



# COVENANT SERVICE

Methodist Online Conference 2023

*Hastings*

Te Hāhi Weteriana o Aotearoa

**President:** Rev Peter Taylor

**Vice-President:** Ms TeRito Peyroux-Semu

**General Secretary:** Rev Tara Tautari

**Tumuaki:** Rev Dr Arapera Ngaha

**Chaplains:** Rev Tovia Aumua  
Rev Keita Hotere

**Musician:** Rev Ieremia Amituana'i

**Theme: God, our Source of Hope**  
*Te Atua, Mātāpuna o te Tūmanako*

*Before the Service the local Tongan Choir will sing*

## *Call to Worship*

**President:** Whakapaingia te Atua e whakamine nei i a tātou.  
*(Blessed be God who calls us together.)*

**All:** Whakamoemititia te Atua kua kōtahi nei tātou.  
*(Praise to God who makes us one people.)*

**Himene:** “It is well with my soul”

A pei se vai tafe le fifilemu  
Pe lutia nei i le sou  
I le olaga nei, ou te molimau pea  
E lelei. E lelei le Alii.

Chorus: *E lelei. E lelei. E lelei.*  
*E lelei. E lelei. E lelei le Alii.*

A tau mai Satani i lona sauā  
Ou te le to'ilalo iai  
Ou te pi'imau pea ia Iesu le Alii  
O ia ou te malosī ai.

Chorus: *E lelei...*

O lona satauro ma lona maliu  
E mau ai le ola tumau  
Le toto na tafe i lona itu  
E ola ai e fa'avavau.

Chorus: *E lelei...*

E fia foa'i le olaga nei  
Ma lona malosī lelei  
Ia fai ma taulaga ia viia ai  
Le Alii alofa lenei.

Chorus: *E lelei...*

## *Reflection*

*President and Vice-President reflect on our time at Conference.*

- President:** It will always seem strange when as a Conference we gather together, not in person, but in a virtual world. It gives a sense of being a little disconnected as a Church, or at least not connected in the way we would like.
- Vice-President:** As we look back over Conference we officially opened with a pōwhiri, and remembered those who have died since the last Conference, and who have been a significant part of our journey.
- President:** On Wednesday afternoon we began the business of our Conference acknowledging all that has been done in the last twelve months and all those who have been involved in furthering our mahi as God's covenantal people.
- Vice-President:** This morning we honoured those whose journey of ministry has taken a new stride in retirement and those who have relinquished significant Connexional roles in our life.
- President:** Tomorrow there will be an Ordination Service in Auckland and we will receive the ordinands.
- Vice-President:** The word Connexion tells us about our relationship with each other in Te Hāhi Weteriana o Aotearoa - The Methodist Church of New Zealand. We are connected. So let us pray for all those in our Methodist Connexion.

## *Prayers for those in Ministry*

**President:** We belong to a tradition, founded on John and Charles Wesley, which follows the way of Jesus the Christ.

**All:** **This is the way of humility and love, of integrity and service.**

**Vice-President:** We celebrate the lives of all who have embraced the vision of the Gospel in Aotearoa. We are thankful for the ministry of all the baptised,

**All:** **called to be salt of the earth and light to the world.**

**President:** We are thankful for the ministry of deacons,

**All:** **called to be pioneers in mission.**

**Vice-President:** We are thankful for the ministry of presbyters,

**All:** **encouraging us to be the body of Christ.**

**President:** We are thankful for the ministry of lay ministers, minita-a-iwi, kaikarakia and lay ministry teams, leading ministry in many parishes,

**All:** **showing that ministry is for all the baptised.**

**Vice-President:** We are thankful for the ministry of lay preachers, musicians, choir leaders and all those who lead or enhance worship,

**All:** **revealing the depth of ministry in te Hāhi.**

**President:** We are thankful for the ministry given by stewards, parish councillors, pastoral carers, leaders of groups, those who look after church property and all those whose ministry lies within the local church and community,

**All:** **building God's Realm on earth.**

**Vice-President:** We are thankful for the ministry of those whose ministry lies in the Missions, and at the Synod and Connexional levels,

**All:** **faithfully serving the needs of Te Hāhi Weteriana o Aotearoa.**

### *Prayers of Praise and Confession*

**Chaplains:** We praise the God of all ages who created heaven and earth and humanity in God's image.

We confess we have thought ourselves as superior to creation and not a part of it.

We have abused and plundered the earth for personal gain.

We praise the God who has forever wanted to be in relationship with humanity, establishing an eternal covenant.

We confess we have ignored that covenant, withdrawing from relationship for fear of God's anger.

We thank God that all peoples chose to work together in the spirit of Te Tiriti, a covenant for this land of Aotearoa.

We confess with shame the many breaches in that covenant and our part in the pain which followed.

We thank God that God's voice still calls us forward, still honours the covenant, and renews us in our commitment to each other and to the work of Christ on earth.

Through God's mercy we are forgiven, renewed, and share in the servant ministry of Christ.

**Hymn:**

**Where mountains rise to open skies  
Your name, O God, is echoed far,  
from island beach to kauri's reach,  
in water's light, in lake and star.**

**Your people's heart, Your people's part  
be in our caring for this land,  
for faith to flower, for aroha  
to let each other's mana stand.**

**From broken word, from conflict stirred,  
from lack of vision, set us free  
to see the line of your design,  
to feel creation's energy.**

**Your love be known, compassion shown,  
that every child have equal scope:  
in justice done, in trust begun  
shall be our heritage and hope.**

**Where mountains rise to open skies  
Your way of peace distil the air,  
Your spirit bind all humankind,  
one covenant of life to share!**

Words: Shirley Murray

**Anthem:** Hastings Samoan Choir

**Reading:** Romans 15.7-13 (Tumuaki)

**Reflection:** President and Vice-President

## *Response 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.*

**Convenor:** This is our commitment to action.

**All:** **May God give us grace and courage so to do.**

**General Secretary:** This 'Conference Journal' contains the deliberations and decisions we have entered into during the Conference.

### *Signing of Journal*

**President:** The signing of the Journal is a way of declaring that together we are connected as God's people.

**Vice-President:** At this online Conference we are reminded that what truly connects us is not just being physically close to each other, but is a spiritual connection that lies much deeper, and binds us more strongly. More than that, we are bound together through our relationship with the rest of creation, of which are a part.

**President:** It is because we are part of creation that we have acknowledged with shame our poor treatment of this world. This is why Te Hāhi Weteriana o Aotearoa - The Methodist Church of New Zealand has declared a Ten Year initiative of Climate Justice. We have met in Hastings, one place where climate change has been seen in natural disasters earlier this year.



**Vice-President:** In our Covenant Service we also acknowledge God, the Creator of this world, including all human life. It is God who truly binds us together as a Church, as God's people, and God is our Source of Hope, not just for our Ten Year initiative, but for all that we commit ourselves to do within the Church and within society.

**Vice-President:** As we prepare to renew our Covenant let us sing a hymn reminding us of the many covenants God has made with creation and humanity.

**Hymn:** You are a covenantal God,  
not distant, you've drawn near;  
our journeying with us you've trod,  
your love for us is clear.

For Noah you gave a rainbow sign,  
with all of life you vowed.  
For Abram guaranteed his line,  
and whenua endowed.

With Moses on the mount you shared,  
did laws on stone impart.  
Through Jeremiah you declared  
you'd write laws on our heart.

At his last supper Christ bestowed  
a covenant for all.  
In bread and wine your love he showed.  
Through him we hear your call.

We've gathered here and seek to find  
the words to pledge anew  
our Hāhi, in one common mind,  
and live our lives for you.

Now hear our prayer, we give our word  
to work with you for peace.

**May justice reach throughout the world  
and aroha increase!**

Words: Peter Taylor

## *Renewing the Covenant*

**President:** So there have been many covenants recognised within the Bible. There was one offered to Noah in which God would protect all creation. Another was given to Abram in which God would bless him with many descendants and give them a land which they would call their own. A third was shared with Moses inscribed in tablets of stone at Mount Sinai declaring that Israel was to be God's own people.

**Vice-President:** Jeremiah was promised that a new covenant would be inscribed not on stone but in the hearts of those within the covenant. In Jesus that new covenant was established through the cross and resurrection, symbolised in bread and wine.

**President:** This covenant defines our relationship with God, but also acknowledges our relationship with each other and with the whole of creation. We stand within this new covenant and we belong to Christ. On one hand, God promises to give us new life in Christ: on the other, we pledge to live not for ourselves but for God.

**Vice-President:** As we prepare to close this Conference, we have gathered as have generations before us to renew the covenant which bound them and which now binds us to each other and to God.

*Congregation stands*

**President:** Let us claim this covenant for ourselves and take again the yoke of Christ upon us.

To take this yoke upon us means that we are willing for Christ to appoint us our place and work, and for Christ alone to be our reward.

**All:**                   **He maha ngā mahi a te Karaiti;**  
**he māmā ētahi, he uaua ētahi atu;**  
**e whakahōnoretia ētahi, e raruraru ana ētahi**  
**atu;**  
**he pai ētahi ki tō te whakaaro me te wairua**  
**māori i te ao kikokiko nei,**  
**he rerekē ētahi atu whakaaro;**  
**ka aru ai mātou i te Karaiti, ā, i ō mātou ake**  
**whakaaro;**  
**e kore e taea e mātou te piri ki te Karaiti,**  
**hāunga ki te whakakāhore mātou i a mātou**  
**anō.**  
**Nā te Karaiti te kaha i tukua ai ki a mātou,**  
**māna anō mātou e whakakaha ai.**

*(Christ has many services to be done;  
some are easy, others are difficult;  
some bring honour, others bring reproach;  
some are suited to our natural inclinations  
and material interests,  
others are contrary to both;  
in some we may please Christ  
and please ourselves;  
in others we cannot please Christ  
except by denying ourselves.  
Yet the power to do all these things  
is given to us in Christ who strengthens us.)*

**Vice-President:**   Loving and holy God, with joy we take upon  
ourselves the yoke of obedience  
and for love of you commit ourselves  
to seek and do your perfect will.  
We are no longer our own, but yours.

**All:**                   **Ehara ahau i a au anō, engari nāu.**  
**Tukua ahau ki tāu e pai ai;**

tātaritia ahau ki tāu e pai ai;  
mahia ahau ki tāu e pai ai;  
tukua ahau kia pā ai te mamae;  
māku mōu e mahi, ā, e kore anō rānei;  
ka whakahōnoretia mōu, ka whakahekea  
rānei.

Whakakīia ahau e tō wairua, ā, e kore rānei;  
tukua mai ngā mea katoa, me noho kore rawa  
rānei;

ka whakapau kaha ahau ki te tuku i ngā mea  
katoa ki tāu e pai ai.

Nā reira, e te Atua korōria nui, Matua, Tama  
me te Wairua Tapu, nāku koe, nāu ahau hoki.  
Waihoki, ko te kawenata i hangaia nei i runga  
i te whenua, kei te pērā tonu i te rangi.  
Āmine.

*(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 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 ratified 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 our brothers and sisters whom we have seen, how can we love God whom we have not seen?

**President:**

The peace of God be with you.

**All:**

**And God's peace be with you.**

*Congregation stands.*

## *The Communion*

**Vice-President:**

God is here.

**All:**

**God's Spirit is with us,**

**Vice-President:**

Lift up your hearts.

**All:**

**We lift them to God.**

**Vice-President:**

Let us give thanks to God.

**All:**

**It is our joy to give God thanks and praise.**

**Vice-President:**

It is our joy to praise you who created all things and called us into a covenant relationship with creation and with you, based on love and mercy.

**President:**

When the time was right you revealed yourself in your servant Jesus who, in humility and sacrifice, demonstrated your healing grace. With thanksgiving we remember that, through the cross and resurrection, a new covenant was offered to all peoples and the vision of your new creation made known to all the earth.

**All:**

**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.**

**President:**

On the night he gave up his life Jesus had supper with his friends. He took bread, gave thanks, broke it and gave it to them:

**All:** “Tangohia, kainga, ko tōku tinana tēnei ka hoatu nei mō koutou. Meinga tēnei hei whakamahara ki ahau.”

**President:** After supper he took a cup of wine, gave thanks, and gave it to them:

**All:** “Inumia tēnei, ko ōku toto o te Kawenata hou i whakahekea mōu, mō te katoa, hei murunga hara.”

**All:** **Glory to you, Lord Christ:  
Your death we proclaim;  
Your resurrection we celebrate;  
Your coming we await. Amen.**

*The congregation sits.*

**President:** We rejoice that your Spirit has accompanied us on our journey of two hundred years in Aotearoa.  
We rejoice that you call us forward to a new future in a renewed covenant.  
As a covenant people may we embody your vision of being a community of hope, offering our common life as servants for you.

**Vice-President:** Come Spirit of God,  
bless these gifts of bread and wine.  
Through them and your eternal love transform us to a life of servanthood within Te Hāhi Weteriana o Aotearoa and the world at large.

**All:** **We offer our prayer with all your people  
in this land and beyond this land  
in this church and beyond this church  
in this time and beyond all time  
to praise Your name. 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 his all for you,  
welcomes you to his feast.

*Silence is kept for a time.*

*The bread will be gluten-free.*

**President:** Please come forward and receive the elements  
of bread and wine as symbols of our renewed  
covenant with God.

*Communion will be distributed.*

## *The Sending Forth*

**President:** We have committed ourselves and our way to  
God in a solemn declaration of our intent to  
follow the path to which God has called us.  
As we leave today, let us go in confidence and  
strength, assured that the best is yet to be, and  
that it is in following the way of Christ that  
fullness of life is experienced - even in its  
challenges and uncertainties - for God is our  
Source of Hope

**Vice-President:** Haere i runga i te aroha.  
Haere i runga i te rangimārie o te Ariki.  
Kia puta ki te wheiao ki te ao mārama.

**All:** **Ka haere mātou i runga i te ingoa o te Ariki.**

*The Conference Candle is extinguished*

**Himene:**            *“Mā te mārie” (sung unaccompanied)*

|  |  |
|--|--|
| Mā te mārie a te Atua<br>tātou katoa e tiaki.  | <i>The peace of God<br/>keeps us all.</i>          |
| Māna anō e whakaū<br>ō tātou ngākau ki te pai. | <i>He will confirm<br/>our hearts in goodness.</i> |

|  |  |
|--|--|
| Mā te Atua Tamaiti ra,<br>mā te Wairua Tapu hoki<br>rātou, Atua kōtahi nei,<br>tātou katoa e whakapai.<br>Āmine. | <i>May the Son of God<br/>and the Holy Spirit too,<br/>one God<br/>bless us all.<br/>Amen.</i> |
|--|--|

*Ngā Inoi me Ngā Hīmene  
a te Hāhi Weteriana  
Tune: Old 100th*

**Recessional:**