



The ACC Newsletter

Assembly of Confessing Congregations
within the Uniting Church in Australia Incorporated
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Next newsletter February 2008: Deadline for submission: January 31, 2008

1. **ACC ANNUAL CONFERENCE AND AGM: 15-17 November**

The minute record and reports will be sent in 2008 after being finalised and approved by the Council, but a brief report is included below.

Approximately 140 people attended at least one session of the 2007 AGM and conference, with a maximum of 130 at any one time. The meeting consisted of business and plenary sessions. We were well served at the Rydges on Bell Hotel Preston, especially in terms of catering and by the helpful staff.

PRAYER

The whole time was covered by the Prayer Network, led by Revd Anne Hibbard and intercessors from four states. The first annual prayer gathering was also held the day before the conference, hosted by the Macedonian Evangelical Uniting Church in Preston, and local members and conference delegates were able to join in fellowship, teaching and prayer 13-14 November.

BUSINESS

The business mainly revolved around reports and material from the Commissions, as well as reports from the Council and management.

The work of the six commissions was especially highlighted:

- Cross Cultural: contact is beginning to be made with a wide variety of groups, encouraging them to be more public in their private convictions.
- Discipleship and Evangelism: the bible study and resources development were highlighted. A new study was announced (details in the flyer included with this mail)
- Doctrine and Theology: the draft theological statement prompted considerable discussion and it was agreed to refer the statement for comment from members before final approval by the Council in 2008. A copy of the statement is included with this newsletter.

- **Ecumenical:** Contact has been made with over 20 heads of churches in Australia and replies received from 7, with meetings to be arranged over the coming months. Contact has also been made with overseas reform groups.
- **Networks:** reports from each state were presented and the prayer network. States were affirmed in their work and the need to support and encourage local members, many of whom feel isolated within the institutional context.
- **Social Responsibility:** A statement on the church and social responsibility was received and is available on the website. The convenor, Dr Brian Edgar, will be interviewed in the December 2007 ACC Magazine.

Council appointments:

Chair: Revd Dr Max Champion

Deputy Chair: Revd Steve Estherby

Secretary: Revd Ivan Kirk

Continuing appointed members:

NSW: Pastor Grahame Abrahams (NSW)

QLD: Revd Hedley Fihaki (Qld);

SA: Revd Rod James (SA); Ms Robyn McKay (SA); Revd Don Purdey (SA);

Victoria: Revd Dr Ian Breward (Victoria); Mrs Margaret Macmillan (Victoria);

Two new members: Dr Colin Adam (from Victoria, and also the new Treasurer); Revd Mike Fawcett (Bicton, WA).

Vision Statement: A fuller vision statement will be prepared along with longer term plans. A 'masthead or 'motto' for the vision statement was approved:

***Confessing the Lord Jesus Christ,
Proclaiming the Truth,
Renewing the Church.***

ACC 2008 AGM and Conference. The SA ACC Movement has been asked to be the local arrangements committee. The date for the conference and AGM has now been set. Note: It is earlier than originally projected: **11 – 13 September 2008**

SPEAKERS

Bill Muehlenberg of 'Culturewatch' (<http://www.billmuehlenberg.com/>) spoke on 'Christianity, Secularism And Culture: When Nations Perish', providing an overview of the changes in moral understanding and our environment over the last 30 years.

Philip Johnson spoke on 'New Spirituality in the Church and Marketplace: Churchless Faith, Alternate Pathways and Reinventing the Past', challenging engagement and making a defence for the faith today.

Gordon Preece (Anglican Priest Melbourne, involved with several groups including Urban Seed - <http://www.urbanseed.org/index.php>) spoke on 'Whose Justice? Which Sexuality? Sex, Social Justice and the City of God.', using the TV show, 'Sex and the City' to compare and contrast Augustine's 'City of God', calling us to a renewed cultural commitment and passion for outreach.

Max Champion spoke on the theme 'Gimme some truth' at the Public Rally held at the Macedonian Evangelical Uniting Church in Preston. We are very thankful for the hospitality of the Macedonian Evangelical members, and the generosity of the worshippers, with over \$1700 in offerings.

Overall, the AGM and Conference were an encouraging and stimulating time and we look forward to 2008, and to capitalise on the large and supportive congregational base which is developing in South Australia.

2. State and Region Reports

NEW SOUTH WALES

A separate note is included with this mailing for NSW Members.

GENERAL MEETING OF ALL NSW MEMBERS
SATURDAY 8th DECEMBER

Location: Sutherland Uniting Church
(Flora & Merton Streets – short distance from the Railway Station)

10.00am Prayers and Reflection
 11.00am State Meeting and AGM commences
 12noon Anticipated finishing time
 BYO lunch to enjoy some fellowship. Tea/coffee will be available.

Further information: Bruce Fairhall; **Email:** bruce@fairhall.id.au
Phone: (02) 4571 1019, or Revd Dr Alan Russell: (02) 9363 1861

Regional Dinner for ACC – Sydney

Members from ACC congregations in the Presbytery of Sydney met on Monday 19th November at Newtown Mission to hear a report from the ACC Conference, and also shared updates from each congregation and ideas to help support and encourage each other within the presbytery area. It has been agreed to hold an occasional dinner and to pray for each other and continue to share and promote common activities, including breakfast meetings and outreach events.

PLEASE CONSIDER HOLDING A REGIONAL ACC DINNER IN YOUR AREA.

WESLEY INSTITUTE SPONSORED EVENTS

- **Ministry Workers Conference: 19-21 February 2008**
 For ministers, youth workers, pastoral workers, key leaders and their spouses within the UCA NSW Synod.
Aim: For ministry workers to devote themselves to bible study, prayer and sharing their ministry experience with like-minded colleagues.
Dates: 5.00pm Tues 19 Feb to 3.00pm Thurs 21 Feb 2008
Venue: Merroo Conference Centre, Kurrajong NSW
Cost: \$200 Twin/Triple share with ensuite, \$350 per couple
Keynote Speaker: Rev Dr John Dickson, Director of the Centre for Public Christianity

- **Day Conference: PUT THE FOLLOWING DATE IN YOUR DIARY**
 ABOUT 70 ACC and RA members attended the August 2006 day and found it excellent and stimulating, and encouraging the Lord. Further details and registration forms will be sent next year.
 Wesley Institute - **Day Conference Sat 12 July 2008**
Cost: \$35; **Venue:** Wesley Institute

- Speakers:** Dr Joe Fantin, Dallas Theological Seminary, plus electives by the faculty of Wesley Institute.

QUEENSLAND

The Queensland group are actively exploring the possibility of setting up local fellowship based groups consisting of individual ACC members in order to encourage members who do not belong to an ACC member congregation. There are eleven different district areas being considered. Committee members are approaching contact people who may be able to facilitate these meetings as co-ordinators.

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Revd John Cranmer has retired from his leadership role here and Revd Dr Phil Marshall has taken over the convenor role. A further report about SA ACC and the latest Steering Committee meeting will be provided in the next edition of the newsletter.

SA members are very welcome to attend the committee meetings and the prayer time beforehand. Contact the new convenor Phil Marshall for information and additional items for discussion: E-mail: phil2042@gmail.com

3. National Council

The National Council met by teleconference on Monday 26th November. The two new members were warmly welcomed. Most of the business revolved around facilitating matters from the 2007 AGM and planning for 2008 (**11 – 13 September 2008**), including arrangements for possible speakers. Information about contact with two heads of churches was also received.

Survey of ACC Congregations: The Council considered the request of Revd Paul Jensen (a UCA minister in Queensland) to survey ACC members in relation to his university project. The details of this project are included below, and more information will be sent to members as soon as a final decision about the arrangement is made.

Description from the Participant Sheet.

A number of ex members and members (clergy, lay and others) of the Uniting Church in Australia are being invited to consider their thoughts and feelings which led them to leave the Uniting Church in Australia. This includes in part issues pertaining to sexuality and ministry. Participants are invited to complete one Background details page, and a short survey. This project is being conducted as part of Rev/Mr. Jensen's PhD candidature in Psychology through the University of Queensland School of Psychology.

4. ACC MAGAZINE - Catalyst

The December issue of Catalyst will be out shortly. For the first two issues, a large number of copies were produced to enable members to provide as free copies, but this will be lessened for the next issue due to cost. Some sample copies will be available for promotion – please contact the office if you are able to assist.
