



## Together Online

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20th October 2008

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### Welcome to our newest member church!

The Church of Christ Wembley Downs has become the newest member of the Council of Churches of WA. In an historic move, the Council voted to accept the Church as part of a new group of churches which are joining as independent churches. The Chairperson of the Council, Mr Graeme Nielsen, welcomed the Church and also said "Welcome back" in reference to the times past when members of the Church of Christ Wembley Downs were observer members of the Council, and earlier when the Churches of Christ as a whole were members.



The Pastor of the Church of Christ Wembley Downs Pr Denis Ryle said that he hoped that membership of the Council would enable them to keep the other Churches of Christ in touch with the ecumenical movement, and looked forward to making a contribution to the Council.

The vote took place at the General Meeting of the Council, which took place on Saturday 18th October, Reverend John Henderson spoke of the work of the National Council of Churches in Australia.

John was farewelled as he will be leaving the NCCA to take up a new post at the Lutheran Seminary in Adelaide.

Other speakers included:

Revd Alan Forsyth who spoke about the Chaplaincy at Acacia Prison  
Chaplain Coleen McLevie who spoke about the Chaplaincy at Swan Health and Kalamunda Hospitals  
Mrs Leticia Navegantes who spoke about the act for peace and Christmas Bowl.

## Australian Religious Response to Climate Change

Australian Religious Response to Climate Change (ARRCC) is a new multi-faith network that supports faith communities to take practical action on climate change, through education, practical projects and climate campaigning.

[Click here to find out more about ARRCC.](#)



## Don't forget poorest in global credit crisis

Geneva (ENI). Leaders of churches and related organizations warned on World Food Day that the global financial crisis may have even more drastic consequences for the world's poorest people than for its major economic centres.

"The global credit crisis will have dramatic consequences for the poorest, because those who fund them are hit by the breakdown," said John Nduna, director of Geneva-based ACT International, a faith-based global humanitarian alliance that is present in more than 75 countries.



"A significant part of our funding comes from individuals through churches in Europe and North America," said Nduna, a Zambian who has headed the agency since 2006. "They are hit by the financial crisis and that will affect their private budgets. Many struggle with loans, risk losing their jobs and small businesses might close down. Our contributors will have less to offer and our emergency work will be affected."

Nduna warned in a statement on 16 October, the United Nations' World Food Day, that the financial meltdown is likely to dramatically affect those who are facing chronic food crises, such as people in Ethiopia, Zimbabwe, the Democratic Republic of Congo, India and Afghanistan.

"The irony is that the European and American governments are now pumping in hundreds of billions of dollars to help their banks and financial institutions, so they still can service the market," he noted. "We ask for little. Just 30 percent of our funding comes from governments, but they seem to make their first cuts on aid. Where are their priorities?"

The general secretary of the World Council of Churches, the Rev. Samuel Kobia, said, "The churches need to continue to hold international institutions, governments, corporations and financial speculators accountable for the realisation of the right to food and food sovereignty," while also continuing with their advocacy work.

The main governing body of the Conference of European Churches, its central committee, which met in Cyprus from 6 to 11 October, urged "governments to be most concerned about protecting the most vulnerable of citizens".

The European church grouping said, "The present crisis has made it very evident that the financial economy has become increasingly distant from the economy of goods and services." CEC said it supports the "need for transparency and better control of the financial market". It called for churches to undertake studies about the ethical dimension of the contemporary economic system.

The world's poorest people have been afflicted with the consequences of the financial crisis following a dramatic rise in food prices in 2007. The UN's Food and Agriculture Organization has said the increase of food prices added 75 more million people to the ranks of the hungry in 2007.

Atle Sommerfelt, general secretary of Norwegian Church Aid, noted, "The image painted by the media is that the greatest world crisis today is the financial crisis on Wall Street. The real crisis is that there are 2.5 billion people on our planet who survive on less than US\$2 a day.

"The poor countries see it as extremely serious that the West refuses to take their situation seriously. US\$500 billion has been loaned out irresponsibly to dictators. Congo, for example, which at this time is struggling to deal with the greatest humanitarian emergency there is, is being forced to repay billions of dollars that [its former dictator] Mobutu [Sese Seko] loaned when he was in power."

Sushant Agrawal, director of the Church's Auxiliary for Social Action in India observed, "If you look back 25 years, people were more engaged in producing millet, sorghum and other staple food grains. But now there is a total shift from producing staple foods to cash crops and biofuels, which is making the poor even more vulnerable because they lose their power and control over their livelihood."

This article is reposted from the Ecumenical News International Website. This article was written by Peter Kenny.

## Anti-Poverty Week Ecumenical Service

The Council of Churches of WA joined other social justice groups in an ecumenical service for Anti Poverty week. [Read More](#)

The Churches WA website also took part in the [Blog Action Day](#) for 2008, with the focus on Poverty. Over 12,000 bloggers all around the world produced 14,053 blog posts focussed towards the theme of poverty, reaching an estimated 13 million readers. We contributed three posts, including the one linked above. Also check out [15 Ideas to learn and do](#) and [Social Justice Sunday](#) - a sermon by the Rev'd Eira Clapton on the 12th of October.



## Recalibrate our Relationship to Eradicate Indigenous Poverty

The National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Ecumenical Commission (NATSIEC) marked the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty by urging all Australians to examine and put right their relationship with Indigenous Australians.



Executive Secretary of NATSIEC, Mr Graeme Mundine said, "Indigenous Australians should not be living in poverty. Australia has the resources, but we have always lacked the will from the mainstream community to raise our Aboriginal brothers and sisters to the same standard of living that other Australians enjoy."

"On Monday, the Federal Government released its report into the Northern Territory Intervention and said they needed to "recalibrate" their relationship to Aboriginal people who are affected by the Intervention."

"No truer word was said. The past eighteen months have brought some significant changes in Indigenous affairs such as the rollout of the Northern Territory Intervention, the new Federal Government, and the Apology in February. While all these things are signals that things can improve, my fear is that too much has stayed the same. The fundamental relationship and attitude to Indigenous people has not changed," Mr Mundine continued.

"I particularly urge people not to be complacent, and think these positive signals mean all has been rectified. Don't think for a minute that the Intervention, especially in its current form, will end poverty. Don't forget for a minute that not all Aborigines live in the Northern Territory. Indigenous poverty is experienced right around Australia."

"The International Day for the Eradication of Poverty draws our attention to the needs of the poor and stirs our hearts to take action and mobilizes our voices to speak out against injustice."

This year it is more pertinent than ever before as we watch the world financial system melt down. Rather than panic and worry about how we will personally be affected by the financial upheaval, could we not take this opportunity to question the system that gives wealth to 5% of humanity and leaves the other 95% floundering in the wake?"

"On this significant day I urge people to question the systems that cause poverty, to enlarge their understanding of Indigenous poverty, and to make a personal commitment to Making Indigenous Poverty History," Mr Mundine concluded.

For further comment: Graeme Mundine 0419 238 788

For further information on the Make Indigenous Poverty History Campaign [www.makeindigenouspovertyhistory.org](http://www.makeindigenouspovertyhistory.org)

## Events for the Heart and Soul

### LABYRINTH WORKSHOPS

Half -Day Workshop

Tuesday October 28

9.30am-1pm (Half Day)

Cost: \$60

Venue: Dayspring Centre, 68 Waverley St, Dianella

"Patterns- origins and meanings"

This workshop will consist of lectures and questions time

Full Day Workshop

Wednesday October 29

9.30 am - 4 pm

Cost: \$120 Including lunch tea and coffee

Nathanael's Rest , 800 Gill St, Mundaring

This workshop includes how to make a small desktop labyrinth

Bookings: [info@dayspring.org.au](mailto:info@dayspring.org.au)

Tel: 9376 1400

Dayspring and Nathanael's Rest present

ROBERT FERRE

President of Labyrinth Enterprises LLC ([www.labyrinth-enterprises.com](http://www.labyrinth-enterprises.com))

and founding member of The Labyrinth Society

([www.labyrinthociety.org](http://www.labyrinthociety.org)).



What? The Edmund Rice Institute for Social Justice, Fremantle presents a one-day Intensive, Development Models as Imported 'Wisdom':

Finding Space for African Thought.

When? Saturday 25 October 2008, 10.00am – 4.30pm

Where? 24 High St, Fremantle

Presenter: Dr Suma Kaare, Social Justice Education Coordinator,

Edmund Rice Institute for Social Justice, Fremantle

We invite you to join us in this one-day intensive to explore and reflect upon the journey towards workable development paradigms for African renaissance.

The day will feature presentations, interactive contributions and reflections upon:

- \* Africa's Development: Overview
- \* Paradigm Experimentations: Lessons from Humanism, and Ujamaa-Socialism
- \* Poverty Reduction Strategies: Development Paradigm or Paradigm Decay?
- \* 'African Way' Development Paradigms: The Debate.

Registration & Payment: <http://erisj.org.au/new/registration>

We ask that you register and pay online if you have internet access. If not, please post a cheque and your details to the address above.

Cost:

Unwaged/Student - \$25;

Unwaged Retiree - \$35;

Waged Adult (self-funded) - \$50;

Non-Government Organisations: \$100;

Government & Corporate - \$150

We look forward to your company on the day.

Regards,

Dr Suma Kaare

Social Justice Education Coordinator

Building community commitment, skills and action for social justice

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

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