

South Australian Council of Churches Inc



Annual Report July 2015 - June 2016

President

“Loving and eternal God, you continually delight in all of humanity and beckon us all on to our best possibilities”. (*Prayer for Christian Unity: Healing Gifts for Wounded Hands 2014*).

The prayer above, I believe, is the essence of the work of ecumenism and the call to us all. I have tried to embrace these best possibilities that have come my way during my time as President, including being involved in the committees of the South Australian Council of Churches, accepting invitations within other arenas such as State Government forums, attending launches and celebrations within various denominations. I am grateful for these opportunities to be engaged beyond my normal sphere, which have stretched my worldview and I have delighted in what I have found.

Opportunities to visit other Churches at our General Meetings allow us to always be looking outward. At the 2015 AGM, at St Spyridon’s Greek Orthodox Church, we joined hands in a circle facing one another, as a sign of standing as one, before being invited to turn around, join hands while facing outward, as a sign of our unity in serving all the world. Our General meeting in May was held at Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress SA in Salisbury, where we heard from Candace Champion, a young Indigenous leader within the Uniting Church. Candace has embraced all of the ‘best possibilities’ that have come her way and was inspiring as she related her experiences of Taizé and her gratitude for the sponsorship of the SACC with this journey. Candace went on to further leadership opportunities within the World Council of Churches Conference on “Reconciliation Processes in Indigenous Contexts” in June this year.

It is heartening to see the growth and change of SACC including some changes of titles of some of the committees to better reflect the role they currently play. These committees include; the Community for Ecumenical Learning, the Community for Local Ecumenism and the Ecumenical Partners for Justice and Peace. The Lenten Resource for 2016, produced by some members of the Community for Ecumenical Learning was also very well received. Receptive Ecumenism has been embedded in the processes and practices of our endeavours, going beyond appreciating each other but also helping us to receive what we might learn from each other as gift.

A highlight of my time as President was the opportunity to travel to Sydney with Geraldine Hawkes to participate in the 9th National Council of Churches Forum. I was privileged to be part of the pre-conference workshop based on The World Council of Churches Document “The Church: Towards a Common Vision”, a resource of which I have continued to engage, and would encourage others to read. The forum was a wonderful opportunity to see the wider picture of ecumenism nationally and in the world and to learn more of the really worthwhile causes that the NCCA supports and gives voice to. It was particularly good to meet many of the people that I have heard about and to network with many others from varying Christian denominations.

I would like to thank all of those who have given so freely of their time to the Executive Committee of the Council particularly Peter Burke as Chair of this Committee and to those who care for the financial stewardship of the Council, especially Neil Traeger. Thank you also to our Office Administrator Melanie Macrow. I would like to pay tribute to our Ecumenical Facilitator and Executive Officer, Geraldine Hawkes, who is ever vigilant in progressing the work of the Churches

and gently encouraging us to stretch our horizons with new ways of engagement. I have learned so much in my time as President from all of the wonderful people I have encountered through the work of the SACC, and through engagement socially and liturgically.

The great work continues and we have much of which to look forward in 2017 when we celebrate our 70th year as the South Australian Council of Churches.

May we all “continue to delight in all of humanity that beckons us all on to our best possibilities.”

Jill Gallio
President

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