

Words from the President Phra Khru Kampeepanyawithet (Ajahn Boonsom)



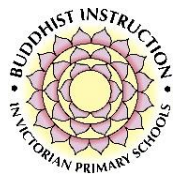
The year is moving on. The last time I wrote to you was in Summer and now two seasons had passed and we are at the beginning of Winter. The last 6 months had been a very busy time for all of us at BCV. Our Treasurer Gontug Rinpoche and myself spent two days visiting temples in the western and eastern suburbs. Our aim of visiting the temples are to get to know our members better and for them to know more about the BCV. We also spoke with them about the Child Safe Standards, the Australian Sangha Conference (ASA) in Canberra and the BCV 20 years celebration. It was two days well spent.



I also like to acknowledge and thank Gerald Lim and his team of volunteers for organising **the 20 years celebration of BCV**.



Our programs of **Health Spiritual Care and Prison Spiritual Care** are progressing well under the leadership of Hojun Futen and Sue Sullivan. Thank you to the both of them for looking after the program.



We engaged a new convener Mahesha Peiris to administer the **SRI program**. It is heartening to see SRI classes coming back. A new school Thomas Mitchell is added to the list of schools offering BSRI classes. Thank you to all the volunteer SRI instructors who give their time to bring the Dhamma to children.

Interfaith work is on the increase. We have Michael Wells representing BCV on the Victorian Police Multifaith Council; Peggy Page on the Multifaith Advisory Board (MAG), the Faith Community Council of Vic (FCCV) and the Rabbinical Council Vic. Community Reference Group, and Carey Rohlach who is a Buddhist representative at various Interfaith events. I like to thank them for representing Buddhists at these events.





The Sangha Advisory Committee (SAC) is needed to discuss important topics that pertain to the community. Recently members of the committee met to discuss the topic of assisted dying. A member at the meeting will

draft up a statement of what BCV can say should it be called upon to give a statement.



The SAC plays a very important role in BCV. As Buddhist organisations are distributed widely throughout Melbourne it will be good if SAC members in a locality can be the

representative of BCV and can assist BCV to disseminate important information to the community. SAC members are needed to assist in providing advice to the community.



The workplan with OMAC finished on 31 May 2017. The workplan facilitator will be busy completing the final accountability report for OMAC. From now onwards BCV needs to look for ways to fund the running of the office. **We are looking for volunteers to come on board to form the fund raising committee.** If you like to help please send an email to administrator@bcv.org.au.

The tentative date set for the AGM is Saturday 16/09/2017. Please consider people for the various Board Positions.

I thank you for your contribution to the BCV and together we can help more people to have access to the Dharma.

Dhammapada Verse 2
Matthakundali Vatthu

*Manopubbangama dhamma manosettha manomaya
manasa ce pasannena bhasati va karoti va
tato nam sukha¹ manveti
chayava anapayini.*

Dhammapada Verse 2
Good Begets Good

All mental phenomena have mind as their forerunner; they have mind as their chief; they are mind-made. If one speaks or acts with a pure mind, happiness (sukha) follows him like a shadow that never leaves him.

Sadhu sadhu sadhu

President – Ajahn Boonsom



Ven. Gontug Rinpoche – Treasurer 2016/17

I was elected to the position of Treasurer in October 2016. The last few months had been a time of learning for me. What I have learned is that the BCV was awarded the Strategic Partnership grants from OMAC in 2012. The funding is to support activities agreed in a workplan with OMAC. The majority of the funding is for BCV to have an office and engagement of an administrative

officer.

Fund Raising for the Buddhist Council of Victoria (BCV)

This funding ends in June 2017 and BCV has to run its own fund raising program to keep the office going. BCV had obtained a fund raising licence. This will enable the BCV to engage in more innovative and exciting fund raising projects. The BCV is looking for volunteers who had experienced in organising fund raising events to come and form a sub-committee. If you like to organise events and like to see your goals come to fruition this is the sub-committee for you. The fund raising committee will set up strategies as to how it will raise funds to support the running of BCV's office. **If you like to join us in this exciting and challenging venture please send an email to workplan@bcv.org.au or call 0412 590 624.** We love to hear from you.



BCV program of **Buddhist Special Religious Instruction (BSRI) in Schools** is self-funded. It had managed to run for more than 10 years on the generosity of donors and volunteers. The funds raised are to pay for a BSRI convenor to administer and manage the program. It is a DGR and therefore all donations to the fund is tax deductible.

The BCV program of **Health Spiritual Care** is funded by Spiritual Health Victoria, for convenor to administer and manage the program. We are very grateful to the pool of Spiritual Health Chaplains who are volunteers and bring caring, sharing and at times joy for those in times of pain and suffering.

The **Prison Spiritual Care** program is funded by the Department of Corrections and private prisons, for a convenor to administer and manage the program with chaplains who visit prisons.

If you are interested in any of our financial figures please send an email to administrator@bcv.org.au or you can call 88222013 on Tuesday and Friday 10:30 to 16:00.

If you wish to make donations before the end of financial year please consider the BCV BSRI program. You can do a direct transfer to our bank account

Account Name: BUDDHIST COUNCIL OF VICTORIA NO1 ACCOUNT (*can issue DGR Receipt for tax deduction*)
Bank: CBA BSB No: 063806 Account No: 10111514
Reference Description: Please indicate your name so that we can capture it correctly.

Please send an email to administrator@bcv.org.au with your name and address so the **DGR receipt can be send to you for your taxation purposed.**



If you do not mind **not** having a tax deduction, please donate to BCV Main account

Account Name: BUDDHIST COUNCIL OF VICTORIA NO3 ACCOUNT (*No DGR Receipt, No tax deduction*)
Bank: CBA BSB No: 063806 Account No: 10044200
Reference Description: Please indicate your name so that we can capture it correctly.

Please send an email to administrator@bcv.org.au with your name and address so a receipt can be send to you. This receipt **cannot** be used for tax purposes.

I would like to **thank** our admin officer Albert Chang who keeps a good record of our accounts, our convenors and especially our volunteers and donors as without your generosity our programs will not exists.

Sadhu sadhu sadhu
Treasurer - Gontug Rinpoche

Access Buddhism in Vic website <http://buddhisminvic.net/>

Michael Wells - Secretary 2016/17



Vesak Day At Parliament House Canberra

Members of the Federation of Australian Buddhist Councils (FABC) and the Australian Sangha Association jointly hosted, with Senator Zed Seselja, Assistant Minister for Social Services and Multicultural Affairs, a small gathering on Vesak day 10 May 2017 at Parliament House Canberra. Fittingly there was a significant presence of Sangha from several ACT temples. Mr Brian Ashen represented BCV at this meeting. The gathering, although small, was an important step toward raising awareness of the Buddhist community and their needs to parliamentarians. The gathering was held the day after the budget and there was much activity in parliament house, which meant that the politicians who attended had, at various times, to head back into the chamber for votes on issues being debated. Despite these interruptions the event was nonetheless judged a success. The FABC and ASA hope to make this an annual event - but maybe not at budget time next year.

Sangha Advisory Council Meeting On Assisted Dying



On 17 May 2017, a small meeting was held with members of the Sangha Advisory Council (SAC) led by Phra Khru Kampee-panya-witthet (Phra Maha Boonsom). The meeting was convened at the request of the BCV committee to consider what response, if any, the BCV should make in regard to the development of proposed legislation by the Victorian Government on Assisted Dying. The proposal arises one of the recommendations of a 2016 cross-Parliamentary committee report into *End of Life Choices*. In addition an expert Ministerial advisory panel is due to report back soon to parliament on the development and implementation of a legislative framework for voluntary assisted dying.

It is likely that such legislation will be introduced this year into the Victorian parliament permitting persons who are terminally ill to seek assistance - in certain specific circumstances, and subject to a range of strict safeguards -to end their life.

There will clearly be a range of views on this issue within the Buddhist community and the wider Victorian community. It is possible that the BCV, as a representative organisation, may be asked to comment on behalf of the Buddhist community. To this end, the meeting agreed to develop a draft statement which articulates the Buddhist view on the sacredness of human life but acknowledges that difficult circumstances may arise in the life of an individual leading them to contemplate ending their suffering. The meeting considered that it was important to acknowledge our understanding of Karma, the importance of compassion and the need for spiritual support for individuals facing extremely difficult life choices.

Once a draft statement is agreed upon, it will be circulated to our member temples for feedback and comment.



Secretary - Michael Wells

Health and Prison Spiritual Care



Over the past twelve months the BCV's Spiritual Care team has been involved in a major project with our partner Spiritual Health Victoria, having all of our healthcare chaplains credentialed under SHV's guidelines as requested by the State Government. This project is to ensure that all healthcare chaplains are trained according to the same standards and that they have all undergone appropriate background checks, including their understanding of the Buddha Dharma in difficult circumstances.

This project has been undertaken mostly with assistance from Angela Scherma. Su Sullivan and I offer our great thanks to Angela for all of her wonderful work.

At the end of the financial year we will submit our credentialing work to SHV for final sign off, which is a necessary process for the BCV to continue to receive funding from the State Government via SHV in the next financial year.



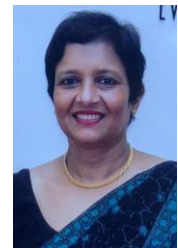
Many thanks to all those chaplains who have completed their credentialing with us. We are constantly grateful for all your voluntary work in bringing the Buddha Dharma to those most in need are, who are often unable to make it to temples for assistance.

Ven. Hojun is going into a closed Vassa meditation retreat in July for three months. As such, please contact Su Sullivan for any enquiries regarding being a Spiritual Care volunteer.

Health and Prison Spiritual Care Convenor - Venerable Hojun

Introduction of BSRI Convenor – Mahesha Peiris

I joined BCV as a trainee instructor in 2013 and was involved with BSRI program until I was invited to be a joint BSRI instructor trainer in 2015. From there I am happy to be the BSRI convener at a time where the program was about to evaporate due to many drastic changes introduced by the Department of Education. Still left with a path crafted by a dedicated group of predecessors and I have the responsibility of clearing the debris remaining after the storm. I hope to do my best with the help of our BCV committee and the newly appointed secretary in RfP.



To disclose about me starting from as a born Buddhist, I was lucky to have a formal education in Buddhism as a subject up to middle school final exam. Thereafter living under the umbrella of three refuge and five precepts until I realised there is much more to explore than preaches. Being very fortunate to live in Australia, opened the doors to associate with noble reverend friends who practice dhamma while preaching. Meditation, applying dhamma at work, family and social life scenarios and helping others to analyse the reality of life through dhamma has become a part of my life. Many years of professional experience as an educator added value to my role. The best part is my affectionate to children and the trust in dhamma are brought together in this BSRI program. It enables me to serve two most interesting streams in my life at once.



Buddhist Special Religious Instructions (BSRI) in Schools Program



We started the year with negotiations with RfP and Education Department for accreditation of our existing instructors for another two years. I am happy to announce that we received accreditation for two more years. I

highly regard our enthusiastic instructors Gontug Rinpoche, Lucky Hewagama, Prema Kodikarage, Atsuko McQuire, Kim Siok See and Albert Chang for getting back on board and continue with the process of taking Buddhist teachings in to the classrooms. Also, a Big Thank You to the Principals, School Councils and Parents of Huntingdale Primary School, Essex Heights Primary School and Thomas Mitchel Primary School for allowing the BSRI to continue in the schools during lunch time. The children are getting the opportunity to learn and cultivate the good qualities such as compassion, kindness, love, generosity, acceptance, patience, determination, honesty and mindfulness which they could utilise to shape up the life when they become responsible adults. The utmost need of today's society is the caring of the human beings for one another with dignity and respect in the light of mindfulness in their actions.

In the coming months, we are hoping to send letters to schools inviting to consider restarting/starting the RSI classes. After receiving the responses, we will be looking at increasing the number of active instructor base and also looking forward to organise a professional development day towards the end of the year aiming at improving the services in the coming year.



I take this opportunity to wish you all well and happy time in sharing dhamma!

BSRI Convenor - Mahesha Peiris

Interfaith / Multifaith Reports



Victoria is proud of itself being a multicultural / multifaith state. Interfaith networks are set up in the cities and regional centres. Very often Interfaith networks look for a Buddhist representative. **If you are interested in supporting your community please do check with your Council if they have an Interfaith**

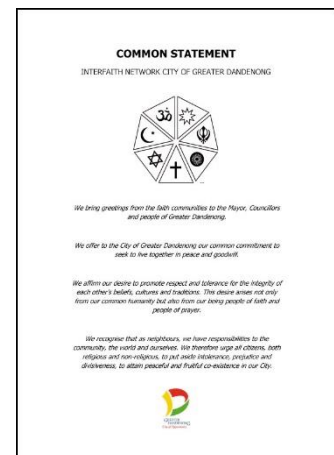
network and if they do you can volunteer to assist them. Thank you to the City of Dandenong Interfaith Network for allowing us to show their Common Statement. The City of Dandenong is a very successful Interfaith Network and their Common Statement indicate the role of an Interfaith Network.



BCV organises events for our interfaith's friends. Our last major event, namely the 20 years celebration of BCV saw religious leaders of other faith attending the event. Members of BCV are often invited to participate in Interfaith events. Participation in events allows for us Buddhist to share the Buddha's Teachings with others and for us to learn

about other faiths.

If you are interested in Interfaith activities send us an email on interfaith@bcv.org.au



Important Community Information

VICTORIAN
multicultural
commission
strengthening our community



On our website www.bcv.org.au **a new tab Community information will be added.** Beneath this tab will be sub-tabs with information from the Victorian Government that are essential and important for Faith organisation. Please access this tab at least once a fortnight for important posting from the Government. To start off these are two important requirements for Faith organisations.

Child Safe Standards (CSS)

It is 6 months into the introduction of the Child Safe Standards. We hope that your organisation had commenced work on implementing the standards. The Victorian Council of Churches (VCC) has very kindly take on the leadership to assist faith organisations to implement the standards. The VCC had produced a document that Faith organisations can adopt and use by changing the words to reflect your organisation, has a toolkit of what to do and newsletters to keep Faith organisations updated. If you have not commenced work please go to BCV website www.bcv.org.au/community_information/CSS for information.

The Commission for Children and Young People website <https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/> has lots of information that could help you too. One of BCV's committee member Mr. Dinesh Weerakkody is overseeing the project for BCV. If you have queries please send an email to administrator@bcv.org.au



COMMISSION FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Royal Commission into Family Violence

The Royal Commission into Family Violence had 227 recommendations. 3 of these recommendations 163 – 165 pertain to Faith organisations. The BCV had invited the CEO of VCC, Rev Ian Smith, to come and give the Sangha a briefing on the recommendations on **Friday 21st July**. Please put the date in your diary. Invitations will be send to the Sangha in the next two weeks. **The BCV is also looking into setting up a program to look into how the Family Violence is affecting the communities whose faith is Buddhism. In our next newsletter BCV aim to bring you more information on the matter.**

Interfaith Convenor - Peggy Page

Recommendation 162

The Victorian Government, through the Council of Australian Governments, encourage the Commonwealth Government to broaden the definition of family violence in the *Migrations Regulations 1994* (Cth) so that it is consistent with the *Family Violence Protection Act 2008* (Vic) and to ensure that people seeking to escape violence are entitled to crisis payments (regardless of their visa status) [within 12 months].

Faith communities

The Royal Commission recommends that:

Recommendation 163

The Office of Multicultural Affairs and Citizenship Multifaith Advisory Group and the Victorian Multicultural Commission, in partnership with expert family violence practitioners, develop training packages on family violence and sexual assault for faith leaders and communities [within three years]. These packages should build on existing work, reflect leading practice in responding to family violence, and include information about referral pathways for victims and perpetrators. The training should be suitable for inclusion as part of the pre-service learning in various faith training institutes, as well as the ongoing professional development of faith leaders.

Recommendation 164

The Department of Health and Human Services consult with the Office of Multicultural Affairs and Citizenship Multifaith Advisory Group, the Victorian Multicultural Commission and women from faith communities as part of its review of standards for specialist family violence service providers (including men's behaviour change programs), to ensure that these standards and the associated services take account of the needs of people in faith communities who experience family violence [within two years].

Recommendation 165

Faith leaders and communities establish processes for examining the ways in which they currently respond to family violence in their communities and whether any of their practices operate as deterrents to the prevention or reporting of, or recovery from, family violence or are used by perpetrators to excuse or condone abusive behaviour.

Details of the recommendations can be found at <http://www.rcfv.com.au/Report-Recommendations>.

Access Buddhism in Vic website <http://buddhisminvic.net/>

BCV 20th Anniversary Celebration



In the last Newsletter we informed our readers about our Celebrations. We were most honoured to have the presence of The Hon. Robin Scott, MP Minister for Multicultural Affairs, Minister for Finance; Ms Inga Peulich, MP Shadow Minister for Multicultural Affairs; Councillor Catherine Cumming, Mayor of



Maribyrnong City Council; Mr Tsebin Tchen, Commissioner Victorian Multicultural Commission; Ms. Natalie Sulleyman, MP Member of St. Albans; Ms. Colleen Hartland, MP Member for Western Metropolitan and representatives of Faiths organisations attend the event. There was a video produced that show all that BCV had

accomplished over the 20 years. BCV is proud to have The Hon. Robin Scott launched [The Buddhism in Victoria website](http://buddhisminvic.net/). I encourage you to access <http://buddhisminvic.net/> to have a look. There are pictures of the celebrations to be posted on our website www.bcv.org.au.

UN Vesak in the Melbourne Town Hall on 27th May 2017



The secretary of the UN Vesak Organising Committee expressed their gratitude to Ajahn Boonsom and his team of BCV Committee members who supported and participated in the event.

BCV also took the opportunity to set up a display table with banners and power-point presentation showing the activities of BCV and member temples.

UN Vesak Organising Committee Secretary - Rashmika Elleperumaarachchi

Surveys



BCV is conducting a survey on the usage of its website. We will appreciate if you can access our website www.bcv.org.au and complete the survey for us. It will take less than 5 minutes of your time.

BCV is conducting surveys via Survey Planet. Please help us to gather information by completing the surveys.

And for feedback for our newsletter instead of asking questions we would like you to tell us about the newsletter. E.g. Do you like the contents? Is the frequency good? What else will you like to see in the newsletter? We need your feedback to help us improve. Please send your feedback to administrator@bcv.org.au.



Before we say Goodbye, we would like to wish our Muslim friends,

