

Council of Churches

# **Council News**

February 2020

Victorian Council of Churches President: Rev Fr Shenouda Boutros

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http://www.facebook.com/viccouncilchurches/



### Reflection

It's been said that the only constant in life is change... recent events here in Victoria highlight the need to respond to the ever changing world we are part of...

This summer we have see horrific bushfires, followed by damaging floods. While globally the Coronavirus is affecting so many. For many people their worlds have been severely disrupted. We'll all have friends, colleagues, neighbours or acquaintances who will be trying to get back to some sense of normality.

In the midst of all this I recall the words of the Prophet Jeremiah, who writing to a group of people whose world had been completely turned upside down says,... 'seek the Shalom of the place were you are, in seeking its shalom you'll find your own' I find these words a call to action for us as Christians. A call to seek the Shalom of our country, State, neighbourhoods.

How might we go about seeking the shalom of where we are?

- Ian

I am currently establishing my diary for 2020 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 <u>ian.smith@vcc.org.au</u> Council is happy to announce **that we have moved**, the VCC along with Act for Peace, Palestinian Advocacy Network, Palestine Israel Ecumenical Network and NCCA Safer Churches Program are now located at new and permanent facilities. New address is level 6, 608 St Kilda Rd, Melbourne, 3004



608 St Kilda Rd Our new home

Contact details are: all emails remain the same.

Phone landline (03) 9412 8487 Note new Phone number Mobile 0408 313 610 Rev Ian Smith Postal address is PO Box 561 Flinders Lane 8009

Council is also continuing to listen to its members by:

- visiting the rural Bishops
- visiting the Senior leaders of each of our member Churches

Council continues to facilitate the gathering of the Victorian Church Leaders.

# VCC Contact details

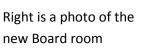
- phone: 03 9650 4511 or 9412 8487
- email vcc@vcc.org.au or ian.smith@vcc.org.au
- Web <u>www.vcc.org.au</u>
- Facebook www.facebook.com/viccouncilchurches
- postal address PO Box 561 Flinders Lane Melbourne 8009

## **The New Office in Victoria**

During the past month the Office of NCCA, Act for Peace, PIEN, APAN and VCC have moved. - some images of new facilities



Left is a photo of the new VCC office







Left is a photo of the new office area incorporating, NCCA Safer Churches, PIEN, APAN and Act for Peace

It's anticipated that an open day and blessing will be held in the near future-details will be circulated soon

## World Council of Churches

### Worldwide campaign begins for 70 days of prayer to end 70-year Korean War

A war erupted on the Korean Peninsula 70 years ago that divided Korea and that has yet to end. So, the world's churches have launched a "70 Days of Prayers - Global Prayer Campaign" for peace.

# WCC event presents Current Dialogue as new academic journal on interreligious relations

A special event on 7 February in Geneva will mark the launch of the World Council of Churches periodical on interreligious relations Current Dialogue as an academic journal for researchers, students, interfaith practitioners, and all those interested in the study of religions. Current Dialogue thereby becomes the third WCC academic journal to be produced by publishers Wiley, alongside The Ecumenical Review and International Review of Mission.

#### GETI 2021: plans for lively learning by young theologians are underway

The Ecumenical Theological Education programme of the WCC hosted the first meeting of the International Planning Group of the Global Ecumenical Theological Institute 2021 in end-January in Karlsruhe, Germany, he venue of the future 11th WCC Assembly.









# Churches worldwide react to US-proposed plan for dividing Palestine and Israel

Churches worldwide have been releasing their official reactions to the proposal by US president Trump and Israeli prime minister Netanyahu for dividing up Palestine and Israel.

### WCC general secretary appointed as presiding bishop for Church of Norway

On 30 January, the Church Council of the Church of Norway appointed World Council of Churches (WCC) general secretary Rev. Dr Olav Fykse Tveit as the new presiding bishop for the Church of

<u>"We Pray, Peace Now, End the War!" - 70 days of global prayer</u> announced for Korean Peninsula

A global prayer campaign for peace on the Korean Peninsula will occur from 1 March – 15 August, lasting 70 days and inviting hundreds of thousands of people worldwide to say: "We Pray, Peace Now,

### Accessing the NEW Facilities at Level 6, 608 St Kilda Rd.

To access the new facilities :

Trams 3, 5, 6, 16, 64 or 67 down St Kilda Rd to stop 27 (High St) then a 5 minute walk to office

Car parking available in St Kilda Rd immediately in from of building

By Train Sandringham train to Prahran Station then walk down High St and turn left into St Kilda Rd. This is a 20 minute walk







## Prayers for the Nation

Recently Faith Communities gathered at Parliament house in Melbourne to reflect, remember and prayer for all Victorians and all Australians affected by the recent Bushfires.

The Faith Leaders were joined by members of the Victorian Parliament with the Premier, Opposition Leader and Leader of the Greens also speaking.



Photo of Faith leaders including the Executive Officer of the VCC with Emergency workers who were honoured and thanked at the Prayer time.

# Victorian Bushfire Response 19/20 VCC Emergencies Ministry

has supported over 10877\* people

Only includes significant conversations

14 Relief Centres attended across the State of Victoria

# 279 individual volunteers\*

\* Not including volunteers in Emergency Operations centre or Managing teams remotely.

# 741 days of service

between 30 December 2019 and 7 February 2020

The Victorian Council of Churches commends the work of the VCC Emergencies Ministry ..

These figures demonstrate the scope and breadth VCCEM were able demonstrate as they shared compassion to others.

The tasks and ministry continues as communities and individuals begin rebuilding.

## **NCCA News**



## **NCCA Reflection for Ash Wednesday**

"May we have nothing left to confess. No enemies, friends everywhere. No unhealthy attachments."

This prayerful reflection by Bishop Philip Huggins is for sharing with our members and friends. We invite Churches and Congregations to hold an Ash Wednesday Vigil using this reflection. Next issue we will provide other resources prepared especially for these Lenten vigils.

"Our Ash Wednesday 2020 is amidst much greater awareness of climate change. How might this influence our Ash Wednesday prayers and our Lenten Discipline?"....<u>Read more >></u>



11

## **NCCA Position Vacant**

General Secretary, National Council of Churches in Australia

- Exciting opportunity to work for a unique organisation
- Senior advisory and secretariat role
- Full-time position based in Sydney

Applications close: Thursday 27 February 2020 Read More >>

## **QCT Position Vacant**

General Secretary of Queensland Churches Together (QCT)

QCT invites applications for the position of General Secretary

The General Secretary is the executive officer of Queensland Churches Together and is directly accountable to General Meetings of QCT through the Executive and functions within the Constit ution of QCT.

Applications close: Monday 24 February 2020 Read More >>

## Lenten Resources 2020

#### Hope out of Loss

those who wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength: they shall rise up on wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint, Isaiah 40:31

Read more >>







## NCCA Safe Church Program



# National Catholic Social Services Conference: Serving Communities with Courage and Compassion

This national Catholic Social Services conference is being held from 26 – 28 February 2020 at the Catholic Leadership Centre, East Melbourne.

The conference aims to strengthen and advance the work in Catholic social services through a shared, critical, forward-looking focus on the mission and on the key issues of the day. It also aims to celebrate the good work achieved collectively and to be inspired and encouraged to ontinue the important work.



Read more and book <u>here</u>. Click <u>here</u> to view the list of workshops.

### **Latest News**

This newsletter comes out once per month. Follow us on Twitter <u>@NCCA\_SafeChurch</u> to keep up with the latest news, links and resources from the Safe Church team.

### **NCCA Safe Church Newsletter**

Do you enjoy reading this newsletter? Do you know others who might enjoy reading it? Please pass on the newsletter and ask them to subscribe. Click <u>here</u> and enter your details to subscribe.

## Announcing the 2020 Canadian School of Peacebuilding

We would <u>csop.cmu.ca</u> <u>csop@cmu.ca</u>

like to invite you to join us at the 12th annual Canadian School of Peacebuilding (CSOP), which will be held June 8-12 and 15-19, 2020, in Winnipeg, Canada. Registration is now available online or using our PDF forms at <u>csop.cmu.ca/registration/</u>.

We welcome anyone who is interested in growing as a peacebuilder—local and international, students, professionals, and community volunteers, seasoned practitioners, and those brand-new to peacebuilding.

Session I: June 8-12, 2020

Indigenous Politics, Land, and Globalization Instructor: Rauna Kuokkanen Leading in an Age of Polarization

Instructor: David Brubaker

Active Bystander Training Instructor: Joy Meeker



As one CSOP participant has said, "CSOP is an incredible opportunity to learn across faith traditions, cultural understandings, and rural and urban settings. Here, the world comes alive in the classroom, and one is inspired to live differently even after stepping foot out of the classroom."

Our <u>five-day courses</u> this year, as always, touch on a range of topics, taught by <u>amazing instructors</u> from around the world:

### PALM SUNDAY April 5th 2020

Advance notice that the Walk for Justice for Refugees is on again April 5th at 2pm @ State Library

Refugee Action Network is encouraging all people of Faith to note the date 5th April 2020 and plan to gather in support of those languishing in offshore detention often abandoned by our Government.



## Interfaith Roundtable - Sydney

Interfaith Roundtable on Nuclear Disarmament

What does the threat of nuclear war mean to your faith? What ideas and lessons can we glean from global movements for peace?

When: Monday 24 February 10:00 am - 1:00 pm Where: Uniting Church in Australia Head Office, Level 2, 222 Pitt St Sydney Read more >>

Act for Peace Taking it to the Top

In November, Act for Peace joined with other humanitarian organisat ions and Australian Christians to meet with Australian politicians and advocate for commitment to the world's displaced and underprivileged people through Micah Challenge's Voices for Justice event.

230 Christians and visiting Pacific leaders at this event made a big impression on our government.





### Envisioning the Church of the future



CRUCOS registered provider: 00004G

**PEACE** 

#### Themes of the Plenary Council

## Learn with leading scholars and experts

Reverend Associate Professor Michael Kelly (Yarra Theological Union), Ms Catherine Jenkins (Diocese of Sandhurst), Very Reverend Dr Kevin Lenehan (Catholic Theological College), Associate Professor Robyn Horner (ACU), Reverend Associate Professor Orm Rush (ACU).

#### Course dates

Wednesday 4, 11,18 and 25 March 2020

#### Time 6pm (for 6.30pm start) to 8pm.

Venue

Christ Lecture Theatre, ACU Melbourne campus, 115 Victoria Parade, Fitzroy, 3065

#### Cost

\$60 per person (attendance only). \$100 per person (includes a Certificate of Participation for accreditation purposes). Free for all current ACU staff and students (not requiring a Certificate of Participation).

#### Accreditation

This Course has been approved for 6 hrs towards "Accreditation to Teach in a Catholic School" (4 hrs for Category A and 2 hrs for Category C).

#### Topics

- Missionary and evangelising
  Open to conversation, renewal and reform
- · Humble, healing and merciful
- Inclusive, participatory and synodal

#### Register by

Friday 28 February 2020

#### Information and registration acu.edu.au/short-coursesmelbourne

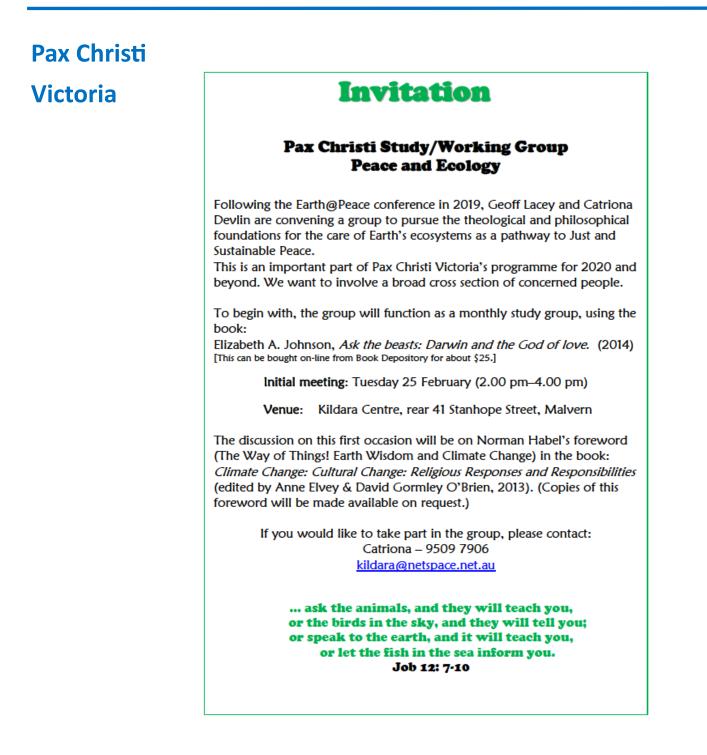
Disclaimer(January 3000): Information correct at time of printing. The University rearrest keright to amend, cancel or otherwise encodify the constant without notice. Nont mores a areanailable into a agear in Adelnide, Canherra, Intelanes, Melloames, and Strathfield. Short commend, and discussion and Strathfield. Short commends are discussion and its adult.

## **Palestine Israel Ecumenical Network**

PIEN are holding a round table in Sydney on 13th February to reflect on how the Churches in Australia can be better informed and better support our brothers and sisters in Palestine.



For more details contact Nell Potter on <u>Nell@pien.org.au</u>



## 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 <a href="http://jcma.org.au/donation">http://jcma.org.au/donation</a>.

### **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 <u>http://jcma.org.au/jcma-membership</u> or call Ginette Everest on (03) 9287 5590 or email to: <u>membership@jcma.org.au</u>.

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



## **Australian Church Women**

**AN INVITATION IS EXTENDED** to any Christian woman who would like to join the fellowship of Australian Church Women Inc to contact the Secretary (details below). We have 6 meetings a year on the fourth Friday of Feb, Apr, June, Aug, Oct and November commencing at 10.15 am at the offices of the Welsh Church, La Trobe Street, Melbourne. The Welsh Church is on the Elizabeth Street tram routes and very close to Melbourne Central Station. The office is next door to the Church.

Associated churches: Roman Catholic, Anglican, Uniting Church, Baptist Union, The Salvation Army, Churches of Christ, Lutheran, Presbyterian.

Please write to VCC at vcc@vcc.org.au to obtain contact details.

## **Whitely College**

### **Indigenous Theology Units**

#### ENROLMENTS ARE NOW OPEN

Explore theology, history and the practice of ministry from Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander and world Indigenous perspectives. In these units, you are invited to:

- Learn about the Bible when reading it using the insights of an Indigenous Perspective
- Discover perspectives on history and church history from the experience and perspective of Indigenous peoples
- Engage in the process of doing theology led by Indigenous Scholars

Reflect on the implications for ministry practice, not only amongst Indigenous communities but in all of our church and ministry contexts

Download the flyer of the units available this year

For more information visit our website or call the office on (03) 9340 8100.

#### Find out more $\rightarrow$

## From the JIM Unit

#### **Family Violence Prevention Action Group**

The Justice and International Mission cluster is facilitating a working group of church members to decide what actions the Synod should be taking on the issue of family violence in our community. The group will probably meet every one to two months initially. If you would like to be part of this group, please contact <u>mark.zirnsak@victas.uca.org.au</u> or phone (03) 9340 8807.

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#### This is Rubbish Campaign

This campaign focuses on one of the most pressing problems of today - averting the plastic pollution crisis. Right now, our world has a rubbish problem – and it's hitting people living in poverty the hardest. Join with us to care for God's amazing creation and show love for our global neighbours. Click <u>HERE</u> to learn more from TEAR Australia

## 

#### Campaign: It's time to #RaiseTheRate

Raising the rate of Newstart will mean people can focus on their futures rather than being totally consumed with the financial crisis they're facing. Raising the Newstart rate will make the system stronger and give people looking for paid work the best chance to get through tough times and find suitable employment. Help us send a message to our leaders that it's time to Raise The Rate and get Newstart working. Add your name here

#### PNG Government Pressures the Australian Government to remove Refugees from Manus Island

The Uniting Church and its members and supporters, such as yourselves, have advocated for an end to offshore processing of people seeking asylum in Australia. In late July, the new government in Papua New Guinea called for the "full closure" of the asylum seeker process on Manus Island. Manus province Governor, Charlie Benjamin, said all the refugees should be resettled elsewhere as soon as possible. He pointed out they had been at the facilities for seven years.

> Find the Full Story Here <

## **Highlighted Opportunities**

### Highlighted Victorian Events for your diary

### **Bushfire-related Resources**

Pastoral and worship resources (UCA VicTas)		
Parenting in the midst of tragedy (Focus on the Family)	Dates for 2020	h
Understanding and coping with trauma (Focus on the Family)		
Resource pack for talking to children about bushfires (Parent TV)	Feb 28, 29 (Parkville)	Generate Conference
Helping children make sense of natural disasters (Parenting Ideas)	May 30 (Parkville)	Stories of Childhood
Building emotional health and wellbeing: a pastoral handbook (Vivienne Mountain)	Aug 29 (Parkville)	Make it Messy!
Lent & Easter		
Easter services (SA UCA)		
Lent Event (Uniting World)		
Lent in 3 minutes (Busted Halo)		
Lent resources (Going 4 Growth)		
Lent resources (Common Grace)		

## Grad. Cert. in Children & Families Ministry – Enrol NOW!

Offered through the University of Divinity, this <u>Graduate Certificate</u> presents an opportunity to enhance your ministry gifts, to increase your capacity for engaging ministry and to learn in a caring, interactive and stimulating environment – as well as providing formal recognition of your skills in ministry. For ministers/pastors engaged in general ministry, those employed in specific Children & Families ministry roles and anyone with a passion for ministry with children and their families, the course requires completion of two compulsory subjects (see below) and one subject of your choice.

DA8015S Children and Families Ministry: Core Issues in Diverse Contexts next offered as intensive in Feb 2020 (dates TBC)

For more information about these great opportunities see this clip and/or e-mail chris.barnett@ctm.uca.edu.au.

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**Intergenerational Ministry** 

Lent & Easter resources (Messy Church)

The Generative Church

Intergenerational faith formation

Intergenerate: Transforming churches through intergenerational ministry

Australian Intergenerational Roundtable (AIR) material\*

2019 Generate Conference resources\*

\*=e-mail <u>chris.barnett@ctm.uca.edu.au</u> to enquire about participation in the 2019 AIR and Generate Conferences

## **Australian Student Christian Movement**

## **Opinion and reflection**

Review of Alan Demack, Pulpit, Pew and Public Life

Alan Demack AO, *Pulpit, Pew and Public Life: The Christian and the Secular Nation*, MediaCom Education Inc, Unley, S.A., 2019

Alan Demack's memoir entitled *Pulpit, Pew and Public Life* takes the reader, firstly, on a journey through the author's formative years which were deeply influenced by the Australian Student Christian Movement. He expresses a deep appreciation for the inspiration of his Christian discipleship provided by such fine theologians as J. H. Oldham, Dietrich Bonhoeffer and Emil Brunner. (On pages 181-184 he provides an extensive list of a wider range of Christian contributors.)

Alan studied law at the University of Queensland (1953-57) and in time he became a barrister and then a judge.

In 1976 Alan was appointed a Senior Judge of the Family Court of Australia. In 1978 he was appointed a Judge of the Supreme Court of Queensland and Central Judge.

He served as a judge in Queensland for some 28 years, and even in retirement has been active in being a valued consultant in regard to important legal issues.

Nurtured in the Methodist Church, Alan and his wife Dorothy (whom he met at a National ASCM Conference in Armidale) have been very active members of the Uniting Church of Australia. Alan also contributes as a lay preacher in the Uniting Church. As well, both Alan and Dorothy have maintained a lifetime of support for ASCM.

This book explores the interplay of law, theology, ethics and public life in the context of living in a 'secular nation'. It contains many insights and thoughtful reflections on the inter-relation of those important dimensions of Australian experience. The book repays thoughtful reading.

Available for \$22.95 from MediaCom.

Ray Barraclough

## Prayers For Nation

Faith Communities gather at Parliament house in Melbourne to reflect, remember and prayer for all Victorians and all Australians affected by the recent Bushfires



## **Child Protection Unit, Department of Health and Human Services**

## **Reporting to protect children**

Mandatory reporting is about protecting children. Children can carry the trauma of abuse for years, unless they get help. They need the adults around them to report child abuse and neglect.

You might have noticed some media attention in September this year about new laws passed by the Victorian parliament to do with reporting child abuse. The media focussed on priests, but actually the law will cover people in religious ministry in the various faiths across Victoria.

If you are ordained, appointed or recognised as a religious or spiritual leader a religious organisation, this new law will apply to you. You will become a mandatory reporter to Child Protection in early 2020.

If a mandatory reporter believes a child might be at risk of physical injury or sexual abuse and their parents are not protecting them, they have to report what they believe to Child Protection as soon as they can, even if information came through religious confession.

To make a report you do not need to be sure or have any proof. You just need to be genuinely worried the child might be at risk. It is up to Child Protection to decide what to do. Your identity will be confidential, and the law protects you from any liability if the report is made in good faith.

Child Protection workers are trained to assess risk to children from child abuse and neglect. They will decide what to do about what they are told. They might give you some information and advice. They might refer the family for support. They might investigate the report. They can do what is needed to protect the child. Often, Child Protection can arrange the help parents need to keep their children safe. Sometimes children might need Child Protection to step in to protect them.

Find out more on the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) website <u>https://</u> <u>providers.dhhs.vic.gov.au/mandatory-reporting</u> - or search 'mandatory reporting victoria' There will be free information sessions about mandatory reporting for people in religious ministry early next year. Bookings will open soon. Keep an eye on the mandatory reporting website.

Please click on the image, right, 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 <u>www.childsafestandards.org.au</u> Downloadable resource kit available on website victorian Council of Churches President: Rev Fr Shenouda Boutros Executive Officer: Rev Ian Smith Ievel 6, 608 St Kilda Rd Melbourne VIC 3004 ABN 51 350 238 724

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

Tel: 9650 4511

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

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 \*\*\*

We're on the web!

www.vcc.org.au

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

Email. vcc@vcc.org.au

Facebook www.facebook.com/viccouncilchurches/

### The new Office

Victoria

Council of Churches

The temporary office of the VCC is 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 Southgate shopping facilities.

If you wish to visit please ring 9412 8487 and arrange with Nicholas Tsigos