

REPORT ON THE “JERICHO RALLY”, 12 AUGUST 2017, CANBERRA CIVIC SQUARE

The proposal for the “Jericho rally” was for a peaceful and respectful rally to publicly voice serious concerns of Canberrans with the ‘safe’ school program. All our volunteers were briefed to monitor our supporters to ensure they were peaceful and respectful. There were a number of indications that God was going to be in this bold rally proposed by Dr David Kim of the Christian Democratic Party in the ACT. Our permit came just in time, and Dr Tim O’Neill stepped in as MC at short notice. Though there was rain and wind in the week leading up to the rally the day was fine and wind was not an issue. We were thankful for the approximately 50 rally supporters from different churches and ethnic groups.

Around 30 anti-rally protesters started chanting a profane slogan as the rally was about to start. Though police had been requested to be present before the rally they arrived late, and by this time the anti-rally protesters had occupied the stage and were attempting to shut down the rally with their shouting and flag waving. They attempted to cut power and to pull plugs on the PA system, but their shouting was such that people could not hear speakers. Despite police not clearing the stage, or using their powers of arrest to restore peace and order, our speakers continued and our rally supporters stood firm. Though intimidated, both our speakers and supporters showed great restraint throughout the rally. There was one incident caught on camera where a man took a protester flag. While people were shocked by the gross display of rudeness on the part of anti-rally protesters, there were testimonies of profound peace in the midst of the onslaught. Many of our supporters said they felt strengthened. We were so thankful no one was hurt and there was no damage to property.

Despite the poor conduct of the anti-rally protesters, the rally ended peacefully, and after the rally there were some constructive debates between rally supporters and protesters. Five of our supporters spoke of opportunities they had to witness to the Lord to some people caught up with the protesters.

Because of the inaction of the police to stop anti-rally protesters shutting down free speech, a complaint has been lodged with the police, and the rally organizer and the MC plan to meet with senior police and the Minister for Police.

We continue to believe that ‘all things work together for good when we love Him’.

I include my letter published in the Canberra Times on 20 August:

Anti-rally people at the ‘safe’ schools protest in Canberra City on Saturday, August 12 had the choice of joining a peaceful, respectful rally, or remaining as spectators. Instead they chose to attempt to control an event for which they had no permit. Despite this the rally program proceeded, and because of the forbearance of the rally supporters, no one was hurt, despite a minimal police presence. Elliot William’s report on the rally (‘Supporters of Safe Schools program drown out conservative group rally’, August 13, p. 2) was an advertisement for discourtesy, and does a disservice to LGBT people.

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In other news I am happy to say that signatures on our paper petition have reached sufficient numbers to require Yvette Berry, the Minister for Education to respond when the petition is tabled in the ACT Assembly. **We now have an e-petition and I urge you to follow the link and sign the petition. Please pass on to anyone you know who has serious concerns with this program.**

https://www.change.org/p/yvette-berry-act-education-minister-keep-the-safe-schools-program-gender-theory-out-of-act-schools/fbog/498980579?recruiter=498980579&utm_source=share_petition&utm_medium=facebook&utm_campaign=petitions

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Arthur Connor, for Canberrans opposed to ‘safe’ schools



The rally started peacefully, though with anti-rally protesters continually shouting, so as to make it difficult to hear rally speakers.

Mother Jenny addressing approximately 50 rally supporters at the opening of the rally.



The rally was broadcast by both ABC and Channel 10 in their news of 12 August. Both channels failed to find anything homophobic in the speeches or placards.



Though our speakers were mobbed by anti-rally protesters so that they could not be heard, the placards gave the message.



ABC TV briefly broadcast the message of Rev Fred Nile MP despite the shouting of anti-rally protesters and being obscured by anti-rally protesters.



Rev Fred Nile MP closing the rally in prayer, despite being harassed, shouted at and obscured by anti-rally protester flags and banners.