

Melbourne, Australia 2025

In a world torn by violence, dissension, othering and hatred,
is there a role for dialogue?

HEADS, HEARTS AND HANDS

What can dialogue do for us?



When:

Sunday, 2 February (2 to 7pm) to Tuesday, 4 February (8:45am to 5pm)

Where:

Trinity College Theological School, (2-3 Feb), 100 Royal Parade, Parkville VIC 3052
Temple Beth Israel - (4 Feb), 76-82 Alma Road, St Kilda VIC 3182



Welcome

In a world increasingly marked by violence, division, and misunderstanding, we are called to ask: Is there still a role for dialogue? The Australian Council of Christians and Jews (ACCJ) believes there is—and that dialogue holds the power to heal, transform, and unite.

Held in conjunction with the visit of members of the executive board of the International Council of Christians and Jews, this will be a rare opportunity for Australians and New Zealanders to engage in dialogue with global and local voices.

Following October 7, people in many religious traditions have stepped back from meeting each other and having conversations. Anger, hurt and confusion—and genuine disagreement—have blocked channels of communication between us. Now is the time for us to step out of our compartments. This gathering is a call to reimagine what is possible when we come together to listen, to learn, and to act.

Throughout the event, you will have the chance to participate in sessions that touch on the three vital aspects of dialogue: engaging the mind (heads), opening the heart (hearts), and inspiring practical action (hands). From thought-provoking theory and debate to hands-on workshops offering tools for fostering more cohesive communities, the program is designed to help equip us to create real change in our own contexts.

We hope that over the next few days, we will together learn more about how open, courageous conversations can help to deepen understanding, break down barriers, and inspire meaningful action.

Please take this opportunity to meet more people, enjoy your time together, ask the hard questions of yourself and others and share your visions, your hopes, your beliefs, your fears and your doubts.

This gathering is a call to reimagine what is possible when we come together to listen with the intention of understanding each other, to learn, and to act.

We are immensely grateful for the generous support from the Sisters of Our Lady of Sion and the Pratt Foundation. We also sincerely acknowledge Trinity College Theological School and Temple Beth Israel for their use of their facilities.

Dr Ron Hoenig (Chair, ACCJ)

Rev'd Canon Jenny Chalmers (Vice Chair, ACCJ)

From the co-convenors

As convenors of this gathering, we are grateful to the many people who have contributed their time, insight, input, and active participation to the program you are about to experience.

A word of explanation on “Heads, Hearts and Hands” (the theme and title of this gathering). We would like this event to organically link together perspectives from the informative (the head), affective (heart), and practical (hands) dimensions of interfaith engagement as we gather to consider the question, “What can dialogue do for us?” We are only too conscious of how fragile and precious it is to preserve a space for dialogue, especially when language itself has become prone to misunderstanding and division. Nonetheless, we believe that dialogue *can* make a positive difference in the world, benefiting people of all faiths and those without religious affiliation.

Organised by the Australian Council of Christians and Jews, the three-day event focuses on dialogue and interfaith activities in Australia and New Zealand. The event will convene various state-based organisations involved in Jewish-Christian dialogue and coincides with a visit from the board of the International Council of Christians and Jews.

We will gather on Sunday on the unceded land of the Wurundjeri People for a Welcome to Country & smoking ceremony. This will be followed by ICCJ President Rabbi David Fox Sandmel, who will deliver a keynote address on the theme of our gathering, followed by Jewish and Christian responses and an opportunity for meaningful dialogue among participants. We will also listen to Rev Canon Glenn Loughrey share how the no vote in the Voice Referendum has affected Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People. The day will conclude with a standing supper and drinks.

Over the next two days, attendees will have the unique opportunity to hear from local and international speakers, who will provide diverse perspectives on the nature of dialogue and the current challenges facing Christian-Jewish dialogue. Opportunities to reflect on the experience of encounter, dialogue, and action in Australia and Aotearoa, New Zealand, will be enhanced by the global perspectives brought by our international guests. On both days, there will be opportunities to participate in hands-on workshops that provide us with practical tools to bring back to our communities.

Throughout the gathering, attendees will be able to reflect on the information they receive in moments of silence and through group discussions. We hope to encourage participants to consider the implications of their learning and how it can positively impact others. We strongly believe that open dialogue has the power to make a significant and positive difference in the world, benefiting people of all faiths and those with no religious affiliation.

Emmanuel Nathan and Mark Walsh

Levels of Listening & Conversation

Throughout the gathering, we will draw upon the work of Otto Scharmer and the Presencing Institute (<https://www.presencing.org>), incorporating their insights into listening and speaking, which are essential to dialogue. The four levels of listening and conversation represent patterns of interaction. These patterns influence the quality of our interactions and represent a movement from a closed way of seeing the world to an open process of engagement with others, leading to collective creativity. This is achieved through having an open heart, an open mind and an open will.

In its essence, conversations connect us to the power of collective intelligence. Conversations can be mere shadows, empty phrases (downloading). They can connect us to the viewpoint of the other (debate). They can connect us even deeper to one another (dialogue). Or they can connect us to our deep source of collective creating and bringing forth the world. When that happens, conversations connect us to who we really are (presencing). When operating from that deeper place, we begin to act as instruments or elements of a whole that is larger than our self. We begin to connect with “the beings who surround us.” We begin to operate from what is moving through, from the power of now.¹

	LISTENING	Leading to		CONVERSATION	Leading to
LEVEL 1	DOWNLOADING Listening from habit (within my worldview)	RECONFIRMING Old opinions & judgements; what I already know		DOWNLOADING Talking nice, conforming, polite, cautious, from within a bubble	CONFORMING Speaking from what others want to hear, not saying what you think
LEVEL 2	FACTUAL Listening from outside (looking beyond from the edge of my view)	DISCONFIRMING Noticing differences, suspending judgement	OPEN MIND	DEBATE “talking tough”, connecting to wonder	DISCONFIRMING Speaking from what I think, exchange of divergent views, confronting
LEVEL 3	EMPATHIC Listening from within (experiencing the world from within the field)	EMOTIONAL CONNECTION Seeing through another person’s eyes	OPEN HEART	DIALOGUE From defending into inquiry, curiosity, willingness to change/enlarge my point of view	REFLECTIVE INQUIRY Speaking from myself as part of the larger whole,
LEVEL 4	GENERATIVE Listening from Source (connecting with those around us and beyond us)	GENERATIVE Listening from the Future wanting to emerge	OPEN WILL	COLLECTIVE CREATIVITY Connecting to Source, collective flow	GENERATIVE FLOW Speaking from what is moving through

¹ C. Otto Scharmer, *Theory U, 2nd Edn* (Oakland, CA: Berrett-Koehler, 2016).

Schedule of presentations and abstracts

When: **Sunday 2 February 2025**

Where: **Trinity College Theological School**

- 13:00 Onsite registration of participants and guests
- 14:00 **Welcome to Country & smoking ceremony**
Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation
- 14:30 **Formal opening**
Welcome to special guests and others from our hosts, the Australian Council of Christians and Jews, followed by a brief intro to the theme.
- Dr Ron Hoenig & Rev Canon Jenny Chalmers
- 15:00 **Keynote Opening Address**
“Heads, Hearts and Hands: What Can Dialogue Do For Us?”
Rabbi David Fox Sandmel, PhD
- 15:45 *Space for people to talk to their neighbours about what they have heard.*
- 16:15 **A Jewish and Christian Reflection on Communal Grief and Resilience**
Two community leaders share the pain that Jewish and Christian communities have experienced since Oct 7, 2023.
- Rabbi Ralph Genende OAM and Ven Dr Colleen O’Reilly AM
- 16:55 *An invitation to reflect in silence and talk to their neighbours about what they have heard.*
- 17:05 **Healing, Dialogue and Reconciliation after the “No” vote on an Indigenous Voice to Parliament**
A reflection on Indigenous experiences of dialogue and reconciliation in the year since the referendum on an Indigenous Voice to Parliament.
- Rev Canon Glenn Loughrey
- 18:00 **Canapes and drinks²**
- 19:00 Free evening
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² All food served at the gathering is kosher. All requested dietary requirements have been catered for.

When: **Monday 3 February 2025**

Where: **Trinity College Theological School**

08:15 Onsite registration of participants

08:45 Reflective moment (Christian)

9:00 **Session 1: What is dialogue today?**

Panel:

Rev Jenny Chalmers

Rev Dr Patrick McInerney

Ophir Yarden

Moderator:

Rev Prof Mark Lindsay

The panellists are experienced practitioners of interfaith dialogue, including Christian-Muslim, Abrahamic, and Jewish-Christian discussions. This session will draw on their experiences to highlight common principles that are valuable in both dialogue and interfaith relations. Additionally, the panellists will discuss experiences that uniquely distinguish various types of dialogue.

10:15 **Session 1 continued: Responses from the heart**

The conference facilitators will use the levels of listening and conversation to invite participants to reflect on what they have heard from the panel. Participants will be invited to reflect on how they listen to one another and to listen and speak from the heart.

11:00 **Morning tea / Coffee break**

11:30 **Session 2: What is unique about Jewish-Christian dialogue?**

Panel:

Rabbi Fred Morgan AM

Mary Reaburn nds

Prof Dr Ursula Rudnick

Samuel J. Sztainhendler

Moderator:

Rev Dr Michael Trainor AM

Having looked at interfaith dialogue more generally in Session 1, Session 2 will examine the particularities of Jewish-Christian dialogue. The panellists are seasoned practitioners in Jewish-Christian relations who will articulate, based on their experiences, what they see as unique characteristics of Jewish-Christian dialogue in Australia and abroad.

12:30 **Session 2 continued: Responses from the heart** (see above)

13:00 **Lunch**

14:00 **Session 3: Practical Workshops (running concurrently). Please attend the workshop you have been allocated.**

Workshop One: *Addressing ‘drip feed’ of anti-Judaism and other ‘drops’ of prejudice* (session 1 of 2). Presented by Dr Teresa Pirola

Workshop Two: *Eat your way to the heart of dialogue.* Presented by Dr Elaine Pratley (Peace Kitchen)

Workshop Three: *Heads, Hearts and Hands: Building Successful Projects.* Presented by Prof. Dr. Ursula Rudnick

Workshop Four: *How do we unravel hate and fear in our world?* Presented by Margaret Hepworth (Together For Humanity)

15:00 **Afternoon tea / Coffee break**

15:30 **Session 4: Current challenges in Jewish-Christian dialogue**

Panel:

Rev Dr Julie Hall

Rabbi Zalman Kastel AM

Kasia Kowalska, nds, PhD

Rabbi David Fox Sandmel, PhD

Moderator:

Dr Emmanuel Nathan

Facilitators:

Mrs Carmel Crawford & Mark Walsh

We recognise that Jewish Christian Dialogue is difficult at the moment. Since October 7, many fractures have been exposed. The panel will consider these challenges in dialogue with the participants.

17:00 **Session 5: Drawing the threads of the day together**

Dr Emmanuel Nathan

Mrs Carmel Crawford

Mark Walsh

Participants will engage in a dialogical process to draw the threads of the day together.

Conclusion and announcements for the following day at Temple Beth Israel

17:30 Close of day

Please remember that we will gather at Temple Beth Israel tomorrow (76-82 Alma Rd, St Kilda VIC 3182).

When: **Tuesday 4 February 2025**

Where: **Temple Beth Israel**

08:15 Onsite registration of participants

08:45 Reflective moment (Jewish)

9:00 **Session 6: How to overcome challenges in Jewish-Christian dialogue**

Moderator:

Dr Emmanuel Nathan

Facilitators:

Mrs Carmel Crawford & Mark Walsh

Panel:

Liliane Apotheker

Pavol Bargár

Benjamin Kamine

Ven Dr Colleen O'Reilly AM

*This session will begin with a facilitated dialogue, allowing participants to consider how we might overcome the challenges facing Jewish-Christian dialogue highlighted in **Session 5** (3 Feb).*

The panel will provide feedback to participants and invite them to consider other ways in which they might respond.

11:00 **Morning tea / Coffee break**

11:30 **Session 7: Is there a role for religion in civil society?**

Panel:

Rabbi Allison Conyer

Rabbi Jacqueline Ninio OAM

Rev Dr Michael Trainor

Religious communities having a voice in a wider secular society is a good thing. Despite our differences, we can all contribute to conversations about important issues we face together. We will begin by addressing the importance of religious voices in these conversations. Following this, we will explore what our traditions say about the Climate Crises we face, with new understandings of biblical texts and theologies that engage with science and new understandings of the world and evolution. There is collaboration rather than conflict between faith and science.

12:30 **Session 7 continued: Responses from the heart** (see Session 1 continued)

13:00 **Lunch**

14:00 **Session 8: Practical Workshops (running concurrently). Please attend the workshop you have been allocated.**

Workshop One: *How can we address the ‘drip feed’ of anti-Judaism? A concrete proposal (session 2 of 2).* Presented by Dr Teresa Pirola

Workshop Two: *Abrahamic Dialogue – Practical examples in the aftermath of October 7*

Moderator:

Dave Moskovitz (Chair, Wellington NZ Abrahamic Council)

Panellists:

Rabbi Ralph Genende OAM (Jewish)

Rev Canon Jenny Chalmers (Christian)

David Blocksidge (Muslim)

Workshop Three: *Learn About the Victorian Jewish Community*

Presented by Josh Goodman (Jewish Community Council Victoria)

15:00 **Afternoon tea / Coffee break**

15:30 **Session 9: Where does our learning lead us? What is our response from the heart?**

Dr. Philip A. Cunningham will join us online to discuss the ICCJ Declaration.

Facilitators:

Mrs Carmel Crawford & Mark Walsh

Participants will engage in a dialogical process to bring the threads of the Gathering together and imagine a way forward.

16:45 **Session 10: Marking 40 years of CCJ VIC**

Dr Ron Hoenig & Rev Canon Jenny Chalmers

Alex Kats & Ven Dr Colleen O’Reilly AM

17:20 **Special performance by “YOUNG WORLD CHOIR”**

18:00 Close of Gathering and free evening

WORKSHOP ABSTRACTS

Session 3: Practical Workshops (Monday, 3 February)

Workshop One: Addressing ‘drip feed’ of anti-Judaism and other ‘drops’ of prejudice

(session 1 of 2) Presented by Dr Teresa Pirola

Abstract: Micro-messages that perpetuate anti-Jewish tropes and stereotypes emanate from many (not all) church pulpits on any given Sunday. This workshop explores this claim and argues that, while the remedy may be simple, the habit is hard to break. Therefore, concerted effort and persistent strategies are required. The topic will be explored through a series of examples and case studies from Catholic circles while inviting participants to consider similar or parallel examples from their respective communities and traditions. A follow-up workshop will be offered on Tuesday, 4 February, to present a concrete proposal for a new Australian resource that addresses the problem of the regular ‘drip feed’ of anti-Judaism.

Workshop Two: Eat your way to the heart of dialogue. Presented by Elaine Pratley (Peace Kitchen)

Abstract: Peace Kitchen (www.peacekitchen.com.au) believes in the power of food to bring people together and foster mutual understanding about sometimes divisive topics. Drawing on Dr. Elaine Pratley’s research on food and peace, this workshop puts peace theory into practice, showcasing how the language of food can serve as an effective tool for dialogue and self-reflection. Join us to reflect on how your everyday practices (like eating and cooking) might already be contributing to peace and dialogue across difference.

Workshop Three: Heads, Hearts and Hands: Building Successful Projects Presented by Prof. Dr. Ursula Rudnick

Abstract: Jewish-Christian relations based on "heads, hearts and hands". What might/does/should it look like? Protestant theologian and activist Ursula Rudnick briefly describes the opportunities and challenges of Christian-Jewish relations she has experienced and shaped over the past thirty years in Germany: building an organisation, initiating educational programs for preachers and teachers, working with Protestant and Jewish communities and teaching at universities. Ursula invites participants to develop and share building blocks of positive Jewish-Christian relations to be used in their own contexts.

Workshop Four: How do we unravel hate and fear in our world? Presented by: Margaret Hepworth (Together For Humanity)

Abstract: This is a highly interactive workshop with break-out group activities focusing on breaking stereotypes and generalisations. The workshop will look at the roadblocks that stop us from unravelling racism and prejudice, then look to the building blocks of social cohesion.

Participants will:

- identify and confront stereotypes and generalizations in everyday interactions, fostering greater awareness and empathy.
- learn to recognize systemic and personal barriers to unravelling racism and prejudice, and develop strategies to overcome these challenges effectively., and
- walk away with practical, community-focused ideas to promote inclusivity and unity, empowering participants to drive change within their own networks and communities.

Session 8: Practical Workshops (Tuesday, 4 February)

Workshop One: How can we address the ‘drip feed’ of anti-Judaism? A concrete proposal

(session 2 of 2) Presented by Dr Teresa Pirola

Abstract: Micro-messages that perpetuate anti-Jewish stereotypes emanate from many (not all) church pulpits on any given Sunday. As a habit, it is hard to break, requiring concerted effort and persistent strategies. This workshop outlines a proposal to help address the stated problem. Participants will be engaged in a discussion of the proposal, its merits and/or weaknesses and thereby have the opportunity to help shape a thought-strategy into a concrete resource offering for churches in Australia. Come along to this workshop with your ideas, your questions, your critical eye, and your practical offerings for turning our dialogue into constructive action.

Note: The workshop is the second of a 2-part discussion. Attendance at Part 1 on Monday 3 February is recommended.

Workshop Two: Abrahamic Dialogue – Practical examples in the aftermath of October 7

Moderator:

Dave Moskovitz (Chair, Wellington NZ Abrahamic Council)

Panellists:

Rabbi Ralph Genende OAM (Jewish)

Rev'd Canon Jenny Chalmers (Christian)

David Blocksidge (Muslim)

Abstract: Jewish - Christian - Muslim dialogue got a lot harder after October 7, and yet it's never been more important. Using examples from New Zealand, Australia, and further afield, this workshop session will explore how to keep striving to build bridges in stressful conditions whilst remaining true to ourselves, our religions, and our interreligious partners.

Workshop Three: Learn About the Victorian Jewish Community

Presented by Josh Goodman (Jewish Community Council Victoria)

Abstract: This session will feature an adaption of the Jewish Community Council of Victoria's (JCCV) Jewish Immersion Program, which is the community's principal cultural awareness training product. This program is delivered as a training to service providers across a range of sectors in Victoria and is used as a structure to facilitate cultural conversations with smaller groups. In this regard, it is an archetype for intercultural dialogue. The session will guide participants through the funnel of cultural understanding, beginning with; (1) the demographic, historic and religious diversity of the community; then moving towards (2) the religious traditions which underpin the community and its identity; before exploring (3) the nature and experience of anti-Jewish discrimination and how we can mitigate its spread.

BIOGRAPHIES

Liliane Apotheker

I was born in Antwerp in 1955. My parents were immigrant Holocaust survivors. I grew up in a traditional Jewish home, speaking many languages and attended a Jewish school. The family moved to Israel and I completed my baccalaureate in Hebrew. I studied languages and literature at Hebrew University in Jerusalem and lived in Israel for many years. Jewish Christian dialogue gave me a space safe enough for me to speak about Judaism with non-Jewish people. My knowledge and love of languages was of great help. I was also fascinated by Bible translations and how apologetic they were. I moved to France and became involved with the *Amitié Judéo-Chrétienne*. The convergence of many different cultures and contexts in the International Council of Christians and Jews (ICCJ) soon became the focal point of my interest. In 2021, I was elected president and served until 2024. I am now the immediate past president of the ICCJ and a proud member of Adat Shalom, a Massorti Jewish community in Paris.

→ **Session 6: How to overcome challenges in Jewish-Christian dialogue** (Tuesday 4 February 09:00)

Pavol Bargár

Pavol Bargár, PhD, is associate professor at the Protestant Theological Faculty of Charles University in Prague, Czech Republic. Pavol serves on the ICCJ Executive Board as well as the ICCJ Theology Committee. His research interests lie in theology and culture, theological anthropology, and interreligious relations.

→ **Session 6: How to overcome challenges in Jewish-Christian dialogue** (Tuesday 4 February 09:00)

David Blocksidge

David Blocksidge has been involved in interfaith activities for several years and sees these as a positive means to highlight what people have in common rather than focus negatively on the things that divide them. After school he trained as a journalist. Since 2012, as a self-employed publisher, he has produced a community magazine for a less-well-off Auckland suburb, believing that you can make a difference at the grassroots. He has volunteered with various organisations on projects ranging from stream restoration and food banks to free burial services for Muslims.

→ **Session 8: Practical workshops—Abrahamic dialogue: Practical examples in the aftermath of October 7** (Tuesday 4 February 14:00)

Rev Canon Jenny Chalmers

Jenny Chalmers is an Anglican Priest and has spent the last thirty odd years ministering in parishes. Her interest in interfaith relations blossomed when concerned Christians and Muslims combined to pressure the New Zealand Government for release from prison of political refugee Ahmed Zaoui. As a result, she convened the Auckland Interfaith Council. She is the vice chair of the Australian Council of Christians and Jews (ACCJ). She has a bachelors degree from the Melbourne College of Divinity and a Masters in Jewish Christian relations from the Woolfe Institute in Cambridge. Jenny has been a member of the Auckland and then the Wellington Council of Christians and Jews. She was the founding Christian co-chair of the Wellington Abrahamic Council and remains a member.

→ **Session 1: What is dialogue today?** (Monday 3 February 09:00)

→ **Formal Opening & Closing** (Sunday 2 and Tuesday 4 Feb)

Rabbi Allison Conyer

Born and raised in Los Angeles, California, Rabbi Conyer was ordained at the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in New York in 1998. Soon afterwards, she and Rabbi Jacqueline Ninio made history as the first female rabbis in New South Wales. In 2024, Rabbi Conyer became the first female Senior Rabbi of Temple Beth Israel, Australia's oldest Progressive Jewish congregation and currently serves as the Chair of the Assembly of Rabbis and Cantors of the Union of Progressive Judaism for Australia, New Zealand and Asia. She has engaged in interfaith dialogue through the Council of Christians

and Jews in Sydney and Melbourne, established Muslim-Jewish dialogue groups in both Sydney and Santa Barbara, California, and collaborated with the Dandenong Interfaith Network and the Jewish Christian Muslim Association in Melbourne. Also a trained practicing psychologist, she is guided by her Jewish values and deep compassion for all people and the planet on which we live and share. Her teaching and actions aim to inspire others to work toward tikkun olam (repairing the world) and actively strive for a better future for all of G-d's creations.

→ **Session 7: What can we all do together? The role of religion in civil society** (Tuesday 4 February 11:30)

Mrs Carmel Crawford

Since 2018 Carmel has been working as Mission Coordinator with the Sisters of Our Lady of Sion, Australia providing formation for Directors, Boards, educational leaders, parish leaders and the wider Sion community. Dialogue is at the heart of the work at Sion. Since being introduced to interfaith dialogue a number of years ago whilst working for the Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne, she is drawn to the positive contribution it makes to society and her own faith journey by facilitating open conversations, breaking down stereotypes, and identifying shared values. Through interfaith dialogue she is able to take an active role in promoting a more inclusive, cohesive and peaceful, society by seeking to build respect, understanding, tolerance, and peace between different religious communities. Carmel has qualifications and experience in theology, Biblical Studies, process facilitation, education, leadership and organisational development.

→ **Conference co-facilitator**

Dr. Philip A. Cunningham

Dr. Philip A. Cunningham is Professor of Theology and director of the Institute for Jewish-Catholic Relations of Saint Joseph's University in Philadelphia, PA, USA. With a background in biblical studies and religious education, he specializes in theologies of the Christian and Jewish relationship. He is the author or editor of over a dozen books, most recently 2022's *Maxims for Mutuality: Principles for Catholic Theology, Education, and Preaching about Jews and Judaism* and dozens of articles or book chapters. Dr. Cunningham has served as president and honorary president of the [International Council of Christians and Jews](#) and on the Advisory Committee on Catholic-Jewish Relations for the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. He is also the webmaster of the Internet resource [Dialogika](#) of the [Council of Centers on Jewish-Christian Relations](#).

→ **Session 9: Where does our learning lead us? What is our response from the heart?** (Tuesday 4 February 15:30)

Rabbi Ralph Genende, OAM

Rabbi Ralph Genende is a Modern Orthodox Rabbi passionate about social justice and creating bridges between cultures and faiths. He is the Interfaith and Community Officer of AIJAC (Australian Israel Jewish Affairs Council) and is on its editorial board. Formerly Senior Rabbi to Jewish Care, Victoria, he is now its Consultant. Ralph is Principal Rabbi to the Australian Defence Force, a member of the Religious Advisory Council to the Minister of Defence (RACS) and a board member of the Victorian Premier's Multifaith Advisory Group. He was President of Jewish Christian Muslim Association (JCMA) and a long-time executive member of the Rabbinical Association of Victoria. Awarded an OAM in 2018 for his services to multifaith relations and the Jewish community of Victoria, his book, *Living in an Upside-Down World*, focuses on crises and challenges of the 21st century – from polarisation to asylum seekers, loneliness to climate change.

→ **Sunday 2 February, Sharing about the pain that Jewish and Christian communities have experienced since Oct 7** (16:15)

→ **Session 8: Practical workshops—Abrahamic dialogue: Practical examples in the aftermath of October 7** (Tuesday 4 February 14:00)

Joshua Goodman

Joshua Goodman is the Community Engagement Manager at the Jewish Community Council Victoria. Josh is a passionate community professional, navigating internal and external politics to achieve respect and understanding of cultural identities from a position of familiarity. Josh sits on two multicultural advisory committees, and is completing his Master of Public Policy and Management. Although he enjoys facilitating programs about culture, he would rather do more listening than talking.

→ **Session 8: Practical workshops—Learn About the Victorian Jewish Community** (Tuesday 4 February 14:00)

Rev Dr Julie Hall

Rev Dr Julie Hall is Minister at Bentleigh Uniting Church. She has an extensive Social Work background with experience working with women, children and families in counselling, health, parenting education and welfare settings. Julie also trained in interfaith ministry, served on the Board of the JCMA, chairs the Uniting Church VicTas Synod Working Group on Christian - Jewish Relations and is an Executive member of the Council of Christians and Jews (Vic). Julie is strongly committed to actively promoting positive interfaith relationships across the community.

→ **Session 4: Current Challenges in Jewish-Christian Dialogue** (Monday 3 February 15:30)

Margaret Hepworth

Margaret is an inspiring educator, speaker, and advocate for inclusive leadership. As Victorian Education Coordinator for Together for Humanity, she builds bridges across cultures. Founder of The Gandhi Experiment, Margaret promotes peace, inclusivity, and intercultural understanding. She authored *The Gandhi Experiment: Teaching Teenagers to Become Global Citizens* and developed the 'Positive Reality' methodology to spark creativity and critical thinking. With experience in Australia, India, Pakistan, Indonesia, and China, Margaret's workshops and talks have impacted thousands. Recognized with the Sir John Monash Award for Inspirational Women's Leadership, her work champions global citizenship and social responsibility.

→ **Session 8: Practical workshops—How do we unravel hate and fear in our world?** (Tuesday 4 February 14:00)

Dr Ron Hoenig

Dr Ron Hoenig was a lecturer and tutor in journalism at The University of South Australia until 2021. In 2013, he completed a PhD in Journalism and Cultural Studies with his thesis entitled *Reading alien lips: Australian press depiction of lip sewing by asylum seekers and the construction of national identity*. This work brings together his passions about writing, multiculturalism and the ethics of depiction of cultural Others. He was born of Hungarian Jewish refugee parents in Israel. He has a background in the arts and multiculturalism, and as a teacher, playwright, actor, community arts administrator and arts bureaucrat. He is the Chair of the Australian Council of Christians and Jews and the Jewish Co-Chair of the Council of Christians and Jews (SA). A former President of Beit Shalom Synagogue, Adelaide, in 2011 he was nominated for a lifetime achievement award for his activities in promoting multiculturalism in South Australia.

→ **Formal Opening & Closing** (Sunday 2 and Tuesday 4 Feb)

Benjamin Kamine

Benjamin Kamine is the Associate Director of the Milstein Center for Interreligious Dialogue at the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, where he is a PhD candidate and adjunct faculty in Rabbinic Literatures and Cultures. His research focuses on how rabbinic literature articulates and reflects boundaries with other cultures, especially Christianity and Islam. He is also adjunct faculty in Interreligious Engagement at Union Theological Seminary. He currently serves as 2nd Vice-President on the Executive Board of the International Council of Christians and Jews. He also works as an interreligious dialogue facilitator and educator. He is most proud of being selected by his undergraduate students as List College Professor of

the Year 2023-2024. Recent publications include: “The Boundary Breaking Dimension of Holiness’ – A Jewish Perspective.”

→ **Session 6: How to overcome challenges in Jewish-Christian dialogue** (Tuesday 4 February 09:00)

Rabbi Zalman Kastel AM

Rabbi Kastel was raised in the ultra-orthodox Hasidic tradition in the racially divided Crown Heights area of Brooklyn, New York. He saw the world through the lens of his absolute tradition and the narrative of his community. This changed in 2001 when encounters with Christians and Muslims transformed him. Rabbi Kastel has had a lot of laughter, surprises and dilemmas on his journey of interfaith cooperation and bringing positive experiences of diversity to young Australians. He is still a Hasidic Rabbi teaching bible study at Chabad House North Shore in Sydney. He was ordained as a Rabbi after study in the UK, Australia and the US, and completed a Graduate Diploma in Education with the University of New England, Armidale. In 2020, he was made a Member of the Order of Australia in recognition of his work on interfaith and intercultural understanding.

→ **Session 4: Current Challenges in Jewish-Christian Dialogue** (Monday 3 February 15:30)

Kasia Kowalska, nds, PhD

Kasia is a Catholic theologian involved in interreligious dialogue in the UK, Israel, and Poland for the last 20 years. She studied at a rabbinical school, Leo Baeck College in London, where she received her doctorate in Judaism. She has taught in various countries, e.g. at Bethlehem University, Harare (Zimbabwe), the Catholic Academy in Warsaw (Bobolanum), the Sion Center for Biblical Formation in Jerusalem, the Sion Center for Dialogue and Encounter in London. She is the co-chair of the Polish Council of Christians and Jews and Vice-President of ICCJ. She lives in Warsaw. She believes that dialogue needs to happen on various levels, both theological and grassroots. And as the most efficient methods she sees encounter and forming friendships.

→ **Session 4: Current Challenges in Jewish-Christian Dialogue** (Monday 3 February 15:30)

The Rev Professor Mark R. Lindsay, FRHistS

Originally from Perth, WA, I have lived in Melbourne for the past 25 years, working in both university education and parish ministry. I am an Anglican priest and have been active in the area of Jewish-Christian dialogue since 1995, particularly through my academic work as an historical theologian. I have published three monographs in the field of post-Sho'ah theology and am currently writing a fourth for Baylor University Press. In 2005, I was delighted to be the Sternberg Visiting Fellow at the Centre for the Study of Jewish-Christian Relations (now the Woolf Institute) in Cambridge.

→ **Session 1: What is dialogue today?** (Monday 3 February 09:00)

Rev Dr Patrick McInerney

Rev Dr Patrick McInerney is a Columban missionary priest. He was assigned to Pakistan for over twenty years. He has a Licence from the Pontifical Institute for the Study of Arabic and Islamics in Rome (1986), a MTheol from the Melbourne College of Divinity (2003) and a PhD from the Australian Catholic University (2009). He is the Director of the Columban Centre for Christian-Muslim Relations. He is a member of the Australian Catholic Council for Interreligious Dialogue, Religions for Peace (NSW) and the NSW Council of Christians and Jews. He has taught academic courses in Interreligious Dialogue and Islam at the Catholic Institute of Sydney and the Broken Bay Institute. Fr Patrick attends Muslim, interfaith and multi-faith events, conferences and celebrations. He gives talks on Islam, Christian-Muslim Relations and Interreligious Relations to a wide variety of audiences. He was recently appointed Director of the Columban Region of Oceania (Aotearoa-NZ, Australia, and Fiji).

→ **Session 1: What is dialogue today?** (Monday 3 February 09:00)

Rabbi Fred Morgan AM

Fred Morgan studied and taught the religions of India in America and in England before pursuing rabbinic ordination at the Leo Baeck College in London. His interest in the religious traditions of India both reflected and stimulated his curiosity about what it means to encounter other peoples' cultures. He has been actively engaged in Jewish-Christian dialogue for nearly 40 years. After serving as Senior Rabbi of Temple Beth Israel in Melbourne, he was appointed Professorial Fellow at the Australian Catholic University, focussing his research on the reception of Nostra Aetate in the Jewish world as well as how to measure success in interfaith dialogue. He is married with three children and four grandchildren, two of whom are sabras (native Israelis).

→ **Session 2: What is unique about Jewish-Christian Dialogue?** (Monday 3 February 11:30)

Dave Moskovitz

Dave Moskovitz is a lay leader and cantor at Temple Sinai, the Wellington Progressive Jewish Congregation. He has been a member of the Wellington Abrahamitic Council, formerly the Wellington Council of Christians and Jews, since 2002, and Jewish Co-Chair since 2009. He is a software engineer by trade, and works as a company director and advisor.

→ **Session 8: Practical workshops—Abrahamic dialogue: Practical examples in the aftermath of October 7** (Tuesday 4 February 14:00)

Emmanuel Nathan

Dr Emmanuel Nathan teaches biblical studies and comparative theology at the Australian Catholic University in Sydney and directs the Research Centre for Studies of the Second Vatican Council. He is currently President of the Council of Christians and Jews, New South Wales and chairs the Theology Committee of the Australian Council of Christians and Jews. Together with Sr Dr Mary Reaburn and Fr Dr Michael Trainor he worked on the 2023 Australian Catholic Bishops' statement, *Walking together: Catholics with Jews in the Australian Context*.

→ **Session 4: Current Challenges in Jewish-Christian Dialogue** (Monday 3 February 15:30)

→ **Session 6: How to overcome challenges in Jewish-Christian dialogue** (Tuesday 4 February 09:00)

Rabbi Jacqueline Ninio OAM

Born in Adelaide, South Australia, Rabbi Ninio has degrees in Arts and Law from Adelaide University. Initially, she specialized in family law, but then attended rabbinical school at the Hebrew Union College Jewish Institute of Religion. She received a Master of Arts in Hebrew Letters and was ordained in 1998. She became the first female rabbi at Emanuel Synagogue and the third Australian-born woman to be ordained as a rabbi. In 2023, Rabbi Ninio received her honorary Doctorate of Divinity and in 2024 an OAM for services to the Jewish community and interfaith dialogue. An active leader in the Synagogue's social justice programmes, she is committed to the pursuit of *tikun olam*, working to heal the world through deeds and actions. Rabbi Ninio has been involved in interfaith work and is a regular participant on panels and speaker about Judaism but especially issues of women and religion. She has served in executive positions, including chair of the Assembly of Rabbis and Cantors of Australia, New Zealand and Asia and is currently its Vice Chair.

→ **Session 7: What can we all do together? The role of religion in civil society** (Tuesday 4 February 11:30)

The Venerable Dr Colleen O'Reilly AM

The Venerable Dr Colleen O'Reilly AM (BTh, MTh, DMin.) is an Anglican priest in the Diocese of Melbourne. She is originally from Sydney and has lived in the UK and USA before coming to Melbourne in 1994. Colleen is a past Associate Dean of the Melbourne College of Divinity (now the University of Divinity) and taught pastoral and liturgical theology before spending twenty years in parish ministry. She is currently an archdeacon working closely with a regional bishop, and also an acting vicar. Her doctoral studies were in ritual and pastoral care. Colleen is married to Walter McEntee, also a priest and has two

sons and three grandsons. Colleen first became friends with an Orthodox Jewish women while living in London fifty years ago, and has continued her commitment to growing understanding between Christians and Jews through studies and the work of the Victorian Council for Christians and Jews.

→ **Sunday 2 February, Sharing about the pain that Jewish and Christian communities have experienced since Oct 7 (16:15)**

→ **Session 6: How to overcome challenges in Jewish-Christian dialogue (Tuesday 4 February 09:00)**

Teresa Pirola

Teresa Pirola, ThD is a Sydney-based writer and faith educator who has been active in the work of Catholic dioceses, parishes, schools and lay-led movements for 40 years. She is author of *Catholic-Jewish Relations: Twelve Key Themes for Teaching and Preaching* (Paulist Press, 2023) and *October 7: A Response to the 2023 Massacre in Israel and Surging Antisemitism in Australia* (The Story Source, 2024). She walks closely with the Jewish community and offers interfaith resources at lightfortorah.net.

→ **Session 3: Practical workshops—Addressing ‘drip feed’ of anti-Judaism and other ‘drops’ of prejudice (Monday 3 February 14:00)**

→ **Session 8: Practical workshops—How can we address the ‘drip feed’ of anti-Judaism? A concrete proposal (Tuesday 4 February 14:00)**

Dr Elaine Pratley

[Dr Elaine Pratley](#) is a peacebuilding lawyer, Rotary Peace Fellow, and founder of [Peace Inc.](#) Her initiative, ‘[Peace Kitchen](#)’, facilitates meaningful conversations over food to promote mutual understanding. In schools, she helps young people develop positive conflict skills through experiential learning.

→ **Session 3: Practical workshops—Eat your way to the heart of dialogue (Monday 3 February 14:00)**

Mary Reburn nds

Mary Reburn is a sister of Our Lady of Sion. She has taught First Testament for forty years. She taught at the Yarra Theological Union, within the University of Divinity and at the Biblical Programs at Ecce Homo convent. Mary has been involved in Jewish-Christian relations in a variety of ways over many years. She is currently on the Australian Catholic Bishops Council for Ecumenical and Inter-faith Relations.

→ **Session 2: What is unique about Jewish-Christian Dialogue? (Monday 3 February 11:30)**

Prof. Dr. Ursula Rudnick

Prof. Dr. Ursula Rudnick is an ordained Lutheran pastor. She holds a doctorate in Jewish Theology, from the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York and taught for many years at the Universities of Hannover and Aachen. She has worked in the field in Christian-Jewish dialogue for over 25 years. Currently, she is commissioner of Jewish-Christian relations of the Lutheran Church in Lower-Saxony. Ursula Rudnick draws from her decades-long experience as an academic theologian as well as a practitioner of dialogue in post-Shoah Germany.

→ **Session 2: What is unique about Jewish-Christian Dialogue? (Monday 3 February 11:30)**

→ **Session 3: Practical workshops—Challenges and fruits of Jewish-Christian Relations - A Protestant Perspective from Germany (Monday 3 February 14:00)**

Rabbi David Fox Sandmel, Ph.D.

Rabbi David Fox Sandmel, Ph.D., is the president of the International Council of Christians and Jews. David is the son of the late Rabbi Samuel Sandmel, a pioneer of post-Shoah Jewish-Christian relations and grew up in a home in which dialogue often took place around the dinner table. He is immediate past chair of the International Jewish Committee for Interreligious Consultations. From 2014-2022 he was Director Interreligious Engagement at ADL. He held the Crown-Ryan Chair of Jewish Studies at the Catholic Theological Union in Chicago (2002-2014) and was Jewish Scholar at the Institute for Christian

& Jewish Studies in Baltimore (1998-2001) where he directed the publication of "Dabru Emet: A Jewish Statement on Christians and Christianity." In addition to rabbinic ordination, David received a Ph.D. in the history and literature of Judaism and Christianity in the Greco-Roman periods. His commentary on Paul's First Letter to the Thessalonians appears in the *Jewish Annotated New Testament*.

→ **Sunday 2 February: Keynote Address** (15:00)

→ **Session 4: Current Challenges in Jewish-Christian Dialogue** (Monday 3 February 15:30)

Rev Dr Michael Trainor AM

Michael Trainor is a Catholic priest who ministers in a parish in the western suburbs of Adelaide, He is senior lecturer in biblical studies at Australian Catholic University and University of Divinity. Michael has a long history of interfaith and religious engagement locally, nationally, and internationally, including various roles in the ICCJ.

→ **Session 2: What is unique about Jewish-Christian Dialogue?** (Monday 3 February 11:30)

→ **Session 7: What can we all do together? The role of religion in civil society** (Tuesday 4 February 11:30)

Mark Walsh

Mark Walsh is a creative facilitator with extensive experience working with schools, religious congregations, and parish groups in Australia and internationally. He is passionate about interfaith and intercultural encounter, dialogue, and action, and working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People for justice, equity, reconciliation, and healing. He spent three years living in Israel with the Sisters of Our Lady of Sion at Ein Kerem whilst studying and working with the Centre for Biblical Formation at Ecce Homo. He is secretary of the CCJ (VIC) and the ACCJ Theological Committee and co-convenor of this Gathering.

→ **Conference co-facilitator**

Ophir Yarden

Ophir Yarden; Jewish educator and peace activist from Jerusalem, senior lecturer at Brigham Young University and teacher for Jewish studies in other Christian colleges and seminaries, director of ADAShA: The Jerusalem Center for Interreligious Encounter at the Rossing Center He is a member of the executive board of the ICCJ.

→ **Session 1: What is dialogue today?** (Monday 3 February 09:00)

Emmanuel Nathan and Mark Walsh compiled this booklet with assistance from Ron Hoenig. Maureen Barten Consulting designed the artwork for our gathering. All efforts have been made to ensure that the information contained in this booklet is accurate and does not infringe copyright.

We acknowledge and recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples as the First Peoples, Owners and Custodians of the land and waters throughout this continent we now call Australia and its adjacent islands. Their sovereignty was never ceded. We are committed to listening to and working with them for equity, justice and healing. We accept, with humility, the invitation in the **Uluru Statement From the Heart** to walk together in a movement of the Australian people for a better future.