



Uniting Network Australia

c/- PO Box 98
Enmore NSW 2042

www.connect.to/unitingnetwork/

NSW/ACT - Uniting Network NSW/ACT

Links to the Uniting Church in Australia through the NSW Board of Education
PO Box 98 Enmore, NSW 2042 Ph: Warren Talbot on 0408 430 582
www.nsw.uca.org.au/boe/resources/unitingnetwork.htm
unnswhotmail.com

QLD - Contact Revd Beverly Cameron in Sydney (02) 9957 5367
Bev can refer individuals to people in QLD

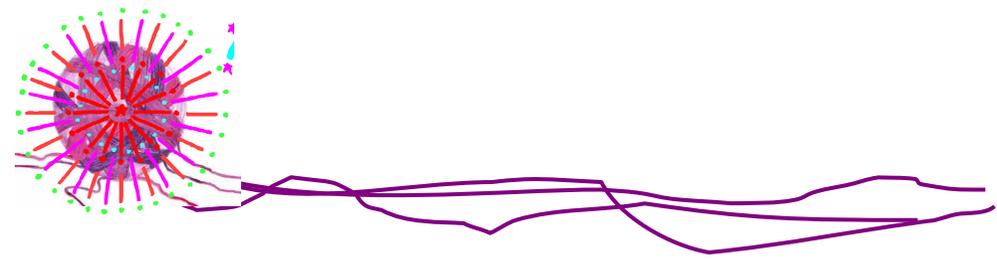
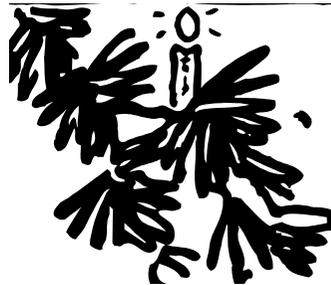
SA - Unity and Friends of Unity

Unity is a support group for LGBT people, their families and friends.
Friends of Unity is an association of Uniting Church people who support Unity in SA
and work for equality for LGBT people
PO Box 848, North Adelaide, SA 5006
www.fou.uniting.com.au/unity.html

TAS - Uniting Network: Peter 03 6437 1859
TasUnity: Pat McKenzie 03 6344 2357

VIC - "for84" supports diversity and inclusiveness
PO Box 2149 Ringwood North, VIC 3134
www.for84.unitingchurch.org.au
admin@for84.unitingchurch.com.au

WA - Uniting Network WA
C/O Trinity Church, 72 St Georges Terrace, Perth, 6000.
Phone 08 9321 9711 (ask for Bev)
www.connect.to/unitingnetwork/wa.html



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Editor: Elizabeth Teece, Co-Convenor, Uniting Network NSW/ACT
Uniting Church in Australia, Synod of NSW

Deputy Editor: Warren Talbot, Education Officer, Uniting Network NSW/ACT
Uniting Church in Australia, Synod of NSW

Editorial Advisory Group: An Editorial Advisory Group is being established, and will be in place for the March 2007 edition.

Uniting Network Review is a quarterly publication of Uniting Network Australia, produced in December, March, June and September. Subscription is via membership of the Network. *UNR* is edited and produced by UN NSW/ACT which, since 1989, has formally linked and reported to the wider Uniting Church through the NSW Synod Board of Education. *The Christian ministry of the Uniting Network NSW/ACT is education and adult faith development concerning gender identity, sexuality and related matters, expressing pastoral care and respect for the God-given dignity of all people. Membership of the Network is open to all. Our primary purpose is to share the love and grace of God in Her world.*

Contributions are welcome. The views expressed in *UNR* are not necessarily those of the Uniting Network or the Uniting Church, and should not be presented as such. Please direct all contributions and inquiries to the Deputy Editor, wrtalbot@gmail.com or by mail to PO Box 98 Enmore NSW 2042. The deadline for the next issue is 1 February 2007. Where authorship has not been stated, news, views and articles have been written by the Deputy Editor. Copyright rests with each writer. Permission needs to be sought for any copying or reproduction. Approval for publication and re-printing rests with the Editor, Ms Teece.

Next issues and themes:

March 2007 (Lent) - "Our histories - Reformed, Evangelical and LGBTI"

June 2007 - same sex relationships: marriage? unions? open? single?

September 2007 - Pastoral Care guidelines

December 2007 - Liturgies and rituals for our lives

March 2008 - "Coming Out" - entries from December 2007 UN/UTC conference

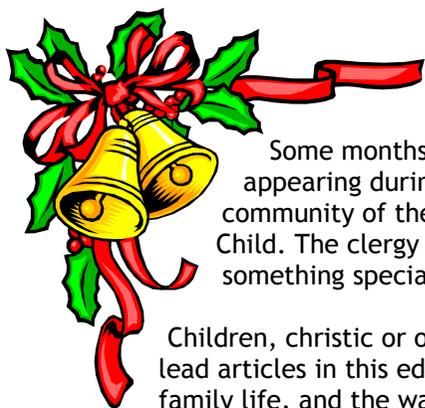
June 2008 - Daring 2008, the eighth national daring gathering set for Adelaide.

Contributions on these themes, news or any matter which may further the aims and objectives of the Network are invited. Articles should be brief (maximum 700 words), although longer articles will be considered. The guest editorialist for March 2007 will be Malcolm Cowan, UNA National Archivist.

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Holy Families First? - Editorial

Some months ago we set the theme for this issue of *UNR*, appearing during the season of Advent, the time when the community of the faithful is preparing for the birth of the Christ Child. The clergy don their purple stoles. We are getting ready for something special.

Children, christic or otherwise, come from somewhere - families. Two lead articles in this edition tell us something about the joys and pain of family life, and the ways in which lesbians and gay men have and are seeking to express their love and humanity. A further article, to be printed in March 2007, reminds us that many lesbian and gay people move into same sex relationships with a child or children from a previous other sex relationship.

Same sex couples and families may seem irregular to some. But a virgin mother, a bastard child, a barely visible human father - plus a few sheep, their herders, angels and astrologers from afar in a shitty stable - is hardly the stuff of normality either.

Families are the crucible from which we all emerge. Nurture and support for some. Domestic violence and sexual assault for others. It is not enough to simply tell us to "move on", ditch our "emotional baggage" and ignore our family histories. LGBT people cannot do that anymore than other people.

Some in the church and wider society would lay claim to the word "family". But they preach a gospel of exclusion, not welcome. They selfishly define "family" in order to reject some. Their vision is tiny. Their political tactics puny. But, dangerously, they engage in the ongoing religious abuse of LGBT people and our families.

The Christmas message for LGBT people of faith, along with all members of the human family, is one of hope - we and our many diverse families, in joy and in pain, are welcome. The Sacred Space is for all. We can be holy. We are family!

*Warren Talbot, Deputy Editor
December 2006*

"Tis Mercy All" St Luke 1:68-79

An advent biblical reflection By David Gill

The readings we hear in the run-up to Christmas are crammed with fascinating people. It's understandable, though unfortunate, that Zechariah, the father of John the Baptist, sometimes gets crowded out.

To Zechariah is attributed what's sometimes called the Benedictus, the glorious song of praise many congregations will use in place of the psalm on the second Sunday in Advent.

It is a lyrical celebration of the mystery of grace. "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel" whose mercy is so vast, whose light so penetrating, whose tender love guides our feet into the way of peace.

Zechariah's outburst of joy points to what is at the heart of Advent. It invites us to forget the tinsel, to look beyond the stories of cribs, wise ones and angels, to contemplate again the great drama of our redemption.

It presses us to rediscover the nearness of a God who, against all the odds, really does care. Cares about the whole human family, with no ifs, buts or maybes. No exclusions, either. No exclusions whatsoever.

Not only does God care. God does something about it. God acts. Advent readies us to encounter, afresh, the astonishing mystery of unconditional love in action. And to encounter it as a gift that bears your name, mine, everyone's.

But Advent asks us to do more than contemplate.

It challenges us to become faith communities that embody Zechariah's grace-filled joy. Witnessing to the good news is not primarily about stringing together religious words. Evangelism is not just about turning up the volume. "Don't tell me, show me" went a love song that was on the hit parades some years ago. Good advice for what E. M. Forster ironically called "poor, little, talkative, Christianity"

As Christmas will remind us again, just a few weeks hence, incarnation is the name of the game. Yet, when it comes to embodying its message of divine grace, the church has quite a way to go.

On a recent Sunday, in our congregation, the prayers of confession included a sentence that grabbed me. "Forgive us" we prayed, "if we create a church which is known for its judgments rather than for its overflowing grace".

"If"? I stumbled a bit there. Can anyone doubt that again and again we've done precisely that, making the church judgemental rather than grace-filled? All of us should be on our knees for it, because facile moralising is a trap into which we've all fallen.

Don't read this as a cheap shot at conservative Christians.

Forget such labels. Whether you're conservative or liberal or hovering somewhere around the middle, whether you're rich or poor, gay or straight, young or old, it's so perilously easy to turn the good news of grace into bad news of moralising.

Yes, I know, finger-pointing is so satisfying. Identifying splinters in other people's eyes makes us feel good. But unconditional love is what God's on about, and we need to be church in a way that makes that unmistakably clear - to everyone.

One of my favourite hymns is Charles Wesley's "And can it be". Remember the recurring themes:

*"Tis mercy all, immense and free
for, O my God, it found out me".*

*"Amazing love! how can it be
That thou, my God, shouldst die for me!"*

Worth singing in Advent, perhaps? With a threefold Amen? Old Zechariah would have approved.

News, news and news

Friends of Unity (FoU), South Australia held its Annual General Meeting on 16 November 2006. FoU describes itself as a "community of people from across the Synod of SA of the Uniting Church committed to the full inclusion of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people, their family and friends, within the life of the church and the Australian community."

A new brochure which FoU has produced includes testimonials from members. One such testimonial reads: "FoU is for me my primary support groups. It is there that I feel most valued for who I am, and most supported as I seek to use my gifts and to celebrate God at work in me."

Uniting Network NSW/ACT - Two women to lead

After the Network's Annual Worship Service, at the Annual General Meeting held 6 November, two lay women, Leanne Hutcheson and Elizabeth Teece were elected to lead the Uniting Network in NSW/ACT for the coming year.

Both women bring a wealth of experience to their appointments. Elizabeth has been a Committee Member since 1999 and a Co-Convenor since 2001. Leanne has been a Committee Member since 1998, Treasurer since 2000 and Uniting Network Australia NSW state representative since 2002.

"It is an honour", Ms Hutcheson stated "to have been elected to lead a Church organisation committed to gender and sexual diversity". "Our challenges in 2007", Ms Hutcheson said, "are to develop detailed pastoral care guidelines and links with lesbian and gay communities, in line with the Uniting Church vision of *transforming communities*".

Ms Teece stated that "The 2006 Uniting Church Assembly provided real leadership, enabling us all to serve the mission and ministry of the Church."

Uniting Network Australia Co-convenor, Rowena Allen, was able to attend the Service and AGM which were both held at Sydney's Lane Cove Uniting Church for the first time. The preacher was the Minister at Lane Cove, the Revd Jerry Duncan, who was a minister with the United Church of Christ in the USA prior to coming to Australia.

The Director of Uniting Justice Australia, Revd Elenie Poulos, has made a submission to the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity commission Inquiry on same sex relationships. The submission utilises the human rights statement supported by the Assembly in July 2006. The statement further argues that

“The Uniting church in Australia is committed to the principles of social justice and peacemaking, and the realisation of the inalienable human rights of all people. Underlying this commitment is the principle that all people must be equal before the law, and we recognise that this is not the current state of affairs for people in committed same sex relationship, As such, UnitingJustice Australia recommends that this situation be amended to give those in committed same gender relationships the same legal status and benefits as those heterosexual couples whose relationship is recognised by the State.”

The full statement is available from unitingjustice@nat.uca.org.au.

Retired Episcopalian Bishop, John Shelby Spong, will be visiting Australia again in August 2007. Details will be provided in the March 2007 edition.

Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori has commenced work as the Primate of the USA Episcopal Church. In addition to being the first woman to head an Anglican Province, Schori is dealing with international and some local dissent over the consecration of openly gay man, Bishop Gene Robinson. Bishop Schori voted in favor of Bishop Robinson's consecration.

Christian Alliance for Progress in the USA has issued a clear position statement on equality for gay and lesbian people. The Alliance argues that “using the popular purity codes of today, such as sexual orientation, to ostracise and marginalise people is immoral”. See christianalliance.org.au.

The Centre for Lesbian and Gay Studies in Religion and Ministry, at the Pacific School of Religion in Berkely, maintains an informative email list. The Centre can be contacted at clgs@clgs.org.au, and they will add you to their email list. Current work includes transgender religious leadership, a Certificate course in Sexuality and Religion, and work with different groups (feminist, lesbian, gay, queer) within the American Academy of Religion.

Two Mums and a Dad for Tali



We knew we needed more information about this lesbian parenting business so we were delighted to find that the Royal Women's Hospital was holding a seminar on the very subject! We walked into the room to find one hundred other wanna-be lesbian mums (and the odd Dad) preparing to take notes at a furious rate. That night we were told that on average it takes same-sex couples two years to journey from a decision to get pregnant to finally receiving confirmation of impending parenthood. For us it was 1 year and 11 months before we were delighted to find we had conceived Tali Ruth.

Caitlin and I knew from the beginning that we preferred to have a Dad involved in our child's life and we knew it would need to be someone we could imagine being in life long relationship with. In fact we often joke that it is kind of like having an ex who you never had to break up with because you were never together in the first place. We knew it would have to be someone we already trusted and could imagine having that bond grow stronger.

So after dinner one evening we gathered up our courage and asked Matt if he would be the father of our child. After an initial reaction of shock, Matt agreed to dream about the possibilities with us over the next year. We knew it would take time to become comfortable with the possibility of having a child together and even more time to negotiate how we wanted it to look. When we finally sat down ten months later to draw up a parenting agreement, our hard work had paid off and we relatively easily navigated the terrain of relationship and decision making models, financial matters and dispute resolution models. We have joked that our dispute resolution model is so comprehensive that if we ever get to court we probably deserve to be there because it will be the only option left!

So we were ready to roll at last. Spring was advancing and what better a time to make babies. Intent was one thing but the mechanics of making a baby with two mums and a dad was another. After consulting various pamphlets and books we decided we were ready to give it a go. Amazingly enough we were successful in our first month and breathed a sigh of relief that the services of the sperm courier would not be required again.

Tali was born on 2nd June 2004 and Matt joined us at the hospital hours after

her birth to welcome her into our lives. We were all amazed at what we had created and had high hopes that our many nights of talking over a good bottle of wine would translate into strong relationships and modelling for our daughter.

18 months later we are going strong. Caitlin and I love the fact that Matt cares for Tali every second weekend because it gives us a wonderful break to do other things in our lives. Every other week we all get the chance to talk over dinner while Tali runs around showing off to one of us at various times. Probably the hardest things we have encountered so far have been the legal aspects where there has been little flexibility to reflect our family's reality. When there was no space for me on the birth certificate and no space for Matt in the Parenting

Orders we both felt the exclusion that the law brings when it is dealing with alternative models of family. But in another way, we are glad that the hardest things we have had to deal with are those outside our choosing and have little impact on our daily lives. So far the parenting agreement, although not a legal document, still reflects our intent and care for Tali in her life.

We know that we have been lucky but we have also put in some hard work to make this work and will keep doing so for the rest of our lives. In fact, we have decided it's such a good thing we're going to give it a go again!

Caitlin, Caz and Matt all met through Daring conferences. Their story was written up by Jill Singer in her book 'Immaculate Conceptions' published by Lothian Books.

Gay and Lesbian Families? By Des Perry

My Son was born in September 2001, and for the first two years of his life I saw him for a total of 10 hours (except for immediately after his birth). Some of you may have recently listened to "Sperm Wars" on BIG IDEAS an ABC radio program. It set off alarm bells for me because it showed the extent to which the gay and lesbian community has totally failed to articulate a perspective on "family" which has the child's best interest at heart, and which is not just a self indulgent adult perspective. If this is true of the gay and lesbian community at large then regrettably Gay and lesbian Christians respond with

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silence because of a reluctance to discuss sexual expression let alone procreation.

A lesbian couple, whom I had known for three years approached me and asked if I would be a sperm donor. I refused saying that if I was going to father a child, then I would want to be a father and play an active role in the child's life. A year later they approached me again, and said that they had re-thought and believed that I would be a good father, and that they would be willing for me and my partner to be actively involved. I draw up an agreement, which we all signed, and although it was not a legally binding document it was a statement of intent. I need not go into any detail here about the nature of the agreement or the subsequent family court proceedings as these are clearly laid out on the New Zealand Family court website at (Google search: "Perry-Miles").

Suffice it to say that in the preamble to the agreement I wrote that I "would like it to be clear that the decision to become a father has not been taken lightly and that the child's birth and life is of great significance to me".

The ensuing events are long, painful and costly, and have only recently resulted in a Parenting Order being made allowing for contact between my son and I on a fortnightly basis and commencement of overnight care. There were 4 family court hearings and two high court appeals which achieved this outcome, and mostly this was because of the nature of the conception which gave the birth mother automatic guardianship and custody, and the birth father no rights or obligations. This was coupled with the intransigence/hostility of the mother and her partner who refused any conciliation or mediation until the second High Court appeal was lost (2.5 years after my son's birth) The first High court appeal has acted as a Catalyst for changes to the New Zealand Status of children Act and the Care of Children Act, which I will look at later.

You may well ask, why is he mentioning New Zealand? The birth mother and her partner relocated to Auckland in 2002. They took out ex-parte applications for joint custody and did not inform me that they were applying for custody. They then refused to serve me with their applications when ordered to do so by the family court. Judge Inglis said that because my son was not conceived through "the congress which nature intended", I had no rights or liabilities in the law. However, he concluded that the fact of the signed agreement and my name being on the birth certificate, was sufficient for me to make an test application for guardianship, and access. The matter was heard before Judge

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Doogue, who stated that she was “saddened by the decision that she had to make”, but could not find any way around the laws which defined me as a sperm donor. At Appeal, Justices Priestly and Heath found that the judge had erred in law because although I could not make applications as a parent - I could make an application as “any other person”, and that the UNCROC was also relevant. The High court said that the merits of my son and I having contact should be heard.

The judgement from the next hearing before Judge Fleming is found on the website, as is the more recent judgement of Judge Von Dadelszen. The latter has quotes from the parties about their perspectives on family which are of interest.

There was also an intervening high court appeal from the mother and her partner which failed. One of the key arguments put forward by the mother and which was echoed in the “Sperm Wars” program, was that she and her partner constitute my sons primary and nuclear family, and that the involvement of the father (“donor” is the word they prefer to use) was an intrusion.

It seems to me that the mandate for a two parent family is based traditionally on a biological reality - that a child is created from two biological parents. As Christians who are biblically literate, we are all aware of a long cultural tradition of children being born into much more than a two parent family - polygamous families, the clan, the tribe etc... If lesbians are thinking of creating children outside that biological reality, then the requirement for “two parents” also flies out the door - there could be one, two or more parents, and the literature and human experience over the centuries seems to suggest the more the merrier, in terms of children sustaining benefit from attachment to more than two primary adults. The New Care of Children Act (2004) in NZ, states that one of the principles to the child’s welfare and best interests is that “relationships between the child and members of his or her family, family groups, Whanau, Hapu or Iwi should be preserved and strengthened, and those members should be encouraged to participate in the child’s care, development and upbringing.”

Some of the Lesbian couples who were interviewed on “Sperm Wars” spoke of “our children”, “our family” and “our Donor”. Such views, in my opinion, are self-indulgent. They are exclusive rather than inclusive, fail to ask what the child’s perspective and experience might be, are more “nuclear” than the “nuclear reality”, and seem to emulate a long questioned and challenged

perception of the “ideal heterosexual family” of mum, dad and 2.4 kids. It seems to me that these “Lesbian nuclear families” are simply “mum, mum’s partner and 2.4 kids” and fail to ask the question of how children could benefit not just from knowing who their father is, but from being cared for and having a relationship with their father, father’s partner and paternal extended family and friends.

Is there any biblical endorsement of this kind of perspective? I believe there is, other than the polygamous family structures of the Old Testament, I see it in Jesus himself. According to the Scripture, Joseph was not his biological father. The “donor” was God whom Jesus had a very close “daddy” or “mummy” relationship with.

While Jesus acknowledges his “primary” family - mother, father, brother, sisters, his reality a much broader family - extended to aunt and cousin (Elizabeth and John), but also to those who have the same “daddy” or “mummy” relationship with God and to anyone who did his “Father’s will”. Jesus perspective on family is not a small, mean and exclusive one, but a large, generous and inclusive one.

What is it that motives smallness, meanness and exclusiveness? I’m sure there are many different dynamics and I postulate a few -

- the psycho-dynamics of lesbian and gay relationships and how we experienced our own being parented - how did we get screwed up and how we experienced our own fathers
- The sociological - trying to aspire to a mythical ideal of family - and aspiring to social acceptance
- Anthropological - tribal infighting - fear, lack of trust and suspicion.

For the sake of the children, I think that we need to put their needs first and put aside our self-indulgences, fears, suspicions, desire to be normal, internalised homophobia, and our own negative childhood experiences. Exclusiveness is easy but destructive, whereas inclusiveness is hard, but life giving.



“The love of God” by Carter Heyward

From *“Religion is a Queer thing”*, Elizabeth Stuart
London, Cassell, 1997.

*The erotic
is our most fully embodied experience
of the love of God.*

*As such it is the source of
our capacity for transcendence,
the ‘crossing over’ among ourselves,
making connections between
ourselves in relation.*

“Grant us openness” by Coralie Ling

A Litany written for the Assembly meeting 1997

Jesus, Teacher.
You speak words that astound and amaze,
words that open us to new realities.
Grant us open ears, we pray.

Jesus, Sophia Wisdom.
Your ways are wise and truthful,
you find faith in women, children and strangers.
Grant us open minds, we pray.

Jesus, Prophet.
You are not afraid to do good amidst hostile stares,
to challenge the complacent.
Grant us open eyes we pray.

Jesus, Saviour.
You make people whole, you accept people of whatever sexuality.
Grant us open hearts, we pray.

Jesus, present in the gathering of your people.
You call the Church to discipleship,
to responding with openness to your teaching and wisdom,
to your prophetic and saving work.
**Grant us and this Assembly openness to your presence, we pray.
Amen.**

“Omnigender: A Trans-Religious Approach”

by Virginia Ramey Mollenkott, *The Pilgrim Press, Boston, 2001.*

This groundbreaking work, by Virginia Mollenkott, was published in 2001, though I have only just discovered it. It challenges those of us committed to sexuality equality to conceive of that in terms of gender. Mollenkott is a pioneering lesbian christian writer, having co-authored “Is the homosexual my neighbour?” with Leitha Scanzoni in 1978, and several other books including “Godding” and “Sensous Spirituality”.

Virginia Ramey Mollenkott contends that the common understanding of gender as two opposite sexes is woefully inadequate. In fact, she argues that this “binary gender paradigm” is oppressive and inflicts grave suffering on many people.

Identifying ways in which this paradigm is harmful to people, Mollenkott moves beyond the current gender construct to offer vision of a new, more flexible gender paradigm which she terms “omnigender.” In proposing a new paradigm, Mollenkott offers a vision of what such an omnigendered society might look like and offers suggestions for the educational, scientific, and political steps it will take to get there.

“The binary gender construct has been and continues to be of life-and-death importance to those who cannot meet society’s unrealistic requirements,” writes Mollenkott. In *Omnigender: A Trans-Religious Approach*, she shows how shifting gender paradigms will liberate individuals and make our society more truthful and just.

In 1998 the Uniting Network resolved to explicitly include transgender people in our Network. This book provides compelling support for that decision and for following it through in many ways we haven’t explored as yet.

“Gays, God and the Galileo problem in Christian thinking”

by Harry Herbert, Executive Director, UnitingCare NSW/ACT

Edited, with permission, from a sermon based on St Mark 6. Delivered on Sunday 9 July 2006 at Roseville Uniting Church, Sydney, Mr Herbert talks about excess baggage, provides various examples of changes in the Church over time, discusses H Richard Niebuhr, usury and divorce. Mr Herbert’s full text is available on request and has been published as the Uniting Network Occasional Paper, Number 2/2006.

...Which brings us to the vexed issue of homosexuality and the question of whether it is proper to ordain homosexual persons as ministers, indeed even bishops, of the Church? The differences on this issue in the Uniting Church are exactly mirrored in other churches, including the Anglican Communion. As you will see from what I have said, I do not think that this issue is best addressed by trading verses from the Bible. Moreover, in contrast to the issue of divorce, social taboos against homosexuality remain strong, although they are much on the wane in the western world. Nevertheless, for many people, perhaps more males than females, there are strong emotional responses to this issue which render logical argument, be it scriptural, scientific, psychological, or medical, rather superfluous.

There are, of course, more sophisticated arguments than the scriptural ones and it would be a relief in the Uniting Church if we heard more of them rather than the accustomed trading of scripture verses. For instance, to all too briefly describe one of those arguments, it is said that homosexual practices are of their very nature incompatible with Christian love. When God saw that it was not good for the man to be alone, he precisely made a woman to be with him. Homosexual relationships reflect a fundamentally narcissistic search for what is the same as oneself and are therefore unfulfilling. For this reason, it is said; they [gay and lesbian people] cannot be accepted by the Church.



While I put this forward as a more sophisticated theological argument, the problem here is what I call the Galileo problem in Christian thinking. That is, when Galileo looked through his primitive telescope in 1609 and found the four moons of Jupiter and the phases of Venus, he knew that Copernicus was right and the sun, not the earth, was the centre of the universe. But the empirical findings of Galileo and Copernicus cut across accepted scholasticism, based on Biblical and Aristotelian teachings.

Although he later recanted his views, Galileo was subjected to permanent house arrest. Interestingly Pope John Paul II commissioned an enquiry into the Galileo affair in 1981 and in 1992 declared that the theologians of the day had erred and that “the Bible does not concern itself with details of the physical world”.

Similarly, in regard to the argument I instanced about homosexuality, the evidence does not seem to bear out the theory. It does not seem true that their [same gender] relationships tend to make gay and lesbian people unfulfilled and unhappy, especially if these relationships are stable and faithful. Neither does it seem true that not wanting a sexual partner of the other sex implies rejection of the other sex. Homosexual people, it seems, do have deep friendships with people of the other sex. But, at least from my point of view, a debate along those lines would be more sophisticated and more fruitful and would be subject to some discipline, rather than the scriptural arguments more common in the Uniting Church. Nevertheless, for the reasons I have already given, the likelihood of consensus at this time is very remote, whatever the nature of the debate, and an agreement to respect the views of others seems the only way ahead.

Separating the faith from culture is no easy matter, as Richard Niebuhr wrote some 50 years ago. Christians will have different ways of doing it, some by a close observance to biblical texts, others by various theologies. But, whatever our means and whatever our decisions on particular matters of discipleship, let us beware of excess baggage. Let us pursue our pilgrimage of faith relying on the grace of the God who came to us in Jesus of Nazareth, and in that mighty incarnation redeemed us and offers us liberation from all worldly prejudices, cultures, and ideologies, to be his holy people.

Ten Ways To Make a Difference in your Church

From More Light Presbyterians

Founded just on 30 years ago, "More Light Presbyterians" (USA), formerly the "Presbyterians for Gay Concerns", has been leading efforts for equality in the Presbyterian Church (USA). MLP's field organiser Michael Adee recently compiled this list of 10 ways that local More Light movement supporters can do to make a difference for LGBT equality "right where you are". It seemed like a good list for Uniting Network Review readers as well.

1. Pray for open hearts & minds to the Spirit of God at work in your church and presbytery beginning with your own.
2. Embrace all persons as children of God created in the image of God and of sacred worth including yourself.
3. Seek out and join companions who are committed to ending discrimination, offering sanctuary and creating equality for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender persons & their families.
4. Nurture a theology, ethic and practice of hospitality within your church family and presbytery.
5. Break the silence and challenge the conspiracy of false witness brought against LGBT persons in church & society.
6. Create safe, welcoming & affirming spaces for LGBT persons, parents & families to come out, to live with integrity and to tell the truth of their lives and faith stories.
7. Participate in your National More Light Movement through "More Light Sunday" in June, "Come Out for More Light" house parties in October and by sending representatives to MLP Conferences & Retreats.
8. Support National More Light Presbyterians' ministries of education, advocacy, grassroots organising, and field outreach through membership drives, fundraising and mission giving.
9. Work for justice through the passage of ordination and marriage equality overtures within your church and in your presbytery in preparation for General Assembly 2008 in San Jose.
10. Celebrate your life and faith journey as a gift from God and be the change you seek to make in your church and world.

Contributors, UNR, December 2006

The Revd Dr Coralie Ling is a retired UCA minister, and was a founding national co-convenor of the Uniting Network in 1994; reprinted from *Uniting in Prayer*. Revd David Gill is a retired Uniting Church Minister. Revd Harry Herbert is the Executive Director, UnitingCare NSW/ACT. Some contributors requested anonymity, a request which has been respected.

Uniting Network Australia (UNA)

UNA is the national organisation which brings together support, education and advocacy groups for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people, friends and families, in the life of the Uniting Church. The organisation is lead by a national committee. National office-bearers are: Rowena Allen (Co-Convenor), Revd Robert Humphrey (Co-Convenor), Andrew O (Secretary), Meredith Knight (Treasurer), Malcolm Cowan (Archivist), Wal Anderson (Web Convenor), Elizabeth Teece (UNR Editor) and state/territory representatives.

Uniting Church in Australia (UCA)

This publication comes from within the life of the Uniting Church in Australia, a 1977 union of the Congregationalist, Methodist and Presbyterian churches. The UCA lives within the reformed and evangelical traditions of the church catholic, naming multiculturalism, diversity, biblical witness, social justice and inclusiveness as key components of our identity. For official national Uniting Church comment on any matter, please contact the Office of the Assembly General Secretary, Revd Terrence Corkin. For matters of human rights and social justice, contact the Revd Elenie Poulos, National Director, Uniting Justice Australia. Details on the UCA, including contact details for the Revds Corkin and Poulos can be found at www.nat.uca.org.au.

