

NSW Council of Churches Articles Archive

Title: A short history of the NSW Council of Churches
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The NSW Council of Churches is the lineal descendant of the first Council of Churches in this State which was formed in 1889. In 1922 the Archbishop of Sydney the Most Rev J. C. Wright strongly urged the formation of a new Council of Churches. Addressing the Fifteenth Provincial Synod of NSW, Archbishop Wright said:

I would hope that those who are keen upon the necessity of unmediate evidence of our corporate Christian life would turn their attention in the direction of organising Christian effort by common councils and committees who would concentrate the whole force of Christian conscience to stem the tide of social and moral evil in our midst or to promote movements necessary for the uplift of the community.

The inaugural meeting of the NSW Council of Churches was held in April, 1925. The current Constituent churches are The Anglican Church (Diocese of Sydney), The Presbyterian Church, The Baptist Union, The Churches of Christ, The Salvation Army, The Fellowship of Congregational Churches, and The Reformed Churches of Australia (Classis of NSW).

The NSW Council of Churches has accepted its prophetic role to speak to the Government and the community on behalf of its constituent churches, to express distinctively Christian gospel insights. The Council's Constitution defines that insight as conforming to "Evangelical Christian Truth." Over the past 73 years the Council's leadership has developed considerable experience in approaches to Government.

In commending the work of the NSW Council of Churches the Chief Secretary of the Salvation Army, Colonel Keith Parkinson stated (18 April 1995):

The Council has a well-deserved reputation for its resolute and effective dealing with Cabinet Ministers and Government officials. It is likely that some Government officials prefer a less resolute approach. The Salvation Army, however, approved the Council's firm and consistent witness. The Gospel outreach of Radio 2CH is another valuable service which the NSW Council of Churches is able to render.

In the light of its nature and membership, the NSW Council of Churches seeks to act as a "conscience for civic leaders" on behalf of the community as a whole (not only on behalf of the Churches). In furtherance of its concern for Christian social witness and action, the Council keeps a watchful eye on proposed legislation. Issues involving alleged exploitation of people and injustice are a profound concern of the Council. Radio 2CH plays a vital part in this outreach to the community.

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