

Uniting Church in Australia – Queensland Synod
Together on the way, enriching community



UNITING GREEN (QLD)

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From little things big things grow
(Paul Kelly & Kev Carmody)

OUTLINE

1. SEASONAL REFLECTION	2
2. ECO-MISSION CALENDAR	3
3. SEASON OF CREATION: SEPTEMBER	3
4. QUEENSLAND CHURCHES TOGETHER	5
a. Environmental Network	
b. Christians In Dialogue Studies	
5. GREEN STORIES	6
a. Uniting World Climate Change Response Program in Tuvalu	
b. Caloundra Solar Cross impacting Britain and Ireland	
6. ECOMISSION DEVELOPMENT	7
a. “The Christian Faith and the Earth” Conference, Cape Town	
b. ARRCC: Ride to Worship Week	
7. RESOURCES AT TRINITY LIBRARY	8
8. IN THE NEWS: OPINION	9
a. Carbon Pricing	
b. Solar Power	
9. CONTACT UNITING GREEN	10

1. SEASONAL REFLECTION

In the cool of winter, it is lovely to have bright sunflowers blooming at Sherwood church. Thanks to Rev Yvonne McRostie and the Coorparoo Community Garden who gave their seeds away at the meeting of Synod last year. I hope many of you will have also sown, enjoyed and shared your own sunflowers.



The children planted these seeds in March, and the seedlings were just “rising” on Easter Day... and blooming in July. They are now mature and full, and we are “waiting in hope” to see if there has been successful pollination and seed production. Bees, ladybeetles, ants and flies have all been spotted visiting.

The God of all Creation gives life and growth (Mark 4:26-29).

As we look forward to new life emerging in spring, we join with the Orthodox churches who have traditionally celebrated Creation on 1 September. Many churches around the world now celebrate the Season of Creation in September. Season of Creation. (See Section 3 for information and resources.)

What can you do in your congregation to “Spring Green”? There are new ecumenical studies to inspire and motivate you (Section 4). A number of web links in the diary (Section 2) and readings (Section 7) are included to take you further, and please do explore our website, and make suggestions and send new stories of what you see happening in your community so we can encourage each other.

<http://www.greenchurch.ucaqld.com.au/>

From little things big things grow!

Judith Dalton

2. ECO-MISSION CALENDAR

- Aug 6-10 International Conference, Capetown, South Africa:**
“Christian Faith and the Earth”
<http://fore.research.yale.edu/calendar/item/christian-faith-and-the-earth-respice-et-prospice/>
- Aug 16 Studies in Religion - Prof Elaine Wainwright - *Images, Words, Stories: The Challenge of Reading a Gospel Ecologically***
5.30-6.30pm, Room 222, Parnell Building (No 7) St Lucia Campus,
University of Qld
<http://www.uq.edu.au/hprc/docs/elaine.wainwright.2012.pdf>
- September Season of Creation 2012**
<http://seasonofcreation.com/worship-resources/liturgies/series-b-the-word-series/> (See Section 3)
- Sept 22-23 Invitation to join Angligreen Camp, Victoria Point, Redlandshire**
Awakening the Dreamer Symposium presented by Fiona Kem O’Sullivan – a weekend experience of simple living with Angligreen (QLD). More information: Judy Seymour (07) 3203 4193 and Ann Ellis (07) 3312 0207. (Register by 14 Sept)
http://www.angligreen.org.au/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=12
- Oct 5-11 Ride to Worship Week** (See Section 6b)
www.arrcc.org.au/ride-to-worship-week-2012.

3. SEASON OF CREATION - SEPTEMBER

The Season of Creation has now become an accepted Season of the Church’s liturgical year in many countries, running for 4 Sundays from September 1, Creation Day in the Eastern Orthodox Church, to 4 October, St Francis’ Day.

THE SEASON OF CREATION

<http://seasonofcreation.com/worship-resources/liturgies/series-b-the-word-series/>

Series B: The Word Series (2012)

The Word is a deep impulse summoning forth creation, evoking praise from creation and stirring life in creation. The Word series correlates with the Mark series of the church year.

September 1	Creation Day	
September 2	1st Sunday in Creation	Planet Earth Sunday
September 9	2nd Sunday in Creation	Humanity Sunday
September 16	3rd Sunday in Creation	Sky Sunday
September 23	4th Sunday in Creation	Mountain Sunday
September 30	5th Sunday in Creation	Blessing of the Animals
October 4	St Francis of Assisi Day	

The Season of Creation website itself has readings, liturgies, children's stories, Bible studies and theological reflections and practical suggestions for each of the three years of the lectionary. There are also outlines dealing with natural disasters and climate change.

The Season of Creation closely links theology into different points of worship:

Location and Invocation	Theology of Sanctuary
Invitation/Call to Worship	Theology of Kinship with Creation
Confession and Absolution	Theology of Alienation and Homecoming
Readings and Prayers	Theology of Empathy with Earth
Gospel and Creed	Theology of Deep Incarnation and Reconciliation
The Eucharist	Theology of Presence
Commission and Blessing	Theology of Ministry of Earth

“As this outline suggests, while the context is creation, the liturgy remains Christological. With creation we celebrate Christ at the core of creation. This kind of worship theology is a far cry from the new age or quasi-pantheistic approach that many thought may develop. The incarnate Christ and the cosmic Christ are integral to the theology of worship.” (From the website)

LECTIONARY RESOURCES FOR THE SEASON OF CREATION

- **The Season of Creation: A Preaching Commentary**

Editors: Norman C. Habel, David Rhoads, H. Paul Santmire

This includes an introduction to the Season of Creation and covers 4 Sundays for each of the 3 years of the lectionary cycle.

NOW IN TRINITY LIBRARY: CALL NUMBER - 261.88 SEA

- **Seasons of the Spirit** <http://www.seasonsonline.org.au>

The Seasons of the Spirit Congregational material now follows the four Sundays of the Season of Creation.

- **Ecofaith** <http://ecofaith.org/mnc/soc/soc2012/>

Season of Creation video resources are being prepared and made available through NSW Mid- North Coast Presbytery.

4. ECUMENICAL: QUEENSLAND CHURCHES TOGETHER (QCT)

a) QUEENSLAND CHURCHES ENVIRONMENTAL NETWORK

The biggest news this month is undoubtedly the commencement of the Qld Churches Environmental Network, even though the membership is still not complete. The first meeting was held on 18th July, with close to a full house; in addition to myself as Chair, we had 2 Roman Catholics, 3 Anglicans, 2 Uniting Church, and 1 Salvation Army, 2 QCT staff members, and a University colleague who was coopted on to the group. I am still confident that there will be several more to come, including at least one Indigenous person. A good spirit prevailed, and it promises well for the future. There is no shortage of agenda items, and future meetings will be held on the second Tuesday of each month. There was a reasonably good response to the idea of having a meeting in Toowoomba, and that is being explored. This is an exciting development.

Clive Ayre

b) CHRISTIANS IN DIALOGUE STUDIES: THE RELATION BETWEEN FAITH AND CARING FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

http://www.qct.org.au/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1143:the-relation-between-faith-and-caring-for-the-environment&catid=24:ecumenical-resources&Itemid=112

The Christians in Dialogue group is associated with Qld Churches Together, and periodically produces studies on a range of subjects. ***The Relation between Faith and Caring for the Environment*** was launched in June by Rev Dr Jonathan Inkpin of St Luke's Anglican Church, Toowoomba. "Every day we are discovering new facets of the amazing universe story and of God's invitation to honour and shape it further. This is the call to deep ecumenism: to a new relationship between Christians, between Christians and people of all faiths and none, and between human beings and the whole created order. For in the new cosmology we are offered fresh dynamic perspectives on existence which can bring alive our Faith in new ways and in more sustainable living", he said.

It is a series of five studies which are simple and easy to follow in their format, and are readily available for download from the QCT website (above) or from QCT directly. The five studies are as follows:

1. Humans and the Web of Life
2. Towards an Environmental Theology
3. Justice for all Creation
4. The Environmental Consequences of Human Activities
5. From Eco-theology to Eco-mission

Why not try and meet with another Church and talk about what you could do together in your local situation?

5. GREEN STORIES

a) **Uniting World Climate Change Response Program in Tuvalu**

<http://www.unitingworld.org.au/hereandnow/>

<http://unitingworld.org.au/blogs/this-is-what-i-saw-climate-change-in-the-pacific/>

Please remember the Church in Tuvalu in your prayers and planned giving program. The Uniting Church is assisting their Climate Change Response Program.



As they see their land being flooded by salt water, they are facing questions of faith.

Where is God in this situation? Workshops enabling reflection and discussion from a

Christian perspective will help people discern what God is saying about land, identity and responding to cataclysmic change.

Resourcing communities to adapt, reduce risk and keep preparing for the consequences of Climate Change will involve practical steps such as sea wall construction, planting methods and waste management.

And what is our response... in terms of prayer, giving, and also changing our ways?

b) Caloundra Solar Cross impacting Britain and Ireland

“Our influence with the Solar Cross has not ceased”, said David Lowry. The photo of the Caloundra Uniting Church solar panels in the form of a cross is now featured (with permission) on the *Churches Together in Britain and Ireland* website.



<http://www.ctbi.org.uk/>

6. ECOMISSION DEVELOPMENT

a) “The Christian Faith and the Earth” Conference, Cape Town

<http://fore.research.yale.edu/calendar/item/christian-faith-and-the-earth-respice-et-prospice/>

The 6th-10th August will mark the culmination of 5 years of preparatory work when approximately 42 people, mainly scholars from various parts of the world, gather in Cape Town South Africa for the Christian Faith and the Earth Conference. The primary purpose of the conference is to try to assess the current state of the debate from a theological perspective. A number of people are going from Australia. Rev Dr Clive Ayre’s paper on “**The Nature, Mission, Governance and Ministry of the Church**” will be delivered on Thursday 9th at 11am South African time. There may be an ensuing book containing the plenary papers. But the other major issue to watch will be the possibility of some kind of post-Conference network, although it is impossible to tell at this stage what that might mean. Further details are available on the website.

Let us support Clive in prayer, and look forward to the report on proceedings and his “networking” on his return.

b) ARRCC (Australian Religious Response to Climate Change)

<http://www.arrcc.org.au/>

Ride to Worship Week, 5-11 October 2012

For the planet, the poor and your health, join in Ride to Worship Week 2012

The third annual Ride to Worship Week runs from Friday 5th to Thursday 11th October 2012. To join in the fun, all you need to do is to cycle, walk, or use another form of environmentally friendly transport to get to and from worship and other faith activities. You can join in as an individual, a family, or as a whole church. Check out the Ride to Worship Week clip, read more about Ride to Worship Week, and register your participation at www.arrcc.org.au/ride-to-worship-week-2012. Ride to Worship Week is an initiative of the Australian Religious Response to Climate Change (ARRCC).

7. RESOURCES: TRINITY LIBRARY

<http://trinity.qld.edu.au/library/>

i. *The Season of Creation: A Preaching Commentary*

David Rhoads, H. Paul Santmire, Norman C. Habel (Editors)

Fortress Press 2011

(Trinity Library 261.88 SEA - See Section 3 above)

ii. *Creation : a Biblical vision for the environment*

Margaret Barker, T&T Clark, London 2010

(Trinity Library 261.88 BAR)

iii. *The ecology of the New Testament: creation, re-creation and the environment*

Mark Brendin, Colorado Springs, Biblica 2010

(Trinity Library 261.88 BRE)

iv. *Celebrating God's cosmic perichoresis: the eschatological panentheism of Jürgen Moltmann as a resource for an ecological Christian worship*

Bryan Jeongguk Lee, Pickwick Publications, 2011

(Trinity Library 261.88 LEE)

8. IN THE NEWS: OPINION

Carbon Price Response

The term “carbon tax” in popular debate is highly misleading, even mischievous, and suggests that this is primarily about money. Thus, the opinion poll question “Do you expect to be better or worse off after 1st July” completely misses the point. This is about protecting the environment for the future, and the debate needs to be focussed around *that* issue. There is little doubt that the carbon price will be blamed for unrelated price rises, but there is no painless way to rectify the problem. There *will* be a cost whatever method is used, and the longer we leave it the higher the cost will be for all of us. We all share in creating the pollution, but it is reasonable that the big polluters should be given the greater encouragement to change their methods. There may be a better way to achieve the same goal, but this at least is a start.

Faith itself involves a cost; it has a cross at its heart, and we can't expect to avoid that in responding to the divine call to care for creation. A faith approach to issues such as this is diametrically opposed to the “me first” approach of the popular debate. The imperative of Christian mission in this context calls us to encourage the community at large to value a healthy and sustainable environment for the future in preference to all other goals, whatever their legitimacy.

Solar Power

Many will be aware of the recent State Government decision to reduce the feed-in tariff rate for solar electricity from 44 cents to a mere 8 cents. It is arguable that 44 cents was always too high, but a reduction to a mere 8 cents raises other problems and seems rather like tokenism. I have written to the Minister concerned, whom I know personally, and while his reply raises some valid points that need to be taken into account, I believe nevertheless that it is an overreaction; it is a disappointing development that is certain to have a negative impact on the renewable power industry and the greening of our environment generally. It is not immediately apparent what if anything we can do about this, but I believe we should be aware of it and remain vigilant.

Clive Ayre

9. CONTACT UNITING GREEN (QLD)

If you have any questions or suggestions for how we may be able to help creation care become an integral part of Christian discipleship and the church's mission, please contact us **by email as we are not often in the office**. Please include your phone number.

The emails and website for Uniting Green are still the same as for Green Church. We will let you know when they change.

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