

# MUSTARD SEED

NEWS FROM UNITING FINANCIAL SERVICES

## Walkers live out faith in practical ways

For those who inhabit the leafy suburbs of Sydney's north shore, poverty is an issue that can usually be kept at a distance.

Since 2001, Moderator-elect of the New South Wales Synod of the Uniting Church in Australia, the Rev. Niall Reid, has been helping to bridge that gap.

In conjunction with Amor Ministries, Mr Reid has led four groups to Tijuana, Mexico, to put faith into practice in a disadvantaged community.

Forty-seven people signed up for the 2006-07 trip to build three houses in five days for families who had previously shared a house or had none of their own.

"I thought it would be good for us to do something that would take us outside our square," Mr Reid said.

The program began as a response to interest from his own congregation at Gordon, but recently participants have come from as far as Wagga Wagga, Canberra, North West Rocks and Lindfield.

Builders live alongside the families they are helping and get a sense of what it is like living in poverty.

### Inspiring

Mr Reid has found the people of Tijuana inspiring.

"For five days those who do the building have to think about their own life and faith and what it means to live as they do in an affluent country.

"You see people who are isolated and there are no services or facilities. Things that we take for granted just aren't in their lives.

"It can be surprising because you spend time with these people and they are very happy in one sense. They aren't saying, 'We deserve more'; they just get on with life."

Mr Reid hopes that the experience of Mexico will have an impact on the way the builders live back in Australia.

"We went to a local church while we were there," he said. "I think that most people who went would say that attending that service was a highlight. They live among so much uncertainty and yet are faithful and can praise God.

"They were so generous with us — that was very humbling because we know

*Continued overleaf >>*

**Robert Reid (first left) and Sarah Leghorn have helped build not just a home but hope for these Mexican children.**



## Building relationships, getting results

This issue of *Mustard Seed* examines practical ways to live out faith.

We look at the role stewardship plays in managing church money and some of the easy ways we can help congregations to be responsible custodians of God's world.

We have been helping church treasurers maximise their interest to create more funds for mission.

Our recent work with UnitingCare Ageing shows how big the benefits can be when Uniting Church organisations build relationships and work together for the same cause.

We are a service to support the church and its financial needs and we work hard to construct an investment service that you can feel confident recommending to others.

Spread the word — and the benefits — onto family and friends so they too can invest in higher values.

BY LYNDAL IRONS

» continued from previous page

that we have so much more than they do.”

Participants must not only give of their time and talent but also of their money.

Fundraising ventures help the team pay for building materials and reduce the total cost of food, living and travelling expenses.

Last year the group decided a walkathon would be the best way to keep fit and raise money. Around 30 people attempted a walk from Palm Beach to Manly, earning money from sponsors per kilometre.

Uniting Financial Services was one of the sponsors, donating shirts, caps, water bottles and \$500.

“The shirts had ‘I’m going to make a difference’ on the front. It looked terrific when you had a group of 25 to 30 people walking around in them on the beach. They really stood

out!” said Mr Reid.

### Building relationships

On December 27, 2006, the group left for Mexico.

“The people from the town knew we were coming, but they were very excited when we arrived. They know that before we leave Mexico there will be a house built for them.

“They are very shy too. We are people coming into their property and taking up their space and it takes a little while to build the relationship across a language barrier — but it does happen.”

On New Year’s Eve the builders invited the families to an afternoon of activities, including face painting, picnics, volleyball and damper making.

“It was a great day. I think for us outings like that are a bit run-of-the-mill, but for these people it was



Walkers take their message to the beach with the help of Uniting Financial Services.

just fantastic. It was a very special time and a great community building exercise.

“I think the difference it makes for those living there is quite significant. In terms of those who went I think the achievement of having done something with their hands, having built something for someone and provided them with accommodation, is not only satisfying but also thought-provoking.

“People said that when they told people that they were going to Mexico it generated a lot of interest and they found it was a good way to get people interested in why they were doing it. It became a bit of a faith sharing exercise as well.

“As long as there are people who want to experience it, it seems worthwhile to me. We want to give people the opportunity to live out their faith in practical ways.”

## Featured service: funding your retirement

**I am a self-funded retiree and want a regular monthly income. Do you have a product that might fit into my self-managed superannuation fund?**

Uniting Financial Services has several products that may be suitable for self-funded retirees and those who manage their own superannuation seeking regular income from an organisation they can trust.

You can select from one of our fixed term investment products which

offer high rates of interest, monthly income and no fees. You choose the term of investment for your money from 12 months to five years.

For a limited time we are offering a three-year fixed-term investment for amounts \$20,000 and over, paying a high 6.35% p.a. with interest paid monthly.

In addition, open a Higher Value Online account and your money is available online anytime you want it, and you receive 6% p.a. on balances \$5,000 and over.

Seek independent advice from a financial consultant who can advise you on your individual taxation and financial circumstance before committing to any investment product.

Call our customer service team on 1300 133 673 to find out how you can earn monthly income for your retirement and help the Uniting Church! Terms and conditions apply. Ask for our Product Disclosure Statement and Product Information Brochure.



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## Sound expertise saves millions for care

Under the guidance of Uniting Financial Services, UnitingCare Ageing (part of UnitingCare NSW.ACT) recently undertook a bank tender process that will save millions for reinvestment in care.

Initial analysis last year found that the total interest earned on working capital funds held by UnitingCare Ageing was lower than they had hoped.

"It was an area where we could improve our financial position without affecting our care services," said Steve Teulan, Director, Corporate Finance and Strategy within UnitingCare Ageing.

Client Relationship Executive, Uniting Financial Services, Cathy Tunbridge began working closely with UnitingCare Ageing regions, helping to centralise hundreds of bank accounts and identify ways to improve their banking arrangements with major banks and Uniting Financial Services.

"Out of that alone we saved many hundreds of thousands of dollars," said Mr Teulan.

The next step was to use the collective power of the streamlined accounts to tender for the best deal possible for services not provided by Uniting Financial Services.

"One of the regional board members we have has spent the last 30 years in banking and said that it was one of the best requests for tender that

he had ever seen," said Mr Teulan.

"When the bank tender concluded, we identified that we would save another \$700,000 a year mainly in increased interest. Overall we expect that there will be a benefit well in excess of a million dollars a year."

The money saved will go back into providing care for elderly Australians and improving buildings and resources.

As a not-for-profit organisation, every dollar saved in the Uniting Church should count, Ms Tunbridge said.

"There are already other parts of the church requesting a full banking and investment review and looking at what we can provide. Then with the things that they do need to use a bank for, like merchant facilities and EFTPOS, we can



Steve Teulan says working with Cathy has saved significant money using valuable skills within the church.

negotiate to drive a better unit price.

"I work with all parts of the church from large boards through to congregations to try and give them things that they need through Uniting Financial Services and banking services.

"If we can do it at no charge we will do it that way. If we can't, we'll leverage the buying

power of the whole church to deliver benefit to the group we are working with."

"We could trust Cathy and Uniting Financial Services implicitly," said Steve Teulan.

"It is about working together, building relationships and valuing the expertise available within the church."

## 2nd National Men's Shed Conference

September 6-7, 2007

*Growing Together: Blokes Building*  
Manly Pacific Hotel, Manly

Hosted by UnitingCare Ageing Northern Sydney Region

A conference specifically for: Shed Members, Shed Supporters, Shed Organisers, Health & Aged Care Workers, Veterans Organisations, Relevant Government Agencies, Educators, those who'd like to find out more about Sheds ... and YOU!

For more information on how to attend or contribute, contact: Conference Secretariat, DC Conferences Pty Ltd, PO Box 637 North Sydney NSW 2059

Phone: 02 9954 4400; Fax 02 9954 0666  
Email mensshed@dcconferences.com.au

See [www.mensshed.org](http://www.mensshed.org)

## Uniting Financial Services takes on church's loans role

Uniting Financial Services has, from May 1 2007, taken on the church loans function (inquiries and approval role) previously offered by Uniting Resources Property Services.

This means Uniting Church congregations, agencies and organisations applying for loans relating to property or for other church purposes will gain the financial expertise of Uniting Financial Services staff who specialise in knowing the best loan options available.

For nearly three decades Uniting Financial

Services has combined Christian values with sound financial management.

Its mission has always been to help assist and fund the work of the Uniting Church New South Wales Synod while offering church entities a range of investment, borrowing products and services.

Cathy Tunbridge from Uniting Financial Services said the change will benefit the Uniting Church in terms of flexibility, accountability and assistance if people are struggling with loan repayments.

As part of the Uniting Resources team, Uniting Financial Services and Property Services will continue to work cooperatively, offering professionally rigorous service to the Uniting Church.

Property Services remains best placed to work on the delivery of property projects and to assess their feasibility. It has the skills and resources to respond to property requests and to focus on property safety and compliance issues.

Uniting Financial Services, meanwhile, is best placed to provide structured financial man-

agement for church lending, to discuss the structure of loans, to make them more affordable, and to make sure people get the right product for the right purpose.

"We will take into account specific application needs and tailor the loans accordingly," Ms Tunbridge said.

Uniting Church organisations seeking to apply for loans to help meet their needs and goals should call Uniting Financial Services on 1300 133 673 and ask to speak to a Customer Service officer.

## Smart money management makes us better stewards

There is one trait all church treasurers need: the heart of a Christian steward, says Uniting Financial Services Sales and Service Manager, Chris Field.

Stewardship, our responsibility for the world and managing everything God brings into our lives in a manner that honours God, should involve the glad giving of time, talents and material possessions for the work of God.

"Everyone has these three things in different degrees," said Chris.

Treasurers, many of whom are volunteers, are already giving in these three ways. But their work also involves ensuring that the congregation as a whole considers its responsibility as a steward when budgets are drawn.

"Moving funds from a lower interest account to a higher one is just one thing we can help with that creates more money for mission," said Chris.

Synod Mission Promotions Officer Emma Halgren said that it is also important that generosity comes from the right place.

"People shouldn't be giving out of guilt," she said.

"Sharing our resources is a justice issue — a way of engaging with God's love and work.

Connecting with projects in non-financial ways — through prayer or learning about the issues that underpin them — is important too, and gives greater meaning to monetary giving."

Last year Chris Field attended a

course on stewardship developed by the Catholic Church in America.

"I've been able to apply it to my work, especially with products like the Self Help Scheme, where congregation members can put money in a deposit that is attached to a Self Help Scheme and then give up their interest to help the congregation."

The Self Help Scheme is a practical product Uniting Financial Services provides by which congregation members don't even need to sacrifice or locate money to give — they just need to put their own money in a smart place.



## Chris offers unique help to treasurers

Uniting Financial Services has appointed a dedicated manager to increase the support available to church treasurers.

Starting in March 2007, Chris Field balances the new role with his existing work as Sales and Service Manager.

His new role is to provide a superior level of personal service to help treasurers manage their financial affairs and achieve the best outcome for the church.

“We are a part of the church,” he said. We understand their needs and church structures and we’re ideally placed to help.”

He points to cheque accounts as a zone where money is easily lost in fees.

Uniting Financial Services offers cheque accounts



with no fees and, when combined with a savings account, customers can keep the majority of their money where it can earn high interest.

Funds can be accessed and transferred between accounts at any time using Uniting Financial Services Internet Access — keeping all funds within one organisation.

“It’ll work much better for them and there will be more money for mission and that is what it is all about,” he said.

## Working together for the same cause

I took over the role of treasurer for Moss Vale Uniting church in January 2006.

It was so much more than just collecting the offerings and banking them each week. Today there are so many government and legislative issues that affect the role of the treasurer.

One of the advantages for me was having access to the people at Synod and Uniting Financial Services. I can’t speak more highly of them.

Everyone that I spoke to was so helpful; they all seem to be working for the same cause.

Uniting Financial Services understands the needs of church treasurers and can assist with Ministers

Expense Accounts, Direct Debits and the Giving Direct system.

I had no idea about the money Uniting Financial Services generates to financially support Synod. For me it just makes sense to be part of an organisation that is working for the same cause that I am.

It took some time to convince all members of Church Council, but from July 1, 2007 — with the exception of one account — all accounts will be consolidated to our current Uniting Financial Services accounts.

We have invested some money in a term deposit for nine months. That way the congregation can see the money is earning good interest

without any extra effort from us.

Last year we started using the MYOB/UCAP program. Now I get a single set of accounting records for all the accounts associated with Moss Vale Uniting Church and the two worshipping centres at Robertson and Bundanoon.

Previously, all accounts were not included and it seemed to be a sad and dreary story each month.

Now that we include everything it does look better; however we continue, like many other churches, to struggle at times.

I encourage as many treasurers as I can to talk to the team at Uniting Financial Services.

*Julie Maloney*



**The Uniting Financial Services office will be closed on Monday August 6 (Bank Holiday) and Friday September 7 for the expected public holiday due to the APEC Meeting in Sydney.**

# Still impressed, 18 years on

Garry May first considered placing funds with Uniting Financial Services around 18 years ago when he was looking to open an account for his father.

He was impressed with the interest rates advertised in a lawn bowls magazine that he came across.

“My father wanted to come to Sydney (from Rockdale) because he was getting older. We spoke about money and decided to open an account with Uniting Financial Services in my name where we could have the interest sent to him.”

This arrangement was designed to put funds aside for eventual funeral costs and also provide a supplementary income stream during later life.

His father has since passed on, but Garry has kept the account going.

“I recently had some more money that I wanted to invest so I looked at Uniting Financial Services and, sure enough, once again you were that bit better than the other places I’d looked at.



**Keeping it in the family: Garry May (left) pictured here with his late father (middle) and son Darren.**

“I’ve had that first account going for at least 18 years and I’ve never had any problems at all. I am definitely happy to recommend them to other people; in fact I did just recently.”

## Frequently asked questions

### 1. Why is our joint account statement mailed to me only?

We send one account statement to the first person named on a joint account (which we refer to as the “Primary Customer”) for several reasons:

1. Cost management. Sending one copy of a joint account statement saves operational and postage costs. The more money we save, the greater the opportunities are to maintain our annual contributions to help fund the work of the New South Wales Synod.
2. Environmental reasons. We are always on the lookout to find ways to help our environment, and one way is to reduce consumption. Reducing our usage of paper is a small but tangible way to save scarce and valuable natural resources.
3. Mutual efficiencies. Our computer systems are “client based”. This means each person operating on an account, whether as an account owner or an authorised signatory, is allocated one client number only. The system instantly recognises that person from their client number which helps us identify customers and

lessens the chance of holding incorrect information on file. So Uniting Financial Services customers only need to remember one client number — and we know everyone prefers that option!

If any customer is affected by this arrangement, simply write to us; we can arrange to send a statement to all joint account holders if required.

### 2. Can I get transaction details on my account from the internet?

Any person registered for Internet Account Access can view transaction listings on their accessible account.

- Simply logon to our website: [unitingfinancial.com.au](http://unitingfinancial.com.au) and click “Login”.
- View transactions by clicking on the account number in List of Accounts.
- To print, go to “Other” tab and select “Transaction Listing”.

Customers wishing to register for online access can obtain the Application Form from the website or contact Uniting Financial Services on 1300 133 673.

Enjoy accessing your accounts via the internet — it really is very easy to use!

## NEWS

*Customers will see some design changes to our forms, brochures and website after July 2007.*

*There will also be small changes in language use as a response to customer feedback, government legislation and as part of continuing efforts to improve our products.*

## Fixed Term Investment Special Offers:

**1. 6.45% pa fixed for two years; Interest paid 6 monthly; Amounts \$50,000 and over.**

**TERMS AND CONDITIONS APPLY.**

**2. 6.35% pa fixed for three years; Interest paid monthly; Amounts \$20,000 and over.**

**TERMS AND CONDITIONS APPLY.**

# Interest Rate Schedule

## Part 2 of 3

This schedule forms part of the Product Information Brochure and Product Disclosure Statement dated 2 December 2005, referred to therein as Part 2. All interest rates, unless otherwise stated are effective from 25 November 2006. All interest rates quoted are per annum and are subject to change.

## Personal, Company, Trust and Other Entities

### At Call Savings Account – Interest paid half yearly

\$0 – \$9,999	\$10,000 – \$49,999	\$50,000 plus
5.40%	5.75%	5.95%

### Higher Value Online Account – Interest paid half yearly

\$0 – \$4,999	\$5,000 and over	(Personal accounts only)
5.25%	6.00%	

### Term Investment – Interest paid 6 monthly and at maturity

Term	\$2,000 – \$9,999	\$10,000 – \$49,999	\$50,000 – \$249,999
6-11 Months	5.35%	6.15%	6.25%
12-23 Months	5.50%	6.30%	6.40%
24-35 Months	5.60%	6.25%	6.35%
36-47 Months	5.70%	6.15%	6.25%
48-59 Months	5.50%	6.05%	6.20%
60 Months	5.60%	5.95%	6.10%

Rates for investments of \$250,000 or more are available on request or by calling 1300 133 673.

### Term Investment – Interest paid monthly

Term	\$20,000 – \$49,999	\$50,000 – \$249,999
12-23 Months	6.10%	6.20%
24-35 Months	6.05%	6.15%
36-47 Months	5.95%	6.05%
48-59 Months	5.85%	6.00%
60 Months	5.75%	5.90%

Rates for investments of \$250,000 or more are available on request or by calling 1300 133 673.

### Self Help Savings Account – Interest paid quarterly

Nil (forgo interest) or 5.20% – Effective 1 October 2006 to 31 December 2006.  
 Nil (forgo interest) or 5.40% – Effective 1 January 2007.

### Funeral Savings Account (Personal accounts only)

4.95%

## Uniting Church Organisations

### At Call Accounts – Interest paid half yearly

6.00%

### Cheque Accounts – Interest paid half yearly

Under \$10,000	\$10,000 – \$49,999	\$50,000 plus
2.00%	3.50%	4.50%

### Self Help Savings Accounts – Interest paid quarterly

Nil (forgo interest) or 5.20% – effective 1 October 2006 to 31 December 2006.  
 Nil (forgo interest) or 5.40% – effective 1 January 2007.

### Term Investment – Interest paid 6 monthly and at maturity

6-11 Months	12-23 Months	24-35 Months	36-47 Months	48-59 Months	60 Months
6.25%	6.45%	6.40%	6.35%	6.10%	6.00%

Rates for investments of \$250,000 or more are available on request or by calling 1300 133 673.

**Conditions apply. Please ask for a Product Disclosure Statement and a Product Information Brochure to assist you in making your product selection.**

## UNITING FINANCIAL SERVICES

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Uniting Financial Services understands you need security, as well as higher value when investing for the future.

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You also get the wonderful feeling of knowing that every dollar you invest helps the Uniting Church NSW Synod care for others.

Take your investments to a higher level, talk with our friendly staff on **1300 133 673** or visit **[www.unitingfinancial.com.au](http://www.unitingfinancial.com.au)** We're eager to help!

\*Conditions apply



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