

METHODIST MISSION AND ECUMENICAL NEWSLETTER

December 2019

HELENA GOLDIE COLLEGE OF NURSING

The general secretary of United Church Solomon Islands wrote to inform the progress made with the Helena Goldie College of Nursing.

Dear Rev Prince, Greetings from the Assembly Office. I wish to update you with the HGCON project.

As per the Health Secretary's report the college admin block is moving towards completion.

We have secured some assistance from the government through our honourable member of parliament. This will go towards repair and renovations of the college houses/facilities. Materials will be delivered to the site this weekend from Honiara.

The principal was terminated. Deputy Principal Moyah is acting. We are considering to advertise the post to fulfil formalities.

Our intention is to reopen the college in June 2020. The progress is going on well. Winston - project manager (our HS) is leading the work very well.

We thank you and NZ Methodist Church for your unfailing support to help us work through challenges. Kind Regards. Brian

I am delighted to hear the good news of the progress. This is encouraging. I look forward to see the completed administrative building and the refurbished buildings of the college during my visit in April 2020. – Prince Devanandan

CURRICULUM REVIEW OF THE HELENA GOLDIE COLLEGE OF NURSING

The health secretary of the United Church Solomon Islands Winston Pitakomoki asked assistance from the Mission and Ecumenical to hold a curriculum review workshop to reorganise the academic work of the College of Nursing. The request was for Solomon Dollars 40,000. The M&E board carefully considered the request and agreed to provide the amount from its medical fund to support the work of the College of Nursing.

M&E Board forwarded the money to the United Church account to carry out this work. Winston wrote on 29 November 2019 to express their gratitude:

1) May I thank you & The Management Board for your quick and positive response to our request on Curriculum Review & Workshop for Nurse Training.

I saw the email & bank notice yesterday. The college committee will be informed soon & organise for the review early next year. Thank-you

2) Work on the admin- building continues. Expecting some Tabaka Boys next week.

3) Today, the college committee is waiting for delivery of hard ware materials from our National MP. The materials are for repair & maintenance work on other buildings such as dormitories and halls.

4) Today HGCON & family are having farewell dinner with Principal Henry Ngumi & Family who is retiring.

Thank you very much for your kind support.

Kind regards, Winston.

WCC – CCA CONSULTATION DISCUSSES 'EVANGELISM AND MISSIONAL WITNESS IN A MULTI-RELIGIOUS ASIA'

CHIANG MAI, Thailand: An international consultation on 'Evangelism and Missional Witness in a Multi-religious Asia' being organized jointly by the World Council of Churches (WCC), and the Christian Conference of Asia (CCA) started with analysing the emerging trends in evangelism and mission in Asia's multi-religious contexts.

The discussions of the first part of the week-long deliberations was summarized as, "at a time when all religious communities are being reshaped by new encounters and relationships, the meaning and relevance of evangelism need to be rediscovered. Persistent plurality moves Christian communities to seek new and adequate ways to understand and relate to peoples of different religious traditions". Forty participants – an inter-generational and diverse group of missiologists, evangelists, young pastors, theological educators, and ecclesiastical leaders representing member churches and councils of WCC and CCA as well as representatives of the Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences (FABC) and the Asian Evangelical Alliance (AEA) are attending the consultation being held at the CCA Headquarters in Chiang Mai, Thailand from 29 November to 5 December 2019. [M&E Director Prince Devanandan was invited to attend the consultation.]

Dr. Mathews George Chunakara, General Secretary of CCA stated at the opening session of the consultation, "Churches and para-church groups,

as well as their related mission and evangelism projects, compete vehemently with each other in Asia in the name of propagating 'gospel to the unreached'. When they make exclusive claims in the name of the gospel, such claims when shared and taken for granted, need deeper exegetical studies".

"It is in this context that the consultation is expected to provide space for constructive dialogue on the challenges, possibilities, and potential for cooperation among churches and networks in different Asian contexts with regard to evangelism and missional witness in a multi-religious Asia", added CCA General Secretary.

Kyriaki Avtzi, WCC's Programme Executive for Evangelism in Unity, outlined the initiatives undertaken since 2012 within a wider global process and implemented earlier in the contexts of Europe, North America, and Africa.

The fourth regional consultation organised in partnership with CCA is expected to address concerns pertaining to the multi-religious Asian context, and "this will be an opportunity to examine how the good news is shared in the multi-religious context of Asia where evangelism can be both a dividing as well as uniting factor", added Ms. Kyriaki, an Orthodox woman theologian from Greece working at WCC's headquarters in Geneva.

The first thematic address of the consultation by Bishop Dr Daniel Thiagarajah of Sri Lanka explained the context for the study of evangelism and missional witness in multi-religious Asia as one that is "significantly conditioned by the unintended consequences to God's intention for *shalom* by the legacy of our missionary inheritance."

Bishop Thiagarajah, a former Mission and Evangelism executive secretary of CCA raised a sharp critique saying "international mission partners cannot divorce themselves from the legacy of harm with which their forebears have burdened several Asian contexts."

Sharing his experiences of working in a war-torn Sri Lanka, and the ongoing divisive practices of certain overseas mission partners in his ecclesiastical jurisdiction, Bishop Thiagarajah said, "What is missing in our evangelism and missional witness to God's *shalom* today is a deep understanding of the severity of sin and its destructive, life-destroying, death-dealing effects."

The starting point for addressing evangelism and missional witness in multi-religious Asia was to address the relationship between those who are

harmed and their enemies, added Bishop Thiagarajah.

Three thematic presentations set the framework for dialogue in the consultation from different regions across Asia while participants make presentations outlining the existing situation of evangelism and mission in their respective contexts.

The week-long consultation is aimed at exploring the ways in which theological affirmations, education, and training programmes on evangelism have been placed in the diverse landscape of Asia; understand and reflect on the methodologies and strategies evolved by churches in Asia at local levels; and provide a platform to learn mutually from the experiences of Asian churches and their innovative evangelistic approaches and engagement in participating in God's mission.

**ECUMENICAL WOMEN'S ASSEMBLY
CONCLUDES WITH CALLS FOR ASIAN WOMEN
TO BE ADVOCATES AND CATALYSTS OF
RECONCILIATION, RENEWAL AND
RESTORATION**



Holy Eucharistic Service at the closing of AEWA led by Bishop Genieve Blackwell from Australia.

HSINCHU, Taiwan: The week-long Asian Ecumenical Women's Assembly (AEWA) concluded with calls for action to empower women as advocates and catalysts to ensure reconciliation, renewal and restoration in the world, communities, and churches. Organized and facilitated by the Christian Conference of Asia (CCA) the, AEWA ended with an ecumenical Holy Eucharistic Service led by Bishop Genieve Blackwell of the Anglican Church of Australia with the assistance of a group of intergenerational women representatives from various churches across Asia.

In a communique issued at the end of the AEWA, participants affirmed "At this critical time of our history, when the whole of God's creation is groaning due to irresponsible human action, greed and continuing discrimination, violence and

exploitation of women and children, without repenting from the sin of greed, and without reconciling and doing justice to God's creation, women and the marginalized communities in particular, the world will not experience justice and peace."

"We are with one voice in asserting NO to a culture of violence and exploitation of earth's resources. We affirm that we need to stand together in solidarity towards realizing justice and peace at this Kairos moment of our planet earth", the participants declared towards the end of the AEWA.

The participants expressed appreciation for the space AEWA provided them to "recommit to God and affirm that the nurturing and sustaining roles of women are crucial, and our voices must be heard for the liberation of the whole earth".

The homily at the closing worship was delivered by the Vice Moderator of the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan (PCT), Rev Abus Takisvilainan. Rev Abus encouraged participants to have perseverance and renewed faith in God in pursuit of their tasks and goals.

She also commented the CCA for bringing together a diverse group of intergenerational women to discuss the pressing concerns of the time. The first woman Vice Moderator of the PCT in its 154 years of history, Rev. Abus encouraged the participants to learn about the differences among people to respect and celebrate their diversities, but never to rebuke or discriminate against them.

The need to work tirelessly for the realization of a better world for women and men and the whole of creation was echoed in the comments shared by the participants in the closing session. Participants shared reflections on their time in the Assembly and the many insights that they take back with them to their local contexts.

Rev Romella Robinson from Pakistan shared a moving testimony on the many challenges of Christian women in her country. Rev Romella shared the experiences of her own denomination and said, **although women are ordained, they are asked to 'stay silent as much as possible', and their gifts are limited to volunteer work. In most churches, women ministers are not permitted to administer the Holy Sacraments.**

The AEWA hosted by the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan and held in Hsinchu City, Taiwan from 21 to 27 November 2019 was attended by more than 250 women.

WCC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE: CLIMATE CRISIS NOT A DISTANT PROSPECT BUT AN EMERGENCY

25 November 2019

The World Council of Churches Executive Committee, in a statement, said that the climate crisis is not a distant prospect, but is upon us today.



Churches take a stand for climate justice in New York, September 2019. Photo: Marcelo Schneider/WCC

"Children, young people and ordinary citizens have made public demonstration of their outrage at the lack of any adequate response by governments to the gravity of this global crisis, and against the backsliding by some governments," the statement reads. "The time for debate and disputation of established scientific facts is long over." Time for action is swiftly passing, the statement continues. "We will all be held to account for our inaction and our disastrous stewardship of this precious and unique planet."

The statement reflects that the climate emergency is the result of ecological sins, and further urges wealthy nations to increase commitments to provide sufficient climate finance to low-income nations for adaptation.

*Wishing you the blessings of
the incarnate Christ during
the festive season*

MISSION AND ECUMENICAL BOARD
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**Methodist Mission and Ecumenical
Annual Appeal 2020
Ablution and Shower Facility for Tabaka Rural Training Centre**



Tabaka Rural Training Centre was started by a group of volunteers from the Methodist Church of New Zealand in 1992. It was established to train youth in a skill which would enable them to earn a living. Over the past 27 years this centre has grown to technical institute with over 250 students, boys and girls receiving technical training in eight different areas.

The work of the institute has expanded, but not the facilities for the youth who live in the dormitories. There is no proper toilet and shower facility for the students. During the annual visit of the Mission and Ecumenical director and the team in consultation with the principal decided to act immediately to build a toilet and shower facility for the Girls' Dormitory as the first stage and to build a similar facility for boys the following year.

Methodist Mission and Ecumenical Board appeals to all to become partners in mission by supporting the

ANNUAL APPEAL 2020 to raise \$ 35,000 in 2019

Mission and Ecumenical Fund is registered with the **Charities Commission**.

Registration Number CC51048. Receipts will be issued for tax rebate on the donation.

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ANNUAL APPEAL 2020 - TABAKA ABLUTION FACILITY FUND

Please send your donation by cheque in favour of **Methodist Church Mission Fund to:**

**Rev Prince Devanandan(Director)
Mission and Ecumenical Board
Private Bag 11 903
Ellerslie
Auckland 1542**

Alternately, do a bank transfer directly to:

02-0800-0766004-03

stating reference as **"Tabaka Fund 2020"**

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

Amount: \$ _____

Name -----

Address -----
