

Kristallnacht Commemoration — 83rd Anniversary

This year's Kristallnacht Commemoration by the Western Australian Council of Christians and Jews was held in the nave of St George's Cathedral at 2:00pm on Sunday 7 November. The grandeur of the Cathedral, together with the presence of Anglican Archbishop Kay Goldsworthy, assisted by the Dean, the Very Reverend Chris Chataway, touchingly made for a respectful, subdued occasion — in an hour of recollecting the 1938 'Night of Broken Glass'.

It was an especially poignant commemoration, as Guest Speaker Dr Bill Leadbetter recalled the voice of one lone German Christian preacher, Helmut Gollwitzer, speak up in 1944, against Nazi persecution of Jews — boldly calling his congregants to actively defend their *neighbour* — in a climate where many Christians tacitly approved of the Nazi persecution. CCJWA members and guests were exposed to this sense of neighbourly concern through a variety of contributions from diverse quarters.

Attendees were greeted by the Dean's welcome; then heard Ms Hilary Silbert (of Temple David) recite the Prayer for Our Country, Jeremy Garside ('cello) and David Hicks (piano) perform an excerpt from Bloch's *Prayer*, and Archbishop Kay's call to all to remember and to mourn. St George's Anglican Grammar School students, Katharine Mullaney, Claire Beltz, and Saira Afridi, then introduced and read, respectively, three poems: *Homesick* (anon.), *Fear* (Eva Picková), and *Passover Night 1942* (Yala Korwin).

Dr Leadbetter presented well-researched insights on one man's courage during the Nazi regime, and the address was followed by the lighting of the Memorial Candles. A moment of reflection was inspired by 'cellist Ethan Clayson and accompanist Mr Ryan McBride (of St George's AGS) performing an excerpt from Arvo Pärt's *Spiegel im Spiegel*. A two-minute silence was broken by the sound of shattering glass, and the congregation together recollected before the Eternal One, the Night of Broken Glass, and the horrors that occurred — the burning of synagogues, looting of schools, destruction of orphanages, the arrests, deportations, and deaths. This solemn moment was followed by a sign of reconciliation, as all turned to their neighbours wishing each other 'Shalom, Peace'. The Candle of Hope was then brought forward and co-lit by Olivia Tate of Temple David, and Jordan Little of St George's AGS. The Archbishop's hope for 'the Light of peace to shine in our world' was echoed by the congregation, and this sentiment was repeated in the words of the beautiful piece 'Inscription of Hope', sung fervently by St George's AGS Vocal Ensemble.

The Exhortation to 'go out into the world in peace', holding 'fiercely to what is good', was delivered by the Dean. Mr Trevor Creewel of Temple David recited *The Mourner's Kaddish*, and Prendiville Catholic College Alumni Choir sang *Oseh Shalom* (directed by David Hicks), with all invited to join in when it was sung for a second time.

'Bring Peace' (*Oseh Shalom*) was affirmed at this commemoration, and all were reminded that 'God is One' (heard in Kiko Arguello's '*Shema Israel*' at the conclusion of the proceedings).

Judith Schneider
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