



Victorian
Council of Churches

Victorian Council of Churches
4/306 Little Collins St
Melbourne VIC 3000
Ph: 03 9650 4511

Council News

April 2019



Reflection

Recently during a Lenten reflection time we were asked to reflect on light..

The leader lit a candle and invited us to sit with the image of the burning wick .. whilst he read those words from Isaiah 42 ... 'a bruised reed he will not break and a dimly burning wick he will not quench ...

Much is said about the apparent darkness within the world .. Misuse of power, use of violence, self gratification and so much more we could add ...

As Christians, and as we approach this most sacred of times can we discover afresh the message of hope ... that in the midst of all the darkness, hope comes in the form of a flickering light, that appears to be snuffed out on Good Friday and yet by Easter morn there are stories of it being alight and inviting others to come, hear and journey as light carriers...

The prayer of the Council is that all again discover the light that is the light of the world.

- Ian

I am currently establishing my diary for second half of 2019 and would welcome opportunities to come and share stories of the Council activities with your Church or organization – you can contact me on 03 9650 4511 or email at ian.smith@vcc.org.au

News from the Council

Council is in midst of preparing for the upcoming AGM which will include :

- a time of reporting
- a time of planning

And the installation of a new President of Council

Council was also involved in the State Government initiated review of the Child Safe Standards - after three years the review is looking at how effectively organisations are implementing and living out of these Standards.

Council has also been active within the multi faith sector of the Victorian Community working with other faith communities to address Domestic Violence. VCC is working with others to develop a resources kit that can help local churches to become places of safety for all who attend.

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 with Nicholas Tsigos

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

National President of the Council of Churches

The National President Bishop Philip Huggins participated in a Victorian State Vigil for those killed, injured or bereaved by the events in Christchurch

Below is the prayer and reflections he used:

My prayers will be encompassed in a three- fold chant of “ Lord have mercy”. In the Greek, “Kyrie Eleison” ...

My prayer begins with gratitude for the friendships that sustain us...I am so grateful for my friend Mohammed who invited me.... My heart breaks with his and yours..

My prayer is first and poignantly for the dead:

- who have left this earth so violently;

My prayer is for the bereaved :

-who are left with a wound that will never heal..this side of eternity;

My prayer is for the injured :

- who need such care;

My prayer is for the traumatised, including the vicariously traumatised:

-for the healing of memory;

My prayer is for young and old Muslims :

- that they may feel safe to again go their mosque and say their prayers;

My prayer is for the politics of our democracy:

- that none will fan fear and hate for some cruel political gain..No double- speak. No obfuscation..

My prayer is for the growth of our interreligious , international peace- making community, premised on our being one human family;

My prayer is for our deepest partnership in sharing our learnings from prayer and meditation:

-that we become what we think; that our thoughts shape our words and then our actions; that the pattern of our thinking, over time, shapes our character and destiny..so that we must be attentive to what we think and who is influencing our thinking;

- that we just must bring our spiritual learnings to bear on the cultivation of pure hearts and minds..Dispersing all that now feeds hate thought , speech and action..”It is from the abundance of the heart that the mouth speaks”(Jesus in Matthew 12:34)

Gathering all that is in our hearts in the divine mercy , I therefore pray from my heart.....

KYRIE ELEISON

CHRISTE ELEISON

KYRIE ELEISON.

Bishop Philip Huggins

President of the National Council of Churches in Australia.

WALK for

2019

JUSTICE for REFUGEES

For a Fair & Welcoming Society
Close Manus & Nauru - Bring Them Here



Palm Sunday, April 14

2pm State Library cnr Swanston & La Trobe Sts Melbourne

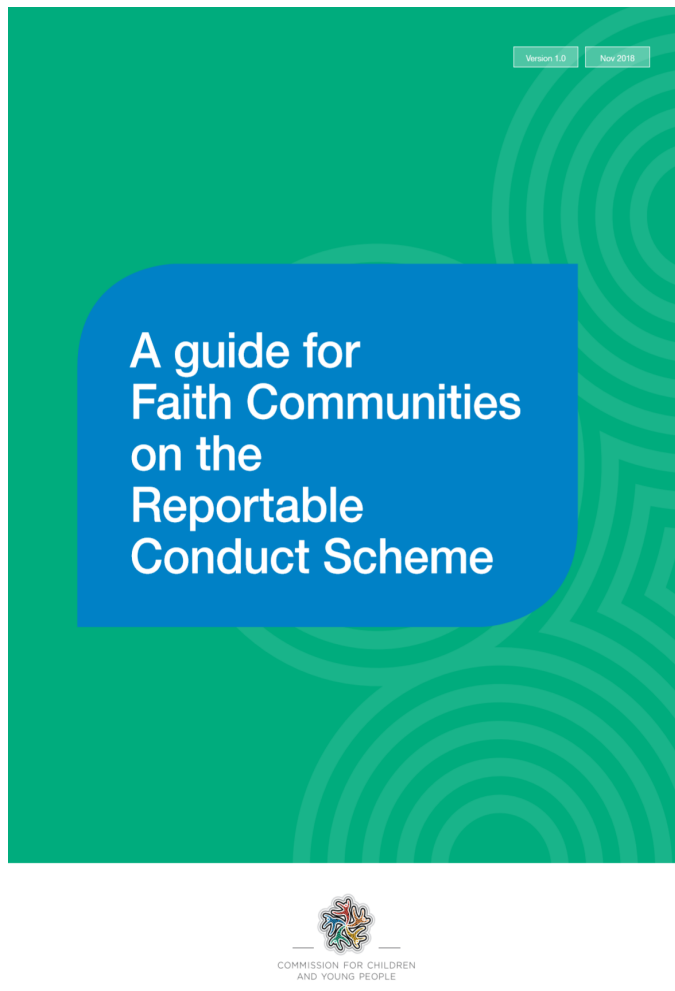
music from 1.30pm

Organised by the Refugee Advocacy Network, endorsed by:



call Marie Hapke 0409 252 873 or Chris Breen 0403 013 183 or visit www.refugeeadvocacynetwork.org.au or www.facebook.com/palmsundaywalk for more info

The Commission for Children and Young People



Please click on the image above for a downloadable pdf document of the Reportable Conduct Scheme

The Victorian Council of Churches through its Executive Officer, Rev Ian Smith, played a major role in the development, writing and delivery of this document. The VCC recommends all churches and church agencies familiarise themselves with their obligations under the Legislation.

Training portal at www.childsafestandards.org.au

Downloadable resource kit available on website

WCC condemns terror attacks on mosques in New Zealand, calls for end to violence

15 March 2019

It is with deep shock and indignation that World Council of Churches (WCC) received the news that 49 people have been killed and at least 20 were wounded in terrorist attacks at the Al Noor mosque in Christchurch and at the mosque in the suburb of Linwood in New Zealand.

Rev. Ray Coster, WCC Central Committee member from Aotearoa New Zealand said, “We share with sisters and brothers in the wider ecumenical family our pain and grief in one of New Zealand’s darkest hours and crave their prayers for the many Muslim families grieving at this time. Some of these families may be migrants or refugees. They are part of us. Many came seeking refuge and safety as Aotearoa New Zealand is perceived as a safe place. As a nation we value compassion, kindness and tolerance. What we have seen today has no place in our culture.”

Rev. Dr Olav Fykse Tveit, general secretary of the WCC, stated: “This terrible crime against women, men and children at the time of their prayers is an attack on all believers and an assault on the bonds of shared humanity and peaceful coexistence which unite us all. The WCC stands in solidarity with all Muslims at this time, especially the Muslims of Aotearoa New Zealand, and expresses the strongest possible condemnation of these actions and of the hateful and dangerous ideologies that stand behind them.”

Tveit expressed his deep condolences to the Muslim community, and all the people of Aotearoa New Zealand, for this massacre is an attack on the whole nation and its values of inclusion and respect for all its citizens. He added: “We pray that all the communities of Aotearoa New Zealand will come together to support those who have suffered so dreadfully and to reaffirm the nation’s commitment to the safety and flourishing of all its people”.

Tveit concluded: “At this time the WCC reiterates its long-standing commitment to dialogue and harmony with the Muslim communities of the world. We affirm to all our Muslim friends and partners that we utterly reject such actions and call on all Christian people to follow in the way of Jesus Christ by seeking to live in peace and respect with all our neighbours, and especially committing ourselves to the protection of vulnerable minorities.”

[Member churches in Aotearoa New Zealand](#)

[CCA General Secretary denounces shooting at mosques in New Zealand](#)

From the NCCA Newsletter

A message from the President

This issue's message comes from India.

Over the last week Bishop Philip Huggins has been visiting the National Council of Churches in India (NCCI) and has been a guest interviewee at the 'Second Session of Spiritual Response to Critical Times' Conference. [Read more »](#)



Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

2 – 9 June 2019

"Justice and only justice, you shall pursue"

(cf. Deuteronomy 16:18-20)

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity in Australia will be observed from 2 - 9 June 2019 in the week between Ascension and Pentecost. [Read more »](#)



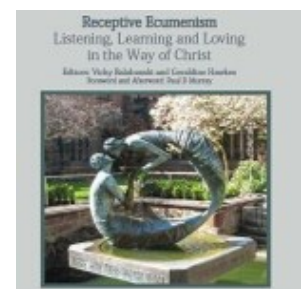
Ecumenical Resource

Recently launched and on sale now.

Receptive Ecumenism: Listening, Learning and Loving in the Way of Christ

Editors: Vicky Balabanski and Geraldine Hawkes

Foreword and Afterword: Paul D Murray. [Read more »](#)



Roundtable event May 2019

Domestic and Family Violence (DFV) Roundtable

When: 2 May 2019

Where: Barbara Dowling Room, Chapter House, 209 Flinders Lane Melbourne, Anglican Diocese of Melbourne

Churches need to be equipped with appropriate and effective ways to identify, prevent and respond to domestic and family violence. [Read more »](#)



Two Extraordinary public events linked with this timely Conference

Earth @ Peace is a landmark conference that will connect global dialogue on how we can address the ethical imperative of our time:
A Just & Ecologically Sustainable Peace

A Just & Ecologically Sustainable Peace
the ethical imperative of our time

PUBLIC EVENTS

Each evening of the conference concludes with an event open to the public.

EARTH @ PEACE PUBLIC FORUM

A public forum featuring international speakers Professor Heather Eaton and Professor Chaiwat Satha-Anand.

WHEN: Tuesday 23 April 2019, 7:30pm
COST: \$20 General Admission / \$15 Concession
BOOK: No bookings. Payment with cash on the night.
(No charge for daily conference participants)

CULTURAL EVENT

An evening of Poetry, Music and Art for ANZAC EVE.

WHEN: Tuesday 24 April 2019, 7:30pm
COST: \$20 General Admission
BOOK: No bookings. Payment with cash on the night.
(No charge for conference ticket holders)

THE CONFERENCE IS HOSTED BY



Read more on the conference website:

[VOX.DIVINITY.EDU.AU/EVENT/EAP](http://vox.divinity.edu.au/event/eap)



At no stage during the 200,000 years of human evolution, have the Earth's species experienced existential threats of the scale and intensity posed by climate change and nuclear weapons. **Until now.**

23-24 APRIL 2019
MELBOURNE CONFERENCE

Link: <http://vox.divinity.edu.au/event/earth-peace-conference/>



[Earth@Peace: Help make our world a little safer | StartSomeGood](#)

Humanity and the Earth's other species are under threat as never before. Earth@Peace is a unique project that will inspire and empower new ways of approaching the future.

I know some of you have indicated you're planning to make a contribution, and others have not yet had a chance to look at the project in any detail. And there's something I should have explained a more clearly in my early email. Funds raised through this appeal will be used mainly to offer scholarships to enable Indigenous Australians and Pacific Islanders (but also students and other young people) to participate in the project, including the landmark Conference in April next year.

You may ask: Why Indigenous Australians? Because it is they who have suffered so horribly - and are still suffering today - from the devastating effects of nuclear testing which we as a nation inflicted on them on the very land from which they were dispossessed. Similarly with Pacific Islanders who have borne the brunt of US, UK and French nuclear tests in the Pacific.

Why student and young people? Because they are our future.

So, please do what you can: whatever contribution you can make, large or small, and importantly a word with friends, family members, colleagues, and members of your communities and networks. You never know, a well chosen word here or there can often open new doors.

In sincere appreciation of the support you've given in the past and continue to give.

International Women's Day

[Women's lives celebrated in prayer](#)

On International Women's Day, 8 March, staff based in the Ecumenical Centre in Geneva organized a worship service to acknowledge achievements of ecumenical organizations in the area of gender justice. Organized jointly by the World Council of Churches (WCC) and the Lutheran World Federation, the service included celebratory singing as well as sombre reflections and prayers for women who are affected by conflict, migration, gender-based violence, economic exploitation and discrimination.

[Communicators advocate for gender equality in the news media](#)

The World Association for Christian Communication, as part of observing International Women's Day, is advocating for gender equality in the news media.



Farmyard Friends

Not only are these gifts cute but animals are an amazing gift for families in Zimbabwe. This range of gifts will mean that households will have a source of healthy, nutrient rich foods – especially important for growing children. New this year are baby turkeys - a fun and quirky gift that can give flight to the dreams of a family in rural Zimbabwe. Each gift comes with a card and matching magnet as a lasting keepsake.



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.

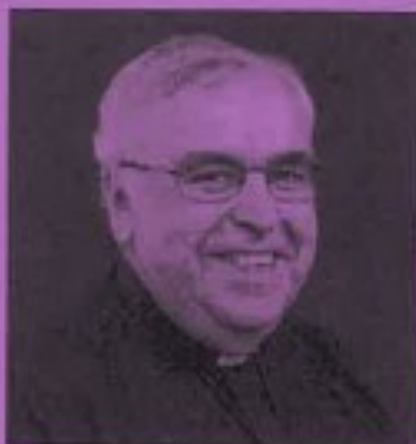
Read about why this is a deep concern for people seeking asylum as well as Churches and Charities. You CAN take action to support.

[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.](#)

Richard McKinney Ecumenical Memorial Lenten Lectures

Speaker Rev Canon Dr Ray Cleary



Theme Renewing the Church / Restoring Faith in Australia

Lecture 2 'Jesus and Concern for the Other'

Tuesday April 2, 2019

St Georges Anglican Church 46 Warncliffe Road E. Ivanhoe

Final Lecture 'Justice and Engagement in the Public Forum'

Tuesday April 9, 2019

Mother of God Catholic Church Wilfred Road E. Ivanhoe

All lectures begin at 8pm

Fellowship and Supper 9.15pm

Gold Coin donation

Contact 9497 1017



From the JIM Unit

GLOBAL ALLIANCE FOR TAX JUSTICE: MAKE TAXES WORK FOR WOMEN



From 8-22 March 2019, the Global Alliance for Tax Justice (GATJ) will hold the Global Days of Action on Tax Justice for Women's Rights under the theme, "Make Taxes Work for Women". As part of the GATJ, the Tax and Fiscal Justice Asia (TAFJA) is taking the lead in this initiative of bringing together movements, citizens' groups, NGOs, and activists to campaign against gender discrimination and tax injustice. In highlighting the impacts of tax policies on women, we are pushing for the following demands:

1. Stop tax abuses by multinational corporations and illicit financial flows
2. Reduce unfair tax burdens on women
3. Remove gender bias and discrimination in tax policies
4. Ensure tax and fiscal policies recognise and serve to represent, reduce and redistribute unpaid care work
5. Increase allocation of tax revenues for gender responsive social services

We urge TAFJA members to support the five demands by organising and actively participating in the coordinated activities during the Global Days of Action. In the coming days, colleagues from APMDD and GATJ will get in touch with you to help in planning possible activities that we can contribute to amplify our calls to make taxes work for women.

For more information on how to organise, take part in, and share your activities during the Global Days of Action, feel free to get in touch with GATJ through Marie Antonelle Joubert (marie@globaltaxjustice.org) or Joy Hernandez (joy@globaltaxjustice.org).

From the JIM Unit (*con't*)

THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CHURCHES IN AUSTRALIA (NCCA) INVITES YOU TO: DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE (DFV) ROUNDTABLE

If you are someone within your church who works at developing resources, implementing training or drafting policy on domestic and family violence, we want to have you present! This roundtable will gather together representatives across the churches and from all around the country.

The objectives of the roundtable will be:

- To bring together people who work in the domestic and family violence area of their church;
- To provide a space where people can share, learn and build networks with others working within the domestic and family violence space within churches; and
- To encourage member churches to actively promote the international ecumenical Thursdays in Black Campaign throughout their networks.

Round table details:

10:00 – 3:30 Thursday 2 May, 2019

Barbara Dowling Room, Chapter House

209 Flinders Lane, Melbourne

Anglican Diocese of Melbourne

RSVP: Friday 26 April, 2019

For information and registration contact Emily Evans, NCCA Project Officer

02 8259 0886 | eevans@ncca.org.au

CHAMPIONS FOR CHANGE

Training Opportunity: Champions for Change 2019 Application

Overview

Champions for Change is a 6-month community organising, advocacy & campaigns fellowship. It is about equipping Refugee Council members, supporters and refugee community members with important advocacy and campaigning skills and set up structures that enable for strong communication, planning and implementation of effective movement-wide campaigns that span the country.

To Apply please follow the link below:

https://action.refugeecouncil.org.au/c4c_application_2019

EAPPI Easter 2019 in Middle East

Passing on the Light

'Passing on the Light' is a ceremony that participants in the EAPPI program, (Ecumenical Accompaniment Program in Palestine and Israel) partake in when one team of Ecumenical Accompaniers (EAs) hands over to the next team. It is a symbolic affirmation of the role the outgoing team played in the Holy Land and the hope they carry with them to their countries of origin. By receiving the light the new team agrees to walk in the light with the people of Palestine and Israel, offering kindness, hope, patience and love.

On a balmy summer's evening just before Christmas 2018, Christian church leaders from 4 denominations, Palestinians from the local community, returned EAs and other invited guests, came together for a 'Passing on the Light' dinner which had been prepared by a refugee family. It was hosted on the forecourt of Pilgrim Uniting Church in the heart of Adelaide.

Over the course of the evening, returned EAs spoke about what they had encountered and witnessed during their time in the West Bank. There was also an opportunity to hear from an EA in placement who shared their experiences via video.

Stories were told of how a mother at an overcrowded Israeli controlled checkpoint, who entrusted her infant to strangers as they gently passed the baby overhead from person to person until it arrived safely in the arms of a stranger at the front of the queue who held the infant until reunited with its mother.

On another occasion an EA met with a family whose house had just been demolished by the Israeli military. The family were obviously traumatised. What made matters worse was the distraught 2 year old boy who had been, just moments before the EAs arrived, picked up by a soldier and literally thrown out of the house. His little body carried the cuts and scratches. Who knows how long the psychological scars will last?

Another EA told how, when they walked children to school, they would carry an onion in their pocket. The locals showed them this was the best remedy to counter the effects of tear gas, which is randomly and regularly fired by the Israeli military at children on the way to and from school.

These type of events often occur in the West Bank. Stories of daily discrimination, abuse, segregation, and humiliation were also echoed by a Palestinian Christian from Bethlehem as she shared an encounter at a checkpoint via a video recording.

As Christian Churches celebrate Easter, we affirm the mystery of God's saving grace, born out of suffering, destruction and death. We celebrate that the light of resurrection life shines, no matter how impenetrable the darkness may seem (John 1:5).

International pilgrim tourists flock to the old city of Jerusalem at this time of year to participate in the Palm Sunday procession, follow the stations of the cross and to share in the passing of the Holy Fire on Easter Saturday. At 2 pm on Holy Fire [Easter] Saturday the Greek Orthodox Patriarch emerges from an enclosed area into the Holy Sepulchre Church with a small fire, with which he lights waiting worshippers' bundles of tapers. The fire is passed from one to another until the Holy Sepulchre Church is filled with light. People wait outside with their tapers & gradually the streets of the Old City become a river of light.

People pass the light to those around them, joy shining in their faces as they celebrate – Christ is risen! The long wait was over.

The long wait for restorative justice and peace in the Holy Land is far from over. The Israeli military block access of main thoroughfares to Palestinians to allow Christian tourists and Jews to have passage through. The sad irony is that for many Palestinian Christians living in Bethlehem, a mere 15 minute drive from Jerusalem, have never experienced Easter celebrations in Jerusalem, due to restrictions placed on them from the Israeli military.

Is visiting the Holy Land at Christmas or Easter on your bucket list? If so, what are you going there to see? This is a question posed by Palestinian Christians, descendants of first century Christians, who have continually inhabited these Holy Lands. Sadly their voice is overlooked! Those local Christians ask, don't just go to walk where Jesus walked and visit the ancient stones, but also meet with the 'living stones' too and learn about the military occupation and how they find hope amidst this daily injustice.

At the closing of the Christmas dinner in Adelaide, EAs lit tapers and then passed on the light to the guests, extending an invitation for the guests to carry peace with them, and to share what they had learned about Palestinian people living under military occupation in the West Bank. This is an invitation we extend to all. Hear the voices of the 'living stones' who are crying out for us to listen and act.

"Christians need no longer to wait for direct divine intervention because the intervention has already taken place. The Messiah has come and there is no need to wait for another. He said what needed to be said and did what needed to be done. The ball is in the court of humankind to engage the world, challenge the monopoly of power and live the life of an already liberated people"

– Rev. Mitri Raheb Bethlehem Lutheran Church

EAPPI is a program of the World Council of Churches and has been operating since 2002. "EAs from all age groups aim to offer a protective presence to vulnerable communities, monitoring and reporting human rights abuses. They join Palestinians and Israelis who work in nonviolent ways for peace"
<https://eappi.org/en/about>

To find out more information about Palestinian Christians go to the Palestine Israel Ecumenical Network (PIEN) website - www.pien.org.au. PIEN is a network of Australian Christians who are seeking a lasting peace in Palestine and Israel. They work closely with the National Council of Churches in Australia as well as with the heads of churches in Jerusalem.



EAPPI (Con't)—*Passing on the Light Dinner*



Holy Saturday Fire



Good Friday Street Blocked



Peace Education Symposium

Teaching the Theology and Practice of nonviolence

Wednesday 14th to Friday 16th August 2019
Melbourne

"To reach peace, teach peace"
Pope John Paul II (1st Jan 1979)

"To be true followers of Jesus today also includes embracing his teaching about nonviolence"
Pope Francis (1st Jan 2017)

"Nonviolence is the answer to the crucial political and moral questions of our time: the need for [humanity] to overcome oppression and violence without resorting to oppression and violence"
Martin Luther King Jr.

Purpose of the Gathering

"promote and provide gospel-based Peace and Nonviolence resources to all Christian educational systems and secondary schools in Australia and New Zealand by 2021"

At this gathering participants will be invited to...

- learn about peace and nonviolence education
- reflect on how the Gospel inspires the work for nonviolence
- network with other educators/teachers
- explore and share resources and experiences to assist with embedding nonviolence principles in curriculum and practice
- contribute to the overall purpose described above

Background

During 2018 a group of keen educators and peace-practitioners from Australia and New Zealand, mainly from the Anglican and Catholic traditions, met to discuss, develop resources and teach the 'theology and practice of peace and nonviolence' in Christian schools. This included the development of a pilot senior-school Religious Education unit by the Anglican Schools Commission (WA) and the incorporation of nonviolence principles, and content, in a number of Catholic education systems and schools.

The feedback from students and staff has been very positive, with teachers observing the helpful holistic nature of the material, which can engage students at intellectual/theological, spiritual/prayerful, and practical (nonviolent peacemaking) levels.

The Gathering

Wednesday 14th August (9am – 4.30pm) – a professional learning day to....

- explore the theological principles and Gospel-based practices that underpin the teaching of nonviolence and peace
- identify and reflect on connections between the inner (life) and the outer (practices) of nonviolence
- learn a range of introductory skills in nonviolent conflict transformation
- consider how to integrate peace education within their teaching roles

This day can be missed if a participant did it on another occasion. This day can also be done as a 'stand-alone' for teachers who would like to know more about Jesus and Nonviolence, but who cannot attend the full three-day gathering.

Thursday 15th August (9am – 4.30pm) – a day of sharing ideas, resources and stories from teachers/practitioners who have been experimenting with the curriculum resources during 2018. This is likely to include content/resource sharing on:

- the Theology of Nonviolence, particularly focussing on the work of Rene Girard and his other Christian interpreters
- the Practice of Prayer as a way of supporting nonviolent peace-making
- stories about how students are beginning to engage in practical ways

Friday 16th August (9am to 2pm) – A self-organising Open Space day for participants to engage with what has been emerging during the preceding two days, share resources, and plan practical next steps in their respective contexts.

Location:

St Joseph's Conference Centre, Edmund Rice Education Australia, Richmond (Melbourne)

Expressions of interest

The event will be formally advertised early in 2019 with more details on costs. In the meantime, if you would like to be included on the mailing list, please Michael Wood, spacemaker62@gmail.com.
Phone: 0435 065326

Gathering sponsored by:

**Edmund Rice Education Australia
Catholic Education South Australia
The Anglican Schools Commission (Inc.)
Pace e Bene (Australia)**

From the Australian Intercultural Society

Football & Human Rights: The World Game Sticking Up for Players Rights



Date: **Tuesday 2 April 2019**

Time: **5:30pm – 7:30pm (6:00pm start)**

Venue: Deakin Downtown, Tower 2 level 12/727 Collins St, Melbourne VIC 3008

[Click here](#) to register or please call (03) 9867 2248 if you have any questions

More from Intergen

Children & Families Ministry: Core Issues – Jul 11-13, 15-17

PARKVILLE

Offered in **Parkville** for the **FIRST** time, this University of Divinity [intensive unit \(Jul 11-13, 15-17\)](#) is an excellent professional development opportunity for ministers, pastors, chaplains *and* those employed or deeply engaged in ministry with children and their families. Areas explored include the theological, developmental and methodological resources for contextual children and families ministries across the spectrum of Australian church based, community based and para-church expressions. Addressing the theology, spirituality and sociology of the child in relation to family, church, faith, culture, technology, history and philosophical discourse, the unit develops critical skills for evaluating and designing robust, contextual processes for discipleship, pastoral care, safe practice, mission and leadership with families. For more information e-mail chris.barnett@ctm.uca.edu.au.

SPIRITUAL ECOLOGY LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

February - August 2019

Immerse yourself in the principles of Spiritual Ecology.
Explore leadership skills and reflective practices.
Develop authentic relationships and improve collaboration.
Be mentored by experienced spiritual and ecological leaders.
Learn Human Centred Design and develop local community projects.

Program Outline

1. Immersion into Spiritual Ecology principles:
Participate in a 4-day Spiritual Ecology retreat in the Otways National Park
February 14th - 17th 2019
2. Toolkit Development Workshop Series (Saturdays):
March 16th at CERES
April 13th at IofCA
May 18th at CERES
June 15th at IofCA
3. Mentoring: Runs continuously from March to July
4. Public Presentation & Open Dialogue Forum:
Saturday July 27th

APPLY NOW



Seeking people aged 18 - 35 with a faith or spiritual practice who are passionate about ecology and environment. 10 places available.

More information: ceres.org.au/spiritualecology



Initiatives of Change
Australia

This program is run by CERES Environment Park in conjunction with Initiatives of Change Australia and funded by the Victorian Government Community Harmony Program

From Intergen:

Highlighted National Event

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

Australia's premier conference for leaders of leaders of ministry with children and their families! Please save the dates and keep an eye out for more info.

Featuring: Facilitated in-put, Workshops, Market place and expo, live-in community, individual retreat, creativity, small groups, worship and reflection, prayer and networking and more!

Venue: The Tops Conference Centre, Stanwell Tops, NSW

Dates: 11-14 June 2019

Times: 2.30pm Tuesday – 1.30pm Friday

Details: leaderstogo.org.au

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/leaderstogoconference/>

Great Opportunities for Families/Households

Sacrededge May 3-5 (Queenscliff)

Sacrededge is our response to a sometimes harsh and fearful world. It is an opportunity to connect with people from diverse backgrounds. Rather than debate and argue about issues Q&A style, this unique festival listens to people from the edge...their stories, music, poetry. More information and registration: [Sacrededge 2019](#)

Jewish Christian Muslim Association

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.

Up-coming Events

i. Winter Conference - July 21st and 22nd

this year the Winter conference is being held at St Paul's Retreat Center,

Wantirna Sth. - for details go to www.jcma.org.au

ii. Friendship walks -

JCMA are planning two friendship walks this year :

- i. Melbourne walking between Mosque in Nth Carlton, a Church in Carlton and a Synagogue - this will be held in October

- ii. Ballarat - again walking between Church, Mosque and Synagogue. This will be held In November

For more information and details on any events see website: www.jcma.org.au

More from the JIM Unit

FILM NIGHTS!

FUNDRAISING support for PALM SUNDAY WALK FOR JUSTICE FOR REFUGEES
3 nights – 3 FILMS - [7pm](#) at ANMF auditorium, [535 Elizabeth Street](#), CITY

[Thursday 4 April](#) Island of Hungry ghosts (Christmas Island)

Bring your friends! Bookings on TryBooking very soon – or email info@refugeeadvocacynetwork.org.au

From Commission for Children and Young People

Child Safe Standards and Reportable Conduct Scheme Information Sessions

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.



COMMISSION FOR CHILDREN
AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Council News is the official newsletter
of the Victorian Council of Churches

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www.vcc.org.au



Victorian
Council of Churches

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 ***

Contact us: web. www.vcc.org.au

Email. vcc@vcc.org.au

Facebook www.facebook.com/viccouncilchurches/

Child Safe Standards

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.
