



"... where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." (Matthew 18:20 KJV)

### **CHURCH ON THE GREEN: LIVING AND LOVING IT!**

*"We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure."* (Hebrews 6:19)

Thank-you to those who put "Gathered Together" together.

It is good to have a place where we can find many of our friends, as we wonder what has happened to them.

As well "Gathered Together" is a great encouragement of the faithfulness of God and that no matter what has happened to us we have Jesus.

Isn't that what really matters in the end? Romans 8:28-39. is a great inspiration in this regard.

"Gathered Together" also shows people that leaving the Uniting Church is not the end, but rather for many of us, we have found a wonderful new beginning by and in the grace of God.

It is for this reason I write this article, to bring hope to those who have left the Uniting Church, and will leave in the future, that there are many of us who have left previously and have a heart for you and will do all we can to help you.

I have found it interesting to note that many people who feel trapped within the Uniting Church say: Where will we go? What can we do? As if there is no where to turn.

Well there is hope....and there are many options.

First of all of course we turn to Jesus the author and perfecter of our faith, surrender everything to Him, and let His Spirit lead.

When Abraham was called he just left and didn't know where he was going what would happen - he just went in faithfulness and obedience according to the promise of God.

The disciples of Jesus when first called were somewhat similar, as were the Israelites leaving Egypt and many others in the scriptures. Faith and obedience being the key, with a confidence and trust in God.

The grief of leaving is very painful and real, but we pass through that by the grace of God, put it all on the cross and know the Truth of the resurrection and new life.

By the grace of God I am so thankful for the experience of leaving the Uniting Church.

Somehow friends of mine who remain in the Church seem to give me the impression that after leaving I must be off somewhere, mortally



**Church on the Green (Beverly Hills, New South Wales)  
First Birthday celebrated on 27th February 2005**

**For more pictures and information see their website  
at [www.churchonthegreen.org.au](http://www.churchonthegreen.org.au)**

wounded in oblivion. They find it hard to imagine how it could be any other way and look at you sort of sideways? Most just don't understand. It is not in their experience.

The Truth is for many of us including me, we are alive and well, and never been better.

God, in and by His Spirit has taken many of us to a new depth of faith, commitment and love of Jesus that is such a gift.

For me, I have discovered dimensions of faith like I've never known before and I have seen God's faithfulness and so many miracles in a way I'd never have imagined.

This is True of the Church I serve in too. The growth in people has been phenomenal all around me.

I am humbled and so privileged to be the Senior Pastor of a growing, vibrant Church in Sydney, called "Church on the Green" which formed as many of us departed the U.C.A. on December 31, 2004.

I give all honour and glory to God. I love being a Pastor and I praise God daily that I am able to continue to serve His Church in this way.

Like many of you, when we left the Uniting Church we had to leave everything materially and the denomination we loved and served in, but felt we could not remain in good conscience before God.

But God has turned our situation totally around.

Both myself and our Associate Pastor have been employed full-time since we left and we have just employed my wife Judy as Team Leader of our new Counselling Centre here in Beverly Hills.

This year we sent 5 of our people on Mission to Sakhalin Island Russia to work in an orphanage for short term mission, we will host an International Retreat for Southern Cross Association of Churches here in Sydney March 10-12, 2006 and we are sending a Team to Africa and Mauritius in October 2006 as well as a member back to Russia later this year, and have been involved in several other mission projects locally, nationally and internationally.

And so much more is happening...A growing Seniors Group, Youth Group, Kids Club, and so it goes on to the glory of God emanating His faithfulness..

In leaving Church on the Green discovered in a very real way that our home is in Jesus and our relationship with Him is paramount and then with each other.

We have learnt faith is all about relationship, with God and each other. That is our strength...that is all we had and all we needed.

Everything moves on from there. We have found powerfully, that God is faithful and can be trusted.

Of course we have many new members now who have had nothing to do with the Uniting Church, we are a new entity, but very much part of the Body of Christ.

We have found it helpful since our inception to be part of a wider Network of Churches which is not a denomination, but built on relationships. We chose to join the Southern Cross Association of Churches and found it a wonderful encouragement giving us a much broader perspective on life, mission and ministry.

If you are a Church not part of a denomination or network I'd strongly encourage you to become part of a wider network.

Church on the Green is happy to be of any support to you we can in setting up your new Church, or part of a consultation in assisting you to grow.

Whilst in Sydney we welcome you.

Just let us know you're in town so we can serve you.

For more details, you can check us out at our website at [www.churchonthegreen.org.au](http://www.churchonthegreen.org.au) or contact me from the details on the back of this magazine.

I have a heart for all of you who have left and those contemplating it. I want to see you successful and prosperous in the sight of God.

For those reading this article who feel they have no where to go or turn..you do...

Believe, there is a great life in store, a new freedom, and a greater understanding of the faithfulness of God. I am living it and loving it! And so are many others!!!

PETER WILSON.

[www.churchonthegreen.org.au](http://www.churchonthegreen.org.au)

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## Apology

I am sorry it has taken so long to compile and distribute this 'Gathered Together'.

Unfortunately events managed to get in my way and after having it nearly complete some weeks ago, I had difficulty finding the little time necessary to finish the job.

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## Pinery Community Church

Last issue we printed some information on how the present Pinery Community Church in South Australia came into being. Below is an example of how God spoke to one of the Pinery people during the time of trying to discern God's will.

I too was devastated by the decision of Assembly in July 2003 and was praying for guidance on how we should respond. As I was reading, a few verses from Isaiah really grabbed my attention. – *“Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil, who put darkness for light, and light for darkness, ... Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes, and clever in their own sight. ... As tongues of fire lick up straw, and as dry grass sinks down in the flames, so their roots will decay, ... for they have rejected the law of the Lord Almighty, and spurned the word of the Holy One of Israel.”* Is. 5: 20-24.

On another occasion I was feeling intense grief for the Uniting Church which, along with the Methodist Church, had been my spiritual home all my life. I decided to read the passage which tells of Jesus bearing our griefs and looked up Isaiah 53. There on the same page verses really stood out and grabbed my attention. – *“Depart, depart, go out from there. Touch no unclean thing. Come out from it, and be pure, you who carry the vessels of the Lord. But you will not leave in haste, or go in flight, for the Lord will go before you, and the God of Israel will be your rear guard.”* Is. 52: 11,12.

Again, on another occasion, feeling a bit discouraged from praying for guidance and not receiving clear direction, I opened my Promise Box. This was a little gift which someone had given me many, many years ago, containing 160 verses. I rarely use this promise box and hadn't opened it for more than 8 years because it can become trying to manipulate God and also the type of promise can be predictable, - e.g. *“I will never leave you, or forsake you.”* However, I took a verse at random, and was amazed to open it and read, - *“Come out from them and be separate, and I will be a Father to you, ... says the Lord Almighty.”* 2 Cor. 6: 14-18. I was surprised that this text was in the promise box.

One night I had a dream. I saw a large ship, loaded with people, tossed in very rough seas. Suddenly it was turned completely upside down, then the right way up again, but many people were thrown out, and were floundering in the rough seas. We were on the shore and went out in little row boats, picking up survivors and ferrying them back to shore.

In the period of struggling with Res. 84 and decision making, our Know Your Bible group was studying Exodus. Over and over again throughout this study subjects arose which were so relevant to where we were at as a congregation at that time, e.g. God calling His people out of Egypt, supplying all their needs through the wilderness and promising to bring them safely into the Promised Land. In Ex. 19: 4 the Lord says, *“You yourselves have seen ... how I carried you on eagles wings and brought you to Myself. Now, if you obey Me fully, ... you will be My treasured possession.”* Also Ex. 33: 14, *“The Lord replied, ‘My Presence will go with you, and I will give you rest.’ Then Moses said to Him, ‘If your Presence does not go with us, do not send us up from here.’”* The very next study was 1 Cor. and the author of the study notes included comments in the introduction which really grabbed our attention. *“Paul deals too with sexual immorality among the Christians in a forthright manner that is all too relevant to our present scene ... We see human nature and the impact of sin and temptation basically unchanged, with the word of God as relevant as ever.”* Also, *“Paul says that as Christians, we can, and must associate with immoral people outside the church. If we didn't, we would need to leave this world, but we are to love them, and seek to win them for Christ. But when such people are within the church, if they are proudly, and unrepentantly sexually immoral, we are to steer clear. It's a different matter however, if they are wounded and broken hearted. Then Christ calls us to love and accept them also.”*

I longed for some clear direction, red or green lights, through this wilderness experience. There were none. The dreams and visions were reassuring, but not sufficient for decision making. It had to be just obedience to God's word, and go out in faith, trusting He would lead us. The words of a chorus really spoke to me at this time. –

“God will make a way, where there seems to be no way.  
He works in ways we cannot see, He will make a way for me.  
He will be my Guide. Hold me closely to His side.  
With love and strength for each new day, He will make a way.  
By a roadway in the wilderness He'll lead me. Rivers in the desert will I see.  
Heaven and earth will fade, but His word will still remain.  
And He will do something new, today.”

None of the incidents above, taken alone, would I consider sufficient evidence to call it God's direction, but these together, plus many others, gave me certainty that we were being told to leave the UCA. Having finally made that decision, in union with others in the congregation, I one day had a vision. I saw a small group of people close together, with a big pair of hands holding, supporting them. And I thought of the promise of Jesus, - *“My sheep hear My voice, and they follow Me, ... and no one can snatch them out of My hand.”*

**Next Issue**

We would welcome contributions for the next issue.

Thanks to those who have sent us information about their activities to print and share.

Contributions can be e-mailed to Ian Denton ( iandcn@yahoo.com ) or sent to 64 Blacket St., Downer 2602, A.C.T..

We will email or post out each issue which can then be copied for the people within the recipient groups.

Please include the best contact information for your group so people who are travelling can get in touch if they are staying close by. ID

**Cunnamulla – from Reachout newsletter**

**Reachout**  
 News and Announcements  
 The Past & Present  
 The Future  
 The Present  
 The Future

Dear Friends July-Aug 06  
 It seems that it was only yesterday that we were writing to you to keep you up to date with the progress and plans. It has been a most amazing time. Many positive encouragements.

Every time we are about putting legs on Christmas, I will pick up the Christmas cards to make the party more festive. I am sure that the cards will be a great help to the children's progress. I have been in the 1000 and the road to "Sharpen the Saw". Anybody that uses a chainsaw knows that you will use a LOT of energy trying to cut wood with a saw that is not sharpened. If you keep pushing without sharpening the saw, eventually it will not cut at all. The same can be said for the church. If you are not sharpening the saw, eventually it will not cut at all. The same can be said for the church. If you are not sharpening the saw, eventually it will not cut at all.

The picture on the left is James, Timothy and Jane. These people have become dear friends to the church in the Outback. They have been here for a long time and have done really well. They are a great part of our church. Please let them know that we are thinking of them. We are all well and hope you are too. We are all well and hope you are too.

There are so many needs! \$ for ... . Are we stressing over the needs? NEVER. [We seek] your prayers in unity to see His kingdom come.

“I have often said that Cunnamulla does not need another crusade but rather to receive with gladness the message that has been placed within their heart, to dig deep into the Word of God OFTEN and to live it consistently.

What we do need is some Young yeast of Jesus to move to Cunnamulla and engage in a Year in the Outback. Call it 'Out Back 06' team. We are praying, writing and looking for God's team for 06. ...

If you are reading this and this is speaking to you or you know somebody else who needs to be connecting with us, don't just sit there, pray something, call somebody.”

There are so many

needs! \$ for ... . Are we stressing over the needs? NEVER. [We seek] your prayers in unity to see His kingdom come.

Go as you are lead by the Lord.  
 Bless as you are blessed by the Lord.  
 Trust and obey, for there is no other way to be happy in Jesus but to trust and obey.

Wayne and Jane's PS In our travels we will be pleased to share what God is doing in the Outback & beyond.

The website [www.dillonministries.com](http://www.dillonministries.com) is worth a look.

**Reachout**  
 News and Announcements  
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 The Future  
 The Present  
 The Future

Dear Friends Sep/Oct 2005  
 Good news in the Nightly News of the day: What an amazing couple of months! God is SO GOOD, SO GOOD.

and also with them after returning in October. Their way South to be picked up a DVD that we created with help from far and wide called 'The Cully Story, 200 seconds of Kingdom Mission'. It is a great picture of how we are doing (partly in the Outback and beyond) and encouraging people to lay in to see the vision become a reality. Also much work has gone into producing a Web site for the UCCF. Huge thanks to Graham Norman who

Adaptive Baptist from Brisbane  
 The first week of the September school holidays with to 30th was an amazing week to be in Cunnamulla. A group of us have been here for the last five years and very friendly folks have been welcomed with the food table. This year was probably the best ever with the Cully kids not wanting them to leave. It was a good mix of kids and families. We are planning to take a group of 10-15 in the future to Brisbane and take from Adelaide to do a lot of starting for us to set down at their church and to attend assemblies at a joint Adelaide/Cunnamulla group.

Albi and Rob Teddie  
 12th Sept was an amazing evening with Albi doing a great job of combining scripture and song. The week was the 10th anniversary of the Tri-Rock Cafe which has been fully renovated and reopened again. It is always a great evening having Rob and Albi and their time well spent, as they feel their work.

last done an amazing job in getting the Web Site up and running. www.UCCFADMINISTRATIVE.COM offer handy night 24th October.

Grassby Conference Sunday the 10th of Sept, a moment of heading the We became for a time of encouraging, equipping and empowering. It was transformational happen in Australia. The guest speakers brought great encouragement but also great challenges. Murray Robertson from New Zealand lifted the bar of excellence. Christianity is a much higher level. Even so, we see the Bible as God's Word and there it is, but we really live a life that constantly reflects the love of Jesus and the command to live a life worthy of the calling. They have required the best of us. There are plenty of people who are bent out of shape and about three inches greater than God has created us to be. His call and light to a living love of Jesus. The reality is to carry the Good News. The best news ever.



## Port Neill – South Australia

' We are a small but vibrant group and have met together in the local sports complex from May 2004 after leaving the Uniting Church in February of that year.

We desire to be real and genuine about our faith and enjoy participating in gifts of ministry as we see love in action and God at work.

Recently we travelled to Cummins to the Eyre Family Church and were greatly encouraged by their enthusiasm. As worship progressed so did the approaching thunderstorm and an awesome display of God's power could be witnessed both inside and outside.

Thank you for your vision in compiling this newsletter. '

Kym Shepherd

## Good News in Catani

[An] amazing thing has happened to our church. In about March we heard rumours of thoughts to sell the UCA in Catani. We decided we should show an interest in the building, so we sent the UCA a letter explaining that we felt the building was really ours, giving 6 - 7 reasons why. First we received a letter saying 'it was legally the property of the UCA'. ... [The Presbytery requested a meeting.] At that meeting they offered us a lease of the Catani UCA building. After they left we all sat down and thanked God in a time of prayer. We had to get our own public liability cover. A couple of quotes were quite expensive and we felt we couldn't justify spending so much on insurance. Then another quote came back almost half the cost of the first quotes, so we are going ahead.

## A Visit to Rivergate Christian Community

On Sunday November 20 at 6 pm I attended Rivergate Christian Community in suburban Adelaide with some members of my Adelaide family. Our granddaughter sings in the group that leads worship at Rivergate. They lead us in a time of worship focussed on Jesus, our Lord and Saviour. Then Mary Hawkes preached on the two great commandments - to love God with all your heart and soul and mind and to love your neighbour as you love yourself (Mt 22:37-40). We tend to downgrade the importance of the second great commandment, if we do not value ourselves as highly as God values everyone; because He sent His only Son to die for us all.

When we love someone very deeply we can't help thinking about them all the time. This is the way we should be about God. Has our love for Him grown stale or cold? Do we do things out of duty rather than love? To do things out of duty is not so good and is second best to doing it out of love for Him.

Mary spoke about two of the churches in Revelation chapters 2 and 3, Ephesus and Laodicea. Ephesus had forsaken their first love - their love had grown stale. Laodicea was rich in the things of this world, just like we Christians are in Australia, compared with our brother Christians in developing countries. In Laodicea they made their money by selling eye-balm, but they were blind towards God (Rev 3:18). Mary appealed to us to come closer to God.

[For information: Nick Hawkes was preaching at Southern Gateway Community Church in Victor Harbour and the following Sunday (November 27) Pastor Rob Moores from Victor Harbour would be preaching at Rivergate]

Howard Bradbury

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