

# South Australian Council of Churches Inc



Annual Report July 2015 - June 2016

## Community for Local Ecumenism [CLE]

We, as a community have struggled to discover what our role as 'a community' is. We felt that we needed to do than encouraging ecumenism in our local area and then reporting back what we have done. (There are more efficient means for doing that.)

So we have taken up the paper **God is Love: Ecumenism of the Heart** and taking in turns of presenting that to our community with the aim of encouraging a deeper look at this more widely.

**God is Love: Ecumenism of the Heart**, written by Dr Antonia Pizzey, is a paper contained within 'Prospects and Challenges for the Ecumenical Movement in the 21st Century: *Insights from the Global Ecumenical Theological Institute.*' Antonia was a participant in GETI. Her doctoral dissertation at the Australian Catholic University focuses on the potential of receptive ecumenism as a form of spiritual ecumenism. For a copy of **God is Love: Ecumenism of the Heart**, see page 234 [http://www.sacc.asn.au/en/index.php?rubric=en\\_receptive+ecumenism](http://www.sacc.asn.au/en/index.php?rubric=en_receptive+ecumenism)

A new Focus for the next few years for Local Ecumenism was developed during 2016 – see [http://www.sacc.asn.au/en/index.php?rubric=en\\_who\\_comm\\_local](http://www.sacc.asn.au/en/index.php?rubric=en_who_comm_local)

Pierre Magar reported on local ecumenism for St Mary and Anba Bishoy Coptic Orthodox Church as follows:

- a. April 2016 – Marion Area Gallery, members of Gallery
- b. May 2016 – History Month – plenty of visits from the wider community for the Coptic Gallery [Upon visitors' request, the tour sometimes included the church itself]
- c. July 2016 – Uniting Church Elders Community visit us and ask to go on a tour of the Coptic Gallery
- d. August 2016 - St Mary and Anba Bishoy Coptic Orthodox Church hosted a multi-church Choirs Performance Evening which strengthened inter-church and various community bonds: attendees tour the Coptic Gallery
- e. September 2016 – attended the opening of the Golden Rule arts exhibition in the City Library
- f. 2016 – throughout – a few classed from various schools visit the Coptic Gallery; St Mary and Anba Bishoy Coptic Orthodox Church is working with local Catholic schools to identify the broad, general (Christian) more requirements of the current day and age; the Church aims to incorporate these moral requirements into the Children's Gallery (which is still under construction).

## Community for Local Ecumenism

The Rev'd Dr Jane Lee-Barker [Anglican Diocese of Adelaide]

Mr Pierre Magar [Coptic Orthodox Church-Diocese of Melbourne and Affiliated Regions]

Pastor Leon Rosenberg [Lutheran Church of Australia - SA/NT District]

Ms Bridgid Medder [RC Archdiocese of Adelaide]

Ms Kay Thorp [Local Ecumenist]

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### Members of South Australian Council of Churches

Anglican Church of Australia - Diocese of Adelaide, The Murray and 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

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

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## Community for Ecumenical Learning [CEL]

### Background

Since being formed in 2008 the activities of the Standing Committee for Ecumenical Learning gradually merged with the overall SACC planning. From 2008 the committee took a lead in offering a range of opportunities for ecumenical learning, for example Annual Lectures, “Learning Together in Christ” events and a mini-Conference. Annual Lectures on ecumenical themes from 2009-2014 contributed to the ongoing conversation on receptive ecumenism. CEL events are self-funding.

The Committee met five times during this period. The following topics occupied our energy and time.

### Name change

Members decided to recommend a name change for this committee. The Executive and General Council agreed to the name change as a focus for 2016-2018.

For some time the committee has acted as a catalyst and a think tank, involved in planning and reflection, with the intent of shaping and developing ecumenical consciousness and leadership. The Community for Ecumenical Learning [CEL], in collaboration and consultation with others, will assist in encouraging, facilitating and nurturing the ongoing shaping and development of ecumenical consciousness/disposition and leadership, individually and institutionally [SACC Core Purpose, Priorities 1 & 3].

The new name recognises a considerable development. After a period of 8 years a “community” of ecumenical learners (as distinct from a “committee”) exists within the life of the SACC. In 2008 a few individuals took a risk to explore the ecumenical learning territory and now we are travelling well across that landscape in South Australia and internationally. A much wider and diverse group/community of people are participating.

### Feedback

Feedback has the potential to enhance ecumenical learning for church networks as well as for individuals. With the Executive, CEL asked SACC member churches to describe ways in which that they went about the ecumenical formation and education of the leadership in their respective traditions. Five out of eleven possible responses were received. A further letter asked for more feedback and one response was received. From this feedback at least one lesson can be noted. Ecumenical formation and education of individuals and the “body of Christ” are greatly assisted when a church establishes a network or conversation group to focus on that topic. The creation of such conversation groups within more member churches would indeed widen the community for ecumenical learning in South Australia.

### Seminar/workshop development

Development of a seminar/workshop with a listening and conversational process for ecumenical learning is in progress. The workshop/seminar is to be entitled Exchange of Gifts: Reimagining our Unity in Christ through Receptive Ecumenism. CEL members will have another conversation about this listening/conversational process during the October meeting as we prepare to conduct such a workshop/seminar early next year.

### Ecumenical Lenten resources

Positive feedback on the Ecumenical Lenten e-Resource for 2016 was received, but it is difficult for SACC with limited resources to assess usage for downloaded material. The CEL recognises that the South Australian Ecumenical Lenten Study resources have fallen away over the past 15 years. However, members

resolved that in October this year preparations would begin on the next resource for 2018. It is “a good thing to do” and contributes to the few Ecumenical Lenten resources available nationally and globally.

**The Fourth International Conference on Receptive Ecumenism will be held in Canberra, 6-7 November 2017**

ELC members support the SACC Ecumenical Facilitator in the ongoing conversations about the planning of this exciting REIV Conference in Australia. Publicity about the Conference is available.

We thank all those who have led, participated in and enabled the CEL activities.

Community for Ecumenical Learning

The Rev'd John Littleton [Anglican Diocese of Adelaide]

Dr Heshmat Keroloss [Coptic Orthodox-Diocese of Melbourne and Affiliated Regions]

Mr Stephen Ghabriel (Correspondent) [Coptic Orthodox-Diocese of Melbourne & Affiliated Regions]

Envoy Ted Wright [Salvation Army SA Division]

Dr Marie Loller [RC Archdiocese of Adelaide]

Ms Mary Camilleri [RC Archdiocese of Adelaide]

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## Ecumenical Partners for Justice and Peace [EPJP]

At the beginning of 2016 our committee was renamed “Ecumenical Partners for Justice and Peace” [EPJP] to allow for a change in our focus and activities. Since being formed in 2008 we had been known as the Committee for Christian World Service.

Through collaboration and consultation with others our focus has changed. Our main aim now is to assist in promoting, shaping and reviewing ecumenical partnership on matters of justice and peace.

Since the beginning of the year our role has continued to evolve with the formation of collegial relationships with a wide range of people across the churches and in the justice sector. For the present our main aims and activities are focused on promoting justice and peace through prayer, promoting the “Peace Lamps Project” and the “Journey to Recognition”, and promoting and reviewing stories, events and resources related to justice and peace. The latter is being developed through existing and new relationships and networks; church newsletters, including the SACC weekly E-news and website; and convening and encouraging gatherings as appropriate. We also try to be aware of, and connect to, justice and peace developments and trends in our various churches, as well as the work of other groups.

We continue to support and to share stories on the many Pastoral Care Workers (PCWs) working in Schools and faithfully supported by Local Inter-church Councils. Many of the PCWs play an important role in nurturing and supporting young people searching for justice and peace.

## Refugee Support

We have maintained relationships with a wide range of agencies working for justice and support of refugees, mainly by sharing information of their activities and promoting the practical resource “Befriending Asylum Seekers”. Our activity on this aspect of justice will increase over the coming year as the SACC has been left a generous bequest for activity focused on refugees. The committee will devise processes whereby the best use of this legacy for refugee work together as churches can be discerned.

## Recognition, Reconciliation, and Relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and the churches in South Australia

This ongoing justice issue was progressed with the general meeting in May hearing the story of and experiencing the generous hospitality of the Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress (UAICC) community at Salisbury. For National Reconciliation Week a prayer in E-News and links on the SACC website were offered as a resource for churches.

## Peace Lamps: an International Appeal to Pray for Peace in the Holy Land

We have continued to be part of this Appeal, including the promotion of Peace Lamps, which are made by young people in Palestine. Their hope is to place a Peace Lamp in every church in the world and to unite as many Christians and people of faith as possible in a common prayer for peace in the Holy Land.

Dawn and John Sullivan sold 9 lamps and 38 small doves with a display in the Henley Beach Catholic Parish over three masses during Advent. The lamps continue to be promoted in the e-news and local newsletters. The message is spreading and recently a lamp was posted to the United States following a request from a lady whose father was born in Taybeh. We look forward to hearing more from this connection.

We are grateful for the support that Melanie gives to this project. From June 2015 - June 2016, 60 lamps and 100 doves have been purchased. The income from sales in that period was \$3,300 and \$1000 was sent to Caritas as part of the Christmas Gaza Appeal.

Book marks and posters were developed to assist promotion and templates are available from the SACC

office. Thank you all who have bought or promoted Peace Lamps and Doves. Information, stories and order forms are available on the SACC website. [www.sacc.asn.au](http://www.sacc.asn.au)

We have appreciated the input, which Geraldine has given and continues to give to this work.

Ecumenical Partners for Justice and Peace

Ms Julie Staszyc [RC Archdiocese of Adelaide]

Ms Jakleen Shonoodh [Coptic Orthodox Church – Diocese of Melbourne and Affiliated Regions]

Dr Colin Cargill [Uniting Church in SA]

Ms Pamela Jones [Justice & Peace Issues]

Ms Dawn Sullivan [Justice & Peace Issues]

Mr John Sullivan [Justice & Peace Issues]

Ms Ngaire Llewellyn [Justice & Peace Issues]

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