

South Australian Council of Churches Inc



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General Meeting of General Council

Saturday 14 May 2016, 9am- 1pm

Adelaide Congress Ministry, 17 Bedwin Street, Salisbury North
Minutes

Present:

General Council:

Anglican: -
Catholic: Mrs Julie Staszyc
Churches of Christ: Rev Doug Walladge, Mrs Ngairé Llewellyn (Vice President), Mr Barry Gear
Coptic Orthodox: -
Ethiopian Orthodox: -
Greek Orthodox: -
Lutheran: Rev Leon Rosenberg, Mr Gilbert Materne
Religious Society of Friends: Dr Jenny Stock
Romanian Orthodox: -
Salvation Army: -
Uniting Church: Rev Rob Williams

Executive Committee:

Ms Jill Gallio (Catholic, President), Mr Peter Burke (Anglican, Vice-President),
Ms Amy Mikhail (Coptic Orthodox), Rev John Littleton (Ecumenical), Mr Neil
Traeger (Treasurer)

Standing Committees:

Community for Ecumenical Learning:

Ms Mary Camilleri (Catholic), Dr Heshmat Keroloss (Coptic Orthodox)

Community for Local Ecumenism:

Rev Dr Jane Lee-Barker (Anglican), Ms Bridgid Medder (Catholic), Mr Pierre
Magar (Coptic Orthodox)

Ecumenical Partners for Justice and Peace:

Ms Pamela Jones (Justice and Peace Issues)

Finance:

Rev Colin Dredge (Churches of Christ)

Observers:

Br Trevor Dean, Ms Sarah Moffatt, Bishop Bruce Rosier, Rev Alison Whish

SACC Staff:

Ms Geraldine Hawkes (Executive Officer) and Ms Melanie Macrow
(Office Administrator)

For Apologies and Absences, see Appendix 1

1. **Welcome, Prayer & Sharing of Stories** facilitated by Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress SA

Ms Jill Gallio, President, welcomed everyone and especially thanked our brothers and sisters from the Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress SA (UAICC) for hosting the gathering of the Ecumenical Council of the Churches in SA. Mark Kickett, Congress Development Officer, also welcomed everyone and led all together in song. (Gathering Together and This Is the Day)

SA Council of Churches - nurturing and nourishing the understanding, spiritual growth and practice of ecumenism across the Churches of SA

Over the course of the morning Mark Kickett, Ian Dempster, Candace Champion and Brian alternated sharing with the Meeting. The following is what each shared.

Ian Dempster

- Ian described the relationship of the UAICC to the Uniting Church of Australia, some of the history the structure of the Congress with Australia, its States and Territories. He also introduced the Meeting to number of people from Salisbury Congress and its Communities through PowerPoint, including Denise Champion of the Uniting Church in SA who is the first Indigenous ordained woman in Uniting Church in SA, and Ken Summner who was the first Indigenous man ordained.
- Later Ian described Communities and their significance, including Finke in Alice Springs, Anangu ministry, a journey of “walking through the Bible” in Israel and of Youth programs that continue today having had significant members participate in past, including Michael O’Loughlin and Gavin Wangeneen, who remember the people fondly.
- He also unpacked some of the journey surrounding struggles regarding health and education, as well as the complexities of intertwining cultural, biblical and legal understandings of marriage.

Mark Kickett

- Mark shared the story of the Kalparrin family.
- He went on to explain the significance of places and the belonging of Aboriginal people. Beginning with describing how the Indigenous culture is “old culture with a new beginning”, Mark shared stories of the Tailem Bend and Oodnadatta communities as well as the significance of the pre-amble to the Uniting Church in Australia’s Constitution.

Brian

- Brian shared his story of coming from Salisbury Uniting Church to be a part of the blessing of growth and building of the UAICC SA at Salisbury North. In particular he explained how the building at Salisbury North has been expanded and how the community has come together to extend it further to include an office, and Sunday school.
- He also shared of the exciting anticipation held for the strengthening of relationships among tribes, churches and peoples.
- Brian described the Congress as being a field for healing ministry.

Candace Champion

- Candace spoke a number of times throughout the morning, beginning with Acknowledgement of Country and sharing about her family.
- She then shared about; the Dusty Feet Mob (dance crew); Ninnel (little) Seed program; Covenanting at Colebrook in Blackwood (having originated in Oodnadatta and then Quorn), a place significant to the Stolen Generation.

Candace shared many aspects of her journey to Taize, which had been co-sponsored by SA Council of Churches, including:

- Consideration of *faith, hope, love, simplicity & mercy* in life
- Expression of art at Taize and the significance for the Aboriginal culture both past and present
- Singing of chants and songs, learning songs in different languages and the joy that translation brings.
- Generosity in prayers of people of all different nations for one another, and the sharing of prayers including in song.
- Recognition of history both at Taize and at home, the struggle in seeking justice and equity, and what it looks like to be “expressing Christ’s love into all the world” through sharing life and stories of hope. Candace commented that life is like weaving a basket; many strands come together to make something meaningful.

- That unpacking her journey has been a slow process but in so doing, the discovery that she herself is “not just an Aboriginal girl in Australia, but I’m a person in Creation”.
- Candace then sang in her Mother Tongue *The Light of Christ has come into the world* with which the Meeting joined in English.

Morning tea was then enjoyed by all with rich conversation shared. A highlight of the wonderful gifts of food and drinks prepared by Margaret and Brian was Banana Damper; the recipe available as a separate document to these Minutes.

2. **General Meeting** (noting that there was not a quorum due to absentees and some apologies)

Following discussion at morning tea, it was announced that Candace 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).

Candace then led all in a responsorial prayer before Jill acknowledged apologies and welcomed all to participate in discussion.

- a. Minutes of AGM held on 14 November 2015 had been distributed and will be presented for acceptance at the AGM on 19 November 2016. There were no further comments or questions.
- b. Budget 2016/17 recommended for acceptance was distributed with Agenda.

Neil was invited to take the Meeting through the Budget which had been accepted by the Executive Committee in March and recommended for acceptance by General Council. The following details were noted:

- A key aspect of the Reports is the Balance Sheet. The operation of SACC is more than the Budget, and the Balance Sheet in particular describes assets and liabilities. For example, Total Assets: \$305,495 – Total Liabilities: \$10,654 = Net Assets \$294,849 [April 2016]
Total Equity: \$294,849 [April 2016]
- The Budget reflects income and expenditure and that SACC’s Balance sheet reflects the good stewardship of the investment Capital held.
- An additional Committee cost of \$1,000 has been added to the Budget for SACC’s 70th Birthday celebrations.
- Attention was drawn to the Budget Notes

Gilbert Materne advised that a vote could proceed despite not having a quorum but that ratification would be needed at the AGM.

Neil Traeger moved that the Budget be accepted. Julie Staszyc seconded. Agreed in principle. **To be ratified at AGM.**

3. **Inspiring and encouraging one another on the journey**

- a. Stories and News from around the Churches & from SACC
 - i. Jane Lee-Barker – Inter Church Council on Central Yorke Peninsula was involved in the World Week of Prayer for Christian Unity earlier in 2016 and it went very well. Also that the SACC Ecumenical Lenten Resource for 2016 was a great resource during Lent and both evenings that were run each week in her community were attended well.
 - ii. Alison Whish – South Coast (Victor Harbor) monthly Prayer meeting had slipped away. Forward planning now in motion for 2017 World Week of Prayer for Christian Unity!
 - iii. Geraldine Hawkes then shared the following:

- Emmaus Meals, as held last year, continue to be purposeful and ongoing.
- The document *Ecumenical Learning, Local Ecumenism & Christian World Service: Focus for 2016-2018 and name change* was tabled. Following *2015 Onwards* last year, and various other conversations, the Focus and Name for the Standing Committees of SACC have been implemented – those on the Committees were acknowledged.
John Littleton (Community for Ecumenical Learning) endorsed the word “Community” and its significance in the new names.
- The writers of the Ecumenical Lenten Resource were acknowledged (both those present and not present).
Leon Rosenberg shared that the Ecumenical Lenten Resource is a very important development of this Community.
Julie Staszyc shared that the Catholic group she participated in the Lenten Study with very much appreciated the input of ‘the other’ and acknowledged the broadening of their knowledge and understanding as a result.
- The National Council of Churches in Australia 9th National Forum is to be held in June. Jill Gallio, President, and Geraldine Hawkes, Ecumenical Facilitator, will represent SA Council of Churches. South Australian photos of ecumenical gatherings have already been forwarded to NCCA and are available by contacting Melanie Macrow at SACC.

- iv. Jill Gallio described the appraisal of the EF/EO role being undertaken and acknowledged Geraldine Hawkes for her commitment to the role of EF/EO of SA Council of Churches. Geraldine was acknowledged by acclamation.

- b. Formation and Education: Shaping and Developing Ecumenical Consciousness and Leadership
Formation and Education Letter April 2016 was distributed prior to the meeting.

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 today’s meeting were encouraged to discuss in their ‘denominational team’, i.e. the people who are appointed by their Church to SA Council of Churches, and/or with others across the church.

John Littleton discussed the Letter further, especially noting;

- Responses are sought - 6 out of 11 Member Churches are yet to respond, and SACC requests that further consideration is given to providing these responses.
- Ecumenism is not *done by SACC*, but rather by the Churches.
- Encouragement is extended for Churches to develop groups to further encourage church-wide ‘doing’ of ecumenism; the total life of the Church.

- c. Prospects and Challenges for the Ecumenical Movement in the 21st Century *Insights from the Global Ecumenical Theological Institute* [GETI].

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*.

Those present were invited beforehand to read through reflectively, noting any word or phrase that touched their heart, their spirit, with no need to analyse, just let it rest.

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

- i. The purpose of ecumenism is not to create unity, but to uncover the unity that already exists, given by the Spirit.
- ii. 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.
- iii. It is repentance for the sins of the past ...
 - iv. The notion of hospitality can be seen as underpinning the ecumenical gift exchange
 - v. ... offering and accepting gifts from others, for our own interior conversion
 - vi. ... the gift-giving enriches all of the partners, since we do not lose our gifts by sharing them with others
 - vii. 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...
 - viii. In ecumenical practice, we do not meet denominations, we meet people.
http://www.globethics.net/documents/4289936/13403236/GE_Global_12_web.pdf/351b2e1c-8926-4710-ae1a-c159b9a88cf7
- d. Receptive Ecumenism – developments and possibilities
- Geraldine brought to everyone's attention the Fourth International Conference on Receptive Ecumenism (RE IV), November 2017 and the invitation to attend as well as the preparations underway including liaising and planning, program development and developing a data base. She also explained that SACC is looking at what more can be offered including an event later in the year/early 2017 through Community for Ecumenical Learning, and other Workshops that are offered through SACC [see www.sacc.asn.au].
- John Littleton mentioned that through the ongoing process of receptive ecumenism, all are developing a culture a listening and learning from one another. He also mentioned meeting with the Uniting Synod Ecumenical Relationships Committee on *Weaving a New Cloth*.
<https://assembly.uca.org.au/cudw/resources/item/1774-weaving-a-new-cloth>
- Geraldine went on to explain that SACC is facilitating and assisting in Receptive Ecumenism at many levels, examples included the following:
- i. UnitingWomen National Conference – 400 + participants: Two Workshops and Q&A Panel
 - ii. Local settings
 - iii. Faith and Unity Commission – invitation to offer opening paper on WCC Faith & Order Paper 214 - *The Church, Towards a Common Vision at NCCA Pre-Forum event* with RE focus.
 - iv. NCCA Forum – invitation to offer a session
 - v. Facilitator for RE process leading into and during International Network of Societies for Catholic Theology (INSeCT)/Australian Catholic Theological Conference.
- e. 70th Birthday for SA Council of Churches in 2017
- Rob Williams and Ngaire Llewellyn shared the current ideas and suggestions being considered:
- To be held on a Saturday late April/early May 2017 i.e. after Easter [which is a common date for Western/Orthodox in 2017]
 - Combine with SACC General Meeting [which may start a little later than usual]
 - A progressive meal, following the meeting – idea is Pilgrim [Uniting], St Francis Xavier Cathedral [Catholic], St Mary Magdalene's [Anglican] and St Stephen's [Lutheran] be the venues. To be invited!
 - Food – how to nurture 'exchange of gifts'
 - Speaker[s], guests etc. to be explored.
 - Key aspect is celebration that is inclusive, remembering the past and traveling together towards the future.
 - To include David Shinnick's work *Ecumenical Journey* as an aspect of the celebration.
- They then invited the Meeting to discuss at tables and share further ideas. These were compiled and passed to the working group for further consideration, and are available as Appendix 2 to these Minutes.

4. Review

As the day came to a close, Jill invited people to reflect on the stories, the conversations and the

sharing of prayer and hospitality:

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...with whom do I need to speak ...?

5. Conclusion and Blessing

Jill presented Candace with donations that were collected during the day, toward her trip to World Council of Churches in Trondheim, Norway, in June.

Thanks and gratitude was offered to the Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress SA for hosting the General Meeting, providing 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.

Candace then led all in a Prayer for Reconciliation in closing.

6. Next Meeting: AGM Saturday 19 November, 9am-1pm at Australian Lutheran College, North Adelaide.

Your Notes – Stories – Names - Questions – Concerns – Hopes – Insights - Learnings...

APPENDIX 1**Apologies/Absent:****General Council:**

Rev'd Caroline Pearce, Rt Rev'd John Stead, Mrs Pat Foord, Most Rev'd Dr Jeffrey Driver and Rt Rev'd John Ford (Anglican);

Dr Marie Loller, Sr Elizabeth Young RSM, Most Rev Philip Wilson and Bishop Greg O'Kelly (Catholic);
Rev Dr Greg Elsdon (Churches of Christ);

Fr Philippos Boghdadi, Fr Seraphim Sidaros, Mr George Mikhail and Bishop Suriel (Coptic Orthodox);
Mr Belay Getachew, Mr Hailmariam Kassa and Mrs Alganesh Abegaz (Ethiopian Orthodox);
Fr Peter Photakis, Fr Jeremy Krieg, Mr Daniel Bradshaw and Bishop Nikandros of Dorylaeon (Greek Orthodox);

Bishop David Altus (Lutheran);

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

Fr Viorel Stoica and Bishop Michael (Romanian Orthodox);

Lieut Col Ronald Clinch and Lieut Col Robyn Clinch (Salvation Army);

Rev Wes Howland, Dr Deidre Palmer and Rev Nigel Rogers (Uniting).

Standing Committees:

Mr Ian Curwen-Walker (Anglican);

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

Fr John Psalios (Greek Orthodox);

Ms Kay Thorp (Local Ecumenist);

Envoy Ted Wright (Salvation Army);

Dr Colin Cargill (Uniting).

Observers:

Ms Beth Ackland, Dr Marelle Harisun, Ms Velvy Holden, Dr Don Hopgood, Ms Hilary McKay, Ms Kathryn Powell.

APPENDIX 2**How would you celebrate the SACC's 70th Birthday?****Table 1**

Progressive meal – yes

'Concept of 'biggest morning tea and invite country parishes and ecumenical groups to do a similar event – either on the same day or another during the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.

Involve young people

Music instead of a speaker

Grace –

Table 2

Different venues – yes

Balloons yes

Walking – pilgrimage

11 - - host church view on faith and life

Articulate 3 communities of SACC – ecumenical learning, local ecumenism; Justice and peace.

Ecumenical gatherings in various churches to present the view of the hosting church on Christian faith and life to enhance knowledge of each other, Ecumenical discussions.

Table 3

Lamb on spit

Hire out a central venue

Have a day in a central location

Lazy Susan dinner

Table 4

Historical perspectives

Influences of change in different church communities

Eg 2nd Vatican Council

Events – central/ local

Progressive dinner eg in Parishes, moving around congregations.

Table 5

Worship then feasting

Different groups present an aspect of Worship

Invite children's groups eg child care kindy groups into church buildings to see the space

With celebration open to general public not just members of SACC

A joint display of symbols from each of the churches – possibility to display for a week in a local shop window.

(cf nativity in shop windows at Christmas

OR treasure hunt that reveals the stories of the churches around the town

Invite visitors to come as emissaries to visit or worship

Dedicated pilgrimage opportunity for a prayer journey ie a weekend /day of intentional pilgrimage

Perhaps written in a way that can be mounted in a range of different communities

Develop an order of service that can be used across churches on a specific designated Sunday of celebration.

Table 6

Joint prayer/liturgy public /outside

Progressive dinner – not just one night

Sponsor people to attend receptive ecumenism conference.