

Methodist Mission and Ecumenical Newsletter

April 2018

Special Appeal 2018

New Classrooms for College of Nursing

It is ten years since Mission and Ecumenical has had a special focus on Helena Goldie Hospital. After investigating current needs, President Prince has endorsed the design and construction of a new classroom block at the College of Nursing as the 2018 special appeal. The College of Nursing has current facilities for forty students. Due to lack of space every second year the college has had to delay its intake till the next year. Now the College of Nursing is to be integrated into the government health system. The building of another classroom block at the college will be a step toward upgrading facilities and the provision of national qualifications. We again appeal to the generosity of individuals, parishes, trusts and MWFs to respond to this appeal. The new classroom block will improve facilities and prepare for future development. The details of the project, and the way in which you can give, can be found on the brochure which follows this Newsletter.

President Prince to visit Solomons

On the 23rd April, President Prince, together with a small delegation of four from the Auckland Methodist Central Parish, will visit the Solomon Islands. They will be present for the dedication of the new Infectious Diseases Ward at Helena Goldie Hospital. The Auckland Central Parish adopted this project as part of their 150 anniversary celebrations. Their generous contribution of \$50,000 has made possible the construction and outfitting of this ward, essential to isolate patients with infectious diseases from others in the hospital.

New Moderator inducted

The general secretary of the United Church of the Solomon Islands, the Rev. Burabeti Tabe has written saying that the Induction of the new Moderator on Thursday 1st March was a wonderful occasion. The Rev. David Garunu was inducted to his new ministry for the next four years by the Moderator of the United Church of Papua New Guinea, the Rev. Bernard Siai. Bernard shared a challenging message of Jesus washing the feet of the disciples and Peter's response to Jesus' question 'Who do people say that I am?' "The theme of humility paved the way for a very moving reconciliation by Church leaders that was to eventuate at the end of the sermon in front of the Kokeqolo Aqoroa Memorial Chapel." The Solomon Islands Government was represented by the Deputy Premier of the Western Province. The Church looks forward to a time of consolidation.

70th Anniversary of WCC

2018 marks the 70th year since the first General Assembly of the World Council of Churches in Amsterdam in 1948. Events are planned around the world to celebrate the establishment of the Council that brings together Protestant and Orthodox Churches. The Roman Catholic Church has a close association with the Council. The general secretary of the World Council of Churches has written to all member churches: "We have decided to invite member churches and ecumenical partners to write stories and compose prayers and songs on the occasion of the 70th anniversary." Rev. Dr Olav Fykse Tveit goes on to suggest ways in which we can participate in local situations. Consider celebrating in your own context and in your own cultural and liturgical way, preferably on Thursday August 23, 2018, the date of the opening of the first assembly in Amsterdam. The World Council of Churches will be commemorating the event that same day with the Protestant Church of the Netherlands, inviting young persons from churches everywhere. Then encourage the writing of stories, prayers and songs to highlight the life and work of the World Council of Churches and the way in which it has enriched the lives of so many churches around the world. It is to be hoped that in local communities and regions around New Zealand there will be those who will take initiatives to mark the 70th anniversary liturgically, with seminars and workshops.

Papua New Guinea earthquake

The Mission and Ecumenical Board at its March meeting reflected on the situation in Papua New Guinea. Stories are emerging of those cut off from supplies in the Highlands and damage to infrastructure. The Board decided to make a grant of \$1,000 from its disaster relief fund. Sent through Christian World Service it will be employed by the ACT Alliance to ensure that essential assistance gets to the most vulnerable. In the first stage, we have learnt from CWS that there is a need for shelter including tarpaulins and blankets, cooking equipment, medicine and solar-powered lights.

Conference on World Mission

The World Conference on Mission and Evangelism was held in Arusha, Tanzania. The Theme was "Moving in the Spirit – Called to Transforming Discipleship." The Methodist Church was formally represented by President Prince Devanandan. Lesieli Samiu of Auckland was invited to attend as a Pacific indigenous youth representative. Opening



Photo: Albin Hillert/WCC

worship was vibrant with African rhythms, storytelling and a spirit of sharing that set the stage for the rest of the week. World Council of Churches general secretary Rev. Dr Olav Fykse Tveit said in opening remarks, “I believe that God is reminding us in our time of what is the force driving the mission of the church. It is the love of God, experienced in the love of Jesus Christ, in his life, death and resurrection, bringing salvation and reconciliation to the world. We should be shaped by the words of the apostle Paul, ‘The love of Christ urges us on.’ (2 Cor. 5: 14)”



Photo: Albin Hillert/WCC

At the end of the conference participants issued a Call to Discipleship. Among other things it said, despite glimmers of hope, we had to reckon with death-dealing forces that are shaking the world order and inflicting suffering on many. This imperial system has made the financial market one of the idols of our time and has strengthened cultures of domination and discrimination that continue to marginalise millions...

Discipleship is both a gift and a calling, to be active collaborators with God in transforming the world. We are called to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ – the fullness of life, the repentance and forgiveness of sin, and the promise of eternal life – in word and deed, in a violent world. Participants also described their call to care for God’s creation and be in solidarity with nations severely affected by climate change.

WCC general secretary on the Conference on World Mission and Evangelism: we are called to transformation

Q: In what way is the call to follow Jesus a call to transformation?

Rev. Dr Tveit: The call to follow Jesus Christ has always been a call to transformation. The first followers of Jesus — after being transformed again



Photo: Albin Hillert/WCC

and again in the dramatic realities of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus — were asked to be disciples by making disciples. Nothing remained as it was and nobody remained who they were or where they were when they followed the call of Jesus Christ to share the gospel.

Q: How are unity and mission related?

Rev. Dr Tveit: The gospel is always to be shared as a message of surprising and sustainable joy coming from God and given to all people. The God of life transforms through creating, saving, liberating, and giving life — from the beginning to end of the world, every day. The church is called to participate in this transforming fellowship of love, to be one, so that the world may believe. In this way, unity and mission are always related.

Asia Sunday 13 May

The Methodist Church has a strong relationship with the Christian Conference of Asia. Parishes and rohe are encouraged to mark Asia Sunday to express their koinonia with brothers and sisters in many countries where Christians hold minority status. This year the theme is ‘Embracing the Differently Aabled; Upholding their dignity.’ The resource we have received comments that “One in every six persons in Asia has some form of disability, and they number about 650 million.” It goes on to state that “Jesus loved, cared and protected people who lived with disabilities in his society... The church as a community is called by God to embrace everyone, including those who live with disabilities; and understand the nature of diversity in humans, who are created in the image of God.”

The Theology of Mission

Together Towards Life – Mission and Evangelism in Changing Landscapes, is the latest document (2013) from the World Council of Churches on mission. Last month I introduced section one, this month we will look at section two. Entitled Spirit of Liberation: Mission from the Margins. It outlines a suggested shift that might take place in missiology.

The chapter outlines Jesus' special concern for the poor and marginalised. He sought them out, healed them, welcomed them and enjoyed table fellowship with them. Clearly he believed that they were to be valued and had much to offer.

The new direction advocated is that we should recognise mission from the margins. This seeks to be "an alternative missional movement against the perception that mission can only be done by the powerful to the powerless, by the rich to the poor, or by privileged to the marginalised." Those who live on the margins are located in a place that provides both insight and compassion. "People on the margins have agency, and can often see what, from the centre, is out of view."

Mission from the margins is intended to help those at the centre to see the ways they are often complicit in structures that are oppressive. Indeed, the claim is made that mission in the past has "generally been aligned with the privileges of the centre and largely failed to challenge economic, social, cultural and political systems which have marginalised some people." Paternalism and superiority complexes have no place in the mission of God.

Mission unmasking idols, challenges ideologies, rejects all forms of discrimination and promotes healing and wholeness. Often in situations of injustice the Church will be called to understand itself as a community of resistance, living by hope and showing forth alternative values in its common life.

Palestine Israel conflict

The President and Vice-President of the British Methodist Conference, the Revd Loraine Mellor and Jill Baker, have released a statement following recent violence on the Gaza-Israel border.

"We are horrified by the violence that has taken place on the eastern border of Gaza in the past days, and deeply troubled by what appears to be a steady escalation in the situation. We appeal to all sides to step back urgently from actions that can only lead to more suffering, and to seek peaceful solutions. The deaths of a reported eighteen Palestinians as a result of shooting by the Israeli Defence Forces have shocked the world. While Israel has invoked its right to protect its border, reports suggest that live rounds were used against unarmed protestors and hundreds of Palestinian demonstrators were hit and injured. The killing of unarmed protestors is unacceptable in any circumstances and a crime against humanity. The Government of Israel is bound by the same standards of international law as any other nation."

They then go on to say that the situation of families in Gaza is desperate following the US cuts in funding United Nations Relief agencies. There are food shortages, children suffer from malnutrition and hospitals lack essential medicines. They observe,

"Reports of Hamas fighters being armed for further conflict have been greeted with dismay by the civilian population. We pray for a resolution of the conflict in the region, for the end to occupation and a just resolution for Palestinian refugees."

Finally, they issue a challenge. "We call on the Government of Israel, the Palestinian Authority, and all regional and international powers to do everything possible to prevent a further slide into conflict and bloodshed, to provide humanitarian aid, and to revive the stalled reconstruction of Gaza."

Reclaim Jesus in US culture

A group of Protestant and Roman Catholic church leaders has begun what they call a campaign to "reclaim Jesus Christ from those they believe are using Christian faith for political gain.

The presiding bishop of the Episcopal Church USA, Bishop Michael Curry and the founder of Sojourners Community Jim Wallis have taken the initiative to which 23 other church leaders, including Methodist bishops, have signed up.

"We are living in perilous and polarising times as a nation with a dangerous crisis of political and moral leadership at the highest levels of government and in our churches. We believe that the soul of the nation is at stake." They make six rejections.

One: Each human being is made in the image of God and therefore we reject the resurgence of white racism.

Two: We are one body and therefore we reject misogyny, the mistreatment, violent abuse, sexual harassment and assault of women.

Three: How we treat the hungry, the thirsty, the naked, the stranger, the sick and the prisoner is how we treat Christ and therefore we reject the language and policies of political leaders who would debase and abandon the most vulnerable of God's children.

Four: Truth is morally central to our personal and public life and therefore we reject the practice of lying that is invading public life.

Five: Christ's way of leadership is that of servanthood, not domination and therefore we reject moves toward autocratic policies and leadership that is authoritarian.

Six: Jesus tells us to make disciples of all nations and therefore we reject "America First" as a theological heresy for followers of Christ.

MISSION AND ECUMENICAL BOARD

Methodist Church of New Zealand

Te Haahi Weteriana o Aotearoa

Acting Director: Rev. Dr Terry Wall

409 Great South Road Private Bag 11 903 Ellerslie

Auckland 1542

Phone: 09-571 9142 Fax: 09-525 9346

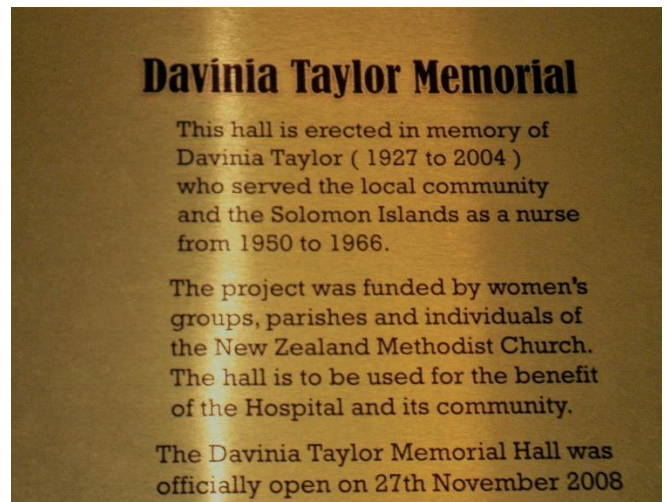
E-mail: mm-e@methodist.org.nz

**Methodist Mission and Ecumenical
Annual Appeal 2018
Classroom Block
For
Helena Goldie College of Nursing**

The Helena Goldie College of Nursing is to be upgraded to a National College in Munda, Solomon Islands. The infra structure needs upgrading. Our contribution to the upgrading will be to build a new classroom block in 2019 at a cost of NZ \$ 50,000.00.

This is possible only with the support of the everyone who contributes through the Methodist Mission and Ecumenical. The building would be built in 2019, but the service from it will be for many years to come.

The last project at the College of Nursing by Methodist Mission and Ecumenical was in 2008.



**Methodist Mission and Ecumenical appeals to all to contribute to the
Helena Goldie College of Nursing
BUILDING FUND
to raise \$ 50,000 in 2018**

Mission is possible only with your participation and contribution to the fund.

Mission and Ecumenical Fund is registered with the **Charities Commission**.

Registration Number CC51048. Receipts will be issued for tax rebate on the donation.

✂-----
ANNUAL APPEAL 2018 - HELENA GOLDIE COLLEGE OF NURSING BUILDING FUND

Please send your donation by cheque in favour of

Mission and Ecumenical Fund

to:

Rev Terry Wall (Acting Director)
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: _____

Please remember to send this cover slip for a receipt when you make a deposit.