

Methodist Mission and Ecumenical Newsletter

May 2015

Towards a Common Vision A Six-day Winter School on Ecumenism In the 21st Century – 13 to 17 July 2015

The Biennial winter school on ecumenism will be held from Monday 13 July to Friday 17 July 2015 followed by an open Symposium on Saturday 18 July 2015 at St. John's College, Meadowbank Auckland.

The programme is jointly organised by

- ❖ Centre for Ecumenical Studies, Charles Sturt University Canberra Australia
- ❖ Mission and Ecumenical - Methodist Church of New Zealand
- ❖ St. John's College, Meadowbank Auckland
- ❖ Trinity Methodist Theological College, Meadowbank Auckland
- ❖ Auckland Catholic Diocesan Commission for Ecumenism

Tutors from Centre for Ecumenical Studies of Charles Sturt University Canberra include Rev. Prof. Robert Gribben (Uniting Church), Rt. Rev. Prof. Steven Pickard (Anglican Diocese of Canberra – Goulburn) and Rev. Dr. Ray Williamson. In addition there will be tutors within New Zealand to bring about the aspects of ecumenism within New Zealand.

Those who wish to attend please register before 31 May 2015 by getting a brochure by email from princd@methodist.nz

FEES (INCLUDES GST, LUNCH, MORNING AND AFTERNOON TEA)

Undergraduate students	\$ 300
Audits	\$ 175*
Symposium (Saturday only)	\$ 35*

**No assignments required*

WCC and CCA call for urgent action in earthquake-hit Nepal



The WCC and the Christian Conference of Asia are deeply saddened by the news of the tragic earthquake that has rocked central Nepal. Official

reports confirm that at least 1800 people are known to have died in Nepal after the devastating 7.9 magnitude quake, making it the nation's worst disaster in more than 80 years.

A second earthquake measuring magnitude 7.3 in the Richter scale hit on Tuesday 12 May 2015 which killed at least 110 people and injured more than 2,300. Christian World Service is appealing for funds to provide humanitarian assistance to the affected people of Nepal. Please help the CWS.

<http://www.oikoumene.org/en/press-centre/news/wcc-and-cca-call-for-urgent-action-in-earthquake-hit-nepal>

Building an interfaith community

27 July - 14 August 2015 Bossey, Switzerland

"What can we, as people of faith, do to respond and to overcome the pressing challenges of our time, such as violence and conflict, and build together mutually accountable societies based on respect and cooperation?" This is the question up to 30 young Christians, Muslims and Jews from around the world are to explore during a summer seminar at the World Council of Churches' Ecumenical Institute in Bossey.

<http://www.oikoumene.org/en/press-centre/events/building-an-interfaith-community>



WCC mourns the killing of Ethiopian Christians by the Islamic State

In a solidarity letter to Abune Mathias, patriarch of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church, a member church of the WCC, Rev. Dr Olav Fykse Tveit, the WCC general secretary expressed deep shock over the recent killing of more than 20 Ethiopian Christians in Libya by the Islamic State.

<http://www.oikoumene.org/en/press-centre/news/wcc-mourns-the-killing-of-ethiopian-christians-by-the-islamic-state>

CHURCHES IN TANAH PAPUA SEEK JUSTICE, PEACE AND STABILITY



01 MAY 2015

Amidst intimidation, illegal arrests, disappearances, torture and killings in Tanah Papua resulting from tensions between the Indonesian authorities and the Papuan pro-liberation groups, churches seek justice, peace, dignity and security for the Papuans.

The conflict in Tanah Papua (West Papua) has cost the lives of thousands since the late 1960s. A former Dutch colony placed under the United Nations administration in 1962, the region was unilaterally annexed by Indonesia and since then has experienced pro-independence insurgency. In 1969 Tanah Papua was formally incorporated into Indonesia, becoming Irian Jaya province.

Jan Bastian Rumbrar, ecumenical relations officer at the Evangelical Christian Church in Tanah Papua (GKITP) – a member church of the World Council of Churches (WCC) said, “The GKITP formed in 1958 following over 101 years of mission work laid down by German and Dutch missionaries, was tested with political dispute between Indonesia and the Dutch over the territory called Dutch New Guinea.”

“The human as well as spiritual development of communities at that time met with despair as preparation for an independent church was not followed by political independence for the Papuans who are the indigenous inhabitants of the territory,” he adds.

On the contrary, Rumbrar says, oppression followed the integration of the territory into

Indonesia on 1 May 1963 under the United States brokered New York Agreement.

While human rights violations have continued in the region, Rumbrar explains that the churches have played a strong role of being the “salt and light” (Matthew 5: 13-16) in a true biblical sense.

While human rights violations have continued in the region, Rumbrar explains that both Catholic and Protestant churches in Tanah Papua have voiced their cries, but little has been heard.

<http://www.oikoumene.org/en/press-centre/news/churches-in-tanah-papua-seek-justice-peace-and-stability>

WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY

17 May 2015 to 24 May 2015

At least once a year, Christians are reminded of Jesus’ prayer for his disciples that “they may be one so that the world may believe” (see John 17.21). Hearts are touched and Christians come together to pray for their unity. Congregations and parishes all over the world exchange preachers or arrange special ecumenical celebrations and prayer services. The event that touches off this special experience is the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.

<http://www.oikoumene.org/en/press-centre/events/week-of-prayer-for-christian-unity>

ASIA SUNDAY 24 May 2015

Asia Sunday 2015 will be observed on Sunday 24 May 2015. Asia Sunday Liturgy is available for download from

http://cca.org.hk/home/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/ASIANSUNDAY_FINAL_HighRes1.pdf

If you are unable download please contact the director Mission and Ecumenical for a copy of PDF version.

Ecumenical officers from WCC member churches meet to strengthen a “pilgrimage of justice and peace”

The World Council of Churches (WCC) hosted the biennial meeting of an international group of people with responsibilities for ecumenical relations in several member churches of the WCC. The spring session of the gathering of the Ecumenical Officers Network met with the

theme “pilgrimage of justice and peace” as the inspiration for learning, reflective study and discussion on current developments in the ecumenical movement.



The meeting was held from 28 April to 1 May at the Ecumenical Institute in Bossey. Prince Devanandan from Methodist Church of New Zealand, Michael Hughes from the Anglican General Synod and the Rev. John Douglas from the Baptist Union of New Zealand attended the meeting.

The Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace is a call to the ecumenical movement which emerged from the WCC Busan assembly in late 2013. During the meeting in Bossey, the group was devoting significant time to explore the pilgrimage, seeing what meaning it has for the WCC, its member churches and their own personal lives.

The WCC general secretary, Rev. Dr Olav Fykse Tveit, joined the group on 29 April to share reflections on the current work and role of the WCC inspired by the Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace.

“Since Busan, we have been developing our work together within the context of the pilgrimage of justice and peace. We did not begin this journey but we have joined this journey in progress with others. Still, it provides the WCC a focus and a framework for our vocation as a global fellowship,” said Tveit.

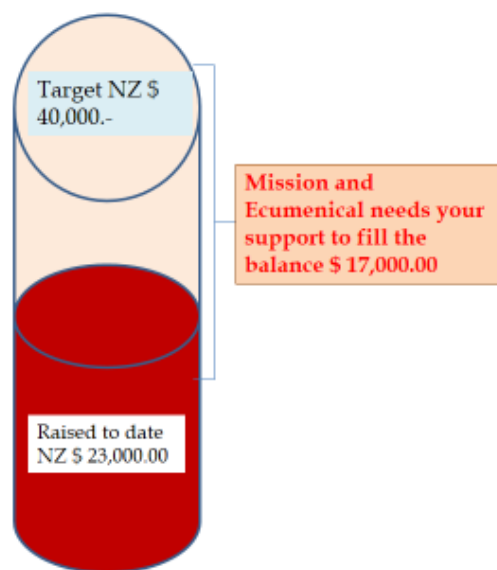
Tveit identified the ecumenical officers’ network as being significant for promoting a “crucial level of relationships between the Council and the member churches.”

Throughout the four days of the meeting many staff members of the WCC have been involved in contributing to the programme. On 30 April around 40 participants were invited to spend the day at the Ecumenical Centre in Geneva, where they were guided in prayer by the WCC staff members from the office of Worship and Spiritual Life.

The meeting closed on 1 May with sessions dedicated to themes such as inter-religious dialogue and cooperation, the work of the WCC’s Faith and Order Commission and the value of communication in sharing of ecumenical message.

<http://www.oikoumene.org/en/press-centre/news/ecumenical-officers-from-wcc-member-churches-meet-to-strengthen-a-201cpilgrimage-of-justice-and-peace201d>

Light up the young lives - **Tabaka Solar Power Fund**



We thank all those who are continuing to support our assistance to Solomon Islands. We look forward to your contribution to complete the Tabaka project as well. * * *

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