

What makes Churches of Christ different?

I am often asked “**How is Churches of Christ different from other Denominations**”, “**What do Churches of Christ stand for?**”, “**What do you mean by Churches of Christ is a Movement not a Denomination?**”

On page 23-24 of the book “DNA of Churches of Christ” by Graham Carlsake (written and published in 2009 to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the Declaration and Address), Graham writes

*Thomas [Campbell one of our founding members] was satisfied. He believed that the attitudes and practices that he was now fostering in the church were in accordance with Jesus’ prayer in John 17 and would result in true unity between Christians. His magnum opus of 56 pages entitled, “**The Declaration and Address**” was produced on 7 September 1809. This was the final result from weekly meetings in a log cabin with 21 friends. It was printed and became the modus operandi for the people soon to be known as “the Reformers”. It promoted simple evangelical Christianity. Today, these reformers are known as the Churches of Christ, Christians or Disciples of Christ.*

*There were **13 propositions** within the **Declaration and Address** that provided this new movement with a clear identity, which can be summarised as:*

1. *The church on Earth is essentially, intentionally, and constitutionally one; although meeting in local churches in various centres, all these local churches must be guided by one rule.*
2. *The final authority is the Bible, especially Christ in the New Testament.*
3. *Creeds are futile as means of union, no command or ordinance ought to be required of a person other than that set out in the New Testament.*
4. *Remove human innovations and unity will result by surrender and obedience to Christ.*
5. *Christians of all denominations are brethren and should be united.*

Basically this proposal was to move away from denominational creeds being used as a test of who is a Christian to only centre on Christ and the Bible.

*Simply put it was “**a plea for the unity of the church, based only upon loyalty to Christ as Lord**”. [...] The church was seen as an organism, not an institution.*

So to answer those questions.....

How is Churches of Christ different from other Denominations?

- The belief that the Church (Universal) on Earth is one body
- The Bible (specifically Christ Jesus in the New Testament) is the final authority
- No command or ordinance will be required of a person other than as set out in the New Testament (a personal confession of faith in Christ Jesus as our Lord and Saviour and baptism by emersion at an age of consent otherwise known as Believers Baptism) [#]
- Our loyalty is to Christ Jesus as Lord through surrender and obedience

What do Churches of Christ stand for?

- The reformation of the Church to biblical principles and the weekly breaking of Bread at the Lord's Table (known as communion)
- Surrender to Christ Jesus as our Salvific Lord through Baptism by immersion
- Fundamental embrace of the priesthood of all believers
- Unity in the bride or body of Christ – relationally

What do you mean Churches of Christ is a Movement?

- As the body, or bride of Christ, Churches of Christ embraces the idea of an organism or Movement as it allows us to hold each other, and be accountable to each other in relationship and faithfulness to Christ.

If you are reading this, and you knew all this, I ask

you to share it with those who might also be asking these questions in our Churches to help us all take up Christ Jesus yoke and pull with him as to the reconciliation of the World to God.

If you are reading this and you didn't know about our Distinctives, then you can chat to our State Office, purchase or borrow one of the many books on Churches of Christ or the Stone, Campbell movement or talk with your minister or Elders about it.

I know you will be serving Christ Jesus in all you do to be part of his Kingdom Come.

Blessings.

Scott Combridge



unless medically or psychologically unable to be immersed at which point other forms of a Baptismal ritual may be explored.

Call to Pray....

You are invited to join with people across our churches in praying for one another. This month we pray together for:

Blackwood, Blair Athol, Bordertown, Brighton

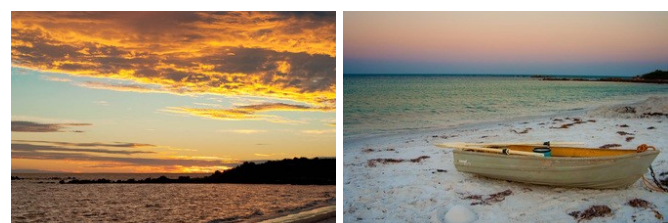
Feel like you need some rest & relaxation?

A couple of members of our Mt Gambier church run **Bush Haven Cottages** in peaceful bush surroundings <http://www.bushhavencottages.com.au/>



The **Redcliffs Campsite** at Tumby Bay, right by the beach, has a reputation for being a wonderful place to stop and rejuvenate.

<http://www.redcliffcampsite.com/>



Prayer



Lord of peace,
Bring to us
The lucidity of
Your clear sightedness,
So that, with great
clarity,

We see life as it is,
The conflict, the injustice,
the intolerance and the greed.

Spirit of Peace,
Grow in us
The abundance of
your unconditional
compassionate Peace,
So that, with endless vitality,
We are not afraid
to address intolerances and greed,
and respond to injustice.

As your body, O Christ,
May we actively be your peacemakers.
We do not need to be worried and upset;
We do not need to be afraid.
Because, in faith, we hear you say
"Peace is what I leave with you".

Rev Anne Hewitt (SACC)



National Reconciliation Week



Each year National Reconciliation Week is held from 27 May to 3 June. It celebrates two significant dates in the national reconciliation journey: the 1967 referendum and the High Court Mabo decision. National Reconciliation Week is also learning more “about our shared histories, cultures, and achievements”.¹ Reconciliation means a change in hearts, minds and actions as Australians to build a “nation strengthened by respectful relationships between the wider Australian community, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples”.²

At GMP, through our Indigenous Ministries Australia program (IMA), we’re committed to walking this journey of reconciliation with our Indigenous brothers and sisters. We’re also passionate about helping us all make this journey as we believe it’s an intrinsic part of our identity as Australian Christians who call this wonderful land our home.

Here are some ideas you might like to include in your service to build and maintain strong and respectful relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous Australians in your church community:

1. Incorporate songs, prayers, readings and liturgy that focus on reconciliation, creation and justice.
2. Include a Welcome to Country or Acknowledgment of Country. Australians Together has information on how to make Welcome or Acknowledgement of Country meaningful for your church event. (Learn more at <https://australianstogether.org.au/discover/indigenous-culture/understanding-welcome-to-country/>)
3. Invite an Indigenous Australian to be involved in your service.
4. Register your event on Reconciliation Australia’s NRW website to join a community of Australians across the country who are celebrating National Reconciliation Week: <https://www.reconciliation.org.au/national-reconciliation-week/> and print off some posters for your church to promote the week.

You can also find a whole range of IMA projects and resources on the website <https://www.gmp.org.au/about-us/more-about-ima>

A reconciled Australia could become a picture of what God’s kingdom looks like: people united across ethnic boundaries, people brought together by forgiveness and love, people who are brave enough to face the truth of our history to forge a new future.

1. <https://www.reconciliation.org.au/national-reconciliation-week/>
2. Ibid.

CareWorks serves alongside of, and on behalf of, local Churches to minister to the disadvantaged in our community. And we can only do so with your continued support of these ministries.

At this time of the year, we like to remind all our church families that your gifts enable life-affirming services to people on low incomes, women who have suffered domestic violence, patients, carers and families from remote areas, and at-risk young people.

Go to www.givenow.com.au/careworkssa or use a CareWorks envelope or donation slip that has been delivered to your Church.

Thank you for being a part of this journey of care as together we seek to be God's love in action.



What your financial support can do...

Your gifts of food, produce and clothing are truly appreciated, as is your financial support.

A gift of **\$20** helps CareWorks **clothe** a deserving family.

A gift of **\$45** helps a person to stay **one night at OASIS**.

A gift of **\$55** helps CareWorks to provide an **emergency food hamper** to an individual.

A gift of **\$75** is equivalent to the average amount paid towards a struggling family's **utility bill**.

All gifts over \$2.00 are tax deductible.

This is a wonderful way for you to express the love, compassion and grace of a caring God as you help CareWorks bring a measure of joy and peace into the lives of the people around us.

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The Winter Appeal, that supporters will be generous as CareWorks launches the appeal at a most challenging time for low income families,

Emergency Relief - Clients - that CareWorks volunteers will be wise and compassionate as clients face extras difficulties that winter brings,

Geoff Payne as he leads the organisation,

CareWorks Noarlunga – that they will be blessed as they serve some of the most disadvantaged people in the southern suburbs,

The **'Strength in Numbers'** program that the women who are escaping violence might build new lives and find genuine community,

The **new English Conversation group** at Torrensville– that participants genuine love and care as they develop new relationships