

2020 Multifaith Association of South Australia – President’s Report

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Overview

In hindsight, 2019 has been a productive and positive year for the Multifaith Association of SA Inc, though a year with unprecedented challenges. Two new active members joined our Committee: Vani Shukla, Yoga teacher and SA Secretary for the Hindu Council of Australia, and Rev Liellie McLaughlin, Uniting Church Minister, founder of RAW (Random Acts of Welcome) for Refugees and instigator of very successful monthly Interfaith Matters dinners held at Hope’s Café.

In the past year we have seen great good arise from the unimaginable pain and distress of terrible disasters. Adelaide’s faith communities responded with great love and compassion to the double tragedies of Christchurch NZ and Colombo, Sri Lanka. Leaders from ten faiths and Kurna elder, Uncle John Lochowiak from NATSICC gathered in an Interfaith Prayer for Peace in St Francis Xavier Cathedral in March. In April, the Sri Lankan Catholic community was joined in solidarity by Professor Mohamad Abdalla, five Imams and the Sri Lankan Buddhist Vihara to grieve the loss of 200 lives in Columbo. MFA has played a small but significant role to in several events since, including two Interfaith Blessings (for Unity Week with the Lord Mayor of Adelaide, and for the launch of a major Multicultural Hub in Salisbury with Salisbury Mayor). Then, after fires wreaked unfathomable devastation across vast areas of this island continent, on Australia Day 2020, twelve faith leaders shared Interfaith Prayers for Bushfire Recovery and Resilience in St Peter’s Cathedral.

Three significant shifts in South Australian Interfaith activity in 2019-2020:

- Disaster and Recovery Chaplaincy training has been opened up to the Interfaith community for the first time, and two members of the MFA Committee participated in 2-day workshops
- First steps taken towards to establishment of an Interfaith Rapid Response Network, so that people of all faiths can more readily respond together in times of crisis and also gather together to celebrate and build friendships and understanding across faith communities
- Living the Change workshops held in 2018/2019 with large interfaith groups (60+ people attended our International Day of Peace event on 21 September 2019) and smaller events are planned within individual faith groups, as a sign of hope and encouragement for many.

Warm regards,

Philippa Rowland, President MFA

2019-2020 Timeline of Multifaith SA Events/Contributions

Date	Activity	Event
29 November 2018	Interfaith/Climate	<i>“Human Face of Climate Change – the True Costs of Our Inaction”</i> , Parliament House, Canberra
February 16, 2019	Peace	Ahmadiyya Peace Symposium
18	Climate	Parliamentary Friends of Climate Action
27	Interfaith	Interfaith Matters at Hope’s Café (& each month hence)
March 9-10	Climate/env	Ecumenical <i>Laudato Si’</i> Retreat, Galong NSW
12	Interfaith	Funeral for Fr Denis Edwards, Eco-theologian
24	Interfaith	Interfaith Prayer for Peace, St Francis Xavier Cathedral
27	Interfaith	Interfaith Matters at Hope’s Café (Egyptian Coptic))
April 13	Interfaith	Baha’i poetry, pizzas, prayers
14	Interfaith	Palm Sunday + Buddha House HHDL long life prayers
18	Climate	St Margaret Mary’s Church banner <i>“Fossil fuels especially coal, must be replaced – Pope Francis”</i>
May 1	LtC	ARRCC Living the Change (LtC) Webinar
8	Interfaith Network	Interfaith Rapid Response Network 1 st Meeting
12	Interfaith	Sri Lankan Muslim Assoc Iftar Dinner
15	Interfaith Network	Interfaith Rapid Response Network 2 nd Meeting
19	Interfaith	Ahmadiyya Muslim “Fasting in my Faith”
June 1	Interfaith	Bosniak’s Masjid Iftar dinner
5	LtC Webinar	Living the Change (LtC)
12	Interfaith Network	Interfaith Rapid Response Network 3 rd & 4 th Meetings
15	Network	Teachings plus Meeting with Tenzin Palmo
18	Refugees	Circle of Silence Vigil for Asylum seekers
July 24	<i>Laudato Si’</i>	<i>Laudato Si’</i> Animators webinar
24	Interfaith	Interfaith Matters (Zoroastrian)
Aug 8	LtC talk	Centre for Islamic Thought & Education
9	Interfaith	Call with President of Religica website (Seattle)
22	Chaplaincy	Disaster & Recovery Ministry Training
28	Interfaith	Beit Shalom Synagogue visit
29	<i>Laudato Si’</i> / LtC	Catholic Clergy Reflection Day on Environment
Sep 5	LtC talk	OCEANIA Ecosystem Services Forum, NZ
	St Peter’s Anglican	Creation Care Symposium
16	Interfaith	Mtg with Hon Vincent Tarzia, Speaker of House
21	LtC/Interfaith	International Day of Peace – Declaring Peace on Earth
October 9	First Nations	Blackwood Reconciliation Uluru Statement from Heart
22	Chaplaincy	Disaster & Recovery Ministry Training
27	Interfaith	Baha’i Celebrations of the Birth of the Bab
30	Interfaith	Interfaith Blessing, Adelaide Town Hall w Lord Mayor
31	<i>Laudato Si’</i> / LtC	Catholic Dialogue on Ecological Conversion and <i>Laudato Si’</i>
November 7	Interfaith	“Showa’ Jewish commemoration of the Holocaust
8-9	Climate/LtC	Australian Religious Response to Climate Change conf
13	Interfaith	Guru Nanak 500 th Birthday, Gurdwara Guru Nanak Darbar,
30	Interfaith	Interfaith Blessing of new Multicultural Hub for Salisbury Council (30 representatives from 15 faiths)