

The Link



September 2009

Thornleigh Hillcrest
Uniting Church Newsletter

Worth Reading

Every two months, Jim Mein receives a copy of a journal, *Australian Leadership*, published by MediaCom, an agency of the SA Synod of the UCA.

Each issue follows a particular theme. For example, the focus of the March/April 2009 edition, was WORSHIP, which the Editor, the Rev Dr Ian Price, says “brings all of us before the Creator of all that is and thrusts us together so that the Spirit can do God’s work among us; we, in gratitude, can find words, thoughts and emotions to express who we are and Whom we love in a way that transforms life”.

In an article, *Don’t Sweat the Culture – and it’s all Culture*, the writer stresses the importance of influencing others. I’m sure we would agree but how do we do it?

Do we, as a congregation, need to give this top priority?

There are two keys that are critical, says Anne Wright Coffman in *Two Keys*. Whilst this sounds rather American and perhaps trite, the writer, in saying that the goal of worship is to worship God, states that it is a fallacy to think that there is only one ‘right way’ to worship. If the Church is to live out the Great Commission, there is a need for different worship styles (no right or wrong way), even multiple worship services. However, within each service, there needs to be consistency and a flow (everything needs to point to the theme which will stay with people throughout the week).

Wendy Perkins, a South Australian Pastor (Worship), gives three reasons for adding new worship services: to reach more people for Jesus, to relieve overcrowding and to reach a new target group – different ethnic backgrounds, ages, worship styles etc. Worth reading, although the overcrowding issue is not relevant to us.

The Rev Dr Andrew Dutney, Principal of the UCA Theological College in Adelaide (and recently appointed President Elect of the UCA Assembly) suggests that we be “consistent memorisers of Scripture, creeds etc, which will serve as a spiritual detox to overcome what pollutes any waking moment”.

These articles are thought provoking and worth reflecting on. Interested people in the congregation are invited to borrow a copy from Jim and return it within a fortnight.

David Richardson

Church Family News

Remember in your prayers:

Mavis and Gordon Price, Angaline Singam and her family, also our missionaries – the Wakefield family in PNG and Richard & Lindsey Parker in South Africa. Broken Hill congregation and Pastor Will Pearson and his wife Betty.

Do you know anyone who would enjoy a hot roast lamb dinner?

If so, how about inviting them to our SENIORS' FRIENDSHIP LUNCH on Wednesday, September 16 at 11.30am for 12noon?

Further information from Gill or Rosalie.

For the Diary

Saturday November 21 at 7.30pm: Northern Sydney Youth Orchestra.
Tickets available soon: \$20 adult, \$15 concession, \$5 school student.

Prayer Time

Because of the Men's Breakfast, there will be no Prayer Time on Saturday September 5. However, there will be an opportunity to pray together for our church, its people and mission on Saturday October 3 from 9 to 10am in the Heritage Chapel.

Please come to join in this time of prayer, whether you are able to verbalise your prayers or prefer to pray silently.

Any enquiries to David Richardson

Birthdays

September

- 1 Wojtek Zborowski
- 5 Robyn Little
- 6 Pat Hutchinson
- 9 Melissa Motram
- 21 Fred King
- 23 Thomas Palmer-Jones
- 27 Michael Wakefield
- 30 Wendy Clark



Friendship Group

At our last meeting we enjoyed seeing not only the most recent DVD from Frontier Services obtained by Jan Williamson, but also an old video 'A Man and his Truck' from the Mein's personal archives. While the recent DVD confirmed what great work is being undertaken out in the outback, it was interesting see just how much progress has been made compared to the old film. It was also great to have Gill Mein and Ruth Parker join with us.



On **Wednesday September 9** we plan to spend the evening at the church from 8pm on our Missionary Support projects and look forward to the additional company of any of the ladies from the congregation.

As published each week recently, the Operation Christmas Child is underway. Anyone wishing to assist with this project can obtain boxes from Heather Firth or myself, together with the information brochure which, this year, has been revamped and sets out clearly what items may or may not be included.

Watching the DVD during the recent combined service will no doubt have been informative and inspirational. Completed boxes need to be returned early next month when we hope to display them during the church services on one particular Sunday prior to delivery to Samaritan's Purse.

Brenda Geary

Cluster Group News

On Saturday September 19 you are invited to enjoy a day's outing by public transport to Cronulla and on to Bundeena (if weather is suitable for a boat trip). We intend to catch the 9.17am train from Thornleigh station to Central, where we will change to join a train to Cronulla. We plan to return home by late afternoon.

It is suggested that, on this occasion, you bring a picnic lunch, although it will probably be possible to purchase drinks etc at Cronulla.

Contact the Sharphams for any further information.

Keep Saturday October 17 free to enjoy a train trip to the Mountains – full details in next month's *Link*.



Mingles

The planned activity for September 26 is a bushwalk organised by Steve Williamson, followed by a barbecue at Newtons.

Please check your email for details closer to the date or contact Steve for the venue and meeting time and the Newtons for catering.

Second Sunday Club

Sunday September 13 at 4pm

Bruce Sharpham will be talking about his career in the NSW Railways. All welcome.

Child Protection Training

Ku-ring-Gai Presbytery

The Synod requires volunteers involved with programs for children and young people, especially leaders, to attend a 3.5 hour training session.

Ministers, youth workers, SRE teachers and those staff who have contact with children should also attend this training.

Where? Tumbi Umbi Uniting Church
Beckingham Road
Tumbi Umbi 2261
Phone: 4389 2183

When? **Sunday October 4 2009 – 2pm**

Each participant will be provided with a work book. The topics covered will include:

Child abuse and mistreatment and why it happens

Child protection laws in NSW

Appropriate behaviour with children and young people in congregational activities

Dealing with inappropriate behaviour in a volunteer

Responding to a child or young person who may be at risk of harm from a caregiver's behaviour.

People who are familiar with child protection issues through their work may be interested in becoming trainers themselves – for their own congregation or for others in the Presbytery. A Trainer's Guide will be provided.

Janet Scott will deliver the training. She is the Child Protection Coordinator with the Board of Education. If you have any questions or concerns, she may be contacted on janets@nsw.uca.org.au

Register through your church with Rev. Mark Watt, emailing your registration form to revwatt@bigpond.com or posting it to PO Box 8138 Tumbi Umbi NSW 2261.

Prayer Brunch

NCEA

The Normanhurst
Christian Education
Association invites

you to a Prayer Brunch in support of Magda De Boer
and her work at Normanhurst Boys and Hornsby Girls
High Schools.

You are welcome to turn up on the day, but an RSVP
would help us with catering. There will also be a movie
set up for children during prayer time.

Time

9.30- 11am

Date

Saturday, Sept 12, 2009

Venue

Chinese & Australian Baptist Church, Thornleigh
Cnr Pennant Hills Rd & Loch Maree Ave,
Thornleigh 2120
(Opposite Bunnings, carpark entry via Loch Maree Ave)

RSVP/Enquiries

Phone: 9489 3238

Email: Magdabrunch@iinet.net.au

RSVP: Sept 10, 2009



The Challenge of Islam

The following is an extract from an article that was sent by Richard Parker (with permission of the author) after reading Alan's report in the last *Link* . It has been condensed for space reasons. Ed

From *Slavery, Terrorism and Islam*, by Peter Hammond (Ch. 9 & 10)

The Bible is 66 books written by 40 different prophets and apostles. in three languages (Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek) on three continents (Africa, Asia and Europe), over 1500 years.

The Koran is one book, written by one author, in one language, in one geographical area, over 23 years. The Koran acknowledges that Jesus Christ was miraculously born of a virgin, was holy and faultless, performed miracles, healed the sick and raised the dead.

POINTS OF AGREEMENT AND CONTRADICTION

Christians and Muslims agree that:

- God created the world and all that is in it, as well as heaven and hell.
- God is all-powerful. He knows everything and He is everywhere – all the time.
- God revealed His will to mankind through certain prophets.
- God has given us laws which should govern our lives and prevent us from doing wrong.
- God will judge all people. Some will be permitted to go to heaven, while all others are doomed to hell.
- Muslims also are allies of Christians in opposing atheism, pornography, gambling and abortion.

But Islam Contradicts the Bible by Saying that:

Jesus was **no** more than a prophet. He was not the Son of God. (Sura 5:78)

Jesus was a good man, but was certainly **not** divine. (S 5:19)

God is **not** a Trinity (Father, Son and Holy Spirit). (S 4:171; 5:75-78; 119)

Jesus did **not** die on the cross for sinners. (S 4:157)

There is **no** atonement or reconciliation of the sinner to God by means of the sacrifice of Jesus or any other substitutionary sacrifice. (S. 22:36&37)

Historical Differences in the KORAN

Much of the Koran shares Bible stories. However, they are often distorted (from our view). For example:

Adam and **Eve** sinned, not in an earthly garden, but in paradise. They were cast down to earth after they sinned. (S 7:19-25)

Noah had only one son – and he drowned in the flood. (S 11:42-43) (cf. Genesis 6 & 7)

The father of Abraham in the Koran, was Azar. (S 6:74) (cf. Exodus 1:5-10)

Moses in the Koran, was adopted by Pharaoh's wife. (S 28:7-9) (cf. Exodus 1:5-10)

Although the Koran recites **Moses'** confrontation with Pharaoh 27 times, it does not include the integral part of the story. The Passover is omitted!

The Koran teaches that **Mary** the mother of Jesus, was the sister of Aaron and the daughter of Imran who lived 1500 years before (S 19:16-28)!

The Six Pillars of Islam

- The open **confession** of faith (*Shahāda*)
- The five daily **prayers** (*Salat*)
- The keeping of the **fast** during the full month of Ramadan (*Sawn*)
(But Muslims are allowed to eat and drink from sunset to sunrise).
- The giving of **alms** (*Zakāt*)
- The **Pilgrimage** to Mecca at least once in a lifetime, provided one has the means for that (*Hajj*)
- Holy War (*Jihad*).

What the Koran teaches about Jesus:

- He was born of a virgin (S 19:20)
- He was holy and faultless (S 19:19)
- He is the Messiah (S 4:171)
- He is the Word of God (S 4:171)
- He is a spirit from God (S 4:171)
- He created life (S 5:113)
- He healed the sick (S 5:113)
- He raised the dead (S 5:113)
- He came with clear signs (S 43:63)
- He is a sign to all mankind (S 19:21; 21:91)
- He is illustrious in this world and the hereafter (S 3:45)
- He was raised to heaven (where he still is) (S 4:158)
- He will come back for judgement (S 43:61)

Jesus Christ says: (John 14:6)

**“I am the Way, and the Truth and the Life;
no-one comes to the Father, but by Me.”**

From the Parkers

We arrived safely in Durban on August 4 for our WEC Candidates Orientation Course. On the way down, Lindsey saw snow on the Drakensburg mountains for the first time (from a distance). The warm weather down here on the coast has been a very welcome change to the freezing conditions up in Johannesburg. One of the things that Lindsey has appreciated is having our laundry dry before lunchtime – in Brakpan it has been taking a couple of days to dry.

The course is going very well. We are living in the WEC headquarters house with the Ezra family – Joshua, Ruth and their children Tehila and Judah, and the other couple on the course, Petrus and Thandi. Our days are filled with lectures and practical work around the house, and most of our evenings are spent ploughing through the books on our reading list. We have also been very privileged to do some outreaches in the area. We have joined with a Korean couple who are doing open air Bible studies and kids clubs in Claremont, a settlement in the hills of Durban. We also joined a local group of believers from a number of churches in the city centre, who visit shelters and minister to people living on the streets. Richard and I joined the street team, and spoke to men on the beachfront who sleep on the piers. We were blessed to share from the Word of God with them and to pray for them.

We leave for Brakpan at the end of August, where we will do much of our practical work for the course, and then return to Durban for another month of lectures.

Please pray:

For safe travel between Durban and Johannesburg.

For us as we are finding living in such close quarters with others quite challenging.

That we will use this time to the best of our ability to be better equipped for our calling.

A Church Garden

First plant four rows of peas: prayer, perseverance, promptness and preparedness

Then plant three rows of squash: squash gossip, squash criticism, squash indifference

Now plant five rows of lettuce: let us be faithful, let us be loyal, let us be unselfish, let us be truthful, let us love one another

No garden is complete without turnips: turn up with a smile, turn up for church, turn up a new idea, turn up with determination, turn up a helping hand, turn up with love.

From Jean Holmes



August Church Council Meeting Report

Church Council Executive – a meeting is being organised to review the congregation as requested by Presbytery, consider the mandate to 2010 and set Church Council and congregation meeting dates for 2010.

Jesus. All About Life Campaign

What burning desire do you have for outreach into our local community? The Mission Team has had difficulties trying to organise a combined event with our local churches so the team are looking for ideas from our congregation for a JAAL event – we currently have a table at our Market Day and a follow-up Bible study planned.

The Fathers' Day Breakfast on September 5 is being promoted in the Advocate and the speaker is Mr Mark Lees from Bible Society NSW, who will talk about the Jesus. All About Life Campaign. All men are welcome and invited to bring someone from outside our congregation.

The TV campaign has been changed to September 27 for four weeks.

Three members of the congregation attended a training night organised by Bible Society NSW at St John's Anglican Church, Gordon on August 5.

Planned Giving Campaign – one person has volunteered to join this group.

Successor for Secretary – Cathy Thompson has advised that she needs to step down at the Annual General Meeting in December.

Pastoral Care – members of the congregation are encouraged to invite, and perhaps pay the cost of the roast dinner, for a neighbour or friend to attend the Seniors' Friendship Lunch on September 16 as an outreach in a non-threatening environment. This could be suitable as part of the Jesus. All About Life Campaign.

Treasurer's Report

Offerings and gifts have declined so income levels are not being achieved. Operating income has increased due to an increase in rent from church users. Church Council agreed that the graphs and financial information included in *The Link* will be published quarterly.

Working Bee – gardening and window cleaning were planned for the working bee on August 29 as well as putting posts for the banners on the wall on Pennant Hills Road.

Communications Report – Ron Newton provided usage statistics for the church website over the last 12 months. There were 3350 monthly hits on average, or around 115 per day. Some hits accessed *The Link*. The most used site is the road map for our location.

Normanhurst Christian Education Association

A Prayer Brunch is being held on September 12 from 9.30am.

Approximately \$66,000 has been received towards the budget of \$93,000 for 2009.

Presbytery – THUC is well represented on Presbytery: Barry Clark, Property Convenor; Glen Renton, Pastoral Relations and Placements Committee Convenor; Allan West, Multicultural and Interfaith Matters and Co-options; Gill Mein, Co-options; Norma Chambers, Representative for Uniting Church Adult Fellowship.

Broken Hill Uniting Church – we're still waiting to hear what help Broken Hill Church would like from us. Peter and Brenda Geary will report back after their visit to Broken Hill.

Annual Reports – Jim Mein advised that it would be helpful if the Annual Reports of committees included information about future plans as well as their past year.

Church Council committee appointments for 2010 – Jim Mein reminded members of the need for committees to appoint their Church Council representatives for 2010. Committee representatives are either the Chairperson of the committee or an alternate.

Wakefield News

Dear friends and family,

We just wanted to update you on how Josh is going. He has been attending school for a week now. Not always for full days but he has managed to keep up quite well. He does still get a bit tired at night but that is to be expected. Today Michael took him to the doctor's at New Tribes. They did a normal check-up on him as well as an X-ray. The doctor was quite amazed at how well he is and how good his x-ray looks. The doctor told us that Josh had an incredibly bad case of pneumonia that was caused by a strain on pneumococcal. Very serious. We are all acutely aware (especially Josh) that it is because of your prayers for Josh that he has recovered so well and so quickly. Thank you so much and praise God for his faithfulness to us all. The doctor doesn't want to see Josh again for a few months for another x-ray unless he doesn't continue to pick up. So please keep praying that Josh will continue to heal and be able to run around at PE at school very soon.

Thanks again for all your prayers; we feel wonderfully blessed to have such good friends who care so much.

Grace and peace

Michael, Rachael, Josh, Elicia, Jessica and Mikaela

INTERFAITH INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PEACE SERVICE



The 55th session of the General Assembly of the United Nations designated September 21 as **International Day of Peace**. The **“Peace Bell”** at the United Nations Building in New York is rung on this day at 12 noon and we encourage churches and schools to ring bells at midday on September 21 to draw attention to the need for peace.

You are invited to join an
Interfaith International Day of Peace Service
on Monday September 21 at 11am
to be held at St David’s Uniting Church Hall
454 Pacific Highway, Lindfield
(cnr. Pacific Hwy & Provincial Rd.)

People representing Aboriginal, Bahai, Buddhist, Christian, Hindu, Islamic, Jain, Jewish, Sikh, Sufi and Zoroastrian Communities will offer prayers for peace and there will be time for silent reflection.

The church bell will be rung at midday.
Light refreshments will follow the service.

For further information contact Rev. Manas Ghosh on 9416 2746.

Important Dates for 2009

Elders' meetings

November 9

Church council

Congregational meetings

Wednesday December 2, 7.30pm

Working bee

October 31

Market Day

Saturday November 7



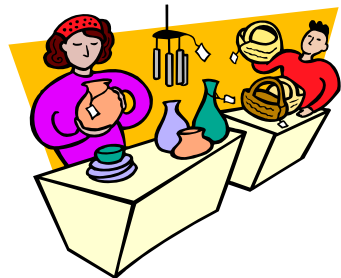
Reminder about things to do now:

- Create items to sell at the craft stall/s – textiles, wood, paper, knitting etc
- Collect and try out recipes for yummy treats to make for the cake stall
- Start putting aside pre-loved treasures and books

when you're decluttering

- Strike and pot up plants for the plant stall
- Plan your Christmas shopping with this day in mind.

A small group meets each Monday afternoon from 4-6pm in the youth room to make textile furnishings for the worship space, craft items for the stall and the quilt to auction at Market Day. We invite any interested people to join us for a relaxing time of stitching and fellowship.



Diary Dates

- **KYB** (Know Your Bible) meets at 10.30am each Monday.
- **Ashleigh Lodge Service** is on the third Sunday of the month at 10.45am.
- **Kids' Time** meets at 4-6pm on Mondays in school terms.
- **THE PIT** is in recess.
- **Indoor Bowls** meets on the first and third Mondays of each month at 1pm.
- **Day Fellowship** meets on the fourth Monday of the month at 1pm, and at other times for outings.
- **Friendship Group** meets on the second Wednesday of the month at 8pm.
- **Second Sunday Club** meets on the second Sunday of the month at 4pm.

September

- Sun 6 8.45am Worship (HC) – G Renton
 10.15am Worship – R Tregenza
- Sun 13 8.45am Worship – JAAL
 10.15am Worship – JAAL
- Sun 20 8.45am Worship – JAAL
 10.15am Worship – JAAL
- Wed 23 **12pm LINK DEADLINE**
- Sun 27 8.45am Worship – JAAL
 10.15am Worship (HC) – JAAL

October

- Sun 4 8.45am Worship – P McIntyre
 10.15am Worship – P McIntyre
- Sun 11 8.45am Worship – J Mein
 10.15am Worship – J Mein

Grounds & Gardening

September

- Sat 12,19 A West, S Vicars
Sat 26,3/10 B & S Wilcockson