

# South Australian Council of Churches Inc

AFFILIATED WITH THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CHURCHES IN AUSTRALIA



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ABN: 88 121 468 824

## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL MEETING

**Saturday 5 April 2014, 9.00am – 1pm**

**The Otherway Centre, Aboriginal Catholic Ministry,  
80 Payneham Rd, Stepney**

### Present

#### General Council:

Anglican: Revd Dr Gregory Stephens, The Right Rev'd John Stead,  
Mrs Pat Foord  
Catholic: Dr Marie Loller, Mrs Julie Staszyc, Sr Elizabeth Young  
Churches of Christ: Rev Doug Walladge, Mrs Ngaire Llewellyn, Mr Barry Grear  
Coptic Orthodox: -  
Ethiopian Orthodox: -  
Greek Orthodox: -  
Lutheran: Mr Gilbert Materne  
Religious Society of Friends: debra hackett  
Romanian Orthodox: -  
Salvation Army: -  
Uniting Church: Rev Anne Hewitt (Vice-President), Rev Rob Williams

Executive Committee: Mr Peter Burke (Anglican, President), Ms Jill Gallio (Catholic, Vice-President),  
Mrs Amy Mikhail (Coptic Orthodox), Mr Graham Jones (Treasurer)

#### Standing Committees:

Ecumenical Learning: Rev John Littleton (Anglican)  
Local Ecumenism: Ms Bridgid Medder (Catholic)  
Christian World Service: Mrs Andrea Gordon (Anglican), Mr Mohsen Abdel-Meseh (Coptic Orthodox), Ms Pamela Jones (Justice and Peace Issues), Mr Andrew Clarke (Refugee Issues)  
Finance Committee: Sr Elizabeth Morris (Catholic)

Observers: Bruce Rosier, Beth Ackland, Marelle Harisun, Joan Dare, Barbara Horne, Margaret Flint, Fred Foord, Velvy Holden, Russell McKinven

SACC Staff: Mrs Geraldine Hawkes (Executive Officer), Mrs Helen Williams (Office Administrator)

### Apologies/Absent

General Council: Rev David Covington-Groth (Anglican), The Most Rev'd Jeffrey Driver (Anglican), Rev Colin Dredge (Churches of Christ), Rev Dr Greg Elsdon (Churches of Christ), Mr George Mikhail (Coptic Orthodox), Mr Drew Thomas (Religious Society of Friends), Rev Wes Howland (Uniting).  
Most Rev Philip Wilson (Catholic), Fr Philippos Boghdadi (Coptic Orthodox), Fr Seraphim Sidaros (Coptic Orthodox), Mr Ibrahim Ibrahim (Coptic Orthodox), Mr Belay Getachew (Ethiopian Orthodox), Mr Hailmariam Kassa (Ethiopian Orthodox), Mrs Alganesh Abegaz (Ethiopian Orthodox), Pastor David Altus (Lutheran), Lieut. Colonel Ronald Clinch (Salvation Army), Dr Deidre Palmer (Uniting).

Standing Committees/Observers: Mrs Maureen Watts (Catholic), Envoy Ted Wright (Salvation Army), David Hall. Mr Stephen Ghabriel (Coptic Orthodox), Rev'd Jane Lee Barker (Anglican), Ms Rosina Gergis (Coptic Orthodox), Rev Matthew Stuart (Uniting), Ms Kay Thorp (Local ecumenist), Ms Miriam Tanios (Coptic Orthodox), Dr Colin Cargill (Uniting), Mr Ian Curwen-Walker (Anglican), Mr Denis Need (Chinese Methodist).

### 1. **Welcome and Prayer:**

Mr Peter Burke, President, welcomed everyone to the meeting, especially people here for the first time.

He then handed over to Mr John Lochowiak who is the Chair of The Otherway Centre. John introduced Mr Michael Sostaric, also from The Otherway Centre, and then led us in a prayer which was originally from his Grandfather.

### 2. **Sharing Stories Part 1:**

John invited everyone to share a little about themselves, on where they worship and their origins.

John spoke about **Tjukurrpa**, which is the Aboriginal word for culture/harmony/Dreaming.

In small groups we then discussed the question 'What is culture?', and each group shared their thoughts. John then gave an interesting talk on his Aboriginal Heritage, Cultural Awareness and many stories.

He described the relationship between the Physical World, the Human World and the Sacred World.

### 3. **Sharing Stories Part 2:**

#### **3.1 Recognition, Reconciliation and Relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and the churches in SA**

The President invited the meeting to consider:

- What has touched us, inspired us, this morning?
- What does this story mean for my Church?
- What further steps might the churches take together?

Responses included:

- We were thankful for the insight into Aboriginal culture and heritage
- Enormous difference to who I am and how I view God
- How it all integrates
- We should look at similarities and not differences
- It broadened our understanding
- It was a positive presentation
- Can we package you.. (John)?

#### **3.2 Ecumenical Learning and Receptive Ecumenism**

We reflected on the session on ecumenical formation & learning at our last meeting, and the energy around Receptive Ecumenism. We considered places within our Church [diocese/synod, agencies, congregations, councils, committees] which may be in need of some healing so that they may reflect the light of Christ more fully. Also, how might SACC assist the churches?

The following points came out of discussion:

- To think of ourselves as brothers and sisters
- Work in a more unified way
- Contact other lay people in geographical area
- Some Interchurch Councils find reasons NOT to do something with other denominations
- We expect the clergy to organise everything
- What we choose to give our attention to determines our experience
- We don't have to lose our identity to embrace otherness
- Ecumenism is happening in some youth groups
- The Lenten resource brings people together.

### 3.3 World Council of Churches: reflections on the 10<sup>th</sup> Assembly

Written reports from Rev Anne Hewitt, Uniting Church/SACC Vice-President and Mrs Geraldine Hawkes, Executive Officer, were emailed prior to the meeting.

Geraldine referred to the highlights especially, and invited people to reflect on times when church is gate-opener or gate-keeper to God's grace in our world.

Anne summarized her report:

- There is a worldwide movement of change – 1/3 of gathering was youth
- Emily Evans from Victoria is on WCC Executive and is a young person

Discussion from both reports followed:

- We should keep in touch with Emily Evans to support her, and also arrange for her to attend one of our meetings
- Rev John Littleton encouraged all to get the WCC electronic newsletter
- Some of our churches are much more culturally diverse than they were 10 years ago
- There is fear among some leadership that they may lose their parishioners to other denominations
- Christian faith and ecumenism is a global movement

### 3.4 The Health of Ecumenism in SA

Geraldine reminded the meeting of the journey of SACC over recent years in becoming more intentionally a resource and support to the Churches in the work of Christian unity. This is becoming more and more the daily reality of SACC as various people/groups from across the churches seek advice, support or resourcing – in order that they may respond more fully, appropriately, lovingly etc in their relationships with the other churches.

Discussion ensued:

- Over recent years there has been more contact between people appointed to SACC Councils/committees and their churches. People are encouraged to continue to talk to the relevant committee or leadership in their church;
- Palm Sunday Walk for Refugees grew from the suggestion of Rev Mark Reissen from Churches of Christ who then garnered the support of several churches and other organisations. The genesis of an event or resource can occur in a particular denomination, and can then grow ecumenically through all the churches;
- In October 2014 Catherine Clifford from Canada will be in Adelaide and give the Annual Lecture;
- Eight people from SA will go to the 3<sup>rd</sup> International Receptive Ecumenism Conference USA to in June. In October, a mini Receptive Ecumenism conference will be held at the Adelaide College of Divinity, alongside the Annual Lecture and the eight people have been invited to contribute from their experience of the international conference.

### 3.5 Easter/Pentecost 2014

Christians from all traditions will celebrate Easter/ Pentecost on the same day - 20 April / 8 June. How are we/our churches marking this?

- SACC, with The Corner Uniting Church, is hosting a dinner called **The Good Table** on 30 May 2014, 6.30pm at The Corner Uniting Church, Warradale. Anne Hewitt described the event, including an Ecumenical Art Exhibition, will be held in conjunction with the dinner. There will be room for 60 people. Bookings being taken: flyers and booking forms tabled for collection.
- Brother Matthew from Taizé will meet with Church Leaders, Youth Ministers and School Chaplains on 12th May in Adelaide. Evening prayer is being arranged.

*SA Council of Churches:*

*nurturing and nourishing the understanding, spiritual growth and practice of ecumenism across the Churches of South Australia*

- On Saturday 7 June there will be a Taizé service at St Peter’s Cathedral as part of the World Prayer for Christian Unity.

**3.6 Finance & Administration**

The Treasurer’s Report to General Council, dated 5 April 2014, was tabled at the meeting. Graham Jones highlighted the following points for the Budget 2014/15:

- Total Draft income \$178,829, total draft expenditure \$180,648, Draft deficit \$1,819.
- The Income includes a Grant of around \$30,000 a year from the SA Government through Dept for Communities & Social Inclusion, for 5 years until 2020.

The Executive Committee has given approval in principle to the Budget, and will consider it further at its May meeting.

Graham Jones moved the Report be accepted. Rob Williams seconded. Carried.

**3.7 Minutes of AGM** held on 16 November 2013 at Noarlunga Uniting Church will be presented for acceptance at the AGM on 15 November 2014. No comments, questions and business arising from Minutes.

**3.8 Other Business**

- Rev Doug Walladge spoke about changes to wireless microphones using the frequencies 694-820Mz, and advised everyone that from January 1, 2015 it will be illegal to use them. As many churches use wireless microphones with these frequencies it is important that they are all advised.
- Mr Peter Burke had two books passed on to him by Rev Lindsay Faulkner to promote. They are written about Aboriginal people, and will be advertised in an upcoming SACC newsletter.

**4. Review** – It was agreed that the meeting was nicely informal, informative and worthwhile.

**5. Conclusion and Blessing Prayer** - Mr Peter Burke closed the meeting with a short prayer.

**NEXT MEETING: Annual General Meeting Saturday 15 November 2014, 8.45am – 1pm**  
St Mary & Anba Coptic Orthodox Church, 18-20 Goldfinch Ave, Cowandilla

Meeting closed at 1pm.

Minutes Confirmed By

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Date: ...../...../.....