



## General Meeting – an Exchange of Gifts Summary of the Stories and Conversations

*This Summary is to enable people to share news of the General Meeting with networks, church leaders/council, inter church councils, ministers circles, church newsletters etc. Minutes will be available later from SACC.*

SA Council of Churches offers deepest gratitude to the Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress SA for hosting the General Meeting on Saturday 14 May 2016, when SACC General Council, with the various committees and friends, gathered to pray, share stories and to explore ways of making more visible our unity in Christ.

### **Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress SA**

We listened to the stories of faith and hope that Ian Dempster, Candace Champion, Mark Kickett and Brian shared, inviting and encouraging us to engage with the challenges of reconciliation and unity, locally and beyond. We enjoyed wonderful gifts of food and drinks prepared by Margaret and Brian, and received by us, keeping us nourished and sustained!

### **Reconciliation Processes in Indigenous Contexts**

SACC is delighted that Candace Champion will participate in the World Council of Churches Conference on “Reconciliation Processes in Indigenous Contexts” in Trondheim, Norway, on 20-21 June. The conference will centre on two thematic focuses, “Truth and Healing” and “Reconciliation and Transformation, “ and will be hosted by the Sami Church Council (Church of Norway). We pray for Candace as she takes to this important gathering the experience of being a young adult leader in the Uniting Church and a member of UAICC SA.

### **Formation and Education: *Shaping and Developing Ecumenical Consciousness and Leadership***

[Reference letter to General Council, Committees and Church Leaders – see [www.sacc.asn.au](http://www.sacc.asn.au) ]

The conversation continues following SACC’s invitation for the Member Churches to share comment and insights on further possibilities for shaping and developing ecumenical consciousness and leadership within and across the churches.

Those unable to attend were encouraged to discuss in their ‘denominational team’, ie the people who are appointed by their church to SA Council of Churches, and/or with others across the church.

### **God is Love: *Ecumenism of the Heart*** [see Link below]

God is Love, an article by Antonia Pizzey, a young theologian from Australia, is part of a collection of papers by young people in *Prospects and Challenges for the Ecumenical Movement in the 21st Century: Insights from the Global Ecumenical Theological Institute* [GETI]. It contains sections on *Spiritual Ecumenism, Ecumenism as an Exchange of Gifts* and *Receptive Ecumenism*.

Participants at SACC General Meeting on 14 May 2016 were invited beforehand to read through reflectively, noting any word or phrase that touches their heart, their spirit, with no need to analyse, just let it rest.

These were then gathered up, and some are as follows:

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

The purpose of ecumenism is not to create unity, but to uncover the unity that already exists, given by the Spirit.

The core of spiritual ecumenism is a focus in *interior conversion*....This *metanoia* is marked by hope for the future and trust in the Holy Spirit.

It is repentance for the sins of the past ...

The notion of hospitality can be seen as underpinning the ecumenical gift exchange

... offering and accepting gifts from others, for our own interior conversion

... the gift-giving enriches all of the partners, since we do not lose our gifts by sharing them with others

attentive listening and a mutual sharing of lives, [...] an openness of heart, a willingness to make one's life visible to others, and a generosity of time and resources...

In ecumenical practice, we do not meet denominations, we meet people.

We invite you to read through *God is Love*, reflect on what touches you and send in your word or phrase to [sacc1@picknowl.com.au](mailto:sacc1@picknowl.com.au)

Link: [http://www.globethics.net/documents/4289936/13403236/GE\\_Global\\_12\\_web.pdf/351b2e1c-8926-4710-ae1a-c159b9a88cf7](http://www.globethics.net/documents/4289936/13403236/GE_Global_12_web.pdf/351b2e1c-8926-4710-ae1a-c159b9a88cf7) - go to page 233.

### **70<sup>th</sup> Birthday for SA Council of Churches**

In 2017 SA Council of Churches will turn 70! How will we celebrate? More soon + your own ideas invited to [sacc1@picknowl.com.au](mailto:sacc1@picknowl.com.au)

### **Review**

Participants and readers are invited to consider:

- What have I learned...what gift have I received...what will I do differently...?
- What story will I communicate to others about today's gathering ...about the gifts that have been shared?
- What steps will I take within my Church...with whom do I need to speak ...how can I received with integrity the gifts that were offered?

### **Conclusion**

The opportunity for the Member Churches to gather as an Ecumenical Council to meet to share prayer and signs of God's beauty, love and unity across the churches in South Australia is indeed a response to the prayer of Christ 'that they may be one'. We look forward to the ongoing journey together as we seek to walk more faithfully in the way of Christ, with the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

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Ecumenical Facilitator

May 2016

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Web: [www.sacc.asn.au](http://www.sacc.asn.au) - for Resources on **SACC Priorities, on Receptive Ecumenism, on Peace Lamps from Palestine, on Prisoners, Prisons and Respectful Relationships** and on **Recognition, Reconciliation and Relationships**

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