



OIKOUMENE

TASMANIAN COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

postal: PO Box 166, New Town, Tas. 7008
phone: 0418-307-449
e-mail: tcctas@bigpond.net.au
website: www.tcctas.org.au

September 2012

The 'Lund' Principle

Should not the churches act together in all matters except those in which deep differences of conviction compel them to act separately?

Greetings in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Welcome to spring, and the first edition of *Oikoumene* for over three years. This newsletter is the sign of renewed life from the Tasmanian Council of Churches, and new steps in our efforts to "assist the growth of ecumenical consciousness in the members of all Churches and generally to promote Christian unity". It is our hope and prayer that the church in Tasmania will be strengthened as we develop ways to communicate more effectively amongst the churches in this state, and raise awareness of all that is happening in the name of Jesus Christ.

As President since 2011 it has been a privilege to observe the dedication and compassion of so many who serve in churches, schools and in the wider community. Readers of the *Letters to the Editor* in any of the three daily newspapers will have little doubt that there is antagonism to views expressed by Christians on matters of morality and justice. Many of those same readers would not be aware to the extent of the compassionate and caring service given, often at great cost, by members of Churches across the state.

June 2012 saw the release of the information gathered from the 2011 Australian Census. Headlines proclaimed the decline in religious faith—they failed to acknowledge that 68% of the populace identify with a religion. They noted a decline in Christianity - but overlooked that fact that there are more persons identifying with Christianity in 2011 than in 2006. Reports focussed in the percentage increase in other faiths, notably Hinduism—they failed to recognise the small base or the influence of immigration. In Australia over 60% of the population identify with the Christian religion, and that majority is also true in Tasmania. These numbers do not suggest that all who identify with Christianity have a deep and personal faith in Christ. They do signify that the Church is still important in Australia, and in Tasmania.



As churches work together and believers live out their faith daily, we will impact the Tasmanian community with the values of the Kingdom of God. In the process it is my prayer that many will hear the good news of Christ, and respond to the grace and love they have

experienced from those who follow Him.

Graham Roberts (Major), President TCC

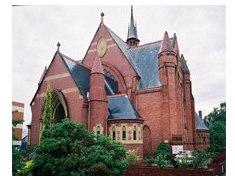
Social Justice Sunday
September 30, 2012
PEACE IN THE MARKETPLACE
So all may live in dignity



Copies available for download
<http://www.ncca.org>.

DID YOU KNOW?

- There are over **120 chaplaincies** in Tasmanian State Schools. Scripture Union is the main provider of chaplaincy services. Other providers include Devonport Chaplaincy Inc. and the Hobart City Mission.
- Funding provided by the Tasmanian Community Fund enabled a study into Maintenance of Heritage Churches in the Launceston, George Town, West Tamar, and Meander Valley municipalities. The commitment of local congregations to maintaining and preserving these churches was commended by the authors. Findings from the study have been shared with participating denominations, and presentations will be made to appropriate government departments about the spiritual, economic, cultural and economic value of heritage churches.



From the Liaison Officer

In the 1980s, the Canadian-born comic actor Michael J. Fox starred in a series of films called "Back to the Future". Fox played an accidental time-traveller named Marty McFly. In the past few months, I've felt a bit of sympathy for Marty McFly. In 2001, I concluded nine years of service with the Tasmanian Council of Churches to return to parish ministry. After eleven years interstate, we've now returned to Tasmania and (in my case) to another opportunity of service with the TCC ("Back to the Future").

It's good to be back home. I'm looking forward with great enthusiasm to re-engaging with the churches of Tasmania. Tasmania is a great place to be involved in ecumenism. (Tasmania is a great place, full-stop, but you already know that.) Since the first years of European settlement, with the close friendship between the early chaplains Robert Knopwood and Phillip Conolly, ecumenism has been alive and well in Tasmania. The sectarian bigotries that were frequently an accepted part of church life in some of the larger cities on the Big Island were generally regarded as "a bit odd" by the average Tasmanian. In fact, I'll make a "big call" (in the words of some sports broadcasters) and say that Tasmania is the spiritual home of ecumenism in Australia. As I said earlier, it's good to be back home.

At present, while the TCC's office accommodation is being sorted out (and many thanks to The Salvation Army for providing me with some temporary desk space in their Liverpool Street office in Hobart during the interim), the quickest and most reliable way to contact me is on my mobile phone: 0418-307-449.

Much of my work will involve communication on behalf of the TCC, with some specific tasks including putting together this newsletter, maintaining our website (www.tcctas.org.au), and developing a TCC **Facebook** page. (See p. 4) As well, I'll be involved (among other things) in encouraging closer links between the TCC and non-member churches, other faith communities, and other community groups.

I'm available to speak in all congregations and church-related groups (in any region of Tasmania), either during worship or on other occasions. I'm happy to speak to groups of any size from tiny to huge (or anything in between).

We hope to publish the next edition of this newsletter in mid-November, so if you have any information to share with other churches about events in late November, or during December, January, or February, please get this information to us on tcctas@bigpond.net.au (or posted to PO Box 166, New Town 7008) by the end of October.

Shalom, salaam, eirene, and pax,

Bob Faser.

Labyrinth in Launceston: On the last Sunday of each month (such as 30 September or 28 October), a Labyrinth Walk is held at the Emmanuel Centre, 123 Abbott Street, Newstead, beginning at 3:00 p.m. Come and discover this ancient form of Christian prayer and reflection.

Taizé In Hobart: On the third Sunday of the month (such as 21 October or 18 November), a service of prayer using the music of the ecumenical Taizé Community is held at All Saints' Anglican Church, Macquarie Street, South Hobart. All are welcome and encouraged to attend.



Christmas Bowl launches: Sunday, 25th November

On Sunday, 25 November, Jeff Wild, the Act for Peace Development Officer for Victoria and Tasmania will launch the 2012 Christmas Bowl in Tasmania.



While details of the launches have not yet been confirmed, we plan to have launches both in Hobart and in Launceston. Further information will be made available ASAP.

"Praying with Handel's 'Messiah'"

On Saturday, 1st December, a retreat afternoon for the beginning of Advent will be held at All Saints' Anglican Church, Macquarie Street, South Hobart. The retreat will be on the theme "**Praying with Handel's 'Messiah'**", and will be led by Bob Faser.

The intention of this retreat will be to allow the words and music of this well-loved example of sacred music (frequently associated with the Advent-Christmas period) to be a starting-point for our prayers during Advent. All are welcome.

The retreat will begin with a shared lunch at 12:00. (Please bring food to share.)

The retreat will conclude with All Saints' regular Saturday evening Vigil Eucharist, beginning at 6:00 p.m.

More information will follow in the November TCC newsletter.

Annual Meeting 23 June 2012

Rev Dr Philip Hughes, Senior Research Officer of the Christian Research Association was the guest speaker at the 2012 Annual Meeting. With the release of the 2011 Census figures on a few days prior to the meeting Philip was able to provide an insight into *"Trends in Faith and Christian Life: the changing nature of faith, and implications for church life"*.



In providing a longer term view of changes that affected society and the church we were encouraged to consider our responses to the statistical data as part of a shift in the thinking of the community from religion to spirituality. Depth to the numbers reported in the Census was added by reference to the Australian Survey of Social Attitudes 2009. Affiliation with a religious denomination is not the same as belief in God, a personal commitment to faith in Christ, nor engagement in the life of the church. There are challenges to be faced by the church as many in Australia are comfortable living without reference to God, gain an

adequate picture of the world from science and lack confidence in the organised church. Effective ministries are still happening on a large scale, and connections can still be made with the wider community. For the church the joining of the communal and spiritual dimensions offers hope as we share life and faith in our own communities.

Philip's PowerPoint presentation can be found on-line at www.cra.org.au/trends_in_faith_and_church_Tasmania.ppt

After sharing a meal together the business of the annual meeting continued, with reports presented and office holders elected. The meeting concluded with the commissioning of office holders for the coming year. Reports presented at the meeting are posted on the TCC website (www.tcctas.org.au).

Functions of the Tasmanian Council of Churches

The Tasmanian Council of Churches exists to promote a closer unity among Christians in Tasmania, specifically,

1. To assist the growth of ecumenical consciousness in the members of all Churches and generally to promote Christian unity;
2. To promote co-operation between the Member Churches through the study of that which we hold in common and the sharing of our different standpoints in such a spirit that the unity to which God calls us may become clearer;
3. To facilitate common action by the Churches within Tasmania as a proclamation of the hope of the Gospel to the whole community;
4. To establish and maintain close relationships with the National Council of Churches in Australia and to increase the contact of Tasmania with Church thought and action throughout the world,

and in these terms promotes the advancement of religion.

(Constitution of the Tasmanian Council of Churches Section III)



Jane Franklin Hall is a residential college of the University of Tasmania. It was founded by the Tasmanian Council of Churches in 1950 as a non-denominational Christian college in which residents of all faiths and beliefs could feel welcome. College aims are spelt out on the crest: the pursuit of truth and the freedom that follows from it.

Two representatives of the TCC (Dr Rosemary Dobber & Rev. Rosalind Terry) serve as members of the College Council.

Contact Jane Franklin Hall
on 03 6210 0100



From the President's report to the Annual Meeting:

"... the TCC cannot continue with a business as usual approach. We will strengthen our administration with the appointment of the Liaison Officer. Key tasks in this area are the recruitment of volunteers, the engagement new personnel on the Executive and on the Commissions, and the building of networks beyond the existing denominational base. In the service of the Church in Tasmania the TCC will work to raise awareness of the breadth of mission and service activities through improved communications, and will seek to promote opportunities for churches to work together in existing activities and new initiatives."

Schools Sunday: 17 February 2013

Schools Sunday in 2013 will be held on 17 February. Please note this day and consider ways your congregation can observe Schools Sunday and relate creatively with local schools.

Schools Sunday is a programme of Scripture Union Tasmania, and is supported by the TCC's Commission on Christian Ministry in State Schools (CMISS).



More information about Schools Sunday will follow in the November TCC newsletter.

The TCC on Facebook:

A new TCC **Facebook** page is now in existence. While there are still a few bugs to work out of the system, we hope this can soon become a way to share Tasmanian ecumenical information quickly. This will only be possible if the page is used.

If you're a member of **Facebook**, please visit "Tasmanian Council of Churches" the next time you use your page. Click "like" when you get to the TCC's page.

We hope this will be a good way to share information among our member churches and other supporters.

Retreat

**Coachmans Cottage
Brickendon Heritage Farm
236 Wellington Street
Longford**



**10.00am — 4.00pm
Tuesday 16 October**

What is it:
a quiet day in retreat in an historic garden in its spring glory for people who value a day intentionally drawing aside to focus on relationship with God.

To Bring:

- windproof jacket (some of the time we shall be sitting in the garden or walking)
- plate of food to contribute to the lunch table
- Bible
- notebook
- \$10 donation towards costs

RSVP: UCA Tasmanian Office
tas.office@victas.uca.org.au
phone 6331 9784
fax 6334 1480


Alison Whish
Leadership Development
Presbytery of Tasmania



**This space is
RESERVED
for information from
YOUR
congregation.**

*Please contact
tcctas@bigpond.net.au*

This retreat day in Longford has been planned by the Uniting Church, but is offered to anyone who wishes to participate.



PINTS OF FAITH

Pints of Faith is coordinated by Catholic Youth Ministry and is a new and regular event where young adults – and others – can come together in a relaxed and fun environment to catch-up, meet new people, share, discuss and ask questions about faith.

Set in a pub, this event is for all people who have any interest at all in exploring more about faith issues. With some fantastic speakers and intriguing topics lined up throughout the year, why not give it a go? What have you got to lose?

Pints of Faith is held every month in the South of the state, on the first Thursday of the month, upstairs at Hotel Soho, Davey Street, Hobart. We gather from 6.30pm for a meal, a drink, or to catch-up; the speaker begins at 7.30pm, there is time for a break, discussions and questions and we conclude by 9.00pm.

In the North of the state, *Pints of Faith* is held every second month (on the last Tuesday), upstairs at the Cock 'N' Bull British Pub, 50 Wellington Street, Launceston. We gather from 6.30pm for a meal, a drink, or to catch-up; the speaker begins at 7.30pm, there is time for a break, discussions and questions and we conclude by 9.00pm.

UPCOMING PINTS OF FAITH

Thursday 4th October in Hobart for 'PINTS OF FAITH: Faith in Action': Hear from two Tasmanian young people as to how they practically live out their faith. Amelia Daun, a young Catholic primary school teacher, previous World Youth Day pilgrim and member of the Southern Youth Council will speak about living her faith and particularly about her involvement supporting a school in Africa. Renee MacGregor, Identity Coordinator and Catholic Secondary Teacher and past World Youth Day Pilgrim will also share some of her own faith story, particularly discussing her time volunteering with the Christian Brothers and Edmund Rice Network in East Timor.

Tuesday 30th October in Launceston: topic TBC

Thursday 1st November in Hobart: Join us on the feast of All Saints' Day, to discover something more about the theology behind the feasts of All Saints and All Souls Day (All Souls Day occurs on Fri 2nd Nov)

MORE INFORMATION: For more information on *Pints of Faith*, and for updates on speakers and topics visit www.cymtas.org.au/pof or contact Rachelle Smith at Catholic Youth Ministry on 0400 045 368 or rachelle.smith@aohtas.org.au

How to use this newsletter in your local congregation

- While it's still fresh in your mind, please check your diary re the events publicised in this newsletter. Choose the events you want to attend and write them in your diary. (Please do this now, before you make your cup of tea. After that, you can have an extra biscuit.)
- E-mail a copy of this newsletter to the person who edits your church's weekly pewsheet. (E-mailing has the result of the editor having this in an editable form without requiring re-typing.) Encourage her/him to include relevant items in the pewsheet each week.
- Make a copy of this newsletter and put it up on your church's bulletin board.
- Make a copy of this newsletter and give it to the person who does the notices during worship. (If more than one person does this, please give it to the person who organises the people who do the notices.)
- If you are not the rector / parish priest / minister / officer / pastor / parish sister / clerk / ... of your parish / congregation / corps / meeting for worship, please give a copy to Captain / Father / Sister /
- If you **are** the rector / parish priest / minister / officer / pastor / parish sister / clerk / ..., please give copies to at least five key laypeople in your patch. (If you serve more than one congregation, please give copies to key people from each congregation.)
- If your church (at the local, regional, or statewide level) is doing something you'd like other churches to know about, please share this information with us at tctas@bigpond.net.au.
- If there's nothing in this newsletter you find particularly interesting or helpful, please contact us at tctas@bigpond.net.au and tell us what information you need.

