaries

Congratulations Laura Lindsay and Luke Williams

The UCAF National Committee is pleased to announce the first awardees of the Joan Stott UCAF Bursary.

Under the terms of the bursary, two bursaries are to be awarded each year. Each bursary is made available to assist those committed to, or who already are, studying in the field of leadership or theology, within the

ethos of the Uniting Church. All recipients of these bursaries are to be under 35 years of age.

Applicants for the bursary are sought through each Synod UCAF Committee, who are asked to interview applicants and forward their recommendation to the National Committee.

There were two applicants this year one each from NSW/ACT and WA.

The awardees are Laura Lindsay, Wollongong, NSW and Luke Williams, Perth, WA

**- Rev Alistair Christie
Chairperson
National Adult Fellowship**



Laura Lindsay

Laura is the children's, youth and family worker at Kieraview Uniting Church, West Wollongong, studying for a Ph D in Theology through the University of Newcastle.

Laura has written:-

'I believe the successful applicant should be passionate about carrying on the legacy of Joan Stott to ensure the bursary was used in a way that will reflect her desire to see this ministry work continued.

With the bursary I plan to develop some type of research that will bring new insight into

the area of attachment and the Trinity.

I plan to undertake this research in the field of psychology and theology with particular emphasis on attachment, the individual and its correlation with the Trinity.

I would like to find a way to put the bursary back into the Uniting Church as well as assisting my research area.'



Luke is currently in formation for the Ministry of the Word with the Uniting Church at the Perth Theological Hall (based at Murdoch University). He is in the second year of formation and will complete both the Bachelor of Theology and formation program at the end of 2012.

In part of his faith journey Luke says: -

'In 2009 I completed a year of discernment, as well as a Diploma of Youth Ministry and Bachelor of Arts in Biblical Studies through Bible College, and was accepted as a candidate for the Ministry of the Word with

the Perth Theological Hall. My faith has continued to grow through my time in formation and I look forward to full time ministry wherever God would have me serve.

My passion for young people, and to see new and fresh expressions of church happen in the Uniting Church, continues as I discern how God would have me use my gifts within and outside of the church to reach people with the love of Christ.'



Luke Williams

Another Five Leaf Eco-Award

Greenhills Leads the Way to Greener Christian Venues

On Wednesday the Greenhills Centre was recognised for its environmental leadership with the presentation of the inaugural Christian Venues Five Leaf Eco-Award. The centre, which has been involved in the pilot program for the award for the last few months, was happy to have its commitment to caring for creation acknowledged in such a way.

Greenhills Executive Director Peter Badowski said, "It is really encouraging to receive this award and to know that we have been part of showing the way for other Christian Venues around the country to demonstrate their commitment to God's creation as well."

The Christian Venues Five Leaf Eco-Award is a new program established this year to help Christian Venues care for creation using a set of criteria developed specifically for them. The award is an offshoot of the successful Five Leaf Eco-Awards Church Project, an ecumenical church greening program attracting national interest with twenty-two awards presented so far in NSW, Vic and the ACT.

Nestled in the bush beside the Murrumbidgee River off Cotter Road in Canberra, the Greenhills Centre seems like a peaceful and lazy kind of place. Over the last few years though, it has been the site of an amazing program of renewal, capped off this week by their achievement of the award.

Five Leaf Eco-Awards founder and director, Jessica Morthorpe said, "I am very happy to present this award to the Greenhills Centre. I know all the hard work they have put in over the years, and I hope this will inspire them to do even more for the environment in the future."

"After losing half of their site's buildings in the January 2003 Canberra bushfires, Greenhills embarked on a painful journey of recovery, determined to make their site even bigger and better than before. In 2011, with new buildings, upgrades to the surviving facilities and landscaping and the establishment of a range of green initiatives, the centre has achieved that. Symbolically, the giant eucalyptus tree that stands next to the Connie Christie Chapel on the site has shed its blackened bark and is starting afresh as it looks over hills that are finally green again. Some things will never be the same again, but new opportunities have also arisen."

The centre's greening program has included a range of activities, including the installation of a 10.15 kilowatt solar photovoltaic system using a Community Energy Grant from the ACT Government, the establishment of a Resource Room and environmental library, using native plants in landscaping, a workshop for staff on identifying the local bird species and the theological background to creation care and a range of other minor sustainability measures like recycling,

a worm farm and installing energy efficient lights. The centre has also developed an organisational prayer and statement on why their faith has led them to care for the environment of the site.

If you would like to get your Christian venue or church involved in the Five Leaf Eco-Awards contact Jessica Morthorpe by email fiveleafe-coawards@gmail.com



Above: Five Leaf Eco-Awards Director, Jessica Morthorpe, presents the award to Averill Edwards, Chairperson of the Greenhills Centre Board.

Image by Kathy Schlenk

Doctorates – by Ron Reeson

James was granted four doctorates, freely,
Fair reward for his efforts, worthy;
Though he's Prot, through and through,
And Uniting "true blue",
Looks like faith Irish Catholic will be!

Bounty – by Doug Parker

A vegetable garden quite sound
Can be found on St Andrew's ground
The fruits of our labour
Are something to savour
We give thanks for bounty profound.

Greenhills – by Derek Watson

The work of a Board known as Averill's
Is to manage the site known as Greenhills,
"No, no" she tells Peter
When he steps out to greet her,
"This don't mean I'm paying all the bills"

Professor Newman – by Derek Watson

Pity poor Prof. Peter Newman,
Who is, after all, only human.
He can certainly cope
When he preaches on hope,
But on warming he ain't got a clue, man!

Feisty – by Derek Watson

A feisty Uniting Church member
Was asked whether he could remember
The date when disaster
overtook the new pastor?
"‘Twas Friday the 13th, in December."

Union with Anglicans – by Derek Watson

Some members of Alpine Uniting
Decided 'twas time to stop fighting
their Anglican brothers
and one or two others,
and they're finding the union enlight'ning.

Braidwood: Anniversary & Art

Reflecting on the past and present life of the church

Christine Cargill, who grew up as a member of Braidwood Uniting Church, returned for the congregation's 150th anniversary of its building in October. During the celebration's well attended Sunday service Christine used a picture frame to invite past members of the congregation, young and old, to reflect on what they had seen in the past and present life of the church.

Christine took a vital leadership role as National Director Social Responsibility and Justice in the Uniting Church in the 1990s, before leaving to take up teaching in the UK. She candidated for the priesthood with the Church of England, was ordained in 2010 and is now curate at St James West Hampstead in London.



Braidwood Uniting Church, like many country congregations, has developed strong connections to the local community over a long period of time. At the 150th anniversary of the local church Brian Brown dedicated a large cross on the church's wall, built by local cabinetmaker and joiner Steve Kidd. The offering was taken up in earthenware bowls shaped and glazed by Pig and Whistle potter Richard Murray. Flowers were arranged by Marilyn Carle, florist for

Government House. Funds raised by the Quilting Circle's catering team were given to the local Braidwood Hospital.



Story and images provided by Duncan McLeod

NCLS in Canberra Region

Presbytery has paid the registration costs

The National Church Life Survey is a five-yearly co-operative venture across all churches in Australia.

Around 400,000 attenders in 7000 churches in 22 Christian denominations have taken part in previous National Church Life Surveys in 1991, 1996, 2001 and 2006, the same year as the Australian census. The key sponsors for the NCLS have been the Uniting Church NSW/ACT Board of Mission, Anglicare Diocese of Sydney and the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference.

This year the National Church Life Survey is being held in Uniting Church congregations during the month of November. The Canberra Region Presbytery has paid the registration cost for each congregation or cluster of congregations, with the cost of \$1 per survey picked up locally.

The results of the survey, along with resources for local and regional use, will be out by Easter 2012. Participating churches will receive integrated streams of resources based on survey results in the areas of church vitality, leadership and community.

As Presbytery Minister (Mission and Education), I will be using survey results to work with congregations on discernment about vision, direction and passions for growth. Identifying the current strengths in a church can be an important first step in effectively planning for ongoing growth and vitality.

One of the useful outcomes from this year's National Church Life Survey will be a congregational profile relating to leadership strengths. It's clear that no one person has all the leadership qualities required in a congregation. Peter Kaldor has worked with a



team to developed an appraisal process looking at twelve leadership strengths, along with six personal foundations that sustain leaders over the long haul and protect them from burn-out.. We'll be running workshops in 2012 helping church councils, ministry teams and others unpack the insights coming from the results.

See more on the NCLS project online at www.ncls.org.au.

- Duncan McLeod

Music Calendar
Wesley Music Centre and Wesley Uniting Church
www.wesleycanberra.org.au/music
Enquiries: Garth Mansfield, Director, Wesley Music Centre.

Wednesday Lunchtime Live Concerts:
Wednesdays, 12.40 – 1.20pm. \$2. Refreshments \$1.

Other Concerts:

Saturday 19 November 6pm Janice Battisson Award Piano Concert. \$25/20/5.

Friday 25 November 6:30pm "From Paganini to the Andes" Duo Paganini. Free, courtesy of the Embassy of Ecuador Australia, 02 6286 4021.

Saturday 26 November 2pm-3pm Carillon Composition Competition Recital. On the National Carillon on Aspen Island. Sponsored by Wesley Music Foundation. Free. Enquiries: 62975312 or 6232 7248. www.carillon.org.au. Followed by Award Presentation and forum. Wesley Music Centre. Free. RSVP: 62975312 or 6232 7248. Refreshments: gold coin.

Sunday 4 December 2pm "The Canberra Mandolin in Concert". Tickets at the door. Adult \$15/10. Enquiries: 0401 432 994 or 6232.

Presbytery News

Next issue: **FEBRUARY 2012**

Contributions due:

Not later than **Tuesday, 24 January**
Distribution: **Saturday, 11 February**

Following Issue: **MAY 2012**

Contributions due:

Not later than **TBA**
Distribution: **TBA**

Contributions and advertising:

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Canberra ACT 2601.
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<http://canberraregion.unitingchurch.org.au>

Presbytery News is printed by Elect Printing, Fyshwick.

Opinions and advertisements contained in the Presbytery News do not necessarily reflect the views of the Canberra Region Presbytery.