

Methodist Mission and Ecumenical Newsletter

February – 2019

Annual Appeal 2019 Solar Power Unit for the Goldie College Computer Lab



Mission and Ecumenical has launched the Annual Appeal 2019 to raise NZ \$ 35,000 Goldie College Computer Lab Solar Power Unit. The solar power unit Mission and Ecumenical provided in 2012 is outdated already due to number of computers being increased from 12 to 32 in 2018. This is to be doubled in 2019, provided, a sustainable solar power source is made available for the college. Mission and Ecumenical identified this as an investment not only for the school, but also in the lives of the young school leavers for their future. Your assistance in raising the funds will help Mission and Ecumenical to fulfil this commitment. Thank you very much for all those who supported to raise \$ 17,700 to date.

World Council of Churches Assembly Karlsruhe, Germany 2021

The World Council of Churches Central Committee has decided upon the theme for the eleventh Assembly to be held in Karlsruhe, Germany in 2021. "Christ's love moves the world to reconciliation and unity" will be the theme used in development of programmes and other preparations.

The general secretary the Rev. Dr Olav Fykse Tveit said, "The theme will help to focus on the ecumenical movement as a movement of love – expressed in the search for justice, peace and unity, based on love."

The World Council of Churches asks for prayer for the Assembly Planning Committee, and for the churches and partners in its fellowship as it begins to prepare for and move toward the eleventh Assembly.

Action is required on Modern Slavery

In January a forum was held in Istanbul on Modern Slavery. The Ecumenical Patriarch, Bartholomew, leader of the Eastern Orthodox family of Churches, spoke in an address entitled "Awareness, Action and Impact."

After many centuries of progress and advancement, we still live in a world where injustice and slavery are a reality. So often human dignity is exchanged for the sole purpose of greed, gain and profit, reflected Bartholomew. "The Ecumenical Patriarch is committed to learn, act and witness to the elimination of this global abomination that traps millions of people in lives of suffering and humiliation," he said.

Bartholomew concluded, "Our love is not to be only for those whom we know, but also for the nameless, the unknown, those who are suffering, especially those trapped in the complex web of slavery." He issued a challenge to those attending the forum: "Action is required," he urged. "Together we must participate in concrete initiatives and actions."

New book on West Papua

The Otago University Press has recently published a book by Maire Leadbeater on the situation in West Papua. Entitled *See No Evil*, it outlines the history of West Papua and gives a helpful overview of developments over the years. However, its focus is on the impact of New Zealand's foreign policy on the indigenous Melanesian population.

A note in the Spring 2018 *Magazine* of the University of Otago observes that, "in the 1950's New Zealand supported self-determination for the former Dutch colony, but in 1962 backed Indonesia as it took over the country. Delving deep into government archives, many of them obtained under the Official Information Act, this meticulously researched book uncovers the untold story of New Zealand's 'unprincipled and often hypocritical' diplomacy." Maire Leadbeater is well qualified to write such a study as she has investigated peace and justice issues in the Pacific for decades. The book reveals New Zealand's shocking lack of solidarity with West Papuans who long for, and are justified in seeking, their independence.

Last year both the New Zealand Baptist Union and the Anglican Church made strong statements calling upon our government to reconsider its policy toward Indonesian occupation of West Papua. Perhaps the time has come for the Methodist Church of New Zealand to make a similar statement with some educational material for our parishes and rohe.

Christian Conference of Asia on bombing

The Christian Conference of Asia has condemned the bombing, both inside and outside, of the Our Lady of Mount Carmel Cathedral in Barangay Walled City, Jolo, in the Sulu Province of the Philippines. in February. Twenty people were killed and another 83 wounded. The bomb blast took place just days after a regional vote backed the establishment of a new Muslim Autonomous Region.

The Christian Conference of Asia general secretary offered prayers and expressed sympathy and condolences to the families of the victims and wished a speedy and full recovery to those injured. Dr George Matthews said, "Such an act of violence against the worshippers, and insolence at a sacred place, is an utter disregard for human life and people's right to live in peace." He also expressed the hope that the violence would not derail the peace process.

Christian Conference of Asia communications

National Dialogue of Christian Unity

The annual forum of the National Dialogue for Christian Unity will be held at the Catholic Centre in Wellington on Wednesday 27th February. The four member churches are the Anglican Church of Aotearoa New Zealand, the Catholic Church, The Methodist Church of New Zealand Te Hahi Weteriana O Aotearoa and the Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand. The Salvation Army is an observer. Other groups that have observer status are: CWS, SCM, UCANZ, ITCC and the Disability, Spirituality and Faith Network.

Keynote speaker at the annual forum will be the Most Revd. David Moxon who for a time led the Anglican Centre in Rome. He will speak about the new, lively ecumenical scene with special reference to developments regarding Christian unity.

Asia Bibi's acquittal upheld by Court

The Pakistan Christian mother Asia Bibi was convicted of blasphemy and jailed in June 2009 under a sentence of death after she drank from a water vessel which, it was claimed, was reserved for Muslims. Pakistan's Supreme Court heard her appeal in October last year. On 31 October the court acquitted her on all charges. She remained in prison until 8 November. Her acquittal sparked violent protests across the country which abated only after the government allowed extremists to appeal to the Supreme Court. On Tuesday 29th February the Court dismissed the appeal. Christians around the world, including Pope Francis, took up Asia Bibi's case contending that the blasphemy laws were being abused. No longer safe in Pakistan, it is expected that Asia Bibi will join her daughters in Canada.

Anglican Communion News Service

Prominent ecumenist honoured

The Rev. Professor Robert Gribben has been awarded an Order of Australia medal for distinguished service to church and society. The citation says that Robert is honoured for "significant service to the Uniting Church of Australia, and to religious and theological studies."

Robert is renowned as a scholar in the field of liturgics. He has an abiding interest in the Wesleys and the Methodist heritage. He has visited New Zealand on a number of occasions and spoken at a recent conference of Te Hahi Weteriana O Aotearoa. Professor Robert is a tireless ecumenist. He is an advocate of unity between the Anglican and Methodist traditions. He has made an outstanding contribution internationally to ecumenical dialogues through the World Methodist Council.

Mission and Ecumenical salutes Robert and congratulates him of his receiving this award.

Theological reflection on Trump

American Episcopal theologian Fleming Rutledge recently published a theological reflection on Donald Trump. She asked whether he is a man without a soul?

"I have never before listened to anyone speak who apparently has no connection to anything outside himself... We have not heard him speak with any genuine, sustained affection, about anyone except himself, or any organisation except his own business. He does not seem to have any stable beliefs... But even more striking than the lack of connection to those outside himself, there does not seem to be any connection to anything inside himself either. He has no hobbies, no interests, no soul-filling pursuits. He has never shown the slightest appreciation for the natural world, unless it's the 'beautiful' views from his golf courses. Photographs of him at religious events have shown him as the only person who does not bow his head during prayers. He does not look at art, or listen to music, or read books or analyse ideas. He does not seem to have a sense of himself at all... He seems to have no sense of humour at all."

Generous Orthodoxy website.

+ The Rev. Prince Devanandan will be back in the Mission and Ecumenical Office on Monday 18th February, after a period of leave.

MISSION AND ECUMENICAL BOARD
Methodist Church of New Zealand
Te Haahi Weteriana o Aotearoa
Acting Director: Rev. Dr Terry Wall
409 Great South Road Private Bag 11 903 Ellerslie
Auckland 1542
Phone: 09-571 9142 Fax: 09-525 9346
E-mail: mm-e@methodist.org.nz

Methodist Mission and Ecumenical Annual Appeal 2019

Solar Power Unit for the Computer Lab

Goldie College is a secondary school in the Western Province managed by the United Church of Solomon Islands. The school hostel is home for over 500 students and the staff who live in the premises.

The Principal Mr Brian Bird with the help of the Alumni has set up a modern computer lab with 32 work stations for computer literacy and learning through technology. The need of the school is a solar power unit to run the computer lab. During the visit of the Director in April 2018, the principal made a request to assist the school with a solar power unit.

Mission and Ecumenical Board is trying to raise NZ \$ 35,000 for this project.



Methodist Mission and Ecumenical Board appeals to all to contribute to the

Goldie College SOLAR POWER UNIT FUND to raise \$ 35,000 in 2019

You are invited to be a partner in mission with a contribution to the school.

Mission and Ecumenical Fund is registered with the **Charities Commission**.
Registration Number CC51048. Receipts will be issued for tax rebate on the donation.

✂-----

ANNUAL APPEAL 2019 - GOLDIE COLLEGE SOLAR POWER UNIT FUND

Please send your donation by cheque in favour of

Mission and Ecumenical Fund

to:

Rev Prince Devanandan(Director)

Mission and Ecumenical Board

Private Bag 11 903

Ellerslie

Auckland 1542

or bank directly to: 02-0800-0766004-03
using reference "Computer Lab"

Amount: \$ _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

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