

# South Australian Council of Churches Inc

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## Annual General Meeting

Saturday 15 November 2014, 9am – 1pm

St Mary and St Bishop Coptic Orthodox Church, 18-20 Goldfinch Ave, Cowandilla

## Minutes

### Present

#### General Council:

Anglican: Rev'd Dr Gregory Stephens, Rev David Covington-Groth,  
The Rev'd Caroline Pearce  
Catholic: Mrs Julie Staszyc  
Churches of Christ: Rev Colin Dredge, Rev Dr Greg Elsdon, Mr Barry Gear  
Coptic Orthodox: Fr Seraphim Sidaros, Mr George Mikhail, Mr Ibrahim Ibrahim  
Ethiopian Orthodox: -  
Greek Orthodox: Fr Jeremy Krieg, Mr Daniel Bradshaw  
Lutheran: Mr Gilbert Materne, Rev Leon Rosenberg  
Religious Society  
of Friends: -  
Romanian Orthodox: -  
Salvation Army: -  
Uniting Church: Rev Anne Hewitt (Vice President), Rev Rob Williams, Rev Wes Howland

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

#### Standing Committees:

- Ecumenical Learning: Rev John Littleton (Anglican), Dr Heshmat Keroloss (Coptic Orthodox), Envoy Ted Wright (Salvation Army)
- Local Ecumenism: Mr Pierre Magar (Coptic Orthodox), Ms Kay Thorp (Local Ecumenist)
- Christian World Service: Mrs Andrea Gordon (Anglican), Mr Mohsen Abdel-Meseh & Ms Jakleen Shonoodh (Coptic Orthodox), Ms Pamela Jones (Justice and Peace Issues)
- Finance Committee: Sr Elizabeth Morris (Catholic)

Observers: Bruce Rosier, Beth Ackland, Marelle Harisun, Barbara Horne, Kris Hanna, Margaret Murphy, Velvy Holden, Trevor Dean, Gwyneth Ottrey, Mary Mercer, Beth Hewitt, Tessa Hewitt

SACC Staff: Ms Geraldine Hawkes (Executive Officer), Ms Jacqui Liu (Office Administrator)

### Apologies/Absent

General Council: The Right Rev'd John Stead, Mrs Pat Foord, The Most Rev'd Jeffrey Driver & The Rt Rev'd John Ford (Anglican); Dr Marie Loller, Most Rev Philip Wilson, Sr Elizabeth Young & Bishop Greg O'Kelly (Catholic); Rev Doug Walladge, Mrs Ngaire Llewellyn (Churches of Christ); Fr Philippos Boghdadi & Bishop Suriel (Coptic Orthodox); Mr Belay Getachew, Mr Hailemariam Kassa & Mrs Alganesh Abegaz (Ethiopian Orthodox); Bishop Nikandros of Dorylaeon & Fr Peter Photakis (Greek Orthodox); Pastor David Altus (Lutheran); Dr Jenny Stock: Mr Drew Thomas, debra hackett & Mr Yarrow Andrew (Religious Society of Friends); Fr Viorel Stoica & Bishop Michael (Romanian Orthodox); Lieut Colonel Ronald Clinch & Lieut Colonel Robyn Clinch (Salvation Army); Dr Deidre Palmer & Rev Nigel Rogers (Uniting).

Standing Committees/Observers: Fr John Psalios (Greek Orthodox), Mr Stephen Ghabriel (Coptic Orthodox), Ms Bridgid Medder (Catholic), Rev'd Jane Lee Barker (Anglican), Rev Matthew Stuart (Uniting), Ms Miriam Tanios (Coptic Orthodox), Dr Colin Cargill (Uniting), Mr Ian Curwen-Walker (Anglican), Mr Graham Jones (Treasurer), Ms Margaret Dingle.

1. **Prayer & Sharing of Stories** – with the people of St Mary and St Bishoy Coptic Orthodox Church. As people registered, each received a gift pack, which included an Order of Service for the morning prayer and a CD entitled *Annual Weekday Praises*, by The Shepherd Choir of St Mary and St Bishoy Coptic Orthodox Church. Following prayer in the Church, which was led by Fr Seraphim and Deacons, the choir of young people sang some ancient hymns, some in Coptic, and in Greek to a Coptic tune.

Mr Pierre Magar, using power point, then described the Copts of Egypt and their journey in faith and life. Three images especially caught people's imagination: the feather and the human heart...which is heavier; faith moving the mountain; the egg at the iconostasis/resurrection. Questions were invited and responses included explanations on Icons, Baptism, the role of women, and the place of theological education. [For more information about <http://www.sacopts.org.au/Home.aspx> ]

Peter Burke, President, gave thanks for the prayer, the singing and the expansive description of the Coptic people. Recognising that many people were at their first SACC Meeting, either having been newly appointed to General Council/Committees or as guests, Peter invited everyone to introduce themselves to someone they have not met before.

Morning tea was served in the courtyard.

## 2. **Annual General Meeting**

Following Acknowledgement of Country, Peter introduced the AGM, reminding people that their green badge indicates that they are part of General Council and are entitled to vote. However, all present are encouraged to offer insights, ask questions etc.

### 2.1 **Confirmation of Minutes of:**

3.1.1 AGM Held On 16 November 2013 at Noarlunga Uniting Church

3.1.2 General Meeting Held on 5 April 2014 at The Otherway Centre

The Minutes had been distributed prior to the meeting. Barry Grear moved that the Minutes be accepted as a true and correct record. Colin Dredge seconded. Carried.

### 2.2 **Discussion and Adoption of Reports** for period July 2013– June 2014

2.2.1 President

2.2.2 Executive Officer

2.2.3 Standing Committees for

i. Ecumenical Learning

ii. Local Ecumenism & Christian World Service

2.2.4 Auditor's Report

All these Reports had been distributed with the Agenda. Brief comments were offered, highlighting one or two aspects.

2.2.5 Finance Report

In the absence of Graham Jones, Treasurer, who was unable to be present, the Executive Officer, Geraldine Hawkes, advised that SACC was operating within budget. She also expressed the valuing of the good partnerships with churches in relation to practical support and specific sponsorship on various occasions and needs.

Ted Wright moved that all the Reports be accepted. Colin Dredge seconded. Carried.

### 2.3 **Appointments and Elections**

2.3.1 Appointments for 2015-2016

A list of all who have been appointed for 2015-2016, together with the Core Purpose & Priorities, was available. Most of the churches have made their appointments for 2015/2016 and all were welcomed, whether new or continuing. The meeting also acknowledged those who are concluding their appointment at the end of 2014.

### 2.3.2 Election of Officers:

Nominations had been invited in advance and were circulated before the meeting, with an update available at each table.

#### *President*

Jill Gallio (Catholic): nominated by Peter Burke, seconded by Rob Williams. No other nominations received. Jill elected unopposed.

#### *Vice President (2 positions)*

- Ngaire Llewellyn (Churches of Christ): nominated by Rob Williams, seconded by Jill Gallio.
- Peter Burke (Anglican): nominated by Jill Gallio, seconded by Rob Williams. No other nominations received. Ngaire and Peter elected unopposed.

#### *Treasurer*

Neil Traeger had accepted the appointment by the Executive Committee to be Treasurer from AGM 2014-AGM 2015 and he was warmly welcomed at his first meeting.

### 2.3.3 Election of two people from General Council to Executive Committee

Rob Williams continues as one of those people, until December 2015.

John Littleton, nominated by Peter Burke, seconded by Caroline Pearce.

No other nominations received. John was elected unopposed, until end of 2016.

### 2.3.4 Appointment of Auditor for 2012/13

Geoff Davis, Principal, Geoff Davis & Associates, Chartered Accountants nominated by Julie Staszyc, seconded by Gilbert Materne. Carried.

### 2.3.5 Expressions of gratitude for past leadership

Peter expressed gratitude to all who had served SACC and who would not be continuing, including:

Graham Jones, who as Treasurer had reported extremely well on the finances; Drew Thomas, a former President and Chair of Executive, who was moving to Tasmania; Anne Hewitt, Vice President for the past two years. Each had served generously and expansively and all expressed their gratitude.

The Executive Officer, on behalf of the Member Churches, thanked Peter for his two terms as President and conveyed delight at Peter's ongoing willingness to serve as a Vice President.

The meeting affirmed the contribution of all with applause.

Jill Gallio was welcomed in as President to AGM 2015 and assumed the Chair for the remainder of the meeting. She was invited to add her signature to the list of Presidents which is kept inside the Bible that is held in SACC office.

Jill opened her term as President by describing how she is looking towards the leadership across the Council and Committees and the close collaboration of all in the work of Christian unity, which is the work of the churches together.

## 2.4 Other Business

**2.4.1 Peace Lamps:** Pamela Jones, a member of the Peace Lamps Working Party, had developed a Power Point Presentation which was shown, describing the story around the Peace Lamps & Peace Doves, made by young people in Palestine.

**2.4.2 Sharing News & Stories at the Table:** Jill invited all to share a story with those at their table. Feedback included:

- Richness of Spirituality of the Orthodox;
- Wonderful Lecture and Conference on Receptive Ecumenism;
- Regret that inter church councils had been 'hijacked' by the employment of CPS Workers, leading them to forego their core business of being church together;
- Pilgrim Uniting and St Francis Xavier Cathedral meeting to share gifts/woundedness;
- Anglican Ecumenical Network [AEN] and Catholic Diocesan Ecumenical and Interfaith Commission [DEIC] - pilot project on Receptive Ecumenism. Details from AEN, DEIC or through SACC.

#### **2.4.2 Dates, Venues and Themes of General Council Meetings 2015**

The following dates had been circulated prior to the meeting and the date for the AGM would be finalised once the date of the Anglican Synod had been announced:

- Saturday 9 May 2015, 11.30am – 3pm - Port Pirie, hosted by the Anglican Diocese of Willochra. SACC will arrange a bus for those who wish to travel together.
- Saturday 14 or 21 November 2015 - Greek Orthodox

### **3. Sharing of stories - Taizé – a Pilgrimage of Trust – a Holy Hour**

Peter Burke led this part of the meeting, which included elements of song, story, hearing God's Word, prayer, conversation and plans for 2015:

- Peter's own experience of Taizé, some years ago and more recently
- Chant: *Come and fill our hearts with your peace* – interlaced throughout
- Beth Hewitt and Tessa Hewitt: their experience of visiting Taizé and the impact it had on their faith and life - followed by questions.
- Hearing God's Word in English, Arabic, Coptic and Mandarin - with a little silence in between: *Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid. John 14: 27*
- Towards a New Solidarity: distributed before the meeting. For conversation at tables.
- Other ways of engaging in Towards a New Solidarity in 2015
  - a. Sponsorship of Volunteers at Taizé – SACC sponsoring volunteers [www.sacc.asn.au](http://www.sacc.asn.au) *Volunteering offers a simple community life and a time of prayer and service for those who wish to go further on their faith journey and understanding of church. A volunteer is first of all a chance to think about the next step in life through reflection, regular community prayer and sharing with others.*
  - b. Young People 13 February 2015: Ruth Mathieson described events for Schools Gathering at St Columba College. Contact Ruth [mathieru@trinity.sa.edu.au](mailto:mathieru@trinity.sa.edu.au) for more information.
  - c. Prayer Event 13 February 2015 – 7.30pm, Brougham Place Uniting Church – invite young people, bring the grandchildren, young neighbours...

### **4. Review**

Jill invited all to consider:

- What have I learned...What will I do differently...?
- What story will I communicate to others about today's gathering ...?
- What steps will I take within my church...Who do I need to speak with...?

### **5. The meeting closed with a Blessing** on all. And then some moved to the Coptic Gallery for a tour led by the young people of the Church.

Minutes Confirmed By

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