



## Together Online

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26th November 2008

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### Liturgical Advent resources available

"Imagine: Peace" is a collection of liturgical resources for the four Sundays of Advent. It is the first of a collection of worship materials from different regions of the world, prepared in the framework of the International Ecumenical Peace Convocation 2011.

This year's resources, including four complete worship orders, liturgical texts and songs, come from Latin America and were prepared during a workshop in Matanzas, Cuba, in July 2008. You can listen to the songs and download the mp3 files and music scores for free from the WCC website.

The Bible meditations are invitations to reflect on various aspects of peace building and overcoming violence. Although these materials have been prepared for the Advent season, they may also be used in other contexts throughout the year.

The World Council of Churches' Worship and Spirituality team encourages everyone to use these texts and songs of peace and adapt them to particular contexts.

Download the Advent resources and listen to the songs

Full text of the book "Imagine: Peace" (pdf, 1.8 MB)

Print quality version available upon request.

<http://www.oikoumene.org/en/news/news-management/eng/a/article/1722/liturgical-advent-resourc.html>



## Prayers for Bethlehem during Advent and Christmas

As many Christians around the world prepare to celebrate Advent and Christmas in the security of their homes and communities, they are invited to pray for justice, peace and security for Palestine and Israel - and to send a prayer or a peace message to Bethlehem.

Once again this year, Christmas celebrations will take place in a difficult climate for people in the Holy Land. However, Bethlehem, the birthplace of Jesus Christ, is still first and foremost a city of peace. And even in these trying times, many individuals and groups living there refuse to give up hope. They continue to search for non-violent ways to voice their rights and work for a peaceful and just future for both Palestinians and Israelis.

Since December 2000, a new Christmas tradition has been taking shape: sending peace messages to people in Bethlehem. Once again, individuals, communities, churches and congregations, organisations and partners from across the world are invited to e-mail Advent and Christmas wishes and prayers for justice and peace to Bethlehem. This year, the project is being carried out in collaboration with the World Council of Churches and its Palestine Israel Ecumenical Forum (PIEF). Wishes and prayers will be printed and handed out as personal messages, educational materials (e.g. at schools), and in the context of interfaith prayers (in places of worship) and in the newly established peace house of the Arab Educational Institute opposite the Israeli "separation wall" at Rachel's Tomb in Bethlehem. The wishes and prayers could also include ideas for non-violent actions. The action will be launched at the beginning of Advent.

Sending a wish or a prayer by e-mail is an important way of communicating with many people who long to hear a word of hope. People in Bethlehem greatly appreciate receiving wishes and prayers from people outside the region, both as personal and spiritual gestures of comfort and hope on the occasion of Christmas. These messages are one way of breaking through the isolation they live in.

Please e-mail your Christmas messages and prayers for peace before the 25th of December 2008 (Western Christmas) and/or the 7th of January 2009 (Eastern Christmas). While English is the preferred language, non-native English speakers may also send wishes and prayers in their mother tongue. Messages can be e-mailed to the Arab Educational Institute at the following address: [aei@p-ol.com](mailto:aei@p-ol.com)

Read all messages at [www.aeicenter.org](http://www.aeicenter.org) and [www.paxchristi.net](http://www.paxchristi.net)



## Christmas Bowl Hits the Airwaves

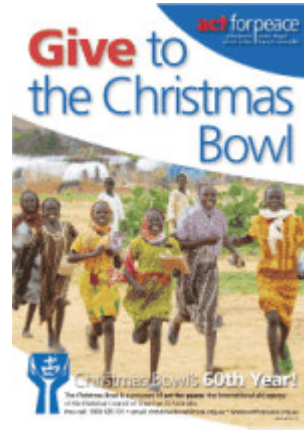
Sixty years ago, the Reverend Frank Byatt of Victoria had a simple vision. On Christmas day 1949, he placed an empty bowl on the dinner table and asked all present to give what they considered to be the cost of the meal. To celebrate this 60th anniversary we started to use the media to tell people about Christmas Bowl asking them to join us. Every Tuesday mostly in the morning, at Sonshine FM 98.5, we will have our Christmas Bowl ads.

In addition, we have to remember that Frank urged his guests to reflect on their good fortunes and encouraged them to do something selfless for the people around the world who are victims of disease, poverty and violence. This small but significant gesture of charity has resonated deeply with thousands of Australians and has shown that we all have the ability to make a difference, no matter how small the gift. The very first Christmas Bowl only raised £1,808, but has now reached over \$2 million each year.

Sixty years on, Frank's vision has grown tremendously. As the world has changed significantly since 1949, the Christmas Bowl has had to grow to meet new challenges. Today, the funds raised assist the domestic and international partners of act for peace, the international aid agency of the National Council of Churches in Australia. act for peace works in partnership to reduce poverty, protect refugees, prevent conflicts and empower communities.

By giving to the Christmas Bowl, we can achieve an international sense of togetherness through working with churches and communities in Australia and in conflict-affected areas worldwide. On the 60 year anniversary of Frank Byatt's Christmas Bowl, please consider the importance of sharing and what it means for the lives of others. As can be seen by how the Christmas Bowl has grown, a small gesture like Frank's can make an enormous difference.

If you would like to act for peace by giving to the Christmas Bowl today, please contact Leticia at 9274.3888, [cwsprojects@churcheswa.com.au](mailto:cwsprojects@churcheswa.com.au).



## Uniting Church Says No to Uranium Mining!

The Uniting Church has voiced strong concerns about the new Liberal Government's decision to lift the ban on Uranium mining within WA.

The Moderator of the Uniting Church, Rev Ken Williams, said the lifting of the ban was a bad move for sustainability in WA. "As a Church that has advocated for the sustainable use of the earth's resources for the sake of future generations, we are concerned that this move places our children's future at risk. "We believe the government should be focussing on reducing our dependence on fossil fuels and working to increase our use of non-nuclear renewable energy sources," said Rev Williams.



"As a church that has embraced scientific discovery, the Uniting Church remains unconvinced about the use of nuclear power as a solution to global warming.

"As a matter of urgency, we call on the government to work to reduce our dependence on fossil fuels, rather than encouraging the use of more of the earth's resources to produce unsustainable levels of power.

"While we understand the desire to increase employment and derive economic gain from uranium mining, this must be offset against the long-term economic, social and environmental costs which will need to be paid by our children and grand-children for generations."

### American evangelical takes climate change crusade to Canberra

Climate change is not an issue normally associated with evangelical Christians but a visiting American religious leader has taken up the mantle of climate change crusader.

Environmental and Christian groups have combined to host the Rev Richard Cizek from the National Association of Evangelicals, who is in Australia this week to lobby the Federal Government on climate change. He is expected to meet Prime Minister Kevin Rudd today and will meet the Opposition's environment spokesman Greg Hunt.

His fight has not been without controversy. It's earned him the wrath of more conservative Christians in the United States.

"We believe climate change is real we believe that it's human-induced and we regard the poor to be the principal victims of our responsibility," he said. The Rev Cizek says climate change is a moral issue and evangelicals have a Biblical duty to protect God's creation.

"I say to my fellow evangelicals, when you die, God is not going ask you how old the earth is or whether or not he created it in six days or six billion years," he said.

"He is going to say, 'What did you do with what I created?' and we have to have an answer. We have to say we took care of it when it was hurting.

Rev Cizek says climate change was one of the issues that weighed heavily on the minds of some young evangelicals voting in last week's US presidential election, helping President-elect Barack Obama to win their support.

"We have disagreement with him on high-profile sanctity of life issues and same-sex marriage issues but nonetheless he was the candidate that reflected our values in so many ways," he said.

While Rev Cizek is usually lobbying in Capitol Hill this week he's in Australia calling for urgent action and long-term commitments to climate change from both politicians and the corporate sector.

He also wants more evangelicals in Australia to take up the cause.

John Henderson, the general secretary of the National Council of Churches in Australia, says it is important for Australian Christians to engage with pressing social and environmental concerns.

"I think more and more not just evangelicals, but Christians throughout Australia, are becoming more concerned about these issues," he said. The Council is trying to develop an agreement between the churches in Australia on climate change. It will not be an easy task.



While some religious leaders have called for speedier action on climate change, Catholic Archbishop of Sydney George Pell has been public in his position as a climate change skeptic.

But Mr Henderson says if Australian Christians are mobilised on issues like climate change, they could make a real difference in helping the community.

"What we're going to do over the next couple of years is spend time looking at Christian teaching and Christian experience and practice," he said.

"Comparing that to the science experience of peoples around the world and try and get the churches agreed around some common policy issues around that."

Based on an AM report by Sara Everingham

## Events, Resources and Job Vacancies.

In This Issue:

Job Vacancies at the National Council of Churches in Australia, Royal Perth Hospital Chaplaincy and the Bible Society; Passing the Baton; 36th Ecumenical Summer School; Restorative Justice Seminar; 16 Days of Activism; Just Music 2008; Voices in Praise present "Joyous Christmas"; The Gift of Christmas.



Applications are invited for the position of

**General Secretary**

The National Council of Churches in Australia is an ecumenical body comprising seventeen Orthodox, Protestant, Roman Catholic and Anglican Churches.

As the NCCA's chief executive officer, he or she will lead a team of some thirty staff to help Australia's Churches respond to the ecumenical vision and act together in partnership.

The person appointed will have a deep commitment to the church, a clear understanding of the ecumenical movement and the theological perspectives which inform it, promotional and management skills, and sensitivity in working with people of different cultures and denominations.

Lay or ordained people with suitable qualifications and belonging to a member Church are invited to apply.

The post is Sydney-based and will fall vacant from the beginning of 2009.

Closing date for expressions of interest is Tuesday, 27 January 2009.

Further information can be obtained from

Bishop Richard Appleby

President

National Council of Churches in Australia

Locked Bag 199

Sydney NSW 1230

Email: [president@ncca.org.au](mailto:president@ncca.org.au)

Royal Perth Hospital Shenton Park Campus

#### 0.5 Protestant Chaplain

The protestant chaplain will work as a member of the Royal Perth Hospital Chaplaincy team, function ecumenically, and respond to the specific pastoral needs of people from Protestant traditions.

For more information, <a

href="http://www.churcheswa.com.au/news/vacancies/">visit our website </a>

#### Position Vacant

RECEPTION / ADMIN SUPPORT

(Part time Position - Max 25 Hrs)

RE ADVERTISED

Bible Society is a well established Mission Organisation working in over 200 countries around the world to provide Scriptures to people in a variety of languages and formats and Scripture based Literacy programs for those who cannot read.

Bible Society is looking for person to fill the Reception / Admin Support position in our close knit team in Belmont (WA).

The role includes general reception duties and administrative functions and support where required for other staff members.

The person we are looking for will be very organised and have excellent time management skills. You will also be able to relate and engage with all levels of donors or supporters from private individuals through to senior and major donors who may be business executives, clergy or leaders in society.

To receive an application pack which outlines the full details of this role:

Email: [directorwa@bible.org.au](mailto:directorwa@bible.org.au)

or

Go online to [www.biblesocietywa.com.au/Employment.html](http://www.biblesocietywa.com.au/Employment.html)

or

Phone: (08) 9479 6711 and ask for the information to be posted to you.

Applications Close Wednesday 24th December 2008.

Bible Society WA

1 / 23 Belgravia Street, Belmont Western Australia.

#### PASSING THE BATON

Children's Workers' Training Day & Expo

Saturday 14th February 2009

South Perth Church of Christ, cnr Murray St & McNabb Loop, Como.

The Children's Ministry Network WA is a taskforce of children's ministry leaders from many denominations and para-church organisations. In response to requests - the CMN are organising a training day and resources expo. This will be ideal for local leaders to bring their current and new team members along to, to be trained and enthused for 2009! There will be a wide range of resources for sale, plus programs and presenters to sign up to have involved in your ministry such as children/family church

services, Beach Missions, in-school ministries, Kid's Clubs, camps, community outreach, etc. Our Keynote speaker is Tania Watson, plus 6 other electives to choose from during the day! Please put this event in your diary/church notices!  
Email: wa@cmn.org.au for further enquiries.  
Website: www.cmn.org.au/waevents for details and registration form  
Phone Contact: Rob Adams 9310 6220 (CMN Secretary)

36TH Ecumenical Summer School  
Queen's College  
Melbourne University  
January 30, to February 1, 2009  
Theme: "the hospitality of God-food for thought"

Contact CCWA for a registration form if you are interested.

#### RESTORATIVE JUSTICE SEMINAR

This one day seminar will be an exposure of restorative practices that can be applied from the point of arrest, the court process, the prison and after release from custody. The seminar presenters will discuss policing, sentencing and healing circles and the uniqueness and effectiveness of restorative prisons. The impact of Restorative Justice on victims of crime will be presented by people who have experienced victimization.

WHEN: Wednesday, 10 December

TIME: 9.00AM Register for 9.30AM Start. Closes at 4.00PM

COST: \$20 (includes light snack)

For further information or to register, please contact Dr Peter Stuart at: P.Stuart@murdoch.edu.au, Research Manager, Centre for Social & Community Research – Murdoch University:  
Phone: (08) 9360 2385

The seminar will be followed by a Book launch of the Shadows and Sounds – A Landscape of Life by Loreen Samson, celebrated Ngarluma artist and social commentator, and Brian Steels, social researcher, social justice activist and convict criminologist. The project has seen a Ngarluma woman and a non-Indigenous man working together to create what is best described as a unique collaboration of artists using a blend of contemporary and tradition design within a social justice commentary.

#### 16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM IN 2008 — White Ribbon Day Picnic in the Park

At least one in three women around the world has been physically abused. During 16 Days of Activism 2008 - 25 November to 10 December - thousands of people and organisations around the world will take a stand in solidarity against gender-based violence. The male led campaign asks men to not commit, condone or remain silent about violence

against women.

To mark the beginning of 16 Days of Activism, join government, non-government and community representatives at the White Ribbon Day Picnic in the Park. Bring your lunch and come along to hear a range of distinguished speakers.

**JUST MUSIC 2008 — Concert for Social Justice**

The Edmund Rice Institute presents the 2008 Concert for Social Justice - celebrating the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Hear Archie Roach and Ruby Hunter, Kavish Mazella, Bernard Carnley, The Working Voices and the YABU Band perform!

WHEN: Friday, 12 December

WHERE: Samson Courtyard, Fremantle Arts Centre

TIME: 6.00pm – 10.00pm

COST: Adults \$30 – Students/Concession \$20 – Children under 6 FREE – Family Pass (2 + 2) \$70

For tickets: go to [www.heatseeker.com.au](http://www.heatseeker.com.au)

**Diary Note: VOICES IN PRAISE — present 'JOYOUS CHRISTMAS'**

Come along and join with us again for Christmas – last year was absolutely fantastic, let's do it again!

Singing The Magnificat, (attributed to Dietrich Buxtehude) together with a selection of joyous of Christmas music, Vivaldi, Bach – accompanied by a small orchestra – with guest solo soprano. Small orchestra – wonderful joyous evening of music plus a rousing community sing!

WHEN: Saturday, December 20

TIME: 7.00PM

WHERE: Mt Pleasant Uniting Church, Cnr Coomoora & Reynolds Rds

COST: \$12.00 - \$7.00 concession – Pay at the Door

Please send to your networks.

"The Gift of Christmas" is a celebration of Christmas with Pamela Jansson and the Ashley Arbuckle Quartet on Sunday 14 December at 5.00pm at Penrhos College Chapel, Morrison Street, Como. Tickets \$20 adults, \$15 concession. Proceeds benefit Christmas Bowl. For tickets or more info phone (08) 9364 1195.

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