



e-messenger

The Methodist Church of New Zealand ~ Te Hāhi Weteriana O Aotearoa

“Our Church's Mission in Aotearoa New Zealand is to reflect and proclaim the transforming love of God as revealed in Jesus Christ and declared in the Scriptures. We are empowered by the Holy Spirit to serve God in the world. The Treaty of Waitangi is the covenant establishing our nation on the basis of a power-sharing relationship, and will guide how we undertake mission”.

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OFFICIAL COMMUNICATIONS

A MESSAGE FROM THE VICE PRESIDENT

The second weekend of September was the Council of Conference meeting at Te Rahui Centre in Hamilton. It was good to once again be part of this meeting, which is a unique event in the life of our church because its modus operandi is that of real partnership. I always come away from Council of Conference thinking that was a great event to have been associated with and giving thanks to the wonderful hosts who make sure I do not eat any of the wrong food.

The next week of the month I was on leave in Christchurch leaving Helen once more in Auckland because of her work and no holidays due. The intention of my time in Christchurch, other than seeing our family, was to purchase a retirement home, which goes unconditional tomorrow. So roll on January 2010!

Helen and I visited Takapuna Parish on Sunday 25th where I delivered the sermons. Important places always receive two! We were well received and exceptionally well catered for at the home of Glenda and Norman West where a luncheon was provided after worship for a number of parishioners and us. Many thanks Glenda and Norman.

On Saturday the 1st of October Helen and I travelled up to Helensville to share in the 30th Anniversary of the establishment of the South Kaipara co-operating Parish. The event commenced with afternoon tea and a pictorial history of the Methodist and Anglican causes prior to Co-operation. This was followed by a service of celebration at which Bishop John Paterson and Synod Superintendent David Pratt shared thoughts 'looking back' and 'looking to the future' respectively. I thought David did us Methodists proud with his comments.

I will round out this month with a visit to Mt Eden on the 16th and an Official visit to Massey on the 23rd and Henderson on the 30th. One might say I have kept the best till last because both Massey and Henderson are part of the Waitakere Parish which I Superintend and this is my first visit to each since becoming Vice President.

The year 'In Office' has passed by quickly and my wanderings will soon be ended. Ron has been great to work with and I have appreciated his good humour and company during our joint visits.

To all who have read my articles, thank you for permitting me to enter your life through the e-mail and I have enjoyed shaping something up to share each month.

It is my opinion that the Methodists I have encountered this year, be they part of a large group or a small group, appear hopeful about their future. Their hospitality and friendliness has been superb. For me the year has been busy, interesting, at times demanding, but always enjoyable. Thank you for gifting me this wonderful privilege.

In signing off for the last time, let me share with you this blessing that was sent to me last week from outside the Methodist family: "Be Joyful; Keep the Faith; and Do the Little Things!"

Kenneth



A MESSAGE FROM THE GENERAL SECRETARY

Conference is now only twenty four days away and the Connexional Office Staff are very busy completing the tasks that must be achieved before 5 November. The agendas were posted last week and if any person has not yet received theirs, they should contact Viki – phone 03 364 9427.

The weekend opening events and the Ordination Service are open to anyone who would like to attend. Full details of the weekend programme are printed in full in this newsletter. South Island Presbyters particularly are asked to encourage members of their congregations to attend the Conference events and take the opportunity to learn more about how the Church works at Connexional level.

Connexional Office Staff will be available during Conference and if there is any particular staff member you would like meet with please let Viki know and she will arrange a time for this to happen.

On Saturday afternoon following the Induction Service the Conference will be acknowledging those who retire along with those who have offered Connexional leadership. The retirees are:
Roy Alexander
Judith Parkes
Donald Prince
Samiuela Taufua
Norman West
Stan West
Kay Wicks

Marcia Baker will be acknowledged and thanked for the twenty six years of leadership she has provided as Connexional Archivist. John Murray, John Salmon, Norman West and Frank Claridge complete their tasks as interim staff of Mission Resourcing and Nicola Grundy completes her term as Director of the Dunedin Mission.

CONFERENCE 2005 - CHRISTCHURCH

Agendas

Conference Agendas, Conference Handbook and Tauwiwi Agenda have been sent out and if you are registered for conference you should have received your set by now.

This is a good opportunity for you to check that we have your details recorded correctly – therefore can you please check your address, accommodation details, name spelling etc. If any amendments need to be made, contact Viki on (03) 364 9427 or email vikif@methodist.org.nz and she will ensure that any errors are corrected.

If you have not received an agenda and think you are registered for conference, once again, please contact Viki and she will follow this up for you.



Conference Weekend

Friday 4th November

6:00pm – 8:30pm **Wesley Historical Society Dinner**

Saturday 5th November

8:30am – 10:30am **Evangelical Network** – Breakfast, Worship & Annual Meeting

9:30am – 10:30am **Introduction to Conference** – Everyone welcome to attend

11:00am – 2:00pm **POWHIRI Te Rehua Marae** – Welcome and light lunch for all visitors and Conference Representatives

2:30pm – 4:00pm **Induction:** President & Vice President

4:00pm – 4:30pm Afternoon Tea

4:30pm – 6:00pm **Tributes** to those retiring and Connexional Thanks

Sunday 6th November

10:00am – 1:00pm **Lay Preachers**, Service and Lunch

2:30pm – 4:30pm **Ordination & Reception into Full Connexion**

Events

Christchurch Symphony Orchestra

We have been contacted by the Christchurch Symphony who are performing the last Masterworks concert for 2005 and it includes the wonderful Beethoven's 9th Symphony - Ode to Joy, with the Christchurch City Choir.

They are delighted to be able to offer a special rate for attendees of the conference - \$10 seat anywhere downstairs – but the offer is available only by emailing or phone Deb O'Regan, Client Liaison Manager, Christchurch Symphony. Deb can be contacted on DDI (03) 365 9614 or email debbie@chsymph.co.nz. Please note that this offer is not available through Ticketek and is subject to availability at the time of booking. When booking, please state that you are attending the Methodist Conference.

Alternative Programme

The Conference Arrangements Committee is offering people who are non-Conference members and accompanying family and friends to Christchurch the opportunity (at appropriate costs) of taking part in trips, visits, sight-seeing and special interest events during the week of Conference.

POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES (all prices are approximate and depend on numbers)

Day visit to Hanmer Springs – transport (shuttle) cost only	\$20.00 (pool extra)
Day visit to Akaroa – transport (shuttle) cost only	\$15.00
Gondola	\$15.00



Antarctic Centre - Transport	\$18.00
- Haglund Ride	\$10.00
- Combo Ticket	\$26.00
Tram rides	\$10.00 (2 days)
Punting and canoeing on the Avon River	\$12.50

The Arts Centre – craft and food stalls plus a market at the weekend.

There are also animal parks (Orana Park, Willowbank), public gardens (Botanical, Mona Vale), Museums (Christchurch, Ferrymead), Art Galleries, Cinemas, live theatre (Court Theatre), concerts, cafes and restaurants.

Please contact Yvonne Barnes, yands@slingshot.co.nz

More details are available in your handbook

NEWS FROM AROUND THE CONNEXION

The Rev Trevor Hoggard has been appointed by the British Conference as their representative to the Vatican and to the World Council of Churches in Geneva. This is a great honour for Trevor and is a wonderful opportunity for him to serve the worldwide Methodist family in these two strategic locations for our faith.

Subject to further negotiations through London and subject to the approval of the Manukau District, Trevor hopes to lead the Synod through the connexional year 2006 up to and including the August Synod. He is due to take up his new appointment from 1 September 2006 in Rome.

The NZ Methodist Family extends its congratulations and best wishes to Trevor. We will miss the significant contribution he has made to the Church during his time in New Zealand.

Rev Jill van de Geer
General Secretary

The Money family wish sincerely to thank relatives, friends and neighbours for the love, prayers and support shown us in the passing of Lucy. We appreciate the cards, letters, flowers baking, and the donations made to the Rhoda Read Hospital. God bless you.

Please accept this as a personal thank you to all.

Morrinsville Methodist Church has 30 copies of the Methodist Hymnbook words edition and 2 copies of the full music edition available for the cost of the postage. If you are interested please contact morrinsville.methodist@xtra.co.nz or phone 07 8897623.

Wesley Historical Society (NZ)

The Wesley Historical Society(NZ) will hold its Annual General Meeting at Conference on Friday 4th November in the Canterbury Horticultural Hall, 57 Riccarton Ave, from 5.30pm. This will be followed by dinner. After the meal and the conclusion of business, at approx. 7.30pm, a panel including Rev. Dr Jim Stuart, Rev. Donald Phillipps, Eric Laurenson and Rev. Michael Greer will discuss Dreams, Designs and Debts: Methodists and their Property.



Everyone who is interested, whether a member of the WHS or not, is welcome to attend this presentation, as well as the dinner which precedes it.

Dinner costs \$20 per person. Please pay through the Connexional Office.

Mt Albert Methodist Open Day

held during the Auckland City *Heritage Week* - September 12 – 18, 2005

Auckland City held a 'Heritage Week' in September, following a small but successful similar activity in 2004. As the Mt Albert Methodist Church is on the city listing as a Heritage building we were invited to participate.

The decision was made to celebrate our heritage through an 'Open Day' to be held on the final day of the week, Sunday September 18. It seemed possible that this could be integrated with the usual morning worship and extended throughout the day with activities to demonstrate the wide range of interests in which our congregation is involved.

Visiting people (and many of our own group) were given a brochure that summarised the 139 years of the church's existence.

The day itself was divided into half-hour segments from 9 am through to 6 pm, with in general a 20-minute presentation followed by a 10-minute break for socialising and moving. The morning service was also split, with a worship session at the usual starting time of 10 am followed by the homily at 10.30.

Prior to this the musical strength of the church was emphasised with a short organ recital by John Diprose to commence the day, and a choir session which fitted neatly into the customary 9.30 pre-service rehearsal.

The 11 am morning tea break then merged into a light lunch, complete with barbecued sausages (despite the rain which continued most of the day.) This was an excellent time for visitors to socialise and see how the church has developed over the years. Throughout the day members were on hand (rostered six or so at a time) to hand out programmes and leaflets on the Church and its heritage, and to guide people as required.

It was a great day of celebration of the past, the present and the future.

Smethurst Reminder

The Last closing date for applications for Smethurst grants for 2005 is October 20th.

If your parish has mislaid application forms the Information sheet and application form are available on the Methodist web site in the MWF section.

We eagerly wait to hear from applicants

Mary West Convenor

maryw@west.net.nz

DEVONPORT METHODIST CHURCH 150TH ANNIVERSARY

Labour Weekend Sat-Sun 22-24 Oct 2005

Programme includes Ferry Ride, Historical Tour, Celebration Concert,
Worship Service with guest preacher President Ron Malpass,
Dinner at Devonport Yacht Club

Enquiries: devonportmeth@ihug.co.nz

Ph: (09)445-6801 or (09)445-0360

Address: 18 Owens Rd, Devonport, Auckland



Remember in your Prayers

Minita-a-Iwi Timaru Rogers ~ It was with great sadness that Te Taha Maori advised of her passing on the morning of the 22nd of September. Timaru Rogers is the mother of Paewhenua Nathan and Marcus Rogers and Aunty to Diana Tana. The whanau took her to lie in state at Omanaia Marae, Hokianga.

Peter Allan (husband of Patricia Allan) died at 4am on Sunday the 18th of September. The funeral was held at Durham St, Wednesday 21 September, at 10 am. Patricia can be contacted at (03) 337 4148, or by post, 9 Bengal Drive, Christchurch. pallan@cyberxpress.co.nz

Minita-a-Iwi Matiu Rakena. It is with deep regret that Te Taha Maori advised of his passing. His funeral service was held 20th September in Mangamuka. We extend our aroha and prayers to Susan and whanau.

Dot Nesbit unexpectedly passed away Tuesday 20th of September. Wife of John Nesbit, sister of Rona Collins. The funeral was at St. Marks Somerfield at 12noon on Friday 23rd September. People can contact the family at 64a Somerfield Street, Christchurch 8002 or jotdon@xtra.co.nz.

Sister Lucy Money died early the morning of Friday 9th September, at Waikato Hospital. Her funeral will be at the Morrinsville Methodist Church at a date a time to be determined. Messages can be sent to her sister Edna Money 22 Willow Grove, Morrinsville.

Ivy Penn, widow of the late Rev. Athol Penn, died in her 100th year at Northbridge on Saturday afternoon 8th October 2005. A Funeral Service and celebration of Ivy's life will be held at 2.00pm on Wednesday 12th October in the Takapuna Methodist Church.

Also remember all those who have lost loved ones and family around the world in the earthquakes in South Asia and the hurricanes in America – New Orleans.

²⁸And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose."

~Romans 8:28~



The Rev Norman Brookes has sent for information these two statements on peace in Ireland:

Can it Happen? – Permanent Peace in Northern Ireland?

Northern Ireland may be witnessing one of the most significant about turns in its recent history and it's one in which the Methodist Church in the person of former President Harold Good has played a critical role.

For the last ten years, since the Good Friday Agreement, an Independent International Commission, authorized by the governments in London and in Dublin, has been in place, its task to oversee a process of de-commissioning of the weapons of both the IRA and the Loyalist paramilitaries. This week the head of the Decommissioning Commission, a Canadian, General John de Chastelain, reported that the IRA had finally decommissioned its arsenal. As part of this process two clergymen, one a highly respected Catholic priest Fr. Alec Reid who has long taken a stand against violence in his own community, and the other a former President of the Methodist Church Rev. Harold Good, were witnesses to the decommissioning process.

General De Chastelain in his report noted that they had witnessed the decommissioning of "flame throwers, surface-to-air missiles, rocket-propelled grenades, both commercial and home-made, heavy machine guns" including some very modern weapons. Over two tons of semtex, a very dangerous plastic explosive, was also decommissioned. He further pointed out that the amount and type of IRA arms decommissioned approximated to the inventories provided by the intelligence services in both Northern Ireland and in the Irish Republic.

In their joint report the two clergymen stated that they had spent many days watching the meticulous and painstaking way in which the International Commission members went about their task. As a results of their observations they made the following statement: "The experience of seeing this with our own eyes, on a minute-to-minute basis, provided us with evidence so clear and of its nature so incontrovertible that, at the end of the process, it demonstrated to anyone who might have been with us, that beyond any shadow of doubt, the arms of the IRA have now been decommissioned."

The Rev. Harold Good has ministered in the strongly loyalist Shankill area of Belfast, has been a member of the North's Human Right's Commission, and has lectured in pastoral counseling and theology at Edgehill the Methodist Theological College in Belfast. He, and his Catholic colleague, were described by the Rev. Dr. Ken Newell, the immediate past Moderator of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland as "two people of the highest integrity (who) bring no political baggage...doing a job for the Kingdom of God and for the entire community". Dr Newell also said that "Methodism had long played an important ground-breaking role in the peace-making process and that to many in the republican community Mr. Good was 'the face of Methodism'." The Primate of the Church of Ireland, Archbishop Robin Eames, has also spoken in support of the Rev. Harold Good and the role he has played.

Some issues remain, and Loyalists, such as the Rev. Ian Paisley, have been quick to latch on to these. For example how can we be absolutely certain that all IRA weapons have been disposed of? What about the breakaway Republican paramilitaries and their arms? And what of IRA criminality and drug dealing? These questions remain. Nevertheless it seems clear that two things have happened, first, the vast majority of IRA arms ,if not all, have been put beyond use, and second, the leadership of the Provisional IRA have decided that the way forward in their ongoing desire for a united Ireland is through the ballet box and by peaceful democratic means.



If these observations are proved correct in the months ahead then it is truly a new day for Ireland North and South. Many here pray that it will be so. In this process Irish Methodism, though small, has played a not insignificant part.

Statement from the President of the Methodist Church in Ireland

Dear Friends,

The following statement was issued by the President on Monday 26th September, following the announcement of de-commissioning by General John de Chastelain and the independent witnesses.

The Statement

Weapons and attitudes have caused a great deal of pain in the past. We welcome the fulfilling of the IRA promise to put weapons beyond use. As a Church we have always had confidence in General John de Chastelain and the Independent International Commission on Decommissioning and we totally respect the integrity of the observers and what they have said.

This is a now a time for calmness and reflection in order for the full effect to become evident, including the important reporting of the Independent Monitoring Commission during the next number of months.

The Old Testament prophet Isaiah called for people to beat their swords into ploughshares so that weapons would never be used again. It is evident from recent events that communities in Northern Ireland have much to do in order to mould a ploughshare of genuine peace.

Decommissioning has opened wide the door for progress towards better understanding, and everyone now needs to work for the trust that will bring us all closer to the future of justice and peace that God intends.

Desmond C Bain. President of the Methodist Church in Ireland (26th Sept 2005)

THE VICTIMS OF VIOLENCE

This is not a time for celebration or recrimination. It is not guns and bombs that kill and maim people – it is people who kill and maim people. Let us now hope and pray that those who have suffered as a result of violent actions, might find in their own time, some measure of healing for their pain through the knowledge that the weapons used have been destroyed.

It is perhaps especially appropriate that a “Healing the Hurts” service will be held in Belfast Central Mission (Grosvenor House) on Wednesday next 5th October. It will use the liturgy that was received by Conference in June. It is hoped many people within and beyond Methodism, will attend. It is offered in the hope that men and women who are dealing with painful memories of loss and hurt, might find God’s help and human support on their long journey toward healing.

ROLE OF REV HAROLD GOOD

The President strongly approves of the participation of Rev Harold Good as an independent observer to the act of decommissioning. In so doing Mr Good took considerable personal risk. He had no obligation to inform or receive the agreement of the Methodist Church beforehand. Out of courtesy he informed the President and Secretary of Conference about what was happening before the media reported the forthcoming announcement. There is, and will be,



some questioning over the "appointment process", but the key to the witness issue, is their integrity, which is beyond question.

THE DECOMMISSIONING

The de-commissioning has shown to the Independent International Commission on Decommissioning, to the independent witnesses and to those in the community who have confidence and trust in them, that this is a clear sign of the republican community's movement to a peaceful and democratic means of operation. Others will rightly and fairly wish to test this out over a period of time and will look at least to the reporting of the Independent Monitoring Commission as mentioned in the press release. It is worth considering, however, that such de-commissioning could not have taken place without a very significant change of attitude.

OUR ROLE

Time is needed to allow the importance of what has happened to sink in. We also need space to allow political parties to begin to engage in productive dialogue. Much prayer is necessary and I call on congregations at all meetings of the Church and to individuals to pray fervently that this step will prove to be the watershed we earnestly desire it to be.

SIGNED: **Desmond C Bain**

PRESIDENT OF THE METHODIST CHURCH IN IRELAND

W Winston Graham

SECRETARY OF CONFERENCE



Secretary: John Roberts, 22a Penney Avenue, Mt Roskill, Auckland.
Phone 09-626-3771 Fax: 09-626-6137 E-mail mm-e@clear.net.nz

Be careful what you pray for!

Simon Oxley, programme executive for ecumenical learning at the World Council of Churches and a minister of the Baptist Union of Great Britain, reflects on the World Council of Churches 9th Assembly February 2006 theme 'God in your grace transform the world'.

The theme of the upcoming 9th Assembly of the World Council of Churches (WCC) is a prayer: "God, in your grace, transform the world." But perhaps we ought to ask the question 'What would we do if God actually answered that prayer?' Or 'Dare we pray for transformation?' Our immediate reaction might be to rejoice. The world does need to be transformed. The monstrous evil of poverty that destroys the lives of so many could be defeated. Everyone could enjoy clean water, sufficient food and an education. Trade could be fair with no one's labour being exploited. Killer diseases such as malaria and tuberculosis could be eradicated. The spread of HIV/AIDS could be halted and effective and affordable treatment be provided for all. Political and economic corruption could be curtailed and we could cease to rely on armed force to make others do our bidding. All that is possible now. The transformation required is that of our political will. But would we really rejoice?

None of that can happen without us being changed too. Some of us are very comfortable with our style of life - our food, our clothes, our entertainment, our cars. We can even convince ourselves that we deserve these things. We will have to let go and give back our unfair shares of resources and power. Our attitudes and behaviour will have to be transformed, and we may not like it.

The transformation of the world cannot happen painlessly through charity - by those who have more being generous to those who have less. It is a matter of justice. In recent years, there has been discussion in the ecumenical movement about 'restorative justice' - the kind of justice that works to put right the wrong that was done.

However, the Assembly theme and biblical conceptions of justice take us beyond this. We should think of God's justice as transformative justice. Justice that goes further than punishing the offender and putting wrongs right, towards creating that which is completely new.

Jesus spoke of this as the kingdom of God. Each time we use the Lord's Prayer we pray: "Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven". We are so used to these words that we can easily forget the radical change for which we pray.

Praying, "God, in your grace, transform the world" means being open to transformation for believers, churches and the ecumenical movement itself. We may only believe in God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit in ways that are convenient for us. We may enlist God to support our causes rather than responding to the call of God to selfless love and service. We may try to draw boundaries round the love of God rather than celebrate its universality. Our actions as churches and our relationships with sisters and brothers in Christ may deny the gospel. We can be so certain that we are right and others are wrong that we forget to be humble before the One who is beyond all our understandings.

How prepared are we to have self-serving or limited understandings of God, the church or the ecumenical movement transformed? The preaching of the first Christians was so effective that they were accused of "turning the world upside down" (Acts 17:6). We recognize that the world still needs turning upside down, but are we prepared to be turned upside down too?

There is a saying: "Be careful what you pray for, you might just get it". So the WCC may have done a very dangerous thing to choose, "God, in your grace, transform the world" as its Assembly theme. But in that lies our hope.



Bishop urges unity among all churches

Outspoken Mendi (Southern Highlands, Papua New Guinea) Catholic Bishop Stephen Reichert has urged all the different churches in the province to work in unity in an effort to eradicate some of the problems affecting the province and the country. Bishop Reichert made the call during a huge outdoor mass service held at Kumin cathedral parish in Mendi to commemorate the church's 50th golden jubilee celebrations in the province.

"As we take this time to celebrate 50 years of the work of the Catholic Church in the province, I ask all other churches in the province, including their leaders and members to join our hands and work to promote peace and harmony in the province," Bishop Reichert said. He said all churches should put Jesus first in order to tackle the problems, adding that only when the different churches cooperate and work together, are they able to solve problems like tribal fights, lawlessness, drug abuse, rape, spread of HIV/AIDS and many others which the province is faced with today.

He told more than 15,000 people who had gathered for the celebrations that they should not fight but live in peace and harmony by following the examples of Jesus as in the Gospel.

"We are the church alive in Christ. ... We are the body of Christ and there is no way that we should fight each other and do any wrong to our fellow brothers and sisters. ... At this time of jubilee, we should do away with anger, jealousy, and hatred and instead love one another as our brothers and sisters regardless of what tribe, church or place where one belongs," Bishop Reichert said.

The bishop also used the occasion to apologise to other churches in the province for past criticisms and conflicts the Catholic Church and its leaders may have been involved in. "On behalf of the Catholic Church, I apologise to the other churches in the province for the past things we may have said against your church and beliefs and ask you to forgive us," Bishop Reichert said.

United Church Bishop in Mendi Clarence Kapali was among other church leaders that attended the celebrations and congratulated the Catholic Church for its golden jubilee. *The National* 14 September 2005

Tribute to Deaconess Lucy Money

Sister Lucy Money arrived on the island of Choiseul in the Solomons in 1947 to serve the Methodist Church of New Zealand as midwife, nurse, teacher and Bible translator. She retired to New Zealand in 1998 and died at Morrinsville in her 90th year on 9 September 2005. We reproduce here the tribute of the Moderator of the United Church in the Solomon Islands, which takes the form of a letter addressed to Lucy.

Dear Sister Lucy

Greetings in the blessed name of Jesus Christ, our Saviour.

We thank God for your life and work. The Lord has been mighty in sending you to live and work with us and He has been generous and gracious in showering us with your commitment, skill and love. You have touched the hearts and lives of your adopted children and hundreds and hundreds of other people here in Solomon Islands.

It is more than 50 years now since the Lord first sent you to us as a Deaconess from New Zealand. Nearly all of that time had been spent in mission in Choiseul. You have been a classic example to the world of effective Christian service. Your MBE award is just one reminder of your essential and untiring work as Secretary for the Conference during the 1970's and the 1980's and your wealth of administrative work for the Choiseul Circuit and your dedicated midwifery, administrative and teaching work for Sasamuqa Hospital.

You have left an everlasting effect on the lives of the people of Choiseul in other ways too. You have lovingly and meticulously translated the Old and New Testaments into the Babatana language. Now, all people of Choiseul have the best chance to hear the Gospel of Jesus Christ and to invite Him into their hearts and lives. Your translation into Babatana of the traditional



Hymnbook and Orders of Service are beautiful illustrations of the great respect you have for the beauty and subtlety of the Babatana language. In our opinion, your translations surpass even the work of the late Helena Goldie.

We are deeply grateful to God for what He has given to us in you. May the Grace and Peace of our Lord Jesus Christ continue to be with you. We sincerely thank you.

NZ Aid office opens in Solomons

A New Zealand Aid (NZ AID) office was officially opened in Honiara on 8 September 2005. The opening followed high level consultative talks between the governments of the Solomon Islands and New Zealand. The office is located in the New Zealand High Commission Chancery at the City Centre Building. Each year the New Zealand Government provides aid assistance, not only to the Solomon Islands Government, but also to individual communities in the provinces for small scale income generating projects and service-based projects such as schools and health facilities. NZ AID assistance to the Solomons for 2005/06 will be SBD100 million or NZ\$21.73 million. Some of this will be spent on a road building programme. Over five years \$37-46 million will be spent on road rebuilding in Guadalcanal and Malaita provinces. This will make for easier access for farmers to sell their produce at provincial and Honiara markets. NZ AID will also consider putting some funds into a small business enterprise programme which will include women's involvement in small commercial undertakings in the rural areas. With better roads and sea transport, they will be in a better position to run their small businesses viably and profitably. *Solomon Star, 9 & 12 September 2005.*

Secretary's engagements

In September the MM&E secretary, John Roberts: attended the funeral for Lucy money in Morrinsville; led worship on overseas mission relationships at Helensville Co-operating Parish; attended a meeting of the Ecumenical Coalition on Justice; attended the final forum of the Conference of Churches in Wellington; attended a meeting of the Talking Cents group; met with the Anglican Commission on Ecumenism; led worship on overseas mission relationships at Pitt Street Church; led a session on 'Violence and Theology' at the Ministry Training Unit; spoken to Takapuna MWF on overseas mission relationships.

MM&E Occasional Paper

No.26 October 2005

“Forgive us our debts”

This article was written by John Roberts for Talking Cents, a group charged by the Anglican Diocesan Council to promote an alternative to current economic and political thought, and to encourage debate within the Church

Debt on the local scene

We live in a consumer society. That makes us a nation of spenders. 'No deposit and no interest for six months' terms, regular sales and competitive pricing, all entice us to spend. Many of us fund our spending by going into debt. Upper income earners with a good credit rating spend up on their credit cards and retail store accounts. For larger sums, as for cars and houses, they borrow from the more reputable financial institutions. Lower income earners don't get these privileges, so are prey to the dodgy financial institutions and loan sharks, who readily hand over



large sums of money with few questions or checks, on exacting terms, and with exorbitant interest rates.

What happens when the debt can't be met? Those on higher incomes may consult a financial planner. Those on lower incomes are likely to be put in touch with a budget adviser. In either case the advice will be the same: "Get rid of the debt". So strategies will be put in place to pay it off. For those on higher incomes this may mean little more than a reduction in 'retail therapy' spending. But for those of lesser means it may greatly reduce the amount available for essential household spending - on doctor's visits, clothing, electricity, rent, etc., leading to an impoverished lifestyle.

Debt on the world scene

What happens when we translate this onto the world scene? There was a time when the wealthy northern nations and the multinational financial institutions, the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, held more money than they knew what to do with. So they made their excess freely available to countries in the impoverished world for a wide range of projects, on appealing terms. Few questions were asked or checks made about the credibility of those being encouraged to take the money. Some were dictators, others corrupt politicians and officials. The people they ruled over were never consulted, but now they and future generations are made accountable for repayment of the debt. In time the economies of the affluent world tightened, and so did the demand for impoverished nations debt repayment. There was little these nations could do but go deeper into debt. They were encouraged to borrow more to pay off the debts of the past. But this time it came with more stringent demands called "structural adjustment programmes". These nations were required to lay off public servants, sell state enterprises, and reduce funding to the health and education sectors. The effects were devastating. These already impoverished nations were driven deeper into the poverty and debt traps. African nations have been particularly affected in this way, but they are not alone in feeling the effects of the debt burden.

Addressing the world debt issue

Most of the focus for debt reduction or elimination has been on Africa. The British Prime Minister, Tony Blair, and Chancellor Gordon Brown developed an initiative to address African indebtedness which they took to the G8 meeting of the leading industrialised nations at Gleneagles in Scotland in July 2005. Bob Geldoff's Live8 concerts initiative also focussed on debt reduction for these the world's most heavily indebted poor countries (HIPCs). The outcome was a 100% cancellation of US\$40 billion of debt owed by eighteen of the world's poorest countries. While this is an achievement, it is to be noted that no Asian or Pacific countries will benefit from this initiative, and at least another 42 countries are in need of immediate debt cancellation.

If we take another indicator, that of least developed countries (LDCs), then fourteen countries in the Asia-Pacific region area are in this category. A United Nations (UN) report "Voices of the Least Developed Countries of Asia and the Pacific", published in July 2005 points out that the eligibility threshold to qualify as an HIPC is excessively high. It indicates that Asia-Pacific LDCs have in general succeeded in keeping debt servicing ratios relatively low by virtue of their more prudent economic management. The report states that these countries should not be penalised by exclusion from the HIPC initiative because their debt servicing ratios are slightly above the threshold. It goes on to say, "The international community ought not to obligate any country to spend money on debt servicing when that country does not have enough money to educate all its children at the primary level, or reduce the number of children dying of treatable and preventable diseases." When debt is cancelled it does free up money for health and education etc, and evidence to date is that it is spent in these areas.



Debt in the Pacific Islands

Five Pacific Island nations fall into the category of an LDC. They are: Kiribati, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tuvalu and Vanuatu. The UN report points out that Vanuatu had an alarmingly high debt-to-GDP and per-capita outstanding debt ratios in 2003 – 71% and US\$785 respectively. A recent report from the Australian Council for Overseas Aid states, that at the end of 1998 Samoa had a debt-to-GDP of 102%. The Solomon Islands had debt of US\$152 million in 1998 which was a debt-to-GDP of 52%.

Let's take a closer look at the Solomon Islands. It has a population of approximately 523,000 with a high population growth rate of 2.8% and an estimated 50% under twenty years of age. Less than 40% of children complete primary school and 36% of adults are illiterate. There is a high pupil to trained teacher ratio of 59:1 The populations missing out on access to basic education are the poorest living in remote rural communities, the majority of whom are girls and women. 38 of every 1000 births result in death in the first year of life. The prime causes are respiratory infections, diarrhea, and malaria, all easily prevented and treated illnesses. Only 8% of the population is in paid employment. Incomes plunged by 30% from 1995 to 2005.

No wonder the Solomon Islands is leading the charge for debt relief in the Pacific Islands. Member of Parliament Alfred Sasako is calling for a debt relief commission to be established. He states: "Many countries in the Pacific are facing mounting debt burdens which must be addressed ... Some island states are spending up to 30% of their GDP on debt servicing leaving little for basic services and investment in education and technology. ... As the single fact that stunts economic growth in the Pacific, debt must be addressed as the priority of priorities." Sasako has been supported by the Solomons Minister for National Planning and Aid Co-ordination, Fred Fono, who has asked the G8 countries and the European Union "to forgive poor African, Caribbean and Pacific countries of their debts." If it can be done for Africa it can be done for the Asia-Pacific region, he says. Vanuatu Trade Minister, James Bule, has also called for debt cancellation. The Pacific Islands Forum (of which New Zealand is a member) says it is following up on these calls to release the region's poor nations from debt. The Manager of Economic Growth for the Forum Secretariat, Stan Vandersyp, sees the organization's role as a broker between the individual countries and the loan providers. We need to watch this space.

Forgiving debt

Have you noticed how the Lord's Prayer differs in its biblical and liturgical versions? The liturgical version has the petition, "Forgive us our sins"; while the biblical version has the words, "Forgive us our debts." (New Revised Standard Version & Jerusalem Bible) There is a theology of forgiveness of debt that runs through both the Hebrew and Christian scriptures, that is captured in this prayer. It forms part of a wider 'jubilee' theology, which you are invited to explore for yourself. As we recite that prayer let's use the word 'debt' and hear the plea of people not only of Africa, but also of our neighbours in the Asia-Pacific region.



ECUMENICAL NEWS & VIEWS

RURAL MINISTRY

The national ecumenical rural church newsletter "Rural Network News" is available at www.schoolofministry.ac.nz/RuralMinistry/ or contact Robyn McPhail at the address below if you wish to receive hard copy.

Rural Ministry news and information, national and international, can be found at www.ccanz.net.nz/rural/ or www.presbyterian.org.nz/2848.0.html.

Of special note is the **LIFE GIVING AGRICULTURE Message and Summary Report**, outlining the affirmations and recommendations of a multi-denomination Forum held in Wonju, South Korea in April this year.

Go to www.ccanz.net.nz/rural/ and click on LGA Official Report and LGA Final Message, or contact Robyn McPhail (address below) for hard copy.

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WORLD ASSOCIATION for CHRISTIAN COMMUNICATION

Taking the side of justice and human dignity in media, and promoting diverse media ownership, WACC works for the right to communicate especially in situations of censorship and oppression. Visit their website for more information and interesting articles about Christians in the world today. <http://www.wacc.org.uk/blog>

CHRISTIAN WORLD SERVICE

Media Release from Christian World Service - 10 October 2005

Emergency Appeal for Pakistan

Christian World Service (CWS) is receiving donations for the victims of the catastrophic earthquake that has devastated parts of Pakistan, Afghanistan and India.

CWS has partners on the ground responding to needs in the worst hit areas of North West Frontier Province of Pakistan. Already over 1600 families are being assisted and as more money as raised, a further 50,000 families will be targeted.

Relief includes shelter kits and family food packages containing wheat flour, rice, pulses and cooking oil. CWS partners are working closely with international and local organisations and authorities to help organise relief efforts and address the immediate needs of the affected people. They are also assessing what the longer-term response will have to be.

Donations are urgently needed. ACT International, the global emergency response network CWS belongs to, has called for an immediate US\$50,000 from member agencies and will release a full appeal target once the extent of damage and need is assessed.

New Zealanders can help relief efforts by supporting the Pakistan appeal. Donations may be sent by credit card, phone 0800 74 73 72 or to PO Box 22652, Christchurch or online www.cws.org.nz.



For further information contact CWS on 03 366 9274 or Jonathan Fletcher, National Director on 021 238 7710.

El Salvador disaster

Christian World Service (CWS) has launched an emergency appeal for El Salvador as partner groups call for help.

Central America has been devastated by Hurricane Stan, which has caused massive mudslides and extensive damage in Guatemala, Mexico, Honduras and El Salvador. El Salvador has also faced volcanic eruption.

CWS has a long-term partner in El Salvador, now working to help the more than 50,000 people affected by these catastrophes and will direct Central American relief to their programmes.

CWS partner Las Dignas (Women for Dignity and Life) is supplying food, medicines and clothing. They say the situation is desperate. CWS has been funding for Las Dignas for over 10 years, including their emergency relief for the victims of a massive earthquake 5 years ago. Many communities have never fully recovered and need urgent assistance to recover from the latest two natural disasters.

Donations may be sent by credit card, phone 0800 74 73 72 or to PO Box 22652, Christchurch or online www.cws.org.nz

For further information contact CWS on 03 366 9274 or Jonathan Fletcher, National Director on 021 238 7710.

World Food Day Sunday 16 October

CWS has prepared worship materials to mark UN World Food Day. You can download them from www.cws.org.nz or contact the CWS Office (03) 366 9274

CWS Christmas Gift Appeal Resources

Resource kits have been sent to all churches for the 2005 Christmas Gift Appeal. This year's theme is Save the Earth, Saves its Peoples and features partner stories of people working on environmentally sustainable development. Orders for resources including appeal envelopes, service sheets, candles and the PowerPoint presentation are due on October 11.

Contact CWS for more information: Ph 0800 74 73 72 or email cws@cws.org.nz

2006 Calendar

Beautiful photos of CWS partners around the world, celebrating people taking action against poverty. A great Christmas gift. Only \$10 - Available now.

Order from CWS www.cws.org.nz or phone 0800 71 73 72 Check out the CWS website for a preview





World Council of Churches

General Secretariat

To:
WCC Member Churches
Members of Central Committee
Associate Councils
Christian World Communions
Regional Ecumenical Organizations

Geneva, 3rd October 2005

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Grace, peace and joy in the name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ!

I would like to take this opportunity to inform you of a new initiative intended to enhance collaboration in the field of development. For many years, specialized ministries/agencies have expressed the need for an instrument to foster programmatic coordination of their development work and to enhance the visibility of ecumenical initiatives. In February of this year, I convened a meeting at Bossey to see how we could move forward together. Frankly, I was concerned that different opinions about this instrument could undermine the coherence of the ecumenical movement. The Bossey meeting agreed that in the long-term, the ideal model is to bring together ecumenical work with emergencies, advocacy and development under a common umbrella with a common brand name. However, as this will take some time, WCC agreed to take the lead in convening a Steering Group to oversee the creation of a new instrument for development by the end of the year. The Steering Group has worked very hard and very quickly to come up with the outlines of the new instrument, which is being referred to as the "Proposed Ecumenical Alliance for Development" (PEAD). Please note that this will not (thankfully) be the final name, but is being used for an interim period while discussions continue with ACT International and the Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance about the possibilities of a common name.

Recognizing the need for consultation, we have sought opportunities to talk about PEAD in many different fora in all of the regions. I am pleased to share with you the "Consultation document" on the Proposed Ecumenical Alliance for Development and to invite your comments. There has been considerable concern from some in our constituency about the role of the World Council of Churches in PEAD. I am pleased to let you know that WCC will play a leadership role, at least for its first few years, by convening and moderating the Executive Committee of PEAD and by providing opportunities for PEAD members to discuss burning issues in the field of development. While the PEAD Executive Committee will oversee the programmatic work of the Alliance and the small secretariat, PEAD will not be independently incorporated, but rather will initially be "housed" in WCC.

I want to stress that PEAD is not an effort to re-create the World Council of Churches. PEAD is a very specific initiative to increase collaboration, strengthen mutual accountability, and increase the impact of ecumenical work in development in an increasingly competitive environment. PEAD will be an instrument to enable those churches with specialized departments working in the field of development and ecumenical agencies, in the North, South and East to strengthen their collaboration with each other in order to increase the effectiveness of their efforts with the poor and marginalized. This is a laudable goal. I see this very much in the framework of the Common Understanding and Vision policy whereby WCC is facilitating a



process by which members of the ecumenical family can strengthen their relationships with each other in order to make a lasting difference in the lives of the poor, the marginalized and the excluded. WCC will ensure that in this process the voice of the churches will be heard and heeded to.

A small global consultation on PEAD is being organised in early December to enable churches, specialized ministries and agencies who are seriously interested in becoming members of PEAD to further consider the attached document. Unfortunately the number of people who can be invited to this consultation is limited. Therefore we are circulating this document widely and I invite you to send your written reflections so that they can be presented to the consultation.

We see the creation of PEAD as a step forward in strengthening ecumenical relationships in the field of development and we take seriously our responsibility as the leader of this initiative.

Yours in Christ,



Rev. Dr Samuel Kobia
General Secretary

WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

KOBIA HIGHLIGHTS UNIQUE CONTRIBUTION OF ETHIOPIA, OFFERS WCC MEDIATION

To read about Rev Samuel Kobias visit to Ethiopia see the September 21st press release on the WCC website - <http://www2.wcc-coe.org/pressreleasesen.nsf/index/pr-05-55.html>

SITUATIONS VACANT

RESEARCH AND LIAISON OFFICER – CASI (One Year Part Time)

We seek an enthusiastic person to work in Wellington for the **Churches Agency on Social Issues** (Methodist, Presbyterian, Quaker, Churches of Christ).

The role involves:

- Gathering information and resources for making submissions
- Producing useful study material
- Liaising with a wide range of groups and individuals

We are looking for:

- Proven competence in research and analysis
- Computer and website skills
- Excellent communication and liaison skills

For more information on the agency visit: www.casi.org.nz

For a job description contact: casi@casi.org.nz or CASI, PO Box 9049, Wellington

Or phone: David Beeston 027 4791340 or
Lesley Shaw 04 389 8597

Applications close on 31 October 2005



ECUMENICAL HOSPITAL CHAPLAIN to the MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES of the Capital and Coast District Health Board

Applications are sought from experienced chaplains or other suitably qualified ordained clergy for this **.5 half-time equivalent chaplaincy position** based at the Porirua Hospital in the Capital and Coast DHB. The Mental Health services include the regional forensic psychiatry service, acute inpatient services, long-term and community psychiatric rehabilitation, and drug & alcohol services. The position is being offered for a term of 3 years from the **beginning of February 2006**.

Applicants should have completed a minimum of one CPE Course and have experience in hospital chaplaincy, parish or other relevant ministry positions. Experience in working in the mental health area **is essential**.

The ability to provide spiritual, emotional and pastoral care to people with a range of health needs and from a variety of cultural and religious backgrounds, and to fully participate in a multi-disciplinary health care team, consistent with the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi, is absolutely essential.

The successful applicant will become a member of a very busy Ecumenical Chaplaincy Team providing Christian ministry, spiritual and emotional support and pastoral care to patients, their families and staff in the Porirua and Kenepuru Hospitals.

An appointee who is not already an accredited healthcare chaplain will be required to work towards obtaining accreditation. Chaplains are now required to become accredited within 5 years of appointment.

The closing date for the receipt of applications is Monday 14 November 2005.

An information pack is available from:

The Executive Officer - Interchurch Council for Hospital Chaplaincy

PO Box 9049, WELLINGTON, NEW ZEALAND

Phone: 04-381 8287

Fax: 04-801 6001

E-mail: admin@ichc.org.nz

AMENDMENTS TO THE YEARBOOK

Page 26

Baker, Edward (Ted);
3 Basil Orr Road,
RD4, Warkworth

(Ph) 09 420 5229

** A Note **

There will be no November e-Messenger due to Conference – but we would like to ask you all to remember those who are involved with Conference – that it may go well and smoothly and will help to carry the Methodist Church through into 2006.

Thank you!

