

METHODIST MISSION AND ECUMENICAL NEWSLETTER

August 2020

THE DEATH OF LYN SADLER – MISSION EDUCATOR TO SOLOMON ISLANDS

News been received in the Mission and Ecumenical office of the death of Lyn Sadler in the middle of July. Lyn had been a teacher at Goldie College for fifteen years until the end of 1978. She was a most competent teacher and much loved by both students and staff. The Board has written to her family and records its appreciation and gratitude to God for her faith and witness in dedication to the mission of the church. The community of those who served in the Solomon Islands have expressed their sympathy.

UNITING CHURCH OF AUSTRALIA ASSISTS UNITED CHURCH OF PAPUA NEW GUINEA

The prevalence of gender-based violence in Papua New Guinea has prompted the Church there to call on the experience of the Uniting Church of Australia to help them develop a pastoral response and programme to address this issue. Resources will be made available and adapted to the reality of Papua New Guinea. The church believes it must be a priority to face the issue to protect women and girls from the scourge.

CORONAVIRUS WIDESPREAD IN PORT MORESBY

On 1st August the *Weekend Herald* reported that Covid-19 is now widespread in the capital of Papua New Guinea. At least seventy cases were confirmed. It was reported that there are three critical cases including one on a ventilator. The city went into lockdown at the end of July with a curfew from 10 pm till 5 am. Schools and non-essential businesses are closed initially for a fortnight. Contact tracing systems are being put in place and assistance is being sought from Australian health authorities.

HEALING THE WORLD: EIGHT BIBLE STUDIES FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS

The global Covid-19 pandemic, which has brought death to hundreds of thousands, and serious illness to millions more, also poses profound spiritual questions and real challenges to churches everywhere.

The pandemic itself has been a fundamental test of our faith in God and God's providence and it requires of us urgent re-examination of our relationship to God, each other and the natural world.

In *Healing the World*, the World Council of Churches offers eight Bible Studies to facilitate our coming to terms – as individuals, groups and communities of faith – with the loss, fear and confusion engendered by the pandemic, and the bracing prospect of building a new world. The studies may be downloaded from the World Council of Churches website.

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WORLD WEEK FOR PEACE IN THE HOLY LAND : 13 – 21 SEPTEMBER

Under the common theme “Creative Solidarity in Common Fragility,” people of faith all around the world are encouraged to demonstrate the power of prayer during the World Week of Peace in Palestine and Israel. This special Week of Prayer coupled with action is held annually 13 – 21 September and includes the International Day of Peace 21 September.

“Let us pray together for a lasting peace built on justice and dignity for all,” said the Rev. Prof. Dr Ioan Souca, interim general secretary of the World Council of Churches. “All those in the Holy Land deserve the freedom to lead full lives now more than ever in this troubled time.”

During the Week of Peace, Souca said he hoped to see compassionate advocacy undertaken in a spirit of goodwill and impartiality that transcends religious affiliation. This year’s theme, chosen in an era of extreme fragility, lifts up creative solidarity as a sign of hope that, through the power of prayer and common action, people across the world can make the reality of peace and justice in the Holy Land both possible and a living reality for all the people of the region.

Taking up the courage to act in an unprecedented manner, people are growing in their ability to think creatively and reflect on whether developments in the Holy Land accord with their understanding of “the things that make for peace.” “May God bless and strengthen our efforts for the mutual flourishing of all through the transforming power of the gospel,” Souca said.

World Council of Churches *News Service*

NEW 2022 DATE FOR 11TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF WCC

The executive committee of the World Council of Churches has approved a new date for the 11th General Assembly which will now be held in Karlsruhe, Germany from 31 August till 8th September 2022. The event was postponed for one year because of the gravity and uncertainties related to the Covid-19 pandemic. “Inspired by the theme ‘Christ’s love moves the world to reconciliation and unity,’ our fellowship will come together in prayer and celebration,” said Ioan Souca, interim general secretary. “The assembly will be a unique opportunity for the churches to deepen their commitment to visible unity and common witness...” The symbol for the assembly is composed of a cross; a dove; a circle alluding to reconciliation; and crossed paths representing various journeys, movements for freedom and the vibrancy of the life of the member churches.

ON THE UNITY OF THE CHURCH

“Never resign yourself to the scandal of the separation of Christians who so readily profess love for their neighbour, and yet remain divided. Make the unity of the body of Christ your passionate concern.”

From *The Rule of Taizé*

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