


# COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

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

## NEWS AND INITIATIVES

### **Uniting Financial Services assures investment security**

In light of recent market events and in response to recent print media speculation, Uniting Financial Services would like to assure all its investors that:

- All investments with Uniting Financial Services remain **secure**;
- Uniting Financial Services has **no** exposure to failed financial entities in the United States or in Australia; and
- Uniting Financial Services remains well **capitalised** and **funded** for what further challenges investment markets may hold.

For the most up to date information, including the full statement from Uniting Financial Services, a list of Frequently Asked Questions and to sign up for further information by e-newsletter, please visit <http://www.unitingfinancial.com.au>.

### **GreenPower fundraiser for places of worship and faith communities**

Jackgreen, one of Australia's leading retailers of accredited renewable energy, is now offering a fundraiser for places of worship and faith communities in New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland and South Australia. Jackgreen will give \$35 to your place of worship or faith community when a member of your faith community switches to GreenPower with Jackgreen. Jackgreen will also give an additional \$5 to the Australian Religious Response to Climate Change. Visit [www.arrcc.org.au](http://www.arrcc.org.au) to find out more about the program and how to participate.

### **Call for submissions: Freedom of religion and belief in the 21<sup>st</sup> century**

The Australian Human Rights Commission, Australia's national, independent statutory authority which administers Commonwealth human rights laws, has commissioned the Australian Multicultural Foundation, in association with RMIT University and Monash University, to prepare a report on Freedom of Religion and Belief in the 21st Century. The report will inform governments, faith communities, NGOs and relevant organisations, and contribute to the ongoing debates around culture, identity and national unity.

All members of the public are invited to submit a response. For more information, please visit <http://www.humanrights.gov.au/frb/> or contact Athalia Zwartz on (03) 9347 6622.

### **In October *Insights***

Joy Balazo from Uniting International Mission travels to places of conflict and teaches people how to build peace. Read October *Insights* for the story of the Young Ambassadors for Peace workshop she conducted recently in North East India with 38 young people from one of the world's troubled regions. Pick up your copy at church.

### **From around the country, Bible study leaders Converge**

Community life, worship and music are huge parts of the National Christian Youth Convention (NCYC), but for many young people the daily Bible studies are pivotal times to deepen their discipleship. To help with this vital aspect at NCYC '09, nine inspiring and engaging Bible study leaders from across Australia have been recruited, bringing with them different perspectives and ideas, and a wealth of knowledge about the Bible.

There's the Rev. Stu Cameron and the Rev. Ralph Mayhew from the Newlife Uniting Church on the Gold Coast; the Rev. Alistair Macrae and ministry candidate Kylie Crabbe, both from Melbourne; Rob Hanks, who is almost legendary around NCYC and NSW youth ministry circles; Craig Mitchell from Adelaide; Dr Elizabeth Boase and Ofa Fotu from Western Australia; and the Rev. Robyn Whitaker from Chicago.

For profiles on all the Bible study leaders visit <http://ncyc.org.au>. Along with other main stage speakers Shane Claiborne and Amie Dural, and amazing live performances from Scat, Simeon, 2-11, Cameron Semmens and more, January 3-9 in Melbourne is unmissable. Registrations close on November 30, so don't delay. Register someone today at <http://ncyc.org.au> or phone the office on 1300 00 NCYC (6292)

## EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

### **Interfaith Social Justice Shabbat Service, October 17**

People of all faiths are welcome to attend this special service to commemorate our common commitment to social justice. The highlight will be an address by Mohamed Dukuly, a Muslim refugee from Liberia, and an inspirational refugee support worker and interfaith educator.

When: Friday October 17 from 6 pm. After the service, celebrate the Jewish festival of Sukkot in a communal Sukkah (traditional booth or hut), with an optional Shabbat dinner. Book for dinner on (02) 9419 7011 by October 3. Dinner charge \$27. Kosher food (vegetarian food available — please advise when booking). Where: North Shore Temple Emanuel, 28 Chatswood Avenue, Chatswood.

### **7th International Interfaith Abraham Conference, October 19**

When: October 19, 11 am to 3:30 pm. Where: Webster Theatre, University of Sydney. Chaired by Richard Morecroft, former ABC TV News presenter. Keynote speaker: Larissa Behrendt, Professor of Law, UTS.

Theme: *Walking together: Our faiths and reconciliation*. For more information, please visit <http://www.affinity.org.au/Abraham%20Cnfrnce%2008%20Flyr%20LR.pdf>. Please register at [registrations@affinity.org.au](mailto:registrations@affinity.org.au) or phone (02) 9702 0789.

### **Caring for Creation: A Christian Call to Action on Climate Change, October 25 and November 13**

Explore the biblical mandate to care for God's creation, and the urgent need to tackle climate change to protect the world's poor and future generations.

#### **At Christ Church Anglican Church, 3 Mann Street, Gosford, October 25, 9.30 am - 1.00 pm:**

An opportunity to hear more about what can be done to address climate change and to live more gently on the Earth with local Aboriginal input, workshops and speakers. To register, or for more information, please contact Kathy Moroney, NSW Ecumenical Council, (02) 9299 2215.

#### **At St Paul's Anglican Church, 421 Old Northern Road, Castle Hill, November 13, 8 - 10 pm:**

An evening seminar with the Rev. Richard Cizik, Vice President for Governmental Affairs with the US National Association of Evangelicals and an advocate for action on climate change, with responses by the Rev. Dr Andrew Cameron, Moore College, and Dr Brett Paris, World Vision. For more information or hard copies of leaflets and posters, contact Miriam Pepper, (02) 9252 5200.

### **End of the academic year at UTC, November 7**

The Ministerial Education Board of the Synod and the Faculty of United Theological College extend a warm invitation to attend and to celebrate the end of the academic year.

Presiding minister: The Rev. Stephen Reid. Preacher: The Rev. Dr Dean Drayton, Acting Principal, UTC. When: Friday November 7, from 7.30 pm. Where: Chapel of St Andrew, Uniting Church Centre for Ministry, 16 Masons Drive, North Parramatta. The service will be followed by supper. For further details or to RSVP, please contact Priscilla Dawson, Executive Assistant, on (02) 8838 8927.

## LIVING IS GIVING: PRAYER POINTS AND RESOURCES

### **October Living is Giving updates are on their way**

The October Living is Giving updates and thank-you letter are on their way to congregation treasurers. If you're a treasurer, please remember to display these updates in your church building and let congregation members know that they have arrived.

### **Prayer point: Mission focus area 9 — Encouraging young people in the Uniting Church**

The higher profile and enthusiasm of young people at the 2008 meeting of the Synod of New South Wales and the ACT may have resulted in significant changes to the shape and purpose of the meeting.

- Give thanks for the Youth Unit and youth leaders who have worked hard to ensure young people were represented at Synod, that their voices were heard, and that Synod was a welcoming place for newcomers.
- Give thanks to the young people who attended Synod and are now exploring opportunities for further involvement in the life of the church.
- Pray that these young people will continue to be supported, encouraged and heard within this Synod and the wider church.

For more on this mission focus area, visit

<http://livingisgiving.nsw.uca.org.au/updates/october08updates/updates10-08mfa09.pdf>.

To find out more about Living is Giving visit <http://livingisgiving.nsw.uca.org.au>.