

TAUIWI STRATEGY & STATIONING

Tauiwi Strategy and Stationing committee has picked up the mood of the moment and taken a lot of time discussing major long-term issues that affect the life of the church. Within the reports of various groups, from MCPC to Council of Conference, as well as Tauiwi Strategy & Stationing, there are references to discussions that may not have reached any tangible conclusion during the course of this year, but which have the potential to question and possibly reshape how we do things in the future. It can be argued that such conversations take place every year at various levels of church life, but it has been a remarkable feature of this past year. Perhaps this is the effect of the Presidential theme: A time to sow, a time to grow. So this report will list some of the conversations initiated this year, or old conversations taken up again for another look, but many of the topics are such that it is unreasonable to expect any quick fixes or easy solutions. The challenge will be to follow up these conversations in such a focused way that they do not in future turn out to have been just hot air, but stepping stones towards reshaping our life and mission to allow us to sow the seed of the gospel more successfully, and to grow our life together more fruitfully.

In March we welcomed Jackie McGeorge and Dilys Davies (area superintendents for Manukau and Auckland) and David Poultney (synod superintendent for NMWC synod) as new members of the committee. The new framework for the re-named Professional Development Grant Fund (the former Travel & Study Committee) was presented and discussed at the March meeting and presented again at the August meeting on its way to Conference. A separate report will deal with this business. Concerns were expressed about various aspects of stationing at both the March and the August meetings. It seems that there might be a growing anxiety among both presbyters and parishes to enter the stationing process. This matter will be followed up by a short survey to investigate what, if any, those anxieties are and what might be done to alleviate them. Another matter raised in March included the revision of the disciplinary code. Advice concerning disciplinary matters should be addressed to the General Secretary as early as possible. Discussions also centred on the effect of ministerial appointments becoming increasingly part time rather than full time. The conversation ranged over presbyter recruitment and training. The General Secretary urged the whole church not to be afraid of trying something new; he advised parishes and Boards to try anything so long as it was neither illegal nor immoral. This conversation will feed into other discussions about the nature and future of our church which have emerged in various parts of our connexion this year.

The March meeting also heard about the history and work of the Evangelical Network and further considered the implications of moving to a 2 yearly Conference. The financial sustainability of synod Superintendency was again a matter of concern. Presently, we respond to each situation as the crisis arises, but further thought needs to be given to what the church expects synods to carry out and how the church gives the personnel and financial resources to fulfil those tasks. This was taken up again at our August meeting when we discussed the matter of parish and ministry reviews. Having analysed the various forms and purposes of First Year, Parish, Ministry, Special and Exit Reviews and begun to discuss how each might be conducted, it was pointed out that in reality synods have little hope of fulfilling all these complex demands on their present resources and so a further discussion will be held next year to tailor the fine intentions of these various reviews to the reality of what we can financially sustain. The viability of synods was further raised when we discussed a concern expressed by UCANZ about how regional church bodies, synod, presbytery, or diocese, vary so much in the amounts and methods of levies. This topic has been on the UCANZ agenda for some time and we urgently need to find a workable solution on which the Partner Churches can agree.

The August meeting opened its business by looking at the various logos in use by the Methodist Church of New Zealand and asked whether we should opt for one of them, or whether a multiplicity of logos serves us still, or whether we should consider designing a new logo for the connexion. The connexional office will work on this further and bring any suggestions to the church for evaluation. The meeting also considered the complex area of copyright and privacy law with regard to churches putting church services and events onto the internet. The Connexional Office will offer guidelines to raise awareness of precautions to take.

Representatives of Methodist Alliance, Peter Glensor and Jill Hawkey, attended the August meeting to present and explain the Methodist Alliance report going before Conference 2016 and lead people through the recommendations of the Establishment Work Group appointed by Conference 2015 to prepare for the Methodist Alliance in place of Methodist Missions Aotearoa (MMA) and to produce an initial version of a founding document. Other topics raised at the August meeting included the remit of the Council of Conference, the role of Conference Elders and presbyters' membership of synods. This latter discussion looked at the Law Book and the interpretation of our rules regarding attendance at synod. It was agreed that all presbyters are full members of the synod to which they are stationed. However, it was noted that many presbyters do wish to attend another synod other than their own for either collegial or cultural reasons. When presbyters desire to attend another synod other than the one to which they have been stationed, they should ask that second synod for permission to attend as Observers. Observers do not speak in synod debates, or participate in any votes, but Observers are welcome to attend synod meetings and fellowship groups. Observers should be listed separately to members on synod Minutes. Presbyters choosing to attend a second synod for cultural or collegial reasons should bear the costs of attendance themselves (this could be one use of the general allowance) and not their parish. Associates of synod are a different category of presbyters who attend a synod and currently associates tend to be presbyters of the Korean Methodist Church who are required to apply for Associate status and when approved by the synod, they will be admitted as Associates by the President and their names shall appear in Conference questions each year to maintain that status.

The most significant development at the August meeting was a strongly expressed determination to make space for longer periods of reflection and discussion, rather than work efficiently through a set of papers and reports, in order to discern more clearly the matters about our mission and structures that underlie so many of the issues we talk about again and again at such gatherings. The agenda shall be more consciously in the hands of all the members of Tauwi Strategy meeting and the issues shared in synod reports will become the focus for our debates. The members of the meeting shall decide at the time which topics are to be discussed and the priority which they deserve. It is in this way that Tauwi Strategy & Stationing has captured the mood of the moment in seeking, like other church bodies, to create greater space for deeper reflection, to stop the constant flow of business and agenda items and to pause, in God's presence, and together seek a way to better sow and grow the gospel in our Methodist tradition in Aotearoa.

SYNOD REPORTS

NORTHLAND AUCKLAND MANUKAU

One of our biggest challenges as the wider Auckland Northland region is the ever growing rapid development taking place with suburbs all around us springing up in unprecedented time. How do we, the Methodist Church, have a presence and a voice in these areas? Some of us attended the COURAGE workshop sponsored by Lifewise/Splice with Jim Diers, Denise Bijoux and John McDonald. It was inspiring and used a community development model which was non-threatening and exciting and showed us a way of taking the first steps to doing. Enthusing and sharing this model with others is our next big step. Takapuna Parish took a team along and they have already implemented this concept into their community outreach programme.

We have launched a new website, Methodist North and it is engaging and interactive. Rosemary Neave has developed this with us and will continue to keep it up to date.

Three workshops were held in Northland recently, one on Conflict Management and two on Working Within Safe and Ethical Boundaries in Ministry. All three workshops were very well attended. There was also one held for those who administer the sacraments and CTN have made it mandatory for attendance before relicensing. The Safety in Ministry workshops will be held throughout the region later in the year.

Colin Gordan's ministry at Wellsford is greatly appreciated and as Auckland spreads further north Wellsford will be an important town so keeping the church there open is strategic.

Our recent synods meetings were held at Te Atatu Union Parish and this is a gentle reminder to us that Cooperating and Union Parishes are an integral part of who we are as the MCNZ.

On an ecumenical front, Abhishek has been working with the local Catholic Priest to share activities. They began with an Easter Thursday service with combined congregations, and an afternoon listening to Trevor Hoggard tell about Methodist/Catholic relationships worldwide. More shared events are planned.

We had a very successful Festive of Song which proved our best yet. This is one of the events that the Consultative Committee organise. The Consultative Committee consists of representatives from all the synods in Auckland including Te Taha Maori and it meets four times a year and we discuss matters that affect our synods and those things we can do to improve our relationships.

A newsletter goes out from the synod office quarterly and I would like to see it produced on a more regular basis.

Koinonia provides a time for Presbyters to get together once a quarter for a time of fellowship, worship and sharing a meal together.

In the north a number of Methodist, Presbyterian, and Anglican Clergy meet informally in Kaikohe every 2-3 months led by Archdeacon John Blundell. This is a very good time to share what's happening in our ministries, and learn from each other.

Our major focus for the rest of the year is to develop a vision for the next 3-5 years and look at the structure which will best serve that vision and the leadership required to make it a reality.

WAIKATO WAIARIKI

2016 has been a year in which the Synod has engaged in intentional strategic thinking on both sides of the Kaimais.

In May we held a visioning and goal-setting day led by John Murray for Methodists in Hamilton to reflect on their future. We shared hopes and dreams for a church that 'punches above its weight' and is connected to and engaged with the building of local community. We identified the need for further research, a city-wide communications policy and a property audit.

In August we will be holding a similar day for parishes in the Western Bay of Plenty. Led by Bonnie Hebenton, this will focus on opportunities presented by the sale of property and rapid population growth in East Papamoa and the Lakes.

While many of the Synod's European congregations are ageing and shrinking, we have noted signs of increasing diversity and rising numbers in others. A time of sharing at the July Synod revealed a revival of youth work in some parishes. Other parishes without children or youth have been inspired by the vision "Let the Children Live" and have found ways to support community initiatives focused on the well-being of children.

The Synod continues to have a full diary of opportunities for people to share and grow together in worship, professional development and fellowship.

Highlights in 2016 have included a lay preachers' training day on "Exploring the Hebrew Scriptures" with Lynne Wall, our annual Synod Refresh which focused on climate change, a Ministerial Synod workshop on "Intercultural Communication" and participation in an interfaith concert to raise money for a scholarship in memory of the late Alan Leadley. We're looking forward to the Synod Quiet Day to be held at Epworth in August with the theme "A Spacious Place".

In July Synod noted the retirement from Synod Executive of Viv Whimster who is preparing to take on the role of Vice-President. Viv's contribution as Synod Steward and member of the Executive has been highly valued and we wished her well as she sets out on this new adventure of service and faith.

Synod also noted the retirement at the end of the year of Terry Kehely as Synod Property Convenor. Over recent years property matters have become increasingly complex and we have been fortunate to be guided by Terry's wisdom and expertise.

LOWER NORTH ISLAND

How shall we sing the Methodist song in the LNIS in the year ahead? With what tone? And in what spirit? And with what configuration? How, when the LNIS has run out of money to pay for the separated superintendence, has its life been effective? Who will do the work?

In the last 12 months LNIS has ceased trying to have and achieve a strategic plan for the whole District, but focussed on becoming a *service provider* to individual parishes and its leaders. That may or may not be good, but, we've changed.

- Our synod meetings this 12 months have each incorporated 3 or 4 workshops and sometimes topical discussions groups;
- We've held a residential School focussing on "enabling small congregations to thrive"
- We've held ministerial workshops on
 - what is discipleship and how do you make disciple when you are a present day minister,
 - funerals
- LNIS Superintendents have convened and led events or consultations at their place for at least 32 of our 42 parishes.

In no small part because of the distances between parishes, the rise of congregationalism and because of the innumerable complicating partnerships that entangle nearly every one of our parishes, the previous strategic plan failed to capture the LNIS. With some exceptions, our parishes don't see being part of any denomination's regional church as significant, let alone are they keen to share its work; almost all are happy to take what is offered them by us, as well as taking those things offered by their other partner churches.

Another significant change in the last year has been our gradual recognition that for about half of our parishes, there is a *changed reason for being*. Such parishes have become just a "periodic gathering of caring, community minded and Christ centred persons". The church folk have ceased to see their parish as a unit that should be organised for mission to others; rather their church has become a place to which people periodically return to share stories of *how their life is out there*. In the year ahead, we owe those parishes a '*duty of care*', to engage and support but not burden them with administrative details. We should not be surprised or disturbed if they don't accept invitations to meetings or respond to 'What do you think?' queries.

What is the Methodist song we should sing among our parishes? Who out there in all these cooperative ventures knows and claims the Methodist flavour, emphasis? How can our parishes know? Barely a quarter of our 42 parishes are served by a stationed presbyter who was trained as a Methodist; how can and how do they possibly know the commitment to the Methodist Social Principles and to the Gospel of New Beginnings. Especially in the face of calls to righteousness living (e.g. about human sexuality) from our partners.

Our July Synod adopted 'in principle' a restructuring of the LNIS work. Specialisation of roles for the Co-superintendents, rather than a division on geography. Appointment of cluster leaders for the geographical sub-districts... to ensure pastoral care, workshops and monthly networking. It also included the appointment of a workshops facilitator and a youth initiatives worker if the Synod can access the financial resources we have currently locked away in the MTA bank. 'In principle'... but implementing it is proving very difficult.

In January the term of a number of long serving Synod Exec members finish. Some new people are to join us. Conspicuous among those retiring, Jenny Olsson has for 20 years been a passionate and committed Synod Secretary first with Hawkes Bay Manawatu and then for the entire life of LNIS; Bruce Wilson as Financial Secretary has in recent years organised and made clear our financial position and obligations.

NELSON MARLBOROUGH WEST COAST

We are currently engaged in stationing with both Motueka and Blenheim seeking new appointments and with their presbyters in the stationing process. Two might not sound a lot but we are letting go and seeking to replace half the presbyters in active ministry in our district. It is an aspect of our being in connexion that a new appointment has an impact beyond the parish where a presbyter is stationed; this is particular clear in a smaller synod.

The Synod has recently funded attendance for a member from Moana to attend the Trans-Tasman Conference on Rural Ministry held in the Wairarapa in May. We felt this to be a learning opportunity of particular significance and were pleased to help someone from a small rural community attend. We look forward to a full presentation on this at our next gathering on the West Coast.

We are grateful to the Central South Island Synod in making places available for members of our synod on a Transitional Ministry Training course they have organised; two of us are participating.

We face challenges as an area which is, almost by definition, peripheral. We are a collection of smaller parish communities spread out over a large geographical area. This in itself can be a challenge. Our Synod Executive plans to have a gathering soon where we can spend a couple of days exploring how our parish communities can help one another.

At present we are trying to find a new synod property secretary, our outgoing property secretary has served in this role for many years and can no longer drive; this led to a couple of ad hoc arrangements in terms of parsonage inspection as part of the stationing process this year but the job was done and in a timely manner.

Our Synod meetings are invariably well attended and are marked by a good spirit and sense of friendship.

Let the Children live - The Synod and the Well Being of Children and Young People

Our Camp Snowden fund seeks to give priority to helping children and their families. It meets before each synod and considers requests for help. Requests are not directly made to the fund but are made via parishes. As interest rates are at a historic low this is impacting on the amount available for disbursement and regular applicants have been advised of this. However our funding helps in a wide range of circumstances from a very successful youth project in Greymouth to helping with a group in the Motueka parish who receive applications for help with school uniforms, school camps etc.

There is also some Methodist involvement locally both in refugee resettlement and the Living Wage campaign. These both have positive implications for the wellbeing of children, young people and their families.

CENTRAL SOUTH ISLAND

Central South Island has once again had a year of significant change and celebration.

Changes

A number of parishes are undergoing a period of transition – some formally and some informally. With the retirement of Rev. Neil Keesing, Port Hill's Uniting Church is working through what kind of ministry they need in light of decreasing congregational members, the Eastern Suburbs emerging strategy, and its own particular needs and strategic plan. Rev. Mark Gibson is currently engaged with the Wainoni Methodist Parish as a transitional minister for two years. Wainoni is the only church in the red zone within Christchurch and has a history of community engagement and extensively used meeting space during the past 5 years. Also part of the Eastern Suburbs relationship building between the 5 main parishes in the East is a priority for ongoing ministry.

Two of the original four Synod appointments that arose out of the post-earthquake strategic plan

also come to an end this year. Rev. Mary Petersen finishes her two year appointment of supporting parishes dealing with the rapid suburban growth. In 2013 growth projections showed Halswell facing an extremely high population growth of up to three times its current population over the next 20 years. The result is an increase from 14,680 up to 40,825 residents by the year 2030. Back in 2007 it was projected that there would be 10,000 new households within 30 years. In 2012 Rolleston's population was around 9,500. In 2016 it was approx 14,000. By 2020 it is expected to be around 20,000. The industrial area in Rolleston has more than tripled in the past 5 years with many factories and warehouses moving from Christchurch. All of this means huge change in community dynamics and significant opportunity. It is our hope that with Mary's help both of these small congregations will have a clear vision and strategy to realize the opportunity that this growth offers.

Also coming to a close is the ½ time appointment of a resource person for Lay Leadership for up to 3 years. Rev. Alan Webster has been that resource person. Over the three year period training has been offered around: Biblical Story telling, Children's Ministry, Ministry to the elderly, Youth Ministry, Messy Church, Breakfast church, Alternative Church, Connecting with your community, Parish Stewards, Lead Worship, Sharing your faith, Pastoral Care, Prayer, Evangelism on a raw edge, Music with no instruments, Journaling, Photographing Psalmically, Powerpointing, Website construction, Rural Church issues, Small Church perspectives, Ecology and the church, conflict resolution, Boundaries, Quiet Church, Art in Church, Sugar free living.

Changes are also afoot within a number of our Cooperative Ventures. Vacancies and appointments in Oxford, Kaiapoi and Port Hills. The Synod and Alpine Presbytery have worked hard to ensure a strong working relationship and collaboration. This includes regular meetings to touch base and catch each other up on what is happening with those parishes for whom we are responsible, inviting participation in procedural matters, and establishing guidelines that ensure that our Union and Cooperating Parishes do not fall down the proverbial "hole"!

Celebrations

The opening of two new church buildings (Christchurch North Methodist Parish and St. Albans Uniting Church) saw a great turnout of supporters, Church and community leaders. It has been 5 very long years since the earthquakes and for these two parishes the re-establishment of their spiritual home is very welcome. It is expected that Opawa Community Church will also be open before Christmas. More parishes are in various stages of progress between repairs, strengthening and building.

Another celebration is the strengthening relationship between the Christchurch Methodist Mission and local parishes. Both Synod and the Mission are committed to working in partnership where possible, to grow our community outreach. The Mission's work around social housing is one such project where parishes have got on board – Linwood Union Church has leased to the Mission, a vacant section on which the Mission has put 5 houses. Other parishes have then supported the Mission through their time, skills and gifts to help get these 5 houses landscaped and the new tenants supported through welcome packs. Other parishes have offered their unused parsonages to the Mission as rentals.

In July the inauguration of a brave new ministry took place. The new Methodist Chaplain to the City Rev. Rob Ferguson was inducted "café style" and has begun to establish this new and courageous venture by the Durham St Methodist Church and supported by the Synod, steps outside the usual ways of being and doing church. Rob's task is to reflect on the city with others, to link folk for conversation and learning, and to reflect from an open Christian viewpoint. "It's fun, shoe-bending stuff" he says.

The Synod Executive are committed to ensuring the ongoing mission and ministry at local level is encouraged and supported through the sharing of ideas, building relationships and networks, meeting together formally and informally, making processes as clear and simple as possible and resourcing where possible and practicable.

The Synod as a whole, is committed to being the best we can. To offer our gifts, skills, strengths and vision to growing our church, being engaged within our local community, establishing a strong

network of people, businesses and institutions so that together, we can make a difference and be a positive influence.

We continue to strengthen our understanding of the Methodist Church's bi-cultural partnership and our relationship with Ngāi Tahu. Through our weekly newsletter we are expanding our vocabulary in Te Reo and collectively we have learned some new waiata's which are sung at each Synod gathering. By the time Conference comes to Christchurch – we'll be ready to sing at full volume! We are richly blessed to have Roz Wilkie and Terry Ryan from Te Taha Maori as guides and mentors! Whakawhetai korua.

OTAGO SOUTHLAND

In one of Te Haahi's smaller synods one might expect an air of despair, but far from it. We may have only nine parishes, having formally closed the Lawrence Parish during the year, but there is a lot of variety. We have two Methodist-only parishes, Dunedin and Invercargill, five that are Presbyterian/Methodist (three with Methodist as co-ordinating partner), and two Presbyterian/Methodist/Anglican (neither with Methodist as co-ordinating partner). Five of them sustain full-time ministry, two have part-time leaders, one has a lay ministry team, and one seems to work well doing its own thing (that has to be Bluff!).

We rejoice that Alexandra-Clyde-Lauder Union Parish now pays its presbyter full time and is going well; and that Otatara Community Parish is flourishing under new lay minister leadership.

We welcomed Michael Lemanu to synod last year and he returned to Dunedin to help the folk there. We have realised that the range of work involving children, youth and families in our parishes is great and varied.

At Synod meetings we had input from John Daniel, the local Presbyterian Synod Moderator, and from Trevor Hoggard during our residential meeting in February.

There have been positive reviews: 5th year parish review at Invercargill, and a more informal review of the Team Ministry structure at Riverton.

Our last synod meeting had a robust discussion about men's ministry, with participants from parishes with such work taking place at present. We realise that for some this is non-PC, but it is still a fact that many men feel church is a feminine issue and we wished to address this positively.

Finally, we are blessed with having synod input from Greg Hughson as Tertiary Chaplain at Dunedin University and Laura Black as Director of Methodist Mission Southern.

We think that small is beautiful, and Otago-Southland is the place to be.

SINOTI SAMOA

We continue to give praise to our Heavenly Father for His never ending love and care, for through Him everything has been made possible. The past 12 months has been a reflective time for Sinoti Samoa as it progresses with new initiatives and vision.

Sinoti Samoa inducted its new office bearers in February 2016. Superintendent Rev Suivaia Te'o, Secretary Mrs Itamua Mataiva Robertson and Treasurer Mrs Saunoa Tulou. This is the first time in Sinoti Samoa's history that its elected executive office bearers have been all women! This in itself was a notable milestone for Sinoti Samoa. The newly appointed National Youth Leaders were commissioned also, Miss Tumema Faioso and Mr Lusua Taloafulu.

Sinoti Samoa has nineteen Parishes and congregations under its care including one recent amalgamation (Waitangirua joining the Wesley Wellington Parish).

Sinoti Samoa at its 2015 AGM passed a resolution to establish a visioning committee called 'Tofa Mamao' exploring and setting strategies for Synod growth. This year, Sinoti Samoa adopted its new Vision for the next ten years: 'Ia loloto le ola faale-agaga o le Sinoti Samoa' 'That Sinoti Samoa develops a deep spiritual well-being'.

Sinoti Samoa held its Annual General Meeting (AGM) from the 14th – 17th July 2016 at the Willow Park Christian Campsite. On Thursday 14th the Ministerial Synod Ministerial Synod had the privilege of having the Director of Pasifika Ministries deliver a 'theological reflection' based on the 2016 Sinoti Theme: *God of Love, fill us with Your Love*'. On this day, the National Youth leaders also held Youth Leadership training for the youth representatives from throughout Sinoti who were in attendance.

On Friday 15th, the Christian Education committee, Mafutaga Tamaitai (MWF) Executive and Sinoti Youth representatives held further meetings during the day before the Sinoti AGM was officially opened in devotion, led by the Auckland Samoan region that evening. During this official opening ceremony we paid tribute to all those who had passed away since our previous AGM, as well as acknowledging those who have served the Methodist Church of New Zealand through Samoan ministry / Sinoti Samoa throughout the last 60 years.

It was a time of thanksgiving as we reflected on the 60 years of Samoan ministry within Te Hahi Weteriana o Aotearoa, with the first Samoan service having been held on the 10th June 1956 at Wesley Wellington. Sinoti also celebrated 20 years since its establishment as an official Synod within Te Hahi Weteriana o Aotearoa on the 27th of January 1996.

At this annual meeting Sinoti paid special tribute and acknowledged Rev Faiva and Luafaletale Alaelua who retire at this year's Conference. We also acknowledged President Tovia Aumua and wished him well for his remaining presidential duties as he approaches the end of his term as President of the MCNZ.

Sinoti Samoa reviewed its constitution (last review was in 2009) and present this to conference. The constitution is in line with the Law Book and outlines processes for Sinoti's internal functions.

Invitation from Samoan Conference 10-17 July 2016

Sinoti Samoa's Superintendent had the honour to participate at the Conference of the Methodist Church of Samoa. It was a wonderful experience to be amongst the male dominant conference. Sui had the privilege to address the Samoan Conference conveying greetings from Sinoti Samoa. It was also a time to pave the way and lay the mat in order for building good relationships, resourcing and inspiration. It was a great experience and Sui was welcomed with open arms by all the Superintendents, their wives, presbyters and many lay people. It was a God moment for Sui as she embraced their love and support towards her as one of the Superintendents from Te Haahi Weteriana o Aotearoa.

Let the Children Live

Each congregation have ongoing programmes based on the 10 year vision. Activities ranging from swimming lessons, family fun days, homework centres, play groups to name a few.

The Sinoti Samoa Social Issues Committee continue running a number of workshops throughout all our regions in relation to Family Violence and Suicide prevention, with a particular focus on the Vulnerable Childrens Act, Youth Justice, Cultural Identity, Brain Development and the Anti Smacking Bill.

Workshops

12th March & 9th April: Sinoti Samoa held training for all it's regions regarding the roles and functions of Parish Stewards, secretaries and treasurers within congregations, parishes, and Sinoti.

14th May: Sinoti held a training workshop facilitated by Tumuaki Diana Tana about the Bi-cultural partnership and Connexional roles.

20th August: A climate change workshop is being hosted (together with the Public Issues Network) regarding climate change and in particular its impact on the Pacific.

Challenges

The harvest is great but the workers are few. Sinoti Samoa have established an 'inspirational team' and a 'candidacy team' who will look at ways to develop potential leaders for ministerial vocation.

Sinoti continue to fundraise for its building project 'Tafa o ata'. We are extremely grateful to Lifewise and Airedale Properties for their guidance and assistance. We have been fortunate also to benefit from the expertise of various Sinoti Samoa members who have offered their skills (in the areas of architecture, construction and engineering) towards this project. We pray that in the very near future our dream shall become a reality.

Sinoti are optimistic about the future and the vision it has adopted for the next ten years. May God guide us as we continue His ministry.

VAHEFONUA TONGA

Relationship with other Conference, Synods and Parish/Congregations

Vahefonua will be focusing on building a closer relationship with other Synods. Parish/Congregation with Tongan members.

Close relationship with the Free Wesleyan Church of Tonga Conference.

Vahefonua has helped established the Tongan Church Leaders Inter-denomination Group.

Sunday School

Training of Sunday school teachers nationwide for the new curriculum.

There is a team that is scheduled to different congregation on Sunday to work with teachers and the new curriculum.

It was approved at the last Synod meeting of the National Annual Examination taking place on Saturday 3rd and Sunday 4th of December. This has allowed students to complete all school and tertiary exams.

The Annual Retreat for the Sunday School Teacher representing from each Congregation will take place in January 2017.

School of Theology

We offer two schools of theology this year at our Ministerial Synod.

We were overjoyed that Rev Dr Nāsili Vaka'uta and Rev Dr Jione Havea blessed the meeting with several sessions.

Evangelism

Increasing of churches offering their evangelical team to lead worship and open-air worship.

Prisons: Mt Eden and Paremoremo is attended to every Sunday by different teams. We have also got approval to visit Wiri Womens Prison.

Markets: Flea markets on Saturday at Otara, Mangere. Sunday at Avondale.

There are also teams from different congregation rostered to Flea Markets on Saturday and Sunday to lead worship and preach.

Labour Weekend Camps

Synod Evangelism team is having programmes fine-tuned and workshop ready to start at the beginning of September for Camp leaders of all congregations. We also have our mission and youth contributing to the programmes so it can offer varieties to all members young and old. Most Camps are held at church halls. Siaola Mission representatives are tasked to other congregation to share and present the different programs they offer, ranging from suicide, health, violence, gambling, education etc.

Youth

Youth Outreach Camp – Battle for the Truth Part IV:18 – 21st July.

Theme: Empowerment - To build the bridge and get over it. This was held at Ngaruawahia. There was 250 + youth members who attended. Registration was \$220 each person but that did not deter churches paying for youth representatives.

Alter call registered more than 100 commitments, weekly session are offered for them for 12 weeks.

Mission and Education – Siaola

1. Vahefonua Tonga o Aotearoa Methodist Mission Charitable Trust (SIAOLA)
The SIAOLA Board of Trustees underwent a capacity building phase which resulted in the nomination and selection of new active members to govern the work of SIAOLA.

With the assistance of David Hanna, SIAOLA completed a draft Strategic Plan to guide its work between year 2016 and 2020. This work identified the need to build SIAOLA's capacity based on its existing strengths including establishing a national office with staff to manage, coordinate and deliver key services of need to our members and wider Tongan community. The Ministry of Social Development (MSD) has given SIAOLA some funding to support this capacity building and delivery of some primary preventative social services with the focus on family violence, domestic violence and vulnerable children. This work will continue to grow and strengthened in the next few years.

2. Education and Training Expo 2016 (Expo)
The Expo was fielded in January in Auckland with great support of 34 participated organisations that erected and display information and networking including education and training institutions, health and social providers. This year, we allocated a designated space for the Early Childhood Education (ECE) to encourage parents to consider enrolling their children in early learning. It was estimated that over 400 participants went through the stalls.

The next Expo is scheduled for the 3rd of December 2016. SIAOLA is planning to collaboratively work with church leaders of other Tongan denominations to encourage more participation and exposure of the Expo to the wider Tongan community. The reach of this work is going to expand.

Gisborne Roadshow

Similar to the Expo in Auckland, SIAOLA carried out a roadshow in Gisborne in November 2015 for the very first time. The purpose was to provide a one-stop-shop for parents, youth and students for the opportunity to network and discuss with service providers appropriate career pathways and subject choices as well as enrolling students into course of their choice. Parents and youth were also engaged in in-depth group talanoa/discussions about family violence and bullying, and health. The level of awareness about these social issues was raised and embraced by the participants.

The Roadshow programme is planned to continue for community in need outside of Auckland.

Primary Prevention Programme – Social Sector

SIAOLA was working in partnership with TOKO Collab on delivering suicide prevention workshops for youth and parents of Vahefonua congregations and others. Suicide is a critical issue amongst

the Tongan community and through this work we expect to raise the awareness about suicide and reduce the number of suicide cases.

Overall, Vahefonua will continue to strengthen and improve the spiritual and social services to improve the wellbeing of its followers. With the help of the Holy Spirit, we are empowered to strive to let the children live.

Staff

The board has made a step forward from volunteer work to having a part time staff. Advertisement for this vacancy post has been distributed nationwide.

Homework Centers

Homework centres started last year with the intention to increase academic achievements especially in numeracy and literacy. This is also an extension for the younger children, the chance to learn their Sunday School syllabus and to maintain using and practising their Tongan language.

Fanongo ki he Ui (Listen to the Call)

Listen to the call, programme for young and all families. Workshops such as budgeting, relationship and communications, family violence, parenting are among the programs that has started for the group.

Building Projects

- New Building
- Christchurch – Demolition work to the hall has been completed. New build to commence.
- Saione, Papatoetoe – Church / Hall / Carpark
- Dominion – Church / Hall / Carpark
- Ellerslie – Hall / Carpark
- East Tamaki – Church / Hall / Carpark
- Ponsonby – Parsonage

Stationing

We have made communication with interest for a new congregation in Warkworth, Dargville, Ashburton, Nelson.

Challenges

- Vahefona strives to maintain and increase youth awareness and support for Alcohol, drugs, suicide and education.
- The need to identify and support family violence.
- Other challenges are the increase in needs and demand for space to worship. Financing of “New Build” projects.
- The increase of awareness of earthquake reports to older church buildings currently in use.
- Finding a Barrister to be the Principal Solicitor, who can help support and work with building Professionals in preparing a Heritage Building case to the Heritage for demolition.

WASEWASE KO VITI KEI ROTUMA

Acknowledgement

Our thanks and appreciation to all Synods, Parishes, Mission Resource, groups and the MCNZ for your continuous support and prayers.

Highlights

1. Wasewase produced their first parish and presbyter’s profiles as required by the MCNZ.
2. A successful Wasewase’s Women’s district AGM at Rotorua in June. Several women from the group will be attending the Womens World Seminar in Texas in the month of August.
3. Three more new Tabacakacaka (Parish) two in the Lower North Island the third one covers the South Island. Each Parish have opted for a resident Fijian presbyter.
4. An increase in stipend for the Pitt St Fijian congregation presbyter from ¼ to ½ stipend.

Challenges and Future Hopes

- Sustainability plan – Encouraging our congregations to become self - supporting / independent congregation.

Others

Our Wasewase Youth Rally will be held at Finlay Park Adventure Camp, 117 Finlay Road, RD 2, Maungatautari from the 15th to the 18th July.

Suggested decision:

1. That the report be received.

EVANGELICAL NETWORK

The Evangelical Network of te Haahi Weteriana o Aotearoa has been asked recently to explain its history and purpose: it may be that this is because a new group of people are coming into the Methodist Church of New Zealand without the institutional memory of events and responses outlined below, or it may be that a new wind is rising: the Evangelical Network was called upon to justify its existence at the March meeting of the Tauwi Strategy and Stationing Meeting, at which much of this material was presented.

HISTORY

The Evangelical Network was set up by Conference 2000

- in response to questions about the place of evangelicals in MCNZ
- to provide a “place for evangelicals to stand”
- In response to the legal question of stationing
- Immediate cause: Rev Dr David Brommel stationing to Durham St .

After an acrimonious and angry series of conference debates, Council of Conference suggested a way forward, with the Memorandum of Understanding presented to Conference.

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

At Conference in 2003 a statement was received from Council of Conference in which it was suggested that a memorandum of understanding in relation to the issue of the ordination of gay and lesbian people be prepared.

Conference resolved to receive the statement and asked the President and Vice-President, in consultation with the Tumuaki and the Executive Officer of Tauwi Strategy and Stationing, to initiate processes to enact the direction of the statement (see F-10, Resolutions of Conference 2003).

They have negotiated with representatives of those who did not support the ordination of gay and lesbian people, Tauwi, and Te Taha Maori who did support and endorse the ordination of gay and lesbian people.

“The purpose of this Memorandum is to put in place protocols that respect the integrity of those who oppose the ordination of gay and lesbian people and at the same time to enable the church to move forward on this issue.

“In doing so it acknowledges that there are members within Tauwi who do not agree with the ordination of gay and lesbian people

“The following has been agreed by representatives of the Evangelical Network, Sinoti Samoa, Vahefonua Tonga 'O Aotearoa and Wasewase Ko Viti Kei Rotuma E Niu Siladi, who represent those within Tauwi who do not support or endorse the ordination of gay and lesbian people, and Te Taha Maori, and is confirmed by the President on behalf of Conference.

This memorandum has been agreed by all parties out of a desire to remain committed to the Methodist Church Of New Zealand/Te Haahi Weteriana O Aotearoa

1. This Memorandum enables both those who agree and disagree with the ordination of gay and lesbian people to stand together with integrity within the Methodist Church of New Zealand / Te Haahi Weteriana O Aotearoa. This Memorandum seeks to clarify the place of individuals and groups within the Laws and Regulations of the Methodist Church of New Zealand / Te Haahi Weteriana O Aotearoa.
2. It is acknowledged there are criteria for ordination which all candidates must meet
3. The Methodist Church of New Zealand / Te Haahi Weteriana O Aotearoa is committed to a practice of appropriate matching in its stationing process which takes account of the diversity and need within the Church.
4. This Memorandum affirms that the Mission Statement, Ethical Standards for Ministry and Pastoral Resolutions are the guidelines by which Ministry operates in our Church.
5. Any person approached for nomination to either the position of President/Vice President should take into account all the tasks they are required to undertake and make their decision accordingly.
6. Each individual ordinand responds to the Church's invitation to be ordained. Ordination acknowledges the unique gifts and graces brought to the Church by that individual.
7. Provision of appropriate leadership in the Church in local/district/regional contexts will recognise the diversity of pastoral need.

The first EN Superintendent was Rev Marion Peterson, the second Rev Nigel Hanscamp, the third Rev Marion Peterson and the fourth and current superintendent, Rev Alan K Webster, who has held this position since XXXX

The Evangelical Network provided an intentional structure of MCNZ, through Conference, to provide a place for an evangelical voice within NZ Methodism

For many, this was too little, too late:

- Wesleyan Methodists exited MCNZ
- several independent congregations left
- and there ensued a painful splitting and separation of congregations, buildings, heritage, families

At its inception, the following was agreed to by a gathering of supporters:

“The Evangelical Network of the Methodist Church will be a place which:

- Fosters positive relational links across the diversity of Methodism.
- Promotes and nurtures evangelical theology and identity
- Protects the theological integrity of evangelicals by involvement in the processes of selection, training, and stationing of evangelical presbyters and deacons

“The Evangelical Network of the Methodist Church will be a place which:

- Equips and resources congregations for discipleship, evangelism, mission and leadership.
- Encourages all church leaders and members to live a life of scriptural holiness.
- Fosters and celebrates Evangelical styles of worship, music and liturgy.
- Actively encourages children and youth work
- Provides a place for people of different cultures, who choose to be a part of the Network, to stand confident in their Methodist heritage.
- Provides a national framework for networking in the areas of resourcing, renewal and visioning.

From an earlier document

Faith essentials and values

- *We are passionate about God's love bringing transformation and renewal to individuals and communities growing the kingdom of God in our world. seeing people have a personal encounter with Jesus Christ, have an experience of God's salvation and grow in active discipleship*

Mission

The mission of the Evangelical Network is

- *To equip and support evangelicals in Methodist churches and Uniting congregations for mission and ministry in God's world*
- *To resource the wider Methodist church in the areas of evangelical theology, spirituality, leadership and worship.*
- *To bring evangelical Methodists together through networking to enable stronger churches and mission*

In this mission we see our key strategic areas

- *Creating vibrant networks—with evangelicals in Methodist churches and Uniting Congregations, within the wider Methodist Church and with other evangelical groups in New Zealand*
- *Working with the national church in stationing and strategy*
- *Providing opportunities for resourcing, particularly in areas where resources are currently less accessible.*
- *Providing links to the wider Methodist Church to have access to the rich resources of Evangelical theology leadership and spirituality*

The Network is Evangelical - unashamedly so

It declares first and foremost the life changing, saving work of Jesus in his life, death and resurrection available for all people and for creation. It declares that this is good news. It declares that this good news is for all people—those who have heard and those who haven't, and that knowing this means an obligation to share it. It declares that the Bible is God's Word for our world, and that it has an innate authority for our lives beyond what we can give it - or take away from it. It holds to the deity and humanity of Jesus, is Trinitarian in theology, and has a passionate belief in the church as the body of Christ, and believes that God is very active in our world.

It is Methodist, though it often works in Uniting Congregations and beyond. The Network follows the tradition of John Wesley in its commitment to proclaiming God's saving grace, and the need for radical discipleship. The Network is committed to renewal of the Methodist church, through its rich tradition arising from the AFFIRM movement and its founding days of the Methodist Revival Fellowship.

The EN and CONFERENCE

1. From time to time Conference has recognised the contributions that the Network has made to the life of the Haahi Weteriana: as in the Evangelical Covenant of 1998 and 1999:

“Conference (1998,1999) warmly affirms the place of Evangelicals within the life of the Methodist Church. It respects the values and contribution made by many evangelical people during our history.

In order for this to continue, Conference commits the Methodist Church to seek more effective ways by which evangelicals within Methodism can contribute to the ongoing life and work of the Church.”

2. From the very beginning, the Evangelical has made a practice of inviting the presidential team to breakfast immediately preceding the taking up of their office: and has prayed personally for each team in ways that have been appreciated by all concerned.
3. In recent years, the Evangelical Network has sponsored Conference artworks and expressions of faith that do not rely upon words.
4. The Evangelical Network has made a point of meeting with the Liberal Society for dinner at Conference, in a deliberate expression of connexionalism as it is meant to be.

The Evangelical Network and the Law Book

Section 4.3.2 provides for representation of the Evangelical Network at TSS by the superintendent

Section 7.3.4 provides for an additional lay representative of the Evangelical Network to represent it at Conference

Conference agenda laws provide in 26 ii (b) a place for the Evangelical Network to report to Conference

Section 11A, Organisations provides space for the Evangelical Network in A.2, ostensibly to provide a rationale as per other church bodies: unaccountably, this space is empty.

In 2016

So in today's climate, what is the Evangelical Network?

First to note is that the loaded word "evangelical" needs some unpacking:

An evangelical is

not fundamentalist, literalist

not US-centric politically

not conservative, ecclesiastical

but a ragtag, catholic, diverse, eclectic group of people for whom an evangelical identity is important in a context of increasing uncertainty and relativism around many of the core beliefs of the church.

Evangelicals come in all shapes and sizes: but share an

Implied high view of scripture

Implied high Christology

Implied passion for mission

The Evangelical Network of the Methodist Church of New Zealand has been part of the ongoing discussions focussing on human sexuality by invitation.

However, our primary focus in recent years has been towards reminding the church of the richness of the evangelical heritage in its perspective on mission, on personal holiness, and in relationships with the wider church. To this end, in recent years we have organised and run a very successful international weekend Conference "Equip" in Ngaruawahia with the World Methodist Evangelism Institute, the Wesleyans, and the Church of the Nazarene, a significant event in the Telstra Clear convention centre celebrating 200 year of the gospel in Aotearoa with a group of CMS young people from Kenya, as well as ongoing events at our annual conferences noted above.

Networking has been largely at presbyteral level, but the Network has been invited to make contributions to the ongoing question of faith-sharing at various synods around the country, where some field testing of new packaging of the gospel for the 21st century have been trialled.

Suggested decisions:

1. That the report be received.
2. That Conference 2016 reaffirms the role and purpose of the Evangelical Network as outlined above.

NEW ZEALAND METHODIST WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP

Supplementary Report

