

South Australian Council of Churches Inc



Annual Report July 2014 – June 2015

Executive Officer

The response to our unity in Christ occurs within the Member Churches, and the role of SA Council of Churches is **facilitating** that response where needed. SACC does this by being a gathering place and being attentive to the life and mission of the churches and society in SA, through:

- a. drawing together conversations and possibilities in a more unified and seamless approach around the priority areas of **Ecumenical Learning, Local Ecumenism & Receptive Ecumenism**. There is an intentional focus on church institutions eg congregations, parishes, agencies, state/diocesan leadership, schools and ecumenical organisations, as well as with individuals, and opportunities for discernment, conversation, hospitality, learning, prayer, reflection and action are offered and arranged.
- b. continuing to encourage, facilitate and nurture **ecumenical partnerships** and action in:
 - i. resourcing individuals and church organisations at all levels in their relations with other Christian communities and various organisations in SA;
 - ii. gathering people when an activity can be best done together rather than separately.

Some examples are below, others are included in the Reports of the President and Standing Committees. It is hoped that these offer you an overview of the journey of many people in the past year. The overall sense is that SACC Member Churches continue to affirm their commitment to one another to make more visible their unity in Christ, whatever and however that may look.

1. Ecumenical Learning, Local Ecumenism & Receptive Ecumenism

- a. **Simple Meals:** opportunities for hospitality/conversation from the heart, on how the ecumenical spirit is being nurtured and nourished, institutionally as well as personally.
- b. **Workshops:** using resources developed by SACC eg *Healing Gifts for Wounded Hands* [Receptive Ecumenism handbook]. These have also been used extensively by Durham University, the Anglican Centre Rome as well as by people across Australia and overseas.
- c. **Annual Lecture & Mini-Conference:** with guest Lecturer, Catherine Clifford from Canada and many local participants from various aspects of church life.
- d. **Taizé:** creating space for sharing stories by young people on their experience of Taizé, liaising with the Brothers for their visit to SA early 2015, and securing funding to assist two young Aboriginal people to visit Taizé during 2015.
- e. **Leaders of Christian Churches SA:** facilitating their engagement with one another, and across relevant spheres of influence including Government, other Faiths, and on social justice matters.

2. Projects & Partnerships in the Mission of Christ

- a. **Constitutional Change & Recognition:** awareness raising, liaising and action in church and society.
- b. **Refugee Coalition:** enhancing hospitality through gathering individuals and agencies across the churches, government and community to share information/development of resources.

- c. **Peace Lamps:** made by young people in Palestine - an appeal for prayer for peace in the Holy Land. See Christian World Service Report for more.
- d. **Lenten Resource 2016:** the preparation team includes people from the Catholic, Orthodox and Protestant traditions. The theme is Return to God: *the human struggle and divine grace*. Available online from mid-November 2015.

Some signs of deeper engagement by the Churches

- a. Increasing number of requests for advice, resourcing and support, together with greater participation from parishes, church leaders, students for ministry, inter-church councils, agencies, bi-lateral dialogues, and involvement in local and national events, celebrations, conferences.
- b. Teams of people involved in SACC being invited to present on ecumenism, or represent the churches ecumenically at church, government and community occasions.
- c. Uniting Church in SA has established a Synod Ecumenical Relations Committee;
- d. Anglican Ecumenical Network/Diocesan Ecumenical and Interfaith Commission pilot project on Receptive Ecumenism, with wide-reaching relational and pastoral outcomes;
- e. Annual Ecumenical Event at St Peter's Cathedral continues;
- f. More interest by religious press on ecumenical matters;
- g. Conversations and action springing up following events etc.

For more information:

- a. Contact a Member of the Executive Committee as at July 2015, or Geraldine Hawkes:

Ms Amy Mikhail: Coptic Orthodox
 Rev Anne Hewitt: Uniting
 Mr Gilbert Materne: Lutheran
 Ms Jill Gallio: Catholic, President
 Rev John Littleton: Anglican/Ecumenical
 Delegate
 Rev John Psalios: Greek Orthodox

Mr Neil Traeger: Treasurer
 Ms Ngairé Llewellyn: Churches of
 Christ/Vice-President
 Mr Peter Burke: Anglican, Vice-President
 Rev Rob Williams: Uniting/Ecumenical
 Delegate

- b. Contribute/Subscribe to *Ecumenism: Reflection & News* (weekly e-news): sacc@picknowl.com.au
- c. Visit www.sacc.asn.au or contact Geraldine Hawkes.

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