

## **UnitingWorld News**

*From: Amy Goodhew*

*Communications Coordinator, UIM*

We have reached an exciting point in our development as an agency of the National Assembly of the Uniting Church in Australia. Uniting International Mission and Uniting Church Overseas Aid have formed one agency with one name – UnitingWorld.

Our range of programs remain unchanged under this new name. We hope this development will make it easier for you to engage in our work and the lives of our partner churches. Our programs are managed by the same people and we maintain our commitment to high standards, transparency, sustainability and ethical practice. We continue to aim to assist those challenged by disaster, disease, violence, famine, drought, injustice and poverty to overcome these hurdles.

We work to connect communities for life through our program areas:

Church Solidarity (*formerly Uniting International Mission and Church Connections*)  
Relief and Development (*formerly Uniting Church Overseas Aid*)  
Peacemaking (*including Young Ambassadors for Peace*)  
Experience (*formerly People in Mission*)

As these changes take effect, you will notice some differences – job titles have been updated, a new website is under construction and we are developing more resources to communicate with Uniting Church members here in Australia.

If you have any questions about these changes, please call (02) 8267 4267 or email [amyg@nat.uca.org.au](mailto:amyg@nat.uca.org.au)

### **Experience**

Experience programs have two urgent placements needs for which we are receiving expressions of interest. If you think you may have the skills and passion to explore these possibilities, please contact Kathy Pereira on 02 8267 4250 or email [kathyp@nat.uca.org.au](mailto:kathyp@nat.uca.org.au)

1. URGENT NEED for an Architect/ architectural draftsman to teach at a Vocational Education College in Tonga (any time commitment considered)
2. Mwandji, Zambia – Orphans and Vulnerable Children's project have critical need for carpenters/builders

Experience's next pre-Service training will be held from 1<sup>st</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> July, 2009.

One of our Experience Volunteers, Rev David Howie from Victoria, has returned in early 2009 from 12 months working in Mwandji, Zambia. David was asked to take up a Supply Ministry position in Whittlesea, Victoria and now finds himself facilitating the Uniting Church response in this area to the Victorian Bushfires. Please pray for David as he has to do some very rapid re-adjustment to Australia.

## **Church Solidarity**

### **NEW APPOINTMENT:**

Bruce Mullan has commenced work as Associate Director, Church Solidarity (Pacific) on Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2009. UnitingWorld is delighted to welcome Bruce to our team and looks forward to his contribution to our engagement with our neighbors in the Pacific.

### **NEWS FROM THE ASIA DESK:**

**Sri Lanka** – Sri Lanka is currently witnessing the horrific crescendo of 25 years of civil war. The Sri Lankan Government has in recent months mounted an offensive against the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) or Tamil Tigers in the north of the country. The collateral damage from this campaign has been truly horrific with some estimates as high as 250, 000 civilians caught in the cross fire between the two groups. UnitingWorld has been receiving updates from the Bishop of Jaffna, the Rt.Rev.Dr Daniel Thiagarajah who has expressed to us the horror of their situation. UnitingWorld asks that you remember the Tamil people of Sri Lanka in your prayers as they struggle to find a way through the violence and bloodshed. For more information about this situation please email [amyg@nat.uca.org.au](mailto:amyg@nat.uca.org.au)

**West Papua** – John Barr, Associate Director, Church Solidarity (Asia) welcomed church leaders from West Papua on Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> and Friday 6<sup>th</sup> March. The Moderator, Rev Jemima Hirino-Krey, and the General Secretary, Rev Hiskiah Rollo of the Evangelical Christian Church in the Land of Papua came to Sydney to discuss ongoing partnership with the UCA.

Rev Jemima was appointed Moderator in July 2008 – she is the only current female Moderator of a church in Indonesia.

The Evangelical Christian Church in the Land of Papua is the largest church in West Papua and it is involved in human rights advocacy, peace initiatives, education and health.

Discussions also involved representatives from the United Evangelical Mission based in Germany. We are seeking ways of working more cooperatively in West Papua, particularly in the area of education and leadership development.

## **Relief and Development**

Uniting Church Overseas Aid has had an office in India for the last three years, run by local staff, that provides support for a range of programs on the sub-continent. On Fri 6<sup>th</sup> Feb we celebrated the re-establishment of this office as an expanded UnitingWorld office

## **UIM staff abroad**

Kathy Pereira, Associate Director of **Experience** programs and John Barr, Associate Director of **Church Solidarity** (Asia) have travelled to India to meet with church leaders and view the range of programs we support in India. You can read more about their visit in the next issue of UnitingWorld magazine, out in April.

Joy Balazo, Associate Director of **Peacemaking** programs spent time recently in Indonesia and Papua New Guinea with our ongoing Young Ambassadors for Peace programs in those countries.

Laurie Fitzgerald, Associate Director of **Relief and Development** has recently returned from India, where he visited to attend the re-establishment of UnitingWorld's India desk.

### **Victoria Bush Fires.**

Uniting World has received numerous expressions of solidarity and support from Uniting Church partner churches in response to the devastating fires that have ripped through Victoria and at the time of writing, were still burning. We have received expressions of support from churches including:

- Presbyterian Church of Vanuatu
- Free Wesleyan Church of Tonga
- Indonesian Christian Church - Regional Synod West Java
- Church of North India
- Sudan Council of Churches
- Presbyterian Church in Taiwan
- Christian Conference of Asia
- Methodist Church of New Zealand
- Ekalesia K Niue
- Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand

The full list of messages can be viewed on the Assembly Website <http://assembly.uca.org.au>