

Methodist Mission and Ecumenical Newsletter

August - 2018

Special Appeal 2018

New Classrooms for College of Nursing

It is ten years since Mission and Ecumenical last had a special focus on Helena Goldie College of Nursing. 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 thirty-five 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 appeal to the generosity of individuals, parishes, trusts, MWFs and youth groups to respond to this initiative. 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.

Pastoral letter from President Prince

"Relations between Palestine and Israel continue to fester as Israeli authorities seek to destroy Palestinian villages. Palestinian human rights are not respected by Israel and Palestinians are deprived of access to basic education, housing and health care. The World Council of Churches has had a long association with movements for peace in the region. The World Council of Churches has set aside the third week in September, 16 - 23 as a World Week of Peace in Palestine and Israel. The aim is for a united Christian witness to solidarity with peoples struggling in despair under illegal occupation. This year will have a special focus on young people with the theme being 'Youth and Children: Raising Hope and Making Change.' During this week, church organisations, congregations, and people of faith are encouraged to bear a common witness by participating in services of worship, educational events, and acts of support in favour of a just peace for Palestinians and Israelis. As Christians we have a responsibility to be informed about the suffering of our brothers and sisters wherever they are. This initiative calls us to engage in research and maybe hear stories that will surprise and disturb us. I strongly commend this initiative to you and trust that parishes throughout the country will arrange events, perhaps with ecumenical partners."

Rev. Prince Devanandan,
President, Methodist Church of New Zealand.

Art of broken glass for angels of hope

Originally, they were made of pieces of broken glass found in rubble caused by an Israeli tank left behind when it slammed into the gift shop of the International Centre in Bethlehem in 2002. Today the glass angels of peace are made from used bottles. A small business enterprise has emerged which employs around fifty people in the Bethlehem area. Since the tank incident, thousands of peace angels have been produced and sold worldwide.

Inger Jonasson, a Swedish missionary and art teacher, who worked at the Art and Culture Centre 2004-2012 explains the theological reasoning behind the angel of peace project:

"Broken glass can be seen as a sign of the brokenness of our world, which is also the reason why God became a human being. Through incarnation, God brought the divine and human together. He embraced what seemed worthless and hopeless and transformed it into something beautiful and complete. The incarnation, which took place in Bethlehem 2000 years ago, is what gives us strength to seek people with broken lives and lost hope."

World Council of Churches News Service

Global response to HIV

"Science is very important. But social change is needed, and social change happens with faith-based communities. UNAIDS executive Michel Sidibe emphasised the importance of UNAIDS' 'bridges' with faith-based organisations in a July 24 dialogue at the inter-faith networking zone hosted by the World Council of Churches Ecumenical Advisory Alliance at the international AIDS conference 2018 held in Amsterdam.

World Council of Churches News Service

Re-launch of Thursdays in Black

Thursdays in Black was born in the 1980s during the World Council of Churches' Decade of Solidarity with Women, as recognition of women's movements worldwide. The re-launch seemed timely in light of the issues that have currently been in the media regarding sexual harassment and abuse. Each week women and men, from many parts of the world, will post expressions of their commitment to the campaign on social media under the hashtag #ThursdaysinBlack. Some share prayers, some pick up on recent news to explain why they are part of the movement, while others may publish photos of themselves wearing black to lend their face to the cause. Calling for respect between women and men, Thursdays in Black aims to expose gender based

violence. It expresses solidarity with victims of violence and rape and looks to construct a culture of equality and appreciation.

70th Anniversary of the World Council of Churches

Celebrations of this important landmark are taking place around the world. During July the World Council of Churches held an Indigenous Global Ecumenical Gathering at Ohinemutu, Rotorua. After the meeting a service of worship took place in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Auckland on Sunday 22nd July to give thanks for the witness of the World Council of Churches over seventy years.

More than two hundred people attended the ecumenical service. First World delegates who had attended the gathering in Rotorua led prayers, archbishop Philip Richardson read the gospel and Tongan, Samoan and Fijian choirs led the singing. Bishop Kito welcomed visitors with a *mihi whakatau* and President Prince preached the sermon. He reflected on the first World Council of Churches Assembly held in Amsterdam in 1948 where archbishop Geoffrey Fisher declared “we are committed to staying together.” Since then the number of member churches has increased from 147 to 349, but Prince commented that this is a sign of division within the Body of Christ. Too often today being church has become like private enterprise, Prince said. Anyone can start a church and cater for different tastes, like ‘what will you have for dinner? Chinese or Indian’ etc.

“Today one can choose the Christ of your taste. The reality that we struggle with is to strive for the vision of Christ who prayed “that they may be one.”

The three New Zealand member churches of the World Council of Churches – the Anglican, Methodist and Presbyterian Church - sent warm greetings to Geneva upon the occasion. The general secretary, the Rev. Dr Olav Fykse Tveit has responded saying, “in our anniversary year, we thank you, and we will affirm that we will continue to move together with you on this journey, which has its origin in the call of God to become a pilgrim people searching for the unity, justice and peace of God. Let us ever seek that realm together.”

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. In July, we looked at section five, Feast of Life: Concluding Affirmations. This month we will introduce the study guide that follows the text of the document. It is entitled A Practical Guide.

The study guide is well prepared for leaders who will introduce the main themes of the text to a group.

Each section of the document is given attention with a bible study, questions, food for thought, and an example of mission in a particular context. Then there is a challenge to enquire how the insights relate to mission in our context, in policy making and in education and formation. Each aspect of this is divided helpfully into celebrate, reflect and act.

Then each of the four main sections is accompanied by liturgical resources with prayers and songs.

The Introduction to the Practical Guide says, “The changing landscape of the church and mission provides an opportunity for fresh thinking and new forms of action. Gone are the days when Christianity was numerically centred in Europe and North America and mission was understood as taking the gospel to unreached continents. With a growing majority of the world’s Christians originating from Asia, Africa and Latin America, it is time to think of the meaning and direction of mission in new and relevant ways. At a time of change we discover that mission is not primarily a human enterprise but a movement that arises from the love of God. When we receive the Holy Spirit we become part of the mission of God to the life of the world (John 20:22-23) This practical guide to the new mission affirmations offers signposts which can help us discern the action of the Spirit in the world – and join in!”

Death penalty excluded by Pope Francis

Pope Francis has declared the death penalty to be “inadmissible” and “an attack on the inviolability and dignity of the person,” promising that the Catholic Church will work towards its abolition around the world.

The change, which has been added to the catechism of the Catholic Church, and is therefore now official teaching, formalizes a position that the Pope has articulated since becoming pontiff five years ago.

Vatican spokesman Greg Burke told CNN, “The key point here is human dignity. The Pope is saying that, no matter how grievous the crime, someone never loses his or her human dignity.”

The journal *The Atlantic* commented, “The Church has underscored its opposition to the destruction of any kind of life, even when that means defying the state.” According to Amnesty International at least 993 state executions took place in 23 countries in 2017. 31 US states still have the death penalty.

MISSION AND ECUMENICAL BOARD

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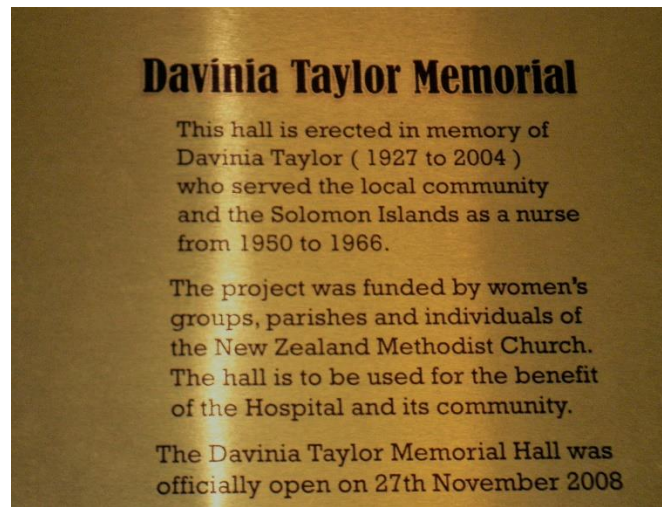
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**Methodist Mission and Ecumenical
Annual Appeal 2018
Classroom Block
For
Helena Goldie College of Nursing**

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.

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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: _____

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