



National Council of Churches in Australia

5 September 2019

MEDIA RELEASE:

A Call for Prayer around Australia in Churches, for UN International Day of Peace, Saturday 21 September.

We are living in dangerous and anxious times. The need for peace-makers is vivid.

Especially given the trends:

- * The weapons are so destructive. The worst of them, nuclear weapons, are being “modernised” whilst more nations are seeking them, recognising the connection to power and resenting that the nuclear-weapon states refuse to disarm, notwithstanding the promises they have made under the Nuclear Non Proliferation Treaty;
- * The opportunity cost of militarism causes more of the poor to starve, robbing funds from health and welfare systems;
- * Meanwhile, in so many places there is unspeakable suffering caused by violence;
- * Meanwhile too, there is a rise in authoritarian regimes which crush dissent and fan various fears and resentments in their populations to consolidate power at the cost of social cohesion;
- * At the same time, the climate-crisis evolves before our eyes. The regulatory regime to contain a rise in global temperatures is fragmented and lacking coherent political leadership.

In this context, is it any wonder that the young are anxious and ask us if they prepare at school for a future that will never arrive, because of global violence and climate change?

For their sakes and for the sake all who are vulnerable, including many species at risk of extinction, the National Council of Churches is asking people of faith to make UN International Day of Peace, 21 September, a special day of prayer and meditation for peace.

Churches across the nation are being asked to open their doors from early in the morning to facilitate prayer and meditation for peace.

Peace, in the Christian understanding, is both a divine gift and our task as we respond to Jesus’ call, in the Sermon on the Mount, for peace-makers. Peace, as gift and task, come together when we pray and meditate.

As we know too, “thoughts and prayers” are not enough. Peace-making requires practical service, advocacy and research. Peace-making means making this the era of dialogue rather than that of violent confrontation.

UN International Day of Peace, 21 September, gives an opportunity to contribute and to renew our hope together.

Bishop Philip Huggins
President, NCCA.

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Note:

Bishop Philip will lead a UN International Day of Peace Service of Prayer and Meditation in St Paul’s Cathedral, Melbourne, 8am -9am on Saturday 21 Sept, as part of “*Stop Still for Peace*” activities around Australia.

Anglican Church

Antiochian
Orthodox Church

Armenian
Apostolic Church

Assyrian Church
of the East

Chinese Methodist
Church

Churches of Christ

Congregational
Federation

Coptic
Orthodox Church

Greek
Orthodox Church

Indian
Orthodox Church

Lutheran Church

Mar Thoma Church

Religious Society
of Friends (Quakers)

Roman Catholic Church

Romanian
Orthodox Church

Syrian
Orthodox Church

The Salvation Army

Uniting Church

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