

**Chairman's Report
Annual General Meeting
Mt Waverley/Chadstone Inter-Church Council
November 2008**

2008 has been a year of 'mixed blessings' for our Inter-Church Council. As the Chair I would firstly like to apologise for my many absences during the year, however because of the diligence of our members, the activities of the council have been carried out successfully. Some of our activities need an injection of 'enthusiasm, support and freshness but **all** are worth our continuing support.

Membership of the ICC: The regular membership of our ICC continues to be well represented – Holy Family, St Mary Magdalen's, St Philip's, St Stephen's & St Mary's, High St Road UC, St John's UC, St Mark's UC and St Luke's UC.

It is anticipated that Chadstone Baptist will become more involved with the appointment of their new minister, while the Church of the Nazarene and Rev Steve Kasambalis has been involved at times and the Rev Peter Wing Tang from Highbury Rd Church of Christ has been part of the Easter Event.

The council is considering widening its membership and an invitation to Monash Uniting Church might be worth considering.

In 2009 however, it might be as well to look around our own congregations for co-resident communities, as this would greatly enrich the membership of our ICC, The Bethel Presbyterian (Korean) community at St John's, the Melbourne Fijian Congregation at St Mark's, the Chinese Christian Renewal Church at St Luke's and the Korean Catholic Community at Holy Family could all be approached. Perhaps we could hold an 'ecumenical function,' or event, to which we could invite all interested parties and use this event to promote and advertise our ICC.

Lenten Studies 2008: Generally the studies were well received and although it was a little disappointing that not all churches were able to support the program, there were good comments about this year's study from those who participated.

The Easter Event: Once again this year, Holy Family hosted this activity and around 1000 children participated. Although four schools did not attend this year, a small group from Huntingtower was an addition to the event. With the aging of our volunteers, whilst the preparation work in the erection of the caves was completed, the staffing of the various venues was somewhat problematic. Fortunately the senior girls from Avila College were able to complete this aspect of the work and ensured that those children who participated, experienced a very well presented and meaningful Easter story. Our thanks to all concerned has been recorded and, as indicated by the letter from Mt Waverley Primary School, the participating schools were pleased to be a part of this significant experience.

In our debriefing discussions it has become apparent that the future of this activity is under a cloud, both in terms of the financial requirements and the matter of staffing. It has been suggested that both our council and the Glen Waverley ICC co-operate more closely in the planning and implementation of this event in the coming years.

Stations of the Cross: Holy Family Church hosted this event in 2008 and it was very successful with the weather cooperating. The 11am start enabled more people to be involved and the route was planned mostly within the church/school complex of Holy Family to enable participants to proceed without difficulty.

Ecumenical Visiting Sunday: With the Glen Waverly ICC we once again participated in the ecumenical visitations on May 4 (*Ascension Sunday*) among the various member

churches. The move to a Sunday in May has been successful as this enables the visitations to avoid clashing with special services for Pentacost. Our thanks to Joe Persico (Chair of the Glen Waverley ICC) for organising these visits which once again were very successful.

Joint Meeting with Glen Waverley ICC: Our meeting in May was again a joint meeting with the Glen Waverley ICC. This has become an annual event and allows us the opportunity to share with our neighbouring ICC not only the planned co-operative events – The Easter Event, the Ecumenical Visitations and the Publicity of Christian events at Christmas – but also to exchange ideas about other activities which we might well undertake together.

St Mark's Project: Early this year St Mark's UC applied to the Victorian Multicultural Commission for a grant to organise a multi-faith project to promote harmony between interfaith groups within the community of Mount Waverley.

They were successful and received \$6,600 for the project *Intersections: Understanding Justice and Joint Interfaith Action in Mount Waverley*. A condition of the grant is that St Mark's work together with the Mount Waverley/Chadstone Inter-Church Council and the Monash City Council

A meeting with the ICC Executive was held in August and the Action Group has been formed to plan for the project and which will be undertaken in the new year.

Monash Interfaith Group: Jim Aylmer has continued to represent us on the Monash Inter-Faith group at its organisational meetings

It is hoped that the Monash Community Interfaith Group will be (officially) launched in November and this group will co-operate with the St Mark's UC in the implementation of the Mt Waverley Interfaith Event next year.

Pastoral Lunch: Unfortunately I was absent when the Pastoral Lunch was held at St Mary Magdalene's. But I have been advised that it was both enjoyable and a relaxed time of sharing. Our thanks to Father Peter and the workers at St Mary Magdalene's for their provision of this opportunity to break bread together.

Ecumenical Hymn Singing: The annual evening service of Hymn Singing was held at High Street Road Uniting Church on Sunday evening October 5. The selection of Hymns was very well received and enthusiastically sung and the choral group from the Glen Waverley UC gave us an interesting and informative presentation as well as delighting us with their performance.

Food for Friends: Our final activity for the year is being undertaken this week and the appeal is going very well again this year. It was agreed the cash raised would be donated to Waverley Benevolent Society. It is anticipated that there will again be an increase in the amount of donations we will be able to disperse to the selected charities.

It is my deep regret that since taking over the Chair of the Chadstone/Mt Waverley Inter-Church Council in 2006, it has not always been possible for me to participate in a number of activities sponsored by our ICC. It is for this reason that I am standing down as chair as of tonight, however, I will continue as a member of the council and attend meetings when I am able to do so.

I also wish to acknowledge the departure of Sister Roma, pastoral associate at Holy Family. Sister Roma has been at Holy Family for 12 years and has been a great supporter of our council for the duration of that period. She will be greatly missed both at Holy family and in our Council. I would like to wish the very best in her retirement.

Finally, I wish to record my thanks to Secretary Jim Aylmer who has kept me on track during my term as chair of this ICC and to Veronica Nicoll our Minute Secretary and Treasurer Michael O'Shea who have kept us informed as to what we need to do and how we can achieve it. I would also like to thank you all for your support of our ICC and extend to you the season's greetings as we prepare to celebrate Advent in this Blessed time of the Year.

**Gavin Faichney
Chair Mt Waverley/Chadstone ICC**