

## The Founding Document of the Methodist Alliance

The Methodist Alliance is a formal alliance of all Methodist Missions, parish and community based social services and Trusts.

**Vision:** A just and inclusive society in which all people flourish

**Mission:** The Methodist Alliance is grounded in the Methodist Church of New Zealand/Te Hāhi Weteriana o Aotearoa's commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi and the bi-cultural journey. The Treaty of Waitangi is the covenant establishing our nation on the basis of a power-sharing relationship, and will guide how the Methodist Alliance undertakes its mission.

The Mission of the Methodist Alliance is to commend and affirm the journey from ka mate (death in the midst of life) to ka ora (life in the midst of death) and will be nourished by our Methodist theological understandings.

**Goals:** The Methodist Alliance will:

- Work towards a bi-cultural future for Aotearoa New Zealand
- Support the work of members, through the promotion of best practice and high ethical and professional standards
- Leverage the collective skills, experience, imagination and resources to work towards building a just and inclusive society
- Increase the visibility of the work being undertaken by the Methodist Church of New Zealand/ Te Hāhi Weteriana o Aotearoa, and the capacity to influence public policy
- Ensure that the voice of those without power is heard and that the conditions that perpetuate injustice are confronted
- Adhere to, and action, the Social Principles of the Methodist Church of New Zealand/Te Hāhi Weteriana o Aotearoa
- Enable members to work openly and collectively
- Celebrate the diversity of its members
- Undertake any other tasks as given to it by Methodist Conference

The Methodist Alliance, in carrying out its objectives, shall at all times conform with the Laws and Regulations of the Church and with any decisions of the Conference, and accordingly all provisions of this founding document shall be subject to such Laws and Regulations and any such Conference decision from time to time.

**Membership:** Membership is open to all social services that run in conjunction with all parts of the Methodist Church of New Zealand/Te Hāhi Weteriana o Aotearoa. It includes:

- All Methodist Missions
- Any Methodist and Cooperating Venture/Union parishes who are engaged in social service or community work
- Any Trusts and Community based social services associated with a Methodist or Cooperating Venture/Union Church (with a Methodist component).

All members must meet the rights and obligations of membership.

## Theological Principles

As part of the Methodist Church of New Zealand/Te Hāhi Weteriana o Aotearoa, the following theological principles underpin our work:

We believe:

- God has called us to stewardship of all of creation and we recognise God's loving presence among all people at all times. It is the love of God that empowers us in our struggles towards justice and unity and calls us to stand in solidarity with those who are struggling
- that Christ leads us to affirm the dignity and worth of every human being
- that we are bound in covenant relationship with tangata whenua and we seek to live as people of the Treaty
- that for us the Good News of Jesus Christ contains the message that will promote effectively the regeneration and reconstruction of society
- in the words of John Wesley,
  - that our faith in God means loving God with all our heart, soul and strength and loving every soul that God has made
  - there is no holiness but social holiness; personal holiness is for changing the world, not just the individual
- in the integrity and the inter-dependence of all creation and therefore we are required to live as stewards of life and work in connected way
- that all of life is infused with an inherent dignity and worth in the sight of God and we seek engagement in activities which transform dehumanising and depersonalising social behaviour
- that together with others, we are called to bring hope, work for equity and justice and challenge unjust systems and structures

**Values** are derived from these principles and include:

- ***Respect for people*** – and every person's unique value
- ***Inclusive of all*** – ensuring that appropriate services recognise the diversity of peoples
- ***Social justice*** – inequality, unfairness and exclusion will be challenged
- ***Integrity*** – actions speak louder than words
- ***Partnership*** – strength is found in cooperation
- ***Empowerment*** – every person deserves the chance for choice and change
- ***Sustainability*** – we are here for the long haul
- ***Celebration*** – we acknowledge and celebrate diversity of our membership

## Code of Conduct<sup>1</sup>

As part of being a member of the Methodist Alliance, all members agree to the Alliance's Code of Conduct, and commit themselves to adhere to it.

### 1. How we work as organisations

As members of the Methodist Alliance, we commit ourselves in the following ways:

- uphold the vision, mission and values of the Alliance
- commit to best practice in all of our work

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<sup>1</sup> The Code of Conduct will be further developed by the founding members of the Alliance.

- to be a learning organisation; reflecting and growing
- aspire always that our work is community and client-led
- meet any professional requirements of appropriate professional bodies
- follow all legal requirements for our work
- ensure that staff and volunteers are treated fairly and with dignity and that the requirements of employment legislation are met
- adhere to all Health and Safety requirements
- be transparent in all financial matters and adhere to required accounting practice
- act with the highest integrity in our work
- co-brand with the Methodist Alliance logo according to the co-branding policy

## 2. How we work together

In working together as members of the Methodist Alliance, we commit ourselves to:

- respect the mandate of each organisation and associated governance and management structure
- support each other to provide the best quality service within available resources
- look for opportunities to collaborate, strengthen and profile each other's work
- be transparent with each other, including making available strategic plans, appropriate reports and financial documents
- contribute to the Methodist Alliance as appropriate through participation in forums, sharing analyses, learnings and resources
- raise any concerns about the work of a member organisation directly with the member if possible. If not, follow the Methodist Alliance's disputes resolution mechanism to address the concern or conflict.

3. Report annually on activities and financial position to the Steering Group.

4. On request make available to the Steering Group all external audits.

## 5. Rights of Membership include

Members of the Methodist Alliance have the right to:

- participate in the forum of the Methodist Alliance
- participate in other meetings and working groups of the Methodist Alliance
- use the Methodist Alliance logo in accordance with the co-branding policy
- access and use the resources and programmes of the Methodist Alliance
- Seek support from subject matter experts within the membership
- Provide information for submissions.

## Obligations of Membership

Every member organisation (Parish or Mission) will continue to have their own governance body which sets and oversees their organisation's strategic direction.

Members of the Methodist Alliance must:

- adhere to the Alliance Code of Conduct
- participate in the Alliance as appropriate
- co-brand with the name and logo of the Methodist Alliance (according to the co-branding policy)

- make a financial contribution to the work of the Alliance (according to a sliding scale of fees that will not preclude any organisation from participating).

### **Decision making**

Decision making will be by consensus in accordance with the practice of The Methodist Church of New Zealand/Te Hāhi Weteriana o Aotearoa. Processes will be developed to ensure that decisions are able to be made in a timely manner.

### **Governance**

The Methodist Alliance is accountable to the Conference of the Methodist Church of New Zealand/Te Hāhi Weteriana o Aotearoa. It will be governed by:

#### **1. Alliance Forum**

This forum provides an opportunity for all members to participate. It will be held every second year, with the following purposes:

- An opportunity to celebrate the work that is being done by individual members and collectively as the Methodist Alliance
- An opportunity to network, learn from each other and explore possible new joint initiatives together
- Evaluating key and emerging work and organisational issues for different Alliance members
- Provide space to reflect theologically on the work of the Alliance members and the issues being addressed by them
- Review Aotearoa/NZ context, including changes in Government policy
- Recommend to the Conference any changes to the founding documents of the Alliance
- Approve the overall strategic direction of the Alliance

The Alliance Forum will usually be held every second year during the year when there is no Methodist Conference and will rotate to different parts of the country to enable maximum participation from members.

#### **2. Steering Group/Committee**

The Steering Group is appointed by the Methodist Conference. Ideally it will include an appointed number of Chairs and Executive Directors (or equivalent) from the Missions, people from cultural and geographical Synods, Parish Community Workers, representation from Te Taha Māori (as they determine) and others with appropriate skills. Members of this group will be both lay and ordained and come from different geographical regions and would reflect the diversity of the Alliance membership. They would be responsible for bringing concerns/issues from the regions or groupings, but are not delegates or bound representatives; rather they are there for the good of the whole Alliance.

Functions of the Steering Group would include:

- Ensuring implementation of the Strategic Plan
- Acting as employer for any Alliance staff
- Receiving reports from Alliance working groups



- Identifying new pieces of work to be undertaken
- Setting annual budget; receiving financial reports and monitoring finances
- Brand management
- Establishing Alliance policy and protocols
- Accepting new members
- Setting the annual financial contributions from members
- Reporting to Conference
- Appointing a Convenor from the membership
- Maintain general oversight of Methodist appointees to New Zealand Council of Christian Social Services.
- General oversight of community and social services in the Methodist Church through:
  - auditing governance and quality standards for Missions and other Church community and social services;
  - property advice and recommendations, in regards to the social service aspects, to the Methodist Connexional Property Committee of the Board of Administration, and investment strategy advice in consultation with the Investment Advisory Board;
  - administration of community and social service funds and bequests (specifically the Family Support Fund and the Everill Orr Training Fund;
  - oversight of national marketing and promotion of Methodist social services.
- National advocacy through:
  - monitoring trends in social policy and services;
  - identifying areas for research and options for obtaining the information required;
  - developing a strategy and protocols for national advocacy;
  - working in partnership with other Conference committees, partner churches, and community agencies.

### **3. Secretariat**

A small Secretariat will support the coordination and administration of the Alliance.

Functions would include:

- Building relationships with, and networking of, Alliance members
- Coordination of the Alliance work programme
- Ensuring that the Alliance is continuously engaged in theological reflection and discourse
- Providing pastoral care to Alliance members as required
- Being a link between the Alliance and the Connexion
- Providing administrative support for Alliance meetings
- Facilitating support for groups in the Church who wish to begin, review or change their social services work
- Supporting/co-ordinating bids for national contracts
- Providing support to any Alliance workgroups

- Facilitating information sharing
- Handling and directing external enquiries and relationships
- Overseeing brand management, communications and marketing

The location of the Secretariat can be flexible. However, the Coordinator will need to have a strong and visible presence amongst other Connexional leaders (Auckland and Christchurch) as well as a regular presence in Wellington to meet with other Sector leaders and with Government.

### **Funding the Alliance**

The Alliance's costs will be set out in an annual budget prepared by the Steering Group and discussed with members each year. The budget will be funded by the Alliance members according to a sliding scale fee structure. Initially, this will be:

1. Organisations with an income under \$100 000 per annum will contribute \$100 per year
2. Organisations with an income between \$100 000 and \$250 000 will contribute \$150 per year
3. Organisations with an income greater than \$250 000 per year will contribute a percentage of the Alliance's costs based on the size of their own income.

### **This Document**

This Founding Document is a 'living document,' meaning that it will be further refined as the Methodist Alliance grows and develops. Changes will be discussed at the Methodist Alliance Forum, and recommended to the Methodist Conference.