



Together Online

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28th January, 2009

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Compassion and Love Preached at Obama National Prayer Service

In her sermon at the first prayer service attended by US President Barack Obama after his inauguration, Rev. Dr Sharon Watkins, general minister and president of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), called on the leader who, she said, would "set the tone" for the nation, to choose compassion, faithfulness and love over vengeance, anger and fear.

Preaching at the National Cathedral in Washington, D.C. on 21 January, Watkins, a member of the World Council of Churches (WCC) Central Committee, said: "Even in these hard times, rich or poor, we can reach out to our neighbour, including our global neighbour, in generous hospitality, building together communities of possibility and of hope."

In a 20 January letter to President Obama, representatives of WCC member churches in the United States, declared that they wanted to "roll up [their] sleeves and partner with [Obama] to help bring about the changes that are so desperately needed for the United States and the world to more closely reflect God's vision for humankind and all of creation."

WCC general secretary Rev. Dr Samuel Kobia assured Watkins of the Council's joy and pride over her role as preacher in the inaugural service. Watkins is the first woman to fulfil this responsibility in US history. With regard to domestic and international challenges that will have to be addressed by the new administration, he wrote in a 19 January letter: "Your prayers will be much needed."

Watkins' sermon took on a recent suggestion by Muslim scholars worldwide for love of God and love of neighbour as "common basis for building a world at peace", explaining that the best way to express love of God "is by facing hard times with a generous spirit: by reaching out toward each other rather than turning our backs on each other."



Full text of Rev. Dr Sharon Watkins' sermon:
http://oikoumene.org/fileadmin/wcc-usa/files/2009/Obama_NPS_sermon_Watkins.pdf

Ecumenical partnership: Professional Standards Director Announced for Anglican and Catholic Dioceses

In an historic move, the Anglican Diocese of Newcastle and the Catholic Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle are pleased to announce a joint approach to the management of professional standards in the Hunter, an initiative that allows the two dioceses to work together to ensure a comprehensive approach to the issues of professional conduct.

Mr Michael Elliott will begin with the Anglican Diocese as Director of Professional Standards next Monday, January 19, while continuing in his role at the Catholic Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle.

This combined role is an example of the ecumenical covenant in action. In April 2008 the diocese signed a covenant committing them to a series of joint initiatives ranging from the sharing of church resources to an annual Bishops' Dialogue.

Anglican Diocesan Business Manager, Mr John Cleary said this appointment is a significant one in the life of both Dioceses.

"It reinforces the unity of our churches in the Hunter region as well as our shared commitment to professional standard protocols."

Ms Helen Keevers, Manager of the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle's Child Protection and Professional Conduct Unit, Zimmerman House, where Michael Elliott will be based in both roles, said, "Michael's appointment to both dioceses is quite an historic development. I am not aware of any other example of our churches combining their approach to professional standards in such a concrete way."

"We hope this arrangement will be of great benefit to both our churches and most importantly to the people of the Hunter region," Ms Keevers said.

Mr Cleary said, "We welcome Michael to the role of Director of Professional Standards and look forward to his involvement in the Anglican Diocese. We feel privileged to add his significant experience to our team."



International Women's Day Community Expo in Perth

Sharing the Caring : Your chance to be part of International Women's Day

Department for Communities has called on community groups to have a say on how they would like to see Western Australia celebrate International Women's Day in 2009.

The Office of Women's Policy and TAFE have joined forces to encourage agencies, community groups and businesses to come together at the fantastic eCentral TAFE campus, in Royal Street East Perth.

eCentral facilities will be available FREE to non-profit community groups and at a nominal cost to government and private organisations from 10am to 4pm on Saturday 7 March.

To book a meeting room, exhibition space or display stall at the Community Expo call Women's Information Service on 6217 8230 ; Freecall 1800 199 174 or email owp@communities.wa.gov.au



Brother Cyprian Consiglio Retreat Day and Workshop

Christian Meditation community and Wesley Uniting Church present Br Cyprian Consiglio, Monk, musician, writer and meditator 7-10 March 2009.

Saturday 7th march 9.30-4.00 Retreat day, "The Universal Call

to Contemplation" -UWA Trinity Conference Centre Crawley

Sunday 8 March 10 am morning workshop Wesley Church

7.30 pm Journey into wisdom . Interfaith discussion Wesley Church

Tue 10 March Sustaining the Spirit -Music and contemplation, Christchurch grammar school chapel, Queenslea drive Claremont



Enquiries Wesley Uniting Church 61034222 admin@ucic.org.au

Christian Meditation Community 94445810

christianmeditation@inet.net.au

Christian Leaders Seek Interfaith Cooperation for Peace Efforts

By Audrey Barrick Christian Post Reporter

More than 300 leaders and members of various faith communities are proclaiming a message of peace and reconciliation and calling all churches across denominations to also take the message to the world.

"Radical peacemaking is usually associated with one segment of the Christian community: the Historic Peace Churches," the Rev. Dr. Michael Kinnamon, general secretary of the National Council of Churches, said earlier this week. "What I am stressing, however, is that radical, costly, insistent peacemaking is not simply your witness. Peace is the message of the church ecumenical!"

Kinnamon was making his address at the "Heeding God's Call: A Gathering on Peace" meeting in Philadelphia. The Jan. 13-17 meeting, convened by the Historic Peace Churches – the Religious Society of Friends, the Church of the Brethren and the Mennonite Church – has brought together an ecumenical group representing more than 15 faith communities with the aim of strengthening their witness.

The church leaders have recognized and stressed the critical role of ecumenism, or religious unity, in peace efforts.

"I want to emphasize one point: the ecumenical movement, of which the National Council of Churches is an instrument, is most essentially a movement of peace," Kinnamon stated. "Part of the point is sociological: Christian divisions (which ecumenism seeks to overcome) often exacerbate political conflicts and hinder effective peacemaking. War is too massive an evil to be responded to denominationally."

The meeting comes as violence is rampant in Gaza, Afghanistan, Congo, Somalia, Darfur, Pakistan and Sri Lanka, as Kinnamon noted.

Members of the Historic Peace Churches are calling people of faith to seek nonviolent ways to confront the violence, terrorism and fear prevailing in many countries. They are not only inviting believers from the various Christian denominations but also representatives of the Jewish and Muslim faiths to join the efforts for peace.

"We are deeply aware that the most effective work for peace will ultimately require interfaith vision, effort and cooperation," a statement from the meeting's website says.

As has been stated in past ecumenical conferences, Kinnamon repeated at this week's meeting, "War is contrary to the will of God."

"It is true that many Christians still see war as a last resort," he continued. "But there is now broad agreement that war is 'inherently evil' (World Council of Churches) – which means that Christians should never identify human violence with God's purposes. Contrary to political leaders and Hollywood movies, it is never redemptive."

Asking Christians to set aside their fears – fears within the peace churches that unity would weaken their peace message



or fears among Christians seeking unity that a message of peacemaking would prove divisive – Kinnamon challenged believers to be "ambassadors of reconciliation by the way we live with one another."

Events for the Heart and Soul

In This Issue: Interfaith Calendar for 2009; Peaceful Pathways to Conflict Resolution & Community Building workshop; Essential Services and Consumer Protection Training Session; Living Contemplatively workshops with Philip Carter; WA Justice Health Research Forum: Past, Present and Future; White Butterfly Ball 2009.



The Interfaith Calendar for 2009 produced by Melbourne University.

It is an excellent resource for interfaith awareness. It has been produced by the Equity and Diversity Planning unit at Melbourne University for several years and comes out in late December every year. I had small part to play in its inception as a university chaplain (at Sydney).

The EDP unit is willing to mail out a hard copy to SECs etc upon request.

The Calendar can be found online at:

<http://www.services.unimelb.edu.au/edp/downloads/2397-InterfaithCalendar09.pdf>

Peaceful Pathways to Conflict Resolution & Community Building Basic Workshop

This is an interactive workshop to help participants discover new and creative ways of responding to conflict situations and build community.

Saturday 21st and Sunday 22nd February
9am until 5.30pm each day.

Please arrive on time and bring your lunch.

Morning and Afternoon teas provided

Venue: Jobs Australia Room, Level 3, 9 The Avenue (cnr Keane St.) Midland

Cost: \$40 unwaged, or by negotiation; \$80 waged.

Contact ECCWA for more details

Essential Services and Consumer Protection Training Session - Provided by WACOSS

Targeting Financial Counsellors, Consumer Advocates, Emergency Relief workers, People interested in essential services & the consumer protection sector, this training session provides new insights, valuable resource information and is an excellent networking opportunity.

You will learn about the Consumer Utilities Project, and how it

can support your vital work, hear the latest about consumer rights and complain procedure/channels when they are aggrieved by a utility company, and learn more about the new consumer Protections for Synergy customers.

Where: Technology Park Function Centre, 2 Brodie Hall Drive, Bentley WA (Opposite Curtin University, Off Hayman Road)

When: Tuesday, 24th February, 2009

Time: 8:45am - 3pm

Cost: FREE

Registration closes Friday 20th February. For more information or to confirm your attendance, please e-mail shane@wacoss.org.au or phone 94207217

Living Contemplatively . . . with Philip Carter of the Julian Centre in Adelaide, South Australia

Workshops

WEDNESDAY MARCH 18th Professional Development "A Hidden Self Grown Strong"

TIME: 6:00 – 8:30pm

VENUE: Dayspring

68 Waverley St, Dianella.

COST: \$40 (\$30 Concession) Cost includes a welcome snack.

Philip will focus upon the person of the spiritual director - stretching people around the imagination. He uses poetry in his work with space and time for personal reflection.

THURSDAY MARCH 19th

Living Contemplatively – Living Sacramentally

TIME: 9:30am – 1:00pm VENUE: Dayspring

68 Waverley St, Dianella.

COST: \$50 (\$35 Concession)

Cost includes a light lunch.

A focus on the power of being present, embodied, sacramental. Finding God in all things, paying attention to our human experience

Retreat Weekend

FRIDAY MARCH 20th- 22nd

Living Contemplatively Today

TIME: 9:30am – 1:00pm

VENUE: Nathanael's Rest

800 Gill St, Mundaring

COST: \$230 (\$180 Concession)

PACKAGE: Two workshops plus the retreat - COST: \$290

For further information and bookings contact:

Dayspring Centre for Christian Spirituality and Counselling Inc.

68 Waverley Street, Dianella 6059

Tel:93761400 or Fax: 9276 8172
Email: info@dayspring.org.au
Web: www.dayspring.org.au

WA Justice Health Research Forum: Past, Present, and Future
Wednesday 11th March 2009
The University Club of Western Australia
M800, 35 Stirling Hwy
Crawley WA 6009
9:00 – 4:00pm
www.universityclubconferences.com.au/template.asp?CID=8

Offending behaviour is one of society's most complex social problems and success in reducing crime and recidivism is likely to require an all-of-government approach with input from researchers. Health issues affecting this population are considerable and add another layer of complexity. Effective health interventions may help to limit disease transmission, reduce recidivism, and improve outcomes for this group. Few opportunities exist for government departments and researchers to come together to share research. Researchers are often unaware of the research needs of industry.

The format of the forum will be to showcase significant research in this area which has been undertaken in the health and criminal justice area in the recent past, update progress on current research, and share proposed research ideas. The types of research we wish to invite to present are those involving health issues (e.g. mental health, drug and alcohol, forensic mental health, infectious diseases, sexually transmitted infections, Indigenous health, women's health, injury, chronic disease, and health services research) which have been conducted in a criminal justice setting (e.g. prisons, juvenile detention, police, community corrections, and courts).

Researchers can be from academia, government, or the private sector.

The forum will also provide an opportunity for participants to have input into developing research priorities for this area to encourage researchers to conduct policy relevant research. Keynote speakers will include: A/Professor Ted Wilkes and Professor Richard Harding.

The forum is being organised by the WA Health Department and the National Drug Research Institute. The event is free of charge and funded by the WA Office of Crime Prevention.

For further information contact: Cerissa Papanastasiou on 9266-1617 / 0403 849 335 C.Papanastasiou@curtin.edu.au; Tony Butler 9266-1616 / 041 111 4927; Lisa Bastian 9388-4840 / 0408 955 243; Adam Brett 9325-6995; Jocelyn Jones 0437 887 930.

White Butterfly Ball 2009

Step into a world of the transformation of a butterfly with an event that is set to amaze and astound their audience. Presenting only the finest entertainment and food. Tickets are

selling fast to this exclusive event. Secure your seat and enjoy a glamorous night of the finest fashion, media personalities and join some of Perth's elite corporate supporters. An event you will love and will assist in saving the lives of women and children affected by domestic violence.

When: Saturday September 19th

Where: Perth Convention Centre, BelleVue Ballroom

Dress: Black Tie

Tickets: \$195 plus GST

Contact: 0419 690 071 or tenille@fashionate.com.au for tickets

All proceeds going directly to The Greater Good Foundation.

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