

South Australian Council of Churches Inc

AFFILIATED WITH THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CHURCHES IN AUSTRALIA



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MINUTES OF THE GENERAL MEETING

Saturday 20 April 2013, 9.00am – 1pm

St Aloysius Catholic Church Hall, 68 Brooker Terrace, Richmond

Present

General Council:

Anglican: Rev David Covington-Groth, Revd Dr Gregory Stephens
Catholic: Dr Marie Loller, Mrs Julie Staszyc, Sr Elizabeth Young
Churches of Christ: Rev Doug Walladge, Rev Dr Greg Elsdon, Rev Colin Dredge,
Mrs Ngaire Llewellyn
Coptic Orthodox: Fr Philippos Boghdadi, Mr George Mikhail
Ethiopian Orthodox: -
Greek Orthodox: -
Lutheran: Mr Gilbert Materne
Religious Society of Friends: Mr Drew Thomas, Dr Jenny Stock
Romanian Orthodox: -
Salvation Army: -
Uniting Church: Rev Lindsay Faulkner, Rev Anne Hewitt (Vice-President), Rev Wes Howland,
Rev Rob Williams

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), Dr Colin Cargill (Uniting), Ms Pamela Jones (Justice and
Peace Issues)

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

Observers: Kay Thorp, Bruce Rosier, Dorothy Short, Barry Gear, Beth Ackland, Marelle
Harisun, Trevor Dean

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

Apologies

General Council: Mrs Pat Foord (Anglican), The Most Rev'd Jeffrey Driver (Anglican), Most Rev
Philip Wilson (Catholic), Rev Ruth May (Churches of Christ), Mr Ibrahim Ibrahim (Coptic Orthodox),
Fr Seraphim Sidaros (Coptic Orthodox), Mr Belay Getachew (Ethiopian Orthodox), Mrs Alganesh
Abegaz (Ethiopian Orthodox), Mr Hailmariam Kassa (Ethiopian Orthodox), Pastor David Altus
(Lutheran), Rev Rodger Russ (Lutheran), debra hackett (Religious Society of Friends), Lieut. Colonel
Ronald Clinch (Salvation Army).

Standing Committees/Observers: Mr Stephen Ghabriel (Coptic Orthodox), Dr Stephen Downs
(Catholic), Envoy Ted Wright (Salvation Army), Ms Rosina Gergis (Coptic Orthodox), Rev Matthew
Stuart (Uniting), Mr Daniel Bradshaw (Greek Orthodox), Mr Andrew Clarke (Refugee Issues), Ms
Jane Juniper (Catholic), Mr Graham Jones (SACC Treasurer), Fred Foord, Velvy Holden, Geoff
Boyce, David Smith, Margaret Dingle.

1. Welcome

- The meeting opened with an acknowledgement to Country and to the Kaurna people, with their spiritual relationship to the land.
- Peter welcomed everyone at the meeting – especially any people here for the first time – all turned to one another to say hello!
- Peter also thanked especially our hosts, Fr Joseph Lee and the RC parish community of St Aloysius.

2. Sharing of Stories: Part 1: The RC appointees to SACC – Jill Gallio, Marie Loller, Julie Staszyc, Elizabeth Young and Bridgid Medder led us in the first part of our meeting - nurturing a disposition where we may learn or receive with integrity from our various others to facilitate our own growth together into deepened communion.

They shared the story of the RC Church in SA through visual images.

Fr Joseph led Morning Prayer using the prayer from the Year of Grace: Lectio Divina/Holy Reading, followed by the Examen/Remembering the Day:

- What am I most thankful for today?
- What has troubled me today?
- How have I met Jesus today?
- What am I being invited to do?

The team then invited the meeting to consider “**What would you pray for the Roman Catholic Church today?**” People shared at tables and then their prayers were gathered up, with a candle being lit as each prayer was offered. [A copy of these is attached in a pdf.]

It was agreed that a copy of these prayers be sent to Archbishop Philip Wilson and Bishop Greg O’Kelly.

2. Reconciliation Australia: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and the Churches

A draft Statement, entitled *Recognition, Reconciliation and Relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and the Church in SA*, had been distributed prior to the meeting. Various affirming comments had already been received. Discussion followed and few changes were made.

Peter moved that, with these changes, the Statement entitled *Recognition, Reconciliation and Relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and the churches in South Australia* be accepted. Marelle seconded. Agreed unanimously.

[A copy is attached to these Minutes and is available at www.sacc.asn.au]

SACC office and SACC appointees to disseminate widely as we continue to activate the commitment.

Action: All

3. Sharing Stories Part 2: SACC Priorities

- Ecumenical Learning: Formation & Education for Leadership in Ecumenism
- Local Ecumenism: Conversations to advance Christian Unity and to deepen the place of the Churches in culture/society
- Christian World Service: Ecumenical Partnership in the Mission of Christ
- Pastoral Care and Support to Witnesses of Ecumenism
- Receptive Ecumenism

Peter reminded people that these Priorities are for the work of us all through SA Council of Churches – and for the work of the Churches in their engagement with ecumenism. People shared news, insights, questions, action and possibilities.

- ❖ New activities
 - Rob Williams: Forming an Ecumenical Council within UCA Synod. Will be considered at UCA AGM
 - Gregory Stephens: Point Pearce, Yorke Peninsula, church bell will ring again in the community.
 - Greg Elsdon: Churches of Christ & Uniting Church in Keith formed *One Church in Keith* in 2013. General Council agreed to send a letter to *One Church in Keith* to congratulate.
- ❖ Questions
 - John Littleton: Could SACC nurture leadership in situations such as at Keith, churches from different denominations to form in to one church, to help these ecumenical communities grow and continue?
 - Ecumenical Lenten Resources, how to make it inclusive of Orthodox?
 - Chris Baker Forum on 27 September 2013 at Pilgrim Uniting Church. How urban planning can help people/churches flourish and grow?
- ❖ Ideas
 - Prayer Days, significant occasions eg Sorry Day, etc.
 - To be faithful in praying, to be visibly active
 - Walk Together in SA for World Refugee Week on 22 June 2013

4. Receptive Ecumenism: facilitated by Drew Thomas, Marelle Harisun and Geraldine Hawkes. Focus was on processes of consultation and decision-making. Following a role-play, people noted the following elements/values within Receptive Ecumenism:

- Relationship and Friendship
- Collegiality
- Consensus
- Need, absence, yearning as start
- Mutual respect
- Acknowledged as gift – no judgement
- Related to our woundedness, where we are in need of healing
- About feelings, not just content
- Model for dialogue – commonality, openness, listening...
- Receiving of the other in open listening
- Let other finish before talking
- Learn from experience of cooperation around the churches in past 40 years
- Attend another tradition for period of time
- Let's do more prayer together

People were encouraged to consider how they can engage in Receptive Ecumenism at whatever level of Church they are involved in. **Action: All**

5. General Meeting Business

5.1 Minutes of Annual General Meeting 17 November 2012 will be presented for acceptance at the AGM 2013.

5.2 Comments/questions/business arising from Minutes:

a. Ecumenical Appointment to Executive. Two vacancies exist.

Rev Rob Williams, currently Moderator of Uniting Church and Member of General Council (whose appointment to General Council will continue when his role as

Moderator concludes later this year) was nominated by Anne Hewitt and seconded by Lindsay Faulkner. Agreed unanimously.

One vacancy remains. Executive Committee will continue to consider.

- 5.3 Finance Report– Peter offered the report as Treasurer on leave
- a. Finance Statement:** for the period 1 July 2012 – 30 June 2013 was distributed before the meeting, indicating current Balance in operating account and in Term Deposits, together with income and expenditure to date.

Peter read the comments dated 19 April 2013 from the Treasurer, Graham Jones, who was unable to be at the meeting:

- i. As the Treasurer, I continue to be encouraged by the financial support and commitment of all the member denominations to the work of the Council.
- ii. As the Treasurer, together with the Director, I have been working on effecting savings on our annual rental bill. The signs at this stage are encouraging.
- iii. As Treasurer, together with the Finance Committee, I have been seeking ways of ensuring that we maximise the return from our financial assets. This has not been as straight forward as we would have like but we have made some progress.
- iv. Working with the trustees of the Jubilee Fund was encouraging. The proceeds of the Jubilee fund have been passed to the Council for the furtherance of Ecumenism in South Australia. Having these funds at our disposal will fill the gaps in our revenue.
- v. It is my goal to look for other sources of revenue that will ensure the future impact of the SACC on the South Australian Community. These include making known that people committed to ecumenism can continue their commitment ‘beyond the grave’ by naming the Council in their will.
- vi. I would like to thank Geraldine, Jacqui and Sarina for making my task over the past six months a pleasurable and doable one.
- vii. Any member of the Council who would like to talk about the Council’s finances are free to contact me at Graham.Jones@flinders.edu.au making your email in the subject line: SACC Finance Question.

Lindsay Faulkner moved that the Finance Statement be accepted. Colin Dredge seconded. Agreed unanimously.

b. Budget: a draft Budget for 2013-2014, dated 05/04/2013, was distributed before the meeting. Finance Committee and Executive Committee have considered and recommend acceptance to General Council.

Lindsay Faulkner moved that the Budget for 2013/14 be accepted. Colin Dredge seconded. Agreed unanimously.

c. Accommodation

Lease with Flinders Street Baptist Church, concludes at end of September as does Government grant. Discussions re options are under way.

d. Staffing

Levels for 2013/14 to be considered in light of Budget and financial viability which is being closely monitored by Finance Committee in discussion with Executive Committee. Executive Committee meets on 23 April and will make a decision by 30 April.

5.4 Any Other Business

This is Lindsay Faulkner's last SACC General Meeting before he concludes his appointment. Lindsay spoke briefly as his farewell with people. Peter, as President, thanked Lindsay on behalf of the General Council and all expressed gratitude for Lindsay's dedicated and faithful commitment.

6. **Review:** Members were invited to give their feedback about the meeting:

- Good to have country representatives
- Great hosting
- RC presentation is very impressive: good to pick up feedback from General Meeting in March 2010
- Good seating arrangement, breaking down any defensiveness between the denominations
- Stories around the place
- Feel presence of God
- The way of the prayer with candles
- Statement on *Recognition, Reconciliation and Relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and the churches in South Australia* – all to action.
- How are we the Church that Christ prays that we be?

People also were encouraged to send their feedback on any aspect of the meeting to the Executive Committee at sacc1@picknowl.com.au .

7. **Conclusion and Blessing Prayer**

Deep gratitude was extended to the RC Church for their gracious and generous hospitality and sharing, and also to all the Members and Ecumeniacs!

Rob Williams, newly elected to Executive Committee, led a prayer of Blessing.

NEXT MEETING: Annual General Meeting – Saturday 16 November 2013, 8.45am – 1.00 pm at Noarlunga Uniting Church, 23 William Rd (crnr of Ramsgate Ave), Christies Beach. *There is plenty of off street parking in Ramsgate Avenue beside the church.*

Minutes Confirmed By

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