



Council news

October 2018

Message from the Interim Executive Officer—Lisa Carey

I have nearly finished up here in the two month role of Interim Executive Officer while Rev Ian Smith enjoys his long service leave—and wow has the time flown!

It has been a privilege to be in this role—especially meeting and working with so many wonderful people in our diverse multi-faith, multicultural society.

Some of the highlights have been:

- Attending the “Please Stop” advertisement launch by the Anglican Church and South Sudanese members asking for the media commentary to stop vilifying that section of our society. This then led to Bishop Peter and I creating a working group of the VCC to bring together Christian Leaders in the South Sudanese Community to work together for a stronger and more coordinated support and response. This working group will meet in coming weeks.
- Representing the Victorian Council of Churches at the Janmastami celebration—the Hare Krishna celebration of the birth of Krishna in Port Melbourne.
- Working with the Multi-Faith Advisory Group (MAG) - discussing the way forward to prevent domestic violence (including discussions about dowry and arranged marriages), meeting with the Premier and Minister Scott to request better access for the faith community in policy and legislation and then recognising the UN International Day of Peace with a multi-faith prayer event for our rural communities affected by drought. (I have provided the prayer on page 2)
- Attending a morning hosted by the Quang Minh Buddhist Temple for a dialogue with Monsignor Indunil Kodithuwakku, member of the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue of the Vatican. Monsignor Kodithuwakku reminded us that interreligious dialogue can be successful with the three P's: Prayer, together; Patience, with each other; and Perseverance to continue. He also spoke of cultivating friendships—that maybe through “kitchen dialogue” we can relax and talk while sharing a meal—this is a good way to start.



I recently spent a weekend away camping in southern NSW. I cannot forget our rural communities and the drought, having seen first hand what they are facing - it is devastating and I commend them to your prayers and to the appeals being run for these communities.

Please have a read through the newsletter, with many upcoming events and information that, we hope, will be of assistance to you.

LisC

Prayers for the drought

This is the prayer I used at the multi-faith prayer event for our rural communities affected by drought. This prayer is adapted from a prayer written by Rev. Simon Hansford, Moderator of the Uniting Church NSW/ACT Synod—Lisa

We pray for the land.

We hear the promise you have spoken in Isaiah of the refreshment of the creation; of water in the desert, of renewal for the land, of hope, of life.

We name our simple need – rain for our thirsty land.

Water tanks and dams are nearly empty, like our farmers' hopes for this season.



Please, loving God, bring us rain to renew the ground, to replenish our dams, to bring some chance of feed, to bring the possibility of some reward to those who have toiled so hard.

We turn to you in faith and hope.

We pray for our rural communities.

We pray for all those whose lives are under the shadow of drought.

We think first of those who work with the land, for farmers and their families, for those who rely upon the land for their life and relationships.

We pray for contractors, merchants and truck drivers, for rural counsellors and support workers, for all our rural community.

We pray, too, for justice; for fair prices for our stock and our wool and our crops and products.

We pray for governments, banks and corporations – to be driven by the wisdom of community, justice and compassion not simply the folly of the dollar and the bottom line.

We pray for each other, keep us aware of the needs of those around us: for those who are struggling, who are grieving, who are ill, who are dying.

Restore those who are far from you with the knowledge that they are loved and valued.



VMC Chairperson, Helen Kapalos; Minister Robin Scott; and members of the Multifaith Advisory Group who brought prayers for the drought

Give them not just a sense of renewal, but a sense of hope and purpose for lives that are finding the journey hard.

Keep us always conscious of the task we have in ministry and mission in your world.

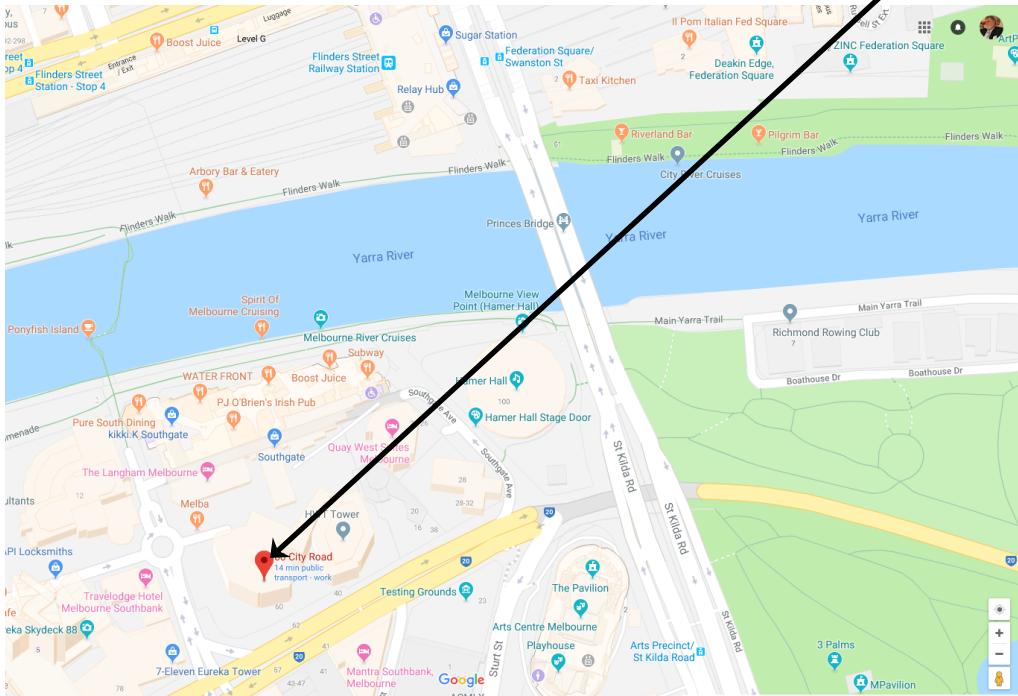
We offer all these prayers in the name of Jesus.

Amen.

The new office

The temporary office of the VCC is now housed in the IBM building in Southbank. We are on the 18th floor sharing with Plan International. Access to the building is via the Plaza which joins the IBM building to the Southbank shopping facilities.

If you wish to visit please ring 9412 8487 and arrange it with Nick.



VCC new contact details

Phone: 03 9650 4511 or 9412 8487

Email vcc@vcc.org.au

Web www.vcc.org.au

Facebook www.facebook.com/viccouncilchurches

Postal address PO Box 561 Flinders Lane Melbourne 8009

VCC Executive Officer on Long Service Leave

The Rev Ian Smith has taken long service leave in August and September.

The Standing Committee of the Victorian Council of Churches granted Ian long service leave. The Standing Committee acknowledge that this leave is funded via Churches of Christ and the granting is an acknowledgement of Ian's ministry with Churches of Christ over some 35 years.

Standing Committee wished Ian and Karen every blessing and prayed that their time away was refreshing and restful.

Ian returns to work on Monday 8 October. When he returns from long service leave, Ian will be again working on appointments for his diary for 2019 and would welcome opportunities to come and share stories of the Council's activities with your Church or organisation.

From the NCCA Newsletter



Message from the President

We have lost another Prime Minister. Again, this is a person of talent and commitment to the nation. Upon reflection, what are the spiritual lessons? [Read more »](#)



NCCA Assembly

Roundtable on Performance Appraisal Frameworks for Clergy and Church Workers (Recommendation 16.44)

31 October 2018 - St James Parish Hall, Sydney CBD

We will look at current performance appraisal tools that incorporate recommendations of the Royal Commission relating to Child Safe Standard 5: *that people working with children are suitable and supported and that supervision and people management have a child safety focus.* [Read more »](#)

Introducing Emily Evans

Emily Evans has just recently begun working with the NCCA as a Project Officer. Her role will see her based in Melbourne providing administrative, research and implementation support to the Commissions, Networks and the overall work of the Council. [Read more »](#)



Palestinian Christian Speaking Tour

“Any Hope for Palestine, now or ever?”

Areej Masoud is a Palestinian Christian with a passion to speak up on behalf of her people and introduce the world to her reality. See further details on page 7.

A Time for Remembering Road Trauma Victims

For the past 17 years the VCC has been part of an annual Time for Remembering ceremony at Parliament House to recognise victims of road trauma. Please see details below.



ROAD TRAUMA SUPPORT SERVICES VICTORIA WARMLY INVITES YOU TO THE 18TH ANNUAL
TIME FOR REMEMBERING

11:45am for a 12 noon start, Sunday 18 November 2018
(Please allow sufficient time to pass through a security checkpoint before entering the building)
Queen's Hall, Parliament House, Melbourne

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.

Refreshments will follow the ceremony.

RSVP Friday 16 November 2018 to 1300 367 797 or office.manager@rtssv.org.au
Please advise us if you have any mobility or dietary requirements.

proudly supported by **TAC** 

ROAD TRAUMA SUPPORT SERVICES
VICTORIA • COUNSELLING, SUPPORTING & EDUCATING

Jewish Christian Muslim Association

JCMA FRIENDSHIP WALK

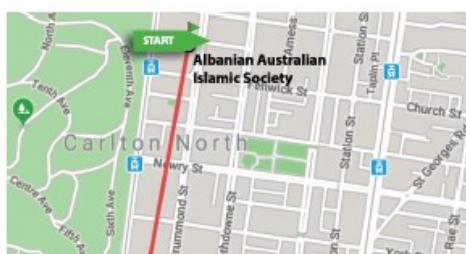
Sunday 21st October 2018 1.15pm - 5.00pm



The Jewish Christian Muslim Association of Australia
invites you to spend an afternoon walking
together in friendship and goodwill between
a church, synagogue and a mosque.

- 1.15pm **Albanian Australian Islamic Society Mosque**
765 Drummond St. Carlton North
Please arrive at 1.15pm for registration & 1.30pm start
- 2.30pm **Church of All Nations**
180 Palmerston St. Carlton
- 3.40pm **East Melbourne Hebrew Congregation**
488 Albert St. East Melbourne
- 4.10pm **St Peters Eastern Hill Church / Community Hall**
15 Gisborne St. (corner of Albert St.) East Melbourne
Join us for tea & refreshments at the Community Hall

- Free event. Book online: <https://jcmaf18.eventbrite.com.au>
- More information: contact Ginette Everest on 0400 211 221, executiveofficer@jcma.org.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. As a listed harm prevention charity we have DGR (Deductible Gift Receipt) status. Your donations are tax-deductible (donations over \$2 are tax-deductible). 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>.

JCMA Membership

JCMA is a membership based organisation for Jewish, Christian and Muslim people of faith. If you would like to find out about joining JCMA as a member you can go to our website at <http://jcma.org.au/jcma-membership> or call Ginette Everest on (03) 9287 5590 or email to: memberships@jcma.org.au.

From the Safe Churches Program monthly newsletter

A Catholic Response to Domestic Violence

This and other resources on domestic and sexual violence can be found [here](#).

When Ministers Sin: Sexual Abuse in the Churches

In this explosive book are powerful and authentic stories of betrayal. These personal accounts of sexual abuse by ministers of religion might not have been listened to in the past. Today, the churches cannot ignore them. Authors: [Neil Ormerod](#), [Thea Ormerod](#). Available from [Amazon](#) and the [publishers](#).

Child safety: What to consider before jumping into the National Redress Scheme

The National Redress Scheme came into effect on 1 July 2018, and organisations are now posed with the question: should we opt-in to the scheme? While it may sound like an easy and ethical decision to join, there are some important factors that Moore's strongly recommend you consider before jumping in. More [here](#).

A theological response to the NSW ecumenical gathering with oversight bodies

Craig Thacker (Assistant Safeguarding Director for The Salvation Army) attended the ecumenical gathering in NSW in June. He has put together a discussion starter for denominations to use to aid their thinking when developing policies and procedures in regard to Professional Standards within a church context. He has made this available [here](#).

To sign up to the NCCA Safe Churches Program Newsletter please [click here](#).



From the JIM Unit

Social Justice Convention 2018

Join us for our annual social justice convention where we will discuss our theme for 2018, Growing Peaceful Communities, as well as the social justice campaigns the Synod of Victoria and Tasmania is working on.

When: October 27, 2018 at 9am - 4pm

Where: Centre for Theology and Ministry
29 College Crescent
Parkville, Victoria 3052

[Register online here.](#)



PIEN Speaker Tour

7 - 27 October 2018

with Areej Masoud

"Any Hope for Palestine, now or ever?"

Areej Masoud is a Palestinian Christian from Bethlehem who currently works as the Development & Communications Department Coordinator at Bethlehem Bible College. Areej is impassioned to speak up on behalf of her people and introduce the world to her reality, often hidden from mainstream media! A reality where access to basic necessities such as healthcare, education, water, shelter, freedom of movement and economic security is greatly restricted.

Opportunities to hear Areej

Melbourne

10 October at 8.00pm – Spirituality in the Pub, The Pumphouse Hotel, 128 Nicholson St, Fitzroy (opp. Carlton Gardens). Meals available at Pub from 6.00pm.

17 October at 7:15pm sign in for 7:30pm start – Live Webinar through Ridley College, open to the public. Prior registration required. [Register here.](#)

21 October at 9.30am – Church service at Brunswick Uniting Church, 212 Sydney Road, Brunswick (corner of Merri St). Areej will speak at morning tea after the service.

Bendigo

9 October at 7.30pm – Public lecture at St Matthew's Church, 153 Eaglehawk Rd, Long Gully (corner of Eaglehawk Rd and Creeth St). Supper will be served. [Register here.](#)

Become a member!

Now is the time to stand with those in Palestine and Israel who are seeking a just, sustainable peace. This is also the time to join with others in becoming a financial member and supporter of PIEN.

For a joining fee of \$20, as well as any other amount you wish to contribute, you will be standing with others committed to peace and justice in Palestine and Israel. Will you join us?

[**Follow this simple link to complete your membership application. We look forward to you joining us.**](#)



**Areej has been brought to Australia by the
Palestine Israel Ecumenical Network**

*PIEN is a network of Australian Christians seeking lasting
peace and justice for the people of Palestine and Israel.*

<http://www.pien.org.au/>

www.facebook.com/PalestineIsraelEcumenicalNetwork/

Major Tour Sponsors:



CHILDREN & FAMILIES MINISTRY

Here to Stay Sep 13 or Oct 18 7.15pm-9.45pm Mitcham

Here2Stay continues to offer a valuable framework for growing discipleship across younger (indeed all) generations. These evenings of experiential activities are designed for church teams to explore life-long faith formation together and will have limited numbers. For more information or to register your church team please contact Leanne Palmer via LeanneP@savic.org.au or (03) 9482 5700.

Connecting with Community Oct 27 9.30am-1pm Donvale

Focusing on being a good listener and safe areas of conversation, this event will be especially useful for congregations with a focus on engaging those who are not yet part of a church community. For more information as it becomes available, e-mail chris.barnett@ctm.uca.edu.au

Please also note these 2019 dates:

May 3-5 [Second International Messy Church Conference \(UK\)](#)

May 20-22 [Intergenerate Conference \(US\)](#)

Jun 11-14 [Leaders to Go \(Aus\)](#)

Dignity not Destitution: Changes to Support Services for People Seeking Asylum



The foundational principle of the campaign Dignity NOT Destitution is the belief that **no person lawfully residing in Australia should be forced into destitution through the removal of access to financial and housing supports.**

Up to 12,000 people seeking asylum in Australia may be at risk of losing core services and financial support due to Government changes in the

Status Resolution Support Services (SRSS). Charities are already struggling to support destitute asylum seekers, but this level of destitution will be unprecedented.

Read about why this is a deep concern for people seeking asylum as well as Churches and Charities. You CAN take action to support.

How you can help: [click here](#) for a list of organisations helping people seeking asylum.

Background information on this issue can be found [here](#), from the Australian Churches Refugee Taskforce

[Click here](#) for a downloadable brochure with actions to take.

Act for Peace breaks through target for Manus Refugee Appeal



The call went out to churches and other supporters to help the men who have been left in limbo on Manus Island.

Thousands responded with overwhelming support and eclipsed the \$64k needed to transform these men's lives within days. This is how much people cared.

It has been more than five years since Australia began holding asylum seekers in offshore detention centres in Manus and Nauru - with 12 distraught men taking their own life during that time.



Australia's policy of 'Regional Processing' has left hundreds of men on Manus Island living in limbo, with little or no solutions being offered.

These men have endured unimaginable hardships, yet they still dream of a better future; where safety, justice and dignity might become a reality.

Since January, Act for Peace, the International Aid Agency of the National Council of Churches has been quietly working with the Australian Churches Refugee Taskforce to find ways for Australians to show kindness and compassion to these men on Manus Island. They are working with an ecumenical partner organisation on the ground - the Manus Provincial Council of Churches (MPCC) - to create a welcoming environment for these detainees. All are ready to deliver practical support for these men, through training and community development, so they can heal from their trauma, find purpose and prepare for their future. For information on this cause visit www.actforpeace.org.au/wecare.

Sharing God's love through the Christmas Bowl



As a Christian, Rev. Frank Byatt believed he had a responsibility to share the joy of his Christmas with our brothers and sisters in need. That's why, nearly 70 years ago, he put a Bowl of Remembrance on his Christmas dinner table, and asked his guests to share their good fortune with 'hungry children in other lands.'

Today, 69 years later, tens of thousands of Australian's follow Frank's example, sharing God's love with our brothers and sisters in urgent need around the world, through our gifts to the Christmas bowl. These gifts support local partners around the world, helping to meet urgent need, but also to create change that lasts, by equipping communities affected by conflict and disaster with the skills they need to solve their own problems, and get back on their feet.

We would encourage ecumenical leaders to support and promote the Christmas Bowl, through the same tradition of Rev Frank Byatt, who was a powerful exponent of the ecumenical movement, and our collective desire to help those suffering in harsh conditions.

Act for Peace can provide your congregation with posters, videos, liturgical resources and giving envelopes on request. Simply phone 1800 025 101 or email info@actforpeace.org.au.

"Love your neighbor as yourself" Mark 12:31.

The 2018 Christmas Bowl Appeal will be launched on 2 December in the afternoon—please put this date in your diary—further details to come.

World Council of Churches



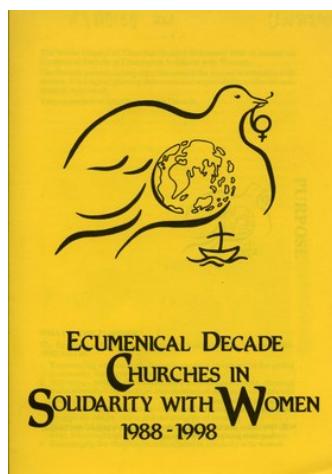
World Council of Churches

A worldwide fellowship of churches seeking unity,
a common witness and Christian service

Message from the global conference against xenophobia: human beings are equal in dignity

Participants at the conference “Xenophobia, Racism and Populist Nationalism in the Context of Global Migration” released a message on 19 September that affirms and upholds the institution of asylum for those fleeing from war, persecution or natural disaster, and invokes respect for the rights for all people on the move. The conference, held in Rome, was organized jointly by the World Council of Churches and the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development in collaboration with the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity.

20 years since the Ecumenical Decade in Solidarity with Women



01 - 06 October 2018 Kingston, Jamaica

In the context of the 70th anniversary of the World Council of Churches, the Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace and the 2030 sustainable development agenda, an international consultation will commemorate the 20th anniversary of the WCC's Decade of the Churches in Solidarity with Women (1988-1998). The consultation will reflect on the achievements and challenges in building a just community of women and men and to strengthen ecumenical collaboration in reading the signs of our times in order to map the future direction of our work.

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

18 - 25 January 2019 Worldwide

The theme for the week of prayer in 2019, "Justice, and only justice, you shall pursue ..." is inspired by Deuteronomy 16:18-20. The resources for the week have been prepared by members of different churches in Indonesia.

Working with Children Checks

It is imperative that we continue to remind you that changes to the working with children checks (WWCC) came into effect on 1 August 2017.

Essentially, the change tightens the requirements for WWCC checks so that all adults who come in contact with children within faith communities require a WWCC check.

If you or members of your faith community have not complied with these changes, we urge you to do so as soon as possible. For further information and how to apply, [click here](#) or call 1300 652 879.



Working with Children Check

From the Commission for Children and Young People

Child Safe Standards and Reportable Conduct Scheme Information Sessions

To further assist organisations to comply with Child Safe Standards and the Reportable Conduct Scheme, the Commission is delivering workshops and information sessions designed to support staff and build understanding.

Child Safe Standards

The [Child Safe Standards](#) workshops include a presentation about the standards and the opportunity to participate in group discussions and activities. The session aims to help improve understanding of how the standards can be applied to your organisation.

The workshops are aimed at all Victorian organisations that are required to comply with the standards.

To attend the **Child Safe Standards Workshop on 23 October from 10am to 12pm**, [register online here](#).

Reportable Conduct Scheme

The [Reportable Conduct Scheme](#) Information Sessions provide a general overview and information about the scheme, including the responsibilities of a Head of an organisation, what is reportable conduct and the investigation process.

Check [here](#) to see if the scheme applies to your organisation.

This session is targeted to all senior staff, such as CEOs, principal officers or human resources, governance and compliance managers who are currently in-scope (Phase 1 and 2 organisations) and Phase 3 organisations (in scope from 1 January 2019).

To attend a Reportable Conduct Scheme Information Session please follow one of the registration links below:

17 October 10am–11.30am [Register online here](#)

1 November 10am–11.30am [Register online here](#)

Certain early years providers are coming into scope for the Reportable Conduct Scheme from 1 January 2019. To register your interest for an **Early Years Reportable Conduct Scheme Information Session**, please complete the [expression of interest form](#).

To find out about new information sessions, you can [subscribe for updates](#) or [contact us](#)

You can also find more information on the Commission's website: www.ccyp.vic.gov.au

To download a copy of 'A Guide for Creating a Child Safe Organisation' to assist organisations to create a culture of child safety, [click here](#).

If you need an interpreter, please call the Translating and Interpreting Service on 13 14 50 and ask them to contact the Commission for Children and Young People on 03 8601 5281.

Is your organisation child safe?



ccyp.vic.gov.au/child-safe-standards

COMMISSION FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

VICTORIA
State Government

A Reminder

As of January 1st 2017 the Victorian Child Safe Standards became mandatory for all Churches and faith organisations.

For more details visit: www.childsafestandards.org.au

How to implement the Victorian Child Safe Standards in your faith community that come into place on 1 January 2017.

The Victorian Council of Churches in partnership with the National Council of Churches in Australia – Safe Church Program has collaborated together to provide a toolkit and Training Portal to ensure that all Faith Communities in Victoria have the opportunity to ensure that they are prepared to implement the Child Safe Standards in their faith community.

We are pleased to partner with the Commission for Children and Young People (www.ccyp.vic.gov.au) in assisting faith based organisations to meet the Child Safe Standards by providing a range of faith-generic resources, tools and supports.



P: 03 9650 4511 or 9412 8487

E: vcc@vcc.org.au

W: www.vcc.org.au

PO Box 561

Flinders Lane

Melbourne 8009



www.facebook.com/viccouncilchurches/

The Victorian Council of Churches is a fellowship of churches which confess the Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour according to the Scriptures and seek to fulfil together their common calling to the glory of the one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

*** 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 ***