

OIKOUMENE

TASMANIAN COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

163 Macquarie Street, Hobart (GPO Box 1130 Hobart 7001)

June 2006

The 'Lund' Principle

Should not the churches act together in all matters except those in which deep differences of conviction compel them to act separately?



From the General Secretary

Sometimes we might be tempted to think of Ecumenical activity as something which is "in house" to the churches. After all it is about churches working together and, as the availability of church resources declines, ecumenical activity may be thought of as having a lower priority despite Christ's prayer for the Church to be one. But I would want to encourage you to think of our ecumenical work as mission. Not only do we share together in the work of Christian World Service but there are many other outreach opportunities for ecumenical activity.

Christian Ministry in State Schools is an expanding area with the growing demand for chaplaincy, not only in secondary schools, but also potentially in primary schools. We are also working with the State Government on ways the TCC can part of the recovery process following emergencies and disasters. There is also work to be done in peacemaking and community harmony through fostering inter-faith understanding. The list of opportunities for mission together could continue.

If you would like to know more about these exciting opportunities for mission or would like to become more involved please feel free to contact us here at the TCC Office.

Rev'd Tim Matton-Johnson

SIMPLY SHARING WEEK

It was good to welcome National Coordinator, Kaylea Fearn, to Tasmania recently. Those of you who heard her speak will have been inspired to support the Solomon Islands project for 2006.

A reminder that colourful erasers are still available for purchase at \$1.00 each from the TCC office. If you would like to sell these in your church or school, please phone the office on 6234 2543.

VISIT TO TASMANIA BY DR. VISIER SANYU 23-28 AUGUST 2006

To assist Tasmanians to celebrate Refugee and Migrant Sunday this year **Visier Sanyu**, who works with the National Council of Churches' Christian World Service's Refugee and Displaced People's Program in Victoria, will be in the state from 23-28 August.



Two special 'Appreciation Events' are planned—one in the north and one in the south of the state—to recognise and celebrate the work being done by support groups, to share stories and to hear from Visier about the wider picture of the refugee situation.

The Northern Event will be held at 7.00 pm on Friday 25 August at St. Finn Barr's Hall, 247 Invermay Road, Invermay. The Southern Event will be held at 7.00 pm on Saturday 26 August (venue to be confirmed).

The TCC office is gathering information about support groups around the state so that we can involve as many people as possible. Please advise the TCC office if you are interested in being part of these special events.

On page 2 of this newsletter you will find information about how your congregation/group can have *Open Hearts, Open Minds* to help "brave people build new lives".

Order your resources NOW
from the TCC Office
(phone 6234 254
or e-mail tcctas@bigpond.net.au).



REFUGEE AND MIGRANT SUNDAY 27 AUGUST 2006

What is Refugee and Migrant Sunday?

Refugee and Migrant Sunday (RMS) aims to encourage churches to help brave people build new lives by celebrating the contribution refugees and migrants continue to make to Australia. A special focus is on refugees, asylum seekers and others forcibly displaced. RMS is held every year in thousands of churches around Australia on the last Sunday in August.

Free Education Kits

To help celebrate and raise awareness, the National Council of Churches in Australia produces free Parish and School Education Kits. The kits have posters, education sheets, suggested activities and actions and worship resources.

Media Competition

Each year there is a School Media Competition with three categories (poster, poem and multi-media). The school kit has all the details on how to encourage your students to enter the competition. The theme for 2006 is *Open Hearts, Open Minds*. (Entries close on September 11). The winning entry will be used to promote the day around Australia in 2007.

How you can help celebrate

- Use the Parish Education Kit to celebrate RMS in your church on or around 27 August 2006.
- Enter the School Media Competition.
- Help refugees build new lives in your community by organising an event with friends, family and refugees and asylum seekers in your area.
- Arrange a speaker for your congregation that day.

Contact the TCC office to order your kits/CDs, request speakers or for more information, on 6234 2543 or e-mail tectas@bigpond.net.au You can also visit the NCCA website www.ncca.org.au/cws/rdp/rms for information and to download items from the Kit.

NCCA CHRISTIAN WORLD SERVICE SEEKS YOUR SUPPORT FOR THE INDONESIAN EARTHQUAKE AND EAST TIMOR HUMANITARIAN APPEALS

Indonesian Earthquake

Indonesia's earthquake toll has reached more than 5,000 with estimates of 20,000 injured and 200,000 homeless. CWS has three partner agencies on the ground who have been running mobile clinics and distributing thousands of food, shelter and hygiene packs since the day of the earthquake. The response is being coordinated by ACT International. With your assistance, CWS and ACT International are hoping to raise a total of \$2 million for this appeal.

East Timor

In East Timor, an estimated 25,000 people have been displaced as a result of recent unrest. CWS is responding through its partner, Yayasan Sosial Naroman (YASONA) by distributing food supplies to displaced people in the districts of Aileu, Same and Ainaro. This assistance began during the early stages of the unrest several weeks ago and has intensified recently.

Please assist this work if you able

To give online, please visit www.ncca.org.au/cws or ring toll free number 1800 025 101. You may also send a cheque or money order to: Christian World Service, Locked Bag 199, Sydney, NSW 1230. Donations are tax deductible.

THE AUDACITY TO HOPE DREAMING OF A FUTURE CHURCH

YOU ARE INVITED

to participate in an inter-active ecumenical
workshop to be held at Wesley Uniting Church
(upper hall) on Saturday 29 July 2006.

This Workshop is part of the ongoing program developed by the Gender Commission of the National Council of Churches in Australia, to be presented in all states and territories of Australia in 2006.

The Workshop is being organised nationally with the aim of enabling the ecumenical voice of committed grassroots people to be heard and acted upon. The response to the Workshop presented so far has been most enthusiastic.

As the Program (included with this newsletter) indicates, there are four sessions, and the day commences with a Reflection at 10.00 am and concludes at 3.30 pm. Participants are invited to arrive at 9.30 am for a cuppa. Lunch, morning and afternoon tea are provided and you are asked to register your interest beforehand to help with numbers for catering and organisation.

Cost is \$15.00 payable on the day.

This workshop is essentially ecumenical because the Gender Commission sees its role as encouraging and enabling conversation, prayer and action between and within church members of the National Council of Churches.

Please register your interest with the TCC Office SOON!



MAKE *INDIGENOUS* POVERTY HISTORY

As the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Peoples wrapped up in New York in late May, we were again reminded of the great need to Make *Indigenous* Poverty History. Indigenous leaders at the Forum voiced concern that developed countries treat the Millennium Development Goals as a matter of foreign policy, relevant only to the international aid programs. At the same time that these Indigenous leaders from around the world were voicing their concerns, here in Australia the atrocious conditions and confronting social issues engulfing many Indigenous communities were once again front page news. And yet, Australia is one of three nations who do not support the proposed

Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous People. In particular Australia has problems with the right to Indigenous Self Determination and the notion of “free, prior, informed consent” with regard to the rights of Indigenous Peoples and the patenting of seeds, plants and other organisms used for manufacturing. Australia believes this principle clashes with intellectual property rights.

Both these events have highlighted the complexity of the issues and the desperate need for informed and constructive dialogue about solutions. Indigenous people will still be living with these issues long after the media have moved on to something else. But we must stay connected, we must continue to dialogue and listen and, most importantly, agitate for change.

As concerned individuals we must

continue to urgently demand that Australia Makes *Indigenous* Poverty History.

For more information about the Permanent Forum and the Draft Declaration of the rights of Indigenous People visit the following websites:

www.ncca.org.au/natsiec/indigenous_poverty/resources?p=2089

www.ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=33358

www.hreoc.gov.au/social_justice/internat_develop.html

The NCCA’s National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Ecumenical Commission has new resources (including an Education Kit and Prayer Sheets) to support the campaign—now available at www.ncca.org.au/natsiec/indigenous_poverty/resources

REPORT FROM THE TCC ANNUAL MEETING

On Saturday 13 May, the Annual Meeting of the Tasmanian Council of Churches was held. The Most Rev’d Bishop Michael Putney was the keynote speaker for the occasion. Bishop Michael gave an inspirational and challenging address entitled *Dialogue as a work of the Holy Spirit drawing us together in Christ*.

Bishop Michael referred to the tiredness and ageing of the ecumenical movement and the necessity for Christians to recover the energy, enthusiasm and expectation for the journey which is being driven by the Holy Spirit. It is the same Christ in each of us who has been leading us to this point of history and will continue to lead us to the future mission of the church in the world. Bishop Michael urged Christians to keep collaborating and stressed the importance of Christians praying together. He went on to speak in detail about current dialogues happening throughout the world – all as a response to the unity that Christ longs for. “If we allow our hearts and Christ’s to be one it will be achieved”, he said.

A CD of Bishop Michael’s address is available from the TCC office. If you would like a copy please ring 6234 2543 or e-mail tctas@bigpond.net.au

In the afternoon session of the meeting, Bishop Michael, John Barker and Nathalie Norris formed a panel for a discussion on the topic *Local Ecumenism at Work*. This provided added insight into and consciousness about initiatives to work towards ecumenism on the local level.

TCC Officers elected for the coming year were: The Rev’d Allan Thompson (President), Sr. Elizabeth Vagg PBVM (Vice-President), Peter Comas (Treasurer).



Have you signed up yet as a *Partner4Peace*? If you would like more information about becoming a Partner, please contact the TCC office – or e-mail direct to partners4peace@ncca.org.au (freecall 1800 025 101 or visit www.ncca.org.au/cws/partners4peace).

**You are invited to celebrate
50 Years of Passionist Ministry at
St. Joseph’s Church, Hobart**

9.30 am Mass, Sunday July 2, 2006

**Renewal Triduum: The Passion
Wednesday, June 28—Friday, June 30
(Morning 10 am—11.30 am, Evening 7.30 pm—9 pm)**

Today’s Passionists—Frs. Graham Orwin (Community Leader), Gerard Glynn (Parish Priest), Gerald Quinn, David Wilkie and Patrick McIndoe, and Br. Edward Braden—and the parishioners of St. Josephs - will welcome you warmly. More information from 6234 4866.

TAIZÉ PRAYER SERVICES

are held regularly at All Saints Anglican Church, South Hobart, on the third Sunday of the month at 5.00 pm from May to October (7.00 pm November, February to April).

There is also a service on the fifth Sunday of the month at Saint Raphael’s, Fern Tree (same time frame).

You are warmly invited to share in these services. More information from Fr. David O’Neill 6223 1795, or e-mail dgoneill@bigpond.net.au



CENSUS INFORMATION

The 15th National Census of Population and Housing will be held on the night of **Tuesday 8 August** this year. Everyone in Australia will be counted wherever they are.

The Census provides a snapshot of everyone in Australia and measures important things like age, birthplace, languages spoken, religion and ancestry.

To ensure all communities are included the Australian Bureau of Statistics is consulting closely with government, service, ethnic and community organisations.

Government, business and community decision makers all rely on Census information to plan facilities and services like housing, health, education, language services and special assistance programs. In light of this, Census 2006 includes some new questions on whether people need assistance with self-care, body movement and communications.

As religious organisations are the biggest providers of services, outside of government, in a wide range of areas, the ABS is relying on your assistance to communicate the value of the Census to the Church community.

The following groups are of particular interest:

- young people,
- those who are homeless,
- migrant groups, new migrants and established groups

The ABS has found that the highest rate of undercount has been among young people aged 15-29, particularly young men. The Census might seem boring or irrelevant to some young people, the homeless or to new migrants. The fact is the Census is an opportunity for all to be counted, no matter who or where they are.

Under the Census and Statistics Act all ABS officers (including temporary employees) are legally bound never to release identifiable personal information to any person or organisation outside the ABS.

The religion question included in the Census is not designed to measure the degree of participation in particular religions and philosophies. Rather, as many people access services in accord with their nominal religious affiliation, the statistics are highly useful for planning these services (for example, many Catholics who do not actively participate in their religion send their children to Catholic schools). The religion question has been optional in all Australian censuses; this follows from a requirement in the Australian Constitution.

By completing a Census form on the night of August 8, individuals can help plan for a better future for their local community, and help ensure all community groups have the services they require.

For more information visit the Census website at www.abs.gov.au/census or contact Terri Fox on 03 6222 5835 or by email therese.fox@abs.gov.au



UNITING CARE B&G COMMUNITY SERVICES

The Bridgewater and Gagebrook Parish Mission relies on the help of volunteers to run the Uniting Care B&G Community Services "Emergency Relief Program". This program provides aid for those in need, such as food vouchers, payment of bills, furniture, bedding, wood supply etc. In this way God's instruction of helping others, regardless of race or faith, and responding to their needs is fulfilled.

The Mission is a Not for Profit based enterprise run by the Uniting Church for the benefit of the community.

If you believe you have the skills and interest to become a volunteer in the programs of the Mission, please contact B&G Community services at PO Box 174, Bridgewater, Tasmania 7030 or phone 6263 5217 for more information. This is an essential service in our community and your assistance would be very much appreciated.

AUSTRALIAN CHURCH WOMEN Fellowship Day

The theme for the services this year is
"I am the Bread of Life"

Services will be held in various parts of the state
at the end of July.

Please check Parish News Bulletins for full details or contact the State Secretary, Mrs. Juanita Millar, phone 6331 5185, or e-mail djmiller@hotkey.net.au

SPIRITUALITY AND ART

Come along to *Spirituality in the Pub* at the Moonah Café Bar Bistro at **7.30 pm on Wednesday 28 June, 2006** to explore *Spirituality & Art*. Guests will be Joe Cooper who has had art exhibited for the Blake Prize in Sydney and Maz Gil-Harper who spreads Christianity through taking her art to psychic expos etc. The evening will finish by 9.00 pm. Meals available from the Bistro from 5.30 pm. Enquiries to Rev. Peter Weeks 6228 1068.