

# South Australian Council of Churches Inc

Affiliated with the National Council of Churches in Australia



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Letter to SACC General Council and Committees, including Member Church Leaders

Dear Friends in Christ

## **Formation and Education for Leadership in Ecumenism in the Spirit of Christ**

Appointees to SA Council of Churches have consistently expressed the importance of **Formation and Education for Leadership in Ecumenism in the Spirit of Christ**. As a result, we recently invited members of SACC General Council and its Committees to describe how their church is shaping and developing ecumenical consciousness and leadership - formally and informally.

At the AGM in 2015, five out of a possible 11 responses from SACC Member Churches were circulated and discussed, each containing valuable and helpful insights. We thank all who contributed.

In addition to the content, all who participated described the process as helpful in eliciting areas of strength and areas for growth. Consequently, some identified possibilities that fall within their sphere of influence and have begun to follow through.

As a result of further consideration by SACC Committee for Ecumenical Learning, we wish to affirm some steps that may assist SACC Member Churches in deepening their commitment to unity in Christ alongside their brothers and sisters in Christ:

### **a. Structure/Network/Conversation Group**

Where a church has a recognised structure, network or ecumenical conversation group, responsible for ecumenical matters [as distinct from relying on a few 'interested' people] it seems that the number of conversation partners increases, the level of the conversation deepens, and ways forward for Christian unity are explored and acted upon.

Such a structure, network or conversation group may comprise the people appointed by a Member Church to the General Council and the various Committees of SACC, and/or others.

The potential of such a structure or network is enhanced when it has a direct relationship to the leadership/decision-making processes within the denomination, as well as to others involved in Christian unity.

### **b. Ecclesial/Formal Formation and Education**

People regularly describe the journey of personal faith conversion that they experience through their participation in ecumenical relations and action, including in bi-lateral dialogues. SACC delights in and affirms ongoing individual formation.

It is less clear, however, what opportunities exist for shaping and developing ecumenical consciousness and leadership in the more formal, institutional aspects of church life, particularly in relation to:

- training and education for ministry;
- ongoing formation of people in stable and recognised ministry and leadership roles;
- processes and decision-making in church councils, committees and other designated areas of church life and mission.

We remain open to hearing from you and to receiving or exploring further thoughts and possibilities with you and others regarding ***Formation and Education for Leadership in Ecumenism in the Spirit of Christ***.

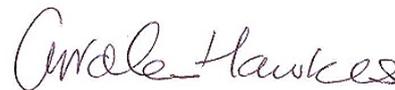
Yours sincerely



Peter Burke  
Chair, Executive



John Littleton  
Convenor, Ecumenical Learning Committee



Geraldine Hawkes  
Ecumenical Facilitator

### **Members of South Australian Council of Churches Inc**

Anglican Church of Australia: Diocese of Adelaide, Diocese of The Murray, Diocese of Willochra  
Catholic Archdiocese of Adelaide and the Diocese of Port Pirie  
Churches of Christ in South Australia/Northern Territory Inc  
Coptic Orthodox Church, Diocese of Melbourne and Affiliated Regions  
Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Australia in South Australia  
Lutheran Church in Australia, SA District  
Religious Society of Friends South Australia Regional Meeting  
Romanian Orthodox Church (South Australia Parish)  
Salvation Army South Australian Division  
St Urael Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahdo Church in South Australia Inc  
Uniting Church SA

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