



Canterbury Council of Churches Incorporated, ABN 92655420071

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## ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2025

### 1. Overview

This report summarises the work of the Canterbury Council of Churches in 2025, as we continued to work together to provide witness to the Good News of Jesus Christ in Canterbury and surrounding areas.

### 2. Members and representatives

Our membership of nine churches remained stable over the year, and we are grateful to each of them for their input in terms of personnel and their annual subscriptions.

Our members are represented on our Council by clergy and lay representatives. The representatives from each member during 2025 were:

| Member                                 | Representatives                               |
|--|---|
| Balwyn Road Uniting Church             | Mr Neti Puamau                                |
| Canterbury Baptist Church              | Rev Stephen Field                             |
| East Camberwell Baptist Church         | Pastor Murray Hogg, Ms Lyn Jerram             |
| Highfield Road Uniting Church          | Rev. Andrew Boyle (until August), Mr Alan Ray |
| St Barnabas' Anglican Parish, Balwyn   | Rev. Randle Bond (until August)               |
| St Dominic's Catholic Parish           | Ms Cathie Sheehan, Mr Denis Fitzgerald        |
| St Dunstan's Anglican Parish           | Fr Jobby John, Ms Rosemary Hicks              |
| St Filoteea's Romanian Orthodox Parish | Fr Claudiu Morutan                            |
| St Paul's Anglican Parish              | Dr Diana Murray (until November)              |

Our office bearers, appointed for the year at our AGM on 4 February, 2025, were:

|              |   |
|--------------|---|
| Chair        | Pastor Murray Hogg  |
| Deputy Chair | Rev Randle Bond   |
| Secretary    | Ms Lyn Jerram, assisted by Mr Alan Ray as minute secretary. |
| Treasurer    | Mr Denis Fitzgerald   |

### 3. **Activities**

The Council met six times during the year. In those meetings, and in various working groups, the activities that were organised included:

#### ***World Day of Prayer***

Our annual participation in the international World Day of Prayer was on Friday 7 March at St Dunstan's Anglican church. This year material was prepared by the women of Cook Islands based on Psalm 139:14: 'I praise You for I am fearfully and wonderfully made'. The prayer service and morning tea were warm and enthusiastic.

#### ***Good Friday Stations of the Cross***

This annual outdoor event at Highfield Park, at midday on Good Friday, was blessed by clement weather, and, thanks to Fr Claudiu, a better sound system. Thanks too to Rev. Andrew Boyle for updating the liturgy program with COVID receding into the past, it was also a time to go back to the original gesture of sharing a hot cross bun at the end of the service.



#### ***Visits across congregations***

During the course of the year members of our various congregations attended events at other churches that were advertised through the Council.

In addition, we again implemented a program of representative visits to our member congregations: members of the Council were welcomed by congregations, and provided with an opportunity to further engage the congregation with the work that the Council undertakes on their behalf.

#### ***Annual Winter Breakfast***



On Saturday 26 July Bishop Philip Huggins spoke on "the role that local congregations can play in building a more just and compassionate society". It was an engaging presentation, with each of us challenged to begin with peace in our

own heart. Bishop Huggins nominated the Gaza work of Anglican Overseas Aid as the recipient of donations on the day.

### ***Mental Health Liturgy***

The annual, ecumenical Mental Health Liturgy was held at St Dunstan's Anglican church, Camberwell on 28 September.

This year we were blessed by our Romanian Orthodox friends lending their two icons for this service. We were thus reminded of the great treasury of worship from that ancient tradition. The photo shows them beside the altar with tea lights on the altar rail. The congregation of 45 people were invited to light these as symbols of hope for all those suffering from mental illness and their carers.



Professor Caroline Johnson from Melbourne University who is both a general practitioner and academic, spoke eloquently about how we can prevent, or mitigate this isolating condition. She illustrated her message by quoting from Psalm 23, [He leadeth me beside still waters"], as well as the reading from the book of Samuel where David played the harp for King Saul during his periods of mental distress.

The uplifting and memorable service which was followed by fellowship over refreshments.

### ***Carols in Canterbury***

After much work with Boroondara Council, the Victorian Council of Churches and others to arrange insurance and other requirements, the Carols were a great success on Sunday 7 December. The setting in Canterbury Gardens, the wonderful early summer evening, the joyful music and familiar lyrics of the Christmas tradition were enjoyed by a large crowd, supported by a large team of workers.



Thanks for this outcome are due to many: the committee that organised the event, chaired by Pauline Proctor and Megan Armstrong; Boroondara Council for their substantial financial support; local businesses for their sponsorships; and the many workers, performers and other volunteers who contributed on the day.

### ***Carols in Maling Road***

This Saturday morning event, on 13 December, helped integrate the Christmas story into the busy lives of our community. Singers and passers by all enjoyed themselves.



## **4. General**

The financial underpinnings of our work depend on modest subscription fees from members. Our Winter Breakfast covers its own costs, and generated a surplus of \$424, which was donated to Anglican Overseas Aid for their work in Gaza. Our main bank account ended the year with a balance of \$3,677. The finances for Carols in Canterbury are separately accounted for. During 2025 we made donations totaling \$3,250 from the surplus from the 2024 Carols, and finished the year with a balance of \$8,204.

Our activities were all publicly advertised on our website – <https://www.canterburycouncilofchurches.org/> – and through the Victorian Council of Churches, with which we maintained an active membership. Our events are covered by insurance.

With thanks to all who contributed to the operations and work of the Council during the year, and to those congregations on whose behalf we operated.

Lyn Jerram  
Secretary

Denis Fitzgerald  
Treasurer

Alan Ray  
Minutes Secretary

21/01/2026



The Canterbury Council of Churches acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people as the Traditional Owners and original custodians of this land, and we pay our respects to their Elders past and present.