

At 10am a segment of Music and Worship was led by the Kardinia creative arts team. This segment included a *Dwelling in the Word* led by the Executive Officer, Paul Cameron, focussing on Philippians 2:1-11.

At 10.20am AGM Chair Greg Warmbrunn (One Community) welcomed delegates and introduced the day. Greg also delivered an Acknowledgement of Country of the Wathaurong people, and its Elders past and present.

At 10.30am the Executive Officer brought a brief reflection on the 'State of Conference', a copy of which is attached.

### **Affiliations**

The following Motions were agreed to with acclamation, and followed by prayer by the President, Robyn Millership.

#### **Motion 1**

**Resolved:** That the Chinese Church of Christ be admitted to the Conference of Churches of Christ in Victoria and Tasmania.

**Moved:** Nathan Nhan **Seconded:** Martin Boutros

#### **Motion 2**

**Resolved:** That the LifeGate Church of Christ be admitted to the Conference of Churches of Christ in Victoria and Tasmania.

**Moved:** Martin Boutros **Seconded:** Paul Cameron

### **World Convention Greeting**

Delegates then received words of greeting from the Executive Director of the World Convention of Churches of Christ, Gary Holloway.

### **Procedural Matters**

The Chair introduced various Procedural Matters about the management of the day. This included: That the 2011/12 Recommended Minimum Ministry Salary is available today; that the Report from Review into Indigenous Ministry is in the Delegates packs; and that the reception of the Reports as published including Conference Financials (summaries in Report book, full statements available in foyer) will take place through the day, but their adoption will take place later in the day.

### **Apologies** were received from:

John Sharpe (Ringwood), Rob Keller (Cross Culture), David Armstrong (Cross Culture), Lisa Stubberfield (Wangaratta), Bob Brown (Churchill Co-operating Churches), Russell Kilgour (Connection), Darrell Baker (Gateway - Warrnambool), Shannon Cheal (Ringwood), Ballarat onezone Gillies Street Church of Christ, Bendigo - Short Street Church of Christ, Boort Church of Christ, Bright Church of Christ, Brunswick Christian Fellowship, Burwood-Mt Waverley Church of Christ, Churchill (Co-operating Churches), Devonport Church of Christ, Dover Community Church, Gateway – Warrnambool, Geeveston Community Church, Hamilton Church of Christ, Hobart City Church of Christ, Huonville Community Church Inc, Joyful Church of Christ, Maryborough Church of Christ, Montrose Church of Christ, Portland Church of Christ, Red Cliffs Church of Christ, Springvale Church of Christ, Stawell Church of Christ, Ulverstone Church of Christ, Yarrowonga Church of Christ, Beth Holden (Council), Tom Blazé (Mission & Ministry Board), Carmen Blazé (M&M Placement Taskforce), Theo Mackaay (Victorian Council of Churches), Allan Meyer (Careforce Lifekeys Inc), Helen Meyer (Careforce Lifekeys Inc) and Third Place Communities Inc.

## Minutes of the 2010 AGM

**Resolved:** That the Minutes of the 2010 AGM of churches of Christ in Victoria and Tasmania Inc. be adopted, as distributed.

**Moved:** Robyn Millership, **Seconded:** Terry McCredden

This was a unanimous decision.

## Update on Community Care Merger Process

Community Care Board Chair Terry McCredden brought a brief update on the Community Care merger process. His main points were:

### Timeline:

- Merger deed signed between
  - Churches of Christ in Queensland,
  - Churches of Christ Community Care and
  - Conference of Churches of Christ in Victoria & Tasmania, on 21 February 2011
- Fred Combridge House closed 2 March 2011
- Merger date 1 July 2011

### Looking Forward:

- Aged Care facilities will remain in Victoria
- Redevelopment of Betheden is planned by 2015
- Proceeds of the sale of Fred Combridge House will ensure continuation of benevolent community programs in Victoria
- Close links with Conference and Partner Departments will be maintained through ongoing presence at Fairfield office

### Acknowledgements:

- Board members
  - Peter Loftus, Deputy Chair, Commenced 20 years ago on 23 May 1991*
  - Graham Condron, Treasurer, Commenced 17 years ago on 26 May 1994*
  - Doug Booth, Commenced May 2002*
  - Alan Niven, Commenced January 2005*
  - Linda Young, Commenced October 2006*
  - Paul Cameron, Commenced August 2003*
  - Robyn Millership, Commenced May 2009*
- Dean Phelan (7 years) and Max Gowty (9 years) assumed the chair of CCCC between 1994 and 2010

Prior to Morning Tea Delegates and other participants were reminded that during debate, anyone can speak to, or ask a question, but only those who are Registered Delegates can vote on a motion; and that Delegates and other participants will have one opportunity to speak to each motion or report (except for those answering questions), for a maximum of three (3) minutes, until all who wish to speak have had the opportunity, and then a speaker may have one further three (3) minutes.

## Morning Tea

## Motions

### Motion 4, Statement of Purpose

**Resolved:** That the current Statement of Purpose that precedes the Constitution of Churches of Christ in Victoria and Tasmania Inc be replaced with the following Statement.

**Moved:** Robyn Millership, **Seconded:** Sarah Deutscher

### Statement of Purpose

#### What is our COMMON MISSION?

*To be a movement of the people of God gathering around the central figure of Jesus Christ, empowered by the Holy Spirit, living out his Way in our local contexts and inviting others to do the same.*

## **What are our SHARED VALUES?**

### ***The Gospel***

We passionately value the good news about God as revealed to us in Jesus Christ, and are committed to the mission of communicating it and sharing it with others, making disciples who can make more disciples, and so extend the Kingdom of God.

### ***The Scriptures***

We value and affirm the centrality of the scriptures as our authority for Christian belief, identity and practice.

### ***Diversity***

We value and recognise the diversity of Christian understanding, belief and experience. Therefore, we value the freedom, flexibility and creativity of a variety of ministry practice and expression, and are committed to the nurture of a diversity of healthy and growing mission-shaped churches that, by crossing frontiers and impacting cultures, are a sign, witness and foretaste of all that God has for the world through Jesus Christ.

### ***Formation***

We value various spiritual practices and disciplines described in the New Testament as aspects of our formation as disciples of Jesus, and our constant renewal by God and the Holy Spirit. Therefore we passionately encourage active personal formation through practices and disciplines that include (but are not limited to) baptism, the breaking of bread, fellowship, prayer, worship, meditation, stewardship, spiritual gift discovery etc.

### ***Collaborative Ministry***

We value the unique contribution to ministry of each individual believer, and are committed to equipping believers (through, for example, the five-fold ministry pattern of Ephesians 4:11-16), and releasing them to participate in ministry and mission on the basis of their giftedness and capacity.

### ***Servanthood***

We value the biblical principles of servanthood and therefore seek to be a servant church committed to responding to human need with love and compassion and to identify and release servant leaders.

### ***Justice***

We value the dignity, equality and inherent worth of all persons regardless of gender, race, economic standing or belief system. Therefore, in announcing the Kingdom and expectant of its arrival, we will work for social justice, equal opportunity for all persons, and the responsible care and management of the environment.

### ***Collaboration and Unity***

We value the close fellowship, community and collaboration of all those who accept Jesus as Lord and Saviour. Therefore, we passionately seek to promote unity in the wider church and are committed to the ultimate ideal of visible unity.

## **Motions 5, 6, 7 and 8**

The Chair invited delegates to note that since the 2010 AGM there have been many conversations, formal and informal, planned and unplanned about what is now the Affirmation document. This has included visits to churches by the Executive Officer and the President, as well as a conversation between Council and a group of churches seeking clarification about the Affinity/Affirmation process, as well as a range of other matters related to the shape of Conference's structures etc.

Council's response was to indicate that the identity, purpose and belonging conversations have been underway for some time, that its desire is to proceed with the Motions as communicated (which include an extension of Affirmation conversation time until October), recognising that there are two further Motions with regards to process and timing. Council also expressed its commitment to provide processes for the ongoing Affirmation conversation and to have further dialogue with the group as needed about other matters raised.

The Chair also invited delegates to note that with regards to the status of the Affirmation, Council's legal advice has been confirmed that a document can be whatever its creators want it to be, no matter what it is called. The law normally looks at intent of a document rather than what it is called. If the intent is that it is just an affirmation and all parties understand and agree to that, then that is what it is.

However, as it is understood that all documents are to a degree legal documents if there are 2 parties involved, for clarity purposes a final clause could be included in the Affirmation clearly stating that it is not meant to be interpreted as a legally binding contract.

The Chair then read Motions 5-8 and indicated that he would take discussion on them together before discerning how to proceed with seeking Resolution/s.

### **Motion 5: Constitution Clause 5. Affiliation with Conference**

That clause 5 of the Constitution of Churches of Christ in Victoria and Tasmania Inc be amended by the insertion of a new 5.4 *A church's affiliation with Conference shall be confirmed by a document jointly signed by the church's leaders and the Conference Executive Officer and Conference President* and that former clause 5.4 be subsequently renumbered as 5.5.

### **Motion 6: Consequential Motion**

That the Affirmation paper dated 13 April 2011 be adopted as the basis for a document that fulfils Constitution 5.4; that affiliated churches be invited to continue the conversations to shape this document in order for it to be decided at a Special General Meeting to be planned for an appropriate date in October 2011, with a view to affiliated churches being invited to sign the Affirmation by the 2012 AGM, and to present it there as an act of partnership with all other affiliated and affiliating churches.

### **Motion 7**

That the Conference of Churches of Christ as assembled at Geelong on May 14, 2011 defer the Notice of Motion concerning a covenant, or similar documents, until such time as all affiliated churches have the opportunity to fully understand the implications of the said documents, after which a Notice of Motion may be submitted for ratification.

### **Motion 8**

That the Conference of Churches of Christ as assembled at Geelong on May 14, 2011 allow all church congregations the opportunity to meet with Conference Executive to discuss more fully the contents of the Motion regarding "the notion of a Covenant" (or similar documents) "as a written expression of the relationship between an affiliated church and Churches of Christ in Vic/Tas" and copies of the views expressed at these discussions forwarded to all church congregations.

A long and open conversation then took place, initially around Motion 5, but also around Motion 6, and the stated need for churches to "have more time" to consider the Affirmation paper (which was also an expression of Motions 7 and 8). This conversation included people speaking for and against Motions 5 and 6, often with affirmations of the work undertaken so far.

Milton Oliver (Roxburgh Park) foreshadowed an amendment to Motion 6, or a new Motion, that, while affirming the reform process so far, opened up the time period in a different way, with the Affirmation paper as a resource for the development of a document that fulfils the Constitution (assuming Motion 5 is passed).

Permission was received from the Movers and Seconders of Motions 6, 7 and 8 to place those Motions on hold.

### **Alternative Motion 6**

**Resolved per Constitution 10.4.2:** That the AGM as assembled permits the alternative Motion 6 be introduced.

Milton Oliver's alternative Motion 6 was then read to Delegates:

**Resolved:** That this AGM affirms the reform initiative of the Conference Council thus far; that the Affirmation paper dated 13 April 2011 be used as a resource for the development of such a document that fulfils Constitution clause 5.4; and that affiliated churches be meaningfully involved in the development of this document which shall be submitted to a future Special General meeting no later than the 2012 AGM.

**Moved:** Milton Oliver, **Seconded:** Ian Smith

### **Motion 5**

Bert Stevens (Norlane) **Moved** an amendment to Motion 5 that added the words "such a document is not to be regarded as a legally binding document", the idea of such an amendment was **Seconded:** Ray Baker. After discussion the amendment was rejected.

**Resolved:** That clause 5 of the Constitution of Churches of Christ in Victoria and Tasmania Inc be amended by the insertion of a new 5.4 *A church's affiliation with Conference shall be confirmed by a document jointly signed by the church's leaders and the Conference Executive Officer and Conference President* and that former clause 5.4 be subsequently renumbered as 5.5.

**Moved:** Robyn Millership, **Seconded:** Rod Brown

## **New Motion 6**

Motions 7 and 8 having been withdrawn, the AGM **Resolved** to agree to the New Motion 6 as above. **Moved:** Milton Oliver, **Seconded:** Ian Smith

The President, Robyn Millership then encouraged church leaders and ministers to help Council find out how to communicate these matters better with churches. If we are to meet this commitment, we need better communication about it, and we need to ensure that blockages to communication are freed up..

David Wells (One Community) speaking on behalf of those present, commended Council and the Executive for their vision and dedicated work in bringing these motions before the churches, and that he is fully aware of how tiring being in leadership can be. The Resolution means more time again on this process, and we pray and support the Council and the Executive in finding the energy it will take. "Thank you for the leadership you've shown us".

## **Motion 9: Constitution Clause 8. Meetings**

**Resolved:** That clause 8.4 of the Constitution of Churches of Christ in Victoria and Tasmania Inc be amended to include the words "*or following a written request from more than 20% of Affiliated Churches*", and that the clause will now read:

*8.4 A Special General Meeting may be called at the discretion of the Conference Council should the necessity arise or following a written request from more than 20% of Affiliated Churches, and the Conference Executive Officer shall give notice of any such meeting at least four weeks prior to the meeting.*

**Moved:** David Brooker, **Seconded:** Robyn Millership

Milton Oliver (Roxburgh Park), in affirming the foresight of Council in bringing this motion, **Moved** an amendment that "20% of Affiliated churches" be changed to "at least ten Affiliated Churches". **Seconded:** Mike Grechko

**Resolved:** To so amend Motion 9.

Delegates then unanimously **Resolved** to amend Constitution clause 8.4 to read:

*A Special General Meeting may be called at the discretion of the Conference Council should the necessity arise or following a written request from at least ten Affiliated Churches, and the Conference Executive Officer shall give notice of any such meeting at least four weeks prior to the meeting.*

## **Motion 10: Ministry Contribution**

**Resolved:** That clause 7 of the Constitution of Churches of Christ in Victoria and Tasmania Inc be amended with a new heading and new clauses 7.1, 7.2, 7.3 replacing old clauses as follows,

### **7. Ministry Contribution**

*7.1 Every Affiliated Church shall contribute each year to the annual Budget of Conference and the Council of Churches of Christ in Australia on a percentage basis of the Affiliated Church's general offerings, as reported in the Church's Census of the previous year.*

*7.2 The percentage of the Affiliated Church's general offerings that will form the Ministry Contribution is fixed by resolution of the Conference AGM.*

*7.3 If an Affiliated Church's Ministry Contribution provided for in clause 7.1 remains unpaid for a period of twelve months, the Church shall meet with representatives of Conference to discuss the Church's circumstances, and shall not be entitled to official representation at Conference AGM or any other General Meeting until all outstanding contributions are paid; if the Ministry Contribution remains unpaid for three consecutive years the Church's ongoing Affiliation will be reviewed.*

**Moved:** Lindsay Cutler, **Seconded** Paul Cameron

This Resolution followed introductory comments by the Mover, and an extended discussion where clarification was sought on the Ministry Contribution, and various people spoke for and against it, expressing the concerns of the churches they were representing. Several speakers affirmed the notion that the Ministry Contribution was an expression of a commitment we share to each other and to the development of our movement and the churches that make it up, and that healthy churches have a responsibility to feed back into the system that supports others. It was also noted that the Contribution would be introduced in Jan 2012, allowing further time to address questions and concerns.

## **Lunch**

Before saying Grace, the Chair invited delegates to take a minute's silence to honour Past Presidents—Gordon Stirling, Gordon Scambler, Max Carter, and ministers and other leaders from our churches who have passed away in the last year.

Afterwards he also reminded those present of the two lunchtime conversations, one with Gary Holloway in to find out more about World Convention and the 2012 WC in Brazil, and a second with John Gilmore for an update from GMP.

The Chair also reminded delegates to cast their vote in Council election process over lunch.

## **After Lunch**

### **Affiliations (part 2)**

The following Motion was agreed to with acclamation, and followed by prayer by the President, Robyn Millership.

#### **Motion 3**

**Resolved:** That the Wallan Gateway church be admitted to the Conference of Churches of Christ in Victoria and Tasmania.

**Moved:** Martin Boutros, **Seconded:** David Brooker

### **Focus: Churches of Christ Theological College**

Andrew Menzies, Principal—CCTC, brought an extended focus on recent progress and activities at CCTC.

*Notes from the CCTC PowerPoint presentation will be included here when they are received.*

### **Other Updates and Reports:**

**Mission and Ministry**—Martin Boutros gave a brief update on activities of Mission and Ministry, including strategic planning, funding needs, and the new staff appointment (Michael Vanderree—Director Church Vision and Health).

**The Properties Corporation**—Joel Plotnek and Max Carr gave a brief update on activities and initiatives of Prop Corp, and Delegates present affirmed a new Prop Corp Trustee.

**Resolved:** That David Warren (One Community church) is appointed as a Trustee for the Properties Corporation.

**Moved:** Max Carr, **Seconded:** David Ratten

### **Treasurer's Report**

Lindsay Cutler, in speaking to the Report, congratulated Council for keeping the expense increase to only 3% over the last year. This would have resulted in a surplus in 2010 except for a \$10,000 donation to the CCA disaster fund.

### **VCC Presidency and Volunteers**

Assembled Delegates and participants were then led in a prayer of blessing for Ian Smith as he is shortly to be formally inducted into his role as President of the Victorian Council of Churches. Ian also gave a brief overview of the role and importance of participation in VCC activities, inviting those present to consider possible involvement.

The Executive Officer, in acknowledging Ian, also expressed appreciation for those who regularly volunteer at Fairfield, and invited others to indicate a willingness to be involved in a similar way.

### **Global Mission Partners—Update**

John Gilmore gave a brief update on the activities of GMP, highlighting good news stories and needs as well noting the formalisation of the partnership between Churches of Christ in Indonesia and Australia.

### **Motions (continued)**

### **Motion 11: Ministry Contribution, Consequential Motion**

**Resolved:** That in order to fulfil new Constitution Clause 7.1, the specific percentage figure for the Ministry Contribution of Affiliated Churches be 2.5%; with an upper Ministry Contribution cap payable per Affiliated Church of \$20 000; that for new churches or new congregations renting worship or ministry spaces the Contribution be calculated on general offerings less \$10 000pa for the first five years of their affiliation; and that the percentage basis for the calculation of the Ministry Contribution be implemented from 1 January 2012.

**Moved:** Lindsay Cutler, **Seconded:** Paul Cameron

### **Motion 12: Affiliation Fees/Ministry Contribution 2011**

**Resolved:** That the Affiliation Fee/Ministry Contribution for churches in Victoria and Tasmania for 2011 be set at \$25 per Member and Christian in Fellowship (pm).

**Moved:** Lindsay Cutler **Seconded:** Paul Cameron

### **Motion 13: Preamble to Constitution**

That the following Preamble acknowledging the Indigenous people as the First People of this land be attached to the Constitution of Churches of Christ in Victoria and Tasmania Inc.

Churches of Christ in Victoria and Tasmania acknowledges:

1. That the land of Australia is under the guardianship of the Indigenous peoples, who since ancient times have formed enduring societies, cultivated and nurtured the land, lived off the bounty of the land, and, in all respects, treated the land as their own.
2. That when the forebears of the Movement we now know as Churches of Christ arrived in this nation, it had been colonised and was being further colonised by a society that had aspects of paternalism, racism and prejudice as part of its culture. At times, Churches of Christ shared the values of that culture, under which it operated. There were exceptions, as some members of Churches of Christ were advocates on behalf of the Indigenous peoples, and conducted mission and ministry amongst them that reflected the character of Christ, rather than the prevailing culture of the time.
3. That our mission and ministry amongst Indigenous people was a continuation of the work of the Creator God amongst them, as evidenced through several of their stories, experiences and other aspects of their culture.
4. That there have been isolated instances of Churches of Christ members, attendees or institutions treating Indigenous people badly.
5. That there has been, within Churches of Christ, a widespread silence regarding Indigenous injustice from an institutional position.
6. That the Indigenous people occupied and possessed this land before the arrival of European settlers and were therefore true guardians of the land;
7. That insofar as the Indigenous people have not made treaties disposing of the land—due in part because they see it as impossible to “own” the land—they should still be seen as guardians of the land;
8. That violence and injustice have been perpetrated against Indigenous people in the colonisation of Australia;
9. That the Church’s relationship with Indigenous people has been ambiguous: while caring for the physical and spiritual well-being of Indigenous people, and modelling what it means to be Jesus followers, the Church has too often been silent about:
  - a. the needless suppression of some traditional practices;
  - b. the deliberate breaking up of Indigenous families;
  - c. the appropriation of Indigenous land;
  - d. the acceptance of societal attitudes and practices which have contributed to the injustices experienced by Indigenous people.
10. That the experience of many Indigenous people continues to be one of injustice and lack of understanding by sections of Australian society, with inappropriate measures of support and assistance from the various levels of government often not alleviating the experience of injustice. Indigenous people feel neglected, their young people suffer disproportionately from the hopelessness of unemployment, and their life is one of comparative ill-health, poor education, sub-standard housing and over representation in our prison system.

Therefore, as a Movement, and as an act of repentance<sup>1</sup> we:

- a. Seek forgiveness from Indigenous people for our complicity and silence;
- b. Seek to continue building relationships with Indigenous people based on respect of their culture, heritage, spirituality and identity;
- c. Seek to support Indigenous people in their desire to determine the shape of their own communities;
- d. Support the implementation of:

<sup>1</sup> Repentance: A change of mind and a change of attitude leading to a change in actions.

- i. An agreement to provide an equitable basis for Indigenous people's guardianship<sup>2</sup> of this land;
  - ii. Accessible and transparent political processes whereby Indigenous people can determine, implement and speak to policies which affect them;
  - iii. Economic rights<sup>3</sup> for Indigenous people so they can develop their homelands;
  - iv. Appropriate restitution<sup>4</sup> for Indigenous people.
- e. Pledge to undertake activities that will:
- i. Increase our awareness of the needs and aspirations of Indigenous people;
  - ii. Bring us into solidarity with Indigenous people and help us identify with and support their struggles;
  - iii. Lead us into genuine reconciliation;
  - iv. Encourage our local churches to forge ongoing partnerships with Indigenous churches, missions and other organisations.

Churches of Christ in Victoria and Tasmania, and its affiliated churches, will strive to ensure that our work with and among Indigenous people is adequately resourced, will strive to ensure the ongoing development and encouragement of Indigenous Christian leaders, will support the establishment of Indigenous Churches and ministries, and will assist them to move towards genuine autonomy of expression.

We acknowledge that our churches, like our society as a whole, will be called to account based on how we treat our most vulnerable members.

**Moved:** Merryl Blair **Seconded:** Craig Brown

After a healthy discussion about the Preamble, its contents (including some specific concepts and wording), the need to be united on the matter if possible, and in recognition that churches needed more time to consider it as a possible Preamble to the Constitution, it was agreed to set the Motion aside. Later Delegates agreed to the following process.

**Resolved per Constitution 10.4.2:** That the AGM as assembled permits the alternative Motion 13 be introduced.

#### **New Motion 13**

**Resolved:** That the Preamble to the Constitution discussion paper presented in advance of the 2011 AGM be circulated for discussion among affiliated churches with the intention to adopt a document at the 2012 AGM.

**Moved:** Merryl Blair **Seconded:** Robyn Millership

The AGM noted that this would include the opportunity for regional or other conversations, as well as local church engagement of the notion of the Preamble.

#### **Motion 14: Indigenous Ministry Engagement Kit**

**Resolved:** That, Churches of Christ in Victoria and Tasmania Inc invites affiliated churches to intentionally engage in Indigenous ministry on the basis of the Kit designed by Francine and Tony Riches; and in resolving this way we affirm the work of Francine and Tony in developing this practical tool for churches; and we affirm the church at Footscray for the way it is modelling such engagement.

**Moved:** Merryl Blair, **Seconded:** Rod Brown

This was a unanimous decision.

In resolving this way, all churches were encouraged by President Robyn Millership to invite Tony and Francine Riches to come to their church and to hear more of their story.

It was also noted that this decision is not about what happens through the Conference Budget or Formula, its about what a local church decides to give in other ways to support indigenous ministry.

#### **Reports**

**Resolved:** That all Reports be formally adopted, as published in the Report Book.

**Moved:** Robyn Millership, **Seconded:** Paul Cameron

There being no other business, the AGM finished with Prayer at 3.41pm, in advance of its scheduled 4.30pm conclusion.

<sup>2</sup> Custodial responsibility: to care, maintain and preserve the land of their birth.

<sup>3</sup> Real Rights: Under current land rights legislation Indigenous people do not possess the right to develop or mine the land. Churches of Christ endorse the right for Indigenous people to economically develop the land.

<sup>4</sup> Restitution: Petition the Government to recognise restitution to Indigenous people who are currently neglected in all land rights legislation. To where appropriate pass on to Indigenous churches and organisations lands no longer required.