



Council News



October 2016

Executive Officer's Reflections

This month, we were privileged to have the Rev Dr Olav Fyske Tveit in Melbourne. He is the General Secretary of the World Council of Churches. He spoke at a number of events with a strong theme of pilgrimage coming through.

I have been pondering his question on seeing ourselves as pilgrims. In particular, what shifts of thinking or practises arise from this thinking? I would like to share two images that have been speaking to me.

One is that pilgrims travel light. Those who have done any hiking, trekking or pilgrimage walking know the importance of carrying only what is needed or required.

The second is that pilgrims travel with intent. There's a focus, purpose which often sets a Direction.

Our constitution states that our Council is made up of Churches on pilgrimage, so I'm wondering – are we travelling light, have we packed what is necessary for the journey of being God's people and then are we travelling with intent... do we have a focus?

Thoughts from a fellow pilgrim,

- Jan.

Executive Officer's movements

This month has seen me:

- Speaking at a number of events - Anti Poverty Week Service at ACU
 - Church Unite
 - 5th Celebration of the establishment of the Inter Faith Center at Swinburne University.
 - mens breakfast in the City of Monash
- Facilitated the visit of Rev Dr Olav Fykse Tveit, General Secretary WCC
- Worked with various faith leaders to address concerns raised with the State Government over its withdrawal of funding for faith groups

- Meet with various Church leaders on policies and directions that affect the wider church as it seeks to serve the communities it ministers in.

I am currently establishing my diary for 2017 and would welcome opportunities to come and share stories of the Council activities with your Church or organisation – you can contact me on 03 9650 4511 or email at ian.smith@vcc.org.au

News from the Council

Council received funding for a training package to help all places of worship obtain Child Safe Standards by 2017

Council hosted Rev Dr Olav Fykse Tveit, General Secretary of the World Council of Churches During October – The General Secretary visited the VCC offices, shared in Evensong and gave a public lecture as part of his Victorian visit.

Council is preparing for 2017 by drafting a budget and looking at priorities and strategies for 2017

Council is happy to announce the extension of Executive Officer's contract for another three years. Council believes that Ian is doing a good job.

**** ANNOUNCEMENT****

The VCC intended to conduct a Rural Conference this year but have been unable to proceed with this – a special gathering of Council will occur in February to conduct necessary business prior to AGM

VCC Events

Social Questions Commission

CHRISTIAN PERSPECTIVES ON TREATY, SOVEREIGNTY AND CONSTITUTIONAL RECOGNITION - An Ecumenical Forum

The Victorian Council of Churches' Social Questions Commission is proud to host this important discussion on treaty, sovereignty and constitutional recognition.

Wednesday 9th November
Wesley Uniting Church, 148 Lonsdale Street, Melbourne
6.45pm registrations / 7pm start

A flier can be downloaded/viewed here: http://vcc.org.au/images/VCC_SQC_Forum_-_9_Nov.pdf

Visit to Melbourne of WCC general secretary

Rev. Dr Olav Fykse Tveit



*following Evensong at St Paul's
picture by Janine Eastgate/ TMA*



At VCC offices with Rev Andrew Dutney

The VCC were very honoured to have the General Secretary of the World Council of Churches in Victoria during October. This was the first visit of a WCC General Secretary since the 1991 WCC Assembly in Canberra. During his stay in Melbourne he helped launch a UCA/PIEN website, preached at Evensong at St Paul's Cathedral and gave a public lecture. Olav's message was strongly couched in language of pilgrimage – raising the questions around what does it mean to be a Church that is on pilgrimage... how do we engage with the wider world in which we participate?

“Nothing substantively new”? A public lecture on the Future of Jewish-Catholic relations

Two scholars, Fr Philipp Renczes SJ and Rabbi Fred Morgan, look at the latest Vatican document “The gifts and calling of God are irrevocable”.

There is no charge for this event, but to help with catering, please send your RSVP to David at: eic@cam.org.au or 03 9926 5708

Victorian Council of Churches Emergencies Ministry

"VCC Emergencies Ministry had the 2016 State Conference at 800 Bourke Street – "The Arena".

Over 100 delegates were in attendance and had the privilege of hearing from Mr. Craig Lapsley, Emergency Management Commissioner, Mr. Pat Ryle and Duncan Bartley, Victoria Police, Mr. Stephen O'Malley, MFB, Mr. Andrew Mason, Melton City Council and Dr. Rob Gordon, Psychologist.



*Mr Craig Lapsley (Emergency Management Commissioner)
Addressing the Conference – Photo Stuart Stuart*

We were also blessed to have present Mr. Gus Yearsley, TCC Emergencies Ministry and a team of 4, and Rev'd Dr. Stephen Robinson, NSW Disaster Recovery Chaplaincy Network.

The day was enjoyed by all with a renewed sense of purpose for the Church in supporting individuals and communities that have experienced trauma from disasters.

For information about VCC Emergencies Ministry please go to:

www.vccem.org.au

www.facebook.com/vccem

www.twitter.com/vicemchaps

National Council of Churches Media Release - October 2016

The National Council of Churches writes to the Prime Minister and Minister for Immigration and Border Protection

The President and Board of Directors of the National Council of Churches in Australia published a Media Release on 18 October 2016 asking for cooperation to settle the asylum seekers from Nauru and Manus Islands.

The Media release states "The continuing reports out of both places are a source of deep concern." Letters have been sent to both the Prime Minister and the Minister for Immigration and Border Protection to encourage them to join in discussions with faith leaders and Church organisations. These organisations have significant resources in overseas aid and domestic welfare which they can bring to the task of settling these displaced people.

For more detail [Read the Media Release](#)

For Media Contact Bishop Philip Huggins 0418 799 515

Safe Church Program

Victorian Child Safe Standards

Safe as Churches? 8 Conference

Being Safer Churches

16th – 17th May 2017 - Jasper Hotel, Melbourne

Breaking ground for safer churches and stronger communities. The upcoming “Safe as Churches?” Conference is the 8th biennial conference bringing together various leaders and experts to network and develop effective ways to lead our churches in best practices for safeguarding our children, youth and vulnerable adults.

The 'Safe as Churches?' consultations and conferences have been engaging the highly sensitive issues of sexual abuse and misconduct that in the past have often been concealed or ignored. Something important has happened when we are ready to share our stories on this most painful of subjects, and to ask for help from the family of Churches. Openness between Churches is an important step in allowing God to heal us and our communities and make us whole.

Our next Safe as Churches? will be held in Melbourne on 16 and 17 May 2017 at the Jasper Hotel. At this conference we will be hearing from a Commissioner from the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. We will also be looking at Pastoral Responses to Child Sexual Abuse and engaging with Known Offenders. For the first time we will be looking in depth at Family Violence, with Our Watch CEO Ms Mary Barry delivering a keynote address as well as members of the Our Watch team running a workshop for attendees. We will also be looking at technology, with an eSafety presentation by the Office for the Children’s eSafety Commissioner, focusing on digital trends, cyberbullying and potential risk for grooming of children and vulnerable people online. They will also highlight some of their tools and resources that they have produced in relation to Family Violence.

To find out more details regarding the conference and other Safe Church matters, visit www.safechurches.org.au.

Please see attachment for details.

Safe Church Tips

Grooming

Sexual grooming is the process used by sexual offenders to select and prepare children for sexual abuse while maintaining a high degree of secrecy. Most abusers are male, although females may also sexually abuse children. Nearly all sexual abusers are known to the target’s family and may be family members, relations or members of the community.

Typically the abuser works to gain the trust of the target, their family and the community at large. Through a process of isolating the target and gaining significance in the target’s life, the abuser gradually sexualises the relationship. The abuser then maintains control over the relationships through bribery, threats, shame and the victim’s fear of safety and security.

Act For Peace

Christmas Bowl 2016

Planning for the Christmas Bowl Appeal is well underway. Kits, envelopes and large corflute posters are being delivered to churches. Do look out for them and be sure to make use of these resources. Many more resources are available on the Act for Peace website.

Many churches in Victoria get involved in activities, such as Christmas Carols events or public cash collections for Christmas Bowl. If you are having a special event, you are invited to get in touch with Jeff Wild at the Melbourne office of Act for Peace on 9650 6811. Share the stories and photos (with any necessary permissions) from your event, and inspire others.

In the spirit of Christmas giving, you may wish to purchase Gifts for Peace for your family or friends. There are 15 different types and more information is on the website at:

www.actforpeace.org.au/Get-Involved/Gifts-for-Peace .

Frank Byatt Memorial Lecture: The Christmas Bowl: what it was and what it is

Rev. Dr D'Arcy Wood, noted liturgist and ecumenist

Venue: St John's Uniting Church,
Buckley St, ESSENDON

Sunday 13th November

3.30pm Afternoon tea

4.00pm Lecture

Enquiries: Jeff Wild 9650 6811

Donations for the Christmas Bowl Appeal gratefully accepted.

A flyer is available for [download](#).

Jewish Christian Muslim Association

'The JCMA Joint Journey to Jerusalem – Discovering Common Ground'

Date: Thursday 17th November **Time:** Arrive 6.45pm for 7.00pm start

Venue: Cathedral Room, Cardinal Knox Centre, 383 Albert Street, East Melbourne. Google maps link: <http://bit.ly/1WcXikV>

Topic: JCMA Joint Journey to Jerusalem 2016 – Discovering Common Ground.

Earlier this year, a group of Christians, Jews and Muslims travelled together for ten days as part of the JCMA 'Joint Journey to Jerusalem'. ...

To Book: go to Eventbrite <https://jcma2016jointjourneytojerusalem.eventbrite.com.au> or RSVP by calling 03 9287 5590 or email: executiveofficer@jcma.org.au

Light refreshments supplied (Kosher & Halal)

We look forward to seeing you there.

Ginette

JCMA Friendship Walk, Sunday 6th November 2016

The Jewish Christian Muslim Association of Australia invites you to come along on Sunday 6th November and spend an afternoon walking together in friendship and goodwill between a church, synagogue and a mosque. Starting at St Peters Eastern Hill Anglican Church we will walk across the road to the East Melbourne Hebrew Congregation Synagogue and then onto to the Albanian Mosque in Carlton North. We will start with a prayer of peace and reflections and then learn about some of the history and traditions of each of the places we visit.

Meeting Place & Planned Walking Route

1.45pm - Registration

Map of the Walking Route

For further details and a map of the planned walking route go to 'Walking Maps' webpage: <http://walkingmaps.com.au/walk/2194>. Please arrive at 1.45pm and meet in the car park beside the church at St Peters Eastern Hill.

For People With Mobility Issues

A minibus is available from St Peters Anglican Church for people with genuine mobility issues who cannot walk the distance thanks to Jewish Care who have generously provided a minibus. Seats are limited, bookings essential please call Ginette on 03 9272 5579 for availability. At this time wheelchair access may be limited at some of the venues and on the minibus.

RSVP, Registration and Information

To register and book your free ticket go to eventbrite <https://jcmafriendshipwalk2016.eventbrite.com.au>

Donations

JCMA is a not-for-profit organisation and donations go directly towards delivery of our many events, forums and conferences and to support our workshop programs in primary and secondary schools. If you would like to make a donation to help support the work of JCMA please go to our website <http://jcma.org.au/donation>. As a listed harm prevention charity we have DGR (Deductible Gift Receipt) status. Your donations are tax-deductible (donations over \$2 are tax-deductible).

JCMA Supporters

We are proudly supported by the Islamic Council of Victoria, Victorian Council of Churches and Jewish Community Council of Victoria.

We look forward to seeing you there.

Ballarat Interfaith Network & the Jewish Christian Muslim Association of Australia Presents:

JCMA Friendship Walk Ballarat - Sunday 20th November 2016 Come along on Sunday 20th November and spend an afternoon walking together in friendship and goodwill between a mosque, synagogue and church.

Starting at Ballarat Mosque we will walk to the Ballarat Hebrew Synagogue and then onto to the St Pauls Anglican Church. We will start with a prayer of peace and reflections and then learn about some of the history and traditions of each of the places we visit.

Please arrive at 1.45pm for registration.

Map of the Planned Route:

<https://walkingmaps.com.au/walk/3332>

To Register & RSVP

Please register your interest for this free event book online at:

<https://jcmaballaratfriendshipwalk.eventbrite.com.au>.

Website: www.icma.org.au Facebook www.facebook.com/icmaonline Twitter JCMAoz

JCMA Supporters

Proudly supported by Ballarat Interfaith Network, Ballarat Reginal Multicultural Council and City of Ballarat and JCMA supporters; The Islamic Council of Victoria, Victorian Council of Churches and Jewish Community Council of Victoria.

We look forward to seeing you there.

Australia Palestine Advocacy Network

Palestinian National Day: flag raising and community festival

15 November, 5.30pm

Swanston St Forecourt, Federation Square

Please join us as the Palestinian flag is flown for the first time in Federation Square. At the conclusion of the formalities, we will have a community festival with fair trade goods for sale, dancing, music, spoken word, and more still to be announced.

More information at: <https://www.facebook.com/events/1103939483055795/>

Australian Student Christian Movement Victoria

Friends Gathering – 26 November 2016

At end of November, the ASCM in Victoria will host the annual Friends Gathering. Whether you are interested to learn more about the Student Christian Movement, looking to reconnect with us, and whether you are studying, recently finished your studies or a Senior Friend; we look forward to welcome you on this Saturday.

There will be a Prayer Service and after that plenty of time to catch up or meet new people over dinner and a cuppa.

If you are not on our mailing list and would love to receive any updates about this event, please let us know via vicscm@ascm.org.au

Monthly Bible Study



Every last Friday of the month we gather for an informal and open Bible Study evening at the Church of All Nations in Carlton.

Everybody is welcome to join us around 7pm, we meet in the church building itself and we have some refreshments during the conversations.

For more information or questions, feel free to contact our staff worker Henrike via 0422 030 879 or henrike.brussaard@ascm.org.au

[You can download the flyer here](#)

Other Events / Resources

Time for Remembering: Road Trauma Support Services

Sunday 20 November 2016, 11:45am

To remember those who have died, acknowledge those who have been injured and recognise the impact of road trauma on our community.

You are invited to bring a small framed photo of your loved one or other symbol of remembrance.

Location: Queens Hall, Parliament House, Melbourne

Contact: 1300 367 797 or office.manager@rtssv.org.au

RSVP 18 November, 2016

A flyer can be [downloaded here](#).

Free "Chasing Asylum" screening 25 October

The Mount Waverley Uniting Churches and Wesley College are hosting a screening of "[Chasing Asylum](#)" next week. This documentary is well-worth seeing, and is an indictment of Australia's policy of offshore detention. It will be shown at High Street Road Uniting Church, 482 High St, Mount Waverley on Tuesday 25 October from 6:30 pm - 9.00 pm. David Manne from the Refugee Immigration & Legal Centre, will also be in attendance.

It's free to attend, but you need to register [here](#). After deduction for the film hire cost, any donations on the night will go to Lentara Asylum Seeker Program: <https://www.lentarauc.org.au>

"Ban the Bomb Dinner"

ICAN is a rare good news story. This organisation started in Melbourne and has rapidly spread across the globe. Join ICAN campaigners Tim Wright and Tilman Ruff at a special three-course fundraising dinner to hear first-hand accounts from the United Nations and around the world on moves to ban nuclear weapons.

Wednesday 30 November, 2016

7pm

University Café

257 Lygon St, Carlton

\$80 waged / \$60 concession / \$110 for the "ICAN do more" crew...

Please book early at www.trybooking.com/NNXM

Queries: 0401 995 699

'Faith and Social Inclusion' - Victorian Interfaith Networks Conference (13 November)

Proudly hosted by the **Darebin Interfaith Council**, **City of Darebin**, and **Faith Communities Council of Victoria**, we are pleased to announce that registrations are now open for the 2016 Victorian Interfaith Networks Conference to be held at Darebin Arts & Entertainment Centre on Sunday, 13 November 2016 from 12:00pm to 5:00pm.

The Victorian Interfaith Networks Conference (VINC) is a grass-roots conference which aims to help build the capacity and sustainability of existing multifaith/interfaith networks, bring people up-to-date with current multifaith/interfaith matters and provide networking opportunities.

Date & Time: Sunday, November 13th 2016, from 12:00pm - 4:30pm

Venue: Darebin Arts & Entertainment Centre - Corner of Bell Street & St Georges Road, Preston, VIC 3072 (Melway Reference: 30 E1)

Workshops & Plenary Sessions:

Enrolment for workshops and plenary sessions can be made on the day of event. Each attendee can only enrol in one workshop. Please arrive early to ensure you enrol in your preferred session.

Registration:

Registration is free. To register for the event go to <http://www.vinc.eventbrite.com.au> - click on the green Register button, fill out your name and email address, and let us know of any special dietary requirements.

*** If you have an event that you want others to know about then contact at vcc@vcc.org.au excluding January we plan to publish a Council News each month ***

*Council News is the official newsletter of the Victorian Council of Churches
Editor Rev. Ian Smith Executive Officer*

Email (as well as to unsubscribe): vcc@vcc.org.au

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Website: <http://www.vcc.org.au/>