

Multiculturalism Matters

UNITING CHURCH IN AUSTRALIA | PRESBYTERY OF SOUTH MORETON | 25 JUNE 2014



Moderator celebrates Korean 'gift' to UCA



KOREAN Christians and congregations have enriched the Qld Synod and bring valuable gifts to the multicultural Uniting Church in Australia.

The Moderator Rev. Kaye Ronalds, said this in her greeting to the opening service of the UCA Korean National Conference, at Southport UC on June 23.

"One gift is that you demonstrate the discipline and priority of prayerfulness. Your example of rising early for prayer is a challenge for Australians," she said.

"A second gift is that you take seriously the command of Jesus 'to go to people of all nations and make them my disciples.'

"A third gift is your high quality music—traditional, classical, contemporary—which enriches your worship.

"And a fourth is the gift of deep concern that your young people become followers of Jesus and find their home in a worshipping congregation in which they can learn from the generations who have gone before them 'on the Way.'

"We, too, pray that many young men and women will find their place in leadership in God's Church and some will hear the call of God for ministry."

The four-day, biennial conference, with the theme *A Common Vision*, includes local tours, plenary input sessions, discussions and business, and worship.



(Above): Rev Kaye Ronalds brings her greeting to the KNC opening service; (top) from left: conference organiser Rev. Paul Cho of Gold Coast Korean Fellowship UC, acting Presbytery Minister Rev. Dr Ray Reddicliffe, Rev. Kaye Ronalds, KNC President Rev. Jacob Yang, Synod Multi Cross Cultural Committee convener Deaconess Terani Lima, and opening service leader Rev. Jeong Gil Eom.

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Multiculturalism Matters is published fortnightly and emailed with the Presbytery Newsletter. You are welcome to email, or copy and distribute. Each issue can also be downloaded from the Presbytery web site: <http://www.southmoreton.org.au>. Please email David if you would like to receive the newsletter directly by email. Submitted photos and stories reflecting the cultural diversity of the South Moreton Presbytery are welcome.

Emerging leadership in migrant churches needs expression in wider Uniting Church

SECOND-GENERATION leaders who are gaining acceptance by their own migrant communities now need to be recognised and endorsed by the wider Uniting Church.

That's the view of Rev. Lu Senituli of Bayside UC, who has been a key mentor of emerging young leaders in the Tongan National Conference.

"I have observed the leadership of 2nd-Gen with great admiration in many migrant communities, yet I don't see many of them in leadership in the UCA," he said.

"I believe these 2nd-Gen leaders are still looking for their church: the church that embraces them and welcomes and encourages their partnership in mission in key areas of faith such as evangelism, discipleship and leadership.

"I wonder whether the UCA leadership would actually make room or intentionally create opportunities for these wonderfully gifted and talented young people to exercise ministry within predominantly white Anglo structures and frameworks.

"Their presence would actually inform the shape of the church's missional engagements.

"What I do know is that our 2nd-Gen do not just want to sing cultural songs and dance. They are looking for missional engagement and they need to make their own unique contribution to the mission of Christ."

Mr Senituli was reflecting on the long journey which the TNC has undertaken in developing 2nd-Gen leadership, demonstrated most recently at the 2014 national conference earlier this month in NSW.

The TNC is regarded as the most successful of the UCA's national cultural conferences in developing new generations of leaders.

"Over the past five to six years, the TNC Executive has taken a very deliberate approach to create opportunities—making room—for our young people to take real leadership roles within the national gathering," Mr Senituli said.

"This comes in light of the tremendous groundswell and overwhelming support for young Tongans to exercise their various gifts

FOCUS ON 2ND-GEN LEADERSHIP: THE TONGAN EXPERIENCE

in their local congregations. It was only logical that they would have the space to lead on a national context.

"They are young adults from across Australia, with a wealth of expertise and competencies. They are young professionals within their own areas of employment and study."

He said the 2nd and 3rd-Gen leaders were regarded as "the trusted navigators for our communities." They offered migrant communities "bridging visas," moving between cultures with relative ease and helping 1st-Gen people to gain confidence in moving into the new church and society.

This enabled them to lead the shift within migrant communities from an internal focus on mutual enrichment to an external focus on mission and partnerships.

Mr Senituli said much of the leadership potential had been developed informally through the young people's participation in UCA events like NCYC, local church involvement and mentoring. But now more formal structures of training and development were needed and this was the TNC's next priority.

Samiuela Hukehuke, a 2nd-Gen leader in the TNC from Park UC, West

End, said a key platform for emerging leadership was running the parallel youth and children's program at the TNC.

"Every Sunday the young people are led in worship and preached to by their mothers and fathers, their superiors," he said. "During TNC, with 2nd-Gen leadership they are directed by their peers, more or less. There's a different way of relating that's less formal and more open.

"This allows the young people to actively participate in ways not possible within the more traditional Tongan setting, which the adults continue in their own programs."

However, the main TNC program was also increasingly being organised and led by young people (this year they chose the theme: "Charged by the Holy Spirit"), and this was creating a new dynamic for the whole community.

"Besides, the 2nd-Gen team organises, sets up, operates and packs down all the equipment for the whole conference, so we're first in and last to go!

"In some years' time the 2nd-Gen will be the ones running the entire conference and be its office bearers. One of its current members is an ordained Minister of the Word and a second is a MOW candidate.

"Each year more members are added to the team from across the

Continued page 3



A youth skit during this year's UCA Tongan National Conference: "2nd-Gen want to do more than cultural songs and dances ..."

Brisbane Fijians prepare for their national conference



Former PM visits Fijian congregation

FORMER Prime Minister of Fiji, the Hon. Laisenia Qarase, visited the Brisbane Fijian congregation at Annerley on June 21-22.

His visit came during a one-week window when Fijian citizens in Australia were able to enrol to vote in Fiji's general elections on September 17, the first election since Mr Qarase was ousted by Fiji's current leader, Commodore Frank Bainimarama, in a 2006 coup.

Mr Qarase is urging support for his SODELPA party in the election, though he is not eligible to stand.

He is pictured above addressing the Sunday afternoon Fijian language service at Annerley.



A LARGE contingent of men, women and children from South Moreton Presbytery's Fijian congregations at Annerley and the Gold Coast will attend the UCA Fijian national conference, *Koniferedi 2014*, in Melbourne, from July 3-6.

About 400 people are expected, with UCA national President, Rev. Dr Andrew Dutney, preaching at the opening worship. Held every two years, this year's theme is, *Dare to Dream: Keys to Unlocking Our Inheritance in Christ*.

Rev Dr Jovili Meo of Brisbane, the current chair of the national conference, said issues for discussion will include the relationship between the UCA and the Methodist Church of Fiji and Rotuma, the Assembly paper on marriage, and how Fijians can contribute to the future strengthening of the Uniting Church.

Above: Some of those who will attend the Fijian national conference in July, gathered at the Brisbane Fijian UC, Annerley, on June 22. Dr Jovili Meo is on the first row of seats, in the middle.

Continued from page 2

nation, so things are looking up for both the 2nd-Gen and the TNC."

TNC 2nd-Gen leader Salote Moa, also of Park UC, said their growing involvement in key TNC roles, including leading the youth and children's program, was adding to the sense of unity and community among young Tongans.

Some times of praying and sharing were very special; "and besides, when you have young people leading they naturally inject some vibrancy and gusto into the air!"

"Last year, there were so many young people who wanted to join the 2nd-Gen team because they, too, felt they could contribute and felt encouraged to step up," Salote said.

"Some 2nd-Gen leaders are moving on, so it's encouraging to hear that there are new leaders to take their place, and I pray that continues."

New UnitingWorld director to visit

ROB Floyd, the new national Director of UnitingWorld, is visiting Brisbane on Monday, July 14.

South Moreton presbytery and the Synod's Multi Cross Cultural Committee are co-hosting an afternoon tea with Rob from 3:30-5:00 pm at the Uniting Church Centre, Auchinflower.

Invitations have been sent, but if you don't receive one and would be interested to meet Rob, please contact David Busch, 0438 646 559.

UnitingWorld oversees the Uniting Church's relationships with its partner churches overseas.

Rob (pictured) succeeds Rev Dr Kerry Enright, who concluded on April 30 after seven years in the role to take up a position in Dunedin, NZ.

