



In this issue:

1. Chairperson's Editorial
2. Review of Events in 2011
3. Visit by Rabbi Jonathan Sacks
4. Donation of Books
5. ICCJ Conference, Manchester UK
6. CCJWA 2011 Annual General Meeting

Chairperson's Editorial

Shared Expectancy: A Suggested Direction

The Council of Christians and Jews WA counters anti-Semitism. An impetus for us is the horror of the Holocaust and the prayer: "Never again" to the Jews ... indeed, to anyone.

But Christians and Jews have much more in common than this counter, as poignant as it is. Although details are hotly contested, there is an unambiguous shared rootedness of Judaism and Christianity. During the decades immediately after the fall of Jerusalem in 70 CE, Judaism on the way to becoming Rabbinic Judaism and the Jesus Messianic Way were two siblings amongst a large number of Jewish children loving and squabbling with each other.

As we aged, both siblings distanced themselves from each other and our intra-Jewish squabbles all too easily became polemical feuds — a path taken with tragic frequency.

Belatedly, but increasingly strongly (and not without some Christian and Jewish resistance), awareness of calamitous ethical consequences of this development and of our rootedness as one family is becoming widespread. While Jews and Christians are different, this does not obviate our rootedness with each other.

Can we not build upon this matrix? We both wait for our God; we both live in expectancy. As a Council, let us strive to celebrate this life of expectancy together, as well as to continue to counter anti-Semitism.

*Charles Waddell, PP STL, PhD
Chairperson*

Review of Events in 2011

Annual General Meeting for 2010

The 2010 Annual General Meeting (AGM) was held at the Mary Lockett Hall, Queenslea Drive, Claremont, on the evening of Thursday 10 February 2011. This was a highly significant occasion, with the Revd Associate Professor Rowan Strong standing down from the Chair after serving in that role since the Council's inaugural General Meeting in October 1995, following some three years as Convenor of the Foundation Working Group. All nominees for positions on the Executive Committee were elected unopposed, and Dr Strong vacated the Chair for the incoming Chairperson, Revd Dr Charles Waddell. Business matters included discussion on the revised version of the Membership Form, of which copies had been distributed. The events proposed for the year were also outlined. Members were urged to contribute suggestions for future events, and encouraged to provide feedback on them afterwards.

Following the close of the business part of the meeting, Dr Strong was invited to deliver the occasional address, which he had retitled "Celebration of Difference and Dissonance". This was a most powerful and moving speech, in which he emphasised that religious differences should be celebrated, not exterminated. He urged the Council, under its new leadership, to adopt this stance, not just accepting the differences of those in other faiths, but of those in denominations other than our own. A copy of the address is available on the CCJWA website on the 2011 Program webpage.



L to R: Dr Mary Marshall, Revd Dr Charles Waddell and Revd Assoc. Prof. Rowan Strong

Fr Charles congratulated Dr Strong on his excellent address, and invited comments and questions from the floor. Mr Berinson added appreciative remarks, and also expressed thanks for Rowan's remarkable leadership of the organisation over so many years, before suggesting that future events could consist of seminars based on a number of points made in the address. Following the time allowed for questions and discussion, Fr Charles announced that at the Executive meeting held just prior to the AGM, it was resolved that Life Membership would be bestowed upon Dr Strong in recognition of his outstanding service to the Council. He added that to honour Rowan, the Committee would arrange a luncheon for him and his wife Jill, with all CCJWA members welcome to attend. Vice-Chairperson Ken Arkwright then presented Rowan with a bottle of red wine, as an initial token of gratitude for his longstanding leadership of CCJWA. The evening concluded with refreshments and fellowship.

Luncheon for the Strong's



Thirteen members of CCJWA joined guests of honour, Rowan and Jill Strong, for lunch at the Café Hyatt in Perth, on Sunday 3 April, held in acknowledgment of Rowan's service to the Council. During the

luncheon, Chairperson Revd Dr Charles Waddell presented Rowan with a Certificate of Meritorious Service "in recognition of eighteen years of service 1993 – 2010 as Chairperson of the Council's Foundation Working Group and Executive Committee". The occasion was enjoyed by all.

Aged Care Seminar

A seminar titled "Am I my brother's keeper? ... and sister's?" was among the events planned for the year, and foreshadowed at the 2010 AGM. The proposed focus on philanthropy proved impracticable, and the topic was changed instead to "Jewish and



Christian Perspectives on Aged Care". The seminar took place on Tuesday 14 June, at The Upper Room, St Joseph's Church, Subiaco, with guest speakers Ms Aviva Lipman, Social Worker at Maurice Zeffert Home, and the Revd Julie Barrett-Lennard, Parish Priest of St Edward's Anglican Church, Hilton.

Both papers were excellent, and evoked a lively discussion. An article on the event is available on the CCJWA website on the 2011 Program webpage.

Lecture: "Building Jewish-Christian Friendship"



The film which had been planned for the next event proved to be unavailable, and we were privileged instead to be able to substitute a lecture by Dr Glenn Morrison, Senior Lecturer in Systematic Theology at the Fremantle campus of The University of Notre Dame, Australia. Dr Morrison was coopted

as a member of the Executive in May, and was happy to offer a lecture on "Building Jewish-Christian Friendship", which is one of his areas of speciality. The event was held on Tuesday 20 September, at the Parish Hall of the Church of St Thomas the Apostle, Claremont, and drew an enthusiastic audience. The topic was particularly timely in that the newly-delivered edition of *Scene Number 85* (p.5) contained an article by Rabbi Yitzchok Adlerstein, in which he queried "What important bonds of friendship were formed in six decades of Jewish-Christian interfaith activity?" and observed that Christians "could not provide what Jews may have needed the most: genuine friendship and caring". Dr Morrison's lecture offered profound insights into how interfaith friendship can indeed be built and nourished, and was followed by an animated discussion which continued informally while attendees enjoyed refreshments. An article on the event is available on the CCJWA website on the 2011 Program webpage.

Commemoration of Kristallnacht

The annual remembrance of Kristallnacht — the so-called "Night of Broken Glass" — was held on the actual anniversary, Wednesday 9 November, at the Sylvia and Harry Hoffman Hall, Carmel Primary School, with CCJWA Chairperson, the Revd Dr Charles Waddell acting as MC. Following his welcoming remarks and acknowledgments, Fr Charles invited Vice-Chairperson Mr Ken Arkwright OAM to give the introductory speech. Mr Arkwright, a Holocaust survivor, gave a very moving personal account of the night of 9 November 1938, and his subsequent experiences, as a boy then not quite 10 years old.

The next cluster of items included two readings from Scripture, introduced and spoken by students of Aranmore Catholic College. Following the reading from Lamentations 1:12–16, soloist Talia Myers of Carmel School gave a beautiful rendition of the Yiddish song "Sh'ma Yisrael".



The Revd Vivien Larkin lights the 7th and 8th memorial candles

While clearly maintaining the sense of lamentation inherent in the first reading, the lyrics of the song also expressed a prayerful hope that the LORD would hear and respond to the plaintive cry of the soul: “Strengthen me, ... help me not to fear. The pain is great and there is nowhere to run. Make it end, for my strength is gone.” It therefore provided an appropriate preface to the second reading, from Isaiah 65:17–25, with its vision of peace, of a future with new heavens and a new earth, and a transformed Jerusalem in which the sound of weeping and crying will be heard no more.

The next item, a drama presented by students of St Mary’s Anglican Girls’ School, focused attention on the effect of the Shoah on a well-known family. It was the opening scene from the Frances Goodrich and Albert Hackett play, *The Diary of Anne Frank*, in which a shattered Mr Frank, about to leave post-war Amsterdam in 1945, finds his daughter’s diary, begun three years earlier. He starts to read it aloud, and his voice is joined by Anne’s, describing what life was like for Jews in Holland from 1940 onwards, and leading on to the account about the family’s need to go into hiding in 1942, in the now famous attic. This very sobering piece appropriately set the scene for the occasional address.

Keynote speaker, Professor Kenneth Chern, Professorial Research Fellow, Murdoch University, and former US Consul General to Perth, was introduced by the MC. Professor Chern began by sharing from his own Jewish background, the effect of the Holocaust on many of his relatives. His wide-ranging address included reference to Aboriginal activist William Cooper, who in 1938, four weeks after Kristallnacht, led a march to the German consulate in Melbourne to protest against the persecution of Jews in Nazi Germany. His march is thought to have been the only such private protest at the time, despite the fact that the incidents were reported worldwide. This was just one of many points which held the audience spellbound, particularly the young people present, who comprised about one-third of attendees.



Jonathan Israel reads the poem “For the Rescuers” while the 7th and 8th memorial candles are lit.

As is traditional in the proceedings, the lighting of memorial candles followed. Executive member Eric Schneider, representing Perth Hebrew Congregation, lit six candles in memory of the six million Jews who perished in the Shoah, while the names of some of the death camps and ghettos were spoken. Revd Vivien Larkin, representing the Moderator of the Uniting Church in WA, then lit the 7th and 8th candles, in remembrance of the righteous Gentiles who risked their own lives to assist their Jewish brothers and sisters, and of other non-Jews who were targeted by the Nazis — gypsies, homosexuals, and disabled persons. Meanwhile the poem “For the Rescuers”, by Gwyneth Lewis, was solemnly read by Jonathan Israel, of Perth Modern School.

The subsequent two minutes of silence were sharply interrupted by the sound of glass being shattered, and all in attendance then recited together their collective remembrance of the incidents which marked that terrible “Night of Broken Glass”. The prayer which followed, led by the Most Reverend Roger Herft, was a heart-felt plea for all present to be strengthened in our resolve to ensure that such acts would never be repeated in human history. As an act of faith, the words of the “Inscription of Hope” — found on the walls of a Cologne cellar where Jews hid from Nazis — were recited sotto voce by all present: “I believe, I believe in the sun, even when it is not shining. I believe in love, even when feeling it not. I believe in God, even when God is silent.”



The lighting of the Candle of Hope.

All then stood while the Candle of Hope was brought forward by Talia Myers of Carmel School, and Sarah Maiden of St Mary's Anglican Girls' School, and lit. The words "Let the light of peace shine in our world," pronounced by the MC, were echoed by all present in affirmation. As a sign of reconciliation, all were invited to turn to those nearby, offering a hand of friendship, and wishing them "Shalom — Peace". Following an expression of thanks, and concluding remarks, the audience stood for the Closing Prayer — a petition for peace — led by the MC. All remained standing reverently, without a word, during the Recessional — a recording of "Inscription of Hope", set to music by Z. Randall Stroope, and sung by St Stephens School choir, Exordium, in 2006. Most of the audience of well over hundred were able to stay for further reflection, and to enjoy light refreshments.

Mary J. Marshall
Honorary Secretary CCJWA

Visit by Rabbi Jonathan Sacks

Lord Jonathan Sacks, Chief Rabbi of United Hebrew Congregations of the Commonwealth, is visiting Perth in January to participate in the 120th anniversary celebrations of Perth Hebrew Congregation. He will be speaking at two public gatherings on 23 January. The first is to be held from 11:00 am – 12:00 noon, at St George's Cathedral, 38 St Georges Terrace, Perth, where his topic will be "Religious Commitment to a Pluralistic Society". In the evening, commencing at 8:00 pm, Rabbi Sacks will be available for a Question and Answer session at the Perth Synagogue, Freedman Rd (cnr Plantation St), Menora. Entry to both of these events is free.

Donation of Books

For some years now it has been the practice of CCJWA to donate one or more books each year to Murdoch University Library, with the object of building up the resources on Jewish-Christian relations. The most recent title donated is *Christ Jesus and the Jewish People Today: New Explorations of Theological Interrelationships* (ed. Philip A. Cunningham, Joseph Sievers, Mary C. Boys, Hans Herman Henrix, and Jesper Svartvik; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2011). This significant volume comprises a collection of essays, mostly by Catholic scholars, exploring the implications for Christian faith, of affirming that the covenant of the Jewish people with God is ongoing. In particular, the challenge is to interpret appropriately the universal significance of Jesus Christ. The book includes responses contributed by Jewish scholars, has a foreword written by Cardinal Walter Kasper, and contains discussion on many complex issues pertaining to biblical exegesis, history, and theology. This volume

was the first of three recent books on the subject of Jewish-Christian relations, to be recommended by the ICCJ. The other two titles are: Amy-Jill Levine and Marc Zvi Brettler, eds., *The Jewish Annotated New Testament* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), and Ruth Langer, *Cursing the Christians? A History of the Birkat Haminim* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011). These have been approved by the Executive for donation to Murdoch University Library this year.

ICCJ Conference, Manchester, 1–4 July 2012

The UK branch of the Council of Christians and Jews had its beginnings in Manchester in 1942. Hence, as the UK Council celebrates its 70th anniversary, Manchester is a most fitting location for the ICCJ annual international conference. This year the main ICCJ conference is organised in cooperation with the Institute for Jewish studies of Manchester University, the Council of Christians and Jews in the United Kingdom and its local Manchester branch. The theme of the meeting is: "New neighbors, new opportunities, multiculturalism and social responsibility". ICCJ is proud to welcome Chief Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks as keynote speaker on the first full conference day. Registration for the conference will be possible as from 1 March. The conference fee amounts to €250. For more information visit <http://www.iccj.org>.

CCJWA 2011 Annual General Meeting

The 2011 Annual General Meeting is to be held at **7:30 pm, Wednesday 1 February 2012** in the **Catholic Church of St Thomas the Apostle Parish Hall** (located at the rear of the church), **2 College Road, Claremont**. The occasional address will be given by the Reverend Ron Larkin, Moderator of the Uniting Church in WA. His topic is "Light Eternal — Jews and Judaism: A Statement by the Uniting Church in Australia National Assembly 2010". Light refreshments will be served. All are welcome.

The CCJWA newsletter is published annually by the Executive Committee and is available online. While it is distributed primarily to members, it is hoped that it will attract a wider readership and stimulate interest in the Council's objectives and activities. Applications for membership are welcomed, and the membership form may be downloaded from the website, or obtained by contacting the Honorary Secretary by post or email.

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