

South Australian Council of Churches Inc

Affiliated with the National Council of Churches in Australia



65 Flinders Street, Adelaide SA 5000

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Minutes of the Annual General Meeting

Saturday 21 October 2017, 9am-1pm

Happy Valley Church of Christ, 179 Hub Drive, Aberfoyle Park

E: sacc@picknowl.com.au W: www.sacc.asn.au

Present

General Council:

Anglican: The Rev'd Barbara Paull-Hunt, Rev'd Dr Jane Lee-Barker
Catholic: Dr Marie Loller, Ms Jill Gallio, Br Patrick Cronin
Churches of Christ: Rev Doug Walladge, Mrs Ngaire Llewellyn, 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, Dr Marelle Harisun, Rev Sue Ellis

Executive Committee: Rev'd Dr John Littleton (Ecumenical Delegate, Vice-President), Mr Peter Burke (Anglican), Mr Neil Traeger (Treasurer).

Standing Committees:

- Community for Ecumenical Learning: Ms Mary Camilleri (Catholic), Envoy Ted Wright (Salvation Army)
- Community for Local Ecumenism: Ms Bridgid Medder (Catholic), Mr Pierre Magar (Coptic Orthodox)
- Ecumenical Partners for Justice and Peace: Ms Kathy McEvoy (Catholic),
- Finance Committee: Rev Colin Dredge (Churches of Christ)

Guests: Rev Mark Stevens, Ms Beck Stevens, Mr Phil Megson, Mrs Merrilyn Megson, Ms Ros Park, Rev'd Peter Balabanski, Rev'd Jenny Wilson, Ms Sandy Craig

Observers: Rev'd Martin Bleby, Mr David Hall, Mr Andrew Hunt, Ms Jo Jordan, Ms Juanita McCullen

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

For Apologies and Absences see *Appendix 1*.

Walking together: *conversations of the heart*

1. Prayer, Welcome and Introductions

Mark Stevens welcomed everyone to the gathering and Roz Park led all in worship, including congregational singing and communion.

2. Sharing of Stories – Part 1: Happy Valley Church of Christ

Mark described the history of Happy Valley Church of Christ, as well as some of the individuality of it. Beck Stevens then shared the story of 'Happy Patch', Happy Valley Church of Christ's Community Garden and invited everyone to explore the garden together amidst those from the community who were there tending their plots.

3. Annual General Meeting

Rob Williams then opened the AGM, extending a special welcome to those for whom it was their first meeting.

3.1 Confirmation of Minutes & Business Arising:

3.1.1 Minutes of AGM: 19 November 2016 at Australian Lutheran College, North Adelaide.

The Minutes had been distributed prior to the meeting.

Ngaire Llewellyn moved that the Minutes be accepted as a true and correct record. Barbara Paull-Hunt seconded. Carried.

3.1.2 Minutes of the General Meeting: 29 April 2017 in four Adelaide City Churches.

The Minutes had been distributed prior to the meeting.

Barry Gear moved that the Minutes be accepted as a true and correct record. Sue Ellis seconded. Carried.

3.2 Sharing of Stories – Part 2: SACC Reports July 2016 – June 2017

The following Reports were distributed prior to the meeting. People had been invited to read reports beforehand and to clarify/discuss any aspect with the authors.

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

Marelle Harisun moved that all Reports from 3.2.1 to 3.2.3.iii be accepted as distributed. Jill Gallio seconded. Carried.

3.2.4 Auditor's Report

Geraldine Hawkes advised that at item 5 of the *Notes to and forming part of the Financial Statements for the year ended 30th June 2017*, the market value of the shares had been amended by the Auditor, Geoff Davis. The amended Note reads:

The market value of the shares as at 30 June 2017 was \$149,316 (last year \$135,505). The unrealised loss on the investment of \$16,939 (last year a loss of \$29,950) has not been brought into account as the shares are held for long term investment purposes.

Sue Ellis moved that the Report, with the amendment of shares market value, be accepted.

Gilbert Materne seconded. Carried.

3.2.5 Budget 2017/18 & Finance Report

Ted Wright moved that the Budget 2017/18 as distributed be accepted. Marie Loller seconded. Carried.

3.3 Appointments and Elections

3.3.1 Member Church Appointments

Rob Williams noted that there were two new appointees to General Council - Pat Cronin (Catholic Diocese of Port Pirie) and Jane Lee-Barker (Anglican Diocese of Willochra) and welcomed them on the journey.

3.3.2 Appointment/Election of Officers for 2018: 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 Wednesday 18 October 2017.

President

Rev'd Dr John Littleton [Anglican]: nominated by Rob Williams, seconded by Jill Gallio. No other nominations received. John was elected unopposed.

Vice-President (2 positions)

Rev Doug Walladge [Churches of Christ], & Dr Marie Loller [Roman Catholic]: nominated by Peter Burke, seconded by John Littleton. No other nominations received. Doug and Marie were elected unopposed.

Treasurer

Mr Neil Traeger was appointed unanimously by Executive Committee on 26 September 2017 to be Treasurer to AGM 2018.

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

Rev'd Dr John Littleton [Anglican], continues his appointment as Ecumenical Delegate through to end of 2018.

Rev Rob Williams concluded his appointment as General Council Ecumenical Delegate to Executive Committee.

Rob described that an Ecumenical Delegate is elected by the General Council *for* the General Council and invited nominations from the AGM floor, for period through to end of 2019.

Peter Burke nominated Pierre Magar who accepted nomination. Moved by Jill Gallio, seconded by Jane Lee-Barker. Carried

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

Geraldine Hawkes thanked Rev Rob Williams, Uniting Church, who has concluded his roles as

President and as Ecumenical Delegate of SACC, for his work on behalf of all for his gracious and generous contribution and participation.

She also thanked all Officers for being available individually and as a team in additional ways for the Council, and all on Committees [Executive, Ecumenical Learning, Local Ecumenism, Ecumenical Partners for Justice and Peace and Finance] for their sharing of gifts and time.

3.4 Other Business

No other items received.

4. **Sharing of Stories - Part 3: Resourcing - A Book Launch of *Enhance Learning in Parishes: A Learning Community Approach for Church Congregations* by The Rev'd Dr John Littleton, published by MediaCom Education Inc.**

Learning has been a constant and vital theme at SACC for the past 10 years and SACC was delighted, therefore, at the opportunity for John's book to be launched at this gathering of SA Council of Churches, as part of the journey together in faith.

Rob Williams welcomed Sandy Craig from MediaCom, and Sandy introduced John's book which is described as "Out of the research of his doctoral work, John Littleton has identified the marks of a congregation as a learning community including how it enables church growth; spiritual maturity and theological capacity." <http://www.mediacom.org.au/jl>

John thanked the General Council and MediaCom for the opportunity to launch at the AGM, describing it as a collaborative launch, echoing the theme of the book - collaborative learning.

Jenny Wilson then described John's invitation to be involved in research collaboration, and the joy of his description that we are all learners, not recipients of teaching, through involvement. She emphasised learning in the great love of Christ.

Peter Balabanski spoke of the possibility of enhanced learning when we are intentional and strategic, and thanked John for his intentional and collaborative work.

Together they launched *Enhance Learning in Parishes: A Learning Community Approach for Church Congregations*. Rob then invited all to move into the foyer for browsing *Enhance Learning in Parishes*, to make any purchases, which John would sign if invited, and to collect morning tea and return to a table after a walk inside or out.

5. **Sharing of Stories - Part 4: Individual**

Rob Williams vacated the Chair and John Littleton took the Chair as President for 2018.

All were invited to describe in table groups an experience of unity, followed by brief description to all. Sharing included:

- i. Leon Rosenberg: The creation of a shared banner in the Saddleworth Church community similar to the 'Welcome' sign [story on SACC website www.sacc.asn.au], and a combined service.
- ii. Rob Williams: A Uniting Church inspired event called IGNITE where youths of many denominations gather and worship.
- iii. Geraldine Hawkes: there are more than 130 registrations for the Fourth International Receptive Ecumenism Conference in Canberra in November, and of these, twenty three are from South Australia. Marelle Harisun recalled that the growth of Receptive Ecumenism in Australia, including SA, flowed from steps taken by Geraldine to develop

Receptive Ecumenism further, by initiating the visit of Dr Paul Murray to Australia/New Zealand in 2012, and for nominating Australia as host country for the Fourth International Receptive Ecumenism Conference.

- iv. Kathy McEvoy spoke of the projects that had been funded from the Yvonne Button Bequest for the work with refugees and displaced persons, and the potential for unity and healing. She mentioned especially the Sand Play project which was designed especially to assist children in dealing with torture and trauma they may have experienced.

Geraldine Hawkes encouraged all to share these and other stories on their church websites and in newsletters so that the work of Christian unity can be more widely celebrated.

6. **Sharing of Stories - Part 5: Resourcing - Pilgrimage to the Heart: Ecumenical Lenten Resource for 2018**

John Littleton invited Mary Camilleri, Ted Wright and Marie Loller, members of the writing team which included Heshmat Keroloss, to launch The Ecumenical Lenten Resource 2018.

Mary described the conversations among the team around pilgrimage which led to developing *Pilgrimage to the Heart*; Marie described the collaborative learning of the team and the journey of pilgrimage they took as a team in the development of the resource. She thanked each of the contributors on behalf of the Council, for their input; Ted encouraged all to promote and to use the Resource imaginatively and creatively, and shared from personal experience of an ecumenical bible study to which recent past resources have contributed a broader picture and dimension through the artworks, poetry and reflections.

John Littleton then thanked the Lenten Resource team and advised that Ecumenical Lenten Resource 2018: *Pilgrimage to the Heart* can be downloaded and printed from the SACC website [www.sacc.asn.au]. Please let the office know when it is downloaded and used at sacc@picknowl.com.au or Ph: 8215 0300.

7. **Sharing of Stories - Part 6: SACC Priority 5 - Ecumenical Partnership in the Mission of Christ**

SACC Priority 5 states: SACC will encourage, facilitate and nurture a range of **ecumenical partnerships** in the mission of Christ to enable people in churches, **individually and institutionally**, to act as Christians together on education, advocacy and fundraising to help alleviate poverty, oppression and injustice in Australia and overseas. (SA Council of Churches – 2015 Onwards: nurturing and nourishing the understanding, spiritual growth and practice of ecumenism across the Churches)

In July 2017, all SACC appointees were invited to gather in their denominational groupings and describe:

- In what ways does your church act with other Christians on education, advocacy and fundraising to help alleviate poverty, oppression and injustice in Australia and overseas?
- What more might be possible and what is emerging?

Responses were distributed to General Council in advance of the meeting.

As a prelude to considering the responses and possible pathways forward, Geraldine invited Doug Walladge to share his experience of SACC over the past several years. Doug described how SACC's actions used to reflect a sense of the Churches being beholden to SACC, whereas now SACC, through all involved, acts as **a resource, facilitator and companion to assist the churches in deepening their ecumenical responsibilities.**

This exercise was to be seen, therefore, as a piece of research that would offer insights and recommendations to the Member Churches regarding Ecumenical Partnerships in the Mission of Christ, and is similar to the exercise that General Council did on 2015 in relation to Priority 1 (*Formation and Education for Leadership in Ecumenism in the Spirit of Christ*).

Geraldine thanked the five Member Churches (Anglican, Catholic, Churches of Christ, Quakers and Uniting) who had already submitted a response, and encouraged those who were still preparing one to send it through as soon as possible. The Lutheran response was tabled at the meeting and people took time to read through, followed by Peter Burke sharing some additional thoughts on the Anglican response. People then discussed the responses and described:

A. What you wish to affirm

- a. Covenanting
- b. Global commitments of partnership
- c. Local initiatives
- d. The place of Lenten Studies – leading to new awareness of things happening in the world and formation of relationships
- e. Local community and groups linked to government
- f. Organisations supporting welfare [national movements]
- g. Responses as given by Member Churches
- h. Niche projects that fulfil an immediate need and have future potential
- i. Mindset of collaboration
- j. Mission of Christ following
- k. Complementarity – the complementing of each other
- l. SACC – an inspiration
- m. Schools and local groups looking beyond themselves to social justice and unity

B. What learnings and possibilities are emerging?

- a. Sharing stories - communicating with others, being in relationship, building collaboration and awareness
- b. Witnessing to Christ – the Church being part of the community, not just in it, living life embodying the Good News
- c. Resourcing and sharing possibilities – doing together as much as possible
- d. Mentoring – Youth, new Christians, discipleship
- e. Interfaith groups – the possibility to meet regularly and locally
- f. Local meetings of Ministers, leaders, congregations, and other groups - collaborative efforts for local needs including such as social justice, domestic violence, etc.
- g. Schools being ecumenical
- h. Prayer sharing
- i. Denominational foci and learning from others
- j. Collaboration of leadership for ecumenical base in key areas

From these reflections and insights, a simple and succinct summary to guide and assist the development and flow of ecumenical partnerships could be described as follows:

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| i. Christianity | v. Complement |
| ii. Community | vi. Covenant |
| iii. Collaborate | vii. Communicate |
| iv. Cooperate | viii. Celebrate |

The conversation will continue as others across SACC distil ways ahead for deepening ecumenical partnership in the mission of Christ.

8. **Dates, venues and themes** of General Council Meetings 2018

John invited all to consider if their church might be open to hosting a meeting of General Council, including non-metropolitan venues.

Jane Lee-Barker offered Burra which was received gratefully by all.

9. **Review, Conclusion and Blessing**

The meeting concluded with participants reviewing:

- What have I learned...what will I do differently...?
- What story/image will I communicate to others about today's gathering ...?
- What steps will I take within my Church...with whom do I need to speak ...?

Responses of words and images included:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| • Collaborate | • Companions/Companionship |
| • Learning | • Sharing the garden tour |
| • Possibilities | • Enrichment |
| • Amen | • Garden |
| • 'The garden is rich' | • Insight |
| • Respectful listening | • Fruits |
| • Giving an account of the hope within us | • Growth |
| | • Seeds |

10. **Closing blessing**

John Littleton thanked all and closed the Meeting in prayer by asking all to join hands in a circle facing inwards for the Lord's Prayer and outwards for a blessing going out to all the world.

A summary report of these Minutes is available at www.sacc.asn.au as a basis for your reporting to your Member Church and other networks.

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:**

Rt Rev'd John Stead (Anglican);
 Fr Philippos Boghdadi (Coptic Orthodox);
 Fr Silouan Fotineas (Greek Orthodox);
 Bishop David Altus (Lutheran);
 Ms Millicent Stein (Religious Society of Friends);
 Bishop Mihail (Romanian Orthodox);
 Rev Ernest Sorensen (Uniting).

Standing Committees:

- Executive: -
- Community for Ecumenical Learning: -
- Community for Local Ecumenism: -
- Ecumenical Partners for Justice and Peace: Mr Refaat Megalli (Coptic Orthodox), Dr Colin Cargill (Uniting), Ms Pamela Jones (Justice & Peace Issues), Mr John Sullivan (Justice & Peace Issues), Mrs Dawn Sullivan (Justice & Peace Issues)
- Finance Committee: -

Observers: Rev Alison Whish, Mrs Barbara Horne, Ms Beth Ackland, Rev Lindsay Faulkner, Mr Charles Stevenson

Absent:**General Council:**

Most Rev'd Geoffrey Smith (Anglican);
 Most Rev Philip Wilson, & Bishop Greg O'Kelly (Catholic);
 Fr Abraam Elbaramousy, & Bishop Suriel (Coptic Orthodox);
 Mr Belay Getachew, Mr Hailemariam Kassa & Mrs Alganesh Abegaz (Ethiopian Orthodox);
 Bishop Nikandros of Dorylaeon (Greek Orthodox);
 Mr Yarrow Andrew (Religious Society of Friends);
 Fr Viorel Stoica (Romanian Orthodox)
 Major Barry Casey & Major Rosslyn Casey (Salvation Army)
 Rev Nigel Rogers (Uniting)

Executive:

Mr Refaat Georgy (Coptic Orthodox)

Standing Committees:

Mr David O'Dwyer (Catholic)
 Ms Carol Assaad, Dr Heshmat Keroloss (Coptic Orthodox)