

# Methodist Mission and Ecumenical Newsletter

## May 2013

### ASIA SUNDAY 2013

**Celebrate on 12 May 2013**

**Theme: God of Life, Lead us to Justice and Peace**

Traditionally Asia Sunday is celebrated every year on the Sunday before the Pentecost. The day commemorates the birth of Christian Conference of Asia. Congregations may choose a different day to observe the celebration.

A set liturgy and material for a service of celebration was circulated via emessenger. Please make use of this material. The theme "God of Life, lead us to justice and peace" is to keep in focus the theme of the assembly of the World Council of Churches that is to take place in October 2013 in Busan, South Korea. The celebration of Asia Sunday also could be an opening for the observing the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2013.

### **LOOKING BEYOND DIVISION**

**A six day winter school introducing the study of Ecumenism**

**Monday 8 to Saturday 13 July 2013**

St. John's College Meadowbank Auckland  
**Applications close on 31 May 2013.**

The Centre for Ecumenical Studies of Charles Sturt University Canberra, Methodist Mission and Ecumenical, College of St. John and the Auckland Catholic Diocesan Commission for Ecumenism present this course to the churches and people of Aotearoa New Zealand.

Course content and details of registration are available from the M&E office. Cost - undergraduate and post graduate level: \$ 300.00 Audit - \$ 150.00. This fee includes course material and lunch during the course.

Resource persons for the course from Charles Sturt University will be Rev. Prof. Robert Gribben (co chair of International Anglican Methodist Dialogue) and Rev. Dr. Ray Williamson (director of Centre for Ecumenical Studies). For further details, please contact Prince at the Mission and Ecumenical office [mm-e@methodist.org.nz](mailto:mm-e@methodist.org.nz)

Private Bag 11903 Ellerslie Auckland 1542

Those who wish to get course fee from Travel & Study Committee must submit their application to Travel & Study Committee before 15 May 2013.

### Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2013

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2013 explores what "God requires of us." In the southern hemisphere the observance will be **from 12 to 19 May 2013**. Material and liturgical resources available from

<http://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/wcc-commissions/faith-and-order-commission/xi-week-of-prayer-for-christian-unity/week-of-prayer-for-christian-unity-resources/resources/2013-worship-and-background-material.html>

### WCC and partners strengthen relationship in advance of assembly

**The upcoming 10th Assembly of the World Council of Churches (WCC) is not only a pivotal moment in the life of the WCC global fellowship of 345 member churches but also a defining moment for the WCC and its programmatic and financial partners or "specialized ministries."**

In advance of the assembly, to be held this year in Busan, Republic of Korea, 30 October to 8 November, the WCC leadership and staff met 18-19 April in Bossey, Switzerland, with representatives of more than two dozen specialized ministries.

As a pre-assembly event, the group addressed changes in development and mission paradigms, the vision for a continuing and deepening partnership and WCC planning for the future.

The future, as reflected in the assembly theme, "God of life, lead us to justice and peace," will be a "pilgrimage of justice and peace" for the church, the WCC general secretary, Rev. Dr Olav Fykse Tveit said to the group in his opening remarks.

"Your encouraging presence here today is another visible sign of your support and your willingness to find new ways forward together," Tveit said. "Speaking with you means sharing common values and calling, and therefore also sharing the resources given to us for proper stewardship for the benefit of those who need what we are able to do together."

With specialized ministries, which are church-based development agencies, the WCC is able to implement a variety of programs, including its HIV and AIDS work in Africa, accompaniment programs in the Middle East and Colombia, gender justice, advocacy on climate change, economic justice and arms trade, mission and evangelism, and the work of the Faith and Order commission.

The work also reflects the core of the ecumenical movement, in which churches through their various mission and development agencies and other ecumenical agencies, such as the ACT Alliance, work together with the WCC and its members to express a common voice, vision and witness to the world. More information at

<http://www.oikoumene.org/en/press-centre/news/wcc-and-partners-strengthen-relationship-in-advance-of-assembly>

### **Ecumenical voices support decolonization process for French Polynesia**

In Tahiti, an ecumenical delegation was told about the need for re-inscription of French Polynesia (Maohi Nui) on the United Nations list of countries to be decolonized. The delegates discussed various pressing concerns while meeting with the local church leaders, civil society organizations and President Oscar Manutahi Temaru during their visit to French Polynesia from 26 April to 1 May.



*Ecumenical delegation meeting with the President Oscar Temaru in his office*

Members of the WCC delegation were: Dr. Mathews George (WCC Director of Commission on International Affairs), Ms. Fa'autu Talapusi (WCC Secretary Pacific Region), Rev. Gregor Henderson (Uniting Church Australia), Rev. Prince Devanandan (Methodist Church of New Zealand), Rev. Francois Pihaatae (General Secretary of Pacific Council of Churches), Rev. Wakira Wakaine (Evangelical Church of New Caledonia) and Mr. John Doom (President of WCC).

The delegation listened to the voices of the people on matters relating to decolonisation and the impact of the nuclear tests. Attention was also drawn to the issue of protection of the rights of indigenous people. Rev. Francois Pihaatae said: "The international ecumenical solidarity visit to French Polynesia comes at the right time. This is significant in terms of accompanying the EPM and the Ma'ohi people while they are struggling to deal with the critical issue of re-inscription of French Polynesia on the UN list."

John Taroanui Doom, WCC president from the Pacific, spoke about the consequences of nuclear testing by France in French Polynesia. "The problems directly and indirectly linked with the nuclear tests in the past thirty years in the French Polynesia are not yet settled," he said.

"Successive governments in France suppressed the demands from the affected local people and denied people's legitimate demand for the sovereignty of their land and right to self-determination," added John Doom.

A consultation organized by the EPM (Ma'ohi Protestant Church) in conjunction with the international ecumenical solidarity team visit, exploring the issue re-inscription of French Polynesia, was attended by more than 100 participants.

Rev. Wakira Wakaine, president of the Evangelical Church in New Caledonia and member of the delegation, explained the advantages of re-inscription for a country on the UN list of countries to be decolonized. He shared experiences from his own country New Caledonia, which was re-inscribed in 1986 on the UN list after long struggles by the people. More information available from:

<http://www.oikoumene.org/en/press-centre/news/ecumenical-voices-support-decolonization-process-for-french-polynesia>

### **New congregational resource invites "Pilgrimage to Busan"**

**Available now in four languages, a new online publication from the World Council of Churches (WCC) invites parishes and congregations to explore the themes of Christian unity, justice and peace in advance of the upcoming 10th Assembly of the WCC.**

Entitled *Pilgrimage to Busan: An Ecumenical Journey into World Christianity*, the six-unit resource is designed for use by congregations in study groups, adult forums, or for a day-long retreat as a way to study the theme to the upcoming assembly, "God of life, leads us to justice and peace". The six units of resources are

1. Christian unity
2. Called to Witness
3. Living with people of other faiths
4. Working for God's justice
5. Praying for Peace
6. Transformative Spirituality for Discipleship

More information and the resources available from:

<http://www.oikoumene.org/en/press-centre/news/new-congregational-resource-invites-pilgrimage-to-busan>

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