

CELEBRATING COVENANT

A service marking the signing of the Covenant between

The Methodist Church of New Zealand
Te Hahi Weteriana o Aotearoa

and

The Anglican Church of Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia,
*Te Hahi Mihinare ki Aotearoa ki Niu Tireni, ki Nga Moutere o Te
Moana Nui a Kiwa,*

CELEBRATING COVENANT

PROCESSIONAL HYMN: LIFT HIGH THE CROSS

*Lift high the cross,
the love of Christ proclaim
till all the world adore his glorious name*

1. Come, Christian people,
sing your praises, shout!
If we are silent,
even stones cry out ...

2. Jesus, you wept to see
our human strife,
teach us compassion
for each human life...

3. Peace was your plea
and peace your loving theme
let peace be our passport,
peace a living dream ...

4. Great is the cost of walking
on this road,
to follow and suffer
with the Son of God ...

5. Worlds to be born
and children yet to be
come, take up this song
into eternity ...

Shirley Murray

(please be seated)

WELCOME

PSALM 100

Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth.

Worship the LORD with gladness;
come into his presence with singing.

Know that the LORD is God.

**It is he that made us, and we are his;
we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.**

Enter his gates with thanksgiving,
and his courts with praise.

Give thanks to him, bless his name.

For the LORD is good;

**his steadfast love endures for ever,
and his faithfulness to all generations.**

OPENING PRAYER:

Gracious God,
we long for Christian unity in which no treasure is lost

We bring our heritages of prayer and liturgy
Let no treasure be lost.

We bring our riches of devotion and praise
Let no treasure be lost.

We bring our wealth of music and hymnody
Let no treasure be lost.

We bring our spiritualities and ministries
Let no treasure be lost.

We bring our scholarship of scripture
Let no treasure be lost.

We bring our cultures, languages and stories
Let no treasure be lost.

We bring our journeys of theological discovery
Let no treasure be lost.

We bring our traditions of pastoral care and healing
Let no treasure be lost.

We bring our passion for social justice and peace
Let no treasure be lost.

We bring our diverse ways of being church
Let no treasure be lost.

Covenant Making God, release a sharing of gifts
that the Holy Spirit has given to our churches,
in Jesus' name we pray. AMEN

COLLECT FOR WESLEY DAY:

**Almighty God,
you raised up your servants,
John and Charles Wesley,
to proclaim anew the gift of redemption
and the life of holiness.
Pour out your Spirit,
and revive your work among us;
that inspired by the same faith,
and upheld by the same grace
in word and sacrament,
we and all your children may be made one
in the unity of your church on earth,
even as in heaven we are made one in you;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

BIBLE READINGS:

Jeremiah 31:31-33

1 John 1: 1 – 7

SINGING GROUP

SERMON

HYMN: CHRIST BE OUR LIGHT

1. Longing for light, we wait in darkness.
Longing for truth, we turn to you.
Make us your own, your holy people,
light for the world to see.

Refrain:

Christ, be our light! Shine in our hearts.

Shine through the darkness.

Christ be our light!

Shine in your church gathered today.

2. Longing for peace, our world is troubled.
Longing for hope, many despair.
Your word alone has pow'r to save us.
Make us your living voice.

3. Longing for food, many are hungry.
Longing for water, many still thirst.
Make us your bread, broken for others,
shared until all are fed.

4. Longing for shelter, people are homeless.
Longing for warmth, many are cold.
Make us your building, sheltering others,
walls made of living stone.

5. Many the gifts, many the people,
many the hearts that yearn to belong.
Let us be servants to one another,
making your kingdom come.

Bernadette Farrell

TOWARDS TODAY

A brief summary of the journey so far.

Voice 1:

The twists and turns of history bring us to this day

Voice 2:

The journey of faith leads us on from today

Voice 1:

On this day, 24th May in the year 1738, Anglican cleric John Wesley had a life changing experience. At a meeting in a chapel in Aldersgate Street, London, while listening to a reading from the preface to Luther's commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, he experienced a spiritual awakening which revolutionized the character and method of his ministry. In his journal he penned the now famous lines "I felt my heart strangely warmed". Soon after John Wesley began preaching the Good News of God's grace in the fields and market places

Voice 2:

John Wesley's mission set him on a course that would involve conflict with leaders of the Church of England. He and his brother Charles had no desire to separate from the church and remained loyal members. However, after John's death in 1793 the Methodist movement evolved into a church with its own ethos.

Voice 1:

At the beginning relationships were strained between the two churches, but as time went by the common roots we shared led

to mutual respect and fruitful partnerships. Within New Zealand the two churches have often had parallel and close relationships. There was co-operation between the two churches in missionary work among Maori in the years before the Treaty of Waitangi was signed. During the 1960's and 70's Co-operative Ventures came into being and theological education began to be shared. In recent years both churches have embraced the bicultural journey in the context of the emerging multi-cultural society.

Voice 2:

But our separation continues to be a reality; part of the “scandal of separateness” which weakens the Christian witness in our world. In 2002 the General Synod of the Anglican Church resolved to invite the Methodist Church to enter conversations with a view to promoting the visible unity of the church. The Methodist Conference accepted the invitation and each church appointed a team to participate in dialogue.

Voice 1:

In the light of these conversations, over the six years that the Dialogue group has been meeting, the idea of the two churches entering into a covenant relationship commended itself. Covenant-making has deep roots in scripture. Methodists have renewed their covenant in Christ annually, and Maori and Pacific people have related to the idea of entering into a sacred covenant of commitment.

Voice 2:

Both churches endorsed this approach and members of the dialogue undertook the theological work necessary before proceeding. Subsequently in 2008, first the Anglican General Synod in May and then the Methodist Conference in November, agreed to enter into a Covenant relationship.

Voice 1:

It is held that within the commitment of a covenant relationship, the remaining theological issues that keep the churches separate

will be able to be addressed in a robust manner. These focus on the theology of ministry and the question of interchangeability of ministries. The covenant provides opportunities for combined worship, perhaps focused on commemorations of the witness of Charles and John Wesley, and eucharistic hospitality. While the remaining theological issues are discussed in dialogue, the covenant relationship will encourage our two churches to grow together in areas of life and witness.

Voice 2:

The covenant is an expression of mission-shaped ecumenism that takes our context in this land seriously. We can celebrate it as a step along the way toward visible unity. It is a demonstration that “the churches share a real but incomplete communion.” It is an expression of a deep resolve to continue the journey, to engage with the questions and share the vision of unity in diversity.

Voice 1:

And so this journey of faith continues as we take this step together.

AFFIRMING THE COVENANT

Methodist representative 1

Brothers and sisters of the Anglican Church of Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia, *Te Hahi Mihinare ki Aotearoa ki Niu Tirenī, Ki Nga Moutere o te Moana Nui a Kiwa*, while acknowledging the brokenness that has brought us to this day, we rejoice that our Churches are have been willing to enter into a new Covenant relationship.

Methodist representative 2

This is an important milestone in our journey together. Are you willing to affirm this Covenant document on behalf of your Church?

Anglican representative

We are willing and we do so in faith and with a sense of hope for the future as we continue to work together to deepen our unity in Christ.

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People:

May God's grace sustain us,

God's wisdom guide us,

God's vision call us,

God's peace enfold us.

Amen

CHOIR

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

We offer to God the yearnings of our hearts, confident that God will employ us in fulfilling the divine purpose.

We give thanks for those who have gone before us, who have kept alive the vision of unity in diversity within the Body of Christ.

O God in your mercy
Hear our prayer

We pray that what we do this day will bear fruit as our two churches grow into a unity deeper than we can as yet imagine.

O God in your mercy
Hear our prayer

In all that we pray and think, discuss and do, may we recognize that the future of our churches will not be separate, but share a common life.

O God in your mercy
Hear our prayer

May our service of the visible unity of the church be a sign that, as our churches are open to healing, we may be agents in the healing of society.

O God in your mercy
Hear our prayer

As our churches address unresolved theological issues, give us grace and courage to see beyond entrenched positions of the past.

O God in your mercy
Hear our prayer

As we pray that we may be one in Christ, may our reconciliation deepen our desire to serve the unity of humankind and the integrity of creation.

O God in your mercy
Hear our prayer.

LORD'S PRAYER:

Kua akona nei tatou e to tatou Ariki, ka inoi tatou:

E to matou Matua i te rangi

Kia tapu tou Ingoa.

Kia tae mai tou rangatiratanga.

Kia meatia tau e pai ai

ki runga ki te whenua,

kia rite ano ki to te rangi. Homai ki a matou aiane

he taro ma matou mo tenei ra.

Murua o matou hara,

Me matou hoki e muru nei

i o te hunga e hara ana ki a matou

Aua hoki matou e kawea kia whakawaia;

Engari whakaorangia matou i te kino:

Nou hoki te rangatiratanga,

te kaha, me te kororia,

Ake ake ake. Amine

HYMN: LOVE DIVINE

Love divine, all loves excelling,

Joy of heaven to earth come down,

Fix in us thy humble dwelling,

All thy faithful mercies crown.

Jesu, thou art all compassion,

Pure, unbounded love thou art;

Visit us with thy salvation,

Enter every trembling heart.

Come, almighty to deliver,

Let us all thy grace receive;

Suddenly return, and never,

Nevermore thy temples leave.

Thee we would be always blessing,

Serve thee as thy hosts above,

Pray, and praise thee, without ceasing,
Glory in thy perfect love.

Finish then thy new creation;
Pure and spotless let us be;
Let us see thy great salvation,
Perfectly restored in thee:
Changed from glory into glory,
Till in heaven we take our place,
Till we cast our crowns before thee,
Lost in wonder, love, and praise!

Charles Wesley

HYMN: MA TE MARIE

Ma te marie a te Atua,
Tatou katoa e tiaki;
Mana ano e whakau
O tatou ngakau ki te pai.

Ma te Atua Tamaiti ra,
Ma te Wairua Tapu hoki,
Ratou, Atua kotahi nei,
Tatou katoa e whakapai.
Amine.

BLESSING