

Methodist Mission and Ecumenical Newsletter

March 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.

Kokeqolo Water Scheme

A big thank you to all those who, over the last two years, have contributed to the appeal for the Kokeqolo Water Scheme. A total of \$67,060, a little short of our target, was received and this will go a long way toward the completion of this creative project. A local company, evidently related to the church, has offered to clean out the bore left by the Americans at the end of the Second World War, without charge. This will help the budget for the project. Without access to reliable supplies of safe water the health of the people remains at risk. Outbreaks of waterborne diseases are not uncommon and they can lead to further medical complications in an under-resourced system. The Kokeqolo Primary School, the youth centre and the office of the United Church of the Solomon Islands will all benefit from this project.

New Moderator to be inducted

President Prince has received an invitation to attend the induction of the new Moderator of the United Church of the Solomon Islands. The Revd David Garunu will be inducted into his new ministry on Sunday 4th March. Unfortunately, Prince has had to decline the invitation as he will be making a pastoral visit to the Solomon Islands in April. It will be at that point that our two church leaders will be able to meet. In the mean-time Mission and Ecumenical has sent warm greetings.

70th Anniversary of WCC

Archbishop of Canterbury visits Geneva

This year 2018 marks the 70th year since the foundation of the World Council of Churches. The Archbishop of Canterbury, the Most Revd Justin Welby visited the Ecumenical Centre in Geneva and addressed church leaders about the ecumenical journey we are engaged in. He put before his listeners a striking image regarding frontiers and borders. Among other things he said: We have often regarded the divisions between churches as states have regarded their territory. This has led us to negotiate frontiers that we have wanted to guard. Beyond the frontier is the 'other' – the other person, the other culture, the other nation, the other sort of person. "Ecumenism that looks as though it is about the negotiation of frontiers is an ecumenism that is based on theological foundations of sand... All ecclesiology begins with Christology. The problem with our divisions is that they say to the world that Christ is divided." We call attention away from the extraordinarily beautiful person of Jesus Christ, who draws to himself and to his love every human being who was born, who lives and who will be born. Negotiated frontiers start with barriers.

Archbishop Justin then went on to propose that we see the church as one with open borders. "Open borders, by contrast, allow the other to be part of ourselves. They permit movement and transfer, exhibiting not division but diversity. In their openness, they invite encounter, as opposed to frontiers which require resilience and courage to cross. The ecclesiology of an open border is to say that we are one with differences – rather than that we are many seeking what it is to be one. Theologically, Christologically and ecclesiologically, to see ourselves as one with fractures is vastly more authentic to the work and purpose of God in Christ through creation, through salvation history, through the work of the Spirit today and towards the revealing of kingdom of God, than it is to see ourselves as different, as other."

"Yet the practical application of open borders is immensely difficult, because we are used to clearly demarcated frontiers. For five hundred years we have got used to frontiers. They have become part of the landscape, with some parts of the church for almost a thousand years. They are normal. They are like the mountains out there – it does not occur to us that they could move, that they could cease to be... The effort of recognising that the Spirit of God is at work equally among others is hard to assimilate."

Coptic cathedral re-opens in Cairo

The Cathedral of St. George and the Martyrs, Tanta, north of Cairo, reopened before Christmas nine months after 49 worshippers were killed in two suicide bombings targeting Coptic Churches on Palm Sunday 2017. 'The Martyrs' is a new addition to the cathedral's dedication. Blood splattered pillars have been left untouched as a memorial.

Conference on World Mission

From 8 – 13 March a World Conference on Mission and Evangelism will be held in Arusha, Tanzania. The Theme will be "Moving in the Spirit – Called to Transforming Discipleship." The Methodist Church will be formally represented by President Prince Devanandan. Lesieli Samiu of Auckland has been invited to attend as a Pacific indigenous youth representative. Seminars have been held over the past year to prepare for the conference. With more Christians living in the southern hemisphere than the north, the conference will take note of this very significant shift.

Church of England General Synod seeks unity with Methodists

At its recent General Synod, the Church of England voted by an overwhelming majority to support plans for a new relationship of being in 'full communion' with the Methodist Church. Despite warnings that the moves were controversial the plan was backed by 290 with 59 against, and 24 abstentions. The proposal will go before the Methodist Conference in August. It would require some adjustments in Methodist polity – the President would become a 'president bishop' with the laying on of hands by an Anglican bishop among others, and all subsequent ordinations of Methodist presbyters would be accepted by the Church of England. There would be acceptance of previously ordained Methodist ministers from that point on, which would be regarded as an anomaly which could be accepted for the sake of unity. In this mission and unity are seen as priorities, both churches making concessions. Rev. Gareth Powell, secretary of the Methodist Conference, said both churches "have an all too easy acceptance of the scandal of disunity."

The Theology of Mission

Missiology is one of the most dynamic branches of Christian theology. New voices are being heard representing different perspectives. Received theologies of mission are being critiqued and vigorous debate is taking place.

The latest substantial statement on mission comes from the World Council of Churches 2013. The text of *Together Towards Life* – Mission and Evangelism

in *Changing Times*, surveys recent reflection on mission and presents an emerging paradigm.

Over the next few months in this column I will provide an outline of this challenging statement. For the March Newsletter I will introduce section one which is entitled Spirit of Mission: Breath of Life.

Working within a Trinitarian framework priority is given to the work of the Holy Spirit in creation, law, prophecy and wisdom. Jesus was filled with the Spirit, and it was the Spirit of God that raised him to life. The church at Pentecost received the Holy Spirit to equip it for mission.

The report makes the bold claim that "The Holy Spirit works in the world often in mysterious and unknown ways beyond our imagination. (15)

"What is clear is that by the Spirit we participate in the mission of love that is at the heart of the life of the Holy Trinity." (16)

Then the report seeks to place the Mission of the Spirit in the context of creation and redemption. Because the Spirit is the Lord and Giver of Life we are to be in communion not only with our brothers and sisters in Christ, but also to be in communion with God's creation. "Humanity cannot be saved alone while the rest of the created world perishes. Eco-justice cannot be separated from salvation, and salvation cannot come without a new humility that respects the needs of life on earth." (23)

In this section there is focus on the discernment of spirits. It is the Spirit of God that helps us to discern evil spirits that bring the forces of death and place life in peril. God's Spirit which serves healing and social justice can often be experienced as subversive of reigning ideologies. Regret is expressed for mission activity that was too closely associated with colonialism that denigrated cultures and failed to recognise their wisdom. Regret is expressed for understandings of mission that have been individualistic. Free market economics is critiqued as idolatrous, as "demanding an endless flow of sacrifices from the poor and from nature... The reign of God is in direct opposition to the empire of mammon." (31)

Finally, in this section there is an emphasis on spirituality. "The church in mission can only be sustained by spiritualities deeply rooted in the Trinity's communion of love." (29) "Mission spirituality is always transformative." (30) TW.

MISSION AND ECUMENICAL BOARD

Methodist Church of New Zealand

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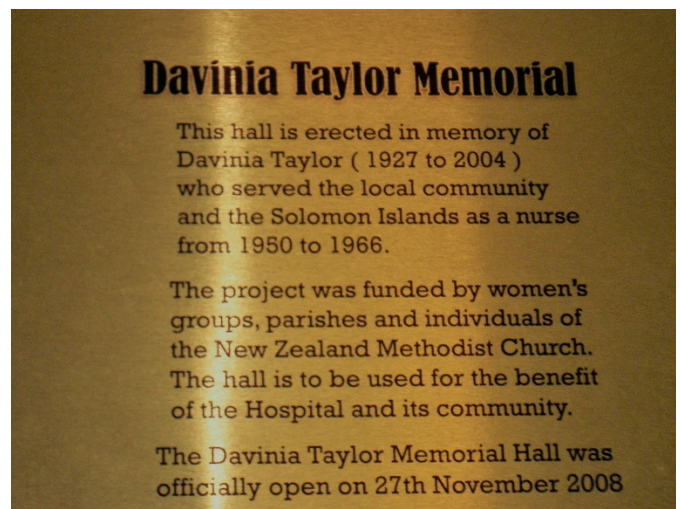
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**Methodist Mission and Ecumenical
Annual Appeal 2018
Classroom Block
For
Helena Goldie College of Nursing**

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: _____

Address: _____

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