

The ANGLICAN PACIFIST

of Aotearoa/New Zealand

Newsletter of the New Zealand Branch of the Anglican Pacifist Fellowship

From the Chairperson

Dear Friends

This is our first newsletter for some time (indeed since the AGM in June) for which I apologise.

So we do have a number of things to report on and I will keep this letter brief. Michael Bent reports elsewhere on the retreat and AGM, at which we had a good turnout in an ideal setting at Houchen House in Hamilton.

And, as you will also see in this newsletter, the establishment of a National Peace and Conflict Studies Centre, in which APF members have been heavily involved, has moved a step closer with the signing of a memorandum of understanding between the Aotearoa New Zealand Peace and Conflict Studies Trust and the University of Otago. The Centre will be launched at the University of Otago's premises in Auckland on October 26th. On the following day the Trust is organising a symposium on "Peace past, peace future". Details on the symposium will follow shortly. We invite Auckland members (and those from further field) to see this gathering as our northern North Island Open Day for 2007.

We have also to start planning for APF involvement in events next year, notably General Synod in May and the Lambeth Conference, with other national partners, in July.

Later this month (September 21st) is the designated International Day of Peace, or Peace One Day, at which we at least imagine a world without war. As Martin Luther King said, "Wars are poor chisels for carving out peaceful tomorrows"

In peace,
Margaret.

APF Retreat

Houchen House, Hamilton, 8-10 June 2007

The Week-end Retreat which formed the major part of the Annual APF Conference was conducted by Brother Brian of the Society of St. Francis with some fifteen taking part.

The Retreat was centred around three addresses given in the Chapel under the titles of

1. Christ the Person of Peace.

In this Address Brother Brian placed before us that Peace was one of the gifts of the Spirit and that as Christians we had always the Presence of Christ with us and, as He was a Man of Prayer so should we be. This should lead us to acceptance of all sorts of people around us and, remembering our Baptism, we should be able to meet and be concerned for all, to bring them into the Peace of Christ.

2. The Church as the Community of Peace.

Being a School for Sinners the Church is called to be a Hospital of Sanctification, where growth to wholeness can take place, bringing Peace out of fear. So APF should reexamine the reason for its existence, the principles and modes of operation and seeing what changes need to be made to be more effective in the NZ Church to-day.

3. Members of APF as being Witnesses of Peace to the World.

We need to be penitent in the face of present conflicts, whilst recognising that we often must agree to disagree, with the humility of Christ. But we must always speak the truth in love and put that love into action as Witnesses of Peace to our community, our society, our nation and our world.

After each address there was time to discuss what had been said before going into Lesser Silence again. This many found very helpful and aided the creation of an ethos of reflection and unity.

The major item on Sunday morning was the AGM and the election of officers together with a review of our financial state and the presentation of Reports. The last Session was on Future Policy,

Planning and what action needed to be taken towards the coming Lambeth Conference.

All who attended found the time spent together to be useful and agreed that this formula of Retreat, with Addresses and time for Reflection had much merit for APF members gathering annually.

Michael Bent

Peace Centre - Plans For The Future

Our thanks are due, not only to the APF members who have initiated this project, but to the APF who, both as a body and as individuals, have contributed the major part of the \$1.25 million initial funding. The Government will double the money raised under the Leading Thinkers' programme so that the Centre may get started with an endowed Chair in Peace and Conflict Studies. Because Otago has campuses in Christchurch, Wellington and Auckland as well as Dunedin, it will be able to offer programmes in other parts of New Zealand.

One of the features of the Centre will be the partnership with the tangata whenua expressed by the participation of the indigenous peace centres such as Hokotahi Moriori Trust and Parihaka together with the mana whenua the Ngai Tahu.

The object is to encourage research on methods of resolving conflict other than by violence and war. The Centre will focus initially on graduate research, but will accommodate undergraduate and taught Masters' programmes as more money is raised and more staff can be appointed.

To achieve this object of development the Trust in conjunction with the University is now embarking on a campaign to publicise the Centre and to raise more funds. The symposium on October 27th will focus on the relationship and contribution of the peace community to the Centre. The theme will be "Peace Past/Peace Future". There will be four sessions:

- The first will focus on the indigenous peace movements of Moriori and Parihaka.
- The second will look at New Zealand's record of opposing war and will include conscientious objection, the anti-nuclear campaign and the World Court judgment.
- The third session will deal with interfaith peacebuilding.
- The fourth will deal with peace and education including the Cool Schools programme and its wider application in restorative justice.

Chris Barfoot

Newsletters by email

Our thanks go to those who have responded so promptly to the recent survey of membership and mailing lists. This has enabled us to update our lists and save money on printing and postage by sending most of our newsletters by email.

APFNZ Website

We now have our own website, courtesy of Peace Movement Aotearoa:

<http://www.converge.org.nz/pma/apf>

It has links to the APF in the UK, Australia, India, Nigeria and South Africa and the Episcopal Peace Fellowship in the USA.

Anglican Pacifist Fellowship New Zealand Branch

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