



**EXECUTIVE COUNCIL OF  
AUSTRALIAN JEWRY Inc.**

## **Uniting Church in Australia/ECAJ National Dialogue**

One result of the creative leadership of Leslie Caplan AM as ECAJ President 15 years ago was the establishment of a formal National Dialogue between the ECAJ and the Uniting Church in Australia. The impetus for the establishment of the Dialogue was action by members of the UCA which had created enormous tension between the ECAJ and the UCA. Calm and intelligent leadership by Leslie Caplan and the moderator of the UCA, Rev Dr D'Arcy Wood, brought these two national peak bodies together in what has proven to be a long, constructive journey together to a point of growing understanding and respect.

Over recent times, ECAJ participants in the Dialogue have been Jeremy Jones (co-chair), The President, Josie Lacey, Rabbi John Levi, Rabbi Phillip Heilbrunn, Rabbi Raymond Apple, Rabbi Jacqueline Ninio, Peta Jones Pellach, Ian Jankelowitz, Melanie Landau and Dvir Abramovich, with Professor Solomon Schimmel (Shalom Institute scholar-in-residence) complementing our delegation at the 2005 Sydney meeting.

The Dialogues have evolved to include text study and a general discussion. The text studies invariably lead to intellectual and philosophical discussions which help us develop deep mutual identity and respect.

The general discussions often focus on Israel, antisemitism, international affairs or other issues which it is important to discuss frankly and openly in an environment of trust and goodwill. Our most recent discussions have included the Workplace legislation and treatment of asylum seekers.

We have now completed over 20 Dialogues and there is every indication that the process, which has had an impact far beyond the individuals who participate in it, will continue well into the future.