

MELBOURNE CITY CHURCHES IN ACTION

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the MCCIA

Wednesday 22 February 2017

Welsh Church Centre, La Trobe Street, Melbourne

Welcome and prayer

The meeting opened shortly after 6:00pm with prayer and the grace led by Convenor Ric Holland, with special prayer and thanks for the host and cooks Jim Barr, and Sandy and Fay Yule for a superb meal. Dinner was then served. The formal proceedings commenced at 7:30pm, with acknowledgement of the first peoples of the City.

Present

Rev. Ric Holland (Chair) (St Michaels UC), Stefanie Pearce (Minutes) (Collins Street Baptist), Rev. Alistair Macrae (Wesley UC), Trudi Doblin (German Lutheran Trinity), Fay Yule (Wesley UC), Mary Elizabeth Calwell (St Francis), Barrie Sutton (Collins Street Baptist), Sandy Yule (Treasurer) (Wesley UC), Rev Jim Barr (Welsh Church), Br Lindsay Rust (Palloine Brother/CSBC), Fr Ken Boland (St Francis), Rev. David Wilson (Collins St Baptist/Urban Seed), Very Rev John Salvano (St Patricks Catholic Cathedral), Jamie Pearce (St Pauls Anglican), Rev Canon Ruth Redpath (St Pauls Anglican), Maureen Pritchard (St Augustines Catholic), Rev Jo Dirks (St Francis Catholic), Pastor Christoph Dielmann (German Lutheran Trinity), Bishop Suriel and Father Mark Attala (Coptic Orthodox Church).

Apologies

Rev. Simon Holt (Collins St Baptist), Sharma Saunders (St Francis Catholic), Rev Ian Smith (Victorian Council of Churches), Rev Grant Edgcumbe, Peter Arnott, Lyn and the team at Holy Trinity Anglican East Melbourne, Rev Tom Hoffman (St Johns Southgate)

Welcome

Ric Holland opened the formal proceedings with a particular welcome to Bishop Suriel and Father Attala from the Coptic Orthodox Church, greeted with applause.

Minutes

The Minutes of the 2015 Annual General Meeting held on 9 December 2015 were moved by Sandy Yule/Trudi Doblin to be a true and correct record: *That the 2015 AGM Minutes be adopted.* Carried.

Convenor's Report

Ric Holland reported on the activities of the MCCIA through 2016, highlighting:

- the excellent attendance of 3,000+ at the annual Good Friday pilgrimage through the city for The Way of the Cross; he noted the important role of Victoria Police in ensuring a smooth and successful event;
- the success of the three bible studies held over winter on the Book of Acts;
- the morning tea held at the end of 2015 with Senior Clergy and the Lord Mayor;
- a well-attended communal lunch for church administrators and office staff of city churches with Victoria Police, to discuss issues and challenges relating to security, safety and dealing appropriately with challenging behaviour on church premises;

- the successful Christmas Nativity creche blessing event held in December 2016 for the last time in City Square, with wide ecumenical support from clergy and the Lord Mayor.

Stefanie Pearce mentioned the publication and distribution of Easter and Christmas service times brochures, very well received by over 60 hotels and tourist offices and thanked those who contributed.

Ric Holland/Trudi Doblin moved: *That the Chair's report be received.* Carried.

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Sandy Yule distributed copies of the financial statement for 2015–2016, with an additional update from July 2016 to 22 November 2016. He reported that the financial accounts were in good order with sufficient income to cover anticipated costs. Sandy Yule/Trudi Doblin moved: *That the financial accounts be accepted.* Carried.

Election of the Committee of Management

There being no other candidates, the following nominees were declared duly elected:

Convenor:	Ric Holland (St Michaels Uniting Church)
Deputy Convenor:	Ruth Redpath (St Paul's Anglican)
Secretary/Public Officer:	Stefanie Pearce (Collins Street Baptist Church)
Treasurer:	Sandy Yule (Wesley Uniting Church)
Committee:	Jim Barr (Welsh Church)
Committee:	Ken Boland (St Francis)

Tom Hoffmann had withdrawn his earlier nomination before the meeting. Ken Boland's nomination was received from the floor, and unanimously accepted by acclamation.

MCCIA activities proposed for 2017

A list of proposed activities was distributed and discussed. Sandy Yule and Jim Barr will approach three theologians from various disciplines to lead a winter bible study series on passages in John's Gospel relating to truth (Jn 1, Jn 8, Jn 14), considering 'truth in a post-truth world'.

Other Business

David Wilson (Urban Seed/Collins Street Baptist Church) is making a submission into Melbourne City Council's process on homelessness in the city and asked whether MCCIA might consider making a submission as well. Ric Holland offered to follow it up, and asked for anyone interested in contributing to contact him or the Secretary promptly.

Guest Speaker

Ric Holland welcomed Christoph Dielmann to speak on Melbourne's commemoration of the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation.

Christoph astonished the meeting by revealing a half-size statue of Martin Luther. He then outlined the history and theology of Luther's ground-breaking stance in Wittenburg. He noted that the correct term for the 500th anniversary is 'commemorating', rather than 'celebrating'. He highlighted the different ecumenical attitudes influencing the 2017 commemoration, with the logo of 'open doors'. Melbourne's commemoration will include concerts and an ecumenical hymn-singing in Federation Square in multiple languages on 28th October 2017, honouring the mother-tongues, given that this was

a feature of Luther's stance on biblical accessibility. Therefore English-speaking and foreign-speaking church communities will come together to witness their faith in an open-air public space in the centre of the city. Ric Holland thanked Christoph. Sandy Yule/Stefanie Pearce moved: *That the MCCA actively supports the commemoration of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation with its member churches.* Carried.

Bishop Suriel and the Coptic Orthodox Church in Melbourne

Ric Holland invited Bishop Suriel to speak, and the meeting warmly welcomed him. Bishop Suriel distributed a brochure relating to the history of the Coptic Orthodox church, one of the oldest churches in the world, established by St Mark in the 1st century. The church calendar began in 284 AD and the Coptic new year begins on 11th September. It is a church of martyrs, from 284 until the present day, as recently as December 2016. Bishop Suriel was in Cairo at the time of a suicide-bombing of a Cairo Coptic Orthodox Church in which 29 Christians were killed. He showed some heart-wrenching artefacts from the bombed church.

The Australian Coptic Orthodox church will be celebrating 50 years in Melbourne in 2019. The Bishop then showed a short video presentation on the Eporo Tower development in La Trobe Street, Melbourne, due to be officially opened on 10 September 2017 by His Holiness Pope Tawadoros II.

Ric Holland thanked the Bishop for his address, both poignant and then full of hope for the future, supported with acclamation by all attending.

Close

The meeting closed at 8:30pm.