

Methodist Mission and Ecumenical Newsletter

July - 2019

Annual Appeal 2020 for Ablution Facility for Girls' Dormitory at Tabaka Rural Training Institute



We at Mission and Ecumenical Board look forward to your support.

When this is complete, the Mission and Ecumenical Board will launch the fund raising for the Boys' dormitory facility in early 2020.

World Methodist Council calls for new ministry with migrants - 20 June 2019



The World Methodist Council called for a new ministry with migrants during a Consultation on Migrant and Diaspora Churches held 3-6 June in London, an event which gathered a diverse group of about 40 leaders. The World Methodist Council stated: "Since its beginning, the Methodist movement has responded to the physical and spiritual needs of people who left their home -

countries; missionaries accompanied migrating people and migrants became missionaries in the places where they arrived."

During the consultation, stories were shared of mission activities, of struggles to overcome the trauma many migrants face, of gracious ways to support refugees, of pain because of a lack of mutual understanding, and of cooperation and growth in building diverse communities.

World Methodist Council vice president Gillian Kingston stated: "We appreciated anew the significant connections with climate change, religious persecution and political unrest which force families and communities to uproot and travel to strange countries to make new lives."

Participants affirmed the document "God Is on the Move: A Call to Be the Church in a New Way." The full document can be found on

<http://worldmethodistcouncil.org/god-is-on-the-move-a-call-to-be-the-church-in-a-new-way/>

THURSDAYS IN BLACK

The Methodist Church of New Zealand Te Haahi Weteriana o Aotearoa Weteriana o Aotearoa in its biennial Conference 2018 committed to "Thursdays in Black" campaign observe the worldwide struggle against rape and violence. The simple action required is wearing black on Thursdays to be a voice against rape and violence. I wonder how much attention is paid to it eight months after the Conference.

Dear fellow Methodists, we cannot rest until the world turns out to be a place free of rape and violence. Our campaign must continue as we come across rape and violence almost every day reported in the media. The media may pick up only one or two or three incidents, but there may be hundreds each day that does not get any attention.

I invite all of the Methodists have committed to be followers of Jesus Christ to observe **Thursdays in Black**. It will not only be a silent voice; it will also be an action on our part to call others to join the movement worldwide. *Prince D.*

No space for rape and violence: Thursdays in Black at Kirchentag - 20 June 2019

Stories, music, and many other expressions of solidarity marked a lively observation of Thursdays in Black at the German Protestant church festival. From religious leaders to passers-by, many offered words of support and

encouragement for the campaign for a world free from rape and violence.

"...I am trying to encourage others to join," said Bishop Rosemarie Wenner of the World Methodist Council, a strong supporter of Thursdays in Black.

"Thursdays in Black and the fight against violence and rape is something everyone, men and women, in and outside of church can join. We are all affected by it," said Rev. Dr Jean Hawxhurst from the Council of Bishops.

Still others were just being introduced to Thursdays in Black. "Sexual violence has many facets and I think it starts with disrespect," reflected Ines von Keller, who was just learning about Thursdays in Black. "Just the other day I overheard four male teenagers commenting on a young girl walking by. I kept silence, but I think I should have spoken up. We all need to start talking about it and demand respect in these situations. I would like to try and include it as a topic in the parish newsletter I am working on."

Those attending also talked about the messages sent - intentionally or not - in liturgies, hymns and prayers, and whether those messages are inclusive. "To tackle the problem of violence and rape, the church should stop excluding women. Our church has a week of prayer against gender-based violence. It is time to face up with stories about violence against women in the Bible. Everyone should be concerned about this topic," said Peter King from the Anglican Church.

Everyone can join

During the event, the World Council of Churches (WCC) organized a sharing on how sexual violence is a part of everyday culture - in songs, media and conversations.

Participant Hana Pandian offered her insights on what Thursdays in Black means in India. "We need to raise our voices and create more awareness," she urged the audience. "Everyone independent from their gender can support this campaign."

Sonja Skupch, general secretary from the Evangelical Church in Argentina reflected that sexual violence is a dire issue in Argentina. "We can do better and we wish for something better," she said.

Dr Isabel Apawo Phiri, deputy general secretary of the WCC, recalled her childhood in Malawi explaining how she grew up in constant fear of rape. When she was working as a professor in Malawi, she conducted research with fellow female lecturers and unveiled the issue of rape happening on campus and in churches.

Following that she had to leave her country but found another blessing in her work with the WCC. "It gives me an international platform to address the issue and supporting the fellowship of 350 churches in creating just communities of women and men and ending attitudes and practices that permit rape and violence. It is a sin and there is no space for it."

She also stressed the importance of mutual encouragement of the member churches to start and keep talking about the issue. "I want my granddaughter to live without fear," she said.

[Time to tweet for a world without rape and violence #ThursdaysinBlack. WCC press release 18 June, 2019](#)

18th 'Building Bridges' for Muslim and Christian scholars is a process



A Christian and a Muslim scholar have told a seminar at the World Council of Churches (WCC) about their work in an annual "Building Bridges" seminar with "freedom" as the theme, as participants described what they do as a process, not an event. The start of the 11-15 June "Building Bridges" at the Ecumenical Centre in Geneva featured lectures by professors Rosalee Velloso Ewell from the United Kingdom's Redcliffe College and Tuba Işık from German's University of Paderborn. Işık was unable to attend, and her address was read by Dr Muna Tatari from the same university.

Azza Karam, a senior adviser on social and cultural development from the United Nations Population Fund in New York, who is also a professor at Amsterdam's Vrije Universiteit, responded. The WCC is hosting the 18th "Building Bridges" seminar for Muslim and Christian scholars. The seminar, under the theme "Freedom: Muslim and Christian Perspectives," is sponsored and organized by Georgetown University, the oldest Roman Catholic and Jesuit affiliated institution of higher education in the United States.

It is the 18th Building Bridges seminar, which has met annually since 2002.

WCC general secretary Rev. Dr Olav Fykse Tveit and Rev. Dr Daniel Madigan, S.J., welcomed the seminar participants. Tveit said that the Building Bridges seminar, "is surely one of the most sustained initiatives of this kind in Muslim-Christian dialogue, bringing together over the years many of the world's leading Muslim and Christian scholars." Madigan described the seminar as a process. "There is an organic growth in the talks that take place with this seminar," said the Georgetown priest who chairs the event, noting participants would look at questions such as: "Freedom from what, freedom for what and is freedom a zero-sum game?"

Tveit said, "As we know from our long experience of interreligious work here at WCC, the interface between Christianity and Islam, or maybe better to say, between Christians and Muslims, is a complex and multi-faceted reality taking a great range of forms in many different parts of the world."

He said there were many challenges and opportunities "in this great global encounter", and so we also need a corresponding range of ways of developing dialogue and building cooperative relationships between Muslims and Christians. Madigan presented a gift set of books to Tveit from the Building Bridges seminar for the WCC library before the lectures began.

Ewell said, "We need to read the voices and text through the languages of others." She said, "Who gets to decide what freedom is?" and "What is your vision of freedom?" Tatari said that from the 9th century the freedom of Islamic women took an "increasingly marginalized position". She said, "There is no common shared definition of Islamic" feminist freedom or of "gender jihad."

Karam observed that "all isms have different definitions" and that women striving for freedom has existed through the ages. "Women's freedom did not emerge in the colonial period, but what the colonial period did was to bequest a politicization of it."

On its website, Georgetown University says, "The programme on Faith, Values, and Public Life at the Berkley Center for Religion, Peace, and World Affairs sponsors this program, which brings together a range of internationally recognized Christian and Muslim scholars to Georgetown. Participants explore a number of the most significant themes in the interface between Islam and Christianity."

<https://www.oikoumene.org/en/press-centre/news/building-bridges-for-muslim-and-christian-scholars-is-a-process>

Regional ecumenical leaders convene at Bossey to share concerns, strengthen bonds



The WCC general secretary (center) welcomed leaders of eight regional ecumenical organizations at the Bossey Ecumenical Institute. Photo: Marcelo Schneider/World Council of Churches

Leaders of eight regional ecumenical organizations are meeting with the World Council of Churches (WCC) at the Bossey Ecumenical Institute on 2-4 July. In addition to sharing news and concerns from each region, the group will identify common concerns such as peace in the Middle East, climate justice, racism, and the Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace, among others. Participants will also determine and plan opportunities for cooperation and joint action. In addition to sharing news and concerns from each region, the group will identify common concerns such as peace in the Middle East, climate justice, racism, and the Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace, among others. Participants will also determine and plan opportunities for cooperation and joint action.

WCC general secretary Rev. Dr Olav Fykse Tveit said: "We have been listening to the updates from the different regions and we have seen more clearly what unites us. We have become mutually accountable to one another and to our common calling and mission." A working group will present the Guiding Principles for Relationships and Cooperation between the WCC and the Regional Ecumenical Organizations, and the group will have an opportunity to discuss that text as well. More at:

https://www.oikoumene.org/en/press-centre/news/regional-ecumenical-leaders-convene-at-bossey-to-share-concerns-strengthen-bonds?fbclid=IwAR2DhQGasiH2Wbf0tZCcVQBFDieVDg0e0Ak3MSpkN_JPrpuqFAdE06YqV0E

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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

<p>Please send your donation by cheque in favour of Mission and Ecumenical Fund to:</p> <p>Rev Prince Devanandan(Director) Mission and Ecumenical Board Private Bag 11 903 Ellerslie Auckland 1542</p> <p>Alternately, do a bank transfer directly to: 02-0800-0766004-03 stating reference as "Tabaka Fund 2020"</p>	<p>Please remember to send this cover slip for a receipt when you make a deposit.</p> <p>Amount: \$ _____</p> <p>Name -----</p> <p>Address -----</p> <p>-----</p> <p>-----</p>
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