



MINUTES

MEETING OF KNOX INTER-FAITH NETWORK

Held Monday 17 October 2007 at Knox Civic Centre

PRESENT:

Representatives of Faith Communities Present:

(Chairperson)	Islamic Society of Melbourne, Eastern Region (ISOMER)
(Treasurer)	Temple Society, Bayswater
(Secretary)	St Simons Rowville, Catholic Church
	Uniting Church, Ferntree Gully
	Egyptian Coptic Church
	Knox Presbyterian Church, Wantirna
	ISOMER
	St Thomas More's Catholic Church, Belgrave
Cr David Cooper	Knox Council, Scott Ward
Deb Robert	Knox Council, Community Resourcing Officer

APOLOGIES:

	Our Lady of Lourdes Bayswater, Catholic Church
	Uniting Church, Ferntree Gully
	St Josephs Boronia, Catholic Church
Lisette Pine	Knox Council, Access and Inclusion Officer
(Vice-Chairperson)	Sikh Faith– by email

OPENING and APOLOGIES:

The meeting was opened at 7:35pm by Riad who welcomed everyone.

Peter led the prayer, based on his prayer from last time. Cr Cooper noted that Knox Council has a prayer with which it opens meeting and read this also.

The Network recorded its wishes for and condolences to Fr Tony, whose mother had passed away in the last week.

AGENDA:

The agenda was accepted as proposed.

4. Presentations: Maher will be presenting in December, as planned.

5. Minutes from 6 August 2007 Meeting

1. Actions arising

1. Opening Prayer – Peter opened with the prayer

2. Brochure – Rowland presented the current draft.

Deb asked who the target audience was, with the response being members of faith communities in the Knox Inter-faith Network, with the aim of increasing awareness of faiths in general and the Network in particular. Riad queried whether it should focus more on all communities registered in the Network. There was general agreement about the draft to date, and appreciation was expressed for Rowland's efforts. He was encouraged to continue along the lines being developed and refine the draft to fit the space available, then distribute for further comment, with the aim of finalising the draft at the December 2007 meeting.

Discussion also suggested that the brochure should list the Knox Inter-faith Network website (www.knoxinterfaith.org.au) and the current list of religious communities in the Knox Council area, available at:

<http://www.datascape.com.au/infocomse/knoxcc/search.cfm> then follow the link to the *Religious Groups* section, on the lower left corner of the page.

3. Youth Choir – this is problematic with Brett's departure. Riad encouraged members to consider how we might approach schools.

4. Council Carols by Candlelight – Deb reported on attempts between Gwenda and Malcolm Russell to speak on this – **item carried over.**

(**Post-meeting note by Secretary:** The timeline for participation in the successful 1 Dec 07 event proved too tight – KIN involvement will be taken up for the 2008 event – thanks to Gwenda for following this up.)

5. AFP talk to Knox Inter-faith Network – Riad reported he has tried several times to progress this, but without success so far. **ACTIONS:** Peter will draft a letter and copy it to Cr Cooper before sending it to the AFP; Cr Cooper will speak with the Mayor about supporting the letter. Riad will provide contact names in the AFP to Peter.

6. Council Call-up Item – The report on the proposed body to advise Council on multi-cultural affairs will be Item 9.1 on the agenda of the next Ordinary Meeting of Council, starting at 7:30pm on 23 October. The report overall does not support the advisory body, although Cr Cooper still supports setting up the body. He did note that the Knox Inter-faith Network was mentioned favourably in the report. Cr Cooper encouraged members of the Network to attend.

2. Event Reports and Matters of General Interest

i. *Sixth International Abrahamic Conference, 26 August 2007*

Sr Moya reported favourably on the conference.

ii. *Promoting Interfaith Relations*

Sr Moya tabled this document, which contains guidelines for the parishes and agencies of the Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne. It has been taken up by the Police Force and by Military and Airforce Chaplains as well as by other faiths and other states.

iii. *On the Path of Mutual Respect*

Sr Moya tabled a copy of this handbook by Alan Nichols, aimed at helping Christians think about the way in which we should relate to people of other faiths and beliefs. It is published by the Victorian Council of Churches and is available for sale through the Council, at Level 4, 306 Little Collins St, Melbourne, Ph 9650 4511, vcc@vcc.org.au

iv. *Rolf reported on a conference in Sydney on progressive religions*, at which the topic of inter-faith relations was of considerable interest. The representatives of the Temple Society community enjoyed themselves.

v. *Riad noted he has been appointed a chaplain at RMIT.*

3. *Treasurer's Report*

The balance is \$XXX.XX as at the end of September, plus a further deposit of \$YY. Rolf noted that Peter owes \$YY, net \$ZZ.ZZ for the renewal of the domain name for the web-site.

6. Future Items of Interest from Members of the Network

Events as noted in the agenda and on the Network web-site at www.knoxinterfaith.org.au

Peter noted that he is happy to put any Member event on the web-site to advertise it more broadly, should the Member Community so wish.

7. Output from Planning Committee Meeting

- Carols by Candlelight Ceremony – Rowland is willing to provide the minister's message if requested.
- There was discussion about various artists who give performances inspired by scripture (Simon Jacobs, Backyard Bard). Cr Cooper encouraged the Network to explore organising and running such an event, and maybe seek to leverage this further into the community. Reviewing possible artists (either live or tape audition) is a possibility for the February or April meetings.
ACTION: Members were asked to consider possible performers and bring back to future meetings. Riad, Rowland and Maher mentioned specific contacts they have.
- Possible Knox Inter-faith Network Forum / Symposium – seen to be worth retaining as an idea.
- Resumption of community visits to Network member places of worship – support for doing this, and seeking to combine it with community activities. All members invited to seek opportunities for doing this.
- **ACTION:** All members to continue thinking about activities for 2008 and beyond.

8. Plans for the Rest of 2007 and 2008

- December 2007 – Maher to present on the faith of the Egyptian Coptic Church. Election of office-bearers needs to be run.
- Ideas for 2008
 - Options include hearing Harpal's presentation on Sikh views on other faiths (deferred from this meeting).
 - Planning for next year.
 - Performing artists.

9. Any Other Matter of Common Interest

- Peter briefly described the Homeless World Cup, an initiative of the International Network of Street Papers (of which Melbourne's *The Big Issue* is a member). This event will be held in Melbourne in 2008 and may present an opportunity for members of the Network, or their community members, to volunteer to help an event which is being run to promote solutions to the global issue of homelessness and the issues which cause it.
- St Jude Multi-cultural Food Festival – Cr Cooper to email Peter details; Peter to advertise

Meeting date and room for 2007 re-confirmed as:

Monday, 3 December – Room 1

The meeting ended at 9:45 p.m.