

## **Adelaide: Australia's most liveable city**

*The Weekend Australian*, Jan 22-23, reports that Adelaide is Australia's most liveable city. A poll of more than 4,000 city-dwelling Australians, conducted by the Property Council, was based on seventeen liveability measures, *such as safety, public transport, cultural entertainment, quality of schooling, attractiveness of the natural environment and affordability of housing.*

Popular discussion about the quality of city life and community well-being is often based on measures of economic growth, political performance, cultural attractiveness and environmental measures. Debates and public conversation about these qualities are often generated by those with vested interests and assume that these measurements are the final answer to the question, *what makes a good city?*

While affirming these indices as foundational others claim that there are other qualities that make cities good places to live and while these are less tangible they are no less important. Sometimes called *social or faithful capital* these qualities include community cooperation and care, sense of mutual obligation, respect for diversity and opportunities for ordinary citizens to engage in public life.

*A vibrant civil society is the bed rock of a healthy democracy because participation in civil society fosters social bonds, enhances civic skills and inspires altruistic values.* (Elaine Graham and Stephen Lowe, *What Makes A Good City? Public Theology and the Urban Church*. 2009. pg 117.)

In 2011 Pilgrim members will have the opportunity to consider the implications this wider conversation for its commitment to being *a church for the city*. On the second Tuesday of each month at 5.00pm a study group will explore this theme and will aim to draw out the implications this has for our community engagement and ministry priorities.

Also during 2011 St Paul's City Ministry director, Greg Elsdon, will be conducting a major study of city churches in Adelaide. The focus of this study will be on the way congregations contribute to quality of life in the city, the underlying values and convictions that make Adelaide a great place to live, work and visit.

We have an exciting year ahead as we revisit and redefine our vision and discover new forms of ministry in a city that is open to new ideas and looking to enhance public and civic life.

Dean Eland

Copies of the book, *What Makes A Good City?* are available for loan through the Pilgrim library.