

## MINUTES

## MEETING OF KNOX INTER-FAITH NETWORK

Held Monday 4<sup>th</sup> October 2004 at Knox Civic Centre

**PRESENT**

Representatives of Faith Communities Present:

Temple Society  
 Boronia Catholic Church  
 St. Simons Church Rowville  
 Boronia Uniting Church  
 Knox Reconciliation Group  
 ISOMER – Islamic Society of Melbourne, Eastern Region  
 Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints  
 Unification Church  
 Boronia Church of Christ  
 World Conference on Religions for Peace  
 Sikh Faith  
 Migrant Information Centre  
 Inter-Religious International Peace Council  
 Rowville Uniting Church  
 St. Vincent de Paul/Ferntree Gully Catholic Church

**APOLOGIES**

Knox Presbyterian Church, Wantirna  
 Boronia Catholic Church  
 Ferntree Gully Catholic Church

**1 & 4. Welcome and Reading: and Presentation by the Jewish and Muslim Communities**

Peter, welcomed everyone and our special guest from the Jewish community, Ms. Vera Link.

Vera opened with a thank you and advised that she and Riad from the Islamic faith had previously met and discussed their topics for presenting tonight.

Both presenters focused mainly on the topics covering some “Similarities” and some “Differences” between their two faiths. The main topics covered were:

Basic beliefs  
 Luna Calendar  
 Services  
 Fast Days  
 Festivals  
 Dietary laws  
 Marriage & divorce  
 Death and dying.

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Differences

Islam, belief in Allah  
 Islam, belief in Mohammed as  
 The Prophet  
 Islam, centrality of Mecca and Medina  
 Islam, belief in the Koran

Similarities

Dietary Laws  
 Prayer times  
 Direction one stands when praying  
 Biblical sources and origins  
 Monotheism  
 Mosque and Synagogue  
 Circumcision  
 Laws of hygiene  
 Laws of Marriage & divorce  
 Study of sacred texts

Jews are mainly in 3 main groups, Orthodox, Conservatives and Liberal.  
 Came to Australia in 1788 on the 1<sup>st</sup> fleet. They also migrated from Russia to Poland in late 1800 and 1900. These days many have arrived from South Africa.

Basic Judaism is by behavioural pattern vs. through theology. It's a way of life, living based on the "Torah" and the "Talmud" for the Rabbi.

They have two ways of worship: [1] way of reason [2] simple unquestioned faith.

"Hear O Israel the Lord our G-d the one Lord G-d."

Jews have 613 Commandments: 248 are positive, 365 are negative

"The Mishnah" – was written in 1<sup>st</sup> Century in Hebrew.

Mishnan [in Hebrew] + Gemara [language & discussion in Aramaic] = "TALMUD"

Jews have a covenant with G-d.

"BRIT" = sign/symbol

The pray facing Jerusalem, a "BIMAH" is a central platform used for praying.

Jew only kneel on 2 festivals (1) New Year (2) Day of Atonement

They pray three (3) times a day: Evening / Morning / and Afternoon.

"KETURBAH" = Marriage celebrant

"GET" = Divorce document.

Eating habits = no meat and dairy to be taken in the same meal.

Natural food = eggs, fish and fruits

Fast Days = 2 types.

They follow the lunar calendar; months are 29 or 30 days and every 17 years an additional month is added to the calendar.

Words from Riad: Islam has approx 90 – 95% similarities with the Jews.

A Muslim's way of life is based on God and the teaching of the Koran, based on five (5)

Pillars of faith offering prayers up 5 times daily.

Foods not permitted to eat are those from pagans due to their offering they 1<sup>st</sup> make to their pagan gods.

Lots of question followed the presentations.

Peter thanked both Vera and Riad . Peter advised that there would be some Press coverage on this.

### **3. REVIEW AND CONFIRMATION OF AGENDA**

#### **5. Minutes from Last Meeting**

Read and accepted after these changes to be noted:

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[5.1] Peter will be presenting the Logo at this tonight's meeting and not the one in November.

[5.1] Working Bee was in September at Isomer.

- 5.1 Logo was passé around and voted on. Down to choice of 2 to be further worked on and presented at next meeting

Website, we are entering an application to Council. We are in the process of getting the website off the ground, some discussion have been had on this with Riad and Connie with both offering some external help on the set up.

With the grant application, Council will need process any grants through a registered business with and ABN. For this purpose, Rowland has offered to be the channel for these funds, unless anyone has any other plans or objections.

Brother Maurice moved to accept the proposal to have Rowland channel the funds through his church, seconded by Rolf, everyone present agreed. Funds if approved by Council will be made available to us in April 2005.

- 5.2 Tentative, 21<sup>st</sup> October there could be a Morning Tea for Muslims and non Muslims at the Rowville Community House - Mervat to advise.

EID celebration at the end of Ramadan, end of November.

Looking at discussion of a playground and also looking for a venue.

Interfaith Symposium – went well, was attended by a wide cross section of faiths. Peace Under One God Rally, was represented by 200 or so people, 14 different faiths generally a good rally.

Lord Mayor's Charitable Concert = went well.

Church of Latter Day Saints Family day went well, approx 600 people attended.

Conference of Jews/Christians and Muslims, a report from David given buy Br. Maurice, they had difficulty getting a mix in age group.

Riad reported, interaction was good when the group were split into smaller groups.

Isomer working bee on 19<sup>th</sup> September was well attended by members, approx 40 people were there, lots of work was done. Riad also mentioned that they community were planning to place a plaque to recognise this work.

Action Items:

- (i) Peter to write a letter to Press, as members of the community after the Isomer fire.
- (ii) Riad to come back with another date for another working bee.

- 5.3 Treasurer's Report – not available

- 6.1 World Conference of Religions for Peace Australia:-  
Is made up of individuals with multi-faiths, multi culture. Some events organised After 911 they had a gathering at the Tennis centre.  
Last AGM, they had 4 members from various Interfaith Networks, talking about their

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Experiences at ground roots at their local communities.

Coming event: Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> November 04, 2 – 4:30 pm at Brunswick Town Hall, Joan is looking for 1 or 3 people for each Interfaith group to give her some ideas on What they would like to have up on the agenda. Phil and Jacinta To attend the meeting end of October.

Brother Maurice advise that at St. Joseph Boronia on 18<sup>th</sup> October, from 8 pm – 9:30pm there will be a presentation by the Buddhist called “The Heart – from the Buddhist Tradition.” There is a donation of \$5.00 which is NOT for the Parish but For the presenters.

#### 7 Next Visits and meetings:-

The Sikh Community will host a visit for all Interfaith communities.  
Date: 10<sup>th</sup> November 2004 at their Sikh Temple, 127 Whitehorse Road, Blackburn.  
Time: arrival 7:15 – 7:30pm for tour and information  
[this will meet with The Sikh community’s schedule on the evening after their prayer time from about 6 or 6:30 pm]

\*\* A Vegetarian Only dinner will be offered to all present after the tour and information, which will be approximately at 8:45pm. \*\*

Out of respect to the Sikh Community, it would be appreciated that all visitors follow a few instructions:

- (i) take shoes off and wash your hands
- (ii) your head must be covered
- (iii) no smoking
- (iv) no alcohol
- (v) for your information: inside the temple, there is a holy book and a donation box, a donation is optional.
- (vi) Men kindly sit on the right side of the temple
- (vii) Women kindly sit on the left side of the temple

Phil advised that he ask spoken with the Buddhist Community, and 2 people will come to present at the next meeting on December 6<sup>th</sup>.

Simone Reed from the Leader called Peter and he will be speaking with her to get some press.

Mary from Whitehorse Council also called, she wants to speak to us to find out more About Interfaith.

AGM on 6<sup>th</sup> December, all office bearers positions will be available.  
Peter will NOT be standing for Chair Person.  
If uncontested, Peter may consider taking on the position of Secretary.

#### 7.4 Preliminary Plans for 2005:

February 2005 - meeting, we will have Peace Presentation by Jacinta.

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Phil to approach Hindu Community to present at April 05 meeting.

General business/interest:

Phil advised that between 11<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> Oct the planets are aligned and it's the best time for spiritual prayers.

Jacinta asked if anyone was interested in going to Israel, there could be some financial for the person.

Peter informed, he had requested permission from Knox Council to use their logo in ours, and the answer he got back from Mary Ryan was No, as Interfaith is an independent group from Council. However, we have permission to state on our logo "supported by Knox Council".

In closing, Peter thanked everyone for their support and hopes that everyone makes a wise choice for a new Chair Person.

Lets all focus on the Faith Community growth.

All present thanked Peter for his role and support to the Knox Interfaith team.

Meeting end at 10:20pm.

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