



Victorian Council of Churches

(Inc.A0036552E)

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Statement from the Victorian Council of Churches Following the Shooting at the Jewish Festival of Hanukkah at Bondi Beach 15 December 2025

The Victorian Council of Churches is deeply shocked and grieved by the horrific act of violence perpetrated at Bondi Beach, where members of the Jewish community had gathered to celebrate the festival of Hanukkah. That such an attack should occur during a sacred season marked by light, hope, freedom, and faith is profoundly distressing.

We extend our deepest condolences to the families and friends of those who have lost their lives, and to all who have been injured. Our prayers are with them, and with the first responders and support services who have acted with courage and compassion in the midst of this tragedy.

To our Jewish sisters and brothers: we stand with you in unwavering solidarity. An attack on your community is an assault on the dignity, safety, and freedom of all people. No one in Australia should fear violence while gathering in peace to celebrate their faith or cultural identity.

We unequivocally condemn this act of terror and all forms of hatred, antisemitism, and religious intolerance. Such violence has no place in our society and stands in direct opposition to the values of dignity of each human life, mutual respect, and care for neighbour that are central to our faith traditions.

As Christian churches in Victoria, we reaffirm our commitment to standing alongside the Jewish community and to strengthening interfaith solidarity. We reject any attempt to sow fear, division, or mistrust. Evil will not have the final word. The light of compassion, justice, and peace must - and will - endure.

In this season of Hanukkah, we pray that the light which shines in the darkness will not be overcome (John 1:5). May the oil of peace, kindness, and hope burn longer than the hatred that seeks to extinguish it.

We call on all people of faith and goodwill to stand together, to support those who are grieving, and to continue the shared work of building communities where every person can live, worship, and celebrate in safety and dignity.

Victorian Council of Churches – Member Churches

Anglican Church – Archdiocese of Melbourne, and Dioceses of Ballarat, Bendigo, Gippsland and Wangaratta;
Antiochian Orthodox Church; Armenian Apostolic Church; Bulgarian Orthodox Church; Chinese Methodist Church in Australia;
Churches of Christ; Coptic Orthodox Church; Greek Orthodox Church; Holy Apostolic Catholic Assyrian Church of the East; German Lutheran Trinity Church; Lutheran Church of Australia; Malankara (Indian) Orthodox Syrian Church (MOSC); Mar Thoma Syrian Church; Melbourne Church of South India; Melbourne Welsh Church; Religious Society of Friends; Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne, Dioceses of Ballarat, Sale and Sandhurst; Melkite Catholic Eparchy; Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy; Romanian Orthodox Church; St George Jacobite Syrian Orthodox Church; St John's German Lutheran Church Springvale; Salvation Army; Syrian Orthodox Church; Uniting Church in Australia.