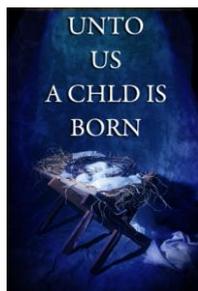


# Methodist Mission and Ecumenical Newsletter

## December 2014



**Mission and Ecumenical Board wishes all**

**Merry Christmas and a blessed New Year.**

**May the peace of Christ be with you all at this Christmastide and in the year ahead.**

### **Mission and Ecumenical Annual Appeal 2015**

President Tovia and vice president Arapera launched the Annual Appeal 2015 "Tabaka Solar Power Fund to light up the young lives."

Tabaka Rural Training Centre trains nearly 140 young men and women in skills that are needed in the Solomon Islands. The training programme is in the areas of outboard motor maintenance, repair and servicing generators, hospitality and tourism, electrical wiring and plumbing, animal husbandry and ecologically planned sustainable horticulture. The need to light up the main hall is expressed by the principal Wilson Agiri to the director of Mission and Ecumenical Board.

Considering the importance of the work of Tabaka Rural Training Centre and its impact on the young ones, Mission and Ecumenical Board decided to raise funds in 2015 as part of its annual appeal.

Tabaka Rural Training Centre was supported by a group of interested people from Waikato Synod in the past. It was appropriate the appeal was launched at Conference 2014 in Hamilton to draw the attention of the supporters of this project.

Your generous contributions will be of assistance to the next batch of young ones who are in training at Tabaka. Let's light up their lives by placing a Solar Power Unit in the main hall of Tabaka.

*Annual Appeal Brochure is attached to the newsletter.*

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### **Christians are called to be peacemakers and to build just peace**

**Pilgrimage towards peace and justice formed the theme of remarks opening the 5-day Ecumenical Peace Consultation in Sigtuna, Sweden. Rev. Dr Olav Fykse Tveit, general secretary of the World Council of Churches (WCC) invited 80 participants from all over the world to join in a common journey of hope.**

"We are on a Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace. We are in the one ecumenical movement together," said Tveit. We are seeking the visible expression of our unity." In our time, he added, we too "are particularly called to find new expressions of our

unity in Christian solidarity. This solidarity is a way to just peace," a way to "solidarity with all, regardless of faith."



Tveit added: "This consultation is one of the means by which we are seeking to give further form and content to the Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace, and to determine how we might practically travel together on this journey."

Tveit concluded, "Just peace in a comprehensive sense requires that just peace be established as an end of armed conflicts. Christians are called to be peacemakers and to build just peace. That means that we need to be peace builders, building the Shalom/Salaam in the wider and deeper sense."

Rev. Dr Anders Wejryd, Archbishop emeritus and Europe president of the World Council of Churches, underlined the message: "Religion is dangerous – and wonderful. Religion can let lose the best and the worst in humankind. Maybe it is not so much because of religion *per se* as it is because of humankind."

In a video message to the Peace Consultation, Dr Agnes Abuom, moderator of the World Council of Churches, said: "It is only through peace we can bring development and prosperity."

The WCC consultation and workshop on Peace building and Advocacy for Just Peace, 1-5 December, is hosted by the Church of Sweden, Uniting Church in Sweden, and Christian Council of Sweden. It brings together more than 80 ecumenical advocacy experts, church leaders, as well as civil society and United Nations partners. More information at

<http://www.oikoumene.org/en/press-centre/news/christians-are-called-to-be-peacemakers-and-to-build-just-peace>

### **WCC URGES PROTECTION OF REFUGEES AND DISPLACED PEOPLE FROM THE MIDDLE EAST**

**A statement issued by the World Council of Churches (WCC) Executive Committee on 25**

**November has made strong recommendations urging all countries to take special measures to protect and support refugees and displaced people from the Middle East, especially those from countries like Syria, Iraq and Israel-Palestine.**



It recommended increased financial and material support for all countries hosting displaced people, urging countries to share the burden more equitably with the most affected host countries and communities. The statement particularly appreciates efforts by countries like Lebanon and Jordan to keep their borders open.

Based on the Christian premise of welcoming the stranger, the statement addresses the crisis of forced displacement in the Middle East, where the WCC has a number of churches and partner organizations working on the issue.

The document urges all parties to conflicts driving destruction and displacement in Syria, Iraq and Israel-Palestine, to “respect the dignity and rights of all human beings, to observe all the principles of international humanitarian law concerning the protection of civilians”. It calls for an end to the conflicts, enabling return of the refugees and displaced people to their homes safely and with dignity.

The statement also calls on the international humanitarian community and authorities in host countries to redouble efforts to avoid statelessness among refugee populations, particularly among children, by simplifying registration procedures and documentation requirements for substantiating identity and marriage.

The statement recommends all states sign, ratify and implement the 1951 Refugee Convention and the 1954 and 1961 Statelessness Conventions.

Another significant point stressed by the WCC statement is related to strengthening the Christian presence in the Middle East, with due protection of their rights and dignity.

According to Dr Elias El-Halabi of the Middle East Council of Churches, “the statement is timely given that the WCC constituency includes important members in Syria, Iraq and Palestine”.

“The issue of internally displaced persons is related to human rights and international humanitarian laws, yet deeply linked with the presence of Christians in the Middle East,” he said. “Forced displacement of religious and ethnic communities can tear apart the social fabric of their homelands, in a region which prides itself on diversity and a history of peaceful co-existence.

“Work to care for refugees and displaced people is never enough. While churches and ecumenical organizations in the region are trying to address the situation, the need to do more to support refugees still remains persistent,” Halabi said.

### **CHALLENGING DIVISIONS, SUPPORTING DISPLACED PEOPLE**

The statement also speaks about the 1974 partition of Cyprus, asking political leaders from both Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot communities to overcome hostilities, division and injustice and to bring negotiations on the future of Cyprus to a successful and just conclusion. It specially encourages religious leaders, through the religious track of the Cyprus Peace Process, to continue their efforts for peace, justice and human rights.

While encouraging international collaboration to protect refugees and displaced people, **the document invites churches to deepen their reflection on the Christian calling to welcome the stranger, promoting the resource “Welcoming the Stranger: Affirmations for Faith Leaders”**. The document is an outcome of dialogue convened by UN High Commissioner for Refugees António Guterres, following which faith-based organizations including the WCC drafted “Welcoming the Stranger” that aimed to inspire religious leaders to welcome strangers with dignity, respect and support.

The WCC Executive Committee meeting is held in Paralimni, Cyprus, from 20 – 26 November. The meeting is hosted by the Church of Cyprus.

<http://www.oikoumene.org/en/press-centre/news/wcc-urges-protection-of-refugees-and-displaced-people-from-the-middle-east>

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# Methodist Mission and Ecumenical Annual Appeal 2015

Light up the young lives

## Tabaka Solar Power Fund



Tabaka Rural Training Institute  
Established in 1992 by the United Church of  
Solomon Islands

The institute trains over 100 young men and women in various skills from outboard motor and generator repair to hospitality and tourism.



The need to light up the main hall of the institute is felt for some time. Due to lack of power the young lives are in dark in the evening.

A Solar Power Unit for the main hall will help the students to do studies in the evening as well as provide light for recreational activities.

Methodist Mission and Ecumenical appeals to all to contribute to the  
**TABAKA SOLAR POWER FUND to raise in 2015**  
**\$ 40,000**

No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lamp stand, and it gives light to all in the house. [Matthew 5:15 NRSV]

With your contribution to the fund you can be a participant in this mission to light up lives.

Methodist Mission and Ecumenical is registered with the Charities Commission Registration Number CC51048. Receipts will be issued for tax rebate on the donation.

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### ANNUAL APPEAL 2015 – TABAKA SOLAR POWER FUND

Please send your donation by cheque in favour of  
Methodist Mission and Ecumenical Fund  
to:  
Rev Prince Devanandan  
Methodist Mission and Ecumenical  
Private Bag 11 903  
Ellerslie  
Auckland 1542

You could also make your donation directly into  
BNZ Account No. 02-0800-0766004-03  
Amount: \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
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Please remember to send this cover slip for a receipt when you make a deposit.