

VICTORIA'S MULTI FAITH ADVISORY GROUP: NAIDOC MEETING 13 JULY 2022

The focus of the first Multifaith Advisory Group face to face meeting in more than two years is on the themes of NAIDOC Week.

This Wednesday leaders from Victoria's diverse faith groups will be considering how they can better support the Uluru Statement from the Heart and the Yoorrook Justice Commission.

This is a crucial discussion and these next years are pivotal. The Uluru Statement from the Heart is a call by Aboriginal and Torres Straits Islander people for real and practical change in Australia through the establishment of a constitutionally enshrined Voice to Parliament which gives the Australian Government the opportunity to make policies in consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Straits Islander people. The Uluru Statement from the Heart is a most generous invitation to all Australians to walk with First Nations people for a better future.

Victoria's religious communities have supported the Statement by placing it on notice boards and providing copies of the Statement to those who attend our temples, synagogues, mosques and churches. Our faith-based schools have the Statement. We have sought to listen better to First Nations members of our own faith communities. We have sought to better link our prayers, meditations and advocacy.

The new federal government's commitment to implementing the Uluru Statement from the Heart has given relief and hope. This is the right moment to address the inequalities experienced by our First Nations communities. The Statement from the Heart articulates, "these dimensions of our crisis" and describes them as "the torment of our powerlessness".

Because compassion and a yearning for a just peace are unifying values which are shared by our major faith traditions, we want to journey together to a place where all our children can have hope for the future.

Hence the importance of clearly supporting First Nations people who, in the motto of this 2022 NAIDOC, call us all to "Get Up; Stand Up; Show Up".

The Uluru Statement from the Heart invites us into a meeting place where we can together build a better nation. A better nation will be one in which the choice is always to heal and never to cause further harm. A nation of trusting, fruitful partnerships. A nation which ensures all our young people have grounds for genuine hope.

The promise of this moment is therefore quite wonderful. Recognising this, our MAG meets to ensure our leadership is well informed, as guided by our special guest, Aunty Joy Wandin Murphy AO and our keynote speaker, Professor Eleanor Bourke, Chair of the Yoorrook Justice Commission.

We will listen and talk together, ever so grateful for the invitation of the Uluru Statement from the Heart, "into a movement of the Australian people for a better future".

The Multifaith Advisory Group
12/7/2022

Multifaith Advisory Group Members

- All Nations Presbyterian Church of Australia Mulgrave
 - AMAFHH Federation - Shi'a Organisation
 - Australian Intercultural Society
 - Australian Muslim Women's Centre for Human Rights
 - Anglican Diocese of Melbourne
 - Baha'i Community of Victoria
 - Board of Imams Victoria
 - Rabbinical Council of Victoria
 - Buddhist Council of Victoria
 - Catholic Social Services Victoria
 - Coptic Orthodox Diocese of Melbourne
 - Ethnic Communities' Council of Victoria
 - Faith Communities Council of Victoria
 - Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Australia
 - Hindu Council of Australia (Vic)
 - Hindu Society of Victoria
 - Islamic Council of Victoria
 - Jewish Community Council of Victoria
 - Lutheran Church of Australia
 - National Council of Churches in Australia
 - Rabbinical Council of Victoria
 - Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne
 - Russian Orthodox Church
 - Sikh Interfaith Council of Victoria
 - The Interfaith Centre of Melbourne
 - Uniting Church in Australia, Synod of Victoria and Tasmania
 - Victorian Council of Churches
 - Victorian Multicultural Commission
 - UNESCO
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