



COVENANT SERVICE

Hui Tōpu/Methodist Conference 2026

Tāmaki Makaurau/ Auckland

Te Hāhi Weteriana o Aotearoa

President:	Rev Alisa Lasi
Vice President:	Tau'ataina Tupou
General Secretary:	Rev Tara Tautari
Tumuaki:	Rev Dr Arapera Ngaha
Kai Hāpai:	Rev Nicola Grundy
Chaplain:	Rev Suiva'aia Te'o
Chaplain:	Rev 'Etuini Talakai
Musician:	Rev Ieremia Amituana'i

COVENANT SERVICE 2026

*Presidential Theme -Maranga, Tula'i, Tu'u Hake, Tucake, Arise
– Be the Light of Christ to All*

CALL TO WORSHIP

President: Grace and peace to you in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Sisters and brothers in Christ, we gather at the close of this Conference to give thanks for God's faithfulness, to renew our covenant with Christ, and to recommit ourselves to the mission entrusted to us as the Methodist Church of New Zealand Te Hāhi Weteriana o Aotearoa.

Throughout these days we have worshipped, prayed, discerned, celebrated, and listened together for the voice of God's Spirit.

Now, before we return to our homes, parishes, and communities, we come once more into God's presence, to renew our covenant and to receive Christ's strength for the journey ahead.

People: We come to worship the living God.

We come to renew our covenant.

We come to arise in faith,

to shine with the light of Christ,

and to serve God's world with hope and love.

Thanks be to God.

Opening Hymn: Christ Be Our Light (Bernadette Farrell)

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.

Chorus

Christ, be our light!
Shine out through the dark, shine!
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 power to save us.
Make us your living voice.

Chorus

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.

Chorus

REFLECTION

(President and Vice President reflect on our time at Conference)

President: Throughout these days of Conference, we have gathered as the people called Methodist to worship God, to seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and to discern together Christ's call upon our Church.

Vice-President: We have listened deeply to one another, prayed faithfully, shared our stories, and sought God's wisdom for the life and mission of Te Hāhi Weteriana o Aotearoa.

President: We have celebrated God's faithfulness in the ministries of our Church, given thanks for those who have served with dedication, and honoured those who have completed their earthly journey and now rest in Christ.

Vice-President: We have reflected on the challenges and opportunities before us and have sought to respond with faith, courage, and hope.

President: We have rejoiced in the gifts God continues to give to the Church through ordained and lay ministries, through young and old, and through every culture and community that enriches our life together.

Vice-President: We have shared around tables, in worship, in conversation, and in prayer. We have laughed together, carried one another's burdens, and experienced once again the strength of our Connexion.

President: As we prepare to leave this place, we do not leave God's presence. The same Christ who has met us here now goes before us into every parish, every congregation, and every community.

Vice-President: The light of Christ does not remain within these walls. It goes with us wherever God calls us to serve.

President: Today we renew our covenant with Christ, trusting that the One who has guided us throughout this Conference will continue to lead us in the days ahead.

Vice-President: Therefore, with grateful hearts and renewed faith,

People: **We arise to be the Light of Christ to all.**

PRAYERS FOR THOSE IN MINISTRY

President: As the people of God, we give thanks for the many ways Christ continues to call women, men, young people, and children into his service. Together we celebrate the gifts of the Holy Spirit, given for the building up of Christ's Church and for the blessing of the world.

People: **Lord, let your light shine through us.**

Vice-President: We give thanks for Presidents, Vice-Presidents, Deacons, Presbyters, and Lay Leaders, who faithfully proclaim the Gospel and shepherd God's people.

People: Strengthen them with your Spirit, that they may faithfully reflect the light of Christ.

President: We give thanks for Local Preachers, Worship Leaders, Parish Stewards, Communion Stewards, Chaplains, and all who lead God's people in worship, prayer, and pastoral care.

People: May their words and their lives lead others to Christ, the Light of the World.

Vice-President: We give thanks for Trinity Methodist Theological College, Wesley College, and all who teach, mentor, and prepare future generations for ministry.

People: Grant them wisdom, courage, and joyful hearts as they nurture those you are calling.

President: We give thanks for musicians, choir leaders, worship teams, readers, and all who enrich our worship through music, creativity, and the arts.

People: May every song, every prayer, and every gift, bring glory to your holy name.

Vice-President: We give thanks for our children, young people, and young adults. For the energy, imagination, faith, and hope they bring to the Church.

People: Help us to encourage them, listen to them, walk alongside them, and rejoice in the future you are preparing through them.

President: We give thanks for those who serve quietly behind the scenes: our administrators, office staff, property teams, finance and legal teams, cleaners, gardeners, cooks, drivers, welcomers, sound and technology teams, and every volunteer whose faithful service is often unseen.

People: No act of service is hidden from you, O God. May every servant know the joy of your blessing.

Vice-President: We give thanks for every congregation, every parish, every Synod, every mission, every ministry, and every community where the love of Christ is shared.

People: Renew your Church, unite us in your Spirit, and send us into the world to be the Light of Christ to all.

President: For every ministry remembered today, and for those known only to you, we give thanks. Together may we continue to serve with humility, walk in faith, grow in hope, and abound in love.

People: Gracious God, Receive our thanksgiving. Renew our calling. Strengthen our witness. Fill us with your Holy Spirit, that together we may arise and be the Light of Christ to all; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

PRAYERS OF PRAISE AND CONFESSION

(Chaplains)

Chaplain: Let us come before God with thankful hearts.

The God who created us.

The God who calls us.

The God who renews us.

The God whose light shines in the darkness.

Chaplain: Let us pray.

Holy and gracious God, Creator of heaven and earth, we praise you for your love that has never failed, your mercy that is new every morning, and your faithfulness from generation to generation.

People: Your light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

Chaplain: Lord Jesus Christ, Light of the World, you came among us bringing hope to the weary, healing to the broken, forgiveness to sinners, and life to all who believe.

People: Lord, let your light shine through us.

CONFESSION

Chaplain: Merciful God, we confess that we have not always lived as your faithful people.

Chaplain: Too often we have chosen comfort instead of courage, silence instead of truth, division instead of reconciliation, fear instead of faith.

Chaplain: Forgive us when we have neglected those in need, failed to care for your creation, or forgotten that every person bears your image.

Chaplain: Forgive us when our words have wounded, our actions have divided, or our lives have failed to reflect the light of Christ.

SILENCE

People: Merciful God, renew us by your Holy Spirit. Restore us through your grace. Strengthen us for your service. May our lives bear witness to the love, the justice, and the peace of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF GRACE

Chaplain: Hear the Good News. Christ is the Light of the world. Whoever follows him will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life.

Chaplain: In Jesus Christ, our sins are forgiven. Our hope is renewed. Our calling is restored.

People: Thanks be to God. Amen.

Hymn 'It Is Well with My Soul'

1. When peace like a river attendeth my way,
When sorrows like sea billows roll;
Whatever my lot, Thou hast taught me to say:
"It is well, it is well with my soul!"
It is well... with my soul!
It is well, it is well with my soul!

2. A pei se vaitafe le ffilemu
Pe lutia nei i le sou
I le olaga nei, oute molimau pea
E lelei, e lelei le Alii.
E lelei, e lelei le Alii!
E lelei, e lelei le Alii!

3. Tala ki mamani 'ofa lahi kuo fai
Mole ai 'a 'eku hia
Poletaki a ho'o mo'ui ke tala 'ene kosipeli
Ko ia pe 'a e mo'ui'anga.
Fiemalie (fiemalie)
Hoku loto (hoku loto)
'Oku fiemalie ma'u pe.

4. Au sa mai waraka na Nona Iesu mai,
Qai noqu na tiko Vua:
Mai Saioni dina, na koro dokai,
Ki Vua au na qai cegu ga.
Cegu tu vei Jisu!
Cegu tu, vei Jisu, tikoga!

5. And Lord, haste the day when my faith shall be sight,
The clouds be rolled back as a scroll;
The trump shall resound, and the Lord shall descend,
Even so, it is well with my soul.
It is well... with my soul!
It is well, it is well with my soul!

Words: Horatio G. Spafford, Music: Philip P. Bliss

MINISTRY OF THE WORD

First Reading: Romans 12:1–2 (Tumuaki)

Reader: Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church.

People: Thanks be to God.

Second Reading: Matthew 5:14–16 (Kai Hapai)

Reader: This is the Gospel of Christ

People: Praise to Christ the Living Word

RESPOND TO THE WORD

General Secretary: (Conference Question 25):

(a) What is God saying to us now?

(b) What more can be done to promote the work of God?

The Conference affirms its work and pledges itself to action.

General Secretary: This is our commitment, to live out our shared purpose.

People: May the Spirit of Life grant us wisdom and courage to fulfil it.

General Secretary: This digital Conference record holds the reflections and decisions we have embraced together during Conference.

President: In place of signing, we acknowledge this record in the spirit of our Methodist tradition, affirming our shared commitment to compassionate action and faithful witness as Te Hāhi Weteriana o Aotearoa.

Vice President: We honour God when we honour the sacred connections with each other and Creation, we pledge to be faithful kaitiaki (guardians) and to live out God's will.

People: We as the people called Methodists, in this land of Aotearoa New Zealand, proclaim and renew our covenantal Relationships.

Hymn: Loving Spirit #HW8846.40 by Shirley Murray (1987)

1. Loving Spirit, loving Spirit

You have chosen me to be

You have drawn me to your wonder,

You have set your signs on me.

2. Like a mother you enfold me

Hold my life within your own

Feed me with your very body,
Form me of your flesh and bone.

3. Like a father you protect me,
Teach me the discerning eye
Hoist me up upon your shoulder,
Let me see the world from high.

4. Friend and lover, in your closeness
I am known and held and blessed:
In your promise is my comfort,
In your presence I may rest.

5. Loving Spirit, loving Spirit,
You have chosen me to be
You have drawn me to your wonder,
You have set your sign on me.

RENEWING THE COVENANT

President: We have heard God's Word. In gratitude for God's grace, and trusting in the faithfulness of Christ, let us now renew the covenant which God has made with us and which we renew with one another through Jesus Christ our Lord.

(Congregation stands)

Vice President: Loving and Holy Presence, with joy we take upon ourselves this call of Service, and in love, commit ourselves to seek and live your will. We are no longer our own, but yours.

People: I am no longer my own, but yours.

Put me to what you will,
rank me with whom you will;
put me to doing,
put me to suffering;
let me be employed for you,
or laid aside for you,
exalted for you,
or brought low for you;
let me be full,
let me be empty;
let me have all things,
let me have nothing:
I freely and wholeheartedly yield all things
to your pleasure and disposal.
And now, glorious and blessed God,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
you are mine and I am yours.
So be it.
And the covenant now made on earth,
let it be sealed in heaven. Amen.

(Congregation sits)

MINISTRY OF THE SACRAMENT

President: We, many as we are, are one body in Christ.

If we do not love those around us whom we can see, how can we Love God whom we cannot see. The peace of God be with you.

People: And may God's peace be with you.

THE COMMUNION

Vice President: The Lord is here.

People: God's Spirit is with us.

Vice President: Lift up your hearts

People: We lift them to the Lord.

Vice President: Let us give thanks to God

People: It is our joy to give thanks and praise

Vice President: It is our joy to praise you, Creator of all things who called us into a Covenant relationship with creation and with you, grounded in love and compassion. At the right time, you revealed yourself in Jesus who in humility and sacrifice, embodied your healing grace. With gratitude, we remember that through the cross and resurrection, a new covenant was offered to all peoples, and the vision of your renewed creation made known to all the earth.

People: Tapu, tapu, he tapu te Ariki,

Te Atua o te mana me te kaha.

Kī tonu te rangi me te whenua I tōu korōria.

Ohana i runga rawa.

(Holy, holy, holy Lord

God of power and might.

Heaven and Earth are full of your glory.

Hosanna in the highest.)

President: On the night before he gave his life, Jesus shared a meal with his friends. He took bread, gave thanks, broke it, and gave it to them, saying: ‘Tangohia kainga, ko tōku tinana tēnei ka hoatu nei mo koutou. Meinga tēnei hei whakamahara ki ahau’.

(‘Take, eat, this is my body, given for you.

Do this in remembrance of me’)

President: After supper, he took a cup of wine, gave thanks and offered it to them saying: ‘Inumia tēnei ko ōku toto o te Kawenata hou I whakahekea mōu, mō te katoa, hei murunga hara’.

(‘Drink this, all of you. This is my blood of the new covenant, poured out for you and for all for the forgiveness of sins’.)

People: Glory to you, Lord Christ:

Your death we proclaim;

Your resurrection we celebrate
Your coming we await. Amen.

THE BREAKING OF THE BREAD

President: This bread is broken, as Christ was broken.

This cup is shared, as Christ shared his life

Come now, for Christ, who gave everything for you,

invites you to this sacred feast. Please come forward and receive the elements of bread and wine, as symbols of our renewed covenant with God.

(Communion will be distributed)

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

People: Gracious God, we thank you that in this holy meal you have nourished us with the body and blood of Christ. You have renewed our strength, deepened our fellowship, and filled us anew with your Holy Spirit. Send us now to live the covenant we have renewed today.

May our words bear witness to your truth, our hands serve with compassion, and our lives shine with the light of Christ.

Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Hymn: ARISE — Be the Light of Christ to All

Verse 1 Arise Ao tea roa, awaken,
As night is fading into dawn;
The Light eternal now has broken,
The risen Lamb of God has come.
From every tribe and tongue united,
By grace and Spirit we are called,
To bear the fire of God's own kingdom,
And be the love of Christ to all.

Verse 2 Tula'i, young prophets, dream God's future,
Rise.... up, Rangatahi with grace;
The Spirit breathes through all generations,
Calling each iwi to their place.
Let sons and daughters speak with boldness,
May elders bless with wisdom's flame;
Together shaped for sacred mission,
Our nation proclaiming Jesus' name.

Verse 3 Tu'u Hake as covenant people
Where justice, truth, and aroha meet;
Through Te Tiriti still God calls us
To walk together at Christ's feet.
Let Māori voices lead with courage,
May all who journey here belong;
For every culture is a treasure
Within God's vast redeeming song.

Verse 4 Mo Tucake with all Christ embraces,
Whose gifts the world has overlooked;
The weak made strong, the hurt uplifted,
The last and least are first in God.
For every person bears God's image,
And every life is sacred ground;
The Body joined in love and honour,
Where all are seen and all are found.

Verse 5 Maranga Ake all, filled with Spirit,
As flames of Pentecost descend;
The Word made flesh now sends us forward,
To heal, proclaim, restore, defend.
Through Māori, Pasifika voices,
And every language, land, and race,
The gospel speaks with living power,
Declaring hope and saving grace.

Verse 6 Arise, though shadows still surround us,
Though fear and suffering remain;
For Christ goes ever on before us,
And death itself has lost its reign.
The cross now shines with resurrection,
The empty tomb proclaims God's reign;
So lift your hearts and sing with courage:
The Light of Christ shall ever reign.

Verse 7 Maranga Ake, till all God's creation
Is filled with heaven's holy flame;

Till each iwi stands rejoicing
And every voice exalts Christ's name.
Then God shall be our light forever,
And tears and sorrow will pass away;
Aotearoa arise, and bear Christ's brightness,
Until God's everlasting day.

(tune to Love Divine All Loves Excelling – Blaenwern)

*Lyrics by Rev. Suiva'aia Te'o in honour of the first Pasifika Presidential
Team.*

THE SENDING FORTH

President: Sisters and brothers in Christ, we have worshipped the living God. We have listened to his Word. We have renewed our covenant. We have shared at the Lord's Table. Now Christ sends us into the world, to love and serve in his name. Go into your homes, your parishes, your communities, and every place where God calls you, bearing the light of Christ, living the Gospel, and serving with joy.

COMMISSIONING

Vice-President: Jesus said, "You are the light of the world." Go, therefore, and let your light shine before others, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven. Go in faith. Go in hope. Go in love. And in the power of the Holy Spirit, be the light of Christ wherever God leads you.

People's Response: With God's help, we will arise in faith.

We will walk in hope.

We will serve in love.

We will shine with the light of Christ.

Thanks be to God. Amen.

President: May the God of hope, fill you with all joy and peace in believing. May Christ, the Light of the World, shine in your hearts and through your lives. May the Holy Spirit strengthen you, guide you, and empower you to live the covenant, you have renewed this day. And the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always.

Amen.

Vice-President: Go in peace, to love and serve the Lord.

People: We go in the name of Christ. Amen.

The Conference Candle is extinguished

Mā te mārie (sung unaccompanied)

Mā te mārie a te Atua

Tātou katoa e tiaki.

Māna anō e whakaū

Ō tātou ngākau ki te pai.

Mā te Atua Tamaiti rā,

Mā te Wairua Tapu hoki

Rātou, Atua kōtahi nei,
Tātou katoa e whakapai.
Āmine.

Please remain standing while Presidential party, process out.