

PRESIDENT'S REPORT 2016/17



Multifaith Association of South Australia

Annual General Meeting

02.04.2017

Thanks to committee and MFA friends.

The MFA has been steady for a number of years largely to the diverse and dedicated committee.

A big thank you to our executive committee which consists of President Damian Outtrim , Vice- President Denise Martin, Secretary Gunhild Jonnson and Treasurer Andrew Buchanan. the working committee members include Salim Kalaniya, Pauline Noorts, Philippa Rowland, Ingo Weber, Fuzzy Trojan ,and Maboobeh Aryanpad.

A big thank you to the all of the MFA's contributors , collaborators and contacts.

The MFA holds monthly committee meetings and is connected with other national and international organisations.

Highlights since our last AGM.

Meetings with Faith Leaders.

As part of of Revitalisation we have been meeting with various faith leaders, these have included, Dilip Chirmuley (Hindu Leader), Imam Tawhidi (Muslim representative), Reverend George Gatenby (SA Council of Buddhists) Geraldine Hawkes,(SA Council of Churches), His Grace Archbishop Philip Wilson (Catholic Church) and the Events Committee of Sukyo Mahikari.

Events we have been involved in.

Humanity at the Crossroads event, Bahai Centre in June 2016

Religions for Peace AGM in Canberra (Gunhild and I attended)

Multifaith Dinner at Cafe Chennai in conjunction with United Religions Initiative.

Hinduism and Science Seminar at The University of Adelaide.

Multifaith Celebration hosted by The Order of Australia .

Theosophical Society Harmony Day Event in conjunction with the MFA.

We had our third annual beautiful End of Year Multifaith Service at the Unitarian Church in Norwood. There were many who attended and enjoyed a variety of multi-faith presentations and buffet lunch.

Governor's Multicultural Awards.

For the third consecutive year I was invited to present at the 2016 Governor's Multicultural Awards Ceremony at Government House Adelaide. I facilitated the Multi-faith Blessing where a number of major faith groups were represented. Present were approximately 400 distinguished guests including His Excellency The Honourable Hieu Van Le and Mrs Le ,The Premier, State politicians and other leaders.

A special mention for our committee members who have been engaged in numerous activities across the State and Nation.

The MFA'S Affiliations.

Religions for Peace (RfP)

Religions for Peace (Australia) is Australia's largest community-based organisation working for inter-religious harmony and social cohesion. RfP is affiliated with the Religions for Peace International, the world's largest international coalition of representatives from the world's great religions dedicated to promoting peace.

Damian Outtrim and Gunhild Jonsson are members of the RfP national committee.

United Religions Initiative (URI)

The purpose of the United Religions Initiative is to promote enduring, daily interfaith cooperation, to end religiously motivated violence and to create cultures of peace, justice and healing for the Earth and all living beings.

Australia is part of the URI Southeast Asia and Pacific region. Multifaith SA is one of 8 *Co-operation Circles* in Australia.

Charter for Compassion

Multifaith SA is a member of the Charter for Compassion as a Religious Community.

The principle of compassion lies at the heart of all religious, ethical and spiritual traditions, calling us always to treat all others as we wish to be treated ourselves. Compassion impels us to work tirelessly to alleviate the suffering of our fellow creatures, to dethrone ourselves from the centre of our world and put another there, and to honour the inviolable sanctity of every single human being, treating everybody, without exception, with absolute justice, equity and respect.

Australian Religious Response to Climate Change (ARRCC)

ARRCC is a multi-faith, member-based organisation of people from around Australia who are committed to taking action on climate change. ARRCC's members represent a variety of religious traditions. We believe that as people dedicated to the common good, inspired by our beliefs and energised by our spirituality, people of all faiths can and should be at the forefront of creating a safe climate. While celebrating the uniqueness of our different traditions, we stand together in working for an ecologically and socially sustainable future. We are actively involved with Religions for Peace Australia, United Religions Initiative, Australian Religious Response to Climate Change (ARRCC) and Charter for Compassion.

Some of our projects.

Revitalisation

The Multifaith Association has changed and evolved over time so that the time is now ripe to review Multifaith SA, our structures and constitution. Our main aim remains firm: to promote harmony and peace among all faith communities in South Australia,

To revitalise the Association, the Committee has committed to an extensive discussion of what kind of Association we want Multifaith SA to be with a review of the Association's membership and funding and to update the Constitution. Places of Worship visits

The MFA would like to continue to provide opportunities for the community to visit different sacred sites and centres around our state for education and experience.

Educational experiences for the community,

Multifaith SA supports all opportunities for people of faith to learn about and share experiences with other faith groups. Two of our members from the Christian and Buddhist faiths joined an 8-week course *Introduction to Islam*. We encourage and support other faiths to present educational classes and materials to share with the faith communities of South Australia.

Humanity at the Crossroads (HAC)

Supported by ARRCC HAC is a call to action for faith groups on one of the greatest challenges of our time: climate change. We have held a faith-based training course about climate change followed by an event to launch a letter calling on faith leaders

to recognised and act on the challenge. In 2017 we plan to hold a series of workshops designed to inspire faith groups to take actions, individually and collectively within our faith groups. This sub-committee has been very active and moving along with a lot of enthusiasm.

Closing comments from President.

Summary of time in MFA.

I've been involved with the MFA for 6 years and in the role of President for 3.5 years. It has been a very honourable and enjoyable role. It feels time for some newness in the Leadership and I therefore will not be available for re-election to an Executive position. I aim to support the executive as a consultant over the next year. I've particular enjoyed meeting so many of our wonderful community people and enjoyed being involved with many events as we work towards harmony across the state. I thank the Divine for this opportunity of service of SA.

PRESIDENT

Damian Outtrim