



MINUTES – DRAFT UNTIL APPROVED

MEETING OF KNOX INTER-FAITH NETWORK

Held Monday 4 June 2012 at Knox Civic Centre

PRESENT:

Representatives of Faith Communities present:

(President)	Uniting Church, FTG
(Secretary)	St Simons Catholic Church, Rowville
(Treasurer)	Temple Society Australia
	Uniting Church, FTG
	Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints
	Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints
(KIN rep to KMAC)	Egyptian Coptic Church
	Janssen Spirituality Centre, Boronia

APOLOGIES:

	Islamic Society of Melbourne, Eastern Region (ISOMER)
	Temple Society Australia
Councillor Gill	Mayor and Member, Dinsdale Ward

GUESTS

Blood 4 Harmony Program (part of meeting)
Member, Melbourne Grove, Order of Bards, Ovates and Druids (Modern Day Druid)

WELCOME AND OPENING BLESSING:

Pat opened the meeting at 7:40pm.

Harry introduced Lee, who will be replacing him as the representative from that community to KIN. Pat thanked Harry for his contributions while a member of KIN. All Network members concurred with this thanks for Harry and welcomed Lee.

Tina provided the opening prayer.

1. PRESENTATION ON MODERN DRUID BELIEFS

Pat introduced Elkie White.

Elkie introduced the background of 'paganism'. The etymology of the word relates to rural countryside. Elkie is a member of the broad grouping considered as 'pagans'.

Her specific community is known broadly as Druids. The etymology of the word Druids is uncertain. There are no written historical records from within the Druid

community and faith. Elkie traced the historical context for the Druids through various Greek philosophers and Roman writers.

Elkie took Members through a thought experiment to imagine Druids gathered at a meeting in a grove of trees to test their own preconceptions and ideas, and to emphasise that many of the historical writings may be unreliable.

The founder of the Druids in Britain identified a set of common traits in children who become Druids – precocious, sensitive, early and continuing interest in the arts, strong affinity with the natural world, all had undergone spiritual and psychological crises in their lives, and all had undergone visions which had affected them.

Elkie reflected on her personal views and journey. She is interested in the immanence of the spiritual and the present rather than the future. She attributes much of her faith to the caring nature of her mother in her early years. Her early experiences were Christian.

She explored her journey within the framework described in the following reference: J.W. Fowler; *Stages of Faith: The Psychology of Human Development and the Quest for Meaning*, HarperOne: 1995.

(See: http://www.amazon.com/Stages-Faith-Psychology-Development-Meaning/dp/0060628669/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1338804309&sr=1-1)

1. Intuitive-connected faith – 3-7 year old.
2. Mythic-literal faith – primary school years.
3. Synthetic-conventional faith
4. Individuative-reflective faith
5. Conjunctive faith
6. Universalizing faith

Elkie emphasised that her faith is a journey which is continuing. Her ultimate goal is unity with the infinite.

While the journey is individual, Elkie does meet with other Druids at times. The local web-site is: <http://themelbournegrove.org/>

There are no sacred texts for Druids. Web-sites exist for people to explore and learn. For example, see <http://www.druidry.org/>. The first training is as a Bard. Subsequent training is as an Ovate – which includes considerable self-examination, including examining family history. The final training is as a Druid, which allows moves into more public activity such as celebrancy and chaplaincy.

After questions, members present thanked Elkie for her presentation.

2. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (ITEMS CARRIED OVER)

- 2.1 Gwenda offered herself as Vice-President and was declared elected unopposed.
- 2.2 Mark provided an updated on liability insurance requirements for the Network. Investigations have revealed that irrespective of whether the Network pays a rental fee for meeting at the Council facilities (which it does not currently do) the groups are expected to have their own Public Liability insurance for meetings. The cost of incidental insurance per meeting through Council is currently \$59.30 for 0-50 attendees. Maher validated that a full cover for meetings and outside events would be about \$600 based on the experience of his community.
ACTION: Maher to investigate the coverage available for KIN from his community's insurer.

RESOLUTION: Moved Peter; seconded Mark – that public liability insurance of some form is in place for our next meeting at Knox Council. Approved unanimously.

2.3 *Membership fees:*

RESOLUTION: Moved Mark; seconded Gwenda – That the Knox Inter-faith Network annual membership is increased to \$50 per annum. Approved unanimously.

3. COMMITTEE MEETING: MINUTES/ACTIONS FROM LAST NETWORK MEETING

3.1 *Minutes of meeting of 2 April 2012:*

Minutes moved for acceptance with this change: Gwenda; Seconded: Mark. Approved unanimously.

3.2 *Annual Return* – Peter confirmed this has been submitted. Annual fee is \$42.80.

3.3 *Red Cross – Blood for Harmony Program.*

The dates for July and September are 5 July and 27 September respectively. Donations will be given at The Seventh Day Adventist Community Centre, 119 Mountain Hwy, Wantirna. Responses of interest to David on 0403 047 859 or at Blood4Harmony@Live.com by one month prior to the proposed date. David noted that registrations for July are limited to two only. David believes the best form of promoting this is through youth groups and sought contacts.

ACTION: All members to promote the Blood for Harmony program.

ACTION: Peter to provide contact details for his local Deanery Youth Group.

3.4 *Treasurer's Report:* Mark noted a balance of \$xxx as of 30 April 2012. This includes un-presented cheques for \$xxx from the 22 April event, leaving a true current balance of \$xxx. Deducting the unspent amount OMAC grant money of about \$xxx from the original OMAC Grant leaves a working balance for the Network of about \$xxx, which excludes the annual fees now due for all Network Members.

4. EVENT REPORTS

➤ Knox Event:

- Mark reported on the status of reconciliation of the OMAC grant after discussions with OMAC, noting we have completed 2 of the 3 required items. The remaining event to be run will cover "Policing and sensitivity to faith. How police in the Knox region address conflict resolution through faith perspectives." This will need to be run in early 2013, and this appears acceptable to OMAC.

ACTION: Mark to complete the OMAC accountability report for 2011/12, including all supporting information such as the pre-event survey and post-event qualitative and quantitative evaluations.

- Peter distributed the qualitative and quantitative evaluations of the event to Members present and will distribute it electronically to Network Members. Overall the event was very well received, with an average rating across the entire event of 4.44 out of a possible 5. The general sense of the evaluation was overwhelmingly positive, noting the challenges experienced in the week leading to the event with speakers and facilitators. Items to consider for improving any future events included:
 - how to create or allow more time for discussion (leading to discussion about whether we run a follow-on event just for this)
 - some sensitivities learnt for communication with all faiths
 - how to generate an attendance which is broader than the overwhelmingly Christian denominations which attended

- Gwenda added some comments about the challenges she had originally foreseen in trying to run an event which makes it hard to separate inter-faith from other elements such as race and nation. She was pleased with the outcome, although noted that the events of the week leading to the event had almost derailed all the excellent work done.
- Mark has prepared a written summary of the event for his community and shared that he had learnt a lot from preparing the summary, and had been able to appreciate the full depth and breadth of the dialogue.
ACTION: Mark to distribute his summary to Network Members.
- Mark also posed the question, of “Well, what next?” He suggested people consider this in light of the quantitative evaluation distributed by Peter and be ready to discuss this at the next meeting. (**To be carried over.**)
- Mark thanked Peter for his efforts in helping to organise the event and presented him with a small token of appreciation on behalf of the Network.
- Mark presented a brief financial summary of the event and outlined the amounts left to run the third event approved by OMAC.
- **RESOLUTION:** Moved Peter; seconded Mark – That \$yyy be paid to the Uniting Church FTG Community as consideration for the donated use of their Church and Hall for running the event. Approved unanimously, with the Member from the Uniting Church FTG Community abstaining.
- Peter distributed draft letters to be sent to each of the speakers and facilitator for review. These were approved for distribution.
ACTION: Peter to send the approved letters to the speakers and facilitator.
- Peter also noted that members of the Frankston Interfaith Network had contacted him asking for permission to quote from the KIN booklet made available to attendees. Peter had approved this (subject to acknowledgement being given of the source) and had further offered to provide 60 copies of the booklet to the Network for their use. Members present approved both actions.

5. PLANNING FOR 10TH ANNIVERSARY EVENT

- 5.1 Mark has prepared a list of faith communities as a starting point, distributed by email. He recommends that we need to speak to someone at each community.
- 5.2 Mark has renewed contact with Swinburne to see if there is interest in a curator.
- 5.3 **ACTION:** Mark to consider how to engage with the faith communities, including drafting a cover letter to be presented at the next meeting.
- 5.4 **Carried over** - consider at next meeting.

6. ITEMS FROM KNOX COUNCIL

- 6.1 Peter reported on a communication from Council that our previous contact, Amy Gough, had been replaced by a new Council Contact person: Belinda Gillam (Diversity Officer) who can be contacted on either 9298 8145 or belinda.gillam@knox.vic.gov.au Belinda works Monday, Tuesday and Thursday. This aligns contact on multicultural and interfaith issues through one person.
- Members present thanked Amy for her strong support of and contribution to the Network and wished her well with her new assignments.
- 6.2 Maher reported that the current term of the Knox Multicultural Advisory Committee is due to expire on 30 June 2012. He added that it is likely to be renewed for a further 2 years from 1 July 2012.
- 6.3 Maher talked to the KMAC Proposal for Celebrating Harmony Day 2013 Event information distributed prior to the meeting. He provided background based on previous similar events run by the Australasia Coptic Society.
- Members present discussed the proposal.

- In general, the Network sees the opportunity for and value of such an event and is broadly supportive.
 - The Network pointed out that the event is quite close in the year to the Knox Festival (which runs the first week of March). Any planning for the KMAC event needs to consider how to ensure both events would be resourced from multicultural and faith/interfaith communities to ensure neither was compromised by demanding too much of the same people.
 - The Network noted further that it already has considerable commitments (for its size of current membership) between now and March 2013 with the planned 10th anniversary activities and the third of the events funded under the OMAC grant. So while it can assist with the event it does not believe it could be a lead organisation.
 - Network Members did agree they could approach any cultural groups within their communities on behalf of the organisers to make them aware of the event if it progresses and test their interest.
 - Network Members also agreed they may be able to assist with the event on the day, noting that Harmony Day is a working day. (The event itself might not run on the actual day.)
 - Network Members asked Maher to report the discussions back to the next KMAC meeting and keep the Network informed about the outcomes.
- 6.4 Peter noted that grant submissions for the 2012-13 round of Knox Council Community Development Funds close on Wednesday, 25 July 2012.

7. OTHER PLANS FOR 2012

- 7.1 Pat reported that the Network had received an invitation from Manjit of the Sant Nirankari Mission on Stud Rd in Rowville to host Knox Inter-faith Network Members at their Rowville Hall. They gather every Sunday from 12 noon – 2pm and follow this by a community lunch. Network Members accepted the invitation and asked Pat to convey this back to Manjit.

ACTION: Pat to respond to the Sant Nirankari Mission accepted the invitation.

8. NEXT MEETINGS

Monday, 16 July 2012 – Detailed planning for 10th Anniversary

Monday, 1 October 2012 – 10th Anniversary Meeting

Monday, 26 November 2012 (Joint meeting with KMAC – date to be confirmed)

Bookings have been made from these events.

Meeting closed at 10:00pm.