

South Australian Council of Churches Inc

Affiliated with the National Council of Churches in Australia



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Minutes of the Annual General Meeting

Saturday 19 November 2016, 9am – 1pm

Australian Lutheran College, 104 Jeffcott Street/200

Ward St, North Adelaide

Present

General Council:

Anglican:	The Rev'd Barbara Paull-Hunt, The Rt Rev'd John Stead
Catholic:	Dr Marie Loller, Mrs Julie Staszyc, Ms Jill Gallio, Mr Joseph Johns
Churches of Christ:	Rev Doug Walladge, Mrs Ngaire Llewellyn, Mr Barry Grear
Coptic Orthodox:	Mr George Mikhail
Ethiopian Orthodox:	-
Greek Orthodox:	Fr Jeremy Krieg
Lutheran:	Rev Leon Rosenberg, Mr Gilbert Materne, Bishop David Altus
Religious Society of Friends:	Dr Jenny Stock, Ms Millicent Stein
Romanian Orthodox:	-
Salvation Army:	-
Uniting Church:	Rev Rob Williams, Dr Marelle Harisun

Executive Committee: Ms Jill Gallio (Catholic, President), Mr Peter Burke (Anglican, Vice-President), Ms Amy Mikhail (Coptic Orthodox), Rev'd Dr John Littleton (Ecumenical Delegate), Mr Neil Traeger (Treasurer).

Standing Committees:

- Community for Ecumenical Learning: Ms Mary Camilleri (Catholic), Dr Heshmat Keroloss (Coptic Orthodox), Envoy Ted Wright (Salvation Army)
- Community for Local Ecumenism: Rev'd Dr Jane Lee-Barker (Anglican), Ms Bridgid Medder (Catholic), Mr Pierre Magar (Coptic Orthodox)
- Ecumenical Partners for Justice and Peace: Ms Kathy McEvoy (Catholic), Dr Colin Cargill (Uniting), Ms Pamela Jones (Justice and Peace Issues),
- Finance Committee: Rev Colin Dredge (Churches of Christ)

Guests: Rev James Winderlich, Dr Stephen Pietsch

Observers: Ms Beth Ackland, Ms Velvy Holden, Dr Don Hopgood, Mr Andrew Hunt, Mr Refaat Megali, Ms Shirley Golding, Br Trevor Dean, Mr Ian Hopewell

SACC Staff: Ms Geraldine Hawkes (Ecumenical Facilitator/Executive Officer), Ms Melanie Macrow (Office Administrator)

For Apologies and Absences see *Appendix 1*.

1. Prayer, followed by Welcome and Introductions

Jill Gallio, President, acknowledged Country and thanked the Australian Lutheran College, including Pastor James Winderlich, Principal, and Lutheran appointees to SA Council of Churches - Bishop David Altus, Pastor Leon Rosenberg, and Mr Gilbert Materne - for their gracious and generous hospitality in hosting the AGM of SA Council of Churches.

James Winderlich then led all in prayer, followed by a brief description of the college, its ecumenical background and role for the Lutheran Church of Australia, including the ecumenical contribution through various bi-lateral dialogues. He also invited exploration by all of the expansive grounds of the College, and outlined WHS protocols.

2. Companions on the Journey – how we as ecumenical council & committees will relate to one another and to our churches so that together we may help bring healing to our broken life.

Jill Gallio invited each person present to introduce themselves and describe the area of their SACC appointment.

Once all had been introduced, Geraldine described General Council – and SACC in general – as a place of gathering for the Churches where their understanding, spiritual growth, disposition and practice of ecumenism can be nurtured and nourished, in response to the prayer of Jesus that “they may all be one”. In sharing the journey, the Member Churches also have a mutual relationship and accountability towards one another.

All were then invited to share in groups their relationship with their own Church and with others through ecumenism, followed by receiving comments and insights:

- i. Leon Rosenberg: Others in the group had experienced similar frustration in that the general attitude of *doing* the ‘status quo’ rather than *being* the church with others was common.
- ii. Kathy McEvoy: Being at the Meeting to learn, much was heard and learned through the conversations; there was richness and depth.
- iii. John Stead: Wanted to be affirming – Ecumenism happens naturally in rural areas due to dependence on others; could this need for the other, this dependence, be learned by those in metro areas?
- iv. Doug Walladge: In response to, and furthering John Stead’s comment – We go everywhere together, so why go to church separately?

3. Annual General Meeting

Jill Gallio then opened the AGM.

3.1 Confirmation of Minutes & Business Arising:

3.1.1 Minutes of AGM held on 14 November 2015 at St Spyridon's Greek Orthodox Church, 50 Oxford Tce, Unley

The Minutes had been distributed prior to the meeting. John Littleton moved that the Minutes be accepted as a true and correct record. Ted Wright seconded. Carried.

3.1.2 Minutes of the General Meeting held on Saturday 14 May 2016 at Adelaide Congress Ministry, 17 Bedwin Street, Salisbury North

The Minutes had been distributed prior to the meeting. Peter Burke moved that the Minutes be accepted as a true and correct record. Pierre Magar seconded. Carried.

3.1.3 Budget 2016/17

At the General Meeting on 14 May 2016, Neil Traeger had moved that the Budget 2016/17 as

distributed be accepted, and Julie Staszyc had seconded. The meeting had agreed in principle, for ratification at AGM. As a result, the Budget had been re-distributed with the AGM Agenda and the Budget for 2016/17 was accepted by General Council.

3.2 Discussion and Adoption of Reports for period July 2015– June 2016

Reports had been distributed with Agenda, with Community for Local Ecumenism Report distributed prior to the meeting.

3.2.1 President

3.2.2 Ecumenical Facilitator/Executive Officer

3.2.3 Standing Committees

i. Community for Ecumenical Learning

ii. Community for Local Ecumenism

iii. Ecumenical Partners for Justice and Peace

3.2.4 Auditor's Report

3.2.5 Finance Report [Refer Item 3.v. of Ecumenical Facilitator - Executive Officer Report]

Each committee had time to speak to their annual report, and questions and comments were invited.

Of particular note was the Bequest *for the work of refugees and displaced persons*, which had recently been given to SA Council of Churches, following the death of Yvonne Button. Yvonne had been a member of St Saviour's Church, Glen Osmond, and a former member of SACC Committee for Refugees and Displaced Persons. Ecumenical Partners for Justice and Peace (EPJP) is developing criteria for funding from the Bequest. EPJP will be keen to hear from Church affiliated groups and organisations working to support refugees and displaced persons in the community of South Australia who may be interested in obtaining funding from the bequest to continue or enhance their work.

Details of criteria and application forms will be made available through SACC weekly e-news *Ecumenism: News, Resources & Events* when ready.

John Littleton moved that a vote of thanks be given in recognition of the late Yvonne Button for the Bequest of \$58,116.17 for use in the area of Refugees and Displaced Persons. Ngaire Llewellyn seconded. Carried.

Jenny Stock asked whether SACC would make statements on matters related to public discourse/social issues on behalf of churches. David Altus responded that the Member Churches had agreed in general to make individual statements, and that these be circulated amongst one another, rather than issue one joint statement, except on occasion.

Neil Traeger, Treasurer, described some of the impact of bequest and long service leave on the end of year reports. These appear as an asset and a liability respectively.

Doug Walladge moved that all Reports from 3.2.1 to 3.2.5 be accepted. Jane Lee-Barker seconded. Carried.

3.3 Appointments and Elections

Jill vacated Chair and Geraldine chaired for the period of appointments and elections.

3.3.1 Member Church Appointments for 2017/18: some have been received, others awaited. People expressed their thanks to those churches that have made appointments through to the end of 2018 to SA Council of Churches.

Member Churches are each dependent on the people that each appoints so that their journey towards Christian unity through their ecumenical council may continue. The meeting noted that some Member Churches are still to make appointments to SA Council of Churches.

3.3.2 Appointment/Election of Officers for 2017: President, Vice-Presidents [2] & Treasurer Nominations had been invited in advance and a Nominations Form, together with some nominations, was distributed prior to the meeting, for return by 17 November.

President

Rev Rob Williams [Uniting]: nominated by Ngaire Llewellyn, seconded by Jill Gallio. No other nominations received. Rob was elected unopposed.

Vice President (2 positions)

Rev'd Dr John Littleton [Anglican]: nominated by Amy Mikhail, seconded by Ngaire Llewellyn. Dr Marie Loller [Roman Catholic]: nominated by John Littleton, seconded by Jill Gallio. No other nominations received. John and Marie were elected unopposed.

Treasurer

Mr Neil Traeger was appointed unanimously by Executive Committee on 8 November 2016 to be Treasurer to AGM 2017.

3.3.3 Election of one Ecumenical Delegate from General Council to Executive Committee to December 2018

Rev'd Dr John Littleton [Anglican], nominated by Peter Burke, seconded by Rob Williams. No other nominations received. John was elected unopposed, until end of 2018.

Rev Rob Williams continues his appointment as Ecumenical Delegate through to end of 2017.

3.3.4 Appointment of Auditor for 2016/17

Mr Geoff Davis, Principal, Geoff Davis and Associates, Chartered Accountants nominated by Neil Traeger, seconded by Gilbert Materne. Carried.

Geoff has been Auditor for SACC Inc since 2008 and SACC is grateful for his ongoing willingness to share his wisdom and expertise in ensuring good stewardship and reporting of SACC finances.

3.3.5 Expressions of gratitude for past leadership, and looking towards new leadership

Thanks were given to Ms Jill Gallio, Roman Catholic Church; Ms Ngaire Llewellyn, Churches of Christ; Mr Peter Burke, Anglican Church, each of whom had concluded their appointment as Officers of SACC.

Rob took the Chair as President for 2017 and thanked all for their support.

3.4 Other Business

3.4.1 Other items for discussion at AGM

No other items received.

3.4.2 Dates, venues and themes of General Council Meetings 2017

Rob invited Geraldine to speak to the dates for the coming year, noting especially the General Meeting which will include SACC 70th Birthday Celebration on Saturday **29 April 2017, 10am-3.30pm approximately**, Adelaide City.

Geraldine described how SACC has invited four city churches to host a 'progressive' gathering, which will include times of prayer, story-telling, hospitality, walking together and a *little* business, in four different churches/halls:

- Pilgrim [Uniting]
- St Francis Xavier Cathedral [Catholic]
- St Mary Magdalene's [Anglican]
- St Stephen's [Lutheran]

The entire day is open to all across the Member Churches. More information soon through *Ecumenism: News, Resources & Events*, and SACC website. **RSVPs** to sacc@picknowl.com.au

Geraldine thanked the four people who were assisting with planning. She also encouraged all present to consider how their local communities could host an event or activity as part of the celebrations.

An invitation was then then opened to all to offer hosting the AGM of 2017, in October/November.

4. **The Reformation: 500 years on**

Rob introduced Dr Stephen Pietsch, Australian Lutheran College/Lutheran Church of Australia SA/NT District.

Dr Stephen Pietsch, Lecturer in Pastoral Theology at ALC, described the Reformation, 500 years on, with a focus on **Luther, Conflict and Communion**, (using a PowerPoint presentation).

He traced some important aspects of Luther's reformation theology for ecumenical dialogue today, drawing on the Document 'From Conflict to Communion':

<https://www.lutheranworld.org/sites/default/files/From%20Conflict%20to%20Communion.pdf>

Following Dr Pietsch's presentation, the meeting considered his discussion points:

1. In what ways has your own church and its tradition been affected by Luther and the Reformation movement?
2. What elements from Luther's theological approach appeal to you as useful for our ecumenical engagement with one another as Christian churches?

People broke into small groups for conversation and reflection and some of their insights included now having a deeper understanding of the Reformation, recognition of the changes that have occurred across the churches and delight at the relationships that have been formed since.

Rob Williams then thanked Stephen Pietsch and the meeting expressed its appreciation to Stephen.

5. **Conversation for Today and Tomorrow**

Rob invited all to consider, discuss and offer any comment on the following questions which had been distributed with the Agenda.

- *As we reflect on all we have heard, and all we bring to this gathering, what insights emerge on what Reformation might look like today?*
Some comments included:
 - * Marie Loller – Young people are breaking boundaries and getting involved regardless of their denomination.
- *In what ways is our church contributing to reconciliation and healing, within and across the Church?*

The following responses were received:

- * Julie Staszyc – Receptive Ecumenism is creating small points of contact and safe spaces to encounter one another.
- * John Littleton – Churches being involved with SA Council of Churches.
- *How would we describe the disposition in our Church towards Christian unity?*
Feedback included:
 - * Doug Walladge – It is hard to get others involved denominationally, let-alone inter-denominationally.
 - * Barbara Horne – It is us being divergent and building relationships.
 - * Kathy McEvoy – Described DNA – It is the understanding of the connective tissue of community.
- *What more can we do so that our love and unity in Christ is manifest – in, with, and for our world?*
A variety of responses were received and included:
 - * Andrew Hunt – Maintain the enthusiasm of being set free.
 - * Jill Gallio – Talking to our own family and others.
 - * Peter Burke – All denominations have founders but need to reclaim the spirit of The Founder – Jesus.
 - * Marelle Harisun – It had been a day of much learning about each other and a great day.

6. Review, Conclusion and Blessing

The meeting concluded with participants reviewing:

- 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...?

People were encouraged to follow up on the second two dot points in particular. Some feedback included:

- * The question, what stops me from being enriched by others?
- * Could we each invite someone from another denomination along to the SACC 70th Birthday Celebration?
- * Purchasing a Peace Lamp and,
- * Speaking to new Leadership.

Finally, thanks was given to all who shared their stories and their hopes, and all who are taking on, or now letting go of, an appointment to the work of Christian Unity through SA Council of Churches.

The Meeting concluded with Rev Rob Williams praying a blessing of all.

Dates of General Meetings in 2017:

Saturday 29 April 2017, 10am-3.30pm – Adelaide City Churches [includes 70th Birthday celebration] see www.sacc.asn.au
Saturday 21 October 2017, 8.45am-1pm – metro area: tba

Members of South Australian Council of Churches

Anglican Church of Australia - Dioceses of Adelaide and of Willochra; Catholic Archdiocese of Adelaide and Catholic Diocese of Port Pirie; Churches of Christ in SA/NT; Coptic Orthodox Church-Diocese of Melbourne and Affiliated Regions; Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Australia – District of SA & NT; Lutheran Church of Australia - SA/NT District; Religious Society of Friends SA/NT Regional Meeting; Romanian Orthodox Episcopate of Australia/New Zealand – SA Parish; Salvation Army SA Division; St Urael Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahdo Church in SA Inc; Uniting Church in SA

Appendix 1**Apologies:****General Council:**

The Rev'd Caroline Pearce, The Rev'd Gael Johannsen, Mrs Pat Foord, The Rt Rev'd Dr Tim Harris, The Rt Rev'd John Ford (Anglican);

Sr Elizabeth Young, Most Rev Philip Wilson, & Bishop Greg O'Kelly (Catholic);

Rev Dr Greg Elsdon (Churches of Christ);

Fr Philippos Boghdadi, Fr Seraphim Sidaros & Bishop Suriel (Coptic Orthodox);

Fr Peter Photakis, Mr Daniel Bradshaw & Bishop Nikandros of Dorylaeon (Greek Orthodox);

Major Barry Casey & Major Rosslyn Casey (Salvation Army);

Rev Wes Howland, Rev Sue Ellis, Rev Nigel Rogers & Rev Ernest Sorensen (Uniting).

Standing Committees:

- Community for Ecumenical Learning: -
- Community for Local Ecumenism: Ms Kay Thorp (Local Ecumenist);
- Ecumenical Partners for Justice and Peace (formerly CWS): Ms Sarah Moffatt (Catholic), Mr John Sullivan (Justice & Peace Issues), Mrs Dawn Sullivan (Justice & Peace Issues);
- Finance Committee: Mr David O'Dwyer (Catholic).

Observers: Mr Refaat Georgy, Fr Abraam Elbaramousy, Rev Alison Whish, Mr David Hall, Bishop Bruce Rosier, Rev Lindsay Faulkner.

Absent:**General Council:**

Mr Belay Getachew, Mr Hailemariam Kassa & Mrs Alganesh Abegaz (Ethiopian Orthodox);

debra hackett & Mr Yarrow Andrew (Religious Society of Friends);

Fr Viorel Stoica & Bishop Michael (Romanian Orthodox).

Executive:

Fr John Psalios (Greek Orthodox).

Standing Committees:

Mr Ian Curwen-Walker (Anglican);

Mr Stephen Ghabriel, Ms Jakleen Shonoodh (Coptic Orthodox).