

Ku-ring-gai Interchurch Committee

Promoting friendship and understanding between Christians;
learning from each other; worshipping together...



- *Anglican Church of St. John the Evangelist, Gordon*
- *Corpus Christi Catholic Church, St Ives*
- *St. Andrews Presbyterian Church, Pymble/St Ives*
- *Pymble Catholic Parish*
- *St. Ives Uniting Church*
- *Pymble Uniting Church*
- *Pymble Chapel (Uniting)*
- *St Swithun's Anglican Church Pymble*

An Exercise in Local Ecumenism-Ku-ring-gai Inter Church Committee

Based on Christ's prayer for the Church that we are "one in Him", local ecumenism can be seen as a partnership between Christians seeking to witness together to their common faith in God, and to act together in matters of common interest in their communities. Indeed our logo the cross formed from the mast over the boat affirms our togetherness as those fishermen of old, afloat with Christ in the world, "growing up in every way to Him who is the head unto Christ (Ephesians 4, 15).

Bishop Herft, Anglican Bishop of Newcastle, addressing a forum on local ecumenism in 1999 stressed "the important, indeed essential, character of local ecumenism...that "if we are not engaged in ministry each locally in our local faith communities where we live our Christian belonging-then there is little point to the theological dialogue and to all else that happens in councils of churches and at other levels in the churches' life."

Significant Covenants, or Agreements have been made have been made between Churches to this end that we are "one body", "many parts" with unique callings committed to act together with other Christians in matters other than those in which deep convictions compel separate action. This Committee has been encouraged by the example of those initiatives, and in particular by that Covenant signed in 2008, between the Catholic, Anglican, Baptist and Uniting Church Parishes of Epping and Carlingford. In November 2012, at the Annual Dinner of the Ku-ring-gai Interchurch Committee an Agreement was signed between the eight member Churches, quite a significant step forward from that first meeting in March 1980 when a group of representatives from local Anglican, Baptist, Catholic and Uniting Churches met in a private home "to discuss one or more ecumenical services in the period of 15th to 29th May, 1980, and with the long term objective of the establishment of an interchurch committee." The Congregations which participated in the 2012 Agreement were two Roman Catholic (Sacred Heart, Pymble and Corpus Christi, St Ives), one Anglican (St John the Evangelist, Gordon), one Presbyterian (St Andrews, St Ives-Pymble), three Uniting (St Ives, Pymble and Pymble Chapel) and the Anglican Catholic Parish of St Mary the Virgin. The last mentioned Congregation no longer exists. We have recently welcomed St Swithun's Anglican Parish, Pymble, as a new member and hope to have them sign the Agreement at our Annual Dinner this year, in November.

How we have progressed and extended our influence, and made our presence felt in interchurch relationships and activities! We now meet monthly on the premises of a member Church ; a supportive prayer roster is circulated between members; an informative leaflet detailing members' particulars is distributed to the wider community; the "Week of Prayer for Christian Unity" is celebrated as a common thread by each member Church individually within their own traditions, while acknowledging a common purpose and central theme; regular annual functions of a social and an educational nature keep the Committee's work alive in the minds of the individual congregations, and, to some extent that of the wider community, as well as uniting those congregations on an informal level that gradually breaks down barriers between us. Some pulpit sharing has occurred, but we are endeavouring to promote it on a more regular and wider basis.

In 2009 the Committee commenced Clergy/Committee Lunches, held informally at a member's home at least once annually, a great opportunity for Clergy to become acquainted , thus strengthening relationships, resulting in closer ties with and between Clergy and committee.

Each of the abovementioned Congregations is represented on the Committee, which meets monthly (except in December). The Committee organizes three major functions annually: a Breakfast during Lent, usually hosted by St John the Evangelist Anglican Parish in Gordon, a Social Justice Lunch in August, usually hosted by St Andrew's Presbyterian Parish in St Ives, and our Annual Dinner, in November, usually hosted by St Ives Uniting Church in St Ives. Each of these functions is an occasion for ecumenical fellowship and is addressed by a speaker on a topic relevant to the shared beliefs of the member Congregations.

With God's help, we trust that our humble efforts at local ecumenism will foster the continued growth of His Kingdom.

Version as at July 30 2015