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Editorial

The CCJWA has had an active year, with several opportunities to participate in some special events, over and above the usual four in our own program. The first was a lecture by Lord Jonathan Sacks, the Chief Rabbi of United Hebrew Congregations of the Commonwealth, held on 23 January in the Perth Town Hall. While this event formed part of Perth Hebrew Congregation's 120th anniversary celebrations, it was arranged in conjunction with the Anglican Diocese, and was open to all, free of charge. The topic was "Religious Commitment to a Pluralistic Society," and Rabbi Sacks emphasised the importance of good relations between religious communities, and that diversity is what God intends for humanity.

In July, Rabbi John Levi gave an open lecture at the University of Notre Dame on "Rabbinic Judaism and the Search for Meaning in the 21st Century." He introduced his historical narrative by referring to the significant role of *Nostra Aetate* in Jewish-Christian relations and noting the importance of interfaith dialogue.

In August it was a great pleasure for some Christian members to be invited for a special service at Temple David to mark its 60th Anniversary. It was a very moving experience for us to attend a full Jewish worship, and the refreshments afterwards were much appreciated.

These occasions, as well as our scheduled events, were fine examples of positive engagement between Jews and Christians, despite the differences in our belief systems.

In our world, moving at ever increasing speeds, it is becoming more and more difficult for our whole society to give to religion, to God, the attention that God demands. Those of us who are convinced of God's presence very much have this belief in common. Specifics and details of how we perceive God are of much less importance than our deeply held belief, and this we share with all Christians and Jews, and probably with most Muslims and those of other religions who believe in goodness.

As emphasised by Rowan Strong in his last address to us as Chair in February 2011, these differences are a great source of richness. Cynicism about the sincerity of a neighbour whose religious belief differs from ours gives great satisfaction to the atheist who claims he has no religious belief.

An analogy used at the 2012 ICCJ conference in Manchester to differentiate between "integration" and "assimilation" may be pertinent here: "becoming a square in a patchwork quilt," over against "becoming a thread in a cloth." Similarly, like the individual elements in a patchwork quilt, Jews and Christians can engage with each other and blend harmoniously without their differences being obscured.

In his keynote address at the Commemoration of Kristallnacht, the Hon. Kevin Parker finished with the meaningful metaphor that the fear of God is the thread which binds together the pearls which are good qualities of human beings: without this thread they are lost. All of us who hope we have good qualities need to bind together against the influence of those who claim they have no religious belief.

Ralph Hickling, Committee Member

Review of Events in 2012

Annual General Meeting for 2011

The Council's first gathering for the year was the AGM, held on Wednesday 1 February in the Parish Hall, Catholic Church of St Thomas the Apostle, Claremont. Rev Dr Charles Waddell took the chair, and after the close of the business part of the meeting, he introduced the guest speaker, Rev Ron Larkin, Moderator of the Uniting Church in WA, and an Honorary President of CCJWA. The topic was *Light Eternal*, a DVD and booklet developed as a study guide to supplement the statement on "Jews and Judaism", adopted by the Uniting Church in 2009. In his presentation Rev Ron Larkin emphasised the importance of educating Christians about Jesus' Jewishness, and spoke of the connectedness of Judaism and Christianity, but also of their differences. The "Introduction" of the DVD was then shown, and a lively discussion followed. In drawing the formal part of the evening to a close, Fr Charles mentioned the intention to hold another event focused on *Light Eternal* during the year. The Chairperson's Annual Report may be found at:

http://www.ccjwa.org/Documents/Articles/010212_Chairperson's_Report_final.pdf

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.

Film Night: The Quarrel

The first event in the year's program was on 15 May, again at St Thomas, Claremont. It was a film night, featuring *The Quarrel*, a 1991 movie by Eli Cohen. Rev Dr Charles Waddell, introducing the movie, drew attention to scenes reflecting the characters' dilemma. *The Quarrel* is about estranged childhood friends, Chaim, a writer, and Hersh, a rabbi, who part ways when Chaim leaves their yeshiva (Jewish school) over a dispute concerning their faith. During the Holocaust, both suffer devastating losses, further widening their perceptions of God. The film is set on Rosh HaShanah, 1948, with Chaim and Hersh meeting unexpectedly. They rekindle their friendship — *and* their argument. Chaim feels that God, in failing to prevent faithful Jews from perishing in the Holocaust, failed his covenant, while Hersh feels that there was a lesson to be learned — assimilation is not possible, and further, to abandon God now is to betray those who suffered the Holocaust. Chaim has become an agnostic humanist, viewing good as located in the human person. After the film, committee member Dr Glenn Morrison invited discussion on the many questions it posed, and an animated discussion ensued. The success of the occasion led the Executive to schedule another film evening in the 2013 program. A more detailed report may be found at:

http://www.cciwa.org/Documents/Articles/Film_The%20Quarrel_150512_article_final.pdf

Light Eternal Seminar



On 9 August, CCJWA held an event on *Light Eternal*, this time at the St Peter's and Emmaus Church located in Joondanna. The Rev Marie Wilson welcomed guest speakers Rabbi Fred Morgan, of Temple Beth Israel St Kilda, Victoria, and Rev Dr Geoffrey Lilburne, Director of Lay and Continuing Education, Perth Theological Hall. Initially,

clips were shown from the *Light Eternal* DVD, which features Rabbi Morgan as one of the main presenters. The guest speakers then spoke in turn about the topics covered, focusing on contemporary Judaism, supersessionism, and interpretation of scripture. At the conclusion, the floor was opened to questions and a lively dialogue followed — very much in keeping with the aims of *Light Eternal*. A full report on the event, and a copy of Geoffrey Lilburne's paper, are available on the website (www.cciwa.org).



Kristallnacht Commemoration



On 8 November, the commemoration of Kristallnacht was held at the Sylvia and Harry Hoffman Hall, Yokine. Some 200 members and guests were in attendance, with the Rev Marie Wilson deputising for Rev

Dr Charles Waddell as MC. This yearly commemoration, a focal point for CCJWA, in more recent years has become a medium for education, and it was pleasing to see many young people in attendance.

The overarching structure, beginning with lamentation and moving toward a focus on hope and peace, was reflected in the first four items, all presented by students. The St Stephen's Singers, a brilliant choir of some fifty voices, set the tone with a sobering rendition of Randall Z. Stroope's *Lamentations of Jeremiah*, directed by Andrea Stimson and accompanied by Marion Jamison. The next item, Pavel Friedmann's poem "I Never Saw Another Butterfly," was recited by Phoebe Gunson of St Mary's Anglican Girls' School, providing a glimpse of the dreadful conditions endured by the young author in Theresienstadt. Then followed the Hebrew song "Shma Yisrael," composed by Sarit Hadad, and sung beautifully by Alex Chapeikin of Carmel School, accompanied by Shirley Atlas. This song spoke of suffering, yet also of faith, and hope in God, as death was confronted. Lastly, in the reading from Isaiah 65:17–25, we were heartened by the prophet's vision of a renewed creation and an era of peace. The passage was presented by students of Carmel School — Eden Ouliel, Olivia Bettane and Meggi Rudman.



The MC then introduced the keynote speaker, the Honourable Kevin Parker AC RFD QC, former Supreme Court Judge, WA, and former Vice-President of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, The Hague.

Justice Parker commenced his address by emphasising that 30,000 males were arrested on Kristallnacht simply because they were Jewish. He went on to stress that this “cautions us of the danger to our society of the notion of the supremacy of one race.” He then spoke of how the work of the International Criminal Tribunal addressed the issue of accountability for crimes against humanity, and continues to do so. He linked the human concern for what was humane with the global community’s ability to bring to justice those who act hatefully to a particular group, under the veil of war, or outside of it. What occurred in the Shoah — Kristallnacht representing the first step in the methodical persecution of a group based solely on identity — must be deemed as objectively unjustifiable, and prosecutable. Prosecuting the genocide that occurred in the former Yugoslavia is an important step toward this.

Following this extremely moving address, the first of the traditional rituals was the lighting of eight memorial candles. Initially, six candles, in remembrance of the Jews who perished in the Holocaust, were lit by Tamsin Eintracht and Lindsey Manushewitz of Carmel School, while the names of some of the death camps were spoken by Shoah survivor Ken Arkwright (Temple David) and Eric Schneider (PHC).

The lighting of the 7th candle was preceded by the reading of a proclamation issued in 1941: “The Penalty for Helping a Jew in Occupied Poland.” This exemplified not only the sinister restrictions placed on Jews, but also the extreme risk taken by anyone who provided assistance to them. The candle in honour of the righteous Gentiles was then lit by the UCA Moderator, the Rev Ron Larkin. The MC’s introduction to the lighting of the 8th candle included details concerning the millions of non-Jews who were targeted by the Nazis because they were deemed “racially inferior” or “undesirable.” The candle in their memory was then lit

by Fr Peter Porteous OSM, representing the Catholic Archdiocese.

The two-minute silence which followed was shattered by the sound of breaking glass, and all joined in remembering before God, the horrors of the “Night of Broken Glass.” Judith Schneider then led the prayer that such events may never occur again.

The MC then introduced the Z. Randall Stroope song “Inscription of Hope,” based on words found on the walls of a cellar in Cologne, where Jews hid from Nazis:

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 song was beautifully sung by St Stephen’s Singers, directed by Andrea Stimson and accompanied by Marion Jamison.

All stood while the symbolic Candle of Hope was brought forward by Alex Chapeikin of Carmel School, and Gerald Yeo of St Stephen’s School, placed with the memorial candles, and lit. The MC’s proclamation: “Let the light of peace shine in our world,” was echoed by

the audience, and neighbours greeted one another with the words “Shalom” — “Peace.”

Bishop Brian Kyme, representing the Anglican Diocese, led the closing prayer for Peace, and the formal proceedings concluded with the Sy Miller and Jill Jackson hymn “Let There Be Peace On Earth,” sung by the male a capella ensemble of St Stephen’s School, and directed by Marion Jamison. All were invited to stay for refreshments to meet the school choristers and the Hon. Kevin Parker and Mrs Parker.

Judith Schneider and Mary J. Marshall

(Photographs 2 and 3 of Kristallnacht commemoration by courtesy of Mathew De Sousa of ‘The Record’.)

Report on ICCJ Manchester Conference 1–4 July 2012

It was a great privilege to attend the annual ICCJ conference, held in Manchester in recognition of the foundation of the Council there 70 years ago. Several of the events took place at the Copthorne Hotel, Salford Quays, while the other main venue was the Manchester Communication Academy, utilised for the plenary sessions and workshops.

The conference theme was “New Neighbours, New Opportunities:

The Challenges of Multiculturalism and Social Responsibility,” and each of the five sessions of concurrent workshops focused on a particular aspect of the overall theme.

The formal conference program began on the Sunday evening with an official welcome to the delegates at Manchester Town Hall. The speakers included ICCJ President, Dr Deborah Weissman, who underlined the theme of social responsibility, pointing out that the Hebrew terms for “brother” and “other” are *ach* and *acher*, while the word for “responsibility” is *achrayut*, all three deriving from the same root.

Later, a short presentation was given by Rebecca Brückner, Chair of the ICCJ Young Leadership Council, impressing all with her enthusiasm, and with the slogan developed by the group: “Equip, Encounter, Exchange.” A festive dinner, provided by the Manchester City Council, concluded the evening.

On Monday, 2 July, the keynote lecture on “The Challenges of Multiculturalism and Social Responsibility,” was given by Clive Lawton, co-founder of Limmud. He began by recalling that he had been an invited speaker at the CCJ conference for its 40th

anniversary, and had utilised the analogy then of “middle age,” emphasising the need for Jews and Christians to move on toward more robust engagement. Now that the organisation had reached its “full life span,” he suggested that it could no longer hide behind immaturity or middle-aged respectability. He then referred to the PowerPoint presentation which just beforehand had been offered for the Meditative Moment — comprising images from the Shoah, and culminating in a “Never again!” testimony. Commenting respectfully but with some reservations on the video, he expressed the hope “that we can move on from the Shoah as the most important thing we have to talk about between us.”

Turning to the topic of “Multiculturalism,” he spoke of the distinct difference between “integration” and “assimilation,” which he likened to “becoming a square in a patchwork quilt,” as against “becoming a thread in a cloth.” Applying his observations to the matter of interfaith dialogue, he turned to the challenges faced by Jews and Christians 70 years on. He concluded by asking: “In short, can we both come out fighting for causes that don’t serve our own private ends? — the Christian aspiration of the spreading of Christianity and the Jewish aspiration for security. Time will tell. After 70 years, time to start!”

The response to Clive Lawton’s address was given by the Rev Dr Helene Egnell, of the Lutheran Church in Sweden, who endorsed Clive Lawton’s assertion that repentance was essential in Jewish-Christian dialogue, saying that: “We need to be honest about the traits in our own traditions that contribute to hate and violence, and God willing, to help each other to deal with them.”

On Tuesday 3 July, the Meditative Moment was coordinated by the Young Leadership Council, and offered by a Jewish-Christian-Muslim trio. Their presentation comprised a solemn liturgy which included a candle-lighting ritual and prayer from each of the faith traditions.

The keynote address was given by John Denham MP on “Multiculturalism and Shared Responsibility” and the respondent was Dr Ed Kessler MBE, co-founder and the director of the Cambridge Woolf Institute. Mr Denham argued that what the narratives of

multiculturalism and integration both lack is: “the action of nation building; and the act of community building.” In conclusion, he stated that “our common future in our own nation is one we need to forge together,” and that “our very diversity may turn out to be not a weakness but a strength.”

In his response, Dr Kessler picked up on two motifs in John Denham’s address — identity and personal encounter. He agreed that “the issue of identity is always a complex and multidimensional problem,” and spoke of the fragility of people’s identities during times of change, when they have to redefine and readjust who they are. On the second subject, he referred to the necessity for increased levels of personal encounter and then outlined the work done in this area at the Woolf Institute, stating that: “at the heart of encounter lies the sharing of personal stories which help the listener to see beyond their own experience.”

In the afternoon, five different outings were offered, and I opted for the “Introduction to Manchester,” which comprised a guided walking tour through the city centre. Starting at the Town Hall, we visited many sites of particular interest to group members, including various places of worship, the John Rylands Library, and Chetham’s Library. Our excellent guide provided a detailed historical commentary, and many interesting anecdotes. In the evening we travelled by coach to King David School, where we enjoyed an informal buffet dinner together with key members of Manchester’s Jewish community, and other locals involved in interfaith and community relations.

The third full conference day started with a sobering Meditative Moment in which it was acknowledged that as well as being Independence Day in the US, 4 July is the anniversary of the murder of 42 Jews, and the wounding of nearly 100, in Kielce, Poland, 1946. Among images shown during the moving address was a photograph of the Jewish Menorah Monument, a sculpture of a partially-buried menorah, which was erected in 2007 in remembrance of the victims of the pogrom.

The keynote lecture titled “Jewish-Christian Dialogue in the Non-Western World,” was given by Professor Kwok Pui-Lan, of the Episcopal Divinity School, Cambridge, Massachusetts. She commenced by giving some

historical background concerning Jewish and Christian communities in the East, and arguing that since the majority of Christians are now situated in the Global South, it was important to consider Jewish-Christian dialogue beyond the North Atlantic context. In conclusion she proposed that: “Jewish-Christian dialogue in the non-Western world can examine how Western Christianity has colluded with and provided justification for anti-Semitism and colonialism as not two different phenomena, but as part and parcel of the ideology of Western hegemony.” She expressed the hope that “the discussion of Jewish-Christian dialogue in the non-Western world will give us food for thought and impetus to try something new.”

The response to the keynote address was given by Baroness Dr Julia Neuberger DBE, Chief Rabbi, West London Synagogue. Paying tribute to Prof. Pui-Lan’s paper, Rabbi Neuberger stressed the importance of focusing on religious communities in modern China, and drew attention to several recent interfaith conferences, asserting that “we need to look at dialogue wherever it is happening, and take from it the need to include Muslims within it.” She went on to state that “part of the power of dialogue is to lead to action — it’s not just about peace-making with words.” Rabbi Neuberger concluded by saying that: “what will ultimately make dialogue mean something is the work we do together as the product of the conversations we have had,” and that “building institutions together as the fruit of dialogue, is the only thing that will really bring us together, and promote peace.”

The conference concluded on the Wednesday evening in the Knight’s Lounge, Manchester United Football Club, with a Gala Dinner to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the founding of CCJ. The conference was voted a huge success.

For a full report of the conference go to:

www.ccjwa.org/articles

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