



# ACC E-News September 2010

Greetings Members

1. **The ACC Conference held 2-4 September 2010** at Camden Uniting Church was a confirmation of the growing fellowship within the ACC. There were 120-150 members (depending on the session), and the ACC was warmly and well looked after by the local ministry team at Camden Uniting Church led by Senior Pastor, Rev. Colin Seymour, Ps Carol Seymour (co-ordinating the mammoth job of catering), Ps Terry Cunningham, Ps Erin McKerral, Ps Simon Nixon (liaised impeccably with music and logistics), Ps Beck Bannister and Robyn Rudar (office secretary). Thank you Camden Members for hosting our time – your Christian hospitality and love was a highlight. Special thanks to Woollahra-Double UC for providing buses for transport to and from the airport, and to the NSW ACC Movement Executive for their overall co-ordination, and the ACC NSW Tonga group for the provision of a lovely lunch on Friday.

**ACC Youth at the Conference:** The involvement of ACC Youth was also a highlight with leading worship, and one elective. Lupe Tapueluelu, reports “that almost 25% of ACCY (ACC Youth whom have already been contacted prior to Conference 2010) were represented at this year’s ACC Conference held at Camden, and also to highlight that most of that 25% were made up of Youth/Young Adults leaders within ACC. I believe that all things happen according to Gods will and purpose, and may I further encourage all the Young people involved in this movement with this “But now your kingdom **shall not** continue. The Lord has sought out a **man after his own heart** , and **commanded** him to be prince over his people, because you have not kept what the **Lord has commanded you**” 1 Samuel 13:14 I believe that the LORD is giving the Youth/Young Adults of this nation to those after his own heart. There is rapid decline in the Youth/Young Adults membership within the Uniting Church of Australia, but the LORD is giving them back, and I believe it will be through the ACC. Pray and seek the LORD concerning all things, but especially whatever he puts in your heart to do, let that be done and none other.”  
*Lupe Tapueluelu, ACCY Co-ordinator*

The three key presenters were well received (Steve Estherby on marriage, and Joanne Lucas and Angela Shanahan – see below. It is hoped to include the papers in the next edition of ACCatalyst.

The four electives also received good feedback, and summaries may be provided in the future editions of the magazine, and we hope to have material on the web as well.

- *‘Firewalling Family from Pornography’* – Ron and Ruth Brookman (Living Waters Australia)
- *‘Catch 22? The Future of Marriage in the UCA’* – Peter Bentley
- *‘Healthy Families, Healthy Teens be’* – Professor Pat Noller (ACC Board of Communication Convenor)
- *‘Holiness and purity 101 – a youth perspective on how to honour God in relationships’* – Lose Pouvalu (ACC Youth leader and Member of ACC Liverpool)

### **ACC 2010 AGM Business**

Reports and information. If you would like a copy of the reports received to date (not all the reports were presented in writing) this can be e-mailed now, but the fuller Annual Booklet with the 2010 minutes and all written papers for the meeting will be provided in late November (after the Council has received it). No decision was made about the date and location for the 2011 conference but this will be considered as a priority by the council.

We welcome Fatai Tapueluelu as a new member of the National Council. Fatai is a member of the ACC Youth network and worships at Liverpool Uniting Church and is part of the 'Hearing the Story' Tongan ACC cluster at Liverpool.

ACC also gives thanks for the service of Pastor Grahame Abrahams over the last few years as an active Council member and especially for his help in co-ordinating the work of the Networks Commission. (Grahame will be ordained as a Minister of the Word on 25<sup>th</sup> September).

**Two Press Releases** provided by Camden Uniting Church Pastor Terry Cunningham are included below for your use in local congregational news.

### **Greens benefit from 'ignorance vote'**

The Australian Greens are benefitting from widespread ignorance of their policies, political journalist, Angela Shanahan, told a national conference in Camden this week. "There's a great deal of ignorance about what the Greens actually believe – and they are benefitting from this," Mrs Shanahan said. "They have benefitted from this in the recent national election." Shanahan was speaking at the national conference of the Assembly of Confessing Congregations, held at Camden Uniting Church [September 2-4]. Shanahan is a regular columnist in The Australian, The Canberra Times, The Age, Sydney Morning Herald, Spectator and Quadrant. She is also a member of the Catholic Church.

"If you want to see what an Australian Government led by the Greens will look like, just take a look at the Greens in Germany – because Bob Brown is a disciple of Petra Karin Kelly [a founder of the German Greens]. Have a look too at a book called 'The Greens' and co-written by Peter Singer and Bob Brown. Some of their policies are downright inhuman. "It's a deliberate attempt to undermine Australia's social cohesion. And only the churches have the gravitas and authority to fight this," she said. Shanahan said the Australian Greens had no category of family policy at all. "To the Greens, people are no more important than a Tasmanian green frog. Humanity has no inherent value – it has to fight against other species for a place in the world." She said the Greens had managed to gain support with some religious groups. "Despite the obvious incompatibility of the Greens with the Christian faith, they have successfully attracted some Christians. Their policy on religion sounds very tolerant – but it actually restricts faith."

## **Men, abortion is your issue too**

Men – abortion is your issue too. That’s the message from Joanne Lucas, a key speaker at a national conference in Camden this week.

“Women have been lied to” and “men have been trained to avoid the issue”, she said. Speaking at the national conference of the Assembly of Confessing Congregations (ACC), held at Camden Uniting Church [September 2-4], Lucas demanded “a new type of feminism”. The ACC is a vital network of evangelical/reformed churches within the Uniting Church in Australia (UCA). “We need a new kind of feminism – one that is powerful and honourable,” Lucas said. “Women have been lied to. And in accepting that lie we have been \*used\* – used for a Culture of Death instead of a Culture of Life. Men have been trained to believe that abortion is \*solely\* a woman’s issue. Don’t perpetuate the lie that unless you have a womb you have nothing to say about abortion. “Women have a unique ability to impact human history – precisely because we give birth to it.” Lucas said. “That is the unique genius of women.” “It’s a lie to say that children and men are by nature opposed to women and their needs and goals and ambitions. We need to help men to be great men, and to accept help from men.”

Lucas said that only a quarter of all women today were willing to accept the “feminist” label. She said that while she appreciated what early feminism had achieved, “it no longer represents me, or many other women.” Feminism has fragmented into a myriad of ideas, she said.

“Sexual reproductive rights are the main battleground now. But being equal must not be confused with being identical. Radical feminism idealizes androgyny [sexual ambiguity]. From this standpoint, children are seen as the ‘ultimate barrier’. Increasingly, abortion has emerged as the litmus test of true feminism.

“It’s wrong to say all forms of feminism are wrong. Women reconcile people – all people – with life. And this means women are uniquely aware of ‘the other’ – not only children, but all human beings.”

Joanne Lucas has a Bachelors Degree in Psychology from the University of South Australia, and a Masters Degree in Theology from the JPPII Institute for Life, Marriage & Family. In 2004 Joanne worked as a Research Officer at the Southern Cross Bioethics Institute, before going to Sydney to take up a position as the Catechumenate Coordinator, which she held until 2007. Since then she has been the Education Officer for the Life, Marriage & Family Centre for the Catholic Archdiocese of Sydney.

## **2. ACC Pin**

A pin with the ACC Logo has been produced for use by ACC members. It could be a helpful talking point about the confessing movement. The pin will be provided at state meetings and cluster gatherings, and also sent out when replying to mail and receipts. If you are keen to have copies of the pins now, please let me know and I can send them direct to you. The pin has been generously provided by an ACC couple.

## **3. ACC Statement – Abortion in the Australian Community**

The print version of the Abortion paper is now available and copies can be obtained from the ACC office. Congregations will receive copies or members at the conference will have taken copies back for your attention. It is also available on the website:

<http://www.confessingcongregations.com/national/item/abortion-in-the-australian-community/>

#### **4. DVD on Evangelism**

The Discipleship and Evangelism Commission has produced a DVD study series called, *“Conversations in Discipleship and Evangelism”*. This consists of 5 x ten minute DVD ‘conversations’ with study questions which can be used after. A copy of this DVD and study questions is being provided to each congregation in the ACC, with many congregations receiving their copy at the 2010 Conference. More DVDs will be produced and will be on for sale for \$10. A flyer will alert member. It is hoped that these sales will cover most of the production costs of the series. This DVD discusses 5 areas of discipleship and evangelism: 1) Disciples are called; 2) Disciples are Sent; 3) Disciples participate in Christ’s ministry; 4) Disciples and discipline; 5) Disciples of the Gospel. These studies are ideal for use in a Bible Study, or to be handed around to congregation members. Both the studies and DVD’s may be copied provided it is not for profit.

#### **5. Max Champion’s movements**

The ACC Chair will continue his visitation of ACC groups in September and October, speaking at the Ulverstone UCA camp event 24-26 September, and then in Queensland he will visit ACC groups there, and in NSW he will follow-up some connections from the ACC conference in the middle of October.

#### **6. *Eternity* newspaper uses ACC Church sign**

The September edition of *Eternity* has a photo of the ACC member congregation Port Pirie SA Lighthouse Church notice board sign on Page 2. This is the regular ‘signs spot’, and their sign says: “Jesus is an investment that never loses interest.

## 7. ACC NATIONAL PRAYER DIARY – SEPTEMBER 2010

*Greetings all, prayer requests for this month.*

- ACC Chair at ACC member congregation - Ulverstone UC Camp 24-26 September.
- For the Tour of Bishop Michael Nazir-Ali
- Pray for all our National Leaders and especially those with administration tasks after Assembly.
- Pray for Max as he visits congregations and clusters.
- Pray that we will be true watchmen of the faith.
- Pray for all state meetings, to be times of inspiration and encouragement.
- Pray for the state and venue of God's choice for our next assembly, 2011. Pray for wisdom and discernment as we pray and explore possibilities for next year.
- Pray that grace will be upon us all as the Prayer Network as we set a new course seeking to network and encourage the prayer life of ACC.
- Pray for each state prayer co-ordinator, to be encouraged and supported in their ministry, as they seek to network prayer. (Especially pray for a NSW co-ordinator.)
- Pray for each Minister, Pastor and Leader of the Uniting Church, to be strong witness of the faith and of God's Word.
- Pray for mentoring of leadership and the passing on of the baton.
- Pray for the Emerging Leaders weekend next year in South Australia, for encouragement and support as things are being organised and brought together.
- Pray for ACC Youth and its leadership. May they be encouraged by comments from Assembly and grow strong in their faith in God to be strong men and women of faith.
- Pray about the abortion issue in Australia. But also that we will be able to support individuals being affected by decisions made.
- Pray for each congregation and cluster in Victoria to prayerfully appoint a person who will forward prayer requests to Annette Blaze. Annette will link up the ACC congregations and clusters in Victoria in prayer.
- Pray for clarity of vision as Victorians seek to evangelise and create more clusters.
- Pray for a working network linking ACC Victorians

*I believe the Assembly of Confessing Congregations is the particular cross that we are 'given' to bear at this particular time in the history of the Uniting Church in Australia to help it find its way back to Jesus Christ who is the Head of the Church. It is for such a time as this that God has given us this cross to bear. The struggles, disappointments and sufferings that we often encounter, are simply part and parcel of the price that we must pay. Jesus in Matthew 6:34 says "do not worry about tomorrow; it will have enough worries of its own. There is no need to add to the troubles each day brings". Therefore, says Paul in Philippians 4:4: **May you always be joyful in your union with the Lord. I say it again: rejoice!***

*Hedley Fihaki, on behalf of the Prayer Network.*

**Please remember Friday's as our National Day of Prayer and Fasting.**