

# OIKOUMENE

Tasmanian Council of Churches

Advent 2017

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## 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?*



### From the President

The past two months have provided some useful material for reflection.

In September, we held the **Annual Meeting of the Tasmanian Council of Churches**. Prior to the meeting, I sensed that people felt that we had failed as a Council. If we consider the TCC as a business enterprise with goals to be achieved within a set time frame and KPI to be demonstrated, then our performance is not brilliant. However, some of our difficulties are situational and contextual and we are not alone in the current struggles. Some Churches have withdrawn from the New South Wales Council of Churches; recently, the South Australian Council of Churches has adapted its Constitution to suit changing situations and Western Australia and Queensland have wide areas to cover; the composition of Churches varies and the different States are faced with different issues. We act out of who we are, do what we can, where we are.

To this end, at the Annual Meeting we established a **Working Group to consider how the TCC might move forward**. At the first meeting, we considered:

- the Terms of Reference,
- some key objectives and a time line,
- approaches and elements of the other State bodies.

We hope to have a draft report by April 2018.

Although numbers at the Annual meeting were low, there was a spirit of hope and a willingness to participate, share and work collaboratively. Bishop Richard Condie was able to join us for part of the meeting and suggested that we consider a more relational approach, which might enable us to move forward despite issues with membership and finances. Some years ago, we considered discernment and a consensus approach to decision-making, rather than a formal parliamentary-style of conducting our meetings. I hope that we can approach our future meetings in a spirit of openness and respectful listening, learning from each other, which is the essence of receptive ecumenism. There may be times when a formal decision needs to be made and recorded, but these occasions are rare.

Bishop Phillip Huggins, the NCCA President, was a guest at the meeting. One of the things he urged us to consider was: **How we speak the name of Jesus today.**

Obviously, this challenge can be considered from a number of angles.

Do we speak the actual name with respect and reverence or as an expletive?

How do we speak with and communicate with those around us each day? What is the tone of our voice? Do we interact with others? Do we listen? Do we command others, demand, or criticise?

We speak the name of Jesus through all that we are – what we do and say each day.

When we come together with others, do we enter into a dialogue to arrive at the truth or do we engage in a debate trying to force our point of view on the other or denigrate the other's viewpoint?

What is our non-verbal communication? Do we dismiss the opinion of others with a shrug, a roll of the eyes?

I have been impressed in recent months by the witness given by the welfare agencies of many of our Churches, Salvation Army, St Vincent de Paul, City Mission, Benevolent Society and others, who combined their efforts to help the more vulnerable in our society, especially during winter. Plans are already in place in Launceston for a Christmas Day dinner for those who are alone, again as a cooperative effort.

Recently, I visited George Town, where the former Convent has been taken over by the St Vincent de Paul and Catholic Care to provide support for the needy and vulnerable in George Town. I learnt that they are able to purchase some grocery supplies from Second Bite (Southern Tasmania).

Due to staffing issues, it seems likely that Christmas Bowl will be much decreased this year, but I encourage parishes or groups that participate to make contact and do what they can to reach out to those less fortunate.

Another instance of religious cooperation

occurred in Victoria on Wednesday 11 October on the steps of Parliament House, Victoria, when representatives of six religions presented a statement on the Voluntary Dying Bill to Mr James Merlino, Victorian Deputy Premier.

I had the privilege of attending the **International Receptive Ecumenism Conference**, which was held in Canberra last week. In the months ahead, I hope that I can share some aspects with you, after I have had time to reflect and assimilate the experience. It was certainly a very deep experience. The speakers were experts in various fields including Scripture, Dogmatic Theology and Philosophy. Each day began and ended with Prayer and Bible Study led by Rev Dr Vicky Balabanski.

Two talks in particular stood out for me: Professor Paul Murray, from Durham University, and Dr Antonia Pizzey, from the Australian Catholic University. We shared in ecumenical perspectives from Sweden, Africa, India and reports of Catholic-Anglican Dialogue and Catholic-Lutheran Dialogue and learned about other instances in informal sharing or the parallel sessions.

The conference illustrated the different ways and levels of ecumenism. We are familiar with the dialogues, based largely on doctrinal-theological discussions at ecclesial level; faith and order approaches, necessary for deeper dialogue and understanding; acting together according to the Lund Principle and in our own experience, the many ecumenical endeavours at the grass roots level. Receptive Ecumenism places an emphasis on learning from each other.

The models of ecumenism too are changing. They are no longer the vision of a monolithic structure to which we all belong. On the other hand, it is not a "grab-all" where anything goes and the groups lose their distinctive identity. The Spirit will lead us, but it may take time.

(Sr) Elizabeth Vagg PBVM



## Carol Services

As we know, the large Carol by Candlelight Service in Hobart is being replaced this year by a number of smaller services held in various locations around Hobart. Such as:

Carols on the Hill, on Sunday 17 December 7- 9.00pm at Guilford Young College, Hobart Campus. It is a free ticketed event – see [www.eventbrite.com.au](http://www.eventbrite.com.au) 'Carols on the Hill'.

Family Carol Singing at All Saints Anglican Church in South Hobart 339 Macquarie Street on Sunday 10 December at 5.00 pm. Led by a Brass Band and Organ

Christmas Carols at Scots Memorial Uniting Church 29 Bathurst Street in the Communal Christmas Garden on Saturday 16 December at 8.30 pm. Led by the Summer Singers and Thirsty Ground

In Launceston the public service in the City Park will still take place, but there are others being arranged. Such as:

A Festival of Australian Christmas Carols at the Church of Apostles at 2.00pm on Sunday 10 December. It will be led by the Launceston Parish Choir, Evandale Singers, Launceston School for Seniors Choir, with Janet Hoare (piano), Camerata Obscura orchestra, and Val Towers (conducting). The cost is \$10, which includes afternoon tea in the Pastoral Centre.

**The Uniting Church Presbytery Office in Launceston has moved Location.**

Originally being located on 96 Margaret Street it has now moved to Pilgrim Uniting Church on 36 Paterson Street.

**In a world where too many people are facing pain, suffering and injustice, supporting the Christmas Bowl appeal is still an essential act of compassion, just as it has been since its humble beginnings in 1949.**

The story of the Christmas Bowl has now become a key part of the history of Christian compassion in Australia. On Christmas Day 1949 the Reverend Frank Byatt of Victoria placed an empty bowl on the dinner table and asked his guests to give a gift to bring relief and hope to refugees who had fled the horrors of World War II.

Rev Byatt could never have known that his simple act would grow into the incredible outpouring of love and compassion it's become today. Last year alone, people like you helped to raise a record-breaking \$2.5 million for those around the world who are suffering hardship and hunger.

As well as being a much loved ecumenical tradition, the Christmas Bowl appeal is a demonstration of unity for Christians in Australia.



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**“Making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace” (Ephesians 4:3), the Christmas Bowl brought together 1,800 churches from 19 denominations last year to help those in need.**

Sadly, the Christmas Bowl is needed now more than ever, with unprecedented numbers of people displaced around the world and millions more suffering from severe hunger. Supporting the Christmas Bowl is a powerful act of faith and love as well as a tangible act of solidarity. By taking part, we’re affirming that every displaced or hungry person is an individual worthy of empathy and compassion.

This year, we’re helping hard working farming families in Zimbabwe who are struggling to feed their children after suffering the worst drought in 35 years. We’ve already taught hundreds of farmers new techniques that can save lives, but so many more are in need of help.

By supporting the Christmas Bowl this year, your act of compassion will help make a life-changing difference to the people who need it most.



The Tasmanian Council of Churches’ Emergencies Ministry (TCC EM) seeks to provide compassionate care in times of crisis. We provide emotional and spiritual care, personal support, and psychological first aid, and contribute to outreach in the event of a disaster or emergency. As part of the Tasmanian Social Recovery Plan, through the activation of a regional social recovery committee, the TCC EM is the primary agency whose sole purpose is to deliver pastoral care in times of crisis. Deployment can also come through local councils or other government departments.

We hope to continue building on our network by training and accrediting volunteers from various Tasmanian faith communities who can provide Pastoral & Spiritual Care in disaster settings and the emergency context.

**Financial donations to Emergencies Ministry are tax deductible. Deposits can be made to the following account:**

**Tasmanian Council of Churches Emergencies  
Ministry  
BSB 067103, Account 1064 1483**

**Please contact us if you would like to receive a receipt for tax (or other) purposes.**

P.O. Box 175, Rokeby, TAS, 7019  
Admin@tccem.org.au

# The Doone Kennedy Memorial Fund

Order of Saint John of Jerusalem, Knights  
Hospitaller, Australasia



*Assisting refugees in their settlement integration into the community and general well being*

Doone Kennedy AO remains a highly respected and valued member of the Order of Saint John of Jerusalem. Her passion was people, their welfare and their well being. During her life Doone was involved with many organizations including the Mary Ogilvie Homes Society, Hobart District Nursing Service, the Sudden Infant Death Society, the Southern Region Ambulance Service Advisory Council and the Asthma Foundation.

During her ten years as Lord Mayor, Doone fostered relationships with other major cities, promoted Hobart as a centre for tourism and commerce, and undertook heritage preservation projects and beautification programs for the city.

For Doone, Hobart was the place to live, the place to be. This fund in her honour is to help refugees come to feel the same way.

## The Memorial Fund

The Order of Saint John's Motto is '*Pro Fide Pro Utilitate Hominum*': For Faith For Service to Humanity. This fund honours one whose life reflected the Order's motto. Please help us, who call Tasmania home, to help those for whom everything will be new and

challenging to make this state their home.

The Funds' Mission Statement reads: 'As a Christian organization, the funds will be dispersed to refugees, primarily those fleeing religious persecution, to assist their settlement and integration into the community and to assist their general well being.'



Donations to the fund are eligible for tax deductibility. They are deposited with The Order of Saint John of Jerusalem, Australasia, Charitable fund.

Distribution is made to eligible individual applicants through a registered organisation, not directly to the individual. Assessment of applications are made by a panel of members of the Order in Tasmania.

The Tasmanian Commandery of The Order of Saint John of Jerusalem is grateful for the assistance of the Hobart City Council, and for the partnership with Catholic Care and the Greek Orthodox Parish of Holy Trinity.

### Your donation can make a difference

Electronic funds transfer:

Bendigo Bank BSB 633 108

Account number 150234045

Cheques made payable to: OSJ Tasmania,

*The Doone Kennedy Memorial Fund*

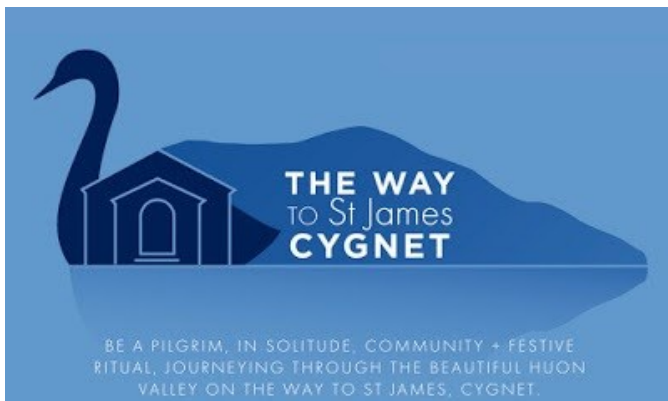
P.O. Box 191 South Hobart 7004

### For initial inquiry to apply for funds

**please contact: Chevalier John Kennedy KGSJ**

P.O. Box 191, South Hobart, 7004

An Application form will then be sent to your organization. At the moment assistance is being given to individuals who have applied through another organization. We welcome any additional information an organization could supply



## 12—13 January 2018

After the second successful pilgrimage in 2017, we are pleased to announce the pilgrimage will be on again in 2018.

Inspired by the famous Spanish El Camino of St James this two day pilgrim walk will take you through the scenic and peaceful Huon Valley to a celebration at the Spanish mission styled Church of St James, nestled in the heart of Cygnet.

Through fellowship, reflection, rejoicing and ritual you will find an opportunity to reconnect with the spiritual dimensions of your life.

## PILGRIMAGE DETAILS

The pilgrimage commences on Friday 12th January 2018 at 10.30am from the Mountain River Community Hall and finishes on Saturday 13th January 2017 at approx. 5pm at St James Church, Cygnet in the midst of the wonderful Cygnet Folk Festival.

The route covers rural roads in southern Tasmania and is best described as needing low to medium fitness levels. Pilgrims are advised to attain reasonable bushwalking levels of fitness. Pilgrims must be a minimum age of 10.

**Day one** is from Mountain River to Ranelagh and is 14km, approximately.

**Day two** is from Ranelagh Church (with a bus trip to Cradoc to avoid narrow sections of the Channel Highway) and then along the Cradoc Coast Road next to the Huon River and over the Silver Hill Road and Missing Link Road to Cygnet and is 15km, approximately.

## ACCOMMODATION

Accommodation in the Huon Valley area is limited. Most pilgrims bring a bed roll which can be laid on the floor of St Mary of the Cross Church Ranelagh, or pitch their tents in the grounds surrounding that church. There is also similar limited accommodation at St James Anglican Church close by to St Mary's and at Mission 21 also relatively close by.

## MEALS

Morning coffee and cake at the Mountain River Memorial Hall will be available at a small cost. Optional lunch pack for journey to Ranelagh will be also available (\$12). Evening meal provided at St Mary of the Cross Church Ranelagh (BBQ) is covered by registration. Alcohol and other beverages will be available at reasonable cost. Breakfast at Ranelagh is covered by registration. Optional lunch pack for journey to Cygnet will be commercially provided at Ranelagh (\$12). The provided lunches will be vegetarian.

Any special dietary requirements are the responsibility of pilgrims.

## TRANSPORT

Busses are provided for transport from Hobart to Mountain River on Friday 12th January, and for the return journey from Cygnet to Hobart on Saturday 13th January.

For Registration

go to [www.wayto stjames.com.au](http://www.wayto stjames.com.au)

## Other News

At the most recent meeting of the Tasmanian Council of Churches Executive, concern was expressed for the welfare of some of the most vulnerable people in our community and the ways in which the welfare arms of the various Churches are working together in a variety of ways to support these people.



### COMMUNITY VOICE ON POKIES REFORM

One example of a current initiative is the Pokies Reform Coalition. A number of individual Churches and/or their welfare agencies have already supported the Community Voice on Pokies Reform Coalition, which is comprised of 55 member organisations including local councils, not-for-profit service organisations, peak bodies, church-based groups and many others who see the harm caused by poker machines on a daily basis.

The following motion was passed by the meeting:

***That the TCC supports the lobbying against gambling in Tasmania and applies to the Community Voice on Pokies Reform Coalition to register the Council's support for poker machine reform in pubs and clubs in Tasmania.***

**[www.socialactionresearchcentre.org.au](http://www.socialactionresearchcentre.org.au)**