

CONFERENCE BUSINESS COMMITTEE "H" Mission & Ecumenical

CONVENER: Keith Hopner

QUESTION 32(a): What are the decisions of Conference on matters relating to Mission and Ecumenical Affairs? *Report pp H1-13*

DECISIONS:

Report:

1. The report is received.

United Churches in the Solomon Islands and in Papua New Guinea:

2. Conference affirms the continuing significant relationship with the United Church in the Solomon Islands, and the United Church in Papua New Guinea, and the assistance being provided to them through Methodist Mission and Ecumenical.

HIV and AIDS resource:

3. Conference encourages parishes and rohe to engage with the issues surrounding HIV and AIDS using the resource pack prepared by Methodist Mission and Ecumenical and available at Conference 2008.

New ecumenical initiative:

4. Conference affirms the ongoing discussion amongst leaders of traditionally ecumenically minded churches towards a possible new national ecumenical initiative, and looks forward to a positive outcome.
5. Conference notes the significant contribution of Rev Brian Turner to this discussion in his presidential year.
6. Noting the desirability of continuity of church leadership participation at this early stage of the dialogue, Conference requests Brian Turner to continue alongside John Roberts, Mission and Ecumenical Secretary, who is acting as a resource person for the dialogue. (Note at this stage there are to be just two representatives from each participating church).

World Council of Churches:

7. That the response to the World Council of Churches Faith and Order paper *The Nature and Mission of the Church: A Stage on the Way to a Common Statement* as set out in Appendix 1 be approved as that of the Methodist Church of New Zealand.
8. Conference affirms the suggestion of a "Living Letters" visit by leaders of the World Council of Churches to its member churches in Aotearoa New Zealand in late 2009 or early 2010.

Responding to open letter from Muslim leaders:

9. Conference welcomes the open letter addressed to Christian leaders by the Muslim leaders who met in Jordan in October 2007, and:
 - a) while acknowledging some profound differences of belief between Christians and Muslims, affirms that the two commandments to love God and neighbour constitute a common element in the faith and practice of our two religious traditions;
 - b) accepts the invitation to see Islam as not being against us but with us as we seek to realise the two commandments of love;
 - c) acknowledges the need for the two religions to work together for a meaningful peace with justice in the world;
 - d) joins with Muslims in challenging those who would promote violence and conflict for their own sake, personal gain, or for ideological ends and purposes.
 - e) encourages the promotion of justice, respect, fairness, kindness, healing, harmony and goodwill between the followers of Islam and Christianity, locally, nationally and internationally;
 - f) urges that the open letter be considered and promoted by local Councils of Christians and Muslims, Interfaith Councils, and be widely discussed within the Methodist Church of New Zealand;
 - g) encourages local congregations to enter with care and sensitivity into conversation with local Mosque or Islamic Centre communities.

Committee membership:

10. The Mission and Ecumenical Committee membership for 2009 be: Keith Hopner (convener), Margaret Donald, Hugh Dyson, Kilifi Heimuli, Keita Hotere, Barry Jones, Lana Lazarus, TeRito Peyroux, Shanti Sinnaduray, Sheila Thorne, Uesifili Unasa.

QUESTION 32(b): What are the decisions of Conference on matters relating to Christian World Service?

Report pp H13-17

DECISIONS:

1. That Conference thanks the Rev John Roberts for representing the Methodist Church on the Christian World Service Council and the Churches Agency on International Issues.
2. That Conference affirms the work of Christian World Service and encourages parishes to support the Christmas Appeal and emergency appeals.
3. That the Conference encourages all parishes to support the CWS campaign on climate change and its continued advocacy for policies to eradicate poverty.
4. That the Conference writes to the leaders of all political parties urging their support for an increase in aid spending to meet the 0.7% commitment, to help people out of poverty.
5. That Conference writes to the Minister of Disarmament, asking that the Government ratify the cluster munitions Treaty at the earliest opportunity.
6. That Conference sends a greeting to Pauline McKay on her appointment as the new Director of Christian World Service.