



4 March, 2016

To Whom It May Concern

Re: 2016 World Interfaith Harmony Week Prize

This letter is in support of The Interfaith Centre of Melbourne and the event, #I'll Dine With You, an open air Dinner held on Monday 29th February, 2016, in the City Square in the heart of Melbourne, Australia The Dinner was open to people of diverse religions and spiritualities and people of no religious belief, in the spirit of Love of God and Love of the Neighbour or Love of the Good and Love of the Neighbour.

The Interfaith Centre of Melbourne organizes an event each year, usually a Luncheon, during the World Interfaith Harmony Week and invites religious, spiritual and community leaders together to share our concerns, to hear speakers from diverse traditions and to meet people of diverse faiths. This year Rev Helen Summers and a group of women opened the event to members of the public who may not be part of our interfaith circles. This socializing aspect is most important, especially this year with growing Islamophobia and anti-semitism dividing our community. Over two hundred and fifty guests and volunteers attended the Dinner with many pedestrians stopping to view the spectacular setting and ask questions.

Rev Helen Summers was ordained as an Interfaith Minister in New York in 1997, the first Australian Interfaith Minister. While Helen Summers' own religious tradition is Anglican, she is knowledgeable and respectful of the world's religious and spiritual traditions.

Helen Summers founded The Interfaith Centre of Melbourne in 2000. She has closely worked with the Islamic Council of Victoria over the past fifteen years in artistic, cultural and social programs to bring about more understanding and respect for the Islamic religion and the Muslim community living in the State of Victoria.

The Islamic Council of Victoria was one of 20 organisations who sponsored/supported the catering and venue of the event. The work of Helen Summers and the members of The Interfaith Centre of Melbourne have been voluntary for fifteen years - their work is unpaid.

I commend The Interfaith Centre of Melbourne for the 2016 World Interfaith Harmony Week Prize. Please feel free to contact me directly on 0430 545 800 or nail.aykan@icv.org.au.

Regards

Nail Aykan
Executive Director