

Building a culture of interfaith peace and understanding in 2026

A statement of hope by Hobsons Bay Interfaith Network

The Hobsons Bay Interfaith Network is made up of people from a wide range of faith communities within our inner western Melbourne municipality. Although there are no Jewish groups in our local area, and so the Jewish faith is not represented in our Network, we nevertheless hold dear all the faiths of 'the Book' – Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Our commitment is to ensure that people from all faith communities are free to practice their faith and to have opportunities to share with people from other faith traditions, so we can build a multicultural and multifaith community founded on the principles of loving kindness and good conduct towards one another.

In our own faith communities, this past week, we have been praying that God will comfort those families in Bondi whose loved ones lost their lives or were injured after being shot by gunmen inspired by an ideology of hate towards people of Jewish heritage and faith. The murder and maiming of these innocent people has stuck fear and grief among Jewish people – not just in Bondi but across our whole nation. It has caused great pain and loss for neighbors and friends. So, following on from the National Day of Reflection on Sunday 21st December to honour the victims of the Bondi Beach terrorist attacks, we pray that God will inspire us to create a safer world for people of all faith traditions to share in their common humanity without fear or prejudice.

As an Interfaith Network here in Hobsons Bay municipality, we will pray for our nation to develop laws and policies that can effectively counter gun violence, antisemitism, and hate speech. And amidst all this difficulty, we hope that Jewish people and all people more widely in every community find solace in the power of God to give

- **peace** amidst their time of trouble,
- **hope** in the face of their despair,
- **love** as they experience people's kindness and care, and
- **joy** through remembering all that was, and is, wonderful about being part of a loving family, a compassionate faith community, and our common brotherhood and sisterhood.

In a spirit of peace and harmony,

Hobsons Bay Interfaith Network
23 December 2025.